

I INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Need of Study

Changing land use conditions in the North Albuquerque Acres/Paseo del Norte area have led to a proliferation of Special Use Permit and Conditional Use Permit requests. These changing conditions include the development of significant transportation corridors along Paseo del Norte and Eubank Boulevard and an increase in the area's population. These changing conditions triggered the need for the North Albuquerque Acres/Paseo del Norte Sector Development Plan (Sector Development Plan). This plan was adopted by the Bernalillo County Extraterritorial Land Use Authority (Resolution ELUA-2-2001) in February 2001.

The Sector Development Plan recommends that 12 areas within the study area be zoned for selected commercial development or higher density residential housing (see the Sector Development Plan for specific areas and types of zoning). The remainder of the area is recommended to be zoned A-1 to be consistent with the existing large-lot residential development in the area. The Sector Development Plan also states, however, that some of the zoning recommendations are contingent upon community water and sewer facilities being available. For example, two types of zoning, Zoning SD-MDR-1 and SD-MDR-2, are contingent upon community water and sewer facilities being available. Similarly, some of the zoned commercial development may have decreased lot sizes if community water and sewer facilities are available. The zoning dependence on availability of community water and service facilities and the additional recommendation by the Sector Development Plan to conduct a level of service options study for the Sector Plan area in 2001 have led to this study.

The purpose of the North Albuquerque Acres Water and Sewer Feasibility Study is to continue to fulfill the recommendations made in the Sector Development Plan. Nick A. Schiavo fulfilled part of the recommendations by completing a report titled, Water Supply and Wastewater Collection Feasibility Study for the North Albuquerque Acres Area: Technical and Financial Analysis (Schiavo Report) which looks specifically at water supply and wastewater collection for the North Albuquerque Acres area. This study is to fulfill the remainder of the study recommendations outlined in the Sector Development Plan. This study will:

- Review and verify the Schiavo Report as well as update its cost opinions for both water and sewer systems.
- Develop a representative sample water model that will then be extrapolated to the remainder of the study area. Initially, no water system remodeling was planned but insufficient data required that limited remodeling be done.
- Summarize certain studies required by Bernalillo County that have already been conducted for the study area.
- Review other specific information relating to water and sewer feasibility in the area

- Work with a citizen and technical advisory committee on the issues of water and sewer service to the area.
- Discuss permitting issues involved with the installation of utilities in the area.
- Hold two public meetings to get feedback and information from the community on the issues of water and sewer service in the area.
- Produce a report summarizing the study findings and the feedback from the community.

Study Area and Area Overview

The North Albuquerque Acres Study area encompasses approximately 3,800 acres of land northeast of Albuquerque and lying just northeast of the City of Albuquerque City Limits in Bernalillo County. Exhibit I-1 from the Sector Development Plan shows the boundaries and approximate land use for the area. The area analyzed for potential water and sewer service do not correspond exactly to the area shown in the Exhibit because of services already provided by the Albuquerque-Bernalillo Water Utility Authority (ABWUA) or Sandia Peak Utilities. These areas will be addressed in greater detail in the Sewer and Water discussions of this report.

The North Albuquerque Acres community lies in the unincorporated portion of Bernalillo County. The community was platted in the 1930s with a traditional grid pattern with the north-south collector streets spaced approximately every half mile (Eubank Boulevard, Lowell Street, etc.) and east-west residential streets spaced approximately every tenth of a mile (San Francisco Street, Holly Avenue, etc.). Paseo del Norte passes east-west through the approximate middle of the area as the major arterial.

Most of the community consists of residential development on lots that are approximately 0.89 acres in size. The area is zoned A-1 which is:

“...to preserve the scenic and recreational values in the National Forests and similar adjoining land, to safeguard the future water supply, to provide open and spacious development in areas remote from available public service, and to recognize the desirability of carrying on compatible agricultural operations and spacious home development in areas near the fringes of urban development. The regulations provide for the protection of these important land uses, and are not intended to unduly restrict or regulate farming or ranching operations.” (Ordinance No. ELUA 1998-1 from the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Extraterritorial Zoning Ordinance).

True to this ordinance, the existing homes are on large lots with a significant amount of equestrian facilities although ranching and farming do not have a significant visible presence. Besides the homes, there are a number of other land uses that exist in the area: a number of churches, a school, several public services facilities (fire and sheriff), some recreational facilities, flood control structures, small commercial development, and some water utility facilities.

The present population of the area is approximately 4,000 according to the 2000 census. The analysis done in this study is based upon full development of the area's property which would be a projected population of approximately 11,000 people.

The existing roadways are also in keeping with the rural character of the area. The existing residential roads consist of two-lane paved and unpaved roadway with no curb and gutter and the use of bar ditches for the conveyance of stormwater runoff to the many arroyos that pass through the area. Although not all of the roadways in the area are paved, a significant number of the roads have been paved recently. The paving work also included many traffic calming devices such as speed bumps and intersection traffic circles. Curb & gutter and sidewalk is not used in the area. For the purposes of this study and the cost analyses, it was assumed that all of the roadways of the area would be paved by the time utilities were provided to the area.

The physical characteristics of the area are consistent with a gradual sloping foothill area. The ground slopes from the east to the west at approximately four percent. Arroyos crisscross the area taking stormwater drainage from the upper regions of the area to the west.

Except for a few fringe areas, the North Albuquerque Acres area is not presently served by urban levels of water and sewer even though urban levels of electric, gas, and telephone utilities are present. The water and sewer utilities, the primary focus of this document, will be discussed in greater detail in the remaining portions of this document.

The Future

According to the Paseo del Norte North Albuquerque Acres Sector Development Plan, this area is to grow with development that is similar to the existing development. For the future, the land use in this area is to primarily remain residentially zoned A-1 with the inclusion of some higher-density residential areas or small commercial development near the Paseo del Norte corridor. The density of these areas is dependent upon the availability of community water and sewer services.

In the future, the area may also have improved transportation facilities with the expansion of Eubank Boulevard and Alameda Boulevard.

Sources of Information

Various sources of information were used in the development of this report. These sources were:

- Sector Development Plan, February 2001, prepared by Sites Southwest, LLC and other consultants
- Schiavo Report, prepared by Nick A. Schiavo, Fall 2001
- North Albuquerque Acres Transportation Plan, March 1998, prepared by Avid Engineering (Transportation Plan)

- Hydrology Report for North Albuquerque Acres/Sandia Heights Drainage Study Phases I & II, November 1998, prepared by Resource Technology, Inc. (Hydrology Report)
- ABWUA Existing Sewer System Information
- ABWUA Existing Water System Information
- City of Albuquerque Water System Master Plan, 1982, prepared by Leedshill-Herkenhoff, Inc. (Water Master Plan)
- 2000 US Census Data
- Graphical Information Systems Data from Bernalillo County