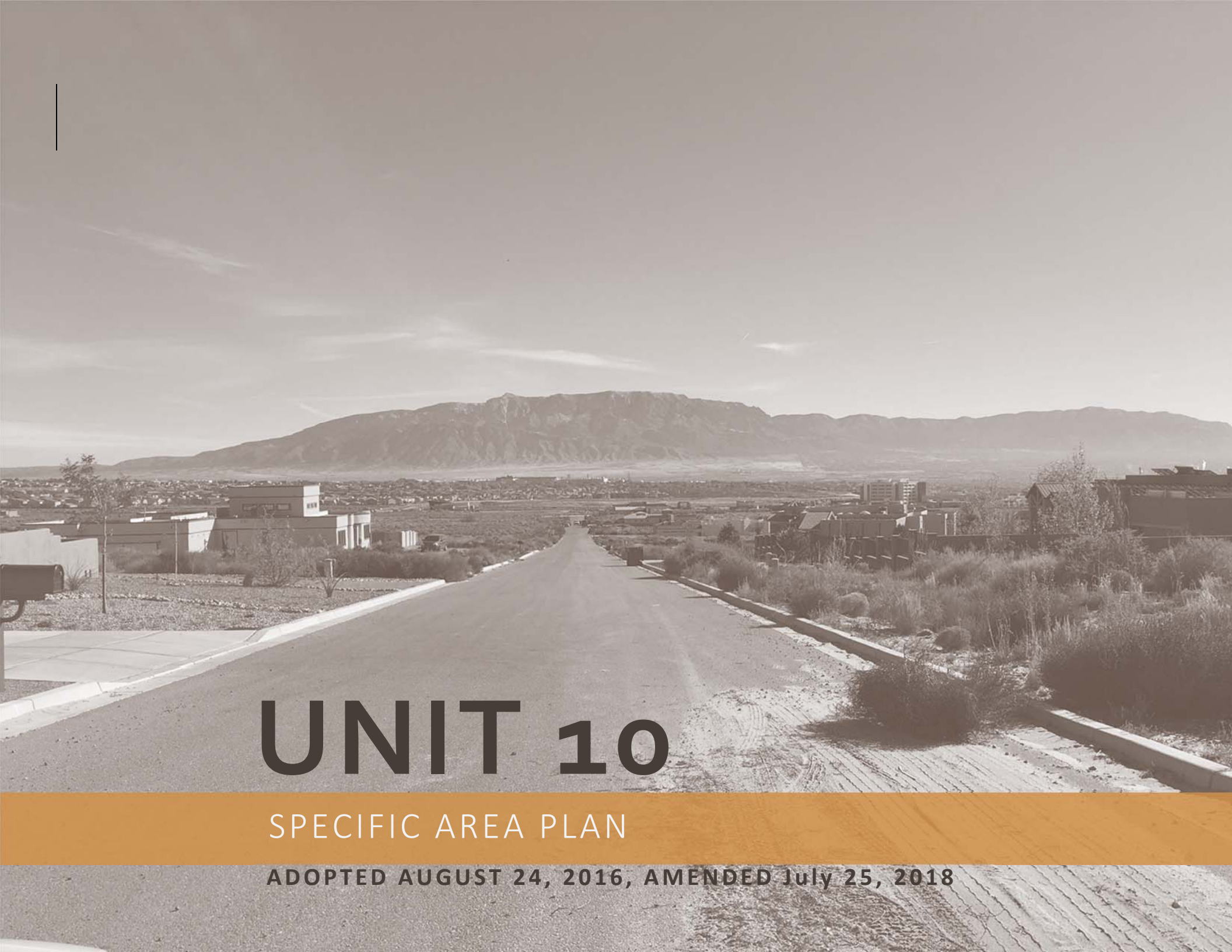

UNIT 10

SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

ADOPTED AUGUST 24, 2016, AMENDED July 25, 2018

UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

Adopted August 24th, 2016; Amended July 25, 2018

MAYOR

Greggory D. Hull

CITY MANAGER

Keith Riesberg

CONTENTS

CITY COUNCIL AMENDED

District 1 – Jim Owen
District 2 - Dawnn Robinson
District 3 – Bob Tyler
District 4 – Marlene Feuer
District 5 – Jennifer Flor
District 6 – David Bency

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD AMENDED

District 1 – David Heil (Chair)
District 2 – Carlos Sanchez
District 3 – Vacant
District 4 – Paul Wymer
District 5 – Sal Maniaci
District 6 – Sal Tortorici
At Large – Michael Schlichte (Vice Chair)

CITY COUNCIL 2016 ADOPTION

District 1 – Jim Owen
District 2 – Dawnn Robinson
District 3 – Cheryl Everett
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District 6 – David Bency

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD 2016 ADOPTION

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District 2 – Brian Gilmore
District 3 – Robert A. Tyler
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District 5 – Sal Maniaci
District 6 – Sal Tortorici
At Large – Michael Schlichte (Vice Chair)

PREPARED BY

Sites Southwest
City of Rio Rancho Development Services Department

GRAPHIC SOURCES

Report Photos: Sites Southwest; Icons: Flaticon.com

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1. AREA PROFILE

Unit 10 is located in the southwest corner of Rio Rancho and shares a common border with the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. The area is adjacent to the Cabezon neighborhood and the Presbyterian Rust Medical Center. Within Unit 10 are established residential neighborhoods and several new development projects, including the Los Diamantes business park. Given its central location, Unit 10 will be a key area for new urban growth in Rio Rancho, taking advantage of its proximity to regional employment centers and existing infrastructure. Land assembly in the western part of the plan area provides an excellent opportunity to create a complete community with a mix of residential densities, employment, and public services.

1.1. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The Unit 10 Specific Area Plan encompasses an area of approximately 2,300 acres and is bounded by Rainbow Boulevard to the west, Unser Boulevard to the east, Southern Boulevard to the north, and Black Arroyo Boulevard to the south (see Map 1: Unit 10 Context).

The area, although still mostly undeveloped, has experienced significant growth in recent years, with the addition of approximately 750 residents between 2000 and 2012.[1] Recent development activity in Unit 10 for rezoning of land has established a need to develop a plan that will address the needs of residents living in the planning area and future business developments along arterial roads including Westside Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard. Additionally, developing a specific area plan (SAP) that addresses the construction of public infrastructure is necessary to ensure that future development can be supported.

The eastern half of the planning area consists of established custom single-family homes on larger lots. In contrast, the western portion of Unit 10 is mostly undeveloped, but platted. Lot consolidation and future master planned communities are a possibility in the future. Although there are few named neighborhoods currently, Unit 10 is characterized by several areas that could develop into distinct neighborhoods in the future (see Map 2: Conceptual Planning Neighborhoods). A ridgeline creates a natural separation between some of these neighborhoods, as does Unit 10's system of arroyos (see Figure 1-2).

1.1.1. NORTHEAST DEVELOPED AREA

This area encompasses the single family residential area North of Westside Boulevard and east of Vargas and Huron Roads. The area has been developing as a low density, single family residential neighborhood for the last 40 years and is characterized by larger custom homes on half-acre lots. Residents of homes south of Viga Road do not have water and sewer connections and rely on well and septic systems. In addition, most of the roadways in this neighborhood are not paved, although some of the main roads (15th Street, parts of Vargas Road) have been paved, while some roads remain unpaved but are currently maintained by the City.

1.1.2. VISTA MONTEBELLA RESIDENTIAL AREA

The area south of Westside Boulevard and east of 10th Street is another developing residential area made up predominantly of single family homes. As with the area to the north, this neighborhood contains many larger custom homes on half-acre lots. The area is part of a special assessment district (SAD 7A) that has provided water, sewer and paved roads to some homes, although not all homes have been connected to the City's utilities. Rio Rancho Public Schools have proposed a new elementary school for the northwest corner of the neighborhood that will be built south of Westside Boulevard.

1.1.3. UNSER GATEWAY AREA

The Unser Gateway Area is mostly comprised of commercial properties abutting Unser Boulevard and north of Wellspring Avenue. The neighborhood forms the "gateway" to Unit 10 and consists of several newer commercial developments

including Petroglyph Plaza, Unser Pavilion, Springer Plaza, and future medical offices. In addition, the Southern and Unser Plaza at the northeast corner of Unit 10 creates a commercial node for Unit 10, consisting of a movie theater, several chain restaurants, and approximately 30 undeveloped commercial lots that could support future business expansion.

1.1.4. CENTRAL AREA

The Central Area of Unit 10 is made up primarily of the planned Los Diamantes community and surrounding residential and commercially zoned lots. Los Diamantes is a proposed master planned community[1] that will consist of medium density single family homes and a business park. The business park offers the opportunity to bring several thousand jobs to Unit 10 that could be filled by residents of Unit 10. The project has also created the need to address storm water, drainage, roads, and other infrastructure needs for the western half of Unit 10, which will begin to catalyze development on the western side of Unit 10.

1.1.5. WEST SIDE OF UNIT 10

The area west of Los Diamantes (bordered by Villa and Viga Roads to the east and Rainbow Boulevard to the west), is mostly undeveloped but offers the opportunity for future lot consolidation. Rio Rancho Public Schools has been considering this area as the location for a new 100 acre high school, although the specific site has not been determined. With future growth, this area has the potential to develop commercial and mixed use “activity nodes” along Westside Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard. These areas could include higher density multifamily housing and retail opportunities that would not disrupt existing single family residential homes to the east.

1.1.6. HERITAGE HILLS COMMUNITY

The Heritage Hills Neighborhood is a triangle of covenant restricted parcels bounded by 5th Street to the west, Hopi Road to the north, and Villa Road to the south. Although mostly undeveloped, there are a few existing single family homes. This neighborhood has existing water connections that were constructed by developer before lots were sold to individual homeowners.

1.2. OPPORTUNITIES

With much of Unit 10 still undeveloped, there are numerous opportunities to foster the development of distinct, complete neighborhoods that will support a mixture of housing types and densities, community amenities, trails and open space, and commercial businesses. Among many others, some of the key opportunities in Unit 10 include:

- There are many key employment anchors adjacent to Unit 10 that should drive future housing, retail, and office growth. These include Rust Medical Center and commercial developments along Unser Boulevard.
- There are several existing and planned community amenities including schools, open space such as the Black Arroyo Wildlife Park, and proximity to existing retail offerings.

[1] Master plan adopted July 12, 2015 by Resolution No. 61, Enactment No. 15-055

FIGURE 1-1. VARGAS ROAD, AN EXAMPLE OF AN UNPAVED ROAD WITHIN A DEVELOPING RESIDENTIAL AREA..

- There is a proposed business park in the center of Unit 10 that would provide new, high quality office space to compete with offerings in Albuquerque such as Journal Center.
- There is an opportunity to introduce higher density, mixed use housing along major arterials including Westside Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard. This could include some multifamily units.
- The area's series of arroyos offer the opportunity to create a system of trails linked to a wider trail network. Combined with future SSCAFCA drainage control facilities, these trails could be part of an impressive trail system within Unit 10.

1.3. CHALLENGES

There are a few challenges to future development in Unit 10, most of which are related to its premature platting as part of Rio Rancho Estates in the 1960s. When land for Rio Rancho Estates was subdivided, the Sandoval County Commission approved the subdivision of land without requiring offsite improvements. The lack of critical infrastructure, such as paved streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, sewer and water lines, and proper drainage facilities creates major planning and safety concerns. Key challenges presented by premature platting and other site constraints include:

- Unit 10's narrow, 50 foot right-of-ways are too narrow to accommodate some of the major roads that will be needed to serve the area, resulting in possible future traffic congestion and low levels of connectivity. This limits the City's ability to construct pedestrian and bike friendly "complete streets" without dedicating additional public right-of-way.
- In addition, premature platting has created potential access management issues such as numerous curb cuts along arterial and collector roads, thereby impeding traffic flow and reducing the level of service on these roads. The City of Rio Rancho has established access management policies for Southern Boulevard and a portion of Westside Boulevard. Additional access management strategies for major roads in Unit 10 will need to be established.
- Unit 10 currently has several floodplain areas and arroyos that create potential drainage issues for future development. SSCAFCA has recently addressed a number of drainage problems in the area. However,

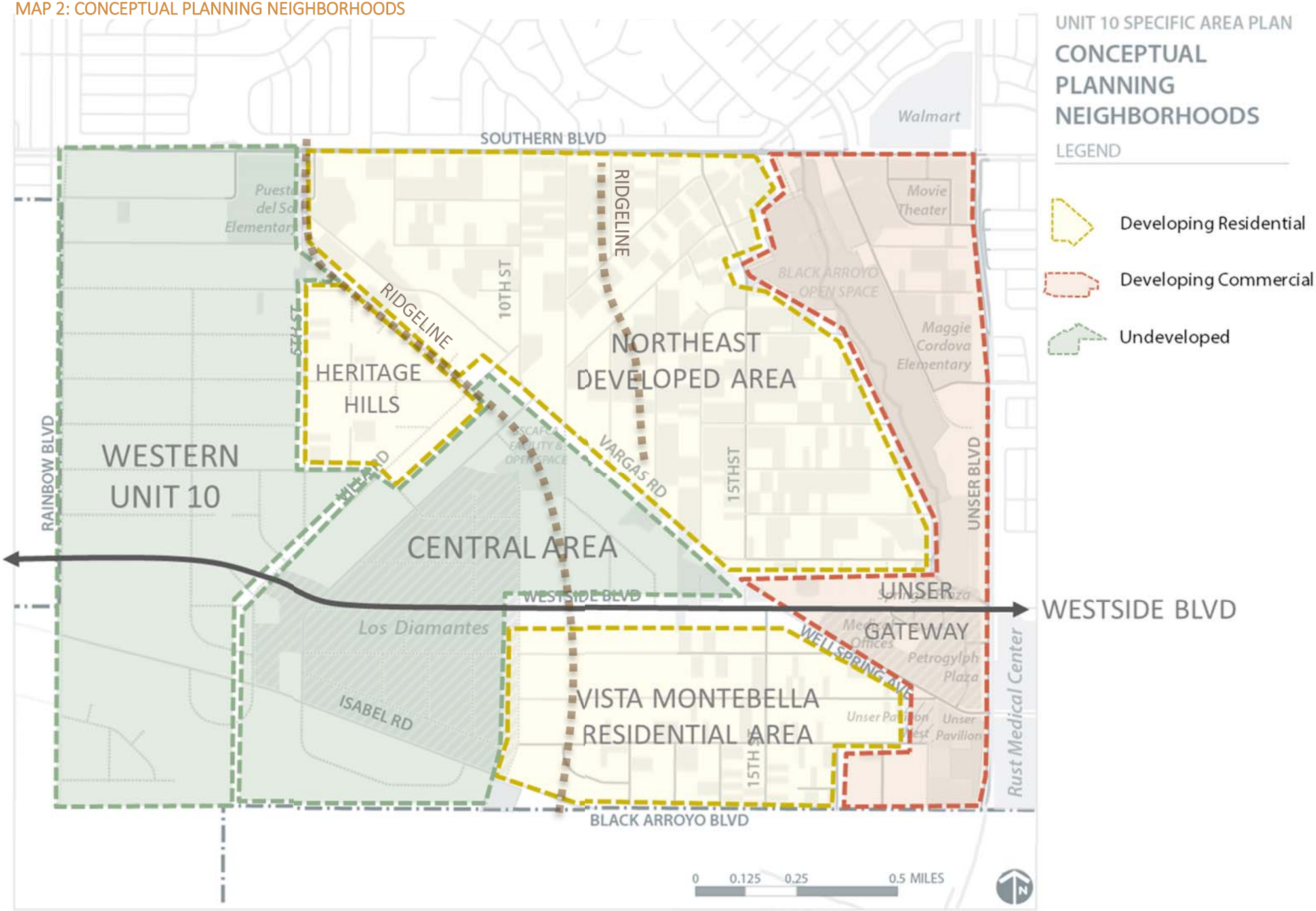
completely solving drainage and off-site improvement problems will fall upon the development community through the consolidation of land and re-platting.

- A final issue is addressing the infrastructure needs of existing development using Special Assessment Districts (SADs) or other financing tools. Protecting existing developed areas while offering property owners the opportunity to construct new paved roads, water, and sewer connections could be a challenge.

FIGURE 1-2. GOOGLE EARTH VIEW SHOWING UNIT 10 RIDGE LINES

MAP 1: UNIT 10 CONTEXT

MAP 2: CONCEPTUAL PLANNING NEIGHBORHOODS



2. PLAN PURPOSE & PROCESS

The City of Rio Rancho experienced explosive growth between 1980 and 2008 that rocketed the City from a small suburban community to the 3rd largest in the state within 20 years. Although the pace of growth has slowed in in recent years from its 2005-2006 peak, the City remains one of the fastest growing in the state. Planning for future development that meets the needs of residents, creates economic opportunity, and supports walkable, sustainable, and diverse neighborhoods is important to ensure the City will continue to prosper as one of the most livable places in New Mexico.

1.1. PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of Unit 10 Area Plan is to help guide and manage the physical development within the planning area over the next 15 - 20 years. Providing suitable housing and job opportunities for new residents in Rio Rancho will depend in large measure on how areas like Unit 10 develop over the next several decades.

This plan provides information about current conditions in Unit 10, identifies goals and objectives, outlines a generalized land use plan, identifies access management strategies, and lists implementation methods with measurable outcomes. Sections in the document are laid out by planning element: 1) jobs, housing, and community facilities, 2) land use, 3) transportation, 4) utilities and infrastructure, and 5) development guidelines.

2.1.1. RELATIONSHIP TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City of Rio Rancho's Comprehensive Plan is a broad-based policy document designed to direct current and future growth and physical development of the entire city. Specific Area Plans (SAP), such as this one, are designed to provide more area-specific goals and policies that fulfill the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. As such, they identify specific land uses at the parcel level, recommend strategies to address transportation and infrastructure needs, address community facilities and open space, and provide additional design guidance.

The Unit 10 SAP seeks to further develop the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan by addressing compatibility of development within the planning area. The plan looks to build on the policy goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and lead to the orderly, sustainable development of the Unit 10 planning area over the course of the next 15 - 20 years.

2.2. SPECIFIC GOALS

Following the goals and policies of the City of Rio Rancho's Comprehensive Plan, the central goals of this plan are to:

Protect existing single-family neighborhoods from future development pressures including increased traffic, higher intensity land uses, and commercial activity.
Enable the creation of future neighborhoods with a variety of housing types, jobs, shopping opportunities, public facilities, and open space.
Create a well-designed transportation system that encourages complete street designs, walkable neighborhoods, and high levels of connectivity.
Establish access management standards for major arterial streets.
Create incentives to expand public infrastructure, including water, sewer and roads.
Avoid environmental impacts and utilize environmentally sound principles during development.

2.3. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this plan will occur through approval of zone map amendments, initiated by either the City of Rio

Rancho or landowners. Capital improvements will be implemented through the City's Infrastructure and Capital Improvements Plan or through the development review process as development occurs. Special Assessment Districts may also be used by property owners who reimburse the city for the cost of installing public infrastructure improvements. To assist with the successful implementation of this plan, a series of measurable indicators are provided that can be used to monitor the progress of this plan as the area develops.

2.4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The planning process for this document involved coordination among the City of Rio Rancho Planning Department, Public Works, SSCAFCA, and area residents. Beginning in 2015, the City of Rio Rancho began to develop a specific area plan for the area that would direct future development.

The public process for the Unit 10 Specific Area Plan involved two community meetings: one on November 19th, 2015 with the Unser Gateway Coalition, and a second public meeting on December 10th, 2015 that was held at Rio Rancho City Hall. Meetings were well attended, with approximately 20 people attending the first meeting at the Unser Gateway Coalition, and approximately 60 residents attending the second public meeting. Comments and feedback from residents helped identify community needs and hone the recommendations in this plan.

At both meetings, community members were given an overview of the components of the specific area plan, and an overview of existing conditions. Residents were then asked to provide feedback on issues and needs within their neighborhoods, identify the boundaries of their neighborhoods, and respond to possible future needs for Unit 10 as a whole. Residents' main concerns by sub-area are outlined below.

2.4.1. NORTHEAST DEVELOPED AREA

Residents of the northeast quadrant of Unit 10 were united in their desire to protect the existing character of their neighborhood. Many expressed the sentiment that they bought property in this area so they could take advantage of the area's views, large lots, semi-rural character, and the ability to build a custom home. Specific concerns that residents expressed include:

- A strong desire to see 15th Street remain a local road that does not connect to Westside Boulevard. There is a concern that a connection to Westside would enable cut-through traffic and worsen congestion. However, 15th Street may need traffic calming such as speed humps.
- If there has to be a connecting north/south road, it should be further west, on either 10th Street or 5th Street.
- There are safety concerns about future development leading to more traffic and congestion in the future.
- Some residents expressed a desire to see sidewalks, fire-hydrants, and useable parks (including a dog park) in the future.
- There was not a consensus on whether roadways should be paved in the future and whether a SAD should be used to finance future improvements.

2.4.2. VISTA MONTEBELLA RESIDENTIAL AREA

As with the northeast developed portion of Unit 10, residents expressed a need to protect the existing character of their neighborhood, especially from proposed multifamily residential development. Specific concerns included:

- There were ongoing concerns about proposed multifamily development near Wellspring Avenue. Residents do not want to see multifamily development in this area.
- The left turn only at Black Arroyo Road and Unser Boulevard creates a barrier for residents. This is a City of Albuquerque managed road, and this issue would have to be taken up with Albuquerque Municipal Development.
- 15th Street should not connect past Westside to the north, given concerns with cut-through traffic.
- There were concerns about future traffic associated with the new elementary school site on the western boundary of the neighborhood.

2.4.3. WEST SIDE OF UNIT 10

The area west of Los Diamantes and Viga/Huron Road is mostly undeveloped and has the potential to support additional master planned communities like Los Diamantes in the future. Residents said that they'd prefer any future north/south road in the future utilize Villa or Viga Road and/or 5th Street, or simply use Rainbow Boulevard. Residents felt any future higher density housing should be located in this area instead of near existing developed homes. In addition, this area encompasses the Heritage Hills neighborhood, which is a covenant protected community that is restricted to R-1 development.

2.4.4. UNSER GATEWAY AREA

This area has seen the rapid development of new commercial in the last few years. As the "gateway" to Unit 10 from Unser, having a high quality of design is important. Residents saw the need to limit future development to commercial land use only, and exclude proposed multifamily or higher density residential uses. There was general agreement that the design of new commercial buildings has been higher than in the past and should be continued.

2.4.5. WESTSIDE BOULEVARD

Residents recognized that Westside Boulevard will be a major roadway in the future and saw the need to ensure adequate ROW is set aside, as well as buffer existing residential development. Residents expressed some support for design controls along this roadway, as long as they didn't impede development. Residents mentioned the possibility of a wall along Westside to buffer residential development from proposed commercial uses.

3. JOBS, HOUSING, & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Unit 10, although still mostly undeveloped, has experienced significant growth in recent years. In 2012, Unit 10 was home to 1,206 people, spread among 385 households. This is an increase of approximately 750 people between 2000 and 2012. Given the rapid rate of growth, providing adequate community facilities such as schools and open space is crucial. In addition, creating future employment opportunities is important to create more local jobs within Rio Rancho, provide more shopping opportunities, and grow the City's tax base to support more services.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- Ensure the needs of existing residents are addressed during future development proposals.
- Provide additional open space and park land, as well as a new community center.
- Preserve existing single-family home neighborhoods and provide adequate buffers between single-family homes and future multi-family developments.

3.1. POPULATION & HOUSING

3.1.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

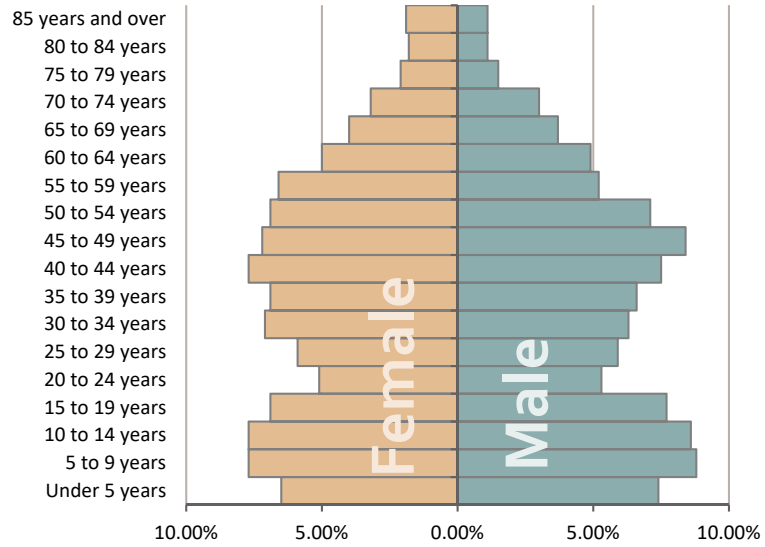
The City of Rio Rancho's has experienced high population growth since it became an incorporated city in 1981. Between 2000 and 2010, the city's population increased by more than 65% to 87,521 residents.[2] Although growth has slowed during the housing downturn and Great Recession, Rio Rancho's estimated population was 93,820 in 2014.[3] Future growth estimates see the city almost doubling in population over the next 25-30 years (see below).[4]

Unit 10, although still mostly undeveloped, has also experienced significant growth in recent years. In 2012, Unit 10 was home to 1,206 people, spread among 385 households (3.1 average household size).[5] This is an increase of approximately 750 people between 2000 and 2012 (170%).

AGE

The median age in Rio Rancho is 36.4 years old.[6] As seen in the population pyramid below, Rio Rancho has a younger population of families with school-age children. However, it has fewer young adults between the ages of 20-29, which may indicate a lack of affordable housing, jobs, or other factors that contribute to an out-migration of these age groups.

CHART 1: POPULATION PYRAMID



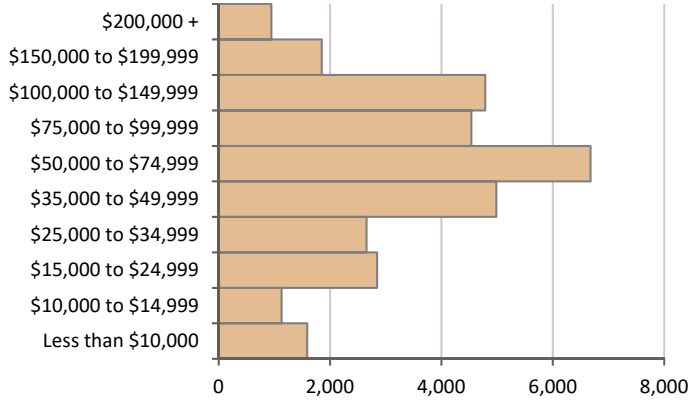
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2009-2013

INCOME

Estimated median household income for Rio Rancho was $59,883 in 2013.[7] This is significantly higher than New Mexico's median household income of $44,927, as well as Albuquerque's median household income of $47,989.

The estimated median household income in Unit 10 was similar to Rio Rancho as a whole at $57,024.[8]

CHART 2: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2009-2013

EDUCATION

Rio Rancho residents are well-educated, with 27.8% of the population over 25 years old estimated to have a bachelor's degree or higher. Only 6.5% of adults over 25 years old do not have a high school degree.[9]

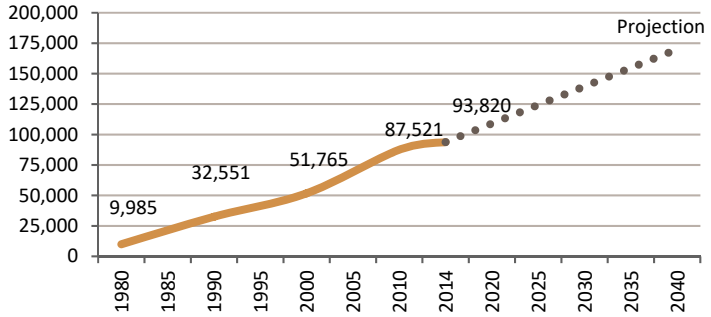
3.1.2. GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Socioeconomic forecasts produced by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG), project that Sandoval County as a whole will grow by 84,931 people to a total population of 220,881 by 2040.[10] This represents a 62% increase in population over the next 25 years. Population growth will be complemented by an even higher amount of employment growth, with a projected increase of an additional 41,191 jobs (75,260 total jobs) or an astounding 121% increase.

Within Rio Rancho, the City is projected to be home to approximately 170,000 people in 2040, or about 80% more residents in 25 years. This represents between 25,000 and 30,000 new households depending on changes in household size. At current average densities, this means that approximately 50,000 acres (78 square miles) of new land will have to be developed to support housing needs.

Specific projections for Unit 10 show a projected total population in 2040 of 9,400 residents, 3,630 households, and 3,900 total housing units.[11] The projected number of total jobs is 5,130, with the majority being service-based jobs. This estimate does not account for possible zoning changes or new facilities that could increase future densities or the total number of jobs, meaning future growth in Unit 10 could be much higher.

CHART 3: RIO RANCHO POPULATION



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2009-2013; MRCOG Socioeconomic Projections 2040.

3.1.3. HOUSING

There are currently 441 developed residential parcels[2] within Unit 10, most of which are on the eastern side of the planning area, between Unser Boulevard and the Vargas Road. As these developed parcels are entirely single-family homes, the total number of dwelling units is approximately 441 or about 1.5 dwelling units per developed acre.[12] Many of these homes were built after 1996 (median age 2002). Not all are connected to existing water and sewer infrastructure (see Infrastructure Section below). Many of these houses are larger homes, with 3 or more bedrooms.

The area south of Westside Boulevard has also recently begun to develop since 2005, and has established a special assessment district (SAD 7) to provide paved roads, and in certain areas, sewer and water. A map of the SAD 7 area is presented in Map 11: Utilities & Special Assessment Districts, showing the sewer and water utility infrastructure that has been constructed to land abutting 20th Avenue SW and 21st Avenue SE.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

According to MRCOG projections, by 2040, Unit 10 will be a community of approximately 10,000 people, over 5,000 jobs, several new schools, new open space and park facilities, and commercial sites that meet the needs of residents and the area workforce. This total population growth represents an additional 8,000 residents or 3,400 housing units by 2040. Part of MRCOG's projection includes 715 multifamily units. This growth in population would mean a slight increase in density to slightly over 2 dwelling units per acre.[13]

Overall, this is a modest projection, as this represents a low density of housing that could be increased with smaller lot sizes or the addition of multifamily or attached housing. Depending on how Unit 10 develops, the predominantly low density single family housing pattern may change to incorporate higher density housing, including some multifamily units. There may also be a need to include plans for affordable housing in the future, depending on local incomes and needs. The potential for Unit 10 to contain a higher density of housing in the future is outlined in the *Land Use* chapter of this document.

3.2. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

3.2.1. EMPLOYMENT

Major employers within the vicinity of Unit 10 are Rust Medical Center, the Walmart at Unser Boulevard and Southern Boulevard, and area schools. Larger employers within the City of Rio Rancho are Intel and Intel contractors, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Presbyterian Hospital, Hewlett-Packard, Bank of America, the City of Rio Rancho and Sandoval County.

RUST MEDICAL CENTER

Presbyterian's Rust Medical Center, located at Unser Boulevard and Wellspring Avenue, opened in 2011 and employs about 670 people. The hospital, along with the Petroglyph Medical Plaza and the Presbyterian Pavilion, form

[2] As of November 1st, 2015.

an important employment center. An expansion was completed last year (2015) that added a 6-story patient tower, with additional beds and operating rooms. This expansion has created approximately 100 new jobs, and has the potential to support additional medical offices in adjacent developments such as Petroglyph Plaza and Unser Pavilion.

COMMUTING & JOBS HOUSING BALANCE

One goal of the Rio Rancho Comprehensive Plan is to improve the jobs/housing ratio to allow residents to work closer to where they live and in turn lower commute times. This in turn can lessen traffic congestion, especially at key bottlenecks like the limited number of river crossings. Currently about 75% of Rio Rancho residents work outside the city limits, with an average commute time of 28.8 minutes.[14] These commuting patterns are similar to what they were in 2000, indicating that although Rio Rancho's population has expanded significantly since 2000, it has not yet created a significant number of jobs to improve the jobs/housing imbalance.

To help provide more jobs within Rio Rancho, future developments in Unit 10 should seek to concentrate employment in larger activity centers that can provide ample job opportunities for residents and improve the current jobs/housing imbalance.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

MRCOG projections for the number of jobs within Unit 10 are broken down by basic employment, retail, and service jobs. The total employment projections are 5,129 jobs with 3,931 in service, 397 in retail, and 801 in basic employment. This is a small subset of the 41,191 additional jobs projected for Sandoval County as a whole.[15]

A recent proposal to create a business park as part of the Los Diamantes Master Plan has the potential to concentrate employment and create approximately 1,400 employment opportunities according to the Los Diamantes Master Plan. The City would like to see the proposed business park develop into something akin to Journal Center in Albuquerque. Future expansions to the business park could lead to an even further increase in total jobs, helping to balance the current jobs/housing ratio and reduce commute times.

3.2.2. RETAIL & COMMERCIAL NEEDS

The planning area is currently served by retail along Unser Boulevard, including a Walmart Supercenter at the corner of Unser Boulevard and Southern Boulevard, a movie theater across the street, a US Bank, and several restaurant chains. The nearest supermarket is the Walmart Supercenter and an Albertson's on Southern Blvd. Existing office spaces include the offices at the Rust Medical Center, medical offices at the Petroglyph Medical Plaza along Unser Boulevard and Wellspring Avenue, and office space along NM 528.

Rio Rancho's 2009 Retail Plan estimated that there was 1,780,000 square feet of retail space in Rio Rancho during the 4th quarter of 2009.[16] This represented 19 square feet of retail space per capita, which is below the national average of 40 square feet. The report also described Rio Rancho's low gross receipts per capita, indicating retail sales leakage to Albuquerque. The good news is that this also offers Rio Rancho the opportunity to increase retail floor space for residents and capture more retail dollars within the city limits.

Given the expected growth in the planning area, and future corridor development along Rainbow Boulevard and Westside Boulevard, at the minimum, at least 180,000 square feet of retail space will be needed to serve Unit 10 residents *alone* at current retail to resident ratios. Conservatively accounting for increased per capita floor space and the needs of future area employees could well raise the need for retail floor space to over 300,000 square feet.[17]

3.2.3. PROPOSED AND EXISTING DEVELOPMENTS

Future commercial developments for Unit 10 are being proposed by several local developers who own land within Unit 10 (see Map 3).

LOS DIAMANTES

The Los Diamantes Master Plan was approved by the City Council on July 12, 2015,[3] including rezoning of 180 acres[4] in Unit 10 to accommodate a new R-3 single family residential subdivision and business park. The plan is bounded by Viga Road on the west, Isabel on the south, 10th Street to the east, and the proposed SSCAFCA facilities near the intersection of Viga Road and Eagle Road. The expected population of the residential subdivision is approximately 1,000 residents and 1,400 jobs within the business park when fully developed.

PETROGLYPH MEDICAL PLAZA

The Petroglyph Medical Plaza Master Plan is an 18-acre development consisting of 60,000 square feet of medical office space. The site is located on the west side of Unser Boulevard, along Westside Boulevard. There is more land available for future commercial medical office development to the west in the future.

UNSER PAVILION & UNSER PAVILION WEST

The Unser Pavilion is a 6.5-acre retail and commercial development on the west side of Unser within Unit 10. The site Master Plan calls for small scale, neighborhood retail establishments, including restaurants, small offices, and commercial services. The site currently features a Subway Sandwiches and Credit Union. A second development directly west is also planned (Unser Pavilion West), and will include a two story, 100,000 square foot office building.

3.3. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

3.3.1. SCHOOLS

There are two public schools within the planning area: Maggie E. Cordova Elementary School off Unser Boulevard, which has an enrollment of 1,029 students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade and Puesta Del Sol Elementary, located on Southern Boulevard which has an enrollment of 814 students in grades kindergarten through 5th grade.

Rio Rancho Public Schools (RRPS) plans to build a new high school, elementary school and possibly a new middle school within Unit 10. Although specific locations have not been determined, a new high school will most likely be located on the western side of the planning area, where there is currently no development. RRPS plans for the future high school to be similar in size to the two existing public high schools in Rio Rancho, with approximately 2,300 students and 200 staff

[3] Resolution No. 61, Enactment 15-055

[4] Ordinance No. 17, Enactment No. 15-14

spread across a 100-acre campus. A future elementary school in the southern sections of Unit 10 near Los Diamantes would have about 800 students and 100 staff. As the location of these new school facilities is finalized, it will be important to ensure appropriate development is provided and crucial roadway connections are preserved to ensure safe, convenient access to these school sites.

3.3.2. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

During community meetings, residents expressed a desire to see an additional community center within Unit 10 or in a nearby neighborhood. There is currently no community center located within Unit 10 or in the neighborhood to the north of Southern Boulevard. Although there is a community center in the Cabezon Neighborhood to the east, a new community center would better serve residents of both Unit 10 and the developed residential neighborhoods to the north. A possible site could be located along Westside Boulevard west of Los Diamantes, or off Southern Road, which would provide access to the neighborhood to the north.

Rio Rancho's stated level of service standard for recreation centers is 1 facility per 20,000 people and a 10-minute driving distance. As of July 1, 2016, the estimated population of Rio Rancho is 96,028, which indicates a need for five recreation centers today, not accounting for future growth.

No funding for recreation projects in Unit 10 is included in the City's 2017-2021 ICIP. The next community center, which is a project under consideration, will be on Northern Boulevard. Projects under consideration will be deferred until growth and funding availability warrant inclusion in the ICIP. Recurring operating costs are also a consideration in planning for new facilities. As of FY 2017, funds were not available to cover ongoing operating costs of new facilities. However, a new community center, potentially in combination with other facilities, should be included in master planning for western Unit 10.

An analysis of considerations for a new community center is located in the Appendix.

The City has identified a need for a fire and rescue station near Southern and Rainbow. This facility is the second priority for a new station in the City's ICIP for FY 2022. It could be incorporated into a master plan for the western portion of Unit 10. Co-location with a new community center is one possibility for these facilities. An analysis of siting considerations for a new fire station is located in the Appendix.

3.3.3. PARKS & OPEN SPACE

The primary existing open space facility within Unit 10 is the Black Arroyo Open Space owned by SSCAFCA. This 75-acre open space runs through the northeastern section of Unit 10, between Unser Boulevard and Southern Boulevard, and has recently completed construction of a new multimodal trail through the area. There is also a small, 5-acre flood control park/open space along Unser Boulevard, south of Wellspring Avenue near the Unser Pavilion Development. Parking for and access to this park is presently from 19th Street SE. Adding additional pedestrian connections from the Unser Pavilion commercial development, and possibility from Unser Boulevard, could add to the functionality and usability of this park facility. Proposed open space for Los Diamantes includes a flood control pond, and two 4-acre neighborhood parks.

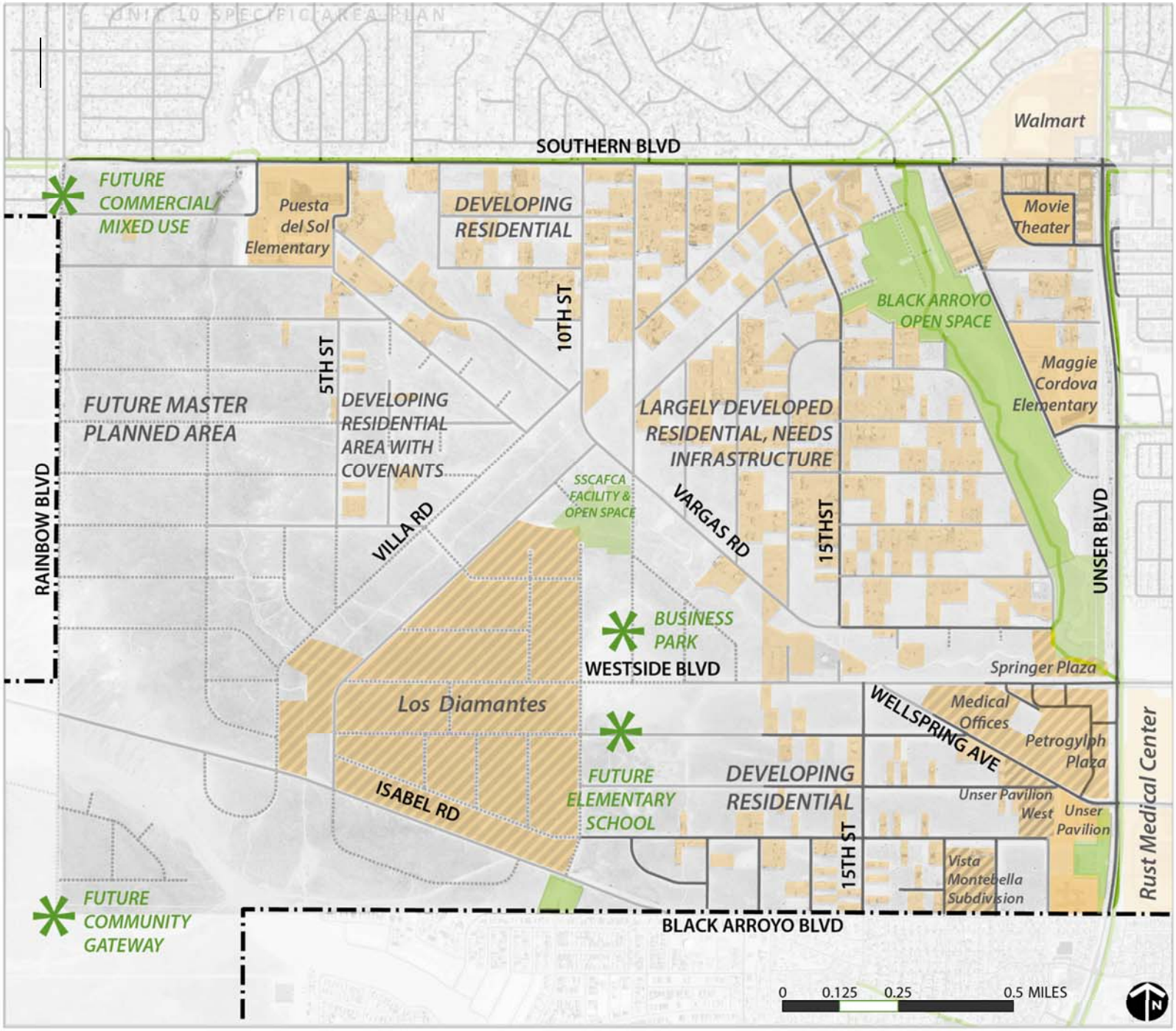
The city has a goal of four acres of developed park land for every 1,000 people. The subdivision ordinance requires three acres of park land for every 1,000 residents with an impact fee in lieu of dedication for subdivisions 25 acres or less. An additional 22 acres of parks space will be needed and provided through the development process to serve future residents of Unit 10. There are opportunities to incorporate this parks space as part of proposed SSCAFCA facilities, including one in the center of Unit 10, and along existing floodplains/arroyos. Park development in the planning area will occur as development occurs through dedication or impact fees imposed on development that will be used to purchase land and develop parks.

3.4. IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of the jobs, housing, and community facilities goals is to encourage the continued development of low to medium density housing in Unit 10, while creating new job opportunities for residents in key employment centers. Implementation recommendations related to jobs, housing and community facilities are shown below.

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL CF-1: Encourage the development of future employment centers (including business parks) that support an improved jobs/housing balance and increased local employment.	**ACTION CF-1.1:** Encourage the development of future mixed use and office development within Unit 10 as identified on the adopted land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-1.2: Encourage expansion of business park zoning to land east of Los Diamantes as identified on adopted land use map.	Development Services	Medium Term
GOAL CF-2: Expand retail opportunities for residents and add at least 200,000 square feet of retail to the community.	**ACTION CF-2.1:** Recruit high quality commercial retail developers to Unit 10 and seek to add at least 200,000 square feet of retail near key activity nodes along Westside Blvd, Rainbow Blvd, Isabel Road, and Wellspring Ave.	Development Services, City Manager's Office	Long Term
	ACTION CF-2.2: Encourage future neighborhood scale and community commercial as part of future master planned areas.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL CF-3: Promote a variety of residential housing types (including medium- and low-density single family, and some multifamily) for residents of all incomes.	**ACTION CF-3.1:** Encourage the development of medium density and high-density housing as identified on the proposed land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-3.2: Promote the development of higher density housing (multi-family and attached) at key future activity centers, including segments of Westside Boulevard and along Rainbow Boulevard.	Development Services	Medium Term
	ACTION CF-3.3: Identify future affordable housing opportunities in future master planned areas.	Development Services	Medium Term

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL CF-4: Increase community access to parks and open space to provide 4 acres of open space per 1000 residents.	ACTION CF-4.1: Identify sites for future open space and park developments. Evaluate whether future connections with existing facilities and surrounding neighborhoods can be established to increase access to parks and open space.	Development Services; Parks and Rec	Short Term
	ACTION CF-4.2: Identify the location, size, and proposed services for a community center within Unit 10 that provides facilities to residents of Unit 10, the neighborhood north of Southern Boulevard, and future neighborhoods west of Rainbow Boulevard.	Development Services; Parks and Rec	Medium Term
	ACTION CF-4.3: Work with SSCAFCA to incorporate future drainage and detention pond areas as passive (or active) recreation areas.	Development Services; SSCAFCA; Parks and Rec; Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-4.4: Work SSCAFCA and Los Diamantes to expand open space area between Villa and Viga Roads north of Westside Blvd.	Development Services; SSCAFCA; Parks and Rec	Short Term
GOAL CF-5: Provide exceptional education opportunities for future families and their children.	ACTION CF-5.1: Work Rio Rancho Public Schools on the siting of a future high school/middle school on the western side of Unit 10 near the intersection of Rainbow Blvd and Westside Blvd.	Development Services; Public Works; Rio Rancho Public Schools.	Short Term



UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

EXISTING & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS

LEGEND

DEVELOPMENT

- Existing Single Family
- Existing Development
- Proposed Development

SSCAFCA FACILITIES

- Existing
- Proposed

4. LAND USE

A generalized land use plan for Unit 10 was adopted in 2015 following several community meetings. This plan preserves the adopted land use plan with a few minor recommendations for future amendment. The overall land use orientation of this plan reflects nodal-oriented development, low to medium densities, and ensures that proposed future uses will be well integrated with existing development. The adopted land use plan is intended to guide future development; however, it is not a prescription or forecast of how the area will actually evolve as private developers and homeowners consolidate and develop their properties.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

- Protect existing residential neighborhoods from future development, such as multifamily apartments and high intensity commercial activities.
- Preserve existing zoning on the developed, eastern side of Unit 10 to protect established neighborhoods.
- Ensure that future higher density housing is built on the western side of Unit 10 over the ridgeline, away from existing homes.

4.1. EXISTING LAND USE & ZONING

4.1.1. EXISTING PLATTING & OWNERSHIP

The planning area encompasses approximately 2,315 acres, 2,000 acres of which is platted on 2,791 existing lots with an average size of 0.72 acres (this excludes public right-of-way and existing SSCAFCA-owned facilities). Of these currently platted parcels, 492 are currently developed, mostly as single-family homes (see Table 1: Existing Developed Land Uses). This accounts for approximately 395 acres of developed land or about 20% of the net buildable land area. Undeveloped parcels account for 2,299 parcels, or about 1,600 acres of land. Public right-of-way accounts for approximately 240 acres (internal streets only).[18]

Many parcels within Unit 10 have a single unique owner. According to Sandoval County Assessor data, there are approximately 1,250 unique owners in Unit 10, which makes coordinated development difficult. However, recent consolidation efforts on the part of Unit 10 property owners have created clusters of contiguous parcels that may be re-platted and rezoned. This creates an opportunity to create more appropriately sized parcels and street alignments that support the goals of this plan.

4.1.2. EXISTING ZONING

Existing zoning within Unit 10 is almost entirely R-1: Single Family Residential (see Map 4). There are a few sections along Unser Boulevard, Southern Boulevard, and Isabel Road that are zoned C-1: Retail Commercial or Special Use to accommodate schools or master planned areas.

During public meetings, residents expressed the desire to preserve single family zoning on the eastern side of Unit 10 and disallow future zone changes that might change the character of their neighborhoods, including multifamily and commercial development. However, recent zoning changes have been approved for the Los Diamantes Master Plan to rezone portions north of Westside Boulevard as BP: Business Park, and residential areas of the master plan as R-3: Mixed Residential.

TABLE 1: EXISTING DEVELOPED LAND USES, SEPT 2015

LAND USE	ACRES	LOTS	PERCENT
Single Family	282	441	12%
Commercial	43	41	2%
Schools	43	2	2%
Churches	20	5	1%
Open Space	84	2	4%
Utilities	7	3	0.3%
Right of Way (internal only)	236	-	10%
Vacant	1,600	2,299	69%
Total	**2,315**	**2,793**	**100%**

Source: Sandoval County Assessor Data, September 2015.

4.2. LAND USE CATEGORIES

The Specific Area Plan contains proposed land use categories that are consistent with and promote the goals and policies of the City of Rio Rancho's Comprehensive Plan. The applicable land use categories are outlined in Table 2. These categories outline in a general way the applicable zoning districts to be considered for future proposed developments, as well as their possible implementation criteria. For example, the *Neighborhood Commercial* category designates area that have a lower intensity of commercial activity, such as office uses and small scale retail. More detail on the suitable zoning districts for each land use category may be found in the City's Zoning Code.

TABLE 2. LAND USE CATEGORIES

Land Use Category	Applicable Zoning Districts	Implementation Criteria	Target Densities
Low Density Residential	R-1: Single Family Residential R-2: Single Family Residential E-1: Estate Residential	Large-lot, detached single-family development.	1-4 DU/Acre
Medium Density Residential	R-4: Single Family Residential R-5: Single Family Residential	Medium lot sizes, single-family attached and detached development.	4-8 DU/Acre
	R-3: Mixed Residential	Attached & detached single family on small lots. Multifamily development should be buffered from adjacent R-1 and R-2 zones by R-4, R-5, or commercial, office, and mixed-use zones.	6-26 DU/Acre
High Density Residential	R-6: Multifamily Residential	Higher density multi-family residential development that is buffered from adjacent R-1 and R-2 zones by R-3, R-4, R-5, or commercial, office, and mixed-use zones.	>26 DU/Acre
Neighborhood Commercial & Office	O-1: Office	Areas where the primary use is non-retail commercial such as smaller-scale medical offices.	NA

Land Use Category	Applicable Zoning Districts	Implementation Criteria	Target Densities
	NC: Neighborhood Commercial	Neighborhood-scale retail that serve the immediate residential areas. Examples include small-scale restaurants, retail stores or small-scale offices.	NA
Community Commercial & Mixed Use	C-1: Community Commercial C-2	Community-scale retail uses that serve surrounding residential areas such as large-lot, anchor businesses, restaurants, and other retail businesses.	NA
	MU-A: Mixed Use Activity Center	Areas designated Mixed Use Activity Center nodes, with a master plan and housing component.	8-32 DU/Acre
Industrial, Business Park, Warehouse	BP: Business Park & C-2	Master planned developments in a campus-like setting.	NA
	M-1: Industrial and Business Park	Light manufacturing operations that do not create offensive noise, traffic, smoke, dust, etc.	NA
Parks, Open Space, Drainage	PR: Parks and Recreation, OS: Open Space	Areas designated as community parks or open space, or undevelopable lots.	NA

4.3. ADOPTED LAND USE PLAN

A generalized land use plan was adopted for Unit 10 in 2015. Although this plan did not rezone parcels, it does lay out a basic framework for how land use should develop over the next 25 years. Overall, the plan looks to include medium density single family residential, more commercial, and room for a business park (see Map 5). Within this overall framework, however, various land use changes may occur in the future, including the location of new school facilities, overall densities, mixture of housing types, and the final alignment of some roads.

4.3.1. PROPOSED CHANGE AREAS

To accommodate recent developments, this plan outlines several areas that may warrant changes to the generalized land use map that was adopted in 2015 (see Map 6). Changes include the following, which are annotated on Map 6:

① Change Low Density Residential land being purchased by Rio Rancho Public Schools for a future elementary school along Westside Boulevard to Civic, School, Church category.

② Change Low Density Residential land along the southern side of Westside between Wellspring Avenue and 14th Street to Neighborhood Commercial with a transition/buffer overlay to be developed prior to any zone map amendment.

③ Designate the upper triangle portion of the Unser Pavilion West development as Neighborhood Commercial from Low Density Residential.

④ Designate the Unser Pavilion West development as Community Commercial from Low Density Residential.

⑤ Change existing Special Use zoned parcels along Southern Boulevard (churches and schools) from Low Density Residential to Civic, School, Church category.

⑥ Change parcels along southern road and 7th Street to Medium Density Residential to align with existing land uses.

⑦ Designate the undeveloped western quarter of Unit 10 west of Villa Road/5th Street (please see Map 6: Generalized Land Use Proposed Change Areas) as a Future Master Planned Area (see section 4.4 below).

4.4. FUTURE MASTER PLANNED AREA LAND USE COMPONENTS

To address future land uses in the undeveloped western quarter of Unit 10 west of Villa Road/5th Street (please see Map 6: Generalized Land Use Proposed Change Areas), this plan designates this area as a Future Master Planned Area. This designation acknowledges that ongoing lot consolidation presents the opportunity for a well-organized, diverse mix of uses that meets comprehensive plan goals and responds to market conditions.

The 2015 Generalized Land Use Plan for Unit 10 proposed approximately the following mix of uses in the Future Master Plan area as a baseline:

- Low/Medium Density Residential & Civic, School, Church – 45%
- High density residential – 25%
- Commercial (Neighborhood, Community), Mixed Use, Office – 22%
- Industrial, Business Park, Warehousing– 8%

Future master plans should use this mix as a baseline, with a change plus or minus 10% allowed, taking into consideration market conditions if the need arises. All proposed rezoning and subdividing shall require a master plan and be served by sewer, water, and roadway improvements.

4.4.1. DENSITY & HOUSING TYPES

As outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, Rio Rancho has been and will continue to develop as a low to medium density suburban community. However, as the City continues to grow and as land becomes more valuable, it will be necessary to increase residential densities in order to provide efficient services and affordable housing. As summarized earlier in this document, if Rio Rancho develops at existing densities, the City's development footprint will have to grow by 78 square miles.

Therefore, future master planned developments in Unit 10 should be encouraged to support medium and higher density developments including R3, R4; and R5, and R6 residential zones, as well as Mixed Use Activity Center zones.

4.4.2. COMMERCIAL SPACE

Balancing future commercial space with residential needs should be a priority for Unit 10. As mentioned in the jobs and housing chapter (page 20), Rio Rancho would benefit from a larger amount of retail square footage space per capita, and Unit 10 can absorb several hundred thousand square feet of commercial space to serve area residents and employees in Unser Gateway and the Los Diamantes Business Park. Therefore, future master planned areas should provide a mixture of NC: Neighborhood Commercial and C1: Retail Commercial, along with MU-Mixed Use Activity Center Districts to provide adequate commercial space along primary corridors and major activity centers.

4.4.3. CIVIC, CHURCH & SCHOOL AREAS

Rio Rancho Public Schools has expressed interest in a new high school or combination middle/high school in Unit 10. They are seeking a larger campus (approximately 100 acres) that would connect to both Westside Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard. Future master planned developments should be coordinated with Rio Rancho Public Schools regarding the location of future schools.

4.4.4. OVERLAY ZONES AND BUFFER AREAS

To protect existing single-family development within Unit 10, and to promote high quality design, basic design guidelines are recommended for multifamily, commercial, and business park development. These include standards for buffering between different uses (e.g., residential and commercial), landscaping standards, building orientation standards, and parking requirements. (More information on overlay zones and buffers is provided in the section *Overlay Zones*, page 70 and an analysis of landscape buffer and use separation issues, along with proposed language for an overlay zone, is contained in the Appendix.)

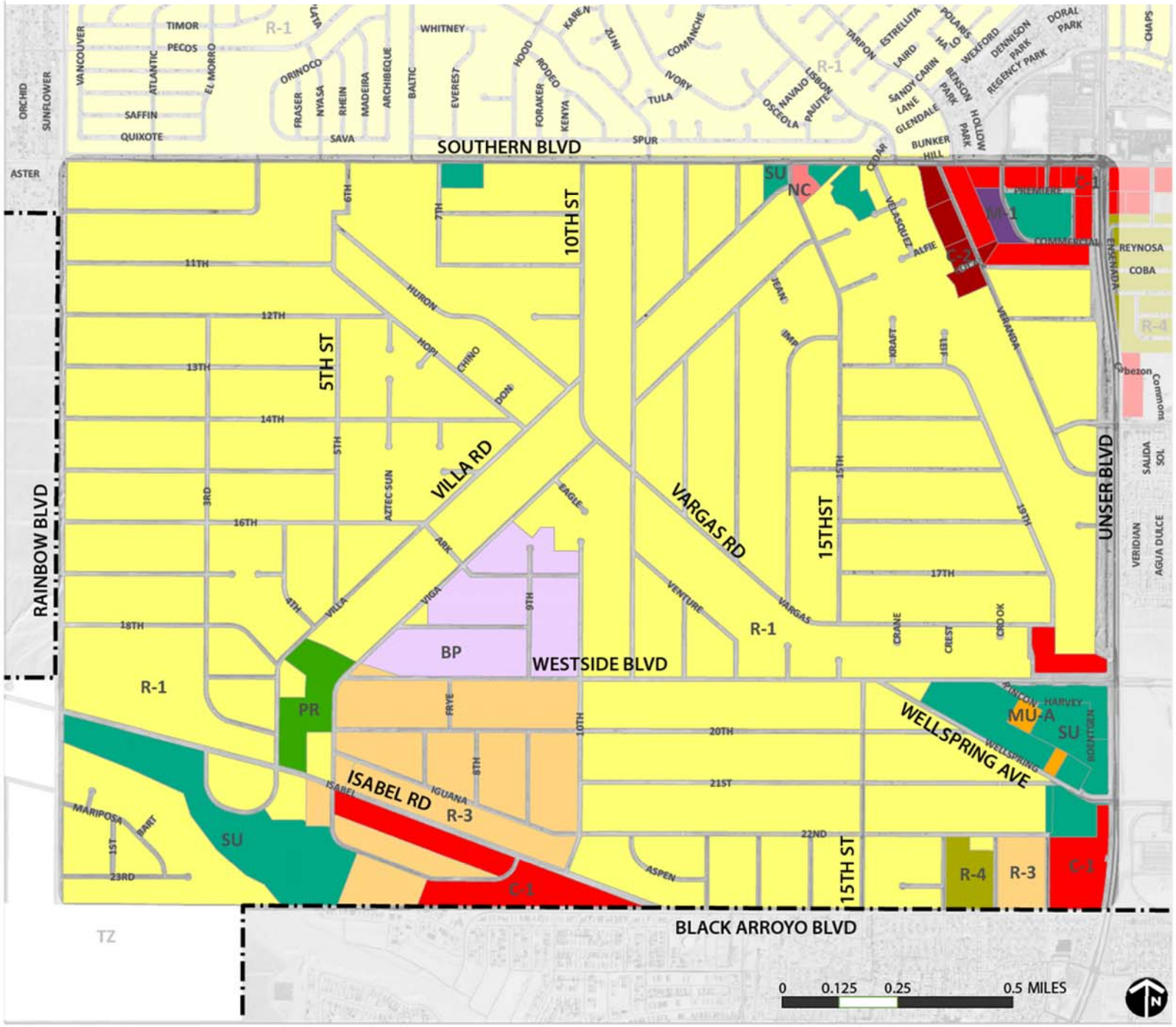
4.5. IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of the land use goals, policies, and actions section of this plan is to achieve a balance between residential and commercial land uses and to promote development that increases the economic vitality of the City of Rio Rancho. With the successful implementation of these land use goals, Unit 10 can be expected to see increased densities, additional lot consolidation, a balance of neighborhood scale retail, increased employment opportunities, and some mixed use development.

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL LU-1: Protect existing single-family neighborhoods from future land use changes to adjacent parcels.	ACTION LU-1.1: Adopt overlay zones where necessary to provide appropriate buffers between higher intensity commercial/multi-family uses and single family residential areas.	Development Services	Short and Medium Term
	ACTION LU-1.2: Rezonings in commercial zones shall not occur until additional buffer area criteria are developed to protect residential uses from higher intensive commercial uses.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION LU-1.3: Designate future high-density multifamily areas west of Los Diamantes to create expectations of future development for adjacent landowners.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION LU-1.4: Taking into consideration market conditions, baseline the percentage of the land use in the future master plan area to plus or minus 10 percent of the 2015 land use plan designation, defined as 25% high density residential; 22% commercial, mixed-use, office; 8% industrial, business park, warehousing; 45% low/medium density residential and/or civic, school, church.	Development Services, P&Z, Council	Ongoing
GOAL LU-2: Ensure future master plans follow the general framework of land use elements included in this plan.	ACTION LU-2.1: Amend Generalized Land Use Map to reflect the proposed land use map in this plan.	Development Services, P&Z, Council	Short Term
GOAL LU-3: Ensure a proper balance between future commercial and residential land uses.	ACTION LU-3.1: Encourage the development of future mixed use and office development within Unit 10 as identified on the adopted land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION LU-3.2: Encourage rezoning of C1: Community Commercial and NC: Neighborhood Commercial Districts to MU-A: Mixed Use Activity in future rezonings.	Development Services	Medium Term
GOAL LU-4: Enable and incentivize future lot consolidation to promote a	ACTION LU-4.1: Provide density bonuses for lot consolidation from the lowest base density to the maximum allowable density upon consolidating 4 or more acres.	Development Services	Short Term

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
variety of land uses that meet resident needs.	**ACTION LU-4.2:** Require future developments to demonstrate the ability to provide adequate infrastructure connections and an access management plan prior to the issuance of a zone amendment or site plan approval.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION LU-4.3: Require all future developments to connect to municipal water supply all zoning districts excepting R-1: Single Family Residential and E-1: Estate Residential.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing

MAP 4: EXISTING ZONING



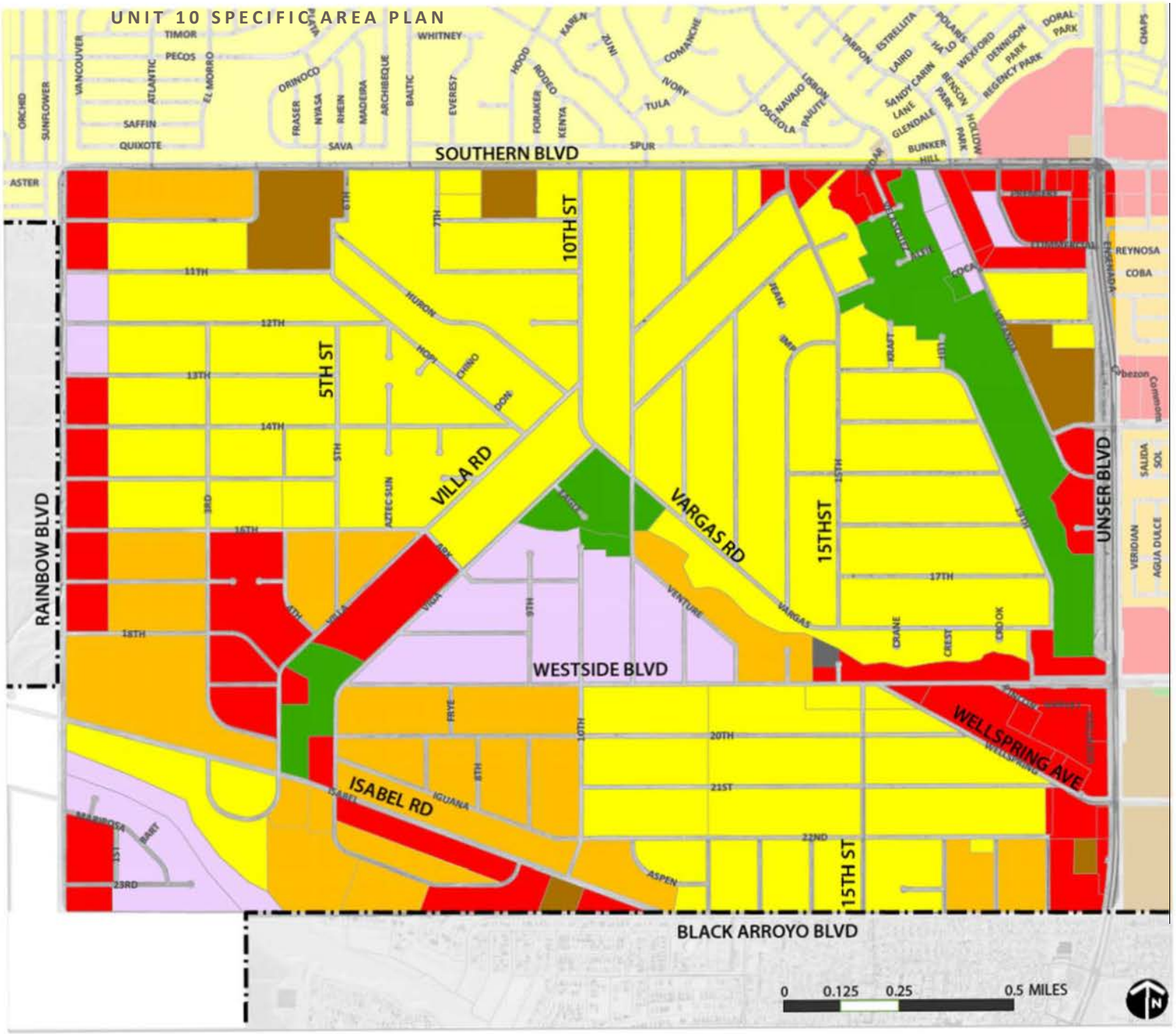
UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

EXISTING ZONING

LEGEND

- BP: Business Park
- R-1: Single Family Residential
- R-3: Mixed Residential
- R-4: Single Family Residential
- MU-A: Mixed Use Activity Center
- C-1: Retail Commercial
- C-2: Wholesale Commercial
- NC: Neighborhood Commercial
- M-1: Industrial and Business Park
- PR: Parks and Recreation
- SU: Special Use
- TZ: Transitional Zoning

MAP 5: ADOPTED GENERALIZED LAND USE, 2/11/2015



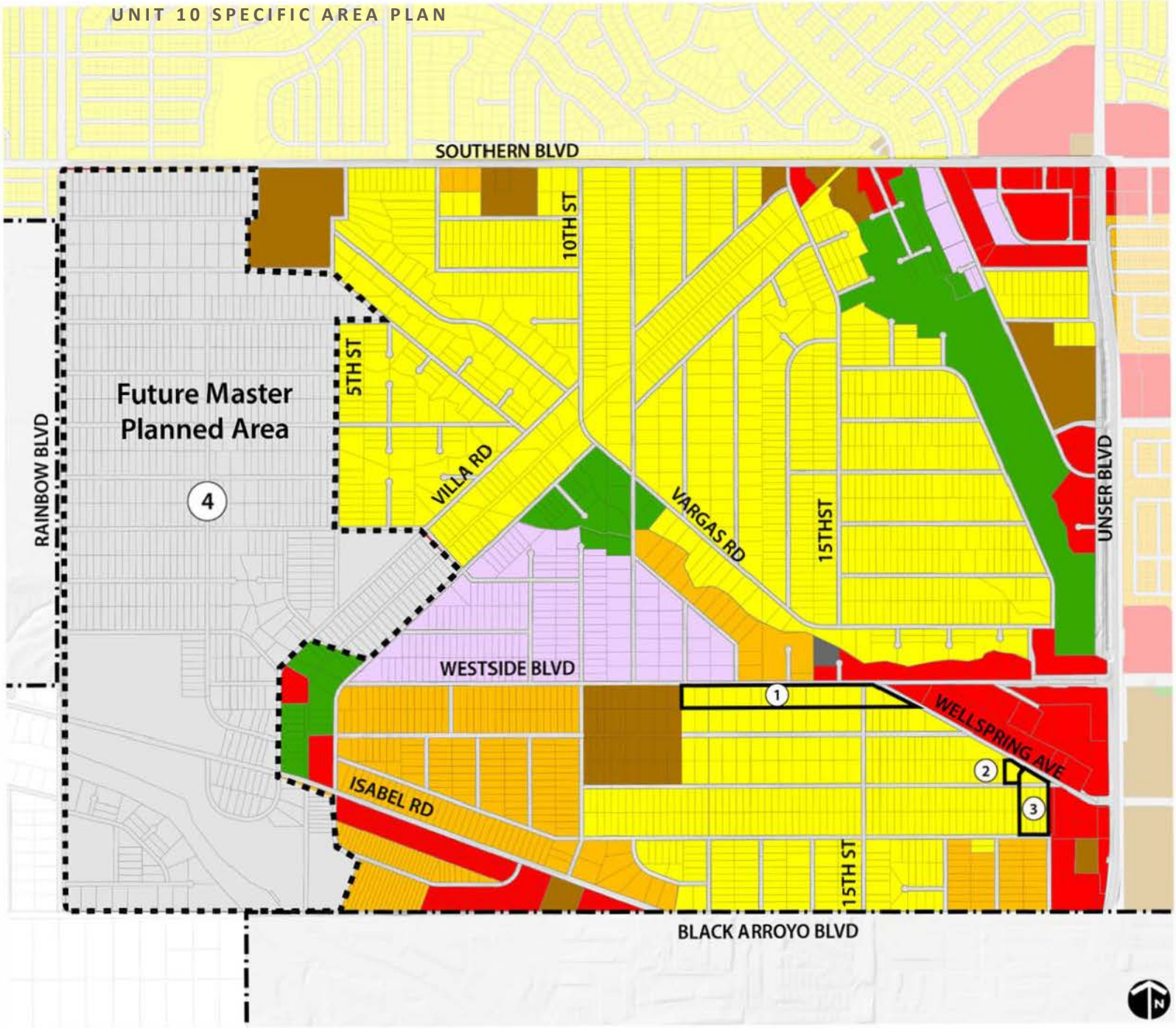
UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

GENERALIZED LAND USE, ADOPTED 2/11/2015

LEGEND

LAND USE CATEGORY

- Low/Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial (Neighborhood, Community) Mixed Use, Office
- Industrial, Business Park, Warehouse
- Civic, School, Church
- Parks, Open Space, Drainage
- Utility



GENERALIZED LAND USE, PROPOSED CHANGE AREAS

LEGEND

LAND USE CATEGORY

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Industrial, Business Park, Warehouse
- Civic, School, Church
- Parks, Open Space, Drainage
- Utility
- Future Master Planned Area

PROPOSED CHANGE AREAS

1. Change to *Neighborhood Commercial* to provide transition area with office. See page 27.
2. Identify as *Neighborhood Commercial* reflecting Unser Pavilion West Plan.
3. Identify as *Community Commercial* reflecting Unser Pavilion West Plan.
4. Change to *Future Master Planned Area*. See page 28 for description of the land uses in this area.

5. TRANSPORTATION

Roadways are generally classified by the amount of traffic they can support, the level of accessibility to property, and types of modes they accommodate. Most roads within the area are unpaved local roads that were laid out when the area was originally platted. As such, many current alignments are a legacy of initial platting efforts and do not provide a sufficient level of connectivity to create a walkable community, although they do provide access to existing parcels. This issue is compounded by narrow, 50 foot right-of-ways for existing roads, which will need to be expanded in the future to accommodate collector and arterial roads.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Concerns about new connections to Westside Blvd from existing neighborhoods to prevent cut through traffic and congestion.

- Concerns about reconfiguring 15th St as a collector, which could increase traffic.
- Future north-south connections should be constructed away from existing homes, such as along Villa Road.

5.1. EXISTING ROADWAYS

Rio Rancho's Department of Public Works has established design standards for roadways depending on the functional classification of the roadway as outlined below. Typical cross-sections for these roadway types can be found in the Appendix on page 74.

5.1.1. PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS

A principal arterial is designed and used primarily for serving large volumes of traffic (15,000 – 40,000 VPD) taking longer distance trips. Mobility generally takes precedence over accessibility. The Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) distinguishes between two types of principal arterials: regional principal arterials (RPAs) and community principal arterials (CPAs). RPAs are primarily for traveling longer distances across the region, while CPAs tend to support shorter trips, have lower speeds, and provide increased access to property while still carrying a high volume of traffic. The minimum recommended right-of-way (ROW) is 156 feet for a regional principal arterial.

There are two existing principal arterial streets within the planning area: Unser Boulevard and Southern Boulevard.

5.1.2. MINOR ARTERIALS

Minor arterials provide the connectivity of principal arterials, but prioritize slower moving traffic, including bicyclists and pedestrians, to allow these modes additional options to reach destinations without needing to be on a principal arterial. Given their lower speeds and volume (7,500 – 20,000 VPD), additional design elements may be worth considering on these streets, including on-street parking, bicycle lanes, expanded sidewalks, and landscape improvements. The recommended minimum ROW is 86 feet for a two lane minor arterial and 106 feet for a four lane minor arterial. Larger ROW may be needed to accommodate all modes comfortably.

Westside Boulevard is currently the only designated minor arterial within Unit 10. As part of the Los Diamantes Master Plan, this road is planned to have a 106-foot right-of-way, with 4 travel lanes, a median, bike lanes on both sides of the road, and wide sidewalks with landscape buffers. Another minor arterial is proposed to run north/south from 10th Street to a southern connection with Universe Boulevard.

5.1.3. MAJOR AND MINOR COLLECTORS

Major and minor collectors provide additional connectivity between destinations on arterials and neighborhoods. Accessibility and mobility (speed) are balanced relative to land use with speed limits between 25 and 35 MPH. Bicyclists should be able to use collectors for long trip segments while motorists primarily use them for short trip segments. Residential collectors with driveways are generally 25 MPH, while those with more limited access have a higher posted speed limit. Volumes can vary from 1,000 to 15,000 VPD. Recommended minimum ROW is 68 feet.

There is one existing minor collector street within Unit 10 that is a continuation of Cabazon Road to the east of Unser Boulevard. This road becomes Veranda Drive, and runs north/south, connecting to Southern Boulevard. Several additional collectors are proposed.

5.1.4. LOCAL STREETS

A local street is intended primarily for access to abutting properties and carries low-volume traffic. Accessibility to homes and business is more important than mobility. Speed limits are set low, usually at 18-25 MPH, with traffic volumes typically less than 1,000 vehicles per day (VPD). Recommended minimum ROW is 50 feet.

There are 53 local streets (247 segments) within the planning area, most of which are not paved, except for some sections nearby existing single-family development.[19]

5.1.5. TRAFFIC VOLUMES

MRCOG produces a traffic volume map for the Albuquerque Metropolitan Statistical Area (Albuquerque MSA). Table 3: Roadway Volumes shows existing traffic counts on collector and arterial streets in the planning area. As can be seen from these data, average daily traffic increased significantly on Westside Boulevard between 2013 and 2014.

TABLE 3: ROADWAY VOLUMES

STREET	2013 AWDT	2014 AWDT
Westside Boulevard (west of Unser)	697	1,089
Westside Boulevard (east of Unser)	3,886	8,772
Unser Boulevard		
north of McMahon	26,088	26,192
north of Black Arroyo Road	26,460	26,566
north of Westside	31,151	32,466
north of Cabezon	29,868	29,987
north of Southern	26,034	24,867
Southern Boulevard		
west of Unser	19,735	19,814
west of Tarpon	17,255	17,324
west of Lisbon	14,180	14,327
west of 10th	10,626	10,669
west of Baltic	9,190	9,227
west of Atlantic	6,780	6,730

5.2. PROPOSED ROADWAYS

MRCOG has recently updated their *Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)* to include new design guidelines for arterial and collector streets. These guidelines call for new roadways to be designed as "complete streets" that accommodate all modes and users of all ages and abilities. These guidelines also include recommended best practices to ensure community connectivity is maintained to promote accessibility, better traffic flow, and more walkable neighborhoods. Typical cross sections for principal and minor arterial, collector, and local streets as presented in the ***RIO***

RANCHO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2010) can be found in Appendix 1.

In addition to proposed or expanded roadways, the ***RIO RANCHO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2010)*** requires a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for all new major developments generating over 100 vehicle trips in the morning or afternoon peak commute period. Requirements of a TIA include site design, trip generation, site access plan, evaluation of impacts on existing and future roadway system, and necessary improvements to mitigate impacts. Developer funded improvements are required if the results of a TIA show proposed development generating a capacity overload on the existing street network. New housing and commercial developments would likely trigger the need for a TIA and consequent developer-funded roadway improvements.

5.2.1. FUTURE ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION

There are several proposed roadways on MRCOG's 2040 Long Range Roadway System Map (see Map 7):

1. Westside Boulevard as a Minor Arterial.
   Rainbow Boulevard as a Regional Principal Arterial.
   Villa Road/10th Street as a Minor Arterial that runs north/south from Southern, connecting 10th street to Villa Road and a future extension of Universe Boulevard to the south. As a minor arterial, this roadway should be designed to carry lower volumes, and possibly include bicycle lanes. To accommodate these modes, additional right-of-way will need to be acquired.
   Isabel Road is labeled as a Minor Arterial to the west of Unit 10, but is classified as a local road between Villa Road and Black Arroyo Boulevard. This roadway will most likely function as a major collector in the future.
   15th Avenue Road as a proposed major collector heading north/south from Southern to Black Arroyo Road.
   Vargas Road as a major collector linking the proposed minor arterial and the major collector on 15th street.
   A major collector running north/south from Southern and 5th street connecting to Villa Road. There are current alignment issues with this roadway given the placement of Puesta del Sol Elementary.

Additional proposed roadways for Unit 10 not currently included on the Long Range Roadway System Map are:

1. Wellspring Avenue as a collector road. The City has asked for approximately 18 feet of additional right-of-way on the north side of Wellspring Avenue to accommodate adequate travel lanes and sidewalks.
2. A new major collector along 14th or 16th connecting Rainbow Boulevard to Villa Road.
3. Isabel Road as major collector between Rainbow Boulevard and Black Arroyo Boulevard.
4. 10th street south of Vargas/Villa Road as a Major collector, with a possible connection to the northern segment of 10th Street.
5. 15th Street as a minor collector to acknowledge constraints with expanding the road given existing development.

5.2.2. RIGHT-OF-WAY PRESERVATION

Proposed roadways running through the interior of Unit 10 do not currently have adequate ROW to accommodate necessary travel lanes, sidewalks, medians, or bicycle infrastructure. In addition, some proposed routes currently intersect platted land, which in some cases may create a barrier to widening or expanding roadways.

Rio Rancho's Comprehensive Plan calls for 156 feet minimum ROW for principal arterials, 86-106 feet minimum ROW for minor arterials, and 68 feet minimum ROW for major collectors. Given existing ROW for roadways in Unit 10 is generally 50 feet, additional ROW will need to be acquired to meet the minimum guidelines for the proposed major roadways. A summary of ROW widths needed for proposed roadways is presented in Table 4.

Both Westside Boulevard and Wellspring Avenue have recently been included as part of an overlay zone that identifies future ROW needs along these roads (see page 71). These roadways form key buffers between commercial development along the north side of these roads and single family residential developments to the south. An analysis and proposed alignements for these roads are included in the Appendix.

TABLE 4: RIGHT OF WAY REQUIREMENTS

STREET	CURRENT ROW	MIN ROW	REC. ROW
Westside Boulevard	50'	86'	106'
Wellspring Avenue	50'	68'	68'
Isabel Road	50'	68'	84'
Villa Road/Minor Arterial	50'	96'	96'
Vargas Road	50'	68'	84'
Major Collectors	50'	68'	84'

5.2.3. PROPOSED CORRIDOR STUDIES

Corridor studies aim to identify needed roadway improvements, including ROW acquisition, capacity expansion, paving, multi modal additions, and other necessary improvements. Improvements identified in these studies can be placed in the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP), which identifies projects for current and future funding. Roadways to be considered for individual corridor studies include: Westside Boulevard, 10th Street/Villa Road, and Rainbow Boulevard.

5.3. TRAFFIC CALMING

The City of Rio Rancho has specific guidelines for efforts to control speeds and improve safety on City and neighborhood streets. These traffic calming measures enhance safety for all users, help to slow vehicle speeds, and provide a framework for multi-modal access in many situations. Traffic calming should be use where applicable to slow traffic on local residential streets. Guidelines and request procedures for traffic calming can be found online under the City of Rio

Rancho's Department of Public Works at ***http://www.rrnm.gov/index.aspx?NID=1887***. Types of allowed traffic calming strategies include:

1. *Traffic Circle*: a small circle placed in a four-way intersection to slow vehicle speeds by directing traffic around them.

Image Credit: National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

Curb EXTENSIONS: curb extensions extend the curb/crosswalk partially into the street to aid in pedestrian crossing by slowing vehicle speed. They can be used to shorten pedestrian crossing distances and slow vehicle turning speeds.

Image Credit: National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

Semi-Diverter: reduces traffic by shutting off access to one direction of traffic.

Image Credit: National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

Chicane: curb extensions and/or medians placed to force vehicles in a circuitous path to slow vehicle speed.

Image Credit: National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO)

5.4. ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Managing access into and out of commercial and multi -family residential developments along arterial streets can help improve traffic flow, as well as pedestrian safety. The City of Rio Rancho follows the access management standards established by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) *State Access Management Manual* (SAMM). The standards are based on roadway classification and include the following strategies:

1. ***Controlled Intersection Spacing***: the SAMM uses standards for the spacing between signalized and unsignalized intersections. Generally, further spacing of signalized intersections improves traffic flow as there are fewer stopping points and fewer vehicle turning movements. Increased intersection spacing, however, can reduce connectivity and walkability for pedestrians. General access management standards for intersection and driveway spacing are found in Table 5.
2. ***Consolidation of Curb Cuts & Driveways:*** reducing the number of curb cuts (driveways) to property can reduce the number of conflict points created by turning vehicles. This can improve both traffic flow and pedestrian safety. However, removing access points to a property means alternative access points may have to be established, such as on local side streets (see below).
3. ***DEDICATED Turn LANES & Raised Medians:*** adding center turn lanes can improve traffic flow by creating a waiting area for turning vehicles. In addition, raised medians (with or without turn lanes) are one of the most effective ways to regulate access. Raised medians have been shown to reduce crash rates, improve pedestrian safety, and can help improve roadway level of service. However, they may limit access to businesses by pass through traffic.

Existing raised median on Wellspring Ave limits left turns into Petroglyph Plaza from this access point and right turns from the Plaza to Wellspring. Access is provided a block east at the intersection of Wellspring and 19th Street.

4. ***Side Street Access:*** elimination of curb cuts/driveways along arterial roadways can introduce the need to establish new access points either at the rear or on the side of properties. This can include creating new access easements between adjoining parcels to allow for shared driveways. In some cases, for parcels located in the middle of blocks, access must be reestablished through new access easements at the back edge of the property (effectively acting as alleyways or an extended driveway.
5. ***Frontage Roads:*** frontage roads may be used to provide access to residential lots that front a major

arterial. The frontage road separates local traffic from the main roadway and limits access between the frontage road and arterial to major intersections. Some segments of Wyoming Boulevard in Albuquerque provide an example of an arterial roadway with a frontage road.

Example of Wyoming Boulevard's parallel frontage road along the major arterial.

TABLE 5: GENERAL ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

	INTERSECTION SPACING		DRIVEWAY SPACING	
STREET	SIGNALIZED	UNSIGNALIZED	FULL	PARTIAL
Unser Boulevard	2,640'	1,320'	1,320'	325'
Southern Boulevard	2,640'	1,320'	1,320'	325'
Westside Boulevard	2,640'	1,320'	1,320'	325'
Rainbow Boulevard	2,640'	1,320'	1,320'	325'
Isabel Road	1,320'	600'	325'	325'
Villa Road /10th Street	1,320'	600'	325'	325'

5.4.1. ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLANS

Recent access management plans have been recommended for Southern Boulevard, Unser Boulevard, Wellspring Avenue and portions of Westside Boulevard. Future commercial and multi-family developments on the following streets will be required to have an approved Access Management Plan that will determine intersection spacing, placement of signals, and access restrictions to property via driveways/curb cuts (see Map 8).

1. *Wellspring Avenue:* THE WELLSPRING AVENUE/WESTSIDE BOULEVARD OVERLAY ZONE ESTABLISHES BASIC ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS THAT REQUIRE CROSS-ACCESS EASEMENTS BE PROVIDED BETWEEN ADJOINING PARCELS TO ALLOW FOR SHARED DRIVEWAY ACCESS BETWEEN LOTS. TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE, THE CITY MAY ASK LANDOWNERS TO DEMONSTRATE HOW FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WILL COMPLY WITH THESE REQUIREMENTS BEFORE ISSUING A ZONE AMENDMENT OR BUILDING PERMIT.
2. *Westside Boulevard:* The WELLSPRING AVENUE/WESTSIDE BOULEVARD OVERLAY ZONE STANDARDS APPLY TO PROPERTIES ALONG

WESTSIDE BOULEVARD BETWEEN CROOK PL AND 10TH STREET (SEE ABOVE). ALONG THIS ROADWAY, obsolete platting has produced narrow, 80-foot wide lots that are difficult to develop individually and create the possibility of curb cuts every 80 feet for commercial access. Allowing vehicles to make left-hand turns into and out of businesses every 80 feet is undesirable and potentially impedes traffic flow. A future access management plan for the entire corridor should be considered, especially as properties develop west of Wellspring Avenue.

Southern Boulevard: A recently drafted preliminary design plan for Southern Boulevard has been completed that includes access management standards. This plan has standards for intersection spacing, and a plan to reduce curb cuts along the roadway. Some properties will lose direct access from Southern Boulevard, and will need to be have reestablished access along side streets.

Rainbow Boulevard: Future extensions to Rainbow Boulevard will run along the western edge of Unit 10, and will most likely feature commercial development similar to existing development along Unser Boulevard. This road is currently proposed to be a regional principle arterial, meaning it will carry a high volume of traffic at higher speeds. Access management for this road should follow standards along Unser, with half mile distances between signalized intersections and limited access to property via driveways.

Villa Road/10th Street: The roadway is designated as a minor arterial, meaning it is designed to carry lower volumes, and possibly include bicycle lanes. Access management standards along this roadway can be less restrictive, with intersections allowed every 600 feet (max) and full access driveways every 325 feet.

5.5. CONNECTIVITY & WALKABILITY

In addition to ensuring adequate ROW for future roadways, it is important to ensure high levels of connectivity are maintained throughout Unit 10 as it develops. High levels of connectivity promote better traffic flow by providing multiple routes for motorists, decreasing travel times, reducing congestion, and creating a more walkable environment.

Given the existing platting of roadways, current connectivity within the area is very low. The current intersection density is approximately 35 intersections per square mile, which is below MRCOG's recommended minimum density of 40 intersections per square mile.[20] Part of the problem is many streets do not complete logical connections to one other or end abruptly. This is highlighted with Viga and Villa Road, which both intersect 10th street heading northeast, but do not complete a logical connection between 10th and 11th Streets. In addition, many existing blocks are very long, with some blocks over 1,400 feet for the east/west segments of each block.

Given the platting issues within Unit 10, it will be hard to improve connectivity within existing developed parcels. However, consolidated parcels repackaged as new, higher density subdivisions offer the opportunity to change roadway

alignments, create more connections, and reduce block lengths.

5.6. TRANSIT

Currently, major transit routes connecting Unit 10 are the 155 Coors/Unser Route, the 251 Southern Boulevard route, and the 551 Jefferson/Paseo del Norte Express (see Map 10). For each of these routes, service is limited. The 155 Coors bus only runs the full route to Southern Boulevard in the morning and afternoon, with no service on the weekend. The 251 Southern bus does not go past Unser Boulevard, and only runs on weekdays, with spotty midday service. Finally, the 551 Paseo del Norte Express bus only runs twice a day during morning and evening peak periods.

The closest bus stops to Unit 10 are along Unser Boulevard at the Rust Medical Center, the intersection of Unser and Cabazon Boulevard, and Unser and Southern Boulevards.

5.6.1. RAPID RIDE AND BRT

The 790 "Blue Line" Rapid Ride express currently travels from the Northwest Transit Center down Coors Boulevard to connect to UNM and Rapid Ride routes on Central Avenue. This route forms a crucial connection between the east and west sides, and has relatively high ridership for the Albuquerque Metropolitan Region. The 790 and Northwest Transit Center can be reached from Unit 10 by traveling down either Westside Boulevard or McMahon Boulevard; however, the distance is approximately 3.5 miles, meaning potential riders must take the 155 Coors Route to reach the Northwest Transit Center or Blue Line. Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lines have been proposed for the west side: one following the current Blue Line alignment, and another running from Unser Boulevard and Southern Boulevard to Paseo del Norte, and South along University Boulevard to UNM.

FUTURE TRANSIT CONNECTIONS

Although current service is limited, growth on the west side and within Rio Rancho specifically will create the need to expand service in the future. Population and job growth within Unit 10 and surrounding neighborhoods will increase the need to provide all day or express service on Unser Boulevard. In addition, future routes may be feasible on Westside Boulevard, Rainbow Boulevard, and Southern Boulevard. To ensure future connections to transit are accessible to Unit 10 residents, efforts should be made with ABQ Ride to establish future transit stops at convenient locations along the area's major roadways, and at key community facilities. Establishing potential park and ride sites may also be a priority as the area develops.

5.7. TRAILS & BIKEWAYS

Providing a robust network of multipurpose trails and bikeways within Unit 10 will allow area residents to bike to jobs, shopping, and recreational opportunities. This network should create connections to major community facilities (schools, parks, open space), transit stops, and the larger regional bicycle network (see Map 9). Such a network can improve livability, health outcomes, and alternative means of travel.

Types of trail and bicycle facilities include:

- *Bicycle Paths and Shared Use Trails:* a bikeway physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within a roadway ROW, or within an independent ROW. Shared use/multipurpose paths may also carry pedestrians and other non-motorized users.
- *On-Street Bicycle Lanes:* a portion of a roadway which has been designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists. Bicycle lanes can also be buffered from traffic using paint striping or separated from traffic using a physical barrier such as bollards, curbs, or posts. Bicycle lanes are suggested on streets classified as collector and arterial, as per typical street sections included in Appendix A.
- *Bicycle Routes:* streets designed for bicycle use by sharing the roadway with motor vehicle traffic.

Current bicycle infrastructure and trails include:

- Multipurpose trails along Southern Boulevard and Unser Boulevard.
- An existing 10-foot bridal (horse) trail on the north side of Black Arroyo Road.

5.7.1. PLANNED BICYCLE FACILITIES

Trails and bike paths listed in the *2040* ***Metropolitan Transportation Plan*** and the ***City of Rio Rancho's Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Master Plan*** include the following projects:

1. A multipurpose trail along the Black Arroyo lands owned by SSCAFCA.
2. A trail along the PNM Right-of-Way between Vega and Villa Roads from Southern Boulevard to 19th Avenue. Additionally, bike lanes are proposed along Southern Boulevard to the western city limits; along Rainbow Boulevard; and along Westside Boulevard.

Additional on-street bicycle facilities and bicycle routes are warranted within Unit 10 to ensure a complete network is created for bicyclist accessibility. Some of these facilities include:

1. A possible trail network following existing arroyos in Unit 10. One trail could parallel Vargas Road and connect to the Black Arroyo Trail and Open Space area.
2. A bike lane along Vargas Road and Wellspring Avenue.
3. A bike lane for Villa Road connecting to 10th Street and eventually Southern Boulevard.
4. A bike route for either 14th Street or 16th Street to connect Rainbow Boulevard and Villa Road.

5.8. IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of the transportation section of this plan is to promote high levels of community connectivity for all transportation modes, complete streets, walkable neighborhoods, enhanced traffic flow, and access management.

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL TR-1: Provide a transportation system that moves people and goods efficiently and effectively.	ACTION TR-1.1: Establish right-of-way alignment for Westside Boulevard between Los Diamantes and Unser Blvd.	Public Works	Short
	ACTION TR-1.2: Establish right-of-way alignment and location of Wellspring Ave and Westside Blvd intersection.	Development Services, Public Works	Short
	ACTION TR-1.3: Adopt access management plans for key roadways including Westside Blvd, Villa Road, and Rainbow Blvd.	Development Services, Public Works	Short - Medium Term
	ACTION TR-1.4: Study the feasibility of future through-street connections, including the alignments of 15th Street and Westside Blvd, a new alignment for Isabel at Black Arroyo Road, and a future connection to Universe Blvd.	Development Services, Public Works	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-1.5: Study feasibility of north/south connection of 10th St/11th Street through SSCAFCA owned land in center of Unit 10.	Development Services, Public Works	Medium Term
GOAL TR-2: Provide a well-connected, multi-modal transportation system.	ACTION TR-2.1: Establish policies to promote pedestrian connectivity and build a well-connected sidewalk and provide an opportunity for on-and-off-street bicycle facilities.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION TR-2.2: Ensure future roadway cross-sections and design meet complete street standards.	Public Works	Ongoing
GOAL TR-3: Ensure connections to regional future bikeways and trails system	ACTION TR-3.1: Study the feasibility of a future trail system along major arroyo easements.	Parks and Rec, SSCAFCA	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-3.2: Construct bikeways and trails improvements as identified in City Bikeways Master Plan and MRCOG's Long Range Bikeways Plan.	Parks and Rec, Public Works	Medium - Long Term
GOAL TR-4: Complete major corridor studies to plan for future roadways.	ACTION TR-4.1: Conduct a corridor study on Rainbow Boulevard to determine access management, conceptual cross-sections and right-of-way needs.	Public Works	Long Term
	ACTION TR-4.2: Complete a corridor study for Villa Road, including connection to Universe Boulevard, and Southern Boulevard to determine right-of-way needs and access management.	Public Works	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-4.3: Conduct a corridor study on Westside Boulevard to determine access management, conceptual cross-sections and right-of-way needs.	Public Works	Short Term
GOAL TR-5: Expand Transit Opportunities to Unit 10 Residents.	ACTION TR-5.1: Establish policies to enhance the current and planned transit system through providing adequate stops and accessible facilities.	Public Works, Rio Metro, ABQRide	Medium - Long Term

UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

EXISTING & PROPOSED ROADWAYS

LEGEND

- Existing/Proposed Regional Principal Arterial
- Existing/Proposed Minor Arterial
- Existing/Proposed Major Collector
- Existing/Proposed Minor Collector

LOCAL ROAD CONDITION

- Paved
- Unpaved
- Unpaved, unmaintained

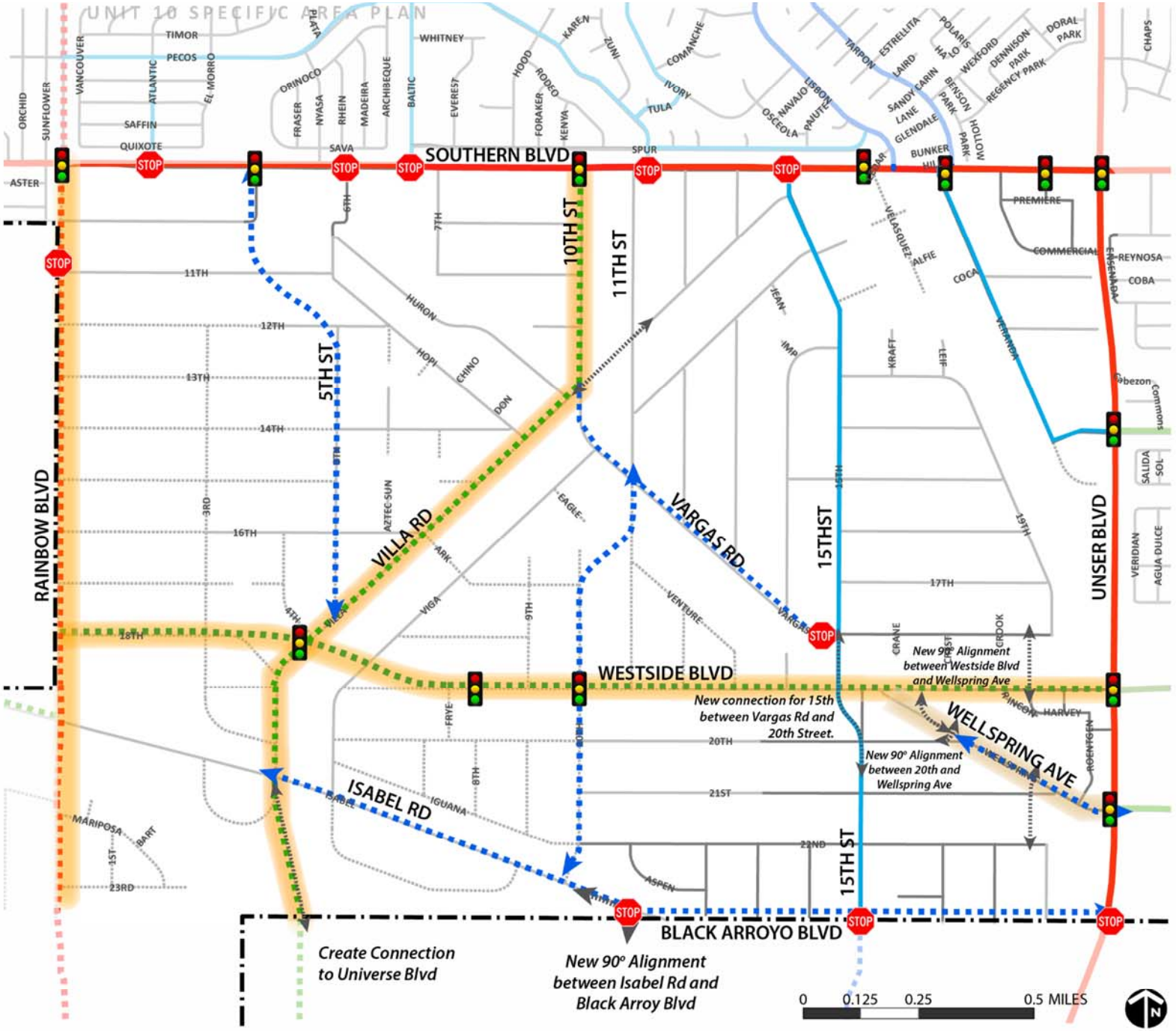
PROPOSED CONNECTIONS

- Extended Connection

DEVELOPMENT

- Existing Single Family
- Existing Development
- Proposed Development
- SSCAFCA Facility

MAP 8: ACCESS MANAGEMENT ZONES



UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

LEGEND

- Existing/Proposed Regional Principal Arterial
- Existing/Proposed Minor Arterial
- Existing/Proposed Major Collector
- Existing/Proposed Minor Collector

LOCAL ROAD CONDITION

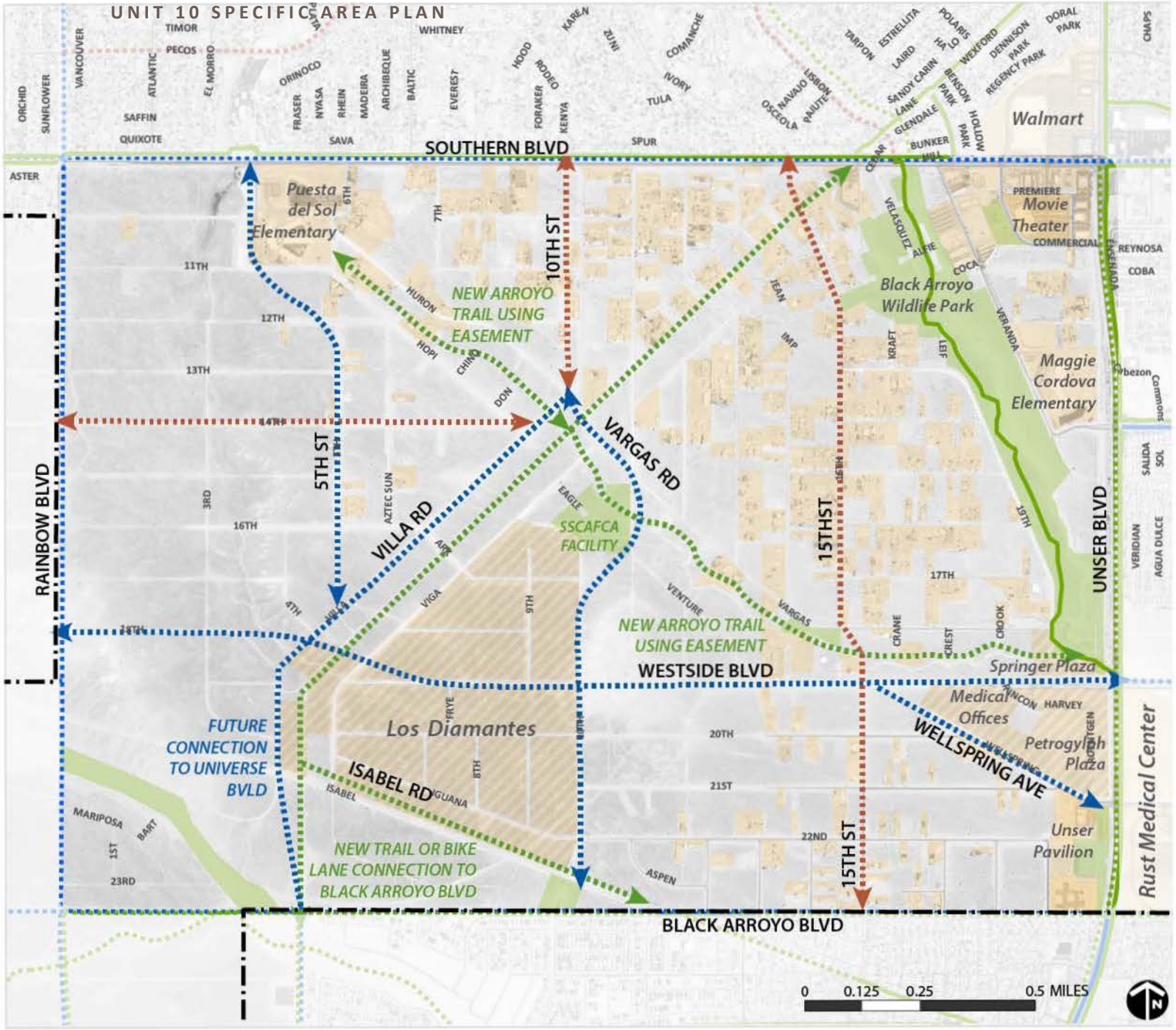
- Paved
- Unpaved
- Unpaved, unmaintained

PROPOSED CONNECTIONS

- Extended Connection

ACCESS MANAGMENT

- Access Management Zone
- Signalized Intersection
- Stop Controlled Intersection



EXISTING & PROPOSED BIKEWAYS & TRAILS

LEGEND

- Existing/Proposed Bike Trail
- Existing/Proposed Bike Lane
- Existing/Proposed Bike Route

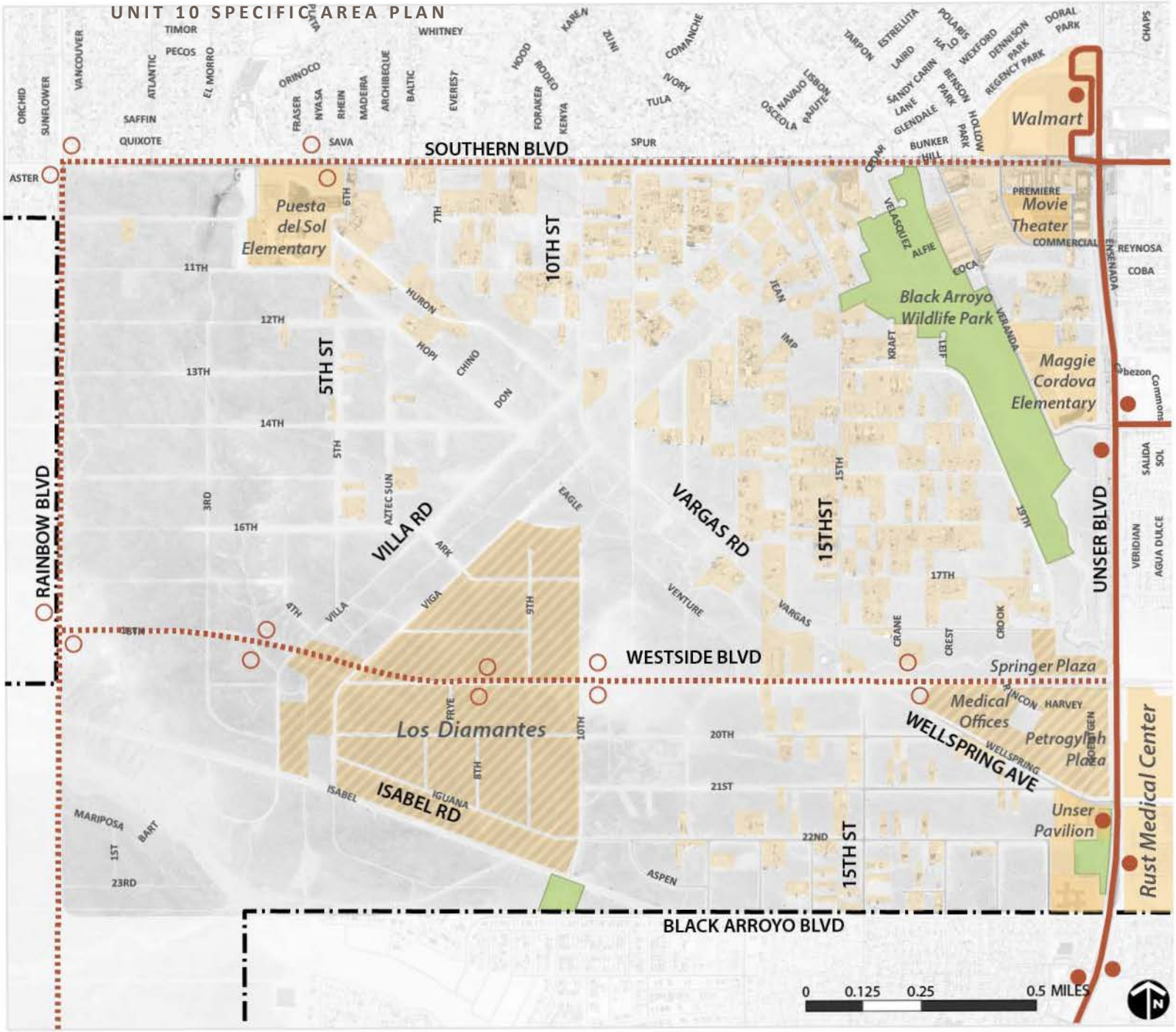
SSCAFCA FACILITIES

- Existing

DEVELOPMENT

- Existing Single Family
- Existing Development
- Proposed Development

MAP 10: PROPOSED TRANSIT ROUTES



UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN 53

TRANSIT

LEGEND

LOCAL ROAD CONDITIONS

- Existing Transit Route
- Possible Transit Route
- Existing Bus Stop Location
- Generalized Future Bus Stop Location

DEVELOPMENT

- Existing Single Family
- Existing Development
- Proposed Development

6. UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Generally, water, sewer, and storm water infrastructure is the responsibility of owners to provide during the subdivision process. However, because the area's platting was approved before current subdivision standards were in place, many existing parcels do not have paved roads or water or storm water utilities. Much of the infrastructure within the area has therefore been constructed through special assessment districts (SADs) (see below). In the future, additional SADs may be approved to provide infrastructure to existing parcels. Alternatively, future parcels may be consolidated and re-platted to meet existing subdivisions standards which require the developer to pay for the extension of utilities.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Residents who have invested in well and septic systems do not want to pay utility hookup fees in the future.

- More streetlights, sidewalks, and paved roads were mentioned by some residents as a need.
- Although mentioned as a possibility, not all residents agreed in the need for a future SAD to provide infrastructure in their neighborhood.

6.1. WET UTILITIES

Infrastructure that is designed to manage or move fluids, such as potable water, sewage, and runoff are considered to be wet utilities. Wet utilities include water lines, sewage lines, drainage channels, detention ponds and arroyos. Map 11 depicts the existing and proposed sewer and water lines in the planning area.

6.1.1. WATER

Water is a valuable resource in Rio Rancho, as it is throughout New Mexico. The City pumped an average of 122.64 gallons per capita per day (GPCD) in 2014, 68.33 gallons of which was represented by single family residential homes. This is an overall reduction from recent years and meets the City's goal to reduce GPCD to 135 by 2017.

Not all of the developed areas in Unit 10 are currently connected to the City's water utility. Although some developed residential areas are connected to City water, many homes in the eastern sections rely on individual or shared wells for potable water. Existing areas with water connections include:

- Areas directly south of Southern Boulevard to Villa Road.
- The southeast corner of Unit 10 that is has an established Special Assessment District (SAD 7A).
- The Heritage Hills Neighborhood south of Puesta del Sol Elementary.
- There is an existing water tank along Westside Boulevard and 15th Street.

PROPOSED FACILITIES

Most new utility construction will most likely occur as a result of future master planning efforts. For example, as part of the Los Diamantes master plan, several new water and sewer connections are proposed:

- A new water line from Southern Boulevard, south down Viga Road, and 11th Street to Westside Boulevard. This line would provide water pressure to the neighborhoods on the top of the ridge, and the proposed new elementary school south of Westside Boulevard.
- A new line from the Heritage Hills Community south to the Los Diamantes development. Water pressure is sufficient at this connection and would require a pressure relieving value near Viga Road.

6.1.2. SEWER

Sewer lines are currently built within SAD 7A. However, other areas with the site do not have sewage lines and rely on septic systems. These may create difficulties in the future as the existing single-family neighborhoods on the eastern side of Unit 10 continue to fill in without connections to the City water/wastewater systems.

PROPOSED FACILITIES

Proposed facilities as part of the Unit 10 Master Plan include:

- A new force main along 21st Street to connect to the existing line in the Vista Montebella Area. This line would feed into the existing sewage line at the Rust Medical Center.

- Replacement of the existing line at Wellspring Avenue with a larger, 12" main.
- A new line flowing west along Westside to the Los Diamantes development.

6.2. DRY UTILITIES

Infrastructure such as electrical, gas and data lines are considered to be dry utilities. Usually, as is the case in Rio Rancho, this infrastructure is built and maintained by private utilities and not the City.

6.2.1. ELECTRICITY

A Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) 115 kV electrical distribution line bisects the planning area from Southern Boulevard to Black Arroyo Boulevard.

6.2.2. NATURAL GAS

Natural gas service in the planning area is provided by New Mexico Gas Company.

6.3. SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS

Special Assessment Districts (SADs) are areas in which property owners reimburse the City for the cost of public improvements in that district. Improvements within a SAD may include storm drainage, sanitary sewer, streets, water and private utility improvements.

There are currently two SADS within Unit 10: SAD 7A and SAD 6. SAD 7A was created to make improvements to 12 different road sections within Unit 10. Improvements to these roads include paving, storm drainage, and private utilities. The portion of SAD 7A within the planning area covers Aspen Drive, Ronda Road, 12th Street, 13th Street, 14th Street, 15th Street, 17th Street, 18th Street, 20th Avenue, 21st Avenue, and 22nd Avenue.

The possibility of creating a future SAD for the existing developed areas of Unit 10 should be considered, especially as the area continues to fill in with more residents. This SAD could cover development north of Westside Boulevard, between Vargas Road and Unser Boulevard. The SAD would allow for the construction of paved roads, as well as water and sewer connections.

6.4. DRAINAGE

Two large floodplains run through Unit 10: one along the Calabacillas Arroyo at the southwestern edge of the site, and a floodplain that runs southeast from the northwest boundary of Unit 10 (see Map 12). In addition, the Black Arroyo is an existing SSCAFCA facility on Unit 10's eastern boundary that handles drainage from the Black Arroyo and channels water to the Black Arroyo Dam further downstream. There is also an intermittent arroyo that runs through the center of Unit 10, connecting with the Black Arroyo at the site's boundary. Although not major floodways, these existing arroyos and floodplains will shape future development in the area and could be used to create a well-connected trail system in Unit 10.

SSCAFCA FACILITIES & PLANS

The Southern Sandoval County Arroyo Flood Control Authority (SSCAFCA) has jurisdiction over all drainage channels in the

Sandoval County portion of Rio Rancho. Regional improvements are typically constructed by SSCAFCA and local improvements are typically constructed by the City.

SSCAFCA has recently completed a plan for the Black Arroyo Open Space that will include a storm water collection system and diversion to ponding areas. This facility will also feature a multimodal trail from Unser Boulevard and Westside Boulevard to Southern Boulevard.

A future detention area is planned for the center of Unit 10 to manage runoff from stormflow from the northwest. This facility will be approximately 3 acres in size and be designed to detain 30 acre/feet of stormflow.

Additionally, the Los Diamantes Master Plan calls for a detention pond and open space area between Viga and Villa Roads to control storm water from the arroyo to the north. Future plans call for a larger storm water facility near Rainbow Boulevard and Inca Road that would capture runoff before it enters the site and would eliminate the narrow floodplain that flows south from Southern Boulevard to the detention facility proposed in Los Diamantes.

DRAINAGE EASEMENTS

There are a number of drainage easements recorded on the original plats for Unit 10 that run along the existing arroyo system. These include an easement from the center of Unit 10 and the proposed detention facility to the Black Arroyo system to the east. As this easement runs along the rear property line of parcels that separate Westside Boulevard and the developed residential areas to the north, this arroyo could function as a buffer between these properties. A proposed trail heading west from the Black Arroyo Trail at Unser Boulevard could be a great community amenity for Unit 10.

TABLE 6: SOILS DOMINANT CONDITIONS

SOIL NAME	Grieta-Sheppard loamy fine sands, 2 to 9%	Grieta fine sandy loam, 1 to 4%	Sheppard loamy fine sand, 3 to 8%	Grieta-Sheppard loamy fine sands, 2 to 9%	Sheppard loamy fine sand, 8 to 15%
Acres	1318	854	152.5	35.5	46.5
Percent	55%	35%	6%	1%	2%
Drainage Class	Well drained	Well drained	Somewhat excessively drained	Well drained	Somewhat excessively drained
Runoff	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Rating for Buildings with Basements	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited
Rating for Buildings without Basements	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited
Paths and Trails	Somewhat limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited
Roads and Streets	Somewhat	Somewhat limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited

6.4.1. SOILS

In general, soils in the planning area are sandy and receive 8-10 inches of rain a year which support mainly native grasses and shrubs. The Grieta Fine Sandy Loam 2-9%, Grieta Loamy Fine Sands 1-4%, Grieta-Sheppard Loamy Fine Sand 2-9%, and Sheppard Loamy Fine Sand 8-15% soils are representative of the soil types in the planning area and are appropriate for urban development (see Map 13). Table 6 shows the total acreage, percentage of each soil type and the slope conditions where these soils exist in the planning area.

6.5. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Current capital improvement projects in the planning area include:

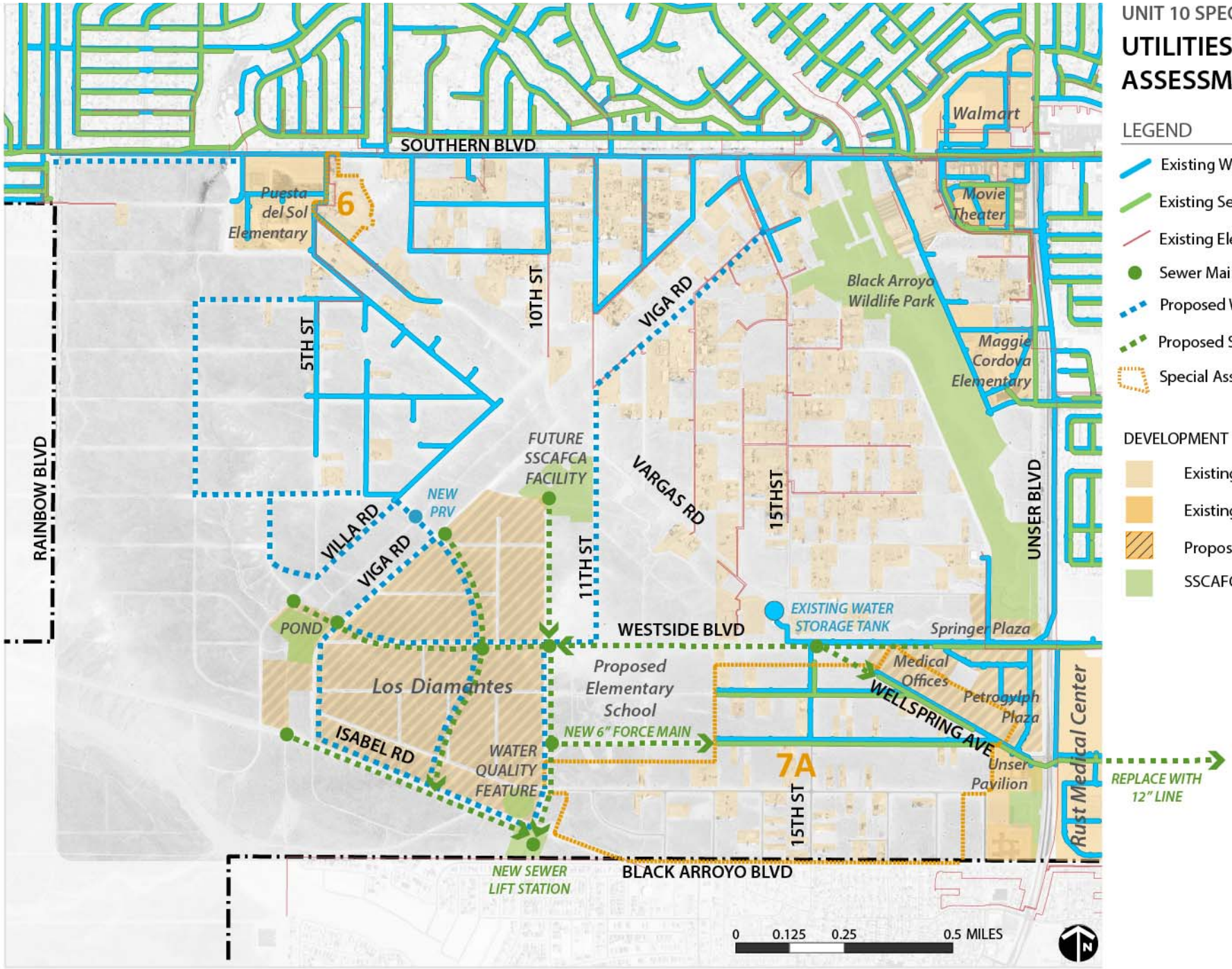
1. Southern Boulevard is currently in the preliminary design phases for improvements including roadway reconstruction and widening, traffic signals, lighting, drainage, utilities, landscaping, transit, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian lanes. This project will involve a widening of the road between Rainbow Boulevard and Unser, as well as an access management plan. The project should begin construction in 2018.
2. Westside Boulevard, east of Unser Boulevard (and Unit 10) is undergoing reconstruction to provide four full lanes between Golf Course Road and Unser Boulevard.

6.6. IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of the infrastructure section of this plan is to promote the development of new infrastructure including sewer and water lines that are consistent with urban infrastructure development standards and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL UT-1: Ensure all development within the planning area has connectivity to paved streets, community water, sewer, power, and natural gas.	ACTION UT-1.1: Discuss establishing Special Assessment Districts with current homeowners without public utilities to provision infrastructure in existing developed parcels.	Public Works	Short Term
	ACTION UT-1.2: Require future developments to demonstrate the ability to provide adequate infrastructure connections and an access management plan prior to the issuance of a zone amendment or site plan approval.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION UT-1.3: Require all future developments to connect to municipal water supply all zoning districts excepting R-1: Single Family Residential and E-1: Estate Residential.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
GOAL UT-2: Ensure adequate drainage facilities are in place prior to completion of new development projects.	ACTION UT-2.1: Work with SSCAFCA and Public Works on drainage master plan for Unit 10.	Development Services, Public Works, SSCAFCA	Short - Medium Term

MAP 11: UTILITIES & SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS



UNIT 10 SPECIFIC AREA PLAN

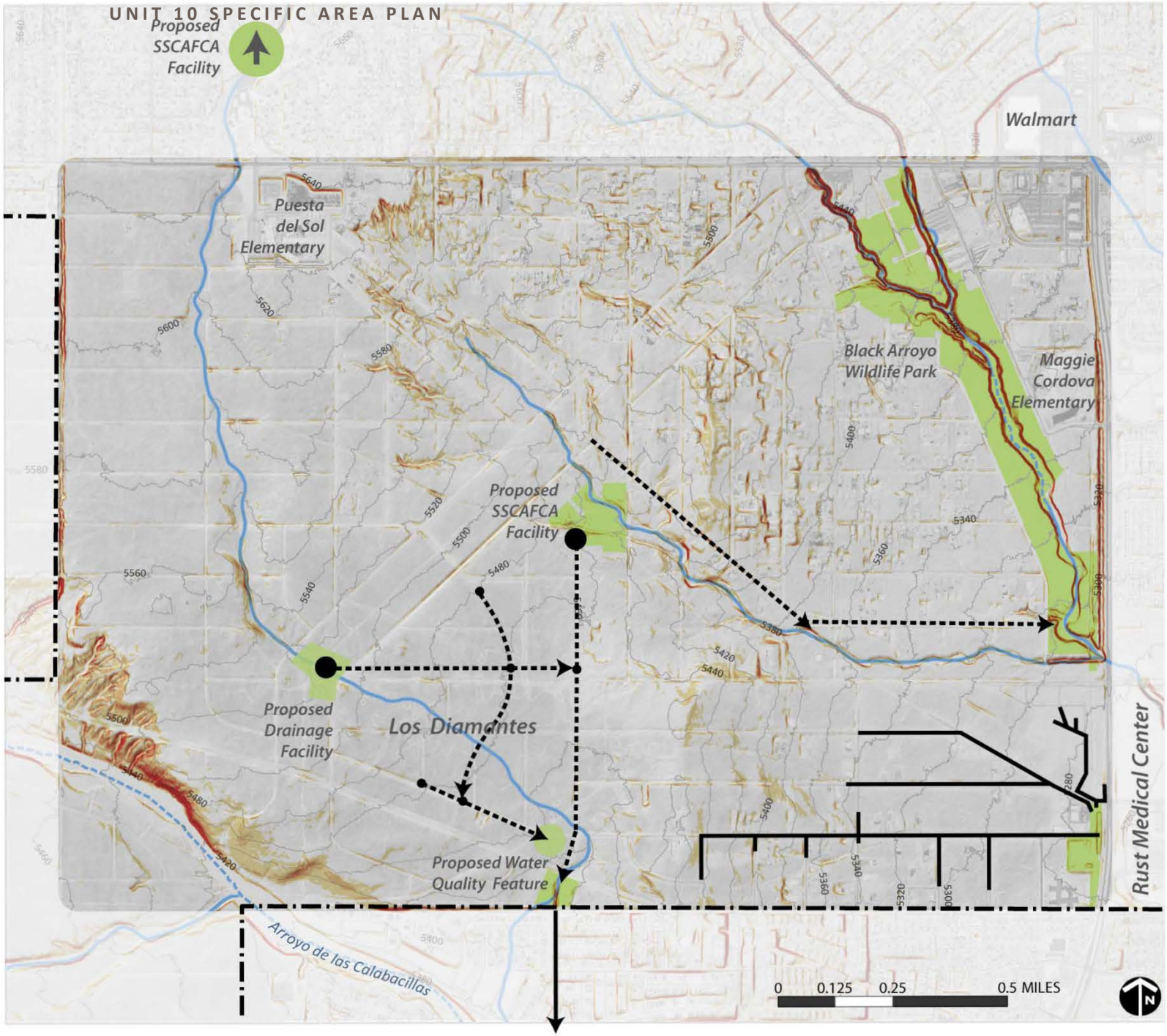
UTILITIES & SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS

LEGEND

- Existing Water Line
- Existing Sewer Line
- Existing Electric Line
- Sewer Main
- Proposed Water Line
- Proposed Sewer Line
- Special Assessment District

DEVELOPMENT

- Existing Single Family
- Existing Development
- Proposed Development
- SSCAFCA Facility



TOPOGRAPHY & DRAINAGE

LEGEND

PERCENT SLOPE

- 0 - 10%
- 10.1 - 15%
- 15.1 - 20%
- 20.1 - 25%
- 25.1 - 30%
- > 30.1%

SSCAFCA FACILITIES

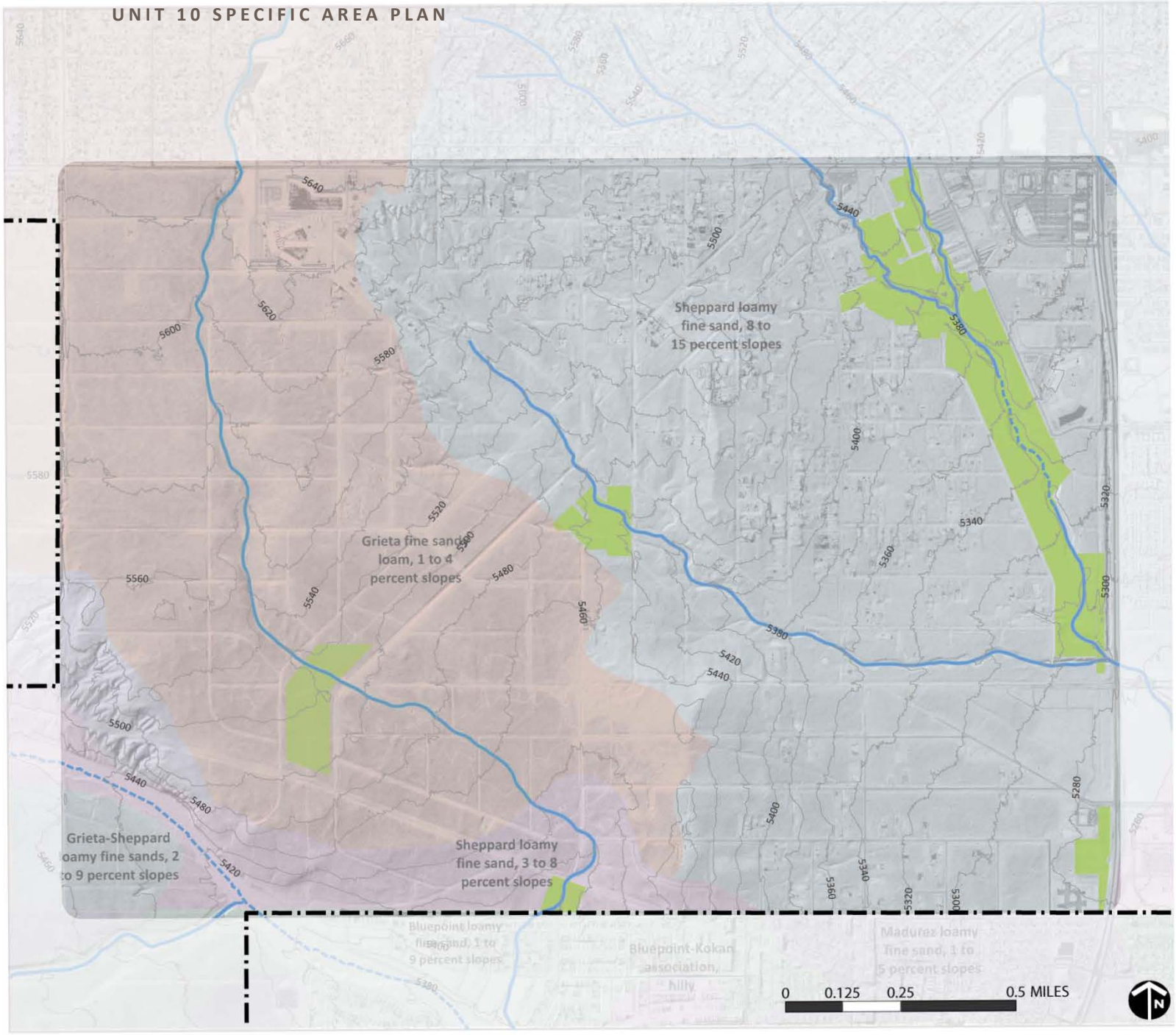
- Existing

FLOODPLAIN

- 100 Year Floodplain
- Stream
- Artificial Flowpath

CONCEPTUAL STORM DRAIN

- Existing Storm Drain
- Proposed Storm Drain
- Major SD Inlet



TOPOGRAPHY & SOILS

LEGEND

SOIL TYPE

- Bluepoint loamy fine sand, 1-9%
- Bluepoint-Kokan assoc., hilly
- Grieta fine sandy loam, 1-4%
- Grieta-Sheppard loamy find sand, 2-9%
- Madurez loamy fine sand, 1-5%
- Sheppard loamy fine sand, 3-8%
- Sheppard loamy fine sand, 8-15%

SSCAFCA FACILITIES

- Existing

FLOODPLAIN

- 100 Year Floodplain
- Stream
- Artificial Flowpath

7. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

The City of Rio Rancho has set guidelines for urban design of subdivisions and individual sites through its zoning and subdivision regulations, plans for public facilities, and plans like this Specific Area Plan. These guidelines are intended to encourage high quality design that supports the central goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan to create walkable, diverse, and attractive neighborhoods with well-designed connections between land uses. Of particular interest are requirements for new non-residential development. Design standards specific to this plan area are summarized in this section. General regulations that apply to all new development are linked to specific sections of the City of Rio Rancho's land development codes.

7.1. GENERAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

The intent of design standards for new development is to implement the Rio Rancho Comprehensive Plan, Urban Design Element. The Urban Design Element calls for focused growth in neighborhoods offering a variety of housing types, employment and access to goods and services. Neighborhoods will have a mix of land uses supported by public facilities and well-designed connections. Land Use regulations applying to all development are found in ***CHAPTER 154 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***. Additional information on processes and procedures for different types/phases of development can be found in the ***DEVELOPMENT PROCESS MANUAL***.

Many standards presented in this section reflect those of neighboring developments and similar existing plans in Rio Rancho, including the Los Diamantes Master Plan, Petroglyph Medical Plaza Master Plan, and other specific area plans.

7.1.1. BUILDINGS & SITE DESIGN

In general, architectural and site design standards outlined below are intended to provide direction for design development and to promote cohesive design throughout the area. While all buildings should reflect these standards, they are not intended to prohibit individual design expression and creativity. Standards refer to the ***RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE*** for detailed information where necessary.

1) Materials and Colors
    i) Materials and colors should be consistent with adjacent developments while still allowing for unique design expression
    ii) A list of appropriate materials and colors can be found in ***CHAPTER 154 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***, and vary by zoning district.
2) Site Design
    a) In general, buildings shall be oriented with consideration to visual impact from the perspective of the driver or pedestrian.
    b) Safe, convenient, and pleasant pedestrian circulation may be accomplished with sidewalks, bike paths, special paving, and shade.
    c) Pedestrian connections shall be made to entrances of all buildings from the public ROW. Parking areas existing between the main building entrance and public ROW shall be designed to include a pedestrian link to the public sidewalk network and/or trail system.

7.1.2. LANDSCAPE DESIGN & STREETSCAPE

Enhanced landscape plantings establish a sense of place and unity. The use of landscaped parkway strips, medians, ROW plantings, and yards help create cohesive neighborhood design and promote environmental sustainability. The following standards are intended to promote efficient and aesthetic landscapes in the area:

1) Landscape plans shall comply with the City's ***WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE AND ZONING CODE.***
2) Additional Landscape Provisions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***, and vary by zoning district.

7.1.3. BUFFER AREAS

A buffer is a specified land area together with its planting and landscaping requirements. A buffer may also contain a barrier such as a fence, wall, hedge, or berm where such additional screening is necessary to achieve the desired degree of buffering between adjacent uses. Future standards for buffering between higher intensity commercial uses and residential uses should be developed to protect existing and future single family homes from these higher intensity uses.

7.1.4. PARKING

Parking should safely and efficiently move vehicles, while still providing safe access to pedestrians. Full Off-Street Parking Guidelines, including the number of spaces required for each building use, are found in ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.

7.1.5. OUTDOOR LIGHTING

All outdoor lighting shall comply with the Night Sky Protection Act and be placed so as to reflect light away from adjacent residential districts. Full lighting guidelines are found in ***CHAPTER 159 OF THE ZONING CODE***. Additional lighting standards are listed below.

1) In general, individual site lighting standards shall blend with the architectural character of buildings and other site fixtures.
2) Lighting layout shall be coordinated with proposed landscaping and trees to maximize light distribution and avoid conflicts.

7.1.6. CONNECTIVITY

Providing trails and sidewalks in residential, commercial, parks, and open space areas creates an integrated, connected system that is easy to navigate for residents. Pedestrian connections throughout the area also enhances residents' quality of life.

1) To the maximum extent feasible, private parks, public parks, and open space areas shall be designed to create an integrated system that is connected through trails and sidewalks, which also serve as recreational amenities.
2) Sidewalks and walking trails shall be designed by handicapped accessible (see Americans with Disabilities Act Criteria for Barrier-Free Design), except where topography makes this unfeasible.
3) Breaks in subdivision walls shall be provided where needed to provide pedestrian connections to the overall sidewalk and trail system.

7.1.7. LOT CONSOLIDATION

Lot consolidation shall be considered in areas identified for multi-family, commercial, industrial, and business park development. Some benefits of lot consolidation include:

- Incentivizing higher density development and cohesive building design.
- Promoting larger building development, which is attractive to regional retailers and employers.
- Promoting cohesive site-design and connectivity to surrounding development

Lot consolidation requirements and recommended exceptions are as follows*:

1) Minimum lot area: if the area of the entire lot consolidation site is less than that required of new lots, the site is exempt from minimum lot area requirements.
2) Minimum lot width: if the width of the entire lot consolidation site is less than that required of new lots, the site is exempt from minimum lot width requirements.
3) Minimum lot depth: if the depth of the entire lot consolidation site is less than that required of new lots, the site is exempt from minimum lot depth requirements.
4) Split zoning: if any of the existing lots within the lot consolidation site are in more than one base zone, the consolidated lot must be consolidated into one zone.

*An exception or variance is set forth in Zoning Code and Subdivision hearings and appeals.

7.2. ZONE SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

Specific design standards by land use are presented here. These standards cover design requirements that aren't addressed under general standards or the City Zoning Ordinance for each district.

7.2.1. SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Single family residential design standards are intended to address issues of landscape, setbacks, signage, and other design elements to create a visual image desired Unit 10.

1) Setbacks should conform to ***CHAPTER 154.05-09 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
2) Pedestrian Amenities
    a) Sidewalks shall be a minimum five feet in width, except on arterial roads where sidewalks shall be a minimum six feet in width.
    b) Pedestrian connections to sidewalks and trails shall be provided from the entrance of each building.
3) Landscape provisions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.05-09 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
4) Building Height and Materials
    a) Building height restrictions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.05-09 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
    b) Sign regulations can be found in ***CHAPTER 156 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.

A *Garage is set back to avoid "garagescaping" and create visual interest*

B *Planting conforms to design guidelines and is visually appealing. Groundcover provides soil stability and prevents erosion.*

C *Building material matches surrounding developments and is visually appealing*

D *Driveway provides adequate off-street parking and pedestrian access between the street and main entrance.*

7.2.2. MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Multi-family residential design standards are intended to address issues of landscape, setbacks, signage, and other design elements to create a visual image desired Unit 10.

1) Setbacks should conform to ***CHAPTER 154.10 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
2) Pedestrian Amenities
    a) Sidewalks shall be a minimum five feet in width, except on arterial roads where sidewalks shall be a minimum six feet in width.
    b) Pedestrian connections to parking areas, sidewalks, and trails shall be provided from the entrance of each building.
3) Landscape provisions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.10 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
4) Building Height and Materials
    a) Building height restrictions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.10 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
    b) Building façades shall be varied to create visual interest and break up expansive building frontages.
    c) Mechanical units shall be entirely concealed from public view.
5) Signage
    a) Sign regulations can be found in ***CHAPTER 156 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
6) Parking
    a) Parking standards for residential buildings can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
    b) Parking areas shall be screened from public streets by landscape, screen walls, berms, or a combination of those materials.
    c) Bicycle parking shall be provided in multi-family developments in a manner that provides convenient access to their use by each building. Bicycle storage racks shall be located adjacent to building entrances. The minimum number of bicycle racks shall be determined by the number of parking spaces provided, consistent with ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.

A *Façade is varied to create interest.*

B *Site is well landscaped and utilized appropriate ground cover. Planting areas are a minimum of five feet to comply with design standards.*

C *Stucco and brick are main building materials.*

D *Adequate bicycle and vehicle parking is available.*

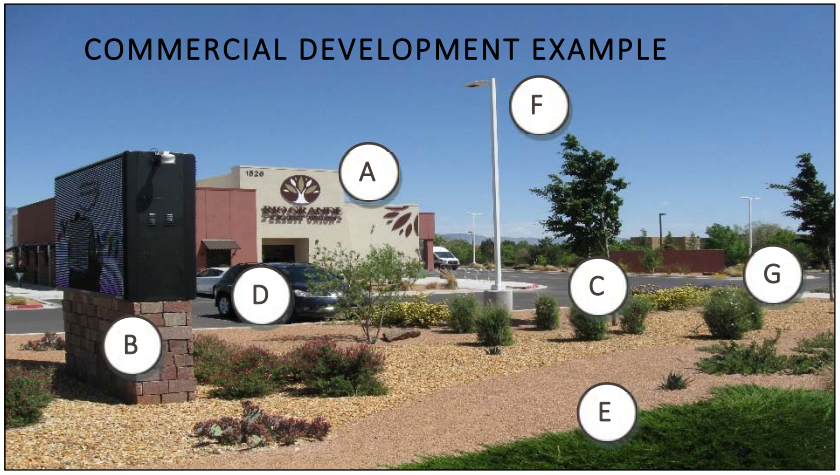
E *Pedestrian facilities are wide and crossings are demarcated with specialized paving.*

7.2.3. COMMERCIAL

Commercial design standards are intended to address issues of landscape, setbacks, signage, parking, and other design elements to create a visual image desired Unit 10.

1) Setbacks should conform to ***CHAPTER 154.12-14 and 154.21 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
2) Pedestrian Amenities
   a) Sidewalks shall be a minimum five feet in width, except on arterial roads where sidewalks shall be a minimum six feet in width.
   b) Pedestrian connections to building entrances shall be required through on-site parking lots.
   c) Structures and on-site circulation systems should be located to minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. Pedestrian access shall be provided to link structures to the public sidewalk.
   d) Pedestrian crossings shall be clearly demarcated with special paving treatment where they cross vehicular entrances and drive aisles.

3) Landscape provisions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.12-14 and 154.21 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
4) Building Height and Materials
   a) Buildings shall be designed to support their primary uses and incorporate sound design elements to provide for an attractive street frontage.
      i) Building elements such as windows, displays, and entries shall be oriented both externally to the streetscape and internally towards public areas.
      ii) Buildings shall be oriented with consideration to visual impact from the perspective of the driver or pedestrian.
      iii) Building façades shall be varied to create visual interest and break up expansive building frontages.
   b) Building height restrictions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.12-14 and 154.21 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
   c) Mechanical units shall be entirely concealed from public view.
   d) Outdoor patios for restaurants are permitted and shall be integrated with the architecture of buildings and shaded by trees and/or shade structures.
   e) Outdoor plazas for office and industrial uses are also permitted.
5) Signage
   a) Sign regulations can be found in ***CHAPTER 156 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
6) Lighting
   a) Outdoor lighting shall conform to ***CHAPTER 159 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   b) Height of outdoor light fixtures shall be kept to a minimum necessary to meet safety requirements, and shall comply with the Night Sky Protection.
7) Parking
   a) Parking standards can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   b) Parking areas shall be screened from public streets by landscape, screen walls, berms, or a combination of those materials.
   c) Bicycle parking shall be provided in commercial developments in a manner that provides convenient access to their use by each building. Bicycle storage racks shall be located adjacent to building entrances. The minimum number of bicycle racks shall be determined by the number of parking spaces provided, consistent with ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   d) Loading areas shall be screened from public view by walls, trees, or landscaping. Passenger loading areas do not require screening.



A *Façade provides strong visual interest, with many details, large windows, and tasteful use of materials.*

B *Signs conform to **Chapter 156 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

C *Parking lot provides pedestrian connections and conforms to **Chapter 154.22 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

D *Building provides proper setbacks and landscape buffers as outlined in **Chapter 154 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

E *Landscaping is xeriscape and conforms to requirements in **Chapter 154 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

F *Outdoor lighting follows guidelines in **Chapter 159 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

G *Access management strategy for site follows guidelines of this plan to provide access of major arterials where*

7.2.4. BUSINESS PARK

Business Park design standards are intended to address issues of landscape, setbacks, signage, parking, and other design elements to create a visual image desired Unit 10.

1) Setbacks should conform to ***CHAPTER 154.14 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE.***
2) Pedestrian Amenities
   a) Sidewalks shall be a minimum five feet in width, except on arterial roads where sidewalks shall be a minimum six feet in width.
   b) Pedestrian connections to building entrances shall be required through on-site parking lots.
   c) Structures and on-site circulation systems should be located to minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. Pedestrian access shall be provided to link structures to the public sidewalk.
   d) Pedestrian crossings shall be clearly demarcated with special paving treatment where they cross vehicular entrances and drive aisles.
3) Landscape provisions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.14 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE.***[5]
4) Building Height and Materials
   a) Buildings shall be designed to support their primary uses and incorporate sound design elements to provide for an attractive street frontage.
      i) Building elements such as windows, displays, and entries shall be oriented both externally to the streetscape and internally towards public areas.
      ii) Buildings shall be oriented with consideration to visual impact from the perspective of the driver or pedestrian.
      iii) Building façades shall be varied to create visual interest and break up expansive building frontages.
   b) Building height restrictions can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.14 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.
   c) Mechanical units shall be entirely concealed from public view.
   d) Outdoor plazas for office and industrial uses are also permitted.
5) Signage

[5] Zoning Code provisions will be superseded by landscape buffer and use separation overlay zone when adopted.

a) Sign regulations can be found in ***CHAPTER 156 OF THE RIO RANCHO ZONING CODE***.

6) Lighting
   a) Outdoor lighting shall conform to ***CHAPTER 159 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   b) Height of outdoor light fixtures shall be kept to a minimum necessary to meet safety requirements and comply with the Night Sky Protection.

7) Parking
   a) Parking standards can be found in ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   b) Parking areas shall be screened from public streets by landscape, screen walls, berms, or a combination of those materials.
      i) In cases where parking is adjacent to roadways, a combination of landscaping and walls no higher than three feet shall be used for screening purposes.
   c) Bicycle parking shall be provided in a manner that provides convenient access to their use by each building. Bicycle storage racks shall be located adjacent to building entrances. The minimum number of bicycle racks shall be determined by the number of parking spaces provided, ***CHAPTER 154.22 OF THE ZONING CODE***.
   d) Loading areas shall be screened from public view by walls, trees, or landscaping. Passenger loading areas do not require screening.

A — *Façade provides strong visual interest, with many details, large windows, and tasteful use of materials.*

C — *Signs conform to* ***Chapter 156 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

D — *Building provides proper setbacks and landscape buffers as outlined in* ***Chapter 154 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

E — *Landscaping conforms to requirements in* ***Chapter 154 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

F — *Outdoor lighting follows guidelines in* ***Chapter 159 of the Zoning Ordinance.***

Access management strategy for site follows guidelines of this plan to provide access of major arterials where possible.

7.3. OVERLAY ZONES

Future overlay zones along major arterial roadways may be warranted to buffer residential neighborhoods from more intensive commercial uses. Overlay zones may have additional setback requirements, access management standards, or other design controls that differ from the base zoning district criteria.

7.3.1. WELLSPRING AVENUE/WESTSIDE BOULEVARD OVERLAY

Due to recent development pressures, Wellspring Avenue and a segment of Westside Boulevard have been identified as two roadway corridors that need additional right-of-way, design controls, and access management standards. Analysis and proposed alignments for these roads were completed as separate documents.[6][7] Overlay Ord. No. 26, Enact. No. 16-21 will be amended to reflect these proposed alignments when adopted.

The Westside Blvd. alignment study includes a proposed roadway alignment, right of way requirements for Westside Blvd. Phase III as a principal arterial. The report includes engineers probably cost estimate for proposed improvements from Unser to 10th Street.

The Wellspring Alignment Study includes the proposed roadway and intersection alignments and a master paving plan for a collector street with a 68' right of way. Proposed driveway locations are also shown in the plan. Realignment of the intersection of 20th Street and Wellspring Avenue is proposed.

Typical cross-sections for a principal arterial and a collector street are shown in Appendix 8-1. More detailed street sections proposed for Westside and Wellspring are shown in the engineering reports.

A corridor overlay zone designation ordinance[8] adopted for these streets requires compliance with an access management plan, larger setbacks to create an adequate buffer, and right-of-way dedication to accommodate expanded roadway cross-sections. The overlay zone ordinance is being updated to reflect the findings and recommendations of the Westside and Wellspring alignment and driveway studies.

7.3.2. LANDSCAPE BUFFER AND USE SEPARATION OVERLAY

As noted in the Land Use section of this report, community residents are concerned about the impact of non-residential uses on adjacent single-family homes in areas where an immediate transition from non-residential use to single family residential is possible in the future. These are identified as "change areas" on the Generalized Land Use Map.

Current issues identified by the public and through review of the current City Code are related to the buffer width in

[6] Alignment Study for Westside Blvd., Unser to 10th Street, April 10, 2018, Prepared for City of Rio Rancho Development Services by Mark Goodwin & Associates.

[7] Wellspring Alignment Study,

[8] Ordinance No. 26, Enactment No. 16-21.

transition areas and heights and stepbacks where non-residential buildings are allowed adjacent to a residential lot.

The proposed overlay language in the Appendix recommends that minimum setbacks on non-residential sites that abut the rear yard of a residential zone be the same as the required setback in the residential zone. Further, a range of options for meeting landscape buffer requirements is proposed.

The current code allows for buildings of up to 50 feet in height, with 78 feet allowed with a conditional use permit with a minimal requirement for building stepbacks above 35 feet. In addition to recommending an increase in the required setback, the landscape buffer and use separation overlay recommends that stepbacks be increased from a one-foot stepback for every four feet in height above 35 feet to ten feet for every 10 feet in height above 35 feet.

A more detailed analysis and recommended overlay zone language is contained in the Appendix.

7.4. IMPLEMENTATION

The objective of the development guidelines section is to create a walkable community that encourages public interaction and create a sense of place through high quality design of residential and commercial properties. Development in Unit 10 should match criteria and standards presented in this section. The purpose of design guidelines is to implement the goals presented in the City's Urban Design Element under the Comprehensive Plan.

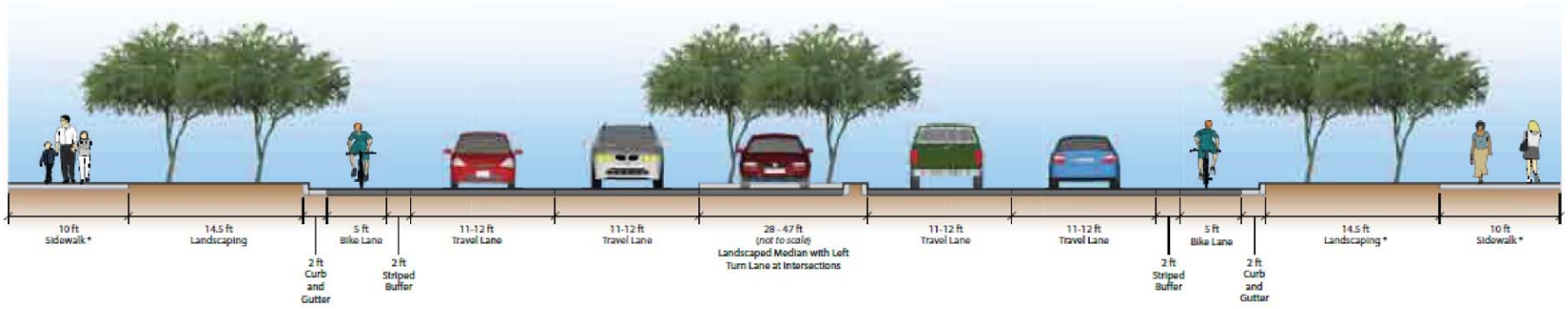
GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL DG-1: Create neighborhood patterns that links neighborhoods and encourages the use of all modes of transportation.	ACTION DG-1.1: Require new developments to adhere to basic design standards in this plan to promote sustainable and well-planned developments.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL DG-2: Foster attractive developments that use sound design principals.	ACTION DG-2.1: Work with developers of commercial and larger scale residential developments to adopt high-quality design standards as part of their development proposals.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL DG-3: Provide a buffer between existing single-family developments and future multifamily development.	ACTION DG-3.1: Consider establishing design overlay zone for major roadways to promote high quality design for commercial development.	Development Services	Short - Medium Term
	ACTION DG-3.2: Consider overlay zones to create adequate buffer areas between existing single family developments and future multifamily development.	Development Services	Short - Medium Term

8. APPENDICES

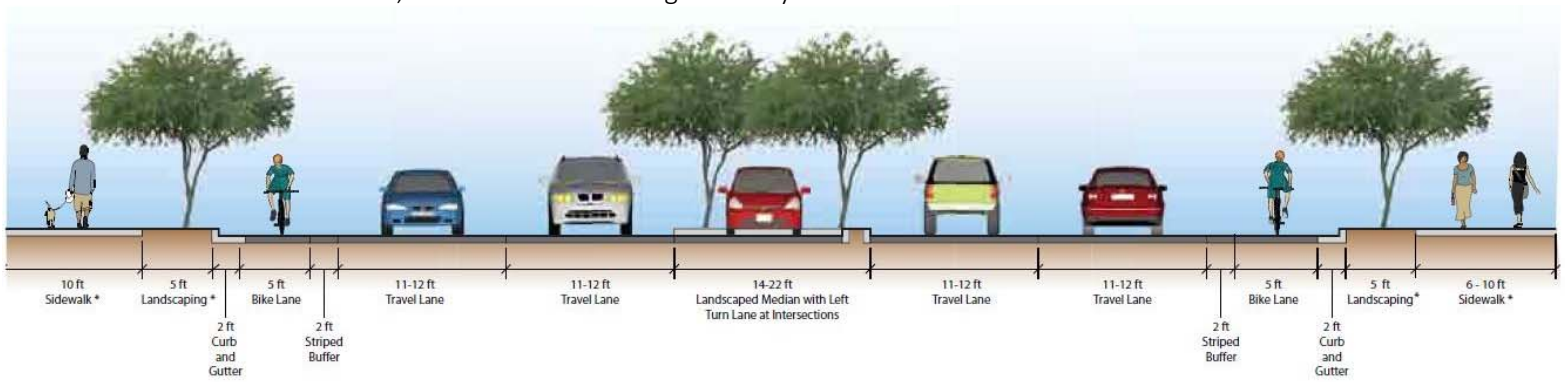
8.1. TYPICAL ROADWAY CROSS SECTIONS

The following cross sections are from the 2010 Rio Rancho Comprehensive Plan, Appendices 3 through 9.

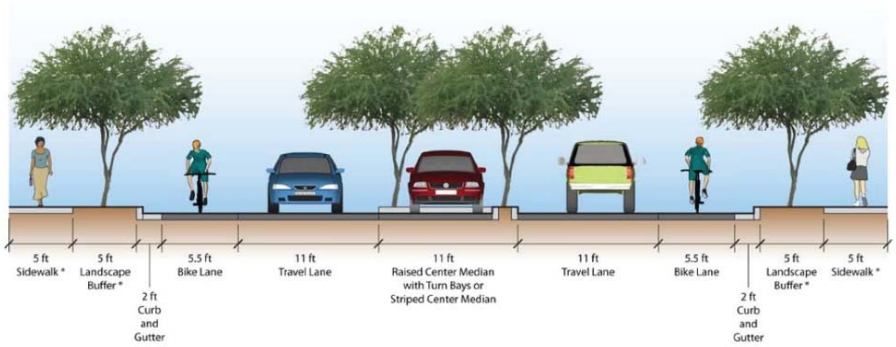
Principal Arterial: 4-6 lanes, 156' minimum right-of-way



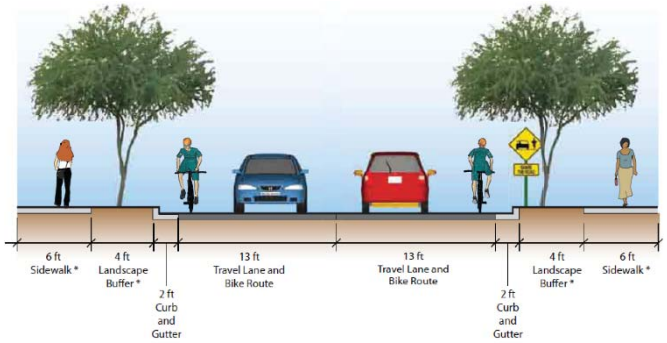
Minor Arterial: 2-4 lanes, 86' - 106' minimum right-of-way



Collector: 2-4 lanes, 68’ minimum right-of-way



Local: 2 lanes, 50’ minimum right-of-way



8.2. IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
Jobs, Housing and Community Facilities			
GOAL CF-1: Encourage the development of future employment centers (including business parks) that support an improved jobs/housing balance and increased local employment.	ACTION CF-1.1: Encourage the development of future mixed use and office development within Unit 10 as identified on the adopted land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-1.2: Encourage expansion of business park zoning to land east of Los Diamantes as identified on adopted land use map.	Development Services	Medium Term
GOAL CF-2: Expand retail opportunities for residents and add at least 200,000 square feet of retail to the community.	ACTION CF-2.1: Recruit high quality commercial retail developers to Unit 10 and seek to add at least 200,000 square feet of retail near key activity nodes along Westside Blvd, Rainbow Blvd, Isabel Road, and Wellspring Ave.	Development Services, City Manager's Office	Long Term
	ACTION CF-2.2: Encourage future neighborhood scale and community commercial as part of future master planned areas.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL CF-3: Promote a variety of residential housing types (including medium- and low-density single family, and some multifamily) for residents of all incomes.	ACTION CF-3.1: Encourage the development of medium density and high-density housing as identified on the proposed land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-3.2: Promote the development of higher density housing (multi-family and attached) at key future activity centers, including segments of Westside Boulevard and along Rainbow Boulevard.	Development Services	Medium Term
	ACTION CF-3.3: Identify future affordable housing opportunities in future master planned areas.	Development Services	Medium Term
GOAL CF-4: Increase community access to parks and open space to provide 4 acres of open space per 1000 residents.	ACTION CF-4.1: Identify sites for future open space and park developments. Evaluate whether future connections with existing facilities and surrounding neighborhoods can be established to increase access to parks and open space.	Development Services; Parks and Rec	Short Term
	ACTION CF-4.2: Identify the location, size, and proposed services for a community center within Unit 10 that provides facilities to residents of Unit 10, the neighborhood north of Southern Boulevard, and future neighborhoods west of Rainbow Boulevard.	Development Services; Parks and Rec	Medium Term
	ACTION CF-4.3: Work with SSCAFCA to incorporate future drainage and detention pond areas as passive (or active) recreation areas.	Development Services; SSCAFCA; Parks and Rec; Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION CF-4.4: Work SSCAFCA and Los Diamantes to expand open space area between Villa and Viga Roads north of Westside Blvd.	Development Services; SSCAFCA; Parks and Rec	Short Term

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL CF-5: Provide exceptional education opportunities for future families and their children.	ACTION CF-5.1: Work Rio Rancho Public Schools on the siting of a future high school/middle school on the western side of Unit 10 near the intersection of Rainbow Blvd and Westside Blvd.	Development Services; Public Works; Rio Rancho Public Schools.	Short Term
Land Use			
GOAL LU-1: Protect existing single-family neighborhoods from future land use changes to adjacent parcels.	ACTION LU-1.1: Adopt overlay zones where necessary to provide appropriate buffers between higher intensity commercial/multi-family uses and single family residential areas.	Development Services	Short and Medium Term
	ACTION LU-1.2: Rezonings in commercial zones shall not occur until additional buffer area criteria are developed to protect residential uses from higher intensive commercial uses.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION LU-1.3: Designate future high-density multifamily areas west of Los Diamantes to create expectations of future development for adjacent landowners.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION LU-1.4: Taking into consideration market conditions, baseline the percentage of the land use in the future master plan area to plus or minus 10 percent of the 2015 land use plan designation, defined as 25% high density residential; 22% commercial, mixed-use, office; 8% industrial, business park, warehousing; 45% low/medium density residential and/or civic, school, church.	Development Services, P&Z, Council	Ongoing
GOAL LU-2: Ensure future master plans follow the general framework of land use elements included in this plan.	ACTION LU-2.1: Amend Generalized Land Use Map to reflect the proposed land use map in this plan.	Development Services, P&Z, Council	Short Term
GOAL LU-3: Ensure a proper balance between future commercial and residential land uses.	ACTION LU-3.1: Encourage the development of future mixed use and office development within Unit 10 as identified on the adopted land use map.	Development Services	Ongoing
	ACTION LU-3.2: Encourage rezoning of C1: Community Commercial and NC: Neighborhood Commercial Districts to MU-A: Mixed Use Activity in future rezonings.	Development Services	Medium Term
GOAL LU-4: Enable and incentivize future lot consolidation to promote a	ACTION LU-4.1: Provide density bonuses for lot consolidation from the lowest base density to the maximum allowable density upon consolidating 4 or more acres.	Development Services	Short Term

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
variety of land uses that meet resident needs.	**ACTION LU-4.2:** Require future developments to demonstrate the ability to provide adequate infrastructure connections and an access management plan prior to the issuance of a zone amendment or site plan approval.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION LU-4.3: Require all future developments to connect to municipal water supply all zoning districts excepting R-1: Single Family Residential and E-1: Estate Residential.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
Transportation			
GOAL TR-1: Provide a transportation system that moves people and goods efficiently and effectively.	**ACTION TR-1.1:** Establish right-of-way alignment for Westside Boulevard between Los Diamantes and Unser Blvd.	Public Works	Short
	ACTION TR-1.2: Establish right-of-way alignment and location of Wellspring Ave and Westside Blvd intersection.	Development Services, Public Works	Short
	ACTION TR-1.3: Adopt access management plans for key roadways including Westside Blvd, Villa Road, and Rainbow Blvd.	Development Services, Public Works	Short - Medium Term
	ACTION TR-1.4: Study the feasibility of future through-street connections, including the alignments of 15th Street and Westside Blvd, a new alignment for Isabel at Black Arroyo Road, and a future connection to Universe Blvd.	Development Services, Public Works	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-1.5: Study feasibility of north/south connection of 10th St/11th Street through SSCAFCA owned land in center of Unit 10.	Development Services, Public Works	Medium Term
GOAL TR-2: Provide a well-connected, multi-modal transportation system.	**ACTION TR-2.1:** Establish policies to promote pedestrian connectivity and build a well-connected sidewalk and provide an opportunity for on-and-off-street bicycle facilities.	Development Services	Short Term
	ACTION TR-2.2: Ensure future roadway cross-sections and design meet complete street standards.	Public Works	Ongoing

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL TR-3: Ensure connections to regional future bikeways and trails system	**ACTION TR-3.1:** Study the feasibility of a future trail system along major arroyo easements.	Parks and Rec, SSCAFCA	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-3.2: Construct bikeways and trails improvements as identified in City Bikeways Master Plan and MRCOG's Long Range Bikeways Plan.	Parks and Rec, Public Works	Medium - Long Term
GOAL TR-4: Complete major corridor studies to plan for future roadways.	**ACTION TR-4.1:** Conduct a corridor study on Rainbow Boulevard to determine access management, conceptual cross-sections and right-of-way needs.	Public Works	Long Term
	ACTION TR-4.2: Complete a corridor study for Villa Road, including connection to Universe Boulevard, and Southern Boulevard to determine right-of-way needs and access management.	Public Works	Medium Term
	ACTION TR-4.3: Conduct a corridor study on Westside Boulevard to determine access management, conceptual cross-sections and right-of-way needs.	Public Works	Short Term
GOAL TR-5: Expand Transit Opportunities to Unit 10 Residents.	**ACTION TR-5.1:** Establish policies to enhance the current and planned transit system through providing adequate stops and accessible facilities.	Public Works, Rio Metro, ABQRide	Medium - Long Term
Infrastructure and Utilities			
GOAL UT-1: Ensure all development within the planning area has connectivity to paved streets, community water, sewer, power, and natural gas.	**ACTION UT-1.1:** Discuss establishing Special Assessment Districts with current homeowners without public utilities to provision infrastructure in existing developed parcels.	Public Works	Short Term
	ACTION UT-1.2: Require future developments to demonstrate the ability to provide adequate infrastructure connections and an access management plan prior to the issuance of a zone amendment or site plan approval.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
	ACTION UT-1.3: Require all future developments to connect to municipal water supply all zoning districts excepting R-1: Single Family Residential and E-1: Estate Residential.	Development Services, Public Works	Ongoing
GOAL UT-2: Ensure adequate drainage facilities are in place prior to completion of new development projects.	**ACTION UT-2.1:** Work with SSCAFCA and Public Works on drainage master plan for Unit 10.	Development Services, Public Works, SSCAFCA	Short - Medium Term
Development Guidelines			

GOAL	ACTIONS	DEPARTMENT(S)	TIMEFRAME
GOAL DG-1: Create neighborhood patterns that links neighborhoods and encourages the use of all modes of transportation.	ACTION DG-1.1: Require new developments to adhere to basic design standards in this plan to promote sustainable and well-planned developments.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL DG-2: Foster attractive developments that use sound design principals.	ACTION DG-2.1: Work with developers of commercial and larger scale residential developments to adopt high-quality design standards as part of their development proposals.	Development Services	Ongoing
GOAL DG-3: Provide a buffer between existing single-family developments and future multifamily development.	ACTION DG-3.1: Consider establishing design overlay zone for major roadways to promote high quality design for commercial development.	Development Services	Short - Medium Term
	ACTION DG-3.2: Consider overlay zones to create adequate buffer areas between existing single-family developments and future multifamily development.	Development Services	Short - Medium Term

8.3. COMMUNITY FACILITIES SITING GUIDELINES

During the development of the Unit 10 Specific Area Plan, the residents of Unit 10 identified a need for a community center to serve their neighborhoods. The Fire Department has identified a need for a new fire station at Southern and Rainbow. This project is unfunded, but is listed in the City's ICIP as the #2 priority for fiscal years 2019-2021.

This section proposed siting criteria for locating new parks and the new fire and rescue facility in Unit 10. These facilities have different needs, but there may be an opportunity for a joint use site in the vicinity of Southern and Rainbow in Unit 10 that meets the needs of both departments. The location preferences, siting criteria and other needs of each department are factored into the site criteria. The information below summarizes siting criteria, department needs and location options.

The west side of Unit 10 will be master planned in the future. Higher densities are anticipated in the western part of Unit 10 because of the opportunities created by topography and land assembly by the private sector. The information about community facility needs and the site preferences can be factored into the master plan.

8.3.1. FIRE STATION SERVICE AREAS AND SITING CRITERIA

The City currently operates six fire and rescue stations and one substation that is used to store reserve apparatus. The department has achieved an ISO classification of 2, which represents steady improvements in service over several years. The city's Impact Fee Plan and Ordinance established a standard level of service of 1.62 sf of public safety building space per functional population (which accounts for employment as well as residents). Fire and rescue is one component of public safety.

Requested funding in the FY 2017 ICIP is for vehicles and equipment and renovation of existing stations. Future fire and rescue stations are under consideration, with the Southern Boulevard and Rainbow Boulevard area as the second priority for a new station in FY 2022.

Figure 8-1**Error! Reference source not found.** shows the locations of existing fire and rescue stations. While the current level of service is good, the department's future priorities accurately indicate a need in Unit 10 as development occurs.

Siting criteria for fire stations– ease of access to major arterial, right and left turns, other?

Site size: Existing stations are on lots that range in size from .8 acre to 1.5 acre. National research suggests that 1.5 acre is preferred with sufficient room for equipment to maneuver into apparatus bays. Typical fire station buildings in Rio Rancho are about 5,000 square feet.

Topography: The site needs to be level with suitable soils and minimal drainage issues.

Frontage: Frontage needs to allow for in and out access with two curb cuts. In Rio Rancho, stations on a corner have one curb cut on each street, and those on interior lots have two curb cuts in front.

Access: Public and employee access, good visibility, compliance with response time standards. Existing stations are located on at least one major street, but only the Fire Station #1, which houses administrative offices, is located on a principal arterial. Others are located on a minor arterial or collector. Four stations are located on a corner. Fire station #2 is located on Unser, but on the frontage road. The location of a station in the vicinity of Southern BD and Rainbow BD will need to take access management on principal arterials into account to ensure a location that enable direct access to a major street with movement in all directions.

Service Area and Response Time: ISO determines standard response districts to be 1.5 road miles for an engine company, providing initial response, and 2.5 road miles for a ladder-service company. Based on a RAND Corporation study, an average speed of 35 MPH is assumed for a fire apparatus responding with emergency lights and siren in average terrain, weather and slowing down for intersections. This would meet a response time of 3.2 minutes for an engine company and 4.9 minutes for a ladder-service company.

Response districts for existing fire and rescue facilities shown in Figure 8-1 are based on road miles.

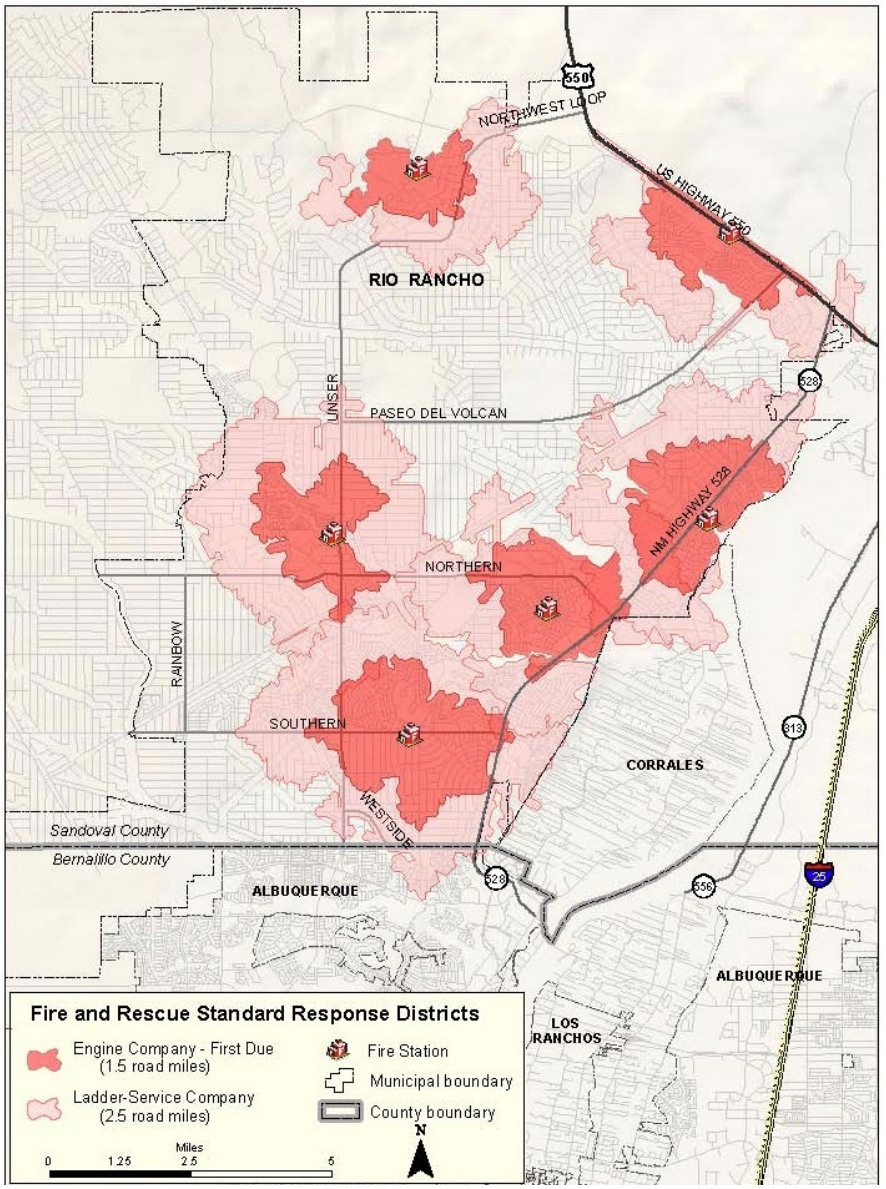


FIGURE 8-1. FIRE AND RESCUE STANDARD RESPONSE DISTRICTS

8.3.2. COMMUNITY CENTER SERVICE AREAS AND LOCATIONS

As defined in the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Rio Rancho's stated level of service standard for a recreation center is 1 facility per 20,000 people and a 10-minute driving distance. As of July 1, 2016, the estimated population of Rio Rancho is 96,028, which indicated an overall need for five recreation centers today, not accounting for future growth.

The City currently identifies five facilities as community centers, as shown in Figure 8-2: Cabezon Recreation Center, Haynes Recreation Center and Park, Rio Rancho Aquatic Center, Sabana Grande Recreation Center and Star Heights Recreation Center.

The closest facilities to Unit 10 are the Cabezon Recreation Center and Star Heights Community Center.

Figure 8-2 shows the existing community centers in Rio Rancho with 10-minute walking distance and five and ten-minute driving distances from each. The northeast and eastern sections of Unit 10, generally bounded by Southern, Unser, Huron Rd SE and Vargas Rd SE are within a five-minute drive time of one of these centers. Most of the area is within a ten-minute drive time of one of these centers.

Rainbow Pool, which is not considered to be a community center, is located across the street from Unit 10 on Southern and Rainbow. Also in the immediate area, and within Unit 10, is the Puesta Del Sol Elementary School.

The Cabezon Community Center is small. Unit 10 residents have the perception that it is exclusively for the use of Cabezon residents. Therefore, in spite of its proximity, Unit 10 residents don't feel comfortable there. Cabezon Park was built by the Cabezon community's developer and dedicated to the City.

The aquatic center is an indoor pool and with multipurpose rooms, not a full community center. The construction of the aquatic center was funded through a public/private partnership. Pulte Homes, a major home builder in the Loma Colorado, paid $3 million of the $10 million cost of that facility. It's next to the Loma Colorado Library, which also had a donation from Pulte Homes, and the Rio Rancho High School, which was partially funded by a generous contribution from Intel Corporation.

Unit 10 could be a good location because of proximity to Rainbow Pool, although a good pedestrian crossing at Southern would make it easier to use both facilities without driving. The proximity to Puesta Del Sol is another advantage in the northwest part of Unit 10.

The city's Impact Fee Plan and Ordinance requires developers dedicated 3 acres of land per thousand residents in a new subdivision of 25 acres or more, with an assumption of 2.83 residents per home. The calculated maximum supported park impact fee rate identified in the city's IFCIP is $1,258 per single family unit and $832 per multifamily unit. However, as of July 1, 2017 through July 1, 2022, the assessed impact fees or value of physical improvements in lieu of impact fees have been discounted to $815 per single family unit and $702 per multifamily unit.

8.3.3. FUTURE DEMAND

The western section of Unit 10 offers an opportunity to coordinate park and recreation facilities with the planning for a master planned community with a residential mix of single family and multifamily housing. The projected increase in housing units in Unit 10 from 2012 to 2040 is from 385 units to 3,900 units.

As proposed in the Las Diamantes master plan, 457 residential units will be in Las Diamantes, which has set aside park and open space locations as part of their master plan. Approximately 400 additional units can be built on existing lots in areas that are partially developed an unlikely to have future platting changes. Approximately 2,600 units will be new development, potentially in new subdivisions.

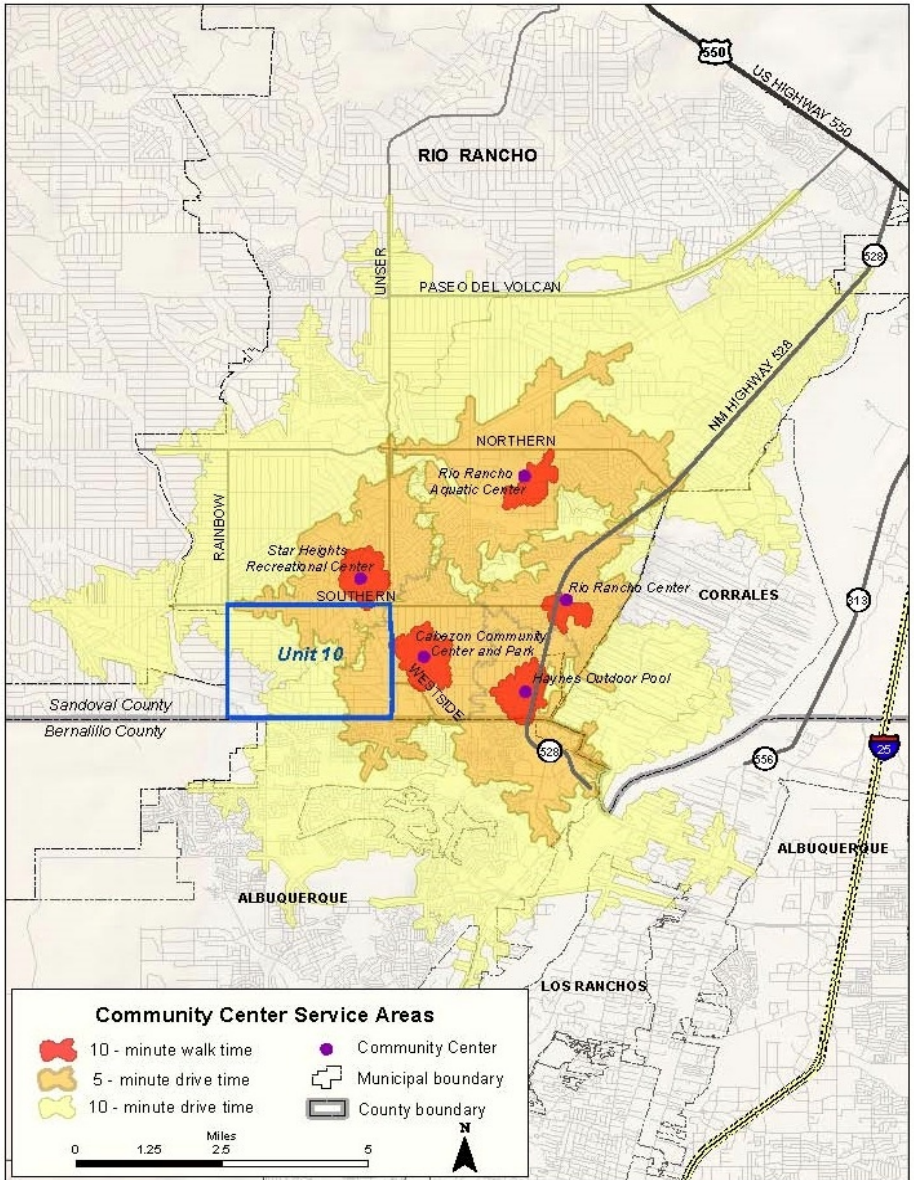


FIGURE 8-2. COMMUNITY CENTER LOCATIONS AND SERVICE AREAS

The City's park dedication requirement is generally based upon three acres per 1,000 persons and 2.83 persons per dwelling unit in single family areas. and generally equivalent in other areas. The City can accept payment in lieu of land dedication for small subdivisions. Based on growth estimates, new development will result in approximately 22 acres of park land.

These units will generate approximately $2,000,000 in fees over time. The fees generated by the projected new units will partially fund new facilities in Unit 10 in addition to those being provided in Las Diamantes. The new facilities are an opportunity for public/private funding similar to other amenities in the area.

No funding for parks and recreation projects in Unit 10 is included in the City's 2017-2021 ICIP. Highest priority projects are additional work for projects that have already been started, including ADA accessibility and improvements to existing centers and parks. The next community center, which is a project under consideration, will be on Northern Boulevard. Projects under consideration will be deferred until the level of growth and funding availability warrant inclusion in the ICIP. Recurring operating costs are also a consideration in planning for new facilities. As of FY 2017, funds were not available to cover ongoing operating costs of new facilities.

When the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2004, Unit 10 was substantially undeveloped, and Cabezon was the area slated for new development. As of 2017, residential properties in Cabezon are almost fully built out, and the eastern portion of Unit 10 is close to half built out, most according to the original Rio Rancho Estates platting. Proposed facilities in the 2004 master plan were adequate to meet the needs of anticipated growth at that time, however, thirteen years later, development is extending further west requiring additional new facilities.

8.3.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Fire and Rescue Stations

1. As part of future planning and subdivision development in northwestern Unit 10, work with landowners to locate a site of approximately 1.5 acres with access to either Rainbow or Southern in a location that allows for right and left turns in and out of the site. A corner lot with a major street that is not a principal arterial is preferred.
2. The site should be level with developable soils and minimal drainage issues.

3. Depending upon the preferences of the Fire and Rescue Department, a community meeting room could be included within the station as an alternative to a community center.

Parks and Community Centers

1. As part of planning and subdivision development in Unit 10, work with landowners to identify sites that meet the park dedication requirements of the City code, including at least one larger park.
2. Consider a future community center location in the northwestern part of Unit 10, potentially co-located with the planned Fire and Rescue station.

8.4. LANDSCAPE BUFFERS AND USE SEPARATION OVERLAY

As the City of Rio Rancho continues to evolve, it is undergoing changes within the overall development pattern of the City. This has inevitably led to the creation of “transition areas” between existing single-family dwellings and commercial and other non-residential uses. In Unit 10, the commercial corridors abut residential lots. To address the needs for adequate buffers between these uses, this document reviews existing requirements and recommends amendments to ensure that residential uses are properly buffered from noise, traffic, and privacy concerns that could be created as a result of future commercial development in Unit 10.

A landscape buffer overlay zone is proposed to provide clearer, more context-sensitive design requirements in transition areas between different land uses and densities.

The overlay will also further Land Use Goal 1 of the *Unit 10 Specific Area Plan* to “Protect existing single-family neighborhoods from future land use changes to adjacent parcels” and directly complete action item LU-1.1: “Adopt overlay zones where necessary to provide appropriate buffers between higher intensive commercial/multi-family uses and single family residential areas.”

8.4.1. CURRENT ISSUES

A few of the issues identified with current buffer and landscape requirements include the following:

1 BUFFER WIDTHS IN TRANSITION AREAS

One of the primary issues is establishing proper buffer area widths in transition areas between commercial and residential developments. Currently, the City Code requires 10-foot side and rear setbacks, a 10-foot buffer area with trees spaced 25 feet apart, and a mandatory wall to achieve a buffer between these uses. In some cases, these requirements may not be adequate, depending on the intensity of the commercial use and the adjacent residential character. The rear yard setback in the R-1 zone is 15 feet. Ideally, the rear yard setback for a commercial property adjacent to a residential zone would be at least the same as the adjacent residential zone. There is also no differentiation between rear landscape areas that include parking or circulation areas and those that only include a building, minimum setback and landscaping.

2 HEIGHT AND STEPBACKS

Existing stepbacks allow tall buildings adjacent to residential properties. A non-residential building on a commercial lot adjacent to a residential lot can be 50 feet in height and up to 78 feet in height with a conditional use permit. At the rear of the property, a stepback of one foot for every four feet in height above 35 feet is required where the rear of the property abuts a residential zone. Increasing stepbacks for commercial buildings next to residential zones to

FIGURE 8-3. SPECIAL USE ZONING ALONG GOLF COURSE ROAD AND SOUTHERN BLVD. THIS SHOWS AN EXAMPLE OF A MANDATORY WALL, WITH TREES PLANTED SPORADICALLY IN THE BUFFER AREA BETWEEN A COMMERCIAL USE AND SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL. THERE MAY BE

10 to 15 feet for every additional 10 feet in height would allow greater separation between uses.

3 WALLS AND SCREENING

Existing requirements in commercial areas require a 6-foot wall and screening when adjacent to a residential property. In some cases, dumpsters and trash compactors that are visible from the road or from a residential property are required to be screened. However, the screening for dumpsters is not consistent between zones and the spacing requirements from the property lines is not consistent with existing landscape buffer minimums.

4 PURPOSE, INTENT AND INTERPRETATION:

The purpose and intent statements of buffer requirements may need to be revised to better establish the need for and usefulness of buffer requirements. There may be some issues with differing interpretation of current standards when it comes to landscape requirements, especially in regards to those areas with a master plan, including SU, MU-A or business park zones. Integration with the urban design goals of the Comprehensive Plan is also important.

5 LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

Current landscape requirements have produced a uniform approach to buffer landscaping. Alternative approaches would result in more variety and interest in site design. Plant and tree requirements could be more specific, with clearer density requirements and definitions. The height of mature trees should be explicit, as well as the species and watering requirements.

6 SPECIAL USE REQUIREMENTS

Many newer developments within Unit 10 are utilizing Special Use zoning to allow/disallow specific uses and include more specific design requirements. In some cases, these SU zones may allow for development that is not consistent with surrounding developments or if they establish requirements that could better be addressed through amendments to the primary zoning districts (e.g., updated setbacks, landscape requirements, etc.

The following section reviews the existing zoning district requirements as outlined in Rio Rancho's zoning code with respect to setbacks, buffer areas, landscaping, and the transition areas between commercial and non-commercial uses. The primary findings are that setbacks, height limits, and some landscape design requirements may not create an adequate buffer between commercial and residential uses.

8.5. DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS

The primary areas that were reviewed for this document are existing and future non-residential zoning districts that are located adjacent to residential developments within Unit 10. The goal was to assess the existing standards in these zoning districts to see how they may contribute to the problems identified in the introduction. It should be noted that requirements for transition areas are tied to individual zoning districts and are not addressed city-wide. Table 1 shows where changes may be needed to amend each zoning district, or areas that could be addressed through the creation of an overlay zone. The use of an overlay would allow for a better transition area between these uses. Table 2 in the Appendix has a full list of the requirements in each district.

TABLE 7. POTENTIAL CODE AREAS TO ADDRESS BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

	NC	O-1	C-1	C-2	MU-A	M-1	BUSINESS PARK DISTRICT	SU
REAR SETBACKS	X	X	X	X	X		Requires Master Plan	Must outline Landscape/buffer standards
SIDE SETBACKS	X	X	X	X	X			
LOCATION OF TRASH CONTAINERS AND TRASH COMPACTORS	X	X	X	X	Requires Master Plan	X		
BUILDING HEIGHT	X	X	X	X		X		
LANDSCAPING	X	X	X	X				
BUFFER ZONE	X	X	X	X				
BUFFER WALL		X	X	X				
BUFFER LANDSCAPING	X	X	X	X				
LIGHTING						X		
NOISE						X		

*Note: **X's** denote areas of zoning district that may need to be addressed with an overlay zone to ensure adequate buffers are being used between commercial and residential uses.*

8.5.1. C-1: RETAIL COMMERCIAL & C-2: WHOLESALE & WAREHOUSING COMMERCIAL

The primary commercial districts that present issues when adjacent to residential districts are the C-1 and C-2 districts, which have minimal setback requirements and landscape requirements. As stated in the code, there is a requirement for a 10-foot setback with a landscape buffer "for buildings up to 35 feet in height. For height greater than 35 feet, the building shall have a step-back of one foot for each additional four feet of height up to the maximum height of the district." The total allowable height is fifty feet, with 78 feet allowed with a conditional use permit. A buffer wall is also required to be at least 6 feet high, and may be constructed of brick, masonry, adobe or chain-link (with slats). Trash containers and compactors must be at least 15 feet from the property line when located next to a single-family district. Landscape buffer areas are required to have a minimum of one buffer tree per 25 feet "or an approved equivalent screening density."

In practice, this allows 35-foot (3 story) buildings to be built within 10 feet of a residential property (which allows a 32-foot building). To reach the maximum permitted height of 50 feet, and conform to the stepback requirements, the building would be required to have a 4-foot setback above 35 feet. A 78-foot building is only required to have an 11-foot stepback from the 10-foot minimum setback. (The C-1 zone allows for R-3 and R-6 residential uses if they are located above the first floor. This effectively allows C-1 areas to function as mixed-use districts.)

These requirements may lead to multi-story buildings within 10 feet of the property line of residential properties. Back yard privacy is a concern of residential property owners (see Figure 1). During the development of the Unit 10 SAP it was identified that this development pattern had not been applied to any C-1 lots. However, the provisions of the current code to not provide for an adequate buffer between residential and non-residential properties.

8.5.2. O-1: OFFICE

This district has the same requirements as C-1, with slightly higher requirements for total landscaped areas. The height limit is 60 feet. All other requirements are the same, leading to some of the same potential issues with transition areas between office and residential uses not being adequately buffered.

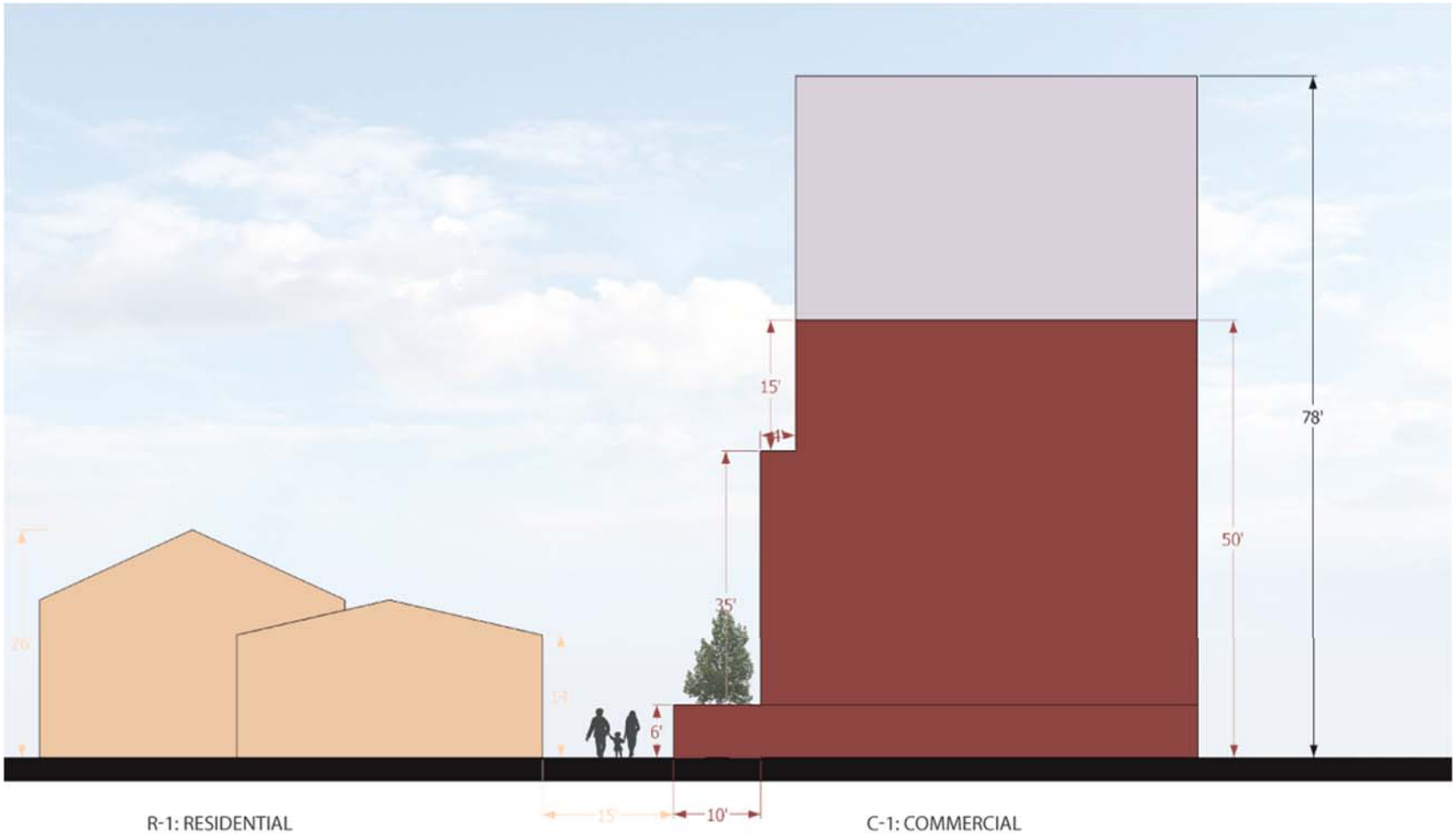


FIGURE 8-4. EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE C-1 OFFICE DEVELOPMENT WITH MINIMAL SETBACKS AND MAXIMUM HEIGHT.

8.5.3. NC: NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Neighborhood commercial is intended to allow for limited commercial uses that pertain to day-to-day residential needs. However, beyond slightly different permitted uses, the design requirements are functionally equivalent to the those of C-1 zones. Only 10-foot setbacks are required for side and rear yards when abutting a residential zone, and max heights are 60 feet – the same as the O-1 zone. This district requires a buffer wall when adjacent to residential uses, although the code states that this wall will be constructed of solid masonry (no chain-link allowed). Evergreen trees spaced no more than 25 feet on center are also required to comply with the landscape buffering requirements. The specifics of this district are somewhat consistent to the C-1 buffer requirements but there is no rational basis for the specifics and stricter regulations of this district compared to the C-1 district.

For true neighborhood-scale commercial, some of the design requirements should be amended, including a height restriction of 35 feet at the rear yard setback with a stepback to buffer the impact of height on adjacent homes. Higher landscape requirements (to blend into more residential areas), and lower parking requirements to reduce parking lot coverage are also desirable.

8.5.4. MU-A: MIXED USE ACTIVITY & BUSINESS PARK ZONES

Both of these zones require a master plan and corresponding guidelines to be approved prior to development. For MU-A zones, setback requirements next to residential properties are the same as for O-1/C-1. Height limits allow for “32 feet for single-family uses; 78 feet for multi-family uses; 85 feet for vertically mixed uses, commercial/office or institutional uses.” Because some of the requirements are based on a site plan, they may not always be consistent with surrounding developments. While this practice introduces flexibility for developers, it may not provide the consistency requested by adjacent residential owners who want clear protections. Because of the increased latitude and height allowances the MU-A and Business Park zone requires adequate land area in order to maximize the potential of these zones.

8.5.5. SU: SPECIAL USE ZONES

Special uses zones require a master plan or specific regulations to be adopted at the time of rezoning and site plan approval prior to development. Examples of master planned SU zones include the Petroglyph Plaza Master Plan and the Unser Pavilion Plaza. Generally, these SU master plans follow the requirements of their underlying zoning district, retaining 10-foot side and rear setbacks in most cases. The Unser Pavilion, Petroglyph Medical

Plaza, and Wellspring SU Zoning District all follow these requirements, with a few additional design guidelines mainly intended for architectural details and landscape requirements.

In some cases, the reliance on SU zones has allowed for differing interpretations and implementation of buffer requirements. In certain instances, providing flexibility to developers may not provide enough consistency and predictability for nearby landowners.

8.5.6. M-1: LIGHT MANUFACTURING

This district has many of the same requirements as C-1, but the height limit is 100 feet with stepbacks required after 35 feet (when next to residential uses). Zero-foot setbacks are allowed except in areas adjacent to residential areas. Buffer areas between these two uses require a 25-foot setback with a 10-foot landscaped buffer, which is similar to the requirements in C-1 zones. There are currently no uses zoned M-1 in Unit 10.

FIGURE 8-6. SU ZONING ON SPRING RD AND UNSER BLVD. A TWO-STORY BUILDING SEPARATED FROM RESIDENTIAL BY A UTILITY EASEMENT AND MULTIUSE TRAIL.

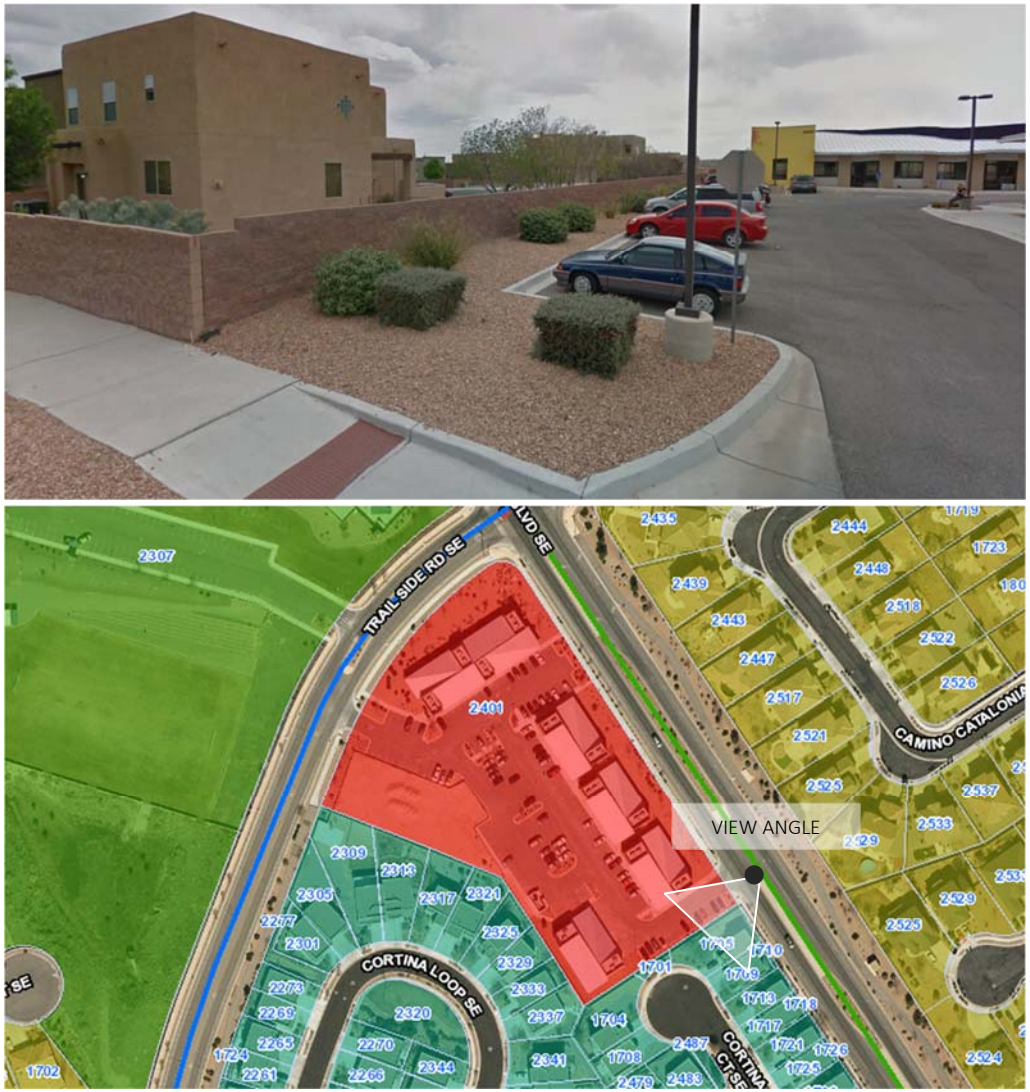


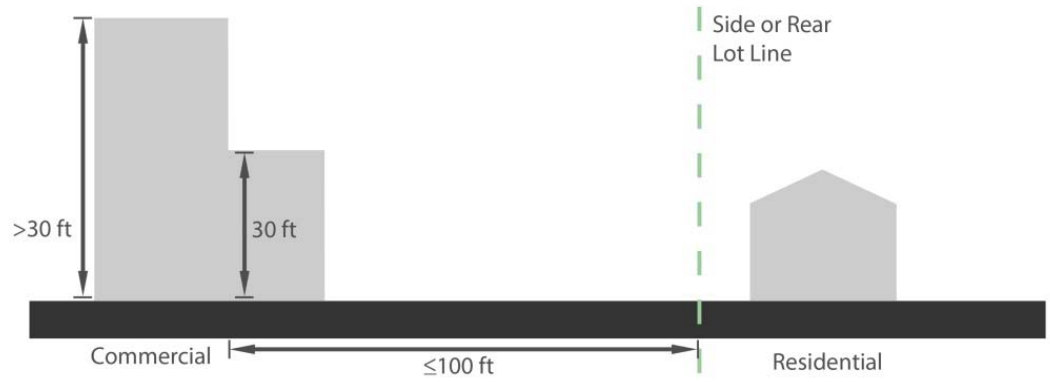
FIGURE 8-7. BUFFER EXAMPLE IN CABEZON BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES.

8.6. HEIGHT AND STEPBACK ISSUE

This section recommends a buffer overlay zone that could address the relationship between abutting residential and commercial zones. The “transition area” requirements of the buffer overlay zone are proposed for commercial development along major streets in Unit 10 that are not covered by a more restrictive plan.

In the City of Albuquerque’s new Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), buffer areas between residential and non-residential users are regulated by a “neighborhood edges” section that is “intended to preserve the established residential neighborhood character in residential districts adjacent to mixed-use or non-residential zone districts.” In areas of the City with lower density (i.e., not Downtown, Urban Center, or Main Street areas), the code requires a rear setback of at least 15 feet, building stepdowns depending on height, a standard landscape buffer of at least 10 feet wide located along the boundary, and trees planted along the boundary that will reach a mature height of 25 feet. The code requires a wall where there is parking or a circulation area abutting the landscape buffer. This is an example of how one City ensures consistent and effective buffers are established.

FIGURE 8-8. EXAMPLE FROM ALBUQUERQUE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF STEPBACK EXAMPLE WITH SETBACK AREA.



8.7. LANDSCAPE BUFFER AND USE SEPARATION OVERLAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for a buffer overlay zone that would address transitions between single-family residential and non-residential uses. These are recommended for properties along Westside Blvd, Wellspring, and future roadways include:

1. SETBACKS & BUFFER ZONES

Create more flexible buffer zone requirements with various buffer zone widths, types, and requirements depending on adjacent land uses.

In addition to minimum setbacks, allow a choice between buffer areas of between 5-20+ feet in width, with differing landscape density requirements. Allow flexibility in the use of different landscape elements in these areas as long as they achieve the purpose of creating adequate transitions between differing uses.

2. BUILDING HEIGHTS

Set maximum height at 35 feet for buildings directly adjacent to residential areas (with no stepback). Allow buildings to maximum allowable height with a stepback of 10 feet for every additional story.

3. TREES, SCREENING AND LANDSCAPING

Require that trash containers be located within a solid enclosure with screening from property line. Only allow for solid masonry or brick walls between residential and commercial uses. Remove chain-link as acceptable screening.
Adjust tree requirements to require mature trees to reach heights of at least 20 feet, preferably evergreen species, with maximum spacing requirements that provides for latitude in landscape buffer design while still setting a minimum standard.

Allow for more creative, flexible landscape elements (berms, hedging, swales) to be used in buffer areas to achieve screening, as long a similar amount of privacy and screening is achieved between uses.

4. FRONT BUFFERS & PUBLIC SPACES

Encourage development of more pedestrian-friendly and inviting frontage areas using more flexible design standards coupled to requirements to achieve attractive, accessible front landscape buffer areas.

FIGURE 8-9. FRONT LANDSCAPE BUFFER AREA EXAMPLE WITH ATTRACTIVE AND FLEXIBLE SCREENINGS ALONG UNSER BLVD AND MCMAHON IN ALBUQUERQUE.

FIGURE 8-10. EXAMPLE OF RECENTLY PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ALONG WELLSPRING WITH A MORE ACTIVE FRONT BUFFER AREA THAT IS PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY AND ENGAGES THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY.

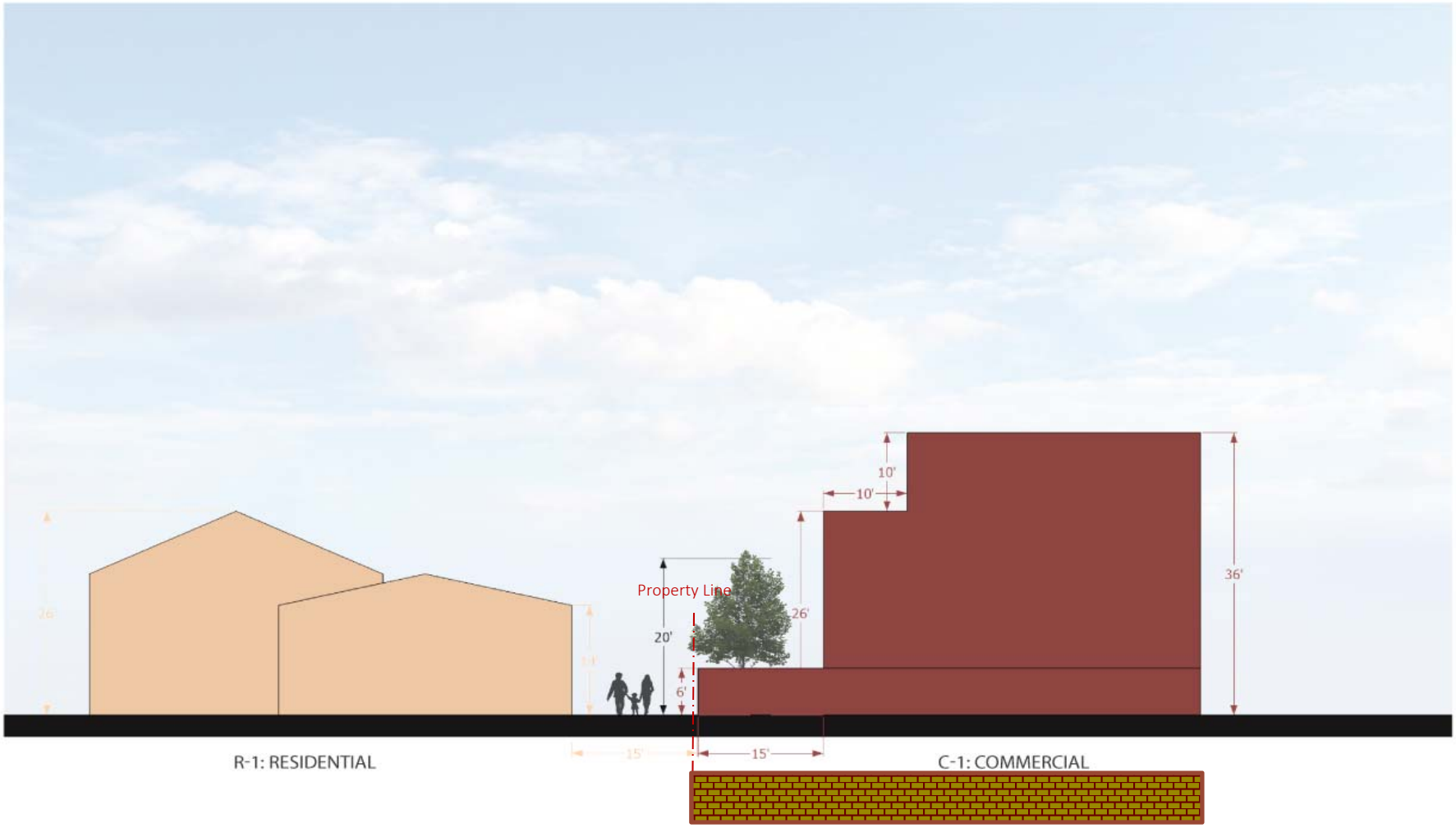


FIGURE 8-11. EXAMPLE OF POSSIBLE C-1 DEVELOPMENT WITH LARGER SETBACKS, HIGHER TREE SCREENINGS AND LOWER

8.8. LANDSCAPE BUFFER AND USE SEPARATION OVERLAY - DRAFT

I. Purpose
   a. To create appropriate buffers between higher intensive commercial/multi-family uses and single family residential developments in Unit 10, this overlay zone establishes setback regulations and creates flexible standards for landscape buffer areas between single-family residential uses abutting developments of a different land use type. The intent is to provide an adequate separation between uses and consistency and flexibility in the choosing of appropriate landscape features based on land use and site conditions.

II. General Requirements
   a. New structures and additions to existing structures must meet the setback regulations of this overlay zone.
   b. A buffer is a specified land area together with its planting and landscape requirements. A buffer may also contain a barrier such as a fence, wall, hedge, or berm where such additional screening is necessary to achieve the desired degree of buffering between adjacent uses.
   c. A landscaping buffer area is required along the perimeter (unless a zero setback is used) of the proposed development whenever a multifamily or non-residential property abuts a residential zone. The existing use, or, where vacant, the permitted use of the abutting property will determine the type of landscape area required for the proposed development.

III. New Developments
   a. All new developments must meet the setback and landscape buffer requirements as set forth in this section.

IV. Existing Developments
   a. Additions and modifications to existing buildings must meet the setback regulations of this overlay zone.
   b. Existing landscapes that do not comply with the provisions of this section must be brought into conformity to the extent possible when:

i. The vehicular/parking lot area is altered or expanded by more than 10% other than re-striping or re-marking;
ii. The building square footage is altered or expanded by more than 50%; and/or
iii. There has been a discontinuance of use for a period of 365 days or more.

c. In the case of a constrained site, the property owner/developer will confer with the Development Services Director to determine how best to meet the setback and landscape buffer requirements of this overlay zone.

V. Use Categories

a. For the purposes of landscape buffer requirements, developments are classified into the following land use categories, with corresponding zoning districts as defined in the City Code. The use categories for landscape buffer requirement purposes are:
   i. L/MDR = Low/Medium Density Residential (1-8 DU/Acre)
      1. R-1: Single Family Residential District
      2. R-2: Single Family Residential District
      3. R-3: Mixed Residential District (single-family development only)
      4. R-4: Single Family Residential
      5. A-R: Agricultural Residential District
      6. M-H: Mobile Home Residential District
      7. E-1: Estate Residential District
      8. T-Z: Transitional Zoning District
   ii. HDR = High Density Residential (8- 26 DU/Acre)
      1. R-3: Mixed Residential District (multi-family/attached residential development)
      2. R-5: Single Family Residential District
      3. R-6: Multi-Family Residential District
   iii. COM = Commercial
      1. C-1: Retail Commercial District
      2. O-1: Office District
      3. NC: Neighborhood Commercial
      4. MU-A: Mixed Use Activity Center District

5. CBD: Central Business District

iv. IND = Industrial, Business Park, Warehouse

1. C-2: Wholesale and Warehousing Commercial District
2. M-1: Industrial and Business Park District
3. BP: Business Park District
4. Utility

v. CIVIC = Civic, School, Church

VI. Setbacks

a. Rear – zero feet, unless abutting a residential zone, then a 15-foot setback with landscaped buffer is required for buildings up to 35 feet in height. For portions of a building greater than 35 feet in height, the building shall have a step-back of ten feet for each additional ten feet of height up to the maximum height of the district;
b. Side – zero feet, unless abutting a residential zone then, a 10-foot setback with landscaped buffer is required for buildings up to 35 feet in height. For portions of a building greater than 35 feet in height, the building shall have a step-back of ten feet for each additional ten feet of height up to the maximum height of the district;
c. Trash containers and trash compactors – 15 feet from the property line when adjacent to land planned or zoned for a single-family residential use.
    i. All trash containers and trash compactors shall be screened from residential zones and public rights-of-way by decorative wall or enclosure that extends not less than two feet above the height of the trash container or compactor.
    ii. Flag poles – 25 feet from any property line, with a maximum height of 50 feet. Pole heights greater than 50 feet may be approved by conditional use permit.

VII. Determination of Landscape Buffer Requirements

a. The table of buffer requirements (Table 1 - Required Buffers Between Land Use Designations) describes the type of buffer required as determined by the uses allowed in the applicable zone and the type of use which is designated, approved, or existing on lands adjacent/abutting the

proposed project. In order to determine the type of buffer required, the following procedures shall be followed:

i. Identify the abutting properties land use designation (existing and/or proposed).

ii. Where an abutting property has a lawful nonconforming use of less intensity than the allowable use of the property, buffering shall be based upon the allowable use. *(Note: This avoids the possibility of "too little buffering" should the nonconforming use be discontinued and subsequently developed with a use consistent with the future land use map).*

iii. Refer to Table 1 below for buffer requirements on each property boundary or portion thereof and select the desired buffer option for the specified type of buffer from those shown in Figure 1 through Figure 3.

iv. The following developments are not required to provide buffers:

1. Construction of single-family homes on "antiquated" original Rio Rancho Estates lots.
2. All licensed plant or tree nurseries shall be exempt from the terms and provisions of this section only in relation to those trees planted and growing on the premises of said licensee, which are so planted and growing for the sale or intended sale to the general public in the ordinary course of said licensee's business.
3. Passive recreation such as golf course, open space areas, hiking/equestrian/bicycle trails, or boardwalks.

Table 1. Required Buffers Between Land Use Designations

	ABUTTING LAND USE				
DEVELOPING LAND USE	L/MDR	HDR	COM	IND	CIVIC
L/MDR	NA	B	C	C	C
HDR	B	A	B	C	B
COM	C	B	A	A	B
IND	C	C	A	A	C
CIVIC	C	B	B	C	A

VIII. Types of Buffers

a. Required buffer types shall consist of “Type A", and "Type B" (see Figures 1 through 2) as follows:
    i. Type A: intended for similar land uses of differing intensities or densities, such as low density residential and higher density residential.
    ii. Type B: intended for different land use types with large differences in impacts and intensity, such as single family residential and commercial uses.
b. Each buffer type consists of several options that utilize different landscape features to create an appropriate buffer between uses. Appropriate landscape features are determined by the total width of the landscape buffer area, the density of trees and shrubs proposed, the abutting land use, and existing site conditions.
c. In no case will a required buffer of less than five (5) feet in width be allowed except when one (1) of the following conditions exists and is indicated on the site plan for the proposed development or project:
    i. The adjacent property is designated with a nonresidential land use category and is vacant.

ii. The adjacent property has existing vegetation sufficient in size, types of plantings, and location that serve in the same capacity as the required buffers between the parcels.

d. For projects that propose to retain seventy-five (75) feet of undisturbed area between the extent of the development and the property line, the Development Services Director may grant an exemption from buffering requirements of this section. This exemption does not apply to industrial, extractive, or outdoor recreation uses. Additionally, the site plan must show that the undisturbed area has an existing mixture of trees, shrubs, and other vegetation or native landscaping that would serve in the same capacity as the required buffer.

e. For projects that are required to provide a buffer to adjacent residentially zoned property that is currently vacant, the applicant may plant the required buffer at the proper density and configuration, but may utilize smaller plants to allow for a longer period to maturity. All plants that are smaller than required shall be of a type that will reach the required height within two (2) years from the time of planting.

f. Alternative designs for required buffers may be approved by the Development Services Director upon a finding that the required buffer will require alterations of the existing improvements on the property or that such alternative designs meets the intent of these regulations and sound landscaping practice. In no case is the Director authorized to reduce the width of a buffer or total number of plants required on the site.

IX. Use and Location of Buffers

a. Areas identified as required buffers may also be used as follows:

i. Satisfaction of setback/yard requirements, if any.

ii. Satisfaction of open space requirements, if any (but not less than the required setbacks/yards).

iii. May contain stormwater retention or detention areas (including green infrastructure solutions), so long as the required buffer plantings are provided and the design and landscaping of the buffer does not interfere with proper functioning of the drainage system and the design water depth or water flow does not harm the viability of the plantings.

iv. Passive recreation such as pedestrian, bicycle, or equestrian trails subject to the following limitations:
    1. No plant material is eliminated.
    2. The total width of the buffer is maintained.
    3. All other requirements of these regulations are met.

b. The following uses shall not be allowed in a required buffer: principal structures, accessory structures, plat fields, stables, swimming pools, tennis courts, or similar active recreation uses; storage facilities, or parking facilities.

c. General location of design requirements:
    i. Buffers shall be located on the outer perimeter of a lot or parcel that abut developments of a different land use type and/or intensity and extend the entire length of the lot or parcel boundary line.
    ii. Buffers shall not be located on any portion of an existing, dedicated, or proposed right-of-way, roadway easement, or private street without prior approval of the Development Services Director.
        1. In some cases, landscape areas may be located within existing or dedicated street right-of-way or roadway easement; however, this requires the written approval by the Development Services Director prior to installation.
    iii. Where an existing utility easement is partially or wholly within a required buffer, the developer shall design the buffer to eliminate or minimize plantings within the easement to ensure proper clearance of all existing or proposed utility equipment. Such design may necessitate choosing a buffer with more land area and fewer required plantings.

X. <u>Barriers & Fencing</u>

a. Fencing for the purpose of security or protection is allowable within all buffers provided the fence complies with the applicable fence or wall requirements and standards found in the City Code. Developments proposing a privacy fence or wall six (6) feet or more in height within a required buffer may be allowed a fifty (50) percent reduction in the density of plantings required. Such request shall be submitted in writing by the applicant and shall include provisions by the owner

for maintenance of the buffer and the fencing. This reduction does not apply to industrial, extractive, or active outdoor recreational uses.

XI. Plantings and Trees

a. At least 75% percent of landscape area shall be covered with living, vegetative materials, including trees, shrubs, ground cover, or flowers. Coverage will be calculated from the mature spread of the plants. To minimized water consumption the use of ground cover other than turf grass and plants that are native or adaptable to the climate of Rio Rancho is encouraged.
b. Plant Types
    i. Appropriate species of trees, shrubs, and hedges to use within landscape buffer areas are shown in Figure 4.
    ii. In general, plant species should be xeric, native species that will prosper within the selected buffer size, and reach mature heights as described below.
    iii. All plants utilized shall be of a type that the growth will reach the required height criteria within a two (2) year period from the time of planting.
c. Trees
    i. Trees in buffers less than ten (10) feet should be of a size that will prosper within this size buffer. Trees in buffers of more than ten (10) feet may be any size provided; however, at least one-half of the required trees shall be a species that reach a minimum height of twenty (20) feet at maturity.
    ii. Trees used in required buffers may be used to meet the required plantings for the property, provided the trees meet or exceed all size, type, and location requirements for tree planting.
d. Shrubs
    i. Shrubs shall be of species that have an average mature height of at least two (2) feet.
e. Hedges
    i. Continuous hedges shall have a height of at least four (4) feet and form a continuous screening.
    ii. Irregular hedges shall have a height of at least four (4) feet, and shall be distributed as to screen at least 75 percent of the buffer area per hundred linear feet.

XII. Landscape Elements

a. Berms

i. Berms are raised areas of the landscape buffer that may be added to create visual interest and screening between uses. Berms are appropriate in landscape buffers areas that are at least fifteen (15) feet wide.

ii. Minimum berm height shall be at least 24 inches, on average, at the crest of the berm, with a maximum berm height of five (5) feet.

b. Swales & Green Infrastructure

i. Swales are lowered areas of the landscape buffer that are designed to manage storm water runoff through retention, infiltration and filtration of water runoff. Swales are appropriate in landscape buffers areas that are at least ten (10) feet wide.

ii. Swales shall be on average three (3) feet wide by one (1) foot deep, and have a total capacity of at least 300 cubic feet per 100 linear feet of buffer area.

FIGURE 8-12. TYPE A LANDSCAPE BUFFER EXAMPLES

Type A buffers are intended for similar land uses of different intensities or densities, such as single-family residences abutting a multifamily apartment complex.

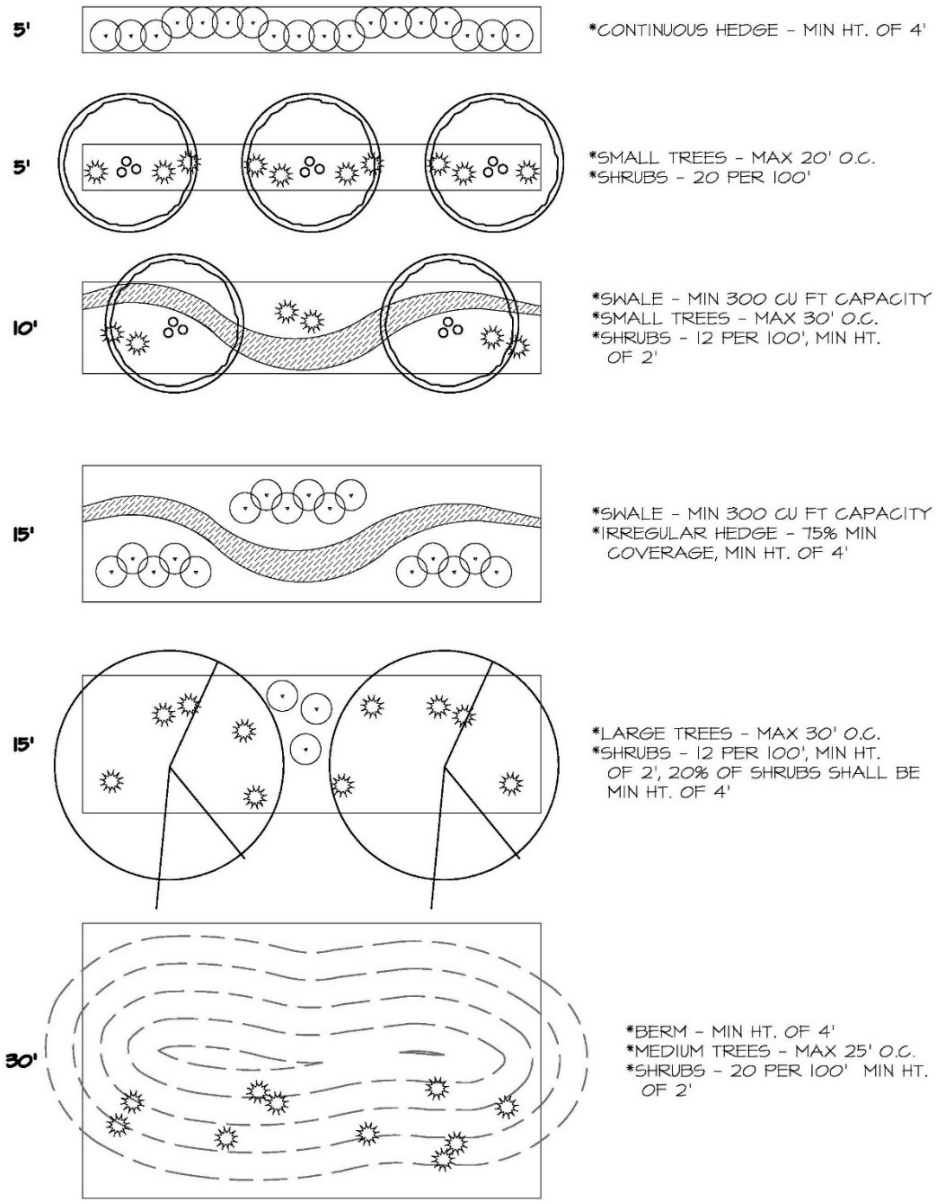


FIGURE 8-13. TYPE B LANDSCAPE BUFFER EXAMPLES

This buffer is intended for different land use types with large differences in density, intensity, height, or building mass, such as a single family residential neighborhood adjacent to a multi-story apartment complex, a multi-story office or a community scale shopping center or “big box” retail.

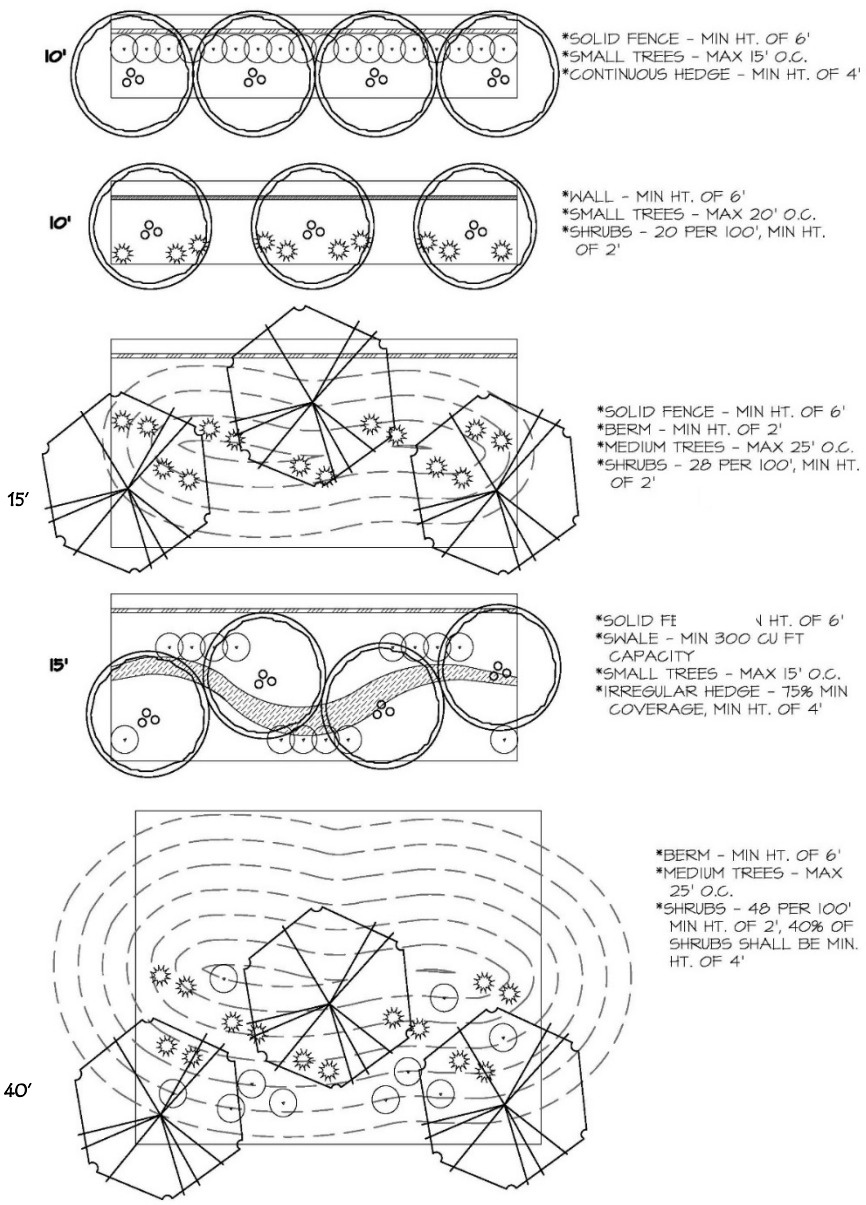


FIGURE 8-14. RECOMMENDED LANDSCAPE BUFFER PLANT LIS

BUFFER PLANT LIST

SMALL TREES (TREES WITH UP TO 20' WIDE CANOPY AT MATURITY)

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	HT x SPR
NM OLIVE	Forestiera neomexicana	15' X 15'
DESERT WILLOW	Chilopsis linearis	25' X 25'
CHASTE TREE	Vitex agnus-castus	25' X 20'
REDBUD SPECIES	Cercis sp.	20' x 15'
MIMOSA	Albizia julibrissin	20' X 20'
ENGLISH OR WASHINGTON HAWTHORN	Crataegus sp.	20' x 20'
FRAGRANT ASH	Fraxinus cuspidata	20' X 20'
CRAPE MYRTLE	lagerstroemia indica	15' x 15'
SCREWBEAN OR WESTERN MESQUITE	Prosopsis sp.	20' X 20'
SUMAC SPECIES	Rhus sp.	15' x 20'
AFGHAN OR PINON PINE	Pinus sp.	20' x 15'
JUNIPER SPECIES	Juniperus sp.	UP TO 20'

MEDIUM TREES (TREES WITH 20'-30' WIDE CANOPY AT MATURITY)

SENSATION BOX ELDER	Acer negundo 'Sensation'	40' X 30'
NETLEAF HACKBERRY	Celtis reticulata	25' X 25'
ASH SPECIES	Fraxinus sp.	UP TO 30'
GOLDEN RAIN TREE	koelreuteria paniculata	25' x 25'
CHISOS OAK	Quercus gravesii	25' X 25'
LOCUST SPECIES	Robinia sp.	40' x 25'
WESTERN SOAPBERRY	Sapindus drummondii	30' X 30'
AUSTRIAN PINE	Pinus nigra	25' X 30'
ESCARPMENT LIVE OAK	Quercus fusiformis	25' X 30'

LARGE TREES (TREES WITH > 30' WIDE CANOPY AT MATURITY)

PECAN	Carya illinoinensis	40' X 40'
COMMON HACKBERRY	Celtis occidentalis	40' X 40'
MODESTO ASH	Fraxinus velutina	40' X 35'
THORNLESS HONEY LOCUST	Gleditsia triacanthos inermis	50' x 45'
CHINESE PISTACHE	Pistacia chinensis	60' X 60'
COTTONWOOD	Populus wislisenii or fremontii	50' x 50'
LACEBARK ELM	Ulmus parvifolia	50' X 50'
JAPANESE PAGODA TREE	Syringa reticulata	35' X 35'
ALLIGATOR JUNIPER	Juniperus deppeana	60' X 40'
EMORY OAK	Quercus emoryi	35' X 35'

HEDGE SHRUBS (SHRUBS MORE THAN 4' TALL AT MATURITY)

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	HT x SPR
BARBERRY SPECIES	Berberis thunbergii	4' X 4'
BUTTERFLY BUSH	Buddleia spp.	5' X 5'
PEA SHRUB	Caragana spp.	8' X 8'
FLOWERING QUINCE	Chaenomeles japonica	6' x 6'
GOLDEN CURRANT	Ribes aureum	6' X 6'
THREE LEAF SUMAC	Rhus trilobata	6' x 6'
SAND SAGE	Artemesia filifolia	4' X 4'
PARNEY COTONEASTER	Contoneaster lacteus	8' x 10'
SILVERBERRY	Elaegnus pungens	10' X 10'
MOUNTAIN MAHOGANY	Cercocarpus montanus	10' X 8'
ARIZONA ROSEWOOD	Vaquelinia sp.	12' x 10'
JUNIPER SPECIES	Juniperus sp.	UP TO 10'

8.9. REFERENCES

[1] MRCOG 2040 Socioeconomic Forecast by Data Analysis Subzone, June 2015 and American Community Survey (ACS) Census Block Group 3, Census Tract 107.20, Sandoval County, New Mexico
[2] Census 2000 – 2010.
[3] US 2014 Population Estimates Program
[4] MRCOG 2040 Socioeconomic Forecast by Data Analysis Subzone, June 2015
[5] MRCOG; American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2009-2013
[6] American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2009-2013
[7] ACS
[8] ACS Census Block Group 3, Census Tract 107.20, Sandoval County, New Mexico
[9] ACS
[10] MRCOG
[11] MRCOG
[12] Data from County Assessor Data and aerial photography counts of developed lots, September, 2015.
[13] MRCOG
[14] ACS
[15] MRCOG
[16] City of Rio Rancho, New Mexico 2010 – 2015 Economic Development Plan
[17] Estimation based on 10,000 residents needing 30 square feet of retail each.
[18] Estimates from County Assessor parcel data.
[19] Sites aerial photography survey, November 2015.
[20] MRMPO, Long Range Transportation System Guide, 2015.