

Regional Plan



Focus 2050

FOCUS
2050

**Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments
of New Mexico**

**Counties and Municipalities
in the Focus 2050 Regional Plan Area**

Bernalillo County

- City of Albuquerque*
- Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque*
- Village of Tijeras*

Sandoval County

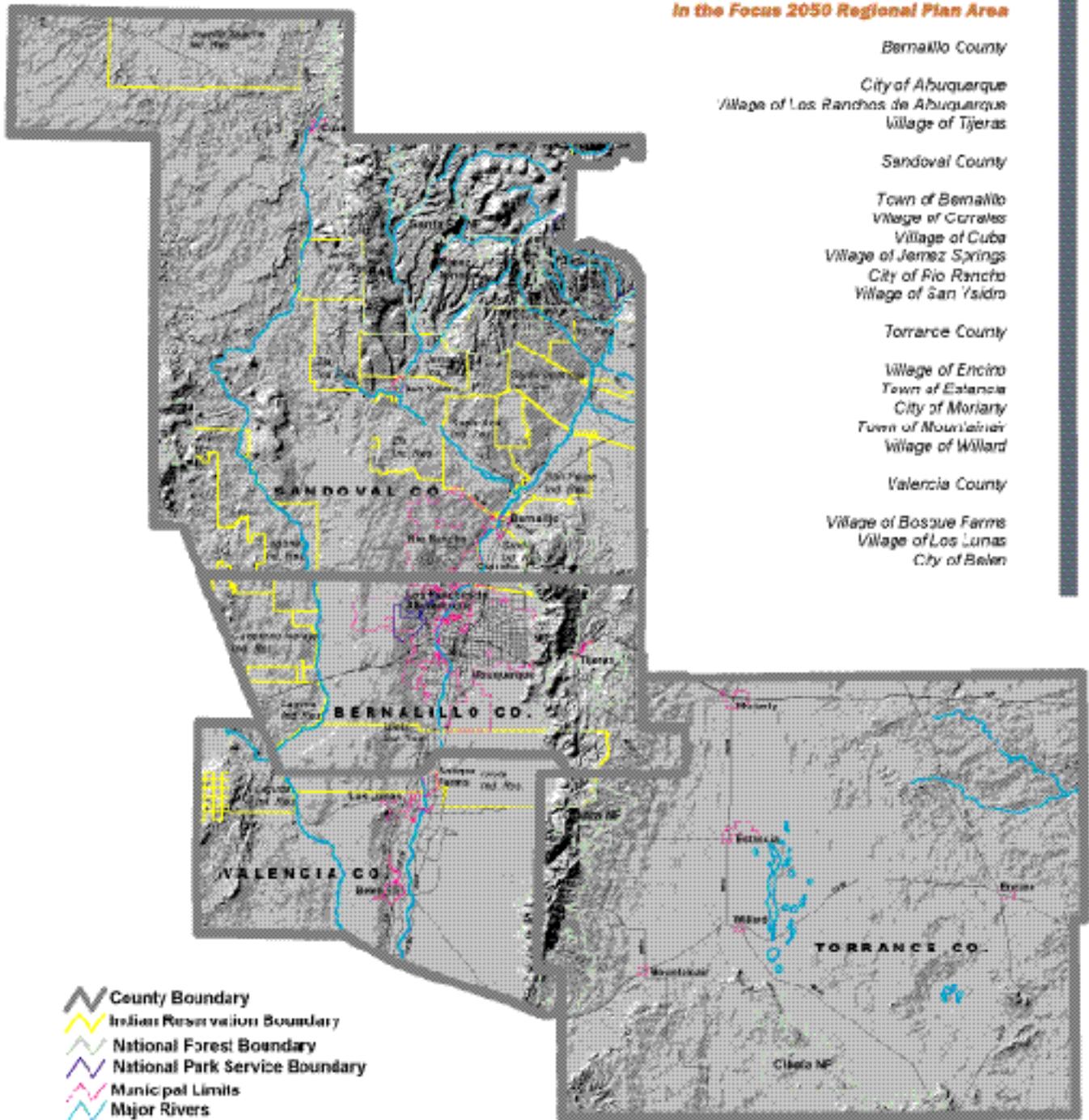
- Town of Bernalillo*
- Village of Corrales*
- Village of Cuba*
- Village of Jemez Springs*
- City of Rio Rancho*
- Village of San Ysidro*

Torrance County

- Village of Encino*
- Town of Estancia*
- City of Moriarty*
- Town of Mountainair*
- Village of Willard*

Valencia County

- Village of Bosque Farms*
- Village of Los Lunas*
- City of Belen*



- County Boundary
- Indian Reservation Boundary
- National Forest Boundary
- National Park Service Boundary
- Municipal Limits
- Major Rivers
- Major Roads

0 20 40 Miles

Focus 2050 Regional Plan Area

State Planning and Development District 3, Central New Mexico

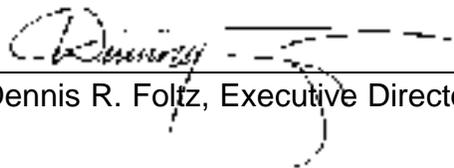
Focus 2050 Regional Plan

Approved by the
Board of Directors
of the
Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments
on February 10, 2000

CERTIFICATION: I, Dennis R. Foltz, Executive Director, hereby certify that the attached MRGCOG Focus 2050 Regional Plan is a true and correct copy as approved by the MRGCOG Board of Directors and that a true and correct copy of Resolution MRGCOG R-1999-11 incorporated in this document and said Plan have been sent to each local government and special district within the MRGCOG region.

March 27, 2000

Date



Dennis R. Foltz, Executive Director

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Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments of New Mexico
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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A. Plan Principles

Focus 2050 is the first regional general plan for this area in central New Mexico. The regional plan is intended to be:

- visionary–
to make sure we take the long-term view and find creative ways to make the best future possible;
- comprehensive–
to ensure that the full region is considered and all of the complex interrelationships between land use, transportation, water, the economy, and other issues are understood and addressed;
- implementable–
to formulate approaches and a set of actions that can be followed to result in the preferred future;
- fiscally responsible–
to demonstrate efficiencies and cost savings in utility infrastructure, roads, transit systems, and other facilities and to provide a balance of land uses by communities so there are adequate public revenues to provide services; and
- internally consistent–
to make sure policy direction for each of the topical areas covered in the Plan will complement and support one another.

The plan is a framework which provides a common vision and vocabulary for regional functional planning (e.g., transportation, economic development water, open space, and housing). It provides context for local comprehensive and local functional planning. The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments recognizes the diverse character and unique needs of each of the communities and areas within the region. As such, plans that are developed for local areas and communities are anticipated to integrate a variety of planning concepts, including ideas contained in this plan as well as other planning techniques not included in this plan to achieve and meet the long-term needs that are in the best interests of the individual and diverse community areas.

The regional plan does not take the place of local planning or regulatory functions. It establishes the regional system characteristics with which local plans should be consistent. Many local issues will not be affected by the regional plan and specific consistency does not need to be established. Additionally, it is the intent of the Regional Plan to recognize the interest of private property owners and to respect private property rights, due process, and just compensation.

B. Legal Foundation of Plan

The Focus 2050 Regional Plan is being prepared in compliance with Section 3, Article 56 of the New Mexico State Statutes, the Regional Planning Act. This statute enables the formation of regional planning agencies, such as the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG), and requires them to prepare plans for the development of the region. According to the statute, regional plans “shall include but not be limited to (1) a statement of the objectives, standards and principles sought to be expressed in the plan, (2) recommendations for the most desirable pattern and intensity of general land use within the region in the light of the best available information concerning natural environmental factors, the present and perspective economic and demographic bases of the region, and the relation of land use within the region to land use in adjoining regions; (3) recommendations for the general circulation pattern of the region, including land, water, and air, transportation and communication facilities; ... (4) recommendations concerning the need and proposed general location of public and private works and facilities... which are regional, and (5) recommendations for the long range programming and financing of capital projects and facilities. ”

The Articles of Agreement establishing the MRGCOG further clarify the intended function of the regional plan: “The Council shall receive and review for compatibility with regional plans all proposed comprehensive land use, circulation and public facilities plans, and regulations, official maps and building codes of local governments in the Region and any amendments or revision thereof and make recommendations for their modification where necessary to achieve compatibility” (Article VII, Section 7).

The MRGCOG has other responsibilities and authorities which complement the Focus 2050 regional planning activity. The MRGCOG is formed under the Joint Powers Act, authorizing various cooperative inter- governmental activities in addition to planning. The MRGCOG is designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for transportation planning and capital programming in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area. As designated by the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department, MRGCOG is the "Regional Planning Organization" for transportation planning in the region outside of the Metropolitan Area. The MRGCOG is designated by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as the Economic District for State Planning and Development District 3. Finally, the MRGCOG is designated by the State Interstate Stream Commission as the entity responsible for preparing a regional water plan for the Middle Rio Grande Basin.

C. Scope of Plan

Topical Scope of the Plan:

The Plan addresses several interrelated topical areas at a regional scale, as illustrated in Figure 1. Each of the topical areas considered in Focus 2050 will eventually have its own element in the Regional Plan. The Growth Management Strategy

in Chapter IV is the land use element of the Regional Plan, and is the only element being adopted at this time. Elements addressing other subjects may be added later. The initial framework Plan is land use based and provides guidance on matters critically affected by land use.

The regional nature of the principal subjects of the regional plan is briefly discussed below. Trying to address any of these subjects without the proper regional context inevitably will yield less than optimum solutions.

- **Land use** is an overall subject area which forms a "quilt" of interrelationships regarding both topics and geography. Issues such as urban form patterns, co-location of jobs, and housing character are largely related to land use.
- **Transportation** forms the connection from one land use to another. Integrating land use and transportation solutions offers the best opportunity to reduce air pollution, conserve energy, and protect the natural environment. Regional and inter-regional transportation systems today consist of arterial and highway roads, airport service, bus, and freight and passenger train service. In the future, there may be enhanced transit services throughout the region.

**Figure 1
Interrelated Topical Areas of the Regional Plan**



- **Open space** is one of the systems that holds our region together, shapes the region's urban form, and protects environmental resources, such as the Rio Grande Bosque and the Sandia, Manzano and Jemez Mountains.

- **Utility infrastructure** for water, sewerage and storm drainage forms the basis for urban development, accounts for a major share of public costs, and can influence the Region's urban form. Private utilities including telecommunications, electric power and natural gas are also critical services in the region.

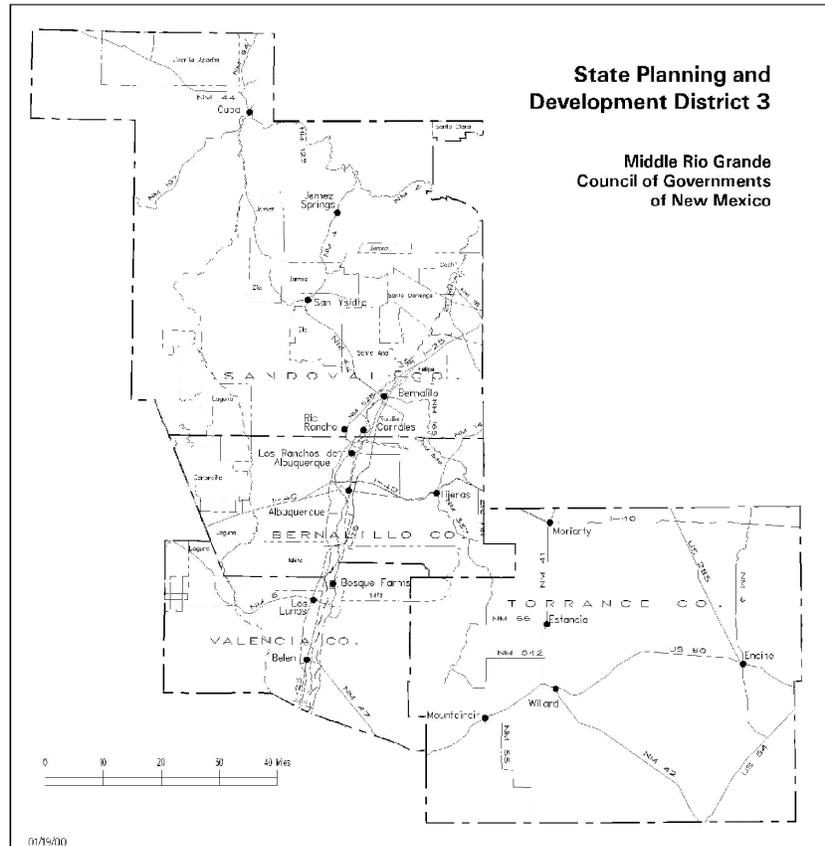
- **Air quality** is a critical environmental subject for the region. The quality of the air we breathe is affected principally by vehicular traffic, wood burning, dust, and pollen. Industries and power plants can also affect air quality. An example of the regional character of air pollution is that while only some areas experience air pollution problems, vehicles coming into that area from outside contribute to air pollution; and non-local pollutants such as ozone are created away from the initial catalysts within the same airshed.

- **Water** is a regional topic as residents, farmers and businesses of the Region share groundwater underlying vast portions of the Region and surface water flowing across jurisdictional lines.

- **Economic development** is increasingly a regional topic in today's Global Economy. The Middle Rio Grande Region operates as an economic unit and "competes" for high quality jobs on a metropolitan regional basis against other metropolitan regions in the world.

- **Housing affordability** is a result of regional housing demand and supply. Sometimes residents cannot afford to live in the community where they work or spend most

Map 1 Regional Plan Area



of their time; or long-term residents cannot afford to stay in their communities.

- **Financing/Capital Improvements** is the strategy for financing the regional plan. Transportation infrastructure and other capital expenses should be generally quantified at the regional scale and current and new funding sources should be identified.

Geographic Scope of Plan:

The study area for the Focus 2050 Regional Plan is comprised of the four county area of Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia Counties, known as State Planning and Development District 3. The 9,300 square mile area contains a great deal of diversity in settlements, ecosystems, and vegetative zones. It includes urban, small town and rural areas, and stunning natural environmental features. Map 1 shows the political boundaries of the region.



D. Process for Developing the Plan

Public involvement is a critical component of Focus 2050. The main public participation and education efforts were Regional Visioning, FutureScape and Town Hall Live. Each of these series of events consisted of multiple activities and venues to better reach broader segments of the region's population.

The visioning process consisted of two rounds of four Visioning Workshops in each of the MRGCOG Counties. The general public was invited to these meetings; and over 400 persons attended. The workshops were supplemented by community interviews and facilitated discussions with planning commissions of the region and with various individuals and groups concerned about development issues. The process culminated in the Vision Forum, held in December 1997 at which delegates from the workshops came together and wrote the Vision Statement and Goals (see Chapter III). The MRGCOG Board of Directors adopted the Vision Statement for use in developing the Regional Plan on January 8, 1998.

The FutureScape series consisted of group discussions, open houses and conferences across the region. At four conferences held in January 1999, high school student teams from Albuquerque, Belen, Estancia, Los Lunas and Rio Rancho presented the four "screen scenarios for growth" produced by the MRGCOG. Participants registered their votes on electronic key pads regarding key issues raised through the presentations.

Presentations on Focus 2050 were made at numerous meetings of elected officials, planning commissions and other groups throughout the region. Meetings were organized before the Regional Visioning, FutureScape and Town Hall events. Progress on the plan and meeting dates

were announced through extensive mailings and notices in newsletters. Newspapers throughout the region covered Focus 2050, using regular news releases submitted by the MRGCOG as well as other sources of information.

The Town Hall series of meetings was the final set of public and technical meetings in creating the draft regional plan. Listening sessions with local elected officials, appointed commission members and staff were held in each of the four MRGCOG Counties, supplemented by community interviews. The Leadership Forum held in October 1999, was an event for evaluating and making changes to the draft preferred land use alternative, and crafting the policy framework to support the preferred alternative. After the Leadership Forum, changes were made to the map and policy framework and the MRGCOG Executive Board authorized issuing the plan for review. During the "Town Hall Live" on December 9, 1999, the preferred scenario and draft regional plan were presented and discussed to ensure the involvement of the general public. A live broadcast was aired on CBS Southwest TV Channel 13. Questionnaires were included accompanying stories and color maps in the Albuquerque Journal. The questionnaires were also posted on the MRGCOG's website, tabulated and reported to the MRGCOG Board of Directors. Town Hall input was entered into the public record for the Public Hearing on approval of the regional plan.

The Regional Plan and public comments were presented to the MRGCOG Board of Directors at the December 16, 1999 public hearing, prior to consideration of plan approval. On February 10, 2000, after discussions at several meetings, the Board of Directors approved the Focus 2050 Regional Plan.

Policy and technical committees working on various aspects of Focus 2050 were formed throughout the process beginning in 1996. The Executive Board of the MRGCOG was the policy body guiding Focus 2050. The Regional Land Use Task Force was the overall technical advisory committee. The technical subcommittees for Focus 2050 consisted of:

- Land Use Alternatives Task Group
- Regional Linked Open Space Task Group
- Economic Sustainability Task Group
- Growth Management Task Group
- Urban Agriculture Task Group
- Focus 2050 Water Subcommittee
- Focus 2050 Transportation Subcommittee.

Technical appendices to the Regional Plan provide further information on technical aspects of the plan and procedures used for its development. These appendices were not approved as components of the plan.

One of the most important research and development achievements of Focus 2050 was the creation and use of the Land Use Analysis Model (LAM). This geographic information system (GIS) computer application allowed the building of alternative land use scenarios by creating polygonal units of geography and attributing to each polygon data on land use types, dwelling unit density and employment density. LAM contains a modeling module for the distribution of land uses based on evaluative scoring of physical and policy constraints and inducements. This product will likely have great use for further land analysis by MRGCOG and local member governments.

The plan could not have been accomplished without the involvement of elected officials, local, State and Federal technical staff, private sector citizens, non-profit sector representatives and concerned members of the general public.

E. Process for Plan Review and Amendment

A cycle and process for periodic review of the Regional Plan, as well as adding major new elements to the Plan are necessary to make the plan a living document. It is anticipated that the Regional Plan will be updated initially within the first three years after its approval to incorporate refinements once local governments have prepared and adopted their plans and regulations, and once regional functional plan elements have been developed. Major elements for transportation and economic development are expected to be ready for Board consideration sometime during year 2000. The regional water plan is expected to be completed in two to three years.

F. Process for Plan Implementation

The MRGCOG will ensure that future elements of the Regional Plan (initially transportation and economic development) will be developed to be consistent with the land use-based Regional Growth Strategy. An "Implementation Section", to identify more specific policy direction and implementation activities for Focus 2050, will be developed. Implementation Principles in Chapter V aspires to establish the foundation for developing an implementation program for the plan. It will be further defined when developing the Implementation Section.

Much of the Regional Plan implementation program is educational and voluntary. For example, as a first step, MRGCOG may provide integrated technical support services for local governments. Such services, include assistance with comprehensive and other functional plans, training, regional data, best development practices, public involvement methods, and economic impact assessments.

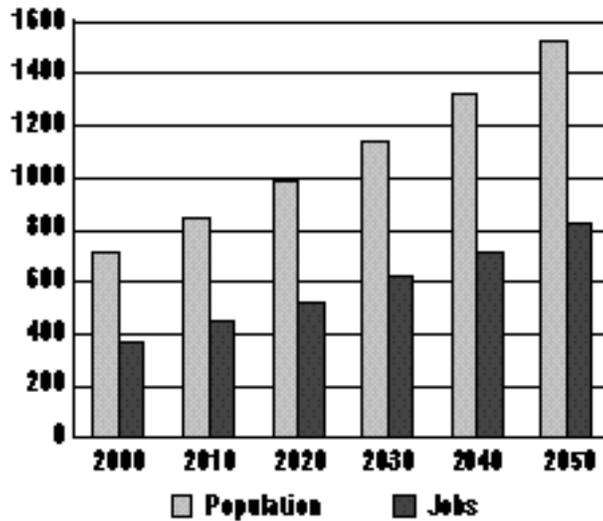
G. Key Assumptions

The long range future of the Middle Rio Grande region depends on a great many variables; some are affected by local and regional actions, and others depend upon dynamics originating outside of the region. Therefore, several assumptions needed to be made to form the foundation of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan. Below are the main assumptions used to guide development of the Plan.

- **Projections** of regional population, dwelling units and employment growth:
 - The region is projected to grow from approximately 707,000 persons today to 1,536,100 persons by year 2050. Employment in the region is projected to grow from 364,000 employees today to 847,700 employees by year 2050 (see Figure 2).
 - 2050 projections were accepted by resolution of the MRGCOG Board of Directors. The Report, Socioeconomic Estimates and Forecasts to 2050, is available at the MRGCOG Office.

- **Vision Statement and Goals**
 - The results of the regional visioning process are included in Chapter III of this Report. The Visioning Process Report document is also available at the MRGCOG Office.
- **Criteria for the evaluation** of alternative land use scenarios
 - The criteria were approved by the MRGCOG Executive Board in September 1998.

**Figure 2
Regional Population and
Employment Projections
(in thousands)**



Chapter II EXISTING REGIONAL CONDITIONS

“Downtown New Mexico”

The Middle Rio Grande region serves many of the functions of “downtown” for the State of New Mexico. Our region contains the largest metropolitan area and the largest single city in New Mexico. The region employs roughly half of the State’s workers and contains 40% of its population. It is the financial center as well as the retail commercial center of New Mexico. This region leads the scientific and high technology sectors of the State. Albuquerque is the only place where all of the modes of transportation in the State come together, including the intersection of two freeways, passenger and freight rail service, inter-regional and city bus service, and the only full service airport. The International Sunport Airport is served by 11 major commercial carriers, 2 commuter airlines, and 4 freight carriers. The region contains the leading medical facilities of the State, as well as the University of New Mexico and the Technical Vocational Institute. The museums and the Biological Park (Zoo, Aquarium and Botanical Gardens) are cultural treasures for the enjoyment of the entire State. The New Mexico State Fair is an annual gathering of residents from across the State to meet and share our diverse heritages, artistic accomplishments and other common interests, and to have fun. The rich ethnic diversity of the region reflects New

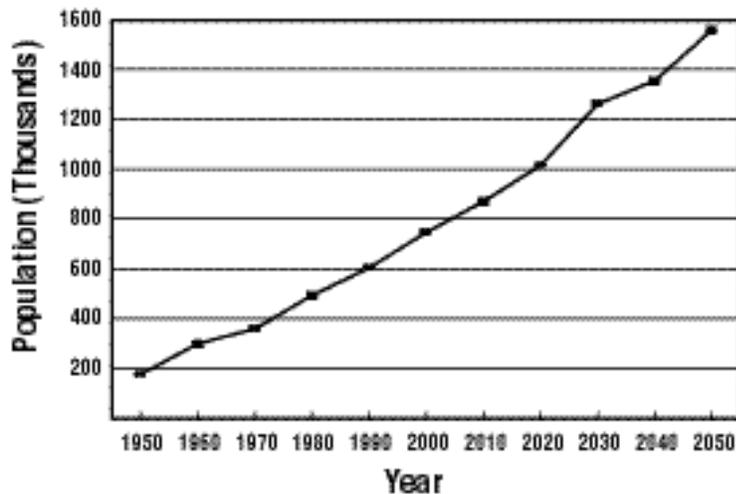
Mexico’s proud heritage, with 37% of the population identified to have Hispanic origin (Hispanic origin is self identified and individuals can be of any race), 5% of the population American Indian, 76% of the population White, 2% Black, and another 17% consisting of other ethnicities besides White, Black and American Indian.

A. Demographic Profile: Historic and Projected Growth of Population, Employment and Dwelling Units

The Middle Rio Grande region has experienced several major waves of growth over the last fifty years. During this period, the region’s population increased by 255%, as shown in Figure 3.

In the 1950’s, Albuquerque’s dramatic growth was caused by increasing defense expenditures directed into Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratories. During the decade of the 1950’s Torrance County switched from dryland farming to irrigation. Population grew in the 1980’s due in part to Intel’s expansion and the advent of other high technology manufacturing and services. Diversification of the metropolitan economy has resulted in generally more consistent growth rates during the 1990’s than was experienced over the past 40 years.

**Figure 3
Historic and Projected Population of the
Middle Rio Grande Region
1950-2050**



Looking toward the next 50 years, population in the regional plan study area is projected to increase by 829,000 persons or approximately 117%. The annual rate of growth is actually lower than it has been historically, as shown in Table 1. The growth rate is anticipated to decrease by about half in the next fifty years compared to the past sixty years. The 2050 projection is based on long term economic and demographic trends and long term forecasts by the University of New Mexico - Bureau of Business and Economic Research (UNM-BBER), the U.S. Bureau of Census, the WEFA Group (a full- service national economic and information consulting firm) and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. This single forecast is a demand forecast through the horizon year of the Regional Plan and may be somewhat too low or too high based on future dynamics and resources. The margin of error for a 50 year forecast is greater than for a short- range forecast; however, the implications to the region are similar whether actually attained in 40 years or 60 years instead of 50 years.

Historic growth rates fluctuate significantly on an annual or decade basis for the Counties other than Bernalillo County. Table 2 shows population counts by County and municipality by decades between 1960 - 1990 and estimates for 1995. Bernalillo County experienced annual growth rates between 1% - 4% while growth rates in the other three counties of the region varied between 4% - 30%. The steadier growth rate for Bernalillo County can be explained largely by its larger population base, for which each percentage represents more people than for a largely rural

county with a small population base. Similarly, the rate of growth projected for the region out to year 2050 is slower than during the past 60 years, reflecting the increased regional population base.

The proportion of the region's population living in the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County has remained fairly steady over the last 40 years. However, since 1980 a shift of the population has become increasingly evident through stronger growth in the surrounding counties than within Bernalillo County, as shown in Figure 4. Still, Bernalillo County remains dominant with 78% of the region's total population.

Figure 4
Percentage of Growth Captured by Counties of the Region 1970-1996

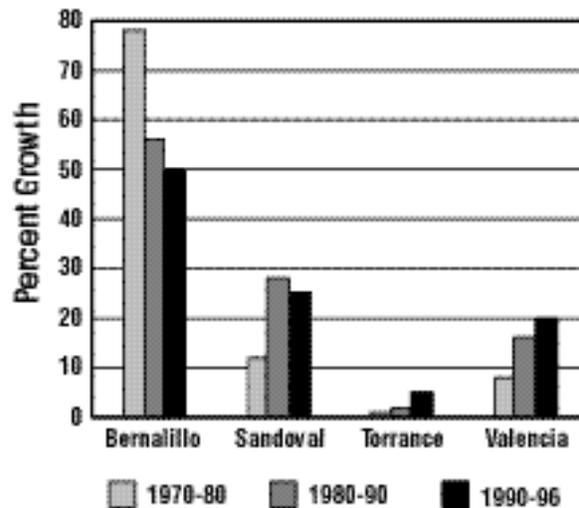


Table 1
Comparative Historic and Forecasted Growth Rate for Albuquerque and New Mexico Planning and Development District 3¹

	City of Albuquerque Annual Growth Rate²	District 3 Annual Growth Rate
1930-1960	6.98%	4.41%
1960-1990	2.18%	2.34%
1930-1990	4.56%	3.37%
1990-2050 ³	---	1.54%

Source: Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments

1 State Planning and Development District 3 includes Bernalillo, Valencia, Sandoval and Torrance Counties and is served by the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG).

2 U.S. Census Bureau, calculated by MRGCOG

3 "Socioeconomic Estimates and Forecasts to 2050 for State Planning and Development District 3 and Southern Sandoval County", MRGCOG Publication TR-127, March 1997. Forecasts to year 2050 were prepared only for the region and not for individual municipalities.

**Table 2
Historic Population of the Counties and Municipalities
of the Region 1960-1995**

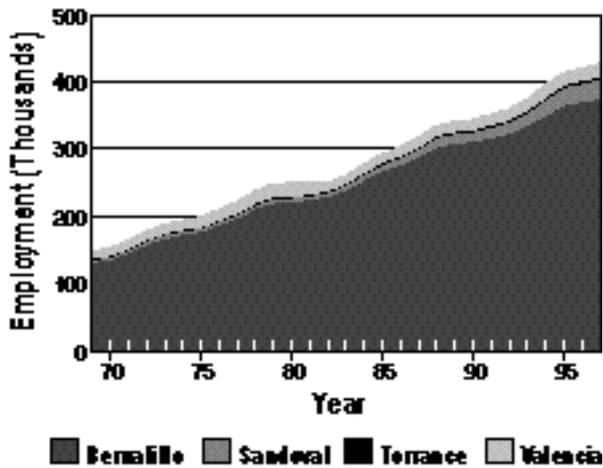
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1995
COUNTIES					
Bernalillo	262,199	315,774	419,700	480,577	524,820
Sandoval	14,201	17,492	34,799	63,319	79,268
Torrance	6,497	5,290	7,491	10,285	13,038
Valencia *	16,146	20,451	30,769	45,235	56,833
MUNICIPALITIES					
Albuquerque	201,189	243,751	331,767	384,736	418,000
Belen	5,031	4,823	5,617	6,547	6,900
Bernalillo	2,574	2,016	3,012	5,960	7,000
Bosque Farms			3,353	3,791	4,200
Corrales			2,791	5,453	6,600
Cuba			609	760	750
Encino		250	155	131	120
Estancia		721	830	792	950
Jemez Springs		356	316	413	500
Los Lunas		973	3,525	6,013	8,000
Los Ranchos de Albuquerque		1,900	2,702	3,955	5,700
Moriarty		758	1,276	1,399	1,700
Mountainair		1,022	1,170	925	1,000
Rio Rancho			9,985	32,505	43,800
San Ysidro			199	233	275
Tijeras			311	340	390
Willard		209	166	183	185
TOTAL DISTRICT 3	299,043	369,007	492,759	599,416	673,959
Percent NM Population in District 3	31.4	35.3	37.8	39.6	40.0
TOTAL NEW MEXICO	951,023	1,016,000	1,302,894	1,515,069	1,685,401

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Census, UNM-BBER, and MRGCOG

*Note: Populations for Valencia County prior to 1990 are for the current boundaries of Valencia County rather than the county boundaries in those years.

Employment growth has occurred in different places in the region than population growth. While population growth has resulted in relatively more people residing in the counties surrounding Bernalillo County, most of the region's new jobs have followed a long term trend of moving into Bernalillo County, as shown in Figure 5. Nonetheless, dramatic gains of employment have recently occurred in Sandoval and Valencia Counties.

**Figure 5
Historic Employment of the Middle
Rio Grande Region by Decade
1970-1990**



Participation in the labor force (the portion of the population age 16 and over who are employed) has increased during the past decade. As we know, there are more women in the work force; and others who may have chosen not to work now are working. These changes account in part for a faster growth rate of employment than population. Labor force participation is expected to increase in the future.

Looking towards the future, employment in the region is projected to increase from approximately 364,000 employees to 847,700 employees by year 2050, an increase of 133% over the next fifty years. Table 3 and Figure 6 show projected employment and population by decade. The employment projection is a continuation of 2020 forecasts and based in part on the UNM-BBER economic model and a BEA forecast of New Mexico to 2045.

The stock of dwelling units in the region is projected to increase by 134% from 293,000 to 686,001. Housing is a function of population, household size, and the occupancy rate of dwelling units.

**Table 3
Employment and Population Forecasted for the
Middle Rio Grande Region**

Year	Forecast for SPDD3	
	Population	Employment
2000	736,020	394,910
2010	857,168	476,333
2020	998,443	557,071
2030	1,156,644	651,179
2040	1,335,210	745,494
2050	1,536,000	847,700

Sources: UNM-BBER and MRGCOG

**Figure 6
Employment and Population Forecasted
for the Middle Rio Grande Region
2000-2050**

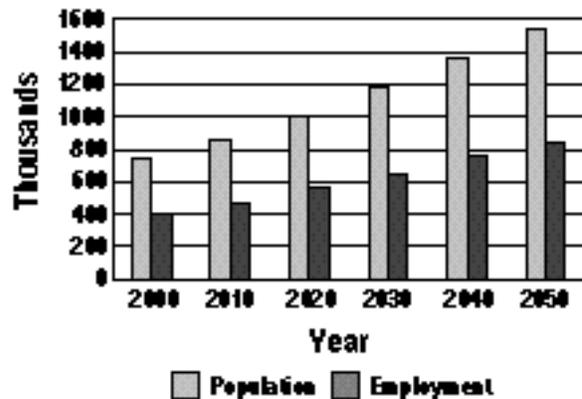


Table 4 displays the housing mix of the region for Census Year 1990. The region's housing mix was 76% single family and 24% multi-family. In 1990, 94% of all of the Region's multi-family housing was in the City of Albuquerque. Bernalillo County had 71% single family and 29% multi-family; while Sandoval County had 95% single family and 6% multi-family. Among municipalities, following Albuquerque's portion of multi-family (34%), comes the Village of Los Lunas (17%), Village of Cuba (14%), and City of Belen (13%).

Table 4
Housing Units by County and Municipality of the Region - 1990

COUNTY	MUNICIPALITY	SINGLE FAMILY Site Built	SINGLE FAMILY Mobile Home	MULTI FAMILY	OTHER UNITS	TOTAL
Bernalillo		127,933	13,818	57,433	2,051	201,235
	Albuquerque	101,780	7,567	55,931	1,592	166,870
	Los Ranchos	1,230	239	90	22	1,581
	Tijeras	103	38	4	0	145
Sandoval		19,581	2,465	1,340	281	23,667
	Bernalillo	1,268	745	158	8	2,179
	Corrales	1,743	350	80	23	2,196
	Cuba	151	128	44	6	329
	Jemez Springs	174	45	3	1	223
	Rio Rancho	11,171	121	972	61	12,325
	San Ysidro	55	38	2	0	93
Valencia		10,202	5,568	915	96	16,781
	Belen	1,892	378	320	32	2,622
	Bosque Farms	919	456	4	5	1,384
	Los Lunas	1,399	489	377	7	2,272
Torrance		2,691	2,068	79	52	4,878
	Encino	52	23	1	0	76
	Esencia	260	104	15	4	383
	Moriarty	356	214	16	11	579
	Mountainair	368	72	10	5	455
	Willard	64	26	0	0	9
Total		160,407	23,907	59,767	2,480	247,561

Among municipalities, the City of Rio Rancho had the highest portion of single family housing (91%), followed by the Village of Corrales (80%), Village of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque (79%) and City of Belen (73%).

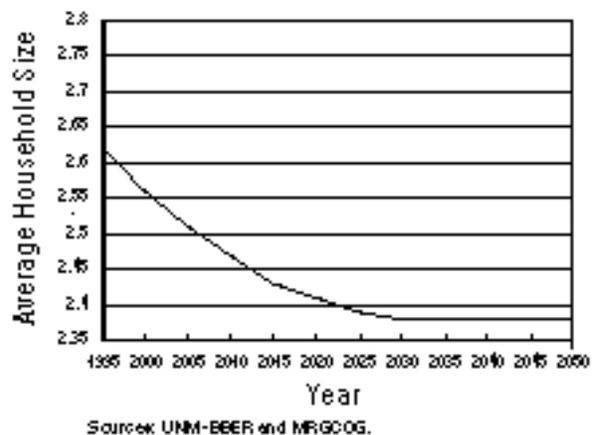
Several communities and unincorporated County areas have high portions of mobile homes in their housing stock. 43% of the Torrance County housing stock consisted of mobile homes in 1990. 33% of Valencia County housing was mobile homes. Among municipalities, the Town of Willard had the highest portion of mobile homes (41%), followed by the Village of Cuba (40%), City of Moriarty (37%), Town of Bernalillo (34%), and Bosque Farms (33%).

The household size is forecasted to drop from 2.61 persons per household estimated in 1995 to 2.38 persons per household by year 2050, as shown in Figure 7. By County, household sizes were estimated in 1995 at 2.53 for Bernalillo County, 3.02 for Sandoval County, 2.86 for Valencia County, and 2.68 for Torrance County.

The downward shift in household size reflects the changing demographics of the region where there are more single person households - many of whom are older residents, and smaller families, many of which do not follow the old norm of

“married with children.” Market demand from smaller households is becoming stronger for higher density housing types (such as small lot single family, townhouses, apartments and shared living arrangements), smaller square footage of housing units, and housing more accessible to activity centers offering entertainment, cultural activities, work and other opportunities.

Figure 7
Average Regional Household Size
Forecast to 2050



Public and Indian managed lands figure prominently in the character of the Region's land use patterns. As shown in Table 5, 42% of State Planning and Development District (SPDD) 3 is under public and Indian management. Sandoval County contains the highest portion of public and Indian lands, at approximately 73%. 49% of Bernalillo County is under public and Indian management. Torrance County contains the smallest portion of public and Indian lands at 10%.

State lands managed by the State Land Office have not been included in Table 5 because some of these lands are actively marketed for private sale. While federal and Indian lands periodically may be sold, they are usually traded to retain the inventory.

**Table 5
Lands Under Public and Indian Management by County in
State Planning and Development District 3 (Square Miles)**

	USFS*	BLM	National Parks and Monuments	Indian Reservations and Trust Lands	State Parks	DOD/DOE*	Total Public and Indian Lands (% of total)	Total County Land Area
Bernalillo County	150.2	14.7	9.4	355.3	10.9	31.3	570.9 (49%)	1,166.2
Sandoval County	661.6	921.1	--	1,214.6	1.4		2,698.7 (79%)	3,709.7
Torrance County	269.9	30.6	1.5	25.7	.3		327.9 (10%)	3,245.1
Valencia County	40.1	46.9	--	205.9	2	10.9	305.8 (28%)	1,067.6
TOTAL	1,121.8	913.2	9.9	1,801.4	12.8	42.2	3,901.1 (42%)	9,284.6

*Department of Defense and Department of Energy (DOD/DOE) land area withdrawn from the United States Forest Service (USFS) for use by Kirkland Air force Base and Sandia National Laboratory.

Sources: Total Land Areas, Indian Reservations and Indian Trust Lands: U.S. Census 1990. United States Forest Service: Mike Brown, USFS Forest Service Engineer, telephone. Bureau of Land Management: Debbie Lucero, BLM Real Estate Officer, telephone. National Parks and Monuments: Dianne Souder, National Parks Service, telephone. State Parks: Dave Johnson, State Parks Department Parks Recreation Division, telephone. DOD/DOE: Arturo Sandoval, Albuquerque, New Mexico: A Social Profile, 1996.

B. Economic Profile

The region holds the preeminent position in the State's economy, and has historically experienced a steady positive rate of growth. In the global economy of today - and increasingly in the future - the overall economic productivity of the region depends on and competes with many other regional economies of the world. Economic development depends on the performance of the region in the context of the world's regions, not merely in relation to the State's economy - and not competition among different communities within the region.

Regional economies grow at above trend rates when they export goods and services to people and business located outside the region. Job growth has slowed down from 7% per year from 1992 -1996 to approximately 2% per year for the region over the past three years. The projected average rate of growth over the next fifty years is less than 2%.

The economy of the region has become more diversified over the past three decades. Bernalillo County, which was once heavily dependent on federal government activity at Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratories, has grown up around these facilities. While still key to the region's economy, the relative importance of the federal government for both civilian and military jobs is declining. In the future, employment at Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratories is anticipated to remain flat.

Sectors of the economy that have been under-represented in the region's economy relative to national averages have increased their share since 1970, with the exception of farming and mining. The manufacturing sector remains relatively small, but is relatively much stronger than in the 1970's.

Figures 8 through 15 display the employment composition of each County in SPDD 3.

Leading trends by County are as follows:

- Bernalillo County: Reliance has shifted away from civilian and military government employment, State and local government employment has remained stable, and growth has occurred in manufacturing, service and retail sectors.
- Sandoval County: Manufacturing has risen and the more "traditional" sectors of mining, agriculture, construction and state and local government jobs are less dominant.

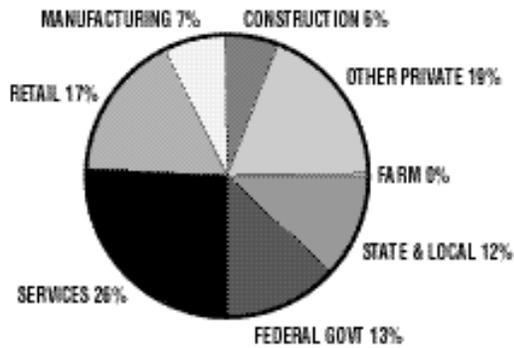
- Torrance County was heavily dependent on agriculture and state and local government in 1970's. While the job base by sectors has changed little in the County, many more residents now commute to jobs outside the County.
- Valencia County's economy has become more diversified away from farming and State and local government since the 1970's to more jobs in services, retail and construction.

Albuquerque's large and diversified economy dominates the region. The population growth outside of Albuquerque has spurred some resident-serving commercial development in those areas. Rio Rancho has also been very successful in attracting industrial development. Figures 9 and 11 show for Sandoval County as a whole a 9% increase in the manufacturing share of total employment from 1970 to 1996. Nonetheless, it appears that residents of the region continue to go to Albuquerque to shop - at one of the three regional malls and at the warehouse stores. People from throughout the region may go to shop for appliances and other big ticket items and to buy clothes for kids going back to school. They also attend concerts and shows; and many commute every weekday to work in Albuquerque.

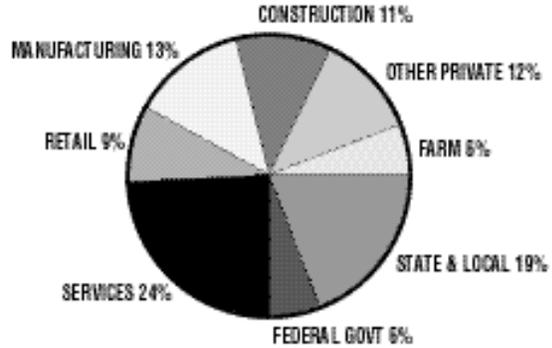
Further diversification of the economy is anticipated in the future, particularly in manufacturing. High technology clusters identified as leaders in the region include biomedicine, biotechnology, optoelectronics, microtechnologies, and semi-conductor manufacturing.

**Figures 8 through 11
Employment Composition of Bernalillo and Sandoval County**

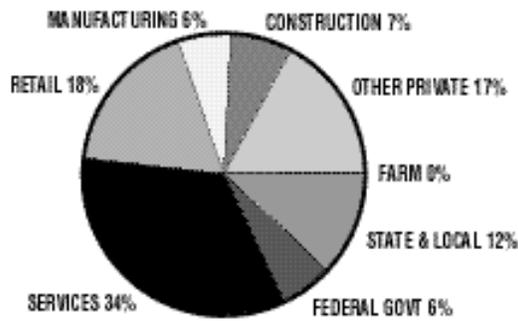
**Figure 8
BERNALILLO COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1970**



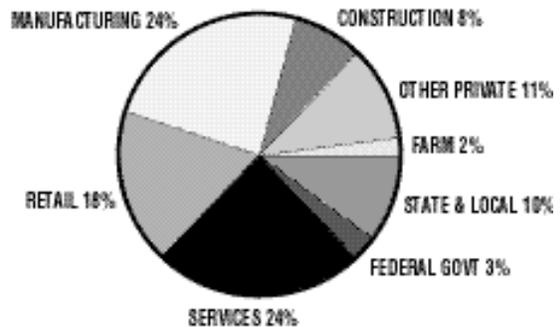
**Figure 9
SANDOVAL COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1970**



**Figure 10
BERNALILLO COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1996**

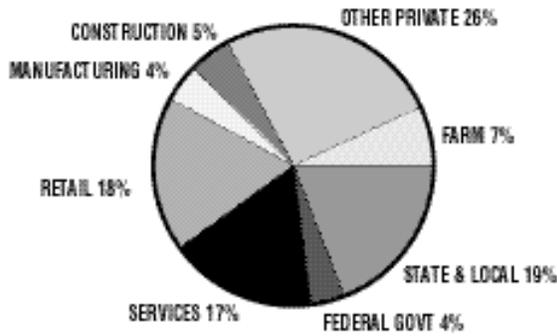


**Figure 11
SANDOVAL COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1996**

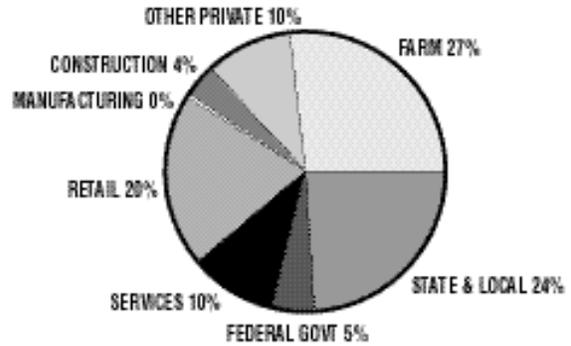


**Figures 12 through 15
Employment Composition of Valencia and Torrance Counties**

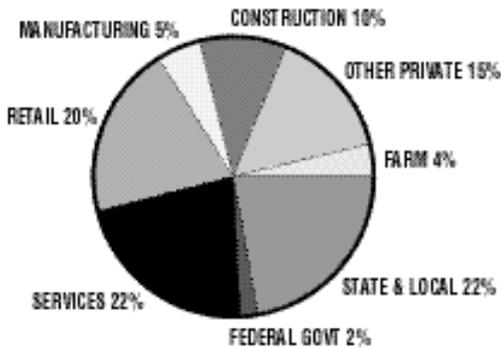
**Figure 12
OLD VALENCIA COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1970**



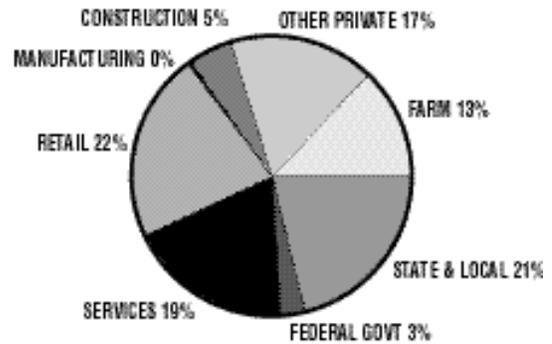
**Figure 13
TORRANCE COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1970**



**Figure 14
VALENCIA COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1996**



**Figure 15
TORRANCE COUNTY: COMPOSITION
OF EMPLOYMENT, 1996**



Personal income in the four county area has grown steadily over the last 30 years. However, each of the four counties' average per capita income has been below the U.S. average since 1969, as shown in Figure 16.

Incomes in the region are generally higher than New Mexico as a whole, attracting in-migration from other areas of the State. And incomes in Bernalillo County have been markedly higher than in the other Counties of the region. The average per capita income in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA - consisting of Bernalillo, Sandoval and Valencia Counties) compares favorably with incomes in peer metropolitan areas of the west, as shown in Figure 17.

An important indicator of the region's economic well-being is the portion of the population living below the poverty level. Poverty rates in the four MRGCOG counties have generally been well above the national average, as displayed in Figure 18.

Figure 16
Per Capita Income by Counties of the Region as a Percent of U. S. Average

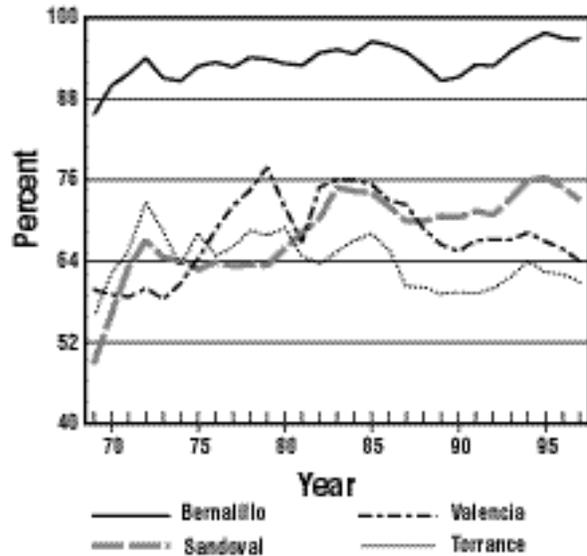
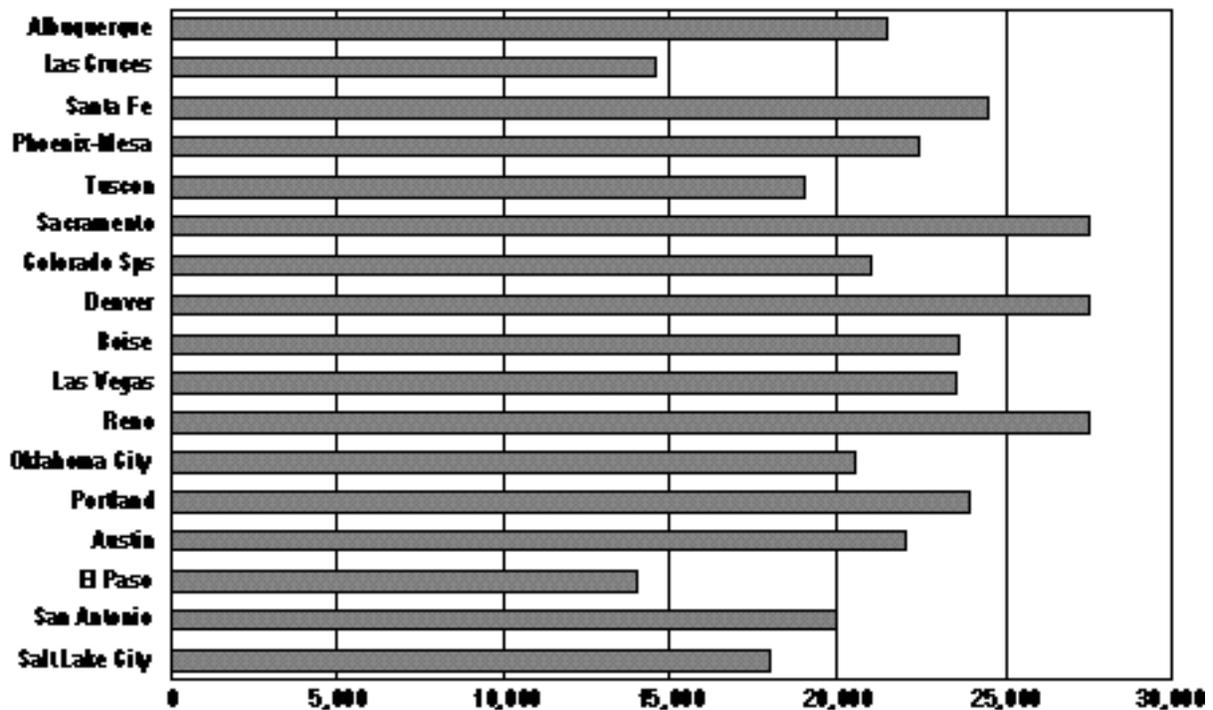


Figure 17
Per Capita Income Adjusted for Inflation
Albuquerque Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Nearby MSA's
(in dollars)



Gross receipts tax is the single most important revenue source for local governments. Many of the municipalities of the region are charging the maximum rate allowed under State law, as displayed in Figure 19. Income from taxable gross receipts varies significantly on a per capita basis among the four Counties of the SPDD 3, as shown in Table 6. The unincorporated areas generate about 1/6th of the County-wide gross receipts through-out SPDD 3.

Figure 18
Percent of Population Living Below the Poverty Level by Counties of the Region

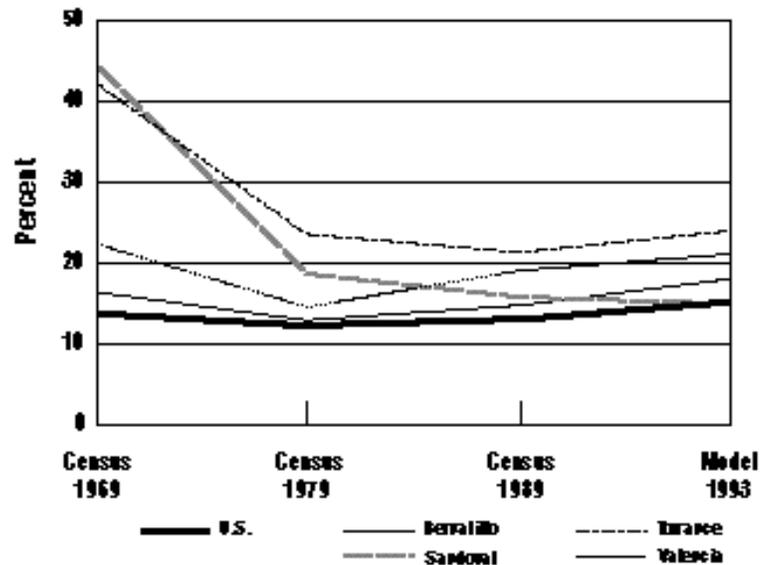


Figure 19
Locally Imposed Gross Receipts Tax

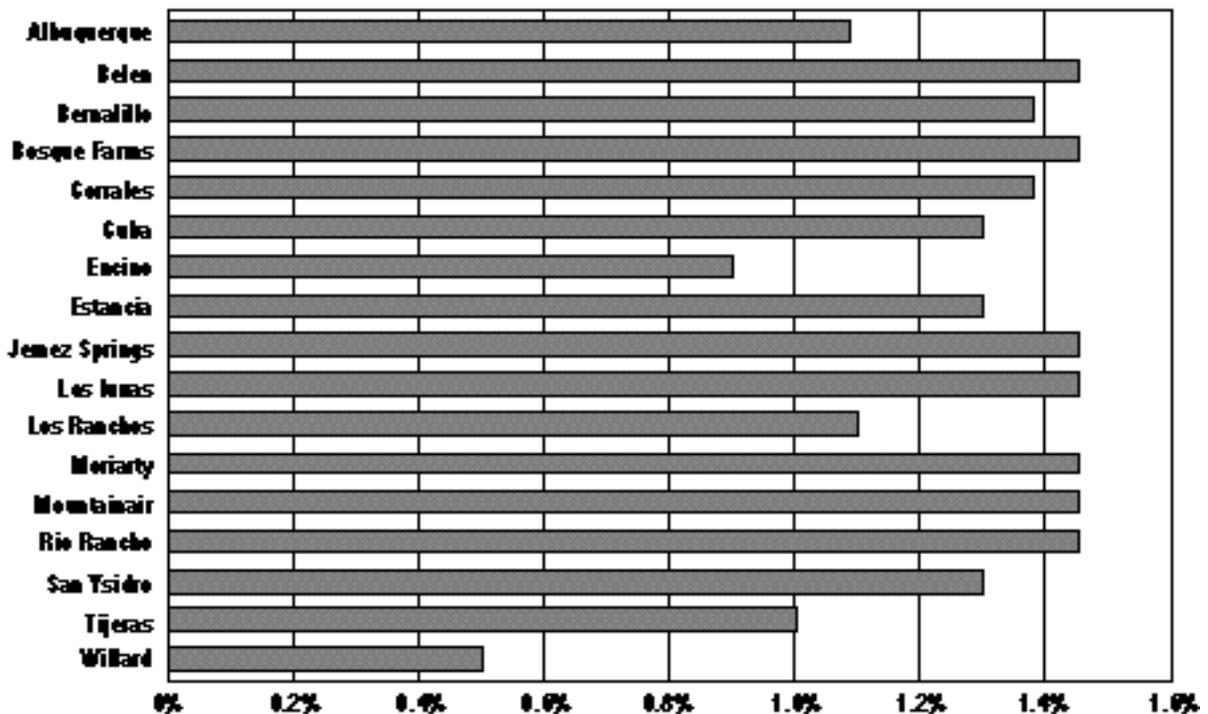


Table 6
Gross Receipts Tax for Counties in MRGCOG Region,
Calendar Year 1997
Taxable Gross Receipts, Tax Rates, Tax Capacity and Tax Effort

County-wide	1997 Population	Taxable Gross Receipts	TGR Per Capita	Tax Rate	Distribution Calculated	Distrib Per Capita	Same Tax Capacity	Same Tax Effort	Equaliz Distrib	Equaliz Per Capita
Bernalillo	539,700	11,518,916,113	21,343	0.2500%	29,797,290	53	46	55	--	--
Sandoval	84,500	797,367,319	9,436	0.2500%	1,993,418	24	46	24	449,776	5
Torrance	14,800	125,414,727	8,474	0.3125%	291,901	26	57	22	105,268	7
Valencia	62,500	485,576,719	6,609	0.3125%	1,329,927	21	57	17	501,088	8
Total 4 Counties	701,600	12,867,274,878	18,343	0.2569%	32,512,557					
Unincorporated Area										
Bernalillo	102,510	1,648,031,209	16,077	0.1250%	2,060,039	20	15	32		
Sandoval	21,720	276,195,994	12,608	0.1250%	347,745	16	15	25		
Torrance	10,470	67,229,904	6,421	0.3750%	252,112	24	45	13		
Valencia	41,400	107,147,941	2,588	0.3750%	401,605	10	45	5		
Total 4 Counties	176,100	2,100,606,048	11,928	0.1986%						

Notes:

- a. To calculate same capacity, the average taxable gross receipts per capita for the four counties was calculated.
- b. To calculate same effort, average tax rates for the four counties are calculated weighing by population.

C. Major Current Regional Issues

Throughout the Focus 2050 process, a number of issues were identified by members of the public, technical participants, and elected officials that are regional in scale. In other words, optimum solutions cannot be identified and implemented outside of the regional context. The regional issues described below are organized within the major issue areas of the adopted Vision statement and goals. The Regional Plan has been prepared recognizing these issues:

Quality of Neighborhoods & Communities

1. Encouraging the retention of the remarkable diversity in the character of the communities of the region
2. Responding to the changing demographics in aging of the population, decreasing average household size, proportionally fewer school age children, and fewer traditional family units.
3. Providing housing that meets demographic demands.
4. Creating affordable housing in the region.

Agriculture, Tradition, Soul of Community

5. Developing ways to encourage retention of the way of life associated with irrigated farming near the Rio Grande and in the Estancia Basin, rural lifestyles of many of the smaller communities of the region, and the beautiful vistas treasured by people of the region.
6. Encouraging the retention of the amount of irrigated agricultural land and enhancing its profitability.

Open Spaces, Lifestyles & Special Places

7. Reducing the loss of wildlife habitat and native New Mexico landscape in the region.

Individual Rights & Responsibilities

8. Striving to preserve individual property rights balanced with planning that seeks to deal with growth patterns that threaten communities and ways of life in the region.

Quality of Life: Jobs, Education, & Youth

9. Positioning the regional economy to compete in the global economy.
10. Reducing inadequacies of revenues for providing new infrastructure and upgrading existing infrastructure to accommodate new growth projected in the region.
11. Improving the balance in the distribution of wealth among local governments and the resultant problems of providing adequate public facilities and services
12. Improving the effective earning per worker in the region, reducing the unemployment rate, and further diversifying employment.

Transportation

13. Improving the balance between jobs and housing on a County-wide and major sub-area bases, resulting in generally shorter commutes, more efficient use of infrastructure and improved connections between different modes of transportation.
14. Reducing the increase in vehicle miles traveled per capita as well as in total vehicular miles.
15. Reducing reliance on automobiles and general lack of choice in transportation modes.
16. Making wise investment decisions for use of limited transportation funds given the high cost of transportation infrastructure construction and upkeep.
17. Finding ways to best arrange land use and transportation facilities in respect of significant barriers to building new "traditional" transportation access (e. g. , river crossings, rights-of-way across Pueblo lands, the Sandias/Manzanos and Kirtland Air Force Base).
18. Promoting development patterns which do not strictly encourage single occupancy vehicle travel by separating land uses beyond walking or bicycling distance.
19. Better managing traffic congestion.

Preservation of Water & Air Resources

20. Determining how the region will meet future water demand with available sustainable water supply, recognizing that the current rate of water use in both the Middle Rio Grande Basin and the Estancia Basin would not sustain the projected population.
21. Complying with the Rio Grande compact between the States of Colorado, New Mexico and Texas and Nation of Mexico, limiting the amount of water that can used in the Middle Rio Grande Basin.
22. Reducing depletion of the aquifer in the Estancia Basin, which is a closed basin with no river running through it.
23. Preserving clean air, while the trend in increasing vehicle miles traveled would eventually result in degradation of air quality in violation of federal standards.
24. Recognizing the difficulty and likely expense in obtaining any new sources of water.
25. Minimizing pollution or the eminent threat of pollution of shallow groundwater.
26. Addressing surface water quality problems for the Rio Grande.
27. Avoiding subsidence resulting from mining of groundwater.



Chapter III FOUNDATIONS

A. Vision Statement and Goals

Visioning is the process by which a community - in this case, the regional community - envisions the future that it wants. The Vision Statement is a brief expression of the values that should motivate plans for the future and how we want the Region to look at some point in the future. The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments conducted regional visioning as a broad-based public involvement process during the period of August, 1997 to January, 1998. Over 400 persons from across the region joined in this process.

The Vision Statement and Goals are an integral part of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan. Measurable aspects have been used for comparing alternative land use scenarios in the process of analyzing various land use scenarios and in arriving at the preferred alternative. The Visioning public involvement activities also provided a base for both participants and processes in the later FutureScape and Town Hall public involvement processes.

. . . Diverse communities sharing many traditions while balancing opportunities with the protection of our unique character.

These key ideas emerge from the Regional Vision Statement prepared by the participants of the Focus 2050 Regional Vision Forum. On January 8, 1998 the MRGCOG Board of Directors adopted the Vision Statement and Vision Goals. Following are the entire Statement and the top attributes of the Vision Goals.

Vision Statement

“We are a diverse community of urban, suburban, village and rural agricultural lifestyles, sharing various cultural, historic and political traditions; and we practice strong participation, which assures protection of individual rights.

“We preserve and enhance this community by coordinating regional and local planning of transportation, water resources and air quality with local land use.

“We balance economic and housing opportunities and development patterns with protection of the unique character of our land, open spaces and communities.”



Top Attributes of Vision Goals

Quality of Neighborhoods & Communities

- Change development patterns, use cluster and open space to maintain rural feel
- Consider the people living on the land in planning decisions
- More affordable housing, variety and kinds of housing

Agriculture, Tradition, Soul of Community

- Protect and develop sustainable agriculture base (environment/economy) that includes: family farms, cropland for food, more innovative uses, and ranching communities

Open Space, Lifestyles & Special Places

- Preserve and maintain diversity of natural environments and vistas (escarpment, mountains, river, dark sky)

Individual Rights & Responsibilities

- Involve more people in public processes to keep local values

Improved Transportation & Regional Planning

- Provide transportation alternatives and develop transportation networks (bikeways, rail, park and ride, and improved transit)

Quality of Life: Jobs, Education, Youth

- Balance economic development, benefits, rural feel

Preservation of Water & Air Resources or Agua es Vida (Water is Life)

- Protect water resources (quality and quantity)



A small Town Main Street possessing a mix of complimentary uses (computer visualization)



Possible new city center with a public plaza framed by shops, offices and new townhouses, capitalizing on views to mountains and connected to civic buildings (computer visualization)



In-filling of an existing shopping center providing retail fronting on the street, additional streetscape, and human scale pedestrian access (computer visualization)

B. Relation of Plan to Vision

Table 7 presents an overview of how the “Balanced Communities Scenario,” described in Chapter IV, compares to the Vision Goals.

Table 7
Assessment of How the Balanced Communities Scenario Meets
the Adopted Regional Vision Goals

Focus 2050 Top Vision Attribute	Balanced Communities Scenario
Change development patterns, use cluster and open space to maintain rural feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most new growth at urban densities inside existing communities and in planned full service communities - Rural areas kept separate from leapfrog development - Substantial public open space and private farming and ranching lands - Some rural residential is clustered
Consider the people living on the land in planning decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local land use decisions guided by regional context and coordination - Stronger structure for managing pattern and character of growth consistent with community character
More affordable housing, variety of kinds of housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety of housing types to meet changing demographics of population in most communities. - More multi-family and small lot residential in centers and corridors - A portion of new housing is built at current densities for urban neighborhoods and rural areas - Lower transportation costs enables more spending on living arrangements
Protect and develop sustainable agriculture base (environment/economy) that includes: family farms; cropland for food; more innovative uses; and ranching communities.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the enhancement of productive farmland in the Valley and Basin, utilizing more efficient irrigation, clustering, development incentives, and introduction of some new higher profit crops while using less water - Continue tradition and rural character of small family farms.
Preserve and maintain diversity of natural environments and vistas (escarpment, mountains, river, dark sky)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Backbones” of current regional open space in the region - escarpments, mountains, and rivers - would be preserved. - Desirable new open space linkages would define overall urban edges, such as the Rio Puerco Valley (in three Counties) and grasslands along the western edge of the Manzano Mountains in Valencia County. - Open space corridors would connect through new communities. - More dark skies would be preserved in rural and natural areas.
Involve more people in public processes to keep local values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional “bottom up” visioning values and regular public involvement has guided regional plan to better support desires for character of future communities. - Unique communities retain their identities through enhanced coordinated regional plan and local planning.

Focus 2050 Top Vision Attribute	Balanced Communities Scenario
Provide transportation alternatives and develop transportation networks (bikeways, rail, park and ride, improved transit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Several transportation corridors linking centers and nodes in urban areas will support high capacity transit, supplementing the street/highway network for private automobiles. - Pedestrian and bicycling will be best supported by the scale and intensity of future urban areas. - Commuter rail to provide outlying communities with transit service to and from the core metropolitan centers is more feasible.
Balance economic development, benefits, rural feel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clustered complimentary businesses are focused into designated existing and new centers distributed through the region. - More even jobs/housing ratio better distributes economic base, revenues and costs for communities. - Quality of life in such areas as travel convenience, high quality air, vistas, and cultural diversity attract and retain businesses with higher pay. <p>Adequate land area provided for economic activities in locations with coordinated delivery of accessibility and urban services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Areas outside designated community growth areas remain rural. - Regionally significant land use and infrastructure decisions support regional economic development strategies.
Preservation of Water and Air Resources or Agua es Vida (Water is Life)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water demand for urban uses is lower for the higher density residential developments. - Fewer future residents depend on wells and septic systems, and are served by managed water and sewer systems. - Large portions of the Rio Grande and Puerco River valleys are encouraged to remain as rural and open space areas respectively through innovative planning techniques, keeping lower urban run-off and reducing impacts on surface water quality.

C. Relation of Plan to FutureScape Scenarios

Four scenarios of future growth patterns were presented, widely publicized, and evaluated through the FutureScape process in late 1998 and early 1999. This integrated technical and public process and discussion formed the basis for crafting the Balanced Communities Scenario and the supporting goals and strategies. The Balanced Communities Scenario strives to incorporate the best aspects of several other scenarios, while adding several unique features of its own.

The Balanced Communities scenario is similar to the Moderately Compact Scenario in the proportion of new growth that it targets for in-fill and redevelopment areas versus new satellite communities and subregional centers. Satellite communities are located on or near mesa edges

near existing communities. Several of the existing modest sized communities in the region, including Los Lunas, Belen, Moriarty and Bernalillo, are targeted to grow into more substantial cities and towns. Many small towns outside the general "commutershed" of Albuquerque, such as Jemez Springs, Cuba, and Willard would also experience modest growth in both jobs and population.

Rio Grande valley floor and Estancia Basin irrigated agricultural lands would be encouraged to remain principally in those uses, similar to **Moderately Compact, Contiguous Mesa and Compact Scenarios**. In total, some 57,173 acres out of 58,909 acres (97%) of current irrigated agriculture would remain in agricultural production. The Rio Grande Bosque would not be used for urban development, but rather would be used for recreation and as unique habitat for fish, birds, animals, and plants.

Open space is treated in a similar manner as it was in the **Moderately Compact Scenario**. Open areas within and between communities provide separation between urban development areas, making it easier to preserve their unique identities. It provides vistas that are an integral part of our unique sense of place in this region. Open space sometimes provides recreation opportunities for nearby residents, and it can be an important element of plant and animal ecosystems. The Balanced Communities Scenario calls for the creation of an integrated, linked open space system throughout the region to create all of these benefits.

A few of the rural areas are similar to the **Contiguous Mesa Scenario**, enlarging several existing low density communities with additional "rural residential" growth. Torrance County, portions of the Valencia County East Mesa and the Bernalillo County East Mountains area all have selected areas for additional rural residential.

As depicted in the **Contiguous Mesa Scenario**, some added urban development in the Balanced Communities Scenario is adjacent to existing urbanized areas, without separating open space. Growth in the Westland area and the Southwest Sector of the Bernalillo County West Mesa and west of Southern Boulevard in Rio Rancho is mainly contiguous to currently urbanized areas.

The Balanced Communities Scenario uses the **Compact and Moderately Compact Scenarios'** themes of focusing substantial new development into transit supported corridors and centers in the City of Albuquerque, urbanized Bernalillo County, and the City of Rio Rancho. The "hierarchy of places," as devised for the Compact Scenario, includes regional centers, major employment centers, subregional centers, town centers and activity nodes at somewhat lower densities. Nodes served by high level of service transit are the focal points for development within corridors.

The **Trend Dispersed Scenario** is a distinct alternative. Most of the participants in the FutureScape process disliked this scenario; and the Balanced Communities Scenario was crafted to be responsive to the concerns expressed. The lower density range for urban single family housing, expansion of rural residential use, and decline in irrigated agricultural land are features of Trend Dispersed which are not incorporated in the Balanced Communities Scenario. Further evaluation of the Trend Dispersed Scenario is given in Appendix 1.

There are a number of features of the Balanced Communities Scenario distinct from the FutureScape Scenarios. Future growth is roughly proportionate to the current distribution of people and jobs in the four counties. This reverses the trend of the last two decades, which shifted residential growth from Bernalillo County to neighboring counties. Each of the four FutureScape scenarios contained relatively higher residential growth in Sandoval, Valencia and Torrance Counties than in the Balanced Communities Scenario. Strong employment growth in Bernalillo County is not anticipated to decline. On a County basis, jobs growth throughout the region will be more closely proportionate to population growth. This growth pattern will help to ensure a continued strong role for the urban core of the region in Bernalillo County, where the highest level of existing services and concentration of cultural facilities and jobs exist to deal with growth.

To ensure choice and options, the Balanced Communities Scenario provides a somewhat different range of housing types and densities than in the other scenarios. The Balanced Communities Scenario reduces the percentage of new residential development that is rural residential, and reduces the average size of those lots. Conversely, the scenario increases the current percentage of new residential development for small household sizes, and focuses a significant amount of new urban development in Bernalillo County into mixed use transit corridors and centers. Townhouse and small lot single family residences are selectively added to other urban areas where vacant lot opportunities exist. This approach takes growth pressures off of existing, older residential neighborhoods, allowing them to retain their current character.

The Balanced Communities Scenario places most new development within, adjacent to, or nearby areas that have existing infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads. The purpose is to keep the per unit costs of providing new infrastructure to a minimum. This approach also creates indirect benefits such as cleaner air and lower automobile operating costs through less driving, and better water quality through less surface water runoff from paved areas.

Improving transportation choices and options is an important goal of the Balanced Communities Scenario. This occurs through three main techniques:

- a) Jobs and housing densities in designated transit corridors and centers are increased. This is designed to generate enough potential transit riders to be able to cost-effectively increase the provision of high capacity transit to these areas. This, in turn, will generate more transit riders.
- b) Promoting a mixture of land uses in downtowns, village centers, neighborhood centers, and transit centers and corridors throughout the region will make it possible for more people to walk and bicycle to some of their destinations.
- c) Providing an even balance of jobs and housing in areas throughout the region will make it easier for people to travel from home to work, shopping and recreation. This will shorten some of their trips, and make it easier for some trips to be by transit, walking or bicycling.

The automobile is expected to continue to be the primary transportation means for most people and most trips. However, the Balanced Communities Scenario provides a land use pattern to help ensure that other transportation options will be viable for many people.



Mixed density neighborhood with unifying design elements in architecture, landscaping and walls (hand drawn visualization)



Continued farmland in the valley and urban density housing on the edge of the mesa (hand drawn visualization)

Downtown street with high density housing above shops, strong pedestrian facilities and choice of transportation modes (hand drawn visualization)



Chapter IV

REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

Focus 2050 identifies how and where growth should occur within the region. The approach is guided by the vision of a high quality of life defined by housing choices, job opportunities, healthy environment and accessible open spaces. The strategy proposes a framework for guiding and better managing the impacts of growth as the projected population and jobs bases more than double over the next half century.

Contained in this chapter of the Plan are the regional land use goals and strategies, future land use map, characteristics of growth by County, target growth distribution and a description of the land use categories which are the building blocks of the land use map. "Goals" are defined as statements of desires for what ideally should be achieved for the regional community. "Land Use Strategies" are defined as the broad set of proposed actions related to the organization of land uses which will contribute to attaining the stated goals.

Strategies other than those related to land use are also necessary to meet the goals of the Regional Plan; however, they will be addressed in other elements of the Plan. For example, promotion of economic development, conserving water and improved marketing of local agricultural products are very important activity areas that are not land use-based and not included in this Strategy.

A. Regional Land Use Goals and Strategies

1. Overarching Goals:

- 1-1 Promote regional cooperation among the various local governmental entities in the Region along with State and Federal governmental agencies to take actions supporting the mutually supported goals of the Regional Plan.
- 1-2 Respect the unique community identities and the different governing authorities of the local governments of the Region.
- 1-3 Promote coordinated public and private sector actions that support the goals of the Regional Plan.
- 1-4 Integrate regional plan elements into the Regional Plan to guide regional systems.
- 1-5 Involve the Pueblos and other tribal entities within the region to promote cooperation and coordination on goals of the Regional Plan.

2. Community Identity & Livability

Regional Goals:

- 2-1 Preserve and promote the historically unique and positive cultural and geographic identities between and within communities in the region.
- 2-2 Preserve and promote the region's high quality of life in open space, vistas, high quality jobs, beautiful built environment, housing variety and choice, and excellent educational opportunities.

Regional Land Use Strategies To Help Achieve Community Identity & Livability Goals:

- 2-1 Distinguish separate communities through a general system of open space, yet to be finalized, and protection of irrigated agricultural lands from the impacts of urban development. Wildlife habitat protection, recreational areas, cultural resources and preservation of unique and special vistas must be balanced with the reasonable expectations and the legitimate interests of landowners and realized through innovative planning techniques and acquisition.
- 2-2 Use urban land more efficiently through location of housing, jobs and services near existing planned developed areas and reducing the average size of new residential lots.

- 2-3 Create new towns that are either contiguous to or geographically separated from other communities, use land efficiently, have a full complement and balance of land uses, and are organized at a neighborhood scale, with a mix of uses and densities to promote pedestrian and transit accessibility.
- 2-4 Focus most new metropolitan and small town development in and around areas of Bernalillo, Sandoval and Valencia Counties in which an urban development pattern is already an established part of their identities. Minimize urban development in the other areas of Sandoval, Tarrant, and Valencia Counties.
- 2-5 Assure that city parks and open space pockets are incorporated into urban areas.
- 2-6 Provide the phased approval of new development outside existing developed areas (e.g., new towns) in a manner that promotes timely phased in-fill and redevelopment.
- 2-7 Improve regional coordination of parks, open space and trails.
- 2-8 Provide the phased approval of new development outside existing developed areas (e.g., new towns) in a manner that directly promotes ways to enhance and retain agricultural lands.

3. Economic Development

Regional Goals:

- 3-1 Ensure that the necessary elements are in place for an additional 480,000 jobs forecast for the region by 2050.
- 3-2 Position the region to be competitive and excel in the Global Economy
- 3-3 Develop the necessary infrastructure to support higher quality jobs and better educate the region's population.
- 3-4 Enhance the region's high quality of life to attract and retain workers in the region.

Regional Land Use Strategies to Help Achieve Economic Development Goals:

- 3-1 Keep infrastructure costs serving new jobs and houses to a minimum over the life of public facilities.

- 3-2 Provide land with appropriate space and location for 480,000 jobs, including the retention and growth of existing businesses.
- 3-3 Achieve a balance of jobs and housing within communities and major sub-areas of the region to provide employees with a choice to live near where they work.
- 3-4 Utilize co-location efficiencies for industries and employers with complimentary needs.
- 3-5 Maximize transportation access to jobs and educational facilities utilizing inter-modal opportunities (e.g., airport, rail and freeway).
- 3-6 Enhance the telecommunications network serving employment centers and residential areas throughout the region.
- 3-7 Maximize efficiencies of commerce through in-fill and redevelopment of commercial and industrial lands.

4. Housing

Regional Goals:

- 4-1 Provide an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of a growing and changing population.
- 4-2 Offer a wide variety of housing choices to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population.
- 4-3 Make jobs, open space, services, public facilities, and other needs easily accessible to residents of metropolitan and small town communities.
- 4-4 Upgrade existing infrastructure to accommodate new in-fill or redevelopment housing where, otherwise, costs of infrastructure replacement or capacity expansion are high.
- 4-5 Provide affordable owner occupied and rental housing.
- 4-6 Reduce conflicts between land for new residences and preservation of agriculture and open space lands.
- 4-7 Maintain or upgrade existing homes.

Regional Land Use Strategies To Help Achieve Housing Goals:

- 4-1 Provide different land uses within a single area to integrate housing with office, retail, and other services.

- 4-2 Strive for an improved jobs/housing balance within the region.
- 4-3 Reduce infrastructure costs by concentrating new housing near existing infrastructure to make use of existing capacity and reduce costs of extending
- 4-4 Provide land with adequate space for 393,000 new housing units.
- 4-5 Reduce the proportion of new residences in rural residential areas.
- 4-6 Increase the proportion of new residences designed for smaller households, such as townhouses, condominiums, small lot detached single family houses, and mixed use projects in transit corridors and centers.
- 4-7 Group rural residential housing units closer together near agricultural areas or use transfer or purchase of development rights to reduce the land converted to urban use, conflicts with agricultural uses and resulting changes in character.
- 4-8 Use design in site planning, architectural features, and mix of uses to make more dense places highly desirable, livable and safe.
- 4-9 Assure that the growth of jobs in planned communities keeps pace with the growth of housing units.
- 4-10 Preserve historic homes.

5. Irrigated Agriculture

Regional Goals:

- 5-1 Support and encourage retention of irrigated agricultural land for agricultural uses.
- 5-2 Enhance the value of irrigated agricultural production, especially crops, to assure its continuity and vitality as an economic activity, culture and way of life.

Regional Land Use Strategies to Help Achieve Irrigated Agriculture Goals:

- 5-1 Discourage the expansion of urban uses in areas of irrigated agriculture.
- 5-2 Direct new urban uses near existing developed areas and to new communities in non-irrigated areas.
- 5-3 Promote farmland preservation and farm business enhancement

6. Transportation

Regional Goals:

- 6-1 Provide viable transportation choices for people.
- 6-2 Minimize the time required for people and goods to reach travel destinations throughout the region.
- 6-3 Minimize air pollution.
- 6-4 Minimize environmental damage from construction of new roads, bridges and other transportation infrastructure

Regional Land Use Strategies to Help Achieve Transportation Goals:

- 6-1 Achieve a balance of jobs and housing within communities and major sub-areas of the region to help reduce the number and length of trips.
- 6-2 Place enough jobs and residences in designated corridors and centers to promote cost-effective, high quality transit service.
- 6-3 Focus new growth near existing developed areas to limit the cost of extending new roadways.
- 6-4 Limit access to any loop roads that are included in the transportation element.
- 6-5 Coordinate transportation enhancements (e.g. landscaping and beautification of transportation facilities, scenic easements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and historic downtown revitalization) to mutually support community development and functions of transportation facilities.

7. Water

Regional Goals:

- 7-1 Ensure an adequate supply of water for future generations and multiple types of users (e.g. residential, agricultural, employment).
- 7-2 Protect the quality of surface and ground water.

Regional Land Use Strategies to Help Achieve Water Goals:

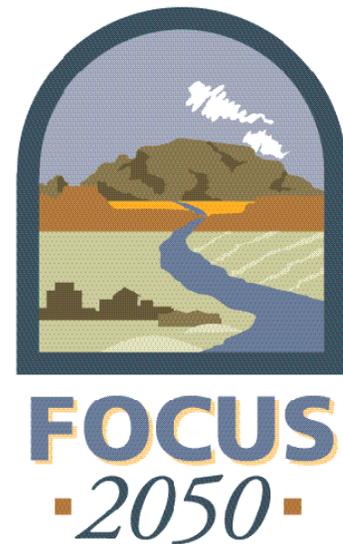
- 7-1 Utilize watershed management approaches to maintaining water supply and healthy environment.
- 7-2 Co-locate industries and other high volume users to maximize opportunities for water re-use.
- 7-3 Clean up and re-use ground contaminated areas.
- 7-4 Minimize the proportion of the residential market dedicated to lots with large yards that are highly water consumptive.
- 7-5 Enhance viability of agriculture with high efficiency irrigation systems.
- 7-6 Limit development in agricultural areas, especially uses that would degrade ground water quality, e.g., septic tanks.
- 7-7 Limit development in water recharge areas.
- 7-8 Manage riparian areas to reduce exotic plants which are high water users.
- 7-9 Increase the use of pervious surfaces in urban areas.

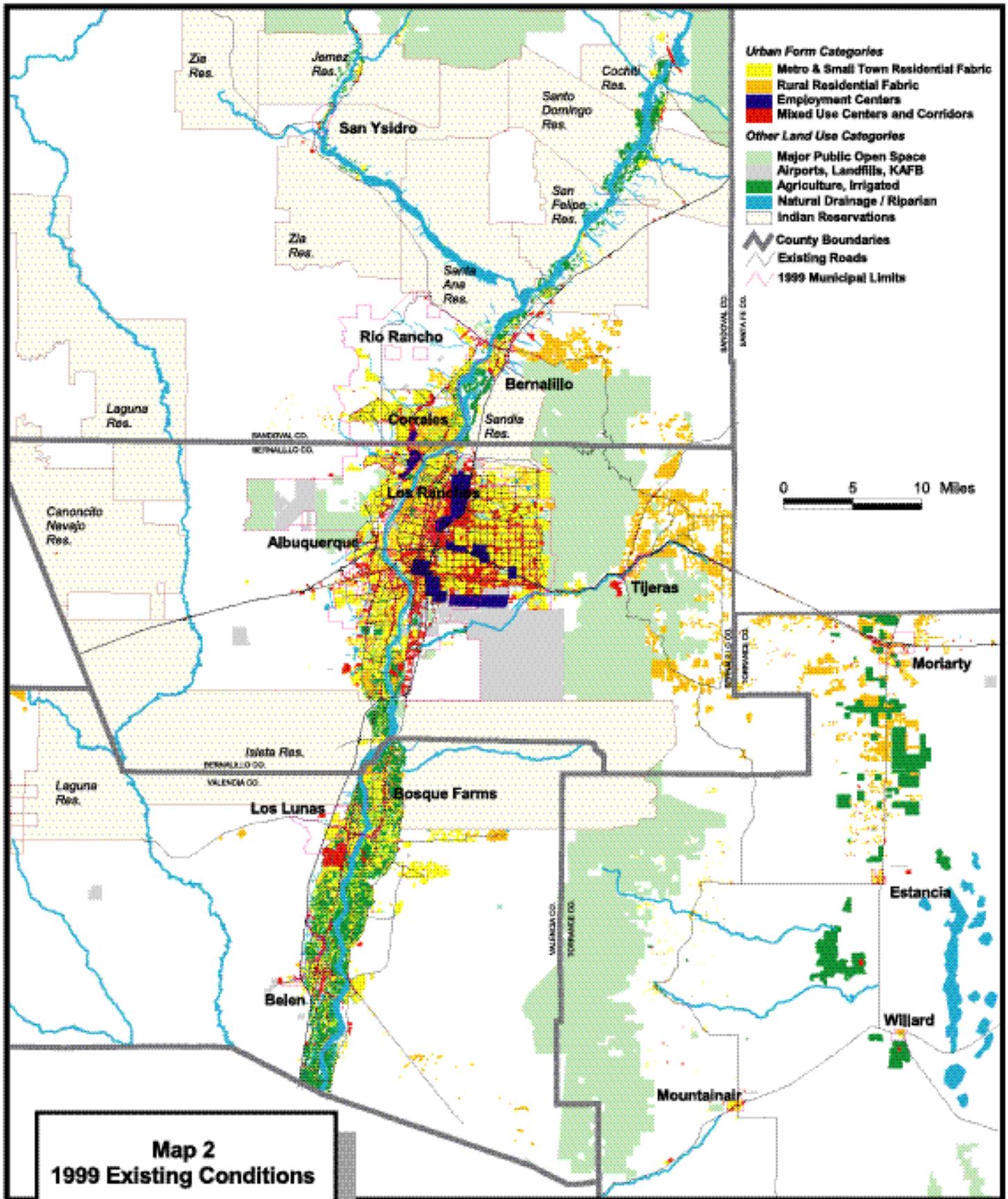
B. Existing and Future Land Use Maps

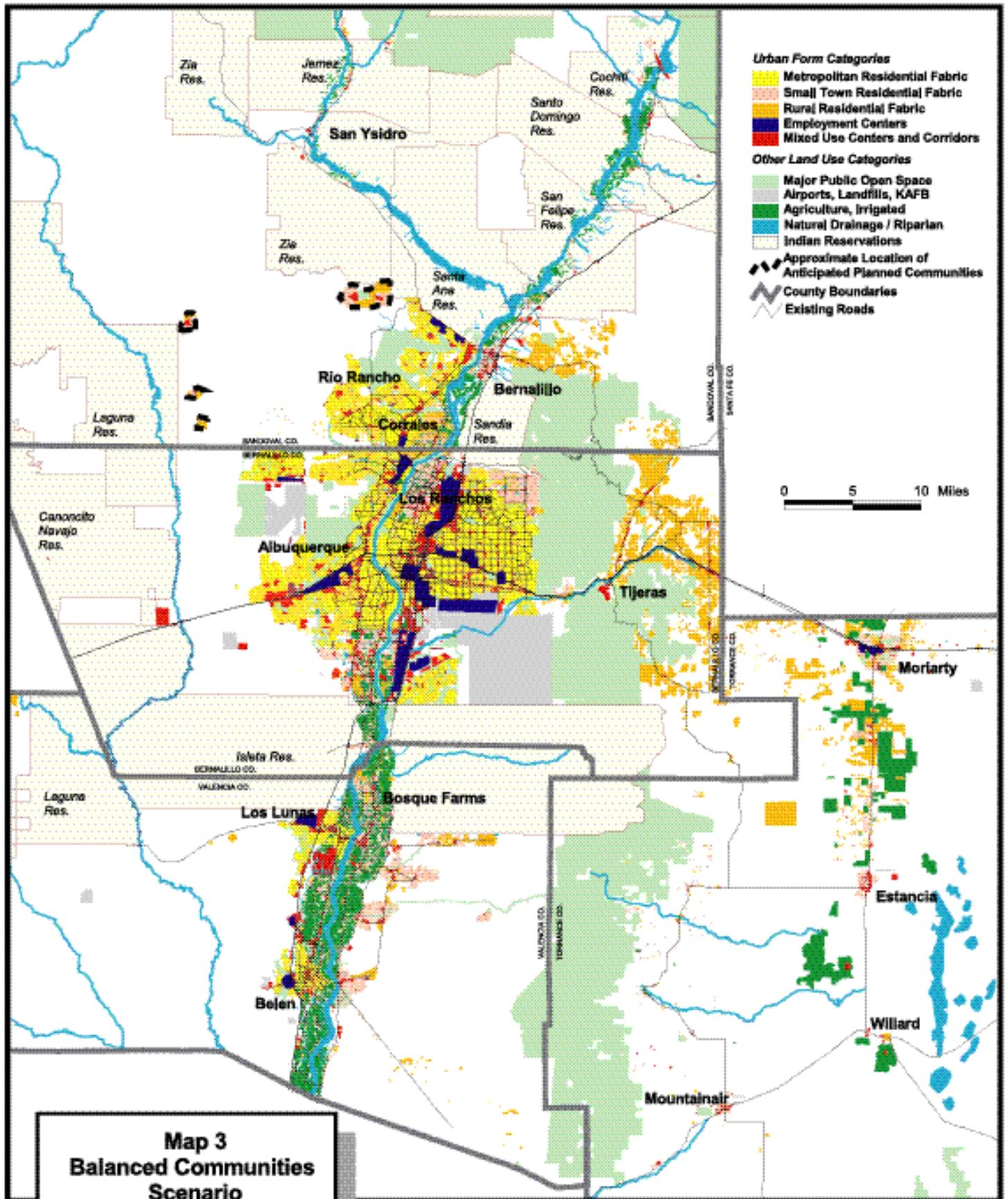
The generalized areas of existing and future urban growth are shown in Maps 2 and 3 on the following pages. Categories of land use are explained in Section E of this chapter. The future land use map is intended to be a guide for the long range distribution of housing and employment and the general location of growth in the region. The future land use map should be used in long range regional functional planning where the scale and level of detail of the map is appropriate for such regional systems analyses and planning. It is also intended to be used to inform local planning decisions. However, the

future land use map should not be used directly as the basis for making individual zoning or other land use decisions. The future land use map does not take the place of local comprehensive plan future land use maps, or the land use regulations guided by local planning maps and accompanying policies.

Urban form categories consist of metropolitan residential fabric, small town residential fabric, rural residential fabric, employment centers, mixed use centers and mixed use corridors. The spatial pattern of these urban form categories can only be achieved if it is structured around a transportation system of regional significance and substantial capacity.







C. Maps of Analysis

Dwelling Unit Densities

Map 4 shows comparisons of residential densities between current land use and the 2050 Balanced Communities Scenario. New, fairly dense centers occur in several areas of the region. Centers and corridors accommodate more residents as well as jobs. As small towns grow, they contain more housing denser than 4 dwelling units/acre, including a limited amount of attached housing. New towns (such as Mesa del Sol, Westland, & Quail Ranch) have significant portions of higher density single family housing in their communities. Existing established urban neighborhoods remain at the same density as today. The range of residential densities in 2050 is nearly as broad as today, while the average density moves from 2.25 to 3.77 dwelling units/acre

Employment Densities

Map 5 shows comparisons of employment densities. Current employment is concentrated in the east side of Albuquerque; outside Albuquerque, the land area and density for employment drops off, in contrast to the distribution of houses. The 2050 Balanced Communities Scenario shows new job centers in locations matching - or catching up to - growth in residences (such as Atrisco Business Park, west of I-25 in Los Lunas, Quail Ranch, Mesa del Sol and Moriarty). Other major employment centers are Downtown Albuquerque, Jefferson Corridor, UNM/TVI/Research Area and Uptown Albuquerque. A series of employment nodes along Coors Blvd./Highway 528 emerges on the Albuquerque's west side and in Rio Rancho.

Jobs/Housing Ratios

A range of jobs/housing ratios is shown on the Map 6, by zones for comparison between current conditions and the 2050 Balanced Communities Scenarios.

Ramped gray shades show from dark to light greater to less "housing rich" zones. Ramped blue shades show from dark to light greater to less "jobs rich" zones. Ratios in the range closest to the overall regional balance of 1:1.2 are white on these maps. See Table 11 for target jobs/housing ratio by County. Magnitude is not reflected, meaning that zones where there are very few jobs or houses look the same as where there are lots of jobs or houses. Jobs/housing balance is important for a community or sub- area because it tends to reduce the vehicle miles traveled, offer

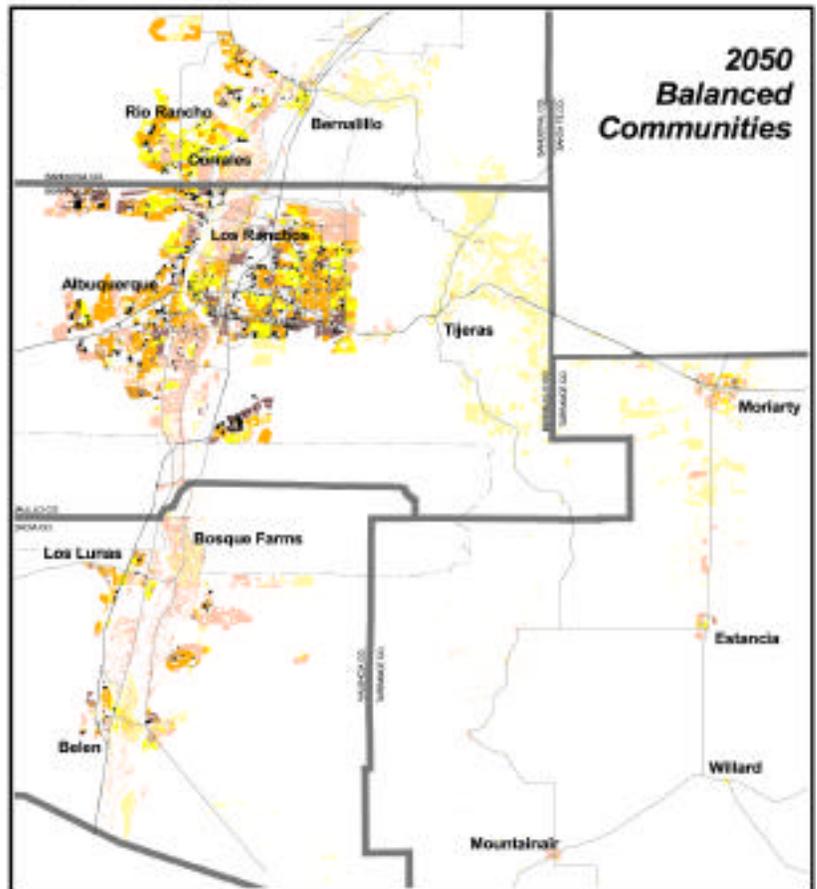
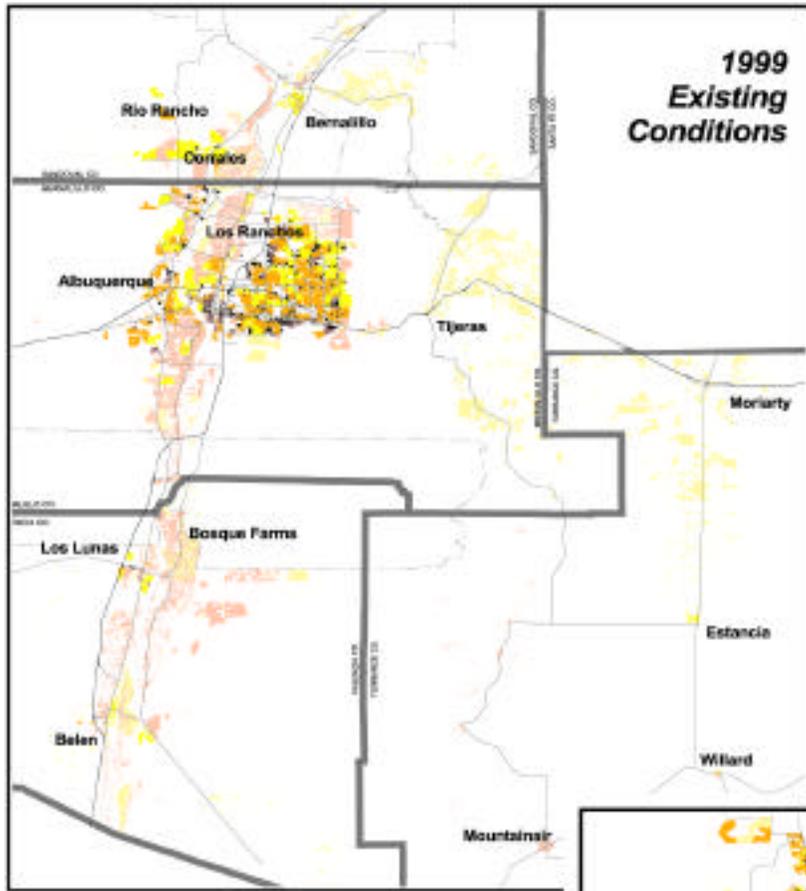
jobs closer to residents, provide better local tax bases, and give communities more convenient shopping. The north/south center of the region along I-25 contains the most significant jobs rich zones. Overall, those zones between 0.8 - 1.539 jobs/housing ratios increased from 11.6% of all zones in 1996 to 17.2% of all zones in 2050.

Conceptual Network of Roads for 2050 Regional Traffic Analysis Modeling

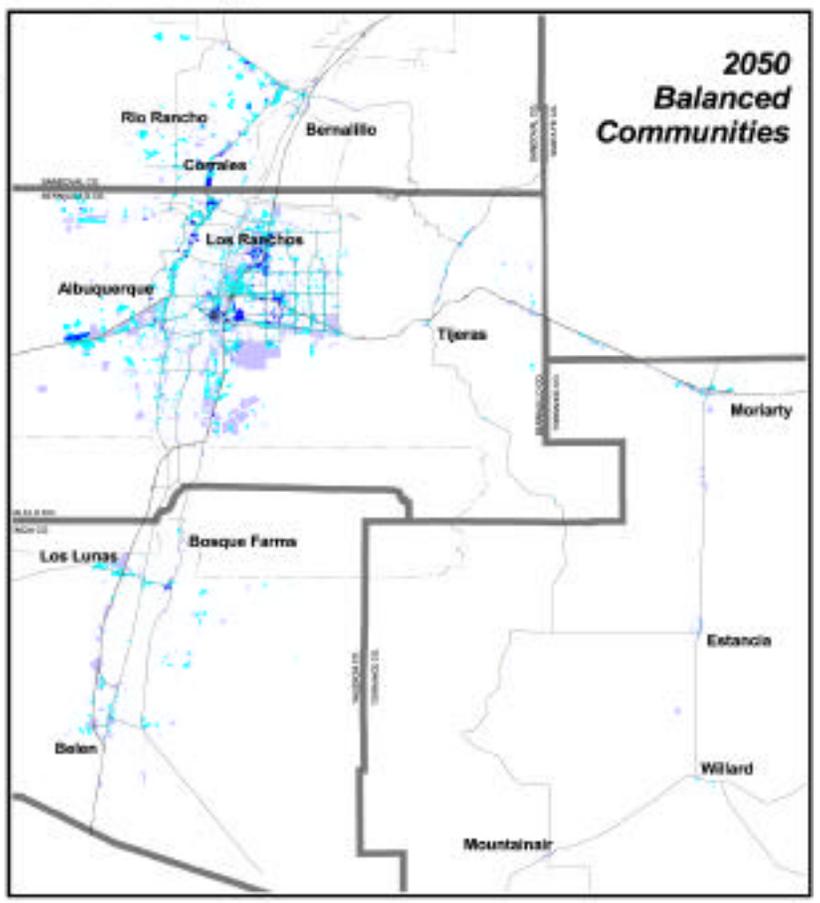
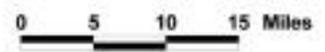
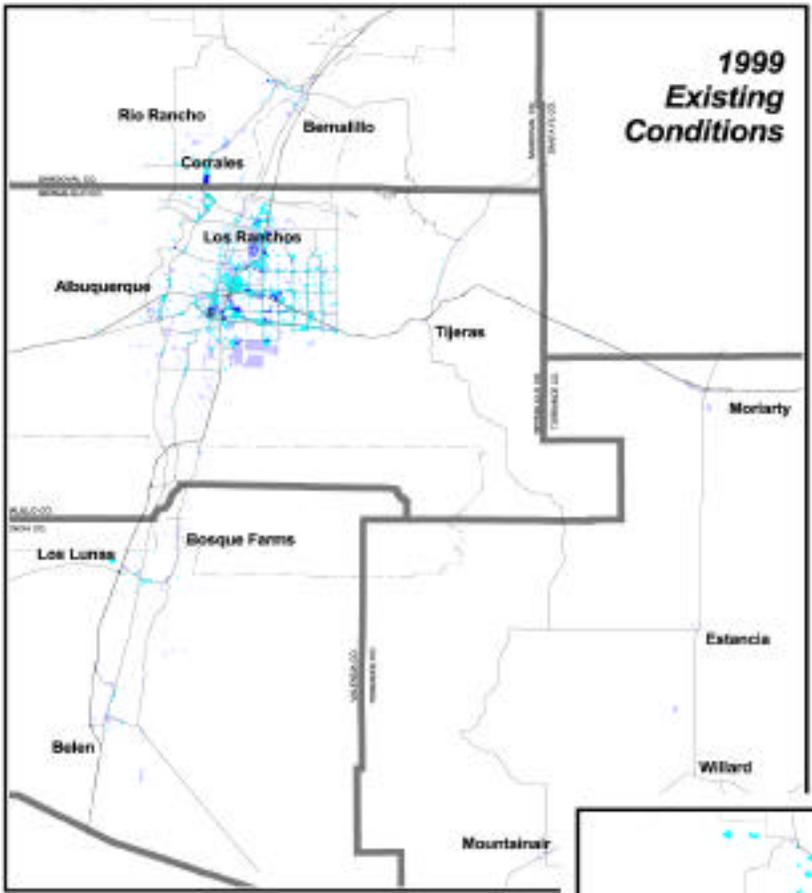
In order to evaluate the Balanced Communities Scenario, a future transportation network was developed. Map 7 shows the conceptual network of roads used for 2050 regional traffic analysis modeling. This extensive network of both existing and conceptual future roads was used for modeling traffic characteristics for all the scenarios considered through the Focus 2050 process. It simulates anticipated roads that would be needed for the maximum area shown in any of those scenarios. A transportation plan for the 2050 horizon has not been prepared; and the network of roads should not be considered to be a transportation plan for 2050.

2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Roadway Changes

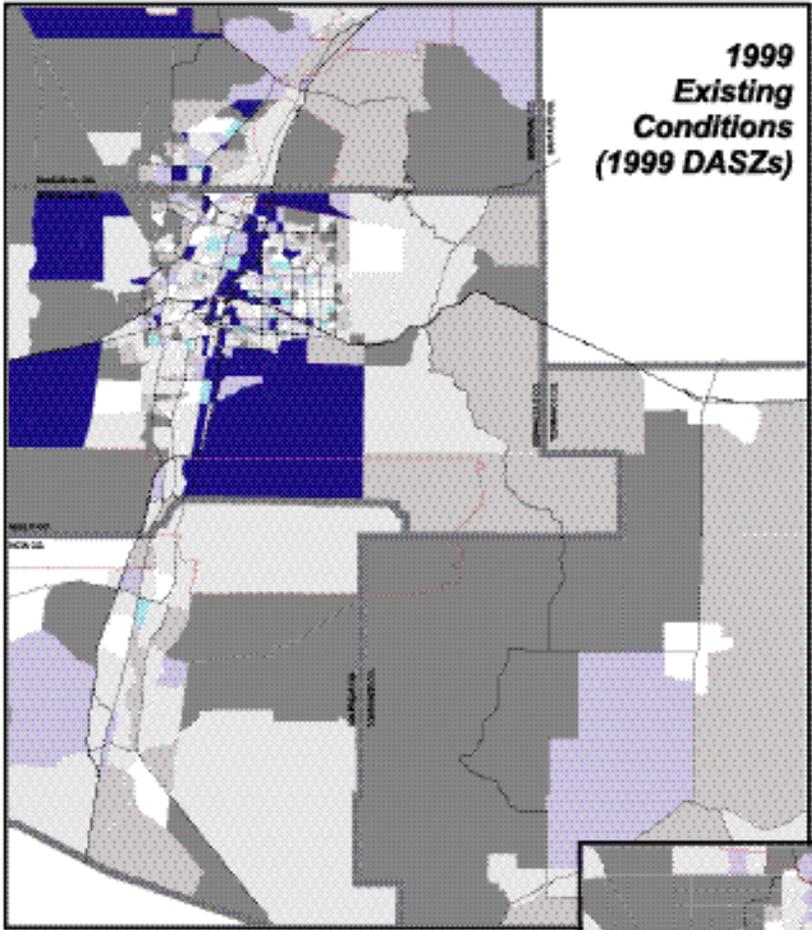
Proposed new roads from the adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2020 are shown in Map 8. These proposed roads form an initial enhancement to the transportation network generally anticipated to be needed to accommodate the Balanced Communities Scenario. Future work on the MTP 2025, the Middle Rio Grande "Connections" study and other transportation planning projects are expected to result in creating a generalized 2050 network for the Balanced Communities Scenario for inclusion in the Focus 2050 transportation element.



**Map 4
1999 and 2050
Dwelling Unit Density by
Land Use Polygon**



**Map 5
1999 and 2050
Employment Density by
Land Use Polygon**

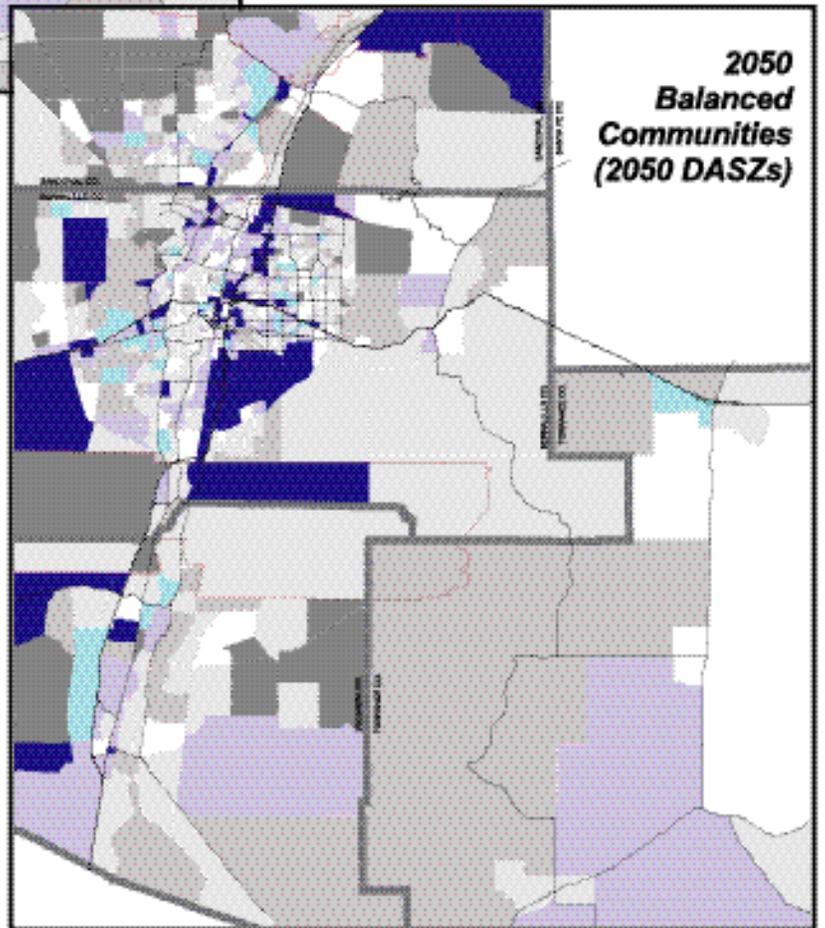


Jobs/Housing Ratio

- 0 - 0.064
- 0.064 - 0.21
- 0.21 - 0.799
- 0.8 - 1.2
- 1.2 - 1.539
- 1.539 - 8,582
- 8,582 - 8845

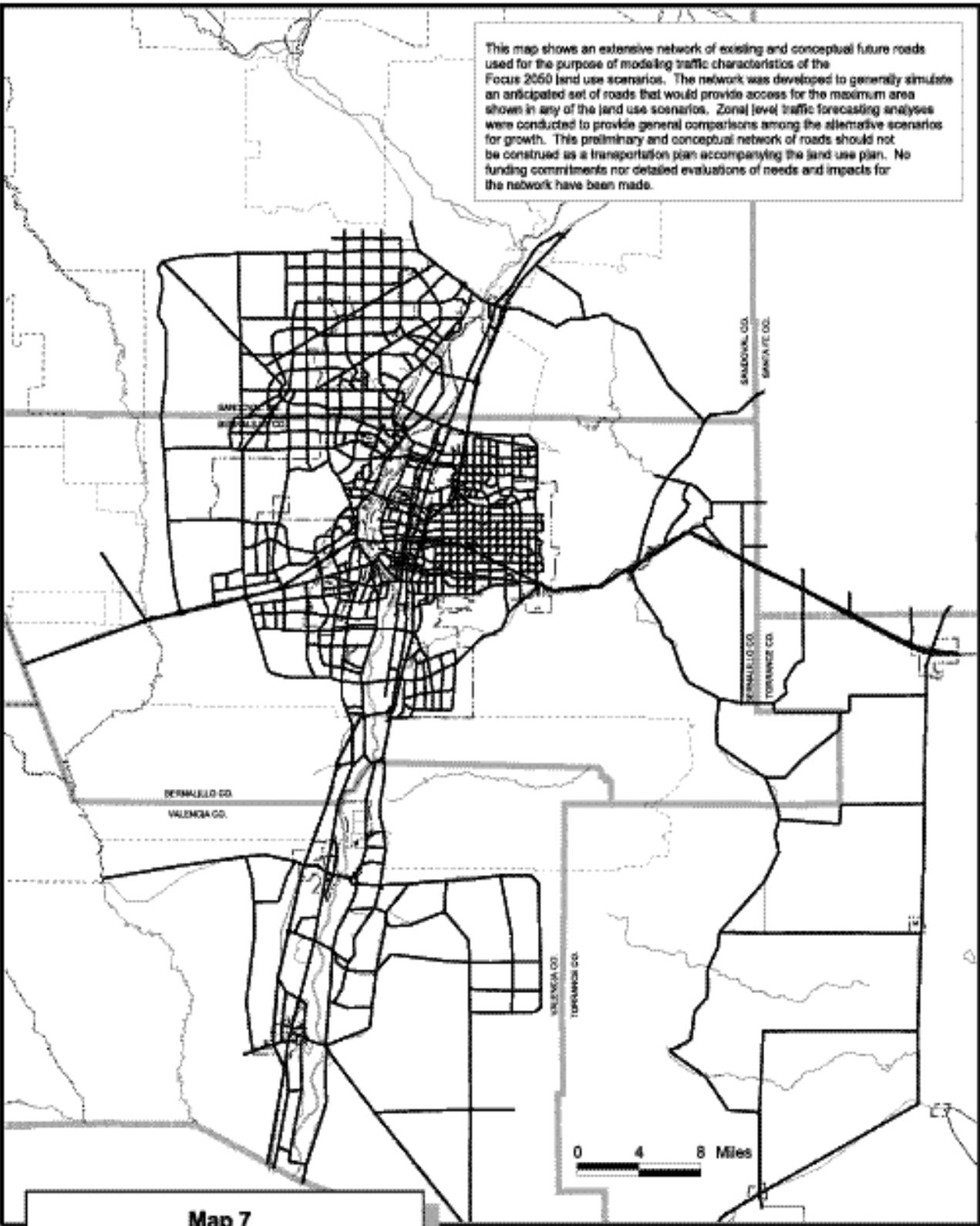
- Major Roads
- County Boundary
- Indian Reservation Boundary

0 5 10 15 Miles



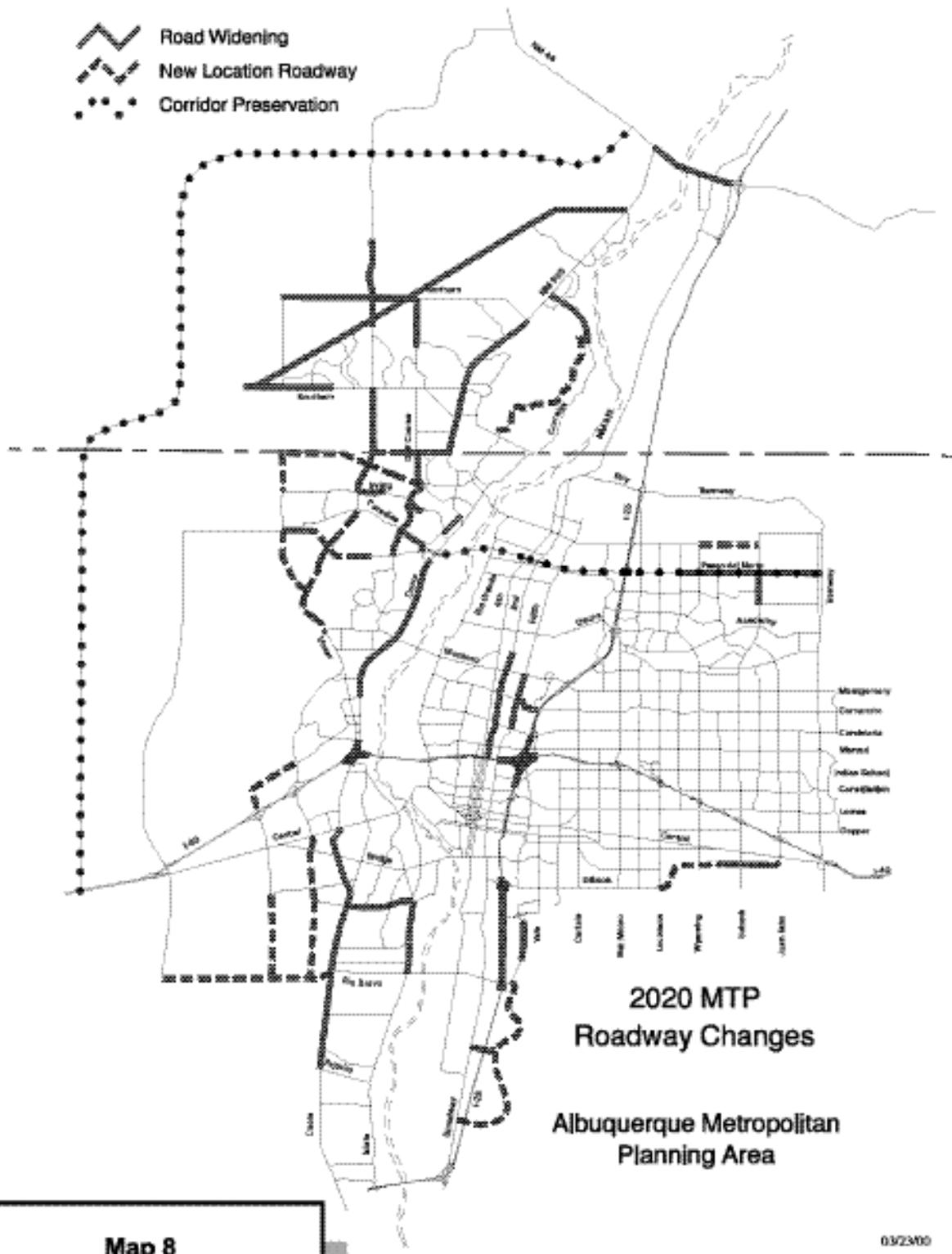
**Map 6
1999 and 2050
Jobs/Housing Balance by
Data Analysis Subzone**

This map shows an extensive network of existing and conceptual future roads used for the purpose of modeling traffic characteristics of the Focus 2050 land use scenarios. The network was developed to generally simulate an anticipated set of roads that would provide access for the maximum area shown in any of the land use scenarios. Zone-level traffic forecasting analyses were conducted to provide general comparisons among the alternative scenarios for growth. This preliminary and conceptual network of roads should not be construed as a transportation plan accompanying the land use plan. No funding commitments nor detailed evaluations of needs and impacts for the network have been made.



Map 7
Conceptual Network of Roads for
2050 Regional Traffic
Analysis Modeling

-  Road Widening
-  New Location Roadway
-  Corridor Preservation



**Map 8
2020 Metropolitan
Transportation Plan**

03/23/00

D. Characteristics of Growth by County Under the Balanced Communities Scenario

This section highlights major features of the Balanced Communities scenario within each County of the region.

Bernalillo County would continue to serve as the main metropolitan county of the region. Nearly two thirds of the new urban growth in the region (65%) would be directed into Bernalillo County, which would grow from 525,000 to 1,082,000 persons by year 2050. This would continue a strong role and steady rate of growth within and in close proximity to the urban core of the region. This tenet reinforces the principle that most growth should occur where it may be best served by the highest existing and planned level of services and concentration of cultural facilities and jobs. In contrast to some projections which show additional leakage of metropolitan growth into the surrounding counties, this scenario shows less explosive growth in those surrounding counties which strongly value their rural heritage and culture. New communities would have significant open space corridors separating them spatially that help preserve their identity from other nearby communities. In some cases, a single development would contain an internal major open space corridor (e.g., the Ceja of the West and Southwest Mesa through Westland North and South).

Focusing on Bernalillo County:

- Serves as the regional center for jobs, shopping, higher education and cultural activities
- Downtown Albuquerque, Uptown, Jefferson Corridor, Cottonwood & Atrisco are the main regional centers, all connected by high capacity transit.
- Urban intensity mixed use centers and corridors serve multiple neighborhoods
- Established single family neighborhoods retain current character
- New towns develop with range of housing, jobs and services
- Jobs/housing balance helps minimize river crossings
- 4th Street commercial district in Los Ranchos revitalized
- Extension of Petroglyphs/Escarpment/Ceja open space
- Minimal urbanization of South Valley agricultural lands and the Bosque
- Brown fields/underutilized land redevelopment of I-25 - Broadway industrial sector
- Puerco Valley not needed for urban development and used for major open space
- Highway 14 in Tijeras and just north of I-40 low scale mixed use corridor
- No large new communities in East Mountain area besides substantial build-out and minor expansions of and adjacent development to existing approved development
- Resident-serving commercial nodes at Frost Road and in and near Pa'aco

Sandoval County growth would be principally accommodated in the southern tier of the County, specifically in the City of Rio Rancho, Town of Bernalillo, and the western portion of the unincorporated community of Placitas. Also in the south part of the County, several planned communities are anticipated in the area of the "Mariposa" property west of NM 44 and in the Rio Puerco Valley of Sandoval County. Sandoval County would grow from approximately 79,000 to 254,000 persons by year 2050. Most of the growth is anticipated in and adjoining Rio Rancho. Elsewhere in Sandoval County, modest growth (which may positively affect community vitality) should be carefully planned for in the communities of Algodones, Pena Blanca, Cochiti Village, Village of San Ysidro, Canon area, Jemez Springs, in-holdings north of Jemez Springs, Ponderosa area, and the Village of Cuba and vicinity.

Focusing on Sandoval County:

- Jobs/housing balance improved, including retail development to enhance tax base
- Moderated rate of growth in southern part of County
- Rio Rancho regional center (downtown) connected by transit
- Rio Rancho open space system
- Bernalillo Downtown revitalized
- Retain rural character of Placitas
- Preserve valley floor agriculture of Corrales
- Minimize urbanization of the Bosque
- Modest growth in Jemez Spring consistent with small town character
- Stronger jobs base in Cuba, consistent with small town character
- Enhance and encourage retention of agriculture in Algodones and Pena Blanca

Valencia County would grow from 60,000 to around 160,000 persons by year 2050 through focusing most of the growth in the northern portion of the County around the existing Village of Los Lunas, secondarily in Belen, and thirdly in three distinct communities on the East Mesa oriented towards the escarpment and served by the Manzano Expressway. The main areas for growth in Los Lunas and Belen would be on the West Mesa.

Focusing on Valencia County:

- Jobs/housing balance improved, including basic employment in centers along I-25
- Urban development directed within existing urban areas, on adjacent mesas and away from the Valley floor
- Downtown Belen revitalized
- Los Lunas Hill and Tome Hill preserved
- Rural/small town character of Bosque Farms preserved
- Irrigated agriculture in the Valley enhanced
- Minimize urbanization of the Bosque
- New towns (currently unincorporated) on East Mesa expand close to Mesa edge along the Manzano Expressway
- Limited clustered development located in traditional valley communities

Torrance County would grow from approximately 13,000 to 44,700 persons by year 2050, accommodating most of the growth in the City of Moriarty, in modest continued rural residential growth in the McIntosh area, and residential development south of I-40 in the Edgewood area. Estancia and Mountainair would both experience modest growth within their community areas. Selected areas in the Mountainair vicinity would experience limited growth in rural residential development. Base jobs would be located primarily in Moriarty because of the existing urban population base and utility services, existing industrial and commercial core area, accessibility to Interstate 40, and suitability of land.

Focusing on Torrance County:

- Jobs/housing balance greatly improved.
- Moriarty commercial and industrial areas grow both north and south of I-40
- Estancia and Mountainair grow while retaining their traditional character and convenience for residents
- McIntosh area becomes a larger community with rural residential and commercial growth
- Minor growth in mountain front areas of Manzano Mountains Land Grant communities, while the local job base is enhanced
- Irrigated farmlands of Estancia Basin enhanced and encouraged to be retained
- Rural residential spreading across the Basin is discouraged
- Basin rangeland remains largely in ranching

E. Target Growth Distribution

One of the principal strategies of Focus 2050 is to direct new regional growth to the identified metropolitan and small town areas, centers and corridors. The intent of the strategy is to promote a regional urban form characterized by mainly compact and well defined communities framed by a network of open spaces, connected by major transit and highway corridors. The main parameters of the Plan's growth distribution are:

- population and employment by each County
- jobs/housing balance by each County
- targeted growth through in-fill and redevelopment in selected areas

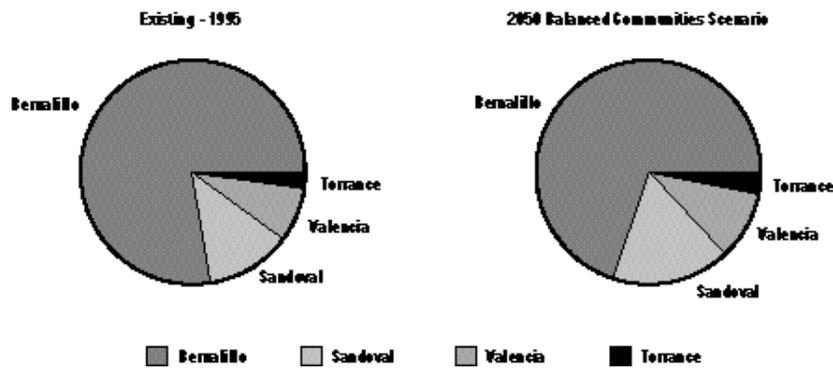
- targeted growth through development of new towns
- higher average densities for new development, including in-fill, redevelopment and building planned communities
- developed land area

Tables 8 through 15 and Figures 20 through 23 describe the target growth distribution.

**Table 8
Target Population By County**

County	Existing - 1995	Existing Percent of Total	2050 Balanced Communities Scenario	Balanced Communities Scenario Percent of Total
Bernalillo	524,620	76%	1,081,907	70%
Sandoval	79,268	12%	253,963	17%
Valencia	56,633	8%	155,410	10%
Torrance	13,038	2%	44,720	3%
Total	673,959	100%	1,536,000	100%

**Figure 20
Target Population By County**



**Table 9
Target Employment By County**

County	Existing - 1995	Existing Percent of Total	2050 Balanced Communities Scenario	Balanced Communities Scenario Percent of Total
Bernalillo	302,643	89%	667,475	79%
Sandoval	21,463	6%	106,420	13%
Valencia	12,453	4%	61,325	7%
Torrance	2,581	1%	12,480	1%
Total	339,146	100%	847,700	100%

**Figure 21
Target Employment By County**

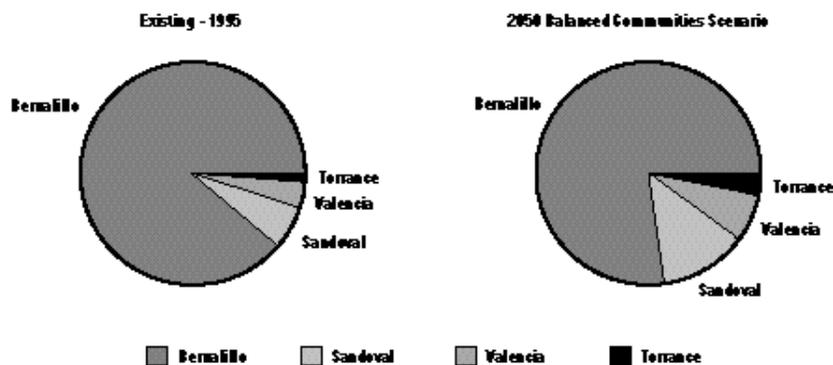


Table 10
Percent of New Population and Employment Growth for Balanced Communities Scenario By County

County	Population Share of New Growth - Balanced Communities	Employment Share of New Growth - Balanced Communities
Bernalillo	66%	71%
Sandoval	20%	17%
Valencia	11%	10%
Torrance	4%	2%
Total	100%	100%

Figure 22
Percent of New Population and Employment Growth for Balanced Communities Scenario By County

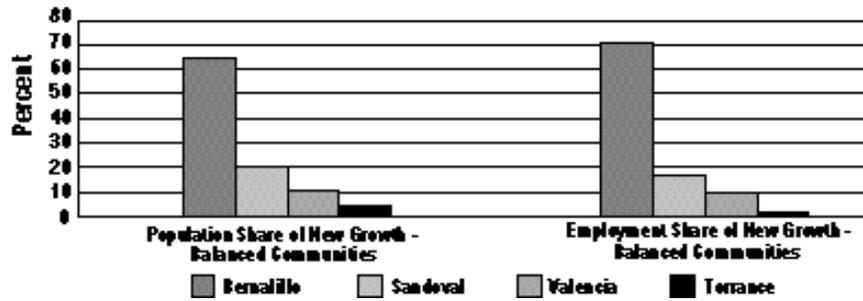


Table 11
Target Jobs/Housing Ratio by County

	Existing	2050 Balanced Communities
Bernalillo	1.33	1.35
Sandoval	0.86	0.97
Valencia	0.56	0.94
Torrance	0.44	0.71
Total	1.20	1.24

Figure 23
Target Jobs/Housing Ratio by County

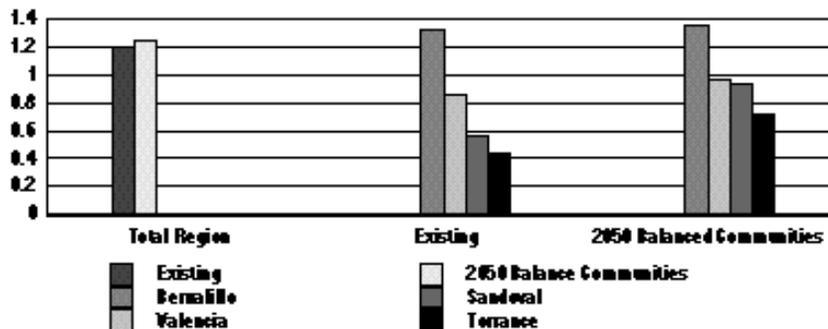


Table 12
Target Population Growth By Municipalities and Key Sub-Areas of Bernalillo County

	Existing Population	2050 Balanced Communities Population	Population Increase from Current	Percentage of Population Increase from Current
City of Albuquerque	455,600	734,844	279,244	61%
Abuquerque - East of River*	367,640	548,513	180,873	49%
Abuquerque - West of River	87,910	188,330	98,420	53%
Village of Los Ranchos	5,465	8,469	3,004	55%
Village of Tijeras	400	1,300	900	225%
East Mountain Area**	17,357	34,858	17,501	101%
Mesa del Sol	-	77,438	77,438	-
Quail Ranch	-	40,516	40,516	-
Westland North & South.	-	102,437	102,437	-

* Albuquerque - East of the River consists of the area within the City Limits east of the Rio Grande, including Mesa del Sol.

** East Mountain Area includes the Tijeras Canyon and the east side of Sandia Mountain within Bernalillo County. The Village of Tijeras is within this area.

Table 13
Target Population Growth By Municipalities and Key Sub-Areas of Sandoval County

	Existing Population	2050 Balanced Communities Population	Population Increase from Current	Percentage of Population Increase from Current
City of Rio Rancho	48,000	180,023	132,023	275%
Village of Corrales	7,400	11,371	3,971	54%
Town of Bernalillo	7,100	10,125	3,025	43%
Village of Cuba	900	1,369	1,369	52%
Village of Jemez Springs	500	1,349	849	170%
Village of San Ysidro	300	396	96	32%
Placitas Area	3,500	4,600	1,100	31%

**Table 14
Target Population Growth By Municipalities and Key Sub-Areas of Valencia County**

	Existing Population	2050 Balanced Communities Population	Population Increase from Current	Percentage of Population Increase from Current
City of Belen	7,500	25,956	18,456	246%
Village of Los Lunas	9,700	34,250	24,550	253%
Village of Bosque Farms	4,400	5,341	941	21%
East Mesa Unincorporated Communities	11,140	56,151	45,011	422%

**Table 15
Target Population Growth By Municipalities of Torrance County**

	Existing Population	2050 Balanced Communities Population	Population Increase from Current	Percentage of Population Increase from Current
Town of Moriarty	1,900	19,090	17,190	905%
Town of Estancia	1,100	4,557	3,457	314%
Village of Mountainair	1,100	1,480	380	35%
Village of Willard	200	800	600	300%
Village of Encino	130	130	-	-

F. Urban Form Categories

The following discussion and Tables 16 through 18 describe and reference the characteristics of the existing conditions map (Map 2) and the future land use map (Map 3) by categories of land use.

Comparing total areas of developed land (including rural residential), there are:

- 232 Square Miles of Urban Development in 1999 Existing Land Use.
- 376 Square Miles of Urban Development in the Balanced Communities Scenario. This represents 144 square miles of additional developed land over the next fifty years.

Table 16
Existing Land Use 1999 Total Developed Land by County

	Acres	(Square Miles)
Bernalillo	91,580	143.1
Sandoval	24,704	33.9
Valencia	19,507	30.5
Torrance	12,497	19.8
Total	148,279	231.7

Table 17
Balanced Communities Scenario Total Developed Land by County

	Acres	(Square Miles)
Bernalillo	149,070	232.9
Sandoval	40,244	62.9
Valencia	32,039	50.0
Torrance	20,110	31.4
Total	240,768	376.2

Table 18
Urban Vacant Lands*

	Acres	(Square Miles)
Bernalillo	22,006	5,645
Sandoval	7,701	2,944
Valencia	1,267	399
Torrance	1,359	469
Total	32,333	9,457

*Urban vacant lands are defined for this study as undeveloped areas within currently developed areas as depicted in the Existing Land Use Inventory. The area includes lands which were inventoried as unbuilt in 1996/97 as updated to 1999. Some lands are directly adjacent to the outer edge of urbanized lands, usually already subdivided, where development has occurred on at least two sides of the vacant land and which, if developed, would create a regular shaped area.

Table 18 shows a current inventory of 32,300 acres, or 50 square miles, of urban vacant lands within the already principally urbanized areas of the region. The Balanced Communities Scenario utilizes 71% of the urban vacant lands for future development.

This represents 36 square miles of "in-fill" out of the total additional 144 square miles of added developed land under the Balanced Communities Scenario. In Bernalillo County, 74% of the urban vacant land is used in the Balanced Communities Scenario. Future land use is mapped according to the following categories:

Metropolitan Residential Fabric consists of predominantly single family neighborhoods, with some multi-family residences, minor commercial (population-serving), schools, parks, natural drainage, urban vacant, and other urban non-residential uses. These are all uses in urban neighborhoods in addition to the predominant single family residential. Gross residential density is higher than 4.2 dwelling units/acre. Metropolitan residential fabric occurs in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Los Lunas and Belen neighborhoods.

Small Town Residential Fabric consists of predominantly single family neighborhoods and a mix of resident-serving uses. Residential areas of the small towns of the region - including several communities contiguous to the metropolitan area,

such as Corrales and Los Ranchos de Albuquerque - have distinctively less intensity, mix of uses and range of urban conveniences than does metropolitan residential fabric. Gross residential density is lower than 4.2 dwelling units/acre. For example, under the Balanced Communities Scenario, the gross density of Moriarty is 2.3 dwelling units/residential acre, Estancia 2.7, and Corrales 2.0. Small town residential fabric occurs in Moriarty, Estancia, Willard, Encino, Mountainair, Bosque Farms, East Mesa of Valencia County, Bernalillo, Corrales, Cuba, Tijeras, portions of the South Valley and North Valley, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, San Ysidro, and Jemez Springs.

Rural Residential Fabric consists of single family residential areas on very large lots with a gross residential density of less than 1 dwelling unit/acre. Many areas have densities substantially lower, containing 5 and 10 acres tracts. Within this low density fabric are a few, scattered schools, parks and businesses. This category is different than working farms and ranches since the primary use of these large lots or tracts is generally residential. In the Balanced Communities Scenario, Placitas, East Mountains, and Tierra Grande are rural residential.

Table 19 shows target residential densities for new construction compared to the existing housing stock.

**Table 19
Housing Stock Density Comparisons of New Construction between the Balanced Communities Scenarios and Total Existing**

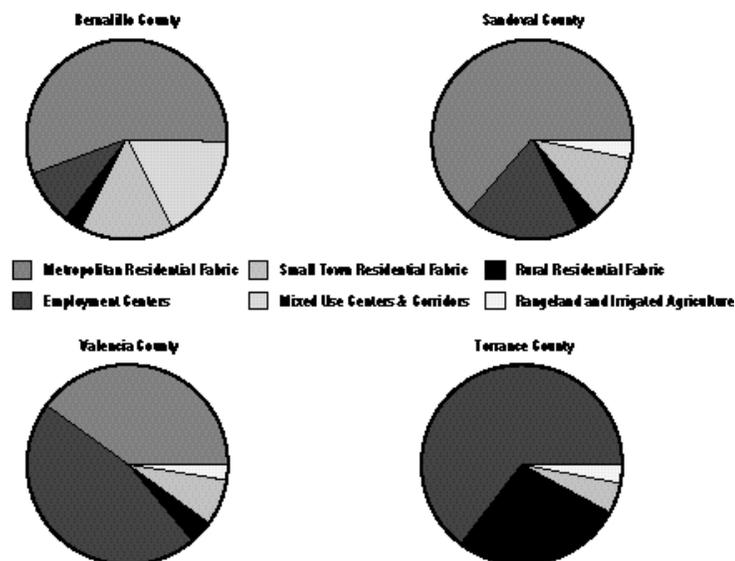
Gross Density (Dwelling Unit/Acre)	Average lot size (Square Feet or Acres)	Range of lot sizes (Square Feet or Acres)	Typical Building Types	% of Existing Housing Stock	% of New construction: Balanced Communities Scenario
Less than 0.2	10 acres	5-20 acres	Single Family	2.1%	02%
0.2 - 1	66,000 s.f.	1-5 acres	Single Family	6.5%	1.4%
1-3	18,000 s.f.	11,000 - 36,000 s.f.	Single Family	20.6%	6.8%
3-4	10,000 s.f.	8,000 - 10,500 s.f.	Single Family	17.4%	8.5%
4-6	6,000 s.f.	5,500 - 7,500 s.f.	Single Family	29.1%	29.1%
6 and over	4,500 s.f.	<5,500 s.f.	Single Family, detached & attached	5.6%	17.9%
multi-family	20 units/acre	8-90 units/acre	Townhouse, Condominiums & Apartments	22.6%	35.9%

In Tables 20 and 21, and Figures 24 and 25 the target distribution of dwelling units and employment is shown by the urban form categories plus rangeland and irrigated agriculture.

Table 20
Dwelling Units by Urban Form Categories by County

	Bernalillo County	Sandoval County	Valencia County	Torrance County	Total (%)
Metropolitan Residential Fabric	274,144	70,147	27,023	—	371,314 (54.0%)
Small town Residential Fabric	44,800	20,967	30,982	11,361	108,110 (15.7%)
Rural Residential Fabric	15,123	3,958	2,651	4,723	26,455 (3.8%)
Employment Centers	72,786	11,884	5,116	914	90,700 (13.2%)
Mixed Use Centers & Corridors	85,776	—	—	—	85,776 (12.5%)
Rangeland and Irrigated Agriculture	344	3,170	1,560	490	5,564 (0.8%)
Total	492,973	110,126	67,332	17,488	687,919 (100%)

Figure 24
Dwelling Units by Urban Form Categories by County

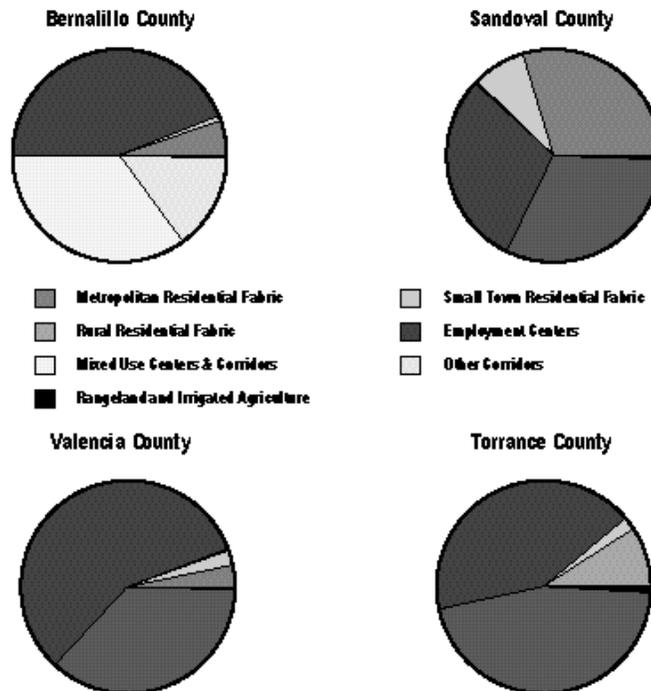


**Table 21
Employment by Urban Form Categories by County**

	Bernalillo County	Sandoval County	Valencia County	Torrance County	Total (%)
Metropolitan Residential Fabric	37,025	5,399	2,056	---	44,480 (5.2%)
Small town Residential Fabric	4,380	2,368	1,444	1,167	9,359 (1.1%)
Rural Residential Fabric	1,160	400	87	254	1,901 (0.2%)
Employment Centers	292,201	48,314	35,147	5,290	380,961 (44.9%)
Mixed Use Centers & Corridors*	233,485	49,821	22,493	5,715	311,514 (36.7%)
Other Corridors*	98,954	---	---	---	98,954 (11.7%)
Rangeland and Irrigated Agriculture	270	118	101	94	583 (0.1%)
Total	667,484	106,420	61,328	12,520	847,752 (100%)

*Employment in Bernalillo County mixed use centers and corridors includes high capacity transit corridors and the nodes in those corridors. The "Other Corridors" category includes the numerous commercial and industrial areas typically along major street corridors in Bernalillo County which are not associated with hypothetical high capacity transit.

**Figure 25
Employment by Urban Form Categories by County**



Employment Centers are principally concentrated manufacturing, industrial, research, and office uses. Regional Centers are the largest, densest and most diverse of centers and are included in this category. These core urban places receive the highest level of transit service in the metropolitan area, as well as other public facilities and services. Residential uses and regional- serving uses are mixed into the fabric of regional centers. Downtown Albuquerque, Uptown Albuquerque, and the Jefferson Corridor in Albuquerque are Regional Centers in the Balanced Communities Scenario.

The category of Employment Centers also includes those job-intense areas with very little residential use. Such employment centers have concentrations of office, industrial, research, and regional retail. UNM Research Area, Intel, Los Morros Business Park in Los Lunas, and Atrisco Business Park in Albuquerque are employment centers in the Balanced Communities Scenario.

Mixed Use Centers include the following forms:

- a. Metropolitan Centers offer services and jobs in locations closer to residential neighborhoods and possess a high levels of transit service. Metropolitan centers are major destinations for employment, commerce, shopping and entertainment, as well as a focus for the local community. They possess multiple family housing, and may have mixed use developments. Cottonwood Mall/7 Bar Ranch, Los Lunas center next to I-25, and Rio Rancho center along NM 528 are metropolitan centers in the Balanced Communities Scenario.
- b. Town Centers are focal points where people come together for business, shopping, medium urban density living and recreation. These centers may include the core for small-to- medium sized cities, and may also be located in unincorporated areas. This category includes "Main Streets. " Downtown Mountainair, Downtown Bernalillo, Downtown Belen, Barelmas, Old Town Albuquerque, Tijeras, Jemez Springs, Cuba, and Downtown Moriarty are town centers.

- c. Activity Nodes are small scale business and shopping areas, occasionally accompanied by medium or higher density housing. These centers serve a large neighborhood or a rural area. Urban examples include Montgomery and Juan Tabo in Albuquerque, and Central and Old Coors in Albuquerque. Small town and rural examples are existing or future commercial districts in San Ysidro, McIntosh, and Meadowlake.

Mixed Use Corridors are linear zones of mixed commercial, office, public, industrial and residential uses. Corridors are a very strong and pervasive urban form in the region. Gross residential densities are higher than 10 dwelling units per acre, and typically in the range of 20-25 dwelling units/acre. Northeast Heights of Albuquerque arterial streets have been developed since the 1960's with strip commercial containing typically few non-retail or office uses, Central Avenue, 4th Street, Coors Boulevards, and NM 47 through Bosque Farms.

Corridors in the Balanced Communities Scenario contain higher density housing - in some cases set back and oriented around courtyards, small neighborhood nodes along the corridors which are pedestrian accessible (in design and distance from dwellings) with general retail and office uses scattered in. Boulevards are a form of mixed use corridors that do not possess contiguous intense residential and nonresidential development, but rather are predominated by park/open space/buffer areas, mixed housing types, and commercial nodes. Most Mixed Use Corridors in the Scenario overlay existing developed areas, and contain additional in-fill and redevelopment.

Selected Statistical Characteristics of Centers and Corridors: Downtown Albuquerque is a particularly important center in the Balanced Communities Scenario. Downtown employment would increase from 21,816 employees to 38,484 employees; and the housing stock would grow from 1,469 dwelling units to 6,826 dwelling units. Approximately 15,000 residents would live downtown.

70% of the new employment would be accommodated within the 23 square miles of "mixed use corridors" (lineal areas 2000 ft. both sides of centerlines) and within and adjacent to the various large and small centers in the region (see Tables 22 and 23).

Minimum Densities in Centers and Along Corridors: Densities of employment and population need to be sufficiently high if centers and corridors are to attract the mix of uses needed for urban vitality, provide a scale convenient for pedestrians, and create ridership to support high capacity transit (e.g. light rail, commuter rail, and rapid bus transit).

Future densities in the centers and along corridors of the Balanced Communities Scenario have been organized to complement a conceptual

high capacity transit system in Bernalillo County and City of Rio Rancho. Tables 24 and 25 show selected potential high capacity corridors and centers. Densities exceeding 30 persons per acre of combined residents and employees have been met in most of the centers and corridors considered for this high capacity transit network.

Some centers would have substantially higher densities; for example, Downtown Albuquerque would have some 112 persons/acre. The corridor on Central Avenue between Rio Grande Boulevard and the University of New Mexico would have 76 persons/acre, not including University students. Of particular importance in corridors is adequate densities in and near the nodes served by transit stops.

**Table 22
Employment in Corridors and In and Around Centers**

	Total Employees	New Employees	Percentage of Region's New Employees	Percentage of Region's Total Employees
Existing Land Use	228,898			62.8%
Balanced Communities Scenario	525,686	340,860	69.6%	62.8%

**Table 23
Dwelling Units in Centers and Corridors**

	Total Dwelling Units	New Dwelling Units	Percentage of Region's New Dwelling Units	Percentage of Region's Total Dwelling Units
Existing Land Use	63,855			23.0%
Balanced Communities Scenario	158,562	94,707	22.7%	22.8%

Table 24
Balanced Communities Scenario
Selected Segments of Hypothetical High
Capacity Transit Routes

Corridor Segment	Length
On Central, between Rio Grande Blvd. and UNM	9.44 miles
On Central, between UNM and Louisiana	3.67 miles
On Louisiana, between Central and Menaul	3.30 miles
On Montgomery, Louisiana to I-25	1.99 miles
On Coors between Cottonwood and Paseo del Norte	4.47 miles
On Coors between Paseo del Norte and Montano	5.12 miles

Table 25
Balanced Communities Scenario
Selected Centers Along Hypothetical High
Capacity Transit Routes

Centers or Nodes	Area
Downtown	460.0 acres
Coors & Paseo del Norte	193.4 acres
Coors/Cottonwood Mall area	408.5 acres
Montgomery east of I-25	395.9 acres
Jefferson St.	438.1 acres

Irrigated Agriculture are areas identified to be in current irrigated agricultural production and encouraged in the Balanced Communities Scenario to continue in such uses. Table 26 show these lands by county. Algodones, Valencia County Rio Grande Valley, portions of Indian Pueblo valley lands (from existing land use), and irrigated fields of the Estancia Basin in Torrance County are shown as irrigated agriculture in the Balanced Communities Scenario.

Retention of irrigated agriculture in the region requires methods to enhance the economic viability of farming and, generally, to find ways to reduce water usage. Land use regulations such as zoning alone do not constitute an adequate

strategy to retain irrigated agriculture in the Rio Grande Valley and Estancia Basin. Additional strategies will be necessary for that purpose. It is recognized that some urban conversion in addition to that shown on the future land use map is likely. It will be very challenging to entirely contain development in irrigated agricultural areas. Through higher efficiency in water use, the introduction of higher value crops, and support for marketing thereof, continued irrigated agriculture may be achieved while also making available additional water for future projected urban residential and commercial/industrial uses, and at the same time strengthening the economic base.

Table 26
Irrigated Agricultural Lands by County

	Existing Land Use	Balanced Communities Scenario
Bernalillo County	5,807 acres	5,117 acres
Sandoval County	7,847 acres	7,744 acres
Valencia County	24,396 acres	23,689 acres
Torrance County	21,059 acres	20,623 acres
Total	58,909 acres	57,173 acres

Major Public Open Space consists primarily of lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, New Mexico State Parks, City of Albuquerque Open Space Division, and Bernalillo County Open Space Division. Approximately 23,000 acres of U.S. Forest Service land has been withdrawn for the use of Kirtland Air Force Base and the Department of Energy and is included in this overall land use category. Any return of portions of this land to the Cibola National Forest requires mitigation. Secondly, existing parks, landowner- proposed open space arrangements and conceptual open space along certain major drainage systems are shown as possible future contributors to open space.

G. Lands Not Shown to Develop

The future land use map contains a number of areas categorized as rangeland and irrigated agriculture and major public open space which are not shown to develop. The Regional Plan provides general guidance to where land should and should not be developed for urban uses; however, it recognizes that rangeland and irrigated agricultural lands may have many different statuses, and these entire areas may not remain undeveloped.

A balance needs to be struck between the land-owners' reasonable expectations regarding the use and enjoyment of their land and the community's desires to promote land use patterns that would provide overall community benefits of openness and preserve desirable quality of life assets. The two need not be mutually exclusive nor contradictory. This balance can be achieved through creative use of a variety of innovative planning techniques, incentives and acquisitions.

In some cases, undeveloped areas contain "pre-platted subdivisions" - lands subdivided prior to current statutory requirements for following local subdivision regulations. Often they are "paper subdivisions" with no roads nor utilities and laid out in grids without regard to topography or surface hydrology. Such lands possess development rights; and these rights are not pre-empted. Techniques must be devised to provide alternative methods, such as land purchase, transfer or purchase of development rights, and clustering, based upon local government decisions to acknowledge development rights and to encourage development in the appropriate locations. The value of undeveloped lands and open space needs to be recognized by the general public. In some cases, public programs for purchasing of open space or giving compensation to the landowners may be necessary to retain open lands.

Other areas not shown to develop may be in preliminary stages of community planning, where expectations of future development have not been fully expressed nor evaluated and approved by local governments. In particular, master planned communities in limited areas may be appropriate if they have adequate water resources, are supported by a full range of infrastructure and services, preserve significant open space, scenic vistas and arable land, and mitigate traffic, wastewater disposal and other development

impacts. It is anticipated that some such areas may be considered through local planning processes. The timing of approvals and phasing of development should be important considerations as well as how the locations fit into the general land use pattern of the Regional Plan.

Lands shown as irrigated agriculture are private lands which have value for farmland and provide a cultural amenity for the region. It should be noted that few places in this arid region have the potential for irrigation based crop production; and these areas are truly unique resources. The value of irrigated agriculture needs to be recognized by the general public. Broad based community support is needed to institute measures of protection from future development and to support farmers by buying local produce. Public financial assistance might be required to help implement efficient irrigation techniques for retaining such lands in agricultural uses. Full or partial acquisition of farmlands might also be needed. Lands indicated as open space on the future land use map are principally in current public ownership. Privately held land which has the potential of being part of a regional open space system, as referenced in Strategy 2-1, should be retained while respecting private property rights. The value of open space in the region also deserves explicit recognition by the general public. There is a need for broad-based community support for the continuation of practices which make it possible for open space to remain without major urban development; and there are public responsibilities to assist in the effort to keep this land undeveloped. Public acquisition, open space dedications through subdividing, easements and transfers or purchases of open space are some of the means to retain open space.



Chapter V

NEXT STEPS

A. Principles for Implementation

The approved of the first Regional Plan is a momentous event, preceded by years of rigorous technical work and comprehensive citizen involvement. But the real work follows approval, as MRGCOG's member governments, the development industry, and citizens begin to take the thousands of actions big and small that will be required to make the plan become a reality.

The purpose of this section is to establish a foundation and direction for developing an implementation program for the Plan. It will not be possible to fill in the initial implementation details until late in year 2000, but the efficiency and odds of success for that effort will be greater if the MRGCOG members and private sector partners start from common principles. Ten such principles are described below.

Implementation Principle #1: Certain actions of regional significance must be consistent with the Regional Plan for the Plan to succeed.

This is the most important implementation principle. Without agreement on it the Plan cannot succeed. The most fundamental presumption of the regional plan is that in some instances regionally coordinated actions will yield greater benefits appropriately labeled regionally significant.

There are numerous examples of this dynamic at work within all the issue areas that eventually will be addressed through elements of the Regional Plan. A few include:

1. A new high tech plant in a jurisdiction with an inadequate supply of housing creates housing demand in a neighboring jurisdiction;
2. New subdivisions in one jurisdiction create a need for new roads in a neighboring jurisdiction with an abundant supply of retail shopping options;
3. Erosion and pollution from inappropriate development near a stream, arroyo or river create water pollution in a downstream community; and
4. Three communities share an aquifer and inefficient water use in one community threatens the future supply for the other two.

In all these cases it is important that individual community choices be made in a manner consistent with the interests of the broader regional community. It is intended that local governments will utilize the information and concepts of the Regional Plan, taking into account local needs and desires, as they prepare and adopt their local plans and regulations, and then apply those planning tools to development reviews and approvals.

Implementation Principle #2: The Plan should provide a clear and objective performance based definition of actions of regional significance.

Because actions of regional significance form the foundation for Plan implementation, it is important to know what they are. For the land use element there are two types of regionally significant actions.

- Individual actions whose impacts are likely to extend beyond a single jurisdiction; and
- Cumulative actions whose impacts are likely to extend beyond a single jurisdiction.

A specific list of individual actions should be developed. For example, it might include siting for such large uses as hospitals, regional scale shopping centers (for example, 300,000 square feet and above), universities, sports or entertainment complexes that draw from a regional market area, and significant new communities (for example, larger than 600 homes and 400 jobs).

The types of regionally significant cumulative actions within each community might include such variables as the location, land use efficiency (density), and the ratio of housing to employment.

Similar definitions for actions of regional significance should be developed for the other elements to the Plan as they are prepared and adopted. In the transportation element the alignment and function of major roads that cross jurisdictional boundaries would be an example.

Ideally MRGCOG's members would identify a relatively small number of variables that are regionally significant and develop performance standards that provide maximum flexibility and encourage innovation and creativity as governments and citizens implement the Plan over time.

Implementation Principle #3: A monitoring system should be established to help assure that the Regional Plan is implemented.

A system should be established that allows MRGCOG to review and comment on the individual actions of regional significance before they occur, and to at least annually review and comment on how well communities are meeting regional targets for the cumulative variables of regional significance. Local governments are encouraged to give notice to MRGCOG of pending regionally significant land use actions so that MRGCOG can provide staff-to-staff advisory comment on whether the proposed action is consistent with the Regional Plan. It will not be possible or necessary for MRGCOG to review every proposed action; however, it should comment during the local government review process whether large individual cases appear to support the Regional Plan, and address the cumulative issues through annual monitoring reports.

Procedures will need to be established for either changing the individual or cumulative actions to conform to the regional plan, or amending the Regional Plan to conform to the actions. The integrity of the Plan cannot be maintained if the actions of the implementors do not support its major tenets.

Implementation Principle #4: Successful implementation of the Regional Plan should add value to local actions, not supplant or duplicate local actions.

The purpose of the regional plan is to help local communities identify actions that have regional impacts and to make choices that serve both local and regional needs. This will increase the quality of local decision-making. The Regional Plan should not place MRGCOG in the role of making local decisions. Finding the constructive balance between regional and local decision-making is challenging, and will require on-going attention from all MRGCOG members.

Cities and counties will remain responsible for the detailed planning of their communities, zoning properties, and processing land division applications and building permits. They should, however, exercise these powers in a manner consistent with the basic framework of the Regional Plan.

Implementation Principle #5: Successful implementation of the Regional Plan will require a partnership comprised of multiple actions by many public and private parties.

Communities grow, change and thrive as a result of thousands of actions by private individuals and businesses. Land use plans merely provide the

framework in which these actions occur. Successful implementation of the Plan will require a comprehensive partnership between multiple private and public parties. The actions of MRGCOG and its members alone will not be sufficient to make the Plan a reality. For example, some pre-platted subdivisions if developed would create an obsolete pattern of growth in areas which do not have potable water or transportation accessibility and may be located in arroyos or other sensitive lands. The development of these lots would not only be deleterious to the environment but would take away the economic incentive for responsible development efforts. Yet development rights for these lots have been approved and are recognized to be valid. These situations present challenges requiring partnership by public and private parties to cooperatively determine how to discourage or redirect development in these areas and encourage development where it is suitable.

Implementation Principle #6: Implementation efforts should make maximum use of education, voluntary actions, and market place incentives.

Successful plan implementation will require that development patterns change. For example, irrigated agriculture will need to become more economically viable to keep those lands from converting to urban uses. The development community will need to learn about financially successful examples of higher density, mixed use development in transit corridors in order to be convinced to build them in the Middle Rio Grande region. Citizens need to see examples in this region of higher density housing and mixed use developments that are well designed, aesthetically pleasing, and consistent with existing neighborhood character in order to be supportive. It would help to persuade farmers not to urbanize their land if a transfer of development rights system allowed them to be financially rewarded for that choice. These are just a few examples of how information and the private market can be used to produce change.

Implementation Principle #7: Government financial incentives should be consistent with the Regional Plan.

Sometimes government intervenes in private markets in a manner inconsistent with its own policy objectives. If the region chooses to steer new urban development away from farmland and open space and towards new towns and existing urban areas then taxes and fees should send economic signals consistent with these goals. State tax law should not encourage people to convert farms to urban development. Perhaps local government impact fees charged to new development should be lower when development

occurs in areas where existing infrastructure capacity exists. Likewise a gross receipts tax system that financially rewards local governments for approving large retail centers, regardless of their consistency with the Regional Plan, will not help the Plan to be implemented.

Implementation Principle #8: Government regulations should provide consumers with choices and allow the needed flexibility to implement the Regional Plan.

There are strong demographic and economic trends that will help the Regional Plan to succeed. Average household size is decreasing as the traditional two parent family with children continues to shrink as a percentage of all households. The population is aging. Market surveys show that significant percentages of households now prefer to own or rent a higher density product in an urban environment near shops, entertainment and places of employment. County or city codes that do not allow mixed use or small lot/attached housing development, or make these development patterns difficult to achieve, effectively leave people with no choice but to continue to buy the traditional detached single family product with a large yard. While this product remains an important element of the Regional Plan, it is not the only housing product that local zoning should allow.

Higher density development often requires greater flexibility in meeting zoning standards such as setbacks and height requirements. Greater attention to high quality design features also need to be incorporated into higher density development. It does little good to adopt policies that support new development patterns when codes continue to encourage or require traditional patterns.

Implementation Principle #9: Government regulations should ensure that important development opportunities are not lost.

A fundamental rationale for land use regulation of any kind is to ensure that worst case circumstances do not occur. Development decisions have long-term consequences, usually at least 50 to 100 years. A decision to turn a farm into a subdivision for all practical purposes means that farmland is lost forever. A decision to build a low intensity strip mall on a road designated for future high capacity transit means that the potential to generate riders to help pay the costs of the transit system is significantly reduced for a very long time. A decision to build a new town with low density housing and few jobs sets the development pattern for the community for decades. Road

systems built to promote privacy rather than connectivity are not replaced easily. It is important that government regulations ensure that opportunities to implement the basic framework of the Regional Plan are not lost.

Implementation Principle #10: The Council of Governments should serve as a technical resource to help identify Best Practices to support plan implementation.

Perhaps MRGCOG's most important function to support Plan implementation is providing information and assistance to local governments and the development industry about Best Practices. MRGCOG can be the regional clearinghouse for gathering research and examples about policies, codes, citizen involvement procedures, financial incentives, and programs that can be effectively put to use in the Middle Rio Grande region. Some of this function will include finding information from the experiences of other communities around the country that is locally relevant; some will include making sure that information is quickly shared between communities in this region as efforts begin to implement the Plan.

B. Future Elements and Phasing

With adoption of Focus 2050, the framework of the Regional Plan will be in place. Other elements besides land use must be added to provide sufficiently clear guidance on coordinated regional level of planning activities. In the table that follows, key pieces and proposed time frames are presented. As other elements are developed to be internally consistent, suggested changes to the future land use may arise and lead to amendments. The on-going process of planning requires a regular review cycle.

As discussed above, an implementation section needs to be prepared. Following is an outline of this section to be completed in the near future.

- Principles for implementation
- Procedures for regional monitoring of growth and development
- Standards for projects of regional significance
- Principles for target phasing of growth
- Program for integrated technical support to local governments
- Policy and implementation best practices
- Schedule of activities and responsibilities of major parties

Implementation requires phasing to assure that different activities are proceeding to support the overall direction set in the Region Plan. Both the implementation section of the Growth Management Strategy and plan elements, to be developed in the next few years, will need to consider how to phase growth, facilities and other regional systems. The regional functional plans which are anticipated to become elements of the Regional Plan will typically possess their own shorter time frames rather than necessarily the Regional Plan's fifty year horizon. For example, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) horizon year is 2025 for planning transportation facilities; and the 2025 growth data is anticipated to provide interim phasing which is consistent with the 2050

target growth. All of the future elements, as well as local comprehensive plans, to the extent possible, should work with consistent phased growth projections in order to coordinate planning for different areas of the region and regional systems and to provide better predictability for future development activities. The anticipated future elements are shown in table 27.

In future refinements to the plan, natural resource limitations affecting growth need to be considered as more information is developed. Water, in particular is a limiting factor to sustainable growth; and it is the subject of a future plan element. Updates to the Regional Plan should incorporate the best available information from regional water planning as this information becomes available.

**Table 27
Elements to Be Added to the Regional Plan**

Element	Components	Time Frame for Completion and Adoption
Transportation Element	Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2025, Middle Rio Grande Connections, & Regional Transportation Planning Organization plan addressing areas outside the AMPA	2000
Land Use Implementation Section added to Growth Management Strategy		2000
Economic Development Element	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	2000
Water Element	Regional Water Plans - Middle Rio Grande Basin; Estancia Basin	Middle Rio Grande Basin - 2001 or 2002
Linked Regional Open Space Element		2001
Housing Element		2002

Chapter VI

ADDENDUM 1

A: Addendum 1

1. The purpose of this plan is to provide a regional form for long range planning in Bernalillo, Valencia, Sandoval and Tarrant Counties. This framework is not to be used as a vehicle or justification for State-down planning or as a basis for State and regional processes to usurp local government authority.

2. The Focus 2050 Regional Plan is not intended to be interpreted or otherwise used as a mandate for local planning land zoning decisions. Locally generated plans and decisions can certainly be interpreted into the Focus 2050 Plan as appropriate.

3. The initial framework is intended to cover the portions of the four counties that are related to the Albuquerque Metro area travel shed and those envisioned to be developed at semi-urban to urban level densities over the next 50 years. Areas in these counties that do not meet both of these criteria have no designation in the Plan and are considered to be outside the Plan boundary. Planning and development activities in eastern Tarrant County and northern Sandoval County, for example, would not be guided or effected by the Regional Plan. The Regional Plan encourages these areas to be carefully planned according to local development policies.

4. The development of this initial framework has revealed that while there is general agreement that a regional perspective on land use can be a useful tool for identifying issues, it has been difficult to generate consensus across sub strata of the population in the region. Surveys and other public involvement activities conducted as part of the development of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan indicate that in many cases there are differences of opinion about the plan and different elements of the plan, particularly among the populations of geographically distinct areas. For example, while a majority of survey respondents in Valencia County (57%) supported the idea that "the average size of new residential lots should be

reduced to reduce the cost of providing services and preserve open space," the majority of survey respondents in Tarrant County (86%) did not. 48% of those surveyed in Bernalillo County supported the idea but the majority (52%), either disagreed or were neutral. Only 20% of the respondents in Sandoval County agreed with this concept while the remainder (80%) either disagreed or were neutral.

5. This initial work has focused primarily on the creation of alternative land use scenarios. More detailed information related to the infrastructure and services that are required to serve these alternatives, and their cost/benefit ratio, has yet to be generated. Without this information it is difficult to ascertain what level of consensus has been reached around the preferred land use alternative. The more detailed evaluation of infrastructure and services may also result in some adjustments to the generalized land use concepts associated with the Balanced Communities Scenario. True consensus on the preferred alternative can only be achieved once the implications and economic impacts of this alternative are thoroughly understood.

6. It is recognized that the initial adoption of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan is a necessary step toward the identification of a framework for understanding the consequences of alternative development patterns in this region. Until more specific information is provided related to the infrastructure and services that may be required to adequately serve the land uses identified in the initial plan, the plan itself is incomplete. One of the most important infrastructure and service categories that needs to be evaluated is the transportation system that will be necessary to serve the alternative development scenarios. Since the origins and development of this study were funded primarily by federal transportation dollars, and one of the MRGCOG's primary missions in this region is to provide a regional forum for transportation decisions, this portion of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan should be developed as soon as possible.

1 RESOLUTION

2 of the

3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

4 of the

5 MIDDLE RIO GRANDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS OF NEW MEXICO

6 (MRGCOG R-1999-11)

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11 **RELATING TO THE APPROVAL OF THE MRGCOG**
12 **FOCUS 2050 REGIONAL PLAN**

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19 WHEREAS, the Middle Rio Grande region is experiencing dramatic growth and change that
20 is forecasted to continue at least through the next fifty years and needs a long range vision to properly
21 plan for growth and change; and

22 WHEREAS, many land use, economic development, transportation, housing, natural resource
23 and other issues transcend the boundaries of individual jurisdictions and require treatment at a regional
24 scale in order to most effectively protect and promote the public interest; and

25 WHEREAS, the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG) is authorized through
26 the Regional Planning Act, Section 3, Article 56 of the New Mexico State Statutes and
27 the Articles of Agreement establishing MRGCOG to prepare plans for the development of the region;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, State Statute Section 3, Article 56 states that regional plans shall include “such
30 components as objectives, standards and principles, patterns and intensity of growth,
31 transportation facilities, (and) public utilities...”; and

1 WHEREAS, the MRGCOG is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization
2 responsible for conducting the continuing transportation planing process for the Albuquerque
3 Metropolitan Planning Area, designated as the regional planning organization for the remainder of
4 the Four County region and Southern Santa Fe County, as the Economic Development District
5 responsible for preparing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; and as the regional
6 water planning entity responsible for preparing the plan for the Middle Rio Grande Water Planning
7 Region; and

8 WHEREAS, MRGCOG initiated the Focus 2050 process in 1996 to create a long range
9 strategy for managing growth and development within the region through the year 2050; and

10 WHEREAS, conducting Focus 2050 to develop a Regional Plan is a voluntary action of
11 local governments of the region to provide a regional context to making more informed local
12 decisions, but is not intended to infringe on the authority of local government planning and
13 regulations; and

14 WHEREAS, the process was regional, encompassing Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia
15 Counties and pertinent adjacent areas; and

16 WHEREAS, the Focus 2050 planning process included analysis of alternative scenarios
17 of growth known as the Trend Dispersed, Contiguous Mesa Expansion, Moderately Compact,
18 Highly Compact Development and Balanced Communities Scenarios by MRGCOG staff together
19 with local government staff and public representatives; and

20 WHEREAS, the MRGCOG Board of Directors approved Resolution R-97-3 on March 13,
21 1997 accepting the 2050 socio-economic estimates and forecasts to 2050; and

22 WHEREAS, the MRGCOG Board of Directors approved Resolution R-98-2 on January

1 8, 1998 adopting the Regional Vision Statement and Goals for use in developing the regional plan;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, the Focus 2050 planning process included a public involvement component
4 that included over 1,000 community members and elected officials during the last three years; and

5 Whereas, the result of the Focus 2050 planning process is a Regional Plan which addresses
6 issues of regional significance; and

7 WHEREAS, the Regional Plan contains a land use element (the Growth Management
8 Strategy featuring the Balanced Communities Scenario) that charts a course for the future of the
9 region through 2050 that will provide significant benefits to the citizens of the region compared
10 to the Trend Scenario in the areas of conserving or enhancing natural resources, open space and
11 irrigated agriculture lands; requiring less developed land areas; protecting the unique identities of
12 diverse communities; providing a choice of a range of housing products to meet the needs of a
13 changing population, providing transportation options in addition to the automobile, lower vehicle
14 miles traveled and other benefits, promoting economic development, reducing the relative
15 infrastructure costs of new development; and enhancing our quality of life; and

16 WHEREAS, the MRGCOG will use all available resources including professional staff
17 efforts to assist and support local governments in undertaking implementation actions throughout
18 the region, and to develop new ways to relate regional and local planning efforts; and

19 WHEREAS, the success of the Regional Plan will depend upon collaborative action by
20 local governments throughout the region, businesses and citizens to ensure that their planning and
21 development actions reflect the intent of the Regional Plan; and

22 WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the MRGCOG, acting as the policy board for the

1 MRGCOG Focus 2050 Regional Plan, passed a motion on November 4, 1999 to release the draft
2 Focus 2050 Regional Plan for public comment and review; and

3 WHEREAS, the Board of Directors held a duly noticed public hearing on December 16,
4 1999 to consider approval of the Focus 2050 Regional Plan

5 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio
6 Grande Council of Governments hereby approves the MRGCOG Focus 2050 Regional Plan as
7 identified in Exhibit "A" of this resolution which includes the growth management strategy and
8 the Balanced Communities Scenario Map that together constitute the land use element of the
9 Regional Plan.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that while the appendices are not adopted, they constitute
11 important background information on how the plan was developed; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors intends to approve or adopt
13 other elements of the Regional Plan starting in Year 2000 for subjects including but not limited
14 to: transportation, water, economic development, open space and housing which are guided by
15 and consistent with the growth management strategy.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Focus 2050 Regional Plan target growth
17 allocations, land use patterns, and growth management goals and strategies will guide the
18 development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2025 to be prepared by the MRGCOG.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the intent of the Regional Plan is to provide a
20 framework guide and add value to local planning decisions rather than to supercede or replace or
21 duplicate them.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the relationship between the Regional Plan and local
2 planning is as follows:

3 (a) The Regional Plan is intended to be a guide for the long range housing and
4 employment distribution and location of growth in the region; and

5 (b) The Regional Plan should be used to guide local planning decisions, not, for
6 example, to use the land use map as the basis for making individual zoning or
7 other land use decisions; and

8 (c) It is anticipated that if necessary the local governments may prepare and adopt
9 local plans and regulations utilizing information and the concepts of the
10 Regional Plan, taking into account local needs and desires of each individual
11 community regarding local planning; and

12 (d) Periodic refinement of the Regional Plan, initially no later than three years after
13 approval, will occur in order to best meet the needs of the local governments
14 and the region as experience and knowledge is gained through the preparation
15 and adoption of local plans, approval or adoption of regional functional plans,
16 and introduction of new data and concepts; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that regional functional plans (such as transportation,
18 water, open space, and capital facilities) will be prepared to be conceptually consistent with the Regional
19 Plan; however, these plans will be based on their selected time frames rather than
20 necessarily the Regional Plan's fifty year horizon; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an implementation process and schedule will be
22 developed with local governments during the next year. The implementation process may include,

1 but is not limited to:

2 (a) Local planning actions should occur considering the Balanced Communities
3 Map, with the understanding that the regional map is conceptual in nature, and local
4 governments may decide to refine that map to best meet local needs, so long as the refined
5 map reflects the basic intent of the Regional Plan; and

6 (b) Local governments are encouraged to give notice to MRGCOG of pending
7 regionally significant land use actions so that MRGCOG can provide staff-to-staff advisory
8 comments on whether the proposed action is consistent with the Regional Plan; and

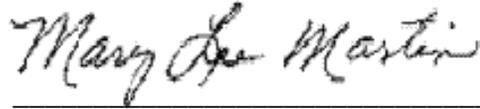
9 (c) Establishment of an annual monitoring system to help determine whether the cumulative
10 effects of individual planning actions have been consistent with the Regional
11 Plan; and

12 (d) Further refinement of the Regional Plan, as noted above, in consideration of
13 cumulative knowledge and experience gained about how the Regional Plan affects local
14 planning choices; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Socio-Economic Estimates and Forecasts to 2050
16 approved through MRGCOG Resolution R-97-3 be amended to forecast population and
17 employment only for State Planning and Development District 3 consisting of 1,536,000 total
18 population and 847,700 total employment; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is expressly understood that each local government
20 retains the powers given to it by the State of New Mexico in developing and adopting its own plan
21 and regulations.

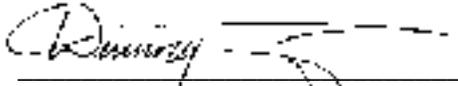
1 PASSED, AND APPROVED THIS 10th day of February, 2000 by the Board of
2 Directors of the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments of New Mexico.

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Mary Lee Martin, Chair
MRGCOG Board of Directors

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12 ATTEST:

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Dennis R. Foltz
17 Executive Director/Secretary

1 RESOLUTION
2 of the
3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
4 of the
5 MIDDLE RIO GRANDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS OF NEW MEXICO

6
7 (MRGCOG R-2000-1)

8
9 **RELATING TO THE APPROVAL OF AN ADDENDUM**
10 **TO THE FOCUS 2050 REGIONAL PLAN**
11

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio Grande Council of Govern- ments
14 (MRGCOG) approved the Focus 2050 Regional Plan through approving Resolution MRGCOG R-
15 1999-11; and
16

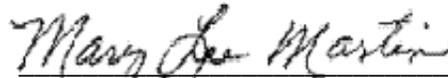
17 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the MRGCOG desires to clarify several
18 matters in an addendum to the Focus 2050 Regional Plan, including the subjects of: how the Regional
19 Plan is not intended to be used as a means or justification for State-down
20 planning, how the Regional Plan is not a mandate for local plans, the extent of the area
21 and significance of activities which the Regional Plan mainly addresses, acknowledgment that certain
22 concepts in the Regional Plan do not have full consensus across the Region,
23 and how further detailed analysis is needed regarding facilities and services, especially
24 transportation, to serve the projected growth according to the Balanced Communities
25 Scenario and

26 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors held a duly noticed public hearing on April 13,
27 2000 to consider approval of the addendum to the Regional Plan.

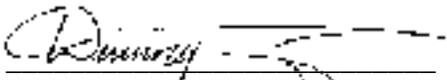
28 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the Middle Rio
29 Grande Council of Governments hereby approves an addendum to the Focus 2050 Regional

1 Plan as identified in Exhibit "A" of this resolution which shall be included as a new section of the
2 approved Focus 2050 Regional Plan.

3 PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 13th day of April, 2000 by the Board of Directors of the
4 Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments of New Mexico

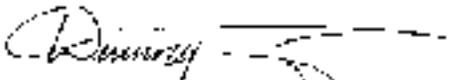
5
6 
7 Mary Lee Martin, Chair
8 MRGCOG Board of Directors
9

10 ATTEST:

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13 _____
14 Dennis R. Foltz
15 Executive Director/Secretary
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20 **CERTIFICATION:** I, Dennis R. Foltz, Executive director, hereby certify that the attached
21 Addendum to the MRGCOG Focus 2050 Regional Plan is a true and correct copy as approved by the
22 MRGCOG Board of Directors and that a true and correct copy of Resolution MRGCOG R-2000-1
23 and the Addendum have been sent to each local government and special district within the MRGCOG
24 region.

25
26
27
28 4-13-00
29 Date

27 
28 _____
29 Dennis R. Foltz, Executive Director
30

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MRGCOG Board of Directors

Mary Lee Martin, Chair, Board of Directors
Board Member, Albuquerque Public Schools*
Alan Armijo, Vice Chair, Board of Directors
Councillor, City of Albuquerque*
Barbara J. Seward, Past Chair, Board of
Directors, Commissioner, Bernalillo County*
Alicia Aguilar, Commissioner, Valencia County
Charles Aguilar, Mayor, Town of Bernalillo
Carl R. Allen, Mayor, Village of Bosque Farms
Cliff Anderson, Board Member, AMAFCA*
Pasqual E. Armijo, Councillor, City of Belen*
Bob Ayre, DWI Coordinator, Tarrant County*
David Cooper, Representative, Village of Encino
James Dorn, Board Member, SCAFCA
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Hector Gonzales, Board Member,
Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District*
Juan Griego, Mayor, Village of Tijeras
Martin Hibbs, Mayor, Town of Estancia
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Mary Humphrey, Commissioner,
Sandoval County
Louis Huning, Mayor, Village of Los Lunas
John Jennings, Mayor, City of Rio Rancho
Gary Kanin, Mayor, Village of Corrales*
Tim Kline, Councillor, City of Albuquerque
Greg Payne, Councillor, City of Albuquerque
Lawrence Rael, Chief Administrative Officer
City of Albuquerque*
Tom Rutherford, Commissioner
Bernalillo County
David Sanchez, Mayor, Village of Jemez Springs
Harry Stowers, Mayor, Village of Los Ranchos
de Albuquerque
Brad Winter, Councillor, City of Albuquerque
Hess Yntema, Councillor, City of Albuquerque
*Executive Board Members

***Thank you to all who have participated
in developing the Focus 2050 Regional
Plan.***

Executive Director

Dennis R. Foltz

Project Manager

Stephen Burstein, Senior Regional
Land Use Planner

MRGCOG Management Team

David Abrams, Information Services Manager
Janice Carolan, Administrative Manager
Michael Copeland, Director of Transportation
James Gross, Director of Water Planning
Judith Lovato, Office Manager
Joseph Quintana, Senior Regional Planner

MRGCOG Staff Members

Shohreh Day, GIS/Systems Analyst,
Carol Earp, GIS Analyst/Cartographer
Linda Jackson, Communications Specialist
Berry Ives, Transportation Planner
Rodolfo Monge-Oviedo, Assistant Planner

Focus 2050 Technical Committees

(The many dedicated committee members are
listed in technical appendices separate from the
Plan.)

Regional Land Use Task Force
Economic Sustainability Task Group
Focus 2050 Transportation Subcommittee
Focus 2050 Water Subcommittee
Growth Management Task Group
Land Use Alternatives Task Group
Regional Linked Open Space Task Group
Urban Agriculture Task Group
Urban Design/Rural Character Subcommittee

Consultant Assistance

Consensus Planning, Ron Thomas, Civitas, and
Visual Dynamics: visioning and urban
design/rural character study.
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, Star Group and Judy
Anderson Enterprises: FutureScape.
McKeever/Morris, Ron Thomas, Consensus
Planning and Dede Feldman: town hall and policy
development.
New Mexico Natural Heritage Program & Earth
Data Analysis Center: surface water & arroyo
buffers, biological diversity.
Planning Technologies: Land Use Analysis Model.
Planning Technologies, Molsen-Corbin Engineers,
and Bureau of Business and Economic Research:
scenario evaluation criteria.
United States Geological Survey (MOU partner):
slope analysis mapping, website coordination.