

The City of Las Vegas, New Mexico  
Comprehensive Master Plan Update



September 2011

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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A sincere thank you to participants in the public hearings, public input meetings, interviews, and the city's Comprehensive Master Plan Facebook page.

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**CITY OF LAS VEGAS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 11-16**

**AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE  
CITY OF LAS VEGAS UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the comprehensive master plan is a long-range policy guide to decisions about the physical development of the city, addressing: land use, transportation and storm drainage, economic development, facilities and parks, utilities, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards mitigation and implementation; and

**WHEREAS**, the comprehensive master plan gives long-range and comprehensive context and support for the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Program, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) infrastructure development grants, as well as other state and federal grants and loans that the city can apply for; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Las Vegas has an adopted community master plan from 1997 and needs to update this plan based on changes in the community, a current and more detailed assessment of conditions and ways to better meet needs of the community, changes in city priorities, and clarifications and changes in policy directions; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Las Vegas is enabled through New Mexico State Statutes to adopt a comprehensive plan which makes recommendations on a variety of subjects; and

**WHEREAS**, , the city's grant agreement with the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration Local Government Division for the receipt of a CDBG planning grant for the preparation of this plan requires that the plan be adopted by means of an ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, adoption by ordinance of a plan signifies that the City Council believes that the plan is a very important document that should be regularly referred to when making decisions; however, adoption by ordinance does not change the advisory nature of the plan, it does not mandate that all recommendations be followed, nor does it make the plan a regulatory document; and

**WHEREAS**, the city developed the 2011 comprehensive master plan through a detailed review of the 1997 Community Master Plan, research and analysis of current demographic and socio-economic information, various analyses of land use, streets, storm drainage, city facilities, and parks and infrastructure, and evaluation of the city zoning code; and

**WHEREAS**, the city conducting a series of five public input meetings on the plan held on December 22, 2010 (land use and economic development), January 12, 2011 (facilities and parks, transportation, storm drainage and utilities), February 2, 2011 (economic development) and February 9, 2011 (economic development), a joint workshop meeting of the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission on April 13, 2011, extensive discussions with city staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the city posted information on its website and on Facebook to keep residents informed about the plan as it developed; and

**WHEREAS**, a special public hearing was held by the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 11, 2011 and August 15, 2011.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE GOVERNING OF THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS, NEW MEXICO:**

1. Hereby adopts the City of Las Vegas Updated Comprehensive Master Plan shown in Attachment A.
2. Finds that the comprehensive master plan is a long-range policy guide to decisions about the physical development of the city.
3. Recognizes that if any section, paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase of this ordinance for any reason held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this ordinance and each section, paragraph, sentence, word, or phrase therefore irrespective of any provisions being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

**PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED** this 27 day of September.



Alfonso E. Ortiz, Jr., Mayor

**ATTEST:**  


Cassandra Fresquez, City Clerk



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# I. Introduction

*The Comprehensive Master Plan is an official public document adopted by the city of Las Vegas City Council as a policy guide for making decisions about the physical development of the community.*

## A. Purpose of the Plan

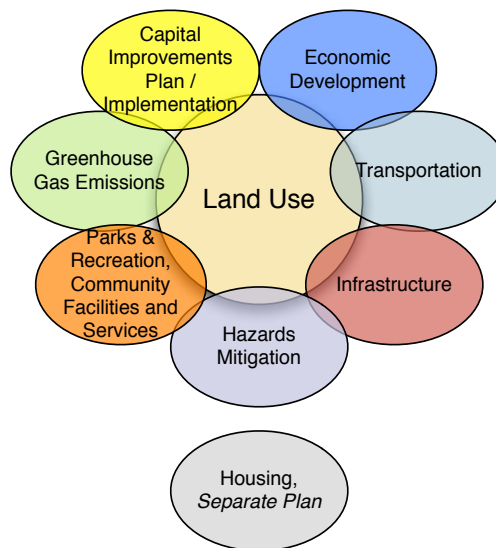
The Comprehensive Master Plan Update is a full revision of the original Las Vegas Community Master Plan adopted in 1997. The city chose to review and revise its long-range plan approximately 14 years after its latest plan in effect. Many of the policies, based on extensive public involvement at that time, and much of the historical context section in the 1997 plan are still considered valid and important. Most of the background information and analyses in this update is new material. The elements of the plan are entirely new material.

The Comprehensive Master Plan, as updated, is an official public document adopted by the city of Las Vegas City Council as a policy guide to decisions about the physical development of community. It presents, in a general sense, the way the leaders of government want the county to develop in the ensuing 20 to 30 years. The plan is intended to assist the city in preparing for the future by anticipating change, maximizing strengths and minimizing weaknesses. The plan sets policies that help guide addressing critical issues facing the community, achieving goals according to priority, and coordinating both public and private efforts.

The city of Las Vegas Comprehensive Master Plan was developed to provide long-range guidance for development activities integrated across the different disciplines and subjects of physical development of the city. It constitutes a comprehensive plan or a master plan, as enabled in the New Mexico State Statutes.

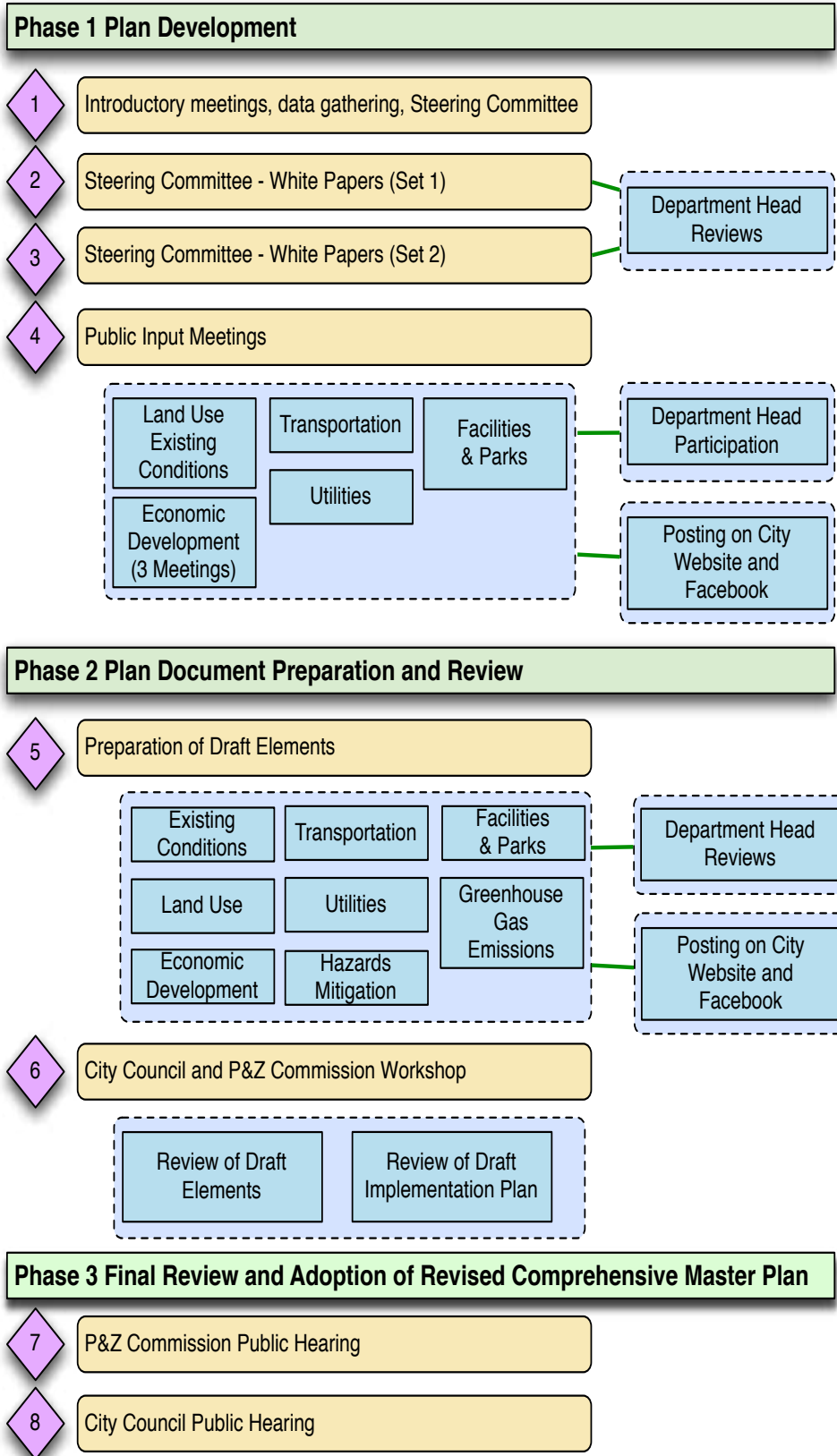
The Growth Management Master Plan encompasses all functional elements that bear on physical development in an internally consistent manner, including: land use, transportation, urban design, economic development, trails and open space, and housing. The city intends to develop an updated facilities and infrastructure element in the near future.

**Exhibit I-1**  
Elements of the Comprehensive Master Plan



**Exhibit I-2**  
*Steps and Milestone  
 Activities of Plan  
 Update*

## City of Las Vegas Comprehensive Master Plan Update Milestone Activities



## **B. Planning Process**

The city of Las Vegas contracted with Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated in 2010 to update its Comprehensive Master Plan. Subconsultants Wilson and Company developed the Transportation and Infrastructure elements, while Quixote Productions (Elmo Baca) developed the Economic Development Element and updated the historical context.

The Comprehensive Master Plan Steering Committee was convened by the city to guide the plan development process and recommendations. This group of city department heads invested much time in plan development, providing valuable information and discussing the issues and direction of the plan.

The city conducted a series of public focus group meetings on the elements. It held separate meetings from December, 2010 to February, 2011 regarding land use, transportation, infrastructure, community facilities, and economic development. The city published public notice of meetings and sent invitations to individuals with particular interest in a meeting topic. Each meeting consisted of presentations and discussions. Economic development was the subject of three separate meetings, and Mayor Ortiz convened the final meeting.

The City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a joint meeting and public workshop on April 13, 2011 to review and refine the recommendations in the draft plan. The commission will hold a public hearing to recommend adoption of the plan. City Council will hold a public hearing to adopt the plan.

## **C. Legal and Administrative Framework**

### **State Statutes Overview**

New Mexico statutes establish the authority of a municipality to prepare a comprehensive plan. The following discussion presents an overview of the legal framework for “comprehensive” or “master” planning (the statutes appear to use these terms synonymously). It quotes and discusses selected relevant statutory provisions and state regulations. Consult the full statutes and state regulations when researching specific questions.

***General powers of counties and municipalities:*** The statutes of New Mexico enable the preparation of a comprehensive plan by local governments, including both municipalities and counties. Most of the statutory provisions regarding comprehensive plans are written specifically for municipalities.

***Purpose of a plan:*** Section 3-19-9 NMSA 1978 addresses the general purpose of a master plan. Subsection (A) states:

... a municipal planning commission shall prepare and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality and the area within the planning and platting jurisdiction of the municipality which in the planning commission’s judgment bears a relationship to the planning of the municipality.

***Subjects the plan may recommend on:*** Section 3-19-9(B) allows that, in addition to recommendations for the physical development of the municipality and its planning jurisdiction, the master plan may also address: ... streets, bridges, viaducts and parkways; parks and playgrounds; floodways, waterways and waterfront development, airports and other ways, grounds, places and space; public schools, public buildings, and other public property; public utilities and terminals, whether publicly owned or privately owned; community centers and neighborhood units and the replanning of blighted districts and slum areas; and public ways, grounds, places, spaces, building properties, utilities or terminals.

***Zoning conformance to plan:*** The most specific statutory provision relating to land use regulations is Section 3-21-5 NMSA 1978, entitled “Zoning Conformance to Comprehensive Plan.” Subsection (A) states: “The regulations and restrictions of the county or municipal zoning authority are to be in accordance with a comprehensive plan....”

***Approval of changes to public property and rights-of-way:*** Section 3-19-11 NMSA 1978 addresses the legal status of a municipality’s master plan, including:

(A) After a master plan ... has been approved and within the area of the master plan ... the approval of the planning commission is necessary to construct, widen, narrow, remove, extend, relocate, vacate, abandon, acquire or change the use of any

- (1) park, street or their public way, ground, place or space;
- (2) public building or structure; or
- (3) utility, whether publicly or privately owned.

(B) The failure of the planning commission to act within sixty-five days after submission of a proposal to it constitutes approval of the proposal unless the proponent agrees to an extension of time. If the planning commission disapproves a proposal, it must state its reasons to the governing body. The governing body may overrule the planning commission and approve the proposal by a two-thirds vote of all its members.

## **D. Goals, Objectives and Policies**

The policy framework for the Comprehensive Master Plan consists of goals, objectives and policies organized by the elements of the plan. Goals are overarching statements describing the direction in which the community wishes to proceed. Objectives are intermediary statements describing ways to achieve a goal. Policies are statements of actions and specific directions or approaches which should be taken in support of the objectives. The statements below also appear in each plan element.

### ***Land Use***

**Land Use Goal: Guide development of the community through land use planning and regulations to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the city and visitors to the city, and promote the economy, convenience and good appearance of the community**

#### **1. Encourage compact and compatible development so that the**



**community can be adequately served by community facilities, public utilities, and other urban amenities**

- a. Add to housing stock in locations that are near to or served by existing utilities, community facilities and community services.
- b. Replace dilapidated housing with new housing or mixed use development where appropriate.
- c. Preserve existing and plan for new neighborhoods possessing community services, destinations, resident-serving retail, employment, schools or parks that are within a comfortable (0.25 - 0.5 miles) walking radius.
- d. Discourage land development schemes that require an unrealistic or wasteful land area or low density that is wasteful.
- e. Discourage premature or spot urban development in undeveloped and rural areas which are not served by or near existing utilities or streets and may be constrained by environmental features.
- f. Provide incentives to make more land available for development, or possibly disincentives for holding onto undeveloped land in in-fill or close-in areas considered most suitable for development.
  - Coordinate infrastructure improvements to provide cost-sharing or other methods to encourage development in priority areas.
- g. Promote infill and redevelopment at urban densities.
  - Target potential sites for quality low-income rental housing.
  - Target areas appropriate for senior housing close to retail, special services, and either close to or highly accessible to medical services.
  - Promote in-fill and replace housing in established neighborhoods.
  - Identify neighborhood appearance issues and promote development or maintenance practices that improve appearance.
  - Promote development in new and expanding neighborhoods in areas generally located on the conceptual future land use map.
- h. Provide mixed-use transitional areas between residential and nonresidential areas, allowing offices and home-based businesses in selected areas on the edge of downtown.
- i. Create new standards and guidelines to encourage the use of sound urban design and energy-saving principles in new construction and redevelopment projects, enhancing the character and appearance of these designated areas.

**2. Preserve natural resources and protect and improve community aesthetics**

- a. Support cleanup of trash, graffiti and weeds to demonstrate community pride.
- b. Discourage development in floodplains and flood-prone areas including arroyos.
- c. Encourage open lands, including agricultural uses and forest, in floodplains and along acequias.
  - Secure conservation easements and land acquisitions to retain open lands for agriculture and ranching.
- d. Develop a system of walking/bicycling trails along the Gallinas River and

up to and along El Crestón.

- e. Promote protection of views, such as through view corridors or viewsheds in subdivision design.
  - Discourage development on steep hillsides.
  - Step back development from the top edge of bluffs and mesas.
- f. Provide educational information about the value of trees and encourage planting appropriate species of trees.

### **3. Support historic restoration, renovation and maintenance**

- a. The Community Development Director or his designee(s) shall develop a survey to identify and evaluate neighborhoods that may have historic, architectural, or aesthetic importance, interest, or value to the community to determine if they may be eligible for historic nomination and designation of a new district.
- b. Current boundaries of historic districts shall be reviewed and boundaries revised in accordance with standards set form in the local, state and national criteria for consideration of historic district and landmark designations.
- c. Map historic structures using GIS.
- d. Conduct periodic (annual or biannual) condition assessments of historic structures.
- e. Consider updating the Cultural Historic Districts Ordinance to clarify and add to design standards and procedures for review.
- f. Expand historic districts, new districts and additional designated landmarks.
- g. Develop an historic preservation element of the comprehensive master plan.

### **4. Expand Las Vegas' role as a regional economic center**

- a. Assure that adequate land area is available to meet projected land use requirements in appropriately located areas for the development of additional shopping and services to meet the needs for residents of the city and regional trade area.
- b. Develop design guidelines or regulations to assure high quality, convenient, attractive, multi-modal, small-city scale, and landscaped shopping areas.

### **5. Designate areas for heavy commercial and industrial activities**

- a. Identify and promote use of lands for industry and warehousing that is consistent with the goals and policies of the Economic Development Element.

### **6. Support land use recommendations in the Downtown Action Plan**

- a. Develop the east gateway to downtown on University Avenue.
  - Design gateways choosing architecture, landscaping, public art, and limited signage to create an attractive, representative visual display that shows pride in the community and welcomes visitors.
- b. Develop the west gateway to the plaza and downtown on West

- National and New Mexico Avenue.
- c. Develop Valencia Square development in the parking area north of Bridge Street.
- d. Leverage new redevelopment programs through incentives.
- e. Promote downtown housing.
- f. Adopt the vacant building ordinance to enhance inspection and code enforcement.

**7. Update development standards and zoning map to promote desired development practices, following principles of clarity, predictability, consistency and fairness**

- a. Evaluate and periodically update land use development standards to assure that they reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Master Plan.
- b. Establish excavation permits applicable to all activities and not limited to subdivisions.
- c. Consider more strict requirements to limit or prohibit relocation of mobile homes built before 1976 or noncompliant with HUD code from being placed in certain zones or zone overlay areas such as entrances to the city and major corridors.
- d. Change uses permitted in zoning districts to assure that common and acceptable practices do not require variances.
- e. Create new zones for annexed areas.
  - The city should create new zones only after a study identifies current land uses in the area.
  - The city should create new zones for only those areas that are large in area and predominantly vacant.
  - Create a rural residential zone with a minimum requirement of 5 acres per housing unit and typically apply this zone to the newly annexed area, with the expectation that the area will be rezoned for urban uses in the future once a development plan is completed.
  - Create a conservation and agricultural zone that may be applied to sensitive lands and some irrigated agricultural areas in annexed areas.

**8. Phase annexations according to the phasing plan to assure appropriate land area for development in the next 20 years**

- a. Review the municipal code to assure that the process, procedures and criteria for annexations are adequate.
- b. Adopt annexation policies by ordinance.
- c. Study suitability of potential annexed land for new development.
- d. Refine phasing plan based on phasing of utilities, streets, emergency services and other municipal services, and the intentions of property owners.
- e. Compile a comprehensive statistical data land use report well in advance of the inception of annexation that includes:
  - Total acreage of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, public, agricultural, rangeland and forest land

- Total population
  - Total residential units
  - Present city utility line locations
  - Total mileage of streets or roadways
  - Cost analysis of utility provisions, street maintenance, public safety and judicial services etc.
- f. To establish the physical framework of future new development, the city should consider the adoption of a long-range street plan in the annexation phases where minimal development has occurred.

**9. Promote extraterritorial planning applicable to the unincorporated private land close to Las Vegas**

- a. Develop a tiered approach to development standards within the city’s ETZ
- b. Consider exercising extraterritorial planning, platting and zoning within a smaller “urban area” and disbanding the current ETZ.

**10. Develop geographic information system citywide mapping**

- a. Use GIS mapping layers created for the plan update to familiarize assigned GIS staff with the tools and data for start-up of the citywide GIS system, including production of maps.
- b. Provide training in GIS to assigned GIS staff.
- c. Create a detailed and accurate ortho-rectified base map of parcels and streets for use by, at a minimum, Community Development, Public Works and Utilities Departments.
- d. Expand the GIS mapping layers following the steps recommended in the plan update.

*Economic Development*

**Economic Development Goal: Pursue economic development strategies that build upon community strengths, resulting in a growing economy.**

**1. Pursue a multi-pronged approach to economic development, including strategies detailed in the Economic Development Element**

- a. Promote Las Vegas’ scenic beauty and recreational assets
- b. Make improvements that allow more use and enjoyment of the Gallinas River Watershed and improve the watershed ecological health
- c. Further develop the economic sector involving great hotels, tourism and hospitality
- d. Increase agricultural production and a broad, healthy local cuisine
- e. Support school institutions in the community, and improve the quality of education
- f. Support expanding retail and services that stem economic leakage
- g. Retain health care service institutions and expand related and complementary services
- h. Promote film making, media arts and publishing in Las Vegas
- i. Improve quality of life, leisure activities, and opportunities for retirement
- j. Develop the wood and forest products cluster, including harvesting and

- manufacturing
  - k. Promote alternative energy production
  - l. Work with Raton and other communities in the region to support regional economic development and achieve better efficiencies in services
  - m. Support improvements to the Municipal Airport that continue its viability for air travel and expand its use by travelers and tourists.
- 2. Give priority to catalytic projects developed in this plan, the Downtown Master Plan and other previous planning projects**
- a. Investigate the use of city reservoirs and the Gallinas River campgrounds at the former historic ice pond property for recreational uses, including the development of the city-owned Gallinas Canyon Recreational Area
  - b. Develop a community sports complex aligned with the Gallinas River park area in the near vicinity of NMHU
  - c. Develop the Valencia Square parking lot and venue for the Farmer’s Market north of Bridge Street and immediately adjacent to the Gallinas River Park
  - d. Pursue Gallinas Riverwalk redevelopment concepts including gateways, landscaping and vendor facilities outlined in the 2010 Las Vegas Downtown Master Plan
  - e. Create an economic development “One-Stop Shop” at the former City Hall at Sixth Street and University Avenue
- 3. Promote local cooperation and collaboration when more than one agency is needed to accomplish economic development projects**
- a. Convene regular meetings of the city, county, and major institutions to discuss opportunities
  - b. Complete cooperative projects
- 4. Use economic development tools available to the city to promote worthy projects and practices**
- a. Consider pursuing Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) projects
  - b. Use Tax Increment Development District (TIDD) financing within the MRA
  - c. Increase the Lodgers Tax rate to better support marketing and other tourism-related services and improvements
  - d. Use the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) to facilitate and support development projects
  - e. Pursue new markets tax credits
  - f. Use general obligation bonds to develop infrastructure supporting economic development
  - g. Use municipal revenue bonds to develop infrastructure and services supporting economic development
  - h. Investigate the use of various other local options and state and federal funding programs to advance economic development projects

## 5. **Develop an organizational framework for guiding economic development programs and projects**

- a. In the short term (2011-2012), create a development task force organized by the city with the mission of creating partnerships, raising funds, leveraging resources, determining project feasibility, developing project scopes of work, and acting as a liaison between the public and private sectors
  - The development task force would be charged with assisting the city in implementation of the catalytic projects described above
  - Representatives from key organizations such as NMHU, NMHU Foundation, San Miguel County, Las Vegas/San Miguel Economic Development Commission, Main Street de Las Vegas, Las Vegas Small Business Development Center, Las Vegas First, and other groups should be included on the task force along with city officials, but overall membership should be limited to a manageable committee size
- b. In the longer term, create a city economic development commission appointed by the Mayor and City Council and charged with major policy and program oversight for the community's economic development plan
  - The commission's powers would include an annual performance review of community economic development organizations; advising city staff and City Council on recommended funding for community economic development organizations; review of organizational budgets and program funding; overview of city-funded economic development projects and programs; review of applications and business plans for potential public funding under the guidelines of the Local Economic Development Act and subsequent funding recommendations to the City Council; and an annual report on the city's economic development status and progress to the City Council.

### **Transportation**

**Transportation Goal: Improve the transportation system to enhance safety, encourage all modes of transportation and meet existing and future needs of the community.**

#### **1. Extend the useful life span of existing streets.**

- a. Develop a comprehensive maintenance program that includes classification of street conditions, prioritization of projects, and responsibility for projects (i.e., city repairs or hires private contractor).
- b. Explore technologies for street maintenance to extend useful life, such as regular slurry seal, mill and pavement overlay, microsurfacing, etc.
- c. Explore financing options for maintenance and repair of streets such as gross receipts tax, special assessment district, grants, etc.
- d. Improve drainage infrastructure as needed to prevent runoff from damaging the streets.
- e. Pave existing unpaved streets such as Keen Street, Tecolote Street and Kavanaugh.

2. **Develop different approaches to streets and streetscapes in particular areas of the city that are context-appropriate to preserve or create neighborhood or small-city character.**
  - a. Develop a rural street section standard that will accommodate drainage needs, particularly along 8th Street from Williams Drive north to the city limits and for future annexation areas that are rural in character.
  - b. Analyze 7th Street from Mills Avenue to Legion Drive to develop a street and streetscape section that will serve the existing and future uses of the street, and provide pedestrian, transit and bicycle accessibility without over-designing for automobile capacity.
  
3. **Encourage alternative modes of transportation, other than automobile, to alleviate congestion, improve air quality and improve the health of the community.**
  - a. Expand the existing Meadow City Express by adding an existing driver during peak hours to avoid turning down customers due to lack of availability.
  - b. Consider establishing a designated Meadow City Express route where demand response service records show a concentration of drop off/pick ups.
  - c. Establish designated bicycle routes using signage, particularly along areas that serve schools, hospitals and other major traffic generators.
  - d. Include bicycle lanes on streets or multiuse paths when improving streets or developing street sections.
  - e. Expand the river walk south of Prince Street between Grand Avenue and River Road and provide a parking area and signage for access to the river.
  - f. Develop a sidewalk inventory to determine where sidewalks are missing, the condition of existing sidewalks and priority projects for repair or construction.
  - g. Construct and repair sidewalks to form a contiguous sidewalk system that adheres to ADA standards for accessibility.
  
4. **Maintain and improve the municipal airport to assure that it serves as a viable option for traveling to and from Las Vegas.**
  - a. Promote greater use of the airport by travellers for business and pleasure, for providing air flight in support of new industrial development, and for fighting wildfires and other emergency response.
  - b. Update the Airport Master Plan regularly and follow recommendations to enhance the airport and make it a viable option for traveling to and from Las Vegas.
  
5. **Enhance safety within the street network.**
  - a. Use traffic-calming measures, such as bulb-out intersections, speed humps, and narrow traffic lanes to slow traffic through residential streets.
  - b. Provide visible signage for bike lanes, bike routes and multi-use trails.
  - c. Provide contiguous sidewalks with ADA-accessible intersections and

clearly marked and signed pedestrian crossings.

**6. Encourage visitors and local residents to arrive, park and walk in the downtown area.**

- a. Construct parking lots and/or structures to accommodate anticipated visitors to the downtown area.
- b. Provide wayfinding signage to the downtown area from the Interstate and at key intersections within the community.
- c. Implement streetscape improvements recommended in the Downtown Action Plan.

**7. Provide alternative routes to alleviate congestion.**

- a. Identify possible north-south routes to connect downtown with destinations to the north.
- b. Study the north-south routes in a transportation study to ensure that added traffic will not have adverse effects on surrounding neighborhood and to determine if existing infrastructure will need to be upgraded.
- c. Develop the extension of 12th Street from Sulzbacher to Mills Avenues.
- d. Improve and complete missing links of Legion Drive as a major east-west route in the northern portion of the city.
- e. Identify a long-range east-west route in the northern portion of the planning area that will add ability to cross the valley, to be developed only if a higher level of development occurs that is unforeseen in this area.

**8. Develop trails and street improvements to make community assets that are a source of pride for the city more visible and usable.**

- a. Use special studies, such as the Downtown Action Plan, to develop standards for street landscaping, building facades, and artwork.
- b. Provide amenities to the community such as an expanded river walk and enhanced sidewalks and streets that are pleasant for traveling.
- c. Install wayfinding signs to important locations such as the downtown area, railroad district, river walk, universities, etc.
- d. Install gateway signage to distinguish important locations such as the downtown and river walk.

**9. Develop street section requirements for annexation.**

- a. Identify street section standards that the city will require for annexation to ensure that annexed areas will not put undue burden on city maintenance and repair budgets.
- b. Work with San Miguel County to develop subdivision standards acceptable to the city for handling of street sections identified by the city as annexation priority areas within the Extraterritorial Zoning Area.
- c. Explore options for special assessment districts on annexed areas to improve infrastructure.

**10. Develop a transportation master plan**

- a. Develop a plan that includes but is not limited to: land use



recommendations, street network guidelines, street spacing principles, and transportation goals and policies.

**11. Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level, and devise appropriate local funding options**

- a. Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level
  - Advocate for public-private partnerships, spending of all transportation-related revenues on transportation needs, indexing taxes to inflation, and establishing a state-level permanent fund.
- b. Seek NMDOT planning and programming of city projects.
- c. Update the city's annual ICIP.

**Storm Water**

**Storm Water Goal: Improve the drainage system to alleviate flooding hazards, prevent damage to streets and other improvements, and create riparian environments in appropriate places.**

**1. Develop standards for existing and proposed development along arroyos, rivers and other vital natural or man-made drainage ways such as channels and ponds.**

- a. Identify existing arroyos, rivers and natural channels as well as man-made drainage features such as ponds and channels to establish drainage ways.
- b. Develop a drainage master plan that studies the city's entire drainage structure.
- c. Prohibit development in identified floodplains.
- d. Establish criteria for future development along drainage ways, including setbacks, allowable discharges and design standards.
- e. Establish criteria for existing development along drainage ways to provide access for maintenance and improvement of the drainage way through easements, dedication of land, or other mechanism.
- f. Acquire easements and dedication of land for rights-of way, or develop alternative mechanisms to assure the continuing function of drainage channels.
- g. Create a grading and drainage development process that requires a permit issued through the city, allowing it to review and approve the earthwork prior to beginning any extensive work.
- h. Establish policies and standards for detention of storm water, including, but not limited to: on-site rainwater harvest areas, mulch basins in road medians or on edges of parking lots, and detention ponds.
- i. Encourage retention or new planting of vegetation next to drainage areas in order to slow down and increase absorption of storm water and keep natural landscape.

**2. Improve existing drainage improvements that are inadequate to handle the runoff generated from surrounding development or that have become costly and inefficient to maintain and repair.**

- a. Identify, prioritize and phase needed drainage infrastructure projects by areas of the city, such as the Baca Avenue drainage system, Kathryn Avenue, Diane Avenue, Moreland Street and Christine Drive drainage

- system.
  - b. Replace old non-standard type inlets with standard inlets for ease of maintenance and improved drainage.
  - c. Combine drainage improvements with street improvements into single projects for enhanced efficiency and cost savings where feasible.
- 3. Focus on improving drainage in the East Las Vegas Area and prevent flooding.**
- a. Implement a study to identify east Las Vegas watersheds and design an adequately sized storm drain system that outfalls to the Gallinas River.
  - b. Maintain water quality of runoff to the river from developed areas.
  - c. Use existing outfalls and easements to access the river.
- 4. Develop drainage requirements for annexation.**
- a. Identify infrastructure standards that the city will require for annexation to ensure that annexed areas will not put an undue burden on city maintenance and repair budgets.
  - b. Work with San Miguel County to develop subdivision standards acceptable to the city for handling street sections identified by the city as annexation priority areas within the Extraterritorial Zoning Area.
  - c. Explore options for special assessment districts on annexed areas to improve infrastructure.

## *Utilities*

**Water Goal: Achieve sustainability of the city’s water supply through capability to reliably deliver enough water in periods of drought and have sufficient water available to support economic and population growth in the future.**

- 1. Complete the preliminary engineering report regarding water and implement recommendations in the report.**
- 2. Take steps to address the following measures in order to improve reliability of the city’s water supply:**
  - a. Improve water supply
  - b. Reduce water losses
  - c. Improve system efficiencies including metering, SCADA and use of other appropriate technologies
  - d. Improve dam safety
  - e. Reduce city’s vulnerability to drought
  - f. Meet future demand
  - g. Anticipate and mitigate climate change impacts
  - h. Totally reuse treated wastewater for various community needs
  - i. Acquire water rights sufficient for the city to accommodate current and future water demand
  - j. Regionalize services where possible to achieve efficiencies and greater reliability
  - k. Reduce competition and tensions with other water users in the Gallinas Basin
  - l. Develop groundwater resources and integrate with surface water supply

**Waste Water Goal: Operate waste water collection and treatment to meet high health and safety standards, while making available a secondary source of water for reuse in the city.**

1. Periodically update waste water master plan.
2. Invest in waste water improvements identified in the ICIP.
3. Plan for extending waste water service to areas annexed to the city.

**Natural Gas Goal: Decrease costs and increase reliability of the natural gas system.**

1. Explore alternative suppliers of natural gas to the city in order to save money.
2. Repair and use the existing backup holding tanks to maintain emergency reserves.
3. Consider energy conservation measures recommended in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element pertaining to natural gas, including: inverse pricing of natural gas, promotion of alternative fuels for city vehicles, space heating conservation in city buildings and in city-owned housing facilities.

**Treated Effluent Goal: Expand the current treated effluent reuse system and increase service area.**

1. Complete the preliminary engineering report for future reuse lines and implement recommendations in the report regarding treated effluent reuse water.

**Solid Waste Goal: Manage solid waste collection, landfilling and recycling to provide an efficient public service, discourage illegal dumping, and reduce the stream of waste ending up in a landfill.**

1. Consider various alternatives for managing waste, from taking over waste transportation to the feasibility of privatization.
  - a. Make capital improvements necessary to maintain and improve the solid waste operations, as appropriate to handle the city's responsibilities.
2. Promote recycling of materials.
3. Provide services to non-city residents priced to pay for the city's efforts.

## **Facilities**

**Facilities Goal: Maintain existing city facilities and develop new city facilities to meet the needs of the community, including the enhancement of the quality, safety and convenience of city services, preservation of historic properties, and support for economic development.**

1. **Use municipal facilities improvements to support and expand economic development.**
  - a. Locate administrative facilities in the downtown and perhaps other areas that are easily accessible to the public and house city staff where such facilities serve as activity anchors.
  - b. Invest in municipal facilities to achieve broader redevelopment in core

areas of the community.

- c. Consolidate city functions that community members frequent and relocate where they are more accessible to the public.

**2. Preserve and maintain historic municipal buildings**

- a. Prioritize repair to historic buildings prior to replacement, including for Old City Hall, Carnegie Library, and the Las Vegas Museum.
- b. Maintain historic municipal buildings, including the Intermodal Center, currently in excellent shape, and the above buildings.
- c. Acquire historic buildings if they are not used and can be properly used for municipal functions.
- d. Where historic buildings cannot be feasibly and economically repaired to function appropriately for municipal purposes, consider replacement buildings.

**3. Build new facilities or expand existing facilities to improve health, safety and welfare of the community.**

- a. Consider establishing a fourth fire house in a location that will improve Las Vegas' insurance services office (ISO) fire protection rating and reduce property insurance rates.
  - As Las Vegas expands, identify and acquire additional sites for future fire stations.
- b. Develop a library facility and services needs assessment, followed by site identification and acquisition.
  - Consider joint use of a library with Highlands University or, alternately, construction of a new general-purpose library while retaining the Carnegie Library as a neighborhood library, special collections library and/or archive.
- c. Bring buildings up to building code standards and ADA compliance during renovation, addressing health and safety concerns.
- d. Invest in improvements in the energy efficiency of city buildings in order to use less energy and save money.

**4. Conduct detailed facilities planning and programming on a regular basis in order to identify needs and funding resources to address those needs.**

- a. Using existing facilities inventories as a basis, develop a comprehensive facility database of city-owned and operated facilities
  - Regularly update facility and equipment data to assist with maintenance and capital improvement schedules.
- b. Tie the Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP) to the needs and approaches identified in the Facilities and Parks Element of the Comprehensive Master Plan.
- c. Secure funds from the city's general budget and other sources that are sufficient to maintain and repair the building facilities owned by the city.

**5. Employ city staff with expertise in specialized facilities operational and**

### **maintenance areas**

- a. Train, hire or contract staff with specialized qualifications in roofing, historic preservation, energy efficiency, and facility database management.

## ***Parks***

### **Parks Goal: Develop and maintain a variety of parks serving the range of recreational needs of Las Vegas residents**

#### **1. Maintain grounds, equipment and structures in parks**

- a. Continue regular trash pick-up and graffiti removal.
- b. Repair and replace equipment to ensure it functions safely.
- c. Continue programs to manage aging park trees, saving them where possible and strategically replacing them when needed, to ensure safety and aesthetics.
  - Develop an Urban Forest Management Plan, incorporating findings of the 2009 draft guide to low water-use trees and shrubs and guidance from an arborist, whether serving on the Tree Committee or as a city employee or consultant.
- d. Where appropriate, develop walking and bicycling trails within parks, linking them to nearby neighborhoods and to key pedestrian and bicycling destinations in the rest of the city.

#### **2. Develop new parks to serve the community and its visitors**

- a. Build new neighborhood parks to conveniently serve residents in developing and redeveloping areas.
- b. Build regional complexes to serve residents and visitors with a variety of larger-scale sports fields and facilities.

#### **3. Assure that parks continue to provide needed recreational opportunities and aesthetic qualities appreciated by residents and visitors**

- a. Periodically survey residents to determine wants and desires, usage, changes in demographics and in activities trends, and priorities to guide park investments.
- b. Develop park adequacy standards appropriate for Las Vegas, and use them to assess location and size for new parks needed to accommodate growth through population expansion or annexation.
- c. Develop detailed parks master plans to identify and fund facilities and programs that are responsive to the identified needs of residents.
  - Where possible, consider opportunities for city income generation.

## ***Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from activities and buildings of both the city and the community in general in order to reduce impacts on the environment and save costs.**

#### **1. Pursue land use practices that reduce energy use.**

- a. Adopt policies that promote compact and efficient development and the traditional neighborhood design that increases walkability.

- b. Preserve and enhance forests, parks, street trees, open space and other natural systems that act as carbon “sinks.”
  - c. Review city land use regulations to assure that they do not discourage or prohibit the use of solar panels.
  - d. Consider adopting local solar access protection regulations.
  - e. Develop diversified entertainment and a “shop local” campaign to result in reducing out-of-town trips.
- 2. Improve the housing stock and home building practices in the community to be more energy efficient and reduce waste.**
- a. Institute source reduction, recycling, and resource recovery programs for construction and demolition material.
  - b. Consider inverse pricing of natural gas, which would establish a higher rate per quantity of natural gas for larger users, while offering programs such as weatherization and incentives that assist residents to improve the heating efficiency of their homes or replace furnaces, water heaters and appliances.
  - c. Improve energy efficiency of existing city-owned housing facilities.
  - d. Promote green building in new housing construction.
  - e. Promote weatherization of the city’s building stock and selected rehabilitation of older buildings in the city.
- 3. Invest in measures to improve the efficiency of city utilities and utilities operations.**
- a. Identify sources of methane production, such as sewage treatment and current and historic land fill sites, for capture and reuse of methane gas.
  - b. Consider cogeneration, using methane to power or heat waste water facilities.
  - c. Reduce energy use by streetlights.
  - d. Reduce energy use in water treatment, water distribution, irrigation and waste water systems.
- 4. Reduce use of fossil fuels through reduction in vehicular miles driven and selection of fuel.**
- a. Create opportunities for greater multi-modal access within the community.
  - b. Promote city use of alternative fuels in city vehicles to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, particularly focusing on natural gas which is available through the city-operated utility.
  - c. Adopt and implement a policy requiring limitations on idling for city operated vehicles, commercial vehicles, construction vehicles, school buses and other similar vehicles within city limits.
  - d. Promote alternatives to single-occupant auto commuting.
- 5. Reduce energy use associated with city-owned properties and services.**
- a. Analyze energy conservation and efficiency in city buildings and equipment.
    - Conduct a detailed energy consumption audit to establish the

- baseline of city energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Identify opportunities to make behavioral and physical changes to energy using facilities.
  - Set realistic goals for energy reduction over the short- and long-term.
  - Develop a capital plan implementing steps to meet established energy reduction goals.
- b. Implement energy-saving measures in city buildings and equipment.
  - c. Achieve energy-efficient operations and protocols.
  - d. Establish minimum levels of energy efficiency and green building standards for future city buildings and facilities.
  - e. Enhance existing waste reduction and recycling activities at city buildings and in the community.
  - f. Promote the use of renewable sources of energy.
  - g. Consider pick-up service for recycled paper, plastics and metals along with trash pick up.
  - h. Promote car pooling and transit service to nearby cities, particularly Santa Fe.

**6. Increase community-wide understanding of greenhouse gases and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**

- a. Promote local agriculture, gardening, a local butcher and other goods and services to reduce the long-distance transport of fresh food to the community and reduce spending “leakage” from the local economy.
- b. Create opportunity to educate residents about home energy use and provide incentives for home energy retrofits.
  - Work with the Central New Mexico Economic Development District or other entities to capture Weatherization Assistance Program funding.<sup>1</sup>
- c. Work with New Mexico Highlands University and other educational institutions in the community to create a energy-efficiency study group.
  - Promote community awareness of energy conservation/cost reductions/greenhouse gas emissions reduction.
  - Recommend institutional and community-wide actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- d. Outreach to business and residents to promote energy efficiency in the community.
- e. Provide opportunities for public engagement that will support successful implementation of climate change actions.
- f. Promote alternative energy generation in and near the city of Las Vegas, including wind power on the eastern plains.
- g. Use all energy efficiency projects implemented in city-owned facilities as educational opportunities to demonstrate to the community what is possible and affordable.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www1.eere.energy.gov/financing/solicitations\\_detail.html?sol\\_id=378](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/financing/solicitations_detail.html?sol_id=378)

**Hazards Mitigation Goal: Keep Las Vegas residents and properties safe from hazards as much as possible.**

- 1. Implement flood protection and drainage improvements.**
- 2. Implement subdivision standards and public safety improvements to increase accessibility in areas with moderate and high wildfire risk.**
- 3. Enforce building codes regarding fire prevention and structural stability.**
- 4. Make infrastructure improvements to reduce vulnerability to drought.**
- 5. Continue to implement water conservation measures, including declaration of water restrictions when necessary to retain water reservoir storage.**
- 6. Support interjurisdictional cooperation and collaboration in emergency response and hazards mitigation.**
- 7. Mitigate landfill gas release, potential leaching into the groundwater, and any stormwater runoff carrying landfill materials off site.**
- 8. Support and participate with the Local Emergency Planning Committee for emergency situational planning.**
- 9. Implement a public awareness campaign for communities to educate the public about preparing for emergency situations through the City/County Office of Emergency Management.**
- 10. Improve alert/notification systems for dispensing information to the public.**
  - a. Identify and evaluate systems such as Reverse 911, siren systems, Internet, automatic emails, Facebook and Twitter notifications.
    - Seek funding through FEMA mitigation funds and other sources.
- 11. Support a centralized city/county communication system to improve interoperable communications for response to emergencies.**
- 12. Implement a city of Las Vegas emergency fund to have funds available to mitigate impacts on public infrastructure and buildings rather than spending funds from the city's general funds.**
  - a. The city should consider setting an amount to be retained in an emergency fund, based on assuming a 25% local match to funds available from the state of New Mexico.



## II. Implementation Plan/Capital Improvements Plan

*The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to summarize the main actions needed to implement the Comprehensive Master Plan, as updated.*

### A. Introduction

The implementation plan presents specific actions that should be taken. The actions are organized by subject. During the development of each plan element, particularly the goals, objectives and policies, various activities were identified.

Virtually all of the implementation actions require funding for staffing, building facilities and infrastructure, providing financial incentives, or consultant professional services. A number of actions can be accomplished with existing city resources and personnel. However, the city of Las Vegas cannot commit to particular actions and projects unless adequate funding is available. In most cases, a first step to an implementation action is for the city to identify one or more funding sources to accomplish projects or programs.

### B. Top-Ranked Implementation Actions

Refinements of actions were arrived at through the City Council/Planning and Zoning Commission joint workshop held on April 13, 2011 and subsequent meetings and public hearings of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council. The city Community Development Department, working with other city departments, clarified and further elaborated on some of the statements made by councilors and commissioners.

### C. Overview of Implementation Actions

The following tables present the full set of identified actions to implement the updated Comprehensive Master Plan over a period of years. There are 84 actions identified by subject area to be accomplished within the 20 year horizon of the plan. Some actions are on-going activities.

**Exhibit II-1** Priority Actions

**Highest 20 Priority Actions (for Years 1 and 2)**

Subject		Action
Land Use	1	Target potential sites for quality low-income residential development (to be detailed in housing plan).
Land Use	2	Create a coordinated GIS mapping system for all city departments.
Land Use	3	Establish grading, drainage, and excavation permits applicable to all activities to assure that land disturbance is minimized and that soil and other materials do not fill drainages.
Land Use	4	Set stricter requirements for mobile homes built prior to 1976. Restrict placement of mobile homes in entrances to the city and major corridors.
Economic Development	5	Create an economic development “One-Stop Shop” at the former City Hall at Sixth Street and University Avenue
Economic Development	6	Pursue one or two catalytic projects per year from among projects such as: Gallinas River recreational area development, athletic complex development, work force training for great hotels and tourism, assisted living complex associated with Regional Hospital, wood products industrial expansion/new enterprise development, Valencia Square development and expanded farmers market, and Gallinas River walk redevelopment.
Economic Development	7	Create a Development Task Force organized by the city to create partnerships, raise funds, determine project feasibility, and act as a liaison between public and private sectors.
Transportation & Storm Water	8	Make improvements to University Avenue as the gateway to the downtown with landscaping, signage, public art and traffic controls.
Transportation & Storm Water	9	Develop a comprehensive maintenance program, including a GIS database, to extend the useful life span of streets.
Transportation & Storm Water	10	Develop sidewalk inventory, prioritize and build missing links or replace sidewalks in poor condition.
Transportation & Storm Water	11	Build storm water improvements for Priority Area 1: Sulzbacher, Rosenwald and San Francisco Avenues neighborhood.
Transportation, Storm Water & Utilities	12	Explore financing options including inter-governmental projects, grants, increase in lodger tax or gross receipts tax, and special assessment districts.
Utilities	13	Finish Water PER and start projects to increase the community’s water reliability.
Facilities	14	Manage aging park trees, saving them where possible, and strategically replacing them when needed.
Facilities	15	Develop a new sports complex after preparing a feasibility and market study to evaluate community demand, confirm proposed uses and establish expected returns on investments.
Facilities	16	Consolidate city administrative functions that community members frequent, and relocate facilities in the downtown, in a location to be selected.
Facilities	17	Train, hire, or contract staff with specialized qualifications in roofing, historic preservation, energy efficiency and facility database management.
GHG	18	Improve energy efficiency of city-owned buildings and public housing. Use any energy-efficient projects as educational opportunities to demonstrate to the community what is possible and affordable.
Hazards Mitigation	19	Work with the City/County Emergency Manager to prepare stronger county subdivision standards and public safety improvements to increase accessibility in areas with moderate and high wildfire risks.
Hazards Mitigation	20	Mitigate landfill.

## City of Las Vegas Comprehensive Master Plan Update Draft Implementation Plan

#	Implementation Action
<b>Land Use</b>	
1	Develop incentives to promote infill and compact development over fringe and low density development.
2	Use city-owned vacant properties, such as a portion of the Rodriguez Park property, for development of housing available to qualified housing developers.
3	Promote new commercial development in designated commercial centers following the principles of complete streets and pedestrian environments. Develop new standards and guidelines for desired land use and urban design.
4	Expand historic districts and add new historic districts. Develop an updated inventory of historic structures, assess property owner and resident interest, determine eligibility for historic nomination and designation of a new district.
5	Implement Downtown Action Plan land use recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop east gateway to downtown at University Avenue starting from the I-25 exit and crossing Grand Avenue.</li> <li>- Develop west gateway to plaza and downtown at New Mexico Avenue and W. National Avenue.</li> <li>- Develop Valencia Square north of Bridge Street.</li> </ul>
6	Target potential sites for quality low-income residential development (to be detailed in the housing plan).
7	Annex additional areas in phases. Consider arbitration and Boundary Commission methods for areawide annexations. Consider petition method for selected parcel annexations. Create new zones, including rural residential.
8	Approach San Miguel County with a proposed agreement on the annexation strategy and amendment to the ETZ to practice extraterritorial planning, platting and zoning in a smaller urban area.
9	Create a coordinated GIS mapping system for all city departments.
10	Establish grading, drainage, and excavation permits applicable to all activities to assure that land disturbance is minimized and that soil and other materials do not fill drainages.
11	Set stricter requirements for mobile homes built prior to 1976. Restrict placement of mobile homes in entrances to the city and major corridors.
12	Consider creating a new zone for mixed use (residential and commercial) in commercial centers that will guide pedestrian-oriented development and streetscape.
13	Evaluate and periodically update land use codes to assure that development standards are effective for current and anticipated development conditions.

#	Implementation Action
14	Develop a telecommunications tower ordinance. Make city properties available for locating telecommunications facilities and using existing towers or water tanks.
15	Enforce land use codes.

### Economic Development

1	Create an economic development “One-Stop Shop” at the former City Hall at 6th Street and University Avenue that houses the City Community Development Department, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, MainStreet de Las Vegas, and the Small Business Development Center.
2	Work closely with local investors, institutions and foundations to solicit business plans from local entrepreneurs for “catalytic small businesses” such as restaurants, supermarkets, brew pub, movie theaters and entertainment facilities. Reduce economic leakage by providing a broader selection of goods and services for local and regional shoppers.
3	Promote University Avenue as the gateway to the downtown business corridor. Enhance the greater downtown corridor and access from I-25 with landscaping, signage, a gateway, public art and traffic controls. Encourage off-ramp traffic to enter downtown corridor and proceed through “new town” and “old town” commercial districts.
4	Raise the lodgers tax rate from 4% to 5% to generate additional revenues for promotion of tourism and development of tourism infrastructure and new attractions.
5	Increase revenues for specific economic development strategies, including dedicated use of gross receipts tax for these strategies. Pursue one or more of the following: MRA, TIF/ TIDD, PID, BID, LEDA.
6	Pursue one or two catalytic projects per year from among projects such as: Gallinas River recreational area development, athletic complex development, work force training for great hotels and tourism, assisted living complex associated with Regional Hospital, wood products industrial expansion/new enterprise development, Valencia Square development and expanded farmers market, and Gallinas River walk redevelopment.
7	Explore a development agreement with United World College for further development of hot springs.
8	Create a Development Task Force organized by the city to create partnerships, raise funds, determine project feasibility, and act as a liaison between public and private sectors (short term).
9	Create a city economic development commission to oversee major policies and programs, including annual performance review of ED organizations, advising city staff and city council, and overview of city-funded ED projects and programs (long term).
10	Support alternative energy development (e.g., wind, solar, possibly bio-fuel) in and near Las Vegas.

#	Implementation Action
11	Continue to collaborate with and help support institutions located in the community, including New Mexico Highlands University, Luna Community College, United World College, Las Vegas Behavioral Health Center, West Las Vegas Schools, Las Vegas City Schools, and Alta Vista Regional Hospital.
12	Keep as low as possible the city costs associated with development and business operation to support continuation and expansion of local businesses.

### Transportation and Drainage

1	Develop a comprehensive maintenance program, including a GIS database, to extend the useful life of streets. Explore financing options such as gross receipts tax, special assessment districts, and grants.
2	Develop a city transportation master plan in phases that recommends major future roadways, incorporating drainage improvements, signalization, traffic calming, sidewalks and bicycle routes.
3	Develop a rural street section standard that will accommodate drainage needs in rural city streets and for future annexation areas.
4	Develop a street section standard for 7th Street north from Mills Avenue and other major commercial streets. Ensure that it provides for pedestrian, transit and bicycle accessibility while not over-designing for automobile capacity.
5	Post information on the city's Web site about grants received by the city after they have been contracted.
6	Expand Meadow City Express bus transit service to improve demand response by adding a bus driver. Explore establishing a modified fixed route bus system that retains some demand response capability.
7	Develop sidewalk inventory, prioritize and build missing links or replace sidewalks in poor condition.
8	Regularly update the Airport Master Plan including improvements to supporting services to better serve the public.
9	Implement traffic-calming measures to slow traffic through residential neighborhoods.
10	Improve or expand downtown parking lots or construct a parking structure.
11	Provide wayfinding signage to the downtown from the Interstate and at key intersections.
12	Create a gateway and improve University Avenue from the I-25 interchange through downtown.
13	Create bicycle lanes, trails and routes, targeting 0.5 linear mile per year.
14	Complete missing links of Legion Drive from Hot Springs Avenue to I-25.
15	Extend 12th Street north to Mills Avenue, providing an alternative north-south route from downtown.

#	Implementation Action
16	Study additional north-south routes to ensure added traffic will not adversely affect residential neighborhoods.
17	Make improvements to drainages by priority for the following areas: 1. Sulzbacher, Rosenwald and San Francisco Avenues neighborhood 2. 2nd Street and Baca Avenue Drainage (including golf course) 3. Douglas Avenue and University Avenue 4. 12th Street area 5. Lincoln Street and Tilden Street area 6. West side arroyo improvements a. Manteca b. Pajarito c. Hermanos 7. Montezuma and Keen Streets area 8. N. 8th Street extension area, including Kretz drainage
18	Develop standards for existing and proposed development along the river and arroyos, prohibiting development in floodplains and requiring safer construction close to drainage ways.

### Utilities

1	Develop infrastructure and make other improvements recommended by the city's preliminary engineering report (in process) to improve the water supply, reduce water losses, improve dam safety, meet future demand while reducing water use on a per capita basis, and reduce the city's vulnerability to drought.
2	Construct high priority drainage improvements where inadequate facilities have been identified.
3	Establish policies and standards for detention of storm water, including on-site rainwater harvest areas, mulch basins in road medians or on edges of parking lots, and detention ponds.
4	Replace or rehabilitate natural gas pipelines according to the Utilities Department's maintenance, replacement and repair schedule.
5	Continue to develop treated effluent reuse infrastructure for watering city parks and other beneficial uses.
6	Develop utilities standards for annexed areas.
7	Explore options for special assessment districts in annexed areas to improve infrastructure.

#	Implementation Action
<b>Facilities and Parks</b>	
1	Consolidate city administrative functions that community members frequent, and relocate facilities in the downtown, in a location to be selected.
2	Develop a comprehensive facility database of city-owned and operated facilities using information in the Facilities and Parks Element.
3	Maintain and prioritize repair to city-owned historic buildings.
4	Acquire historic buildings if they are not fully used and can be used for municipal functions.
5	Establish a fourth fire house in a location that will improve Las Vegas' ISO rating, likely on the north side of the city.
6	Bring buildings up to building code standards and ADA compliance when making renovations, addressing health and safety concerns.
8	Train, hire, or contract staff with specialized qualifications in roofing, historic preservation, energy efficiency and facility database management.
9	Conduct regular clean-ups of trash, weeds and graffiti in parks and public places.
10	Regularly repair and replace park furniture and playground equipment.
11	Manage aging park trees, saving them where possible, and strategically replacing them when needed.
12	Develop an urban forest management plan.
13	Develop walking and bicycling trails within parks and linking parks to nearby neighborhoods.
14	Develop park adequacy standards as a basis for determining park needs. Build new neighborhood parks in new and underserved areas.
15	Conduct periodic citywide public surveys of park use to determine trends and demand levels.
17	Develop a new sports complex after preparing a feasibility and market study to evaluate community demand, confirm proposed uses and establish expected returns on investments.
18	Develop a detailed parks master plan.
19	Develop a library facility and services needs assessment that considers the best uses for Carnegie Library, identifies feasibility of an additional library, and considers the joint-use library potential with Highlands University.

<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>	
1	Improve energy efficiency of city-owned buildings and public housing. Use any energy-efficient projects as educational opportunities to demonstrate to the community what is possible and affordable.
2	Identify significant sources of methane production, such as the sewage treatment plant and historic land fill sites, for capture and reuse of their methane gas.

#	Implementation Action
3	Develop local solar access protection regulations.
4	Consider inverse pricing of natural gas to set a higher unit rate for larger users, and offer programs to assist residents to improve heating efficiencies.
5	Convert city vehicles to alternative fuels to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, particularly focusing on natural gas.
6	Create a partnership with Highlands University and other educational institutions to form an energy-efficiency study group to promote community awareness and recommend institutional and communitywide actions to reduce GHG emissions.
7	Promote car pooling and improve transit to nearby cities, particularly Santa Fe. Implement a “shop local” campaign to encourage fewer out-of-town trips
8	Consider pick-up service for recycled paper, plastics and metals.

### Hazards Mitigation

1	Publicize risks of wildfire, drought, severe weather events, hazardous materials, and terrorism; educate the public about actions individuals can take to minimize risks and prepare for natural and human-caused emergencies.
2	Work with the City/County Emergency Manager to prepare stronger county subdivision standards and public safety improvements to increase accessibility in areas with moderate and high wildfire risks.
3	Enforce building codes to reduce the risk of fire and increase structural stability.
4	Implement Preliminary Engineering Report recommendations regarding water to reduce vulnerability to drought.
5	Continue to implement water conservation measures.
6	Support and participate in interjurisdictional cooperation and collaboration in emergency response and hazards mitigation.
7	Mitigate landfill.



## **D. Funding Strategies**

The plan addresses funding strategies in the Transportation and Storm Water Element and Economic Development Element as they relate to those element topics. This section discusses several key strategies because capital funding is critical to the city for implementing various recommendations of the plan.

### ***Tax Increment Financing***

Tax increment financing (TIF) involves allocating the increase in tax revenue resulting from property improvements in a district to help finance infrastructure in that same district. Traditionally, TIF finances urban renewal and redevelopment projects. It allows the use of future tax revenues to finance current improvements that will generate future gains. Since the improvement will increase property values which in turn will generate property taxes, there is a logical nexus to funnel some of the increased tax revenue to developers. The developers can then use the tax revenue to back bonds to finance improvements. Moreover, since municipalities typically use only a portion of a tax gain resulting from development to support that development, general revenue for the local government usually increases. The logic of tax increment financing is compelling and 49 states and the District of Columbia have all adopted versions of it.

The TIF program in New Mexico is arguably the most generous of any state. Under New Mexico legislation passed in 2006, the legislature authorized cities and counties to create Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDDs). These districts can pledge up to 75% of future incremental gross receipt and property tax revenues to underwrite bonds to finance infrastructure construction costs. While all but four other states include only local tax revenue in the TIF, the New Mexico law diverts both state and local revenues, and New Mexico diverts both property and gross receipts taxes. Only one other state diverts sales tax to TIFs. The New Mexico law also allows TIDDs to fund greenfield development. It should be noted that Las Vegas recently created a TIDD for the downtown.

### ***Shift To Development Impact Fees***

The city may use impact fees to pay for infrastructure from development that clearly increases traffic, emissions, or stormwater management, and taxes sanitary sewer collection and water distribution needs. Imposing impact fees, as well as conditioning development on infrastructure provision, aligns with practices of larger municipalities in New Mexico such as Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Past experience confirms that impact fees generate few constitutional concerns for jurisdictions since they can easily tailor these fees to the impacts of a specific development. The city should pay special attention to crafting its impact fee system to meet the nexus and rough proportionality criteria required under state law. Historical data for municipalities in New Mexico suggest that well-designed impact fees along with systematic and integrated long-range planning have justified setting higher impact fees.

### ***Public and Private Sector Contributions***

Although governments often assume full responsibility for the provision of infrastructure, United States policymakers have begun to design and implement new models of service delivery that blend the efforts of public, private, and nonprofit organizations. These models include:

- Coordination and cost-sharing cooperation
- Public enterprises
- Competitive procurement
- Management contracting
- Leasing and concessions
- Public-private partnership (PPP)
- Privatization

Each of these models has its own unique advantages and no single model is universally successful. The city of Las Vegas should assess conditions carefully and proceed with the most suitable models and reforms. Public-private cooperative arrangements do not relieve the city of Las Vegas of its responsibility to ensure fair prices, adequate quality, and access to infrastructure services. An example of a public-private partnership is Rio Rancho's recent successful implementation of a public improvement district (PID). In a PID, property owners pay an annual special levy that relates to the value of the benefit property owners receive from the improvement projects. A developer forms a PID which must meet city council approval. Typically, the developer requires a year to implement this is a process, which includes the sale of bonds to investors. The municipality uses bond proceeds to pay for the agreed-upon infrastructure. Residents who buy homes in the district repay the bonds through an assessed fee added to their property taxes.

### ***Special Assessment Districts***

Municipalities routinely use special assessment districts (SADs) to provide utility improvements or to update roads in areas where existing homes lack developer-supplied infrastructure. These subdivisions may have been platted and sold by developers to multiple private owners as "premature subdivisions," and usually lack standard infrastructure such as street improvements, drainage easements, adequate park, recreation or open space area, or overall drainage features. Municipalities may set up improvement districts to provide a variety of infrastructure improvements, and all property owners within the district's boundaries must pay their assessed share because all receive the benefit of the improvements. The assessed share for each parcel of land within the district is based upon the "amount of maximum benefit" estimated for each parcel. Therefore, there is an estimated increase in value for each parcel due to the infrastructure improvements. Even if the actual costs for constructing the improvements increase, according to state law the assessments cannot increase beyond the original estimate of "maximum benefit."

SADs differ from other infrastructure financing options in New Mexico in that they are the only option that allows the governing body to pay the cost of the improvement up front, and then to levy the assessment on the landowners at a later date. Funding for SADs may also be through general obligation bonds and tax increment bonds, after the approval of voters. SADs may qualify for New Mexico

Finance Authority funding and, if financed through bond sales, must have high investment-grade rating. It is common for assessments added onto landowners' property taxes to finance SADs. Landowners may pay in a lump sum, or spread payments over 10, 20, or 30 years with interest included.

### ***General Obligation Bonds***

General obligation bonds pledge the full faith and credit of the municipality and are paid through the assessment of property taxes. Property taxes are based on assessed valuations by the county assessor, which are one-third of full market value. Both real and personal property are subject to taxation.

The city of Las Vegas may consider, for example, a ¼ -cent tax increase on its gas tax and may leverage the annual revenues to finance a general obligation bond for public infrastructure such as roads, drainage, parks, utilities, and public buildings. For example, the city of Grants passed a ¼-cent tax on fuel in 2009, providing an annual revenue of approximately \$400,000. Today, Grants is leveraging the money to finance \$1.6 million in matching funds for a federally funded STIP roadway project totaling \$4.2 million.

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### III. Existing Conditions/Community Assessment

*This section presents information about demographic trends and projections and a history of the community.*

This section provides background information about the city of Las Vegas and San Miguel County. It includes population and housing units projections and the analyses upon which they are based.

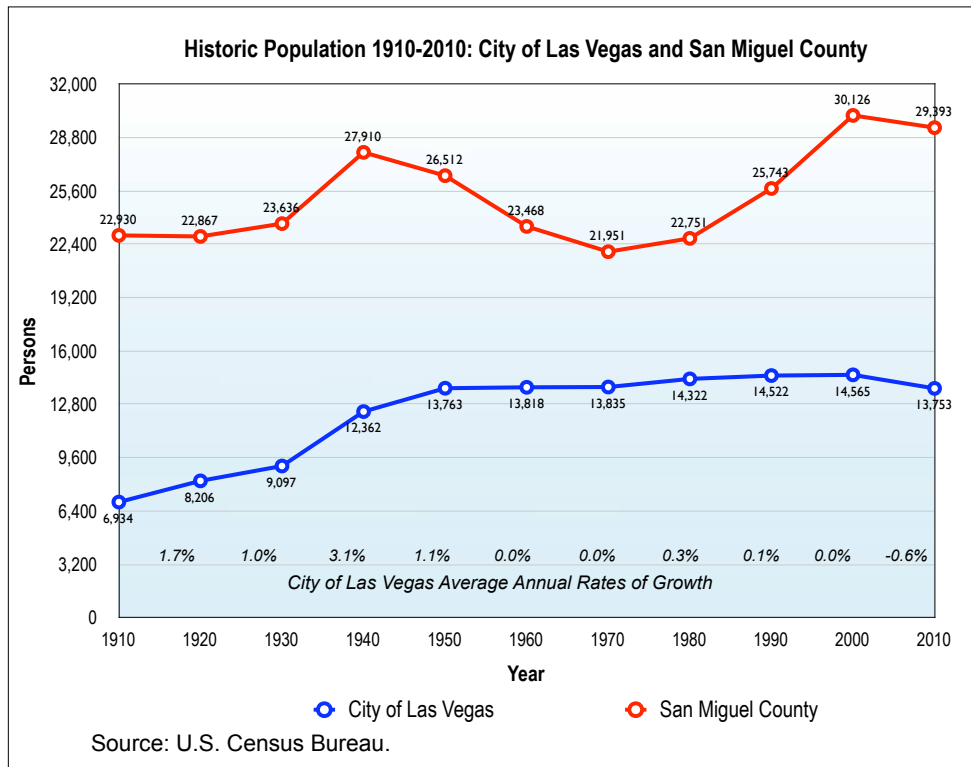
#### A. Demographic Trends and Projections

Long-term demographic and economic trends tend to shape the future of communities. While the past does not dictate the future, the dynamics of long-range trends generally continue with some momentum into the future, unless unforeseen conditions intervene.

#### City and County Long-Range Population Trends

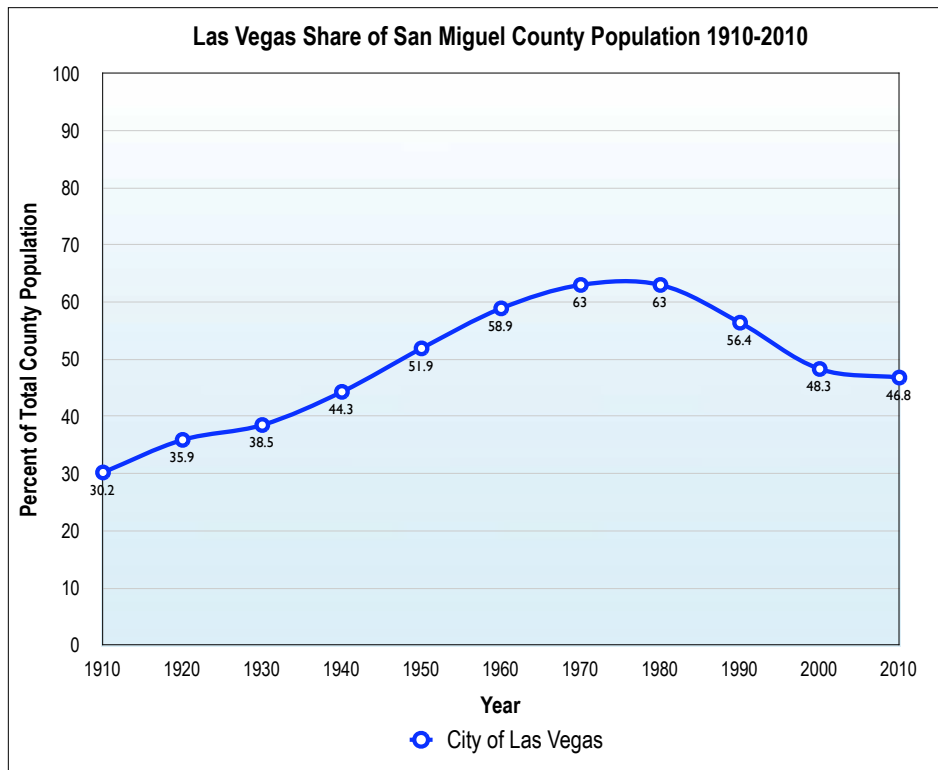
Over the 100-year period of 1910-2010, population grew at varying rates. Las Vegas grew considerably from 1910 to 1950 and has been very stable since. On average, Las Vegas grew 0.1% per year from 1950 to 2000, then declined by -0.6% from 2000 to 2010. San Miguel County population peaked in 1940, followed by decline until 1970, then steadily grew from 1970 to 2000. The county declined by 733 persons between 2000 and 2010.

**Exhibit III-1**  
Long-Range  
Historic  
Population of the  
City and County:  
1910-2010



Las Vegas's share of total county population varied from 30% to 63%. The trend has been a decline in share since 1980, from 63% to 46% in 2010.

**Exhibit III-2**  
City Share  
of County  
Population: 1910-  
2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Census Bureau attributed San Miguel County’s estimated population decline between 2000 and 2008 to net domestic out-migration, a loss of 2,369 persons. More births than deaths and net international in-migration were both positive influences on population.

**Exhibit III-3**  
Components of  
County Population  
Change: 2000-  
2008

County	Population Change	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Net International Migration	Net Domestic Migration	Residual
San Miguel	-1,566	3,059	2,213	846	63	-2,369	-106

Source: U.S. Census estimates.

**Birth Trends**

During the period of 2000-2006, the rate of natural increase (births minus deaths) dropped from the prior decade for both the county and the Las Vegas urban area, declining more for Las Vegas. San Miguel County’s average annual natural increase dropped by 48 persons (26%) between the 1990s and the first six years of 2000s. The Las Vegas urban area’s average annual natural increase dropped by 48 persons (42%). This slow-down in natural increase means more net in-migration would be needed for population growth (while the Census Bureau estimated a net migration loss since 2000).

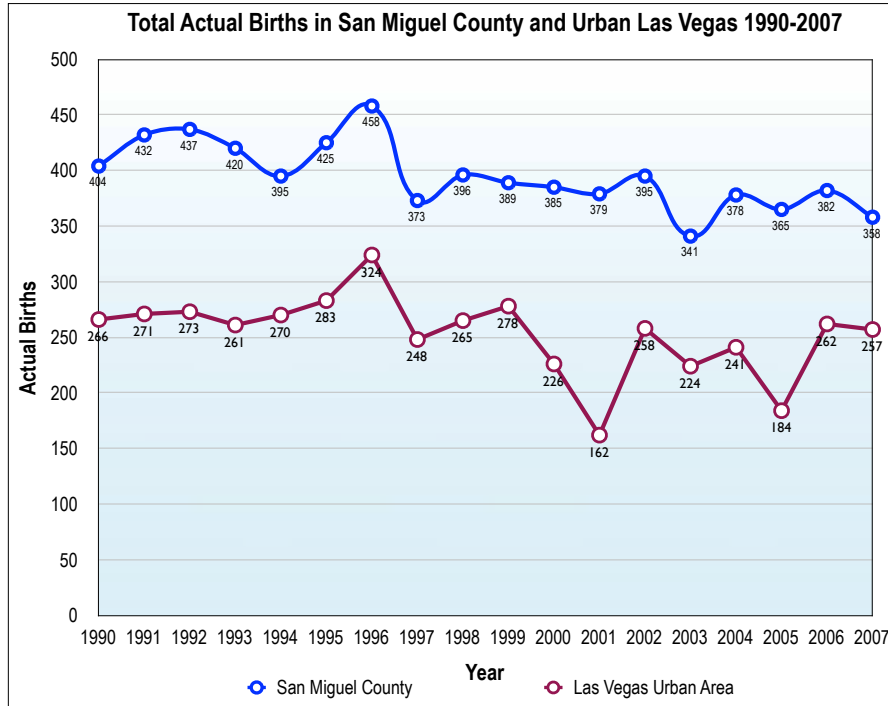
**Exhibit III-4**  
Births and Deaths  
in the County  
and the Las Vegas  
Urban Area

	1990-1999				2000-2006			
	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Average Annual Natural Increase	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Average Annual Natural Increase
San Miguel County	4,129	2,282	1,847	185	2,625	1,667	958	137
Las Vegas-Urban	2,739	1,593	1,146	115	1,557	1,089	468	67

Source: New Mexico Department of Health.

San Miguel County and Las Vegas urban area birth numbers have been fairly flat. Actual births increased from 1990 to 1996 and generally declined from 1996 to 2007.

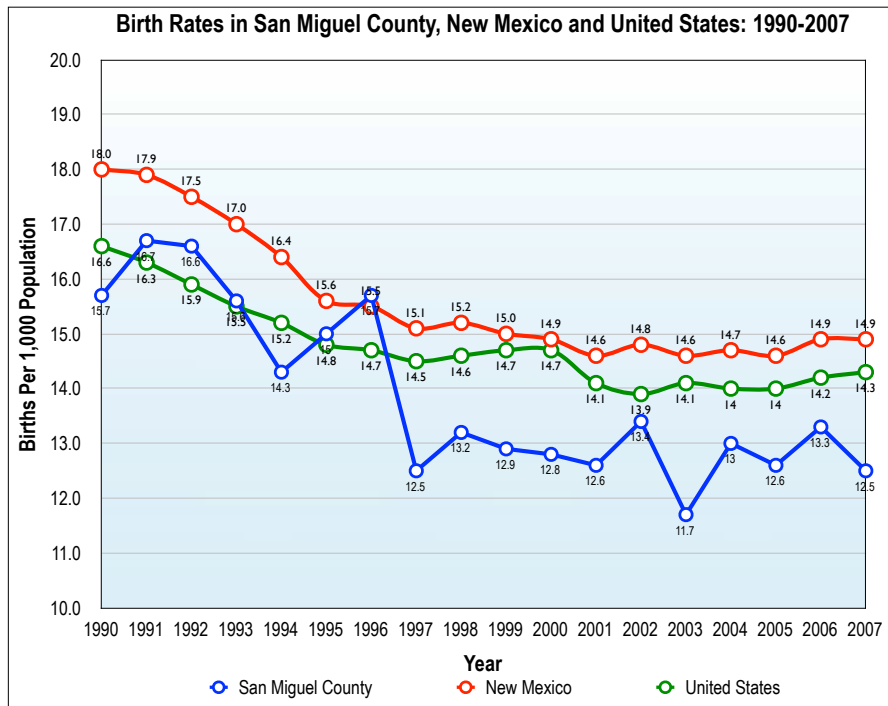
**Exhibit III-5**  
Actual Births in Las Vegas Area and San Miguel County



Source: New Mexico Department of Health

While birth rates fell from 1990 to 2002, since 2003 they have stabilized and increased somewhat. San Miguel County rates were generally lower than for the state or the U.S.

**Exhibit III-6**  
Birth Rates in San Miguel County and New Mexico

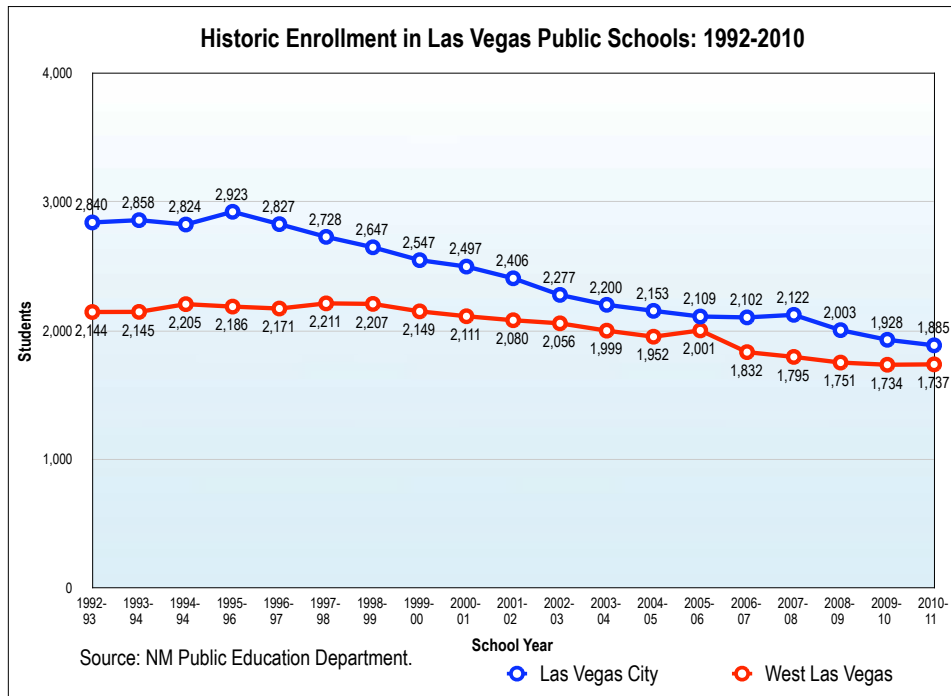


Sources: New Mexico Department of Health and U.S. Vital Statistics Reports

### School Enrollment Trends

Public school enrollment declined by 1,362 students (-27%) between 1992-93 and 2009-10. The average annual rate of change was -2.3% for Las Vegas City Schools and -1.2% for West Las Vegas Schools. In 2000, the total population living in the West Las Vegas School District was 11,020 and in the Las Vegas City School District, it was 12,849 persons.

**Exhibit III-7**  
Historic Enrollment



### Ethnicity

Las Vegas’s population was 80% Hispanic in 2010. It was somewhat higher than the Hispanic share of San Miguel County’s population at 77% and considerably higher than the share of the State of New Mexico at 46%. The city’s Hispanic population share was 82% in 1990 and 83% in 2000.

### Age

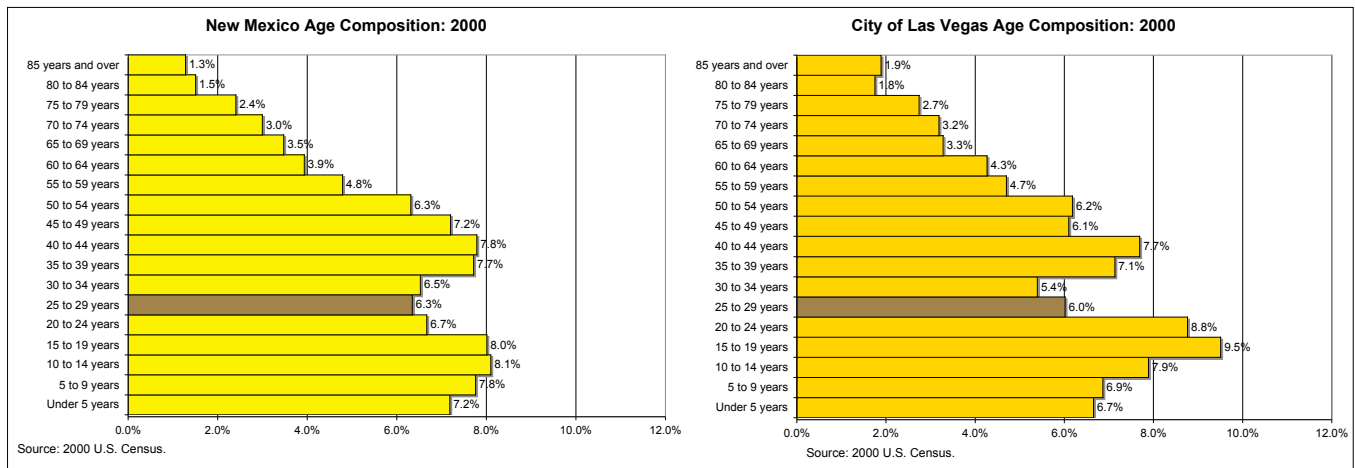
In 2000, the median age in San Miguel County was 35.1 years and in Las Vegas, 34.0 years, compared to 34.6 years of age in the state and 35.3 in the U.S.

As shown in the two charts below, Las Vegas’s age profile showed a greater rise in the 10- to 24-year-old age groups compared to New Mexico in 2000. Las Vegas had a larger share of residents 80 years and older than did the state.



### Exhibit III-8

#### Age Groups in Las Vegas and State of New Mexico



### Population Living in Group Quarters

In 2000, 95% of the total city population, or 13,833 persons, lived in households in Las Vegas, while 5%, or 732 persons, lived in group quarters. Residents living in group quarters in San Miguel County totaled 1,391 persons in 2000, or 659 persons outside the city of Las Vegas.

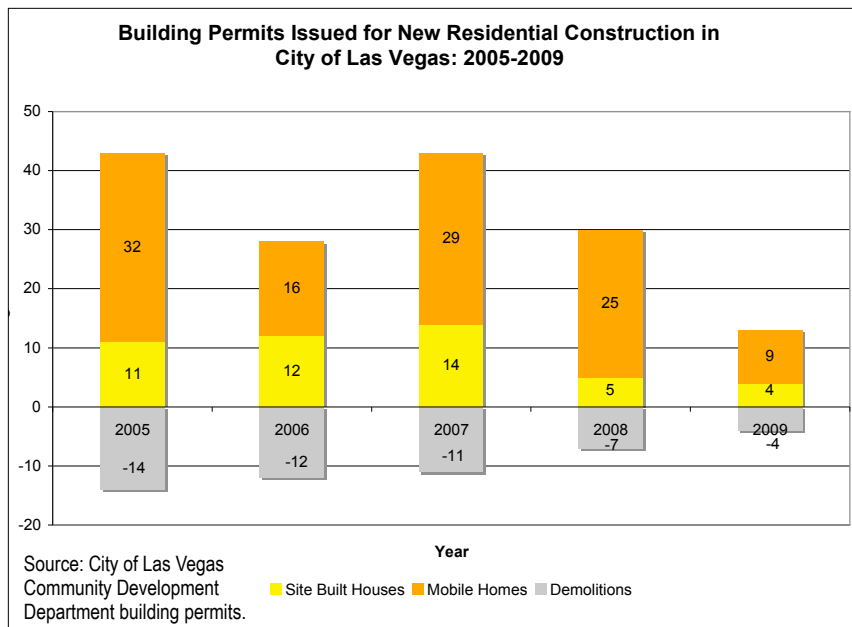
- The 2000 Census counted 111 residents living in institutional facilities within Las Vegas and a total of 227 such residents in the county as a whole. The Las Vegas Medical Center, outside city limits in 2000, has approximately 404 licensed beds.
- Students living in dormitories and other college quarters numbered 508 within the city and 206 in the county outside the city.
- An additional 113 persons lived in noninstitutionalized group homes in the city and 292 such persons in the county outside the city.
- Correctional institutions' populations included 112 persons in the county and none in the city.

### Housing Growth

Las Vegas added 661 housing units (+12%) to its inventory between 1990 and 2000, and 232 housing units (+4%) between 2000 and 2010.

Permits for single family and mobile homes issued in the city of Las Vegas over the last five years averaged 31 new units per year, without demolitions, and 22 new units per year with demolitions. In addition, some mobile homes are replacements. Due to the recession, 2009 was a particularly slow year for new housing.

**Exhibit III-9**  
 City of Las Vegas  
 Building Permits:  
 2005-2009



Single-family homes constituted 71% of the housing units in Las Vegas in 2000. Mobile homes were the second largest category, with 10%.

**Exhibit III-10**  
 City of Las Vegas  
 Housing Stock by  
 Housing Type:  
 2000

Housing Type	Number	Portion
Single Family Detached	3,802	59.6%
Single Family Attached and Duplexes	709	11.1%
Multi-family	646	10.1%
Mobile Homes	1,220	19.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,377</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census 2000 SF 1 count data.

**Household Size and Relation to Population Growth**

Las Vegas had a relatively small average household size in 2000 with 2.48 persons, compared to San Miguel County with 2.58 and New Mexico with 2.63. In contrast, the city of Las Vegas' household size was 2.73 in 1990. While the 2010 census has not yet reported household size, it appears that it has declined again since 2000. If group quarter residents were the same in 2010 as in 2000, household size in Las Vegas would be approximately 2.26 persons in 2010. Declining household size implies either that more housing units are needed to house the same population or, in the absence of new housing, the population declines.

**Exhibit III-11**  
*City of Las Vegas  
 and San Miguel  
 County Household  
 Size: 2000*

	City of Las Vegas	San Miguel County
<b>City of Las Vegas and San Miguel County Household Size Calculations: 2000</b>		
Total Population	14,565	30,126
Population in Households	13,833	28,735
Total Housing Units	6,366	14,254
Households (occupied)	5,588	11,134
Vacant	778	3,120
Persons Per Household	2.48	2.58
Source: U.S. Census 2000 SF 1 count data.		

**Population and Housing in the Extraterritorial Zoning Area (ETZ)**

Based on an analysis of county rural addressing data, growth since 2000 added an estimated 120 housing units and 323 persons to the ETZ.

**Exhibit III-12**  
*Housing Units and  
 Population in ETZ*

	2000	2009	2010 projection	Change 2000-2010
<b>Housing Units and Population in Las Vegas Extraterritorial Zoning Area: 2000, 2009 and 2010</b>				
Housing Units	1,607	1,715	1,727	120
Households	1,447	1,555	1,567	120
Population per housing unit	2.70	2.70	2.70	
Population	4,331	4,622	4,654	323
Sources: U.S. Census 2000 census block data, and San Miguel County rural addressing GIS data retrieved in March 2010, aggregation by ARC. ARC estimate of population in 2009 and projection of population in 2010.				
Housing and population data are approximate. The 2000 census blocks do not precisely match the geographic area of the ETZ. County address data use categories were selected by ARC for what appeared to be residential uses.				

The following table shows population and housing in the ETZ by subareas in 2000.

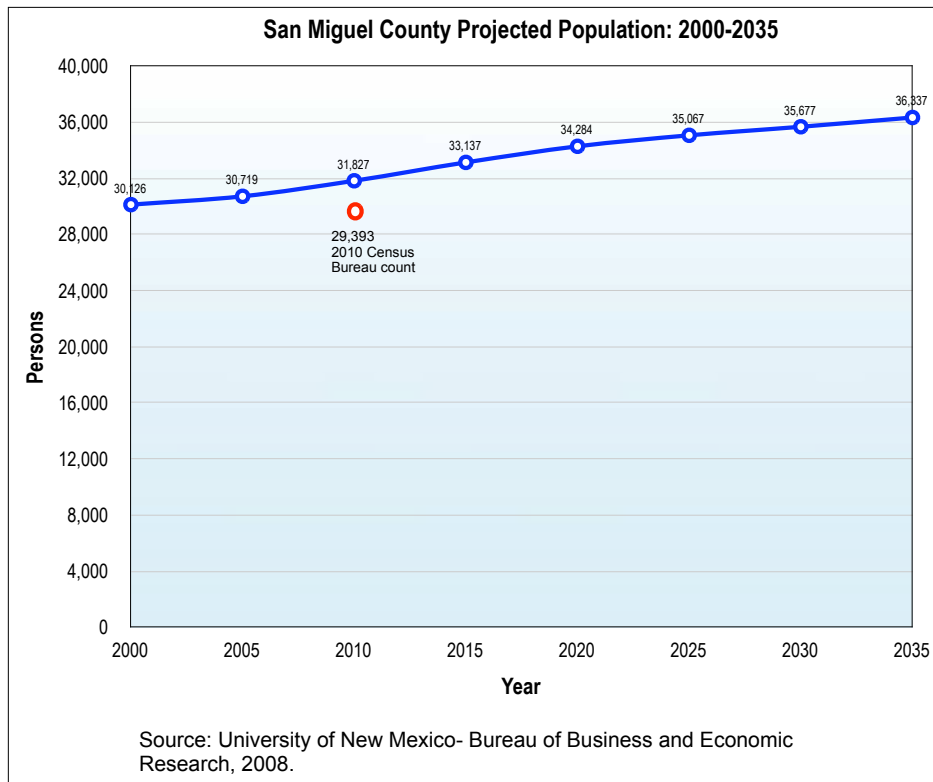
**Exhibit III-13**  
*Population and  
 Housing in City  
 and Subareas of  
 ETZ: 2000*

<b>City of Las Vegas, Subareas Around the City and San Miguel County 2000 Population and Housing Summary</b>						
Area	Population	Housing Units	Households	Vacant Houses	Vacancy Rate	Gross Population Per Household
City of Las Vegas*	14,962	6,417	5,628	789	12.3%	2.66
<b>Subarea Outside City Approximately Within the Extraterritorial Zone</b>						
North Central	832	313	296	17	5.4%	2.81
Northeast	113	51	44	7	13.7%	2.57
Northwest (n. of Gallinas R.)	1,972	663	594	69	10.4%	3.32
West Central (s. of Gallinas R.)	1,114	456	406	50	11.0%	2.74
Southeast	201	80	67	13	16.3%	3.00
Southwest	99	44	40	4	9.1%	2.48
<b>Total of Subareas Outside City</b>	<b>4,331</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>1,447</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>2.99</b>
<b>Total for City and Approximate ETZ</b>	<b>19,293</b>	<b>8,024</b>	<b>7,075</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>2.73</b>
Rest of San Miguel County	10,833	6,230	4,059	2,171	34.8%	2.67
<b>San Miguel County</b>	<b>30,126</b>	<b>14,254</b>	<b>11,134</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>2.71</b>
*City of Las Vegas population, housing units, and households include census block counts for areas annexed to the city since 2000. Consequently, these counts are higher than the official 2000 counts.						
In comparison, population is 403 persons higher, housing units are 58 higher, and households are 47 higher than official 2000 counts.						
Sources: U.S. Census 2000 census block data, aggregation and GIS by ARC.						

## Population Projections

In 2008, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research projected San Miguel County will gain approximately 890 persons each five years, at an average annual rate of 0.6%. The actual population count (see the red dot in the chart below) from 2000-2010 was less than this projection. Earlier, in 2004, BBER had projected a more rapid growth of 1,990 persons each five years, and assumed that growth outside the metro areas would be stronger compared to the 2008 series study.

**Exhibit III-14**  
*Projected  
Population of San  
Miguel County:  
2000-2035*



In 2008, BBER projected that San Miguel County will have a proportionally larger population aged 20 to 34 years, compared to the state. They projected a smaller age group of 35 to 64 years, and a slightly larger group of residents 65 years and older by 2035. New projections will be prepared once additional Census 2010 data become available.

**Exhibit III-15**

*County and State Projected Population by Age*

<b>Population Projections for New Mexico and San Miguel County by Age Groups: 2005-2035</b>								
<b>New Mexico</b>								
Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Change 2005 to 2035
0 to 4 years	103,923	149,872	168,091	177,095	175,297	176,088	185,588	81,665
5 to 19 years	463,015	428,487	432,024	461,007	532,320	556,874	565,573	102,559
20 to 34 years	364,130	427,109	494,198	525,650	488,408	491,236	520,429	156,299
35 to 64 years	802,800	881,517	929,784	970,345	1,028,347	1,087,512	1,150,856	348,056
65 years and over	235,425	275,346	332,140	406,047	483,385	553,086	595,843	360,418
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,969,293</b>	<b>2,162,331</b>	<b>2,356,236</b>	<b>2,540,145</b>	<b>2,707,757</b>	<b>2,864,796</b>	<b>3,018,289</b>	<b>1,048,996</b>
Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2005 to 2035
0 to 4 years	5.3%	6.9%	7.1%	7.0%	6.5%	6.1%	6.1%	0.9%
5 to 19 years	23.5%	19.8%	18.3%	18.1%	19.7%	19.4%	18.7%	-4.8%
20 to 34 years	18.5%	19.8%	21.0%	20.7%	18.0%	17.1%	17.2%	-1.2%
35 to 64 years	40.8%	40.8%	39.5%	38.2%	38.0%	38.0%	38.1%	-2.6%
65 years and over	12.0%	12.7%	14.1%	16.0%	17.9%	19.3%	19.7%	7.8%
<b>San Miguel County</b>								
Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	Change 2005 to 2035
0 to 4 years	1,425	2,550	2,980	2,989	2,523	2,252	2,406	982
5 to 19 years	8,112	6,615	6,453	7,028	8,306	8,272	7,789	-324
20 to 34 years	5,374	6,683	7,651	7,601	6,083	5,986	6,647	1,273
35 to 64 years	12,170	12,064	11,529	11,637	12,234	12,379	12,095	-75
65 years and over	3,638	3,915	4,523	5,028	5,921	6,788	7,400	3,763
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,719</b>	<b>31,827</b>	<b>33,137</b>	<b>34,284</b>	<b>35,067</b>	<b>35,677</b>	<b>36,337</b>	<b>5,618</b>
Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2005 to 2035
0 to 4 years	4.6%	8.0%	9.0%	8.7%	7.2%	6.3%	6.6%	2.0%
5 to 19 years	26.4%	20.8%	19.5%	20.5%	23.7%	23.2%	21.4%	-5.0%
20 to 34 years	17.5%	21.0%	23.1%	22.2%	17.3%	16.8%	18.3%	0.8%
35 to 64 years	39.6%	37.9%	34.8%	33.9%	34.9%	34.7%	33.3%	-6.3%
65 years and over	11.8%	12.3%	13.7%	14.7%	16.9%	19.0%	20.4%	8.5%
Source: University of New Mexico - Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2008.								

The following table describes the drivers that planners considered in preparing population projections for the city of Las Vegas and the extraterritorial zoning area.

Exhibit III-16 Drivers of Population Growth in Las Vegas

City of Las Vegas Drivers of Population Growth

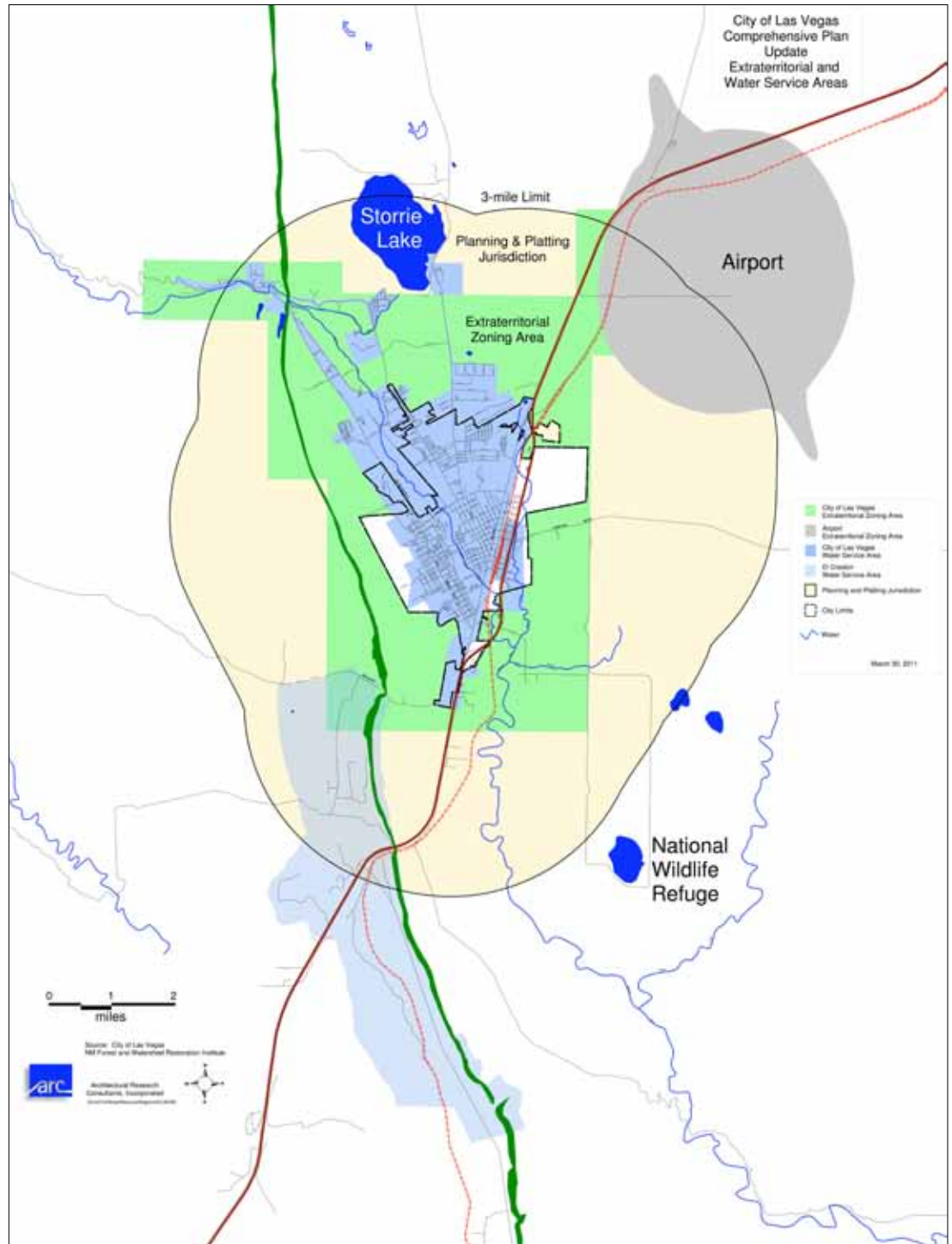
Indicator	Growth	Findings
Flat city population 1950-2000	→	Las Vegas' population grew from 13,763 persons in 1950 to 14,565 persons in 2000. San Miguel County grew particularly dramatically from 1970-2000. Some of the county growth was in the Las Vegas area outside the city and not annexed by city. Las Vegas' share of total county population has declined.
Decline in city and county population 2000-2010	↓	Las Vegas' population dropped by 812 persons in 2000-2010, an average annual rate of -0.6%, and San Miguel County lost 733 persons in 2000-2010, or -0.2%.
Gain in population through recent annexations	↑	Las Vegas Medical Center (Behavioral Health Institute) was annexed in 2010. 402 persons lived in census blocks (2000 data) in the approximate area.
Slow population increase in ETZ since 2000	↑	ARC estimates 4,331 persons lived in the ETZ in 2000, and that the population increased to 4,622 by 2009, an average annual gain of +0.7%. Calculations are based on U.S. Census 2000 block data and San Miguel County rural addressing data – the 2000 household size held constant (larger in the ETZ than in the city).
Slow growth projected for San Miguel County	→	BBER 2008 projections show a gain of 5,618 persons between 2005 and 2035, an average 0.6% per year. The city and ETZ should experience a share of this growth. BBER's population projections for the county prepared in 2008 are substantially lower than those for 2004. Small towns and rural areas are not expected to grow as much (even Santa Fe County's projected population dropped) as the metropolitan areas of Albuquerque and Las Cruces.
Natural increase slowed in period 2000-2006	→	Las Vegas - Urban and San Miguel County had more births than deaths since 1990, however, the rate of gain slowed significantly from 2000-2006 compared to 1990-1999.
More out-migration than in-migration in the county	↓	U.S. Census estimates San Miguel County's net domestic migration population loss was -2,369 between 2000 and 2008. A positive change in economic circumstances can reverse this loss.
Relatively low and flat county birth rates	→	Las Vegas has a relatively older age population and a higher proportion of females than does the state. Hispanic fertility rates are higher than non-Hispanic rates in the U.S. and N.M. San Miguel County birth rates (births per 1,000 population) were generally lower than N.M. or U.S. rates, but have increased since 2003.
Slow growth in housing in city and ETZ	→	Las Vegas gained 232 housing units from 2000 to 2010, with an estimated decline in household size. ARC estimates growth added 108 housing units from 2000 to 2009 in the ETZ, based on U.S. Census 2000 and San Miguel County rural addressing data.
Growth in county employment	→	There was a gain of 1,223 jobs from 1994 to 2010. The ratio of city population to county employment has been declining. San Miguel County's average income is at the midpoint for N.M. counties (16th of 33), but adjacent Santa Fe County's income is second highest, and there appears to be an increase in the number of residents commuting there.
Economic growth potential	↑	Major employers in the city are stable and maybe growing slightly: little enrollment or job growth are expected for NMHU, Luna CC World College, or West and City School Districts. Some growth is expected at Las Vegas Medical Center. Regional shopping, services and entertainment opportunities may expand and improve somewhat, while trade area population is growing very slowly or possibly declining. Travel, tourism, arts, and cultural destination activities have potential for growth. Economic development strategies and incentives for target industries may lead to increased employment.
Quality of life, community assets	↑	Retention and growth of population in the city are possible through strategies and investments favoring redevelopment, infill and housing maintenance, and some growth in northern area/ETZ. Quality-of-life improvements including walkability, historic resources, small town culture and lower cost of living retain current residents and attract new residents. Addressing the identified housing shortage could lead to growth.

Legend

→	Neutral, stable impact on future population (6)
↓	Negative impact on population growth (2)
↑	Positive impact on population growth (4)

The Comprehensive Master Plan has a horizon of approximately 20 years. Consequently, land use, economic development, transportation and facilities planning focuses on year 2030 numbers. To support the 40-year water plan, projections extend to 2050.

**Exhibit III-17**  
*Map of City of Las Vegas, ETZ, and Water Service Areas*



### Projection Series for City of Las Vegas

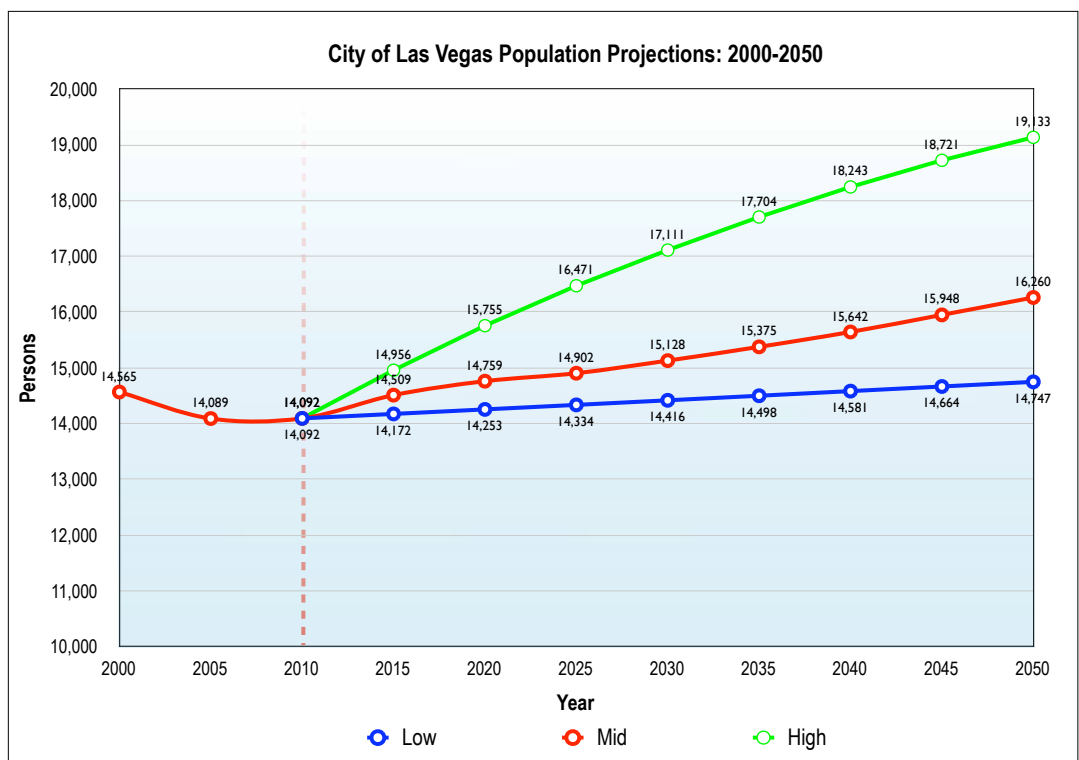
**Low Series** — based on the average rate of city growth from 1960 to 2000. This projection shows an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 324 persons, or an average annual growth rate in that time of +0.1%.

**Mid-Range Series** (considered most likely) — based on BBER county projections adjusted down to reflect 2010 actuals and a slowly declining share of county population. This projection has an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 1,036 persons, or an average annual growth rate of +0.4% from 2010 to 2030.

**High Series** — based on the rate of growth projected by BBER in 2004. The projection results in an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 3,019 persons. The average annual growth rate is +0.5% from 2010 to 2030.

The following chart shows the three population projections series. The population in 2010 of 14,092 was estimated assuming inclusion of the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute, annexed by the city early in 2010. However, the Census count, which did not include the Institute, was 339 persons fewer, at 13,753.

**Exhibit III-18**  
City of Las Vegas  
Population  
Projections



### Projection Series for the ETZ

**Low Series** — based on the average rate of city growth from 1960 to 2000. It shows an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 106 persons, for an average annual growth rate of +0.1% from 2010 to 2030.

**Mid-Range Series** (considered most likely) — based on 2008 BBER county projection rates slowed some to reflect more gain inside the city and some loss of

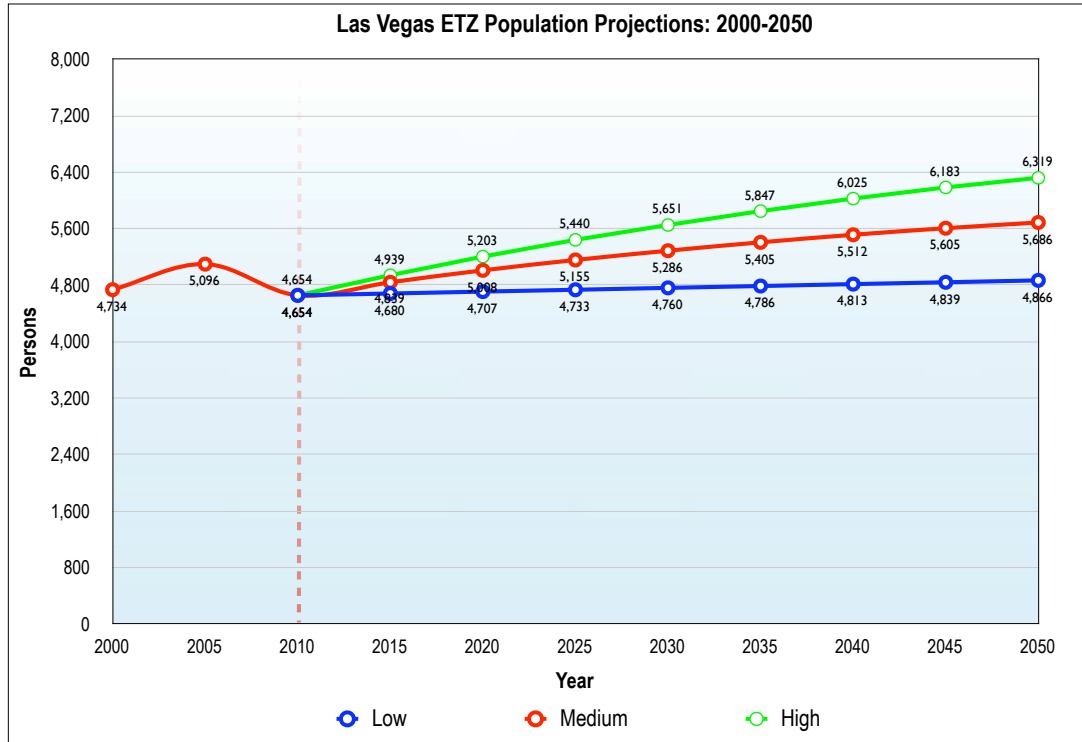


share to other areas of county. This series shows an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 632 persons, for an average annual rate of growth from 2010 to 2030 of +0.6%.

**High Series** — based on 2008 BBER county projection rates, with an increase in population from 2010 to 2030 of 997 persons and an average annual rate of growth from 2010 to 2030 of +1.0%.

The 2010 population for the ETZ was estimated based on the exclusion of the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute.

**Exhibit III-19**  
Las Vegas ETZ  
Population  
Projections



**Exhibit III-20**  
City of Las Vegas  
and Las Vegas  
ETZ Population  
Projections

Mid Series		2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
City		14,565	14,289	14,292	14,509	14,759	14,902	15,128	15,375	15,642	15,948	16,260
ETZ Area		4,734	5,096	4,654	4,839	5,008	5,155	5,286	5,405	5,512	5,605	5,686
<b>Total Area</b>		<b>19,299</b>	<b>19,385</b>	<b>18,946</b>	<b>19,349</b>	<b>19,766</b>	<b>20,058</b>	<b>20,414</b>	<b>20,780</b>	<b>21,153</b>	<b>21,553</b>	<b>21,946</b>

High Series		2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
City		14565	14289	14292	15,168	15,979	16,705	17,354	17,955	18,501	18,986	19,404
ETZ Area		4734	5096	4654	4,939	5,203	5,440	5,651	5,847	6,025	6,183	6,319
<b>Total Area</b>		<b>19,299</b>	<b>19,385</b>	<b>18,946</b>	<b>20,107</b>	<b>21,182</b>	<b>22,145</b>	<b>23,005</b>	<b>23,802</b>	<b>24,526</b>	<b>25,169</b>	<b>25,723</b>

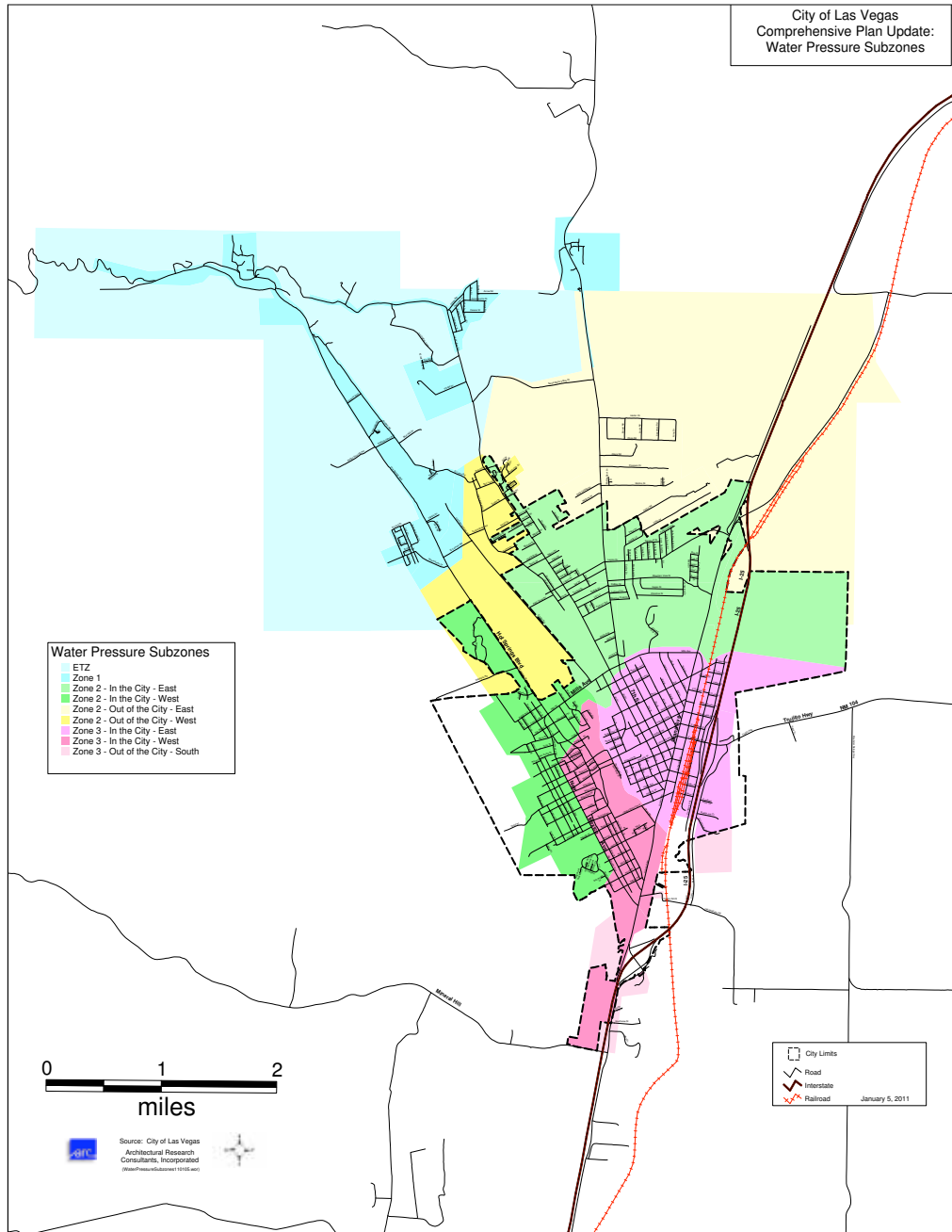
  

Low Series		2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
City		14565	14289	14292	14,373	14,455	14,538	14,621	14,704	14,788	14,872	14,957
ETZ Area		4734	5096	4654	4,680	4,707	4,733	4,760	4,786	4,813	4,839	4,866

The Census Bureau released the first set of 2010 data only two weeks prior to the preparation of this document; consequently, the authors, as well as BBER and the Census Bureau have not yet fully evaluated population trends. As additional 2010 census data become available and as BBER prepares its next series of county population projections, the city is urged to evaluate population projections. It is

likely that at a minimum, a lower projection series should be considered. Population projections were further evaluated and allocated according to water pressure zones and subzones both within the city and in the ETZ. These projections used estimated 2010 populations and housing units, and focused on the middle and high projection series to provide the Water Preliminary Engineering Report consultants with data for their planning efforts.

**Exhibit III-21**  
Water Pressure  
Zones and  
Subzones



The high series projections are more aggressive and could be realized if recommended strategies for economic development and housing development succeed. For long-range infrastructure sizing, the margin of additional population in the high series is probably most expedient, unless resultant improvements are excessively costly or difficult to achieve.

**Exhibit III-22 Mid-Range Series 2030 Projections by Sub Areas**

<b>Medium Series Population Projections by Subarea: 2030</b>										
Water Pressure Zones	Subarea	City Limits	2000 Population	2010 Population Estimate	2030 Household Population Change	2010 to 2030 Additional Households	2010 to 2030 Additional Residential Land (Acres)	2030 Total Households	Housing Units Per Acre	2030 Total Population
Zone 2	East	In	4,919	4,759	300	152	43	2,085	3.5	5,059
Zone 2	West	In	3,133	3,031	270	105	21	1,190	5.0	3,301
Zone 3	East	In	3,911	3,784	310	140	28	1,617	5.0	4,094
Zone 3	West	In	2,602	2,517	100	60	12	1,114	5.0	2,617
<b>Total In</b>			<b>14,565</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>6,009</b>		<b>15,072</b>
Out	ETZ North	Out	387	380	100	49	37	203	1.3	480
Zone 1	North	Out	1,680	1,652	140	51	38	506	1.3	1,792
Zone 2	East	Out	983	966	200	91	26	449	3.5	1,166
Zone 2	West	Out	556	547	230	94	31	292	3.0	777
ETZ Remainder		Out	1,128	1,109	0	0	0	0		1,109
<b>Total Out</b>			<b>4,734</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1,360</b>		<b>5,324</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,299</b>	<b>18,746</b>	<b>1,650</b>	<b>656</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>20,396</b>

**Exhibit III-23 2030 Summary by Water Pressure Zones**

<b>Summary by Water Pressure Zones</b>							
Water Pressure Zones	2000 Population	2000 Housing Units	2000 Households	2010 to 2030 Additional Households	2010 to 2030 Additional Residential Land	2030 Total Households	2030 Total Population
Zone 1	1,680	497	455	51	38	506	1,792
Zone 2	9,591	3,974	3,574	442	122	4,016	10,303
Zone 3	6,513	2,953	2,531	200	40	2,731	6,712
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,784</b>	<b>7,424</b>	<b>6,560</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>7,253</b>	<b>18,807</b>

**Exhibit III-24 Mid-Range Series 2050 Populations by Subarea**

<b>Medium Series Population Projections by Subarea: 2050</b>										
Water Pressure Zones	Subarea	City Limits	2000 Population	2010 Population Estimate	2050 Household Population Change	2010 to 2050 Additional Households	2010 to 2050 Additional Residential Land	2050 Total Households	Housing Units Per Acre	2050 Total Population
Zone 2	East	In	4,919	4,759	640	402	114.9	2335	3.5	5,399
Zone 2	West	In	3,133	3,031	600	288	57.7	1373	5	3,631
Zone 3	East	In	3,911	3,784	700	382	76.4	1859	5	4,484
Zone 3	West	In	2,602	2,517	170	147	29.3	1201	5	2,687
<b>Total In</b>			<b>14,565</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>2,110</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>278.3</b>	<b>6780</b>		<b>16,202</b>
ETZ North		Out	387	380	220	105	78.8	259	1.33	600
Zone 1	North	Out	1,680	1,652	270	97	73.1	552	1.33	1,922
Zone 2	East	Out	983	966	300	139	39.6	497	3.5	1,266
Zone 2	West	Out	556	547	290	122	40.8	320	3	837
ETZ Remainder		Out	1,128	1,109						
<b>Total Out</b>			<b>4,734</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>1,080</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>232.3</b>	<b>1491</b>		<b>5,734</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,299</b>	<b>18,746</b>	<b>3,190</b>	<b>1558</b>	<b>510.7</b>			<b>21,936</b>

**Exhibit III-25 Mid-Range Series 2050 Summary by Water Pressure Zones**

<b>Medium Series 2050 Summary by Water Pressure Zones</b>						
Water Pressure Zones	2000 Population	2000 Housing Units	2000 Households	2010 to 2050 Additional Households	2010 to 2050 Additional Residential Land	2050 Total Population
Zone 1	1,680	497	455	97	73	1,922
Zone 2	9,591	3,974	3,574	952	253	11,133
Zone 3	6,513	2,953	2,531	529	106	7,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,784</b>	<b>7,424</b>	<b>6,560</b>	<b>1,578</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>20,227</b>

**Exhibit III-26 High-Range Series 2030 Population Projections by Subarea**

<b>High Series Population Projections by Subarea: 2030</b>										
Water Pressure Zones	Subarea	City Limits	2000 Population	2010 Population Estimate	2030 Household Population Change	2030 Additional Households	2030 Additional Residential Land	2030 Total Households	Housing Units Per Acre	2030 Total Population
Zone 2	East	In	4,919	4,759	870	502	143.4	2435	3.5	5,629
Zone 2	West	In	3,133	3,031	780	357	71.3	1442	5	3,811
Zone 3	East	In	3,911	3,784	750	403	80.6	1880	5	4,534
Zone 3	West	In	2,602	2,517	450	272	54.3	1326	5	2,967
<b>Total In</b>			<b>14,565</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>2,850</b>	<b>1,541</b>	<b>349.6</b>	<b>7090</b>		<b>16,942</b>
ETZ North		Out	387	380	250	118	88.5	272	1.33	630
Zone 1	North	Out	1,680	1,652	250	91	68.8	546	1.33	1,902
Zone 2	East	Out	983	966	350	158	45.2	516	3.5	1,316
Zone 2	West	Out	556	547	350	145	48.5	343	3	897
ETZ Remainder		Out	1,128	1,109						
<b>Total Out</b>			<b>4,734</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>251.0</b>	<b>1523</b>		<b>5,854</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,299</b>	<b>18,746</b>	<b>4,050</b>	<b>1899</b>	<b>601</b>			<b>22,796</b>

**Exhibit III-27 High-Range Series 2030 Summary by Water Pressure Zones**

<b>High Series 2030 Summary by Water Pressure Zones</b>								
Water Pressure Zones	2000 Population	2000 Housing Units	2000 Households	2010 to 2030 Household Population Change	2010 to 2030 Additional Households	2010 to 2030 Additional Residential Land	2030 Total Households	2030 Total Population
Zone 1	1,680	497	455	250	91	69	546	1,902
Zone 2	9,591	3,974	3,574	2,350	1,162	308	4,736	11,653
Zone 3	6,513	2,953	2,531	1,200	674	135	3,205	7,502
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,784</b>	<b>7,424</b>	<b>6,560</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>1,928</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>8,488</b>	<b>21,057</b>

**Exhibit III-28 High-Range Series 2050 Population Projects by Subarea**

<b>High Series Population Projections by Subarea: 2050</b>										
Water Pressure Zones	Subarea	City Limits	2000 Population	2010 Population Estimate	2050 Household Population Change	2050 Additional Households	2050 Additional Residential Land	2050 Total Households	~ Housing Units Per Acre	2050 Total Population
Zone 2	East	In	4,919	4,759	1,400	639	182.6	2572	3.5	6,159
Zone 2	West	In	3,133	3,031	1,100	424	84.8	1509	5	4,131
Zone 3	East	In	3,911	3,784	1,300	558	111.6	2035	5	5,084
Zone 3	West	In	2,602	2,517	1,200	549	109.9	1603	5	3,717
<b>Total In</b>			<b>14,565</b>	<b>14,092</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>2,166</b>	<b>488.9</b>	<b>7715</b>		<b>19,092</b>
ETZ North		Out	387	380	400	176	132.5	330	1.33	780
Zone 1	North	Out	1,680	1,652	300	96	72.1	551	1.33	1,952
Zone 2	East	Out	983	966	250	111	31.6	469	3.5	1,216
Zone 2	West	Out	556	547	200	83	27.6	281	3	747
ETZ Remainder		Out	1,128	1,109						
<b>Total Out</b>			<b>4,734</b>	<b>4,654</b>	<b>1,150</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>263.9</b>	<b>1504</b>		<b>5,884</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>19,299</b>	<b>18,746</b>	<b>6,150</b>	<b>2504</b>	<b>753</b>			<b>25,449</b>

**Exhibit III-29 High-Range Series 2050 Summary by Water Pressure Zones**

<b>High Series 2050 Summary by Water Pressure Zones</b>								
Water Pressure Zones	2000 Population	2000 Housing Units	2000 Households	2010 to 2050 Household Population Change	2010 to 2050 Additional Households	2010 to 2050 Additional Residential Land	2050 Total Households	2050 Total Population
Zone 1	1,680	497	455	300	96	72	551	1,952
Zone 2	9,591	3,974	3,574	2,950	1,257	327	4,831	12,253
Zone 3	6,513	2,953	2,531	2,500	1,108	222	3,639	8,802
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,784</b>	<b>7,424</b>	<b>6,560</b>	<b>5,750</b>	<b>2,460</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>9,020</b>	<b>23,007</b>

## B. Historical Overview of Las Vegas

*This section was updated and expanded from the settlement history in the 1997 Community Master Plan by Elmo Baca.*

### Introduction

The 1997 Las Vegas Community Master Plan's motto of "Building Upon the Past to Create the Future" recognized past achievements, events and individuals that have shaped and contributed to Las Vegas' identity. Las Vegas has become well known throughout the southwest, the United States, and Europe as one of the premier historic cities of the American Southwest. Quality of life, or *la vida buena*, which many residents associate with Las Vegas today, is the basic principle guiding the Las Vegas Community Master Plan Update of 2010. By reflecting on the past, listening attentively to the public, and determining the needs and trends for the future, viable elements of quality of life emerge. This process is critical in preparing Las Vegas for future challenges.

Much of what makes Las Vegas an attractive and desirable place to live and visit today is the interwoven social, physical, and historical fabrics and relationships upon which the community developed and evolved since its founding in 1835. This section of the Las Vegas Community Master Plan Update summarizes the elements which have determined the urban form and settlement patterns that make the community a magnet for multigenerational Las Vegas families and newcomers alike. The purpose of this section is to examine Las Vegas' history as it relates to settlement patterns, economic development, architecture and urban form.

### Original Inhabitants, Early Explorers and Settlements

The physical setting of Las Vegas has always made it a desirable and practical location for inhabitants. As far back as 10,000 years, Paleo-Indians took advantage of the natural resources of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the meadows of the Las Vegas Plateau for sustenance and livelihood. During the years 1100 to 1400 AD, Pueblo and Plains Indians used the mountain passes northwest and southwest of the city as trade routes. Las Vegas was an ideal camping and trading location and its proximity to a perennial water source in the Gallinas River foreshadowed permanent settlements. The presence of water meant that agriculture was marginally possible, and a review of the archaeological record bears this out with area excavations uncovering remnants of corn, beans, *manos*, and *metates*.

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado and 30 of his troops were the first Europeans to experience the rich resources in the Las Vegas area on their initial exploration of the "New World" in 1541. Between 1581 and 1808, at least 15 other Spanish and French expeditions traveled through the area and crossed the Gallinas River near the present-day location of Las Vegas. Notable among them were the expeditions led by Juan de Oñate in 1600, Pedro Vial from 1787 to 1792, and Peter and Paul Mallet in 1751.

The early history of the middle Pecos River valley was one of dispersed settlements. In 1794, just south of Pecos, New Mexico, San Miguel del Bado was established and soon became a major settlement along the Pecos River. As the population grew within the river valley, other communities sprang up around San Miguel, including

San José, Tecolote and Antón Chico. For several years, San Miguel del Bado served as New Mexico's "port of entry" for traders wandering in from the frontier towns of St. Louis and Fort Smith on the Santa Fe Trail.

In 1821, Luis Maria Cabeza de Baca and his sons were awarded a land grant of approximately 500,000 acres along the west bank of the Gallinas River and they attempted to settle in the area traditionally and presently known as Uppertown, or "Upper" Las Vegas, about three miles north of the present city. Unable to sustain a presence due to persistent Indian attacks, the family abandoned the area after several years. In 1835, a group of colonists from San Miguel del Bado was awarded this same grant along the Gallinas, with the provision from Mexican authorities that the colonists construct a fort on the site of the present-day plaza for protection.

Each of the settlers received a field strip varying in width from approximately 100 to 200 varas (1 vara = approximately 33 inches) each. The allotments ran perpendicular to the river, stretching from the Crestón (rocky ridge) on the west to the first set of hills east of the river. Each strip afforded the settlers access to irrigated fields and pasture for grazing as well as the resources of wooded uplands. Las Vegas' farming and grazing origins were established. These traditional land uses are still evident and vibrant today in the local economy and culture. From the earth and its resources, the beginnings of the permanent settlement of Las Vegas emerged and left its mark on the western frontier for the next 70 years.

Prosperity followed this second and successful attempt at settlement. Many colonists from the older surrounding communities moved in, and the foundation was laid for what was destined to become the most populous and significant town of the New Mexico/Arizona Territorial era. Las Vegas' historical and current role as a gateway and crossroads was established during this time when it was under the rule of Mexico (1821-46). Settlers from all parts, including Mexican colonists, merchants and traders of western and eastern European descent that arrived via the eastern United States, and others left their imprint on Las Vegas. This territorial legacy can still be seen and felt today, as a unique frontier blending of cultures, traditions, architecture, and personalities converged and evolved into an identity shaped by economics, politics, and a frontier vision.

The stage was set for the permanent settlement of Las Vegas after Mexico gained its independence in 1821 from Spain. While trade and contacts along the Camino Real from Mexico City to Santa Fe continued, the vast distances, political instability in Mexico, as well as aggressive expansion by the United States, all resulted in New Mexico's frontier borders with the United States being opened. The Las Vegas settlement quickly became an important stopping point for *las caravanas* traveling back and forth between Santa Fe and St. Louis, Missouri.

In May 1846, war between the United States and Mexico erupted, and Las Vegas' location rendered it as the first Mexican community in the present southwestern United States to feel the effects. By August 1846, General Stephen Watts Kearney spoke from a building rooftop on the north side of the plaza and claimed possession of New Mexico on behalf of the United States. Trade along the Santa Fe Trail and

the arrival of newcomers from the east, mostly merchants and traders, facilitated annexation of the area by the United States. Several regional forts were established as protective measures, including Fort Union (1850) and Fort Marcy (1846). Their presence stimulated the local economy and resulted in the early economic development of northern New Mexico being catalyzed by federal expenditures to maintain and supply the forts. Transportation and communication improvements ensued. Las Vegas became a main stop for regular stagecoach connections that continued until arrival of the railroad in 1879.

### **Historical Settlement Patterns and Trends in Las Vegas**

Although the physical layout of Las Vegas' historic core can be fairly represented by what current architectural historians classify as nine historic architectural districts, the city's overall character is quite often generalized and separated as the west side and east side, or Old and New Towns. This character began to develop in the latter part of the 19th century and was determined by important historical, political, and technological events.

After the permanent settlement of 1835 along the west bank of the Gallinas, Las Vegas grew to a cluster of single-story adobe homes and shops situated around a centralized plaza. The plaza urban form is based upon the Spanish Laws of the Indies which were, in effect, development guidelines for all of Spain's New World settlements. The plaza and church were located on a rise just above the floodplain, and with linear access to the river, development occurred in long and narrow strips perpendicular to the Gallinas. A main irrigation ditch, or "Acequia Madre," was dug from the Gallinas River to irrigate fields of crops downhill and immediately east of the plaza.

The Santa Fe Trail followed a route through modern-day Las Vegas that traversed approximately west on National and Bridge Streets, through the plaza, then south along South Pacific Street. From 1835 to 1879, the trail became Las Vegas' economic lifeblood, and the adobe town flourished as a result. Along with growth of the original Plaza came the development of what became known as the Distrito de las Escuelas, or "School District," a residential area located south of the plaza along the trail, with traditional adobe houses set close to narrow and winding streets. Today, both areas — the primarily commercial plaza and the residential district along the trail — are well preserved with their traditional structures providing homes and businesses for many Las Vegans. The residential neighborhood south of the plaza has been cited as one of the few surviving examples of what Territorial Las Vegas was like. Distrito de las Escuelas and the Plaza were listed as districts on the National Register of Historic Places in the 1970s and are designated Cultural/Historic Overlay Zones by the city of Las Vegas.

As transportation technology evolved, so did the town's architecture and urban form. The flat-roofed adobes of the plaza were largely abandoned in favor of two and three-story commercial buildings of stone masonry construction, designed in the Victorian and "Railroad Gothic" styles, and adorned with ornate scrollwork at gables, porches and interiors. More importantly, the freestanding, single family house, set back from the street, was introduced, reflecting a suburban and American vision of

the home as a private refuge from an increasingly turbulent world.

In contrast to the narrow and winding street layouts of Old Town, which responded to the agricultural landscape, organic pathways and natural terrain, East Las Vegas streets were wider, more formal, tightly gridded and oriented to existing property boundaries on the east side of the river. And unlike Spanish Colonial land planning concepts where the Plaza and Church were located on choice high ground, the grid model from the Midwest made no special provision for religious or civil structures.

The first east-side grid was laid out in early 1879, in anticipation of the arrival of the railroad later that year, and followed the general orientation of the streets of Old Town in a northwest to southeast direction perpendicular to the river. Although the grid appears uniform at first glance, it is in fact comprised of over a dozen separate plats, each reflecting a different sized field; hence, many blocks vary in width from one to the next. Furthermore, when the railroad entered town later that year, a different and competing street grid at a 30 degree angle was established, along a northeast to southwest direction. In reconciling the two grids, a number of irregular blocks and triangular lots were created along the edge where they met (present-day Grand Avenue).

The differences in development patterns, technology, and architectural design of the east and west sides of the Gallinas resulted in residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods distinct to each area. Because of this complexity, mandating blanket policies and actions as appropriate for all sectors of the community can be problematic. Infrastructure improvements, sanitation, public safety, flood control, and other issues must be considered largely on a neighborhood basis to provide for locational differences in appearance, form, and function.

**Exhibit III-30**  
*Busy Intersection  
of Douglas Avenue  
and 6th Street  
(Crockett Building  
in background  
at right was the  
heart of East Las  
Vegas' downtown  
commercial  
district, ca. 1910)*



*(Photograph courtesy of  
Las Vegas City Museum  
and Rough Riders  
Collection)*

nationally popular architectural styles, such as the Italianate commercial. Today, Bridge Street remains as one of the few remaining examples of an authentic Western boomtown street of the era in New Mexico. The Plaza/Bridge Street District, the Railroad Avenue area, and the commercial district centered on the intersection of Douglas/6th Street (primarily established in the 1890s) continue to comprise the commercial core of Las Vegas in 2010, and all three neighborhoods

Two residential neighborhoods (later designated National Historic Districts) were developed around Lincoln Park and Carnegie Library Park at the turn of the century. Bridge Street, which had been established in the 1880s, became a commercial link between the west and east sides of Las Vegas, and reflected mass-produced materials and



are recognized as national, state, and local historic districts.

Physically, politically and ethnically divided by the Gallinas River, residential segregation evolved as both the Town of West Las Vegas and the City of East Las Vegas flourished. On the west side, wealthy Hispanos and Santa Fe Trail merchants of German and Jewish descent built large, fashionable homes near the Catholic and Presbyterian churches and along Hot Springs Boulevard, South Pacific Street, and South Gonzales Street in close proximity to their businesses on the plaza. More modest dwellings were built in an indigenous style, which combined traditional construction methods and house plans with imported materials, such as tin roofing. This is known as New Mexico Vernacular Architectural Style. The Anglo neighborhoods of the east side were populated largely by newcomers and the second generation of successful local Santa Fe Trail merchants. The areas in close proximity to the railroad tracks became primarily working class neighborhoods, while the hill area north and northwest of Library Park and around Lincoln Park became distinctively middle and upper class neighborhoods.

After the AT & SF Railroad arrived in July 1879, the stage was set for a physically different and culturally divided community: Old Town Las Vegas with its plaza, on the west bank of the Gallinas, reflecting its roots in the Laws of the Indies planning; and New Town Las Vegas, emulating other European influences and memories, with minimal integration of regional history and culture into the new design vernacular.

This contrast between two different traditions and their cultures, and the friction and conflict that came with it, also brought to Las Vegas a diversity of styles, political prominence in northern New Mexico, a distinctive hybrid architecture,

and a unique heritage that still gives the town a special sense of place unlike any other community in New Mexico.

**Exhibit III-31**  
New Town



### **The Railroad Boomtown Era**

The arrival of the railroad on July 4, 1879 signaled one of the most significant events in the history of Las Vegas in terms of its social, economic, and physical impact. The Santa Fe Railroad chose to locate the new tracks approximately one mile east of the existing plaza, thus catalyzing the development of New Town on the east side of the Gallinas. Las Vegas was not the only New Mexico community in this era whose physical development (and social relationships) were orchestrated by the location of rail lines – Albuquerque, Belen,

Socorro, and Las Cruces were also divided into new towns/old towns that resulted in fierce intra-settlement rivalries. A nine-stall roundhouse was constructed in 1880, and businesses hastened to set up shop near the tracks along the street which was to become Railroad Avenue and the Railroad Avenue Historic District. An influx of eastern products and influences arrived, altering social, economic and political lifestyles as well as diversifying the ethnic makeup of the local population.

The railroad heralded another divisive element in the community -the media - which was reflected in the two newspapers of the day. The Las Vegas Daily Gazette and the Las Vegas Daily Optic each had its own political agenda, supporters, and markets, and intentionally or not, perpetuated the rifts that had begun to emerge in the two towns. Readership and advertising dollars were predicated on economic and ethnic grounds, fostering a cycle of mistrust and uncertainty that continued well into the 1900s. Overall, the arrival of the railroad inaugurated four decades of prosperity whereby Las Vegas became a commercial hub in eastern and northern New Mexico.

**Exhibit III-32**  
*Bird's Eye View*  
*of Las Vegas*  
1882



New technology quickly was introduced in Las Vegas, such as the telephone and electric street car. The need for capital and civic improvements during this railroad boom period led to discussions among some segments of the community about continuing the consolidation of Old Town and New Town, which occurred for a brief period in the early 1880s. Political pressures, patronage, staunch and opposite positions adopted by the two newspapers, and ethnic prejudices, however, were the main factors that delayed this dialogue from seriously taking place for an additional 75 to 80 years. Thus, the Territorial Legislature's adoption of a new municipal code in 1884 by which all municipalities were "disincorporated" so that they could reincorporate under new rules was approached differently and separately by both sides of Las Vegas. Municipal incorporation of East Las Vegas occurred in 1888 while West Las Vegas incorporated in 1903.

Many railroad mechanics and train crews made Las Vegas their home. The Casteñeda

Hotel operated by the AT&SF railroad promoted the Fred Harvey tradition of superb food and efficient service for its passengers. At the terminus of the spur rail line to the north was the Montezuma Hotel and Hot Springs resort catering to a diverse and affluent clientele. Starting as the Adobe Hotel in 1862 (previously an Army Hospital), the Montezuma resort was truly a lavish hotel and grand architectural achievement. However, after surviving several catastrophic fires, it finally closed its doors in 1903.

Upstream from the Montezuma Hotel in the Gallinas Canyon, Las Vegas produced and stored ice for the railroad's shipping needs. Las Vegas was a busy town at the turn of the century, with businesses dependent on the railroad congregating along the tracks. The Railroad Avenue District included a foundry, lumber and wool scouring mills, mercantile and dry goods stores, saloons, dance halls, grocery, and hardware warehouses. Commercial and professional businesses thrived here as well as in the Plaza District with horse-drawn and later electric streetcars tying the two sides together. Horseback riders, burros and carriages were also a common sight.

Las Vegas experienced unprecedented growth in residential construction from approximately 1898 to 1913. By 1920, Las Vegas' combined population was the second largest in New Mexico (behind Albuquerque) with 8,220 people. Las Vegas' prominence in the state was exemplified by several key projects. For example, the New Mexico State Hospital for the Insane was established in 1893. Education came to the forefront when New Mexico Normal University was established in 1893 as a teacher's college (later renamed New Mexico Highlands University), continuing a tradition of educational excellence started by Presbyterian missionaries and the Jesuit schools in the 1860s. A grand opera house built by Charles Tamme in 1886 at 6th Street and Douglas Avenue ushered in outside talent as well as a place for local productions.

Las Vegas closed the 19th Century in a magnificent way, as the city hosted the First Rough Riders Reunion in 1899, celebrating the dramatic military success of the First Volunteer Cavalry in Cuba. Spanish-American war hero Colonel Theodore Roosevelt commanded a tough company of colorful cowboys from Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico and other parts that captured the imagination and patriotism of the nation. New York Governor Roosevelt and three other governors hosted a gala reunion that drew over 10,000 people to Las Vegas in late June. The annual Rough Rider Reunions were often hosted in Las Vegas until the 1960s.

### **Early 20th Century Las Vegas**

As many new rail lines began to crisscross the plains after 1880, the importance of Las Vegas as a trading center was reduced and in the ensuing years, building construction dwindled. In 1905, the Belen cutoff line of the AT&SF was constructed. This rail line went directly from Clovis to Belen, completely bypassing Las Vegas. By 1910, commercial businesses in New Town were firmly established. This area became the third commercial district of Douglas/6th Street. A few public buildings and residential homes continued to be built into the 1920s. Examples include the Carnegie Public Library (1903), the Herman Ilfeld House (1902-

08), the Romero Building (1919), Ilfeld Auditorium (1914-21) and the 34-stall Roundhouse (1917).

Statehood finally was achieved in 1912, and Las Vegas remained the county seat for what was briefly known as Jefferson County. Because Las Vegas hosted yearly encampments for the National Guard, the Chamber of Commerce underwrote the purchase of 668 acres in 1920 which became a permanent site known as Camp Maximiliano Luna with 38 buildings constructed from 1924-42. The federal Public Works Administration (WPA) built Kings Stadium for the Calvary's training and exhibition with supporting funds from the townspeople. With the onset of World War II, Camp Luna served as a training installation with 500 instructors and housed 3,500 people for the Army Air Force Ferry Command.

Las Vegas enjoyed regional prominence during the statehood era, as it attracted early silent film production companies such as Romaine Fielding's troupe in 1913 and later matinee idol Tom Mix in 1915-16. The spectacular Cowboys Reunion rodeos were organized by local ranchers in 1915, and drew large crowds to the city every summer for nearly 50 years.

The Great Depression of 1930, the rise of automobiles and trucking industries, and the more economical and easily maintained diesel railroad engine, were, in some ways, setbacks that adversely affected Las Vegas. As agriculture prices became depressed, four of the city's six banks went bankrupt. While other areas of New Mexico continued to grow after the Great Depression, Las Vegas' old neighborhoods and commercial districts remained relatively unchanged.

### **Las Vegas in the Post-War Years**

The Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II marked critical turning points for Las Vegas' transition from a mercantile economy to an institutional- and service-based community. The preeminence of railroad shipping and transportation that had nourished Las Vegas for decades was itself becoming a victim of the new technology of automobiles.

For many Las Vegans, World War II was a catalytic experience of mixed blessings. The war offered an economic alternative for the poverty of the Depression, but local servicemen encountered discrimination for their native Spanish language and racial heritage. Armed service offered many Las Vegans the opportunity to experience foreign cultures (albeit under challenging circumstances), and their sense of American patriotism was enhanced. The so-called "Greatest Generation" returned back home with hardened determination to earn an education, start families, contribute to their communities and become civic leaders. An example of this dedicated veteran was Junio Lopez, who grew up in "Old Town," fought in World War II and returned home to become Mayor of West Las Vegas in 1958.

World War II was a boon to the Las Vegas economy largely due to the hyper military training activity at Camp Luna. Named for Captain Maximiliano Luna, a valiant Rough Rider killed in action in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, Camp Luna was greatly expanded by the federal government to house the nearly

2100 enlisted men of the Army Air Corps Ferrying Command. Many locals fondly remember the World War II years in Las Vegas as lively and exciting. Bridge Street and the Plaza teemed at night and on weekends with night clubs, restaurants, and movie theaters to entertain the GI's. The remodeling of the Kiva Theater on Bridge Street in 1939 in art deco style was prescient.

After the war, however, a new economic reality set in. For an entire generation of veterans raised in northeastern New Mexico, in small villages, ranches and towns such as Mora, Trujillo, Wagon Mound, Springer and Las Vegas, the traditional cultural pathway of agrarian work yielded to professional ambitions of careers in education, small business, law or politics. Others simply relocated to the emerging Western metro centers in Denver, Albuquerque, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

Once thriving communities along the Pecos River watershed in western San Miguel County, such as Villanueva, Ribera, and San Jose, along with several villages along the "Llano Estacado" on the eastern Canadian River watershed, including Trementina and La Garita, faded away in the 1950s. Similar outmigration in nearby Mora and Guadalupe Counties slowly ravaged Las Vegas' retail trade dominance. The construction of Winrock Center, New Mexico's first regional shopping center in Albuquerque in the early 1960s, heralded a new shopping and entertainment paradigm.

The G.I. Bill enabled veterans to pursue degrees in higher education; for many native New Mexicans, this was an extraordinary opportunity. New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) thrived during the 1950s and 1960s, offering quality programs in education, arts and sciences. Proud of its reputation as a teacher's college, NMHU trained many educators who would pursue distinguished careers throughout New Mexico school systems. College educated veterans stressed educational advancement as a primary virtue to their children and students.

As in small and large towns across America, the post-war years in Las Vegas were characterized by conformity to the "American Dream" and also the compelling desire for homes and families. Suburban growth in Las Vegas was expressed in subdivisions established north of Mills Avenue, and straddled by 8th Street and 7th Street "extensions."

New housing developments along Dalbey Drive, Lee Drive and Highland Drive anticipated a wave of suburban development in "north new town" that continues to this day. By the 1970s, a new elementary school at Legion Park and Memorial Middle School were built to serve the grade school population.

After 1945, the health care industry in Las Vegas was enhanced by the establishment of the state-operated Meadows Home for the Aged in 1947. The facility was created as an adjunct to the New Mexico State Hospital for the Insane, now known as the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute (NMBHI). Today the Meadows Home for the Aged has been expanded to four specialized facilities for long-term care, offering 176 licensed beds with services for disabled patients

suffering from acute dementia and other illnesses. The New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute, the city's largest single employer, is a legacy of the Territorial economy, and currently serves about 1,000 admissions per year. The NMBHI is the state's only fully licensed psychiatric care facility.

The dynamic popularity and affordability of automobiles after World War II helped fuel the emerging "middle class" tourism industry lifestyle in the United States. The popularity of the nation's first transcontinental highway, Route 66, encouraged President Eisenhower to build the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s.

Route 66 bypassed Las Vegas, passing through Santa Rosa instead, but the fervor for highway expansions led to the improvement of US HWY 85, a north/south interstate corridor linking El Paso, Albuquerque, Denver and beyond. In the early 1950s, Grand Avenue in Las Vegas was expanded to four lanes, and new businesses such as the Hillcrest Restaurant, the La Loma Motel, the 85 Coffee Shop, and the A&W Root Beer drive-in catered to the "motel and car-hop" generation.

Local community boosters recognized the need for "tourist attractions" to serve the motoring public. For Las Vegas, this meant capitalizing on the area's historic, cultural, and scenic resources. For the first time, historic preservation as an economic development strategy for Las Vegas was prominent.

Leading the effort was retired Colonel James W. Arrott, a local Sapello rancher whose property bordered upon the ghostly remains of Fort Union. Once the U.S. Army's major supply depot on the Santa Fe Trail, Ft. Union was closed in 1891, and its adobe walls were slowly melting away. The evocative ruins of crumbling chimney stacks, officer's houses, and formal parade grounds recalled the sagas of western migration and the untamed Southwestern frontier. For Arrott and others, Ft. Union was a landmark in the nation's compelling story of Manifest Destiny.

Fort Union was opened to the public as a National Monument in the National Park Service in 1954. By 1959, a Visitors' Center was built at the historic fort. Within another decade, Pecos National Monument, at the ruins of the deserted Pecos Pueblo and Mission complex just 40 miles north and west of Las Vegas, was established in 1965.

As major federal preservation and visitors' interpretation projects, both Fort Union and Pecos National Monuments contributed significantly to cultural and heritage tourism potential of Las Vegas and San Miguel County. These efforts complemented other private initiatives in the Las Vegas vicinity that would also enhance development capacity and conservation. Among these, the purchase of several historic ranch properties in the decades after the war, including the Vicente Romero ranch and homestead in La Cueva by Colonel William Salman, later converted to raspberry cultivation by his descendants is significant. Other major ranch acquisitions included the Watrous Ranch in Watrous by the Doolittle family; the Forked Lightning Ranch in Pecos by actress Greer Garson; the Romero Ranch at Romeroville by Mike Koldyke; a youth rehabilitation ranch near Ribera

developed by radio personality Don Imus; and a Pecos River estate purchased by actor Val Kilmer.

### **JFK and the Politics of Optimism in Las Vegas**

The dramatic election of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States in November 1960 held a special resonance and promise for New Mexico and Las Vegas. As the first Catholic President, Kennedy captured the imagination, support and loyalty of many Hispanic families in northern New Mexico. The liberal politics of his successor Lyndon B. Johnson ushered in an era of profound change in America. In Las Vegas, the 1960s also reflected a transformation of the community from politically divided towns with two governments in 1960 to one consolidated city in 1970.

In symbolic harmony with the optimistic Kennedy spirit, the town of West Las Vegas was named an “All American City” in 1960 under the leadership of Mayor Junio Lopez. The warm glow of achievement, however, would be short-lived, as the Old Town business district was already in decline. The closing of the Jayval Parachute manufacturing company in the former Rosenwald mercantile building on the south Plaza in the early 1970s devastated the Old Town economy.

Las Vegas community boosters continued their efforts to promote and sustain the local economy. The Las Vegas City Museum and Rough Riders collection was founded in 1965 with donations of Rough Riders memorabilia by 20 veterans. These donations marked the ultimate passage of time and dwindling ranks of Rough Riders. What began as a nationally celebrated reunion of Rough Riders in 1899 had diminished to the fading parades on Douglas Avenue of a handful of the last survivors in the 1960s.

The proud cowboy heritage of Las Vegas had seen better days as well. The Cowboys Reunion rodeos and parades which began in 1915, organized by local rancher Alvin Naylor and his friends, were once among the most popular and celebrated professional rodeos in the West. A large, wooden rodeo arena built on the northern edge of town on the Storrie Lake highway, now the site of Wal-Mart department store at 7th Street and Legion Drive, was the site of many great summer spectacles. By 1967, the old rodeo arena stood empty and silent. The facility was torn down a few years later, and a new San Miguel County fairgrounds facility emerged on the Montezuma highway north of Camp Luna.

Besides the Kennedy election, 1960 was literally a watershed year for the region as Storrie Lake State Park was established. Over the past half-century, Storrie Lake has remained popular as an essential recreational attraction, featuring picnic and camping facilities, overnight camping, boating and fishing, and more recently as a wind sailing hot spot. Severe droughts in northeastern New Mexico after 2000 have created tensions between the thirsty city of Las Vegas and the agricultural water users (and water rights owners) of the Storrie Lake Irrigation Project.

Another popular recreational site at McAllister Lake, a small pond on the eastern bluff overlooking the community (near KFUN hill), was established as a National

Wildlife Preserve in 1965. McAllister Lake attracted loyal “birders” and fishermen intent on enjoying hawks, falcons and even bald eagles as well as bountiful fishing. Today, McAllister Lake is closed due to lack of water caused by bureaucratic snafus and lack of oversight.

By the close of the 1960s, the tempestuous energy of the decade found expression in Las Vegas. In 1967, the town of West Las Vegas and the city of East Las Vegas had finally agreed to create a joint commission to initiate the consolidation of two governments into one. District Judge Joe Angel chaired the commission. In 1968, voters of both commissions approved the referendum in favor of one unified government. In March 1970, Las Vegas residents voted overwhelmingly to consolidate the East and West government entities to become the city of Las Vegas. Through this referendum, the citizenry made it clear that old divisions were unnecessary and counterproductive. A new era of a unified Las Vegas was realized, and it was essential in order to meet the needs of the community.

In 1970, Las Vegas had its first comprehensive plan prepared under a Housing and Urban Development Grant. The amount of citizen participation is unknown. The impetus behind creation of the plan was the consolidation of the two communities, and it was designed to steer the city’s growth through 1990. It forecast a total population of 21,000 by 1990, and envisioned a western road (along the Crestón) that would connect with a larger northern loop road. Since the plan was prepared during the time of urban renewal nationwide, it also recommended that the area immediately north of the plaza be razed for a large civic/convention center. Implementation of the plan was never achieved, probably because it came too close after consolidation, and the community was still adjusting to its new status as a single governmental entity.

The year 1967 also witnessed the return of Hollywood film production to Las Vegas in the counter-culture movie “Easy Rider,” starring Peter Fonda, Jack Nicholson and Dennis Hopper. The motorcycles, long hair, sideburns and leather jackets of the star actors caused a sensation in the community and heralded the beginning of a long and sustained tradition of film-making, utilizing the picturesque quality of many Las Vegas streets and sites.

Film production accelerated after Governor Bill Richardson’s administration enacted substantial tax credits and other incentives after 2002. Among the many productions filmed locally, including “Red Dawn,” “Convoy,” the “Ballad of Gregorio Cortez,” and “The Hi-Lo Country,” the 2007-08 production of “No Country for Old Men,” produced by the Coen Brothers and based on a novel by Santa Fe author Cormac McCarthy, captured the Best Picture Oscar at the Motion Picture Academy Awards.

Las Vegas has recently formed a film commission and enacted local policies for film companies working within the city limits, and especially within commercial districts and residential neighborhoods.

The 1960s closed on a euphoric high as the New Mexico Highlands University



football and baseball programs achieved national recognition. Under the leadership of football coach John Levra, NMHU's dominant Cowboys filled Perkins Stadium with overflowing fans. In turn, NMHU attracted record student enrollments, and a new "high-rise" dormitory building was built to accommodate the swelling campus population. At nine stories tall, the brick and concrete high-rise El Conquistador Hall was northern New Mexico's tallest building and dominated the Las Vegas skyline for nearly 40 years, until it was torn down because of functional obsolescence in 2008.

### **Stormy Weather in the 1970s**

The national atmosphere of scandal and conflict reflected by the contentious presidency of Richard M. Nixon also saw reverberations in Las Vegas. The civil rights movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King and Cesar Chavez in the late 1960s found fertile ground in San Miguel County, as the majority population of Hispanos reacted to perceived dominance of Anglo-American power and money.

The retirement of Dr. Thomas C. Donnelly as President of NMHU in 1970 provided an opportunity for dissent for the rising tide of Chicano student activists. Students, faculty, and community members protested the appointment of a "Midwesterner" to replace Donnelly, touching off a firestorm of ethnic and political turmoil in Las Vegas in 1970-71 that also affected the East Las Vegas school board.

In 1971, Dr. Frank Angel was chosen as the new President of NMHU. His presidency was hailed as a landmark hiring of a Latino as President of an American university. Angel was succeeded in 1975 by Dr. John Aragon.

The campus unrest at Highlands had taken a toll, as student enrollment declined from a high point of 2,500 students in 1970 to 1,800 in 1975. The protests of the Chicano movement had lasting effects in Las Vegas, however, as faculty and administrative positions at NMHU, at the local school systems and Luna TVI, and other institutional jobs were filled by Hispanos over ensuing years and decades.

The heightened tension in Las Vegas in the early 1970s was intensified by the consolidation of the two municipalities. The election of Fidel "Chief" Gonzales as first mayor of the united city helped knit the communities together.

The city's historic preservation efforts emerged from this period, as Rheua Pearce, a retired humanitarian living in a restored adobe home on South Pacific Street, championed the protection of Las Vegas' considerable architectural and historic assets. The late 1970s witnessed a reawakening and rediscovery of Las Vegas' architectural treasures. Historic preservation groups, along with the city's government and the public, have worked toward the recognition of the importance of Las Vegas history through inventorying 918 of the community's historic homes, commercial establishments and public buildings, many of which have been placed on the national or state register of historic places or in historic districts.

The city of Las Vegas first adopted a cultural historic ordinance in 1972 that provided protection and assistance for approximately one-third of those historic

properties through the creation of a city Design Review Board (DRB). State and federal funds provided through the Certified Local Government program, the state Historic Preservation Division, and Main Street support from the National Trust for Historic Preservation have promoted preservation activities in residential and commercial neighborhoods. The city's preservation program has heightened interest in shopping in Las Vegas, offered expertise for rehabilitation of historic buildings, and helped to research and maintain local historical activities. This interest in Las Vegas' architectural treasures has also brought new residents and a demand for residential property, as well as local reinvestment in historic properties owned by existing residents, all contributing factors to the rise of property values.

By 1975, the long-envisioned national Interstate Highway system begun by President Eisenhower was nearing substantial completion. A bypass route for Interstate 25 had been planned on the eastern edge of Las Vegas, along a low-lying drainage easement that skirted the foot of "KFUN" hill. The proposed route would also eliminate a poor "barrio" of largely Hispano residents centered along Commerce Street. The new alignment of the I-25 bypass displaced entire neighborhoods of Las Vegas, many of whom relocated to new "affordable" housing units developed north of Dalbey and Lee Drives, thus adding to the general direction of "suburban" growth in Las Vegas northwards towards Storrie Lake.

Health care needs in Las Vegas had long been served by the Las Vegas Hospital at 8th Street and Friedman Avenue. Senior health services, traditionally provided by extended families (especially in Hispanic cultures) began to expand during this time. The Candido Maestas family had operated a nursing home in Las Vegas since 1957. In 1968, the Maestas family secured the issue of municipal revenue bonds to extend their facility to 100 beds and renamed their facility Southwestern Senior Care Center.

In 1973, the Las Vegas Hospital suffered a financial crisis and nearly closed its doors. The community rallied behind the hospital, and just a few years later in 1981, the Las Vegas Hospital was expanded with a \$4 million investment and became Northeastern Regional Hospital serving seven counties. In 1980, Las Vegas boasted 18 physicians and five dentists.

Diagonally across the street from the Las Vegas Hospital, the former St. Anthony's Sanitarium was housed in an impressive red brick building. The building had been modified over time and was transformed for continued community service as the Northern New Mexico Rehabilitation Center for physical therapy and specialized medical care.

In the 1970s, two of Las Vegas' largest institutions and employers located along the Montezuma Highway, Camp Luna and the Montezuma Hotel, were in transition to new uses. The housing and barracks facilities at Camp Luna had become desolate and ghostly rows of decaying structures. Nearby, the impressive outdoor King's Stadium, built in 1935 by the Public Works Administration (WPA) to accommodate crowds of up to 1,500 people, also slept.

Under the leadership of State Representative Sam Vigil after 1967, the state legislature passed legislation creating a tri-county vocational institute on the southern end of Camp Luna. The Luna Vocational Technical Institute grew quickly in the 1970s; by 1981 the enrollment was 988 students. The student enrollment at Luna Community College exceeds 2,000 in 2010.

Farther north along the Montezuma highway, the majestic Montezuma Hotel and its substantial grounds, including several hot mineral springs, had offered healing and recreational comforts since the 1860s, when small adobe “huts” built near the springs housed early bathers. After the A.T.&S.F. railroad arrived to Las Vegas in 1879, the railroad quickly built a spur line up to Montezuma and farther into Gallinas Canyon. The A.T.&S.F. constructed several ice ponds in Gallinas Canyon for its refrigerated freight cars, and erected an imposing wooden resort hotel at the mouth of the canyon. After the first Montezuma Hotel burned down in 1882, a “fire-proof” Queen Anne-style hotel was built on the hillside opposite the original. This hotel was ravaged again by fire in 1886 and rebuilt to its current configuration.

Over the decades, the Montezuma Hotel has served several uses, including resort hotel, Baptist College, and a seminary for Mexican priests owned and operated by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe in the 1950s and '60s. In 1972, the seminary was closed and the great property, which included the historic “castle” and several newer dormitory buildings, was abandoned. Legislative proposals in the 1970s to convert the Montezuma into a veteran’s hospital or as a hotel management college proved fruitless.

Dallas real estate developer William “Wid” Slick moved to Las Vegas in 1979-80 with the intention of purchasing the Montezuma Hotel for redevelopment as a resort hotel and vacation home sites. Coincidentally, Los Angeles oil magnate Armand Hammer was scouring the Western United States in search of a campus site for a new United World College, an advanced international high school and college prep school founded by Lord Mountbatten and chaired by England’s Prince Charles. By 1981, Hammer had purchased the Montezuma and began the process of transforming it into a campus accommodating 200 students from over 60 nations.

Since its first graduating class in 1984, the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West has grown and evolved as one of Las Vegas’ and New Mexico’s most prestigious institutions, often hosting international heads of state, notable figures from politics, arts and sciences, and outstanding students and faculty members. The campus has been rehabilitated with several new buildings, athletic fields and walking paths. The AHUWC has also maintained the historic hot springs for public use. In 2000-2003, the magnificent Montezuma Castle itself was rehabilitated at a cost of \$10 million.

### **Old Town Revitalization**

The 1980s dawned on a sunny sky over Las Vegas, as both the Montezuma property and the Plaza Hotel would be rehabilitated. The Slick and Lucero

partnership restored the Plaza Hotel to its former glory in 1982, and a federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) leveraged by the hotel project enabled the city of Las Vegas to undertake a rehabilitation of Plaza Park by 1985. New period streetlights, landscaping, and a new gazebo enhanced Old Town streetscapes.

In 1986, Las Vegas was selected by the Lt. Governor's office as one of five New Mexico communities to undertake a MainStreet downtown revitalization program. Las Vegas has sustained several MainStreet programs during the past quarter century with some notable successes. Several major commercial landmarks, including the Romero Block and the Plaza Antiques (former Tru-Parts Auto Supply), the Veeder buildings, YMCA building, El Fidel Hotel, the Gross Kelly building (PNM), and the Santa Fe Railroad Depot (city of Las Vegas, have been rehabilitated along the downtown corridor. Currently in 2010, Community First Bank is restoring the Crockett Building at 6th Street and Douglas Avenue (former Murphey's Drugs) for its new headquarters.

An innovative real estate partnership called La Plaza Vieja, Ltd. developed by Slick and Associates and five local general partners raised \$2.3 million in 1985-86 and rehabilitated 15 buildings in the Plaza and Bridge Street Historic Districts. La Plaza Vieja provided a catalytic boost to the revitalization of the Old Town commercial district.

Industrial development in the city was greatly enhanced by the construction of a multi-density fiberboard (MDF) plant called Montana de Fibre north of town by the Public Service Company of New Mexico. The plant employed 200 people in its heydays in the 1980s. By 1995, the plant was closed, and the entire building and equipment shipped off to investors in Canada. San Miguel County now owns the site and has been aggressive in marketing the property for new business tenants.

Ten acres of land on the southern edge of town acquired by the city from rancher Dee Bibb provided the basis for the development of the Dee Bibb Industrial Park after 1980. The park has had moderate success in attracting small manufacturers and service companies.

The demise of the fiberboard plant and slow industrial growth in the area emphasize Las Vegas' most glaring weakness in manufacturing capacity and industrial development: water. The city's dependence on rainfall and ground water leaves it susceptible to droughts and inconsistent capacity. Current Mayor Alfonso Ortiz is pursuing a comprehensive water policy of acquiring water rights, exploring negotiations with the Storrie Project, and considering water conservation and recycling of effluent.

By the end of the 1980s and the Ronald Reagan era, Las Vegas was rocked by a financial scandal at First Federal Savings and Loan Association. Insider dealing and corruption caused the closure of First Federal in 1991, leaving the Bank of Las Vegas, the Bank of Northern New Mexico (now Wells Fargo), and First National Bank (now Community First Bank) to service the region.

## **Adjusting to a Global Economy**

After 1990, the rapid deployment of the Internet and other mass market technologies began to impact Las Vegas and northeastern New Mexico. The most visible retail symbol of global capitalism, Wal-Mart, manifested in Las Vegas after 1995, providing a lift to the city's gross receipts tax collections, but causing negative impacts to several locally owned small businesses.

The most significant business closures after Wal-Mart opened in Las Vegas were in the food and grocery sector. Food markets at Columbia Supermarket on 8th Street and Ludi's grocery on South Pacific Street, both long-standing businesses, were closed in the aftermath of Wal-Mart. Las Vegas' proud tradition of retail marketing and service, and also wholesale distributing pioneered by Charles Ilfeld, had been eclipsed by the "big box" retail revolution in America.

The seeds of banking and financial deregulation encouraged by the Clinton Administration and enacted by Congress after 1996 flourished in northeastern New Mexico. The relatively affordable land and real estate values in San Miguel and Mora Counties attracted retirees and leisure homeowners.

One popular investment destination at Pendaries community near Rociada grew steadily from its founding in the 1970s. An 18-hole golf course surrounded by lots in the pines and luxury cabins lured many new residents to the county.

Subdivisions planned and developed at Mineral Hill and San Geronimo near Romeroville saw growth and new homes in the past 15 years. Leisure and retiree home trends positively impacted population growth in San Miguel County after 1990, while the population of Las Vegas itself slightly declined.

New Mexico Highlands University adapted to evolving technologies by implementing a new emphasis on media technology training championed by President Selimo Rael after 1998. The new media arts program at NMHU has proven popular with students and the community as well. Similar programs and enhanced computer training capacity have been developed at Luna Community College.

The new millennium in Las Vegas embraced the long-awaited and anticipated restoration of the Montezuma "Castle" by the Armand Hammer United World College, a dream which began in 1981 and finally was completed in 2003. The restored Montezuma Castle features the restored magnificent dining hall and ballroom, lobby and reception rooms, guest rooms for visiting dignitaries, conference rooms and classrooms, and student dormitory rooms.

Another major institutional project realized was the construction of a new regional hospital. Built on the northern side of the city with easy access to I-25, Alta Vista Regional Hospital opened its doors in 2003.

The city of Las Vegas was proactive in developing several projects that promoted quality of life in the community in the first decade of the new millennium.

The overgrown Gallinas River corridor between Mills Avenue on the north and Grand Avenue on the south was cleaned and dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1990s, and the city installed walking paths, picnic equipment, benches and exercise stations to enhance the river park's appeal. A major new Abe Montoya Recreation Center featuring a swimming pool and fitness center, located on the northeastern edge of the NMHU golf course, was built by the city in two phases from 2002 to 2004.

As the first decade of 2000 drew to a close, Las Vegas witnessed a flurry of construction projects despite a deep and lingering economic recession that staggered the world. The historic Ilfeld mercantile building on the Plaza, a great sandstone Italianate structure, was rehabilitated in 2008-09 by the Plaza Hotel next door with a new ballroom, retail storefronts and guest rooms. Along with new motels of the Day's Inn, the Holiday Inn Express, the Comfort Inn, and the Best Western Montezuma Inn, the community's lodging capacity was dramatically upgraded after 2001.

The New Mexico Transportation Department is working on a rehabilitation, streetscape, and drainage upgrade to the Grand Avenue highway corridor downtown, which will be completed in 2011. NMHU is building a new 70,000-square-foot student center at the corner of 8th Street and National Avenue to be completed by spring semester 2012.

With the celebration of the Centennial of New Mexico Statehood in 2012, Las Vegas could revel in the outstanding contributions it has made to the evolution of the state and region. The city achieved notable progress in unifying its diverse population and surviving the vicissitudes of wars, economic recessions, droughts, and ethnic conflicts. Most importantly, Las Vegas has protected its major assets of natural resources, architectural landmarks, scenic beauty, "small town" ambience, and talented residents to build a rich future.

The Las Vegas Community Master Plan Update of 2011 seeks to ensure that the proud and distinct history of the community and region is carried through the next 20 years and beyond. As community planning strategies are implemented, it is appropriate to briefly reexamine and take inspiration from the development of Bridge Street during the height of the railroad era. Bridge Street is not just a physical connection between urban districts, nor just a metaphor for unity, but also a cultural and social "bridge" that brings the diverse citizens of Las Vegas together into a proud and unified community where cultural diversity and integrity are constant.

## IV. Land Use Element

*“Land use” is the study and practice of guiding the urban form and development patterns of the community.*

*The land use element presents a broad vision of current and future land use, serves as the basis for land use regulation, and generally integrates all elements of the plan.*

### A. Introduction

The purpose of the land use element is to guide the future pattern of land use in the city and adjacent unincorporated county area over the next 20 years. The land use element presents a broad vision of current and future distribution and character of land uses. The land use element is the “keystone” in the comprehensive master plan. More than any other element, it integrates all of the plan components. Consequently, it should be consistent with and supported by the other elements of the plan.

### B. Existing Conditions

#### Location

Las Vegas is situated at 6,424 feet elevation in the valley of the Gallinas River on the edge of the Eastern Plains near the Sangre de Cristo mountains. Las Vegas is the county seat for San Miguel County. The city is 68 miles (driving distance) east of Santa Fe, 123 miles from Albuquerque, and 108 miles south of Raton. It is the largest city in northeast New Mexico, and serves as a trade and service center for a large geographic area. Las Vegas’ most direct trade area consists of San Miguel, Mora, Guadalupe and Colfax Counties. While located fairly far east, Las Vegas is historically and culturally part of north central New Mexico.

#### Climate

The average annual precipitation at the Las Vegas airport is 16.55” (1941-2002).

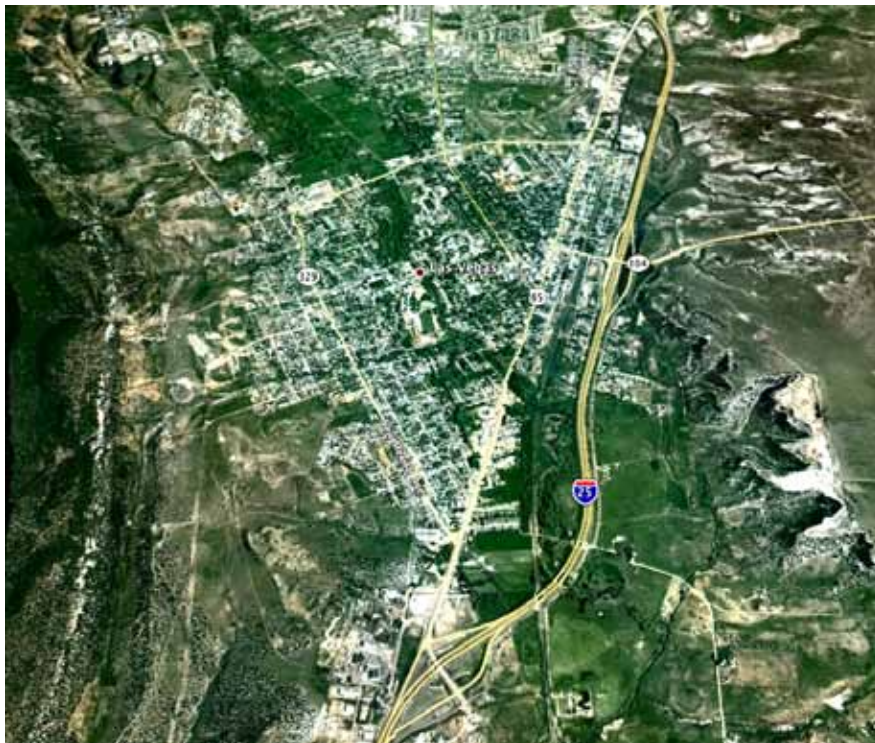
#### Urban Form

The community is generally wedge-shaped. New Mexico Avenue, Hot Springs Boulevard and Grand Avenue form the principal arms of the wedge intersecting at the south and extending north. The Gallinas River runs from northwest to southeast through the center of the community. The historic core of the city consists of fairly compact mixed development that, historically, were the townsites and early subdivisions of the town of Las Vegas (west) and city of Las Vegas (east) prior to the merging of the two municipalities in 1970.

**Exhibit IV-1**

*Aerial Photograph  
of City of Las  
Vegas  
Showing Las Vegas'  
Wedge Shape.*

(Source: Google  
Earth, 2005)



The west side includes the plaza and somewhat irregularly spaced streets forming a grid. Many urban form elements of the west side are consistent with Laws of the Indies. The Laws of the Indies, dated 1573, put forward town planning principles for the founding of new towns throughout the Spanish colonies. The plaza's dimension is approximately 420' by 287' with an irregular shape. Law #113 states that the plaza should be square or rectangular and not less than 300' long and 200' wide. While the orientation of the plaza should be on the cardinal directions, the Las Vegas plaza is laid out to be parallel to the channel of the Gallinas River. Law #114 requires four principal streets setting off from the plaza with interconnected streets inside the overall network. Law #103 describes the size of lots as varying between 4,232 square feet to 17,848 square feet (sf), with no landowner able to purchase more than 1.2 acres. This law encourages a mixture of lot sizes according to ability to build. Subsequent platting resulted in typical west side lots sized 25x125' to 25'x175'. Resulting lot sizes are:

- 3,125 sf to 4,375 sf per lot
- 6,250 sf to 8,750 sf per two lots.

Some properties have been developed as compounds, with as many as five separate houses clustered on a property or on adjoining properties.



**Exhibit IV-2**  
West Side Streets  
and Land Use  
Near the Plaza

(Source: Google  
Earth)



The core east side grid consists of two grid patterns. The main area has rectangular blocks with one axis southwest to northeast. Blocks vary from a full size of approximately 840' by 380' to a half size of 430' by 380'. The New Mexico Highlands University campus is located on a rise above and east of the Gallinas River and central to the community. Another grid extends east of Grand Avenue to the east side of the railroad tracks and towards the Pecos Arroyo with a northwest to southeast axis. The railroad tracks, Pecos Arroyo and I-25 form a series of barriers limiting development spreading further to the east. East side lots are typically 25'x100' to 25'x125'. Resulting lot sizes are:

- 2,500 sf to 3,125 sf per lot
- 5,000 sf to 6,250 sf per two lots

Some properties are deeper, resulting in lots of 8,000 to 9,000 sf.

**Exhibit IV-3**  
East Side Streets  
and Land Use

(Source: Google  
Earth)



Much of the core area of Las Vegas on both the west and east sides meets several criteria for being highly walkable. A convenient walking distance is

one-quarter mile or less. Trips to grocery and other types of stores with large volume merchandise are likely to be longer, typically best served by automobile. Schools and parks are major pedestrian destinations, especially for children. The commercial intersection of Legion and Seventh Streets is within easy walking distance to only a small fraction of a nearby residential neighborhood.

Several major institutions in the community are beyond easy walking distance. While New Mexico Highlands University is notably close-in, the Las Vegas Medical Center (Behavioral Health Institute) and Luna Community College (part of the former Camp Luna) are located in nodes on the west side of Hot Springs Boulevard, north of the core community area. Neither are within easy walking distance from many residences. Further north on Hot Springs Boulevard, at the mouth of the Gallinas River canyon, is the United World College.

A mix of medium size and large lot subdivisions form a discontinuous layout within the wedge area's valley floor to the north of the city. Between the subdivisions is undeveloped land, some irrigated. These newer residential subdivisions, developed since the 1970s, have lot sizes ranging from 6,000 sf to 2 acres. Porkchop Hill is the only significant hill in the middle of the valley floor, located between 7th Street, NM 518 and 8th Street, and north of Porkchop Hill Road. Further to the north and just south of Storrie Lake is a manufactured home subdivision approximately 80 acres in size. Irrigated agriculture forms a privately owned greenbelt proximate to the Gallinas River between Hot Springs Boulevard and approximately 8th Street. This area is outside the city limits.

**Exhibit IV-4**  
*Las Vegas'*  
*Northern Urban/  
Rural Fringe*



I-25 traverses the eastern edge of the community. For most of its route around Las Vegas, the freeway is a distance of 0.1 to 0.25 miles from the closest developed area of the city. Consequently, travelers cannot see the extent of the city from most perspectives along the Interstate. This lack of visibility discourages many travelers from exiting the Interstate for services in the community. However, the separation from traffic diminishes noise and visual impacts on most residents of Las Vegas compared to impacts on most communities in New Mexico.

Three interchanges on I-25 serve the city. The area near the south interchange

includes the Dee Bibbs Industrial Park on the west side and the state's Department of Transportation yard on the east side. The new Holiday Inn Express is north along Grand Avenue, a short distance from the south interchange. The central interchange accesses University Avenue to the center of town and the commercial area along Grand Avenue, just north of the Intermodal Center. With the Pecos Arroyo and hillside constraints, no development is close to this interchange. The north interchange is mainly north and east of the community. The area near this interchange includes a Comfort Inn along Grand Avenue and Alta Vista Regional Hospital on the west side, and the city solid waste transfer station on the east side.

Four vehicular bridges cross the Gallinas River within the city from south to north at Grand Avenue near Alamo Street, Independence Avenue, Bridge/National Street, and Mills Avenue. A pedestrian/bicycle pathway bridge crosses the Gallinas River north of Bridge Street. Bridges and at-grade crossings traverse the railroad tracks at from south to north at I-25 (bridges), County Road 23 (at grade), East University Avenue (bridge to middle I-25 interchange), East National Street (at grade), Olguin Street (at grade), and I-25 (bridges south of the north interchange).

The primary commercial areas of the city are:

- Plaza District, including Bridge Street
- Douglas Street District
- Railroad District
- Mills Street from New Mexico Avenue to 7th Street
- 7th Street between Mills and Legion Streets
- North Grand Avenue (north of Washington Avenue), dispersed, including several motels on large properties

The municipal airport is on a mesa east and north of the city by approximately 4.2 miles.

As noted in the 1997 plan, a location at New Mexico Highlands University has a view of El Crestón, los llanos, Hermit's Peak, Mesa Apache and the Gallinas River. This vista shows the impressive physical setting of the city and the close proximity of natural amenities.

### **Land Status**

Land in the city of Las Vegas and the vicinity is mainly private. The city, county, school district and state own small sites, with no state or federal public lands identified within the city. The closest public lands are the National Wildlife Refuge, southeast of the city by approximately three miles, and Storrie Lake State Park north by approximately three miles. While Las Vegas is a gateway community to the Santa Fe and Carson National Forests to the west and north of the community, the closest national forest boundary is approximately 11 miles away.

### **Existing Land Use**

An inventory of existing land use in the comprehensive master plan update provides a better understanding of use patterns and opportunities for future land use in and around Las Vegas. The inventory includes the city and the extraterritorial

zoning (ETZ) area. The total ETZ area is 50.4 square miles, of which 7.8 square miles are within the city and 42.6 square miles are in the unincorporated area. The table below shows existing land use in both the city and the ETZ area by land use category.

**Exhibit IV-5**  
*Existing Land Use of Las Vegas and the vicinity*

**City of Las Vegas and Extraterritorial Zoning Area Existing Land Use Inventory**

Land Use Category	City of Las Vegas				ETZ Area Outside City Limits		
	Acres	Square Miles	Portion of Total Area	Portion of Developed Area	Acres	Square Miles	Portion of Total Area
Single Family Residential	859	1.3	17.2%	39.8%	999	1.6	3.7%
Mobile Homes - Scattered	176	0.3	3.5%	8.2%	329	0.5	1.2%
Mobile Home Park	70	0.1	1.4%	3.2%	24	0.04	0.1%
Duplexes	51	0.1	1.0%	2.4%	0	0.0	0.0%
Multi-Family Residential	62	0.1	1.2%	2.9%	3	0.004	0.0%
Business	341	0.5	6.8%	15.8%	437	0.7	1.6%
Industrial/Heavy Commercial	41	0.1	0.8%	1.9%	85	0.1	0.3%
Railroad	45	0.1	0.9%	2.1%	0	0.0	0.0%
Public Facilities	161	0.3	3.2%	7.5%	35	0.1	0.1%
Parks	115	0.2	2.3%	5.4%	33	0.1	0.1%
Schools	102	0.2	2.0%	4.7%	0	0.0	0.0%
Higher Education	48	0.1	1.0%	2.2%	125	0.2	0.5%
Churches	16	0.0	0.3%	0.8%	6	0.0	0.0%
Cemeteries	20	0.0	0.4%	0.9%	55	0.1	0.2%
Other	47	0.1	0.9%	2.2%	0	0.0	0.0%
Irrigated Agriculture	64	0.1	1.3%		257	0.4	0.9%
Riparian and Forested Areas	44	0.1	0.9%		212	0.3	0.8%
Rangeland	1,085	1.7	21.7%		14,214	22.2	52.1%
Right-of-Way	976	1.5	19.5%		10,457	16.3	38.3%
Urban Vacant	679	1.1	13.6%		0	0.0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,005</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>		<b>27,270</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Developed Area</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>43.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,131</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>7.8%</b>

**Developed Land**

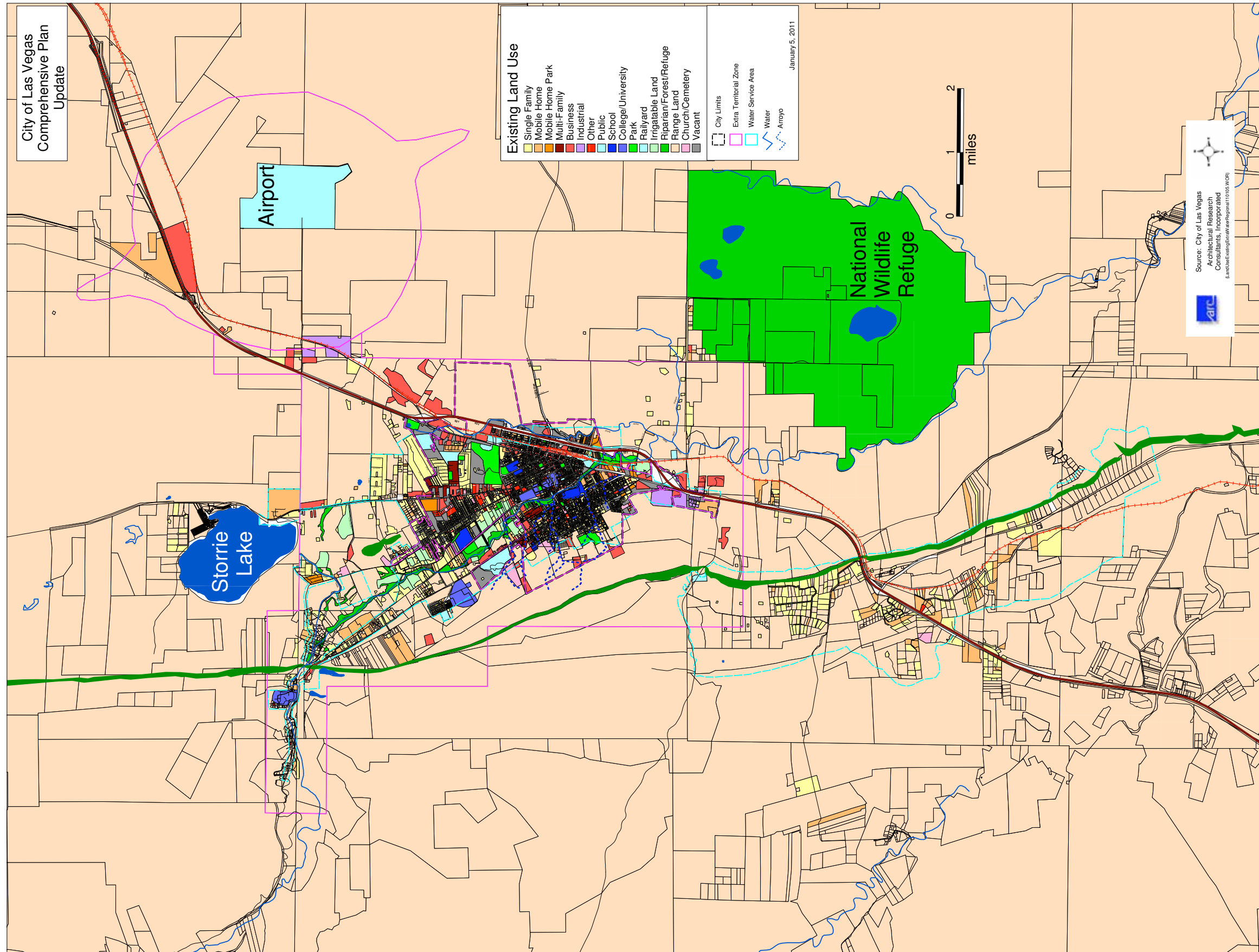
The developed area of Las Vegas contains 2,157 acres, or 43% of the city. Of the developed land in the city, residential lands require the most area, 1,218 acres, or 57%. Single family residential is the largest category, occupying 859 acres, followed by mobile homes and mobile home parks with 246 acres combined.

The second largest category of land use after residential in the city is general business, occupying 341 acres or 16% of the developed area. Industrial/heavy commercial uses occupy a relatively small land area of 41 acres.

Public facilities, including city, county, state and federal offices occupy 161 acres, or 7.5% of the developed area in the city. In addition, there are 115 acres of parks in the city, occupying 5.4% of the developed area. Public schools occupy 102 acres, while higher education takes up 48 acres within the city and another 125 acres in the unincorporated ETZ area.

**Undeveloped Land**

Approximately 57% of the land area is undeveloped for urban uses, and is either vacant, irrigated agriculture, riparian or forested land, rangeland or in rights-of-way. Clearly, not all of this land area is available or suitable for urban uses because of property owners' intentions, drainage, flooding, slopes and other environmental factors, or due to use for streets and other public purposes within rights-of-way. Typical of most older small cities, the land use pattern is not fully built-out. Urban vacant lands are contiguous to the developed portion of the community and not





on its fringes. Of the total city land use, 679 acres or 13.6% are in the urban vacant category.

### ***ETZ Land Use Characteristics***

The ETZ area outside the city limits occupies 27,270 acres, or nearly 43 square miles. Land use in the unincorporated ETZ area includes a large area of over 1,355 acres which is primarily residential. With generally larger lot sizes, the density of the ETZ area with approximately 4,600 residents, is on average 30% inside the city. There are approximately 12 persons per residential acre within the city and 3.4 persons per residential acre outside the city in the ETZ. Multi-family residential in the ETZ occupied only 3 identified acres.

The general business category in the ETZ occupies 437 acres, more than identified within the city. Business land uses in the city are considerably more compact than in the ETZ in terms of structures, employees and activity and taxable gross receipts. Some of the properties identified for business use in the ETZ may be previously disturbed land areas that are no longer operational. Similarly, 85 acres of industrial/heavy commercial area in the ETZ exceed the 41 acres for this same use in the city.

***Exhibit IV-8***  
*Dee Bibb*  
*Industrial Park*



The existing land use inventory is an important land use tool for current and long-range planning. For example, in processing development applications, the planner, advisory bodies and city council can use mapping and land area data as context for their decision-making. Knowledge of the existing land use pattern is also useful for long-range land use, transportation, and facilities planning. Over time, a timed series of existing land use maps will contribute to analysis of trends in land use change. The city should periodically update the existing land use inventory and continue to improve the identification of uses of properties.

## **C. Issues and Opportunities**

### **Vision of Land Use in the Community**

The purpose of the land use vision is to articulate broad values and goals for land use. The vision establishes future aspirations for the community. The goals, objectives and policies should support this vision. The 1997 plan and visioning exercises conducted with the Steering Committee provided information for the following statements. The vision addresses the entire community rather than the downtown area alone, which was the primary emphasis in the 1997 plan, and is the topic of the Downtown Action Plan of 2010.

The City of Las Vegas is a diverse and attractive small city with thriving neighborhoods and a solid economic base.

**Exhibit IV-9**  
*Neighborhood  
Corner Store, Now  
Closed.*



Residential neighborhoods are the basis for the quality of life in the community. The existing housing stock and the scale and form of the neighborhood should be honored in future redevelopment. In-fill development should be encouraged to enhance neighborhoods by bringing in more housing that is attractive, fulfills community housing needs, and

creates efficiencies since infrastructure is nearby or already serves sites. In some areas, in-fill development that replaces dilapidated houses with new houses heals gaps in the physical fabric of the neighborhoods. Infill also demonstrates pride and positive neighborhood change. New neighborhoods are a positive component of community growth and change, expanding housing opportunities. With the city's limited housing opportunities, both new and old residential areas should add homes to fulfill identified housing needs.

The land use pattern supports Las Vegas' rich cultural diversity and integrity — identities, traditions, cultures, and customs. The city promotes restored, renovated and highly maintained historic houses in all older neighborhoods. Neighborhood parks should be within easy walking distance of most residences of the community. Walkability is a highly valued quality of a healthy city, requiring sidewalks on busy streets or off-street trails. The vision of walkability includes multiple services and/or destinations within a comfortable walking radius, such as community/neighborhood, central business district and regional-scale retail services for residents, as well as places of employment, schools and parks.

The major institutions of the community are important to the community and state as a whole, and should continue to be strong. Civic buildings in Las Vegas should be among the tallest, most detailed, and prominently sited. The institutions provide some of the community's best jobs, including for younger people who might otherwise leave. The buildings should incorporate space for some growth, and offer efficiencies in access and shared land use. Along with growth and change, the building architecture and grounds of these institutions should continue to be aesthetically pleasing and proud features of the community.

Las Vegas treasures its natural assets including the Gallinas River and its bosque, views, open land used for agriculture, El Crestón, the Sangre de Cristo mountain range, and los llanos. Las Vegas also has a remarkable urban forest. Aspects of nature and rural lifestyles are close at hand and part of the daily experience. The scenic beauty and mild climate of Las Vegas lead to an emphasis on recreation amenities for active lifestyles including walking, hiking and bicycling and other sports. A system of trails along the Gallinas River to Luna Community College and the World United College, and up to and along El Crestón should be extended and



promoted for multigenerational use.

Steep hillsides, drainages (particularly arroyos) and other flood-prone areas should be restricted from development.

Las Vegas desires to expand its role as a regional economic center. Shopping and entertainment should be conveniently located, attractive, multimodal, scaled to a small city, and landscaped for shade, wind protection and beauty. Regional services should be provided with good accessibility, attractive buildings and grounds, and colocated where there are efficiencies for clients and employees. Las Vegas must be a lively place where residents of the region enjoy doing business, participate in interesting activities, and feel comfortable.

Land use patterns should achieve high levels of energy and water efficiency. Where possible, buildings and neighborhoods should be certified by LEED or recognized through other green building programs.

Las Vegas possesses rare treasures in its historic commercial and government buildings and their historic settings. The use, reuse, and high level of upkeep of these buildings and grounds continue to be of great importance to the community. Las Vegas strives to enhance the appeal of its history to locals as well as to visitors. When original use is obsolete, encourage adaptive reuse of historic buildings to enable buildings originally used for housing, commerce, industry or government to transition to other economically viable and compatible uses.

Las Vegas encourages architecturally distinguished new buildings in addition to beautiful old buildings. The city hosts many old and new gathering places. It promotes typical “sophisticated” college-town amenities: restaurants, bars, arts, entertainment, recreational activities, and colorful people and places. Las Vegas should reestablish from its history the tradition of great hotels that serve as focal points and gathering places for the community. A performing arts theater/events center or convention center should be pursued if a market analysis determines a center to be a viable and complementary improvement to the city. If it is economically viable, then a center should be either near to or part of hotels, or the university. The city would need additional citywide hotel rooms to be prepared to host large events, depending on the scale of the center. The city could locate future “great hotels,” as discussed in the Economic Development Element, along the Gallinas River, taking advantage of the beauty of the area and promoting recreational amenities associated with hotels such as trails and possibly hot spring spas.

Heavy commercial and industrial activities contribute to the economic base and provide jobs, services and materials for locals. This component of the community economy has the potential for growth, while such uses should be located in places **where** there is limited land disturbance, visual impacts, and environmental hazards. Rail spurs at the wood cluster (Medite) industrial park and at the railyard behind the PNM Building allow for loading and unloading of goods using rail transport. Heavy commercial and industrial activities that may be incompatible with established residential uses should be restricted.

Las Vegas should be free of trash and graffiti. Brownfields, or industrial or heavy commercial sites that are no longer used but may be still contaminated, should be cleaned up. Currently disturbed sites should be restored.

Agriculture and ranching are time-honored livelihoods in the vicinity of the city. Conservation easements and acquisitions should be pursued to retain open lands. These uses should be encouraged to continue as long as possible; premature conversion to urban and suburban uses should be discouraged. Environmentally sensitive areas such as floodplains and steep hillsides should remain undeveloped.

City land use regulations should continue to be refined in response to changes in the community, and designed to protect the community's valued assets. Regulatory approaches should be tailored and appropriate to Las Vegas. The city is committed to continuing a fair, comprehensive and efficient development review process. While they must protect community health, safety and welfare, building and fire codes should not discourage restoration and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

The public must be engaged to solicit residents' ideas regarding city planning and land use regulations.

### **Land Area Requirements to Accommodate Future Needs**

The city of Las Vegas should be prepared for growth that will involve infill, redevelopment and expansion of urban development into currently undeveloped areas. An important component of growth management is realistic land area requirements to accommodate future needs. These requirements would guide a reasonable level of growth to appropriate locations, with coordination of acreage to be developed, sizing of infrastructure, extension of public services to existing and new development areas, and timing.

As discussed in the Existing Conditions chapter of this plan, the city's population is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 0.1% to 0.5%. The medium series, considered most likely, shows a population increase of 1,036 persons in the city from 2010 to 2030, or an average of 0.4% growth per year. Within the extraterritorial zoning area, population is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 0.1% to 1.0%. An implication of this growth is the need for additional housing both within existing city limits and in the nearby vicinity. Declining household size, anticipated to continue due to an aging population, and the city's aging housing stock create additional demand for housing. Replacement housing drives more land use change, some of which should occur in existing development areas as infill and redevelopment, while some will be on currently undeveloped lands.

The analysis of land area requirements assumes a distribution of housing types and densities similar to current conditions. Current vacancy rates for housing are assumed to remain the same. ARC projects that household size will continue to drop at a gradual rate. In the city, the household size of 2.48 persons per household in 2000 would drop to 2.28 persons per household in 2030, while the

assumed household size of 2.53 in the unincorporated ETZ would drop to 2.32 persons per household by 2030. As a result of household size change, the area would need an increase of approximately 1,460 housing units to accommodate the medium-range projected population of the entire ETZ area, including the city, by 2030. It is assumed that a portion of the new housing in the total ETZ area will build at rural densities. It is also assumed that 25% of new housing units forecasted for the unincorporated area would develop at the current density in the ETZ of approximately 1.28 dwelling units per acre (an average of just over a 0.75 acre lot, or 34,000 sf lots); the remaining 75% of new housing units would be at urban densities similar to the existing city, since they are likely to be served by city sewer and water.

The following table shows land area requirements by land use category expected by 2030. The medium series of projected growth during the future years requires approximately 625 acres of new developed land area. This requirement is an increase of 14% in developed land area over existing conditions. Approximately half of this land is for residential. The density in the city for single family residential land is approximately 4.4 housing units per acre. Replacement housing and businesses are not quantified in this calculation. Demand for nonresidential land uses is anticipated to increase at rates similar to the increase in projected population. Business and industrial uses are expected to need an additional 90 acres, however, this land requirement would increase if any land-intensive industries develop.

**Exhibit IV-10**  
*Land Use Requirements to Accommodate Projected Growth*

**City of Las Vegas and Extraterritorial Zoning Area Future Land Requirements (Acres)**

Land Use Category	Existing Developed Land		Net New Developed Land			Total Developed Area
	Current City of Las Vegas (2010)	Current ETZ Area Outside City Limits (2010)	Future City of Las Vegas (Medium Range 2030)	Future ETZ - Urban* (Medium Range 2030)	Future ETZ - Rural* (Medium Range 2030)	Future City and ETZ (Medium Range 2030)
Single Family Residential	859	999	70	30	113	2,071
Mobile Homes - Scattered	176	329	20	15	38	673
Mobile Home Park	70	24				
Duplexes	51	0	4	0		55
Multi-Family Residential	62	3	10	0		75
Business	341	437	44	57		879
Industrial/Heavy Commercial	41	85	100	30		256
Railroad	45	0	0	0		45
Public Facilities	161	35	22	5		222
Parks	115	33	16	4		168
Schools	102	0	14	0		116
Higher Education	48	125	7	0		180
Churches	16	6	2	1		26
Cemeteries	20	55	3	7		85
Other	47	0	6	0		54
<b>Developed Area</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>2,131</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>4,905</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,005</b>	<b>27,270</b>				

\*Urban as well as rural land may be located either within the city through infill development or through annexation of area or may be located in the unincorporated ETZ. This would be determined through the annexation policies and process and location as guided by the future land use map.

The high range population projection series would require 700 acres, while the low range series would require 550 acres, based upon the assumptions discussed above regarding density, household size, and need for nonresidential land uses in proportion to population.

A substantial amount of new development should be located on land that is currently urban vacant land, consistent with the land use goals and policies.

### ***Residential Development***

The city wishes to promote infill housing by providing both incentives and encouragement. The city can allow higher density development in selected urban areas. Las Vegas should consider incentives such as reducing permit fees, reducing parking requirements, and infrastructure improvements serving areas with vacant lots that can be infilled with water and sewer stub-outs, streets, and sidewalks. The city can also make available some city-owned land that may be suitable for residential development. The area west of Rodriguez Park is a leading candidate area for new residential development. A plan for this area must address the Pajarito Arroyo, on-site stormwater retention, supply of water, and determination of which recreational uses should remain on the site prior to development activities.

### **Downtown Action Plan – Land Use Recommendations**

The Las Vegas Downtown Action Plan, adopted in 2010, provides guidance on land use in the historic commercial areas of the city. Following is a summary of land use recommendations in the plan. For further details, consult the Downtown Action Plan.

- Develop gateways to downtown
  - East gateway to downtown at the intersection of Grand Boulevard and University Avenue
  - West gateway to the downtown at the intersection of W. National Avenue and New Mexico Avenue
- Build Valencia Square in the parking area north of Bridge Street (a catalytic project). Valencia Square would also be an ideal location for the Farmers Market to sell local growers' produce.
- Promote entertainment and retail uses missing from the current set of land uses downtown that, based on a market feasibility analysis, have a promising market.
- Leverage new redevelopment programs in the Arts and Cultural District through a Business Improvement District, Tax Increment Development District, and Metropolitan Redevelopment District and/or a community land trust.
- Conduct more regularly markets, festivals and events in the downtown.
- Develop identified opportunity sites.
- Promote downtown housing, including artist live/work studios and housing for students, faculty, and seniors.
- Provide a building craft incubator with a focus on historic restoration and rehabilitation.
- Adopt a vacant building ordinance to enhance inspection and enforcement.
- Extend River Park to the south.

The Comprehensive Master Plan supports these recommendations and incorporates them by reference.

## **Commercial Areas and Centers**

Besides the historic downtown of Las Vegas, more recent development of major commercial corridors is on 7th Street, Mills Avenue and Grand Avenue. Developed during the last 50 years, these areas are primarily auto-oriented, linear, and discontinuous. They typically have large parking lots in the front and are difficult to access by foot or bicycle. While this development pattern is largely functional today to accommodate local and regional users, improvements to this urban form should be made to broaden accessibility to these areas and bring its character more into keeping with the small-city scale of Las Vegas. Complete streets concepts. Design guidelines or standards for retrofitting and filling in strip retail development into centers and/or into a commercial corridor that is more accessible by car, foot or bicycle, aesthetically linked and limited in distance.

Centers should promote a mix of uses, interrelationships among uses, pedestrian trips, shared parking, pedestrian-scale architecture, slowing of traffic, transit and bicycling modes of transportation, gathering places, lighting, pavement texture and trees.

The city should designate new commercial development centers based on convenience of access to neighborhoods and proximity to community facilities. The location of new or extended utilities should guide growth to the appropriate areas where centers have been designated. Candidate centers include:

- Downtown
  - The Plaza, Douglas and Railroad Districts of Downtown constitute the premiere center for the agglomeration of businesses, banks, offices and institutions, with nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Mills Avenue and 7th Street
- Legion Drive and 7th Street
- Mills Avenue and Hot Springs Boulevard
- Grand and South Pacific (proximity).

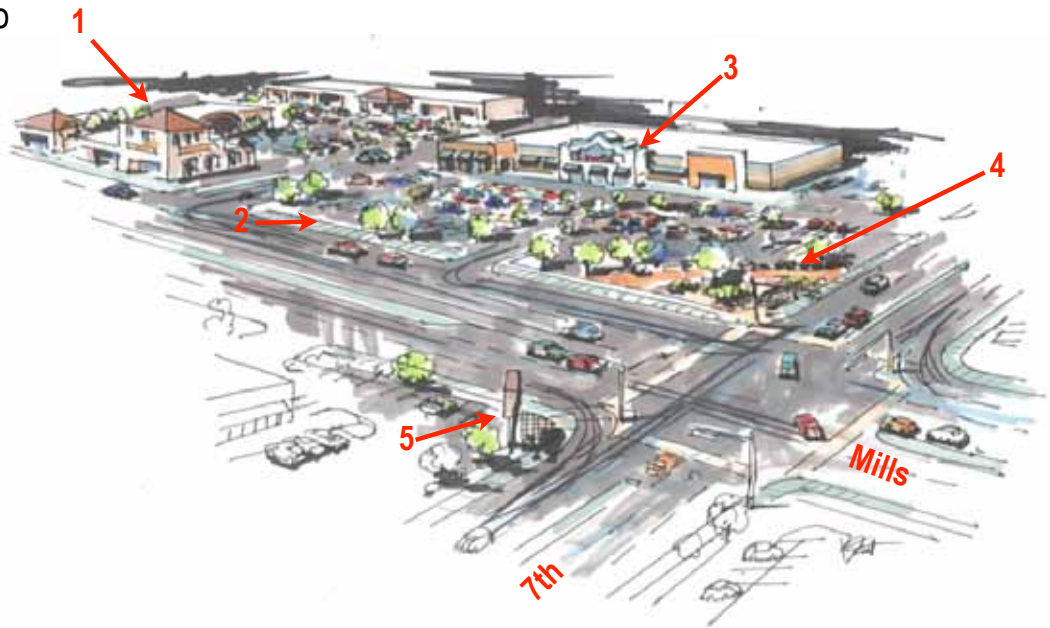
### ***Commercial Center Intersection, Streetscape, and New Development***

The visualization below shows the potential for the key commercial intersection of Mills Avenue and 7th Street. Features that would transform the existing commercial development and integrate new development into a more functional place include the following. These features are generally appropriate in other commercial centers, as well.

- Crosswalks with safe pedestrian space, dedicated turn lanes, and as two lanes of through traffic in both directions (see sidewalk detail in the next illustration)
- Community reader board announcing community or school events, such as tournaments at the sports complex further west on Mills Avenue
- Pocket park on corner and street trees
- Enhanced Mills Avenue sidewalk safe and inviting for students from nearby Robertson High School
- Additional front facade windows, doors, and portales or awnings for the existing grocery store, to make for a more lively and comfortable pedestrian environment
- Addition of a new commercial building east of the existing grocery. The entrance street serves both the new building/plaza and the existing grocery

**Exhibit IV-11**  
Commercial  
Center  
Visualization

- 1 New commercial building pulled up to front property line, shared access and parking
- 2 Sidewalk safe for high school students
- 3 Pedestrian scale front facade renovation
- 4 Pocket park on corner, street trees
- 5 Community reader board



store. A customer could park in either parking lot and walk to either store. The main building is located closer to the front property line to have additional street appeal and help enclose the street. Office uses can be accommodated on the second floor. Residential could be located in the rear building of the complex.

- Utility lines are underground.

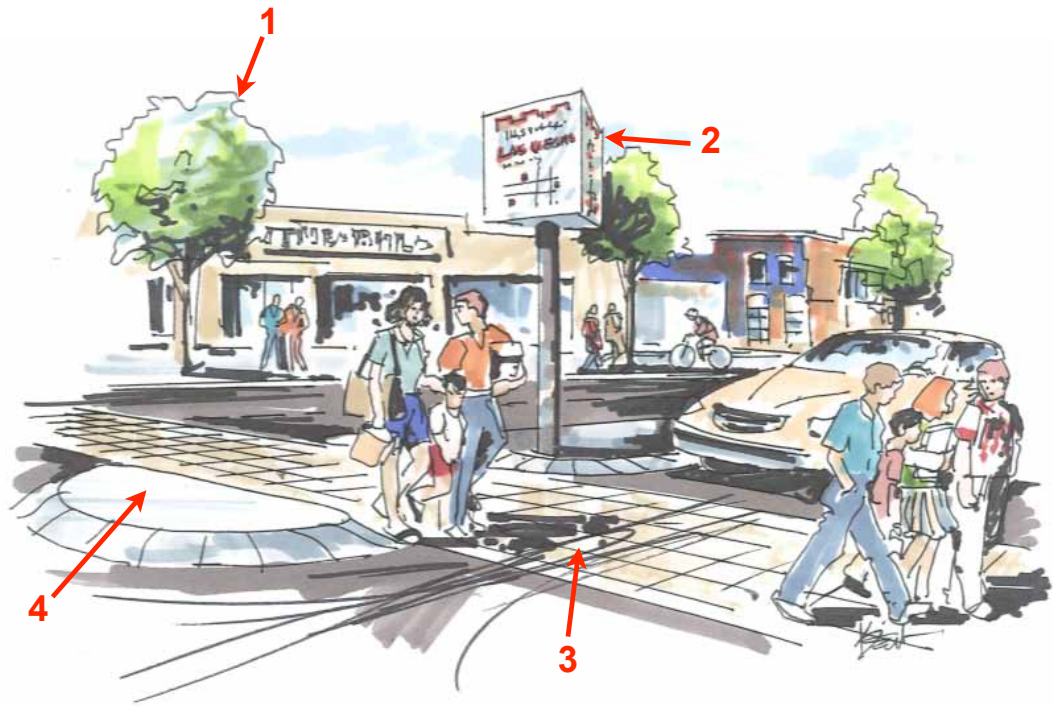
**Commercial Center Intersection**

The illustration below shows a new commercial center intersection that would promote pedestrian use, by including these features:

- Intersection with stamped concrete or paver crosswalk
- Comfortable distance across street for family and school children to stroll
- Safe pedestrian space
- Median with hardscape texture and without landscaping to be maintained
- Signage to orient visitors to main attractions in city and area

**Exhibit IV-12**  
Commercial  
Center Intersection  
Visualization

- 1 Street trees
- 2 Wayfinding signage
- 3 Intersection with stamped concrete or paver crosswalk
- 4 Median with textured hardscape



**Historic Structures and Historic Districts**

The city of Las Vegas possesses an especially rich and important inventory of historic resources. A number of plans and studies have amplified the value of historic structures and sites, including their contribution to the local economy, the community’s historic and cultural identity, and overall quality of life. According to the state of New Mexico’s publication, *New Mexico’s Rich Cultural Heritage, Listed State and National Register Properties* (December 20, 2007), the city has 109 buildings and sites, and five districts listed on either the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties or National Register of Historic Places. Listing of structures and districts on these registers is prestigious and allows for certain tax breaks, grants and loans, but it does not protect the buildings from alterations, additions or demolition.

Nine historic districts and several designated historic landmarks are designated through the city’s Cultural Historic Districts Ordinance. For city historic designations, the city reviews proposed alterations, additions, new construction and demolition within the district that affect designated individual sites. The city’s districts are substantially smaller than the national register’s historic districts. Many of the identified historic buildings in the city are not subject to the city’s cultural historic (CH) overlay zoning.

Preservation of historic resources is an ongoing, high priority of the city. There are concerns that the inventory of historic structures is shrinking due to poor

maintenance, vacancy, economic hardships of property owners unable to maintain such buildings, vandalism, and sometimes intentional destruction. While the city desires to save historic buildings, some of the old structures may not have structural or historic integrity, or owners who are financially capable of preserving these buildings. Ultimately, the property owners are responsible for their historic structures and the city can only encourage, promote, and provide incentives to enhance or find appropriate uses for privately owned historic buildings. Many historic buildings are publicly owned; and governmental agencies are encouraged to save and use their historic buildings.

The city should assess conditions of historic structures and map them through geographic information system (GIS) technology to correlate their status with respect to zoning, infrastructure, and improvements (see Exhibit IV-19). Conduct condition assessments annually or every two years and note changes such as buildings that have been restored or renovated, demolished or vacated, or that are threatened. If an important historic building is threatened, then the city should work with the state historic preservation division, MainStreet de Las Vegas when appropriate, and any private foundations on strategies to save such buildings. Under certain circumstances, the city may be able to acquire historic buildings through eminent domain.

The city should consider updating the Cultural Historic Districts Ordinance to clarify standards and procedures for review. Overall, the ordinance provides excellent direction. Review for clarity and detail procedural provisions including applicability, demolition review criteria and findings of the Design Review Board. Update historic guidelines periodically to incorporate any new or reconsidered approaches to recommended practices in historic preservation. In the future, launch expansion of historic districts, new districts and additional designated landmarks. The recommended assessment of buildings should provide guidance to any strategy to enlarge CH zoning overlay districts. The city should also consider developing an historic preservation element to address in a single document more detail about the conditions, goals and strategies to preserve historic buildings and landscapes.





## Growth of Major Institutions

**Exhibit IV-13**  
New Mexico  
Center for  
Behavioral Health

(Source:  
GoogleEarth, 2005  
imagery)



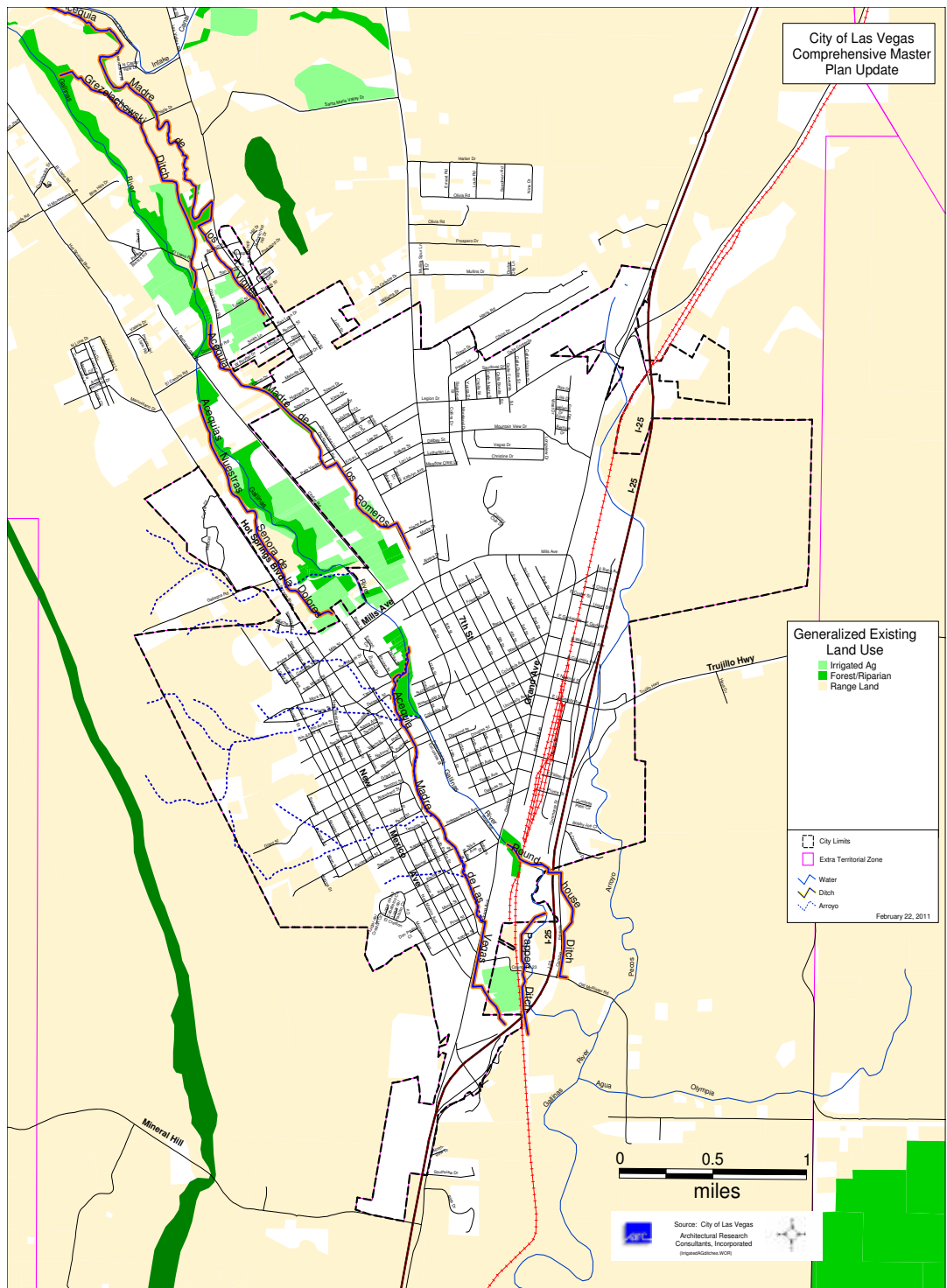
The major institutions of the community, including the Behavioral Health Center, colleges, school districts, hospital, and city and county governments are major employers and contribute substantially to community pride and identity. Given prominence of these institutions in the community, the city is highly interested in the continued success of their land use and desires to proactively address their needs. Collaborative planning, shared use of facilities, possible land trades, and coordination in economic development are some of

the activities that the city strives to work on together with the institutions. The city also wants to assure that there are no undue impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, traffic generation or circulation, or drainage. Since city land use regulations are arguably preempted by the powers of the state and the state does its own planning, collaboration and voluntary reviews are particularly critical.

## Open Lands and Acequias/Ditches

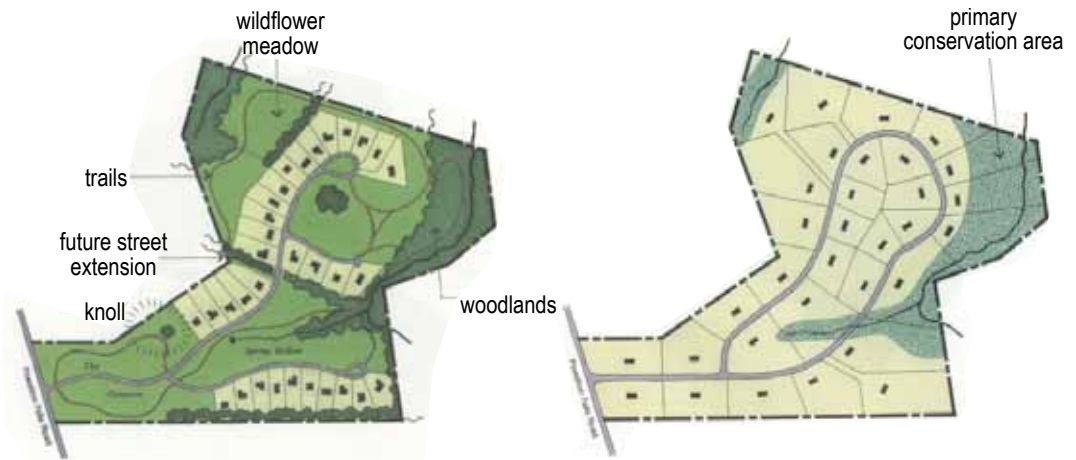
Acequias convey water for irrigation of fields inside the city, in the ETZ and outside of the ETZ. In addition to the support given by acequias for agricultural activity and local produce for humans and livestock, they provide landowners with the option of retaining their open land and preempting urban development. This land use provides additional greenery in the valley and contributes to the cultural rural landscape appreciated by residents of the community. The city acknowledges the valuable service provided by the acequias and desires to work in cooperation with the acequia associations to support their continuation of irrigation ditches for irrigated agriculture and urban forestry. In addition, some open lands lie within the 100-year floodplain (see Chapter X, Hazards Mitigation). Floodplain regulations restrict development in those areas.

**Exhibit IV-14**  
*Acequias (ditches)*  
*in Relation*  
*to Irrigated*  
*Agriculture and*  
*Riparian Areas.*



Cluster development should be considered as an allowed use in one or more zones for areas that currently have open lands or resource lands. The illustrations below compare a standard large lot subdivision to a clustered “conservation subdivision”. It demonstrates how through clustering, larger systems of open area can be used for agriculture or remain undisturbed and better accommodate wildlife habitat as well as equestrian or pedestrian trails. In exchange, a larger number of housing units might be developed on a property.

**Exhibit IV-15**  
*Standard  
 Subdivision  
 Design Versus  
 Conservation  
 Development  
 Design*



**Urban trees**

Many neighborhoods in Las Vegas have remarkable “urban forests,” which are both beautiful and unique in New Mexico. These trees contribute continuous greenscape in some areas, slow down and reduce stormwater runoff (especially large cottonwood trees, through water retention on leaves and trunks, and ground absorption), save home energy consumption and costs through shading, and increase private property values.



The city should, at a minimum, provide educational information to the public about the values of trees and encourage planting appropriate species of trees. Some mature trees, depending on their size, health, and specie, may be considered “heritage trees.” Some communities have permit systems for the removal of trees anywhere on public and private property. The city should consider tree protection in both subdivision applications and an ordinance that protects trees of a size (caliper) and specie that the city believes qualify trees that are worthy of protection. In the event that protection is not feasible, then the city may establish a standard for replacement plantings.

The city should also inventory, maintain, and protect qualified trees in public parks.

**Review of Land Use Regulations**

Land use regulations of the city of Las Vegas include the zoning code, subdivision regulations, Cultural Historic Cultural Districts Ordinance, floodplain ordinance, and airport overlay zone. While each code is independent, all codes should work together with a consistent purpose to effectively guide land use. A preferred approach is to develop a unified code with all land use regulations compiled into a single document. The advantages of this approach include:

- Consistency in definitions, application and review procedures, and public notifications
- Ease of finding code provisions
- Code simplification through publishing provisions in a single document

A unified development code also allows for better oversight of the entire land

regulatory process and for easier updating. Given the effort needed to create a unified development code, it may not be a high priority at the current time, however, it should be considered later.

The following table presents zoning districts, and a summary of the development and design standards and allowed uses. Refer to the zoning code for details.

**Exhibit IV-16**  
*Summary of Zones  
 in City of Las Vegas  
 Zoning Code*

**Summary of City of Las Vegas Zones**

Zone		Overview of Uses and Dimensional Requirements <sup>1</sup>
RA	Residential Agriculture	One single family dwelling per acre.
RR	Restricted Residential	Half acre minimum lot size. 30' front, 10' side, and 30' rear setbacks. Guest house without kitchen permitted.
R-1	Single Family Residential	6,000 s.f. minimum lot area, 1 dwelling unit per lot. 15' front, 7' side, and 20' rear setbacks.
R-2	Multi-Family Residential	Single family, duplex and townhouse (2,400 s.f. per lot) allowed by right. Condominium, triplexes, and apartments are subject to special use permit. 7,000 s.f. minimum area. Up to 6 dwelling units per gross acre. Minimum of 1,200 s.f. for each dwelling unit. Height limit of 60' or 4 stories whichever is less.
R-3	Mixed Residential	Single family, duplexes, mobile homes, and community adult residences are allowed by right, art galleries, mobile home parks, and hospitals are allowed by special review permits. 5,000 s.f. minimum lot size, 15" front, 5' side, 15' rear setbacks, Height limit of 30' or 3 stories.
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial	Apartments in multi-story buildings, institutions, office, and selected retail and services are allowed. 7,000 s.f. minimum lot size, 1,200 s.f., per family unit.
C-2	Central Business District	Uses allowed in C-1 plus other commercial uses, including 2nd floor apartments are allowed by right. Single family, not mobile homes, are allowed by special use permit. No minimum lot area, no setbacks, height to 45' or 3 stories.
C-3	General Commercial	Various commercial uses for highway oriented commercial areas or large tracts, Uses allowed in C-1 plus other specified uses including mobile home parks. No minimum lot size, 25' front, 15' side, and 25' rear setbacks.
O	Office Zone	Clinics, single family, duplexes allowed by right, multi-family allowed by a special use permit, 7,000 s.f. minimum lot size. Height limit of 60' or 4 stories.
M-1	Light Manufacturing	Various light manufacturing or heavy commercial uses including animal hospital, automotive rebuilding and repair, recycling, bakery, fuel yards, lumber yards, and rail yards allowed. 25' front, 25' side, and 25' rear setbacks.
M-2	Heavy Manufacturing	Uses allowed in M-1 plus rock crushing, wrecking yard, and batch plant. No agriculture, residential or commercial uses allowed. No minimum lot size. 25' front, 25' side, and 25' rear setbacks, height up to 50'.
M-3	Special Environment	Uses allowed in M-1 and M-2 plus brick manufacturing, foundry, rendering, meat packing, and railroad tracks and yards.
PC	Planned Community	Minimum 5 acres for a project area. Submittal information must be provided as required by the planning commission.
CH	Cultural Historic Overlay	Design Review Board review of exterior modifications, additions, new buildings, and demolitions of designated historic structures, as set forth in CH Ordinance 05-01, chapter 20 in municipal code.

<sup>1</sup> This table is intended to provide a brief overview of the zones. It is far from comprehensive and does not substitute for the zoning code.

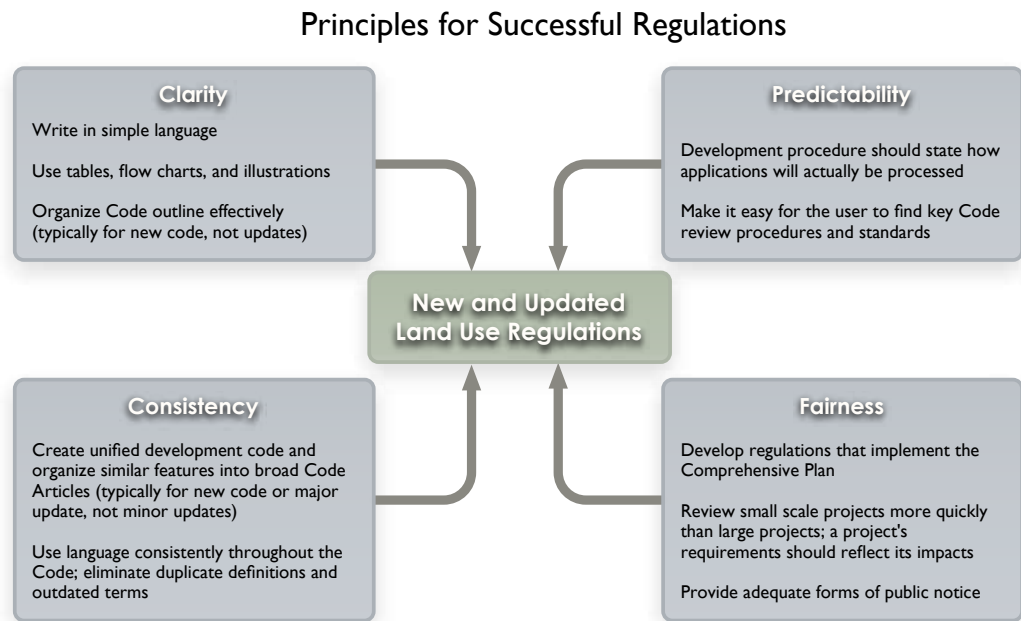
**Periodic Zoning Code Updates**

Land use regulations should be living documents rather than rigid regulations that remain as they were originally conceived. It is purposeful to update codes in order to clarify language, correct or better define standards, or create a new focus on the desired form of development based on an updated comprehensive master plan. Land use codes are one of the most important tools for implementing long-range plans. Zoning codes often require revision to keep up with changes in the community. For example, granting variances for activities no longer considered inappropriate should not be substituted for making needed code updates.

To the credit of the city, its zoning code has been amended many times over the years to remain current in numerous areas. The city should consider whether it is more appropriate to continue periodic updates or to perform a major overhaul to make the code generally more useful or improve its clarity.

Successful regulations are written with clarity, predictability, consistency and fairness. All code writing, whether involving small changes, major updates or additions, should follow the principles in the chart below.

**Exhibit IV-17**  
Principles for  
successful  
regulations



***Flexible Setbacks***

The city has developed an innovative approach to flexible setbacks compared to standard zoning practices. Section 12-5-33 of the Municipal Code allows modifications of front yards in all zones where adjacent lots have the same depth. Section 12-5-29 allows the Community Development Department to reduce side and rear yards based on the average actual setback of existing buildings. These provisions respond to the variety of historic building placements prior to the city's first zoning code. Flexibility helps safeguard this aspect of the city's character, and allows for increased efficiency in use of lot space. Side yard setbacks enhance privacy and design, and protection against fire spreading between buildings (reductions should be limited where they would increase the risk of fire).

***Code Amendments to Help Implement Downtown Action Plan***

The Downtown Action Plan promotes regularly scheduled markets, festivals and events. Such events are typically very positive for the community and should be allowed in particular zones, primarily in C-2. Section 12-5-12 of the municipal code that addresses temporary uses should be updated to identify more specifically appropriate zones, types of events, impacts and conditions of approval to assure that the events are conducted appropriately and without undue impact on nearby land uses.

Mixed use in the downtown likely involves residential uses on upper floors, stand-alone apartment buildings, and possibly adaptive reuse conversions of commercial or industrial buildings. Such projects can invigorate a core area through opening up interesting historic spaces for new uses, bringing more activity to an area, and increasing pedestrian traffic, patronage of businesses and “eyes of the street” from residents enhances safety. However, conflicts can arise between residential and nonresidential uses because of noise, fumes, parking, juxtaposition of some heavier commercial uses with residential, and alteration of buildings. The city should consider urban design and architectural guidelines or standards for mixed use areas.

Some communities with a strong contingent of artists are concerned about whether galleries and art studios that focus on production should be allowed downtown and in residential areas. Some art production involves mechanical or chemical processes that could be classified as industrial and may be more appropriate in manufacturing zones than in the center of town. Conversely, galleries that only market art works might be allowed as conditional uses in some residential zones.

### ***Mobile Homes***

Mobile homes are allowed in most residential and some commercial zones in the city, including RA, RR, R-1, R-2, R-3, and C-3. Mobile homes are an important component of affordable housing in Las Vegas, and are appropriately permitted in many zones. However, when scattered among site-built single family housing, they can negatively impact the character of neighborhoods. Their dimensions, exterior materials and orientation to the street are typically quite different from surrounding houses. In addition, old mobile homes built prior to HUD manufactured housing regulations usually have lower structural stability and lower safety.

The city should consider more strict requirements that limit or prohibit the relocation to certain zones or zone overlay areas of mobile homes built before 1976 and/or noncompliant with HUD code. In certain areas, such as at entrances to the city or major corridors in the community, mobile homes should be restricted. Skirting and placement on a permanent foundation should be required for all mobile homes except those in mobile home parks. In addition, architectural standards for mobile homes in single family neighborhoods should be considered to enhance compatibility with predominantly site-built homes, such as site-built stairs.

Section 3-21-A-4 (NMSA 1978) Mobile homes permissible: regulations state that municipalities are free to exclude from residential districts mobile homes built prior to 1976 and single-section manufactured homes built to the HUD Code, and restrict them to mobile home parks. The city enacted this law in 1987. However, if the city does consider implementing a new ordinance restricting mobile homes, the community as a whole should be aware of this proposed ordinance well in advance. The city should review and change as needed the regulations dealing with nonconforming uses and structure replacement within six months to assure that replacement nonconforming mobile homes is not permitted.

**Lot Sizes**

Minimum lot sizes restrict density and protect a predominant pattern of development that some residents find appealing. The R-1 single family zone requires 6,000 sf. Some communities allow single family homes on lots as small as 3,000 or 4,500 sf. Evaluate minimum lot sizes to determine whether they unreasonably restrict opportunities for affordable housing or generally discourage expansion of the housing supply. Prior to determining whether lot sizes unduly restrict the ability to create affordable housing, a study should be conducted into housing demand by type, cost of development and undeveloped or underutilized land and buildings in areas zoned for higher density. The city should address these matters when it develops the housing element. As addressed below under Annexation Policies and Phasing, a new large lot zone is needed for annexed territory.

**Rezoning**

Trends in rezoning sometimes indicate a need for zoning map or text revisions at a more comprehensive level. The past ten years have seen regular rezoning to R-3 and C-3, with no particular year having a predominance of rezonings. In two cases, zoning followed annexation and in five cases, rezoning occurred between C-3 and R-3 rather than as “upzoning” from a lower intensity.

**Exhibit IV-18**  
*Zoning Changes to C-3 and R-3 Zone Districts*

<b>City of Las Vegas Zoning Changes to C-3 and to R-3</b>		
	To C-3	To R-3
2000	2	3
2001	1	3
2002	2	2
2003	1	1
2004	1	2
2005	1	4
2006	2	1
2007	2	1
2008	2	0
2009	3	2
2010*	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>

Source: City of Las Vegas  
\*Note: 2010 through March 19, 2010.

Any other frequent zone changes should be evaluated.

**Development Review**

The city established the development review board (DRB) in the late 1990s, following a recommendation in the 1997 master plan. This board consists of representatives of various city departments as well as the New Mexico Department of Transportation, and private utilities providers. Applicants for development review may meet with the board to discuss their projects and receive staff questions and comments prior to the formal review process. These reviews have been very efficient for the applicants and the city because they cover a breadth of subjects, and often result in creative solutions through synthesizing various points of view.

The review process should continue to be improved through refinements of checklists identifying subjects to be reviewed by the DRB, guidelines that provide information on best practices, and updates of specific review criteria in the code.

The city should evaluate the criteria for approving discretionary reviews (i.e., conditional uses, subdivision applications, site plan reviews, and variances) to assure that the standards are both sufficiently clear and address concerns about the acceptable qualities of development. If the city believes that approved development lacks desired qualities, then the land use codes should be amended to make standards more strict. Alternately, any requirements no longer needed to protect the public welfare should be eliminated.

### ***Code Enforcement and Nuisance Abatement***

Violation of land use codes sometimes occurs and it is difficult for the city to proactively enforce the codes. This situation can lead to serious health and safety conditions, unkept properties that degrade a neighborhood, and subversion of the course of community improvement set out in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Enforcement can be very complicated. Code enforcement and nuisance abatement have many components, including:

- Craft of codes for clarity and enforceability
- Code enforcement personnel training in details of the codes
- Allotment of time for code enforcement personnel to work in the field
- Procedures for taking complaints
- Notification of violators
- Maintenance of complete records on violations
- Coordinated enforcement with key city departments and sometimes county, state or federal agencies
- Work with the district court to assure that a judge's decisions remedy the situation, including condemnation in severe enough situations.

The city of Las Vegas is interested in establishing a multi-disciplinary task force for abating the more difficult code violations and public nuisance conditions on private property. City departments that would likely be on the team are: Community Development Department, Building Inspector, City Attorney, Police Department (animal control, zoning code enforcement), Fire Department, Public Works Department, Utilities Department, and, for certain situations, Office of Emergency Management. The city's main intent is to establish an ongoing code enforcement program that precludes situations from becoming complicated and serious enough to require the task force; however, prior history indicates that a task force-level of effort must be available as a tool in the enforcement "tool kit. "

Other communities have had successful experience with such task forces that can inform the city of Las Vegas, for example, the city of Albuquerque and Leona Valley, California.

### ***Grading, Drainage and Excavation Permits***

The city should establish a permitting process for grading and excavation to assure that excavation does not fill in drainages, uses appropriate soil material for fill (not



trash or junk), minimizes land disturbance and does not change topography in a way that harms neighboring properties. This permitting process should be separate from subdivision regulations and apply to all excavation activities over a threshold size, regardless of whether or not the land is subdivided.

The permitting process should require applications to contain information about the topography before and after excavation, major vegetation, location of any drainages across the property, and location of floodplains. The application should require a description of the excavation technique, erosion control measures and fugitive dust control. The permit should be approved by the Planning Director and Public Works Director. The process should require bonding for the completion of the excavation of major projects. "As-builts" should be required for commercial projects and other activities involving significant earth moving. The city should consider employment of an in-house engineer who can better enforce grading and drainage plans that are not in compliance or not properly maintained.

### ***City Use of Geographic Information System (GIS) Technology***

The city plans to use a geographic information system (GIS) for most of its mapping needs. One of the objectives of the plan update is to guide the city in its use of GIS. Computer-aided design and drafting (CADD) is an alternative software format for mapping that is favored by many engineers, surveyors and architects for its precision. However, the main advantage of GIS over CADD mapping is its database that is organized like an Excel spreadsheet and linked through unique identifiers to map features. While it is possible to associate data attributes to an object in CADD, the process is much easier in GIS. A database linked to GIS can also be easily updated independent of the GIS program. If information is merely visually placed on a map (whether created in GIS, CADD or on mylar) rather than developed as an electronic database, that information cannot be retrieved electronically, analyzed, or easily updated.

### ***Inventory of City GIS, CADD and Hard Copy (Paper and Mylar) Maps***

The City of Las Vegas currently possesses various maps and mapping data in different formats. GIS products consist of the 2007 aerial, city boundaries, parcels, and rural addressing points. ARC has juxtaposed these GIS layers in the correct position.

The city's hard copy maps are valuable as historic records and their use in atlases for city utilities and road work in the field. Mylar maps are durable and highly readable. All of these maps have been scanned and are available as JPEG files.

A number of critical maps are in CADD. It was noted that the Community Development Department and Utilities Department use different CADD base maps. These base maps differ in north orientation and have some dimensional differences and consequently, do not align with each other. The maps were not ortho-rectified or geo-referenced, which is necessary to create accurate mapping layers for ease of geographic analyses.

The list of maps and mapping data below is based on ARC's site visits and interviews with city and county staff on May 25, 2010.

**Exhibit IV-19**  
*List of City of Las Vegas Maps and Mapping Data*

Review of Currently Available City of Las Vegas Maps and Mapping Data			
Category	Description of Maps and Mapping Data/Location	Type of Data	Date Received
Facilities	City of Las Vegas propertylisting - map of city - coded	Hard copy, CADD	5/25/10
Land Use	Biesman (local surveyor) street map in CADD	Hard copy, CADD	Not Requested
Land Use	1930 Sanborn maps (black & white) in Community Development office	Hard copy	Not Requested
Land Use	2007 aerial of City - 1 meter resolution - ortho-rectified in GIS	GIS	5/25/10
Land Use	2008 Assessor's parcel data - MSWord file, in Community Development office	File	Not Requested
Land Use	City Boundary updated by ARC working with Community Development Department	GIS	5/25
Land Use	Parcel data from San Miguel County - based on NMSU efforts. Accuracy is poor due to problems with scaling and detail. Does not replace Assessor's Office maps.	GIS	5/25
Land Use	Rural addressing points in Las Vegas and within 5 miles of the city - SDR work ~2005, from San Miguel County	GIS	5/25
Land Use	Zoning - CADD file	CADD	5/25
Land Use	Zoning Map (hard copy)	Hard copy	5/25
Land Use	Streets and blocks with block numbers - in Community Development office	CADD	5/25
Land Use & Physical Features	Koogle & Poole 1991 black & white aerials with street R.O.W.s overlaid - mylar originals, scanned jpegs	Mylars, Jpegs	Not Requested
Utilities	Utilities in CADD - water, 21 of 60 maps digitized to street quad and Koogle & Poole aerials	CADD	Not Requested
Utilities	Water - Mylar Atlas in Utilities Department	Mylars, Jpegs	Not Requested
Utilities	Wastewater- Mylar Atlas in Utilities Department	Mylars, Jpegs	Not Requested
Utilities	Natural Gas - Mylar Atlas in Utilities Department	Mylars, Jpegs	Not Requested
Utilities	Treated effluent water lines - Mylar Atlas - on sewer maps In Utilities Department	Mylars, Jpegs	Not Requested

In the process of updating the comprehensive master plan, the consultants collected, created or updated GIS data for city limits, parcels (first generation draft), existing land use, land status, streets, water service areas, water pressure zones, hydrology, acequias, and floodplains. These data will be provided to the city for various city purposes and provide a basis for citywide GIS.

*Recommended Steps to Implement Citywide GIS*

The parcel GIS layer is arguably the most critical layer for mapping various themes. Since zoning is parcel-specific, a parcel layer is the most appropriate base for mapping zoning districts. An accurate GIS parcel layer also shows rights-of-way, which are essential for mapping streets and utilities.

The steps to developing useful GIS data include:

- Convert each individual CADD layer into a shape file
  - Prioritize layers, beginning with parcels and streets, then adding zoning, then utilities
  - Rotate each file to be oriented so that north faces directly up.
- Rubber sheet the shape files into small geographic areas (sections or smaller), relying on an accurate ortho-rectified, geo-referenced aerial or other accurately

referenced layer.

- This step is laborious. Use of a contractor specializing in GIS could expedite the process.
- Delete or adjust stray lines and polygons that do not match exactly with the edges of the neighboring section.
- Enter information associated with parcels or values associated with streets into data fields rather than as map features.
  - A contractor might be hired to accomplish this phase of the work, with follow-up corrections by city staff.
    - » For example, for utilities, the city might input data about the diameter of a utility line, material, year installed, etc. Each of those aspects would be entered as a separate data field (as a column in spreadsheet), probably entered manually.
- GIS training for Community Development and Utilities Department mapping staff
  - GIS work provided by the consultants for the city's plan update mapping will serve as a beginning base for GIS generated by the city.
  - The training should be done soon. It is possible to enroll in a 40-hour course at a community college, however it may take several months or longer to become proficient in using the software.

### **Annexation Policies and Phasing**

The city of Las Vegas is interested in annexation in order to accommodate future growth, influence the future development pattern of land just outside the city limits and expand its population and employment base. Las Vegas has a limited land base. While scattered vacant lots in the city present an excellent opportunity for infill development, it is expected that of the 679 acres identified as urban vacant in the existing land use inventory, some of this land cannot be developed for urban purposes. Some vacant parcels are not suitable for development due to the presence of arroyos and other drainageways. There are also challenges in acquiring scattered lots and developing them in a way that is compatible with surrounding development. Vacant land inside the city but on the fringe of urban development is categorized in the existing land use inventory as rangeland. This land base amounts to over 1,000 acres and also has potential for development which needs to be further evaluated. Drainage, steep topography and the unavailability of utilities or street access limits much of the suitability of this fringe land.

The city's extraterritorial zoning area is home to approximately 4,700 persons, and the city provides direct or indirect services to many residents living in the area. Approximately 3,500 residents receive water from the city in its service area outside the city. The water service area outside the city limits is 55% of the ETZ's land area.

The city is able to absorb much of the projected growth, however, it is expected that additional development will take place on the fringes of the community because of the desirability of some of the terrain, cost of land, availability of road access and other services.

### ***Benefits of Annexation***

Annexation provides the following benefits to the city as well as to existing and future residents of annexed areas:

- The city can provide a more comprehensive framework for planning land use, utilities, streets, public safety, and other facilities and services.
- Annexation makes available additional services to residents and may make available new revenues to pay for those services. Street maintenance, sidewalks, public safety, municipal water, sanitary sewer, treated effluent reuse, and use of libraries, trails, and parks are all valued services that the city can provide to residents of annexed areas.
- The efficiency of services already provided by the city can be improved, reducing costs.
- Annexation can better achieve consistent infrastructure standards for urban development, such as for drainage and streets, while also allowing for rural infrastructure standards in areas of very low density.
- Residents who were outside the city before annexation can vote in city elections.
- Confusing boundaries can be remedied and ambiguities to residents over public responsibilities in the area eliminated.
- Annexation relieves San Miguel County of the need to provide duplicative urban services to residents in the same area.
- Annexation can protect sensitive lands from inappropriate development, or, in some cases, clean up disturbed sites through the city's abilities to organize efforts and enforce regulations.

Some existing development in areas of potential annexation was built with substandard infrastructure. Subdivision and other standards differ between the city and county. One of the challenges in annexing these areas is to arrive at means to upgrade such situations. Special assessment districts are a particularly attractive method of upgrading infrastructure upon annexation, using funds largely generated by the property owners to complete a single project. In addition, the city must undertake a phased approach to upgrading existing inadequate infrastructure and facilities, depending in part of the availability of funding.

### ***Annexation Methods Allowed by State Statute***

New Mexico State Statutes enable four methods of annexing territory:

1. Arbitration
2. Boundary commission
3. Petition
4. Extraterritorial land use authority approach in class A counties only. *San Miguel County is a class B county; consequently, Las Vegas cannot use this method.*

#### *Arbitration Method*

Described in Sections 3-7-5 through 3-7-10 NMSA 1978, this method requires creation of a seven-member board of arbitration. Three members are property owners living within the territory to be annexed, as voted on by qualified electors residing in the territory. Three members are qualified electors and owners of real property within the municipality and are appointed by the governing body of the

municipality. The seventh member is selected by the other six board of arbitration members (as a neutral member), and owns property within the county and lives outside the municipality and the territory proposed to be annexed. The board of arbitration is charged with determining if the benefits of the municipality are or can be available to a property petitioned to be annexed within a reasonable period of time. The determination of whether the annexation should proceed or not is final.

#### *Municipal Boundary Commission Method*

The municipal boundary commission method, described in Sections 3-7-11 through 3-7-16 NMSA 1978 is a method by which a municipality can petition to annex territory. The commission consists of three members appointed by the governor. The commission holds a public hearing within the municipality regarding the question of annexing the petitioned territory. The commission must determine if the territory proposed to be annexed is contiguous to the municipality and may be provided with municipal services by the municipality. If the municipal boundary commission determines that only a portion of the territory petitioned to be annexed meets these conditions, the commission may order annexed to the municipality that portion of the territory which meets the conditions.

#### *Petition Method*

The petition method, described in Sections 3-7-17 NMSA 1978, allows petitions for annexation of territory contiguous to the municipality signed by the owners of a majority of the number of acres in the territory proposed for annexation. The petitioners must present their petition to the governing body of the municipality for consent or rejection.

#### ***Annexation Policies***

Annexing territory will achieve bringing into the city properties currently on city utilities, developing areas that would have city utilities and areas that contain sensitive or visually important lands that the city wishes to safeguard from inappropriate development. The city should be prepared to initiate annexation, probably through the arbitration method, or consider annexation petitions for territory whose annexation the city believes is in its best interests.

Following are policies to guide annexations:

- Contiguity of the annexed area shall be required to meet statutory requirements
- Applications for annexation must include: boundary lines, total acreages, existing easements, streets and utilities rights-of-way and easements dedicated at time of annexation, phasing of development if annexation is over 50 acres (or another land area to be specified), floodplain areas for all drainageways, other natural conditions such as prominent land forms or vegetation, and the names of property owners of record within 100 feet of the subject property.
- Findings shall be made to the satisfaction of the city regarding the following:
  - The annexation does not adversely affect the city fiscally
  - The city has water and sewer capacity to serve the area
  - Properties annexed shall bring water rights sufficient to serve such properties
  - The annexed area should contribute to the city urban buffer area when an open land buffer would be consistent with the comprehensive master plan

- Streets in the annexation shall be laid out to be integrated with existing streets, built to city standards, and dedicated to the city upon the city's approval of the streets
- Applications for an annexation shall comply with applicable zoning and subdivision regulations, and zoned upon annexation

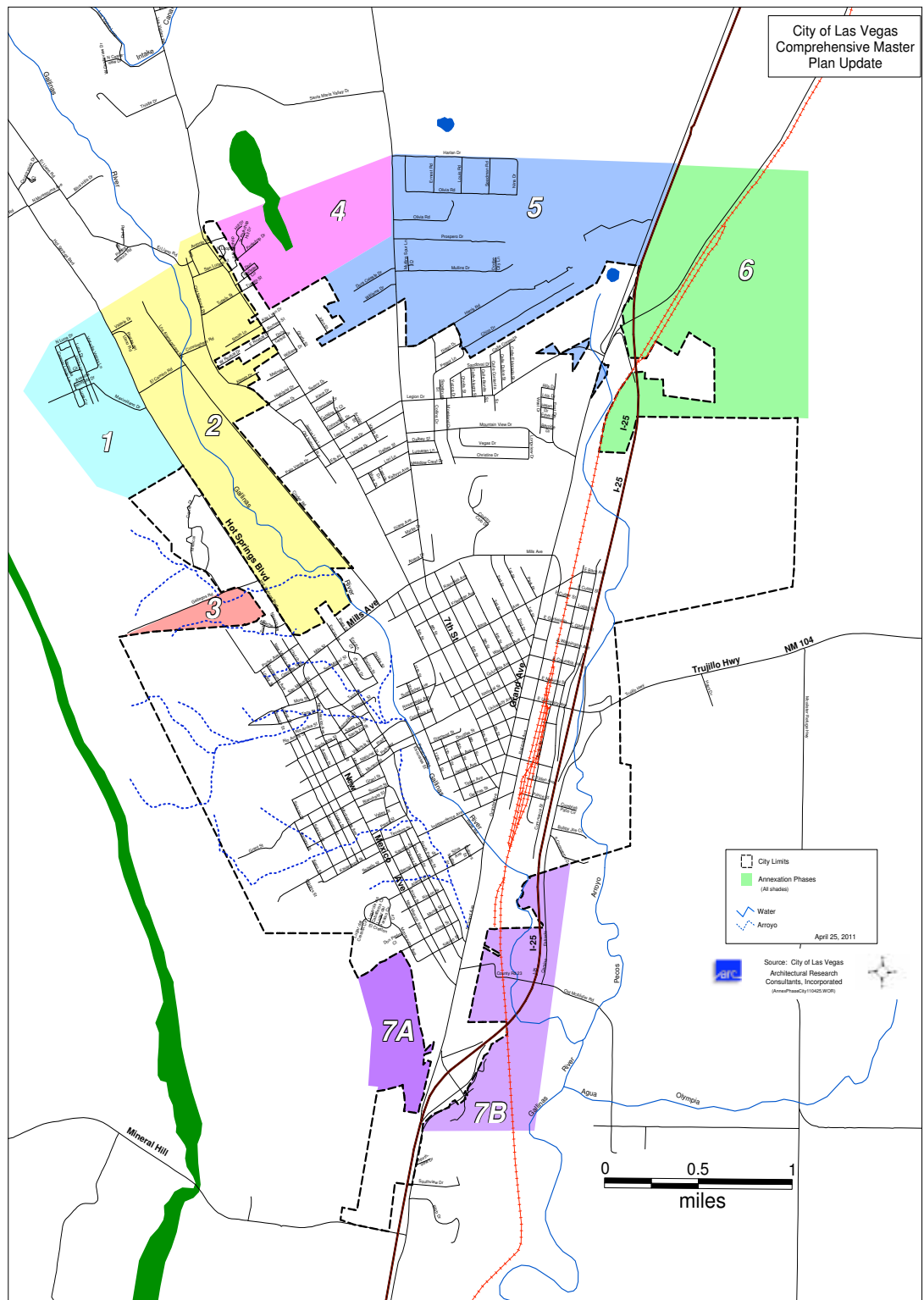
**Annexation Phases**

Annexation requires numerous steps in working with property owners, collecting the necessary documentation, and undergoing the approval process consistent with annexation methods in state statutes. In order to expedite annexation and create more regular city limits, larger land areas should be bundled into annexation phases rather than proceeding property by property. The following table shows existing land use characteristics of seven phasing areas. The map on the following page illustrates the proposed annexation phase, keyed to the column heading colors in the table. The order of annexation may be changed in further refinements to the annexation strategy.

**Exhibit IV-20**  
Annexation Phases  
and Existing Land  
Use

Existing Land Use by Annexation Phases (Acres)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7a	7b	Total
Single Family	24.1	157.7		25.7	325.7			6.3	<b>539.5</b>
Mobile Home	3.9	37.5		6.1	16.1			5.0	<b>68.5</b>
Business	1.8	27.0	14.1		16.3	137.0	8.4	22.6	<b>227.3</b>
Industrial							52.5	0.0	<b>52.5</b>
Government	11.0							7.4	<b>18.4</b>
Higher Education	80.4								<b>80.4</b>
Park		14.6							<b>14.6</b>
Irrigated Agriculture		124.5						18.0	<b>142.4</b>
Riparian and Forested		95.0						20.8	<b>115.8</b>
Rangeland (vacant)	122.3	140.2	35.0	217.9	384.7	504.1			<b>1404.2</b>
Church					0.5		62.6	156.8	<b>219.9</b>
Rights of Way	24.3	46.4			147.6	112.2		59.3	<b>389.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>267.8</b>	<b>642.9</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>249.7</b>	<b>788.7</b>	<b>753.3</b>	<b>123.6</b>	<b>296.1</b>	<b>3,171.0</b>

**Exhibit IV-21**  
**Annexation Phases**  
**Map**



**Extraterritorial Planning, Platting and Zoning**

Extraterritorial planning, platting and zoning reflect the responsibility shared between the county and municipality to plan for unincorporated areas in proximity to the municipality. Both municipalities and counties are required to regulate subdivisions. Platting, or the regulation of subdivisions, is the planning regulatory

authority most often exercised in extraterritorial areas, either separately and concurrently, or jointly by the city and county. Extraterritorial zoning can be opted into by a county and a city in compliance with statutes.

### ***Statutory Authority for Extraterritorial Planning, Platting and Zoning***

The state of New Mexico enables and directs the application of extraterritorial planning platting and zoning through several statutes, including:

- Establishment of boundaries of the extraterritorial planning and platting jurisdiction in Section 3-19-5 NMSA 1978
- Subdivision regulations in municipal planning and platting jurisdiction in Section 3-19-6 NMSA 1978
- Master planning in Section 3-19-9 NMSA 1978
- Concurrent jurisdiction of subdivisions in Section 3-20-5 NMSA 1978
- Extraterritorial zoning in Section 3-21-3 1978
- Extraterritorial zoning and subdivision regulations in Section 3-21-3.1 NMSA 1978

Counties and municipalities are enabled, but not required to establish a joint municipal-county zoning authority for purposes of adopting, amending and regulating subdivision regulations. Section 3-21-3.1 states "... such subdivision ordinances and regulations may define 'subdivision' in a manner which differs from the definitions set forth in Subsection A of Section 3-20-1 NMSA 1978 and in Subsection I of Section 47-6-2 NMSA 1978 ..." where county subdivision exemptions are defined.

Consistent with state statutes, the jurisdictional area for extraterritorial planning and platting for communities that are the size of the city of Las Vegas, with a population of less than 25,000 persons, is territory within three miles of the Las Vegas city limits.

The city of Las Vegas is enabled to establish a jurisdictional area for extraterritorial zoning within two miles of its city limits. State statute allows two miles for municipalities with a population of 20,000 or more persons.

### ***Purposes of Extraterritorial Planning, Platting and Zoning***

The main purposes of extraterritorial planning, platting and zoning include:

- Assurance that lands likely be annexed are developed to the standards of the city so that upon annexation, major upgrading is not required at the expense of the city
- Cooperative planning for land development activities to proceed in locations where they can be supported in a timely and efficient way
- Assurance that environmental conditions affecting areas in the unincorporated county and municipality, such as drainages or steep hillsides, are appropriately protected or that impacts of development are mitigated
- Guidance to ensure the desired character of gateways to cities and areas of interface between urban and rural land use/development pattern

A tiered approach to development standards within the city's ETZ should



be established to differentiate planning, platting, and zoning standards and responsibilities. Development standards should be crafted for the categories in the table below. Tiers 2 and 3 will likely have more rural standards, such as all-weather streets, pathways rather than sidewalks, and septic systems.

**Exhibit IV-22**  
*Subdivision  
 Development  
 Standards that  
 Could be Set by  
 ETZ Tiers*

**Matrix for Comparing Development Standards and Subdivision Requirements for City of Las Vegas and Tiers of ETZ in San Miguel County**

Development Standards	City of Las Vegas	Tier 1 of ETZ	Tier 2 of ETZ	Tier 3 of ETZ
Streets - Public Right of Way Width				
Streets - Dedication or Easement				
Streets - Pavement, All-Weather Gravel and Base Standards				
Streets - Curb and Gutter				
Streets - Sidewalks or trails (describe where required, width required)				
Streets - Bicycle lanes or trails				
Streets - maximum grade, grade at intersections				
Easements for irrigation ditches, drainages				
Streets - Maximum block length, maximum cul-de-sac length, and connectivity				
Streets - Signalized intersections				
Street lights				
Double fronted lots				
Utilities - gas and electric in R.O.W.				
Utilities - required connection to public sewer line				
Utilities - standards for septic systems & minimum lot size for septic and well				
Utilities - domestic water pipe size				
Exemptions from Definition of Subdivision and Subdivision Standards				
Minor subdivisions - summary review process				
Terrain management - grading and drainage plan				
Storm water detention				
Flood hazard areas				
Fire hydrants				
Requirements for survey				
Information required on plats				
Bonding for improvements through a subdivision agreement				
Enforcement				
Master planning and phasing of large developments				
Fees for roadway facilities, public safety facilities, parks/recreation/trails, and drainage facilities				

## **D. Goal, Objectives and Policies**

**Land Use Goal: Guide development of the community through land use planning and regulations to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the city and visitors to the city, and promote the economy, convenience and good appearance of the community**

- 1. Encourage compact and compatible development so that the community can be adequately served by community facilities, public utilities, and other urban amenities**
  - a. Add to housing stock in locations that are near to or served by existing utilities, community facilities and community services.
  - b. Replace dilapidated housing with new housing or mixed use development where appropriate.
  - c. Preserve existing and plan for new neighborhoods possessing community services, destinations, resident-serving retail, employment, schools or parks that are within a comfortable (0.25 - 0.5 miles) walking radius.
  - d. Discourage land development schemes that require an unrealistic or wasteful land area or low density that is wasteful.
  - e. Discourage premature or spot urban developments in undeveloped and rural areas which are not served by or near existing utilities or streets and may be constrained by environmental features.
  - f. Provide incentives to make more land available for development, or possibly disincentives for holding onto undeveloped land in in-fill or close-in areas considered most suitable for development.
    - Coordinate infrastructure improvements to provide cost-sharing or other methods to encourage development in priority areas.
  - g. Promote infill and redevelopment at urban densities.
    - Target potential sites for quality low-income rental housing.
    - Target areas appropriate for senior housing close to retail, special services, and either close to or highly accessible to medical services.
    - Promote in-fill and replace housing in established neighborhoods.
    - Identify neighborhood appearance issues and promote development or maintenance practices that improve appearance.
    - Promote development in new and expanding neighborhoods in areas generally located on the conceptual future land use map.
  - h. Provide mixed-use transitional areas between residential and nonresidential areas, allowing offices and home-based businesses in selected areas on the edge of downtown.
  - i. Create new standards and guidelines to encourage the use of sound urban design and energy-saving principles in new construction and redevelopment projects, enhancing the character and appearance of these designated areas.
  
- 2. Preserve natural resources and protect and improve community aesthetics**

- a. Support cleanup of trash, graffiti and weeds to demonstrate community pride.
- b. Discourage development in floodplains and flood-prone areas including arroyos.
- c. Encourage open lands, including agricultural uses and forest, in floodplains and along acequias.
  - Secure conservation easements and land acquisitions to retain open lands for agriculture and ranching.
- d. Develop a system of walking/bicycling trails along the Gallinas River and up to and along El Crestón.
- e. Promote protection of views, such as through view corridors or viewsheds in subdivision design.
  - Discourage development on steep hillsides.
  - Step back development from the top edge of bluffs and mesas.
- f. Provide educational information about the value of trees and encourage planting appropriate species of trees.

### **3. Support historic restoration, renovation and maintenance**

- a. The Community Development Director or his designee(s) shall develop a survey to identify and evaluate neighborhoods that may have historic, architectural, or aesthetic importance, interest, or value to the community to determine if they may be eligible for historic nomination and designation of a new district.
- b. Current boundaries of historic districts shall be reviewed and boundaries revised in accordance with standards set form in the local, state and national criteria for consideration of historic district and landmark designations.
- c. Map historic structures using GIS.
- d. Conduct periodic (annual or biannual) condition assessments of historic structures.
- e. Consider updating the Cultural Historic Districts Ordinance to clarify and add to design standards and procedures for review.
- f. Expand historic districts, new districts and additional designated landmarks.
- g. Develop an historic preservation element of the comprehensive master plan.

### **4. Expand Las Vegas' role as a regional economic center**

- a. Assure that adequate land area is available to meet projected land use requirements in appropriately located areas for the development of additional shopping and services to meet the needs for residents of the city and regional trade area.
- b. Develop design guidelines or regulations to assure high quality, convenient, attractive, multi-modal, small-city scale, and landscaped shopping areas.

### **5. Designate areas for heavy commercial and industrial activities**

- a. Identify and promote use of lands for industry and warehousing that is

consistent with the goals and policies of the Economic Development Element.

**6. Support land use recommendations in the Downtown Action Plan**

- a. Develop the east gateway to downtown on University Avenue.
  - Design gateways choosing architecture, landscaping, public art, and limited signage to create an attractive, representative visual display that shows pride in the community and welcomes visitors.
- b. Develop the west gateway to the plaza and downtown on West National and New Mexico Avenue.
- c. Develop Valencia Square development in the parking area north of Bridge Street.
- d. Leverage new redevelopment programs through incentives.
- e. Promote downtown housing.
- f. Adopt the vacant building ordinance to enhance inspection and code enforcement.

**7. Update development standards and zoning map to promote desired development practices, following principles of clarity, predictability, consistency and fairness**

- a. Evaluate and periodically update land use development standards to assure that they reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Master Plan.
- b. Establish excavation permits applicable to all activities and not limited to subdivisions.
- c. Consider more strict requirements to limit or prohibit relocation of mobile homes built before 1976 or noncompliant with HUD code from being placed in certain zones or zone overlay areas such as entrances to the city and major corridors.
- d. Change uses permitted in zoning districts to assure that common and acceptable practices do not require variances.
- e. Create new zones for annexed areas.
  - The city should create new zones only after a study identifies current land uses in the area.
  - The city should create new zones for only those areas that are large in area and predominantly vacant.
  - Create a rural residential zone with a minimum requirement of 5 acres per housing unit and typically apply this zone to the newly annexed area, with the expectation that the area will be rezoned for urban uses in the future once a development plan is completed.
  - Create a conservation and agricultural zone that may be applied to sensitive lands and some irrigated agricultural areas in annexed areas.

**8. Phase annexations according to the phasing plan to assure appropriate land area for development in the next 20 years**

- a. Review the municipal code to assure that the process, procedures and criteria for annexations are adequate.

- b. Adopt annexation policies by ordinance.
- c. Study suitability of potential annexed land for new development.
- d. Refine phasing plan based on phasing of utilities, streets, emergency services and other municipal services, and the intentions of property owners.
- e. Compile a comprehensive statistical data land use report well in advance of the inception of annexation that includes:
  - Total acreage of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, public, agricultural, rangeland and forest land
  - Total population
  - Total residential units
  - Present city utility line locations
  - Total mileage of streets or roadways
  - Cost analysis of utility provisions, street maintenance, public safety and judicial services etc.
- f. To establish the physical framework of future new development, the city should consider the adoption of a long-range street plan in the annexation phases where minimal development has occurred.

**9. Promote extraterritorial planning applicable to the unincorporated private land close to Las Vegas**

- a. Develop a tiered approach to development standards within the city's ETZ
- b. Consider exercising extraterritorial planning, platting and zoning within a smaller "urban area" and disbanding the current ETZ.

**10. Develop geographic information system citywide mapping**

- a. Use GIS mapping layers created for the plan update to familiarize assigned GIS staff with the tools and data for start-up of the citywide GIS system, including production of maps.
- b. Provide training in GIS to assigned GIS staff.
- c. Create a detailed and accurate ortho-rectified base map of parcels and streets for use by, at a minimum, Community Development, Public Works and Utilities Departments.
- d. Expand the GIS mapping layers following the steps recommended in the plan update.

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## V. Economic Development Element

*The Economic Development Element provides long-range strategies and policies to guide economic growth in the community.*

### A. Introduction

The purpose of the Economic Development element is to provide overarching themes, strategies and policies to guide the economic development of the city of Las Vegas and its environs for the next 20 years. The element presents an integrated set of strategies based on the traditional economic “drivers” of the Las Vegas economy and incorporates new approaches such as community economic development, creative economic development and sustainable or “green” development. The topic of economic development is integrally interconnected with other subjects of the Comprehensive Master Plan including land use, facilities and parks, and transportation.

### B. Existing Conditions

#### Brief Economic History of the Community

The economic history of Las Vegas provides context for the establishment of critical infrastructure and services that enabled the community to grow, and identifies certain factors that still drive the economic situation of the community. In addition, economic initiatives that were successful in the past might be the foundation for future economic growth; consequently, the history of those activities should be studied. Additional historical information is provided in Chapter III. Existing Conditions/Community Profile.

#### Exhibit V-1

*View of 6th Street commercial district looking north from Grand Avenue, ca. 1900.*

(Photograph courtesy Las Vegas City Museum and Rough Riders Collection)



Las Vegas played an important role as a trade center along key pioneer routes, and as the home for the military and state institutions.

- Las Vegas was founded in 1835 primarily due to its strategic location on the Santa Fe Trail, its easy access to bountiful hunting and fishing in the nearby mountains and plains, and also its access to water from the Gallinas River watershed.

The community’s original economic base was agricultural and Santa Fe Trail trade, originally a bartering system of exchange. Ft. Union was established in 1859 and became a major source of trade and hard currency revenue. The presence of Ft. Union encouraged expansion of the agricultural base, including the increase in cattle and sheep production and also cold-climate wheat production in San Miguel and Mora Counties. After the Civil War, the Santa Fe Trail trade enjoyed its most lucrative years, and Las Vegas businesses grew around the plaza. Jewish, Anglo-American and Hispanic merchants and traders exploited the trail trade in both directions, importing manufactured goods from Missouri and exporting local products such as hides, meat and burros.

- The arrival of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in Las Vegas in July 1879 created the first railhead in New Mexico, and Las Vegas became an instant boomtown, doubling and tripling in size within ten years. Las Vegas and Albuquerque dominated the mercantile trade of New Mexico until 1900. As southern New Mexico cities such as Roswell, Carlsbad and Las Cruces grew and developed after 1900, and also because of the introduction of numerous train line services into the New Mexico Territory, Las Vegas' economic preeminence declined after 1920.

**Exhibit V-2**

*Historic  
Photograph of the  
Castañeda Hotel*



- The Great Depression effectively marked the end of the mercantile and agricultural boom of the previous half-century and began a transition to an institutional and service-oriented economy. The federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) built many buildings and projects in Las Vegas and San Miguel County between 1933 and 1945.

Other federal economic generators included a major Army Air Corps training center built at Camp Luna during World War II.

- The post-war years saw the growth of New Mexico Highlands University and the New Mexico State Hospital. National Monuments established at Ft. Union in 1956 and Pecos Pueblo in 1965 introduced enhanced tourism to Las Vegas. After consolidation in 1970, historic preservation successes at the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West and the Plaza Hotel have added new permanent jobs to the economy.
- The other significant institutional innovation has been the creation of Luna Community College after 1972.

**Current Economic Conditions**

***General Trends and Sectors of the Economy***

In perspective, the civilian workforce of San Miguel County remained flat from 1994 through 1999, representing an average of 12,375 persons, with high unemployment rates of 12.6% in 1996 and 10.7% in 1997. The decade of 2000-2009 saw steady employment growth from 12,600 in the total labor force in 2000 to 13,550 in 2010. The lowest unemployment rate recorded in the decade was in 2007 at 3.9%. Employment peaked in 2007 with 13,061, then slipped during the recession years that followed and has not yet recovered by 2010.

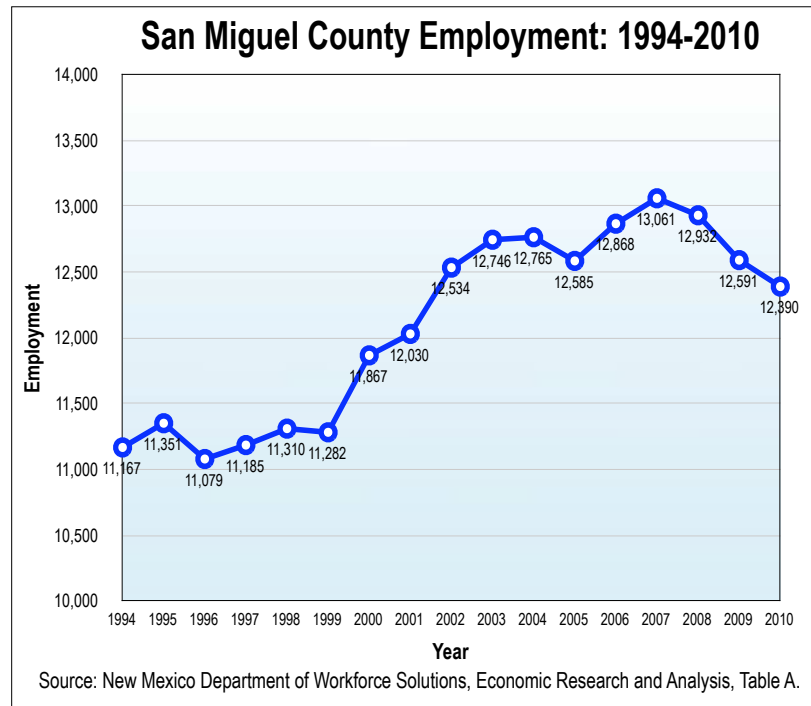


**Exhibit V-3**  
*San Miguel*  
*Employment and*  
*Unemployment*

**Employment and Unemployment in San Miguel County: 1994-2010**

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment Number	Unemployment Rate
1994	12,122	11,167	955	7.9%
1995	12,459	11,351	1,108	8.9%
1996	12,669	11,079	1,590	12.6%
1997	12,530	11,185	1,345	10.7%
1998	12,348	11,310	1,038	8.4%
1999	12,122	11,282	840	6.9%
2000	12,600	11,867	733	5.8%
2001	12,800	12,030	770	6.0%
2002	13,364	12,534	830	6.2%
2003	13,613	12,746	867	6.4%
2004	13,684	12,765	919	6.7%
2005	13,433	12,585	848	6.3%
2006	13,532	12,868	664	4.9%
2007	13,596	13,061	535	3.9%
2008	13,539	12,932	607	4.5%
2009	13,501	12,591	910	6.7%
2010	13,550	12,390	1,159	8.6%

Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Economic Research and Analysis, Table A.



Employment in most industrial sectors of the San Miguel County grew gradually between 2001 and 2007, then experienced some decline 2007 to 2009. The majority of employment is concentrated in government, health care and education. Government or public sector jobs accounted for approximately 45.4% of the total of 8,515 jobs in San Miguel County in 2008. Since 2001, health care has represented the strongest growth sector of the San Miguel County economy, expanding from 872 jobs in 2001 to 1,471 jobs in 2008. Retail trade contributes the next largest portion of county employment, remaining stable at 1,034 jobs in 2010, rising from a low in 2003 at 944 workers. Accommodation and food services, representing the tourism industry, has lost over 220 jobs from its high point in 2003 at 886 workers to a low in 2008 at 664 jobs. Some sectors are notably small, such as manufacturing and wholesale trade, each with employment under 100.

**Exhibit V-4**  
*San Miguel County*  
*Employment by*  
*Industrial Sector*

<b>San Miguel County Covered Wage and Salary Employment by Major Industrial Sector: 2001-2009</b>									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8,154</b>	<b>8,747</b>	<b>8,925</b>	<b>8,777</b>	<b>8,579</b>	<b>8,673</b>	<b>8,674</b>	<b>8,515</b>	<b>8,326</b>
<b>Total Private</b>	<b>4,326</b>	<b>4,860</b>	<b>5,026</b>	<b>4,889</b>	<b>4,676</b>	<b>4,815</b>	<b>4,853</b>	<b>4,650</b>	<b>4,443</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	52	45	48	53	75	67	63	64	63
Mining	20	34	30	14	25	22	17	26	*
Utilities	18	*	*	13	12	15	16	16	23
Construction	291	265	303	318	282	334	358	340	264
Manufacturing	75	84	91	81	93	88	84	78	62
Wholesale trade	80	128	90	95	93	77	71	65	48
Retail trade	1,015	1,024	944	946	961	956	1,012	1,034	1,008
Transportation & warehousing	67	60	60	55	56	51	58	64	52
Information	77	88	82	78	76	86	98	90	79
Finance & insurance	178	211	214	219	214	224	221	213	206
Real estate & rental & leasing	30	25	31	38	38	46	40	36	40
Professional & technical services	104	112	105	93	95	122	124	111	100
Management of companies & enterprises	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Administrative & waste services	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	111	99
Educational services	151	137	*	143	*	*	*	*	*
Health care & social assistance	872	1,305	1,536	1,516	1,265	1,418	1,438	1,471	1,469
Arts, entertainment & recreation	46	*	15	20	18	18	15	46	45
Accommodation & food services	806	886	856	851	836	824	819	664	650
Other services, except public admin	118	129	119	122	118	120	110	113	101
Non-classifiable	0	*	*	*	*	0	0	*	1
<b>Total Government</b>	<b>3,828</b>	<b>3,887</b>	<b>3,899</b>	<b>3,889</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>3,859</b>	<b>3,820</b>	<b>3,865</b>	<b>3,883</b>
Federal	174	182	170	156	152	149	149	150	159
State	2,058	2,057	2,051	2,062	2,048	2,083	2,073	2,087	2,123
Local	1,596	1,648	1,679	1,670	1,703	1,627	1,598	1,628	1,601

Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Economic Research and Analysis Bureau.

A breakdown of businesses, employment and sales is provided by Dunn and Bradstreet for San Miguel County and municipalities in the county, shown in the Exhibit V-6 below. This information is useful for seeing trends in Las Vegas, while it is not exactly comparable to the countywide data shown above from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. The Dunn and Bradstreet data show that the vast majority of jobs in San Miguel County, 89%, were located in Las Vegas in 2007. There were 10,306 jobs in San Miguel County. The largest concentration of employment was in educational services (2,061), which includes the public school districts, NMHU, Luna Community College, and United World College.

A relatively high portion, over 12%, of workers 16 years and over in San Miguel County commuted 35 minutes or more, indicating that a large portion work is outside the county, likely in Santa Fe. (Source: U.S. Census 2000 STF 3 survey data) Santa Fe County employment grew by an average of 1.5% per year from 2000 to 2008, then declined by 1.3% per year during the recession from 2008 to 2010. This growth likely helped San Miguel County residents. Conversely, some employees in Las Vegas live in Santa Fe County. It has been noted that some Behavioral Health Center and Highlands University staff live in Santa Fe.

## Exhibit V-5

### Business Establishments, Employment and Sales by Sectors in San Miguel County

Business Establishments, Employment and Sales (Revenues), by Industry and Geography in San Miguel County, 2007												
Industry	Number of Businesses				Employment				Sales			
	Las Vegas	Pecos	Rest of County	County Total	Las Vegas	Pecos	Rest of County	County Total	Las Vegas	Pecos	Rest of County	County Total
Agriculture	20	4	15	39	39	10	35	84	\$2,004,500	\$521,300	\$1,311,000	\$3,836,800
Mining		1		1		2		2		\$182,900		\$182,900
Utilities	3		5	8	19		14	33	\$8,257,400		\$666,800	\$8,924,200
Construction	93	18	38	149	655	31	80	766	\$81,226,916	\$3,883,300	\$8,587,300	\$93,697,516
Manufacturing	20	3	8	31	61	16	15	92	\$6,570,300	\$525,000	\$25,598,500	\$32,693,800
Wholesale Trade	30	3	6	39	115	4	12	131	\$24,608,143	\$550,000	\$1,118,000	\$26,276,143
Retail Trade	164	9	17	190	988	35	49	1,072	\$129,780,800	\$4,354,900	\$3,983,400	\$138,119,100
General & Misc Retailers	37	5	5	47	284	15	7	306	\$43,832,100	\$1,991,700	\$736,700	\$46,560,500
Transportation and Warehousing	23	11	13	47	419	28	20	467	\$9,987,200	\$2,227,500	\$344,900	\$12,559,600
Information	17	1	3	21	84	2	4	90	\$4,084,400	\$200,000	\$220,000	\$4,504,400
Finance and Insurance	49	4	0	53	224	10	0	234	\$31,060,166	\$1,304,800	\$1,293,700	\$32,364,966
Real estate	47	2	8	57	125	4	16	145	\$8,836,428	\$360,000	\$2,834,800	\$10,490,128
Professional & tech svcs	77	6	18	101	233	12	37	282	\$13,803,300	\$646,000	\$485,000	\$17,284,100
Admin & support svcs	52	4	6	62	347	9	8	364	\$22,440,000	\$507,000	\$14,763,200	\$23,432,000
Educational Services	29	1	9	39	1,789	56	216	2,061	\$109,725,020	\$2,800,000	\$1,052,100	\$127,288,220
Health care & Social Assistance	140	7	5	152	1,101	75	17	1,193	\$50,207,056	\$3,272,640	\$1,825,561	\$54,531,796
Arts, entertainment & recreation	14	2	6	22	24	2	16	42	\$1,087,000	\$110,000	\$1,293,000	\$3,022,561
Accommodations	23	6	5	34	191	46	31	268	\$5,799,500	\$1,567,900	\$745,000	\$8,660,400
Restaurants & drinking places	52	2	2	56	577	15	12	604	\$15,566,000	\$510,000	\$1,114,300	\$16,821,000
Other services	136	11	12	159	355	30	25	410	\$15,696,200	\$937,000		\$17,747,500
Public administration	34	6	6	46	1,834	129	54	2,017				
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1,306</b>	<b>9,180</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>10,357</b>	<b>\$540,740,329</b>	<b>\$24,460,240</b>	<b>\$67,236,561</b>	<b>\$632,437,130</b>

Source: National Establishment Time Series Database, based on Dunn & Bradstreet data. Aggregation, summary and calculations by UNM-BBER, 2010.

From "A Comprehensive Assessment of the San Miguel County Economy," UNM BBER, 2010.

### **Stability of Large Employers and the Community's Dependence on their On-Going Operations**

The base of Las Vegas' economy is its institutional jobs housed within eight major institutions. These include: New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute (former New Mexico State Hospital), New Mexico Highlands University, Luna Community College, city of Las Vegas, San Miguel County, Las Vegas City Schools, West Las Vegas City Schools, and Alta Vista Regional Hospital. Other institutional employers include the New Mexico Department of Transportation District 4 office in Las Vegas with 345 employees and Armand Hammer United World College with 100 employees. Along with Wal-Mart's 317 retail industry workers, and Franken Construction's 126 employees, Victory Home Health Care Agency and Professional Home Health, the major employers includes at least 4,000 employees. West Las Vegas and Las Vegas City School Districts are also major employers, but were not included in this tally.

A third source, the 2007 Economic Census, reports the number of paid employees for the pay period including March 12, 2007 by county. The counts of employees by various establishments are close to Dunn and Bradstreet's tabulations.

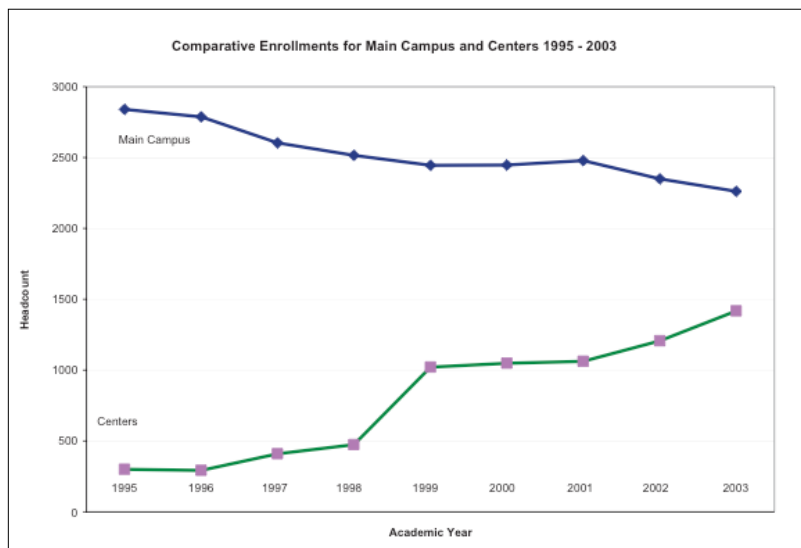
**Exhibit V-6**  
Major Employers  
in Las Vegas

Employer	Sector	Employees
Las Vegas Medical Center*	Health Care	850
New Mexico Highlands University	Education	559
West Las Vegas Public Schools (FTE's)*	Education	385
Luna Community College*	Education	326
Alta Vista Regional Hospital*	Health Care	278
Las Vegas City Public Schools (FTE's)*	Education	261
Victory Home Health	Health Care	257
New Mexico DOT - District 4*	Government	256
City of Las Vegas*	Government	254
Wal-Mart Supercenter*	Retail	246
Professional Home Health Care	Health Care	200
San Miguel County	Government	140
Armand Hammer United World College	Education	100
Franken Construction*	Construction	60
Franken Oil and Distributing*	Oil	53
<b>Total</b>		<b>4,225</b>

Sources: Las Vegas San Miguel Economic Development Corporation, "Las Vegas at A Glance," 2009.  
\*City of Las Vegas calls to employers, March-May, 2011.

New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas has experienced a trend of slowly declining enrollment since 1995, while centers off the Main Campus, including Farmington, Roswell, Española, Rio Rancho and Raton, have grown. Higher educational employment is not directly tied to enrollment, and changes in employment relate also to programmatic changes and budgets. It is possible that employment in Las Vegas has not experienced a decline similar to that in enrollment.

**Exhibit V-7**  
N.M. Highlands  
University Historic  
Enrollment



Source: New Mexico Highlands University, 2010

Overall, a high proportion of the San Miguel County workforce works for the government (local, including public school districts, state and federal). The government workforce of 3,865 jobs or 45.4% of the total workforce of 8,515 represented the fourth highest percentage of county government jobs in New

Mexico. Only Harding County (57.7%), Catron County (50.8%), and Cibola County (46.2%) registered higher. In addition, 32.3% of Las Vegas jobs are located in the downtown corridor, a very high percentage compared to similar New Mexico cities such as Deming (10.5%) and Gallup (11.9%). New Mexico Highlands University in the midst of the downtown district anchors this heavy job concentration. (Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Table D- Labor Market Information Series, 2008)

As previously discussed, the recession has adversely affected Las Vegas and San Miguel County since 2007. With its high percentage of public service sector employment, the county may have a stronger steady base of employment compared to other communities. However, impacts to its institutional employers through budget reductions could result in a slow recovery.

**Income Levels**

The median household income in Las Vegas is estimated at \$23,584; this is 45% lower than for the state as a whole.

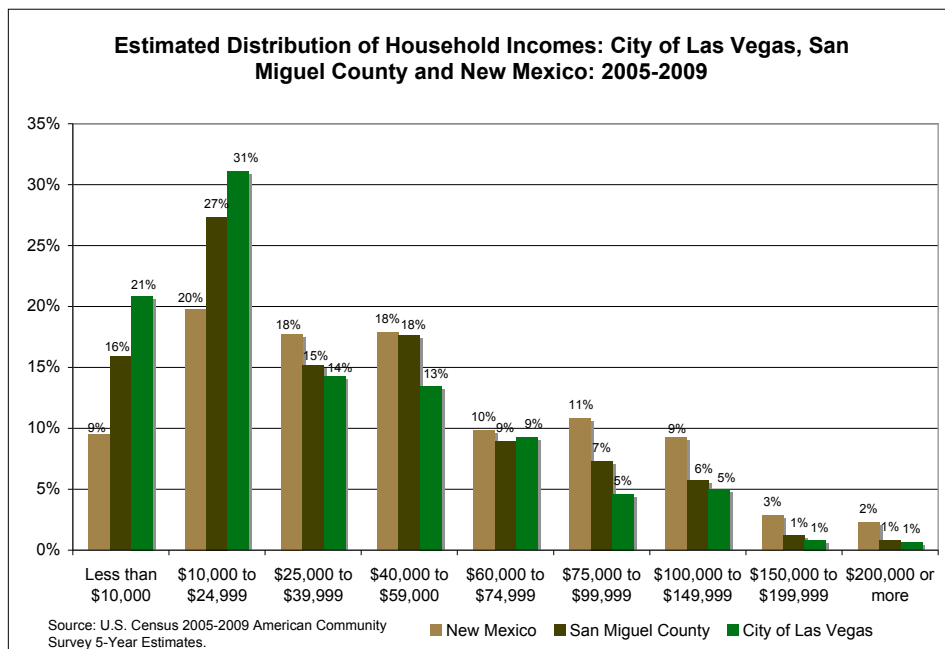
**Exhibit V-8**  
Median Household Income

Estimated Median Household Income: 2005-2009		
Place	Annual Income	Difference from New Mexico's Median Income
United States	\$51,425	20%
New Mexico	\$42,742	
San Miguel County	\$30,956	-28%
City of Las Vegas	\$23,584	-45%

Source: U.S. Census 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Income is reported for the past 12 months in 2009 inflation adjusted dollars.

The distribution of household incomes shows a much larger share in Las Vegas earning less than \$25,000 compared to the U.S., New Mexico and San Miguel County. Correspondingly, fewer households earn more than \$25,000.

**Exhibit V-9**  
Distribution of Household Incomes



Wages in San Miguel County are about 20% lower than in other parts of the state. Compared to New Mexico in 2009, average weekly wages varied from 34% lower for private employment to 9% lower for local government employment in San Miguel County. In comparison, weekly wages in New Mexico for all industries were \$876, or 15% lower than for the U.S. as a whole in 2009. It should be noted that in the table below, government and private sector wage differences cannot be compared for comparable skill and educational levels.

**Exhibit V-10**  
Average Weekly Wages

Employment Status	New Mexico	San Miguel County	% Difference
All Industries	\$741	\$579	-22%
Federal Government	\$1,245	\$902	-28%
State Government	\$906	\$763	-16%
Local Government	\$674	\$611	-9%
Private	\$712	\$468	-34%

Source: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

As discussed below, young residents leave the community in search of better employment opportunities. Low salaries and wages are one of the factors that lead to out-migration.

Rates of poverty are relatively high in Las Vegas. According to the most recent American Communities Survey, the number of individuals in Las Vegas living below the poverty line was 3,431 or 27.1% of the population. The proportion of population in the U.S. living below the poverty line was 13.5%, and in the state as a whole, 18.1%.

**Exhibit V-11**  
Proportion of Population Living Below the Poverty Level

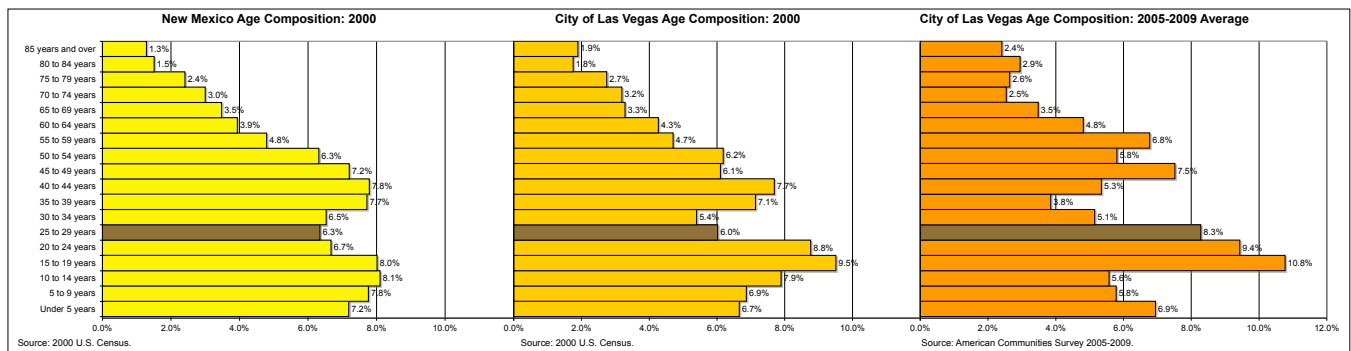
Place	Percent
United States	13.5%
New Mexico	18.1%
San Miguel County	24.6%
City of Las Vegas	27.1%

Source: U.S. Census 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

**Exhibit V-12**  
City of Las Vegas Age Groups

**Young Adults Leaving the Community**

Las Vegas is concerned that young adults do not remain in the community. The bar



charts in Exhibit V-12 show the age composition of the state (2000) and Las Vegas (2000 and estimated 2005-2009). The loss of population in the age group of 20 to 24 years (college) and 25 to 29 years (represented by the brown bars) is greater in Las Vegas than in the state. In Las Vegas, there is further loss in the age group of 30 to 34 years, while the state gains in this age group.

To some extent, the loss of young adults is normal for any college town away from a metropolitan area, where students typically go back to their communities or to bigger cities after graduation. Las Vegas is not alone in rural America in this dilemma, since more jobs have been created in metropolitan areas for many decades. However, if the economy were able to provide opportunities for young adults to stay and prosper in Las Vegas, then the community would have the full advantage of higher education institutions serving as “economic engines.”

Jeff Mitchell, economist with BBER, made similar observations:

The relatively small size of the workforce age population constrains the growth of the local economy, and the small number of children suggests that this trend is likely to continue. Finally, not only is the workforce small, it is relatively old.... The percentage of the population between the ages of 25 and 45 years old — people with a long career ahead of them — is much smaller than the corresponding share for the state as whole. Conversely, the share of the population in the latter half of their working age, from 45 to 64 years old, is larger than the state share. Retaining a larger share of the college graduates, particularly those originally from the region, should be a focus of attention of the economic development community. (Source: BBER Comprehensive Assessment of the San Miguel County Economy, 2010, page 7)

***Leakage of Retail Sales and Services***

Las Vegas is the largest city in northeast New Mexico, and provides regional sales and services to residents in nearby Eastern Plains counties. One benefit of population growth is providing the number of potential customers needed to entice metropolitan-scale stores and services, thus competing more effectively with the Albuquerque and Santa Fe metropolitan markets, and stemming leakage of sales and services.

The five-county region roughly constituting Las Vegas’ regional market area is growing slowly. BBER projects growth at an annual average of 0.6% over the next 25 years, growing from about 61,000 persons in 2010 (projected) to 72,000 persons in 2035. While slow, growth is nonetheless sufficient to support some increase in retail sales and services.

**Exhibit V-13**  
Projected  
Population of  
NE New Mexico  
Counties

<b>Northeast New Mexico Population Projections: 2000 - 2035</b>								
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Colfax	14,230	14,375	14,803	15,323	15,836	16,214	16,480	16,720
Guadalupe	4,696	4,743	5,114	5,553	5,961	6,328	6,717	7,160
Mora	5,205	5,440	5,636	5,855	6,007	6,066	6,094	6,134
San Miguel	30,249	30,719	31,827	33,137	34,284	35,067	35,677	36,337
Union	4,177	4,315	4,449	4,814	5,029	5,169	5,259	5,352
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,557</b>	<b>59,592</b>	<b>61,830</b>	<b>64,682</b>	<b>67,117</b>	<b>68,844</b>	<b>70,227</b>	<b>71,703</b>
Average Annual Rate of Change		0.4%	0.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%

Source: University of New Mexico, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 2008.

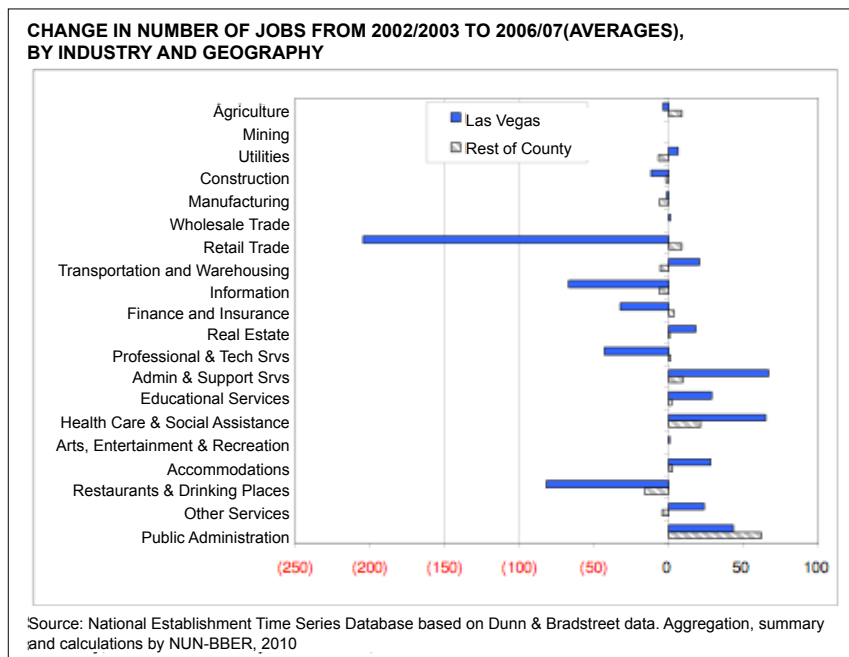
Pull factors are expressed as ratios (in percentages) between per capita expenditures for different goods and services spent locally to expenditures in the state as a whole. Ratios over 100% typically signify a positive pull of trade from outside the local community. Ratios under 100% indicate that typically local residents are buying those goods and services outside the community, considered to be “leakage” from the local economy. BBER analyzed pull factors for 1998 and 2002 in the Las Vegas MainStreet Community Economic Assessment, 2006. In 2002, less than 100% pull factors were identified for the following notable goods and services:

- Department stores (46%)
- Apparel and accessory stores (62%)
- Furniture and home furnishings (15%)
- Physicians and dentists (83%)
- Motion pictures had a 28% pull factor in 1989 and was not evaluated in 2002
- Hotels and motels had a pull factor of 115% in 2002. BBER noted that hotels and motels bring in less than \$0.5 million, a surprisingly small contribution to the city. This number has probably changed since 2007, with the addition of several new motels

While retail food stores showed a pull factor of 118% in 2002, anecdotally, participants in public meetings stated that the lack of a full-service health food grocery such as Whole Foods in Las Vegas is the cause of many out-of-town shopping trips.

Another possible indicator of economic leakage is the change in employment in different sectors. The largest job losses in recent years have been in the sectors of retail, industry, restaurants, information, and professional services. The largest job gains have been concentrated in administration, health care, and accommodations (hotels and motels).

**Exhibit V-14**  
*Change in Number of Jobs in Las Vegas and Rest of San Miguel County*





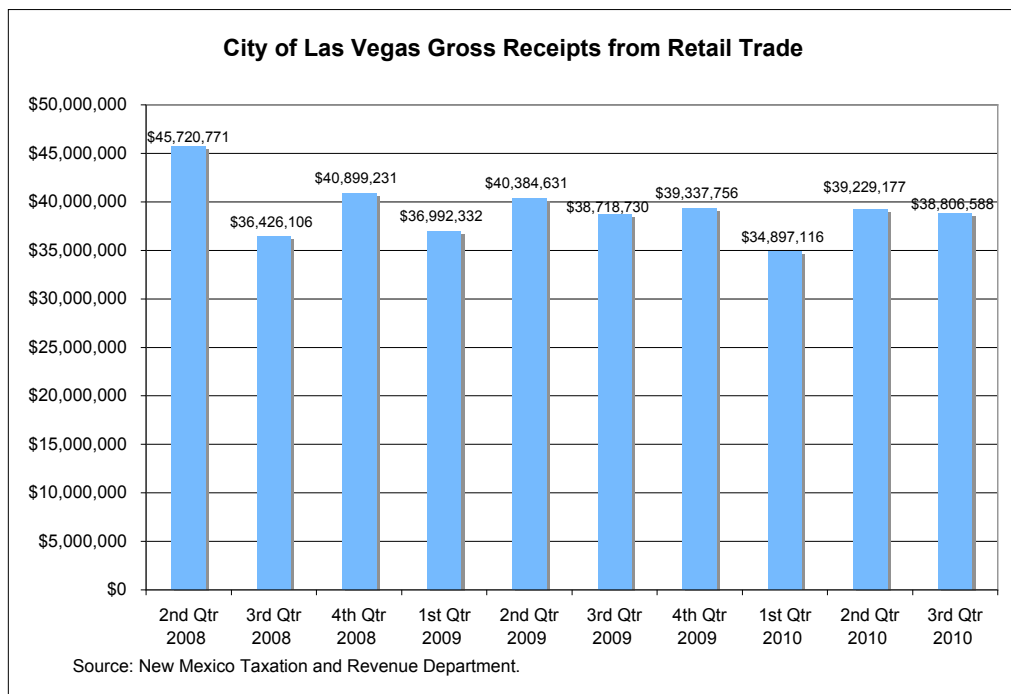
**Municipal Revenue Trends**

On September 10, 2010, interim city of Las Vegas Finance Director Pamela Marrujo reported to the City Council that the Fiscal Year 2011 city budget submitted to the state’s Department of Finance and Administration was “very conservative” in light of an estimated decrease of about 5% in the city’s revenues from gross receipts tax collections.

The city had already taken measures to replace this revenue shortfall. Under Mayor Alfonso Ortiz’s new administration, the City Council passed an ordinance on July 7, 2010 imposing an additional 1/4% gross receipts tax increment beginning January 1, 2011. The 1/4% tax increment will raise the city’s gross receipts tax rate to 8.0625% and generate approximately \$660,000 in general fund revenues for Fiscal Year 2012. (Source: University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research)

Taxable gross receipts from retail sales in Las Vegas have declined since mid-2008. The four quarters starting with the second quarter in 2008 were \$6.7 million lower than the next four quarters, for a 4% decrease in retail sales activity. The third quarter of 2010 was higher than 2008 or 2009 third quarters, showing a positive sign for the local economy.

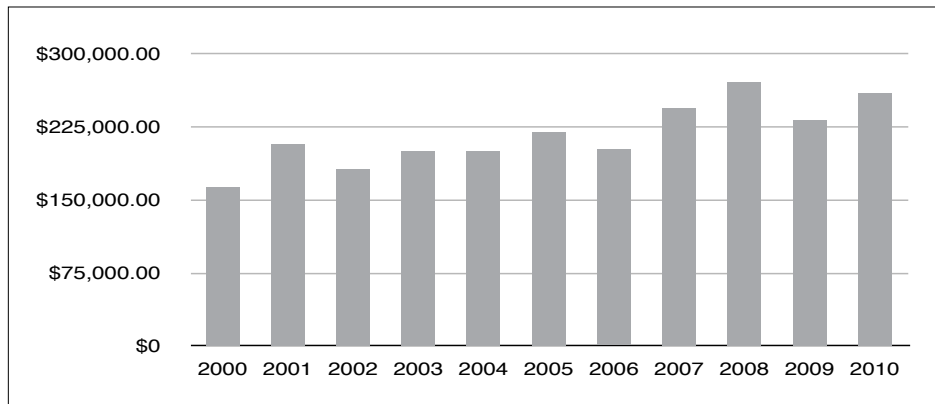
**Exhibit V-15**  
Gross Receipts  
from Retail Trade  
by Quarter



Another general indicator of economic activity is the collection of lodgers tax. Las Vegas currently collects a 4% “bed” tax from local hoteliers and motel operators. The current maximum lodgers tax rate allowed by the state is 5%, with some exceptions for the metro areas of Albuquerque, Las Cruces and Santa Fe, which are financing convention centers with higher lodgers tax collections. Lodger Tax collections in Las Vegas saw dramatic growth from 2000 to 2008.

**Exhibit V-16**  
Lodgers Tax  
Collection

**City of Las Vegas Lodgers Tax Collection: 2000-2010**



Sources: NM Taxation and Revenue Department and City of Las Vegas Finance Department.

The city's lodgers tax collections grew from \$163,419 in FY2000 to \$200,754 in FY2004 and additionally to a high point of \$271,258 in FY2008. The most recent annual lodgers collections are \$232,127 in FY2009 and \$260,360 in FY2010. The decade welcomed dramatic improvements and expansions of the hotel and motel capacity in the city, resulting in a total room capacity of 658 rooms by 2010. From 2008 to 2010, room capacity was increased by nearly 200 rooms, or about 30% of total capacity.

**Exhibit V-17**  
Number of Rooms  
in Hotels and  
Motels in Las  
Vegas

<b>Hotels and Motels in Las Vegas</b>			
	Rooms	Suites	Total
A+ Extended Stay Motel			
Best Western Montezuma Inn and Suites	48	19	67
Budget Inn	40		40
Comfort Inn	101		101
Days Inn	36		36
El Camino Motel	24		24
Historic El Fidel Hotel	17		17
Holiday Inn Express	68		68
Inn of Las Vegas	30		30
Knight's Rest	11		11
Palomino Motel	21		21
Plaza Hotel	71	5	76
Regal Motel	50		50
Santa Fe Trail Townhomes	5		5
Sunshine Motel	16		16
Super 8 Motel	36		36
Thunderbird Motel	20		20
Townhouse Motel	40		40
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>658</b>

Source: Las Vegas/San Miguel Chamber of Commerce.

According to the city's Finance Department, Las Vegas has about \$7.2 million in general obligation bonding capacity in FY2011. The city has exercised all of its allowable gross receipts tax option increments, with the exception of a 1/4% Quality of Life tax increment available to San Miguel County. The city has the option of increasing the Lodgers Tax rate up to 5% from its current level of 4%.

Along with community economic development groups that include the MainStreet de Las Vegas program, Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce, EDC and the Small Business Development Center, the City Community Development Department is planning to relocate its offices to the Old City Hall on University Avenue and 6th Street.

## **Economic Development Organizational Capacity**

### **Main Agencies**

#### *Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce*

The Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce has functioned as the community's primary organization for tourism marketing, advertising, and business promotion for several decades. Among its goals and programs are a "Shop Local" campaign, promotion of a local film commission, and marketing Las Vegas as a meeting and convention location. Historically, the community also supported a Hispano Chamber of Commerce active in the 1970s and 1980s, but the business chamber activity coalesced into one organization after 1995. A volunteer board of directors oversees the Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce, a nonprofit business organization.

The Las Vegas-San Miguel Chamber of Commerce receives program, marketing and advertising support from the city of Las Vegas Lodgers Tax fund, and also is maintained by donations from business members and sponsors. The Chamber of Commerce maintains a paid professional staff and offices.

#### *Las Vegas-San Miguel Economic Development Corporation (EDC)*

The primary focus of the EDC's mission and activities has been industrial business development, alternative energy production strategies, enhancement of the Dee Bibb Industrial Park, and the development of diversified wood products. In addition, the EDC seeks to promote entrepreneur development and business retention.

Founded in 2000, the EDC is funded jointly by the county and city and is overseen by a citizen board of directors. The EDC is a nonprofit business organization. The EDC has maintained a paid professional staff and offices in downtown Las Vegas for several years since its founding in May 2000. As of March 2011, the EDC had not had an executive director for six months. Reorganization to combine the Chamber of Commerce and EDC is under consideration.

#### *Las Vegas First*

Las Vegas First is an Old Town merchants' association that promotes retail development in the Plaza and Bridge Street commercial district primarily, but has expanded its scope to include other economic activity. Las Vegas First organizes merchant promotions, special events, billboard advertising, advertising campaigns and other activities to enhance retail activity and growth in the downtown corridor. The group is an ad-hoc business organization also active in local media campaigns.

#### *Small Business Development Center*

The Las Vegas Small Business Development Center (SBDC), housed at Luna Community College, is a member organization of the New Mexico Small Business Development Center network funded by the State of New Mexico and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Las Vegas SBDC offers free business management consulting, small business training, and government procurement assistance for northeastern New Mexico businesses. The Las Vegas SBDC service area includes San Miguel County as well as Mora, Colfax, and Guadalupe Counties.

### *MainStreet de Las Vegas*

MainStreet de Las Vegas is a nonprofit business organization devoted to business and economic development within the historic downtown corridor of Las Vegas. Las Vegas was selected as one of New Mexico's original five communities to undertake the MainStreet downtown revitalization program developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1985. The current program has been in operation since 2005. MainStreet de Las Vegas receives funding support from the city of Las Vegas, members, sponsors, and earned income. MainStreet de Las Vegas maintains a paid professional manager and office and is directed by a volunteer board of directors.

MainStreet de Las Vegas successfully applied for a pilot Arts and Cultural District designated by New Mexico MainStreet and the New Mexico Arts Commission in 2008. MainStreet de Las Vegas completed a cultural plan in support of the Arts and Cultural District in 2009 and the Downtown Action Plan in 2010, which was adopted by the city.

### ***Other Major Economic Development Stakeholders***

#### *Nonprofit Organizations*

Several local nonprofit organizations have actively supported causes, provided education and sponsored programs that have resulted in economic development in the community. These organizations include:

- Casa de Cultura
- Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation

#### *Governmental Agencies*

The city of Las Vegas, San Miguel County and the State of New Mexico are the most prominent governmental stakeholders in promoting economic development in the greater Las Vegas area. The Las Vegas City Council formulates and directs economic development policy primarily through the City Manager's office and also through the Community Development Department. The San Miguel County Commission directs its policy primarily through the County Manager's office.

The State of New Mexico has provided economic development support and funding through its various departments and agencies, including the Economic Development Department, Department of Transportation (NM DOT), Tourism Department, Department of Workforce Solutions, Department of Cultural Affairs, and others. The NM DOT district office in Las Vegas is implementing a major enhancement of the Grand Avenue corridor in the historic commercial core.

The federal government has significant offices to support its lands, property and interests including the national forests, national monuments at Ft. Union and Pecos, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development program, AMTRAK passenger and freight services, the Federal Highway Administration, and also the National Guard.

#### *Educational and Health Care Institutions*

Major state institutions of New Mexico Highlands University, Luna Community

College, the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute, and the NM DOT Region 4 office are protecting and promoting major public investments in the Las Vegas area. As of this writing, NMHU is undertaking major expansions to its main campus, including a new student center. The New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute is building a 49,000 square foot facility to expand the Meadows Home Health Long Term Care Facility.

The Armand Hammer United World College of the American West (AHUWC) housed in the former Montezuma Hotel property located five miles north of Las Vegas has become a downtown economic developer recently as a result of a property donation. The AHUWC was deeded the former First Baptist Church building at the corner of University Avenue and Seventh Street (nicknamed "U7"). The UWC Board of Directors has supported the redevelopment of the building as an educational facility to support local youth development and also enhance the community's cultural and creative development. Currently, the UWC has been working interactively with local arts supporters to develop a conceptual plan for the facility somewhat inspired by the Warehouse 21 youth center in Santa Fe.

### ***City Ordinances and Overlay Zoning Districts Fostering Economic Development***

The city of Las Vegas has enacted ordinances and overlay districts that may benefit and stimulate economic development. After consolidation of the two municipalities was achieved in 1970, the city of Las Vegas created six local historic districts by ordinance. Over time, the community's historic building resources were surveyed and a total of nine districts were listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties and the National Register of Historic Places. Approximately 900 individual properties are listed either individually or included in designated historic districts. The inclusion in state and national registers qualifies business and property owners of contributing or significant historic buildings to apply for tax credits for approved rehabilitation projects.

### ***Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)***

In the 1990s, the state legislature enacted LEDA to promote public investment in private business enterprises. The approved business activities include distribution facilities, call centers, Farmer's Markets, utilities, manufacturing, metropolitan redevelopment, and projects on Indian reservations. The Economic Development Department has provided cash grants and incentives for municipalities to enact the LEDA. In addition, the state legislature has created gross receipts tax increments for economic development and infrastructure of up to 1/4% to support infrastructure development and investments in private enterprise. The first 1/8% may be adopted by the governing body without election; the second 1/8% increment must be approved by a public referendum.

The city of Las Vegas adopted the LEDA in 2002. According to the City Ordinance, the Las Vegas-San Miguel Economic Development Corporation is designated as the organization authorized to accept and review applications from businesses. The City Council has also approved a 1/8% tax increment for infrastructure, dedicated to the Abe Montoya Recreational Center. Begun in July 2004, the financing amortization for the Recreation Center will be completed in 2029.

### *Arts and Cultural District*

With the enactment of the state Arts and Cultural Districts Act in 2007, the LEDA was also amended to allow municipal investments in creative enterprise projects in state designated Arts and Cultural Districts. The maximum allowable state tax credit for historic rehabilitation projects was raised to \$50,000. The Las Vegas City Council adopted the proposed boundaries for the nearly square-mile Arts and Cultural District in October 2010, and therefore the expanded LEDA program and enhanced historic preservation tax credits are in force.

*The city has adopted an MRA and a Tax Increment Development District (TIDD).*

*Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), and Tax Increment Finance Districts (TIF)* Other planning and development overlay districts currently in discussion for Las Vegas include an MRA and TIF.

### **National Recession and Las Vegas Economic Trends**

As of March 2011, the United States is weathering a deep and pervasive economic recession that has impacted all sectors of society. Previous to the recession which unfolded in 2007, New Mexico state government had enjoyed several years of expansion and generous capital outlay funding for community facilities and projects. With reduced severance taxes from oil and gas extraction and increasingly lower levels of consumer spending (and therefore gross receipts tax income), the state's budget has been in free-fall for the past ten fiscal quarters. The estimated state general fund deficit was estimated at \$450 million in December 2010.

As described above, Las Vegas and San Miguel County economic indicators demonstrate a contraction of the local economy, but perhaps not as serious as expected. Residential construction activity slowed after 2005 due to a general moratorium on housing development because of severe droughts and water limitations. Tourism activity and lodgers revenues significantly expanded from 2000 to 2010, and the industry is remaining stable in spite of the general decline in mass tourism after 2007.

The most alarming downward trends are in retail spending and employment. Both show steady declines since 2007.

## **C. Issues and Opportunities**

### **Current Economic Development Theory and Practice**

Economic development quickly evolved and diversified after World War II from its traditional definitions. This subsection reviews different theories and practices of economic development. Ultimately, the different approaches should be blended together in an integrated strategy for Las Vegas.



### ***Classic Economic Development***

For many decades, economic development in America and also regionally in New Mexico and the Southwest was understood as a function of exporting local goods and services in exchange for importing money and goods (barter). A product or

service produced or rendered locally may be “sold” or traded for hard currency. That hard currency pays wages, creates jobs, supports families who build houses in cities, and so on. This is known as “classic” economic development and also “macro” economic development that directed the growth of the country and global economies. Many economists distinguish between “base” jobs created by an export economy and “non-base” jobs created to support the “base” economic activities and provide services and goods for the local economy. By this definition, agriculture, manufacturing, and also tourism and state institutions provide “base” employment. Retail that is primarily for local residents is “non-base,” while retail oriented largely to travelers and tourists is “base.”

New Mexico’s economy in the historic era (after the Spanish Colonization in 1598) has largely been characterized by trading (on El Camino Real and the Santa Fe Trail), mineral extraction (oil, gas, copper, coal and potash), and agriculture. These are base economic activities.

In the American period which started in 1846, economic development in New Mexico expanded with the U.S. government, which seized the majority of the territory’s lands. The federal (and later state) government has therefore evolved as a major economic driver, extracting and exchanging New Mexico’s natural resources for hard currency and jobs. Initially the U.S. Army, and later the entire defense industry, including two national laboratories, a missile range, and multiple military bases, have nurtured and stabilized the state’s economy. This economic “conquest” of New Mexico by the federal government laid the foundation for a more complex codependency than experienced by more “private sector” states such as New York, Illinois or Michigan.

After World War II, many changes occurred to the national economy that altered the types and balance of base and non-base sectors. Resource development in mining, ranching, and agricultural, which had been a major source of base employment, declined in many communities as resources were depleted, or the costs of labor made their development noncompetitive. By the end of the 20th century, the economic development opportunities provided by cheap labor have largely been exported to third world or developing countries such as China, India, and South Korea. The diminishment of America’s manufacturing capacity is a major topic of national debate.

Therefore, many economic development professionals would agree that “classic” economic development is only one of several major strategies that can be effective in today’s diversified, interconnected “global” economy. Economic development strategies are appropriate for Las Vegas as defined and refined by the available natural resources, quality of the local labor force, community organizational and political capacity, and the leverage of advanced technology. This economic development plan recommends and endorses “classic” economic development strategies of alternative energy production (sun and wind), agricultural production and enhancement, light manufacturing, wood products and (in the long term) transportation.

### ***Classic Economic Development Sectors in Las Vegas***

- Light manufacturing
- Health care
- Education
- Finance
- Agriculture
- Real estate

### ***Community Economic Development***

After the mass deployment of railroads, automobiles and airplanes, tourism development emerged as a major industry in America. Las Vegas was a beneficiary of transportation innovation, enjoying its boomtown years from 1880 to 1920 as a railroad center. U.S. Highway 85 and Interstate 25 have since nourished Las Vegas tourism and small business growth. The tourism industry spawned another major economic development strategy focused on travel, leisure, and retail activities that have been characterized as “the service industry or economy.”

Recently, due to the loss of many communities’ resource and manufacturing economic drivers, tourism and the service industry have become primary development strategies. This activity has grown within the past three decades to include quality of life programs, downtown revitalization, education and health care, known as “community economic development.” In Las Vegas, it is generally acknowledged that institutional employers in education and health care are the foundation of the base economy.

### ***Community Economic Development Sectors in Las Vegas***

#### ***Exhibit V-18***

Las Vegas  
Intermodal Center



- Local Service Industries
- Retail
- Nonprofits
- Tourism
- Downtown revitalization

### ***Creative Economic Development***

The invention and mass deployment of the Internet after 1990 has dramatically and fundamentally changed the practice and implementation of economic development. High technology has de-emphasized location based production and employment and has rewarded innovation, speed and design. The so-called “creative economy” has flourished in the 1990s and the present decade. Many publications recently have advocated creative economic development strategies designed to attract “knowledge workers” and small businesses that utilize advanced computerization and technology. Many advocate high quality of life amenities such as entertainment, recreation, cultural activities and access to attractive natural environments as critical to evolving the “creative economy.”



*Some economists differentiate the economies in western U.S. as either “Old West,” based largely on resource development, or “New West, shifted largely to a creative economy.*

New Mexico’s Arts and Cultural Districts program was adopted to support communities that wish to pursue creative economic development. Las Vegas, with its excellent infrastructure of educational institutions and historic architecture, was selected as one of two pilot communities for the Arts and Cultural District program in 2008.

After the symbolic millennium transition in 2000, many leading cities worldwide sought guidance and new strategies to develop their tourism primacy and advantages. “Creative economic development,” the “experiential economy,” and “creative tourism” are among the recent paradigm innovations relevant to Las Vegas.

These strategies build upon a well-established cultural and tourism infrastructure to innovate and offer visitors participatory experiences emphasizing authenticity, education, discovery, cultural interaction, self-improvement, and other potentially life-changing opportunities highly prized by today’s travelers. Many experts predict that various passive forms of tourism, recreation, shopping and cultural experience are becoming outdated or regressive when it comes to the challenge of attracting a multimedia-savvy generation of prospective tourists. This evolution has been succinctly described as the change from a “purchasing” paradigm to an “experiential” paradigm.

Like many small towns across the Southwest, Las Vegas is at a critical crossroads. Its traditional economic generators are outdated, in decline or defunct, and the community must reinvent itself to remain competitive and vital. The entire eastern plains region of New Mexico from Raton to Tucumcari is struggling with the challenges of a new global economy that ruthlessly exploits talent, mobility and interconnected networks.

There is no quick fix for this structural economic dilemma. Rather, Las Vegas must reconceive its economic future in new paradigms, train a new generation of “knowledge workers,” enhance its quality of life, ambience and appeal to visitors and residents alike, and enthusiastically seek new partnerships and cooperation in the region.

### ***Creative Economic Development Sectors in Las Vegas***

- Internet connectivity
- Media arts
- Arts production and marketing
- Arts and cultural district development

### ***Sustainable or Green Economic Development***

Finally, the concept of “green” or sustainable development has become attractive to many communities and policy makers. The sustainable development movement gained momentum after fossil energy costs began to spike after 1980. Oil embargoes, the creation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and increased dependence of “First World” nations such as the USA, England and France on gasoline and other fossil fuels have promoted

consideration of sustainable development. Other critics and policy makers have noted the detrimental effects of “export capital” models of economic development employed by large and multinational corporations that impose major “big box” retail, agricultural or manufacturing facilities on local communities. A response to this paradigm is sustainable development or “grass-roots” economic development whereby local governments, business interests and labor work together to create employment and production enterprises.

Besides energy conservation and alternative energy production strategies, sustainable development also encourages local strategies such as multimodal transportation, historic preservation, local cultivation and consumption of food, local systems of barter and currency, and local production and sale of staple goods such as clothing and building products. In Las Vegas and San Miguel County, current community discussions regarding sustainable development are concerned with stimulating local entrepreneurs and retailers, investigating the potential of reviving traditional agricultural industries of cattle and sheep production, wheat production and milling for flour, and organic food production.

### ***Sustainable Economic Development Sectors in Las Vegas***

- Alternative energy production
- Entrepreneur development
- Organic food production
- Farmer’s Markets
- Local bartering and currency exchange
- Historic preservation

### **Balance of All Four Types of Economic Development**

This economic development plan recommends a balanced and diversified strategy that embraces and incorporates all four major strategies including “classic” or industrial development, community economic development, creative economic development, and sustainable development. These areas should interact and overlap with each other, creating a dynamic synergy of mutual support.

### **Entrepreneurship for Las Vegas**

Community economic development practice and policy historically has depended upon vibrant activity from entrepreneurs who can assess a business opportunity, raise capital and start new businesses. Las Vegas built a successful regional economy largely based on retail and mercantile trade supported by both immigrant and Hispano entrepreneurs who mastered the business of the Santa Fe Trail trade and later the railroad economy. Over time, entrepreneurship has evolved to take new forms including social, cultural, scientific, and nonprofit activities. In addition to traditional “for profit” or business entrepreneurship, alternative economic activities such as these have sometimes produced catalytic and long-term benefits for communities.

Social entrepreneurs address community problems such as literacy, poverty, homelessness, health care, immigration and other social welfare issues. Creative entrepreneurs may be active in the arts and humanities, encouraging the

development of libraries, performing arts venues, educational programs, arts councils, and historic preservation activities, among other concerns. These efforts, if successful, can create jobs and also improve community “quality of life” and the environment for business growth to prosper.

Community leaders should encourage these various types of entrepreneurs and support development activities undertaken by local and statewide nonprofit organizations and foundations. Las Vegas economic development must attract a wide variety of conventional and alternative investment sources in order to prosper. Inventive design of community and economic development projects to include public and private investments and also nonprofit organizational participation is a useful strategy in a difficult economic climate.

### **Recommended Economic Development Strategies**

The overarching vision for economic development is to build upon Las Vegas’ traditional assets and strengths as a pathway and strategy for current and future economic development. These traditional assets and job creators are defined as (but not limited to): scenic beauty and recreation; great hotels, tourism and hospitality; the Gallinas River watershed; agriculture and cuisine; education and schools; mercantile, wholesale and retail innovation; health care services; film legacy, media arts and publishing; quality of life, leisure and retirement; manufacturing building products; environmental resources, and regional strategies and synergy.

The goal is to attract wealth, talent, innovation, and opportunity to Las Vegas by offering superior quality of life, healthy lifestyles, education and health care.

Las Vegas’ traditional economic development strengths provide a conceptual framework and also an organizational foundation for enhanced community involvement in economic development. These areas of interest offer strategies for community improvement that can cut across political, economic and social barriers and engage the community in short- and long-term strategies and projects. Most of the strategies entail the creation of private sector jobs. However, growth in public sector base employment, especially in education and health care services, will also improve the local economy.

**1. Scenic Beauty and Recreation** — Las Vegas is well sited, near national wilderness areas, state parks, national forests, lakes, ski areas, and wildlife refuges. The Las Vegas area offers year-round recreational opportunities for outdoor activities for families and individuals.

- » Strategies for enhancement of scenic parks and recreation
  - Promote better marketing of existing attractions
  - Develop new programs and promotions – Hermit’s Peak tours, hunting expeditions, cross-country skiing, bike tours, etc.
  - Infrastructure development – Redevelop and restore historic Montezuma Pond for ice skating
  - Seek funding for program development from federal sources, including U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service (Ft. Union), U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.

- Study potential of an urban recreational trail from the Railroad Roundhouse to Montezuma Castle

- 2. Gallinas River Watershed Health and Recreation** — The Gallinas River is an essential resource for economic and community development in the Las Vegas area. Recent efforts by the city to clean the river bed and create a parkway have greatly enhanced the river's attraction and potential for sensitive development. From its source in the Pecos Wilderness, the Gallinas River meanders through spectacular scenic canyons and meadows through Las Vegas and on to its flow into the Pecos River. The river offers many opportunities for recreation, tourism and quality of life enhancements.

The upper watershed supplies Las Vegas with most of its drinking water. The forest is overgrown and unhealthy due to years of fire suppression and the lack of thinning. A large forest fire would be devastating to the city's water supply. Selected timber harvesting is an opportunity that could both provide added jobs and help the forest.

- » Strategies to enhance the Gallinas River Watershed
  - Develop a long-term watershed plan
    - > Work closely with San Miguel County to establish a planning and mapping initiative for the Gallinas River
    - > Identify major property owners and development interests along the river and look for potential opportunity sites
  - Encourage high quality landscape design along the river and view shed
  - Improve fishing in the Gallinas River, including the portion through the city. Improvements to the riparian habitat (e.g., removal of trash, re-planting native vegetation for shade, and some ponding) and stocking the river with fish are needed
  - Investigate potential use of city reservoirs and city property in the Gallinas Watershed for recreational uses, including fishing, picnicking, and camping
  - Consider a hotel or hot springs baths development below Montezuma
  - Promote small-diameter tree harvesting in the upper watershed
  - Work with NMHU on joint planning projects, including extension of Twelfth Street to Mills Avenue, potential land swaps for a utility office site, restoration of the historic trolley car barn for a new media arts department, potential housing on the riverfront, expanded sports facilities

**Exhibit V-19**  
*The Castañeda  
Hotel*



- 3. Great Hotels, Tourism and Hospitality** — Las Vegas boasted several great hotels in its history, including the Montezuma, El Porvenir, Castañeda, Plaza, and Meadows (now El Fidel). While Las Vegas' trade area and tourism potential have contracted, the great hotels still provide the community with a foundation to build upon for tourism enhancement and other economic

development strategies. The Montezuma has been converted to the Armand Hammer World College of the American West; the Plaza Hotel has been rehabilitated and expanded into the adjacent Ilfeld Building; and El Fidel rents rooms for long-term use and overnight stays. The Castañeda is nearly vacant, and the El Porvenir is lost to history. Las Vegas hotels and motels have been popular movie sets in recent productions. New facilities such as the Best Western and the Holiday Inn Express offer modern conveniences. All together, the Las Vegas hotel and motel infrastructure offers interesting opportunities.

- » Strategies for great hotels, tourism and hospitality
  - Create new marketing campaigns: “Great Hotels of Las Vegas”
  - Increase Lodger’s Tax increment from 4% to 5%. Consider incremental funds for infrastructure development, such as bonding, new tourism attractions.
    - > A municipality may levy a maximum tax rate of 5% on all persons renting temporary lodging (hotels and motels) within the municipality. If the tax imposed is not more than 3%, at least one-half of the proceeds must be used for the promotion or advertising of authorized facilities, tourist attractions and events. If the tax imposed is more than 3%, an additional amount of at least one-quarter of the additional tax proceeds over 3% must be used for promotion and advertising. (The exception is that municipalities in Class A counties must use one-half of their entire proceeds for advertising.) The tax proceeds exceeding the amounts required for advertising may be used for the other purposes set forth in the Lodgers Tax Act. (Source: NM Municipal League, Municipal Revenue Sources in New Mexico, 2006)
  - Implement a hospitality training program to enhance the local tourism industry with training opportunities at the college and high school levels
  - Strategically assess existing hotels and motels — potential conversion of existing hotels and motels to other uses such as live/work housing, “retro” motel rehabilitations
  - Explore potential of new “dude ranch” hotels such as the former El Porvenir in Gallinas Canyon or other locations near natural attractions
  - Determine the market niche for “great hotels” in the coming decade. Consideration should given to how great hotels can best capitalize on assets of the community including historic architecture, the plaza, walking, good food, entertainment, arts, scenery, hikes, horseback rides, activities for children, swimming, river, hot springs, bars, and boutiques.

4. **Agriculture and Cuisine** – From its very beginnings, Las Vegas has thrived as an agricultural center. Local residents sold vegetables and meat to Santa Fe Trail travelers and engaged in buffalo hunts as *ciboleros*. Today, Las Vegas offers a Farmer’s Market and several excellent restaurants that offer high

quality local cuisine. Contemporary lifestyles encourage healthy diets, a diverse menu of locally grown products, and an interesting variety of food and restaurant choices. Attractive local food and cuisine are essential for attracting and retaining a talented workforce, attracting tourists and visitors, students and retirees, and is therefore a critical component of a progressive economic development strategy.

- » Strategies for enhancing agriculture production and cuisine
  - Make the local Farmer’s Market a priority. Expand to a “grower’s market,” inviting local gardeners and other producers. Consider arts and crafts vendors and entertainment. Find or create an attractive venue for the market, such as the proposed Valencia Square Parking lot.
  - Attract new funding to support the Farmer’s Market. Talk to the USDA and New Mexico Farmer’s Markets, an organization that helps with marketing local operations, training, and financial assistance.
  - Investigate the “Slow Foods” program, and movement as a public education campaign. The program encourages the value of high quality local products such as goat cheeses, piñon nuts and choke cherry jam.
  - Develop local food-based festivals
    - > Examples are Roswell’s Chile Cheese Festival and the Bernalillo Wine Festival
  - Begin educational programs in the schools to promote awareness of biodiversity, agricultural innovation, healthy lifestyles, and culinary arts
  - Develop courses in agriculture and cuisine at Luna CC, NMHU and other facilities
  - Develop capacity for meat processing and value-added supply and marketing with a local butcher shop

**5. Education and Schools** — It may be argued that Las Vegas’ main industry today is education and schools, based on facilities, budgets, jobs and total students. New Mexico Highlands University, Luna Community College, Armand Hammer United World College of the American West, Las Vegas City and West Las Vegas Public Schools offer an exceptional educational infrastructure. It is in Las Vegas’ vital interests to ensure the health and quality of local schools, colleges and universities. The city wants to retain educational institutions in Las Vegas, increase enrollment (some trends are downward), retain teachers, professors, administrative and support staff in the community, encourage/accommodate construction projects, retain students in the community as employees and entrepreneurs, promote more shopping/spending by students in Las Vegas, and promote creation of university-related spin-off research and development.

- » Strategies for enhancing education and schools
  - Promote a consortium of local schools to meet occasionally to

- discuss common interests and objectives such as curriculum, housing, community outreach, and partnerships
- Engage local schools in economic development by identifying potential redevelopment projects such as art centers (e.g., the U7 project), affordable housing, entrepreneur development and student entertainment
- Develop a forum for students to communicate their needs and wants to community members
- Actively investigate development projects that enhance student life and well-being: theaters, restaurants, and media centers

**6. Leakage of Retail and Services** — With the arrival of the Santa Fe Trail and later the Santa Fe Railroad in the 19th century, Las Vegas attracted many successful traders and merchants such as Charles Ilfeld, Emmanuel Rosenwald and the Romero family. These pioneer businessmen established Las Vegas as a progressive retail trading center that was a bedrock of the community's prosperity. Cultivating a new generation of entrepreneurs and business innovation is among the most difficult challenges facing small, rural communities in the global digital economy.

Las Vegas has nearly lost its tradition of creativity in merchandising and distribution, and while its retail trade area is only a fraction of its historic reach, the community may consider exploiting a few of its strengths. These strengths include a strong cluster of antique stores and second-hand dealers, art galleries and gifts, and a strong bookseller.

- » Strategies for improving retail sales and services
  - Plug leakages in such areas as: motion picture theaters, diversity of restaurants, furniture and home furnishings, health food grocery and hotels/motels
  - Build upon existing retail clusters such as antique stores to recruit additional businesses by creating a marketing and recruitment strategy
  - Support innovative art marketing projects such as the Las Vegas Arts and Cultural District Web site that markets work by local artists

**7. Health Care Services** — The establishment of the New Mexico State Hospital in Las Vegas in the 1890s nurtured a community of caregivers. Many Las Vegans have worked at the State Hospital over the years and others have worked at St. Anthony's Sanitarium, the Las Vegas Hospital, Meadows Home and now Alta Vista regional hospital. The community lacks adequate facilities for senior and elder care, which may provide an opportunity for strategic development and job creation.

- » Strategies to enhance Las Vegas' health care services
  - Survey local providers to determine local need for senior and long-term elder care services
  - Investigate potential for assisted living and senior care facilities

- Promote healthy living programs and projects such as exercise facilities, bike trails, saunas and spas

**8. Film Legacy, Media Arts and Publishing** — Las Vegas boasts a remarkable affinity with the motion picture industry as well as journalism and publishing. Las Vegas was known historically as a highly literate and cultured community that was home to several newspapers, including outstanding Spanish language periodicals such as La Voz del Pueblo. Popular newspapers fostered intelligent policy discussion as well as the development of articulate leadership. Las Vegas attracted early filmmakers who pioneered the “Western” film genre before 1920. The community has since become a popular location for dozens of Hollywood productions due to its picturesque architecture and variety of scenery. NMHU offers a popular media arts program that is a significant asset to enhancing the community’s potential as a media production center.

- » Strategies for enhancing Las Vegas’ film legacy, media arts and publishing
  - Assess Las Vegas’ current policies for film production location and recruitment
  - Update location photographs and data bases that show the interesting and unique natural settings and buildings available for shooting movies or still photography
  - Develop a media business incubator to attract new graduates of NMHU and Luna Media Arts programs
  - Sponsor film festivals, symposia, lectures and publications that celebrate Las Vegas film history. In November 2010, a Santa Fe-based film producer Christopher Alexander, approached community leaders and the Steering Committee of the LV Arts and Cultural District (ACD) with a proposal to develop an international film forum. This idea is being revised and refined by MainStreet de Las Vegas and the City Film Commission.

**9. Quality of Life, Leisure and Retirement** — Las Vegas offers a comfortable, relatively stress-free environment for a healthy lifestyle and retirement. Although Las Vegas’ population is aging and experiencing stagnant or declining numbers, the community has the potential to attract a vibrant retirement population. Affluent, independent and (semi)-retired “baby-boomers” can provide many benefits to the community that enhance economic development. These benefits include: restoring aging but attractive historic homes; providing capital and ideas for new businesses; contributing time and energy to nonprofit organizations and other charitable causes; providing mentorship and educational capacity for new courses and educational programs, and other enhancements.

- » Strategies for enhancing quality of life, leisure and retirement
  - Work with the local realtor’s association to identify and market available historic properties for sale
  - Develop a marketing plan to attract retirees, perhaps targeting major metro areas such as Denver and Dallas

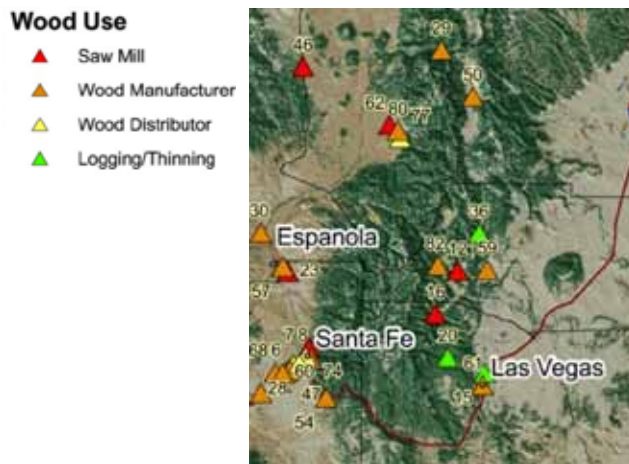


- Promote University Avenue as the gateway to Las Vegas and downtown business districts with streetscape enhancements, public art, building improvements, and traffic improvements
- Work with local school districts and colleges to plan a new sports complex of ball fields and facilities
- Support planning and development efforts to create a youth center at the former Baptist Church, owned by the Armand Hammer United World College and known as the U7 project at University Avenue and Seventh Street
- Consider establishing a Las Vegas Community Foundation to attract legacy giving and endowments and to support local organizations and projects

**10. Wood and Forest Products (Wood Cluster)** — Las Vegas’ proximity to timber has enabled several economic development enterprises, including the manufacture of railroad ties, air-lock logs and a fiber board manufacturing facility. Wood products and by-products recently have been considered as a suitable resource and strategy for industrial development. Economic downturns have affected industries that depend on forest harvesting. At least 18 lumber mills have closed in the southwest over the last few years, including mills in northern New Mexico and in and around Las Vegas. The downturn in this industry has had a negative impact on Las Vegas and the surrounding area.

**Exhibit V-20**  
*Wood Use in Northern New Mexico*

(Source: “Identifying Wood User’s and Wood Manufacturers in N.M.,” N.M. Forest Watershed Restoration Institute, N.M. Highlands University)



This strategy involves the Gallinas Watershed. It is traditional to the area and there are many loggers and foresters skilled in this field. By developing the capacity in Las Vegas and surrounding area and providing specific technical assistance, Las Vegas and its forestry partners can contribute to the revitalization of the wood industry.

- » Strategic recommendation for wood cluster development
  - Support the development of the Northern New Mexico Wood Business Park (former Medite Company site north of Las Vegas). The 143-acre park features two rail spurs, basic infrastructure, security lighting and fencing, and easy access to I-25 and the municipal airport.

- Fire Suppression: recent forest fires in the Las Vegas watershed have increased public concerns and the need to thin forests. Private enterprises that use small-diameter forest products can take advantage of a forest thinning program.
- Watershed improvements: forest thinning also has the added benefit of enhancing the watershed's conservation and productivity. For every acre of forests thinned by specifically removing piñon and juniper growth, an increase of up to one acre-foot of water can be recovered.
- The State of New Mexico Department of Transportation has adopted official specifications for using composted mulch on all highway landscaping projects, which constitutes a large market for new wood products. Erosion control has become a government priority and new regulations are in effect, including a new market for erosion control devices made from wood chips.
- New Mexico Highlands University and La Jicarita Enterprise Communities are developing programs for forest thinning. The city of Las Vegas and other development interests may be proactive in supporting this initiative.
- Encourage the development of forest and timber management and watershed curriculum at NMHU and Luna Community College
- Support development of biomass energy production in northeastern New Mexico

**11. Environmental Resources and Alternative Energy Production** — Las Vegas' unique location at the nexus of the Great Plains and southern Rocky Mountains yields an abundance of natural resources for potential alternative energy production. Most significant are solar and wind exposures. The Las Vegas – San Miguel Economic Development Corporation has been active in attracting solar and wind generating facilities. Dragonfly Industries, a bio-fuel producer, recently located in Rociada. Most of the opportunity for utility-scale alternative energy production is in the unincorporated county, and Las Vegas should support these efforts.

- » Strategies for environmental resource development and alternative energy production
  - Promote educational programs on "green" technologies and local projects incorporating alternative energy strategies such as LEED, geothermal, biomass, solar and wind energy production. Use Las Vegas "green" projects such as the new student center at NMHU as a teaching laboratory.
  - Work closely with San Miguel County and the EDC to promote the development of wind energy facilities.
  - Study the feasibility of developing a municipal solar energy production facility as proposed by Casa de Cultura.

**12. Regional development and efficiencies** — Northeastern New Mexico is relatively sparsely populated, with Las Vegas and Raton as the major communities in the vast region. Joint projects and coordination of economic development goals and strategies could benefit the region and its community interest.

- » Strategies for regional development
  - San Miguel and Colfax Counties may develop joint policies and funding strategies for regional solid waste transfer and recycling, currently costly for each county but potentially a cost-savings initiative for both county governments
  - Raton and Las Vegas both have successfully applied for state-designated arts and cultural districts. Coordination of development projects and programming opportunities as well as scheduling of major events could be beneficial.
  - Regional tourism and marketing campaigns may be developed to promote common or complementary themes and attractions, such as recreation, the Santa Fe Trail, railroads, theaters, film festivals, and architecture (Rapp and Rapp buildings)

### **Transportation Infrastructure**

The city needs transportation infrastructure to support economic development strategies. Interstate-25 and state highways are critical for tourism, hospitality, and retail trade and regional tourism. The interstate is the foremost component of the transportation system that supports economic development.

Rail service and rail spurs into industrial areas are important assets available to support wood cluster and other possible industrial and warehousing developments that would be advantageous for Las Vegas. Currently, Rail spurs that serve Las Vegas allow for loading and unloading of goods at the railyard behind the P&M Building and at the wood cluster industrial park (Medite site) northeast of the city.

The Las Vegas Municipal Airport supports opportunities for several economic development strategies, including tourism, film industry, and industrial development. The airport has a remarkably long runway which can handle 727 and C131 aircraft. While there is no commercial service at this time, some mostly wealthy visitors and tourists currently use and prefer the airport as an alternative to Santa Fe and other nearby airports.

Benefits derived from the airport are significant to the community. The majority of firms that seek a site for relocation or to build a new facility would not consider a community without an airport. Medical evacuation flights extend the community's medical services and make Las Vegas a safer community to live in. This service undoubtedly appeals to some business people who invest in Las Vegas. Of the 1,200-acre site, approximately 400 acres are not affected by airport operations, and could be available for subdivision and development. Industrial park or other development associated with the airport need municipal water.

The airport should be a gateway to visitors, with a clean appearance, new buildings and additional services, all of which require improvements. The city's goal is to continue to provide the current general aviation-types of service and to add support services, such as:

- Restaurant
- Additional hangars
- Rental cars (in the past there was rental car service)
- Improved pilot lounge
- Self-service fuel station.

### **Catalytic Projects**

- Create an economic development “one-stop shop” at the former City Hall at Sixth Street and University Avenue consisting of the City Community Development Department, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Corporation, MainStreet de Las Vegas, and the Small Business Development Center
- Work closely with local investors, institutions and foundations to solicit business plans from local entrepreneurs for “catalytic small businesses” such as restaurants, supermarkets, brew pub, movie theaters and entertainment facilities
- Promote University Avenue as the gateway to the downtown business corridor. Enhance the greater downtown corridor and access from I-25 with landscaping, signage, gateway, public art and traffic controls. Encourage off-ramp traffic to enter the downtown corridor and proceed through “new town” and “old town” commercial districts.

### **Las Vegas Economic Development Implementation and Financing Strategies**

#### ***Organizational Capacity***

In March, 2011, the professional and volunteer capacities of the city and its partnering economic development organizations are in question. The Las Vegas-San Miguel Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has lacked an Executive Director for nearly six months, and its continued work and leadership are currently under review. Other partnering organizations such as Main Street de Las Vegas, Casa de Cultura and the Las Vegas San Miguel Chamber of Commerce are operating with limited budgets and largely volunteer staffs.

Like many other towns in New Mexico, Las Vegas has been adversely affected by the ongoing economic recession, and city and other government institutions face budget shortfalls. The economic development plan proposed here will require enhanced professional and staff efforts, coordination, cooperation among the partnering agencies, and increased volunteer support.

The economic development strategies proposed here will require teamwork and the active oversight of the city and its departmental staff to succeed. New volunteers, interns, professionals, and carefully leveraged financing are necessary for this plan to have an impact.

This plan recommends a new approach to the practice of economic development

in a small rural community such as Las Vegas. Community presentations about economic development, public education, outreach and other networking efforts are necessary to recruit new talent and human resources to the effort.

This plan recommends concentrated programs in four major areas of economic development, including “classic” or industrial economic development, community economic development, creative economic development, and sustainable or “green” development. Each of these areas will require the direction of one or more of the city’s governmental and nonprofit organizations to provide direction and stewardship. Smaller working “task forces” or committees may be organized to implement specific projects. This “grass-roots” approach to economic development is a slightly new direction for Las Vegas. Currently, the community possesses the progressive leadership to consider new models of economic development.

## **Financing Strategies**

### ***Revenue Enhancements***

- » Gross Receipts Tax Increments – The city of Las Vegas and San Miguel County have one remaining .25% Gross Receipts Tax Option available. The available GRT Option is a .25% Municipal Quality of Life GRT increment that would generate approximately \$660,000 annually.
- » Lodgers Tax increment - The city of Las Vegas may raise the lodgers tax rate from 4% to a maximum of 5%. This increase would generate about \$65,000 to \$70,000 annually, based upon averages of the past three years collections.

### ***Self-Assessment Strategies***

- » Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) assess annual contributions on property owners within a designated PID for public improvement and infrastructure projects.
- » Business Improvement Districts (BID) assess annual contributions on property owners within a designated BID for district management, promotions, marketing, safety and hospitality programs.

### ***Planning Overlays and Tax Incentives***

- » Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs) designate a district, project, or site in a distressed economic area for enhanced public/private development opportunities.
- » Tax Increment Finance (TIF) District captures rising increments in property taxes due to redevelopment and reinvests these funds in public projects within a designated TIF District. A Tax Increment Development District (TIDD) captures rising increments in gross receipts taxes within a designated district for bond financing and reinvestment in infrastructure projects within the TIDD.
- » State and national registers of historic places sites, buildings and districts identify and list historic and cultural properties for protection and rehabilitation. Listing can facilitate eligibility for state and federal tax credit incentives for appropriate rehabilitation projects.
- » New Markets tax credits (NMTC) are federal tax credits offered to investors

and developers of major redevelopments and job-creating projects located within economically distressed census tracts. The challenge with utilizing New Markets Tax Credits is that a \$3 million project is the minimum threshold for the application process administered by the New Mexico Finance Authority. The NMTC can be utilized along with the federal and state historic preservation tax credits, so it is an ideal program for Las Vegas. This program is one of the most significant incentive for economic development, job creation and private sector investment.

### ***Recommendations To Improve Organizational Capacity***

Although Las Vegas and San Miguel County are home to several economic development organizations mentioned in this plan, the community lacks a cohesive vision or plan for economic development as well as a policy board with fiscal authority to manage and direct the numerous strategies and programs required for effective economic development.

1. For the short term (2011-2012), we recommend a development task force organized by the city with the mission of creating partnerships, raising funds, leveraging resources, determining project feasibility, developing project scopes of work, and acting as a liaison between the public and private sectors. The Development Task Force would be charged with assisting the city in implementing the catalytic projects described above. Representatives from key organizations such as NMHU, NMHU Foundation, San Miguel County, Las Vegas/San Miguel Economic Development Commission, Main Street de Las Vegas, Las Vegas Small Business Development Center, Las Vegas First, and other groups should be included in the task force along with city officials, but overall membership should be limited to a manageable committee size.
2. The city of Las Vegas is currently (March 2011) planning to develop a development center, as described under catalytic projects in the section Catalytic Projects above. Housing these key organizations together should achieve closer working relations and better collaboration, resulting in higher levels of service to the public and effectiveness in executing strategies.
3. For long-term implementation enhancement, we recommend the creation of a city economic development commission appointed by the Mayor and City Council and charged with major policy and program oversight for the community's economic development plan. The commission's powers would include the annual performance review of community economic development organizations; advising the city staff and City Council on recommended funding for community economic development organizations; review of organizational budgets and program funding; overview of city-funded economic development projects and programs; review of applications and business plans for potential public funding under the guidelines of the Local Economic Development Act and subsequent funding recommendations to the City Council; and an annual report of the city's economic development status and progress to the City Council.

## **D. Goal, Objectives and Policies**

**Economic Development Goal: Pursue economic development strategies that build upon community strengths, resulting in a growing economy.**

- 1. Pursue a multi-pronged approach to economic development, including strategies detailed in the Economic Development Element**
  - a. Promote Las Vegas' scenic beauty and recreational assets
  - b. Make improvements that allow more use and enjoyment of the Gallinas River Watershed and improve the watershed ecological health
  - c. Further develop the economic sector involving great hotels, tourism and hospitality
  - d. Increase agricultural production and a broad, healthy local cuisine
  - e. Support school institutions in the community, and improve the quality of education
  - f. Support expanding retail and services that stem economic leakage
  - g. Retain health care service institutions and expand related and complementary services
  - h. Promote film making, media arts and publishing in Las Vegas
  - i. Improve quality of life, leisure activities, and opportunities for retirement
  - j. Develop the wood and forest products cluster, including harvesting and manufacturing
  - k. Promote alternative energy production
  - l. Work with Raton and other communities in the region to support regional economic development and achieve better efficiencies in services
  - m. Support improvements to the Municipal Airport that continue its viability for air travel and expand its use by travelers and tourists.
  
- 2. Give priority to catalytic projects developed in this plan, the Downtown Master Plan and other previous planning projects**
  - a. Investigate the use of city reservoirs and the Gallinas River campgrounds at the former historic ice pond property for recreational uses, including the development of the city-owned Gallinas Canyon Recreational Area
  - b. Develop a community sports complex aligned with the Gallinas River park area in the near vicinity of NMHU
  - c. Develop the Valencia Square parking lot and venue for the Farmer's Market north of Bridge Street and immediately adjacent to the Gallinas River Park
  - d. Pursue Gallinas Riverwalk redevelopment concepts including gateways, landscaping and vendor facilities outlined in the 2010 Las Vegas Downtown Master Plan
  - e. Create an economic development "One-Stop Shop" at the former City Hall at Sixth Street and University Avenue
  
- 3. Promote local cooperation and collaboration when more than one agency is needed to accomplish economic development projects**

- a. Convene regular meetings of the city, county, and major institutions to discuss opportunities
  - b. Complete cooperative projects
- 4. Use economic development tools available to the city to promote worthy projects and practices**
- a. Consider pursuing Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) projects
  - b. Use Tax Increment Development District (TIDD) financing within the MRA
  - c. Increase the Lodgers Tax rate to better support marketing and other tourism-related services and improvements
  - d. Use the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) to facilitate and support development projects
  - e. Pursue new markets tax credits
  - f. Use general obligation bonds to develop infrastructure supporting economic development
  - g. Use municipal revenue bonds to develop infrastructure and services supporting economic development
  - h. Investigate the use of various other local options and state and federal funding programs to advance economic development projects
- 5. Develop an organizational framework for guiding economic development programs and projects**
- a. In the short term (2011-2012), create a development task force organized by the city with the mission of creating partnerships, raising funds, leveraging resources, determining project feasibility, developing project scopes of work, and acting as a liaison between the public and private sectors
    - The development task force would be charged with assisting the city in implementation of the catalytic projects described above
    - Representatives from key organizations such as NMHU, NMHU Foundation, San Miguel County, Las Vegas/San Miguel Economic Development Commission, Main Street de Las Vegas, Las Vegas Small Business Development Center, Las Vegas First, and other groups should be included on the task force along with city officials, but overall membership should be limited to a manageable committee size
  - b. In the longer term, create a city economic development commission appointed by the Mayor and City Council and charged with major policy and program oversight for the community's economic development plan
    - The commission's powers would include an annual performance review of community economic development organizations; advising city staff and City Council on recommended funding for community economic development organizations; review of organizational budgets and program funding; overview of city-funded economic development projects and programs; review of applications and business plans for potential public funding



under the guidelines of the Local Economic Development Act and subsequent funding recommendations to the City Council; and an annual report on the city's economic development status and progress to the City Council.

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## VI. Transportation and Storm Water Element

*The Transportation and Storm Water Element is intended to guide improvements to streets, streetscape, transit services, bicycling and pedestrian facilities. Since storm water is typically conveyed on streets or through storm sewers under streets, this element also provides guidance to storm water improvements.*

### A. Introduction

The purpose of the Transportation and Storm Water Element is to guide improvements and expansion of the multi-modal transportation system needed to meet the demands generated by the existing population as well as future growth over the next 20 years. The transportation system is pivotal to the city's economic development, providing access for regional shoppers, travelers and city residents to jobs, goods and services. Safety, efficiency, costs, energy savings, convenience, aesthetics and community character are all major aspects of the transportation system in a community. Storm water management is critical to reduce the risks of flooding in the community.

The Transportation Element also provides a general policy framework that would guide a transportation master plan which is recommended to be developed in phases some time in the future. The transportation master plan is a more detailed document based upon a set of transportation network studies and analyses.

### B. Existing Conditions - Transportation

#### Transportation Infrastructure

##### Street Network

The city of Las Vegas street network is as varied as its history. Old routes date back to the Camino Real along the Pecos River from Las Vegas to Mexico, and there are routes from pueblos along the Comanchero trails from the east, and later the Santa Fe Trail. The transportation system within the city of Las Vegas became substantially solidified in the 1880s when the railroad was introduced to the southwestern region of the U.S. West Las Vegas streets developed as people settled along the banks of the Gallinas River using a centralized plaza concept based on the Laws of the Indies. The street grid developed out from the plaza and along the Gallinas River alignment. Streets on the west side are narrower than in the newer parts of

#### Exhibit VI-1 Highways of New Mexico, 1912

(Source: NM Department of Transportation, 1912 Road Map)

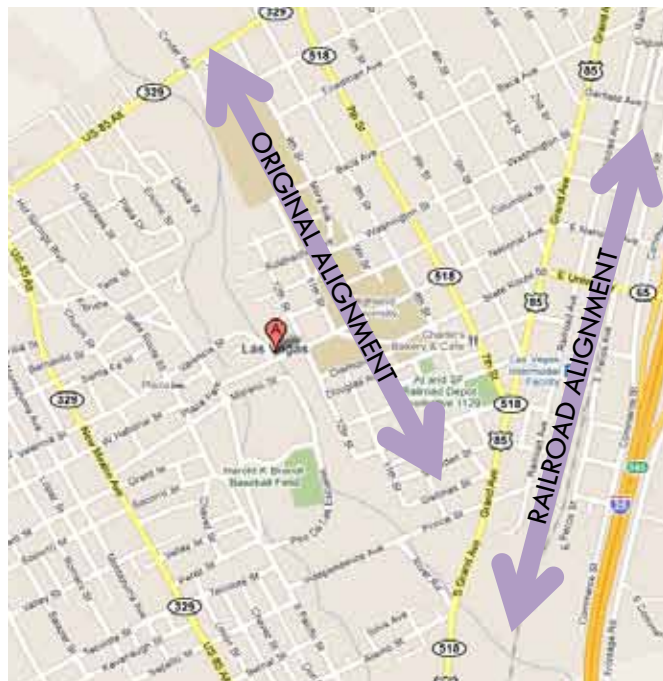


the city and follow the natural terrain in a general northwest to southeast direction.

As the city developed east of the Gallinas River in anticipation of the railroad, the streets were laid out in a traditional grid network following the same northwest to southeast orientation of west Las Vegas. Although the grid network appears to be uniform, it is comprised of several different plats that varied in block lengths and rights-of-way widths.

When the railroad arrived on the east side of Las Vegas in the 1880s, it did not follow the northwest to southeast orientation of the existing streets. It came in at a slightly northeast to southwest orientation and the street network along the railroad followed this pattern. This orientation caused a major skew in the road that tied the railroad development areas to the existing street network, which is Grand Avenue.

**Exhibit VI-2**  
Streets by  
Functional  
Classification



Today, the city of Las Vegas street network is comprised of approximately 85 miles of roadway. The extraterritorial area outside the city limits includes an additional 46 miles of roads. The functional classification of roadways ranges from highways (highest) to local streets (lowest). The following table shows the classification of streets within the city by street lengths.

**Exhibit VI-3**  
Existing Streets  
by Functional  
Classification.

<b>Streets by Functional Classification Within the City of Las Vegas</b>		
Street Classification	Length (Miles)	Portion of Total
Interstate	4.09	5%
Arterial (State Highways)	14.81	18%
Collector	3.21	4%
Local	62.41	74%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.53</b>	<b>100%</b>
Sources: San Miguel County road file, with corrections and calculations by ARC.		
Note: streets identified in this table as collectors are candidate collectors, to be determined by the city.		

*Highways*

Highways connect communities. Their primary function is the movement of people and goods through the region. Interstate 25 is a major interstate highway that provides connections from southern New Mexico to Wyoming. The city of Las Vegas can be accessed by three interchanges along I-25. The northernmost and southernmost exits connect to US85/Grand Avenue. The middle exit takes vehicular traffic to University Avenue. Transportation signage along the Interstate and at the interchanges is minimal per NMDOT standards, and without knowledge of the city transportation network layout, visitors may have difficulty navigating through town to the various landmarks and destinations.

*Arterials*

Arterial streets carry higher traffic volumes through the city. Engineers frequently design these streets as access-managed roadways, minimizing roadside access to facilitate the highest level of traffic operations.

Major arterials such as US85/Grand Avenue along with the NMDOT roadways (SR65/New Mexico Avenue/Hot Springs Boulevard, NM518/Seventh Street and NM218 Mills Avenue) provide interconnected access for all modes of transportation (vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle) throughout the city.

*Collectors*

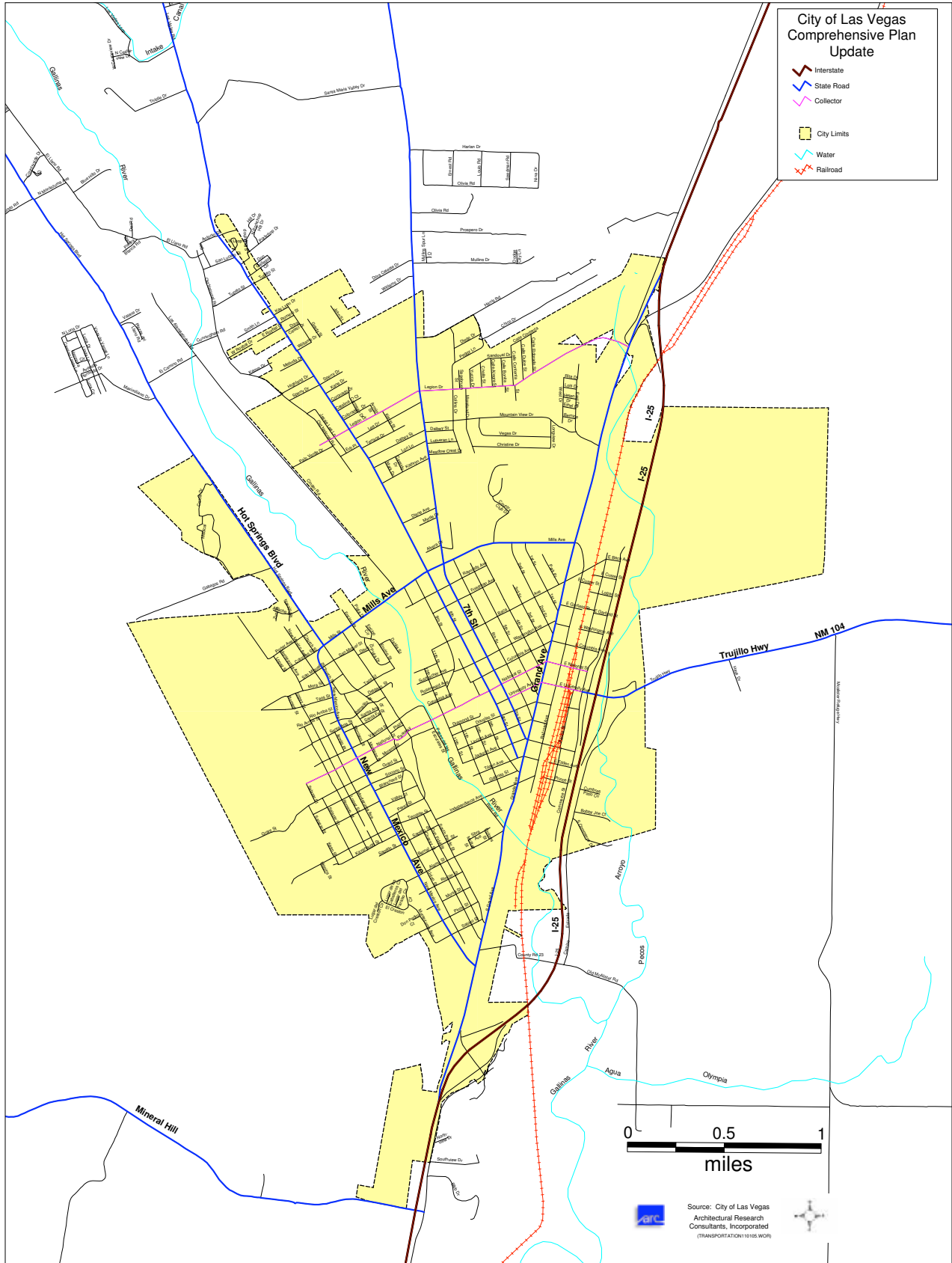
Collector streets are the more significant streets that connect local streets to arterial streets and take lower volumes of traffic than arterial streets to local destinations, such as grocery stores and schools. Legion Drive, National Street and University Avenue are all examples of collectors in Las Vegas.

*Local*

Local streets serve properties abutting the public right-of-way and are low-volume streets. Residential neighborhood streets are local streets.

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) owns and maintains streets and roadways designated as interstate, state highway or state route. The city of Las Vegas owns and maintains all other streets.

Exhibit VI-4 Map of City Streets



## Traffic Safety

Analysis of existing traffic crash data demonstrates that several intersections have consistently high accident rates. For years 2004 through 2008 (the latest years for available data), the intersections in the table below were in the top seven for most crashes in at least one of the years.

**Exhibit VI-5**  
*Intersections with  
the Most Crashes*

Intersections in Las Vegas with the Most Crashes: 2004-2008						
Intersection	2008	2007	Year 2006	2005	2004	Totals
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ Mills Ave	5	7	12	15	18	57
8 <sup>th</sup> St @ Mills Ave	7	16	8	15	11	57
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ Legion Dr	9	6	10	6	6	37
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ Mountain View Dr				10	13	23
Hot Springs Blvd @ Mills Ave	5	4	10			19
Grand Ave @ University Ave	5			6	6	17
Grand Ave @ Mills Ave		5	8			13
8 <sup>th</sup> St @ National St		4			6	10
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ National St		7				7
8 <sup>th</sup> St @ Douglas St			6			6
9 <sup>th</sup> St @ Mills Ave					6	6
Grand Ave @ National St	6					6
New Mexico Ave @ Valencia St			6			6
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ Dalbey Dr	5					5
7 <sup>th</sup> St @ Baca Ave				5		5
12 <sup>th</sup> St @ National St				4		4

Source: New Mexico Traffic Safety Bureau.

Grand Avenue is an existing four-lane roadway and is of particular interest due to the angle at which the cross streets intersect along the alignment. The intersections are skewed (not a typical 90-degree intersection) and as a result, sight distance and line of site are limited at these intersections along Grand Ave, causing deficiencies at the intersections and roadway tie-ins.

Mills Avenue is a four-lane roadway (two lanes in each direction). Mills Avenue at 7th Street and 8th Street are signalized intersections. Mills Avenue has dedicated left and right turn lanes with medians constructed at the intersections to separate and distribute traffic in a cohesive manner. Mills Avenue at 9th Street is an unsignalized intersection which may lend itself to traffic problems at this intersection.

NM 518/7th Street is a two-lane roadway with on-street parking along the entire length from Grand Avenue ending just south of Mills Avenue, where the street widens to two lanes in each direction, prior to the traffic signal at Mills Avenue.

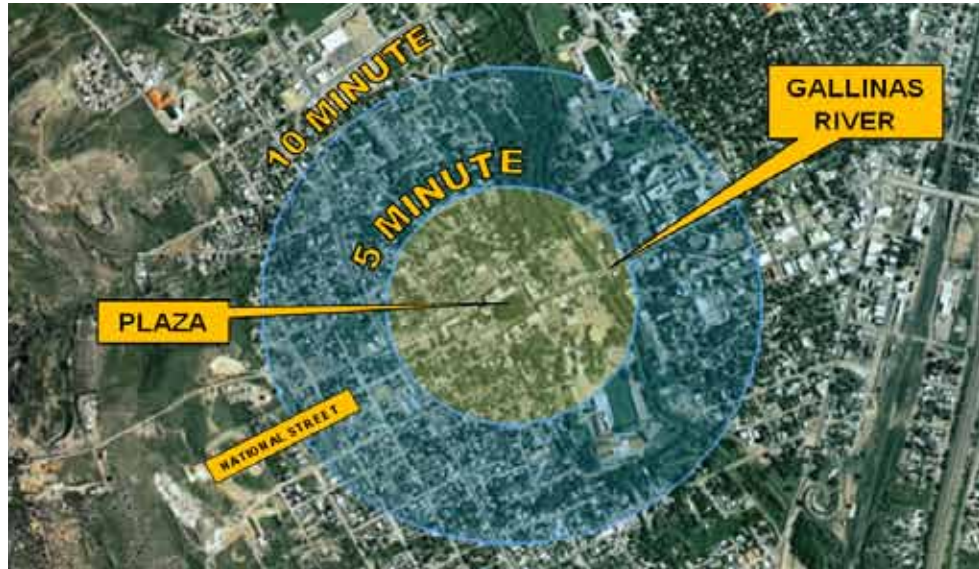
## Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The downtown part of the city (both east and west of the Rio Gallinas), where the street network is dense and congested, has an extensive network of sidewalks and pedestrian connections, although many of the sidewalk facilities do not meet current standards for accessibility and ADA requirements. Conditions of the sidewalks vary throughout the city, from newly constructed sidewalks along some streets and roadways to severely cracked or missing sidewalk stones along other roadways. Farther from the historic district, the streets transition to a rural section and many streets do not include curb and gutter or sidewalks. Many

residents within the city live in close proximity to businesses and services and can take advantage of the sidewalk system, due to small block lengths and the existing roadway layouts.

Using an average walking pace of three miles per hour, a pedestrian can walk one-quarter mile in five minutes and one-half mile in ten minutes. The following map illustrates a five- minute and ten-minute walking commute from the plaza.

**Exhibit VI-6**  
*Walking Radii from the Plaza*



The five-minute radius encompasses Old Town commercial areas and nearby neighborhoods on the west side and the Rio Gallinas. The ten-minute walk incorporates a larger area of downtown residences, businesses, and New Mexico Highlands University. By visualizing the proximity of amenities to residences, it is apparent that pedestrian continuity and other non-vehicular forms of transportation such as bicycling are important components of the transportation system within Las Vegas. Currently, the city does not designate bicycle routes with signage or strip bicycle lanes on streets. A multi-use path runs along a section of the Gallinas River through the central part of the city, but the path is not continuous and does not connect to any major bicycle routes or pedestrian facilities.

### **Transit Service**

The city of Las Vegas' transit system, the Meadow City Express (MCE), works on a "demand response service." The customer must call in advance to schedule service. The service is provided Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and serves the city of Las Vegas and the extraterritorial zone (a total area of 35 square miles).

The MCE operates out of the intermodal facility, also known as the old railroad depot at 500 Railroad Avenue. The MCE has a staff of six people and has five transit vehicles or buses. Three buses are in operation full time, with the remaining two buses reserved as backup. This transit system provides transportation to approximately 17,137 people per year (2009 statistics).



A federal transit grant program (FTA Section 5311) provides funding for the MCE and the New Mexico Department of Transportation administers it. The grant program assists "... states and localities in developing and expanding transit services in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000...." (source: NMDOT Web site <http://nmshtd.state.nm.us/main>) The federal funding for fiscal year 2010 was \$140,233.20, which the city of Las Vegas then matches on an 80/20 match (federal/local funds) for administrative, capital and planning expenses, and 50/50 for operating expenses.

Fares are \$0.75 per boarding and passengers can buy at a discount 10 rides in advance for \$5.00 or 20 rides in advance for \$10.00. This transit service is the only one within the city limits. A few Web sites list a Greyhound Bus line to Las Vegas, but current bus schedules for Greyhound do not indicate a bus stop in the city.

### **Railroad**

The Amtrak Southwest Chief route goes through Las Vegas, originating in Chicago, IL and terminating in Los Angeles, CA. The schedule (as of May 10, 2010) shows one commuter train in each direction stopping at the station every day (two train stops per day). The train drops off and picks up passengers at the intermodal facility located at 500 Railroad Avenue. The station has a self-service ticket kiosk for purchasing tickets; this station does not have a staffed Amtrak ticket office.

The 2009 station ridership was 4,456 passengers with ticket revenues of \$335,144. Ridership is relatively light in Las Vegas compared to Raton with 15,066 passengers per year, Lamy with 13,012, Albuquerque with 67,751 and Gallup with 12,340. The current Las Vegas Intermodal Center, built in 1878 and recently and beautifully restored, also serves as the city's visitor center.

Rail spurs exist at the rail yard behind the PNM Building and at the wood cluster industrial park (Medite site) northeast of the city. The spurs allow for loading and unloading of goods from rail cars, and could be used for the transport of industrial products or rail-related warehousing.

### **Airport**

The Army Corp of Engineers constructed the Las Vegas Municipal Airport in 1941, while the city formally received it in 1942. The airport has been rehabilitated over the years to include two runways with taxiways, a helipad, three apron areas for aircraft parking, a terminal and administrative building, aircraft storage hangars and fuel facilities. The airport is located 5.3 miles northeast of the city. The city has managed the airport over the past 15 years. The latest Federal Aviation Administration information available shows 11 aircraft are based at the airport. The airport has an average of 31 aircraft operations per day (over a 12-month period ending April 6, 2009).

**Exhibit VI-7**  
Las Vegas  
Municipal Airport

(Source: Google  
Map Maker)



Las Vegas Municipal Airport Runway 1 has a length of 5,004 feet and a width of 75 feet. Runway 2 has a length of 8,198 feet and a width of 75 feet. Both runways can handle single wheel aircraft weighing up to 20,000 pounds.

Runway 2 is longer than runways at the following nearby airports:

- Raton's La Mesa Park Airport Runway 2 at 6,328 feet
- Moriarty's Biplane Ranch Airport at 7,700 feet
- Santa Rosa Route 66 Airport Runway 1 at 5,013 feet
- Tukumcari Municipal Airport's Runway 1 at 7,102 feet

Runway 2 is not quite as long as:

- Santa Fe Municipal Airport's longest runway at 8,342 feet, with a width of 150 feet.
- Roswell International Air Center's Runway 3 at 9,999 feet, with a width of 100 feet

(Source: Flight Plan LLC, fltplan.com)

One cargo aircraft associated with UPS uses the airport five days per week. Military aircraft perform four to six operations per week with both helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. Military traffic prefers to use the airport in Las Vegas over the one in Santa Fe, which it considers to be crowded. Aircraft from Fort Carson Air Force Base (Colorado Springs), Air Force Academy (Colorado Springs), and Cannon Air Force Base (Clovis) periodically use the airport. Tanker planes fighting wildfire and flights for medical evacuations also use the airport.

Recent improvements at the airport include a new beacon light, seal-coated taxiways and apron, and new runway striping.

The airport's pilot lounge is a basic room in the terminal building. The airport is served by a well, and lacks city water and sewer.

Funding for the airport is a combination of state and federal grants. These funds pay for regular maintenance and operations, as well as capital improvements.

## **C. Issues and Opportunities - Transportation**

Some of the analyses and recommendations in the Comprehensive Master Plan are general (such as developing a master plan), but it also contains specific recommendations such as paving or reconstructing certain streets. The following recommendations are developed based on meetings with city staff, research of existing data and reports, and site reconnaissance.

### **Street Network**

Different levels of transportation planning are appropriate, depending on the size of the study area and topics addressed. The sections below discuss these levels.

#### ***Transportation Master Plan***

A transportation master plan is a broad effort to assess existing conditions in further detail and provide analysis for proposed improvements to the street network. The transportation master plan should address both the internal portions of the city and all major roadways within the study area. As part of the overall plan for the city's transportation needs, a traffic and transportation analysis should study network improvements, such as realignment of roads, acquisition of right-of-way for new streets, installation of medians, signalized intersections or other traffic control devices and street section changes.

The document should address area transportation needs and provide a priority plan for implementation of projects in the city's ICIP plan. In addition to the framework of street improvements, it should be recognized that other needs may also be met with the construction or renovation of streets, such as pedestrian and bicycle circulation. These improvements will provide a safe, convenient and interconnected environment for pedestrians while minimizing conflicts between automobiles and increasing walkability with sidewalks. Renovations would include bike lanes and multi-use facilities, and proper drainage improvements necessary to protect and preserve the existing and future improvements and investments in the city.

The city should develop a travel-demand model for the city and nearby vicinity to determine vehicle trip forecasts for the primary roadway network within the community, as well as to assess the impacts upon the external roadway network. The travel-demand model would use modeling assumptions consistent with similar models for other municipalities similar to the city of Las Vegas. The New Mexico Department of Transportation currently runs the travel-demand model for Las Vegas. The city should evaluate the size and location of the traffic analysis zones and modeling assumptions to determine whether they are adequately fine-grained to assist the city in forecasting traffic for city streets, in addition to state highways through the city.

Suggested goals of the transportation master plan are as follows:

- Establish a logical and functional hierarchy of streets and roads that will provide interconnected access for all modes of transportation throughout the city of Las Vegas
- Provide access for emergency services to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of present and future occupants of the city
- Establish a transportation network and support facilities that will encourage the convenient and safe travel through the recommended facilities
- Encourage mixed-use development in the city that provides employees and residents with alternate, non-polluting means of transportation

### ***Sub-Area Transportation Plan***

Sub-area planning examines a specific district within the city to understand its transportation characteristics and infrastructure needs. For example, the city should prepare a sub-area transportation plan if it is most interested in examining west side connectivity of streets in association with proposed development in or above Rodriguez Park or in the proposed annexation areas 1, 2, and 3.

### ***Corridor Transportation Plan***

A corridor plan focuses on a specific transportation facility, such as North 8th Street or Mills Avenue. A study at this level will establish the function, character and design criteria for a specific corridor. It should consider not just the needs of vehicular traffic, but also of other modes of travel. A successful corridor plan considers not only the corridor's mobility function, but also how its design responds to ways that the facility can help support its contiguous land uses as well as function as part of the public realm. Some corridor plans cover transportation, utilities and land use (e.g., zoning changes to create one or more new zones or a design overlay zone) with an integrated approach.

In the interest of controlling costs, the city should consider a phased approach to creating of the master plan, which focuses on high priority sub-areas of the city and corridors rather than undertaking a single large project.

### **Specific Transportation Corridors**

The transportation master plan, sub-area plan or corridor plan may include the following recommendations or the city may consider them independently to accomplish the goals of the city.

#### ***Grand Avenue***

The alignment of Grand Avenue is not perpendicular to many of the cross streets from the west, causing poor sight distance and line-of-sight constraints that could cause dangerous crashes and situations at the intersections. An ideal solution in terms of geometry would be to realign the cross streets to intersect perpendicularly to Grand Avenue, similar to the intersections of 7th and 9th Streets. While this solution is ideal, it is not always practical due to the right-of-way required for realignment, and historic districts that must conform to State Historic Preservation Office requirements. Many intersections have existing businesses or residences on

the corners; and acquisition of right-of-way, along with the construction of the new road may prove to be costly and inappropriate.

Another solution would be to provide limited access from Grand Avenue westbound to the cross streets, thereby minimizing the potential for turning conflicts. The intersections of Grand Avenue and 3rd and 5th Streets (no westbound traffic can turn from Grand Avenue) are examples of access management. Providing left turn lanes at the intersections where turns are allowed, such as at National Avenue is another potential way to reduce conflict.

The city should undertake a study including a traffic analysis and assessment of these alternatives and the benefits, and consequences of making any changes to the existing street section.

### ***University Avenue***

***Exhibit VI-8***  
*Visualization of  
University Avenue  
Gateway*



As a main entrance to the city from I-25, the city desires to establish a gateway on University Avenue near Grand Avenue that directs visitors to the downtown. The Downtown Action Plan also makes this recommendation. The city is interested in creating a two-way street along the entire way to the intersection with National Boulevard, providing an enhanced landscaped boulevard, and emphasizing prominent buildings in the Douglas Street business district. The city should also provide sidewalk maintenance and pedestrian crossings. The creation of a gateway is considered a catalytic project that should accomplish a number of objectives for the city, including:

- Inviting entrance to the city for visitors
- Enhanced wayfinding to downtown, as well as to other attractions in and near the city
- Supporting downtown revitalization
- Encouraging additional capital investments within the corridor

**Exhibit VI-9**  
Photograph of  
University Avenue  
Today



The remodeling of Old City Hall (also addressed in the Facilities and Parks Element and the Economic Development Element) is a specific catalytic project that has several transportation-related aspects. It is a capital improvement that will enhance University Avenue as the preferred route to the downtown. Angle parking on University Avenue would create more parking spaces in the downtown area for the convenience of shoppers and people doing business at the Development Center.

**Exhibit VI-10**  
Visualization  
of Remodeled  
Old City Hall on  
University Avenue



### ***12th Street Extension and Congestion in Residential Neighborhoods***

The extension of 12th Street from San Francisco Avenue to Mills Avenue would create a new route between the downtown and the 7th Street/Mills commercial area. It could relieve some of the traffic that currently burdens the residential neighborhoods south of Mills Avenue. This project is considered one of the catalytic projects for the city to accomplish a number of objectives, including:

- Creating a new two-lane street with bicycle lanes as a preferred, alternative route for traffic between downtown and Mills Avenue as well as neighborhoods to the north
  - Taking traffic off of 7th and 8th Streets through residential neighborhoods
- Enhancing wayfinding
- Increasing visibility of the River Walk path and Rio Gallinas bosque for enhanced accessibility and safety

While stop signs were set to discourage cut-through traffic, some traffic is unavoidable, due to the neighborhood's location between downtown and the Mills Avenue/7th Street commercial area. The city needs stronger enforcement of traffic laws to assure control of speeding in these neighborhoods.

**Exhibit VI-11**  
12th Street  
Extension and  
River Walk  
Extension

(Source: Main  
Street Action Plan)



**Exhibit VI-12**  
Visualization  
of 12th Street  
Extension and  
River Walk



**Hot Springs Avenue from Plaza to Mills New Section**

Hot Springs Avenue is a two-lane section with curb, gutter and sidewalk. Immediately north of the plaza, the road is narrow and is constricted from widening due to buildings located adjacent to the right-of-way. Farther north from the plaza, the section may be widened to accommodate future traffic volumes. Buildings have a setback. The city should analyze future land use for the area and

develop a new, appropriate street section that provides for vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle access.

### ***8th Street from Williams Drive to North City Limits***

The existing 8th Street is a two-lane rural section without adequate drainage. This problem causes damage to the road from runoff and ponding. The city should consider a new section to provide drainage and improve longevity of the road. It should analyze future land use for the area and develop a new, appropriate street section that provides for vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle access.

### ***Legion Drive Connection***

A major recommendation in the Community Master Plan adopted December 1997 addresses the need for a major east-west connection in the northern area of the city, in the vicinity of Legion Drive, that connects Grand Avenue to Hot Springs Boulevard. Major hospital and emergency facilities in the area include the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institution on Hot Springs Boulevard and the Alta Vista Regional Hospital at the eastern end of Legion Drive. Luna Community College is on the east end of the extension of Legion Drive.

The city has already completed several phases of this project. The ICIP plans for the final phases that include linking Legion westward to Cinder Road. The city should complete this final link to increase accessibility along this route.

### ***East-West Connection***

In addition to the Legion Drive connection, the city has considered the need for a future east-west connection north of existing development. This connection would take travelers north of the city to the Storrie Lake area and other recreational opportunities to the north.

This connection will affect the entire area, and population projections do not require urban development expanding substantially into this area during the next 20 years. If developed prematurely, this road could induce speculative development and sprawl; consequently, planners do not recommend this connection this time. The successful completion of Legion Drive should make this project unnecessary.

Signalized intersections along a future route may be necessary. Street sections will require a design for the future traffic counts. The city will need to analyze existing property ownership to determine costs of acquiring right-of-way, if necessary. Environmental concerns may be present and the city should undertake studies to recommend an alignment based on all critical factors.

### ***Drainage***

As part of any transportation project, the city should give consideration to drainage improvements. Preventing ponding and high velocity runoff from eroding the streets will help improve the longevity of the streets. Currently, runoff adversely affects many streets, which show signs of spalling and cracking. Improvements to these streets (such as within the Baca Avenue area, Moreland Street and Christine



Drive) will only be worth the cost of repair when accompanied by the installation of drainage infrastructure to prevent the same situation in the future.

### ***Unpaved streets***

Several existing unpaved streets are located throughout the city. The unpaved streets require more frequent maintenance than do paved streets. The reliability of the unpaved streets becomes questionable during major storm events. Identifying and paving these streets is a priority for the city to reduce maintenance costs and improve reliability. The most recent Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) has already included some streets such as Keen Street and Kavanaugh Street. The ICIP should add additional streets as needed.

### ***North-South Connection***

Members of the steering committee and the community have expressed interest in designating a north-south corridor that would allow traffic to flow freely without passing through the congested areas of downtown. A transportation master plan will be crucial to the identification of the route, since the corridor is affected along all the streets in the vicinity. The plan will consider existing land uses and effects of increasing traffic on those uses. The need for new street sections may be necessary if traffic increases along the corridor. Traffic signals and/or signage may be needed if the traffic counts warrant.

The city should select a route that maintains the existing integrity and character of the surrounding areas, for example, through old, established neighborhoods.

### ***7th Street Commercial District***

Commercial development is emerging along 7th Street from Mills Avenue to Legion Drive. Closer to the major intersections of Mills Avenue and Legion Drive are strip mall type shopping centers and drive-through facilities. Travelling north from Mills Avenue and south from Legion Drive, there is a transition from the strip-mall-type development to a mixture of residential and business. The existing street section is four lanes with a two-way turn lane in the center of the street. Several intersections within this area are shown in Exhibit VI-4, due to the high number of crashes.

As the area evolves, zoning regulations will dictate density of the development and appropriate uses for the land. The city should develop an improved street section to accommodate any increases in traffic and improve safety in the area. The existing sidewalk is not continuous along 7th Street. Future improvements to the area should include improvements to the sidewalk as well as street improvements.

### ***Access Management***

The management of access (i.e., curb cuts for driveways, entrances and parking lots) should be considered for all arterial roadways within the city of Las Vegas. A formal policy is needed for arterials to ensure the mobility and safety of motorists and pedestrians. A formal policy is not anticipated for collector roadways, however, the city should consider prohibiting single family residential access directly from collector roadways.

Access management policies should consider the land uses currently within the city and may require special accommodations within specific roadway sections. One such area will be the interchange areas, where policies should prohibit roadside access along the arterials that intersect I-25 between the signalized intersections to the east and west of each interchange. The city should develop a complete set of policies in conjunction with the NMDOT.

### ***Street Standards in Areas of Annexation***

The city will likely annex surrounding land in the future. The city then inherits the existing infrastructure (streets, utilities, etc.). This infrastructure can become expensive for the city to repair and maintain, particularly if the existing infrastructure does not meet city standards. The city should work with the county to develop minimum standards for areas that are priority annexation areas. By setting these standards, the city can ensure that the infrastructure being annexed will fit into the existing maintenance schedules, and can be properly budgeted for repair.

### ***Maintenance***

Maintenance of the street network depends on funding, and funding sources have decreased their awards in recent years. Cooperative Agreement Program (CO-OP) funds have been used in the past, but during the most recent fiscal year, only \$38,000 was available for road maintenance. The Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) funds provided only \$100,000 for road maintenance during the last fiscal year. Community Block Development Grants (CDBG) have been used in the past, but this funding source is now available only every other year, as opposed to yearly. This amount of money is not sufficient to maintain all the roads that need work. As funding becomes scarcer, it is imperative that the city have the ability to identify priority projects so that those funds may be used effectively.

The city of Las Vegas currently does not have a regular street and sidewalk maintenance program. One recommendation of the comprehensive master plan update is to implement a program that will inventory the condition of existing streets and sidewalks. The inventory could then help in identifying priority areas in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction. There should be programs for maintaining existing streets to extend the useful life, through slurry seal, chip seal, mill and inlay and other types of resurfacing. Total reconstruction may be the only option for some of the streets that are in disrepair. Prioritizing projects can enable applying funding as soon as it becomes available. A later section of this element discussion identifies potential funding sources.

In addition, street maintenance should be a database component of the citywide GIS system. This inventory will help prioritize maintenance needs, as well as allow for cross-referencing to land use, utilities and other GIS data fields.

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

### ***Inventory and Classification***

Improving the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will require an inventory of existing facilities and conditions of those facilities. The city will need to address accessibility so all members of the community can enjoy the facilities. The benefit to the inventory is the ability to use the funding sources effectively and at critical locations.

A major goal of developing the inventory will be to fill in the missing links by constructing sidewalks, striping bike lanes, and designating one or more multi-use trails. Safety concerns should be a primary criteria for prioritizing sidewalk work. For example, the university area has the most pedestrian traffic in the city, and should have a well-maintained and comprehensive sidewalk network. The city should improve the level of maintenance in this area.

The River Walk is a prime example of the discontinuity of these facilities. Identifying locations to tie the River Walk into the existing sidewalk network and bicycle route is crucial to encouraging usage among residents and visitors

Future roadway recommendations and design of all collector and higher functionally classified roadways should include non-motorized facilities. The facilities may include pathways for pedestrians and cyclists, sidewalks for pedestrians, and on-street bicycle lanes for cyclists. Open spaces may also include trails suitable for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. All intersections shall be constructed according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design criteria so that rights-of-way are accessible to all.

### ***South Access to River Walk***

The current River Walk has a north access area, with parking and signage, but there is no south access to the River Walk. The city should complete an access location near the Grand Avenue and Gallinas River crossing, also a recommendation of the Downtown Action Plan.

### **Transit Service**

Expansion of the Meadow City Express depends on funding availability, since federal and local city funds provide the majority of the budget. The current demand for service causes customers to be turned away at peak service hours. Another full-time driver would allow for ridership increases. The transportation master plan and analysis should address bus shelters and mass transit facilities.

### **Airport**

The Las Vegas Municipal Airport Action Plan, prepared by ASCG, Inc. (2007), addresses and provides recommendations for needed improvements at the airport. Improvements in the near future include a friction coat over the runway. Planning is also in progress to obtain a grant for terminal remodeling. The current ICIP has included items for the airport terminal and hangar remodeling (also recommended in the Airport Action Plan).

The city is interested in further developing and marketing the Municipal Airport as a component of its economic development strategy and to assure that air travel remains a viable alternative for emergency, business travel and other types of use. Airports are critical infrastructure for disaster response. The airport has special characteristics that can enhance economic development. With relatively long runways, the airport is capable of handling 727 and C-131 airplanes, and the 747 might be able to land there without improvements to pavements.

The airport should be a gateway to visitors — with a clean appearance, some new buildings and additional services, achieved by improvements. The city's goal is to continue providing the current general aviation types of service and to add support services, such as:

- Restaurant
- Additional hangars
- Rental cars (in the past there was rental car service)
- Improved pilot lounge
- Self-service fuel station

Public transportation from the airport into the city is currently unavailable. As a result, visitors flying into the airport cannot leave the airport unless they find a ride with city staff or private parties. The city should investigate public or private transportation services that will serve the airport. Car rentals offered at the airport would be another solution to this problem.

The city would like to have an airport mechanic. Currently, the closest mechanics are in Santa Fe, Estancia or Albuquerque.

A bicycle lane or bicycle path to the airport would encourage bicycling to the airport for recreation and create more visibility of the airport to the community.

#### **D. Existing Conditions - Storm Water Drainage**

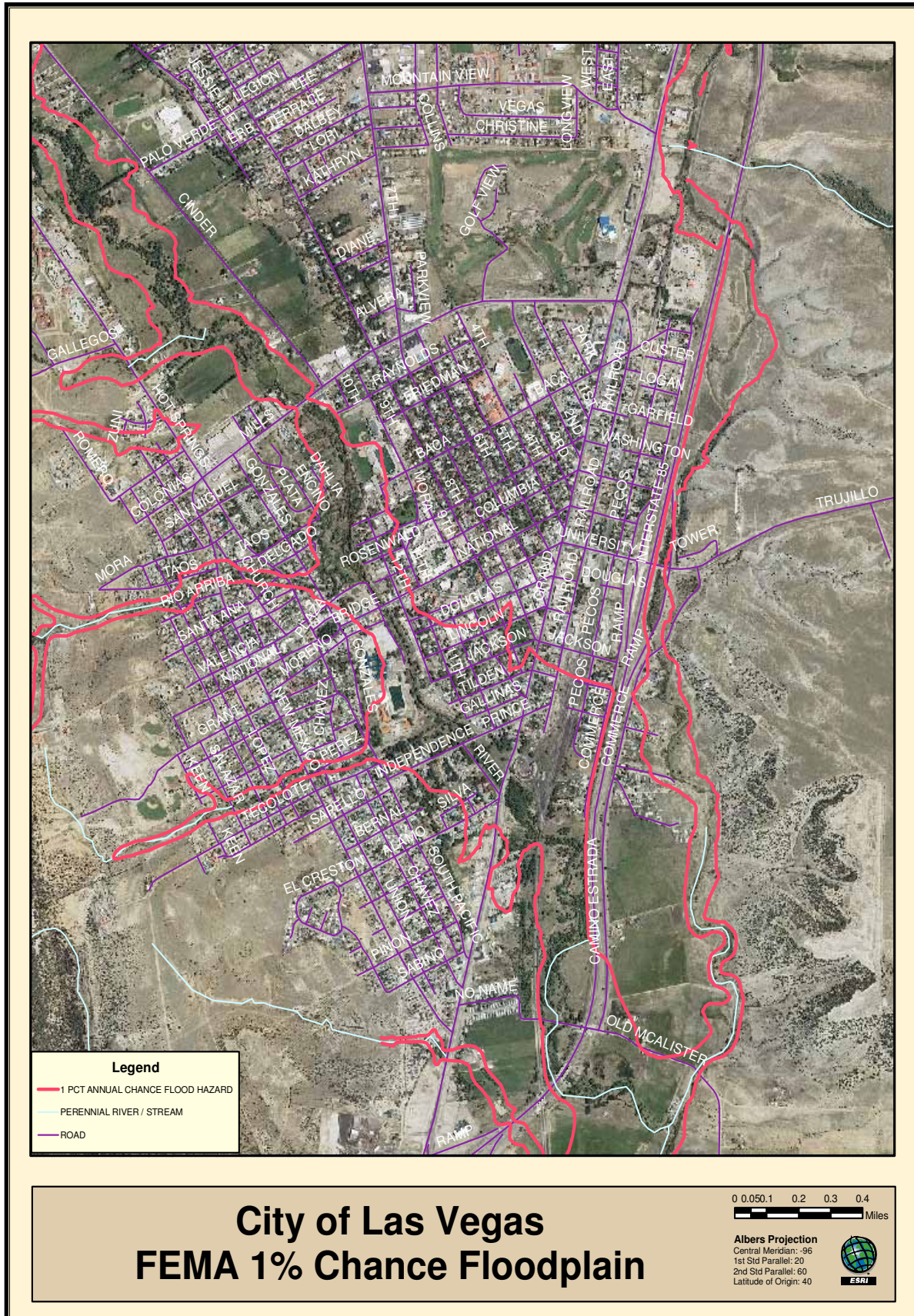
Drainage is a vital component of any city's infrastructure program. Drainage controls flooding, improves safety and prevents damage to other infrastructure, such as streets and sidewalks. The city of Las Vegas' drainage system is categorized into three components for this report — the Gallinas River, natural waterways and man-made drainage features.

##### ***Gallinas River***

The Gallinas River crosses into the city of Las Vegas at the northwest border, meanders in a southeasterly direction through the city, including the historic downtown, exits the city boundary at the southeastern border under Grand Avenue and Interstate 25, and terminates at the Pecos River southeast of the city. Several bridges cross the river in the city limits, as shown on Figure 1 on page 2. The watershed that affects the section of the river through the City boundaries is approximately 84 square miles. The watershed originates in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains northwest of the City and encompasses the arroyos shown on Figure 1.

**Exhibit VI-13**

100-year Floodplains Identified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration



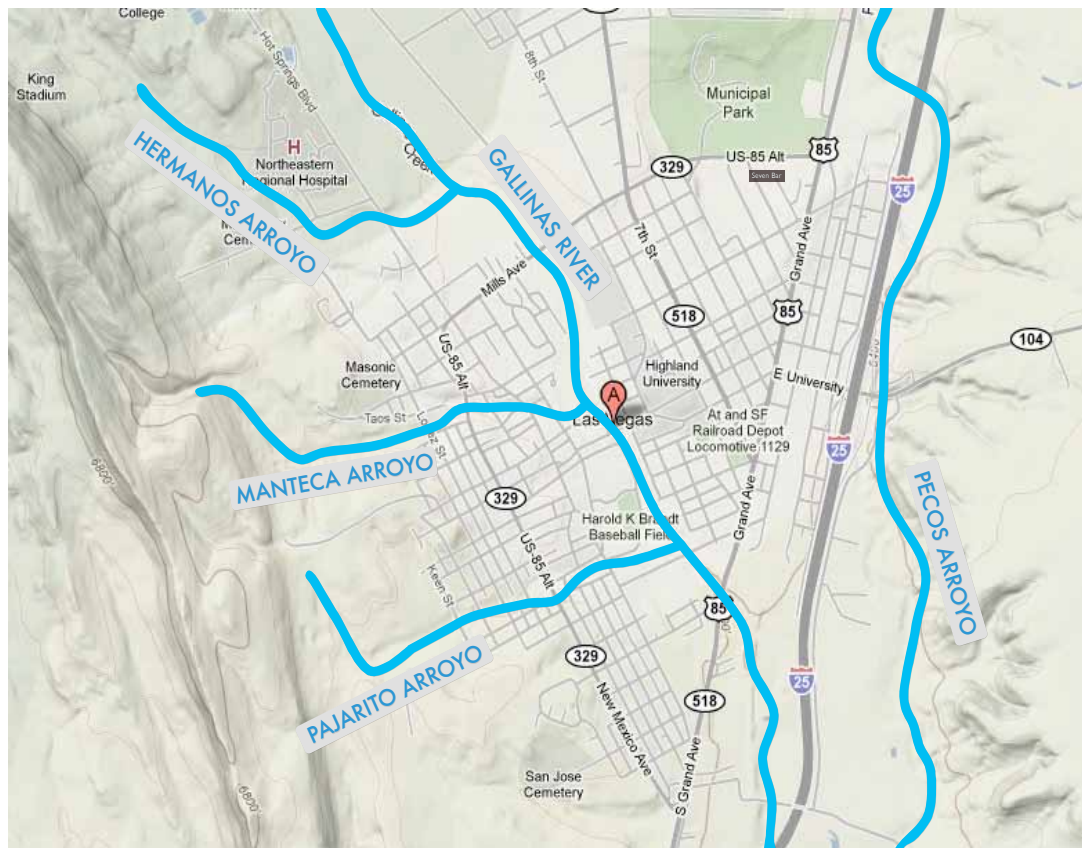
### **Natural Waterways**

Three major arroyos enter the west side of the Gallinas River—the Pajarito Arroyo, the Hermanos Arroyo and an unnamed arroyo according to the USGS mapping, but known as Manteca Arroyo, as shown on the exhibits below. The existing arroyos have experienced encroachment in several areas of the city. Private owners have filled in arroyos or altered the cross section of the arroyos, causing flooding because there is no defined channel for runoff. In some instances, it appears that structures may have been built over arroyos.

Access to arroyos for maintenance and improvement varies. Private landowners have fenced off sections of arroyos, preventing access. Trash and large debris accumulate in areas that cannot be cleaned, exacerbating flooding. Private landowners have also constructed outfall structures into the arroyos, possibly increasing the peak flow rates in the arroyos and causing flooding. There is no existing ordinance to regulate grading within and around arroyos.

The map below shows the 100-year (1% chance) floodplains through the city.

**Exhibit VI-14**  
Major Drainages in  
Las Vegas



### **Man-Made Drainage Features**

The city has an extensive storm drainage system comprised of inlets, pipes, channels and ponds. The effectiveness of the system varies throughout the city. Some areas have older storm drain systems that may have deteriorated or are no longer sized correctly. One example is in the Baca Avenue area. The existing storm drain is 4" clay and inlets that collect runoff are smaller than current standards. In addition to inadequate capacity, the inlets are difficult to clean,

**Exhibit VI-15**  
Diane Avenue  
Valley Gutter



causing clogging and flooding into the streets, as well as street deterioration (evident during site visits).

Within the east side of downtown area, inlets and culverts collect runoff into underground storm drains that discharge directly into the river. The city maintains the structures, but they can quickly become overgrown and blocked, as shown below, preventing runoff from reaching the river and possibly causing flooding.

Several other streets have unique drainage conditions. Kathryn Avenue in the northwest area of the city has an inverted crown that directs runoff into a valley gutter in the center of the street and ultimately into an area inlet at the low point of the gutter. This gutter and inlet may not be sized appropriately, because excessive water has been evident on the street, causing asphalt spalling.

Diane Avenue has a man-made concrete channel running perpendicular to the road and then discharging across the middle of the street in a valley gutter. Excessive runoff has damaged the gutter and surrounding asphalt.

Moreland Street and Christine Drive have a high volume of surface runoff, with the only collection point located at the extreme downstream end. The surface runoff has caused damage to the street, which is currently in need of reconstruction.

FEMA has completed recent floodplain mapping and the current 100-year (1% annual chance) floodplain (Exhibit VI-13). The floodplain encompasses homes and businesses along the arroyos, and a major portion of east Las Vegas.

The city does not have a drainage master plan that sets forth specific standards for drainage design and presents a comprehensive needed infrastructure program.

## **E. Issues and Opportunities - Storm Water**

### **Storm Water Drainage**

Planners recommend a drainage master plan for the city of Las Vegas. This plan will analyze existing conditions, including the natural and man-made drainage features and should propose future goals with recommendations for achieving those goals. A drainage master plan should address the following items, or the city may consider them independently to accomplish its goals.

### **Grading and Drainage Standards**

The city does not have an approved set of standards for grading and drainage projects that landowners may undertake. Without standards, people may alter drainage channels and inadvertently cause flooding. The city should implement a

standard process where any land disturbance greater than an acreage determined by the city will require a city permit. Also, any grading within a city-defined setback from arroyos or natural drainage ways should also require a permit. By requiring property owners to obtain permits and receive approval from the city, the city will be able to manage floodplains more effectively.

### **Floodplain Development**

Landowners have encroached on arroyos, reducing cross sections of the arroyos or even filling arroyos. This encroachment causes an increase in floodplains because the runoff no longer fits into the channel. To prevent this situation in the future, development near arroyos and the river should have special requirements regarding land use, grading and set backs from the floodplains.

The city should limit development within floodplains. It should maintain the cross section of natural waterways to let pass the volume of water in a “design storm,” as set forth by the city. Landowners should allow the city to access the waterways for maintenance and improvement. This access could be obtained through easements or city acquisition of rights-of-way.

For areas where it is not possible to increase the natural waterways to reduce the floodplain, the city should conduct an analysis to determine what kind of infrastructure could aid in decreasing the floodplain where development already exists, such as in east Las Vegas. This infrastructure may include retention or detention ponds, underground storm drain with inlets to capture surface runoff and diversions.

### **Drainage Infrastructure Improvements**

City’s Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan for 2012-2016 identified the specific areas of concern mentioned in this report, such as Kathryn Avenue, Diane Avenue, Moreland Street and Christine Drive. These streets all need of major reconstruction due to poor drainage infrastructure. By including drainage infrastructure with any street construction project, city streets will last longer.

The Baca Avenue drainage system in east Las Vegas will require a study to determine drainage basins and pipe sizes. Standard inlets sized to collect the surface runoff should replace existing inlets.

The city should study future outfall locations to the Gallinas River to determine appropriate alignments and use existing rights-of-way and easements where possible.

Priorities for drainage improvements are as follows (in order from top to bottom):

1. Sulzbacher, Rosenwald, and San Francisco Avenues neighborhood
2. 2nd Street and Baca Avenue drainage (including golf course)
3. Douglas Avenue and University Avenue
4. 12th Street area
5. Lincoln Street and Tilden Street area
6. West Side arroyos improvements



- a. Manteca
- b. Pajarito
- c. Hermanos
7. Montezuma and Keen Streets area
8. N. 8th Street extension area, including Kretz drainage

When the 12th Street extension is designed, the city will need to collect drainage from the area to the east and channel it through a culvert under the River Walk to the Gallinas River.

### **Water Quality and Water Harvesting**

Water quality is an important topic when discharging to the Gallinas River. The city must maintain total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) set forth by the New Mexico Environment Department and implement management practices. The city should develop standards to prevent pollution, such as through retention before release into the river to allow pollutants to settle out, or water quality structures that will strain out floatables. Native vegetation planted along drainage paths would slow down velocities and allow pollutants to settle out, and create a “natural” feel to the drainage paths.

Water harvesting regulations can reduce the amount of runoff from developed areas. Rainwater barrels, on-site detention or retention, and planted roadside ditches or medians that collect and hold water are all examples of harvesting that could be effective in Las Vegas.

### **Street and Drainage Standards in Annexation Areas**

The city will likely annex surrounding land in the future, as addressed in the Land Use Element. The city then inherits the existing infrastructure (streets, utilities, etc.). This infrastructure can become expensive for the city to repair and maintain, particularly if the existing infrastructure does not meet city standards. The city should work with the county to develop minimum standards for areas that are priority annexation areas. By setting these standards, the city can ensure that the infrastructure being annexed will fit into the existing maintenance schedules, and can be properly budgeted for repair.

## **F. Infrastructure Capital Improvement Program (ICIP) Projects: Transportation and Drainage**

The 2012-2016 ICIP identified the following projects in planning and programming.

**Exhibit VI-16**  
*Transportation  
and Drainage ICIP  
Projects*

**Transportation Projects Listed in Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan FY 2012-2016**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Moreno St. Drainage and Paving	\$650,000					\$650,000
Mainstreet Corridor Improvement Project	\$1,325,000	\$1,650,000	\$1,000,000	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$5,375,000
Seventh Street Reconstruction	\$250,000	\$3,000,000				\$3,250,000
Eighth Street Reconstruction	\$80,000	\$900,000				\$980,000
Legion Drive Phase VI	\$100,000	\$1,000,000				\$1,100,000
Citywide Pedestrian Facilities	\$660,000					\$660,000
Riverwalk Improvements	\$50,000	\$300,000				\$350,000
Mooreland Street Repavement	\$100,000					\$100,000
Christine Drive Repavement Project	\$100,000					\$100,000
Ridge Runner Road Reconstruction	\$200,000					\$200,000
Airport Terminal Remodel	\$198,000	\$198,000				\$396,000
T Hangars Renovation/Construction Airport	\$300,000					\$300,000
Dee Bibb Ind. Pk. Infrastructure Improvements	\$1,255,000					\$1,255,000
River Road Construction	\$192,000					\$192,000
Keen Street Construction	\$618,000					\$618,000
West National Street Construction	\$550,000					\$550,000
Salazar Street Construction	\$260,000					\$260,000
Kavanaugh Street Reconstruction	\$107,800					\$107,800
Valencia Street (San Pedro Street) Reconstruction	\$96,200					\$96,200
Street Surface Treatment	\$178,000	\$178,000	\$178,000	\$178,000	\$178,000	\$890,000
Fifth Street Reconstruction	\$994,146	\$301,382				\$1,295,528
Williams Drive Reconstruction	\$420,000	\$420,000				\$840,000
Rosenwald/Sulzbacher Reconstruction	\$50,000	\$450,000				\$500,000
Northern Arterial					\$16,500,000	\$16,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,734,146</b>	<b>\$8,397,382</b>	<b>\$1,178,000</b>	<b>\$878,000</b>	<b>\$17,378,000</b>	<b>\$36,565,528</b>

Source: City of Las Vegas, May 25, 2010.

**Drainage Projects Listed in Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan FY 2012-2016**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
City Wide Streets-Drainage & Utilities Improvement	\$200,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$2,600,000
South Pacific St. Drainage Improvements	\$330,000					\$330,000
Drainage Improvements to Arroyos		\$533,622	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000		\$3,533,622
Second Street Drainage		\$200,000	\$800,000			\$1,000,000
City Wide Drainage Improvements		\$100,000	\$1,070,000			\$1,170,000
Housing-Drainage Improvements		\$30,000				\$30,000
Kretz Drainage				\$200,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,200,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$530,000</b>	<b>\$1,463,622</b>	<b>\$3,970,000</b>	<b>\$2,300,000</b>	<b>\$1,600,000</b>	<b>\$9,863,622</b>

Source: City of Las Vegas, May 25, 2010.

**Transportation and Infrastructure Funding**

Funding is critical to the development of street and drainage improvements in the City. Over many years, the city has been highly successful in receiving grants and allocations, and using special districts for transportation improvements.

- The CDBG program has been particularly useful to Las Vegas for funding various street and drainage improvements.
- As noted under maintenance, the city has used COOP funds and MAP funds, however, their sums are currently much smaller than in past years.
- The city has also been able to tap discretionary funds awarded by the New Mexico Highway Commission.
- Special Assessment Districts and Special Improvement Districts of the 1970s, particularly on the west side, and while these programs were not popular, they provided improved streets and sidewalks.

With funding sources unavailable in recent years, cities all over the country are seeking alternative funding mechanisms to maintain and construct infrastructure.

### ***Strategic Approach to Coordinated Capital Projects***

Intergovernmental planning and cooperation are becoming increasingly important and advantageous. A recommended option is partnering with the school districts and San Miguel County to align capital projects. Pooling funds to leverage match requirements for state and federal funding is a crucial strategy as competition for grants continues to increase. For example, street reconstruction may require replacement of water, sanitary sewer, and storm drain along a designated bus route. In this case, the city and its partners might consider “pooling” Bus Route, County CAP, City MAP and other grants such as NMFA’s Water Trust Board and USACE’s Continuing Assistance Program (CAP) funds. This approach has been successful in other communities across the state.

The fiscal year 2012-2016 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (above) lists \$36 million in transportation projects and \$10 million in drainage improvement projects that need funding. Some examples of funding are listed below.

### ***Special Appropriations Project Funds***

The State of New Mexico General Fund, Capital Projects Fund, or proceeds generated by the sale of Severance Tax Bonds (STB) fund special appropriations projects. For projects funded through the General Fund, the money is available immediately upon enactment of the law, if an emergency clause is present. If the law does not provide an emergency clause, the monies become available on July 1st of the appropriating year, which is the beginning of the state fiscal year. STB monies are not available until the bonds are sold, which can take up to six months from the end of the Legislative session. Municipalities, counties, special districts, Indian tribes, and water and/or wastewater mutual domestic associations are all eligible entities.

### ***NMDOT Safety Program***

NMDOT Safety Funds are a reoccurring annual Local Government Road Fund (LGRF). The local Regional Planning Organizations and the State LGRF Coordinator administered these funds. Funding requests include costs for multiple phases such as survey, design, right-of-way, utility relocations and construction, and list the estimated costs associated with each phase. The application requires that a brief description of the existing conditions demonstrate a safety problem. A formal study or report attached to the application can supersede this section. If no formal study or report exists, the applicant may also provide a discussion of the completed safety analysis. The application requires proposed improvements or counter measures to improve the safety conditions. In January of each year, the program sends letters to municipalities soliciting safety projects.

### ***Municipal Arterial Program (MAP)***

The MAP assists municipalities to construct and reconstruct streets that are principal extensions of the rural state highway system and other streets which qualify under New Mexico Department of Transportation criteria.

### ***Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP)***

The COOP assists public entities to improve, construct, maintain, repair and pave public highways and streets. Local entities may also use the funds for acquisition of rights-of-ways (ROW) or for materials for the construction and improvement of ROW. Local entities must provide a 25% match for each project.

### ***Safe Routes to School (SRTS)***

SRTS funding begins with Phase 1, which is development of a SRTS Action Plan that identifies needed infrastructure improvements and other components that will encourage walking and bicycling to school. After Phase 1 is complete, Phase 2, the implementation phase, can begin. Applicants can apply for funding for infrastructure projects identified in Phase 1. Infrastructure projects can include traffic calming, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements and sidewalk improvements.

### ***Cooperative Marketing Grants***

The Cooperative Marketing Program provides funding to non-profit tourism-related organizations, local and tribal governments in the state for marketing the State of New Mexico as a tourist destination. The department encourages advertising and promotional efforts that maximize statewide and regional benefit, as well as year-round economic benefit. The program is an annual matching program. The program operates on a state fiscal year, July 1 through June 30. The department reimburses 33% to 50% of eligible costs per the agreement executed between the department and the organization. Percentage of match is based on the amount an organization expends annually on marketing efforts.

### ***Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)***

The Community Development Block Grant program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at HUD. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to 1,209 general units of local government and states.

### ***Bureau of Reclamation Water Smart Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP)***

The Department of the Interior is moving forward with the implementation of the CWMP, which was established in 2009 as part of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act (Public Law 111-11, Sections 6001-03). The Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to establish a new grant program to support the formation and development of locally led watershed groups, and to facilitate the development of multi-stakeholder watershed management projects. The purpose of the CWMP is to improve water quality and ecological resilience, and to reduce conflicts over water through collaborative conservation efforts in the management of local watersheds. The secretary may provide up to \$100,000 to first-phase grant recipients (planning and design) for a period of not more than three years. The federal share of expenditures accrued in first-phase grant activities shall be funded 100%. Second and third phase (construction and outreach programs) grants shall

not exceed 50% of the total cost of the activities.

#### ***New Mexico Finance Authority Water Trust Board***

By statute, the Water Trust Board may fund five types of projects: storage, conveyance and delivery of water, implementation of the Endangered Species Act collaborative programs, restoration and management of watersheds and flood prevention as well as conservation, recycling, treatment or reuse. Cost share is typically 80/20 state to local. Grants to local governments are a reoccurring annual program.

#### ***United States Army Corps of Engineers Section 14 (Flood Control Act of 1946) Emergency Streambank Erosion Protection***

Section 14 of the Flood Control Act of 1946 allows the Corps of Engineers to study, design and construct bank protection works in the interest of protecting public facilities (churches, roads, bridges, known cultural sites, public buildings, utilities, etc.). The federal limit is \$1.5 million per project, where the initial \$100,000 of the feasibility phase is 100% federal cost. The remainder of the feasibility phase is cost-shared 50/50. The design and implementation phase cost-sharing is 65% federal and 35% non-federal.

#### ***City Capital Improvement Funding***

The city has the proceeds of a recent quarter-cent gross receipts tax for infrastructure as well as other General Funds that may be available to pay for transportation improvements. City funds can directly pay for capital projects, provide matching funds, or provide a basis for bonding. In the long run, the city should consider developing a capital fund accumulating over years.

Special Assessment Districts are an appropriate method for funding area-specific improvements, requiring a contribution by property owners.

## **G. Goal, Objectives and Policies**

**Transportation Goal: Improve the transportation system to enhance safety, encourage all modes of transportation and meet existing and future needs of the community.**

### **1. Extend the useful life span of existing streets.**

- a. Develop a comprehensive maintenance program that includes classification of street conditions, prioritization of projects, and responsibility for projects (i.e., city repairs or hires private contractor).
- b. Explore technologies for street maintenance to extend useful life, such as regular slurry seal, mill and pavement overlay, microsurfacing, etc.
- c. Explore financing options for maintenance and repair of streets such as gross receipts tax, special assessment district, grants, etc.
- d. Improve drainage infrastructure as needed to prevent runoff from damaging the streets.
- e. Pave existing unpaved streets such as Keen Street, Tecolote Street and Kavanaugh.

2. **Develop different approaches to streets and streetscapes in particular areas of the city that are context-appropriate to preserve or create neighborhood or small-city character.**
  - a. Develop a rural street section standard that will accommodate drainage needs, particularly along 8th Street from Williams Drive north to the city limits and for future annexation areas that are rural in character.
  - b. Analyze 7th Street from Mills Avenue to Legion Drive to develop a street and streetscape section that will serve the existing and future uses of the street, and provide pedestrian, transit and bicycle accessibility without over-designing for automobile capacity.
  
3. **Encourage alternative modes of transportation, other than automobile, to alleviate congestion, improve air quality and improve the health of the community.**
  - a. Expand the existing Meadow City Express by adding an existing driver during peak hours to avoid turning down customers due to lack of availability.
  - b. Consider establishing a designated Meadow City Express route where demand response service records show a concentration of drop off/pick ups.
  - c. Establish designated bicycle routes using signage, particularly along areas that serve schools, hospitals and other major traffic generators.
  - d. Include bicycle lanes on streets or multiuse paths when improving streets or developing street sections.
  - e. Expand the river walk south of Prince Street between Grand Avenue and River Road and provide a parking area and signage for access to the river.
  - f. Develop a sidewalk inventory to determine where sidewalks are missing, the condition of existing sidewalks and priority projects for repair or construction.
  - g. Construct and repair sidewalks to form a contiguous sidewalk system that adheres to ADA standards for accessibility.
  
4. **Maintain and improve the municipal airport to assure that it serves as a viable option for traveling to and from Las Vegas.**
  - a. Promote greater use of the airport by travellers for business and pleasure, for providing air flight in support of new industrial development, and for fighting wildfires and other emergency response.
  - b. Update the Airport Master Plan regularly and follow recommendations to enhance the airport and make it a viable option for traveling to and from Las Vegas.
  
5. **Enhance safety within the street network.**
  - a. Use traffic-calming measures, such as bulb-out intersections, speed humps, and narrow traffic lanes to slow traffic through residential streets.
  - b. Provide visible signage for bike lanes, bike routes and multi-use trails.
  - c. Provide contiguous sidewalks with ADA-accessible intersections and

clearly marked and signed pedestrian crossings.

- 6. Encourage visitors and local residents to arrive, park and walk in the downtown area.**
  - a. Construct parking lots and/or structures to accommodate anticipated visitors to the downtown area.
  - b. Provide wayfinding signage to the downtown area from the Interstate and at key intersections within the community.
  - c. Implement streetscape improvements recommended in the Downtown Action Plan.
  
- 7. Provide alternative routes to alleviate congestion.**
  - a. Identify possible north-south routes to connect downtown with destinations to the north.
  - b. Study the north-south routes in a transportation study to ensure that added traffic will not have adverse effects on surrounding neighborhood and to determine if existing infrastructure will need to be upgraded.
  - c. Develop the extension of 12th Street from Sulzbacher to Mills Avenues.
  - d. Improve and complete missing links of Legion Drive as a major east-west route in the northern portion of the city.
  - e. Identify a long-range east-west route in the northern portion of the planning area that will add ability to cross the valley, to be developed only if a higher level of development occurs that is unforeseen in this area.
  
- 8. Develop trails and street improvements to make community assets that are a source of pride for the city more visible and usable.**
  - a. Use special studies, such as the Downtown Action Plan, to develop standards for street landscaping, building facades, and artwork.
  - b. Provide amenities to the community such as an expanded river walk and enhanced sidewalks and streets that are pleasant for traveling.
  - c. Install wayfinding signs to important locations such as the downtown area, railroad district, river walk, universities, etc.
  - d. Install gateway signage to distinguish important locations such as the downtown and river walk.
  
- 9. Develop street section requirements for annexation.**
  - a. Identify street section standards that the city will require for annexation to ensure that annexed areas will not put undue burden on city maintenance and repair budgets.
  - b. Work with San Miguel County to develop subdivision standards acceptable to the city for handling of street sections identified by the city as annexation priority areas within the Extraterritorial Zoning Area.
  - c. Explore options for special assessment districts on annexed areas to improve infrastructure.
  
- 10. Develop a transportation master plan**
  - a. Develop a plan that includes but is not limited to: land use

recommendations, street network guidelines, street spacing principles, and transportation goals and policies.

**11. Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level, and devise appropriate local funding options**

- a. Support transportation funding alternatives at the state level
  - Advocate for public-private partnerships, spending of all transportation-related revenues on transportation needs, indexing taxes to inflation, and establishing a state-level permanent fund.
- b. Seek NMDOT planning and programming of city projects.
- c. Update the city's annual ICIP.

**Storm Water Goal: Improve the drainage system to alleviate flooding hazards, prevent damage to streets and other improvements, and create riparian environments in appropriate places.**

**1. Develop standards for existing and proposed development along arroyos, rivers and other vital natural or man-made drainage ways such as channels and ponds.**

- a. Identify existing arroyos, rivers and natural channels as well as man-made drainage features such as ponds and channels to establish drainage ways.
- b. Develop a drainage master plan that studies the city's entire drainage structure.
- c. Prohibit development in identified floodplains.
- d. Establish criteria for future development along drainage ways, including setbacks, allowable discharges and design standards.
- e. Establish criteria for existing development along drainage ways to provide access for maintenance and improvement of the drainage way through easements, dedication of land, or other mechanism.
- f. Acquire easements and dedication of land for rights-of way, or develop alternative mechanisms to assure the continuing function of drainage channels.
- g. Create a grading and drainage development process that requires a permit issued through the city, allowing it to review and approve the earthwork prior to beginning any extensive work.
- h. Establish policies and standards for detention of storm water, including, but not limited to: on-site rainwater harvest areas, mulch basins in road medians or on edges of parking lots, and detention ponds.
- i. Encourage retention or new planting of vegetation next to drainage areas in order to slow down and increase absorption of storm water and keep natural landscape.

**2. Improve existing drainage improvements that are inadequate to handle the runoff generated from surrounding development or that have become costly and inefficient to maintain and repair.**

- a. Identify, prioritize and phase needed drainage infrastructure projects by areas of the city, such as the Baca Avenue drainage system, Kathryn Avenue, Diane Avenue, Moreland Street and Christine Drive drainage



system.

- b. Replace old non-standard type inlets with standard inlets for ease of maintenance and improved drainage.
- c. Combine drainage improvements with street improvements into single projects for enhanced efficiency and cost savings where feasible.

**3. Focus on improving drainage in the East Las Vegas Area and prevent flooding.**

- a. Implement a study to identify east Las Vegas watersheds and design an adequately sized storm drain system that outfalls to the Gallinas River.
- b. Maintain water quality of runoff to the river from developed areas.
- c. Use existing outfalls and easements to access the river.

**4. Develop drainage requirements for annexation.**

- a. Identify infrastructure standards that the city will require for annexation to ensure that annexed areas will not put an undue burden on city maintenance and repair budgets.
- b. Work with San Miguel County to develop subdivision standards acceptable to the city for handling street sections identified by the city as annexation priority areas within the Extraterritorial Zoning Area.
- c. Explore options for special assessment districts on annexed areas to improve infrastructure.

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## VII. Utilities Element

*The Utilities Element addresses at a general level natural gas, wastewater, effluent water re-use, water, and solid waste. This element is intended to provide an integrated perspective of and guide improvements to utilities.*

Utilities constitute essential public infrastructure networks that deliver services the entire community needs. The utilities systems are interconnected; consequently, planning for these systems should be integrated.

### A. Existing Conditions

#### Natural Gas

One natural gas transporter serves the city. It may become necessary in the future to add another transporter to increase reliability. The city owns storage tanks that are usually full. Five tanks currently serve as backup in case of an emergency, but at the time of this report, the tanks were not in use. The city plans to inspect the tanks and certify them for storage.

The majority of the city uses natural gas and there is also service outside of the city limits to users such as the World College. The city maintains and upgrades the gas lines, which consist primarily of PE lines, except for in the west Las Vegas area. The ICIP contains a planned project for upgrades of these lines to PE pipe. Fiscal year 2010 budget for maintenance and improvements was \$150,000. Collected fees are for usage and also for connection. New meters cost \$450 for residential and start at \$450 for commercial.

#### Waste Water

The existing waste water treatment plant began operation in 1980 and is located at the southern end of the city near the I-25/Grand Avenue interchange. The most recent upgrade of the system was in 2008 and included a capacity upgrade to 2.5 MGD.

According to the preliminary engineering report for the latest upgrade by Molzen-Corbin & Associates in 2003, the plant includes "... raw wastewater solids reduction using a comminutor, grit removal, primary clarification, activated sludge treatment, final clarification, disinfection with chlorine and dechlorination before discharge into the Gallinas River." The sludge is hauled to a disposal site located near the City airport and injected into the soil.

Approximately 95% of the collection system is comprised of PVC for the major trunk lines and PCP for the smaller lines. The remaining 5% is older pipe, such as clay, that needs replacement. The main area in need of replacement is in older areas of the west side. The most recent Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (2012-2016) includes waste water projects.

In order for a new users to connect to the city waste water system, they must obtain a permit from the Waste Water Development Department. Connection costs are based on the size of the water meter installed.



## **Solid Waste**

The city provides weekly residential trash pick-up and commercial pick-up at frequencies that vary according to business needs. The department has six drivers and one attendant. The city recently annexed the 60-acre transfer station site, housing facilities to process trash.

The city sends trash to a multi-county regional landfill located near Wagon Mound. Recycling is divided into different materials and handled by a variety of service providers:

- “White goods” are sold to the highest bidder
- Newspaper is hauled to Santa Fe
- Las Vegas pays Santa Fe to take mixed plastics
- Recycling businesses pay the city for cardboard and aluminum

The solid waste pick-up service area consists of the city of Las Vegas and parts of ETZ that are dense enough to make service routes feasible.

The city will use funding from past bond election in 2011 to improve the transfer station, reduce the amount of blowing trash, and purchase vehicles.

**Exhibit VII-2**  
*Solid Waste Facility*



## **B. Issues and Opportunities**

The purpose of the comprehensive master plan recommendations is to set standards and guidelines for how the city will proceed with development and improvements in the future. Some of the recommendations are general in nature (such as developing a master plan), but there are also specific recommendations such as replacing infrastructure on certain streets. The following recommendations are based on meetings with city staff, research of existing data and reports and site reconnaissance.

### **Natural Gas**

The city should explore a second option for gas transport to increase reliability of the supply of natural gas. This option would also include constructing a second transmission line. The city should maintain and upgrade backup tanks as needed to ensure a consistent supply of gas.

The city is planning an upgrade for the west side of Las Vegas to replace or refurbish identified existing lines.

### **Waste Water**

The city recently upgraded the waste water system. A 20-year plan which was the basis for the upgrade took into consideration population projections and growth of the city. The city should update the waste water master plan periodically to reassess the conditions of the city.

A portion of the city in the vicinity north of Mills Avenue on 8th Street does not have sufficient wastewater capacity in nearby interceptors to accommodate new development. There may be other areas in the city with this same limitation. The city should plan to upgrade interceptors, or alternately, develop sewer capacity in locations where some development can be removed from the at-capacity interceptors. The extension of a Cinder Road interceptor, in process, will free up the at-capacity interceptors for use by other properties in 8th Street neighborhoods.

*Water is currently the city's highest priority. Upon delivery of the Water PER, the Utilities Element should be updated to incorporate recommended policies, practices and projects described in the PER..*

### **Domestic Water**

Developers of the Water Preliminary Engineering Report, due later in 2011, are currently forming a detailed discussion of issues and opportunities for the city to improve its water supply. The consultant firms are assisting the city to prioritize projects, including a public involvement process.

Following is a preliminary list of issues and opportunities that was developed as part of the PER project.

- A portion of the water distribution system past its useful life and prone to leaks and catastrophic failure
- Undersized pipes impacting level of service and fire protection
- Inadequate raw (river) water storage
- Lack of redundancy in the potable water storage and distribution system
- Vulnerability of water supply to impairment from forest fires
- As much as 25% of water supplied "lost" or not fully accounted for
- Ongoing conflicts with other water users
- Groundwater sources insufficiently characterized
- Drought vulnerability
- Insufficient water rights
- Public perception of water problems perhaps creating disincentives for new businesses to relocate to the city

### **Reuse Water**

The preliminary engineering report (PER) will make recommendations for the overall system. The city would like to reach a goal of 10% reuse, and it is anticipated that the PER will provide recommendations for the expansion of the system, including holding areas, phasing and projected costs.

## Solid Waste

The city is considering various alternatives for managing waste, from taking over waste transportation to the feasibility of privatization.

## Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) Projects

The city has identified over \$107 million in water, wastewater, natural gas and treated effluent water ICIP projects during the next five years.

### Exhibit VII-3

#### ICIP Utilities Projects

*ICIP projects are regularly revisited and may change due to redefining and reprioritizing these projects. In particular, it is anticipated that the Water PER will change project priorities.*

Utilities Projects Listed in Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan FY 2012-2016

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
Water System Improvements	\$10,400,000	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000			\$20,400,000
Water Storage Capacity	\$10,800,000					\$10,800,000
Water Delivery System Repair	\$6,325,000	\$2,750,000				\$9,075,000
Citywide Streets - Drainage & Utilities Improvements	\$200,000	\$60,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$2,060,000
Wastewater System Improvements	\$1,650,000					\$1,650,000
Transfer Station Facility Repairs	\$700,000	\$700,000				\$1,400,000
Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade	\$779,403					\$779,403
Replacement of Solid Waste Heavy Equipment	\$350,000	\$350,000				\$700,000
Gallinas Hydro Electric Project	\$425,000	\$5,000,000	\$17,347,666	\$13,347,667	\$13,347,667	\$49,468,000
Water Treatment Plant Improvements	\$825,000					\$825,000
Water Diversion Dam Phase II	\$3,000,000					\$3,000,000
Wastewater Collection System	\$1,950,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$2,750,000
Replacement of PVC Gas Lines in Westside	\$120,000					\$120,000
Gas Transmission Line Replacement and Repairs	\$800,000					\$800,000
Effluent Water Line-Redirect Project	\$1,000,000					\$1,000,000
Replacement of PVC Gas Lines/Transmission Lines	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$50,000			\$1,050,000
Water, Gas Lines to Airport	\$1,350,000					\$1,350,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,174,403</b>	<b>\$14,560,000</b>	<b>\$23,197,666</b>	<b>\$14,147,667</b>	<b>\$14,147,667</b>	<b>\$107,227,403</b>

Source: City of Las Vegas, September 20, 2010.

## C. Goals Objective and Policies

**Water Goal: Achieve sustainability of the city's water supply through capability to reliably deliver enough water in periods of drought and have sufficient water available to support economic and population growth in the future.**

1. Complete the preliminary engineering report regarding water and implement recommendations in the report.
2. Take steps to address the following measures in order to improve reliability of the city's water supply:
  - a. Improve water supply
  - b. Reduce water losses
  - c. Improve system efficiencies including metering, SCADA and use of other appropriate technologies
  - d. Improve dam safety
  - e. Reduce city's vulnerability to drought
  - f. Meet future demand
  - g. Anticipate and mitigate climate change impacts
  - h. Totally reuse treated wastewater for various community needs
  - i. Acquire water rights sufficient for the city to accommodate current and future water demand
  - j. Regionalize services where possible to achieve efficiencies and greater reliability

- k. Reduce competition and tensions with other water users in the Gallinas Basin
- l. Develop groundwater resources and integrate with surface water supply

**Waste Water Goal: Operate waste water collection and treatment to meet high health and safety standards, while making available a secondary source of water for reuse in the city.**

1. Periodically update waste water master plan.
2. Invest in waste water improvements identified in the ICIP.
3. Plan for extending waste water service to areas annexed to the city.

**Natural Gas Goal: Decrease costs and increase reliability of the natural gas system.**

1. Explore alternative suppliers of natural gas to the city in order to save money.
2. Repair and use the existing backup holding tanks to maintain emergency reserves.
3. Consider energy conservation measures recommended in the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element pertaining to natural gas, including: inverse pricing of natural gas, promotion of alternative fuels for city vehicles, space heating conservation in city buildings and in city-owned housing facilities.

**Treated Effluent Goal: Expand the current treated effluent reuse system and increase service area.**

1. Complete the preliminary engineering report for future reuse lines and implement recommendations in the report regarding treated effluent reuse water.

**Solid Waste Goal: Manage solid waste collection, landfilling and recycling to provide an efficient public service, discourage illegal dumping, and reduce the stream of waste ending up in a landfill.**

1. Consider various alternatives for managing waste, from taking over waste transportation to the feasibility of privatization.
  - a. Make capital improvements necessary to maintain and improve the solid waste operations, as appropriate to handle the city's responsibilities.
2. Promote recycling of materials.
3. Provide services to non-city residents priced to pay for the city's efforts.



## VIII. Facilities and Parks Element

*The Facilities and Parks Element is intended to guide improvements to city-occupied facilities and city-operated parks and playfields.*

*In this element, ICIP projects are cited by individual facility. It should be noted that ICIP projects are regularly revisited and may change due to redefining and reprioritizing of projects. In particular, it is anticipated that the Water PER will change project priorities.*

### A. Introduction

The purpose of the Facilities and Parks Element is to assess facilities and parks conditions and to guide short-and long-term strategies that will result in high quality, well-maintained facilities and parks for the city of Las Vegas. Information about city buildings is presented in Section B, with parks information following in Section C.

### B. City Facilities

#### Existing Conditions of City Buildings

City facilities provide essential governmental services and amenities to residents and businesses of the community. Because of their important stature in the community, civic buildings and grounds that are used by the public are often highly accessible, prominently sited, and contain beautiful architectural features.

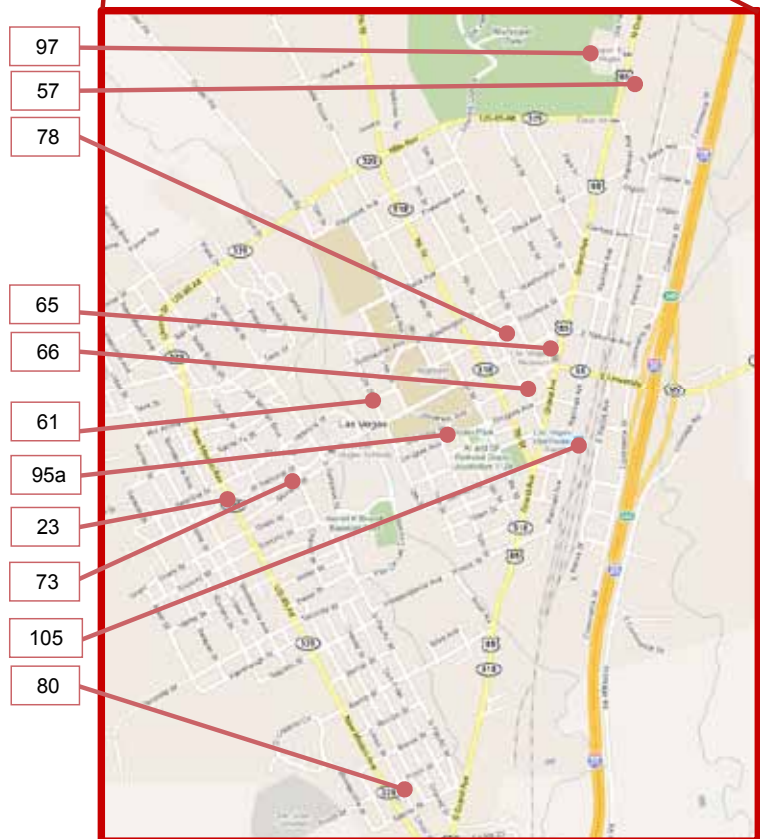
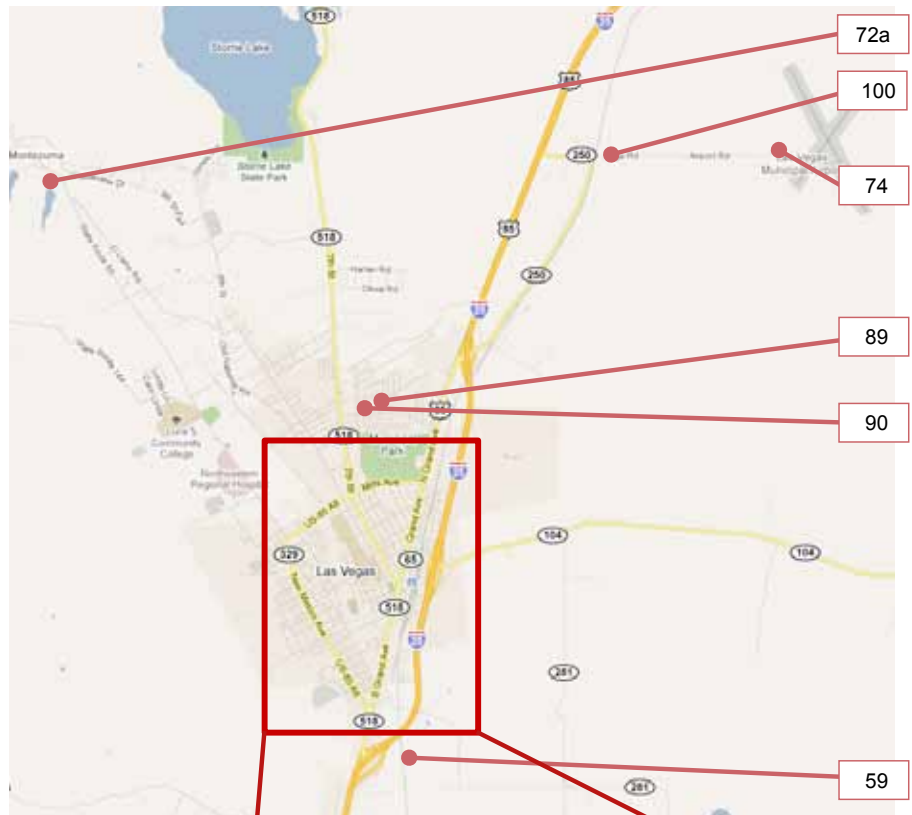
In order to provide guidance on improvements, planners conducted an assessment of the conditions and usability of the facilities that house city of Las Vegas employees and public services, and that citizens visit for various city-sponsored public functions. This element compiles information about each facility and recommends specific actions and projects to improve the condition and usability of city facilities over the next 20 years.

#### Locations

There are 20 locations with facilities within and outside of the city limits that house staff and provide services to the community. Some of the sites house more than one facility. The map in Exhibit VIII-1 shows the locations of the facilities.

The city of Las Vegas owns other properties that are vacant or leased by other organizations, or that do not contain facilities. This analysis does not cover these properties, with the exception of the Senior Center and the Veterans Center/Old Armory, both of which the city leases to outside agencies and which are described in this element.

**Exhibit VIII-1**  
*Map of Las Vegas Facilities*



- LEGEND OF FACILITIES**
- 23 E Romero Fire Station
  - 57 George Arrellanes Municipal Complex and Animal Shelter
  - 59 Wastewater Plant
  - 61 Utilities Center
  - 65 Municipal Court and Las Vegas Museum
  - 66 Old City Hall and Unmanned Fire Station
  - 72a Water Treatment Plant
  - 73 Police Department
  - 74 Airport
  - 78 Carnegie Library
  - 80 Senior Center
  - 89 Housing Authority Offices
  - 90 H Ledoux Fire Station
  - 97 Abe Montoya Recreation Center
  - 100 Solid Waste Transfer Station
  - 105 Intermodal Center

## 1. Facilities Descriptions

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### Administrative Facilities

#### George Arellanes Municipal Complex

**Address:** 1700 North Grand

**Building ID number:** 57

**Square footage:** approximately 11,200 gross square feet (gsf)

**Number of staff:** 65

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas



**Purpose/services offered:** Administrative functions of city government, including Mayor and City Council, City Manager, City Clerk, Community Development, Human Resources, Finance, City Attorney, as well as Public Works. The Animal Shelter is located on an adjacent site.

**Description of facility:** This campus was originally owned and operated by the New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department and acquired and remodeled for city use by the city of Las Vegas in the early 1970s. Further remodels and additions occurred in 1991 and 2009. The facility currently consists of a main building with office and meeting uses, an annex which is a converted laboratory with office uses, and two warehouse buildings with storage, garaging, and some office uses. The condition of these facilities is fair. The roof was replaced in 2009. Although the facilities are maintained at an operational level, the exterior and interior appearances are disjointed and worn. A remodeling project was underway as of late 2010, with completion of Phase II expected in 2011 (Phase I was a remodel of Council Chambers). This project will enhance security in the lobby and update some surface finishes. Space will also be created to bring a customer service cashier back to the Municipal Complex. Two additional construction phases are planned for 2011, with budgets of \$120,000 to \$130,000 per phase.

**Issues and Needs:** Building and systems are aged and need to be updated, although a phased renovation process is underway. Finishes in much of the complex are worn and need replacement. The main building is crowded and egress clearances are insufficient. Additional space for staff should be found.

The power supply is insufficient and the electrical distribution system is not grounded. The Community Development offices, located in an annex, are extremely crowded. The warehouse buildings are not appropriate for housing staff.

A long-range phased transition plan under consideration by the city identifies administrative functions that would move to downtown Las Vegas. Once those functions have moved, other functions could move into the Municipal Complex, i.e., utilities. These transitions would result in a more spacious and functional work environment for staff. The level of effort in phased upgrades to the main building (see ICIP projects below) will support housing public works and utilities once administrative functions have moved.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-05 *Project Title: Downtown Revitalization Project*

This project includes four key subprojects. The fourth project is the acquisition of a property with structures in the downtown area and renovation of City Hall to house the majority of administrative functions currently residing at this complex.

2012-11 *Project Title: Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

2016-02 *Project Title: Records Storage/Archives Facility*

This project is construction of a building to house records, files, archival materials, and equipment for City Clerk’s Office and Community Development Department.

**Facility Adequacy:** Neither space, location, nor condition are adequate for current occupants to provide services to the community and accommodate staff. Space and location will be resolved with relocation of current occupants. However, improving energy efficiency and resolving deficiencies need attention after current occupants relocate and before new occupants move in. Space will likely be adequate for proposed new occupants. The condition of the Community Development annex does not merit remodeling expense. It should be replaced with storage facility. Existing warehouse facilities should continue use as equipment and supplies storage. Those buildings should not house personnel.

**Public Safety  
Facilities**

**Police Station**

**Address:** 318 Moreno Street

**Building ID number:** 73

**Square footage:** Approximately 15,600 gsf

**Number/type of staff:** 54 (not all staff have desks at this facility)

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas and larger region for narcotics programs

**Purpose/services offered:** Main police station with dispatch, offices, evidence archives, and other functions associated with law enforcement



**Description of facility:** This building is an amalgamation of three separate buildings, the oldest of which was formerly a home and possibly dates to the turn of the 20th century. The easternmost portion of the building was a retail store, and the majority of the space which comprises the police station was added in approximately 1984. A remodel of the entire facility was completed in December 2010 and cost \$198,000, funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants. A roof replacement costing \$98,000 was a legislative appropriation. Renovations also updated systems, provided handicapped access, and met state accreditation criteria for archiving evidence.

**Issues and Needs:** The proposed remodel should resolve most issues and needs of the current facility. Parking availability next to the facility remains inadequate due to the Police Department's location on the Plaza, which creates a demand for parking for shoppers. Over the long term, the city should explore opportunities to acquire vacant properties suitable for parking and located near the police station.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-17 Project Title: Police Administration Building Expansion & Renovation – Phase II

This project remodels the Police Administration Building and includes land acquisition, building expansion and renovation, improvement and expansion of centralized emergency communications center for local and state entities, HVAC system upgrades, ADA compliance, additional parking for police facility and public.

2013-09 Project Title: Land Acquisition/Police Department

This project is the purchase and development of land located on Moreno and South Pacific Streets.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space, and condition should now be adequate for existing use and community access, with the exception of parking.

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**E. Romero Fire Station**

**Address:** 1901 NM Avenue

**Building ID number:** 23

**Square footage:** Approximately 5,875 gsf

**Number/type of staff:** 2 administrative staff, 3 firefighters on duty at any time

**Service area:** Southern part of city limits



**Purpose/services offered:** Staffed fire station

**Description of facility:** This facility was built in 1974. It replaced the original E. Romero Fire Station located on Bridge Street shortly after Las Vegas became a consolidated city in 1970. Its service area focuses on Las Vegas' south and west side but also covers the rest of the city and region when needed.

The truck garage is a single-story structure and the attached residential/administrative portion is two stories. The basement of the latter contains several small office rooms used mainly for storage around a central space. These spaces are rarely used due to the lack of adequate ventilation and exiting. Staff uses the functioning spaces on the upper floor on a daily basis. The residential portion is occupied 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with a minimum of three firefighters in residence at any time. The truck garage is adequately sized for the number of vehicles it needs to house.

**Issues and Needs:** The building and systems are aged and need to be updated. Ventilation and exiting from the basement do not meet code but would otherwise be usable. The building was reroofed in about 2008 and has been recently been tested for mold.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-11 Project Title: *Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

2013-07 Project Title: *Remodel Fire Stations 1 & 2 (partially completed as of 12/2010)*

This project includes window and door replacement and heating and cooling unit upgrade. Remodel to include repaving of entry to bay areas at the E. Romero Fire Station 2.

**Facility Adequacy:** The space and location are adequate to provide services to the community and to accommodate staff. Energy efficiency needs improvement and deficiencies resolved. The major challenge is to determine uses for the underused space in the basement and bring that area up to code compliance.

*EMS is now private. There is some interest in it being a city function. If it is housed in the fire stations, an additional assessment of space needs should be conducted.*

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**Harold Ledoux Fire Station**

**Address:** 604 Legion Drive

**Building ID number:** 90

**Square footage:** Approximately 5,950 gsf

**Number/type of staff:** 3 administration, 3 firefighters in residence at all times

**Service area:** Northern part of city limits, but serving the entire city and region when needed



**Purpose/services offered:** Staffed fire station.

**Description of facility:** Built in 1994 to serve the expanding northern part of Las Vegas, this facility is constructed from concrete masonry units with a sloped metal roof. A new office area created last year at the northeast corner of the building accommodates reception staff. The HVAC system, which exhausts air from the garage to protect the air quality of the office and residential areas, is a model for other facilities that lack adequate garage ventilation, according to the Risk Management and Safety Coordinator.

**Issues and Needs:** The building is in excellent condition but staff report that space is cramped, particularly space to house fire trucks and other rolling stock. The fire chief hopes to build a garage extension to the west of the existing building.

According to the fire chief, local fire departments are experiencing ever-increasing demands to conduct and inspect existing and new building construction for fire safety and codes compliance, and to evaluate and approve plans for proposed new construction. This site also houses emergency medical services.

*Vacant land on the Harold Ledoux Fire Station site is appropriate for future facility expansion*



**Facility Adequacy:** The location and condition are adequate for the services provided. The fire station may eventually require additional space, but it is available.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-11 *Project Title: Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

2013-07 *Project Title: Remodel Fire Stations 1 and 2 (partially completed). Also includes remodeling to E. Romero Fire Station.*

This project includes window and door replacement, and heating and cooling unit upgrades. Remodel to include repaving of entry to bay areas at the E. Romero Fire Station 2.

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**Old City Hall and Fire Station**

**Address:** 626 6th Street

**Building ID number:** 66

**Square footage:** 11,645 gsf

**Number/type of staff:** included in staff numbers for police station

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas, with a regional narcotics program coordinated through the department

**Purpose/services offered:** Unmanned fire station for the downtown area, and space for the narcotics division of City Police Department. Neither function receives visitors.



**Description of facility:** The building is a two-story stone structure built in 1891. It was the first Las Vegas building for municipal functions. It was also the first

municipal building in New Mexico and is on the National Register. The fire station was expanded to the south side in 1955. Another addition on the east side was added for police department use in the late 1960s or early 1970s.

This building is important in the story of the development of the city of Las Vegas. It represents a key opportunity for economic development through heritage tourism and is in the Downtown Revitalization Project. The city is considering it for housing the Community Development staff as well as the MainStreet program, the Chamber of Commerce, the Las Vegas Economic Development Corporation, and the Small Business Development Corporation.

**Issues and Needs:** This historic building needs stabilization to prevent deterioration of historic features due to exposure to the elements. A variety of environmental conditions have made the facility unacceptable for occupancy. Design of the building remodel will address ADA accessibility and other codes. Renovation and restoration of this building, which is listed on national and state historic registers, will require compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of historic properties (<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standguide/>).

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-05 Project Title: *Downtown Revitalization project*

This project is the redevelopment of two key properties that will promote the revitalization of the historic downtown area and provide positive economic development. The city-owned properties are the former Safeway site and the historic (1898) City Hall building.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space and historic nature of the facility are appropriate for the proposed future use. A significant challenge will be to bring the facility up to condition and energy efficiency adequacy, with special attention to compliance with codes and historic preservation standards.

**Cultural and Recreational Facilities**

**Carnegie Library**

**Address:** 500 National Avenue

**Building ID number:** 78

**Square footage:** Approximately 3,100 gsf

**Number of staff:** 4 FT, 3 PT

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas, San Miguel County, and some users from Mora County



**Purpose/services offered:** The Carnegie Public Library is committed to providing and promoting open and equal access to the resources and services of the library in order to meet the informational, educational and cultural needs of the community. This building is the community's only public library, but has a library materials



sharing arrangement with Highlands University library.

**Description of facility:** Built in 1904 in the style of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, this building was designed by the Chicago-based architecture firm of Rapp and Rapp, which also designed the Chaves County Courthouse. The building has functioned as a library since it opened. A grant from the foundation of philanthropist Andrew Carnegie funded building construction, which was provided according to Carnegie's belief in a society based on merit, where anyone who worked hard could become successful. The library is on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Issues and Needs:** Due to failing downspouts and lack of gutters, the exterior of the building has damage from water draining from the roof, such as rotting of wooden members and windows, deterioration of brick surfaces, and erosion and spalling of cement covering the brick window sills. Cracks in exterior window and door lintels from settling have telegraphed into the brick above. The building has an elevator, but staff does not feel it is adequate. Space within the facility is insufficient to house programs that the community desires and the city is considering several possibilities to increase public library services to the community.

The poor location of the parking lot and issues with the sprinkler system have caused drainage problems at the site, which is also an historic park. The parks section discussion of this report describes the park in further detail.

Future expansion of library services should consider which programs will make best use of this building and what is in the best interest of library users. The city is considering housing a collection there that focuses on the history of the area, possibly containing archives and research collections and databases. At the same time, the library location remains a good one for general collections that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

With an existing facility that the community has outgrown, any expansion of the Carnegie Library functions will require additional library facilities built elsewhere. The city should consider a joint-use library shared with Highlands University or a new, stand-alone branch public library.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-25 *Project Title: Carnegie Library Renovation*

The project will repair existing areas of damage to this historical landmark, including roof, gutters, above-grade exterior walls, main entrance columns and stairs, concrete at grade around exterior of building, walls below grade and interior mold removal. The project would also incorporate space planning, design and construction of an expansion.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location is appropriate for existing use and community access. Condition and energy efficiency need attention. Its major challenge is space that is too limited for programs offered.

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## City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial Collection / Municipal Court

**Address:** 727 Grand Avenue

**Building ID number:** 65

**Square footage:** This is an approximately 6,800 gsf building on three levels (split-level layout). The museum occupies approximately 3,720 gsf on the main floor with approximately 2,600 gsf of archive storage space in the

basement. The Municipal Courts occupy approximately 3,040 gsf on the upper floor, which includes offices, a courtroom, and storage space.

**Number/type of staff:** Museum: 2 FT, 2 PT. Municipal court: 5 FT.

**Service areas:** Museum: visitors from the Las Vegas area and tourists from across the U.S. Courts: entire city of Las Vegas



**Purpose/services offered:** The City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial Collection engage visitors in the rich history of the Las Vegas area. The Municipal Court wing houses court administrative functions and a courtroom for court proceedings.

**Description of facility:** This building was formerly the municipal building, constructed in 1940 as a Works Progress Administration project in the Spanish pueblo architectural style. The city renovated it in the early 1970s as the museum and court building when the municipal complex moved to its present site. The exterior walls are rock with a plaster interior finish. The building is located on Grand Avenue at the corner of National and is neither adjacent to other historic public structures nor along a scenic or tourist route. The museum is an element of the Community Development Department.

**Issues and Needs:** This historic building is experiencing damage due to water infiltration at grade and at the roof, causing structural damage and deterioration of interior finishes. It potentially could develop mold. A conservation assessment report in 2008 outlined stabilization issues and solutions. Some areas potentially could have lead paint and asbestos. An EPA Phase I Environmental Assessment of the facility outlines these issues. Systems and finishes are old and need upgrading, including roofing and electrical, and only some parts of the building are ADA-compliant. The building needs an elevator to make all three levels ADA-compliant. The court spaces are very cramped, especially the courtroom, and additional space should be found to house staff. Since a more centralized location with adjacency to other city functions would be more desirable, the city is considering relocation of the courts function. The museum needs archive space and program space. The addition of the spaces that the courts now occupy would provide ample expansion space. Resolution 07-12 passed in April 2007 by the City Council supported this arrangement.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-29 Project Title: City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial Collection Renovation

The project would expand the museum into spaces that the municipal court currently occupies, address negative situations, repair existing areas of damage, upgrade systems, manage and enhance energy conservation, address safety and ADA concerns, and plan, design, and install new exhibits geared toward the New Mexico statehood centennial in 2012.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location and historic nature of the facility are appropriate for the museum, but space is inadequate. Neither space nor location for providing services to the community are adequate for the courts, because that space is cramped and the building is not centrally located or adjacent to other municipal functions. If the courts relocate, the facility would meet the space needs of the museum. The condition of the energy efficiency of systems and the building envelope need attention.

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**Abe Montoya Recreation Center**

**Address:** 1751 N. Grand Avenue

**Building ID number:** 97

**Square footage:** approximately 60,400 gsf

**Number of staff:** 11 FT, 11 PT

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas



**Purpose/services offered:** Indoor and outdoor recreational facilities and programs for all ages

**Description of facility:** Built in two phases. Phase 1 includes reception, pool, fitness center, locker rooms, exercise rooms, activity/game area, kitchen, and offices. Phase 2 includes a gymnasium with two basketball courts, racquetball courts, and locker rooms. The Phase 1 building is constructed from concrete with exposed concrete masonry units at the exterior. Phase 2 has a stucco exterior. Roofs are a combination of flat thermoplastic olefin (TPO membrane) and sloped metal.

**Issues and Needs:** The facility is relatively new, well used and well maintained. However, lack of effective waterproofing to prevent condensation and problems created by a former pool operator have caused water damage to the roof and corrosion of metal structural members in the pool area, resulting in multiple condition issues.

Roofing problems include: failing parapet coping or sealant at counter-flashing at flat roofing, missing gutter and downspout members, missing snow breaks, failed sealant at roof penetrations, and flawed roofing installation at the shed roof over the mechanical floor. These roofing failures result in water penetration inside the building which causes water damage to interior finishes, including serious rust spalling of the structural decking over the mechanical floor. Pool waterproofing

problems include: rusting and structurally compromised roofing deck and staining of walls and floor surfaces.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-11 *Project Title: Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

2012-28 *Project Title: Swimming Pool Re-roof and repair Pool Pac HVAC*

The recreation swimming pool roof is in critical need of repair/replacement. Solar panels will provide a cost-effective use of solar energy. Severe moisture build-up and corrosion are currently creating an unsafe environment for workers and hazardous conditions for fitness center patrons.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location and space are adequate for the services provided. Major challenge: Waterproofing the pool enclosure and repairing roofing require attention. The city should explore using noncorrosive structural supports such as wood beams for the roofing system.

**Transportation-Related Facilities**

**Intermodal Center**

**Address:** 500 Railroad Avenue

**Building ID number:** 105

**Square footage:** 4,054 gsf

**Number/type of staff for Meadow**

**City Express:** 2 FT administrative, 3 FT drivers, 2 PT drivers (drivers do not occupy space in building)

**Service area for Meadow City Express:**

Entire city of Las Vegas (only within city limits)



**Purpose/services offered:** Public transit hub (Meadow City Express on-demand transit service and Amtrak rail service), Visitor Center (space leased to Chamber of Commerce), MVD and rental car office (space leased to private car rental company)

**Description of facility:** This building is the original ATSF rail depot, renovated in the past ten years. It has two stories, brick exterior walls and a sloped red tile roof, and is on the National Register.

Historic features were restored and the building made completely code-compliant. This facility is very well maintained and adequate for functions served. On-site parking is adequate. The facility includes a small meeting room that is leased to community groups.

**Issues and Needs:** There are no current facility issues or needs.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:** None

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space, and condition are adequate for the services provided.

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### **Airport Terminal**

**Address:** 1000 Airport Road, approximately 7 miles northeast of the city

**Building ID number:** 74

**Square footage:** Approximately 1,460 gsf

**Number of staff:** 2 FT

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas and surrounding area



**Purpose/services offered:** Airport occupies 1,600 acres on the north side of town outside of city limits. The airport terminal building includes office space for staff, restrooms, reception counter, and waiting facilities. There are airplane hangars that are leased to private airplane owners, including the original 1940s building.

**Description of facility:** This small, one-story building dates from the 1960s and is wood frame with stucco finish. Includes an office, waiting areas for pilots and passengers, kitchenette and restrooms. Appears to be well maintained.

**Issues and Needs:** It is desirable to build a fire station at this facility, and in the long term, to create an industrial park on airport land. Extending potable water lines to the site would help to make these projects possible and enhance fire safety operations.

### **Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-32 *Project Title: Fire Station Las Vegas Airport*

Construct new fire station at municipal airport to provide fire protection and crash rescue to municipal airport and future growth of facility.

2012-37 *Project Title: Airport Terminal/Fire Station*

Remodel the airport terminal building and T hangers. Construct a new fire station to provide fire protection and crash rescue to municipal airport and future growth of facility, and extend main lines to the airport.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space, and condition are adequate for existing use.

## Public Housing Services

### Housing Authority Office

**Address:** 2400 Sagebrush Drive

**Building ID number:** 89

**Square footage:** Approximately 2,500 gsf

**Number of staff:** 11 (5 are maintenance crew)

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas



**Purpose/services offered:** Administrative office for Las Vegas public housing staff. Tenants and prospective tenants deliver rent payment and fill out forms at this office.

**Description of facility:** The campus has two buildings: an administrative office, and maintenance shop and supplies storage. The buildings are single-story slump block with metal pitched roof, probably built in 1960s or 1970s. The housing authority maintenance crew maintains these structures which are in excellent condition and are adequate to accommodate housing authority staff. The administrative and maintenance facilities are in a good location that is close to much of the public housing and adjacent to some of the public housing that it manages. However, housing projects are located throughout the city. The facilities have no accessibility issues and have sufficient parking on site.

**Issues and Needs:** None noted.

#### **Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

Housing projects listed in the ICIP are for the housing units, not for the administration building.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space, and condition are adequate for the services provided. Energy efficiency may need attention.

## Animal Services

### Animal Shelter

**Address:** South end of Municipal Complex

**Building ID number:** 57

**Square footage:** approximately 3,300 gsf

**Purpose/services offered:** City's shelter for stray cats and dogs

**Number of staff:** 2

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas, other communities in the region



**Description of facility:** The Las Vegas Police Department is responsible for animal control, transporting stray and dead animals to the animal shelter. The shelter's staff of two care for living animals, search for their owners or adopt them out, and sell licenses. Staff also coordinate with other adoption agencies to try to find homes for the animals. They dispose of dead animals and euthanize those that remain unclaimed or are not adopted.

The original metal building was part of the State Highway Department's original campus in Las Vegas. In the late 1980s, the city constructed an addition and combined the two buildings. The facility has 32 kennels for dogs and approximately 12 kennels in the cattery. A crematory that runs on natural gas is on the site.

**Issues and Needs:** All of the facilities are in poor condition. The shelter has particular problems with heating during the winter months and needs a new heating and cooling system. Freezing water lines need attention and sewer lines need to be upgraded. In the long term, a new facility is needed. The replacement of the crematory is most pressing. It should be replaced quickly, with costs estimated at \$70,000 to \$80,000.

The facility needs to be secure, because although drugs are kept in a locked cabinet, they are still vulnerable to theft.

During the summer months, the shelter's animal population tends to exceed capacity. The city should consider a larger facility when it replaces this one, provided that neighboring towns and counties are willing to sign agreements to pay for housing their strays at the facility.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-41 Project Title: Animal Shelter Renovation Project

The facility needs major renovation/replacement of HVAC, possible expansion, replacement of crematorium, and upgrades of water and wastewater lines.

**Some funding possibilities:** Some grants may be available for shelter services from organizations that included, as of 2010, American Humane, ASPCA, Animal Welfare Trust, and Maddie's Fund. See <http://grants.library.wisc.edu/organizations/animals.html>. Further research grant availability when the city begins planning and funding for a replacement shelter.

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**Infrastructure-Serving Facilities**

**Utilities Center**

**Address:** 905 12th Street

**Building ID number:** 61

**Square footage:** Approximately 9,000 sf office and heated warehouse space.

**Number of staff:** 17 FT, 1 PT

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas



**Purpose/services offered:** Gas, water, waste water, and solid waste utilities administration, operations, maintenance, and customer service. All equipment and supplies are stored on site in heated and unheated warehouse spaces as well as out in the open on site.

**Description of facility:** Located on about 2.75 acres, the center has three facilities:

approximately 2,500 sf of centrally heated office space, approximately 4,500 sf of warehouse space, some of which is converted into offices, and an approximately 2,000-sf unheated metal building warehouse.

**Issues and Needs:** Building and systems are aged and need to be updated. Finishes are worn and need replacement. The administration building is crowded, and offices are housed in the warehouse, which lacks adequate insulation and is conditioned with ceiling-mounted space heaters and wall-mounted air conditioners. Staff share space with warehoused supplies and equipment. The center stores some equipment and supplies out in the yard, which are exposed to the elements and vulnerable to theft due to insufficient enclosed storage space. The power supply is insufficient and the wiring is outdated. The facility remodel will include a fire suppression system.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-05 *Project Title: Downtown Revitalization Project*

This project includes four key projects. The fourth project is the acquisition of a property with structure on University and renovation into City Hall to house the majority of administrative functions currently residing at the current City Hall.

2012-11 *Project Title: Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

**Facility Adequacy:** The location of facility is adequate but not ideal for providing services to the community. Office space and condition are less than adequate for current uses. Warehouse space currently houses staff and, although adequate for warehousing, is inadequate for housing staff. Energy using systems and building envelope need improvements if the city considers continued facility use. In general, the poor condition and performance of the building do not merit investments needed to bring it up to adequacy.

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**Wastewater Administration Building**

**Address:** South side of Las Vegas, east of I-25  
Frontage Road

**Building ID number:** 59

**Square footage:** Approximately 1,500 gsf

**Number of staff:** 8 FT staff members

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas

**Purpose/services offered:** Houses waste water  
treatment plant staff

**Description of facility:** Built in 1980, this  
small concrete structure houses two offices, a  
break room and laboratory. It is probably not





well insulated, but its use is intermittent. It appears to be well maintained and is adequate for current needs.

**Issues and Needs:** None apparent nor reported.

**Facility Adequacy:** Space, location, and condition are adequate for current occupants. Improving energy efficiency is not merited, since this building probably does not use a large amount of energy.

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### **Water Treatment Plant**

**Address:** North State Route 65

**Building ID number:** 72a

**Square footage:** Approximately 800 gsf

**Number of staff:** 5 FT

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas and some communities in the ETZ



**Purpose/services offered:** Houses staff assigned to managing and maintaining raw water supplies and water treatment facilities.

**Description of facility:** The water treatment plant site houses the water department operational and maintenance functions in a modular building. This building includes a private office, an open office area, a restroom, and a lab. Water customers are not serviced at this facility, but the department conducts tours of the water treatment process for 20 to 30 people ten times per year. Other buildings house the water treatment processes, including chemical treatment of raw water, clarifying beds, filtration of clarified water, and chlorination tanks. The processing buildings do not house staff.

**Issues and Needs:** The modular building is fairly new and in good condition. The roofing is loose and should be permanently affixed. The building needs miscellaneous other repairs. Staff will need additional space when a permanent operations director is hired. Other space needs currently unmet include a larger laboratory and a conference room for tours and staff meetings.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

None

**Facility Adequacy:** The location and condition are adequate for existing use, since the facility is relatively new and services provided to the community are not located there. However, space is below adequacy.

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## **Solid Waste Transfer Station**

**Address:** 32 Airport Road

**Building ID number:** 100

**Square footage:** 60 acre site



**Purpose/services offered:** Solid waste transfer station for trash and recycling, holding materials for transfer to other facilities for further processing

**Number of staff:** 12, including drivers and a truck attendant

**Service area:** Entire city of Las Vegas plus some areas of the ETZ that are dense enough to support pick-up routes

**Services:** Process trash from pick-up to shipping out to landfills and provide drop-off for residential recycling

**Description of facility:** The transfer station is in poor condition. Its initial construction quality was poor. The city has \$400,000 in hand to upgrade the station and vehicles during 2011. Construction will include adding doors to the building to better manage blowing waste. The city has a permit to use approximately 15 acres for operations out of the 60-acre site. As the operation increases, the permit must be expanded to allow for more space.

The office houses the manager, Keep America Beautiful coordinator, supervisor, office clerk, recycling coordinator, field supervisor, six truck drivers and an attendant.

**Operations:** Residential pick-up is weekly. Commercial service is weekly or more frequently, depending on need. The city also collects cardboard from businesses for recycling.

The city is considering taking over waste transportation operations, but is also considering other alternatives for the long term, including privatization.

### **Where the Waste Goes:**

The department disposes of regular trash at the Wagon Mound landfill. The city contracts with a hauler.

Recycling is transferred to various places. The city receives payment for some recyclables and pays to dispose of others. The city receives payment for cardboard, aluminum, scrap and tires, and white goods (refrigerators, washers, etc.). It pays Santa Fe to take mixed plastics and hauls newspaper to Santa Fe.

### **Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-07 *Project Title: Transfer Station Facility Repairs*

Perform major repairs to the transfer station facility including door repair, insulation, installation of water service, paving/grading and development of adequate drainage detention facilities on site.

**Facilities Owned  
by the City and  
Leased to Service  
Providers**

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**Senior Center**

**Address:** 500 Sabino Street

**Building ID number:** 80

**Square footage:** Approximately 10,200 gross square feet



**Number of staff:** 9 FT, 2 PT seniors paid with state funding

**Service area:** Greater Las Vegas area

**Managing agency:** SER de New Mexico, under contract

**Purpose/services offered:** Activity center for greater Las Vegas area senior citizens and two additional centers in rural areas. Also provides meals transported to seniors' homes.

**Description of facility:** Built in 1985, this facility has served exclusively as a senior center. The structure is wood frame with stucco and a pitched metal roof. The facility spaces include offices, reception area, activity rooms, storage, and a large multi-purpose/cafeteria and kitchen, which is also serves other organizations. The center offers a wide variety of programs at this facility which are well attended. The roof and HVAC systems were replaced in 2004. Since the programs are managed by contract, the facility does not house city staff. Las Vegas Public Works department is responsible for upkeep.

**Issues and Needs:** The facility is in good condition with a few accessibility issues. Capital projects desired include: replacement of exit lights, an enclosed parking area to secure the facility's fleet, and more security lights and some security cameras.

**Projects in 2011 ICIP:**

2012-11 *Project Title: Public Facilities Upgrade and Improvements*

Almost all city-owned public facilities are in serious need of upgrading and improvements to increase access, meet safety standards and improve the public service and work environments.

2012-29 *Project Title: Las Vegas Senior Center*

Remodel the Las Vegas Senior Center

**Facility Adequacy:** The location, space, and condition (with minor exceptions) are adequate for the services provided. Energy efficiency may need attention.

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**Miguel Encinias Veterans' Service Center**

**Address:** 917 Douglas Avenue

**Building ID number:** 95A

**Square footage:** Site approximately 12,000 gsf

**Service area:** Greater Las Vegas area

**Managing agency:** Northern New Mexico Veterans Coalition

***Purpose/Services offered:***

The city renovated this building as a service center to meet veterans' needs.



***Description of Facility:*** The city of Las Vegas acquired this building located at 917 Douglas Avenue in 1989 and renovated it as a recreation center in about 1995. When nearly complete, a fire destroyed most of the building, but left the front façade relatively intact.

In recent years, the city reached an agreement with the local veterans group to lease the building as a site to provide services to veterans. A combination of insurance money and legislative funding covered the cost of demolishing the back of the building, restoring the front façade and adding a new metal section at the back of the building, which meets commercial codes.

***Issues and Needs:*** The renovated building meets current needs, but is designed to accommodate an addition should demand for services grow and funding become available.

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**Summary Matrix: Building Facilities Conditions and Adequacy Checklist**

The facilities condition matrix below shows the evaluation of facilities on a condition and adequacy basis and their ranking from greatest to least according to need for condition remediation. This list does not necessarily coordinate with prioritization of projects in the ICIP, since those project rankings include additional factors such as strategic and policy considerations.

## **2. Facilities Issues and Opportunities**

### **Effects of Population Trends and Possible Changes to Municipal Functions**

While population projections do not show rapid growth in the city, certain administrative functions may need additional employees and associated space due to incremental growth and annexation, or changing municipal functions.

As the city grows, it should assure maintaining appropriate community access to existing public-oriented facilities in the central city area. It must distribute certain services such as fire stations or additional parks and recreational facilities in new neighborhoods. However, the geographical size of this community is not great enough to justify forfeiting the operational and fiscal benefits of collocating the majority of municipal functions that provide services directly to the community. Rather, the desirable locations of municipal facilities should benefit other goals, such as enhancement of economic development opportunities, appropriateness of density, adjacency to other destinations, and availability of land or buildings of required size.

**Exhibit VIII-2**

*Building Facilities Condition and Adequacy*

**Table 1**

**Scale: Worst 1.00 to Best 3.00**

	George Arellanes Municipal Complex	Police Department	E Romero Fire - NM Ave.	H Ledoux Fire Station - Legion Ave.	Unmanned Fire Station - 6th St.	Old City Hall	Carnegie Library	Las Vegas Museum	Municipal Court	Inter-modal Center
<b>Building #</b>	57	73	23	90	66	66	78	65	65	105
<b>Condition</b>	2.4	2.8	2.6	3.0	2.5	1.0	1.6	2.2	2.2	3.0
Shell	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	3
Roof	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	3
Systems	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	3
Grounds	3	3	3	3	NA	1	3	3	3	3
Appearance	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3
<b>Location</b>	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0		2.5	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
Public access	2	3	3	3	NA	3	3	2	2	3
Adjacencies	2	3	NA	NA	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	3
<b>Historic Preservation</b>						1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	3.0
<b>Space Needs</b>	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5		1.0	1.5	1.0	2.0
Adequate space	2	3	3	2	2	NA	1	2	1	3
Expansion feasibility	2	2	2	3	3	NA	1	1	1	1
<b>Energy Use</b>		2.0	1.0	2.0			1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0
<b>Total Score</b>	2.13	2.58	2.28	2.63	2.50	1.50	1.72	1.74	1.64	2.80
<b>Ranking by greatest need</b>	7*	15*	8	16	13	3	5	6	4	19

**Table 1 Continued**

**Scale: Worst 1.00 to Best 3.00**

	Airport	Housing Authority Offices	Abe Montoya Recreation Center	Animal Shelter	Utilities Center	Wastewater Treatment	Water Treatment Plant	Solid Waste Transfer Station	Senior Center	Armory/Veterans' Center
<b>Building #</b>	74	89	97	57	61	59	72a	100	80	95a
<b>Condition</b>	1.8	3.0	2.8	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.8	2.2	3.0	3.0
Shell	2	3	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3
Roof	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	3
Systems	2	3	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3
Grounds	NA	3	3	NA	NA	NA	3	1	3	3
Appearance	1	3	3	1	1	NA	NA	1	3	3
<b>Location</b>	3.0	3.0	3.0		2.0		3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Public access	3	3	3	NA	2	NA	3	3	3	3
Adjacencies	NA	NA	3	NA	2	NA	3	NA	NA	NA
<b>Historic Preservation</b>										3
<b>Space Needs</b>	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.5	1.5	3.0	1.5	3.0	2.0	
Adequate space	3	3	2	1	1	3	2	3	3	NA
Expansion feasibility	3	1	3	2	2	NA	1	3	1	NA
<b>Energy Use</b>	2.0	2.0	2.0						3.0	
<b>Total Score</b>	2.44	2.50	2.58	1.25	1.50	2.50	2.42	2.73	2.75	3.00
<b>Ranking by greatest need</b>	10	12	14	1	2	11	9	17	18	20

### Exhibit VIII-3

#### Ranking Basis and Project Recommendations

##### Basis for Ranking (1 = low to 3 = high)

General Condition	1	Beyond expected life span, not well maintained, not energy efficient, requires ongoing maintenance
	3	Relatively new (within first half of expected life span), well maintained, energy efficient and low maintenance
Location/access	1	Removed from service area or hard to access
	3	Easily accessible to service area
Location/adjacencies	1	Physically removed from departments with shared work
	3	Physically adjacent to departments with shared work
Historic Preservation	1	Deterioration of structure or features are threatened by exposure, historic features compromised by remodeling, inappropriate use
	3	Stabilized from weather damage, historic features are not removed or covered, use is compatible with original purpose
Space Needs	1	Conditions are inadequate for occupancy by staff, crowded, unhealthy, or lacking environmental comfort, no room for expansion
	3	Adequate space for all staff, room for potential expansion
Energy Use	1	Energy efficiency cannot be achieved affordably
	2	Remodeling or replacement of systems will probably improve performance
	3	Building is energy efficient

##### Recommendations for Top 10 Facilities Projects (Based on Conditions)

1	Animal Shelter	Replace with new, adequately sized facility
2	Utilities	Relocate utilities staff and warehouse to adequate facility
3	Old City Hall	Repair shell, replace systems, insulate. Excellent location for some administrative staff.
4	Municipal Court	Relocate court to adequate facility
5	Library	Repair shell and upgrade systems, provide more space for library
6	Museum	Repair shell and roof, upgrade systems, provide more space for museum
7	Arellanes Complex	Relocate current occupants to facility with better adjacency and access. Renovate to improve energy performance
8	E Romero Fire Station	Use space in basement by improving egress, replace systems to gain energy efficiency
9	Water Treatment	Replace single wide manufactured building with new double wide unit
10	Airport	Gain energy efficiency with insulation

### Newly Acquired Facility: Original E. Romero Fire Station

In early 2011, the city of Las Vegas completed the acquisition process for the original E. Romero Fire Station on Bridge Street. As the city's first fire station, the structure has historic significance. In recent years, the city has considered the building appropriate for use as an historical museum to display antique fire equipment from Las Vegas' past. With a site in a busy location for both local business and tourists, the proposed museum can be expected to attract a wide range of visitors.



## **Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP)**

The purpose of a local government ICIP is to establish and prioritize unmet facility and infrastructure needs through public improvement projects, and to identify potential funding sources for implementing those projects. The city identifies and ranks the need for projects that appear in its ICIP, which is a requirement for eligibility for certain public funding resources.

## **Municipal Facilities' Contribution to Economic Development**

Enhancing and expanding the economic development potential in Las Vegas is an established strategic goal for the municipal government. The city's investment in administrative facilities that house city staff and serve the community can support this goal by contributing to the establishment of occupied and maintained properties, the presence of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and the synergistic relationships between municipal functions and private spin-off functions in a district.

In 2010, the city of Las Vegas and MainStreet de Las Vegas completed the Downtown Action Plan that identified actions to be taken to enhance the economic development potential of the "MainStreet Corridor," a contiguous area that links Las Vegas' historic downtown commercial areas. A main tenet of the MainStreet formula for economic development through historic preservation is to emphasize the presence of municipal facilities in the downtown area that can act as activity anchors, creating a cluster of services and commerce that contribute to commerce.

A key strategy in this plan, involving a series of redevelopment projects, includes creating a thoroughfare linking the three commercial historic districts with a tree-lined street, studded with the historic treasures that make Las Vegas famous and attractive to both locals and visitors. Also along this thoroughfare are proposed municipal features that include a potentially relocated City Hall, containing one or more buildings to house administrative functions and a civic plaza. The latest ICIP now lists these projects at a high ranking.

*The current transition plan is preliminary. The city needs to assess the feasibility of any specific property acquisition and renovation. It needs to acquire funding to accomplish the overall project and set a timeline for completion of the moves.*

## **Transitioning Locations of Administrative Functions**

Three different campuses house the various departments of the city of Las Vegas that are frequented by community members. These campuses for administrative offices, municipal courts, and utilities are not centrally located. The city finds it desirable to consolidate those functions, relocate them to facilities that are more accessible to the public, realize synergistic outcomes from collocation with other similar public service functions, and enhance economic development opportunities through increased pedestrian traffic and public interactions in the downtown commercial district.

Potential staffing moves include the following:

- The current city hall administrative offices, located at the George Arrellanes Municipal Center, would be the future home of the Public Works and Utilities staff, all of whom currently occupy space in warehouse facilities at that campus,

the Utilities Department staff, currently housed on 12th Street in the utilities office, and the warehouse complex. This complex is one potential location for the municipal courts, which are currently located in cramped quarters in the Las Vegas Museum building on Grand Avenue at National Street.

- The Old City Hall, a historic two-story stone property in the Douglas Avenue historic district, once renovated, is a suitable home of the Community Development Department, the Chamber of Commerce, the Las Vegas / San Miguel County Economic Development Corporation, the Las Vegas MainStreet office, and the Small Business Development Center. It would become a center for collaboration and generation of fresh ideas for economic development.
- City of Las Vegas administrative functions would move from the George Arrellanes Municipal Center to one or more suitable locations in the downtown area. Another potential location for the municipal courts would be collocated with these functions.

This comprehensive master plan recommends implementing this strategy for the following reasons:

- Key administrative functions would be more centrally located and more accessible to user groups
- An increase in commercial activity, potentially resulting from locating City Hall in the downtown area, could increase the tax base
- The collocation of public interface functions of municipal government with non-profit economic development entities would create synergy

### **Historic Structures**

With over 900 buildings identified and listed either independently or as part of historic districts on either the national or state historic register, Las Vegas has a wealth of historic structures, one of the largest collections in the state of New Mexico. The wealth of architectural manifestations of the community's success and growth as a railroad regional hub is legendary and has contributed to its attractiveness as a heritage tourism destination. This attractiveness is an asset that the city and MainStreet de Las Vegas are determined to convert into economic growth for the community. For this reason, public and private owners of historic properties must be mindful of the need to treat these historic properties with more care and financing than they are currently being shown, to avoid the tragic loss through neglect that claims many a historic treasure (e.g., the Center Block building).

Local governments must lead by example, partner with local historic preservation groups, and set the standard for the preservation and maintenance of historic building in their use as municipal facilities.

### **The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating**

The Insurance Services Office surveys communities on a regular basis to determine the Public Protection Classification (PPC) of the fire protection services protecting the community. The PPC is used to gauge the ability of a local fire department to respond to fires. ISO collects and analyzes a community's fire protection information using its Fire Suppression Rating Schedule. It assigns a classification



of 1 to 10, based upon the results of the survey. Class 1 is the best rating, and Class 10 is basically an indication of no fire protection. The insurance industry uses the ISO PPC in determining insurance premiums for many properties within the community. The ISO survey examines a variety of areas. It considers the community's water supply, dispatch (communications) center, and fire department. Each entity receives a rating, and ISO considers those ratings together to determine the community's final Public Protection Classification.

Las Vegas' ISO rating would be enhanced by additional locations to house fire fighting equipment and potentially staff. The city is considering the potential for fire stations at the airport or at Luna Community College. Additionally, the city should require future subdivisions located on its fringes to set aside property for future fire stations.

### **Upgrade and Update of Buildings Upon Renovation**

Due to the age of some city buildings and the length of time since renovation, some buildings may not meet current building code standards or American Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates. When renovating buildings, the city brings them up to standards, addressing safety violations and compliance with ADA and health and safety requirements.

### **Increase Level of Expertise of City Staff**

Public facilities are costly to build and maintain, representing a significant investment for any local government. To minimize the operational and maintenance costs associated with ongoing occupancy of these facilities, the building envelope requires attention as the first line of defense against the deteriorating effects of weather. In particular, the roof of a facility, the place most people do not frequent, is the most vulnerable and often the most neglected.

The city should retain a roofing expert on staff to keep a constant accounting of the condition of every city facility roof and develop a maintenance and replacement schedule. The city should periodically hire a roofing consultant to review roof conditions and establish a five-year capital improvement projects plan.

The city currently owns five buildings that are on the National or State Register and other older buildings which may also be historically significant. The city may acquire additional historic buildings to house its functions in the future. An historic preservation expert in the stabilization, maintenance, and restoration of historic properties should be retained on staff (may not be full time) to guide municipal facilities practices, and to train other city staff to do so.

A significant portion of a facility's operational budget is devoted to paying energy costs. Making energy efficiency changes to facilities infrastructure and operational practices can result in energy savings and a short payback time for amortizing retrofit investments. The city should retain an energy efficiency expert to develop a conservation strategy and an energy efficiency investment capital plan. This person can also implement an education and training plan to bring all city staff up to date with energy conservation techniques that the city will adopt as standard practices.

## **Facility Data Management**

The ability to track facility capital improvement projects such as roofing and mechanical systems, to measure and adjust energy efficiency project implementation, and to anticipate and plan for facilities funding needs requires a comprehensive database of owned and operated facilities. The city should employ facility management inventory/database software that city staff can use and modify with a minor amount of training. This system should be accessible from multiple facilities, and a dedicated staff person should manage the database and train staff members who will use it. The database can track pertinent information such as size, age of facilities and systems, dates of major facility upgrades such as HVAC and roofing, warranty expiration, historic sources of CIP funding, infrastructure capacity, energy use, etc.

## **Security and Safety**

The city is addressing concerns for outdoor safety and security through a program to provide video surveillance of key areas of concern around the community. Starting with ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) funding already received, the city has begun the purchase and installation of CCTV (closed circuit TV) cameras in parks and along major corridors. The program will expand as funding becomes available.

## C. Parks

### 1. Existing Conditions of City Parks

The city of Las Vegas maintains 19 park properties, some consisting of multiple parcels. An additional park will come on line in late 2011. Parks range in age from historic parks constructed when Las Vegas was two separate cities to modern playfields, and from large to very small. The sites serve many purposes from passive parks and a river walk to sports fields. While some parks see more heavy use than others, the parks in general are very popular, particularly in summer.

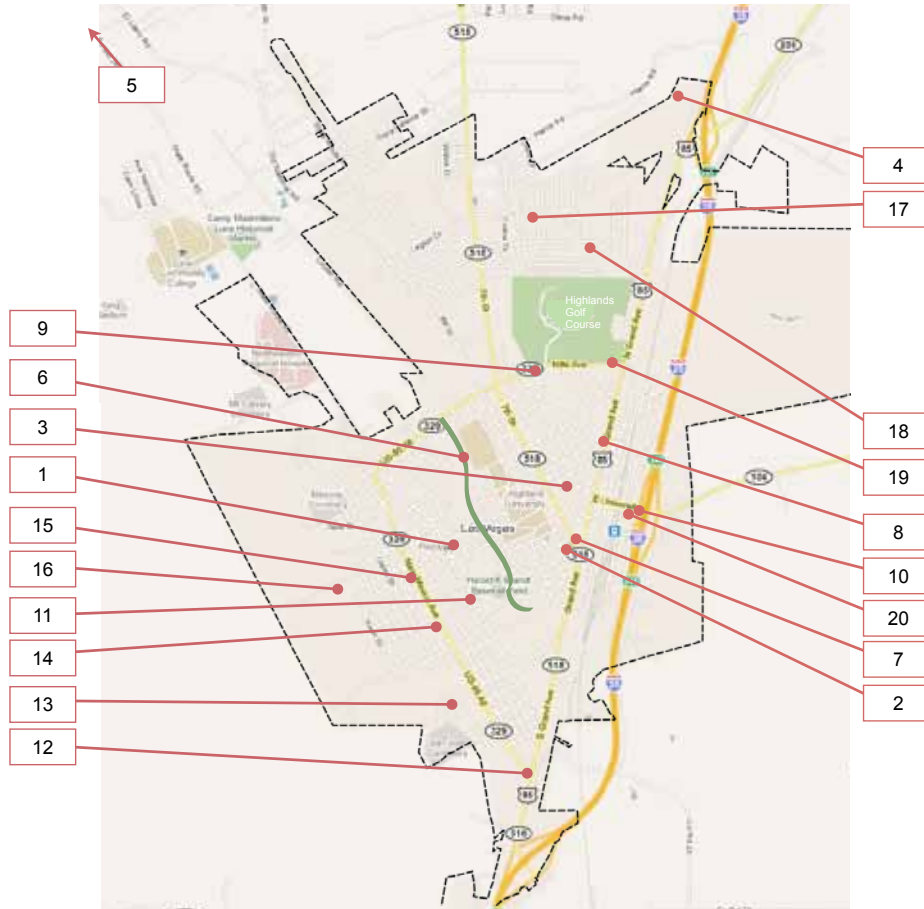
#### Locations of Parks Maintained by the City

The map below illustrates the locations of the parks that Las Vegas currently maintains:

**Exhibit VIII-4**  
Map of Las Vegas  
Parks

#### LEGEND OF PARKS

- 1 - Old Town Plaza Park
- 2 - Lincoln Park
- 3 - Carnegie Park
- 4 - Harris Pond
- 5 - Montezuma Pond
- 6 - Gallinas River Walk
- 7 - Lion Park / Fountain Square
- 8 - Truder Park / Triangle Park
- 9 - Veterans Park
- 10 - James Marrujo Park
- 11 - South Pacific Park
- 12 - Welcome Center and Caboose
- 13 - El Creston Circle Park
- 14 - Pajarito Park
- 15 - Memorial Park
- 16 - Rodriguez Park
- 17 - Hanna Park
- 18 - Padilla Park / Soccer Field
- 19 - Keyes Play Area and Fields / Train Engine Park
- 20 - Commerce Soccer Field (under construction)



## Descriptions of Each Park

This section describes existing parks and their current condition, and lists any ICIP recommendations.

---

### Old Town Plaza Park

**Size:** approximately 1.6 acres

**Location:** Historic Plaza in Old Town

**Park Description:** The Old Town Plaza Park is a signature feature of Las Vegas, beloved by residents and visitors alike. It contains a gazebo, park benches and lighting fixtures of an old-fashioned style. Sidewalks surround the oval site and cross through it, all in good condition.



Patrons of local businesses use on-street parking around the site. Visitors as well as local residents use the park. Large elm trees dominate the park, providing a grand canopy and shade during the summer.

**Park Issues:** The park is irrigated with city water, but there are plans to shift to treated effluent water in the near future. The irrigation system is in fair to poor condition and turf is in fair condition. The aging elm trees need to be replaced in the near future. In order to retain the character of the park, trees should be replaced gradually to the extent possible.

---

### Lincoln Park

**Size:** approximately 2.3 acres

**Location:** Lincoln Avenue west of Grand Avenue

**Park Description:** An historic property, Lincoln Park is reportedly the most heavily used park in Las Vegas. It is located in New Town on a square block, surrounded by residences. A large stone gazebo is the focal point for the park, used for some special events.



**Park Issues:** The gazebo is in good to fair condition, but prone to have graffiti. The irrigation system, reported to be in fair condition, uses treated effluent water. The turf is in good to fair condition, but the elm trees are deteriorating with age and will need eventual replacement. The city has planted newer trees to supplement them and make a smoother transition for the landscape.

Children’s play equipment includes swings, a play structure and a sandbox, all in good to fair condition. Picnic tables and benches are in good condition, as are sidewalks through the park. A row of parking to serve park users is along one edge of the park, but surrounding residents mostly use it. A black-painted metal fence in fair condition surrounds the park.

---

### **Carnegie Park**

**Size:** approximately 2.82 acres, including the library

**Location:** National Street, surrounding the library

**Park Description:** This historic park is a full square block that surrounds the Carnegie Library in the heart of New Town. The park contains a parking lot for library users, as well as benches and picnic tables.



**Park Issues:** The irrigation system is in good to fair condition and is currently being prepared to transfer to treated effluent water use in 2011. Turf is in good to fair condition. However, the old elm trees that dominate the park are at the end of their lifespan. Newer plants and trees have been installed as part of the eventual replacement of the old trees. The park has drainage issues, which have been exacerbated by the location of the parking lot, resulting in water damage to the library building.

### **Parks with Water Features**

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#### **Harris Pond Park**

**Size:** approximately 9.7 acres

**Location:** North side of Las Vegas

**Park Description:** This park on the northern end of Las Vegas has a fishing pond currently designated for use by children only. Families use it for picnicking, although picnic tables have been removed due to vandalism. A paved roadway circles the pond.



**Park Issues:** Wooded parts of the park close to the road are no longer in use due to vandalism. The pond should be available to all residents for fishing, and not available only to children.

---

## Montezuma Pond

**Size:** approximately 88 acres and part of the city's Gallinas Canyon watershed properties

**Location:** north of Las Vegas



**Park Description:** Considered part of the Watershed Properties, which total 1,524 acres, this pond is located about five miles north of Las Vegas, to the west of United World College. In the past, it served as an ice skating pond which was busy during winter months.

**Park Issues:** In recent years, the pond has deteriorated. It is filled with numerous rocks that have fallen from a cliff on one side and maintenance is not appropriate for ice skating. A cement ramp extends from a parking lot into the pond. Two vault toilets on the site are unusable. A gravel parking lot has become a popular party hangout.

Middle-aged and older residents remember this site with fondness and express the desire to renovate it for future use. A challenge to reestablishing this site, however, is the remote location from the city, which would make supervision difficult.

The city is considering a long-range, multi-use, multi-site development plan for the watershed properties that could link the properties and offer a variety of year-round activities, including camping, hiking, fishing, picnicking, tubing, sliding, and of course, skating on Montezuma Pond.



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## Gallinas River Walk

**Acres:** approximately 30 acres

**Location:** Rio Gallinas (the Parks Department maintains the walk from Independence Street to Mills Avenue and the Streets Department maintains it from Independence to Grand Avenue)



**Park Description:** The Parks Department maintains this linear site from Independence Street to Mills Avenue.

Consisting of individual city-owned parcels, it borders both sides of the Rio Gallinas. The walk has a pathway for walking and bicycling, paved from just south of Mills to West Las Vegas High School and unpaved from the high school south to Independence Street. Picnic tables and benches are along the length of the river walk. Three walking bridges bisect it. The Public Facilities Department maintains the bridges along with adjacent canopy structures. The Parks Division installed ten exercise stations in 2008.

**Park Issues:** Even though this park is at the heart of Las Vegas, many of its elements are in fair or even poor condition. Picnic table condition ranges from good to poor. Trail condition also varies from good to poor, with the worst problems in a few small areas. Two bridges are in good condition, but the third requires replacement of wooden slats. Park staff take care of major weed problems, but maintain the grass for a semi-natural appearance.

Graffiti is a continual problem that requires constant attention. Dirt bike riders damage the embankments and create wear and tear to the trail; park staff attribute trash problems to dirt bikers. They believe that permanent barriers should be installed to deter this nuisance behavior.

Some River Walk areas are overgrown. However, maintenance must balance the need for brushy areas that provide wildlife habitat with the desire for a clean and safe public amenity.

The River Walk has been the focus of various revitalization plans for Las Vegas as a key attraction that would add to visitor amenities. Improvements to the area that include pedestrian and trail amenities, as well as pocket parks, are part of the ICIP recommendations.

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### **Fountain Square Park (Lion Park)**

**Size:** approximately .05 acres

**Location:** Grand and Lincoln Avenues

**Park Description:** This tiny site holds an historic stone fountain that was once a showpiece for Las Vegas.

**Park Issues:** After severe deterioration of the fountain due to the fragility of the stone, the city covered the fountain with a shed until funding is available for the extensive repairs. It is considering replacing the fountain on the site with a replica, then repairing the original and placing it in a protected location.

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### **Truder Park/Triangle Park**

**Size:** approximately .05 acres

**Location:** Grand and Washington Avenues

**Park Description:** This small triangular park borders Grand Avenue on the east end of New Town. Its only features are elm trees and turf.

**Park Issues:** The turf is in poor condition and the trees are old and in need of replacement. There is no irrigation system.



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## Veterans Park

**Size:** approximately 35,000 gsf

**Location:** Mills Avenue and 8th Street

**Park Description:** A small park that honors local veterans, this site contains an amphitheater and a large gun. The park is used for ceremonial purposes. Irrigation water comes from the city's gray water system.



**Park Issues:** The irrigation lines are in good to fair condition. The city constructed the amphitheater in the last two years. It is in good condition, as are turf, trees and sidewalks.

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## James Marrujo Park

**Size:** data needed

**Location:** between West side of I-25 and Commerce Street

**Park Description:** This linear, two-part park borders the west side of I-25 in the area east of the railroad tracks from the Castañeda Hotel. The land appears to have been left over from the construction of I-25 through Las Vegas.



**Park Issues:** The northern portion of the park contains recently installed play equipment and picnic areas, while the southern portion has older equipment. The south portion has new trees and in 2011, the site will receive effluent irrigation and a French drain with a drip irrigation system for watering the trees. The turf is in fair to good condition.

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## South Pacific Park

**Size:** approximately 2 acres

**Location:** South Pacific Street east of New Mexico Avenue

**Park Description:** Located in a residential area of the west side, the site once housed an elementary school that burned down. This heavily used park contains a small playfield, as well as play equipment, a gazebo and a covered area with picnic tables.



**Park Issues:** The irrigation system uses city water and is in poor condition, only manually operable. The turf areas are in fair to poor condition. Some of the



trees are in good condition, but the old elm trees are in poor condition. Play equipment, benches and tables are in fair condition, the gazebo is in fair to poor condition and the cover structure for the picnic tables is fairly new and in good condition. The park also contains two barbecues.

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### **Las Vegas Welcome Center Park and Caboose**

**Size:** not in inventory

**Location:** South Grand and New Mexico Avenues

**Park Description:** This small park once contained Las Vegas' visitor welcome center, which has since moved to the Railroad Depot/Multi-modal Center. The original visitor center building currently houses a social services organization. However, a red caboose and picnic facilities remain, along with swings, picnic tables and two barbecues.

**Park Issues:** The irrigation system uses treated effluent water and is considered to be in fair to poor condition. The turf is in fair condition while trees and shrubs are in good condition. The children's play equipment is in poor condition, while benches and picnic tables are in fair condition.



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### **El Creston Circle Park**

**Size:** not in inventory

**Location:** El Creston Circle west of New Mexico Avenue

**Park Description:** This pocket park is part of a residential subdivision that overlooks much of the city. It includes a small irrigated turf area that uses residential water and an unirrigated area with both old and new play equipment that includes a new spider climbing web and a small play structure. The park has picnic tables and benches as well.

**Park Issues:** The turf areas are in fair to poor condition and the irrigation system is reportedly in fair condition. Older play equipment is in poor condition.

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### **Pajarito Park**

**Size:** less than 1,000 gsf

**Location:** New Mexico Avenue and Perez Street

**Park Description:** This small area is actually a narrow stretch that borders an arroyo east of New Mexico Avenue. A private citizen planted it with trees and shrubs, and landscaped it with natural rocks. It was then turned over to the city to maintain.

**Park Issues:** The trees and shrubs are in fair to poor condition.

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## Memorial Park

**Size:** less than 1,000 SF

**Location:** west side of New Mexico Avenue near Socorro Street

**Park Description:** This long, narrow strip on one side of New Mexico Avenue is dedicated to military personnel. Families may set up small displays to honor their loved ones.

**Park Issues:** The park has no irrigation system and turf is in fair to poor condition. Trees and shrubs are in generally good condition. There is one wooden picnic table cemented into the site that has rotted and broken wood, and needs to be replaced.

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## Rodriguez Park

**Size:** 255 acres, with approximately 32 developed acres of playfields and support spaces

**Location:** Salazar and Grant Streets

**Park Description:** This park is Las Vegas' largest and contains five playfields. Different softball and baseball leagues that include La Plaza Little League and T-ball Fields, Rick Arguello Men's Softball Field, Donald Tafoya Women's Softball Field, as well as the Senior League fields, use the park. The city has a memorandum of understanding with Luna Community College for shared use of two of the fields. The site



also contains an office building that formerly housed the city's park and recreation staff, as well as two concession buildings, one of which is unused due to problems with water pressure. Three practice fields are located west of the main complex (not visible in the aerial below). The site has room for future expansion, either for recreation or to accommodate other city facilities and programs.

**Park Issues:** The condition of the existing irrigation system varies from good to poor depending on the field, as do the turf conditions. The irrigation system uses city water, but will be converted to treated effluent water during 2011. Trees and shrubs are in fair condition.

The former recreation offices are now leased to a social services organization. The exterior appears to be in fair condition. The concession stand/storage/

restroom building currently in use is in fair condition. Another concession stand is not operational. An arroyo runs through the park, leading to issues of drainage maintenance.

The roads to access the playfields are in poor condition and difficult for driving. A sandy hill at the north end of the complex is prone to erosion, which aggravates site conditions. Much of the area lacks fencing.

This major sports complex is in a location that is not entirely appropriate for its uses. Residential areas abut the east edge of the park. Neighbors report that the participants in adult softball sometimes cause problems at night after games. Access to Rodriguez Park is by local streets through residential areas. Since the park is difficult to find and it is difficult to observe sporting events from off site, it does not provide the community with economic development spin-off activities or the enhancement of community spirit that could result from a sports complex centrally located with more visibility. Las Vegas is considering developing a new sports complex park in partnership with Highlands University and the school districts that can better host large ball tournaments. The city should also considering mixed income and mixed density housing on city property west of and in the vicinity of Rodriguez Park.

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### **Hanna Park**

**Size:** 4.7 acres

**Location:** Legion and Moreland Drives

**Park Description:** Hanna Park is located in northern Las Vegas. It consists of two sides: one with a playfield and one with play equipment, a play structure and picnic tables.



**Park Issues:** The irrigation system serves only the park's playfield. Turf and play equipment are generally in good condition.

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### **Padilla Soccer Field**

**Size:** approximately 4.2 acres

**Location:** Mountain View Drive, west of Longview Drive

**Park Description:** Located in the north part of Las Vegas, this park consists of one soccer field and a new playground. It also has a batting cage that is four to five years old.

**Park Issues:** The soccer league maintains a storage container at the park. The irrigation system, turf and play equipment are in good condition.

## Keyes Baseball and Softball Fields, Keyes Play Area and Train Engine Site

**Size:** 4.4 acres

**Location:** West side of Grand and Mills Avenues

**Park Description:** This park consists of the Juan Gallegos softball/t-ball field, Keyes baseball field and a children’s play area. Play equipment consists of swings and play structures. There are two concessions stands, although the older one is not currently used. Located across Mills Avenue is a mostly undeveloped site that houses an old train locomotive that appears to attract visitors.



**Park Issues:** The play area is not irrigated, but the two playfields are irrigated with treated effluent water. The irrigation system for the softball field is good and the baseball field irrigation system is in fair condition. The playfields have bleachers, some in good condition, but some wooden bleachers need maintenance or replacement.

### Summary Matrix: Parks Conditions

The summary below presents conditions and location scoring and ranking information for Las Vegas’ parks as of December 2010. The condition of eight of the 19 parks evaluated ranked “2” or lower. The ranking numbers are for physical conditions only. When planning for major park upgrades or new parks, the city should supplement this information with strategies for meeting demands for certain types of parks and for underserved areas.

**Exhibit VIII-5**  
Parks Condition  
and Adequacy

<b>Parks Condition and Adequacy Checklist</b>										<b>Scale: 1.00 to 3.00</b>
	Old Town Plaza Park	Lincoln Park	Carnegie Park	Harris Park	Montezuma Pond	Gallinas River Walk	Lion/ Fountain Square Park	Truder/ Triangle Park	Veterans Park	Marrujo Park
<b>Estimated Size</b>	1.6 acres	2.3 acres	2.8 acres	9.7 acres	88 acres	30 acres	.05 acres	.05 acres	.8 acres	3 acres
<b>Condition</b>	2.5	2.6	2.6	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.00
Turf	2	3	2	NA	NA	2	1	1	3	2
Trees and Shrubs	2*	2*	2*	1	1	2	1	1	3	3
Sidewalks/Paths	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	NA	3	3
Equipment	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	NA	3	2
Irrigation	2	2	2**	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	2**
Buildings	NA	3	3	NA	1	NA	1	NA	NA	NA
Appearance	3	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	2
<b>Location</b>	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.5
Public access	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Adjacencies	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	3	2	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	2.6	2.6	2.7	1.3	1.3	2.0	1.5	1.8	2.9	2.4

**Exhibit VIII-5 Continued**  
**Parks Condition and Adequacy**

<b>Parks Condition and Adequacy Checklist</b>								<b>Scale: 1.00 to 3.00</b>	
	<b>South Pacific Park</b>	<b>Welcome Center &amp; Caboose</b>	<b>El Creston Circle Park</b>	<b>Pajarito Park</b>	<b>Memorial Park</b>	<b>Rodriguez Park/Fields</b>	<b>Hanna Park</b>	<b>Padilla Soccer Field</b>	<b>Keyes Fields &amp; Play Area</b>
<b>Estimated Size</b>	2 acres	.5 acres	.7 acres	.13 acres	.17 acres	32 ac. In use	4.7 acres	4.2 acres	4.4 acres
<b>Condition</b>	2.0	2.0	2.7	2.0	1.7	1.5	2.0	3.0	2.0
Turf	2	2	2	NA	NA	2***	2	3	2***
Trees and Shrubs	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2
Sidewalks/Paths	2	2	3	N/A	N/A	1	2	3	2
Equipment	2	2	3	N/A	1	2	2	3	2
Irrigation	2	2	2	N/A	N/A	1	NA	3	2
Buildings	N/A	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	NA	NA	2
Appearance	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	2
<b>Location</b>	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.5	3.0	3.0	3.0
Public access	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	3
Adjacencies	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	2.1	2.1	2.6	2.0	1.8	1.4	2.3	3.0	2.2
<b>Ranking by greatest condition needs</b>	6	6	10	5	4	2	8	13	7
* Old trees in poor condition, new shrubs and trees in good condition									
** Irrigation scheduled for conversion to treated effluent in 2011									
*** Conditions vary by individual field									

**2. Park Under Development**

**Commerce Soccer Field**

**Location:** Commerce Street and East University Avenue

**Park Description:** This single soccer field should be ready for use in late 2011. Located across the street from Marrujo Park, turf was planted in 2010, but needed replacement. The irrigation system is in place and will use treated effluent water.

**3. Infrastructure Capital Improvement Projects (ICIP): Recommendations for Parks-Related Projects**

The list below presents information on capital projects that the city of Las Vegas would like to construct. These project recommendations are listed by fiscal year for requested project start-up, followed by the project ranking in each year's list. The projects include upgrades and expansions to existing parks and extension of the treated effluent water lines to more parks. Costs are estimated.

*2012-35 River Walk Improvements*

Proposed: Trail improvements from Prince Street to Mills Avenue, pocket parks, pedestrian improvements, etc.

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative funds, state grant, federal grant

Total Cost: \$350,000

*The city should re-evaluate expansion of Rodriguez Park in light of planning for a sports complex at the Macario Gonzales site.*

*2012-44 Rodriguez Park Expansion, Phase II – Sports Complex*

Proposed: Construct Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts, 3 soccer fields, pedestrian pathway, BMX park, water park, playground, picnic area

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative grant, legislative funds, state grant

Total Cost: \$3.5 million

*2013-06 Keyes Park Improvements*

Proposed: Parking Lot and field lighting

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative grant, legislative funds, state grant

Total Cost: \$500,000

*2014-05 Commerce Street Park Improvements*

Proposed: Design and construct baseball fields, add lighting, fencing, surfacing

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative funding, legislative grant, state grant

Total Cost: \$100,000

*2012-20 Cinder Road Sewer Relief Line and Treated Effluent Water Line*

Proposed: Extension from Mills Avenue to provide park and sports field irrigation water to the northwest quadrant of the city

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative funding, legislative grant, federal loan

Total Cost: \$1.20 million

*2012-54 ADA Compliance Improvements to City Facilities*

Proposed: Includes installation of ADA accessible picnic tables in city parks

Potential Funding Sources: Legislative bonds, legislative grant, state grant, federal grant

Total Cost: \$1 million for all projects

#### **4. Issues and Opportunities for Existing Parks**

Maintaining the Las Vegas parks to ensure attractive and safe facilities requires attention to a variety of issues that include:

*Maintenance – Daily and Long-term*

Many parks have problems with trash and graffiti. City maintenance staff work hard to keep parks clean and spend much of each workday picking up trash and covering graffiti, particularly during the summers when parks are most heavily used. Vandalism is particularly a problem in parks located in more isolated locations.

*Trees and Shrubs*

Many of Las Vegas' parks, particularly the historic ones, have aging trees, the majority of which are elms. These trees have reached the end of their lifespans, are no longer aesthetically appealing and could potentially be a hazard to people and property if limbs fall. The trees selected to replace the aging ones should be appropriate for the site and climate and reasonable to maintain over a long lifespan. Many of the trees are Siberian elms, which have been placed on the state's list of noxious weeds.

The city's Tree Committee has focused on strategies to systematically replace the older trees with new trees and shrubs, and they have provided input into this Parks discussion. They stress the importance of ensuring attractive and safe parks facilities for Las Vegas, with the understanding that improvements will take time and money. However, their concern about deterioration of old trees has led them to conclude that the trees are causing Las Vegas to have a diminished quality of life and increased liability potential. They recommend a larger budget for more and better parks maintenance.

The committee is also concerned with vandalism and littering in local parks. The city's program to install CCTV cameras in parks and long major streets should make surveillance easier and more effective.

The Tree Committee believes that addressing existing problems concerning trees, litter, vandalism and graffiti should be the city's first priority for parks. They also recommend developing an Urban Forestry Program and Plan (also known as an Urban Forest Management Plan) to address how to improve tree management. To implement these improvements, they recommend two ICIPs for 2012 to cover urban forest remediation and development of the Urban Forest Management Plan.

The Tree Committee has also developed a guide with low water-use trees and shrubs (Draft 2009). This guide provides information about plant materials that will thrive in Las Vegas without excessive watering. Funding agencies sometimes give preference to applications from Tree City USA communities. Celebrating the Tree City USA award and Arbor Day offer opportunities for publicity, reaching large numbers of people with information about tree care.

Las Vegas is a member of the national Tree City USA program created by the Arbor Day Foundation, one of eight member communities and three air force bases in New Mexico. This program assists communities in creating a framework for action, education, a positive public image, and citizen pride. State and federal noxious weeds programs may also be potential sources of expertise and/or funding for managing Siberian elms.

#### *Irrigation*

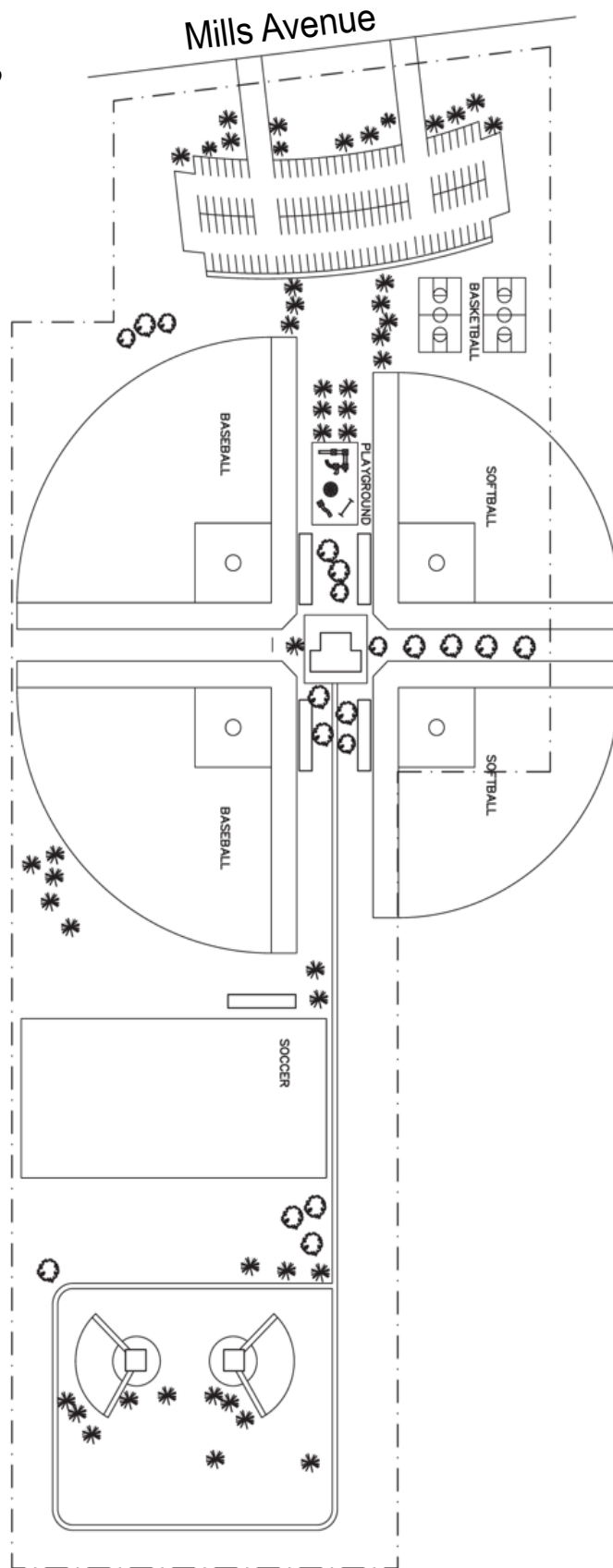
The city selectively irrigates Las Vegas parks. Playfields and parks that receive heavy use have irrigation systems, while more lightly used parks and segments of parks rely on rainwater. The original irrigation system relies on the city's domestic water system, but the city has increasing concerns with drought and the availability of domestic water to meet local needs. In recent years, Las Vegas has begun to implement a gray water system that uses treated effluent water for irrigation.

#### *Staffing Needs*

Additional staffing may be needed carry out all the responsibilities assigned to it. In addition to parks, the park staff maintain landscaping at the following facilities: Senior Center, Museum/Courts Building, Old Armory/Veterans Center, Art Council Building, City Hall, Animal Control, Old City Hall, OK Café and Walkway, and

**Exhibit VIII-6**  
 Conceptual Site  
 Plan B for Macario  
 Gonzales Site

(Source: City of  
 Las Vegas)



trash receptacles on Bridge Street, 6th Street and Douglas Avenue.

**Proposal for a New Athletic Complex**

Las Vegas is considering the development of a new athletic complex. The site formerly held a public housing complex on Mills Avenue. This site is centrally located, is conveniently close to commercial development that can serve participants and has excellent access.

The main features of the complex as initially conceived include two softball fields, two baseball fields, a soccer field, two basketball courts, playground with a selection of play equipment and a parking area off Mills Avenue. Additional components being considered include: equipment storage buildings, a concession stand with restroom facilities, a hiking trail connection to the NMHU Athletic Complex, and trees for shade, wind reduction, and privacy. Multiple walkways are planned to connect all facilities and provide paths for runners.

A feasibility and market study prior to formal design and construction would confirm proposals or provide guidance on the best alternatives for the site in terms of community demand for various amenities and potential return on investments the city could expect from field rental for tournaments and team fees.



*Park adequacy standards typically deal with the size of parks per population and the distribution of parks by distance for ease of use by residents. Las Vegas is recommended to develop its own standards.*

## **Park Adequacy Standards**

Some cities develop and adopt park standards to respond to community demands and needs for parks of various types, and to ensure that facilities are equitably distributed throughout the community. Parks classifications are by use type or size in categories that may include: neighborhood parks, recreation complexes, special use parks and others. Classifying park spaces helps the community to assess whether the numbers, sizes and amenities meet local needs.

Las Vegas has a total of approximately 189 acres of developed park areas, including Montezuma Pond, which is only marginally in use. Additional acreage is available for future development, particularly at the Rodriguez Park site. The city is also considering redevelopment as a sports complex the former public housing site on Mills Avenue, with plans described above; this complex would add considerably to the total acreage of parks.

A preliminary analysis was conducted to identify standards that may be appropriate for Las Vegas. As a starting point, the following standards are derived from the National Recreation and Park Association (1983 and 1995) and 2010 Parks and Trails Master Plan Update, Standards for Flower Mound, Texas, while simplifying their respective classification systems with slightly smaller park sizes:

- Community park sizes of 20 or more acres for a population of 15,000 to 20,000 persons
- Neighborhood parks of 5 acres or a little less for a population up to 1,000 persons

Over the past 20 years, communities have moved away from national standards. Currently, standards vary considerably among communities. Planners recommend that Las Vegas develop its own standards. The following categories can serve as a starting point:

**Original Plaza:** Las Vegas' Plaza is the city's premier park and one of the community's best-known landmarks. With its furniture, lighting and gazebo, it is mainly used as a place to sit and visit with friends, but also serves as a venue for special events. It can also fit other park categories, but ultimately, stands on its own.

**Community Parks:** These parks serve all of Las Vegas, mainly in active uses. Parks in this classification tend to be larger in size than most other parks, are for a single use type and/or are frequently used for special community-based events.

**Neighborhood Parks:** These parks combine both passive and active uses. While anyone living in Las Vegas can use these parks, they are located throughout the community for easy access. Under this classification, Las Vegas currently has eight neighborhood parks in operation.

The city should consider increasing the number of sites, whether new or existing, that provide neighborhood park amenities. For instance, Las Vegas' concept for

including mini-parks along the River Walk would help with expanded provision of neighborhood park amenities like playground equipment and picnic tables. Other community parks may also be appropriate for playgrounds.

**Pocket Parks:** These parks, two of which are historic, are all under 0.2 acres in size. They serve as places of respite and visual relief.

**Special Use Parks:** Special Use parks serve a variety of uses that are difficult to categorize with other parks. Two parks are included in this category are Veterans Park and the Welcome Center and Caboose.

The table below presents a summary of Las Vegas’ maintained parks, using the proposed park classification system.

**Exhibit VIII-7**  
*Parks by Size, Uses and Classification*

**Las Vegas Parks by Size, Uses and Classification**

Park Name	Approximate Acreage	Historic	Recreation			Linear	Special Use	Tentative Classification
			Play-ground	Playfield	Water			
Old Town Plaza Park	1.6	●					●	Original Plaza
Gallinas River Walk	32					●	●	Community
Harris Park	9.7				●			Community
Montezuma Pond	88				●			Community
Rodriguez Park/Fields*	32			●				Community
Carnegie Park	2.8	●						Neighborhood
El Creston Circle Park	0.7		●					Neighborhood
Hanna Park	4.7		●	●				Neighborhood
Keyes Fields & Play Area	4.4		●	●				Neighborhood
Lincoln Park	2.3	●	●					Neighborhood
Marrujo Park	3		●					Neighborhood
Padilla Soccer Field	4.2		●	●				Neighborhood
South Pacific Park	2		●	●				Neighborhood
Lion/ Fountain Square Park	0.05	●					●	Pocket Park
Memorial Park	0.17					●	●	Pocket Park
Pajarito Park	0.13					●	●	Pocket Park
Truder/ Triangle Park	0.05	●					●	Pocket Park
Veterans Park	0.8						●	Special Use
Welcome Center & Caboose	0.5						●	Special Use

\* Approximately 13% of Rodriguez Park is currently developed.

Las Vegas residents value their parks as part of their day-to-day quality of life. Further assessment and the creation of standards or guidelines for Las Vegas’ parks can help to guide long-range maintenance, planning and design. This process should include:

- Periodic citywide surveys of park use to determine trends and demand levels for facilities
- Periodic assessments of park conditions
- Locational analysis and planning for new parks to ensure distribution that conveniently meets citizens’ needs
- Analysis of community demographic trends, e.g., growth areas or age data to locate specific facility types to meet future needs

## **D. Goals, Objectives and Policies for Facilities and Parks**

**Facilities Goal: Maintain existing city facilities and develop new city facilities to meet the needs of the community, including the enhancement of the quality, safety and convenience of city services, preservation of historic properties, and support for economic development.**

- 1. Use municipal facilities improvements to support and expand economic development.**
  - a. Locate administrative facilities in the downtown and perhaps other areas that are easily accessible to the public and house city staff where such facilities serve as activity anchors.
  - b. Invest in municipal facilities to achieve broader redevelopment in core areas of the community.
  - c. Consolidate city functions that community members frequent and relocate where they are more accessible to the public.
  
- 2. Preserve and maintain historic municipal buildings**
  - a. Prioritize repair to historic buildings prior to replacement, including for Old City Hall, Carnegie Library, and the Las Vegas Museum.
  - b. Maintain historic municipal buildings, including the Intermodal Center, currently in excellent shape, and the above buildings.
  - c. Acquire historic buildings if they are not used and can be properly used for municipal functions.
  - d. Where historic buildings cannot be feasibly and economically repaired to function appropriately for municipal purposes, consider replacement buildings.
  
- 3. Build new facilities or expand existing facilities to improve health, safety and welfare of the community.**
  - a. Consider establishing a fourth fire house in a location that will improve Las Vegas' insurance services office (ISO) fire protection rating and reduce property insurance rates.
    - As Las Vegas expands, identify and acquire additional sites for future fire stations.
  - b. Develop a library facility and services needs assessment, followed by site identification and acquisition.
    - Consider joint use of a library with Highlands University or, alternately, construction of a new general-purpose library while retaining the Carnegie Library as a neighborhood library, special collections library and/or archive.
  - c. Bring buildings up to building code standards and ADA compliance during renovation, addressing health and safety concerns.
  - d. Invest in improvements in the energy efficiency of city buildings in order to use less energy and save money.

- 4. Conduct detailed facilities planning and programming on a regular basis in order to identify needs and funding resources to address those needs.**
  - a. Using existing facilities inventories as a basis, develop a comprehensive facility database of city-owned and operated facilities
    - Regularly update facility and equipment data to assist with maintenance and capital improvement schedules.
  - b. Tie the Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP) to the needs and approaches identified in the Facilities and Parks Element of the Comprehensive Master Plan.
  - c. Secure funds from the city's general budget and other sources that are sufficient to maintain and repair the building facilities owned by the city.
  
- 5. Employ city staff with expertise in specialized facilities operational and maintenance areas**
  - a. Train, hire or contract staff with specialized qualifications in roofing, historic preservation, energy efficiency, and facility database management.

**Parks Goal: Develop and maintain a variety of parks serving the range of recreational needs of Las Vegas residents**

- 1. Maintain grounds, equipment and structures in parks**
  - a. Continue regular trash pick-up and graffiti removal.
  - b. Repair and replace equipment to ensure it functions safely.
  - c. Continue programs to manage aging park trees, saving them where possible and strategically replacing them when needed, to ensure safety and aesthetics.
    - Develop an Urban Forest Management Plan, incorporating findings of the 2009 draft guide to low water-use trees and shrubs and guidance from an arborist, whether serving on the Tree Committee or as a city employee or consultant.
  - d. Where appropriate, develop walking and bicycling trails within parks, linking them to nearby neighborhoods and to key pedestrian and bicycling destinations in the rest of the city.
  
- 2. Develop new parks to serve the community and its visitors**
  - a. Build new neighborhood parks to conveniently serve residents in developing and redeveloping areas.
  - b. Build regional complexes to serve residents and visitors with a variety of larger-scale sports fields and facilities.
  
- 3. Assure that parks continue to provide needed recreational opportunities and aesthetic qualities appreciated by residents and visitors**
  - a. Periodically survey residents to determine wants and desires, usage, changes in demographics and in activities trends, and priorities to guide park investments.
  - b. Develop park adequacy standards appropriate for Las Vegas, and use

them to assess location and size for new parks needed to accommodate growth through population expansion or annexation.

- c. Develop detailed parks master plans to identify and fund facilities and programs that are responsive to the identified needs of residents.
  - Where possible, consider opportunities for city income generation.

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## IX. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element

*The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element provides an approach to reducing GHG emissions, including cost-savings measures, for the city and the community. It also starts the collection of benchmark information on the subject, while the city needs to make additional efforts to gather and analyze more information.*

### A. Introduction

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Element is intended to establish an approach for steps that the city of Las Vegas and the community in general can take to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The comprehensive master plan update includes this section to comply with New Mexico Administrative Code, Title 2- Public Finance, Chapter 110- Local Government Grants, Part 2 – Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). These regulations require CDBG-funded plans to address GHG reduction in land use, transportation, housing and economic development portions of the plan. The state of New Mexico has determined the reduction of GHG emissions to be in keeping with the objective of assisting communities in providing and maintaining a suitable living environment for its residents.

Most of the activities of daily life in every community create greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, even the smallest of communities can have an impact on global reduction of GHGs. The local government can control some of these activities through ordinance and financing incentives. However, many activities are beyond the control of local governments and therefore the government can only provide influence, support, or education to effect reductions in GHG.

Through this documentation of strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the community of Las Vegas, this plan seeks to:

- Promote an understanding of the local government’s and community’s impact on climate change
- Outline a program of changes that can reduce that impact
- Enable future detailed assessments which accurately measure emissions to the extent possible and appropriate for aiding future GHG reduction actions

### B. Existing Conditions

#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions Background

The concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere (those gases that trap heat within the atmosphere and contribute to global warming) has increased considerably in recent history to the point where global temperatures are rising at an unprecedented rate. The U.S. scientific community has issued recent and very clear warnings that the climate is close to a “tipping point” (meaning that climate change will become irreversible) and that unless we begin reducing greenhouse gas emissions we will soon pass this point with widespread undesirable consequences. Some of the forecast changes include irreversible glacial melt and rapid sea level rise “out of humanity’s control.”<sup>1</sup> Scientists estimate that continued growth of GHG emissions for another 10 years would make it impractical, and most likely

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<sup>1</sup> Hansen, J. et al., “Dangerous human-made interference with climate: a GISS model E study,” *Atmos. Chem. Phys.*, 29 March, 2007: 2298.

impossible, to avert dangerous climate change.<sup>2</sup>

The danger is not that the planet will be harmed, for there are fossil records of extreme climate changes having occurred in the history of the earth, but that our delicate balance of human habitation, resource availability, and international trade patterns upon which our economy, indeed our very lifestyles, are founded and governed, will be disturbed in ways that are uncertain. Our ability to adapt in time to changes in availability of resources, such as water, energy, and food, may cause loss of homes, jobs, and quality of life, perhaps even widespread political unrest and deaths. Curbing greenhouse gas emissions now, while it is still possible to return to predictable climatic patterns, is in the hands of all community members.

### **Benefits of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan**

Because reducing GHG emissions will be realized largely through the reduction of energy use, regardless of the source of energy or of the end user, these reductions will directly affect funding associated with energy use. In other words, energy use reduction is good for everyone's bottom line: government budgets as well as citizens' pocketbooks.

As state and federal governments continue to put GHG emissions regulations into place, it will likely become necessary for the city of Las Vegas to measure its direct and indirect emissions, to set goals for their reduction, and to monitor its performance in achieving these reductions. Although the update plan does not measure emissions, it is nevertheless a recommendation that the city establish a measured baseline. Implementing emissions reductions efforts ahead of schedule will make the task of realizing mandated reductions more affordable.

Even prior to creating a measured baseline of emissions by local government-owned and operated facilities, a local government can assess building performance against a nationwide database of similar facilities to determine whether improvements can and should be made to each individual facility. This assessment only requires entering a year of utility data in an online calculator that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides for free.<sup>3</sup> For help in directing the appropriate placement of funds toward achieving energy efficiency, an online assessment tool, Energy Guide, provides recommendations for actions to take to reduce energy consumption and approximate costs for these actions. This analysis was part of gathering data for the comprehensive plan and the results are included at presented the end of this section.

A thorough analysis of a community's greenhouse gas output would involve quantifying the local government's energy use and associated greenhouse gas production, and estimating energy use and production by the community at large. Although this data is highly detailed and planners did not collect it for this document, this plan can make some general statements about probable energy use

2 Hansen, J. et al., "Dangerous human-made interference with climate: a GISS model E study," *Atmos. Chem. Phys.*, 29 March, 2007: 2298.

3 [http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate\\_performance.bus\\_portfolio manager](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance.bus_portfolio manager)



and greenhouse gas output of the community at large. Planners conducted a high level assessment of energy use for most city-owned facilities. The Results of Energy Guide Energy Assessments at the end of this section presents that information. Those analyses provide an estimate of energy expenditures, percentage of totals energy consumed by use, and suggestions for future energy savings.

The following are general statements regarding probable energy use and greenhouse gas output by the community:

- As is the case with many New Mexico communities, there is an abundance of older houses and nonresidential buildings in Las Vegas, some dating back 100 years, that do not have sufficient insulation or energy efficient mechanical systems and electrical appliances. These conditions cause a higher than average use of heating fuel and electricity. The building sector (including construction materials, the building process, and the on-going operations and maintenance of buildings) accounts for 49% of total U.S. energy consumption and 77% of all electricity produced in the U.S.<sup>4</sup>
- According to the U.S. Census 2000 (Summary File 3), of the 5,160 workers in the city of Las Vegas 16 years of age and over, 4,694 (91%) commuted to work, 13 (0.3%) took a bus, 36 (0.7%) bicycled, and 273 (3%) walked to work. Although Las Vegas has a public transit system, ridership is less than 2% of the total population of the city (200 riders per day). Transportation accounts for 33.1% of U.S. energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by end-use sector (2008).<sup>5</sup>
- Waste management (landfill operations) accounts for 29% of all human-caused methane emissions, which is 18% of total greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, extracting virgin materials from the earth for products that are used in daily life (and often thrown away) can use up to 20 times more energy to produce. Limited local waste recycling facilities reduces the community's ability to achieve energy reductions by diverting waste from landfills. Public awareness of the benefits to environmental health from purchasing recycled products can be increased.<sup>6</sup>

## **C. Issues and Opportunities**

### **Roles of City and Higher Educational Institutions in GHG Emission Reductions and Communitywide Understanding**

The community of Las Vegas hosts several higher educational institutions, which in the past decade have taken leadership roles in reducing GHG and educating the community about GHG issues. Creating partnerships with these institutions can help the city of Las Vegas in its efforts to educate, incentivize, and effect change. Many colleges and universities in the state of New Mexico have undertaken GHG measurement and reductions planning and have used the results of these efforts

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4 [http://architecture2030.org/the\\_problem/buildings\\_problem\\_why](http://architecture2030.org/the_problem/buildings_problem_why), Source data from U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration

5 U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, report #0573 (2008)

6 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (2006) and US Environmental Protection Agency, Inventory of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks (2007)

to encourage positive actions among community residents. These partnerships can provide a model for local government activities and a vehicle for socializing these activities. It is likely that there is an untapped interest in the topic among residents, and potential enthusiasm for activities to make Las Vegas a leader in conservation and sustainability in the state and the region.

New Mexico Highlands University is constructing a new building that will be LEED Silver certified. The city can showcase this facility as a model for new “green” construction to the private and public sectors.

### **Land Use and Transportation Strategies**

The city should consider various land use and transportation measures that yield greater energy efficiencies. One of the benefits of a compact land use pattern with complementary uses near one another is reduced auto use. A “shop local” economic development campaign should result in fewer out-of-town trips. In addition, natural gas vehicles generate less GHG emissions compared to gasoline vehicles.

### **Energy Saving Retrofits of Homes, Businesses and Public Buildings**

Insufficient home insulation and inefficient mechanical systems and electrical appliances are the usual targets when seeking widespread reductions in energy use. Furthermore, many people have developed energy-use habits that result in energy waste, such as leaving lights, appliances, and heating/cooling equipment turned on in uninhabited rooms and facilities. Correcting these building deficiencies can be as simple as changing wasteful habits, and as difficult and expensive as replacing large cooling systems. Generally speaking, behavioral changes are free and energy-saving retrofits can be amortized over a reasonable period of time.

### **Contribution of Urban Forest to Energy Savings**

The city possesses a substantial urban forest, both on public and private properties. The city of Las Vegas should continue to promote planting and maintaining trees in the city. Trees create shade in the summer and temper the effects of wind, rain and snow on cars and facilities, potentially saving energy costs associated with cooling and heating.

### **NM Solar Rights Act and Local Ordinance to Protect Solar Access**

New Mexico Statute 47-3 Solar Rights NMSA 1978 provides for the protection of New Mexico residents who invested in capturing solar energy. The city of Las Vegas has an opportunity to describe in further detail local provisions in a local ordinance to benefit the residents of the community.

### **Comparative Generation of Carbon Dioxide by Different Fuels**

Residents of Las Vegas burn wood widely for home heating. While it is more affordable and available for some, and ensures a reliable back-up during electricity and natural gas shortages, an abundance of smoke from wood-burning creates localized air pollution that causes health issues for residents. Wood also generates more carbon dioxide than natural gas and other fuels for heating (see table below).

**Exhibit IX-1**  
Relative CO<sub>2</sub>  
Emissions of  
Various Fuels

<b>Mass of Carbon Dioxide Emitted Per Quantity of Energy for Various Fuels</b>		
Fuel Name	Carbon Dioxide Emitted (lbs./10 BTU)	Carbon Dioxide Emitted (g/10 J)
Natural gas	117	50.3
Liquefied petroleum gas	139	59.8
Propane	139	59.8
Aviation gasoline	153	65.8
Automobile gasoline	156	67
Kerosene	159	68.4
Fuel oil	161	69.2
Tires/tire derived fuel	189	81.3
Wood and wood waste	195	83.8
Coal (bituminous)	205	88.1
Coal (subbituminous)	213	91.5
Coal (ignite)	215	92.4
Petroleum coke	225	96.7
Coal (anthracite)	227	97.6

Source: IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, Table 2.14, Chapter 2, p. 212.  
Note: Quantity of energy is expressed in British Thermal Units (BTU) and in Joules (J).

The city of Las Vegas operates the natural gas utility serving the community. Consequently, the city has a direct ability to develop a facility to dispense natural gas for vehicles, possibly at a lower cost than if natural gas were an independent utility. As shown in the table above, natural gas produces less carbon dioxide than gasoline.

Las Vegas and San Miguel County have solar, wind, and geothermal resources that are likely sufficient to warrant investments in renewable energy equipment. The city of Las Vegas should consider how incentives, promotion, and education regarding these industries can enable alternative fuels to flourish in the community and potentially contribute to the local economy.

Adobe and straw bale construction have a long history in northern New Mexico. These vernacular methods contribute to energy savings in many ways. The city of Las Vegas can promote the further use of these methods through incentives and education.

### **Methane Gas Reduction**

The city has opportunities to reduce the release of methane gas into the atmosphere from the sewer treatment plant, landfills/dumps and perhaps other sources. Captured methane gas can be a fuel. The city needs to research further to identify methane gas sources and consider methods of capturing and using the gas.

### **Carbon Credits**

The city of Las Vegas may be able to benefit from selling “carbon offsets” or “carbon credits.” A carbon credit is “a tradable financial unit, similar to a stock share, representing a certain quantity of greenhouse gas emission reductions due

to implementing a project.” (Source: Carolyn J. Roose, Ph.D., “Selling Carbon Offsets from Your Clean Energy Project,” U.S. Department of Energy Clean Energy Application Center, October 2009) In order to establish the value of an offered carbon credit, the credit must be certified in accordance with rigorous standards in accordance with current carbon markets. Emissions reductions must be compared to an accurate and realistic baseline that reflect what greenhouse gas emissions would have been in the absence of the project. While there are several carbon markets at this time, the expansion of markets depends upon the creation of cap-and-trade systems. A “cap” is a legal limit on the quantity of greenhouse gases our economy can emit each year. “Trade” means that, by law, companies may swap among themselves the permission to emit greenhouse gases (ibid).

Projects that the city might find eligible for carbon credit include but are not limited to capturing methane from the wastewater treatment plant and utilizing it to generate power, renewable energy generation, and highly energy efficient buildings.

## **D. Goal, Objectives and Policies**

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goal: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from activities and buildings of both the city and the community in general in order to reduce impacts on the environment and save costs.**

### **1. Pursue land use practices that reduce energy use.**

- a. Adopt policies that promote compact and efficient development and the traditional neighborhood design that increases walkability.
- b. Preserve and enhance forests, parks, street trees, open space and other natural systems that act as carbon “sinks.”
- c. Review city land use regulations to assure that they do not discourage or prohibit the use of solar panels.
- d. Consider adopting local solar access protection regulations.
- e. Develop diversified entertainment and a “shop local” campaign to result in reducing out-of-town trips.

### **2. Improve the housing stock and home building practices in the community to be more energy efficient and reduce waste.**

- a. Institute source reduction, recycling, and resource recovery programs for construction and demolition material.
- b. Consider inverse pricing of natural gas, which would establish a higher rate per quantity of natural gas for larger users, while offering programs such as weatherization and incentives that assist residents to improve the heating efficiency of their homes or replace furnaces, water heaters and appliances.
- c. Improve energy efficiency of existing city-owned housing facilities.
- d. Promote green building in new housing construction.
- e. Promote weatherization of the city’s building stock and selected rehabilitation of older buildings in the city.

3. **Invest in measures to improve the efficiency of city utilities and utilities operations.**
  - a. Identify sources of methane production, such as sewage treatment and current and historic land fill sites, for capture and reuse of methane gas.
  - b. Consider cogeneration, using methane to power or heat waste water facilities.
  - c. Reduce energy use by streetlights.
  - d. Reduce energy use in water treatment, water distribution, irrigation and waste water systems.
  
4. **Reduce use of fossil fuels through reduction in vehicular miles driven and selection of fuel.**
  - a. Create opportunities for greater multi-modal access within the community.
  - b. Promote city use of alternative fuels in city vehicles to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, particularly focusing on natural gas which is available through the city-operated utility.
  - c. Adopt and implement a policy requiring limitations on idling for city operated vehicles, commercial vehicles, construction vehicles, school buses and other similar vehicles within city limits.
  - d. Promote alternatives to single-occupant auto commuting.
  
5. **Reduce energy use associated with city-owned properties and services.**
  - a. Analyze energy conservation and efficiency in city buildings and equipment.
    - Conduct a detailed energy consumption audit to establish the baseline of city energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.
    - Identify opportunities to make behavioral and physical changes to energy using facilities.
    - Set realistic goals for energy reduction over the short- and long-term.
    - Develop a capital plan implementing steps to meet established energy reduction goals.
  - b. Implement energy-saving measures in city buildings and equipment.
  - c. Achieve energy-efficient operations and protocols.
  - d. Establish minimum levels of energy efficiency and green building standards for future city buildings and facilities.
  - e. Enhance existing waste reduction and recycling activities at city buildings and in the community.
  - f. Promote the use of renewable sources of energy.
  - g. Consider pick-up service for recycled paper, plastics and metals along with trash pick up.
  - h. Promote car pooling and transit service to nearby cities, particularly Santa Fe.
  
6. **Increase community-wide understanding of greenhouse gases and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.**
  - a. Promote local agriculture, gardening, a local butcher and other goods and services to reduce the long-distance transport of fresh food to the

- community and reduce spending “leakage” from the local economy.
- b. Create opportunity to educate residents about home energy use and provide incentives for home energy retrofits.
    - Work with the Central New Mexico Economic Development District or other entities to capture Weatherization Assistance Program funding.<sup>7</sup>
  - c. Work with New Mexico Highlands University and other educational institutions in the community to create a energy-efficiency study group.
    - Promote community awareness of energy conservation/cost reductions/greenhouse gas emissions reduction.
    - Recommend institutional and community-wide actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
  - d. Outreach to business and residents to promote energy efficiency in the community.
  - e. Provide opportunities for public engagement that will support successful implementation of climate change actions.
  - f. Promote alternative energy generation in and near the city of Las Vegas, including wind power on the eastern plains.
  - g. Use all energy efficiency projects implemented in city-owned facilities as educational opportunities to demonstrate to the community what is possible and affordable.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www1.eere.energy.gov/financing/solicitations\\_detail.html?sol\\_id=378](http://www1.eere.energy.gov/financing/solicitations_detail.html?sol_id=378)

The energy guide assessments ties closely to assessments and recommendations in the Facilities and Parks Element.

## E. Results of Energy Guide Energy Assessments

The Energy Guide tool analyzes data about individual buildings (e.g., size, age, operating hours, shell insulation, heating and cooling equipment, types of lighting fixtures, and number of office equipment) and evaluates how efficiently energy is used by the building. The evaluation assigns approximate costs to each category of energy usage (e.g., heating, cooling, lighting, ventilation) and compares these expenditures to show percentage of total energy used in each category. The guide then determines how energy can be saved by implementing a variety of efficiency measures, how much investment would be required, and how much annual budget could be saved by undertaking each of these investments. These assessments for the city of Las Vegas facilities inventory are based on data received from staff during the data-gathering phase of planning and may not be as precise as an actual energy audit, but they are useful for planning the implementation of energy efficiency projects.

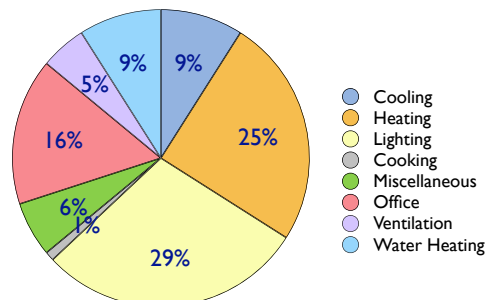
The following facilities were not analyzed for the reasons given:

- Arellanes Complex – lack of available data
- Old City Hall – complete renovation needed, current data irrelevant
- Animal Shelter – building is inadequate for service and should be replaced
- Utilities Department Administration Building – building is inadequate for service and was planned for replacement
- Wastewater Treatment Plant – building is not used full-time, is sufficient for service, and not likely to receive energy efficiency investments
- Water Treatment Plant – modular building is inadequate for service and should be replaced
- Solid Waste Transfer Station – building is in poor condition and is planned for replacement
- Old Armory/Veterans Service Center – newly renovated facility is used and operated by third party; energy efficiency is not within local government control

### Typical Office Building Energy Use

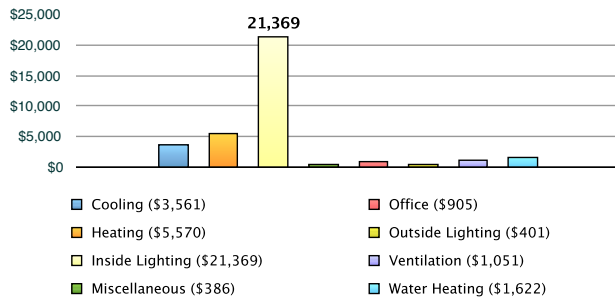
The chart in Exhibit IX-2 displays the percentages of total energy use by category that would be expected in a typical office building. This chart is presented as a baseline for comparison with the estimated performance data of city-owned facilities that follow. Due to the variation in uses of these facilities, a range around these baseline percentages can be considered acceptable. Energy use that strays dramatically outside the range is considered wasteful and an excellent opportunity for utility bill savings.

**Exhibit IX-2**  
Site Energy Use in Office Buildings

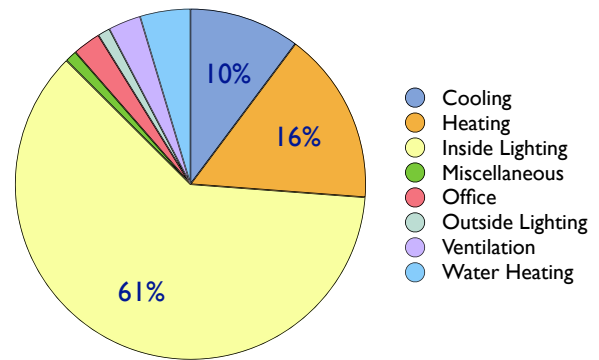


Source: DOE, <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/consumption/briefs/cbecs/pbaweb/site/office/office/howuseenergy.htm>

# Police Department



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Police Station Energy Saving Action

Police Station Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$1,900-\$2,800	\$500-\$800
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$340-\$510
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$250-\$370	\$270-\$400
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$230-\$340
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$130-\$200
COOLING: Regular Maintenance Program for Your Cooling System	\$250-\$370	\$110-\$170
WATER HEATING: Lower the Water Temperature Setting	\$0	\$100-\$160
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$90-\$140
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$120-\$190	\$60-\$90

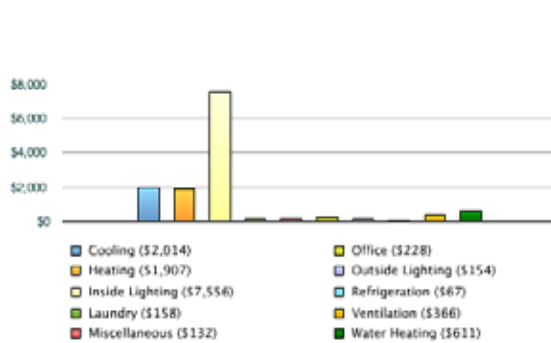
Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

## Analysis

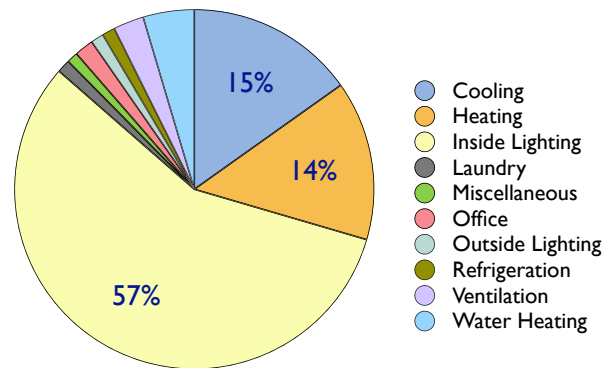
Indoor lighting is an inordinately large portion of energy expenditures. The department can realize the greatest savings through replacement of lighting fixtures and/or lamps from T-12 to T-8 or T-5 (if this work has not been included in 2010/2011 remodel activities).



## E. Romero Fire Station



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

### E. Romero Fire Station Energy Saving Action

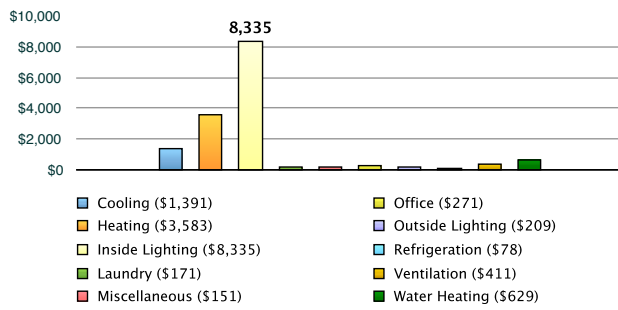
	Cost	Annual Savings
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$700-\$1,100	\$180-\$270
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$130-\$190
COOLING: Regular Maintenance Program for Your Cooling System	\$90-\$140	\$130-\$190
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$360-\$540	\$120-\$180
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$90-\$140	\$90-\$140
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$50-\$80
WATER HEATING: Lower the Water Temperature Setting	\$0	\$39-\$59
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$34-\$52
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$50-\$70	\$32-\$48
REFRIGERATION: Clean Heat Exchanger Coils Regularly	\$0	\$1

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

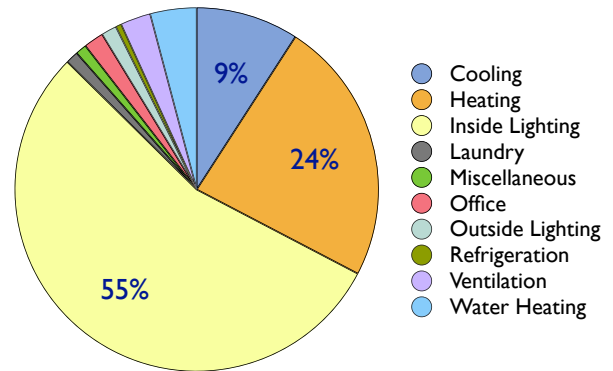
### Analysis

Indoor lighting and cooling exceed the average use expected for office buildings. The department can realize the greatest savings by replacing lighting fixtures and/or lamps from T-12 to T-8 or T-5, adding building insulation to roof, ceilings and walls, and replacing cooling equipment with high-efficiency units.

# Ledoux Fire Station



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Harold Ledoux Fire Station Energy Saving Action

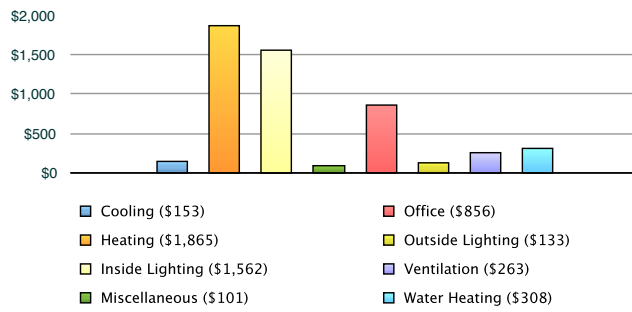
Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" - Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$1,000-\$1,500	\$330-\$500
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$700-\$1,100	\$200-\$300
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$100-\$140	\$170-\$260
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$70-\$110
WATER HEATING: Lower the Water Temperature Setting	\$0	\$40-\$60
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$35-\$53
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$50-\$70	\$22-\$34
REFRIGERATION: Clean Heat Exchanger Coils Regularly	\$0	\$2

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

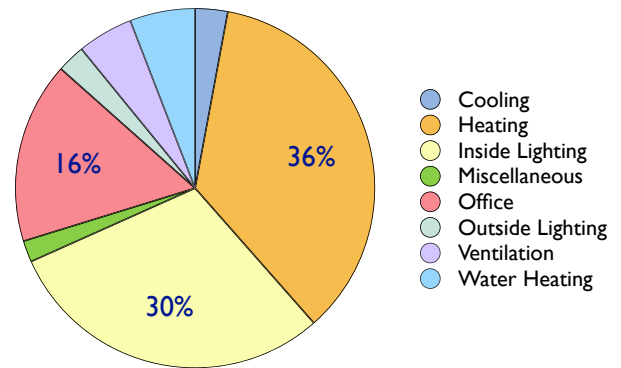
## Analysis

Most costs are in line with expected percentages, although indoor lighting exceeds the average use expected. All systems can benefit from energy efficiency modifications, particularly changing lighting, which is used 24 hours a day, to T-8 or T-5.

# Carnegie Library



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Carnegie Library Energy Saving Action

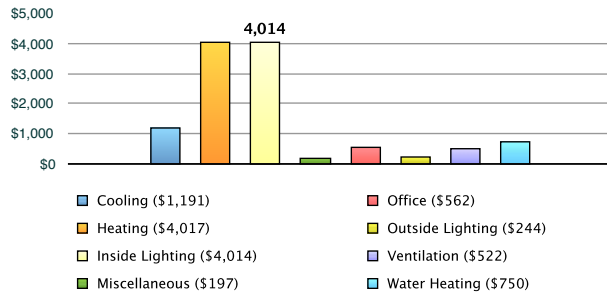
Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
LIGHTING: "T-8" Energy-efficient Fluorescent Lighting	\$8,400-\$12,600	\$280-\$410
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$260-\$390
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Purchase Equipment with the EnergyStar Logo	\$600-\$800	\$210-\$310
INSULATE: Add Rigid Insulation to Your Flat Roof	\$2,200-\$3,300	\$180-\$270
INSULATE: Add Insulation above Dropped Ceiling	\$4,300-\$6,500	\$140-\$210
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$80-\$120	\$90-\$130
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$370-\$560	\$38-\$56
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$32-\$48
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$200-\$300	\$25-\$37

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

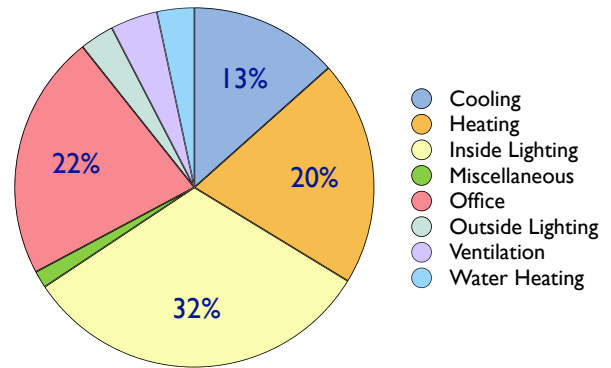
## Analysis

Heating costs are inordinately high. Insulating this historic uninsulated building can cut heating energy use and replacing light fixtures with more energy efficient types will reduce the high lighting bills. Office equipment (computers) spending is high due to the large number of units in a building of this size. Ensure that all appliances are shut off after hours to reduce electricity bills. Purchase Energy Star appliances when replacing equipment.

# Intermodal Center



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Intermodal Center Energy Saving Action

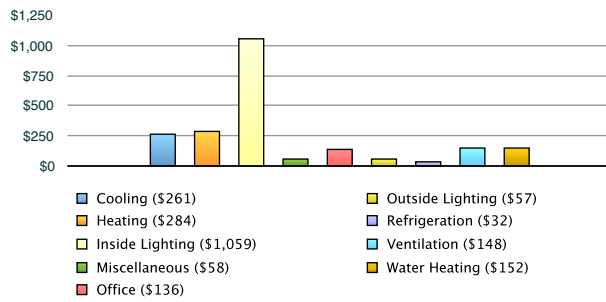
Intermodal Center Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
HEATING: Lower Thermostat. Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$200-\$300
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$130-\$200
HEATING: Seal Leaky Ducts	\$200-\$300	\$90-\$140
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$500-\$700	\$70-\$110
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$40-\$60
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$30-\$46
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$27-\$41
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$36-\$54	\$9

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

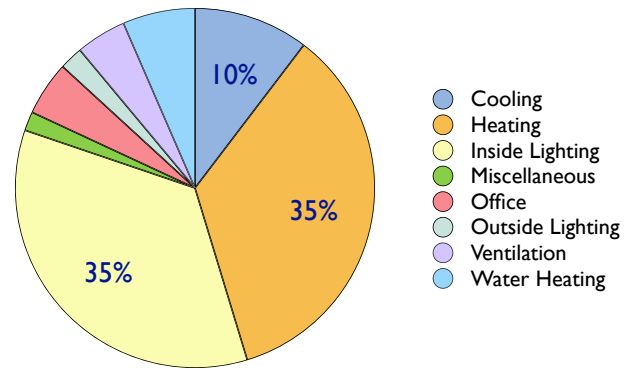
## Analysis

Heating costs are inordinately high. Insulating this historic uninsulated building and replacing heating equipment with energy-efficient heaters can cut heating energy use. Lighting energy use is usually high in a museum, but using the most energy efficient lamps can cut lighting energy use.

# Las Vegas Museum/Municipal Courts



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Las Vegas Museum/Municipal Courts Energy Saving Action

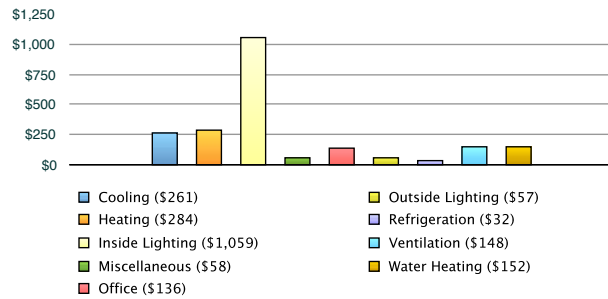
Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
HEATING: Install a High-Efficiency Heating Unit	\$6,000-\$9,000	\$1,600-\$2,400
LIGHTING: Install Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs	\$900-\$1,300	\$600-\$1,000
INSULATE: Add Rigid Insulation to Your Flat Roof	\$4,800-\$7,100	\$500-\$700
INSULATE: Add Insulation above Dropped Ceiling	\$9,500-\$14,300	\$380-\$570
HEATING: Lower Thermostat. Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$350-\$530
LIGHTING: "T-8" Energy-efficient Fluorescent Lighting	\$7,400-\$11,100	\$260-\$390
COOLING: Install a High-efficiency Air Conditioner	\$16,300-\$24,500	\$240-\$360
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$800-\$1,200	\$100-\$140
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$80-\$110
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$200-\$300	\$60-\$100

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

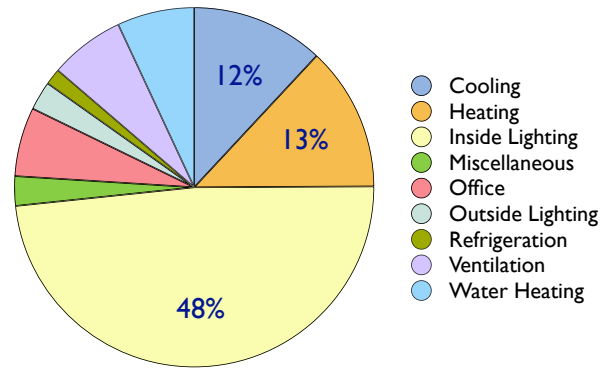
## Analysis

Systems perform within expected ranges. Energy efficiency measures requiring additional investment are probably not cost effective.

# Airport



*Estimate of Energy Expenditures*



*Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use*

## Airport Energy Saving Action

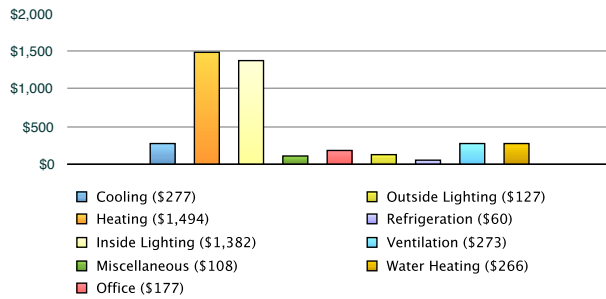
Airport Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$38-\$58
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$200-\$300	\$26-\$38
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$200-\$300	\$17-\$25
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$17-\$25
HEATING: Seal Leaky Ducts	\$200-\$300	\$11-\$17
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$11
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$10
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$36-\$54	\$5
REFRIGERATION: Clean Heat Exchanger Coils Regularly	\$0	\$1

*Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment*

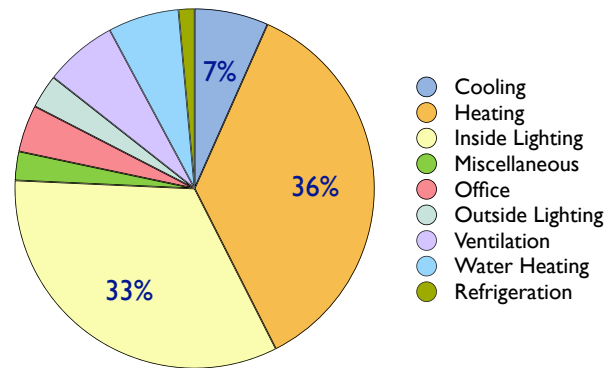
## Analysis

Indoor lighting and office equipment use exceed the average use for office buildings. Replacement of lighting fixtures and/or lamps from T-12 to T-8 or T-5, adding building insulation to roof, ceilings and walls, and replacing cooling equipment with high efficiency units will realize the greatest savings.

# Housing Authority Offices



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Housing Authority Energy Saving Action

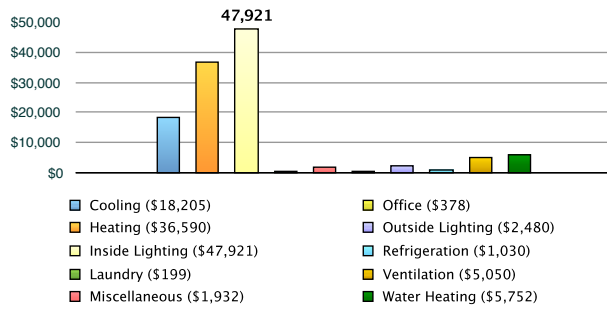
Housing Authority Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
HEATING: Lower Heat during Unoccupied Hours	\$0	\$100-\$140
HEATING: Seal Leaky Ducts	\$200-\$300	\$60-\$90
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$300-\$450	\$33-\$49
WATER HEATING: Lower the Water Temperature Setting	\$0	\$32-\$48
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$27-\$41
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" / Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$200-\$300	\$22-\$34
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$18-\$26
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$15-\$23
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$14-\$20
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$36-\$54	\$6

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

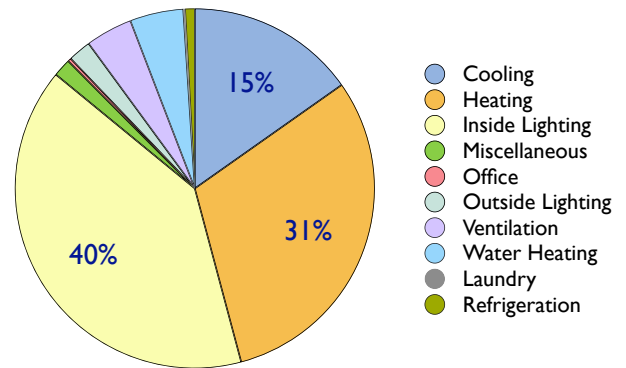
## Analysis

Heating and lighting costs are high. Sealing and insulating, and lowering thermostats after hours, can cut heating energy use. Installing more energy-efficient lamps can reduce lighting energy use.

# Abe Montoya Recreation Center



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Recreation Center Energy Saving Action

Recreation Center Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
LIGHTING: Use "Day Lighting" - Take Advantage of Natural Sunlight	\$5,800-\$8,600	\$1,900-\$2,900
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$1,000-\$1,400	\$1,800-\$2,600
COOLING: Raise Summer Temp. Setting / Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$1,200-\$1,700
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$7,200-\$10,900	\$1,200-\$1,700
COOLING: Reduce Cooling Load During Unoccupied Hours	\$0	\$1,000-\$1,500
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$240-\$360	\$800-\$1,200
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$320-\$480
COOLING: Replace Air Filters Regularly	\$500-\$700	\$290-\$440
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$220-\$330
REFRIGERATION: Clean Heat Exchanger Coils Regularly	\$0	\$17-\$25

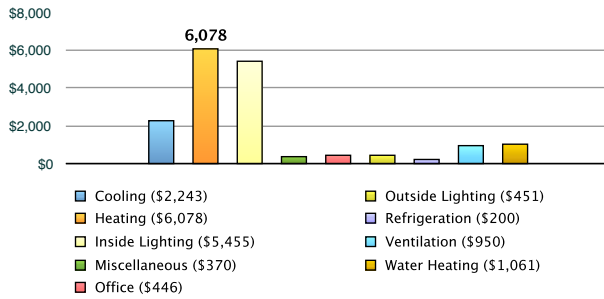
Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

## Analysis

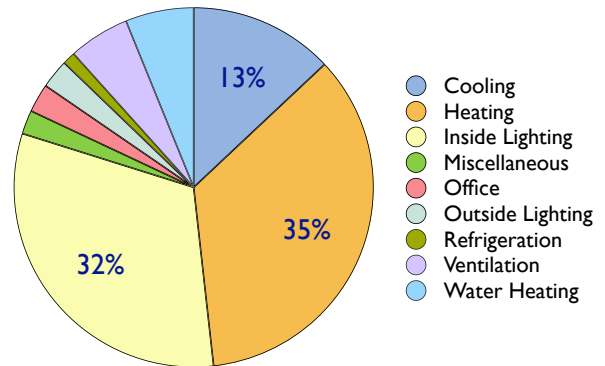
Heating and lighting costs are high. Conditioning large, tall spaces uses a large amount of energy, but installing centralized energy management controls can regulate heating, cooling and lighting use. Installing more energy-efficient equipment can also reduce energy used for space conditioning. Replacing existing lighting with T-8 or T-5 lamps can reduce lighting energy use.



# Senior Center



Estimate of Energy Expenditures



Energy-Use Percentage by Type of Use

## Senior Center Energy Saving Action

Senior Center Energy Saving Action	Cost	Annual Savings
HEATING: Lower Thermostat. Install Programmable Thermostat	\$0	\$500-\$800
HEATING: Lower Heat during Unoccupied Hours	\$0	\$390-\$580
HEATING: Regularly Service Your Heating System	\$160-\$240	\$290-\$440
HEATING: Seal Leaky Ducts	\$200-\$300	\$240-\$360
LIGHTING: Energy-efficient Light Sources for Exit Signs	\$1,200-\$1,800	\$130-\$200
COOLING: Reduce Cooling Load During Unoccupied Hours	\$0	\$130-\$190
WEATHERIZE: Seal Cracks around Windows and Doors	\$200-\$300	\$120-\$190
OFFICE/ELECTRONICS: Turn "Off" Equipment When Not in Use	\$0	\$110-\$160
COOLING: Regular Maintenance Program for Your Cooling System	\$160-\$240	\$70-\$110
WATER HEATING: Insulate Your Water Heater	\$28-\$42	\$60-\$90

Measures with Fastest Payback on Investment

## Analysis

Heating and lighting costs are high. Sealing and insulating, and lowering thermostats after hours, can cut heating energy use. Replacing existing lighting with T-8 or T-5 lamps can reduce lighting energy use.

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## X. Hazards Mitigation Element

*The purpose of this plan element is to establish a foundation for city hazards mitigation planning.*

### A. Introduction

The definition of hazards mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property from natural hazards and their effects. (Source: James Schwab, *Integrating Hazard Mitigation into Local Planning*, APA presentation, 2008) The emphasis on long-term risk distinguishes mitigation from actions geared primarily to emergency preparedness and short-term recovery. Mitigation includes actions to prevent disasters and any long-term recovery strategies after a disaster, including economic and community recovery.

### Purposes of Hazards Mitigation Planning

- Enhance Public Awareness and Understanding – to help residents of the Las Vegas area better understand the natural and human-caused hazards that threaten public health, safety, and welfare; economic vitality; and the operational capability of important institutions.
- Create a Decision Tool for Management – to provide information that managers and leaders of local government, business and industry, community associations, and other key institutions and organizations need to take action to address vulnerabilities to future disasters.
- Promote Compliance with State and Federal Program Requirements – to ensure that Las Vegas can take full advantage of state and federal grant programs, policies, and regulations that encourage or mandate that local governments develop comprehensive hazard mitigation plans.
- Enhance Local Policies for Hazard Mitigation Capability – to provide the policy basis for mitigation actions that participating jurisdictions should promote to create a more disaster-resistant future.
- Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination of Mitigation-Related Programming – to ensure proposals for mitigation initiatives that local jurisdictions review and coordinate among the local jurisdictions.

### Benefits of Mitigation Planning

- Saving lives and reducing property damage
- Protecting critical community facilities
- Reducing long-term hazard vulnerability
- Contributing to sustainability of the community
- Fostering Las Vegas as an environmentally sound, economically viable and disaster-resistant community

While most of the focus of hazard mitigation is on natural conditions, additional concerns for possible terrorism and traffic or railroad accidents are also part of this topic.

The guidelines for the New Mexico Small Cities Community Development Block Grant indicate that the hazards mitigation element includes “...(i) an analysis of the risks of hazards such as wildfire, floods, extreme weather conditions, accidents, and terrorism; (ii) goals, objectives and policies for hazard mitigation; and (iii) a

description of the actions that will be taken to mitigate hazards....” (Source: Section 2.110.2.19.F(5)(f) of the New Mexico Administrative Code, language added in 2006.)

In 2000, the U.S. Congress passed the Hazard Mitigation Act, which requires local plans in order to receive federal Hazard Mitigation Grants. After 9/11, federal requirements for the security of local utilities increased the planning and protective measures on the part of communities, no matter their size.

The purpose of this plan element is to establish a foundation for city hazards mitigation planning. It is recognized that if the city of Las Vegas seeks a Hazard Mitigation Grant or another grant, specifics in the grant program may require work in addition to this element. The city of Las Vegas/San Miguel County Office of Emergency Management is tasked with detailed planning and training with first responders, maintaining an emergency operations manual and with coordinated hazards mitigation planning. Those additional processes and products provide hands-on tools for hazards response.

*Components of Hazards Mitigation include:*

- *Prevention*
- *Property protection*
- *Public education and awareness*
- *Natural resource protection*
- *Emergency services*
- *Structural projects*

Hazards mitigation is linked to other elements in the Comprehensive Master Plan in a variety of ways. Any evacuation plan relates to the transportation network addressed in the Transportation Element. Flooding potential relates to the urban form of the community, land uses, and land use regulations in the Land Use Element. Drought and the availability of water to the community are a component in the Utilities Element, which the Water Preliminary Engineering Report will supplement.

Hazard types are not always absolutely separate. Below are several examples:

- Winds cause power outages.
- Flooding can cause property damage and collapse of steep slopes, or floating of underground storage tanks that might leach fuel into groundwater.
- Flooding can cripple vital transportation routes.
- The threat of flooding supports open space and recreational uses along the Gallinas River.
- Flooding is also related to “green infrastructure,” handling stormwater from street run-off in ecological applications.
- Drought is the typical precursor for severe wildfires. Heavy precipitation over denuded hills can loose soil or lead to landslides. A forest fire in the Gallinas River watershed could affect the city’s water supply by depositing ash and sedimentation in the river, requiring special care to avoid excessive particulates in the city’s reservoirs.

## **B. Conditions, Issues and Opportunities**

### **Drought Vulnerability**

Drought is not purely a physical phenomenon aspect of weather. Rather, at its essential level, the balance between water supply and demand defines drought. Hydrological drought occurs when water reserves in aquifers, reservoirs and lakes

fall below an established statistical average. Meteorological drought is a prolonged period of deficient precipitation which causes a natural shortage of available water. Agricultural drought occurs when there is not enough moisture to support average crop production or average grass production on range land. Whenever human demands for water exceed the natural availability of water, the result is drought.

Variables of snow pack and monsoon rains are critical to Las Vegas' water supply; and in some years, offset one another. Even when the snow pack is low in the watershed, if monsoon rains come, the city's water supply may be in good condition. Water demand varies based due to a multitude of factors, including population growth or decline, change in non-residential high water users, and water use restrictions that the city.

In the Gallinas watershed, average annual precipitation ranges from 15 inches in Las Vegas to more than 30 inches at the higher altitudes above 9,000 feet. Summer rains fall almost entirely during brief, intense thunderstorms. The average annual snowfall in the area ranges from 30 inches to well over 100 inches at the higher altitudes. (Source: Water Quality Assessment of the Gallinas River, WRAS, March 2005)

Water flows in the Gallinas River have been notably low during seven of the last 60 years.

**Exhibit X-1**  
*Historic Low  
 Water Flows in the  
 Gallinas River*

<b>Gallinas River Low Water Flows</b>		
Water Year	Frequency	River Flow (Acre Feet)
1953	40-year	2,660
1954	50-year	2,450
1956	180-year	1,830
1963	5-year	6,400
2002	25-year	3,440
2003	10-year	4,735
2007	2-year	11,730
Source: Mustafa D. Chunoff Consulting, 2011.		
Note: flow at Montezuma Gage.		

The city has established water restrictions during a large part of the last nine years, due to the limited water supply. Even with the array of water conservation measures that the city is currently implementing, the city has high vulnerability to drought.

**Exhibit X-2**  
*Historic  
 Declarations of  
 Water Restrictions*

<b>Water Restrictions Declared in City of Las Vegas Since 2002</b>		
Beginning Date	Stage	Duration
March, 2002	I	15-Apr-02
15-Apr-02	II	29-May-02
29-May-02	III	Unknown
14-Aug-03	III	Unknown
Unknown date in 2005	II	27-Mar-06
27-Mar-06	III	Unknown
June, 2008	I	Aug-09
17-Aug-09	II	April 6,2011
6-Apr-11	III	8-Apr-11
8-Apr-11	IV	In effect
Source: Mustafa D. Chudnoff Consulting, 2011.		

Currently, there are major concerns about a hydrological drought affecting the city. The city has recently declared very restrictive Stage IV limitations on water use, prohibiting outdoor water use. As the *Las Vegas Optic* reported: “Snow pack levels in the Gallinas watershed are well below normal this year (2010-11), meaning that there’s not much runoff heading into the Gallinas River. Warm temperatures and high winds aren’t helping the situation.” (Source: *Las Vegas Optic*, “More Water Restrictions Imposed, April 7, 2011)

Drought mitigation is one of the objectives of the city’s Water Preliminary Engineering Report (PER). The PER is developing a series of interrelated strategies that would reduce the city’s drought vulnerability, including but not limited to:

- Identifying additional conservation measures to supplement the city’s ongoing water conservation program
- New and replacement wells to tap groundwater, thus broadening conjunctive use operations when less surface water is available
- Infrastructure improvements to decrease overall community water demand through use of treated effluent water
- Infrastructure improvements to increase surface water storage
- Decrease water loss from leakage at reservoirs
- Decrease water loss from water pipe leakage

**Wildfire**

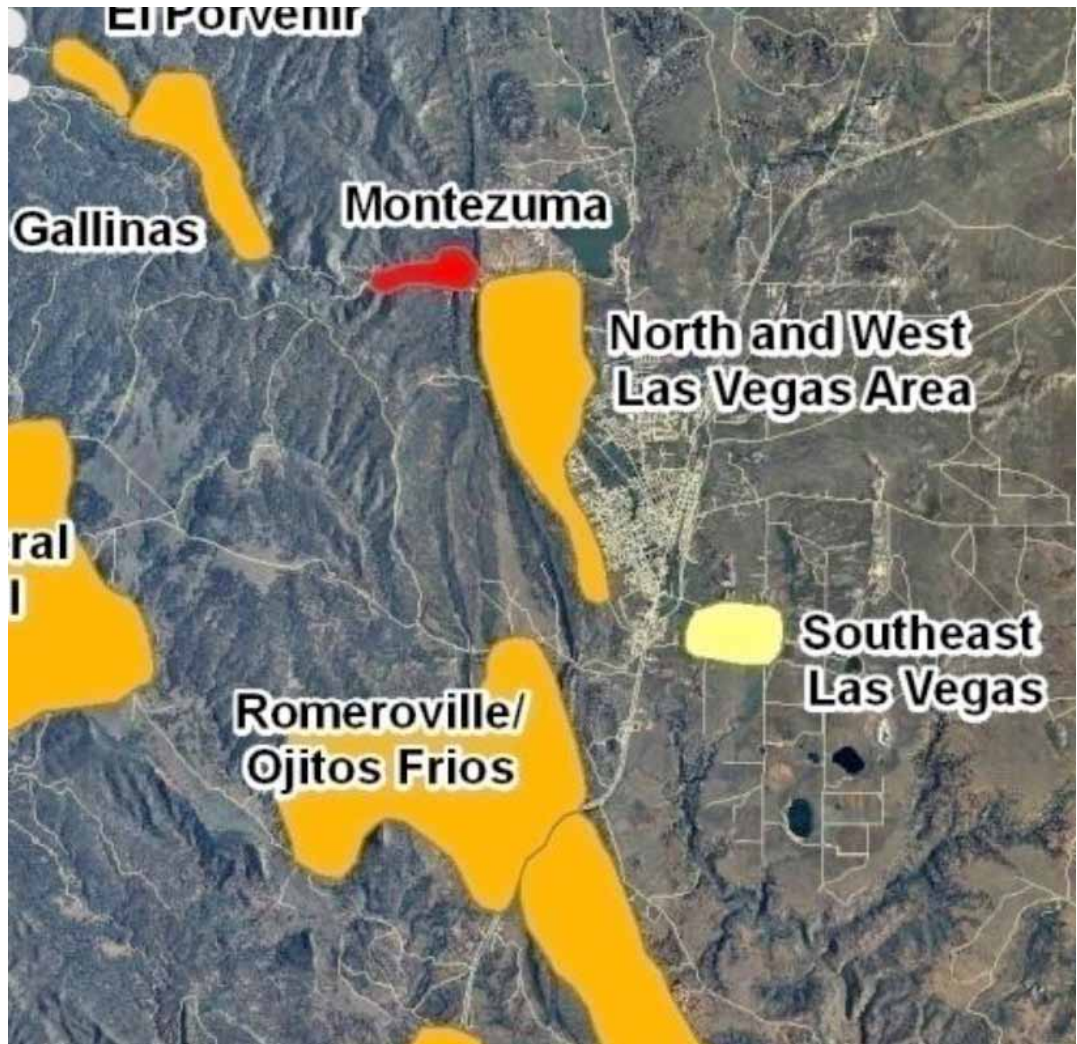
San Miguel County has taken the lead in regional emergency preparedness related to the hazards of wildlife. The city has participated in planning for emergency response as well as planning and prevention measures with the county and other agencies concerned about grass or forest fires.

San Miguel County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan, 2008 rated the potential for wildfires. An excerpt of their mapping for the city of Las Vegas and nearby area shows a high rating for an area on the west side of Las Vegas, and a very high rating for an area around Montezuma. To the southwest of Las Vegas is a smaller area rated moderate for wildfire hazards. Northwest of Montezuma in the Gallinas watershed is an area rated very high. These areas, as well as others not as close to the city, are of strategic interest to Las Vegas because of various potential impacts on the city, its water supply and fire protection.

There is little development in the forested portion of the North and West Las Vegas area rated very high for wildfire hazard. The Gallinas valley floor has considerable development and a high wildland interface with predominantly grasslands in the valley. The Montezuma area and the Gallinas watershed also have rural residential development and a significant urban wildland interface.

**Exhibit X-3**  
 Map Showing  
 Wildfire Hazards  
 Ratings of Areas  
 In the Las Vegas  
 Vicinity

(Source: San Miguel County Wildlife Urban Interface Community Wildlife Protection Plan, prepared by Anchor Point Group LLC, 2008)



Wildfire hazard relates in part to land use. County subdivision regulations in wildland interface areas of the extraterritorial area and in the Gallinas Watershed should address the following:

- Pullouts for emergency apparatus on driveways and private roads longer than 300 feet, and turnarounds at end of driveways and dead-end roads (recommended for Montezuma in San Miguel County plan, p. B-17)
- Requirement for dual road access wherever feasible
- Driveway and road widths adequate for fire fighting apparatuses
- Specify acceptable location of propane tanks and clearance of vegetation near tanks
- Use of combustible materials for decks and siding
- Use of combustible materials for roofs
- Signage: all road signs are present and made of non-combustible materials, with reflective addressing for all driveways or homes, and “no outlet” signs to identify dead-end streets
- Signage marking alternate routes exiting an area

Additional topics that development standards should address include the following. Community utility systems and public safety facilities are also affected.

- Water supply requirements
- Fire hydrants in areas of density
- Sprinklering of houses in remote locations
- Location of fire stations
- Impacts on wildlife

Thinning of the Gallinas Watershed is a very high priority in the San Miguel County Wildland Urban Interface - Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2008). The plan references the Environmental Assessment for the Gallinas Municipal Watershed Wildland-Urban Interface Project, Santa Fe National Forest, January, 2006:

An Environmental Assessment for the Gallinas Municipal Watershed Wildland-Urban Interface Project was published in January, 2004. The purpose of the project is to reduce the potential for large scale, high intensity crown fire and spread in the watershed by reducing surface fuels and opening the forest canopy. About 17,000 people in Las Vegas, New Mexico and surrounding villages depend on Gallinas Creek for their water. Gallinas Creek feeds the Peterson, Bradner and Storrie Lake reservoirs, providing a major source of municipal water.

The city strongly supports this strategy not only because of the overall benefit of reducing the risk of wildfire affecting this area, but also because a fire in the watershed could lead to ash and additional sediment entering the Gallinas River and affecting the city’s water supply.

### ***Flooding***

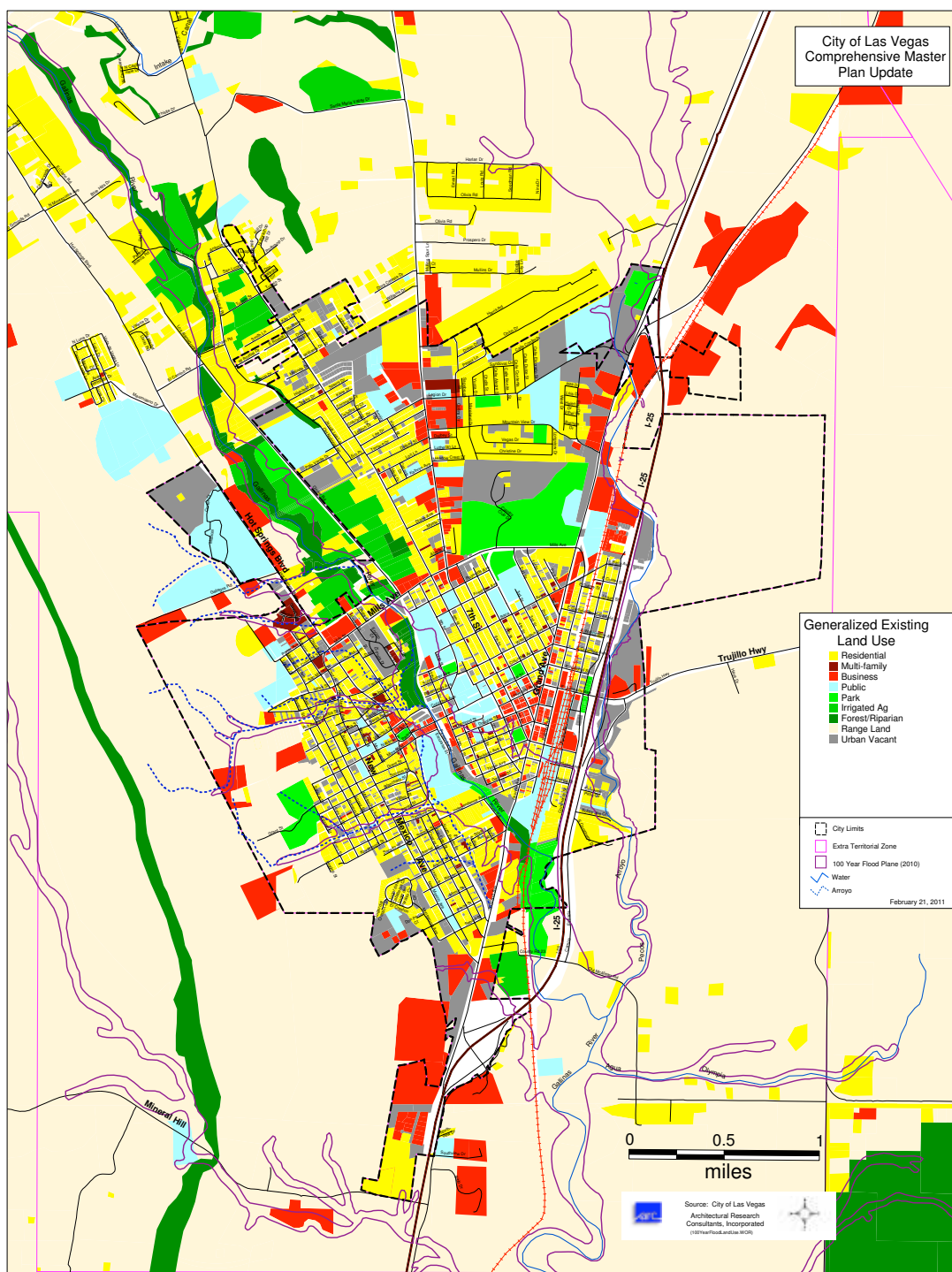
The main floodplain through Las Vegas is associated with the Gallinas River. A significant amount of development is within the 100-year (1%) floodplain, particularly in the southern portion of the city. Three major arroyos entering the west side of the Gallinas River, addressed in the Utilities Element, have the potential for flooding. Structures are also located in the floodplains of these arroyos.



The map below shows the 100-year (1% chance) floodplains through the city. Critical facilities in the 100-year floodplain include a portion of West Las Vegas High School. No other critical public facilities are in the floodplain.

Floodplain regulations require elevating buildings above the elevation of flooding, but considerable damage to properties can occur. The regulation do not allow unanchored mobile homes in floodplains. The city encourages property owners of flood plain to retain the area as open space, agriculture or park space wherever possible. The city of Las Vegas participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

**Exhibit X-4**  
 Federal Emergency  
 Management  
 Administration  
 100-Year  
 Floodplain  
 Designations over  
 Existing Land Use



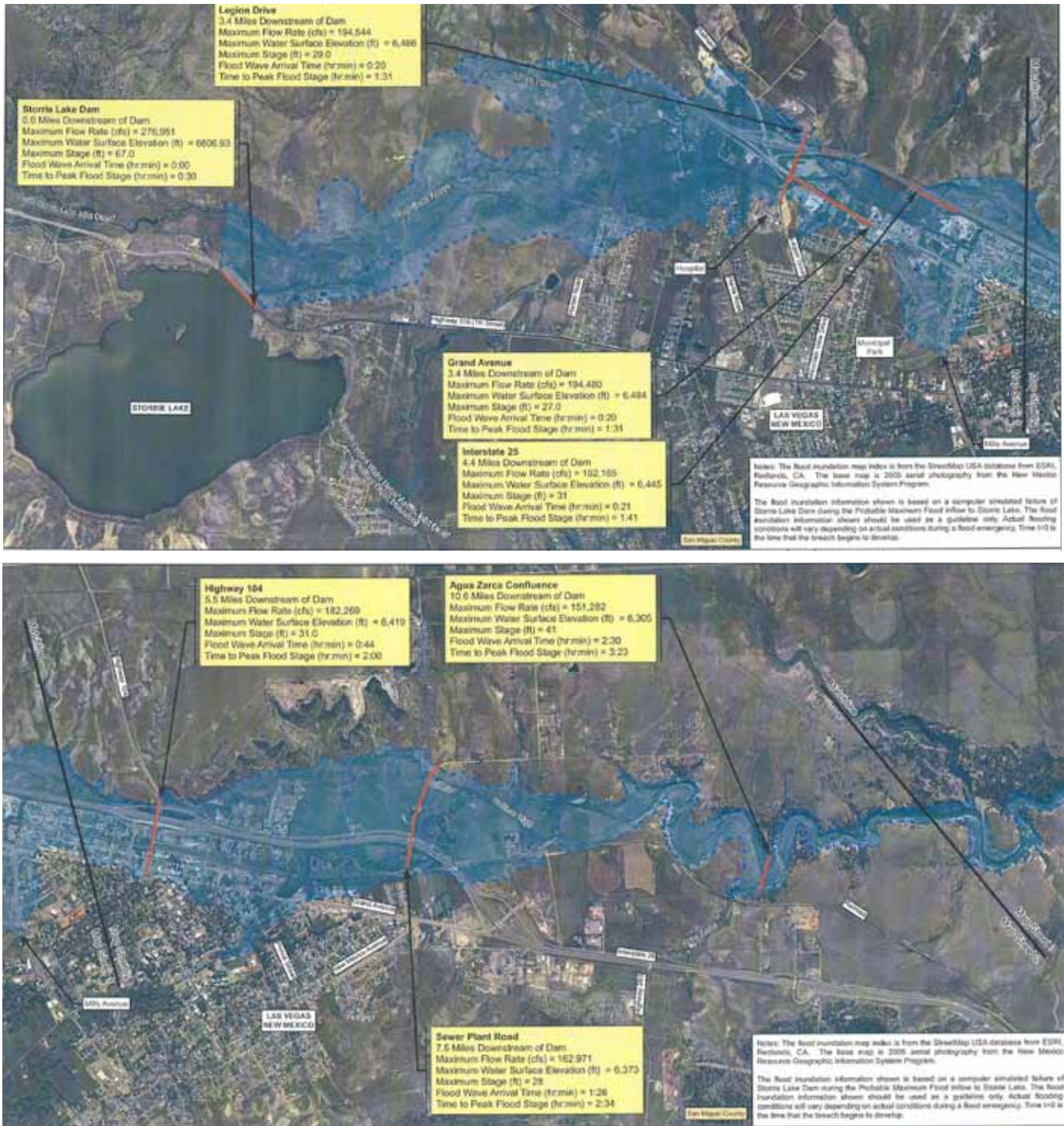
**Water Inundation from Breaching of Dams**

While the flooding associated with the breaching of reservoir dams is less likely than flooding associated with weather events, the public should be aware of the possible risks. Storrie Lake Dam is rated at a high risk, as is the Peterson Dam. The Water Preliminary Engineering Report is evaluating actions to reduce the risk.

The maps below show a flood inundation scenario of Storrie Lake Dam bursting.

**Exhibit X-5**

**Storrie Lake Dam Failure Inundation Map**



(Source: Las Vegas / San Miguel County Office of Emergency Management, *Storrie Lake Dam Emergency Action Plan*, June 2009)

**Severe Weather Events**

The complex terrain of New Mexico creates weather that changes quickly over relatively short distances. Highway travelers may find first light snow or rain, then suddenly heavy snow as a highway climbs through a mountain pass. Within a distance of 30 miles or less, the weather might change from rain to blizzard conditions.

The following are some of the characteristics of the main types of severe weather.

*Winter storms* begin as low-pressure systems that move through New Mexico following the jet stream. These storms may include heavy snowstorms, sleet storms, ice storms, blizzards, and severe blizzards. Blizzard conditions develop with winds over 35 miles per hour and visibility of less than one-quarter mile. Freezing rain and drizzle create a coating of ice that is hazardous to walk or drive on. Unusually heavy ice accumulations can damage trees, power lines and other utilities, and buildings.

*Thunderstorms* are responsible for much of the severe weather across New Mexico. The storms are capable of producing lightning, flash flood events, hail, tornadoes, and strong winds. The thunderstorm season in New Mexico is well defined, from early July to September. Thunderstorms are an almost daily occurrence during July and August, especially over the northwest and north central mountains of New Mexico.

*Lightning* usually occurs as a result of thunderstorms that move through New Mexico during the summer months, with peak lightning strikes occurring in July and August. Lightning does not normally cause significant damage to property; however, it is responsible for numerous power outages and is also the leading cause of weather-related injuries and fatalities in New Mexico.

*Hail* ranks as the most frequent type of severe weather in New Mexico and is responsible for a considerable percentage of property and crop damage. Damaging or severe hail (0.75 to two inches) is most common in May and June, as is very large hail (over two inches). However, a significant number of hail reports also occur from July through September.

#### *Tornadoes*

While the magnitude and location of tornadoes are unpredictable, all that have occurred in San Miguel County in the past 90 years have been classified as low to moderate intensity and have done little damage, with no loss of life. The Conchas Dam area experienced a Class 3 tornado on May 14, 1977 and a Category 2 tornado on June 27, 1992. In each incident, damages were valued between \$5,000 and \$50,000.

#### *Flash Floods*

Flash floods are aptly named: inundation can occur suddenly with high velocity stormwater flows. Although the duration of these events is usually brief, the damages can be quite severe. Specific impacts depend on the location, duration, and quantity of rainfall and are therefore difficult to predict. Flash floods are more likely to occur in drainageways that receive runoff from watersheds with steep slopes and narrow stream valleys. In urban areas, parking lots and other impervious surfaces that shed water rapidly can also contribute to flash floods. Las Vegas faces the greatest risk of flash flooding from heavy rain on dense snow pack in winter or spring and intense rain storms during the “Southwest Monsoon” season of July and August.

The likelihood of flash floods increases as a secondary effect from other types of disasters, including large wildfires and dam breaks. Wildfires remove vegetative cover and alter soil characteristics, increasing the quantity and velocity of stormwater runoff, and dam breaks quickly release large quantities of water into receiving drainage ways.

#### *Mitigation Measures for Severe Weather*

To mitigate damage to structures, consistently enforcing building codes provides the greatest benefit for new construction. For existing structures and critical facilities, follow-on inspections and retrofits provide effective mitigation. For new construction, good site and architectural design practices can reduce the impacts of severe weather.

Severe storm activity poses a significant threat to unprotected or exposed utility systems. Generally, commercial power networks are very susceptible to interruption from lightning strikes, high winds, ice conditions and hail. The most effective mitigation strategy burying vulnerable overhead utility lines underground, but this action is often cost-prohibitive.

Another important part of mitigating severe weather hazards is forecasting and warning so that residents can prepare. Las Vegas can prepare for disruptions of utilities and transportation due to severe weather by advising residents to stay home or use caution if they must go out, and recommending that residents stock up on food, water, batteries, and other supplies. The National Weather Service, combined with local television stations, have an effective strategy for notifying residents about impending storms. San Miguel County's radio station 1670 AM provides information in case of emergencies.

### **Earthquakes**

Though not nearly as severe or numerous as in some other parts of the U.S., earthquakes have rattled New Mexico over the years. The majority of the earthquakes in New Mexico occur in the area of the Rio Grande rift. The Raton area records generally minor and nondestructive earthquakes on a regular basis. In August 2005, an earthquake measuring a 5 on the Richter Scale occurred near Raton, but caused little damage. Five lesser earthquakes occurred during the period of 1990 to 2004. No earthquakes have been recorded in Las Vegas over the past 40 years.

Recently, New Mexico School of Technology prepared an evaluation of city and county buildings identified near a fault line across the Taos /Pecos Valley. The school has not yet completed the evaluation and any recommendations.

### **Hazardous Materials and Terrorism**

Human-caused hazards that might occur in the Las Vegas area include technological hazards and terrorism. Both are distinct from natural hazards in that they result directly from the actions of people. The phrase "technological hazard" refers to incidents that can arise from human activities such as the manufacture,

storage, transportation, and use of hazardous materials. Technological hazards are generally accidental and their consequences unintended. Terrorism, on the other hand, encompasses intentional, criminal, and malicious acts involving weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). WMDs include biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons; arson, incendiary, explosive, and armed attacks; industrial sabotage and intentional hazardous material releases; and cyber-terrorism (attacks via computer). Some of the planning, design and construction activities for natural disasters also apply to human-caused disasters.

Technological and terrorism hazards are interrelated in that facilities that handle hazardous materials or hazardous materials in transit may be potential targets.

The focus of this section is on two types of human-caused hazards: hazardous material releases, terrorism, and nuclear/radiological accidents. Hazardous materials can include toxic chemicals, radioactive materials, infectious substances, and hazardous wastes. An accidental hazardous material release can occur wherever hazardous materials are manufactured, stored, transported, or used. Such releases can affect the nearby population and contaminate critical or sensitive environmental areas. Facilities that use, manufacture, or store hazardous materials in New Mexico must comply with Title III of the federal Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), also known as the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (EPCRA)<sup>1</sup> and the state's reporting requirements under the Hazardous Chemical Information Act [74-4E-1 to 74-4E-9 NMSA 1978].

The community's right-to-know reporting requirements inform communities about the presence and release of chemicals at individual facilities. The EPCRA enabled the establishment of, and the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 expanded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) database, which contains key information about chemicals handled by manufacturing or processing facilities. The goal of TRI is to empower citizens, through information, to hold companies and local governments accountable for their management of toxic chemicals.

The TRI is publicly available and contains information on toxic chemical releases and waste management activities reported annually by certain covered industry groups, as well as federal facilities. Facilities that exceed certain threshold levels must report TRI information to the U.S. EPA, the federal enforcement agency for SARA Title III, and the NMOEM.

EPCRA's primary purpose is to inform communities and citizens of chemical hazards in their areas. Sections 311 and 312 of EPCRA require businesses to report the locations and quantities of chemicals stored on site to state and local governments in order to help communities prepare to respond to chemical spills and similar emergencies. EPCRA Section 313 requires U.S. EPA and the states to collect data annually on releases and transfers of certain toxic chemicals from industrial facilities, and to make the data available to the public in the TRI. In 1990, Congress passed the Pollution Prevention Act, which requires that additional

data on waste management and source reduction activities be reported under TRI.

Hazardous material releases can occur at facilities (fixed sites) or along transportation routes. They can occur as a result of human carelessness or intentional acts, as well as from natural hazards. Hazardous material releases, depending on the substance involved and type of release, can directly cause injuries and death and can contaminate air, water, and soils. The probability of a release at any particular facility or at any point along a known transportation corridor is relatively low.

I-25 is a designated WIPP route for transporting transuranic wastes to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad. Periodically, trucks carry chemicals and other hazardous materials along I-25. In addition, there is the possibility of hazardous materials being carried by freight trains on the Burlington Northern railroad.

### ***Severity and Probability of Hazardous Materials Release Occurrence***

The severity of an incident varies with the distance from and time elapsed since the release. However, the consequences of releases of these materials can be very serious. The most immediate areas are generally at greatest risk; yet, depending on the agent (e.g., nuclear radiation), a release can travel great distances or exist over a long period of time, resulting in far-reaching effects to people and the environment. With a hazardous material release, whether accidental or intentional, several potentially exacerbating or mitigating circumstances affect the severity of the release.

Exacerbating conditions can enhance or magnify the effects of a hazard. Mitigating conditions, on the other hand, can reduce the effects of a hazard. These conditions include:

- Weather conditions that can affect how the released material is dispersed (e.g., high winds can increase the spread of gases or radioactive materials)
- How the chemical was released (explosion, volatilization, air or water release) and the nature of the substance
- Micro-meteorological effects of buildings and terrain that can alter travel and duration of agents
- Shielding in the form of “sheltering-in-place” that protects people and property from harmful effects
- Non-compliance with applicable codes (e.g., fire and building codes) and maintenance failures (e.g., fire protection and pipeline maintenance) can substantially increase the damage to the facility itself and to surrounding buildings with the numerous fixed facilities, pipelines, and transportation

### **Blackouts, Disruption in Fuel Supply, and Pipeline Incidents**

Natural gas comes to Las Vegas from Colorado. The city owns and operates natural gas pipelines within the city.

### **Landfill Mitigation**

The city should address hazards associated with the old landfill on the northwest

side of the city related to landfill gas, potential leaching into the groundwater, and stormwater runoff from the site.

The decomposition of organic materials is the main source of landfill gas. Landfill gas, a green house gas that is explosive, consists of methane and mostly carbon dioxide. Inorganic contaminants are also sometimes present in landfill gas.

The general options for dealing with landfill gas (once collected) are as follows:

- Flaring
- Burn in boiler to make heat
- Burn in internal combustion engine to make electricity
- Burn in a gas turbine to make electricity
- Place in fuel cell to make electricity
- Convert the methane to methyl alcohol
- Clean it up sufficiently to pipe it to other industries or into the natural gas lines

Before determining to burn landfill gas, the city should consider means to reduce dioxins or other toxic emissions.

The landfill on the northwest side of the city should be managed to reduce the release of landfill gas, assure that a water course does not carry old landfill materials, and prevent leaching into the water table.



## C. Goals and Policies

### **Hazards Mitigation Goal: Keep Las Vegas residents and properties safe from hazards as much as possible.**

1. Implement flood protection and drainage improvements.
2. Implement subdivision standards and public safety improvements to increase accessibility in areas with moderate and high wildfire risk.
3. Enforce building codes regarding fire prevention and structural stability.
4. Make infrastructure improvements to reduce vulnerability to drought.
5. Continue to implement water conservation measures, including declaration of water restrictions when necessary to retain water reservoir storage.
6. Support interjurisdictional cooperation and collaboration in emergency response and hazards mitigation.
7. Mitigate landfill gas release, potential leaching into the groundwater, and any stormwater runoff carrying landfill materials off site.
8. Support and participate with the Local Emergency Planning Committee for emergency situational planning.
9. Implement a public awareness campaign for communities to educate the public about preparing for emergency situations through the City/County Office of Emergency Management.
10. Improve alert/notification systems for dispensing information to the public.
  - a. Identify and evaluate systems such as Reverse 911, siren systems, Internet, automatic emails, Facebook and Twitter notifications.
    - Seek funding through FEMA mitigation funds and other sources.
11. Support a centralized city/county communication system to improve interoperable communications for response to emergencies.
12. Implement a city of Las Vegas emergency fund to have funds available to mitigate impacts on public infrastructure and buildings rather than spending funds from the city's general funds.
  - a. The city should consider setting an amount to be retained in an emergency fund, based on assuming a 25% local match to funds available from the state of New Mexico.

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