



TOWN OF
Mesilla

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2017 Update

Final Adopted by the Board of Trustees, November 27, 2017



RESOLUTION 2017-23

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE TOWN OF MESILLA 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND REPEALING IN ITS ENTIRETY THE MASTER PLAN CURRENTLY IN EFFECT.

WHEREAS, The Town of Mesilla 2017 Comprehensive Plan has been developed with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated and harmonious development of the Town which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the health, safety, order and general welfare of the citizens of Mesilla as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to *Dugger v. City of Santa Fe*, 114 N.M.47, 834 P.2d 424 (Ct. App. 1992), the Town of Mesilla understands that the New Mexico Legislature intended a master plan adopted by a municipality to be "advisory in nature"; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Town of Mesilla 2017 Comprehensive Plan in whole or in part shall require approval of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Mesilla; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Mesilla 2017 Comprehensive Plan is based on comprehensive studies of existing conditions, probable future growth and extensive citizen input from Town residents; and

WHEREAS, The Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission recognizes the long-range nature of the Town of Mesilla 2017 Comprehensive Plan and has expressed its willingness to make recommendations regarding implementing and amending the Plan; and


WHEREAS, The Board of Trustees and the Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission has reviewed recommendations for substantive changes and typographical corrections and consents to have the typographical corrections, any additional corrections to maps and any similar changes agreed to by the Board of Trustees made between the date of Board approval of the Plan and the date of final printing; and

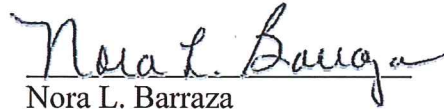
WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees herewith repeals the 2004 Town of Mesilla Comprehensive Plan currently in effect.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Mesilla that the Town of Mesilla 2017 Comprehensive Plan as recommended for approval and certified by the PZHAC is hereby approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Mesilla.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 13th day of November 2017.

ATTEST:


Cynthia Stoechner-Hernandez
Town Clerk-Treasurer


Nora L. Barraza
Mayor



ROLL CALL VOTE:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Mayor Pro Arzabal: | Yes |
| Trustee Caro: | Yes |
| Trustee Flores: | Yes |
| Trustee Johnson-Burick: | Yes |

Town of Mesilla

2017 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by the Board of Trustees, November 27, 2017

Acknowledgements

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NOTE ON MAPS: Data for maps were obtained from public data sources and may contain inaccuracies.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mesilla has one of the most storied histories of any place in the State of New Mexico. The Town has played a pivotal role in the State's history – first as a Mexican settlement, then as part of the new territory of New Mexico, then as the seat of the Confederate State of Arizona (1861-1862), and then as the largest settlement in the Mesilla Valley until being overtaken by Las Cruces in the 1880's. Through these historical events, Mesilla has cemented its place as one of the best historically preserved places in the Southwest. Although the town has evolved since being settled in 1848, it has maintained essentially the same population and boundaries as it had when it was founded.

Planning for the Future

As an update to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan and earlier Yguado Plan, this plan carries forward the goals and vision from these earlier planning efforts while also examining what has been achieved in the last decade. In addition, this document revises information related to demographics, economics, land use, and community services that have changed in the past 15 years in order to provide staff and elected officials with a concise but nuanced look at the local and regional forces that will affect Mesilla in the future.

Key Issues

Many of the issues identified in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan remain relevant. As described in the chapters that follow, some of the most important issues affecting Mesilla today include:

- Continuing to protect Mesilla's character, history, and traditional land uses in the face of ongoing development pressure.
- Changes in the affordability of land and housing have made Mesilla unaffordable to some long-term residents unless they inherit property. In some instances, this may be changing the composition of households in Mesilla with only those with higher incomes able to afford most of the new housing in Town.
- With a tourism-based economy, finding ways to promote the Town to a larger tourism base (and therefore customers) while still maintaining a small town feel that respects residents' way of life.
- Some of the Town's infrastructure systems – specifically roads and water and sewer lines – are old and need to be upgraded and/or replaced in the short term.
- There are needs to continue to invest in Mesilla's historic core, including addressing parking needs, sidewalk repair, and issues with stormwater.

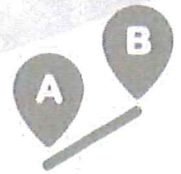
Goals & Guiding Principles

To address these issues and take advantage of new opportunities, this plan identifies *five guiding principles* that can be used to direct future activities, including strategic investments and policy making. The following principles are infused throughout the entire plan and are the primary goals of stakeholders as expressed through the community involvement process.



SECTION 1

Introduction



Over the last several decades, Mesilla has positioned itself as a key tourist destination in southern New Mexico. This reputation is one that has taken time to grow, but has blossomed into a key asset that the Town can continue to build on. Although rapid population growth in nearby Las Cruces has led to development pressures, the Town has been able to preserve its cultural assets, including its historic buildings, agricultural land, and sense of place.

This plan is an update to the 2004 Town of Mesilla Comprehensive Plan and seeks to articulate the direction that residents, business owners, elected officials, and other stakeholders would like the Town to move in over the next 10 to 15 years. To this end, the plan is focused on continuing to preserve Mesilla's cultural assets, support local businesses, promote sustainable tourism, maintain and improve infrastructure, and ensure that residents retain a high quality of life.

MESILLA IN CONTEXT

The Town of Mesilla is a small, historic community of approximately 2,000 people located in southern New Mexico within Doña Ana County. Mesilla is one of five incorporated communities within Doña Ana County and is part of the larger Las Cruces Metropolitan Area. The Town shares its eastern border with the City of Las Cruces, and residents have connections to the communities up and down the fertile Mesilla Valley. These include both the incorporated communities of Hatch, Sunland Park, and Anthony, as well as the County's unincorporated communities located north and south of Mesilla along Interstate 25 and Interstate 10, including Doña Ana, Radium Springs, Mesquite, Vado, and Santa Teresa. Many of these smaller communities are similar to Mesilla in that they developed around ranching and farming.

One challenge that Mesilla has continually faced is maintaining its unique cultural identity in a vastly changing region that has seen rapid growth over the last 25 years. Doña Ana County was for many years one of the fastest growing regions in the country, growing from

96,340 people in 1980 to 209,233 people by 2010 (a 117% increase). Although growth has slowed, Doña Ana County still expects the population to increase by 64,000 people by 2040 – a 30% increase from 2010.

Much of this growth can be attributed to the fast growing El Paso/Ciudad Juarez Metropolitan Area located approximately 40 miles to the south, which has been driven by a program of integrated international trade on both sides of the border. Since the late 1990s, economic growth has been stimulated by NAFTA and the Mexican maquiladora program, two programs that have served as catalysts for job growth.

The significance of these growth trends to Mesilla is profound. It opens the region to more people looking to settle in the area and has brought more visitors to the area, many of whom come specifically to Mesilla. Population growth and other impacts in the region have translated into growth pressures affecting Mesilla as well. These are examined in greater detail in other sections of this comprehensive plan.

Figure 1. Location of Mesilla within the Mesilla Valley



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is an action-oriented tool containing a series of policies, strategies and actions that together create a vision for the future growth and development of the community. As a “high-level” visioning document, the plan strives to reflect the desires of the entire community, rather than a few people or interest groups. Overall, through community discussions, research, and analysis, the plan should serve as a guide to help elected officials and staff members make decisions about future land use, housing needs, economic development priorities, infrastructure improvements, and enhancement and preservation of the community's character.

By addressing specific elements (see Figure 2) related to the Town's development, the comprehensive plan provides the community with the opportunity to take a proactive approach to how Mesilla should develop and evolve in the coming years. Typically, a comprehensive plan will cover a 20-year planning horizon, but it should be reviewed yearly and updated every five years as conditions change.

Figure 2. Elements of a Comprehensive Plan



Planning Authority

The Town of Mesilla Board of Trustees, the governing body of the Town of Mesilla, has the authority to adopt plans for the physical development of the community. The authority is granted by Sections 3-19-10 and 3-19-11 NMSA 1978, a state statute that empowers municipalities to plan. This plan also applies to those lands within the municipal boundary of the Town of Mesilla and any future lands the Town may annex.

Role of the Town of Mesilla

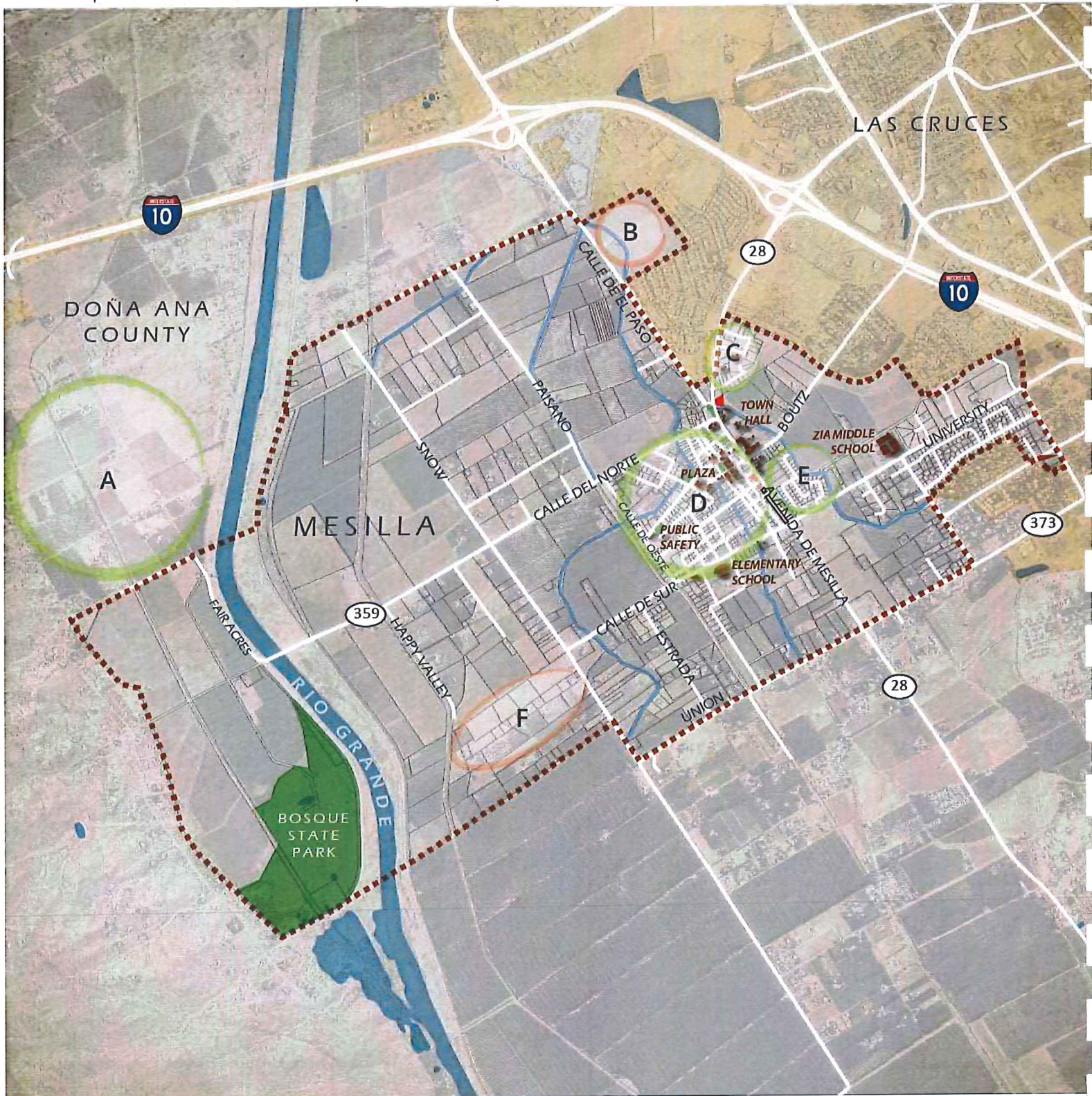
The Town of Mesilla's staff, elected officials, and residents can become proactively involved in the implementation of this plan in many ways. A few of the key roles the Town may play to make this plan successful include:

Town Roles

- **Leadership:** Continue to provide and implement a vision for Mesilla that focuses on the long-term goals outlined in this plan.
- **Promotion:** Continue to promote Mesilla as a great place to visit, live, and work. Share Mesilla's story with visitors and emphasize the cultural heritage of the Town.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Encourage and support the construction and reconstruction of necessary infrastructure upgrades to water, sewer, and streets.
- **Supporting:** Connect business owners and residents with other economic organizations.

TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 1. Overview of Mesilla



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park
- Primary Building

- Area of Change
- Area of Interest

AREA KEY

- A - Former Area Considered for Annexation
- B - Future Orchard Development
- C - Newer Commercial Development
- D - Downtown Historic District
- E - Newer Residential Development Area
- F - Future Residential Development



SECTION 2

Community Outreach



This plan was developed through the active involvement of residents, business owners, property owners, elected officials, Town staff, and other stakeholders. Throughout the six-month planning process, resident input was solicited using several means: stakeholder interviews, a community survey, two public meetings, and two public hearings in front of the Board of Trustees.

Community Meetings

An initial public meeting was held on the evening of April 18th, 2017 to introduce residents to the planning process and gather feedback on primary issues and challenges facing the town. The meeting was attended by 22 participants who took part in small group discussions focused on the following four questions: 1) What are Mesilla's greatest needs? 2) What are Mesilla's greatest opportunities? 3) Twenty years from now, how do you envision Mesilla? and 4) What investments are needed to make this vision a reality?

Although several topics were brought up, there was a definite emphasis on improving and replacing public infrastructure (sewer, water, and roadway systems) as well as the maintenance needs

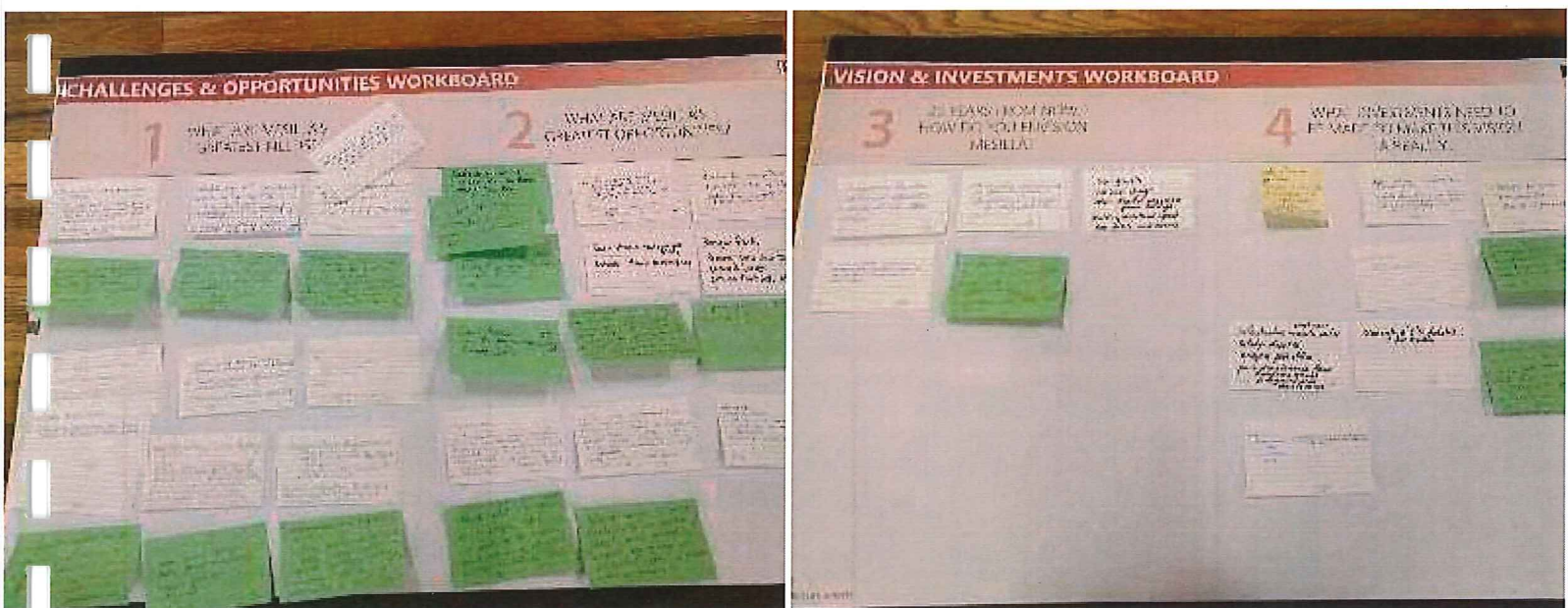
of public facilities. Many residents also expressed a desire to see continued historic preservation and promotion, protection of agriculture land, and better parking solutions to address parking needs in the Plaza District. Additional topics that were discussed included an interest in creating a cultural center or historic museum, better enforcement of the dark skies ordinance, more promotion of historic events and focus on targeted tourism development based primarily on the Town's history. A few participants mentioned creating more bike/walking paths and looking at ways to diversify the number and type of local businesses that would serve residents in the future.



At a second public meeting held on August 8th, 2017, these issues as well as others were discussed once again, with a stronger emphasis placed on finding strategies to control infill development and possibly revise parts of the Town's zoning code in the future. Members from the Planning and Zoning Commission pointed out that there are parts of the existing zoning code that create ambiguities when interpreting certain development requests. Issues like the number of dwelling units allowed per lot, the definition and regulation of accessory dwelling units, and subdivision standards came up as issues that needed to be addressed in the near future.

Additionally, installing parking meters (or a paid parking system) around the Plaza Area was discussed, along with on-going issues with infrastructure capacity (specifically the sewer system). Some residents mentioned that they do not have access to the internet in areas west of Snow Road, due to cable companies deeming the area too low density to support the costs of providing high speed internet.

The affordability of housing was another topic of discussion, with the trend of increasing home and land prices leading to some long-term residents being unable to afford to live in Town unless they have inherited property. A secondary issue with housing is the large number of renters and Airbnbs, which has gradually changed the household composition in Mesilla.



Interviews

Town staff, elected officials, business owners, and residents were interviewed for this comprehensive plan update. These interviews provided crucial information on specific issues, ideas, and goals that were not necessarily addressed at the community meetings.

Additional, specific information that was gathered from interviews included information from staff on stormwater man-

agement concerns and areas of ponding; the challenges faced by the fire department due to limited resources; insight from business owners into changes to the tourism economy during and after the Great Recession; and discussions with staff about possible future land use changes and the tradeoffs between ongoing land preservation strategies, housing affordability, and creating a sustainable tourism economy.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

We would like to see an agriculture/produce heavy farmer's market. Fewer crafts during growing season. Move farmer's market to Town Hall area to better accommodate growers' trucks.

Build a cultural center to provide a place for book, poetry readings, music, art (all with a local flavor). It could host a blacksmith!

I envision Mesilla looking no different in 20 years

Survey

A community survey that was first developed for the 2004 Comprehensive Plan was redesigned and sent to residents as part of this planning effort. The goal of the survey was to assess residents' sentiments about primary topic areas in Mesilla, including land development, preservation of agriculture, and the need for more commercial uses and affordable housing. The survey consisted of eight primary questions and was administered through the Town's email lists, promoted at the first public meeting, and advertised through the Town's water bill. Full results of the survey are included in the appendices.

Respondents to the survey overwhelmingly (71%) felt that Mesilla's infrastructure – especially water and sewer sys-

tems need to be upgraded and/or repaired. In addition, 77% of respondents felt that the Town needed to do more to protect agricultural land around Mesilla, and 62% felt that more could be done to protect the character and history of the Town. Although a few (17%) respondents felt there was a need for more affordable housing units, 50% did not want to see higher density, multifamily residential development in Mesilla.

Other interesting findings from the survey that did not come to light at public meetings was the need to develop stronger water conservation measures and invest in streetscape improvements like shade structures, trees, bicycle trails/routes, and sidewalks.

The privately-owned Gadsden Museum has hundreds of assets that need to be catalogued and protected. If it could be resurrected and promoted it would be a huge cultural attraction. This area has enormous potential as a historical and cultural destination.

Keep Mesilla just like it is, but with sound, modern infrastructure. Keep the fields, keep the ROOSTERS!

Diversify businesses! We have a lot of tourist shops. We need businesses that allow everyday Mesilleros to grocery shop, go to the pharmacy, laundry, bakery, etc.

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SECTION 3

Community Profile

Mesilla is a historic, incorporated community of 2,000 people (covering 5.5 square miles) located in Doña Ana County, New Mexico. Over the past three decades the Town has grown slowly and seen a small influx of seniors and retirees. Although rapid population growth in nearby Las Cruces has led to development pressures, the Town has been able to preserve its cultural assets including historic buildings, agricultural land, and sense of place. By retaining its cultural heritage, Mesilla has positioned itself as a key tourist destination in southern New Mexico, with most of the Town's economic and cultural activity centered around the historic plaza and adjacent Basilica of San Albino.

A STORY OF MESILLA

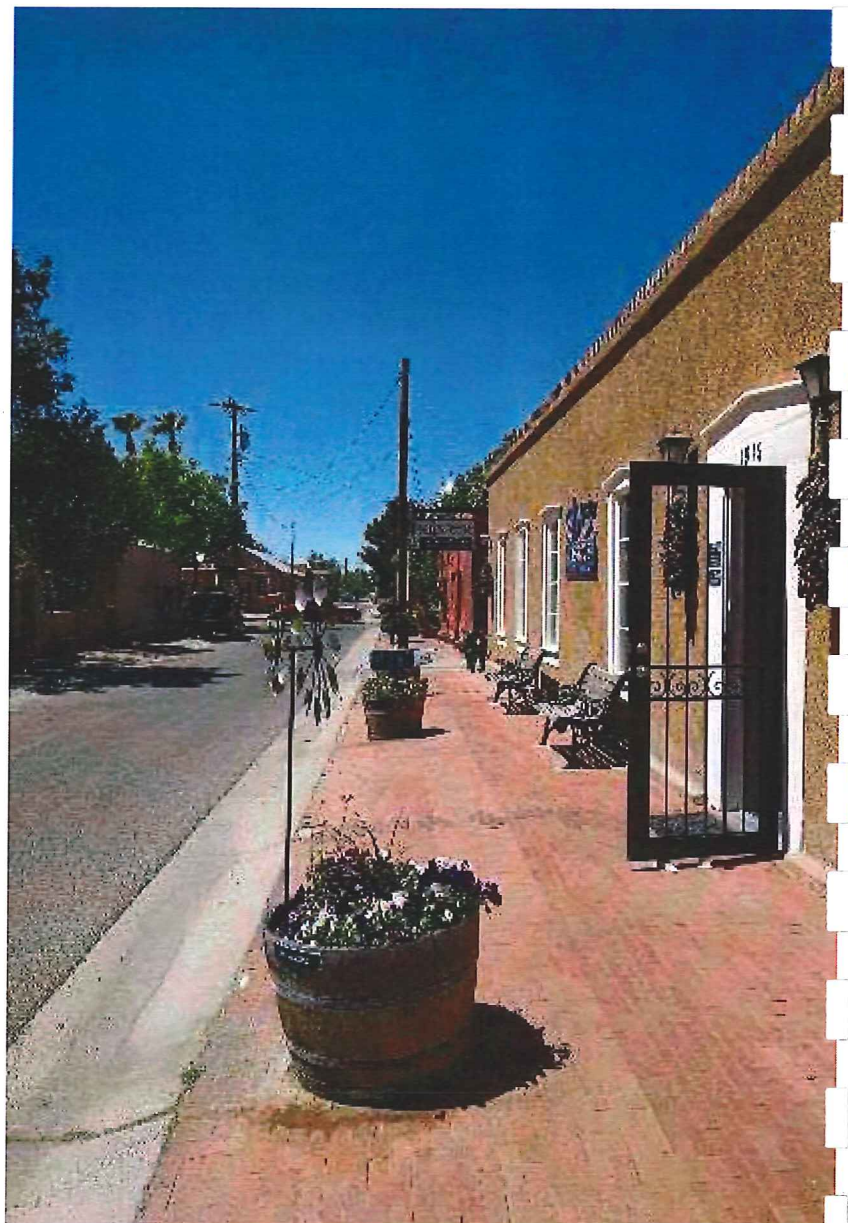
The history of Mesilla is centered around its plaza, the protective heart of the town and a National Historic Landmark. The plaza, designed to keep out Apache raiders, continues to function as a place of celebration, debate, art and contemplation. As one of the most famous plazas in the State, Mesilla (meaning small table in Spanish), thrives on sharing its history with residents and visitors alike.

Beginning in the 16th century, nomadic Indians occupied the fertile Mesilla Valley. Once the early European explorers entered the region, travel and trade routes opened. In the 1800's, Mesilla was a stopping off point along the Camino Real and the Butterfield Trail—truly at the crossroads of commerce and activity.

After the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in Mesilla's Plaza in 1848, the town became an established colony. The peace treaty ceded land from Mexico to the United States to form what is California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and portions of Colorado, Nevada and Utah. Located near Fort Filmore, Mesilla was a supply center providing goods and services to the troops. The town flourished, even though it was located between the boundary lines of Mexico and the United States. In fact, residents living north of the town moved to Mesilla to remain in Mexico; however, the Gadsden Purchase (1854) resolved this boundary dispute

and Mesilla officially became part of the United States.

Incorporated in 1861, c Mesilla thrived and the town, being the County Seat, enjoyed the activity resulting from its location along the major east/west and north/south trails. A bustling center, the



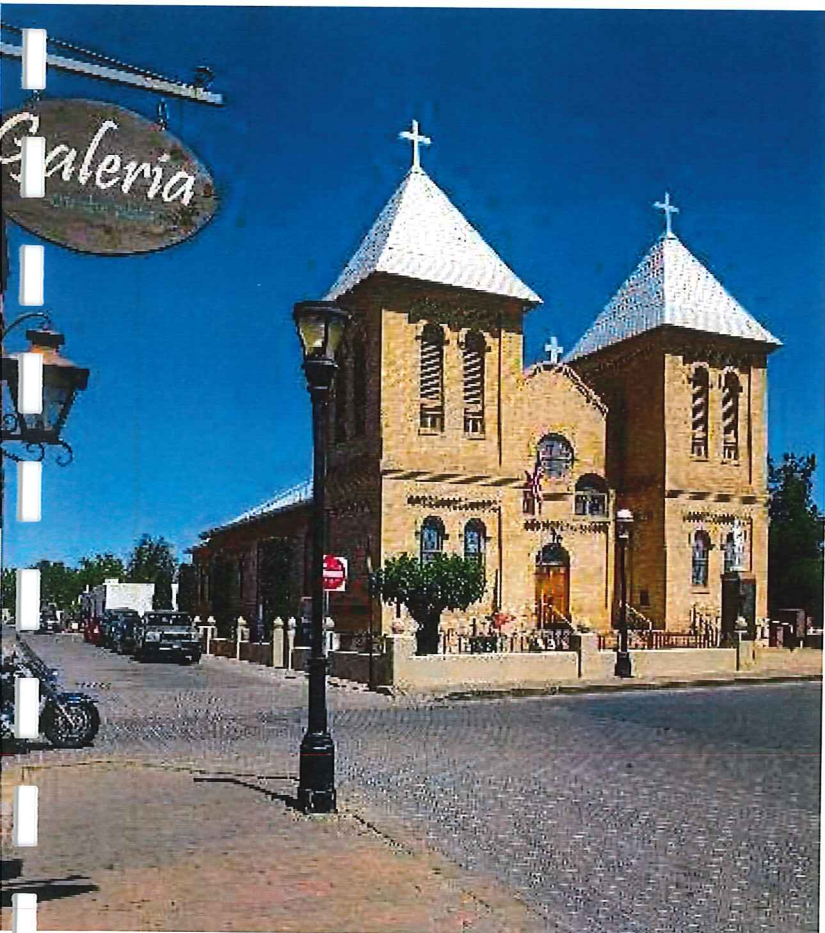
Mesilla plaza played host to dances, bullfights, and other more politicized events, like the trial of Billy the Kid. The courthouse off the plaza still stands today, with a plaque describing the events of Billy the Kid in Mesilla.

Activity slowed when Mesilla lost its position as the County Seat with the arrival of the railroad in neighboring Las Cruces. This event, according to some, was a blessing in disguise that resulted in the preservation of the town's unique architectural style and charm.

After losing its position as the County Seat, Mesilla continued to thrive as a cultural hub of southern New Mexico, with

the economy remaining based in agriculture, and later, tourism. In that time, the population has grown slowly but has never reached more than about 2,200 people, retaining Mesilla's small town character.

Much of this has been made possible through the Town's efforts to preserve both its cultural and natural resources. The Mesilla Plaza was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1961. Mesilla's Historic District, encompassing the core blocks of the downtown Plaza Area, was designated as a National Historic District in 1985. Ongoing preservation efforts and policies will continue to make the Town a sought-after destination in southern New Mexico.



THE RESIDENTS OF MESILLA

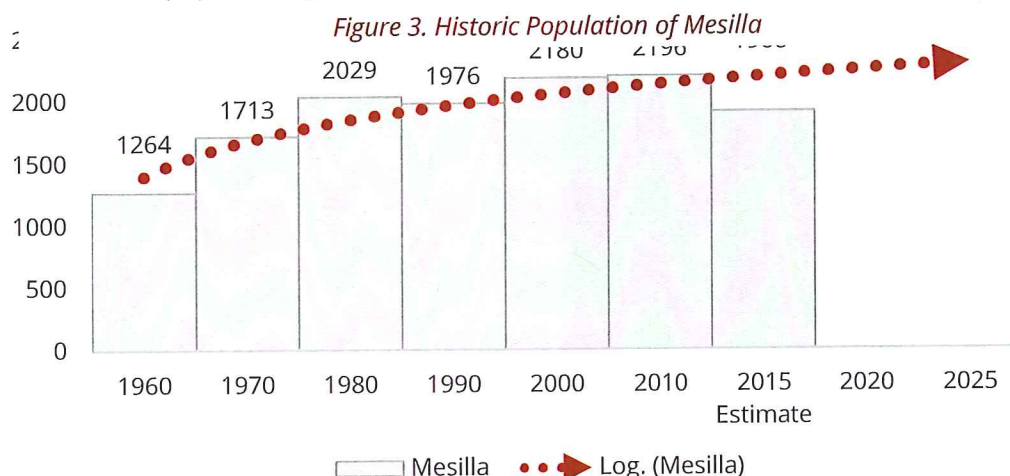
Current Population

Mesilla remains a small community with an estimated 2,000 residents in 2016 – a decline from 2,196 residents counted during the 2010 Census.¹ Overall, the population of Mesilla has grown slowly since 1970, gaining 483 people between 1970 and 2010 (28% growth), with a small decline in population between 1980 and 1990. In this time period, the town's population has made up a decreasing share of the total population in Doña Ana County, dropping from 2.5% of the population in 1970 to around 1% of the population in 2010. The slow population growth reflects the town's small land base, generally older population, and the community's desire to protect agricultural land and maintain a low-density rural character. Unlike some smaller towns, Mesilla has not annexed significant amounts of land that would also contribute to population growth.

Population Projections

Mesilla has grown hardly at all in the last 15 years and is not likely to grow significantly (if at all) in the future. Although Doña Ana County is expected to gain 64,000 new residents by 2040, much of this growth is expected to occur in other parts of the County that have the ability and desire to accommodate population growth.²

Considering the Town's aging population, decreasing family sizes, the small amount of land available for new residential development, and strong protections to preserve agricultural land, the town's population may continue to decline slowly in the coming decade. If current demographic trends hold, the population could fall below 1,800 people by 2021.



¹ These data are from the 2010 Census and 2016 ESRI Business Analyst Estimates.

² Viva Doña Ana County Comprehensive Plan.

Future development forces could change this projection significantly, however. As discussed in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the critical variable determining future population growth is the availability of developable land. For example, if the Town were to annex more land, it could add a large number of residents who currently live in unincorporated areas of Doña Ana County. Similarly, economic development projects that stimulate local jobs could make Mesilla a more desirable location for younger families. In addition, changing land use policies or development pressures could lead to the conversion of agricultural land for commercial and residential development.

Age, Sex and Migration

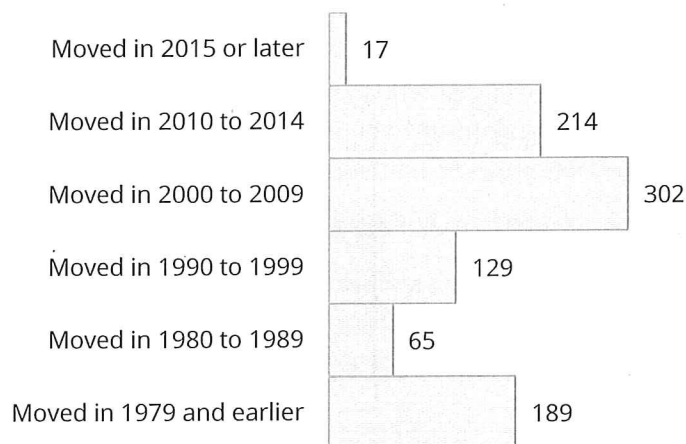
Mesilla's residents are on average older than residents in Doña Ana County and the state. The median age is estimated to be 43.9 years, compared to 32.4 years for the County.³ As seen in Figure 8, the population distribution by age and sex is top heavy, with a large number of residents over the age of 50 (49% percent of the population). Seniors themselves (those over 65) made up 24% of the population in 2010. During this same period, children made up 18% of the population, young adults (20-34) 15%, and middle-aged adults (35 to 64) 32% of the population. These counts reveal that there is a gap in the number of working age adults that produces a slightly unbalanced population distribution, with more residents over

the age of 65 than under the age of 20 (which is unusual in NM).

However, there has been a decrease in the median age from 2010, when it was 49.8 years. A few possible causes for this decrease include: a decline in the number of older residents (due to deaths and out-migration) and an increase in younger families with children. There is some evidence that those who have moved into Mesilla since 2010 are younger, but the total number of people who are estimated to have moved into Mesilla is relatively small – approximately 300 people (most of whom moved from within Doña Ana County). If these data are accurate, it would represent a shift from the largely retiree-led growth that the town experienced in previous decades.

There are also slightly more females than males living in Mesilla (100 females for every 90 males).

Figure 4. Migration Patterns, Mesilla, 2015 Estimate



³ These estimates and those that follow are 2011-2015 ACS 5 year estimates.

Households

Households in Mesilla are generally smaller and older than households around the state. Recent estimates show that Mesilla currently has 848 households and 508 families, which translates to an average household size of 2.22 people (the state average household size is 2.55 people).⁴ As seen in Figure 5, about a third of households consist of one person, a third of households have two people and a third have three or more people. In general, this means that many households consist of either single householders or wife-husband households without children. Only 18% of households have children, which is lower than the state average of 27% and Doña Ana County's average of 31%.

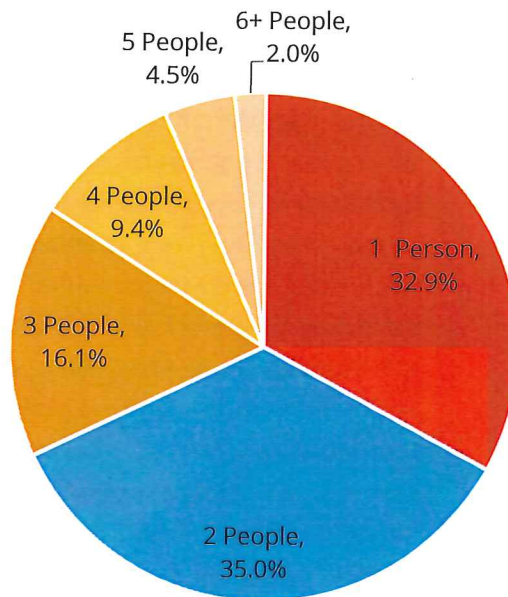
Race & Ethnicity

According to Census estimates, 95% of residents identify as "White", while 3% identify as "Some other race." There are very few Black, Native American, or Asian and Pacific Islanders living in Mesilla. Among all racial groups, 61% of residents also identify as "Hispanic or Latino." This is an increase from the 48% of residents who identified as Hispanic during the 2010 Census.

Income & Poverty

Incomes in Mesilla are higher than the state average. Median household income in 2016 was estimated to be

Figure 5. Household Sizes, 2011-2015 Estimate



\$44,465, while the average income was \$70,028. Per capita income was estimated to be \$30,057. Conservative estimates show that the combined income of residents is about \$60 million annually.⁵

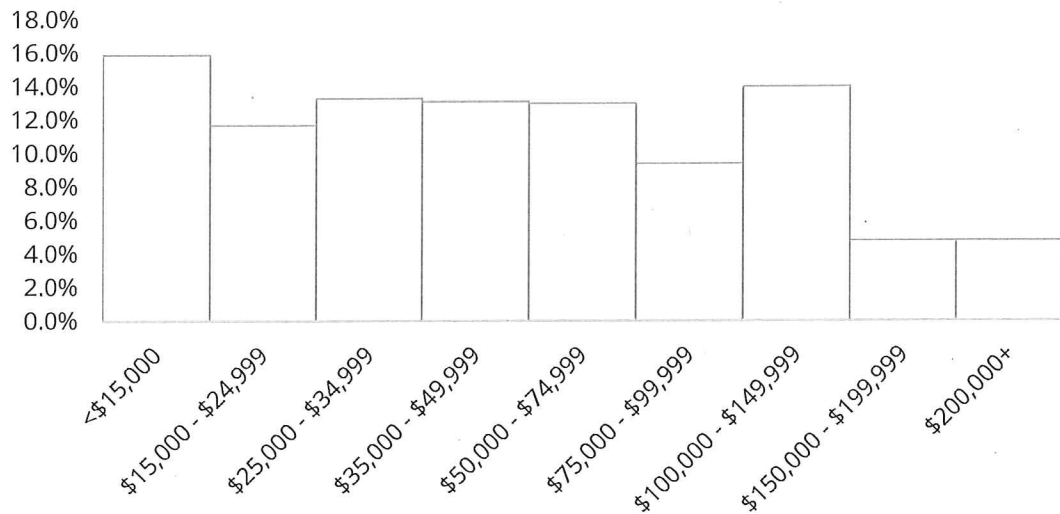
The poverty rate in Mesilla is 12.5% of families and 20.9% of individuals. This is about the same as the state average for individuals (21%) but lower than the average for Doña Ana County (28.2%).⁶ Coupled with household income data, the poverty rate shows that there is some income inequality in Mesilla, with

⁴ 2011-2015 ACS 5 year estimates.

⁵ These estimates are from 2016 ESRI Business Analyst.

⁶ 2011-2015 ACS 5 year estimates.

Figure 6. Estimated Household Income, 2016



nearly 27.6% of households having annual incomes less than \$25,000 and another 23.6% having incomes of \$100,000 or more.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of residents is higher in Mesilla than the average for both Doña Ana County and the state. About 45% of residents over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 25% have some college or an associate's degree. The remaining 22% of residents have a high school diploma or GED. Only 7.7% have less than a high school education.

High educational attainment scores show that Mesilla has a highly-educated workforce, which is correlated with higher incomes, better health outcomes and higher paying jobs.

English Language Proficiency

Approximately 42% of Mesilla residents (or 900 people) speak a language other than English. Of these residents, 91.5% speak Spanish. An estimated 5.7% of Mesilla residents (or 126 people) speak English less than "very well," compared with 15% of residents in Doña Ana County.⁷

⁷ These data are from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5 year estimates.

COMMUNITY PROFILE - THE RESIDENTS OF MESILLA

Figure 7. Educational Attainment, Residents 25+ years

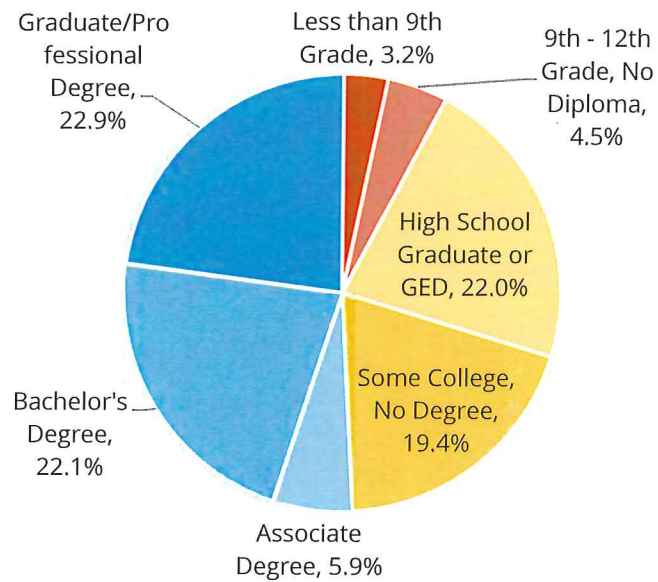
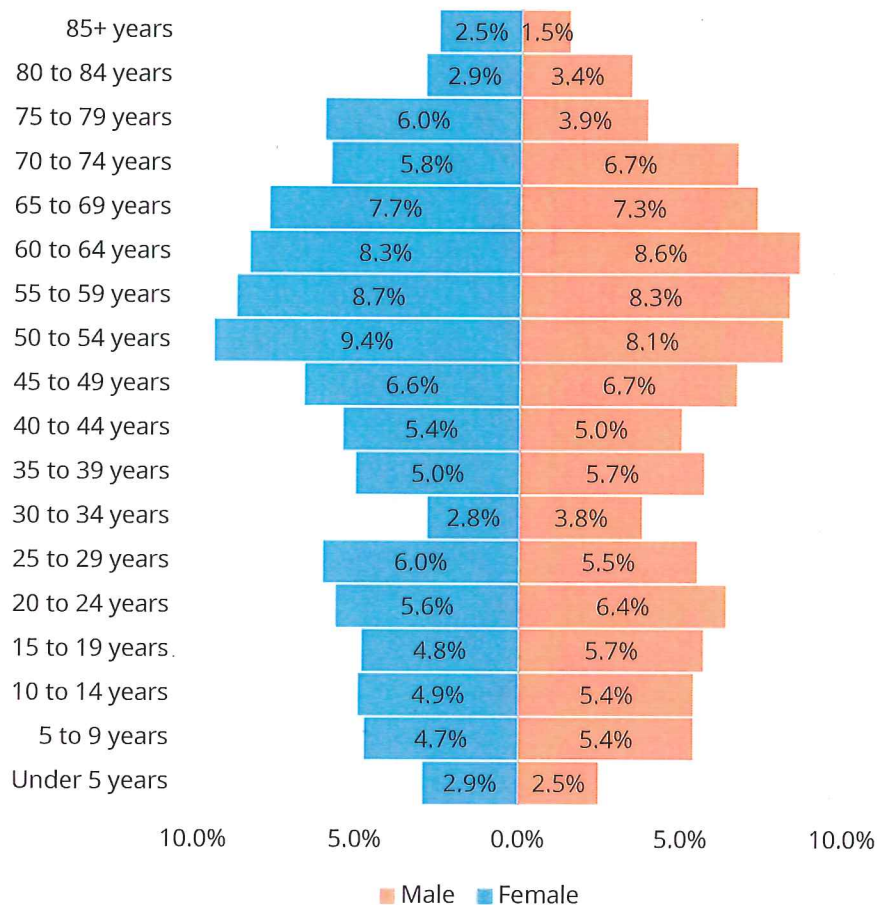


Figure 8. Population Distribution, 2010



PREVIOUS TOWN PLANS

The Town of Mesilla has been fortunate in that previous planning efforts have helped the Town successfully protect its rural character, historic significance, and agricultural base, especially in light of Mesilla's proximity to growth pressures as part of the Las Cruces Metropolitan Area. Town leaders who oversaw these efforts recognized that Mesilla possessed certain attributes and characteristics that continue to make it a unique and special place. This recognition spurred Town leaders to engage in detailed planning designed to achieve specific goals and objectives. The 1973 Yguado Master Plan and 1987 Mesilla Master Plan led to the creation of a zoning ordinance that has kept the intent of both master planning efforts alive. The 2004 Town of Mesilla Comprehensive Plan, which this plan updates, also carried forward the original goals of the Town and included many policies and projects that have since been implemented.

1973 Town of Mesilla Master Plan (Yguado Plan)

The first planning effort conducted in Mesilla resulted in the 1973 Master Plan prepared by the Yguado Association. Its significance cannot be overstated. The Master Plan laid the groundwork for land use and urban design planning in the Town. One of the most important components to come out of the 1973 Plan was the creation of seven zoning

districts that were established in response to the Town's long-term development goals. Many of the development standards that have been successful in preserving the character of the Town can be attributed to recommendations of the Plan. The Town's zoning and other land use regulations can be traced back to this initial work.

During the formulation of the goals, objectives, and policies, it became evident that conserving the historic and agricultural resources present in Mesilla was a priority, which reflected the original intent of the 1973 Yguado Plan. As a result, the need to preserve the Town's historic character and agriculture became a central theme of the 1987 Plan Update, something that is reflected in its goals, objectives, policies, and implementation strategies found throughout the Update. In addition to preserving the Town's character, Element I in the plan also contained implementation steps to develop a solid economic base coupled with improvements to community facilities and infrastructure (including the Town's transportation system).

Element II focused exclusively on Land Use, which analyzed existing land use and recommended future land use based upon some of the goals found in Element I. One of the primary functions of Element II was to offer a structure to help guide growth and development in the years following its 1987 adoption. A

key recommendation of Element II was that the Town carry out annexation of five areas, which were identified on a map.

1987 Town of Mesilla Master Plan

In 1987, a Master Plan Update was completed by J. Ken White, the Mesilla Town Planner. This Plan, which received a New Mexico State Planning Award, built upon the 1973 Plan and reflected current trends and development conditions in the rapidly changing Mesilla Valley.

2004 Comprehensive Plan

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan updated the 1987 Master Plan with new planning sections to comply with the requirements for comprehensive plans in New Mexico. The plan carried forward the goals of the 1987 Master Plan and Yguado Plan, including the preservation of agricultural land, historic preservation, zoning changes to support cluster development, and economic development strategies based on community agriculture.

Several goals and objectives outlined in this plan have been accomplished since the plan's adoption, including:

- Preservation of an agricultural greenbelt around the historic core of downtown. This implemented the "greenbelt" concept of the 2004 plan.
- Ongoing historic preservation within the Historic District. This includes

adopting clear design standards as part of the Town Code.

- Ongoing promotion of events including the Fiestas, Cinco de Mayo, etc.
- Adoption of a Dark Skies Ordinance
- Adoption of a Water Conservation Ordinance
- Creation of the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park

Other Plans

2009 Affordable Housing Plan

The 2009 Affordable Housing Plan and ordinance were adopted to allow the Town to contribute to affordable housing projects within Mesilla. This plan contains updated demographic and housing information from the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, as well as recommendations to increase affordable housing opportunities. Some of these recommendations include tradeoffs between preserving agricultural land and promoting new housing development. For example, the plan outlined revisions to the cluster subdivision ordinance that would decrease the minimum lot size from 10 acres to 1, thereby increasing density. The plan also recommended the creation of a rehabilitation program within the Town to help homeowners with home repairs.

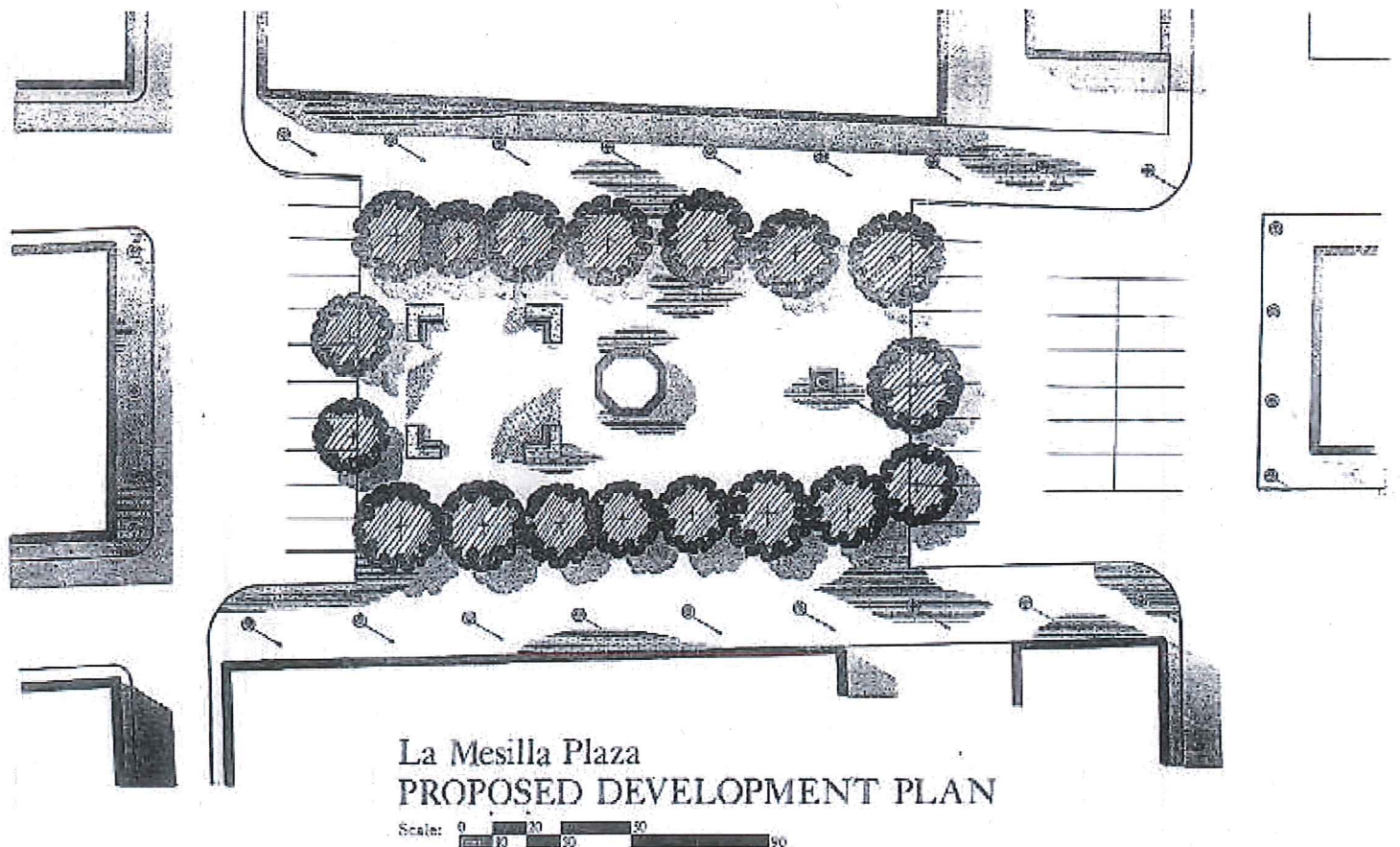
2016 University Avenue Corridor Study

Led by the Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, this study looked at safety and pedestrian and bicycle improvements for University Avenue between Avenida de Mesilla and the I-10 on-ramp in Las Cruces. The study recommends changes to the corridor to include a multi-use trail on one side and on-street bicycle lanes for certain segments.

2017 Asset Management Plan

The recently completed asset management plan reviewed the condition of public infrastructure in Mesilla, including the roads, water lines, sewer lines, town buildings, and public safety-related utilities (e.g., fire hydrants). The purpose is to ensure that necessary infrastructure upgrades, maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacements occur in a timely, cost-effective manner.

Figure 9. Plaza Rendering from Yguado Plan



COMMUNITY & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

As with many places, the Town of Mesilla has a limited financial and organizational capacity to implement projects. However, there are several organizations and institutional partners that have been working together to support key projects and programs in the town. These main institutions cluster around four key sectors: private businesses; government, education and non-profits; private investors; and outsiders, as summarized below. Continuing to work together will be paramount to the success of Town priorities and goals.

Financial Capacity

Mesilla relies on Gross Receipt Taxes (GRT) generated by local businesses to provide capital to fund public safety, administration, roadway improvements, and infrastructure costs. Inflation-adjusted gross receipts have been essentially flat since 2004, averaging about \$44.5 million per year. After peaking in 2008, gross receipts fell by 30% in 2009 following the Great Recession. Revenues have been slow to recover, but have begun to reach pre-recession levels.

Overall, the financial capacity of the Town of Mesilla is stable, if limited.

Gross tax receipts in 2015 were \$2.9 million, which equals approximately \$1,450 dollars in tax revenue per resident. This is comparable to more urbanized areas of the state where tax revenues are between \$1,000 to \$2,000 per resident. However, the Town of Mesilla receives only about one third of the gross revenue, with the rest going to the State of New Mexico and Doña Ana County.⁸

Given the small size of the Town and limited tax base, there is an ongoing need to pursue outside sources of funding as well as private investment for larger projects. In addition to GRT revenue, the Town receives a variety of grants, including, enterprise funds, and intergovernmental grants to help fund local government operations.

Organizational Capacity

The Town Government is made up of seven departments that provide the primary services to the Town, including public safety and public works. In addition, these departments have close working relationships with local, regional and state organizations and governments, including Doña Ana County, the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the South Central Council of

⁸ The Town's tax rate is 8.1875%, of which the Town collects 3.0375% of the total (1.2250% is returned to the Town directly and 1.8125% is collected as part of the Town's Local Option Tax percentage).

Governments, the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance and others. The Town works together with these organizations on regional issues, such as transportation and economic development, and coordinates funding through regional agencies.

As stated above, due to Mesilla's small size and limited resources, it is critical that the Town departments partner with other agencies to both expand their capacity and tap into wider networks and shared resources.

Figure 10. Town Departments and Organizations



COMMUNITY PROFILE - COMMUNITY & ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

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SECTION 4

Plan Elements



This section is the heart of the Comprehensive Plan and addresses the primary elements important to the Town of Mesilla. The following elements contain information on existing conditions, feedback from public meetings and stakeholders, strategies, goals, and next steps.



ELEMENT 1

LAND USE



Perhaps more than anything, the land located in the Mesilla Valley is what makes Mesilla a special place. The Rio Grande Valley helps frame a landscape where agricultural fields, groves of pecan trees, and historic residences all contribute to the special sense of place that one feels upon visiting or living in Mesilla. Indeed, land use is a fundamental component of comprehensive planning and provides an underlying framework for the entire document. Land use patterns influence such things as a community's economic base, the cost of providing public services and the location of future (re)development and preservation.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Continue to protect Mesilla's agricultural lands for future generations.
- **GOAL 2:** Achieve an historically appropriate and orderly pattern of land use development in Mesilla and surrounding areas.
- **GOAL 3:** Support new development that respects Mesilla's character and fills a community need.

Community Comments

"Let's keep commercial development to the existing zones. Maintain other areas as residential but no apartments or condominiums."

"We need incentives to keep our farmland and stay a small town..."

Existing Land Use

The existing land use pattern within the Town of Mesilla is rooted in the area's agriculture. Historically, land near the Rio Grande was easier to irrigate, which contributed to Mesilla's rise as a green oasis in the Chihuahuan Desert, with fields and orchards of pecans, chili fields, cotton, and other crops.

The built environment, which developed to the east of the river, complemented the agricultural uses near the river (now known as the Historic District). Mesilla's development pattern featured a traditional street and building layout. More specifically, the development pattern featured narrow streets with a variety of building sizes built to the street edge. The heart of the original town, as in most traditional communities in New Mexico, was the Plaza and Church. San Albino Catholic Church served as the focal point for the community members, who would then attend social events and fiestas on the Plaza. Yet, even as the townsite was built, agriculture remained an essential part of the local economy and one of the reasons that Mesilla remained a thriving community after the railroad arrived in Las Cruces.

Today, Mesilla's land use pattern continues to reflect its historic pattern. The current Town limits encompass 5 square miles. Agricultural uses, characterized by

large parcels and diverse crops, are still found primarily in the western part of the town, with the largest parcels being located adjacent to the Rio Grande.

There are, however, parcels within the Historic District and eastern parts of town where cotton, chile, and pecans are grown. Subdivisions and development in the agricultural areas of town are minimal and have generally been limited to single homes on large lots. For the most part, development has generally taken place adjacent to and within the Historic District, which is bordered by Calle del Norte on the north, Calle de Oeste on the west, Calle del Sur on the south, and Avenida de Mesilla on the east. Another area of residential development is located on the east side of town, just off University Avenue. There are, however, several agricultural fields within the Historic District between Calle de Santiago and Calle del Norte. More agricultural fields exist north of Calle del Norte and along Boutz Road, east of Avenida de Mesilla.

There are several vacant, developable lots within Mesilla, with most located in the Historic District. In a Town like Mesilla, however, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether a parcel is vacant, left fallow, or being used for agriculture. The existing land use map shows an overview of existing land use in Mesilla.

PLAN ELEMENTS - LAND USE

Table 1. Approximate Land Use Distribution

| LAND USE | APPROXIMATE ACRES | APPROXIMATE % |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Single Family Residential | 500 | 14.3% |
| Commercial | 60 | 1.7% |
| Institutional/Government | 36 | 1.0% |
| Park/Open Space | 150 | 4.3% |
| Farmland | 1,350 | 38.6% |
| Orchard | 800 | 22.9% |
| Vacant | 50 | 1.4% |
| Roadways & Other* | 550 | 15.7% |

NOTE: These totals are approximate and are based on publicly available data. *Other includes right-of-way (ROW) for ditches, the Rio Grande Bosque, flood control and other non-developed uses.



Zoning Districts

The Town of Mesilla Zoning Code designates eleven general zone categories consisting of two commercial zones, one industrial zone, seven residential zones of varying densities, and a "holding zone." The zoning code was first developed by the Yguado Plan in 1973 and has been incrementally updated since then to ensure that agricultural land and historic assets are preserved. Overall,

zoning has been an effective tool in successfully helping achieve agricultural and character preservation. Three zones (MER3, MER4, and MEH) were created for the proposed 2007/2008 annexation of land to the northwest. However, this annexation was never finalized and these zones are not currently implemented on the Town's zoning map.

Table 2. Zoning Districts & Approximate Area

| ZONING | APPROXIMATE ACRES | APPROXIMATE % |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| RF: Rural Farm | 2,450 | 80% |
| RA: Residential/Agricultural | 225 | 7% |
| R-1: Single Family Residential | 150 | 5% |
| H-R: Historical Residential | 170 | 6% |
| C-1: General Commercial | 32 | 1% |
| H-C: Historical Commercial | 36 | 1% |

RF - Rural Farm

The Rural Farm Zone is intended to maintain low residential densities and preserve agricultural uses and agricultural activities. Permitted uses include farms, ranches, nurseries/greenhouses, and one single family home, but only as an accessory to the primary agricultural use. Uses allowed by special permit include cottage industries, agriculture related industries (i.e., processing), and bed-and-breakfasts. The zone requires a minimum lot size of 5 acres with a 225 feet width and 300 feet depth. A separate section of the Municipal Code permits cluster development, which can allow for development of a slightly higher density.

RA - Residential/Agricultural

Permitted and prohibited uses in the Rural/Agricultural Zone are the same as the RF zone. This zone is intended to encourage low density residential use on the periphery of the built-up portions of Mesilla. Lots are required to be at least 3 acres in size and have a minimum width of 200 feet and depth of at least 300 feet. Cluster development is permissible in this zone.

R-1 - Single Family Residential

This zone is intended to permit the development of single family homes on smaller lots that have an available water supply. Permitted uses include: one single family home, agricultural uses, guest houses, storage. Uses permitted by special permit include those in the RF zone, except for cottages industries. The R-1 Zone requires a 1-acre minimum lot size with a minimum width of 100 feet and depth of 200 feet, available community water supply and off-street parking. This zoning classification also allows for cluster development.

R1-M - Single Family Residential with Mobile Homes

This is a special zone for land annexed into the Town after February 9, 2004. This zone allows single-family site-built homes or mobile homes. The lots must be a minimum of one acre with a 100-foot width and 200-foot depth provided a community water supply is available.

H-R - Residential Cultural-Historical

This zone allows residential uses including multifamily, subject to approval of a "development plan" by the commission. The intent is to preserve areas of historical, cultural, aesthetic or architectural interest. All new structures and remodels must be compatible with the styles and design elements established in the *Guidelines and Criteria for Preservation*

and *Development* manual. Minimum lot sizes are 8,000 ft²; multifamily dwellings must provide a minimum of 4,000 ft² per unit. All H-R lots are required to have a minimum lot frontage of 80 feet on a public road.

H-C - Historical Commercial

The Historical Commercial Zone allows those commercial uses permitted in Zone C- Commercial and some residential uses subject to the approval of the Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission. The purpose of this zone is to preserve commercial sections of the town deemed worthy of preservation due to historical, cultural, aesthetic or architectural interest. All structures must be compatible with the styles and design elements established in the *Guidelines and Criteria for Preservation and Development* manual as well as in compliance with the Town's Historic Preservation Ordinance (MTC 18.33).

C - Commercial

Intended for limited commercial activities, this zone prohibits agricultural, industrial, home occupational and multifamily residential uses. One single-family dwelling is permitted by a special use permit. The ordinance, Chapter 18.45.020 of the Municipal Code, lists over 50 permitted uses, including a variety of retail stores, hotels, trade and service shops, business and real estate offices, and restaurants. Lot areas must be a minimum of 12,000 ft² and have a minimum 100 feet of frontage. In addition,

the ordinance requires extensive requirements concerning yard space and landscaping, alleys, off-street parking, screening and buffering. This zone also requires all structures to be compatible with the styles and design elements established in the *Guidelines and Criteria for Preservation and Development* manual.

GI - General Industrial

The Town of Mesilla created this zone for certain lands annexed into the town after February 9, 2004. The ordinance lists 32 permissible uses, another 11 permissible uses subject to unspecified conditions, and a final eight uses which require a special use permit. Lots must be at least 60 feet wide and 70 feet deep with a minimum 5,000 ft² area.

Historic Preservation

Chapter 18.33 - Historic Preservation of the Town's Code outlines the processes, procedures, and design criteria for developments within the Town's four historic districts. These requirements apply to:

- Any property located within one of the town's four historic districts.
- Any property located outside a historic district or zone that is subject to the *Guidelines for Preservation and Development* zoning overlay.

- Any property not located within the town's historic districts/zones that has been designated as a historic landmark.

Further details of this part of the Town Code can be found in the Cultural Preservation Element of this plan.

Cluster Development

Chapter 17.45 of the Town Code allows for "cluster subdivisions," which are intended to concentrate residential development and preserve Mesilla's greenbelt of farmland, open space, and natural sites. In general, cluster development seeks to concentrate development in smaller portions of lots that are closer to public infrastructure (e.g., roads and water lines), thereby lessening the development footprint and impacts on farmland and natural systems. In many cases, subdivisions that are developed as clusters share common open space and/or apply conservation easements to land that is to be protected. In return, some density bonuses are allowed (50%-125% increase in allowable density). Cluster development is permitted in RF, RA, and R-1 zones for sites with 10 or more acres of net buildable area.

Primary Land Use Issues

Many of the land use issues identified in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan remain relevant, although progress has been made to address some of these issues in the last 15 years. As discussed above, land uses have changed very little in Mesilla between 2004 and 2017, except for the construction of a few new residential subdivisions and the infill of residential lots within the historic district and on some rural, large-lot agriculture properties. In that time, the Town has successfully implemented a cluster development ordinance, preserved large-lot zoning, and developed additional developable commercial space along Avenida de Mesilla to the north. The primary land use issues identified by residents, staff, and elected officials include:

- **LACK OF DEVELOPABLE COMMERCIAL LAND:** As discussed in the Economic Development element, a bulk of Mesilla's municipal revenue comes from gross receipt taxes generated from tourism-based businesses. However, because the bulk of commercial land in Historic District is already developed, there is a lack of developable land for additional commercial development. If the Town would like to expand its tax base, there may be a need for more commercially zoned land. A possible location is along Highway 28 south of Calle del Sur near the intersection of Union and Avenida de Mesilla.
- **INFILL PRESSURES:** Over the past decade, there has been ongoing infill of 1-acre parcels within the historic residential areas of Mesilla. In some cases, this has contributed to a change in the character of these neighborhoods, due to a higher concentration of new housing units on formerly vacant land. Ongoing infill may also strain the capacity of existing infrastructure systems to handle this increase in residential density. This issue is discussed more in the Infrastructure element of this plan.
- **ALLOWABLE DENSITIES:** One clear obstacle to controlling development in the historic residential zoning district is that the current code allows for 1 unit per 4,000 square feet of lot area, which in theory allows for a residential density of around 10 dwelling units per acre. Although the definition in the code allows for 4,000 square feet per *multifamily unit*, in practice, developers have been able to build multiple *single family homes on one parcel*, instead of being limited to one primary dwelling unit. To address this issue, the Town may consider revising the zoning code to allow only one primary housing unit per lot and one accessory dwelling unit (ADU). This would make the density requirements and primary dwelling unit definitions consistent with requirements in the R-1 zone.

- **MAINTAIN GREENBELT AND LARGE LOTS:** The Town has done a commendable job of maintaining a green belt around the Town using large-lot zoning, which allows only one housing unit per 5 acres. As related in the 2004 Plan, large-lot zoning has been in place in Mesilla for a long time; however, ongoing maintenance of the large-lot standards, and hence an active green belt, will be an ongoing priority for the Town.
- **MAINTAIN VIABLE AGRICULTURAL TRADITION:** Agricultural production in the Mesilla Valley is transforming due to demographic changes, the availability of water, and changing agricultural markets. For example, there has been a shift away from water-intensive cotton production to other crops, as well as the planting of more orchards (which are also water intensive). These changes may make it less economically viable to grow particular crops and result in fewer fields being in active cultivation.
- **ANNEXATION:** A plan for future annexation was pursued after the adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The plan recommended annexation of land to the south, west, and northwest. Following the

plan adoption, an annexation proposal for residential land to the west was almost finalized, but never fully implemented due to legal obstacles. Although annexation as a tool is still possible, it has been taken off the table as a priority for the Town. A primary reason for this is that incorporating additional land usually entails significant costs for the municipality, which then must maintain and construct infrastructure within a larger area without a corresponding increase in tax revenues.

- **LOT SPLITS & NON-CONFORMING USES:** In Mesilla, there have been many instances of lot splits, which occurred prior to zoning, making them legal non-conforming uses. In some instances, the lots were illegally split either by the property owners filing plats with the County instead of the Town or simply establishing another residence on their land, usually for children or elderly relatives

Future Land Use

Land use scenarios represent ways for the Town of Mesilla to change over time. Because the Town's population is not expected to increase (and may decline), and annexation of new land is not currently being pursued, changes in land use over the next 10 to 20 years could be minimal. However, if conditions do change, a general land use plan should be in place that addresses where and how land uses could respond to changing dynamics. Such a land use plan would help the Town Board of Trustees and citizens to decide where to locate new housing, commercial space, or other uses.

The following two options present different scenarios that seek to address the issues identified above. The first "trend" scenario is based on ongoing residential infill and some conversion of agricultural land to residential uses.

The second scenario is the "preferred scenario" that incorporates the desires and ideas of residents gathered from community meetings, discussion with Town staff, and through the online survey. This preferred scenario functions as the future land use plan for the town.

Scenario 1: Trend

The first "trend" scenario is designed to follow existing development trends in Mesilla, with ongoing infill of vacant lots in the Historic District, as well as some conversion of agricultural land to large-lot residential areas with larger homes.

The overall development pattern for this scenario follows existing zoning, but would increase the overall housing density in the historic district. The expected changes if this scenario came to pass include approximately 40 additional housing units, 90 new residents, 25 acres converted to new residential uses, and about 20 acres within the historic district redeveloped as infill housing. It would also include about 7.5 acres of new commercial development.

Preferred Scenario

An overwhelming number of residents said they prefer to "keep Mesilla the way it is" and preserve existing land uses – especially greenbelt areas. However, to both preserve existing land uses and accommodate some of the trends outlined in the scenario above, the preferred scenario calls for targeted infill development at lower densities and preservation of areas currently zoned RF and RA.

This preferred scenario shows less infill in the historic core, and limited expansion of commercial land extending outward from the historic core along the west side of Avenida de Mesilla, consistent with a trend in small scale businesses. In this scenario, areas would develop according to existing zoning.

In the future, additional commercial development on somewhat larger lots but still at a neighborhood scale appropriate to Mesilla may be appropriate. However,

the preference is to review further land use changes in the future as there is clear demand for such development. Big

box retail establishments are not appropriate within the Town because of limited land availability and lot sizes.

Achieving the Preferred Land Use Vision

Land Use Code Updates

The Town Adopted an Affordable Housing Plan in 2009 that proposed a series of recommendations to help increase housing affordability through changes to the zoning code. These would primarily increase the density bonus allowed for subdivisions that use cluster development and utilize less land area.

However, density bonus strategies involve clear tradeoffs between allowing more housing development and continuing to protect Mesilla's greenbelt through large-lot zoning requirements. *One clear take-away from public meetings is that residents desire to keep Mesilla's housing density as it currently is, instead of allowing for more higher density infill.*

As stated above, the primary way to control the density in the Historic Residential District is to limit the number of allowable dwelling units per lot to 1, instead of using the current area requirements.⁹ Property owners who want to develop multiple units would then have to subdivide their parcels, which would trigger subdivision standards that could be tied to more stringent requirements for parking, infrastructure availability,

and lot sizes. Alternatively, the current area requirements could be increased to 1 unit per each quarter acre or more, depending on the desired density.

Application of Accessory Dwelling Units (Guest Houses)

The current code defines accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as "guest houses" and limits their size to 600 square feet. However, the guest house as a use is not addressed consistently in the code – for example, it is not applied to the Historic Residential zone. This has created a situation where many properties may be defined as a guest house or ADU but are not actually regulated under certain zoning districts. Applying the guest house requirements across residential zoning districts would address some of these issues that create ambiguity with interpretation and enforcement.

Priority Infill Areas

To support additional housing development, the Town should propose priority infill areas within the historic district (and other areas) to which the Town would like to channel future development (see Land Use Map on page 44).

⁹ This is the requirement in the existing R-1 zone.

The Town could provide incentives for development in these priority areas by investing in infrastructure, as identified in the Infrastructure Element. In contrast, the Town could discourage development in RA and RF lots by not extending infrastructure support to these areas. This would provide a disincentive for future lot splits and conversion to other land uses that require infrastructure for development.

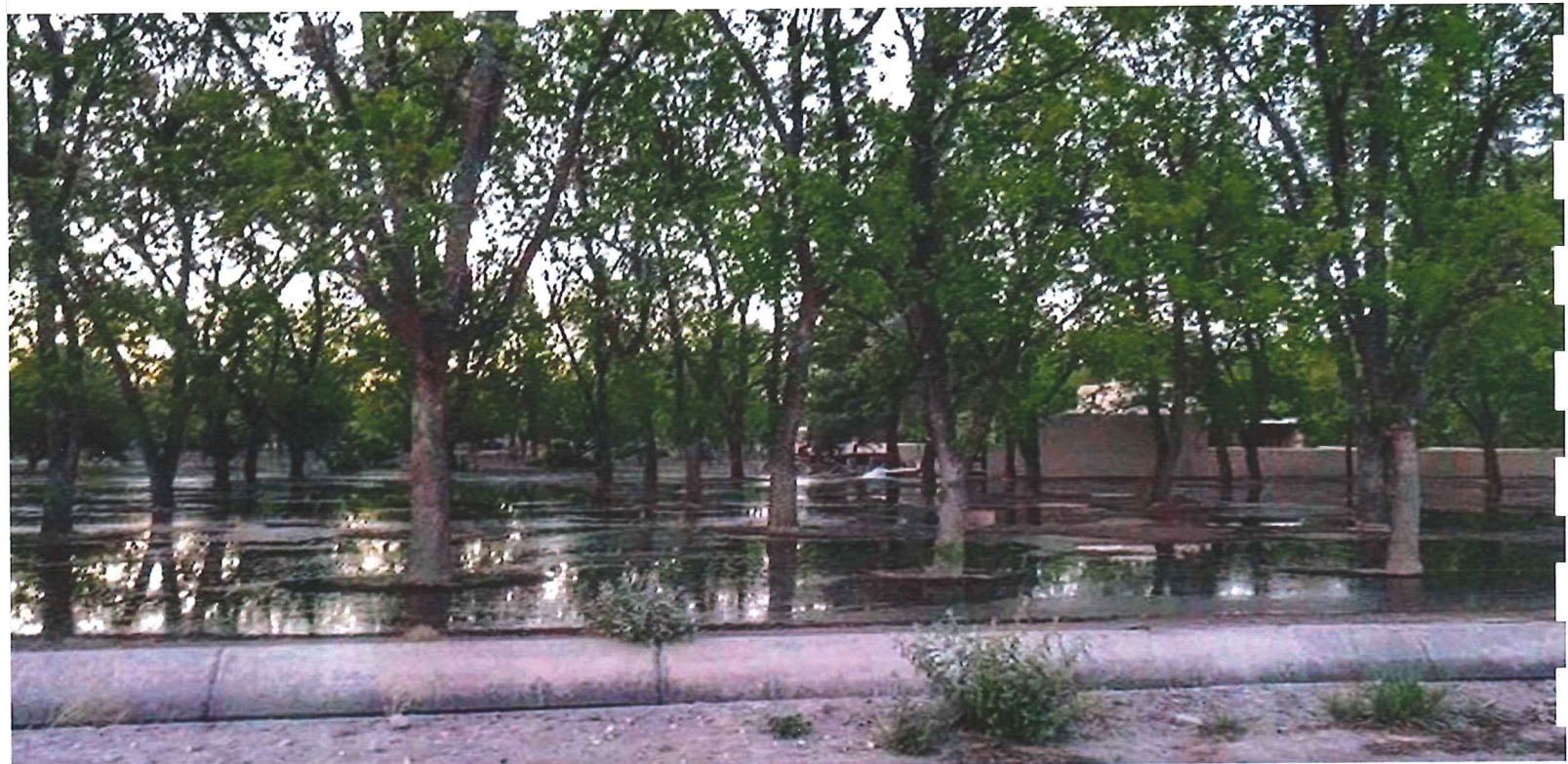
The Town could take even stronger action to limit development by requiring new housing developments in RA and RF areas to pay for the cost of any infrastructure extensions. As mentioned above, these strategies all have tradeoffs among housing affordability, rural land protection, and the overall costs of development, which affects who may be able to live in Mesilla.

Progressive, Contiguous Growth

The Town's preference is for incremental growth that is contiguous to developed areas rather than a spot zoning approach. This is consistent with an infill strategy that promotes development in areas that are served by the Town's infrastructure and maintain the Town's greenbelt.

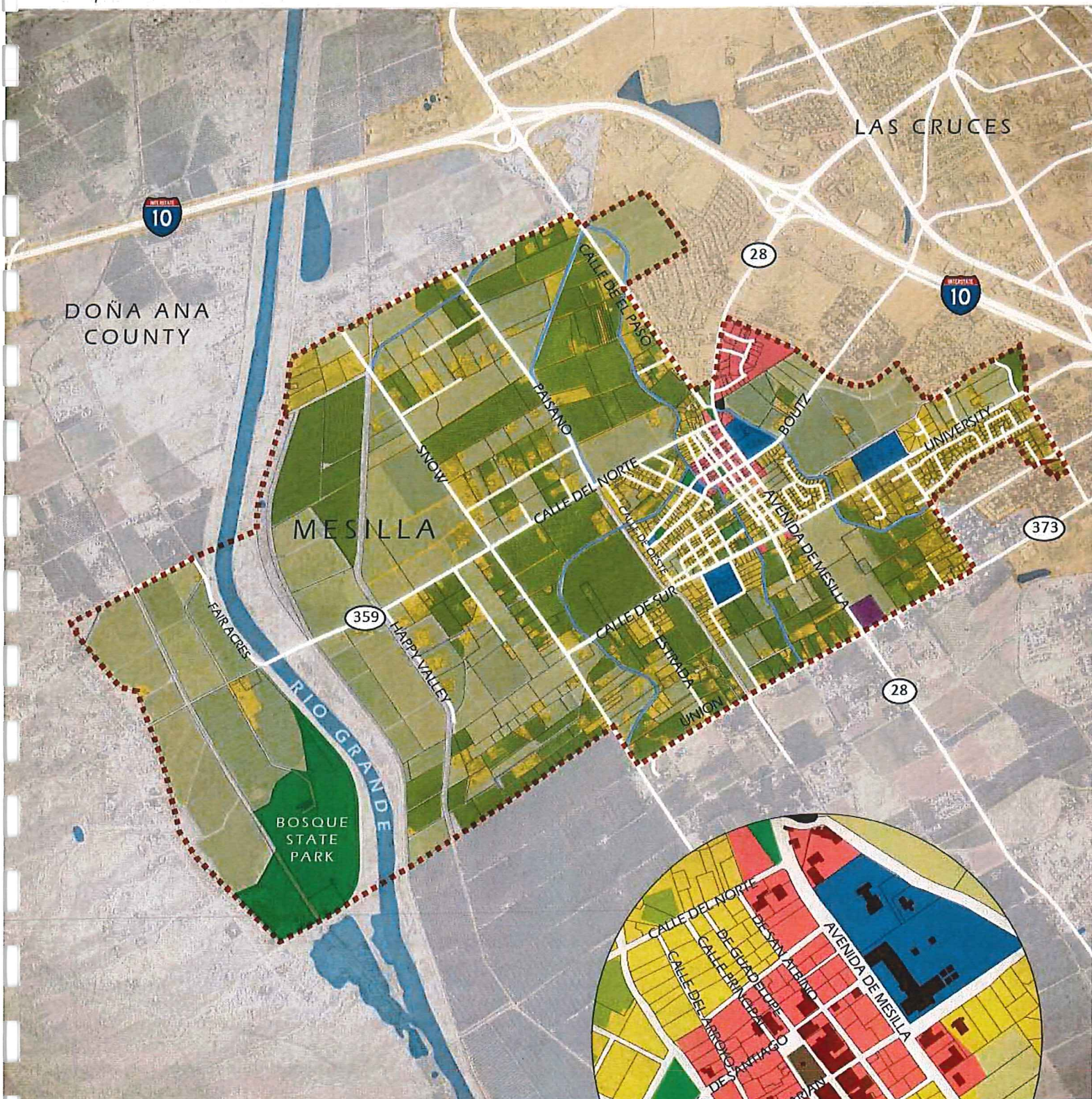
Preservation Tools

Several strategies have already been used in Mesilla to preserve agricultural land uses and control development. These include large lot zoning, the Town's cluster development ordinance, and the use of historic preservation districts. A few additional tools that the Town may explore in the future include: transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, buffering and land purchase, and additional historic district designation. These tools are described in more detail in the Resources section of this plan.



TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 2. Existing Land Use



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces

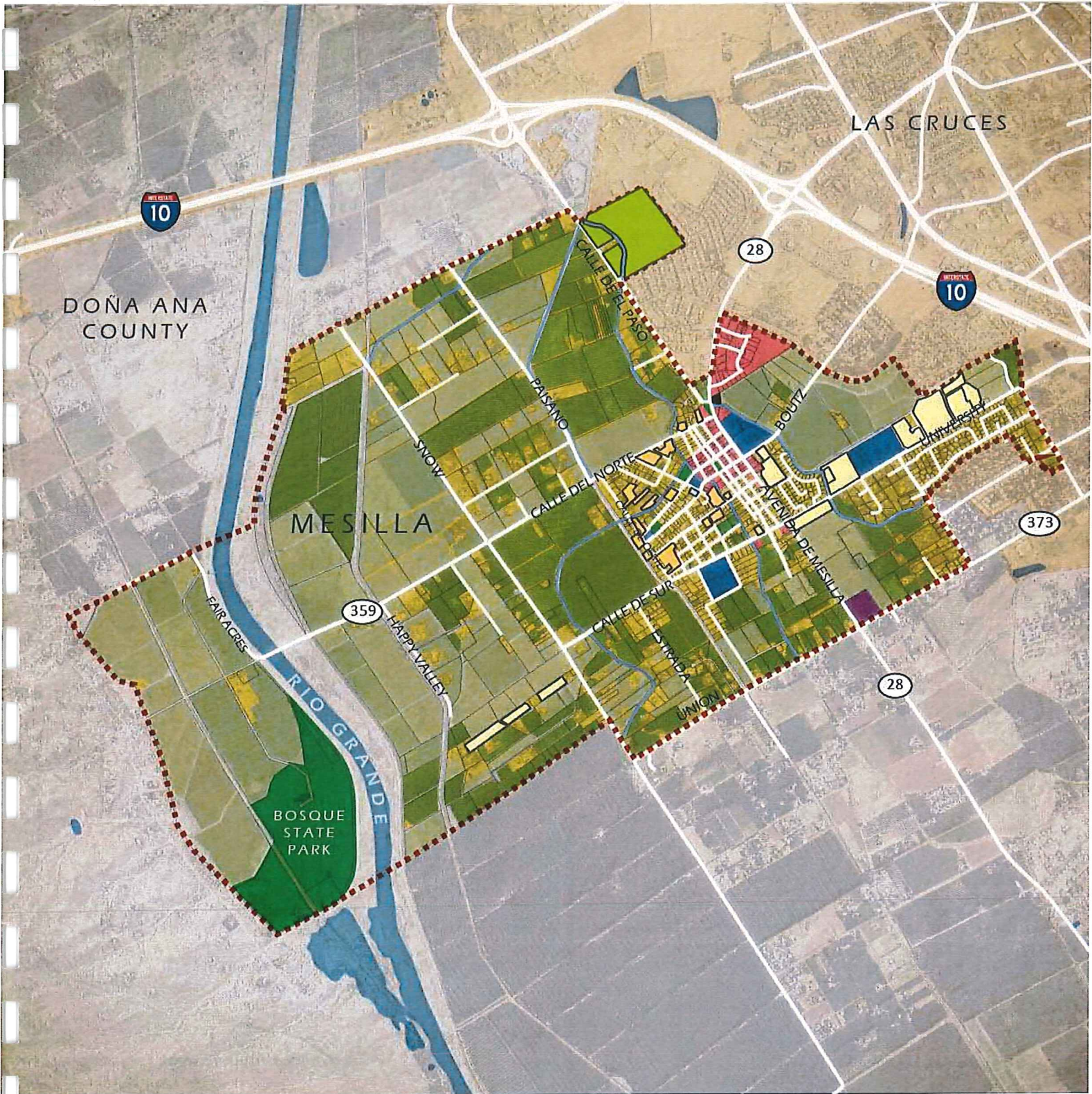
EXISTING LAND USE

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| Park | Residential |
| Orchard | Commercial |
| Farmland | Institutional |
| Vacant | Industrial |

PLAZA
AREA INSET

TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 4. Land Use Scenario - Trend



LEGEND

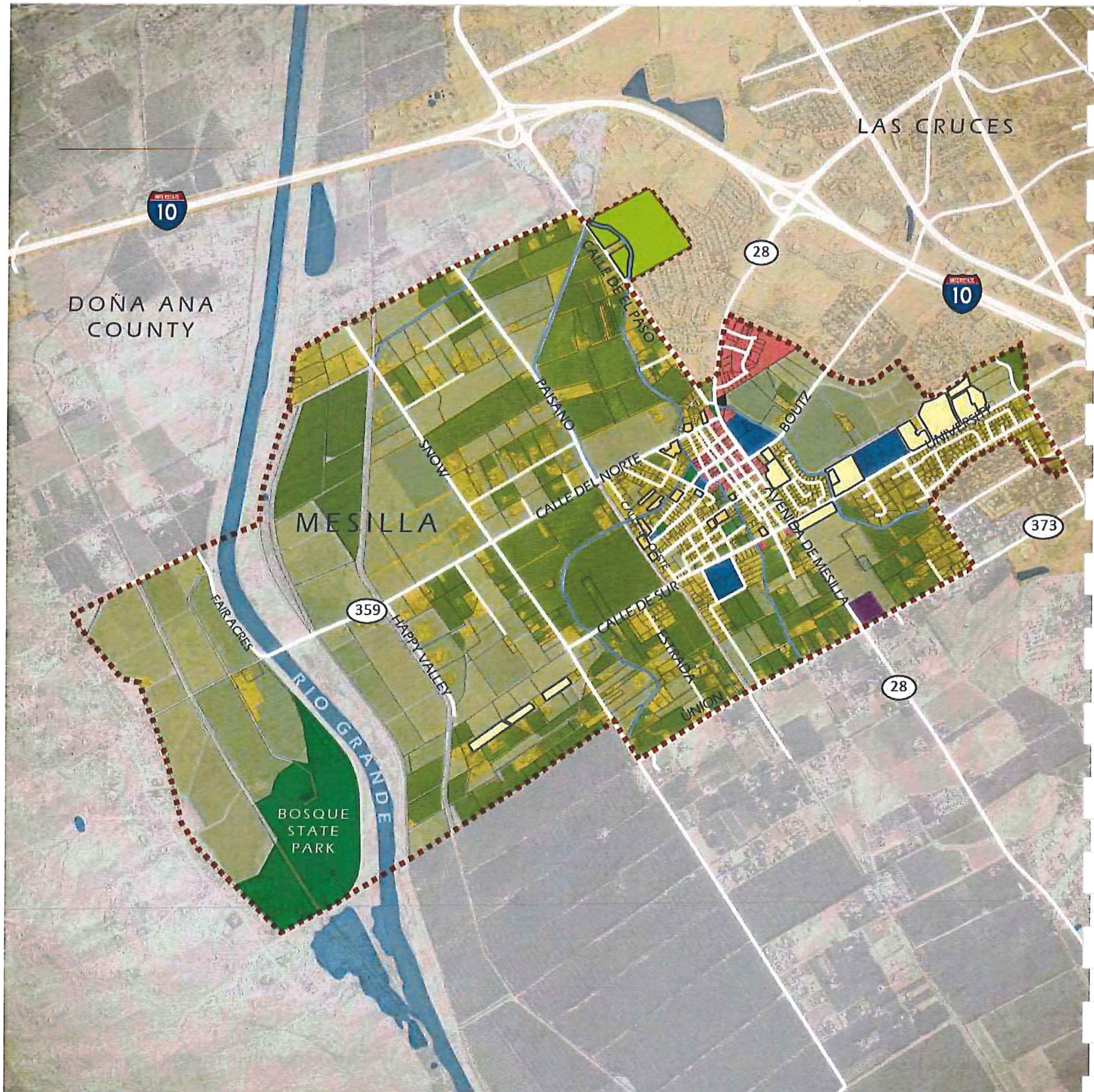
- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces

EXISTING LAND USE

- Park
- Orchard
- Farmland
- Vacant
- Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial

APPROXIMATE AREAS OF CHANGE

- Commercial
- Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Infill & High Density Residential



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces

EXISTING LAND USE

- Park
- Orchard
- Farmland
- Vacant
- Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial

APPROXIMATE AREAS OF CHANGE

- Commercial
- Agriculture
- Low Density Residential
- Infill & High Density Residential

ELEMENT 2

HOUSING



The Housing element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes goals, objectives and policies for ensuring that adequate housing opportunities are available for current and future residents of Mesilla. This component identifies existing housing conditions and trends, analyzes how well available housing meets local needs, and projects future housing needs. It also establishes long-range goals and strategies for the Town to follow in meeting those needs.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Ensure that all current and future residents of all income levels have access to durable and quality housing that promotes the character of Mesilla.
- **GOAL 2:** Enhance the livability of residential areas to maintain the character of Mesilla and improve the overall quality of life for all Town residents.

Community Comments

"Restrict development to currently zoned residential areas."

"Let's try to provide low cost loans or grants to those homeowners who cannot afford repairs on their own."

Overview of Housing in Mesilla

Driving through Mesilla, one gets the immediate sense of how unique and historically significant the homes in Town are. Coupled with Mesilla's unparalleled setting, the combination of historic homes, history, and small-town character have turned Mesilla into an attractive location for retirees and others desiring to live in a unique location. When homes become available, they typically sell quickly, often being purchased by out-of-town (or state) buyers. This has increased housing prices and led to some tension between long-time residents and newcomers.

This dynamic has been in place for at least the last 30 years and was discussed in the *2004 Comprehensive Plan* and the *2009 Affordable Housing Plan*. Both of those plans described the housing situation in Mesilla as having two sides: although there is strong demand for homes in Mesilla (and hence a robust housing market), steadily increasing housing prices have decreased the affordability of homes in town, "pricing out" those who might otherwise live and work in Mesilla.

A few of the primary factors contributing to high housing costs include: a lack of developable land, higher building costs (primarily for historic homes), high demand leading to higher home values, and zoning requirements that limit housing development in some cases. These factors have led to a situation where there is very little "entry-level" housing in Mesilla that would be affordable to most young families.

In addition to issues with affordability, residents at public meetings also discussed the high percentage of renters living in the downtown historic residential district and the perception that many of Mesilla's older, and lower income residents may have moved due to high housing prices and a lack of availability. These issues are coupled to a long-term discussion about the desirable levels of housing density to allow in Mesilla, as well as the use of historic preservation requirements and large-lot zoning to maintain a desirable density.

Housing Conditions

According to the 2010 Census, there were 1,076 housing units in Mesilla in 2010.¹⁰ This is slightly more housing units (9.7%) than the 981 units counted for the 2000 Census. These data are confirmed in part by the Town's permit data that indicates that 58 permits for new housing were issued between 2000 and 2009 – of which 50 were for single family homes and 8 were for apartment units.

Tenure and Occupancy

Of the Town's 1,076 housing units, 980 were occupied, or 91% of units. The vacancy rate has remained stable since 2000, at about 9% of units. This is slightly lower than the average for Doña Ana County (10%).

An estimated 27% percent of homes were occupied by renters, which is lower than the county rate (35%). However, many residents at public meetings mentioned that there was a high percentage of renters in the historic downtown neighborhoods, which created a more transient, shorter-term population and changed the neighborhood dynamics in Mesilla. The Affordable Housing Plan identified 54 out of 273 rentals units being located in the downtown historic district, or about 20% of rentals.

A shift in the number of long-term residents is reflected in Census data. An estimated 58.3% of residents have moved into their homes since 2000, which is comparable to the rate in other communities that have seen rapid population and housing growth. In other words, although there has not been much housing construction in Mesilla in the last 20 years, there has been a significant change in the number of residents who have occupied these homes. Contrasting this turnover, however, 27% of residents can be considered "long-term residents," having moved in before 1990.

Housing Types in Mesilla

A majority of the homes (82.9%) in Mesilla are detached, single-family houses. This is followed by an estimated 9.5% of apartment units in small-scale buildings of 2 to 9 total units. Attached single family homes (i.e., townhomes) make up the remainder of units, at 5.8% of all units. Approximately 1% to 2% of homes are estimated to be manufactured or mobile homes, which is significantly lower than the state average and the average in Doña Ana County (including Las Cruces). In general, the composition of housing has not changed significantly since 2000.

¹⁰¹⁰ 2010 Census data is the most accurate data available. 2011-2015 ACS data indicate that there are 1,052 housing units but the margin of error is ± 96 , which does not allow an accurate portrayal of whether the number of housing units has increased or declined.

Homes in Mesilla are on average larger than homes in the rest of Doña Ana County – 62.2% have 2 or 3 bedrooms, and 29.1% have 4 or more bedrooms.¹¹

Age of Housing Stock

Homes in Mesilla are generally older and reflect different growth periods in the town's history. An estimated 25.4% of homes were built prior to 1939, representing the historic housing stock in the downtown core neighborhood. This was followed by new construction in the 1960's and 1970's when another 37.2% of homes were built. About 17.4% of homes were built in the 1980's and 1990's, reflecting a slowdown in growth. More recently, there has been minimal growth in the number of new homes, with only 6.6% of homes being built after 2000. These homes are most likely infill properties, as well as new construction on some of the larger lots.

As is often the case with an older housing stock, many homes may need extensive repairs or upgrades to roofs, plumbing, siding, or electrical systems. In some cases, these upgrades may be cost-prohibitive for homeowners, especially if they are on fixed incomes and

cannot afford the upfront costs of a new roof, or other large-scale repairs.

Home Values, Costs & Affordability

Both home values and home prices are much higher in Mesilla than in nearby Las Cruces or in some parts of unincorporated Doña Ana County. The median value of owner-occupied housing estimated by the Census for the years 2011 to 2015 was \$255,400 (compared to the County's median value of \$138,100).¹²

There has been a rapid appreciation in the value of homes in Mesilla – in 2000, the median home price was \$132,800, which adjusted for inflation is equal to \$192,400 in 2017, an approximately 40% increase in the median home value. This is a faster annual appreciation than the national average, and reflects the hot housing market in Mesilla despite the 2008-2009 housing market crash and Great Recession.¹³

¹¹ American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-year estimates. About 17% of homes in the County have 4 or more bedrooms.

¹² 2011-2015 ACS, 5-year estimates, Table DP04. These data are estimates and have a margin of error, but show that housing values are much higher in Mesilla than in other parts of the County. Inflation adjusted to 2017, the median housing value was \$267,221.

¹³ Annual appreciation for homes is 3-5% annually, but this varies widely by location. In Mesilla, the non-inflation adjusted annual appreciation was approximately 6-7% annually between 2000 and 2015.



The Town Adopted an Affordable Housing Plan in 2009, but did not adopt a corresponding Affordable Housing Ordinance. Adopting such an ordinance would give the Town the ability to contribute to some types of affordable housing developments. However, given the limited funds available to the Town, the level of financial assistance it would be able to provide would be small. The Town has also adopted a Fair Housing Ordinance.

Housing Market

Home values estimated by the Census give a snapshot of housing costs but do not necessarily reflect how much homes are selling for, which is often higher. A

review of homes for sale within Mesilla was conducted in June 2017 to determine average listed price, number of bedrooms, and general condition. For the review, Realtor.com and Zillow.com were consulted for current listings. A total of nine homes were listed at a price range between \$179,000 and \$549,000. All the listed homes had three or more bedrooms and were located within the historic residential district. One property was a multifamily dwelling with five apartment units. Seven lots were also for sale, with price ranges between \$79,000 and \$175,000. Four homes were also listed for rent, mostly in the neighborhoods to the east of the historic district along University Blvd.

Housing Needs & Issues

Most of the housing issues identified in the previous comprehensive plan and affordable housing plan remain relevant. These include:

- **HOUSING DEVELOPMENT/INFILL:** Given the stable (or slightly declining) population, there is not currently a need to construct additional housing units in Mesilla to meet population growth. However, housing development will continue given demand from out-of-state buyers. As there is little available land to construct large subdivisions under current zoning, most development will continue to be infill of single lots or development of larger RA- and RF- zoned parcels.
- **AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** The 2009 Affordable Housing Plan details the factors that contribute to higher home prices. These include a low number of multifamily units, zoning restrictions on density to preserve open space/agriculture land, a lack of developable land, infrastructure costs, and high market demand for existing housing units. Unfortunately, the high housing costs in Mesilla may have already pushed out long-term residents with lower incomes while also creating a barrier for those with lower incomes to be able to move into Mesilla.
- **MANUFACTURED HOUSING:** Manufactured housing in any location must be consistent with the historic character of the Town. Within historic zones, manufactured housing must meet historic district standards.
- **JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE:** As discussed in more detail in the Economic Development element, most of the workers in Mesilla live outside of town. This is starkly apparent in both commuter data, as well as in data collected by the Town, which shows that only about one in 20 Town employees both live and work in Mesilla.
- **HOME REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE:** As discussed above, some of the older homes in the historic district may need extensive repairs that are cost-prohibitive for current owners. This may contribute to some of these homes remaining in poor condition and signals a need to provide additional support to homeowners who need rehabilitation assistance.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION:** Parcels outside the historic core blocks of Mesilla are not all served by municipal water and sewer. There has been an ongoing discussion of extending service to these residences; however, this may be cost-prohibitive. This includes not only up-front development costs but also the costs of maintenance and replacement. A more detailed discussion of expansion costs is provided in the Infrastructure element.

Achieving Housing Goals

Partnerships with Housing Authorities

Both the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority and the Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation already construct, operate and provide services related to affordable housing. If the Town would like to see housing development in Mesilla that provides affordable units, partnerships with these organizations will be crucial to enable this development.

Homeowner Rehabilitation Support

Creating a homeowner rehabilitation fund for those who cannot currently afford repairs could help maintain and restore the housing stock in the historic district for those property owners without the means for expensive repairs. Such a fund can be set up through the adoption of an Affordable Housing Ordinance (see above), and could be man-

aged jointly with the Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation or another non-profit partner.

Infill Priority Areas & Infrastructure Support

For those areas identified as priority infill, the Town can help the property owners invest in new housing development that fits the context of Mesilla. These are areas within the existing historic district that are zoned H-R, and the more recent but undeveloped subdivisions along University Ave, and to the east of Snow Rd slightly north of Dimatteo Rd.

As discussed in the Land Use Section, the Town should consider revising the number of allowable units per lot in areas zoned Historic Residential, as well as developing definitions and regulations regarding accessory dwelling units.

PLAN ELEMENTS - HOUSING

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ELEMENT 3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The Economic Development section of this plan aims to build upon opportunities that currently exist within the Town to support local businesses, grow new ones, and enhance the overall quality of life. Economic development is a common thread throughout this plan and is integrated with strategies and goals for land use, historic preservation, housing, and infrastructure improvements.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Achieve the preservation and promotion of Mesilla's agricultural industry.
- **GOAL 2:** Achieve greater area-wide prominence as a destination for all forms of tourism to strengthen the economy.
- **GOAL 3:** Target small, clean, light industries for location in Mesilla that would not negatively impact the physical environment or Town character.

Community Comments

"Can we get a Trader Joes to come to Town?"

"Do not allow chain stores to develop here!"

"We need more stores that supply basic living needs so we don't have to spend money outside of Town."

Regional Economy

To understand Mesilla's economy, it is important to review statewide and regional trends affecting local market conditions. As detailed in several other planning documents, such as the Doña Ana Comprehensive Plan (*Viva Doña Ana*), the region's economy is growing rapidly due to a confluence of factors, including increasing freight movement through the region¹⁴, a rapidly growing population, and the region's position as a strategic port of entry between Mexico and the United States. As part of the larger Las Cruces Metropolitan Area, *Mesilla is positioned to both benefit from and be affected by this growth*, which will continue to increase development pressures for land within and adjacent to the town.

Regional Economic Base & Trends

Although facing several challenges, Doña Ana County's economy is expected to grow significantly in the coming years. According to the County's *Comprehensive Plan*, 85,000 people and 42,000 jobs are expected to move into or be created in the County by 2040.¹⁵ Combined with other regional and international economic forces centered around

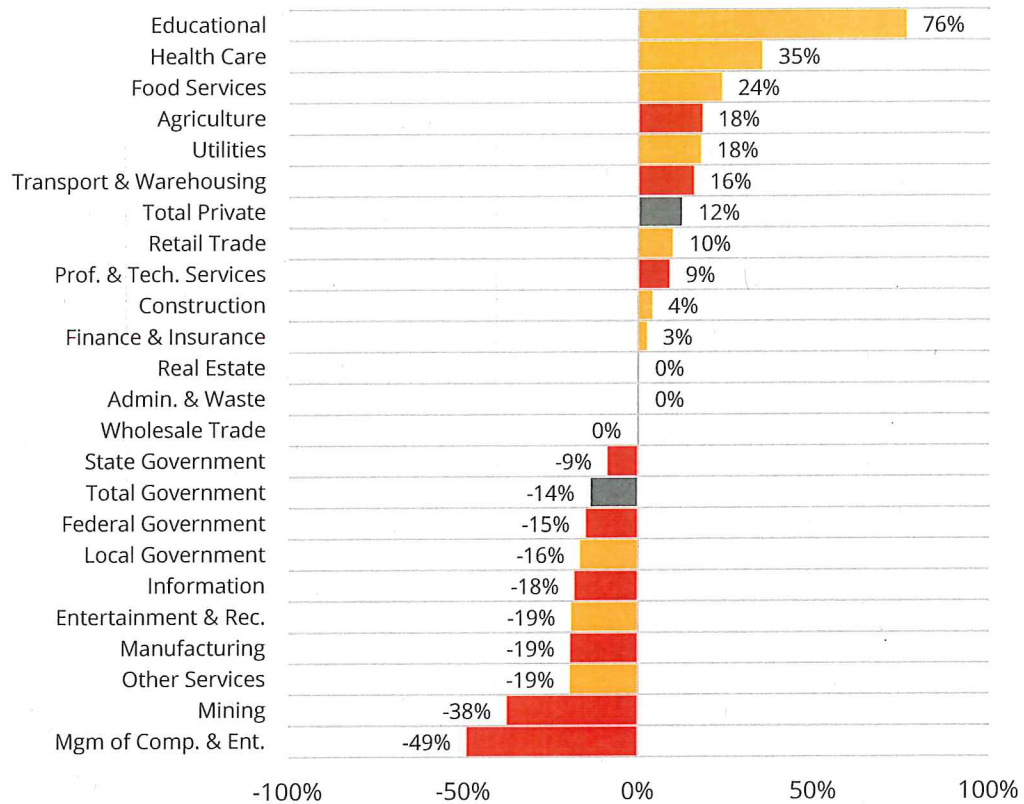
healthcare, trade, and education, Doña Ana's economy is expanding, with transportation and warehousing, utilities, and agriculture sectors all expected to grow in the next 20 years. These industries represent strong *base industries* for the County and region, which export goods and services to other markets.

As the County continues to grow, these industries are projected to expand in importance, especially if investments are made in key infrastructure projects. In addition, the continued expansion of these sectors (and the overall population) will boost demand for secondary retail and service-based businesses to supply increased local demands.¹⁶ On the other hand, government, mining, manufacturing, and information sectors have lost jobs since 2010 and may continue to decline as significant regional industries.

¹⁴ According to the 2015 Border Area Economic Development Study, USDOT estimates show that freight movement will increase by 45% by 2045, which will have a large impact on the region as it functions as a current port of entry.

¹⁵ Viva Doña Ana 2040 Comprehensive Plan

¹⁶ UNM BBER and New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program & Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Figure 11. Changes in Total Employment, Doña Ana County, 2010-2017¹⁷

Regional Anchors & Projects

Within the Las Cruces Metropolitan Region, primary regional anchors (and major employers) are associated with the government and service sectors. These include New Mexico State University, White Sands Missile Range, Las Cruces Public Schools, Doña Ana Community College, Memorial Medical Center, Mountain View Regional Medical Center, NASA, Wal-Mart, the City of Las Cruces, and Doña Ana County, which provide a significant majority of jobs. In El Paso, 40 miles to the south, manufacturing, production and transportation-related jobs are the primary base industries that

thrive on the exchange of goods between Mexico and the United States.

In addition to these anchors, there are several upcoming projects that promise to expand or catalyze economic development in the areas surrounding Mesilla. A few include ongoing growth in Las Cruces, increased international trade at the Santa Teresa Border Crossing, and several new industrial park sites along the border. Mesilla is positioned to capture some of the economic development benefits of these anchor sites and projects through the development of secondary support businesses (such

¹⁷ Data from NM Department of Workforce Solutions. Dark red bars represent traditional base industries.

as retail) as well the continued promotion of the town's tourist attractions, high quality of life, and historic character.

Regional Agriculture

Agriculture in the Mesilla Valley is undergoing a transition due to water availability issues, trends in agricultural production and conversion of farmland for residential development. However, Doña Ana County remains one of the largest agricultural producing counties in the state. In 2012, the County had the second largest number of farms and the third highest cash receipts for agricultural products (behind Curry and Chaves counties). The primary products in the county continue to be milk production, fruit/nut trees (mainly pecans), livestock crops (hay and corn), and cotton.

In Mesilla, this agricultural economy is still incredibly important, both economically and as a cultural resource. Without the agricultural green belt surrounding the town, Mesilla would soon become a different place with potentially more residential development taking the place of traditional orchards and irrigated farmland. It is uncertain how this development would impact tourism, but what is certain is that working to ensure that agriculture continues as a viable source of income for farmers is essential to maintaining Mesilla's character.

Table 3. Total Farms & Market Values for NM Counties¹⁸

| | TOTAL FARMS | | | TOTAL MARKET VALUE | | | VALUE PER FARM 2012 |
|------------|-------------|-------|-------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| | 2002 | 2007 | 2012 | 2002 | 2007 | 2012 | |
| Doña Ana | 1,691 | 1,762 | 2,184 | \$251,847,000 | \$388,787,000 | \$ 351,032,000 | \$ 160,728.94 |
| Rio Arriba | 988 | 1,312 | 1,892 | \$10,551,000 | \$12,763,000 | \$ 18,979,000 | \$ 10,031.18 |
| San Juan | 808 | 1,897 | 2,628 | \$37,030,000 | \$57,199,000 | \$ 71,311,000 | \$ 27,135.08 |
| Roosevelt | 804 | 876 | 680 | \$190,083,000 | \$253,950,000 | \$ 264,324,000 | \$ 388,711.76 |
| Valencia | 718 | 901 | 1,607 | \$17,715,000 | \$36,322,000 | \$ 55,765,000 | \$ 34,701.31 |
| Curry | 677 | 681 | 600 | \$232,601,000 | \$347,323,000 | \$ 447,315,000 | \$ 745,525.00 |
| San Miguel | 565 | 765 | 877 | \$12,278,000 | \$17,186,000 | \$ 18,631,000 | \$ 21,244.01 |
| Chaves | 604 | 584 | 595 | \$339,088,000 | \$339,088,000 | \$ 388,099,000 | \$ 652,267.23 |
| Lea | 554 | 572 | 460 | \$98,298,000 | \$93,644,000 | \$ 188,926,000 | \$ 410,708.70 |

¹⁸ USDA Agricultural Census, 2002, 2007, 2012.

Workforce Characteristics

Residents' skills, interests, and abilities are the foundation of any economy. In Mesilla, the workforce is increasingly made up of older, well-educated residents who are either close to retirement or already retired. On the one hand, this is good for the local economy as it places less demand on the Town to generate new jobs for residents. On the other hand, it can also mean a lack of qualified laborers to continue to support the town's traditional industries, including agriculture. If agriculture is to continue to be a viable economic industry for the town, there is a need to find residents and property owners who can fill these positions and perform agricultural work.

Labor Force Participation & Unemployment

The estimated total labor force in Mesilla (those over 16 and capable of work) is 1,398 people. Those over 16 who are not in the active labor force comprises 662 people, reflecting a relatively older population with many retirees. However, the overall labor force participation rate is estimated to be 68%, which is higher than the national average of ~63%. This indicates a very active labor force, especially for a town with an older population.

As a small Town, the best data source for unemployment data in Mesilla is American Community Survey data, which is prone to high margins of error and estimates the unemployment rate is 12.2% ($\pm 8.8\%$). Given more accurate data from comparable communities, the *unemployment rate is probably on the lower end of this estimate, at between 3.4% and 6% - both positive indicators.*

Resident Jobs & Occupations

Reflecting the high educational attainment in the community, Mesilla residents are primarily employed in professional management positions in the healthcare, educational services, public administration, and professional services industries. In total, about 49% of residents are employed in management and business occupations (i.e., white collar jobs), 21% are employed in sales and office professions, 21% are employed in service industries, and very few (6%) are employed in productive occupations and natural resource occupations (3%).

Although relatively small sectors, the accommodation and food service industry and the retail trade industry employ approximately 75 residents. Many of these residents may constitute a majority of those who live and work in the town (see commuting sections below).

Figure 12. Resident Occupations by Primary Sector

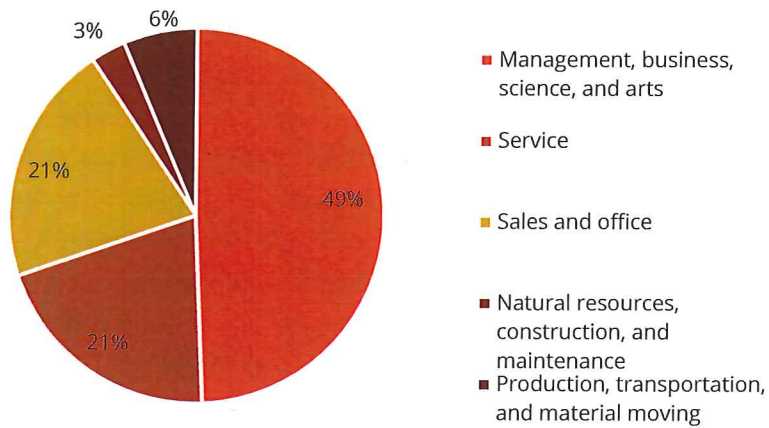
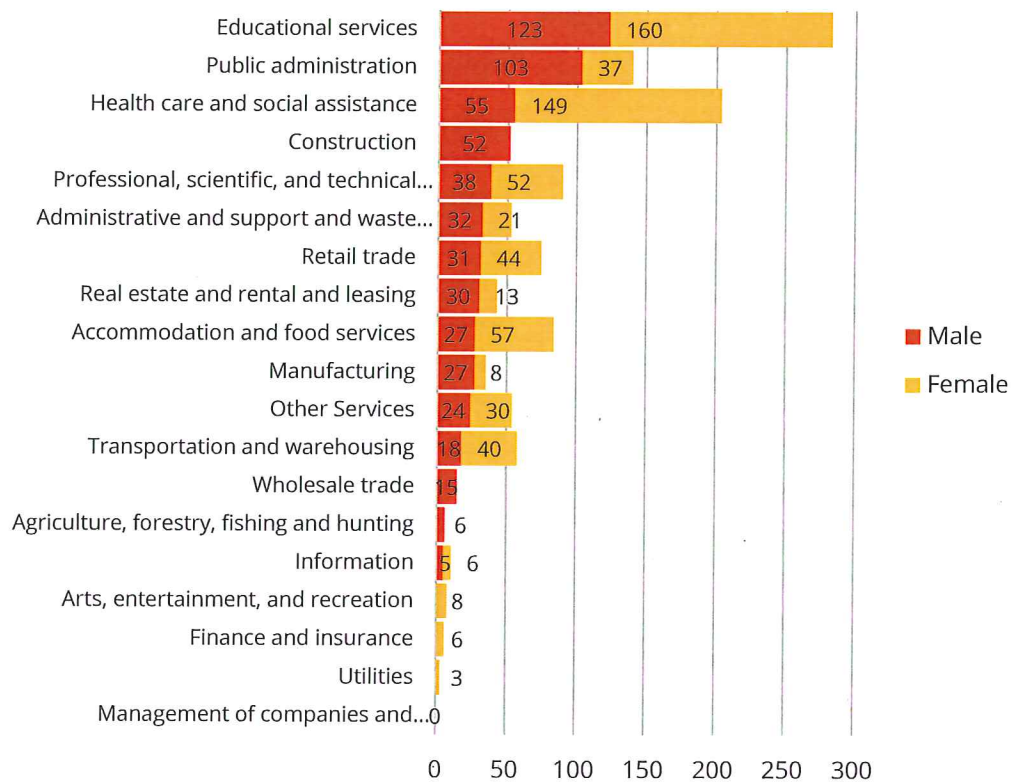


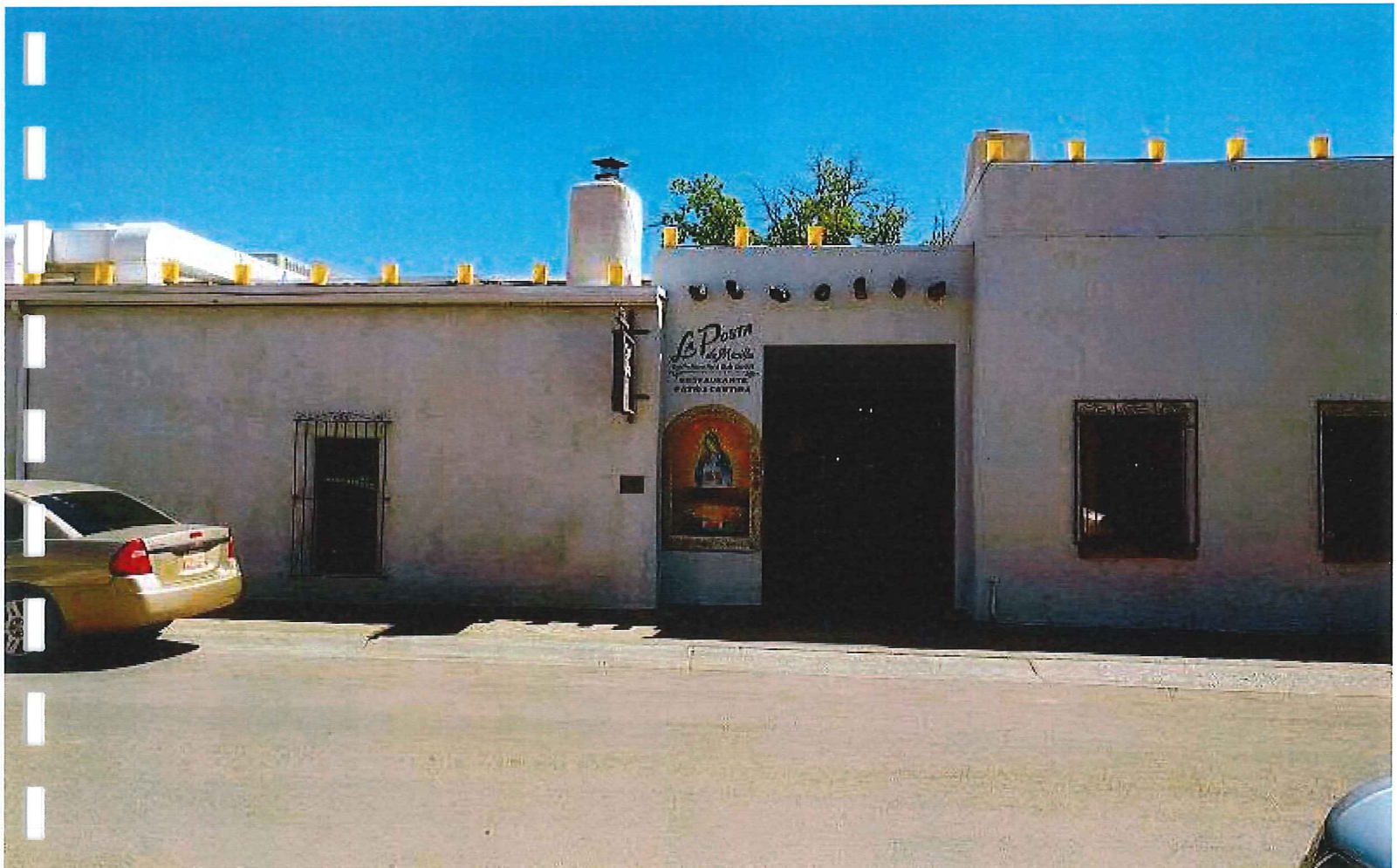
Figure 13. Resident Jobs by Industry and Sex



Commuting Patterns

Although most residents are employed in higher paying jobs that require higher levels of education, most work outside of the Town limits. An estimated 95% of workers commute out of town for work every day. (The average travel time to work is 17.7 minutes, which is the same commute time as in 2010.) In contrast, 95% of jobs in town are estimated to be filled by people who live outside the Town limits. This imbalance in jobs and place of residence reflects several characteristics of Mesilla's economy:

- The Town functions as a bedroom community for many residents who work in higher paying jobs in Las Cruces and the surrounding Metro Region.
- Mesilla's economy is relatively small, and most industries and businesses are focused on tourism-related products and services. These industries, by themselves, do not generate enough jobs (or high enough wages) to support the existing population base.



Local Businesses & Market Conditions

Tourism represents the primary economic strength for the Town of Mesilla. Each year, thousands of tourists flock to the Mesilla Historic District to be enchanted by the narrow streets, adobe buildings, unique shops and historic plaza. The historic districts, surrounded by agricultural fields still producing cotton, pecans and alfalfa, offer a bucolic atmosphere to capture the feeling of the southwest. Clean air and warm weather affords many opportunities for outdoor experiences ranging from passive activities of sight-seeing and shopping to active recreation centering around biking and hiking.

Existing Businesses

Mesilla's primary local business are tourism-based businesses located around Mesilla Plaza and in the newer El Mercado commercial development to the north. These two locations are the primary employment centers for the town,

which is due in part to the lack of commercial and industrial-zoned land within the community. Both locations contain the primary tourist-based businesses including at least 17 restaurants, dozens of retail shops, and local-serving banks, insurance agencies, and professional service offices.

ESRI Business Analyst Data estimates that there are 126 businesses and organizations operating within Mesilla. The largest sectors by number of employees are restaurants (32% of local jobs), educational services (27% of jobs), retail trade (11%), finance and insurance (6%), and local government (5%). Together these businesses/organizations account for an estimated 1,250 jobs. In addition, as discussed above, agricultural activities continue to provide employment opportunities in Mesilla. There is a possibility that land currently zoned for agriculture could be used to support more cottage industries in the future.

Figure 14. Business Employment and Number of Establishments, 2016 Estimates¹⁹

| INDUSTRY SECTOR | BUSINESSES | | EMPLOYEES | |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | TOTAL | PERCENT | TOTAL | PERCENT |
| Accommodation & Food Services | 17 | 14% | 402 | 32% |
| Educational Services | 6 | 5% | 338 | 27% |
| Retail Trade | 31 | 25% | 139 | 11% |
| Finance & Insurance | 13 | 10% | 78 | 6% |
| Public Admin (Local Government) | 5 | 4% | 66 | 5% |
| Construction | 10 | 8% | 53 | 4% |
| Other Services | 9 | 7% | 35 | 3% |
| Health Care & Social Assistance | 4 | 3% | 33 | 3% |
| Manufacturing | 4 | 3% | 23 | 2% |

¹⁹ ESRI Business Analyst Data, 2016 for Mesilla 5-minute drive times centered on Plaza.

| INDUSTRY SECTOR | BUSINESSES | | EMPLOYEES | |
|--|------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | TOTAL | PERCENT | TOTAL | PERCENT |
| Real Estate, Rental & Leasing | 2 | 2% | 22 | 2% |
| Administrative & Support | 2 | 2% | 13 | 1% |
| Information | 1 | 1% | 10 | 1% |
| Arts, Entertainment & Recreation | 4 | 3% | 10 | 1% |
| Utilities | 2 | 2% | 9 | 1% |
| Professional, Scientific & Tech Services | 3 | 2% | 9 | 1% |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting | 2 | 2% | 7 | 1% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2 | 2% | 5 | 0% |
| Transportation & Warehousing | 1 | 1% | 3 | 0% |
| Management of Companies | 1 | 1% | 1 | 0% |
| Unclassified Establishments | 7 | 6% | 1 | 0% |
| Mining | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |

Pull Factors

Pull factors measure the capacity of an industry sector to draw revenue into the local economy. Factors are generally measured as percentages, with 100% indicating that an industry is “breaking even” and not drawing in or leaking revenue to other communities. Industries with pull factors greater than 100% are industries that are drawing money into the local economy. Pull factors record a snapshot of the local economy at one point in time but do not suggest industries that may be growing or shrinking. In addition, not every industry will have a positive pull factor, due to different strengths and weaknesses in the local economy. Reviewing pull factors for Mesilla between 2005, 2010, and 2015 shows several patterns:

- The strongest industry by far is accommodation and food services, due to the many local restaurants

that are around the Plaza area. Restaurants generated about 30% of total gross receipts in 2015 and had the highest pull factor.

- The healthcare and social assistance industry grew rapidly between 2010 and 2015. This reflects both a national trend and healthcare providers locating in Mesilla since 2010. This industry now grosses the third most GRT revenue.
- Professional services have grown significantly (193%) since 2010, perhaps reflecting the establishment or expansion of small, sole-proprietor or home-based operations.
- Revenue from agriculture does not appear in the Town’s gross receipts data. This could be for two reasons. First, receipts of growers and producers from selling unprocessed agricultural products (for example, a bale of hay, a head of lettuce, or an unroasted sack of chile) are exempt

PLAN ELEMENTS - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

from gross receipts tax. Second, information is suppressed if the number of businesses in a category is small to maintain confidentiality for those businesses.

- Following regional and national trends, revenue from manufacturing and utilities has declined since 2010.
- All other industries besides accommodation and food services have a pull factor of less than 100%, indi-

cating that these industries are potentially leaking revenue that locals would possibly spend in town if there were options to buy products and services from local businesses.

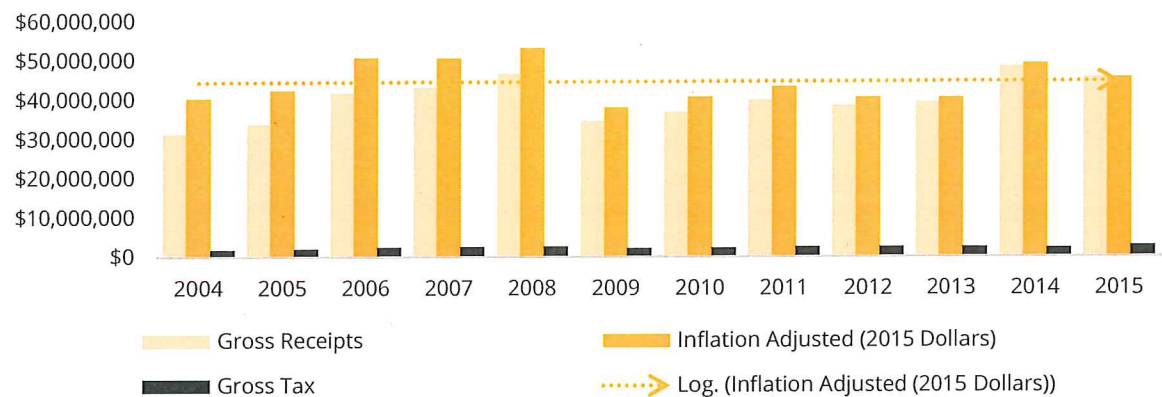
One example is retail trade, which generates a large amount of gross receipts (24% of the total) but does not meet local demand, as many of the retail establishments for day-to-day goods are located outside the Town limits.

Figure 15. Gross Receipts and Pull Factors by Industry, 2010-2015²⁰

| | TOTAL GROSS RECEIPTS | | PULL FACTOR, 2015 | CHANGE 2010-2015 |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | 2015 | 2010 | | |
| Accommodation & Food Services | \$ 13,133,096 | \$ 11,413,110 | 256% | 15% |
| Retail Trade | \$ 10,969,219 | \$ 7,867,985 | 38% | 39% |
| Health Care & Social Assistance | \$ 4,361,210 | \$ 561,112 | 65% | 677% |
| Construction | \$ 3,088,279 | \$ 3,480,825 | 28% | -11% |
| Other Services (ex Public Admin) | \$ 2,640,168 | \$ 3,904,882 | 27% | -32% |
| Information | \$ 2,482,212 | \$ 1,769,149 | 72% | 40% |
| Utilities | \$ 2,371,537 | \$ 2,665,532 | 60% | -11% |
| Wholesale Trade | \$ 2,036,013 | \$ 1,409,384 | 10% | 44% |
| Manufacturing | \$ 1,583,312 | \$ 2,010,668 | 17% | -21% |
| Prof, Scientific, & Tech Services | \$ 1,307,526 | \$ 446,699 | 10% | 193% |
| Finance & Insurance | \$ 592,228 | \$ 525,407 | 93% | 13% |
| Real Estate | \$ 554,947 | \$ 374,779 | 22% | 48% |
| Educational Services | \$ 208,142 | \$ - | 74% | |
| Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation | \$ 140,150 | \$ 151,399 | 30% | -7% |
| Administrative & Waste Mgt | \$ 102,569 | \$ 3,878 | 5% | 2545% |
| Mining | \$ - | \$ 2,276 | 0% | -100% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | \$ - | \$ 327 | 0% | -100% |
| Agriculture | \$ - | \$ 23,035 | 0% | -100% |
| Total Gross Receipts | \$ 45,658,924 | \$ 36,888,183 | 36% | 24% |

²⁰ UNM BBER Gross Receipts Tax Data from New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department. Calculations by Sites Southwest.

Figure 16. Trend in Gross Receipts Tax Revenue



Gross Receipts Revenue

Gross receipts revenue for the Town has fluctuated widely in the last decade, primarily due to the Great Recession in 2008 and 2009. After peaking in 2008, revenues declined significantly in the following years and have only begun to climb to pre-Recession levels. Although recovery from the recession has been slow, the overall trend is positive and shows that Mesilla retains its economic advantage as a tourist destination.

Lodging Options & Lodger's Tax

Mesilla's lodging options are the Casa de Rosie B&B, Josefina's Inn, and the Hacienda de Mesilla. These establishments generated approximately \$100,000 in revenue in 2016. The Town receives approximately \$5,000 in tax revenue per year through a 5% lodgers tax. These revenues are used to fund the Town's Visitor's Guide and other advertising.

The City of Las Cruces benefits from Mesilla's proximity by offering lodging opportunities for travelers near the town. The City of Las Cruces generates over \$2 million in lodger's tax revenue from area hotels and motels. Another hotel in Mesilla would help capture additional visitor revenue; however, a new building would likely have to be built outside the historic district due to a lack of developable land.

Airbnb has changed the dynamic for vacation rentals. A search in May 2017 found 10 available rentals ranging in price from \$41 to \$250 per night. Airbnb has entered into "voluntary collection agreements" with communities throughout the U. S. In New Mexico, guests who book Airbnb listings in Taos County, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and the Town of Taos pay lodgers tax. The tax is imposed on the listing price including cleaning fees for reservations of fewer than 30 nights. The taxes are collected and remitted by Airbnb on behalf of the host. VRBO provides information about local

taxes on its web site but expects owners to collect and pay occupancy taxes.

businesses would have to fit the existing character of the town.

Retail Gaps

Within the Town limits, there is a large retail supply gap that indicates that residents need to travel to Las Cruces or elsewhere for basic retail goods. The largest gaps are for electronic and appliance stores, building material stores, grocery stores, health and personal care stores, gas stations, and general merchandise stores. Although the lack of these businesses in Mesilla represents a loss of potential revenue to Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, residents do not necessarily want all of these business types to be located in Mesilla itself. New

In addition, because Mesilla is located so close to Las Cruces, there is very little local market area demand for most retail establishments that are within a 5-to15-minute drive. Business types that do have unmet demand within this larger market areas include grocery stores, beer/wine/liquor stores, furniture stores and other general merchandise stores. Together with the businesses mentioned above, retail demand data indicates these businesses could be potential candidates for any future commercial development, including additional spaces in the Mercado commercial subdivision.

Figure 17. Retail Surplus and Leakage Factors, 5-Minute Radius of Plaza 2016²¹

| INDUSTRY GROUP | DEMAND | SUPPLY | RETAIL GAP | POSSIBLE SQ FT |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts. | \$9,530,926.00 | \$ - | \$9,530,926.00 | 47,655 |
| Health & Personal Care Stores | \$3,165,063.00 | \$ - | \$3,165,063.00 | 15,825 |
| Other General Merchandise Stores | \$3,144,773.00 | \$ 548,779.00 | \$2,595,994.00 | 12,980 |
| Grocery Stores | \$8,046,360.00 | \$5,990,257.00 | \$2,056,103.00 | 10,281 |
| Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores | \$1,159,889.00 | \$ 151,087.00 | \$1,008,802.00 | 5,044 |
| Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses | \$ 632,200.00 | \$ - | \$ 632,200.00 | 3,161 |
| Direct Selling Establishments | \$ 338,404.00 | \$ - | \$ 338,404.00 | 1,692 |
| Shoe Stores | \$ 315,324.00 | \$ - | \$ 315,324.00 | 1,577 |
| Furniture Stores | \$1,121,469.00 | \$ 843,748.00 | \$ 277,721.00 | 1,389 |
| Used Merchandise Stores | \$ 199,204.00 | \$ - | \$ 199,204.00 | 996 |
| Florists | \$ 113,779.00 | \$ - | \$ 113,779.00 | 569 |
| Special Food Services | \$ 70,176.00 | \$ - | \$ 70,176.00 | 351 |

²¹ ESRI Business Analyst Data, 2016 for Mesilla 5-minute drive times centered on Plaza.

Economic Strengths & Constraints

The Town of Mesilla relies on its location, physical setting, and unique culture and history as its prime economic development assets. Because the Town is relatively small, compared to Las Cruces, and does not have land zoned for industrial uses, continued preservation of Mesilla's distinct identity is essential to ongoing economic sustainability and any future development. Revenues generated from tourism will continue to be necessary to meet the needs of the Town, while involvement with economic development agencies, promoters, educators and resources will be necessary to support future economic development efforts.

Strengths

- **HISTORIC IDENTITY:** One of the main tourist attractions of Mesilla is the Town's historic assets. This identity is seen in both the historic architecture, preserved agricultural land, community events, and sense of history. The ongoing preservation of these assets is what distinguishes Mesilla from surrounding communities and draws customers to Mesilla's restaurants and shops.
- **LOCATION:** Mesilla has an excellent location next to Las Cruces and is a destination for regional travelers from Texas, Arizona, and elsewhere.
- **TOURISM-BASED BUSINESSES:** Mesilla's existing restaurants, shops, cafes, and bars form a strongly knit group of complementary businesses. New businesses additions (such as the Spotted Dog Brewery) have fit well into this existing business ecosystem while providing services and products that attract new customers.
- **AGRICULTURAL LAND:** Mesilla's agricultural land remains a productive asset that contributes to the Town's identity while also producing some agricultural goods for market. However, as discussed above, these revenues do not directly contribute to the Town's gross receipts tax revenue, but instead support Doña Ana County's regional agricultural economy.

Issues & Constraints

- **LACK OF DEVELOPABLE LAND:** As with housing development, the availability of land in Mesilla is limited for new commercial development. This means that although there may be business development opportunities based on existing demand, there are few places to physically meet this demand given existing land use patterns.
- **FEW HOTELS/MOTELS:** The few lodging options in Mesilla mean that most visitors to Mesilla end up staying in hotels and motels in Las Cruces. While good for the regional economy, it also means that Mesilla loses some lodgers tax revenue that could be generated by hotels located in Mesilla, as well as secondary business revenue (more dining, cafe, etc. expenditures).
- **BUSINESS DIVERSITY:** Although Mesilla has a strong base of tourism-serving business, it lacks local-serving retail and has few economic base businesses. This means that residents must travel outside of town for most household goods (e.g., groceries), and that the economy is at higher risk during economic downturns when there are fewer tourists.
- **PARKING/ACCESS:** Another limiting factor in addition to land availability is a lack of parking near the plaza. Although some of this is perception rather than an actual lack of available parking, it could discourage visitors who cannot find convenient parking. Public transit, shuttles and park-and-ride stations are ways to increase access to the plaza, especially during special events.



Achieving Economic Development Goals

Partnerships with Regional Groups

As with affordable housing development, one primary way that Mesilla can promote economic development goals is through partnerships with existing organizations. These include business groups (such as the Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce), and groups that help recruit or provide business assistance. The Town should have several business recruitment goals and work with these organizations to match the Town with business owners or entrepreneurs. Key partners include the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance, Doña Ana County's Community Development Department, and NMSU's Cooperative Extension Service.

Rebooted Farmers' Market

At one time, Mesilla's Farmers' Market had more agricultural vendors than it does currently. Over the last 10 years, however, the market's emphasis has turned to craft goods, losing its agricultural focus. Working directly with local farmers to reintroduce a true farmers' market could be a project for the Town.

Such a market would have to complement the existing *Las Cruces Farmers' Market*, which is quite large and already draws a crowd. However, Mesilla's Plaza (or the parking lot at Town Hall), could function as an alternative weekly or bi-

monthly market site devoted to local agricultural producers from the entire Mesilla Valley.

Development of Commercial Space

As mentioned above, the Town is limited by the amount of developable commercial space. As outlined in the land use plan on page 43, there is some room for growth of commercial space at the intersection of Union and NM 28, where the old Cotton Gin property is located. This site could be redeveloped for future retail or service-focused commercial, or for light manufacturing (e.g., artisan agricultural goods).

Ongoing Advertisement

The Town already produces a visitor's guide and other promotional material. These efforts should continue and could involve development of other outreach strategies including social media and partnerships with NM True for statewide and regional advertising.

LEDA Projects

The Town has adopted a LEDA ordinance that allows it to contribute to eligible projects. The Town should continue to use this ordinance to support priority projects.

PLAN ELEMENTS - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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ELEMENT 4

COMMUNITY SERVICES



The Community Services element encompasses a wide range of subjects important to the quality of life within a community. This element addresses recreational opportunities and facilities in Mesilla as well as public safety services, such as police, fire fighting, and emergency medical services. Additionally, senior services, library services, solid waste, and educational services are incorporated into this element.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Provide a diversity of passive and active recreational activities and opportunities for all residents, regardless of age.
- **GOAL 2:** Maintain community safety through enhancing police, fire, and emergency services throughout the Town of Mesilla.

Community Comments

"Invest in more shade, street trees, and community walkability."

"It would be great to have meals that people gather for, like a pancake breakfast on the plaza."

Parks, Open Space & Recreation

The Town of Mesilla operates five parks, which are maintained by the Public Works Department. The table below provides an overview of Mesilla's park facilities. All the Town parks can be classified as smaller neighborhood parks that serve the surrounding residences. The largest park – Los Leones Park – is approximately 2.75 acres in size, while the others are less than 1.5 acres. These parks, along with the Town's Community Center, provide the primary active recreational opportunities in Mesilla. In addition, many of the recreation facilities, parks, sports fields, and trails in the City of Las Cruces are also used by many Mesilla residents, supplementing the Town's recreational offerings.

While active recreational opportunities in Mesilla are limited within Town boundaries, the Town is a good place for *passive* recreational activities that are informal, less energetic, and do not require a high level of organization. Some of these passive recreational activities include walking, jogging, and horseback-riding. People use the ditch banks found within Mesilla for these activities, which are operated by the Elephant Butte Irrigation District.



Parks

Overall, residents at community meetings and those responding to the online survey felt that Mesilla had enough town parks, although some people mentioned that there may be a need to upgrade park facilities, primarily playground equipment. Discussions with staff verified this information – overall the parks are in good condition, although most playground equipment needs to be modernized. Two parks – Parque Cura Ramon Ortiz, and Johnny Trujillo – do not have irrigation systems for watering the grass.

Staff did not identify any specific maintenance issues with the parks, except general issues maintaining grass in those parks without an irrigation/sprinkler system.

Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park

Creating a park space along the Bosque was a priority in the previous comprehensive plan and came to fruition beginning in 2003 when the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park was designated. Although not owned or maintained by the Town directly, the park and adjacent Bosque lands are the primary open space and recreation areas within the Town limits. The park is 305 acres in size and is a popular spot for birdwatching.

Table 4. Town Owned Parks and Public Spaces

| FACILITY | LOCATION | ACRES | AMENITIES | CONDITON |
|-------------------------|---|-------|--|---|
| Los Leones Park | Calle de Santa Ana | 2.25 | Irrigation, baseball fields | Good |
| Parque Conmemorativo | Along Avenida de Mesilla | 1.5 | Outside playground | Outdated playground equip. |
| Parque Cura Ramon Ortiz | Next to community center | 1 | Playground equipment, basketball courts, grills/tables | Not irrigated; outdated playground equip. |
| Parque de los Veteranos | Avenida de Mesilla | 0.5 | Fountain, Town Welcome Sign | In good condition |
| Johnny Trujillo Park | Next to old public safety building, Calle de Parian | 0.75 | Playground equipment | Good, will have future dog run area. Outdated playground equip. |
| Mesilla Plaza | | 0.6 | N/A | Good |

Mesilla Plaza

Mesilla Plaza is maintained by the Public Works Department, while the Community Programs Department organizes and runs major events on the Plaza. As the heart of Mesilla, the Plaza has long been recognized as a historic asset. It was declared a state monument on September 10, 1957 and was registered as a National Historic landmark in January 1982. The plaza and gazebo were first refurbished in 1978 following the adoption of the Yguado Plan, and in 2012 the gazebo was renovated.

Regional Trails

There is an existing paved, regional trail along the west side of the Rio Grande that begins at the intersection of Calle

del Norte and the river. This trail heads north into Las Cruces and connects to other regional bike and trail facilities. The Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization has identified several regional trail routes that would connect Mesilla to the larger regional trail network. The primary routes in the Bicycle System Priorities Plan are along Calle del Norte and Calle del Sur/University Ave. The Calle del Norte route would head east from the existing trail along the east side of the river. Such a connection could be in the form of a paved or unpaved trail along the side of the road or a bike lane. Other proposed, but lower priority routes were also identified for Snow Road and Union Ave.



Town-Owned Buildings

The Town of Mesilla public works department is responsible for the maintenance of four Town-owned properties: Town Hall, Mesilla Plaza, Public Safety Building, and the Community Center facilities. As identified in the 2017 Asset Management Plan, the conditions and needs for public buildings are described below.

Town Hall

Planning and design of the Town Hall began in 2000, with Phase 1 completed in 2002 and Phase 2 completed in 2007. Planning, design and construction of the facility cost an estimated \$1.7M. Per the County tax assessor, the property value is assessed at \$1.9M.

Community Center

The Mesilla Community Center is an important facility that functions as a primary indoor gathering space for public events. The building also houses senior

and youth activity programs. The Center has several rooms devoted to its various activities and has a large meeting room complete with a stage. The facility is often rented out for community activities and events, such as wedding receptions.

The Community Center building was constructed in 1930. The building has undergone several exterior and interior improvements since 2003. According to the County tax assessor, the property's assessed value is \$536,000.

Public Safety Building

According to the County tax assessor, this 7,000-square foot building is located on 0.66 acres of land. This building served as the Town Hall until 2005. It was originally built in 1970 and is currently headquarters for the Marshal's and Fire Departments, and is a work and storage area for the Town's Public Works Department.



Public Safety

The Public Safety Department is focused on ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the Town by maintaining a police force, fire department, and emergency services.

Public safety represents the greatest expenditure in the Town's general fund. The Town has always maintained a high level of public safety and has made sure that it provides its citizens with a strong police and fire force. Maintaining current staffing levels for the police force and fire department is the primary issue regarding public safety.

The Fire Department and Marshall's office is looking at ways to ensure they can pay for continued operations in the face of budget cuts, and most volunteers have forgone their stipends in the past.

Fire Department

The Town of Mesilla's Fire Department averages about 18 volunteers. Staff includes a paid fire chief and fire marshal. In terms of equipment, the Department operates four vehicles. These include:

- Two ladder trucks. One truck was recently purchased, while the other is nearing the end of its useful life.
- Two brush trucks: One is stored at the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park in the case of brush fires. The Town has an agreement with the State Park to maintain this truck on-site

Regarding emergency services, the department currently provides a minimum of basic life support on all medical calls. The current staff consists of 13 basic EMTs and 4 paramedics.

Education & Healthcare

There are five schools within the Mesilla Town limits. These include three public schools (Mesilla Elementary, Zia Middle School, and Rio Grande Preparatory Institute), and two private schools (Las Cruces Academy and Acton Academy). The public schools are part of the Las Cruces Public School District.

There are no hospitals or urgent care facilities within Mesilla. However, several clinics and urgent care locations are located nearby to the northeast within Las Cruces. The nearest facilities are St. Luke's Health Care Clinic and MountainView Urgent Care, both approximately two miles from Mesilla Plaza.

Achieving Community Services Goals

Park Upgrades

Although the Town's parks are in good condition, upgrades to the playground

equipment is an identified need – mostly due to safety concerns. There may also be desirable park upgrades to modernize them with amenities that are known

to draw in more users, such as dog parks, water features, and improved sports fields.

Regional Trail Connections

The proposed trail project on Calle del Norte is moving forward with funding support from the MPO. As both a transportation improvement and community amenity, this project creates a new physical connect that could draw in more bicycle visitors who currently use trail facilities in Las Cruces and Doña Ana County.

Along with the planned bike route improvements along University Ave, these new connections form the backbone of a local trail network that connects Mesilla

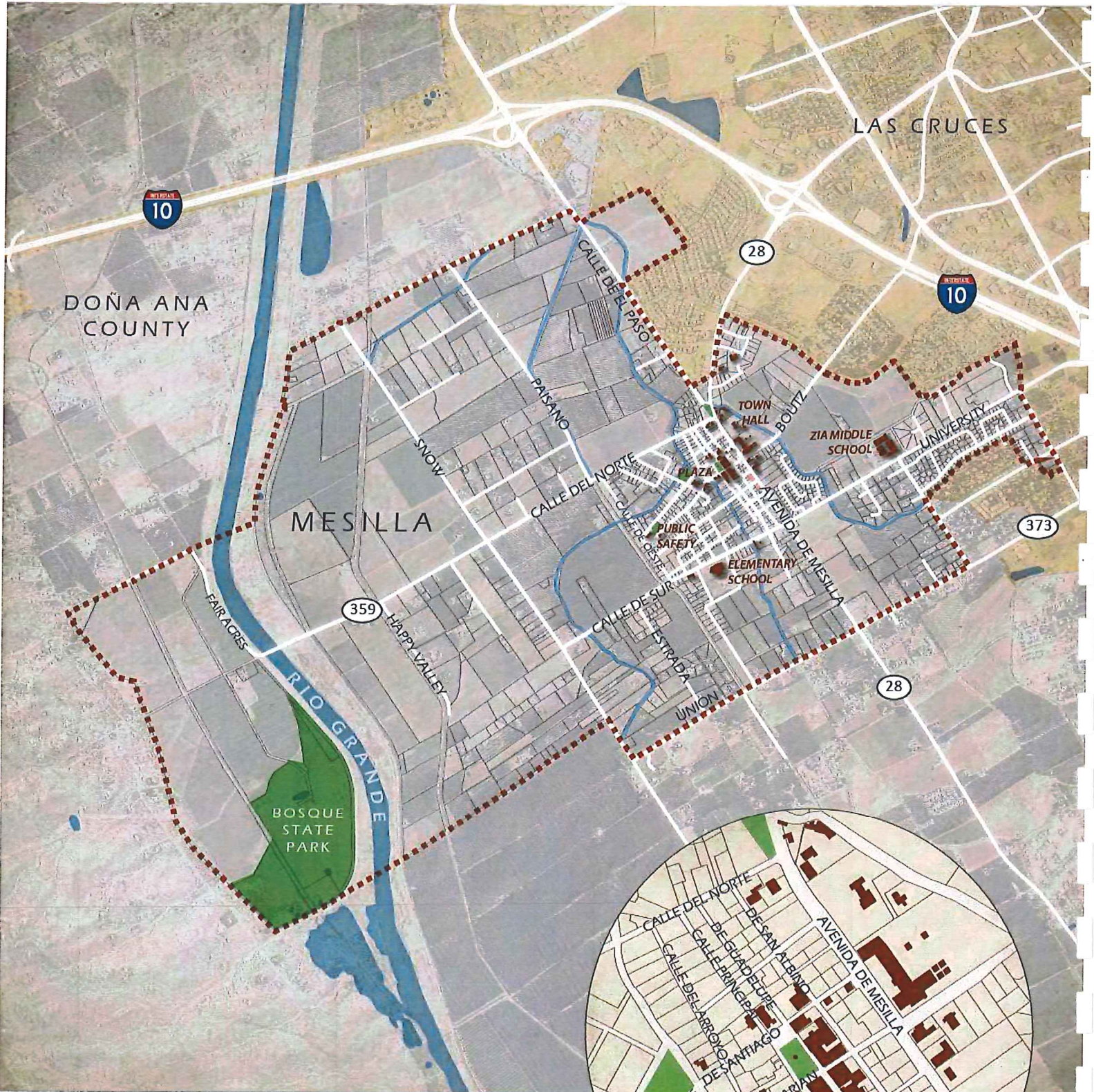
to a regional trail network (and by extension, set of users). Future formal trails may be planned along the Town's irrigation ditches with support from the Elephant Butte Irrigation District.

Improvements to Town Buildings

As identified above and in the 2016 Asset Management Plan, the public buildings in Mesilla are in relatively good condition but will need ongoing maintenance and upgrades. These upgrades should be pursued given available funding and their overall priority.

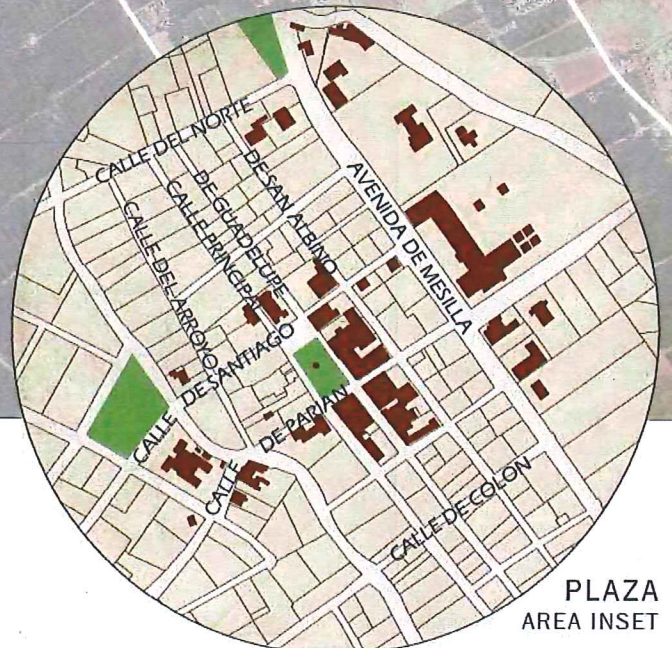
TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 6. Community Services



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park
- Primary Building



PLAZA
AREA INSET

ELEMENT 5

CULTURAL PRESERVATION



The purpose of this section is to describe, accentuate and maintain the unique character that makes Mesilla both a special place for residents, visitors, businesses and attractive to new business opportunities. Support for community character elements such as rural character, views and vistas, architectural style, and historic preservation will assist the Town of Mesilla in marketing and economic development.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Continue to strengthen and utilize regulatory measures, training, and incentives to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of historic resources.
- **GOAL 2:** Provide the technical assistance and incentives necessary to preserve and improve historic properties.
- **GOAL 3:** Establish and support heritage tourism efforts appropriate to Mesilla's historic resources and community needs.
- **GOAL 4:** Preserve and enhance the traditional, visual, and natural resources present in Mesilla and its physical setting.

Community Comments

*"Our history speaks for itself!
Mesilla is the most historically
preserved town in the state!"*

*"Continue with the strict or-
dinances, just make sure
that the ordinances are
clearer and concise."*

Mesilla's Character

Mesilla enjoys the best of two worlds: a thriving agricultural heritage and a historic Town plaza with a closely knit urban core of commercial and residential neighborhoods. This character offers the casual visitor all the sights and sounds of a rural historic place with the convenience of accessibility to housing, open space, retail, commercial services, and civic attractions.

The core of the Town is centered around the plaza and surrounding historic district, where retail curio shops, restaurants, bars, and other businesses cater both to the visiting public and the locals. The restaurants and movie theater are often packed with people enjoying each other's company and catching up on local affairs. In addition to the historic core commercial areas, a second retail area has grown along NM 28—the major thoroughfare from Las Cruces to Mesilla. This retail area serves medium-scale retailers, restaurants and some commercial services. Still, the small-town atmosphere prevails, and locals and visitors can stroll the streets in Mesilla, shop in many locally-owned shops, dine in venerable restaurants, and still see the stars in the night sky.

Town Design

As a traditional Spanish community, Mesilla was originally laid out according to the Spanish Empire's *Laws of the Indies*, which was first compiled in 1680. The *Laws of the Indies* included the town design standards used by the Spanish

when founding new settlements across their colonial empire. The standards prescribed the basic design pattern for new towns, including the location of the town plaza, the placement of important buildings, and the alignment of streets to create a cohesive block pattern.

The physical legacy of the *Laws of the Indies* has significantly shaped the urban form of Mesilla. Overall, Mesilla's town design has maintained a cohesive core and adhered to the *Laws of the Indies*, which was further reinforced by the 1973 Yguado Plan. For example, Mesilla's narrow roads were built to create shade for pedestrians during the hot summer days, directly following provisions in the *Laws of the Indies* prescribing roadway designs in hotter climates. In addition, the Town's streets form a modified grid pattern radiating from the plaza, and the plaza is built with retail at its perimeter. The church itself was built at the high point in a prominent location and no other buildings are taller, making the church visible from all directions. Further following the *Laws of the Indies*, residential housing is located off the plaza and behind the retail area with open space surrounding the community, which allows for ongoing agricultural production.



Community Events

Mesilla is a community of celebratory spirit. During the summer, winter and fall, the plaza is filled with people gathering to enjoy local culture. Friday and Sunday host the crafts market during the summer months. Other annual events that bring residents and visitors to the Town include:

- For the Love of Art (February)
- Cinco de Mayo Fiesta (May)
- Summer Music Series on the Plaza (June – July)
- Diez y seis de Septiembre Fiesta (September)
- Mariachi Sundays in the Fall
- Dia de los Muertos in October
- Pecan Festival in October
- El Tratado de la Mesilla (November - Commemorating the Gadsden Purchase)
- Christmas Eve Caroling and Luminarias (December)

These events build community spirit and help bolster a sense of community pride. A secondary benefit to retail and restaurant establishments is the added exposure gained through community events, resulting in increased sales and profits.

Agricultural Heritage & Acequia System

Not only is the built environment a component of the history of Mesilla, it is also the natural environment and agricultural landscape that contributes to the economic well-being of the community. With green chili, pecan, cotton, cabbage and alfalfa, this region is known for its agricultural life-style and heritage. A drive down NM 28 from Mesilla to El Paso confirms this heritage as the road winds through pecan groves and agricultural landscapes. Sometimes irrigated, the fields create a reflection of trees and mountains that may amaze any driver. These are the sights, smells and sounds of Mesilla that trick the mind into believing it is anywhere but the desert. Certainly, this is why people flock to the town, and why the town has responded by maintaining a low property tax, an incentive to keep locals in the community. The initial concern for residents was gentrification; however, maintaining a low property tax allows less wealthy residents to stay in the community and not be forced out due to increasing property taxes, which has happened in other New Mexico towns.

The Rio Grande provides water to feed the extensive acequia and ditch system that irrigates the agricultural fields and alfalfa fields found on many of the 5-acre residential parcels. The ditch system is managed by the Elephant Butte Irrigation District and begins at Elephant Butte Lake and extends to the New Mexico/Texas border. In Mesilla, the system

meanders through residential areas and runs adjacent to the retail and residential properties near the historic district. Near the community center, the ditch follows the boundary of the park and flows behind the Community Center. Often, one can see horseback riders, runners and passersby strolling the right-of-way along the ditch. It is important to utilize and preserve the ditch system, as it provides a habitat for birds and a waterway that feeds trees and other vegetation along ditch banks. The ditch system reminds residents of the agricultural importance of Mesilla and the entire Mesilla Valley.



Historic Assets

The original core blocks of Mesilla are part of the Mesilla Historic District, which was designated a historic district in 1982. In addition, Mesilla Plaza—a primary feature of the historic district—was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1961. This designation includes the plaza, and many of the surrounding buildings within the area as contributing historic structures. The 1973 Yguado Plan listed a total of 61 properties and structures as historical sites, of which 52 are considered contributing buildings/structures to the Historic District. The system of acequias and ditches are also contributing features of the historic district. In addition, the Barela-Reynolds House and former Dona Ana County Courthouse in Mesilla are listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties.

Historic Review Process & PZHAC

The H-R: Historical Residential and H-C: Historical Commercial zones are the underlying zoning districts within the Historic District. As stated in the code, permits for “construction, modification, moving or destruction which would affect the exterior appearance of any structure, sign, or other improvement affecting use or function” must be approved by the Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission (PZHAC). In other words, the commission reviews all new development and redevelopment within the Historic District to ensure it fits the existing character of Mesilla. The role, duties, and powers of

the Commission are outlined in Chapter 18.06 and 18.33.070 of the Town’s Municipal Code.

Certified Local Government

Because Mesilla has a historic preservation committee through the PZHAC and a historic preservation ordinance, the Town may apply to become a Certified Local Government (CLG). The primary benefits of becoming a certified local government are access to federal preservation grants, access to additional technical assistance from the state’s Historic Preservation Division, and the ability to review local nominations to the historic register.

Design Standards

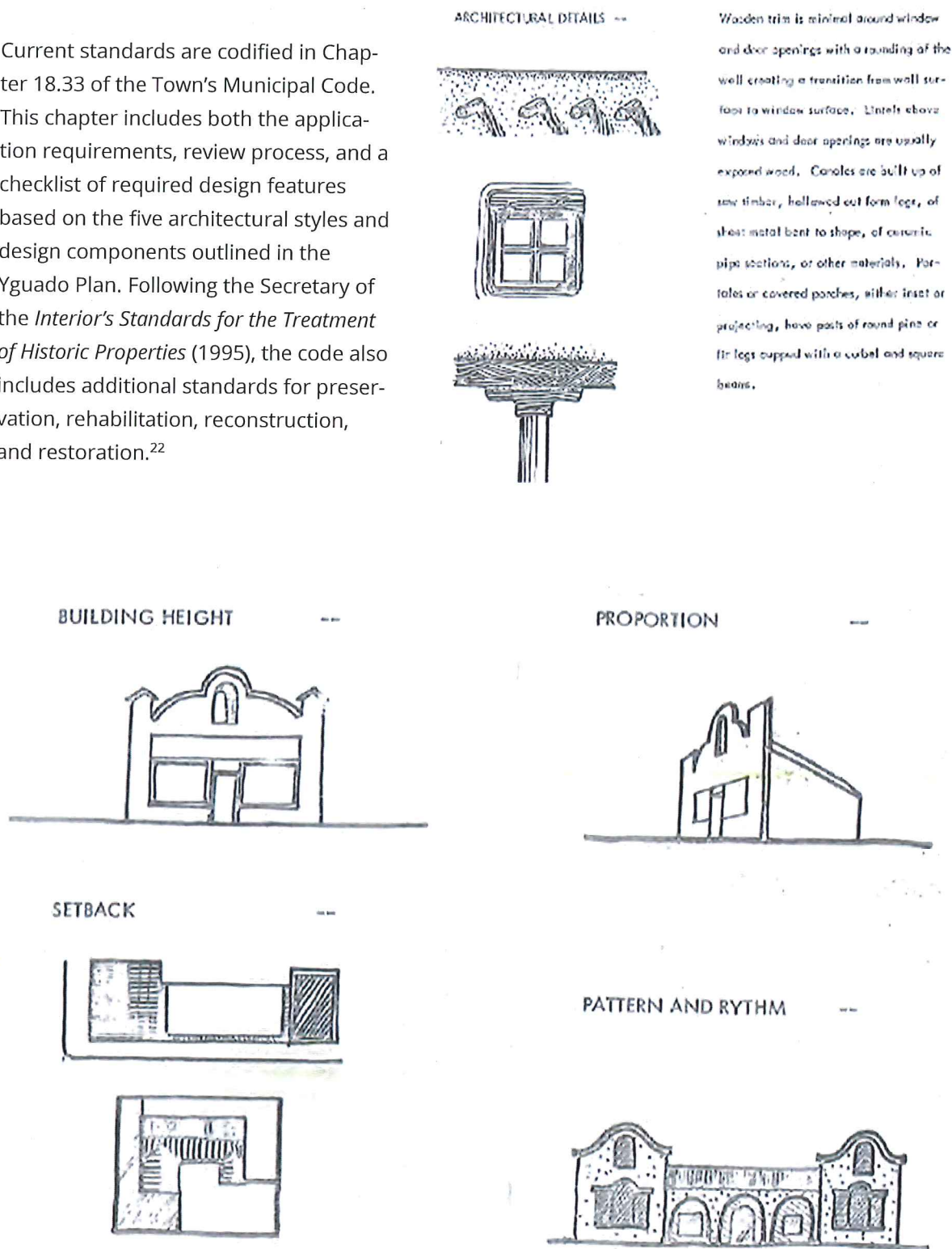
The specific design standards required by both the zoning code and by the Planning, Zoning and Historical Appropriateness Commission were first outlined in the 1973 Yguado Plan, as well as subsequent updates. These guidelines were based on the identification of seven architectural styles of existing buildings—five of which are used as the basis to determine the architectural appropriateness of new developments. Within these architectural styles, 10 design criteria were considered the defining design components. These include: height, setbacks, proportions, pattern and rhythm,

PLAN ELEMENTS - CULTURAL PRESERVATION

roof type, texture, color, site utilization, projections, and architectural details.

Current standards are codified in Chapter 18.33 of the Town's Municipal Code. This chapter includes both the application requirements, review process, and a checklist of required design features based on the five architectural styles and design components outlined in the Yguado Plan. Following the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (1995), the code also includes additional standards for preservation, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and restoration.²²

Figure 18. Example Design Guidelines from Yguado Plan



²² <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-guidelines.pdf>

Primary Issues

- **DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES:** As discussed in the Land Use section, there are ongoing development pressures in Mesilla for more commercial space, housing, and other uses that could impact the historic core as well as change the agricultural lands surrounding the historic district. The current zoning code and historic design standards have protected historic assets; however, development (and re-development) of properties for new uses will be an ongoing point of tension.
- **MAINTAIN FAMILY ATMOSPHERE:** Many residents expressed a desire to maintain the “family atmosphere” in Mesilla, with long-standing Mesilla residents staying in town across generations. The primary contributing factor to a perceived shift in the “family atmosphere” of the Town stems from high housing costs, an increasing number of renters living in the historic core, and a loss of some of Mesilla’s long-time residents. These issues are addressed in more detail in the Housing element of this plan.
- **GREENBELT & AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION:** Along with development pressures will be an ongoing need to preserve Mesilla’s Greenbelt through the existing land use controls (i.e., zoning) as well as through the preservation of farmland by helping support existing farmers.

Due to development pressures, the cost of land, an uncertain water supply, and shifts in the agricultural industry worldwide, some farmers are finding small-scale agriculture a difficult pursuit. A few of the possible preservation tools and strategies are discussed in the Land Use section of this plan on page 44.

- **PRESERVING & RESTORING HISTORIC ASSETS:** The Town of Mesilla is proud of its historic district, plaza and intact historic residential district. Ensuring that this dedication to historic preservation continues from generation to generation is imperative. Bringing youth and newcomers into the process will only strengthen the historic preservation ethic in Mesilla. Using historic preservation as a teaching tool—whether it be the process of adobe building and reconstruction or through the cultural history and narratives told about famous individuals who arrived in Mesilla—youth involvement helps create a sense of pride for their community.

Another ongoing issue will be finding sufficient funds for restoration and rehabilitation projects of historic properties. As pointed out during community meetings, some property owners may not have the financing available to maintain or restore their historic properties. In some cases, this may lead to these properties

falling into disrepair, which further increases the cost of any eventual rehabilitation project.

- **DARK SKIES PRESERVATION:** The Town has adopted a Dark Skies Ordinance that limits the type and amount of lighting that may be used on residential and commercial properties. Although a great first step, some residents felt that the ordinance was not being enforced in some cases and that there was more light pollution than in the past. Some of this may be due to light pollution from Las Cruces, which has grown considerably over the last 15 years.
- **WATER CONSERVATION:** With the growing uncertainty of the water supply for agricultural purposes, finding ways to preserve water re-

sources is imperative. Where irrigation is available, lands should remain in cultivation whenever possible.

The Town's water conservation ordinance, adopted in 2004, encourages users to reduce water consumption and waste. The ordinance applies to all users of town-provided water and to users of water provided by water utility companies franchised by the town. All water users are prohibited from allowing water to flow from their property to adjacent properties or rights of way. The ordinance implements outdoor watering restrictions except for irrigation water provided by EBID, irrigation wells or domestic wells. It requires that any new building or facility built after the adoption of the ordinance has low-flow toilets and shower heads and encourages water conserving landscapes.

Achieving Ongoing Cultural Preservation

Review of Design Standards – Scale and Massing

The design standards developed in the Yguado Plan and incorporated into the Town's Land Use Code have effectively led to compatible development styles. However, one issue that was mentioned as needing more clarity was the scale and massing of new residential buildings (especially infill in the historic district), which in some cases may be out of context with surrounding homes (i.e., larger than historic homes). Additional controls may be developed that limit housing

units to a maximum square footage or a percentage of the total lot.

Develop Historic Museum

One idea mentioned during public meetings is to renovate the old adobe blacksmith shop at the intersection of Calle de Parian and Callejon Picacho into a new Mesilla Heritage Museum. The feasibility and cost of this new facility would have to be worked out further, but would provide another destination for history buffs and tourists looking to explore the history of the Mesilla Valley.

ELEMENT 6

TRANSPORTATION



The Transportation element addresses issues related to the transportation and circulation system, parking, and drainage. In addition to roads, this section addresses other modes of transportation, such as pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. The Town of Mesilla recently completed an Asset Management Plan that included a preliminary review of the Town's roads.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Achieve improvements in the existing transportation network that will facilitate future growth and be compatible with Mesilla's development.
- **GOAL 2:** Achieve improvements in the regional transportation network that will facilitate future area-wide growth and be compatible with Mesilla's development.
- **GOAL 3:** Address parking and congestion needs within the Historic Plaza District.

Community Comments

"We could maybe use more bicycle facilities or even a bike share program..."

"Some of our sidewalks are sketchy. However, it should be safe to walk without extending sidewalks and sacrificing the rural feel of Mesilla."

Existing Conditions

The Town of Mesilla is best accessed by road using the north/south roadways of Interstate 10 and State Road 28 (which turns into Avenida de Mesilla). Although the Town does not have an interstate highway exchange within the Town limits, Interstate 10 can be accessed at Motel Boulevard, at Avenida de Mesilla, and at University Avenue, all of which are approximately one mile from the Town limits. These access points appear to function adequately for the Town's needs for both origin and destination traffic. Overall, the Town's transportation system mostly comprises historical roadways, with the majority of the roads having been upgraded to meet modern transportation standards and other roads remaining unpaved.

If traveling by air, the closest commercial airport serving the community is the El Paso International Airport located 40 miles south of Mesilla. There is a municipal airport west of Las Cruces that serves commuter and personalized air charter services. Access to the Town by train is non-existent as Amtrak does not serve the area. There is a Greyhound bus stop in Las Cruces, but there is no convenient local transit connection.

Roads

The road layout within the historic core blocks of town reflects the character and

the history of the community. The roads are narrow and in some places accommodate only one-way traffic, which enhances the historic architectural character of the community. As discussed in more detail in the walkability section of this element, these streets are inviting to pedestrians but pose challenges in terms of accessibility – especially on those roads that do not have sidewalks or have impediments to pedestrians (and those with disabilities).

Roads within the Town of Mesilla are maintained by several entities, including NMDOT, Doña Ana County, and the Town. A few roads are privately maintained (see Map 7 on page 99). The Town maintains approximately 17.27 miles of roads, of which 16.88 miles are paved. Three roads (0.34 miles) are dirt roads, and a short segment of road (0.06 miles) within the historic district around the plaza is constructed of cobblestone.

Other roads that traverse the Town but are maintained by Doña Ana County or the State of New Mexico are listed in the box on the following page. It is important to note that many of the Town's major streets – including Avenida de Mesilla are managed by NMDOT – which limits the ability of the Town of Mesilla to redesign/reconfigure or modify these roadways without direct involvement and support from NMDOT.

State Roads

- Avenida de Mesilla
- Calle De El Paseo (NM 292)
- Calle del Norte
- University Avenue (east of Avenida de Mesilla)
- Snow Road
- W. Union Avenue

County-Maintained Roads

- S. Fairacres Road
- Glass Road
- McDowell Road
- W. Conway Avenue

Roadway Condition Assessment

As mentioned previously, most of the roads within the Town limits are paved. As part of the 2016 Asset Management Plan development effort, the roads within the Town limits were photographed to document initial conditions. Over 4,700 photos were captured using a car-mounted GoPro that took a photo every three seconds. Following the photo capture, sampling sites within the Town were randomly selected and the corresponding photos were evaluated for

pavement cracking and surface defects. The road assessment included measuring the presence of longitudinal, transverse, and alligator cracks, as well as raveling, bleeding edge, and patching. These conditions were used to generate a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for randomly selected sites. Extrapolating the results of the pavement condition rating resulted in estimating that most of the roads did not need immediate improvement and that less than 12% of the roads might need attention within the next five years.

Figure 19. Timeline for Repairs to Roads by Total Miles



Traffic

The historic nature of the community invites many visitors and tourists. Not only are visitors attracted from out-of-state, but many residents from within New Mexico visit the Town in appreciation of the history of the community. As a result, traffic generated from within the community is not as significant as traffic generated outside the community. Most local residents understand the nature of the narrow roadways and seek alternate routes away from the more commercial tourist areas. As such, typical traffic pat-

PLAN ELEMENTS - TRANSPORTATION

terns with normal morning and afternoon traffic peaks are not observed because the core plaza area of the community experiences a steady stream of vehicles for much of the day.

Most of the roads within the town allow two-way traffic, except immediately around the Plaza where traffic must travel in one direction. Traffic must move around the Town plaza in a counter-clockwise direction, with Calle De Santiago north of the plaza restricted to west-bound traffic and Calle De Parian south of the plaza restricted to east-bound traffic. Calle de Guadalupe east of the plaza moves traffic north-bound and Calle Principal west of the plaza moves traffic south-bound.

Based on MPO annual average weekday traffic volume counts, 41,702 total vehicles per day were counted traveling the main thoroughfares through the Town (see Map 7). According to the data, most of the north-south traffic travels along Avenida de Mesilla, and east-west traffic travels along Calle Del Norte. These data were collected between 2014 and 2016.

Parking

As a tourist community, the Town provides parking facilities away from the central plaza. These facilities are located on Calle De Medanos and on NM at the Town Hall. In addition to the public parking areas, Basilica of San Albino Catholic Church and some of the businesses, specifically restaurants, provide parking.



This is particularly important on weekends when the Town has the most visitors.

With limited off-street parking downtown, many visitors resort to parallel parking along the roads. This can be a challenge when events are being held in town. This can be an issue for homeowners, some of whom also park along the street, especially when their property cannot accommodate more than one vehicle on-site.

The Town does not currently charge for public parking, either through parking meters or other fee collection systems. As described below, charging for parking has actually been shown to be beneficial in areas with limited parking as it promotes turnover of new visitors, which can allow more people to access businesses or other destinations. It also provides a revenue stream for the City that can be applied to mitigate any impacts from tourism activity, and does not directly affect residents if implemented effectively.

Table 5. Parking Facilities Downtown

| FACILITY | LOCATION | ESTIMATED CAPACITY |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Calle De Medanos | Calle De Medanos and Calle Principal | 62 |
| Plaza Parking | Plaza | 20 |
| Town Hall | Avenida de Mesilla | 106 (includes RV & Bus) |
| Community Center | Calle de Santiago | 13 |
| On-Street Parking | Plaza Area/Historic Blocks | Approx. 200 |

Note: The estimated capacity is based on a count of spaces in a current aerial photograph.

Walkability & Street Design

The compactness of the Town of Mesilla lends itself to walkability for visitors who frequent the attractions and restaurants located around the Town plaza. In addition to the smaller size of Mesilla, the narrow roads help manage the traffic speed and increase driver awareness, providing a higher level of pedestrian safety.

Based on *Walkscore.com*, a good portion of the Town can be covered by foot in 20

minutes as shown in Map 8 on page 100. However, despite the large walking coverage area, residents still need a vehicle to take care of most errands such as grocery shopping and access to healthcare facilities, which are provided in the neighboring City of Las Cruces. As a result, *Walkscore.com* rated the Town a score of 33 out of 100, indicating that Mesilla is a car-dependent community.

Sidewalks

There are 5.6 miles of sidewalks within the Town of Mesilla, concentrated around the plaza and along Avenida de Mesilla and some segments of Calle del Sur (see Map 8 on page 100). The sidewalks provide pedestrians the connectivity between the Town's main attractions, such as stores and restaurants. Some areas of downtown do not have sidewalks and may be priority locations for sidewalks in the future.

Bicycle Infrastructure

The Town currently does not maintain any bicycle infrastructure, although possible routes have been planned (see Map 9 on page 101). A bicycle lane suitability study conducted in 2011 by the MPO identified potential lane locations along the main thoroughfares within and around the Town. The roads identified as most suitable for bike lanes included:

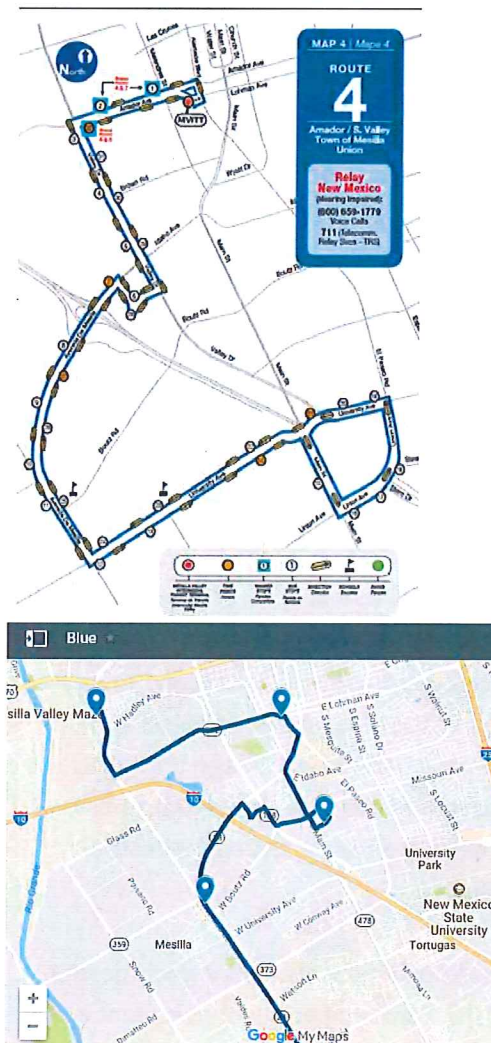
- Snow Road
- Paisano Road
- Calle del Sur
- Portion of Calle de El Paso
- Valle Grande
- Estrada Road

A more recent corridor study of University Boulevard includes the consideration of placing bike lanes on both sides of the road, thereby facilitating both east- and west-bound bicycle traffic. In addition, previous considerations of building a bike trail along Calle del Norte have been deemed not fiscally feasible at this time.

Transit

The Town of Mesilla is served by Route 4 of the RoadRUNNER Transit Service provided by the City of Las Cruces. Route 4 connects the Town to the main transit terminal to the northeast and to the east side of the University. Bus stations 11, 12, 24, and 25 are closest to the Town, with stops along University Boulevard and Avenida de Mesilla. The South Central Regional Transit District Blue Line serves Mesilla along NM 28 with a stop at the Mesilla Town Hall.

Figure 20. Transit Maps – RoadRUNNER Route 4 and SCRTD Blue Line



Transportation Infrastructure Capital Improvements

Roadway and sidewalk infrastructure improvements are a priority for the Town, as shown by the number of such projects listed in the Town's ICIP. Many of these projects are associated with improving the roadway drainage capacity.

| PROJECT | TOTAL PROJECT COST |
|--|--------------------|
| Mesilla Road Improvements Phase I-III Mesilla Road Improvements Phase I-V to design, construction management, reconstruct roadway, utility, water, sewer improvements for the following: Phase I - Calle Primera, Calle Segunda, Calle Cuarta, Paisano Rd, Phase II - Calle de San Albino, Calle de Santa Ana, Calle de Cura; Phase III - Calle de Oeste, Calle de Picacho; To plan, engineer, design, construction management, reconstruct the roadway by removing and replacing the existing deteriorated subgrade, pavement, curb, installing a new asphalt surface, concrete curb, adjust manholes to grade, utility, water and storm drain improvements. Town of Mesilla will work with the engineer firm to design the project and go out for RFP and bids. Roads will be improved as funding is available for each. | \$ 2,207,200 |
| Bowman Street Plan, design, construction management, reconstruct the roadway by removing and replacing the existing deteriorated subgrade, pavement, curb, installing a new asphalt surface, concrete curb, adjust manholes to grade, utility, water and storm drain improvements. Town of Mesilla will work with the engineering firm to design the project and go out for RFP and bid. | \$283,822 |
| Calle de Parian Improvements Phase I - II Design and construct the storm drain and improvements for Calle de Parian to include reconstruct roadway 2500 linear feet, adjust manholes grade, curb gutter, drainage, install 8" water line and utility improvements. Town of Mesilla will work with the engineering firm to design the project and go out for RFP and bids. | \$ 897,396 |
| Parque de Los Leones Parking/Loop Improvements The Town of Mesilla Parque de Los Leones de Mesilla parking lot which include plan, design and construction and complete roadway improvements to Calla Primera, Calle Santiago, 2.5 mountable curb, drainage improvements, manhole adjustments and utility improvements. The Town is seeking funding and will follow state procurement code to implement the project. | \$ 220,000 |
| Road Reconstruction Utility Improvements Calle Del Norte | \$ 2,057,257 |
| Citywide Sidewalks | \$ 250,000 |
| Calle del Sur Road Widening Phase I-II | \$ 1,015,000 |

Achieving Transportation Goals

Investing in the Town's existing transportation network is important to encouraging and facilitating growth within the community. Whether someone is considering the Town of Mesilla for residential or commercial development, effective and efficient access is a key factor because transportation impacts all aspects of the Town, including economic development, quality of life, social equity, public health, and ecological sustainability.

Roadway Design Standards

As part of zoning changes and development review, the Town will continue to evaluate the impact of the development on existing transportation infrastructure. This includes implementing design standards for existing and local streets for both inside and outside the Historic District so as they are maintained and/or reconstructed with the Town's character in mind, while considering bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Participation in Regional Transportation Planning

In the regional context, the Town is an active participant of the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization with three of the ten voting members being Town of Mesilla Trustees. The Town will continue engaging in planning discussions and initiatives that affect the area-wide growth, as is relevant to Mesilla's development.

Managing Public Parking

The biggest challenge, as expressed during public meetings, was how to manage parking within the historic district. The challenge included managing not only visitor parking but also residential parking. Ideas discussed during the meeting and could be evaluated by the Town include:

1. Implementing regulations and design standards to manage parking in the historic district to control on-street parking.
2. Installing parking meters in the historical plaza area.
3. Continuing to coordinate with public safety and public works departments to manage traffic during special events.
4. Making off-site parking at nearby schools available during special events and providing a shuttle service to the event.

The Mesilla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization is responsible for planning all aspects of the transportation system including bicycle, auto, pedestrian, public transit, and aviation in Las Cruces, Mesilla and part of Dona Ana County.

5. Evaluating the option of providing centralized parking for the guests of residents in the historic district.

Charging for Parking

Installing parking meters is a common strategy for enhancing parking availability by managing the duration a vehicle can be parked at an available parking spot. As a result, parking meters can help manage parking turnover and maximizing the flow of customers to the retail and dining establishments within the historical district. Parking meters also discourage store employees to occupy prime parking locations, thereby making the parking spaces available to customers.

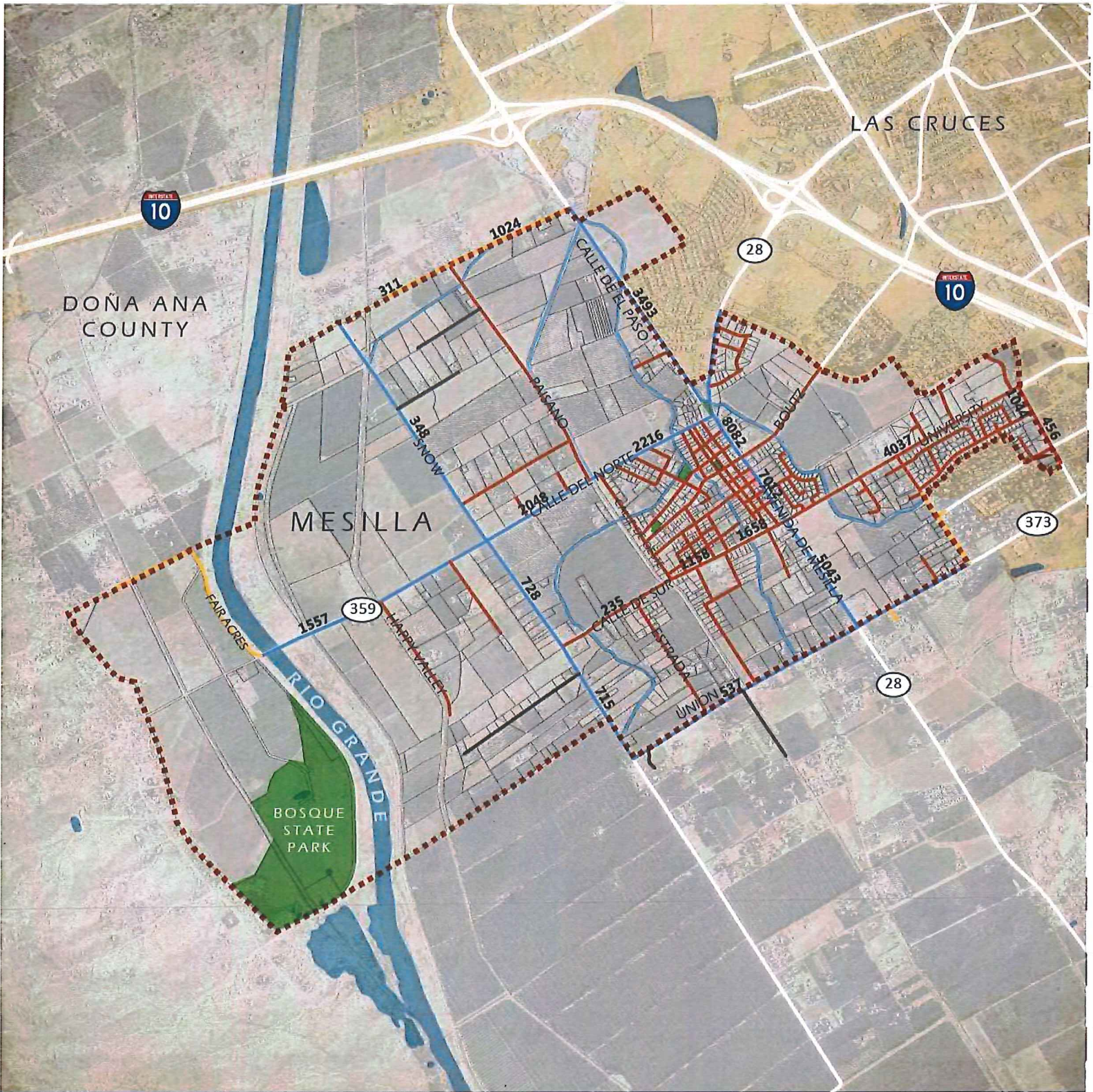
Some communities have defined specific areas as "Parking Meter Zones" in which the parking revenues raised are reinvested back into the district for transportation-related improvements, such as purchasing the meters, investing in walking and biking infrastructure, or paying for streetscape projects. Establishing

such a zone allows the Town to be specific about not only how to apply the revenue, but where the revenue can be reinvested. In the case of Mesilla, the parking meter revenue could be used specifically to maintain and improve aging downtown infrastructure.

Metered parking can pose a challenge to residents and their guests. One approach to address this concern is to offer a residential parking permit that would allow residents to park on the street within the historic district. This would provide the Town the opportunity to manage the number of permits a household can receive, thereby minimizing the presence of long-term on-street parking. Accommodating guests is the other challenge. Providing a centralized off-site parking location has been considered. However, finding an available lot and the funds to purchase the property has been the challenge. The Town should consider conducting a comprehensive parking study to document the challenges more thoroughly so that parking solutions and alternatives can be fully evaluated.

TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 7. Roadways & Traffic Volumes



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park

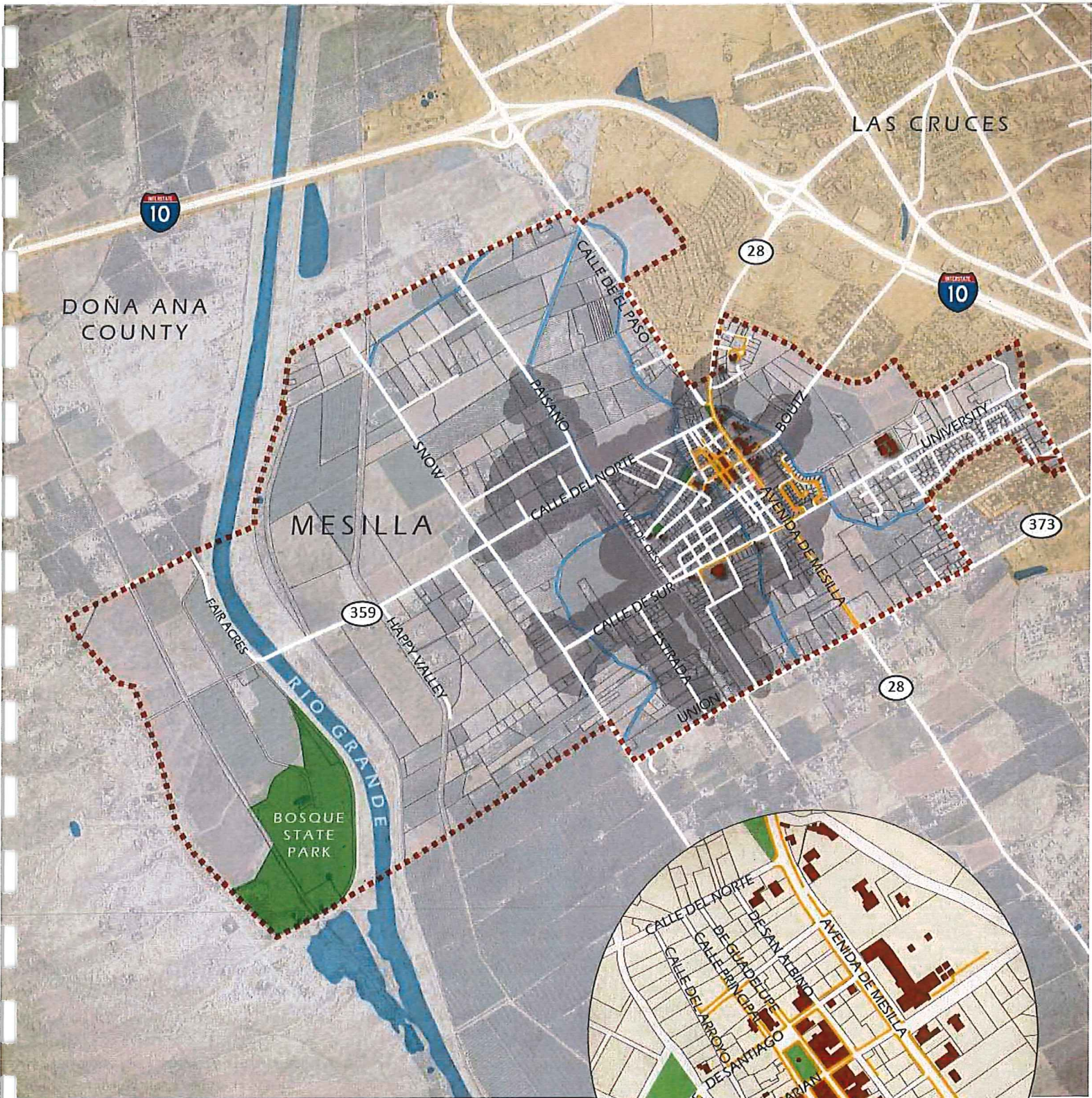
ROADWAY OWNERSHIP

- Town of Mesilla
- Doña Ana County
- State of NM
- Private

715 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Count

TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 8. Pedestrian Facilities

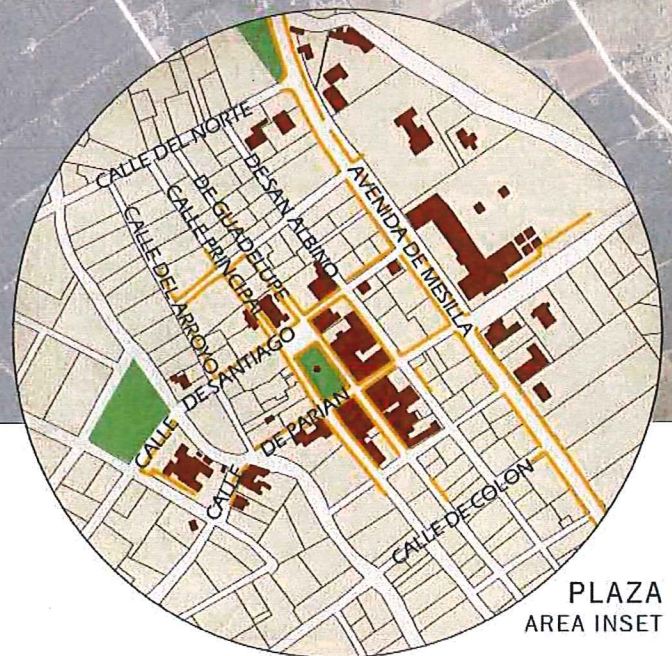


LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park
- Primary Building

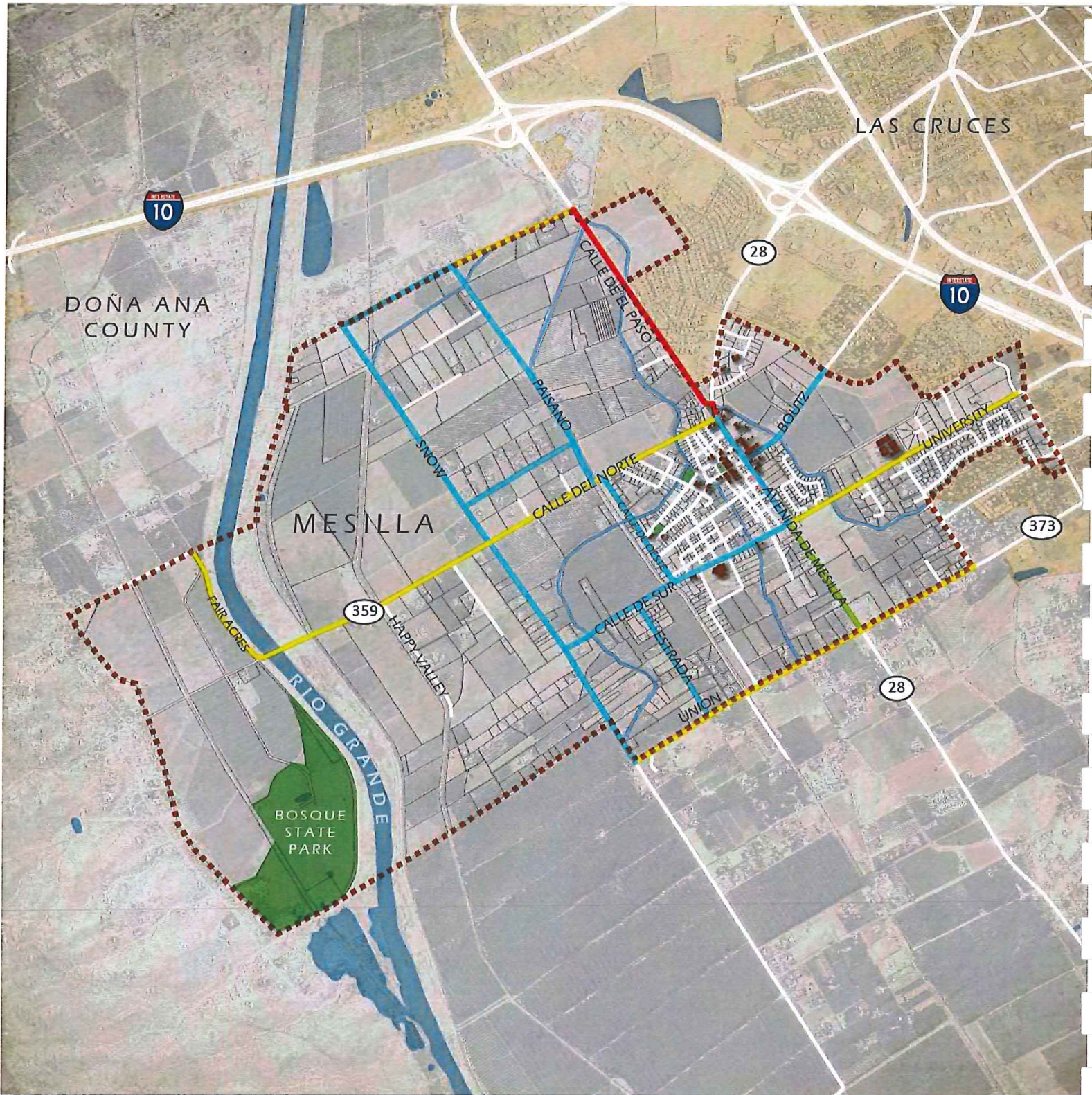
PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

- Sidewalk
- Acequia/Ditch
- 20 Minute Walk Radius (from public safety building)



TOWN OF Mesilla

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 9. Bicycle Facilities & Suitability



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park
- Primary Building

BICYCLE SUITABILITY

- Most Suitable
- More Suitable
- Somewhat Suitable
- Least Suitable

ELEMENT 7

INFRASTRUCTURE & WATER RESOURCES



This element looks at the Town's water supply, water infrastructure, sewer system and the need for maintenance upgrades or other improvements.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Continue to optimize conservation of water resources through application of water conservation standards.
- **GOAL 2:** Promote the health, safety, and welfare of residents by providing an environmentally and economically sound system for collecting and treating wastewater at an affordable cost.
- **GOAL 3:** Optimize the public investment represented by the Town's existing utility system and the City of Las Cruces' utility system.
- **GOAL 4:** Provide an uninterrupted supply of water to residents in adequate amounts, at an affordable cost, and at the best quality possible.
- **GOAL 5:** Provide a storm drainage system in Mesilla that offers the greatest affordable protection from flood hazards.

Community Comments

"Our downtown infrastructure needs help. Some of our infrastructure fails due to high usage and age"

"The sewer system seems to be aging and not work very well. Can we fix that?"

Water Distribution System

The Town of Mesilla had 607 active water connections as of October 2008. There were 519 active accounts in the year 2000, and 410 active customers in the year 1990. There are currently over 800 service connections.

The downtown core has water distribution lines that are constructed of asbestos cement pipe. This, along with the age of the pipe dating from the 1950's, has caused operational and maintenance issues. The water distribution network includes 4-, 6-, 8-, 10-, and 12-inch diameter PVC pipelines. There are approximately 141 fire hydrants within the Town limits of which the majority are connected to 6-inch mains or larger.

Table 6. Water Distribution System Overview²³

| WATER SYSTEM ASSET | SIZE (IN) | UNITS (COUNT/LENGTH FT) |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Waterline | 4 | 17,089 |
| Waterline | 6 | 53,937 |
| Waterline | 8 | 21,370 |
| Waterline | 10 | 5,499 |
| Waterline | 12 | 24,738 |
| Fire Hydrants | | 141 |
| Water valves | | 528 |

Water Source

There are two existing water wells that Mesilla relies on for its domestic water supply. Well No. 1 (OSE No. LRG 06582) produces less than 400 gallons per minute, and Well No. 2 (OSE No. LRG 06582 S) produces closer to 600 gallons per minute. Well No.'s 1 and 2 were drilled to a depth of approximately 700 feet and 600 feet, respectively. The water rights for both wells were established in 1959, and provide for diversion of 483.9 acre-feet per year (AFY).

The 40-Year Water Plan developed for the Town of Mesilla in April of 2007 indicated that the existing water rights are more than adequate for present needs and near-term growth; however, if the growth projections cited in the Plan come to fruition, it is possible that by the year 2047, the Town could find itself in need of water rights closer to 520 AFY.²⁴ The referenced plan includes a detailed discussion of options available to the Town for acquiring ground and/or surface water rights. The Town will need to monitor actual growth and compare to the projections used in such planning documents to better understand when and to what extent additional water rights will be required.

²³ Source: Mesilla Asset Management Plan, 2016, Souder Miller and Associates

²⁴ Source: 40-Year Water Plan, Town of Mesilla, April 2007, Lee Wilson and Associates

Water Treatment

For disinfection, the Town of Mesilla's water system implements gaseous chlorine injection at the wells. The Town ensures that the drinking water is safe and meets federal and state requirements.

Water Storage

There is one storage tank for the Town of Mesilla, which has a capacity of 514,760 gallons and was built in 1994. It was constructed using welded steel with cathodic protection; the height is 16 feet, and the diameter is 76 feet. The foundation type is a ring wall with sand bed. The tank uses a pressure sensor for level control.

Condition Assessment

Although the exact installation dates of the water distribution system assets are not known, the Town has a good understanding of the overall condition of the system. As previously stated, the oldest waterlines are located within the Town center and are constructed of asbestos cement. Due to the age and material of these pipes, most of the operational and maintenance challenges are in the Town center area. Therefore, future water system improvements will include replacing the older waterlines in that area.

The water storage and treatment aspects of the Town's water system currently provide adequate service. No improvements in those areas are anticipated in the near future. The Town's water stor-

age capacity of 514,760 gallons is sufficient for the next 40 years. In addition, through the interconnect with the City of Las Cruces, the Town has the redundancy in place to provide water to its residents in the event of a water supply issue. The Town of Mesilla's existing water disinfection systems are working efficiently and correctly. Therefore, no water treatment improvements are being considered.

Water Conservation

While the Town is well aware of the benefits and importance of water conservation, it currently does not have a formal water conservation plan. The Town promotes water conservation to its customers by including in the Town's customer confidence reports tips and recommendations on how to conserve water. The Town also employs an aggressive tiered water rate schedule to promote conservation as detailed below.

Water User Rate Structure

The rates and charges for the consumption of water and sewer services furnished by the Town of Mesilla, as well as the charges and fees for connections, are determined according to the general categories described below (see Appendix for full rate schedules).

- **Residential charges** apply to single-family residences, multiple dwellings, apartment complexes, townhomes, mobile home parks, and units used for domestic purposes.

- **Commercial charges** apply to any establishment engaged in the operation of a business or an institution, whether or not for profit, including clubs, hotels, motels, schools, hospitals, stores, churches, restaurants, municipal, county, state, and federal buildings. The standard commercial rates are significantly higher than the residential rates and also include a tiered structure to encourage conservation.
- **Master meter** charges apply to apartment complexes, guesthouses, studios, in-law quarters, and any separate building potentially used for living or business quarters. These charges are in addition to the charges presented above.

For master meters located within the Town and serving more than one living unit or more than one commercial unit or combination of living unit and commercial unit, the customer pays a monthly minimum charge multiplied by the number of living units and commercial units served.

Significantly higher rates apply in the case of master meters located outside the Town service, such as multi-user facilities.

- **Bulk water** charges apply to any business or institution requesting temporary water service through hydrant meters for the use of construction, alteration or repair of roads, buildings or other similar activities. These charges apply whether the service is provided inside or outside the Town limits. Connection charges are a one-time tap fee and meter charge for service to the property. These charges are paid by all customers prior to connection to the system based on the schedule presented below.
- A customer who installs a **master meter** to serve more than one living unit or more than one commercial unit, or combination of living unit and commercial unit, pays an amount equal to the number of units multiplied by the tap fee.

Wastewater Collection System

The Town of Mesilla also has approximately 400 active wastewater connections. Many of the Town of Mesilla's residents not living in the downtown area have septic systems that drain to leach fields.

The original wastewater system was constructed in the late 1950's and early 1960's. The collection system consists of approximately 3,650 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe, 20,000 feet of 8-inch clay pipe, and 2,500 feet of 4-inch sewer force main. The entire existing wastewater collection system provides coverage to only a quarter of the total land area within the Town limits. There are parts of the community that lack access to the wastewater collection system.

Wastewater collected by the Town of Mesilla is treated at the City of Las Cruces wastewater treatment plant facility located approximately two miles north of the Mesilla Town center.

Lift Station

The original lift station was constructed in the 1960's with a depth of approximately 21 feet and a diameter of 5 feet. The lift station was reconstructed in 2004 to include a wet well liner, new submersible pumps, new controls, and new piping. The lift station is lined with fiberglass; the inlet pipe is 12 inches in diameter, and the discharge pipe 4 inches in diameter. Flow rates to the station are highest from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and from 8:15 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Condition Assessment

The wastewater system is in good operational condition overall. However, there are three areas that are more frequently maintained and need to be hydro-jetted on a regular basis due to build-up of grease, food, dirt, debris and other residue. Those areas are along the following roads:

- Calle San Albino (Restaurant row)
- Calle de Santiago (Town center)
- Calle del Oeste

Table 7. Waste Water Collection System Overview²⁵

| WATER SYSTEM ASSET | SIZE (IN) | UNITS |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| | | (COUNT/ LENGTH FT) |
| Sewerline | unknown | 51,569 |
| Manhole | | 162 |
| Pump station | | 1 |

²⁵ Source: Mesilla Asset Management Plan, 2016

Wastewater User Rate Structure

Residential charges apply to single-family residences, multiple dwellings, apartment complexes, townhomes, mobile home parks, and units used for domestic purposes. The minimum charge for wastewater services to residential customers is eleven dollars and fifty cents (\$11.50) per month.

Commercial charges apply to any establishment engaged in the operation of a business or an institution, whether or not for profit, including clubs, hotels, motels, schools, hospitals, stores, churches, restaurants, municipal, county, state, and federal buildings. The minimum

charge for wastewater services to commercial customers is fifteen dollars and fifty cents (\$15.50) per month.

Wastewater customers outside the Town are charged a flat fee of \$30.00 per month.

Solid Waste

All trash and recycling has been handled through Mesilla Valley Disposal since July 2012. Residents and local business are provided 96-gallon carts, color-coded for trash or recycling. Trash is picked up weekly and recyclables biweekly. Dumpsters are serviced Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, with frequency based on individual need.



Utilities

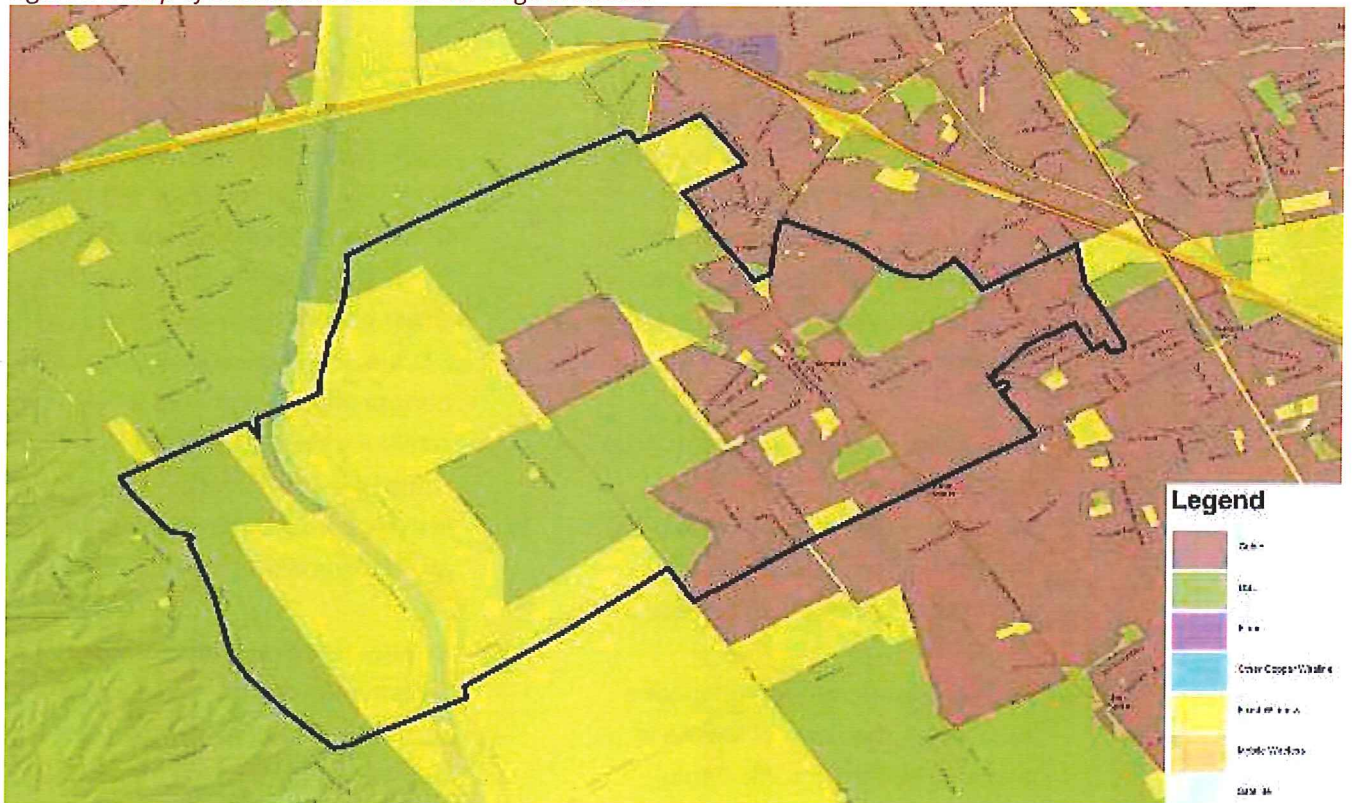
- **Power:** Residents use electrical power for their basic lighting and appliance needs and in some cases for heat. El Paso Electric Company provides the electrical power for the Town of Mesilla. The local El Paso Electric Company offices are in Las Cruces.
- **Gas:** Many residents use natural gas for their winter heating requirements or household appliances. Zia Natural Gas Association provides natural gas for the Town of Mesilla.
- **Telecommunications:** Telephone services for the Town of Mesilla is provided by CenturyLink. CenturyLink also provides DSL high speed internet for the area. Some residents rely on mobile phones or VOIP service instead of landlines.
- **Television:** Local cable television is readily available to the most densely populated portions of the Town provided by Comcast, although residents may also utilize one of the satellite systems of either Direct TV or Dish Network for their television needs. Residents can also pick up local programming (El Paso market) via antenna.

Broadband Internet: Internet access is available throughout the Town, however broadband internet access via cable television is limited to mostly the eastern portion of the Town, including the historic district. Other options are available such as DSL via one of the telecommunications providers, and fixed wireless or satellite service is available to the rest of the Town. The map below illustrates broadband internet coverage options within the town limits.

An interactive map which shows broadband internet providers by sector is available at the following website: nmbbmapping.org/mapping. The Office of Broadband and Geospatial Initiatives of NM DoIT provides several options to communities or even individuals regarding accessing internet service. There are many state and federal programs available that promote such access.

Fiber internet service is available to limited areas of Las Cruces. Expansion of this service to Mesilla is desirable as the fiber system is built out in the area.

Figure 21. Map of Broadband Internet Coverage in Mesilla



Source: Office of Broadband and Geospatial Initiatives, NM DoIT (<https://nmbbmapping.org/mapping>)

Storm Drainage

The roadways within town were originally designed and built to act as storage during rain events and strategically located drop inlets in the roadways connect to a storm sewer system which takes the storm water away from the town roadways and drains it into the Mesilla Drain. The remainder of the streets outside the immediate town center have bar ditches which divert water away from the roadways.

Refer to the Hazard Mitigation element on page 118 for information related to the history of flood events in the Town of Mesilla as well as established floodzones.

There are several areas in the Town of Mesilla which suffer from excessive ponding during storm events. Town staff have identified the most problematic areas within town. The areas of greatest concern include but are not limited to the following:

- **Calle del Arroyo & Calle de Medanos:** Storm sewer inlets exist, but are quickly overwhelmed during storms.
- **Calle de Picacho & Calle del Norte:** Water flows down Calle de Picacho and, due to lack of an outlet to the bar ditch on the north side of Calle del Norte, ponds at the intersection.
- **Calle de Parian:** Excessive amounts of water collects midway between Calle del Oeste and the central plaza, due to the lack of proper maintenance of the pervious concrete, and water is no longer allowed to readily infiltrate to the sub-surface as originally designed.
- **Other Problem Areas:** Additional locations identified as areas of special concern include the intersection of Calle de los Huertos and Calle del Norte where the drain inlet is completely silted in, flooding along Snow Road between Calle del Norte and Calle del Sur, ponding along Los Arenales between W. Union Ave. and Calle del Sur, and flooding at the intersection of Bason Drive and Capri Road.

All these areas will need to be evaluated for drainage solutions as part of a comprehensive examination of storm drainage issues for the Town of Mesilla, resulting in a coordinated approach for dealing with each.

Figure 22. Photos Showing Areas of Flooding and Ponding During Storm Events



Calle del Arroyo and Calle de Medanos



Calle de Picacho and Calle del Norte



Calle de Parian midway between Calle del Oeste
and Plaza



Bason Drive and Capri Road

Prioritization of Infrastructure Projects

Based on the risk index value assigned to various Town assets in the 2017 Asset Management Plan, each is categorized as low, medium or high priority. The risk index value is based on an evaluation of the probability of failure of key assets combined with the expected consequence of failure.

The downtown sewer lines outscored all other assets, indicating an elevated risk and cost of failure. This is to be expected since those assets are much older, require frequent maintenance and are probably in poorer condition than the rest of the system. The following table ranks the infrastructure assets based on their risk index. Assets at the top of the list are higher risk assets.

Funding Strategy

Per the Town's ordinances, the rates and charges for water and sewer services are established from time to time to ensure sufficient income to cover associated costs. These costs include all reasonable operating and maintenance expenses in connection with the water and sewer systems, as well as the principal and interest on the Town of Mesilla's water and sewer revenue bonds, and to create and maintain a reasonable reserve for this purpose.

Therefore, the rates are evaluated and adjusted accordingly to ensure that sufficient revenue is generated to cover typical operating costs and pay back loans.

Figure 23. Infrastructure Risk Index Scores

| INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET | RISK |
|----------------------|------|
| Downtown sewer lines | 80 |
| Downtown water lines | 45 |
| Other sewer lines | 30 |
| Valves | 24 |
| Water meters | 21 |
| Fire Hydrants | 20 |
| Tank | 18 |
| Wells | 18 |
| Other waterlines | 16 |
| Manholes | 15 |

Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan

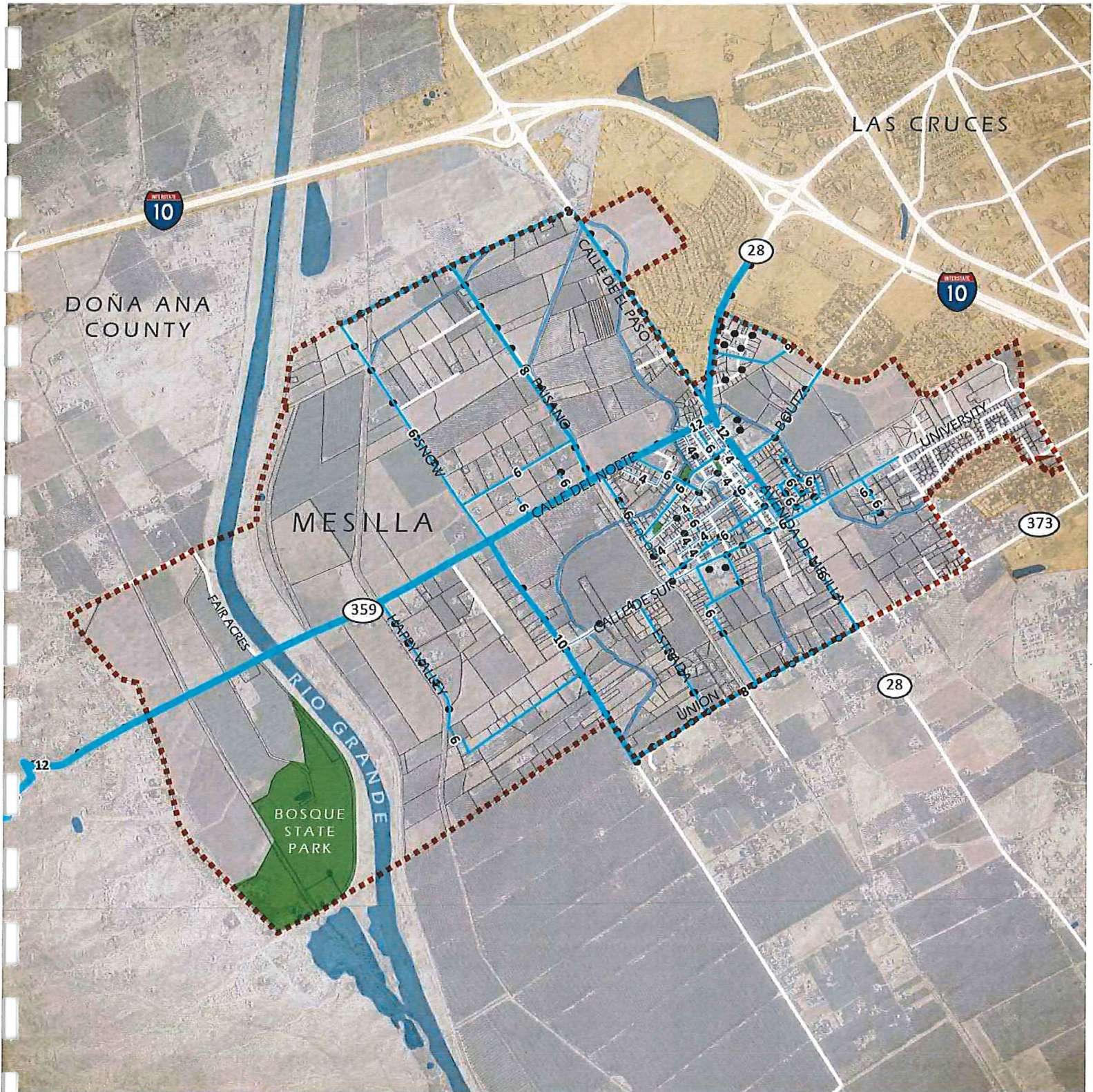
The Town of Mesilla's infrastructure capital improvements plan (ICIP) for 2018 to 2022 includes several projects related to water and wastewater system improvements beginning in 2019, with the majority planned for 2020 and 2021. The following table includes those projects identified on the ICIP that are related to utility infrastructure improvements.

In addition to the projects listed in the ICIP, recommendations have been made in previous preliminary engineering reports regarding replacing critical sewer arterials and associated manholes in the downtown area in the vicinity of Calle de San Albino, Calle de Parian, and Calle Principal; and installing new pressure sewer lines on a portion of Calle de Guadalupe.

Table 8. Infrastructure Projects - 2019 to 2022 ICIP

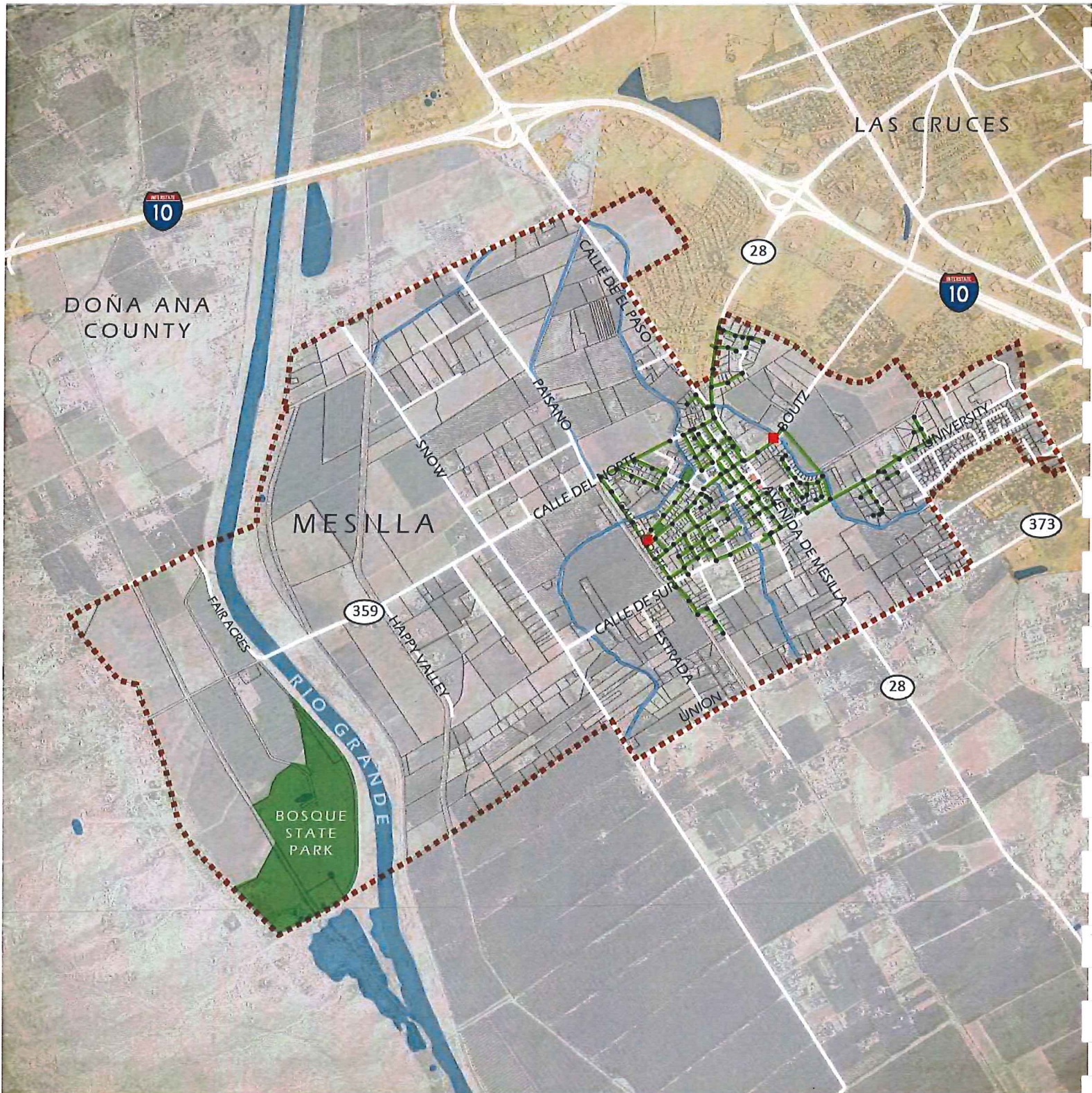
| PROJECT | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | TOTAL PROJECT COST |
|--|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Generator for Lift Station Booster Tank | \$ 150,926 | | | | \$ 150,926 |
| Replace Waterlines Phase I-III | | \$ 305,500 | \$ 1,708,000 | \$ 76,500 | \$ 2,090,000 |
| Sewer line Extensions Phase I-III | | \$ 150,000 | \$ 850,000 | | \$ 1,000,000 |
| Manhole Rehabilitation | | \$ 50,000 | | | \$ 50,000 |
| Storm Drain Repair, Video Inspection of Storm Drain | | \$ 150,000 | | | \$ 150,000 |
| Installation of Pedestrian Storm Drain Grates | | | \$ 50,000 | | \$ 50,000 |
| Install/Replace Fire Hydrants | | | \$ 250,000 | | \$ 250,000 |
| Rehabilitate Existing Water Supply Well | | | \$ 200,000 | | \$ 200,000 |
| Installation of Storm Water Quality Treatment Unit | | | \$ 400,000 | | \$ 400,000 |
| Drilling New Well | | | \$ 1,000,000 | | \$ 1,000,000 |

Source: 2018-2022 Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (water, wastewater, drainage components)



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Park
- Water Line
[Number Denotes size in Inches]
- Fire Hydrant



LEGEND

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Town Limits |  Sewer Line |
|  City of Las Cruces |  Manholes |
|  Park |  Pump Station |

ELEMENT 8

HAZARD MITIGATION



This section identifies the natural, human-made, and human-caused hazards, such as drought, floods, wild fires, and hazardous materials. In addition to identifying potential hazards, this section develops strategies to reduce or eliminate either the hazards themselves or potential damage.

Goals

- **GOAL 1:** Implement priority recommendations of 2013 County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- **GOAL 2:** Pursue expanded training for the volunteer fire department.

Community Comments

"We see a lot of brush fires every year, but it really varies depending on whether we're in a drought year."

Existing Hazards

Doña Ana County completed a Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2013, which includes recommendations for the Town of Mesilla. The goals of a hazard mitigation plan are to identify existing natural hazards such as wildfire, droughts, storms, floods, dam failures, severe wind, and

other natural disasters and then assess risks and develop mitigation steps to reduce the loss of life and property in the event of a disaster. The primary hazards identified in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan as they impact Mesilla are described below.

Table 9. Summary of Hazards and Risk Levels for Mesilla

| HAZARD | PROBABILITY | MAGNITUDE | WARNING TIME | DURATION |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| Dam Failure | Unlikely | Catastrophic | 6-12 hrs. | < 6 hrs. |
| Drought | Highly Likely | Limited | Days | Months |
| Extreme Cold | Likely | Limited | Days | < 1 week |
| Flooding | Likely | Critical | 12-24 hrs. | < 24 hrs. |
| Wind | Highly Likely | Negligible | Days | < 6 hrs. |
| Wildfire | Likely | Limited | 6-12 hrs. | < 1 week |

Note: Table developed from the 2013 Doña Ana County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Probability and Magnitude of occurrences are defined in the Plan on page 65. Highly likely events are those that are frequent and well-documented, such as flooding events. Annual probability is greater than 0.1. Catastrophic events are those that would result in severe property damage to over 50% of critical buildings and possible injuries and deaths.

Drought

Drought has been a well-documented hazard throughout Mesilla's history, affecting the Town's water supply for both agricultural and municipal uses. As stated in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan, between 1995 and 2012, there were five state-wide declared drought disasters, with indirect costs of between \$50 and \$100 million. As a large agricultural producing county, Doña Ana has been affected by these droughts; between 1995 and 2010, the County re-

ceived \$6.4 million in direct USDA disaster payments (mainly for crop assistance).

Given existing water-rights allocations, most of the water available in the Lower Rio Grande is currently assigned to agricultural uses, which are also affected by groundwater withdrawals from the aquifer. In the event of future droughts, the primary impacts will be on agricultural production within Mesilla, as well as possible constraints on the municipal water supply. Secondary effects could

lead to increased risks of flooding and wildfires, as well as habitat loss. These effects could hamper the ability of property owners to continue to maintain active fields and orchards, potentially putting pressure on agricultural lands to be converted to other uses (such as residential developments). It could also result in fewer visitors to the Town, leading to a loss in tourism revenue.

Floods

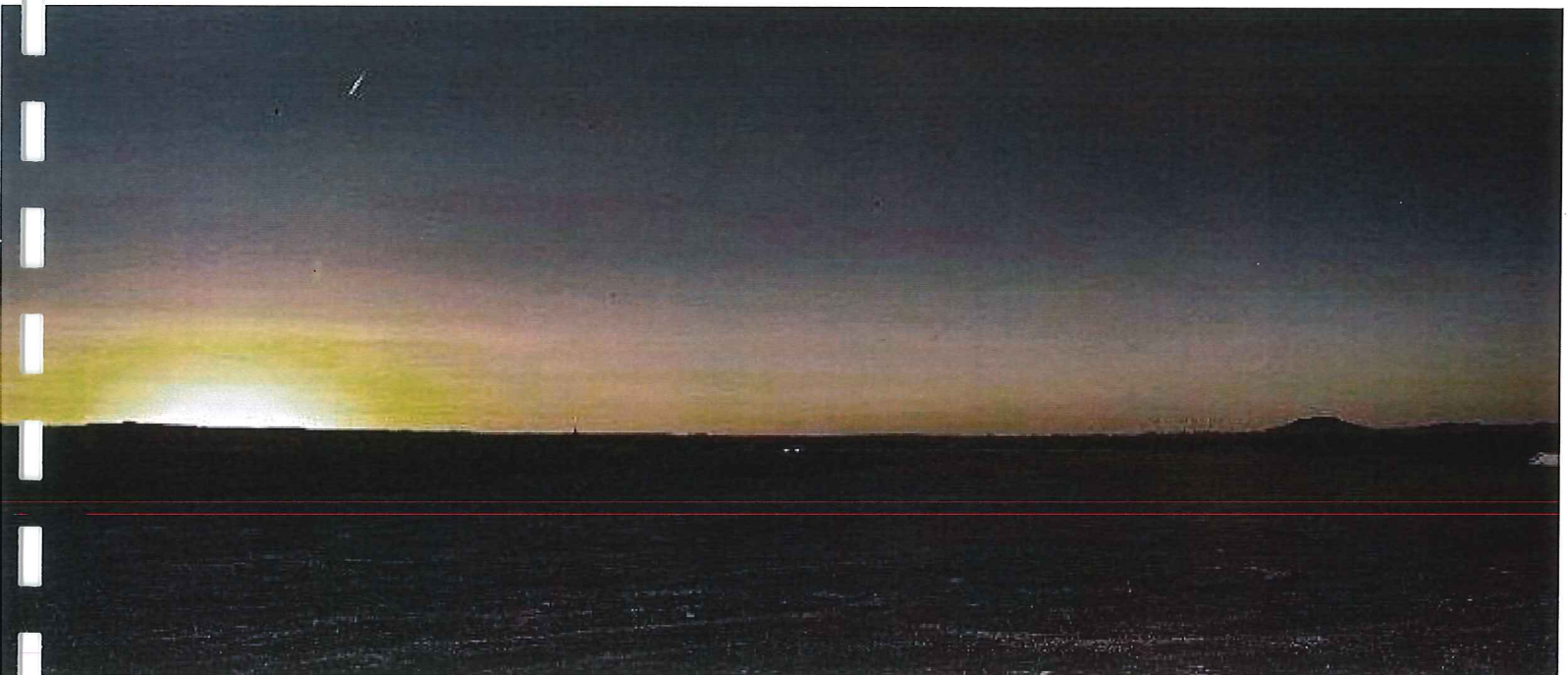
As seen in Map 12. Flood Zones, much of the Town of Mesilla is located in the floodplain of the Rio Grande (areas with 0.2% chance of annual flooding). This includes all agricultural lands west of Calle de Oeste and Paisano, as well as some western parts of the historic district. Areas closer to the river are in "Zone A" flood zones, with a 1% chance of annual flooding. In addition to the Rio Grande, there are several ephemeral arroyos

that drain into the town from the west mesa. These flows are intercepted in basins and irrigation drains that eventually discharge back into the Rio Grande.

Several major floods have occurred in Doña Ana County since 1972, with the most prominent recent floods severely affecting Hatch, Vado and parts of Las Cruces. Future flooding in Mesilla is rated as "likely" with "critical" severity in the case of a full flooding. Estimated losses to residential buildings in the case of severe flooding are estimated at \$785,000 for high risk areas and \$3 million for medium risk areas in town.

Wildfires

According to the County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan, there were 817 recorded fires in Doña Ana County between 1981 and 2011. Most of these were under 100 acres and put out



quickly. Mesilla is considered to be a “medium” wildfire risk area, with some pockets being rated as “high” risk areas (see Map 13. Fire Hazard Index). This includes large sections of the more densely vegetated Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park. Higher risk areas are associated with vegetation built up on vacant lots and along watercourses, as well as their proximity to occupied structures.

Overall, the probability of fires in Mesilla is rated as “likely” but of limited severity. As discussed in the Community Services element, the Mesilla Fire Department responds to several dozen brush fires every year and owns two “brush-fire” trucks to combat these occasional fires.

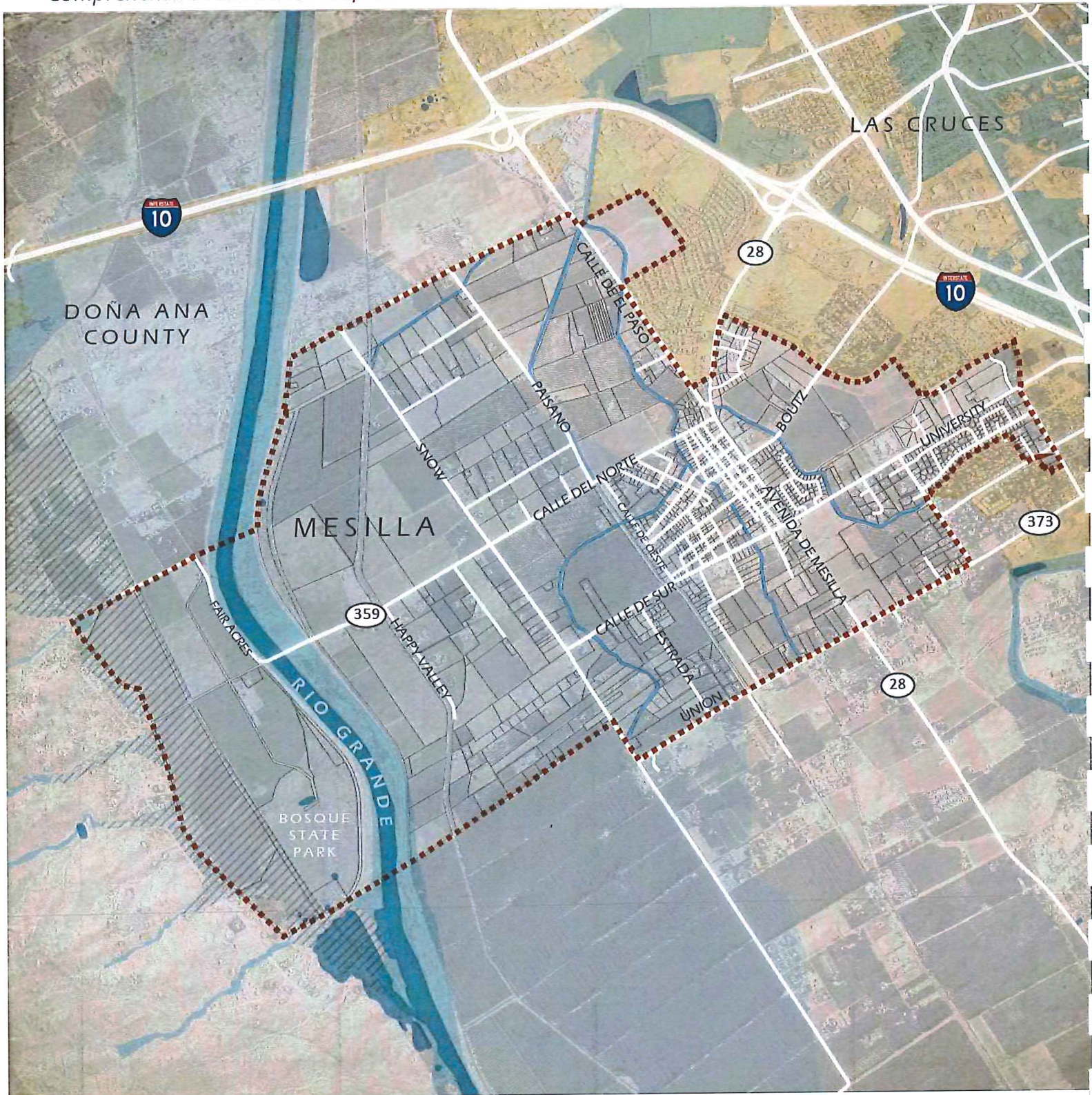
Dam Failure

Much of the Town is located within the Caballo Dam failure inundation limits which would lead to catastrophic flooding for most agricultural areas of the Town. About 11% of residential structures could be affected, and up to 250 residents would be exposed to high hazard areas. Estimated losses (replacement costs) to residential buildings could top \$25 million in the event of a full dam failure. Overall, the Town’s vulnerability to this hazard is rated as “moderate,” however.

Mitigation Actions

Eleven mitigation actions for the Town were identified in the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Some of these actions are addressed in other sections of this plan as they relate to other plan elements. For example, storm drain inspections and maintenance are covered in the Infrastructure and Water Resources element on 103. Because these recommendations have direct effects on hazard mitigation issues, they are repeated here.

1. Upgrade/ Repair Mesilla Community Center to serve as Cooling/ Heating Station. Continue upgrades to the Community Center so that in extreme weather conditions citizens could be temporarily housed there.
2. Rehabilitate and Repair Public Safety Building. Upgrade electrical and environmental systems to withstand severe weather events and serve as a staging area for community response to all hazards. Most of these improvements were completed as part of the recent renovations; however, these facilities may need additional upgrades in the future.
3. Storm Drain Inspections and Repairs to effectively handle runoff during flood conditions.
4. Implement the Life Safety Initiative "Turn Around Don't Drown" which is a program to educate residents to avoid flood areas.
5. Reduce Hazardous Material Dumping through enforcement of local regulations.
6. Participate in the Doña Ana County flood warning and response system.
7. Participate in the Doña Ana County on public education initiatives in the event of drought (including ways to conserve water).
8. Adopt drought-resistant landscape design requirements.
9. Work with Doña Ana County to improve County-wide emergency communications and warning systems.
10. Recommend and implement defensible space practices, coupled with *Firewise Communities* practices, to reduce structural ignitability and to protect critical infrastructure within the wildland-urban interface areas
11. Ongoing Wildfire Education and Public Outreach efforts.



LEGEND

- Town Limits
- City of Las Cruces
- Acequia/Ditch

FLOODZONES

- A & AE - 1% of Annual Flooding
- AO - River or Stream Hazard Areas
- 0.2% Annual Flood Chance

TOWN OF *Mesilla*

Comprehensive Plan 2017 Map 13. Fire Hazard Index



LEGEND

Town Limits

Wildfire Risk



PLAN ELEMENTS - HAZARD MITIGATION

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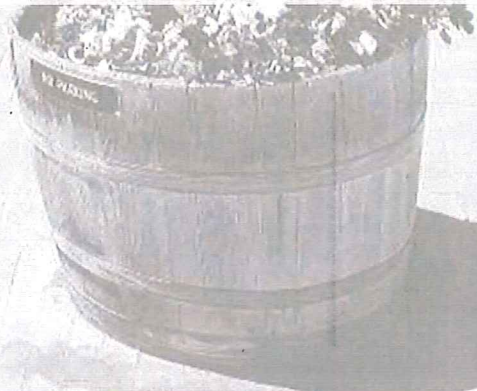


SECTION 5

Implementation

Implementation is arguably the most important part of any plan, as the adoption of any plan is only the beginning of a longer-term process to pursue projects, implement policies and achieve goals.

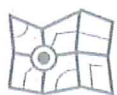
To help with the implementation of this plan, the following chapter outlines the goals, actions, and policies that the Town of Mesilla can take to achieve the vision developed through this planning process. For each plan element and associated goals there are specific action steps, followed by an overview of priority, timeline, responsible parties, potential cost, funding sources, and partnerships/resources to leverage. It is these implementation actions that turn the plan into *an active, living document*, instead of simply being a comprehensive report.



ACTION TABLES

Because this is the Town's plan, it is critical that Town staff and elected officials take the first steps in implementing primary goals outlined below. To increase the likelihood that the goals outlined in this plan are accomplished a few guiding principles can be followed:

1. **Assign Responsible Parties:** Town staff will ultimately be responsible for implementing many of these strategies, which will require the assignment of the following actions to the relevant town department. Outlining who, when, and how these goals and objectives can be completed will require coordination among Town staff and outside partners.
2. **Link to CIP and Funding Cycles:** Implementation strategies that involve Town investment and funding should be linked to the Town future Capital Improvement Plans, as well as state funding cycles.
3. **Review and Update:** The plan should be reviewed annually and updated every five to ten years, or as needed, as conditions in the community change. Mesilla should establish a schedule for reviewing the plan (by committee) to evaluate the progress of different implementation strategies
4. **Collaboration:** Many of these goals and objectives require collaboration with other agencies and organizations, including private developers and residents. To facilitate ongoing collaboration, the Town should continue to initiate or take part in regional events that are related to the goals outlined in this plan, as well as maintain active partnerships with regional and state organizations.



LAND USE

Land Use Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will support the permanent preservation of agricultural land, open space, the greenbelt, and buffers between high density and low-density development through the use of agricultural preservation techniques, low-density development, and cluster development in appropriate locations.
2. The Town of Mesilla will support new commercial and residential development through infill development on vacant lots and/ or renovation of abandoned and vacant structures as outlined on the future land use plan.
3. The Town of Mesilla will support future commercial development that is at a compatible scale, is on appropriately sized lots and can bring revenue without destroying community character.
4. The Town of Mesilla supports the creation of conservation residential areas that allow cluster development in exchange for more open space and an open space buffer.
5. The Town of Mesilla will adhere to its zoning code to eliminate illegal lot splits and eliminate non-conforming uses. Non-conforming uses represent any uses which do not conform to the Town of Mesilla's land use code.

| LAND USE GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Achieve protection of Mesilla's agriculture and greenbelt. | | | | | |
| Create an Agricultural and Historical Preservation Committee to meet yearly. | P&Z, Staff, Residents | Short Term | \$1,000 | Mesilla Valley Farmers | Committee/ Task Force |
| Adapt <i>Guidelines for Preservation and Development</i> to create design standards for non-residential buildings that protect the agricultural character of the greenbelt. | P&Z, Staff, Residents | Medium Term | Staff Time | Property Owners | Planning Effort |
| Research the feasibility of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program and/or other land preservation strategies. | Community Development | Medium Term | \$20,000 | Planning Grant | Planning Effort |
| Promote the use of agricultural land for the sale and promotion of agricultural and related products. | Community programs, elected officials | Ongoing | Staff Time | Agricultural Preservation Committee | Promotion + Information |

IMPLEMENTATION - LAND USE

| LAND USE GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|---|------------|------------|--|------------------------|
| Establish partnerships with private organizations whose aim is open space and agricultural preservation and work toward preserving critical areas. | Community Development, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | New Mexico Land Conservancy, Trust for Public Land | Partnership/ Agreement |
| GOAL 2: Achieve an efficient and orderly pattern of land use development in Mesilla and its surrounding areas. | | | | | |
| Review and update of the Mesilla zoning code, zoning map, and enforcement policies. | Community Development, Administration, Trustees | Long Term | \$75,000 | Doña Ana County, Planning Grant | Planning Effort |
| Digitize land use map and zoning map data for easier review and updating. | Community Development | Short Term | \$5,000 | Doña Ana County | Planning Effort |
| Communicate regularly with Dona Ana County and the City of Las Cruces to ensure that these entities respect and comply with land use decisions in Mesilla, especially in regards to lot splits. | Community Development, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | Doña Ana County, Las Cruces | Partnership/ Agreement |
| Bring non-conforming properties up to code through code enforcement, strategic grandfathering, and application of existing zoning design guidelines | Community Development, Public Safety | Long Term | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| GOAL 3: Support new development that respects Mesilla's character and fills a community need. | | | | | |
| Identify primary infill areas and priority areas for infill on future land use map. | Community Development, P&Z | Short Term | Staff Time | Property Owners | Planning Effort |
| Develop clear and specific guest housing and/or accessory dwelling unit (ADU) standards for all zoning districts. | Community Development, P&Z | | Staff Time | | Planning Effort |
| Accommodate new commercial and residential development through infill development on appropriately sized vacant lots and/or renovation of abandoned and vacant structures throughout Mesilla. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | Business and Property Owners | Internal Practice |
| Support incremental growth rather than spot zoning. Support development that is contiguous to developed areas. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | Business and Property Owners | Internal Practice |



HOUSING

Housing Policies

1. Encourage the use of design standards that reflect the historical and rural character in all new residential development. Architecture, building massing, setbacks, open space, and walls should be consistent with the historic character of Mesilla.
2. The Town of Mesilla is committed to ensuring that all existing and new residential neighborhoods are safe for pedestrians, children, and horses by identifying and rectifying dangerous situations that currently exist.
3. Support cluster development projects through adherence to the Zoning Code as long as adequate open space is retained for the benefit of residents and in order to preserve agriculture, and the greenbelt.

| HOUSING GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|------------|--|------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Ensure that all current and future residents of all income levels have access to durable and quality housing that promotes the character of Mesilla. | | | | | |
| Continue to adhere to and follow the Town of Mesilla Manufactured Housing Ordinance in establishing design and development standards for manufactured homes in Mesilla and, within the historic zone, ensure that manufactured housing meets historic district standards. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | Doña Ana County | Resolution/ Ordinance |
| Establish partnerships with existing housing providers to construct affordable housing and provide homeowner support services. | Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | Tierra del Sol Housing Corp; Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority | Partnership/ Agreement |
| Utilize grants, loans, and programs designed to assist lower income residents and those on fixed incomes in the upkeep, maintenance, and weatherization of their homes. | Administration | Medium Term | \$50,000 | MFA Technical Assistance; Tierra del Sol Housing Corp; Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority | Program |
| GOAL 2: Enhance the livability of residential areas in order to maintain the character of Mesilla and improve the overall quality of life for all Town residents. | | | | | |
| Provide infrastructure to identified priority infill areas that concentrate new housing development. | Public Works, P&Z | Ongoing | See ICIP | Infrastructure grants and loans; Developers | Construction |



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will coordinate its economic development efforts with local and regional non-profit organizations, the Old Mesilla Association, MVEDA, NMSU and the Mesilla Valley MPO.
2. The Town of Mesilla will encourage the economically viable agricultural practices including specialty crops and organic production practices by continuing to support the Mesilla Farmer's Market as a venue for the buying and selling of locally-produced agricultural goods.
3. The Town of Mesilla will support tourism development through the creative use of Lodgers' Tax funding.
4. The Town of Mesilla will attract small, clean and light industries to the community in order to diversify the economic base.

| ECONOMIC DEV. GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|---|-------------|------------|--|-------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Achieve the preservation and promotion of Mesilla's agricultural industry. | | | | | |
| Promote the establishment of a rebooted community/farmer's market that offers local produce, and agricultural products. Work in partnership with the Farm Store, a co-op, or a market in the Town Hall parking lot that allows growers to sell from their trucks. | Community Services | Short Term | \$10,000 | Las Cruces Farmers Market | Promotion + Information |
| Identify methods and incentives that help make agriculture an income and revenue generating activity for local farmers. | Community Services, Community Development | Medium Term | Staff Time | NMSU, Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance | Planning Effort |
| Partner with regional economic development groups that promote agricultural practices as both an ecotourism generator and for profit. | Community Development, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | NMSU, Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance | Partnership/ Agreement |
| GOAL 2: Achieve greater area-wide prominence as a destination for all forms of tourism to strengthen the economy. | | | | | |
| Promote the existing tourist and business industry by improving visitor accommodations and attractions based upon the area's unique culture and history. | Community Services, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Promotion + Information |

IMPLEMENTATION - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| ECONOMIC DEV. GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------|------------|--|-------------------------|
| Promote the area's history and culture by continuing to allow use of the Plaza for fiestas, music, and festivals that appeal to tourists as well as locals. | Community Services, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | NM True | Promotion + Information |
| Continue to disseminate information on the history and environment of Mesilla through well designed signs and brochures that are available to visitors. | Community Services, Administration | Ongoing | \$10,000 | NM True, Lodger's Tax | Promotion + Information |
| Promote the existing tourist and business industry by improving visitor accommodations and attractions based upon the area's unique culture and history. | Community Services, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Promotion + Information |
| Coordinate with property owners and vacation rental platforms to collect lodgers tax on vacation rentals enable enhanced promotion through increased revenue. | Community Services, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Promotion + Information |
| GOAL 3: Target small, clean, light industries for location in Mesilla that maintain a balance between revenue and preserving the Town's physical environment and rural character. | | | | | |
| Partner with regional economic development groups to recruit businesses that use locally produced agricultural goods and raw materials so long as they are nonpolluting, clean industries. | Community Development, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | NMSU, Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance | Partnership/ Agreement |
| Continue to direct specialty retail to the historic district, while directing more general retail to commercial areas along Avenida de Mesilla. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Continue to permit cottage industries and home occupations which have minimal environmental impacts and that are compatible with existing surroundings and land uses. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Allow for the strategic use of LEDA funds and incentives for identified target industries and businesses. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | \$10,000 | LEDA Capital Fund | Internal Practice |
| Connect with MVEDA to recruit desirable businesses to existing commercial zones | Community Development, Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance | Partnership/ Agreement |



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Services Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla supports efforts to improve existing parks and community facilities as needed, including replacing playground equipment, adding playing courts and fields, and repairing sprinkler systems as needed.
2. The Town of Mesilla will continue to work with other governmental entities such as the Elephant Butte Irrigation District and the Las Cruces Public Schools in order to allow the citizens of Mesilla access to recreational amenities owned or managed by these entities.
3. The Town of Mesilla will support efforts by the Metropolitan Planning Organization to establish bike lanes and trails within Mesilla where appropriate.
4. The Town of Mesilla will continue to take the necessary steps to ensure the highest state of readiness for its police, fire, and emergency services.

| COMMUNITY SERVICES GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|------------------------------|-------------|------------|--|------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Provide a diversity of passive and active recreational activities and opportunities for all residents. | | | | | |
| Enter into a joint powers agreement with the Elephant Butte Irrigation District (and Mesilla Valley MPO) for use of the trails along acequias for walking, jogging, biking, and horseback riding. | Administration, Public Works | Medium Term | Staff Time | EBID, MPO | Partnership/ Agreement |
| Continue to upgrade community recreational facilities and amenities with available funding, maintenance resources, and the overall demand of Mesilla residents. | Public Works | Ongoing | varies | | Construction |
| Support the construction of new regional trails as outlined by the Mesilla Valley MPO. | Public Works | Long Term | \$25,000 | Mesilla Valley MPO, Transportation Funds | Construction |
| Achieve coordination with the Las Cruces Public School system to determine appropriate joint uses of certain public school facilities within Mesilla. | Administration, Public Works | Medium Term | varies | Las Cruces Public Schools | Partnership/ Agreement |
| GOAL 2: Maintain community safety through enhancing police, fire, and emergency services throughout the Town of Mesilla. | | | | | |
| Prioritize spending for equipment, personnel and technology improvements and upgrades for the Mesilla Marshall's Department and Fire Department. | Public Safety | | varies | Public Safety Grants | Internal Practice |



CULTURAL PRESERVATION

Cultural Preservation Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will foster appreciation and awareness of historic preservation, heritage and community character through support for rehabilitation of historic buildings.
2. The Town of Mesilla will continue to reinforce the character of historic Mesilla through the use of the Yguado Plan as a guide for future growth and development in the historical zones.
3. The Town of Mesilla will continue to collaborate with the State Historic Preservation Division and other statewide historic preservation organizations to make knowledge and expertise available to residents regarding the preservation of and education about historic buildings and landscapes.
4. The Town of Mesilla will become a role model for dedication to community character and historic preservation in the public sector. The Town will continue to require public buildings to reflect the culture and history of the region, while looking towards the future of sustainable building practices and technologies.
5. The Town of Mesilla will encourage youth involvement in historic preservation. If the Town embarks upon rehabilitation projects, youth should be involved, whenever possible.

CULTURAL PRESERVATION GOALS

WHO

WHEN

COST

PARTNERS + RESOURCES

ACTION

GOAL 1: Continue to strengthen and utilize regulatory measures, training, and incentives to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of historic resources.

| | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------|------------|------|----------------------|
| Pursue designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) through the SHPO and National Park Service | P&Z | Short Term | \$25,000 | SHPO | Resolution/Ordinance |
| Review existing design standards for scale and massing standards in the historic zoning district. | P&Z | Short Term | Staff Time | | Resolution/Ordinance |
| Establish an Agricultural and Historic Preservation Committee to serve as the qualified historic preservation commission for the Town. | Administration | Medium Term | | SHPO | Resolution/Ordinance |
| Monitor state and federal funding opportunities for historic preservation and technical assistance programs | Community Development, Administration, Community Services | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |

IMPLEMENTATION - CULTURAL PRESERVATION

| CULTURAL PRESERVATION GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|--|--|------------|------------|--|-------------------------|
| Train current and future staff on the tools, funding, and resources for historic preservation efforts. | Community Development, P&Z, Administration | Short Term | \$5,000 | SHPO | Partnership/ Agreement |
| GOAL 2: Provide the technical assistance and incentives necessary to preserve and improve historic properties. | | | | | |
| Offer technical assistance to historic rehabilitation projects through design review process. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | SHPO | Internal Practice |
| Provide technical expertise to educate owners of historic properties concerning tax credits, grants, and other incentives available. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | SHPO, Historic preservation grants and credits | Program |
| GOAL 3: Establish and support heritage tourism efforts appropriate to Mesilla's historic resources and community needs. | | | | | |
| Continue to produce and update the Mesilla Visitor's Guide and Walking Map | Community Services | Ongoing | \$10,000 | Lodger's Tax | Promotion + Information |
| Continue to support heritage festivals. | Community Services | Ongoing | \$10,000 | Lodger's Tax | Promotion + Information |
| Consider creating a Mesilla Historic Museum utilizing existing historic structure | Board of Trustees | Long Term | varies | | Construction |
| GOAL 4: Preserve and enhance the traditional, visual, and natural resources present in Mesilla and its physical setting. | | | | | |
| Enforce the dark skies ordinance through the regulation of intense/ indirect light and glare without compromising public safety. | Community Development, P&Z, Public Safety | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Continue to achieve a regional architectural image rooted in a variety of Mesilla's historic styles, motifs, and cultural heritage. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Maintain and reinforce an overall form and character for Mesilla, which communicates sensitivity to its physical setting through limitation of building height, and preservation of views. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Continue to establish and maintain a landscape character for Mesilla which stresses resource conservation and maximizes visual and environmental quality. | Community Development, P&Z | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |



TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will ensure that all new road construction that occurs in the Town reflects traditional development patterns.
2. The Town of Mesilla will ensure that development that takes place along the Town's commercial corridors contributes to Mesilla's character.
3. The Town of Mesilla will seek and promote alternative means of transportation in order to promote pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit opportunities.

| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|-----------------------------------|----------|------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Achieve improvements in the existing transportation network that will facilitate future growth and be compatible with Mesilla's development. | | | | | |
| Continue to monitor the growth and needs of the Town to be proactive in meeting traffic and transportation needs. | Administration, Public Works, | On going | Staff Time | MPO, NMDOT, DAC | Internal Practice |
| Consider not only vehicle traffic, but also bicycle and pedestrian traffic when considering land development projects while minimizing disruption to current and future property owners within Mesilla. | Administration, Public Works, P&Z | On going | Staff Time | MPO, NMDOT, DAC | Internal Practice |
| Continue implementing design standards for existing and local streets for both inside and outside the Historic District as they are maintained and/or reconstructed, this includes considering bicycle and pedestrian traffic. | Public Works | On going | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Pursue application for Bicycle Friendly Community status through the League of American Bicyclists. | Administration, Public Works | On going | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| GOAL 2: Achieve improvements in the regional transportation network that will facilitate future area-wide growth and be compatible with Mesilla's development. | | | | | |
| Continue to participate in MPO activities so that the Town maintains an active role during the development of regional transportation planning documents as related to bicycle, auto, pedestrian, public transit, and aviation. | Administration, Public Works, P&Z | On going | Staff Time | MPO, NMDOT | Partnership/ Agreement |

IMPLEMENTATION - TRANSPORTATION

| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|--|---|----------|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| GOAL 3: Address parking and congestion needs within the Historic Plaza District. | | | | | |
| Consider regulations and design standards to manage parking in the historic district and to control on-street parking in order to maintain the historic nature of district and prevent traffic congestion. | Administration, P&Z, Public Works | Mid-term | Staff Time | | Internal Practice |
| Evaluate installing parking meters in the historical plaza area to manage parking congestion in the historical district and generate revenue in the process. | Administration, Public Works | Mid-term | Equipment, staff time, maintenance | | Resolution/ Ordinance |
| Ensure that parking related signage is unobtrusive and as compatible as possible with the historic character of the plaza area. | Administration, Public Works | Mid-term | Equipment, staff time, maintenance | | Internal Practice |
| Continue coordination with public safety and public works departments to manage traffic during special events. | Administration, Public Safety, Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time, | | Internal Practice |
| Continue evaluating the option of providing centralized parking for resident's guests. | Administration, Public Works | Ongoing | Property purchase, property improvement maintenance | | Resolution/ Ordinance |
| Re-evaluate providing off-site parking during special events and providing a shuttle service. Possibly coordinating with nearby schools for parking. | Administration, Public Works | Mid-term | Staff Time, Shuttle Service Costs | School District | Partnership/ Agreement |



INFRASTRUCTURE & WATER RESOURCES

Infrastructure & Water Resources Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will ensure that water use in the Town is efficient and conserves water as much as possible.
2. The Town will continuously monitor the affordability and accessibility to basic water and wastewater infrastructure.

| INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|------------------------------|------------|------------|--|-------------------|
| GOAL 1: Continue to optimize conservation of water resources through application of water conservation standards. | | | | | |
| Revisit tiered rate structure periodically to ensure revenue generated from user fees is adequate to cover the OM&R costs for related infrastructure, and to encourage residents to conserve water. | Administration, Public Works | Annually | Staff Time | MPO | Internal Practice |
| Closely monitor overall water usage and compare results to projections included in 40-Year Water Plan to continually reassess the potential need to acquire additional water rights. | Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time | OSE | Internal Practice |
| Develop a Water Conservation Plan to document and implement conservation standards and practices which help to avoid water shortages/losses, and which balance the need to conserve water resources with quality of life and economic development concerns. | Administration, Public Works | Short Term | \$25,000 | Planning Grant | Planning Effort |
| GOAL 2: Provide the technical assistance and incentives necessary to preserve and improve historic properties. | | | | | |
| Study all potential acceptable solutions for collecting and treating wastewater, including expanding on collection and conveyance system to City of Las Cruces system, other potential solutions such as a decentralized low pressure sewer system (w/ STEP or grinder pumps), continued implementation of individual septic systems for large tracts, etc. | Public Works | Mid-term | \$15,000 | City of Las Cruces, NMED, Planning Grant | Planning Effort |

IMPLEMENTATION - INFRASTRUCTURE & WATER RESOURCES

| INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------|--|---|-----------------------|
| Prioritize wastewater collection infrastructure improvements in areas of Town in greatest need of upgrades. | Administration, Public Works | Ongoing | Three wastewater system projects in ICIP totaling \$1,200,000 | MPO, USDA, EPA, CDBG, State Appropriations, Water Trust Board, etc. | Construction |
| Study feasibility of extending sewer service to dwellings on parcels under 2 acres | Public Works | Mid-term | | MPO | Resolution/Ordinance |
| GOAL 3: Optimize the public investment represented by the Town's existing utility system and the City of Las Cruces' utility system. | | | | | |
| Continue to establish land-use and development priorities which optimize the use of existing infrastructure. | Administration, P&Z, Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time | MPO | Planning Effort |
| Continue dialog/coordination with the City of Las Cruces to ensure future development within the Town fits within any limitations established in agreements between Mesilla and Las Cruces. | Administration, Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time | City of Las Cruces | Partnership/Agreement |
| Look at feasible/affordable options for expanding high speed internet access to the entire Town. | Community Development | Short Term | Staff Time | NM DoIT, Internet Service Providers, NM DoIT GIS database and staff | Committee/Task Force |
| GOAL 4: Provide an uninterrupted supply of water to residents in adequate amounts, at an affordable cost, and at the best quality possible. | | | | | |
| Prioritize water infrastructure replacement/upgrade projects, especially in the center of Town. Continue to improve existing water system maintained and controlled by the Town in order to better facilitate budget planning and control over infrastructure development. | Administration, Public Works | Ongoing | Four water system projects in ICIP totaling \$3,540,000 | MPO, USDA, EPA, CDBG, State Appropriations, Water Trust Board, etc. | Construction |
| Consider future potential growth areas when designing upgrades and expansion to the existing water infrastructure, and size main trunk lines accordingly. | Administration, Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time | MPO | Planning Effort |
| GOAL 5: Provide a storm drainage system in Mesilla that offers the greatest affordable protection from flood hazards. | | | | | |
| Concentrate implementation of needed storm drainage improvements in most problematic areas within Town limits. | Public Works | Short Term | Three storm drainage system projects in ICIP totalling \$600,000 | NMED, FEMA | Construction |
| Ensure that new development neither contributes to existing nor creates new drainage problems in the Town. | Public Works | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Resolution/Ordinance |



HAZARD MITIGATION

Hazard Mitigation Policies

1. The Town of Mesilla will work with regional partners including Doña Ana County, the City of Las Cruces and others to ensure the Town is addressing existing and future hazards.
2. The Town of Mesilla is committed to ensuring public safety and other staff are well trained and ready to respond to any future natural disasters and/or extreme weather events.

| HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| GOAL 1: Implement priority recommendations of 2013 County Hazard Mitigation Plan. | | | | | |
| Continue to upgrade/ repair Mesilla Community Center in conjunction with County emergency management program. | Public Works | Long Term | \$100,000 | | Construction |
| Rehabilitate and Repair Public Safety Building. Upgrade electrical and environmental systems to with-stand severe weather events and serve as a staging area for community response to all hazards | Public Works, Public Safety | Medium Term | \$680,000 | | Construction |
| Implement storm drain inspections and repairs to effectively handle runoff during flood conditions | Public Works | Short Term | \$175,000 | | Construction |
| Work with Doña Ana County to improve County-wide emergency communications and warning systems. | Administration, Public Safety | Ongoing | Staff Time | Dona Ana County | Partnership/ Agreement |
| GOAL 2: Pursue ongoing education and training initiatives to improve safety and reduce hazard risks. | | | | | |
| Implement the Life Safety Initiative "Turn Around Don't Drown". Program to educate residents to avoid flood areas | Administration, Public Safety | Short Term | \$1,800 | | Promotion + Information |
| Participate in the Doña Ana County on public education initiatives in the event of drought (including ways to conserve water). | Administration | Ongoing | Staff Time | Dona Ana County | Partnership/ Agreement |
| Pursue ongoing Wildfire Education and Public Outreach efforts. | Administration, Public Safety | Ongoing | \$2,000 | | Promotion + Information |

IMPLEMENTATION - HAZARD MITIGATION

| HAZARD MITIGATION GOALS | WHO | WHEN | COST | PARTNERS + RESOURCES | ACTION |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------|------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Recommend and implement defensible space, coupled with Firewise Communities practices, to reduce structural ignitability and to protect critical infrastructure within the wildland-urban interface areas | Community Development, Public Safety | Ongoing | Staff Time | | Promotion + Information |

SECTION 6

Appendices & Resources



A. LOCAL RESOURCES

The Town of Mesilla has internal resources it can contribute to future projects. A few of the resources the Town can offer as incentives are detailed below, as well as resources and incentives available through state and federal funding sources. A few general resource directories can be accessed below.

- Creative Finance for Smaller Communities – Urban Land Institute
<http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Creative-Finance-for-Smaller-Communities.pdf>
- Kellogg Foundation Grants List - <https://www.wkkf.org/grants#pp=10&p=1&f3=new-mexico>
- FUNDIT – New Mexico Economic Development Department
<https://gonm.biz/business-resource-center/edd-programs-for-business/finance-development/fundit/>
- Federal Grants Search
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>
- Statewide Grant Opportunities Search
<https://www.centerforprofitexcellence.org/grantmakers-directory?keys=&page=1&order=field+does+the+grantmaker+accept&sort=desc>
- The Grant Plan List of Upcoming Grants
<https://www.thegrantplantnm.com/upcoming-grants/>

1. General Obligation Bonds/General Funds

Agency: Town and/or Doña Ana County (through State)

Type: Capital Outlay

Description: The Town of Mesilla and Doña Ana County may seek GO Bond money or a direct appropriation for infrastructure costs using the County's existing general fund or by issuing new bonds to pay for capital improvements.

2. Industrial Revenue Bonds

Agency: Town and/or Doña Ana County

Type: Bond

Description: The Town of Mesilla or Doña Ana County can issue Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) for the expansion and relocation of commercial and industrial projects. IRB financing is available for land, buildings, and equipment for headquarter office buildings, warehouses, manufacturing facilities and service-oriented facilities not primarily engaged in the sale of goods and commodities at retail. IRB-financed projects are exempt from ad valorem tax for as long as the bonds are outstanding and title to the project is held by the issuing agency. Bonds may be issued in different series with variable principal amounts, interest rates and maturities to accommodate the acquisition of assets with different useful lives.

3. Local Gross Receipts Tax Option (LOGRT)

Agency: Town

Type: Tax Funds

Description: As part of the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA), residents in Mesilla may vote to raise the local gross receipts tax to help fund additional economic development projects within the Town. The tax is collected by the State as part of the statewide gross receipts tax and redistributed to the community for local projects. In general, LOGRT provides the community with a source of additional revenue to fund additional services or projects related to

arts and cultural activities or revitalization projects.

4. Gross Receipts Investment Policy (GRIP)

Agency: Town

Type: Tax Funds

Description: The Town may pass a Gross Receipts Investment Policy (GRIP) ordinance that would allow property owners who develops his or her property to be reimbursed up to 50% of the owner's gross receipt taxes for infrastructure development costs incurred by the property owner (such as water, sewer, and roadway improvements). The ordinance is intended to incentivize development in key areas. Both new retail and certain targeted commercial businesses are eligible for this reimbursement, which is distributed through a Town -managed GRIP fund based on the total attributable direct sales gross receipt taxes paid by an eligible project.

5. Lodgers Tax

Agency: Town

Type: Tax Funds

Description: The Town may use the existing lodgers tax for promotion of downtown's attractions and events to visitors. The tax may also be used to acquire, establish, and operate tourist-related facilities.

B. STATE & FEDERAL RESOURCES

6. Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP)

Agency: Town and/or Doña Ana County (through State)

Type: Capital Outlay

Description: The Town and County may also seek to fund infrastructure projects through their infrastructure capital improvements plans. Although funds are limited, these funds may be used as matching funds to secure larger grants and/or loans by outside agencies (e.g. matching road funds for a street reconfiguration on a state highway).

7. Colonias Infrastructure Fund

Agency: NMFA

Type: Grant/Loan

Website: <https://www.nmfa.net/financing/colonias-loans-and-grants/about-the-colonias-program/colonias-faq/>

Description: This fund may be used to supplement a capital outlay project that is intended to develop a colonia's infrastructure, including water and wastewater systems, flood control and drainage facilities, road infrastructure or housing infrastructure. The program requires that 10% of funding consist of a loan, while the remainder is delivered as a grant. A local match of at least 10% is required for projects. Applications for this funding must go through the Colonias Infrastructure Board and can take more than a year. Several projects may be submitted at once.

8. Transportation Alternatives Program

Agency: MPO/NMDOT

Type: Capital Outlay

Website: <http://dot.state.nm.us/en/Planning.html>

Description: The New Mexico Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a Federal-Aid funding program. TAP funds can

generally be used for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and activities, in addition to other projects, related to economic development, increased safety, and increased accessibility. The New Mexico Department of Transportation has a competitive process to afford TAP funds, based on how well each project proposal addresses the goals of the program.

9. Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local Government Road Fund

Agency: NMDOT

Type: Capital Outlay

Website: <http://www.torcnm.org/downloads/Final%20Approved%20TorC%20Downtown%20Master%20Plan%2010.2014.pdf>

Description: The New Mexico Department of Transportation sets aside money each year for local government road improvements. This program assists local governments to improve, construct, maintain, repair, and pave highways and streets with matching funds from NMDOT.

10. Small Cities Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Agency: New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration

Type: Community Grant

Website:

http://nmdfa.state.nm.us/CDBG/Information_1.aspx

Description: Community Development Block Grants can be used to fund planning projects and the construction of public buildings, community facilities, infrastructure, and housing. Funds are administered by the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration, with a \$500,000 grant limit per applicant. Five percent of matching funds must be provided by the applicant.

11. Rural Business Development Grants (RBDG)

Agency: USDA

Type: Community/nonprofit Grant

Website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-business-development-grants>

Description: Rural Business Development Grants are available to rural communities under 50,000 in population. Grant funds may be used to finance and facilitate the development of small, private, business enterprises which includes any private business which will employ 50 or fewer new employees and has less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues. Programmatic activities are separated into enterprise or opportunity type grant activities.

12. Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program

Agency: USDA

Type: Community/nonprofit Grant

Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

Description: This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is defined as a facility that provides an essential service to the local community for the orderly development of the community in a primarily rural area, and does not include private, commercial or business undertakings.

13. Rural Community Development Initiative Grants

Agency: USDA

Type: Community Grant

Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

Description: This program provides funding to help non-profit housing and community development organizations support housing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas. To improve hous-

ing, community facilities, and community and economic development projects in rural areas. Rural Community Development Initiative grants may be used for, but are not limited to:

- Training sub-grantees to conduct:
- Home-ownership education
- Minority business entrepreneur education
- Strategic plan development
- Accessing alternative funding sources
- Board training
- Developing successful child care facilities
- Creating training tools, such as videos, workbooks, and reference guides
- Effective fundraising techniques

14. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants

Agency: EDA

Type: Community Grant

Website: <https://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>

Description: Under this FFO, EDA solicits applications from applicants in rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and EAA programs. Grants and cooperative agreements made under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches to advance economic prosperity in distressed communities. EDA provides strategic investments on a competitive-merit-basis to support economic development, foster job creation, and attract private investment in economically distressed areas of the United States.

C. PRIVATE/NON-PROFIT GRANTS & LOANS

15. NM Community Development Loan Fund (The Loan Fund)

Agency: The Loan Fund

Type: Business/Organization Loan

Website: <http://www.loanfund.org/>

Description: The Loan fund is a private, non-profit lender that provides \$5,000 - \$500,000 loans to small businesses and non-profits. The Loan Fund will finance equipment, inventory, building renovations, operating capital and business expansion expenses. As a private lender, the Loan Fund seeks to support low-income individuals and communities that need additional "bridge funding" to establish or expand their organizations.

16. ACCION New Mexico

Agency: ACCION New Mexico

Type: Business/Organization Loan

Website: <http://www.accionnm.org/>

Description: ACCION is small-scale micro-lender that makes loans to small businesses that may not qualify for traditional bank loans, and also provides business support services. Loans are primarily intended for low-income borrowers and minority entrepreneurs. Since being founded in 1994, ACCION has financed the start-up or expansion of more than 2,300 new businesses in New Mexico with loans totaling more than \$23 million.

17. The Public Project Revolving Fund (PPRF)

Agency: New Mexico Finance Authority

Type: Community Loan

Website: <http://www.nmfa.net/financing/public-project-revolving-fund/about-the-pprf-program/>

Description: The PPRF is an up to \$200,000 revolving loan fund that can be used to finance public infrastructure

projects, fire and safety equipment, and public buildings. Both market rate based loans and loans to disadvantaged communities at subsidized rates are made from PPRF funds.

18. New Markets Tax Credits

Agency: New Mexico Finance Authority

Type: Business Loan

Website: <http://www.nmfa.net/financing/new-markets-tax-credits/>

Description: The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) is designed to increase private investment to businesses and low income communities with poverty rates higher than 20% by providing a tax credit to investors in business or economic development projects. By making an equity investment in a Community Development Entity (CDE), an investor receive a tax credit against their federal income tax worth 39% of the total equity contribution. Community Development Entities are certified by the CDFI Fund. New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) loan funds are intended to help business investment in low-income census tracts. The fund will help finance the development of commercial, industrial and retail real estate projects (including community facilities), and some housing projects. Loans for up to 25% of the project are available at low interest rates. NMTC loans are combined with other sources of funding that is secured by the applicant and managed by Finance New Mexico.

D. CHARITABLE GRANTS & LOANS

19. Sponsorships

Agency: Miscellaneous

Type: Donation

Description: Although they may often be considered insubstantial or time consuming, sponsorships from local businesses including banks, large retail chains, and other donors can be an effective way to raise money for small scale projects. Often, this is enough to fund façade improvements, basic building rehabilitation efforts, additional streetscape amenities (trees, furniture, etc.) and events. Some sponsorships may also involve the donation of materials or equipment.

20. Crowdfunding

Agency: Miscellaneous

Type: Donation

Websites: many, including Kickstarter.com; Indiegogo.com; gofundme.com; StartSomeGood.com; Causes.com

Description: Crowdfunding is a way for individuals from around the world to pool their assets to fund projects or organizations they support. Most crowdfunding relies on internet platforms that allow donors to connect with projects they are interested in funding. Crowdfunding can be used to support a wide variety of projects that individuals feel are worthy of funding, including many of smaller-scale projects such as façade treatments, public art installations, a downtown wayfinding system, etc. Although donations amounts vary, they can be used as a supplement to larger funding sources. In some cases, these efforts can also be the impetus to moving a conceptual project to one that can actually be implemented.

21. McCune Foundation Grants

Agency: McCune Charitable Foundation

Type: Community and Organization Grants

Website: <http://nmmccune.org/apply>

Description: The McCune Charitable Foundation awards grants to communities, non-profits, public schools, and government agencies that are engaged in community-based projects related to the Foundation's nine foundational priorities. This includes projects that build capacity in the non-profit sector, promote economic development, education and childhood development, healthcare, local food, the arts and community engagement, natural resources, urban design, and rural development are all considered. The average grant award is \$15,000, with some as large as \$25,000.

E. LAND PRESERVATION TOOLS

Table 10. Land Preservation Tools Overview

| TOOL | DESCRIPTION | IN USE? | BARRIERS TO USE |
|--------------------------------|--|---------|---|
| Large-Lot Zoning | Establishes large area requirements per allowable dwelling unit – usually 5 acres or more per unit (to maintain lower densities). Allows for farms, single-family residences, open space, and agricultural related businesses. | Yes | May drive up development costs. |
| Transfer of Development Rights | Development rights are separated from the land in an area (the “sending area”) where the community wishes to limit development and sell them for use in a “receiving area” that is more desirable for development. | No | Complicated to administer. Requires developable sending and receiving areas, which Mesilla does not have. |
| Purchase of Development Rights | Development rights are purchased outright from the property owner and written into the deeds of the property. This limits development of the property to agreed upon types, densities or uses. | No | Costs money to purchase land; requires property owners to sell. |
| Conservation Easements | Voluntary agreement between a property owner, local government, and/or a non-profit to restrict the development, use, or management of set parcels of land. Successfully applied in areas requiring habitat or environmental protection. | No | Requires property owners to put an easement on their properties for this use. |
| Open Space Buffering | Purchase of land by local government or another group to set it aside as open space – for example an open space trail corridor or a greenbelt. | Partial | Costs money to purchase land; requires property owners to sell. May drive up development costs. |
| Cluster Development | Groups housing development on a parcel into a concentrated area of smaller lots in order to preserve open space elsewhere on the parcel. | Yes | May increase housing density beyond what residents prefer. |
| Historic Preservation | Can restrict development in area to established historic standards – such as building size, design, scale, etc. | Yes | May drive up development costs. |
| Infill Development Areas | Directs all new development to existing vacant or underutilized lots through zoning and infrastructure prioritization. | Partial | May increase housing density beyond what residents prefer. |

F. PUBLIC MEETING & SURVEY RESULTS

1st Community Meeting Notes

April 18th, 2017 – 6:00-7:30 PM

22 Attendees

Notes were typed directly from notecards posted on boards. No editing has been done except for spelling mistakes. Bullet point responses grouped by table.

What are Mesilla's greatest needs?

- The historic core needs to be protected. The infrastructure needs to be updated (electrical underground, sewer, water systems need to be repaired) Historic preservation needs to be a priority.
- Minimizing gentrification through grants, tax incentives, etc. Funding sources (fees per sales). Transaction fees.
- Parking alternatives (transit).
- Code enforcement. Funding assistance for home owners to repair homes.
- Need funding – to pay for projects. GRT – need to understand % taxes kept from GRT and property.
- Parking meters: people park all day. Community parking lot with fee. Look at County taxes – don't raise enough funds to see what they want done – farmland pays less.
- Enforce dark skies ordinance: City parking lot, local residential floodlights. Ball parks. Maybe cut of lights at certain time.
- Agriculture development and utilization – look at City tools – no way to have big food processing – no ag industries.
- More staff with higher wages. Street maintenance. More goods and services for residents rather than tourists.
- Needs: infrastructure, sewer (capacity, condition), streets (congestion), electric (capacity). Parking. Define # of dwellings per property (1 per 4000 sq ft or # per property).
- Issues: Highway 28 should be a commercial strip (general commercial – C1) outside the historic areas in order to provide GRT without relying solely on Plaza shops to support the town.
- Finish core infrastructure: sewer, water streets. Value changes with improvements.
- Maintaining the exceptional character of Mesilla. Avoiding the community becoming over extended in obligations.
- Avoid anything that causes Mesilla to become a rust belt [unreadable]
- We need a safe sewer system. Sewage smell is a noticeable at certain places – is this a problem with sewage lines?
- Now that some extension of water service has taken place, we need to replace water lines in core area as needed. Need a safe water system.
- Sidewalks – we like the brick/historic feeling sidewalks. Lots of sidewalks need repair. Some areas that done have sidewalks might benefit from having them. But we don't want to see roads made much wider to accommodate sidewalks.

- Property (owned by a church?) @ university and Avenue de Mesilla – where is development of this property at? Want possible tabernacle to fit neighborhood. Want green space, dark skies compliance, traffic problems addressed.
- Better dark skies enforcement: building permits should have a place asking about proposed lighting so better enforcement can be accomplished. (So applicants can better understand requirements and better work with Town.)

What are Mesilla's greatest opportunities?

- Use restaurant TVs to promote the town events, history... [This idea was liked by another group]
- Create Town museum in old adobe building next to community center.
- Love the comment about emphasizing our history to bring history minded tourists to the area.
- Our table would like to see an agriculture/produce heave farmer's market. Fewer crafts during growing season. Move farmer's market to Town Hall area to better accommodate growers trucks. Two markets: crafts on plaza, grows by town hall?
- Paint 1-way arrows on street. Need good signage on 1-ways in downtown. Also, we need to be nicer about ticketing when our visitors accidently go down one-ways
- Would more 1-way streets help make streets more walkable/bikeable by giving us sidewalks/safety without widening them?
- Cultural center: to provide a place for book, poetry readings, music, art (all with a local flavor). Blacksmith
- Culinary center for the area.
- Dark streets you can see stars. Ditch Trails. Bosque park: bocce ball courts, peacefulness, stores that sell NM products.
- Tourism Exploitation: importance of our history. Gadsden Purchase signed in Town Plaza. Taylor Monument (Historic Site).
- More restaurants: not changes. Big draw is our individuality. Annexing businesses on Avenida de Mesilla. Bike paths + walking paths. Heritage tourism: attract interest in our history.
- The privately-owned Gadsden Museum has hundreds of assets that need to be catalogued and protected. If it could be resurrected and promoted it would be a huge cultural attraction. This area has enormous potential as a historical and cultural destination. Souvenir shops don't interest people. The books store is an asset – more businesses and locations that have substance...

20 years from now, how do you envision Mesilla?

- Slow growth. Not much change. Retain Mesilla's uniqueness and Spanish Heritage. Multi-generational aspect. Less rentals – more homeowners.
- Just like it is, but with sound, modern infrastructure. Keep the fields, keep the roosters!
- "The same, only better." Historically preserved, but economically solvent to meet the town's infrastructure and support needs.
- Historically preserved, to the developed guidelines. Consistent to the ordinances and Yguado Plan
- I envision Mesilla looking no different, in a marginal sense, than today!

What investments are needed to make this vision a reality?

- Lodgers Tax – Money from City of Las Cruces to help promote Mesilla. Las Cruces capitalizes on Mesilla for tourism (due to the number of hotels there).
- Adopt as an ordinance the Yguado Plan
- Leadership within the board and planning and zoning that values our history and ordinances.
- Upkeep of our parks. More green areas. Quality of our Roads.
- Investments: a grant writer.
- Promote small lot farming. Five acre lots. For example, straw, flowers, lavender, herbs. What is a profitable crop for a 5 acre lot?
- Diversify businesses. We have a lot of tourist shops. We need businesses that allow everyday Mesilleros to grocery shop, go to the pharmacy, laundry, etc. Bakery.
- Infrastructure: street repair, roads, water. Safety – deputies. Bridge @ post office
- Park maintenance, fence dangerous around playground. Crosswalk at “y” @ Andale’s @ Avenue Mesilla
- Investments: infrastructure – installed in such a way as to not impose on the historic qualities of the town: sewer, electric, water.

2nd Community Meeting Notes

August 8th, 2017 – 6:00-7:30 PM

6 Attendees

Land Use

- Need better controls for the allowable number of units per lot in the historic district.
 - P&Z would like more guidance on the type and scale of buildings being built as infill
 - Discussion of minimum lot sizes allowed in historic district and infill happening through development of single lot vs subdivisions (lot splits)
 - Need to define allowable densities in core as infill occurs.
 - Not just the number of units but number of people living in these areas, as many may be rental properties
- Accessory dwelling unit component for historic lots – need to define and account for in code
- Subdivision of historic lots – require infrastructure capacity + connection for subdivision approval and/or building permit. Need to check parking availability of subdivision occurring in historic district.
- Change areas:
 - Maybe allow commercial along NM 28 to Union.
 - However, large lots in this area would result in some lots having two zoning classifications. Would need to clearly define how this would work and how subdivision of the property would be affected by zoning boundaries.
 - Lot along University at NM 28 is owned by church as was first subdivided in 1980’s but remains undeveloped.
- Perhaps look into additional zoning district/overlay zone for new commercial areas along NM 28 that would address the above concerns.
- Uniform development code needed for signage especially – differences between County requirements and Mesilla’s

Economic Development

- Farmers need large lots to make farming economically feasible. Should continue to subdivide existing large lots which makes active farming less feasible and erodes Mesilla's greenbelt.
- Larger farmers in the Valley continue to cultivate multiple farms and rent land from some property owners in Mesilla. Many of these farmers are from families that have lived in the Valley for generations.
- Debate on the need for more commercial land – C1 lots along NM 28 have not all been developed.

Housing

- Large number of renters in Historic district.
- Affordability issues with large lot homes driving up property values
- Issues for the Town qualifying for certain grants/assistance due to high median incomes in Mesilla.
- Additional infill areas may be possible outside historic district
 - Along University (Area C)

Cultural Preservation

- Size of historic district – quite large, meaning controls are applied over a large area to administer
- Density of historic core has increased since 1970's
 - Population density vs housing unit density
- Change in character as roads have been paved.
 - Historic/cultural studies have been required for roadway projects (even paved roads), which has driven up the cost of improvements. Have not been able to get an area wide exception for routine roadway maintenance projects.
- Code enforcement is tricky
 - Do not have a dedicated code enforcement officer and additional code enforcement would be costly
 - It is also hard for the Town to enforce due to litigation costs if owners refuse to comply and contest in court.

Transportation

- Parking meters for historic district?
 - Low hanging fruit
 - Idea should be looked at more closely
 - Residents would need permit to park next to their properties
 - Workers at restaurants currently take up a lot of parking spaces.
 - Tourists are likely willing to pay parking fees and are used to them
- Increased number of cyclists coming through town in recent years.
- Proposed trails are being developed with Mesilla Valley MPO, but have a medium to long term implementation timeframe.

Infrastructure

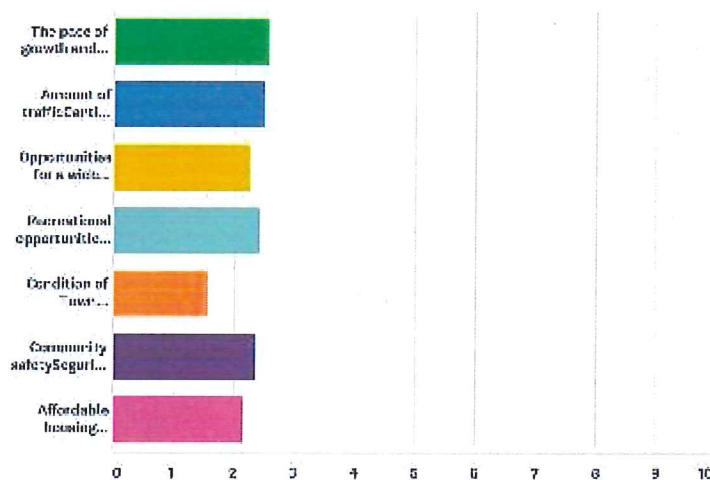
- High speed internet is lacking in rural areas west of Snow Road. Residents here rely on cell phone service and/or satellite connections
- This is an issue across rural areas in the Southwest, but there are federal funds available to extend lines.
- Internet provider has said the density of the area is too low to justify infrastructure costs of extending cable lines...

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q1 How satisfied are you with the following quality of life aspects in Mesilla? Que tan satisfecho esta usted con los siguientes aspectos referentes a la calidad de vida en Mesilla?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 2



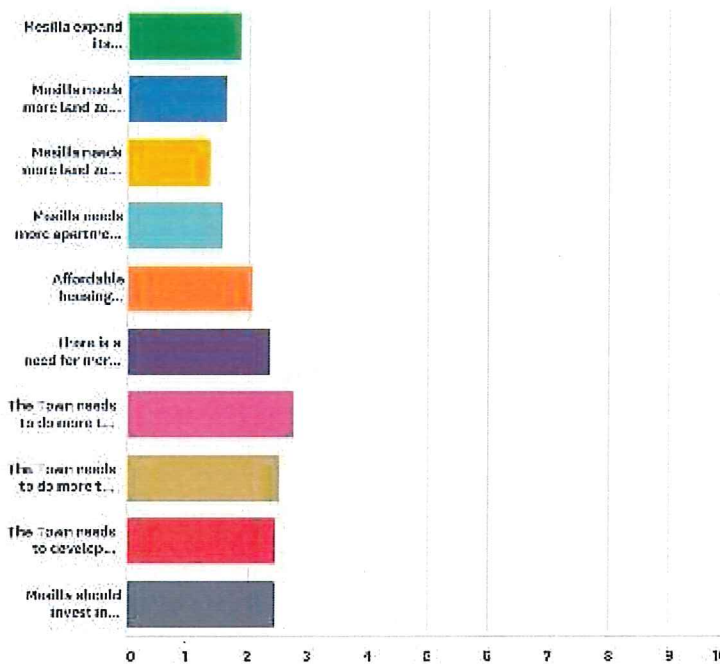
| | SATISFACTORY/SATISFECHO | NEUTRAL/NEUTRAL | UNSATISFACTORY/INSATISFECHO | TOTAL | WEIGHT AVERAGE |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------|----------------|
| The pace of growth and development El ritmo de desarrollo y crecimiento | 57.14% 3 | 42.85% 5 | 0.00% 0 | 14 | |
| Amount of traffic Cantidad de tráfico | 57.14% 3 | 35.71% 5 | 7.14% 1 | 14 | |
| Opportunities for a wide range of housing in Mesilla Oportunidades de acceso a diferentes tipos de viviendas | 41.67% 3 | 41.67% 5 | 16.67% 2 | 12 | |
| Recreational opportunities in the Town Oportunidades de acceso a varios tipos de recreación | 64.29% 3 | 14.29% 2 | 21.43% 3 | 14 | |
| Condition of Town streets Condición de las calles/visas en la Ciudad | 28.57% 1 | 0.00% 0 | 71.43% 10 | 14 | |
| Community safety Seguridad en la comunidad | 57.14% 3 | 21.43% 3 | 21.43% 3 | 14 | |
| Affordable housing opportunities Oportunidades de acceso a viviendas asequibles | 33.33% 4 | 55.56% 7 | 11.11% 2 | 13 | |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q2 Please indicate how strongly agree or disagree with the following statements. Por favor Indique su nivel de acuerdo o desacuerdo respecto a las siguientes declaraciones

Answered: 14 Skipped: 2



| | YES/SI | NEUTRAL/NEUTRAL | NO/NO | TOTAL | WEIGHTED AVERAGE |
|---|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| Mesilla expand its geographical area by annexing land Mesilla debe expandir su área geográfica anexando más territorio | 28.57% 4 | 28.57% 4 | 42.86% 6 | 14 | 1.86 |
| Mesilla needs more land zoned for commercial and industrial uses Mesilla necesita más zonas zonadas para usos comerciales e industriales | 14.29% 2 | 35.71% 5 | 50.00% 7 | 14 | 1.81 |
| Mesilla needs more land zoned for residential uses at higher densities Mesilla necesita más zonas zonadas para usos residenciales con densidades más altas | 14.29% 2 | 7.14% 1 | 78.57% 11 | 14 | 1.36 |
| Mesilla needs more apartments or multifamily dwellings Hay necesidad en Mesilla de construir más apartamentos y viviendas multifamiliares | 7.14% 1 | 42.86% 6 | 50.00% 7 | 14 | 1.87 |
| Affordable housing opportunities are sufficient in Mesilla Las oportunidades de vivienda asequible son suficientes en Mesilla | 25.00% 3 | 58.33% 8 | 16.67% 2 | 12 | 2.06 |
| There is a need for more economic development/business opportunities in Mesilla Existe la necesidad de fomentar el desarrollo económico/opportunidades de negocio en Mesilla | 53.85% 7 | 30.77% 4 | 15.38% 2 | 13 | 2.36 |
| The Town needs to do more to protect agricultural land in and around Mesilla La ciudad debe hacer más para proteger los terrenos agrícolas en y alrededor de Mesilla | 76.92% 10 | 23.08% 3 | 0.00% 0 | 13 | 2.77 |

2/9

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|----|------|
| The Town needs to do more to protect the character and history of Mesilla/La ciudad debe hacer más para proteger el carácter y la historia de Mesilla | 61.54% 6 | 30.77% 1 | 7.69% 1 | 13 | 2.51 |
| The Town needs to develop water conservation measures or ordinances/La ciudad debe desarrollar medidas u ordenanzas para la conservación de agua | 61.54% 6 | 23.08% 3 | 15.38% 2 | 13 | 2.16 |
| Mesilla should invest in streetscape improvements like small plazas/community meeting spaces, tree canopy/shade structures, bicycle facilities for leisure and commuting/Mesilla debe invertir en mejorar el paisaje urbano como plazas/espacios | 61.54% 6 | 23.08% 3 | 15.38% 2 | 13 | 2.16 |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q3 What do you see as the primary community assets in Mesilla? (For example, historic buildings, land, people, etc.). En su opinion, cuáles son los activos comunitarios principales en Mesilla? (por ejemplo, construcciones historicas, terrenos, su gente, etc)

Answered: 11 Skipped: 5

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Green, rural feel, historic community and buildings | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | People/community, history, historic buildings | 6/30/2017 10:31 AM |
| 3 | Historic character, walkability + human scale, narrow streets, sense of history and history, preserved agriculture based surroundings, darkskies, signage control | 6/30/2017 10:26 AM |
| 4 | History, the Plaza | 6/30/2017 10:18 AM |
| 5 | Historic preservation and continuation of existing zoning | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 6 | Small size; low crime; quiet; historic assets such as buildings, local knowledge | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 7 | The lifestyle | 6/30/2017 10:07 AM |
| 8 | A community center/civic hub – i.e. the plaza and surrounding businesses – the town/developed environment designed for pedestrian activity/connectivity | 6/15/2017 4:53 PM |
| 9 | Unexpected green(fresh) like trees in a desert climate | 7/26/2017 11:01 PM |
| 10 | people and buildings | 6/22/2017 5:33 PM |
| 11 | U need to prevent growth not in compliance in the Historic zones to our Existing zoning as it is today | 4/30/2017 4:52 PM |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q4 What types of businesses and commercial developments are needed in Mesilla and where should that development take place? ¿Que tipos de negocios y desarrollo comercial se necesitan en Mesilla, y en que lugares debería suceder ese desarrollo?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 5

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Secure farms (herbs, lavender, etc). Businesses that support higher-end tourism - restaurants, a quality, small scale history museum - focus on history buffs. Coffee roaster, tortilleria, brew pub type stuff. Farm tours or farm camp for families. | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | Businesses that are locally owned and operated and protect the environment | 6/30/2017 10:31 AM |
| 3 | Stores that support basic living needs, so we don't spend our money in Las Cruces or El Paso. Grocery, bakery, pharmacy, hardware - in scale with existing buildings - daycare, pet care + supplies, doctors, dentists, law offices, property management, real estate, garden center, truck farms, health aids services, young peoples' entertainment (game stores, craft stores). | 6/30/2017 10:26 AM |
| 4 | Retail sales of NM local products | 6/30/2017 10:18 AM |
| 5 | any developments should happen in existing commercially zoned areas | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 6 | Bike Rental, Laundromat, Grocery Store (not convenience store) | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 7 | Clean, non-smokeback type stuff. Needs to fit the character of Mesilla. | 6/30/2017 10:07 AM |
| 8 | comp plan, development codes and resulting development should support/inplement "transit zone" development concept. | 6/15/2017 4:53 PM |
| 9 | More culturally diverse dining opportunities, a DMV office, and hospital affiliated medical clinic | 7/28/2017 11:01 PM |
| 10 | Trader Joes in the Commercial areas or a McDonalds similar to that in Sedona AZ across from Sharys | 5/22/2017 5:33 PM |
| 11 | Only in the commercial and historic commercial zones Not in other zones all other zones for residential use no apartments or condominiums preserve Mesilla by maintaining legend zoning to the core | 4/30/2017 4:53 PM |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q5 Is the Town's infrastructure & utilities (sidewalks, sewer lines, and water pressure) adequate? ¿Que tan adecuadas / bien mantenidas son las aceras, el sistema de alcantarillado, y la presión de agua en Mesilla?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 5

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1 | No, sewer system seems to be aging, sidewalks are sketchy, but should be safe without being extended too much (don't want to sacrifice rural feel) | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | water and sewer lines need update | 6/30/2017 10:31 AM |
| 3 | Not really - in some places it's okay. | 6/30/2017 10:28 AM |
| 4 | No | 6/30/2017 10:18 AM |
| 5 | No, there is always a need to update and repair | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 6 | I don't think so, but I don't know enough about it. | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 7 | Needs some TLC | 6/30/2017 10:07 AM |
| 8 | Need to implement 'green infrastructure/low impact development' practices into municipal commercial and residential projects. | 6/15/2017 4:53 PM |
| 9 | yes, but walking paths other than the roadway are limited to water ditch accessways which are sometimes signed with no trespassing or glass upon the pathways but beautiful areas to walk | 7/26/2017 11:01 PM |
| 10 | No, they fail every day | 6/22/2017 5:33 PM |
| 11 | No we need special assessments to pay for improvements (water sewer by the bars and restaurants they're the ones that put the demands out for heavy use not the residents) | 4/30/2017 4:53 PM |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q6 What should the Town of Mesilla do to preserve the rural character and historical significance of Mesilla? ¿Que debe hacer el Pueblo para preservar el caracter rural y significado histórico de Mesilla?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 5

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Deny zoning for large commercial and multifamily dwellings. No big box stores. Favor local businesses over big, out of town businesses. Keep money in town. | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | 1. Do not allow national chains to be established here. 2. Do allow small, family owned businesses that protect the rural and historical significance of Mesilla as well as the environment. | 6/30/2017 10:31 AM |
| 3 | Maintain planning and zoning to encourage that preservation - restrict size of buildings - style (historic styles) and require appropriate landscaping. Encourage historic displays (museums in city hall or plaza). Encourage small farms. | 6/30/2017 10:28 AM |
| 4 | Preserve the Plaza character. | 6/30/2017 10:16 AM |
| 5 | be consistent in historic districts as far as ordinances and enforcement. | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 6 | Incentives to keep farmland, stay small, put resources towards rehabilitation of the Cadeen Museum, which is currently privately owned but needs money from the State. | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 7 | Everything | 6/30/2017 10:07 AM |
| 8 | control (inappropriate) growth through thoughtful planning - strategic expansion/extension/improving infrastructure. development code could adopt a minimum acre size for non-rural/agricultural land to ensure farmland is not developed creating sprawl, can explore agricultural conservation easements. | 6/15/2017 4:52 PM |
| 9 | Promote more tourism during winter time to people living in the northern snow states where Mesilla could be "the other Florida" | 7/26/2017 11:04 PM |
| 10 | Continue with the strict ordinances, just make sure that the ordinances are clearer and concise. There is an issue with the interpretations of some of them, and they need to be clarified. | 6/22/2017 9:03 PM |
| 11 | enforce current zoning without exception to zoning use the current master plan (preservation means to Not change), our past history speaks for itself Mesilla is the most historically preserved town in the state according to the state historic office established here in Mesilla by alfonso lópez on the plaza when he has visited here! | 4/30/2017 4:53 PM |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q7 If Mesilla invested in street improvements, IE: like small plazas/community meeting spaces, tree canopy/ shade structures, bicycle facilities for leisure and commuting, what would be the top 3 most important ones to start with and why? Si Mesilla invirtiera en mejoras al paisaje urbano, Ej: como plazoletas/espacios de reunion comunitarios, arboles de sombra/ estructuras para crear sombra, instalaciones para bicicletas para ocio y desplazamiento. Cuales serian las 3 mas importantes para empezar y por que?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 6

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|----|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 1) maybe bike facilities to bring in bike tourism. 2) shade - gives us the rural feel. 3) plazas! community feel | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | 1) bike + walking paths outside of central area; 2) shaded (trees or structures) in parks and benches; 3) water fountains + trash + recycling containers | 6/30/2017 10:28 AM |
| 3 | Small plazas with trees | 6/30/2017 10:18 AM |
| 4 | Infrastructure such as sewer, water, streets | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 5 | Bike path along Highway 20. We have enough parks. Non-touristy amenities on the plaza... | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 6 | Shade structures, benches, TOD | 6/30/2017 10:07 AM |
| 7 | 1. tree canopy 2. bicycle facilities (on Hwy 20) | 6/15/2017 4:53 PM |
| 8 | 1. Bicycle facilities and pathways to promote local people to utilize but also to bring in tourism. 2. canopy structures placed in ideal places emphasizing certain views: mountains, tower gardens, historical sites, etc and 3. | 7/26/2017 11:04 PM |
| 9 | Bicycle facilities | 5/22/2017 5:33 PM |
| 10 | The plaza area and all the agricultural use layered zoning | 4/30/2017 4:52 PM |

Mesilla Community Survey

SurveyMonkey

Q8 Please add any additional issues you would like to see addressed as part of this plan. Por favor, agregue cualquier problema o inquietud adicional que le gustaría ver abordado como parte de este plan.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 10

| # | RESPONSES | DATE |
|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | I'd love to see a quality historic museum and quality signage re history. Meals that people could gather for, like a pancake breakfast on the plaza or breakfast burritos. Tourism - engage tourists from different markets like El Paso, and Texas, Arizona, and other parts of NM - maybe Colorado | 6/30/2017 10:37 AM |
| 2 | 1) Quiet traffic zones - i.e., motorcycles roaring on Ave de Mesilla + University; 2) testing for lead + other significant contaminants in water supply (such as arsenic, pesticides + herbicides); 3) some way to provide low-cost, small loans to low-income residents for home improvements that help meet housing codes where current conditions have been "grandfathered" in or where they are in violation. | 6/30/2017 10:26 AM |
| 3 | We love Mesilla | 6/30/2017 10:16 AM |
| 4 | There is demolition by neglect that is occurring with some existing historic structures | 6/30/2017 10:14 AM |
| 5 | Mesilla should not identify itself as a tourist town first | 6/30/2017 10:11 AM |
| 6 | Seek historical grants or tax incentives for brick and other money fundraisers if necessary | 4/30/2017 4:53 PM |

