

***Chapter One: A Guide to the Town
of Silver City 2004 Comprehensive
Plan***

March 2004

Chapter One: *A Guide to the Comprehensive Plan*

A. Principles of the *Comprehensive Plan*

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* offers a guide for achieving balanced growth and development in Silver City now and into the future. Early in 2002 the town initiated a process of bringing the 1996 *Comprehensive Plan* up to date. Throughout Year 2003 and into 2004, the town planning staff, the *Comprehensive Plan* Task Force and consultants have been working to engage the citizens of Silver City and to gather and review existing information for the *Silver City Comprehensive Plan*.

The town's comprehensive plan update took place simultaneously with the comprehensive plan update for Grant County. This represents the first time that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through New Mexico's Local Government Division have been used simultaneously and under a single contract to develop the respective comprehensive plans of a municipality and county in New Mexico. This has resulted in collaborative efforts of town residents and officials and their counterparts in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas outside Silver City. As a result, the respective comprehensive plans contain many common elements, especially with regard to land use and economic development.

From an extensive public participation and collaborative process, seven key principles have emerged to guide future growth and development of the community. These key principles form the foundation of the *Comprehensive Plan*:

1. Provide direction to both short-term and long-term economic recovery as the town seeks to collaborate with the county and other municipalities to develop a diverse and sustainable regional economy.
2. Establish principles and goals to guide the town's collaboration with Grant County in creation of a growth management strategy for the ETZ, including procedures for joint planning and development review.
3. Protect the community's historic downtown and neighborhoods, including the town's distinctive architecture and settlement patterns.
4. Preserve the quality of the natural environment, open space,

A Comprehensive Plan process is meant to assist citizens of a community identify and implement actions for better transportation, land use, housing, infrastructure, economic development, parks and open space, and other issues that shape daily life in their community.

water and other resources.

5. Maintain and enhance community facilities and provide park, open space and recreational opportunities to serve the entire community.
6. Protect Silver City's "small town" feel and character, and shape new growth to promote walkable livable neighborhoods and districts.
7. Ensure that the town's cultural diversity is maintained and historic traditions are protected and celebrated.

B. Organization of the Plan

The *Comprehensive Plan* is organized into eight chapters:

Chapter One (this chapter), A Guide to the *Comprehensive Plan*, provides an introduction and a brief summary of how the Plan was developed, as well as the plan's organization. This chapter identifies priority issues and specific action strategies to address these key issues.

Chapter Two, Strategic Actions, identify the priority goals, policies and implementation measures derived from the various elements of the *Comprehensive Plan* set forth in chapters 3-8. While all goals and polices identified in the *Comprehensive Plan* represent the consensus of the community on important issues, the *Strategic Action Plan* set forth in the next chapter defines the most important goals of the community, especially for the immediate future.

Chapter Three, Land Use & Community Design, addresses the town's land use code, current and future land use and provides an overview of the important features and characteristics of the community. This chapter contains the future land use map and a description of land use categories for the Plan. In addition, this chapter outlines a means to ensure that future development and community design are informed by the best and most distinctive qualities of the town, as well as a set of *best practices* to guide future development. The chapter also provides an overview of Silver City's downtown area as well as the goals and policies to assist in the continuing revitalization of this important and historic area of the town. The section discussing the land use and growth management in the Extra-territorial Zone (ETZ) is essentially the same as the corresponding section in the *Grant County Comprehensive Plan*.

Chapter Four, Transportation and Circulation, looks at the movement of cars and trucks, people, bicycles and buses throughout the community; and it sets forth agreed-upon improvements in the transportation system.

Chapter Five, Housing, outlines the community's housing needs and trends; and it identifies ways that the town can promote quality housing, including affordable housing, throughout the community.

Chapter Six, Public Facilities and Services, looks at public services and facilities including water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, police and fire protection, and other community services and facilities such as parks and recreation. Discussion of natural resource issues with regard to water and sewer is also found in Chapter 8: Natural Resources. In addition, sewer and water extension policy is discussed as part of growth management strategy in Chapter 3: Land Use and Community Design. These divisions reflect in part divisions in the *Silver City 1996 Comprehensive Plan*.

Chapter Seven, Economic Development, addresses how the economic health of the town can be improved by providing more job opportunities and by creating a more diversified and sustainable local economy. This chapter is essentially the same as the corresponding chapter in the *County Comprehensive Plan* with regard to overall analysis and goals, but there are specific policies and goals for the town that differ from those of the county.

Chapter Eight, Natural Resources and Hazards, addresses issues that relate to the town's local and regional environment as well as potential natural hazards.

C. What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Purpose & Approach

On a daily basis, most residents of Silver City leave their homes for school, work, recreation, entertainment or shopping. Do you ever think about why these places are located where they are? Does traffic congestion cause you to wish you could walk to school or work, or ride your bike rather than drive? When you turn on the tap for a glass of water, do you ever think about where the water is coming from or how it is getting to your house? If so, you are beginning to consider some of the elements comprehensive planning deals with – housing, education, economic development, land use, transportation and infrastructure.

Essentially, comprehensive planning for a city or town is a process for:

- Solving a community's problems;
- Protecting important features; and
- Guiding how the community will grow in the future.

Comprehensive planning is a very important task in every community. The way in which elements of a town or city are organized and the way in which they interconnect influence the quality of life for both citizens and visitors. A comprehensive planning process is meant to assist citizens of the community to identify and implement actions for better transportation, land use, housing, public facilities and programs, infrastructure; economic development, parks and open space, and other policies and programs that shape daily life in their community. The comprehensive plan could be called the "roadmap" to guide development and growth of the town now and into the future, for the next 10 to 20 years.

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* sets forth the town's policies regarding the types and locations of future land use and activities. It outlines the character and quality of development as well as the process for how development should proceed. While the Plan addresses many town issues, there are other factors outside of the town's control that influence its future land use, growth and development. Market forces and economic trends, as well as the land use and transportation decisions of adjacent communities and Grant County, are examples of the types of factors that will influence the Town of Silver City. It is important that the Plan recognizes such influences and includes a set of goals and policies that are visionary, yet realistic, in light of these factors.

A major goal is better collaboration between the town and county on issues of common concern, building upon the improvements in communication and cooperation that everyone recognizes have occurred in recent months.

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* is based upon the community's values, goals and priorities; and its purpose in large part is to guide in the development of public policy. The Town Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission will reference the Plan when making land use and planning-related decisions. Town staff will utilize the Plan on a regular basis to assist in administering and regulating land use and development activity. The Plan will also be a guide to staff, Planning and Zoning Commissioners and elected officials in appropriate revisions of the Land Use Code and Municipal Code to address community concerns and to best follow the roadmap that has been provided. Town residents can use the Plan to understand the town's approach to regulating development, protecting natural resources, and upholding the community's values.

Goals, Policies & Implementation Measures

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* identifies a set of recommended goals, policies and implementation strategies for all elements of the Plan; these are included in chapters 3-8 (see Section B of this chapter). The *Comprehensive Plan* is guided by the key principles outlined in Section A. These principles provide the foundation for the Plan, as well as the direction for goals, policies and implementation measures. To help understand the meaning of the terms used - goals, policies and

implementation measures - the following definitions are provided:

Goals are general statements of values and aspirations of the community. As goals are general in nature, they are often widely supported by community members and, in most cases, are uncontroversial among residents.

Policies provide a more precise interpretation and intention for a goal statement. Policies can outline means or initiatives needed to achieve a specific goal.

Implementation Measures outline the plan of action the town can take to achieve the policies, and thereby doing, achieve the goals and policies set forth in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Implementation measures may include further utilization of existing town programs (e.g., infrastructure upgrades) and/or new planning actions (e.g., development of a new ordinance) the town should pursue. The action plan will also include intergovernmental collaboration and private-public partnerships to achieve desired goals.

D. Developing the Comprehensive Plan

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* was developed in three phases consisting of (1) review and reconnaissance (2) development and design, and (3) refinement and adoption. The town's *Comprehensive Plan* Task Force, Town Staff, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Elected Officials provided overall direction. There were extensive interviews and public meetings. Staff reviewed the previous comprehensive plan to update information. They also responded to specific questions from the consultant and task force members with information and analyses that helped shape overall understanding of the issues and provide guides for future policy.

The task force met many times as a group and in sub-groups to consider different elements of the plan. Task force members worked many hours to consider carefully the important issues that face the community and to seek solutions that provide common ground for important future decisions for the town. Members understood from the beginning that they were stewards of a process that meant not only providing their own knowledge and wisdom, but seeking out the best ideas of others in their group and from the general public. There was close coordination also with the Grant County Task Force, and joint meetings were a common occurrence.

Phase One, review and reconnaissance, consisted of information gathering for, and information dissemination of, elements of the *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* as they were being developed. In this phase, general research was conducted into the history, regional environment,

existing land use and other important elements that have shaped the development of Silver City. This phase also consisted of:

- A kick-off meeting involving elected officials, development review officials of the town and county, and task force members and staff of both the town and county;
- A joint Silver City/Grant County community-wide workshop; interviews with elected officials, staff and members of the community;
- Dissemination of a survey/questionnaire; and
- A series of task force meetings to begin gathering information and to identify key principles that should guide the Plan.

The meetings of the comprehensive plan task force were critical in the collection and analysis of information as it was being shaped into the *Comprehensive Plan* during past months.

Phase Two, development and design, was initiated by further public outreach and updates to the task force, staff and the Town Council. A number of public meetings were held for each neighborhood in the town (including Brewer Hill, Downtown/University Neighborhoods, Chihuahua Hill, Indian Hills, Mountain View, and Rosedale). At each meeting, facilitators guided the discussion and gathered important information from community residents. In addition to the neighborhood meetings, a joint Grant County/Town of Silver City community workshop focused on updating the goals and policies of the Silver City 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*, as well as addressing issues in the ETZ and Silver City downtown area. Results of the community survey, while it did not provide a rigorous methodology or scientific sample, also provided important information. Citizen volunteers prepared two summaries of the findings of the questionnaire, and both are available at the Community Development Department and the Silver City Public Library. The information gathered from the meetings and community workshop, interviews and survey shaped the 2004 Plan document.

Upon completion of Phases One and Two of the *Comprehensive Plan* process, the draft plan was developed. Shortly thereafter, Phase Three, the final phase of the planning process, was initiated. Phase Three includes the review of the draft plan by town staff, the task force, town officials and the public. Final changes were made in the Draft plan prior to public hearings and review by public officials that preceded its adoption.

Developers Workshop. The Town of Silver City wants to promote better relations with the development community and to encourage the highest quality development within the town and in the ETZ. As part of the comprehensive plan process, the town and county sponsored a Developers Workshop to address important issues regarding the development process and development review with a shared concern about future development review procedures in the ETZ.

In addition to the regular consultant team, the consultant brought four developers and development consultants to Silver City for the Developer's Workshop as part of a community workshop on June 6-7-8, including: Christopher Calott, Tom Gifford, and Roy Wroth, all architects, urban designers and development consultants. Mrs. Calott and Gifford are also partners in a number of recent development projects in several cities in New Mexico, including Santa Fe, Albuquerque and Los Alamos. One consultant (Dean Carris) is the developer of the Dos Griegos Project in the ETZ north of Silver City, perhaps the most widely admired project in the ETZ. The consultant team, along with local architect and designer Jim Redford, also conducted a tour of older and more recent developments in the Silver City area that represent both best practices and poor practices in real estate development.

These architects, designers and development professionals joined the consultants in making presentations regarding best development practices in residential, commercial and mixed-use projects from other cities-most of which represented projects of the consultants themselves. A slide presentation contrasted patterns of traditional neighborhood development (TND) with conventional suburban development (CSD), in order to establish the basis for planning and zoning that supports neighborhood and district centers following Silver City's historic pattern.

Following the tour and presentations, workshop participants and consultants joined in a variety of discussions regarding best development practices and how to implement them in Silver City and the ETZ. The workshop participants included consultants, staff, members of the Comprehensive Plan Task Forces of the town and county, and citizens. This Comprehensive Plan is the result of discussions with working groups from the three-day workshop.

The workshop addressed the process of development review for the town and county, as well as the town's land use code and the county's subdivision ordinance. Recognizing problems with the development review process, the Silver City 1996 *Comprehensive Plan* adopted the goal of "establishing a standard development process and to promote better communication between developers, planning staff, Planning and Zoning Commission and the neighborhoods." [See Goal 1.9, 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*.] The 2004 *Comprehensive Plan* includes the development of goals, policies and implementation measures for the 2004 *Comprehensive Plan*, particularly in Chapter 2: Land Use and Community Design.

E. Putting the Plan to Work

The *Comprehensive Plan* is useful only if it actually leads to achievement of its goals and policies. Once adopted, it should serve as a guide for planning and decision-making with regard to land uses and other municipal policies and procedures. However, the Plan is not regulatory. For the implementation of goals and policies outlined in the Plan, the town relies on tools and regulations such as the overall municipal code, the land use code, a design review process, a capital improvement program, and other ordinances and programs.

To assist in achieving each goal and policy outlined in the *Silver City Comprehensive Plan*, at least two implementation measures have been identified for each policy. These implementation measures are then summarized at the end of each chapter. The review, refinement and utilization of these implementation measures by town staff and public officials are the keys to effectively put the Plan to work. They also provide the basis for determining overall priorities and a specific action plan for the town that is set forth in Chapter 2: Strategic Actions.

It is also important to consider how the *Comprehensive Plan* meets the state's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) requirements, as well as how the Plan can be maintained as an effective management tool after it is adopted. The *Comprehensive Plan* is only the first, yet critical step, in achieving the type of future growth and development that the town desires.

State Requirements

To meet the requirements of the state's Community Development Block program, the town must ensure the adopted *Comprehensive Plan* addresses key policy elements that are outlined by the state -- land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, economic development, and implementation. The elements that the state requires are included in: Chapter Four: land use; Chapter Five: transportation; Chapter Six: housing; Chapter Seven: infrastructure; and Chapter Eight: economic development. Implementation is integrated within each chapter, rather than being a stand-alone chapter, in order to provide a direct link between policies and their implementation measures; and the town's prioritized goals and policies are outlined in Chapter 2: Strategic Actions.

The *Comprehensive Plan* also includes several major topics not required by the state: Chapter Four: community design (combined with land use); Chapter Seven: public facilities and services (combined with infrastructure); and Chapter Nine: natural resources & hazards.

Other Government Actions

The town makes many decisions each year, such as adoption of budgets

that affects the public health, safety and welfare. As these decisions are made, the *Comprehensive Plan* should be consulted to see if the proposed action or actions are consistent with the town's expressed goals and policies.

In addition, other government agencies and organizations develop plans and engage in decision-making processes that can influence policy planning in the Town of Silver City -- such as transportation, public services and facilities, housing and land use. The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* should be distributed to the local governments, agencies, and organizations and all major planning goals and policies should be highlighted so that these agencies are aware of the town's plan

Land Use Code & Zoning Ordinance Consistency

To implement the Plan's goals and policies, the town's Land Use Code and Zoning Map should be consistent with the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*. It is recognized that the Land Use Code has a provision that any decisions made pursuant to it cannot be challenged "on the basis of any alleged non-conformity with any planning documents." Nevertheless, the Land Use Code should be reviewed upon adoption of the Plan to ensure consistency. Generally, the Land Use Code can be more prescriptive and restrictive than the *Comprehensive Plan*, but should not allow significant deviation from the type or intensity of development that is outlined in the Plan.

The Land Use Code and Zoning Map are parcel-specific statements of how land may be used in the Town. These regulatory tools provide specific conditions the Town will impose to ensure desired development for the community. As noted above, the town's Land Use Code and Zoning Map should be consistent with the policy framework of the *Comprehensive Plan* and the Plan's land use map in order to take full advantage of the *Comprehensive Plan*. It is important to note that the Plan and its land use map are neither precise nor parcel-specific. The Plan and land use map do not show detailed land use distinctions and, in many cases, do not reflect the existing use of the land. The Land Use Code and its accompanying Zoning Map, which is mapped on a parcel-specific basis, should not be confused with the *Comprehensive Plan* and/or its land use map.

Consistency means that various land uses authorized by the land use code, and the distribution of these permitted land uses, must serve to implement the goals and policies of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Specific zoning districts, ideally based on neighborhood and area plans, should correspond with the land use designations in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Just as important, the policies in the *Comprehensive Plan* should be used when making discretionary decisions called for in the Land Use Code.

of action for the future. Efforts should be made to coordinate with other local governments, organizations and agencies to ensure that their actions and plans do not undermine, but rather support and complement, the goals and policies of the town's Comprehensive Plan.

Making the Plan Available

The *Comprehensive Plan*, all amendments, and all related products including the *Issues Report*, the *Public Participation Summary* should be accessible to the public. The *Comprehensive Plan* should be made available, when possible, on a Town website. It is especially important that Town officials have the most up-to-date version of the Plan for their use in day-to-day decision-making.

Subdivision Ordinance Consistency

The town should also ensure that its decisions regarding subdivisions, including design and proposed land uses, are consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Again, as with the land use code and zoning ordinance, consistency requires that the proposed subdivision reflect the goals, policies and implementation programs outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Of particular importance is ensuring that the subdivision provides for adequate services and facilities, such as roads, water supply, and wastewater systems.

Capital Improvement Programs

A capital improvement program (CIP) is a description, by year, of all public works projects recommended for study, design, or construction in the immediate future. This list should be consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* in order to ensure that public monies are spent in an efficient manner and in a way that leads to implementation of the goals of the Plan. The importance of ensuring that the CIP is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* cannot be overemphasized, especially in a growing community. Experience in other communities has shown that an effective CIP, combined with comprehensive plan guidance, is the most effective way of ensuring the adequacy of public facilities and services, and promoting a public perception of good government.

The process for providing local input for updates to the state Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) should be coordinated with the updating of the *Comprehensive Plan* – see *Maintaining the Comprehensive Plan* below. One concern with the ICIP process, however, is that it tends to encourage the listing of projects whether or not funding is likely. In order to prevent the CIP from becoming an unrealistic “wish list,” the Town should consider a separate prioritization of projects based on consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan* policies, need, and availability of funding.

Maintaining the Comprehensive Plan

Traditionally, comprehensive plans were viewed as static documents that required updating about every 20 years. The more contemporary view of comprehensive plans is that they are management tools that must be kept up-to-date to provide useful guidance for evolving communities.

Although state law does not require that comprehensive plans be periodically reviewed, to ensure its usefulness as an effective management tool the Town of Silver City should carry out a review and update process for its *Comprehensive Plan* every five years, or even more frequently. During each review, the town should ensure the Plan is consistent with state requirements as well as the evolution of land use patterns as the community continues to develop.

In addition, the town should ensure the Plan's goals and policies are updated to reflect demographic and economic changes, as well as other changes that influence the growth and development of the community. The following review and update measures should be implemented:

1. The town staff should prepare an evaluation report every five years, or more often as appropriate. The evaluation report should address:
 - a. The degree to which each goal outlined in the Plan has been successfully reached;
 - b. The effectiveness of each policy in reaching each relevant goal;
 - c. Problems or opportunities that did not exist or were not anticipated when the Plan or most recent five-year update was prepared;
 - d. Data and background information that is out of date; and
 - e. Recommended changes to the Plan, CIP, and other programs, policies and regulations.
2. The town staff should then propose *Comprehensive Plan* amendments as needed to maintain the Plan as an effective management tool.

Amending the Comprehensive Plan

Town officials and staff as well as residents can initiate *Comprehensive Plan* amendments by submission of a written proposal to the governing body. As noted in the section above, the Plan should be kept up-to-date or else it becomes less and less useful as a management tool. On the other hand, frequent amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan* often indicate that it is not being used properly as a long-range guide to the future. Some states allow amendments only two times per year in order to provide a sense of stability to local plans. One of the sets of amendments should coincide with the preparation of the annual update of the list of capital improvement projects.

Chapter Two: *Strategic Actions*

March 2004

Chapter Two: *Strategic Actions*

A. Strategic Planning

The purpose of Chapter Two: Strategic Actions is to set *priorities* and to develop an ambitious but viable *action plan* for implementation of the most important goals and policies that have been identified in the *Silver City Comprehensive Plan*.

As the town continues to grow and develop, it should strive to preserve its historical character and traditions, while rising to new opportunities and challenges. The *Comprehensive Plan* is an important tool for protecting Silver City's past and guiding its future. The *Comprehensive Plan* effectively outlines the goals and policies -- and implementation measures -- to address the many planning issues that face the town, both in the short-term and for many years into the future. A *strategic action plan* should be developed that is clear and focused where individuals and groups will be accountable, and where success will be measurable.

The *Silver City Comprehensive Plan* addresses key policy elements that are outlined by the state -- land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, economic development, and implementation; and several additional issues and policy areas, including: community design; natural resources and hazards and public facilities and services. For each of these elements, goals and policies have been identified in the respective chapters where they are addressed, and specific implementation measures have been identified. The purpose of this chapter is to review this entire set of goals and policies, and the implementation measures identified, and to establish priorities that will set an action agenda for the coming months and years.

The key issues addressed by the *Comprehensive Plan* are very often interrelated, and *strategic actions* should take advantage of the opportunity to address two or more issues simultaneously and in a holistic manner. At the same time, an integrated approach should not compromise the focus of the overall strategic plan and its specific action items, and thereby limit its chances for success.

The *strategic actions* identified by the town create a framework for making decisions and allocating limited resources. Each of the *nine strategic actions* set forth below should include the process, projects, and programs that the town and community may initiate to achieve the specific planning goals. The town may pursue these nine major strategic initiatives in partnership with the county, other organizations, and neighboring agencies, both locally and regionally.

This chapter identifies recommended strategic actions. However, the town does not have all the necessary resources to undertake all the actions at one time. Thus *strategic actions* phase projects and programs over time. In addition, these strategies identify ongoing projects or

For each strategic action, identify the responsible organizations or entity that should assume the lead role; the time frame within which the action should be undertaken; and, potential funding sources.

The review, refinement and utilization of these implementation measures by town staff are the keys to putting the Plan to work.

programs as well as those projects that could be implemented as opportunities for funding or implementation arise. For each action, it is critical that the town identify:

- The *responsible organizations* or entities - and sometimes the specific individuals - that should assume the lead roles;
- The *time frame* within which the action should be undertaken including near-term (1-3 years) mid-term (3-5 years) and/or long-term (5+ years); and
- Potential *funding* sources.

Implementing strategic actions is not a static process. Over time, resources, opportunities, and new challenges will inevitably present themselves to the community. The town's *strategic actions* should be periodically reviewed and revised as the primary goals are accomplished and new actions, programs, and priorities are developed to face new challenges. Likewise, the town's overarching principles, as outlined in Chapter One, should be periodically tested and revisited, alongside the community's goals and policies. As always, the ability of the town to implement goals and policies depends on funds available and budget priorities.

B. Implementation Principles

Four principles have been developed as a guide for effective implementation of the town's *strategic actions*

Build on what we have. Successful existing programs should continue to be supported as new initiatives are implemented. Too often communities take for granted successful programs and divert resources unwisely into new or different programs; care should be taken that these existing programs continue to be nurtured and supported. The proven successes of town departments like the Silver City Museum, which leverages resources wisely and serves the community well, should continue to be supported.

Encourage public-private and community partnerships. The successful implementation of the town's *strategic action* agenda is contingent upon the continued support and cooperation of the entire community, including the public and private sectors, community groups and residents.

Identify roles and responsibilities. The dedication, commitment, and accountability provided by a lead organization and specific individuals are key to successful implementation. Identifying the lead individual and organization and establishing a process for accountability will turn plans into reality.

Monitor and evaluate on-going progress. Periodic assessments help to identify barriers to success and determine if "mid-course corrections" are needed. Furthermore, demonstrated success helps sustain and increase community support, commitment and enthusiasm toward common goals.

C. Strategic Actions

As part of the *Comprehensive Plan*, the town has defined or created the foundation for the following *strategic actions*:

1. Economic Development Strategy
2. Growth Management Strategy (focus on ETZ)
3. Intergovernmental Coordination & Community Collaboration Strategy
4. Affordable Housing Strategy
5. Parks, Trails and Open Space Strategy
6. Transportation and Land Use Strategy
7. Downtown Area Revitalization Strategy
8. Water & Wastewater Servicing Strategy
9. Watershed Protection & Enhancement Strategy

Each of these key *strategic actions* should be based on the extensive discussion and specific implementation measures set forth in the narrative sections of each chapter and at the end of each chapter (chapters 3-8). For each *strategic action* the town should identify an *action team*, including the lead organization and individuals, as well as all participating organizations (including government). Each action strategy should establish: an overall approach and scope of work; resources for implementation of the strategy; and the time line for completion of an *action plan*. These *action teams* should be established with the endorsement of the governing body, and with all participating individuals and organizations aware of their accountability to elected officials and to the community as a whole.

Following approval of the comprehensive plan and adoption of the action strategy, the lead organization for each action team should convene all the relevant parties in a timely manner -- to review the goals, policies and implementation measures identified in the Comprehensive Plan and to set forth a specific action plan based upon the principles and approach outlined herein. Within a short and defined period of time following the original meeting of each action team, the lead organization and individuals for each of the *strategic actions* should present its respective *action plan* at a public meeting of the Town Council.

The implementation strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan provide the basis for the strategic actions listed above. Ultimately, it is the implementation of these *strategic actions* that will effectively address the highest priority issues currently facing the Town of Silver City, and in so doing ensure that the town realizes its desired future.

Chapter Three:
Land Use & Community Design

March 2004

Chapter Three: *Land Use & Community Design*

A. Setting

Silver City: County Seat and Regional Center

Silver City is the county seat and regional center for Grant County. The *town* of Silver City is located within an area of human settlements that span thousands of years, including the early Mimbres communities. From the historic period of western settlement beginning in the late nineteenth century, Silver City has been the principal urban center of a region that also includes: traditional Hispanic villages, most notably San Lorenzo; farming and ranching communities such as Gila/Cliff and Mimbres; small traditional towns that began with the mining era, including Hurley, Bayard, Santa Clara, Hanover and Tyrone; and homesteads that have been established across the county. *Figure 3-1: Silver City Context* shows Silver City's place within Grant County and its relation to other settlements throughout the county.

Silver City: History and Background

Silver City was founded in 1870, long after and far from the Hispanic agricultural settlements along the Rio Grande. In a geographical transition between mountains and grasslands, in remote and dangerous Apache territory, money was to be made by mining and so the settlers came.

Isolation, topography, late settlement, and the extravagancies of sudden wealth shaped the early character of Silver City. The original townsite was platted on a grid, a typically American pattern that is distinct from the earlier Hispanic settlements of the Southwest. The sudden and occasionally profligate wealth of mining fortunes was manifested in numerous houses modeled on the Victorian styles of the eastern seaboard.

The general prosperity of the community was also sufficient to accommodate an early ordinance requiring all construction to be of masonry. Adobe brick was a commonly used building material, especially in Hispanic neighborhoods, where traditional patterns occasionally overwhelmed the street grid. Many of these houses were built without the large front yard setbacks typical of Anglo dwellings, and the family compounds, built gradually by addition, sometimes spilled onto the streets.

Mining wealth also prompted the establishment of a thriving central business district that provided a convenient locale for trade and entertainment and that soon lured the designation of Silver City as the county seat. Isolation ensured at least a moderate degree of self-

sufficiency. Together wealth and isolation became the basis for the town's future as a regional center for trade and services.

Silver City today has a rich legacy of Victorian architecture in three historic districts. A fourth—Chihuahua Hill—has a distinctively Hispanic character. History and the geography of hills and arroyos of Silver City have formed natural boundaries for distinct neighborhoods, and the preservation and empowerment of these areas in planning activities is an important community concern. This kind of shared responsibility within distinct boundaries should also be fostered in new neighborhoods. In addition to architecture and historic neighborhoods, the multi-cultural heritage of Silver City has been recognized as an asset to be celebrated.

This multi-cultural heritage, combined with the town's beautiful natural setting and its special architectural character, help define a distinctive "sense of place" for the entire community that is widely admired. The citizens of the town recognize this unique legacy and overwhelmingly support the protection of these historic assets. The Land Use Code, currently under review, should be re-written in ways that continue to support the town's historic development patterns.

A good historical summary for the Town of Silver City from the 1996 Comprehensive Plan is provided as an attachment to this chapter.

Historic Silver City – Downtown & Neighborhoods

Figure 3-2: Historic Districts shows the Silver City Historic District and the adjacent historic districts that constitute Silver City's historic downtown: Chihuahua Hill, Black's Addition, and North Addition. The Brewer Hill neighborhood to the east of the historic district is also part of the older downtown area—even though it is not part of the historic district. The Brewer Hill Neighborhood Plan (2001) provides one model for other neighborhood plan and area plans that should be completed for all neighborhoods in the town. In effect, the pattern is a central business district (CBD) surrounded by primarily residential neighborhoods. These residential neighborhoods are all relatively compact in size and close to the CBD.

Silver City: Zoning & Land Use Regulations

Current regulations regarding zoning and land uses are contained in the Silver City Land Use Code, adopted in 1999. The current code supplanted an earlier and arguably simpler code that had been used by the town for many years. The existing code is now under review by staff and members of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The town is expected to modify the code based upon critical review of the land use code in the coming months.

The current zoning districts for the towns are shown in *Figure 3-3: Current Zoning*. The map shows permitted uses within different districts

defined by the code, and includes the following zones: Residential A, B and C; Rural Residential; Commercial and Industrial. Outside the ETZ surrounding the town we find mostly residential development, except for the commercial uses located primarily along Silver City's main corridors.

Existing Land Uses

The most current inventory of land use within the town is from a New Mexico State University (NMSU) study in May 2000, which provides the basis for this section. *Figure 3-4: Existing Land Use* is taken from the NMSU study. The purpose of the study, which was conducted by students in the university's Department of Geography, was to provide community leaders and planning staff an inventory of land use that could be used to assist in local land use and transportation planning efforts. All figures below, unless otherwise indicated, are Year 2000 figures.

The land use classification system for the Silver City study includes eight classes of land use; the location of these uses throughout the town can be seen on the map provided in this section (See *Figure 3-4, Existing Land Use*). The uses that are mapped include: Industrial, Residential, Rural Residential, Commercial, Institutional, Open Space, Parks, and Vacant. Mixed-use parcels were also identified; and a separate classification was devised for mobile homes (See discussion below and in Chapter 5: Housing) and for transportation infrastructure, for a total of eleven land use categories. The total amount of land classified was approximately 6,580 acres.

The mapping of land uses was accomplished on an aerial basis. Generally, individual parcels were not mapped. The minimum mapping unit for all land use categories was 200' by 200'. If any land use fell below this minimum, it was generalized to the next largest use in proximity to it; and, as a result, the authors of the study caution that there may be a limited number of misclassifications due to generalization.

Land Uses in Silver City: Types of Uses & Acreages. The land use categories and the amount of acreage in each category within the town limits are as follows:

1. Open Space - undeveloped private and public lands (3,839.4 acres or **58.4%**)
2. Vacant Land - land with infrastructure that is currently unused (250.1 acres or **3.8%**)
3. Residential - parcels of .5 acres or less (931.8 acres or **14.2%**)
4. Rural Residential - parcels greater than 1.0 acre (139.2 acres or **2.1%**)
5. Transportation - roads and parking areas (747.4 acres or **11.4%**)

Land Use & Community Design

6. Commercial - retail, service & office (322.8 acres or **4.9%**)
7. Institutional - schools (including Western New Mexico University), churches, hospitals, etc. (263.3 acres or **4.0%**)
8. Industrial - manufacturing, warehouse, trucking, and related uses (60.5 acres or **0.9%**)
9. Parks - neighborhood, regional and other parks, including recreational areas and playfields (20.0 acres or **0.3%**); [See Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services, for a more complete discussion of parks and recreational areas.]
10. Mixed Use - retail and other commercial uses mixed with residential (1.7 acres or **0%**, i.e., statistically insignificant)
11. Mobile Homes - mobile homes or "trailers" and manufactured homes - a total of 499 units spread throughout the town

These different categories of land use are discussed below.

Open Space. The NMSU study found that the predominant land use category was open space. The report makes this distinction between open space and vacant land: vacant land is land that is proximate to utilities infrastructure (sewer, water, electricity, telephone) and ready for development; open space is land that is not readily available for development and requires extension of utility infrastructure. No distinction is made between public and private open space, and the open space category should certainly not be understood as open space in perpetuity.

The study recognizes that this distinction between open space and vacant land is often misleading, and in fact some large areas of land classified as open space could be made ready for development at what could be reasonable costs. The area surrounding the 32nd Street Bypass (particularly north of 32nd Street and east of Pinos Altos Road) falls into this category, especially if extension of infrastructure is part of a large-scale master planning effort for development of the several hundred acres.

Vacant Land. Vacant land is land with infrastructure that is currently unused (250.1 acres); it also includes parcels with buildings that have fallen into disuse and/or disrepair, such as the old hospital building. Vacant land occurs generally in three areas of the town:

- Along NM 90 at the south end of town;
- The downtown area - with roughly one-third of the parcels in this area defined as vacant; and

- Northern sections of town, mainly in the residential areas north of US 180.

Vacant land, because it has infrastructure in place, is an obvious place to look for infill development sites.

The amount of land available in the downtown area could accommodate more than 500 homes at modest densities of 7 -8 dwellings per acre. With a mixed-use pattern of development, with non-residential uses appropriately sited in existing or new activity centers or in established commercial areas, hundreds of housing units and a mix of commercial uses could exist together. Of course, the exact location and disposition of this vacant land must be inventoried first, with parcel specific mapping of all available land. With this information, future land uses could be identified in the context of area and neighborhood plans (see section below). If even a portion of the land identified in the study proves readily available for construction and development, there seems to be a great infill opportunity.

Vacant land along US 90 appears more problematic for extensive residential uses, but with infrastructure in place a mix of commercial uses and perhaps some residential uses are possible. Again, parcel specific mapping and subsequent analysis of benefits, opportunities and constraints is necessary before future land uses can be determined and development would be likely to occur.

North of US 180 there are *pockets* of vacant land available for development. Most of this land appears to be in areas where infill development would mean additional housing; however, the area also contains a substantial amount of land (especially in the area of the proposed Gila Medical District) for retail, office and other commercial uses. When a parcel-specific land use map is created and the land use context is understood (types of uses adjacent and nearby), the best future uses for the parcels can be determined. Like everywhere else, opportunities for the entire area north of US 180 must be developed in the context of agreed-upon neighborhood and area plans before the extent and type of infill opportunities can be determined.

The several areas shown as existing and possible future neighborhoods can be seen in *Figure 3- 7: Future Growth Areas*. The area with the most vacant land is within the possible future Gila Medical District, but also includes the following neighborhood areas: Pine, Kimberly, Swan, Cottage San, Cold Springs, and Indian Hills. The remaining area of land identified on the map (*Figure 3- 7*) as a future growth area is the future 32nd Street neighborhood, but that area is not classified as *vacant* but rather as *open space* because infrastructure is not in place within the site but only at the edge of the parcel.

Residential. Of the 931.8 acres of land use classified as residential in Silver City, most is located in the older parts of the town, Residential

includes housing within older neighborhoods primarily south of US 180, and in the neighborhoods and residential areas above US 180 that were developed beginning after World War II. The residential category does not include rural residential (discussed below). The NMSU study's definition of residential included housing at urban densities of less than one-half acre.

This definition of residential is a very broad category and includes a variety of housing and patterns of development. Generally speaking, this broad definition of residential includes the more compact neighborhoods of the older town as well as the relatively larger lot development that increases in acreage per dwelling as one moves north of US 180. The street grid pattern of the older town continues immediately north of US 180 (swan, Pine, Kimberly and Cottage San areas), but curvilinear streets and *cui de sacs* dominate in more recent development. The street grid is also warped and broken in areas of difficult terrain and topography.

In the northwest quadrant of the map, larger lots and vacant lots between and among homes causes a break in the fabric of development. In some cases, it appears that homes are randomly scattered on the land, with this pattern becoming more pronounced at the edges of the town limits. In the north central part of the community, the residential areas immediately north of US 180 are also more compact, and the Gila Regional Medical Center and associated uses break the uniformly residential pattern.

The south and southwestern portions of the town, which includes downtown and older neighborhoods, contains a much more variegated pattern of development with a mix of uses interspersed among the residences. The different categories of uses in these areas are commercial, institutional, vacant and industrial.

Rural Residential. One of the major land use categories found in Silver City is classified by the NMSU study as rural residential. Rural residential uses are found on 139.2 acres of land, primarily at the fringes of the town. The NMSU study is not altogether clear on the definition of rural residential, as it sometimes appears that the minimum lot size is one-half acre and in others a full acre. Nevertheless, the category clearly refers to homes on larger lots, mostly on the outskirts of town and the fringes of the community, and almost exclusively in two areas:

- The northwest corner of the town boundary, in the Cold Springs area primarily; and
- The southeast fringes of the settled area of town adjacent to large areas of open space. In the northwest, each of the home sites is a parcel of approximately 1/2 acre or more with a distinctively rural character.

These fringe areas of town are the only areas defined as rural residential in the NMSU study. As the town grows outward, these rural residential

areas may well evolve into higher densities and/or include other types of land uses. However, demand pressures for more intense development may be mitigated by covenants and restrictions against further subdivision or more intense use of the land.

Transportation. Transportation use occupies 747.7-acres within the limits of Silver City. This includes the town's street and road network, including the major corridors and arterials. More information on the street network can be found in Chapter 4: Transportation and Circulation.

Commercial. Commercial areas are those used predominantly for the sale of products and services, and for offices (including professional offices). Overall, there are 322.8 acres of commercial land, including: the central business districts; shopping centers, usually in suburban and outlying areas; and commercial strip developments along major highways and access routes to cities. While office uses typically locate at the intersection of major arterials and collectors, some did appear in residential neighborhoods.

The majority of commercial activity is located in the Central Business District (CBD) and along US 180 and NM 90. Most of the chain businesses (fast food restaurants, grocery stores, etc) are located on or near US 180. Local independent businesses are more often found within or close to the CBD. Some commercial uses were found outside of the major commercial concentrations within residential neighborhoods and on the outskirts of town (e.g. south NM 90).

In the northeast quadrant, most commercial activities are along US 180 and in areas predominately surrounded by institutional uses and vacant land. In the northwest quadrant, there are only a few commercial uses that met the minimum mapping unit -- disbursed on the outskirts of town. In the southwest quadrant, commercial uses are mostly found in the CBD and along NM 90 (Hudson Street) and along NM 90 heading out of town. There are also some activities dispersed in residential neighborhoods. In the southeast quadrant, the commercial uses are located on the fringe and scattered among residences in this area.

Institutional. Institutional land uses include government buildings, schools, churches, libraries, cemeteries, legal services, hospitals and medical/professional offices. In Silver City, the 263.3 acres of land for institutions is dispersed with no visible pattern. Western New Mexico University is the largest institution in town. Government uses include the Town Administration Building, Library, Silver City Museum, New Mexico Department of Labor, County Jail and Grant County Courthouse. In the southeast quadrant there is little institutional land use, with the largest being Memory Lane Cemetery just south of US 180.

The largest concentration of institutional land use is north of U.S. Highway 180, and includes schools (La Plata Jr. High School, Silver

High School, Stout Elementary School), Gila Regional Medical Center and medical/professional offices, and a U.S. Forest Service facility.

Industrial. Most of the 60.5 acres of industrial land is dispersed, but can be found on relatively large parcels, most of which are located adjacent to major corridors such as US 180 and NM 90. The great majority of industrial land is found on the north side of the town. However, there are two large parcels and several scattered pockets of smaller industrial uses that can be found in the southeastern part of the town. There are also two small areas of industrial land in the southeastern section of the town.

Mixed Use. The NMSU study found a miniscule percentage of land that might be classified as mixed use. Mixed uses include parcels of land that have more than one use co-located on a single parcel, either in adjacent buildings, or situated in a single building. An example would be a small retail establishment on the first floor and residential on the second floor. There is a very small amount of this land - *only 1.7 acres* within the entire town. All of the surveyed mixed land use was located in the Central Business District or CBD. Outside the town study area, the other geographical area classified as mixed use was Pinos Altos.

Mixed use in town centers and neighborhood centers has been recognized as a desirable land use pattern because it can reduce the need for motorized transportation. Residents who make their homes within or adjacent to the CBD have immediate access to goods and services and most other activities in their daily lives. The small amount of mixed use recorded by the NMSU study is significant in light of widespread community support for mixed-use zoning. This concept of mixed use is a basic feature of so-called *activity centers* at the heart of neighborhoods and districts (see discussion in section on neighborhoods, districts and corridors).

While the NMSU study found very little mixed land use, the extent of mixed use might be underestimated somewhat by the study. In addition to the 1.7 acres, some few commercial uses were noted within predominantly residential neighborhoods. Furthermore, a few additional retail/commercial uses within predominantly residential areas might also be lost to the study because of generalization (discussed above), suggesting that a residual historic pattern of mixed use might exist in some areas. Conditional use permits granted in more recent years contribute somewhat to a mixed-use pattern. A more detailed parcel-by-parcel survey would be necessary to determine the extent and type of mixed use within areas of approximately one block (200' x 200') because only the predominant use is recorded by the NMSU study.

The study shows that the town's historic pattern of land use during the post-WWII period no longer conforms to the mixed land use pattern. During this earlier period, the pattern of development established was characterized by civic, government, religious, retail, office, residential and other uses that were proximate and within a compact walkable area

that comprises the historic downtown and the immediate neighborhoods.

Mobile Homes. The NMSU study also identified a specific type of housing, namely mobile homes, which the study found to be ubiquitous in Silver City. There were some 499 mobile homes within the town (Year 2000), with the distribution in the town as follows:

- Northeast - 188
- Southeast - 193
- Northwest - 15
- Southwest - 103

There are some interesting facts from the study:

- The largest concentration of mobile homes (116) is in the northeast quadrant of the town, located in groups of two or more and not in mobile home parks; and
- There are 199 units outside the town limits in southeast area within the ETZ.

The NMSU study recommended that the town consider the issue of location and relative placement of mobile homes within areas of town and in relation to other uses. Most of these units are not located in designated mobile home parks.

There also appears to be no legal distinction made in the study between types of non-site built residences (i.e., manufactured homes and mobile homes) within the town's various subdivisions and residential areas. When covenants and restrictions of subdivisions do not prohibit these types of residences, both mobile homes and manufactured homes are almost certain to be found. Many of these units are not on foundations and the wheels are still visible. Even though the state statutes are liberal regarding the siting of mobile homes, their location can be influenced through architectural standards or square footage minimums. The NMSU study recommended that land use compatibility among units be similar to locating multiple family units.

Silver City: Neighborhoods, Districts and Corridors

The physical structure and pattern of land uses within American towns and cities can be understood by reference to the categories of neighborhood, district and corridor. The neighborhood, the district, and the corridor are essential elements of development and redevelopment in cities and towns in the United States.

Silver City's early development reflected this pattern of the classic American town. Typically these towns have a central business district (CBD) that include a mix of retail, office, institutional, educational, religious and other uses - including housing above shops and in ground

level residences within and adjacent to the CBD. Within these small towns, residents walk to the center for shopping, church, school, entertainment, recreation, and other amenities of urban life.

Residents of Silver City's older neighborhoods enjoyed this convenient access to the downtown area. But as new residential areas developed primarily north of the US 180 corridor and outward toward the town limits, this historic *neighborhood structure* did not continue. In addition, the habits of downtown residents changed, as they increasingly joined residents of newer areas in using their automobiles for many activities of their lives - including shopping in stores along the corridor rather than the historic town center.

The changes in our lives occasioned by the automobile and conventional suburban development patterns have been dramatic during the past several decades. Today the typical American household makes as many as ten trips or more daily by automobile, and walking and bicycling has decreased. This has become true even in relatively small towns like Silver City.

Neighborhoods. Historically, neighborhoods in America's cities and towns were compact, pedestrian-friendly, and mixed use. Neighborhoods were primarily residential, but they had central areas where local residents found shops, offices, schools, restaurants, churches and other uses that provided for their daily needs. Because activities of daily living occur within walking distance, the elderly and the young who do not drive gain a measure of independence and freedom because they can access most of their most destinations on foot or on a bicycle.

Interconnected networks of streets reinforce this pedestrian-orientation, as they are designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy. [New Mexico's recent *Safe Routes to School* calls for local communities to design streets and sidewalks within a pedestrian network that makes this possible.] Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can ideally bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.

Districts. Downtown areas in smaller towns in this county historically functioned as *neighborhoods* as well as *urban and regional centers*. Typically, in addition to the central business area, historic downtowns incorporated a variety of residential uses adjacent to and mixed within the commercial uses at the center (typically above and behind shops and offices). We also refer to downtown areas as *districts* (specifically, central business districts) because their role as urban centers makes them more than neighborhood-serving centers for surrounding residents. Other types of districts that emerge as towns and cities grow include industrial districts, entertainment districts, university/education districts, shopping (retail) districts, medical districts, etc.

Silver City has one area close to downtown that has many characteristics of a district, namely Western New Mexico University (WNMU). Because of WNMU's close proximity to downtown it has not developed a true neighborhood center; however, the town is considering changes in the Land Use Code that might make possible more commercial uses along College Avenue at the edge of the historic downtown area, creating an area of town that might evolve into a small-scale mixed use *activity center* that serves primarily the needs of students and others at the university.

Silver City has another large area within the town limits that could be consciously shaped as a district, namely the area surrounding the Gila Regional Medical Center (GRMC). Many businesses related to and supporting the GRMC are continually being located in the area surrounding the medical center, helping to establish the area, in effect, as a *special use district*. At the same time, the area within walking distance of the GRMC includes a substantial amount of housing. By creating a *medical district* for the area (Gila Medical District), future development can be shaped to meet the needs of the larger *regional* community for health care, while at the same time creating a *neighborhood center* with a mix of neighborhood-serving retail and services that addresses the daily needs of both daily workers and residents of the area. The center of this district would have intensive land uses (including perhaps some residential) and an appropriate mix of uses (including restaurants and cafes for workers and residents) surrounded by increasingly lower densities and primarily residential uses radiating out from the center.

The *2004 Comprehensive Plan* recommends that zoning be changed to help realize this opportunity.

Corridors. Corridors are regional connectors of neighborhoods and districts; they range from boulevards and rail lines to rivers and parkways. In Silver City, the two principal corridors are, of course, the historic highways that have always brought people in and out of town: US 180 and NM 90. These major highways also serve as the principal means of traffic circulation within the town, especially because parallel arterial roadways are difficult given the topography and limited development of east-west connectors, particularly above Highway 180. The 32nd Street Bypass, while it would not qualify as a corridor, is certainly a major connector within the town.

In most towns and cities, corridors have usurped the traditional function of urban and neighborhood centers. Silver City is no exception. These highway corridors, providing land as they do on either side of the roadway convenient for access by automobiles, have displaced investment from existing centers. In their current state, these corridors are very difficult for pedestrians to cross safely; this serves to reduce opportunities for businesses located along such corridors. The large scale of current retail businesses has meant that these businesses often do not fit well into the traditional block structure and grid of traditional

downtowns - and they prefer to be on large parcels with their buildings surrounded by a sea of parking. For this reason, the typical pattern is the development of strip retail along major and even minor corridors.

The location of major retail and commercial businesses in Silver City along Highway 180 East is reinforced by the fact that this roadway connects Silver City with the mining district towns and Mimbres Valley communities where the majority of the remaining population of the county is located. Additionally, the location of new residential development along north-south drainages in the ETZ north of the town limits has also provided another nearby customer base for commercial uses along this corridor. The Highway 180 East Corridor has established itself as the most important strip commercial corridor in the region. The NM 90 south corridor (Hudson Street) serves as a secondary strip commercial area, with Highway 180 West also playing a minor role.

The Corridor Study in progress is exploring ways to establish improvements and enhancements for the US 180 and NM 90 corridor that create more pedestrian-friendly environments along the corridor and connecting to streets intersecting the corridor. This includes pedestrian pathways and intersection improvements that make pedestrian crossings safer and more pleasant for area residents, including shoppers, helping to increase potential sales and business activity along the corridor.

Subdivisions in Silver City and the ETZ

In concert with the development of the *2004 Comprehensive Plan*, town staff has prepared maps showing new development within the town and the ETZ. *Figure 3-5: Existing Subdivisions* identifies existing subdivisions and the historic neighborhoods within the town limits; and *Figure 3-6: Existing Subdivisions - ETZ* shows existing subdivisions extending into the ETZ. *Figure 3-6* also shows the boundaries of three water associations adjacent to or near Silver City that have wholesale purchase contracts with the town (Arenas Valley, Rosedale and Tyrone; the fourth association is Pinos Altos).

These water associations are discussed below in the context of growth management policies for the ETZ. *Figure 3- 7: Future Growth Areas* that identifies areas for future infill growth within the town of Silver City is discussed in the next section.

Developers and Development Review

The Town of Silver City wants to promote better relations with the development community and to encourage the highest quality development within the town and in the ETZ. This goal will be realized by some changes in the land use code and in development review procedures, and by collaborating with the development community to promote a professional approach to development and *best development practices* in residential, commercial and mixed-use projects.

Recognizing problems with the development review process, the Silver

City 1996 Comprehensive Plan adopted the goal of "establishing a standard development process and to promote better communication between developers, planning staff, Community Development Commission and the neighborhoods." [See Goal 1.9, 1996 Comprehensive Plan.] The objectives included the following:

1. Develop a public notification process and provide opportunities for public participation on all land use and growth management issues.
2. Adopt findings and issue written decisions for all land development requests.
3. Develop, and make available to the public, an easy to understand and current book that outlines the development process and the steps needed to get a project approved. Develop, and make available to the public, a current book that clearly illustrates the town's infrastructure specifications. Illustrations should meet standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and include but not be limited to:
 - a) Streets
 - b) Sidewalks
 - c) Driveways and curb cuts
 - d) Sewer and water lines
 - e) Street and sidewalk repair
4. Establish and incorporate enforceable site development standards in development practices that encompass land use, design, landscape, and site standards.
5. Define and acknowledge existing and new neighborhood subareas and develop a neighborhood planning process with broad neighborhood involvement that provides for the completion of more detailed neighborhood plans.

Some of these objectives have been accomplished, but others that might help establish better development procedures have not. Specifically, items 1,2 & 5 above have been implemented. With regard to items 3 and 4 above, the Planning Department's goal is to prepare an explanation sheet for each type of project but not for all aspects of the development review process. In this way, applicants will have the specific information they need for the project being proposed. The several explanation sheets combined would provide information on the range of possible projects, but the town would not print an entire booklet covering all types of projects.

Other concerns with the Land Use Code heard from the real estate development community include:

1. The limited number of zoning categories combined with the extensive use of Conditional Use designations creates uncertainty, inefficiency, and invites discretionary review of development proposals, often based on opposition from a few individuals.
2. Existing street standards are based on suburban and rural standards, and are obsolete, wasteful, and inappropriate for Silver City and for the kinds of density that exist within the town.

Conditional use provisions of the code are currently under review by staff and the Community Development Commission. Clearer and unambiguous zoning provisions, combined with mixed-use zoning for appropriate areas of the town, will help to eliminate some of the frustrations associated with this discretionary approach to zoning and development review. This approach would include creation of special planning areas and eventually zoning districts based on the neighborhood and district model.

Many developers also believe that street standards should be changed to allow for infiltration of stormwater and other practices more appropriate to rain patterns, street design, topography and soils conditions – all consistent with best development practices.

While public officials agree that it is desirable to have infrastructure specifications (all standards and requirements) readily available in a single document, lack of staff time and resources have made it impossible to create such a document. For a period of time during the 1990's, a summary of the development review process prepared by local architects and development consultants was made available to the public. The Silver City Community Development Department would welcome assistance again from members of the development community in preparing such a document. This task should be addressed at the time of revision of the code, which is underway and will be completed in the near future.

While staff is committed to the neighborhood planning process and development of area plans, their ability to work with neighborhoods on these important projects is limited by resources available, including both staff time and funding for consultants and other aspects of the process. Both the public and developers/applicants in the development review process would benefit from area plans and an orderly process for neighborhood participation, which would result in a more rational and predictable review process. Typically, developers have more difficulty and consequently higher costs when development guidelines are unclear

or provide for greater discretion in interpretation of ordinances, rules and regulations. Area plans combined with clear and straightforward rules can help to mitigate the uncertainty often associated with the process. This will in turn encourage quality development proposals and result in the kinds of projects the town wants to support as part of a comprehensive growth strategy.

B. TRENDS

Population and Growth Rate

Since its historical high in 1886 of 4000 people, the Town of Silver City's population has grown over time, alternating between times of rapid increase and periods of little to no growth, and even net loss. By the mid 1930's the town surpassed its 1886 population peak of 4,000 residents. Today, Silver City has a population of approximately 10,545 people. (Census 2000)

Silver City experienced a very high growth rate from 1940 to 1950 (39.2 percent). Yet, through 1950 to 1960, the rate of growth diminished (0.7 percent) and the population slightly decreased. After the 60's the growth rate rebounded with about a 2.3 percent increase per year until the 1980s. From 1980 to 1990, the population slowed significantly with an increase of 1.8 percent in total population throughout this 10-year period. And, following past trends, 1990 to 2000, has experienced a total decrease in the population of 0.01 percent over this 10-year period. Silver City's population has dropped from 10,683 in 1990 to 10,545 in the year 2000. The US Census 2000 estimate is less than the 2000 population estimate outlined in Silver City's 1996 Comprehensive Plan which, based on the 40 Year Water Plan for Silver City, estimates the 2000 population at 12,338.

For the purposes of the comprehensive plan, population growth rate estimates of low (0.3 percent) medium (0.5 percent) and high (0.7 percent) have been developed and provide general population estimates for the Town of Silver City from the year 2000 (based on the population estimate of 10,545 by US Census 2000) to the year 2020 (see *Tables 6-1 through 6-3* in Chapter Six: Housing for more details on town and ETZ population estimates). It is important to note that, following past trends, the ETZ is expected to continue to grow at a slightly higher rate than the town.

At a medium growth rate of 0.5 percent annually from the population estimate of 10,545 (Census 2000), by the year 2020 Silver City's population would be approximately 11,651. This indicates an increase of approximately 1,106 people-about 55 new residents each year. The population increase for the town and ETZ (based on a year 2000 population estimate of 19,587 for the combined area and a medium annual growth rate) would be approximately 2,460 people for a total

town and ETZ population of 22,047 by the year 2020.

Land Use & Community Design: A Sense of Place

The section above discussed the importance of organizing land uses within communities to create a great *sense of place*. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes and celebrates Silver City's historic pattern of growth and development, and calls for a pattern of development, supported by revisions in the Land Use Code and planning initiatives (such as neighborhood and area plans) that promote best development practices into the 21st Century.

Land use and community design provide a framework for the use, organization, and planning of sites, as well as the design of the buildings and landscape that comprise Silver City's urban environment. In so doing, these land use and community design principles and programs offer a physical design direction to growth, conservation and change.

Land use and community design is the process for organizing and shaping physical form in the landscape. This means recognizing the inherent natural and cultural features of the town and areas within the town, and enhancing these elements through appropriate planning, development and design. The physical form, including land use (and transportation networks), determines the appearance, character and image of a town and can influence the overall quality of life of a community. Generally, land use and transportation policies outline the locations and types of activities, while community design influences the character and quality of these places. To influence the design of places within a town, decision makers need a strong vision of what their town should look like as well as the ability to engage in a critical, day-to-day, site-by-site, decision making process. Furthermore, the town's decision makers need to ensure that they are implementing the town's vision through innovative, yet fiscally responsible and realistic solutions.

Some key land use and community design features that contribute to making the Town of Silver City a great place to live include the topography of the hills and arroyos, the distinctive architecture, immediate access to open space surrounding the town (including Boston Hill), views of and from the high points surrounding the town and extensive views of the mountains, the Big Ditch, Western New Mexico University, the historic downtown and many special neighborhoods and communities (Brewer Hill, Chihuahua Hill, Mountain View, Indian Hills, and others)-all of which make up the Town of Silver City. Local residents have identified these important community elements as the town's treasures. The attributes of these treasures should inform the design of future community elements.

A major goal for land use and community design in Silver City is to implement a future growth strategy that maintains and enhances the existing "sense of place". This can be achieved by strengthening and

protecting those special qualities that make Silver City a unique community and a great place to live. By improving the aesthetic appeal of Silver City's streets, buildings, and public places, community design can serve to strengthen and protect important qualities and enhance the perception and experience of the town.

In terms of land use, there are a number of design solutions suggested by the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) approach and the physical organization of the community within the structure of districts, neighborhoods and corridors. TND is another term used to describe the pattern of development organized around neighborhood structure described above. This approach supports such themes and patterns for Silver City as a "town of neighborhoods," a "pedestrian friendly community," and "activity centers;" all provide major organizational concepts and general principles to guide Silver City's future growth strategy. These community design trends build on Silver City's existing land use and development patterns and help to establish the policy direction for future development and design improvements for both the public and private sector.

A Pedestrian Friendly Community

A major community design improvement for Silver City is the focus on pedestrian friendly elements, including sidewalks and pathways, bike routes, and public transit throughout the community. Improvements should include an interconnected system of pedestrian-friendly streets, an emphasis on pedestrian-oriented buildings, pathways and open space, as well as slow vehicular traffic on residential streets. The community can in this way provide an overall attractive, pleasant setting for foot traffic and bicycles-with emphasis on families, children, seniors and the physically handicapped. Such elements will improve the "quality of life" for residents by making safer, more attractive, walkable places throughout the town. It should be noted that in some of the more rural areas of the community, especially on unpaved streets and where traffic counts are relatively low, pedestrian access could be provided without sidewalks, often within the roadway itself.

Figure 3-7: Future Growth Areas identifies areas of town that can accommodate future growth, primarily within the Town of Silver City. All these evolving neighborhoods should grow as pedestrian-friendly places. Of course, some areas can absorb more future growth than others. Downtown areas have few opportunities, fringe areas will become denser over time, and current vacant land can be developed according to an agreed-upon master plan. Ideally, future growth in all these areas will be governed by neighborhood and area plans), with future growth following the *structure* for neighborhoods and districts discussed in this chapter.

Silver City: A Town of Neighborhoods

One of Silver City's strengths has been and should continue to be its neighborhoods, and public policy and planning efforts should continue to

support strong neighborhoods. As we move into the 21st Century, Silver City will continue to be a "Town of Neighborhoods."

Future planning efforts should focus on neighborhood planning' initiatives and the creation of *area plans* and *neighborhood plans* to direct future growth for the different areas of the town.

Existing and future neighborhoods, patterned after historic and walkable neighborhoods, include the several evolving neighborhoods outside the older downtown area. North of US 180 these areas include Cold Springs, Indian Hills, Cottage San, Swan, Pine, Kimberly, and the largely vacant area where a future 32nd Street Neighborhood could be created on several acres, based on a comprehensive master plan. South of US 180 there are opportunities for neighborhood centers for Rosedale and Mountain View (to the east) and Ridge Road/San Vicente (to the south). In the area north of US 180, there is opportunity also for a neighborhood plan in the proposed Gila Medical District. See *Figure 3-7: Future Growth Area*.

Views of the surrounding mountain ranges, as well as the significant open space surrounding the town, should be preserved in neighborhoods of the upland areas. Significant open space, parkland and trail systems should be protected and enhanced in each neighborhood. Finally, the intensity and density and mix of uses within these neighborhoods should reflect the vibrancy of the MainStreet District and other areas within the town. We know that over time fringe areas of the town have been increasing in density, radiating out from the center. The goal is to make certain that this pattern of development is managed in such a way that the quality of life of both existing and future residents is protected and enhanced. Ultimately, the housing types, land use and activities will reflect the character, scale and height of adjoining use and structures, as well as the important landscape features that have influenced the historical development of Silver City's original neighborhoods

Area Plans and Neighborhood Plans

Based upon comments from the town's Comprehensive Plan Task Force, Community Development Director and citizens during the public meeting process, it is recommended that the desires of residents within Silver City's various existing and proposed neighborhoods and districts be taken into account. The ideal mechanism for this effort is the creation or revisions of several area or neighborhood plans, including;

- Downtown Historic District Plan;
- Neighborhood plans, including plans for historic downtown neighborhoods as well as newer residential areas and neighborhoods; and
- District plans, such as the Medical District Plan recommended in this section.

This approach reiterates an objective of the 1996 Plan, namely, to:

Define and acknowledge existing and new neighborhood subareas and develop a neighborhood planning process with broad public involvement that provides for the completion of more detailed neighborhood plans.

The Brewer Hill Neighborhood Plan (2001) may provide a model for future neighborhood plans as recommended here.

These neighborhood, area and district plans (all referred to below as area plans), which would govern development in each of those respective areas, would be created by area residents working cooperatively with town staff and elected officials. The advantage of neighborhood and area plans is that they provide the governing body and all residents of an area an agreed-upon framework for future development, ideally avoiding all the piecemeal disputes regarding development over time in the area. Areas plans should be subject to change over time; but if an area plan is developed in an inclusive and rigorous process it can provide strong guidance and controls for future development that protect the interests of all parties, establish orderly review and development procedures, and promote the general interest of the town as a whole. As indicated above, town staff supports development of area plans but recognize that additional staff and financial resources are necessary if the goal is to be achieved.

The town has long recognized that neighborhood opposition to development proposals before the Community Development Commission and the Council might be better managed if applicants involved neighborhood residents earlier in the process and in a more systematic way. Area plans offer the best way for area residents to consider future development in their area in a comprehensive way and to resolve major concerns regarding individual development proposals in an equitable manner.

Silver City - Downtown Neighborhoods and Infill Opportunities

The older neighborhoods in Silver City have fewer opportunities for new growth and development than the newer residential areas north of US 180 and elsewhere in the town. The Town of Silver City Citizen's Steering Committee on Growth (Yr 2000) identified the Brewer Hill Neighborhood as the principal area for infill development within the corporate limits. The NMSU study indicates that there are other opportunities a well -- approximately 70 acres of vacant land with infrastructure in place in the older sections of town. While the amount of land that is finally developable may not be as high as 70 acres, there are certainly development opportunities that should be explored.

Even where lots are already built out with homes and other structures in older residential areas, there are infill opportunities for infill

development. New infill opportunities can also be *created* by allowing for the following changes with regard to residential lots in the older neighborhoods:

- Smaller lot sizes
- Higher percentage of lot coverage for buildings
- Second (and even more) residential units *by right* on individual lots.

An inventory of available land for new development in the downtown and older neighborhoods should be created as part of a future growth strategy.

In summary, there are many opportunities for infill development in older neighborhoods as well as on vacant land within newer residential areas of the town. The 32nd Street Neighborhood alone (a large-scale infill opportunity) could add hundreds of new homes and supporting land uses to the community. Some sites in the town will be more expensive to develop because of terrain, problems with cost and access to utilities, and other factors. In addition, development must respond to market trends and new homes must be targeted to the needs and desires of households that are making their homes in the area - so that in-town development can compete with the ETZ.

Development of these sites also depends upon the ingenuity of landowners and developers in seeking and creating opportunities, and from past experience Silver City appears to be short on the kind of professional approach to development that is required. Success also depends upon the town creating conditions that encourage more and better development within the town.

The town should create a master development plan and phasing plan for future development, in order to prioritize infill sites for future development linked with a plan for providing infrastructure to serve those areas targeted for development.

Collectively, all these in town sites represent sufficient land to add thousands of new residents to the town *within the existing corporate limits*, with the exact number of new residents dependent upon appropriate density and mix of uses in those areas. A successful infill strategy will support the creation of livable neighborhoods and communities. The trend is for new growth in the ETZ to exceed growth within the town limits. A growth management plan to exploit opportunities for growth *in the town* can help to mitigate this trend. Otherwise, the preponderance of new growth will certainly continue to occur within the ETZ.

Development in the ETZ

Most development in the ETZ and areas close-in to the town have occurred to the north of Silver City, most notably in the Indian Hills Subdivision directly north of town but also: along Cottage San Road and Bear Mountain Road; in Wind Canyon and other development to the north and west of town (both east and west of the continental Divide); and in the Arenas Valley primarily north and east of town. The relatively new and upscale Dos Griegos Subdivision is located north of Indian Hills on relatively steep slopes and uplands above the town. Development directly to the north has been more extensive than in other areas, and subdivisions in this area constitute an almost seamless extension of the town.

Development in the Wind Canyon area (outside the ETZ) is primarily higher priced homes, although this area and others in the ETZ also include more modest homes and mobile homes, some reflecting what might be described as "an alternative life style" of their owners. This means that the ETZ and other close-in areas do have a mix of housing types and prices, reflecting a mix of incomes and housing choices.

Toward the south and east of town development has occurred: along Ridge Road south of town; along Mountain View Road to the east; and along the Bypass road connecting NM 90 South and US 180 West. In these areas, development is more likely to be modest homes and primarily mobile homes.

South of town within the town limits, even with mobile homes, one is more likely to find paved streets and modest landscaping, with most residents enjoying hook-ups to the town's water and sewer systems (although many residents of the Mountain View neighborhood do not enjoy hook-up to town utilities). By contrast, relatively dense areas of mobile homes on the county side are on dirt roads, and they rely on wells and septic systems. Similar development patterns can be seen in the Arenas Valley area off Highway 180 East. During the developers' workshop, this contrast between town and county development patterns was seen as an example of the need for more cooperation between the town and the county to help assure quality development in these areas. The goal is to raise standards for development in the urban area of the ETZ and to avoid water contamination and other problems associated with crowded homes on wells and septic systems.

Figure 3-6: Existing Subdivision - ETZ shows existing subdivisions within the town and in the ETZ surrounding the town. The map may be incomplete and should be updated by staff as appropriate in order to provide baseline information that will guide the town and the county in developing growth management strategies and joint planning authority for the ETZ.

ETZ: Town Policy Regarding Extension of City Utilities & Services

New growth in the ETZ is shaped in large part by the Town of Silver City's policy regarding service extensions for sewer and water. The town has extended utility service to new development in the ETZ, which can be categorized as follows:

1. Extensions of both water and sewer lines;
2. Extensions of water lines but not sewer lines.

Service extensions are governed by provisions of the Silver City code enacted since the adoption of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan. [See Utilities, Article IV, Extensions, Section 30-83, Extension of water and sewer mains for development of property or newly subdivided property.]

These extensions have been provided on a case-by-case basis. While the town has made attempts to provide extensions of infrastructure in a systematic and orderly manner, they have been frustrated by many reasons, including: the fact that developers initiate requests for extensions; extension requests may include water and not sewer; topography and soil/rock conditions; location of proposed new development in relation to the existing utilities grid; difficulties in securing adequate or optimum easements and rights-of-way, resulting in system gaps, costlier extensions and difficulties in providing future service to some areas.

Water extensions occur to individual homes within subdivisions, as part of an extension agreement with the developer of the property, or to water associations that are created by a developer or a legally organized group of residents within an area. Silver City has agreements in place to provide water on a wholesale basis to the following: Arenas Valley Water Association; Pinos Altos Water Association; Rosedale Water Association, and Tyrone Townsite. These agreements are described in Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services. The attached map (*Figure 3-6 Existing Subdivisions - ETZ*), shows the locations and service areas of these water associations.

These agreements make it possible for the town to continue supporting growth within and even beyond the ETZ. However, some citizens continue to question whether or not the agreements with water associations have been crafted in the past in ways that always protect the interests of the town and its utilities customers. The following policies have been recommended:

- Conservation agreements and incentives, for conserving water, should be included;
- There should be clear boundaries for respective service areas; and

- There should be regulations regarding total number of hook-ups allowed by the water association.

These service extension agreements provide the town with additional revenues: the town charges users within the ETZ a fee that is double the rates charged for properties within the town limits. However, the Public Utilities Director argues that these service extension agreements are not necessarily on terms that are favorable to the town, primarily because the costs for increased capacity (initial capital costs, operations and maintenance, and recurring capital costs) may match or exceed the revenues generated.

Still, there is the perception among some critics that this policy is so favorable to the town financially that it is difficult to argue successfully for limits on extensions based on other policy considerations regarding growth. These questions can be answered if the town conducts a rigorous life-cycle cost-benefit analysis in order to establish a solid foundation for growth management policies in the ETZ. As the town negotiates possible new agreements and renegotiates existing agreements on service extensions, a cost-benefit analysis will provide the basis for forging agreements that protect the town's financial interests. In addition, accurate information regarding water supply (including recharge of the aquifer) will also help shape the extent of total obligations by the town to residents who live outside the town limits.

Service extensions by the town provide an alternative to individual wells and septic systems in the ETZ. This is arguably good policy so long as the extensions do not stress the town's own utilities systems and make it difficult now or in the foreseeable future to provide adequate service to town residents and businesses.

In addition to this concern regarding existing users within the town, there are many town residents who do not have water and/or sewer service, and arguably provision of services to those properties should be a first priority. The combination of recent conservation efforts by town users and reduced losses in the system make policy-makers confident that an increase in service to utilities customers outside the town will not compromise service to town residents.

It is already standard procedure that when new subdivisions are approved, water contracts are included in the approval processes that outline water usage and the *primary right to in-town users* (emphasis added). In fact, the rate at which water extensions are being extended to provide service to residents in the ETZ has been declining, and over the past several years, the growth rate has been less than 1 percent per year.

Current town-county discussions regarding mechanisms for governance and development review in the ETZ may result in mutually acceptable policies for extension of water and sewer service to new development.

This could also result in a phased growth policy for the ETZ that is accompanied by a parallel policy regulating the phased extension of sewer and water infrastructure (and roads as well). Finally, a common approach by town and county could provide the basis for *a sewer and water master plan* for the ETZ that allows not only for future extensions but also for improvements and upgrades to the system that assure a rational system and orderly service in the future.

The town and county recognize that a strong real estate market and construction industry is one of the important foundations for a continuing strong economy. Most of this activity is in the ETZ and other areas within the urbanizing area, and all public officials want to support this economic activity. In spite of dramatic job losses, the economy continues to grow and prosper, in no small part because of growth in the ETZ. The fiscal situation for the county has improved and stabilized during the past year, and gross receipts revenues for the town continue to rise (see Chapter 7: Economic Development). The evidence is that the area's strong real estate market represents an important part of diversification of the area's economy, and is a major reason that stresses on the local economy have not been more severe.

The town's goal is to promote policies that assure new growth is desirable for both the town and the region.

Growth Management in the ETZ: Town-County Cooperation

The preferred approach today for growth management is a common town-county strategy for managing growth in the ETZ. The most viable policy options include:

1. Controls over sewer and water extensions into the ETZ
2. Common agreements between county and town for growth management in the ETZ

Common agreements could include ETZ zoning, a joint development review process with an ETZ development review commission, and a joint ETZ authority comprised of elected officials (or their designees) from both the town and county. These options are now being explored by a joint committee of the town and county composed primarily of members from the Silver City Community Development Commission and the Grant County Subdivision Review Committee.

The current approach regarding land use that appears to be acceptable to the parties is the following:

1. Residential and agricultural zoning as the base zoning for all of the ETZ,
2. Conditional use permits required for all non-residential uses.

County officials have been wary of any zoning in the ETZ - the county has no zoning and all development review occurs under the county subdivision ordinance, The limited approach to zoning of ETZ land outlined appears to be a good approach likely to gain the support of all parties, who appear willing to proceed cautiously with this kind of agreement, The joint town-county committee will likely agree on an overall growth management approach in coming months, and some kind of joint planning authority and limited zoning will be established.

C. Land Use Goals and Policies (LU)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

LU Goal #1: Encourage development to locate in appropriate future growth areas within town limits and the ETZ.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 1.1	Infrastructure Services. Identify areas in town and ETZ that can be adequately serviced with town water, sewer and roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Improvement Program • Development Regulations (zoning) • Special Districts
LU 1.2	Higher Density Development. Identify areas within town limits that are appropriate for higher density development and that have vacant land suitable for infill development. Evaluate the current zoning of those areas to ensure consistency with land use and growth management goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Special Districts • Development Review • Comp Plan Consistency Review
LU 1.3	Actions. Identify actions (incentives, rate differences, waivers, etc.) that will encourage development in identified growth areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Development Review • Development Regulations (zoning)

The implementation measures for each “Land Use & Community Design” policy are discussed in detail in Section F: Summary of Implementation Measures.

LU Goal #2: Continue to explore the cost/benefit of annexation taking into consideration wishes of residents in the proposed annexation area.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 2.1	Annexation & Services. Prioritize annexation and delivery of services to appropriate areas. Commercial and industrial areas with community services available should be considered for annexation first.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Improvement Program • Development Regulations (zoning) • Special Districts
LU 2.2	Annexation Evaluation Procedure. Adopt a procedure for evaluating each proposed annexation in terms of feasibility, its cost/benefit ratio, and the concerns of affected parties. Proposals should be rejected if the town cannot provide services or infrastructure to the area proposed for annexation within a 5 year time frame.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
LU 2.3	Financial Strategies. Use financial strategies to offset the costs of public services in newly annexed areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review • Development Incentives • Fiscal Impact Assessment • Impact Fee

LU Goal #3: Coordinate land use and growth management with water management priorities and extensions of infrastructure.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 3.1	Utility Extensions. Identify appropriate utility extension corridors to preferred development areas and prioritize those as capital improvement projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Capital Improvement Program • Development Review
LU 3.2	Water Plan. Review the Water Plan and demographic projections on a regular basis to ensure their consistency with the sale of new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Plan • Development Review

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 3.5	<p>water taps and water availability.</p> <p>Road Improvements. Ensure that road improvement or expansion plans are consistent with the town’s growth and land use goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan • Pavement Management Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review • Development Incentives • Comp Plan Consistency Review
LU 3.6	<p>Regional Water Plan & District. The town should work toward creating a regional water plan and district.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Plan

LU Goal #4: Encourage infill development as a way to accommodate new growth in established areas within the town limits.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 4.1	<p>Development Incentives. Provide incentives for new development to occur within town limits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
LU 4.2	<p>Statutes. Utilize the Metropolitan Redevelopment Statute and other economic development statutes where applicable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Development Regulations (zoning)
LU 4.3	<p>Grant Funding. Continue to pursue state and regional grants, and historic district designations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Funding • Historical Inventory & Designation • Neighborhood Plans • District Plans

LU Goal #5: Implement zoning policies that achieve a desirable mix of different land uses and densities, preserve existing neighborhood character, and respect the rights of private property owners.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 5.1	Zoning Districts. Expand the number of zoning districts to provide a finer mix in zoning and broaden the range of densities and housing types, types of office and commercial development, and appropriate employment areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
LU 5.2	Mixed-Use Development Incentives. Provide incentives for neighborhood-scale, mixed-use, pedestrian oriented commercial development to occur in appropriate areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives
LU 5.3	Mixed-use Zone. Include a new mixed-use zone category in a revised zoning ordinance that includes site development plan standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Standards • Design Guidelines
LU 5.4	Code Review & Update. Review and update at 5-year intervals the town’s zoning and development codes to ensure they are consistent with and facilitate the implementation of land use goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Comp Plan Consistency Review

LU Goal #6: Increase the gross acreage of industrial zoned land while minimizing conflicts with other uses.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 6.1	Industrial Development. Identify areas appropriate for new industrial development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
LU 6.2	Industrial Zones. Rezone areas for industrial development that are appropriately located for connection to the fiber-optic network and other appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 6.3	<p>infrastructure and are consistent with natural resource protection and growth management and annexation goals.</p> <p>Industrial Operation Standards. Create industrial operation standards that meet or exceed state standards for odor, lighting, air and water quality, noise and vibration, in order to minimize future land use conflicts for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comp Plan Consistency Review • Development Regulations • Development Review

LU Goal #7: Protect public health, safety, and welfare and prevent new land use conflicts by incorporating performance-based site development standards for new development.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 7.1	<p>Development Standards & Guidelines. Develop site development standards and design guidelines for new office and commercial development, industrial development, and large-scale residential development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Design Guidelines
LU 7.2	<p>Performance Standards. Establish through ordinance performance standards for telephone, natural gas, propane, electric and cable services for aboveground and underground utilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Design Guidelines
LU 7.3	<p>Landscaping. Require minimal landscaping for all new commercial and large-scale residential development. Residential landscaping standards should address streetscape issues. Xeriscape planting and water-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Design Guidelines

	Policies	Implementation Measures
	saving irrigation should be encouraged.	
LU 7.4	Manufactured Homes. Develop site standards and determine appropriate locations for manufactured home development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Development Incentives
LU 7.5	Mobile Home Park Standards. Review and improve existing mobile home park standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Design Guidelines
LU 7.6	ADA Compliance. Ensure town compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review

LU Goal #8: Establish a standard development process and promote better communication between developers, planning staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the neighborhoods.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
LU 8.1	Public Notification. Develop a public notification process and provide opportunities for public participation on all land use and growth management issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review • City Policy
LU 8.2	Development Requests. Adopt findings and issue written decisions for all land development requests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review • City Policy
LU 8.3	Development Process Book. Develop, and make available to the public, an easy to understand and current book that outlines the development process and the steps needed to get a project approved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review • City Policy
LU 8.4	Infrastructure Guide Book. Develop and make available to the public a book that clearly guides the public to town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review • City Policy

	Policies	Implementation Measures
	<p>infrastructure specifications and requirements. Illustrations should meet standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and include but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Streets & Sidewalks c. Driveways and curb cuts d. Sewer and water lines e. Street repair 	

D. Community Design Goals & Policies (CD)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

CD Goal #1: Recognize the value of preserving the Chihuahua Hill, Silver City, Black’s Addition, and North Addition Historic Districts.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
CD 1.1	<p>Historic Buildings. Explore opportunities to protect, preserve, restore, and re-use historic buildings in Silver City.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Inventory & Designation • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review • Development Incentives • Demolition As Appropriate
CD 1.2	<p>Historic District Development Standards. Maintain site development standards for Silver City’s four historic districts that require new development to be compatible with existing neighborhood patterns and values. Reasonable design criteria should be developed for, but not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building massing and scale b. Lot size requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical Inventory & Designation • Development Regulations (standards) • Design Guidelines • Development Review • Development Incentives • Streetscape Design Guidelines

Policies		Implementation Measures
CD 1.3	<p>c. Setback requirements d. Facade building materials e. Housing type</p> <p>Financial & Technical Assistance. Coordinate with the State of New Mexico Historic Preservation Division and other appropriate agencies on opportunities for tax credits, preservation loans and grants, and technical assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Grant Funds

CD Goal #2: Improve the visual quality of Silver City by adopting sign regulations that respect community character.

Policies		Implementation Measures
CD 2.1	<p>Nonconforming Signs. Establish a program for the elimination of nonconforming signs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Development Review
CD	<p>Sign Regulations. Develop sign regulations appropriate for different areas of town.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Development Review

CD Goal #3: Support and preserve cultural diversity and traditions as integral components of community character.

Policies		Implementation Measures
CD 3.1	<p>Neighborhood Sub-areas. Recognize neighborhood sub-areas for their unique qualities and adopt appropriate planning procedures for each.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • (Neighborhood/Area Plans) • Development Review • Development Incentives • Design Guidelines

Policies		Implementation Measures
CD 3.2	Neighborhood Representation. Include neighborhood representation in adoption of land use decisions and/or policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Neighborhood/Area Plans) • Development Review • City Policy

CD Goal #4: Factor community identity and cultural diversity into development design.

Policies		Implementation Measures
CD 4.1	Entryways. Major entryways into Silver City shall be designed to be compatible with the natural setting of the town and enhance the entry appearance of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautification Program • Design Guidelines • Streetscape Improvement Program • Coordinate with NM DOT
CD 4.2	Public Projects. Encourage public projects that reflect the town’s architectural character and urban design standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautification Program • Design Guidelines • Development Review • Development Incentives • Private/Public Partnerships
CD 4.3	Neighborhood Plans. Encourage neighborhood level planning projects to allow area residents to identify the distinctive character elements of their neighborhoods. Encourage sensitivity to defined character elements when evaluating new development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Neighborhood/Area Plans) • Development Regulations (zoning) • Design Guidelines • Development Review • Development Incentives

F. Summary of Implementation Measures

This section summarizes all of the implementation measures listed for each *Land Use and Community Design* policy in Sections C & D.

Beautification Program. A beautification program promotes good design and quality spaces town-wide. A town beautification program should encourage citizen participation and should be built upon a private/public partnership. Ideally, town beautification programs are

These implementation measures are the key to turning “Land Use and Community Design” goals and policies into action.

sponsored jointly by the town government and local civic organizations and as such serve to promote civic pride while enhancing the physical appearance of the community. Beautification programs can include design awards to recognize private sector for quality architecture and/or landscape design. Such programs can include landscape planning projects such as garden improvements; street tree programs; or public art projects at key locales throughout the town, as well as special design of main entryways to the town. Programs may also include further development and improvements to the neighborhood parks and public spaces in Silver City, as well as development of public scenic turnouts, rest stops, and overlooks to take advantage of views and vistas of the surrounding mountains from the hillsides.

Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a compilation of the improvement projects planned for construction over the next five years. The CIP outlines cost estimates, phasing and financing for proposed projects. The town should review the CIP annually to ensure current and future infrastructure is in place to support the town’s master development and phasing plan. The town should be strategic in finding funding sources for CIP land use and community design improvements including investigating the funds available through applicable federal and state funding initiatives.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency Review. Review all public documents for consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Ensure projects conform to the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The town should revise any public documents and/or projects that do not conform to the plan.

Design Guidelines. Design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that development is appropriate to the area and that it functions well for the community. Design guidelines can help to ensure that new development maintains and enhances aesthetic quality and character of the community. Guidelines should serve to ensure that all new development reflects and enhances existing land use patterns and community design elements. Guidelines that promote the development of pedestrian-oriented streets and sidewalks, and high quality buildings with strong aesthetic character (reflective of a unique southwest New Mexico community), will enhance Silver City’s unique qualities of place. To assure that the historic character of downtown is preserved, the town might adopt guidelines or codes for remodeling historic buildings to assure that these historic buildings and the overall character of downtown is preserved.

Development Incentives. Offering development incentives to property owners and developers can help to achieve quality design and development for a community. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, and/or lessening of development regulations (i.e. reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.) in exchange for the development of

community features or amenities that assist in achieving the town’s overall community design and quality of life goals. Features could include creative design of off-street parking, enhancements to public facilities, and/or environmental benefits, such as open space set-a-sides and/or waterway corridor protection, or other similar benefits to the community. Other incentives that could be used to encourage developers to focus development in the town’s desired growth areas include:

- a. Lowering water and sewer hook-up fees in desired growth areas
- b. Reducing building permit fees in desired growth areas
- c. Reducing utility hook-up fees in desired growth areas

Development Regulations (zoning). The town should coordinate land use and community design goals with the goals of other planning elements such as housing, community design, transportation and economic development. The town’s development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to planning, ensuring all new development has a beneficial influence on the quality of life to improve future opportunities for the community. The town should incorporate into the zoning ordinance those provisions that will require each new project to provide safe pedestrian access, park space and/or other amenities for residents as a means to improve the overall safety, general appeal and aesthetics of the community.

The town can also ensure appropriate development by including development standards in its zoning ordinance. Such development standards could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Grading and drainage
- b. Preservation of natural vegetation
- c. Landscaping requirements
- d. Internal circulation, parking, and access
- e. Street engineering standards
- f. Setbacks and buffer areas
- g. Noise, air quality, vibration, and odor standards
- h. Lighting standards consistent with minimum standards of state *dark skies* ordinance
- i. Hazardous materials standards
- j. Signage

Development standards for mobile home parks could also be included in the zoning ordinance and could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Skirting requirements
- b. Landscaping

- c. Types of foundations
- d. Lot parameters
- e. Grading and site preparation
- f. Solar orientation
- g. Fire ratings
- h. Stairs, entryways and porches

Other possibilities for changing zoning and land use regulations to permit infill development are discussed in the chapter above, and include: smaller lots sizes; higher lot coverage ratios; and second units on lots “by right” in order to encourage “granny flats” and rental units for students, young couples, etc.

Development Review. The development review process includes discretionary review by the Planning and Zoning Commission based on the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*, as well as criteria established by the town’s zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other town regulations and adopted guidelines. Development review also includes administrative review of projects to verify compliance with regional, state and federal laws and policies, and standards set by the town through adoption of building and fire codes, engineering standards, and other such regulations and ordinances. Development review should also assess the impact of new development on the demand for transportation and parking improvements both on- and off-site; demand for infrastructure and public services; adjacent land use impacts; and, to implement mitigation measures and other mechanisms to help finance needed infrastructure, transportation, and land use and community design improvements throughout the town.

Growth Management Strategy & Land Use Category Review. It is important to note that Silver City's growth may exceed the anticipated annual rate of 1 percent through the planning horizon because the supply of land currently exceeds the demand; if demand was to increase, the town could accommodate a higher growth rate. Because of this potential for higher growth rates, the town staff should review the town's population growth rate every five years and revise the Comprehensive Plan's growth strategy accordingly. Ultimately, the Comprehensive Plan growth strategy should match infrastructure planning and should outline adequate and appropriate development to meet current and future trends.

The town should adopt a growth management strategy including a CIP Plan and a Master Development Plan for the town and the ETZ, to assure that historic buildings and the overall character of downtown and older neighborhoods are preserved.

Fiscal Impact Assessment. The town should consider the development of a fiscal impact assessment process that would identify the economic and fiscal impacts of new development projects. The process should

establish thresholds for the size and character of the development that triggers the assessment. Ultimately a fiscal impact assessment should evaluate the benefit of the new development in terms of land use and economic development as well as the infrastructure and public service costs.

Fiscal impacts of development also include impacts on the transportation system, and a traffic impact analysis should be required for new development that generates threshold levels traffic, so that the developer is held responsible for relevant off-site improvements or makes the required in lieu payments to a transportation improvement fund.

Grant Funds. The town should determine whether grant funds are available from federal, state and/or private sources for projects that will improve the appearance of the community and promote land use and community design goals. In addition, the town should recognize the value of finding grant funds for environmental/open space protection and restoration, parks and recreation improvements, and preparation of design guidelines to enhance community character. Improving the quality of life in the area will ensure that citizens and businesses continue to locate in the town because of its great quality of life features.

Impact Fees and Building Permits. The town should adopt a town wide impact fee ordinance, under the requirements of the New Mexico statutes, to fund new and/or expanded capital improvements, such as water and wastewater facilities, roads, fire and police buildings, and parks required to serve new residents and employees in the town. The town should reevaluate the current fee structure for developers and builders and increase fees as appropriate to cover actual costs of administration and impacts.

Intergovernmental Coordination. The town should continue to collaborate with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, particularly with regards to the ETZ, the Village of Santa Clara, the City of Bayard, the Town of Hurley as well as local and regional organizations (such as the Council of Governments) and state and federal agencies in implementing appropriate land use planning and community design for the town and throughout the region. The towns should work closely with all applicable agencies and organizations to ensure that development projects meet the town's interests and ultimately offer positive land use and community design solutions both on a local and regional scale.

The town should continue to place high priority on a joint planning agreement with Grant County to manage growth in the ETZ, including a joint planning authority and joint development review committee.

Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan. The Town of Silver City has done exemplary work in this area (see Chapter on Public Facilities and Services) and should continue work related to

creation and implementation of a Master Bikeway, Pedestrian and Recreation Trails Plan that identifies new roads and improvements to existing roads necessary to incorporate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as locations throughout the town that would best serve an interconnected trail system for recreational purposes. Ultimately, a Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan can compliment efforts to revitalize areas in and around the Town of Silver City.

Parking Regulations. Specify maximum and minimum parking ratios for development projects and encourage shared or joint parking for compatible non-residential uses. Create a stronger pedestrian realm along street fronts by encouraging developers to locate parking lots at the rear or sides of buildings. A comprehensive Parking Strategy for downtown is also needed to manage parking for the benefit of all downtown businesses and residents of the downtown neighborhoods.

Special Districts. Working with the town, property owners can form special districts to assist in financing desired area improvements such as street lighting, landscaping improvements, and other streetscape enhancements. Special Districts could include Silver City's historic downtown area as described in the land use and community design chapter of the Plan; as well as new development in the proposed Silver City Medical District and the 32nd Street neighborhood; the Western New Mexico University campus and adjacent sites for student housing and related commercial activity; and, other districts/areas throughout town that are unique and serve a special role in the community. These important areas, defined as *Special Districts*, should be developed for these areas.

Neighborhood, District and Area Plans (Area Plans). The town is reviewing the current Land Use Code to determine what changes might better reflect the desires of citizens within the community. As part of this review, consideration should be given to a set of plans and codes that are appropriate to existing neighborhoods and areas of the town, as well as future neighborhoods or districts. The town should work with residents to adopt neighborhood, district and areas plan that are appropriate to those different areas and sections of the town.

Private/Public Partnerships. The town should encourage local, regional and state private/public partnerships to address land use and community design issues. The town should actively involve residents, landowners, not-for-profit organizations, and local businesses in local and regional community design initiatives and neighborhood safety programs. The town, with leadership from town agencies like the Silver City Museum, should increase awareness among local citizens and businesses about the importance of land use and community design and elicit their support in maintaining and revitalizing important natural, cultural and historic treasures within the community. Working with local developers and businesses, the town should invest in maintaining and enhancing existing streets, buildings and parks, while supporting future community design

incentives and projects. In addition, the town should partner with local citizens to develop a Neighborhood Watch Programs to assist residents in monitoring and maintaining the safety and well being of the community.

Streetscape Design Guidelines and Signage. Categorize the town's streets into types: (e.g., residential street; commercial main street; boulevard; drive) and develop design guidelines for each street type. Ensure guidelines enhance the pedestrian realm of the street as well as address safety, general appeal and aesthetics. Ultimately, recognize and promote streets as important components of the town's public realm.

Signage is an important part of the town's streetscape, and signage should be appropriate to the neighborhood or district, with special attention to the character of the historic downtown and adjacent historic neighborhoods. In addition to regulation of private sector signage, the town should develop and implement an overall plan for signage at gateways to the town and at other key points, in order to direct visitors and residents to points of interest throughout the town.

Streetscape Improvement Program. The town's major corridors including US 180 and NM 90 would benefit from street improvements such as signage, continuous sidewalks, designated bike lanes, and highly visible crosswalks. The types of improvements and their design are being considered now as part of the 180 Corridor Plan, and these planning deliberations should involve all affected parties. Other amenities to improve these important streets could include decorative lighting, landscaping and street trees. In addition, the town can sponsor the design of entry monuments and landscape improvement projects to improve the appearance these important corridors and the entryways into the town.

Through a Streetscape Improvement Program administered by the town, residents, civic organizations, and local business could be actively engaged in creating new entry signs, monuments, landmarks and other basic street improvements at main entry points and key locations along these major corridors. The Street Improvement Program would help to prioritize improvements and outline a program for funding (potential sources could include TEA-21, federal and state agencies and non-profit foundations) and implementation, and in so doing, assist in dramatically enhancing the town's entryways and key streets.

**Chapter Four: *Transportation &
Circulation***

March 2004

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A. Setting

In 1870, Silver City lay in the heart of the Mimbres Apache homeland, 500 miles from the nearest railroad. The nearest supply center was in Janos, Mexico and was linked across largely uninhabited plains by wooden ox-carts. Transportation was difficult.

One hundred years later, the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad still had a station at the intersection of Bullard and San Vicente Streets, where heavy freight was dispatched. Frontier airlines provided service at the Silver City-Grant County Airport, and the primary arterials linking Silver City with the rest of the country were in place. US 180, which ran from Grand Canyon National Park to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, passed through town on its present alignment; NM 90 ran through town connecting Lordsburg with US 180. At the time, however, the alignment of this later route followed Cooper Street and jogged down Broadway before proceeding up Hudson Street. The 1970 Master Plan recommended a new alignment for this route, which was implemented.

Other recommendations included the extension of 32nd Street to link Swan Street and Pinos Altos Road and the paving of Swan Street south of U.S. Highway 180. These recommendations were implemented. Recommendations to realign Pope, Texas, and Bullard Streets were not. New functional classifications were suggested, a parking plan was proposed for the central business district, and a concern about proliferating traffic control devices was raised. Pedestrian and bicycle issues were not addressed in the 1970 Plan.

Today US 180 and NM 90 remain the major routes connecting Silver City to destinations in southern New Mexico and provide access to points north within the Gila National Forest and beyond. The highway is classified as a "principal arterial" according to American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials guidelines (AASHTO 1994). US 180 is the main commuter corridor between Silver City and Deming, and also serves the municipalities of Bayard, Santa Clara, and Hurley. US 180 also serves as access to the small communities north and west of Silver City, including Cliff and Gila in Grant County, and Glenwood and Reserve in Catron County. NM 90 is the main commuter corridor between Silver City and Lordsburg, and serves the community of Tyrone. NM 90 (Hudson Street) also serves as the primary north-south arterial through the Town of Silver City, terminating at US 180. Both highways are key thoroughfares for school buses, emergency service vehicles, and commercial trucks.

The 1996 *Comprehensive Plan* endorsed a transportation plan based

On recommendations of a traffic study completed for the town, in cooperation with Grant County and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department. This transportation plan responded to stresses on the road system in Silver City caused primarily by higher levels of traffic generated by the rapidly urbanizing area outside the town limits. The 1996 Plan's goals and policies responded to the community's desire--expressed through a community survey and in public meetings--for a comprehensive, safe, and efficient transportation system. The traffic study included provisions for bicyclists and pedestrians that became an important part of the plan, in response to the community's strong support for these provisions and the clear need for improvements in the town's on-road and off-road system of sidewalks, pathways and trails for walking and bicycling.

An additional recommendation from the 1996 Plan was to coordinate with Grant County and other agencies on issues relevant to the airport. Rail service no longer exists to Silver City.

Many elements of the 1996 Plan - still relevant today - have been incorporated by the town's *Comprehensive Plan* task force into the *2004 Comprehensive Plan*.

The major roadways serving Grant County and providing access to Silver City are shown in *Figure 1: Major Routes*. Major roadways in Silver City and the ETZ are shown in *Figure 2: ETZ Main Corridors*.

B. Transportation Trends & Analysis

The Town of Silver City completed Comprehensive Transportation Study (CTS) in 1996 to address specific traffic issues in Silver City and the adjacent Grant County area, primarily in the ETZ. A subsequent Transportation Plan, focusing on the same traffic and transportation issues and larger county concerns, was prepared in 1997 for Grant County, the Town of Silver City, and the municipalities of Santa Clara, Bayard and Hurley. Issues raised in both these studies continue to be evaluated today, guided by on-going technical studies as well as input and direction from the governing bodies of the town and county and cooperative efforts that include affected parties, advocacy groups and the general public.

Residents of the community want their streets to be well maintained and safe, and there was a strong emphasis in public meetings, in the responses to survey questions, and in other venues for calming traffic and making neighborhoods streets safer and more pedestrian- friendly. These concerns are addressed in the *2004 Comprehensive Plan*. The community also continues to ask for relief from traffic congestion, particularly at peak hours and on the principal roadways. The proposed relief route was an attempt to address this problem but the transportation analysis of relief route alternatives revealed problems, not least of which was opposition from the community. Fortunately, preliminary studies

Indicate that congestion relief measures can be introduced that will effectively address the problem into the foreseeable future. Preliminary studies indicate that a comprehensive transportation system management plan (TSM) using traffic synchronization;

intersection improvements and other methods can effectively mitigate the worst of congestion problems in the town.

1996 Comprehensive Transportation Study (CTS)

Issues identified in the initial study included relief of heavy truck traffic through town, relief of congestion in the Silver Heights Boulevard and Hudson Street areas, safety concerns due to multiple access/driveways, the need and feasibility of alternate relief routes, and the area's rapid growth and resultant traffic needs. The CTS identified improvements to US 180 and NM 90, and several alternative corridors that could feasibly address all of the issues identified.

Legislation was enacted by the State of New Mexico in 1998 authorizing the State Highway Commission to issue and sell state highway bonds "for construction of the Silver City relief route" when "the project has been developed sufficiently to justify the issuance". These bonds were authorized along with bonds for several other projects that are collectively known as the Citizens Highway Advisory Task Force (CHAT) program. In response to the legislative act, the Silver City Town Council established the Silver City Relief Route as one of its goals and objectives during its annual retreat of 1998. The Silver City Town Council and the Grant County Commissioners have both passed a resolution in support of the study.

The Phase A Study: *Initial Corridor Analysis-identified* parts of the Silver City transportation system with the strongest need for improvements: 1) safety on the existing highway corridors, 2) system connectivity between arterial streets and collector streets, 3) alternate routes for incident management, emergency vehicle use, truck traffic, and the haul of hazardous materials, and 4) additional transportation facilities to accommodate future growth.

Strong opposition to the relief route has focused on concerns that the relief route would:

- Promote undesirable new growth and patterns of growth (strip retail) adjacent to and near the relief route corridor;
- Negatively impact downtown area businesses because both locals and visitors alike would have a convenient alternate route around downtown;
- Divert funds away from much-needed improvements in the historic downtown and neighborhoods and along the US 180 corridor.

Traffic studies for the proposed relief route indicated that because,

Downtown is a destination, the relief would not negatively affect downtown businesses. Nevertheless, critics have not been persuaded and continue to argue that the bypass would provide an alternative route for locals and visitors alike that would harm downtown area businesses, while at the same time benefiting existing and new businesses along the Highway 180 strip, and possibly new businesses at locations just off the bypass.

1997 Transportation Plan

A comprehensive Transportation Plan completed in 1997 for Grant County, the Towns of Silver City and Hurley, the City of Bayard and the Village of Santa Clara provides the basis for planning and implementing an extensive road system for a large area of Grant County, including the principal corridors. The plan included a bicycle and pedestrian plan as well as a plan for roadways, and provided a "blueprint" for street, sidewalk and highway improvements for local governments as well as the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD - now the New Mexico Transportation Department or NMDOT).

The Comprehensive Transportation Plan incorporates two studies: the work of the 1996 Comprehensive Traffic Study (CTS) prepared for the Town of Silver City and its ETZ; and a related Corridor Study for US 180 from Alabama Street in Silver City east to the access road for the Grant County-Silver City Airport.

The projected traffic volumes obtained through the traffic model were used to evaluate future traffic conditions and analyze alternative street networks for the Plan's 20-year period. The resulting Transportation Plan included descriptions of existing conditions and future roadway requirements, including: the number of lanes in each roadway section; conceptual plans for proposed highway, intersections, and/or interchanges; special features which affect speed and capacity; and recommended alternative relief routes.

As part of the Transportation Plan, a Street and Highway Improvement Program was prepared. It provided a classification of each major roadway in the study area (which can be the basis for a Street Classification system recommended below, in Section E of this chapter). The program also included specific projects needed to accommodate the increased traffic forecasted for the year 2015. In order to assure the feasibility of the proposed improvements, sequencing plans were included to meet traffic needs for each time frame.

In reviewing specific improvements within the Town of Silver City, compatibility with several issues was used as a "test" for inclusion in the recommended system. These issues included: 1) compatibility with relevant existing conditions of the transportation system; 2) technical analysis of street operations (capacity analysis); 3) traffic impacts to residential neighborhoods; and, 4) financial implications.

The specific principles identified were elaborations on one or more of the four factors. These principles were not intended as absolute criteria, since instances may occur where certain principles conflict. The principles were used as concepts for proper system layouts within the Town of Silver City.

Using computer models, future traffic volumes were analyzed to provide the basis for recommendations of improvements to the transportation system. Those alternatives are shown on *Figure 4-3: Proposed Roadway Connections*. Most of the alternatives considered are within the Town of Silver City, the ETZ or areas close to the town limits; these roadway improvements are designed to improve the efficiency of the transportation system in the urbanizing area of the town and its environs, as the area grows over the coming decades. One important alternative further south in the county (a 2015 Truck Bypass Route) calls for the development of a two lane, high-speed road between the Tyrone mines to US 180 south of Hurley. This route would be advantageous to trucks but studies indicate that it would not impact current automobile traffic traveling US 180 to Silver City.

Relief Route Alternatives and Road Connectivity

Several basic "relief routes" were reviewed in the 1996 Comprehensive Traffic Study (CTS): southern and northern routes between US 180 East and US 180 West. Because of the terrain and/or existing developments, a complete northern route from US 180 West to US 180 East was not feasible. In addition, an eastern loop road or bypass was evaluated. This road was a combination of a southern connector and three northern connectors. The evaluation of this route by the consultant indicated that based on analysis of transportation efficiency alone, it provided the best relief for the US 180 - NM 90 corridors. However, the cost of the long roadway (especially in the southeast) as well as the terrain and existing residential developments in the north and south were such that this route could not be justified.

While the alternative preferred by the consultant proved unfeasible (so - called eastern loop road), it did indicate a need for additional Street connectors in the roadway system. These include specific "connectors" from various north-south streets between Cottage San Road (on the west side of Silver City) to Pinos Altos Road (NM 115) and then to US 180 East. These new streets in the north can provide relief to US 180 and NM 90, improve internal circulation for neighborhoods, and improve emergency response time (similar to the connector studied).

Locations identified for these connectors can minimize the costs and can reduce impacts to existing subdivisions. In addition, each street can be constructed independently of the others. Thus, they can be constructed in phases and, in part, acquired by land development dedications of roadways. While the 1997 Transportation Plan concluded that all of the

north connectors had favorable characteristics, it cautioned that terrain and existing residential developments in the area, including the consequent costs, remain the biggest obstacles to their development.

Interconnectivity of streets and roads and pedestrian pathways is a key ingredient of a good transportation system. Clearly, interconnectivity of roads is limited in many areas of Silver City, particularly to the north. Most roadway connections to the north of Highway 180 and west of Swan Street have few if any east-west connections, particularly in the areas further north and away from Highway 180. This is, in large part, due to the topography of the area, which consists of steep valleys and hills; these constraints of topography make these connections difficult to address in a cost-effective manner. The roadway network may be likened to a series of spokes, which converge at the hub of the US 180 and NM 90 intersection. Roadways running north off Highway 180 typically follow drainages surrounded by ridges or high ground on either side, making road construction difficult and costly. As the town grows to the north, the need for better connectivity from east to west also grows. These connections will also make it easier for emergency vehicles to respond in a timely manner, by providing more choices and alternate routes. Alternate routes are critical for emergency vehicles-the issue is not just response time but access in the event that the major roadway access route is blocked.

Transportation System Management (TSM) - Traffic Synchronization and Operational Improvements.

In conjunction with these recommendations, subsequent studies have focused attention on improvements to the existing corridors (particularly US 180 East), traffic signal synchronization, improvements at key intersections and other related improvements to reduce congestion, improve safety, and to provide better alternatives for pedestrians and bicycles. Because of the costs and disruption of roadway improvements, particularly in the developed areas, the 1997 Transportation Plan called for greater emphasis on low cost *operational* improvements. These Transportation System Management (TSM) measures, such as left or right turn lanes and protected turn movements, can often improve traffic flow and safety with minimal expense.

Preliminary studies conducted more recently indicate that these operational improvements can significantly relieve congestion, particularly during peak hours. The Plan affirms that all modes of transportation (automobiles, trucks, buses, bicycles and pedestrians) should be considered in all roadway designs. The 1997 Plan includes an extensive discussion of bicycle and pedestrian modes, and incorporated at firm commitment to observe state and federal law in the design of streets and transportation systems that offer optimum opportunities for these alternative modes. The consultant study team is working cooperatively with the Citizen's Advisory Committee and meeting with the general public to present improvement options for NM 90 and US

180. This approach is consistent with public opinion that funds should be used to upgrade and improve the Silver City road system to make it more efficient and to help reduce accidents, as an alternative to major investment in a bypass.

Therefore, while studies conducted by the engineering consultant (Engineers Inc.) suggest that the relief route would best address the needs identified by the Initial Corridor Analysis, attention is now focused on the so-called Enhanced No-build Alternative. The approach includes analysis of coordination and timing of traffic signals to help expedite the flow of traffic through town. Improvements suggested focused on congestion mitigation techniques recommended in the Comprehensive Traffic Study (CTS), including striping, left-turn lanes, intersection improvements, and traffic signalization.

The preliminary studies show that synchronizing the traffic signals will have a positive effect-particularly at peak hours-and could reduce congestion significantly in Silver City and environs. The need for synchronization and optimization is the result of recent growth in traffic volumes and increased congestion, and funding has not previously been available for the analysis or equipment and installation. Methods of connecting the traffic signals along the corridor, such as physical connections, radio communications or timing of controllers are needed; these methods will make each intersection operate efficiently by itself, and in relationship to the other intersections. Ideally, closely spaced signals such as these can be set to a timed sequence that correlates with a set travel speed through the corridors. This alternative for relief of traffic congestion is further enhanced by roadway improvements currently recommended for Highway 180 East, particularly for intersections beginning at 32nd Street west and including the 180-90 intersection. Improvements being considered also include frontage roads to take local traffic off Highway 180. The study team includes local pedestrian and bicycle advocates (WAAG primarily) who are helping incorporate sidewalks and off-road pathways along and adjacent to the corridor.

Alternate Modes of Transportation: Pedestrian and Bicycle.

The 2004 Plan places strong emphasis on walking and bicycling not only for recreation and health (See Ch. 4: Trails and Open Space section of Public Services and Facilities), but also as alternative modes of transportation. Scientific studies by the National Institute of Health and other groups linking census tracts with pedestrian/bicycle accessibility have shown that communities with traditional roadway systems (interconnected grids and sidewalks) have lower levels of obesity and other maladies and diseases associated with inactivity and lack of exercise. These studies demonstrate that alternative modes that reduce automobile usage also relieve congestion, lower noise levels (vehicles are the primary source of noise pollution in most communities), reduce emissions and promote cleaner air and better health-not to mention stress and attendant health problems associated with extensive commuting.

Even relatively small towns such as Silver City that do not have extensive commuting can realize benefits from alternatives to the automobile. Alternative modes are linked also with small-town urbanism and the *quality of place* that is important as a foundation for economic development. Economic development planners today also emphasize the importance of attracting young 25-44 year old entrepreneurs who have been responsible for innovations in the new telecommunications and technology economy, and for this reason, bicycle trails and open space are not just amenities but infrastructure to support economic development (See Ch. 8: Economic Development).

Silver City residents in significant numbers strongly support policies that promote and support pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as access for physically challenged individuals and wheelchairs. The Silver City Walkability and Accessibility Advocacy Group (W AAG) is a strong local advocacy group for goals and policies that promote pedestrian safety, sidewalk construction and maintenance, accessibility, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The UNM Center for Injury Prevention Research and Education (CIPRE) provides information and support to local citizens to better understand the issues of walkability.

Accessibility for the Handicapped: Compliance with ADA Requirements.

The 1996 *Comprehensive Plan* and the 1999 Town of Silver City Land Use Code both affirm goals and policies that promote compliance with federal and state laws regarding access for the handicapped. To assure implementation of stated goals and policies as well as existing law and ordinance, the *Comprehensive Plan* calls for a number of important implementation measures, which are included below. However, full compliance with legal requirements and other goals listed below depends upon available funds and on the town's overall budget priorities. At the same time, there should be both a short term and long-term implementation strategy, based on cost estimates for each of the respective projects, with projected budget allocations annually to achieve priority goals for ADA compliance and improvements of the town's sidewalks and related infrastructure. Specific goals and objectives include:

1. The 1999 Land Use Code should be revised to require developers of all new commercial projects to install sidewalks, and to require installation of ADA compliant sidewalks when public and commercial facilities are altered.
2. The town should develop, implement and adhere to sidewalk regulations addressing materials and width, as well as keeping sidewalks clear and free of all impediments, including traffic signs, utility poles, gas meters, mailboxes, and other items. The sidewalk regulations should comply

with the ADA requirements, as well. The town should develop a program based on the adopted sidewalk regulations for the gradual removal of any such barriers and impediments. The town should work with local utility companies on a program for the removal of impediments and enter into agreements with all utilities to keep sidewalks clear.

3. The Public Works Department should develop and implement a policy for the replacement and maintenance of town sidewalks. Replacement of existing hazardous sidewalks should be given high priority.
4. The town should develop and implement a plan for bringing all town facilities and infrastructure into compliance with ADA requirements, including sidewalks and parks.
5. The town should develop and implement a policy whereby street projects will provide appropriate pedestrian and bike access. Such improvements should be considered a priority, equal to that of improving vehicular movement, and automatically included in the project cost, rather than considered an added alternative.
6. The town should develop and implement a rights-of-way adoption and maintenance program, including a list of approved vegetation (such as trees whose roots will not damage adjacent sidewalks).

Silver City Transportation Planning - Implementation Strategies

The most important goals and policies for Silver City transportation system, including non-vehicular modes and public transit, are set forth in the next section. In the last section of this chapter (D. Summary of Implementation Measures) the current Comprehensive Plan identifies a list of the many measures and approaches that can help make the town's transportation system more efficient and to serve the needs of all residents.

The categories explored in this section include:

- Master Transportation Plan - perhaps the most important foundation for a comprehensive approach to transportation;
- Capital improvement program;
- Development regulations and development review;
- Funding sources;
- Intergovernmental collaboration;

- Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan (also discussed in Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services);
- Parking Management Plan and parking regulations;
- Pavement Management Plan;
- Private-public partnerships;
- Strategic Transit Service Plan;
- Streetscape Improvement Program and streetscape guidelines;
- Traffic impact analysis and traffic impact fees.

A comprehensive action plan founded on the goals and polices in this chapter, with attention specifically to the many implementation measures identified, offer the promise of a transportation system that will meet present and future needs and respond to the needs of all citizens within the community.

C. Transportation & Circulation Goals & Policies (TC)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

TC Goal #1: Create a comprehensive, safe, and efficient circulation system that balances the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Transportation decisions should be based on the land use and planning goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 1.1	Transportation Plans. Adopt transportation plans that address the three major transportation systems: vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreation Trails Plan
TC 1.2	Traffic Impact Analysis. Develop a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) process to study the impact a proposed development will have on the surrounding transportation system. Integrate the TIA into the development process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Impact Analysis • Development Review • Development Regulations (zoning) • Traffic Impact Fee

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 1.3	<p>Adequate Right-of-Ways. Develop a plan to acquire and protect adequate rights-of-way, as defined by the code of ordinances, along all public streets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan • Development Regulations (zoning)
TC 1.4	<p>SC 2002 Corridor Study. Follow the recommended improvements contained in the Silver City 2002 Corridor Study.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan • Town Policy
TC 1.5	<p>Comp Plan Consistency. Use transportation improvements to encourage and direct development where it is desired under the comprehensive plan: avoid ratifying development that runs counter to the comprehensive plan with roads, sidewalks and other transportation methods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comp Plan Consistency Review • Master Transportation Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review

TC Goal #2: Enhance the pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in Silver City by providing safe, easily-accessible connections to neighborhoods, shopping areas, schools, and community facilities.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 2.1	<p>Pedestrian Friendly Parking Lots. Encourage pedestrian-friendly site planning in parking areas at commercial and public buildings that minimizes pedestrian-vehicular conflicts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Regulations • Streetscape Design Guidelines • Master Transportation Plan
TC 2.2	<p>Sidewalks. Encourage provision of accessible sidewalks on one side of all streets and both sides of arterial streets. Initiate a sidewalks improvement program and improve substandard sidewalks wherever they occur.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Streetscape Design Guidelines • Development Review • Master Transportation Plan
TC 2.3	<p>Pedestrian Flow. Identify and relocate where feasible existing utilities that impede pedestrian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape Design Guidelines

Policies		Implementation Measures
	flow on sidewalks including electric poles, telephone poles, guy wires, and fire hydrants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Review • Master Transportation Plan
TC 2.4	Pedestrian Safety. Improve pedestrian safety in Silver City through the maintenance of existing street lamps along roadways, the enforcement of clear sight triangles at intersections, the timing of traffic lights to allow adequate time for pedestrian crossing, and the enforcement of speed limits and citations for other traffic violations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape Design Guidelines • Development Regulations (standards) • Master Transportation Plan • Development Review
TC 2.5	Public Transportation. Continue to support public transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Transit Service Plan • Master Transportation Plan • Capital Improvement Program

TC Goal #3: Enhance the bicycle-friendly atmosphere in Silver City and promote bicycle use as a healthy, viable transportation alternative.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 3.1	Bicycle Movement. Consider bicycle needs on existing major roadways and during construction and rehabilitation of major roadways and approvals for new subdivisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreation Trails Plan • Streetscape Improvement Program • Development Regulations (standards) • Streetscape Design Guidelines • Traffic Impact Fee • Pavement Management Plan

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 3.2	Bike Route Signs. Install bike route signs, signed and painted bike lanes, and bike detectors at traffic signals at appropriate locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreation Trails Plan • Streetscape Improvement Program • Development Regulations (standards) • Streetscape Design Guidelines
TC 3.3	Bicycle Routes. Continue to evaluate potential for bicycle routes and facilities, separate and distinct from roadways that connect to public open space areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreation Trails Plan • Development Regulations (zoning)
TC 3.4	Bicycle Safety. Educate the public on bicycle safety and encourage bicycle use through sponsoring of special events, including bicycle safety clinics, bicycle rodeos, seminars on bicycle law for law enforcement officers, and bicycle races.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreational Trails Plan • Private/Public Partnership
TC 3.5	Bicycle Route Map. Modify, maintain and improve a bicycle route map and make it available to the public at major public places, including the Silver City Library, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, post offices, and other public places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Pedestrian, Bikeway & Recreational Trails Plan • Town Policy

TC Goal #4: Provide safe, accessible, and adequate parking for commercial development.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 4.1	Downtown Parking, Access & Circulation. Assess parking and access needs within the downtown area and develop a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Management Plan • Parking Regulations

Policies		Implementation Measures
	circulation plan that balances various transportation modes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan
TC 4.2	Parking Ordinance. Re-evaluate the parking ordinance requirements for safety and sufficient number of spaces in parking lots for commercial development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Management Plan • Parking Regulations • Master Transportation Plan
TC 4.3	Shared Parking. Encourage shared-use parking facilities between commercial, institutional, and residential users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Management Plan • Parking Regulations

TC Goal #5: Provide traffic control devices (signage, traffic control lights, timed lights, access control, etc.) to enhance the flow of traffic through Silver City.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 5.1	Traffic Flow. Utilize the recommendations of the 2002 Corridor Study to identify and prioritize specific traffic control actions to enhance traffic flows throughout the Town, including a traffic signal prioritization system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan • Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan • 2002 corridor Plan • Traffic Signalization Plan
TC 5.2	Funds. Seek state and federal funds whenever feasible to assist in funding improvements to the local system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Funds • Traffic Impact Analysis

TC Goal #6: Pursue coordination between the Town of Silver City, Grant County, and other agencies with regard to access and expansion issues for local airports.

Policies		Implementation Measures
TC 6.1	Local Airports' Level of Service. Evaluate the current level of service offered by local airports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Transportation Plan

D. Summary of Implementation Measures

Master Transportation Plan. The town should create a Master Transportation Plan *of* arterial and collector streets so that the town has a long-range guide as to how streets will be improved and function now and through the future. This Transportation Plan will help guide investment and will identify amounts *of* future rights-of-way that will be needed. A companion to the Major Transportation Plan is a Street Classification System that identifies the current function *of* streets as arterials or collectors. The town's Street Classification System would be informed by the street classification system created as part *of* the Corridor Transportation Study (CTS), and would be updated over time in response to changing conditions.

Perhaps the most important action that Silver City (and other local government entities in the region) can take is to identify future roadway corridors and prohibit development within these corridors. In order to preserve the corridor, the recommended system network-as well as any additional corridors should be adopted and changes made to the agencies permitting procedures, i.e. subdivision and building permit ordinances to require street dedication and paving of these streets.

The town should create a Master Transportation Plan and amend local ordinances as necessary, establish traffic impact analysis policy; approve street cross-sections; require sidewalks on one side of all streets and both sides of arterial streets; establish truck routes system; require dedication of rights-of-way and construction of *local* and collector streets, thus preserving street corridors; and establish "limited access" zones. All improvements should be identified by short, median, and long-term implementation time frames, and funding should be matched over time to the desired improvements.

The master Transportation Plan should include all proposed connector roads identified in *Figure 4-3: Proposed Roadway Connections*.

Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a compilation of the improvement projects planned for construction over the next five years. The CIP outlines cost estimates, phasing and financing for proposed projects. The town should review the CIP annually to ensure that current and future transportation needs, including public transit needs are being addressed through the program. The town should be strategic in finding funding sources for CIP transportation improvements including securing federal funds available through TEA-21 and other such federal and state funding initiatives. Section B of this chapter contains a full discussion of issues regarding the town's capital improvement program and it relates to transportation. The Public Works section of Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services also discusses the town's budget priorities and issues with regard to

paving and maintaining roadways within the town limits.

Development Regulations (zoning). The town should coordinate all street and transportation planning with land use planning. The town's development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to land use and transportation planning. To ensure impacts of new development on transportation and parking conditions in and around the development site are addressed, the town should adopt an ordinance that requires developers to:

- Fund traffic impact studies that identify on-site and off-site effects and mitigation measures; and implement transportation improvements adjacent to property, where appropriate.
- In addition, the town should incorporate into the land use code those provisions that will require each new project to provide sidewalks and other amenities for pedestrians and cyclists as a means to encourage alternative modes of transportation as well as improve the safety, general appeal and aesthetics of streets.

Development Review. The development review process includes discretionary review by the Planning and Zoning Commission based on the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*, as well as criteria established by the town's zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other town regulations and adopted guidelines. Development review also includes administrative review of projects to verify compliance with regional, state and federal laws and policies, and standards set by the town through adoption of building and fire codes, engineering standards, and other such regulations and ordinances. Development review should also be used to assess the impact for new development on the demand for both on- and off-site transportation and parking improvements.

Funding for Transportation Projects. The town should determine whether grant funds are available from federal, state and/or private sources for transportation projects. In addition, the town should continue seeking grant funds for alternative transportation modes including pedestrian, bicycle and/or transit, including TEA-21 funding.

Funding possibilities include federal, state and local sources. Federal funds are available from TEA-21 funding and Hazardous Route funds. State funding is available from a number of sources, including: special fuel tax; trip tax; weight/distance tax; motor vehicle registration; motor vehicle transaction fee; driver's license fee; oversize/overweight fees; state legislature designated funds; energy, minerals and resources funds. Local funds include the general fund; gross receipts tax revenues, and special bond issues. Private funds include assessment districts, development impact fees, right-of-way dedications, and private construction.

Intergovernmental Coordination. The town should continue to collaborate with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, Santa Clara, Bayard and Hurley, as well as The Southwestern New Mexico Council of Governments, New Mexico State Transportation Department (NMDOT), the MainStreet Program, Western New Mexico University and other applicable agencies and organizations to ensure an effective and efficient transportation system for town residents. The town should work closely with NMDOT to ensure that regional studies, such as studies for highway relief or bypass routes, meet the town's interests and ultimately offer positive transportation and economic development solutions both on a local and regional scale.

The Town should actively participate in the intergovernmental implementation plan that is created as part of the updated Corridor Study currently underway as part of the Transportation Plan being prepared by Engineers Inc, and set forth initially in the 1997 Transportation Plan (see "Recommended Action Plan" in Implementation Plan for The Transportation Plan of Grant County, Town of Silver City, City of Bayard, Village of Santa Clara, and town of Hurley, August 1997)

Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan. The town should create a Master Bikeway, Pedestrian and Recreation Trails Plan, in conjunction with a Master Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Plan. This Plan would identify new roads and improvements to existing roads necessary to incorporate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as locations throughout the town, in order to create an interconnected trail system (integrated with the parks, recreation, open space and trails system) for recreational purposes. These respective plans would build on the extensive work already done by bicycle and trails advocates and town officials. Ultimately, a Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan can complement efforts of the Master Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Plan and together serve to revitalize areas of the town and continue to improve the quality of life.

Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. The town should develop a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) that is administered by town staff but focuses on actively involving residents in identifying and addressing traffic issues in their neighborhood. The NTMP should include a survey of residents to determine reasons for vehicle trips, providing the basis for mixed-use zoning within neighborhood centers that would make possible pedestrian/bicycle alternatives to the automobile. Each participating neighborhood should receive a NTMP handbook that outlines research and methods required to address local transportation issues, such as the type of traffic data that should be collected; examples of traffic calming measures; prioritization methodology; and, funding mechanisms. The town should ensure that involved citizens are provided with tools and processes that enable them to evaluate the benefits and trade-offs of proposed solutions.

Parking Management Plan. Identify commercial areas with current

parking shortages and provide an analysis of long term parking needs in commercial areas and the downtown district. To address current and future shortages, encourage on-street parking where feasible and investigate the development of shared public parking lots and facilities. Capitalize on funding opportunities such as in-lieu development project fees for public parking areas as well as town redevelopment funding.

Parking Regulations. Specify maximum and minimum parking ratios for development projects and encourage shared or joint parking for compatible non-residential uses. Create a stronger pedestrian realm along street fronts by encouraging developers to locate parking lots at the rear or sides of buildings.

Pavement Management Plan. Establish and maintain a systematic pavement program. Ensure the Pavement management Plan is included in the town's Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Recognize maintenance and improvements of bicycle and pedestrian paths, as well as signage as part of the overall Pavement Management Plan.

Private/Public Partnerships. The town should encourage local, regional and state private/public partnerships to address transportation needs. The town should actively involve residents, landowners, not-for-profit organizations, and local businesses in local and regional transportation initiatives and bicycle and pedestrian safety programs. The town should continue to increase awareness among local citizens and businesses about the importance of alternative transportation modes for the community. Working with local developers and businesses, the town should invest in maintaining and enhancing existing streets and parking lots, while supporting future streetscape design incentives and improvement projects. Private developers and businesses can help improve the transportation system and maintain it in the future. Developer contributions will be based on traffic impact studies (see below, Traffic Impact Analysis).

In addition, the town should partner with local citizens to develop a Neighborhood Traffic Management Plan (as described above) and/or a Neighborhood Watch Program to assist residents in monitoring and maintaining the safety and well-being of the streets in their community.

Strategic Transit Service Plan. Maintain and increase current levels of service provided by Corre Caminos. Develop a Strategic Transit Service Plan (STSP) that identifies opportunities for improved transit service, including increasing the frequency, level of service, and the number of transit routes, as well as establishing future corridors for fixed route service within and around the town. Ensure that the STSP promotes efforts to increase transit ridership region-wide as a means to reduce traffic congestion within the town and throughout the region. The STSP should recognize and identify opportunities to collaborate with regional and state transit initiatives.

Streetscape Design Guidelines. Categorize the town's streets into types (e.g., residential street; commercial main street; boulevard; drive) and develop design guidelines for each street type. Ensure guidelines enhance the pedestrian and bicycle realm of tile street as well as address safety, general appeal and aesthetics. Ultimately, recognize and promote streets as important components of the town's public realm.

Streetscape Improvement Program. The town's major corridors through town and adjacent to the downtown area, particularly US 180 and NM 90, would benefit from street improvements such as signage, continuous sidewalks, designated bike lanes, and highly visible crosswalks. Other amenities to improve these important streets could include decorative lighting, landscaping and street trees. In addition, the town can sponsor the design of entry monuments and other gateway features, including landscape improvement projects to improve the appearance of these important corridors and tile principal gateways into town. Through a Streetscape Improvement Program administered by the town, residents, civic organizations, and local business could be actively engaged in creating new entry signs, monuments, landmarks and other basic street improvements at main entry points and key locations along these major corridors. The Street Improvement Program would help to prioritize improvements and outline a program for funding (potential sources could include TEA-21, federal and state agencies and non-profit foundations) and implementation, and in so doing, assist in dramatically enhancing the town's entryways and key streets.

Traffic Impact Analysis. Require proponents of development projects to conduct a traffic impact analysis for all projects that would produce 75-200 vehicle trips daily. Ensure the analysis identifies the specific impacts to existing and future transportation conditions and outlines measures required to mitigate on-site and off-site impacts of the development project. The town should require developer's to pay for improvements that substantially impact the transportation system, according to requirements of Town's policy with regard to the Traffic Impact Analysis. In lieu of construction of these improvements, the developer would pay a traffic impact fee so that the town would have funds available for scheduled improvements to the transportation system.

Traffic Impact Fee. The town should consider a traffic impact fee study to help determine if it would be beneficial to establish impact fees on development projects to fund transportation and street improvements. Such a fee could be in-lieu of off-site mitigation requirements but would not replace the developer's responsibility for on-site requirements (such as street frontage). Traffic impact fee would be placed in a specific fund and would be used to help fund scheduled roadway extensions, intersection improvements, safety improvements, or improvements and amenities to pedestrian, bicycle and/or transit facilities.

Chapter Five: *Housing*

March 2004

Chapter Five: *Housing*

A. Setting

Population Demographics

Since its historical high in 1886 of 4000 people, the Town of Silver City's population has grown-alternating between times of rapid increase and periods of little to no growth, and even net loss. By the mid 1930's the town surpassed its 1886 population peak of 4,000 residents. Today, Silver City has a population of approximately 10,545 people. (Census 2000)

Silver City experienced a very high growth rate from 1940 to 1950 (39.2 percent). Yet, through 1950 to 1960, the rate of growth diminished (0.7 percent) and the population slightly decreased. After the 60's the growth rate rebounded with about a 2.3 percent increase per year until the 1980s. From 1980 to 1990, the population slowed significantly with an increase of 1.8 percent in total population throughout this 10 year period. Following past trends, the decade 1990 to 2000 saw a total decrease in the population of 0.01 percent. Silver City's population has dropped from 10,683 in 1990 to 10,545 in the year 2000. The US Census 2000 estimate of 10,545 people is considerably less than the 2000 population estimate outlined in Silver City's 1996 Comprehensive Plan which, based on the 40 Year Water Plan for Silver City, projected the 2000 population at 12,338.

Today, based on US Census 2000 data, the plurality of Silver City's residents (3,959 people or 38 percent) are between the ages of 25 to 54 years. Approximately 21 percent of residents (2,160) are 14 years or under, while 16 percent (1,686) are teenagers, ages 15 to 19, or young adults, ages 20 to 24. Those between the ages of 55 to 64 years comprise about 10 percent of the population (1,025 people), while those 65 to 84 accounts for 14 percent (1,471 people). There are about 244 seniors 85 years and older--approximately 2 percent of the population. (Census 2000)

Household Types

The original plat of Silver City acknowledged different levels of prosperity among residents by providing small inexpensive lots in the southwestern quarter of town, as well as larger lots elsewhere for those who had more resources to invest. The only rule of construction, adopted soon after adoption of the town's charter, was that all buildings were to be of brick or a similar fireproof material. The legacy of this rule is a significant stock of brick homes that were constructed in Victorian styles by lucky miners and other prosperous residents. Not as well known is the substantial stock of much smaller homes that were constructed of adobe, cobbled rock, and other materials-at-hand in vernacular styles and often by the tenants themselves.

In 1970, the primary housing concern of the Master Plan was the poor condition of a significant part of the housing stock: over 29% of all dwelling units were deemed deteriorated or dilapidated. The bulk of these buildings were located in the southern and eastern portions of the original town site, in areas with very little public investment in infrastructure.

In the older, formerly neglected areas of town, investment in public infrastructure increased in the decades following 1970, but many dwellings were still without water and sewer and paved streets. With these improvements, a collateral effect has been a measure of displacement of the poor from a housing stock that has been historically available and affordable. Some people sold their property as a result of paving assessments. Others were enticed to sell by rising property values, only to find housing costs even higher elsewhere, forcing them to move out of town, where inadequately regulated development creates new blight conditions. Still others found their rent increased as public investment made older neighborhoods more attractive to a larger and wealthier market.

Today, the Town of Silver City has a total of approximately 4,757 housing units, with an average household size of 2.4 persons per unit. Family households make up the majority (approximately 65 percent) of household types in the Town of Silver City. The number of non-family households is approximately 35.4 percent, slightly higher than the proportion in Grant County and the state. Compared to Grant County and the state, Silver City has the largest percentage of single female-parent households (15.4 percent).

Types of housing in Silver City generally are found in the same percentages found elsewhere in the state. Approximately 65 percent of the units are single family dwellings. Multi-unit housing (including duplexes, multi-family homes and small apartments) account for a little less than 15 percent of housing types, and about 20 percent of units are in the form of manufactured/mobile homes.

A considerable portion of housing units (39 percent) in Silver City was built prior to the 1960s. From 1960-1980, another 34 percent of the existing housing stock was built. And, from 1980 to 1996 (the time of the town's last Comprehensive Plan) about 16 percent of the homes were developed. Since the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, there have been approximately 512 new homes (11 percent of the housing stock) constructed.

Household Income

The median household income in 1999 for Silver City was \$25,881. A portion of the population, 18.4 percent, had a household income within the range of \$15,000 to \$24,999, while 17 percent earned less than

\$10,000. In 1999, 2,237 individuals (approximately 22 percent of the population) were living below the poverty level in Silver City. This percentage is higher than the percentage of individuals below poverty level in Grant County as well as the state.

Owner Occupancy Rate

Sixty three percent of the housing units in Silver City are owner occupied. The median house cost in the town is \$87,700-about the same median price of a home in Grant County (\$87,900), but considerably less than that of the state (\$108,100). Seventeen percent of residents earn less than \$10,000 per year. As a result, even the lowest priced homes in the area remain unaffordable to this group.

Affordable Housing

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordability in relation to homeownership as a household that pays no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Families who are paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing can be considered financially burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care. (US HUD 2003)

US Census data (1999) indicates that about 76 percent of Silver City homeowners spend less than 30 percent of their household income on monthly mortgage costs. The remaining 24 percent of homeowners have monthly owner costs 30 percent or more of their household income. (Census 2000)

Renter-occupied housing makes up 32 percent of Silver City's total housing units. (Census 2000) The median cost to rent a unit in Silver City is \$430.00. This amount is slightly higher than the median for Grant County (\$419.00), but less than that of the state (\$503.00). (Census 2000) About 37 percent of household renters in Silver City are paying 30 percent or more of their household income on rent.

B. Trends

Population Projections

1990 to 2000 has experienced a total decrease in Silver City's population of 0.01 percent over this 10 year period. Silver City's population has dropped from 10,683 in 1990 to 10,545 in the year 2000 (Census 2000). This phenomenon is not unlike trends of other decades, and though the population within town limits has shown a slight decline in the past decade, it is expected that Silver City's population will continue to grow in coming years, though the rate of growth will slow down and probably level off in the future. It is important to note that the population within the ETZ outside of town limits has continued to grow over the past

decade, and will likely grow at a slightly higher rate than that of the town.

For the purposes of the comprehensive plan, population growth rate estimates of low (0.3 percent) medium (0.5 percent) and high (0.7 percent) have been developed and provide general population estimates for the Town of Silver City from the year 2000 (based on the population estimate of 10,545 by US Census 2000) to the year 2020 (see Table 5-1: Population Projections - Town Limits)

As indicated above, following past trends, the ETZ is expected to continue to grow at a slightly higher rate than the town. Population estimates for the ETZ have also been developed based on the growth rates outlined in the 2004 Grant County Comprehensive Plan and are outlined in Table 5-2: Population Projections - ETZ. Lastly, population projections for both the town and the ETZ combined are provided in Table 5-3: Population Projections - Town & ETZ.

Table 5-1: Silver City’s Projected Population within Town limits based on US Census estimate of 10,545 for the year 2000.

	Annual Growth Rate		
	Low (0.3 percent)	Medium (0.5 percent)	High (0.7 percent)
2000	10,545	10,545	10,545
2001	10,577	10,598	10,619
2003	10,608	10,651	10,693
2003	10,640	10,704	10,768
2004	10,672	10,757	10,843
2005	10,704	10,811	10,919
2006	10,736	10,865	10,996
2007	10,768	10,920	11,073
2008	10,801	10,974	11,150
2009	10,833	11,029	11,228
2010	10,866	11,084	11,307
2011	10,898	11,140	11,386
2012	10,931	11,195	11,466
2013	10,964	11,251	11,546
2014	10,997	11,308	11,627
2015	11,030	11,364	11,708
2016	11,063	11,421	11,790
2017	11,096	11,478	11,873
2018	11,129	11,535	11,956
2019	11,163	11,593	12,039
2020	11,196	11,651	12,124

Table 5-2: Population projections for the ETZ based on low, medium and high population estimates (extrapolated from the 1996 Comprehensive Traffic Study for Silver City-Grant County data) for the year 2000.

	Annual Growth Rate		
	Low (0.5 percent)	Medium (0.7 percent)	High (0.9 percent)
2000	8,061	9,042	10,112
2001	8,101	9,105	10,203
2003	8,142	9,169	10,295
2003	8,183	9,233	10,387
2004	8,223	9,298	10,481
2005	8,265	9,363	10,575
2006	8,306	9,428	10,670
2007	8,347	9,494	10,767
2008	8,389	9,561	10,863
2009	8,431	9,628	10,961
2010	8,473	9,695	11,060
2011	8,516	9,763	11,159
2012	8,558	9,831	11,260
2013	8,601	9,900	11,361
2014	8,644	9,970	11,463
2015	8,687	10,039	11,567
2016	8,731	10,110	11,671
2017	8,774	10,180	11,776
2018	8,818	10,252	11,882
2019	8,862	10,323	11,989
2020	8,907	10,396	12,097

Table 5-3: Population estimates for the Town of Silver City & ETZ extrapolated from the Comprehensive Traffic Study for Silver City-Grant County (1996) data and 2003 Comprehensive Plan growth rate estimates.

	Annual Growth Rate		
	Low	Medium	High
2000	18,606	19,587	20,657
2001	18,678	19,703	20,822
2003	18,750	19,820	20,988
2003	18,823	19,937	21,155
2004	18,896	20,055	21,324
2005	18,969	20,174	21,495
2006	19,042	20,294	21,666
2007	19,116	20,414	21,839
2008	19,190	20,535	22,014
2009	19,264	20,657	22,189
2010	19,339	20,780	22,367
2011	19,414	20,903	22,545
2012	19,489	21,027	22,726
2013	19,565	21,152	22,907
2014	19,641	21,277	23,090
2015	19,717	21,404	23,275
2016	19,793	21,531	23,461
2017	19,870	21,659	23,648
2018	19,947	21,787	23,837
2019	20,025	21,917	24,028
2020	20,103	22,047	24,220

Mobile Homes

The NMSU Study (see chapter on Land Use) found that mobile homes are ubiquitous in Silver City. There are 499 mobile homes within the city limits. These structures are not concentrated in specific areas or segregated into mobile home parks/subdivisions or private lots outside of traditional residential areas. Instead, mobile homes are located in every quadrant of the city. During recent decades, they have become one of the primary sources of shelter in Silver City and in the Southwest in general, primarily because of price and readily available sources of financing.

Although mobile homes are not located according to any specific pattern, plan, or zoning, there are three areas within the city limits where mobile homes dominate the landscape. They are the northeast, southwest and southeast quadrants. The northeast contains 188 mobile homes. The southeast contains the largest concentration of mobile homes within the city it includes 193. The southwest contains 103 units. The largest concentration of MH is located in the northern portion of the northeast quadrant with 116. The mobile homes are not placed in mobile home parks; they are often located in groups of 2 or more on individual parcels.

The southeast quadrant contains 193 units. The southwest quadrant includes 103 units. The northwest quadrant has a noticeably small number of mobile homes with only 15 units located there. In addition in the southeast area beyond the current city limits where an annexation has been proposed, NMSU surveyed mobile homes. In this area there are 199 units.

The NMSU study recommended that the town consider the issue of location and relative placement of mobile homes within areas of town and in relation to other uses.

There appears to be no legal distinction between manufactured homes and mobile homes, and most of these residential types are not located in designated mobile home parks. However, mobile homes must be located in areas with Residential B zoning. When covenants and restrictions of individual subdivisions with Residential B zoning do not prohibit mobile homes, both mobile homes and manufactured homes can and most likely will be located in these areas. Many of these units are not on foundations and the wheels are still visible. Even though the state statutes are liberal regarding the siting of mobile homes, their location can be influenced through architectural standards or square footage minimums. The comprehensive plan recommends that land use compatibility among units similar to locating multiple family units.

Housing Needs

Based on the estimated population increase of 2,460 people (from the

year 2000) for the town and ETZ combined and an average household size of 2.40 (Census 2000 average household size), the Town of Silver City/ETZ will require approximately 51 new housing units per year to meet housing demand in the year 2020. These estimates suggest a total of 1025 new housing units in Silver City/ETZ by the year 2020.

Table 5-4: Anticipated Housing Needs for the Year 2020

Income Group & Relation to Town's Median Income	Required Percentage	Total Housing Unit Need
Very Low (0-50%)	20	1,837
Low Income (50-80%)	20	1,837
Moderate (80-120%)	17	1,562
Above Moderate (>120%)	43	3,950
Total		9,186

Note: Figures are based on Year 2020 population estimate of 20,047 as derived for the comprehensive plan; and approximations for Income Groups derived from US Census 2000 estimates for median household income (\$31,374); household income groups; and, average household size (2.40). This data is extrapolated from available data for comprehensive plan purposes only.

Today there are several concerns regarding housing:

- The poor condition of the housing stock, both owner-occupied and rental;
- The limited availability of affordable housing, both rental and for-sale;
- The social problem created by higher housing costs that are making it difficult for long-term residents disproportionately Mexican/Hispanic - to continue living in Silver City.

A significant part of the housing stock remains in poor condition. This same concern was central in the 1970 master plan and in the 1996 comprehensive Plan, and while there have been some improvements over past decades, the problem remains. In 1970, over 29% of all dwelling units were deemed deteriorated or dilapidated; and mobile homes comprised 9% of all dwellings in town. While current figures for dilapidated and deteriorated homes are not available, the percentage remains high; and both the percentage and number of mobile homes is

increasing. The bulk of deteriorated buildings continue to be located in the southern and eastern portions of the original town site (Brewer Hill and Chihuahua Hill primarily) in areas where additional public investment in infrastructure is still necessary.

In 1996, the primary housing concern of the Comprehensive Plan was the availability of affordable housing. The poor condition of much of Silver City's housing stock, which was the primary concern of the 1970 Plan, has been addressed to some extent, although much more needs to be done. Growth in more recent years has only increased demand for housing, and rehabilitation of the older housing stock in downtown neighborhoods continues to cause displacement. In recent years, CDBG grants to the town have helped bring sewer and water infrastructure to most of the older neighborhoods, and most of the formerly dirt roads are now paved. These improvements have been welcomed by residents of these neighborhoods, who have seen their quality of life and their property values rise. At the same time, it has resulted in displacement of older residents who find it harder for themselves and their children to afford housing in the older parts of the town.

Demand for housing has resulted in increases in home prices and rental costs, with prices almost *doubling* during the last decade of the twentieth century. In 1990 the average price for a 1500 square foot, four-bedroom home was \$54,500. In 2002 the figure was \$107,200. Given the low average and median income for Silver City households, it is becoming more and more difficult to become a home owner or to find affordable rental housing. The high demand for housing continues to be aggravated by changes in the nature of the population; a substantial amount of local growth is attributable to migration by older retired people, who have smaller than average families, more houses are needed for fewer people.

Census tracts in older neighborhoods qualify for CDBG funding under the so-called Colonias Housing Program, and a recent grant of a quarter million dollars will be used for rehabilitation of up to 20 homes. Obviously, this program can hardly make a dent in the problem, and if the housing is to be improved substantially, much more needs to be done. In many cases, deterioration has continued to such an extent that rehabilitation is not a viable option, and dwellings need to be demolished and new homes constructed. Both public and private not-for-profit programs, such as Habitat for Humanity and Neighborhood Housing Services, must both address these serious problems.

Except for initiatives of the local public housing authority, little new construction is planned for and marketed to people with low and moderate incomes. Mobile homes continue to supplant site-built homes throughout the community as an affordable alternative for scores of households. In a five-year period starting in 1990, 247 single-family residential units were given construction permits, and 341 mobile homes were added to the housing stock. Today, there are more than 500 mobile homes within the town limits and hundreds more in the in the ETZ and

other areas close to the town limits.

This preponderance of mobile homes creates some community character issues and tends to compromise Silver City's distinctive "quality of place". To address this issue, the comprehensive plan calls for joint town and county efforts to manage growth in the ETZ where mobile homes are abundant and where poor site design, inadequate grading and restoration practices, poorly designed and constructed roadways, and lack of adequate landscaping make for unsightly and often sub-standard living conditions. While conditions regarding affordable homes are arguably better within the town limits, the comprehensive plan also calls for landscaping standards and adequate enforcement of ordinances within the town to assure highest possible quality and aesthetic appearance for roads, housing and landscaped areas.

Everyone acknowledges that progress toward solving the affordable housing problem has not been significant, and if anything increased costs and demand pressures for land and housing has only served to widen the gap. Combined with dramatic job losses, these conditions may create even more problems for households with limited incomes. When unemployment benefits for miners run out early in 2004, and later in 2004 for former workers with Stream International, these households will find it increasingly difficult to maintain their residences as demand remains strong and housing prices rise.

The *2004 Comprehensive Plan*, recognizing that no solution to this on-going problem will be found without a comprehensive plan and implementation strategy, that has as its primary goal, the creation of a staff position within the City with responsibility for creating and administering a variety of existing and primarily new housing programs to address this need. This staff person would provide technical assistance and program management for a comprehensive Silver City program that uses state and federal financial and other resources (e.g., New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority) for affordable housing and related issues, including fair housing, family self-sufficiency, homebuyer assistance, homeownership, rental housing development, mortgage loan programs for both home-ownership and rentals, rehabilitation/home repair, and public housing.

An Affordable Housing Office for the town could help assure that the goals of the comp plan are implemented, including providing incentives for affordable housing, promotion of innovative design, the dedication of town property for affordable housing projects (now possible without violating the anti-donation clause of the state constitution), and partnerships with lending institutions. With a full-time staff person (perhaps funded jointly with the county), the town could take advantages of a wide range of opportunities that would more than justify the cost of hiring a staff person and managing an Affordable Housing office.

Manufactured and Mobile Home Fact Sheet

Definitions:

Manufactured Home

- Minimum 24 feet x 36 feet
- Minimum 864 square feet
- Certified by HUD
- On a permanent foundation

Mobile Home

- Minimum of 40 feet long, 8 feet wide, or 11 feet high
- Not certified by HUD

Permissible Regulations:

Manufactured Home

- Must treat same as single-family site-built home
- Can regulate such topics as the following (if done for both):
 - Setbacks
 - Access (can say front door must face street)
 - Parking
 - Minimum square feet
 - Landscaping
 - Roof overhang
 - Aesthetics

Mobile Home

- Regulations must be “reasonable”
- Can exclude from residential districts
- Can limit to mobile home parks or mobile home subdivisions
- Can limit mobile home parks or mobile home subdivisions to certain parts of the Town

C. Housing Goals and Policies (H)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

H Goal #1: Support the provision of an adequate supply of affordable housing in Silver City in order to curtail the displacement of low-income households.

Policies	Implementation Measures
<p>H 1.1</p> <p>Town Owned Property. Identify Town-owned surplus land that is appropriate for affordable housing projects. Examine potential for public/private partnerships that provide affordable housing on Town land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Program • Development Regulations (zoning) • Private/Public Partnerships
<p>H 1.2</p> <p>Affordable Housing Incentives. Provide incentives for homebuilders to provide a specified amount of affordable housing within their subdivisions. Incentives may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reduced building permit and plan check fees b. Reduced utility hook-up fees c. Density bonus and/or relaxation of development standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
<p>H 1.3</p> <p>Maintenance & Improvement. Encourage the maintenance and continued improvement of existing housing stock.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Private/Public Partnerships • Design Guidelines • Grant Funds
<p>H 1.4</p> <p>Blighted Structures. Exercise powers of condemnation and public health, safety, and welfare protection to require removal or redevelopment of blighted structures within Town limits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Private/Public Partnerships • Development Incentives

Policies		Implementation Measures
H 1.5	Encourage redevelopment with affordable housing or other suitable use. Mixed-Use Zoning. Explore and encourage multi-use zoning in Silver City and ETZ zone to allow for apartment houses and other mixed housing types and limited commercial use in residential areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
H 1.6	Land Use Code. Modify the Land Use Code to encourage infill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review

H Goal #2: Create a town staff position (through grants, if necessary) that will become knowledgeable in state funding, grants, and federal and state programs for low income housing, and act as a facilitator between the government and the private sector to provide help in developing affordable housing.

Policies		Implementation Measures
H 2.1	Government Programs. Work with government low-income housing programs, such as the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority, the Council of Governments, Community Actions Agency, and other government programs created to promote low-income housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Housing Program
H 2.2	Private Sector. Work with private sector such as banks, realtors, and developers to encourage low income housing programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Housing Program • Development Incentives
H 2.3	Public/Private Partnerships. Pursue public/private partnerships between Silver City and local lending institutions to establish a revolving loan fund to supplement/guarantee down payments for qualified low-income home buyers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Grant Funds • Housing Program

Policies		Implementation Measures
H 2.4	Town Department Plans. Develop a five-year plan for each relevant Town department that will address the goals and objectives contained in this Comprehensive Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Policy • Comprehensive Plan Consistency Review
H 2.5	Innovative Design & Building. Explore innovative housing design and building techniques for providing affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Design Guidelines • Housing Program
H 2.6	Other Communities' Solutions. Learn how other communities have solved the problem of providing low-income housing and explore ways to adapt these methods to our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Program • Intergovernmental Coordination
H 2.7	Community Group. Form a community group made up of realtors, developers, bankers, etc., plus just interested individuals to support the Town staff position on low-income housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Housing Program

H Goal #3: Create minimum standards for rental properties, both public and private, in the Town and ETZ area.

Policies		Implementation Measures
H 3.1	Code Enforcement. Empower the code enforcement officer to be able to inspect rental properties and to be able to enforce minimum standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning & standards) • City Policy
H 3.2	Rental Standards. Set minimum standards, such as HUD minimum standards, for all rental properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Housing Program • Development Regulations (standards)
H 3.3	Landscape Standards. Require mobile home parks to have minimum landscape standards, preferably southwest native plants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Design Guidelines

Policies		Implementation Measures
H 3.4	Mobile Homes. Require all mobile homes to be skirted and to have site built porches, front and back.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Design Guidelines
H 3.5	Flood Control. All mobile home parks should meet minimum flood control and drainage standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Design Guidelines

D. Summary of Implementation Measures

This section summarizes all of the implementation measures listed in Section C of this chapter.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency Review. Review all public documents for consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan*. Ensure projects conform to the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The town should revise any public documents and/or projects that do not conform to the plan.

Design Guidelines. Design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that development is appropriate to the area and that it functions well for the community. Design guidelines can help to ensure that new housing development maintains and enhances aesthetic quality and character of the community. Guidelines should serve to ensure that all new development reflects and enhances existing land use patterns, community design elements, and housing in the area. Guidelines that promote the development of high quality, yet affordable homes with strong aesthetic character will enhance existing features of the town and serve to promote quality homes and an appealing community for all residents throughout the future. Design standards, including landscape standards, can be particularly effective in addressing the poor appearance of mobile homes.

These implementation measures are the key to turning “Housing” goals and policies into action.

Development Incentives. Offering development incentives to property owners and developers for affordable housing can help to achieve quality affordable housing design and development throughout the community. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, and/or lessening of development regulations (i.e. reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.) in exchange for the development of affordable housing allocations or community features/amenities that assist in achieving the town's overall housing, community design and quality of life goals. Other incentives that could be used to encourage developers to accommodate low income housing in their projects include, but are not limited to:

- a. Lowering water and sewer hook-up fees for affordable

housing developments;

- b. Reducing building permit fees for affordable housing developments;
- c. Reducing utility hook-up fees for affordable housing developments;
- d. Providing density bonuses in conjunction with inclusionary zoning provisions that require creation of a certain percentage of affordable homes.

Development Regulations (zoning). The town should coordinate housing goals with the goals of other planning elements such as land use and community design, transportation and economic development. The town's development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to planning, ensuring all new development has a beneficial influence on the quality of life to improve future opportunities for the community. The town should incorporate into the zoning ordinance those provisions that will require certain new projects to provide a percentage of affordable housing, as well as sidewalks, park space and/or other amenities for residents as a means to improve the overall affordability, safety, general appeal and aesthetics of the community.

The town can also ensure appropriate development by including development standards in its zoning ordinance. Such development standards could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Grading and drainage
- b. Preservation of natural vegetation
- c. Landscaping requirements
- d. Internal circulation, parking, and access
- e. Street engineering standards
- f. Setbacks and buffer areas
- g. Noise, air quality, vibration, and odor standards
- h. Lighting standards consistent with minimum standards of state *dark skies* ordinance
- i. Hazardous materials standards
- j. Solar Orientation
- k. Signage

Development standards for mobile home parks could also be included in the zoning ordinance and could include, but are not limited to:

- a. Skirting requirements
- b. Landscaping

- c. Types of foundations
- d. Lot parameters
- e. Grading and site preparation
- f. Solar orientation
- g. Fire ratings
- h. Stairs, entryways and porches

Development Review. The development review process includes discretionary review by the Planning and Zoning Commission based on the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*, as well as criteria established by the town's zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other town regulations and adopted guidelines. Development review also includes administrative review of projects to verify compliance with regional, state and federal laws and policies, and standards set by the town through adoption of building and fire codes, engineering standards, and other such regulations and ordinances. Development review should also assess the new development with relation to the demand for housing needs; transportation and parking improvements both on- and off-site; demand for infrastructure and public services; adjacent land use impacts; and, to implement mitigation measures and other mechanisms to help finance needed affordable housing, infrastructure, transportation, and land use and community design improvements throughout the town.

Grant Funds. The town should determine whether grant funds are available to the community from federal or state sources for senior housing as well as affordable housing programs. The Comprehensive Plan calls not only for a strategy in this area but a staff person to make certain that the programs and policies, including grant and loan programs available, are taken advantage of to the maximum extent possible. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force has identified scores of affordable housing programs providing assistance directly and indirectly to future homeowners and renters. This information should be provided to a new Town of Silver City Housing Task Force to implement the action items for Housing in the *2004 Comprehensive Plan*.

Programs to investigate include the: New Mexico Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME Program) created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990; Community Housing Development Organization; Housing Tax Credit Allocations; as well as a variety of other programs offered through the NM Mortgage Finance Authority and other state and federal agencies. In addition, the town should recognize the value of supporting and finding grant funds for land use programs such as open space/environmental protection and restoration, parks and recreation improvements, as well as the preparation of design guidelines to enhance community character. Implementing such measures to improve the overall quality of life in the area will inform and attract quality new housing development for the town and will ensure Silver

City remains a great place to live, now and in the future.

Housing Program. The town should develop a housing program that consists of the goals, policies and implementation measures outlined in this chapter. The housing program should monitor progress toward achieving goals to ensure that suitable land and incentives are available. The housing program should explore and identify affordable housing options available to the town.

Intergovernmental Coordination. The town should continue to collaborate with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, particularly with regards to housing development in the ETZ, the Village of Santa Clara, the City of Bayard, the Town of Hurley as well as local and regional organizations and state and federal agencies in implementing appropriate affordable housing programs for the town and throughout the region. The town should work with applicable agencies and organizations to ensure housing for the homeless, as well as variety of quality housing options for lower income families and individuals, and for the community's senior citizens. The town should ensure initiatives that assist in meeting the town's housing needs and ultimately offer a diversity of housing solutions both on a local and regional scale.

Private/Public Partnerships. The town should encourage local, regional and state private/public partnerships to address economic development. The town should actively involve residents, landowners, not-for profit organizations, and local businesses in local and regional housing initiatives and neighborhood safety programs. This includes partnerships with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, and Neighborhood Housing Services. The Affordable Housing Roundtable in Santa Fe is also a model for the type of public-private partnership that can be created in Silver City.

The town should increase awareness among local citizens and businesses about the importance of affordable housing and elicit their support in establishing a strategic housing program to address housing issues within the community. Working with local developers and businesses, the town should invest in maintaining and enhancing existing buildings, while supporting future housing through development incentives and private/public projects. In addition, the town should partner with local citizens to develop a Neighborhood Watch Program to assist residents in monitoring and maintaining the safety and well-being of the community.

**Chapter Six: *Public Facilities &
Services***

MARCH 2004

Chapter Six: *Public Facilities & Services*

The growth and development of the community is dependent upon the town's ability to provide adequate public facilities and services. Public facilities and services-including water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, police and fire protection, and parks, recreation and community facilities-must be examined critically as part of the town's comprehensive planning process, so that the town can identify opportunities and constraints as it grows into the 21st Century.

A. SETTING

History

Silver ore and a chance to strike it rich were the initial and compelling reasons for the founding of Silver City. The early focus of local government service in Silver City as in most mining camps was the conveyance of property, protection of assets, and provision of the modest kind of civil order suggested by a district court 'that convened in Bill McGary's saloon. The original town charter had provisions for local taxes, including assessments to improve streets. Almost all other community services were provided by charity or by private subscription. Over the next one hundred years, the provision of community services broadened substantially.

Town administration shared the old bank building at 215 N. Bullard Street with the police department and the naval recruiting station. The fire station shared the Ailman House on Broadway with the museum and the town's equipment maintenance program and storage area. And the library at the corner of Cooper and College Streets was clearly too small.

Twenty-five years later, this concern had largely been addressed. An equipment shop had been constructed at 800 N. Gold Street, a public safety building had been constructed for the police and fire departments at 1011 N. Hudson Street, town administration moved to a larger building at 101 W. Broadway, and the old library building had been expanded. The community Development and Utilities Departments are today located at a City Hall Annex Building at 1203 North Hudson Street.

Public Services and Facilities

Public Services and Facilities include:

- Administrative services, including purchasing, billing, budgeting, and public relations;
- Police, fire and emergency services, including the town's

shared responsibility for the county jail;

- Community facilities such as libraries;
- Parks, recreation and open space facilities; and
- Sewer, water and stormwater infrastructure and services.

During the comprehensive plan process in 2003/2004, participants did not raise significant issues regarding the level of services provided in the first two categories above, in spite of the fact that levels of services in some areas have been impacted since 1996 because revenues have sometimes fallen below expectations. This is a notable change from 1996, when the primary concerns regarding community service were the adequacy of policy and programs. The principal concern regarding community service in the *1970 Master Plan* was also the adequacy of facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Silver City department heads and staff are currently aware that increased staffing and budget increases are important to provide the desired levels of service. Town departments responsible for providing services continue to point out that increased demand for services should be matched with commensurate increases in funding and staffing for relevant town departments.

Equity with regard to distribution of services throughout the town also still needs to be assured. Public discussions based on an inclusive public process should continue to establish community priorities and help provide direction in review and evaluation of the adequacy and equity of services throughout the community. Fire protection and emergency medical response were specifically raised as community services that are already excellent but that can be further enhanced by targeting higher levels of service.

Additionally, costs should be shared when appropriate with Grant County for services that benefit the larger community - the town, the *ETZ* and immediate environs. Staff and public officials of both the town and county believe that cooperative agreements for police, fire and emergency services are working well and equitably. Joint town-county agreements should be developed whenever benefits of such arrangements can be identified.

B. TRENDS

Silver City Police Department

The SCPD has 35 allocated positions, made up of 30 sworn officers and 5 civilian employees. The current operating budget is \$1.9 million.

The SCPD services approximately 10 square miles and 10,545 residents, based on the 2000 Census. The service area for the town includes a number of communities and residential areas, beyond the actual town limits, which generate a workday population estimated at roughly twice the size of the census number. This fact is crucial in establishing a realistic load for police and emergency services. Annexation of additional residential property adjoining existing town limits can have a significant impact on the level of police service provided.

The present police facility was built and dedicated in 1969 and has become dated for providing efficient service. Increased workloads and technological advances foretell the need for a new, larger facility.

The SCPD continues its efforts to make Community Policing a reality for the citizens. A Citizens Police Academy was recently revitalized and is being offered on an annual basis. Also, citizen meetings were conducted to allow for community input and questions, as well as present a forum for police personnel to tell the current status of police issues and investigations. These meetings were conducted on a geographic basis utilizing the town's district system and the respective Town Councilor was present as a co-host.

Other programs that remain priorities are both school and community based in nature. First is D.A.R.E, which is aimed at drug, gang and juvenile delinquency prevention. Next is the Domestic Violence program that is directed at reducing the incidence of violence in the home. Also, from traffic safety viewpoint is the continued use of highly focused and specific activities such as Operation Buckle Down, Operation DWI, and Superblitz.

The recent passing by town voters of an increase in the percentage of local tax (Gross Receipts Tax) paid on goods and services has created an opportunity to fund additional positions for a more responsive team concept. This revenue source will furnish four new officers and additional funds for vehicle/equipment purchase.

While the public safety tax revenue just discussed will ameliorate the deficiencies in the SCPD resources, there is still a need for added support. Since the time of the last Comprehensive Plan (1996), the SCPD staffing level has decreased by 3 people, a reduction of 2 sworn positions and one clerical person. This reduction has impacted the Department negatively and has caused a diminished capacity to respond to citizen needs. The

shortage can be rectified by increasing the resources of the Department in the following areas:

- 3 officers and one detective
- One clerical person for transcription and Investigative record keeping
- Additional workspace through expansion of present facility or a new building

Silver City Fire Department

The Silver City Fire Department (SCFD) employs at this time (20 on shift personnel and 3 administration personnel) and is operating on a current annual budget of \$1.2 million; this includes the Fire Fund and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Fund. It is important to note that the SCFD operates on a budget that is among the lowest in the state on the basis of population served; and the Department is to be commended for the services delivered with limited resources. In 1995 the SCFD had 8 personnel on each shift, which included 3 and 4 administration personnel, for a total of 30. At this time, the SCFD does not meet the minimum staffing of an engine company, which is 4 personnel and 6 personnel on an aerial apparatus.

The SCFD has developed a Fire Academy, for training and selects qualified individuals for employment in the SCFD. If no individuals qualify for hire from the Fire Academy, the SCFD requires new employees to attend the Academy after hire.

The SCFD services the Town of Silver City and the OPA (outside protection zone) also known as the ETZ. The SCFD also will respond to calls out of its service area if needed for major disasters or if otherwise requested by any of the surrounding fire departments. There are 9 fire departments in areas outside the town boundary.

Department facilities include:

- South district headquarters located at 1011 N. Hudson St., which was built in 1970, and
- North district headquarters located at 1835 E. 32nd St., which was built in the early 1990's.

Administration is located at the Town of Silver City Annex Building on 12th and Hudson Streets. SCFD is currently seeking another station site on Ridge Road. The new site for the fire station might also include a police substation. If built the new station site would increase the fire fund from \$82,000-\$90,000 to \$145,319.

The SCFD responded to over 2,000 alarms in 2002. Medical alarms are

the majority of the calls, estimated at approximately 80% of all calls. The SCFD has 2 paramedics, with one additional person who needs to certify and one person in paramedic school. SCFD has 10 Intermediate EMT'S, 5 Basic EMT'S and 2 First Responders. In the past few months SCFD lost 2 paramedics who left *for* other job opportunities. SCFD staffs a paramedic level unit at the south headquarters district and an Intermediate level unit in the north headquarters district, operating under Joint Powers Agreement (JP A) with Gila Regional Medical Center.

The SCFD's other responsibilities include:

- Responding to Public Service Calls
- Building Inspections
- Fire Code Enforcement
- Fire Safety Classes
- Fire Prevention Classes
- First Aid, CPR Classes and Safety Classes
- Traffic Light and Crosswalk Signal Maintenance
- Fire Extinguisher Maintenance
- Fire Extinguisher Classes
- Plans Review
- Apparatus Maintenance
- Hydrant Maintenance (including over 800 hydrants in the town's water system).

Building inspections include public, institutional and commercial as well as residential. The *2004 Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the importance of building inspections and enforcement with regard to residential rentals. Since the attacks on Sept.11, 2001 the SCFD has assumed responsibility for the Office of Emergency Management. This office has been a great asset to the fire dept, providing much needed additional training and grant money.

The SCFD's response time in the town limits averages 2-4 minutes, in the outside protection zone it averages 4-6 minutes. These averages are for Fire and EMS response only. Public service alarms, which are not a life threat, alarm average 5-8 minutes.

The SCFD is committed to maintaining a high degree of public confidence by instilling a high degree of expertise, dedication and professionalism in the development of the fire service.

Fire Marshal

The Fire Marshal's duties and responsibilities include:

- The Fire Prevention Bureau Plans review
- Plans Review
- New and existing building inspections
- Operational and construction permits Fire investigation
- Fire Investigation
- Fire evacuation drills
- Fire safety talks
- Fire extinguishers for the Town
- Inspections for pyrotechnics and monitoring shows for the town and county
- Unsafe buildings, working with the Building Inspector to have these buildings abated.

Building Department

The Building Department is located within the Community Development Department, and is responsible for building inspections within the town of Silver City. However, the Department does not handle all inspections. New Mexico state inspectors have the responsibility for providing electrical and mechanical inspections within Silver City and the surrounding area.

The Silver City Building Department goals include the following:

- Remove or rehabilitate old and dilapidated or non-maintained buildings. This is a long-range goal to be implemented over time;
- Address issues that will improve the town's ISO BCEGS rating and lower the cost of insurance premiums;
- Most important, keep the building code, now 6 years old, current in order to improve ISO Rating (Note: new uniform building codes are published every 3 years).
- Providing adequate training for the building inspector;
- Having the Building Inspector and Fire Marshal work together on inspections of existing buildings and changes of occupancy on existing buildings;
- All electrical, mechanical and plumbing inspections within the

Town of Silver City and grant County to be handled exclusively by the town.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is committed to continue use of available funds and resources to provide quality services and total customer satisfaction to the citizens of Silver City. The objectives of the various divisions are as follows:

1. Street Division - to provide well maintained streets and sidewalks that meet the needs of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians within Silver City.
2. Sanitation Division - to offer consistent residential and commercial solid waste collection in a timely and courteous manner.
3. Parks Division- to provide well maintained and equipped parks and ball-fields for the enjoyment of the community.
4. Pool - provide a clean, safe, and professionally run pool for use by all ages in the community.
5. Recreation Center - provide a cost effective, safe, and enjoyable learning environment for local children, while providing recreational services to adults.
6. Cemetery - to provide a well-maintained cemetery, that citizens can be proud of and visit.
7. Maintenance Division - to maintain the town's fleet in a safe manner while keeping maintenance costs low, speeding up down time and making vehicles/equipment more available for intended purposes.

The Public Works Department has responsibility for securing and administering CDBG grants for improvements of roads and streets in the town, including chip seal for the remaining roadways that have not been paved within the town, which are primarily in the Brewer Hill neighborhood. It is anticipated that all roads in the town will be paved in the next 2-3 years. Of course, the town then faces the task of maintaining these and other streets to provide adequate levels of service.

The Department also has responsibility for maintaining sidewalks and streets in order to assure access not only for motorized vehicles but also for bicycles-within roadways-and for pedestrians and wheelchairs on the town's sidewalks. The up-and-down terrain in the downtown area, combined with the deteriorated condition of aging sidewalks in the downtown area, makes it difficult to repair infrastructure and to create

new sidewalks where necessary. The task is further complicated because telephone poles and other obstructions exist within the pedestrians rights-of-way, and ADA compliant access at street intersections is often difficult. Given recent experience, the Town and public utilities companies (PM, Qwest, etc.) should establish procedures for better coordination to assure that, when sidewalks and roads are disturbed for infrastructure improvements and repairs (pipes, cables, etc.), they are repaired properly and in a timely manner.

With limited resources, the town is supplying materials to property-owners who agree to be responsible for labor to make appropriate repairs. This program is working well, but would work better if the community were more aware of the opportunity; and the necessity for such programs would be lessened if there were better coordination between the town, public utilities companies and private contractors and property-owners.

Parks and recreation facilities, which fall under the Public Works Department, are discussed below.

Utilities: Water and Sewer

THIS Section discusses sewer and water infrastructure for the Town of Silver City. However, sewer and water infrastructure issues related to future growth and development are discussed extensively in Chapter 3: Land Use and Community Design, in the section entitled ETZ: Town Policy Regarding Extension of City Utilities & Services.

The Water Department currently employs 10 individuals with a budget of \$1,328, 189 as of FY 2002-3. The Sewer Department currently employs 7 individuals with a budget of \$463,652 as of FY 2002-3.

The Wastewater Treatment Plant currently employees 6 full and 2 part-time employees. The current budget for 2002-3 is \$630,301. The Treatment plant has a capacity to treat on the average 2,0 million gallons per day (average MGD) and currently treats 1.1 MGD (average). The town currently has a water conservation plan and ordinance in place.

The number of new water taps has declined steadily over the past few years, after a peak of approximately 200 new taps or more in 1996, 1997 and 1998. The total number of taps in 2002 was only 49. New taps *for* areas outside the town limits is also low, with approximately 20 new taps each for years 1999, 2001, and 2002-and only 31 for the year 2000. (See Figure 6-0: Water Taps per Year: In-Town vs. Out-of-Town).

Water Associations. In response to the town's concerns regarding management of growth within the town and the ETZ, the town now has an ordinance in place that regulates water and sewer extensions (Town of Silver City Code of Ordinances, Article N, Sec. 30-83). It is already standard procedure that when new subdivisions are approved, water

contracts are included in the approval process that outlines water usage and the primary right to in-town users.

Water extensions occur to individual homes within subdivisions, as part of an extension agreement with the developer of the property, or to water associations that are created by a developer or a legally organized group of residents within an area. Silver City has agreements in place to provide water on a wholesale basis to the following: Arenas Valley Water Association; Pinos Altos Water Association; Rosedale Water Association, and Tyrone Townsite. These agreements are described in Chapter 6: Public Facilities and Services.

1. Arenas Valley Water Association. The Arenas Valley Water Development Association entered into agreement with the Town of Silver City in 1986 for the delivery of water for residents of the Arenas Valley area. The agreement between the parties established a maximum amount of water to be delivered, which is 150 acre-feet of water per year. The term of the contract is for 20 years from the initial date of the delivery of water. In 2002, the association used a total of 100.66 acre-feet of water.

2. Pinos Altos Water Association. The Pinos Altos Domestic Water Consumer's Association entered into agreement with the Town of Silver city in May 1987 for the delivery of water to serve the residents of Pinos Altos. The agreement for the delivery of water established a limit on the amount of water to be allocated for the association. The limit was set not to exceed 75 acre-feet per year during the life of the agreement. The initial number of connections established by the agreement was 93. During 2002, the association utilized 31.35 acre-feet of water. The contract duration was set for 20 years from the date of the initial delivery of water. The contract can be renewed or extended on existing terms or with new terms that would be agreed upon by the parties.

3. Rosedale Water Association. The Rosedale Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association entered into agreement with the Town of Silver City in April 1992 for the delivery of water to benefit residents living in the area of Rosedale Road. The agreement calls for no more than 25 acre-feet of water per year. In the year 2002, the Association utilized approximately 20.06 acre-feet of water and has imposed a moratorium on new connections to allow a "cushion" and to help assure that the association did not exceed the contracted amount. The agreement between the parties lasts for a term of 20 years from the date of the initial delivery of water. In addition, a boundary was established in the agreement for the area to be serviced by the association.

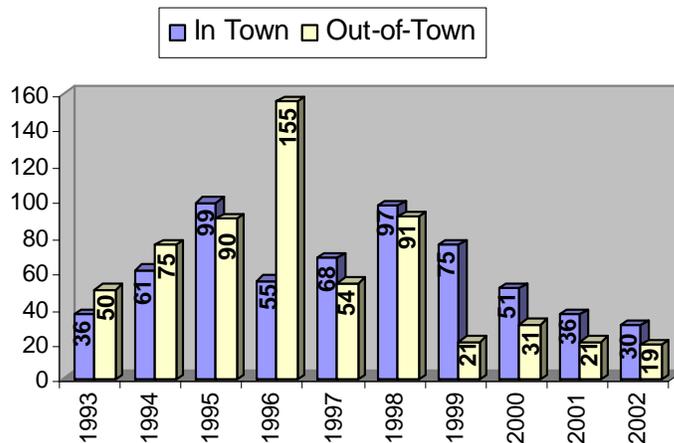
4. Tyrone Townsite. The Tyrone Water Association was created by an agreement between the town and Phelps Dodge Corporation in April 1967. The agreement provided for the delivery of water to the proposed Tyrone Townsite, which was then comprised of 212 individual

residences, a community park, a fire and police facility, a company mercantile store, a service station and other minor installations. The agreement has since been amended and currently does not have a cap on the amount of water that can be used, nor does it have a termination date. It is believed that the townsite now has 313 residential connections. In year 2002, the association utilized 107.9 acre-feet of water for the year.

The attached map (*Figure 6-1, Existing Sewer and Water*) shows the locations and service areas of these water associations.

The Water and Sewer Departments are the two agencies that consistently provide a positive source of income to the town. At the same time, a comprehensive financial model would be necessary to determine more accurately the financial and other benefits to the town from water service to areas outside the town limits. The *Comprehensive Plan* recommends that the town establish a full life-cycle cost accounting method that takes into account all costs for both systems and revenues, including initial capital costs, recurring capitals costs, and operations and maintenance costs. If this methodology is established, the town will be in a better position to evaluate the relative costs and benefits of providing service to additional customers. This approach will help the town to determine the point at which favorable marginal costs of extending service might end and the larger customer base might begin to present a burden on the system as a whole, over both short- and long-term horizons.

Figure 6-0: Water Taps per Year: In Town versus Out-of-Town



Source: Town of Silver City Utilities Division

The Town of Silver City in 1997 instituted an increase in water/sewer user fees to raise total revenues for the Water/Sewer Fund. The fee structure was created so that individuals who use larger amounts of water pay more for their usage. Also, an automatic 1.5% per year increase was included over a 15-year period.

Many participants in the process of updating the current comprehensive plan have expressed concern that Silver City's water supply is threatened, as evidenced by decreasing water levels in the underground aquifer. In fact, the town reports that current water levels in town wells have been decreasing at a rate of approximately 1.5 feet per year at the Franks Wellfield and 2.0 feet per year at the Woodward Wellfield. Some residents are now asking the town to implement standard methodologies for testing wellfields so the town may make better decisions about expansion of utilities service agreements.

The Utilities Department of the Town of Silver City has implemented practices to reduce the amount of water unaccounted for over the past several years. The town regularly performs meter testing at booster stations, individual wells, and large water users within the town. The Utilities Department also performs leak detection surveys 2-3 times a year to identify subsurface leaks. The Meters Department currently performs meter change-outs on older meters throughout town as part of an on going program. The town has realized a decrease in the amount of unaccounted water. Over the past 5 years, the rate has decreased from 24.2% in 1998 to 14.6% in 2002.

The town does provide brochures on water conservation and xeriscape landscaping. These brochures are located at City Hall, City Hall Annex and the Public Library. The use of low flow fixtures is now a state requirement for new construction.

The town reports dramatic decreases in the amount of water that is lost or unaccounted for in the system, and hopes to improve even more. The combination of recent conservation efforts by town users and reduced losses in the system make policy-makers confident that an increase in service to utilities customers outside the town will not compromise service to town residents.

Silver City is participating currently in a regional water plan that will address supply and demand for the entire southwest region of the State and will become part of an overall State Water Plan (See chapter 7: Natural Resources and Hazards.). The town will soon (within next few months) update the existing 40-year water plan as recommended by the 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*.

The Treatment plant has a capacity to treat on the average 2.0 million gallons daily (MGD), and currently treats 1.1 MGD (average). The average water supply per day for 2002 was 2.5 MGD to Silver City and all other communities under contract with the town for supply of water.

Silver City Public Library

The Silver City Public Library has eight employees currently and is operating on a current budget of \$300,941.

The Library's book collection includes 52,742 items and 17,719 patrons are currently registered. The annual circulation for 2001-2002 was 124,300. This has decreased gradually over the last few years. The decrease in circulation is due to a decrease in the funds for new materials in the last few years and to the availability of online databases and other Internet reference services.

The library has 10 public access computers that can access the library's card catalog and 5 Internet terminals for public use. 46,000 people use the library's electronic resources each year.

Over the last ten years the library staff positions have remained the same while the level of service offered has increased. Staff shortages identified to meet the current level of service include one technician and one clerk.

Library services are provided to the town and the county. It is estimated that approximately 41 % of these services are provided to county residents. There is a need for expanded space to meet the current level of service and meet the future needs of the community. The current library needs to be expanded or a new library should be constructed.

There would be a possible need for a branch library and more staff if new areas of the county are annexed in the future and the ETZ continues to develop.

One of the library's main goals is to continue pursuing a joint powers agreement with Grant County for cost sharing of library services.

Parks, Recreational Facilities, Trails & Open Space

History & Background. In common with many other mining communities platted in the 19th century, the original town site of Silver City had no parks or plazas. But the town's plat had definite boundaries, and the surrounding open space of unsettled land and ranches tempered the urban life.

One hundred years after its founding, the town had four modest parks within its limits:

1. A small neighborhood park that had been established by private donation (Noble Park);
2. A second small neighborhood park that had been established on town property by community petition to memorialize Chicano veterans of the Vietnam War (Ybarra Park);
3. A third much larger but undeveloped neighborhood park that had just been acquired through park dedication requirements of the new subdivision ordinance (Linda Vista Park); and

4. One square block at 12th and Pope Streets, a former storage yard that had been acquired from the state highway department and developed through a private bequest (Gough Park).

There also existed a community swimming pool, built in the late 1940s with accumulated revenues from tobacco tax, and a small community center on Spring Street. South of town, in the recently platted Silver Acres Subdivision, a nine-hole golf course had been donated to the community. Next to the golf course two baseball fields had been constructed on the old abandoned landfill, and more were anticipated as the site was reclaimed.

Although the town had doubled its physical size, open, undeveloped land still characterized the adjacent area, at least outside Little Walnut Creek and Silver Creek.

The *1970 Parks Master Plan* offered specific prescriptions for the location of new parks, equipment, and facilities, including recommendations for the construction of a new swimming pool, and the expansion of the golf course to 18 holes. Many of these recommendations were implemented. The plan did not address the issue of open space.

In 1996 Silver City had 21.4 acres of neighborhood parks, 152.6 acres of community parks, a larger swimming pool on Silver Street had replaced the old one on U.S. Highway 180, a recreation center was established in the old National Guard Armory, and the community center on Spring Street had been demolished. The golf course was expanded to 18 holes. However, despite improvements from the time of the 1970 Plan, in 1996 the town still did not meet national standards of park to population ratios, and three of the town's five baseball fields can no longer be watered because of their location on the old landfill, a constraint of the landfill reclamation program. A very important community concern identified in the 1996 *Comprehensive Plan* was the provision of more and better recreational opportunities, especially for youth.

The Silver City 1996 Parks Survey completed by the town's Planning Department (see chart below) provides information for all parks facilities at the time of the 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*. Several parks and recreation areas have been created in Silver City since the 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*: the Community Built Park (Penny Park), the Altamirano Sports Complex, the Big Ditch Riverside Park and the Boston Hill Open Space. The addition of these new facilities has significantly increased the total amount of parks and recreation space, but by some measurements the town still does not meet recognized standards for parks and recreational facilities per population. There is also the issue of equitable distribution of facilities throughout the community, and the need to locate small neighborhood parks within each of the town's neighborhoods or areas of the town.

Public Facilities & Services

Silver City Parks Survey 1996 (Figure 6-4)	AREA	R E S T R O O M S	B A R B E Q U E	B A N D S T A N D	T E N N I S C O U R T	B A S K E T B A L L	R A C O U E I B A L L	V O L L E Y B A L L	G A M E F I E L D	B A S E B A L L F I E L D	F I T N E S S E Q U I P	C O M C E N T E R	R E C T R A I L	G O L F C O U R S E	P L A Y E Q U I P
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS															
1. GOUGH PARK	1.99	X	X	X		X									
2. POPE STREET PARK	0.55														X
3. BIG DITCH PARK	0.99														
4. GREG JAUREQUI PARK	0.29					X									X
5. NOBLE PARK	0.17														X
6. CORBIN STREET PARK	0.26					X									X
7. LA CAPILLA PARK	0.56					X									X
8. VIRGINIA STREET PARK	0.72					X									X
9. 32ND STREET PARK	7.60				X						X				
10. 38TH STREET PARK	4.30														X
11. CHERRY HILLS PARK	0.25														X
12. LINDA VISTA PARK (UNDEVELOPED)	1.96														
13. VALLEY VISTA PARK (UNDEVELOPED)	1.52														
14. PINE RIDGE PARK (UNDEVELOPED)	0.25														
TOTAL AREA (IN ACRES)	21.43														
COMMUNITY PARKS															
15. RECREATION CENTER	4.57	X				X		X			X	X			X
16. SCOTT PARK	30.00	X								X					
17. GOLF COURSE	118.00	X												X	
18. POOL	N/A	X													
TOTAL AREA (IN ACRES)	152.57														

The Town of Silver City owns and leases a golf course that serves both local residents and visitors. The other parks that are used extensively by local residents and tourists alike include: Penny Park, Gough Park, and the sports playfields.

Grants and donations, park dedications as required by subdivision ordinance and the conversion of town property remain the principal strategies for developing new parks. In the first and second instances, the scope, timing, and location of recreational development are difficult to predict. An opportunity exists, however, to provide additional parks by converting portions of the town's large and dispersed properties to new and appropriate recreational uses. A master plan for parks recommended in the '96 Plan, based on inventory and public inquiry, is the instrument necessary to effectively coordinate the uncertainties of the future, the current tangible assets of the community, and identified need.

C. Public Services: Goals and Policies (PS)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

PS Goal # 1: Provide equal access and distribution of all public services to properties within Town limits.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PS 1.1	Level of Service. Assess community service needs and develop a standard level of service for all areas within Town limits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Capitol Improvements Program
PS 1.2	Public Service Staff. Evaluate current staffing levels within Town departments responsible for delivery of public services. Prioritize any staffing deficiencies in delivery of community services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Annual Budget
PS 1.3	Budget Increases. Allow for a commensurate increase in Town Department budgets and staff as Town limits and the demand for services increase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Town Policy • Development Regulations (zoning)
PS 1.4	Joint Use. Encourage joint use of public and private facilities where feasible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination

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Policies		Implementation Measures
PS 1.5	Public Oversight Process. Establish a public oversight process for identifying and prioritizing community service needs and the budget and staff support to achieve them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Annual Budget • Town Policy
PS 1.6	Department Plans. Develop a five-year plan for each Town department that addresses goals and objectives contained in the current <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comp Plan Consistency Review • City Policy
PS 1.7	Town-owned Property. Recognize Town-owned property as a community asset and develop a plan for the utilization and maintenance or disposal of this property to advance infrastructure and public services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Town Policy • Strategic Water Action Plan
PS 1.8	Efficient Town Service & Processes. Identify opportunities to increase efficiencies regarding all Town services and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Improvements Program • Annual Budget • Town Policy

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PS Goal #2: Increase the level of fire protection and emergency services throughout Silver City limits.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PS 2.1	Insurance Service Office Rating. Achieve a better Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating for fire protection services in order to decrease costs for homeowners insurance. Silver City currently has a rating of 5. The goal is a rating of 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Hazard Reduction Program • City Policy
PS 2.4	Fire-fighting Equipment. Adopt and maintain a standardized schedule for replacing all fire-fighting equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Hazard Reduction Program • Asset Replacement Fund • Annual Budget

Policies		Implementation Measures
PS 2.5	Fire Training. Improve the fire training facility in order to maintain skill levels of the Silver City Fire Department.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Hazard Reduction Program • Annual Budget • Capital Improvement Program
PS 2.6	Emergency Medical Services. Continue providing Emergency Medical Services at the intermediate level, as identified by the National Emergency Medical Technician standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Asset Replacement Fund
PS 2.7	Engine Companies. Upgrade engine companies to Emergency Medical Service Intermediate Level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget
PS 2.8	Rescue Units. Upgrade all rescue units to Emergency Medical Service Paramedic Level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Asset Replacement Fund
PS 2.9	Fire Prevention Education. Improve and continue fire prevention education in schools, public sector, and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Hazard Reduction Program • Annual Budget

PS Goal #3: Enhance the actual and perceived level of public safety throughout the Town of Silver City.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PS 3.1	Police-Community programs. Enhance the interaction between law enforcement and residents, as well as further the public trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Meetings • Citizens Police Academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Walk and Talk” neighborhood canvas
PS 3.2	Heightened traffic education and enforcement. Develop a safer and more efficient motoring public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation DWI • Operation Buckle Down • SuperBlitz

PS Goal #4: Prioritize community service needs within Town funding potential and budget considerations.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PS 4.1	<p>Funding Opportunities. Maximize funding potential for Town services by evaluating the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bonding capacity b. Additional user fees c. Plan review fees d. Water/utility fees e. Annexation policies f. Development impact and/or assessment fees g. Tax rates h. State grants i. Shared funding with Grant County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Fees • Grant Funds • Fiscal Impact Assessment <p>All enterprise funds should be self-sustaining with monies to support preventative maintenance and future mandated modernization.</p>
PS 4.2	<p>Funding Needs. Develop a means for prioritizing funding needs. Coordinate the annual budget process and the Capital Improvements Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Capital Improvement Program

D. Parks, Recreation & Open Space and Community Facilities Goals and Policies (PR)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

PR Goal #1: Provide and maintain an equitable distribution of parks and recreational facilities and services by population and geographic location.

Deleted: Maintain, improve, and create parks, recreational facilities, and open space. Coordinate, when appropriate, the development of new parks and facilities with Grant County and with state and federal agencies that manage property locally.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PR 1.1	<p>Inventory & Evaluation. Maintain and update the inventory of the geographic distribution of existing parks and recreational facilities and evaluate the current level of service offered. Inventory and classify all parks by category: neighborhood, community or regional parks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS Data Base • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 1.2	<p>Needs and Priorities. Identify areas where new parks and/or recreational facilities are needed and establish a priority list for development. Consider locating new parks to connect to the public open space trails.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Public/Private Partnerships • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 1.3	<p>Balance Needs. Develop a parks system that balances the community need for neighborhood, community and regional parks and recreational facilities. Balance the need for renovation of existing parks with the need for new park construction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal Impact Assessment • Development Regulations (zoning) • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 1.4	<p>Private Sector Facilities. Encourage private sector recreational facilities to complement public parks and recreation systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 1.5	Funding Sources. Identify alternative funding sources to aid in the development of new parks. Advocate for increased funding for the operation and maintenance of parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Grant Funds • Impact Fee • Public/Private Partnerships • Fiscal Impact Assessment • Development Incentives
PR 1.6	Joint Use. Encourage and work towards joint use of recreational facilities and memorandums of understanding with the City, Silver Schools, Western New Mexico University, Grant County, the Forest Service, other State and Federal agencies, and agencies and organizations that manage property programs locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

PR Goal #2: Facilitate the growth and development of new neighborhood and community parks within Town limits through the Park Dedication Ordinance.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 2.1	Dedication Ordinance. Evaluate the Park Dedication Ordinance for its effectiveness in covering the actual cost of park development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Asset Replacement Fund
PR 2.2	Park Dedications. Develop criteria for evaluating and accepting park dedications. Maintain the Town's ability to select the location of land within proposed subdivisions for parks and open space. Utilize the Town's Trails and Open Spaces Plan, which has a protocol for evaluating trails, and open spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning)

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 2.3	Cash-in-lieu Provision. Utilize as appropriate the cash-in-lieu provision in the Park Dedication Ordinance to aid in the development of community-scale parks within Town limits, and with the cooperation of Grant County in the ETZ and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination

PR Goal #3: Maintain a high quality standard for existing parks and create new parks that are appropriately designed for their location

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 3.1	<p>Design Guidelines. Develop and update guidelines for park design, and operations and maintenance standards. Design criteria should include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participation of neighborhood residents (children, youth, and adults) in the planning, design and maintenance of neighborhood parks. b. Plant materials appropriate to the location, function, and intensity of proposed park use. Utilize native plants. c. Techniques to minimize vandalism such as lighting, plant materials, and site design, etc. d. Integration with natural environment. e. Shared use of park resources and facilities where feasible. f. Compliance with standards established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Design Guidelines • Development Regulations (standards)

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 3.2	Park Staff. Evaluate current staffing levels dedicated to park operations and maintenance to ensure that staffing levels are adequate for operations and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Annual Budget • Capital Improvement Program

PR Goal #4: Encourage public/private partnerships for the development and maintenance of park and recreation facilities.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 4.1	Public Resources. Program public resources for design and construction in parks within new subdivisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Replacement Fund • Annual Budget
PR 4.2	Sponsorship. Pursue corporate, church, non-profit, and youth organization sponsorship for the design and construction and ongoing maintenance of new parks and recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Grant Funds • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 4.3	Volunteers & Youth. Encourage youth work activities and volunteers in the development and maintenance of parks, trails, and open space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 4.4	Public Schools & University Involvement. Incorporate public school and university involvement in parks and recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Public/Private Partnerships • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 4.5	Organizations & Neighborhood Groups. Encourage community youth organizations, athletic clubs, service and neighborhood groups to become involved in the development and maintenance of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Grant Funds • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 4.6	community recreation facilities and programs. Town Departments. Identify departments in town government and community groups that could work together to design, develop, and maintain parks and recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Town Policy • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

PR Goal #5: Provide and Support a wide variety of recreational and educational opportunities to residents of all ages.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 5.1	Available Recreational & Educational Opportunities. Identify the populations currently served by the available recreational and educational opportunities in the community, catalogue the opportunities, and correlate the opportunities with the local demographic profile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS Data Base • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 5.2	Recreational & Educational Gaps. Identify gaps in the provision of recreational and educational opportunities and develop a plan to fill gaps through an inclusive public process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Private/Public Partnerships
PR 5.3	Funding. Advocate for funding for existing parks and recreation facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Budget • Asset Replacement Fund • Grant Funds • Capital Improvements Program

PR Goal #6: Support existing opportunities and provide new opportunities for youth activities and community involvement.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PR 6.1	<p>Assess Needs & Provide Activities. Coordinate with the school district, home schools, youth organizations, and non-profit organizations to assess needs and provide for supervised youth and community activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 6.2	<p>School Involvement. Coordinate school involvement in park and recreation activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 6.3	<p>Youth Activities. Coordinate with youth organizations, church groups, and other service groups in providing activities and adult involvement to aid in early intervention to prevent gang participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 6.4	<p>Community Forum. Initiate community forum on techniques for prevention of youth violence, crime and gang participation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Annual Budget • Intergovernmental Coordination
PR 6.5	<p>Community-Policing Program. Study the feasibility of implementing a community-policing program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Annual Budget
PR 6.6	<p>Educational Forums. Encourage the Silver City Police Department to conduct community educational forums on crime and gang prevention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Annual Budget

PR Goal #7: Preserve and enhance the visual quality of the Silver City environment.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PR 7.1	Visual Open Space. Identify distinct ridge top views for the preservation of visual open space. Recognize the natural and visual environment as a significant determinant in development decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
PR 7.2	Harmonious Building Materials. Encourage the use of building materials that are in harmony with the natural surroundings in order to minimize the visual intrusion of building structures on the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Design Guidelines • Development Review
PR 7.3	Careful Siting. Encourage the careful siting of incidental structures such as signs, guy wires, poles, and overhead utility lines for new development. Remove obsolete and disused infrastructure when necessary in open space areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review • Design Guidelines • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 7.4	Grant County. Coordinate with Grant County on visual preservation goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan
PR 7.5	Open Space Acquisition. Encourage the acquisition of open space that preserves Silver City's most beautiful or significant plant and wildlife communities, flood storage areas in headwaters and floodplains downstream, and groundwater recharge areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 7.6	Adopt-a-Median Program. Encourage the adopt-a-median program within the Town. Provide for on-going support of median maintenance by sponsors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Town Policy

PR Goal #8: Establish an open space network for recreation, conservation of natural resources, education, and tourism. Coordinate the establishment of this network with Grant County and with state and federal agencies that manage property locally.

Policies		Implementation Measures
PR 8.1	Areas for Open Space Preservation. Pursue the identification of areas appropriate for open space preservation by Silver City to improve air quality, to promote groundwater recharge, to preserve distinctive views and natural features, buffer neighborhoods, and to provide a contrast to urban development. Utilize the Town of Silver City Trails and Open Spaces Plan to determine areas identified for preservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives • Public/Private Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination
PR 8.2	Open Space Network. Identify trail corridors along arroyos, creeks, and ridge tops to create a public open space network that links Silver City with the Gila National Forest. Maintain these open space areas in their natural state where feasible. Utilize the Trails and Open Space Plan that has identified the trail corridor system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Public/Private Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination
PR 8.3	Development Incentives. Provide incentives, including density bonuses to developers, allowing cluster subdivisions, or other techniques to encourage dedication of open space adjacent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Development Regulations (zoning) • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan

	Policies	Implementation Measures
	to new subdivisions. Encourage the donation of suitable open spaces and trail corridors.	

PR Goal #9: Link the major open space network to new and existing neighborhood parks, residential areas, and commercial centers.

	Policies	Implementation Measures
PR 9.1	Open Space Corridors. Pursue the acquisition of open space corridors adjacent to neighborhood parks and residential areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination • Development Incentives

E. Summary of Implementation Measures

The following is a summary of the major tools available to the town for implementation of the policies of this chapter, Public Facilities & Services.

These implementation measures are the key to turning the “Public Facilities & Services” goals and policies into action.

Annual Budget. The town's Annual Budget should provide adequate funds for public facilities and services. The Annual Budget should place a high priority on sewer and water line maintenance and replacement, as well as new connections to new developments within the town. In addition, it should place police and fire protection as a top priority, including education awareness for fire and crime prevention programs and forums.

The Annual Budget should also ensure funds are available for the inspection and maintenance for safety of public facilities, and problems as a result of deferred maintenance should be addressed as soon as possible. Addressing deferred maintenance problems now will serve to avoid higher replacement and maintenance costs in the long term. All department heads have indicated that budget constraints make delivery of desired level of services difficult. Insofar as possible, the Annual Budget should also ensure adequate staff is hired to provide/oversee public services.

Asset Replacement Fund. The town should create an asset replacement fund to ensure that town facilities are brought up to and/or maintained to current code specifications. Funding could include general fund reserves, state grants for upgrades, and voter approved special taxes. In addition, the town should make annual contributions to the asset replacement fund equal to between 3 and 5 percent of the total replacement cost of all major civic facilities so that they can be rebuilt or significantly renovated within 20 to 30 years.

Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a compilation of the improvement projects planned for construction over the next five years. The CIP outlines cost estimates, phasing and financing for proposed projects. The town should review the CIP annually to ensure current and future public service and facility needs are being addressed through the program. The town should continue to coordinate future capital improvement expenditures for public infrastructure with the town's long-range capital improvement program. The town should ensure funding and long-range facility planning adequately anticipates future demands of growth and the life-cycle replacement of equipment and infrastructure. The town should be strategic in identifying funding sources for CIP public service and facility improvements including identifying the federal and state funds available through funding initiatives.

Development Regulations (zoning). The town should coordinate public facility and service goals with the goals of other planning elements such as land use and transportation. The town's development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to planning, ensuring all new development has a beneficial influence on the quality of life and social well being and safety for citizens of the community. The town should incorporate into the land use code those provisions that will require each new project to provide public access as well as costs associated with public services and infrastructure. The town should also incorporate provisions that will require each new project to provide park space and/or other public amenities as well as costs associated with police and fire services.

Development Incentives. Offering development incentives to property owners and developers can help to achieve quality design and development for a community. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, and/or lessening of development regulations (i.e. reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.) in exchange for the development of community features or amenities, such as park, recreation facilities, trails and/or open space that assist in achieving the town's overall community design and quality of life goals. Other features could include creative design of off-street parking, enhancements to public facilities, and/or environmental benefits, such as open space set-a-sides and/or waterway corridor protection, or other similar benefits to the community. Other

types of incentives that could be used to encourage developers to commit to supporting the town's public facilities include:

- a. Lowering water and sewer hook-up fees in exchange for development of community features such as parks, recreation facilities, trails, and/or open space.
- b. Reducing building permit fees in exchange for development of community features such as parks, recreation facilities, trails, and/or open space.
- c. Reducing utility hook-up fees in exchange for development of community features such as parks, recreation

Development Review. The development review process includes discretionary review by the Planning and Zoning Commission based on the goals and policies outlined in the *Comprehensive Plan*, as well as criteria established by the town's zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other town regulations and adopted guidelines. Development review should also be used to assess the impact for new development on the demand for public services and infrastructure and to implement mitigation measures and other mechanisms to help finance needed infrastructure improvements throughout the town.

In addition, projects should be evaluated for their impact on parks and recreation services as well as the resources of the project site with regard to the park and recreation needs of the community. In terms of police and fire service, prior to the approval of any new developments, the Police and the Fire Department should review all applications to determine the ability of the department to provide protection services. In addition, the applicant should be required to demonstrate that adequate emergency water supply, storage, and conveyance facilities, and access for fire protection will be provided concurrent with development. The ability to provide protection to existing development should not be reduced below acceptable levels as a consequence of new development.

Recommendations such as the need for additional equipment, facilities, and adequate access may be incorporated as conditions of approval. Ultimately, the town should approve new development only if the capacity of public infrastructure is in place or can be reasonably provided.

Fire Hazard Reduction Program. Continue to promote fire safety in Silver City through fire prevention programs and public information programs. Emphasis should be placed on very high Fire Hazard Severity zones in the town as they relate to definable fire and fire safety hazards and on strengthening existing codes in relation to high hazard areas. Working with the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resource Department - Forestry Division, and with federal agencies, the town should review and implement fire prevention management strategies as

outlined in EMNRD's Forestry Division implementation plan (soon to be completed) for communities at risk of fire.

Fiscal Impact Assessment. The town should consider the development of a fiscal impact assessment process that would identify the economic and fiscal impacts of new development projects. The process should establish size thresholds that trigger the assessment (for example residential development projects of more than 10 housing units should require a fiscal impact assessment). Ultimately, a fiscal impact assessment should evaluate the benefit of the new development in terms of land use and economic development as well as the infrastructure and public service costs. The assessment should undertake a full life-cycle analysis of the original capital, recurring, and operation and maintenance costs as they relate to required infrastructure for all new and retrofitted development.

GIS Data Base. The town should ensure an inventory with accurate records of existing infrastructure conditions is maintained through a GIS data base and mapping system. The system should be used to:

- Map existing infrastructure lines;
- Assist in developing a maintenance and replacement schedule;
- Provide accurate, reliable, and readily accessible information on current infrastructure conditions;
- Assist in determining future infrastructure needs for the community; and,
- Map future infrastructure lines.

In addition, the town should ensure that an inventory with accurate records of existing parks, recreation, trails and open space conditions and use is maintained through a GIS data base and mapping system.

Grant Funds. The town should determine whether grant funds are available from federal, state and/or private sources for public service and facility maintenance and improvements. In addition, the town should recognize the value of supporting and finding grant funds for environmental/open space protection and restoration, parks and recreation improvements, and preparation of design guidelines to enhance community character. The town should continue to capitalize on Community Development Block Grants for infrastructure improvements.

Impact Fee. The town should adopt a town-wide impact fee ordinance, under the requirements of the New Mexico statutes, to fund new and/or expanded capital improvements, such as water and wastewater facilities, roads and trails, fire and police buildings, and parks required to serve new residents and employees in the town. The town should provide

financial and other incentives to encourage new development that promotes goals of the comprehensive plan such as infill development, neighborhood centers and affordable housing. Therefore, this fee should be fair and equitable and not place an undue burden on developers who present development proposals consistent with the priorities and goals of the town.

Intergovernmental Coordination. Recognizing that many county residents and residents of nearby municipalities benefit from the public facilities and services the town provides, the town should continue collaborative efforts with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, the Village of Santa Clara, the City of Bayard and the Town of Hurley as well as and other applicable agencies and organizations to maintain and enhance public facilities and services. In particular, the town should continue to work closely with these agencies to ensure an effective and efficient fire and police service. In collaboration with these agencies, the town should work to reduce the risk of fires in open space in and adjacent to the town. In addition, the town should work closely with these agencies as well as the Gila National Forest Service in establishing a park, recreation, trail and open space network system within the town limits and beyond.

Joint Response Agreements. Maintain and improve the town's ability to participate in existing joint response agreements that enhance its ability to respond to fire, emergency or disaster needs. Currently, town and county staff and public officials indicate that existing joint agreements are working well (e.g., emergency response), and that there are other opportunities for similar joint agreements between the Town of Silver City and Grant County.

Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. The town should consider creation of a Parks, Recreation, Trails & Open Space Master Plan as the basis for future improvements in the town's parks, recreational facilities, trails and open space areas. The master plan would identify the departments within the town and private sector partners responsible for implementing the Plan, with clearly defined tasks and responsibilities for all parties.

With regard to Parks, the Master Plan would take into account standard ratios for parks and recreation facilities for a community the size and population of Silver City, and it would take into account long-term future needs as well as current needs. The Plan would include definitions for: Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Undeveloped Park, and Community Facilities; and the Plan would address the issues of equity in types, quality and distribution of parks within the community, including the need for a neighborhood park within each neighborhood or geographical area of the town.

The creation of the master plan will include an inventory and assessment of current parks that is kept current and update regularly. In addition,

priorities for acquisitions by the town or by other agencies and organizations should be established in the master plan. High priority for open space designation will be given to biologically sensitive and visually prominent lands that seem most at risk from development. The plan should outline an inventory of unique natural areas, important wildlife habitats, and areas suitable *for* nature study, particularly near schools. The plan should identify which portions of open space areas can be made accessible to the public and which portions should be made off limits to protect the natural features of the area.

Building on the strong public-private partnership already established, the following means should be considered for preserving open space resources:

Private Resources

- a. Require permanent dedication of open space areas with high habitat, visual, recreational or archeological values as a condition of development. These lands should be owned and maintained by homeowner associations unless they are appropriate for use as trails or other public-access use.
- b. Use visual or public-access easements and building setbacks to protect space resources while allowing development on private parcels.
- c. Encourage development to be compact and clustered in order to protect areas with high open space values.
- d. Encourage grants and donations of undeveloped property with high open space values from private individuals or organizations.
- e. Encourage private, non-profit and other public agencies to acquire and maintain undeveloped land for open space preservation. These methods are preferred over the use of town funds.

Private/Public Partnerships

- a. When parcels on planned trail corridors are developed, require the developer to construct the portion of the trail crossing the parcel as one of the conditions of development.
- b. Work with Grant County, the Village of Santa Clara, the Town of Hurley, the City of Bayard, federal and state agencies, including the Gila National Forest Service, as well as organizations such as the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy to preserve important open space systems. ensure protection and conduct restoration of the river corridors/waterways within the community.

Public (Town) Funds.

- a. Prioritize parcels with high habitat, visual, archeological or recreational values for purchase by the town if funds become available.

To guide the committee formed to create the Parks, Recreation, Trails

and Open Space Master Plan, the following studies already exist: 2002 Recreation Needs Assessment; San Vicente Arroyo Open Space Plan done by Trails and Open Space Committee; and a recently updated Parks and Recreation Inventory for Silver City.

Private/Public Partnerships. The town could encourage local, regional and state public/private partnerships to address community facilities and services. The town should actively involve residents, landowners, and not-for-profit organizations in park and open space acquisition and in the development of community programs and services. Working with local developers and businesses, the town should invest in maintaining and enhancing existing facilities, while supporting future programs and projects. In addition, the town should actively involve residents, landowners, and not-for-profit organizations in public programs and services.

Area Plans. Though the *Comprehensive Plan* is important in informing the development of areas throughout the town, many key areas need to be planned in more detail than can be done in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Areas within the town that could be considered for a specific plan include: the MainStreet and Silver City Historic District; the 32nd Street bypass area; and, the commercial corridor along Highway 180. Neighborhood and Area Plans could also be developed for Silver City's older neighborhoods like Chihuahua Hill, as well as other neighborhoods and important residential areas in the town. These plans can include the character of development and integrate land use, design, transportation, utilities and parks, recreation and open space elements into a 20-year action strategy for neighborhoods and other key areas within the town. In so doing, specific plans will assist in implementing the overall goals and policies of the town-wide *Comprehensive Plan* and enable citizens of a specific community to be actively involved in a visioning exercise and a planning process to make decisions about future growth for *their* neighborhood and/or area. Parks, trails and open space designations could be required for new development in order to assure an interrupted network of trails and open space.

Strategic Water Action Plan. The town should prepare a Strategic Water Action Plan that outlines a framework towards balancing the town's projected water supply with demand. In keeping with the goals of the Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan, Silver City's Action Plan should provide an outline to address water quality, sustainable use of water resources; economic sustainability; and, quality of life. (See also Chapter 8: Natural Resources and Hazards, for a discussion of the state and regional water plans.)

The Action Plan should be administered through an advisory board and will outline a process for intergovernmental coordination as it relates to water and wastewater issues and collective decision-making.

The town's update of its 40 year Water Plan should address the following issues:

- Restoring watershed sub-basins within the town's planning area;
- Managing stormwater to enhance recharge;
- Managing water resources through better understanding of hydrogeology;
- Accommodating appropriate flood flows;
- Removing trace constituents to protect human health; Cleanup of contaminated groundwater and surface water;
- Continuing funding programs to protect surface water and groundwater;
- Restoring the health of streams and arroyos;
- Requiring wastewater reuse, including treated sewage and gray water;
- Encouraging stormwater collection and natural methods of on-site infiltration;
- Maintenance and repair of the water system.

Furthermore, to address projected demand, the update of the 40-year plan should include:

- Analysis of customers' use habits;
- Evaluation of water conservation consciousness using incentive rates;
- On-going education and outreach to customer groups emphasizing responsible landscaping practices and use of non-potable water for irrigation;
- Encouragement of conservation fixtures such as toilets, showerheads, sprinklers, etc.;
- Establishment of water use efficiency in new developments through regulations;
- Feasibility study of a new regional wastewater treatment plant;

- Feasibility study of zero discharge as a means of avoiding ammonia limitation requirements reducing potable water use.

A drought contingency plan should be created and implemented during drought conditions. This plan will include measures such as:

- Analysis of drought severity and vulnerability of water supplies;
- Evaluation of vulnerability of water rights to priority calls that may be made during the drought;
- Evaluation and adoption of mitigation measures through a series of meetings that develop consensus on appropriate measures.
- Many if not most of these measures are in place, and can be incorporated into the updated 40-year Water Plan that will commence in the next few months.

Town Policy. The town can undertake several of its implementation measures by making changes in its internal operating policies, assuming these changes would be within budget limits.

Chapter Seven: *Economic Development*

March 2004

Chapter Seven: *Economic Development*

Introduction

Recognizing that the economies of the Town of Silver City and Grant County are inextricably linked, the economic development components of the respective comprehensive plans of the town and the county have a strong common element. The sections below providing background and context (sections A and B) are basically the same for the town and county, with the goals and policies of the respective plans differing as they reflect specific goals and policies that are appropriate for each political jurisdiction.

As the county seat and regional center for retail, commercial, institutional and government activity for Grant County, Silver City's economic health is a fundamental indicator of the state of the county's economy as a whole. Furthermore, while the workforce for the region is located across the county, the great majority of county's workers live in the greater Silver City area, which includes the Mining District.

The intertwined economic fate of the town and the county has been recognized for some time, and was the primary impetus for the creation of SIGRED (Silver City Grant County Economic Development Corporation). That same awareness of the common fate of municipalities and the county as a whole is evidenced in the recent formation of the Grant County Economic Development Coalition for Progress, a coalition of the Town of Silver City, Grant County and the municipalities of the Mining District.

A note at the beginning of this chapter: for purposes of the Comprehensive Plan, Year 2000 Census Data has been updated when possible with most recent data available, primarily from the New Mexico Economic Development Department and the New Mexico Department of Labor.

A. Setting

Employment

In the Town of Silver City, the total population aged 16 years and over is estimated at 8,086. Of this population, 4,249 are recognized as being in the labor force. Ninety seven percent of the labor force (3,936) is currently employed, while 286 people (about 3 percent) remain unemployed (Census 2000). Recent lay-offs from Stream International in Silver City and from Phelps Dodge (most importantly the Chino Mines in Hurley) have impacted the economic environment of Silver City. The most recent New Mexico Department of Labor Report (August 2003) indicates that recent layoffs have increased unemployment to 14.2%.

Income

The median household income in 1999 for Silver City was \$25,881. The majority of the population, 18.4 percent, had a household income within the range of \$15,000 to \$24,999, while 17 percent earned less than \$10,000.

In 1999, 2,237 individuals (approximately 22 percent of the population) were living below the poverty level in Silver City. This percentage is higher than the percentage of individuals below poverty level in Grant County and the state as a whole.

Revenues: Gross Receipts & Property Taxes

Property tax revenues in New Mexico are among the lowest in the nation. According to the Grant County Treasurer, 2002 property tax for commercial property is assessed on land, building and equipment. Inside the Town of Silver City, the property tax rate is \$15.502 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable value. Assessed taxable value is one-third of the market value of the property. Outside the Town of Silver City, the property tax rate is \$13.921 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable value. The residential property rate for inside the Town of Silver City is \$15.53 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable value. Outside the Town of Silver City, the property tax rate is \$13.921.

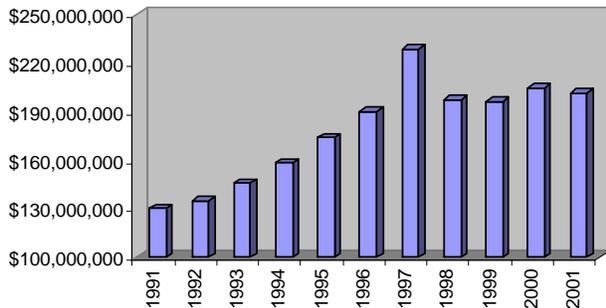
Silver City's primary source of revenues is the New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax (GRT), which includes taxes on both retail goods and services. Tax revenues from GRT are distributed to the Town of Silver City and Grant County, according to enacted tax rates. The town can increase its overall revenues from gross receipts by voting to increase the percentage of tax collected, while the county has no remaining GRT authority without a public referendum. Both limits and types of increases with regard to the Gross Receipt Tax are defined by state law (State of New Mexico Gross Receipts and Compensating Tax (52.229-10) (Oct 1988). Pharmaceuticals, wholesale purchases and material used in the manufacturing process do not pay gross receipts tax. Gross receipts tax in Silver City and surrounding municipalities is currently 6.5 cents per dollar. In Grant County gross receipts tax rate is 5.9375 cents per dollar.

For the purposes of this plan, we have used primarily Grant County data, including information on county gross receipts from retail trade, number of businesses, annual wage and employment by sector available from the NM Economic Development Department. The town is currently considering adoption of a one-eighth of 1 percent gross receipts tax called the Public Safety Tax; the increase is projected to provide about \$300,000 in additional funding for the fire and police Departments.

Gross receipts from retail trade steadily increased from approximately \$130 million in 1991 to a high of \$229 million in 1997. (NM Economic Development Department, 2003) From 1997 to 2001, however, total

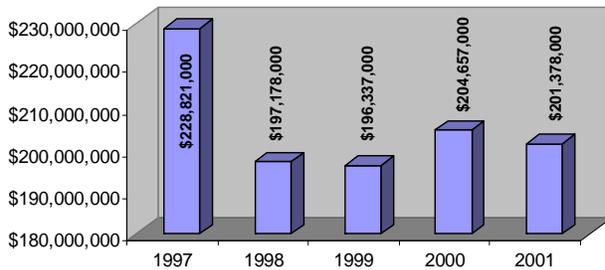
gross receipts declined by about \$28 million. Figure 7-1: *Gross Receipts from Retail Trade - 10 Year Trend* outlines Gross Receipts trends for the ten year period of 1991 to 2001, while Figure 7-2: *Gross Receipts from Retail Trade - 5 Year Trend* provides a detailed overview of total gross receipts from the all time high in 1997 to 2001 based on figures derived from data of the NM Economic Development Department.

Figure 7-1: Gross Receipts from Retail Trade – 10-Year Trend for Grant County



Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003

Figure 7-2: Gross Receipts from Retail Trade – 5-Year Trend for Grant County

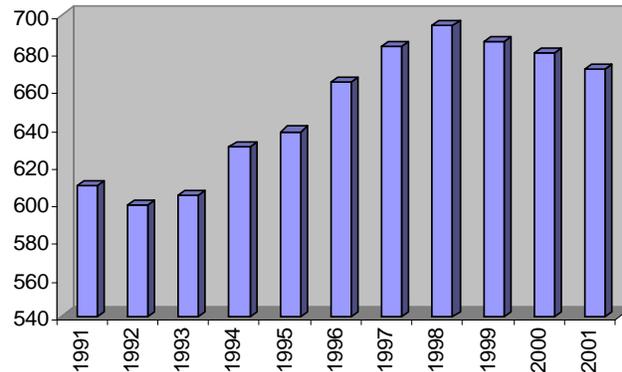


Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003

Number of Businesses

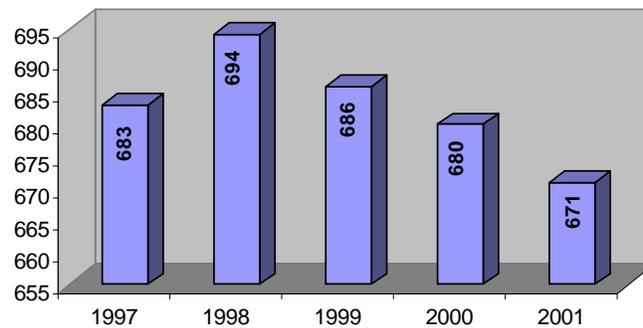
The number of businesses in Grant County increased steadily from 609 in 1991 to a high of 694 in 1998. From 1998 to 2001, however, the number of businesses in the county declined from 694 to 671. Unfortunately, more than 20 businesses left the county in this four-year period. Many businesses in Silver City are small owner/operator businesses comprised of one or more members of a single household. Figures 7-3 and 7-4 outline 10 and 5-year trends for the number of businesses operating in the county.

Figure 7-3: Number of Businesses – 10-Year Trend in Grant County



Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003

Figure 7-4: Number of Businesses – 5-Year Trend in Grant County



Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003

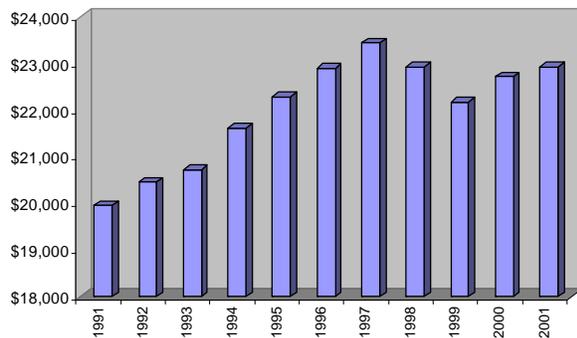
Annual Wage

Like the gross receipts trends in the County, the annual wage/salary per job for those working in the County steadily increased from \$19,949 in 1991 to a high of \$23,440 in 1997. From 1997 to 1999, however, the annual wage decreased to \$22,173. Fortunately, the wage is showing signs of an increasing trend, based on the incline from 22,173 in 1999 to \$22,931 in 2001.

Employment by Sector

The most recent comprehensive data for employment by sector in Silver City and Grant County is provided by the New Mexico Department of Labor's 2001 Report. Because of dramatic changes in employment during 2002-2003, these figures must be adjusted accordingly. As indicated above, some more current data is provided in this chapter but the most current comprehensive data should be used for economic development planning as soon as it is available.

Figure 7-5: Annual Wage/Salary per Job – 10-Year Trend for Grant County



Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003

The service industry in 2001 was the largest employment sector for Grant County with approximately 2,306 employees, based on NM Department of Labor data for the year 2001. The next largest employment sector for the county is the retail trade industry (1,812 employed), followed by the local government sector (1,749), the mining industry (1,335), and state government (1,035). Figure 7-5 outlines the top ten employment sectors for the county in the year 2001 based on NM Department of Labor and NM Economic Development Department data.

The mining sector has been historically a key employment sector for the county (and was the 4th largest employment sector for the county in 2001, as outlined above). However, layoffs of 660 employees from Phelps Dodge Corporation's Chino Mines in 2002 have significantly impacted employment and economic trends in the county and the Town of Silver City. As outlined in *Figure 7-6: Top 10 Employment Sectors for Grant County - Number of Persons Employed*, jobs in the mining industry provide a relatively high income. Employees of the mining sector earn the third highest average weekly wage of \$811.00 (based on NMEDD data of 2001 earnings). Only federal government and company management positions have a higher average weekly wage (however the number of employees in these sectors is considerably less, approximately 292 and 27 respectively, than those of the mining sector even today). Undoubtedly, the loss of these relatively high-paying mining jobs is a significant drain on the overall economy of Grant County and the Town of Silver City.

Major Employers in Grant County

Major employers in Grant County, with number of employees, are as follows:

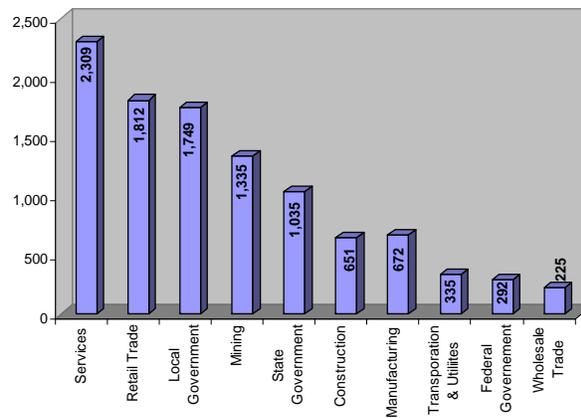
- Phelps Dodge Mining Company (640)
- Gila Regional Medical Center (600, with more than 500 full-time)

employees or FTEs)

- Fort Bayard Medical Center (420)
- Western New Mexico University (322)
- Cobre Consolidated School District (256)

When considered together, the number of employees in the Silver City and Cobre school districts combined is in excess of 500. Local Government is also a significant employer, with the Town of Silver City, Grant County and other municipalities of the county having combined employment in excess of 200 persons. It should be noted also that businesses in the historic downtown district of Silver City have combined employment in excess of 400 persons. Until recently, Stream International was also a major employer, with over 800 workers employed at its peak in the company's former technical call center in Silver City.

Figure 7-6: Top 10 Employment Sectors for Grant County



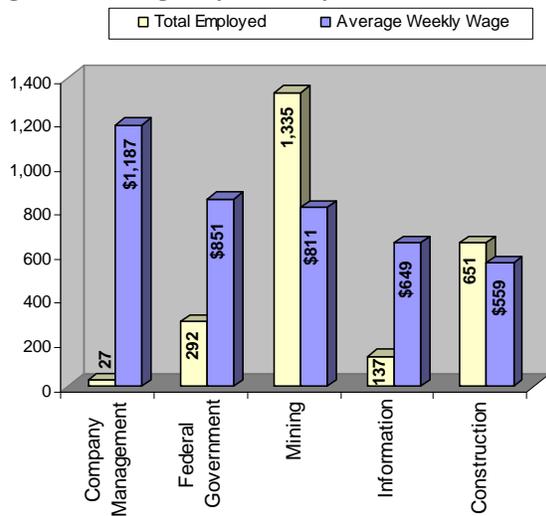
Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003 & NM Department of Labor, 2003

Phelps Dodge Mining Company (PD) has more than 600 employees still on the local payroll, of which 400 are at Tyrone. These figures represent a reduced workforce following loss of several hundred employees, primarily from the approximately 660 jobs lost at the Chino and Tyrone mines beginning in December 2001. The long-term outlook of PD in Grant County depends on overall economic recovery and rise in the price of copper above the current costs of production. PD also cites permitting issues with the State of New Mexico as a continuing concern regarding its economic viability. Recently Phelps Dodge brought another 150 employees back on the payroll, and many are optimistic that over the long haul PD will continue to be an important part of the local economy.

The Gila Regional Medical Center (GRMC) is an important part of the local economy, and is the second largest provider of jobs in the area. GRMC's total employment in 2003 was approximately 600, including

both fulltime and part-time employees. GRMC provides the kind of quality medical care that is a major consideration for businesses considering relocation to the area, and for retirees who are attracted to the Silver City area already and are more likely to settle here because of easy access to the medical center and its physicians and services. GRMC's recent \$5.5 million construction project has been completed, and the hospital has just announced another \$3.5 to \$4 million expansion of their operating rooms and well as looking at ways to further expand their services. The Legislature passed a bill appropriating \$600,000 for indigent care and expansion. GRMC is currently recruiting an urologist and a cardiologist, and is planning to lure a full-time grant writer.

Figure 7-7: Wages By Industry



Source: NM Economic Development Department, 2003 & NM Department of Labor, 2003

The Fort Bayard Medical Center is a major economic asset to Grant County, with 420 employees. The physical plant of the medical center is in disrepair. The State of New Mexico is now examining alternative scenarios for either a renovated or new facility, and new construction is likely the best solution. There has been discussion of moving the facility to a new location in Grant County, but the current mayor of Santa Clara receives widespread support in her goal to keep the medical complex in Santa Clara and at its current location at Fort Bayard.

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) is a significant economic driver in the Silver City area, with 322 employees and more than 2,500 students enrolled in various classes, including adult education and the New Mexico Works project, as well as regular degree-bound students. This includes the Silver City campus and the Deming, Truth or Consequences, and Gallup campuses. The Legislature passed a bill appropriating \$250,000 to the University to expand its childcare development program, helping to address a significant problem in the county.

The Gila National Forest also offers job opportunities for Grant County communities; for example: Gila WoodNet, which helps reduce fire threats; and the Southwest fire fighting crew training. SIGRED is currently working with the GNF and WNMU to expand training for youth and adults interested in fire fighting and working in the forest. Until recently, Stream International was also a major employer, with over 800 workers employed at its peak in the company's former technical call center in Silver City.

Employment directly and indirectly in tourism is a major part of the local economy, and is discussed in further detail below.

B. Trends

Recent Job Losses

The economy of Silver City and Grant County faces mounting loss of jobs from cutbacks in the operations of Phelps Dodge Mining Company (PD), and from the relocation of Stream International's operations from Silver City. PD continues to maintain a local workforce of more than 600 persons, with 400 located in Tyrone. Nevertheless, the cumulative impact of cutbacks was expected to push unemployment toward 20% in the latter half of 2003.

The Department of Labor estimates that the impact to Grant County from the recent loss of 2,464 jobs will be approximately \$61 million. This impact is primarily from loss of jobs at Stream International and Phelps Dodge (PD), and losses experienced by independent contractors, suppliers and other small businesses that provided goods and services to these major employers. Another loss to the economy and to the important downtown retail sector was averted when Maxwell House (31 employees), Silver City's major department store, re-opened its doors after a brief closure.

The worst impacts of the job losses may not be realized for months to come. Unemployment benefits and retraining programs for miners laid off at Phelps Dodge have been extended, and the full impact of job losses may not be realized until the 2nd Quarter of 2004. Unemployment benefits for the former Stream International workforce have only just begun, and the full impact of those losses may be delayed even further into 2004.

The efforts of thousands of citizens of Silver City and Grant County are focused on finding solutions to these problems and to build the foundations for a sustainable economy. Everyone is aware of the immediate need to find work for hundreds of unemployed, while at the same time creating an economic base for the future that is not subject to the fluctuations and uncertainties associated with the mining industry.

Regional Cooperation For Economic Development

Recognizing the depth of the crisis following Stream International's final departure, Silver City has joined with the county and the other three incorporated municipalities to form the *Grant County Economic Development Coalition for Progress*. The goal of the coalition is to build the widest possible base among business and government leaders for cooperation on economic development.

This year, the area has received several grants from the State Legislature and from other sources for economic development initiatives (see below). Both the county and the town are heartened by the extent of support from the state legislature and other sources. Members of the new *Coalition for Progress* will develop mechanisms to oversee the expenditure of these grants and appropriations, and to foster cooperative efforts at revitalizing the economy. With these efforts and others, including movement towards coordinated planning in the areas where town/county jurisdictions intersect (especially the growing area of the ETZ, where real estate and construction activity is especially strong), positive communication among local government officials and other affected parties has significantly increased. Officials believe that this will foster greater cooperation that will help the region to recover from current economic conditions.

The respective comprehensive plans for Silver City and Grant County express an overall *regional* vision for future economic development. But neither the town nor the county want these comprehensive plans to be visions only; instead, everyone wants the specific goals, policies and implementation measures in the respective plans to contribute significantly to regional cooperation for economic development. Everyone realizes that in order to meet the current crisis citizens and government officials must make constructive contributions toward creation of a strong, stable, sustainable economy for Silver City and Grant County.

SIGRED. Silver City and Grant County economic development efforts have in recent decades been focused primarily through the efforts of the Silver City Grant County Economic Development Corporation or SIGRED; and SIGRED will continue to play an important role in regional economic development. SIGRED was established in 1978 to create and maintain jobs in Silver City and Grant County, and SIGRED works to "strengthen the economy of Southwest New Mexico by directly assisting businesses and providing incentives that attract new businesses." SIGRED's 19 member Board of Directors and 150 members provide direction to these efforts from SIGRED's offices in the Besse Forward Global Resource Center on the campus of Western New Mexico University (WNMU). SIGRED's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) operates under contract with WNMU to "provide services to entrepreneurs, small business and industries," with responsibilities not only for Grant but also for Luna, Catron and Hidalgo counties. SIGRED

understands that its overall community development effort is "cultivated and coordinated by partnering with elected officials, civic and other community organizations."

SIGRED has had major responsibility for securing substantial grants and appropriations to help the regional economy in the wake of dramatic job losses; and a total of \$625,000 in public and private funds has been targeted for economic development and job-creating initiatives in Silver City and Grant County. Most of these funds have already been secured from recent legislative appropriations, the Department of Labor, and private sources. The funds' will be used for the purposes set forth below as part of an overall strategic plan for economic development for the region.

In addition to the collaborative efforts that take place through efforts of SIGRED, the Silver City- Grant County Chamber of Commerce and the Corporation for Downtown Development (Silver City MainStreet Project) also promote economic development and tourism in Silver City and Grant County: A local Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce has had a presence in past years but is not currently active in promoting member businesses within the Silver City area.

Current Initiatives for Regional Economic Development

The current strategic plan for regional economic development for Silver City and Grant County includes the following initiatives:

- Community survey (\$100,000 from Department of Labor) Marketing plan (\$250,000 legislative appropriation);
- Pay recruiter expenses, trade shows, public relations (\$75,000 from combined public and private sources);
- Economic development plan (\$50,000 from the Economic Development Administration);
- Development and expansion of import/export businesses around the state (\$150,000 from the New Mexico Small Business Development Center).

The community survey or assessment phase in this overall strategy will include: a labor skills analysis to evaluate the supply and quality of the labor force; a household survey to document detailed skills within the community; and a target market analysis to document community assets and match them with target industries that will be identified.

The legislative appropriation will be used for a variety of interrelated tasks that will identify: suitable buildings and sites for businesses; investors; infrastructure and funding sources; and a grant writer. A comprehensive marketing strategy will use a variety of techniques to

market the assets of Silver City and Grant County using websites, fact books, community profiles created, 800 telephone number, etc.

Private and public funds will be used for an outside recruiter with understanding and contacts re: targeted industries; trade shows; and public relations efforts. Some funds will also be used as a match for the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant and for purchase of equipment.

The EDA application has been approved and will produce an economic plan for Grant County. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force for the town advocates "maximum public involvement in all planning stages," including the development of the county economic development plan. Examples of the kind of public forums that should be encouraged in the development of the Grant County Economic Development Plan include:

- The recent "Local and Sustainable Economic Development Forum" that generated a range of ideas and plans for economic development from a diverse group of citizens; and
- Public-private cooperation for the creation of the proposed San Vicente Cienega Creek Park.

Funding of \$150,000 from the New Mexico Small Business Development Center will be used to develop and expand import/export businesses around the state. In response to a recent strategic planning meeting conducted by the NMEDD and hosted by SIGRED. SIGRED has developed an Economic Diversity Plan. This plan came in part from a SWOT analysis of the region performed by community leaders. The SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) identified the following main strategies:

1. Customer Service/Tech Support Center Recruitment Strategy.
2. Recruit Manufacturer(s) to Grant Count.
3. Develop 3-Year Grant County Economic Development Strategy.

Silver City: Satellite Community for Statewide Clusters and Business Development

Silver City and Grant County could develop a *satellite* relationship with Albuquerque and the business clusters supported and nurtured there and in the Albuquerque-Santa Fe corridor. Economic development efforts also focus on other satellite relationships that may be possible with Santa Teresa, Las Cruces and El Paso. This relationship would include high school and college level educational and training programs for individuals interested in entering the workforce for particular industries or clusters. This would mean collaborative relationships with educational

institutions and business organizations in the Albuquerque - Santa Fe corridor; the special high school training/education programs in technology sponsored by the Governor's Science and Technology Office are an example of this kind of collaborative relationship. The goal would be to provide gateway and entry opportunities through education and training (including apprentice relationships) for Silver City residents who want to make a career in a particular business or industry cluster.

This satellite relationship could also result in location of facilities for fabrication, manufacturing, and assembly of products, with one or more businesses within a cluster locating in the Silver City area. Finally, in the media/communications area, broadband infrastructure in Silver City would make possible the kind of on-line remote collaboration that is now common in the film and media cluster of businesses, a cluster that is already prospering in the state.

Finally, there is a statewide effort through the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD) to promote incubators in satellite communities that can help create the kind of business activity that allows New Mexico's smaller towns and cities to participate in business development programs appropriate to their geographical areas and their set of resources/skills.

NNMEDD's statewide incubator program and initiatives in media and film will begin in earnest in the next few months and Silver City can position itself to receive benefits associated with these programs and to participate in effective ways to optimize opportunities for satellite relationships of various kinds.

Economic Diversification

Mining has been the mainstay of the Grant County economy for decades, but the economy of the region has been stressed during recent years because of the dramatic loss of jobs described above. Economic development strategies forged over the years have emphasized the importance of diversification, but during past downturns there has been the shared hope that mining will once again recover from the doldrums and the economy would rebound yet again. This time around, many in the community believe that this rebound in mining operations is unlikely to return Phelps Dodge operations to anything like previous highs, and this has added new urgency to the call for diversification.

Considerable diversification has already occurred during the past decade, and is cause for some confidence that a sustainable economy less dependent on mining is being established. Since the completion of the Grant County 1993 *Comprehensive Plan* and the subsequent Town of Silver City 1996 *Comprehensive Plan*, several new industries have been recruited to Grant County: Ecco Products, manufacturers of helmets and helmet safety buckles (originally 12 and now 2-3 employees); Jongbloed Industries, manufacturers of racing wheels (4 employees); and Stream

International, with several hundred employees at their peak. Stream International's recent departure (Summer 2003), as indicted above, has been a severe blow to the local economy.

The community understands that 80% of all jobs created come through expansion and startups, underscoring the importance of retention and support for local businesses and potential clusters of businesses. This means, of course, that efforts must be focused on creating foundations for a diversified economy that builds on local strengths and assets. At the same time, community leaders recognize the need to respond in appropriate ways to help replace, in a timely manner, hundreds of job losses resulting from Stream's departure and Phelps Dodge's massive cutbacks.

A financial analysis by SIGRED indicates the positive benefits to the local economy that Stream provided: up to \$30 million in direct economic benefits; hundreds of trained workers with skills that can be harnessed to help support a more diverse local economy; and a large scale facility with state-of-the-art communications infrastructure that could attract other large companies to the area.

Building on the positive benefits from Stream International's tenure in the county, the community needs to create an asset inventory of skills acquired by former Stream employees in order to better understand the capabilities of the workforce and the need for further training and education to support new directions for the local economy. This is exactly what will happen in the months ahead (see below). The working partnership that is coming together for the region (namely, the Grant County Economic Development Coalition for Progress) seeks to forge a strategy that takes advantage of these assets.

In spite of severe job losses, the economy of Silver City and Grant County has been resilient, primarily because of trends indicating diversification of the area's economy. These trends have been evident at least for the past decade, and they promise to remain strong in years ahead. The most important of these trends that support a strong local economy and provide the basis for confidence in the future are:

- Retirees
- Lone Eagles
- A strong real estate market
- Tourism

In addition to these strong economic drivers, we can add a fifth important category; namely, Silver City's continuing role as the regional center for a market catchment area of over 50,000 people over a three county area.

State of the Town: State of the County

Both the Town of Silver City and Grant County have experienced budget problems as a result of the economic downturn that was caused by both national/international and regional factors beyond the control of local government. The national recession and the impact of depressed copper prices on the local economy combined to create a particularly difficult situation in Silver City and Grant County. Lower revenues to support local government were a predictable outcome of these economic conditions. As a consequence, both the town and the county have observed caution in expanding budget commitments and priorities, and department budgets have been kept more or less at current levels.

The loss of jobs has created economic hardships that have extended beyond the individually affected families. In 2001, Grant County was forced to lay-off one-third of its workforce (36 jobs) and instituted a 32-hour workweek, partially in response to declines in tax revenues. These reductions resulted in reduced services to citizens. The county's financial position has now stabilized (2003), the remaining employees are back to a forty hour work schedule, yet only a limited number (8) of the laid-off employees have been called back to work

In spite of economic hardships and loss of jobs, the Town of Silver City continues to see a rise in gross receipts tax revenues. Government officials see this stability in their fiscal situation as a result of a strong economy supported by tourism, retirees (including Lone Eagles), and a strong real estate market.

Retirees, Lone Eagles and Young Adults

Silver City and Grant County have in recent years attracted significant numbers of retirees and other households re-settling to the area. This influx of individuals and households has balanced any exodus of laid-off workers, and therefore the need for governmental and medical services has, if anything, grown during the same period. The wonderful qualities of Silver City were been discovered by travel writers (beginning a decade ago). SIGRED, the Chamber of Commerce and others have also successfully marketed Silver City nationally, and this has resulted in recognition in the following publications:

- *The 50 Healthiest Places to Live and Retire in the United States* by Norman D. Ford, Mills and Sanderson, Publishers - 1991
- *The 100 Best Small Towns in America* by Norman Crampton, Prentice Hall -1993
- *100 Best Small Art Towns in America* by John Villani - 2nd Edition

Retirees and others that establishing residences in Silver City and Grant County fall into a number of different sub-categories:

1. Retirees and seniors resettling to the area (including “returnees” originally from the area), persons no longer part of the workforce but buying buildings and homes and using retirement income to secure goods and services in the local area
2. Semi-retired individuals and households, persons in their 40's and 50's who are permanently re-settled to the area, still part of the work-force but often self-employed.
3. Lone Eagles (or Modern Cowboys), individuals who have established a home in the area, but whose primary source of income are from business enterprises or consulting relationships outside the area.
4. Young Adults, including students and former students attracted to the culture of a small historic university town, the natural environment and access to the forest and wilderness, and the relatively low cost of living in Silver City and Grant County.

Unlike the first two categories, Lone Eagles often maintain a residence as well as business in the area from which they migrated. However, typically spouse and children are relocated full-time to the Silver City and Grant County area. These settlers to the area can in large measure be characterized as creative, innovative and entrepreneurial. Most individuals and households who move to the area are educated and relatively affluent, and they contribute not only directly to the economy but they also give their time and often their special expertise and skills to support cultural, educational and other nonprofit efforts that provide benefits to the community.

Individuals and households in all three categories contribute in some way to the local economy, some obviously more than others. Purchasing and building homes supports the local real estate and construction industry, which has benefited and grown as a result of re-settlement to the area. Many settlers to the area also contribute by establishing businesses, primarily small-scale and often home-based enterprises. These businesses are not necessarily local serving, but depend upon outside customers and clients for their success.

Of course, the historic downtown and downtown neighborhoods, which includes the university, are major reasons that settlers are attracted to Silver City. The forest and the great outdoors are also factors, as most retirees apparently choose to make their homes outside the town limits in the ETZ or other close-in areas, but significant numbers also make their homes in the downtown neighborhoods, often rehabilitating historic structures. There appears to be evidence that older households re-settling to the area who make their homes downtown are more likely to be semi-retired or still fully employed.

Many other individuals—mostly younger adults who have adopted what

might be called an "alternative lifestyle" - are attracted to the quality of life offered by the area, and they contribute further to the diversity of the Town of Silver City and the region. In large numbers, these individuals (including college students) are the workforce for many tourist-related and other small businesses.

It is important to note that the percentage of individuals 25-44 years of age is much higher in Silver City and Grant County than in New Mexico a whole. In Grant County, the figure is 38% while in New Mexico it is only 28%. Economic analysts note that all metropolitan areas and regions that have been successful in creating and nurturing entrepreneurs and businesses in the new economy of the internet, computers and telecommunications have at least 1/3 of their population in this demographic category of 25-44 years. This suggests an opportunity for Silver City and Grant County to encourage and create more support for business development and entrepreneurial activity among individuals in this age group.

These new residents to the area have all chosen Silver City and Grant County because of the special character discussed above. This includes not only the historic downtown, but also the vast open spaces, pristine environment and access to the mountains, forests and wilderness areas. These individuals are typically not attracted to areas where either urban or rural sprawl has taken hold, or where unplanned and uncontrolled development threatens the future quality of life of the area. In this mix of different lifestyles, the virtue of *tolerance* helps to encourage the kind of vitality that overall fosters a strong society and economy. So long as these amenities and special assets are preserved and nurtured by the town and county, households resettling to the area will likely continue coming and will provide an important contribution to the local economy and society.

Economic Development & Quality of Place/Quality of Life

Perhaps the most important asset for economic development that Silver City and Grant County possess is what could be called its *quality of place*. It is this quality, that continues to attract people to Silver City and Grant County. This quality of place is directly related to the people who already live in Silver City and in the smaller towns and outlying communities of Grant County, including the people who are resettling to the area from all across America. It is further enhanced by a rich variety of historic and natural landscapes that offer scenic beauty as well as recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, including the Gila Wilderness, a unique wilderness area that was the first designated wilderness area in the nation.

The town and county have a *physical environment* - both the natural environment and the built environment of towns and rural communities- and a *people environment* that in combination contribute to an overall high *quality of life* that creates a hospitable environment for economic development. Other towns and regions have mistakenly sought to mimic

or copy other successful places or have simply given in to contemporary development patterns of strip and sprawl, sacrificing their unique characteristics to a faceless sameness that characterizes much of American in the latter half of the 20th century. Silver City and Grant County understand and appreciate the qualities that help define them as *somewhere* as opposed to *everywhere and nowhere* - a unique heritage and special "territory assets" that help define an authenticity of place.

For decades, economic developers spoke almost exclusively about the "business climate" (low taxes, fewer regulations, etc.), but many studies in recent years show conclusively that decisions, regarding location of both small and large businesses are made primarily by the creators and managers of those businesses for *personal* as well as *business* reasons. These studies show that incentives to lure and attract businesses and to create jobs, however successful in the short-term, often do not provide a fiscal and economic basis for long-term economic development. Instead, thriving cities and towns are those that provide homes, workplaces and mixed-use centers that attract many types of creative people. In fact, what is emerging might be called a *creative sector* or *creative class* within a 21st century economy. Today, more than 1/3 of the workforce in the nation works in this creative sector. The creative sector is larger today than either the service or manufacturing sector. Recent trends in Silver City and Grant County indicate that the area can build on assets to further enhance opportunities for developing this creative potential.

Approximately 80% of new job creation is from small businesses with 10 or fewer employees. The creative and entrepreneurial people who are responsible for this rich culture of small business development make decisions about their lives-and those of their employees-based on their evaluation of the overall quality of life that is offered by a town or city and the region in which those municipalities are located. University towns such as Silver City have yet another asset that helps to lure the kind of entrepreneurial individuals that will provide a solid basis for economic development over time. Communities like Silver City have three key ingredients-what author Richard Florida has called the three "T's"-that are associated with successful economies through creative activities: *technology, talent and tolerance*. The level of acceptance of alternative differing lifestyles, artists and gays is a good index of the level of tolerance. Albuquerque ranks high on his creativity index at 98% (#1), suggesting that other towns and smaller cities in New Mexico might also prosper by nurturing similar creative and entrepreneurial qualities.

Silver City and Grant County have favorable demographics for participation in the new economy of telecommunications, computer and the internet, with 38% of the population aged 25-44. In addition, Silver City and the region have assets in abundance and the opportunity to build on those assets to develop a more solid foundation for its economic future. Silver City's ranking as one of the best small towns in America, a great place to retire, and one of the country's 100 top small towns for art are all indications of the strengths of the town and region.

As Silver City and Grant County experience a decline in a traditional economic base founded on resource extraction and related industries and businesses, quality of place will increasingly become the most important driver of economic development for the region. This quality of place provides the basis for a thriving tourist industry that Silver City and the area enjoys, but the evidence is that towns and cities that rely too heavily on tourism often fail to create the kind of diversified economies with deep roots that promote lasting economic sustainability. Moreover, a newly emerging *creative class* of residents, which includes both existing residents and newcomers to the area, will provide the business expertise and savvy to help create a more diversified economy appropriate for the 21st century.

Small towns like Silver City cannot forge an economic development strategy that forces them to compete head-to-head with larger cities like Albuquerque, Austin, TX, San Francisco, Portland, and similar large cities. These cities have experienced positive growth because *they* have provided a distinctive sense of place and a high quality of life that those to help create a *critical mass* of creative and entrepreneurial people. However, there are many persons who prefer the quality of small town life and access to unique historic and natural landscapes, as opposed to the extremely high energy of more populated and often congested cities and metropolitan areas. Silver City and the region are already producing and attracting this creative class, and while the numbers cannot compare with large metropolitan areas, increasingly more of these innovative and entrepreneurial individuals are making their home in the area.

The Town of Silver City provides the kind of *small town urbanism* that attracts these creative, innovative and entrepreneurial individuals. A vital downtown area - which includes the lure and amenities that only a university town can bring - provides a gathering place for the *interaction* of creative individuals and creates a context in which innovative business opportunities are created and nurtured. Economic development is definitely linked to the kinds of relationships and sharing of ideas and creative energy that can be provided by *compact* historic downtowns and neighborhoods. When talking about large cities we would also emphasize high density; when talking about Silver City we emphasize the *compact* nature of the downtown area, which-like in larger urban areas-promotes positive interactions and relationship building. Silver City residents emphasize that they live in a *town* as opposed to a city - which emphasizes the value placed on the quality of small town life and the context it provides for interaction of all its diverse citizenry.

Within the larger context of the county and the region, this means promoting development within the existing town limits not only of Silver City but also of the mining towns and traditional communities. As Silver City grows, it means emphasis on appropriate infill strategies within existing neighborhoods and downtown, as well as rational growth

strategies for the ETZ and other close-in areas. In the outlying areas of the county, it means emphasizing growth that respects traditional patterns of growth in existing villages and farming and ranching communities. When growth occurs outside these areas, every effort should be made to preserve the kinds of landscapes that residents of the county hold dear: uncluttered mountain slopes and uplands, large tracts of open rangeland, and appropriate clustering of development combined with traditional homesteads along the ribbons of the river valleys.

Silver City and county residents often cast choices about their economic future as one of jobs and growth vs. creating a great place to live. In point of fact, these are false dichotomies that tend to create unfortunate differences and divisions within the community. All parties need to better understand that a whole range of economic development opportunities must be pursued to address both immediate needs and long-term sustainable economic development. Conflict and differences of opinion are inevitable, of course, but they can be constructive when opposing viewpoints are respectful of-and open to learn from contrasting and differing viewpoints and perspectives. In fact, this kind of diversity and constructive engagement can help create a highly diverse economy and region that is respectful of alternative lifestyles, choices and values. Again, it is not *sameness* that makes for interesting places and communities but rather a high level of creativity and inventiveness-not a *melting pot* but a *mosaic* of innovative persons. Silver City has the opportunity to nurture these qualities to better position itself for a creative *society* and *economy* for the 21st Century.

Real Estate and Construction

During the past decade or more sales of land, lots and homes, and new construction and renovations of homes, have been important parts of the local economy. The real estate and construction industry continue to do well because of the area's mild climate, relatively low prices, current low interest rates and the slower pace and overall high quality of life offered in the area.

The importance of construction in the total economy is seen clearly in Figure 7-7 above - it is one of the top ten employment sectors both in terms of total number employed (651) and average weekly wage (\$599). The total economic impact of the "real estate industry" is, of course, even greater than reported and unreported construction activity. This includes the earnings and economic activity of property-owners making productive use of their land, real estate sales of land and property as well as homes, architects and designers, surveyors and engineers, attorneys, title companies, and others who are part of the larger real estate industry. There is strong support in the community for this economic generator, and no small frustration within the real estate industry at what is perceived as opposition to new growth and development. At the same time, there is strong consensus in support of managed growth policies that accommodate growth while simultaneously protecting the quality of

life that everyone values so highly.

Tourism: Heritage Tourism and Recreational Tourism

Tourism is strong because of Silver City's great downtown area, a growing arts scene and access to the great outdoors in Grant County and the region. Silver City and Grant County's rich history offer wonderful opportunities for developing a comprehensive strategy around what is now being called *heritage tourism*. Heritage tourism includes the attraction of Silver City's historic downtown, the period of early settlement of the southwest and trails crossing the county, the mines and mining culture within what is called the Mining District, and its Mogollon and Apache Indian heritage.

The rugged and beautiful mountains, historic landscapes, extensive forests and open spaces already attract vast numbers; and with conscious planning and protection strategies, these natural wonders are the basis for consciously developing one of the southwest's premier locations for *recreational tourism*. Recreational tourism includes attractions for sightseeing, birding, walking, hiking; backpacking climbing and bicycling, as well as opportunities for 4-wheel drive and other mechanized off-road vehicles on designated trails and in areas appropriate for such use.

Silver City and Grant County businesses that are supported by tourism are primarily small-scale businesses with sole proprietors or with only family members representing the workforce. Many other businesses remain relatively small, employing only one or a few employees other than family members. This characteristic of the tourist industry in Grant County and Silver City is advantageous because business activity of this kind - as opposed to typically larger businesses that are owned by outsiders - has a greater multiplier effect upon the local economy. Businesses benefiting from tourism in many communities (Aspen, CO for instance) are for the most part, larger businesses - owned by individuals or groups of investors from outside the area. Locally owned businesses have a ripple effect on the local economy that is 2 to 3 times greater than businesses that send their revenues and profits to other communities.

Heritage & Cultural Tourism

Cultural heritage tourism is a "natural" for Silver City and Grant County because the area has such a rich and varied heritage. The Department of Tourism says that the top seven tourist draws in New Mexico are (in descending order): scenic beauty, Native American culture, historic sites, outdoor recreation, arts, Hispanic culture and special events. Silver City and Grant County has "all of the above" (the Native American culture being represented by the early Mogollon culture and later Apaches). Various facets of the area's regional heritage have been developed and interpreted more than others, but the best affirmation of Silver City and Grant County's appeal to heritage tourists came when the National Trust

for Historic Preservation named Silver City one of the Dozen Distinctive Destinations for 2002; and Silver City will soon receive recognition as a National Heritage Area.

The National Trust defines cultural heritage tourism as "traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present." Cultural heritage tourism includes historic, cultural and natural resources. Typically the heritage tourist is well educated and in a higher income bracket, and interested in lifetime learning experiences.

Tourism is the world's leading industry, and what we call heritage and cultural tourism is its fastest-growing segment. Today's national and international travelers look for fulfilling travel destinations that provide authentic historical, cultural and natural experiences of an area or region. To be able to provide exciting and competitive packages, travel related organizations can maximize their strengths by forming public and private partnerships within communities and regions. Such partnerships leverage resources to develop and promote programs that meet travelers' needs for enriching, integrated experiences. [Virginia Department of Tourism].

Silver City is positioned to aggressively promote such partnerships - the town and surrounding area have all the ingredients already. One exciting example of these possibilities is "a living history park" that could be developed just off the south end of Bullard Street-the San Vicente Cienega Park. This approach would emphasize museums, archaeological sites, La Capilla and Kneeling Nun. It could also include organizing Hispanic festivals and performing arts to re-enact historical events. The 1870s cabin from the movie "The Missing" has been sited at the Silver City Visitor Center. The cabin has become a focal point for curiosity about the Old West, Silver City history, and the history of Billy the Kid during the time he lived in Silver City. While some advocates caution that such efforts are questionable in their authenticity, the cabin has sparked interest in heritage tourism activities.

The Mining District emphasizes its unique assets for tourism, related primarily to mining sites and its mining culture and history. In recent months informal collaborations have begun to occur, bringing together groups and individuals in the town and county who have not cooperated in the past.

The website below: provides a wealth of information under the title: *Income Diversification through Nature & Heritage Tourism: A Step-wise Guidebook to Evaluate Enterprise Opportunities.*

[http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/tce/nature tourism/businessstartupintro.html](http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/tce/nature%20tourism/businessstartupintro.html)

In addition to the potential for heritage tourism outlined above, there is a huge potential in environmental and recreational tourism (see chapter 6, section on Parks, trails and open space). For example, Silver City and Grant County have a wide diversity of birds that now attract (and could

attract more) birding enthusiasts from afar. The state publication of the Audubon Society highlights the opportunities for birding in southwestern New Mexico, and Grant County in particular. This opportunity for tourism will be sustained and will grow so long as habitat is protected on both private and public lands. This will be supported by on-going campaigns to help educate the public and landowners of the benefits of good management practices on farms, ranches and other small- and large-scale properties within the region.

Silver City Museum

The Silver City Museum ("The Museum") has played a central role in promoting Silver City and its distinctive heritage and traditions. During the 1970's, the Museum was almost solely responsible for placing the City's four historic districts and individual sites on the State and National Historic Registers. The Museum wrote the nominations for these designations and inventoried the county's historic buildings to support the town's selection. Subsequently, the Museum has for more than 20 years counseled with property owners (and interested potential buyers) on the histories of local buildings, preservation incentives such as tax credits, and referrals to the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division. In large part because of the Museum's efforts, the town has a Historic Design Review Committee (on which a voting position is reserved for the Silver City Museum Director). The Museum also helped establish Silver City as a Certified Local Government (CLG), and has secured and administered more than \$50,000 in the past four years following the CLG designation. In these and countless other efforts, the Museum has played a critical role in heritage tourism and economic development. .

The town provides active support for the Museum, recognizing its important role in Silver City's vibrant downtown and in recognition of the history of the region. In fact, the Museum is the top tourist attraction within the town, with an annual attendance of 17,000-18,000 people - 75% of whom are tourists from outside the county. As an illustration of its key role, in 2003 the Museum brought the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance conference to Silver City, drawing over 100 preservation enthusiasts from all over the state and other parts of the country - and drawing attention to the town's unique status in the state and southwest. Following the conference, the town was selected as one of the National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations - a distinction that will certainly help to increase tourism and tourist dollars to the area. In the last few years, the Museum has also helped host reunions for families with roots in Grant County, attracting several hundred out-of-town participants, all of whom spend money and support the local economy.

The Museum's historic facility, the H.B. Ailman House, is itself a major tourist attraction. The historic building has been preserved and restored through funding from legislative appropriations, private contributions, and through corporate and foundation grants. The total for the two major construction phases over 20 years was in excess of \$600,000, for

complete interior and exterior rehabilitation, expansion and landscaping (*not* including countless volunteer hours). The Ailman House, with its original features now preserved and restored, is owned by the town. However, except for \$20,000 in Lodger's Tax funds and \$300 for a dedication plaque, the Museum has raised all the funds necessary for its restoration and operation. In fact, the Museum consistently raises funds for worthwhile activities and programs that bring new residents and tourists to the Silver City and Grant County. The Museum, which is open to the public, boasts a professional-quality collections care wing, a beautiful changing-exhibits gallery, and a landscaped courtyard available for public events.

The Museum has taken leadership roles in a multitude of activities that promote Silver City's "quality of place" and thereby increase Silver City's attraction as a tourist destination and as a center for historic and preservation research. The Society has partnered in collaborative efforts with numerous community groups ranging from the Devotion Car Club to the Southwest New Mexico Quilters Guild, the Mimbres Region Arts Council, Silver City/Grant County Chamber of Commerce, Mexicano/Chicano Chamber of Commerce, Silver City Main Street Project, Fort Bayard Historic Preservation Society, Community Access Television of Silver (CATS), Western New Mexico University, and the Johnny Banks Memorial Committee. The Museum is pursuing further creative partnerships to make Silver City a major center for heritage tourism in the United States, as part of the Museum's mission to "collect, preserve, research, and interpret for the public the history and objects related to the peoples of Southwest New Mexico in a balanced, accurate, and professional manner."

Among the many amenities it offers to both tourist and local visitors include: a beautiful landscaped courtyard; well maintained handicapped accessible restrooms; an extensive local history research library; a photo archive of over 14,000 images (with a darkroom that produces prints both for exhibits and to fill orders from researchers and publishers); and a gift store featuring many locally-produced items as well as an excellent selection of books on Southwest topics. Long-term thematic exhibits in the Museum explore different aspects the region's history, and within the next two years will be completely overhauled to better represent the influence of various cultures in the local heritage.

The Museum also regularly presents new offerings in its two changing exhibits galleries; and it participates in the annual Weekend at the Galleries event with exhibits celebrating the artistic heritage of the area (this year hosting "Neo-Mimbreno III," an exhibition of contemporary artwork inspired by ancient Mimbres pottery designs, with 40 artists participating). Beyond exhibits, the Museum reaches several thousand additional people a year through its educational outreach programs and special events - the annual Fourth of July Ice Cream Social and Car Show and the Victorian Christmas Evening draw a combined total of approximately 1,500 participants. Its educational curricula and hands-on

outreach kits are used extensively in the local schools, and the Museum also offers lectures, author events, historic district walking tours, workshops and musical heritage presentations to learners of all ages. The Museum is responsible for publication of *Built to Last: An Architectural History of Silver City, New Mexico* (now in its 2nd edition), an important tool for generating appreciation of the local heritage. The Museum's brochure, its chief marketing tool, is distributed in welcome centers all over New Mexico in order to draw tourists to Silver City and Grant County.

Two major initiatives currently underway (described below) illustrate the ongoing role of the Museum in the community.

1. Obtaining designation for the 1887 Waterworks Building as one of New Mexico's "most endangered" historic resources and as an official Save America's Treasures, and securing funding for structural studies, adaptive reuse planning, emergency roof repair, hazardous materials research and mitigation, and other preservation activities and community organizing for the 1887 Waterworks building.

2. Organizing a consortium of local entities (libraries, museums, agencies, organizations, and individuals) possessing research materials-archival material, historical files, indexes and databases, archaeological records, and oral histories - and securing resources (including equipment and staffing) to create a centralized regional research and cultural center to be located eventually in the current Library building. With hundreds of researchers, many of them genealogists, coming to Silver City each year to explore aspects of the regional heritage, such a facility can be an enormous tourist draw as well as an important quality-of-life resource for the community.

In summary, the Silver City Museum has been for decades perhaps the most important organization in Grant County and Silver City in promoting heritage tourism, and deserves both private and public support for its continued role in economic development for the town and county.

Silver City Downtown and the MainStreet Program

The Silver City MainStreet Project - which has served Silver City since 1986 - continues to play an important part in the economic development of Silver City and its historic downtown. Historic Downtown Silver City dates from 1870 and includes a wide assortment of historic architecture, including Victorian homes, brick commercial buildings, traditional adobe structures and newer contemporary buildings. Downtown includes parts of all four historic districts. The Silver City Main Street Project, since 1986, has promoted downtown revitalization. Areas of successful activity have included infrastructure improvements in cooperation with the Town of Silver City, special events, historic preservation and design support, beautification and litter control, and business retention and recruitment.

The Silver City Museum has done great service to the district through consistent and quality documentation of the area's events and resources, and continuing attention to historic preservation.

A healthy and vital downtown both preserves these historic resources of the town, as well as acts as a focal point for community activities where people from all walks of life congregate together. The pedestrian-friendly environment encourages person-to-person interaction. Downtown, as of September 2003, was home to a total of 206 local businesses, including 167 retail and service businesses, 11 art studios, 4 churches, 6 government services, 15 nonprofit organizations, and 3 schools. These figures do not include residential apartments and homes that are present in the downtown area. The business mix falls into 95 categories of the yellow pages, demonstrating the breadth of the activity within this district. Downtown is an important resource for all residents, as it provides roots and historic context for the town as a whole. The total number of employees in these businesses is in excess of 400 persons.

Silver City MainStreet is affiliated with the national MainStreet program through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the New Mexico MainStreet program through the state Economic Development Department. The fact that the state program is located within the Economic Development Department emphasizes the importance of the program as an integral part of an overall economic development strategy for the town and the county region. The Silver City MainStreet Project is a nonprofit public/private partnership (a 501-c-3 organization), and is recognized as one of the most successful Main Street Projects in New Mexico. The Mission Statement is "To encourage a vibrant, historic downtown which is recognized as the heart of our diverse community." Ongoing activities are as follows:

Infrastructure Improvements. In its 17-year history, MainStreet has leveraged approximately \$400,000 received from the Town of Silver City into \$4.6 million of infrastructure improvements in Historic Downtown. New sidewalks were completed in 1996. The Visitor Center was completed on donated land in 1999. Renovation and expansion of Big Ditch Riverwalk Park was done in two phases, 1997 and 2002. The first phase of the historic acorn-style streetlights was completed in 2002. The Visitor Center marquee sign was added in 2002.

Historic Downtown Special Events. MainStreet hosts a series of special events throughout the year. This includes Celebration of Spring Festival (May), Blues Berry Brunch (during Silver City Blues Festival), Historic Downtown Music Showcase (June), Taste of Downtown Silver City (September), Spookwalk (Halloween), and its premiere event, the Lighted Christmas Parade (Thanksgiving weekend). MainStreet also supports projects it originated like the Silver City Farmer's Market and the Wild Wild West Rodeo Parade.

Historic Preservation & Design Support. MainStreet has been at the forefront of the revitalization and preservation of Historic Downtown, first with acquiring low-interest loans, in the early years for downtown businesses. Over 25 businesses have received free design assistance through MainStreet for facades, signage and interior improvements. The AS. Goodell Warehouse facade on Yankie Street, built by Elizabeth Warren, was preserved through MainStreet and the building owners cooperating on an easement. MainStreet worked closely with the Town of Silver City to help create the Historic Overlay Zoning identifying four adjacent historic districts in Silver City-a major goal of the '96 Plan.

MainStreet is best positioned also to continue promoting other goals and objectives of the '96 Plan with regard to: providing education to the public on the benefits of historic preservation; and exploring opportunities and adopting measures to protect, preserve, restore and re-use historic buildings in Silver City. This includes improving the visual quality of Silver City by supporting sign regulations that respect the historic character of downtown.

Beautification and Litter Control. Over the years, MainStreet has planted over 200 trees in Historic Downtown. MainStreet contracts for grounds keeping for Historic Downtown, the Visitor Center and Big Ditch Park. In the wider community, MainStreet coordinates beautification and litter control work like the Trek for Trash cleanup and the Adopt-a-Median Program of over 25 medians inside the town limits.

Economic Development. MainStreet has been an ongoing active player in economic growth. Activities include infrastructure improvements, special events, historic preservation and design support, beautification and litter control have all contributed to economic development. In addition, MainStreet's work in business retention and business recruitment has enabled downtown businesses to grow and the historic district to include now over 200 businesses, government services, studios and organizations. The Downtown Gift Certificates Program has brought over \$30,000 into downtown in four years. The annual Historic Downtown Guide & Business Directory promotes Historic Downtown and provides orientation for both residents and visitors.

MainStreet also coordinates with the State of New Mexico Historic Preservation Division, the State Economic Development Department and other appropriate state and federal agencies on opportunities for tax credits, preservation loans and grants, and technical assistance. This includes exploration of opportunities with the private and public sectors for New Market Tax Credits available from the U.S. Treasury (through the National Trust for Historic Preservation), which might be facilitated through creation of a local community development corporation.

The State of New Mexico and Silver City Downtown Revitalization

The State of New Mexico maintains state offices in the larger Silver City area in both leased and state-owned buildings. The current administration in Santa Fe sees an opportunity in systematically relocating most if not all of these offices over time to the downtown area. As leases expire or as new buildings are constructed, the goal is to locate these offices and state workers into the downtown area. Between 100 and 200 state workers, and visitors and clients of the agencies and departments, will increase the daily population of downtown and help to support retail establishments like restaurants and cafes, as well as other retail and service businesses in the downtown.

The town should support and encourage efforts to create a critical mass of daytime workers in the downtown, as a way of sustaining and supporting businesses that serve both local residents and tourists alike.

Silver City and Grant County: Arts and Economic Development.

Silver City has an active arts scene, which includes year-round events, performing local musicians, theater offerings, museums, preservation of historic architecture, and galleries and art studios. Recognizing the place of arts in Silver City, it has been named for the past several years one of the 100 best small arts towns in America. Major events include those put on by the Mimbres Region Arts Council such as the Silver City Blues Festival (May) and Weekend at the Galleries (October). They host a performance series too. The annual Big Ditch Art Fair (September) is presented by San Vicente Artists. They also publish the annual San Vicente Artists Guide featuring over 40 local artists.

MainStreet has begun an annual Historic Downtown Music Showcase (June) to present live music. Over 30 local musicians and an additional 10 bands are available to play in the area. Besides special events, weekend performances downtown at shops, restaurants, and venues are becoming more common.

WNMU has a well-developed theater and fine arts department. The WMNU Museum focuses on the prehistoric Mimbres Indian culture. The Silver City Museum includes Victorian-era history, mining and historical photos. Tours of Historic Downtown happen each Saturday highlighting architecture and historical events.

There are over 25 galleries and art studios in Historic Downtown, and over 200 artists in the area. (Note; there are 40 galleries combined in the county as a whole, including the town.) For most artists, this is an activity secondary to their occupation, unless they are retired. There is an abundance of available, reasonably priced large spaces for studios, but many artists prefer to work at home. The re-opening of spaces within the historic Murray Hotel as artists' studios is an indication of this continuing

trend for artists and businesses related to the arts in the downtown area. Individual artists and galleries are now using websites for marketing, but all aspects of marketing could be improved upon. Architectural craftspeople in the area work on custom homes, and business and residential renovations.

Recreational Tourism

The heritage of the Silver City and Grant County includes also a vast network of nature trails, many of them old mining and logging roads and railroad rights-of-way. The area includes a portion of the old Butterfield Trail, sites associated with Apache occupation of the area, living towns from the mining era, ghost towns, Mimbres cliff dwellings and other interesting areas associated with Native American and early American settlements in the area.

In addition to attractions associated with heritage tourism, Silver City and environs provide a perfect setting and the considerable amenities that attract a special kind of tourist - the recreational tourist and outdoor sports enthusiasts. The traditional recreational pursuits of fishing and hunting can be found in the area, as well as hiking and camping in the mountains, forests and wilderness areas.

Some of the roadways/trails can often be accessed from areas close to Silver City or other towns and communities within the county, and they provide recreational opportunities for hikers, bicyclists, and--under appropriate controls of usage--motorized vehicles as well. In fact, mechanized vehicles on remote trails and roadways have become a significant form of outdoor recreation in some areas of the mountainous west. Grant County and Silver City possess all the attributes necessary to continue attracting this kind of recreational tourist and sportsmen and sportswomen. Tourism advocates argue that the county should defend rights to older historic roadways as a way of developing a network of trails to support recreational and recreational tourism for the larger region, and not just in Silver City. This is an important way to establish Grant County as a destination for sports recreational tourism.

Accordingly, Silver City and Grant County should continue to work cooperatively with state and local government, and with non-profit groups, to secure, maintain and develop a large network of trails and roadways within the county (including contested rights-of-way). There should also be an emphasis on easy access to trailheads, including connections from the Boston Hill trails and other urban trails in Silver City, as well as trails within and adjacent to other communities in the county.

Silver City as Regional Economic Center

Silver City is the regional center for a large market area that includes residents of the surrounding areas. Silver City's downtown is no longer the principal retail center for the area, as major businesses that serve the

region have established themselves along the main corridors, primarily Highway 180 East. Downtown does still attract retail stores that serve the shopping needs of the local area, including the furniture store, new Dollar Store and Fashion Max. However, as indicated above, downtown is increasingly becoming a center for arts, restaurants, entertainment and related venues, as opposed to a regional center serving all basic shopping needs of area residents. Experience in other regional centers with strong historic and "territory" assets indicates that this emphasis on arts and entertainment (broadly defined) is a key to the economic success of Silver City's downtown area in the decades ahead.

Although, there are larger retail stores located outside of the downtown area, Silver City's downtown still serves a major role in providing retail products and services for Grant County and a larger three-county service area. The anchor for regional *retail* is, of course, the local Wal-Mart Super Store. Wal-Mart is the principal multi-purpose store within a larger market capture area that includes more than 50,000 persons in a three county area. Other businesses in the area thrive on customers that come to the area primarily for the large array of goods and services at affordable prices provided by Wal-mart. These businesses are in recent years more likely to locate along the main corridors, the Highway 180 East corridor in particular.

This considerable benefit to the local economy may well be compromised to some extent by the opening of an even larger Wal-Mart Super Store in Deming in September 2003. This new store is certain to attract residents of Deming and its environs, and will likely attract some percentage of customers from the Lordsburg and Hidalgo County area who currently shop in the Silver City area. While some local analysts believe that the impact on the Silver City retail/service sector will be limited (optimistic projections call for a reduction of total sales by no more than 5% or so), others fear that the impact could be significant-and all the more problematic given the current stressful economic conditions of the area.

Historic Economic Base: Agriculture and Ranching

Grant County is committed to supporting its traditional economic base, which, in addition to mining, includes agriculture and ranching. In spite of local, state and federal government support, market conditions nationally and worldwide have resulted in declines over recent decades in the agricultural and ranching sectors. This has been true all over the United States, and Grant County is no exception. Nevertheless, Grant County has a strong commitment to support for these sectors of the economy and for the traditional communities that have historically earned their living *from the land*. Those participating in the comprehensive planning process, whether from Silver City or from smaller towns or rural areas, continue to affirm their support not only for the economic activity represented by farming and ranching, but the traditional way of life and the beautiful riparian and vast open range

landscapes associated with these traditional communities across the county.

Within the county's agricultural and ranching communities, more and more residents are finding that their livelihoods depend primarily on jobs outside the area, or small businesses that depend for the most part on a customer and client base outside those traditional communities. Nevertheless, households continue to choose living on traditional homesteads and continue farming and ranching practices, even when overall household income these economic activities have declined. Even when economically below past expectations, the farming and ranching "way of life" continues to be very important for residents of those outlying areas. Even when one or more members of households are forced to leave their home area for work in and around Silver City or in the mining district, they typically do not consider re-locating closer to the place of work. These households value highly a way of life based on the land that often has been passed down for generations. For these residents, commuting is the preferable alternative to relocation.

New residents to these outlying areas choose to re-locate to farming and ranching communities for the same reasons that long-time residents want to stay. Many are increasingly retirees who can establish a daily life routine that does not require daily departure from their homes and communities. However, many other households create homesteads within these traditional communities (and in upland areas surrounding farm and ranch land), even if it means that one or more members of the household must commute long distances during the workweek.

In sum, some agricultural operations in the country, primarily large ones, continue to be viable economic enterprises; but even larger farms and ranches now find it difficult to maintain economic viability. The trend is for agriculture and ranching to provide supplementary income for most households in these areas, who look outside the area for their principal source of income. Silver City and Grant County have not yet developed a strong farmers market and direct marketing system that would harness currently unproductive land to meet the food needs of area residents. New small-scale farming operations, including greenhouses, might provide a form of "import substitution" that would simultaneously relieve Silver City and Grant County of its dependence on outside food providers and generate income and jobs from within the community.

It is estimated that the Silver City Farmers Market captures only 1 % of the area population, evidence of the huge potential in this area. An effective marketing campaign to promote local growers, ranchers and providers of value-added products could dramatically increase opportunities. Marketing and sales of food products outside the area (with emphasis on value-added products) could also provide livelihoods for area households. Training in small business start-up and management could help existing and potential businesses, most of which are (or would be) small scale-operations. The multiplier effect on the local economy

would be an added benefit from providing locally grown produce and other products.

New Mexico Economic Development Department

The focus on retention, expansion and start-ups mirrors the approach statewide by the Richardson administration, as reflected in the policies and programs of the Economic Development Department (EDD). After an initial emphasis almost exclusively on recruitment, NMEDD is creating more capability not only to support local communities in promoting out-of-region prospects, but also-and primarily in retention, expansion and start-ups. The Certified Communities Initiatives (CCI) developed by NMEDD in recent months will help local communities organize themselves more effectively to address local economic development needs. Silver City is one of the initial 10 communities selected by NMEDD as a *certified community* under this program. SIGRED completed virtually all requirements for selection under this state program.

However, this shift in state strategy more toward retention, expansion and startups notwithstanding, with lingering high levels of unemployment in Grant County and the region it would seem irresponsible not to focus efforts also on luring one or more large-scale business enterprises from outside the state and region. Immediate action would seem appropriate to help address the needs for hundreds if not thousands of jobs for an unemployed workforce that seems to have little prospects. In this process, the community must decide the types of businesses and the kinds of incentives and/or subsidies that are appropriate.

NMEDD is also initiating a business investment program, working with the state's Investment Funds and the NM Finance Authority, to provide capital assistance in the form of equity partnerships and loans to businesses that qualify and agree to move their base of operations to the state. The fund will sponsor businesses in communities all across the state.

WNMU and Economic Development

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) continues to be an important part of Silver City's economy. Thousands of students and faculty make their homes here part-time and full-time in the area. They buy, build and rent homes, and they are an important part of the overall percentage of goods and services purchased in the local economy. The on-going construction activity at WNMU continues to support local contractors and associated businesses. WNMU provides many cultural benefits to local residents, and this is one of the main attractions for individuals and households re-settling to the area. There is strong evidence that retirees who are educated and affluent are very attracted to the combination of *small town urbanism* and *the university town*.

WNMU is also actively involved in creating educational and training programs that help support workforce training, entrepreneurial development and other activities that support economic development within the region. Close collaboration with SIGRED is an important part of WNMU's contribution in the area of economic development. Experience of other universities and university towns (Bloomsburg P A, for example) suggest that the university can play a very significant role in helping to create the human capital and telecommunications infrastructure that will prepare students and attract industry sectors for computer software, hardware and telecommunications businesses in the new economy of the 21st century.

Emphasis on Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan task forces of the town and the county believe that the existing comprehensive plans have not been used to any meaningful extent to guide economic development for Silver City and Grant County. With regard to reaching the stated goals, the plans lack specificity and accountability. Accordingly, the updated comprehensive plans should not be simply an expression of current desires of the community, but should be incorporated into legislation and into clear rules and regulations as appropriate, with accountability for enforcement and implementation. While recognizing that the comprehensive plan provides a vision and framework to guide economic development, the comprehensive plans and stated goals and policies should provide a meaningful framework and strong direction to the governing bodies and other organizations responsible for economic development.

As the goals and policies of the comprehensive plans are translated into public policy, each goal and policy of the plan needs to have a clear implementation strategy and the plans should specify:

- Legislation and rules/regulations necessary to implement state goals and policies;
- The individual, department or group/organization responsible for achieving the goal;
- A target date for achieving the goals and policies;
- An estimate of any costs involved; and
- A clear definition of what "achieving the goal" will look like or a "standard of goal measurement."

Without these factors in place, the Town of Silver City Comprehensive Plan Task Force argued, "we will be left with a document that presents a glowing vision of the future with no mandate and no practical roadmap as to how to get there."

The updates of the comprehensive plans in this document reflect this

emphasis on implementation. The task forces believe that these updated plans should become guides and points of reference for the newly formed "Grant County Economic Development Coalition for Progress" and all its members as a regional economic development plan is developed and implemented. Of course, this applies to the ways in which government grants and other sources of funding are used to implement this economic development strategy. Task force members should participate in some way as part of the "Coalition for Progress" to make certain that the goals, policies and implementation strategies of these plans become part of the new regional economic development plan.

C. Economic Development Goals and Policies

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

ED Goal #1: Encourage a diverse mix of economic development and new employment opportunities that balance social, economic, cultural, and environmental values and goals of the community.

Policies		Implementation Measures
ED 1.1	Common Goals. Through a public process, formulate a strategy that provides common goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination • Economic Development Strategic Plan
ED 1.2	Local Business. Encourage the retention and expansion of existing local business through technical, managerial, financial planning and educational support in order that businesses remain viable and perhaps grow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Development regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives • Grant Funds
ED 1.4	Partnerships. Encourage businesses, government, and educational partnerships for the creation of new economic entities, institutions, businesses, etc., that create jobs and the provision of job training programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Private/Public Partnerships • Economic Development Strategic Plan
ED 1.5	Diversified Employment. Encourage a diversified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning)

The implementation measures for each "Economic Development" policy are discussed in detail in Section D: Summary of Implementation Measures.

Policies	Implementation Measures	
ED 1.6	<p>employment base consistent with the skills in the community that accommodates a wide range of occupational skills as well as wage, salary and benefit levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination
ED 1.6	<p>Local Economic Development Act. Through a public process, prepare a policy for the use of public resources to promote economic development in a manner consistent with the state Local Economic Development Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination
ED 1.7	<p>State Statutes & Federal Programs. Use all available state statutes and federal programs to promote economic development, including but not limited to the Business District Improvement Act, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act, and Enterprise Zones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Economic Development Strategic Plan
ED 1.8	<p>Industrial Parks. Support and participate in the development of industrial parks in locations that are consistent with planning and zoning goals, infrastructure capacity, and public needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning) • Development Review
ED 1.9	<p>Public Awareness. Promote public awareness of current economic, development services and policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Economic Development Strategic Plan
ED 1.10	<p>Energy Conservation & Recycled Materials. Encourage energy conservation and the efficient use of recycled materials in construction and manufacturing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (standards) • Development Incentives • Design Guidelines
ED 1.11	<p>Tourism. Support the development and evaluation of strategies to maximize economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan

Policies		Implementation Measures
ED 1.12	<p>opportunities provided by tourism.</p> <p>Conference Center. Support the development of a community conference/event center.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development regulations (zoning) • Development Incentives • Private/Public Partnerships • Intergovernmental Coordination
ED 1.13	<p>County & Regional Efforts. Encourage the coordination of local economic development activities with Grant County and regional efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Economic Development Strategic Plan
ED 1.14	<p>Local Efforts. Support and fund local efforts that promote economic development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Private/Public Partnerships • Grant Funds
ED 1.15	<p>Arts Community. Continue to support development of the arts community, because art is both a significant economic activity in itself and a basis for attracting additional economic activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Grant Funds
ED 1.16	<p>Public Involvement. Include language in comprehensive plan to assure “maximum public involvement” in our planning stages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships
ED 1.17	<p>Loans & Venture Capital Funds. Create commercial loan, mortgage loan, and venture-capital funds to support formation and growth of innovative business and/or education activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Private/Public Partnerships • Grant Funds

Policies		Implementation Measures
ED 1.18	Evaluation. Develop statistics and other measures of information to ascertain the degree to which goals of this plan are being fulfilled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Comp Plan Consistency Review
ED 1.19	New Businesses. Create a master plan that identifies businesses we want to attract that are consistent with SC/GC location, skill sets and environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination
ED 1.20	Seed Capital. Create a local public/private venture fund to search for and provide seed capital for businesses consistent with Goal #1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public Partnerships • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Grant Funds
ED 1.21	Competitive Advantages. Develop a list of SC/GC competitive advantages and seek/develop economic activities/businesses consistent with these advantages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination

ED Goal #2: For each policy stated above specify the individuals departments or offices of government, non-profit organizations and/or other entities responsible for achieving the goal, a target date for achieving the goal, an estimate of any costs involved, and a clear definition of what "achieving the goal" will look like or a "standard of goal measurement."

Policies		Implementation Measures
ED 2.1	Intergovernmental Coordination. Coordinate economic development polices of the comprehensive plan with SIGRED and with other efforts to create effective partnerships for regional economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Private/Public Partnerships

Policies		Implementation Measures
ED 2.2	<p>Legislation. Enact legislation providing rules and regulations as appropriate to implement the goal and specific policies stated above (Goal #1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Strategic Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination • Public / Private Partnerships

D. Summary of Implementation Measures

The following is a summary of the major tools available to the town for the implementation of the policies in this chapter, Economic Development.

Design Guidelines. Design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that development is appropriate to the area and that it functions well for the community. Design guidelines can help to ensure that new development maintains and enhances aesthetic quality and character of the community. In the chapter on Land Use for both the town and county, we emphasize the importance of community character in attracting new people and investment to the area. The restoration of older buildings and creation of new high quality buildings with strong aesthetic character, in the context of a distinctive historic downtown, embody a unique southwest New Mexico heritage. The same is true for the historic landscapes of farming and ranching communities and for the small towns of the county. These qualities encourage new businesses (and their employees) to locate in the area and, in turn, foster the local economy.

Development Incentives. Offering development incentives to property owners and developers can help to achieve quality design and development for a community, and in so doing, can assist in attracting new businesses into the area and in bolstering the local economy. This is a strategy that can benefit the Town of Silver City and Grant County as a whole, as well as municipalities within the mining district. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, and/or lessening of development regulations (i.e. reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.) in exchange for the development of community features or amenities that assist in achieving the town's overall community design, economic development and quality of life goals. Features could include creative design of off-street parking, enhancements to public facilities, and/or environmental benefits, such as open space set-a-sides and/or waterway corridor protection or other similar benefits to the community. Other incentives that could be used to encourage developers to focus development in the town's desired growth areas include:

- a. Lowering water and sewer hook-up fees in desired growth areas;
- b. Reducing building permit fees in desired growth areas c. Reducing utility hook-up fees in desired growth areas.

Development Regulations. The town and the county should coordinate economic development goals with the goals of other planning elements such as transportation and land use. The town's development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to planning, ensuring all new development has a beneficial influence on the quality of life, including economic opportunities for the community. The town should incorporate into the zoning ordinance those provisions that will require each new project to provide sidewalks and other amenities for pedestrians as a means to improve walkability as well as the safety, general appeal and aesthetics of the community. In addition, the town's zoning ordinance should specify development sites for warehouse facilities, business and/or industrial parks/districts. Town policy should encourage these sites house a diversity of activities and should encourage opportunities for clean industry and/or technology related enterprises in the area.

While the county does not currently have a zoning ordinance, cooperation with the town in the ETZ might lead to some form of governance regarding development review in the ETZ. Whatever regulations might be adopted, they should be designed in part to help preserve the unique character of the landscape and to preserve the quality of place that is a major reason for retirees, lone eagles and others to locate in the area. Similar attention to new development in the outlying areas is important - whether it is in riparian areas with older historic settlements or new development in the upland areas or open ranchlands. These issues are discussed in detail in the land use and community design chapters for both the town and county.

Economic Development Strategic Plan. The town and county should recognize the connection between economic prosperity and their southwest heritage, including the distinctive small town urbanism of Silver City and the mining district towns, the special character of historic Hispanic villages, and the unique rural landscapes of farming/ranching communities.

The town and county should continue cooperating in the creation of an area wide strategic plan for economic development, primarily through the development of the proposed Grant county Economic Development Plan.

Grant Funds. The town has been very successful in securing federal or state sources for economic development projects. In addition, the town should recognize the value of supporting efforts to secure grant funds for

indirectly related economic development incentives such as environmental open space protection and restoration, parks and recreation improvements, and preparation of design guidelines to enhance community character. Improving the quality of life in the area will encourage citizens and businesses to locate in the town.

Intergovernmental Coordination The regional Coalition for Progress is the kind of inter-governmental collaboration that helps assure a regional approach to economic development. The town should continue to collaborate with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, the Village of Santa Clara, the City of Bayard, the Town of Hurley as well as local and regional organizations, including SIGRED, etc., and state and federal agencies in developing a sustainable economy for the region. The town should assist in a process that would enhance the coordination and communication among these economic development organizations to ensure program efforts are not being duplicated and that successful collaboration among these groups is initiated. The town's economic development personnel should work closely with the applicable agencies and organizations, such as the MainStreet Program and the Chamber of Commerce, to ensure that projects meet the town's interests and ultimately offer positive economic development solutions both on a local and regional scale. Cooperative relationships with NMEDD and organizations such as the Next Generation Economy in Albuquerque will help assure the kind of *satellite* relationships discussed above. Cooperative relationships along the border with Mexico should also be pursued.

Public/Private Partnerships. The town should continue to encourage local, regional and state public/private partnerships to address economic development. The town should increase awareness among and actively involve residents, landowners and not-for-profit organizations in local and regional economic development initiatives and planning projects through an extensive public outreach process. Working with local developers, businesses and entrepreneurs, the town and county should encourage further diversification and the rich mix of innovative businesses that constitute the foundation for a growing and sustainable economy. This means investing in, and maintaining and enhancing, existing enterprises, while supporting future economic development incentives and projects.

Chapter Eight: *Natural Resources*

March 2004

Chapter Eight: *Natural Resources*

A. SETTING

Geography

At an elevation of nearly 6,000 feet, Silver City lies a few miles east of the continental divide. Nestled in the foothills of the Silver City and the Pinos Altos Ranges, the town is located on a geographical margin, where mountainous prongs from the Mogollon-Datil section of the Colorado Plateau physiographic province abut broad plains of the Basin and Range province. In the east, the high ridge of the Black Range separates the area from the rift valley of the Rio Grande. West of the continental divide, beyond the Silver City Range, the Gila River flows through a series of box canyons and occasional valleys. Elevations in Grant County range between 10,165 feet at McKnight Peak in the Black Range and slightly below 4,000 feet at Red Rock, on the Gila River.

The mineral-rich mountains north, east, and west of Silver City are primarily the product of volcanic activity in the Oligocene epoch. To the south are thick deposits of sand and gravel that washed down from the mountains, filling the basins and forming extensive plains. These loosely consolidated deposits hold deep reservoirs of underground water. Straddling the border between the two physiographic provinces is a broad transition zone, characterized by extensive faulting, the intrusion of igneous rock, and the furrows of many dry washes. The San Vicente Arroyo, which traverses the center of Silver City, is a major local drainage feature, rising in the mountains north of town and east of the divide. Approximately 25 miles to the south, the arroyo joins the Mimbres River. Usually dry at this confluence, the Mimbres continues underground, carrying water into a deep closed basin that also captures subterranean waters of three Mexican rivers: the Rio Casas Grandes, the Rio Santa Maria, and the Rio Carmen.

In the immediate area of Silver City, the soils are clustered in the Santa Fe Rock outcrop-Encererro category, which is characterized as nearly level to very steep, with well-drained shallow and deep soils, and rock outcroppings on hills. The abundant springs of La Cienega de San Vicente and the deep soil of the bottomland were the first enticement for settling in the immediate area, just a few years before the discovery of silver. The former marsh is now the most densely constructed area in Silver City, and deep entrenchment of the San Vicente Arroyo at the turn of the century has lowered the water table, undoubtedly drying up the many springs. Curbs up to three feet high, a rain bridge on Yankee Street, and the perennial waters that pool along the exposed bedrock in the Big Ditch are all reminders of the modified but continuing hydraulic function of the bottom land. Floodplain, rock outcroppings, and occasionally steep

slopes are the principal topographical constraints to construction and future development.

In keeping with its geological edge status, Silver City also lies at the intersection of several bio-geographical or floristic provinces: pinon-juniper woodlands, outliers of the Sierra Madre encinal or Mexican oak forest, and semi-arid grasslands that gradually merge in the south into the Chihuahuan desert. In the higher reaches of the mountains north of town are ponderosa pine forests with stands of mixed conifer on the peaks.

Climate

The climate of Silver City is semi-arid. Based on records kept for the locale since 1879, the average precipitation is 16.40 inches. Evaporation loss in Grant County averages 64 inches a year, exceeding the rate of precipitation by a ratio of nearly four to one. Again, Silver City lies on a margin: in Pinos Altos, five miles to the north, the average annual precipitation is 21.32 inches; and in White Water, a dozen miles to the southeast, the average is 8.78 inches. It is important to qualify these statistics with the observation that few years are actually average and that the annual precipitation has ranged locally from a high of 31 inches to a low of 5 inches. The record also shows long periods of below average rain and snowfall, interrupted by shorter intervals of much higher than average. This pattern, which may be linked to El Nino events, is not sufficiently understood to be useful for accurate long-range weather forecasting.

Most rain falls in the monsoon months of July, August and September, when warm moist air from the Gulf of Mexico generates intense thunderstorms. To a lesser degree, rain and sometimes snow occur in November through January, the result of moist air from the Pacific, with occasional tropical storms moving in from the Gulf of California. In Silver City, spring and fall are usually dry seasons.

Because of its high elevation, Silver City is cooler than most areas of similar latitude. The summer temperatures average a high in the 80s, with only 27 days of temperatures exceeding 90 degrees. The record high temperature is 103 degrees. In the evenings, the air cools off rapidly, and the onset of the monsoon season cools daytime temperatures as well. Winter days are moderately warm, with temperatures commonly near 50 degrees. Nights are cool, and temperatures often drop below freezing from mid-October until May. The record cold is -13 degrees. The growing season reliably lasts a minimum of 180 days.

The sun shines an average of 70 percent of the time, a little more in the spring and fall. In the lee of the mountains to the west and north, Silver City is usually sheltered from the intense winds of spring.

The task force encourages placement in Silver City of a National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) transmitter.

Water

Silver City currently owns the rights to 4739.22 acre-feet of water per year, or approximately 1.548 billion gallons (an acre-foot of water equals 326,588 gallons). These rights are for water in both Gila-San Francisco Basin and the Mimbres Basin.

The town currently consumes approximately 2820.04 acre-feet (2002) as opposed to 2.795.38 acre-feet in 1996 (approximately 60% of its total allocated acre-feet), or approximately 918.85 million gallons per year. The change during the past 6 years is negligible - slightly less than 1 %.

The Silver City 40-Year Water Plan forecasts that water use in the year 2033 would be 4280 acre-feet per year, which represents a 60 percent increase over the current consumption. This projection is based on an estimated service population of just under, 25,000 people and a total per capita consumption figure of 155 gallons per day (gpcd).

Table 8-1 outlines water use among Town of Silver City customers for the year 1992. A 1990 report by the State Engineers Office (*Water Use by Categories*, Technical Report 47) contained different per capita consumption figures then shown in the table below. It had the following figures for gallons per capital daily consumption - Pinos Altos (92 gpcd), Tyrone Townsite (426 gpcd), and Arenas Valley (65 gpcd). These three water systems averaged 194 gpcd, compared to 186 as shown below. Similarly, this report also revealed that Silver City had a 184 gpcd in 1990 compared to 155 gpcd as noted above. If both figures are correct, then a significant decrease in water consumption occurred between 1990 and 1992.

Table 8-1: Town of Silver City Water Customers

User	Water Use (mil gallons per yr)	Percentage of Total Consumption	Estimated Population	Per Capita Use (gallons per day)
Pinos Altos, Arenas Valley, & Tyrone Water Associations	95.5	10.8 %	1,403	186
Residential	393.8	44.9%	14,108	76
Commercial	180	20.7%	N/A	35
Unaccounted	206.9	23.6%	N/A	N/A
Total (pumped)	876.5	100.0%	15,511	Average: 155

The average water supply per day is 2.5 million gallons daily (MGD) to Silver City and the surrounding area to include Arenas Valley Water Association, Pinos Altos Water Association, Rosedale Water Association, and the Tyrone Townsite. Silver City obtains its water from four well fields on both sides of the Continental Divide - Franks (ranges from depth of 580 to 1095 feet), Woodward (800 to 1030 feet), Anderson (900 feet), and Gabby Hayes (680 feet) - which supply an average of 2.3 MGD to Silver City. The town's wells have been drilled to great depths to allow for drawdown during pumping and the gradual lowering of the four well fields. Studies indicate that the current water levels have been decreasing at a rate of approximately 1.5 feet per year at the Franks Wellfield and 2.0 feet per year at the Woodward Wellfield.

Silver City's water is of excellent quality. It is relatively low in mineral content, moderately hard and slightly alkaline. Chlorine is added for purification at the Franks Woodward booster pump stations before the water enters the distribution system. Water was fluoridated in the past but this practice was discontinued in 1988. The Gabby Hayes well has naturally elevated levels of fluoride, and water from this well is mixed with water from other wells to reduce the total fluoride level. Regularly scheduled water tests for metals, nitrate/nitrite, total trihalomethanes, and volatile organic compounds have consistently met standards. Microbiological testing is conducted monthly on samples from throughout the system.

Air Quality

Air quality in Silver City area does not meet state standards in the following categories: total suspended particulates (dust), and sulphur dioxide. The Gila Wilderness is a Class I air quality area and has extensive regulatory requirements that must be met.

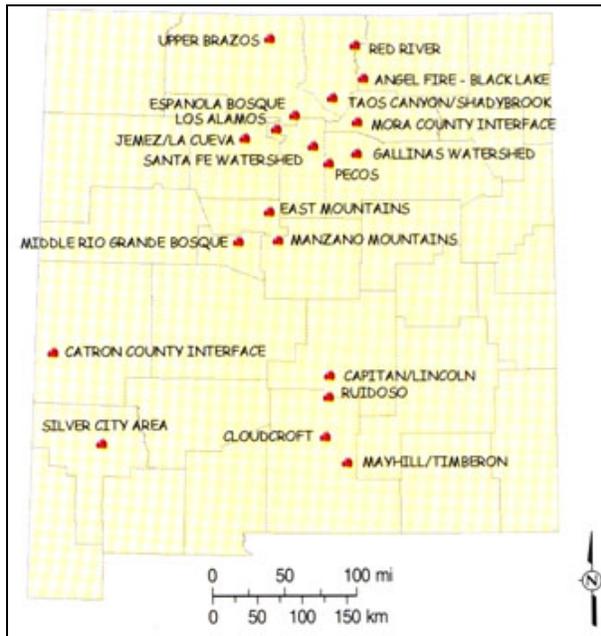
Soils, Slopes & Vegetation

There are dozens of soil types found in Silver City and the ETZ. Most soils in the area are rocky and somewhat alkaline, but are considered productive. The most common types of soil found in the area include: Camero-Santa Fe complex that comprise ridges, hills and valley sides; Lonti gravelly loam of hills and pediments; Manzano loam of floodplains and upland areas; Othents of eroded breaks and ridges; Paymaster Ellicott complex of floodplains and alluvial fans; Santa Fe and Santana Rock outcrop complexes along hills, mountains and ridges. Generally, these soil types are well drained, with slow to moderate permeability and slow to medium runoff. Currently, Stormwater Drainage Control Ordinance Number 989 regulates commercial development to maintain the same runoff after construction as prior to construction. A more detailed analysis of soil types in the Town can be found in *Survey of Grant County, Central and Southern Parts* (1979).

As noted above, annual rainfall is approximately 16.4 inches. The vertical topography around Silver City creates unusual microclimates, which protects the Town from temperature extremes experienced by other towns with similar climates. Silver City's growing season is approximately 185 days. Plants commonly found in the natural environment in the Silver City area include beargrass, stool ocotillo, agave, yucca, desert willow, seepwillow, box elders, mountain mahogany, alligator juniper, single-seeded juniper, oak varieties, and Arizona cypress.

Fire Hazards

Potential damage from fire represents a significant hazard for the Silver City area. According to the General Accounting Office (GAO) Report to Congress, "the window of opportunity for taking corrective action is estimated to be only about 10 to 25 years before widespread, unstoppable wildfires with severe and immediate and long-term consequences occur on an unprecedented scale [throughout New Mexico]." (Rossbach 2001) The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resource Department (EMNRD) developed a fire risk analysis of communities throughout the state. In this assessment, the Silver City Bosque was rated as one of the twenty communities most vulnerable to fire. The analysis is based upon factors including: type of vegetation of the forest or woodland area; proximity of woodland area to homes; availability of water; effective evacuation routes; topography (ridge, valley, slope, and exposure); forest type; number and size of previous forest fires in the area; direction of prevailing and local winds; and, the ability of the community or subdivision to protect homes.



B. Trends

The *2004 Comprehensive Plan* essentially adopts the '96 Plan's goals and policies with regard to natural resources, with slight modifications and some additions. These goals and policies are adopted in the 2004 Plan with the knowledge that some relate to natural resources issues where regulatory authority does not reside with local government but with state or federal government.

Air quality standards (Natural Resources Policy 2.1 or NR 2.1 - see below) are currently controlled by the New Mexico Air Quality Bureau of the State's Environment Department, and the Town has no air quality goals or standards.

With regard to water quality (NR 3.1), the Environment Department has standards and violations regarding all three water quality issues that are listed:

- Groundwater contamination resulting from on-site liquid waste disposal systems;
- Leaking underground storage tanks; and
- Improper disposal of hazardous materials.

The comprehensive plan also calls for the town to develop a total systems approach to water management (NR 3.2). This long-term goal is being addressed systematically within the state of New Mexico on a number of fronts, and a regional water plan is currently being prepared for the area that includes Silver City and Grant County (see below).

With regard to alternative methods for collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater effluent (NR 3.3), the NM Environment Department is already employing this approach for development in environmentally sensitive areas in order to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination in areas not serviced by the Town sewer system. The comprehensive Plan recommends continuing existing programs that help lower the amount of water use unaccounted for and unbilled in Silver City (NR 5.5). Much has been accomplished through implementation of these measures, and water loss during the late 1990's was reduced by 50%.

The town now has a program to promote the education of Silver City residents on the value of water conservation and specific conservation techniques and practices. Perhaps more important, by raising rates the Town has used pricing mechanisms to promote conservation and reduce water use. The Town of Silver City in 1997 instituted an increase in water/sewer user fees to raise additional revenues for the Water/Sewer Fund. The fee structure was created so that individuals who use larger

amounts of water pay more for their usage. Also, an automatic 1.5% per year increase was included over a 15-year period. These measures have resulted in dramatic reductions of water use - 15% in the first year the new rates were initiated. Water conservation practices at public facilities, including schools, using low-flow fixtures and xeriscape landscaping, have also resulted in water-savings. In addition, native and drought tolerant plant materials and water saving irrigation techniques and devices are now being used extensively in residential and commercial landscaping; nevertheless, 50% of landscaping must still be irrigated.

State Of New Mexico Water Plan

The State of New Mexico is developing a statewide water plan. Several years ago, the State provided funding to the State's 16 regions for the development of regional water plans. These regional water plans will establish the basis for county water plans and for the State Water Plan. Several of the regional plans are already completed. According to the State's Interstate Stream Commission, all completed regional plans have a least one characteristic in common - none of the regions plan to export water and all of the regions plan to make up their water shortages from importing water from other regions.

Daniel B. Stephens and Associates Inc are writing the Southwest Regional Water Plan. Phase one of the Plan, includes an inventory of area water supplies, a projection of future water needs and a water budget. Phase one is complete. Phase two, which is scheduled for completion in Year 2004. This phase will look at alternative sources of water and the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing the various alternatives identified. Public involvement is an important component of both phases.

One of the reasons for writing a State Water Plan is to show that local jurisdictions have a need for scarce water resources, and thereby to avoid exporting water to neighboring regions. The State also realizes the need for comprehensive plans to deal with drought, to provide information on water conservation and to secure additional water for future needs. The regional plan will encourage conservation and allow for "water banking", as an alternative to the current policy regarding so-called beneficial use ("use it or loose it") that promotes waste and penalizes conservation.

Conservation is necessary if the region is to reduce significantly the rate at which aquifers are mined. New Mexicans depend upon surface water for about 50 percent of area needs and ground water for the other 50 percent. In the Southwest Region municipalities and individual users rely almost exclusively on ground water. Wells in the Silver City area show measurable losses in water levels each year. Because aquifers recover from over-mining only over hundreds if not thousands of years, they are essentially non-renewable resources. Therefore, conservation and other measures to reduce consumption can extend the life of the aquifers upon which this region depends.

Silver City uses 138 gallons of water per person per day (gpcd), which compares favorably with Santa Fe at 125 gpcd. By contrast, the City of Albuquerque has only recently dropped below 200 gpcd. It is important to note that gpcd calculations take into account total water use for all users, including both residential and industrial/retail/commercial, and is therefore not an indication necessarily of individual and household use in residential areas.

Continuing efforts at conservation are critical-it can save millions of gallons of precious water in Silver City and Grant County. Conserving water increases available water supply and extends the life of aquifers that Silver City relies upon for long-term supplies; but for conservation to work, the conservation measures must be fair and equitable among all users.

Fire Hazards

To assist communities at risk of fire, the Forestry Division of the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (ENMRD) is developing an implementation plan that will provide communities with the tools to make necessary changes. The plan emphasizes cooperation among all stakeholders (federal, state, tribal and community leaders). The plan will be completed in 2 to 5 years. The implementation plan includes a complete assessment of at-risk communities-including immediate and long-term treatment-as well as a development and implementation program for damage prevention and restoration projects. The plan will focus on prevention efforts that range in scale from the backwoods, to the urban/wild land interface, to individual backyards. Management strategies will include: Federal and tribal thinning, burning and fire break projects; EMNRD Forestry Division education, technical advice and ordinance development; fireproofing home exteriors; clearing vegetation and reducing flammables around homes; and, improving access for fire engines throughout communities.

C. Natural Resources Goals & Policies (NR)

The following goals, policies and implementation measures are recommended.

NR Goal #1: Coordinate land use and development policies and decisions with Grant County in order to safeguard public health, safety, and welfare.

Policies		Implementation Measures
NR 1.1	Intergovernmental Coordination. Encourage cooperation between Silver City and Grant County in planning, zoning, and land use control in unincorporated areas and in the ETZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Development Regulations (zoning)

NR Goal #2: Maintain air quality in Silver City to safeguard public health and enhance the quality of life.

Policies		Implementation Measures
NR 2.1	Air Quality Goals. Pursue cooperation between the Town of Silver City and Grant County to ensure that development within the County is compatible with the Town’s air quality goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Development Regulations (zoning) • Air Quality Strategies
NR 2.2	Land Use/Air Quality. Integrate air quality considerations into zoning and land use decisions to prevent future land use/air quality conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality Strategies • Development Regulations (zoning)
NR 2.3	No-Burn Ordinance. Adopt ordinance that prohibits burning garbage with penalties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality Strategies • Development Regulations (zoning)
NR 2.4	Controlled Burning. Coordinate with Grant County and Gila National Forest to ensure public awareness of controlled burning operations near city limits in order to avoid exposure to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Air Quality Strategies

The implementation measures for each “Natural Resources & Hazards ” policy are discussed in detail in Section D: Summary of Implementation Measures.

Policies	Implementation Measures
increased air pollution particularly by people suffering from asthma and respiratory diseases or infections.	

NR Goal #3: Maintain a dependable, quality water supply in Silver City to safeguard public health and enhance the quality of life.

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 3.1	<p>Groundwater Contamination. Coordinate with the County on reducing the potential for groundwater contamination resulting from on-site liquid waste disposal systems, leaking underground storage tanks, and improper disposal of hazardous materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations (zoning) • Hazardous Waste Management Plan • Hazardous Materials Storage Tanks
NR 3.2	<p>Water Management – Systems Approach. Develop a total systems approach to water management that addresses the relationships between watershed condition, precipitation, groundwater recharge, drainage management, consumption, and contamination from septic tanks, wastewater discharge, and industrial uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Water Quality Strategies • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Development Regulations • Intergovernmental Coordination
NR 3.3	<p>Wastewater Effluent. Encourage alternative methods for collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater effluent to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination in areas not serviced by the Town sewer system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations • Capital Improvements Program
NR 3.4	<p>Water Quality Education & Management. Promote the education of residents on the environmental benefit of maintaining water quality and alternative methods for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Education Programs • Water Quality Strategies

Policies	Implementation Measures
<p>wastewater and solid waste disposal in areas not serviced by Town sewer.</p> <p>NR 3.5 Monitor Wells. Monitor existing wells in the areas outside but adjacent or near the town limits that are not serviced by the Town sewer system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations
<p>NR 3.6 Groundwater Protection. Adopt a groundwater protection policy to protect the quality and quantity of the water supply currently in use, as well as the future water supply.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations
<p>NR 3.7 Liquid Waste. Eliminate public health threats and water quality degradation resulting from polluting on-site liquid waste disposal systems. Require community wastewater treatment facilities or alternative on-site systems which do not pollute the groundwater in all subdivisions not serviced by Town’s sewer system where the maintenance of sub-central sewer systems can be provided by Town as in the case now with roads.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations • Development Review
<p>NR 3.8 Groundwater Supply. Protect groundwater supply by preventing land uses that pollute the groundwater from locating in floodplains and groundwater recharge areas highly vulnerable to contamination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Development Review • Strategic Water Action Plan • Water Quality Strategies
<p>NR 3.9 NM Regional Water Plan. Actively participate in New Mexico’s regional water planning program to ensure that the Town’s water needs are accurately portrayed and considered. These area plans will</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination • Strategic Water Action Plan

Policies		Implementation Measures
	provide a base for an eventual state water plan.	
NR 3.10	Water Rights. Continue to support New Mexico’s claim to 18,000 acre-feet of Gila River water that was allocated in the Central Arizona Project (CAP) to ensure that the water right is not lost. Explore avenues and procedures for acquisition of this water by the Town when the need arises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan
NR 3.11	Bill Evans Lake-Tyrone Water System. Acquire the Bill Evans Lake-Tyrone Mine Water System when Phelps Dodge no longer needs it for operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan

NR Goal #4: Prevent flooding and protect public health, safety, and welfare by requiring stormwater and drainage plans for all new development with special consideration for stormwater retention and ground water recharge.

Policies		Implementation Measures
NR 4.1	Drainage Management Plan. Develop a comprehensive drainage management plan for the Town that addresses residential as well as commercial uses (current plan applied only to non-residential)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Development Regulations (zoning)
NR 4.2	Stormwater Drainage Ordinance. Update the existing Stormwater Drainage Control Ordinance Number 989 to include residential development drainage regulations and guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations (zoning)
NR 4.3	Drainage & Stormwater. Coordinate with Grant County on drainage and storm water issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intergovernmental Coordination

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 4.4	<p>Grading & Drainage Standards. Evaluate existing grading and drainage standards and provide recommendations to be included in the development approval process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Development Regulations • Design Guidelines • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan
NR 4.5	<p>Stormwater Retention. Explore alternative stormwater retention techniques through alternative road design in particular (curb and gutter requirement creates runoff/pollution).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Streetscape Design Guidelines • Development Regulations (zoning)
NR 4.6	<p>GIS Data Base. Implement a complete Geographic Information System that is linked with the County to provide more accurate information to the public in a timely manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS Data Base • Geological, Fire, Flooding and other Hazard Maps • Intergovernmental Coordination
NR 4.7	<p>Inventory & Mapping. Inventory and map wetlands and waterways within the Town limits as defined by the Natural Resources and Soil Conservation Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS Data Base • Geological, Fire, Flooding and other Hazard Maps • Intergovernmental Coordination
NR 4.8	<p>Floodplain Easements. Purchase property and/or acquire easements for all trails and drainage maintenance along all floodplains.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterway Protection Ordinance • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Development Regulations (zoning) • Private/Public Partnerships • Master Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan
NR 4.9	<p>Wetlands & Natural Drainage. Preserve the flood protection and water-restoring abilities of existing wetlands and natural</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterway Protection Ordinance • Development Regulations

Policies	Implementation Measures
drainage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Stormwater Management Plan • Design Guidelines • Master Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan

NR Goal #5: Manage water resources efficiently, maintain or lower the current level of per capita consumption, and provide incentives for conservation to ensure availability of water.

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 5.1	<p>Water Supply, Storage & Demand. Continue evaluating Silver City’s future water supplies, storage requirements, water demands, and water rates through regular updates to geohydrology studies and water plans, as provided for in the 40-Year Water Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Water Quality Strategies • Geological, Fire, Flooding and other Hazard Maps
NR 5.2	<p>New Water Rights. Aggressively pursue the acquisition of new water rights and additional long-term water supplies and ensure that existing water rights are maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination
NR 5.3	<p>Water Rates & Usage Evaluation. Evaluate water rates and usage by Water Associations, including Tyrone, Pinos Altos, Arenas Valley, and Rosedale. Review existing contracts and determine policy for future contracts and contract extensions. Require that the Town and any new Water Association create a sub-central sewer system. Create a Water District.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 5.4	<p>Feasibility Study. Conduct feasibility study regarding formation of a regional water authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Intergovernmental Coordination
NR 5.5	<p>Unaccounted / Unbilled Water Use. Continue existing programs that help lower the amount of unaccounted and unbilled water use in Silver City, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Inventory and match account numbers and meter information to physical addresses and include this information in the Town’s GIS system b. Establish a leak repair log and maintain records on main flushing, fire hydrant inspection, and tank draining c. Initiate a domestic meter change-out program d. Obtain a comprehensive analysis of unaccounted water, test for meter accuracy of all well meters, test a random sample of sales meters, and conduct a leak detection survey e. Develop a database of pumped and billed water use to which the town would relinquish control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • GIS Data Base • Town Policy
NR 5.7	<p>Water Conservation Practices. Continue water conservation practices at public facilities, including schools, using low-flow fixtures and xeriscape demonstration landscaping.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Environmental Education Programs • Town Policy

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 5.8	<p>Native & Drought Tolerant Plants. Encourage the use of native and drought tolerant plant materials and water saving irrigation techniques and devices in residential and commercial landscaping.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Development Regulations • Design Guidelines • Development Incentives • Development Review • Private/Public Partnerships
NR 5.9	<p>Conservation Kit. Develop a “conservation kit” that includes brochures on water conservation and xeriscape landscaping, dye tablets for leak detection, displacement devices for toilets, faucet aerators, and low-flow showerheads.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Environmental Education Programs • Private/Public Partnerships
NR 5.10	<p>Water Use Education. Educate the Silver City residents on their own water usage by reformatting the water utility bill to show units of water used this month, last month, and this month last year, as well as comparing their use to average use.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Water Action Plan • Environmental Education Programs • Town Policy
NR 5.11	<p>Block Rate Water Bills. Develop a block rate structure for water bills that increases with the volume of consumption in order to promote water conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Strategic Water Action Plan
NR 5.12	<p>Rebate Program. Establish a rebate program for water users to install low-flow plumbing fixtures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Incentives • Town Policy • Strategic Water Action Plan
NR 5.13	<p>Water Conservation Guidelines. Establish guidelines for new construction that require low-flow plumbing fixtures and other conservation features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Design Guidelines • Strategic Water Action Plan

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 5.14	<p>Wastewater Irrigation for Public Facilities. Plan, design, and fund the infrastructure required to facilitate the recycling and reuse of wastewater for irrigation purposes at parks, schools, and other public facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Strategic Water Action Plan
NR 5.15	<p>Wastewater Irrigation for Subdivisions. Plan, design, and fund the infrastructure required to facilitate the recycling and reuse of wastewater for subdivisions, if they are required to have sub-central sewer systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Design Guidelines • Strategic Water Action Plan • Capital Improvements Program
NR 5.16	<p>Install Low-flow Plumbing Fixtures When Properties Are Sold. Require by law and regulation that all plumbing fixtures be upgraded at point of sale of properties within the town limits, at seller's expense, to assure optimum water conservation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Policy • Development Regulations • Strategic Action Water Plan

NR Goal #6: Maintain the quality of the natural environment by maintaining creeks and washes in their natural condition and minimizing the destruction of native flora and fauna.

Policies	Implementation Measures	
NR 6.1	<p>Restoration. Encourage restoration of creeks and washes and educate the public on their environmental value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Education Programs • Watershed Restoration Programs
NR 6.2	<p>Site Grading & Clearing Criteria. Develop design criteria to minimize the amount of site grading and clearing of mature trees and vegetation on newly developed land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Regulations • Design Guidelines • Tree Preservation Ordinance
NR 6.3	<p>Groundwater Recharge Areas. Develop a policy that prohibits the filling in of groundwater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Quality Strategies • Development Regulations

Policies		Implementation Measures
	recharge areas and natural wetlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Review
NR 6.4	Yard Clippings. Create a program for disposal of yard clippings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management Plan
NR 6.5	Used Tires. Create a program that uses tires and/or aids in providing incentives for disposal of used tires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management Plan

D. Summary of Implementation Measures

The following is a summary of the major tools available to the Town for the implementation of the policies in this chapter, Natural Resources.

Air Quality Strategies. Implement trip reduction and energy conservation measures for jobs/housing balance and transit, and coordinate with other state agencies, Grant County, the Village of Santa Clara, the City of Bayard and the Town of Hurley, as well as Phelps Dodge's industrial mining operations and other applicable private enterprises in maintaining air quality.

Capital Improvement Program. The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a compilation of the improvement projects planned for construction over the next five years. The CIP outlines cost estimates, phasing and financing for proposed projects. The Town should review the CIP annually to ensure that natural resource protection and hazard mitigation are being addressed through the program. The Town should be strategic in finding funding sources for CIP natural resource projects including investigating the federal and state funds available through funding initiatives.

Town Policy. The Town can implement several of its natural resource policies by making changes in its internal operating policies, assuming these changes would be within budget limits.

Design Guidelines. Design guidelines are a tool for ensuring that development is appropriate to the area and that it functions well for the community. Design guidelines can help to ensure that new development maintains and enhances aesthetic quality and character of the community while designing around natural features and hazards. Design guidelines can also outline appropriate stormwater drainage techniques as well as

appropriate development and maintenance practices to ensure minimal impact to existing resources. Guidelines can provide a means to maintain and enhance natural resources in the face of new development.

Development Incentives. Offering development incentives to property-owners and developers can help to achieve quality design and development for a community. Development incentives can be in the form of density and development intensity bonuses, and/or lessening of development regulations (i.e. reductions in parking requirements, height restrictions, setbacks, etc.) in exchange for the development of natural features or amenities that assist in achieving the Town's overall community design and quality of life goals. Features could include creative design of off-street parking, planting of trees along streets and in public spaces, other enhancements to public facilities, and/or environmental benefits such as watershed restoration, tree preservation or other similar benefits to the community.

Development Regulations (zoning). The Town should coordinate natural resources goals with the goals of other plan elements, such as land use and transportation. The Town's development regulations should reflect this integrated approach to planning, ensuring all new development has a beneficial influence on the quality of life and social well being and safety for citizens, as well as the natural resources of the community. The Town should incorporate into the zoning ordinance those provisions that will ensure the protection of important habitat and natural resources in light of new development. Ultimately effective development regulations can ensure that the environment and natural resources are maintained and even enhanced with new development. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas including waterways/river corridors is an important step in protection of the community's natural resources. Development regulations can ensure that these important systems are maintained.

Development Review. The development review process includes discretionary review by the Community Development Commission based on the goals and policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, as well as criteria established by the Town's zoning and subdivision ordinances, and other Town regulations and adopted guidelines. Development review should also be used to assess the impact of new development on natural resource and open space. In terms of hazard mitigation, require appropriate studies to assess identified hazards and ensure that impacts are adequately mitigated.

Environmental Education Programs. Establish public information/education programs to enhance public knowledge about environmental protection and water conservation measures.

Fire Hazard Reduction Program. Promote fire safety in Silver City

through fire prevention programs by continuing existing (and creating new) public information programs. Emphasis should be placed on dealing with very-high Fire Hazard Severity zones in the Town as they relate to definable fire and fire safety hazards and on strengthening existing code in relation to high-hazard areas. Working with the New Mexico Energy Minerals and Natural Resource Department (EMNRD) - Forestry Division, and Federal agencies, the Town should review and implement fire prevention management strategies as outlined in EMNRD's Forestry Division implementation plan (soon to be completed) for communities at risk of fire.

Geologic, Fire, Flooding and Other Hazard Maps. Maintain detailed hazard maps for use in development review.

Grant Funds. The Town should determine whether grant funds are available from federal, state and/or private sources for natural resources protection and enhancement. In addition, the Town should recognize the value of supporting and finding grant funds for watershed protection and restoration, and open space improvements.

Hazardous Materials Storage Tanks. A comprehensive investigation of hazardous materials storage tanks should be undertaken for specific sites when development is proposed. The potential hazard for any tanks or former tank sites found should then be evaluated using federal, state and local regulatory guidelines, and remedied by the developer.

Hazardous Waste Management Plan. Collaborate with Grant County and adjacent municipalities, other applicable agencies and organizations as well as private industry (particularly mining operations) on the development of a Hazardous Waste Management Plan for the region.

Integrated Stormwater Management Plan (ISMP). In addition to conveying the infrequent, large storm events, the Town's stormwater systems can and should be designed to infiltrate all small events and/or re-use stormwater as a resource within the system's watershed. As a means to address stormwater management issues, the Town of Silver City should focus on an integrated approach to stormwater management and prepare an *Integrated Stormwater Management Plan* (ISMP) to address stormwater drainage in the Town.

An *Integrated Stormwater Management Plan* (ISMP) for the Town of Silver City should be based on five guiding principles:

1. Recognize stormwater as a resource.
2. Design for the complete spectrum of rainfall events. Act on a priority basis in at-risk drainage catchments.
3. Plan for stormwater at the regional, watershed, neighborhood and site scale.

4. Test solutions and reduce costs through adaptive management.

Integrated stormwater management planning and design solutions for the Town should include conventional, detention, infiltration and re-use approaches for rainfall capture, runoff control and flood risk management. An integrated stormwater approach is based on a common sense, effective and affordable means to address current and future stormwater issues.

Intergovernmental Coordination. Recognizing that the preservation and protection of natural resources that lie within the Town benefits the regional environment, the Town should continue collaborative efforts with the adjacent jurisdictions including Grant County, Santa Clara, Bayard and Hurley as well as other applicable state and federal agencies (e.g., the Gila Forest Service) to maintain and enhance its natural resources. This includes the development and enhancement of an integrated trails and open space network throughout the region (see chapter on Public Services). In this regard, the Town should cooperate with other government entities in the region and with regional non-profit organizations and agencies in their efforts to clean up the environment and to enhance natural resources as an amenity for the community and for visitors to the area. In addition, the Town should work closely with these agencies to ensure effective and efficient hazard mitigation program.

Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan. The Town should create a Master Bikeway, Pedestrian and Recreation Trails Plan that identifies new roads and improvements to existing roads necessary to incorporate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as locations throughout the Town that would best serve an interconnected trail system for recreational purposes. The first phase of this Master Plan should identify existing corridors that have the highest potential to be successful pedestrian-oriented environments as well as those corridors that have the highest potential to be successful bike routes and identify specific implementation measures to undertake required improvements. In addition, the Town should identify paths for future recreational corridors to be enjoyed by pedestrians, bikers, and equestrians. Ultimately, a Master Pedestrian, Bikeway and Recreation Trails Plan can compliment efforts to revitalize areas of the Town.

Public/Private Partnerships. The Town should encourage local, regional and state public/private partnerships to address community natural resource management, protection and enhancement. The Town should actively involve residents, landowners, and not-for-profit organizations in open space and natural resource preservation. Working with local organizations, developers, businesses and residents, the Town should invest in maintaining and enhancing existing open space systems, while supporting future acquisition programs. Working with the private sector, the Town should also promote and support watershed restoration

and environmental education programs. These partnerships help create and support natural amenities and the overall "quality of place" that is directly related to economic development for the region.

Tree Preservation Ordinance. Consider adoption of a tree preservation ordinance that defines the types and size of trees to be protected, and will include specific criteria, procedures and mitigation when trees are proposed to be removed.

Water Quality Strategies. Implement habitat protection programs and evaluate proposed projects for potential water quality impacts that may require sediment basins as part of grading activities, grease/oil traps where concentrations of such pollutants are anticipated, or other measures and programs. In coordination with Grant County and other applicable agencies and organizations continue to implement measures for water quality protection.

Watershed Restoration Programs. Through a partnership program with Grant County and the Gila Nation Forest Service and other applicable organizations and agencies as well as private land owners, the Town should develop and implement a Watershed Restoration Program that identifies and provides policy guidelines for areas of a watershed that need to be restored. Restoration could be conducted by the Town in exchange for permission to provide public access and greenway trails along appropriate locations within the watershed.

Waterway Protection Ordinance. Consider adoption of an arroyo ordinance applicable townwide to certain waterways to include, among other factors, such provisions as setbacks of construction including buildings and paved areas; avoidance of culverting; standards for waterway restoration; and principles of watershed management.

Dark Skies. As Silver City grows, more and more lighting of public places and private property will contribute to potential light pollution over the town. The state has adopted a dark skies initiative as a guide for local government, and many municipalities are re-examining existing public lighting to introduce a replacement/maintenance strategy that assures adequate lighting while at the same time helping maintain dark skies. This means choosing lighting fixtures and light sources that simultaneously help reduce costs and light pollution in the skies above the metro area.