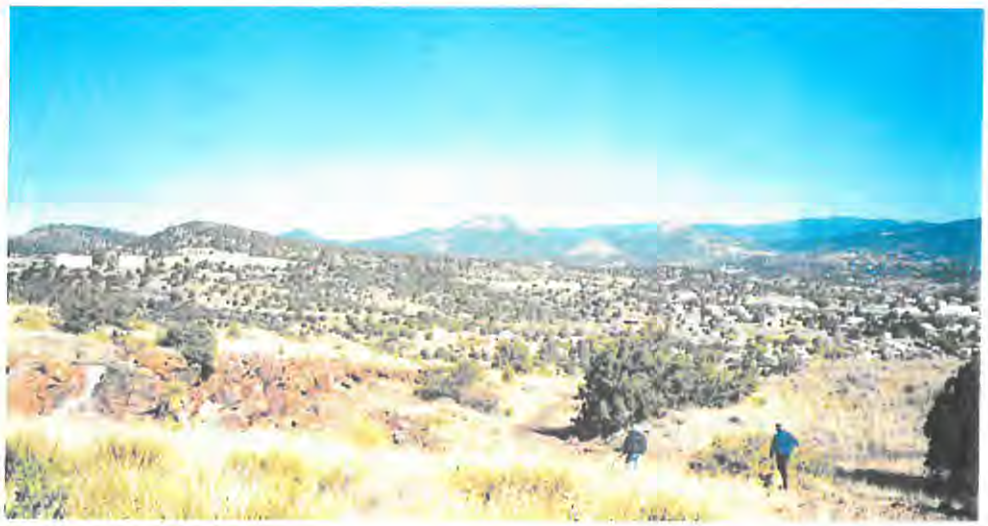
Trails and Open Spaces Plan

Silver City, New Mexico



Developed by the Trails and Open Space Committee and the Town Planning Department with assistance from the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service

Adopted by the Town Council
February 26, 2002

RESOLUTION 2002-07
ADOPTION OF THE TRAILS AND OPEN SPACES PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town's 1996 Comprehensive Plan recommends the establishment of an open space network with trail corridors for recreation, conservation of natural resources, education and tourism; and

WHEREAS, several Town plans, such as the 1969 Comprehensive Plan, the 1970 Master Plan, the 1975 Central Retail Business Study, and the 1997 Transportation Plan, include recommendations on trails and open spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council approved establishment of the Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC) in January 2000 and directed the TOSC to develop a trails and open spaces plan; and

WHEREAS, the TOSC, composed of citizen volunteers and representatives from local, state, and federal agencies, holds public meetings on a monthly basis, in addition to conducting field studies and site visits;

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes the value of open spaces to the community's character and quality of life, particularly as the area continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, the Town recognizes that trails provide alternative transportation, as well as recreation and connectivity; and

WHEREAS, the Trails and Open Spaces Plan developed by the TOSC includes public input and the efforts of citizen volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations set forth in the Trails and Open Spaces Plan implement the goals and objectives of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and are compatible with the 2002 Floodplain Management Plan, as well as the recommendations of the 2001 Your Town workshop; and

WHEREAS, the Town is committed to the conservation and protection of open spaces and trails.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF SILVER CITY THAT:

The Town hereby adopts the Trails and Open Spaces Plan as a guide to implementing and creating a trails and open spaces network in Silver City and the surrounding area.

PASSED, APPROVED and ADOPTED by the governing body this 26th day of February 2002.

Terry Fortenberry, Mayor

Attest:

Jane Toomajanian, Town Clerk

CITY OF SILVER CITY INCORPORATED SEAL 1878 GRANT COUNTY NEW MEXICO

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Photo credits:
Front cover – View looking north from Boston Hill, Frank Drysdale, December 11, 2000.
Page 2 – View of Town from Boston Hill, Jessica Griffin Frost, spring 2000.
Page 4 – TOSC members hiking San Vicente Creek trail corridor, Frank Drysdale, June 6, 2001.
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1 Executive Summary

The *Trails and Open Spaces Plan* is the product of a year's worth of meetings and volunteer hours contributed by the members of the Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC), sanctioned by the Silver City Town Council in January 2001. This *Plan* sets forth goals for establishing and protecting a trails and open spaces system within Silver City and the surrounding area. The purpose of establishing such a system is to preserve Silver City's rural and small town character, while providing a comprehensive, alternative method of transportation that links publicly owned open spaces. These open spaces connect people to nature and provide valuable natural, cultural and historic resources. Permanent protection ensures that these areas will always be available and accessible to the Town's citizens for recreational, educational and health purposes. A trails and open spaces system will also contribute to the local economy by attracting tourists, businesses, and retirees, and at the same time, enhancing quality of life for existing residents.

Section 2 of the Plan provides an introduction that outlines the purposes of this plan, the need for protection of trails and open spaces and the history of the TOSC. This section provides definitions for trails and open spaces, as well as the benefits they provide. Section 2.3 traces the history of trails and open space planning in Silver City, beginning with the 1969 Comprehensive Plan and ending with the 2002 Floodplain Management Plan.

Section 3 outlines the existing conditions, including an inventory of city parks and open spaces, as well as privately owned open spaces. A trails inventory that includes existing and potential trail corridors is also included, as well as planned development and existing trails and open spaces programs.

Section 4 describes the recommended projects of the TOSC, as determined through an assessment process, also described in this section. The ten priority projects recommended by the TOSC are as follows:

1. Boston Hill Open Space and Trails System
2. La Capilla Park/Open Space/Trails Plan
3. San Vicente Trail and Open Space Project
4. Brewer Hill Open Space and Trails System
5. Downtown Historic Walking Tour
6. Old Water Reservoirs Property
7. Silver/Swan Street Bike Lanes
8. Northern Loop Multi-Use Trail
9. Greenway Corridors
10. Bear Mountain Trail

Section 5 describes the voluntary and governmental tools available for the protection of trails and open spaces, including funding mechanisms. Section 6 provides an action and implementation plan that sets forth five broad goals and the action steps recommended to achieve these goals, including completion plans for the ten priority projects. The five goals are as follows:

Goal: Complete the projects identified by the TOSC as priority projects.
Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to complete the trails and open spaces projects designated by the TOSC as priority projects that contribute to a trails and open space system in Silver City and the surrounding area.

Goal: Development of an area-wide trail system.
Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to develop an area-wide trail system that provides connectivity within Silver City between open spaces, neighborhoods, and commute destinations (commercial, employment, recreational, schools, etc.), and connectivity between Silver City and the surrounding area, such as the Gila National Forest and other communities.

Goal: Develop an open space system in Silver City by protecting existing public open spaces.
Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to implement an open space system in Silver City by protecting and designating existing Town-owned open spaces.

Goal: Develop, adopt and implement regulations that encourage conservation of open spaces.
Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to research regulations that the Town can adopt and implement to encourage the conservation of open spaces in residential subdivisions and other privately owned open spaces.

Goal: Develop a long range trails and open spaces program.
Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to develop a trails and open space program in Silver City and the surrounding area in the future, when funding is available.

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of Trails and Open Spaces Plan

2.1.1 Need for Trails and Open Spaces Protection

One of Silver City's greatest assets is its outdoor natural resources and recreational opportunities. Silver City is considered the gateway to the Gila National Forest, an area with vast quantities of publicly owned open spaces. Within Silver City there are large areas of undeveloped land that provide scenic views, places to enjoy nature and protection of natural resources. However, as the area's population continues to grow, particularly within the Town's three-mile extraterritorial zone (ETZ), these areas of open space are disappearing along with traditional trails and access to public lands.

Open spaces and trails contribute significantly to the quality of life in the greater Silver City area. Open spaces provide a range of benefits to the

community, including protection of natural resources that people depend on, such as watersheds, aquifers, and vegetation that contribute to our air quality. Open spaces protect developed areas from storm runoff and floods, and provide buffers between developed areas. The recreational potential of open spaces ranges from active uses such as hiking, biking and equestrian use to uses such as bird watching and enjoying nature. Trails provide connections between open spaces for people and wildlife, as well as providing alternative transportation routes that link neighborhoods, schools, and centers of activity.

The purpose of this *Trails and Open Spaces Plan* is to implement the trails and open space goals of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and provide a guide for the development of a trails and open space system in Silver City and the surrounding area. Clearly, this system may not be achievable in the near future; however, there are open spaces and trail corridors available now that if protected, can contribute significantly to a future trails and open space system. This *Plan* provides recommendations for the implementation of open space and trails projects selected by the Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC) as priority projects, as well as incorporating recommendations from past plans. The *Plan* is intended to serve as a guide to local elected officials, Town departments and citizen committees.

2.1.2 Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC)

Inspired by the Town's 1999 purchase of the 500-acre open space area and former mining site called Boston Hill, a group of citizens began meeting on a monthly basis to discuss the creation of more open spaces in Silver City. The discussions also encompassed the development of trails and how to improve the Town's bike and pedestrian atmosphere. These informal meetings led to the establishment of the Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC) in January of 2001, staffed by the Planning Director and the Town's Brownfields Coordinator, as well as a representative of the National Park Service through the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, and charged by the Town Council to develop a trails and open spaces plan.

At its first meeting, the committee decided to include everyone interested in participating as committee members, rather than requesting Council appointments. While the TOSC includes representatives from the Forest Service, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Town, and other agencies, the majority of the active members are local citizens. The Planning Department maintains an email list for the TOSC of approximately 50 people (a list of members is attached in the Appendix).

The meetings of the TOSC are open to the public, noticed in the paper and are frequently attended by members of the public, as well as other public agencies (the minutes of the encourage comments and feedback. In addition, several newspaper articles have provided information to the public on trails and open spaces, as well as the activities of the TOSC.

In an effort to generate more public input on trails and open spaces, the TOSC held an Open House on October 13, 2001, in conjunction with a workday at the Community Built Park. During the Open House, volunteers from the TOSC conducted a community survey, to gather input on trails and open spaces, particularly the projects under development by the TOSC (a summary of the survey responses is included in the Appendix). The responses to the survey greatly favored a

commitment to developing and protecting trails and open spaces in Silver City and the outlying areas. Most of the citizens surveyed pointed out the need for better pedestrian and bike circulation systems, including sidewalks and bike lanes throughout the city, in addition to an off-road trail system that would provide a transportation alternative to vehicles. Several children were surveyed and they indicated a need for paths between schools and neighborhoods so that kids could ride their bikes or walk to school, safely. Those surveyed also commented on the importance of protecting existing open spaces, such as Boston Hill, the 500-acre site acquired by the Town in 1999.

The volunteers of the TOSC also developed checklists for assessing potential open spaces and trail corridors (forms are attached in the Appendix), and used the checklists to develop a list of priority projects, discussed in Section 4.2 of this *Plan*. These projects were presented to the Town Council in the summer of 2001 and were well received by both the Council and the public.

The TOSC developed a mission statement to direct the committee and prioritize activities. The mission statement is as follows:

"To protect, promote and encourage trails and open spaces in Silver City and throughout the surrounding area."

The recommendations and strategies set forth in this *Plan* contribute to the implementation of this mission statement.

2.1.3 Updating the 1996 Comprehensive Plan

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan, as discussed in Section 2.3.5 of this *Plan*, indicates the importance of trails and open spaces to the community. Many of the goals and objectives of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan relate to the protection of trails and open spaces in Silver City and the surrounding area. The *Trails and Open Space Plan* attempts to meet most of these goals and objectives. If adopted by the Town Council, this *Plan* will be incorporated into the five-year update of the Comprehensive Plan.

2.1.4 Promoting Partnership Initiatives

This *Plan* identifies initial priorities for protecting and promoting trails and open spaces in and around Silver City and provides a framework for the evaluation of future initiatives. The recommended approaches to implementing current and future priorities will require the active participation of various governmental agencies as well as private organizations and individuals. It is hoped that partners will endorse the recommendations set forth in this *Plan*, adopt formal and informal agreements to collaborate in their implementation, and – most importantly – begin to carry forward joint initiatives.

2.2 *Issues and Background*

2.2.1 What is Open Space?

Fundamentally, open space is undeveloped land. Open spaces may include vacant lots in town, linear corridors along creeks or ridgelines, archeological or historic sites, areas used for ranching, forestry or other activities that require limited development, or more pristine natural areas. Some open space areas have natural resource management needs or significant archaeological sites that may require more protection and less public access. Other areas are more appropriate for recreational usage. This *Plan* will focus on the protection of open space areas with special scenic, natural, or cultural qualities and/or opportunities for public use and enjoyment.

2.2.2 What is a Trail?

Trails are corridors that provide a safe means for non-motorized travel within the community and linkages for people to reach and enjoy the special places in the region. Trails can include on-road bike lanes, sidewalks and other roadside pathways, routes within utility corridors or railroad rights of way, paths along creeks, or planned corridors within larger open space areas. Trails also include greenways, open space corridors along drainage ways and arroyos. This *Plan* will focus on the protection and development of trails with legal public access and long-term stability.

2.2.3 Benefits of Trails and Open Spaces to the Town of Silver City

The existing trails and open spaces in and around Silver City are part of what makes the community an attractive place to live and work. Trails – downtown sidewalks, on-road bike lanes, paved and unpaved pathways - are used for walking, bicycling, horseback riding, and other forms of transportation and recreation. Open spaces contribute to the scenic character of the area and provide places where people can reconnect with the natural environment. Some of the many benefits of trails and open spaces include the following.

Conservation

Protecting open space in Silver City is in part a reflection of a community-wide perception that some lands of special importance should be left undeveloped, except for low-impact trail systems. Setting these lands aside, regardless of their potential for public use and enjoyment, benefits the community by protecting one or more of the following assets:

Wildlife Habitat
The natural vegetation preserved in undeveloped open spaces – in contrast to the playing fields and landscaping found in most local parks – can provide critical habitat for flora and fauna (such as butterflies, native plants, birds, and other wildlife). When trail corridors connect larger areas of habitat, such as the National Forest or other public lands, they can serve as wildlife corridors through which elk and other migratory animals can travel. Protecting open spaces around creeks, springs, and other wetlands will have the greatest habitat conservation benefits.

Floodplains and Drainages

Leaving natural floodplains as undeveloped open space can be the most cost-effective way to prevent potential flood damages to both the protected land and developed areas downstream. The ability of natural areas to absorb rainfall and runoff water can help decrease the erosion and flood damages in downstream urban creeks. Open spaces and undeveloped trail corridors in floodplains also help to protect water quality by acting as a buffer, filtering contaminants and sediment out of runoff water before it flows into the rivers and creeks of a watershed. The Town Council recently adopted a Floodplain Management Plan that recommends a "greenway" system, or the preservation of open space corridors such as drainage ways, arroyos and streams in and around Silver City that are essential to the area's overall drainage system.

Historic and Cultural Sites

Silver City and the surrounding region contain a wealth of archeological and historic sites reflecting centuries of human settlement. Many of these sites are essentially undocumented and unprotected. Leaving them undisturbed but protected, will preserve them as resources for future study and research. Some proposed modern trails travel along – and can in some senses preserve – historic and prehistoric routes. The past importance of abandoned railways, wagon trails, or footpaths is better appreciated if the corridor is maintained as a functioning trail.

Small Town Character

Existing open spaces that visually separate Silver City from surrounding developments help to maintain the community's small town character. Within and around the town, protected open spaces provide visual and physical buffers that keep the community from looking like "Anywhere, USA". In town, public open spaces and trails provide gathering places that help to connect neighbors and neighborhoods.

Economic Enhancement

A common objection to proposed trails and open space projects is that the projects are too costly, will waste tax money and limit development. In fact, trails can have a positive impact upon a city's economy in several key ways:

Increased Tourism Revenues
Tourism is a significant element of the Silver City economy. The recreational and educational opportunities associated with trails and open spaces would both attract additional visitors and encourage longer stays. These visitors would provide increased business for local restaurants, gift shops, hotels and bed-and-breakfasts, concession stands, bike shops, equipment stores, galleries, etc. Not only does this increased revenue help business owners, local governments will also realize an increase in tax revenues.

The increasing nation-wide interest in eco-tourism (most notably birding) and heritage tourism (visits to museums and cultural sites) indicate that Silver City has the potential to increase in popularity as a tourist destination and should seek to carefully manage the potential benefits - and costs - of a growing industry.

Decreased Cost of Government Services
Protecting open spaces can prevent development in areas that are costly to reach with municipal services and infrastructure (roads, utilities, law enforcement, etc.). Frequently, the cost of government services to support new development in such areas is not covered by the increase in tax revenues thus resulting in tax increases to the larger community. By planning strategically, a city can keep some land out of development and direct growth into a more compact area, thereby reducing the per capita costs of government services.

Increased Property Values
Real estate agents often emphasize in property listings when a home is located in close proximity to protected open spaces or trails. The popularity of such homes is underscored by the fact that they frequently sell for slightly higher prices than comparable homes elsewhere. Open space and trail amenities in a community can also serve to attract businesses – and employees – who increasingly have the ability to select their location based on a community's quality of life assets.

Public Use and Enjoyment

Most people assume that trails and open spaces are primarily designed to support public recreation. To be sure, Silver City's trails and open space should provide close-to-home opportunities to relax and reconnect with nature. However, the use of open space and trails is not just for fun, as demonstrated below:

Health and Fitness
Designated trails and open space can provide a safe, convenient place for the physically fit as well as the "not so fit" to exercise. The Centers for Disease Control determined in 1998 that 18% of Americans are obese and fewer than 40% get regular physical activity. A 1996 report by the Surgeon General recommended that people should try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise, biking or walking for

instance, most days of the week. In addition to decreasing rates of obesity, regular exercise can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, back pain, osteoporosis, stress, depression and diabetes.

Too often, new developments are built without any provision of facilities that allow for people to be physically active. Newer subdivisions often do not even have sidewalks. This and the fact that land uses are often widely separated, requiring the use of a car for the simplest of errands, contribute to the poor physical condition of many Americans. Establishing trails is one clear way to inspire people to exercise more. Besides improving the quality and length of people's lives, improved health also helps lower national health care costs, which can amount to billions of dollars a year nationwide.

Alternative Transportation
When trails connect places, they can be used for more than just recreation or exercise; people can also use them as safe alternative routes to streets. Transportation planners can maximize this benefit by providing safe on-street bike lanes where trails are not possible and linking trails to bus systems. The more comprehensive a trail system is, and the more schools, shopping areas and neighborhoods it connects, the more likely that people will use it for transportation. The benefits of encouraging non-motorized transportation include reducing pollutants, traffic, and the costs associated with roads and vehicular travel.

Education
Protected open spaces and trails within and around Silver City will become easily accessible outdoor classrooms and laboratories. Opportunities to get up close to the natural and historic features of the region provide for outstanding learning experiences. Students, families, and tourists all seek opportunities to learn about their surroundings. Facilities and programs can be developed at some sites to enhance the educational experience and foster appreciation, protection, and stewardship of Silver City's unique resources.

In addition to all the benefits of trails and greenways listed here, there are others that are not as easily quantified: the pleasure that people take in their city or in their neighborhood; the physical beauty of a place that has protected natural areas; and the sense of identity that can be gained from a unique local feature. These are all benefits that can be realized from the protection of trails and open space. But the greatest benefit of all derived from trails and open spaces, perhaps, is the potential for community interaction in planning, developing, and using public assets. The sense of community inspired by contact between neighbors and common stewardship may outweigh all the other qualities of the trail combined.

2.3 Trails and Open Spaces Planning in Silver City

The issue of trails and open spaces in Silver City is not a new topic of discussion; many plans and studies call for the protection and promulgation of trails and open spaces inside city limits. Some of the more recent plans and studies are cited below, along with the references to trails and open spaces.

2.3.1 1969 Comprehensive Plan

Under the "Community Facilities Plan" section of the 1969 Comprehensive Plan, general recommendations include the maintenance of "the 23.9 acres owned by the Town north of the hospital between Crest Way and Walnut Drive" and the "tree-lined bend of the San Vicente Arroyo in the southern section of Town" as "open spaces" (p. 65). The property behind the Hillcrest hospital, now referred to as the Old Water Reservoirs property, is considered one of the top ten priority projects by the TOSC. The 1969 plan also contains a map (see Map 1) showing parks and "open spaces" and indicates "pedestrian and bicycle paths along drainage ways" (p. 66).

Under the "Capital Improvements" section of the 1969 Comprehensive Plan, the plan recommends that the Recreation Department undertake "intensive development of the 'Big Ditch' in the CBD (central business district) in the form of beautification, parks, pedestrian bridges and walks, additional parking and flood control" during the 1973-1988 planning period (p. 84).

2.3.2 1970 Master Plan for the Development of the Town of Silver City

The 1970 Master Plan, adopted by resolution of the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 7, 1970, and accepted by the Town Council on July 20, 1970, formalized the 1969 Comprehensive Plan. The recommendations outlined in the 1969 plan are also contained in the 1970 Master Plan.

2.3.3 1975 Silver City Central Retail Business Area Study

This study concentrates on improving the downtown central business district of Town and discusses at length, "one of the most valuable assets of the Town," the San Vicente Arroyo (p. 111). Now called the Big Ditch, the 1975 study recommends developing the arroyo as an open space with trails and predicted that, "the green strips of the Arroyo, if developed properly, offer and enticing environment for the entire Silver City community, and an attractive visual, as well as functional, component of the downtown area" (p.111). The study recommends developing an urban park and open space along the San Vicente Arroyo and the adjacent alleyway: "a major north-south pedestrian system could be developed along the San Vicente Arroyo, where a park and promenade could extend from Broadway to College" (p. 73). This open space could be linked with other parks and open spaces, such as between Yankie and Market Streets, through a system of trails. These parks would "tie adjacent active centers of development to the arroyo" (p. 75). The study also recommends the development of promenades along both banks of the arroyo, "where commercial development of properties could front, and would make a more pleasant shopping atmosphere" (p. 100). The study also mentions using pedestrian walkways and bridges "strategically located to connect the pedestrian flow of the HBD (historic business district) with the parking facilities along the east bank" (p. 112). The study states:

> "Development of the area as proposed would create an environment which would serve as a focal point for the entire community and subsequently bring additional people downtown. It will also provide needed access to the central retail core from an eastern approach, as well as serve as a spatial linkage between the commercial uses fronting Hudson Street and the HBD. In addition, it is believed that the volume of the traffic along Hudson can be tapped, thus bringing additional shoppers across the pedestrian bridges and into the commercial core" (p. 113).

2.3.4 1975 Recreation and Historic Preservation Plan for Southwest New Mexico

This regional plan, prepared by the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments (SWNMCOG), assesses the area's recreational and historic preservation needs. The plan recommended that local governments "acquire land resources now to provide open space, buffer zones and green spans, as well as parks and recreation areas and facilities for the future" (p. 14). The study discusses a state trail system and suggests incorporating utility easements, abandoned roads and railroad right-of-ways, arroyos, and irrigation canals into this system. This system "will make existing outdoor space more accessible by connecting these assets" (p. 42). In addition, the study recommends construction of loop trails from population centers to provide for foot traffic, trails for horseback riders and bicycle use with trail maps to inform all residents and visitors (p. 87). The study also discusses the downtown historic district of Silver City and recommends making pedestrian ways and historic trails part of the overall traffic design for the downtown and that "natural pedestrian walkways" be encouraged through some blocks so that pedestrians do not play a "secondary role to the automobile" (p. 61).

2.3.5 1996 Comprehensive Plan

The 1996 Comprehensive Plan is the impetus for many of the current planning projects, including the *Trails and Open Spaces Plan.* Open spaces and trails are high priorities in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan and many of the goals and objectives emphasize the need for protection and preservation of both open spaces and trails. As the plan states:

> "Open space around Silver City is vanishing rapidly beneath a blanket of residences. Although several large tracts of undeveloped state and federal land, including the vast Gila National Forest, exist nearby, access to this land is increasingly constrained as private development cuts off potential corridors of approach.
>
> The preservation of open space and the linkage of this community asset through riparian corridors and trails is a widely-reported public concern" (p. 64).

Due to the significant role this document plays in guiding current Town policy and planning priorities, all of the goals and objectives related to trails and open spaces are included below as outlined in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan. Goals and objectives related to pedestrian and bicycle use are also included, as well as those objectives related to implementation and monitoring.

3.6 Goal: Preserve and enhance the visual quality of open space in Silver City.

Objectives:

3.6.1 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.

3.6.2 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.

3.6.3 Encourage the careful siting of incidental structures such as signs, guywires, poles, and overhead utility lines for new development.

3.6.4 Coordinate with Grant County on view preservation goals.

3.6.5 Encourage the acquisition of open space, which preserves Silver City's most beautiful or significant plant communities, flood storage areas in headwaters and floodplains downstream, and groundwater recharge areas.

3.6.6 Encourage the adopt-a-median program within the Town. Provide for on-going support of median maintenance by sponsors.

3.7 Goal: 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.

Objectives:

3.7.1 Identify 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.

3.7.2 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.

3.7.3 Provide incentives, including density bonuses to developers, allowing cluster subdivisions, or other techniques to encourage dedication of open space adjacent to new subdivisions.

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

Objectives:

3.8.1 Pursue the acquisition of open space corridors adjacent to neighborhood parks and residential areas.

6.6 Goal: 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.

Objectives:

6.6.1 Encourage restoration of creeks and washes and educate the public on their environmental value.

6.6.2 Develop design criteria to minimize the amount of site grading and clearing of mature trees and vegetation on newly developed land.

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

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

Objectives:

8.3.1 Consider bicycle needs on existing major roadways and during construction and rehabilitation of major roadways and approvals for new subdivisions.

8.3.2 Install bike route signs, signed and painted bike lanes, and bike detectors at traffic signals at appropriate locations.

8.3.3 Evaluate potential for bicycle routes and facilities, separate and distinct from roadways, that connect to public open space areas.

8.3.4 Establish a volunteer advisory board comprised of Silver City and Grant County residents to consider bicycle issues, to help facilitate the implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan, to recommend funding sources for bicycle improvements, and to provide recommendations to the Town Council and County Commission on bicycle issues.

8.3.5 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.

8.3.6 Develop 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.

9.5 Goal: Prioritize follow-up planning actions needed to implement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

9.5.2 Adopt an open space plan that identifies undeveloped areas appropriate for preservation and that recommends funding sources for acquisition of public open space.

9.5.3 Adopt guidelines for the preservation of visual open space areas.

2.3.6 1997 Transportation Plan

The 1997 Transportation Plan for Grant County, Silver City, Santa Clara, Bayard and Hurley assesses needed street and transportation improvements in the area, and provides information on bicycle and pedestrian systems in Silver City. According to the plan the Silver City area is "an ideal bicycling environment due to its compact size, moderate terrain, pleasant weather, and bicycle-friendly and considerate motorists" (p. 48). The plan promotes the benefits of bicycling to the community as an inexpensive alternative travel choice:

"The broadening of transportation options can help improve the environment and the quality of urban life. The personal and social benefits of bicycling have been long recognized, and include individual health improvement, personal and community cost savings, and lower roadway construction and maintenance costs. For every person who makes a trip by bicycle instead of by car, there will be a decrease in pollution, fuel used, space on the road, and need for additional roadway construction" (p. 49).

As part of the transportation study, the Town Council established a Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force. The Task Force produced a "bicycle master plan" that "identifies policies and establishes objectives with the goal of integrating bicycle traffic into the area's transportation system in a way that will allow cyclists to coexist safely with vehicular traffic" (p. 48). The recommendations of the Bicycle Master Plan are listed below and demonstrated on Map 2.

General Objectives and Policies

The following policies were recommended as part of the Transportation Plan.

1. Bicycling needs should be addressed and considered in the construction and rehabilitation of major roadways consistent with this plan.
2. Public transportation, if and when established in Silver City, should be linked to bicycling (e.g., bicycle racks on buses, at bus stops, etc).
3. Signage and striping should be accomplished for routes designated as Bicycle Lanes and/or Bicycle Routes under the "Bicycle Route" section of this Plan. For purposes of this Plan, a "Bicycle Route" is a street designated as such by signage, with no space reserved for bicycles. A "Bicycle Lane" is a dedicated lane, striped and reserved for bicycle use, with appropriate signage.
4. Bicycle Paths, bicycle riding routes that are separate and distinct from roadways, should be considered, as appropriate.
5. With the existing governmental frameworks of the Town and the County, a permanent subcommittee or advisory body should be established for bicycle issues. The sub-committee would forward special public concerns to the Town Council and the County Commission on bike trails, facilities, safety and promotion programs and other relevant programs which would have an impact on bike facilities, bikeways planning or implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan.
6. Secure bicycle racks should be installed at public buildings (Town Hall, County Courthouse, Library, Recreation Center, etc.) Businesses will also be encouraged to provide secure bicycle racks.
7. Subdivision ordinances should be written/rewritten to include "bicycle" considerations (bicycle paths, bicycle lanes, etc.).
8. On-street parking should be prohibited on major roads whenever feasible.

Bicycle Routes and Lanes

The following bicycle facilities are recommended:

1. Bicycle Lanes:
    a. On-street parking on Hudson Street should be prohibited between its intersections of Broadway Street and Silver Heights Boulevard. Striped bicycle lanes, with appropriate signage should be installed.

b. Striped and signed bicycle lanes should be installed on the 32nd Street Bypass Road, between US 180E and Silver Street (Remove on-street parking).

2. Bicycle Routes:
   a. US 180E between the 32nd Street Bypass Road and the ETZ on US 180W, except for the area between Swan Street and 14th Street.
   b. Alabama Street and Cottage San Road between 12th Street and the northern ETZ.
   c. Swan Street between Broadway and the northern ETZ.
   d. Broadway between Swan Street and Cooper Street.
   e. Cooper Street between NM 90 and Market Street.
   f. Market Street between Cooper and US 180 West.
3. Long range facilities:
   a. A bicycle/pedestrian path should be constructed from the end of Bullard Street to Scott Park, using the old railroad right-of-way.
   b. When rehabilitation/repair is accomplished on Little Walnut Road and Cottage San Road, the road should be widened to include shoulders wide enough for safe bicycle travel. These shoulders can be included as bicycle routes.

Education and Promotion

The Town of Silver City and Grant County should encourage bicycle safety and use by:

1. Sponsoring and assisting educational special events like bicycle rodeos, bicycle safety clinics, seminars on bicycle law for law enforcement officers, etc.
2. Actively pursuing funding options and sources for bicycle path/trail construction.
3. Assisting and/or sponsoring special events such as the Tour of the Gila, Signal Peak Challenge mountain bike race and Bike to Work Day.
4. Increase local and visitor knowledge of established bike-ways by making current bicycle route maps available at the Chamber of Commerce, Library and other relevant public places.
5. Maintain liaison with the Silver Spokes Bicycle Club and other bicycling-related organizations and enlist their support for, and participation in, bicycle-related special events sponsored by the public agencies.

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force established under the 1997 Transportation Study also developed recommendations for a pedestrian system in Silver City. As cited in the study:

> "The pedestrian network must be basic to an urbanized area and the network will consist of varied physical facilities and applications. From a single sidewalk to the community network, pedestrian facilities should provide at least four major services:
>
> - the safe and efficient movement of persons who are walking,
> - adequate space for a pleasant walking experience.
> - maximum coverage between specific locations and general areas where people would desire to walk, and
> - maximum integration with transit, bikeway, and roadway elements in order to form and reinforce a balanced transportation system"(p. 52).

The study proposes a pedestrian system that integrates sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb ramps and different types of facilities "designed to serve a specific location and provide specific functions" with the combination of all individual facilities "integrated into a network or system

of pedestrianways" (p. 54). The study proposed gradual but continuous improvements to the pedestrian network "so that pedestrians may have safe access to destinations and so that more people will be encouraged to walk" (p. 54).

Recommendations from the Pedestrian Subcommittee are presented in the study as follows and shown on Map 3:

Facilities

1. All projects within the study area should comply with federal ADA standards.
2. All street construction projects should include full sidewalks.
3. As utilities are improved or modernized (e.g., power, telephones, etc.), they should be moved clear of sidewalks where feasible.
4. Walking paths should be installed along Pinos Altos Creek from 19th Street to 40th Street, and along Black Creek and Silva Creek.
5. The 32nd Street Bypass Road should be used as a route for pedestrians to get to Wal-Mart, Albertson's, etc.
6. A pedestrian path should be constructed from the end of Bullard Street to Scott Park.
7. A post office substation should be established in the historical district, so that handicapped, senior citizens, and others will not have to cross Hudson Street.
8. Shoulders along Market Street to US 180 West should be widened.

Planning Issues

1. Land, including ridgetops, should be preserved for greenbelt areas, linear parks and/or nature trails.
2. All new housing developments should be required to have sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Operations

1. Property owners should trim shrubs away from sidewalks and maintain a clear line of sight for motorists.
2. Streetlights should be maintained/added along all major thorough-fares so that pedestrians walking at night are able to reach their destinations safely.
3. Enforcement of speed limits and stoplight/stop sign violations should be increased.

Education

1. An education campaign should be established to alert motorists to use their blinkers, to remind them that crosswalks serve an important function and to remind pedestrians to cross at corners and intersections, as well as the use and function of pedestrian push buttons at signalized intersections.
2. The health and enjoyment benefits of walking should be promoted.
3. Maps showing all walking routes in the area should be developed and distributed.

Roadway Improvements

In addition, there were a number of roadway improvements recommended by the Pedestrian Subcommittee. These included the following:

1. Efforts to remove truck traffic in the central area should be undertaken.
2. Construct an elevated pedestrian walkway on Silver Heights Boulevard from Pinon Plaza to across the street.
3. Traffic signals at intersections should not only regulate traffic flows but also create safe crossing areas for pedestrians.

2.3.7 2001 Your Town Workshop

The Silver City Your Town Workshop took place on October 4-6, 2001, at Western New Mexico University (WNMU). The Your Town Workshop was funded through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The workshop involved lectures, case-study presentations and interactive group problem solving, including working on realistic design problems in Silver City. The participants developed a vision statement and design principals based on existing design elements found in Silver City and elements that are significant but missing. The vision and design principals were applied to a hypothetical redevelopment project on Hudson Street and to a new development on 32nd Street.

Twenty-five people participated in the workshop, including a Town Councilman, the Mayor of Silver City, the Public Works Director, a Town Planner, the Brownfields Program Coordinator and three members of the Planning and Zoning Commission. The participants also included representatives from the local school district, the Mimbres Regional Arts Council, Main Street, Grant County, the Mimbres Valley Alliance, the Silver City-Grant County Economic Development agency and local businesses.

In the Final Report, the participants recommend establishment of a permanent committee to implement the recommendations generated at the workshop. Among the priority projects identified are the following:

- Develop and implement plans for improvements to some or all of the downtown corridors, such as Bullard, Pope, and Hudson Streets, as well as the Big Ditch. Possible improvements range from minor enhancements such as sidewalks, landscaping, crosswalks, connectors (such as the pedestrian bridges that cross the Big Ditch), and bike lanes to major redevelopment concepts.
- Support the ongoing work on trails and open space planning, floodplain management planning, and/or specific priority projects in the community.
- Establish "gateways" (recognized entries) into Silver City and the downtown using signs, landscaping, public art, traffic circles, and other concepts.
- Examine and update zoning laws, site development standards, and other regulations and plans to implement these design concepts.
- Revise subdivision standards to encourage conservation design, clustered subdivisions, affordable housing, and mixed uses.
- Implement a mixed use zoning designation to protect the existing mixed uses in the downtown and to encourage other areas of mixed use development.
- Develop better relations with the county and work towards a common vision and agenda that includes coordination on regional issues, such as planning.

3 Existing Conditions

3.1 Inventory of Protected and Unprotected Open Spaces

3.1.1 City Parks and Open Spaces

The Town currently has 13 developed parks, a golf course, and a sports (see Map 4). Most of the parks are small, neighborhood parks. Some of the larger parks are described as follows:

- Community Built Park (Penny Park) – Construction on this 3.2-acre volunteer-built park began in 1999 and is still underway. The park currently includes playground equipment, a tot lot, an amphitheater, picnic grounds, a volleyball court and a temporary skateboard facility. Future plans include a permanent skateboard park, a children's museum, a teen center, and a BMX course.
- Ben Altamirano Sports Complex – This 45-acre park includes six ball fields. The complex was constructed through funding from a legislative allocation in 1999 and is jointly managed and maintained by the Town and Silver Consolidated Schools.
- Gough Park – Gough Park, at almost two acres in size and located in the center of Town, is used for many community events, including the annual Blues Festival, the San Vicente Festival, the Renaissance Fair, basketball competitions, and other events. This park is within walking distance of downtown, the Community Built Park and the Big Ditch Park.
- Big Ditch Park – The Big Ditch Park project, located in the historic downtown, has been in the works for nearly two decades. Planning for the project began in the 1980's and the first phase of construction occurred in 1994 through a legislative funding allocation. Construction of the current phase in the area between 7th and Market Streets, began in 2001 and was completed in February of 2002. Several grants, as well as funding from the Town and private donations have funded the project. The recent improvements include pathways, landscaping, lighting, benches, and trash receptacles, as well as a steel footbridge to facilitate pedestrian access at the Kelly Street entrance to the park.

There are several vacant lots within older subdivision dedicated to the Town for use as parks in accordance with the park dedication ordinance of the subdivision regulations (see Section 5.1.6 of the 1999 Land Use Code included in the Appendix). At this time, the Town does not have any plans or funding to develop these vacant lots into city parks although the properties do function as open spaces.

Two Town-owned properties are actually considered "open spaces" because they were purchased with funding from the Lennie Merle Forward Fund, thus must be used in accordance with the requirements of that fund. Although neither of these sites is officially designated as an open space, future plans for both sites include recreational use and conservation. These two properties are described as follows:

- Boston Hill – This 500-acre property, purchased by the Town in 1999, is located to the southwest of downtown and is within walking distance of the downtown. A local citizens group, the San Vicente Open Space Coalition, used the objectives and goals of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan to generate community support for purchase of this property. Phase I and limited Phase II environmental assessments were conducted on the site in 1999 and concluded that the property could be used for recreational purposes. In 2000, the Town applied for a New Mexico Recreation Trails Grant to develop a non-motorized trail system, which was approved for submittal to the Federal Highway Administration for final review and approval. Funding from this grant is anticipated in spring 2002. The Town's match for this grant includes 1200 hours of volunteer labor.
- La Capilla – La Capilla is a 35-acre site adjacent to the historic Chihuahua Hill neighborhood on the south side of Town and directly east of Boston Hill. A portion of this property houses the Senior Citizens' Center and the El Refugio Domestic Violence Shelter, as well as the site of the historic La Capilla Chapel, no longer in existence. The Town purchased the privately owned 27 acres in 2000 upon the request of a local neighborhood group opposed to a proposed rezoning of the property from residential to commercial. The neighbors formed a volunteer, citizen-led group, named the "La Capilla Gang of Five" and developed a concept plan for the area that includes reconstruction of the historic chapel, non-motorized recreational use, trails, and other facilities. The Town, through the Brownfields program, is currently conducting a reuse plan of the site.

3.1.2 Public Open Spaces

There are several other Town-owned properties within city limits that qualify as open spaces, as follows:

- Old Water Reservoirs Property – This 20-acre property located behind Hillcrest Hospital to the east of Little Walnut Road contains two abandoned water tanks, previously used to supply Town water. The property also contains a number of significant archaeological sites as documented in a 1980 study.
- Brewer Hill Property – There are approximately 114 acres of undeveloped, Town-owned property located in the Brewer Hill neighborhood to the east of downtown. This property is part of the Fraser subdivision, the original townsite platted in 1879. The property contains hilly terrain, a major drainage corridor, a riparian area and a steep canyon. The old tramway ran through this property, and the corridor is used today as an informal pedestrian path.
- Scott Park-Old Landfill and Landfill Impact Area –A portion of this 300-acre property, Scott Park, is considered a developed park; however, the majority of the property lies adjacent to the old city landfill and is underutilized. A reuse plan is currently underway to determine potential recreational uses of the site, which is considered one of the Town's brownfield sites.

The Old Waterworks Building property directly to the west of the Old Water Reservoirs site, across Little Walnut Road, is another potential open space site. This property, adjacent to Silva Creek, is approximately six acres in size and includes the old waterworks building. Currently, the Town uses the yard for storage of materials and the building sits vacant. The Silver City Museum and a group of volunteers continue to seek funding for renovation and reuse of the building, which is listed on the state and federal registers.

There are four additional Town-owned properties outside of city limits that are considered open spaces but are not used by the public. There is no legal road access to these properties; they are only accessible though the adjacent Gila National Forest. The properties are described as follows:

- Dorsey Springs – A 20-acre parcel, also known as the Homestead Patented Placer Claim, located approximately 11 miles north of Town at the end of US Forest Service Road 172.
- Allen Springs – A 40-acre property located approximately eight miles north of Town off Bear Mountain Road. This property, which contains a natural spring, was a major Town water source from 1929-1946. The water rights were transferred and the spring is now unused.
- Gomez Peak Parcel -- A 40-acre parcel adjacent to Gomez Peak and Round Mountain, north of Silver City and south of the Little Walnut Picnic Grounds. The property borders the Gila National Forest and a 560-acre parcel of state land.
- An unnamed 120-acre parcel south of the aforementioned State Land parcel and east of Bear Mountain Road.

There are other open spaces in Town owned by public entities, such as the Boston Hill parcels and mining claims owned by Grant County, WNMU, and the BLM. In addition, the State Land Office owns approximately 160 acres along both sides of 32nd Street, on the northeast side of town. A 300-foot corridor immediately adjacent to the 32nd Street right-of-way is zoned for commercial uses; the remainder of the State-owned property is zoned residential and a riparian area, a tributary of Maude's Creek, is located within the residentially-zoned property to the east of 32nd Street. The State Land Office, in conjunction with the NMED, WNMU, and the Gila Chapter of the New Mexico Native Plant Society, has developed a non-point source pollution prevention project for Maude's Canyon area that includes establishment of a riparian buffer and protection of the area.

3.1.3 Privately Owned Open Spaces

There are many privately owned and undeveloped tracts of land within city limits that have potential as open spaces. However, it is important to point out that these properties are privately owned and are not considered part of the open space plan. Some of these properties are described below:

- Pope/California Mill Site – Approximately eight acres along the San Vicente Creek east of Highway 90 South.
- Ancheta Mill Site – Approximately 11 acres along the San Vicente Creek east of Highway 90 South.
- Hearst Mill Site – A 3.7-acre site east of Silver Street that includes portions of Pinos Altos Creek.

There are also large tracts of privately owned, undeveloped lands along 32nd Street, NM 90 South, Mountain View Road, Ursa Minor, Pinos Altos Road, and several areas in the Indian Hills subdivision.

There are several privately owned "open space" type properties located outside city limits that have some significance, as well, such as properties in the Chloride Flats area northwest of town and the W Mountain area. There is also the Bear Mountain Lodge property owned by the Nature Conservancy. This 178-acre site, north of Town on Cottage San Road, is adjacent to the Gila National Forest and includes a 1920's guesthouse called the Bear Mountain Lodge.

3.2 Trails Inventory

3.2.1 Existing Trails

At this time, the Town does not have any officially designated and developed trails. However, there are several well-used trails scattered throughout town, including: an informal trail system on the Boston Hill property; a footpath that runs along the Big Ditch in downtown; footpaths along the vacated tramway route through Brewer Hill, and footpaths along many of the drainage ways around town. All of these paths cross both public and private properties, with the exception of the Boston Hill trails.

3.2.2 Potential Trail Corridors/Systems with Legal Public Access

There are several potential trail corridors and systems within the Town. The projects are described in more depth in Section 4.2 of this *Plan*. The potential trail corridors are as follows:

- Trail system in the Old Landfill Impact Area (Scott Park area);
- Multi-use corridor within the street right-of-way to provide a loop trail along Swan Street, Cain Drive and Little Walnut Roads, with potential for a northern link along Little Walnut Road north to the Gila National Forest;
- Boston Hill Trail System;
- Downtown Historic Walking Tour along existing sidewalks; and
- Virginia Street Park to Old Water Reservoirs property and Waterworks property.

The potential improvements to support pedestrian and bicycle use of the Town right-of-ways were proposed in the 1997 Transportation Plan. Specific priorities are identified on Maps 2 and 3 and in Section 2.

3.2.3 Potential Trail Corridors without Legal Public Access

The TOSC has also identified several potential trail corridors that are privately owned, including:

- A trail along the San Vicente Creek from the Big Ditch to Scott Park and Old Landfill Impact Area;
- A trail along a portion of the old railroad bed and a primitive Forest Service road through Chloride Flats from Boston Hill north to the Bear Mountain trailhead of the Continental Divide Trail;
- Trails along arroyos and drainage corridors, such as Silva Creek, Silver Arroyo, Pinos Altos Creek, Cottonwood Creek, etc.; and
- Trails along utility and railroad easements/corridors.

3.3 Planned Development

Many large, vacant but commercially zoned lots within Town limits are under development or have projects pending on these sites. However, there are currently no residential subdivisions proposed within city limits. There are a few residential subdivisions under development on large tracts of vacant land within the Town's three-mile ETZ, such as the property on Rosedale Road and the Wind Canyon Estates. These subdivisions are platted into five-acre lots, thus do not require approval by the Town. Subdivisions in the ETZ of less than five-acres per lot do require review and approval by the Town. The approval process does not currently include specific requirements for trails and open spaces.

3.4 Existing Programs and Policies

Currently, the Town does not have a program for the protection of open spaces and trails. The Town does have a Parks Division, under the Public Works Department, responsible for the maintenance of city-owned parks. The Public Works Department also minimally maintains some Town-owned "open spaces", such as the Scott Park-Old Landfill complex. However, the budget for maintenance of parks and other Town properties is minimal and this service has been considered a low, non-essential priority of the Town.

Although the Town does not have any policies specifically related to open spaces and trails there are two recent events that shaped the Town's policy towards the acquisition of open spaces. The first event involved funding for open space acquisition. In 1998, a sum of money was left to the Town for the purchase of property for parks. This fund, referred to as the Lennie Merle Forward Fund, was used by the Town Council to purchase the 500-acre Boston Hill site and the 35-acre La Capilla site. Some controversy surrounded the use of the Forward bequest to purchase open space, as opposed to purchasing property for parks; however, a legal interpretation and input from acquaintances of Ms. Forward determined that the acquisition of open spaces was an appropriate use of the funds.

Secondly, the San Vicente Open Space Coalition used the open space goals and objectives in the 1996 Comprehensive Plan as a directive to lobby for the purchase of Boston Hill as open space. The goals of the Plan provided a justification for the Town's purchase of open space and the Forward fund provided the financing. These two events marked the Town's entrance into the trails and open space discussion.

In 2000, the EPA designated the Town as a Brownfields demonstration pilot project. This resulted in the creation of a Brownfields Coordinator position with the Town, fully funded through the Brownfields Program. In addition to the $200,000 brownfields grant, the Town received $50,000 for open space initiatives, related to brownfields. Several properties identified as brownfields have potential as open spaces. The Brownfields program is a two-year program; however, the Coordinator has requested supplemental funding.

4 Trails and Open Spaces Recommendations

4.1 Criteria for Establishing and Protecting Trails and Open Spaces

Over several meetings, the TOSC developed checklists to assess and evaluate potential open space sites and potential trail corridors and systems. A site or trail that meets most or all of the criteria is considered a high priority. Members of the TOSC used this checklist to assess the trails and open spaces listed as priority projects under Section 4.2 below. The criteria is as follows:

Feasibility

- The landowner and other stakeholders (neighbors, community at large) are supportive of the project.
- A funding or maintenance program exists to support use and management.
- Impacts to neighbors or sensitive sites are acceptable.
- The area/trail can be established or protected for a reasonable cost and/or a partner is willing to share or finance the cost of acquisition and/or management.
- The area is relatively undisturbed and/or can be restored if degraded.
- The trail corridor is safely useable and/or can be made useable.
- The land is owned by the City, County, State, or school system and the public property owner may be willing to set aside the property for open space purposes.
- The trail corridor is an existing easement that can be expanded for public access.
- The trail corridor is currently used by the neighborhood as a trail.

Community support

- The local community has demonstrated strong support for the project (e.g. organized efforts such as letters and meetings).
- The project will benefit more than one neighborhood, or will benefit the community as a whole.
- The trail is designated in a Town or other agency plan, such as the 1997 Transportation Plan, as a priority corridor.
- The trail is designated as a high priority corridor to encourage pedestrian accessibility and/or serve as an alternative transportation route.

Cultural, historic, educational and/or scientific significance

- The area/trail corridor has high ecological significance: is a habitat for a large number of plant and animal species; has unique geological features; is a rare, threatened or endangered species habitat; and/or contains natural community types that are not well protected in the region.
- The area/trail corridor is associated with an important historic or prehistoric structure, landscape, event, person, or activity.
- The area/trail corridor contributes to a traditional/historic community's identity, history and cultural connections as defined by the community, and/or has traditionally been used as "common land" by neighboring residents.
- The area/trail corridor has educational, interpretive, or research value.
- The trail corridor can be developed and used without impact to any of the above items.

Wetlands, drainage areas, steep slopes, etc.

- The proposed area protects wetlands, major floodplains, stream headwaters, municipal water quality and supply, critical groundwater recharge areas, and/or access to water for wildlife.
- The land is unsuitable for development because of topography or other limitations.

Scenic qualities

- The area/trail corridor includes established or familiar visual features that are part of the scenic landscape (unique color, texture, patterns of vegetation or physical features).
- The area/trail corridor has high visual exposures from roads, trails, and/or residential areas.
- Existing open space creates a buffer between or within communities.
- The area/trail corridor provides scenic views of surrounding landscapes.

Connectivity

- The area links critical resources/habitats for wildlife.
- The area is part of, or can be accessed from, an existing or proposed trail system.
- The area contributes to an open space network or system.

Recreation/non-recreation potential

- The area can support trails that will serve the public, including trailhead access.
- The area contains trails that are or have been used.
- The area can support recreation or public use opportunities other than trails. It is of appropriate size, shape, and topography to accommodate such uses.
- The area has legal access.
- The area has other non-recreational potential, either as undeveloped or low-density use.
- The trail corridor can be developed for any of the following uses walking/jogging; biking; paved for rollerblading or other uses requiring a paved surface; universal access; and/or other uses as described.

Agricultural/ranching areas

- The area supports current agricultural use or has the potential for sustainable agricultural use. (e.g., farming, ranching, herding, plant collecting, wildcrafting)

Buffer Zone

- The area can serve as a buffer zone between different types of land uses.

4.2 Proposed Trails and Open Spaces Projects

Using the criteria discussed above, the TOSC evaluated and identified the following ten projects (see Map 4) as priority projects that are feasible and affordable. Except for the projects listed as "proposed for study," all of the projects are on publicly owned land or on land whose owner is willing to work with the Committee and the Town on the project. If implemented, the projects would protect approximately 1,036 acres of open space and 36 miles of trails, creating a sound foundation for a community-wide system of trails and open spaces. Specific details, such as

facilities development and public use of the project, shall be determined on a project-by-project basis with community input.

4.2.1 Boston Hill Open Space and Trails System

General Description: Protection and limited recreation (trails) development of Boston Hill.

Project Area: Approximately 500 acres of open space and 10 miles of trails.

Key Features: Boston Hill is perhaps the most significant open space area currently owned by the Town of Silver City. Extensive evidence of the long history of mining on Boston Hill is found both on site and in archival documents and artifacts. The area is also a highly scenic, prominent feature in the community and protects diverse vegetation and wildlife. The Boston Hill open space is currently used by residents for hiking, nature study, biking and horseback riding. The Town is expecting a grant in spring of 2002 to further develop the trail system, as well as trailheads and parking areas. The Town is looking into development of other uses on portions of the property, such as a "bark park" behind the Grant County Animal Shelter. Plans are proceeding to coordinate land protection efforts with WNMU, BLM and Grant County, agencies that manage adjacent properties.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Brownfields Committee and Coordinator
- BLM
- WNMU
- Adjacent neighborhoods
- Adjacent property owners

4.2.2 La Capilla Park/Open Space/Trails Plan

General Description: Protection and limited development of a culturally and historically significant undeveloped area.

Project Area: A 27-acre parcel owned by the Town in the in Chihuahua Hill neighborhood.

Key Features: A reuse plan funded through the Town's Brownfields Program is currently under development for this area. The consultants contracted to develop the plan are working with Town staff and representatives of the surrounding neighborhood, including the La Capilla Gang of Five, which has developed a 16-element vision plan for the property, including cultural, historic and recreational projects. Public meetings will be held on the proposed plan in spring 2002.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Brownfields Committee and Coordinator
- La Capilla Gang of Five and surrounding neighborhood
- Senior Citizens Center
- El Refugio Domestic Violence Shelter

4.2.3 San Vicente Trail and Open Space Project

General Description: Development of a trail within the San Vicente arroyo corridor from the Big Ditch to Scott Park with protection and enhancement of adjacent public open spaces, including the old landfill impact area.

Project area: Approximately 300 acres of open space and three miles of trails.

Key Features: Much of the project could be implemented using existing publicly owned lands and rights of way (railroad and sewer corridors) and adjacent landowners are generally supportive. The trail could run between the sewer easement and the abandoned railroad bed, crossing back and forth as needed. The trail could provide multi-use recreational opportunities in a scenic setting with cultural and historic sites, such as the abandoned Chinese Gardens, which could be developed into a community garden. A northern trailhead and parking could be provided at the Big Ditch and a southern trailhead and parking at Scott Park, making the trail a priority corridor for linking the historic downtown area to Scott Park. There is also a possibility of developing a spur connecting to the Boston Hill trails, as well as the La Capilla site. The existing open space includes scenic natural areas and a major drainage way – there is high potential for enhancing natural habitat values within the project area and using the trail and open space for educational activities.

Project Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Adjacent landowners
- Volunteer groups (such as Building Trails, Building Assets)

4.2.4 Brewer Hill Open Space and Trails System

General Description: Protection and development of a trail system and other limited amenities within the Town-owned property in Brewer Hill (the area located between Gold Street to the west, the unimproved Rio Vicente subdivision to the south, Mountain View Road to the east and College Street to the north).

Project Area: Approximately 114 acres of open space including approximately two miles of trails.

Key Features: The property consists of steep, rocky terrain and several arroyos that are essential to the drainage patterns of the surrounding neighborhoods. Development potential of the area is low due to the rocky terrain and drainage significance. The northeastern section of the property, used several years ago as a borrow pit, is currently used by ATVs and dirt bikes thus is disturbed and eroded. A riparian area is located in the southwestern section of the property. The area provides outstanding scenic views of the surrounding landscape, such as the view from the property immediately adjacent to the Town's Recreation Center, and is a prominent visual feature in the community. A trail system could support diverse recreation users and link the surrounding neighborhoods with downtown, as well as providing pedestrian access to facilities, such as the Town's Recreation Center, located to the north.

The TOSC has developed a conceptual plan (attached in the Appendix) for the property that includes establishment of a trail along the old narrow gauge tramway corridor with spurs to downtown, Mountain View Road and possibly the Big Ditch trail. Areas that may be appropriate for development, disturbed sites that may be best suited for contained BMX use, a popular area sport, and parcels best left as open space are proposed, as well.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Brewer Hill residents

4.2.5 Downtown Historic Walking Tour

General Description: Re-create the downtown Historic Walking Tour utilizing sidewalks and on-street route markers to link designated historic sites in the downtown. Expand tour to include a route to the Boston Hill trail and open space system and along Cooper Street or Bayard Street to the La Capilla area.

Project Area: Approximately three miles of pathways.

Key Features: The trail does not require acquisition of private property because all of the sites on the walking tour are accessible by sidewalk or city owned rights of way. Improvement and publicity of the route would create an asset for visitors, an educational opportunity for residents, and generally improve conditions for pedestrians within the Historic Downtown. The Tour will provide key linkages from downtown neighborhoods to other priority trails and open spaces.

Stakeholders

- Museum
- Historic Design Review Committee
- Town of Silver City
- Main Street

4.2.6 Old Water Reservoirs Property

General Description: Protection of and improvements to city-owned open space behind the city shop on Little Walnut Road and the Hillcrest Hospital.

Project Area: Approximately 20 acres of open space plus six acres containing the Old Waterworks Building and Virginia Street Park.

Key Features: The property contains two partially buried water reservoirs no longer in use, as well as several designated archaeological sites from different eras as documented in the 1990 report, entitled "Preliminary Study (of) Ursa Major/Old Hospital Water Tanks Site, LA#72881" written by Gila Archaeological Associates. The property also contains evidence of wildlife habitation. Preservation of this property as open space, with appropriate protection of the archaeological sites, would provide open space for the surrounding neighborhoods north of Silver Heights Boulevard, as well as a field study area for the nearby Jose Barrios school. There are outstanding scenic views from the property and it is a prominent visual feature in the community. The water reservoirs could be used as "community kivas" and a picnic area could be developed on the site. Trails within the property provide opportunities for low-intensity recreation and the property could be connected by a trail to the proposed Northern Loop Trail (see below) and the historic Old Waterworks building on the west side of Little Walnut Road.

The Old Waterworks building is located on approximately six acres along Silva Creek and includes the Virginia Street Park.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Local neighborhoods
- Museum
- WNMU
- Jose Barrios School
- State Historic Preservation Organization

4.2.7 Silver/Swan Street Bike Lanes

General Description: On-road improvements, such as bike lanes and a safer crossing on US Highway 180 East to allow for safe bicycle travel on Silver and Swan Streets.

Project Area: Approximately four to five miles of bike lanes.

Key Features: Silver and Swan Streets can serve as priority corridors for bicycle travel within the Town of Silver City, and are designated as such in the 1997 Transportation Study. Minimal improvements are needed to make the routes safe and make both cyclists and vehicles more aware of the opportunities for non-motorized transportation. The streets provide key linkages between residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, schools, and the Town's Recreation Center. The bike lanes will also connect to the proposed Northern Loop Trail and Pinos Altos Creek Trail (see below) and the Brewer Hill Trail System.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Neighborhoods and residents
- Local bike clubs
- Schools and students
- New Mexico State Highway Transportation Department (NMSHTD)
- Public health organizations

4.2.8 Northern Loop Multi-Use Trail

(Proposed for study)

General Description: Multi-use trail along Little Walnut/Cain/ Swan with an extension beginning north of city limits on Little Walnut Road to the US Forest Service picnic grounds and trails.

Project Area: Approximately four to five miles of multi-use trail.

Key Features: This trail could be constructed within the existing Cain and Swan Street rights of way and contribute to the planned improvements on Little Walnut Road, which include construction of a bicycle lane and sidewalk to city limits. A roadside multi-use trail within the unimproved right-of-way could accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and horse uses, providing non-motorized access routes from Town to the Gila National Forest trails. In addition, the trail system would provide neighborhood trails for northern residents. Local residents in adjoining neighborhoods currently use portions of this route as a walking trail. Trailhead access/parking could be located at the Little Walnut Picnic Grounds and at the Old Waterworks Building.

Stakeholders:

- Neighborhood Residents
- Town of Silver City
- US Forest Service
- NMSHTD
- Grant County

4.2.9 Greenway Corridors

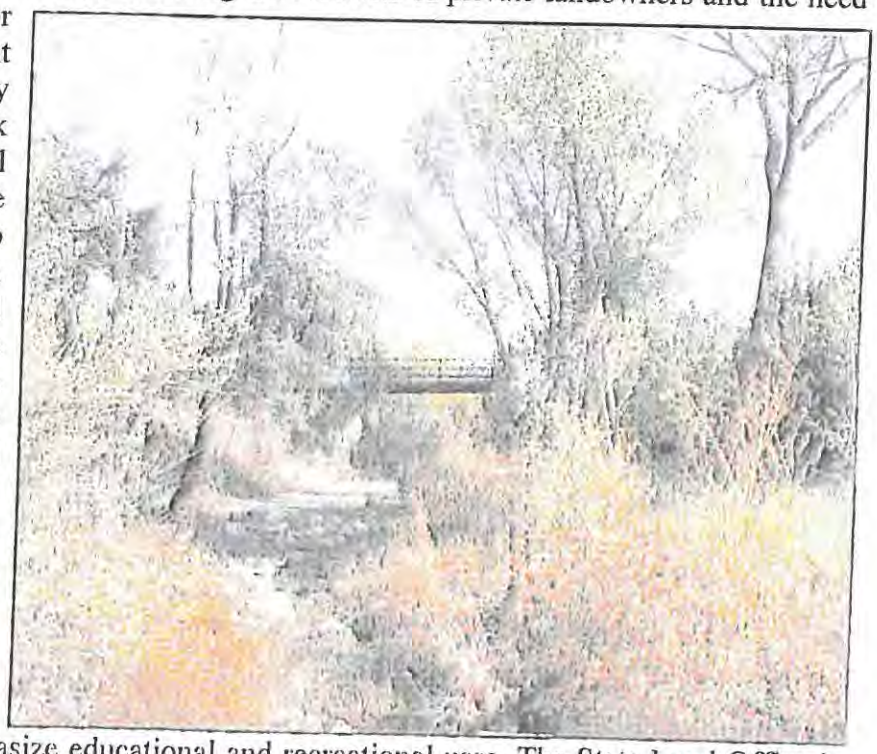
(Proposed for study)

General Description: Protected open space with the potential for multi-use trails along major natural drainages. Highest priorities include:

- Pinos Altos Creek from W Mountain to the Big Ditch;
- Silva Creek from Cain Drive to the Big Ditch; and
- Maude's Canyon extending south from the State Trust Land east of the 32nd Street Bypass.

Project Area: A total of approximately 68 acres of open space and six miles of trail.

Key Features: These proposed greenway corridors would protect critical drainage ways in the upper watershed, significant riparian habitat and scenic areas. All of these proposals are currently under study to assess their feasibility, including the interests of private landowners and the need for acquisition of land or easements to implement viable projects. The greenway along Pinos Altos Creek would provide a priority trail linking schools and the recreation complex to surrounding neighborhoods. A Silva Creek greenway trail would serve as an alternative unimproved trail to the bike lanes and sidewalk on Little Walnut discussed above and would be a multi-use trail providing an off-road non-motorized route from the downtown to the northern neighborhoods along Silva Creek from the Big Ditch to Cain Drive. The Maude's Canyon greenway would emphasize educational and recreational uses. The State Land Office is interested in protecting the riparian corridor within State Trust lands.



Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Grant County
- Neighborhood residents
- Schools
- State Land Office
- NMED

4.2.10 Bear Mountain Trail

(Proposed for study)

General Description: A trail along Alabama Street, Cottage San Road and Bear Mountain Road from NM Highway 180 West/Alabama Street intersection north to the Bear Mountain Lodge.

Project Area: Approximately four miles of trail.

Key Features: A trail along Bear Mountain Road is a priority to provide access along the improved right-of-ways and non-motorized access to the Bear Mountain Lodge with links to forest trails. It would serve as both a transportation route and could support diverse recreational trail use in the scenic roadway corridor. This proposal is currently under study to assess its feasibility, including the interests of private land owners and the need for acquisition of land or trail easements.

Stakeholders:

- Town of Silver City
- Grant County
- Neighborhood residents
- US Forest Service
- The Nature Conservancy

5 Trails and Open Space Protection Tools

While several of the priorities identified in this *Plan* can be carried forward within lands owned by the Town of Silver City, others will require strategies to protect additional lands. A variety of tools can be used by either governmental or non-governmental organizations working in the community interest to protect these – and other – trails and open space lands. The Appendix (Attachment to Section 5) provides examples of how some of these tools have been applied by both governmental and non-governmental entities in New Mexico and other states.

5.1 Voluntary Tools

This *Plan* proposes using a variety of voluntary tools to protect significant trails and open spaces. These tools will only be used when the landowner contractually agrees to the approach.

5.1.1 Land Acquisition

The most straight-forward tool for protecting trails and open spaces is to acquire those lands that best serve community-wide interests. This approach can be especially effective where public access to the lands is desired and/or permanent protection is the goal. While public investment in open space land acquisition may require initial tax increases, it can reduce future tax burdens associated with allowing the land to develop. However, acquisition and management of many parcels, particularly those with strong development potential, can be cost prohibitive. In Silver City, limited funds have been allocated to acquire lands on a project-by project basis (such as Boston Hill and La Capilla).

This *Plan* proposes acquisition of some initial priority lands, however, specific strategies should be formed for each parcel. It is recommended that land acquisition for trails and open space only be considered in negotiation with willing sellers. It may be possible to reduce the community investment required for acquisition through matching federal, state and/or private funds. Lease or use fee arrangements can also be established to defray acquisition or management costs. Deed restrictions to prohibit future sale or development, management plans, and other policies should be put in place to protect the public investment in lands acquired for trails and open space.

5.1.2 Acquisition of Development Rights

Landowners may donate or sell the development rights associated with their property. These rights include the right to build structures, develop commercially, subdivide the land, mine, graze, farm or harvest timber. The landowner grants a conservation easement, which runs with the land in perpetuity (unless otherwise specified) to an accepting entity that represents community interests. Conservation easements are well suited to protecting traditional land uses, scenic areas, and/or lands unsuitable for development where public access is not necessarily desirable. Tax incentives can encourage landowners to grant conservation easements at less than their fair market value, (the difference between the value of the land as restricted and the value of the land for its "highest and best use") but consideration needs to be given to the long-term costs of monitoring the easement in perpetuity.

This *Plan* identifies priority projects where acquisition (or transfer) of development rights may be required, however, specific strategies should be formed for each project. It is recommended that acquisition of development rights for trails and open space only be considered in negotiation with willing sellers. It may be possible to defray the community investment required for acquisition through matching federal, state and/or private funds. Stewardship and monitoring agreements should be put in place to assure the protection of the lands in perpetuity.

5.1.3 Transfer of Development Rights

The Town or Grant County may want to develop a transfer of development rights program (TDR). TDR programs have been established in many localities across the country. Such a program would identify, or establish criteria for identifying, "sending sites" (those from where development rights are transferred) and "receiving sites" (those to where development rights are transferred). The major objective of a TDR program is to concentrate development in appropriate areas and protect desirable open space. This approach works especially well in areas with high development potential where acquisition of open space may be cost prohibitive. In concept, development rights could also be transferred from protected open space parcels to produce revenue for management.

A market analysis is needed to determine if a TDR program is viable in Silver City or Grant County. If this is viable, a formal TDR program would need to be established before it can be utilized as a tool for open space or trails protection.

5.1.4 Acquisition of trail easements

A property landowner can also sell or donate the right to enter the property to a trail managing organization. This right is granted through a deed of trail easement, legally binding on future owners of the land. In contrast to conservation easements, trail easements are often negotiated to grant access for a fixed number of years, rather than in perpetuity. The terms of the agreement can be tailored to allow for specific types or times of use, include development or maintenance conditions, or address the landowners' security, privacy, and liability concerns.

This *Plan* identifies suggested priorities for acquisition of trails easements, generally in areas where it is anticipated that the cost will be significantly less than the acquisition of the tract of land and access rights to a limited corridor will serve the project objectives. In some cases, it may also be desirable to negotiated trails easements across public lands where trails development or management is not within the responsibilities of the public land manager.

5.1.5 Intergovernmental transfers and cooperation

Some BLM, State Land Office and County lands are included in the trails and open space priority areas identified in this *Plan*. These public lands should generally not be regarded as protected open space and public access can be limited. Entities interested in assuring their protection and/or accessibility could enter into lease agreements with BLM or the State Land Office as a first step toward acquiring a patent deed. Lease costs are nominal, and both agencies have defined processes for entering into agreements that should allow for open space protection. Both agencies also have processes for negotiating land exchanges. Agreements should also be sought with these entities to develop collaborative management and maintenance programs.

5.1.6 Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions

Developers or Homeowners' Associations can attach Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) to the deeds of properties within a subdivision to establish or protect priority trails and open space areas. Residents agree to the CC&Rs at time of purchase (or adoption) and they run with the land, meaning they pass from seller to buyer indefinitely. A developer may use CC&Rs as a selling point for buyers interested in close-to-home trails or/and open space amenities. CC&Rs typically provide for the creation of a Homeowners' Association that will assume defined responsibilities for enforcing the CC&Rs. Local governments can offer incentives to developers that include desirable CC&Rs in their subdivision plans.

5.1.7 Planned Conservation Developments

Developers should be encouraged to consider land use planning techniques that protect existing open space and trails. Conservation developments typically involve a cluster of higher density development in appropriate sites and dedication of significant areas of protected open space in areas less suitable for development. This open space area may include drainage channels and topography that limit buildable area; as designated open space, the area contributes to overall drainage patterns and provides protection of sensitive areas. In many cases the economic viability of conservation developments may be better than conventional subdivisions because infrastructure development costs are reduced (as well as the long-term maintenance costs typically borne by local governments) and the shared open space increases the value of adjacent housing. City and County officials could review existing zoning and comprehensive plans to ensure that "conservation development" plans are not just allowed, but actively encouraged

under local regulations. Appropriate locations for future conservation developments could be designated in official planning and regulatory documents. While regulations can be updated to require open space developments (see Section 5.2.1), it is also possible to put in place a variety of incentives to encourage developers to incorporate open space and trails voluntarily. Specific strategies to consider include:

Require alternative sketch plans – landowners can be required to submit an inexpensive sketch conservation development plan as an alternative to a more conventional plan as part of the development approval process. The owner is then free to pursue either alternative. Just participating in such an exercise may help to clarify the costs and benefits of conservation alternatives. Occasionally local conservation organizations can be enlisted to assist in developing these plans.

Provide density bonuses – landowners can be offered the opportunity to include additional dwelling units in a subdivision in exchange for dedicating protected open space or trails to public use.

Allow flexible lot sizes – large lot size requirements can be waived in exchange for dedicating significant areas of protected open space that preserve community values.

Reduce uncertainty – typically conservation development proposals have to go though a special permit procedure for approval, which can be a highly political, uncertain process. To improve the predictability of the process, review criteria for conservation developments should be made as clear and specific as possible, the ordinance governing the permit procedure should clearly state that applicants that meet the criteria will be approved. Pubic comments should be solicited early in the process, but restricted to input directly related to the review criteria.

Support education – local conservation advocates can do whatever possible to document and share information on the comparative values (economic, environmental, and other) of conservation developments with the general public, landowners and developers. This helps to create a climate where creative proposals will emerge and be given fair consideration.

5.2 Governmental Tools

There are several tools available to local governments that can assist in the protection and conservation of open spaces and trails. Both Silver City and Grant County have the authority to enact and enforce development requirements that will promote community-wide goals regarding open spaces and trails. To be most effective, the jurisdictions must work cooperatively to plan and manage their respective open space and trails protection requirements. Some of the tools that are most commonly employed by local jurisdictions include the following:

5.2.1 Subdivision/development requirements

When land is subdivided for development, local jurisdictions can require the developer to dedicate land for open space and trails. Since 1980, the Town has required a park dedication fee of all residential subdivisions. Section 5.1.6 of the Town's 1999 Land Use Code (included in the Appendix) outlines the dedication ordinance, which requires 0.01 of an acre for each unit set

aside for public facilities, parks or recreation areas. The ordinance also allows the developer to pay a fee in-lieu of land dedication. There are several lots owned by the Town (as mentioned above in Section 3.1.1) dedicated as parks that the Town has not developed due to financial constraints. Most subdivisions approved during the past few years have opted to dedicate a fee rather than the land, upon request by the Town. During the development of the 1999 Land Use Code, the Steering Committee requested review of the park dedication ordinance to determine if the amount of land required for dedication could be increased; however, the park dedication can be considered an impact fee, which must meet state regulations. Thus the Town cannot increase the amount of land required without undertaking an impact fee development process. However, the park dedication ordinance can be expanded to allow for conservation of open spaces.

The Town can develop an open space system with connecting trail corridors that new subdivisions could link into through trails and the provision of open space (or parks) within the subdivision. The Town can also expand the subdivision regulations to include interconnected trails, sidewalks, and/or bike lanes as part of the development's transportation infrastructure.

Subdivision requirements should be flexible enough to allow for conservation oriented subdivision designs in which a significant portion of the property is designated as undivided, permanent open space. This open space area may include drainage channels and topography that limit buildable area; as designated open space, the area contributes to overall drainage patterns and provides protection of sensitive areas. These requirements can be density neutral by allowing clustered development – grouping dwellings together on smaller lots while leaving shared open space for use by the residents or visitors. In many cases the economic viability of clustered developments are better than conventional subdivisions because infrastructure development costs are reduced (as well as the long-term maintenance costs typically borne by local governments) and the shared open space increases the value of adjacent housing.

Section 3.4.3 of the Town's 1999 Land Use Code (attached in the Appendix) allows for alternative residential development options, such as attached single-family development, zero lot line development, and clustered development. However, most local subdivisions are platted in a traditional manner because financial institutions and local regulations encourage the more traditional subdivision layout.

Long-term management responsibilities and public access to dedicated open space and trails should also be considered in subdivision and development requirements.

5.2.2 Overlay Zoning

An "open space" zoning category can be used to officially designate areas as open spaces. This designation is different from a park zoning, as parks are developed recreational areas and open spaces are primarily undeveloped. The Town's current zoning map does not include an open space zoning designation to protect and conserve open space properties. Implementation of such a zone would require an ordinance from the Town Council, followed by ordinances to rezone the individual parcels.

An open space zoning designation does not protect the property indefinitely; the property can be rezoned again. However, all rezonings do require public hearings by the Planning and Zoning

Commission and the Town Council. By implementing an open space zone and rezoning Town-owned properties such as Boston Hill, the Town could begin to establish an open space system and indicate a commitment to this system.

Another zoning tool is an overlay zone that is superimposed over existing zoning maps and land use designations to provide protection for specific cultural and natural resources. Common examples of overlay zones include floodplains or drainages, historic districts, and hillsides. Overlay zoning ordinances implement new requirements that apply to a specific area in addition to the provisions of the existing zoning ordinance, both of which are enforced by local authorities. The overlay ordinance can also include provisions or waivers to encourage certain types of development.

Like other zoning regulations, the enactment and enforcement of overlay zones can often be difficult depending on the political climate in the community and the administrative capacity of local jurisdictions. It is recommended that the County and Town explore the possibility of creating a jointly administered conservation overlay zone for Silver City and the ETZ to provide protection of important resource areas without requiring an overly burdensome administrative process.

5.2.3 Capital Improvement Projects

The construction and maintenance of public infrastructure and facilities – most notably roads – can have profound impacts, both positive and negative, on Silver City's trails and open spaces network. Wherever possible, trails should be an integrated element in the development or improvement of roads, utility corridors, drainageways, or other relevant public works projects. Road improvement projects should include methods to increase pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety such as clear sidewalks, designated crosswalks, bike lanes, landscaping, and the use of traffic calming techniques. The development and management of public facilities should also avoid impacts to existing trails and open space areas.

5.2.4 Tax Incentives

The County can structure property tax incentives to support landowners that are protecting trails and open space. Property is usually assessed by market value, which reflects development potential. Currently, grazing and agricultural tax exemptions lower the assessed value of some open space lands in the County. These incentives could be expanded to reduce the property taxes on lands currently used for wildlife habitat, public recreation, cultural site preservation, or other recognized community values. Although this may help to encourage private owners to retain open space and trails, it will generally not be effective in protecting lands with strong development potential and does not afford permanent protection.

5.3 Funding Mechanisms

There are several funding mechanisms available to local governments for acquiring and protecting open spaces and trails corridors. This section explains a few examples.

5.3.1 Long-Term Bonds

Over the past 30 years, local government borrowing to acquire open space and trails has accelerated remarkably. Although competition for general obligation bonds is typically keen among the many local government programs in need of financing, voters in diverse communities across the country have proven to be very supportive of bonds dedicated to open space programs. Both Bernalillo and Santa Fe Counties recently approved bonds to support open space and trails acquisition. Sometimes, open space protection is packaged with park and recreation or capital funding measures; in other instances, open space programs are funded by a separate bond or – to increase voter appeal – paired with related conservation programs. Revenue bonds are used by some communities to avoid the ceilings that constrain general obligation debt. Voter approval is not necessarily required because the government is not obligated to repay the debt if the revenue stream does not flow as predicted. Revenue bonds typically cost more to package than general obligation bonds.

5.3.2 Gross Receipts Tax

A set-aside from the gross receipts tax can be dedicated to an open space and trails program. This has the advantage of being relatively easy to administer and can tap into tourism profits generated in part by open space amenities. However, revenue from this tax also declines if the economy slows. Another drawback is that the gross receipts tax is regressive, falling disproportionately on lower-income people. Limiting the set-aside to certain types of sales (airport use, rental cars, lodging, recreational equipment, gasoline, alcohol, tobacco, etc.) can help to make the tax more progressive or address other social objectives. Albuquerque has used a special gross receipts tax set aside to fund land acquisition.

5.3.3 Real Estate Transfer Tax

Real estate transfer taxes have been levied to support land acquisition and conservation programs in at least nine states and localities. This tax, which taps a percentage of funds generated by development, is relatively easy to collect and can be structured to increase with the value of the property involved in the transaction. Passing a transfer tax is difficult because real estate and housing interests mount strong opposition campaigns. Another drawback is that the revenue stream can be highly unreliable if the real estate market fluctuates widely. To address affordable housing concerns, one community exempted the first $75,000 of the purchase price of a primary residence for first time buyers.

5.3.4 Trust funds

Recognizing the long-term responsibilities of open space and trails management, land conservation advocates often try to establish trust funds that earmark revenue sources to build up a sustainable principal that yields regular earnings. Trust funds can finance a comprehensive program over a period of years and can insulate spending from the fluctuations of the economy. The administration of trust funds can vary. Some are structured to allow for spending of capital, usually after a specified amount has accumulated; others provide that only interest can be spent. Revenues used to support a trust fund include general appropriations (either one time or ongoing), lotteries, mitigation funds, special taxes, user fees, and severance payments on natural resources extracted from public lands.

5.3.5 Benefit Assessment Districts

Benefit Assessment Districts are similar to special districts in that they create a financing mechanism to provide community services, facilities, or infrastructure within defined boundaries. Typically a levy is placed on individual parcels, and the assessment is structured so that landowners pay in proportion to their benefit, which may mean a flat surtax per property or a percentage value. Benefit districts have been created to finance parks, recreational uses, and open space, as well as schools, road, sewerage, and other traditional community infrastructure. Irrigation districts are common in New Mexico.

5.3.6 Impact Fees and Mitigation Banks.

Through state and local regulations, the development process has become an important source of funding to pay for community infrastructure, including open space. The source of funds – developer contributions – is private, but the process by which these funds are raised and allocated is authorized by public action, either in specific legislation or in more general home rule authority. Impact fee programs have been authorized in at least 15 states. Several states have enacted legislation to ensure that fees are reasonable and related to actual estimates of the impact of a development. Exaction arrangements are controversial and it can be difficult to meet the legal requirements to demonstrate the nexus between new development impacts and the cost and type of exactions.

From the perspective of open space conservation it is important to pool the development impact fees to provide a fund for off-site purchases of sizeable tracts of open space, but this raises additional administration questions regarding the criteria for site selection, and who should decide. Mitigation banks provide a mechanism to deal with the difficulty of balancing the costs of impacts with the benefits of open space protection in a single transaction. Accounting systems are established to assess both the environmental damage of development and the benefits of resource protection or restoration. The most common examples of mitigation banks relate to wetlands, but the concept is also being applied to state highway projects. Many states require off-site mitigation for violations after the fact or when the value of mitigation lands is deemed necessary to off set proposed impacts.

5.3.7 Land Exchanges and Sales

If there is a consensus that the local government is holding non-essential public property, these lands can be exchanged for preferred open spaces or sold and the proceeds dedicated toward open space acquisition. A successful exchange of properties usually requires time and it can be difficult to match the values in the exchange. Exchanges often require the participation of a third party to negotiate linked cash sales with the landowner and the local government. A variation on this option is a partial development transaction. An open space parcel can be split, selling a minor portion for development and using the proceeds to help secure the major portion as protected open space. Again these arrangements can be difficult for a governmental entity to negotiate and frequently involve multiple parties.

5.3.8 Private Non-profit partners

Funding problems frequently prompt a local government to call on partners for help. A private non-profit partner can promote a tax-deductible bargain sale or donation to bring down the price of a project. Non-profits can also sponsor private fund-raising campaigns, solicit contributions

from a variety of sources, and educate voters about a bond referendum. With their inherent flexibility, non-profit partners can combine funds from two or more sources to support priority projects and may be able to respond quicker to respond more quickly to opportunities than local governments.

6 Action and Implementation Agenda

The following section outlines the goals and actions recommended by the TOSC to implement this *Plan*.

6.1 Goal: Complete the projects identified by the TOSC as priority projects.

Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to complete the trails and open spaces projects designated by the TOSC as priority projects that contribute to a trails and open space system in Silver City and the surrounding area.

6.1.2 Action: Until such time that funding is available for a Trails and Open Space Coordinator position, coordination of trails and open space projects will be handled by the Brownfields Coordinator.

6.1.3 Action: The Town Council should appoint a seven-member Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC), staffed by the Planning Department and the Brownfields Coordinator, with support as needed from the Public Works Director, and Floodplain/Drainage Administrator, to assist with and oversee implementation of the priority projects and make recommendations on future projects.

6.1.4 Action: Implement the TOSC priority projects, as follows:

1. **Boston Hill Open Space and Trail System (2002/2003 project)**

- The TOSC, Brownfields Committee, Brownfields Coordinator, Planning Director and Public Works Director should proceed with development of trails system including linkages to the community;
- Formally protect open space through zoning revisions and/or deed restrictions by April 2002;
- The Brownfields Coordinator should continue working on protection of adjacent open spaces that contribute to Boston Hill Open Space and Trails; and
- Develop maintenance program that can be supported by volunteer stewards.

2. **La Capilla Park and Trails Plan (2002/2003 project)**

- The Brownfields Committee, Brownfields Coordinator, La Capilla Gang of Five, and other Town staff should complete the reuse plan currently underway;
- Formally protect open space through zoning revisions and/or deed restrictions;
- Seek funding to implement improvements; and
- Develop maintenance program that can be supported by volunteer stewards.

3. **San Vicente Trail and Open Space Project (2002/2003 project)**
- Complete research of property ownership (currently underway) by March 2002;
- Acquire public trail easements by May 2002, research funding sources for property acquisition;
- Complete development of reuse plan for Scott Park open space (currently underway) by April 2002;
- Formally protect open space through zoning revisions and/or deed restrictions; and
- Continue working with the Building Trails, Building Assets group to maintain the San Vicente Arroyo corridor.

4. **Brewer Hill Open Space and Trails System (2002/2003 project)**
- Conduct neighborhood meeting on proposed Brewer Hill Open Space and Trails Plan (scheduled for January 29, 2002);
- Revise plan based on community review and input by February 2002;
- Present plan to Town Council for adoption in March 2002;
- Formally protect open space through zoning revisions and/or deed restrictions by April 2002; and
- Seek funding and volunteer support for development of trails and access points (throughout 2002/2003).

5. **Downtown Historic Walking Tour with links to Boston Hill and La Capilla Open Spaces via Cooper Street Trail (2002/2003 project)**
- Continue coordination between TOSC, Museum, Historic Design Review Committee, Main Street, Brownfields Coordinator and Planning Department to determine official tour routes with connections to Boston Hill and La Capilla (spring 2002);
- Identify needed sidewalk improvements and on-street markers and seek funding to implement improvements; and
- Produce guide to tour.

6. **Old Water Reservoirs Property (2002/2003 project)**
- The TOSC, Brownfields Coordinator, Planning Director, and Museum Director, should undertake and complete a reuse plan for the area, including strategies for protecting the archaeological resources (summer 2002);
- Formally protect open space through zoning revisions and/or deed restrictions; and
- Seek funds for development of trails and limited improvements.

7. **Silver/Swan Street Bike Lanes (2003-2005)**
- Identify needed improvements to roadways and seek funding to implement.

8. **Northern Loop Multi-Use Trail (2003-2005)**
- The TOSC should continue consultation with the neighbors to adopt official route for trail;
- The TOSC and neighbors should determine and work with the Public Works Director to design the needed improvements (trail surfacing, landscaping, driveway crossings, drainage, signage, trailheads, etc.); and
- Seek funding to implement improvements and easement acquisition (if needed).

9. **Greenway Corridors (2003-2005)**

- The TOSC, Floodplains Coordinator, Public Works Director and Planning Director, should in consultation with land owners, identify potential trail routes and priority open space areas and develop project specific land protection strategies (rezoning, acquisition, conservation easements, etc.); and
- Seek funding to acquire land or easements and implement trail improvements.

10. **Bear Mountain Trail (2005 project)**

- Identify road right-of-way and ownership of adjacent parcels;
- Determine potential for land or easement acquisition of proposed trail corridor; and
- Seek funding to implement acquisition and needed improvements.

6.2 Goal: Development of an area-wide trail system.

Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to develop an area-wide trail system that provides connectivity within Silver City between open spaces, neighborhoods, and commute destinations (commercial, employment, recreational, schools, etc.), and connectivity between Silver City and the surrounding area, such as the Gila National Forest and other communities.

6.2.1 Action: As part of an overall trail system for the Town, the Town should incorporate bike and pedestrian facilities into road improvement projects and the construction of new roads. These facilities should be ADA compliant and should contribute to the overall system connectivity. Facilities should include but not be limited to the following:

- Bike lanes on designated streets;
- Installation and maintenance of clear and obstacle-free sidewalks;
- Use of traffic calming techniques, such as narrow streets, medians, bulb outs, etc.; and
- Installation of clearly marked crosswalks, such as stamped concrete, at all major intersections.

6.2.2 Action: The Planning Director and Public Works Director should work with the City Manager/Finance Director to develop a road improvement plan, based on the 1997 Transportation Plan, the Your Town Final Report, and other studies/reports, as well as input from existing and proposed citizen committees, such as the Main Street Streetscapes Committee, the Silver Spokes Bike Club, the proposed Your Town Committee and the proposed Walkability Advisory Group.

6.2.3 Action: The planned improvements should be incorporated into the Town's five-year Infrastructure Capital Improvement Program. As funding allows, the Public Works Department, with assistance from volunteer groups, shall implement the planned road improvements.

6.2.4 Action: The Town should work with the New Mexico State Highway Department to improve the pedestrian and bicycle accessibility of Highway 180 and 90 South. In addition to on-street improvements, the Town should request an off-street multi-use trail along both highways to provide an alternative transportation route connecting major destinations.

6.2.5 Action: The Public Works Department, the Trails and Open Space Committee, the Planning Director and the Floodplains Administrator should continue planning for the development of a trail/greenway system along the Town's streams, arroyos, drainages, etc.

6.2.6 Action: The Town Floodplains Administrator, Town Attorney and Planning Director should pursue state and federal funds for acquisition of or obtaining easements for access and development of the trail/greenway system.

6.2.7 Action: The Trails and Open Space Coordinator should work with the US Forest Service, Continental Divide Trail (CDT) advocacy groups, private land owners and interested citizens to determine a preferably off-road route for a spur trail that would connect Silver City with the CDT in the Gila National Forest.

6.2.8 Action: The TOSC should work with citizen volunteers to identify traditional and/or historically significant trails and methods for protection of these trails.

6.2.9 Action: The Town should research the options for protection of existing trails that traverse proposed subdivisions.

6.3 Goal: Develop an open space system in Silver City by protecting existing public open spaces.

Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to implement an open space system in Silver City by protecting and designating existing Town-owned open spaces.

6.3.1 Action: The Town should afford permanent protection to Boston Hill, La Capilla and Scott Park/old landfill through zoning, deed restrictions and/or conservation easements that address conservation, recreation and other usage issues.

6.3.2 Action: Appropriate signage and brochures should be developed to inform the public of these open spaces and the activities allowed on these sites.

6.3.3 Action: Allow motorized use only in areas specifically approved and developed for such use.

6.3.4 Action: Provide for the security of public open spaces with adequate fencing and a fence maintenance program.

6.4 Goal: Develop, adopt and implement regulations that encourage conservation of open spaces.

Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to research regulations that the Town can adopt and implement to encourage the conservation of open spaces in residential subdivisions and other privately owned open spaces.

6.4.1 Action: The Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission, and other citizen committees should research and discuss issues related to conservation of open spaces, included but not limited to the following:

- overlay zoning;
- open space/parks/recreation zoning designations;
- conservation easements,
- deed restrictions;
- transfer of development rights;
- conservation/clustered subdivision design; and
- revision of the Town's park dedication ordinance to include open spaces and trails.

6.4.2 Action: These options should be included in the five-year update of the Town's 1996 Comprehensive Plan for discussion purposes and presented to the public. The Town should also educate the citizens, developers, and landowners on the benefits of these options.

6.4.3 Action: The Town should develop model conservation mechanisms for private property owners and developers to utilize for the protection of private open spaces.

6.4.4 Action: The Town should review options available for maintenance of neighborhood open spaces, such as neighborhood associations, land trusts, volunteer stewardship groups, etc., to provide community ownership and maintenance of neighborhood open spaces.

6.5 Goal: Develop a long range trails and open spaces program.

Purpose: The purpose of this goal is to develop a trails and open space program in Silver City and the surrounding area in the future, when funding is available.

6.5.1 Action: As funding becomes available, the Town should establish a trails and open space division, with a full time coordinator to develop and maintain a city-wide trails and open space program. This program and the division should compliment and coordinate with the Parks Division.

6.5.2 Action: The Trails and Open Space Coordinator should identify funding mechanisms to support the trails and open space program, such as selling non-essential Town properties, developing impact fees, etc.

6.5.3 Action: The Trails and Open Space Coordinator should identify options for the on-going stewardship and maintenance of trails and open spaces, such as land trusts, volunteer organizations, adopt-a-trail/open space groups, grants, etc.

6.5.4 Action: The Town should develop signs for the trails and open space system that clearly demarcate trails and provides information on access to and appropriate uses of the open spaces. In addition, the Town should work with the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street and local newspapers to develop informational guides that promote the system to tourists and local citizens.

6.5.5 Action: The Town should work with Grant County to develop joint open space and trails protection and conservation measures both within the Town's ETZ and the county as a whole.

MAPS

Map 1 – Trails and Open Space Recommendations from 1969 Comprehensive Plan
Map 2 – Recommended Bicycle System Plan from 1997 Transportation Plan
Map 3 – Pedestrian Facilities Plan from 1997 Transportation Plan
Map 4 – Map of Existing Parks and Open Spaces
Map 5 – Map of TOSC Priority Projects

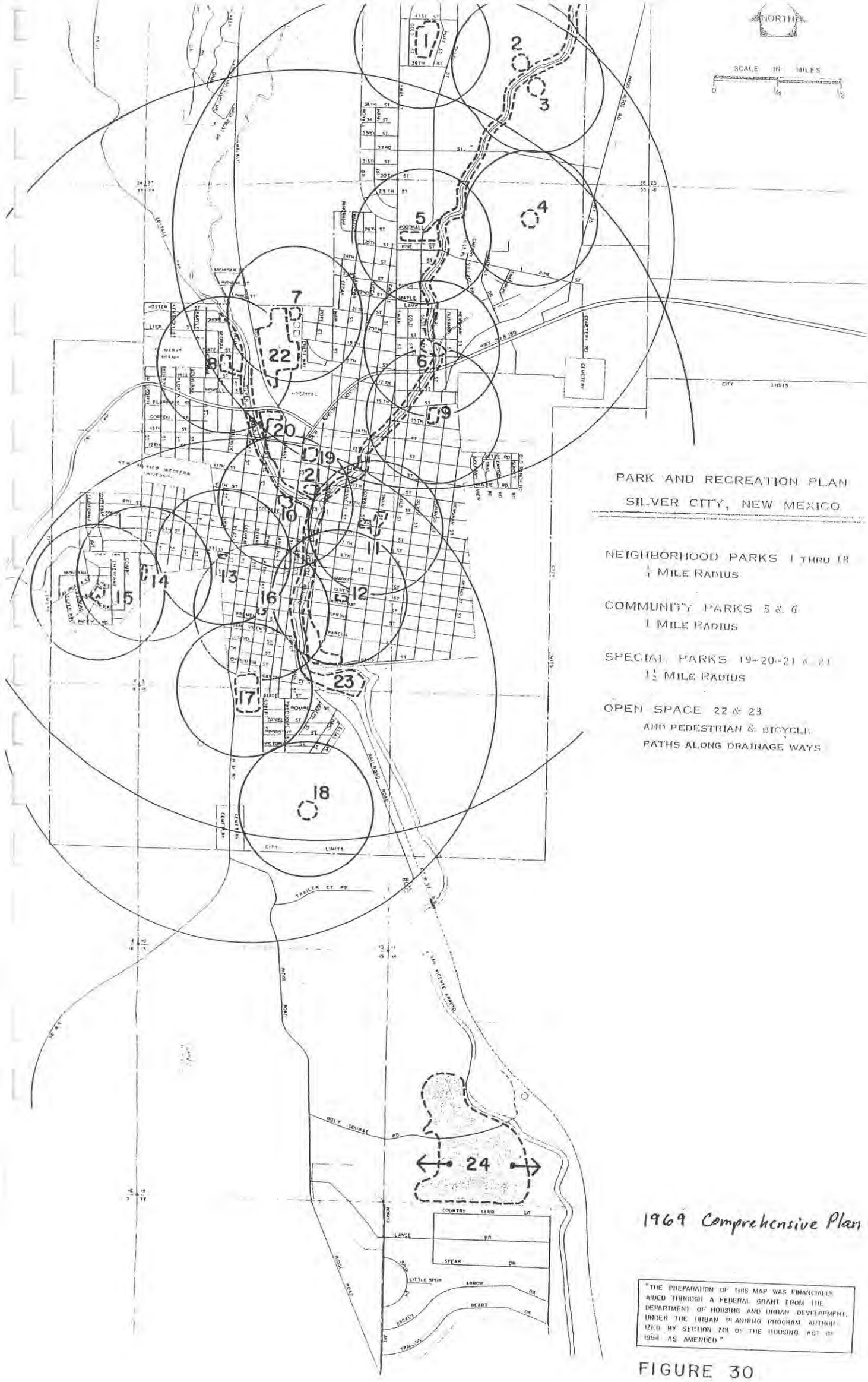

NORTH
SCALE IN MILES
0
1/4
1/2
PARK AND RECREATION PLAN
SILVER CITY, NEW MEXICO
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS 1 THRU 18
1/4 MILE RADIUS
COMMUNITY PARKS 5 & 6
1 MILE RADIUS
SPECIAL PARKS 19-20-21 & 23
1 1/2 MILE RADIUS
OPEN SPACE 22 & 23
AND PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE
PATHS ALONG DRAINAGE WAYS
1969 Comprehensive Plan
"THE PREPARATION OF THIS MAP WAS FINANCIALLY AIDED THROUGH A FEDERAL GRANT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, UNDER THE URBAN PLANNING PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY SECTION 701 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954 AS AMENDED."

FIGURE 30

LEGEND

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS
CITY LIMIT BOUNDARY
ETZ BOUNDARY

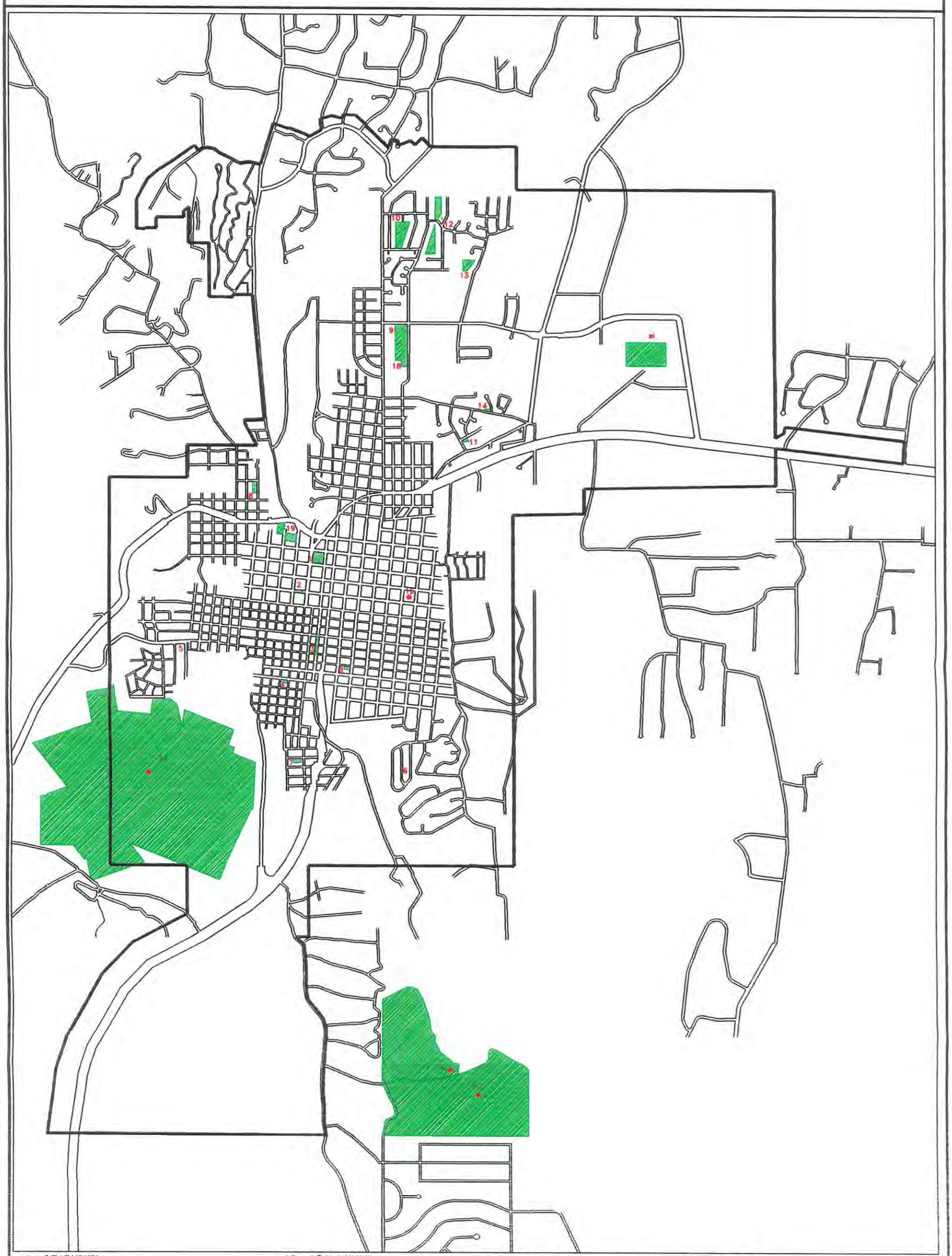
PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES	
DATE: 01/15/96	FIGURE 34
REVISIONS: 08/01/97	

LEGEND

- SIGNED & PAINTED BIKES LANES
- SIGNED BIKE ROUTE
- CITY LIMIT BOUNDARY
- ETZ BOUNDARY

RECOMMENDED BICYCLE SYSTEM	
DATE: 06/15/95	FIGURE 33
REVISIONS: 08/01/97	

CITY PARKS

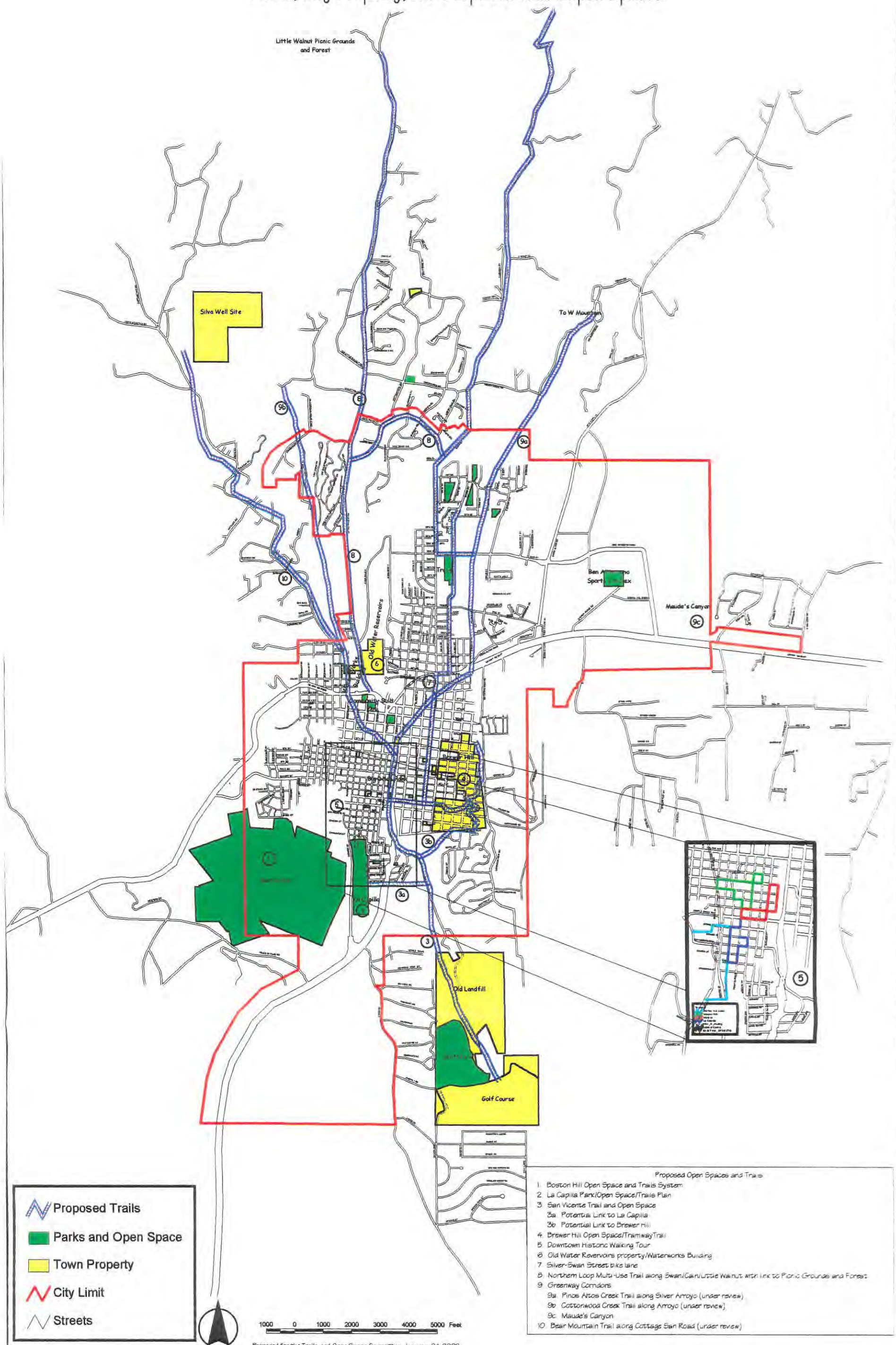


1 - GOUGH PARK
2 - POPE ST PARK
3 - BIG DITCH PARK
4 - GREG JAUREQUI PARK
5 - NOBLE ST PARK
6 - CORBIN ST PARK
7 - LA CAPILLA PARK
8 - VIRGINIA ST PARK
9 - 32ND ST PARK
10 - 38TH ST PARK
11 - CHERRY HILLS PARK
12 - LINDA VISTA PARK (UNDEVELOPED)
13 - VALLEY VISTA PARK (UNDEVELOPED)
14 - PINE RIDGE PARK (UNDEVELOPED)
15 - RECREATION CENTER AREA
16 - SCOTT PARK
17 - GOLF COURSE
18 - SWIMMING POOL
19 - COMMUNITY BUILT PARK
20 - BEN ALTIMIRANO SPORTS COMPLEX
21 - BOSTON HILL

TOWN OF SILVER CITY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
Revised January 25, 2002

Town of Silver City, NM
Parks, City Property, and Proposed Trails/Open Spaces



Proposed Open Spaces and Trails

1. Boston Hill Open Space and Trails System
2. La Capilla Park/Open Space/Trails Plan
3. San Vicente Trail and Open Space
   - 3a. Potential Link to La Capilla
   - 3b. Potential Link to Brewer Hill
4. Brewer Hill Open Space/Tramway Trail
5. Downtown Historic Walking Tour
6. Old Water Reservoirs property/Waterworks Building
7. Silver-Swan Street bike lane
8. Northern Loop Multi-Use Trail along Swan/Cain/Little Walnut with link to Picnic Grounds and Forest
9. Greenway Corridors
   - 9a. Pinos Altos Creek Trail along Silver Arroyo (under review)
   - 9b. Cottonwood Creek Trail along Arroyo (under review)
   - 9c. Maude's Canyon
10. Bear Mountain Trail along Cottage San Road (under review)

Prepared for the Trails and Open Space Committee, January 24, 2002

APPENDIX

List of Trails and Open Space Committee (TOSC) members
Minutes of 2001 TOSC Meetings
Summary of October 13, 2001 Survey Results
Trail and Open Space Evaluation Forms/Checklists
Section 5.1.6 of the 1999 Land Use Code
Section 3.4.3 of the 1999 Land Use Code
Brewer Hill Concept Plan
Examples of Trails and Open Space Protection Tools (Attachment to Section 5)

Email List for Trails and Open Space Committee

* Denotes active member.

Alan Ragins, NPS RTCA*
Bernice Rissman
Bill Toth
Bob Schiowitz*
Carol Morrison*
Chad Steven
Cosette M. Laperruque*
David Coblentz
Diego Villalba, BLM
Ernesto Stolpe*
Frank Drysdale*
Frank Kenney
Frank Merritt
Gerry Engel
Gwen Lyndsong*
Henry Cwieka*
Herbie Marsden*
Jack Savlan
Jan Merchant
Jane Olson
Jesse Franklin-Owens*
Joe Hutto
John Dunne-Brady*
John LeRoy
Joseph and Katherine Ryer
Joseph Gendron, Brownfields Coordinator*
Juan Padilla, BLM
Kate Schilling
Kathleen Jackson
Kathy Cordo
Ken White, State Land Office
Laurel Rhodes
Melissa Castor*
Michael Metcalf
Michele Giese
Mike Sauber
Oswaldo Gomez, BLM
Peter Russell
Renee Kincannon, NMED SWQM*
Robert Myers, Planning and Zoning Commission*
Ron G. Perez
Todd Jones
Tom Manning
Trish Geels*
Vic Topmiller
Victor Ruiz, SWNMCOG
Walt Mellberg*

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of January 30, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Carol Morrison, TOSC
Renee Kincanon, TOSC/NMED
Cosette Laperruque, TOSC
Frank Merritt, TOSC
Jesse Franklin-Owens, TOSC
Joseph Gendron, TOSC/Brownfields Comm.
Bill Toth, TOSC
Bob Myers, TOSC
John Dunne-Brady, TOSC
Gwen Lyndsong, TOSC
Walt Mellberg, TOSC
Bob Schiowitz, TOSC
Henry Cwieka, TOSC
Harry Browne, TOSC/GRIP
Frank Drysdale, TOSC
Jack Savlan, TOSC
LaRee Savlan, TOSC
Ernesto Stolpe, TOSC
Herbie Marsden, TOSC
Gwen Lyndsong, Citizen
Barbara Smith, Citizen
Thomas Cobb, Citizen
Senovia Ray, Citizen
Bernice Rissman, Citizen
Oz Gomez, BLM
Kate Schilling, Citizen
Kathleen Jackson, Citizen
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Jessica started the meeting and introductions were made. Jessica presented the results of the "Community Survey on Trails and Open Spaces" (handout of results is available).

The Committee discussed a mission statement and agreed (temporarily) on the following: "Protect and establish open spaces and trails." The Committee tentatively agreed that a more detailed vision statement, or mission statement with goals, objectives and policies could be developed later.

Alan and Jessica presented the packet of handouts which included the following materials: reasons for protecting trails and open spaces; goals of the Town's 1996 Comprehensive Plan related to planning for and protection of trails and open spaces; 1997 transportation plan addressing bicycle and pedestrian improvements for local streets; summary of minutes from past Making Trails meetings; and open space and trails goals of other communities.

The Committee discussed an inventory of existing resources, as follows:

1. "Protected areas" such as Boston Hill, La Capilla, Allen Springs and Dwyer Springs (there are areas owned by the Town but only Boston Hill and La Capilla are considered open spaces, meaning they were purchased with funds allocated for parks/open spaces).
2. Designated trails such as the Continental Divide trail, Forest Service trails, and the soon to be officially designated trails of Boston Hill.
3. Public lands (not owned by the Town) such as Maude's Canyon (State Land Office), Little Walnut Picnic Grounds (Forest Service) and Fort Bayard.
4. Other public places or trail destinations such as parks, schools, libraries, museums, etc.

The Planning Department will begin to develop a base map that will contain some of the above information, for the Committee to use as an informational resource.

The Committee then discussed types of areas that may be high priority targets for protection or establishment of trails and/or open spaces. These areas were grouped into two broad categories of OPEN SPACE and TRAILS, for which sub-committees were established, along with two other sub-committees titled PUBLIC OUTREACH/EDUCATION and ACTION PROJECTS. The Committee members signed up for the different sub-committees. The description of each sub-committee and the members is as follows, along with the delegated responsibilities. The list of volunteers with phone numbers and emails is attached to these minutes.

OPEN SPACE Subcommittee

Possible criteria:	Members:
· cultural/archeological sites;	Renee
· wildlife areas;	Henry
· viewsheds;	Gwyn
· watersheds;	Bill
· buffers;	Jessie
· floodplains/wetlands.	Walter

Responsibilities:

Designate 1 or more coordinators that will be responsible for convening group and presenting work back to the general committee. (Please notify Jessica if you are willing to serve in this capacity)

Define criteria for open spaces--what are high priorities for protection, and why.

Determine information needed to assess potential open spaces as per the selected criteria, such as floodplain maps.

Identify (and map?) some areas that meet the criteria.

****

TRAILS Subcommittee

Possible criteria:	Members:	John
· legal easements;	Carolyn	Frank M.
· existing footpaths;	Kathleen	Cosette
· sidewalks and bike lanes;	Ernest	The Savlans
· corridors (wildlife, arroyos);	Frank D.	Bob S.
· railroad bed.		

Responsibilities:

Designate 1 or more coordinators that will be responsible for convening group and presenting work back to the general committee. (Please notify Jessica if you are willing to serve in this capacity)

Define criteria for trails--what are high priorities for establishing/protecting trails, and why.

Determine information needed to assess potential trail corridors, such as existing footpaths.

Identify (and map?) some areas that meet the criteria.

****

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION Subcommittee

Possible strategies (not discussed at meeting, but taken from minutes of Making Trails meetings):

- Presentations to community groups and schools;
- Brochures;
- Website.

Members:
Bill
Ernest
Harry
Bob M.
Jesse

Responsibilities:

Designate 1 or more coordinators that will be responsible for convening group and presenting work back to the general committee. (Please notify Jessica if you are willing to serve in this capacity)

Determine ways to conduct outreach and educate the public about trails and open spaces. Identify one or two preferred methods and develop a plan (who/what/when) for carrying them out.

****

ACTION PROJECT

Potential projects:

- Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail
- Boston Hill Trails (?)

Members:
Barbara
Joseph
Savlans
Carolyn
Kathleen
Herbie
Ernest
Cosette

Responsibilities:

Designate 1 or more coordinators that will be responsible for convening group and presenting work back to the general committee. (Please notify Jessica if you are willing to serve in this capacity)

Determine a trail-building project that can be done as a model/demonstration project for this plan.

Outline steps to be taken to move the project forward.

****

The subcommittees are to meet on their own and accomplish the responsibilities by the next meeting (March 7). One person in each subcommittee may want to act as group leader/organizer. Subcommittee members are encouraged to contact either Alan (alan_ragins@nps.gov; 505-988-6091) or Jessica Griffin (griffin@zianet.com 534-6353) if any additional information or assistance is needed.

The Committee decided to postpone discussion of the logistics until the next meeting. The Committee did decide that everyone in attendance willing to help out could be part of the TOSC whether they submitted an application or not.

The Committee adjourned at 7:45 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 7 at 5:30 PM in the City Hall Planning Annex meeting room.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of March 7, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Carol Morrison, TOSC
Jesse Franklin-Owens, TOSC
Joseph Gendron, TOSC/Brownfields Comm.
Bob Myers, TOSC
John Dunne-Brady, TOSC
Walt Mellberg, TOSC
Bob Schiowitz, TOSC
Gary Berg, TOSC
Trish Geels, TOSC
Vic Topmiller, TOSC
Frank Drysdale, TOSC
Ernesto Stolpe, TOSC
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Audience:
Cecil and Lois Brown
Senovia and Joe Ray
Mike Short
Earl J. Montoya
Liz Gary, Town Council
Peter Russell, Town Council

Jessica started the meeting and introductions were made. Jessica presented the minutes of the January 30, 2001 meeting. Jesse suggested that public input be added at the beginning of the agenda, as well as at the end. Based on some input from the audience, the group agreed that the TOS plan should not entail condemnation of property or propose trails not agreed to by the affected property owners.

The group broke out into an Open Space sub-committee and a Trails sub-committee to define criteria, determine priorities, and determine information needed to assess potential open space sites and trails. Each group was provided a draft of the base map being prepared by the Planning Department, which shows existing city parks and property. The notes of each sub-committee are provided below.

Trails Sub-Committee: Bob S. (contact), Frank D., Carol, Liz, Mike, Gary, John Dunne-Brady, Jessica

Possible criteria/locations for trails:

1. property owner must be in support of trail;
2. commuter trails or trails that move people from home to work or around town, or children to and from school, that are not located within streets;
3. existing legal easements that may be expanded to include pedestrian access with the permission of the property owners (need map showing easements);
4. building trails in the unpaved portions of local and highway right-of-ways, such as 180, 90, Swan, Market, Little Walnut Road, PA Road, Cottage San, Cooper, Rosedale, Mountain View, and 32nd Street Bypass (need map showing right-of-ways and field work to determine paved length);
5. using arroyos, creeks and areas prone to flooding for trails (need floodplain maps and filed inspections of arroyos and creeks); and
6. urban trails that connect city lands, parks, community centers, commercial areas, etc., which requires the maintenance/installation of sidewalks and safe road crossings, and entails the use of culverts or other features.

It was decided that urban trails within Town limits should be the first priority, with a focus on improving pedestrian and bike safety and circulation. Secondly, feasible trails, such as in existing easements and right-of-ways, should be mapped and signed. Either of these priorities could be used as a demonstration project.

Some potential trail locations are: Swan Street to Cleveland Mill site to Pinos Altos; Big Ditch to Scott Park along sewer easement; portions of Cottonwood Creek through Indian Hills and north of Grand View (this is private property this all owners would have to be consulted); along 32nd Street Bypass; and along Pinos Altos Creek.

During the month of March, the following activities will occur:

- Frank D., Gary and Liz will keep a log of their walks around town, including impediments, unsafe crossings, alternative routes, etc.
- Vic and Bob S. will work on compiling topographic quad maps of the area and Bob S. will look at street widths.
- Carol will look at a trail from Boston Hill, across La Capilla and into the downtown (The Rays will help with the La Capilla property).
- Trish will walk Pinos Altos Creek (Nancy Gordon can possibly help).
- Jessica will look at floodplain map and with Nancy Gordon determine arroyos and creeks (Silva Creek?) where trails may be possible.

The Trails Sub-Committee will report back at the next TOSC meeting. Ernest, Kathleen, Frank M., Cosette and the Savlans will also be notified of this group's activities because they signed up for this group at the January 30 meeting.

Open Space Sub-Committee: Jesse (contact), Joseph, Peter, Rays, Mr. Montoya, Walter, Trish, and Alan.

Possible criteria/locations for trails:

1. wetlands and drainage areas;
2. feasible sites such as Boston Hill and La Capilla;
3. most threatened areas, both public and private;
4. sites of cultural, historic and/or scientific significance;
5. scenic viewpoints, looking out from and looking at;
6. connectivity between sites for trails or wildlife corridors;
7. good deals or land meeting the criteria that is available for cheap;
8. recreation potential, either passive or aggressive; and
9. agricultural/ranching areas.

Bad open spaces, such as contaminated, trashed or rough sites, are not desirable, unless there is a possibility of reclamation.

A base map showing the following features is needed:

- federal, state, county and town property;
- university property;
- floodplains;
- listed state/federal historic sites

The Open Space Sub-Committee will meet again before the next TOSC meeting to further define the criteria and determine what qualifies as open space. Alan will provide research materials and examples of plans from other areas. Jessica and Alan will look into the possibility of a speaker or video for the group to help with the open space concept. Jesse agreed to coordinate the group.

The Committee decided to postpone discussion of outreach and action activities until the next meeting. The discussion on an executive committee and bylaws were also postponed.

Ernest reminded the group about the Big Ditch Clean Ups on March 10 and 24 (meet at the City Hall Annex at 8 AM, for more info call Rose or Grace at 538-3140).

The Committee adjourned at 7:45 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 5 at 5:30 PM in the City Hall Planning Annex meeting room.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of April 5, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Carol Morrison, TOSC
Jesse Franklin-Owens, TOSC
Joseph Gendron, TOSC/Brownfields Comm.
John Dunne-Brady, TOSC
Walt Mellberg, TOSC
Bob Schiowitz, TOSC
Trish Geels, TOSC
Vic Topmiller, TOSC
Frank Drysdale, TOSC
Ernesto Stolpe, TOSC
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Audience:
Cecil and Lois Brown
Liz Gary, Town Council

Jessica distributed the minutes of the March 7, 2001 meeting. The Trails Sub-committee reported on their activities as follows. Frank D. handed out Walkable America information, including a survey to determine the walkability of routes through Town (attached). Frank suggested that committee members use the survey to assess potential trail routes, as well as city streets and sidewalks. The committee discussed the need for a Pedestrian and Bike Committee to work with the Town and the Highway Department on road projects and prioritize needed improvements. An east-west crossing on Hudson, especially at the post office is a high priority, as well as a north-south crossing on 180 east. Liz suggested that the committee begin public outreach and education activities, such as training police officers at the schools to teach pedestrian and bike classes in the schools. Bob S. suggested training teachers who take kids on walking field trips. A comment was made that the police need to enforce share the road laws, jaywalking, parking, etc.

Bob S. is compiling topographic quad maps of the area and will provide larger scale maps of the area. The maps can be used to determine potential trail routes for assessment purposes.

Carol looked at the possibility of trails from Boston Hill, across La Capilla and into the downtown, and trail connections from the south along Cooper Street. Carol talked to the Senior Citizens Center staff and they were opposed to trails in the area that might result in vandalism. Carol will work with the Ray's and other residents in that area.

Trish and Joseph walked Pinos Altos Creek from 180 to 32nd Street, along easements dedicated for flood control and sewer lines. They found lots of garbage and heavy damage from the last big snow storm. Some of the Town's paper streets cross the creek, thus provide other potential easements. They also visited the Hearst Mill Site, which the Brownfields Committee is researching, and visited the Skyview "park" which is a retention basin but has potential. They found several access points from Silver Street to the creek, which looked fairly well traveled. The next step is to identify property owners along the creek and easements, then contact the owners and ask about using the existing easements for a trail. The trail could be marked with carcenic (?) posts to guide walkers. There is also potential for a trail north of 32nd Street along the Silver Schools property. We need to look at the creek from 180 south to the Big Ditch for connectivity purposes.

Jessica reported that the Floodplain Committee, which holds its first meeting on April 6, will be able to provide feedback on floodplain areas where trails may be possible.

The Open Space Sub-Committee was unable to meet during March but will meet in April to determine priority areas and assess them according a criteria checklist. Alan will assist the group with developing the checklist.

The Committee identified potential trail corridors and open space areas to evaluate:
TRAILS

- Big Ditch to Scott Park Trail
- Spring Street-La Capilla-Cooper-Boston Hill trails
- PA Creek Trail
- E-W crossing on Hudson at post office and N-S crossing on 180 near Swan Street
- Trail along Market Street to Boston Hill
- Pedestrian access along Swan Street
- Cottage San to Forest Service

OPEN SPACES

- Brewer Hill property owned by the Town
- La Capilla Hill—Brownfields group working on a plan and will involve the community
- Old landfill

Assignments for next meeting—each Committee member will think of an outreach activity and a group to contact by the next TOSC meeting.

The Trails Sub-Committee will meet on Saturday, April 14 at 10 AM in the City Hall Annex. The Open Space Sub-Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 18 at 5 PM in the City Hall Annex.

The Committee adjourned at 7:15 PM. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 3at 5:30 PM in the City Hall Planning Annex meeting room.

NOTE: the Planning Department's move to the Bank of America Building is tentatively scheduled for May 7-11 and the department will be closed that week.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of May 3, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Jesse Franklin-Owens, TOSC
Joseph Gendron, TOSC/Brownfields Comm.
John Dunne-Brady, TOSC
Walt Mellberg, TOSC
Bob Schiowitz, TOSC
Trish Geels, TOSC
Harry Browne, GRIP
Frank Drysdale, TOSC
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Audience:
Cecil and Lois Brown
Bob Myers

Jessica distributed the minutes of the April 5, 2001 meeting. The Open Space and Trails Subcommittees reported on the meetings held since the April meeting and presented the checklists for assessing potential open spaces and potential trail corridors. The group discussed the checklists and made several changes. Frank D. and Bob S. presented a map showing open spaces, centers of activity and potential trail corridors. The group added other information; this map will be used to record information. The next steps are as follows:

1. assess potential open spaces and trail corridors according to the checklists and determine if more revisions are needed and/or what other information may be needed for an assessment (such as property ownership maps, areas of threatened/endangered species, locations of cultural sites, etc.);
2. Fill in missing information on the maps based on the initial assessments;
3. Prioritize the potential open spaces and trails corridors.

Jesse and Joseph (and any others) will meet on May 21 and use the open space checklist to assess the Town-owned Brewer Hill property and if possible, La Capilla. Bob S., Frank D. and John will meet next week (May 7) to assess a northern loop and the downtown Boston Hill loop, according to the trails checklist.

Assignments for next meeting—each Committee member will think of an outreach activity and a group to contact by the next TOSC meeting.

The entire group will meet on the afternoon before the next regular meeting to add features and other information to the maps.

The next meeting will be held at 5:30 PM on Thursday, June 7 at the Planning Department on the second floor of the Bank of America/City Hall Annex building at 1211 N. Hudson Street.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of June 7, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Jesse Franklin-Owens, TOSC
Joseph Gendron, TOSC/Brownfields Comm.
John Dunne-Brady, TOSC
Walt Mellberg, TOSC
Bob Schiowitz, TOSC
Trish Geels, TOSC
Cosette Laperruque, TOSC
Frank Drysdale, TOSC
Carol Morrison, TOSC
Senovia Ray, Chihuahua Hill
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS
Bob Myers, PZC

(Frank D., Frank M., Alan and Jessica met before the meeting to work on the maps)
Jessica distributed the minutes of the May 3, 2001 meeting. Bob S. and Frank D. reported on the assessment of the Cain Drive trail. The Committee used the evaluation form to assess the trail as a group (see evaluation form in file). It was decided that horses and ATV/motorized access uses should be added to #6, "Recreation potential" on the assessment form. A participant mentioned that a trail on Cain Drive should be accessible to handicapped persons. It was pointed out that all city streets should be ADA accessible, but not all trails had to be ADA compliant.

Jesse and Joseph reported on the Brewer Hill assessment and provided the evaluation form with comments from the participants in that assessment. Joseph, Jesse and Jessica will meet at a later date to compile a report and map on the Brewer Hill property that can also be used for the CDBG project in Brewer Hill.

Joseph and Jesse pointed out several issues with the assessment form:

- How to assess sites where a portion of the property is useable:
- May need to weight categories due to the different value levels for the topics;
- Assign varying degrees of importance to each question, i.e. high, medium, low; and
- Need to break larger areas into smaller parcels for proper assessment.

There is also a need for local officials or professionals to evaluate areas and assess floral, fauna and cultural resource sites. Need to find volunteers willing to work with the Committee on this need.

The Committee discussed a list of priority sites and trails; Alan will compile this list for review.

Some other items discussed at the meeting:

- Redo downtown historic walking tour and include directions to Boston Hill using trail markers with a Boston Hill logo;
- Installing trail markers for the future Silver City trail system;
- Working with developers to develop a trail in Wind Canyon Subdivision (Cosette will look into this);
- Establishing a trail to Bear Mountain Lodge along arroyo;

- Establishing the Town property containing the old water towers (behind Silver Cliffs) as an open space and cultural resource site;
- Progress of bike lanes along Little Walnut Road (Jessica will check with Peter Pena, Public Works Director); and
- Chihuhua Hill neighbors want to set up park on Town property and explore possibility of chapel on La Capilla hill (Senovia and Carol are working with the neighbors on this and will keep TOSC informed).

Next meeting is at noon on Monday, July 2, 2001 in the Planning Department conference room on the second floor of the Bank of America/City Hall Annex building at 1203-1211 N. Hudson Street.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of July 2, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
John Dunne-Brady
Ernesto Stolpe
Frank Drysdale
Carol Morrison
Gwen Lyndsong
JohnG. Luna, La Capilla Park
Joe and Senovia Ray, La Capilla Park
Earl J. Montoya, La Capilla Park
Cecil and Lois Brown
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Jessica handed out minutes of the June7, 2001 meeting and the participants introduced themselves. Committee members provided reports on recent assessments (see attached Progress Report for more details).

Alan presented the list (attached) and map of priority trails and open spaces, as determined in previous meetings.

Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail
Frank Drysdale, Herbie Masden and Ernesto Stolpe walked the trail with some of the property owners, including Becky Smith and Charles Slought. The property owners are willing to work with the Town on easements for the trail. Ed Horton, another property owner, is also willing but has conditions for establishment of the trail, such as location. The trail could run between the sewer easement and the old railroad easement, crossing back and forth as needed. Some residents in Silver Acres have indicated an interest in using the trail for access to downtown. There are some people camping on the Alcorta property in the area called "The Jungle" with permission of the property owner. The Committee discussed the possibility of a private camping area on this property with parking at the old landfill. The Committee also discussed the possibility of preserving historic structures along the trail and restoring historic uses, such as the Chinese Gardens, which could be a community garden. This would entail the purchase of private property by the Town. Next step may be to have trail corridor surveyed for purposes of obtaining easements from property owners (this is something that needs approval from the Town Council). Frank will write up a report based on the assessment forms.

Brewer Hill Property
Joseph and Jesse walked the Town-owned property in Brewer Hill and assessed the potential of the area for recreational use, open space and development. The first draft of the block-by-block assessment is attached. Jessica is working on the report and a map of the recommendations. This area seems to be a priority because of the recent request from Habitat for Humanity to buy the property and develop a subdivision. The Committee agreed that a more comprehensive plan of the area is necessary before the Town sells off parcels.

Old Silver City Water Reservoirs and Property
Jesse, Joseph, Carol, and Walter Mellberg recently walked the area and used the assessment form to assess the open space potential (see attached assessment form). According to Carol (and the

forms), the area has a lot of potential as open space. The Town owns the property, which contains historic waterworks facilities, including a partially buried reservoir. The area is fairly pristine and appears to provide wildlife habitat. The area could be used for hiking and nature study by Jose Barrios school and by the community as a picnic ground. The reservoir could be converted into a community kiva. In addition, the area provides good views of Town. There is some excavation taking place behind the city water shop to the west of the site, which may be causing erosion of the hillside.

La Capilla Park
Earl, Senovia and Joe presented the proposed La Capilla Park plan being developed by residents of the Chihuahua Hill neighborhood. The plan includes the following elements: reconstruction of the La Capilla chapel; a planetary system; a desert garden; a petroglyph section; a grotto; picnic grounds; trails and fencing; recreational areas and a playground; and planting of wildflowers and other native vegetation. The Committee found the presentation and the plan very impressive and agreed to support the effort and help out in any way needed.

Jessica and Senovia discussed making a presentation to the Town Council on the progress of the TOSC and the proposed La Capilla Park plan. This special meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 9 at noon at the City Hall Annex meeting room on the first floor. Everyone is encouraged to attend this meeting, which Jessica will confirm, to show the Council that there is support for these projects.

Next TOSC meeting is tentatively schedule for 5:30 PM on Thursday, August 9, 2001 in the Planning Department conference room on the second floor of the Bank of America/City Hall Annex building at 1203-1211 N. Hudson Street.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of August 10, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Ernesto Stolpe
Frank Drysdale
Carol Morrison
Walt Mellberg
Tom Manning
Melissa Castor
Bob Myers
Trish Geels
Jesse Franklin-Owens
Herbie Marsden
Gwen Lyndsong
Renee Kincannon, NMED-SWQB
Joseph Gendron, Brownfields Coordinator
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, NPS

Jessica handed out minutes of the July 2, 2001 meeting and reported on the presentation of the TOSC Progress Report to the Town Council on August 9. The presentation highlighted the Big Ditch to Scott Park Trail and the recommendations for the town-owned property in Brewer Hill. The Council directed staff to move forward on both projects, obtaining estimates for surveying the Big Ditch Trail and presenting the Brewer Hill recommendations to the residents for input.

The Committee discussed the "Priority Projects and Next Steps" report, a revised copy of which is attached. Below is a summary of what the next steps are for the priority projects and who is working on that project.

1. Big Ditch to Scott Park Trail along old Railroad/Old Landfill and Scott Park Open Space - Joseph, Frank D. and Herbie will develop the trail corridor based on existing surveys, easement locations, and input from the adjacent property owners.
2. Brewer Hill/Railroad Trail Plan – Discuss plan with neighborhood and interested parties, gather input, and take plan to Council for approval. Jesse and Walt will help with setting up a neighborhood meeting. Jessica will explore options and costs of finishing park.
3. Downtown Historic Walking Tour/Links to Boston Hill and La Capilla Open Spaces/Cooper Street Trail – Jessica and Joseph will meet with Susan Berry of the Museum and Historic Design Review Committee volunteer to determine trail route, key features, and route markers. Carol and Senovia will assist with this project and Carol will assess Cooper Street.
4. Old Water Reservoirs Property - Joseph is working with the EPA on designation of this site as a brownfields project, in conjunction with the Old Waterworks Building on Little Walnut Road.
5. Silver/Swan Street Bike Lane – Tom Manning and Melissa Castor will look into organizing a biker group to determine where bike paths and possibly bike lanes are needed. Also need to work with Public Works on this project.
6. Northern Loop Multi-Use Trail along Little Walnut/Cain/ Swan with extension beginning north of City Limits on Little Walnut to Picnic Grounds and Forest – TOSC volunteer to assess and make recommendations for design along Cain, Swan and Little Walnut. John D. and Bob S.?

The Committee discussed education and outreach activities, including holding an open house in

October, possibly at the Community Built Park in conjunction with a park workday. Information stations showing trails and open spaces could be set up staffed by TOSC volunteers to explain the activities. Other groups could be invited to talk about their activities. A planning meeting will be held Friday, August 17 at noon in the Planning Department meeting room.

Under "Other Business" the following was discussed:

- The Building Trails & Building Assets group has workdays scheduled for August 25, September 8 and September 22. The group is working with Main Street to clean Big Ditch Park.
- Frank D. is still working on the large map if anyone has anything to add.
- Renee Kincannon updated the group on NMED activities, such as sampling for non-point source pollution.
- Joseph reported that the Floodplain Committee is researching how to address the problems of debris build-up in the creeks and arroyos.

The next TOSC meeting is tentatively schedule for 12:00 PM on Thursday, September 13, 2001 in the Planning Department conference room on the second floor of the Bank of America/City Hall Annex building at 1203-1211 N. Hudson Street.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of August 17, 2001 Meeting
OPEN HOUSE PLANNING MEETING

Attended by:
Ernesto Stolpe
Carol Morrison
Walt Mellberg
Trish Geels
Jesse Franklin-Owens
Gwen Lyndsong
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the TOSC Open House planned in October. The Open House is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 20, 2001 at the Community Built Park amphitheater in conjunction with a Penny Park workday. Jesse is the contact for setting this up with the Penny Park folks.

The purpose of the Open House is to share trails and open space info with the public, gather comments and volunteers, and start spreading the word. The TOSC will have a display area of maps, a newsletter and ways for people to provide comments, make recommendations and volunteer to help. TOSC members can volunteer to staff the display to answer questions, handout info, and sign up new volunteers. The Open House will run from 8 AM to 4 PM.

TOSC members staffing the display area or just being there to show support can also spend some time volunteering to work at the park.

The theme of the Open House is "Envisioning Trails and Open Spaces!" and the committee decided that other community groups involved in outdoor activities should be invited to set up displays, as well. The tentative list is as follows:

1. Friends of Boston Hill (contact – Joseph Gendron)
2. La Capilla Park (contact – Senovia Ray)
3. Building Trails & Building Assets (contact - Ernesto)
4. Bike rodeo group (contact - Mike Sauber)
5. Native Plant Society (contact - Bill Davis)
6. Audubon Society (contact - ?)
7. Rock Hounds (contact – Gwen)
8. Silver Spokes (contact – Jessica)
9. Hiking Club (contact – Mike Sauber)
10. Forest Service (contact – Bob Schiowitz)
11. Grant County Archaeological Society (contact – Dave Mathews)
12. Equestrian group? (contact – Carol)
13. NMED-SWQM on Maude's Canyon (contact – Renee Kincannon)

Jessica will develop an initial invitation letter inviting group contacts to attend a planning meeting on September 27 at 5:30 PM in the Planning Department meeting room. TOSC committee members interested in volunteering for the Open House should also attend that meeting.

Trish will take photos of the priority areas.
Gwyn will draft a press release for the Daily Press.
Jessica will work on compiling a newsletter that includes priority projects list and get announcements to both papers and the Desert Exposure.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of September 13, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Carol Morrison
Walt Mellberg
Trish Geels
Frank Drysdale
Gwen Lyndsong
Mike Sauber
Joseph Gendron, Brownfields Coordinator
Jessica Griffin Frost, Planning Director

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the August 10, 2001, regular meeting.

The Committee discussed progress on the priority projects, as follows:

Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail (Joseph) – There are problems determining property ownership but the EPA approved the Brownfields program paying for a survey and property research. Jessica and Joseph will work on letters to property owners regarding a trail easement and also meet with the Town's attorney.

Brewer Hill-Railroad Trail Plan (Jessica) – Neighborhood hearings on this plan will be held in conjunction with meetings for the CDBG planning grant. Habitat for Humanity is looking into the property recommended by the TOSC evaluation as developable.

Downtown Walking Tour with Links to Boston Hill (Joseph) – Volunteers are needed to walk the three historic tours and document problems. (Carol, Gwen and Walt volunteered to do this.) Joseph obtained an easement from Grant County for a trailhead from Spring Street. Complete documentation of sidewalk conditions to include in Town's ICIP.

La Capilla (Jessica) – The Town is working on the design for the CDBG grant, which includes drainage improvements and paving La Capilla Street. When the preliminary design is complete, Jessica will meet with the La Capilla group.

Old Water Reservoirs Property (Joseph) – Need to do a preliminary site assessment prior to a reuse plan.

Old (old) Landfill, north of Scott Park - Joseph submitted the assessment completed by him and Jesse Franklin-Owens on August 28, 2001. They recommend adding this property to Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail Project. The Town may want to exchange some of the property at the nose of the existing ridges for other open space. There is some agricultural potential for this property, as well.

Maude's Canyon (Jessica) – Jessica spoke with a representative of the State Land Office, which owns the property. There is some interest in placing deed restrictions on the property to preserve it as a research and study area that could not be developed and would not be accessible to the general public. This would require either leasing by a public entity, possibly the Town or Western New Mexico University, which has indicated some interest in leasing the property for research purposes.

Bike lanes – Mike Sauber is organizing a bike group to assess existing bike plans.

The Committee discussed the Open House planned for October 13, 2001 and the Trails and Open Space Plan. Jessica and Alan will work on this plan and hopefully have a draft ready in November.

There was no public input. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 18, 2001 at 6 PM.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of October 18, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Gwen Lyndsong
Joseph Gendron, Brownfields Coordinator
Jesse Franklin Owens
Jessica Griffin Frost, Planning Director

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the September 13, 2001, regular meeting and discussed the Open House held October 13 at the Community Built Park. Jessica reported that she is compiling the survey results and will have a report ready next week. She included some of the comments from the surveys in a follow-up press release that the Daily Press has agreed to run.

The Committee discussed progress on the priority projects, as follows:

Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail (Joseph) – A surveyor has been hired to research the properties along the northern section of the trail, to determine ownership. Following the results of that research and additional research into the easements needed, Jessica and Joseph will meet with the Town's Attorney and prepare letters to property owners requesting easements. The highway department will also have to be contacted for an easement under the 90 bridge.

Brewer Hill-Railroad Trail Plan (Jessica) – Habitat is making a presentation to the Town Council on October 23, requesting permission to use some of the property in Brewer Hill. Jesse suggested that the Committee hold a neighborhood meeting before the Council makes any final decisions on the use of that property. Jessica will suggest this to the Council at the next meeting.

Downtown Walking Tour with Links to Boston Hill (Joseph) – Volunteers are needed to walk the three historic tours and document problems. (Carol, Gwen and Walt volunteered to do this.) Joseph obtained an easement from Grant County for a trailhead from Spring Street. Complete documentation of sidewalk conditions to include in Town's ICIP.

La Capilla (Jessica/Joseph) – Joseph reported that Planners Ink has been hired to complete the re-use plan for La Capilla and the old landfill. The La Capilla group and the Brownfields Committee reviewed the two RFP's submitted for this plan and selected Planners Ink/Todd Jones. Public meetings will be held during that planning process. Jessica reported that the preliminary design of the 2002 CDBG - La Capilla project is completed but is being revised based on suggestions from the La Capilla group.

Old Water Reservoirs Property (Joseph) – Joseph reported that a 1990 archeological report of the area indicates that a long history and an abundance of archeological artifacts and resources. There were/are many grave sites from different eras. A site assessment will begin in the next few months, followed by a reuse plan, which will include the historic waterworks building across Little Walnut Road to the west.

Maude's Canyon (Jessica) – Jessica has not received additional information from the State Land Office but will call them for an update.

Joseph suggested that the committee assess Town properties outside city limits, such as Allen Springs and the Silva Well site. The group also discussed the options for ensuring that open spaces stay open spaces.

There was no public input. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 15, 2001 at 12 PM.

Trails and Open Space Committee
Minutes of November 15, 2001 Meeting

Attended by:
Gwen Lyndsong
Walt Mellberg
Carol Morrison
Ernesto Stolpe
Trish Geels
Jack Pecka
Frank Drysdale
Melissa Castor
Joseph Gendron, Brownfields Coordinator
Jessica Griffin Frost, Planning Director
Alan Ragins, RTCA

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the October 18, 2001, regular meeting and discussed the results of the survey conducted at the Open House on October 13 at the Community Built Park. Frank suggested surveying more people and the committee members agreed to survey neighbors and others. Jessica will present the survey results at the November 27 or December 11 Council meeting. Ernesto recommended that the TOSC be reinstated at the Council meeting, as well.

The Committee discussed progress on the priority projects, as follows:
Big Ditch-Scott Park Trail (Joseph) – Jack Scavlon has created an initial property ownership map which shows that several parcels along the southern end of the Big Ditch are unclaimed. Western Title is researching titles and will have more info to Joseph on November 26. Ernesto asked if its possible for the Town to condemn and take ownership of unclaimed properties for use as open space/trails. Following the results of the property research, Jessica and Joseph will meet with the Town's Attorney and prepare letters to property owners requesting easements (week of November 26 is the target date).

Brewer Hill-Railroad Trail Plan (Jessica) – Jessica is setting up a neighborhood meeting for the first week in December, most likely to be held at the Rec Center. Jack Pecka suggested that the plan include a trail along 7th Street from Hudson to Bennett in the 7th Street right-of-way (need to check ownership and whether that section has been vacated). The committee discussed at length whether or not the Brewer Hill plan map should designate the recreational area for ATV use. The committee decided that the map should not specifically indicate that use but that the residents should be asked what types of recreational use they would prefer on that property (more of an open-ended approach). Jessica will email everyone regarding the exact date and time.

Downtown Walking Tour with Links to Boston Hill (Joseph) – Carol is writing up final assessment of walking tour with an analysis of sidewalks and other pedestrian impediments. Joseph will compile a final report and then he and Jessica will meet with Susan Berry. The TOSC plan can list specific areas of sidewalk improvements that are needed.

La Capilla (Jessica/Joseph) – Joseph reported that Planners Ink has been hired to complete the re-use plan for La Capilla and the old landfill. Jessica reported that the 2002 CDBG application for La Capilla was submitted to the state last week. This project entails paving La Capilla street and drainage improvements on El Refugio and Senior Center sites, including landscaping. El Refugio is providing $20,000 in landscaping and volunteer labor. Jessica also mentioned that the Town applied for a $1,000 grant from the Native Plant Society for more landscaping, all of which should be drought-tolerant and/or native.

Old Water Reservoirs Property (Joseph) – Joseph reported that Engineers Inc. will be starting the site assessment which will be followed by a reuse plan. Jessica has contacted SHPO for info regarding the archaeological sites and public use of the property to no avail. Alan will contact SHPO and the Heritgae

Preservation Alliance on those matters. Jessica suggested that the committee members read the 1990 archaeolgical report on the site, which is available in the Planning Department.

Maude's Canyon (Jessica) – Joseph has discussed the Maude's Canyon project with Renee Kincannon of NMED but there is some confusion over what the plans are and what the State Land Office is doing with the site. Joseph will contact Renee for a project description and Alan and Jessica will contact the State Land Office for more info.

The committee discussed other projects underway. Gwen suggested that the TOSC keep a scrapbook of photos and articles and volunteered to put that together. Melissa reported on the bike survey conducted at the October 13th Open House; she is still surveying and will compile the results soon. She also mentioned that the bike group may focus in on a certain project, such as the Chloride Flats trail. Ernesto is developing a position/informational paper on the activities of the Trail Building group which can be incorporated into the TOSC plan and also used to educate the political leaders on the activities of that group.

Joseph presented a letter to the Council requesting permission to pursue the sale of Dorsey Springs and Allen Springs to the Forest Service and using the income to buy open spaces within city limits, such as on Boston Hill and along the Big Ditch-Scott Park trail. The committee discussed developing the concept to clearly state that only non-essential Town properties should be considered for sale and that the buyer would have to preserve the property as open space. In addition, the income from the sale would have to go towards buying more open space (or property for trails). Jessica and Joseph will work on the letter and send it to Alan and the committee for final OK, before submitting it to the Council (at the first meeting in December).

The committee discussed the TOSC plan. Alan and Jessica will rough out a draft in December and submit it to the committee. The draft will be discussed at the January meeting and finalized at the February meeting, then presented to the Council.

There was no public input. The next TOSC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 10, 2002 at 12 PM. The Brewer Hill neighborhood meeting will be held instead of the December TOSC meeting.

What do you think?

TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE SURVEY

Conducted October 13, 2001 at the TOSC Open House held at the Community Built Park

Results Compiled by the Planning Department

Total # of survey respondents: 31

1. Do you live in Silver City? - **20** Grant County? - **9** No response - **2**

2. Would off-road pedestrian/bike trails be useful in Silver City? Yes - **28** No - **0**

3. Do you have an idea for a local trail? Yes – **(see below)** No - **2**
   If yes where would this trail go from/to?

Trails to Boston Hill – 3. From Broadway up Boston Hill and around to Market Street.
Trails along Little Walnut Road – 7.
Expand Big Ditch trail - 4. Mentioned trail thru Chinese Garden with respect to homeless.
Trail to Scott Park.
Trail along Cottage San Road – 2
Bike path along Bullard – 4.
Bike path along Hudson – 4.
Trail along Alabama and Virginia – 4.
Trails as proposed on map (TOSC Proposed Trails and Open Spaces map) -- 6.
I believe in trails for health and to help traffic, off-road (trails) connecting to stores and recreation areas; committee needs money to make them (trails). Trail connecting university area with Swan and Juniper Streets, rather than going through gas stations and store parking lots. Trails to Penny Park. Bike path on PA Road. Bike trails along highways to separate traffic like in Idaho and Washington states. But no bikes, just horses on wilderness trails. From downtown to highschool and hospital. Every busy street and highway needs a trail—connected system of bikeways and hiking trails. Trails through city and state property from national forest and downtown; need a trail system around town now before it is too late and while it can still happen in each direction. Trails should be away from roads so people are away from the fumes and can get around without driving. Maybe mopeds could be rented. Dogs should be allowed on all trails. Need more level trails because its hard to hike uphill. Need a trail to Albertson's (Food Basket) and to Tyrone; a safe way through town. At the end of C Street. From Luck Street to the university.

4. Should motorized vehicles be allowed on local trails? Yes - **1** No – **27** Some – **2**
Comments – **Could allow electric mopeds at 10mph; 4-wheelers need some trails; some motorized OK but no 4-wheelers.**

5. How do you usually get about town? Drive - **30** Walk - **22 (4 only walk)**
   Bicycle - **10** Bus - **1**

Comments—hills too steep for a 68 year old to walk; I drive because I have kids and live 3 miles out and its too dangerous to ride bikes/walk; walk downtown; drive because of time restrictions; walking or driving depends on how much I have to carry; drive for errands, too afraid of traffic to ride bike.

6. Using a scale of 1 = awful, 2 = many problems, 3= some problems, 4 = good, 5= very good, 6 = excellent, how would you rate the following:

A. Walking in Silver City?	1- **0**	2 - **7**	3 - **10**	4 - **6**	5 - **2**	6 - **1**
B. Biking in Silver City?	1- **4**	2 - **10**	3 - **7**	4 - **5**	5 - **1**	6 - **1**
C. Drivers in Silver City?	1- **2**	2 - **5**	3 - **8**	4 - **6**	5 - **8**	6 - **0**
D. Traffic law enforcement?	1- **1**	2 - **4**	3 - **9**	4 - **6**	5 - **5**	6 - **3**
E. Pedestrian crossings @ major intersections?	1- **4**	2 - **13**	3 - **4**	4 - **1**	5 - **2**	6 - **1**

Comments: People don't stop (for pedestrians); good environment for walking; drivers are better than those in Los Angeles; walking is especially bad for handicapped persons; need bike lanes; drivers are rude and dangerous, especially the children; crossings are not marked any more in the downtown; downtown is a 6 and WalMart is a 1.

7. If you gave a rating of 1, 2, or 3 to any of the above what are some specific problems and what are some possible solutions?

Need plans for traffic flows and restrictions on building, such as traffic-free zones downtown and one-way traffic—takes getting used to but we need a few traffic-free zones downtown. More sidewalks and pedestrians/bikes should have the right of way. When fighting, some people get run over - fix with lawyers. Dogs and not enough sidewalks, speeders and reckless drivers and not enough police – install sidewalks and use stoplights instead of stop signs. Too many drivers, whether good or bad; terrible access to post office, disconnected neighborhoods, lax traffic enforcement in university area. Need off-road paths so you don't have to walk around in car exhaust. Need bikeways and grass walks. More safe crosswalks, trails that connect areas and downtown with hiking trails. Need painted crosswalks and more hiking trails. Need off-road trails for hiking. Need better pedestrian crosswalks that are pedestrian friendly. Need to trim plants along sidewalk so people don't have to walk in the road. Need to have more and better places for traffic to stop so people can walk across. Police need to enforce the laws. Narrow streets with medians, boulevards—Hudson and Swan Street. Need pedestrian bridge at post office and walkways. All intersections with traffic signals have burned out lights, poorly marked crosswalks, are not ADA compliant, no medians and very poor enforcement near Gough Park. Traffic laws—why are people cruising on Bullard and not 180? There should be a law that cars have to stop for pedestrians. Need places to walk for pleasure and to connect to other places and need crosswalks. Mark crosswalks and ticket rude drivers. People need to use signals. More space for bike riders. Restricted pedestrian mall downtown with no cars. Problems at intersection of Hudson/Broadway, Hudson/12th and 90—Medians on Hudson, more delineated crosswalks, more vigilance of speed limits on Hudson. Need bike lanes. More trails connected to out(lying) areas; crosswalks on Bullard; all roads marked; bike trails connecting downtown to other parts of town; Big Ditch, 32nd Street and schools need walkways. Spiral staircases that can be used over busy highways.

8. Are there open spaces in or near Silver City that should be preserved? Yes - **26** No - **0**

If yes, where are these areas?

Good ones noted on map – 5.

Big Ditch – 1.

Boston Hill - 7.
La Capilla – 3.
Maude's Canyon, Little Walnut area, open lot behind Food Basket, hill off Little Walnut behind (old) McDonalds.
Preserve all we have, the community needs it, good for watershed. Every one. Wherever possible. Use clustered housing. Keep everything available open—its all necessary and provides buffers. Just about any space on hillsides surrounding Silver City. All of them that aren't developed; more open space is better. Elk need space. All space needs to be zoned now. We need connecting trails to all parks for kids to use to walk to schools. All public lands, up-land canyon areas, top of hills, hiking trails, Arenas Valley. Cottage San Road property (owned by gravel company?) and hilltops to preserve views. All hills and landmark points inside city limits and ETZ. Along all streams and washes. Need linkages to preserve open spaces.
Happy with what is (currently) open space, especially federal and state lands.

9. What are appropriate uses of open spaces?
Recreation, education; open space needs no purpose; having it for our children; wildlife habitat, diversity for plants, sight lines for nature. Non-use, natural habitat for animals; picnics. Parks and community designated meeting places that are well planned; involve planning. Hiking, walking, some biking, horseback riding, picnics, enjoy a natural setting free of trailers and other dwellings or human-built structures, including "barnola" houses (?). Walking horses and riding bicycles. Leisure and plan, to enjoy nature. Walking, education and just having it. Cut no lumber, no mining, national monument, keep rock, leave only foot prints. Hiking and hiking education. Trails. Hiking, walking, wooded park/spaces are restful. No development or damaging lights; user friendly to handicapped and all genders with sanitation facilities. Non-motorized recreation. Kids camping. Walking, nature study, just being there for the vistas. Recreation, birding, biking, playgrounds, picnic tables, soccer fields, walking, viewing nature. Just to BE—enjoy nature, socialize, education, picnic, drumming (?). Non-motorized uses, hiking, biking and pedestrians. Play soccer and football, ride bikes, have picnics. Education, walking, hikes, riding some horses. Vision shed, birds and animals. Hiking, educational nature walks, herbal study, mountain hiking. Parks—no motorized vehicles on trails. Solitude to large group activities, set aside some areas for motorized use.

10. How would open spaces benefit you?
Keeps me from going crazy and there is a market (for open space), once its lost, its gone so keep it all and take care of what we have. Allows me to feel not closed in, hang out and meditate, write and paint. Contribute to beauty and enjoyment that is around me; vital to good health. Enjoy going to them and having picnics. I'd feel closer to nature, less encroached upon by over population/human civilization. Place to hike and relax and enjoy nature. Diminishes stress. Releases stress, enjoy beauty of nature. Replenishes spiritual, mental and physical being to be a better person and live better. Beauty-place to get away from traffic and be with nature, place for dogs. Improve overall quality of life. Helps kids, children love it. Personal joy and quality of life. Environmental benefits; recreationally; aesthetically; preservation of plants and animals. Possibly. Yes. Make life beautiful. Provides clean air, freedom, inspiration, be away from people more. Give motorized

vehicles their own space. Have picnics. Get exercise, beauty, places to paint. Areas to walk, relax and picnic. Stress relief, shared by the public, builds community. Recreation, hiking, group activities; maintain sense of small rural town.

11. Using the rating scale 1=awful to 6=excellent how would you rate open space preservation in Silver City?

1 - 0	**2 - 4**	**3 - 11**	**4 - 5**	**5 - 2**	**6 - 1**

If you gave a rating of 1, 2, or 3, what are some possible solutions?

Off to a good start, it is valuable and worth preserving, commit as much $ as possible to open space—this community values open space and will keep it for the next generations; encourage public participation. More committed, education for children on field trips. Need far-sightedness—all parks become more important as we grow, help to build community and open space is critical for good health. Committed open space helps build community and good health—we need each other and nature is vital to a good life, happiness is often found in nature. Could be more open space donated or bought by Grant County and Town of Silver City. Buy up everything possible and donate to public. Trades of land, involving businesses, ranchers, conservation groups. More money dedicated to it, some neighborhoods don't have it (open space) now. Keep everything open (that) we have now. Need more (open space)—we have some but we need to slow sprawl and consider water. We are working on preservation (but) we need more efforts and need more (open space), stop development. More public education, increase public awareness. Keep it (open space) clean and safe. My opinion is as a member of the Board of Directors of the Main Street Program: I am interested in future maintenance of open spaces, such as the Big Ditch, by the Town of Silver City. Making cluster housing a matter of policy (zoning) and putting areas off limits to development. Land Trust meetings; organizing people with money; identifying county, city and private lands that could be provided to the community as a survey for picking which ones they'd like--this would help get awareness. Need more (open space). More community participation in conjunction with city/county funding. Use money to get more volunteers, commitment of local government funding. Save more (open space).

Other comments:
Need more benches downtown.

Designation of Trails in Silver City
Initial Assessment of Proposed Trail Corridors

1. Feasibility

_____ The landowner and other stakeholders (neighbors, community at large) are supportive

_____ A funding or maintenance program exists to support use and management

_____ Impacts to neighbors or sensitive sites are acceptable

_____ The trail can be established or protected for a reasonable cost. A partner is willing to share or finance the cost of acquisition and/or management.

_____ The trail corridor is safely useable and/or can be made useable.

_____ The corridor is owned by the City, County, State, or school system who may be willing to set aside for a trail corridor.

_____ The trail corridor is an existing easement that can be expanded for public access.

_____ The trail corridor is currently used by the neighborhood as a trail.

Comments:

2. Priority corridor

_____ The trail is designated in a Town or other agency plan as a priority corridor

_____ The trail is designated as a high priority corridor to encourage pedestrian accessibility and/or serve as an alternative transportation route.

Comments:

3. Connectivity

_____ The trail corridor connects community sites, such as schools, neighborhoods, parks, or other public facilities.

_____ The trail corridor serves as a transportation corridor, connecting residential areas with places of employment and/or can be used as a transportation route by visitors and tourists.

_____ The trail corridor will connect designated open space areas.

_____ The trail corridor provides access to public lands.

_____ The area links critical resources/habitats for wildlife.

_____ The area is part of, or can be accessed from, an existing or proposed trail system.

4. **Community, cultural, historic, educational and/or scientific significance**

_____ The trail corridor has high ecological significance, such as a wildlife corridor; unique geological features; or other scientific significance.

_____ The trail corridor is located in a historic area or an area of cultural significance.

_____ The trail corridor has educational, interpretive, or research value.

_____ The trail corridor can be developed and used without impact to any of the above items.

Comments:

5. **Scenic qualities**

_____ The trail corridor includes established or familiar visual features that are part of the scenic landscape. (Unique color, texture, patterns of vegetation or physical features)

_____ The trail corridor provides scenic views of surrounding landscapes.

Comments:

6. **Recreation potential**

The trail corridor can be developed for the following uses (check all that apply):

____ Walking/jogging
____ Biking
____ Paved for rollerblading or other uses requiring a paved surface
____ Wheelchair and handicap access
____ Other (describe):

Establishment and Protection of Open Space in Silver City
Initial Assessment of Proposed Open Spaces

1. Feasibility

_____ The landowner and other stakeholders are supportive.

_____ A funding or maintenance program exists to support use and management

_____ Impacts to neighbors or sensitive sites are acceptable

_____ The area can be established or protected for a reasonable cost. A partner is willing to share or finance the cost of acquisition and/or management.

_____ The area is relatively undisturbed and/or can restored if degraded

_____ The land is owned by the City, County, State, or school system and may be willing to set aside for open space purposes.

Comments:

2. Community support.

_____ The local community has demonstrated strong support for the project (e.g. organized efforts such as letters, meetings).

_____ The project will benefit more than one neighborhood, or will benefit the community as a whole.

Comments:

3. Cultural, historic, educational and/or scientific significance

_____ The area has high ecological significance: is is a habitat for a large number of plant and animal species; it has unique geological features; it is a rare, threatened or endangered species habitat; and/or contains natural community types that are not well protected in the region.

_____ The property is associated with an important historic or prehistoric structure, landscape, event, person, or activity.

_____ The area contributes to a traditional/historic community's identity, history and cultural connections as defined by the community, and/or has traditionally been used as "common land" by neighboring residents.

_____ The area has educational, interpretive, or research value.

Comments:

4. Wetlands, drainage areas, steep slopes, etc.

_____ The proposed area protects wetlands, major floodplains, stream headwaters, municipal water quality and supply, critical groundwater recharge areas, and/or access to water for wildlife.

_____ The land is unsuitable for development because of topographic or other limitations.

Comments:

5. Scenic qualities

_____ The area includes established or familiar visual features that are part of the scenic landscape. (Unique color, texture, patterns of vegetation or physical features)

_____ The area has high visual exposures from roads, trails, and/or residential areas.

_____ Existing open space creates a buffer between or within communities.

_____ The area provides scenic views of surrounding landscapes.

Comments:

6. **Connectivity**

_____ The area links critical resources/habitats for wildlife.

_____ The area is part of, or can be accessed from, an existing or proposed trail system.

_____ The area contributes to an open space network or system.

Comments:

7. **Recreation/non-recreation potential**

_____ The area can support trails that will serve the public, including trailhead access.

_____ The area contains trails that are or have been used.

_____ The area can support recreation or public use opportunities other than trails. It is of appropriate size, shape, and topography to accommodate such use.

_____ The area has legal access.

_____ The area has other non-recreational potential, either as undeveloped or low density use.

Comments:

8. **Agricultural/ranching areas**

_____ The area supports current agricultural use or has the potential for sustainable agricultural use. (e.g., farming, ranching, herding, plant collecting, wildcrafting)

Comments:

9. Buffer Zones

_____ The area can serve as a buffer zone between different types of land uses.

1999 Land Use Code

Sections 5.1.6 and 3.4.3

5) Lots abutting watercourses, drainageways, bluffs, channels or streams, shall have additional minimum width and depth as required by Section 5.6 to provide an adequate building site, drainageway, and easements, and afford the minimum useable area required in the zoning ordinance for front, rear, and side yards.

C) ***Monuments.*** Monuments shall be provided for all plats according to the following specifications: All exterior boundary corners of the subdivision, and each corner of each block within the subdivision, shall be defined by permanent monuments. Such monuments shall consist of a metal rod, at least one-half inch in diameter, and at least 18 inches in length, with a permanent cap attached to the top; and the rod set in at least one cubic foot of concrete. The surveyor who sets the corner will have his or her registration number, or name, or both, along with the position of the corner stamped into the cap.

D) ***Street Lighting.*** Street lights will be installed by the subdivider in all subdivisions within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Silver City according to the standards in Section 5.12 of this Land Use Code. A street light is required at every intersection and at a minimum of every 300 feet.

E) ***Other Requirements.*** The subdivision plat shall comply with all other requirements of this Article and other provisions of this Land Use Code.

5.1.6 Land Dedication and Fees-in-Lieu

A) ***Parks, Playgrounds, And Other Public Areas.*** Land or money in lieu of land required by this Section shall be conveyed to the Town upon approval of the final plat.

1) Land Dedication.

a) For each single-family housing unit, or unit in a multiple-family housing development, 0.01 of an acre shall be set aside by the subdivider for public facilities, parks, or recreation areas.

b) The preliminary plat shall show the area which the subdivider proposes to construct as a park or recreation area, but the Town shall have the right to select another location if, in the sole discretion of the Town, the location proposed by the subdivider is unsuitable.

c) Subdividers shall convey to the Town, by unrestricted deed, the area of land required for park or other public facilities as determined above, based on the number of single-family housing units, or units in a multiple-family housing development in the proposed subdivision.

d) If the Planning and Zoning Commission determines that more land is needed in a particular subdivision, the subdivider shall sell to the Town, at the market value of the unimproved land, the additional area that is determined to be needed for the park or other public areas to serve the future residents of the land to be subdivided.

e) Multi-family developments may, with Town approval, retain private ownership and maintenance of such parks, according to the requirements in Section 5.1.8.

2) Fee In-Lieu of Land.

a) In lieu of such conveyance of land, the Town may require a subdivider to pay to the Town a sum of money equal to the market value of the unimproved land which otherwise would be conveyed.

b) The subdivider shall provide and submit to the Town an independent appraisal, completed within the previous 12 months, of the market value of the said unimproved land, to be used as a basis for determining the amount of money to be paid by the subdivider in lieu of deeded land, or by the Town for additional unimproved land. If the appraisal provided and submitted by the subdivider is deemed to be unacceptable by a majority of the Planning and Zoning Commission based on their knowledge of property values, the commission may order the subdivider to provide a second appraisal by a Town-appointed appraiser, which appraisal shall be binding upon the parties.

B) ***Streets.*** Subdivisions that adjoin existing streets shall dedicate additional right-of-way for such streets to meet the demand created by the future residents of the land to be subdivided if necessary to meet the minimum street width requirements set forth in Section 5.2, as follows:

1) The entire additional right-of-way shall be provided where the subdivision is on both sides of the existing street.

2) When the subdivision is located on only one side of the existing street, one-half of the required additional right-of-way shall be provided. In no case shall the resulting right-of-way width be less than 50 feet.

C) ***Individualized determination.*** Following the calculation of land dedications for parks, playgrounds, other public areas, and streets pursuant to subsection (A) and (B) above, the Planning Director shall conduct an individualized determination to consider whether the amount required fairly reflects the amount of land needed to offset the impact of the proposed development on the Town's parks, playgrounds, other public areas, and streets, using an average impact (not marginal impact) methodology. The individualized determination may be influenced by the anticipated ages of the residents of the development, the number of bedrooms included in residential units, the inclusion of private community park space that could offset some portion of the impact on the Town's park system, or other factors unique to the development. In the absence of special factors that the Planning Director concludes would lead the development to have a different impact on parks, playgrounds, other public areas, or streets than other developments of the same type and density, the contribution amounts listed above shall govern the required contributions of land. If the Planning Director concludes that the proposed development would have a smaller or greater impact on the Town's parks, playgrounds, other public areas, or streets that is not adequately reflected in the contributions shown above, the Planning Director is authorized to increase or reduce those amounts as necessary to accurately offset the impact of the proposed development on the Town's parks, playgrounds, other public areas, and streets.

5.1.7 Improvement Standards and Timing

A) The proposed plans, specifications and construction drawings covering the construction of improvements on land designated for public use and the installation of utility facilities shall be submitted to the Town Engineer for approval.

B) No improvements, such as sidewalks, water supply, stormwater drainage, sewage facilities, gas service, electric service or lighting, or grading, paving or surfacing of streets, shall be made within any such subdivision by any owner or owners, or his or her agent, or by public service corporation at the request of such owner or owners, or his or her agent, until the final plat for the subdivision and all plans, specifications and drawings for subdivision improvements have been formally approved by the Town Engineer, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Town Council.

C) The Town Engineer shall have the right to inspect the course of the construction of improvements on land designated for public use and of the installation of the

Table 3.4.2: Density and Dimensional Standards

Zone District	Maximum Density		Minimum Lot Area (square feet)	Minimum Street Frontage (feet) *	Minimum Setbacks			Maximum Height (feet)
	Du/Acre	FAR			Street (feet)	Side (feet)	Rear (feet)	
R	0.5	N/A	12,500	75	20	5[1]	20	50
RA	5	N/A	5,000	50	20	5[1]	20	35[4]
RB	10	N/A	5,000	50	20	5[1]	20	35[4]
RC	15	N/A	5,000	50	20	5[1]	20	50[4]
C	15	5	N/A	50	N/A[3]	5[2]	N/A	50
I	N/A	1	N/A	100	50	20	50	50

[1] On a lot bounded by two or more streets, setbacks not adjacent to streets shall be five feet.
[2] Only required where side of lot abuts upon lot in residential or rural zone district.
[3] Commercial properties fronting on a designated primary arterial shall have a front setback of 20 feet.
[4] Accessory uses: Playhouses, patios, cabanas, porches, gazebos, and incidental household storage buildings shall not exceed 15 feet in height. Private garages and carports used to serve the residents of the property are allowed, provided that the height of a garage or carport serving a single-family dwelling unit shall not exceed 25 feet.
* Flagpole lots require at least 20 feet of street frontage.

3.4.3 Alternative Residential Development Options. The alternative development options of this Section allow for variety in development standards while maintaining the overall character of a single-family residential development.

A) ***Flagpole Lots.*** Flagpole lots shall be allowed in the R zoning district pursuant to the standards of this subsection.

1) *Frontage.* Each flagpole lot shall have at least 20 feet of street frontage and at least 20 feet of width for the entire length of the flagpole.

2) *Number.* A maximum of one flagpole lot is allowed in subdivisions of four lots or less. No more than 20 percent of the lots within a subdivision containing five or more lots shall be flagpole lots. No more than two flagpole lots may be contiguous.

3) *Lot Area Calculation.* The area of the flagpole may not be counted as part of the lot area for the purpose of establishing minimum lot size.

4) *Driveways.* Driveways shall be designed to allow vehicles to drive out forward. Common driveways shall be required when two flagpole lots are contiguous.

B) ***Single-Family Attached.*** Attached single-family development shall be allowed in accordance with the Use Table of Section 3.2. No interior side setback is required on the "attached" side of a lot containing an attached house. The street, side, and rear setback standards shall apply around the perimeter of an attached housing development.

C) ***Zero Lot Line.*** In zero lot line development, houses are shifted to one side of each lot, to provide for greater usable yard space on each lot. These developments require planning for all of the house locations concurrent with the initial subdivision platting. Because the exact location of each house is predetermined, greater flexibility in site development standards are possible while assuring that the single-family detached character of a neighborhood is maintained.

1) *Applicability.* Zero lot line developments are allowed by right in any residential zoning district.

2) *Review and Approval.* Review for compliance with the standards of this Section shall occur during the platting process. Restrictions that assure the minimum distance between houses and any required easements must be recorded on the plat and on the deeds of the applicable lots. Proof of such recordation must be submitted as part of the building permit application.

3) *Setbacks.* The side building setback on one side of the house may be reduced to zero. This reduction does not apply to the street side setback or to the interior side setback adjacent to lots that are not part of the zero lot line project.

4) *Distance Between Houses.* The minimum distance between all buildings in the development must be equal to twice the required side setback required by the underlying zoning district. A deed restriction must be recorded on the deed of each applicable lot to ensure continued compliance with this setback.

5) *Eaves.* The eaves on the side of a house with a reduced setback may project a maximum of 24 inches over the adjacent property line. In this case, an easement for the eave projection must be recorded on the deed for the lot where the projection occurs.

6) *Maintenance Easement.* An easement to allow for maintenance or repair is required when the eaves or side wall of a house are within four feet of the adjacent property line. The easement on the adjacent property must provide at least 10 feet of unobstructed space between the furthermost projection of

the structure (other than eaves) and be wide enough to allow five feet between the eaves or side wall and the edge of the easement.

7) *Privacy.* If the side wall of the house is on the property line, or within three feet of the property line, windows or other openings that allow for visibility into the side yard of the adjacent lot are not allowed. Windows that do not allow visibility into the side yard of the adjacent lot, such as a clerestory window or a translucent window, are allowed.

D) ***Cluster Development.*** A cluster development is a residential subdivision in which the lots are allowed to be smaller or narrower than otherwise required in the zoning district (Cluster Lots), but in which the overall number of lots does not exceed the maximum number of lots allowed on the property by the zoning district. In a cluster development:

1) *Preservation of Open Space.* At least 30 percent of the property shown on the subdivision plat must be preserved as contiguous, common open space located along natural corridors or adjacent to existing open space.

2) *Deed Restriction or Easement.* Such common open space shall be preserved from development for a period of at least 40 years through the use of a recorded deed restriction or easement, and shall be conveyed to a Property Owner's Association or other organization with responsibility for maintenance of the open space and the ability to collect assessments or dues for such purpose. The Town shall be named as a third party beneficiary to the deed restriction for purposes of enforcement.

3) *Recording.* Proof that such a deed restriction or easement has been recorded with the County Clerk must be submitted before any building permits for construction on a Cluster Lot shall be issued.

Recommendations for Usage of Town property in Brewer Hill
Based on Assessments by Members of the Trails and Open Space Committee and information gathered as part of the CDBG Planning Grant for Brewer Hill
DRAFT – June 15, 2001/ REVISED – July 23, 2001
Jessica Griffin, Planning Director

In June of 2001, members of the TOSC and the Town's Brownfield Coordinator, Joseph Gendron, conducted an assessment of the Town-owned property in Brewer Hill to determine potential for development, preservation as open space and recreational use. During the same period, Engineers Inc. conducted a drainage study of the area and also assessed potential street vacations. Based on these reports, in addition to input from different community members and identification of issues in the Brewer Hill area, the following recommendations are proposed for consideration. Please note that these recommendations are based on exploratory studies and have not been discussed with all affected parties. The recommendations are for discussion purposes only.

Blocks 153, 154, 189, 190 and 191 – Due to current use and poor condition of the area, this may be an appropriate location for a dirt bike/BMX park. ATVs may also be appropriate depending on the input of the neighborhood. A buffer zone between the area and the residential properties could minimize impact to neighbors. A designated ATV park would provide a place for such use and would possibly eliminate ATV use on other Town properties, such as the old landfill which sustains heavy damage from ATVs.

Another idea is to restrict ATV use to these blocks and allow BMX use in blocks 187, 188 and 192, as a buffer between the ATV park and the residential areas.

Block 218, 219 and 221 (behind Town Recreation Center) – This area is difficult to develop due to the rocky terrain. There are existing trails on the property; however, there appears to be no right-of-way access for motorized vehicles, which protects the site. The trails provide linkage between the Recreation Center and surrounding homes, thus could be a safe route for kids. A portion of the property is fenced—need to check ownership.

Block 216 (in front of the Recreation Center) – This hill would be difficult to develop and provides beautiful views of Town. Recommend that it be preserved as open space and part of the Recreation Center property.

Blocks 155, 187, 188 and 192 – This area has potential for development but may also be needed as a buffer if a BMX/ATV park is developed. This property could be traded for property along Mountain View Road that is not as developable, which could then be preserved as open space.

Blocks 78, 79, 82, 114 and 115 – This area has potential for development depending upon the proximity of water and sewer lines. Right-of-ways providing access to these blocks would need to remain platted. Also recommend preserving an easement for the railroad trail (see below), which crosses some of these blocks.

Blocks 51 and 76 – Contain a riparian area worthy of preservation.

Blocks 44, 45 and 46 – Developable area if accessed from Rio Vicente Subdivision. May consider trading this area with Rio Vicente owners for more property along Big Ditch.

Blocks 39 and 41 – Contain an old dump, hilly terrain.

Blocks 47, 80, 81, 116 and 117 – No access, steep, tie in with railroad corridor (see below). The area does have potential as a viewshed.

Vecinos Unidos Park (in front of CODC) – In 1997, the Town traded property with Tom Turner to provide property to CODC for the pellet plant and a park, named "Vecinos Unidos." A local landscape architect developed a plan for the park and a draft memorandum of understanding was developed that allowed CODC to develop the park, with assistance from the Town; however, the MOU was apparently not adopted and no further action was taken by the Town or CODC. A neighborhood group volunteered to maintain the park but disbanded due to the lack of action.

Planning Department staff recommends looking into rewriting a MOU with CODC and reorganizing the neighborhood group to finish construction of the park.

Brewer Hill Trail -- There is a possibility of establishing a trail system along the old railroad corridor and power line easement, that would arc along west side of Mountain View Road, from 10th Street down to Broadway and Gold Streets. Trail linkages could be provided using existing, unpaved right-of-ways. There are existing trails currently being used by Mountain View residents to access downtown. There could also be a link to the future Big Ditch Trail.

Street vacations -- The Town should consider vacating the unimproved and unneeded streets in this area which are part of the original street grid established by the Fraser Survey. Due to the hilly terrain and steep grades, it is unlikely the Town will ever improve some of these streets. The Town could preserve needed utility and drainage easements and vacate the unneeded platted streets.

Examples of Trails and Open Space Protection Tools (Attachment to Section 5)

This attachment provides examples of the tools discussed in Section 5 of the *Plan*. The section number provided corresponds to the section number in the *Plan*.

5.1.2 Acquisition of Development Rights – Taos Land Trust, New Mexico

The Taos Land Trust, a nonprofit, non-governmental organization is working to protect open spaces in north central New Mexico with agricultural value, scenic vistas, significant habitat, or historical sites. Since beginning operations in 1991, the Taos Land Trust has preserved more than 5,342 acres by negotiating the acquisition of development rights on 25 separate parcels. The Land Trust intends to hold and monitor conservation easements on each of these properties – and others as opportunities arise - in perpetuity.

Similarly to hundreds of other land trusts around the country, the Taos Land Trust plays effective roles in presenting conservation easement options to land owners and assumes the long-term responsibility of inspecting and enforcing the provisions of the easement. However, landowners maintain the primary responsibility for land management and their immediate connections to the land.

The Taos Land Trust uses a generic Deed of Conservation Easement as a basis for negotiating and formalizing specific agreements with individual landowners. Key elements of the model deed include:

- Description of conservation values of the property – agricultural, scenic, habitat and/or historic/archeological – including a Baseline Documentation Report prepared by the Trust with the cooperation of the Landowner documenting the open space characteristics.

- Description of conservation purposes and public benefits of the easement that are consistent with the current uses and improvements of the property.

- Voluntary conveyance of the perpetual land use easement from the landowner to the Land Trust

- Definition of Prohibited acts that require the Land Trust's notification and approval. These may include new construction, subdivision, separation of water rights from the land, commercial timber harvesting, installation of new utilities or roads, ranching and agriculture practices that adversely impact the conservation values of the property (it is the expressed intent of the Land Trust to flexibly permit the continuation of

ranching and agriculture), paving, mining, dumping, commercial/industrial activities, and signs other than property markers.

- Statement that the Conservation Easement in no way allows or encourages public access.

- Procedures for annual inspection and enforcement, transfer of the easement, transfer of the property, and amendments to the easement as appropriate or necessary.

5.1.3 Transfer of Development Rights – West Valley City, Utah

West Valley City, like most other communities in Salt Lake County, Utah, has experienced rapid growth in recent years, raising community concerns about the loss of wetland and upland habitats and other natural open space. In an effort to increase public open space and discourage development of environmentally sensitive lands, the City adopted an Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) ordinance in April, 2000.

The West Valley City TDR ordinance allows development rights to be transferred from designated sending sites (natural open spaces) to designated receiving sites that can appropriately accommodate higher density development. Sending and Receiving sites are defined and mapped in a TDR Overlay Zone. The number of development credits available to a sending site parcel range from 2-4 credits per acre depending on the location of the parcel and if the property remains private or is dedicated to the City (allowing for public use). All transfers or sales of development rights are recorded by the City. A sending property owner receives a Development Credit Certificate and a conservation easement is recorded on the sending parcel. Residential developers with eligible receiving sites can increase the density of development above the levels permitted under base zoning by transferring development credits. In an effort to ensure quality development all residential developments using TDR's are required to meet a number of criteria, including providing for landscaped open space and trail systems within the development.

Some communities (e.g. Calvert County, MD) have established revolving loan programs in conjunction with a TDR program to allow conservation oriented organizations to purchase open space and repay the loan (at least in part) by selling development rights. The sale of development rights from publicly owned lands can also help to finance a local government's trails and open space protection program. Santa Fe County adopted the first TDR ordinance in New Mexico in June 2001.

5.1.4 Acquisition of Trail Easements – Forest Trust, Santa Fe, New Mexico

In the 1980's and 1990's, a diverse group of citizens became increasingly concerned that new residential development was resulting in a loss of public access to traditional trails through private and National Forest lands in the foothills adjacent to the City of Santa Fe. Disputes flared up as to the rights of the public to prescriptive easements crossing private

property. One solution pursued by the Forest Trust, a non-profit, non-governmental organization, has been to negotiate the conveyance of formal trail easements from private landowners to the Trust.

Two relatively simple legal documents provided a framework for this conveyance:

1. An Access Agreement under which the landowner agrees to provide an easement of a specified width in a defined location across his property for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a recreational trail, restricted to non-motorized use. The owner also agrees to not construct a fence or wall within a specified distance of the centerline of the easement.

2. A grant of easement and quitclaim deed formally transferred a deed of trail easement to the Forest Trust only for the purposes established in the Access Agreement.

In the specific case of the Atalaya Trail, the Forest Trust committed to transferring the title to trail easements to the US Forest Service and/or the City of Santa Fe if either entity agreed to accept the easement. This arrangement was supported by both landowners and the Forest Trust as a way to convey long-term management responsibilities to an organization better suited to that role. Subsequent agreements have been established that assign the trails easements along this corridor to the US Forest Service.

5.1.7 Planned Development – Santa Fe Community College District, New Mexico

As an outgrowth of many discussions about preferred growth scenarios in the greater metropolitan area around the City of Santa Fe, the 1999 Santa Fe County Growth Management Plan identified a "New Community District" south of Santa Fe. The vision for the district was to promote the positive attributes of traditional community land use patterns (as compared to large lot subdivisions) including protection of open space and walkability. The Santa Fe Community College District - an area of approximately 17,100 acres, of which approximately 14,700 acres were undeveloped - was identified as a planning district in which more compact development could be focussed outside of the existing urban area over the next 20 years or longer.

The Santa Fe Community College District was targeted for planned, clustered development because of a combination of ongoing development pressures; existing or planned infrastructure (roads and water utilities); existing or potential employment, educational, and cultural centers; and an expressed willingness of land owners to develop their property in a more compact village manner. Interest was heightened by the recent success of a planned subdivision within the district the "Village at Rancho Viejo". This development - in contrast to more standard subdivisions with average lot sizes of 2+ acres - received development approval for 314 dwelling units on 300 acres, with 60% of the land dedicated as open space, a planned trails system, and other community amenities. By 1999, less than two years from opening, the Village had already achieved a total buildout of 45%, a rate unmatched by recent experience elsewhere in the County.

From 1999-2000, a planning committee consisting of landowners, neighbors, environmental groups, managers of local institutions, development project consultants, and County staff worked to develop the Santa Fe Community College District Plan. The plan, adopted by County resolution and ordinance in 2000, lays out a multi-faceted vision for long-term development. Key elements include:

- land use planning based on the natural landscape;
- provisions for protected open space, parks, and trails;
- a circulation and connections plan incorporating trails and transit
- infrastructure systems (water, wastewater, drainage, utilities, telecommunications)
- plans for schools and community services and facilities
- economic development strategies
- sustainable design principles
- affordable housing
- operations and maintenance plans

The land use plan proposes a continuous system of natural open space largely comprised of arroyos and drainageways, important wildlife habitat, and important cultural resource areas. New development is required to set aside these areas plus additional open space parcels to total 50% of the development area in dedicated open space. The plan calls for adoption of a more detailed District ordinance that will provide detailed definitions, criteria, and requirements for dedicated open space, a process to review specific development proposals, and options for transferring open space obligations from properties that may more appropriated have lesser or greater open space than the 50% requirement calls for. It also recognizes that an entity needs to be created within the District to manage and maintain dedicated open space.

The District Trails Plan maps out district wide trail corridors that are interned to be the backbone of a trail system connecting the major roadways and arroyos. Village and neighborhood trails and trailheads are also proposed for incorporation into individual development proposals to provide access to the open space, neighborhood centers, campuses, and community facilities. These trails will be established through dedicated easements. Again the plan calls for the more detailed District ordinance and County policies to establish criteria for trails easements, development standards and guidelines for specific trails easement agreements with individual property owners.

5.2.1 Subdivision/development requirements- Eastern Pima County Trails System, Arizona

The Eastern Pima County Trails System Master Plan was originally adopted by County resolution in 1989 as a guide for the implementation of a comprehensive public trails system. At that time, County staff was directed to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners proposed ordinances necessary to enact the plan. Over the course of the next several years, while significant progress was made in developing and protecting public trails, it became clear that new developments were continuing to eliminate important trail opportunities. In 1996, the Pima County Parks and Recreation Department

completed a planning process to update and revise the plan. The revised Master Plan was used as the basis for important amendments to the existing land use ordinances. All proposed new subdivisions or rezoning changes are required to reserve hiking, biking, and equestrian trails easements or rights of way when the property in question includes trails designated on the Trails System Master Plan. Some flexibility is provided for, in that the Parks and Recreation Director can approve an alternative corridor or waive the trail requirements entirely if exceptional conditions require relocation or deletion of the trail or it is determined that sufficient trails already exist in the area.

These requirements have greatly enhanced the County's ability to protect public trails access as new developments proceed. Based on plans presented by the landowners, County staff is able to negotiate specific agreements tailored to each property. These agreements typically include details on the locations, size, development, signage, use, and long term management of the trail easement and can also incorporate improved trailhead access or parks. While there are guidelines in place, there are no absolute requirements regarding any of these elements. As a result, the implementation of the ordinance requires a significant staff commitment and it can be substantially influenced by political factors.

5.2.2 Open Space Zoning – Tumwater, Washington

In an effort to meet the needs of the community as they relate to open space and recreational facilities, the City of Tumwater established an open space zone district, governed by a relatively simple ordinance. The stated intent of the open space district indicates that the primary focus is on lands of an institutional nature such as parks for active and passive recreation, cemeteries and golf courses. However, the district includes both public and private lands and attempts to address the potential for joint usage of facilities not traditionally regarded as open space such as stormwater.

The ordinance strives to protect the open space lands within the district by restricting their future uses to three categories of allowable activities:

1. Permitted uses - Parks and other related active and passive recreation facilities; agricultural uses subject to conservation requirements; support facilities; cemeteries located outside of the 100 year floodplain; golf courses; stormwater retention/detention ponds and conveyance facilities; camp facilities; and residences existing prior to January 1, 1996.

2. Accessory uses - Residential uses, located outside of the 100-year floodplain, as an accessory use to agricultural uses; caretaker dwellings, located outside of the 100-year floodplain; structures needed to support permitted uses; and wireless communication antenna not exceeding the height of the principal building on the property.

3. Conditional uses - Single-family residence located outside of the 100-year flood plain on a parcel no smaller than 5 acres; and campgrounds or recreational vehicle parks.

While the district and ordinance is limited in scope it allows for relatively straight forward protection of some forms of open space.

5.2.2 Open Space Zoning – El Dorado County, California

El Dorado County, a largely rural, agricultural, but rapidly growing County in central California, established multi-faceted open space districts to address several key growth management issues:

- Preventing adverse impacts from inappropriate development in areas not suitable for development.
- Managing the use of land that has been set aside as protected open space.
- Protecting critical watersheds, riparian zones, and aquifers in order to enhance their importance as wildlife habitat, water purification function, and scenic value.
- Protecting areas of critical wildlife habitat including deer winter, summer and fawning ranges; deer migration routes; riparian habitat; lake shore habitat; fish spawning areas; habitats for rare, threatened, and endangered species; wetlands; wildlife corridors; and diverse wildlife habitat.
- Enhancing the County's rural character, commercial agriculture, forestry and other productive uses, and the enjoyment of its scenic beauty and recreational opportunities.

In order to accomplish these diverse goals, the Open Space ordinance defined and mapped five distinct open space districts. While it was recognized that open space lands may serve more than one purpose, they were assigned to these districts based on the primary purpose for which the open space was established as follows:

1. **Agricultural Open Space (OS-A):** - agricultural lands covered by an open space easement or other protective restrictions.

2. **Habitat Open Space (OS-H):** critical wildlife habitats that are covered by an open space easement or as a part of a planned development, specific plan, or other protective restrictions. Such lands may include, but are not limited to, rare and endangered plant or animal habitat, critical winter deer range and migration corridors, and riparian areas.

3. **Recreational Open Space (OS-R):** land protected primarily for passive recreational purposes as a part of a planned development, specific plan, or other protective restrictions.

4. **Visual Open Space (OS-V):** land set aside primarily for protection of visual resources as a part of a planned development or along a designated scenic corridor.

5. **Watershed Open Space (OS-W):** watersheds and groundwater recharge areas that are protected by an open space easement or as a part of a planned development or other protective restrictions.

Parcels within any of the Open Space districts may not be subdivided unless it has been determined by the County that a division of an open space parcel is necessary to enhance the purpose for which it was created. Specific limits are placed on building heights, minimum setbacks, and signs. In addition, Permitted uses and development standards for each district are defined in the following table:

TABLE 1 - OPEN SPACE ZONE DISTRICTS USE MATRIX

USE TYPE	OS-A	OS-H	OS-R	OS-V	OS-W
Recreation and Open Space					
Hiking and Equestrian Trail	P	P	P	P	P
Hunting Club, Farm or Facility	S	-	S	-	-
Marina, Non-Motorized Craft	-	-	S	-	S
Picnic Area	A	A	P	A	A
Private Recreation Area	-	-	S	-	-
Resource Protection and Restoration	P	P	P	P	P
Riding Stables	S	-	S	-	-
River Put-In and Take-Out	-	-	S	S	S
Ski Area	-	-	S	-	-
Snowplay Area	-	-	S	S	S
Special Events, Temporary	T	-	T	-	-
Trail Head Parking and Staging Area	S	S	P	S	S
Agricultural					
Cropland	P	-	-	-	-
Grazing	P	-	P	P	P
Orchards and Vineyards	P	-	-	-	-
Packing, On-Site	S	-	-	-	-
Processing	S	-	-	-	-
Produce Sales	S	-	-	-	-
Timber Production	P	P	P	S	P
Industrial					
Mineral Exploration	S	-	S	-	S
Mining	S	-	S	-	S
Civic					
Cemeteries, Public	S	-	S	S	-
Parks, Day Use	-	-	S	S	S
Utility and Communication					
Public Utility Structure and Service Minor Utility Structure	S	-	S	S	S

"P" Permitted use;
"A" Use permitted subject to issuance of an administrative permit;

"T" Use permitted subject to issuance of a temporary use permit;
"S" Use permitted subject to issuance of a special use permit;
Use types not listed, or designated by a dash (-), are not permitted in that zone district.

5.2.4 Current Use Tax Valuations – New Hampshire

Tax assessments for qualifying land can be based on current use rather than development potential. Reduced tax rates for land retained in agricultural and forest uses are common examples of preferential assessments intended to promote desirable land uses.

Some states have broadened this concept to more generally allow property owners of undeveloped land to petition for taxation based on current use valuation on a case-by-case basis. This can encourage landowners – particularly cash-poor and/or conservation minded owners who might otherwise need to develop their land to manage the tax burden - to maintain land in an undeveloped state. Often a penalty is assessed when the enrolled property is converted to another use. This may be a rollback tax – the sum of the difference between full and current us assessments over the period of enrollment – or a land use change tax – some portion of the full value of the property. In addition many current use assessment programs require that landowners give the local taxing jurisdiction (municipality or county) first right of refusal if the property goes up for sale.

In New Hampshire, under state law, any application from owners of open space that qualifies under the rules of the statewide Current Use Advisory Board must receive a current use valuation by the local tax assessor. (This is currently not a local option.) About half of the state's 4.4 million eligible acres are assessed at use value. When the land is removed from its current use, a land use change tax of 10% of the full value of the property is imposed. State legislation also allows municipalities to dedicate all or part of the land use change tax to a conservation fund.

Current use assessments can help to keep large tracts of private open space undeveloped while the land is enrolled in the program. However, it is only a temporary measure – landowners can withdraw at any time and financial inducements for development can outweigh the tax savings yielded from current use assessments. Local taxing jurisdictions may also be reluctant to adopt current use assessments because they fear reducing a tax base already stretched to provide local services. The long-term increased cost of services associated with the conversion of undeveloped land should also be taken into account.