

7 The Plan – Recommendations for Parks and Major Public Open Space

7.1 Introduction

East Gateway's parks and open space are essential to community health and well-being, providing spaces for exercise and recreation coupled with green and wild places of visual relief within the urban fabric. This chapter includes recommendations for improvements and expansions to existing parks, development of new parks and acquisition and development of Major Public Open Space to meet existing and future community needs.

A map with recommendations will be included in the next draft of the plan.

7.2 Plan Goal Addressed by Parks and Open Space Proposals

Goal 5 – Provide accessible parks, Major Public Open Space and community programs that serve the entire East Gateway community.

The Plan proposes expansions and further development of existing parks to improve outdoor recreation opportunities for East Gateway residents.

The Plan proposes development of additional parks in areas that are underserved by park facilities.

The Plan proposes continued acquisition of Major Public Open Space within and close to the Tijeras Arroyo, including development of access points and trails.

7.3 Recommendations

Parks

To provide a broader range of parks and recreation amenities to East Gateway, the Sector Development Plan recommends the following projects:

- **Proposed Expansion of Sandia Vista Park:** The New Mexico Department of Transportation holds land just south of I-40 and adjacent to Sandia Vista Park. This parcel is appropriate for park expansion, including playfields. The City should work with NMDOT to explore feasibility of a land trade or purchase. Additional funding will be required for site improvements.
- **Proposed Expansion of Park Uses at Singing Arrow Park:** if the archeological site at the park can be protected, consider uses of the site that will not adversely affect it, such as natural vegetation, carefully placed trails, interpretive signage, and outdoor furniture.
- **Continued Development of Manzano Mesa Park:** this plan recommends continued, ongoing development of playfields and recreation amenities at

the park to serve the East Gateway and surrounding areas.

- **Proposed Park in Four Hills Subdivision:** acquire approximately two-acre site that includes a well from Four Hills Country Club. Develop the site as a neighborhood park.
- **Proposed Park on Central Avenue East of Eubank Boulevard:** Work with the State of New Mexico to determine the feasibility of acquiring State-owned land on the south side of Central Avenue just east of Eubank Boulevard. Long a mobile home park, many of the mobile homes have been removed, leaving a site with mature trees that area residents have suggested could be appropriate for a park.

Major Public Open Space

This plan recommends the following acquisition and access projects to improve the open space experience for Albuquerque residents:

- **Tijeras Arroyo:** Continue to acquire private land parcels within the arroyo as a means to consolidate public ownership.
- **La Cañada Park:** Develop La Cañada Park as Major Public Open Space, using a portion of the land to accommodate a small number of parking spaces, as well as a trailhead/access point to Tijeras Arroyo. Acquire additional land if possible. Work with surrounding private landowners to minimize negative impacts on their property.
- **Access Points to Tijeras Arroyo:** Formalize Access to the Tijeras Arroyo on public land. In the long term, formalize public access locations to the arroyo are recommended at Singing Arrow Park (west side) and at Four Hills Road.
- **Open Space property to the east of the plan area:** To continue the acquisition of open space lands in and around the Tijeras Arroyo and to create access between the Manzanos and Sandias, the City should continue its collaboration with the Trust for Public Lands and Bernalillo County. The project makes feasible a “gateway” that could include a museum or historic interpretative center, as well as a pedestrian bridge over I-40 that would link the two mountain ranges that converge at Tijeras Canyon.