



**Environmental
Planning
Commission**

**Agenda Number: XX
Project Numbers: 06EPC-00697
06EPC-00698
Case #: 1004905**

Staff Report

Agent	City of Albuquerque – Council Services
Applicant	City of Albuquerque
Request(s)	Approval of Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan
Legal Description	See below:
Location	North: Along a straight line created by the extension of a line between Ventana West and Universe on Paseo del Norte, continue along the line east to the Petroglyph National Monument. South: Boundary of the City Open Space and the City of Albuquerque, and along the boundary of SAD 227. West: Along the Western boundary of subdivision <i>The Trails Unit 3</i> , then West along the edge of the Petroglyph National Monument (the Monument) and South along the Monument border, continue South along the boundary of the City and the City of Albuquerque Open Space. East: The boundary of SAD 227, then North along the boundary of the Petroglyph National Monument.
Size	Approximately 3,532 acres
Existing Zoning	A1, R1, RD, RO20, SU1 PRD, SU1 C1 (See Exhibit 9 of Plan)
Proposed Zoning	Town Center, Village Center, Neighborhood Mixed Use, Urban Residential, Suburban Residential,

Staff Recommendation

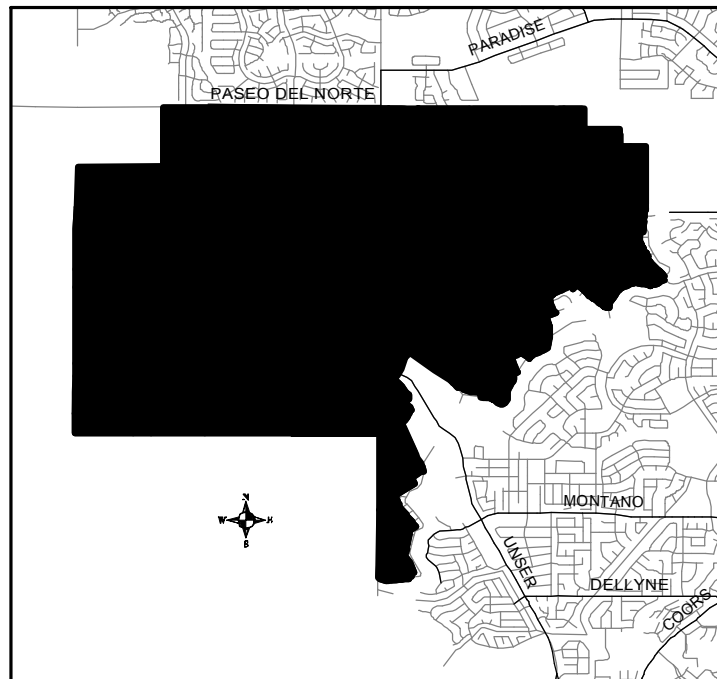
APPROVAL BASED UPON CONDITIONS

Staff Planner

**Louis Colombo, Deputy Director,
City Council Services**

Executive Residential, Rural Residential, Office Campus, Schools, Park, Open Space / Buffer, Open Space. (See Exhibit 22 of Plan)

Legal Description: From the Northwest corner of the map below go South along the Western boundary of subdivision *The Trails Unit 3*, then West along the edge of the Petroglyph National Monument (PNM) and South along the PNM border, continue South along the boundary of the City and the City of Albuquerque Open Space, then east along the boundary of the City Open Space and the City of Albuquerque, South along the boundary of SAD 227, then east and north along the boundary of the Petroglyph National Monument, then due West along a straight line created by the extension of the line between Ventana West and Universe on Paseo del Norte, continue West along Paseo del Norte/easement to the starting point.



Summary of Analysis

- The Volcano Heights Area covers over 3,500 acres and was not phased for development, except under certain conditions, until 2015-2035 according to the West Side Strategic Plan. The Land Use Assumptions adopted by the City as part of PGS implementation call for a total of 2,890 to 3,056 dwelling units in Volcano Heights by 2025. However, 2,700 dwelling units already are “in the pipeline” with vested development rights, according to City Legal. Consequently, the adopted growth policy frameworks were not effective in controlling development approvals.

The City of Albuquerque intends to complete Paseo del Norte and Unser Boulevard approximately by 2010, or about 4 years from the date of this writing. This will increase significantly the development pressure on the area.

In short, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan including its zone changes and design standards are extremely timely in terms of insuring a high quality and functional development pattern in the Volcano Heights area that is consistent with adopted policies.

- There are scores of policies that affect the Volcano Heights Area in the Comprehensive Plan, Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), West Side Strategic Plan, the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan, and EC-35. These policies are identified in the report below, as is the compatibility of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan with them.

Some of the key policies include: building “community” where citizens can live, work, shop, play, and learn together; allowing full range of urban land uses; organizing the land uses within mixed-use and higher density (height, mass, and volume) Activity Centers, Community Centers and Neighborhood Centers; Centers to include shopping, schools, employment, entertainment, civic uses, parks / plazas; providing for a wide variety of housing choice including multi-unit housing and affordability, clustering housing to provide more open space; providing significant public open space; implementing a system of neighborhood parks; providing opportunities for large-scale employment, concentrated in Activity Centers, so that cross river trips are minimized; establishing development design guidelines including muted colors and low reflectivity; balancing land use and transportation systems so that transit is supported, especially in Centers and Corridors; increasing attractive transportation mode choice including walking, biking, transit, HOV; preserving the basalt flows and escarpment; preserving and protecting the Petroglyph National Monument; considering as an entire unit the escarpment, volcanoes, the mesa top, and the arroyos; prohibiting continuous perimeter walls; connecting open space features; creating a multi-purpose network of open space area and trails along arroyos; treating arroyos in a naturalistic way; protecting and enhancing unique vistas;

utilizing native vegetation; creating planning links associating development with transportation and new school facilities.

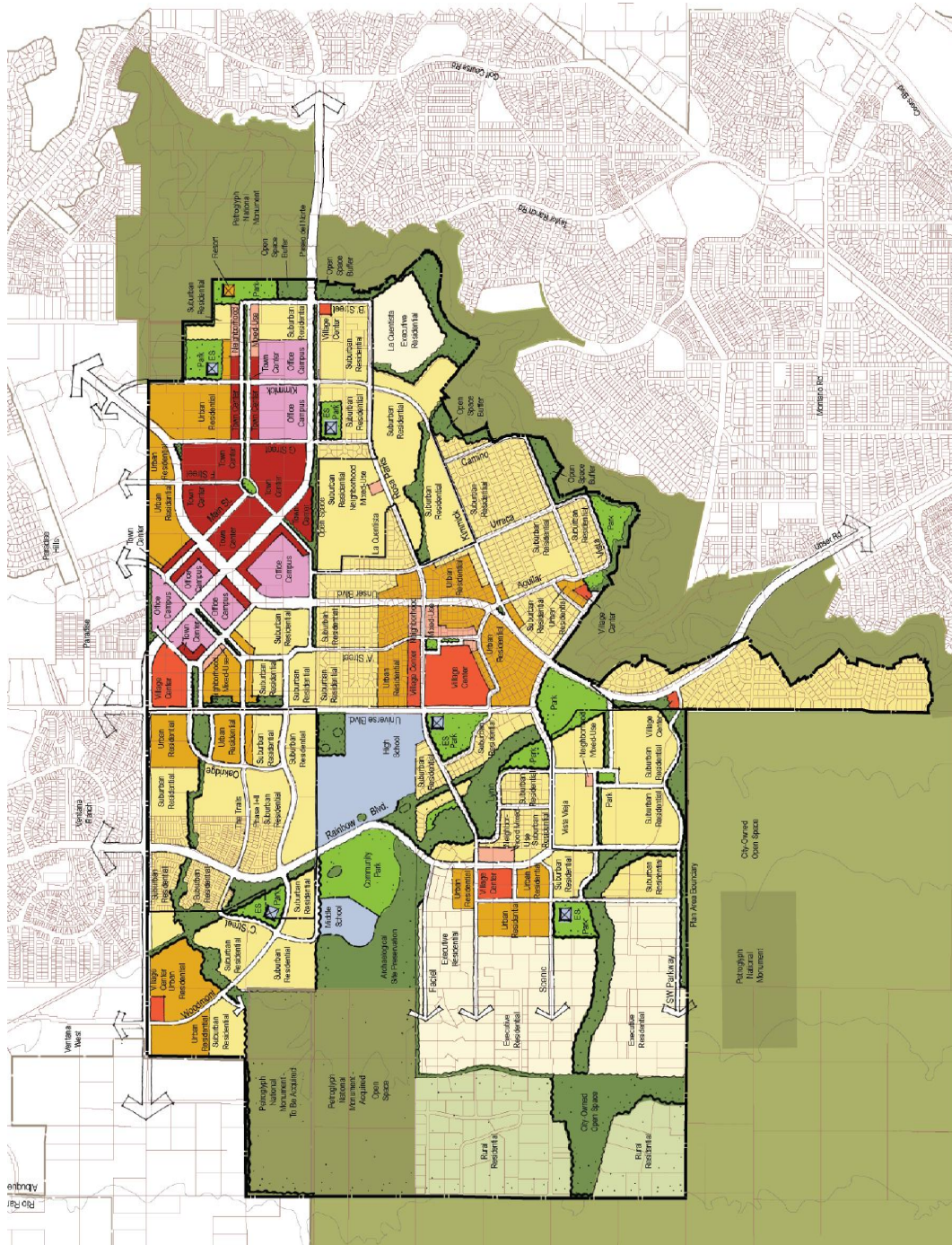
- **The proposed Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is consistent with the policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan, Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), West Side Strategic Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan.**
- **The existing pattern of zoning in the Volcano Height area (almost entirely R1, RD, RO20, and A1) will result in development that will fail to meet the policies contained in Comprehensive Plan, Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), West Side Strategic Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan. Furthermore, development according to the existing zoning is likely to increase materially west side traffic congestion, perhaps even causing failure of the roadway system.**
- **The zone map changes proposed in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan comply with the requirements of Resolution 270-1980 based upon “changed conditions” and “community benefit”.**



City Departments and other interested agencies reviewed this application from 15/5/06 to 30/5/06.
Agency comments were used in the preparation of this report and begin on page #.

Existing Comprehensive Plan Designations and Zoning

Proposed Land Uses and Zoning



AREA CHARACTERISTICS AND ZONING HISTORY

Surrounding zoning, plan designations, and land uses:

	Zoning	Comprehensive Plan Area; Applicable Rank II & III Plans	Land Use
Site	Town Center, Village Center, Neighborhood Mixed Use, Urban Residential, Suburban Residential, Executive Residential, Rural Residential, Office Campus, Schools, Park, Open Space / Buffer, Open Space.	* Established Urban, Developing Urban, Reserve * Planned Growth Strategy * West Side Strategic Plan * Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan * Executive Communication 35	Vacant, tract suburban residential, custom built housing in SAD 227
North	A1, RLT, R2, SU1 PRD, RD	Developing Urban, Developed Urban	Largely tract suburban residential
South	City Open Space, Petroglyph Natl. Monument	Open Space, Reserve	Open space
East	R1, RLT	Established Urban	Petroglyph National Monument Escarpment, tract suburban residential, scattered neighborhood commercial
West	City Open Space, Petroglyph Natl Monument, A1	Open Space, Reserve; Developing Urban	Open space

Background, History and Context. (The reader is referred to Section 1 – Planning Framework in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan)

Plan Area

The Volcano Heights Plan Area covers 3,532 acres. The area is surrounded on three sides by more than 7,000 acres of open space under City, State and Federal jurisdictions. The shape of the open space holdings includes large tracts and long, narrow bands of escarpment. The Plan Area includes portions of the land the US Congress set aside as Petroglyph National Monument (the “Monument”) in 1990. From east to west, the Plan Area extends from the volcanic escarpment to the open space surrounding five dormant volcanoes. From north to south, the Plan Area extends from Paseo del Norte to city open space and the Monument.

Volcano Heights lies between publicly owned lands preserving the escarpment and lands protecting the volcanoes and geologic windows. Arroyos generally run west to east between these features.

Volcano Heights provides a unique portal into New Mexico's rich interplay of cultures. Most Albuquerque residents recognize the Monument as an important asset and associate it with the five volcanic cones and the 17-mile Escarpment containing petroglyphs.

There are more than 20,000 petroglyphs dating from 700 to 3,000 years ago carved here and in other places within the Monument. A 2002 National Park Service ethnographic study--*"That Place People Talk About: The Petroglyph National Monument, Ethnographic Landscape Report,"* illuminates the still active religious and cultural value these sacred places hold for many Native Americans. This rich document explores the meaning of the West Mesa volcanic area for Pueblo and other Native American and Hispanic people.

The Monument legal boundaries were influenced by financial resources available for land acquisition. For the Pueblos, however, the site encompasses the entire lava bed, the volcanoes' caves and shafts, the petroglyphs, and additional features of comparable importance in meaning and use. Anschuetz 3.31, 9.9 writes: "Land-use planning in the face of development, to be successful, needs to consider how to *sustain* extant landscape traditions within an ongoing historical process"

Drainage Channels

The Monument and affiliated City open space create a major natural ecosystem for Albuquerque. At the heart of the ecosystem are the Boca Negra/Mariposa arroyos, making up a 21 square-mile watershed. The watershed is generally bounded by the Calabacillas Arroyo basin on the north and the San Antonio arroyo basin on the south.

Open Space Edge

The Monument has miles of edge and adjacent private lands are in a natural state. Currently people access the open space anywhere along the edge and can take in exceptional views of the volcanoes, the Rio Grande valley and the Sandia Mountains, much as people have done for thousands of years.

Platting and Zoning

Between the northernmost volcanoes and the escarpment lie approximately 1700 small vacant lots in a subdivision platted in the 1960s known as "Volcano Cliffs." These lots were sold to individual investors during the 1960s and '70s according to a 1967 master plan, and in 1981 the City annexed the Volcano Cliffs subdivision. Approximately 1,400 of these lots are under 1 acre in size.

The Plan Area, consisting of more than 3,500 acres, is zoned almost entirely for single-family development (R1 and RD) at average suburban densities of 5 dwelling units per acre. R1 is the

underlying zoning for Established Urban areas designated in the Comprehensive Plan and RD is the underlying zoning for Developing Urban areas.

Development Trends

The promise of water service has enabled property owners and developers to begin the development process pursuant to current residential zoning. Small property owners have begun to cooperate in assembling land for subdivisions, paying over time for local infrastructure---roads, water, sewer and hydrology service---through Special Assessment Districts. In 2002 property owners petitioned and formed SAD 227 and development is beginning in Units 2, 5 and 24. Property owners are interested in continuing the process of private assembly to create additional SADs for areas within the Volcano Cliffs subdivision.

In many other areas developers are actively acquiring contiguous tracts and developing master plans. Longford Homes, Vista Vieja and La Cuentista are examples of subdivisions approved or in the approval process with the City of Albuquerque. The La Ventana subdivision is in the development review process with Bernalillo County.

Trend Scenario Assumptions show that the expected total build-out for the plan area under current zoning, including the four subdivisions, the individual platted lots and the commercial areas adjacent to Paseo del Norte and Unser, is roughly 12,000 dwelling units.

Of the 3,800 dwelling units planned for current subdivisions, 2,700 are already “in the pipeline” with vested development rights, according to the City of Albuquerque, and have been exempted from development moratoriums. A population of over 30,000 residents within the plan area is projected under current zoning.

Adjacent development

Directly to the northwest lies Quail Ranch, a major development currently within the City of Rio Rancho. Zoning for Quail Ranch consists of approximately 53% single-family residential (3.5-6 DU/acre), 5% estate residential (1 DU/acre, 4% multi-family residential (20 DU/acre), 15% commercial and light manufacturing, 15% open space, and 8% public facilities. The future development of Quail Ranch and the current and future development of Ventana Ranch together result in approximately 75,000 additional residents, for a total population of 107,000 within and directly impacting the plan area.

Considerations

Single-family residential subdivisions are the pattern for new development in the study area. The current single-use residential zoning militates against integrating a mix of other uses which could make neighborhoods more walkable and convenient (e.g. neighborhood services) by requiring an extra step in the city approval process—preparation of a sector plan for anything other than suburban residential development. Under the current zoning, it is certain that a desirable jobs/ housing balance will not be achieved.

Assuming a workforce need of 1.25 jobs per dwelling means a deficit of 13,000 jobs within the Plan Area under current trends. Including the Quail Ranch and Ventana West developments to the northwest, which are zoned for approximately 23,500 jobs, there is still a deficit of around 24,000 additional jobs needed to provide an adequate job base serving the anticipated population of the plan area and vicinity.

Build-out of the Volcano Heights area almost exclusively with single-family residential subdivisions will increase jobs/ housing imbalances on the West Side, adding to traffic demands and increasing the burden on West Side and east-west transportation systems. Without adequate provision of employment, greater trip internalization, and more emphasis on transit-supportive land uses and road systems on the West Side, traffic congestion and demand for expanded river crossings will increase, perhaps resulting in failure of the system.

Transportation and Transit

Portions of Unser Boulevard, Atrisco Drive, Universe and the western segment of Paseo del Norte are the only primary paved roads presently serving the Plan Area. Major roadway improvements are anticipated by the Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area's (AMPA's) *Long Range Roadway System*. Most notably, extensions to Unser Boulevard and Paseo del Norte (PdN) are planned for completion by 2010.

Increasing regional traffic demands have occurred against a backdrop of rapid suburban growth and increasing travel. In 1970, per capita vehicle-miles traveled were 12.4 miles per day (per Albuquerque Metropolitan Planning Area); by 2000, per capita vehicle-miles had increased to 20.9 miles per day – an increase of 69%.

Regional impacts

Transportation impacts from Volcano Heights development have raised concern. City and regional transportation planners are looking to the planned extensions of Unser and Paseo del Norte (PdN) to alleviate congestion on the West Side, although arterial connections will remain constrained at the Rio Grande and across the Monument escarpment. Near the plan area, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho and Bernalillo County have approved many projects that are moving forward. Low density, single-family residences dominate nearly all of this new growth. Little employment growth has been planned, further contributing to an imbalance of jobs and housing on the West Side, and even greater pressures on the road system.

Transit

Coors Boulevard is designated as the main west side corridor for High Capacity Transit on the MRCOG *Long Range High Capacity Transit System* map. The Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Centers and Corridors Plan shows Unser as an Express Corridor appropriate for limited stop service from Rio Bravo to McMahon north of the plan area. This plan recommends more mixed-use development and greater mixed modal transportation orientation that conflict with the current Express Corridor designation.

City and regional transportation authorities are considering the establishment of a network of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and/or Rapid Bus routes. BRT routes leave open the flexibility of evolving to dedicated lines for light rail in the future. While supportive of the concept, City and regional transportation authorities have not developed guidelines for roadways with dedicated BRT lanes and the current design standards for Unser prevents this.

Long Range Roadway System

The Long Range Roadway System designates Unser and Paseo del Norte as a Limited-Access Principal arterials, with a right-of-way of 156'.

The Long Range Roadway System designates Universe as a Minor Arterial, with a right-of-way of 86'.

The Long Range Roadway System designates Rainbow as a Principal Arterial, with a right-of-way of 124' (Established & Developing Urban) or 156' (elsewhere).

Collector and Major Local streets have not been designated in the Volcano Heights area within The Long Range Roadway System.

Public Facilities/Community Services

Water Utilities

Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority. Many small landowners in the Volcano Cliffs subdivision have held their property for 30-40 years, relying on platting executed in 1967 and anticipating that the City of Albuquerque would provide services.

In 1998, the City approved a development agreement (EC-35) that authorized a water pump station to be constructed above the escarpment. The pump station was paid for by property owners, to be reimbursed with enterprise fund development fees over time as other projects are connected. EC-35 set conditions and requirements to be met by future developers in order to receive water services through connection to the pump station.

Construction of the water facility has provided water availability to serve development in the Volcano Cliffs area. According to a 2003 design analysis, expansion of the existing pressurized system (closed loop system) installed pursuant to the 1998 agreement can serve up to 5,200 dwelling units above the escarpment

According to the Albuquerque/ Bernalillo County Water Authority's Utility Development Section, the closed loop pressurized system should be considered as a temporary interim system until the Water Authority can construct a permanent reservoir in accordance with the Water Master Plan.

New Mexico Utilities, a privately owned utility company, provides water service and wastewater collection to the large Longford Homes subdivision now being developed south of Paseo del Norte and to other areas north of the service boundary of the Albuquerque/ Bernalillo County Water Authority. More recently the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority revoked the water return flow credits to New Mexico Utilities placing them in a deficit situation of several thousand acre feet of water rights. It is unclear how the N.M. State Engineer will bring New Mexico Utilities into compliance with regard possessing sufficient water rights.

Transportation Utilities

Unser Boulevard has been constructed up the Volcanic Escarpment north to approximately Atrisco Drive where traffic is channeled north along temporary Universe Blvd. to Paseo del Norte and beyond. Paseo del Norte has been constructed up the Volcanic Escapement where traffic is channeled west utilizing permanent and temporary pavements.

Stormwater

The AMAFCA master plan for stormwater drainage provides for a regional detention basin at Unser and Universe, but does not detail all stormwater facilities The developed watershed channel extends to a small area below the escarpment and into the Mariposa Detention Basin.

Schools

The Albuquerque Public Schools is in the development process for a new high school in a tract to the northwest of Universe Blvd and Rose Parks. An APS middle school currently exists just north of the plan area adjacent to Paradise Hill south of Paradise Blvd.

Open Space

As indicated above, the plan area is adjoined on the east, south, and west by City open space and the Petroglyph National Monument.

ANALYSIS OF APPLICABLE ORDINANCES, PLANS AND POLICIES

Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan

1. OPEN SPACE NETWORK

The Goal is to provide visual relief from urbanization and to offer opportunities for education, recreation, cultural activities, and conservation of natural resources by setting aside Major Public Open Space, parks, trail corridors, and open areas throughout the Comprehensive Plan area.

Policy a

Open space lands and waters shall be acquired or regulated as appropriate to serve one or more of the following specific purposes:

- Conservation of natural resources and environmental features
- Provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation
- Shaping of the urban form
- Conservation of archaeological resources
- Provision of trail corridors
- Protection of the public from natural hazards

Policy c

Development in or adjacent to the proposed Open Space network shall be compatible with open space purposes.

Policy d

The City and County shall preserve the volcanoes, key portions of the basalt flow, and the escarpment as part of the Open Space network.

Policy f

A multi-purpose network of open areas and trail corridors along arroyos and appropriate ditches shall be created. Trail corridors shall be acquired, regulated, or appropriately managed to protect natural features, views, drainage and other functions or to link other areas within the Open Space network.

Policy g

Planning and implementation of a system of neighborhood parks and community open areas shall be undertaken to meet a range of needs at different scales.

Policy h

Developing areas shall have neighborhood parks and open areas located to serve the population of the area.

Policy i

The design of parks and other open areas shall incorporate the following criteria:

- Multi-functional use of resources and compatible facilities.
- Maintenance and landscaping appropriate to the location, function, public expectations and intensity of use.
- Integration into residential design for easy accessibility and orientation to encourage use.
- Lighting, site design, or other methods to minimize vandalism.
- Connections between other Open Space network areas and public facilities.

Policy j

Design of neighborhood open areas should tie into other open spaces, where appropriate, to create an Open Space network.

Please refer to VI Open Space for details.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan contains a number of elements that meet the Comprehensive Plan requirements related to Open Space. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

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- *The Escarpment Buffer is expanded at its narrow edge to protect the quality of experience, to foster a peaceful and thoughtful place, to maintain view corridors.*
 - *Open space spines are established along the North and Middle Boca Negra arroyos, using 300' prudent line easements to link the escarpment edge to open space on the west side of the plan area, City open space, Petroglyph National Monument, and the Rio Puerco basin beyond. This will preserve plant colonies located especially along the arroyos and connect animal habitats.*
 - *The open space/ arroyo spines are believed to represent cultural / spiritual paths of contemporary Pueblo Indians and who resided in the now-abandoned villages along the Rio Grande.*
 - *The open space spines will be multi-use facilities with walking and biking trails and will be maintained in a natural condition.*
 - *The northern third of the North Geologic Window is proposed for acquisition.*
 - *The western two-thirds of the State of N.M. lands, along with Paleo-Indian sites on the eastern one-third are proposed for acquisition.*
 - *Development standards are provided to buffer the open space / arroyo / escarpment lands such as height, materials, grading, landscaping, lighting, and adjacency of streets along the open space.*
 - *Scenic Corridors are defined and protected.*
 - *Petroglyphs are protected and larger volcanic rock outcrops are preserved in the lower density residential areas and to the degree feasible in other locations.*
 - *Standards are established for public Conservation Easements in exchange for density bonuses and clustering of housing in the lower density residential areas*
 - *“Development envelopes” are established in the lower density residential areas and the areas outside of the envelopes cannot be disturbed by development, must be maintained in a natural state, and cannot be fenced except to separate public access.*
 - *Two plant lists are provided: one for the areas outside of “Development envelopes” in the lower density residential zones that is based on a plant inventory in the Monument, and the other, that is the City’s water conservation plant list, for within the Development envelopes and in higher density areas,.*
 - *A system of parks is established, often linked to the open space corridors and co-located with school sites.*
 - *The plan area is divided into a series of villages each of which with a mixed-use and higher density core surrounding a public plaza.*

2. RESERVE AREA

The Goal is to allow opportunity for future development of high quality, mixed-use, largely self sufficient planned communities, bounded by permanent open-space, in appropriate outlying areas, and to protect the non-urban development areas as Rural unless such planned communities are developed.

Policy b

Overall gross density shall not exceed three dwelling units per acre, and density transfer (clustering) shall be used to accomplish appropriate urban densities in planned communities while ensuring an open space network within and around them. Within this overall density policy, housing densities and land use mix, open space, infrastructure size and location, and other public services and facilities are to be prescribed through rank two plans or rank three plans.

- Transfer of development rights to local government shall ensure the permanency of the pattern.
- Land which is already in public ownership (whether fee or easement), including Indian lands, is not considered in calculating density, but all other land is counted.
- A carrying capacity analysis of each planned community area will identify constraints and opportunities presented by environmental, historical, cultural, archaeological and infrastructure factors.

The Reserve Area in the Volcano Heights Sector Plan is owned by the State of N.M. and also property included the North Geologic Window within the Petroglyph National Monument. The Albuquerque Public Schools has purchased the eastern 1/3rd of the State Lands (except for the Paleo-Indian sites) and is developing a high school there. The Sector Plan proposes acquiring the remainder of the Reserve Area to be maintained largely as open space and park land. (See Exhibit 22)

5. DEVELOPING AND ESTABLISHED URBAN AREAS

The Goal is to create a quality urban environment, which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work areas, and life styles, while creating a visually pleasing built environment.

Policy a

The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses, resulting in an overall gross density up to 5 dwelling units per acre.

Policy b

Developing Urban Areas shall be subject to special requirements for low-density holding zones to allow for sector planning, special design treatments, and phasing of infrastructure in keeping with capital improvements priorities.

Policy d

The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.

Policy e

New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.

Policy f

Clustering of homes to provide larger shared open areas and houses oriented towards pedestrian or bikeways shall be encouraged.

Policy g

Development shall be carefully designated to conform to topographical features and include trail corridors in the development where appropriate.

Policy h

Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:

- In designated Activity Centers.
- In areas with excellent access to the major street network.
- In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available.
- In areas now predominantly zoned single-family only where it comprises a complete block face and faces onto similar or higher density development; up to 10 dwelling units per net acre.
- In areas where a transition is needed between single-family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas. (See also Policy 7.b relative to Activity.)

Policy i

Employment and service uses shall be located to complement residential areas and shall be sited to minimize adverse effects of noise, lighting, pollution, and traffic on residential environments.

Policy j

Where new commercial development occurs, it should generally be located in existing commercially zoned areas as follows:

- In small neighborhood-oriented centers provided with pedestrian and bicycle access within reasonable distance of residential areas for walking or bicycling.
- In larger area-wide shopping centers located at intersections of arterial streets and provided with access via mass transit; more than one shopping center should be allowed at an intersection only when transportation problems do not result.
- In free-standing retailing and contiguous storefronts along streets in older neighborhoods.

Policy k

Land adjacent to arterial streets shall be planned to minimize harmful effects of traffic; livability and safety of established residential neighborhoods shall be protected in transportation planning and operation.

Policy l

Quality and innovation in design shall be encouraged in all new development; design shall be encouraged which is appropriate to the Plan area.

Policy m

Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.

Policy n

Areas prematurely subdivided and having problems with multiple ownership, platting, inadequate right-of-way, or drainage should be reassembled or sector planned before annexation and service extension is assured.

There are a number of ways in which these policies are addressed in the Volcano Heights Sector Plan. These include the following:

- A full range of uses, in mixed use settings, and residential types are encouraged throughout the plan area. The intent of the plan is create more interesting, diverse, and active places especially in the Town Center, Village Centers, along the Neighborhood Mixed Use corridors through such approaches as mixed-use (including retail, commercial, and entertainment), design standards, somewhat higher densities, pedestrian/bicycle orientation, and mitigating the impacts of traffic. In other words, to make the more urban places - urban. In contrast, the Volcano Heights Sector Plan creates less dense and more natural environments in the lower density residential areas. The intent is to create distinct places that are high quality environments of their own particular natures.*
- The average gross residential density is 3.4 dwelling units per acre in the plan area.*
- Section VII Implementation contains a phasing and timing place for growth. It includes a innovative approach of linking the issuance of residential building permits with the availability of APS elementary schools that is based on the City's recently adopted Adequate Public Facilities regulations. The areas that are in the early phases of growth are either adjacent to the west side development under the escarpment or already have vested development rights according to City Legal.*
- The Volcano Heights area is largely undeveloped at this time. The Sector Plan contains development and design standards that are compatible with proposed adjacent open space lands and parks, the cultural history of the area, and scenic views to the volcanic cones on the west and the Rio Grande and Sandia Mountains to the east. Development, design, and architectural standards are provided in create a quality built environment.*
- The Plan provides density bonuses for clustering housing (and providing a Conservation easement) within Suburban Residential, Executive Residential, and Rural Residential zones.*
- The Volcano Heights Sector Plan is organized according to Traditional Neighborhood Development principles where higher density housing is located within and adjacent to the Village and Town Centers and then residential density tapers to the edges.*
- The existing pattern of uniform and low density zoning in the area (A1, R1, RD), if built-out without amendment, will fail to meet most Comp Plans policies regarding place making, mixed-use, jobs-housing balance, transit orientation, pedestrian orientation, and so on. Furthermore, it will significantly contribute to west side congestion potentially producing failure of the roadway system. Consequently, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan appropriately calls for modification of the existing zoning.*
- Acceptable Building Types (as shown in Table 8 and Exhibit 23 and 24 and regulations) have been established to mitigate adverse effects of noise, lighting, and traffic on residential environments. However, it should be noted that an identified market segment of the population prefers more active mixed-use environments and has a higher tolerance for what might be objectionable in lower density, residential areas.*

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- *The Building Types regulations intentionally direct retail and commercial activities to the Town Center, Village Centers, and Neighborhood Mixed Use areas as part of its place-making effort.*
 - *The Volcano Heights Sector Plan Team made an extra effort to design and test the creation of an Urban Boulevard on Paseo del Norte and Unser adjacent to the Town Center. The nationally recognized transportation engineering firm of Kimley-Horn modeling the transportation network and the specific design of the Urban Boulevard. It was found that a more urban and pedestrian oriented environment could be created while maintaining traffic through-put on these arterials. (See Cross Section 4, Transportation Studies – Kimley-Horn Assessment and Boulevard Design, and Kimley-Horn report attached to review draft of plan).*
 - *The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan complies with the requirement that “Areas prematurely subdivided . . . should be reassembled or sector planned before . . . service extension is assured”. The plan attempts to minimize (but not completely eliminate the possibility of) public reassembly of land and attempts to meet plan objectives through design regulations, incentives, and private reassembly.*

7. ACTIVITY CENTERS

The Goal is to expand and strengthen concentrations of moderate and high-density mixed land use and social/economic activities which reduce urban sprawl, auto travel needs, and service costs, and which enhance the identity of Albuquerque and its communities.

Policy a

Existing and proposed Activity Centers are designated by a Comprehensive Plan map* where appropriate to help shape the built environment in a sustainable development pattern, create mixed use concentrations of interrelated activities that promote transit and pedestrian access both to and within the Activity Center, and maximize cost-effectiveness of City services. Each Activity Center will undergo further analysis that will identify design elements, appropriate uses, transportation service, and other details of implementation. The following table specifies policy objectives for each type. [See table in hard copy Comp Plan]

Policy b

Net densities above 30 dwelling units per acre should generally be within Major Activity Centers; lower net densities in areas surrounding all types of Activity Centers will serve as a transition to residential neighborhoods.

Policy c

Structures whose height, mass or volume would be significantly larger than any others in their surroundings shall be located only in Major Activity Centers to provide for visual variety and functional diversity in the metropolitan area while preserving pleasing vistas and solar access.

Policy d

Size, functional diversity, and supporting market area are the primary determinants for designation as an Activity Center. Smaller Activity Centers serving surrounding neighborhoods may be developed, but are not designated or mapped.

Policy e

New Activity Centers may be designated and added to the Comprehensive Plan through local government review and approval based upon the following criteria:

- The proposed Activity Center's potential for shaping the built environment, consistent with policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Market potential for concentrating activities to higher than average intensities, and potential for promoting infill of vacant land inside the existing urban services boundary.
- Appropriateness of the proposed Activity Center, including location relative to the market area and access/connections including transit service potential.
- Fiscal impact of the proposed Activity Center on City government and the private sector.
- Compatibility of the proposed Activity Center with surrounding neighborhoods.
- Capacity and availability of public services such as transportation, water, and sewer systems to support the Activity Center as proposed.
- Environmental impact of the proposed Activity Center.

Policy f

The most intense uses in Activity Centers shall be located away from nearby low-density residential development and shall be buffered from those residential uses by a transition area of less intensive development.

Policy g

Activity Center locations shown on a Comprehensive Plan map, and their predominate uses in accordance with their unique roles and expected needs of the community, shall be developed in accordance with more specific sub-area planning efforts.

Policy h

Changing zoning to commercial, industrial or office uses for areas outside the designated Activity Centers is discouraged.

Policy i

Multi-unit housing is an appropriate use in Neighborhood, Community and Major Activity Centers.

Policy j

The City will structure capital expenditures and land use regulations in support of creating multi-use Activity Centers, and will promote ongoing public/private cooperation necessary for private market conditions that support the development and functioning of Activity Centers.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is organized around Village Centers and a regional Town Center. The principles guiding this land use organization have been addressed above and need not be repeated here. Some additional items of note include:

- ***The proposed enhanced transit network within the Plan is fully compatible with the higher density system of Centers and Corridors. Bus Rapid Transit and possible future Light Rail are brought within the core of the Town Center and adjoining the Village Centers.***
- ***The Volcano Heights Town Center will need to be identified in the Comprehensive Plan (policy e). More detailed planning for the Town Center, to be reviewed by the EPC, is called for.***

1. Air Quality

Goal: to improve air quality to safeguard public health and enhance the quality of life.

Policy a:

Air quality shall be improved through the enforcement of air quality standards to safeguard public health and welfare.

Policy b: Automobile travel's adverse effects on air quality shall be reduced through a balanced land use/transportation system that promotes the efficient placement of housing, employment and services.

Policy d:

Air quality shall be protected by providing a balanced circulation system that encourages mass transit use and alternative means of transportation while providing sufficient roadway capacity to meet mobility and access needs.

Policy i

Air quality considerations shall be integrated into zoning and land use decisions to prevent new air quality/land use conflicts.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan addresses these policies through:

- ***Land use policies, including mixed uses, higher density along transit centers and corridors, and pedestrian/bicycle orientation, are proposed that will materially reduce vehicular trips and trip lengths.***
- ***The Volcano Heights land use plan includes 18,000 jobs based on the pressing need for better jobs-housing balance on the west side. This compares to a liberally estimated 2,000 jobs for the Trend Alternative reviewed in the plan and under the current zoning.***
- ***Dedicated Transit / HOV lanes are included in the street design for Unser and Paseo del Norte. It is proposed that the Unser design regulations be modified to allow for these dedicated lanes.***
- ***Village and Town Center designs encourage pedestrian and bicycle use.***

2. Water Quality

The Goal is to maintain a dependable, quality supply of water for the urbanized area's needs.

Applicable policies include:

Policy a:

Minimize the potential for contaminants to enter the community water supply.

Policy b:

Water quality degradation resulting from on-site liquid waste disposal systems shall be minimized.

Policy c:

Water quality contamination resulting from solid waste disposal shall be minimized.

Policy d:

Water quality management plans shall be coordinated to assure Bernalillo County's citizens receive adequate water quantity and quality that meets essential needs.

Policy e:

Provide greater emphasis on a total systems approach to water as a valuable resource.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan addresses these policies primarily through:

- *A plan that supports extension of urban water and sewer services instead of wells and septic systems. The potential for multiple septic systems was an environmental threat entailed by the scattered development on the prematurely platted lands of Volcano Cliffs.*
- *Urban solid waste collection is assumed.*
- *The landscaping and Development envelope regulations will significantly reduce water use.*

The Solid Waste Goal “is an economical and environmentally sound method of solid waste disposal which utilizes the energy content and material value of municipal solid waste.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

Planning and implementation of more efficient and economical methods of solid waste collection shall be continued.

Policy b

Encourage solid waste recycling systems which reduce the volume of waste while converting portions of the waste stream to useful products and/or energy.

Policy c

Illegal dumping shall be minimized.

See above.

The Noise Goal “is to protect the public health and welfare and enhance the quality of life by reducing noise and by preventing new land use/noise conflicts.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

Noise considerations shall be integrated into the planning process so that future noise/land use conflicts are prevented.

Policy b

Construction of noise sensitive land uses near existing noise sources shall include strategies to minimize adverse noise effects.

As noted above, the Acceptable Building Types regulations address noise concerns. The Volcano Heights land use plan does not contain industrial uses that might represent point sources of noise pollution.

5. HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Goal is to protect, reuse, or enhance significant historic districts and buildings.

Policy a

Efforts to provide incentives for the protection of significant districts and buildings shall be continued and expanded.

Policy b

Research, evaluation, and protection of historical and cultural properties in the City and County shall be continued.

Policy c

Increase public and inter-agency awareness of historic resources and preservation concerns.

The Volcano Heights Sector Plan area is either vacant or recently developed. There are significant cultural / archeological resources in and adjacent to the area. These are addressed below.

The Archaeological Resources Goal “is to identify and manage or acquire archaeological and paleontological sites for research, education, economic and/or recreation use.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

A protective program for identifying and evaluating archaeological and paleontological sites and items in the metropolitan area shall be undertaken.

Policy b

Appropriate treatment of significant sites and remedies for those that cannot be preserved shall be determined.

Policy c

Public understanding of and appreciation for the area’s archaeological and paleontological past shall be promoted.

The manner in which the plan addresses these policies largely has been covered above and note that the Petroglyph National Monument staff have endorsed the Plan with minor suggested changes.

A few other comments:

- *Design standards are established for the distances between trails and archeologically significant sites and also for interpretive signs and fences related to these sites. These are established to provide a buffer and place for quiet reflection. Monument staff have encouraged review of the fencing standards and the Planning Team intends to do so.*
- *It is believed that the Volcano Heights plan has incorporated a concern and appreciation for Native American and Hispanic history of the site’s use and meaning. Please refer to “The Meaning of Place: Natural and Cultural Features”. This subsection addresses how the plan incorporates these concerns.*

8. DEVELOPED LANDSCAPE

The Goal is to maintain and improve the natural and the developed landscapes’ quality.

Policy a

The natural and visual environment, particularly features unique to Albuquerque, shall be respected as a significant determinant in development decisions.

Policy b

Public facilities (including buildings, parks, plazas, utilities, bridges, streets, stadiums, and airports) shall be designed to realize opportunities for City/County beautification.

Policy c

Incidental structures such as signs, guywires, poles, fireplugs, street furniture and overhead utility wires shall be designed for minimal visual intrusion and mobility impediment to pedestrians.

Policy d

Landscaping shall be encouraged within public and private rights-of-way to control water erosion and dust, and create a pleasing visual environment; native vegetation should be used where appropriate.

Policy e

In highly scenic areas, development design and materials shall be in harmony with the landscape. Building siting shall minimize alteration of existing vegetation and topography and minimize visibility of structures in scenic vista areas.

It is believed that these policies have been addressed in the comments above.

The Community Identity and Urban Design Goal “is to preserve and enhance the natural and built characteristics, social, cultural and historical features that identify Albuquerque and Bernalillo County sub-areas as distinct communities and collections of neighborhoods.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

The City and County differentiate into thirteen sub-areas as shown on the Community Areas map; the unique character and constituent neighborhoods of each area identified on the Community Areas map shall be respected in all planning and development actions.

Policy b

In each Community Area, strategic planning, neighborhood planning, development and redevelopment shall be evaluated in light of its relationship to and effect upon the following:

- 1) The natural environment
 - Indigenous vegetation and other materials appropriate to landscapes.
 - Topography and landscape features such as arroyos, the Rio Grande and bosque, the foothills and escarpments
 - Soils and erosion potential
 - Colors and textures of the natural environment
 - Views
- 2) Built environment
 - Height and massing of buildings
 - Setbacks from the street
 - Placement of entrances and windows
 - Walls and fences
 - Parking areas design and relationship to buildings
 - Road widths, sidewalks, curb cuts, medians
 - Grain of streets/size of parcels

-
- Patterns of movement (e.g. pedestrian connections, access to transportation/transit)
 - Street furniture (e.g. bus stops, street lights, signs)
 - Landscaping materials, both planting and hardscape
 - Public infrastructure (e.g. drainage facilities, bridges)
 - Social interaction opportunities
 - Relationship between built and natural environment
- 3) Local history
- Architectural styles and traditions
 - Current and historic significance to Albuquerque
 - Historic plazas and other Activity Centers
- 4) Culture and traditions
- Cultural characteristics of residents
 - Community celebrations and events

Policy c

The identity and cohesiveness of each community shall be strengthened through identification and enhancement of community Activity Centers that have a scale, mix of uses, design character and location appropriate to the unique character of the community.

Policy d

Development projects within Community Activity Centers should contribute the following:

1. Related land uses that effectively encourage walking trips from one destination to another within the center, including shopping, schools, parks or plazas, employment, entertainment, and civic uses such as public libraries, recreation or senior centers, post office or fire station.
2. Pedestrian linkages among uses in the Activity Center and connecting to surrounding neighborhoods.
3. Building designed and arranged to reflect local architectural traditions, scale, height, massing and setbacks appropriate to the community served by the Activity Center and that support public transit and pedestrian activity.
4. Landscaping, street furniture, public art, colored or textured paving and other improvements to the public realm that reinforce the cultural, social and design traditions of the community served by the Activity Center.

Policy e

Roadway corridors (collectors, arterials, Enhanced Transit and Major Transit) within each community and that connect the community's Activity Centers shall be designed and developed to reinforce the community's unique identity; streetscape improvements to these roadways shall be designed to:

- minimize water use
- screen parking areas
- create useful and attractive signage and building facades
- facilitate walking safety and convenience

The Volcano Heights area is largely vacant or is only recently developed as tract suburban housing. These policies for the most part have been addressed above. Per the above comments, the plan

addresses issues related to the natural environment, retrofitting activity centers, roadway and transit corridors connecting activity centers, and pedestrian linkages. In addition:

- *Streetscape design plans, including traffic calming features, and on-street and off-street parking regulations, are included Section II Transportation under 3. Street Design and are believed to adequately address pedestrianism, landscaping, and screened parking areas.*
- *Urban Design standards are included in Section IV Urban Design. These include street facing setbacks, transparency, the lengths along streets that the facades need to be constructed to “build-to” lines, signage, garage frontages, and so on. These standards are believed to create an attractive, interesting, and pedestrian-conductive built environment.*
- *The land use and design standards for the entire Volcano Heights area will establish a unique and memorable community identity.*
- *Special design standards are included for Public Buildings so that they might properly anchor Village Centers and the Town Center.*

The Service Provision Goal “is to develop and manage use of public services/facilities in an efficient and equitable manner and in accordance with other land use planning policies.” Applicable policies include:

Policy b

Capital spending priorities for the City and County shall be consistent with the land use goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy c

The existing public service area should be the highest priority for service, capacity, use, maintenance and rehabilitation.

Policy d

Public service expansion costs, benefits and effects should be evaluated and balanced between new service recipients, existing users and the community at large.

- *The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan area is outside of the adopted Water Service Area and is largely unserved by existing and funded transportation infrastructure with the notable exceptions of Paseo del Norte and Unser Blvds. However, the past approvals of Paseo del Norte and Unser, already approved residential subdivisions and SAD 227 within the plan area, the construction of the new high school, and the adopted provision of the City’s Adequate Public Facilities regulations related to schools essentially have “opened” this area for development. The Planned Growth Strategy assumes that the preponderance of new development will occur at the urban fringe.*
- *The PGS-based development impact fee system, especially as it is implemented at 100% of “cost”, will provide substantial revenues to provide the infrastructure called for in the plan including transportation, open space, parks, hydrology, and so on. These*

revenues will be obtained from development within the plan area. The Impact Fee CIP will need to be amended to be consistent with the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. It still will be critical to identify a funding source so that these lands and facilities can be acquired and constructed in advance of impact fee collections.

The Water Management Goal “is efficient water management and use.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

Measures shall be adopted to discourage wasteful water use, such as extensive landscape-water runoff to uncultivated areas.

Policy b

Maximum absorption of precipitation shall be encouraged through retention of natural arroyos and other means of runoff conservation within the context of overall water resource management.

The plan addresses these policies as described above. The City’s Water Conservation Ordinance already includes requirements for water run-off.

The Energy Management Goal “is to maintain an adequate, economical supply of energy through energy management techniques and use of alternate and renewable energy sources.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

Use of energy management techniques shall be encouraged.

Policy b

Efficient and economic use of alternative and renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, solid and liquid waste and geothermal supplies shall be encouraged.

Policy c

Land use planning that will maximize potential for efficient use of alternative and renewable energy sources shall be undertaken.

Policy d

A transportation system that is more energy efficient shall be developed. In particular, promote:

- A variety of transportation modes including expansion of transit, paratransit and railway systems; and
- Fuel efficiency standards for automobiles.

The Volcano Heights plan encourages building designs adapted to the southwestern climate and passive energy management techniques. The land use plans emphasize balanced; pedestrian, bicycle and transit oriented; and mixed use development that will significantly reduce SOV trips and hence conserve energy.

The Transportation and Transit Goal “is to develop corridors, both streets and adjacent land uses, that provide a balanced circulation system through efficient placement of employment and services, and encouragement of bicycling, walking, and use of transit/paratransit as alternatives to automobile travel,

while providing sufficient roadway capacity to meet mobility and access needs.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

Table 11 of the Comprehensive Plan presents ideal policy objectives for street design, transit service and development form consistent with Transportation Corridors and Activity Centers as shown on the Comprehensive Plan’s Activity Centers and Transportation Corridors map in the Activity Centers section. Each corridor will undergo further analysis that will identify design elements, appropriate uses, transportation service and other details of implementation.

Policy b

The City will structure capital expenditures and land use regulations in support of creating additional housing and jobs within Major Transit and Enhanced Transit Corridors, and will promote ongoing public/private cooperation necessary to create private market conditions that support intensified development of jobs and housing in these corridors.

Policy c

In order to add to transit ridership, and where it will not destabilize adjacent neighborhoods, additional dwelling units are encouraged close to Major Transit and Enhanced Transit streets.

Policy d:

The frequency of driveways along principal and minor arterial streets will be reduced when possible, toward a spacing frequency of one or two drives per 300 feet of frontage on principal arterials, and one or two drives per 200 feet on minor arterials.

Policy f

Transit planning and implementation shall be coordinated among agencies and area jurisdictions, including identification of high capacity corridors for high occupancy vehicles.

Policy g

Pedestrian opportunities shall be promoted and integrated into development to create safe and pleasant non-motorized travel conditions.

Policy h

A metropolitan area-wide recreational and commuter bicycle and trail network which emphasizes connections among Activity Centers shall be constructed and promoted.

Policy i

Street and highway projects shall include paralleling paths and safe crossings for bicycles, pedestrians and equestrians where appropriate.

Policy j:

For each mode, potential transportation/emergency response hazards such as grade crossings, obsolete street geometry, and inadequate street lighting shall be minimized.

Policy k:

In currently developed areas, efficiency of existing arterial streets shall be increased in preference to addition of new freeways.

Policy l

In the newly developing areas, a portion of the street system should focus on arterial roads upon which vehicles encounter few stops.

Policy n

Important environmental and cultural resources should continue to be considered in roadway planning, design and construction to minimize harmful effects and engineering costs of facilities.

Policy p:

Efficient, safe access and transfer capability shall be provided between all modes of transportation.

Policy q

Transportation investments should emphasize overall mobility needs and choice among modes in the regional and intra-city movement of people and goods.

These policies largely have been addressed above. Some additional comments include:

- *The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan proposed changing the classification of Unser and Paseo del Norte from proposed Transit Express Corridors to a Mayor Transit Corridors. This is believed to be more compatible with the mixed use and pedestrian oriented nature of the plan. This will require modification of the Long Range High Capacity Transit Plan, as called for in the plan.*
- *Extensive work was carried out during the development of the plan to coordinate with the City Metropolitan Development Department, the State Department of Transportation, MRCOG, transportation planners from the City of Rio Rancho, and the Transit Department.*
- *Development standards effectively reduce the number of curb cuts along principal and minor arterial streets.*
- *The Bicycle Trail Network was extended into the plan area as shown in Exhibit 21. This will require a modification of the Trails and Bikeways Plan, as called for in the Volcano Heights plan.*
- *As noted above, the design standards for Unser and Paseo del Norte combine limited access arterial designs with an Urban Boulevard configuration. Traffic modeling results indicate that this more pedestrian and urban design can be accomplished with little or no degradation of traffic flow.*

5. HOUSING

The Goal is to increase the supply of affordable housing; conserve and improve the quality of housing; ameliorate the problems of homelessness, overcrowding, and displacement of low income residents; and assure against discrimination in the provision of housing.

Policy a

The supply of affordable housing, shall be preserved and increased and the opportunity to obtain standard housing for a reasonable proportion of income assured.

Policy b

Quality and innovation in new housing design and construction shall be promoted and quality of existing housing improved through concentrated renovation programs in deteriorating neighborhoods.

Policy d

Availability of a wide distribution of decent housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, or handicapped status shall be assured.

Policy e

Encourage efficiencies in the public development review process and reduce unnecessary construction costs, but balance short-term benefits of delivering less costly housing with long-term benefits of preserving investment in homes and protection of quality of life.

The Housing policies are addressed by the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan in the following ways:

- *The affordable housing, diversity, and non-discrimination policies are addressed through the variety of housing types provided for in the plan. These include single family detached, apartments, condominiums, townhouses, duplexes and triplexes, and large lot “executive” and “rural estate” type housing. Accessory Units / Carriage Houses are allowed in a number of residential categories. This will result in a number of housing “price points” that supports housing affordability and other objectives.*
- *Efficiencies in the development review process are provided, as identified in the Implementation Section (see Development Approvals), by allowing review by the Planning Director for a number of Volcano Heights Sector Plan areas based on their consistency with the plan.*

6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Goal is to achieve steady and diversified economic development balanced with other important social, cultural, and environmental goals.

Policy a

New employment opportunities which will accommodate a wide range of occupational skills and salary levels shall be encouraged and new jobs located convenient to areas of most need.

Policy b

Development of local business enterprises as well as the recruitment of outside firms shall be emphasized.

Policy d

Tourism shall be promoted.

Policy g

Concentrations of employment in Activity Centers should be promoted in an effort to balance jobs with housing and population and reduce the need to travel.

- *This Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan assumes that 18,000 jobs will be located in the plan area. Diversity of employment opportunities will be based on the development types included such as regional headquarters office complexes, the Town Center, Village Centers, Neighborhood Mixed Use areas, schools, etc..*
- *The consultant to the Albuquerque Visitors and Convention Center (ACVB) strongly encouraged the promotion of cultural tourism. The Volcano Heights plan is believed*

to strengthen the Petroglyph National Monument, preserve exceptional view corridors, and supports the re-establishment of trail corridors from the former pueblo sites near the Rio Grande through the petroglyph sites on the Escarpment and to the North Geologic Window and the volcanic cones. The Volcano Heights area contains a critical cultural message for all of Albuquerque and the nation.

The Education Goal “is to provide a wide variety of education and recreational opportunities available to citizens from all cultural, age and educational groups.” Applicable policies include:

Policy b:

Stronger communication and planning links with area schools and educational institutions shall be established.

Policy c:

Library services shall be expanded and made more accessible to people at a neighborhood and community level.

Policy d:

Efforts should be made to integrate educational programs with the natural and cultural environments.

Policy e

Variety and flexibility in educational and recreational resources shall be encouraged through joint use of facilities.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan addresses these policies in the following ways:

- *Extensive coordination took place between the Plan Team and Albuquerque Public Schools facility planners.*
- *Public facilities such as libraries are directed to the Town Center, Village Centers, and Neighborhood Mixed Use Zones.*
- *Schools are co-located within parks, often adjacent to arroyo corridors. These link the schools with pedestrian and bike trails and also with interpretive features related to the cultural history of the area.*
- *Joint use of facilities is supported as described above and also through proposed siting of schools adjacent to Village centers.*

The Human Services Goal “is to site human service facilities in locations that provide the greatest possible access to services and to consider human rights and human service needs in development and redevelopment throughout the Plan area.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a:

Zoning, land use, transportation and economic development strategies shall be consistent with the goal of maximizing access to human services.

Policy b:

Establish community-based residential care facilities equitably throughout the City and County.

Policy c:

Development’s negative effects upon individuals and neighborhoods shall be minimized.

The Volcano Heights Planning Team fully supports the Community Schools program currently being considered for adoption by the City, County of Bernalillo, Albuquerque Public Schools, UNM, and Albuquerque Business Education Compact. Accessibility to whole-family services is one of the objectives of the Community Schools program.

The Public Safety Goal “is to develop a safe and secure community in cooperation with the public and other governmental agencies.” Applicable policies include:

Policy a

A strong fire prevention and suppression program to protect lives and property shall be maintained.

Policy e

Police protection, law enforcement and optimum use of the criminal justice system shall continue to be emphasized as priority activities of City and County government.

Police, fire, emergency services facilities will be integrated into the Volcano Heights area in finer grain, future planning efforts.

West Side Strategic Plan Policy Analysis

Plan Goals:

4. Land use considerations and overall growth and development concerns should be tied to infrastructure and funding considerations for realistic implementation.
5. The Plan should recommend solutions for design and development issues, as well as cultural and environmental concerns. Ways to achieve better design should be examined and included in the Plan.
6. Protecting significant natural assets of the West Side (escarpment, bosque, open space, views, clean air and water) is a primary goal of long-range planning efforts in the area.
7. The planning effort must be broadly inclusive, sensitive to many ideas and cultures, and give the West Side a greater role in determining its own destiny and establishing its own vision of the future.
9. The preservation, protection, responsibilities, and opportunities of the Petroglyph National Monument must be recognized as a important part of the West Side's future. The growth and development pressures on the West Side must be recognized as an important part [on the] Petroglyph National Monument's future. Other special places on the West Side (existing neighborhoods and natural features) must also be preserved and protected.
10. The Plan should create a framework to build a community where its

citizens can live, work, shop, play, and learn together while protecting the unique quality of life and natural and cultural resources for West Side residents.

12. The Plan should provide for long-term sustainable development on the West Side.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan fully addresses these WSSP Goals as indicated above. Some additional comments are appropriate here:

- *Section VII Implementation provides details on how development can be tied to infrastructure and funding considerations. The Section contains a system for growth phasing and timing within subareas linked to elementary school boundary areas, Adequate Public Facilities requirements to link development to transportation infrastructure and timely new school facilities, a program for open space, park, and drainage acquisition and funding, the approval methods for more fine-grained development plans, and amendments needed to existing plans and programs to be consistent with the Volcano Heights Plan.*
- *The Volcano Heights planning effort was conducted over an approximately 18 month period. A number of meetings were held with property owners in the Volcano Heights area especially in Volcano Cliffs, developers and their agents, architects and planners, City, State, Federal, regional (MRCOG, AMAFCA) agencies, the Albuquerque Public Schools, neighborhood associations and coalitions on the West Side and elsewhere. The Plan Team met on several occasions with planners and administrators at the Petroglyph National Monument and they participated in the planning efforts. A three day planning and design charrette took place early in the process that resulted in a "preferred alternative" land use plan that is consistent with the final Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan land use plan and zoning. A day long workshop also was held to explore issues related to transportation, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access. The Volcano Heights Planning Study (a preliminary product) was completed at the end of Phase I of the process and was posted on the City Council's web site for review and comment. Notices regarding public review by EPC / Council of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan were mailed to all identified area property owners. The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, in its entirety, was posted on the City Council web site and property owners and other citizens were referred to this site.*

WSSP OBJECTIVES

1. Provide for a complete mix of land uses on the West Side, including opportunities for large-scale employment, in order to minimize the needs for cross-metro trips. Employment opportunities are encouraged on the West Side.
2. Provide the opportunity for creative and innovative solutions to housing,

utility, and transportation problems. Improve upon methodologies employed elsewhere in the region in order to eliminate repetition of previous mistakes. Provide incentives for "good" development, not just deterrents for "bad" development, through design requirements specifically geared toward the West Side environment.

3. Plan for the ability to manage and preserve unique West Side resources (scenic, natural, cultural, historical, and spiritual) within the context of a growing metropolitan area.

4. Preserve a sense of community and quality of life for all residents based on wise, long-term decision-making.

5. Evaluate funding needs, infrastructure costs, development revenues, and "fair share" means of sharing community-wide benefits and constraints.

Recognize that the metropolitan area is tied together economically, as well as culturally and physically.

6. Conserve and protect natural resources, and minimize environmental impacts. Densities of development and efficient utilization of all transportation and utility corridors are a part of this objective.

7. Plan for and incorporate the educational needs of the West Side in the development process. The provision of quality education is tied to all other social and economic aspects of the community.

8. Promote job opportunities and business growth in appropriate areas of the West Side.

9. Promote accountability in the public sector to provide timely services and completion of implementation steps in order to build public trust.

10. Promote community building on the West Side, and in the metropolitan region as a whole. Celebrate successes and provide ways for creating effective communication and consensus-building. Involve citizens of all ages in determining the future of the West Side.

11. Implement an efficient, effective, multi-modal transportation system with supporting land uses (the community concept including pedestrian, bicycle, vehicle and HOV transit) to serve the West Side and connect it with the rest of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County as well as outlying areas such as Rio Rancho. This might require the establishment of a Transportation Management Organization for West Side employers, maximizing internally captured trips in mixed use areas or PUDs.

This Plan embraces the City of Albuquerque Five Year Goals adopted by the City Council in the fall of 1994, and strives to meet and exceed the expectations of the Administration and Council.

As described above, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan complies with these objectives.

WSSP Policies

Policy 1.1: Thirteen distinct Communities, as shown on the Community Plan Map and described individually in this Plan, shall constitute the existing and future urban form of the West Side. Communities shall develop with areas of higher density (in Community and Neighborhood Centers), surrounded by areas of lower density. Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque Planning Commissions shall require that high density and nonresidential development occur within Community and Neighborhood Centers. Low-density residential development (typical 3-5 du/acre subdivisions, or large lot rural subdivisions) shall not be approved within the Centers.

Policy 1.3: Strip commercial developments shall not be approved on the West Side. Commercial development shall occur in concentrated clustered areas rather than new strip developments. Zone changes to commercial, industrial, or office uses for areas outside the centers are strongly discouraged, in order to reinforce the Neighborhood and Community Centers. Changes of commercial and office zoning outside the centers to residential use is encouraged. This policy is meant to impact the design and layout of commercial areas and their connections to adjacent development and to encourage clustering of commercial and office uses in activity centers. It is not intended to rezone allowed commercial uses.

Policy 1.5: Community and Neighborhood Centers shall be required to provide pedestrian/bicycle access to key activity areas. Parking lots shall be carefully designed to facilitate trail access and pedestrian access between buildings.

Policy 1.9: In the Established and Developing Urban areas mapped by the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, future neighborhood and community centers may be designated and developed at appropriate locations, determined as follows:

- Market Area - Community Centers should be located to serve a primary service area of about 30,000 people within approximately a three mile radius of the center; neighborhood centers should be located to serve approximately 15,000 population within about one mile radius of the center. Uses typical of community centers would likely be accessed on a weekly basis, whereas those in a neighborhood center might be used almost daily.
- Access/Connections - Community centers shall be easily accessible by automobile, located at the intersections of at least one major and one minor arterial street, and connected to public transit service as well as the community-wide trail/bikeway network. Neighborhood Centers should be less automobile oriented, located on minor arterial and/or collector streets, and

connected to public transit service as well as informal pedestrian and bicycle ways. Both community and neighborhood centers shall be very accommodating to the pedestrian even within predominantly off-street parking areas.

- **Scale** - Community centers shall be composed of blocks with buildings well connected by sidewalks and public spaces like plazas. Shared parking, through mainly off-street, should be encouraged, and larger parking areas may be divided into smaller ones or used for structured parking and/or additional active land uses. Neighborhood centers should also have small blocks, but with small clusters of shared parking as well as on-street parking. Both community and neighborhood centers shall have outdoor areas that encourage gathering; both shall include bicycle parking and both shall provide safe pedestrian connections among buildings and between buildings and parking areas.

- **Location** - a major facility or employer located in a manner which creates a focus and stimulus to economic and social activity may also be a reason for designating a new center.

Policy 1.10: Designated neighborhood and community centers shall be reviewed periodically for viability and appropriateness; if a center comes to exhibit characteristics which justify it, its designation may be amended from neighborhood to community or vice-versa. Similarly, new centers may be located/designated based upon the criteria outlined in Policy 1.9.

Policy 1.11: The City shall develop incentives encouraging the private sector to develop activity centers in line with the policies of this plan. Incentives for compliance could be regulatory (e.g. waiver of some impact study requirement on the proposed development) or provision of a special public facility or service (e.g. enhanced pedestrian crossings, transit stops or increased bus frequency within the affected center) by the City.

Policy 1.12: The ideal community activity center of 35 to 60 acres will have parcels and buildings in scale with pedestrians, small enough to encourage parking once and walking to more than one destination. Off-street parking should be shared; on-street parking will contribute to the intimate scale typical of well functioning pedestrian areas. Parking shall be located between uses that front on sidewalks rather than parking lots. Seating and shade will be provided along pedestrian routes to promote walking and informal gathering.

Policy 1.13: The Community Activity Center shall provide the primary focus for the entire community with a higher concentration and greater variety of commercial and entertainment uses in conjunction with community-wide services, civic land uses, employment, and the most intense land uses within the community. Its service area may be approximately three miles (radius) and a population of up to 30,000.

Policy 1.14: The typical Community Center shall be accessible by a major street or parkway, provide a hub for transit service, and be accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists.

Policy 1.15: Neighborhood Centers of 15 to 35 acres shall contain generally small parcels and buildings; on-street parking is permitted, with smaller off-street parking areas shared among businesses and institutions. The neighborhood center shall have a built scale very accommodating to pedestrians and bicyclists, including outdoor seating for informal gatherings. Services such as childcare, dry cleaners, drug stores and small restaurants along with a park and/or school should be located central to surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 1.16: Neighborhood Centers shall be located on local collector and sometimes arterial streets. While their primary access may be by auto, pedestrian and bicycle connections shall be provided to all adjacent neighborhoods, parks and to the larger open space system. Convenient transit services shall be connected with community-wide and regional transit development. The strategies of the Community Concept section of the Plan shall be implemented through systematic follow-through on all policies requiring further action, and by enforcement of all policies stating intent. Uniform enforcement and consistency with stated intent is required in order to achieve the urban form envisioned herein which has been endorsed by the public.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan conforms to these policy statements. Some additional comments are as follows:

- ***The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is within the Volcano Cliffs Community as identified in the West Side Strategic Plan, but it does not include the Petroglyph National Monument and the City's Open Space which acts as part of the Monument. The Volcano Heights Plan is integrated into the Monument and Open Space. Joint planning has occurred with Monument and Open Space planners and administrators.***
- ***The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan does not include "strip commercial" development. It does have a Neighborhood Mixed Use zone that may function similarly to a "Main Street". It is believed that this is compliant with WSSP policies.***
- ***The hierarchy of WSSP centers "map" to the Sector Plan centers as described below. The Volcano Heights Town Center is considered to be a regional center that has a greater service area than Volcano Heights. As noted above, it may be necessary to amend the City / County Comprehensive Plan to designate the Town Center as a Major Activity Center as defined in the Comp Plan. What is called the "Volcano Cliffs Village Center" (See Land Use Section) is a Community Center in the definition of the WSSP. The other Village Centers in the Volcano Heights Plan are compatible with WSSP Neighborhood Centers.***

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- *Village (neighborhood) Centers are located on Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials and Collector Streets. Special design standards are provided for Village Centers to slow traffic and create an environment conducive to pedestrian and bicycle movement. (See Illustrative Plans in Section III Land Use and street cross sections in the Section II Transportation.) The rationale for each of their location is described in the Plan.*
 - *WSSP policies include elements dealing with such issues as bicycle parking and outdoor seating for informal gathering. The location and design of these elements necessarily will be addressed in finer grained plans as called for in the Sector Plan.*

Policy 2.5: When considering approval of subdivisions for residential development, the City Planning Department shall consider whether local public schools have sufficient capacity to support the increased number of homes.

Section VII Implementation addresses this Adequate Public Facilities requirement for school facilities and specifies how it might be carried out. Coordination with the Albuquerque Public Schools will be necessary. This has been described elsewhere.

Policy 3.79: The National Park Service should continue to be invited to participate in future planning efforts on the West Side, including implementation strategies for this Plan.

Policy 3.81: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall, through their land use and design decisions, minimize negative impacts upon the National Monument. The Park Service shall, through their actions, attempt to minimize their negative impacts on the City, County, and adjacent neighborhoods and landowners.

Policy 3.82: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall remain involved in the Park Service's General Management Plan process, and shall look out for the interests of the community as a whole when evaluating the Plan.

Policy 3.83: Design neighborhood access points to Petroglyph National Monument to discourage use by the general public; establish permit parking systems for neighborhoods adjacent to the monument if necessary to control non-resident parking.

As noted above, the planners and administrators of the Petroglyph National Monument participated in the Volcano Heights Sector Plan process throughout and the Plan is supported by them (with suggested minor modifications). Section IV Urban Design contains a special provision for neighborhood permit parking for areas adjacent to more intense-use areas such as the Town Center, Village Centers, high school, Neighborhood Mixed Use zone, and Office Campus. It will need to be

established whether extending this approach to access points to the Monument is necessary, but it would be consistent with the Plan.

Policy 4.6: The following design guideline sections shall become policies with the approval of this Plan: View Preservation; Views East of Coors Boulevard; Views to and from the Monument; Other Views; Height; Lighting; Vegetation; Overhead Utilities; Radio, TV, and Cellular Towers; Signs; Fences and Walls; and Additional Design Guideline Issues. It is recognized that additional Design Guidelines based on these and other applicable policies of the Plan shall be developed as follow-up work, and will be more complete than those included here. These policies were considered too critical to wait for additional planning efforts in the future.

Policy 4.8: It is recognized that different standards are desired for areas with different characteristics (urban vs. rural neighborhoods for example, or Bosque areas vs. volcanic areas). The design guidelines will recognize and embrace these differences which give communities their identity. However, to be effective, the design guidelines must be enforced consistently by both the City and County, so agreement on the content of the guidelines must be developed early on.

Policy 4.9: Design guidelines affect West Side residents in personal and economic ways. The process utilized to develop the design guidelines must be as inclusive as possible.

Policy 4.10: It is important to promote and establish land uses and urban patterns whose design support bicycle and pedestrian travel, and public transportation, encourage ridership, enhance public mobility and promote alternatives to single occupant vehicle use.

Policy 4.11: Existing design standards, not altered through the policies of this Plan, remain in force until such time as the new design guidelines have been adopted and previous standards rescinded. However, elected officials and neighborhoods are encouraged to suggest that new development occurring in the interim respect the intent of the future design guidelines as described above, as it represents the will of the public.

Policy 4.14: It is the intent of the Plan that there will be a new policy to provide incentives to served development for efficient use of infrastructure as well as a policy to impose penalties for sprawl. The incentives should save developers time or money in order to be effective.

It should be noted that the City and County did not adopt West Side Design Guidelines as called for in the WSSP. The guidelines contained in the Volcano Heights Sector Plan are consistent with the policies contained in the Comp Plan and the WSSP and will be reviewed by the EPC and the City Council. Specific design standards are provided for the facilities as called for in Policy 4.6.

Furthermore, the Volcano Heights Sector Plan provides for development design standards compatible with the particular environment of the volcanic area. The development impact fees already adopted by the City in a manner consistent with the Planned Growth Strategy do provide incentives for efficient urban growth and disincentives for "sprawl".

Policy 6.1: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County and MRGCOG shall use a regional transportation model to assess differences in transportation system costs based on community-based urban form as proposed herein versus traditional and grid-based low-density sprawl. The outcome of this study will clearly define a transportation network needed to support the urban form described in the Plan as it relates to the region. Additionally, the study will provide cost estimates for such a network. These costs will differentiate between public and private infrastructure costs. Funding shall be provided by these agencies to conduct this study.

Policy 6.4: The City of Albuquerque shall maintain its existing policy to build Montañó Bridge and the Paseo del Norte extension as soon as is legally feasible, as well as the other facilities identified in the Long Range Major Street Plan as soon as funding becomes available.

Policy 6.23: Require trail access to the regional trail network, through the Community Centers, Employment Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and parks and open space identified in the Plan. Require trail access through neighborhoods according to "transit friendly" subdivision design policy in 6.13 above. Proposed trails west of 118th Street are largely not mapped, but they should generally follow open space areas, drainage ways, major land forms or limited access arterials. Generally, an attempt shall be made to provide trails at approximately 1.5 mile intervals. Dedication of right-of-way and/or construction of trails may be required pursuant to Planned Communities Criteria and subject to impact fee policies.

Policy 6.24: Bernalillo County and City of Albuquerque transportation planners shall incorporate commuter bicycle needs into all future transportation plans and facilities (bike lanes, shoulders, wide curb lanes, etc.). All arterials shall have bike lanes at a minimum and trail facilities where necessary to serve the functions identified in Policy 6.22 or where identified in the Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan. Wide curb lanes at a minimum and bicycle lanes where there is no parallel residential street route shall be included on all collectors. Bike routes on residential streets or collectors shall connect to the destinations identified in Policy 6.20. When existing arterials and collectors are reconstructed, resurfaced, or the median is rebuilt, and sufficient right-of-way exists for the inclusion of on-street bicycling facilities, appropriate bicycling facilities shall be included. Examples where this may be appropriate include Ladera, Atrisco, and Montañó.

Policy 6.25: All new developments shall include internal bicycle/pedestrian trails and bikeways which link to the adopted Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan primary trails network when feasible and subject to development impact fee requirements. All subdivisions, sector plans, planned communities, and other development plans must demonstrate connectivity of trails and bikeways to adjacent developments and destinations.

Policy 6.26: Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque must incorporate recreational trails/bikeways along with roadway projects as identified in the adopted Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan.

Policy 6.28: The City of Albuquerque Planning and Public Works Department in conjunction with MRGCOG and Bernalillo County shall designate specific transportation facilities as "scenic facilities" and implement signage restrictions and other design characteristics through overlay zoning techniques.

- *The Volcano Heights Plan Team worked with MRCOG to conduct a regional transportation analysis for the area, which is summarized in the Plan. It should be noted that "grid based" transportation systems have been reported to be more efficient and pedestrian oriented than 1970s-type subdivision roadway configurations .*
- *The Bicycle Trail Network is contained on in Exhibit 21 and appears to comport with the WSSP requirements with regard to spacing.*
- *The Volcano Heights Plan proposes amending the existing Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan to be consistent with bike network indicated in the Plan. (See Section II Transportation) Finer grained plan for new development should address internal bicycle trails.*
- *"Scenic facilities"(called "Scenic Corridors" in the Plan) are incorporated into the Volcano Heights Sector Plan in Section VI Open Space.*

Policy 7.4: The City of Albuquerque Office of Neighborhood Coordination shall continue to work with the National Park Service, other City agencies, and neighborhood associations located near Petroglyph National Monument to discuss visitor impacts to local neighborhoods, and neighborhood impacts on the Monument, and how both may be minimized.

Policy 7.6: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall recognize the arroyo classifications and policies of the Facilities Plan for Arroyos and other adopted plans and policies. These public agencies shall recognize that these arroyos require unique development standards in order to satisfy the drainage/flood control and open space/recreational needs of these key natural features on the West Side.

Policy 7.7: Specific standards for development adjacent to arroyos will be included in both the Unified Development Code and Design Guidelines.

Arroyos shall be preserved in their most naturalistic state through the use of these new standards whenever possible.

Policy 7.8: The major arroyos cross both City, County, and federally managed lands, and all arroyo plans, trail designs, and flood control/drainage measures must be jointly prepared and administered by all affected entities. Additionally, AMAFCA must be involved in the development of any new standards affecting Major Arroyos due to their critical regional flood protection role. Standards affecting arroyos crossing the Petroglyph National Monument must also be coordinated with the NPS.

Policy 7.10: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall protect and expand both public and private open space on the West Side consistent with the final adopted facility Plan for Open Space. Private developers are encouraged to include open space in all major private developments consistent with Planned Community Criteria.

Policy 7.12: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall jointly work on a strategy for acquiring open space lands within and between communities on the West Side which may include: broader funding sources such as local tax initiatives, State appropriations, density transfers, cluster development, incentives for providing on-site open space, land trading, optioning land early, and long-term purchase of open space.

Policy 7.14: Bernalillo County and City of Albuquerque Parks Plans shall respond to the urban form and Community planning intent of this Plan when planning future park land acquisitions. Adequate land for parks should be identified and acquired as early as possible in the planning and development process.

Policy 7.18: This Plan promotes cooperative recreation program planning recreation providers, as well as volunteer groups, schools, and parent organizations should be part of the program planning framework. The goal is to eliminate gaps in service.

Policy 7.19: It is a policy of this Plan that the Volcano Cliffs Area as described above and generally shown on the Plan maps shall be considered for development through one or more Special Assessment Districts, upon extension of Unser Boulevard and accompanying infrastructure and subject to acceptable drainage arrangement, or through other development financing and infrastructure methods.

Policy 7.20: It is the policy of the City that, in areas such as may occur in the Volcano Cliffs Area, in which SAD improvements construction costs Volcano Cliffs Area Map exceed normally occurring costs by 10% or more based on average actual costs incurred in the last three, non-scattered site SADs adjusted for inflation, the City will not be responsible for paying the portion of the SAD assessment for each parcel which is greater than the benefit to the parcel of

the Special Assessment District improvements.

Policy 7.21: The City of Albuquerque Planning Department shall take the lead in establishing a task force made up of City representatives and Volcano Cliffs Area property owners, and make recommendations concerning development issues and/or open space purchases for the Volcano Cliffs Area.

Policy 7.22: Classification of the Volcano Cliffs Community as Priority 2 shall not prohibit the provision of system improvements sooner than anticipated in the prioritization. However, the City's adopted policies concerning "no net expense" contained in the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Communities Criteria: Policy Element shall apply when such infrastructure is sought prior to the normal provision of utilities through the City's Capital Improvement Program. Alternative techniques for the provision of master plan infrastructure shall be considered based upon no additional cost to the City and no degradation of appropriate service standards. The reasons for this policy include: slower build-out of the Volcano Cliffs subdivision expected due to its status as a premature subdivision, the number of parcels contained in the subdivision to be served through system improvements, and possibly higher construction costs due to volcanic soils in the area.

Policy 7.23: The City shall encourage the orderly, efficient from the stand point of the provision of urban infrastructure, and environmentally sensitive development of the Volcano Cliffs area through planning approvals and infrastructure extension determinations.

Policy 7.24: In the Volcano Cliffs Area, the City shall encourage developments which assemble lots of multiple owners, cluster housing to provide more open space and efficient provision of utilities, and use xeriscape landscaping and other water conservation techniques. Such encouragement may include the provision of master plan infrastructure prior to normal extension of infrastructure in Priority 2 areas when the cost of such infrastructure is exceptionally low to the City. This shall be done in a way, however, which avoids scattered site development in adjoining areas.

Many of these policies have been addressed above. More particular comments include the following:

- ***One of the source documents the Volcano Heights Plan Team reviewed was the Facilities Plan for Arroyos. The Staff Review of the incorporated its objectives into the Sector Plan is covered below under the North West Mesa Escarpment Plan write-up.***
- ***The Volcano Heights Plan's recommendations for arroyo design, flood control/drainage measures, maintenance, and mixed use were reviewed on several occasions with AMAFCA, the City Hydrology Division, and with the staff at the Petroglyph National Monument. The plan's approach has been approved by AMAFCA.***

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- *The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan's design treatment of parks varies according to adjoining land use. Within the Village and Town Centers, the design is consistent with the higher density and more urban character of the place.*
 - *Section VII Implementation addresses the fact that Special Assessment Districts will be needed within "prematurely" subdivided areas without local infrastructure in order to design and finance these facilities. The Volcano Heights Plan contains a provision for integrating finer-grained land use planning efforts into the SAD planning process in order to implement the plan's regulations consistent with its objectives.*
 - *Policy 7.22 recognizes that providing development approvals and infrastructure earlier than contained in the WSSP phasing program (slated for 2015 to 2035) is on the basis of "no net cost". Since the adoption of the WSSP, the Planned Growth Strategy legislation adopted a definition of "no net cost". It is anticipated that these requirements will be met in the course of development approval. This may particularly affect the provision of water and wastewater service by the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority. While Water Authority staff has been kept informed of this planning effort, it is suggested that these provision of the WSSP be brought to their attention.*
 - *Consistent with Policy 7.24, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan implicitly associates the provision of urban infrastructure prior to 2015 to 2035 per the WSSP with the Plan's standards concerning the possible need in some locations (e.g. Village Centers, Town Center, Office Campus) for the assembly of multiple owners' lots, cluster housing, xeriscape landscaping, and other water conservation techniques.*

Policy 8.1: Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque shall work together to jointly plan, acquire, and build public service facilities which are co-located for maximum efficiencies of the agencies and the public.

Policy 8.2: City or County facilities, along with private facilities, shall be located within or adjacent to the Regional Center, Employment Centers, Community Centers, or in Neighborhood Centers. Facilities proposed outside of these locations must demonstrate to elected officials and the public that a compelling public need is best served by the alternate location.

Policy 8.3: Stand alone City and County facilities will not be approved for funding until it has been demonstrated that all reasonable and prudent options for co-location or shared facilities have been explored.

Policy 8.4: The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County shall jointly prepare and distribute a document addressed to all departments stating their intent to seek co-location or shared facility locations on the West Side in the future. Ongoing communication will be maintained between all other agencies currently building facilities on the West Side, including local agencies and the State and Federal government, in order to seek their cooperation in the co-location of facilities whenever possible.

Policy 8.5: The cooperation of APS in appropriately locating new school facilities in accordance with the principles of this Plan shall be actively sought by Bernalillo County and the City of Albuquerque. While co-location of schools with other facilities is deemed desirable and will be encouraged, it is understood that cost and site suitability factors may preclude colocation in some instances.

Policy 8.6: The West Side Strategic Plan recognizes that parks are important character-defining features for neighborhoods and communities. While the Park System Facility Plan is the guiding policy document for the distribution and location of parks to meet neighborhood and community needs, every effort should be made to achieve the goals of the co-location policies in siting parks and other facilities. It is also important that the Parks and Open Space System not be viewed as a land bank for future facilities. Opportunities for co-location of facilities should be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

Policy 8.8: Locate new fire stations in or near the Regional Center, Community Centers, Employment Centers, or Neighborhood Centers. Require co-location on a site with other public agency facilities.

Policy 8.10: The City Police Department shall consider the co-location and shared site potential for future facilities. Locating police stations near community centers and high schools is seen as being particularly attractive. Seek out locations for new substations near other facilities in or adjacent to the Regional Center, Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers or Employment Centers established in this Plan.

Policy 8.12: New library facilities shall be located in or adjacent to the Regional Center, Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers, or Employment Centers in the Plan area.

Policy 8.13: Libraries are particularly well-suited for co-location or sharing sites with other facilities, and are compatible with all age groups and activities. Future library sites shall locate according to these goals.

Policy 8.15: The City of Albuquerque City Council and Bernalillo County Commissioners shall take the lead to work with the Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education about continuing and expanding a joint strategy for better use of facilities, co-location of facilities, opportunities for cost-sharing, joint funding requests to the State, and acquisition method for future school and community facilities.

Policy 8.16: New school facilities should be located within Community Centers (High Schools), Employment Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Neighborhood Centers (Middle and Elementary Schools) whenever possible to provide easy access to local residents and reinforce the urban form established in this Plan. It is understood that cost and site availability

factors may preclude this opportunity from occurring in every case.

Policy 8.20: The City shall request that APS comment on development plan submittals from the standpoint of whether a new facility is needed in that location, and, if so, what the strategy is to acquire it.

- *Many of these policies address co-locating City and County facilities and actions that the City and County governments should take to produce this result. These actions are outside of the scope of a Sector Plan but would apply to the facility decisions of the governments that adopted the WSSP.*
- *Section III Land Use calls for Civic, Cultural, and Community Buildings only with the Town Center, Village Center, and Neighborhood Mixed Use zone. The Volcano Heights Plan does not consider it appropriate to locate these uses within more low density and less mixed-use Employment Centers (i.e. Campus Zone).*
- *Some of the policies recommend locating police, fire, and library facilities within Regional Centers, Community Centers, Employment Centers, or Neighborhood Centers. As noted above, with the exception of Employment Centers, the Volcano Heights Plan supports this policy. However, the Volcano Heights Plan was not conducted at a level of detail to site these facilities. It is assumed that more specific site planning needs to occur within the Town Center, Village Centers, etc. that would address the location of such facilities.*
- *The WSSP Policy 8.16 supports locating school facilities within Community Centers, Employment Centers, and Neighborhood Centers. The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan identifies school sites at these locations but also along open space corridors. Both approaches have merit.*
- *The provisions of the Volcano Heights Plan with regard to school facilities have been addressed elsewhere.*

Policy 9.3: The Unified Development Code and Design Guidelines for the West Side shall incorporate water conservation principles through specific requirements for xeriscape design standards, water recycling/harvesting techniques, low-flow fixtures, and other means of achieving conservation goals.

Policy 9.4: The delivery of water services in all of the Communities shall follow the east-to-west water zone method of providing service.

Policy 9.9: Multiple-use utility easements shall be used whenever possible to provide joint-use corridors to and through communities. Possible shared uses include open space, trails, other utilities, drainage, and transportation.

- *The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan addresses xeriscape standards, water recycling/harvesting techniques, and other measure of achieve water conservation*

goals. Water conserving fixtures are addressed in City Ordinance as adopted by the Water Authority.

- *The Planning Team coordinated with the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority in terms of the provision of water / wastewater service by pressure zone. The Sector Plan is consistent with the Authority's approach to service delivery.*

Policy 10.1: The public has stated that they would like to see arroyos treated in a more naturalistic manner. They made it clear that they do not want to see concrete channels on the West Side. This Plan strongly recommends naturalistic treatment of all arroyos on the West Side. It is recognized that structural improvements may be required in arroyos and channels on the West Side. The Plan will require developers and public agencies to explore naturalistic treatments where possible. If such designs fail to be physically or financially feasible, less natural treatments may be considered. All review agencies (DRB, DRC, EPC, CPC, etc.), as well as the appropriate City, County, and AMAFCA staff, should carefully analyze the impacts of proposed developments to existing arroyos and should determine which treatments are most appropriate physically and financially.

Policy 10.3: The citizens' views about the undesirability of the grey concrete box or trapezoidal channels of the East Side is a challenge to the local hydrology community to come up with drainage treatments that are more aesthetically pleasing while still serving essential flood protection functions. Use of earth tone colors, natural building materials, or vegetative slope coverings will be considered whenever possible.

Policy 10.5: Bernalillo County Public Works, AMAFCA, City Parks and General Services Department, County Parks and Recreation Department, and City of Albuquerque Public Works Department shall consider joint-use of drainage facilities (for recreational and open space purposes especially) whenever feasible. Joint funding for additional right-of-way and facilities is also necessary.

Policy 10.7: The cooperation of the NPS will be sought by the City, County, and AMAFCA in determining where and how drainage improvements will cross National Monument lands. The NPS is encouraged to cooperate in developing reasonable solutions to drainage and flood control problems. City Open Space Division and City Hydrology shall work closely together to present a consistent City position to the National Park Service regarding drainage crossings.

The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is consistent with these policies and directions as has been discussed elsewhere. It should be noted that prior to this planning effort, some subdivisions were permitted to use concrete lined channels and not treat arroyos in a "more naturalistic manner".

Water Conservation/Green Principles

This has been addressed elsewhere.

The Facility Plan for Arroyos is the Rank Two Plan intended to provide more detailed implementation programs for the general planning policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Its other objectives most pertinent to the Volcano Heights study area are to identify constraints and opportunities presented by arroyos and development adjacent to them, to set policies for the design of arroyos and adjacent development, to evaluate and realize arroyos' potential as open space and trail links, and to rank arroyos' priority for detailed study, design and development.

The Facility Plan for Arroyos lists three categories of arroyos for different kinds of protection based on their purpose. Major Open Space Arroyos are to remain in a natural or semi-natural condition with native vegetation and channel stabilization by naturalistic treatments such as un-grouted riprap, gabions and tinted concrete or soil cement. Major Open Space Links are ideal locations for east-west recreational trail linkages between the foothills, the Bosque and the west mesa escarpment. And Urban Recreational Arroyos are those in more developed areas with potential for connecting activity areas like schools, parks and employment centers with residential development.

Three significant arroyos cross the Volcano Heights planning area. Furthest north is the Piedras Marcadas Arroyo and canyon within the escarpment; it is designated as a Major Open Space Link, and in fact is the number one priority among all arroyos in the metro area in this category. The second significant arroyo is the Upper Fork of the Boca Negra Arroyo. Near the study area's southern boundary is the Middle Fork of the Boca Negra Arroyo, designated second priority among all Urban Recreational arroyos. The treatments proposed in the Volcano Heights Planning

The Plan Team recognized late in the Volcano Heights process that the Piedras Marcadas access from the former Rio Grande Pueblo to the volcanic cap through the Escarpment is an important path that needs to be reinforced in the Plan. The Plan Team intends to revisit this path (See Exhibit 6) as it extends through the Town Center and to the North Geologic Window in order to memorialize and reinforce it within the land use plan.

Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (Rank III)

The Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP) was adopted by City Council on November 30, 1987. The Northwest Mesa Escarpment is a seventeen-mile long face of exposed volcanic basalt and associated soils approximately 50 to 200 feet high which runs north to south along the northwest mesa. This plan was created to maintain the volcanic escarpment as open space for public health, welfare and safety reasons, as well as to define the urban form and satisfy other open space needs. It sets forth goals and policies regarding land use and resource areas in four areas including the Escarpment face, the Conservation Area, the Impact Area, and the View Area (Maps 10 and 12). The NWMEP contains a design overlay zone and is utilized as a tool to help preserve the escarpment area.

The NWMEP was completed twenty years ago. At the time, development was approaching the Escarpment base. The NWMEP focuses on preserving the Escarpment and how development of land immediately adjacent to its top and base should be preserving of the Escarpment and its setting. The NWMEP does not give detailed design criteria for the majority of the area within the Volcano Heights boundaries. However, it does establish general criteria to preserve views of the area and to the area from other parts of the city; to turning the open space into a network; and to lower development intensity near key natural land features.

The Volcano Heights Plan essentially completes the planning work for the mesa top that was envisioned in the NWMEP. The Volcano Heights Plan provides the detail of how the NWMEP policies can be achieved on the mesa top. The analysis that follows shows the compatibility between the two plans.

The most specific review is of detailed policies in the NWMEP applying to an approximately 350-foot swath of land on the mesa top edge, adjacent to the Escarpment face, and called Impact Area in the NWMEP. Under the Volcano Heights Plan, approximately 50 percent of the land in Volcano Heights that is designated NWMEP Impact Area is proposed to be change to open space buffer land, including parks and schools. (Note: Not all of the NWMEP Impact area land is located in Volcano Heights as the NWMEP Impact Area extends along the 17 miles of Escarpment, on top and at its base.)

There are a few policies applying to the NWMEP Conservation/Impact Area lands--related to archaeological surveys, construction mitigation, and signage of nonresidential areas--which should be considered for inclusion in the Volcano Heights Plan.

Policy #1 establishes nine governing concepts for development and conservation:

- a. The unique environmental, visual, recreational, archaeological and historical qualities and opportunities of the escarpment are to be conserved.

The Volcano Heights Plan promotes all of these attributes and their interconnectivity. The Plan preserves views and paths that connect the escarpment to the arroyos and volcanoes to the west AND to the arroyos and Rio Grande Valley to the east. This not only preserves the cultural history of the area, but also creates new recreational opportunities.

- b. The escarpment area is recognized as a fragile and valuable environmental resource that harbors plant and wildlife within a unique geologic formation. Disturbances to the natural environment, in particular to the drainage, basaltic caprock, slopes and vegetation could result in erosion and caving of slopes and boulders and pose a threat to the public safety and welfare by impacting existing and future down stream and downslope development.

The NWMEP culminated in acquisition of the Escarpment face, a narrow strip of land including the essential features. This narrowness has not been problematic when the western edge was undeveloped. But now, as development approaches on the west of the Escarpment face, the geologic formation and its ecological diversity are threatened by development. The Volcano Height Plan advances the NWMEP policy intent to preserve the ecology and fragile lava by widening the setback area on the mesa top. In addition, the Volcano Heights Plan creates a mostly street interface between open space and private development. A multi-use trail would be built on the east side of the street. Placing a trail and street just outside the current

boundary of the Monument, encourages most foot traffic away from the fragile Escarpment face, while increasing the access for the general public to the views and setting of the Escarpment.

The Volcano Heights Plan also provides a new plant list of native species and details that native species must be used outside the Development envelopes on larger lots west of the Escarpment. The requirement for native plants adjacent to Escarpment open space will protect the open space from the introduction of non-native species. This occurs when the wind blows seeds from yards with non-native plants into the open space. The use of native species near the Escarpment lands will also preserve the character of the area as high desert land.

- c. The escarpment is to be conserved as an entire unit with a recognizable relationship to the volcanoes which created it, the mesa top which borders it, and the arroyos which bisect it.

The Volcano Heights Plan accomplishes this policy by acquiring the Boca Negra arroyos, portions of the State Land parcel, and purchasing the north 1/3rd of the North Geologic Window for open space. These features connect the escarpment to the volcanoes and the arroyos, making the important ecological and cultural linkages through the Volcano Heights area.

- d. The black escarpment face is recognized as giving physical order to the community and as acting as a visual reference point. Views to it and from it are recognized as important.

The Volcano Heights Plan increases the setback from the Escarpment, by creating an open space buffer next to the Escarpment. This will preserve views of the mesa top virtually with no structures visible on top of it. The Volcano Heights Plan repeats policies in the NWMEP to minimize the visual impact of development through building color and reflectivity. The Volcano Heights Plan also details to a greater degree how structure height can be controlled to preserve views.

- e. The archaeological/historical resources are recognized as inexorably linked to their setting. The resources and the setting must always be considered in relationship to each other as well as to other influences.

The Volcano Heights Plan addresses new Paleo-Indian sites on the State Land parcel, identified subsequent to the NWMEP. The Plan preserves these sites as part of the open space network.

The Volcano Heights Plan proposes additional open space lands that form a complete network of the natural features that have historical and cultural significance. The paths and view connections between the volcanoes, arroyos, escarpment, river, and mountains were extremely significant to early Pueblo and Hispanic people.

- f. The natural setting and archaeological/historical resources of the escarpment combine to provide recreational and educational opportunities which are to be developed in ways which will not damage either the setting or the resource. Management and maintenance are recognized as intrinsic needs.

The Volcano Heights Plan open space network completes preservation of these historic natural resources. At the same time, their preservation as a network provides many recreational and educational opportunities for the community. The Volcano Heights Plan establishes a multi-use trail system throughout this network and also places many schools near the open space network. The Volcano Heights Plan also outlines the important roles that City and public agencies, in addition to neighborhood associations, will have in helping to manage and maintain these open space lands.

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- g. The escarpment is not an isolated portion of the community. It is recognized as physically, culturally and economically integral to the rest of the community and as providing physical, cultural and economic benefit to the community.

The Volcano Heights Plan addresses preserving views and visual experiences related to the volcanic cones, the geologic window, the buffer edge of the Escarpment, Rio Grande, and Sandia Mountains. It also preserves views of these features from the rest of Albuquerque.

The Plan seeks to provide amenities to visitors to this area in the form of trails and commercial enterprises--such as a future resort--that ties the area to the City's tourism efforts. In addition, the ability to attract corporations to the Town Center is strengthened by the area having unique natural and cultural amenities that appeal to people's desire to be in 'authentic' cultural space.

- h. Conservation of the escarpment rock art, and related archaeological sites allows for further research and discoveries of the people who inhabited the Middle Rio Grande Valley. The art is not only an artistic expression of the prehistoric peoples, but is a record of their culture and history. The Physical and historical connection from the mesa to the valley through an open space network will create significant educational, research and recreational opportunities.

Several years after the NWMEP was completed in 1987, the National Park Service commissioned an ethnographic study of Petroglyph National Monument resources. This compelling study included extensive interviews with many Pueblo communities. The results amplify the importance of connecting the topographic features associated with their social elements. While the study documents the rich history of the petroglyphs and their surroundings, it points out that all these features are still a living, relevant component of the cultural life of modern Pueblo people.

The Volcano Heights Plan seeks a balance between the interests of new development coming into the area while preserving the rich geologic and cultural resources that have been valued for thousands of years.

A major advancement of the Volcano Heights Plan to preserve the cultural context of the Escarpment is to widen the narrow strip of the Escarpment that is preserved. This will allow more reflective space at a greater distance from the built environment.

The Volcano Heights Plan calls for trails and recreations areas to be set back at least 50 feet from petroglyphs and archeology sites. Guidance is also give for interpretive features and fencing appropriate to the site.

The Volcano Heights Plan requires new site plans to identify petroglyphs and larger rock outcroppings. All rock outcroppings with petroglyphs must be preserved as must all larger rock outcropping in lower density residential areas. Larger rock outcroppings in higher density areas must also be preserved to the degree practicable.

- i. The escarpment's archaeological/historical resources are recognized as important to the world as well as the local community. The benefits of having the resource in our community carries with it a corresponding responsibility to the larger world.

The Volcano Height Plan balances interests to preserve the archeological/historical features, while also integrating them into the lifestyle and economy of the Volcano Heights area. Building a Town

Center and Resort, with their corresponding variety of services, will amplify opportunities for a wider group of people to visit the area.

Policy 9 applies to the entire NWMEP Design Overlay and therefore all of the Volcano Heights Area.

Policy 9: Development at the edge of public or private open space shall be designed to compliment and enhance the open space.

Policy 9-1: On-site open areas shall be designed to connect with adjacent public or private open space and to be visually integrated with the open space system. Orientation of the on-site open areas to the larger open space system is required. In mixed-use development, lower densities and less intense uses shall border the open space and higher densities and more intense uses shall be placed away from the open space. Site plans shall allow for shifting excessive density to a part of the premises outside of the Conservation Area boundary, whenever feasible.

The Volcano Heights Plan proposes setting aside additional open space and parks that will help make the existing open space into a complete network. The existing open space lands form a U-shaped pattern around Volcano Heights. Creating linkages through Volcano Heights will connect these large holdings enhancing the functionality of the entire network. Arroyos and open space lined up to conserving rock outcrops are important linkages.

The specific parcels proposed to be added to open space in a strategic way that both enhances the ecological and cultural value of the escarpment holding and makes a street--instead of a backyard--the edge between the escarpment and private development. The Volcano Heights Plan calls for inhabited spaces and walls creating an edge between open space and residential areas adjacent. Please refer to Section VII Open Space and the image on page 106.

The Volcano Heights Plan creates a Town Center--with higher densities and more intense uses--away from open space at the intersection of Paseo del Norte and Unser in compliance with the NWMEP. Other community and neighborhood centers are also distant from open space lands. While these more intense developments in the area can seem like the loss of open space that many citizens have enjoyed, they are developments that can help pay the costs of purchasing additional open space land within Volcano Heights. Public meetings on the Volcano Heights Plan showed a clear preference for making the trade-off of increased density in centers in exchange for expanding the open space network, i.e., acquiring key features that had not yet been preserved.

Policy 9-2: Where the adjacent land use required visual privacy, non-continuous, non-perimeter walls may be constructed. Varied set backs and landscaping are required. Platting of lots adjacent to the Conservation Area shall configure the perimeter facing the open space in order to avoid a strictly linear appearance. Recommended fence materials include brick, stone, wood, stucco over concrete block, or textured concrete masonry units.

Development in Volcano Heights creates miles of edge between development and open space. Plan policies require 80 percent of the edge between the Monument lands to be a street. The edge adjacent to arroyos is required to be 50 percent of street. Walls and fences are allowed within properties facing the Monument and arroyos. Fencing is post and wire, split rail, or coyote fencing. Walls are stucco, brick and tile masonry, rammed earth, adobe, native stone (or synthetic equivalent) or straw base. For larger lots

Development envelopes are required without perimeter walls or fences on the lot lines, except for fences at the edges of Community Conservation areas.

Policy 9-3: Height of walls and fences shall not exceed 6'0". Color of finish materials shall match Approved Color List (Appendix E).

The Volcano Heights Plan modifies these policies slightly. Walls shall not exceed a height of 48 inches where allowed within street-facing setbacks. They should not exceed a height of 72 inches along rear and sides of the Development envelope. Fences are allowed to separate private land from Community Conservation areas. Building colors should be in harmony with the desert palette.

Policy 9-4: Access to open space trails shall be provided with guidance from the Conceptual Trail Map 11 (page 87), and subsequent arroyo corridor plans, upon review by the City Planner.

Volcano Heights Plan proposes a multi-use trail network that is similar to the NWMEP Conceptual Trail Map, yet it further develops east-west connections. Furthermore, the Volcano Heights Plan details a Bicycle Trail Network that is much more extensive than shown in the NWMEP. The Volcano Heights Multi-Use Trail Network and Bicycle Trail Network will supercede the NWMEP Conceptual Trail Map within Volcano Heights boundaries. Both Plans call for trails along the Escarpment and the North Fork of the Boca Negra Arroyo. Volcano Heights adds east-west trails to better connect the open lands on the west, including the Geologic Window, through Volcano Heights, connecting to the Escarpment. Volcano Heights adds a trail along the Middle Fork of the Boca Negra, roughly along Rosa Parks and roughly along the north side of the State land parcel turning into the Paseo del Norte alignment, and through the Town Center. Volcano Heights Plan proposes a multi-use trail along Universe. The NWMEP calls for an equestrian trail on Universe and a bikeway on Unser. A bikeway on Unser or Paseo del Norte is not part of the VH Plan.

Policy 9-5: Native or naturalized vegetation adjacent to the open space is required. Plant species shall be selected from the Plant Species List (Appendix D).

Volcano Heights Plan strives to maintain native vegetation in areas adjacent to open space and in lower density residential areas to both preserve the character of the area and to curtail transmission of seed from non-native plants into the Monument lands. A new plant list--Plant List A Native--is introduced which supersedes the NWMEP plant list in Volcano Heights. The new plant list was derived from a survey of the Monument in 1994 and was amended to eliminate non-native species and most allergenic species.

Policies require planting of native plant material on private land adjacent and visible to Monument lands. In addition, Community Conservation Areas (with shared ownership) and Conservation Easements (for private lots) are introduced to provide more open space with native vegetation throughout low-density residential areas in Volcano Heights. Homes subject to Development envelopes will maintain native landscape--from Plant List A--outside the Development envelopes. Scenic corridors will also maintain native landscaping.

The Volcano Heights Area includes a strip of land along the top of the escarpment that is currently within the Impact Area. Development in this area now requires a special review process at building permit to ensure that this project meets all of the policies. The Impact Area is generally described as the 350 feet immediately adjacent to the Conservation Area, which by its proximity has significant visual and physical impact upon the

escarpment or other open space. The Impact Area is subject to design regulations which are intended to enhance the visual character of the development adjacent to the escarpment and associated open space, to protect the fragile nature of the landform and thereby, the public safety and welfare, and to provide a visual transition from open space to development. Policies 10-14 apply to the Impact (as well as Conservation) Areas.

The Volcano Heights Plan proposes that specific parcels within the NWMEP Impact Area - representing approximately 50 percent of the land in Impact Area - will become effectively part of the Conservation Area. The remainder of the land would remain subject to the design overlay regulations contained in the Volcano Heights Plan. The NWMEP regulations for Conservation Areas and Impact Areas will be reviewed for incorporation into the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.

It should be noted that La Cuentista subdivision has a plat approved that places approximately 70 percent of its NWMEP Impact Area land into open space. This open space land could be considered NWMEP Conservation Land.

The following policies apply to land considered to be Conservation Areas and Impact Areas in the NWMEP:

Policy 10: Archaeological sites shall be identified and protected or mitigated, as appropriate.

Policy 10-1: A survey by a qualified archaeologist, as defined in Appendix H, is required for development approval.

Policy 10-2: Surveys and reports shall follow guidelines established by the State Historic Preservation Division.

Policy 10-3: Sites shall be treated according to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Treatment of Archeological Properties: A Handbook (1980 or subsequent editions); treatment shall include preservation, avoidance, testing, or documentation of surface and/or subsurface remains. If significant archaeological sites are found that cannot be conserved or avoided, the City and State shall work with the property owner to determine the best mitigation solution.

The Volcano Heights Planning research did not find that new archeological sites have been identified within the Impact Area lands. The NWMEP regulations will be reviewed for incorporation into the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.

Archeological sites have been discovered subsequent to the adoption of the NWMEP. Most of them are on the State Land Parcel or in what would be considered the View Area in the NWMEP. The Volcano Heights Plan proposes conserving these sites and requires site plans to survey petroglyphs and larger rock outcroppings to identify areas of archeological value.

Policy 11: Any damage to the vegetation, slope, or placement of boulders due to or related to construction shall be mitigated.

Policy 11-2: Prior to beginning construction, the property owner shall construct a temporary barricade at the site boundary adjacent to the **Escarpment face** to protect it from heavy equipment. Alternatively, the property owner or contractor may elect to keep construction activities to a minimum of 20 feet from the **Escarpment face** or survey boundary. Photographs of the site in its original condition shall be submitted with the application for building permit, subdivision and/or site development plan.

Policy 11-3: If damage due to construction occurs on the escarpment side of the property line, it shall be mitigated as required in this Plan at the expense of the property owner.

Policy 11-4: Public- and private-sector projects must include geotechnical data and analysis that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the City Engineer that proposed trenching or blasting will not affect the face of the escarpment, potentially causing erosion or caving of the slopes and boulders and thereby threatening the public safety or welfare.

Policy 11-5: Private open space shall be left in its natural undeveloped condition, or developed in accordance with an approved site plan if recreational facilities are located within it.

Policy 11-6: The location and design of private open space shall be consistent with the conservation of the escarpment's multiple resources and with the design of the entire escarpment open space system, to the satisfaction of the City Parks and Recreation Department.

Policy 11-7: For any construction within the Conservation and Impact Areas, the following applies in the selection of alignment and in site design.

- a. Generally, the overall topography of the site is not to be substantially altered.
- b. Combine utility projects (roads, water/sewer, electric) in corridors located in least sensitive areas.
- c. Minimize width of disturbance and minimize cut and fill.
- d. Use natural materials or materials which blend visually with open space for slope stabilization, facilities.

Policy 11-8: Replace boulders where appropriate and revegetate to approximate original conditions, within 90 days of project completion; warrant bond required.

Policy 11-9: City shall restore existing public open space, including land in the Conservation Area that is donated to the City.

Policy 11-10: Existing cuts which are used as trail locations shall be stabilized and revegetated at the time of trail construction.

Policy 11-11: As public open space is acquired by the City, damaged areas shall be protected from further abuse and reseeded.

These policies shall be reviewed and possibly updated to be more consistent with the Volcano Heights development regulations.

Policy 12: Structures shall not block views of the Escarpment or visually contrast with the natural environment.

Policy 12-1: Structure height (As defined in the Comprehensive City Zoning Code) shall not exceed 15'0". Up to four feet additional height for non-residential structures may be allowed by seeking a variance, in order to screen rooftop equipment. Residential structures further than 200' from the **Escarpment face** on site with gross residential densities less than one dwelling unit per acre may have a height of 26'.

Policy 12-3: The exterior surfaces of structures must be Approved Colors (Appendix E). Mechanical devices and vents on roofs are subject to this regulation. Trim material on facades constituting less than 20% of the façade's opaque surface may be any color.

Policy 12-4: Glass on any façade shall not be reflective or mirror glass, that is glass having greater than 15% average daylight exterior reflectance as published by the manufacturer.

Policy 12-5: No exposed roof-mounted heating or air-conditioning equipment shall be permitted. Roof-mounted heating and air conditioning equipment shall be fully screened from views, both from the ground and from the escarpment. Screening materials shall be of Approved Colors (Appendix E).

The Volcano Heights Plan recognizes that Open Space is a network tying the entire Plan Area with the large tracts of existing open space. To preserve the character of open space throughout the area, regulations are needed across the Plan area to control colors, reflectivity, and screening of equipment on roofs. The NWMEP and the Volcano Heights Plan set similar design standards, however, the Volcano Heights Plan applies them across the entire area. The Volcano Heights Plan does allow a broad color choice in commercial and urban residential districts.

The Volcano Heights Plan contains a limit of 18 feet within 200 feet of any open space just above the escarpment. A general concept for building heights throughout the Plan Area is diagrammed on the Building Height Concept Map (see Exhibit 26). The Map identifies a special exception to this height limit for a potential resort site proposed within the Monument buffer area, just west of the Piedras Marcadas.

Policy 13: Sites which cannot be set aside as open space, including recreational facilities, and sites adjacent to Open Space, shall have minimum visual impact.

Policy 13-1: Off-site parking requirements:

- minimum 20% parking area landscaped
- Nor more than 10 contiguous spaces with a 6 foot wide landscaped separation.
- Wheel stops or curbs required
- Landscaping--native or naturalized plants-nursery grown stock except for grasses.

This NWMEP Parking criteria would apply to parking lots of these facilities planned to be in the Impact Area: the Kimmick Elementary School/Park, the Resort at the Piedras Marcadas, the Village Center at the southwest corner of Paseo & 'B' Street, the Village Center and Urban Residential at Aguilar and Cuervo, the Park east of Vista del Prado, and the Village Center at the northwest corner of Unser and SW Parkway (Vista Vieja). Requirements of the Volcano Heights Plan are: require that one tree be planted every six parking spaces; that parking not exceed a dimension of 260 feet in any direction without providing a landscaped walkway; that parking be at the side of rear of buildings; and that parking lots that abut a street have a 5-foot landscaped setback and a 3-foot screen wall.

Policy 13-2: Landscaping

- a. Plants selected for landscaping on privately or publicly owned land shall be selected from the Plant Species List (Appendix D). Landscaping plans shall indicate a pattern that does not obscure major public views of the escarpment as defined in this document.
- b. Shrubs and trees shall be nursery grown. Nursery grown stock is required to prevent illegal removal of naturally occurring vegetation from its existing location.

Volcano Heights Plan requires native plants or Xeric plants in all areas. The residential lots in the Impact Area fall under the Volcano Heights Suburban Residential design guidelines, resulting in a

slight modification of the NWMEP landscaping policies above. In Suburban Residential, parcel area outside of the Development envelope will be maintained in natural vegetation where the native vegetation is undisturbed. Inside the Development envelope, only 2,000 square feet may be yard landscaped using the Xeric Plant List (List B). Any additional landscaping in the Development envelope would use native plants.

The Volcano Heights Native Plant List (A) supersedes the NWMEP plant list in Volcano Heights. The new plant list was derived from a survey of the Monument in 1994 and was amended to eliminate non-native species and most allergenic species. The Plan uses a second Xeric Plant List (B) to cover backyards.

The Volcano Heights Plan prescribes that native, drought tolerant trees be planted along multi-use trails along the escarpment edge in a continuous way, but should not obstruct views of the Rio Grande and Sandia Mountains. The Volcano Heights and NWMEP share this objective.

The Volcano Heights Plan does not prescribe that plant material should be nursery stock. The Volcano Height Plan's promotion of native material for conservation areas and outside Development envelopes creates a greater market for these plants species than is currently supplied in local nurseries. There are few nurseries carrying these native species and the projection is that the supply will increase as these requirements spur an increased demand for these species. In addition, it is desired that a native seed mix specific to this area be developed and become widely available.

Policies require planting of native plant material on private land adjacent and visible to Monument lands. In addition, Conservation Easements and Community Conservation areas are introduced to provide more open space with native vegetation throughout low-density residential areas in Volcano Heights.

Policy 13-3: Signs

- a. Free-standing signs other than streets signs, traffic signs or informational signs shall be limited to 6 square feet of sign area --except in areas zoned C-2, where free-standing signs shall be limited to monument signs 75 square feet in sign area-- and be of a uniform material, style and color to be determined by the Planning Department.
- c. There shall be no building mounted signs with a sign area of greater than 24 square feet.
- d. There shall be no portable signs.

The Volcano Heights Plan does not address signage for nonresidential uses. The NWMEP policies on signage should be considered for adoption in these areas by inclusion in the Volcano Heights Plan. At the time of the NWMEP, land uses were not known for all of the Impact Area. The Volcano Heights Plan establishes these land uses and the non-residential uses lying within the Impact Area (detailed under Policy 13). None of these uses--neighborhood retail, schools, parks--are proposed to have C-2 zoning.

Policy 13-4:

- a. Height of luminaire shall not exceed 20 feet.

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- b. Light fixtures shall be of a type that throws light downward and have baffles, hoods or diffusers so that any light point source is not directly visible from a distance greater than 1000 feet.

The Volcano Height Plan requires light point sources not to be visible beyond 1,000 feet for the entire Plan Area. In addition it restricts light poles to 20 feet for arterial and collector streets and 16 feet for local streets. Only "bollard lighting" (usually less than 3 feet) are permitted along trails that abut arroyos or the Escarpment. The Volcano Heights Plan requirements will supersede NWMEP Policy 13-4 in order to further enhance views of the sky and city, to reduce the impact of Volcano Heights on views from other parts of the City, and to support desert wildlife.

Policy 14: No structure shall be placed within 50 feet of the top or the base of the **Escarpment face**.

The intent Policy 14 was to maintain an unobstructed view of the full height of the escarpment whenever possible. This was to be accomplished by placing development away from the base and top of the escarpment. The acquisition of the escarpment lands included the 50-foot setback. Current development in SAD 227 has shown that this setback is not adequate to preserve this view. Homes built at the escarpment edge in SAD 227 are visibly prominent on top of the escarpment. In the Volcano Heights Plan, a buffer area is added along the Escarpment that increases the setback of homes. This change should preserve the view of the top edge of the Escarpment clear of any structures. The view analysis indicates a small incursion in the view shed from Paseo del Norte and Golf Course. The Plan Team will work with the property owners there to verify this situation and address it in terms of design standards.

The NWMEP Policy 14 also discusses the importance of maintaining clear spatial separation between the historic resources of the escarpment and adjacent, private development. The Volcano Heights Plan requires that a street be the edge of 80 percent of the edge with the Escarpment.

Section 3 of the NWMEP regulates roads, utilities and drainage corridors within the Impact and Conservation Areas. Policies 15, 18, and 19 are relevant to Volcano Heights. The NWMEP calls for the design of these facilities to respect the natural and cultural resources of the Escarpment. The siting and construction of public works require practices which minimize damage to the escarpment and associated resources as the Northwest Mesa develops, and minimize downstream flooding and downslope erosion impacts on existing development. Street and site lighting should be scaled so as not to compete with views of the escarpment at sunset. Fixture, height, direction and quantity of light should be controlled to minimize visual impact while still providing for safe circulation at night.

Policy 15-3:

- a. Height of luminaires shall not exceed 28 feet.
- b. Light fixtures shall be of a type that projects light downward and have baffles, hoods or diffusers so that any light point source is not directly visible from a distance greater than 1,000 feet.
- c. A single fixture and pole style shall be selected by the City and used throughout the Escarpment Area.

The Volcano Heights Plan reduces the acceptable height for an arterial and collector light pole to 20 feet and the acceptable height to 16 for local streets. Fixtures must also provide 'cut-off' angles and be positioned to avoid glare into residential units.

Policy 18: Directs comprehensive recreational trail planning be done for the entire Plan Area.

The Volcano Heights Plan establishes both a Bicycle Trail Network and a Multi-Use Trail Network consistent with this NWMEP policy.

Policy 19: Drainage facilities' design shall be sensitive to the character of the existing escarpment. Arroyo corridor and drainage management plans are the appropriate planning level for specific channel treatment recommendations for arroyos identified in the Facility Plan for Arroyos.

Policy 19-1: Channel treatments shall meet the following requirements:

- a. Limited stabilization of natural channels, according to the policies contained in the "Facility Plan for Arroyos," unless such treatment is determined to be infeasible by the City Engineer.
- b. Use of many small, unobtrusive structures, such as check dams or small drop structures, rather than larger, more obtrusive structures, when structural solutions are required.
- c. Use of materials in treated channels which blend visually with the escarpment and adjacent open space. Naturalistic treatments, such as rip-rap, gabions, or tinted concrete, are the preferred treatment types.
- d. Protection of canyons from erosion through control of developed flows above the escarpment and through stabilization techniques which are consistent with the visual character of the open space.

Policy 19-2: Developed flows above the escarpment shall be managed to minimize their impact on the open space above the escarpment and the Escarpment face. The potential impacts of water retention above the escarpment should be thoroughly studied prior to use of detention areas to control flows.

Policy 19-2: Within the large areas of open space above the escarpment, developed flows shall be modified through check dams or other means to approximate undeveloped flows to minimize impacts on the escarpment and to minimize the intensity of channel treatment required. However, the impact of check dams as a method of controlling flows should be thoroughly studied prior to their use.

The Boca Negra-Mariposa Arroyo Drainage Management Plan of April 2005 provides for a regional detention basin at Unser and Universe, but allows future planning documents to detail stormwater facilities. In February 2006, the AMAFCA concurred with the proposal in the Volcano Heights Plan to maintain the natural drainage function of the North and Middle Forks of the Boca Negra Arroyos. The Plan proposes that new development shall maintain at least a 300-foot drainage corridor which provides for a 100-year flood plain plus a 30-year erosion line. These NWMEP policies shall be reviewed and possibly updated for inclusion in the Volcano Heights Plan.

Current policy of the National Park Service is that no developed flows can enter the Monument lands. The Volcano Heights Plan proposes streets as the preferred edge between open space and private development. This policy will benefit efforts to drain developed flows away from the Monument. The Plan requires streets along at least 80 percent of the linear edge between the Monument and private development. In

addition, streets or other open spaces are required along at least 50 percent of the linear edge between arroyos and private development.

Other drainage facilities will need to be designed as areas within Volcano Heights develop. Hydrological study and design shall be required of new development to determine what, if any, stormwater detention and energy dissipation features are needed.

The remainder of the Volcano Heights area is located within the View Area of the Plan. The View Area generally extends west to the edge of the volcanoes, north to Paseo del Norte and Paradise Boulevard, east approximately 1000' from the base of the Escarpment face to Unser Boulevard, and south approximately 5000' from the southernmost tip of the Escarpment face. This large area comprises the view from a distance. The view area is subject to design regulations, which affect views from a distance and enhance the overall character of the area, and as such has fewer controls than the Impact Area. Policies 20 and 21 apply to Volcano Heights.

Policy 20: The predominate colors used on structures within the view area shall blend with the natural colors of the mesa.

Policy 20-1: Predominant exterior surfaces of commercial and multi-family buildings shall be approved colors (Appendix E). Metal items such as vents, cooling units and other mechanical devices on roofs are subject to this regulation, as are fences. Dish antennae shall not be placed on roofs. Up to 20% of the opaque materials on any façade may be colors other than Approved Colors.

Policy 20-2: Single-family residential structures built in the View Area must be built with roofs that are approved colors.

The Volcano Heights Plan complies with the NWMEP intent to make development on the lands leading to the volcanoes as unobtrusive as possible in order to preserve a view valued by the entire community. The Volcano Heights View Shed Analysis revealed that development within Volcano Heights will be visible from most of the city of Albuquerque, hence design guidelines were needed to keep structures from detracting from this view. The analysis showed that from distant points in east Albuquerque, one is able to see development on the eastern portion of Volcano Heights--SAD 227, SAD 228, The Town Center and the Universe Village Center. One is also able to see lower density residential areas.

The Volcano Heights Plan is compatible with NWMEP, even referencing it, in the regulation of building color, reflectivity, mechanical devices on roofs, and fence/wall colors. The only differences in the Volcano Heights Plan are:

-- Trim materials constituting less than 10% of the façade's opaque surface may be any complementary color, as opposed to 20% in NWMEP.

--In commercial and higher density areas occurring apart from Open Space areas, alternate colors are permitted.

Policy 21: Structures above and below the escarpment shall not dominate the views of the escarpment from the east side.

Policy 21-1: The height of structures within the View Area shall comply with the requirements of the Comprehensive City Zoning Code, except that no structure shall exceed 40' in height.

The Volcano Heights Plan proposes more detail on building heights. A general concept for building heights throughout the Plan Area is diagrammed on the Volcano Heights Plan Building Height Concept Map (Exhibit 26). This map shows a limit of to 18 feet: within 200 feet of any open space just above the escarpment; within 600 feet of Monument; and within the Rural Residential zone. A 26 foot height limit applies in Executive Residential; 39 feet in Suburban Residential; 52 feet in Urban Residential surrounding the Town Center; and 66 feet in the Town Center. Buildings immediate adjacent to the BRT Transfer Station in the Town Center may be 90 feet (7 stories) for a building footprint not to exceed 20,000 sq. ft.

Resolution 270-1980 (Policies for Zone Map Change Applications)

This Resolution outlines policies and requirements for deciding zone map change applications pursuant to the Comprehensive City Zoning Code. There are several tests that must be met and the applicant must provide sound justification for the change. The burden is on the applicant to show why a change should be made, not on the City to show why the change should not be made.

The applicant must demonstrate that the existing zoning is inappropriate because of one of three findings: there was an error when the existing zone map pattern was created; or changed neighborhood or community conditions justify the change; or a different use category is more advantageous to the community, as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan or other City master plan.

The new zones provided in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan and the zone changes included in the Plan are justified based upon “changed conditions” and that they are “more advantageous” to the community based upon the Comprehensive Plan, Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), West Side Strategic Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan. It should be noted that Section 14-13-2-3 of City Ordinances states: “The Planned Growth Strategy, in conjunction with the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, shall guide the future development of the Albuquerque urban area. The Planned Growth Strategy shall serve as the comprehensive guide for this urban growth management program”

- *“Changed Conditions”. The Volcano Heights area was scheduled for development in the 2015 to 2035 time period in the West Side Strategic Plan. The Land Use Assumptions adopted by the City as part of PGS implementation call for a total of 2,890 to 3,056 dwelling units in Volcano Heights by 2025. However, 2,700 dwelling units already are “in the pipeline” with vested development rights, according to City Legal. Consequently, the adopted growth policy frameworks were not effective in controlling development approvals.*

The City of Albuquerque is pursuing completion of Paseo del Norte and Unser Boulevard approximately by 2010, or potentially less than 4 years from the date of this writing. This will increase significantly the development pressure on the area.

In short, the zone changes resulting from the Volcano Heights planning effort are extremely timely in terms of insuring a high quality and functional development pattern in the Volcano Heights area that is consistent with adopted policies.

- *“Community Benefit”. The preceding pages of this Staff Report describe the literally scores of policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan, West Side Strategic Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan that are part and parcel of the Volcano Heights Sector Development. The reader is referred to the comments above.*

The Planned Growth Strategy calls for a development of a set of new mixed use zones called Planned Village Development, Transit-Oriented Development / Corridor, Conservation Subdivision, Commercial Center, and Campus. With the exception of Conservation Subdivisions, these are concurrently pedestrian oriented, mixed use and mixed-density zones that are transit oriented, control excessive traffic, integrate open space and xeriscape landscaping, contain design standards, and so on. The Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan fully complies with the direction of these PGS zones.

It is extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to achieve the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the West Side Strategic Plan as covered above (e.g. mixed use; TOD villages, town centers, and corridors; pedestrian and bicycle oriented; and so on) using the existing zoning code. Said differently, these policies virtually can only be realized through new zones and design standards such as contained in the proposed Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.

Lastly, the existing pattern of zoning in the Volcano Height area (almost entirely R1, RD, RO20, and A1) will result in development that will fail to meet the policies contained in Comprehensive Plan, Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), West Side Strategic Plan, and the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan. Furthermore, development according to the existing zoning is likely to increase materially west side traffic congestion, perhaps even causing failure of the roadway system.

CONCERNS OF REVIEWING AGENCIES / PRE-HEARING DISCUSSION

TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

Transit Department requests a bike lane along Unser Blvd.

Response:

The VHP offers a unique bikeway trail system (See Exhibit 21) separate from automobile traffic along open space connections, arroyos and gas line easements. A bikeway system separate from traffic on a Limited Access Arterial is preferred for safety and recreational purposes. Only portions

of the area not well served by open space connections are designated for a Class 2 bike lane as part of the street right-of-way. A Class 2 bikeway is shown for Universe Blvd. as a minor arterial (see Cross-sections 8 and 9). Universe provides a good north-south commuter route. The Class 1 separated bike trail along Rainbow runs along the gas line easement away from traffic. It parallels the roadway for a short distance south of Woodmont. Bikeways not separated from traffic should not be included in the right-of-way for Unser as a major, high speed, traffic carrier due to safety considerations and the limited right-of way available. The proposed BRT will provide a more-used alternative to automobile travel on Unser.

The Transit Department requests a station at the Paseo / Rainbow intersection to replace the stop located further west and a Park and Ride for the Paseo route near the Universe station. Regarding amendments to the Long Range High Capacity Transit System Plan, the Transit Department wants consideration of a peak-period commuter route to the Double Eagle destination if that area develops as an employment center without significant demand for all-day trips.

Response:

It is agreed that the Paseo del Norte Major Transit Corridor should extend to Rainbow rather than Double Eagle because the airport is likely to develop as a major employment center requiring commuter service rather than a mixed-use district requiring all-day service. Subsequent to the VHP's adoption, the exact location of transit stations and the design details of the BRT route in relationship to the Town Center Parkway will be determined in coordination with the Transit Department.

The Transit Department has identified technical considerations with door openings for the proposed BRT route adjacent to the Town Center Parkway median (shown in Cross-section 12).

Response:

The Plan Team will review this situation and switch the general purpose and BRT lane shown as appropriate. The Plan does not call for a dedicated transit lane here – so we are mostly changing the placement of the bus shown in the graphic and the lane width indicated.

Transit questions suggests unlimited F.A.R. for the Town Center and suggests raising the maximum F.A.R. for the Village Centers to 1.5 or higher.

Response:

The community participants in the Volcano Heights charrette had a preference for somewhat lower density. The Plan Team is aware that higher densities are more conducive to effective transit. We will consider this change in the context of the public comments made at EPC / Council hearings. We note that FARs of 2.0 for the Town Center and 1.0 for the Village Centers will create substantial mixed-use centers.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (MRCOG)

MRCOG identifies the need to amend the following plans:

- Amendments to Roadway Access Policies in the Long Range Roadway System are subject to review and approval by the MTB.
- Modifications to the High Capacity Transit Facilities in the Long Range High Capacity Transit System will occur through development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and coordination with the City's Transit Department and the Technical Programming Task Group (TPTG).
- Proposed modifications to the Long Range Bikeway System should be discussed with the Walking and Bicycle Advisory Group (WABAG). There is concern over exclusion of Unser Blvd. as a major north-south bicycle corridor.

Response:

See discussion of the proposed Bicycle Trails Network above.

The Volcano Heights Plan Implementation Element VII.6 lists all plans to be amended including the above list. The City will coordinate with all responsible owner and implementing agencies in making these amendments.

See discussion of the proposed Bicycle Trails Network above regarding reasons for not including a bike route as part of the Unser right-of-way.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Air Quality Impact Regulations in the Zoning Code require an Air Quality Impact Analysis for a sector development plan that meets certain threshold criteria.

Response:

The Environmental Health Department Air Quality Planner will work with the Plan Team to conduct a Preliminary Air Quality Impact Analysis to determine if the sector plan meets the threshold requirements for an Air Quality Impact Analysis including specific quantification of traffic generation and emissions. The extensive quantification of anticipated traffic generation in the plan area should provide adequate data to calculate emissions. The analysis should consider the mixed-use nature of proposed development, the emphasis on transit and walkability, the fact that the "trend" development alternative contains the same number of dwelling units and population as the "preferred alternative", and other sustainable development features.

CITY OPEN SPACE DIVISION

The Open Space Division recommends that archeological sites be removed from the map on p. 5, Exhibit 4.

Response:

Site locations are indicated in a very generalized way on the map so it would be difficult to use the map to locate specific sites on the ground. While this information provides context for the specific Plan requirements for site plans, subdivisions, master plans, and so on, we will consider removing some or all of these references in Exhibit 4.

Comment: The Open Space Division recommends revision of the first sentence in the last paragraph of p. 9 to read "The open space that exists within and adjacent to the plan area does not have a fully developed formal trail system."

Response:

The first sentence of the last paragraph on p. 9 will be revised per the comment.

Comment: The Open Space Division would like the VHP to more clearly distinguish between various types of land that are generically called Open Space in the VHP. Distinctions should be made as follows:

- Natural land to be acquired and managed by the City as part of its Open Space system should be referred to as Public Open Space
- Natural features that are incorporated into subdivisions but are not on public land should be called Private Open Space
- Land managed for specific purposes such as drainageways, parks, or recreational trails.

The Division recommends that this land managed for specific purposes should not be included in the Open Space acreage calculations later in the Plan.

For clarification, changes should be made to the following maps:

- Exhibit 7 Parks and Natural Drainage map and Exhibit 22 Land Use Plan – show the Middle Geologic window as existing City-owned Open Space
- Exhibit 22 Land Use Plan – The shades of green are too similar to be able to distinguish between Open Space/ Buffer, City-Owned Open Space, and Petroglyph National Monument. For clarity, the key should read: Proposed Open Space/ Buffer (City management) and Existing City-owned Open Space
- Exhibit 29 Open Spaces and Scenic Corridors map – the linear tracts of land that are part of the trail system as shown on Exhibit 30 (along Paseo del Norte, south and west of La Cuentista, along Universe Blvd., through The Trails, through Vista Vieja) should be designated as active parks or part of a trail network rather than proposed Open Space. This comment also applies to the Land Use Plan map.

Response:

The above changes will be made to all relevant maps and text to better delineate distinctions between existing and proposed open space, parks and trails through color coding and more specific designations.

The estimated acreage calculations on VHP p. 125 do break down open space into separate categories including parks and storm drainage. It is not assumed that the City Open Space Division is responsible for acquiring or maintaining these other lands.

Comment: The Open Space Division points out that the Open Space Element of the VHP includes other topics such as parks, stormwater, lighting and design.

Response:

The Open Space Element of the VHP is meant to be comprehensive, including parks, trails and scenic corridors, all of which contribute to the desired emphasis on the natural setting. The chapter could be re-named "Natural Setting." A statement will be added to specify the responsible agencies in addition to Open Space.

Comment: The Open Space Division questions the reference to future connections to the Rio Puerco wilderness.

Response:

This sentence will be eliminated since it references possible future actions outside the Plan Area and further research is needed.

Comment: The Open Space Division should be specified as the approval authority for interpretive signage or petroglyph conservation techniques outside the National Monument.

Response:

The Open Space Division in consultation with the National Park Service will be identified as the approval authority for these actions outside the Monument.

Comment: The Open Space Division wishes to amend and provide more detail regarding trails:

- Not all trails need to be 9 feet wide
- Trail surfaces should be specified as stabilized crusher fines in most cases
- High-tensile fencing should be used to prevent access by motorized vehicles

Response:

The above changes will be made to the text regarding the Trail system

Comment: The Open Space Division wishes to include the potential for Federal funding for future Open Space acquisitions,

Response:

The possibility of Federal funding for Open Space acquisition will be included.

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD

Comment: The Open Space Advisory Board recommends the following changes:

- Strengthen the recommendation for streets as buffer areas between subdivisions and the drainage channels, trails and Escarpment by requiring boundary streets as a condition of development approvals. Backyards facing open space should be discouraged.
- Provide public access from Rainbow to the North Geologic Window. Purchase of the State land adjacent to the Window should be considered for this purpose.
- Recognize the diverse nature of Open Space and the different roles to be played by AMAFCA regarding arroyos and trails; the Parks Department regarding parks; and the Department of Municipal Development regarding trails within public rights-of-way. It should not be assumed that the Open Space Division is responsible for all lands designated Open Space in the VHP.

Response:

A recommendation for access to the North Geologic Window will be added. Please note that the VHP work did not include identifying local street rights of way. The State owned land is recommended for trade for other uses identified in the VHP including a Community Park and middle school site. The potential for access to the North Geologic Window should be added as additional justification for the trade.

A statement clarifying responsible entities for the various Open Space categories will be added to VI. Open Space element (see above).

Section VI. Open Space requires streets along 80% of the linear edge along Monument lands, and streets or open space along 50% of the edge along arroyos. On p. 115 there is a statement regarding Scenic Corridors that roads shall occur along at least 60% of any edge between development and open space (any protected arroyo or Monument buffer). These statements should be made consistent and enforcement mechanisms identified.

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

APS needs to assess proposed elementary and middle school locations for suitability. APS needs to identify funding mechanisms for acquisition of proposed elementary and middle school sites. Based on the projected 12,000 dwelling units, APS has identified a need for 1.5 middle schools serving the Plan area assuming that 8,000 DU's generate 1,200 middle school students. APS states that the new Northwest high school is needed to relieve overcrowding at Cibola High School and will not be able to support existing and future needs of the planning area.

Response:

The elementary school locations recommended in the VHP meet several criteria for location near Village Centers or open space, and the need to avoid crossing a major street. The Middle School location recommended to the west of the High School is complemented by open space and a Community Park which provides buffer from the High School. These locations provide recreational and educational opportunities for students and allow students to be part of community life.

The Middle School planned to serve Paradise Hills north of the Plan Area can also serve the Urban and Suburban Residential areas near the Town Center.

While the new Northwest High School is needed to initially relieve overcrowding at Cibola High School, as the Volcano Heights area develops over the next 20 years, this High School should eventually be phased in to serve the Volcano Heights residential neighborhoods as proposed in the VHP. This phasing will require identification of an additional high school site to serve the large number of additional dwelling units (approximately 100,000 population) anticipated for the areas to the northwest of the Plan Area. (See Conditions and Considerations element of the VHP for a full discussion of anticipated population growth in the area).

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Comment: The Park Service is concerned about the number of approved developments in the pipeline, and suggests that the City work with Bernalillo County to encourage a similar type of planning effort on County lands contiguous to the Plan area and the Monument.

Response:

Bernalillo County Commission Chairperson has been contacted and is willing to support undertaking a planning process for the area that is in the unincorporated portion of Bernalillo County.

Comment: The Parks Service wishes to protect archeological sites, but questions calling attention to these sites through fencing or signage. If it is necessary to identify specific sites, NPS recommends that they should be protected by higher fencing discouraging casual access and through archeological monitoring.

Response:

The section of the VHP dealing with fencing and signage of archeological sites will be reviewed for modification based on your comments.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY

Comment: PNM has a 115 kV electric transmission line along Universe Blvd. and plans a new electric substation on the west side of Universe adjacent to Vista Vieja subdivision to support growth in the area through electric feeder lines from the substation. The recommendations in the VHP for undergrounding of transmission or distribution lines are contingent upon agreement of PNM that the system will be technically and operationally equivalent to the above ground system that would otherwise be constructed and upon available funding for the differential costs associated with underground construction. Associated costs would be the responsibility of the requesting entity.

PNM states that the Plan must provides for utilities in street facing setbacks (Table 11).

Response:

The VHP includes undergrounding of utilities is a major goal in keeping with the Plan's environmental ethic. The VHP recommends undergrounding of the 115kV transmission line in the Volcano Cliffs Village Center, but not elsewhere, and prohibits the construction of new overhead distribution lines. Each of these recommendations would be contingent upon a determination by PNM that the system will be technically and operationally equivalent to the above ground system and on estimating costs and identifying funding sources for the differential costs associated with underground construction.

The Plan Team will review the suggestion that the VHP contain the provision that PNM utilities should be located in street facing setbacks.

FINDINGS - (CASE NO. 1004906), May 29, 2006

1. The Volcano Heights Sector Development plan is consistent and compatible with the relevant policies contained in the Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan.

2. The Volcano Heights Sector Development plan is consistent and compatible with relevant policies contained in the Planned Growth Strategy.

3. The Volcano Heights Sector Development plan is consistent and compatible with relevant policies contained in the West Side Strategic Plan.

4. The Environmental Planning Commission especially notes the consistence of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan with the Comp Plan requirement that areas such as Volcano Cliffs “should be reassembled or sector planned before . . . service extension is assured” and West Side Strategic Plan Policy 7.24 that provision of urban infrastructure to Volcano Cliffs prior to 2015 to 2035 should be conditional on cluster housing, xeriscape landscaping, water conservation regulations, and possibly necessary assembly of multiple owners’ lots.

5. The Volcano Heights Sector Development plan is consistent and compatible with relevant policies contained in the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan.

6. The zone map changes proposed in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan comply with the requirements of Resolution 270-1980 based upon “changed conditions” and “community benefit”.

7. The Environmental Planning Commission strongly supports the Urban Boulevard design for portions of Paseo del Norte and Unser as they adjoin the Volcano Heights Town Center. The EPC commends the Volcano Heights Plan Team for creating this valuable design solution to establishing a more pedestrian oriented place while maintaining traffic flow.

8. Several governmental plans, policies, and program will need to be amended, supplemented, or otherwise modified in order to implement the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. These are addressed in Conditions below. It is especially important that the City of Albuquerque act in a rapid fashion to carry out recommendations to acquire lands for parks, open space, storm drainage, and roadways.

9. The Environmental Planning Commission strongly supports dedicated transit / HOV lanes for the Paseo del Norte and Unser systems. The EPC recognizes that dedicated transit and HOV lanes are major west side arterials are necessary to obtain consumer acceptance of a commuter transit / high capacity transportation system and avoid grid lock especially at the Rio Grande crossings.

10. The Environmental Planning Commission commends the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan Team for the outlined process to link residential development with the availability of new school facilities. This system addresses a long-standing problem of urban growth on the west side. The EPC encourages the APS to adopt this approach.

11. The City should review Comprehensive Plan Policy 5.i to provide for flexibility and choice in the built environment that may involve varying degrees of consumer tolerance for noise, lighting, traffic, and so on. It should be recognized that some individuals are willing to accept higher levels of these environmental qualities in order to live in more dense and active mixed-use places.

12. The City is strongly encouraged to develop financing methods so that funds can be expended for land acquisition needed for open space, parks, transportation, storm drainage, and so on as called for in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan in advance of the collection of impact fees for these purposes.

13. The City should considered amending the West Side Strategic Plan policies to support or allow:
(a) Main Street designs; (b) more flexibility to locate Neighborhood Centers on Principal Arterials under pedestrian oriented design standards; (c) recognizing that a “grid” transportation may be preferred for system design; (d) locating civic, cultural, and community building within Community Centers, Neighborhood Centers, and Main Streets and removing the

recommendation that they be located in Employment Centers; (e) providing greater flexibility for locating schools in parks adjacent to open space corridors.

14. The traditional path from the Piedras Marcadas Arroyo through the volcanic cap presumably to the North Geologic Window has not been fully incorporated into the land use plan in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.
15. While the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is consistent with the policies in the North West Mesa Escarpment Plan, there are a number of development regulation in the Escarpment Plan related especially to the Conservation Area and the Impact Act that should be reviewed for inclusion or otherwise integration into the Sector Development Plan.
16. The maps and text pertaining to Open Space, Scenic Corridors and Multi-Use Trail Network; Transit Network; Bicycle Trail Network; Land Use and Natural Cultural Features should be reviewed and revised in accordance with comments from the Open Space Division, the Open Space Advisory Committee, the Transit Department, and the National Park Service consistent with the responses from Plan Team.
17. The text pertaining to the requirement for undergrounding of electric and gas utilities and placement of utilities in setbacks should be revised to include PNM conditions consistent with the Plan Team's response.

RECOMMENDATION - (CASE NO. 1004906), May 29, 2006

APPROVAL of Project # 06138-00697 and 06EPC-00698 (Case No. 1004906), adoption of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, for *Legal Description*: From the Northwest corner of the map below go South along the Western boundary of subdivision *The Trails Unit 3*, then West along the edge of the Petroglyph National Monument (PNM) and South along the PNM border, continue South along the boundary of the City and the City of Albuquerque Open Space, then east along the boundary of the City Open Space and the City of Albuquerque, South along the boundary of SAD 227, then east and north along the boundary of the Petroglyph National Monument, then due West along a straight line created by the extension of the line between Ventana West and Universe on Paseo del Norte, continue West along Paseo

del Norte/easement to the start point based on the preceding Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL - (CASE NO. 1004906), May 29, 2006

1. The City of Albuquerque commits to take action to seek to amend, supplement, or otherwise modify the following plans and programs in order to implement the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan: Long Range Roadway System, Long Range High Capacity Transit System, Trails and Bikeways Plan, PGS Land Use Assumptions, Impact Fee Capital Improvement Program, establish consistent Adequate Public Facilities regulations as contained in Section VII Implementation, and others. This includes changing the classification of Paseo del Norte and Unser as identified in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan from a Transit Express Corridor (or other designation) to a Major Transit Corridor. A Major Transit Corridor should be extended along Paseo del Norte to Rainbow, rather than to Double Eagle Airport, in the Long Range High Capacity Transit System Plan. The character of development at Double Eagle should be considered prior to designating the transit service from Rainbow and Paseo del Norte to the Double Eagle Airport
2. The City of Albuquerque shall work with the Albuquerque Public Schools to amend the Albuquerque Public Schools Facilities Master Plan and adopt or amend other policies to incorporate the recommendations in Section VII Implementation, related to Adequate Public Facilities regulations and schools.
3. Amend Bill No. F/S R-455 that contains the Unser Boulevard Design Standards to be consistent with the Plan's recommendations.
4. Acquire, on a fast track basis, lands identified in the plan for public uses such for street rights-of-way, parks, open space, hydrology, and other uses. This includes acquiring the northern 1/3rd of the North Geologic Window, the western two-thirds of the State of New Mexico land, and the Paleo-Indian sites on the eastern one-third of this property.
5. Initiate actions to identify the Volcano Heights Town Center as a Major Activity Center as provided in the Comprehensive Plan.

-
6. Conduct a Preliminary Air Quality Impact Analysis as identified by the Environmental Health Department.

 7. Amend the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan to extend the provisions for neighborhood permit parking to areas adjacent to access points to the Petroglyph National Monument.

 8. Review and amend, if necessary, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan to insure consistency between the Bicycle Trails Network and the applicable street cross sections.

 9. The City shall provide mechanisms for assisting in the assembly of multiple owners' lots or causing this to occur as a last resort when necessary to achieve the objectives of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. The City should initially rely on private sector efforts to achieve the needed assembly of lots.

 10. The North West Mesa Escarpment Plan regulations shall be reviewed, possibly updated, for inclusion and consistency with the Volcano Heights Section Development Plan regulations

 11. The Volcano Heights Plan team should review the land use plan and consider creating a trail along the path from the Piedras Marcadas Arroyo through the Town Center to the North Geologic Window.

 12. The maps and text pertaining to Open Space, Scenic Corridors and Multi-Use Trail Network; Transit Network; Bicycle Trail Network; Land Use and Natural Cultural Features shall be reviewed and revised in accordance with comments from the Open Space Division, the Open Space Advisory Committee, the Transit Department, and the National Park Service consistent with the responses from Plan Team.

 13. The text pertaining to the requirement for undergrounding of electric and gas utilities and placement of utilities in setbacks shall be revised to include PNM conditions consistent the Plan Team's response.

Louis Colombo
Deputy Director, City Council Services

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Zoning Code Services

Office of Neighborhood Coordination

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Transportation Development Services

Utility Development

Traffic Engineering Operations

Hydrology

Transportation Planning

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Air Quality Division

After doing a quick review of the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan, my only comment is that I didn't see any reference to an Air Quality Impact Analysis, which is required in the Zoning Code, 14-16-3-14 Air Quality Impact Regulations. It requires that projects that have potential for significant impact on air quality submit an impact assessment that includes specific information on the proposed site, traffic generation, and quantification of project generated emissions. Included in these types of actions is "any sector development plan". This may be unclear because the ordinance also includes threshold criteria which, upon quick review I am not able to discern from the plan.

Environmental Services Division

PARKS AND RECREATION

Planning and Design

Open Space Division

In general, the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan is to be commended for its ambitious and far-reaching strategy to acquire public Open Space and to preserve the natural and cultural characteristics of the West Mesa. The following comments are intended to strengthen the document, and not taken as criticism of the overall intent of the Plan:

Page 5, Exhibit 4—It is recommended that archaeological site locations be removed from the map.

Page 9, last ¶-- Please clarify the first sentence by stating that the Open Space adjacent to the study area “does not have a fully developed formal trail system” in lieu of the statement that it is not a connected or consolidated network (which is inaccurate).

Page 10, Exhibit 7—Please show the “Park” area (Middle Geologic Window) between the Northern and Southern Geologic Windows as existing City-owned Open Space.

Page 61, Land-Use Plan (Exhibit 22)-- As commented on previously, please show that the Middle Geologic Window is existing City-owned Open Space on this map and all other relevant maps. Generally, the three shades of olive-green that show “Open Space/Buffer,” “City-Owned Open Space,” and Petroglyph National Monument are so similar that it makes the map hard to read. For clarity, the key should state “Proposed Open Space/Buffer (City management)” and “Existing City-Owned Open Space.” The comment below for page 109 should also carry forward for all maps that intend to show park areas, trails, and Open Space tracts.

Chapter 6, pp 106 through 116-- The Plan needs to clearly distinguish between various types of land use that is generically called “open space.” Natural land acquired to be managed by the City as part of its Open Space system should be referred to as “public Open Space” or “Major Public Open Space.” Natural features that are incorporated into subdivisions but are not on public land should be called “private open space.” Other land managed for specific purposes such as drainageways, parks, or recreational trails should not be lumped into a general “Open Space” category, nor included in the total Open Space acreage calculations shown later in the Plan.

This chapter includes discussions of several land uses that are not Open Space issues such as parks, stormwater, lighting, and neighborhood design (the chapter title implies a narrower range of topics).

Page 107, Conservation of Arroyo Corridors—At the end of the first paragraph, clarify the reference to the “Rio Puerco wilderness.” Does this imply that there should be a trail system extending from the volcanoes west to the edge of the Rio Puerco valley? Is there an existing wilderness area in the Rio Puerco valley?

Page 109, Exhibit 29-- Some of the more linear tracts of land should be designated as active parks or part of a trail network, but not necessarily as proposed Open Space (e.g., along Paseo del Norte; south and west of La Cuentista; along Universe Blvd; through “The Trails”, through Vista Vieja, etc). Refer to the trails map on Exhibit 30 to segregate these functions.

Page 113, Interpretive features/Conservation-- The proper approval authority for interpretive signage or petroglyph conservation techniques outside the National Monument would be the Open Space Division. The City and the National Park Service would likely consult on these issues, but the approval authority would not rest with the Park Service.

Page 114, Multi-Use Trails-- It is not necessary for all trails to be 9 feet wide. The trail surface should be specified: Open Space Division prefers to use stabilized crusher fines in lieu of asphalt or concrete in most natural areas. The Plan should specify that Open Space trail corridors would be fenced with high-tensile fencing to prevent access by motorized vehicles.

Page 125, Open Space Acquisition—Do not preclude the possibility of federal funds for future acquisitions.

Submitted by:
Matthew F. Schmader, PhD
Superintendent, Open Space Division
Parks and Recreation Department

POLICE DEPARTMENT/Planning

Name, location and service area of the nearest Police station?

Shawn Mc Wethy Substation
6404 Volcanes Rd. NW
Alb., NM 87121

Any plans for expansion of existing facilities or plans for new facilities in the area?

No

CPTED comments on site layout and building design?

none

Any other information that will aid the decision - making process?

Major development - will impact traffic, law enforcement, health services and schools. This will require

reassessment of all related services on the west side and increased man power, equipment and planning.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Refuse Division

Solid Waste approves on condition, that they will comply with all SWMD ordinances and requirements.

FIRE DEPARTMENT/Planning

Comments on Volcano Heights consists of fire dept access roads with a minimum unobstructed width of 20 ft for single story buildings and 26 ft unobstructed width for buildings 30 ft or more in heights. Fire hydrant placement need be in place & approved by fire dept. New construction will be reviewed by AFD through the normal City of Albq plans review process. Items to be reviewed by AFD will be, but not limited to fire hydrants, fire dept access, fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems, as well as fire dept connections.

TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

Transit strongly supports the plan's concepts of promoting transit-oriented development and creating the potential for future enhanced transit service in the Volcano Heights area. The Plan's strong emphasis on pedestrian-friendly design will support future transit service.

Transit has no current plans for extending enhanced quality transit service to the area and currently serves the area with a commuter route (#162) to Ventana Ranch and TVI's Westside campus. That route operates in both directions during peak periods primarily on Unser, Universe and Rainbow.

Future enhanced transit service would require sufficient development to support that level of service, in addition to the requisite capital and operating funding.

The following are comments on some of the details of the draft plan.

1. Routes and stop locations shown in the plan generally appear to be feasible, although exact routing and station/stop locations might change somewhat when service is actually initiated.
2. A stop/station would probably be desirable at the Paseo/Rainbow intersection to allow transfers between routes. That stop could replace the stop located further west.
3. A park-and-ride for the Paseo route would be desirable, potentially at (or near) the Universe station.
4. Extending Major Transit (Exhibit 20) to the Double Eagle area would only be warranted if that employment center generated significant all-day trip levels normally associated with mixed-use

development. Otherwise, a significant employment center could be well served with peak-period commuter routes.

5. Cross Section 12 (p. 48) shows transit lanes next to the median of the Town Center Parkway, and Exhibit 19 shows at least one transit stop on that Parkway. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can only have stops when operating in center lanes if special vehicles are acquired with left and right side doors to serve a center median station (left side of the vehicle – conventional buses have doors only on the right side), or if stops/stations are located between the BRT lanes and traffic lanes (right side stations, with separate “platforms” for each direction), or if the BRT leaves the center lanes to serve stops placed at the edge of the street.

6. Transit questions the need for the maximum F.A.R. in the town center and suggests raising the maximum F.A.R. for the Village Centers to 1.5 or higher.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT/ ADR

Our office offers a Land Use Facilitation Program that encourages neighbors and applicants to discuss questions or concerns regarding proposed applications in their area.

Should City Council desire to have facilitated meeting(s) to obtain public comment on the proposed Volcano Heights Sector plan from affected citizens, our office would be happy to provide assistance.

If you have any questions, or would like further information about the program, please contact me at your convenience.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT/ REAL PROPERTY DIVISION

Per your request, I have no comments on the Volcano Heights sector plan.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

BERNALILLO COUNTY

ALBUQUERQUE METROPOLITAN ARROYO FLOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

AMAFCA approves the drainage concepts for arroyos as presented in the Sector Plan. At the February 2006 meeting the Board of Directors agreed that AMAFCA will consider assuming maintenance of the major arroyo facilities.

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools

- Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan has identified 5 elementary school sites
- APS needs the opportunity and access to analyze these sites in order to assess their suitability as elementary school locations
- APS needs a definitive mechanism as to how these sites (currently privately held) will be acquired by the school district for the purpose of school siting

Middle Schools

- Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan has identified one middle school site
- APS needs the opportunity and access to analyze these sites in order to assess their suitability as middle school locations
- APS needs a definitive mechanism as to how these sites (currently privately held) will be acquired by the school district for the purpose of school siting
- Based on an estimated 12,000 residential units, the planned area will drive the need for 1.5 middle schools. Therefore, the planned area needs to identify two (not one) middle school sites (assuming approximately 8,000 dwelling units to generate 1,200 middle school students).

High Schools

- Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan has assumed the planned northwest high school will support the new planned area
- Based on an estimated 12,000 residential units, the planned area will drive the need for 0.8 high school
- **The new northwest high school is planned to relieve overcrowding at Cibola High School and will not be able to support existing and future needs from the planned development**
- The latter phases of the planned area will drive the need for another high school

Adequate Public Facilities

- APS would like to request a meeting with the City Council Services to further discuss and clarify the section on Adequate Public Facilities

MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Comments made herein reflect consistency with MRCOG and regional policies as supported by the Metropolitan Transportation Board and supporting resolution(s). Travel analysis contained in the plan

utilized MRCOG's Regional Travel Demand Model with modified socioeconomic scenario datasets and refined analysis provided by the consultant. It is anticipated that upon adoption of this plan, these assumptions and the supporting analysis can be used through the MPO committee process as input into our planning and land development assumptions and roadway and transport system access policy. We support efforts to provide a strong and effective planning framework that encourages a more sustainable growth pattern, especially on the west side of town where transport infrastructure and travel options have been limited.

- Any reference to the *Long Range Major Street Plan* should be changed to reflect the current name, *Long Range Roadway System*.
- Any modifications to current access and or designations such as new access for facilities identified on the Long Range Roadway System are subject to review and approval by the MTB following the Roadway Access Policies (R-05-09 MTB) procedures available on the MRCOG website.
- Any modifications in High Capacity Transit Facilities designations as reflected in the Long Range High Capacity Transit System will be handled through the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan in coordination and cooperation with the City's Transit Provider (ABQ Ride). This update is currently being undertaken for the 2030 MTP by the MRCOG through the Technical Programming Task Group (TPTG) which includes member agency representation.
- The Proposed Bicycle Trails Network (Exhibit 21) provides expansion and additional facilities not reflected on the currently adopted Long Range Bikeway System. These additions are welcome and supported, however, there is concern over the exclusion of Unser Blvd as a major north/south bicycle corridor. These modifications to the adopted plan will need to be brought forward by City representation to the Walking and Bicycle Advisory Group (WABAG) for discussion and proposed amendment to the Plan.

Again, MRCOG supports the development of this plan as a guiding document for an area with significant issues related to balanced land use, roadway infrastructure, and limited travel modal options available to the public. This document should be used in support of modification of current MRCOG policies in coordination with all responsible owner and/or implementing agencies. Feel free to contact me for any discussion or if any clarification is needed with these comments.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

The proposed development is located outside the boundaries of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

The District has no comments at this time.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW MEXICO

Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) hereby submits the following comments on the Draft Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan.

- The planned development with additional residences and businesses will require additional utility facilities including electric transmission lines and substations, gas regulator stations, and high pressure gas pipelines. It is important that PNM is contacted to ensure adequate space and public utility easements are dedicated for future facilities.
- PNM currently maintains 20-inch and 12-inch high-pressure gas lines that cross the plan area along Atrisco Drive. There is a 6-inch gas line along Rainbow Boulevard. Additionally, there are gas and electric distribution facilities within the developed portions of the plan area. Typically it is the developer's obligation to determine and accommodate existing easements, to dedicate the utility easements, and to abide by any conditions or terms of such easements.
- PNM has a 115 kV electric transmission line that crosses the plan area along Universe Boulevard. PNM requires phase to ground clearances be maintained for all transmission lines with no more than 2 feet of fill placed at mid-span locations. Ground elevations must be maintained at all pole structure locations. PNM must have access to all portions of the right-of-way including all pole structures and substations. No tall streetlights or signs are allowed beneath or in close proximity of the transmission lines. PNM must review and approve all current and proposed road crossings of the easement within the development.
- PNM has plans for construction within the development plan area that include a new electric substation on the west side of Universe Boulevard adjacent to the northeast corner of the Vista Vieja Subdivision.
- Electric feeder lines from the proposed substation would be required to support growth in the area. PNM in conjunction with developers and city infrastructure projects over time would extend new electric feeder lines along Universe Boulevard north to Ventana Ranch and Paradise Hills, north and east along Unser Blvd. towards La Cuentista Subdivision, north and west along Atrisco Drive towards The Trails subdivision, south towards the Santa Fe Village service area, south to the intersection of Unser Boulevard and Mohave Street NW, and west towards the Double Eagle Airport and Aerospace Technology Park facilities.
- The plan discusses the difficulties and expense of extending water and sewer utilities above the volcanic Escarpment. PNM would anticipate the same construction constraints and difficulties in extending gas and electric utilities into the same area (page 12).

- All streetscape designs should provide for public utility easements (pages 42-25).
- The plan should allow for aboveground facilities associated with public utilities to be located in set back zones (page 71).
- If underground transmission and/or distribution lines are desired for a particular project or area, the requesting entity should examine the funding mechanisms available to fund underground installation of distribution and/or transmission line facilities consistent with the requirements of any applicable rules of the electrical utility on file with the NMPRC or successor agency. Installation of underground facilities would be contingent upon (1) the agreement of the electrical utility that undergrounding is appropriate and that any underground system will be technically and operationally equivalent to the above ground system that would otherwise be constructed; and (2) the availability of funding for the differential costs associated with underground construction (page 37).
- Transmission lines are currently located in valid and existing rights-of-way that pre-date sector plan requirements. Installation of underground facilities would be contingent upon (1) the agreement of the electrical utility that undergrounding is appropriate and that any underground system will be technically and operationally equivalent to the above ground system that would otherwise be constructed; and (2) the availability of funding for the differential costs associated with underground construction. Associated costs would be the responsibility of the requesting entity (page 103).
- The plan must provide provisions for utilities in street facing setbacks (page 84).

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. We would also like to thank you and the Volcano Heights Planning Team for incorporating the interests of Petroglyph National Monument in all the phases of this very important planning effort. We have reviewed the referenced the 3,500 acre development plan, and we are pleased at the effort made to integrate the cultural significance of the entire West Mesa to the Pueblo People into a Rank II plan, which lies immediately adjacent to Petroglyph National Monument. The monument's enabling legislation, P.L. 101-313, authorizes the National Park Service to provide comments on transportation and land use issues adjacent to Petroglyph National Monument. By Acknowledging the traditional land use of the area and the on-going spiritual significance in a city-wide planning document the City is taking a major step in encouraging respectful development.

While we are generally in concurrence with the overriding vision this plan has for the West Mesa, we remain disappointed that over half of the potential development is considered to be already “in the pipeline.” Obviously, it is better to be able to plan for the remaining development but it is indeed an unfortunate lesson to realize that so much of the area is exempt from the plan’s zoning, architectural and landscape standards. We suggest that the City work, if at all possible, with Bernalillo County to encourage a similar type of planning effort on county lands contiguous to the Plan Area.

Because of the significance of the Albuquerque Volcanoes, we are pleased to see the plan includes a View Shed Analysis, and we support the protection of views both to and from the volcanoes. The Design Guidelines in the Northwest Mesa Sector Plan have helped to mitigate the visual intrusion of the encroaching urban development; and, building height, color, reflectivity and landscape are cornerstones to the success of this plan as well. During the 1990s, a significant percent of cases heard by the Environmental Planning Commission addressed conditional uses and possible variances to the Conservation and Impact Area regulations. No doubt future development in the Volcano Heights area will face similar variances. We suggest that the Environmental Planning Commission look carefully at the Architectural and Design Standards and assess whether these carefully crafted standards can all be consistently applied, without variances, without exception.

We are pleased with the emphasis on xeric plants and the inclusion of our 1994 plant inventory as a suggested plan species list. This will help the monument maintain the native species that currently exist.

Creation of a needed buffer along some of the city owned lands within the Piedras Marcadas and Boca Negra Units of Petroglyph National Monument will assure the protection of the views of the escarpment and create space for a Mesa Top trail. The boundary of Petroglyph National Monument is very narrow in several places, sometime only two lots wide. We are extremely pleased with the plan’s concept of conservation of lands to serve as a buffer, as well as the conservation of arroyos. This will help reduce erosion caused by storm water runoff, preserve historic and cultural pathways, help support animal and plant corridors and help link parcels of Open Space lands. We appreciate the lighting, setback, street frontage and storm water discussion on page 112 of the plan.

Furthermore, we are supportive of transitions between the existing natural areas and residential development. When possible single-loaded streets are preferable to backyards of residential properties abutting Open Space and Petroglyph National Monument. When residential development abuts monument lands, we would like to see incentives which discourage the “walling” of individual lots.

The inclusion of provisions to protect archeological sites (pg. 113) is admirable, but many times calling attention to sites through fencing or signage may have unintentional negative results. Some sites may be better served by not calling attention to their existence. If the decision is made to fence the sites, then a fence taller than five feet would be preferable to limit casual access to the sites. The inclusion of an archeological monitoring program for the sites should also be considered to ensure sites remain in their existing condition.

This planning effort is long overdue, and we concur that the West Mesa should have a more sustainable development focus. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important concept plan. We look forward to meeting with you and the other team members.

OPEN SPACE ADVISORY BOARD

The Open Space Advisory Board has reviewed and discussed the Volcano Heights Planning Study and Area plan. We commend the plan for its concepts of varied and viable types of urban development. To its credit, the plan proposed public “open spaces” and trails as notable components of the plan area’s development. The proposed types and areas of “open space”—most notably the two Boca Negra arroyos, the national monument buffer, various parks, and the portion of State land just east of the North Geologic Window—will provide a good, usable network.

In the following paragraphs we offer further discussion of three specific plan topics. Our recommendations, we believe, should be incorporated into the plan—perhaps as text amendments, perhaps as findings or conditions of approval.

1. **Interfaces between “Development” and Open Spaces.** The area plan mentions that subdivisions will abut the Boca Negra arroyos as well as the proposed buffer adjacent to the Petroglyph National Monument (near the top of the escarpment). The text indicates that for the most part the abutting subdivisions should be designed so that streets lie along the boundaries between the developments and the arroyos/ buffer. We support this recommendation and suggest only that it be emphasized and strengthened as a

requirement of development approvals. It is a common but unfortunate practice in Albuquerque to have subdivisions “turn their backs” to adjacent open spaces, arroyos, canals, foothills, and even parks. Instead of preserving and capitalizing on natural features and expansive views—using such things as amenities—this sort of subdivision layout cuts off visual and physical access, both for the public and for the very persons who live in the houses of such subdivisions. A better solution is to require two-way streets running adjacent and parallel to the arroyo or open space/ private development interfaces. There should be few if any houses with their backyards up against the arroyos, the monument, or the buffer area. Boundary streets should be required along essentially all the interfaces here described, excepting only a spot or two where irregular property boundaries will not permit.

2. **Access to North Geologic Window.** The North Geologic Window is a detached portion of Petroglyph National Monument, and is managed by the City’s Open Space Division by agreement with the National Park Service. Perhaps it “*will be managed*” would be more accurate, because at the present time the “Window” is remote and seldom visited. But as urban development approaches more closely, the area will be increasingly impacted. For one thing, the new Northwest High School is starting construction a half-mile away. It is obvious that planning for the Window’s future needs to be done—for protection of the resources and for possible regulation and accommodation of visitors. One need is particularly apparent: the Window has no legal access; the only approaches now are over two or three irregular paths that trespass on adjacent property. To remedy this situation the Open Space Division should pursue acquisition of the state land adjoining the Window. Then a short park-type road might be extended from the Rainbow Boulevard to provide visitor access, management access, and emergency access. Our Board suggests including this matter in the plan.
3. **Strategies and Time Dimension of Open Space Acquisitions.** The area plan speaks of using various strategies to acquire land for open space and trail use, seeking to minimize taxpayer expense. Our Board certainly agrees with effort to economically acquire “open spaces.” It should be specifically acknowledged, however, that open space acquisitions will require a period of several years. Accordingly, the plan should ensure that its designations of “open space” are lasting, enforceable reservations, not merely recommendations.

In this regard, too, we anticipate that relatively little of the plan’s “Open spaces” would be acquired or administered as “Major public Open Space” by the Open Space Division. For the plan’s *arroyos* as open spaces and trail locations, its *trails* within major street rights-of-way, and its developed *parks*, there are roles to be played by AMAFCA, the City’s Park Department, the Municipal Development Department, and probably other

entities. It should not be thought that all the proposed “open spaces” should be the responsibility of the Open Space Division.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters. As you know, Albuquerque’s quality of life has recently been praised in several national magazines, and we believe that our open space system is surely one of the reasons why. Here is opportunity for further improvement of the system.