

## Action Plan

The East Mountain Area is faced with several challenges relative to development and future growth. The following information summarizes the foundation for the Area Plan:

- The area has scenic qualities and an existing rural character that are unique to Bernalillo County, beautiful, and vulnerable;
- Responsible development must be properly planned for and regulated to prevent it from destroying the area's rural character and environment
- Observance of basic conservation principles can prevent environmental degradation, including minimizing impacts related to water quantity and water quality issues.

The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1988, identified the entire East Mountain Area as within the Rural district. A-2 zoning predominates in the East Mountain Area. The Comprehensive Plan states that decisions authorizing development in the Rural Area should be made in conjunction with environmental analyses, which highlight site suitability and potential impacts. Furthermore, Rural Areas of great environmental or scenic value should be considered for major Public Open Space designation, acquisition, and preservation. Environmentally appropriate development in Rural Areas should be encouraged to stabilize and maintain the open, rural character. A site's environmental conditions should guide new development's location, intensity, and character in the entire East Mountain Area. The Comprehensive Plan states that if densities in remote and environmentally sensitive portions of the area were limited to one dwelling unit for every 5 to 20 acres (depending on local environmental conditions), then some problems associated with development at A-1 and A-2 intensities could be minimized.

Each section of the Action Plan includes a set of goals, objectives, policies and possible techniques. The goals are broad statements that reflect the direction that community members want East Mountain Area planning to head in. These are based on existing conditions and a

vision for the future of the area. The objectives identify particular aspects of each goal and lead to the fulfillment of these goals. Possible techniques are the specific actions that can be taken to accomplish objectives. Policies are the combination of goals, objectives and techniques in order to create directives and rules that ensure plan implementation.

This Area Plan for the East Mountain Area of Bernalillo County must recognize the goals and objectives of residents, the unique character of the area, and its sensitive environmental conditions. Together, these factors provide direction and guidance for the drafting of land use and development policies specific to this area. The East Mountain Area's vision, conditions, and goals have been updated to produce the current East Mountain Area Plan.

### *Policies*

It is important to Rural Area preservation that the distinct character and value of specific regions within the East Mountain Area be recognized and maintained. The unique rural attributes and environmental conditions warrant development standards that differ from those applied in urban areas. The policies below provide direction for future development and land use decisions in the East Mountain Area.

Implementing the policies will only be possible if the necessary funds and personnel are available to the affected County Departments. General implementation provisions include the following:

- Adopt the East Mountain Area Plan (2006) update.
- Guide all development with the intent to maintain the rural character of the East Mountain Area.
- Review and make necessary amendments to the Bernalillo County Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance for compatibility with the recommendations in the EMAP.
- Establish additional plans to implement goals of the EMAP.

Periodic review and evaluation is critical to the successful implementation of the East Mountain Area Plan. Bernalillo County Zoning, Building, Planning, and Environmental Health Department shall review the East Mountain Area Plan every five years and solicit citizen input in the review. This review shall focus upon action items and recommendations that were accomplished, utility of the plan to the County Planning Commission and staff, and demographic changes in the area. This will allow the County to evaluate the plan's effectiveness and identify areas in need of modifications and/or revisions. The efforts in this plan should be coordinated with those in other Bernalillo County plans that affect the East Mountain Area.

## Land Use

Wide open spaces, scenic views, farms, and houses spaced far from one another are what largely characterize a rural area and represent a lifestyle different from that in an urban setting. The rural character of the East Mountain Area is very important to its residents and gives the East Mountain Area its own unique identity and “sense of place”. The citizens in the East Mountain Area acknowledge and are concerned that the existence of the area’s rural character is vulnerable to residential and commercial development. Planning for land uses provides the means for involvement in addressing these concerns. The progress and goals achieved in other plans, such as the East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan, contribute to the effort of maintaining the character of the area.

### GENERAL LAND USE – 1

#### GOALS

- Promote appropriate development that retains the unique rural character of the East Mountain Area.
- Protect the property rights of property owners while ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all inhabitants.
- Prevent future degradation of the natural environment as a result of new subdivisions.
- Preserve agricultural uses that are compatible with the environmental conditions of the area.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Emphasize development that consists primarily of ranches, farms, and large-lot (minimum net lot size of two acres) single-family residential lots.
- Provide public trail corridors and trailheads wherever possible.
- Use natural resource capacities (water availability and quality, wastewater disposal, and soil capacity), and community/regional goals as guidelines for development.
- Maintain (to the extent feasible) agricultural uses for lands suitable or historically used for agriculture. Discourage non-agricultural development for such lands, although parks, ranches, and trails may be appropriate uses.
- Historical and cultural character shall be used to guide development of inhabited rural settlements.

## POLICIES

- 1.1 Bernalillo County shall evaluate future development and land uses in accordance with the specific environmental factors affecting each site. These factors include:
  - water availability and quality
  - wastewater disposal and treatment
  - steep slope areas/erosion control
  - floodplain/arroyo corridors
  - visual characteristics
  - vegetation
  - soil types
  - fire breaks in forested areas.
- 1.2 Subdivisions with trail development potential, as outlined in the East Mountain Trail and Bikeways Master Plan, shall work with Bernalillo County Planning Department and Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department toward identifying and providing trail corridors in the County Development Review Authority process.
- 1.3 Subdivision and development on existing lots in areas of poor soils, steep slopes, wildlife habitat areas, and high scenic quality areas shall consider planning relative to water supply, wastewater treatment, building site, road layouts, drainage, and subdivision design.
- 1.4 New rural development shall be sensitive to existing historic, cultural, architectural, and economic patterns.
- 1.5 Agricultural uses within the East Mountain Area shall be preserved through continued and enhanced tax incentives
- 1.6 New, small-scale agricultural activities such as light crop production, home gardening, sustainable agriculture, and animal husbandry shall be encouraged where consistent with environmental conditions.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

### Establishment of sector plans

Bernalillo County shall prioritize and prepare specific plans for neighborhoods or sub-areas within the East Mountain Area. These plans will specify development criteria for the areas they cover and can establish specialized zoning. Each sector plan must be presented to the Bernalillo County Commission for approval and adoption. The plan shall consider the following:

- natural resource analysis;

- economic data;
- community facilities;
- infrastructure review; and
- design guidelines.

Another option for maintaining rural character of the area would be to select zones along North Highway 14 and Interstate 40 that could serve as transitions from commercial nodes to residential areas. These zones could include residential and neighborhood scale businesses. Zones would require appropriate setbacks, performance standards (See Appendix H) and development guidelines (shared access, signage and landscaping requirements).

### Neighborhood Notification

Prior to Preliminary Plat submittal for major subdivisions, applicants shall be encouraged to host or attend a public forum in which neighborhood concerns and questions about the subdivision may be addressed.

## BERNALILLO COUNTY PUBLIC OPEN SPACE – 2

### GOALS

- Work with private and non-profit entities to establish and maintain a network of educational and recreational facilities, parks, trails and open spaces that promote recreation, tourism, cultural activities, trail corridors, protection from natural and manmade hazards, and conservation of natural and visual resources.
- Secure long term funding (20+ years) source for Bernalillo County Open Space (BCOS).
- Develop resource management plans for BCOS properties that conserve and enhance natural and cultural resources while providing opportunities for public education and recreation.
- Preserve and enhance water resources on BCOS properties.
- Form partnerships with agencies and community organizations to build BCOS capacity for land management by BCOS and other land conservation partners.

### OBJECTIVES

- Establish guidelines for the identification, acquisition, maintenance and preservation of these areas.

- Create an Open Space Network which connects a system of residential areas, developed neighborhood parks, and community natural open areas, to other parks and major public open space areas, to meet a range of needs at different scales and to serve the population of the development and adjacent areas.
- Create a multi-purpose network of open spaces and trail corridors along arroyos (above the 100 year flood plain and flood safety zone) and maintain the natural state of such arroyos wherever possible.
- Establish a balance between natural and cultural resource protection and public use.
- Involve the community and other agencies in property inventory and planning process.
- Explore habitat enhancement through constructed wetlands or moist soils areas.
- Continue to improve irrigation efficiency on agricultural lands.
- Balance preservation of water quality and quantity with public use.
- Plan for extended droughts by exploring alternative farming techniques such as native grass and grazing management programs.
- Engage the public and community organizations in stewardship and education programs that promote responsible use and community ownership of Open Space lands.
- Continue to partner with Natural Resource and Conservation Service and acequia associations on agricultural lands.

POLICIES	
2.1	Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department shall pursue the acquisition and/or preservation of the Major Open Space Areas identified by the Open Space Advisory Committee.
2.2	Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department shall work with the National Forest Service and City of Albuquerque Open Space Division concerning joint efforts for the provision of trails, trailheads and parking lots, group gathering sites, outdoor classrooms, handicapped access to open space, and acquisition of more open space.
2.3	Bernalillo County shall require major subdivisions abutting public Open Spaces to provide access to the public.
2.4	Bernalillo County shall encourage citizen stewardship of specific open space sites and shall work with the East Mountain Coalition of Neighborhood and Landowner Associations to implement the Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- The Bernalillo County Planning Department shall support the Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Department (BCPR) in its objective to develop a system that tracks and evaluates each property in the Bernalillo County Open Space program which will assist in determining annual spending priorities as per the Bernalillo County, Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan.
- Continue to implement the BCPR Parks, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan (2003) and the East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan (2005).
- Bernalillo County should continue to develop the trail system as planned in the East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Plan (Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation).
- Ensure that open spaces provided by new residential and commercial development are publicly accessible and suitable for community parks and/or useable open space.

## Natural Environment

The natural environment in the East Mountain Area is vulnerable to degradation due to the area's unique combination of steep slopes, shallow soils, fractured bedrock, dependence upon ground water, scenic beauty, and the lack of urban water and sewer facilities systems. Increased development makes demands on these resources and impacts the unique conditions. Analyses of these conditions prior to development can provide Bernalillo County with information on the appropriateness of the proposed development.

This document strives to promote, as an overarching goal, the preservation of the natural environment to maintain rural character, protect the watershed, control erosion, facilitate drainage, reduce air pollution, and conserve the viewshed and preserve night skies.

### WATER & WASTEWATER – 3

Water is one of the most valuable natural resources for the East Mountain Area. At present, almost all of the domestic, commercial, and agricultural water used in the East Mountain Area comes from groundwater, whether native to the basin or imported from surrounding areas via community water systems. In order to ensure that this groundwater is available for use in the future, measures must be taken to protect this valuable resource. The proliferation of inadequate individual wastewater systems in areas having steep slopes, shallow soils, and fractured bedrock have already polluted groundwater in some portions of the East Mountain Area, and have created growing concerns about public health.

#### GOALS

- Maintain a dependable, quality water supply for the area.
- Minimize the potential for ground water pollution.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Conserve and enhance existing watershed areas.
- Provide greater emphasis on a total system approach to water resource management, recognizing the interrelationship between watershed quality, precipitation, recharge, storm water runoff, consumptive use, and septic tank effluent.
- Encourage maximum absorption of rainfall through the preservation of natural arroyos and the design of drainage facilities and properly engineered, designed and constructed conservation devices in all new developments.
- Encourage water harvesting and recharge/injection wells that meet state and EPA criteria to provide for aquifer recharge.
- Minimize public health threats and water quality degradation resulting from on-site wastewater disposal systems

- Encourage conservation, alternative technologies, and reuse/reclamation to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination and depletion.
- Encourage the use of alternative methods for collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater effluent and residuals to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination.
- Require the use of appropriate technologies for on-site wastewater processing for private and community systems where feasible.
- Monitor existing water wells in the East Mountain Area for contamination, and strictly enforce sewage/wastewater disposal requirements to protect water quality.
- Revise the permit fees to fund an adequate inspection and enforcement, and remediation program for wastewater disposal systems.
- Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health shall promote education of East Mountain Area residents on water conservation, contamination, and alternative technologies for water usage and wastewater disposal, solid waste disposal, and recycling.

POLICIES
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| <p>3.1 Bernalillo County shall update ordinances governing the approval and construction of individual and community wastewater systems and discharge plans that meet the most current New Mexico Environment Department regulations.</p> <p>3.2 Bernalillo Country shall require that for new developments of 25 dwelling units or more, developers must provide connection to a centralized water system meeting all state sanitation requirements.</p> <p>3.3 Bernalillo County shall require that for new developments of 25 dwelling units or more, developers and builders must provide either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-connection to a regulated sewer system;</li> <li>-centralized collection and treatment of wastewater (including nitrogen removal);</li> <li>-approved alternative on-site non-discharging systems; or</li> <li>-conventional systems that meet the requirements specified in the most current Bernalillo County Wastewater Ordinance, <i>and</i> an acceptable hydrogeologic, soils, and slope report.</li> </ul> <p>3.4 Any major subdivision in the East Mountain Area may be required to provide a study of the effects of the proposed development upon the groundwater supply of neighboring properties.</p> <p>3.5 Bernalillo County shall actively seek grants, loans, Federal and State special appropriations to assist in the construction and customer connection and utilization of community water and wastewater systems in conformance with approved area plans, and seek to establish public/private and intergovernmental agreements for continued operation, maintenance and administration of any publicly funded community water or wastewater systems.</p> |
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- 3.6 In all areas determined by an on-site soil evaluation approved by Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health as having moderate or severe restrictions on the development of wastewater disposal fields, whether for new building permits or subdivisions, the disposal fields must meet minimum county and state standards. In those soils where disposal fields are not recommended, an alternative system, which can be demonstrated to mitigate the adverse impacts of discharging sewage to the environment, must be provided.
- 3.7 Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall prepare a Wastewater Service Options Study for the East Mountain Area to include:
- A water and wastewater infrastructure study;
  - Evaluation of wastewater treatment options for the major subdivisions and population centers in the East Mountain Area;
  - Comparison of the costs and benefits of all wastewater treatment options as they pertain to specific development areas; and
  - Exploration of financing and management techniques for the various options.
- 3.8 Bernalillo County shall pursue the establishment of an incentive program (revolving loan fund, matching funds, grants) to promote the upgrade of existing septic systems to non-polluting alternatives in areas experiencing problems with septic tank effluent (groundwater pollution, well contamination, or public health hazard).
- 3.9 Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health shall update the existing informational booklet on residential on-site wastewater systems.

#### POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Bernalillo County shall update ordinances governing water and wastewater issues to be at least as stringent as the New Mexico Environment Department regulations.
- Bernalillo County shall prepare and adopt a Wastewater Services Option Plan for the East Mountains.
- Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall prepare an overall drainage management plan for the entire East Mountain Area.
- Bernalillo County shall provide the public with educational information about conventional and alternative water and wastewater system.
- Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health shall continue tracking wastewater permits and shall monitor and evaluate the cumulative effect of wastewater systems.
- Developer shall install desiltation ponds downgradient from residential areas. Sheet flow from medians and roadside/parking lot plantings can be directed to drainage swales towards ponding areas, which can also serve as a small native vegetation park.
- Community water systems and shared wells shall be encouraged where appropriate.

## VISUAL RESOURCES – 4

The dynamic mountainous landscape of the East Mountain Area provides many prominent views that are highly valued by residents and tourists alike and serve to enhance the rural character. Future development shall preserve views of the mountains and valleys of the East Mountain Area in order to retain the sense of identity and rural character that mountains, hills and valleys impart to the region. Natural features shall dominate the rural landscape, while artificial features shall not be visible from roadways. Projects that retain most of the vegetation and distinctive features (such as hilltops, outcroppings and meadows) are not only visually attractive, but also ecologically sound and increase the real estate value and shall be given a favorable consideration for approval.

A viewshed starts at the transition between the development of a road or a village and the surrounding landscape. To determine the extent of the viewshed, important vantage points and significant features in a village shall be identified. Foreground, middle ground, and background views should be assessed, and sensitivity (or relative importance) of each view classified. Effects on views should become an integral part of the evaluation of proposed future developments in the East Mountain Area. Current light ordinances should be uniformly enforced in commercial and residential areas. Information about dark skies should be provided to local residents and businesses.

### GOAL

- Maintain and improve the existing visual quality of the East Mountain Area.

### OBJECTIVES

- Recognize the natural and visual environment, particularly features unique to the East Mountain Area as a significant determination in development decisions.
- Encourage the careful siting of incidental structures such as signs, guywires, poles, fireplugs, street furniture, and overhead utility lines, which are sources of visual intrusion and impediments to the mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians.
- Encourage landscaping within public and private rights-of-way to control water erosion and dust, and create a pleasing visual environment; native or naturalized low-water use vegetation shall be used where possible.
- During construction, avoid disturbing the natural features on the portion of a lot that is not affected by the new development.
- Encourage preservation of natural topographic features such as canyons, arroyos, streams, slopes, springs, ridge lines and open meadows.
- Avoid siting of buildings on ridge tops or in the middle of meadows whenever possible to preserve the integrity of the rural views in the area.
- Construct roads along natural contours whenever possible and avoid or minimize cutting and grading.
- Encourage imaginative and innovative building techniques to create buildings suited to natural hillside surroundings, using colors and textures of building materials that are in harmony with the natural surroundings.

## POLICY

- 4.1 In order to minimize environmental and visual damage from new construction in the East Mountain Area, Bernalillo County Zoning, Building, Planning, and Environmental Health Department shall require that all subdivision applications and building site plans include the following:
- Topography indicating areas between 15% and 25% slope and over 25% slope, and ridge tops
  - Existing generalized vegetation
  - Existing floodplains/arroyos, wetlands, and riparian areas
  - Existing roads and/or trails
  - Cleared and graded areas not to exceed minimum required for roadways, home, accessory building, wastewater treatment, animal husbandry (where allowed by zoning) and driveway construction.
  - Measures taken to prevent spread of non-native invasive plants found on building sites to other areas through equipment contamination

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUE

- Conduct a study of ridge tops and escarpments including an analysis of slopes and strategies for protection of these natural features.

## AIR, LIGHT, NOISE POLLUTION – 5

While the East Mountain Area currently enjoys clean air, dark skies, and limited noise pollution, it is important to realize that as the population and associated activities increase, it will be necessary to guide land use and community development toward strategies and solutions that are respectful of these aspects of the environment.

## GOALS

- Safeguard public health and enhance the quality of life by enforcing Lighting, Noise, and Air Pollution ordinances.
- Improve air quality to safeguard public health and enhance the quality of life.
- In accordance with Bernalillo County regulations, prevent noise conflicts between new land uses and existing development.
- Maintain and improve the existing visual quality of the East Mountain Area.

## OBJECTIVES

- Protect air quality by providing a balanced circulation system that encourages mass transit use through the I-40 corridor and other alternative means of transportation while providing sufficient roadway capacity to meet mobility and access needs.
- Integrate noise mitigation into the land-use planning process.
- Develop strategies to minimize adverse noise effects on noise-sensitive land uses near existing noise sources (such as Interstate 40)
- Review and revise Bernalillo County Light Pollution Ordinance as needed.

## POLICIES

- 5.1 Bernalillo County shall integrate air quality considerations into zoning and land use decisions to prevent air quality/land use conflicts.
- 5.2 Bernalillo County shall require new buildings in the East Mountain Area intending to use fireplaces or wood-burning stoves to install low-emission units.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Public Education

Inform residents of changing technologies and offer incentives for improved air, light, and noise pollution control systems, as well as placing controls on major industrial pollution point sources. Bernalillo County should provide incentives for change and encourage EMA residents to educate one another about potential pollution-reducing technologies and techniques. Local businesses should offer appropriate products. Population growth and distribution, air circulation patterns, and pollutant concentrations should be monitored in order to determine how location and type of development will affect the East Mountain Area's airshed. Such an approach will safeguard air, light, and noise quality by guiding development and encouraging residents to be more respectful of the environment.

- Auto Emissions

Reduce emissions by limiting the number of vehicles or dispersion units in an area, by mechanical improvements, by intensive education of the public along with incentives for change, and by applying enforceable standards and controls on their maintenance and use. Preserved air quality by keeping motor vehicle traffic minimal and engine emissions low, or by dispersing pollutants into a larger volume of air, thereby reducing concentration of air pollution.

- Scale of Roadways

Maintain a hierarchy of roads to serve various traffic volumes, while generally keeping roadways at a reduced scale. Minimize scale of roadways to prevent pollution, to discourage high traffic volumes, encourage non-motorized uses and to retain the rural character of the area (particularly valuable to both residents, tourists and the real estate community). Plan toad “improvements” with the surrounding countryside in mind. Designated a network of “scenic routes” intended to display and complement the natural environment. Establish locally-owned public transportation (on-call and scheduled “minibuses”) to discourage automobile travel to central commercial points.

- Alternate Transportation

Provide facilities for walking, bicycling, and horseback riding, thereby reducing the need for travel by automobile (Refer to the *Trails* section). Leave trails along roads unpaved for multiuse where convenient. Design trails sensitively to fit in with the natural environment. Created bikeways on roads where wide shoulders can be accommodated. Use the East Mountains Bikeways and Trails Master Plan, which outlines the options for trails and bikeways, to guide new trail development

- Atmospheric Circulation

Leave drainageways unobstructed so that there is a free flow of air movement thereby allowing adjacent sources of pollution to take advantage of prevailing winds and breezes.

- Dust Control

Require construction sites to have top soil disturbance permits and dust control plans, and other paving or gravel surfacing of dirt roads in order to reduce dust from these sources without greatly increasing the traffic speeds or runoff. Materials and construction methodologies are available for sensitively preparing unpaved roads, including appropriate landscaping along roadsides that prevent dust from reaching adjacent buildings, etc

Address fugitive dust associated with unpaved roads on public rights of way, construction activity, and other dust-producing activities, as defined by the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board Fugitive Dust Control regulations in order to achieve air quality goals to reduce dust from unpaved roads and construction sites. Strategies to reduce fugitive dust include paving, application of hygroscopic materials, as well as non-toxic chemical stabilizers. A Fugitive Dust Control permit must be acquired from the Albuquerque Environmental Health Department.

- Landscaping

Landscape bare areas and green-belts with native plants. Preserve native vegetation in areas not under active construction to reduce dust.

- Buffer Zones

Implement buffer zones to minimize adverse impacts of pollutants on a specific area by reduction of human exposure to the pollution source. Protect areas most sensitive to air pollution such as, schools, playgrounds, residential areas, and places where people congregate. Ensure continued monitoring of air near schools in the village of Tijeras. Establish vegetative buffer zones to (“green-belts”) reduce the impact of air, noise, and dust pollution and contribute to the highly valued characteristics of privacy and isolation. One proactive way for developers to reduce noise is to provide a vegetative buffer between streets and houses. This buffer of native species would also provide privacy and improve the views along designated streets

- Wood-burning Emissions

Install environmentally sensitive wood stoves in new construction which will includes wood stoves. Create incentives for replacement of older wood-stoves to begin reducing emissions caused by the uncontrolled burning of wood. Encourage the local industry to supply environmentally effective materials and equipment.

WILDLIFE – 6

The wildlife within the East Mountain Area is similar to that found in other New Mexico upland and mountainous areas. Increased development within the area poses a risk to natural habitats. Landscaping with native vegetation can limit dangerous wildlife/human interactions.

GOAL

- Strive to maintain wildlife habitats and create new habitats where wildlife would otherwise be displaced.

OBJECTIVE

- Create and protect natural habitats so animals can take non-intrusive paths through human areas to and from water and food sources.

POLICY
6.1 Bernalillo County shall encourage the establishment of wildlife corridors to increase the safety of residents and preserve the natural habitat for wildlife.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- One precaution that can be taken during development design is to designate wildlife corridors through developments, so animals can take non-intrusive paths through human areas to and from water and food sources. These can double as drainage arroyos, perhaps even as enhancements to roadsides when coupled with corridors beneath roads and fences constructed where possible. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the New Mexico Department of Transportation in association with the Wildlands Project are developing wildlife corridors across the highways. Wildlife “culverts” beneath roadways would be appropriate in many areas where the aforementioned effort is underway.
- Designate open space and wildlife corridors contiguous to existing public lands for critical area protection.
- Residents should avoid planting non-native species, fruit trees, and berry bushes in order to minimize attracting wildlife to predominately human occupied areas.

## SOILS, VEGETATION, AND TOPOGRAPHY – 7

Steep slopes, limited vegetation and soil restrictions predominate the East Mountain Area landscape. These features present limitations to development and must be recognized so as to minimize environmental degradation.

## GOALS

- Protect slopes.
- Preserve native vegetation.
- Control non-native invasive plants.

## OBJECTIVES

- Prevent introduction and spread of non-native invasive plants that are currently located on the site and/or could be introduced by contaminated construction equipment.
- Implement re-vegetation with native species on sites that are disturbed by development.
- Preserve the natural topography of existing slopes.

POLICIES
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| <p>7.1 Future trail locations shall be placed at an elevation that is above the water surface during a 100-year storm event.</p> <p>7.2 All development shall comply with the Federal Storm Water Quality regulations promulgated by the US Environmental Protection Agency and as administered by Bernalillo County, the City of Albuquerque, or any other local governmental entities.</p> <p>7.3 Usage of road curbing will not be permitted unless it is incorporated in a complete storm drainage system.</p> <p>7.4 Bernalillo County Office of Environmental Health shall provide information to assist citizens in identification of non-native invasive plants, measures which can be taken to prevent introduction and spread of these species, and various methods of control and their respective cost and effectiveness.</p> <p>7.5 Bernalillo County shall require that all cut and fill slopes associated with development in the East Mountain Area be re-vegetated with natural plant materials and/or rip-rapped with natural stone to blend with the natural setting.</p> <p>7.6 Bernalillo County shall encourage the development of individual conservation plans for properties of 10 or more acres in cooperation with the Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District and the Edgewood Soil and Water Conservation District.</p> |
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## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall require all future subdivisions in the East Mountain Area to submit an Erosion and Sediment Plan (during and after construction) for review and approval.
- Bernalillo County shall adopt an ordinance to require the use of native plant material and xeric principles.

# Community Development

## RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – 8

Existing standards and procedures for development approval should be re-examined. The commercial and residential development approval process must be rigorous in order to ensure that critical issues (such as those presented in the Existing Conditions section) are addressed. Water availability, fire mitigation plans, and rural preservation must be the primary criteria for approving all new development. Without these precautions, over-development will occur, directly impacting water and fire, the two most potentially catastrophic issues. The development review process should require that development proposals not harm the area. Developers must consider minimizing or mitigating the negative impact on existing watersheds and viewsheds, the increased wildfire danger, and increased air, noise, and light pollution.

The process should continue to be publicly visible and more responsive to public opinion. The most significant feature that draws people to the East Mountain Area is the natural environment. The sense of seclusion, solitude, tranquility, privacy, and environmental integrity should take precedence in decisions regarding new development. The disregard for rural preservation negatively affects the quality-of-life. Developers are encouraged to hold or attend at least one public meeting to address concern of adjacent landowners, neighbors, neighborhood associations and other interested citizens.

Housing dispersal characteristics of rural areas dramatically increase public facility extension costs. Decisions to extend public facilities and services should be made with careful consideration of both the public health and safety concerns and the effect that service extension will have upon the existing character and future development in those areas.

### GOALS

- Allow for residential development while protecting the rural character of the area.
- Ensure that zoning meets residential and housing needs.
- Ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with residential development.

### OBJECTIVES

- Preserve the supply of affordable housing and the opportunities to obtain standard housing for a reasonable price.

- Encourage quality and innovation in new affordable housing design and construction
- Evaluate service expansion costs, benefits, and effects and balance costs among new service recipients, existing users, and the community, taking into consideration the natural environment.
- Encourage the use of building materials that are in harmony with the landscape, minimize the alteration of existing vegetation and topography on building sites, and minimize the visibility of buildings and incidental structures.
- Establish construction guidelines requiring low-flow plumbing fixtures and other conservation features (unless alternative wastewater systems proposed would be better served by high water volumes).
- Study development patterns and address long-term infrastructure requirements.

POLICY
8.1 Bernalillo County shall ensure that land is primarily zoned for residential uses, including housing that is affordable to all East Mountain residents.

POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Require all subdivisions to include undeveloped, unimproved open spaces. Where these open spaces abut current public lands, a publicly accessible right-of-way will be designated on the master plan.
- Require new developments to provide access to trailheads and/or trail easements to existing trails and National Forest Lands and other federal, state, and city lands.

ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT – 9

Portions of the community shall be reserved strictly for commercial activity to accommodate a variety of wholesale, retail, service and office uses where the highest traffic volumes and greatest utility demands can be served and more extensive signage and outdoor display of materials will be expected and permitted. Business should be neighborhood-scale. Local business that can provide for the goods and service needs of the community also keep profits in the area, create jobs, and engender local decision-making for the future of the economy.

Commercial activity in the East Mountain Area is predominantly located along the two main local transportation corridors, Highway 14/337 and Historic Route 66. Commercial Nodes identified on the 1992 Proposed Transportation Network and Commercial Nodes indicate approximate locations for future commercial activity. The commercial nodes shown on the 1992 Proposed Transportation Network and

Commercial Nodes Map were based upon existing cultural and commercial villages, with a moderate area available for future expansion. The exact dimensions and parcel boundaries of commercial nodes and corridors should be determined as part of an economic development study. Future commercial development should be allowed only in designated centers and commercial corridors. Limiting new commercial development to designated areas will eliminate commercial sprawl along the highways and help to alleviate future degradation of the rural character. Limiting the amount and intensity of commercial development in the area has been a high priority of the public throughout the planning process.

The existing commercial centers are located in: Tijeras, Cedar Crest, San Antonito, the junction of Highway 333 (Historic Route 66) and Highway 217, and Chilili. In addition, two small neighborhood commercial centers are at Kuhn Road and the intersection of Highways 337 and 217. Future commercial and employment uses should be encouraged in the Route 66 and North 14 corridors. Sector plans can be developed to ensure that future commercial and employment uses in the Route 66 and North 14 corridors are compatible with the rural character of the East Mountain community.

#### GOAL

- Achieve steady and diversified economic development balanced with other important social, cultural, and environmental goals.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Promote sound economic development that includes small-scale, local businesses.
- Provide new employment opportunities for area residents which will accommodate a wide range of occupational skills and salary levels.
- Promote tourism with careful attention to the potential for impacts of tourism on the East Mountain Area residents, rural character, and environment.

#### POLICIES

- 9.1 Commercial development shall occur in commercial corridors and nodes identified through an economic development study, sector plan, or master plan approved by Bernalillo County.
- 9.2 Prohibit new Special Use Permits for commercial and manufacturing that would be equivalent to M-2 zoning.
- 9.3 New commercial development shall be of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of the area residents and not degrade the environment.

9.4 Encourage small-scale business to develop with the potential for providing local employment.
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## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Establish commercial corridors and nodes to allow for the location of neighborhood-scale businesses that generate jobs and provide needed goods and services to EM residents while maintaining rural character.
- Focus light industrial and commercial development in selected areas with adequate utilities and transportation access and set apart from any existing or future residential neighborhoods or other incompatible land uses.
- Reserved portions of the community strictly for commercial activity to accommodate a variety of wholesale, retail, service and offices uses where the highest traffic volumes and greatest utility demands can be served and more extensive signage and outdoor display of materials will be expected and permitted.
- Work with the local business community and other appropriate groups to collect annual figures on new, continued, expanded, and discontinued businesses. As part of this assessment, special attention will be paid to the number of locally owned and operated establishments.
- Conduct an economic development study including market analysis and corridor study in order to identify what constitutes corridors and nodes (areas of concentrated commercial activity), prioritize desired and potential commercial and industrial activities, assess job opportunities, and develop criteria for locating commercial nodes and corridors. Include the public in this process
- Design guidelines created for commercial development must be compatible with the rural character of the area and with the transportation network. Design criteria could be developed for, but not limited to, the following:
  - Scale;
  - Building massing;
  - Sense of entry;
  - Ingress and egress;
  - Placement of buildings and parking areas;
  - Rural character;
  - Architectural design and building materials;
  - Traffic impact;
  - Visual impact;

- Road setbacks;
- Adjacent residential setbacks; and
- Open space.

CULTURAL RESOURCES – 10

Three important pueblo sites are in the East Mountain Area, including Tijeras Pueblo, the San Antonio Pueblo and the Paa-ko pueblo along the San Pedro Creek. Other cultural sites as identified in the existing conditions section include early Hispano settlements, churches and plazas, such as those found at San Antonito and along the Tijeras Arroyo. Land Grants are also cultural sites that continue to be occupied by some heirs of the original grantees.

GOAL

- Identify and, if appropriate and feasible, manage or acquire significant archeological and paleontological sites for research, education, economic, or recreational use.

OBJECTIVES

- Develop a proactive program for identifying and evaluating historical, archeological, paleontological, ecological, and other significant sites and items in the East Mountain Area.
- Determine appropriate treatment of significant sites and remedies for those that cannot be preserved.
- Per the State of New Mexico Cultural Properties Act 18-6-11.2 NMSA 1978 and the Bernalillo County Subdivision Ordinance Sec. 74-112 Protecting Cultural Properties: All lands that are to be subdivided into more than 24 lots shall be investigated by an archeologist who is permitted by the State Cultural Properties Review Committee.

POLICIES
10.1 Existing buildings and spaces determined to be of significant local, State, or National interest shall be retained, maintained, and integrated as viable elements of the community.
10.2 Bernalillo County shall promote preservation of historic structures in the East Mountain Area.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Promote preservation through the following actions:
  - Encourage private preservation of historic structures.
  - Explore the feasibility of adaptive reuse of historically significant structures for public or other community uses.
  - Provide support for practical historic preservation programs that will benefit East Mountain Area residents.
  - Apply for matching funds from the State Historic Preservation Division for an area survey of historic structures.
  - National Historic Register nominations shall be prepared as a deliverable of survey.
  - Notify and work with concerned citizens who have identified potentially historical sites.
  
- Review and evaluate existing archeological sites and pictographs for potential inclusion and purchase as County Open Space.

## FACILITIES – 11

Since 1995 several new community facilities have been constructed in the East Mountain Area. These facilities include Vista Grande Community Center and Multipurpose field, East Mountain Little League Fields and Concession Stand, Sunflower Meadow Park, Los Vecinos Skate Park, Whispering Pines Senior Meal Site, the Vista Grande /San Antonio Elementary School Trail, and the Vista Grande exercise station. A cluster of community facilities are located in the vicinity of Tijeras including the Village Hall, a County Sheriff's Office, a waste transfer station, a fire station and substation, a post office, an elementary school, a middle school, a community center, and a new library.

The Bernalillo County Transfer Station is located 3 miles east of the Village of Tijeras on Old Highway 66. It has been in operation since 1985 and serves a Bernalillo County residential base in the East Mountains and has become a central part of the community and a place to emphasize ways of recycling solid waste, such as newspaper, cardboard steel cans, aluminum can, #2 plastic containers, and tires. The Bernalillo County Solid Waste Ordinance states that solid waste must be disposed of properly. In the East Mountain Area, there are three independent solid waste haulers who can be contracted to pick up and dispose of garbage or residents can take it to the Transfer Station themselves.

The Bernalillo County Parks and Recreation Parks, Open Space, and Trails (POST) Master Plan 2003-2010 was adopted in 2003. The East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan was adopted in 2005. Generally, these plans aim to create an interconnected system of parks, open spaces, trails, and bikeways that provide East Mountain Area residents and visitors opportunities for a variety of activities. They advocate involvement of community members and collaboration with public agencies to make amenities possible.

GOALS

- Provide and promote diversified and quality educational opportunities, recreational programs and facilities for the citizens of Bernalillo County.
- Develop and manage public services and facilities in an efficient, equitable manner.
- Maintain an accessible solid waste station and promote recycling.

OBJECTIVES

- Expand services and make them more accessible to people who reside in the East Mountain Area.
- Implement East Mountain Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.

POLICIES

- 11.1 Bernalillo County public buildings and facilities shall serve as community gathering areas by being accessible and available to area residents.
- 11.2 Bernalillo County shall encourage educational programs on Open Space land
- 11.3 Public buildings should strive to be an example of superior design.
- 11.4 Bernalillo County shall work with staff from other federal, state, county and municipal agencies and private developers on facility development and management issues in order to provide and promote diversified and quality recreational programs and facilities for the citizens of the EMA.
- 11.5 Use County review approval process (CDRA and CPC) as ways to secure public accessibility to open space and trails.
- 11.6 Bernalillo County shall improve enforcement of ordinances associated with solid waste disposal.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Work with the Albuquerque Public School system and other area schools to make educational facilities accessible by East Mountain Area residents.
- Encourage local educational and recreational activities including races, parades, East Mountain Rendezvous, etc.
- Work with Kirtland Air Force Base and the U.S. Department of Energy to ensure that the Withdrawal Area is properly maintained and to prevent the inappropriate use of the area by hikers, equestrians, and mountain bike users.
- Develop one or more community cultural centers to provide visual and performing arts space, including classroom and performance space for both children and adults to participate at all levels in their cultural heritage, music, theatre, art, and dance.
- Designate scenic roadways with educational and historical information signage.
- Assess the capacity of existing public facilities to serve the current or projected future population. This information can assist in identifying potential locations for future public facilities and lead to the expansion or relocation of public activities or facilities.
- Encourage clustering of services in centralized locations through the policies of this plan to be accessible to area residents.
- Continue to work in conjunction with the National Forest Service regarding expansion of recreational facilities in the East Mountain Area.
- Incorporate the following criteria into the design of parks and other undeveloped open areas:
  - Multi-functional use of resources and facilities compatible with local character and development policies.
  - Maintenance and landscaping appropriate to the location, function, public expectations and intensity of use.
  - Integration into residential design for accessibility and orientation to encourage use
  - Lighting (minimal), native vegetation, sit design, or other methods to minimize vandalism and ensure compatibility with the surrounding area.
  - Integration with natural environment.
  - Promote private land dedication of open space and public access corridors by private citizens and organizations.
  - Provide fencing, parking and signage where appropriate for each open space site.
  - Encourage the development of and provide support to school systems and organizations to promote environmental education.

- Solicit community involvement when any public land is considered for sale, trade or gifting.
  - Support the continuation of public access in the Otero Canyon Withdrawal area.
- Work with the Village of Tijeras on development and funding of regional community facilities such as the existing Community Center, or proposed Library, Museum, and Mountain Arts Cultural Center.

## TRANSPORTATION – 12

The Area Plan establishes a local and regional road circulation network that provides access to all residential and recreation areas in the Area. Regional circulation routes provide access through the area and access to regional attractions such as Sandia Crest, Sandia Peak Ski Area, and Cibola National Forest. The local circulation routes provide access to more remote residential areas and provide alternative access routes to the regional thoroughfares. The Transportation Network Map illustrates the overall circulation network and several proposed improvements.

### GOAL

- Plan transportation infrastructure to facilitate a balanced circulation/transportation system including automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian, and public transportation that respects the existing rural characteristics of the East Mountain Area.

### OBJECTIVES

- Establish and maintain an all-weather circulation system allowing year-round and emergency vehicle access to existing and planned developments. Roads shall fit the existing topography of the area and the scale of travel needs.
- Reduce the adverse effects of automobile travel through a balanced land use/transportation system that promotes the efficient movement of residents to and from housing, employment, and services.
- Improve roadway maintenance to achieve and maintain smooth, steady traffic flow at speeds appropriate for the East Mountain Area.
- Provide effective regional transit and community-level transportation, such as van services.
- Promote development of pedestrian ways and auto-free areas integrated into developments for safe, pleasant, non-motorized travel.
- Develop a hierarchy of roadway designs to maintain rural character:
  - a. natural runoff control wherever possible;
  - b. native vegetation encouraged in rights-of-way;
  - c. design speeds appropriate for rural areas.

## POLICIES

- 12.1 The primary intra-mountain circulation network consisting of Hwy 14, Frost Road, Hwy 217, Hwy 337 and Historic Route 66/I-40 shall be improved and maintained to provide safe, efficient year-round access.
- 12.2 Secondary circulation routes including Gutierrez Canyon and Vallecitos Road/Meadow Drive/Sedillo Hill Road shall be maintained as rural roadways providing alternative north-south connections from I-40 to the residential development to the north.
- 12.3 Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall prepare a location study for at least one Park & Ride lot in the area.
- 12.4 Bernalillo County Public Works Division shall pursue methods to gravel and maintain all appropriate high traffic roadways in the East Mountain Area to reduce dust and air pollution.
- 12.5 Bernalillo County shall limit individual driveway access for new subdivisions onto all regional and local primary roadways wherever reasonable access can be provided through other existing rights-of-way or interior circulation streets.

## POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Encourage the use of car/van pooling and bus ridership through the provision of park-and-ride lots. These lots shall be designed for joint use when efficient and feasible, including but not limited to:
  - a. school/park sites;
  - b. private parking lots/park and ride lots;
  - c. mixed-use developments.
- Construct and promote a bicycle and trail network.
- Include parallel paths and crossings for trails or pedestrian walkways where possible in all street and highway projects.
- Encourage a reduced level of peak hour demand on traffic circulation by encouraging flexible work hours, carpooling, park and ride, etc.

## PUBLIC SAFETY – 13

The Bernalillo County Public Safety Division oversees services such as the County Fire and Rescue operation, the Juvenile Detention Center and will be involved in the new Metropolitan Detention Center. Especially significant to the East Mountain Area is the Emergency Management office, which is responsible for planning for emergency situations and disasters and coordinating emergency response efforts to save lives, reduce injuries, and preserve property. The Fire and Rescue team works to protect lives and property through proactive education, prevention and response.

### GOAL

- Improve fire protection, law enforcement, and emergency evacuation.

### OBJECTIVES

- Coordinate site planning review relative to fire protection, emergency vehicle ingress and egress, and evacuation.
- Encourage the use of fire resistant materials for development in forested areas.
- Encourage and support the East Mountain Area Inter-Agency Fire Protection Association.

POLICIES
13.1 Bernalillo County shall require major subdivisions applications to include a fire mitigation plan.
13.2 Bernalillo County shall communicate with the State Forestry Department on fire safety measures.

### POSSIBLE TECHNIQUES

- Identify community buildings that can be used for emergency shelters.
- Coordinate the review and approval process within the East Mountain Area relative to the fire safety with the State Forestry Department.
- In fire mitigation plans, identify proposed landscape alterations to reduce fire danger, adequate fire water supply, and alternative containment techniques to be used within heavily forested areas.