

The Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Planned Growth Strategy: A Comprehensive Urban Growth Management System

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Introduction

Many regional growth management plans are long on vision but short on the nuts and bolts to make them work. One major limitation is the absence of a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing set of implementation tools, without which all the years of public involvement of thousands of individuals can be rendered inconsequential. Another limitation is the lack of attention to older neighborhoods that is necessary to obtain their buy-in to a program that will impact

them substantially. Both lessons were taken to heart by Albuquerque during its decade-long effort to adopt its “Planned Growth Strategy”.

This article provides an overview of the Planned Growth Strategy (PGS), focusing especially on the integration of implementation system elements. It addresses what many people in the community believed was a failure of past planning efforts - the absence of effective follow-through. The ten main elements of the PGS growth management paradigm are contained in Figure 1.

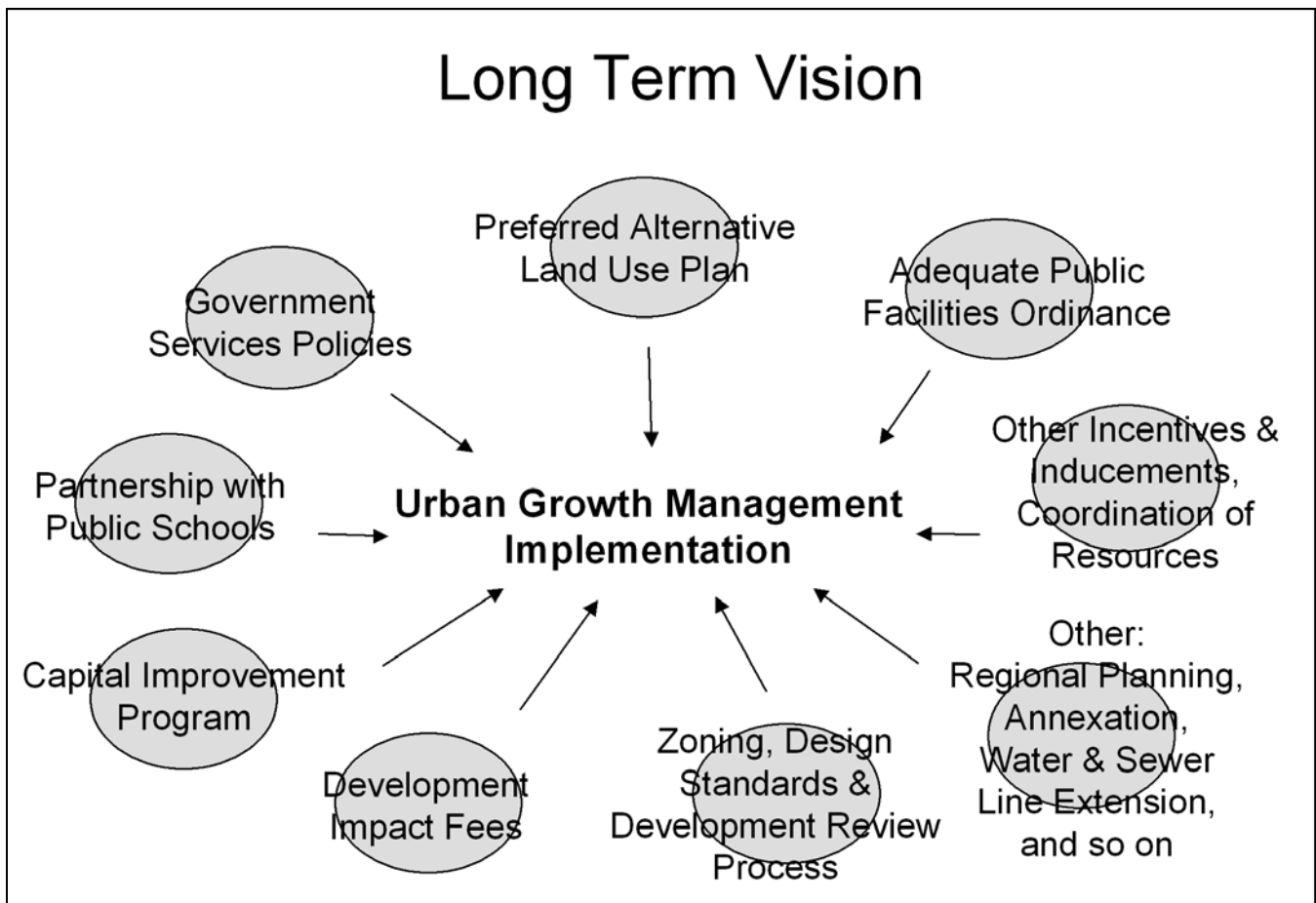


Figure 1 - Elements of the Planned Growth Strategy

The elements include: a long term vision statement; land use plan; government service delivery policies; partnership with the public schools; zoning, design standards, development review process; capital improvement program; development impact fees; adequate public facilities ordinance; incentives, inducements, coordination of resources; and other recommended changes needed to align internally a number of preexisting policies, procedures, and resources. The PGS is a synthetic approach to implementing urban growth management that is strengthened through each of its parts and balances attention to growth at the fringe with that to older neighborhoods.

This article discusses each of the PGS implementation tools contained and how it is used in furtherance of the community's vision of the future. At the start of the next section of the article, we review the consequences of the absence of effective urban growth management in Albuquerque prior to the PGS.

The Albuquerque Planned Growth Strategy (PGS) is a forceful urban growth management program. Albuquerque's previous growth management efforts stretched back over a 10-year period,¹ but these efforts had been stalemated in a political climate that was more comfortable with accommodating private development initiatives than proactively guiding growth.² The PGS broke through the very real bulwark of political resistance. Two bills adopting almost all of the PGS recommendations were enacted by the City of Albuquerque in the Fall of 2002 (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002; Bill

No. F/S R-02-111, 2002). The Planned Growth Strategy report in its entirety and the legislation can be found on www.cabq.gov/council.

There are several reasons why the Albuquerque Planned Growth Strategy is an important national model for urban growth management programs.³ The PGS contains a comprehensive and coordinated set of implementation mechanisms. It emphasizes financial incentives and disincentives rather than regulations to reach desired outcomes. The PGS consciously links neighborhood development, in older and new areas, with urban growth management. A comprehensive national study of growth management programs found a relative absence of focus on the redevelopment benefits of growth management on older urban neighborhoods (Nelson and Dawkins, 2003). In the course of fostering desirable neighborhoods, the PGS evolves into a method for reforming the delivery of many local government services, not just those related more narrowly to development. The Planned Growth Strategy calls for exceptional cross-agency coordination by incorporating the Albuquerque Public School into the urban growth plan. This is timely in the context of the current partnership of the Council of Educational Facility Planners (CEFPI) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in revising school facility standards. Lastly, the Albuquerque example is salient because over time the city annexed urban growth in a methodical way (Rusk, 1995): the PGS addresses the full range of setting, from the urban fringe to declining older neighborhoods and semi-rural areas.

Why Growth Management Matters

The PGS is a response to Albuquerque's past reactive and piecemeal approach to urban growth. Some of the consequences of prior practices include: subsidies of public services for fringe development by all rate and taxpayers (including low income ones) and by infill developers; neighborhood decline and significant movement of existing residents from older neighborhoods to the urban fringe; an approximately billion dollar back-log in infrastructure rehab and deficiency-correction needs, much of that in older neighborhoods; inefficient city service delivery and resulting cuts in programs at times of budget short-falls; empty school desks in older neighborhoods and metal portable classrooms at the fringe, leading to disrupted school schedules; and decayed older commercial corridors. (Robbins, **; City of Albuquerque and County of Bernalillo [COA/COB], 2001a, pp. 40-47; City of Albuquerque and County of Bernalillo [COA/COB], 2001b, pp. 25-33, 210-211; Revised Ordinances of the City of Albuquerque, 1994, §6-4-8).

In 1999, a survey of all residents found that only 26% believed that Albuquerque was "well planned" and 30% said that they noted "a decline in the appearance of properties, or that owner-occupied homes are turning into rentals" in their neighborhood in the previous year. (Research and Polling, 1999, pp. 21, 24) Focus group research conducted in 2001 for a proposed update to the Comprehensive Plan found many Albuquerque residents have lost faith in local leadership to implement plans. (Shared Vision, Inc., 2001, p. 9) These outcomes can be found in other urban areas with similar reactive approaches to growth.

The text box summarizes the components of the Planned Growth Strategy report, the products of a four year study period.

The Planned Growth Strategy Report

The PGS report includes the following elements:

- Two Town Halls conducted by the non-profit Shared Vision, Inc. entitled Creating a Sustainable Future Through Quality Growth: Strategy and Action Plan and Shared Vision Report on Planned Communities Forum (Shared Vision, Inc., 1998; Shared Vision, Inc., 1999). These meetings provide guiding vision statements for the growth plan.
- Three alternative growth scenarios, each making use of the same, official forecasts of overall metropolitan area population, housing, and employment growth for a 25 year period. The scenarios are called "Trend", "Downtown" (focused on large centers), and "Balanced" (emphasizing jobs-housing balance).
- The three alternative growth scenarios led to a Preferred Alternative land use plan that includes the phasing and timing of population, employment, and housing growth over a 25 year period. The Preferred Alternative is guided by policies derived from the Town Halls, Comprehensive Plan, other adopted legislation, cost factor analyses, and other criteria.
- The estimated public and private costs for major infrastructure elements including streets, water, wastewater, hydrology, and transit for each of the first three scenarios.
- A macro-economic model of the benefits of growth to the county's economy for the alternatives.
- A description of other social and economic consequences of urban growth, addressing such topics as housing costs, school quality, crime, and segregation.
- A survey of urban growth management techniques used in a number of other localities with long-standing programs and their reported positive and negative consequences.
- An inventory of vacant developable and redevelopable land.
- Implementation techniques for achieving the community's vision and realizing the Preferred Alternative land use plan. These elements include: the capital improvement program, development impact fees, adequate public facilities regulations, government service delivery policies, partnership with the public schools, zoning and design standards, inducements and incentives, and a number of other changes.
- Financial requirements to carrying out the PGS capital plan.
- A regulatory structure outline to guide the drafting of legislation and administrative regulations to implement the Planned Growth Strategy.

Toward a New Urban Growth Management Paradigm

The shortcomings of Albuquerque's implementation efforts have a long, if not distinguished, historical precedent. Early planning practice, notably in Washington, D.C. (1902), Cleveland (1903), San Francisco (1906), and Chicago (1909), focused on comprehensive approaches to urban growth, often addressing systems of public buildings, streets, public art, and parks. The focus of planning efforts that followed shifted to zoning regulation for the development of specific parcels of land. In 1926, Alfred Bettman presented a defense for the Village in Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., the landmark case that upheld zoning. However, the negative consequence of this sequence of events was that zone codes often were adopted "unrelated to a general plan for the fulfillment of community aspirations" (Scott, 1995, pp. 238-239). Bettman believed that the zoning code, subdivision ordinance, and expenditures of public funds should serve as tools to implement the comprehensive plan.

Albuquerque adopted its zone code in 1959 without the guidance of a comprehensive plan, elements of which were first approved between

1964 and 1972. A new Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan was enacted in 1975. The city did not then, or afterwards, thoroughly review zoning to make these requirements consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Critical planning implementation tools, e.g. zoning, the capital improvement program, development related charges, and policies related to the extension of water and sewer service, had never been effectively aligned with the community's long term vision for the future. The rules, processes, and charges faced on a day-by-day basis by developers who built Albuquerque were not consistent with and were sometimes incompatible with the Comprehensive Plan's vision. Understandably, many Albuquerque residents grew critical of local planning.

Participants in the Planned Growth Strategy Town Halls provided succinct guidance for achieving their long-term vision: they wanted a "different, more intentional approach to growth that is not reactive or piecemeal but instead follows carefully considered principles" (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 22). The PGS Town Hall participants called for nothing less than a far-reaching paradigm shift for Albuquerque's growth.

Ten Steps Toward Urban Growth Management

The Planned Growth Strategy is a mutually-reinforcing lattice of implementation techniques: none are effective in isolation and all are necessary for the program to be fully effective. Figure 1 above contains a graphic of these elements. The remainder of the paper describes each of the elements, covering their rationale, expression, and inter-connections.

1. Long Term Community Vision.

Long-term goals are expressions of residents' vision of the community. Accessible and compelling, they are descriptions of community conditions reaching 20 or 25 years in the future if the planning work undertaken is realized. They continually inform "what" is to be achieved, to which the plan responds "how". A set of goals becomes the touchstone for the growth management plan.

The principle way that the Planned Growth Strategy obtains its fundamental direction is through two Town Halls conducted by the non-profit Shared Vision, Inc. The Town Halls were attended by more than 500 people who represented diverse interests including neighborhood associations; students; community based organizations; developers; business leaders; builders; realtors; civic and advocacy groups; elected and appointed governmental officials; professionals mostly in the development field such as architects, attorneys, and planners; and government employees (Shared Vision, Inc., 1998, p. 3; Shared Vision, Inc., 1999, p. 1).

The Town Hall reports contain the basis of the long-term goals expressed in the PGS Report (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 16-24). These vision statements are reviewed in the text box.⁴

Vision Statement.

- * The existing community and its built environment – including the young and old, working people, homes, stores, offices and factories, parks, schools, streets, water and sewer systems, its landscape and neighborhoods, and the economic needs of its residents – are the principal priorities for government action and spending.
- * Residents, whether in already developed areas or in new developments, live in stable, supportive, and aesthetically satisfying communities. These planned neighborhoods are diverse in terms of income, cultural background, and age; have close proximity to activity centers that contain businesses that serve basic needs and also civic facilities such as schools, preschools, and parks; be pedestrian, bicycle, and transit friendly; located close to employment opportunities; include a mix of housing types and densities; and incorporate an aesthetically satisfying built environment.
- * Neighborhoods have on-going improvement socially, economically, and in the built environment. Urban growth has positive impacts on residents' lives and their neighborhoods. Individuals' investments in their homes and businesses are protected.
- * Sufficient public resources are made available on an annual basis to maintain and rehabilitate public infrastructure and facilities and to correct deficiencies in infrastructure over time.
- * New homes, offices, and businesses are adequately served with infrastructure and facilities including streets, water, wastewater, hydrology, parks, schools, and other facilities.
- * The environment is protected and restored through preservation of vistas, maintenance of open space, natural resource conservation, biological diversity, and urban growth that is harmonious with the natural environment.
- * There is efficient management of the water and sewer utility, government services such as public safety, libraries, schools, etc.; and efficient provision of capital facilities such as streets, water and sewer service, hydrology, parks, community centers, and schools. The public's wealth is conserved through the preservation of existing neighborhoods.

2. Preferred Alternative Land Use Plan. Effective urban growth programs are based on a land use plan addressing the phasing, timing, and nature of desired development. In the PGS report, the land use plan is referred to as the “Preferred Alternative”. The following section covers the nature, importance, and key characteristics of the plan.

Land use plans may institutionalize current development practices or, better yet, they may reflect adopted policies. In the past, Albuquerque adopted a set of socio-economic forecasts by planning subareas that represented a “Trend” scenario. When these forecasts were used by facility planners to lay out urban infrastructure, the resulting urban form embodied reactive growth management.

The Planned Growth Strategy identifies the “Preferred Alternative”: a set of phased and timed population, housing, and employment prescriptive forecasts by subarea: a proactive plan to guide urban growth over a twenty-five year period.⁵ Figure 2 depicts the Preferred Alternative population forecasts for the initial 2000-2010 period (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 145).

The Preferred Alternative socio-economic allocations are performed first for 14 large subareas that constitute “development zones” and “protection zones” (see Figure 3). These are distinguished by the periods of local development (e.g. older infill area, fringe development area), special cultural significance (e.g. semi-rural areas along the Rio Grande that are traditional settlement areas for Hispanics), particular development conditions (e.g. areas with obsolete and premature plats), and jurisdictions (city and county unincorporated areas) (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 29, 77).

The Preferred Alternative allocations are made to these large subareas first (by five year increments) and then disaggregated into the smaller units used for transportation planning (divided into the initial 10 year and following 15 year periods) as shown in Figure 2. Changes are phased in over time with a progression from the more market-drive Trend to a pattern that better reflects long term community goals.

The PGS policies reflected in the Preferred Alternative are summarized in the text box.

Achieving Community Policies Through the Land Use Plan

Some important ways that the community’s vision is incorporated into the Preferred Alternative are summarized below:

- * Renewed vitality of the older portions of Albuquerque (the area annexed from 1890 through 1959) is reflected by forecasted housing starts increasing from a 7.6% to a 16% market share.
- * Vibrant mixed-use redevelopment occurring along the designated transit-oriented corridors (Central Avenue, 4th Street, Isleta, Menaul, Lomas, and San Mateo) located primarily in older parts of Albuquerque. These are represented by the north-south and east-west corridors in Figure 2.
- * Easier commutes and more efficient use of street infrastructure represented by increased jobs in proximity to housing west of the Rio Grande and in job centers located near the lower-income Southwest Mesa and South Valley areas (in the Atrisco Business Park and west of the Albuquerque International Airport.)
- * Mixed-used regional centers strengthened through increases in housing and employment in the Downtown, Uptown, Journal Center, Cottonwood Mall area, and the Renaissance area. These are shown by the circles in Figure 2.
- * More efficient use of urban infrastructure locates almost all projected growth within the area already served partially or completely by Master Plan water and wastewater facilities. More than 32,000 acres of vacant and redevelopable land are identified within this area, greater than a 30-year supply (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 74-81). These parcels are represented in Figure 3.

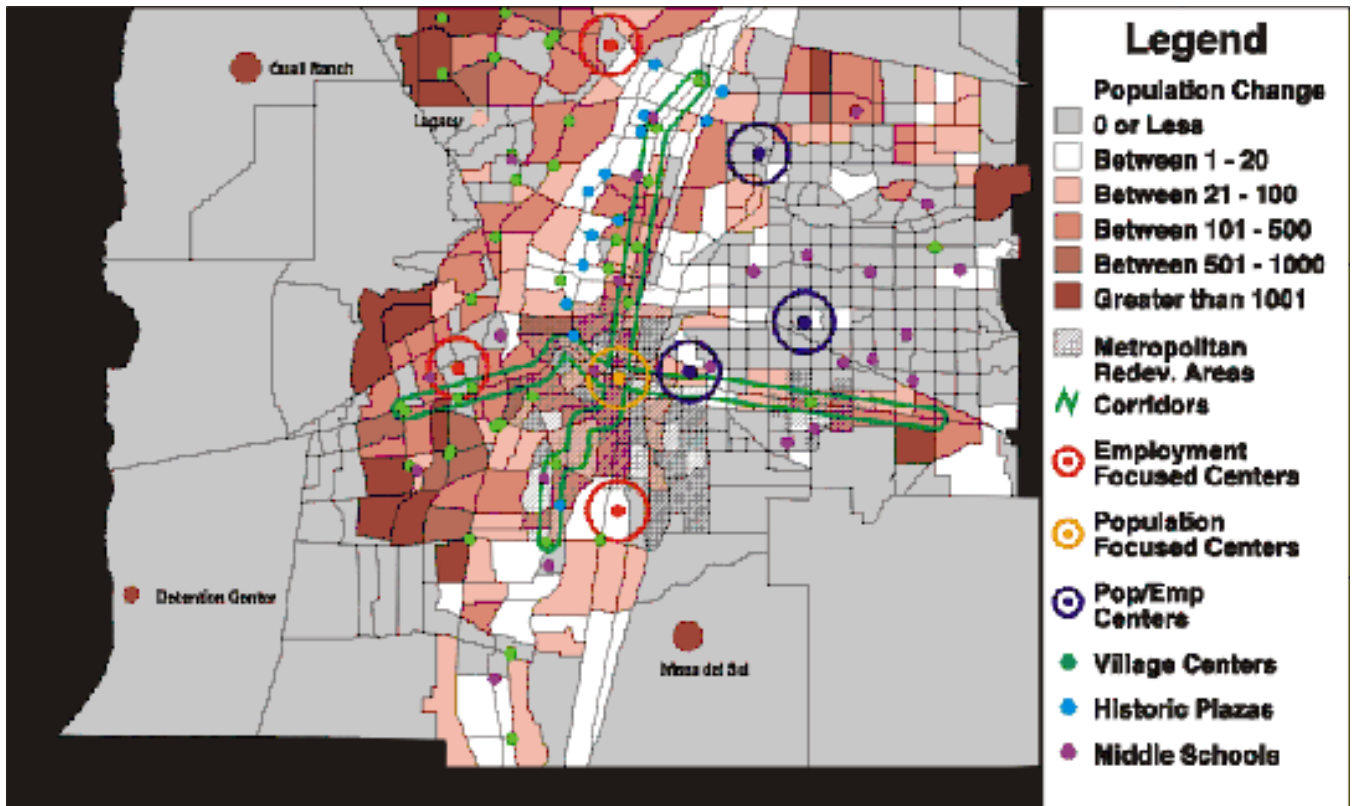


Figure 2 - Preferred Alternative, Population Allocations, 2000-2010 Period

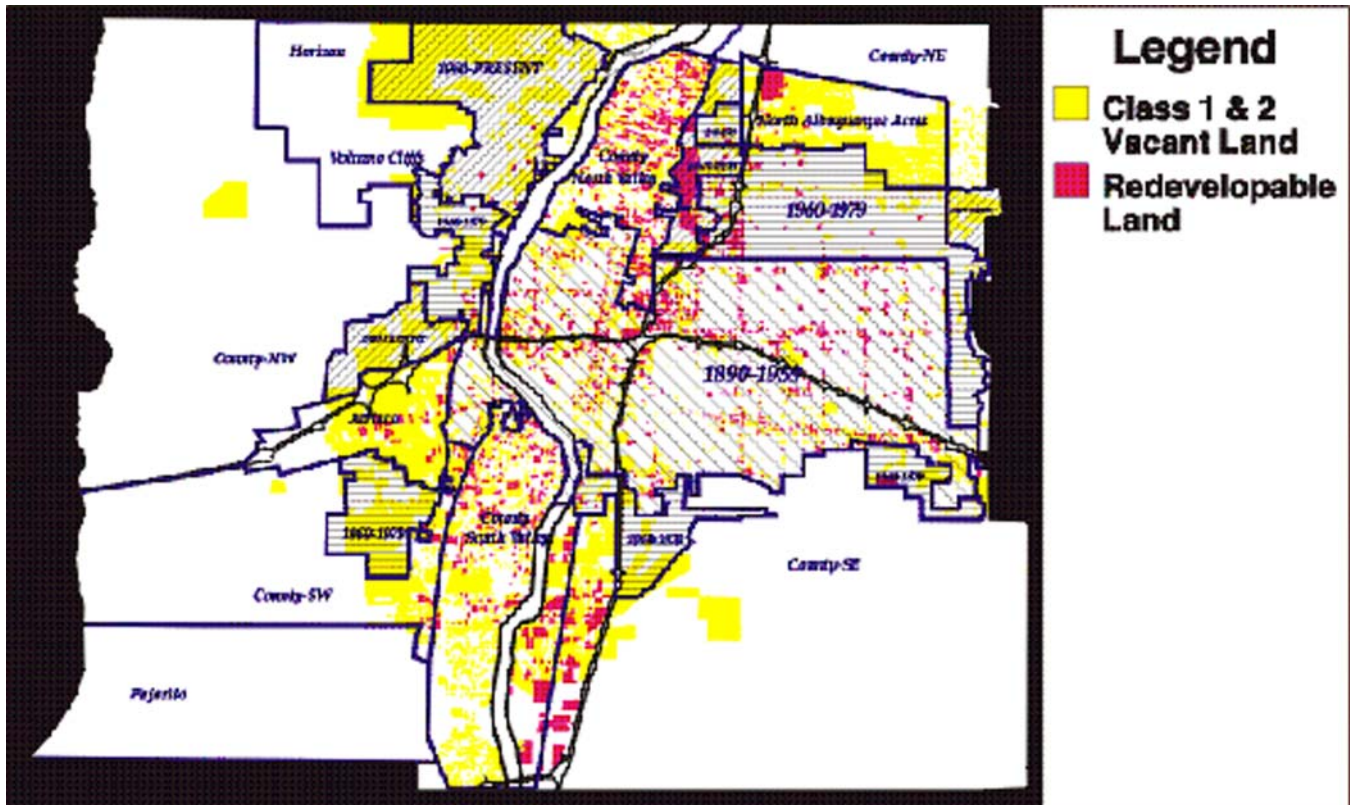


Figure 3 - PGS Preferred Alternative Subareas, Vacant Land and Redevelopable Land Inventory

3. Government Service Delivery Policies.

The community's vision encompasses both existing neighborhoods and new development. In response to this guidance, the PGS adopts the program of urban service delivery reform described below.

The Planned Growth Strategy recognizes that the quality of existing neighborhoods is a critical element of the growth management equation. The community's long-term goals, as indicated above, address the need for neighborhoods to be "stable, supportive, and aesthetically satisfying", to experience on-going improvement socially, economically, and in the built environment; to be diverse socially; contain local services; and be near employment.

Another factor supporting this reform stems from the dynamics of the residential housing markets in relation to population growth. A sizeable proportion of the new units being constructed was to house existing residents moving from one part of the area to another. The years 1998 and 1999 were record-breaking for the number of new housing permits, but wage and salary employment increased only 1.3% and 2.6% respectively. One of the area's top home builders was quoted as saying: "We are gearing up for the same thing next year [a record level of new house construction], even though people aren't moving here." (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 26). In addition, about 20% of survey respondents who had been in their current residences for five years or less and whose former home also was in Albuquerque said that they had moved because of the negative qualities of their old neighborhoods, mentioning crime, deterioration, drugs, gangs, traffic, and schools (Institute for Social Research, 1997, p. 104).

For these reasons among others, the Planned Growth Strategy evolves into a program not only for addressing the character, location, and timing of, and services for, new development, but also for reforming the delivery of the broad range of government services as they affect the quality of neighborhood life. As its starting point, this approach assumes that high levels of social capital are essential both for good neighborhoods and urban growth management. Social capital is the effective network of social, familial, and organizational connections by which a neighborhood comes together to identify its problems, establish strategies for dealing with them, and effectively mobilize internal and external resources to resolve them (Sampson,

Service Delivery Policies

- * Community Oriented Policing. Community oriented policing is recognized as the strategy by which the police department, neighborhood residents, and other governmental and private agencies work together in full partnership to identify, prioritize, and solve public safety problems such as crime, drugs, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and neighborhood decay (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-1).
- * Informal Helping Networks. Informal care-givers such as family, friends, and neighbors are recognized as the primary source of assistance for those seeking help. Informal helping networks are voluntary, spontaneous, individualized, flexible, and reciprocal networks that encourage self-reliance and are based on individuals' abilities and strengths. The PGS legislation directs social and recreational service providers to identify, facilitate, enhance, and collaborate with these networks in a partnership with professional care givers and agencies (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-2)
- * Neighborhood Economic Development. The principal focus of neighborhood economic development is on local residents, workers, and businesses and the creation of better-paying, quality jobs with benefits. The emphasis is on job training and placement, support for business start-ups, and the maintenance and expansion of existing businesses. Types of economic development approaches include employment training, capital strategies, business retention, technical assistance, incubators, entrepreneurial training, business enterprises by community organizations such as Community Development Corporations, creation of affordable and mixed-income housing, and rehabilitation of existing housing (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-3)
- * Community Education. To the extent possible, local government is to integrate its human service activities, especially related to pre-school and school-aged children, through a "full partnership with the Albuquerque Public Schools" utilizing a community education model (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-4). Community education is defined as "a strategy for serving the neighborhood by providing for the educational needs of all its members" and "more broadly, Community Education uses the local school as a catalyst for bringing neighborhood resources, including those of governmental and private service agencies, to bear on community problems" (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-4)
- * Neighborhood Planning and Community Identity. PGS legislation recognizes that Comprehensive Plan objectives for protecting and enhancing neighborhoods can be realized through neighborhood planning. A neighborhood plan is as a program for improvement, based on the interests and participation of neighborhood residents. The plan assumes that local residents, businesses, churches, and institutions are primarily responsible for defining and achieving the goals identified. In addition, a neighborhood plan is a way of organizing and empowering local action without which the residents' long-term goals can not be achieved (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A)

2001, pp. 93-96; Putnam, 1993). The PGS legislation states: “The City shall take an “assets-based” approach to neighborhood, corridor, center, and community development that focuses on utilizing the capacities of Albuquerque’s citizens, organizations, and institutions” (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A). Public agencies and various social service programs are directed to form

collaborative partnerships with neighborhood residents. To this end, PGS policies “of the highest priority” are adopted by the municipal government to guide its own service delivery and to frame its partnership with the Albuquerque Public Schools (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A). These policies are covered in the text box.

4. Partnership with the Public Schools.

In most places, school systems and local governments are separate worlds, even though they come together importantly in the lives of young people, families, and the fates of neighborhoods. In Albuquerque, this separation was more distinct than in most. The following section describes the old relationship and how the PGS directs its reform.

The Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) is a state agency with an elected board of education and dedicated revenue sources. Despite a history of joint programs among City and County governments and the Albuquerque Public Schools, such as local government funding of before and after-school programs, pre-school, and the joint use of athletic fields and playgrounds, the relationship was particularly strained in relation to school facility planning and the impacts of urban growth on school facilities and operations. The public schools held a seat on the development review board and commented on new subdivision proposals, but existing regulations provided no effective recourse when concerns were raised that schools were already over-crowded as the approval of new housing was being considered.

The Planned Growth Strategy's emphasis on the quality of urban neighborhoods has, as its corollary, the importance of well-performing and highly valued community schools in partnership with neighborhood residents. Effective and attractive schools are specified as a necessary condition to realize the goal that "neighborhoods should be diverse in terms of income, cultural background, and age". In many places in the U.S., the disparity between the rich and poor is reflected particularly in public school enrollment. Often local schools with a preponderance of low-income students are found in economically diverse neighborhoods. True neighborhood diversity involves diverse student populations in local schools.

The Planned Growth Strategy legislation calls for a "full partnership" between local government and the Albuquerque Public Schools based on the community education model. This has implications for how and where governmental services are delivered, such as human services and health care programs, recreational services, cultural programs, public safety, and neighborhood planning.

The legislation also has implications for how this partnership is incorporated into urban development and redevelopment practices, facilities planning and construction, development reviews, and funding. The PGS calls for new land use zones

based on Traditional Neighborhood Development principles, identified as the Planned Village Development zone and the Infill Development zone. In both these zones, the PGS encourages a small elementary school at the core of the neighborhood, combined with a central park or plaza, commercial and public facilities, and housing. It also calls for streets designed to subdue the automobile's impact and pedestrian and bicycle friendly; the school and other buildings at the neighborhood core oriented to the public realm; and landscaped areas and open space integrated into the neighborhood. Taking a page from the community education book, the PGS provides for neighborhoods that are school-centered and schools that are neighborhood-centered (Epstein, 2001, pp. 27-33; Minzey and LeTarte, 1994).

Concerning facilities, the PGS recommends that elementary and middle schools be designed and used as community centers, where the educational needs of "all [the neighborhood's] members" are addressed and where "neighborhood resources, including those of government and private service agencies" can be brought together to bear on community problems (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-A-4).

The Planned Growth Strategy calls for the use of the Preferred Alternative land use plan to guide both the municipal Capital Improvement Program and the school Facility Master Plan (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §6-B-1; Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-3-k). The growth phasing and timing elements of the PGS land use plan would be incorporated into infrastructure extension and school construction decisions. The municipal Capital Improvement Program is authorized to fund elementary and middle school community centers (and by extension other joint use facilities such as libraries and health clinics) within schools. (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-3-l). Schools are included in the facilities needed to support growth, for which development impact fees should be charged. (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §4-H). An Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance will consider the capacity of schools either existing or in the APS Facilities Master Plan as one of the conditions for development approvals regarding replatting and the issuance of residential building permits (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-4-b).

The implementation mechanisms identified in the Planned Growth Strategy are Joint Powers Agreements and mutually-supported revisions to the New Mexico Development Fees Act (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §4-H, 6-B-1; Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-3-k).

5. Land Use Zoning, Design Standards, and the Development Review Process. The natural setting of Albuquerque is inspiring and softens the sometimes jarring quality of the built environment. There are many small places of great beauty: the acequia irrigation system in the Rio Grande Valley, the historic Hispanic churches and chapels, the Pueblo-Deco Kimo theater downtown, the passive solar University Medical Library, and Bart Prince’s wonderfully eccentric residential work - great spiraling space ships of homes, to name a few. But much of Albuquerque has the uninspired sameness of place created by production suburban home builders, power center developers, and street engineers, and is so alienated from its natural environment as to be troubling.

The PGS Town Hall participants had a lovelier vision of what might be built and rebuilt. They said: “Whether in new or older neighborhoods, people want to see not just development, but creation of communities” (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 16). They suggested many ways this could be fostered by the built environment including complete and integrated communities in terms of basic services like schools, shopping, jobs, recreation, and civic facilities; a mix of housing types including affordable housing; neighborhood design based on walkability and fostering sociability; internal park and open space amenities and the use of the natural terrain; mixed use centers where people can come together to create a vital social environment; mixed use development with housing close to jobs and services; and the development and redevelopment of higher intensity mixed-use transit corridors (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 16-17, 19).

Many of these design concepts encourage community relations through the built environment and fit comfortably into the New Urbanist lexicon. Albuquerque had reviewed the existing zoning, subdivision regulation, building code, and transportation standards in terms of their compatibility with New Urbanist techniques. Staff members found that existing regulations were mostly permissive or did not address these design solutions and sometimes actually discouraged their realization (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 224). A recently enacted large area plan contains a number of recommendations supporting mixed-use centers as a growth organizing principle. In a review of its implementation, however, the Planning Department stated: “A . . . weakness, not of the . . . Plan but of existing zoning, is that the centers are

Mixed Used Land Use Zones

- The Planned Village Development zone and the Infill Development zones make similar use of land use elements and relationships. Both hearken to the town and neighborhood building principles of Raymond Unwin, Clarence Stein, and Clarence Perry (Unwin, 1909; Stein, 1957, Perry, 1939). Neighborhoods in these zones include “a central plaza, central commercial and public facility area, elementary school, central park/plaza, mixed-density residential with higher densities closer to the central plaza, buildings oriented toward the public realm (e.g., streets and parks), interconnected pedestrian and traffic routes, narrow traffic lanes, short blocks, landscaping and xeriscaping, open space, integration of historic/cultural features of the built and natural environments, [and] design standards” (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §§3-B-2-b-1, 7). The legislation’s authors intend to build one neighborhood at a time at the urban fringe and to reinforce or create these land use elements in existing neighborhoods.
- The Transit Oriented Development/Corridor zone and the Commercial Center zone encourage mixed uses, notably higher density residential development combined with retail, office, and service; and pedestrian scale buildings oriented to the public realm. Transit and bicycle use are encouraged through design and higher residential densities. Parking is moved away from the front of the development sites. Similarly, the Campus zone is intended for the “unified development of office, industrial, institutional and residential uses” along with supportive retail and restaurant activities (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-2-b-2).
- The Conservation Subdivision zone incorporates many green building design concepts for developing areas with unique environmental or topographical character (Arendt, 1994). The Albuquerque metropolitan area has a significant inventory of land in premature and often obsolete subdivisions along the immediate path of urban growth. One of these, Volcano Cliffs, adjoins Petroglyph National Park and is considered a sacred area by nearby Pueblo Native Americans. The Conservation Subdivision zone includes “narrow streets, natural drainage and minimal impervious surfaces, limited sidewalk requirements, high minimum passive open space (30%-50%), curvilinear streets, landscaping and xeriscaping, design standards, resource conservation standards . . . [and] appropriate integration of town building principles” (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-2-b-3). While development in these fragile and culturally sensitive areas might not be prevented, the character of what is built under the Conservation Subdivision zone is likely to respect the place to a greater degree than a conventional subdivision.

not zoned to encourage mixed-use development and pedestrian and transit convenience or to discourage auto-oriented uses” (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 225). Albuquerque’s subdivision and zone codes have not encouraged the building of complete neighborhoods instead of tract subdivisions.

The Planned Growth Strategy legislation directs the establishment of large mixed use, place-creating zones and design standards. In the PGS report, these include: the Traditional Neighborhood Development based - Planned Village Development zone and the Infill Development zone; Transit Oriented Development/Corridor zone; Commercial Center zone; Campus zone; and Conservation Subdivision zone (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §§3-B-2-b-1 to 7). These are described in the text box.

The Planned Growth Strategy legislation also calls for the development of design standards to create a sense of place and identity, to preserve and be consistent with historic social and cultural elements, and to be compatible with the unique high desert light and color (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-2-b-8).

The original draft of the PGS legislation called for the use of these new zones for new growth areas and to serve as overlay zones in fully

or partially developed areas where vacant land had been subdivided and zoned. Because Albuquerque recreates itself every few decades, the intent was for the newly built sections to be markedly different than those built between about 1960 and 2002. During the course of the legislative debate, however, developer interests prevailed in making these new zones “options for new growth areas” and adding a largely single-use Employment zone to the new categories (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §§3-B-2-b and 3-B-2-b-6). This optional approach compromises the growth management program but it is uncertain whether the other PGS implementation tools can offset its impact.

To encourage the use of these zones, the PGS calls for a set of inducement and incentives. The more general ones of these are described below in other sections of this article. Two procedural changes are identified specifically related to zoning. Development under the new zoning categories and the overlay zones is allowed to proceed to the building permit application directly. In addition, no Special Use regulations are allowed in these zones. Both of these expedients will encourage the development of projects that are consistent with PGS, Comprehensive Plan, and other adopted policies (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-2-c et seq.).

6. The Capital Improvement Program.

The Planned Growth Strategy Town Hall participants said that infrastructure needs within existing neighborhoods for maintenance, rehabilitation, and the correction of deficiencies were of the “highest priority” (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 18). They believed that the resources being allocated for these purposes were inadequate, especially impairing older neighborhoods (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 18). Local government is directed to make available adequate resources for these purposes, infrastructure extensions should be done in an efficient manner, and development is to take place in areas where infrastructure already are available “as a first priority” (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 18). The capital program becomes a tool for implementing the PGS: growth related infrastructure planning taking place prior to development, guiding it, and supporting it (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 18).

Spending for rehabilitation, deficiency-correction, and growth. The Planned Growth Strategy report assessed the financial resources needed over the 25 year study period for the separate purposes of growth, rehabilitation, and deficiency-correction. “Rehabilitation” is defined as improvements that correct substandard physical conditions of existing infrastructure without increasing capacity. “Deficiency” involves expanding infrastructure capacity to conform to engineering standards. Together, the research performed for the Planned Growth Strategy and the 1997 Water and Wastewater Utility Program Assessment were the first comprehensive assessments of infrastructure conditions and funding needs adopted by the municipality to guide capital programs. (Parsons Engineering Science, 1997)

The PGS findings are dramatic. The total rehabilitation needs over a 25 year period are estimated to be \$1.9 billion dollars; deficiency correction needs are about \$760 million; and growth related costs, using the most efficient growth scenario, \$1.8 billion, for a combined total of nearly \$4.5 billion dollars. The adopted PGS legislation uses the figures from the study, converted to annual funding requirements by government level, as the beginning assumptions for the municipal capital program (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 32, 55).

To a large extent, the Report confirms the beliefs of Town Hall participants concerning the sufficiency of infrastructure spending.

Rehabilitation spending was approximately 50% of that needed for water and wastewater and was 12% too low for streets. (The more adequate street funding level only resulted from a recently passed ¼ percent gross receipts tax adopted for this purpose by the City of Albuquerque.) The rehabilitation needs were greatest in the older parts of Albuquerque (COA/COB, 2001b, 33-34, 37,39). Relatively similar results were obtained about the inadequacy of spending for deficiency correction for hydrology (-20%) and wastewater (-50%). Interestingly, spending for street deficiency correction was significantly greater than the norm established and the report concludes that insufficient growth-related street funding was being translated after the fact into a street deficiency need (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 34).

Infrastructure demands resulting from growth vary according to assumed land use scenarios. The three alternative growth scenarios used in the first part of the study, called “Trend”, “Downtown”, and “Balanced”, each make use of the same, official forecasts of metropolitan area population, housing, and employment growth for a 25 year period. The information obtained by evaluating these three growth scenarios led to the Preferred Alternative PGS land use plan.

Estimating the possible infrastructure and facility cost savings possible through growth planning, in fact, is one of the original purposes of the PGS. The resulting figures are contained in Table 1, which also breaks down these totals in terms of financing, either by the public or by private developers (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 55). The most efficient growth scenario among those evaluated reduces total infrastructure costs by \$361 million in total cost over 25 years (16.8%) and by \$122 million in public costs (11.9%).

Since these figures are derived from the three preliminary growth scenarios, the estimated cost of future development would vary based on the Preferred Alternative land use plan, which evolved from these. The Preferred Alternative optimizes the efficiency of infrastructure provision by mapping existing infrastructure, vacant land, and estimating the cost for service in different locations. The estimated figures for infrastructure needed to support growth for the Preferred Alternative would be obtained through the actual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) planning process that follows the PGS adoption.

Table 1
PGS Growth-Associated Costs, by Land Use Scenario, In Millions (25 Years)

	Total Cost Trend	Total Cost Balanced	Total Cost Downtown	Public Cost Trend	Public Cost Balanced	Public Cost Downtown
Water	\$685.8	\$565.2	\$568.7	\$370.2	\$339.2	\$330.5
Sewer	\$353.5	\$340.1	\$324.4	\$70.8	\$70.1	\$66.8
Storm Drainage	\$268.5	\$231.4	\$206.0	\$147.7	\$141.0	\$126.2
Streets	\$518.0	\$414.7	\$439.4	\$116.3	\$108.9	\$108.5
Transit	\$323.5	\$247.4	\$249.4	\$323.5	\$247.4	\$249.5
Total Growth	\$2,149.3	\$1,798.8	\$1,787.9	\$1,028.5	\$906.6	\$881.4
Difference from Trend		-\$350.5 -16.3%	-\$361.4 -16.8%		-\$121.9 -11.9%	-\$147.1 -14.3%

CIP As a Growth Management Tool. The Planned Growth Strategy legislation recognizes the Capital Improvement Program as a key strategic implementation tool. The adopted legislation states that capital “funding . . . shall be prioritized . . . to catch up with the backlog of rehabilitation, to address infrastructure deficiencies over time, and provide basic infrastructure to support urban growth” (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §6-C-2). The PGS report specifically identifies the generally higher nominal spending levels required to do so (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 34, 265-273).

Identifying and paying to correct infrastructure deficiencies has been one of the major barriers to infill development. Since there was no systematic program for local government to correct these conditions, private developers were assessed their costs as exactions during the building review process. In the PGS legislation, the municipality assumes the cost of scheduled deficiency correction projects. The identification of these project locations is to be based on redevelopment priorities and the expected impacts of growth based on the Preferred Alternative (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-3-e).

With regard to the Town Hall participants’ direction to use the CIP to guide growth, the legislation calls for all municipal departments to refer to the Planned Growth Strategy as the comprehensive framework in planning their capital programs (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §6-C-1). In a direct way, the phasing and timing of urban growth specified by the Preferred Alternative land use plan, when combined with appropriate level of service standards, become the assumptions for planning growth related infrastructure and facilities.

In a less apparent way, the community building goals of the PGS and its pursuit of vitality in existing neighborhoods also guides the CIP in very important ways. What does “community building” imply for the capital program? It encourages, for example, smaller and more decentralized facilities such as parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities in the centers of neighborhoods, community policing meeting spaces in neighborhoods, community centers within elementary and middle schools, full service human service and health facilities at school sites, mini-libraries, and so on. It provides for an improved development coordination process among private developers, the public schools, and local government.

In Albuquerque, the demands of government service efficiency had resulted in ever-larger scale parks, facilities for recreation, social services, and schools, etc. that then needed to be located on major arterials, increasing auto dependency. Although “penny-wise”, these solutions made it less likely that community ties would be formed to address needs through informal neighborliness and more likely that service provision would be professionalized (McKnight, 1995).

In the future, the Capital Improvement Program will be specified within infrastructure and facility provision zones and according to level of service standards in a way that is integrated with the formulation of development impact fees and concurrency regulations. These topics are covered next.

7. Development Impact Fees.

Development impact fees are identified as a key strategic tool for implementing the Planned Growth Strategy. There are three primary ways in which this occurs: (1) marginal cost pricing basis for the fees, (2) reductions in impact fees to reflect the infrastructure and facility efficiencies of the development, and (3) partial to complete fee waivers based on the realization of adopted policies through the development (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §§4-C to E).

Marginal Cost Pricing. In the PGS framework, infrastructure and facility service areas are used as CIP planning areas in support of the community’s vision. Service area tiers are defined as the “Fully Served area”, “Partially Served area”, and “Unserved area” and adopted by the PGS legislation for each infrastructure type - water, wastewater, hydrology, and streets (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-3-a and Exhibit A). “Service areas” also include smaller “reasonable service delivery geographic areas (e.g. water trunks or pressure zones, hydrology basins, traffic sheds)” (Bill No. F/S R-02-111,

2002, §3-B-3-a). This assures that development impact fees are based on the relative cost of actual infrastructure and facility service necessitated by development in its actual location. This approach aligns the financial interests of developers with those of rate and tax payers.

The “Fully Served” tier is the area almost completely supplied with all the components of physical infrastructure required by growth for a specific service type. The “Partially Served” tier is one that already has a number of important infrastructure items constructed, such as water reservoirs and transmission lines, but other types, such as distribution lines, need to be built to support urban growth. The “Unserved” tier is an area that has virtually no master plan infrastructure items. Albuquerque’s infrastructure systems are represented in the PGS report in a series of Geographic Information System (GIS) maps. As an example, the detailed GIS depiction of the water system, (Figure 4) reduced to a simplified version, is shown in Figure 5. (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 171, 253-255).

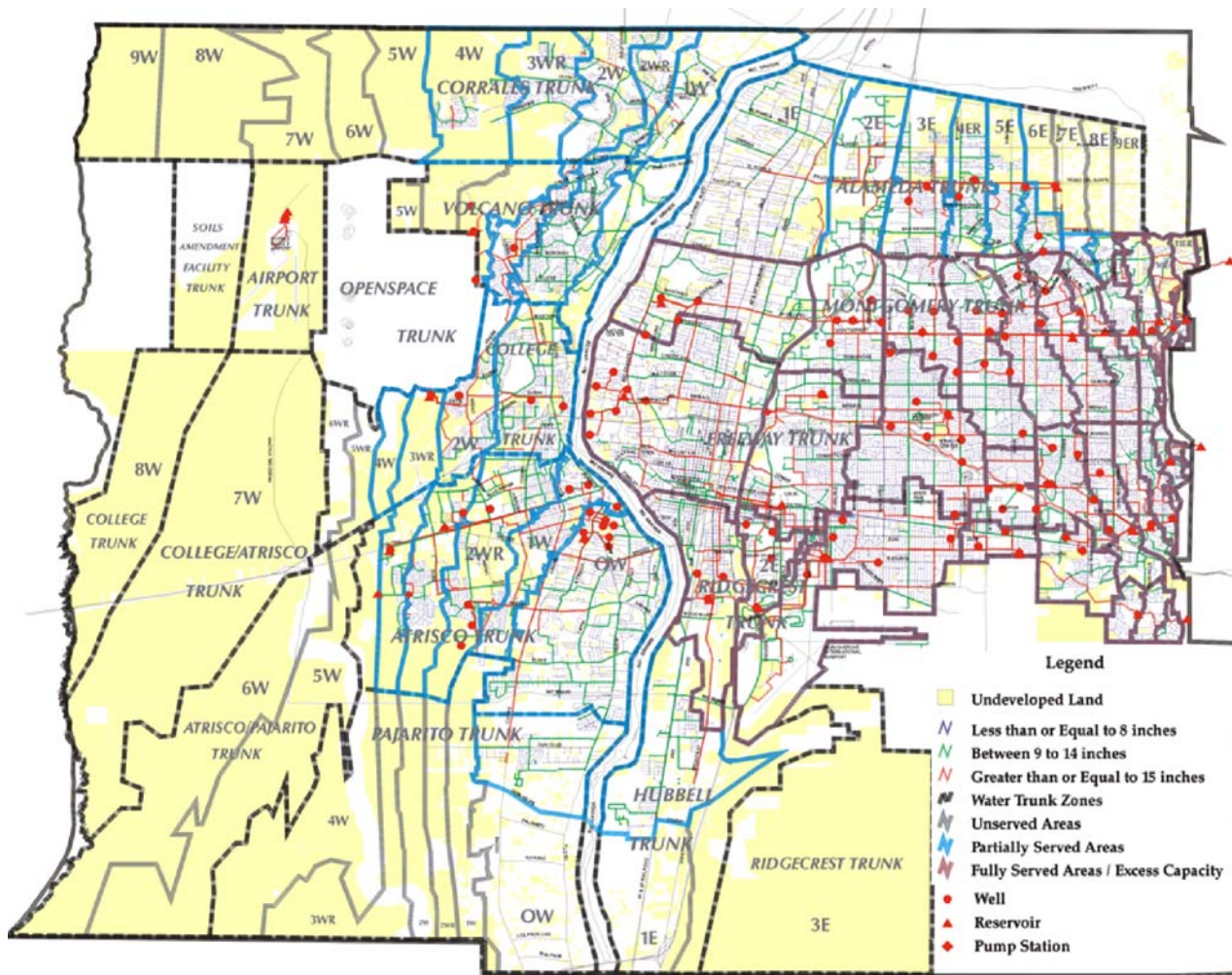


Figure 4 - Water Infrastructure System Elements and PGS Service Area Tiers

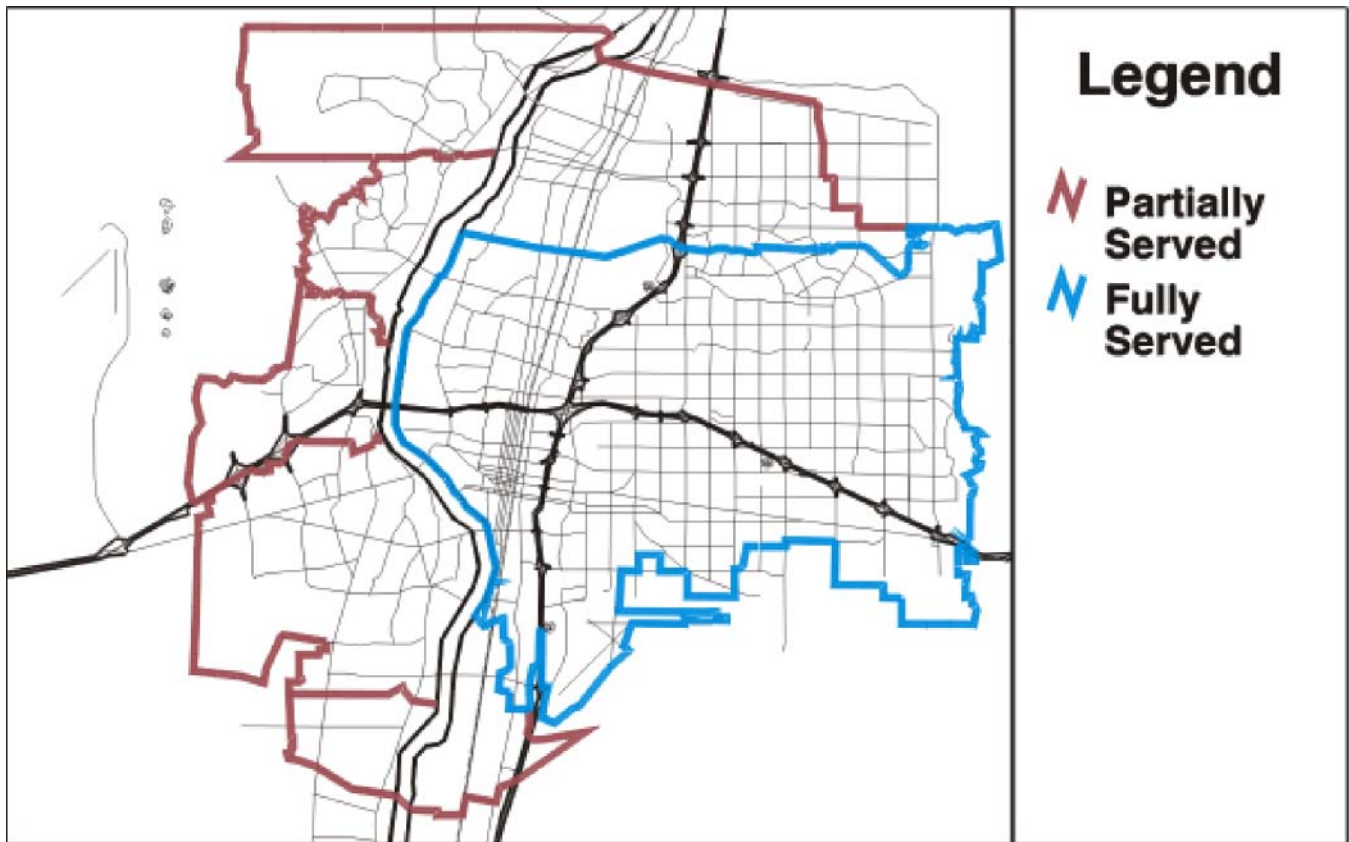


Figure 5 - PGS Water Infrastructure Service Area Tiers

The PGS legislation states that “Impact fees . . . shall be initially calculated based upon the full marginal cost of growth” (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §4-C). The “marginal cost pricing” for impact fees means simply that cost basis for the fees (the starting point in their calculation) is the additional cost to the community to build infrastructure and facilities to provide service for new development. In other words, where the additional (or “marginal”) cost of local capital facilities is minimal based on service capacity already constructed, the fee basis is lower. In contrast, where no local facilities have been constructed to serve growth, the fee basis is higher.

How does this work in practice? Table 2 provides an example using the water system, identifying each of the elements of the water facility system and whether that element is likely to be available to support development in each of the tiers (Fully Served, Partially Served, Unserved) (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 209). (“SCADA” is the acronym for the automated control system.) It is clear from Table 2 that development in the Fully Served area with excess water capacity (virtually the entire Fully Served area) costs the utility little. The reverse is true for

development in the Unserved area. This approach to setting impact fees is nothing less than free market economics and sends the proper economic signals from the perspective of rate payers to developers: consider the cost to the utility when development location decisions are made. This is the classic market strategy to maximize efficiency.

What does this approach imply regarding the actual cost bases of the impact fees? The precise figures are not known until the CIP program is finalized based on the Preferred Alternative, budgeted, and the resulting costs of infrastructure and facility impacts are calculated. A back-of-the-envelope calculation, however, performed by the City Public Works Department staff following the assumption contained in Table 2 indicates the following total public costs: Fully Served area (with excess water capacity), \$8; Partially Served area, \$2,528; and Unserved area, \$3,908. These figures are provided only to indicate the magnitude of the possible differences in cost among tiers but are meaningful from a public policy standpoint.

The current Albuquerque Utility Expansion Charge (development impact fee) for water service is \$1,419 per single family house regardless

Table 2
PGS, Hypothetical Allocation of Marginal Cost to Service Tier,
Water System, per Single Family House

Infrastructure Item	Fully Served Area With Excess Water Capacity	Partially Served Area	Unserved Area
Wells	\$0	\$933	\$933
Water Rights	\$0	\$1,587	\$1,587
SCADA	\$8	\$8	\$8
Reservoirs	\$0	\$0	\$807
Pump Stations	\$0	\$0	\$471
Transmission Pipelines	\$0	\$0	\$102
Master Plan Distribution Lines and Lines in Street	\$0	\$2,959	\$2,959
Service Connections	\$1,095	\$1,095	\$1,095
Single Family Dwelling Total	\$1,103	\$6,582	\$7,962
Net Public Cost Per Single Family Dwelling*	\$8	\$2,528	\$3,908

of location (Revised Ordinances of the City of Albuquerque, 1994, §6-4-8). This implies that the developer of a single family house in the Fully Served area is paying \$1,411 more than the cost of service, while the developer receiving the same water service in the Partially Served area is paying \$1,109 less than its marginal cost. If the water system was expanded to serve development in the Unserved area, the subsidy would increase to \$2,489. It is possible to conclude, from the perspective of the water utility, that developers in the Fully Served area and all water utility rate payers are subsidizing development at the urban fringe, a practice that is at cross-purposes to adopted policy to encourage infill development and redevelop older neighborhoods. The differences in cost among the three tiers, if all infrastructure and facilities are considered, are likely to be considerable.

Impact Fee Incentives and Inducements. Policy direction is integrated into the PGS impact fee system in two additional ways. First, the fees are reduced based on infrastructure and facilities efficiencies achieved by the character of the development. If the development costs the community less to support, impact fees are adjusted downwards. For example, the PGS reported research findings that traditional neighborhoods, Traditional Neighborhood Developments, and mixed use developments reduce the vehicle miles traveled by 25%-60%. (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 191-193; see also

Crane, 1996; Cervero, 1987; American Society of Civil Engineers, 1992). The location of jobs in proximity to housing reduces the use of the roadway system (Cervero, 1986). Housing development with permanent restrictions on high water use landscaping, positive requirements for xeriscaping, and designed according to “Green Infrastructure” principles utilizes less water (and wastewater) system capacity. Affordable housing with fewer fixtures also may be assumed to use fewer water system resources (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 215-216). Conservation of natural resources, infrastructure system efficiencies, less traffic congestion, more pedestrian and multi-modal options, jobs closer to housing, and, ultimately, stable older neighborhoods - all may be encouraged through lower impact fees using this approach.

The New Mexico Development Fees Act allows impact fees to be reduced based upon adopted public policy. When this occurs, a development’s share of the improvements is “funded with revenues other than impact fees from other developments” (Development Fees Act, New Mexico, §13). The Planned Growth Strategy directs that impact fees should be waived for “policies and recommendations in area plans, metropolitan redevelopment plans, neighborhood and sector development plans, center and corridor plans, and for affordable housing and for new zoning objectives” contained in the PGS legislation (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §4-E). As a result of the statutory requirement, it

is reasonable to determine first whether adopted policies could be supported through the efficiency-based reductions in fees as described above.

The Planned Growth Strategy report recommends amending the N.M. Development Fees Act to allow impact fees to be charged for schools, transit, libraries, community centers, senior centers, and social service multi-service centers in addition to the basic infrastructure and facility items then allowed. The PGS legislation endorses seeking statutory authority to enact impact fees for schools, transit, water rights, and “other facilities as determined in the future” (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §4-H).

The Planned Growth Strategy transforms an existing impact fee system that contravenes adopted public policies into one aligned with those policies. Initially setting fees in proximity to the full marginal cost is likely to create financial incentives great enough to bring developer decisions in line with the community’s vision. Calculating the cost basis of impact fees upon the full marginal cost allows (but does not require) additional revenue to be raised for these purposes. If impact fees do more closely approximate the actual cost of growth, additional revenue is raised and capital funds from utility rates and taxes spent to support growth can be shifted to correct deficiencies and to restore and maintain existing facilities.

8. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). Concurrency (implemented through an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, or APFO) is a system of regulatory review of proposed development to determine whether sufficient infrastructure and facility capacity is available or programmed within a reasonable time to meet the demand created by the development (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-4-a).⁶ Concurrency serves several functions including ensuring that infrastructure and other facility capacity are available in a timely way to support growth; coordinating the planning, financing, and construction of public facilities and infrastructure; and managing the location, character, and timing of growth in furtherance of the community's long term vision.

Where Concurrency Fits. Concurrency is part of a linked sequence of urban growth management tools in the Planned Growth Strategy that connects the community's long term vision to the Preferred Alternative land use plan, to the Capital Implementation Program, and to the development impact fees system. The Preferred Alternative represents a proactive and comprehensive approach to growth that follows considered principles based on the public's long term goals and direction. The capital program provides the infrastructure and facilities needed to support the Preferred Alternative within specific service areas according to level of service standards and to build community. Development impact fees raise a substantial portion of the funds needed to finance these facilities. Reduced impact fees are based on service efficiency, resource conservation, and furtherance of policy goals. The reduction or waiver of impact fees for public policy reasons are replaced by funding from other sources. Concurrency, or APFO, provides a critical link in the implementation sequence. When development is progressing according to the plan and sufficient revenues are available from impact fees and other sources to provide the concomitant facilities and infrastructure, the APFO review should present little impediment to development. The system is internally consistent and mutually reinforcing.

The logical approach and calculations used to establish impact fees can be extended directly to concurrency review. Calculating impact fees requires the identification and quantification of units of service demand for new residential and non-residential development according to adopted standards. Units of demand, for example, might

include gallons of water consumed per single family house or vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) per 1000 square feet of office development. The level of service standards are based on assumptions such as whether a water conservation target is used to calculate the consumption level assumed, or what level of service from the Highway Capacity Manual is assumed in the service area that would translate VMT into cost. These assumptions and calculations are inherent in identifying the cost of development and of fully-burdened impact fees. Concurrency extends these approaches from the demand to the supply side, i.e. to the calculation of infrastructure and facility capacity. Concurrency establishes a regulatory linkage between supply and demand.

Adequate public facilities regulations already existed in the Albuquerque area for urban water and wastewater service prior to the PGS. The Planned Growth Strategy legislation called for adding streets, hydrology, parks, and schools to the services subject to the APFO review (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-4-b).

Concurrency Incentives and Inducements. The PGS concurrency system also functions in the service of the community's long term vision by reducing streets, hydrology, parks, and schools capacity requirements based on the efficiency of the proposed development; setting level of service standards appropriate to the PGS land use plan; and by reducing, eliminating, or setting-aside infrastructure and facility capacity to meet policy objectives.

The same approach used to lower impact fees based on reduced demand for infrastructure and facilities, e.g. reduced VMT based on Traditional Neighborhood Development design, also is applied to the concurrency review. (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-4-d). Incentives are created for developments that place less burden on public systems. For example, rather than assuming that all single family homes or office developments make the same demands on service, the design, location in relation to other uses, and compatibility with non-Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) means of transportation would affect the estimated service demands. Less demand means lower infrastructure and facility capacity required.

As in the case of development impact fees, the PGS legislation calls for concurrence requirements to be adjusted or waived entirely in order to support the community's long term goals

(Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-4-c). Such systems are used in Montgomery County, Md.; New Jersey; and in Florida. (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 182-184) This approach may take the form of an intentional adjustment of level of service standards (LOS) to support the goals of the urban growth strategy. This application has been used mostly with street capacity levels. The phasing and timing of urban growth in the PGS Preferred Alternative are translated into LOS standards within service areas. Parts of the urban fringe not scheduled for near term development may be assigned higher service levels, for example, LOS B or C from the Highway Capacity Manual to increase private sector exactions for developing this area in advance of the plan and the Capital Improvement Program. Higher LOS levels may be given permanently to “Preservation Areas”, such as the more rural areas of the Albuquerque’s Rio Grande valley, in order to protect the quality

of life. Alternatively, lower LOS level could be assigned to areas the PGS targets for more intense development (transit corridors, centers, and the downtown). Concurrency requirement may be waived entirely by policy in order to encourage certain development types and locations.

The set-aside of infrastructure capacity for desired development such as used in New Jersey, Florida, and Montgomery County, Md. provides a robust application of APFO and is authorized by PGS legislation. Facility and infrastructure capacity may be reserved for, or credited to, those locations for such public goals as affordable housing, jobs-housing balance, and mixed-use centers (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 182-184). The assignment of facility capacity acts to correct problems associated with zoning inconsistent with the community’s long term vision.

9. Additional Incentives, Inducements, and Coordination of Resources. Local governments in the Albuquerque area have a number of existing incentive programs and funding sources to support objectives similar to those in the Planned Growth Strategy. Frequently, the issue goes beyond inadequate funding or programs, extending to the lack of coordination among existing programs. In the City of Albuquerque, these included the Community Development Block Grant; Home Investments Partnership Program (HOME); Emergency Shelter Grants Program; Metropolitan Redevelopment fund based on Tax Increment Financing (TIF) projects; Neighborhood Housing and Community Economic Development Fund based on repaid UDAG grants; Housing Trust Fund containing paybacks on revolving housing loans; water and sewer development impact fee waivers for affordable housing; grants from federal, state and private non-profit agencies; special Capital Improvement Program infill development set-aside program; special City Council - neighborhood

set aside CIP program; Local Law Enforcement Block Grant; and so on. PGS legislation identifies these as strategic resources to implement the Planned Growth Strategy in an integrated way (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-E-1-c).

The Planned Growth Strategy report also recommends creating a \$10 million annual General Fund set-aside to provide "but-for" incentives for public-private development partnerships. In part, this set-aside was meant to address developers' concerns that they were supporting the general operation of local government through New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax payments on their projects (COA/COB, 2001b, p. 260).

In order to coordinate associated local government operations, the PGS legislation calls for literally scores of departments and programs to be formed into a functional unit under a Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §§3-E-1-a, b).

10. **Annexation, Regionalism, and Other Implementation Tools.** A critical part of implementing any urban growth plan is to sift through the many preexisting policies, laws, and regulations that impact development in order to make them consistent with the new planning approach. In the Planned Growth Strategy report, this review includes: Development Agreements, “No Net Expense” policy, Annexation Ordinance, Development Process Manual, regional transportation planning under the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG), Water and Wastewater Line Extension policy, Utility Expansion Charge (impact fee) reimbursement policy, Subdivision Ordinance, Planned Communities Criteria, Storm Drainage Infrastructure District Ordinance, and the Neighborhood Association Recognition Ordinance. It is not possible in this context, given limitations of space, to address all of these. The recommended changes to the annexation policy and regional planning are worth noting in more detail, however.

Annexation. The former mayor of Albuquerque, David Rusk (1995) has extolled the value of the city’s annexation practices and held them up as a model. While the city’s aggressive annexation program generally has a favorable outcome, it can be a two-edged sword. Annexation carries with it planning, platting, and zoning jurisdiction, but, absent a growth management plan, it also creates the responsibility to provide urban infrastructure within a reasonable period. Aggressive annexation, in the long run, may contribute to urban sprawl.

The PGS legislation calls for the annexation process to be linked to “urban growth phasing and timing contained in the [Preferred Alternative], related facility and infrastructure level of service standards, Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, and the Capital Improvement Program” (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §6-C-5). It states that “Linking these provisions and policy instruments will provide critical information to the applicant for annexation, to the State Municipal Boundary Commission, the courts, and City officials in order to make decisions regarding the review and approval of annexation applications, and their implications with regard to the timing of access to urban facilities and infrastructure, and the standards under which access will be provided” (Bill No. F/S O-02-39, 2002, §6-C-5).

Regionalism. Reflecting the past reactive nature of growth “management” in the Albuquerque region, the regional transportation agency, Mid Region Council Of Governments (MRCOG), has been greatly influenced by large-scale development interests. As the City of Albuquerque moved toward a proactive approach to growth management, the MRCOG board was expanded to allow greater control of these interests and to dilute the influence of city officials. In the context of the approximately \$1.4 billion dollar requirement for street rehab and deficiency correction over the study period, developers lobbied MRCOG to build a loop road serving their properties but providing only marginal improvements to traffic congestion and air quality. In the abstract, regional urban growth management is needed, but the regional planning political context, such as described above, can work at counter-purposes to good planning. The tools of urban growth management also can be employed to increase sprawl, congestion, inefficient service provision, poor urban form, and political favoritism. The Planned Growth Strategy proposes a regional planning approach that is consistent with the political context of the region.

The Albuquerque area regional planning approach in the PGS is similar to the “cross acceptance” technique used in New Jersey (COA/COB, 2001b, pp. 366-369). Official regional socio-economic forecasts (population, housing, jobs) would be allocated initially to counties and other planning jurisdictions by MRCOG and then accepted via a negotiated “cross acceptance” process. County or other local plans would be developed within the region and transmitted to MRCOG. Through an interactive process, MRCOG would use these inputs to formulate a draft regional plan. In the final analysis, however, the local plan would be adopted within the separate jurisdictions. This creates a bottom-up planning process, empowers the local planning jurisdictions, and drives the decision nexus to a more accessible political arena (Rohe and Gates, 1985).

Within the municipal planning jurisdiction, the implementation of many Planned Growth Strategy approaches are applied “in a manner appropriate for neighborhood conditions, through the amendment of a sector development [neighborhood] plan” (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-B-2-d). The intent was to re-energize local planning at the neighborhood level and to

provide greater influence of these plans even up to the regional scale. The Planned Growth Strategy report endorses state adoption of consistency requirements, especially in relation to the N.M. State Highway and Transportation Department as its activities affect the regional plan.

Linkages among the neighborhood plans and municipal-wide systems and priorities are established through the municipal strategic planning and budgeting program (Bill No. F/S R-02-111, 2002, §3-E-1-d, §2-11 et seq. ROA 1994). The City's program calls for the adoption of goals, identification of conditions, creation of strategies and programs in pursuit of the goals, and the establishment, measurement, and budgeting of interim program objectives. This system was honored in 2003 by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The PGS legislation calls for a system of bottom-up and top-down consistency between the plans at these levels.

Conclusion

The Planned Growth Strategy goes full-circle in unifying the public's long term vision with a land use plan; service delivery policies; public schools partnership; zoning, design standards, development review process; CIP; impact fees; concurrency; incentives, inducements, coordination of resources; and other recommended changes needed to align policies, procedures, and resources internally. The strength of the urban growth plan is found in all of these elements, their consistency, and mutually-reinforcing nature. Even with these elements present, an urban growth management program can be used in furtherance of efficiency, quality growth, and to build community, but it also can produce quite opposite outcomes. The integrity of the plan is conditioned on whether the tools are employed in an carefully specified way to make step by step progress toward the community's long term vision and to arrive at that achievable future without undue delay. This describes the thin line between science and art, between theory and practicality. The future of cities and towns requires urban planners and appointed and elected officials to take up this challenge in a forthright and courageous way.

While the PGS legislation is far reaching, in many instances it provides solely the policy framework for future activities. Given the statutory context for development impact fees, the municipality-school partnership, and concurrency,

as examples, the PGS necessarily was limited to policy. The New Mexico Development Fees act requires the separate creation of an oversight committee and then legislative adoption of a land use plan and fee schedule. The participants in the political dialogue about the PGS generally assume that future statutory authority is necessary to adopt an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. A joint powers agreement is needed between the Albuquerque Public Schools and local governments. The Planned Growth Strategy travels a long way down the path of implementation by creating the Preferred Alternative land use plan, providing policy guidance for development impact fees, establishing the impact fee advisory committee, setting government service delivery policies, and calling for the creation of mixed-use, large area zones. Perhaps most importantly, the Planned Growth Strategy provides a comprehensive and effective framework for the community to realize its long-term vision.

The barely visible thread running through the above discussion is the politics of the PGS' adoption and implementation. It is not surprising that many of Albuquerque's developers were unhappy about its passage. The unfortunate reality is that development is a zero sum game for certain individuals. The policy calling for growth to occur first in areas already served with infrastructure negatively affects land owners outside the area. The policy to charge fees in proximity to the marginal cost of growth means higher fees for landowners in the Unserved urban tier. The change in the growth management paradigm, in and of itself, challenges the old system of using campaign contributions to influence votes and of real estate professionals sometimes using positions on elected and regulatory bodies in a self-promoting way. Urban growth management seeks to replace this system with one that honors the public's participation by implementing the community's long term goals.

Old ways of doing business do not die easily. In the course of the City's consideration of the PGS legislation, powerful developers and land owners who thought they would be negatively affected by the plan, lobbied elected officials, convinced business organizations to oppose the plan, pushed aside more moderate developers and silenced some of them, threatened legal action, raised hundred of thousands of dollars for a political action committee, and paid for an opposing media campaign. Still, the Planned Growth Strategy was adopted by the city

government because it spoke to the community's aspirations and had strong grass-roots support.

The PGS legislative sponsors made a clear choice not to compromise the plan or produce yet another in a series of weak and ineffective planning efforts gathering dust on the shelf. The Planned Growth Strategy, since its adoption in

fall 2002, has continued to come under attack. Ultimately Albuquerque's community will control the outcome. The PGS sponsors hope that their efforts to produce a clear and compelling plan that reflects the community's vision will sustain the PGS and assure its implementation.

Endnotes

¹ The PGS grew out of a number of prior planning efforts, notably including the Transportation Evaluation Study (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 1996) and the Development Impact Fees Report (Growth Management Analysts, Inc., James C. Nicholas, Ph.D., and James Duncan and Associates, 1995).

² The Planned Growth Strategy required four years of effort and the work of engineering, legal, planning, and economic consultants. It cost more than \$400,000 and is about 750 pages in length. The PGS Report was released in Fall 2001. The consultants assembled included Parsons Brinckerhoff; Camp Dresser & McKee; CH2M-Hill; Freilich, Leitner & Carlisle; Friedmann Resources; Growth Management Analysts (Arthur C. Nelson, Ph.D.); Lora Lucero, Esq.; Michael McKee, Ph.D.; Sites Southwest; and Wilson & Company.

³ The planned growth strategy literature reviewed is identified in the bibliography.

⁴ The vision statements referenced here are based on Shared Vision Town Hall participants' statements as represented in Shared Vision, Inc., 1998 and Shared Vision, Inc., 1999. These positions were compromised somewhat during the legislative adoption process.

⁵ During the course of legislation adoption, the name of the Preferred Alternative was amended to the "Infrastructure and Growth Plan".

⁶ During the course of legislation adoption, developer representatives requested that the term "Concurrency" be removed from the bills and replaced with "Adequate Infrastructure and Facilities". This amendment was made.

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The Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Planned Growth Strategy: A Comprehensive Urban Growth Management Approach

Abstract:

The recently adopted Albuquerque urban area Planned Growth Strategy (PGS) is a comprehensive, mutually reinforcing system, designed to change the local growth management paradigm from reactive to proactive and intentional. The PGS is noteworthy for incorporating quality older neighborhoods into the growth management program, establishing policies to reform the delivery of local governmental services, establishing cross-agency coordination with the public schools, and relying to a large extent on financial incentives and disincentives. The PGS program integrates a long term vision, land use plan, zoning and design standards, capital improvement program, impact fees, concurrency, regionalism, and other related changes. The purpose of this article is to review a synthetic approach to implementing urban growth management that is strengthened through each of its parts and balances attention to growth at the fringe with that to older neighborhoods.

**The Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Planned Growth Strategy:
A Comprehensive Urban Growth Management System**

Louis J. Colombo, Ph.D.

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