

# PLANNED GROWTH STRATEGY



**PART**  
**1**

# FINDINGS REPORT

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

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## Glossary

mg/L	micrograms per liter
acre	area of land equal to 43,560 square feet; about 209 feet by 209 feet if the area is a square.
AGIS	Albuquerque Geographic Information System; a department in the City of Albuquerque government that produces and updates mapping of land usage, property boundaries, infrastructure systems, etc.
AMAFCA	Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control Authority
basalt	durable, dense rock produced from hardened lava flow.
CPA	Community Planning Area
DASZ	Data Analysis SubZones
detention vs. retention	Detention ponds have an outlet, usually a drainpipe. Retention ponds do not have an outlet. They empty by evaporation and/or infiltration.
dip section	a roadway that crosses an arroyo without a bridge.
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency

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GIS	geographic information system
gpcd	gallons per capita per day
GRT	gross receipts tax
hydrology	science that deals with the water cycle; precipitation, evaporation, and runoff.
mgd	million gallons per day
mgd	million gallons per day
MRGCD	Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District; an agency that implements and oversees Rio Grande flood protection between Cochiti Dam and the Bosque del Apache Grant south of Socorro.
MRGCOG	Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments
Near Heights	the part of the Northeast Heights that is closest to the Southeast Heights; located between Central Avenue and I-40.
O&M	operation and maintenance
playa	A natural, dry lake depression that has no outlet (Spanish for “shore” or “beach”).
ROW	right-of-way
V/C	volume-to-capacity

Section 1  
**Growth &  
Infrastructure**



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# 1.0 Introduction

**E**arly in 1995, staff from the City of Albuquerque began work on the Transportation Evaluation Study. This project, managed by a team of staff from key departments throughout City government, had as its purpose the creation of a plan for integrating transportation and community development.

In 1997, Parsons Brinckerhoff staff and the project's technical and management committees finished their work. The resulting Final Report (June 1997) began with a presentation of a series of principles that participants proposed should govern future plans. These principles include the following:

- Assuring the orderly and efficient provision of urban services,
- Encouraging compact development without crowding,
- Preserving and enhancing neighborhood characteristics,
- Preserving and enhancing the natural environment,
- Managing circulation and accessibility for all modes of travel,
- Meeting and maintaining federal air quality standards,
- Developing partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and the private sector,
- Assuring adequate funding for transportation project development, and
- Assuring public involvement in the planning process.

Applying these principles, authors of the report proposed the adoption of a “Future Place Image.” This place image would consist of the orderly provision of urban services within an urban service area that would grow steadily, as needed. Within the urban service area, planners envisioned higher density centers and corridors, supported by a transportation system that offered multiple modes of travel. Lastly, the planners envisioned an institutional framework that supports the implementation of all of the above. The concluding chapter of the Final Report contained a series of strategies to implement their recommendations, organized around each of these key concepts.

In the fall of 1997, Bernalillo County staff participated in the City's effort to build on the Transportation Evaluation Study. Formally known as the Planned Growth Strategy, work began in the spring of 1998.

The integration of City and County policy makers and staff represents the successful implementation of one of the key concepts of the Transportation Evaluation Study. To further the prospects for additional planning and implementation, the City and the County commissioned the Parsons Brinckerhoff team to undertake technical analyses that would support further action on the plan.

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In the summer of 1998, the Parsons Brinckerhoff team submitted to the City and the County a draft Interim Ordinance as their first work product. This ordinance became the basis for the eventual adoption of Council Bill R-70 by the City, the “growth policy framework” (R-91-1998 [section 3-8-6 Albuquerque Code of Resolutions] hereafter referred to as R-70). In this Resolution, City policy makers acknowledged the receipt of the Transportation Evaluation Study and committed themselves to completing the plan of work embodied in the scope of the Planned Growth Strategy Project. This includes the establishment of a policy framework providing overall direction for implementation of future growth policies. The Resolution contains:

- Recommendations for the structuring of capital improvements programs and plans to support the emergence of centers and corridors,
- The development of an impact-fee system based on the actual costs of providing services,
- The timing of road and utility construction to assure orderly growth,
- The encouragement of increased densities and mixed uses in centers and corridors, and
- The consideration of “whether, within the context of an amended comprehensive plan, the concept of urban service areas is, on balance, beneficial to the quality of life in Albuquerque, and if so, the determination of the most appropriate areas for urban services.” On this last point the Resolution states that “such a determination would be based on an accurate and publicly reviewed inventory of available and developable land and planned in conjunction with projections of the resources available for expansion.”

Later in 1998, Albuquerque Shared Vision, a not-for-profit civic organization committed to convening citizens to facilitate community development, held the first of several Forums in which participants articulated their concerns and goals for the Albuquerque region. The most recent of these, held in August of 1999, focused on the role of new planned communities. We acknowledge the debt all community-oriented residents owe to Shared Vision for their leadership in this important issue.



*Local panel (left to right) Ned Farquhar, Larry Wells, Councillor Tim Cummins, Commissioner Barbara Seward, and Victor Chavez*

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This Findings Report, the first major deliverable of the Planned Growth Strategy Project, directly addresses the above requirements of R-70, the Planned Growth Strategy policy framework, and should provide the basis for decisions regarding the orderly provision of urban services called for in that Resolution. In Chapter 2 that follows, we address the question of how much land is available and suitable for development, as well as the issue of how much land is required in order to service the community's orderly growth. We do this through a careful analysis of both the supply and demand for land of all kinds in the County during the 1990s. This analysis is refined in the Planned Growth Strategy, Part 2 which addresses the Preferred Alternative.

In Chapter 3, we describe once again the alternative that emerged from the Transportation Evaluation Study, now called the Downtown Scenario. We further describe two other alternatives developed cooperatively with the City and the County. One, called the Balanced Scenario, retains the concept of compact urban form developed in the Transportation Evaluation Study but balances housing and jobs on both sides of the Rio Grande, rather than emphasizing employment on the east side. The third alternative, the Trend Scenario, represents consensus opinion regarding the likely evolution and growth of the metropolitan area assuming the continuation of current trends. This scenario involves the evolution of less centralized, less compact forms of development. It is by no means a worst-case scenario; it is intended to be a realistic assessment of the continuation of current trends.

These three scenarios are the basis of substantial technical evaluation. For each scenario, we estimate the capital costs associated with the provision of water, wastewater, drainage, street and transit transportation infrastructure. These types of infrastructure are, as a group, responsible for most of the (non-school) capital costs of government in the region. Information in Chapter 4 is designed to furnish policy makers and the general public with estimates of expenditures required to support orderly growth under each of the three scenarios.

In Chapter 5, we summarize the policy context for our ongoing work. We identify other projects, plans, studies, and initiatives that bear on the subject of orderly and efficient growth of the Albuquerque metropolitan area and identify their relationship to this planned growth strategy. In doing so, we remind the reader of the complex web of decisions that influence urban form in the region and the need for strong leadership to assure that the built environment meets citizens' expectations both for quality and efficiency.

In the period between January 1999, when we submitted the draft of this report, and today (December 2000), this report has undergone substantial revision and enhancement, as a result of input from the Planned Growth Strategy (PGS) Advisory Committee, and City and County staff. The cost data contained here reflect a deep understanding of actual conditions in the City and County. In all, the report better suits its original purpose—to inform important decision making about the costs of planned growth in the City and County. The authors thank all the staff and citizens who contributed valuable time to improve this product.

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During this same period, work by staff and members of this consultant team has resulted in the development of a recommended Preferred Alternative for future growth, which is a combination of desirable aspects of several of the scenarios evaluated here. The Preferred Alternative is described in a separate report. Further, a specific implementation strategy was developed by Freilich, Leitner, and Carlisle. The Part 2 Report, also deals with fiscal issues related to the implementation strategy. This portion of the report was prepared by Growth Management Associates.

These products, as a group, will enable City and County elected officials to implement the commitments they have made in undertaking the Planned Growth Strategy.

In summary, as part of the larger PGS work effort, this Findings Report has been designed to address the following questions:

- How much land do the County and City need to accommodate orderly growth?
- How much public and private capital do we need to spend?
- How can citizens get the most from the dollars we need to spend to support growth?

With answers to these questions, we hope to further the implementation of the region's desired vision for planned growth.

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## 2.0 Development Trends

### 2.1 Summary

**T**he Albuquerque area's urban growth pattern is tied to the locations of vacant developable land and land that is suitable for redevelopment. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the current vacant and under-used land supply in the metropolitan area, quantify historic land absorption, and compare supply and demand.

The land supply analysis focuses on readily available information supplemented with original survey research. Information was analyzed for two types of geographic subareas. First, we examine a set of three concentric rings. The information was compiled for three areas: 1960 City Boundary, an area representative of older, established neighborhoods; the area generally served by the City's water system, which is representative of the area with existing urban services; and urban or urbanizing land in Bernalillo County that is outside the current Water Service Area.

- **1960 City Boundary**

The area within the 1960 City Boundary is considered to be an infill area. Land within this area has had municipal infrastructure and services for many years, and new development within this served area is considered to contribute to Comprehensive Plan goals regarding a compact urban form.

- **Water Service Area**

The current Water Service Area is served (though not completely) by City of Albuquerque water and sewer systems, and other municipal services are provided within the portion of the Water Service Area that is in the City limits. This area is the location of much of the new development in the urban area.

- **Outside the Water Service Area**

The area outside the City's Water Service Area encompasses the remainder of land in Bernalillo County, excluding the East Mountains and the Indian reservation. It includes land served by other utility companies (principally New Mexico Utilities) and land that currently has no urban services. The City of Albuquerque provides all services but water and sewer to portions of this area that are within the municipal limits. Other portions of the area receive services other than sewer and water from Bernalillo County or smaller municipalities.

We also compile and analyze data by Community Planning Area. The Albuquerque area in the mid-1990s was divided into 10 such areas based mainly on residents' perceptions of community. Community Planning Areas are being used primarily for planning and organization of neighborhood groups. The analysis results are summarized in the following sections.

## Historic Demand for Land

- Single family development accounted for 65% of land absorption from 1990–1997. Less than 10% of new single family units and 6% of land absorption were within the 1960 City Boundary.
- Multifamily housing accounted for 5% of land absorption. Most new construction from 1990–1997 was in the far northeast (Foothills Community Planning Area) and northwest.
- Multifamily housing accounted for 13% of total housing units built from 1990–1998. This may be a trend toward more compact development or part of the cyclical nature of multifamily construction.
- 45% of single family units were built in the northwest mesa (West Community Planning Area), and one-third of total land absorption was in this Community Planning Area. Densities were average for the community planning areas at five units per acre.
- Non-residential development accounted for 30% of total land absorption. Non-residential development is likely to occur in areas with an established population base. From 1990–1997, 34% of non-residential land absorbed was located in the 1960 City Boundary, 48% was in the Water Service Area, and 18% was Outside the Water Service Area.
- Parks and rights-of-way increase total land absorption by about 15%.

Total demand for land from 1990–1997 is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Historic Land Absorption by Area, 1990–1997**

Area	Average Annual Absorption (Acres)	Total (%)
1960 City Boundary	130	12
Water Service Area	537	50
Outside Water Service Area	409	38
Total	1,076	100

- Single family densities are more than twice as high in the older infill areas than at the fringe. (These are averages across areas; individual developments vary.) Multifamily and commercial densities are uniform and relatively low. Residential densities and non-residential floor area ratios are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2 Development by Area, 1990–1997**

Area	Single Family (units/ac)	Multifamily (units/ac)	Non-residential Floor Area Ratios
1960 City Boundary	5.7	21	.20
Water Service Area	4.5	18	.18
Outside Water Service Area	2.8	18	.16
Total	3.9	18	0.18

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## Land and Building Values

### *Residential*

- New housing prices and existing home prices are highest in the northeast part of the urban area and lowest in the southwest.
- Existing neighborhoods provide moderately priced housing. Prices for existing homes generally parallel new home prices, with higher priced new housing in areas with high priced existing housing and lower priced new housing in areas with lower priced existing homes.

### *Non-Residential*

- Over half of the existing retail space is within the 1960 City Boundary. Downtown has a high retail vacancy rate, with almost one-quarter of total space vacant. Downtown also has the lowest rents. In the second quarter of 1998, 1.5 million square feet of retail space were available.
- Three-fourths of existing office space is located within the 1960 City Boundary. The areas with the highest amounts of space are Downtown and Uptown. The highest vacancies are in Downtown and the area near Albuquerque International Airport. Most new office construction is taking place in the North I-25 area. In the second quarter of 1998, 1.1 million square feet were vacant.
- Most industrial space is within the 1960 City Boundary. Again, Downtown has the highest vacancy rate. Nearly half of all industrial square footage is in the North I-25 area. In the second quarter of 1998, 2.4 million square feet were vacant.
- Overall, five million square feet of non-residential space were vacant in mid-1998. Average annual construction, including public buildings and owner occupied buildings, is about 2.2 million square feet. Downtown appears to be the least competitive area in all non-residential categories.
- Most actively marketed vacant land is on the West Side and in the South Valley. Limited numbers of parcels are on the market in other areas, even though land is vacant.

### **Vacant and Redevelopable Land Supply**

Vacant land in the urban area was estimated from Albuquerque geographic information system (AGIS) land use data. Areas not considered suitable or available for development in the context of this analysis are lands within Indian reservations, public open space, 100-year flood hazard areas, areas with poor soils, and landfills. Several large land areas at the urban fringe outside the Water Service Area have been subdivided into small parcels with multiple owners. Fragmented ownership is an impediment to development. Over the long term, flood hazard areas, poor soils, and fragmented ownership can be mitigated, but usually at increased cost.

Land potentially suitable for redevelopment was identified by comparing the value of site improvements to the value of the land. Parcels with improvements valued at less than the land value were identified as potential redevelopment parcels.

The total vacant land supply is 91,897 acres, of which 2,240 acres are located within the 1960 City Boundary, 12,232 acres are within the City of Albuquerque's Water Service Area, and 77,425 acres are Outside the Water Service Area. An additional 10,000 acres, 80% of which are located Outside the Water Service Area, are impacted by flood hazard areas and poor soils, impediments that can be mitigated.

The geographic distribution of vacant and redevelopable land by community planning area is shown in Table 3. To be conservative, land impacted by flood hazard areas and poor soils is not shown in the total.

Key findings of the analysis of land supply are as follows:

- Nearly 92,000 acres of vacant land that is not impacted by landfills, flood hazards, or poor soils exist within the study area. Of these, 2,240 acres are located within the 1960 City Boundary. An additional 12,232 acres are located outside the 1960 City Boundary but within the Water Service Area. These areas do not include land served by other utility companies, which also have potential for urban development.

**Table 3 Vacant and Redevelopable Land by Community Planning Area, May 1998**

CPA	Vacant Land	Redevelopable Land	Total
Central Abq.	337	111	448
E Gateway	867	251	1,118
Foothills	672	58	730
Mid-Heights	326	680	1,006
N Abq.	2,693	315	3,008
N Valley	2,415	2,143	4,558
Near Heights	894	277	1,171
South Valley	3,196	1,727	4,923
SW Mesa	15,438	322	15,760
W Side	8,685	322	9,007
NE Outside	132	0	132
SE Outside	9,485	0	9,485
SW Outside	20,640	0	20,640
NW Outside	26,117	0	26,117
Total	91,897	6,206	98,103

- Over 6,000 acres of land within the 1960 City Boundary and Water Service Area are potentially redevelopable, based on the value definition.
- The analysis of redevelopable land indicates a pattern of declining value of improvements and increasing land values in older commercial strips along most of the arterial streets within the 1960 City Boundary. Public incentives may be needed to encourage redevelopment of these properties.
- Vacancy rates for non-residential buildings are highest in the Downtown, and rents for non-residential space are lowest.



## Comparison of Projected Demand with Land Supply

Three growth scenarios were developed for analysis. These are:

**Trend Scenario.** A continuation of historic development patterns with most new development at the fringe of the urban area. The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments (MRGCOG) developed and used this scenario as a base case for regional planning purposes.

**Balanced Scenario.** A more compact urban form with a balanced distribution of employment east and west of the river. This scenario also emphasizes more intense development along Central Avenue and Isleta Boulevard to 4<sup>th</sup> Street. These corridors present opportunities for transit service.

**Downtown Scenario.** This scenario emerged from the Transportation Evaluation Study. It concentrates employment growth in the Downtown, University of New Mexico, and Uptown areas, creating a major employment center in central Albuquerque. Residential and employment densities are increased in these centers as well as in major transportation corridors.

Population and employment projections by area for each scenario are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4 Population and Employment Projections to 2020**

CPA	1995		Trend Scenario		Balanced Scenario		Downtown Scenario	
	Pop.	Emp.	Pop.	Emp.	Pop.	Emp.	Pop.	Emp.
Central Abq.	19,247	31,650	19,232	37,208	29,756	38,084	25,343	52,561
E Gateway	52,007	14,478	55,327	20,294	55,327	19,353	55,352	20,340
Foothills	45,431	8,565	52,324	12,538	52,114	11,950	52,649	11,057
Mid-Heights	82,276	64812	80,863	79,577	83,863	76,383	82,009	89,176
N Abq.	40,887	14231	56,755	19,019	54,986	17,820	58,447	18,445
N Valley	49,999	55887	57,342	91,361	60,318	82,343	60,147	88,212
Near Heights	77,991	63700	77,606	79,616	88,606	80,396	81,893	83,108
S Valley	43,009	9278	46,350	16,458	51,652	16,320	46,509	15,275
SW Mesa	33,887	6101	60,395	17,263	45,182	37,785	55,000	13,782
W Side	47,322	10634	106,244	40,717	93,196	34,222	104,862	37,500
SE Outside	8,717	20,350	20,558	26,238	29,758	30,548	18,659	19,620
SW Outside	11	90	28	194	27	94	9	90
NW Outside	1,311	86	6,784	6,926	1,545	3,225	1,099	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>502,095</b>	<b>299,862</b>	<b>639,808</b>	<b>447,409</b>	<b>646,330</b>	<b>448,523</b>	<b>641,978</b>	<b>449,252</b>

Future demand for land was estimated by area for each of these scenarios and compared to the supply. Table 5 summarizes the total demand for land and the supply of vacant and redevelopable land.

**Table 5 Projected Demand for Land by Community Planning Area to 2020, Acres**

CPA	Total Demand for Land						
	Land Supply		Current Densities			25% More Efficient Use of Land*	
	Vacant Land	Redevelopable Land	Trend	Balanced	Downtown	Balanced	Downtown
Central Abq.	337	111	82	187	362	150	290
E Gateway	867	251	337	311	340	249	272
Foothills	672	58	613	588	620	470	496
Mid-Heights	326	680	106	152	163	122	130
N Abq.	2,693	315	2,147	1,892	2,351	1,514	1,881
N Valley	2,415	2,143	2,674	3,253	3,335	2,602	2,668
Near Heights	894	277	235	340	321	272	257
S Valley	3,196	1,727	959	1,913	930	1,530	744
SW Mesa	15,438	322	1,756	2,317	1,328	1,854	1,062
W Side	8,685	322	5,899	4,600	5,639	3,680	4,511
NE Outside	132	0	28	26	28	26	28
SE Outside	9,485	0	1,177	2,078	716	1,663	573
SW Outside	20,640	0	7	1	0	1	0
NW Outside	26,117	0	860	1020		82	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,897</b>	<b>6,206</b>	<b>16,880</b>	<b>17,760</b>	<b>16,133</b>	<b>14,215</b>	<b>12,912</b>

\* For an explanation of this standard, see the main section of this chapter.

The findings of the demand analysis are as follows:

- Vacant and redevelopable land within the Water Service Area can accommodate more growth than would occur under any of the three scenarios over the next 20 years.
- Occupancy of existing vacant space, additional redevelopment, or higher density new development will enable existing areas to accommodate more development than shown in the analysis. For example, under the Downtown Scenario, higher density non-residential development and absorption of existing commercial and office space will meet the demand for land in the Central Business District.
- Land holdings, recent annexations, and plans for Westland, Mesa del Sol, and Quail Ranch planned communities contain an inventory of vacant land equivalent to more than 50 years' demand in these market areas, even in the Trend Scenario. The total inventory of vacant land outside the Water Service Area is the equivalent of several decades of City and County land consumption. Phasing of urban services to the master planned communities proposed for these properties must be planned carefully.
- Public policies that encourage investment in established areas and discourage disinvestment are critical to realization of the vision of a compact urban area as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Evaluation Study.

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## 2.2 Introduction

The Albuquerque area's potential for urban growth is tied to the locations of vacant developable land and land that is suitable for redevelopment. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the current vacant land supply in the metropolitan area, quantify historic land absorption, and determine the development potential of the remaining vacant land.

The land supply analysis focuses on readily available information wherever possible but is supplemented with original survey research. Information was analyzed for two types of geographic subareas. First, information was compiled for three concentric "rings" of the region—the 1960 City Boundary, the Water Service Area, and urban or urbanizing land Outside the Water Service Area. The second subareas used for analysis are Community Planning Areas, which allow analysis by geographic area of the City. Figure 1 (pg.13) shows the 1960 City Boundary and current Water Service Area. Figure 2 (pg.15) shows Community Planning Areas. Figure 3 (pg.17) shows the areas serviced by water and wastewater systems.

The area within the 1960 City Boundary is considered to be an infill area. Land within this area has had municipal infrastructure and services for many years, and new development within this served area is considered to contribute to Comprehensive Plan goals regarding a compact urban form.

The current Water Service Area is also served (though not completely) by City water and sewer systems. This area is the location of much of the new development in the urban area, and services are being extended to serve the area.

The area Outside the Water Service Area includes land served by other utility companies, principally New Mexico Utilities, and land that currently has no urban services. The City of Albuquerque provides all services but water and sewer to portions of this area that are within the municipal limits. Other portions of the area receive services other than sewer and water from Bernalillo County or smaller municipalities.

A number of maps were created for use in the analysis of growth trends, vacant and redevelopable land, and development constraints. A listing of maps used in the analysis is found in the References.

This chapter contains the following sections:

**Historic Demand for Land.** This section of the report documents the historic demand for land in the Albuquerque urban area, including the historic rate of land absorption by area and type of land use, characteristics of land development by area, and pricing information for residential and non-residential real estate.

**Vacant and Redevelopable Land.** This section documents the current supply of vacant developable land and estimates redevelopable land in the urban area.

**Projected Demand for Land.** This section evaluates growth projections for the urban area and estimates the future demand for residential and non-residential land by area.

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**Growth Related Policies.** This section updates work completed in the Transportation Evaluation Study, a prior analysis of development policies. New plans and policies adopted since the completion of the Transportation Evaluation Study are summarized, and the implications of these policies for a local growth strategy are discussed.

## **2.3 Historic Demand for Land**

The urban area's historic rate of new construction indicates the demand for land from 1990–1997. Demand for land is characterized by historic land absorption, residential densities, non-residential floor area ratios, and market segments as defined by price by area. This section summarizes demand for land and characteristics of development by area for the Albuquerque urban area.

### **2.3.1 Historic Land Absorption, 1990–1997**

City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County building permits from 1990–1997 were used to derive estimates of the total amount of land absorbed by development over this period. The study analyzed development by three main types: single family residential, multifamily residential, and non-residential. Total units and acreage were analyzed for residential absorption. Total square feet and acreage were analyzed for all other land uses.

The study also examined the geographical location of new construction. One set of tables (Tables 6–7; pg.21, 10–11; pg. 23, and 14–15; pg. 25) indicates whether the various types of development fell within (1) the 1960 City Boundary (the infill area), (2) the Water Service Area, or (3) the area Outside the Water Service Area that is bounded by the Sandia Mountains to the east, the Sandia Reservation and Sandoval County line to the north, the Bernalillo County and Isleta Reservation line to the south, and Rio Puerco to the west.

The areas outside the City's utility service area have on-site systems or are served by other utility companies, as shown in Figure 3 (pg. 17). Public utility systems enable relatively dense development, and on-site systems limit lot sizes to a minimum of 0.75 acre. New Mexico Utilities, which serves far northwest Albuquerque and Paradise Hills, provides both water and wastewater service. Development within the New Mexico Utilities service area is at typical urban densities. Sandia Utilities provides water service only. Densities in areas served by Sandia Utilities are similar to rural densities (1 du/ac).

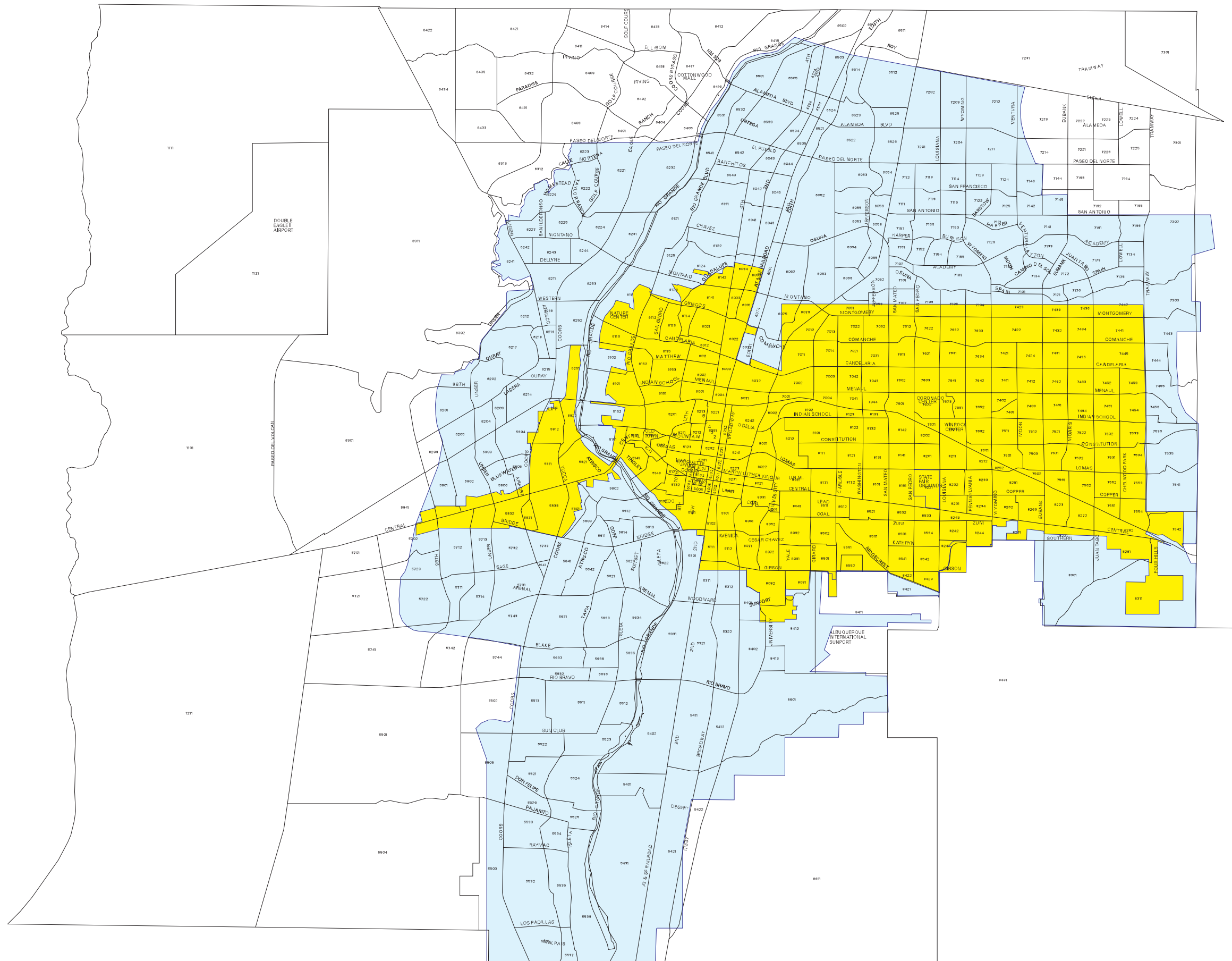
Figure 4 (pg.19) shows the locations of permits issued by the City of Albuquerque for these areas from 1990–1997. Geo-coded permit data were not available for Bernalillo County, so Figure 4 does not include the locations of development within the study area but outside the City Boundary.

A second set of tables (Tables 8–9; pg.22, 12–13; pg. 24, and 16–17; pg. 26) assigns the various types of development to one of the City's 10 Community Planning Areas. This further clarifies which parts of the City are experiencing fast or slow growth. Not all development is accounted for by building permits. To obtain a more accurate estimate of total land absorption, the land used each year for public rights-of-way and parks were added to the estimate.

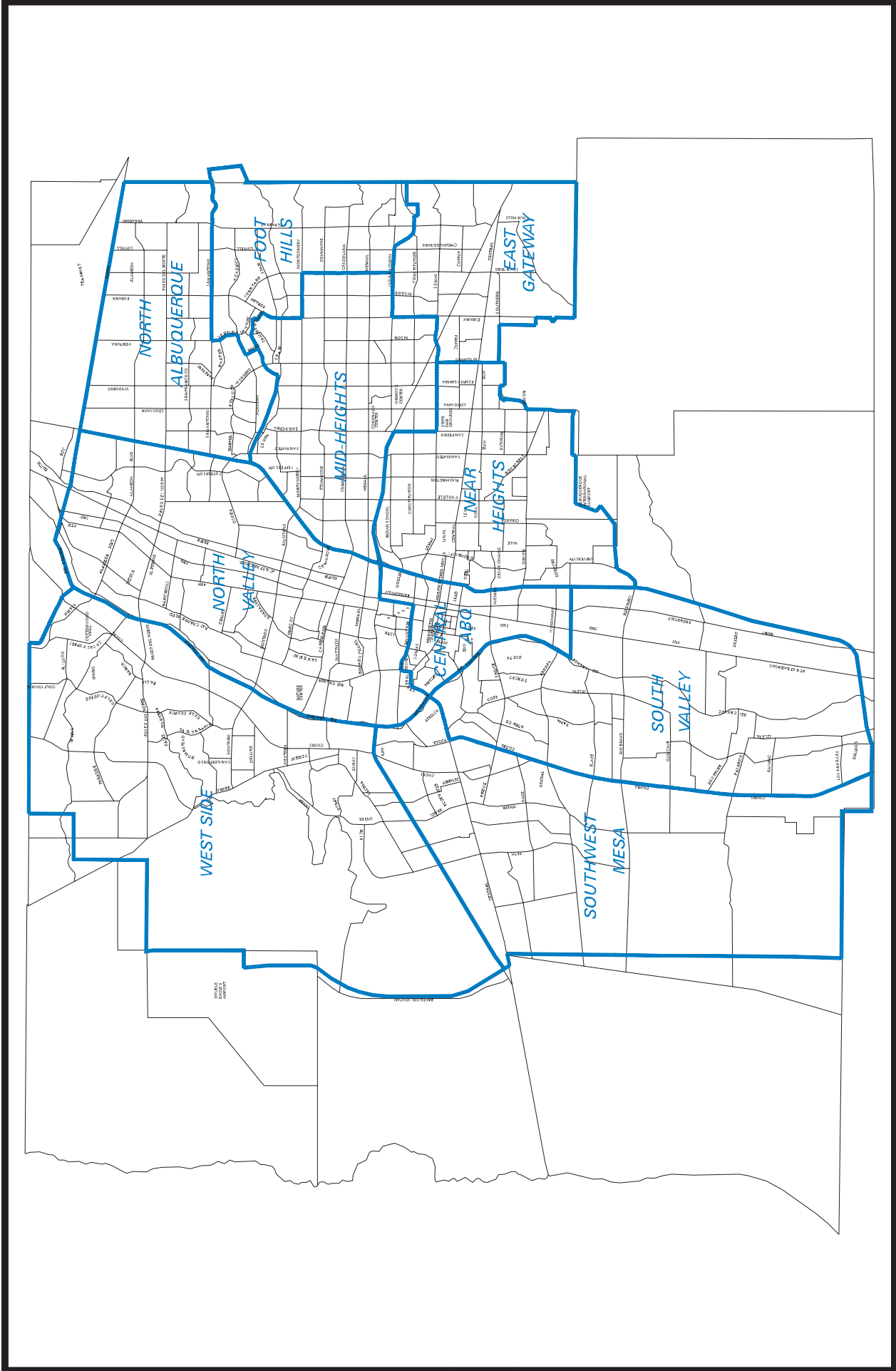
**Figure 1  
Planned Growth Strategy Areas**

**Legend**

- 1960 Limits
- Water Service Area



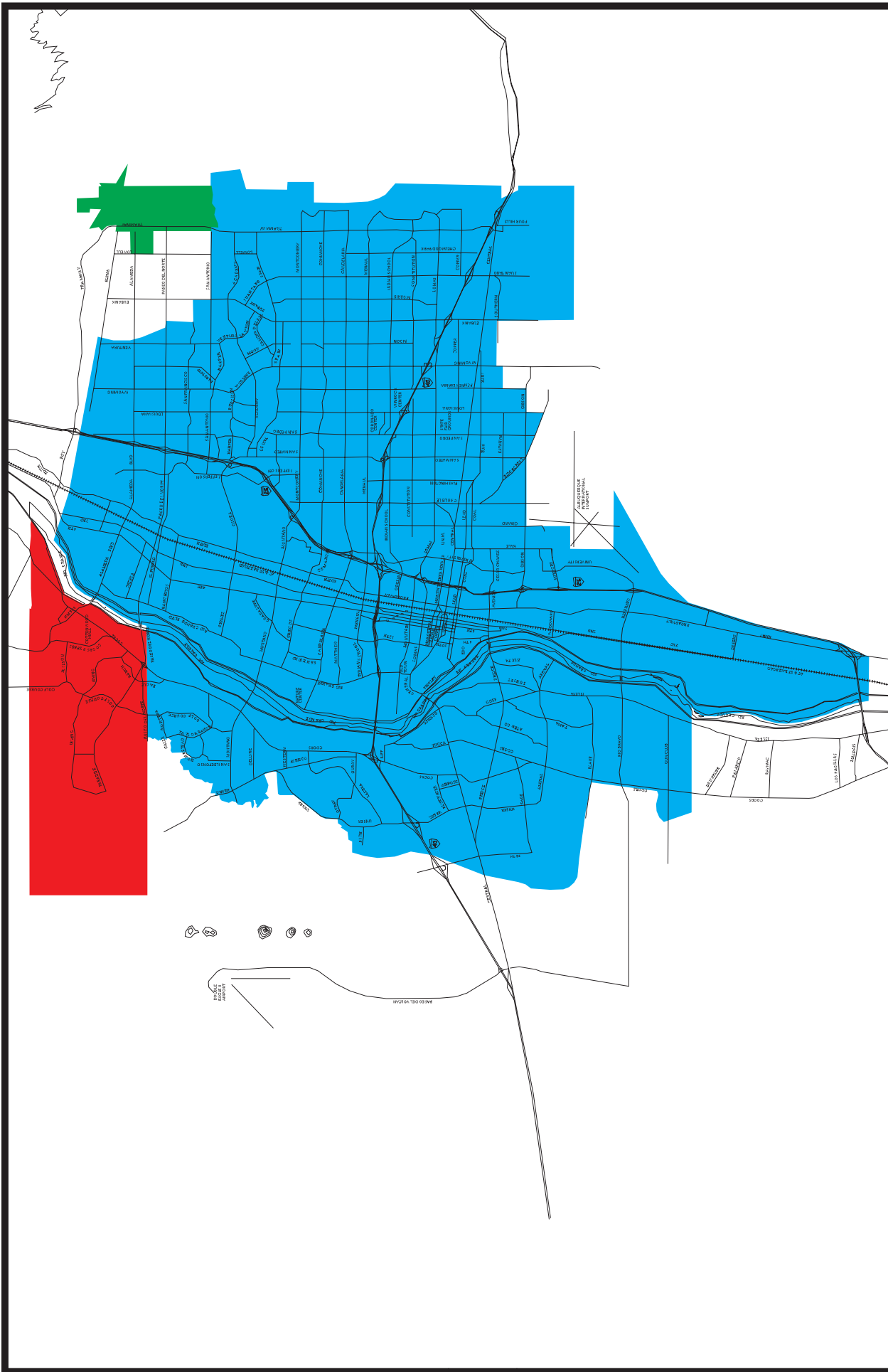
Scale: 1 inch = 2 miles  
Map Printed November 30, 1998



Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998

**Figure 2**  
**Planned Growth Areas with**  
**Community Planning Areas**

**N** Community Planning Areas

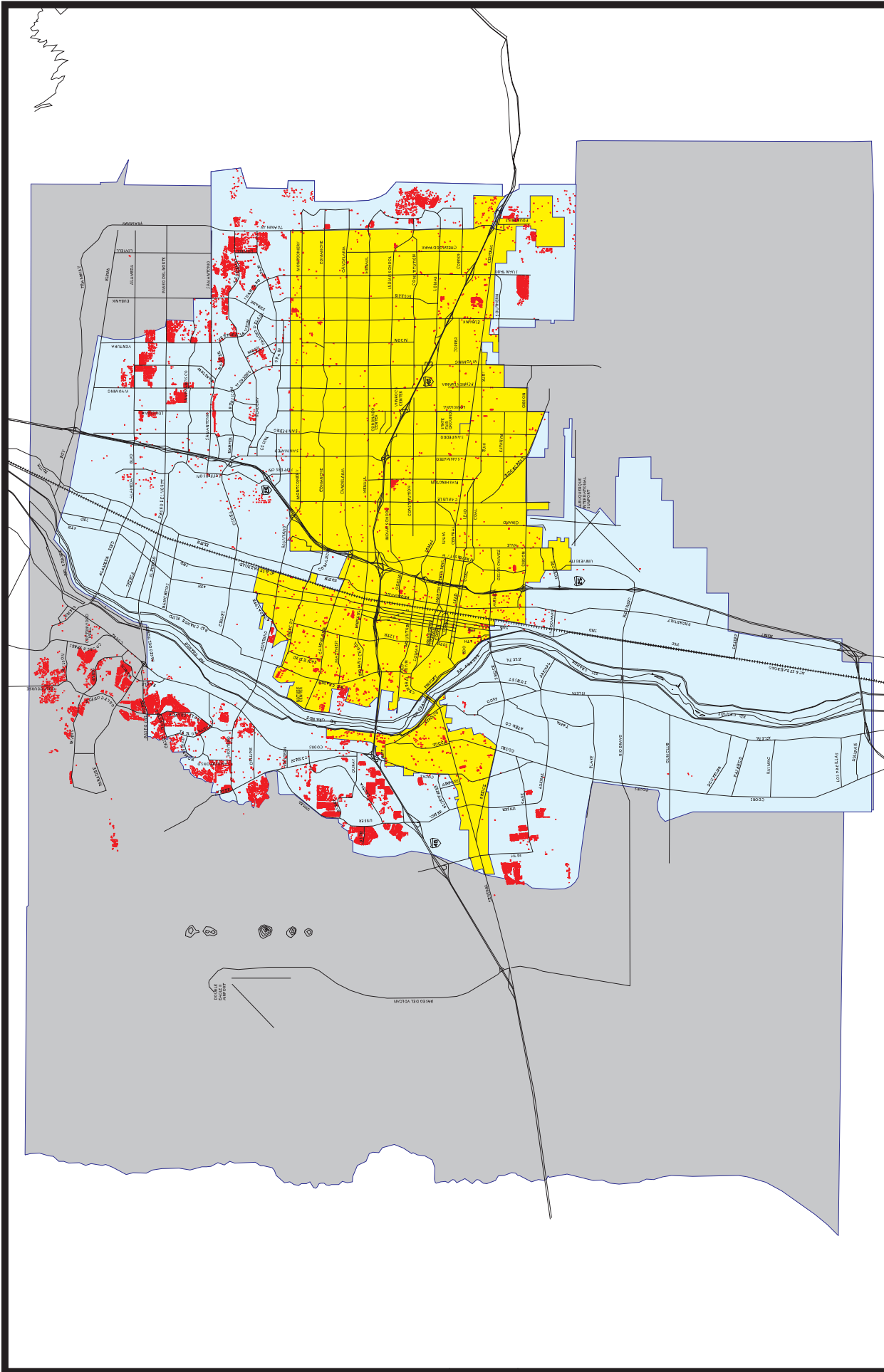


■ City of Albuquerque  
■ New Mexico Utilities  
■ Sandia Utilities



**Figure 3**  
**Water & Wastewater Service Areas**

Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



- 1960 Limits
- Water Service Area
- Outside Water Service Area
- Building Permits



**Figure 4**  
**Location of New Construction 1990-1997**

Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



## Residential Land Absorption

### Single Family Development

Single family housing is the largest category of land development, accounting for approximately 65% of all land used for urban development in the urban area. The category includes single family houses, townhouses and patio homes, and mobile homes. As shown in Tables 6 and 7, most new residential construction has taken place outside the 1960 City Boundary. Less than 10% of new single family units, using 6% single family acres, can be classified as infill.

**Table 6 Single Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Units**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	124	129	154	157	233	280	328	266	1,671	209
Water Service Area	926	988	1,497	1,915	2,023	1,706	1,665	1,447	12,167	1,521
Outside Water Service Area	219	113	461	410	807	1,073	987	1,083	5,153	644
Total	1,270	1,230	2,112	2,482	3,063	3,059	2,980	2,796	18,991	2,374

Note: Some columns may not total correctly due to rounding. Totals are correct.  
Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

**Table 7 Single Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Acres**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	19	21	32	32	43	48	69	30	294	37
Water Service Area	174	183	312	399	509	423	361	322*	2,683	335
Outside Water Service Area	83	47	180	156	343	391	268	391*	1,859	232
Total	276	251	524	587	895	862	698	743	4,836	605

\*Acreage data estimated.

Note: Some columns may not add due to rounding. Totals are correct  
Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

Most single family development in Albuquerque takes place in new subdivisions located at the edges of the urban area. Tables 8 and 9 show the number of single family units and acreage for Community Planning Areas.

The largest amount of single family development over the past eight years occurred in the West Side Community Planning Area, which is the northwest mesa of Albuquerque. This area accounted for 45% of the units built and more than 36% of the acres developed within the 10 Community Planning Areas.

The four other fastest developing Community Planning Areas for single family

housing were North Albuquerque, Foothills, Southwest Mesa, and East Gateway (for number of units) or South Valley (for acreage). These areas are all located at the urban fringe.

**Table 8 Single Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Units**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	10	18	20	12	12	23	44	16	155	19
E Gateway	118	134	136	240	332	202	212	123	1,497	187
Foothills	244	276	466	278	221	133	176	220	2,014	252
Mid-Heights	1	3	0	3	9	31	16	13	76	10
N Abq.	219	262	485	439	611	363	332	432	3,143	393
N Valley	52	53	95	136	133	121	128	114	832	104
Near Heights	7	3	7	43	48	16	39	29	192	24
S Valley	80	42	74	72	98	117	82	86	651	81
SW Mesa	67	30	37	48	87	562	529	375	1,735	217
W Side	405	402	756	1,194	1,502	1,488	1,421	1,380	8,548	1,069
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>1,223</b>	<b>2,076</b>	<b>2,465</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>3,056</b>	<b>2,979</b>	<b>2,788</b>	<b>18,843</b>	<b>2,355</b>

Note: Some columns may not add due to rounding.

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

**Table 9 Single Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Acres**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	1	3	2	2	2	3	6	2	21	3
E. Gateway	18	23	31	48	60	32	35	23	270	34
Foothills	42	46	94	55	93	60	43	48	481	60
Mid-Heights	0.1	0.4	0	0.6	1	2	2	1	7	1
N Abq.	60	54	132	120	226	145	115	105*	852	107
N Valley	19	18	33	43	50	43	33	22	261	33
Near Heights	1	0.5	1	8	7	3	11	2	34	4
S Valley	43	31	68	67	84	87	81	26*	461	61
SW Mesa	16	8	19	20	35	99	126	44	367	46
W Side	60	62	134	211	305	385	247	243	1,647	206
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>863</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>4,532</b>	<b>566</b>

\* Excludes county acreage

Note: Some columns may not add due to rounding.

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

**Multifamily Development**

Only a few multifamily projects have been built per year since 1990. As a result, the rate of multifamily construction varies significantly from year to year, and the location of new construction also varies. Multifamily units accounted for only 13% of the total housing units built between 1990–1993, but increased to 34% of the total over the next four years. It is difficult to forecast whether this is a trend toward more compact growth or part of the cyclical nature of multifamily construction. As shown in Table 10, most multifamily construction has taken place in the Water Service Area or Outside the Water Service Area in the northwest mesa. However, in 1996, almost half of new multifamily units were built within the 1960 City Boundary

**Table 10 Multifamily Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Units**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	146	47	63	113	75	16	465	22	947	118
Water Service Area	281	216	6	182	1,135	514	493	306	3,133	392
Outside Water Service Area	0	0	0	0	617	1,360	72	1,154	3,203	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>1,827</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>1,482</b>	<b>7,283</b>	<b>910</b>

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

Multifamily construction is cyclical, with annual absorption since 1990 ranging from two to 131 acres. An average of 50 acres per year are absorbed for multifamily construction. Table 11 summarizes land absorption by community planning area.

**Table 11 Multifamily Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Acres**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	4	2	2	5	2	1	27	1.5	45	6
Water Service Area	5	10	.28	15	67	39	26	13	175	22
Outside Water Service Area	0	0	0	0	32	91	4	53	180	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

The West Side Community Planning Area captured the largest share of multifamily units, nearly half the total units and acres, as shown in Tables 12 and 13. This pattern followed the trend of single family housing development. The closest competitor was the Foothills area in the northeast.

**Table 12 Multi-Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Units**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	0	0	0	0	0	3	10	3	16	2
E Gateway	0	0	0	0	0	16	4	3	23	3
Foothills	244	262	9	10	734	298	124	4	1,685	211
Mid-Heights	0	1	56	200	0	0	6	0	263	33
N Abq.	40	0	0	76	424	0	0	294	834	104
N Valley	0	0	4	0	4	2	10	20	40	5
Near Heights	143	0	0	4	0	1	170	10	328	41
S Valley	0	0	0	0	0	90	12	0	102	13
SW Mesa	0	0	0	0	32	0	464	0	496	62
W Side	0	0	0	4	633	1,480	230	1148	3,495	437
Total	427	263	69	294	1,827	1,890	1,030	1,482	7,282	910

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

**Table 13 Multi-Family Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Acres**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.1
E Gateway	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.4	0.2	2.0	0.3
Foothills	5.0	12.0	0.3	0.4	48.0	26.0	5.0	0.5	97.3	12.2
Mid-Height	0.0	0.0	2.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	10.0	1.3
N Abq.	1.0	0.0	0.0	11.0	23.0	0.0	0.0	15.0*	50.0	6.0
N Valley	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.8	0.2
Near Heights	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	7.0	0.5	11.7	1.5
S Valley	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	0.5	0.0*	7.0	0.9
SW Mesa	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.0	0.0	31.0	3.9
W Side	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	31.0	97.0	13.0	51.0	192.1	24.0
Total	10.0	12.0	2.5	19.7	102.3	130.4	58.1	68.2	403.9	50.5

\* Excludes County acreage

\*\* Missing some acreage

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

## Non-Residential Land Absorption

Non-residential development (commercial, office, institutional, and industrial) accounted for only 30% of the acres developed in the Albuquerque area over the past eight years. This type of development was more evenly distributed among the three areas of the city than residential development. While nearly half of the new non-residential square footage was built in the current Water Service Area (compared with 58% of residential units), more than a third occurred within the 1960 City Boundary (compared with 10% of residential units). The outside area captured less than 20% of the total non-residential square footage (Tables 14 and 15; pg. 25).

**Table 14 Non-Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Square Feet**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997*	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	511,771	412,846	561,899	876,614	1,147,777	718,889	1,061,665	0	5,291,461	755,923
Water Service Area	813,995	716,486	418,888	932,215	810,215	1,719,181	2,043,797	0	7,454,777	1,064,968
Outside Water Service Area	336,518	219,095	191,913	111,608	155,445	1,381,426	465,665	0	2,861,670	408,810
Total	1,662,284	1,348,427	1,172,700	1,920,437	2,113,437	3,819,496	3,571,127	0	15,607,908	2,229,701

\* Some data are not available for Bernalillo County (26 of 181 building permits)

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

**Table 15 Non-Residential Land Absorption by Year and Area, Acres**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997*	Total	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	49	46	114	68	131	80	124	0	612	87
Water Service Area	153	105	67	136	108	206	194	0	969	138
Outside Water Service Area	29**	24	33	7	38	179	93	0	403	58
Total	231	175	214	211	277	465	411	0	1,984	283

\* Data are not available for Bernalillo County (76 of 181 building permits)

\*\* Does not include a 660-acre City composting facility, which was a one time project not consistent with long-term trends.

Source: City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Building Permits

In Community Planning Areas, the North Valley outstripped the West Side in non-residential development every year but 1995. This was due to heavy commercial and industrial development along the north I-25 corridor. The Near Heights ranked third in capturing new square footage and acreage. The Mid-Heights ranked fourth in new square footage while North Albuquerque was fourth in the number of acres absorbed by non-residential development. (Tables 16 and 17 (pg. 26).

### Parks and Rights-of-Way

The study estimated annual acreage needed for rights-of-way and parks to account for land absorption not included in building permits. The study estimated rights-of-way—land used for streets, drainage, utility easements, and trails—to be 27% of the developed acreage. This percentage was derived from statistical analyses done earlier for the City of Albuquerque’s Wastewater Facility Plan.

Right-of-way needs will vary with the amount of infrastructure in place at the time of new development. Total land absorbed by rights-of-way is only the incremental addition required at the time of development. For example, development of a lot in an existing subdivision does not entail additional street

**Table 16 Non-Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Square Feet**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	7,781	19,904	52,108	73,468	2,090	17,480	6,086	1,894	180,811	22,601
E Gateway	92,536	165,039	346,176	147,466	334,445	47,869	182,494	173,267	1,489,292	186,162
Foothills	33,860	18,651	4,863	21,692	41,640	110,089	51,300	200,429	482,524	61,066
Mid-Heights	109,966	95,027	73,416	521,970	132,124	364,099	554,678	204,105	2,055,385	256,923
N Abq.	200,206	114,792	26,124	307,163	121,981	181,445	291,203	82,907	1,325,821	165,728
N Valley	395,216	419,028	223,689	511,861	760,681	1,113,528	1,231,200	969,407	5,624,610	703,076
Near Heights	312,657	127,587	92,578	140,990	513,418	213,506	365,614	381,266	2,147,616	268,452
S Valley	16,119	23,767	17,519	43,695	44,685	57,047	148,092	12,295	363,219	45,402
SW Mesa	54,973	9,858	164,103	405	48,853	233,535	277,059	286,550	1,075,336	134,417
W Side	224,135	354,774	140,828	135,429	94,956	1,479,698	455,793	384,587	3,270,200	408,775
Total	1,447,449	1,348,427	1,141,404	1,904,139	2,094,873	3,818,296	3,563,519	2,696,707	18,020,814	2,252,602

**Table 17 Non-Residential Land Absorption by Year and Community Planning Area, Acres**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	.29	3	47	.56	.14	5	.75	0	57	7
E Gateway	9	9	51	14	28	13	12	40	176	22
Foothills	11	3	1	1	10	7	5	19	57	7
Mid-Heights	13	9	6	43	27	41	87	28	254	32
N Abq.	13	8	10	50	26	58	38	3	206	26
N Valley	42	91	23	61	75	109	117	113	631	79
Near Heights	32	11	10	19	50	13	26	8	169	21
S Valley	3	9	10	10	17	22	20	3	94	12
SW Mesa	11	1	29	0	17	48	15	26	147	18
W Side	90	32	26	10	26	149	92	42	467	58
Total	224	176	213	209	276	465	413	282	2,258	282

right-of-way. For this study, no new rights-of-way are assumed within the 1960 City Boundary. Only 25% of new development in the Water Service Area is assumed to require additional rights-of-way (an additional 6.75% overall). Most development Outside the Water Service Area is assumed to be new development, with the full 27% of land area for rights-of-way added to the net acreage accounted for in building permits.

There were several standards available for projecting the amount of acreage that will be needed for parks. The City's Park Dedication Ordinance (Sections 14-9-

1 et seq. ROA 1994) requires a neighborhood park dedication of 170 square feet of land for every townhouse, single family residence, or mobile home built, and 85 square feet for every apartment. Its purpose is to provide developed park space within one-half mile of every home, where practicable, “to supply areas for recreational opportunities and visual relief to the population of the City.” The City’s “Goals for Park Development” (Albuquerque Code of Resolutions, 3-6-1), adopts a standard of 1.5 acres per every 1,000 people for neighborhood parks and two acres per 1,000 people for district and other large urban parks.

Table 18 shows the fairly generous assumptions of this study regarding average annual acres needed for parks. This estimate of land absorption for parks combines the need for neighborhood, district, and regional parks into a standard of 3.5 acres per 1,000 people. An assumption of 2.5 persons per housing unit resulted in 400 units per 1,000 people or 380 square feet of park space per unit. The analysis assumes that no new parks are needed within the 1960 City Boundary and that half the new residential development within the Water Service Area resulted in acquisition of new park land. An average of 17 acres of new park land is estimated to be needed each year.

**Table 18 Average Acres Required for Parks Annually  
(3.5 acres per 1,000 persons)**

<b>CPA</b>	<b>Ave SF Units</b>	<b>Average Multiunit</b>	<b>Average Total Units</b>	<b>Park Space (Sq. Ft.)</b>	<b>Total Park Acres</b>	<b>Modified Park Acres*</b>
1960 City Boundary	209	118	327	124,260	3	0
Water Service Area	1521	392	1913	726,940	17	8
Outside Water Service Area	644	400	1044	396,720	9	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2374</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>3284</b>	<b>1,247,920</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>

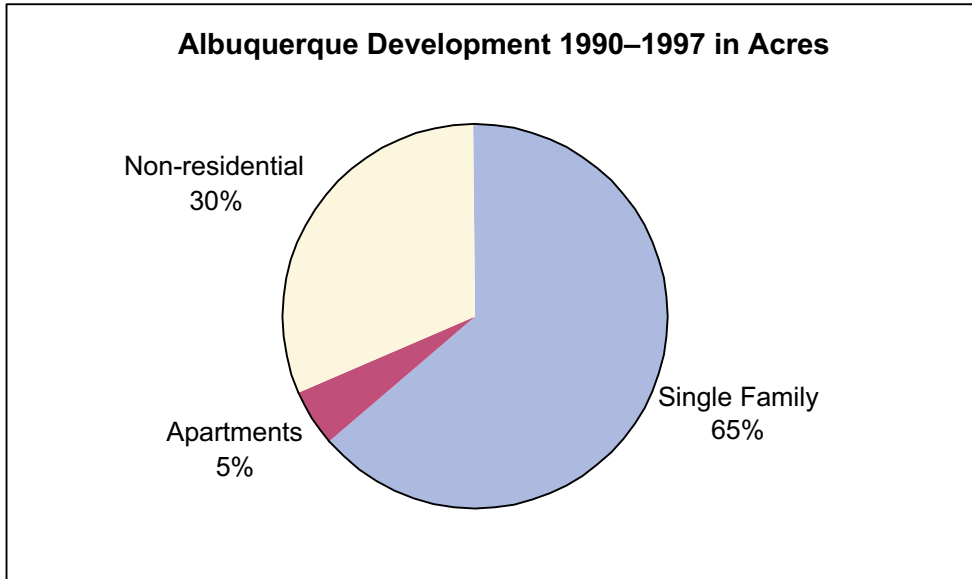
\* Assumes no parks needed within 1960 City Boundary and half of vacant land inside Water Service Area is already developed.

### **Absorption Summary**

In general, development in Albuquerque (single and multifamily residential and non-residential) absorbed a total of 7,220 acres over the past eight years for an average of 938 acres per year. Single family homes accounted for 65% of the total, non-residential development for 30%, and multifamily units for only 5%, as seen in Figure 5 (pg. 28). This excludes parks, open space, and rights-of-way. It also excludes development in the East Mountains and the Indian Reservations.

Single family residential lots absorbed a minimum of 251 acres in 1991 and a maximum of 895 acres in 1994, with an average of 605 acres per year over the 1990–1997 period. Multifamily sites consumed a minimum of two acres in 1992 and a maximum of 131 acres in 1995, with an average of 50 acres per year. Finally, non-residential absorbed a low of 175 acres in 1991 and maximum of 465 in 1995, with an average of 283 annually.

**Figure 5 Development by Type**



As seen in Table 19, single family and multifamily residential units absorbed an average of 655 acres or 70% of the total acres absorbed over the past eight years, while non-residential accounted for 283 or 30%. Rights-of-way accounted for an estimated 125 acres, and parks accounted for an estimated 17 acres.

**Table 19 Total Average Acres Absorbed Annually 1990-1997**

Area	Res.	Non-Res.	Subtotal	Parks*	Total	ROW**	Total
1960 City Boundary	43	87	130	0	130	0	130
Water Service Area	357	138	495	8	503	34	537
Outside Water Service Area	255	58	313	9	322	87	409
<b>Total</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>1,076</b>

\* Assumed 3.5 acres per 1,000 persons or 380 square feet per residential unit for parks

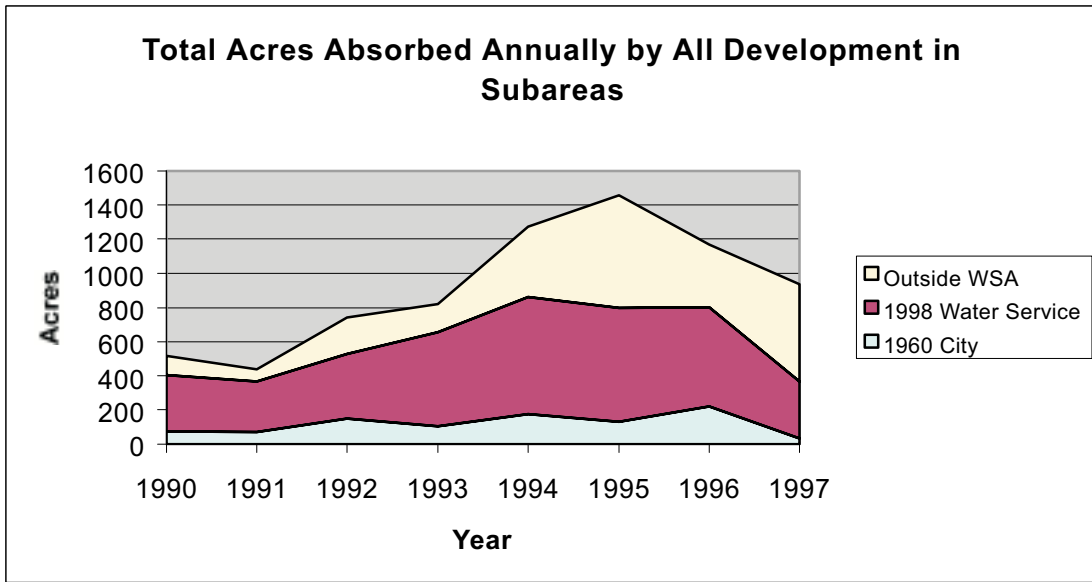
\*\* Assumed 27% of total acreage is right-of-way per Albuquerque Wastewater study statistical calculations, no new right-of-way is needed within 1960 City Boundary, and 25% of right-of-way is still needed in the 1998 Water Service Area.

**Subarea Absorption**

On average, the current Water Service Area outside the 1960 City Boundary experienced the most residential and non-residential development as measured in acreage-52%-from 1990-1997. The 1960 City Boundary captured 14% of the total development and the subarea Outside the Water Service Area captured 34%. The change in numbers of acres absorbed by the three subareas over time is shown in Figure 6 (pg. 29).



**Figure 6 Annual Land Absorption**



By subarea, the greatest number of single family dwellings (12,167) was built within the Water Service Area, consuming 2,683 acres, exclusive of parks and rights-of-way. Even though fewer than half that number of dwellings (5,153) were built Outside the Water Service Area, their lower density absorbed 1,859 acres, 1.7 times the land area per unit as homes in the Water Service Area. Only 1,671 homes, or about 9% of the total, were built within the 1960 City Boundary on 294 acres.

A summary of development by Community Planning Area is shown in Table 20. Overall, the West Side Community Planning Area experienced the most residential and non-residential development by far as measured by acres absorbed. Development there consumed 2,306 acres, nearly twice the amount absorbed in

**Table 20 Total Residential and Non-Residential Absorption by Community Planning Areas, Acres**

CPA	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	Avg.
Central Abq.	1	6	49	3	2	8	7	2	79	10
E Gateway	27	32	82	62	88	46	47	63	448	56
Foothills	58	61	95	56	151	93	53	68	635	79
Mid-Heights	13	9	8	52	28	43	89	29	271	34
N Abq.	74	62	142	181	275	203	153	123	1213	152
N Valley	61	109	56	104	125	152	150	136	894	112
Near Heights	37	12	11	27	57	16	44	11	214	27
S Valley	46	40	78	77	101	115	102	29	588	74
SW Mesa	27	9	48	20	52	147	172	70	545	68
W Side	150	94	160	221	362	631	352	336	2306	288
Total	494	434	730	803	1241	1454	1170	866	7193	899

Note: Some columns may not add due to rounding.

the Community Planning Area with the second-highest amount of development, North Albuquerque. Not surprisingly, the Central Albuquerque Community Planning Area had the fewest developed acres over the past eight years.

### 2.3.2 Characteristics of Land Development by Area

Land development characteristics include densities (units per acre) for residential development and floor area ratios (the ratio of building area to land area) for non-residential development. A comparison of single family densities by area is shown in Table 21.

**Table 21 Single Family Residential Land Density by Year and Area, Units per Acre**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	6.5	6.1	4.8	4.9	5.4	5.8	4.8	8.9	5.7
Water Service Area	5.3	5.4	4.8	4.8	4.0	4.0	4.6	4.5	4.5
Outside Water Service Area	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.7	3.7	2.8	2.8
Average	4.6	4.9	4.0	4.2	3.4	3.5	4.3	3.8	3.9

Housing in older established areas is typically higher density than housing on the edges of the City. Net single family infill densities (excluding rights-of-way) average five to six units per acre. In the Water Service Area, densities are four to five units per acre. Densities vary slightly from year to year, but lot size trends have not changed significantly during the past eight years. However, individual developments vary from these averages.

The area Outside the Water Service Area includes low density developments such as North Albuquerque Acres and portions of the South Valley as well as suburban development served by New Mexico Utilities. Overall, the average net density of new single family residential development Outside the Water Service Area is 2.8 units per acre compared with 5.7 within the City infill area.

Community Planning Areas span both the 1960 City Boundary and Water Service Area subareas. Single family densities varied considerably by Community Planning Area. They ranged from 1-3 acres in the North and South Valleys and North Albuquerque to 7-10 units per acre in Central Albuquerque and the Mid-Heights, respectively.

Densities in the West Side Community Planning Area, which captured nearly 40% of the City's single family market over the past eight years, were average for all the Community Planning Areas at five units per acre.

Table 22 (pg.31) shows multifamily densities by area. Multifamily projects are very similar for all areas of Albuquerque, with a typical density of 18-20 units per acre. Densities of multifamily units outside the city infill area are only slightly lower than inside.

**Table 22 Multifamily Residential Land Density by Year and Area, Units per Acre**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	37	24	32	23	38	16	17	15	21
Water Service Area	56	22	21	12	17	13	19	24	18
Outside Water Service Area	0	0	0	0	19	15	18	22	18
Total	47	22	30	15	18	14	18	22	18

**Table 23 Non-Residential Floor Area Ratio by Year and Area**

Area	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997*	Avg.
1960 City Boundary	0.24	0.21	0.11	0.30	0.20	0.21	0.20	0	0.20
Water Service Area	0.12	0.16	0.14	0.16	0.17	0.19	0.24	0	0.18
Outside Water Service Area	0.27	0.21	0.13	0.37	0.09	0.18	0.11	0	0.16
Total	0.17	0.18	0.13	0.21	0.18	0.19	0.20	0	0.18

Some columns may not add due to rounding. Totals are correct.

\* Data unavailable for 1997

Non-residential density is measured by floor area ratio, or the ratio of the total building square footage to the lot square footage. Floor area ratios are low generally in Albuquerque due to parking and landscape requirements and a prevalence of one-story buildings. As shown above in Table 23, the floor area ratio is somewhat higher in the infill area and lower in the Water Service Area.

### 2.3.3 Pricing Data by Area

Land prices, residential sales information and non-residential lease rates are reported to illustrate differences in pricing from area to area. Demand is influenced by price, and a planned growth strategy must assure a broad range of prices and types.

#### *Housing and Residential Land*

The starter home market is located in the southwest near Westgate Heights, in the southwest quadrant of the City. Homes in this area range in price from \$75,000–\$125,000. An average of 217 homes have been built in the southwest over the past nine years, with over 500 units built in 1995 and 1996.

Moderately priced homes are still available in the northwest mesa, although home prices are increasing in newer subdivisions surrounding Cottonwood Mall. Housing prices in northwest subdivisions range from \$115,000–\$175,000 in Ventana Ranch up to \$300,000 closer to Coors Road. An average of 750 units per year, representing 40–50% of the Albuquerque market, are built in this area.

Lot prices for builders in Ventana Ranch are currently about 22–23% of total home price. For example, a 50 foot lot is \$27,000–\$29,000 for a \$115,000–\$130,000 home. A 60 foot lot is priced in the mid-\$33,000s for a \$130,000–\$145,000 home price, and a 65 foot lot is priced at about \$35,000 for a \$145,000–\$175,000 home. Lot prices in the Seven Bar area west of Cottonwood Mall are priced at about 24–28% of home prices. The top lot price for builders in this area is about \$36,000.

The highest prices for new homes are in the far northeast, with home prices starting at about \$130,000 for the most affordably priced product.

Table 24 shows existing home sales for 1995, the first year for which these data were compiled, and 1998 and 1999 grouped as closely as possible to the 1960 City Boundary and Water Service Area. Average home prices are lowest within the 1960 City Boundary, increasing in the newer areas Outside the Water Service Area, although there are price variations within each major area. The most affordable housing overall is in the southwest.

**Table 24 Albuquerque Area Existing Home Sales, 1995, 1998, and 1999\***

Area	Total Sold 1999	Ave. Price 1999	Total Sold 1998	Ave. Price 1998	Total Sold 1995	Ave. Price 1995	Ave. Annual Increase (%)*
<b>1960 City Boundaries</b>							
Downtown	96	\$108,741	96	\$107,405	92	\$116,958	(2.80)–(1.81)
Near Heights	574	\$129,017	649	\$124,861	613	\$117,420	2.07–2.38
NE Heights	977	\$133,356	962	\$130,789	986	\$127,195	0.93–1.19
SE Heights	316	\$134,825	318	\$130,025	291	\$114,415	4.36–4.19
Four Hills	74	\$207,778	66	\$211,912	65	\$207,454	0.71–0.04
Subtotal	2,037	\$133,905	2,091	\$130,320	2,047	\$124,539	1.52–1.83
<b>Water Service Area</b>							
Far NE Heights	1,067	\$192,263	1,062	\$188,241	942	\$182,333	1.07–1.34
N Valley	305	\$187,700	331	\$201,119	298	\$162,906	7.28–3.61
NW Heights	765	\$131,043	764	\$128,558	811	\$120,955	2.06–2.02
Southwest	334	\$ 94,412	322	\$ 96,735	492	\$ 87,301	3.48–1.98
Subtotal	2,471	\$159,520	2,479	\$159,681	2,543	\$142,096	3.97–2.93
<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>							
Paradise Hills	347	\$153,641	352	\$149,995	193	\$140,676	2.16–2.23
Sandia Heights	127	\$287,230	106	\$265,624	90	\$269,936	(0.54)–1.56
N Abq. Acres	87	\$338,403	76	\$337,840	44	\$289,127	5.33–4.01
Subtotal	561	\$212,536	534	\$199,682	327	\$196,227	0.58–2.02
Total	5,069	\$155,094	5,104	\$151,837	4,917	\$138,387	3.14–2.89

\* First percentage is for 1995–1998 period, second percentage is for 1995–1999 period.

Negative figures in parentheses.

Source: Albuquerque Board of Realtors, Southwest Multiple Listing Service

Existing single family home prices in the Greater Albuquerque area have increased about 3% per year since 1995 (not adjusted for inflation), encouraged by declining interest rates, according to the Albuquerque Board of Realtors. (Inflation based on the Consumer Price Index—Urban during the 1995–1999 period averaged 2.25%.per year.) About 5,100 single family detached homes sold during 1998, at an average price of \$151,837 and 5,069 single family homes sold in the following year at an average price of \$155,094. Overall, home prices are lowest within the 1960 City Boundary and highest Outside the Water Service Area.

The level of existing home sales activity was about the same in 1995, 1998, and 1999. Sales activity has shifted geographically, however. On the West Side, home sales in Paradise Hills have increased, but sales in older northwest neighborhoods and in the southwest have decreased. Activity in Sandia Heights and North Albuquerque Acres, which are a very small part of the urban area total, has increased. All other areas appear to be at about the same level as in 1995.

The subareas with the greatest increase in the average cost of a single family house were the North Valley and the SE Heights. The latter is a gentrifying area with reasonably low priced houses. The subareas with a declining or flat trend in the sales price of single family houses were Downtown and Four Hills.

Reporting areas for the Board of Realtor data do not exactly correspond with Community Planning Areas, but the data have been matched as closely as possible in Table 25. The lowest home prices are in the southwest and Central

**Table 25 Albuquerque Area Existing Home Sales, 1995, 1998, and 1999\* by Community Planning Area**

Area	Total Sold 1999	Ave. Price 1999	Total Sold 1998	Ave. Price 1998	Total Sold 1995	Ave. Price 1995	Ave. Annual Change (%)*
Central Abq.	96	\$108,741	96	\$107,405	92	\$116,958	(2.80)–(1.81)
Old NE/SE Heights (Near Heights, Mid-Heights)	1,867	\$132,271	1,929	\$128,669	1,890	\$122,057	1.77–2.03
New NE Heights (North Abq., Foothills).	1,281	\$211,603	1,244	\$203,975	1,076	\$194,027	1.68–2.19
N Valley	305	\$187,700	331	\$201,119	298	\$162,906	7.28–3.61
Northwest	1,112	\$138,095	1,116	\$135,319	1,004	\$124,746	2.75–2.57
Southwest (SW Mesa, S Valley)	334	\$ 94,412	322	\$ 96,735	492	\$ 87,301	3.48–1.98
Four Hills (E Gateway)	74	\$207,778	66	\$ 211,912	65	\$207,454	0.71–0.04
Total	5,069	\$155,094	5,104	\$ 151,837	4,917	\$138,387	3.14–2.89

\* First percentage is for 1995–1998 period. Second percentage is for 1995–1999 period. Negative figures in parentheses.

Source: Albuquerque Board of Realtors, Southwest Multiple Listing Service.

Albuquerque, and the highest prices are in the newer parts of the northeast heights. Housing prices are trending upward in most areas, but average home prices in Central Albuquerque have declined over the past four years. It can be observed that the Central Albuquerque market was far less robust than the markets in all the other parts of the City. Sales prices in the Four Hills area, although relatively high, have not increased over the analysis period.

Home prices have increased the most in the North Valley, although the average price in the larger areas shown in Table 25 (pg. 33) masks the variations among smaller areas.

### ***Non-Residential Space and Land***

Lease rates and vacancy rates indicate the general health of a real estate submarket. The following tables summarize overall lease rates and vacant space for retail, office, and industrial buildings of over 10,000 square feet in the Albuquerque area.

**Table 26 Retail Markets in Albuquerque, Second Quarter 1998**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Total Retail Centers</b>	<b>Total Square Feet</b>	<b>Vacancy (%)</b>	<b>Average Asking Rent*</b>
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>				
Downtown	10	530,735	23.14	\$9.19
Uptown	28	2,829,075	5.40	\$86-\$11
Mid NE Heights	76	3,810,010	9.28	\$11.46
South Metro	43	2,101,197	7.44	\$9.31
<b>Water Service Area</b>				
Far NE Heights	43	2,996,497	6.71	\$12.35
North Valley/North I-25	16	783,300	7.79	\$9.94
Northwest Mesa**	28	3,651,174	11.63	\$95-\$13
Overall	237	16,701,988	8.84	

Source: CREI Research 1998.

\* When two rent figures are shown, the first is regional mall rates and the second is all other.

\*\* Includes Rio Rancho

Real estate information for non-residential submarkets of Albuquerque is available by areas that vary from the areas selected for analysis in the Planned Growth Strategy. As a result, information is generally representative of areas within the 1960 City Boundary and the Water Service Area, but does not match precisely.

### ***Retail***

Table 26 contains information about retail markets in Albuquerque. Downtown is the smallest submarket with 530,735 square feet of leasable area. It has the highest vacancy rate, with nearly one-fourth of the leasable area vacant. Uptown has the lowest vacancy rate, at just over 5%. Other than Downtown, submarkets have similar vacancy and rent characteristics.

**Table 27 Office Markets in Albuquerque, Second Quarter 1998**

Area	Total Projects	Total Square Feet	Vacancy (%)	Average Asking Rent*
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>				
Downtown	42	2,932,493	16.35	\$13.18
Uptown	47	2,186,406	8.89	\$14.73
Midtown	25	1,114,432	9.22	\$11.67
South Metro/Airport	31	1,163,728	10.04	\$12.53
<b>Water Service Area</b>				
NE Heights	41	1,285,119	9.39	\$13.07
North Valley/North I-25	32	1,084,696	6.05	\$14.18
<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>				
Northwest Mesa*	18	384,305	11.79	\$14.16
Overall	236	10,151,179	11.08	\$13.44

Source: CREI Research, 1998.

\* Includes Rio Rancho. Area is split between Outside Water Service Area.

**Office**

Office space is classified according to building characteristics. Prime locations for Class A space are Downtown and Uptown. No suburban space is considered to be Class A. Class B and Class C space are older buildings in good to average locations with lower rental rates. Figures reported below are averages over all building classifications. Office space characteristics are shown in Table 27.

Nearly 75% of office development is located within the 1960 City Boundary. Downtown has the highest vacancy rate of any area. New office development is taking place in the North I-25 corridor.

The northwest has historically had low demand for office space. To date, the area is largely residential, with retail and service businesses moving into the area in recent years to serve the population on the West Side. However, as the West Side population continues to increase, demand for office and industrial space will increase.

**Industrial**

Most industrial development is concentrated in areas within the 1960 City Boundary and in the Water Service Area. The largest industrial area is the North I-25 area, which extends along I-25 north of I-40. Some of this area is within the 1960 City Boundary, but most is outside it and within the Water Service Area, as shown in Table 28 (pg. 36).

Industrial buildings are a mix of office and warehouse or manufacturing space. Average rents vary with the percentage of buildings that tend to be office space,

**Table 28 Industrial Markets in Albuquerque, Second Quarter 1998**

Area	Total Projects	Total Square Feet (Estimate)	Total Available Square Feet	Vacancy Rate (%)	Average Asking Rent*
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>					
Downtown	19	4,400,000	429,130	9.86	\$3.82
NE Heights	8	5,200,000	234,921	4.51	\$7.03
SE/Airport	16	2,600,000	194,455	7.42	\$5.07
<b>Water Service Area</b>					
North Valley/North I-25	63	14,700,000	1,303,275	8.91	\$5.85
Northwest Mesa*	8	4,196,766	164,967	3.86	\$6.72
Southwest	7	2,500,000	122,386	4.88	\$4.17
Overall	121	33,596,766	1,590,628	7.29	\$5.46

Source: CREI Research 1998.  
Includes Rio Rancho

since office space rents are higher than warehouse or manufacturing space rents. Rents and vacancy rates vary by area of town, but not by whether the area is in older or newer parts of the urban area.

## 2.4 Vacant Land

### 2.4.1 Vacant Land Prices

#### *Residential*

In the third quarter of 1998, the Home Builders of Central New Mexico listed 478 available home lots for sale in about 20 major subdivisions or phases of subdivisions in the Albuquerque area, excluding Rio Rancho, Los Lunas, the East Mountains, and Placitas. These included lots available to the public, as opposed to lots sold in bulk to homebuilders. Lot sizes for single family detached homes ranged from approximately 5,000 square feet to just under 1.5 acres, although one subdivision offered lots as large as 1.8 acres. Prices ranged from \$49,000–\$340,000, except for townhouse lots of 3,000 square feet selling for \$25,000–\$28,000.

The northeast offered the largest number of lots available to the public—340—at a range of \$54,000–\$340,000. Lots in the northeast ranged from 5,000 square feet to over one acre. Large lot sizes in North Albuquerque Acres and the foothills of the Sandias are dictated by topography and utilities.

More than 600 lots in the Northwest Mesa were presold to builders, with only 51 listed as available to the public for from \$49,000–\$69,000. Lot frontages ranged from 45 feet to 65 feet, with a typical lot depth of 110 feet. Only one development, a custom home subdivision built on difficult soils, offered average lots as large as an acre.

A total of 56 lots in three infill subdivisions was available in the North Valley. Lot sizes for single family detached homes ranged from 6,000–14,053 square



**Table 29 Non-Residential Land Market in Albuquerque 1997–1998\***

Area	Total Parcels	Total Acres	Aver. Parcel Size (AC)	Median Parcel Size (AC)	Size Range (AC)	Aver. Price/ Acre	Aver. Price/ SF
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>							
Downtown	2	12.60	6.30	6.30	4.00–8.60	\$318,560	\$7.32
Uptown	4	8.11	2.03	1.99	1.52–2.62	\$399,336	\$9.17
NE Heights	10	59.27	5.93	3.25	0.92–22.00	\$357,288	\$8.29
SE Hts./ Airport	8	101.59	12.70	2.61	to 48.00	\$191,849	\$4.38
<b>Water Service Area</b>							
Far NE	9	23.82	2.65	2.00	1.18–6.25	\$401,418	\$7.03
N Valley	22	273.44	12.43	6.37	1.29–66.13	\$295,080	\$4.87
S Valley	11	882.47	80.22	9.60	3.00–565.00	\$103,760	\$5.29
<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>							
West Mesa	51	2,691.72	52.78	6.07	0.92–2000	\$230,176	\$5.12
Total	117	4,053.02	21.88	4.66	0.92–2000	\$287,183	\$6.43

Source: NAIOP 1997–98 Commercial Space Directory. Geographic boundaries do not exactly match the three service boundaries

feet in size. Their prices ranged from \$58,000–\$74,000. Townhouse lots were priced at \$25,000–\$28,500 for about 3,000 square feet.

In the Southwest Mesa, 21 lots were listed for sale in one subdivision, with a price of \$18,000 per lot. Most subdivisions in the southwest are built out by builders specializing in affordable housing priced under \$100,000. Few lots are available for purchase by individuals. The low lot prices in this area are essential for builders to be able to provide lower priced new homes.

No data are available for individual infill lots.

### ***Non-Residential Land***

Vacant non-residential land prices vary by area. On average, the highest prices are within the 1960 City Boundary, and the lowest prices are in the South Valley on a per acre basis. The largest supply of land being actively marketed is in the West Mesa. (Table 29.)

#### **2.4.2 Vacant Land Supply**

The vacant land supply as of May 1998 was used as the benchmark for this analysis. Figure 7 (pg.43) shows the locations of vacant land in the metropolitan area. Vacant land was identified through AGIS, which contains all platted parcels in the urban area and zoning by four-digit land use code. Vacant land in the AGIS is identified by broad use category, based upon the zoning of the property.

Land with potential impediments to development has been eliminated from the vacant land supply. Within the Albuquerque urban area are more than 115,000

**Table 30 Vacant Land Not Impacted by Poor Soils, 100-Year Flood Zones, Open Space, Landfills, and Indian Reservations, May 1998**

Area	Residential	Residential/ Agricultural	Non- Residential	All Categories
1960 City Boundary	937	0	1,303	2,240
Water Service Area	4,682	3,030	4,520	12,232
Outside Water Service Area	13,534	51,579	12,312	77,425
Total	19,153	54,609	18,135	91,897

acres of vacant land as of May 1998. Subtracting land that has soils identified in the soil survey of Bernalillo County as having limitations for construction of dwellings and basements, 100-year flood zones, acres designated as current or proposed open space, Indian lands, and landfills leaves more than 90,000 acres available for development. Because poor soils and flood zones can be mitigated, total land area is shown with and without these constraints (Tables 30 and 33 and 31–32, respectively).

Following this analysis, Albuquerque City Planning staff in February/March of 1999 began the first phase of a field study to fine tune the vacant land data generated by AGIS. Staff visited 414 sites (2,020 acres) within the 1960 City Boundary that were identified as vacant and at least one acre or larger in size. Staff verified the vacant status and evaluated the development potential of these parcels. They found that 313 of the sites (1,735 acres) were indeed vacant. Moreover, 234 of these vacant sites (1,421 acres) or 82% were judged to have good development potential. Development potential of the rest was considered fair (12%) or poor (6%). Staff also found that 52 sites (65 acres) were already developed and 49 sites (220 acres) were under development.

**Table 31 Vacant Land Not Impacted by Open Space, Landfills, and Indian Reservations, May 1998**

Area	Residential	Residential/ Agricultural	Non- Residential	All Categories
1960 City Boundary	974	0	1,260	2,234
Water Service Area	5,377	3,542	4,970	13,889
Outside Water Service Area	16,353	55,469	13,473	85,295
Total	22,704	59,011	19,703	101,418

In addition, staff estimated a total of 1,647 sites (446 acres total) smaller than one acre were vacant within the 1960 City Boundary. This resulted in an estimated grand total of 2,181 vacant acres—1,735 acres surveyed and 446 acres unsurveyed—within the 1960 City Boundary during the first quarter of 1999. The number is close to the 2,240 acres found vacant in Table 30.

While more costly, development can take place in flood zones and on poor soils when these conditions are mitigated. For example, a portion of Ventana Ranch, currently being developed on the West Side, is shown as an area of poor soils. Excluding these constraints that can be mitigated, the available supply rises to more than 100,000 acres, as shown above in Table 31.

Tables 32 and 33 summarize vacant land by Community Planning Areas and for areas outside the designated Community Planning Areas. This includes all vacant properties that are designated in the AGIS land use file as vacant residential or vacant non-residential. Many parcels within the 1960 City Boundary are known to be small.

Community Planning Areas with the greatest supply of vacant land are located near the urban fringe. These include North Albuquerque, the South Valley, and the West Side.

**Table 32 Vacant Land Not Impacted by Open Space, Landfills, and Indian Reservations, May 1998, by Community Planning Areas**

CPA	Residential	Residential/ Agricultural	Non-Residential	All Categories
Central Abq.	82	0	262	343
E Gateway	597	51	319	967
Foothills	735	4	103	842
Mid-Heights	68	0	271	339
N Abq.	999	2,010	293	3,302
N Valley	619	846	1,109	2,573
Near Heights	147	27	680	854
S Valley	828	1,425	1,474	3,727
SW Mesa	3,019	12,235	1,368	16,622
W Side	5,795	4,316	1,641	11,753
NE Outside	167	74	3	244
SE Outside	9,603	45	99	9,747
SW Outside	69	20,142	1,294	21,505
NW Outside	4	17,830	10,794	28,628
Total	22,732	59,005	19,710	101,446

**Table 33 Vacant Land Not Impacted by Poor Soils, 100-Year Flood Zones, Open Space, Landfills, and Indian Reservations, May 1998, by Community Planning Areas**

CPA	Residential	Residential/ Agricultural	Non-Residential	All Categories
Central Abq.	81	0	256	337
E Gateway	511	47	309	867
Foothills	572	4	96	672
Mid-Heights	62	0	264	326
N Abq.	762	1,729	202	2,693
N Valley	593	811	1,011	2,414
Near Heights	141	0	753	895
S Valley	727	1,087	1,382	3,196
SW Mesa	2,777	11,465	1,196	15,439
W Side	3,410	4,065	1,210	8,685
NE Outside	77	52	2	132
SE Outside	9,386	11	88	9,485
SW Outside	68	19,485	1,087	20,640
NW Outside	3	15,821	10,293	26,117
Total	19,170	54,577	18,149	91,898

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The fringe areas of Albuquerque, including North Albuquerque (substantial portions vacant), the Southwest Mesa (Atrisco Land Grant, 1,972 acres and Pajarito Land Grant, 8,445 acres) and the northwest outside of Community Planning Areas (8,872 acres), contain areas of premature platting, shown in Figure 8 (pg.45). Platting and fragmented ownership makes development difficult, but not impossible. For the most part, these areas are outside the Water Service Area. As the urban area has expanded, land assembly and development has occurred. In North Albuquerque Acres, for example, 40% of the total land area is developed. In the Pajarito Land Grant, only 4% is developed, and in the Atrisco Land Grant 20% is developed. A few acres of the land west of Paradise Hills are developed, and about 20% is open space.

### **2.4.3 Redevelopable Land Supply**

Potential redevelopable sites were identified by comparing assessed building value to assessed land value. Parcels with a building value equal to or less than the land value were considered to be redevelopable. Assessed value information was obtained from the Bernalillo County Assessor, who has building and land values for all parcels within the County. To make sure that the redevelopable land estimates do not include land that is not redevelopable, a conservative approach was taken by excluding the following types of parcels:

- Private schools
- Board of Education (Albuquerque Public Schools) properties
- City and County properties
- Cemeteries
- Mobile home parks
- Golf courses
- Residential properties of 0.5 acre or less
- Residential properties with homes valued at \$50,000 or more, and
- All buildings over \$1 million

Some of the excluded sites might be suitable for redevelopment. For example, buildings valued at more than \$1 million could include properties such as older shopping centers and excess parking. These sites are often designed to incorporate infill projects, and many could serve as potential redevelopment sites.

An estimated 1,521 acres of redevelopable land are located within the 1960 City Boundary, as shown in Table 34. The average parcel size is 0.85 acre. An estimated 3,996 acres of redevelopable land are located outside the 1960 City Boundary but within the current Water Service Area. The average size of redevelopable parcels in the Water Service Area is 3.2 acres. Several large parcels, including the 430-acre Sundt property at Osuna and the North Diversion Channel and the Coronado Airport, provide opportunities for large-scale redevelopment.

The location of redevelopable parcels is shown in Figure 9 (pg.49). Most parcels are

small. Non-residential parcels are located along most older arterial streets and through-out older parts of the North I-25 area. Most residential parcels are larger parcels in the North and South Valley, where the land value has outstripped the value of the original rural residential or agricultural improvements.

**Table 34 Estimated Redevelopable Land by Area, 1998**

Property Class	Count of Parcels in the 1960 City Boundary	Sum of Acres in the 1960 City Boundary	Count of Parcels in the Water Service Area	Sum of Acres in the Water Service Area	Total Parcels	Total Acres
Combination of Uses	0	0	11	416	11	416
Non-residential	1,522	1,338	531	2,040	2,053	3,378
Residential	82	137	488	1,351	570	1,488
Vacant Buildings	192	46	230	189	422	235
Total	1,796	1,521	1,260	3,996	3,056	5,517

Most redevelopable parcels are small, as shown in Tables 35 and 36. Most parcels within the 1960 City Boundary are commercially zoned and/or in commercial use. As shown in Figure 9 (pg.49), these parcels tend to be located along arterial streets. In the Water Service Area outside the 1960 City Boundary, over half of the redevelopable land is commercial property, but there is residential and mixed-use property suitable for redevelopment as well.

Within the 1960 City Boundary, nearly 60% of parcels are less than 0.5 acre in size. Only nine parcels are 10 acres or more, but these account for nearly 40% of the land area. In the Water Service Area parcels are larger, with 65 parcels of 10 acres or more totaling nearly half of the land area.

**Table 35 Redevelopable Land by Parcel Size, Number of Parcels, 1998**

Location	LT 0.5 ac.	0.5–0.9 ac.	1–1.9 ac.	2–4.9 ac.	5.0–9.9 ac.	10.0+ ac.	Total
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>							
Commercial	885	318	178	127	28	9	1,545
Residential	0	0	74	13	1	0	88
Mixed-Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant Building	170	7	5	2	0	0	184
Total	1,055	325	257	142	29	9	1,817
<b>Water Service Area</b>							
Commercial	94	120	114	143	46	39	556
Residential	0	0	320	144	20	17	501
Mixed-Use	0	1	3	3	1	5	13
Vacant Building	133	50	38	8	3	4	236
Total	227	171	475	298	70	65	1,306

**Table 36 Redevelopable Land by Parcel Size, Acres, 1998**

Location	LT 0.5 ac.	0.5–0.9 ac.	1–1.9 ac.	2–4.9 ac.	5.0–9.9 ac.	10.0+ ac.	Total
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>							
Commercial	227	224	248	385	187	150	1,421
Residential	0	0	100	38	8	0	145
Mixed-Use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant Building	28	5	6	7	0	0	46
Total	255	229	354	430	194	150	1,613
<b>Water Service Area</b>							
Commercial	31	90	163	440	325	1,278	2,326
Residential	0	0	433	430	124	417	1,404
Mixed-Use	0	1	4	12	6	400	422
Vacant Building	34	35	49	24	22	60	223
Total	65	125	649	905	477	2,154	4,375

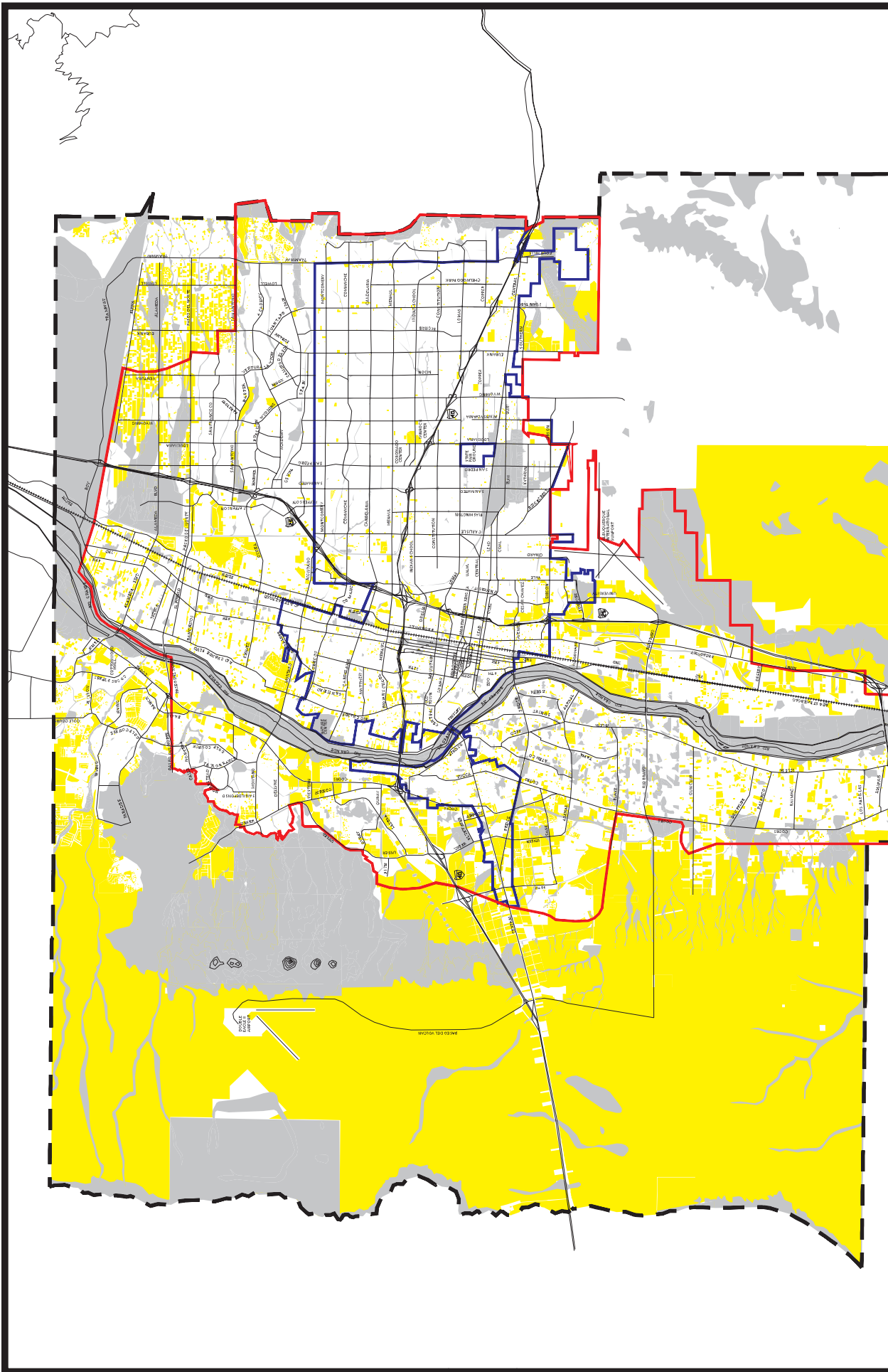
Note: Some columns may not add due to rounding.

Smaller redevelopable parcels present several limitations. First, they may not be available for sale, and second, their small size may accommodate a limited number of potential uses. As arterial streets in older Albuquerque neighborhoods have been widened, the depth of older strip commercial properties has decreased to a size that limits design flexibility.

Retail patterns have changed dramatically in the past 20 years. Rather than shopping at smaller independently owned stores, consumers do much of their shopping at larger discount stores. Grocery stores have increased in size to accommodate a wider range of non-food merchandise. A small modern grocery store is about 40,000 square feet in size, and a large “super center” may be 80,000 to over 100,000 square feet in size. In Albuquerque, larger stores and newer shopping centers are located on sites or in centers of 10 acres or more. A number of new retail centers have been built on infill sites. Examples of new retail center locations include San Mateo and I-40 (The Pavilions at San Mateo: Circuit City, Old Navy, Linens and Things, Just for Feet), Eubank and Lomas (Target, Office Depot, Best Buy) and Eubank near Central (Wal-Mart, Sam’s Club, PetSmart, Home Depot).

A few retailers specialize in renovating older properties. In Albuquerque, John Brooks supermarkets and Wild Oats Markets have renovated commercial space of 20,000–30,000 square feet in older centers. MacFrugals, Lots Off, 50 Percent Off, Family Bargain stores and Hobby Lobby are other retail stores that have taken over space vacated by grocery and discount stores.

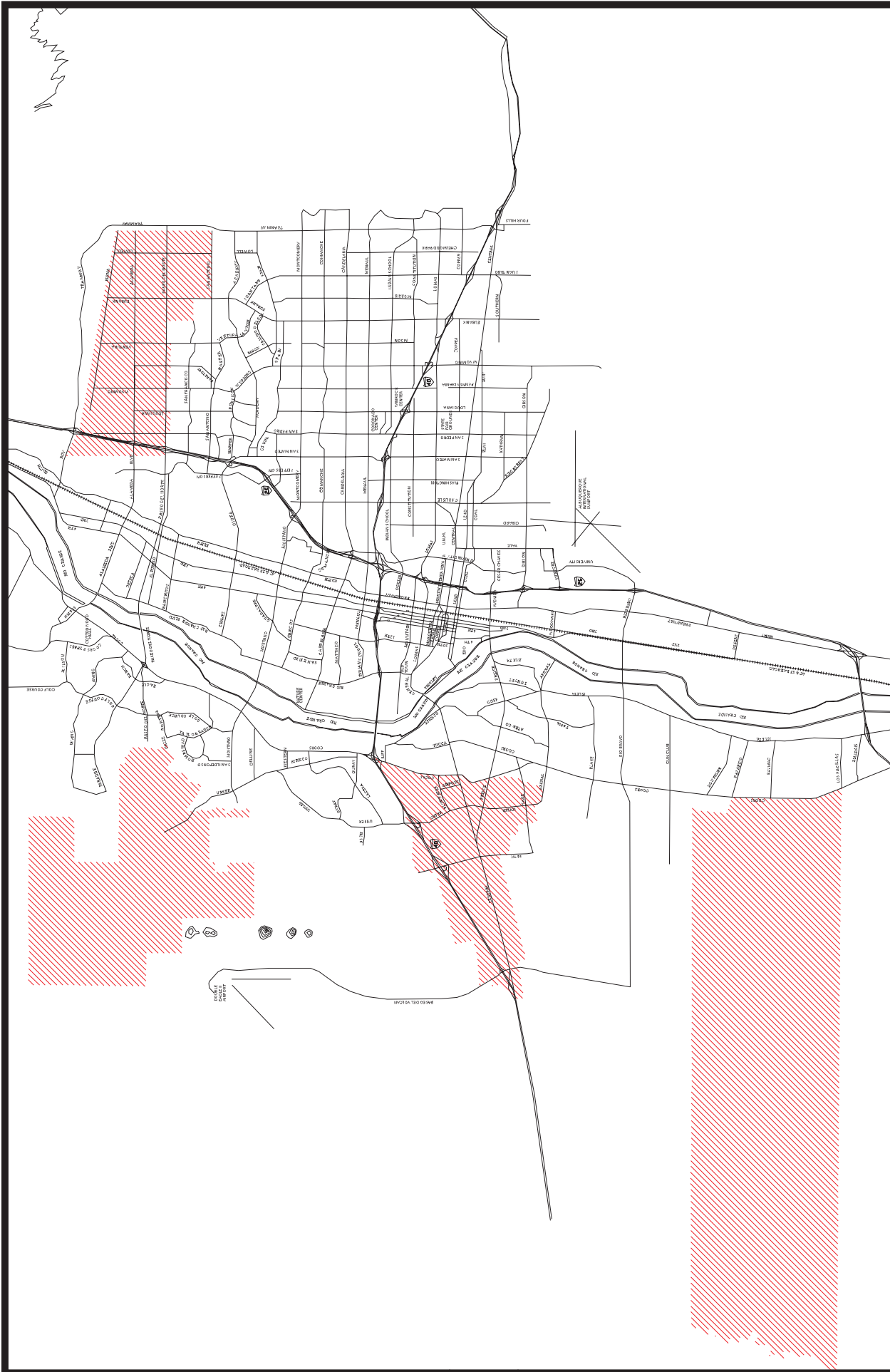
Because the sizes of most redevelopable parcels are small, a growth strategy for Albuquerque should encourage assembly into larger tracts, redevelopment of older strip centers as office or specialty retail, or redevelopment as residences. Prototype designs would be useful to illustrate how these parcels can be reused.



- DEVELOPED LAND
- UNDEVELOPED LAND
- LAND CONSTRAINTS
- 1960 CITY LIMITS
- WATER SERVICE AREA

**Figure 7**  
**Vacant Developable Land**

Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



**Figure 8**  
**Areas Impacted by**  
**Fragmented Ownership**

▨ Impacted Areas

Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



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Land use policy should be compatible with City and County goals. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan encourages a rural environment in the Valley areas. Redevelopment of large rural parcels may not be desirable under this policy. Compatibility of infill with existing neighborhoods is also a concern.

Findings of this analysis are as follows:

- Nearly 92,000 acres of vacant land that is not impacted by landfills, flood hazards, or poor soils exist in the study area. Of these, 2,240 acres are located within the 1960 City Boundary, which represents Albuquerque's older established neighborhoods. An additional 12,232 acres are located outside the 1960 City Boundary but within the Water Service Area. These areas do not include land served by other utility companies, which also have potential for urban development.
- Approximately 6,000 acres of land within the 1960 City Boundary and Water Service Area are potentially redevelopable.
- The analysis of redevelopable land indicates a pattern of declining value of improvements and increasing land values in older commercial strips along most of the arterial streets within the 1960 City Boundary. Public incentives may be needed to encourage redevelopment of these properties. Such incentives might include streetscape and façade improvements to fix deteriorating commercial strips, direct property acquisition and project packaging to encourage private development, writing down the cost of land, and upgrading infrastructure at public expense.
- Vacancy rates for non-residential buildings are highest in the Downtown, and rents for non-residential space there are low.

## **2.5 Projected Demand for Vacant Land**

Projected demand for vacant land was estimated based on the historic relationship between development and growth. Projections of population and employment growth for Bernalillo County were developed by the MRGCOG for 2020. This analysis compares the differences in demand for land between three scenarios for the distribution of growth in the study area.

### **2.5.1 Historic Demand and Demographic Change**

From 1990–1995 the urban area population increased from 465,621–502,095 and employment (jobs) increased from 242,635–299,862. During the same time period, 2,705 acres of residential land and 1,108 acres of non-residential land were absorbed to accommodate this growth.

The relationship between growth and land absorption varied by area, as shown in Table 37 (pg.48). Development within the 1960 City Boundary is much denser for both population and employment than in the area Outside the Water Service Area.

### **2.5.2 Planned Growth Strategy Scenarios Development**

Three land use scenarios were developed to evaluate infrastructure costs. These scenarios illustrate different distributions of growth during the period 1995–2020. Estimates of 1995 population and employment and 2020 projections produced by

**Table 37 Historic Growth and Land Absorption**

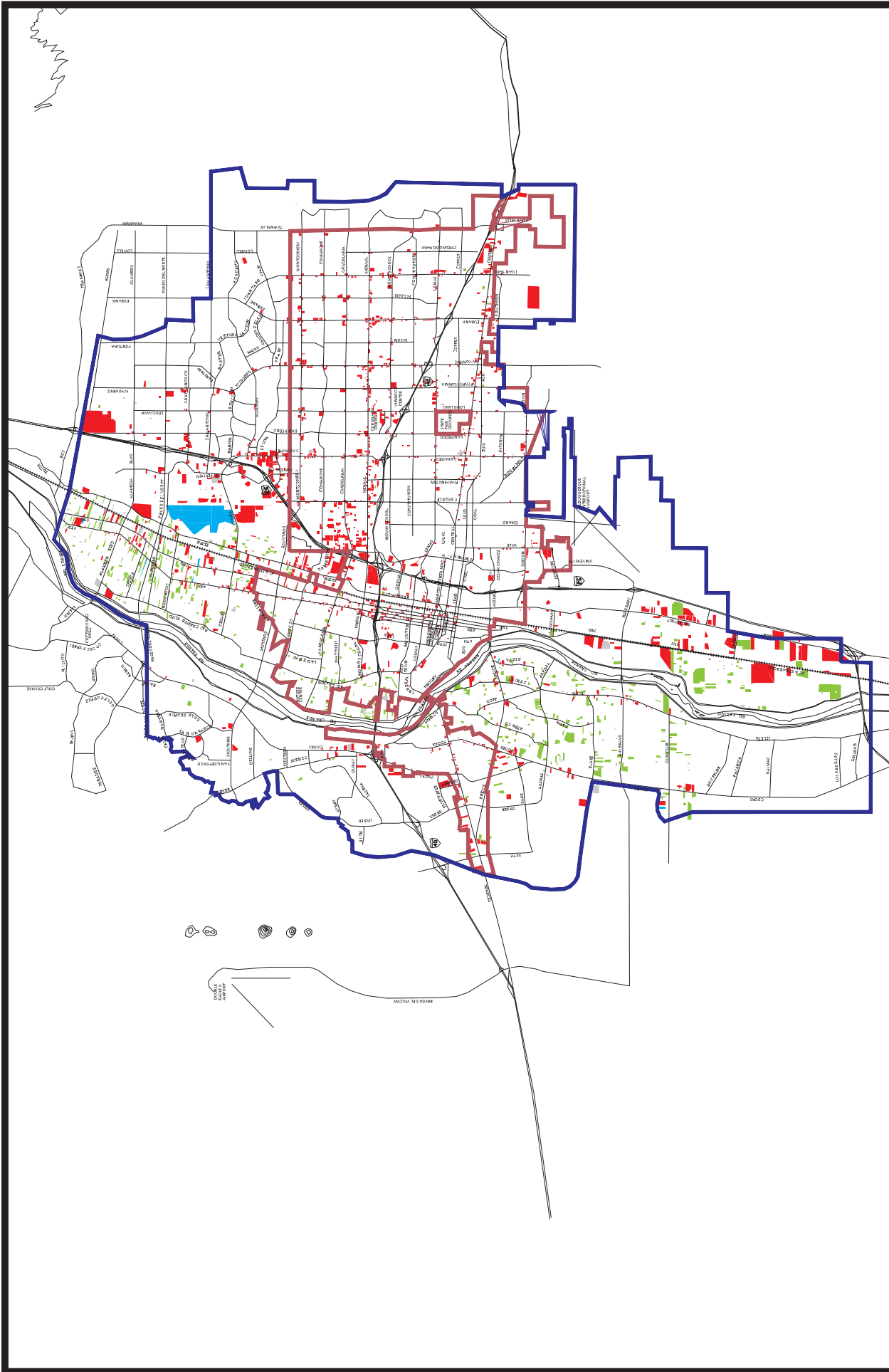
	1990	1995	Growth	Total Land Absorption 1990–1994 (Acres)	Average Land Used per Person (Acres)
<b>Population</b>					
1960 City Boundary	259,783	262,472	2,689	162	.060
Water Service Area	169,685	195,936	26,251	1,702	.065
Outside Water Service Area	36,153	43,687	7,534	841	.112
Total	465,621	502,095	36,474	2,705	.074
<b>Employment</b>					
1960 City Boundary	155,192	184,342	29,150	408	.014
Water Service Area	60,720	86,450	25,730	569	.022
Outside Water Service Area	26,723	29,070	2,347	131	.056
Total	242,635	299,862	57,227	1,108	.019

the MRGCOG provide the total growth in Bernalillo County in all scenarios. These scenarios were developed by an ad hoc committee composed of planners and engineers from City and County agencies. The three scenarios are:

**Trend Scenario.** MRGCOG 2020 projections were assumed to represent current trends. The trend is toward dispersed suburban growth on the West Mesa and at Mesa del Sol. The most significant employment growth is projected for the North I-25 area.

**Downtown Scenario.** This is a modified version of the land use alternative contained in the Transportation Evaluation Study, prepared for the City in 1997, that was designed as a transit-oriented land use pattern. It emphasizes employment growth in three major centers: the central business district, Uptown, and the area surrounding the University of New Mexico. Population growth is more compact than in the Trend Scenario, with a concentration of population growth along key corridors linking the major centers.

**Balanced Scenario.** This scenario was developed in conjunction with County staff. It emphasizes a balance of population and employment east and west of the Rio Grande, with concentrations of population and employment to support transit along two key corridors: (1) Central Avenue from Atrisco Business Park to the New Mexico State Fairgrounds and north on Louisiana Boulevard to Uptown and (2) a north/south corridor along Isleta from Rio Bravo to Bridge, east to 4<sup>th</sup> Street and north to Osuna along 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Population growth is concentrated along these corridors, with a corresponding increase in population-serving employment. More employment is located west of the Rio Grande compared to the Downtown Scenario. Key new employment centers are the Atrisco Business Park, Mesa del Sol, and a redeveloped New Mexico State Fairgrounds site.



**Figure 9**

**Redevelopable Land**

- Residential
- Commercial
- Combination
- Vacant Buildings
- M 1960 City Limits
- M Water Service Area

Scale: 1 inch = 3 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998

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Figures 10–15 (pg.53-63) illustrate differences in the distribution of growth from 1995–2020. See Chapter 3.0 for more information on the three scenarios.

### 2.5.3 Projected Land Absorption

A summary of projected population and employment growth by area is shown in Table 38 (pg. 52). County control totals for 2020 are the same in all projection scenarios. However, the scenarios differ slightly in the amount of growth distributed to the urban area. A higher proportion of growth is projected within the 1960 City Boundary and Water Service Area in the Downtown and Balanced scenarios than in the Trend Scenario.

In the Trend Scenario, very little population increase occurs within the older areas of Albuquerque as defined by the 1960 City Boundary. A population increase of 1,400 is projected under the Trend Scenario. Both the Balanced and Downtown Scenarios assume more infill in older neighborhoods. The Balanced Scenario places an emphasis on balanced employment on both sides of the river and population growth in the Central Avenue and Isleta-4<sup>th</sup> Street corridors. This scenario shows an increase in population of 28,819 within the 1960 City Boundary, and the Downtown Scenario shows a population increase of 16,453 in the 1960 City Boundary.

Within the Water Service Area and outside the 1960 City Boundary, the Trend Scenario projects population growth of 52,836. The Balanced Scenario projects growth of 48,243, and the Downtown Scenario projects growth of 62,369 in this area.

All of the scenarios recognize that some portion of study area growth to 2020 will take place outside of the existing Water Service Area. From 1995–2020, the Trend Scenario projects an increase of 83,468 residents, or 54% of total study area population growth, Outside the Water Service Area. Both the Balanced and Downtown Scenarios project a much more compact urban form, with population growth Outside the Water Service Area of 67,173 (44% of study area population growth) and 61,061 (38% of growth), respectively. As described later in this section, much of the growth outside the City of Albuquerque’s Water Service Area is projected to take place within the service areas of other utilities, principally New Mexico Utilities on the West Side.

The major differences in employment distribution among the scenarios are in the Downtown Scenario, which projects that half of study area employment growth will take place within the 1960 City Boundary. However, both the Balanced and Downtown Scenarios place more employment in areas with existing urban services than the Trend Scenario.

Projected demand for land by area for each scenario is compared to the available developable and redevelopable land supply in Table 39 (pg.66). The total amount of land available in all areas can accommodate projected growth in all scenarios. Residential infill as projected in the Balanced Scenario could be accommodated through higher densities, use of non-residentially zoned land for residential use, or additional redevelopment. As described below, the impact of a 25% more efficient use of land was explored for the Balanced and Downtown Scenarios. Twice the development projected in any of the scenarios could be accommodated in the Water Service Area.

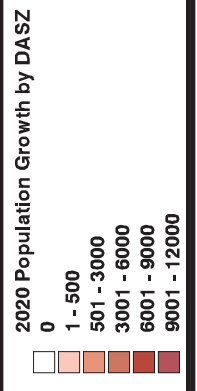
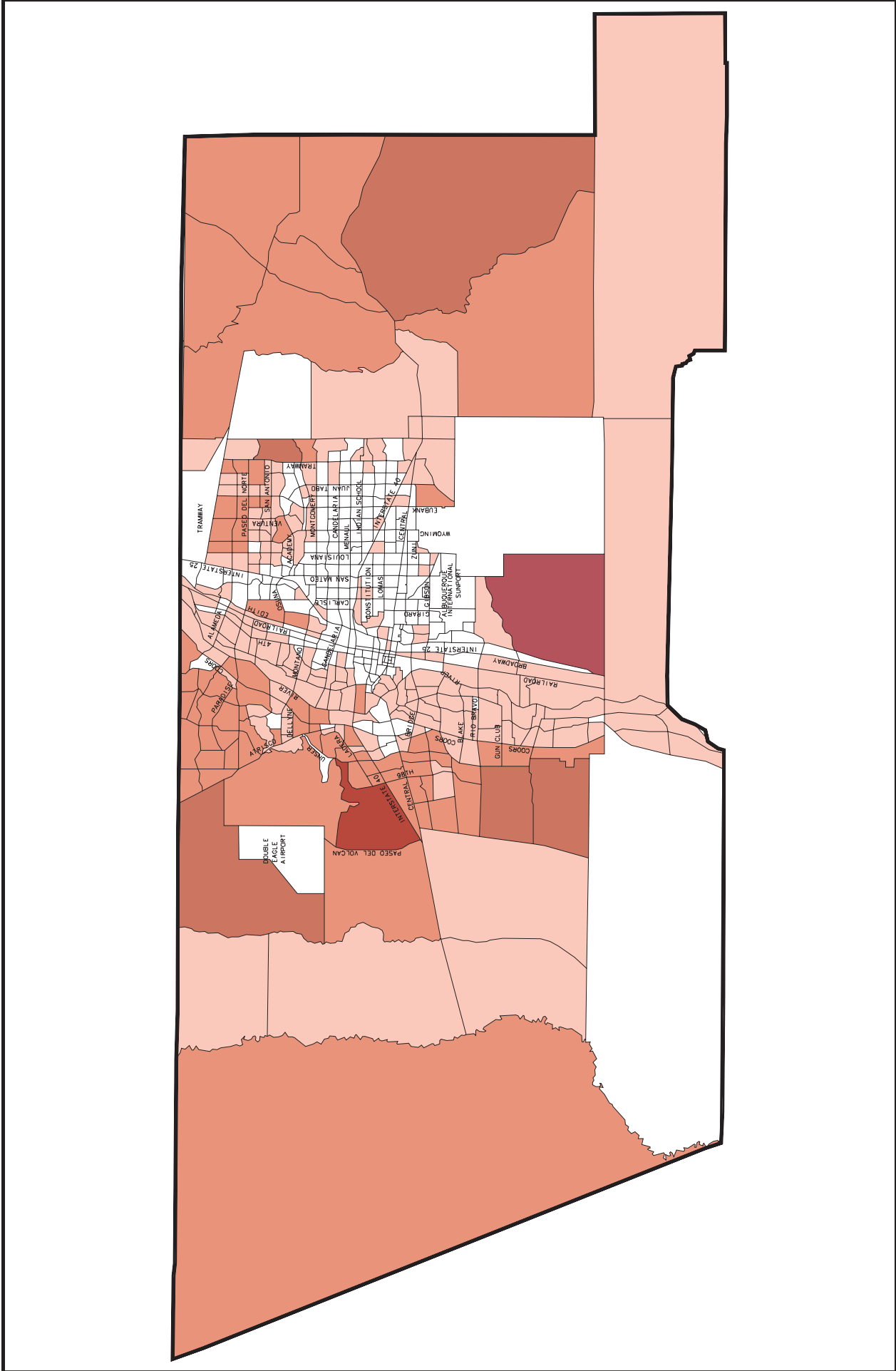
The analysis was done in two ways as shown in Table 39 (pg. 66). The first projection of demand for land does not assume changes in density. For example, all development projected in the 1960 City Boundary is assumed to occur at the same density as during the period from 1990–1995. Differences among the scenarios are the result of more or less development occurring in higher or lower density areas. In the second approach, a 25% more efficient use of land is assumed for residential development, and higher-than-average floor area ratios are assumed in the Downtown Core.

**Table 38 Projected Total Population and Employment by Area**

	<b>Total County</b>	<b>Study Area</b>	<b>1960 City Boundary</b>	<b>Water Service Area</b>	<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>
<b>Population</b>					
1990	480,577	465,621	259,783	169,685	36,153
1995	520,201	502,095	262,472	195,936	43,687
2020	673,734				
Trend		639,808	263,872	248,772	127,165
Balanced		646,330	291,291	244,179	110,860
Downtown		641,978	278,925	258,305	104,748
<b>Employment</b>					
1990	244,307	242,636	155,192	60,720	26,723
1995	302,702	299,862	184,342	86,450	29,070
2020	455,182				
Trend		447,409	230,308	145,962	71,139
Balanced		448,529	232,297	152,255	63,976
Downtown		449,252	259,919	143,053	46,280

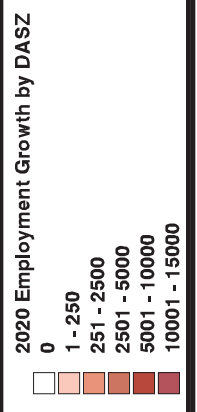
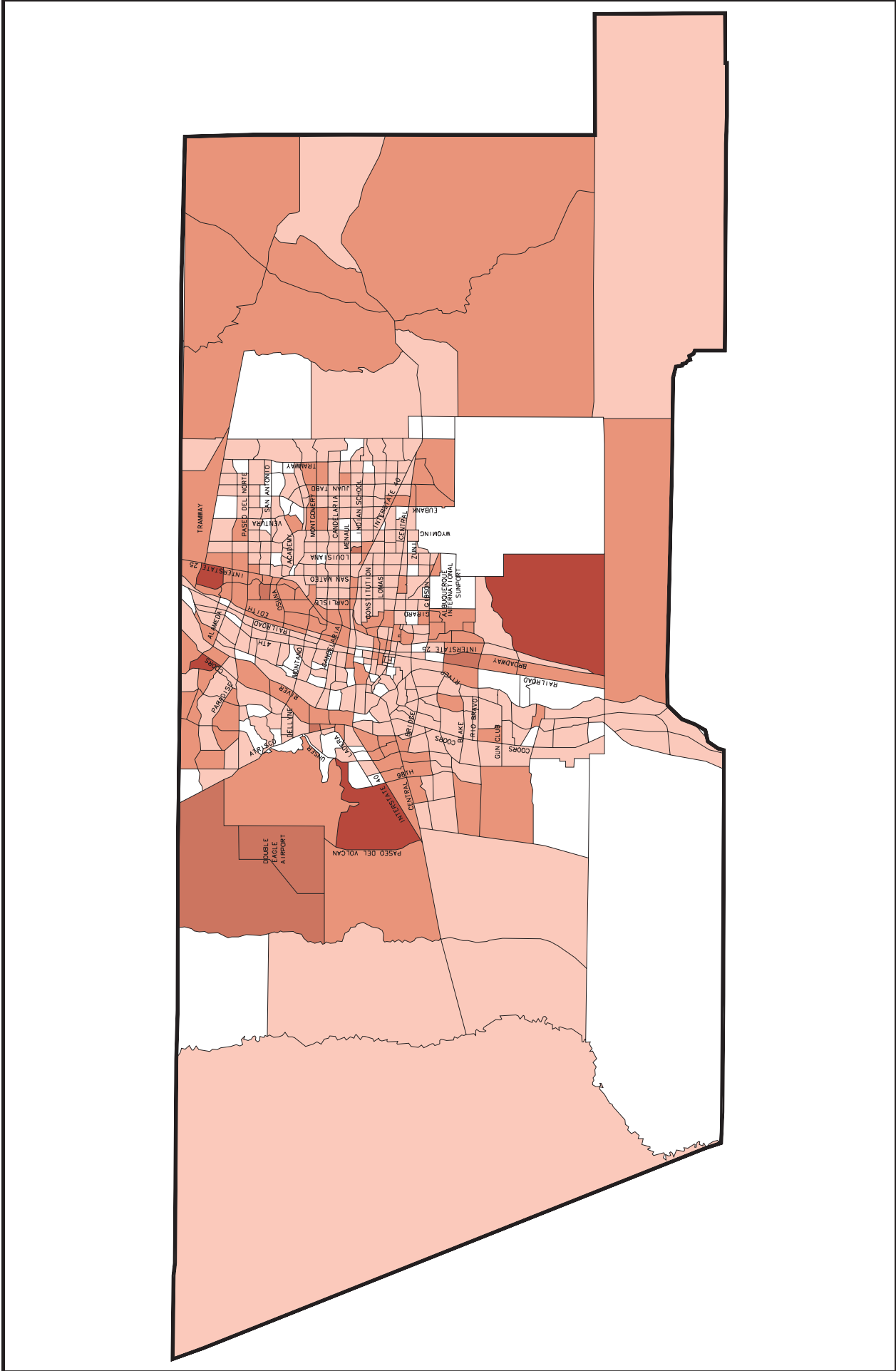
The Balanced and Downtown Scenarios make the assumption of a 25% increase in land use efficiency. This efficiency can be based on two factors. The first is related to the number of persons or employees within large parts of the urban area. Efficiency, in this sense, can be achieved by building in an orderly way from the edge of development and not passing over large tracts of land. Secondly, efficiency also can be achieved by decreasing the lot size and increasing the Floor Area Ratio for non-residential development. The Scenarios assume moderate changes in both approaches. The study did not assume, for example, that there was a shift to a greater percentage of higher density housing, such as townhouses and apartments, being built. The percentages of single family detached, townhouses, and apartments followed past patterns.

This approach is based on the following. First, a compact urban form is supported by adopted City/County Comprehensive Plan policy that is more conservative in its impact on the environment, intrinsically more efficient, encourages sociability and the formation of community, and supports an effective public transit system and the use of other alternative modes of transportation.



**Figure 10**  
**Projected Population Growth by DASZ, 1995 to 2020**  
**Trend Scenario**

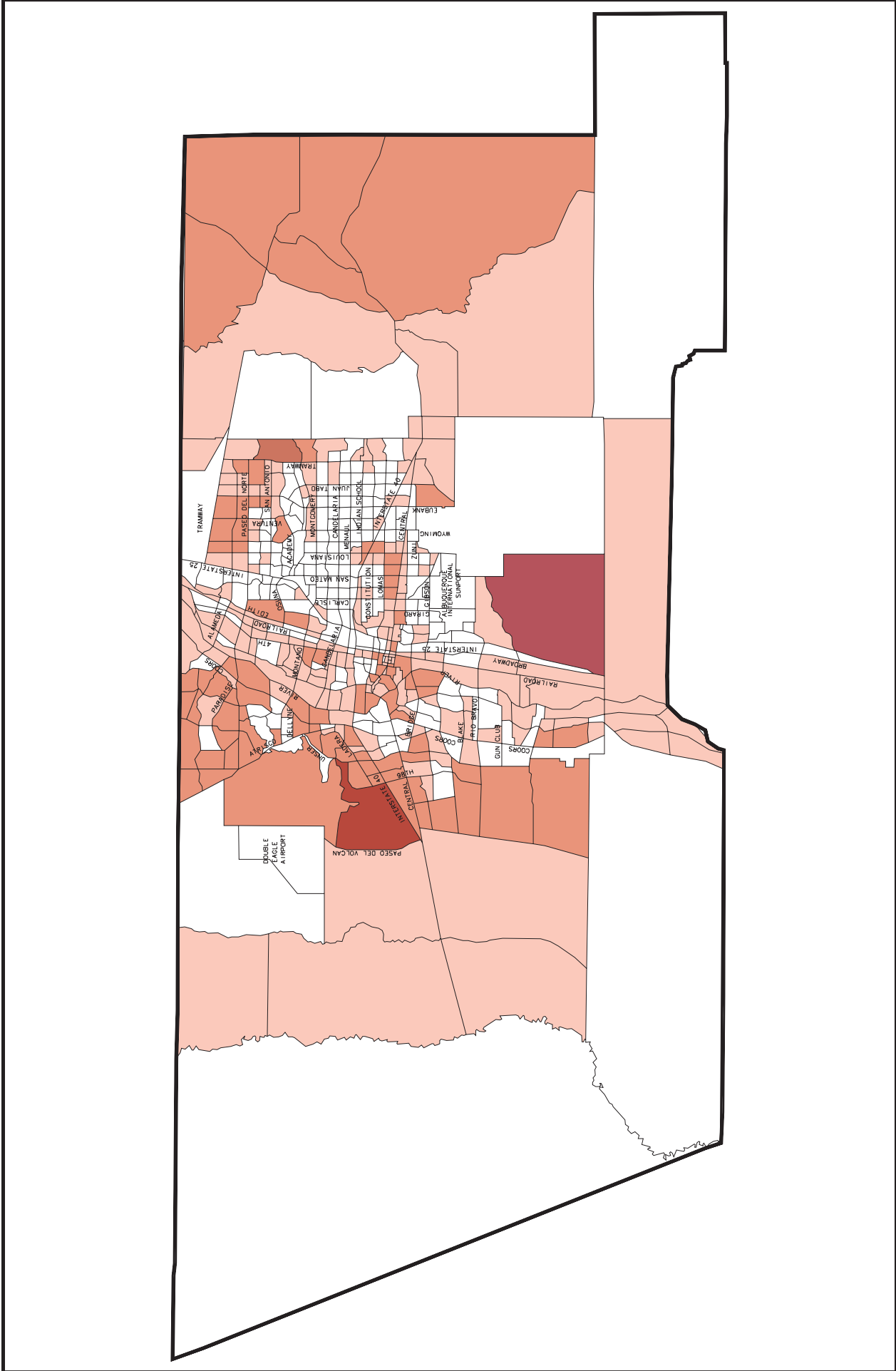
Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



**Figure 11**  
**Projected Employment Growth by DASZ, 1995 to 2020**  
**Trend Scenario**

Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles

Map Printed November 30, 1998



2020 Population Growth by DASZ

- 0
- 1 - 500
- 501 - 3000
- 3001 - 6000
- 6001 - 9000
- 9001 - 21000



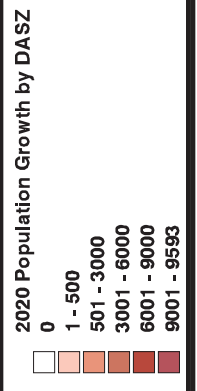
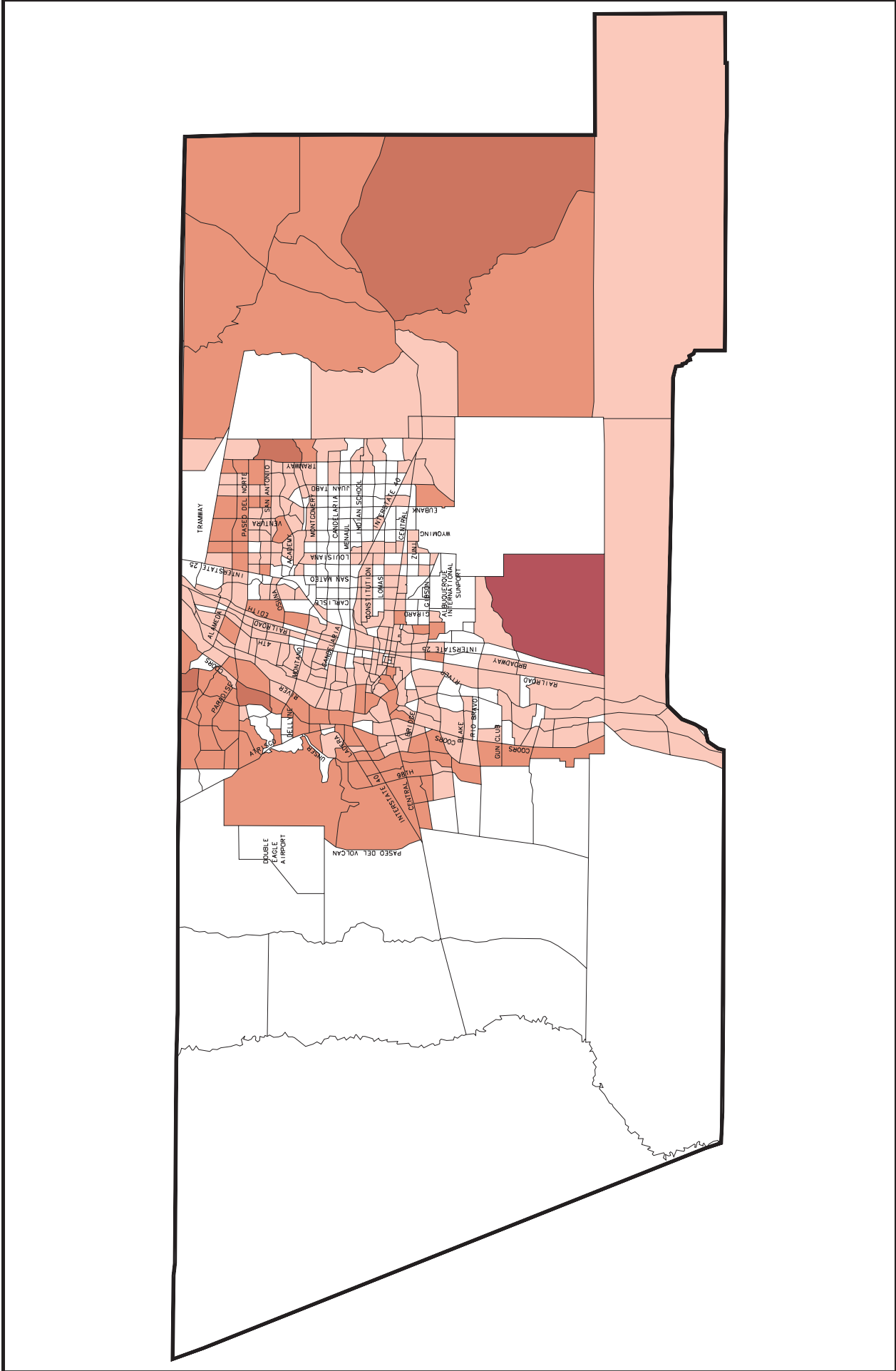
Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles

Map Printed November 30, 1998

**Figure 12**  
**Projected Population Growth by DASZ, 1995 to 2020**  
**Balanced Scenario**

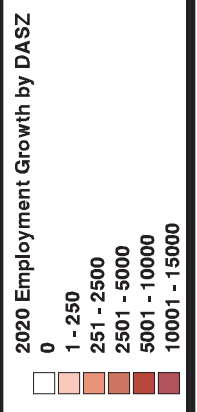
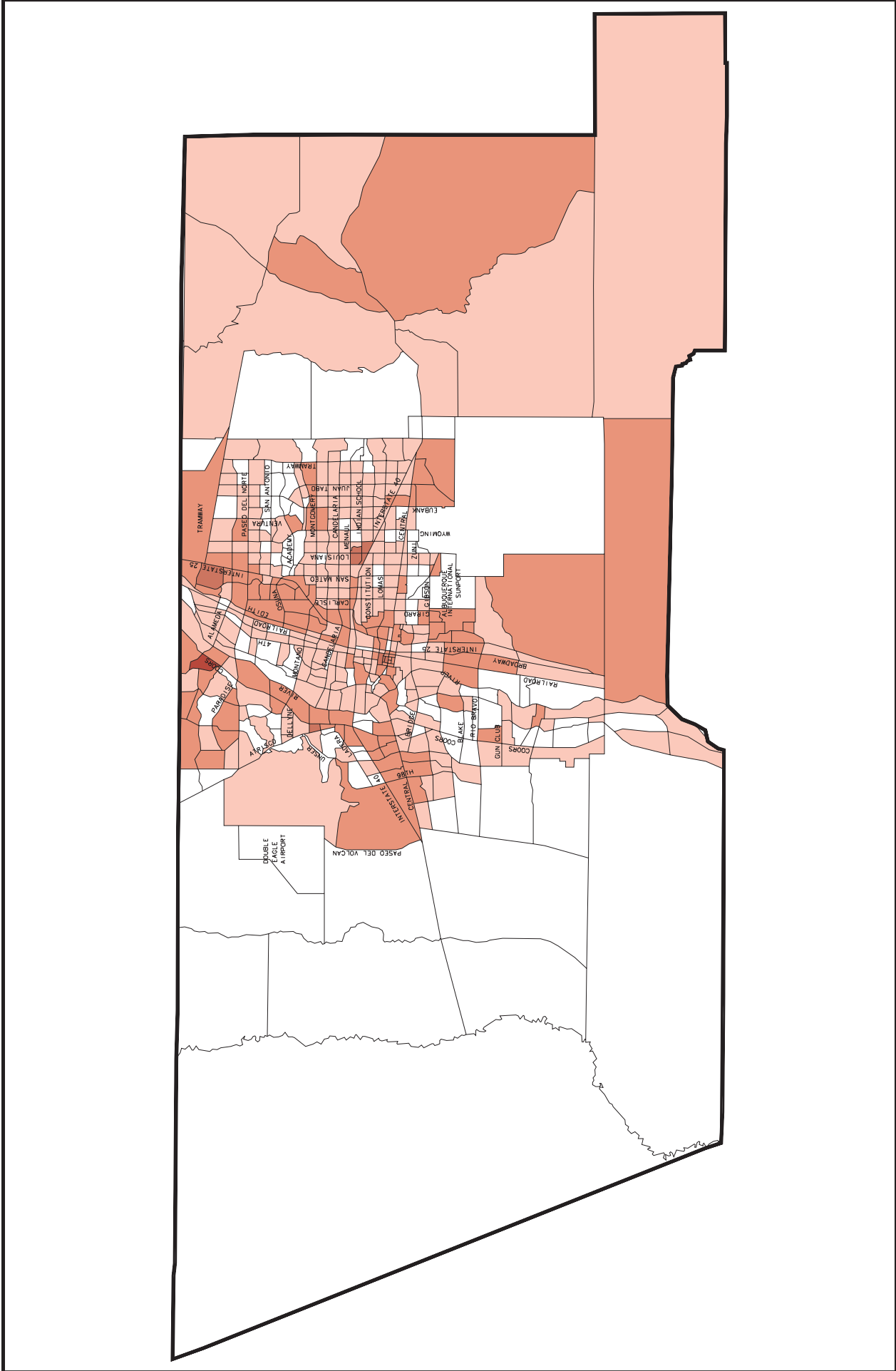






**Figure 14**  
**Projected Population Growth by DASZ, 1995 to 2020**  
**Downtown Scenario**

Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998



Scale: 1 inch = 6 miles  
 Map Printed November 30, 1998

**Figure 15**  
**Projected Employment Growth by DASZ, 1995 to 2020**  
**Downtown Scenario**

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Second, land prices can be affected by a number of factors that often work in combination, including the desirability of the location, the relative supply of available land, the economic condition of the community, the pace of growth, and so on. If implementation of a growth strategy for the region effectively did result, however incidentally, in an increase in land prices per acre, some or all of this increase in price would result in smaller lots or the need for higher floor area ratios for commercial development. Developers would have incentives to reduce lot sizes to keep final costs down and to maintain market demand.

Third, competitive market forces lead to innovation in land planning and development practices. Land planners would innovate in ways to use land more efficiently as they lay out subdivisions, in response to public guidelines and requirements. Through better design, reductions in lot sizes might fully offset increased costs, affording opportunities for greater profits.

Both these forces are already at work in the Albuquerque market today without an urban growth strategy, as witnessed by smaller lot sizes in the newer Northeast Heights subdivisions.

In the analysis with no change in density, the Downtown Scenario reduces the demand for land by about 2,000 acres over the 25-year period. The Balanced Scenario reduces the demand for land by about 1,000 acres. In the second analysis, total land consumption dropped by approximately 4,000 acres in the Balanced Scenario and 5,000 acres in the Downtown Scenario.

Enough land is available within the Water Service Area to accommodate all growth projected to 2020. However, because of location, lot size, ownership, and other land characteristics, all vacant and redevelopable land may not be suitable or available for development when needed. An aggressive infill policy could improve the potential for growth to occur in areas already served by infrastructure. In the 1960 City Boundary, some commercially zoned or mixed-use parcels would be redeveloped for residential use.

The analysis also looks at land supply and demand by Community Planning Area for a more specific analysis by geographic area. Table 40 (pg.64) shows projected demand for land based on projected growth and current average densities for both residential and non-residential development. All areas have an adequate land supply to accommodate projected growth at current densities. Land use efficiencies in the alternative scenarios could produce an even more compact development pattern, with little impact on neighborhood quality.

Findings of the analysis are as follows:

- Vacant and redevelopable land within the Water Service Area as defined in this Part 1 – Findings Report can accommodate more growth than would occur under any of the three scenarios over the next 20 years.
- Occupancy of existing vacant space, additional redevelopment, or higher density new development will enable existing areas to accommodate more development than shown in the analysis. For example, under the Downtown Scenario, higher density non-residential development and absorption of existing underutilized

**Table 39 Projected Demand for Land, 1995–2020**

	Residential				Non-residential and Other*			
	Land Supply	Trend	Balanced	Down-town	Land Supply	Trend	Balanced	Down-town
<b>Current Densities</b>								
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>								
Demand (acres)		84	1,736	991		644	671	1,058
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	937				1,303			
Redevelopable Land	137				1,384			
Total supply	1,074				2,687			
<b>Water Service Area</b>								
Demand (acres)		3,434	3,136	4,054		1,309	1,448	1,245
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	7,712				4,520			
Redevelopable Land	1,351				2,645			
Total Supply	9,063				7,165			
<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>								
Demand (acres)		9,350	7,523	6,839		2,356	1,955	964
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	65,113				12,312			
Redevelopable Land	NA				NA			
<b>Total Study Area</b>								
Demand (acres)		12,868	12,395	11,884		4,309	4,074	3,267
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	73,762				18,135			
Redevelopable Land	1,488				4,029			
Total supply	75,250				22,164			
<b>25% More Efficient Land Use</b>								
<b>1960 City Boundary</b>								
Demand (acres)			1,389	793			537	846
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	937				1,303			
Redevelopable Land	137				1,384			
Total supply	1,074				2,687			
<b>Water Service Area</b>								
Demand (acres)			2,509	3,243			1,158	996
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	7,712				4,520			
Redevelopable Land	1,351				2,645			
Total supply	9,063				7,165			
<b>Outside Water Service Area</b>								
Demand (acres)			6,019	5,471			1,564	771
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	65,113				12,312			
Redevelopable Land	NA				NA			
<b>Total Study Area</b>								
Demand (acres)			9,917	9,507			3,259	2,613
Supply (acres)								
Vacant Land	73,762				18,135			
Redevelopable Land	1,488				4,029			
Total supply	75,250				22,164			

Land supply from Tables 30 and 34.

\* Other includes mixed-use properties and vacant buildings.

space will meet the demand for land in the Central Business District.

- Land holdings, recent annexations and plans for Westland, Mesa del Sol, and Quail Ranch planned communities contain an inventory of vacant land equivalent to more than 50 years' demand in these market areas, even in the Trend Scenario. (In other words, they will absorb demand from other parts of the region, to build out more quickly.) The total inventory of vacant land Outside the Water Service Area is the equivalent of well in excess of twenty years of City and County land consumption. Twenty years' supply is the standard used, for example, in the state of Oregon as appropriate for urban areas, and it is used in other community plans across the country as well. Phasing of urban services to the master planned communities proposed for these properties must be planned carefully.
- Public policies that encourage investment in established areas and discourage disinvestment are critical to realization of the vision of a compact urban area as envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Evaluation Study.

**Table 40 Projected Demand for Land by Community Planning Area, 1995–2020**

CPA	Land Supply		Total Demand for Land				
			Current Densities			25% More Efficient Use of Land	
	Vacant Land	Land	Trend	Balanced	Downtown	Balanced	Downtown
Central Abq.	337	111	82	187	362	150	290
E Gateway	867	251	337	311	340	249	272
Foothills	672	58	613	588	620	470	496
Mid-Heights	326	680	106	152	163	122	130
N Albuquerque	2,693	315	2,147	1,892	2,351	1,514	1,881
N Valley	2,415	2,143	2,674	3,253	3,335	2,602	2,668
Near Heights	894	277	235	340	321	272	257
S Valley	3,196	1,727	959	1,913	930	1,530	744
SW Mesa	15,438	322	1,756	2,317	1,328	1,854	1,062
W Side	8,685	322	5,899	4,600	5,639	3,680	4,511
NE Outside	132	0	28	26	28	26	28
SE Outside	9,485	0	1,177	2,078	716	1,663	573
SW Outside	20,640	0	7	1	0	1	0
NW Outside	26,117	0	860	102	0	82	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,897</b>	<b>6,206</b>	<b>16,880</b>	<b>17,760</b>	<b>16,133</b>	<b>14,215</b>	<b>12,912</b>

\* Surplus or deficit is for vacant land only. Redevelopable land supply provides additional opportunity to accommodate growth.

