City of Las Cruces

Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan

Adopted: May 6, 1996

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Acknowledgements

In the preparation of this document, the dedication, enthusiasm, and cooperation of all contributors was greatly appreciated. Throughout the document's creation, Mr. Edward Southworth, a very dedicated and compassionate member of the group, was lost to cancer.

Mr. Southworth will always be remembered for the leadership, professionalism, compassion, and true love that he felt for the Town of Mesilla, City of Las Cruces, and the surrounding area. It was through his insight, vision and genuine concern for the entire community that this Plan was created. Mr. Southworth will always be remembered in the hearts of those that were blessed to have known him. Although he will be sorely missed, his spirit will live on, forever instilled in the achievements accomplished for the benefit of all.

Introduction

Purpose

During the past ten years, Avenida de Mesilla has witnessed new development and land use changes which have generated concerns from citizens within the Town of Mesilla and the City of Las Cruces alike. Sensitivity to the "gateway", the entrance into either community having specific aesthetic appeal and/or design characteristics, has become an increasingly prominent issue given its importance at providing direct ingress/egress to the historically significant Town of Mesilla. The Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan is intended to provide guidance in future decisions regarding zoning, land use, urban design, transportation, and enforcement of related issues. It will focus on utilizing existing policy and regulations as a foundation onto which, additional requirements will be placed in order to address specific concerns along the Gateway. Thus, the Plan itself will serve as a document from which an overlay district will be created for regulatory application. The intent of the Plan is also to create a gateway which promotes an aesthetically pleasing yet functional environment in which citizens from both communities can interact socially, where the business community can exist in a commercially viable environment, and where both endeavors can co-exist with little or no conflict with one another.

The Plan is intended to be accepted and applied equally by the City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla. The creation of the Plan and the application of its goals and policies is a clear indication of the commitment by both entities of how each wishes to enhance, develop, and preserve the character of this important gateway.

Process

The Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan is the cumulation of several months of gathering input from the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan Committee, a committee of eight which was jointly formed by the City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla. Following several meetings wherein input was solicited and obtained from the committee, a decision was made to follow a format similar in nature to that of the University Avenue Corridor Plan; a plan which addresses similar design and land use issues. Research was conducted on the study area to ascertain information regarding its past and present status, and trends which would help determine its future.

Additionally, other corridor documents and reports were researched which, when all combined, allowed for the creation of a Plan draft which was then presented to the Planning and Zoning Commissions of both communities. It was at this point that the community was afforded an opportunity to review, discuss, and provide input on the Plan. Following further modification, the draft was then processed to the Las Cruces City Council and the Town of Mesilla Trustees for their review and consideration.

Framework

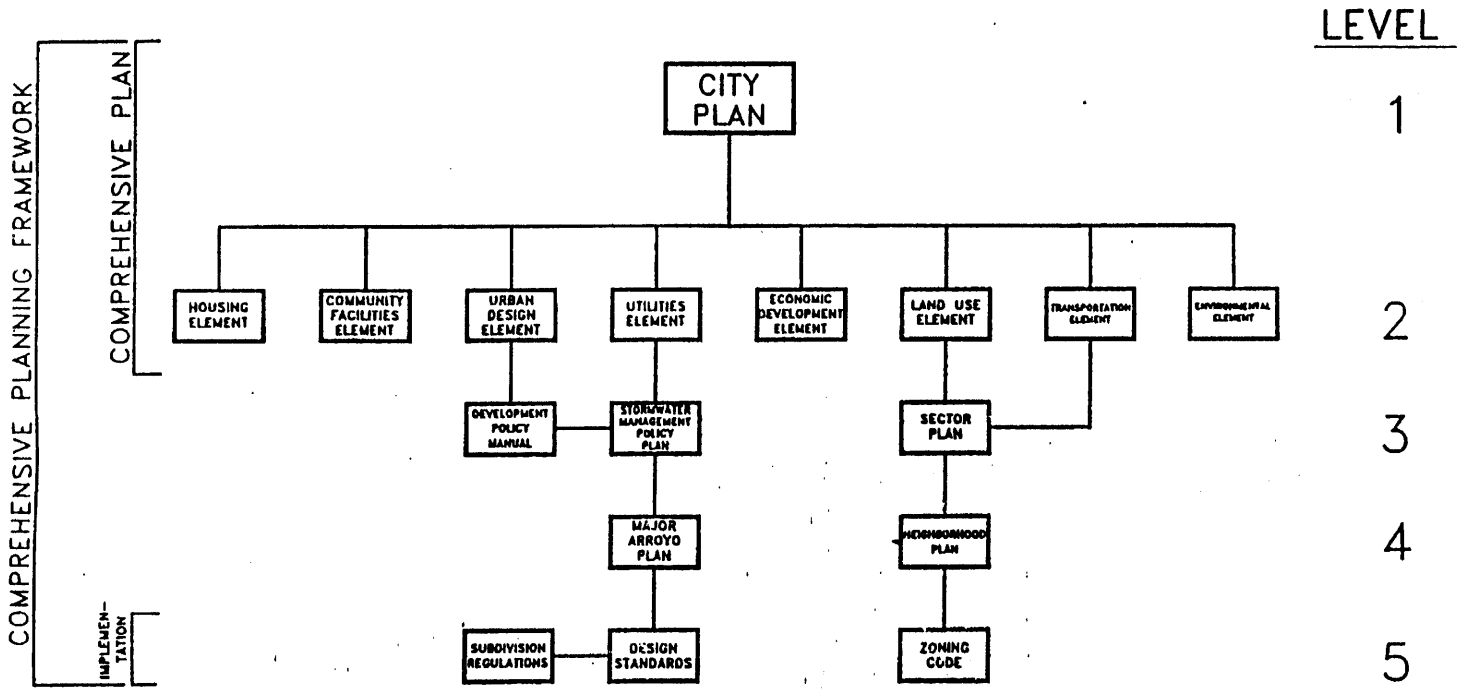
The Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan is an area-specific comprehensive plan, representing a fourth level plan under the City Comprehensive Planning Framework (Exhibit 1). Though incorporating urban design, land use, and transportation elements, the Plan will be classified as a gateway plan under the Land Use Element of the City Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Elements

The Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan is comprised of five main elements:

Study Area Information:	Location, History, Planning Background, Demographics, Current Issues.
Plan Concepts:	Concept Statements, Guiding Policies, Relation to the Las Cruces City Plan.
Intergovernmental Coordination:	Coordination of municipal and township governments and other entities.
Goals and Objectives:	Planning Goal, Objective, and Policy Recommendations related to Zoning/Land Use, Urban Design, Transportation, and Enforcement of Gateway Standards.
Implementation:	Program recommendations for implementation of the Plan.

Exhibit 1. Comprehensive Planning Framework



Study Area Information

Location

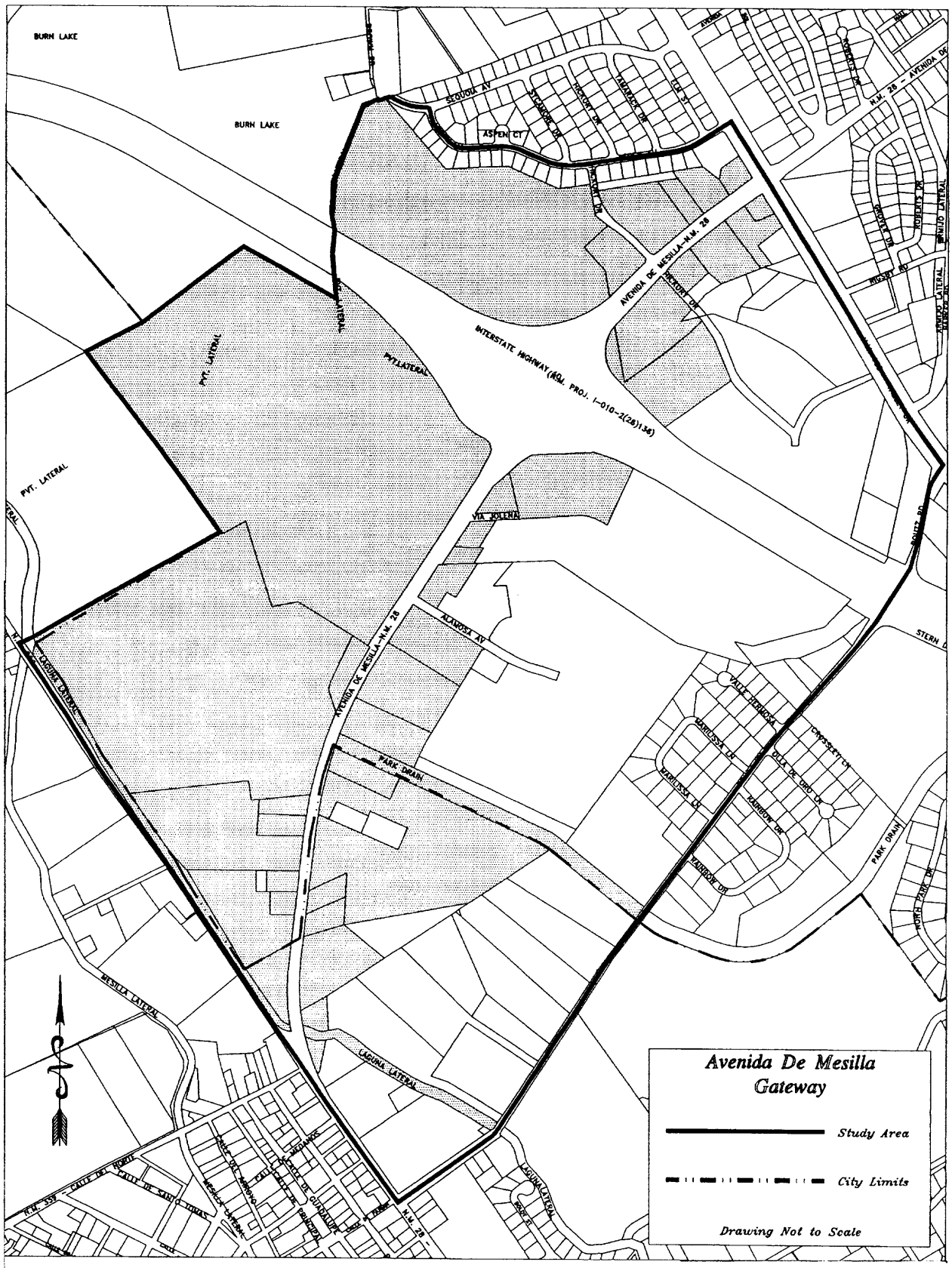
Avenida de Mesilla is a major east-west route linking the Town of Mesilla with the City of Las Cruces. Its location is generally on the west side of Las Cruces and lies between Main St. (east) to Calle de El Paso (west). For purposes of our study area, Avenida de Mesilla was limited to that segment between Valley Drive and Calle de El Paso on a east-west orientation and the Mesilla Lateral and Boutz Road on a north-south orientation. Later, an overlay was created incorporating those properties having frontage directly on Avenida de Mesilla and represents our gateway overlay. Planning activities will focus on both sides of this thoroughfare.

History

According to *A City Plan For Las Cruces New Mexico - Summary and Conclusions 1955*[1], Avenida de Mesilla was first described as a "Farm to Market Road"; that is, a road connecting a city's central business district to its trade territory. The land adjacent to the road through the late fifties consisted of generally large tracts of land predominately agricultural in nature. On August 8, 1956, the City of Las Cruces annexed via the South City Annexation, approximately 1,123 acres of land. This area encompasses a majority of the study area/gateway. The Town of Mesilla annexed the remaining portion of that land which lies within the study area/gateway boundary.

Development patterns along the Gateway show a clear trend of the areas transformation from a predominately agricultural gateway to more of a commercial environment. The land use conversion process has been slow; however, the shift became most evident during the last decade. Presently, development along the Gateway continues to occur and the commercial land use pattern has become more prevalent than any other land use in the area.

As a result of the land use transformation, and a greater reliance on Avenida de Mesilla for connectivity between Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla, substantial improvements to Avenida de Mesilla were made by the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department beginning in the early 1970's. These road improvements played a major role in further establishing the Gateway as a prominent location having prime development potential. With its increased prominence, traffic volumes along the thoroughfare have substantially increased from 4,105 (segment between Calle de El Paso and I-10) and 4,342 (segment between I-10 to Valley Drive) AADT in 1969 to 8,008 and 11,720 AADT respectively in 1993.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PARK DRAIN
VALLE VERDOSA
RAINBOW DR
MESILLA LATERAL
LAGUNA LATERAL
CALLE DEL NORTE
N.M. 28
Avenida De Mesilla
Gateway
Study Area
City Limits
Drawing Not to Scale

Planning Background

To date, there have been no City or Town comprehensive plans written specifically for the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway area. There are, however, city and town-wide comprehensive plans which address land use, urban design, transportation, and other related issues. These plans address the Gateway area on a macro scale, yet, do very little in terms of addressing specific area needs.

Due to growing demands for a more focused, area-specific planning process, the City began to produce plans directed toward smaller geographic areas such as neighborhoods, sectors, and corridors. One of the first attempts to create such a plan, which addressed various issues, unique to its area, was the University Avenue Corridor Plan. The University Avenue Corridor Plan which was adopted on October 21, 1991, established the general framework from which this plan will be based. *The Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plan*[2] and the *Bicycle Facilities And System Master Plan*[3] (pending approval) address bicycle planning throughout Las Cruces and its five mile extra-territorial jurisdiction. This plan, designates Avenida de Mesilla as a roadway, wherein a "Planned Bicycle Facility" is proposed.

Current Issues

As a result of growing interest in the Gateway, as illustrated in recent development proposals, it has become increasingly important to begin planning efforts along Avenida de Mesilla in order to ensure that the area retains its character as a gateway into the City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla. Given the Gateway's history and the role it has in maintaining the delicate balance between the current urban, rural, and historical settings, specific policies which maintain its significance are now required.

Since the early seventies, the Town of Mesilla became keenly aware of "urban" development encroaching toward the Town's perimeter. It was generally felt that the fallout from this development may adversely impact the rural and historical character of the Town. In order to prepare for inevitable growth along and within their own boundary, the Town developed and adopted a master plan which established seven zoning districts. Today, the Town is careful in its review and handling of development proposals within its town limits. Additionally, the Town has become genuinely interested in development proposals outside their jurisdiction and along the gateways leading into their community. No greater example of this exists than the concern which was exhibited over the recent rezoning and development proposals along Avenida de Mesilla. The concern with those cases focused on whether the proposal as presented, adversely impacted the gateway setting and the urban to rural transition between Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla. Typical development allowed by right through existing ordinances would have allowed a variety of land uses which many felt were inappropriate for the area.

The City of Las Cruces also recognized that impacts caused from "inappropriate" development within the Gateway area may be detrimental to the overall Gateway character. One concern which exists in terms of development along the Gateway is that the 1981 City of Las Cruces Zoning Code,

as amended, has no specific language addressing development along "sensitive corridors or gateways"; a deficiency contrary to what is stated in the City of Las Cruces 1985 Comprehensive Plan. Another concern is that the current Zoning Code is limited in establishing urban design criteria and mitigation strategies which, if more thoroughly applied, may have been more successful in responding to a development proposal's potential impacts on adjacent properties.

Acknowledging specific shortcomings in the Zoning Code, both the City and Town felt that a different approach toward planning along the Gateway needed to take place; one which would recognize specific needs of the Gateway and establish itself as an urban design-driven planning effort.

Development along the Gateway has established a mixed retail and service character with residential uses becoming more prominent. Generally speaking, the mix of uses may not seem to pose any threat to the character of the Gateway; however, in consideration of the recent uses which have been developed and/or expanded, careful reconsideration of this point should be made. Input from concerned citizens on this matter would indicate that the majority of uses along the Gateway are not appropriate for the area. The concern is that these uses do not lend credence to the Gateway concept and do not add to the aesthetic appeal that a gateway serving a transitional role from urban to rural development should provide. Figures 2 and 3 provide current information regarding land use and zoning within the study area and along the Gateway overlay.

Figure 2.

Existing Land Use Map

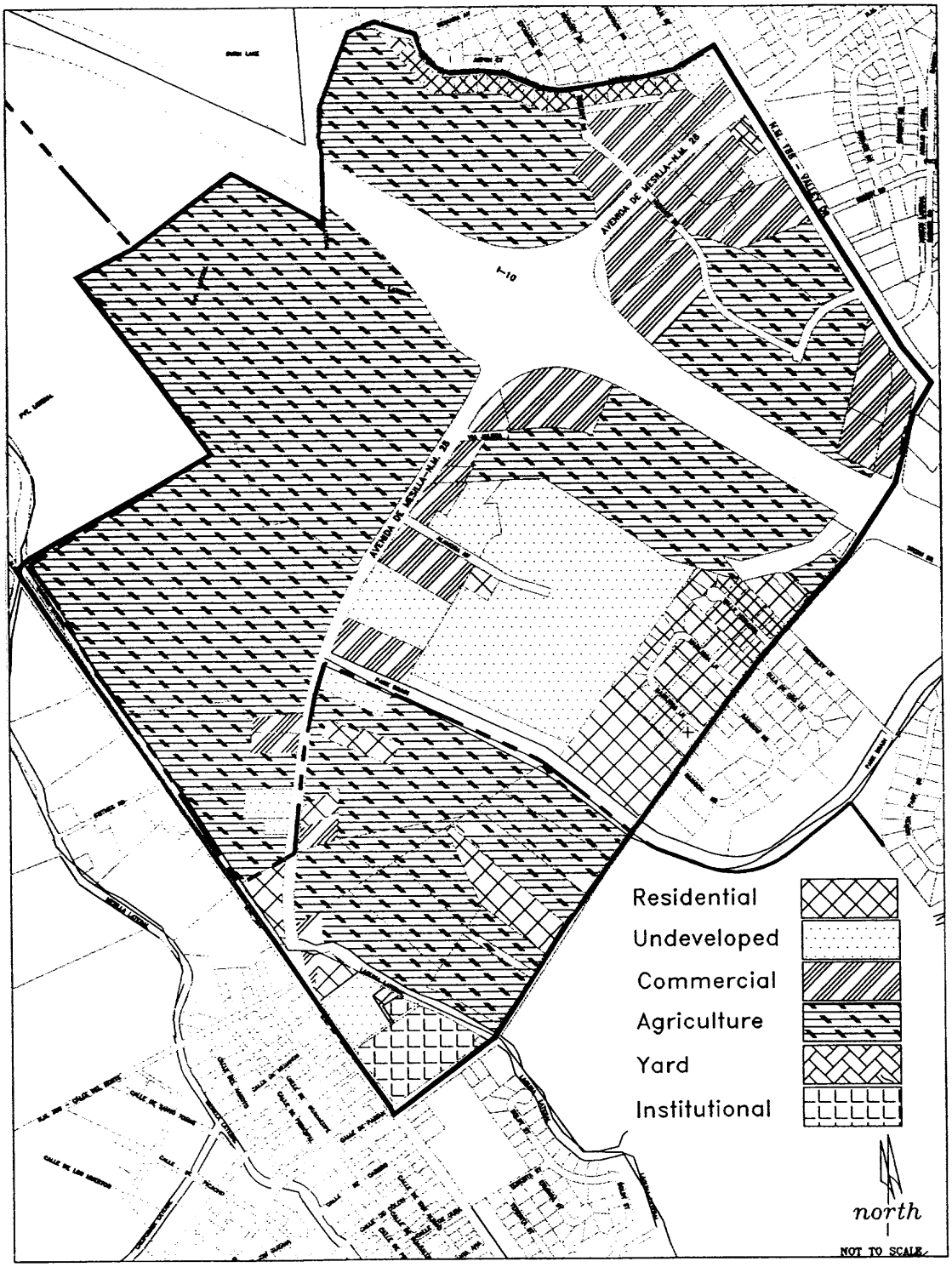
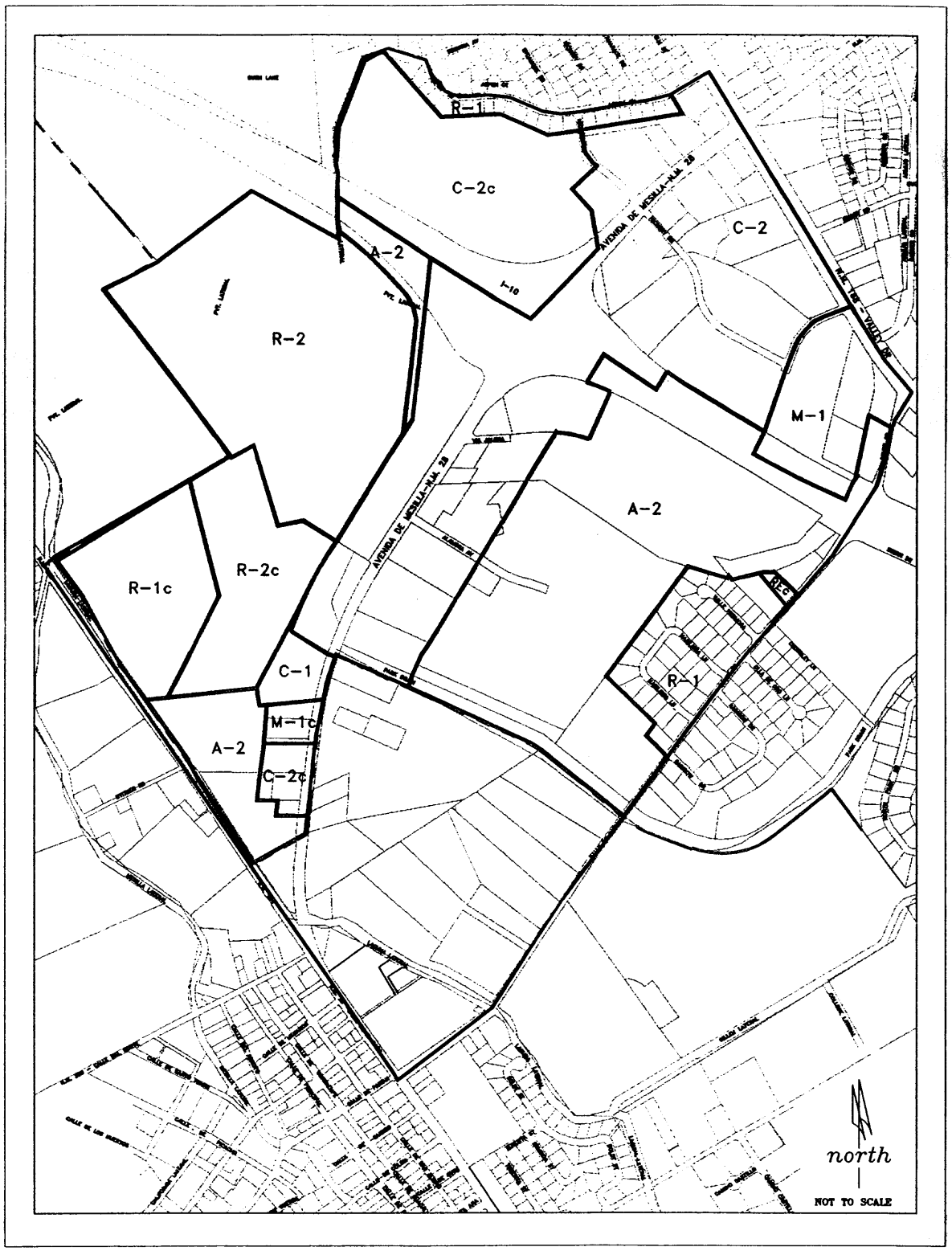


Figure 3.

Existing Zoning Map



Plan Concept

Concept Statement

Concerns for new and existing development and the preservation of a fully functional, social, and business environment, where people can interact cohesively within a delicate, transitional and historical setting, illustrates the need for a high-quality, well-maintained gateway. Thus, the Plan Concept for the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan is to create an aesthetically pleasing, unified environment, sensitive to existing and future development through the application of flexible design-oriented development policies and standards.

Guiding Policies

The following are general guiding policies for zoning/land use, urban design, and transportation planning for the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway.

Zoning/Land Use:

In consideration of zoning and land uses, attention will be focused specifically on those uses which are considered "inappropriate" for the Gateway. Rather than create a permitted use - no conditions, permitted use - with conditions, and special use list for the Gateway, the Plan seeks to utilize existing (underlying) zones and their associated uses with limited modification, for the determination of allowable uses. Generally speaking, variety in retail, service, and residential uses are encouraged. It is the intent of this Plan to establish uses within the Gateway which are sensitive to the needs of the resident, visitor, and consumer without allowing uses which may through their design, character, scale, or market orientation, disrupt overall compatibility due to intensity or purpose. Issues to consider when determining Gateway compatibility include, but may not be limited to, excessive noise, vibration, odor, dust, and glare.

In terms of consumer oriented uses, greater emphasis is placed on the personalized retail and service uses, which through their character, may serve as an attraction itself; and, therefore, enhance one's visit to the Gateway. Conversely, the Plan de-emphasizes industrial uses and those service uses which are impersonal in their orientation and which may otherwise detract from the overall Gateway character. Uses which involve outdoor storage or display and which become a visual distraction due to "clutter" are prohibited.

Urban Design:

Architecture, landscaping, site design, signage, utility standards, and the streetscape shall be considered as urban design standards.

Architecture

Architecture along the Gateway shall adhere and be compatible to the extent possible with architectural styles generally found within the Town of Mesilla and those which have historical significance within southwest New Mexico.

Landscaping

Standards for landscaping on properties adjacent to this right-of-way should be established. A landscaping theme consistent with the agricultural atmosphere associated with the valley area should be established. Efforts should be made to ensure landscape compatibility with landscaping installed within the right-of-way and on private property.

Site Design

Site design elements should be carefully integrated into developments in order to mitigate potential impacts to adjacent properties and the views from the Gateway right-of-way. Standards for the treatment of parking lots, dumpster locations, light standards, and landscaping elements should be considered in order to achieve this.

Signage

Signage should adhere to the extent possible to the architectural styles established for the Gateway. Standards closely resembling the Town of Mesilla, as they relate to treatment, materials, height, color, etc., are proposed to further convey a unified gateway theme. Standards where applicable will also reference established City provisions. Greater emphasis in creating "appropriate" signage will be focused along the front portion of each lot. Greater variety in sign standards will be allowed toward the rear of each lot.

Utilities

Although utilities along the Gateway are currently under ground, policy further supporting this concept will be provided.

Streetscape

A streetscape concept plan should be established which incorporates and addresses elements such as street furniture, landscaping, sidewalk surfacing, and lighting within the right-of-way. Development of a streetscape will help efforts in creating a unified, cohesive, and aesthetically pleasing Gateway.

Transportation:

The Avenida de Mesilla Gateway has a potentially unique opportunity to integrate pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle transportation modes all along the Gateway. In addressing this integration, it has been determined that opinions vary regarding strategies which seek to establish and/or coordinate the transportation modes in a manner which promotes and becomes conducive to "cross street interaction"; that is, facilitating easy accessibility to both sides of the Gateway for visitors, tourists, and others in a safe fashion, through the placement of greater design emphasis on the pedestrian component and less on through automobile traffic. Due to transportation issues such as street classification, right-of-way widths, etc. which have a very long history and which have already been established throughout the Gateway, oportunities for creating an environment conducive to "cross-street interaction" are limited. Future investigation into this design issue should be considered if warranted. Regardless of the current situation, with existing/proposed hotel/motel sites, the tourist attraction that Mesilla and many retail/service establishments along the Gateway offer, and the future possibilities involving bike paths, this Plan must ensure that all modes of transportation are duly considered in order to avoid any transportation mode conflicts which may occur. Although sidewalks are established along the Gateway, the decorative theme involving sidewalk surfacing and lighting, recently completed in Mesilla, should be carried out along the entire Gateway in order to enhance pedestrianism. Strong possibilities exist for future bus service along the Gateway to the Town of Mesilla. If future demand requires such service, mass transit should be supported and bus pull off lanes which allow buses to more efficiently avoid traffic conflicts should be established where appropriate, and if/when necessary. Parking lots and provisions for their use should be carefully considered to minimize overall required paving area and should incorporate urban design elements such as landscaping and lighting standards to soften their overall impact. Ingress/egress points to parking lots should also be minimized to further reduce transportation mode conflicts. Parking areas and associated facilities for bicycles should be located in appropriate areas which do not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular movement.

Enforcement of Area Standards:

For enforcement purposes, reliance on existing ordinances, a proposed Gateway ordinance, and reference documentation should be encouraged in order to expedite to the extent possible, development or redevelopment proposals. Focus on specific ordinance language incorporating the goals, objectives, and policies of this plan will be made in order to establish all applicable provisions which will apply within the Gateway. In this fashion, developers within the Gateway will know up front what is expected of their development without having to go through a formal design review committee. Language establishing the respective Planning and Zoning Commission as the initial appeals board should be established.

Las Cruces City Plan

This document, which is pending formal adoption, will illustrate in broad terms the standard of living to be established in the City of Las Cruces. The City Plan will serve as the conceptual policy foundation for all City comprehensive planning. The basic concepts of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan concept shall be consistent with the City Plan.

Intergovernmental Coordination

The City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla have worked closely throughout the planning process for this Plan. It should be noted that membership for the committee, which is primarily responsible for the creation of this Plan, had equal representation, and their input was provided with substantial focus on the Gateway as a whole. The Plan itself is intended to be used by both the Town of Mesilla and the City of Las Cruces for further implementation efforts. Both entities feel that a Plan of this nature can easily be used by both communities to create a cohesive gateway. It is intended that implementation of the Plan through subsequent ordinance adoption be handled by each respective governmental agency. Collaboration with state and federal agencies will also be required to further implement various aspects of the Plan. The City shall assume lead role in these efforts, due to its current function as administering agent for all activities conducted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Planning Department has enlisted the assistance of a number of City staff for input into such issues as landscaping, architecture, transportation, and site design. Other organizations, such as the MPO, will be yet another source to which further implementation efforts will be directed.

Goals And Objectives

Zoning/Land Use

The following are zoning/land use provisions for the Gateway.

GOAL:

Establish a gateway which allows a variety of land use opportunities which, when integrated, enhance and remain sensitive to the unique transitional characteristics of the Gateway.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Create the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway District.

POLICIES:

1. An Overlay District shall be established along Avenida de Mesilla between Valley Drive (east) and Calle de El Paso (west). The district shall pertain to those properties along the specified segment of roadway which have direct frontage off Avenida de Mesilla (see Figure 4).

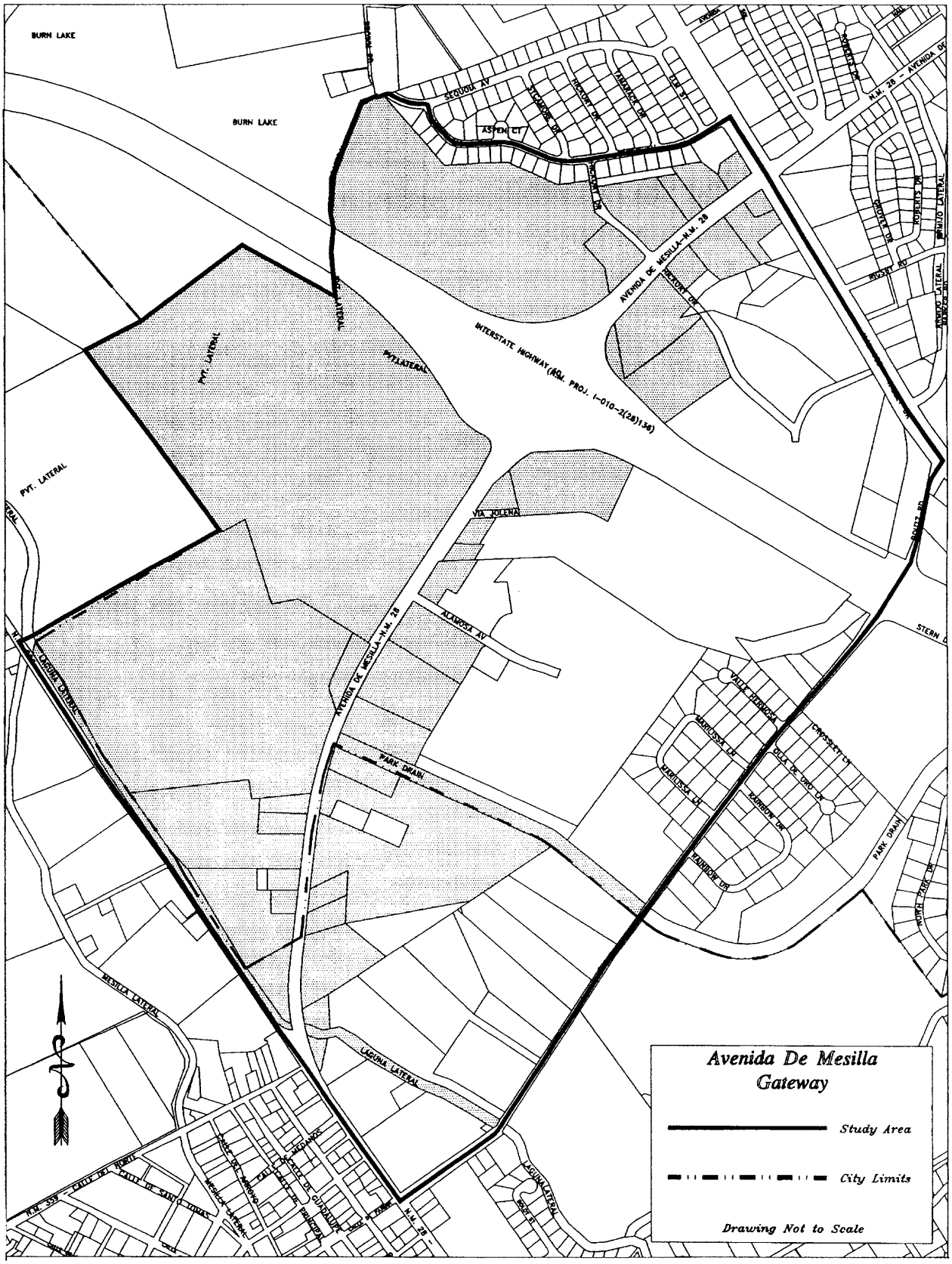
OBJECTIVE 2:

Utilize to the extent possible underlying zoning and land use allowances as identified through existing zoning ordinances, to more accurately reflect and establish the desired Gateway character.

POLICIES:

1. Maintain the underlying zone and the corresponding zoning ordinance criteria for each fronting property as the primary mechanism in determining permitted uses - no conditions, permitted uses - with conditions, and special uses. Exceptions and/or modifications to use lists are further established in Policy 2.

2. Apply the following land use criteria as a secondary mechanism in determining allowable land uses per zoning district. Permitted uses with conditions remain subject to the property's underlying zone. If the use is allowed in the underlying zone with no conditions, the conditions stated herein apply. If conditions exist for the use, the stated conditions within this Plan shall serve as an additional requirement. Prohibited uses apply to all properties within the overlay regardless of zoning district. These lists are intended to be added to any existing listing which may already be in place.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Permitted Uses - With Conditions

The following list is intended to modify and/or be added to any existing permitted uses - with conditions listing. Any permitted uses - no conditions land use list may be affected by the stated conditions contained herein.

Automobile Parking Lot/Parking Garage -	Only when all applicable urban design requirements are followed.
Bus Terminal -	Shall follow all urban design criteria. There shall be no storage of buses on site nor shall there be repair facilities provided.
Commercial or Trade School (Totally Enclosed) -	Only when related activities occur within an enclosed building and when there are no materials, equipment, or machinery used in the conduct of said activity stored outside. The use shall not pose any adverse impacts to adjacent properties due to noise, odor, dust, or vibration.
Cottage Industry -	Only when such use occurs within a totally enclosed building on the premises where the primary use (retail/service) is conducted, and when the product which is being produced is on a contract basis, for demonstrative purposes, or for the establishment of limited stock/inventory. The processing of goods shall be clearly secondary to the primary use (retail or service) and shall not pose any adverse impacts to adjacent properties due to noise, odor, dust, or vibration. A maximum of 49% of the total business floor area (not to exceed 3000 square feet) shall be used in the conduct of the cottage industry. No more than three separate cottage industries may operate on any one parcel.
Dance/Music Academy -	Only when used for instruction and/or the conduct of activities related to the performing arts.

Dwellings: Accessory Use-Proprietor, Resident Watchman, or Caretaker Only-	Only when said dwelling meets all applicable urban design criteria and is constructed on-site.
Engraving Shop -	All related activity shall be completely enclosed within the building used for the primary use and there shall be no outside storage of parts, inventory, or related materials whether temporary or permanent.
Food/Beverage Production or Packaging -	Only when such use occurs within the same building as the primary use and remains secondary to the primary use (retail or service). In no event shall the square footage for any production/assembly process associated with the commercial activity exceed 49% of the total business floor area (not to exceed 3,000 square feet). It is herein intended that the ancillary activity (processing) be conducted in a manner which serves to enhance the general retail and/or service atmosphere. Examples of establishments which may conduct this ancillary activity include cafes/restaurants, taverns, and other like uses involving food/beverage related products (human consumption) within applicable zoning districts. The ancillary activity shall not pose any adverse impacts to adjacent properties due to noise, odor, dust, or vibration.
Gasoline Station -	Only when vehicle repair activities are not associated with the use.

Prohibited Uses

This list identifies those uses which are prohibited regardless of the underlying zoning district.

Acid Manufacture
Adult Amusement Establishment
Adult Bookstore/Video Store
Airport and Heliport
Amusement Park or Enterprise
Assembly of Electronic or Mechanical Parts and Equipment
Auto, Truck, Camper, and Recreational Vehicle Sales and Service
Automotive Washing Establishment
Boat Sales, Service, and Repair
Body Shop
Bus Garage
Cement, Lime, Gypsum or Plaster Manufacturing or Mixing
Cemetery
Cigarette and Cigar Stand (Temporary)
Clothing Manufacturer
Construction or Contractor's Yard (Permanent)
Dance Hall
Drive-In Theater
Dyeing Establishment
Electrical Shop (Contractor)
Explosive Manufacture or Storage
Fabrication Shop
Fat Rendering
Fertilizer Manufacture/Processing
Flea Market
Firewood Sales
Fraternity
Freight House or Truck Terminal
Frozen Food Locker
Glue Manufacture
Heavy Equipment Sales and Service
Junk Yards, Salvage, or Wrecking Yards
Kennel (Commercial)
Lumber Yard (Outside Storage)
Manufacturing of Consumer Goods Such as: Appliances, Batteries, Garments, etc.
Metal Work and Machine Shop
Microwave Radio Relay Structure
Mini Storage Units
Mobile/Manufactured Homes

Mobile Home Park
Mobile Home Sales and Service
Mobile Home Subdivision
Motorcycle Sales and Service
Open or Exterior Storage and Display of Merchandise and/or Materials (except temporary produce stands established to sell farm products)
Packaging of Cosmetics, Pharmaceuticals, Toiletries
Paint Shop (Spraying/Mixing - Non Retail Sales)
Petroleum Refining
Plumbing and Heating Shop (Contractor)
Public Utility Installation, Substation, and Water well
Racetrack
Radio and TV Broadcasting
Raw Materials Manufacturing, Processing, and Extraction
Recreational Vehicle Park
Recycling/Purchase Center
Sign Construction and Sales (exclusive of signs created pursuant to a cottage industry)
Smelting of Ores
Sorority House
Stables (Commercial)
Stadium: Baseball, Football, Soccer, Track
Stock Yards or Slaughter of Animals
Storage of Wrecked or Dismantled Vehicles and Parts (Primary or Accessory Use)
Street Vendors
Television and Radio Towers and all other Free Standing Towers (Public or Private)
Temporary Uses (Pursuant to Temporary Use Permits)
Tire Sales and Service
Warehouse/Storage/Distribution Center
Welding Shop (Primary or Accessory Use)
Wrecker Services

3. Establish the following development standards for all fronting properties along the Gateway.

Minimum Lot Area/Size/Dimensions:	Refer to underlying zone development standards.
Minimum Setback Provisions:	Refer to underlying zone development standards.

Maximum Building Height:	A maximum height of 40 feet to contain no more than 2 stories. This provision shall pertain to all allowed uses within underlying zoning districts.

4. Establish the following non-conforming use provisions for properties within the Gateway.

   A. When non-conforming urban design features involving parking, landscaping, lighting, and fencing/walls are located on properties within the Gateway, these features shall be brought into compliance with current standards when:

      1) The property remains vacant for a period of one (1) year or greater; or

      2) Any increase to the gross square footage of the building occurs; or

      3) Any exterior remodel, renovation, or alteration occurs to the building; or

      4) A change in use occurs on the property which results in the alteration of the use's intensity (i.e. low volume to high volume business activity) or orientation (i.e. service to retail activity).

   B. When the architectural characteristics of the building are non-conforming, the architecture shall be brought into compliance with current standards when:

      1) The property remains vacant for a period of one (1) year or greater; or

      2) A minimum increase of twenty (20) percent is made to the gross square footage of the building; or

      3) Any exterior remodel, renovation, or alteration occurs to the building.

   C. When a sign on the property is non-conforming, it shall be brought into conformance with current standards when:

      1) The property remains vacant for a period of one (1) year or greater; or

      2) A change in use occurs on the property which results in altering the use's intensity (i.e. low volume to high volume business activity) or orientation (i.e. service to retail activity); or

   D. Non-conforming commercial uses that existed within the Gateway, prior to plan/ordinance adoption, and which are specifically identified as a prohibited use, may be allowed to expand or enlarge provided that:

1) Said increase is no greater than 25% of the gross square footage of the lot, if said increase involves the incorporation of additional land area; or

2) Said increase is no greater than 25% of the gross square footage of the building(s), if said increase is through the addition of building floor area; and

3) All non-conforming urban design features are brought into compliance with current standards.

E. For purposes of this section, exterior remodel, renovation, or alteration shall be defined as, any change or rearrangement in the supporting members of an existing building, such as bearing walls, columns, beams, girders, as well as any change in doors, windows, or roof lines, or any enlargement to or diminution of a building or structure, whether horizontally or vertically. Normal maintenance activities as verified by the appropriate jurisdiction's building inspector are exempt from this provision.

Urban Design

The creation of aesthetic amenities along Avenida de Mesilla has been strongly recommended by citizens, committee members, and staff. These amenities created through urban design standards, would focus on Architecture, landscaping, site design, signage, and streetscape standards which will itself, address landscaping, lighting, street furniture, and other related items within the right-of-way. The goal was to create an appropriate transition along the Gateway which was in keeping with standards already established within the Town of Mesilla. A successful transition would avoid the stark contrast between the historical, old town atmosphere and the urban setting which is quickly becoming prevalent along the Gateway. A component of urban design, which is certainly deserving of consideration, is the need to establish maintenance standards in order to provide a stable and aesthetically pleasing environment.

The following are proposals for these elements within the Gateway.

GOAL:

Improve the visual quality of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Establish flexibility through varied styles and appropriate architectural standards for all structures within the Gateway which convey and support the rich New Mexico/Southern New Mexico architectural vernacular and heritage.

POLICIES:

1. Architectural design standards for the Gateway shall be established as follows:

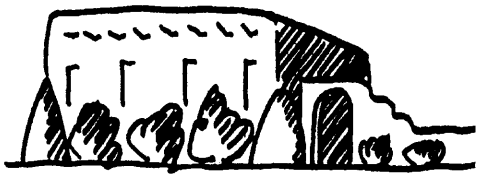
   A. For properties along the Gateway, Pueblo, Spanish Colonial, Territorial, Mission, and other southwest vernacular architectural styles shall be required. For information regarding other allowable styles, please refer to *New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual, Section VI. Introduction To New Mexico Architectural Styles*[1]. Of the styles identified in the manual, Gothic, Richardson Romanesque, Colonial Revival, Wold's Fair Classic, Prairie, Hipped Box, Bungalow, Decorative Brick, Tudor Revival, Thatched Cottage, Provincial, Georgian Revival, Art Deco, International Style, and Streamlined Moderne shall <u>not</u> be used.

   The Pueblo, Spanish Colonial, Territorial, and Mission architectural styles represent those which are strongly encouraged within the Gateway. In general, these styles reflect and typify the rich architectural fabric, character, and history, which is found in the Mesilla Valley and southern New Mexico, and should blend well with those styles that have been established and which are becoming more prevalent along the Gateway and its general vicinity. The following information identifies the exterior visual features of these specific styles. Various features discussed may either be a required or strongly encouraged element, which must be taken into consideration through the design process. Incorporating the specified architectural features will help ensure that structures built, altered, renovated, or remodeled pursuant to a selected style are consistent with documented and identifiable architectural characteristics. The other architectural styles which may be used require adherence to the design principles/elements noted in Section VI of the New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual. Please note that required building elements for all permissible styles may be augmented or modified should proper documentation such as published architectural reference books or manuals lend credence to such efforts.

Pueblo

<u>Facade</u>

Walls shall be surfaced with a smooth stucco surfacing and shall incorporate soft rounded corners or buttressed corners in order to emphasize structural massing. Parapet walls above the roof line shall be used in the design and shall have rounded edges and variations in height. The use of bell coates (españadas) or other design strategies which simply vary the heights of the facade shall be incorporated in large scale (business center or apartment complex) commercial or residential buildings. Structures which are more than one story in height shall have the top story setback further from the front property



line than the first story. Manipulation of the facade using these strategies will help break up building mass and reflect a more appropriate scale to adjacent surroundings.

Roof

Roofs shall generally lie flat except that sloping of the surface will be allowed to facilitate the shedding of moisture. Canales made of clay or treated wood shall be incorporated along appropriate areas of the roof and facade to aid in the removal of the surface moisture.

Color

Stuccoed walls and applied ornamentation shall be of a desert or earth tone.

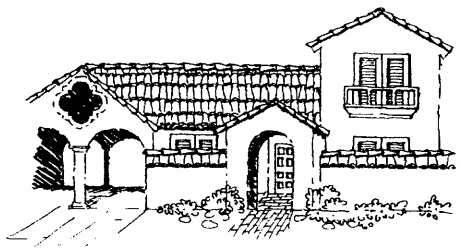
Ornamentation

Although the pueblo architectural style is generally limited in ornamentation, the use of exposed/treated wood lintels above windows and entryways and wood vigas shall be required. Application of these features may be used in their true structural form or may be applied simply as decoration. Vigas, applied as decoration, shall be placed along the exterior wall in a single orientation i.e., north/south or east/west in order to avoid the appearance of crossed or misplaced supports (buildings of more complicated design may be allowed multi-directional placement). The use of portales/loggias are strongly encouraged but are not required elements. Vertical supports for these items, if used in the design, shall consist of round wood columns with corbel bracketed capitals. If chimneys are incorporated as a design feature, all components shall be appropriately constructed and detailed in a manner consistent with the rest of the structure.

Spanish Colonial

Facade

Walls shall be surfaced with a smooth stucco surfacing and shall have a belt mold which encircles the building along the top of the facade. Structures which are more than one story in height shall have the top story setback further from the front property line than the first story. Manipulation of the facade using these strategies will help break up building mass and reflect a more appropriate scale to adjacent surroundings.



Roof

Roofs shall be pitched using a 4 in 12 to 5 in 12 pitch. Roofs over balconies and other such features may have pitches of 2 in 12. Roofs shall have clipped eaves, generally flush with the wall, and shall be surfaced with clay barrel tiles. When overhangs are created, exposed and treated timbers shall be used.

Color

Stuccoed walls shall be white or contain otherwise light desert colors, such as tones of peach, etc. Color accents, if used, shall not be of a stark contrast to the primary color of the wall.

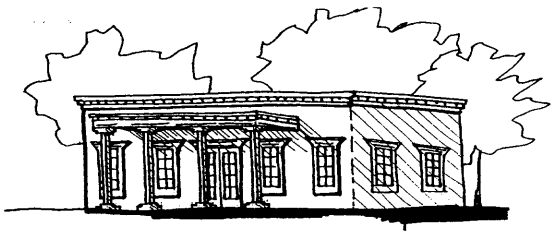
Ornamentation

There shall be limited arches used in the overall design of the structure. Arches serving primary entryways are typical and are encouraged. Windows shall be of a divided light variety and shall be recessed or otherwise defined and accentuated with molded surroundings. All doors shall be constructed of or give the appearance of heavy carved wood. Exposed timber shall be used in the design of overhangs. Courtyards and patio designs incorporated into the building design are strongly encouraged. Walls for these features, if used, shall be thick and/or otherwise appear massive. Shade structures are also encouraged and, if used, shall have strong timber accents such as beams or joists. If chimneys are an incorporated design element, all components shall be constructed and detailed in a manner consistent with the rest of the structure.

Territorial

Facade

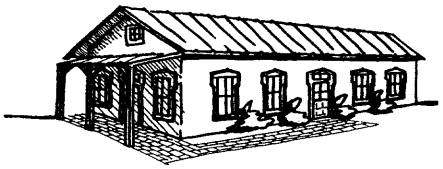
Walls shall be surfaced with either a smooth stucco or brick. If brick is used, the brick must be antiqued or otherwise treated to give the appearance of a weathered and aged brick. Overall building form should be clean and simple in appearance. Parapet walls above the roof line shall be used in the design and shall be capped with brickwork, masonry, or wood unless a folk territorial design is used in which case, no parapet shall be used. Structures shall have facades of varying heights. Structures which are more than one story in height shall have the top story setback further from the front



property line than the first story. These design techniques are useful for emphasizing structural depth and aid in defining and distributing structural mass and scale.

Roof

Roofs shall generally lie flat except that sloping of the surface will be allowed to facilitate the shedding of moisture. Folk territorial designs shall have pitched gable roofs surfaced with tin or corrugated sheet metal which has been factory painted/treated in a manner which eliminates its reflective properties yet contributes to the design characteristics of the selected architecture. Dormer windows are not required in folk territorial designs but are strongly encouraged.

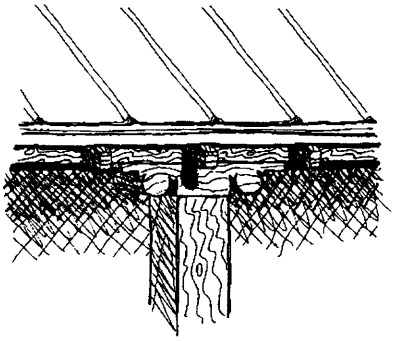


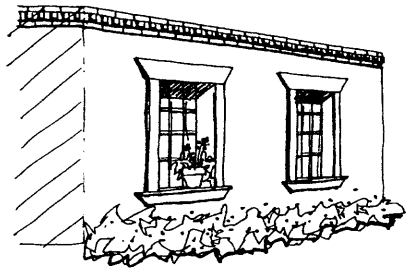
Color

Stuccoed walls shall have earth tones such as tan, sand, and beige. Brick facades shall consist of muted colors such as red brick which has been "antiqued". Trim materials shall have light or neutral colors which contrast to primary surface colors.

Ornamentation

In designs which incorporate parapets, the cornice shall be detailed with decorative brick or wood and contain dentil ornamentation. Canales shall be square or rectangular in shape and be constructed of a natural material such as wood or have surface treatment which is consistent with the primary structure. Window and door openings shall be set flush with the wall and shall have trim treatments of brick or wood surrounding the fenestration. The use of pediments (wood trim treatment) above doors and windows is strongly encouraged. If window shutters are used, they shall be paneled. Doors shall be constructed of wood or treated to give the appearance of wood and must also be paneled. Windows shall be of a divided light variety. Designs incorporating porches or porticos along the facade are strongly encouraged and, if used, shall be supported by wood columns. Ornamentation treatments for porches or porticos shall be similar to those incorporated on the primary structure (wood cornice and dentil treatments are typical). Separate shade structures or treatments over balconies are not required but, if used, shall incorporate exposed timber in the design. If garden walls are used, they shall be surfaced with stucco and shall have a brick cap similar in treatment to that used for the primary building walls. Chimneys are not required but, if incorporated



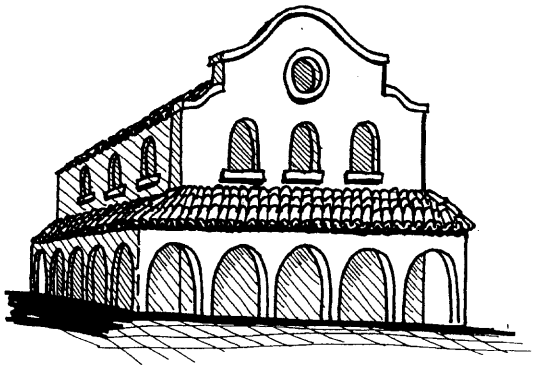


as a design feature, all components shall be appropriately constructed or otherwise detailed in a manner consistent with the rest of the structure.

Mission

Facade

Walls shall be surfaced with a smooth stucco finish and maintain clean edges or corners. Walls shall give the appearance of mass through their construction. For larger structures (i.e. business center, hotel etc.) which contain two stories, facades shall, through their design, create two distinct levels, feature an arched portal feature along the first level and incorporate a vertical element such as an espanada or bell coate in the design. The portal shall characteristically contain curvalinear openings or archways to emphasize the portal and assist in defining the two levels. The second story shall be set back further from the front property line than the first story. Smaller structures used for single uses or a small number of uses may incorporate similar design features as what is required of the larger structures; however, greater design latitude shall be afforded to smaller structures in order to ensure that scale and mass do not overwhelm the overall appearance. All facades regardless of building size shall incorporate arched entryways in the design. Arched window openings or detailing is strongly encouraged for all such openings and shall be required for windows which figure prominently in the facade design. Facades shall also incorporate curvalinear parapets projecting above gabled rooftops.



Roof

Roofs shall be pitched in a gable fashion and shall be surfaced with a red colored tile. Emphasis to the roof detailing shall be provided through the use of curvalinear parapets. Projecting eaves shall be accentuated with exposed rafters.

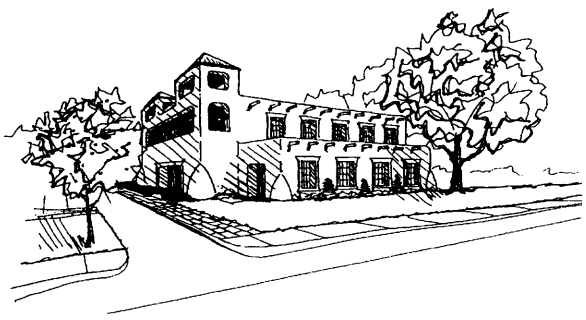
Color

Stuccoed walls shall have light or neutral tones. Roof tiles shall have a red tone.

Ornamentation

Curvalinear parapets shall be required. Any projecting eaves shall be accentuated by exposed rafters. Detailing which emphasizes rounded or curved openings such as windows or portal entry arches is encouraged.

For all architectural styles, stucco or brick shall be the material used for all exterior wall surfacing (exclusive of trim details etc.). Freestanding walls/fences if used as a design feature shall be constructed of adobe or cinder block layered with stucco, or wrought iron or any combination thereof except that all wall treatments shall be consistent with the architectural style used for the building(s). Slump block shall not be used as a finish surface for any facade or freestanding wall. No chain link fencing shall be permitted unless used for temporary purposes related to construction which occurs on site.



Two story structures, regardless of architectural type, shall have its stories terraced or staggered so as to provide a transition of structural bulk and scale. Special design features such as españadas (bell coates) may be exempt from this provision. Additionally, portals incorporated in the design and placed along the facade may be considered as an acceptable transitional mechanism. All accessory structures such as storage buildings, work shops, and structures used to enhance indoor/outdoor space (i.e. pergolas or other shade devices within courtyards etc.) shall be constructed and otherwise detailed in a manner consistent with the architecture of the primary building.

OBJECTIVE 2:

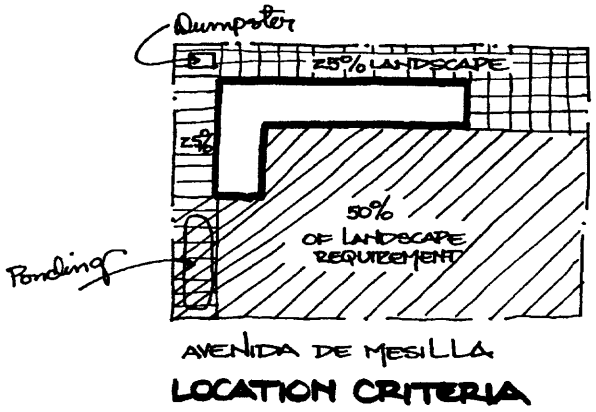
Establish landscaping standards for new development, and encourage landscaping of existing property along the Gateway, representative of the agricultural theme which is prevalent within the Gateway area and the Mesilla Valley.

POLICIES:

1. Landscaping for new development along the Gateway shall be provided to cover 15% of the lot area exclusive of building area. All landscaping shall be provided on site.

2. For the purpose of this Plan, landscape shall be defined as (2) - 2" caliper trees as measured six (6) inches above soil level and which reach a minimum height of 25 feet at maturity as referenced in **The New Western Garden Book**, (15) - 5 gallon shrubs, and a (5) - 1 gallon shrubs for every 500 square feet of landscape area required.

3. Of the total area to be landscaped, fifty percent (50%) shall be located within the front setback of the property. Of this percentage, one-half (½) shall be located between the front property line and the parking lot. For purposes of this plan, the front setback of the property shall be defined as the area between the back of the sidewalk and the property's principal structure.



LOCATION CRITERIA

4. A minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of the total required landscaping shall be located along the rear and sides of any principal and/or ancillary building.

5. The remaining 25% shall be incorporated in areas adjacent to service areas (loading docks/bays, dumpsters, etc), building/utility equipment, and within ponding areas so as to provide a screen or buffer to these potentially harsh/contrasting development features. Should there be an excess of landscape materials after buffering these features, the materials shall be appropriately integrated elsewhere on the site in a manner consistent with the overall landscape design.

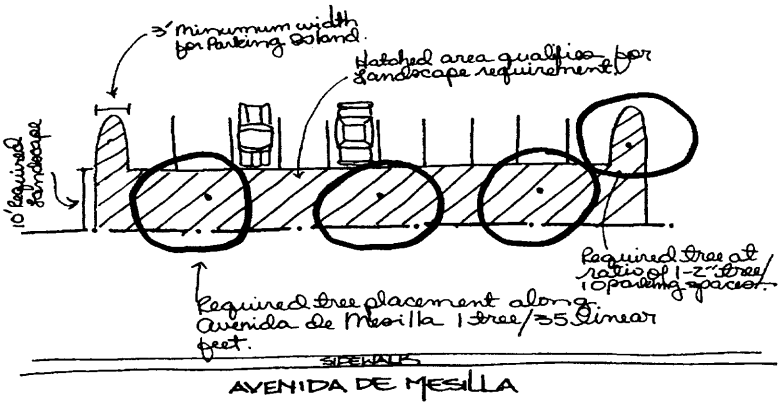
6. In addition to the 15% required landscaping percentage (Policy 1), all development exclusive of single family and duplex properties shall be required to plant trees <u>within</u> the parking areas for shade and visual relief. Trees, within the parking area, shall maintain a minimum height of six (6) feet before the first lateral branch and shall reach a minimum canopy diameter , at maturity, of twenty (20) feet. One (1) tree shall be planted every five (5) parking spaces within the parking lot. Trees should be planted every five (5) parking spaces within the parking lot. Trees should be planted along the edge and/or between parking stalls

in planter areas which have a minimum area of 34 square feet, dimensional requirements as provided in Figure 5, and a raised border of at least 4 inches in height. Where a landscape border or similar feature abuts parking stalls, trees within those areas may count toward the parking area tree requirement, provided:

A. The trees planted within ten feet of the parking stall area perimeter; and

B. The number of parking area trees required pursuant to this policy are not reduced by more than half as a result of this condition of implementation; and

C. A minimum of one (1) tree is provided within the parking area.



PARKING AREA LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENT

7. Ground cover material consisting of bark, pecan shell, decorative stone, or river rock shall be used on any ground surface which would otherwise be exposed. Excessively large expanses (greater than 500 square feet) of ground covered landscape areas shall be avoided unless vegetation and variety in ground cover textures are incorporated to help mitigate incompatible scale concerns.

8. The City/Town will encourage owners of previously developed properties to landscape their properties in a manner consistent with required Gateway landscaping.

9. All landscaping shall be irrigated by an approved automatic or manual underground irrigation system, which includes a reduced principle backflow preventor, pipes, valves and heads, and shall be sufficiently sized to properly irrigate all applicable plant materials.

10. All required landscaping located outside the right-of-way shall be maintained in a healthy, clean, trimmed, weed-free and litter-free condition. Dead plant material shall be replaced with new plant material immediately. All plant material shall be pruned, trimmed, or otherwise kept in a manner which prohibits the material from interfering with the installation,

maintenance or repair of any public utility or from obstructing pedestrian, vehicular, or bicycle traffic.

OBJECTIVE 3.

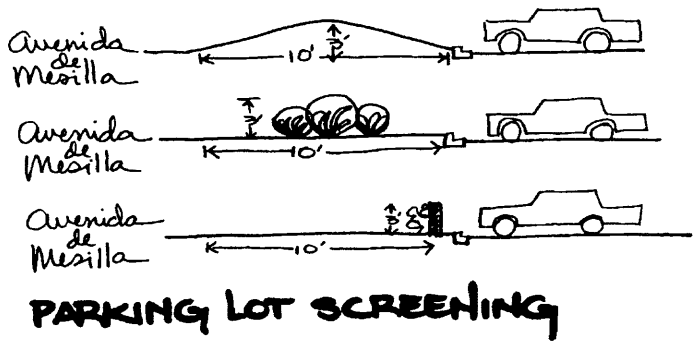
Establish appropriate site design standards which enhance and generally promote an overall coordinated development approach.

POLICIES:

1. Through the use of required landscaping and/or landscaping element, visually screen/buffer parking lots from the right-of-way and soften their overall impact; thus, creating a more appealing development. The following provisions shall be considering when creating this separation.

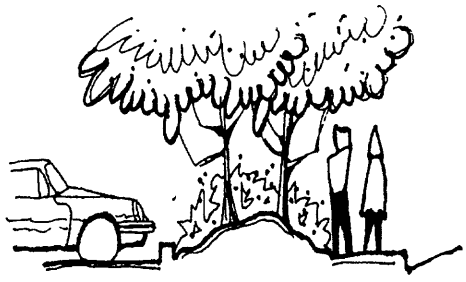
   A. The use of garden walls, berms, or other landscape features are required for purposes of achieving this policy.

   B. A minimum of ten (10) foot wide buffer strip shall be required between parking lots and the property line which is most parallel with Avenida de Mesilla. Buffers shall have a minimum vertical height of two (2) feet and a maximum vertical height of three (3) feet, as measured from top of buffer element to top of curb. The maximum height of elements within clear sight triangles shall follow each jurisdiction's approved provisions.



PARKING LOT SCREENING

   C. All landscaping used within the buffer strip may count toward fulfilling the landscaping requirements pursuant to applicable provisions.



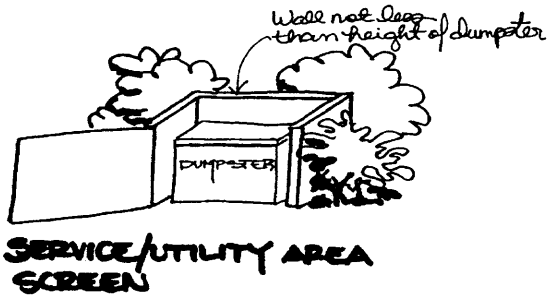
   D. If berms are used to achieve this policy, they shall have a maximum design slope of one (1) foot of rise for every five (5) feet of distance (grass) or one (1) foot rise for every three (3) feet of distance (ground cover).

E. If walls are used in conjunction with berms or as the sole buffering mechanism, the wall shall be placed at the farthest location away from the property line, closest to the parking area.

F. Design considerations shall be implemented to control erosion where berms abut sidewalks.

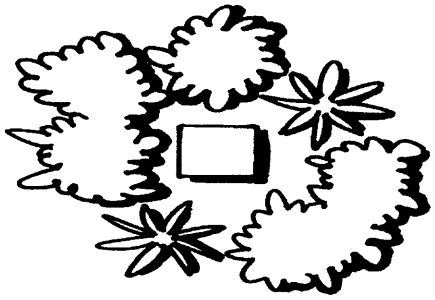
2. Encourage the integration of all modes of transportation with each development in a manner that reduces vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation conflicts. Appropriate striping, placement of barriers, surfacing treatments, and other applicable demarcation of strategies should be used to clearly identify circulation patterns. Developments are encouraged to provide adequate bicycle facilities.

3. Screen/buffer service areas and building mechanical/utility equipment that are incompatible with the aesthetic goals of the Gateway.



A. Dumpster locations shall be surrounded by a wall having a minimum height equal to the height of the refuse container and which is compatible with the architectural character of the development. Landscaping shall also be placed in close proximity so as to cause a more appropriate transition or blending of physical features.

B. Freestanding building mechanical/utility equipment shall be screened from view using landscaping or walls in a manner that conceals the equipment and remains consistent with the landscape/architectural character of the project to which it pertains. Equipment that is on the rooftop or otherwise attached to the building shall be screened from view through the use of building design elements such as parapets or similar strategies. When the chosen architectural style selected does not lend itself to using these techniques, equipment shall be placed toward the rear of the building, rooftop, or facade and shall be painted with a color that most accurately matches the building element to which it is attached.



4. Through sensitive building design, encourage all building facades to become an integral part of the overall design and reflect the architectural style chosen. When necessary, encourage

the use of landscaping to break up building facades which by their design may have long, continuous surfaces with limited fenestrations or other openings.

5. To minimize traffic conflicts along the Gateway, the following access/curb cut provisions shall be pursued as the established standard along Avenida de Mesilla through the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department. The provisions are based on the linear frontage of property along Avenida de Mesilla and are intended to promote shared access and increase overall ingress/egress efficiency and safety.

Frontage	Provision
≤200 feet	(1) shared or (1) two-way or (1) one-way pair
>200 - ≤300 feet	(2) shared or (1) two-way or (1) one-way pair
>300 feet	(2) shared (and either (1) two-way or (1) one-way pair) or (2) two-way or (2) one-way pair

A. Access designs which incorporated acceleration/deceleration lanes and other similar traffic flow strategies, which may impact access/curb cut needs, will require the review and approval of plans by the appropriate jurisdiction's traffic engineer.

B. Non-shared curb cuts shall maintain a five (5) foot side yard setback.

C. A fifty foot separation between curb cuts as measured along the property line shall be maintained regardless of type.

D. The width for one-way curb cuts shall be 15 feet. The width for two-way and shared curb cuts shall be no less than 25 feet and no greater than 35 feet.

E. Shared access shall be strongly encouraged.

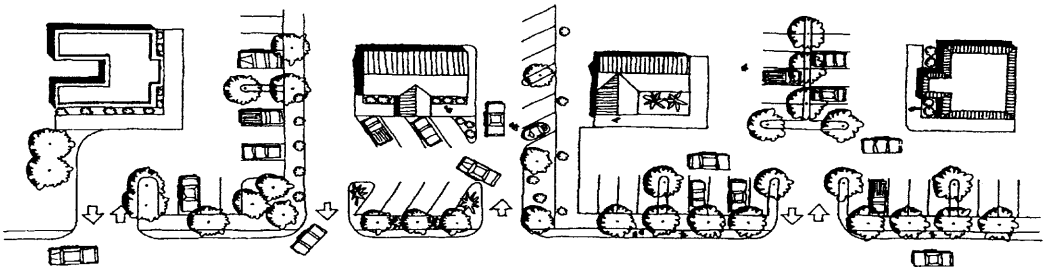
F. Shared access provisions shall be secured by a shared access agreement between affected property owners and shall be approved as to form and content by the appropriate jurisdiction's legal staff. Final agreements shall be filed at the Dona Ana County Clerk's Office.

6. Depending on jurisdictional authority, parking requirements along the Gateway shall follow all applicable parking standards as provided in Article IX, of the 1981 Las Cruces Zoning Code, as amended, or Chapter 11 of The Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance of the Town of Mesilla except as follows:

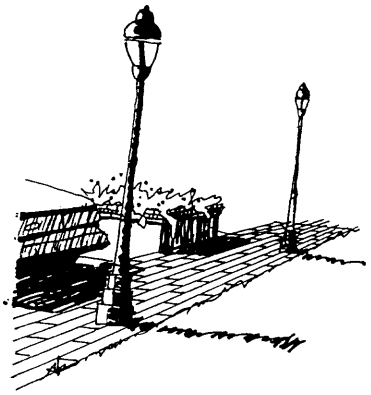
(1) Businesses located along the Gateway are encouraged to seek shared parking agreements with businesses on adjoining properties. These agreements shall be approved as to form and content by the appropriate City/Town Attorney's Office and once completed, filed with the Dona Ana County Clerk's Office. Agreements may

be made with adjoining property owners regardless of each business' hours of operation.

In combining parking requirements, 100% of the required off-street parking for all subject businesses shall be met. For businesses requiring a shared parking arrangement in order to meet parking provisions, the agreement shall pertain to no more than 40% of the number of parking stalls they are responsible to provide. The remaining 60% must be provided on that businesses site.



2) Lighting standards used to illuminate parking lots shall relate in design, material, and color to the architectural and/or historical character of the property. Lighting shall minimize impacts on local nighttime atmospheric uses (ie: telescopes, etc.)



OBJECTIVE 4:

Establish appropriate and flexible signage requirements that blend with the architectural character of the property to which it pertains, and through their placement and overall treatment, assists in creating a cohesive atmosphere along the Gateway which is compatible with the Town of Mesilla.

POLICIES:

1. In determining applicable sign standards, Article XII of the 1981 Las Cruces Zoning Code, as amended, or Chapter 11 of The Comprehensive Land Use Ordinance of the Town of Mesilla (dependant upon applicable jurisdictional authority) shall apply, except as provided below:

A. **Off-Premise Signage**

(1) No off-premise signage shall be allowed along the Gateway except for displays approved by the City or Town Manager regarding community events or holidays.

B. **Temporary Signage/Displays**

(1) Temporary signage/displays, if allowed pursuant to the applicable jurisdictions sign ordinance, shall be limited to banners, pennants, streamers, and balloons.

C. **On-Premise Attached Signage**

(1) Wall and window signs shall be the only attached sign types allowed within the Gateway. The maximum total sign area shall be no greater than one square foot of signage per linear foot of street frontage. There shall be no limit to the number of signs used provided that their cumulative square footage does not exceed the maximum allotment (see also, window sign design standards). The sign(s) placement may be along any building wall and in the instance of window signs, along any window.

D. **On-Premise Freestanding Signage**

(1) Monument signs shall be the only freestanding sign allowed within the Gateway. If two signs are allowed, the second sign may be of a design, size, and height permitted pursuant to the applicable jurisdiction's sign ordinance and shall be located toward the property line which is furthest from and most parallel to Avenida de Mesilla, at a distance from that line which shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet. All other applicable sign setbacks and related provisions shall apply for the sign.

(2) Monument signs located along Avenida de Mesilla shall be no larger than six (6) feet in height and no greater than thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area. Each monument sign shall maintain a ten (10) foot setback from front and side property lines. Wood shall be the predominant material used in the construction of the monument signs copy. The illumination of the monument sign's must not be positioned so as to interfere or visually impair passing motorists, bicyclists, or pedestrians. If the lighting standard is visible, it shall be decorative in its construction and shall be consistent with the architectural style of the property.

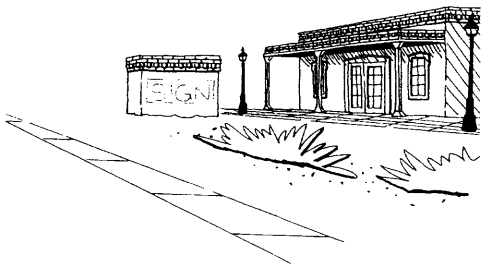
(3) When a property is developed as a business center, one monument sign identifying the name of the center and one directory monument sign will be allowed. The directory monument sign shall be no greater than six (6) feet in height and shall provide no more than four (4) square feet of sign area for the identification of each tenant. Overall sign area is dependent on the number of businesses within the business center. All other provisions regarding setbacks, construction materials, and illumination all apply.

G. **Sign Design Standards**

1) Signs shall not be placed in a manner which interferes, covers, or otherwise disrupts the intended purpose of important architectural building features such as display windows, cornices, vigas, entrances, eaves, and other decorative/integral elements.

(2) Signs shall be designed (shape, color, and material) in a manner consistent with the building to which it relates. Signs of excessively complicated design, which disrupt the architectural character of the building, shall not be permitted. In order to facilitate this compatibility, the following shall apply:

(3) Freestanding Signs. Design elements and/or finish treatments such as stucco or brick surfacing, freestanding wall designs/treatments, etc. shall be incorporated into a monument sign's overall design except that the copy portion of the sign shall be constructed of wood. The color of surface or finish materials used on the building shall be incorporated into the signs supporting structure. Contrasting colors may be used on the copy portion of the sign for purposes of increased legibility and clarity. A maximum of two (2) contrasting colors shall be used. When multiple monument signs are allowed (i.e. business centers), the design of each sign shall maintain a similar design appearance, and colors and lettering styles shall remain consistent. The base of all monument signs shall be appropriately landscaped with shrubs and ground cover.



(4) Attached Signs. Signs may be constructed of channel letters, independent can, or wood except that only one style may be used per facade. Contrasting colors may be used in the sign's design for clarity and legibility; however, a maximum of two such colors are allowed. When multiple signs are used along a facade, the design context, color usage, and lettering styles shall remain consistent. If a sign is externally lighted, the lighting fixtures shall be decorative in its construction and be compatible to the architectural style of the building to which it relates. Other illumination options include both internal and back lighting.

(5) The use of neon in a sign's design is allowed provided that the number of colors used is limited to three (3) and that their use does not detract from the overall aesthetics of the sign or the structure/building to which it refers. Neon signs shall only be used to identify the business or development name.

(6) To facilitate legibility and sign clarity, the number of different lettering styles or fonts and font sizes on a sign shall be kept to a minimum. Lettering shall not be crowded onto a sign and ample space surrounding the copy shall be maintained.

(7) No more than twenty percent (20%) of the window area shall be covered by a window sign.

(8) Signs which are animated whether intentially or unintentionally are prohibited.

(9) All signs shall utilize lighting that minimizes impacts on local nighttime atmospheric uses (ie: telescopes, etc.)

OBJECTIVE 5:

Develop a City initiated streetscape plan along the Gateway which addresses various issues such as landscaping, sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, and bicycle facilities within the Avenida de Mesilla right-of-way. The streetscape is intended to provide greater design and aesthetic unity while maintaining compatibility with the Gateway theme.

POLICIES:

1. Establish and subsequently utilize a conceptual streetscape plan as a basis for requesting, funding, designing and constructing applicable improvements along Avenida de Mesilla (Figure 6). Specific elements which comprise the concept plan shall consist of the following:

A. **Gateway Identification**

(1) Monument signs, following design considerations as identified in Objective 4, shall be placed in appropriate locations at the intersection of Valley Drive/Avenida de Mesilla and at the intersection of Calle de El Paso/Avenida de Mesilla. These signs shall indicate the name of the Gateway and are intended to provide a sense of arrival to the Gateway.

B. **Landscaping**

(1) Street trees shall be planted along the roadway using species and landscaping materials as approved by the City's Landscape Architect. Consideration will be given to species size, maintenance requirements, and aesthetic appeal.

(2) Inasmuch that many of the medians located along Avenida de Mesilla have been landscaped, efforts shall be made to investigate opportunities to landscape those that have not.

(3) In consideration of tree planting locations, right-of-way width/availability and traffic safety shall be considered.

C. **Sidewalks**

(1) Although sidewalks are installed along the majority of Avenida de Mesilla, future large scale (block lengths or greater) sidewalk reconstruction and new installation efforts shall require the matching of sidewalk surfacing consistent with that found along Avenida de Mesilla near the Avenida de Mesilla/Calle de El Paso intersection. Areas where sidewalks are currently not installed shall be reviewed for possible sidewalk installation. Small scale (less than block length) installation of new lengths of sidewalk and small scale sidewalk reconstruction shall be examined on a case by case basis to see if surface matching is appropriate. Piecemeal surface matching should be avoided.

D. **Street Furniture**

(1) Items such as benches, bus stops, trash containers, and other like items shall be incorporated along Avenida de Mesilla as needed. These items shall be positioned within the right-of-way or an appropriately designated easement in a manner which does not obstruct pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicular circulation. Clear sight triangle provisions from the applicable jurisdiction shall also be considered when siting these items.

(2) All items shall relate aesthetically to a common historical motif which blends well with the architectural character along the Gateway. Items used for a similar purpose (i.e. trash containers, etc.) shall be of the same design, color, and material. Proper anchoring shall be required so as to mitigate vandalism, theft, and safety related concerns.

(3) Although street lighting is installed along certain segments of Avenida de Mesilla, a unified lighting theme shall be implemented which provides for the installation of new fixtures and the replacement of those which exist. A

motif and design that matches fixtures installed alongside and within the park, located at the intersection of Avenida de Mesilla and Calle de El Paso shall be required. Modifications to the design may be made, upon the request by either the Town or City traffic engineer, in order to facilitate the lighting needs of vehicular traffic. If such a modification is required, a design which incorporates separate lighting for pedestrians and vehicles on the same light standard is strongly encouraged. The City will utilize street lighting that minimizes impacts on local nighttime atmospheric uses (ie: telescopes, etc.)

E. **Bicycle Lanes**

(1) Implement objectives and policies as provided by the Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plan and the City of Las Cruces Bicycle Facilities Master Plan (approval pending) for the development of bicycle facilities within the Gateway.

F. **Utilities**

(1) Maintain the current practice of providing under-ground utilities as a mechanism to reduce "visual clutter" along the Gateway.

2. Establish a coordinated work program with the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD) for the timely phasing and implementation of work activities necessary to carry out all streetscape improvements.

3. Apply for Inter-Modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and other applicable funding sources for the design and construction of streetscape improvements.

4. In accordance with proposed streetscape improvements, efforts to coordinate the replacement of chain link access control fencing with a fence type/material more compatible with the character of the Gateway shall be made with the NMSHTD.

Enforcement of Gateway Standards

Proposals involving any development within the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway area shall be processed through the applicable jurisdiction's staff to aid in enforcing area standards. It is strongly encouraged that the review of development proposals be examined by reviewers who are well versed in architecture and landscape architecture as well as all other applicable disciplines, codes, ordinances, and policies. Should this review process require various staff members, reviews from each member should be carried out simultaneously in order to conserve time and expedite the building permit process. Development submittal requirements shall, at a minimum, reflect the following information:

- A statement of objectives to be achieved by the development inclusive of a description of the character and anticipated use of the proposed development.

- A complete, scaled site plan which clearly identifies property boundaries, location of all structures, parking layout, location of service and loading areas, pedestrian and bicycle circulation, dumpster location, areas proposed for landscaping, ingress/egress access points, identification of proposed uses within each structure, storm water ponding areas, surfacing material for impervious surfaces, setbacks, and any other information which conveys how the proposal will meet development requirements.

- A scaled floor plan which clearly shows the internal boundaries, size, and storage areas of each use.

- A scaled landscaping plan to include the location, size, common name of all landscaping, and a complete irrigation plan clearly identifying how the landscape will be sustained.

- Scaled elevations of each directional view of all structures clearly identifying exterior building materials and treatments, location and treatment of all fenestrations and other building openings, building ornamentation, roof design, and roof surfacing material.

- Architectural/artistic renderings reflecting the exterior building, the use of building materials, and selected colors.

GOAL:

Enforce the development standards of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway.

OBJECTIVE 1:

Establish a clear and streamlined review procedure which ultimately expedites the permitting process yet affords an appropriate amount of time in which to carefully review development proposals within the Gateway.

POLICIES:

1. The applicable jurisdiction shall not issue building permits for any proposed development within the Gateway unless they have been reviewed and approved.

2. Establish the applicable jurisdiction's Planning and Zoning Commission as the appeal board for decisions rendered through the review process.

3. Any requests for numerical variances to the development standards of this Plan shall be directed to the applicable jurisdiction's Board of Adjustment.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Develop application standards for all development in the Gateway.

POLICIES:

1. A standard application form and informational materials shall be established for all development within the Gateway.

2. Any required application fees associated with the review process shall be kept to a minimum whenever possible.

Implementation

There are numerous tasks to be performed in the implementation of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan. The Plan has attempted to establish a flexible approach to area planning along Avenida de Mesilla. Although the implementation process requires the cooperation and assistance of the general public in carrying out the goals and objectives of the Plan, the City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla should act as a catalyst for the establishment and development of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan.

The following are recommended programs for the implementation of the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan.

1. Each jurisdiction's Planning Department shall submit to their respective Planning and Zoning Commission an amendment to the zoning code no later than *(Date)*, to establish boundaries and ordinance language covering Land Use, Architecture, Landscaping, Site Design, and Signage, thus, implementing the Gateway Plan.

2. The City Planning Department, acting as lead agency, shall make a request to the Traffic Engineering Department and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department no later than *(Date)*, to conduct studies along Avenida de Mesilla to ascertain the feasibility of establishing the streetscape within established right-of-way. Said request shall include all elements identified within Objective 5 of this Plan. The Planning Department shall submit the findings of these studies to City Council and the Town Trustees for their review and consideration.

Implementation Actions Taken

Issue	Date	Resolution/Ordinance
Plan Adoption	May 6, 1996	96-333 (Resolution)

Bibliography

[1]S.R. De Boer and Company, *A City Plan For Las Cruces New Mexico - Summary and Conclusions 1955*. July 1955.

[2]Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization, *Las Cruces Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plan.* August 1994.

[3]City of Las Cruces, *City of Las Cruces Bicycle Facilities and Master Plan.* Pending Approval.

[4]University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning, *New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual*. May, 1980.

5,Author. *New Western Garden Book.* Publication Location, Year.