Acknowledgements to 2004 City Plan Participants

City Commission

Honorable Monty D. Newman, Mayor

Commissioner - District 1 - Gary W. Fonay

Commissioner - District 2 - Ray J. Betzen

Commissioner - District 3 - Hector M. Ramirez

Commissioner - District 4 - Joseph D. Calderón

Commissioner - District 5 - Robert R. Wallach

Commissioner - District 6 - John W. Boyd

City Manager

Dan Dible

Advisory Board Members

Larry Bozeman	Ron Braun	Jessie Harley	Beth Hahn
Molly Herrera	Debra Hicks	William Hicks	Suzanne Holler
Fred Hopkins	Bill Ramirez	Jeremy Raulston	Bill Razo
Dr. Steve McCleery	Gary Jones	David Pyeatt	Tim Woomer
Hack Conder	Dan Dible	Gary Fonay	Joe Dearing
Chief Manny Gomez	Todd Randall	Russ Doss	Brenda Brooks
Bob Reid	Bobby Shaw	Ella Turner	Sam Cobb
Robert Wallach	Wade Cavitt	Kathy Bearden	Rodger Gray
Eric Gray	S.G. Cobb	Steve Eckman	Gary Eidson
Beverly Ellis	Nancy Etier	Oscar Gonzalez	Basin Surveys
Dr. Richard Fleming	Maddy Mann	Susan Maddox	Velma Makin
Ray Betzen	City of Hobbs	John Boyd	Hector Ramirez
Hector Baeza	Max Clampitt	Barry Peters	Nellie Armitige
Guy Kesner	Joe Calderon	Oscar Gonzales	Ray Battaglini
Belinda Battaglini			

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Guy Kesner - Vice Chairman

William Ramirez - Member

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Gary Jones - Member

Sam D. Cobb - Member

Results of Action Priority Ranking

During March 2004, members of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and selected others—22 people in all—participated in reviewing 93 potential actions that are included in the Draft Comprehensive Plan: 14 for Growth Capacity (utility infrastructure), 15 for Transportation, 15 for Economic Development, 33 for Urban Development (growth/development, housing, beautification), and 16 for Parks and Recreation. In preparation for this exercise, the consultant team had screened all the actions contained in the draft plan and narrowed the list to those that involved new and/or strategic initiatives for the community. Those participating in the ranking exercise then had the opportunity to identify 20 actions from this list that they considered most worthy of early attention during the first 1-3 years following plan adoption.

As a result of the priority-setting exercise, five action items received 11 or more votes, meaning they attracted votes from a majority of the participants. Another 17 actions received support from one-third to one-half of the participants. These 22 highest-rated actions are those that potentially should receive the most attention as implementation efforts move ahead following plan adoption. The overall voting results showed:

- 1 item receiving 15 votes.
- 1 item receiving 13 votes.
- 3 items receiving 12 votes.
- 2 items receiving 10 votes.
- 3 items receiving 9 votes.
- 4 items receiving 8 votes.
- 8 items receiving 7 votes.
- 14 items receiving 6 votes.
- 8 items receiving 5 votes.
- 16 items receiving 4 votes.
- 13 items receiving 3 votes.
- 11 items receiving 2 votes.
- 7 items receiving 1 votes.
- 2 items receiving 0 votes.

The results of this exercise are in no way binding as ultimate priorities will require the input of all City Commissioners and leaders. However, this priority ranking method illustrates how certain actions quickly rise to the top and the trade-offs that must be made among many competing needs given limited time and money. If the City pursues the idea of a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Task Force, as discussed in Chapter 9-Implementation, then this new committee could begin its work of recommending action priorities and monitoring progress by building upon this initial prioritization.

In deciding whether an action should be assigned short-range priority, considerations may include the budgetary obligation required, the availability of City staff or another lead entity to carry the initiative forward, and the expected difficulty or complexity of the task. Plan implementation priorities

and strategies will also require the professional input of City administrative staff, who can advise on budget implications and realities, items the City must do within a certain time frame given federal or state mandates, staff availability and capabilities, and other practical considerations.

The results of such strategic planning efforts should also be revisited each year as part of the annual status review of Comprehensive Plan implementation, as described in Chapter 9-Implementation. The results of each annual evaluation should feed into the City's budget process, capital improvements programming, departmental work plans, and other City planning and management activities. In the meantime, City Commission adoption of the overall Comprehensive Community Development Plan, including the initial Strategic Implementation Plan, will set the stage for early, priority efforts by City staff and other community interests.

Compiled below in List 1 are the plan actions that received more than 30 % of the votes from the survey and also were confirmed as high priority during the March 30, 2004 CPAC meeting. The CPAC also directed the staff to look at the 30 % and 25 % action items to determine if some of the items needed to be combined or re-worded to better express the views of the CPAC. Some of the items in those categories were combined or re-worded as requested.

During that CPAC meeting, the staff was also directed to review the items in the 25 % category and determine if some of them needed to be included in the top priority list for potential prioritization in the Three Year Plan. Those items are included as List 2.

List 3 contains the action items that received 25 % or less of the votes from the survey and are not proposed for potential prioritization in the Three Year Plan.

The original 93 action items have been reduced to 80 total action items, of which 29 are presented in the first and second lists for consideration of potential prioritization in the three year plan by the CPAC and Planning Board at the Joint Work Session on April 13, 2004.

List 1. Actions Favored by 30% or More – Potentially for Three Year Plan

15 **Transportation:** Pursue specific transportation improvement projects consistent with the Thoroughfare Plan and the following needs identified and prioritized by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (15 additional "long-range" projects are identified for 2010-2025):

Short-Range Projects (2004-2009):

- State Road 18/Hospital Driveway Traffic Signal
- Central Extension from Joe Harvey to Calle Sur (with later traffic signal)
- HIAP Economic Development Phase I North/South Area Roads
- Downtown Traffic Flow/Parking/Pedestrian Improvements (with streetscape)
- Grimes/Joe Harvey Traffic Signal Upgrade
- Other Connecting Bike/Walk Trails
- Green Meadow Lake to Del Norte Park Connecting Trail

13 **Urban Development:** Implement the annexation of and infrastructure development along the Joe Harvey-Navajo corridor to better manage the development pattern and quality along this key boulevard in Hobbs. Continue with incremental implementation of a long-term annexation strategy, both through landowner-requested as well as City-initiated annexations. (combined and revised)

12 **Growth Capacity:** Based on the results of the City's current treatment plant capacity study, plan and implement a phased program of interim process modifications and facility improvements until the City is ready for more significant and costly steps.

12 **Transportation:** Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review the City requirements for street widths to make sure these requirements are applicable and safe for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs. (revised as requested)

10 **Urban Development:** Identify a core set of minimum residential and non-residential development standards that should be adopted by ordinance and enforced by the City.

10 **Parks and Recreation:** Work to provide parks and recreation opportunities that will entice racetrack/casino visitors to spend more time in Hobbs. Also, explore non-traditional facilities to address a wider range of recreational pursuits, including those that are popular with potential business prospects and/or relocating employees or their children (e.g., bmx courses, mountain biking, ropes courses, indoor rock climbing walls, etc.). (combined and revised)

9 **Growth Capacity:** Continue to pursue federal participation and funding to accomplish the most significant, regional drainage system improvements recommended in the *Storm Drainage Management Plan*.

9 **Urban Development:** Establish reasonable minimum standards for the screening of unattractive sites and views and the provision of buffering (dense vegetation, walls/fencing, increased setbacks, etc.) between incompatible land uses.

9 **Growth Capacity:** Continue to weigh opportunities to increase reuse of treated municipal wastewater effluent for irrigation (e.g., non-edible agriculture, golf courses, parks) to divert higher-quality water away from this use. Any significant expansion of effluent reuse will involve infrastructure costs (additional piping and pumping) as well as necessary staff and budget for maintenance and operations activities.

8 **Growth Capacity:** Continue to upgrade the City's pretreatment requirements, especially to enhance monitoring and enforcement, to eliminate the worst influent problems (petroleum products, solvents, etc.) from the City's wastewater treatment process.

8 **Growth Capacity:** Expand water production capacity through well field development and enhancement, plus construction of associated trunk facilities when needed. Also, work to expand implementation of mandatory and recommended water conservation measures within the City and in all new developments regulated by the City, using incentive and financial assistance approaches where appropriate. (combined)

8 **Transportation:** Collaborate with the County Planning Board to assure that appropriate right-of-way widths, grid layouts, and proposed road development are properly coordinated in the extraterritorial areas of the City.

8 **Economic Development:** Provide economic development incentives and expansion/relocation assistance for existing businesses. Also, when exploring potential new regulatory mechanisms for Hobbs, consider incentive-based provisions for achieving desired outcomes for development siting and design. (combined)

7 **Transportation:** Require traffic impact studies and mitigation actions for large-scale development proposals.

7 **Transportation:** Reach out to other Southeast New Mexico communities to explore a coordinated plan for Eclipse air service when available.

7 **Economic Development:** Encourage private development standards and/or restrictive covenants for new industrial developments to achieve a higher level of design and aesthetic quality.

7 **Economic Development:** Consider better neighborhood delineation and entry treatments (signage, landscaping) in older areas of Hobbs to emphasize established residential districts and encourage civic pride as in done in new suburban developments.

7 **Urban Development:** Promote adoption or reinstatement of deed restrictions or covenants in established neighborhoods along with creation of an entity with the capacity of enforcement.

7 **Urban Development:** Encourage improved communication between citizens and the City Commission to improve the community through the use of "town hall" meetings in each of the city's districts.

7 **Urban Development:** Establish programs that local organizations can assist with that will improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, such as Crime Watch, neighborhood clean-up, assistance with code enforcement, programs for seniors and youth, and maintenance of public spaces and recreation areas.

7 **Parks and Recreation:** Prioritize and implement the following parks and recreation improvements in Hobbs:

- Construct restrooms at Charlie Brown Park.
- Replace sports field lighting at Zia Softball Complex.
- Add new youth baseball and soccer fields for games.
- Construct new Museum/Arts Center.
- Construct outdoor shuffleboard courts.
- Construct frisbee golf area.
- Construct "maze" type vegetation walking/meditation trail.
- Replace lighting at High School Tennis Complex.
- Construct amphitheatre.

- Upgrade Turner/Stanolind mini-park.
- Identify usable practice space for youth teams (spring).

List 2. Actions Favored by 25% – Potentially for Three Year Plan

6 **Parks and Recreation:** Prepare a Hiking/Biking Trails Master Plan which 1) connects existing and planned parks and other recreational and open space areas, 2) defines routing and design standards for trails, and 3) encompasses a wider range of both active and passive recreational activities. (revised)

6 **Economic Development:** Encourage the Lea County Commission to establish a citizen committee with a promotional operating budget to aggressively promote the use of the Lea County Event Center and to provide the Lea County Event Center budget with sufficient funds for personnel and resources to coordinate high-quality events that will result in excellent event and total yearly attendance.

6 **Urban Development:** Adopt infill and redevelopment policies to grant incentives to infill developments, such as flexible development standards, waiver of development and utility tap fees, and other potential incentives as permitted by state law, in exchange for developments using existing street and utility infrastructure. (revised)

6 **Urban Development:** Promote alternative site design to achieve affordable housing, including zero-lot line development, reduced setbacks, reduced street widths, reduced lot size, mixed-use development, cluster housing, and increased density. Aggressively coordinate with developers to find ways to reduce construction and development costs associated with land acquisition, infrastructure costs, pre-construction loans and other elements that impact the cost of housing.

6 **Urban Development:** Work to expand the amount of quality housing stock in the community by working with the Community Housing Development Organization, encouraging the establishment of additional non-profit and public/private organizations to assist with housing improvements in both new construction and existing neighborhoods, and coordinating with local banks to create a revolving loan fund that can assist in homeownership assistance or housing rehabilitation. (combined and revised)

6 **Urban Development:** Improve the aesthetics of the community by creating a plastic bag ordinance to reduce plastic bag litter or begin charging for bags, continue aggressive community cleanup activities, and consider the creation of aesthetic development regulations for new building exteriors in various areas. (combined and revised)

5 **Transportation:** Adopt a Major Street and Thoroughfares Plan by Ordinance to allow the City and private developers to negotiate construction of streets in non-residential areas. (revised)

* **Transportation:** Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review requirements for provision of green space in new subdivisions to create a set of requirements that are applicable and reasonable for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs. (split out)

List 3. Actions Favored by 25% or Less – Not Proposed for Prioritization

6 **Transportation:** Extend the walking/jogging/bicycle path system constructed along NM 18 (Lovington Highway) adjacent to College of the Southwest to extend at least to the Bender/Turner/Grimes "Triangle" and eventually into the central core of Hobbs.

6 **Economic Development:** Make specific infrastructure improvements (streets, water, wastewater, drainage, telecommunications, etc.) to support the expansion plans of the medical center and higher education institutions in northwest Hobbs.

6 **Parks and Recreation:** Conduct an annual condition assessment of existing parks and recreational facilities to identify improvement needs and determine the level of annual financial commitment required to maintain existing facilities.

5 **Growth Capacity:** Complete piping system expansions in both the Hobbs and North Hobbs systems to address current and future water demands as detailed in the *Water Master Plan*.

5 **Transportation:** Continue phased upgrades to the Lea County-Hobbs Airport, particularly new and improved features to enhance the facility's market appeal.

5 **Urban Development:** Maintain high standards of site maintenance and appearance at City properties and facilities.

5 **Parks and Recreation:** In existing deficient areas, identify vacant lots or City-owned properties that would be appropriate for neighborhood parks.

4 **Growth Capacity:** Construct pressure reducing stations at Lovington Highway and Dal Paso to facilitate continued water transfers from North Hobbs to the Hobbs System.

4 **Growth Capacity:** Continue to use capital improvement program funding to complete targeted drainage improvements in a gradual, phased fashion.

4 **Growth Capacity:** Continue to pursue opportunities to develop storm drainage improvements, particularly retention basins, as multi-use facilities either for active recreation (e.g., athletic fields, bikeways/trails) or passive open space for the enjoyment of the citizens who helped to fund such improvements.

4 **Transportation:** Investigate the option of a Southeast New Mexico Regional Airport to serve Clovis, Hobbs, Roswell and Carlsbad.

4 **Economic Development:** Through development regulations or non-regulatory encouragement, promote the concentration of additional retail development at existing commercial nodes—as recommended in the GG+A analysis and strategy—to achieve a "critical mass" of attractive shopping destinations, to avoid excessive dispersal of commercial activity (and particularly to avoid further "strip" development along major roadways), to cluster compatible uses such as restaurants near department stores, and to enable the types of district treatments as suggested in Figure 6.1.

4 **Economic Development:** Increase the Lodger's Tax fund percentage up to the maximum rate to provide additional revenue for economic development activities.

4 **Economic Development:** Encourage the development of neighborhood programs to improve the overall quality of neighborhoods.

4 **Urban Development:** Use capital improvements planning to focus road and utility upgrades in preferred growth, infill, redevelopment and economic/industrial development areas.

4 **Urban Development:** Use public projects (schools, libraries, community centers, etc.) as "anchors" for newly-developing or redeveloping areas.

4 **Urban Development:** Identify locations for future commercial development clusters (versus scattered and/or "strip" development).

4 **Urban Development:** Establish a partnership between builders, local lending institutions, local government and educational institutions such as Hobbs Senior High School and New Mexico Junior College to establish a modular housing industry in the community that provides affordable housing to local market while also creating new, skilled employment in the area.

4 **Urban Development:** Consider adopting a "neighborhood protection" form of regulation that focuses on protecting existing and future residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and other undesirable development impacts at the fringe of residential areas. Areas targeted for commercial and industrial development would continue to have limited regulations.

4 **Urban Development:** Offer incentives or financial/technical assistance for rehabilitation of substandard buildings.

4 **Urban Development:** Encourage the expanded use of residential solid waste polycarts for community litter reduction.

4 **Parks and Recreation:** Improve the maintenance of all parks and recreation areas and facilities by funding preventive maintenance schedules.

3 **Growth Capacity:** Expand existing pump stations and construct additional facilities as outlined in the *Water Master Plan*.

3 **Growth Capacity:** Build new elevated storage towers at key locations as detailed in the *Water Master Plan*.

3 **Transportation:** Conduct a comprehensive downtown parking and circulation study to document specific traffic flow and safety problems in the CBD, current parking arrangements and utilization and needed parking improvements, and interactions between traffic flows and on-street parking.

3 **Economic Development:** Use development regulations or other strategies to encourage a mix of compatible, complementary land uses along Lovington Highway, such as additional restaurants and lodging near the college campus and Medical Center, potential senior housing (in close proximity to medical, educational, recreational and cultural amenities), and additional recreation and entertainment venues.

3 **Economic Development:** Continue phased design and implementation of specific elements of the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives provided by John Armstrong that will add to community and district identity and character.

3 **Economic Development:** Following Comprehensive Plan adoption, begin preparing a series of neighborhood-level plans using a more detailed, strategic planning approach.

3 **Urban Development:** Encourage construction of alternative housing types such as "granny flats," row houses and duplexes/tri-plexes/quad-plexes in new development and redevelopment initiatives to provide more options between single-family detached dwellings and large-scale apartment complexes.

3 **Urban Development:** Focus primary enhancements on Broadway and Turner as the major east-west and north-south "spines" of Hobbs, and continue supplemental beautification efforts along other major corridors.

3 **Parks and Recreation:** Consider private sponsorship of park improvements and upgrades.

3 **Parks and Recreation:** Partner with local schools, churches and organizations in maintaining and enhancing existing parks and facilities. Consider a "Public Works Park Day" where citizens and groups are encouraged to participate in community service for park maintenance.

3 **Parks and Recreation:** Establish requirements for fees in lieu of parkland dedication in the City's subdivision regulations.

3 **Parks and Recreation:** Improve access to and connectivity between existing parks through the development of additional sidewalks and/or trails.

2 **Growth Capacity:** Construct additional distribution system pipe capacity in both the Hobbs and North Hobbs systems for fire-related needs.

2 **Transportation:** Adopt access management regulations for arterials and other busy roadways pertaining to the design, construction, location, width, spacing, offset and potential coordination of driveways; street connections; medians and median openings; auxiliary lanes; on-street parking; traffic signals; turn lanes; and, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

2 **Transportation:** Fund and construct pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, crosswalks, handicap accessible ramps, curb cuts, "pedestrian/ bicycle crossing" signs and warning lights (near schools, parks, etc.), and pedestrian-activated signal changers along city streets in areas with significant pedestrian traffic, such as around schools, parks, retail districts, and other activity areas.

2 **Transportation:** Conduct a comprehensive and detailed inventory of existing sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities throughout the community, including a condition assessment to prioritize needed improvements by condition, need and location.

2 **Economic Development:** If Hobbs chooses to adopt a higher level of development regulation, make neighborhood protection the cornerstone of this initiative, both through public policy statements in the regulations as well as specific provisions aimed at protecting the edges of residential neighborhoods, managing the transition of land use from residential to commercial along major thoroughfares and elsewhere, and ensuring compatible siting and design of varied housing types and small-scale neighborhood commercial uses.

2 **Economic Development:** Conduct an evaluation of the first year of Landscape Ordinance implementation and consider potential enhancements to the ordinance to make further progress on beautification and development quality objectives for Hobbs.

2 **Urban Development:** Create an option that rewards traditional neighborhood design or conservation subdivision techniques with increased density, reduced lot size, decreased setbacks, reduced street width and other measures as determined appropriate.

2 **Urban Development:** Attract specific desired uses through targeted recruiting, incentives and/or other means.

2 **Urban Development:** Follow Comprehensive Plan adoption with neighborhood-level strategic planning initiatives to provide "grass roots" involvement in ongoing community planning and neighborhood protection/enhancement efforts.

2 **Urban Development:** Incorporate sidewalks into all urban neighborhoods, as feasible, and repair those that impede pedestrian access.

2 **Parks and Recreation:** Develop corporate, memorial and individual sponsorships with naming privileges for facilities, parks, trails and greenbelts.

1 **Growth Capacity:** Establish additional ground storage reservoir capacity at multiple locations as outlined in the *Water Master Plan*.

1 **Transportation:** Begin to acquire or obtain dedication of space for likely bike-ped routes, including coordination with owners of utility easements and other potential shared-use corridors.

1 **Urban Development:** Provide incentives to ensure points of interconnectivity between adjacent developments, including streets, sidewalks, green spaces and paths.

1 **Urban Development:** Provide density incentives to developers that are willing to incorporate alternative housing types into a new development.

1 **Urban Development:** Develop a neighborhood-based capital improvements planning process that helps to identify and prioritize area needs and complements the community-wide Capital Improvements Plan.

1 **Parks and Recreation:** Acquire and develop neighborhood parks in identified deficient areas, as shown on the Parks and Recreation System Plan.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan is an official public document that will serve as a blueprint for future development in the community. The plan will be a tool used to guide future growth in an appropriate and desired manner and improve the quality of life of area residents. The plan serves as a framework for policy decisions relating to the physical growth and economic development of Hobbs. In addition to providing a vision, goals and objectives to work toward over the next 20 years, the plan assesses the opportunities and challenges facing the City, identifies important policies and strategies, and establishes priorities for an aggressive implementation program that emphasizes specific actions and practical results.

While the City of Hobbs continued to prepare plans on specific topics and implement a variety of community improvements in recent decades, Hobbs has not had an overall plan for its long-term growth and enhancement since 1965. On May 3rd of that year, the City Commission adopted a Comprehensive Plan prepared with the assistance of distinguished urban planning consultant Harland Bartholomew and Associates of St. Louis, Missouri. More recently, particularly with Hobbs facing greater economic uncertainty, it became clear that the City again needed the longer-term perspective and unified approach to community betterment that a comprehensive plan would provide. Another nationally-recognized consulting firm, Wilbur Smith Associates of Houston, was selected to assist the City with its planning process, supported by Southwest Planning and Marketing of Santa Fe.

This new Comprehensive Plan, prepared during 2003-04, is designed to acquaint the reader with the City by documenting existing conditions and characteristics while identifying the area's goals, expectations and priorities for the 21st Century as well as specific action plans for achieving these goals. The plan addresses the physical aspects of planning such as urban development, transportation facilities and improvements, and parks and recreation facilities. In addition, it addresses long-term policies that will guide shorter-term decisions regarding development review and approval, budgeting and fiscal management, and capital improvements programming.

The Comprehensive Plan also sets the stage for more focused planning efforts by providing long-term perspective and highlighting how actions in one area, such as extension of roads and utilities, can have implications in other areas, such as land use, annexation, parks and community facilities.

Comprehensive Planning Authority

The Hobbs Comprehensive Plan has its foundation in state law. The New Mexico Legislature, through Chapter 3 of the New Mexico statutes, provides that "the planning commission shall prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the municipality and the area within the planning and platting jurisdiction." Since Hobbs is a municipality with a population of more than 25,000 residents, it is permitted a planning and platting jurisdiction extending five miles beyond its borders. In these areas, the City has the authority to establish development standards, review and approve subdivisions, and prepare plans for areas that have direct relationships to municipal planning.

The planning area for this Comprehensive Plan focuses on the immediate growth and municipal service areas around the incorporated city, as shown in **Figure 1.1**.

Why Should Hobbs Plan?

Local planning allows the City of Hobbs to have a greater measure of control over its destiny rather than simply reacting to change. Planning allows the City to proactively manage future growth and development as opposed to reacting to development proposals on a case-by-case basis without adequate and necessary consideration of community-wide issues.

The process required to develop the Hobbs Comprehensive Plan may prove more valuable to the community than the plan itself since the document is ultimately only a snapshot in time. The planning process involves major community decisions about how much and where growth will occur, the nature of future development, and whether the community can afford to provide the necessary public services and facilities to support this growth. This leads to pivotal discussions about what is "best" for the community and how everything from taxes to "quality of life" will be affected.

Long-range planning also provides an opportunity for the City's elected and appointed officials to step back from pressing, day-to-day issues and clarify their ideas on the kind of community they are trying to create. Through the plan development process, they can look broadly at programs for neighborhoods, housing, economic development and provision of public infrastructure and how these concerns may relate to one another. The Hobbs Comprehensive Plan represents a "big picture" of the City, one that can be

related to the trends and interests of the broader region as well as the State of New Mexico.

Local planning is often the most direct and efficient way to involve members of the general public in describing the community they want. The process of plan preparation provides a rare opportunity for two-way communication between citizens and local government officials as to their vision of the community and the details of how that vision is to be achieved. The plan will result in a series of goals and policies that, ideally, will guide the City in administering development regulations; in determining the location, financing and sequencing of public improvements; and, in guiding reinvestment and redevelopment efforts. The plan also provides a means of coordinating the actions of many different departments and divisions within the City.

In summary, important reasons for long-range planning in Hobbs include:

- To ensure adequate facilities to meet the demands of future growth and development.
- To develop an efficient and effective growth pattern that reflects the values of the community.
- To ensure the long-term protection and enhancement of the visual image and appearance of the community.
- To maintain the community's local heritage and culture.
- To involve local citizens in the decision-making process and reach consensus on the future vision for Hobbs and its ongoing development.
- To develop an annual work program and prioritize improvements consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Intended Use of the Hobbs Plan

The Hobbs plan belongs to the community and its citizens, who generously offered their time and talents to create it. The ability to implement the plan is directly related to the amount of citizen participation and the sense of ownership derived from the process.

The plan contains many components and serves numerous functions. It is a definitive source of information regarding the existing conditions and desired future

characteristics of the community. Most importantly, it establishes local governmental policies and strategies for working toward long-range goals and objectives. By its nature, the plan is intended to serve all interests of the community and thus offers the following benefits:

- It states the intentions of the governing body regarding the area's physical development and infrastructure investment, which creates a level of certainty for landowners and developers.
- It establishes local policy and provides guidance for future growth and development, which is then utilized by the City and others in various types of decision-making.
- It identifies programs and initiatives in the form of specific statements of action, which contribute to a coordinated work program for the departments of the City.
- It identifies capital improvement needs and priorities, which City management and staff use for annual budgeting and capital programming.
- It indicates the potential direction and nature of future development and coordinates improvements, thereby making citizens aware of the anticipated pattern of development and its potential influence on private property.
- It serves as the blueprint for the area's future economic and physical development, which is useful to other local, State and Federal agencies engaged in the provision of programs, services and facilities.

Development of the Comprehensive Plan

Citizen and stakeholder involvement is the cornerstone of the Hobbs Comprehensive Plan. A successful plan is identified not just with the elected and appointed officials of the City who adopt it, but with the entire community and its residents who helped draft it and want to see it followed and maintained. Effective mechanisms for citizen involvement and debate were an essential part of the Hobbs planning process. Through this involvement, the plan incorporates the community's values in terms of quality of life, character and scale of development, urban form, aesthetic appeal, and how new development should be integrated with the existing and future urban and rural fabric. Citizen participation in the City's long-range

planning effort included a variety of activities for community involvement and public information:

- The **Hobbs City Commission** and **Planning Board** were involved as major participants in the plan development process through their representation on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee as well as through regular briefings on the progress of the plan. Draft elements of the plan were also forwarded to Planning Board and City Commission members for their review as the plan development process proceeded.
- Eight meetings were held with a **Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee** (as well as additional subcommittee meetings), which offered unique insights by identifying the community's strengths and weaknesses, completing initial review of each plan element, and providing input and suggestions to ensure the plan reflects local values and priorities.
- **Key Person Interviews** were conducted with small groups that included members of the City Commission and Planning Board and other key community figures representing neighborhood and civic organizations, business and industry, community service groups, major landowners and developers, and other segments of the City. The purpose of the small-group interviews was to solicit the input of a cross section of the community regarding common perceptions, issues, problems, opportunities, constraints, assets and challenges in Hobbs. This input was invaluable toward understanding the underlying issues and needs of the community and specifically the values and priorities of those who know best – its citizens.

- A citywide **Community Forum** was held during the early stages of the planning process. The purpose of the forum was to inform citizens of the comprehensive planning process and to solicit their input on current issues, improve-ment needs and future priorities for implementation of the plan. A special event devoted to Hobbs teenagers and youth was another highlight of the planning process.
- A **Joint Workshop** was held with the Planning Board and City Commission to review the highlights of the draft Comprehensive Plan. A priority-setting exercise was also completed, which will set the stage for initial action steps as part of a Strategic Implementation Plan for Hobbs.
- The final stage of the Hobbs community outreach process involved formal **Public Hearings** prior to consideration of the recommended Comprehensive Community Development Plan by the Planning Board and City Commission.

A Continuous Planning Process

The Hobbs Comprehensive Plan is a principal part of the overall, ongoing planning process of the City. However, the plan should not be considered a static document but rather the result of a continuous process to gather and evaluate information about the community and make informed decisions based upon constantly changing conditions.

The plan is intended to be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as needed to maintain its applicability to current conditions and priorities of the City. At a minimum, the entire plan should be revisited every five years and revised as needed to ensure that it still reflects the true values and direction of the community. While the plan must be flexible to respond to changing needs, the community should remain steadfast in its vision and support for the core goals and objectives contained in the plan.

Essential Aspects of a Comprehensive Plan

The Hobbs plan is "comprehensive" in two ways: (1) geographically, since it considers the entire city, and (2) by the variety of issues and elements that are evaluated simultaneously to determine the best future course. For these same reasons, the plan is general since it cannot provide definitive answers in so many individual situations and with circumstances sure to change over time. Instead, the plan provides a policy framework to guide numerous public and private decisions.

Some elements of the plan are especially long-term and will become permanent factors in the ongoing development of the City, such as where roads and infrastructure will be extended, where various types of development will occur, and where property will be set aside in perpetuity as public land. On the other hand, while looking ahead to the future, a thorough understanding of the community's past and present is also needed to identify key issues and trends and formulate realistic goals, viable objectives, workable policies, and effective action plans.

The Comprehensive Plan should be optimistic and even inspirational – enough to challenge the community about its future. But it also must provide clear direction through statements of action that indicate how to achieve the community's desired vision. The sign of an effective plan is when it is frequently cited at Planning Board and City Commission meetings and regularly consulted in the business and development communities. Hobbs officials should expect and ensure that their plan is the "road map" for City in the years ahead, providing practical guidance for every municipal function.

Finally, the Hobbs Comprehensive Plan and the growth guidance policies it includes should not be confused with zoning. Zoning is a legal mechanism cities may enact whereby land is classified according to specified uses. The Comprehensive Plan is a more general guide for future growth and development. Once an overall community development plan is in place, zoning is one tool the City may consider adopting to influence and direct land and infrastructure development consistent with the growth directions and desired urban form specified by the Comprehensive Plan.

Organization of the Hobbs Plan

The Hobbs Comprehensive Plan is organized into nine individual plan elements, which address the existing conditions, issues, goals, objectives and action plans for various facets of the community. These elements include:

- **Chapter One: Introduction** – Outlines the purposes of comprehensive planning and includes background on the plan development process and associated community involvement activities.

- **Chapter Two: Community Profile** – Documents the existing socioeconomic conditions and characteristics of the City as well as the projected growth of the area. It includes data relating to historical, current and forecasted population and employment and other local demographic trends.
- **Chapter Three: Vision and Goals** – Expresses the shared vision of what Hobbs residents want their community to be now and in the future. The vision statement is intended to provide a clear and concise summary of citizens' expectations for future development, economic opportunity, mobility, public facilities and services, recreational enjoyment, natural beauty, and other aspects of community life.
- **Chapter Four: Growth Capacity** – Establishes growth constraints and opportunities and compares them with projected future demand. This chapter also identifies development practices that can aid in enhancing the physical, social, environmental and financial condition of the community.
- **Chapter Five: Urban Development** – Determines the policies and tools needed to ensure effective guidance of individual land use decisions and the overall direction of ongoing development in Hobbs. This chapter also assesses housing and neighborhood development needs and revitalization priorities, in addition to identifying opportunities for enhancing the physical character and attractiveness of the City.
- **Chapter Six: Transportation** – Reviews existing mobility conditions, determines deficiencies and needs, and prepares improvement priorities and development standards. This chapter also includes a new long-range Mobility Plan to guide future roadway upgrades and extensions within and beyond the City of Hobbs.
- **Chapter Seven: Economic Development** – Builds upon recent economic development studies and strategies prepared for Hobbs and Lea County by focusing on tangible physical improvements that will enhance the area's economic appeal and diversity, including measures involving land use, infrastructure and beautification.
- **Chapter Eight: Parks and Recreation** – Defines the role of the City in providing priority parks and recreation facilities and programs for its citizens over the next 20 years. This chapter also includes a Parks and Recreation System Plan that identifies potential placement of new community and neighborhood parks and a complementary trail network based on population projections and future growth areas.
- **Chapter Nine: Implementation** – Includes specific actions that are linked to the goals and objectives of each of the plan elements and identifies the time frame for implementation and the agency/entity responsible for accomplishing

each priority action. This chapter also addresses ongoing planning efforts and procedures for annually reviewing and regularly updating the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure its continued relevance and use.

Chapter 2

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The purpose of the Community Profile is to gain an understanding and present a summary-level discussion of key trends and factors affecting the City's past and future growth and development, focusing primarily on demographic and economic indicators and characteristics of the population. Many other data and information resources are available regarding the Hobbs area, including some that are highlighted at the end of this chapter. The intent of this chapter is to focus on likely indicators of where the community is headed in the future and specific needs to anticipate over the next few decades for purposes of long-range planning.

The Community Profile also includes a consensus 20-year population projection that will become the basis for important findings and recommendations throughout the Comprehensive Community Development Plan. In addition to gauging the physical growth potential of Hobbs, this includes assessing acreage requirements for future land use, likely impacts on community infrastructure and utilities demand, future employment and housing needs, and the desire for expanded parks and recreation opportunities and other improvements that contribute to community livability.

The Profile reflects the most recent available data from the 2000 U.S. Census supplemented by other data sources. As newer data becomes available, it will help to validate or cause reconsideration of assumptions in this plan as a normal step in ongoing community planning efforts.

Hobbs Basics

Hobbs is the largest city in the southeastern corner of New Mexico, as well as for adjacent areas across the state border in west Texas. A recent market study (*Southeast New Mexico-West Texas Retail Trade Zone*, 1998) confirmed that Hobbs serves as a commercial center for an area encompassing some 100,000 residents within a 55-mile radius of the city. Primary economic activity related to the oil and gas industry is supplemented by farming and ranching, medical care, higher education and a private prison.

A summary of historical highlights since Hobbs was established in 1907 is found on the next page. In its early growth years, Hobbs was actually three "towns"—Hobbs, New Hobbs and All Hobbs. Hobbs, sometimes called "Old Hobbs," was bound by

HOBBS TIMELINE

1907	James Isaac Hobbs settles his family in the area
By 1909	General store, post office and school established by Hobbs family
1910-1928	Early years as agrarian community (ranching, cotton)
1928	Oil boom begins, drawing many newcomers and makeshift building construction amid "Black Gold Rush"
1930	Highly-productive wells intensify oil boom
Early 1930s	Railroad reaches Hobbs, first buildings of brick (and with an elevator) constructed, Great Depression briefly interrupts local growth trend
1937	Elections in the "three towns" lead to unification of Hobbs, New Hobbs and All Hobbs into one municipality
1942	Hobbs Army Air Base built to north to train World War II military personnel assigned to B-17 and B-24 bombers
1956	First institution of higher learning (First Baptist College), offering a four-year liberal arts degree program
1962	First Baptist College becomes College of the Southwest, dedicated to the principles of free enterprise
1966	New Mexico Junior College established with 728 students
1970s	Hobbs evolves as a commercial center for nearby areas of southeastern New Mexico and west Texas, providing more economic stability amid a boom-bust oil economy (cultural events and offerings also expand)
1974	$7 million Llano Medical Center built on site adjacent to New Mexico Junior College at Hobbs Industrial Air Park, bolstering the health care sector of the local economy
Early 1980s	Harry McAdams State Park created north of Hobbs, adding more recreational opportunities (and drawing more visitors) beyond the City's park system and state-maintained fishing lakes in the area
1980s-1990s	Consolidations in U.S. energy sector lead to reduced oil/gas-related employment in Hobbs
2003	New national chain stores open (Home Depot, Chili's, Applebee's)

Sanger Pasture (now Sanger Street) on the north, Marland Boulevard on the south, present-day Grimes Street on the west, and what is now Dal Paso Street on the east. Both New Hobbs and All Hobbs were south of Marland, with present-day Dal Paso serving as the boundary between New Hobbs to the west and All Hobbs to the east. The fact that there is an east-west "Main Street" to the south of Marland Boulevard points to Hobbs' past development pattern (and this Main Street at one time had a five-story hotel, upscale movie theater, and other stores). A fourth townsite plotted to the north on Dal Paso was not as successful.

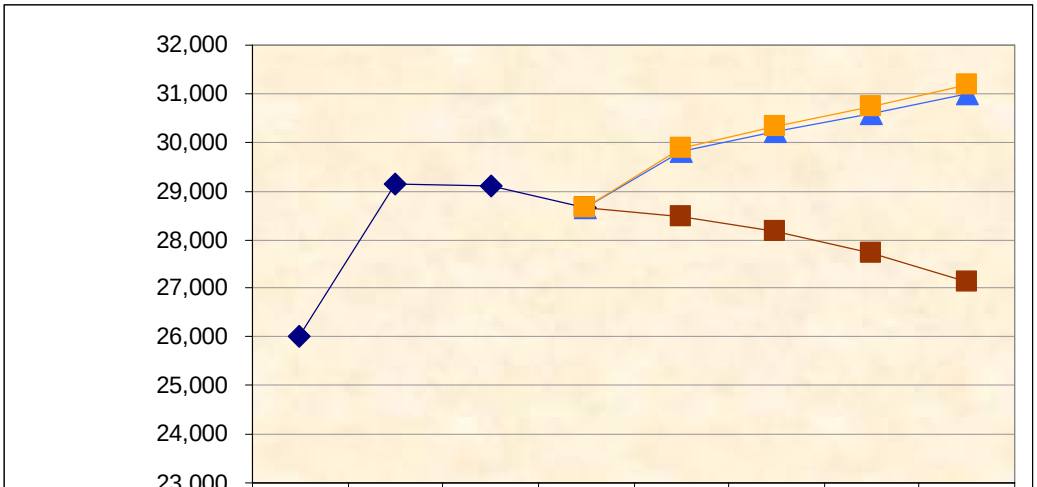
Uncertain Growth Outlook

Hobbs is among those communities that inevitably has the words "boom-bust" attached to its name, given the nature of the area economy. When the City's previous Comprehensive Plan was prepared in 1964-65, Hobbs had grown from 598 residents in the 1930 U.S. Census to 26,275 in the 1960 Census. As the U.S. entered World War II in 1941, there were approximately 12,000 residents, and the population increased by less than 2,000 persons by 1950 (to 13,875). However, during the 1950s the population of Hobbs nearly doubled (to 26,275), adding another 12,400 persons. Then from 1960 to 1970 the community effectively had no net growth, declining slightly to 26,025 residents in 1970.

Displayed in **Figure 2.1** is the City's population trend since 1970. Following a slight uptick in the 1970s, when Hobbs reached its peak population of 29,153 persons, the community has been holding steady or slightly losing population ever since (29,115 in 1980 and 28,657

in 2000). However, residential and non-residential development has continued in areas beyond the Hobbs city limits, particularly to the north of the city, which adds upwards of 5,000 or more residents to the area-wide population. While population in the City of Hobbs increased by 9.4 percent from 1970 to 2000, U.S. population growth over these three decades was 38.4 percent, New Mexico grew twice as fast as the nation at 78.9 percent, and county-wide population growth in Lea County was 12.0 percent.

FIGURE 2.1:
Hobbs Population Projection Scenarios: 2000-2020
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Historical	26,025	29,153	29,115	28,657				
Step Down				28,657	28,460	28,172	27,737	27,142
Linear Regression				28,657	29,809	30,202	30,595	30,988
Exponential Growth				28,657	29,878	30,311	30,750	31,195

SOURCE: Wilbur Smith Associates based on Bureau of Business & Economic Research (University of New Mexico) projections for Lea County

Hobbs' uneven growth pattern over time makes it difficult to pinpoint any clear historical trend from which a future growth path may be extrapolated. Also displayed in Figure 2.1 are the results of three methods for projecting the community's future growth, yielding 2020 projections ranging from just over 27,000 (a net loss of population) to nearly 31,200.

The "Step Down" method assumes the City's population will grow at the same rate as County-wide population, thereby maintaining the City's share of the County population

(approximately 52 percent) in coming years. This percentage is then applied to County-level population projections to project the future City population. This projection method results in a declining population for Hobbs because the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of New Mexico has forecasted that Lea County will lose more than 2,900 residents, or about five percent of its population by 2020. Since the numerical population projections considered in this chapter are based on the current city limits and do not take into account potential annexation activity, the City could possibly account for a larger share of Lea County's future population by taking in additional territory and residents through annexation. If the County does not lose as much population as predicted or even gains population, then the City's growth projection would also be affected, as it would if Hobbs is able to account for a higher share of the County-wide population in the future.

A second population forecasting method, labeled linear regression in Figure 2.1, involves a basic "straight-line" projection of past trends into the future. Using this approach, the City's population would increase to nearly 31,000 residents by 2020, representing 8.1 percent growth over the 20-year period. Under this method, the same absolute number of additional persons is added to the population in each five-year forecast period (in this case, 393 people each period). However, this results in a declining rate of growth over time since the same quantity is being added to an ever-expanding base of people. Nonetheless, it is a scenario that shows renewed growth for Hobbs.

The third projection method, exponential growth, assumes a constant rate of population growth. This means that the number of people added to the local population increases in each five-year period just as the overall "pie" is expanding over time. The exponential growth line in Figure 1.1, and the associated projection numbers, represent steady growth of 1.4 percent each five-year period. Compared to the linear regression approach, this method results in a slightly higher population forecast of nearly 31,200 residents in 2020. While exponential growth yields only 207 more future residents than linear regression, it is substantially above the step-down calculation (by 4,053).

Under the three projection scenarios, Hobbs' population by 2020 would either:

- decrease by 5.3 percent, representing a loss of 1,515 residents (Step-Down);
- increase by 8.1 percent, for a gain of 2,331 residents (Linear Regression); or,
- increase by 8.9 percent, adding 2,538 residents in the process (Exponential).

When the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee reviewed these scenarios, it was discussed that a recent wastewater system analysis prepared for the City (*Municipal*

Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis, 2002) included a projection of 36,130 residents in 2020. This projection assumed population growth in Hobbs of 1.4 percent per year over the next two decades. Under this projection, nearly 7,500 new residents would be added to Hobbs through 2020 compared to just over 2,500 residents under the highest of the three scenarios presented above. It was also discussed that such projections for water and wastewater planning must not be too conservative to avoid underestimating future infrastructure and service needs. However, Hobbs' up-and-down experience in recent decades makes it difficult to gauge which potential growth scenario might be most reasonable, including the much more optimistic wastewater system projection that implies 26 percent growth in the City's population by 2020.

Some point to economic development potentials that could boost local employment and population (racetrack, uranium facility, etc.). Greater retention of existing residents, particularly youth, is another hope for the future. In addition, Hobbs may be able to capture a greater share of the pending wave of "baby boomer" retirees in the United States over the next few decades. Yet, the Bureau of Business & Economic Research at the University of New Mexico is currently projecting that Lea County will lose population in coming years.

As a result of these discussions, **it was concluded that Hobbs' new Comprehensive Community Development Plan should be based on a projected 2020 population range of 31,000 to 36,000 residents, with 34,000 as a round-number target figure for long-range planning purposes**. Growth from 28,657 persons in 2000 to 34,000 in 2020 would represent an 18.6 percent increase and the addition of 5,343 new residents over the 20-year period. Hobbs has not seen growth at this rate since the 1970s, when the population increased by 12 percent in 10 years, and then back to the oil-boom decades of the 1930s to 1950s. In neighboring Texas, given recent economic uncertainties, the State Data Center has suggested that those making population projections should assume slower but steady growth, which is a change from earlier projections that extrapolated from the dramatic growth rates of the 1990s.

Projections provide a basis to prepare for the future. But it is important to remember that such projections and forecasts cannot account for all physical, social and economic phenomena that may occur over the next several decades and cause subtle or drastic changes in the area population. It will therefore be important for the City of Hobbs to monitor population and economic growth on an ongoing basis to account for both short- and long-term shifts that will influence growth and development in the city, county and larger region. Hobbs' previous Comprehensive Plan in 1965 predicted that Hobbs would have 50,000 residents in 1980 and 55,000 in 1985, "if present trends are maintained." In reality, Hobbs had just over 29,000 residents in 1980 and roughly the same 10 years later in 1990. This did not mean that the urban planning strategies and

action recommendations in the 1965 plan were worthless, just that the magnitude of future needs turned out to be less than anticipated. Pertinent questions today include:

- Will the City's share of the countywide population continue to decline in future years as more people choose to live in less urbanized settings or as development is drawn to areas outside the corporate limits for cost advantages or other reasons?
- Will the City offset some of this population loss through annexation of additional territory, particularly newly-urbanizing and growing areas just beyond the existing city limits?
- If significant annexation is not feasible, will the City adopt other policies and/or incentives aimed at attracting more residential and non-residential development within the corporate limits?

The answers to these questions will also influence the City's population growth path.

Other Hobbs Data *

Average Household Size:
2.72 persons per household

Percent of Family Households:
86% of all households

Percent of Hispanic or Latino Population:
42%

Percent of Households with 2 Persons or Less:
54%

Institutionalized Population:
820 (2.9%)

Percent of Residents With Retirement Income:
13.7% (16.7% U.S. / 17.4% in N.M.)

Percent Who Lived in Same House in 1995:
52%

Percent Who Lived in a Different New Mexico County in 1995:
4.9% (1,408 persons)

Percent Who Lived in a Different State in 1995:
10% (2,547 persons)

73% came from the South
17% came from the West
9% came from the Midwest
3% came from the Northeast

* *from 2000 Census unless otherwise noted*

Many communities prefer some degree of growth while others purposely adopt policies to limit the rate of growth and development. A slow-growth period, such as Hobbs has experienced in recent years, can provide an opportunity to address pressing community issues and "get ahead" of renewed growth by preparing for future extension of infrastructure and expanded public services. Economic development and redevelopment needs often become a primary focus during such times, as is the case in Hobbs in 2003 compared to the heady days surrounding the 1964-65 comprehensive planning effort.

A Young Community Needing Greater Retention

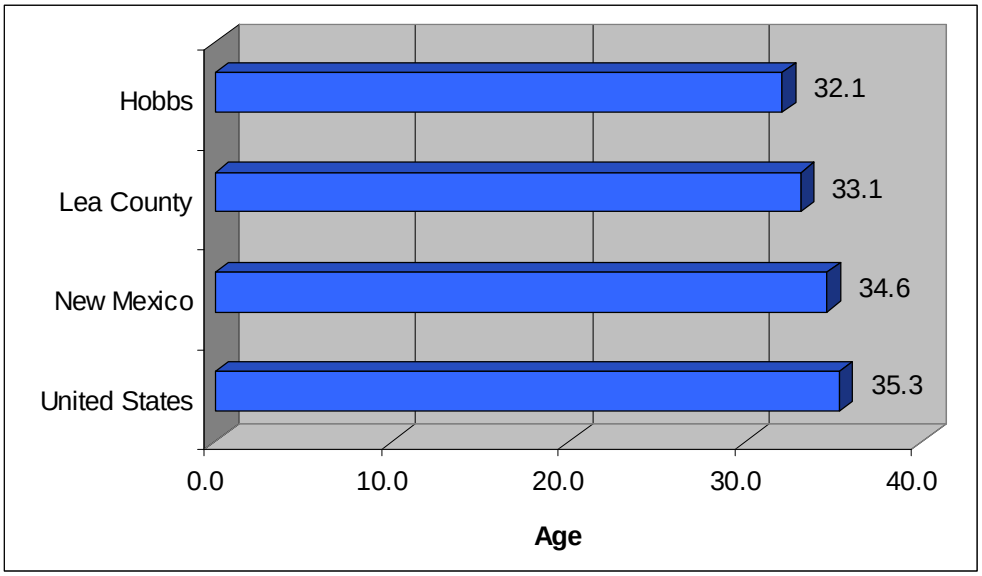
The median age comparison in **Figure 2.2** confirms that Hobbs is a relatively young community, with a median age of 32.1 years in 2000. Detailed age data from the last U.S. Census show that 30.4 percent of Hobbs' population in 2000 was under age 18. This

compares to 30.1 percent for all of Lea County, 28.0 percent for New Mexico, and 25.7 percent for the United States.

This fact can have numerous implications within a community. For example, a population of predominately younger individuals and/or families will have different housing needs than a more mature community. Similarly, younger men and women in the labor force will have particular employment needs given their lesser experience. In the public sector, government staff responsible for parks and recreation must consider the needs of younger residents and families when planning facilities and programming.

At the other end of the spectrum, Hobbs more closely resembles the age distribution statewide and nationally. The percentage of Hobbs residents who were age 65 or older in 2000 was 11.9 percent, which compared to 12.2 percent for Lea County, 11.7 percent for New Mexico, and 12.4 percent for the United States.

FIGURE 2.2:
Median Age: 2000
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

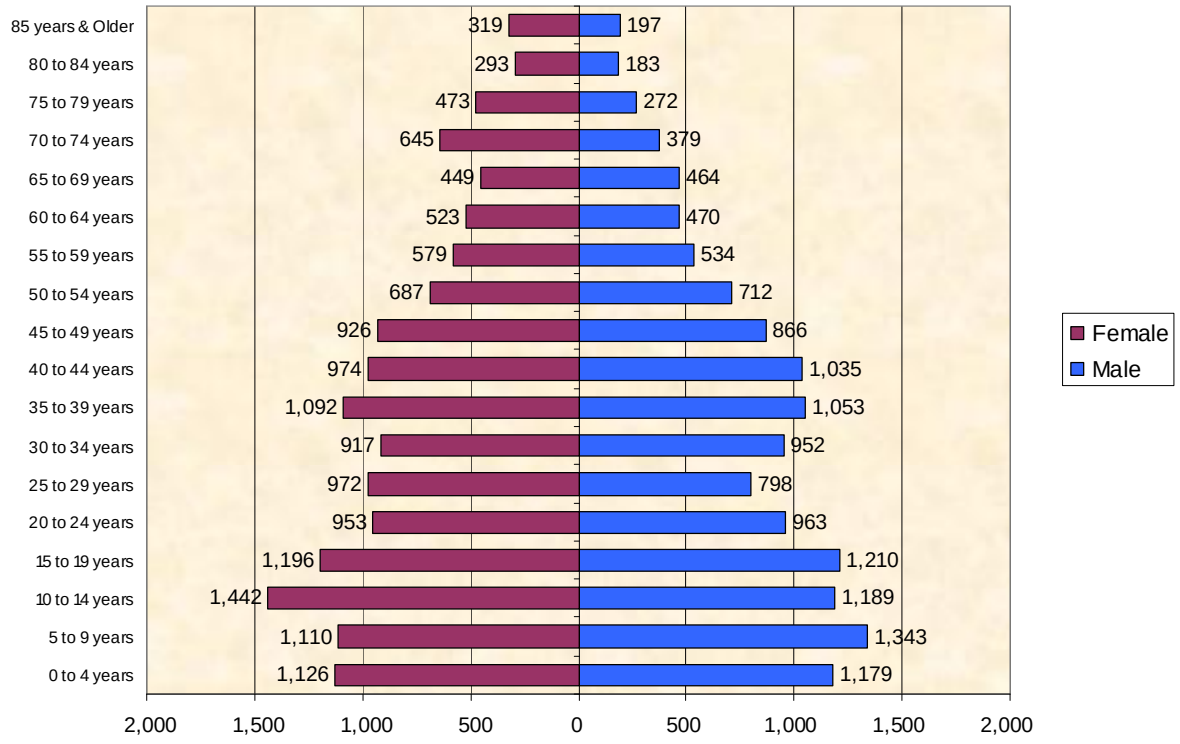


SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The population pyramid for Hobbs displayed in **Figure 2.3** shows how the local population was distributed across all age ranges and between males and females in 2000. This chart clearly shows the dropoff in population in the 20 to 34 age groups. This

corresponds to concerns expressed in Hobbs about the need to retain a greater proportion of youth after high school graduation and/or following their college years.

FIGURE 2.3:
Hobbs Age and Gender Distribution: 2000
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



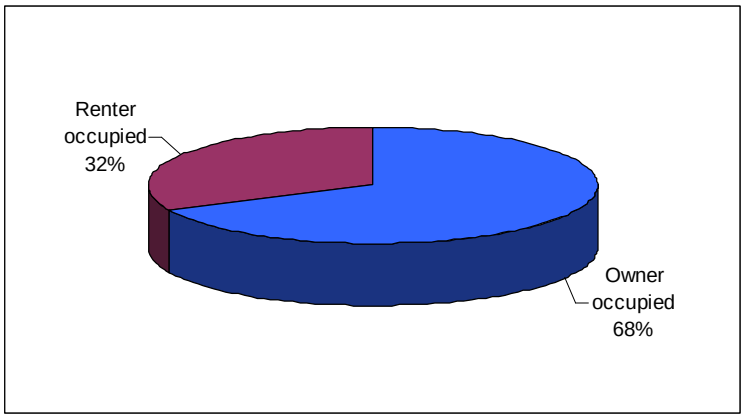
SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Housing Market Concerns

One of the most telling statistics about Hobbs' housing market in recent years is the rate of growth in housing units, which totaled just under 12,000 within the City in 2000. Whereas Hobbs had 32.4 percent more dwelling units in 2000 than in 1970, the housing supply nationwide grew more than twice as much (68.7 percent), and statewide the number was more than four times higher at 139.4 percent. Data for just the 1990s shows the gap was even more pronounced during the last decade. The number of dwelling units in Hobbs increased only 4.3 percent from 1990 to 2000 while statewide the number grew 22.9 percent and nationally by 17.0 percent.

On the positive side, housing occupancy data from the U.S. Census show that more than two-thirds (68.1 percent) of the dwellings in Hobbs in 2000 were owner-occupied, as displayed in **Figure 2.4**. The rate was slightly higher statewide, at 70.0 percent, but Hobbs exceeded the national homeownership rate of 66.2 percent in 2000.

FIGURE 2.4:
Hobbs Housing Occupancy: 2000
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Among all dwellings in Hobbs that were owner-occupied in 2000, nearly half (48.7 percent) had a value of $50,000 or less. Statewide only 13.1 percent of owner-occupied homes were valued at $50,000 or less. While Hobbs is known for its relatively low cost of living, these figures may be a reflection of the number of older, smaller homes within the City as well as the need for revitalization in some areas. On the other side of the coin, 22.5 percent of New Mexico's owner-occupied dwellings were worth $150,000 to $300,000 in 2000. In Hobbs, only 3.8 percent of such homes fell within this higher value range, which is likely another reflection of limited new home construction in the community.

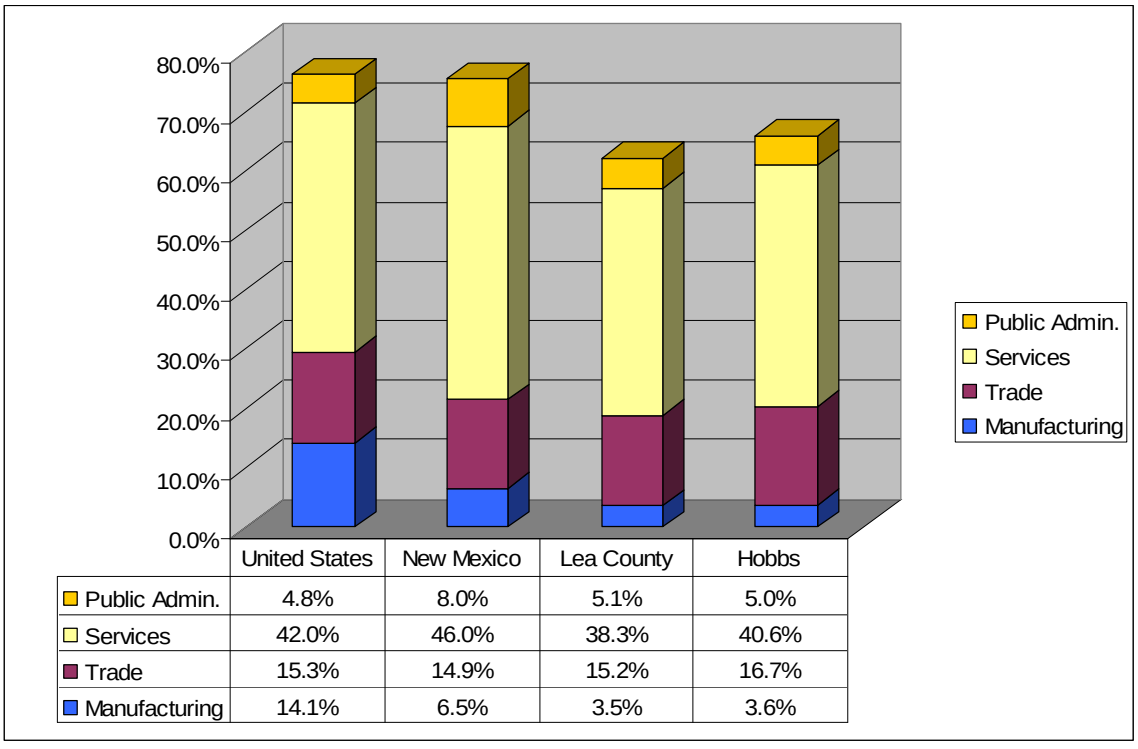
Energy and Trade as Economic Pillars

Employment data from the 2000 U.S. Census confirm several key characteristics of the Hobbs economy. First, while less than one percent (0.38 percent) of all workers nationally are involved in mining industries (covering resource extraction, including oil and gas production), 16.1 percent of local employment in 2000 was devoted to mining-related activities (down from 18.9 percent in 1990). Even at the state level, only 1.9 percent of New Mexico's employed worked in mining. The percentage was slightly

higher, at 17.6 percent, for all of oil-rich Lea County. The Hobbs community continues to work toward greater diversification of the area economy to reduce its dependence on one sector.

The comparison chart and data in **Figure 2.5** illustrate the relatively small role of manufacturing in the Hobbs and Lea County economies, in terms of employment, compared to statewide and especially nationally. However, data on wholesale and retail trade employment reflect Hobbs' "trade center" role. In Hobbs, 16.7 percent of all employment in 2000 was in the trade sector, which was higher than for Lea County (15.2 percent), New Mexico (14.9 percent) and the nation (15.3 percent). In the increasingly important services sector, Hobbs was not significantly different from state and national employment shares (40.6 percent in services employment locally versus 46.0 in New Mexico and 42.0 percent for the United States).

FIGURE 2.5:
Employment by Sector Comparison: 2000
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



	United States	New Mexico	Lea County	Hobbs
Public Admin.	4.8%	8.0%	5.1%	5.0%
Services	42.0%	46.0%	38.3%	40.6%
Trade	15.3%	14.9%	15.2%	16.7%
Manufacturing	14.1%	6.5%	3.5%	3.6%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Income and Poverty Issues

Federal data on income levels and poverty status point toward ongoing economic development and social service needs in Hobbs. For example, local per capita income in 1999 ($14,209) was 18 percent lower than for all of New Mexico ($17,261) and one-third lower than nationally ($21,587). Once again, such comparisons, in part, reflect cost-of-living differences. However, other data show that nearly a quarter (24.2 percent) of Hobbs residents in 1999 were below the poverty line compared to 18.4 percent statewide and 12.4 percent across the nation.

Other data show that nearly half (44.0 percent) of Hobbs workers earned less than $25,000 in 1999, compared to 37.0 percent statewide and 28.7 percent nationally. Finally, the percentage of people in Hobbs receiving public assistance income in 1999 (7.5 percent) was more than double the national rate (3.4 percent) and higher than for all of New Mexico (4.7 percent).

Sources of Additional Community Information

Lea County Fact Book, Economic Development Corporation of Lea County (http://www.leanm.org/)

Bureau of Business & Economic Research, University of New Mexico (http://www.unm.edu/~bber/)

Market and Economic Analysis and an Economic Development Strategy for Lea County and the Cities of Hobbs and Lovington, Gruen Gruen + Associates (March 2003)

City of Hobbs (http://hobbsnm.org/)

Hobbs Public Library (http://hobbspublib.leaco.net/)

Hobbs Chamber of Commerce (http://hobbschamber.org/)

Hobbs News-Sun (http://63.106.39.47/hobbsnews/index.bsp)

U.S. Bureau of the Census (http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer?city=hobbs&state=nm&zip=)

State of New Mexico (http://www.state.nm.us/)

Lea County (http://www.leacounty.net/)

Chapter 3

VISION & GOALS

Vision is the first step on the road toward successful implementation of a strong Comprehensive Plan. Regarding the power of vision, Florence Scovel Shinn noted that "every great work, every great accomplishment, has been brought into manifestation through holding to the vision." Robert Collier said that vision "…reaches beyond the thing that is, into the conception of what can be. Imagination gives you the picture. Vision gives you the impulse to make the picture your own." That initial imagination leads to goals and, ultimately, to action.

The Comprehensive Plan, though broad in nature, is intended to provide clear and decisive statements concerning the community's goals and objectives and other general guidelines for managing future growth and enhancement. The plan serves as an overall guide while allowing flexibility to respond to new ideas and direction as the community progresses and partnerships flourish between the City, Lea County, local schools and colleges, the Economic Development Corporation, and various other parties.

To establish this positive framework for growth, the plan must first create a sense of overall vision. Vision represents the point from which plan implementation begins. It is the overall consensus for how the community will be viewed by future generations. It is the understanding that the community offers many strengths and faces its share of challenges. The vision offers a unique image of the future based on the community's core values, building upon its strengths and overcoming obstacles. Most important, the vision is not simply an ideal image, it is achievable, even if the path seems arduous.

Vision is the recognizable point in the planning process when the community ceases to examine existing conditions and begins to look forward to the future. A single, encompassing vision dictates the tone of the Comprehensive Plan. In addressing major themes such as land use, transportation, community image, and utilities,

vision is the first step on a road to implementation that is followed by goals, objectives and action statements.

Goals serve as the general ends toward which efforts are directed. Goals are broad and, as the next logical step, they begin to answer the question, "how will the vision be implemented?" Goals are qualitative and offer no strong quantitative measures. Goals are designed to stretch and challenge the imagination while remaining realistic and achievable.

Objectives are clear targets for specific action. They mark interim steps toward achieving the vision and goals. Responding to the relevant goal, an objective is quantifiable and more specifically answers the question of "how?" It is a measurable statement of intent that emphasizes the results of various actions at the conclusion of a defined period.

Action statements are specific tasks that must be completed to achieve goals and objectives. An action is the means for transforming goals and objectives into results, with an efficient allocation of resources and mindful of financial constraints.

In this context, community goals, objectives and actions are structured to provide direction for the future growth and appropriate development of Hobbs. In a structure that begins broadly, each step toward implementation more precisely answers the question of "how?" Conversely, the steps can be taken in reverse to answer the question of "why?" Taken either way, the process begins and ends at the foundation: vision.

Determining Vision

Establishing vision involves gaining an understanding of what Hobbs "would like to be when it grows up" and applying those ideals to each of the plan's elements. The Vision Statement established for Hobbs is a reflection of public opinions, data collection and consultant observation in which individuals cited assets, challenges, needs and possibilities. Information was gathered during the process of assessing existing conditions in Hobbs and refined as the planning process reached a conclusion. The Vision Statement reflects the dialogue of numerous stakeholders, including elected officials, civic leaders, business owners, residents and many other members of the general public who sought to play a role in planning for the future of Hobbs.

A Vision for Hobbs … for 2025 and Beyond

Hobbs has tenacity and will continue to persevere.
Hobbs embraces a higher quality of life
through responsible growth and development.
Our community is safe, appealing and vibrant.
Hobbs is a regional hub for shopping, entertainment,
sports and recreation, health care and education.
Most importantly, we remain a community where
relationships matter—a place you feel you belong.
Hobbs offers youth opportunities, welcomes newcomers,
and is a great place to spend one's "sunset years."
Our vision is reflected by community pride.
A city that never gives up, is never satisfied,
and is never afraid to take a chance.

Assets of Life in Hobbs

Residents and leaders in Hobbs are enthusiastic about their community and its people but cognizant of its weak points and long-range planning challenges. Following are some of the many positive aspects of Hobbs cited by residents and local leaders through key person interviews, a "town hall" style community forum in July 2003, advisory committee meetings and other activities.

Hobbs offers:

- A great place to live and raise a family (climate, infrastructure, cost of housing/living, great educational system from kindergarten through graduate, family-driven activities).
- A good place to do business (a "land of opportunity" that also has its ups and downs).
- A values-based community.
- Lots of people who know each other and communicate—relationships are what keep people here (more of a southern culture than the rest of New Mexico).
- A community that supports its schools.
- Community spirit and pride (one high school helps to bring everyone together).
- A "can do" attitude, where people are willing to accept responsibility.
- A progressive, philanthropic, tremendously giving community that supports itself.

- A solid work ethic.
- A pioneering mentality and perseverance.
- A diversity of people, representation of different cultures—and improving ability to work together across cultures.
- A climate you can't beat (warm summer days and cool nights).
- Wide-open land.
- Low hazards (tornados, hurricanes).
- A setting that is not as fast-paced as bigger cities—but more shopping and activity than really small towns.
- People with long-term family and business ties to the area.
- An enjoyable place to live.
- A community that has made strategic investments in itself (school bonds passage, New Mexico Junior College, Turner Street beautification, Del Norte Park, Lea County Events Center).
- Strong tax valuations and low property taxes.
- Good relationships in Albuquerque and with state government.
- Two institutions of higher learning (College of the Southwest, NMJC) and continuing education opportunities.
- A place that some people leave for various reasons but then choose to come back to.
- A place where you can get involved with what you want to get involved with.
- Good (and inexpensive) golf.
- A renaissance in community leadership.
- A "comfort" factor.

Challenges to Life in Hobbs

Challenges represent real or perceived issues that negatively impact Hobbs. It is important to recognize both types of issues and develop the capacity to address them appropriately. Thinking positive and actively, challenges should also be viewed as additional opportunities for the area. The solutions that emerge can become very strong

assets and marketing points for the community. They also offer the chance to show positive results through implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

As expressed by community leaders and residents, Hobbs needs:

- Economic diversification and quality job opportunities.
- Workforce development—plus attraction of qualified labor to the area.
- Growth of existing businesses while working to attract new investment.
- More new housing—and in the appropriate price ranges and types/sizes to suit the local market.
- A restored "middle class" to offset the trend toward a poorer community.
- Renewed entrepreneurial spirit—willingness to take risks (and more capital to encourage new business ventures and expansion).
- Beautification.
- Well-planned infrastructure.
- "Smarter" growth (coordinated with infrastructure, targeted annexation, major street planning, better development guidance—especially with the arrival of national chain stores, avoid "helter-skelter" growth, build where development already is, planned northward growth).
- A better image, especially to be more competitive in economic development.
- To address pockets of blight.
- Better land use management to protect property values and tax base—and community consensus on how best to achieve this.
- A secure long-term water supply and more aggressive water conservation.
- Better cooperation with all levels of government.
- Improved municipal finances.
- Quality public spaces.
- Community consensus on downtown revitalization, redevelopment possibilities in other older areas, and on the role of City government.
- More parks and recreation.
- Better air transportation service.
- Reduced building and infrastructure costs to spur construction.
- Better building quality and aesthetics.

- Annexation to better manage growth and enhance tax base.
- Expanded fine arts offerings and facilities (and better coordination among cultural arts organizations).
- To retain its younger population ("keep our kids here").
- Confidence and better identity and self-image (change in attitude).
- Better display of community pride and optimism (otherwise, why invest here?)
- An atmosphere where people will want to live here.
- Longer-term perspective versus short-term "fixes" (a collective, collaborative vision with resources focused toward key milestones versus scattershot efforts).
- County-wide perspective on economic development and public services.
- More people willing to step forward as community leaders and "champions."
- Overcoming a "no change" mentality.
- Better integration of newcomers.
- More things for people and youth to do (retail variety, entertainment, more local spending and activity).
- To take advantage of this "window of opportunity" for community improvement (and educate the community about what City government can do and potential benefits).

Goals by Plan Element

The Comprehensive Community Development Plan for Hobbs is designed to direct the community's attention toward the "big picture" of its future. An overall Vision Statement provides inspiration, and the goals to be pursued through each plan element establish a decision-making framework for addressing more specific issues and concerns that must be acted upon. Goals also help to promote consistency in plan implementation as changes occur in development trends and the physical form of the community as well as its government leadership.

The remainder of this chapter is a compilation of the goal statements that appear in the core elements of this Comprehensive Plan: Growth Capacity, Transportation, Economic Development, Urban Development, and Parks and Recreation.

Growth Capacity

Besides needing to support its existing population, businesses and institutions with essential utility services, Hobbs must have the necessary infrastructure in place to attract

the type of investment and development that it desires for the future. This includes reliable and high-quality water service, wastewater collection and treatment, and storm drainage facilities. More than is often realized, availability of quality infrastructure also dictates community growth patterns and quality of life for residents.

Goals for Growth Capacity include:

- *Adequate, reliable water supply to serve Hobbs' long-term needs.*
- *Increased capabilities and capacity of the potable water system.*
- *Adequate wastewater collection and treatment capacity to accommodate long-term growth objectives and projected needs.*
- *Continued progress toward alleviating existing and projected flooding risks.*

Transportation

Long-range planning for enhanced mobility in Hobbs addresses all aspects of transportation, from the private automobile to walking and biking, public transit, and efficient movement of goods and materials. A particular focus is the need for expanded air transportation service to support local and area-wide economic development objectives.

Goals for Transportation include:

- *A safe and efficient roadway network to serve existing transportation needs and accommodate future projected growth.*
- *Constant coordination of land use and transportation planning and implementation to ensure viable development outcomes for the long term.*
- *Appropriate parking arrangements to support an appealing, thriving downtown without sacrificing traffic safety in the area.*
- *Pedestrian and bicycle "friendliness" elevated as a more important component of quality of life in Hobbs.*
- *Expanded local air transportation options for residents, businesses and public agencies.*

Economic Development

As was stated many times and in many ways during the comprehensive planning process, economic development is "Job One" for Hobbs after several decades of limited investment and growth. While the community no longer has to weather a "boom-bust" cycle as in its formative years, Hobbs still needs more economic opportunity to boost area employment, maintain a healthy housing market, and generate the public revenue

streams necessary to fund desired community enhancements—which, in turn, make the city more appealing for future growth and investment.

Goals for Economic Development include:

- *A revitalized, appealing community in which diversified and quality development provides the foundation for sustained investment and enhanced livability.*
- *A City whose economic and community assets are obvious—and obviously appreciated.*
- *A medical/educational district in northwest Hobbs that is better woven into the fabric of the future City.*
- *A community where civic pride comes naturally given the array of recreational, shopping, cultural and entertainment opportunities available to residents and visitors.*

Urban Development

The pattern and nature of land use and development play a significant role in establishing the character of a community. Transportation and utility infrastructure are often described as forming the "skeleton" of a city, but the real community is found in individual homes, businesses, schools, churches, stores, athletic fields, and libraries where people go about their daily lives and interact socially and economically.

Goals for Urban Development include:

- *Long-term growth in appropriate areas to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses within the City and urbanizing portions of its extraterritorial jurisdiction.*
- *A community in which quality, affordable housing in a variety of styles is available in sufficient quantity to residents at all income levels.*
- *Well-maintained established neighborhoods that offer rewarding living options while supporting the history, character and pride of Hobbs.*
- *Attractive, appealing developments that contribute to a positive community image and character, thereby encouraging further desired economic investment and enhancements.*

Parks and Recreation

All communities face the challenge of accommodating those who desire a variety of active recreational options while also providing green spaces and quiet places for more passive activity and environmental preservation. Hobbs also has the opportunity to continue building on its successes in neighborhood-based parks and effective coordination of school playgrounds and City parks.

Goals for Parks and Recreation include:

- *A parks, recreation and open space system that is operated, maintained and enhanced in a cost-effective manner.*
- *Livable neighborhoods with parks and open space areas serving as focal points or key components of neighborhood design.*
- *A network of sidewalks, trails and bikeways which connects residential areas to parks, schools, workplaces, shopping, major open spaces and other destinations, providing alternative routes for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and access.*
- *A parks and recreation system that enhances the quality of life of local residents and promotes economic growth and investment.*

Chapter 4

GROWTH CAPACITY

The purpose of the Growth Capacity chapter is to provide a framework for the logical development, extension and upgrading of the City's infrastructure system in line with current needs, projected growth and economic development goals. This chapter addresses potable water, wastewater and storm water services. The potable water system is comprised of supply (ground water wells) and distribution facilities. The wastewater system includes gravity flow collection lines, pump stations (lift stations) with pressure lines, and treatment units. Storm water drainage facilities typically include collection inlets, gravity flow collection lines, open channels, detention ponds, and storm water treatment facilities.

The findings and recommendations in this plan element are based, in part, on information from existing utility plans and studies. These include:

- *Municipal Water System Hydraulic Analysis and Water Master Plan*, 2002.
- *Lea County Regional Water Plan* (prepared for Lea County Water Users Association), 2000.
- *Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis*, 2002.
- *City of Hobbs Storm Drainage Management Plan*, 1994.
- *Hobbs Industrial Air Park Master Plan*, 2002.

Also available for the comprehensive planning process were electronic data and maps of the municipal water system (including pump stations, water towers, pipe layout with diameters, and service areas including supply sources); wastewater system (including pipe layouts, force mains, and service areas including lift stations); storm water system; the locations of existing private water wells; and, the locations of existing septic tanks and drain fields.

This plan element is not intended to update or replace these current utility plans. Instead, it should be used in conjunction with these studies as well as the Urban Development and Transportation elements of this Comprehensive Plan to support long-range planning for the ongoing physical development of Hobbs and adjacent urbanizing areas.

Key Issues

Through the comprehensive planning and public input processes, the following key issues related to Hobbs' major utility systems and growth capacity were identified:

- **Conserving Hobbs' Most Valuable Resource—Water.** Much attention and discussion during the comprehensive planning process was focused on the remaining capacity of the City's single wastewater treatment plant as a potential growth constraint. However, basic water supply is the more significant constraint to Hobbs' long-term growth and development. Water is a depletable resource, and in Hobbs' case, the actual amount of water available for municipal and commercial needs could became a limiting factor well before the 21st Century is over (in 40-60 years, by some estimates, based on the rate at which feasible aquifer supply is drawn down in the coming decades). While a range of water system improvements is needed, as outlined in the City's *Water Master Plan*, to ensure that the existing and future urbanized area will be served effectively, the important distinction is that it is not the adequacy of the "infrastructure" or the quality of facilities that will impact Hobbs' growth potential. Rather, it is the need to identify alternative, reliable, reasonably-priced sources of water for the long term while conserving water now to stretch the time span of existing supplies.

- **Planning Ahead for Expansion of Wastewater Treatment Capacity.** As the City awaits the results of a study aimed at determining the true remaining capacity of its lone wastewater treatment facility, current estimates are that the plant is typically operating in the 85-90 percent range. City Utilities personnel are confident that interim methods and improvements will suffice to enable the facility to operate effectively and within capacity for the next decade. However, during that time it will be essential for the City to continue to make the necessary improvements in the existing system while planning ahead for the potential investment in an upgraded or new wastewater treatment facility to handle future growth and demand. Such an investment is a major milestone for a municipality, and one for which there is limited opportunity for significant grants or other external funding. As a result, it will require the City to position itself with adequate budgetary resources by that point to finance what will likely be a costly capital expenditure. But, as noted above, facility and infrastructure deficiencies can be addressed, assuming adequate monetary resources are available, but water is either available or it is not. That fact is what places the water supply issue at a higher level of concern than current capacity limitations at the City's wastewater facility.

- **Addressing Key Drainage Problems.** Hobbs continues to face urban drainage challenges, with ongoing development and conversion of land to impermeable surfaces contributing to additional storm drainage needs. The City's *Storm Drainage Management Plan*, prepared in 1994, provides a specific program of targeted improvements to address current and projected drainage issues. While progress continues, the most significant improvements will require major capital expenditures, including likely federal government participation, and such projects are always in competition with water, wastewater and other infrastructure priorities.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan are based on traditional infrastructure planning and community design principles as well as input from community residents and leaders during the planning process. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order. Some of the action recommendations from existing utility plans and studies will remain long-range options since they do not involve simple or low-cost solutions or are not yet warranted by demand.

Conserving Hobbs' Most Valuable Resource—Water

GOAL: Adequate, reliable water supply to serve Hobbs' long-term needs.

GOAL: Increased capabilities and capacity of the potable water system.

Objectives

- Continue to plan cooperatively with other major water users to implement "supply-stretching" conservation and management measures while pursuing feasible long-term water supply alternatives.
- Use the *Water Master Plan* as a guide for completing prioritized water system improvements in the Hobbs and North Hobbs systems through 2020.
- Recognize the role of potable water service in growth management and guidance efforts, together with other infrastructure policies and development regulations/incentives.

Actions

- Continue coordinated efforts among all major water user groups and with the State of New Mexico to work toward long-range water supply alternatives.
- Expand implementation of mandatory and recommended water conservation measures within the City and in all new developments regulated by the City, using incentive and financial assistance approaches where appropriate.

- Expand public education efforts to achieve broad recognition of the importance of comprehensive water conservation measures to ensure Hobbs' long-term growth potential.
- Monitor and adjust the City's usage-based water rate structure as necessary to ensure that water billing continues to provide conservation incentives.
- Expand water production capacity through well field development and enhancement, plus construction of associated trunk facilities when needed.
- Establish additional ground storage reservoir capacity at multiple locations as outlined in the *Water Master Plan*.
- Expand existing pump stations and construct additional facilities as outlined in the *Water Master Plan*.
- Build new elevated storage towers at key locations as detailed in the *Water Master Plan*.
- Construct additional distribution system pipe capacity in both the Hobbs and North Hobbs systems for fire-related needs.
- Complete piping system expansions in both the Hobbs and North Hobbs systems to address current and future water demands as detailed in the *Water Master Plan*.
- Construct pressure reducing stations at Lovington Highway and Dal Paso to facilitate continued water transfers from North Hobbs to the Hobbs System.
- Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan when reviewing proposed subdivision and site development plans to ensure functional integration of new streets and land uses with the expansion and extension of properly-sized water distribution lines.
- Update the *Water System Plan* (including system computer models and digital maps) periodically to reflect the current condition and capacity of the water system. Also take into account the City's economic development and growth guidance objectives and priorities as reflected in this Comprehensive Community Development Plan, the City's Thoroughfare Plan, and other development plans, policies and regulations.
- Continue to require high standards for water-related infrastructure in new developments that are regulated beyond the current city limits to avoid inheriting problem situations as the City grows.

Planning Ahead for Expansion of Wastewater Treatment Capacity

GOAL: Adequate wastewater collection and treatment capacity to accommodate long-term growth objectives and projected needs.

Objectives

- Use the 2002 *Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis* as a guide for completing prioritized wastewater system improvements through 2020.

- Position the City to undertake significant capacity-enhancing improvements that will require significant capital investment in engineering design and construction.
- Recognize the role of centralized wastewater collection and treatment in growth management and guidance efforts, together with other infrastructure policies and development regulations/incentives.

Actions

- Based on the results of the City's current treatment plant capacity study, plan and implement a phased program of interim process modifications and facility improvements until the City is ready for more significant and costly steps.
- Continue to upgrade the City's pretreatment requirements, especially to enhance monitoring and enforcement, to eliminate the worst influent problems (petroleum products, solvents, etc.) from the City's wastewater treatment process.
- Continue to weigh opportunities to increase reuse of treated municipal wastewater effluent for irrigation (e.g., non-edible agriculture, golf courses, parks) to divert higher-quality water away from this use. Any significant expansion of effluent reuse will involve infrastructure costs (additional piping and pumping) as well as necessary staff and budget for maintenance and operations activities.
- Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan when reviewing proposed subdivision and site development plans to ensure functional integration of new streets and land uses with the expansion and extension of properly-sized wastewater collection lines.
- Update the *Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis* periodically to reflect the current condition and capacity of the wastewater system. Also take into account the City's economic development and growth guidance objectives and priorities as reflected in this Comprehensive Community Development Plan, the City's Thoroughfare Plan, and other development plans, policies and regulations.
- Continue to require high standards for wastewater-related infrastructure in new developments that are regulated beyond the current city limits to avoid inheriting problem situations as the City grows.

Addressing Key Drainage Problems

GOAL: Continued progress toward alleviating existing and projected flooding risks.

Objectives

- Continue to use the *Storm Drainage Management Plan* as a guide for completing prioritized drainage system improvements as resources allow.

- Recognize the role of drainage system improvements in growth management and guidance efforts—as well as for economic development—as reduced flood risk makes certain areas more attractive for development.

Actions

- Continue to use capital improvement program funding to complete targeted drainage improvements in a gradual, phased fashion.
- Continue to pursue federal participation and funding to accomplish the most significant, regional drainage system improvements recommended in the *Storm Drainage Management Plan*.
- As was done in preparing the City's *Storm Drainage Management Plan*, continue to coordinate with the local development community to ensure that public planning and implementation efforts related to drainage are in sync with anticipated development trends and private intentions (in terms of location, timing/phasing, scale, etc.).
- As recommended in the *Storm Drainage Management Plan*, continue to allow flexibility and encourage innovative approaches for mitigating the drainage impacts of new development and significant redevelopment.
- Continue to pursue opportunities to develop storm drainage improvements, particularly retention basins, as multi-use facilities either for active recreation (e.g., athletic fields, bikeways/trails) or passive open space for the enjoyment of the citizens who helped to fund such improvements.
- Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan when reviewing proposed subdivision and site development plans to ensure functional integration of new streets and land uses with the expansion and extension of properly-sized storm sewer lines.
- Update the *Storm Drainage Management Plan* periodically to reflect the current condition and capacity of the storm drainage collection and conveyance system. Also take into account the City's economic development and growth guidance objectives and priorities as reflected in this Comprehensive Community Development Plan, the City's Thoroughfare Plan, and other development plans, policies and regulations.
- Continue to require high standards for drainage-related infrastructure in new developments that are regulated beyond the current city limits to avoid inheriting problem situations as the City grows.

Potable Water System

Lea County Regional Water Plan

Water for public supply needs currently represents only about 10 percent of all water use in Lea County (irrigated agriculture uses 78 percent, mining uses seven percent, power generation uses three percent, and the remaining small share is for domestic,

livestock and recreational needs). Given the variety and magnitude of competing water uses in the region, it is essential for Hobbs and other area cities to be engaged in coordinated, comprehensive water supply planning to ensure that long-term urban water needs will be met.

A regional water plan completed in December 2000 for the Lea County Water Users Association provided a detailed examination of water supply and service needs over the next 40 years. The *Lea County Regional Water Plan* included the following key findings:

- There are no perennial streams in Lea County, and surface water is limited to stockponds, playas and intermittent drainage.
- Area ground water resources include five underground water basins (UWBs), which, from north to south, are: (1) Lea UWB, (2) a very small portion of the Roswell UWB, (3) the Capitan UWB, (4) the Carlsbad UWB, and (5) the Jal UWB.
- The Lea UWB is associated with the Ogallala Aquifer, which is part of the High Plains Aquifer. Water from this primary ground water resource is used for agriculture, domestic, municipal, livestock, commercial, oil and gas, mining and industrial purposes.
- Ground water in the Lea UWB is being pumped out at a faster rate than it is being recharged. Historic water level declines from pumping near Hobbs and along the New Mexico-Texas state line are as great as 50 to 70 feet.
- The Jal UWB is the smallest in Lea County and the only other basin that provides water for municipal use, primarily for the City of Jal. Water levels in the Jal UWB have remained relatively steady, indicating that recharge is sufficient to keep pace with historic and ongoing ground water pumping.
- The other three UWBs in the County provide water for livestock, domestic, mining, and oil and gas activities. Water use from these UWBs is fairly limited because the aquifers cannot provide adequate quantities of water for large users' wells, or because the water quality is poor.

The "bottom line" conclusion in the regional water plan has clear implications for the growth capacity and economic development potential of Hobbs and Lea County:

- Annual ground water diversion in Lea County in 1995 was 179,341 acre-feet, the majority of which was from the Lea UWB. Such diversions are projected to more than double by 2040, primarily in response to increased agricultural demands for the dairy industry. Adequate water rights are in place to meet this increasing demand. However, there is physically not enough water in the basin to maintain an annual diversion of this magnitude.

Water demand in Lea County had increased 33 percent from 1985 to 1995, reaching approximately 180,000 acre-feet per year by 1995. Water demand projections in the regional plan indicate that, over the next 40 years, annual water use in the County could increase to as much as 360,000 acre-feet, which would double the 1995 demand. Irrigated agriculture is expected to account for 80 percent of this overall demand (roughly 290,000 acre-feet in 2040) to provide the necessary feed for the area's expanding dairy industry. All other water use categories are also expected to increase their demand in the coming decades, with public supply needs increasing by 55 percent over 1995 levels.

The regional water plan recommends a three-pronged approach combining conservation measures with development of additional supplies and better management of existing water resources. Some conservation options are focused toward agriculture while others are aimed at urban water usage, such as installation of low-flow plumbing fixtures, use of xeriscaping (native vegetation) methods versus water-intensive landscaping, implementation of an inclining block-rate structure for water billing, and public education regarding the benefits of water conservation. Methods to be evaluated for securing additional water supplies include development of deep aquifers, treatment of lower-quality water, water importation, water reclamation (desalinization), aquifer recharge, and cloud seeding. Potential management strategies include attempting to close the Lea UWB to new appropriations, using a ground water flow model to predict the impacts of both pumping and recharge projects, monitoring the efficiency of urban water distribution and consumption (and correcting leaks and metering problems), tracking seasonal water level fluctuations, and monitoring water quality.

Municipal Water System Hydraulic Analysis and Water Master Plan

Hobbs is served by two interconnected water systems, each of which have their own supply sources. The Hobbs Water System is located between Joe Harvey Boulevard on the north and Stanolind Road on the south, extending from 14th Street on the east to the West County Road By-Pass on the west. The North Hobbs Water System covers the area north of Joe Harvey Boulevard to College Lane, from Grimes Street on the east to Lovington Highway and the Hobbs Industrial Air Park (HIAP) on the west. Both systems cover approximately 19 square miles in all, with 12 square miles in the Hobbs System and the other seven in the North Hobbs system. Some 29,000 residents are served by the current systems. Major water users include industries, medical facilities,

public schools and colleges, large retail stores and churches, the prison facility, motels, and parks, golf courses and other recreation facilities.

Both service areas encompass Hobbs' relatively flat, gently sloping terrain. The north system only ranges in elevation from 3,700 feet near HIAP to 3,650 feet near Joe Harvey Boulevard. From there, the Hobbs System only drops to 3,600 feet near Stanolind Road. Given these elevations, water flows only from the north system to the Hobbs system. The Hobbs Water System is controlled by the elevation of the Arriba Tower, located to the south of Bender and just east of Turner. The North Hobbs system is controlled by the elevation of the HIAP Tower near Lovington Highway. The *Municipal Water System Hydraulic Analysis and Water Master Plan* has full details on the components, criteria and operation of the Hobbs water system. Such plans are important to overall urban planning because they address water system improvements for future development as well as current problem areas. The following findings are based on this analysis and plan:

- Based on a total projected service area population of 44,528 in 2020, average-day water demand is expected to be 12.41 million gallons per day (MGD), compared to 8.76 MGD in 1996. The 2020 total is comprised of 8.02 MGD in the Hobbs System and 4.39 in the North Hobbs System. The peak-day demand is projected at twice this level, or 24.83 MGD.
- The projected 2020 allocation of water use in the Hobbs System will overwhelmingly be for domestic demand. In contrast, the North Hobbs System is expected to have much greater shares devoted to large commercial users and large irrigation users (including the impact of increased irrigation for an expanded Ocotillo Golf Course).
- Modeling analysis of the existing water distribution system found that average-day demands were easily met, at acceptable pressure levels. However, analysis of peak-day and peak-hour conditions found an array of issues to address involving inadequate water production, storage and distribution capacity and acceptable pressures.
- Under the more critical scenario of Peak-Day plus Fire Demand (emergency situation), the need for varying degrees of piping improvements was identified, generally to incorporate additional looping in existing distribution grids to achieve adequate flows for fire conditions.
- Analysis of existing components of the Hobbs Water System showed an immediate need for additional well production capacity (to at least 18 to 20 MGD) and elevated storage capacity (as detailed in Table 4.1). The capacity of

ground storage and booster pump stations was found to be sufficient through 2020.

- Analysis of existing components of the North Hobbs Water System showed sufficient well production capacity through 2020 (only additional back-up capacity at the HIAP Well Field needed after 2010) but the need for additional capacity in ground storage reservoirs, booster pump stations and elevated tanks (as detailed in Table 4.1). It was noted that additional production capacity would occur through development of the Dal Paso Well Field.
- The North Hobbs Water System would be significantly expanded to provide a larger service area extending northward from the current boundary at College Lane up to Kansas Street and to the east of Grimes. The service area coverage would more than double from seven to 17 square miles.
- Additional supply wells, elevated storage and extended distribution grids west of Grimes will enable expansion of the Hobbs Water System service area by approximately four square miles (from 12 to 16).
- Recommended future water system improvements provide the flexibility of continued water transfers directly from North Hobbs into the Hobbs system, effectively providing a back-up supply through the North Hobbs system.

Presented in **Table 4.1** is a summary of the major water system improvements identified in the City's *Water Master Plan* to address current or projected deficiencies through 2020.

In the end, Hobbs must do what in can in terms of conservation and management of existing supplies while the technological challenges and economics of various water supply alternatives continue to be evaluated. The City has adequate water rights (using only about 40 percent now) and land (at HIAP and elsewhere) to expand ground water pumping activity, but the basic resource itself must be there for the long term.

Wastewater System

The City of Hobbs operates and maintains an extensive wastewater collection and treatment system, including gravity sewage collection lines, several lift stations to maintain acceptable collection line flows, and a wastewater treatment plant. Much attention is focused on the remaining capacity of the City's lone treatment facility, which is the subject of a current capacity study to address this concern. Even if it is confirmed that the plant is operating at 85 or 90 percent of capacity or even higher, City utilities staff point to various methods for working through this interim period while the City continues to take steps toward longer-term capacity solutions. Fortunately, Hobbs has had no problems complying with its state-issued discharge permit, even when its parameters became more strict through a recent

renewal. Staff note that aeration space for the biological phase of the treatment process is the primary plant constraint at the moment.

TABLE 4.1:
Identified Water System Improvements Through 2020
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Facility Type	Existing Capacity	2020 Capacity	Upgrades
Hobbs Water System			
Wells	15.48 MGD	18-20 MGD	2.25-4.52 MGD
Ground Storage Reservoirs	8 million gallons	8 million gallons	NONE
Booster Pump Stations	37.3 MGD (25,900 gallons per minute)	37.3 MGD (25,900 gallons per minute)	NONE
Elevated Storage	1.5 million gallons	3.25 million gallons	1.75 million gallons
North Hobbs Water System			
Wells	7.74 MGD	10.8-12.8 MGD	3.06-5.06 MGD
Ground Storage Reservoirs	0.81 million gallons	4.75 million gallons	3.94 million gallons
Booster Pump Stations	7.63 MGD (5,300 gallons per minute)	19.5 MGD (13,550 gallons per minute)	11.87 MGD (8,250 gallons per minute)
Elevated Storage	1.5 million gallons	1.82 million gallons	1.32 million gallons

SOURCE: *Municipal Water System Hydraulic Analysis and Water Master Plan*, 2002

At some point a satellite treatment plant will be necessary, but the City needs to reach the point of being ready for this major step. As the community's wastewater collection lines continue to reach ever farther north from the southside treatment facility, particularly over relatively flat terrain, the problem of influent starting to go "septic" before it reaches the plant has become an issue in a few instances. The City has a program to jet-clean lines on a regular basis, which helps to improve flow. Field crews also inject treatment materials directly into the collection system, as needed, to offset influent problems. But, a next logical step is to intercept and divert some portion of the collected flows to a satellite plant to introduce a second treatment option to the system. Some have suggested that a second treatment facility should be built on the City's north side, partly to serve Hobbs' northward growth but also to facilitate greater effluent reuse given the location of Ocotillo Golf Course

and Harry McAdams Park. City utilities staff point out that plant siting is more a matter of pumping implications and the comparative costs of various potential locations, noting that a second facility adjacent to the City's existing treatment plant is one option to be considered.

In the meantime, utilities staff emphasize the need to continually evaluate and revise, as appropriate, the City's wastewater master plan, especially since it can take five years or more to get from identifying a major system solution to completing design and construction. During that period, given the City's aggressive economic development stance, one or more significant industrial recruiting "wins" could require a significant re-evaluation of the utility capacity outlook and the City's capital improvement planning and financing options.

Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis

The *Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis*, prepared in 2002 and intended to evaluate needs through 2020, has full details on the elements and operation of the Hobbs wastewater system, including mapping of the current and projected collection systems. Such studies are important to overall urban planning because they address wastewater system improvements for future development as well as current problem areas. The following findings are based on this analysis:

- Using demographic data from the 1999 *Comprehensive Traffic Study for the Hobbs Area*, which identified nearly 36,000 people living inside or immediately adjacent to the city limits, it was estimated that 83 percent of this population is served by the current wastewater collection system.
- The City's wastewater collection system is comprised of six main trunk lines: (1) Trunk A, which has an 18-inch main line that serves an estimated 2,655 persons in a narrow north-south corridor on the far east side of the City; (2) Trunk B, which has a 24-inch main line that serves an estimated 5,501 persons in a north-south corridor to the west of Trunk A and east of Dal Paso; (3) Trunk C, which has a 24-inch main line that serves an estimated 11,094 persons (about one-third of the total service area population) in an area between Dal Paso and Grimes and north of Snyder; (4) Trunk D, which has an 18-inch main line that serves only 1,818 persons in the original downtown core of Hobbs bounded by Snyder on the north, Dal Paso on the east, Grimes on the west, and Hardin-Main on the south; (5) Trunk E, which has a 24-inch main line and serves an estimated 5,424 persons in an area generally west of Grimes and north of Main, although a portion of its collection area lies south of Hardin and east of Grimes; and, (6) Trunk F, which has lines ranging from eight inches to 30 inches that serve an estimated 3,019 persons over an extensive area that includes the Hobbs Industrial Air Park (HIAP), a narrow commercial corridor along Carlsbad Highway, and a triangular area of new development bounded by Lovington Highway on the west, Grimes

on the east, and College Lane on the north (except for the southernmost portion of this triangle, which is served by Trunk D).

- Trunk F is planned to receive most of the added wastewater flows from the City's future growth to the north and northwest.
- The City's collection system is mostly a gravity-based system with very few lift stations needed to maintain a desired flow velocity of at least two feet per second due to the area's gradual slopes, generally from the northwest to the southeast, where the City's wastewater treatment facility is located (east of Dal Paso and south of Texas, past the eastern terminus of Temple).
- The City currently operates and maintains four lift stations that help feed the collection system: (1) the Halliburton and HIAP Lift Stations, which are located along Lovington Highway and feed Trunk F; (2) the North Lift Station, which serves a small residential area known as the Taylor Ranch Addition that includes about 170 homes and is bounded by Sanger on the south, Jefferson on the west, and Llano on the north and east and discharges into Trunk B on Jefferson; and, (3) the Carlsbad Lift Station, which receives small amounts of flow from a narrow commercial corridor along Carlsbad Highway between West County Road and Texaco and discharges into a branch line that feeds Trunk F.
- The North Lift Station will see little increase in flow in the future and will not be a candidate for future expansion. The Carlsbad Lift Station is expected to handle some additional flow when a new sewer line is connected to serve an area of about 60 homes to the south of Carlsbad Highway known as the Gibbs Addition, which was developed with septic tanks. However, given the limited potential for other significant residential development to the north and south of the highway, minimal future flow increases are projected for the Carlsbad Lift Station.
- A future Del Norte Lift Station at the intersection of Dal Paso and Millen, on the northeast side, will move flows west along Gamblin/Broom roads to Trunk F at the intersection of Grimes and Millen, just north of Del Norte Park. This new lift station is intended eventually to serve future growth along Dal Paso to the north of Millen.
- The City's wastewater system planning is based on the guideline that two residential dwelling units per acre is the minimum development density at which satisfactory performance can be obtained in a gravity collection system without otherwise requiring excessive maintenance for sewer line cleaning and flushing. Areas falling below this minimum density are generally considered not suitable for centralized wastewater collection and treatment service and will continue to depend on individual septic tanks.

- Based on area population projections and the minimum density guideline above, the recommended extension of the wastewater system service area boundary through 2020 mostly encompasses areas to the north of or adjacent to Joe Harvey Boulevard.
- Following the planned service area expansion, it is projected that nearly 11,000 additional people will reside within the area to surpass 40,000 total residents served. Of this total, about 62 percent are expected to locate in parts of the service area already served by the system while the remaining 38 percent will require extension of sanitary sewer service.
- Areas served by Trunks C and F would accommodate 82 percent of the projected service area population growth, including areas already served and areas to receive wastewater service in the future.
- Of the added population that would need to be served by system expansion (in areas where service is currently unavailable), 75 percent can be served by expanding Trunk F.
- The wastewater system analysis identified 40 large water users that are considered large-volume wastewater dischargers. The 1,200-bed correctional facility is one of the new major users added to the Hobbs system in recent years.

The *Municipal Wastewater System Computer Model and Analysis* identified $3.18 million of recommended system improvements. Of this total, projects aimed at correcting existing capacity shortfalls in Trunks C, D, E and F—and recommended for the earliest possible completion—totaled an estimated $577,100. Another project, involving Trunk B, was classified as "future work needed for the system to handle projected Year 2020 flows." As a result, this improvement, estimated at $12,900, could be deferred until such flow conditions emerge. The "big ticket" item, totaling $2.59 million, includes trunk line extension projects that would allow for future service area expansion to serve projected growth (north on Dal Paso from the Del Norte Lift Station, north on Grimes above College Lane, to the northwest along Lovington Highway, and along Dal Paso and Fowler to serve new development along the Joe Harvey Boulevard corridor). These projects also would not be necessary until such service demands materialize.

Storm Drainage

Flooding problems in Hobbs result from storm runoff that drains toward the center of the City from relatively undeveloped watersheds to the northwest of town, combined with the effects of localized rainfall directly over the City. Physical and topographic maps of the Southern High Plains, where Hobbs is located, show long, narrow drainage basins (10-plus miles in length) that convey runoff over a land surface that slopes gently to the east and southeast at an average rate of 16 feet per mile. This area has no

permanent streams, although a few intermittent channels may carry water flows following thunderstorms that are typically concentrated in July and August. Instead, in the absence of defined natural channels, runoff tends to be distributed into wide swales during lesser magnitude storms. However, major rainfall events in the sparsely developed watersheds northwest of Hobbs can send significant runoff toward the City, which contributes to existing flooding problems caused by inadequate urban drainage infrastructure.

Past flooding has been most severe and widespread on the north side, where drainage from the large watersheds to the north and west first enters the urbanized area. Rising waters within the City are then conveyed primarily by the street network. When heavy rainfall occurs over the central, developed portion of Hobbs, then the south side experiences flooding from the "upstream" accumulation of runoff that pushes flood waters to the south and east. Drainage challenges are inevitable given the area's relatively flat topography, caliche soils, and sparse ground cover to the north and west of the City. Urban development tends to increase rates of storm water runoff as well as the overall volume of drainage from a basin as more and more impermeable surfaces (paved streets and parking areas, rooftops, etc.) are introduced into the landscape, making it less likely that runoff will be contained within the local basin.

The City of Hobbs is responsible for storm sewer inlets and lines along public streets, as well as open drainage channels (within easements) and retention basins, such as at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Soccer Complex on Dal Paso between Texas and Temple. Other storm drainage infrastructure is associated with state highways through the City, but many manmade drainage ditches and swales and natural depressions are on private property.

As with all urbanized areas, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapped areas of Hobbs subject to flooding during the "100-year flood" for the National Flood Insurance Program. (A "100-year flood" is associated with a rainfall event that is significant enough to have only a one percent chance of occurring in any given year.) Caution must be exercised in using these maps, which are intended only to show a generalized area where flooding may occur during a flood of a certain frequency and

severity. Flooding can occur in areas not indicated on these maps due to storms of greater intensity than the one used in modeling, changes in watershed characteristics subsequent to the modeling, obstructions in the drainage systems, or other reasons. Also, the 100-year as well as the 500-year floodplain may now be confined to smaller areas than are shown on the maps as a result of completed drainage improvements. On the other hand, flooding could occur over an even wider area than shown as a result of increasing urban runoff subsequent to the FEMA studies.

Storm Drainage Management Plan

The City of Hobbs has a *Storm Drainage Management Plan*, completed in Fall 1994, to guide policy and planning decisions related to drainage improvements. The plan focused on drainage needs and facilities within an approximate 90 square mile area in and around the City. Such plans are important to overall urban planning because the proposed improvements are aimed at remedying chronic flooding problems while looking ahead to future watershed conditions and conceptual plans for longer-term drainage management.

Improvements were proposed in two phases: (1) an interim phase designed primarily to divert drainage originating from the north and west away from the most urbanized portions of Hobbs; and, (2) longer-term improvements to handle drainage to the north (Grimes-Millen area) and on the east side (Main, Yeso) and to construct two significant detention basins to the east of the city. At that time (1994), the overall cost of all proposed improvements was estimated at nearly $20 million, including $19.3 million in construction costs and approximately $600,000 to acquire approximately 300 acres of rights-of-way.

The *Storm Drainage Management Plan* has full details on the area's drainage characteristics, needs and recommended policies and improvements. The 1994 study and plan included the following key findings:

- The City's existing drainage systems did not have adequate capacity to prevent flooding problems under various scenarios ranging from a 100-year frequency rainfall event to even 10- or five-year events (storms of lesser severity that have a 90 or 95 percent chance, respectively, of occurring in any given year).
- Flooding problems were exascerbated due to roadway drainage facilities being substantially under capacity.
- Amid this situation, ongoing urbanization, particularly to the north and west, would only add to existing drainage challenges.

- Recommended improvements were prioritized first to address potential health and safety impacts and then to provide significant, regional flood relief benefits. Given the development potential to the north of the City in the Grimes-North Millen area, the plan also called for immediate procurement of adequate rights-of-way for eventual drainage improvements in this growth area.
- It was calculated that completion of all proposed drainage improvements would result in the removal of approximately 1,700 acres (2.7 square miles) of property from defined floodplains in Hobbs.
- Potential funding options cited included capital improvement monies, implementation of a drainage utility approach (similar to water and sewer utilities, in which "user" fees are accumulated in an enterprise fund to generate dedicated capital funds), state and federal grants, and/or developer contributions. A municipal drainage utility can also provide an equitable method for funding necessary programs and improvements to comply with federal mandates to reduce water pollution from contaminated storm runoff.
- It was recommended that the City clarify and formalize its policies, regulations and procedures regarding how the drainage impacts of future development projects (both public and private) are evaluated and mitigated, including requiring analysis of cumulative impacts beyond individual projects and establishing design criteria for on-site infrastructure and financial participation in necessary off-site improvements (and for longer-term maintenance).

Coordinating Land Use, Transportation and Utility Planning

Like every urban community, Hobbs faces challenging decisions on how best to address increased demands on existing utility infrastructure while providing utility extensions that will meet the future demands of new development. This new development almost always requires utility services, which adds the need for line extensions and increases capacity demands on existing supply or collection lines. The coordination of roadway types and land use density/intensity with utility capacities is critical to proper urban planning and development. Arterial roadways with adjacent commercial or industrial land uses will almost always create a greater utility capacity demand than the extension of a small road in a residential land use area. Utility capacities should be carefully planned to coordinate with anticipated land uses, to the extent possible in the absence of formalized land use planning and zoning regulations.

Conversations with City utilities staff indicated that the City's expected northward growth will require a new wellfield and additional ground water pumping and capacity to the north of the City. Accelerated urban growth would also add to the City's wastewater treatment capacity situation. But staff emphasize that plans are in place—

if followed and properly funded—to maintain adequate short-term capacity in both the water and wastewater systems while the City works toward longer-term solutions. In the meantime, identifying suitable water and wastewater line capacities in new growth areas is another challenge without the land use predictability provided by zoning. Staff also noted that while much of today's planning is focused on serving future growth areas to the northwest near Lovington Highway, potential growth to the northeast in the Seminole Highway-Bender vicinity will be more challenging to serve, whether or not the future horse track is sited in this northeast area. It was also pointed out that no matter where the race track is ultimately built, extension of water service will be more of an issue then wastewater.

Chapter 5

TRANSPORTATION

The purpose of the Transportation chapter is to provide for orderly development and upgrading of Hobbs' future transportation system to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and across the urban area. This chapter should be used in conjunction with the Urban Development and Growth Capacity elements of this Comprehensive Plan to support long-range planning for the ongoing physical development of Hobbs and adjacent urbanizing areas.

The findings and recommendations in this plan element are based, in part, on information from existing transportation plans and studies. Principal among these is the City's *Comprehensive Traffic Study for the Hobbs Area*, which was completed in March 1999 in cooperation with the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department. Also available for the comprehensive planning process were electronic data and maps of the area roadway network, including major, intermediate and local streets.

Besides providing findings and action recommendations regarding various aspects and modes of transportation, this element includes a new Thoroughfare Plan to guide long-term right-of-way preservation and acquisition and to ensure carefully planned expansion and improvement of the City's system of arterial roadways and collector streets as the community grows and changes. The needs cited in this chapter can provide the basis for ongoing capital improvements programming and budgeting, lobbying of other transportation funding entities, and potential bond issues to finance and accomplish significant local projects.

Key Issues

Through the comprehensive planning and public input processes, the following key issues related to mobility and circulation in and about Hobbs were identified:

- **Addressing Priority Roadway Improvements**. The City's 1999 traffic study concluded that the City of Hobbs "has an excellent transportation infrastructure system with the exception of a few minor items." Committee members and citizens noted that one enjoyable aspect of living in a smaller city is that residents can "get anywhere in 15 minutes" without worrying about traffic congestion. Data from the 2000 U.S. Census confirmed that nearly two-thirds of Hobbs residents (64.2 percent) traveled 15 minutes or less to work compared to only 37.0 percent statewide and 29.4 percent nationally who had a maximum 15-minute commute. Even given this enviable position for Hobbs, specific

roadway improvements are needed to address existing capacity and/or safety issues and to support future growth objectives. This Comprehensive Plan incorporates priority recommended improvements from the 1999 study that will help to ensure that Hobbs maintains a safe and efficient roadway network in coming decades.

- **Coordinating Land Use and Transportation.** Like every urban community, Hobbs faces challenging decisions on how best to address increased traffic, problem intersections, and other locations with unsafe conditions for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. In addition, the City must deal with a variety of county, regional, state and federal agencies that are involved in initiating, prioritizing, funding, designing, constructing and maintaining important pieces of the overall transportation system—particularly the state and U.S. highways that criss-cross the community.

  Besides maintaining local streets and related infrastructure, where a City can have its greatest measure of control is in regulating the location, layout and design of land development relative to the roadway and sidewalk networks. This significant local government function can go a long way toward ensuring safe and efficient travel conditions and is a day-to-day responsibility—always with long-term planning considerations in mind. The City's role includes:

  (1) planning for new and expanded roadways through effective thoroughfare planning procedures to open up new areas for development within or adjacent to the community versus at or beyond the urban fringe, to provide alternate travel routes and traffic relief for existing roadways, to ensure advance knowledge of roadway segments that are likely to be built or widened in the future, and to extend roadways into new growth areas as appropriate;

  (2) establishing appropriate design and dimensional standards for various types of streets to ensure traffic speeds and flows that will be compatible with anticipated development in the vicinity;

  (2) upgrading capacity and safety at key intersections through road widenings, additional lanes or turning lanes, new or adjusted signalization, better striping and signage, and crosswalks or other pedestrian enhancements;

  (4) managing access to developed properties along major roadways to control turning movements and reduce traffic conflict points, limit the uncoordinated proliferation and proximity of driveways, and set the stage for eventual signalization at workable locations;

  (5) requiring adequate off-street parking to avoid off-site impacts of overflow parking and traffic;

(6) considering annexation where and when appropriate to ensure that areas requiring upgraded roads or services contribute tax revenue to support such improvements;

(7) coordinating with major traffic generators/attractors, such as large businesses, institutions and other levels of government that operate major public facilities in the area, to manage transportation conditions and issues cooperatively; and,

(8) participating in inter-governmental planning for major transportation improvements, particularly for economic development purposes.

Most importantly, City leaders and residents need to recognize the community-shaping role of transportation investments, both to guide the direction of growth more effectively and also to keep significant development and traffic away from valued agricultural lands, environmental assets, and residential neighborhoods.

- **Achieving Consensus on Downtown Parking.** As in many downtowns, the issue of angle versus parallel parking has been a subject of ongoing debate in Hobbs' Central Business District, particularly along busy Broadway and Turner streets. Merchants and downtown advocates tend to favor angle parking because of the additional spaces it typically provides near storefronts as well as the "atmosphere" angle parking creates along downtown streets. Those focused on efficient traffic flow—and sometimes the need to address a high incidence of collisions between through and parking/exiting vehicles—urge the use of revised parking configurations. As CBD parking arrangements contribute significantly to the long-term "health" of downtowns, the Hobbs community must decide whether parking convenience is more important than the needs of through traffic in the CBD. A recent trend in U.S. commercial development has been away from enclosed shopping malls and toward retail center designs where smaller buildings are scattered and intermingled with parking areas so that more stores have nearby curb space where customers can park and be in a store almost immediately. As in Hobbs, this is what many traditional downtowns already offer, and the newer retail developments are their primary source of competition. The Downtown Streetscape is presently in the conceptual planning process by a professional designer. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee desired that the recommendations of this Comprehensive Community Development Plan be closely coordinated with the results of the Downtown Streetscape Plan, which will be prepared using the views of the City, Main Street and downtown merchants.

- **Providing for Non-Vehicular Circulation.** The City's 1999 traffic study noted that "no significant concerns have been presented to City staff about pedestrian

access within the study area." Similarly, concerns about walking and/or bicycling routes and safety were not frequently expressed by Hobbs residents during the comprehensive planning process. As Hobbs continues to set priorities for needed transportation improvements in the face of limited resources, the community will need to decide how much value it places on an expanded and interconnected sidewalk system within neighborhoods and to key destinations such as schools, parks, commercial areas and civic uses (libraries, community centers, etc.). Likewise, how important are on- or off-street bicycle routes in existing developed areas as well as in newly-developing areas, either as an alternative way of moving about the community or for strictly recreational purposes? Sidewalks and trail networks are a basic "quality of life" component in many communities. Given the size and geographic extent of Hobbs, attempts to "retrofit" sidewalk and/or bikeway improvements in existing developed areas will require careful setting of priorities to ensure "bang for the buck" and satisfaction of real needs for better and safer walking and biking routes. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee emphasized the need to highlight connections between destinations with trails as was previously identified in the Beautification Steering Committee recommendations. A future trail connecting Green Meadow Lake and Del Norte Park is one example of this type of linkage.

- **Addressing Long-Term Air Transportation Needs.** During the comprehensive planning process, many people expressed a strong desire for expanded air service options in Hobbs. For individuals it is a matter of time and convenience. For businesses and institutions, it is an economic competitiveness and cost-efficiency issue, considering the driving distances (and related highway safety concerns) to larger airports in Midland, Lubbock, Albuquerque and elsewhere. At the same time, many also recognize Hobbs' relative position within the air service market—combined with the current challenges facing the entire airline industry. As part of its discussions, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee identified two potential alternatives for improving air transportation. One option is to work with Clovis, Carlsbad and Roswell toward the possibility of creating a centrally located regional airport. The other alternative is to work with these same communities to identify actual air passenger flight destination and flight time preferences and work in a coordinated fashion with a

carrier using the new Eclipse airplanes available in 2008 to serve Southeast New Mexico with more small planes flights, which would provide more efficient service at less cost. For the immediate future it appears that Hobbs must continue to upgrade its airport facilities (as feasible), monitor opportunities to attract carriers and targeted service, and ensure a coordinated approach among all interested local parties through the Lea County Economic Development Corporation and other forums.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan are based on traditional transportation planning and community design principles as well as input from local residents and leaders during the planning process. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order.

Addressing Priority Roadway Improvements

GOAL: A safe and efficient roadway network to serve existing transportation needs and accommodate future projected growth.

Objectives

- Ensure that the transportation system adequately accommodates and encourages through traffic on the arterial street system and controls traffic and speeds on collectors and local residential streets.
- Continue to expand upon the grid major street system as urban development proceeds to accommodate the City's largest traffic flows effectively and to discourage through traffic from encroaching into residential areas to avoid traffic congestion.
- Support efforts of local economic development organizations and others to represent the interests of Hobbs in regional, state and federal transportation planning and funding processes.

Actions

- Officially adopt, maintain and use the City's Thoroughfare Plan, with specific references to arterial streets on a one-mile grid, collector streets on a ½-mile grid, and residential collector streets on a ¼-mile grid, as a guide for the future extension of roadways and for priority upgrades to existing corridors.
- Maintain and annually update the Roadway Priority List as a guide for allocating limited transportation funds to priority projects that will alleviate existing problems and address the impacts of future growth.

- Pursue specific transportation improvement projects consistent with the Thoroughfare Plan and the following needs identified and prioritized by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee:

  Short-Range Projects (2004-2009):

  A. State Road 18/Hospital Driveway Traffic Signal
  B. Central Extension from Joe Harvey to Calle Sur (with later traffic signal)
  C. HIAP Economic Development Phase I North/South Area Roads
  D. Downtown Traffic Flow/Parking/Pedestrian Improvements (with streetscape)
  E. Grimes/Joe Harvey Traffic Signal Upgrade
  F. Other Connecting Bike/Walk Trails
  G. Green Meadow Lake to Del Norte Park Connecting Trail

  Long-Range Projects (2010-2025):

  A. Grimes Reconstruction from Millen Drive to College Lane (5 lanes)
  B. Grimes and College Lane Traffic Signal
  C. West County Road/Bender Traffic Signal
  D. Arterial Traffic Signal Interconnect Improvements
  E. Millen Drive Extension from Fowler to Dal Paso (3 lanes)
  F. Dal Paso and Millen Traffic Signal (if Item E is done)
  G. Buried Underground Utilities
  H. College Lane/HIAP Entrance Road Intersection Align and Traffic Signal
  I. Southeast Hazardous Chemical Route (complete Loop)
  J. Cope/Linda Lane Cross Road from Grimes to Dal Paso (3 lanes)
  K. World Drive/Jack Gomez Intersection Align and Traffic Signal
  L. Eunice Highway/South Loop Traffic Signal (if Item I is done)
  M. Seminole Highway/NE Loop Traffic Signal (if Item I is done)
  N. Fowler Extension from Campbell to Millen Drive (3 lanes)
  O. Bender from Turner to West County Road (5 lanes)

- Continue to require dedication of public rights-of-way and construction of street improvements as development occurs in accordance with the City's subdivisions

regulations and adopted Thoroughfare Plan. Work with the City and County Planning Boards to assure that 100 feet of right-of-way is required on all section lines for arterial streets, 80 feet of right-of-way is required on all ½-mile lines for collector streets, and 60 feet of right-of-way is required on all ¼-mile lines for residential collector streets. Also, directly acquire rights-of-way as needed to preserve future corridor opportunities.

- Continue planning and funding coordination with the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department, the Southeast New Mexico RPO, and Lea County to accomplish needed improvements to regional highways and thoroughfares in the Hobbs area.

Coordinating Land Use and Transportation

GOAL: Constant coordination of land use and transportation planning and implementation to ensure viable development outcomes for the long term.

Objectives

- Use the Thoroughfare Plan as a tool to identify areas where transportation access is essential to spur desired development activity, along with necessary capital investment in utility extensions (e.g., north Hobbs, targeted areas for economic/industrial development).

Actions

- Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review the existing Major Street Plan and the Thoroughfare Plan as provided in this Comprehensive Community Development Plan to prepare and officially adopt a Major Street Plan for use in all subdivision and development actions.
- Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan during the subdivision and site development review process to ensure functional integration of new streets with the existing arterial and collector street system; interconnected street systems between adjacent developments, as appropriate; and, multiple points of ingress/egress for large subdivisions.
- Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, periodically review the City's Thoroughfare Plan and consider amendments as necessary, particularly to maintain consistency with other development-related ordinances and standards.
- Consider traffic impacts on affected transportation facilities during review of subdivision and development applications, with developer participation in improvements needed to maintain an adequate level of service.
- Research and consider requiring traffic impact studies and mitigation actions for large-scale development proposals.

- Adopt access management regulations for arterials and other busy roadways pertaining to the design, construction, location, width, spacing, offset and potential coordination of driveways; street connections; medians and median openings; auxiliary lanes; on-street parking; traffic signals; turn lanes; and, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Adopt a Major Street and Thoroughfare Plan by ordinance to allow the City and private developers to negotiate construction of streets in non-residential areas.
- Collaborate with the County Planning Board to assure that appropriate right-of-way widths, grid layouts, and proposed road development are properly coordinated in the extraterritorial areas of the City.
- Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review the City requirements for street widths to make sure these requirements are applicable and safe for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs.

- Consider the impact of unincorporated population and traffic on city roads as a factor in annexation studies and decisions.
- Continue to require high standards for infrastructure in new developments in unincorporated areas to avoid inheriting problem situations as the City grows and potentially annexes additional territory.

Achieving Consensus on Downtown Parking

GOAL: Appropriate parking arrangements to support an appealing, thriving downtown without sacrificing traffic safety in the area.

Objectives

- Provide for adequate and convenient parking to support downtown merchants.
- Ensure that policy and regulatory decisions on downtown parking provision are based on sufficient study and information.
- Ensure that the Comprehensive Community Development Plan and the Downtown Streetscape planning process are properly coordinated.

Actions

- Conduct a comprehensive downtown parking and circulation study to document specific traffic flow and safety problems in the CBD, current parking arrangements and utilization and needed parking improvements, and interactions between traffic flows and on-street parking.
- Coordinate with the Downtown Streetscape planning process to identify a Downtown Streetscape Plan to benefit the City, Main Street and the downtown merchants to the greatest extent.

Providing for Non-Vehicular Circulation

GOAL: Pedestrian and bicycle "friendliness" elevated as a more important component of quality of life in Hobbs.

Objectives

- Fund and construct a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle system to serve both recreational and alternative transportation needs, including an enhanced sidewalk network and off-street paths and trails accessible to all areas of the community and connecting neighborhoods, schools, parks, shopping and employment centers.
- Improve the availability and safety of pedestrian crossing opportunities on major thoroughfares and other streets with high traffic volumes or speeds.
- Pursue improvements that increase the visibility and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists while also enhancing the streetscape.

Actions

- Prepare a pedestrian/bicycle system plan, either for the entire community or on a special-area plan basis, with meaningful public input opportunities and in coordination with ongoing parks and recreation planning.
- Extend the walking/jogging/bicycle path system constructed along NM 18 (Lovington Highway) adjacent to New Mexico Junior College to extend at least to the Bender/Turner/Grimes "Triangle" and eventually into the central core of Hobbs.
- Fund and construct pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, crosswalks, handicap accessible ramps, curb cuts, "pedestrian/ bicycle crossing" signs and warning lights (near schools, parks, etc.), and pedestrian-activated signal changers along city streets in areas with significant pedestrian traffic, such as around schools, parks, retail districts, and other activity areas.
- Conduct a comprehensive and detailed inventory of existing sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities throughout the community, including a condition assessment to prioritize needed improvements by condition, need and location.

- Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review the need and requirements for construction of sidewalks.
- Begin to acquire or obtain dedication of space for likely bike-ped routes, including coordination with owners of utility easements and other potential shared-use corridors.
- Monitor and address locations with a high incidence of pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.
- Continue aggressive enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws near schools and parks and along neighborhood streets.
- Improve the site design of residential and non-residential developments to discourage speeding, cut-though traffic and other driver behavior that makes after-the-fact "traffic calming" measures necessary.
- Continue to pursue federal and state financial assistance grants for pedestrian and bicycle transportation projects.
- During the planning process for new non-vehicular paths, trails or routes, the recommendations of the Beautification Steering Committee should be strongly considered.

Addressing Long-Term Air Transportation Needs

GOAL: Expanded local air transportation options for residents, businesses and public agencies.

Objectives

- Continue to enhance the Lea County-Hobbs Airport.
- Maintain a coordinated approach to marketing Hobbs' airport facility and unmet air service needs of local residents, businesses and institutions.
- Provide affordable, convenient air service for the community.

Actions

- Maintain close coordination with federal and state aviation officials and planners regarding New Mexico (and Texas) air market trends, facility competitiveness issues, and funding and technical assistance opportunities.
- Continue phased upgrades to the Lea County-Hobbs Airport, particularly new and improved features to enhance the facility's market appeal.
- Continue to monitor opportunities for safe and cost-efficient surface transportation "shuttle" options between Hobbs and larger airport hubs in Midland, Lubbock and Albuquerque.
- Through the Lea County Economic Development Corporation and other forums, continue close coordination on air service issues and opportunities among the City, County, state and federal elected officials from the region, institutions (Lea

Regional Medical Center, New Mexico Junior College, College of the Southwest), the business community (especially major industries with the greatest air service needs), and other interested parties.

- Investigate the option of a Southeast New Mexico Regional Airport to serve Clovis, Hobbs, Roswell and Carlsbad.
- Reach out to other Southeast New Mexico communities to explore a coordinated plan for Eclipse air service when available.

Existing Transportation Concerns

The City's 1999 traffic study involved a detailed examination of transportation needs and concerns in Hobbs, including some capacity and safety issues that were ongoing and well known. The City's consultants analyzed the performance of the local roadway network during "peak hour traffic flow" conditions for 1998, which was defined as the evening "rush hour" period from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on a weekday. The project also involved computer modeling of traffic conditions in Hobbs to forecast what peak-hour conditions might be like in 2020, depending on whether various roadway improvements were implemented.

As a result of the 1999 traffic study, the Bender/Grimes and Turner/Grimes intersections in the triangle area have been upgraded with signalized double left turns, which has resulted in increased capacity, efficiency and safety at these intersections.

Some of the other important study highlights and findings include:

- Peak-hour traffic in Hobbs flows relatively smoothly with few major problems due to a very well-developed grid system of arterial streets on one-mile intervals, collector streets on half-mile intervals, and residential collector streets on quarter-mile intervals. As one example, Sanger Street has some traffic capacity issues because it was not built as a four-lane arterial consistent with the grid master street plan.
- The Hobbs bypass system, established in 1984 and implemented by the City, has resulted in an efficient arterial roadway network.
- Traffic problems occur in Hobbs primarily where through vehicles mix with more local vehicles on such busy streets as Marland, Turner, Grimes and Dal Paso.
- Among the six highest intersections in collision incidence, three were along the Bender corridor (Bender at Grimes, Bender at Fowler and Bender at Dal Paso). Other highly-ranked intersections were Turner at Sanger, Turner at Snyder, and NM 18 (Lovington Highway) at Joe Harvey. Various improvements in the late

1990s (additional turning lanes, better intersection marking, traffic signal upgrades) were expected to have a significant effect in terms of reduced risk of collisions.

- In projecting future development and traffic conditions, it was assumed that very little growth would occur in south Hobbs, there was limited potential for infill development in the most urbanized portion of central Hobbs, and most new residential development will occur in the largely undeveloped areas north and northeast of the city (north of Joe Harvey to approximately Kansas). New commercial and industrial growth was expected to occur primarily along existing arterials in the northern part of Hobbs (Lovington Highway, Joe Harvey-Navajo, West County Road) and to a lesser extent along other arterials (US 62/180-Marland, South Bypass, and future Southeast Bypass).

Key Traffic Locations

The location and character of land uses that generate moderate to large numbers of trips can influence traffic volumes and flow patterns in their immediate vicinity as well as over a portion of the nearby street network. This occurs through arriving and departing trips by employees, visitors/customers, and delivery/service vehicles.

The following major trip generators in and around Hobbs were considered in reviewing existing transportation conditions and preparing the City's Thoroughfare Plan:

- Downtown (commercial areas, government offices).
- New Mexico Junior College (and the Lea County Event Center during significant events).
- College of the Southwest.
- Hobbs Senior High School and associated recreational facilities (particularly Eagle Stadium, during major athletic events).
- Hobbs Industrial Air Park (and the private prison facility).
- Lea Regional Medical Center.
- Zia Sports Complex.

As a regional hub, Hobbs also receives significant through traffic given its location at the intersection of US 62/180 (Carlsbad and Seminole highways) and NM 18 (Lovington and Eunice highways).

Priority Transportation Improvements

Included in **Table 5.1** is a recap of the top priority transportation improvements that were identified by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. Projects that were in the 1999 traffic study and included in this listing are still applicable, but projects in the 1999 traffic study that are not included in this list are not considered as being applicable any longer. Some of the projects listed will remain long-range planning challenges as they do not involve easy or low-cost solutions.

The 1999 study and plan identified a variety of improvements that could be implemented gradually, through both short- (first 10 years) and longer-range (2009-2020) programs, to make significant progress on priority traffic concerns by 2020. As of the time of this study, the total estimated cost of all identified improvements was $2.1 million. More than two-thirds of the cost (68 percent) was to be incurred in the short-range program ($14.3 million), with the remainder ($6.7 million) falling under the longer-range program.

Given local growth trends, the plan noted that a priority area for upgrading existing streets is on the north side of Hobbs, including such roadways as Grimes, Dal Paso and Navajo. More recently, Hobbs has become the focus of a potential race track development for horse racing and associated gaming activity. This significant new traffic generator/attractor is also expected to be located to the north of the City.

TABLE 5.1
Transportation Projects Priority List
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Item	Project
Short-Range Projects (2004-2009)	
A	State Road 18/Hospital Driveway Traffic Signal
B	Central Extension from Joe Harvey to Calle Sur (with later traffic signal)
C	HIAP Economic Development Phase I North/South Area Roads
D	Downtown Traffic Flow/Parking/Pedestrian Improvements (with streetscape)
E	Grimes/Joe Harvey Traffic Signal Upgrade
F	Other Connecting Bike/Walk Trails
G	Green Meadow Lake to Del Norte Park Connecting Trail
Long-Range Projects (2010-2025)	
A	Grimes Reconstruction from Millen Drive to College Lane (5 lanes)
B	Grimes and College Lane Traffic Signal
C	West County Road/Bender Traffic Signal
D	Arterial Traffic Signal Interconnect Improvements
E	Millen Drive Extension from Fowler to Dal Paso (3 lanes)
F	Dal Paso and Millen Traffic Signal (if Item E is done)
G	Buried Underground Utilities
H	College Lane/HIAP Entrance Road Intersection Align and Traffic Signal
I	Southeast Hazardous Chemical Route (complete Loop)
J	Cope/Linda Lane Cross Road from Grimes to Dal Paso (3 lanes)
K	World Drive/Jack Gomez Intersection Align and Traffic Signal
L	Eunice Highway/South Loop Traffic Signal (if Item I is done)
M	Seminole Highway/NE Loop Traffic Signal (if Item I is done)
N	Fowler Extension from Campbell to Millen Drive (3 lanes)
O	Bender from Turner to West County Road (5 lanes)

SOURCE: *Hobbs Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, 2003*

Hobbs Thoroughfare Plan

The existing and proposed thoroughfare system in and around Hobbs is displayed in **Figure 5.1**. The Thoroughfare Plan shows approximate alignments for planned or enhanced thoroughfares that should be considered in platting of subdivisions, right-of-way dedication, and construction of major roadways within the City and its extra-territorial jurisdiction. The primary objective of the Thoroughfare Plan is to ensure that adequate rights-of-way are preserved on appropriate alignments and of sufficient width to allow the orderly and efficient expansion and improvement of the thoroughfare system.

Thoroughfare planning is interrelated with other components of comprehensive planning and urban development, including land use, annexation, utilities, housing, environment, and other elements. It is important for growing communities to maintain an effective Thoroughfare Plan to ensure continuity of the major roadway network and desirable connections between major arteries for cross-town traffic flow, to support minimum response time for emergency vehicles, and to aid in prioritizing transportation improvement needs. Actual roadway alignments can vary somewhat from the plan depending on future development trends and necessary refinement of projected circulation needs and concepts depicted on the Thoroughfare Plan. Some of these improvements may not occur for many decades, if ever, depending on development trends, while others are not too far from the "drawing board."

Some elements of the thoroughfare system will require new or wider rights-of-way and may ultimately be developed as two-lane or multi-lane roadways with various cross sections. Other streets identified as collectors on the plan will not necessarily ever be widened due to physical constraints and right-of-way limitations. Instead, the collector designation signifies their traffic-handling role in the overall street system and the importance of maintaining such streets in superior condition to maximize their traffic capacity since they most likely cannot be improved to an optimal width and cross section.

The plan does not show future local streets because these streets function principally to provide property access and their future alignments will vary depending upon site-specific development plans. Local street alignments should be determined by the City and landowners as part of planning for development. Likewise, minor collectors are required with new development but are not shown in all places on the Thoroughfare Plan since their alignments will depend on the surrounding street system and the particular development concept. Minor collectors should be situated on a case-by-case basis to connect major collectors (and sometimes arterials) with other major collectors and local streets.

The Hobbs Thoroughfare Plan will have far-reaching effects on the growth and development of the City since it guides the preservation of rights-of-way needed for future thoroughfare improvements. As a result, the plan has significant influence on the pattern of movement and the desirability of areas as locations for development and land use. While other elements of the Comprehensive Plan look at foreseeable changes and needs over a 20-year period, thoroughfare planning requires an even longer-range perspective extending into the very long-term future.

Thoroughfare Plan Implementation

Implementation of thoroughfare system improvements occurs in stages as the City grows and, over many years, builds toward the ultimate thoroughfare system shown in the Thoroughfare Plan. The fact that a future thoroughfare is shown on the plan does not represent a commitment to a specific time frame for construction, nor that the City will build the roadway improvement. Individual thoroughfare improvements may be constructed by a variety of implementing agencies, including the City, Lea County, and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department, as well as private developers and land owners for sections of roadways located within or adjacent to their property.

The City, County and State, as well as residents, land owners and developers, can utilize the Thoroughfare Plan in making decisions relating to planning, coordination and programming of future development and transportation improvements. Review by the City of preliminary and final plats for proposed subdivisions in accordance with the City's subdivision regulations should include consideration of compliance with the Thoroughfare Plan in order to ensure consistency and availability of sufficient rights-of-way for the general roadway alignments shown in the plan. By identifying thoroughfare locations where rights-of-way are needed, land owners and developers can consider the roadways in their subdivision planning, dedication of public rights-of-way, and provision of setbacks for new buildings, utility lines, and other improvements located along the rights-of-way for existing or planned thoroughfares.

Major constraints in the Hobbs area that could limit the development of roads, streets and highways include existing developed areas; large land holdings (ranches, oil/gas fields, etc.); areas of uneven terrain; drainage and floodplain areas; public parks and open areas; agricultural land; and, critical habitat areas and other valued environmental resources. Rail lines through town are major obstacles to traffic circulation in many communities, sometimes requiring consideration of costly solutions such as construction of grade-separated over or underpasses at key railroad-roadway intersections.

Perhaps the most significant influence on thoroughfare improvement is existing residential neighborhoods and other developed areas that present constraints when a new or expanded thoroughfare might impact the area. This is not intended to imply, however, that existing constraints prohibit the development of a desirable transportation system. These factors may affect the location, feasibility and construction cost of transportation improvements, so they should be considered in the planning and design of future facilities.

Flexible Administration of Thoroughfare Plan

In the administration and enforcement of the Thoroughfare Plan, special cases and unique situations will occasionally arise where existing physical conditions and development constraints in certain areas conflict with the need for widening of designated thoroughfares to the planned right-of-way width and roadway cross section. Such special circumstances require a degree of flexibility and adaptability in the administration and implementation of the plan. Acceptable minimum design criteria and special roadway cross sections may have to be applied in constrained areas where existing conditions limit the ability to meet desirable standards and guidelines. Special roadway cross sections should be determined on a case-by-case basis when a unique design is necessary, and these exceptions should be subject to approval by the Planning Board. Otherwise, standard roadway cross sections should be used in all newly-developing areas and, whenever possible, in existing developed areas.

Plan Amendment Process

It will be necessary for the City to periodically consider and adopt amendments to the Thoroughfare Plan to reflect changing conditions and new needs for thoroughfare system improvements and development. A systematic procedure should be followed for making plan amendments, including a set schedule for annually inviting and considering proposed changes.

The process for amending the Thoroughfare Plan should be established in the City's subdivision regulations. Typically, plan amendment requests may originate from landowners, civic groups, neighborhood associations, developers, other governmental

agencies, City staff, and other interested parties. Proposed revisions should be analyzed by the Planning Board, the City Engineer, and other City staff. The proposed change and staff recommendations should then be formally considered by the Planning Board. The Board should conduct a public hearing on proposed plan amendments following required public notice. Proposed amendments should be considered in a fair, reasonable and open process. The burden for proving compelling reasons for the public benefit of any proposed changes should rest with the requesting parties. Decisions and determinations should represent the best interests of the public.

The revised Thoroughfare Plan, including any approved plan amendments, should be forwarded by the Planning Board to the City Commission for its consideration. The amended plan becomes effective upon final adoption by the City Commission.

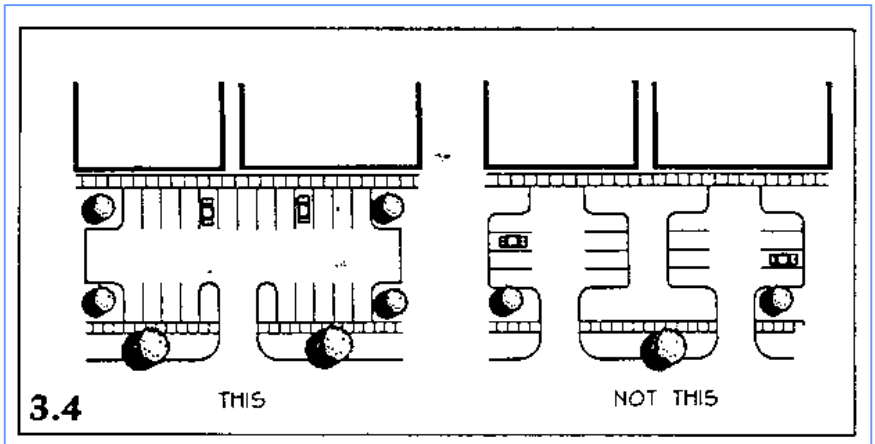
Access Management

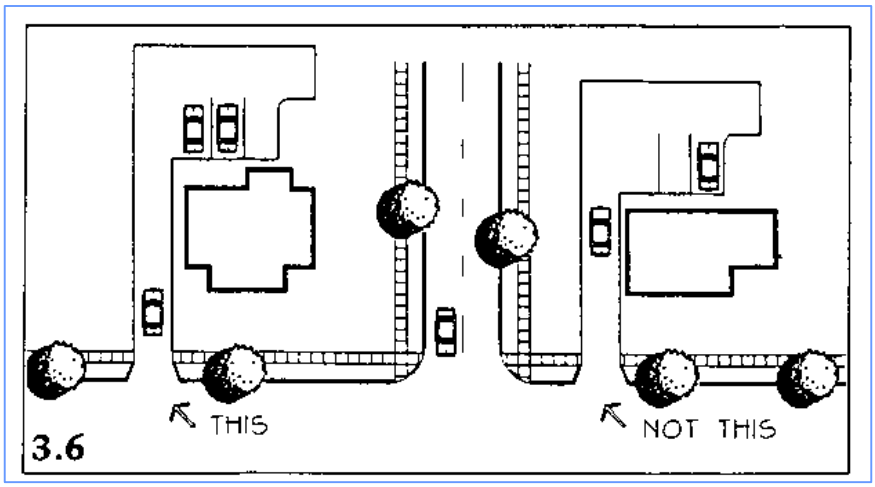
The transportation system is designed to provide access to the overall street network plus adjacent land uses. However, the number of property access points can directly affect the efficiency and safety of the street system. Too many points of ingress and egress along a corridor can significantly impede traffic flow and result in more vehicular and pedestrian conflicts. On the other hand, too few access points can result in reduced marketability of area property. An efficient system is properly regulated with regard to the number and placement of curb cuts, traffic signals and signage.

The practice of access management is intended to enhance the performance and safety of the major street system. It manages congestion on existing transportation facilities and protects the capacity of future transportation systems by controlling access from adjacent development. Properly utilized, it can eliminate or postpone the need for street widening or right-of-way acquisition.

As illustrated by the examples in **Figure 5.2**, means to accomplish access management include limiting and separating vehicle (and vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-bicycle) conflict points, reducing locations that require vehicle deceleration, removing vehicle turning movements, creating intersection spacing that facilitates signal progression, and ensuring adequate on-site space for ingress and egress movements and vehicle queuing and manuevering. Access management also focuses on the spacing and design of driveways, street connections, medians and median openings, auxiliary lanes and transit facilities, on-street parking and parking facilities, on-site storage aisles, traffic signals, turn lanes, freeway interchanges, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, bus stops and loading zones. Some of these design factors are accomplished within the public right-of-way while others require regulation of specific aspects of private development, particularly at the point where such developments will be accessed from the public street network.

FIGURE 5.2
Access Management Techniques
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico





Traffic engineering research indicates that a well-designed and effectively administered access management plan can result in the following tangible benefits:

- accident and collision rates are reduced by 40 to 60 percent;
- roadway capacity and the useful life of transportation facilities is prolonged;
- travel time and congestion is decreased;

- better coordination between access and land uses is accomplished;
- air quality is improved;
- economic activity is enhanced;
- urban design and transportation objectives are reconciled; and,
- the unique character and livability of a community is preserved through the coordination of land use and transportation.

Failure to manage access negatively impacts the efficiency of transportation networks in the following ways:

- more driveways related to strip commercial development;
- local streets becoming bypasses for congested streets thereby creating the need to address cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods;
- more frequent driveway-related accidents;
- vehicle conflicts from closely-spaced driveways, which increase congestion and thereby reduce capacity;
- longer travel times that reduce market areas for business;
- more difficulty in providing safe access for new development thereby affecting economic growth;
- lower investment benefits of transportation improvements;
- greater need for wider streets to compensate for lost capacity; and,
- more cluttered streets and frequent driveways, which create an undesirable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The following access management strategies may be used to balance the access needs of adjacent land uses with the function of the transportation system:

- *Separate Conflict Points* – Two common conflict points are driveways and adjacent intersections. Spacing driveways so they are not located within the area of influence of intersections or other driveways is a method to achieve access management objectives.
- *Restrict Turning Movements at Unsignalized Driveways and Intersections on Multi-Lane Roadways* – Full-movement intersections can serve multiple developments through the use of joint driveways or cross-access easements. Turning

movements can be restricted by designing accesses to limits movements or by the construction of raised medians that can be used to provide turn lanes.

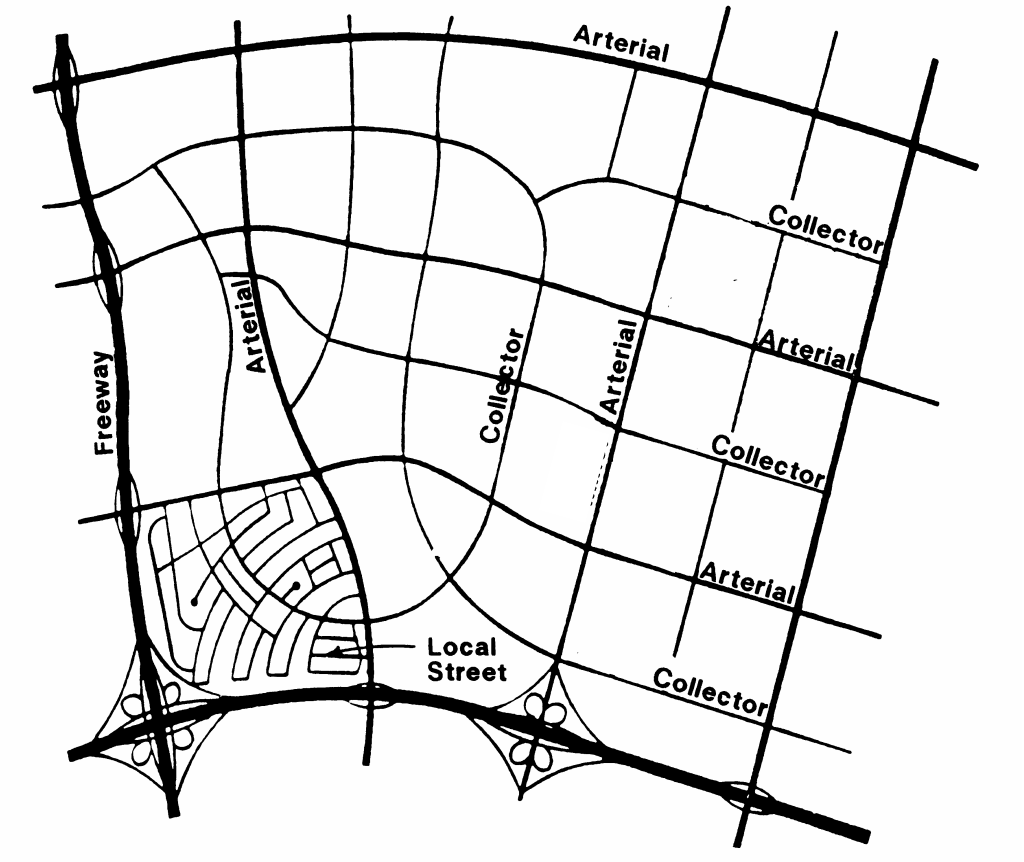
- *Maintain a Hierarchy of Streets* – The development of a hierarchical street system that varies the amount of access based on the need to maintain vehicular mobility is a major goal of access management.
- *Establish Design Standards* – Design standards addressing the spacing of access points, driveway dimensions and radii, sight distance, and the length of turn lanes and tapers are effective mechanisms for managing the balance between the movement of traffic and site access.
- *Locate and Design Traffic Signals to Enhance Traffic Movement* – Interconnecting and spacing traffic signals to enhance the progressive movement of traffic is another strategy for managing mobility needs. Keeping the number of signal phases to a minimum can improve the capacity of a corridor by increasing green band width by 20 seconds.
- *Remove Turning Vehicles from Through Travel Lanes* – Left- and right-turn speed-change lanes provide for the deceleration or vehicles turning into driveways or other major streets and for the acceleration of vehicles exiting driveways and entering major highways.
- *Encourage Shared Driveways, Unified Site Plans and Cross-Access Easements* – Joint use of driveways reduces the proliferation of driveways and preserves the capacity of major transportation corridors. Such driveway arrangements also encourage sharing of parking and internal circulation among businesses that are in close proximity.
- *Plan for Pedestrians, Bicycles and Transit Vehicles* – The specific access needs of pedestrians and bicyclist movements can be addressed by providing safe access to transit stops and bicycle lanes. It is helpful to design and time signals to accommodate pedestrians. It is also helpful to place bus stops so as to minimize impact to roadway capacity by providing pullout lanes.

APPENDIX:
Functional Classification of Roadway Network

Streets are grouped into functional classes according to their purpose of moving traffic or providing access to property. A schematic illustration of a functionally classified roadway network is shown in **Figure 5.3**. Characteristics of each functional class of roadway are further described in this Appendix. The functional classification of area roadways is shown on the Hobbs Thoroughfare Plan and includes the following functional classes:

- Highways
- Arterials (major and minor)
- Collectors (major and minor)

FIGURE 5.3:
Functionally Classified Roadway Network
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



Arterial roadways form an interconnecting network for citywide and regional movement of traffic and provide connections to highways and other express roadways. Although they usually represent only five to 10 percent of the total roadway network, arterials typically accommodate about 30 to 40 percent of an area's vehicular travel. Since traffic movement, not land access, is the primary function of arterials, access management is essential to avoid traffic congestion and delays caused by turning movements for vehicles entering and exiting driveways. Likewise, intersections of arterials with other public streets and private access drives should be designed to limit speed differentials between turning vehicles and other traffic to no more than 10-15 miles per hour. Spacing of major, signalized intersections should be long enough (preferably one-third to one-half mile) to allow a variety of signal cycle lengths and timing plans that can be adjusted to meet changes in traffic volumes and maintain traffic progression.

Arterials may be further categorized as Major and Minor (or Principal and Secondary). A typical cross section for a major arterial roadway is a minimum 100-foot right of way, providing for either a divided or undivided thoroughfare. Arterials may vary from multi-lane roadways with three, four or five lanes down to two-lane roadways in developing fringe and rural areas where traffic volumes have not increased to the point that more travel lanes are needed. Functional classification is not dependent on the existing number of lanes since the functional role served by a roadway typically remains constant over time while the roadway's cross section is improved to accommodate increasing traffic volumes. Thus, lower-volume roadways that are continuous over long distances may also function as arterials, particularly in fringe and rural areas.

Street layout plans for residential subdivisions, as well as commercial and industrial districts, should include **collectors** as well as local streets in order to provide efficient traffic ingress/egress and circulation. Since collectors generally carry higher traffic volumes than local/residential streets, they may require a wider roadway cross section or added lanes at intersections with arterials to provide adequate capacity for both through traffic and turning movements. However, since speeds are slower and more turning movements are expected, a higher speed differential and much closer intersection/access spacing can be used than on arterials. Collectors typically make up about 5 to 10 percent of the total street system.

Local/residential streets include all other roads that are not included in higher functional classes, particularly internal and access streets that allow direct property access within residential and commercial areas. Excessive speeds and through traffic should be discouraged by using appropriate geometric designs, curvilinear alignments,

discontinuous streets, and traffic control devices (as a last resort). Local/residential streets typically comprise about 65 to 80 percent of the total street system in urban areas.

Cross sections for local/residential streets vary widely between communities depending on the extent of on- and off-street (driveway/garage) parking that is anticipated and whether sidewalks will be provided on all or most local streets—and on one or both sides of the street. Ease of access by emergency vehicles, including large fire apparatus, is also a critical factor in street width policy and must be evaluated with worst-case scenarios in mind such as when a local street is lined with overflow parking from a large party or other neighborhood event. In general, the goal on a local street is to accommodate one travel lane for vehicles moving in each direction as well as some amount of on-street parking. The extent of right of way beyond the paved roadway determines whether sidewalks, if provided, can be set back from the curb (typically three feet) to enhance pedestrian safety and allow a continuous green strip between the sidewalk and street. Extra right of way also allows for placement of neighborhood-scale street lighting plus landscaping or other streetscape amenities.

In the context of comprehensive planning for New Mexico communities (and in many other western states), arterial roadways are usually located on section lines, collector roads are usually located on ½-mile lines, and residential collectors are usually located on ¼-mile lines in the City. Then local or residential streets are the roadways not included in other classes that can be designed with curves, cul-de-sacs and other geometric designs to discourage use by through traffic and consequently limit vehicle volumes and speeds on these roadways.

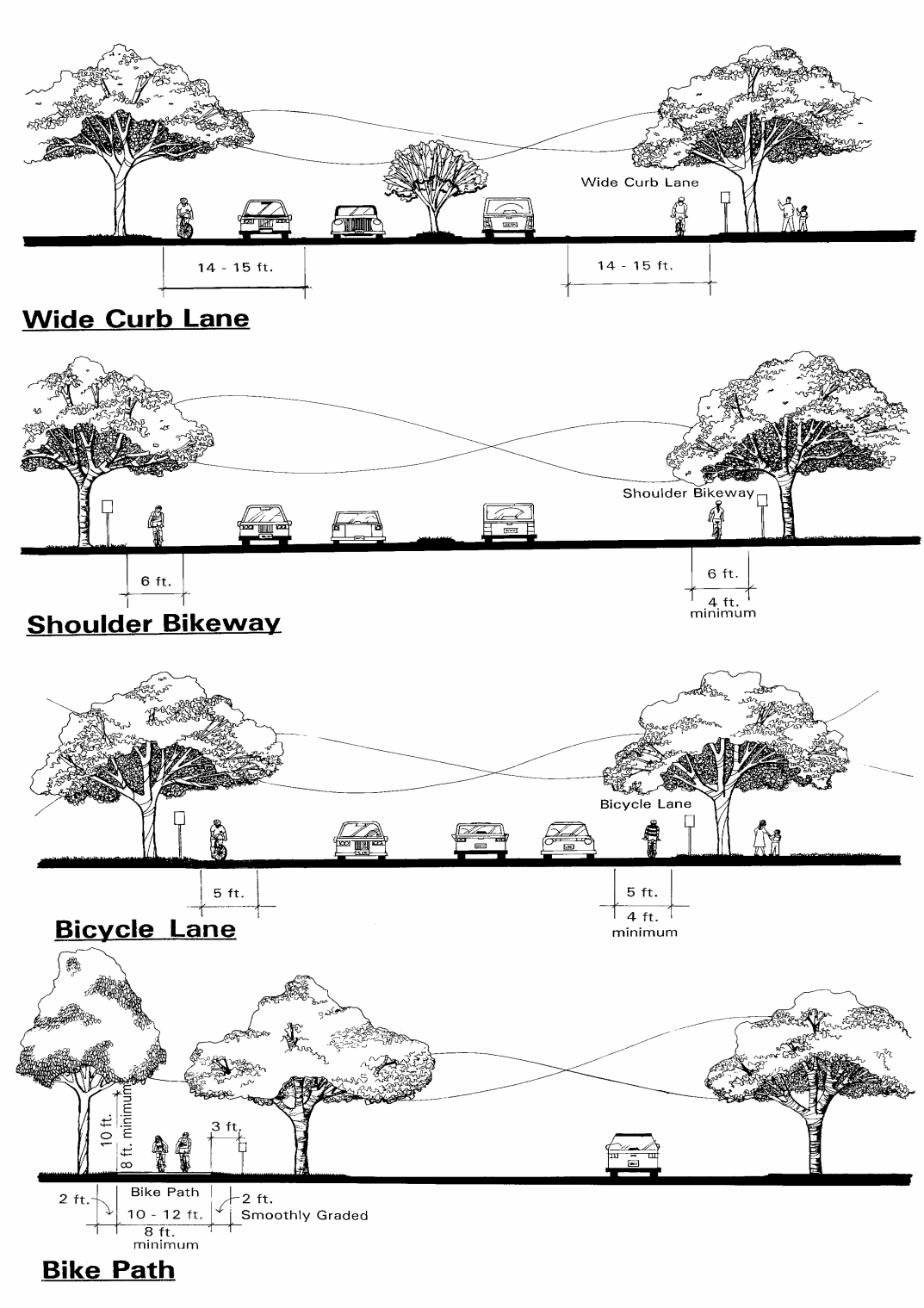
In communities where the circumstances are appropriate, local street width standards have purposely been reduced—in some cases, to as low as 20-25 feet—to restore the road network as a key component of traditional neighborhood design and not just an excessively wide conduit for automobile traffic and parking. This design approach is one of the defining principles of the "New Urbanism" movement, intended to create a pedestrian-scaled neighborhood with narrower streets and reduced building setbacks. A lesser street width also allows an increase in the distance from the sidewalk to the street and supports traffic calming efforts. In the narrowest situations, two full travel lanes may no longer be provided, requiring vehicles approaching from opposite directions to decelerate and possibly move toward the edge of the street to allow safe passage. Adequate off-street parking must be available, and emergency vehicle access is often handled through innovative methods.

"Bicycle-Friendly" Roadways

Additional alternatives to the standard thoroughfare include those designed to aggressively promote the use of bicycles. A comprehensive, safe and efficient network of "bicycle-friendly" roadways not only emphasizes alternative methods of transportation but also improves overall quality of life for residents.

Skilled bicyclists usually prefer to travel along the street system and, where possible, should be accommodated through striped bike lanes or extra-wide curb lanes on arterials and collectors. Most bicyclists are less skilled and need to be separated from high-speed and high-volume traffic through the use of off-street bike lanes and paths. Typical design sections for different bikeway classifications are displayed in **Figure 5.4**. Local and collector streets are suitable for use by most adult bicycle riders while minor arterial streets are only suitable for limited use by bicyclists due to higher traffic volumes and speeds.

FIGURE 5.4:
Roadway Designs for Bicycle Use
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



Chapter 6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the Economic Development chapter is to provide a set of strategies for both strengthening the local tax base and diversifying the economy. This task involves a review of current conditions, including strengths and weaknesses, and recommendation of policies for growing the economy in a way that is both feasible and compatible with the character of the community. The Economic Development element of the plan also considers the general status of and future needs related to area healthcare and educational facilities, which contribute to Hobbs' prosperity as well as local quality of life. Such public and private facilities are also important components of future land use and transportation planning.

This chapter builds upon the *Market and Economic Analysis and an Economic Development Strategy for Lea County and the Cities of Hobbs and Lovington*, which was completed by Gruen Gruen + Associates (GG+A) in March 2003. While the GG+A study addresses the entire range of economic development considerations and strategies, from policies to programs (such as workforce development initiatives), this Comprehensive Plan element focuses on the issues and recommendations that are most directly related to Hobbs' long-range physical planning.

A second important input to this chapter, in terms of the community's basic attractiveness for economic investment, was the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives effort that was coordinated during 2002 by the consulting landscape architecture and planning firm Armstrong Berger in conjunction with a steering committee and City staff.

Other resources that were relevant to and consulted for this chapter included:

- Results of a Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Economic Development Planning Session facilitated in January 2004 by the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council and attended by a cross section of Hobbs' public and private sector leadership.
- *Economic Development Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Assessment of Southeast New Mexico (Summary of Findings and Recommended Actions)*, Tripp, Umbach & Associates, 1999.
- *Southeast New Mexico-West Texas Retail Trade Zone*, 1998.

- *Hobbs Industrial Air Park Master Plan*, Larkin Group, Consensus Planning, Pettigrew and Associates, 2002.
- *Lea County Fact Book*, Economic Development Corporation of Lea County, 2000.
- *Strategic Planning Document, 1999-2004*, New Mexico Junior College, 1999.
- *Strategic Planning Project Implementation Plan*, Ernst & Young, 1990.

Key Issues

Through the comprehensive planning and public input processes, as well as review and evaluation of the various recent initiatives and studies in Hobbs related to economic development, the following key issues were identified:

- **Using Economic Development as the Organizing Focus of all Comprehensive Plan Implementation.** Clearly, steady, sustainable economic development is essential for the future health of Hobbs as a desirable and "fiscally fit" community. As noted in previous studies, Southeast New Mexico has experienced a structural economic decline due to over-reliance on oil and gas and the lack of a truly diversified economy with investment and employment across numerous diverse business sectors. Strategic actions are necessary and continue on a number of fronts, from workforce development to innovative research and new business incubation; community image and marketing; industrial recruitment; support, retention and expansion of existing businesses; and, overall "quality of life" enhancements. A Comprehensive Community Development Plan provides the ideal mechanism for ensuring coordinated policies and implementation efforts, as well as keeping all involved from forgetting the community's long-term progress and outlook and the "big picture." As comprehensive planning priorities ranging from land use to transportation, utility infrastructure to parks and recreation, and housing to beautification are pursued in coming years, these efforts should all have the economic renewal of Hobbs as their driving focus and unifying theme.

  Priority Economic Development Strategies

  Based on the Gruen Gruen + Associates analysis and further discussions during the comprehensive planning process, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee identified the following initiatives as essential to ongoing economic development efforts in Hobbs:

  - ***Identify and actively recruit strategic industries suited to use the skilled workforce and business capabilities presently in Hobbs.*** Hobbs currently has a number of businesses and skilled workers who have historically provided

services to the oilfield. This expertise could be used in related areas to provide a skilled work force to attract related industries. For example, the high quality welding and machine shops in Hobbs could provide services to industries needing high quality welding and/or machine work in their industrial processes. Using the survey of skilled workers and businesses in Hobbs, strategic industries related to those workers and businesses should be identified and recruited in a coordinated effort.

Specific action items to support workforce development include:

- Establishing cooperative arrangements with local businesses, New Mexico Junior College and College of the Southwest to facilitate workforce training opportunities through apprenticeships and co-op opportunities as well as other job training offerings that combine "hands-on" skills development with classroom education and mentoring.
- Creating a task force comprised of area employers plus representatives of the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County, local schools, and the two colleges. This task force should be primarily focused on identifying current and projected skills gaps in the local labor market and those job positions at or above prevailing wage rates that could go unfilled as a result. Such information should be a key input to workforce development strategies and job training programs in the area, particularly to support existing and prospective employers.
- With continued growth of the area's Hispanic population, monitoring the need for expanded English as a Second Language instruction and bilingual counseling assistance for small businesses and un/underemployed individuals.
- Placing a particular focus on skills development and increasing the number of area workers suited for positions in building trades. In addition to coordinating efforts and programs with the appropriate organizations and educational institutions, this should include emphasis on effective placement and local retention of such individuals.

ü ***Designate a "Racetrack Development Area" and work to identify and recruit venues into the area that would provide recreation and entertainment for the racetrack or racetrack visitors.*** Additional recreation and entertainment venues could be created in the area that would encourage and attract racetrack visitors to stay additional days in the community to increase the total dollars spent locally per visitor on food and motel costs. Key development districts and activity centers in Hobbs are depicted in

Figure 6.1, including a Racetrack Development Area to the west, south and east of the racetrack/casino area along Lovington Highway.

- ***Identify and attract firms to Hobbs that could provide goods and services for the racetrack or racetrack visitors throughout the entire city.*** In addition to motels and restaurants, a number of stores that sell tack, feed, clothing, or other items could be complementary sources of gross receipts tax revenue and jobs.

- ***Support the development of the NEF Facility in Eunice and work to identify and recruit businesses into the area that would provide associated goods or services for the NEF facility or its workers.*** Also work to support the establishment of a Uranium Waste Treatment facility within 5-10 miles of the proposed NEF site to provide safe treatment of the waste and also provide additional jobs in Lea County.

- ***Actively pursue all types of housing construction as an economic development opportunity.*** Within five years, a minimum of 500 housing units will be needed in Hobbs. Identify and recruit a large scale home builder to come to Hobbs for a two to five year period to build large scale housing developments. Encourage them to hire local individuals that could be trained as apprentices to eventually obtain subcontracting licenses that would be very beneficial to our community in terms of jobs and availability of general contractors and subcontractors.

- ***Establish an Economic Development Forum.*** The area has many different entities who work to help with economic development in the region. A forum should be created with monthly or bi-monthly meetings to allow the various agencies to communicate their plans to each other and coordinate actions to make best use of the resources of the group. This group could also help annually review and monitor the implementation of this Comprehensive Community Development Plan.

- ***Research potential enactment and specific intended uses of the Economic Development Gross Receipts Tax and dedicate it and other public funds specifically for the implementation of the action items contained in the Comprehensive Master Plan.*** Without the necessary level of funding and support, the Comprehensive Plan will be set on the shelf to gather dust. A concerted and well funded implementation plan needs to be set up to help prioritize and implement the action items of the plan to provide the community with the full benefit of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Making Hobbs a City of Districts and Neighborhoods.** As discussed in the Urban Development chapter (Chapter 7) of this plan, the urban form of Hobbs has evolved as in most communities, with a more compact and dense core now surrounded by neighborhoods and commercial and employment areas designed based on widespread dependence on automobiles. In the face of scattered, strip development patterns, the GG+A study recommends that Hobbs "encourage concentration of consumer-responsive retail development" near existing commercial uses such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot. The Armstrong Berger beautification strategies include recommendations for improving the appearance of commercial areas and downtown and introducing an integrated, City-wide community signage program with a consistent graphic look to boost the image and identity of the community's key areas (e.g., downtown, medical, colleges) and assist visitors and residents in navigating around Hobbs. Whether undertaken for reasons of economic development, beautification, or better long-range community planning, implementation efforts across these various areas should all be geared toward highlighting the geographic location and identity of Hobbs' economic assets (downtown, retail, educational, industrial, HIAP, recreational) and ensuring that all Hobbs' neighborhoods are community assets through neighborhood protection and identity/enhancement efforts. Key development districts and activity centers in Hobbs are depicted in **Figure 6.1**. **Figure 6.2** highlights elementary schools, local parks and other community facilities as neighborhood "building blocks" and suggests a successful community development pattern that should be replicated in newly-developing areas in and around Hobbs.

- **Nurturing Medical and Educational Facilities.** In Hobbs as elsewhere, medical and educational facilities are important to the local economy as their presence

and future expansion efforts create jobs and provide for a more skilled labor force. Additionally, medical and educational institutions add to the quality of life of local residents and are often an important factor in business attraction and retention. Hobbs is home to Lea Regional Medical Center, which provides a variety of medical services to a large population base that extends well beyond the City, and to two colleges, College of the Southwest and New Mexico Junior College. The GG+A study concluded there was unmet healthcare demand in the community and the need to expand medical services. Supporting the expansion of medical facilities will create jobs and induce development and growth in other industries like housing and retail development. As with medical facilities, educational facilities create jobs as well. Both colleges have plans to add staff and expand facilities in the future. Further medical and educational investment will also boost efforts to retain more people who currently look—and go—elsewhere for their healthcare needs and educational opportunities.

- **Emphasizing Quality of Life.** Quality of life, which refers to the environment and amenities an area has to offer, is an important factor in retaining existing and attracting new businesses to a community. Some establishments will require large, relatively flat sites with maximum transportation access and utility capacity. Others will be drawn primarily by a city with quality neighborhoods, cultural and recreational pursuits, and retail shopping opportunities. Persons involved with the comprehensive planning process said "quality living" factors have certainly been a challenge in Hobbs' efforts to recruit major businesses and high-skilled individuals, such as doctors and college professors. These factors may include housing and neighborhood options, medical facilities, educational opportunities, recreational resources and entertainment diversions, and overall aesthetic appeal. Based on leadership and community input, improving the quality of life in Hobbs is critical to competing with other communities and enhancing economic development opportunities in the area. This is further supported by the GG+A report and survey, which found that what residents

liked least about living in Lea County was insufficient recreational, shopping and entertainment opportunities. Improvements residents wish to see include more parks and recreational opportunities, quality housing, additional shopping and eating establishments, entertainment opportunities, cultural events, and improvements to the overall image of the community including beautification of gateways and corridors. The Hobbs Improvement Initiatives are squarely aimed at overcoming apathy about the community and its potential, providing a means, through aggressive and targeted improvements (what GG+A labels "confidence-raising" measures) to make Hobbs a more "happening place" for residents and visitors of all ages.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan are based on priority economic development needs and strategies identified for Hobbs, as well as input from community residents and leaders during the planning process. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order.

Using Economic Development as the Organizing Focus of all Comprehensive Plan Implementation

GOAL: A revitalized, appealing community in which diversified and quality development provides the foundation for sustained investment and enhanced livability.

Objectives

- Provide adequate and appropriate areas for future industrial and commercial investment through coordinated land use, transportation and utility infrastructure planning.
- Address the needs and desires of prospective businesses and their employees as well as existing Hobbs residents through targeted community enhancements involving housing and neighborhoods, parks and recreation, trails, community facilities and urban beautification.

Actions

- Use the Hobbs Chamber of Commerce and/or the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County as forums for delivering annual status reports on Comprehensive Plan implementation—in addition to official reports to the City Commission—to emphasize that timely and effective accomplishment of priority community objectives is not solely the responsibility of City government.
- Include economic development criteria (e.g., potential job creation, existing business expansion, new business investment, district and neighborhood

enhancement) when setting priorities for infrastructure improvements and expenditures in Hobbs.

- In exploring potential new regulatory mechanisms for Hobbs, consider incentive-based provisions for achieving desired outcomes for development siting and design.
- Use the urban development themes and guidance in this Comprehensive Plan to make wise decisions on the effective siting of economic development facilities (e.g., potential small business incubator, "one-stop shop" for business financing and assistance, Small Business Development Center branch in downtown, etc.).

Making Hobbs a City of Districts and Neighborhoods

GOAL: A City whose economic and community assets are obvious—and obviously appreciated.

Objectives

- Use the City's land use, transportation and utility infrastructure planning role, combined with economic development recruiting and site selection processes, to focus new investment in areas that will create synergy between "old and new" and support clustering of commercial and industrial activity in well-planned nodes and activity centers.
- Better delineate and highlight Hobbs' established and newly-emerging neighborhoods through urban design techniques as well as better neighborhood organization, planning and management.

Actions

- If Hobbs implements zoning, establish zoning districts specifically designed to promote the desired types and mix of uses in key retail, commercial and industrial areas across the community.
- Also under a zoning scenario for Hobbs, consider the use of special area and/or corridor overlay districts where very specific standards can be applied related to land use compatibility, development appearance and quality, and area amenities.
- Consider the districts identified through this Comprehensive Plan (Figure 6.1) as the basis for various targeted enhancements, such as streetscape and landscaping

improvements, consistent street and directional signage, and coordinated marketing and district "identity" efforts.

- If Hobbs chooses to adopt a higher level of development regulation, make neighborhood protection the cornerstone of this initiative, both through public policy statements in the regulations as well as specific provisions aimed at protecting the edges of residential neighborhoods, managing the transition of land use from residential to commercial along major thoroughfares and elsewhere, and ensuring compatible siting and design of varied housing types and small-scale neighborhood commercial uses.
- Through development regulations or non-regulatory encouragement, promote the concentration of additional retail development at existing commercial nodes—as recommended in the GG+A analysis and strategy—to achieve a "critical mass" of attractive shopping destinations, to avoid excessive dispersal of commercial activity (and particularly to avoid further "strip" development along major roadways), to cluster compatible uses such as restaurants near department stores, and to enable the types of district treatments as suggested in Figure 6.1.
- Implement the annexation of and infrastructure development along the Joe Harvey-Navajo corridor to better manage the development pattern and quality along this key boulevard in Hobbs.
- Encourage private development standards and/or restrictive covenants for new industrial developments to achieve a higher level of design and aesthetic quality.

Nurturing Medical and Educational Facilities

GOAL: A medical/educational district in northwest Hobbs that is better woven into the fabric of the future City.

Objectives

- Support future medical/educational facility expansion and enhancements through coordinated land use, transportation and utility infrastructure planning and implementation between the City, Lea County, the involved institutions, and other private interests.
- Promote evolution of the area around Lea Regional Medical Center, College of the Southwest, New Mexico Junior College and the Lea County Event Center as a mixed-use district that serves as an "anchor" for other residential and non-residential investment in north and northwest Hobbs.

Actions

- Make specific infrastructure improvements (streets, water, wastewater, drainage, telecommunications, etc.) to support the expansion plans of the medical center and higher education institutions in northwest Hobbs.
- Use development regulations or other strategies to encourage a mix of compatible, complementary land uses along Lovington Highway, such as additional restaurants and lodging near the college campuses and Medical Center, potential senior housing (in close proximity to medical, educational, recreational and cultural amenities), and additional recreation and entertainment venues.

Emphasizing Quality of Life

GOAL: A community where civic pride comes naturally given the array of recreational, shopping, cultural and entertainment opportunities available to residents and visitors.

Objectives

- Build on Hobbs' "trade center" role and status to attract additional retail and restaurant establishments with reputations for quality development programs and service to the community.
- Continue to highlight downtown Hobbs as the primary focus of cultural arts offerings and festival events.
- Aggressively promote the use of the Lea County Event Center to provide events to attract the same type of visitors who will be attending the new racetrack in Hobbs.
- Use the Parks and Recreation element and the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives to bring more green pathways to the community and walking/biking linkages between important districts and destinations.
- Emphasize quality homes, quality neighborhoods, quality schools, and quality employment opportunities as the cornerstones of quality lives, for residents of all ages and means.

Actions

- Encourage the Lea County Commission to establish a citizen committee with a promotional operating budget to aggressively promote the use of the Lea County Event Center.
- Provide the Lea County Event Center sufficient personnel and resources to coordinate high-quality events that will result in excellent event and total yearly attendance.
- Increase the Lodger's Tax fund percentage up to the maximum rate to provide additional revenue for economic development activities.
- Continue phased design and implementation of specific elements of the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives provided by John Armstrong that will add to community and district identity and character.
- Encourage the development of neighborhood programs to improve the overall quality of neighborhoods.
- Consider better neighborhood delineation and entry treatments (signage, landscaping) in older areas of Hobbs to emphasize established residential districts and encourage civic pride as is done in new suburban developments.
- Conduct an evaluation of the first year of Landscape Ordinance implementation and consider potential enhancements to the ordinance to make further progress on beautification and development quality objectives for Hobbs.
- Following Comprehensive Plan adoption, begin preparing a series of neighborhood-level plans using a more detailed, strategic planning approach.

Market and Economic Analysis and Economic Development Strategy

A Market and Economic Analysis and An Economic Development Strategy For Lea County and the Cities of Hobbs and Lovington (referred to as the Market and Economic Analysis) was completed by Gruen Gruen + Associates in March 2003. The report provides an overview of past and existing economic trends in the region and identifies strategies to further enhance the area's economic vitality. The report discusses opportunities and constraints for attracting and retaining desirable businesses. It also identifies comparative advantages that target industries derive from locating in Lea County. Finally, the analysis and strategy recommends economic development policies and actions that would enhance private sector economic conditions and capabilities.

Employment Trends

The GG+A analysis highlighted the following key facts and trends regarding employment in Hobbs and Lea County:

- Total employment in Lea County increased from approximately 16,100 jobs in 1970 to nearly 27,250 in 1981 (a nearly five percent average annual growth rate). Then a dramatic employment reduction occurred from 1981 to 1990, dropping total employment to under 20,000 jobs (an average of more than three percent annual decline). The oil and gas sector accounted for 52 percent of the 1981-1990 job loss.
- The area employment base stabilized in the 1990s, with modest job growth from 1990 to 1998. Employment increased by 1,835 jobs during this period to nearly 21,800.
- Employment in services grew the most from 1990 to 1998, at a rate of nearly three percent, adding nearly 1,000 jobs.
- Government and services were the only two sectors in which employment increased over each of the three periods. Government is the lone sector in which this growth was steady, albeit slow, for nearly 30 years.
- Oil and gas employment has been relatively stable in Lea County since 1990. Much of the regional corporate presence, represented by administrative and technical jobs, was eliminated or relocated to "headquarters" versus "field" locations in the mid 1980s.
- For many decades prior to 1990, the status of the predominant oil and gas sector was the key determinant in the creation or loss of related and indirect jobs in various other sectors. This has been much less the case since 1990.
- The oil industry could be a continuing, cyclical source of employment for at least another 20 years, primarily involving "blue collar" jobs. The higher-paying administrative and technical activities and jobs are unlikely to return.
- Lea County's employment base has been evolving more toward services, retail trade and government functions.

Comparative Advantages, Competitive Disadvantages

Economic development advantages and disadvantages of Lea County were identified based on the report's demographic and economic analysis, which included field research, interviews and surveys. Examples of comparative advantages that certain industries derive from locating in Lea County and competitive disadvantages that constrain economic development opportunities in the region are listed in **Table 6.1**.

TABLE 6.1:
Comparative Advantages and Competitive Disadvantages
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Comparative Advantages	Competitive Disadvantages
Availability of natural resources	Location, relatively isolated
Favorable climate	Lack of proximity to major airport
Low cost land available for development	Limited supply of high-skilled workers and inability to recruit professionals
Affordable housing	Lack of modern industrial park
Available semi-skilled labor	Unattractive appearance of community (gateways, commercial corridors)
Educational and healthcare institutions	Unfavorable personal and corporate income taxation regimes compared to those of Texas
Positive business climate	Lack of housing stock
Workforce with a "can do" attitude and positive work ethic	Lack of community amenities
	State liquor license statutes discourage construction of restaurants in Hobbs

SOURCE: *Market and Economic Analysis and an Economic Development Strategy for Lea County and the Cities of Hobbs and Lovington*, Gruen Gruen + Associates, 2003 (with additions from Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee)

Economic Development Priorities

In addition to the GG+A recommendations that are already incorporated into the Goals, Objectives and Actions in this Comprehensive Plan element, the analysis and strategy also suggests the following actions and policies to enhance economic opportunities in Hobbs and the region, which were again endorsed and elaborated by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee:

- **Concentrate on Serving Existing Firms in the Market Area** – Concentrate economic development efforts on accommodating the needs of existing firms and expansion needs of those in nearby cities desiring a location in Hobbs. This can be accomplished through incubator programs and providing assistance to small businesses. The study also suggests holding retention meetings to identify concerns and needs of existing businesses.
- **Enhance Workforce Training Programs** – Identify future economic and industrial trends, determine associated workforce training needs, coordinate needed programs, and identify potential funding sources to help coordinate and establish agreements with local businesses and educational institutions in the area such as

New Mexico Junior College and College of the Southwest in facilitating workforce training programs including apprenticeships, co-op opportunities, and other job training programs.

- **Make Infrastructure Improvements** – Assist industries and businesses with the provision of adequate utilities to meet their needs. Additionally, Lea County should work with other counties and the State in improving roadway infrastructure that would help facilitate the movement of goods regionally. The survey conducted as part of the study suggests that improvements to roadways, including enhanced access to I-40 and I-20, and air service infrastructure would increase the attractiveness of Lea County as a place to do business.

- **Facilitate the Development of Available Lots and Building Space** – Be more proactive in developing sites and buildings for existing or prospective businesses. This could be accomplished through working with builders and developers and offering them incentives to induce private development (provision of land, low-cost financing, tax abatements). Or, a public entity could develop building space and then lease or sell it to prospective businesses.

- **Encourage Concentration of Consumer-Responsive Retail Development** – Given that retail demand was found to be greater than supply, encourage the development and appropriate mix of retail and commercial uses. These uses can reduce the leakage of sales dollars outside of the County and also improve the appeal of the area to prospective new businesses. In particular the report suggests that land be allocated to enable a 125,000-200,000 square foot shopping center near existing retail developments such as Wal-Mart or Home Depot. Potential businesses to recruit include Kohl's, Target and Old Navy. Restaurants and other retailers should also be encouraged to locate near existing major commercial uses.

- **Support the Expansion of Medical and Education Uses** – Support medical and educational institutions by providing assistance with permitting, infrastructure needs and improvements, and legislative support.

- **Explore the Potential for Establishing a Research Center for Extending the Economic Life of Oil and Gas Resources** – Create a task force with the responsibility of investigating the establishment of an industry and government

research center that would focus on extending the life of oil and gas fields in the region. Contact the New Mexico Oil and Gas Association (NMOGA) for potential coordination.

- **Encourage Expansion of Waste-Related Management Research and Operating Activities** – Coordinate with other agencies in obtaining a greater share of jobs and associated income from the Waste Isolation Pilot Project and Waste Control Specialists activities, which are currently located in nearby cities.
- **Test Feasibility and Implement Commercial Alternative Energy Facilities and/or Research and Development Programs** – Work with the New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, the Department of Energy, utility companies and alternative energy developers in determining the feasibility of having alternative energy facilities in Lea County.
- **Use Results of the Survey and Study to Communicate Advantages of Hobbs** – Use the GG+A survey results in brochures and advertisements to market Hobbs as a beneficial place for industries to locate.
- **Continue to Make Quality of Life Improvements** – Continue to improve Hobbs as a residential location including offering facilities and amenities that will attract and retain businesses and their employees. Such amenities may include adequate housing, shopping areas, restaurants, medical facilities and parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, improving the overall appearance and image of the city, including streetscape and landscape improvements to enhance community gateways and corridors, would make the community more appealing to visitors as well as future businesses and residents.

Hobbs Improvement Initiatives

During 2002, this project was launched to solicit public opinion on community beautification and recreational needs in Hobbs. According to the Summay Report prepared by the City's project consultant, Armstrong Berger, Inc., the survey results "revealed an overwhelming positive response for the need to add landscape and recreational activities to the City agenda." Items that elicited the highest degree of support included:

- Improved City image (98%)
- More aggressive trash pick-up programs and strong ordinances and code enforcement related to trash and litter (94%)

- More pedestrian-friendly intersections (90%)
- Plant 1,000 trees a year in public spaces for 10 years (90%)
- Stronger planning initiatives (90%)
- Landscape ordinance (85%)
- New City-wide signage system (80%)
- Initiatives to revitalize downtown (80%)
- Install overhead utilities underground (80%)
- Hike and bike system to link existing and future park space (80%)
- Replacement of billboards with smaller roadside signage (70%)
- Streetscape projects along major street corridors and rights of way (60%)

Based on this and other findings, the priority projects presented in **Table 6.2** were identified as part of the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives. The total estimated cost of all priority improvements ranged from $56.7 million to $66.1 million. The cost estimates were followed by this concluding statement to the entire Hobbs community:

> While the scope and costs of the projected projects is large, it is important to note that they reflect the wishes of the citizens of Hobbs and represent decades of deferred investment in the community. However, Hobbs will find it hard to compete economically for new business and development unless greater attention is paid to amenities and quality of life initiatives. This is certainly true if Hobbs wishes to expand and diversify its economy beyond present business and industries … Also, while the cost is significant, the above projects represent the minimum of the types of projects that have to happen to radically improve the appearance and appeal of Hobbs.

During 2003, the Hobbs City Commission approved further funding to enable Armstrong Berger to proceed with a downtown streetscape design for portions of Broadway Street in downtown. Additional funds are already available to begin constructing the Phase 1 design, once completed. The City Commission also sought a $2.7 million loan through the New Mexico Finance Authority to be used for other beautification efforts, including new and more significant gateway signage for Hobbs.

TABLE 6.2:
Priorities from Hobbs Improvement Initiatives
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Initiative	Projected Timeframe	Preliminary Cost Estimate
Trash / City Image Program	2002-2007	$2.8-3.2 million
Aquatic Park Activities	2003-2008	$3.5-3.8 million
City Entrances (4 locations)	2004-2007	$1.5-1.8 million
Hike and Bike Trail Plan		
Phase 1 – Railroad Right-of-Way	2002-2008	$3.5-3.8 million
Phase 2 – Dedicated Bike Route	2004-2005	$775-825,000
Phase 3 – Neighborhood Route	2008-2009	$475-525,000
Streetscape Corridor Plan		
Phase 1	2002-2007	$10.5-12.0 million
Phase 2	2005-2010	$4.8-5.2 million
Phase 3	2010-2015	$5.0-6.0 million
Phase 4	2015-2020	$7.5-8.5 million
Downtown Streetscape		
Per Block (5 block minimum)	n.a.	$6.5-7.5 million
Park Site	n.a.	$2.6-2.9 million
Green Meadow Lake Improvements	2004-2005	$2.5-3.9 million
City-Wide Graphics	2003-2005	$1.0-1.3 million
General Recreational Activities		
Putt-Putt Golf	2004	$800,000-$1.1 million
Skate Park	2004	$800,000-$1.1 million
Indoor Swimming Pool	2006	$2.0-2.4 million
Batting Cages (6)	2005	$100-125,000
Lighted Basketball Court	2005	$55-65,000
Outdoor Volleyball Court	2005	$25-30,000
Racquet/Handball Court	2005	$30-35,000

SOURCE: *Hobbs Improvement Initiatives*, Summary Report, Armstrong Berger, Inc., 2002

Medical and Educational Facilities

Lea Regional Medical Center

The Lea Regional Medical Center, located at 5419 N. Lovington Highway, between New Mexico Junior College and the Hobbs Industrial Air Park, has served southeastern New Mexico and nearby areas of Texas for more than 25 years. When it first opened in 1974,

the Humana-owned hospital was known as Llano Estacado Medical Center. The facility was purchased by HCA in 1979 and given its current name.

Over the next four years, from 1980 to 1984, HCA opened four medical office buildings and a 70-bed pavilion. Following its affiliation with Triad Hospitals, Inc., in 1999, the medical center has opened a state-of-the-art Cardiac Cath Lab and a Gastroenterology Lab. The center currently has five operating rooms in its surgical suite suitable for a wide variety of procedures. The hospital also has a seven-bed intensive care unit to provide 24-hour care for critical condition patients. Other significant facilities include a full-service laboratory, medical imaging department (including nuclear medicine, ultrasound, C-T and mammography labs), health sciences library, and pharmacy.

Lea Regional continues to attract more physicians to Hobbs. As a result, in early 2003, an additional medical office building was constructed at the site. Through its variety of facilities built since the mid 1970s, this acute care medical center now has 250 licensed beds and is able to offer the following key services:

- Cardiology
- Inpatient and outpatient services
- 24-hour emergency services
- Labor and delivery (including a neonatal special care unit for premature babies)
- Women's services
- Pediatrics
- Senior adult services
- Rehabilitation services
- Physical therapy
- Mental health unit
- Chemotherapy
- Imaging services
- Occupational medicine

The Lea County Medical Center was recently recognized as a "Top 100 Hospital" in the medium community hospital category. Other concentrations of physicians and health care services in Hobbs are found on Dal Paso and North Grimes streets. The Lea County health offices are located on Dal Paso just south of Bender Boulevard (at Michigan Avenue).

City of Hobbs Fire Department personnel fulfill a "first responder" role from three community fire stations (plus an airport location) and through numerous employees who are cross-trained to provide advanced life support care as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). HFD currently has five ambulances.

New Mexico Junior College

New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) is a public, two-year community college which confers Certificate and Associates degrees. Located at 5317 Lovington Highway, between the Lea Regional Medical Center and the Lea County Event Center, the college currently enrolls more than 3,200 students. In operation since 1966, NMJC has grown into a 243-acre campus with more than 331,400 gross square feet of building space worth an estimated $37.3 million. A college taxing district within Lea County supports NMJC's programs and facilities.

Notable in NMJC's Strategic Plan is a series of 11 Vision Statements, including:

- Vision Statement 7 – New Mexico Junior College will continue to provide modern and clean facilities, as well as provide a plan for maintaining the campus and buildings for future growth.
- Vision Statement 8 – New Mexico Junior College will provide a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and patron.

Notable facilities on the circular campus include Pannell Library, various classroom and office buildings, special instructional and vocational facilities, men's and women's dormitories, athletic fields and facilities, and a Continuing Education Building through

which NMJC provides "life-long" learning opportunities to many others besides its currently enrolled students.

New Mexico Junior College provides a particular economic development asset to the Hobbs and Lea County area through its Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC exists to assist start-up, established and expanding business establishments and provide one-on-one support to aspiring entrepreneurs. The Center's focus is on job creation and retention, increased business sales, new capital investment, and longevity of small businesses by providing expert consultation, workshops and resources on business planning, financing, marketing, operations, and technology.

Another way that NMJC benefits Hobbs is by making its campus facilities available for community use. The Events/AV Services Department handles room reservations and arrangements and encourages on-campus art exhibits, cultural events, conferences, meetings, and similar activities.

Since 1969, NMJC has benefited from philanthropic contributions overseen by the New Mexico Junior College Foundation, which is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation. In addition to providing financial assistance and scholarships to deserving students, as well as funding enhanced educational and technical programs, the Foundation encourages facility expansion and improvements through grants and endowments.

College of the Southwest

College of the Southwest (CSW) has completed significant physical and strategic planning exercises in recent years and considers itself a "work in progress." Such improvements were urgently needed since CSW is one of the fastest growing colleges in the southwestern United States. Enrollment has nearly tripled to approximately 900 students over the last decade.

CSW has a 162-acre main campus located at 6610 Lovington Highway, across from the Hobbs Industrial Air Park and slightly north of New Mexico Junior College. The current collection of nine major buildings totals some 80,000 square feet of space. These include:

- J. L. Burke Hall – Built in 1965, it houses CSW's administrative functions and executive staff.
- Scarborough Memorial Library – Constructed in 1967 and expanded in 1980 and again in 2000, the library houses CSW's general holdings plus several special collections.
- Business Building – This facility was built in 1969 and includes classrooms and a computer laboratory.
- Mabee Southwest Heritage Center – Constructed in 1976, this theater building includes an auditorium (238-seat capacity), seminar room and informal reception area. It is available for corporate training, classes, lecture series, multimedia presentations, and musical and dramatic productions.
- Mabee Physical Fitness Center – Built in 1980, the Center includes a multi-purpose gymnasium, racquetball court, weight room, and athletic training room.
- Academic Building – This building of classroom, laboratories and faculty offices was finished in 2000, adjoins the Business Building, and is home to the Department of Arts and Sciences. It is nearly 9,000 square feet in size.
- Bill Daniels Student Center – Built in 2001, this building contains the campus store, food service, a game room, and informal living area in nearly 13,000 total square feet of space.
- Mabee Center for Teaching and Learning – This building came into operation in 2002, adds nearly 13,000 square feet to the campus space inventory, and houses the Departments of Education and Computer Services as well as a computer lab.

The Thelma Linam Webber Dormitory, completed in 1994, has semi-private rooms and a commons living area. Two student apartment buildings—Jane Adams Hall (1978) and Bob and Adele Daniels Hall (1981)—include units suitable for sharing by four or five students. The CSW campus also has athletic fields for baseball and soccer—Jack Williams Baseball Field and Bob Moran Soccer Field.

One special campus asset that benefits the Hobbs community as well as CSW students is an Interactive Television Classroom (ITV) at Scarborough Memorial Library. The library also has a two-story interior atrium that is popular for community activities.

The CSW Board of Trustees in Winter 1996 launched the "Faith in 2000" fundraising initiative. Within 16 months, the $6.2 million capital campaign—the largest in school history—had been completed. The funds are helping to pay for the enhancement and/or development of CSW's physical plant, technological infrastructure, administrative systems, library automation, and library collection.

In 1998 the College concluded a Comprehensive Campus Master Plan, prepared with the assistance of the noted architectural firm Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum (HOK). The Master Plan provided a comprehensive assessment of CSW's physical plant needs over a 10-year period. Upon full implementation of this three-phase plan, CSW will have nearly tripled its total building square footage. Phase 1 was to be accomplished based on the success of the "Faith in 2000" campaign and would increase on-campus square footage by 68 percent. Phase 1 also included $750,000 of new library acquisitions. New buildings completed since the 1998 campus plan include the Academic Building (2000), Bill Daniels Student Center (2001, adjacent to the Mabee Southwest Heritage Center), and the Mabee Center for Teaching and Learning (2002).

In December 2003, CSW broke ground for construction of the second residence hall called for in the Campus Master Plan. The first residence hall, which was nearing completion in the same timeframe, has 1,500 square foot suites, a commons area, and room for 48 beds in the multi-storied, 14,000 square foot structure. The campus will also have a new 3,900 square foot chapel as a result of Phase 1.

In addition to its positive economic impact on the Hobbs and Lea County areas, CSW contributes to the area's spiritual, cultural and intellectual development through continuing education opportunities and sponsorship and involvement in the Thanksgiving Community Prayer Breakfast, the Jack Maddox Distinguished Lecture Series, and the Hatton W. Sumners Speaker Series. College of the Southwest is also nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in free enterprise education.

Hobbs Municipal Schools

The Hobbs public school system includes one senior high school campus (Hobbs High School, located in east Hobbs on Jefferson Street, between Scharbauer and Sanger Street); a 9th-grade campus (Hobbs Freshman High School—Heizer Campus, located in south

Hobbs on Stanolind Road); two junior high schools (Houston Junior High and Highland Junior High); and, 12 elementary schools distributed across the community (Broadmoor, Booker T. Washington, College Lane, Coronado, Edison, Jefferson, Mills, Sanger, Southern Heights, Taylor, and Will Rogers). The school system also operates a specialized Learning Center (Jenkins-Nunan), a Head Start facility, and an Alternative School.

According to school system data, total enrollment has generally declined since the mid 1990s, from 8,621 in 1996-97 to just under 7,700 in 2001-2002. Further information on Hobbs Municipal Schools and individual campuses is available at www.hobbsschools.net.

Chapter 7

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the Urban Development chapter is to address three key aspects of Hobbs' physical development: (1) land use and urbanization; (2) housing and neighborhood integrity; and (3) aesthetics and beautification. Besides creating a framework for more orderly growth, physical planning for urban communities is essential to ensure tax base preservation and enhancement, coordination of public facilities and services with private investment, and fiscally responsible decision-making regarding infrastructure provision and extension.

As a community, Hobbs continues to debate the merits of expanding municipal regulation of land development activities to enhance the City's urban form and image. Without these tools, Hobbs will continue to rely on infrastructure provision as the primary means of guiding and influencing the City's development pattern. Incentive-based approaches can also be applied, supplemented by private initiative and appeals to civic pride, to encourage wise decisions about land use and development quality and compatibility.

This plan element should be used in conjunction with the Growth Capacity, Transportation, Economic Development and Parks and Recreation elements of this Comprehensive Plan to ensure coordinated long-range planning for the ongoing physical development of Hobbs and adjacent urbanizing areas.

Key Issues

Through the comprehensive planning and public input processes, the following key issues related to Hobbs' urban development trends and outlook were identified:

- **Achieving a More Orderly Development Pattern.** As urbanization moves northward and eastward away from the original core of the community, Hobbs faces the prospect of an emerging development pattern that exhibits all the classic signs of "urban sprawl": "leapfrog" activity in which considerable vacant land remains amid scattered pockets of development; inefficient and costly extension of the City's utility infrastructure to serve this uncoordinated fringe development; new residential developments that lack the design quality and amenities to qualify as true, enduring neighborhoods rather than just "subdivisions"; siting of new schools and other public facilities in an

uncoordinated fashion rather than as anchors for new neighborhoods and private development; "strip development" outcomes along major roadways as stand-alone sites are developed and shopping and services are strung out in a linear—and often unattractive fashion—along the City's thoroughfares; and, increased driving times and distances between typical destinations of work, home, school, shopping and services, and recreation. The Hobbs community must recognize that managing the pattern and quality of its future growth will remain difficult without all the necessary regulatory tools available to municipalities. In addition, the City must consider strategic annexation of additional territory, when and where fiscal considerations make sense, to ensure that it is in a position to guide and influence growth in newly-developing areas. In growing outward, the City also risks increased vacancy of existing commercial structures and the gradual decline of older neighborhoods. By maintaining a vital center and strong established neighborhoods, Hobbs can enjoy the benefits of positive new development activity at the edge while avoiding wholesale duplication of existing infrastructure, schools and public services in new growth areas.

- **Expanding and Diversifying the Area Housing Supply.** The area housing market will fluctuate based on the performance of the local economy. A vibrant housing market requires adequate and steady demand to fuel a healthy process of new construction, resale and renovation of older dwellings, and trade-up activity among consumers at various life-cycle stages and income plateaus. When Hobbs regains this momentum, it will be important to diversify the local housing stock both for affordability reasons and to ensure that a wide array of living options are available, from traditional detached homes and apartment developments to townhomes, patio homes, duplexes, smaller multi-unit developments (e.g, tri-plexes and quad-plexes), and "granny flats" and other types of accessory units for younger and older residents.

- **Protecting and Revitalizing Neighborhoods.** Hobbs has historically experienced stagnant neighborhoods in which deterioration of homes and properties can set in and maintenance costs begin to exceed the upkeep capabilities of owners. In the absence of municipal development regulations, Hobbs' neighborhoods are also at risk of encroaching, incompatible development and the random transition of former residential properties to more

intensive uses at neighborhood edges. The community must continue to focus attention and resources on maintaining attractive, stable and secure neighborhoods to avoid wholesale decline and abandonment and the devaluation of property values and the City's tax base.

- **Raising Standards for Development Quality and Community Appearance.** As a community with a "boomtown" history, Hobbs experienced periods in which numerous structures were built without significant attention to detail, quality appearance and long-term viability. As in many other maturing communities, Hobbs residents are increasingly concerned with the quality and not just the quantity of development. But, even as Hobbs has attracted more national retail and restaurant chains, while also nurturing locally-grown businesses, it has not set its expectations high enough with regard to development quality. A regulatory approach can help to establish reasonable minimum standards and a "level playing field." And, in the process of raising expectations for private developments, public agencies and facilities must also present a positive image.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan are based on traditional community planning and urban design principles as well as input from community residents and leaders during the planning process. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order.

Achieving a More Orderly Development Pattern

GOAL: Long-term growth in appropriate areas to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses within the City and urbanizing portions of its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Objectives

- Promote growth where adequate infrastructure exists.
- Encourage infill development where appropriate (utilities, compatibility, etc.).
- Ensure that development within targeted growth areas will not reduce the adequacy of public facilities and services.
- Coordinate the location, density and types of development with utilities and transportation planning to ensure desired development outcomes.
- Plan for mixing and/or separation of different development types based on desired location, density and pattern of development.
- Undertake annexation and extension of services in a coordinated and timely manner to protect public interest and assure continued orderly growth and development.
- Annex key growth areas when and where appropriate.

Actions

- Employ the development policies contained in this plan element to guide individual development decisions and the overall development pattern in Hobbs.
- Identify targeted, preferred growth areas just beyond the existing city limits (through utility extension planning, advance parkland and school site acquisition, Thoroughfare Plan implementation, annexation planning).
- Use capital improvements planning to focus road and utility upgrades in preferred growth, infill, redevelopment and economic/industrial development areas.
- Use public projects (schools, libraries, community centers, etc.) as "anchors" for newly-developing or redeveloping areas.
- Consider the use of incentives to entice development within or adjacent to established neighborhoods, including increased density, tax deferral, fee waivers, and other methods in accordance with state laws.
- Provide incentives to ensure points of interconnectivity between adjacent developments, including streets, sidewalks, green spaces and paths.
- Create an option that rewards traditional neighborhood design or conservation subdivision techniques with increased density, reduced lot size, decreased setbacks, reduced street width and other measures as determined appropriate.
- Begin incremental implementation of a long-term annexation strategy, both through landowner-requested as well as City-initiated annexations.
- Identify locations for future commercial development clusters (versus scattered and/or "strip" development).

- Adopt infill and redevelopment policies to grant incentives to infill projects, such as flexible development regulations, waiver of development and utility tap fees, and other potential incentives as permitted by state law, in exchange for developments using existing street and utility infrastructure.
- Provide economic development incentives and expansion/relocation assistance for existing businesses.
- Attract specific desired uses through targeted recruiting, incentives and/or other means.
- Maintain communications with major landowners in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction regarding future development plans, service provision, and annexation potential.

Expanding and Diversifying the Area Housing Supply

GOAL: A community in which quality, affordable housing in a variety of styles is available in sufficient quantity to residents at all income levels

Objectives

- Address local barriers to affordable housing development.
- Establish "life-cycle housing" as an essential component of subdivision design and reinvention of existing neighborhoods.
- Rehabilitate and improve existing quality homes.
- Introduce quality factory-built housing, specifically modular housing, into the mainstream market as a responsible method of addressing affordability, adequacy and availability issues.

Actions

- Encourage construction of alternative housing types such as "granny flats," row houses and duplexes/tri-plexes/quad-plexes in new development and redevelopment initiatives to provide more options between single-family detached dwellings and large-scale apartment complexes.
- Provide density incentives to developers that are willing to incorporate alternative housing types into a new development.
- Promote alternative site design to achieve affordable housing, including zero lot line development, reduced setbacks, reduced street widths, reduced lot size, mixed-use development, clustered housing, and increased density.
- Aggressively coordinate with developers to find ways to reduce construction and development costs associated with land acquisition, infrastructure, and other project elements that impact the cost of housing.

- Conduct and periodically update a detailed housing condition survey to determine the quality of the existing housing stock and identify all substandard housing as visible from the exterior.
- Ensure that demolition of substandard and dilapidated housing is conducted within the context of a coordinated neighborhood enhancement and infill development strategy.

- Ensure that the City's development ordinances treat modular housing the same as conventional, single-family detached homes.
- Establish a partnership between builders, local lending institutions, local government and educational institutions such as Hobbs Senior High School and New Mexico Junior College to establish a modular housing industry in the community that provides affordable housing to local market while also creating new, skilled employment in the area.
- Pursue opportunities to acquire federal or other funds to assist in programs such as downpayment assistance, homebuyer education and owner-occupied housing rehabilitation.
- Expand the amount of quality housing stock in the community by working with the Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), and encourage the establishment of additional non-profit and public/private organizations, as appropriate, to assist with housing improvements in both new construction and existing neighborhoods.
- Coordinate with local banks to create a revolving loan fund that can support homeownership assistance or housing rehabilitation.
- Analyze the existing building and subdivision regulations to identify possible barriers or cost savings.

Protecting and Revitalizing Neighborhoods

GOAL: Well-maintained established neighborhoods that offer rewarding living options while supporting the history, character and pride of Hobbs.

Objectives

- Empower residents through development of strong, active neighborhood associations (and encourage such associations, as well as the adoption and maintenance of private covenants, in new developments).
- Enhance and better enforce development-related codes and ordinances.
- Ensure that amenities are available to maintain the marketability of existing neighborhoods.
- Ensure that vacant lots do not proliferate in neighborhoods, posing potential risks to safety and community character. Promote infill housing development on vacant parcels as appropriate.
- Develop neighborhood protection and upkeep projects and programs through area nonprofits, local government and neighborhood associations.

Actions

- Research and consider a core set of minimum residential and non-residential development standards that should be adopted by ordinance and enforced by the City.
- Consider adopting a "neighborhood protection" form of regulation that focuses on protecting existing and future residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses and other undesirable development impacts at the fringe of residential areas. Areas targeted for commercial and industrial development would continue to have limited regulations.
- Consider adopting development regulations that focus on managing the transition of land use along the City's major roadway corridors and at the edge of neighborhoods, where residential character and property values can gradually be undermined as fringe properties begin to transition to non-residential uses.
- Promote adoption or reinstatement of deed restrictions or covenants in established neighborhoods along with creation of an entity with the capacity of enforcement.
- Encourage improved communication between citizens and the City Commission to improve the community through the use of "town hall" meetings in each of the city's districts.
- Work with the Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) to encourage quality infill development.
- Establish programs that local organizations can assist with that will improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, such as Crime Watch, neighborhood clean-up, assistance with code enforcement, programs for seniors and youth, and maintenance of public spaces and recreation areas.

- Offer incentives or financial/technical assistance for rehabilitation of substandard buildings.
- Regularly evaluate code enforcement processes and practices to ensure that enforcement is fair, expedient and utilized.
- Follow Comprehensive Plan adoption with neighborhood-level strategic planning initiatives to provide "grass roots" involvement in ongoing community planning and neighborhood protection/enhancement efforts.
- Develop a neighborhood-based capital improvements planning process that helps to identify and prioritize area needs and complements the community-wide Capital Improvements Plan.
- As part of neighborhood planning and protection, consider drafting residential design guidelines that address issues such as materials, roof pitch, façade treatment, porches (if applicable), proportional dimensions, garage placement, and other elements necessary to ensure that new development and rehabilitation is consistent with the established character of the area (for potential incorporation into restrictive covenants).

- Incorporate sidewalks into all urban neighborhoods, as feasible, and repair those that impede pedestrian access.
- Educate homeowners, apartment owners and other interested parties about the importance of home maintenance and its impact upon community quality of life, as well as property value, and encourage neighborhood associations.

Raising Standards for Development Quality and Community Appearance

GOAL: Attractive, appealing developments that contribute to a positive community image and character, thereby encouraging further desired economic investment and enhancements.

Objectives

- Assure the quality of development in both residential and non-residential areas.
- Manage development along highways and major thoroughfares for aesthetic reasons as well as transportation efficiency and safety.
- Ensure compatible development when differing development types are located in close proximity.

- In recognition of resource limitations, complete community enhancement projects according to a beautification "triage" in which improvements are targeted in the highest-priority, greatest "bang for the buck" areas and limited effort is spent in areas where the sheer scale of aesthetic challenges will be difficult to overcome.

- Pursue an "inside out" urban beautification strategy that involves a more internalized approach, versus excessive emphasis on major "pass-through" routes, for the benefit of Hobbs residents as much or moreso than short-term visitors.

Actions

- Focus primary enhancements on Broadway and Turner as the major east-west and north-south "spines" of Hobbs, and continue supplemental beautification efforts along other major corridors.
- Research and consider reasonable minimum standards for the screening of unattractive sites and views and the provision of buffering (dense vegetation, walls/fencing, increased setbacks, etc.) between incompatible land uses.
- If the City decides to pursue adoption of a traditional zoning ordinance, then corridor overlay zoning techniques should be seriously considered to support the City's streetscape and beautification objectives. A zoning overlay district provides a higher level and/or more targeted set of development standards for a particular area that goes above and beyond the typical requirements for area development provided through the underlying base zoning district.
- Consider the creation of aesthetic development regulations for new building exteriors in various areas.
- Ensure quality development through commercial and industrial development standards (outside storage and merchandise display, parking/loading areas, landscaping, lighting).
- Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review requirements for provision of green space in new subdivisions to create a set of requirements that are applicable and reasonable for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs.
- Maintain high standards of site maintenance and appearance at City properties and facilities.
- Continue aggressive community cleanup activities.

- Create a plastic bag ordinance to reduce plastic bag litter or begin charging for bags.
- Encourage the expanded use of residential solid waste polycarts for community litter reduction.

Land Use and Development

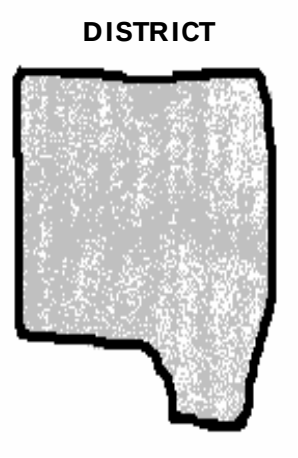
Orderly growth is the essence of comprehensive planning as it involves coordination of the various elements of urbanization: land use, transportation, utility infrastructure, parks, community facilities, public services, housing, economic development, and so on. Comprehensive planning provides a framework for individual land use decisions, both in government and the private sector, to move the community toward desired development patterns and outcomes.

Hobbs' Urban Form and Development Pattern

An inventory of existing land use is a basic data collection activity that is necessary to understand the various ways land is currently utilized and the location, pattern and extent of development both within the corporate limits of Hobbs as well as urbanized portions of the City's surrounding extraterritorial jurisdiction. Such an inventory was conducted for this Comprehensive Plan in Summer 2003, involving extensive field work across the area as well as use of recent aerial imagery of the Hobbs planning area. Land use information outside the city limits and in relatively undeveloped portions of the community is more generalized given the lesser extent of urbanization to date.

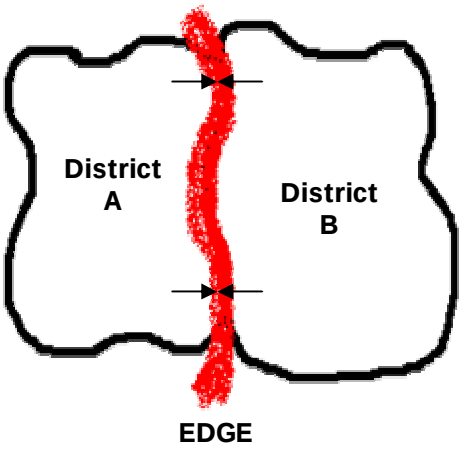
A widely-used method for evaluating community layout and activity patterns was also applied to Hobbs. This method involves five elements identified by Kevin Lynch, a renowned urban planner and keen observer of effective community design:

- **Paths.** Paths are channels for residents and visitors to travel from one destination to another. These may include roads, sidewalks, waterways or railroads. Paths create the framework of the community on which all other components fit. Examples of paths in Hobbs include the major street system (Marland, Sanger, Bender, Joe Harvey, Grimes, Turner, Dal Paso) and the north-south rail line through the City. Like many midwestern and southwestern U.S. cities, Hobbs was developed on a sectional grid that provides a logical set of circulation paths within the community. On a smaller scale, paths include the local and collector streets within various neighborhoods.



- **Districts.** Districts are identifiable areas within a community or neighborhood. Each has a distinct character that is separate from other areas that people enter and leave as they travel along various paths. That character is generally physical and can be as simple as a stark change in land use, such as an industrial district, or a transition in development styles. Within a community, neighborhoods can function as districts or can be combined into larger "residential districts." In Hobbs, district examples include the traditional downtown area along Broadway; an institutional district, comprised of higher education and medical facilities (New Mexico Junior College, College of the Southwest, Lea Regional Medical Center), to the north along Lovington Highway; a regional recreation district to the northwest at Harry McAdams City Park and Campgrounds and the Ocotillo Golf Course; industrial districts at the Hobbs Industrial Air Park (HIAP) and along the West County Road By-Pass; and, the evolving commercial district along Joe Harvey Boulevard (Wal-Mart, Chili's, Applebee's, Home Depot, movie theatre).

- **Nodes.** Nodes are significant destinations where people eventually arrive. They primarily include focused concentrations of land uses, a major feature (perhaps at the intersection of several paths), or any other location or event that commonly draws individuals together. For communitywide analysis, a node may include such destinations as the Lea County Event Center, the Zia Sports Complex, the Hobbs Teen Center, or Hobbs Senior High School and associated facilities (stadium, natatorium). At the neighborhood level, a node may include more local destinations such as Hobbs City Park, Southern Heights Elementary School, or a neighborhood grocery store. Some features of the community may fall into several categories, such as the Lea Regional Medical Center being a node as well as part of a larger medical/educational district.



- **Edges.** Edges are the distinct ending of one area and, if well designed, the obvious beginning of another. An edge is always a physical presence, such as where a residential neighborhood abuts a non-residential district, but it can also include a social perception of boundaries. Some edges within Hobbs include the railroad corridor

through town and the perceived north-south "divide" at Broadway and/or Marland. On the neighborhood level, a wide, busy thoroughfare and long, uninterrupted fence lines can form edges. These physical elements provide very definite borders. Sometimes the activities on either side of an edge are not compatible, leading to problematic *edge conditions*. Managing edge conditions is a major focus of city planning and development regulations. Edges should not be confused with gateways, which are limited to high-profile entries and exit points.

LANDMARK

- **Landmarks.** Landmarks are focal points. They help to orient the resident or visitor within the community or neighborhood, and they often imprint a mental image of an area. The impact of a landmark, however, depends not on its magnitude but its uniqueness. In urban areas such as Hobbs, a landmark may include a major monument or structure or an obvious feature, such as the Community Message Board near the Bender/Grimes/Turner intersection or various tall church steeples. In a more rural setting, items such as a barn, large house, an unusual sign, or even a particularly recognizable tree can become landmarks.

Hobbs has its own unique versions of these city "building blocks." Their location and nature are determined by the community's historical development pattern as well as the needs and desires of its residents.

Expectations for Ongoing Growth and Development

Anticipated trends and features of ongoing urban development in and around Hobbs include:

- Northward growth along the Lovington Highway corridor and up Grimes and Dal Paso toward College Lane, Kansas and Alabama.
- Northeasterly growth in the vicinity of the Navajo corridor as more acreage "opens up" for development in this direction.
- Continued constraints to growth to the south and west (oil/gas activity).
- A relatively healthy retail/cultural/civic node downtown, but the continued emergence of Joe Harvey Boulevard between Lovington Highway and Dal Paso as a new satellite, more auto-oriented retail corridor for Hobbs.
- Continued challenge of housing conditions and neighborhood quality in older, lower-income areas of Hobbs.

- Continued residential development activity outside the existing city limits, which will eventually draw more retail and services to such areas—and which could be the eventual impetus to more significant annexation activity by the City (gross receipts tax revenue).
- Continued potential for "strip" development along the major corridors leading in and out of Hobbs.
- Introduction of a horse racing and gaming facility to the area, plus the "spin-off" development that such a facility will attract.
- More aggressive trail system development and linking of parks.

Urban Development Policies

Communities across the country are attempting to achieve "Smart Growth." While the name is somewhat new, this is really nothing more than the fundamentals of sound urban planning. A community can grow sensibly by balancing economic development and environmental protection, focusing new development where public services and utilities are already available, actively supporting redevelopment of older areas and vacant buildings, valuing its traditional downtown and vibrant mixed-use areas, maintaining an efficient street network and infrastructure systems, providing convenient neighborhood shopping and attractive parks, and ensuring pedestrian-friendly commercial districts and walking connections between neighborhoods, parks and schools. Through effective land use planning and urban design, a city fulfills its paramount responsibility to promote the public health, safety and welfare while also providing predictability in the development process.

Policies serve as a guide and reference for elected and appointed officials and City staff and should be utilized when making decisions regarding future development within the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. Even if Hobbs does not choose to adopt zoning regulations in the near future, the following policy statements should be consulted as they reflect sound land use planning criteria and practices.

<u>In General</u>

- Neighboring land uses should not detract from the enjoyment or value of properties.
- Potential negative land use impacts (noise, odor, pollution, excessive light, traffic, etc.) should be considered and minimized.

- Adequate transportation access and circulation should be provided for uses that generate large numbers of trips. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be addressed where appropriate.
- Compatibility with existing uses should be maintained. Well planned, mixed uses which are compatible are to be encouraged.
- Floodplain areas should not be encroached upon by future development unless there is compliance with stringent floodplain management practices. These areas should be used for parks or recreational or related purposes or for agricultural uses.
- Environmentally-sensitive areas should be protected, including wildlife habitat areas and topographically constrained areas within the floodplain.

Residential

- Schools, parks and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods.
- Residential areas should not be next to industrial areas.

- Residential and commercial areas may be adjacent if separated by a buffer.
- Houses should have direct access to residential streets but not to primary streets.
- Houses should not be adjacent to major highways.
- Neighborhoods should be buffered from primary streets.
- Residential developments should include adequate area for parks and recreation facilities, schools and churches.
- Manufactured homes should be located at appropriate sites within the City where there are similar homes.

Retail / Office

- Neighborhood retail and service uses should be located at intersections of arterial or collector streets or at the edge of logical neighborhood areas unless appropriately placed within a planned development.
- Retail development should be clustered throughout the City and convenient to residential areas.
- Buffers should separate retail/office uses and residential areas.
- Downtown should be a major focus of office, retail and service activities, particularly through adaptive reuse of existing structures or redevelopment of vacant or industrial use parcels.
- Office and professional uses should be compatible with nearby residential areas and other uses through appropriate building height limitations and adequate buffering and landscaping.
- Low-intensity office and professional uses should provide a transition between more intense uses and residential areas.

Commercial

- The City's commercial areas should include a range of development types to serve regional as well as local needs, from large commercial developments to smaller, free-standing commercial sites.
- Commercial development should be concentrated in nodes at intersections and along major thoroughfares that are designed and constructed to accommodate heavy traffic.
- Parcels should be large enough to accommodate commercial use and associated parking needs.
- Commercial uses with more intensive operational or traffic service characteristics should be located away from most residential areas.
- Buffers should separate commercial uses from residential areas, especially where the commercial use involves visible storage or display of merchandise or materials.

Industrial

- Industrial development should have good access to truck routes, hazardous material routes and railroads.
- Industrial uses should be targeted in selected industrial development areas.
- Industrial development should have good access to primary streets and major highways.
- Industrial development should be separated from other uses by buffers.
- Industrial development should not be directly adjacent to residential areas.

Parks and Open Space

- Parks should be evenly distributed throughout the City and include larger community parks and smaller neighborhood parks.
- There should be walking and biking linkages between parks, schools, employment centers and residential areas.
- Parks are a desirable use for floodplain areas.
- Parks and open space may be used to buffer incompatible land uses.
- Natural features should be used as buffers or open space between or around developed areas.

Community Facilities

- Community facilities should be located adjacent to major streets to accommodate traffic.
- Community facilities should be centrally located in easily accessible areas within the community.
- Downtown should continue to be enhanced as a civic and cultural/ entertainment/tourism destination.
- Community facilities should be well buffered from nearby residential areas.

Housing and Neighborhoods

The *Market and Economic Analysis* completed by Gruen Gruen + Associates (GG+A) in March 2003 points out that limited new housing construction, high vacancy rates, and a decline in housing values are indicative of low demand for housing in the Hobbs and Lea County area. The analysis concludes that, "This weakness in the housing market relates to the limited growth in population and employment, which serve to stimulate the demand for housing (and the demand for retail goods and services)."

The Community Profile section of this plan (Chapter 2) highlights the minimal population growth of the last 30 years, the adverse economic impacts of reduced employment and investment in the oil/gas sector, and the income and poverty challenges that Hobbs faces as a result.

The following key facts and trends, from the Community Profile and the GG+A analysis, illustrate the realities of the area housing market:

- **Declining Income.** From 1980 to 2000, reflecting the area's shifting employment base, median household income (adjusted for inflation to 2002 constant dollars) declined by nearly 25 percent in Lea County (from $41,721 to $31,374) and by nearly 23 percent in Hobbs (from $40,289 to $31,148). Whereas the City and County exceeded statewide median income by nearly 25 and 30 percent respectively in 1980, by 2000 they had both fallen about 13 percent behind the New Mexico median ($35,937).
- **Minimal Construction.** Hobbs had only 840 more housing units in 2000 than in 1980 (7.5 percent increase). Lea County added 2,400 housing units (11.4 percent increase). Within the City, the number of units actually declined since 1990, from 12,327 to 11,999. GG+A reported that only 11 residential building permits were issued in 2002.
- **Increased Vacancy.** Vacant housing in Hobbs increased from 9.4 percent in 1980 (approximately 1,050 units) to 16.3 percent in 2000 (about 1,950). The countywide vacancy trend was very similar (up from 9.8 to 15.8 percent). [During Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee discussion of the housing situation, it was noted that vacancy rates can fluctuate widely in Hobbs, from "boom" to "bust" times, and that the housing market had tightened considerably during the one-year period of preparing this Comprehensive Plan.]
- **Limited Diversity.** Detached single-family dwellings represented nearly three-quarters of all housing units in Hobbs in 2000, increasing from 70.1 percent in 1990 to 73.7 percent in 2000 (196 additional homes). Total units in both the multi-family and mobile home-trailer unit categories actually declined during the 1990s. There were 240 fewer multi-family units (1,435 total) and 318 fewer mobile home-trailer units (1,349 total) in 2000 versus 1990. The housing category showing the most growth since 1980 was attached single-family dwellings, which increased from 172 units in 1980 to 373 units in 2000 (116.9 percent). However, attached single-family homes still represented only 3.1 percent of all housing units in Hobbs in 2000, compared to 12.0 percent in multi-family units and 11.2 percent in mobile home-trailer units.

- **Aging and Obsolete Housing Stock.** Given the lack of significant housing construction in recent years, an overwhelming percentage of existing housing units were built prior to 1990 (93.4 percent in Lea County and 95.6 percent in Hobbs), with the majority dating to before 1970. Historically, oil/gas booms in the area quickly led to housing booms to accommodate rapid population and employment growth. As in other boomtowns, much of this housing was built quickly and without a long-term investment perspective. As noted by GG+A, the combination of limited housing demand and an aging housing stock means that Hobbs and Lea County have limited offerings in terms of new, larger homes with contemporary designs for newcomers who can afford a more expensive home with better amenities. Maintenance and repair issues will become more prevalent in neighborhoods with mostly older structures, eventually progressing into blight and urban redevelopment challenges in the worst cases.

- **Depressed Home Values.** The median value of housing during the 1990s increased by 26.5 percent in Lea County (to $50,100) and 23.1 percent in Hobbs (to $51,200). However, by adjusting all figures for inflation to 2002 constant dollars, GG+A showed that the median home value actually fell by 4.0 percent in the County (from $54,749 to $52,573) and by 6.6 percent in Hobbs (from $57,514 to $53,727) over the decade. While "affordable" housing is often a plus for workforce and economic development reasons, GG+A point out that "the limited replacement of obsolete housing units with housing products responsive to contemporary preferences of workers and declining quality and stagnating or declining values does not provide the kind of supply preferred by employers and their workers." In addition, if actual values are increasing due to inflation while area incomes are lagging, then affordability suffers as well.

- **Proliferation of Low-Cost Housing Outside the City.** Countywide figures show that just over two-thirds of the housing unit growth in Lea County from 1980 to 2000 was in the mobile home-trailer unit category. At 1,640 additional units, this was nearly double the number of single-family detached dwellings added over the 20-year period (873 units). Since mobile home-trailer units account for smaller shares of the housing unit mix in both Hobbs and Lovington, most of these units have been added in the less urbanized portions of unincorporated Lea County.

Housing Affordability

Typical guidelines disseminated by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development suggest that households should generally spend no more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. Gruen Gruen + Associates calculated an inflation-adjusted median household income of $31,374 for Lea County and $31,148 for Hobbs in 2000. Using a rounded median amount of $31,000, **Table 7.1** indicates the monthly

housing costs that would be "affordable", based on the 30 percent threshold, for various income levels above and below the area median.

TABLE 7.1:
Housing Payment Affordability by Income
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Household Income	Percent of Hobbs Median	"Affordable" Monthly Payment
$46,500	150%	$1,163
$38,750	125%	$969
$31,000	**100%**	**$775**
$23,250	75%	$581
$15,500	50%	$388

SOURCE: Median income data from Gruen Gruen + Associates, monthly payment calculations based on U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development guidelines.

The next table, **Table 7.2**, shows the maximum house price that would be affordable at various levels of household income and based on three typical mortgage financing options—conventional, FHA and VA. As noted above, the median home value in Hobbs is in the $50,000 range (in addition, a local real estate broker reported that recent residential closings in the area, during Fall 2003, were averaging approximately $48,000). The affordability numbers in Table 7.2 suggest that much higher-value homes should be feasible in Hobbs. For example, a household earning the area's median income of $31,000 could afford homes in the $90,000 to $120,000 range, depending on the type of financing for which they would qualify.

TABLE 7.2:
Housing Price Affordability by Income
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Household Income	Percent of Hobbs Median	Maximum "Affordable" Sales Price		
		Conventional Loan	FHA Financing	VA Financing
$46,500	150%	$181,851	$141,295	$143,612
$38,750	125%	$151,543	$117,746	$119,676
$31,000	**100%**	**$121,234**	**$94,197**	**$95,741**
$23,250	75%	$90,926	$70,648	$71,806
$15,500	50%	$60,617	$47,099	$34,838

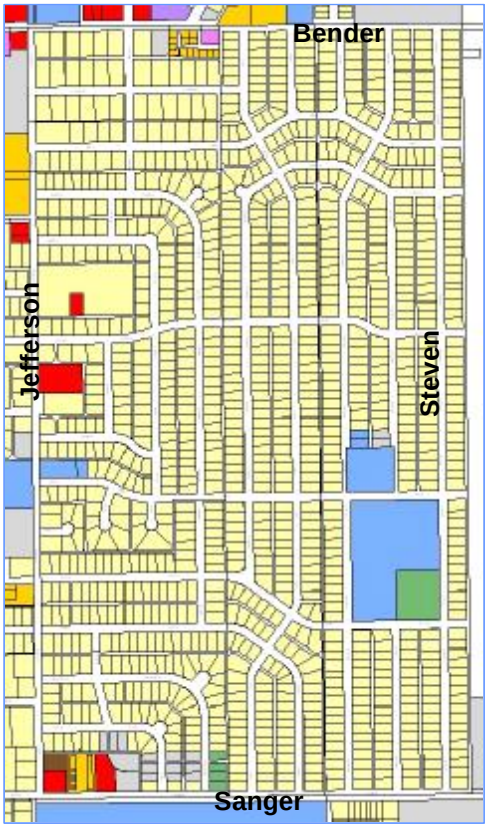
SOURCE: Median income data from Gruen Gruen + Associates, sales price calculations based on the "affordability calculator" available through the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae) website at www.ginniemae.gov.

NOTE: The Ginnie Mae calculator provides general estimates based on national averages and assuming the borrower is married with two dependents. It is not for loan qualification purposes for any loan program or specific lenders. All figures are based on a 30-year loan, with a 5.875% fixed rate for conventional, 6.25% fixed rate for FHA, and 6.375% fixed rate for VA. Down payment requirements are much higher for a conventional loan relative to FHA and VA.

Unfortunately, stagnant population and employment growth continue to dampen housing demand and therefore new supply. Knowledgeable individuals interviewed during the comprehensive planning process noted that few local investors are willing to risk capital on speculative housing construction given the unfavorable market conditions. Custom construction of individual units has been the recent practice versus large-scale development of more moderately-priced homes in subdivision settings. The decline in construction activity has also reduced the pool of contractors and qualified trades workers in the area, and limited construction also increases the cost of building materials and supplies. Finally, and significantly, it was noted that a tight land market, with significant acreage devoted to agricultural activities and resource extraction—and other land kept off the market through family ownership or for other reasons—is resulting in elevated costs for raw land and building lots.

Future Housing Needs

Based on a 2000 population of 28,657 and a projected 2020 population of approximately 34,000 (as detailed in Chapter 2-Community Profile), **Hobbs will need 1,964 new housing units by 2020 to accommodate 5,343 additional residents**. This is more than double the 840 units that were added in Hobbs between 1980 and 2000. For general planning purposes, this assumes the same average household size (2.72 persons per household) over the projection period. If household sizes continue their steady decline (dropping from 2.92 to 2.72 persons per household in Hobbs from 1980 to 2000), then even more housing units could be needed to house the same population growth increment. On the other hand, periodically high residential vacancy in Hobbs indicates that existing units are available beyond the needs of the current population. However, as noted previously, some of this housing is likely vacant due to its age and condition, declining value, and general obsolescence, making new housing construction a necessity.



In acreage terms, nearly 2,000 new housing units, if built at a typical density of four units per acre, would require 500 acres for development. Adjusting this acreage total upward to account for roads and infrastructure—using a typical set-aside factor of 15 percent—results in an acreage projection of 575 acres. To put this acreage figure in perspective, one can think of the rectangular, predominately residential area that is bounded by Sanger on the south, Bender on the north, Jefferson on the west, and Steven on the east—immediately north of Hobbs Senior High School. This existing developed area is roughly 350 acres, and, based on the existing land use inventory conducted for this plan, it was calculated that 232 of these acres are in single-family residential lots. When this figure is factored up by 15 percent to account for roads and infrastructure, the total acreage becomes 267 acres. This is nearly 50 percent of the 575 acres projected for Hobbs' additional housing needs through 2020.

As a further illustration, 232 acres, without roads and infrastructure, can accommodate 928 single-family housing units at a density of four units per acre (just under 11,000 square feet per lot). In reality, the 232 acres in the subject residential area has 1,148 such lots—or 220 more single-family homes than the example calculation—with a typical lot size of roughly 7,500 to 9,000 square feet. Thus, the density of home construction has many implications, including for neighborhood character, lot and home price, and the extent of land needed to accommodate a particular amount of population. Obviously, if attached dwellings (e.g., townhomes), small-footprint designs (e.g., patio homes), or multi-family apartment development are part of the housing mix, then even less land will be needed and more price and style options will be available to area consumers of varying ages, tastes and financial means.

Housing Diversity

Hobbs' housing stock is comparable to similar communities across the country in that it is almost exclusively comprised of two types of housing: single family detached homes and apartments. For the most part, existing housing follows traditional planning practices—a structure located in the center of a site with ample space for side yards, a front yard, and a rear area.

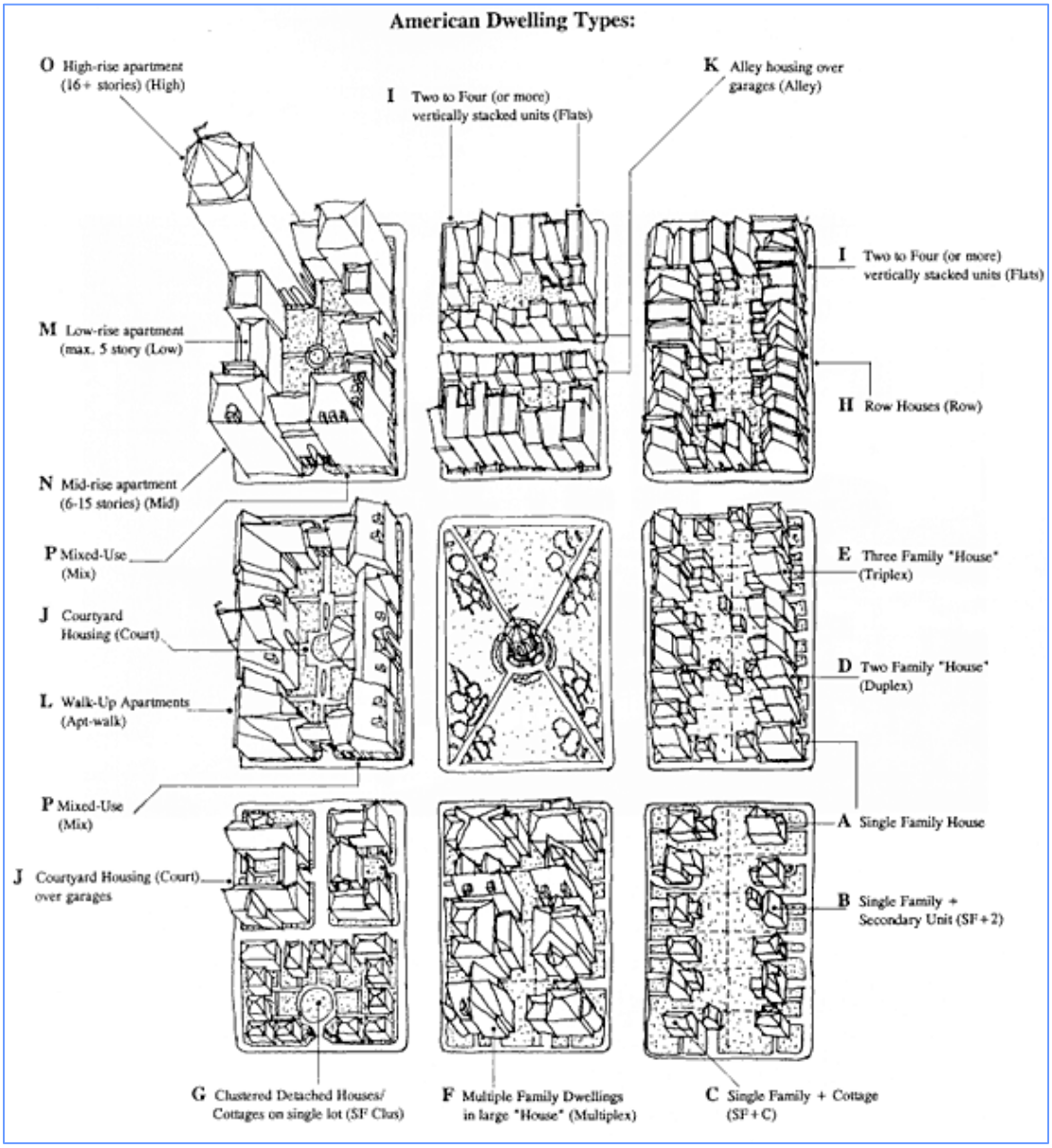
While not surprising, the lack of diversity in housing contributes to issues regarding affordability and adequacy. Diversity improves variety and allows for transition in housing to occur. In fact, authors Michael Pyatok, Tom Jones and Willie Pettus in their recent book titled, *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing*, indicate that American housing can be divided into 16 different categories, as shown in **Figure 7.1**. While some of the types discussed may not be as appropriate to Hobbs as others, the list of types exhibits the variety of housing options that are available beyond the traditional single-family home or multi-family development. Placement of structures, as in the case of zero lot line development, can also impact the ability to provide homes more affordably.

Single Family House. This category includes the traditional home associated with the American Dream. The structure is detached from and represents the only dwelling unit on a parcel. Most often, the single family home is located in or near the center of the site. Single family homes can be designed affordably by adjusting location on the site to allow innovative techniques such as zero lot line development, through alternative construction practices, home design, and financial incentives.

Single Family House with Secondary Unit. While the appearance remains similar to the simple single family house, this category includes space for a second unit within the structure that can be leased to individuals or families. Historic homes often designed secondary unit features into the structure in order to lease space or for use by domestic assistants. Home design eventually evolved away from this practice as leasing portions

of a home became "undesirable." Today the practice is being reconsidered as the benefits of placing renters in a single family environment and away from the social culture of apartments becomes apparent.

FIGURE 7.1:
American Housing Types
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico



SOURCE: *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing* (also available at www.designadvisor.org)

Single Family House with Cottage. Like the home with a secondary unit, accessory cottages were once commonplace and are only recently beginning to witness resurgence – thanks in large part to the move by "New Urbanists" to recapture many discarded, but useful, practices in housing. Commonly referred to as a "Granny Flat", the accessory cottage or above garage apartment inserts renters into the stable environment of homeownership. Additionally, the unit provides added income to the homeowner and makes the cost of the home more affordable.

Lake Park Townhomes – Klahanie, WA

Two Family Home. Duplexes, unlike accessory structures and secondary units, remain a part of the current housing environment and a legitimate means of generating affordable housing. Duplex construction is rare and almost never incorporated into new, large scale housing development. Duplexes can provide both rental and homeownership opportunities and, when designed as cluster housing, provide an outstanding housing alternative for seniors.

Three Family Home. Triplexes are fairly rare in today's housing market; however, like duplexes, they provide a viable alternative to the single family home. Triplexes, like duplexes, can be designed to appear as large scale single family structures with multiple stories and provide opportunities for both renters and owners.

Multiple Family Home. A larger variety than duplexes and triplexes, the multiple-family home can be designed to accommodate numerous households. While the scale of multiple family home design is too large to appropriately fit within established neighborhoods in Hobbs, it is a strong candidate for incorporation into new development.

Six Unit Homes at The Farm – Santa Cruz, CA

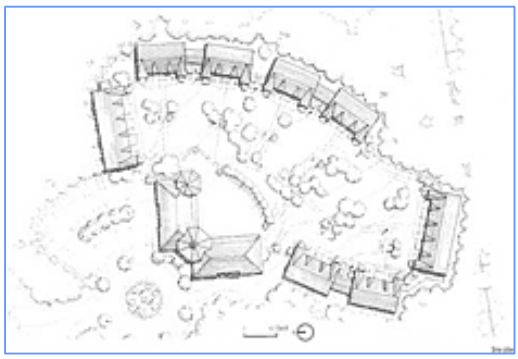
Row Houses. Similar to duplexes, triplexes and multiple family homes, row houses offer the reduced construction cost that come with attached structures while also permitting a sense of independence. For a time, row

houses fell out of favor as designers sought to move away from the gritty design of the urban environment. However, like other forms of housing, row houses have once again gained popularity as an option to single family homes and apartments.

Flats. While popular in other countries, such as Britain, flats – ownership or control of a substantial portion of a single story in a multiple story structure - have never been as abundant in the United States. Nevertheless, flats offer an additional alternative when considering affordable housing opportunities.

Courtyard Housing. This category offers the benefits of a row house, with the added "twist" of entry through a courtyard. Courtyard homes may be incorporated into innovative development techniques to include playgrounds, a community center or a forested green space. Like Multiple Family Homes, Courtyard Homes will likely not fit into established neighborhoods in Hobbs.

Apartments. Divided into four housing types (walk-up, low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise), apartments offer affordability through the reduced construction cost per unit and added density. As in Hobbs, apartment construction is sporadic with a tendency to be developed in quantity once sufficient demand is available. As a result, the market for apartment units tends to swing between need and saturation.



Courtyard Homes at West HELP – Greenburgh, NY

Mixed Use Housing. Mixing of uses was commonplace until separation of land uses through zoning and other mechanisms became prevalent to address negative impacts on adjacent residents. Today, mixed use housing is making a tremendous comeback, particularly in traditional downtown areas that can offer a range of commercial retail and entertainment activities and proximity to a variety of resources such as parks, schools and work.

Urban Beautification

All cities have an identity, an independent character that forms the community's unique personality. This character is demonstrated by the physical image of the city. It is found in the visual quality of the built and natural environment that defines the community's physical space. The visual elements, the parts of a city that residents and visitors see, are a reflection of the values held by local citizens and leaders. To foster economic development and support a good quality of life, cities must pay close attention to their visual image as they address their growth and renewal.

The series of figures in the remainder of this chapter highlight particular aspects of Hobbs' image and aesthetics that were considered during the comprehensive planning process. These considerations should be a central part of ongoing beautification and image enhancement efforts in Hobbs.

FIGURE 7.2a:
Screening Unsightly Views
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Like many Permian Basin communities, Hobbs is dotted with oil wells and related equipment storage sites. While many residents point to the economic benefits involved, it would be desirable to provide some minimal screening where homes are nearby (above) and along major roadway corridors (below), where cities have their best opportunity to impart a positive image.

FIGURE 7.2b:
Screening Unsightly Views
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Screening of scrap yards and other heavy industrial sites may not be a priority in areas of the community that are the focus of such intensive activity. However, similar to the situations illustrated in Figure 7.2a, basic screening should be provided for the benefit of nearby residences (below) and to enhance the aesthetics of major roadways and entry points into the City.

FIGURE 7.2c:
Screening Unsightly Views
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

If a community expects the private sector to meet a higher standard of development quality and aesthetics, then it must also call on its City government to set a good example. The City of Hobbs presents a very positive image at its wastewater treatment facility entry (above) through effective fencing, signage and landscaping. However, just down the block, at a point where the municipal property is directly across from the front doors of residences, a stockpile area remains unscreened.

FIGURE 7.3a:
Enhancing Perimeter Walls
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

As in many southwestern communities where wood fencing is less common, concrete and masonry walls have been erected around the perimeter of subdivisions and to buffer development along major roadways (such as above, along Michigan south of Bender). These blank, monotonous walls—especially those that are basic unadorned concrete block—contribute little to corridor aesthetics and attractiveness. In the specific example below, along Grimes north of Bender, the open storage of residential garbage cans is more appropriate to a rear alley situation than one of Hobb's heavily-traveled thoroughfares.

FIGURE 7.3b:
Enhancing Perimeter Walls
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

SOURCE: Federal Highway Administration Environment website (http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/)

This photo montage shows how variations in design, texture, color and detailing, plus incorporation of landscaping and artwork, can "soften" perimeter walls and make them more of a community asset even as they serve their primary function. The City of Phoenix Planning Department has available on its website an excellent and colorful publication, entitled *Freeway Mitigation and Enhancement Ideas*, that illustrates the many ways in which sound barrier walls and other "hardscapes" and structures have been beautified through creative design, public art and xeriscaping with a decidedly southwestern flair, particularly to benefit abutting neighborhoods (http://www.ci.phoenix.az.us/PLANNING/plnpubs.html).

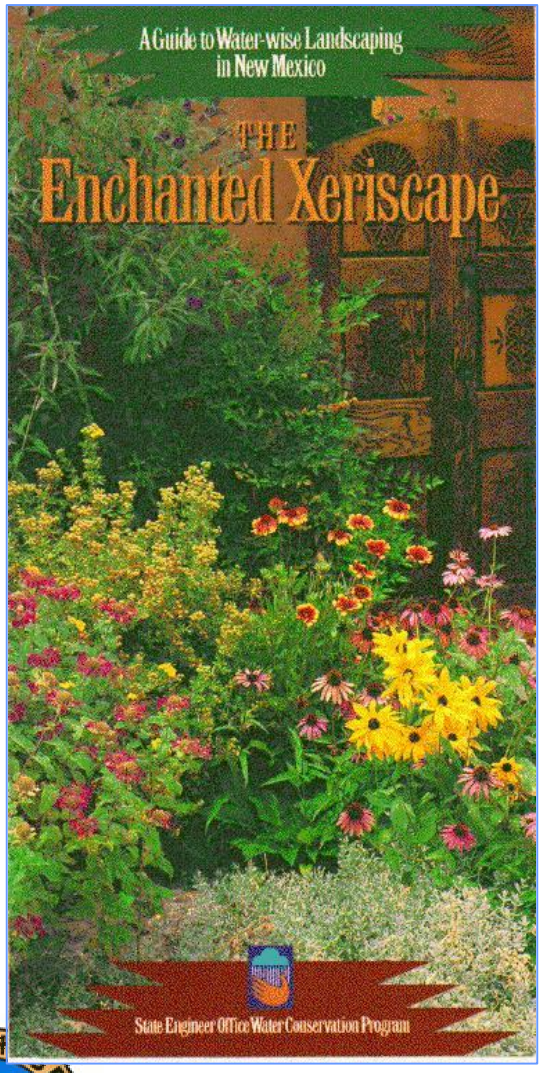
FIGURE 7.4:
Setting High Standards
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

While the example shown is but one recent case and is not being singled out, comparisons from other communities (below) show that Hobbs should not settle for a lower standard of development quality, particularly in terms of site enhancements and parking lot landscaping and screening. Even in a relatively arid climate, more can be done through xeriscaping and non-vegetative design to avoid the "sea of asphalt" effect (above) that results from the combination of an unscreened retail parking area abutting a major arterial roadway.

FIGURE 7.5:
Climate-Appropriate Landscaping
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Peoria, Arizona

Given the long-range water supply concerns raised in Chapter 4-Growth Capacity, Hobbs should clearly emphasize water-saving approaches in pursuing its urban beautification strategies. The Water Conservation Program under the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer has extensive resources available to assist communities, businesses and individuals with "water-wise" property enhancements. In conjunction with the New Mexico Department of Transportation and Lea County, Hobbs should continue to expand on southwestern-themed boulevard enhancements, such as those already in place along Bender Boulevard.



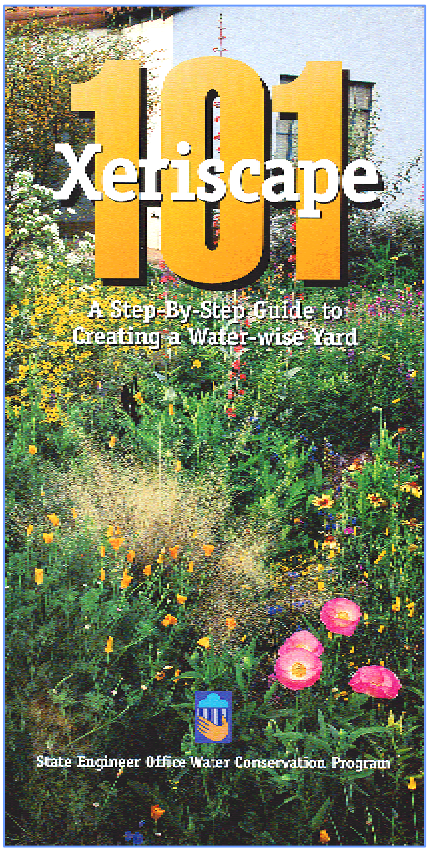


FIGURE 7.6:
Streetscape and "Curb Appeal"
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Central Avenue – Phoenix, AZ

Downtown Enhancement along Broadway in Hobbs

Cultural Mural – Santa Monica, CA

Attractive Appearance of the Soaring Society of America Building in Hobbs

A community ultimately establishes its image and projects its character through many individual elements that are either part of the public realm or the "public face" of private developments and properties. Hobbs should continue to focus on targeted enhancements in high-profile areas of the City that will boost the pride of local residents as well as impress visitors. Meanwhile, private owners and groups should be encouraged to contribute to community beautification during property development, redevelopment and maintenance.

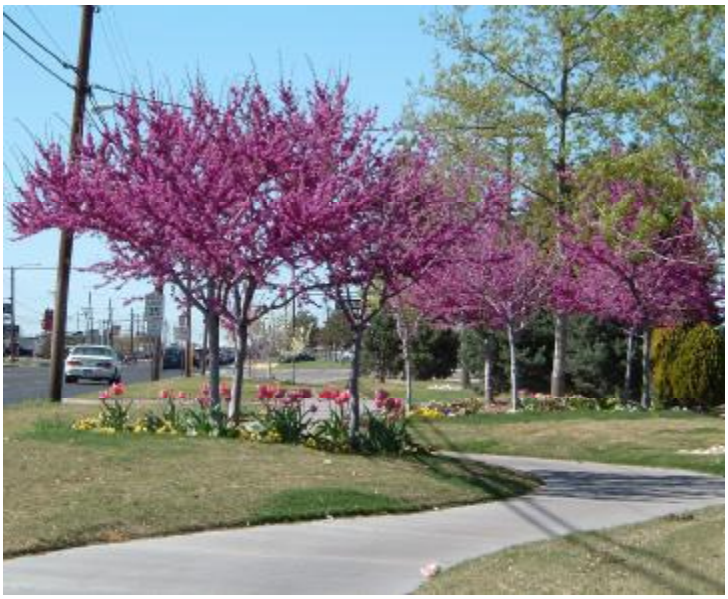
Effective Property Maintenance at the City of Hobbs Fletcher Center

Chapter 8

PARKS AND RECREATION

More and more people are recognizing the importance of parks and recreation facilities as an essential component of a "livable community." A well planned, funded, and managed system of parks, trails and open spaces will help the City to attract and sustain quality development and will also contribute to improved community health, enhance the enjoyment and quality of life of residents, provide a variety of active and passive recreational activities for all persons, and help to preserve and enhance the quality and integrity of the natural environment. Additionally, parks and recreation facilities play an important role in a community's economic viability.

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation chapter is to identify current and future needs for parks and recreation facilities in Hobbs and to recommend policies, standards, facilities and programs to eliminate existing recreational and open space deficiencies and provide for future needs. Additionally, this chapter includes a Parks and Recreation System Plan which identifies general areas for the placement of future neighborhood and community parks, plus a network of trails and linkages, based on 20-year population projections and anticipated future growth areas and development patterns.



Key Issues

Through the comprehensive planning and public input processes, the following key issues related to parks and recreation in Hobbs were identified:

- **Maintaining and Enhancing Existing Facilities.** Like roads, water and sewer lines and drainage, parks and related facilities should be considered an integral part of the infrastructure of a city. As with all infrastructure, maintenance of parks and recreation facilities will be important in sustaining their quality and

ensuring they continue to be an asset to the community. All facilities will require routine maintenance and repairs while some will require additional facilities and improvements such as new play equipment, bike racks, walking trails and tennis courts. As increased demand is placed on the park system, facilities and equipment will need to be replaced and refurbished. As these improvements are made, opportunities will arise to enhance the appearance and attractiveness of the facilities and structures. Due to financial and other resource constraints, maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities will have to be carefully balanced with the provision of additional parks and recreational improvements in newly-developing areas.

- **Promoting Livable Neighborhoods**. Many communities across the country are recognizing the importance of creating strong, livable neighborhoods that include valued amenities and facilities. Parks and recreation facilities along with other public facilities are necessary components and building blocks of vital neighborhoods. When appropriately designed and integrated within a community, these amenities can serve as an "anchor" and focal point of a neighborhood—a place where residents can gather and interact. An effective parks and recreation system should include both neighborhood and community parks. Neighborhood parks should be located within residential areas and easily accessible to all residents. They should be within walking distance and should be connected to the neighborhood and other public facilities through sidewalks and/or trails. Community parks serve a larger area as discussed later in this chapter.

- **Implementing Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities**. Through the public involvement process for this plan Hobbs residents expressed concern over the lack of connectivity and access between parks, schools and residential areas. One way of improving connectivity and mobility between these major destinations is to offer residents an alternative way to travel. A system of sidewalks, trails and bicycle lanes that links major destinations including parks, schools, residential areas, commercial centers and public facilities will provide an alternative means of circulation while contributing to the recreational needs of the community. Improving connectivity between these destinations will also increase residents' access to and use of parks and recreation facilities in the city. Bicycle and pedestrian amenities are a key "quality of life" component in many communities, and Hobbs residents would like to see more emphasis placed on providing these facilities and improving connections between destinations. However, given limited resources and the size of the community, the City will have to determine to what extent it wishes to create a network of trails and which connections would provide the most benefits. Based on community input and future

development trends, the Parks and Recreation System Plan identifies a network of trails and bike lanes that would link major destinations in the community. Bicycle and pedestrian planning should be highly coordinated with overall transportation improvements and planning. Bicycle and pedestrian strategies are further discussed in the Transportation chapter of this plan (Chapter 5).

- **Supporting Economic Prosperity.** Parks and recreation facilities have often been looked at in terms of the benefits they provide to the community, particularly to those that use the facilities. However, there are many region-wide and public benefits derived from parks and recreation facilities in addition to the direct benefits to users. These public benefits—economic, social and environmental—are often ignored in gauging the success of parks and recreation facilities and when making decisions related to sustaining or investing in them. Due to limited financial resources, parks and recreation facilities are often overlooked in favor of other pressing priorities. However, like other infrastructure elements in the community (roads, utilities), parks should be recognized for the long-term economic benefits they provide, and such factors should be considered in deciding whether to invest in them.

  Key economic benefits of parks and recreation amenities include attracting tourists and retirees, enhancing real estate values, and attracting and retaining businesses. Many businesses will choose to locate in a community based on quality of life factors which often include parks and recreation facilities. The need for these amenities and opportunities has been expressed by local residents. This need is further supported by the market analysis and economic development strategy prepared by Gruen Gruen + Associates (as discussed in Chapter 6 of this plan). The GG+A survey found that one of the things residents liked least about living in Lea County was insufficient recreational opportunities. For non-residents, parks (state, regional and local) and recreation (festivals,

camping, fishing, hunting, etc.) are key attractions and reasons for visiting an area. **Given that State of New Mexico approval for a new racetrack/casino complex in Hobbs occurred amid the City's comprehensive planning process, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee considered it highly important that the community work to provide parks and recreation opportunities that will entice racetrack/casino visitors to spend more time in Hobbs.**

Goals, Objectives and Actions

The goals, objectives and action steps outlined in this element of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan are based on traditional parks planning and community design principles as well as input from local residents and leaders during the planning process. The goals, objectives and actions appear in no particular priority order.

Maintaining and Enhancing Existing Facilities

GOAL: A parks, recreation and open space system that is operated, maintained and enhanced in a cost-effective manner.

Objectives

- Develop and implement a parks and recreation improvement program which identifies and prioritizes improvements for each of the current City facilities.
- Enhance existing recreational opportunities to meet the passive and active recreational needs of the community.
- Explore innovative ways to finance park improvements and activities through user fees, fund-raising, sponsorships and other sound fiscal methods.

Actions

- Conduct an annual condition assessment of existing parks and recreational facilities to identify improvement needs and determine the level of annual financial commitment required to maintain existing facilities.
- Improve the maintenance of all parks and recreation areas and facilities by funding preventive maintenance schedules.
- Continue the replacement program for playground equipment through which equipment is annually inspected and, when necessary, added to a five-year capital improvements program.
- Consider private sponsorship of park improvements and upgrades.
- Partner with local schools, churches and organizations in maintaining and enhancing existing parks and facilities. Consider a "Public Works Park Day" where citizens and groups are encouraged to participate in community service for park maintenance.
- Continue to promote the Adopt-A-Spot program to supplement and assist in the maintenance and upkeep of parks and park facilities.
- Identify needed improvements to existing recreation programs based on public input and participation rates.
- Prioritize and implement the following parks and recreation improvements in Hobbs:

A. Construct restrooms at Charlie Brown Park.

B. Replace sports field lighting at Zia Softball Complex.

C. Add new youth baseball and soccer fields for games.

D. Construct new Museum/Arts Center.

E. Construct outdoor shuffleboard courts.

F. Construct frisbee golf area.

G. Construct "maze" type vegetation walking/meditation trail.

H. Replace lighting at High School Tennis Complex.

I. Construct amphitheatre.

J. Upgrade Turner/Stanolind mini-park

K. Identify usable practice space for youth teams (spring)

Promoting Livable Neighborhoods

GOAL: Livable neighborhoods with parks and open space areas serving as focal points or key components of neighborhood design.

Objectives

- Integrate parks and open space areas into neighborhood design and development.
- Create high-quality parks and open spaces that are safe, accessible to all, and provide connectivity between other facilities and parks.
- Provide parks and recreation opportunities for all persons including low-income and elderly citizens and at-risk youth, recognizing the importance of accessible facilities.

Actions

- Acquire and develop neighborhood parks in identified deficient areas, as shown on the Parks and Recreation System Plan (Figure 8.3).
- In existing deficient areas, identify vacant lots or City-owned properties that would be appropriate for neighborhood parks.
- Encourage traditional neighborhood developments that promote the use of public open spaces as focal points of the neighborhood.
- Establish requirements for fees in lieu of parkland dedication in the City's subdivision regulations.
- Require new developments to set aside sufficient land suitable for development into a neighborhood park.
- Require citizen input with regard to location, accessibility and type of facilities to be included in neighborhood parks.

Implementing Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities

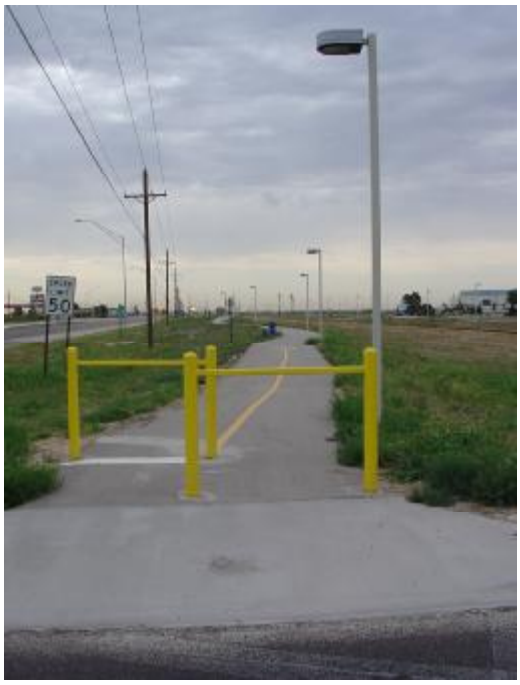
GOAL: A network of sidewalks, trails and bikeways which connects residential areas to parks, schools, workplaces, shopping, major open spaces and other destinations, providing alternative routes for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and access.

Objectives

- Identify potential greenbelt corridors, bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes and linear parks that can provide a safe and secure connection between parks, schools, neighborhoods and open spaces.
- Implement policies and procedures to acquire recreational easements and/or rights-of-way at an early stage in the development process.

Actions

- Prepare a comprehensive bicycle/trail master plan that will define the routing and design standards for all trails.
- Designate appropriate arterial, collector and residential streets that are suitable for bicycle traffic.
- Identify rights-of-way, easements and natural drainage ways that would be suitable for bike or hike trails.
- Coordinate with owners of utility easements and rights-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Include trails in the development of new parks and recreation facilities, where feasible.
- Improve access to and connectivity between existing parks through the development of additional sidewalks and/or trails.



Supporting Economic Prosperity

GOAL: A parks and recreation system that enhances the quality of life of local residents and promotes economic growth and investment.

Objectives

- Continue to make quality of life improvements that will further elevate Hobbs as an attractive and desirable place to live, work and visit.
- Provide parks and recreation facilities that will appeal to and attract targeted businesses and industries as well as tourists and visitors.
- Provide adequate park and recreation facilities to keep up with new growth and development.
- Identify ways to finance park facilities and improvements, including local funding mechanisms, state and federal grants and loans, and private dedication of fees.

Actions

- Acquire incrementally and develop parkland (through lease agreements, donations and/or partnerships) to meet local requirements and needs for park acreage for the 20-year projected population.

- Conduct periodic needs assessments to update the types of recreation needs and improvements desired by the local community (including those already identified through the Hobbs Improvement Initiatives process in 2002—e.g., museum/fine arts facility).
- Coordinate with the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County in determining recreation needs and improvements that would better market Hobbs as a place to live and locate.
- Work to provide parks and recreation opportunities that will entice racetrack/casino visitors to spend more time in Hobbs.
- Explore non-traditional facilities to address a wider range of recreational pursuits, including those that are popular with potential business prospects and/or relocating employees and their children (e.g., BMX courses, mountain biking, ropes courses, indoor rock climbing walls, etc.).
- Continue a joint parks/facilities use and management approach between the City and Municipal Schools in newly developing areas.
- Identify and explore all potential funding sources, including federal and state programs and local revenue options such as fees, fee-in-lieu of lands, etc.
- Develop corporate, memorial and individual sponsorships with naming privileges for facilities, parks, trails and greenbelts.
- Include parks and recreation facilities improvements in a five-year capital improvements plan.

Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Hobbs' park and recreation system consists of approximately 182 acres of land and includes four pocket parks, 12 neighborhood parks, eight community parks, and two regional parks. Shown in **Figure 8.1** are each of the City-owned and maintained parks. Displayed in **Table 8.1** are the existing facilities and their respective classification and size.

In addition to these facilities, Ocotillo Golf Course and Hobbs Country Club contribute to the recreation needs of the community and region. The City of Hobbs Parks & Recreation Division is also responsible for managing and maintaining the Hobbs Teen Center, located on Alto Drive between Turner and Grimes, as well as all landscaping on City-owned properties and rights of way (medians, Turner Street landscaping, etc.).

TABLE 8.1:
Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Park / Recreation Facility	Size (acres)	Classification
Bender / Jefferson Mini Park	1.0	Neighborhood
Bensing / McKinney	1.0	Neighborhood
Charlie Brown Park	3.5	Neighborhood
City Park	10.5	Community
Copper / Central	0.5	Pocket
Del Norte with Pool (80 acres total available)	26.5	Regional
Fire Station II	0.5	Pocket
Harry McAdams Park and Campgrounds	45.0	Regional
Heizer Park with Pool	7.1	Community
Humble Park with Pool	4.1	Community
Little Heizer	1.0	Neighborhood
Little Snyder	0.5	Neighborhood
Peavy Park	0.5	Pocket
Sanger Green Acres	0.5	Pocket
Snyder	3.0	Neighborhood
MLK Soccerplex	28.0	Community
Triangle	1.5	Neighborhood
Washington Heights	10.0	Community
Washington Ball Field	2.0	Community
School Parks		
Jefferson School Park	2.5	Neighborhood
Mills School Park	1.5	Neighborhood
Sanger School Park	2.5	Neighborhood
Taylor School Park	1.5	Neighborhood
Washington School Park	2.0	Neighborhood
High School Tennis Courts	1.0	Community
Other		
Veterans Memorial Sports Complex	24.0	Community
TOTAL	**181.7**	

SOURCE: City of Hobbs Parks & Recreation Division

Standards

Standards provide measures to determine the amount of land needed for parks and recreation to meet the demands and desires of citizens and visitors. Parks and recreation standards are typically expressed in terms of acres of land dedicated for parks and recreation use per unit of population. While general standards are useful, it is important to establish standards that are based upon unique local considerations. Leisure and recreation values are unique to each municipality; therefore, the standards applied should represent the interests and desires of the community.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* to establish nationally-applicable criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and open space. These standards serve as a guide for parks and recreation planning but do not replace reasonable judgment or specific local needs. The needs and desires of the citizens of Hobbs justify continued development of parks, recreation facilities and open spaces to meet the specific requirements of the community.

Local Park Classification System And Development Standards

A variety of sizes and types of parks and recreation facilities are recommended to satisfy diverse individual interests, ensure adequate and equal opportunity, and to encourage use by all population groups.

Standards for parks and recreation areas and open space are helpful to identify the community's parks and recreation needs based upon its population. The population ratio method is commonly used to determine a level of standard for parks and recreation space. Using a standard that is based upon a unit of population—for example, "x" number of acres per 1,000 persons—allows simple quantification of park area needs. Starting with the current population determines the level of adequacy of the existing parks and recreation areas and facilities.

The development of standards for parks and recreation areas is dependent upon local population characteristics. For example, a community with a substantial portion of its population in younger age groups will require standards much different from a community with a more mature population. Young adults and youth require facilities for active recreation whereas mature adults are typically more interested in leisure activities and passive recreation. A well-designed parks and recreation system will account for the needs of all users including children and mature adults. The standards adopted should reflect the uniqueness of the population and represent the interests and desires of the park users.

Hobbs has approximately 182 acres of land devoted to public parks and recreation areas. This acreage includes two regional parks, eight community parks, 12 neighborhood parks and four pocket parks. The existing inventory of parks and open space provides leisure and recreation to the current population, which numbered 28,657 persons in the 2000 Census. Standards established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggest that a city should have at a minimum of six acres of parkland (regional, community and neighborhood parks) per 1,000 persons. However, many communities use five acres per 1,000 persons as a standard. An appropriate standard for Hobbs would be to have between five and six acres of parkland per 1,000 persons.

Displayed in **Table 8.2** are the standards for each type of park and trail in Hobbs. These standards were then used to determine the locations and needs for existing and future parks. The actual location and size of the park will often be determined by the availability of the potential park site.

Table 8.2:
Parks Classification System and Development Standards
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Component	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 Population	Desirable Site Characteristics
Mini-Park	Specialized facilities serving concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	Less than 1/4-mile radius	1 acre or less	0.25 to 0.5	Within neighborhoods and close to apartments, townhouses, or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Park	Area for intense recreation activities (such as field games, court games, crafts, playgrounds, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.) as well as passive use (walking trails)	1/4- to 1/2-mile radius serves a population up to 5,000 persons (evenly distributed across neighborhoods)	5 to 15+ acres	1.0 to 2.0	Suited for intense development, easily accessible, centrally located in neighborhood, with safe walking and bike access, may also be a school playground.
Community Park	Areas of diverse environmental quality may include intense or combined recreation areas such as athletic complexes, large pools, and areas for walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking, etc. May include natural features such as water bodies, in areas suited for intense development.	1- to 2-mile radius (serves several neighborhoods, but suitable for use by any City residents)	25+ acres	5.0 to 8.0	Located to be accessible to all City residents, both for larger-scale athletic activities and unique passive recreational opportunities.
Regional	Serves regional needs with a broad range of facilities and activities. Typically includes areas of natural resources.	50-mile radius	100 to 150+ acres	5.0 to 10.0	Planned to accommodate large numbers of visitors including regional special events (tournaments, concerts, festivals, etc.).
Linear Park	Area for hiking, biking, jogging, horseback riding, canoeing, and similar off-street activities.	No applicable standard	Width should be sufficient to protect resources and provide maximum use and safety	Variable	Manmade corridors such as utility rights-of-way, greenbelts, ridgeline or bluff areas, water bodies, ditches, canals, and abandoned RR lines.
Special Use Facilities	Areas of a specified activity, such as golf courses, zoos, conservatories, bird sanctuary, nature reserves, theme parks, and equestrian activities.	No applicable standard	Variable	Variable	Specific to the intended use.
On-Street Bikeways	Paved segments of roadways that serve to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Citywide	Sufficient to provide adequate travel between parks, neighborhoods and community facilities	No minimum standard	Bike Route: Designated portions of roadway for the preferential use of bicyclists. Bike Lane: Shared portions of paved roadway that provides separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists.

Table 8.2 (continued):
Parks Classification System and Development Standards
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Component	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 Population	Desirable Site Characteristics
All-Terrain Bike Trail	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes.	Single-purpose loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural areas	Variable	No minimum standard	Designed for all-terrain bicyclists

Source: National Recreation and Park Association, 1987

Needs Assessment

To determine the needs for parks and recreation facilities it is first necessary to identify the community's assets and underserved areas as well as the community's desires for facilities. Assessing park and facility needs in the community is important in identifying specific improvements and in maintaining and enhancing the parks and recreation system.

Assessment by National Standards

To assess the adequacy of the existing parks and recreation supply, it is necessary to look at the existing population and the supply of parks provided by existing facilities including any planned improvements or expansions, and then relate them to planning standards for desirable levels of service. In addition, it is necessary to consider forecasted population to determine future needs and to identify underserved areas of the system.

Displayed in **Table 8.3** is the amount of park acreage needed to meet the demand of the current population as well as the projected future population of 34,000 persons in the Year 2020. Both the five-acre and six-acre numbers are included.

TABLE 8.3:
Parks and Recreation Demand in Years 2000 and 2020
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Year	Population	Recommended Park Acreage	Above/Below Standard	Recommended Park Acreage	Above/Below Standard
		5 acres standard		6 acres standard	
2000	28,657	143.29	+38.71	171.94	+10.06
2020	34,000	170	+12	204	-22

Based on these standards Hobbs should already have between 143 and 172 acres of parkland. The City currently owns a total of 182 acres of parkland (for purposes of standards evaluation, this does not yet include another 53.5 acres at Del Norte Park that will be used for its gradual phased expansion into a full-scale regional facility). Therefore, Hobbs already exceeds even the higher, six-acre standard for providing an adequate amount of City-owned parkland for a community.

Future anticipated growth and the nature and location of this growth will dictate the necessity to expand and provide increasing acres of land dedicated for parks and recreation use. Utilizing five and six acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, and based upon the projected population of 34,000 persons in the year 2020, Hobbs will need between 170 and 204 acres of parkland. With 182 existing acres, Hobbs already exceeds the five-acre standard for its projected 2020 population. To satisfy the projected demand based on the six-acre standard, the City will need to acquire and/or develop an additional 22 acres by the Year 2020. As noted above, reserve acreage of 53.5 acres at Del Norte Park is already in City ownership. Including this acreage means the community is already 31.5 acres above the six-acre standard for 2020. As discussed in the next section, if the City is in good standing in terms of numerical standards for park acreage, then the next consideration is the geographic distribution of the various parks and facilities relative to residential neighborhoods and other potential users (businesses, institutions) to ensure good coverage and accessibility.

Table 8.4 identifies current and future facility needs based on the projected population and national guidelines for particular types of space and facilities. Although the standards below provide a guideline for future facility needs, they should not replace local standards based upon unique local considerations such as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, climate and natural environment. For example, the City of Hobbs meets national standards for basketball facilities; however, local demand may still indicate a need for additional basketball facilities in the future.

TABLE 8.4:
Facility Needs
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

Facility	Standard	Existing	2000 Need	2020 Need
Basketball	1 per 5,000	8	6	7
Baseball	1 per 5,000	13	6	7
Football	1 per 20,000	1	1	2
Soccer	1 per 10,000	10	3	3
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000	4	1	2
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	13	14	17
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	7	6	7

Service Areas

Evaluating service areas is an effective means of identifying geographic areas that have sufficient park areas available, but more importantly to identify those in need of additional parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Community parks have a primary service area of one mile, meaning that a majority of persons utilizing these citywide parks generally reside within one mile. The secondary service area extends two miles from the park to account for user patterns associated with the types of activities and facilities available in the community parks. For instance, little league athletic fields draw participation from throughout the community.

Neighborhood parks have a primary service area of a quarter mile and are intended to provide residents with ample opportunity for both passive and semi-active recreation activity within close proximity to their homes. The method of

determining the need for neighborhood parks is quite different from an assessment of need for community parks. Whereas community parks are designed for large-scale, community-wide events and activities, neighborhood parks are intended to meet the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. The level of activity is limited as a result of the size and location of these parks and the equipment and facilities available. Neighborhood parks should be within a short walking distance (typically one-half mile or less) for the residents of one or more neighborhoods thereby encouraging use and promoting convenience, ease of access, and safety for neighborhood children.

The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use. One or two vacant lots or several acres may both adequately serve the needs of a neighborhood if there is an even distribution of parks and sufficient facilities and equipment available. National standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of five acres assuming an adequate and even distribution across the city. Although a 15-acre park may accommodate ball fields and larger recreation and open space areas, three parks that are five acres in size may equally and perhaps better serve the need while providing a broader distribution of neighborhood parks.

Illustrated in **Figure 8.2** are the neighborhood and community park service areas in Hobbs. A one-mile service area is shown around all community parks. A quarter-mile service area is shown around all neighborhood parks. Additionally, a quarter-mile service area is also shown around all community parks and schools. Schools provide an assortment of playgrounds, athletic courts and fields, and open space, which, for all intents and purposes, help to meet the citywide demand. Community parks have a quarter-mile service area—in addition to their larger one-mile service area—because they serve as neighborhood parks for nearby residents. As shown in Figure 8.2, there are several areas in the City that are underserved with neighborhood and community parks.

Joint Use of School Facilities

The City of Hobbs and the Hobbs Municipal Schools have done an excellent job of jointly purchasing, using and maintaining recreational facilities. Currently the school system and City have several agreements in place including: (1) a joint-use agreement for use of the school district's indoor swimming pool, gymnasium and handball courts; (2) joint purchase and use of Veterans Memorial Complex; and, (3) joint development and use of the tennis courts located at Hobbs High School. Joint agreements and use of school properties increases the number and distribution of parks and recreation areas throughout the community, as shown in Figure 8.2.

Parks and Recreation System Plan

The general plan for future development of Hobbs' parks and recreation system was developed through evaluation of existing conditions, planned improvements, local demand and needs, and projected needs based upon anticipated urban development and increases in population. Areas targeted for potential future park development, as well as the possible location of additional trails and/or pedestrian/bicycle routes within Hobbs, are shown in **Figure 8.3**. All locations shown on the map for potential future improvements are generalized, conceptual and not parcel-specific and would require detailed study and design prior to actual acquisition and construction.

To develop a system of neighborhood and community parks that will adequately serve the existing and projected future parks and recreation needs of the community, the City needs to acquire and develop parks in underserved areas. These parks will help to achieve full service area coverage of community parks and an even distribution of neighborhood parks.

This general plan should be a valuable resource that is used on a continuous basis in guiding the City's parks and recreation development program. The goals, objectives and recommended actions included in this chapter should also be referenced in other planning studies and development proposals to ensure consideration of existing and planned public parks, recreation areas and open space. As new residential subdivisions are platted and developed, there should be allowances for sufficient land capable of being developed for public park and recreation uses.

Funding Mechanisms

Most capital investments involve the outlay of substantial funds. Therefore, local governments often must pay for new facilities through appropriations in the annual operating budget. There are numerous techniques available to local governments to pay for capital improvements over a longer period of time. These include both public and private funding alternatives.

Public Financing Alternatives

Current Revenue – This technique is known as "pay-as-you-go" financing and is the financing of improvements from current revenues such as general taxation, fees, service charges, special established funds, or special assessments.

Reserve Funds – The use of reserve funds is made possible by accumulating funds in advance for capital acquisition or development. The accumulation may result from surplus or earmarked operational revenues, funds in depreciation reserves, or the sale of capital assets.

Enterprise and Revenue Funds – Many municipalities establish accounts that are earmarked for park and recreation programs. These accounts are used to fund programs and to acquire, operate and maintain facilities.

General Obligation Bonds – The use of this method involves the taxing power of the jurisdiction as it is pledged to pay the interest and principal to retire the debt. General obligation bonds can be sold to finance permanent types of improvements such as park and recreational areas and facilities. Voter approval may be required.

Lease-Purchase – Local governments utilizing this innovative financing approach prepare standards and specifications for the development of a park by a private company. The facility is then leased to the jurisdiction for a specified period of time. Title to the park and facilities can be conveyed to the local government at the end of the lease period without future payments. The rental over the years will have paid the total original cost plus interest.

Eminent Domain – The power of eminent domain allows the local government to acquire private property for public use. Although this is not a common practice for the acquisition and development of park and recreational areas, it is a tool that can be used by the City to purchase property within certain areas of the City, particularly within established neighborhoods. The property would be acquired through condemnation with "just compensation" paid to the property owner.

Authorities and Special Districts – Special authorities or districts may be created to provide public facilities such as parks and recreational areas. These authorities are commonly created to avoid the restrictive debt limitations of local governments. They may be financed through revenue bonds retired by user charges or fees, or, in some instances, the authority may have the power to tax.

Sales Tax – Through a public referendum, the City may establish a sales tax of any size, typically one-half to one cent, to generate general revenue for the acquisition and development of parks and recreation areas. The sales tax may have a limited duration or may be permanent.

User Fees – User fees may be an effective cost-recovery technique to recover a reasonable portion of the costs to administer, operate and maintain public parks and open space. Examples of user fees include registration or entry fees for recreational programs and equipment and facility rental charges.

In-Kind Services and Volunteer Participation – In-kind services may be coordinated with other departments and governmental entities to perform the labor on specific construction projects. Individuals, sports associations, private businesses, and civic groups are just a few examples of entities and organizations that may furnish volunteer participation.

State and Federal Assistance – State and federal grants-in-aid are available to finance a large number of programs. The cost of funding parks may be borne completely by grant funds, typically with a local share required. Programs such as federal revenue sharing and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) have given local governments more freedom on how they spend their grant money. Some of the programs currently available include:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – CDBG funds may be used on projects which benefit persons with low and moderate incomes. The CDBG program is administered by the Department of Finance and Administration.

Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – This fund is administered by the New Mexico State Parks Division of Energy and Natural Resources Department. Funds are provided through the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of Interior. The LWCF program provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) – This program is available for planning and technical assistance on projects emphasizing environmental protection, open space accessibility and construction. Funds are available to qualified private organizations and local governments. Public involvement is a requirement of this program.

Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21) – This program provides funding for transportation-related bicycle and pedestrian facilities. There is a Surface Transportation Program (STP) category, which allows cities and counties the option of using bridge and road funds for providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Enhancements can include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rail corridor preservation, scenic and environmental transportation opportunities and improvements to historical transportation sites. Funds from this program could be used to establish corridor linkages between neighborhoods and park and recreational areas.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) – This fund is administered by the New Mexico State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department. Funds are provided through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. The RTP program provides funds to states to develop and maintain recreations trails and trail related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail uses.

Federal Lands Highway Funds – This program provides funds for bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities in conjunction with trails, roads, highways and parkways. The primary intent of this program is to assist in the construction of

transportation facilities. This is a 100 percent federal share program. These funds would primarily be for the acquisition of right-of-way and development of trail linkages connecting residential neighborhoods with the public parks system.

American Greenways Du Pont Awards Program – This program is administered by The Conservation Fund, which provides grants of $500 to $2,500 to local greenways projects. Grants can be used for almost any activity that serves as a catalyst for local greenways planning, design or development.

Most of the grant programs are reviewed and selected on a competitive basis, therefore, applications for funding will be evaluated based on assessment of local need; existence of an adopted Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan; and, the availability of local matching funds. Although grants provide an alternative means of financing local park and recreational area improvements, they should not serve as the sole basis for funding a local park and recreation system.

Private Financing Alternatives

In addition to capital improvement financing and state and federal assistance, there are a variety of innovative approaches to financing public park and recreation areas. The use of incentives to encourage private financing, public-private partnerships, and land dedication or donation can be effective strategies to develop a city-wide park and recreation system without relying on the municipality to fully fund the program. In addition, the use of impact fees may help to offset the impacts of private development on the demand for and use of public facilities and services. The following private funding approaches may be available to the City of Hobbs.

Park Dedication Fee – Realizing that residents in new developments use existing park facilities, the City may, as part of the subdivision process, require an equitable and reasonable sum of money per lot to be contributed to the City for park and recreational improvements. However, in order to abide by legal validity tests and to avoid a "taking" of private property, the amount of the fee must be roughly proportional to the demand for park and recreational services placed on the City by a private development. This method has worked effectively in some municipalities.

Credit for Private Facilities – In lieu of requiring land dedication or money, the City may consider giving credit for recreation facilities provided in new developments.

Land Donation – Property owners may be willing to donate land to the City for use as a public park. The City should encourage donation subject to established guidelines for the development of park and recreational areas. Considerations should include the suitability of the land for park development; and, proximity to neighborhoods, natural features, and adjacent land uses.

Trust Fund – The City could establish a trust fund for citizens to will a portion or all of their estate to public park and recreational use. Legal provisions would need to be established for the conveyance of property. In addition, the City should establish and use guidelines for the acceptance of suitable park land property. The trust fund would be incorporated as a 501(C)3 non-profit corporation. This would allow possible income tax benefits for the donors.

Private Financing – Community organizations or local service clubs could assist in acquiring and developing park and recreational areas by providing the local match for state or federal grants-in-aid. Another option is 100 percent financing by a private entity with dedication to the City.

Fee In Lieu of Dedication or Improvement – The City may use impact fees to collect revenue for the acquisition and development of park and recreational areas. Similar to the dedication approach, the required fees must also be roughly proportional to the City's burden for the provision of additional park and recreational services resulting from private development. An example of a "fee in lieu of improvement" is a park excise tax that would require a developer to pay a fee (on a per-square-foot or per-dwelling-unit cost basis) upon issuance of a building permit.

Tax Deferral – The City may use this method to encourage property owners to defer the development of their land while the City uses it for public open space or a semi-developed park. During the deferral period, the property would be assessed as an undeveloped parcel, with the collection of taxes to be deferred until the property is developed. The City would secure an agreement with the property owner with established conditions of use and provisions for liability and ongoing maintenance. In addition, the City would obtain a recreation easement for "temporary" use of the property.

Tax Reductions – Donation of private land for public use may reduce an individual's federal income tax burden. Also, the market value of a recreation easement may reduce the tax burden either federally or locally, if approved by the local government.

Chapter 9

IMPLEMENTATION

The completion of the Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan serves as an initial step in achieving the City's desired vision for the community over the next 20 years and beyond. Through the comprehensive planning process the community identified key issues affecting Hobbs and developed a series of actions and policies that will serve as a foundation for future planning. With such a foundation in place, implementation of the plan is the next critical step in the planning process to ensure appropriate and desirable growth that enhances the local economy, reflects the values of the community, and improves the quality of life of its residents. By implementing the recommended actions in this plan, the desired future development pattern, construction and extension of major streets, parks and recreation enhancements, and community facility needs will be achieved as envisioned by Hobbs residents.

The purpose of the Implementation element is to provide direction and recommendations for implementing and periodically updating the City's Comprehensive Plan. The chapter also includes a compilation of specific actions from the plan that were considered the highest priority to address over the next three years and as a foundation for achieving the community's vision over the next 20 years.

Strategies for Implementation

Form Implementation Task Force

Momentum must not be allowed to falter once the plan has been adopted. Immediately following approval of the plan, it is highly recommended that the City establish an Implementation Task Force. The role of the Task Force is to further refine and prioritize the Implementation Plan and initiate action. Task Force membership may include key members of City Staff; select members of the development and business communities; individuals from other public agencies and institutions; leaders from organized neighborhood and civic groups; and, other residents of the community.

While the Implementation Plan is a beginning, the Implementation Task Force will be charged with the tough task of honing actions beyond the information provided in the plan. The Task Force will help determine methods or programs to be used to implement the proposed actions, specifically identifying which agencies/departments will be responsible for their implementation, estimating costs, identifying proposed sources of funding, and establishing a time frame in which the recommended action should be accomplished.

The work of the Implementation Task Force should be short term but should also occur annually. The product of the Task Force should be a recommended set of strategic actions to accomplish or initiate within the year. Departments and organizations charged with completing tasks, or aiding in their completion, can use the prioritized action list in their budget process and in determining other needed resources. The City Commission and City administrators can also utilize the information for overall budget and resource decisions as well as establishing benchmarks for departmental performance.

Maintain Citizen Involvement

Communication and coordination have been key needs mentioned throughout the comprehensive planning process. Active participation has been a cornerstone of the process to create the plan; however, it is even more essential as a means of implementing the plan. To do this, current and future leaders must pledge their support to maintain public involvement, awareness and commitment to the purpose and importance of the plan.

Hobbs residents shared in developing the plan's goals, objectives and action statements by participating in a Town Hall Meeting, key person interviews, and Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee meetings. The many ideas and comments contributed by citizens during the plan's development were incorporated and shaped the resulting priorities and action strategies. Citizens should continue to be involved in implementation and maintenance of the plan. Advisory committees, public meetings and community workshops, open houses and public forums, newsletters, websites, media releases, and public notices should be used to inform and involve citizens in ongoing planning. Methods and activities for public participation should be carefully chosen and designed to achieve meaningful and effective involvement.

Quality is Key

The plan is designed to improve and enhance the quality of life for current and future residents of Hobbs. It is meant to provide a standard of excellence by which future development, programs and activities can be measured. It is this level of quality that is clearly desired by stakeholders in the community, whether it is in terms of housing, infrastructure, parks and recreation areas, neighborhoods, downtown, commercial developments, gateways and corridors, or simply Hobbs' approach to its future.

Quality is consistently mentioned throughout the Comprehensive Plan. It is a standard to which all elements of the plan should be held. New community facilities should be designed

as landmarks with an understanding of their ability to positively impact the surrounding environment. Gateways for the community should represent the character of Hobbs. Programs created as a result of the plan should establish best practices for other communities to follow.

Make Success Quick and Constant

A strategy used by successful organizations is to seek tangible results early in the implementation process. By doing so, stakeholders are able to see the benefits of their involvement. Momentum also results, which naturally motivates more participation by persons desiring to be involved in a successful program. In the Implementation Plan provided below, there are various recommended actions that do not bear significant budgetary obligation. These programs and activities provide an opportunity to make an immediate impact on the community and thus on the successful implementation of this plan.

Success is a powerful tool for marketing the plan. As such, serious consideration should be given to making sure that successes are consistent throughout the implementation process. Some actions will take longer to complete than others. These longer-term projects should commence in a timeframe that will allow for best use of resources while marking interim successes on a regular basis.

Solve Problems Creatively

In order to seek continuous improvement it is necessary to be creative and innovative in the approach to solving key issues and problems. It is this ability to overcome what may ordinarily be considered obstacles that will demonstrate the City's willingness and capacity to achieve the community vision, including the use of creative solutions. One example might be a public-private partnership to seek objectives and results that may not be possible without a joint venture, such as the beneficial redevelopment and re-use of an otherwise constrained property.

Share Responsibility and Rewards

This plan cannot be carried out by an individual or even a single department. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan requires responsibility and accountability from a number of diverse parties. In several cases, results will not come quickly, particularly in instances that are likely to create some controversy or come at a significant expense. However, once completed, each task of the plan will improve area quality of life and instill a sense of pride and accomplishment in the community.

To ease effort and expense, responsibility for accomplishing the tasks of the Comprehensive Plan should be shared by a number of individuals and organizations. By working together the community can achieve its vision, which is of benefit to all involved.

Integrate Planning into Daily Decisions

Opportunities for integrating the plan's recommendations into other business practices and programs of the City are vital to widespread recognition of the plan as a decision-making tool. For instance, the plan's recommendations should be widely used in decisions pertaining to infrastructure improvements, proposed new development and redevelopment, expansion of public facilities and programs, and the annual capital improvement planning and budgeting process. The plan should be referenced often to maintain its relevance to local decisions and to support the decisions that are being made.

Plan Maintenance

The culmination of the comprehensive planning process is an implementation program that prioritizes specific program recommendations and actions addressing each of the plan elements. These actions are then linked to implementation tools such as subdivision regulations, other development-related ordinances, the City's annual budget process, longer-term capital improvements planning and potential bond financing, grant opportunities, and ongoing coordination with other public and private partners in plan implementation.

Circumstances will continue to change in the future, and the plan will require modifications and refinements to be kept up to date. Some of its proposals may be found unworkable and other solutions will continue to emerge. Needed refinements and changes should be carefully noted and thoroughly considered as part of Annual Plan Amendments and Five-Year Major Plan Updates. As changes occur, however, the Vision of the City should remain the central theme and provide a unifying focus. The plan's importance lies in the commitment of citizens to agree on the area's purposes and priorities for the future, and to apply that consensus in continuing efforts that focus on the betterment of their community.

Since change is certain to occur, both the plan and the City's implementation tools should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness in achieving the desired vision, goals and objectives of the community.

Annual Plan Amendment Process

The Planning Board is responsible for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan. Annual plan amendments will provide opportunity for relatively minor plan updates and revisions such as changes in urban development policies, implementation actions and priorities, and review of plan consistency with City policies and ordinances. Annual plan amendments should be prepared and distributed in the form of addenda to the adopted plan. Identification of potential plan amendments should be an ongoing process by the Planning Board and City staff throughout the year. Citizens, property owners, community organizations and other governmental entities can also submit requests for plan amendments. Proposed plan amendments should be reviewed and endorsed by the Planning Board if found to have merit. The Planning Board and City Commission should adopt plan amendments in a manner similar to the plan itself, including public hearings followed by official action.

Annual Report of the Planning Board

The Planning Board should prepare an Annual Report for submittal and presentation to the City Commission. Status of plan implementation should be included in the Annual Report. Significant actions and accomplishments during the previous year should be highlighted as well as recommendations for needed actions and programs to be developed and implemented in the coming year. The timing of preparation and submittal of the Annual Report should be coordinated with the City's annual budget development cycle so that the recommendations will be available early in the budgeting process.

Major Plan Updates

Major updating of the plan should occur every five years. These updates will ensure renewal and continued usefulness of the plan for use by City officials, staff and others. Annual plan amendments from the previous four years should be incorporated into the next major plan update. Plan updates will be a significant undertaking involving City officials, departments and citizens. Consultant services should be considered if necessary.

As part of the major plan updates, the City should review and update the base data, particularly population estimates and projections. Additionally, the goals, objectives and policies of the plan should be reviewed and assessed to determine their effectiveness and relevance to current conditions. Those that were not achieved due to obstacles or financial constraints should be identified, and new or modified goals, objectives and policies should be developed as necessary.

The result of the major plan updates will effectively be a new plan for the City, including identification of up-to-date goals, objectives, policies and implementation actions or strategies.

Requiring Updates and Implementation

To ensure that current and future elected officials, as well as the general public, remain committed to the success of the Comprehensive Plan, many communities have begun officially committing to plan implementation and maintenance. Most popular is a resolution that confirms the community's commitment to the plan and to the steps necessary to enhance area quality of life. Recommended items to incorporate into such a resolution include creation of an Implementation Task Force, required annual updates by the Planning Board on plan implementation successes and shortcomings, consideration of the plan in development of budgets and in daily decisions, and a firm schedule for minor and major plan updates.

Implementing the Plan

The essence of the plan is in the City's ability to implement its goals, objectives and policies through tools like subdivision regulations and a capital improvements process. In a continually changing environment, enforcement is a necessary ingredient not only to preserve the character and integrity of established neighborhoods and nonresidential areas, but also to ensure sustainable, quality development in the future.

Perhaps the most important method of implementing the plan comes through a day-to-day commitment by elected and appointed officials, City staff, and citizens of the community. The plan must be perceived as a useful tool in directing the City's future. Plan elements and maps should be displayed and available for ready reference by public officials, City staff, business and property owners, and citizens. It is this high visibility that will make the plan successful and a powerful tool for guiding Hobbs' future growth and development.

Plan Implementation Activities

- **Urban Development Policies (Chapter 7)** – Implementation will include use of the Urban Development policies in decision-making related to development review and subdivision approvals, to ensure that new development and redevelopment are consistent with the City's plan. The plan and policies should be used to identify appropriate areas for various types of development based on land use compatibility, infrastructure availability and environmental constraints.
- **Thoroughfare Plan (Chapter 5)** – The Thoroughfare Plan should be used in subdivision plat review and dedication of needed rights-of-way for street and highway improvements.

- **Parks and Recreation System Plan (Chapter 8)** – The Parks and Recreation System Plan should be used in identifying and implementing priority park and recreation improvements and enhancements, concurrent with new developments and ongoing growth of the urbanized area.
- **Existing Regulations** – Existing regulations and ordinances, including the City's subdivision regulations, should be reviewed and updated to reflect the policies identified in the plan.
- **Capital Improvements (Chapters 4, 5, 8)** – Capital improvement decisions should be consistent with the recommendations and policies outlined in the plan, such as the upgrading of utility infrastructure, acquisition and improvement of parks and recreation areas, as well as street and highway improvements in accord with the Thoroughfare Plan.
- **Economic Development (Chapter 6)** – Policies and strategies identified in the plan should serve as a basis for providing economic incentives and enhancing investment and employment opportunities in the City. Urban development policies should be used to encourage industrial and commercial development in appropriate and compatible areas.
- **Private Property Owners/Developers** – Private property owners and developers should utilize the plan in identifying appropriate areas for development based on natural constraints, land use compatibility, and upgrading of transportation facilities and public utilities. The plan should be used by local leaders in encouraging development that is consistent with plan objectives and policies.
- **Elected/Appointed Officials and Staff** – The City Commission, Planning Board and City staff should constantly use the plan in making decisions regarding development review and approval. The plan should continually be referenced in other City studies and reports as well as informal discussion situations.

Types of Implementation Actions

For ease of implementation planning, the various action steps outlined in the Comprehensive Plan may be organized into five categories as described below. These categories are applied within Table 9.1, Strategic Actions for Plan Implementation, in the next section.

- **Capital Improvements** – Capital improvements involve all action statements in which development or revitalization of a physical asset occurs, usually requiring some form of construction as well as longer-term maintenance. Like the scale of the project, the costs for capital improvements can also be broad, ranging from very expensive to limited. However, unlike programmatic initiatives, the majority of expense is incurred at the outset for purchase and/or construction.

This may include land, labor, equipment or materials. Longer-term costs for capital improvements are generally related to maintenance.

- **Ongoing Coordination and Management** – Ongoing coordination and management actions can range from coordination between government agencies and other organizations to continuing management of facilities and programs. Unlike other types of action statements, most actions in this category are relatively inexpensive, although staff resources are necessary to allow for monitoring of results, preparing reports, and other management activities. These actions may also include some overlap with programmatic, capital or regulatory improvements.
- **Programmatic Initiatives** – Programmatic initiatives refer to action statements that require development or implementation of a particular program by the City, other government agencies, or private or nonprofit organizations. In comparison to other types of action statements, Programmatic Initiatives can range from the inexpensive to the very expensive. Cost is impacted by a number of variables, particularly staff requirements and the scope and longevity of the program. Most programmatic improvements will be renewed annually based upon performance, impact and available resources.
- **Recommended Studies and Plans** – Some action statements require additional study or detailed planning in order to prepare for a particular programmatic or regulatory initiative or a significant capital improvement. Such plans and studies are supplementary to the Comprehensive Plan and a prerequisite to more tangible actions. Some should be considered as potential appendices of the plan while others represent separate and independent efforts. Compared to "big ticket" capital improvements and some programmatic initiatives, development of further plans and studies is relatively inexpensive.
- **Regulations and Standards** – Regulations and standards refer to action statements that are met through changes in governance. Regulatory changes involve altering the existing municipal Code of Ordinances. Standards impact ordinances but are not necessarily a written component of an ordinance. Standards may also be voluntary and privately-enforced or based on meeting a series of incentives. The costs associated with actions requiring regulations and/or standards are largely short term. Long-term costs come with added staff and the time and capital required to implement changes.

Implementation Priorities

During the final phase of the comprehensive planning process, both the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and the Hobbs Planning Board participated in priority-setting exercises. The purpose was to establish a list of strategic actions considered essential

to pursue first above all others included in the 20-year plan. This initial plan of action is designed to "kick start" implementation activities by the City and other public and private partners following formal plan adoption—and to avoid a loss of momentum after all the thought and energy that went into creating the plan.

The actions compiled in **Table 9.1** reflect the evolution of this priority-setting process from consultant and staff evaluation through advisory committee ranking and discussion and finally to Planning Board review and final prioritization. (The full list of action priority ranking results from the committee phase are included at the end of this chapter.) Of the nearly 100 action statements from the plan that were reviewed (and, in some cases, further clarified), **a short list of 23 actions represent those the Planning Board identified as meriting immediate attention** when plan implementation efforts begin in earnest. The 23 key actions, which appear in bold text in Table 9.1 (and also have a check mark in the "Year 1" column), are drawn from all elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including two from Growth Capacity, four from Transportation, five from Economic Development, 11 from Urban Development, and one from Parks and Recreation. Table 9.1 also includes various other actions that were considered important but determined to already be under way or ongoing (these actions are shaded in the table). In some cases an action already identified as under way or ongoing was also designated an immediate priority to signal the perceived importance of completing these activities along with other, entirely new initiatives for Hobbs.

The results of this exercise are in no way binding as ultimate priorities will require the input of all City Commissioners and leaders. However, this priority ranking method illustrates how certain actions quickly rise to the top and the trade-offs that must be made among many competing needs given limited time and money. In deciding whether an action should be assigned short range priority, considerations may include the budgetary obligation required, the availability of City staff or another lead entity to carry the initiative forward, and the expected difficulty or complexity of the task. Plan implementation priorities and strategies will also require the professional input of City administrative staff, who can advise on budget implications and realities, items the City must do within a certain time frame given federal or state mandates, staff availability and capabilities, and other practical considerations.

The results of such strategic planning efforts should also be revisited each year as part of the annual status review of Comprehensive Plan implementation, as described earlier in this chapter. The results of each annual evaluation should feed into the City's budget process, capital improvements programming, departmental work plans, and other City planning and management activities. In the meantime, City Commission adoption of the overall Comprehensive Community Development Plan, including the initial Strategic

Implementation Plan provided in Table 9.1, will set the stage for early, priority efforts by City staff and other community interests.

Plan Implementation Logistics

The implementation discussions that yielded Table 9.1 also involved logistical considerations such as who is best positioned to lead or assist with an initiative and what funding sources might be available to pay for it, recognizing that some actions will require little financial expenditure. In many cases the "Lead Entity" column in Table 9.1 includes multiple "players" who will need to be involved in moving an action forward, which indicates the importance of partnerships and coordination. In some instances the collaboration will be between City staff and elected and/or appointed officials. Other times a public/private partnership will clearly be needed. Whenever potential regulatory actions or new or revised development standards are to be considered, participation of the development community is encouraged to ensure adequate "give and take" and consensus building.

Below are the overall lists, by plan element, of the potentially involved entities and funding sources that were inventoried by the Planning Board, Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, City staff and consultant team.

Growth Capacity

Potential Lead or Involved Entities	Potential Funding Sources
City of Hobbs Utilities Division	City of Hobbs General Fund
City of Hobbs Engineering Division	City of Hobbs Utility Enterprise Funds
City of Hobbs Utility Board	New Mexico Finance Authority
City of Hobbs Planning Board	Private Development
Private Utilities	
Private Development	

Transportation

Potential Lead or Involved Entities	Potential Funding Sources
City of Hobbs Engineering Division	City of Hobbs General Fund
City of Hobbs City Planner	City of Hobbs Bond Funds
City of Hobbs General Services – Streets	Lea County General Fund
City of Hobbs Planning Board	S.E. N.M. Regional Plng. Organization
City of Hobbs City Commission	S.E. N.M. Economic Dev. District
Hobbs Industrial Air Park Board	New Mexico Dept. of Transportation
Lea County Road Department	New Mexico Finance Authority
Lea County Planning & Mapping Department	Private Development
Lea County Planning Board	

Transportation (continued)

Potential Lead or Involved Entities

Lea County Economic Development Corp.
S.E. New Mexico Regional Plng. Organization
New Mexico Department of Transportation
Private Development
Engineers / Surveyors

Economic Development

Potential Lead or Involved Entities

City of Hobbs City Manager
City of Hobbs City Planner
City of Hobbs Finance Division
Hobbs Municipal Schools
Hobbs Chamber of Commerce
Hobbs Main Street Program
Community Housing Dev. Organization
Lea County Economic Development Corp.
Lea Co. Community Improvement Corporation
Lea County
Lea County Planning Board
New Mexico Junior College
College of the Southwest
S.E. N.M. Economic Dev. District
S.E. N.M. Workforce Development Board
New Mexico Economic Development Dept.
Governor's Office of Workforce Development
New Mexico Department of Labor
N.M. Small Business Development Center
N.M. Rural Development Resource Council
Private Development
Private Sector
Literacy Alliance

Potential Funding Sources

City of Hobbs General Fund
Lea County General Fund
Lea Co. Economic Development Corp.
Industrial Revenue Bonds
N.M. Economic Development Dept.
Governor's Office of Workforce Dev.
New Mexico Department of Labor
N.M. Rural Dev. Resource Council
New Mexico Finance Authority
Private Development
Private Sector (EDC)
Bankers / Financiers

Urban Development

Potential Lead or Involved Entities

City of Hobbs City Planner
City of Hobbs City Manager
City of Hobbs Engineering Division
City of Hobbs Finance Division

Potential Funding Sources

City of Hobbs General Fund
Lea County General Fund
Community Housing Dev. Org.
Region 6 Housing Authority

Urban Development (continued)

Potential Lead or Involved Entities	Potential Funding Sources
City of Hobbs Legal Division	N.M. Mortgage Finance Authority
City of Hobbs Parks & Recreation Division	Fannie Mae (FNMA)
City of Hobbs Planning Board	Banks / Financiers
City of Hobbs Community Affairs Board	
City of Hobbs City Commission	
Hobbs Main Street Program	
Lea County Planning & Mapping Department	
Lea County Planning Board	
Community Housing Development Organization	
Lea County Housing, Inc.	
Region 6 Housing Authority	
Private Development	
Builders	
Property Owners	
Engineers / Surveyors	
Hobbs Beautiful	
Committee for Hobbs	

Parks and Recreation

Potential Lead or Involved Entities	Potential Funding Sources
City of Hobbs Parks & Recreation Division	City of Hobbs General Fund
City of Hobbs General Services Division	Joint Use Agreements (Schools)
City of Hobbs City Planner	Hobbs Chamber of Commerce (Lodger's)
City of Hobbs Community Affairs Board	Parks and Recreation Grants
City of Hobbs Planning Board	Lea County Commission for the Arts
Hobbs Industrial Air Park Board	N.M. Revolving Loan Fund
Lea County Economic Development Corp.	N.M. Legislature (special appropriations)
Sports Council	Arts/Theater/Music Groups
Athletic Leagues	
Bicycle Groups	
Arts/Theater/Music Groups	
Private Development	

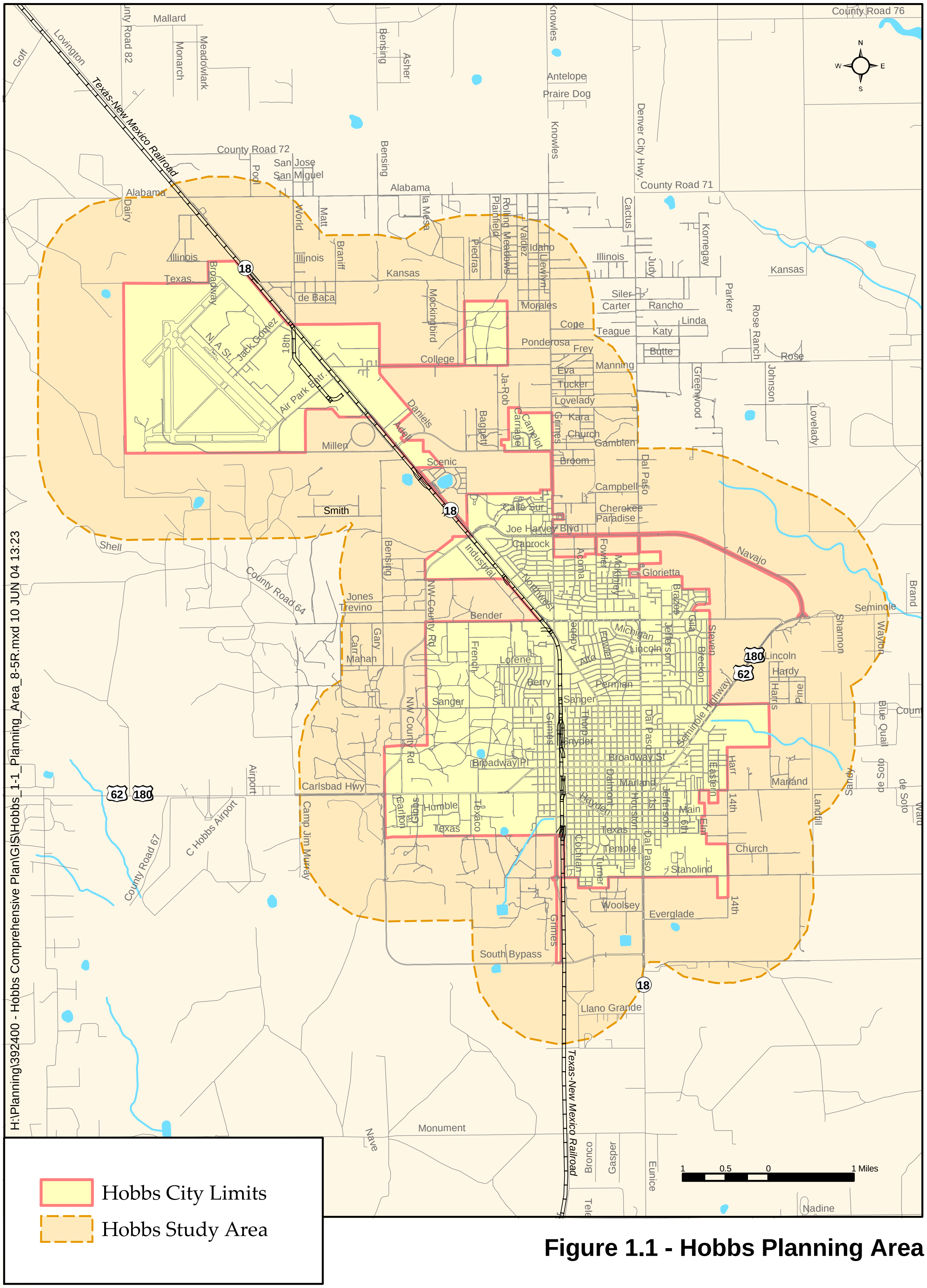


Figure 1.1 - Hobbs Planning Area

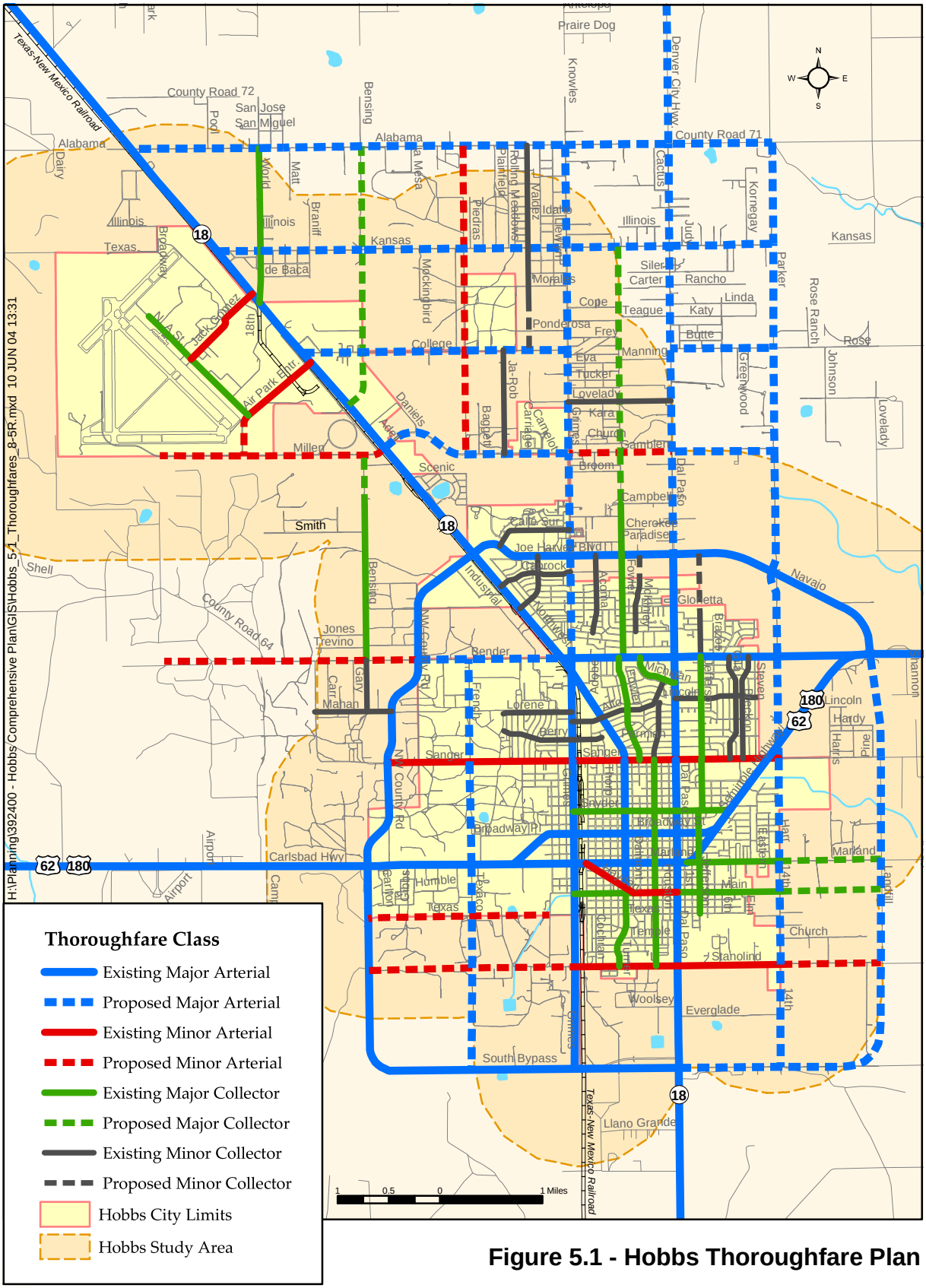


Figure 5.1 - Hobbs Thoroughfare Plan

Note: The Thoroughfare Plan shows general alignments and corridors for existing and planned arterials and collectors. The plan is a guide for general transportation planning and right-of-way acquisition. Proposed alignments shown on the plan are subject to change based upon design and implementation considerations.

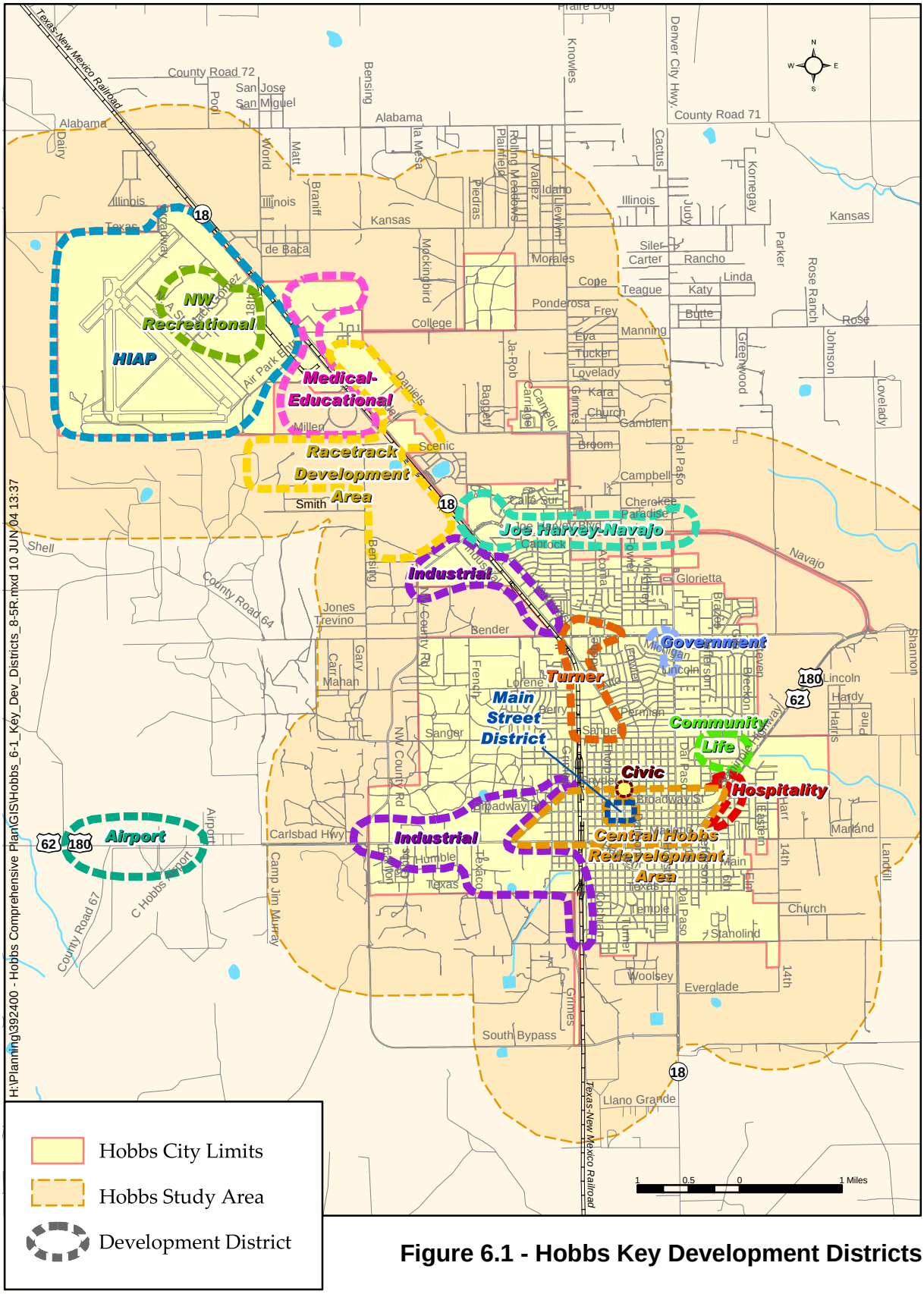


Figure 6.1 - Hobbs Key Development Districts

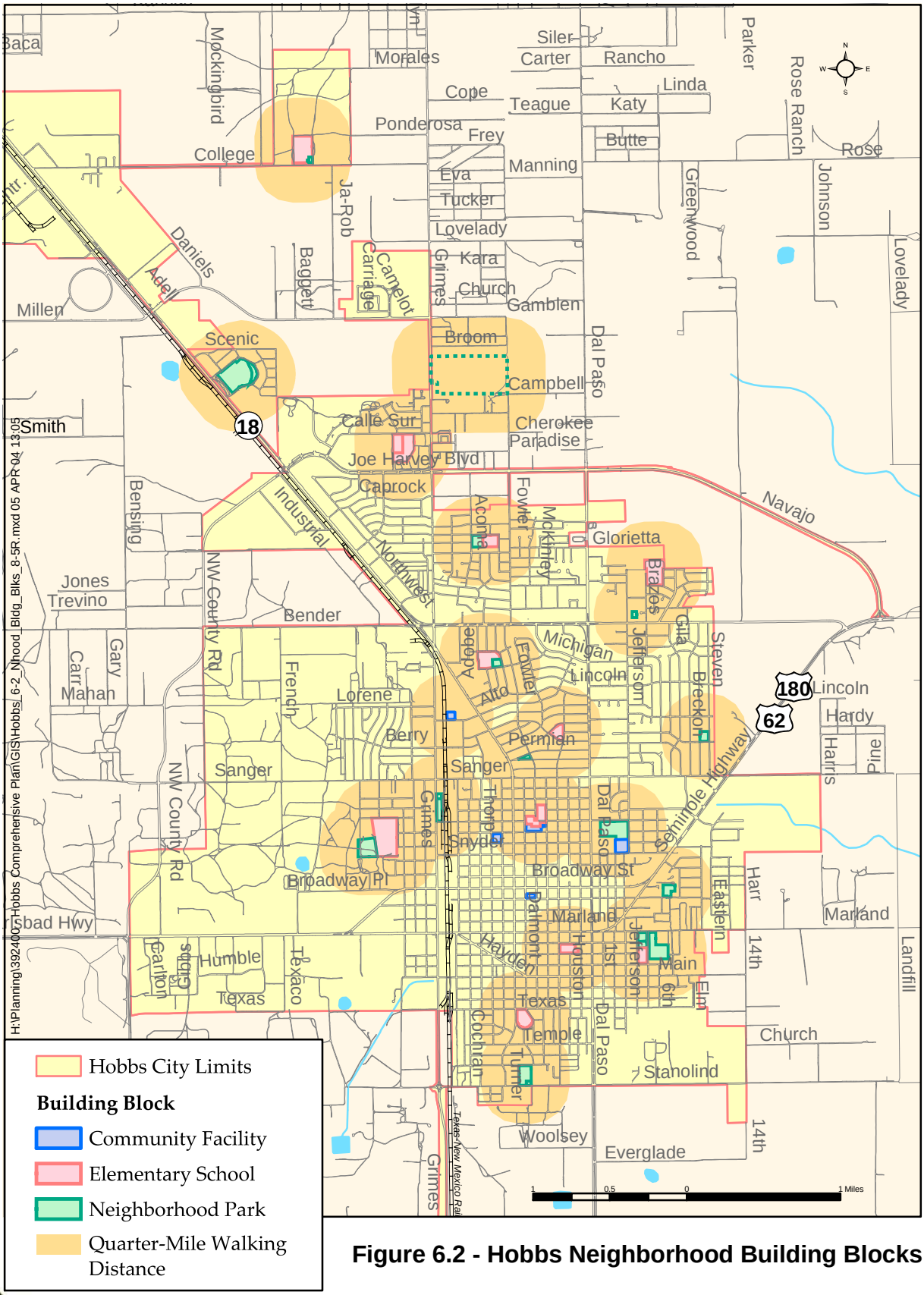


Figure 6.2 - Hobbs Neighborhood Building Blocks

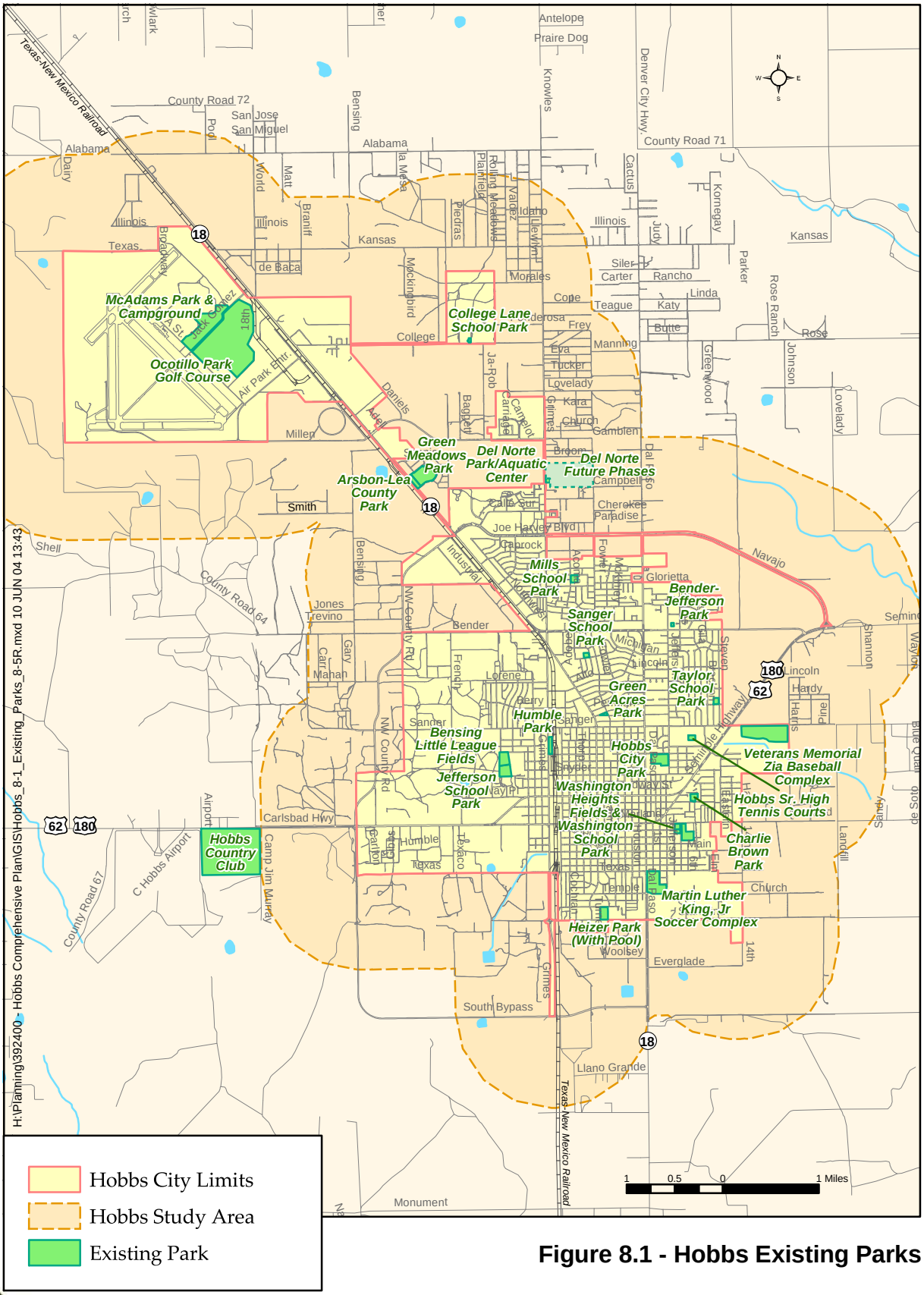


Figure 8.1 - Hobbs Existing Parks

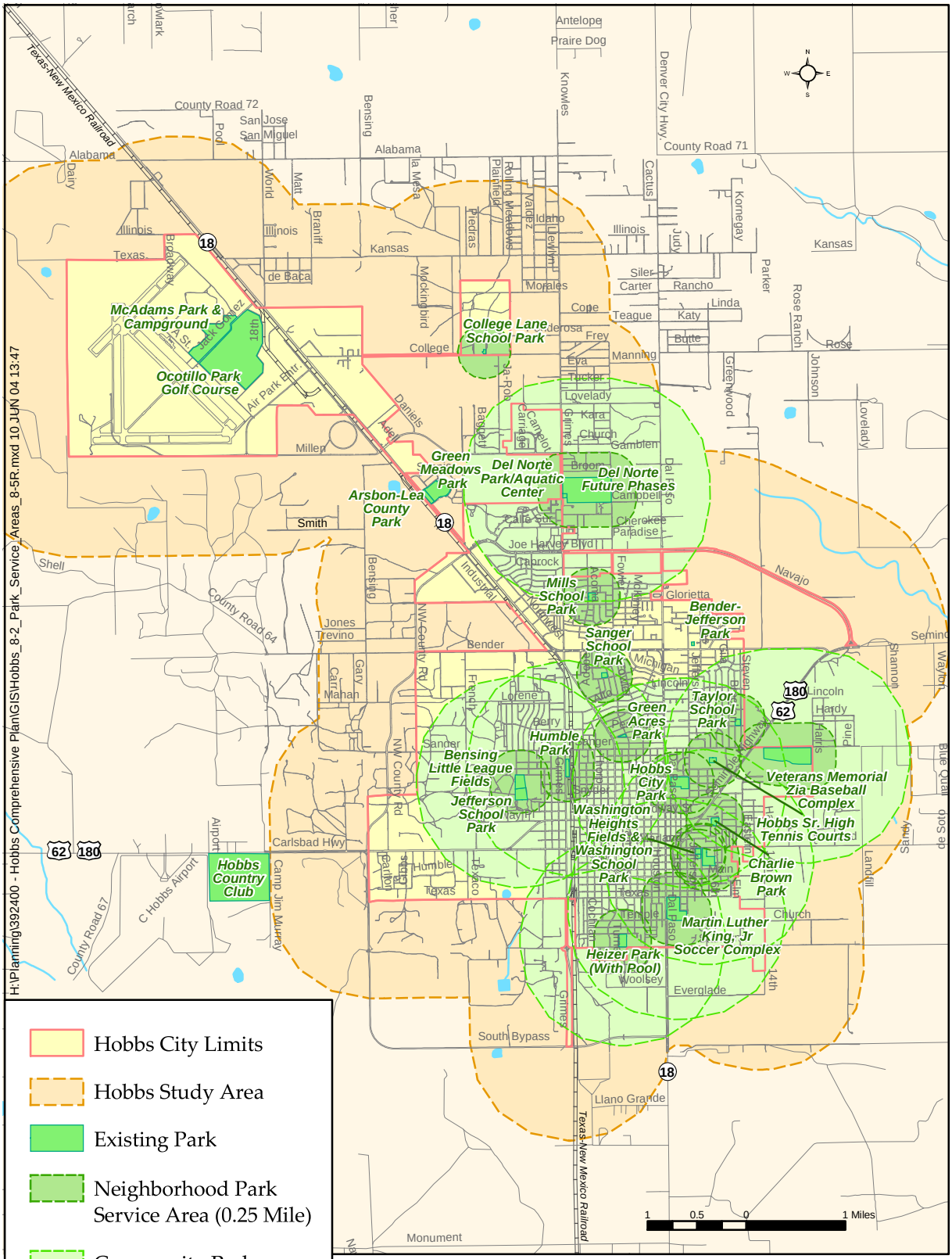


Figure 8.2 - Hobbs Park Service Areas

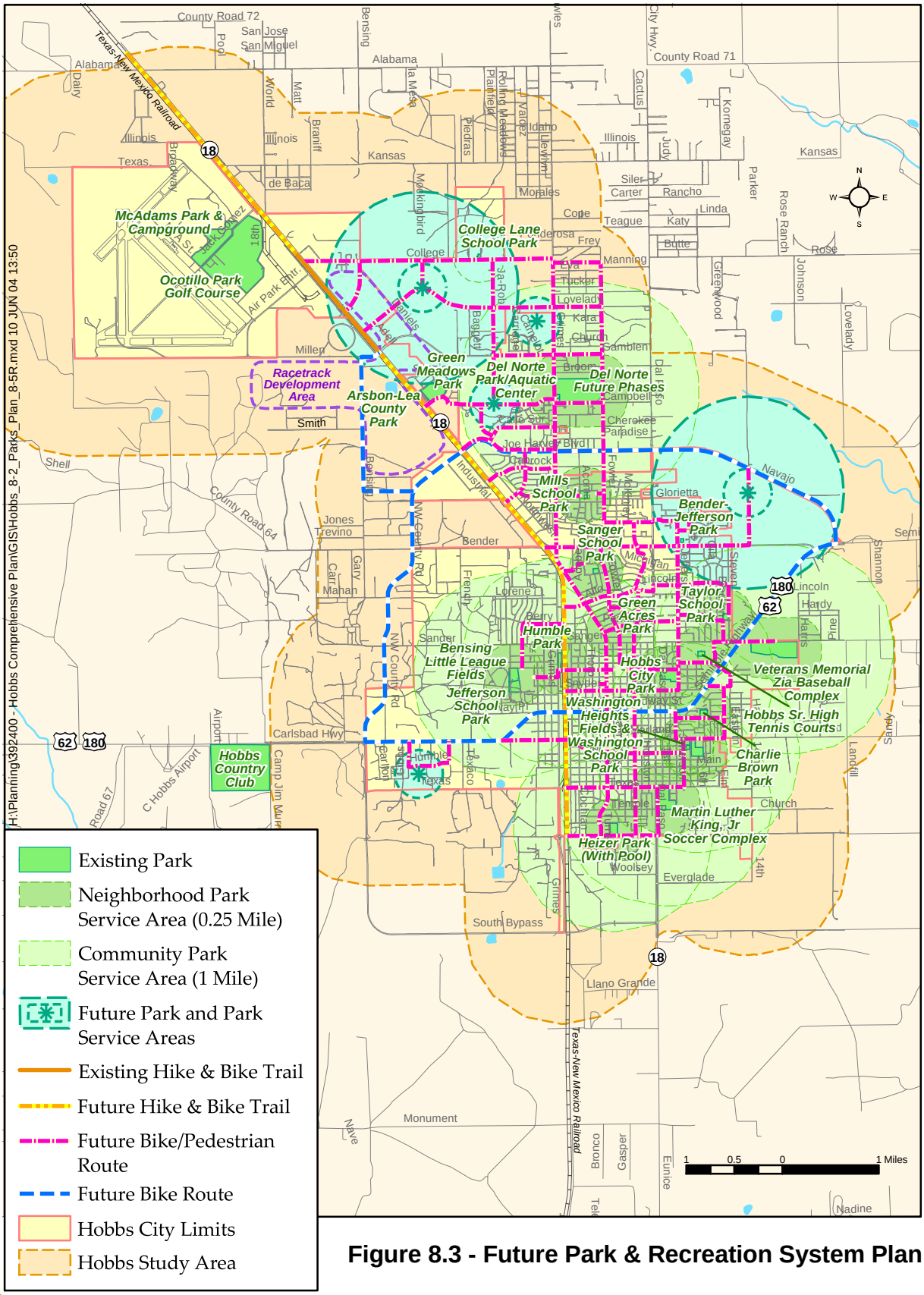


Figure 8.3 - Future Park & Recreation System Plan

TABLE 9.1:
Strategic Actions for Plan Implementation
Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan
City of Hobbs, New Mexico

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
Growth Capacity							
1	**Based on the results of the City's current treatment plant capacity study, plan and implement a phased program of interim process modifications and facility improvements until the City is ready for more significant and costly steps.**	Capital Improvement	ü			CoH Utilities	
2	Continue to pursue federal participation and funding to accomplish the most significant, regional drainage system improvements recommended in the *Storm Drainage Management Plan*.	Capital Improvement				CoH Engineering	
3	**Continue to upgrade the City's pretreatment requirements, especially to enhance monitoring and enforcement, to eliminate the worst influent problems (petroleum products, solvents, etc.) from the City's wastewater treatment process.**	Regulations & Standards, Program Improvement	ü			CoH Utilities	
4	Expand water production capacity through well field development and enhancement, plus construction of associated trunk facilities when needed.	Capital Improvement				CoH Utilities	
Transportation							
1	**Research and consider requiring traffic impact studies and mitigation actions for large-scale development proposals.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			CoH Planning Board City Commission City Planner CoH Engineering	Developer-funded
2	State Road 18/Hospital Driveway Traffic Signal	Capital Improvement				CoH Engineering	
3	HIAP Economic Development Phase I North/South Area Roads	Capital Improvement				CoH Engineering	
4	Downtown Traffic Flow/Parking/Pedestrian Improvements (with streetscape)	Capital Improvement				CoH Engineering	

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
5	Grimes/Joe Harvey Traffic Signal Upgrade	Capital Improvement				CoH Engineering	
6	**Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review the City requirements for street widths to make sure these requirements are applicable and safe for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			CoH Planning Board City Planner CoH Engineering Developers Engineers / Surveyors	
7	**Collaborate with the County Planning Board to assure that appropriate right-of-way widths, grid layouts, and proposed road development are properly coordinated in the extraterritorial areas of the City.**	Coordination & Management	ü			CoH Planning Board City Planner CoH Engineering Lea Co. Plng. Board	
8	**Adopt a Major Street and Thoroughfare Plan by ordinance to allow the City and private developers to negotiate construction of streets in non-residential areas.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			City Commission City Planner CoH Engineering	
Economic Development							
1	**Actively pursue all types of housing construction as an economic development opportunity.**	Program Improvement	ü			EDC CoH Planning Board City Planner CHDO Property Owners Developers Banks / Financiers	
2	**Research potential enactment and specific intended uses of the Economic Development Gross Receipts Tax, including possibly dedicating it and other public funds specifically for the implementation of the action items contained in the Comprehensive Master Plan.**	Program Improvement	ü			City Manager City Planner CoH Finance EDC	
3	Provide economic development incentives and expansion/relocation assistance for existing businesses.	Program Improvement				EDC NM SBDC	
4	Identify and actively recruit strategic industries suited to use the skilled workforce and business capabilities presently in Hobbs.	Program Improvement				EDC	

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
5	*Support workforce development by:* Establishing cooperative arrangements with local businesses, New Mexico Junior College and College of the Southwest to facilitate workforce training opportunities through apprenticeships and co-op opportunities as well as other job training offerings that combine "hands-on" skills development with classroom education and mentoring.	Coordination & Management				EDC NMJC CSW	
6	**Creating a task force comprised of area employers plus representatives of the Economic Development Corporation of Lea County, local schools, and the two colleges. This task force should be primarily focused on identifying current and projected skills gaps in the local labor market and those job positions at or above prevailing wage rates that could go unfilled as a result. Such information should be a key input to workforce development strategies and job training programs in the area, particularly to support existing and prospective employers.**	Coordination & Management	ü			EDC Municipal Schools NMJC CSW	
7	With continued growth of the area's Hispanic population, monitoring the need for expanded English as a Second Language instruction and bilingual counseling assistance for small businesses and un/underemployed individuals.	Program Improvement				NM SBDC Literacy Alliance	
8	**Placing a particular focus on skills development and increasing the number of area workers suited for positions in building trades. In addition to coordinating efforts and programs with the appropriate organizations and educational institutions, this should include emphasis on effective placement and local retention of such individuals.**	Program Improvement, Coordination & Management	ü			EDC NMJC	
9	**Identify and attract firms to Hobbs that could provide goods and services for the racetrack or racetrack visitors throughout the entire city.**	Program Improvement	ü			EDC	

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
10	Support the development of the NEF Facility in Eunice and work to identify and recruit businesses into the area that would provide associated goods or services for the NEF facility or its workers.	Program Improvement				EDC	
Urban Development							
1	**Implement the annexation of and infrastructure development along the Joe Harvey-Navajo corridor to better manage the development pattern and quality along this key boulevard in Hobbs.**	Studies & Plans, Capital Improvement	ü			City Planner CoH Engineering CoH Finance CoH Planning Board City Commission Property Owners	
2	**Continue with incremental implementation of a long-term annexation strategy, both through landowner-requested as well as City-initiated annexations.**	Studies & Plans	ü			City Planner CoH Engineering CoH Finance CoH Planning Board City Commission Property Owners	
3	**Research and consider a core set of minimum residential and non-residential development standards that should be adopted by ordinance and enforced by the City.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			City Planner CoH Legal CoH Planning Board Developers	
4	**Research and consider reasonable minimum standards for the screening of unattractive sites and views and the provision of buffering (dense vegetation, walls/fencing, increased setbacks, etc.) between incompatible land uses.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			City Planner CoH Legal CoH Planning Board Developers	
5	**Promote adoption or reinstatement of deed restrictions or covenants in established neighborhoods along with creation of an entity with the capacity of enforcement.**	Program Improvement	ü			City Planner CoH Legal CoH Planning Board Property Owners	
6	**Encourage improved communication between citizens and the City Commission to improve the community through the use of "town hall" meetings in each of the city's districts.**	Program Improvement	ü			City Commission City Manager City Planner	

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
7	**Adopt infill and redevelopment policies to grant incentives to infill developments, such as flexible development standards, waiver of development and utility tap fees, and other potential incentives as permitted by state law, in exchange for developments using existing street and utility infrastructure.**	Program Improvement	ü			City Planner CoH Legal CoH Planning Board CHDO Developers	
8	**Promote alternative site design to achieve affordable housing, including zero lot line development, reduced setbacks, reduced street widths, reduced lot size, mixed-use development, clustered housing, and increased density.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			City Planner CoH Engineering CoH Legal CoH Planning Board CHDO Engineers / Surveyors	
9	**Aggressively coordinate with developers to find ways to reduce construction and development costs associated with land acquisition, infrastructure, and other project elements that impact the cost of housing.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			CoH Planning Board City Planner CoH Engineering Developers Builders Property Owners Engineers / Surveyors CHDO	
10	*Work to expand the amount of quality housing stock in the community by:* Working with the Community Housing Development Organization.	Coordination & Management				City Planner CoH Planning Board CHDO Deveopers / Builders	
11	***Improve the aesthetics of the community by:*** **Continuing aggressive community cleanup activities.**	Coordination & Management	ü			CoH Community Affairs Board CoH Parks & Rec. Hobbs Beautiful	
12	**Request that the Planning Board, or designated subcommittee, review requirements for provision of green space in new subdivisions to create a set of requirements that are applicable and reasonable for a progressive city without unduly burdening developers with unnecessary costs.**	Regulations & Standards	ü			CoH Planning Board City Planner CoH Parks & Rec. Developers Engineers / Surveyors	

#	Action	Action Type	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Lead Entities	Funding Sources
Parks and Recreation							
1	**Work to provide parks and recreation opportunities that will entice racetrack/casino visitors to spend more time in Hobbs.**	Program Improvement	ü			CoH Parks & Rec. EDC Developers	
2	Replace sports field lighting at Zia Softball Complex.	Capital Improvement				CoH Parks & Rec.	

Shaded actions are already under way or ongoing.

Action — Actions in **bold text** and with a check mark (ü) in the Year 1 column were identified as meriting immediate attention following plan adoption.

Action — Some actions that are already under way or ongoing (i.e., shaded) were also identified as immediate priorities to indicate the importance assigned to their accomplishment.

Acronyms

CHDO	Community Housing Development Organization
CoH	City of Hobbs
CSW	College of the Southwest
EDC	Lea County Economic Development Corporation
NMJC	New Mexico Junior College
NM SBCD	New Mexico Small Business Development Center

Notes

1. Table 9.1 includes recommended action items and lead entities proposed to work together to pursue these action items in Year 1. However, unforeseen circumstances may arise during the year that will require adjustment of priorities.

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Tables and Figures

ENGINEERS
PLANNERS
ECONOMISTS
Wilbur Smith Associates

June 16, 2004

9800 Richmond Ave., Suite 400
Houston, TX 77042-4521
(713) 785-0080
Fax (713) 785-8797
www.wilbursmith.com

Mr. Joe Dearing
City Planner
City of Hobbs
300 N. Turner
Hobbs, NM 88240

RE: Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan

Dear Mr. Dearing:

We are pleased to submit the final document of the **Hobbs Comprehensive Community Development Plan** as adopted by the Hobbs City Commission on June 7, 2004, following final review and endorsement by the Hobbs Planning Board during May 2004. This plan was prepared in accordance with our Professional Services Agreement with the City of Hobbs, dated May 16, 2003.

The plan documents the results of work accomplished by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, City staff and the Wilbur Smith Associates consultant team, which included Southwest Planning & Marketing of Santa Fe. This new plan for Hobbs includes consideration of long-term trends and key planning challenges facing the community, outlines a vision and goals for what the community hopes to achieve in the next several decades, and provides recommended policies and prioritized action strategies for successful plan implementation. It represents general consensus on the direction the community should take in the future.

Citizen participation was the cornerstone of the planning process. Hobbs residents and community leaders served as members of the Advisory Committee and were integral participants in the identification of issues, development of the plan's goals and objectives, and oversight of the technical plan elements. Those who participated in Key Person Interviews in June 2003 and the Town Hall Meeting and Teen Forum in July 2003 provided valuable insights and ideas that are reflected throughout the plan.

We sincerely appreciated—and enjoyed—the opportunity to assist in this important process and provide professional services to the City. Best wishes for the continued growth and enhancement of Hobbs.

Sincerely,

WILBUR SMITH ASSOCIATES

Gary Mitchell, AICP
Director of Urban Planning Services

Tony S. Allender, AICP
Senior Planner (Deputy Project Manager)