AMENDED AGENDA

FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF BELEN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION, STATE OF NEW MEXICO, COUNTY OF VALENCIA TO BE HELD ON MONDAY THE 14th OF MAY 2018 AT 6:00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL, 100 SOUTH MAIN STREET, BELEN, NEW MEXICO 87002.

ALL P & Z COMMISSION MEETINGS ARE VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDED.

A COPY OF THE AGENDA MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CITY OF BELEN PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

2. **ROLL CALL**

3. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGENCE**

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
   Minutes of April 30, 2018-have not been completed.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT 3 MINUTE PRESENTATIONS:** If more time is needed for presentation, please ask to be scheduled on the next agenda.

7. **DISCUSSION**
   The City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
   Conditional Use Permits

8. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**
   a. Communication from the Commission and Staff

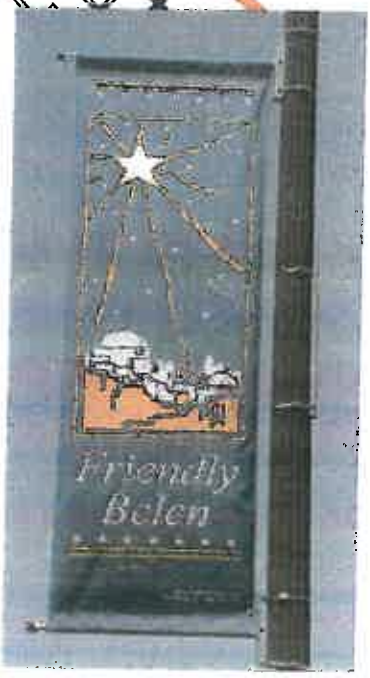
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

/s/
Lisa Miller, Planning & Zoning Administrator

cc: Mayor & City Council
News Bulletin
Belen Chamber of Commerce
Belen Recreation Center
Belen Public Library
Belen City Hall

Belen Comprehensive Land Use Plan



August 2003

MR COG

Prepared by Mid-Region Council of Governments

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Z-03-02

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

for the

CITY OF BELEN, NEW MEXICO

Adopted by the City Council
July, 21, 2002

This document was prepared by the Mid-Region Council of Governments staff through the New Mexico Community Development Block Grant Program, and funded in part by the Local Government Division of the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS OF NEW MEXICO
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PART I

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

A comprehensive plan is an official document that is adopted by a local government as a policy guide for making future decisions regarding the physical development and overall improvement of the community. The Plan indicates how the local residents and their elected officials would like the community to develop over the next 20 years and beyond. Moreover, a comprehensive plan is a legally binding document of the City that provides a basis for regulations and programs necessary to manage the current and future development of the City.

The ultimate purpose of this Comprehensive Land Use Plan is to present an array of strategies that will guide and manage future development in the City of Belen. The primary emphasis of this Plan is on land use activities as an indicator of health, character, and municipal functions in the community. An extensive public involvement process was conducted in the formulation of this Plan. Public meetings, workshops, individual surveys, and interviews of local citizens were used to reveal public opinions and attitudes concerning the present status and potential of Belen. The intent of this public participation was to ensure strong community support for goals and objectives and strategic action recommendations, which are incorporated in this Plan.

This Comprehensive Plan for Belen contains a "community profile" section which presents essential information on the regional setting, present character of development, local development history, population and housing statistics, local economy, transportation and circulation systems, and the major public services and facilities available to Belen residents. This Plan also contains trends and projections for population, housing, and employment that provide a basis for envisioning future development patterns and land use activities that define the community of Belen.

A key component of the Belen Comprehensive Plan process is the formulation of broad goals and specific objectives that imply a desirable future for the City. These goals, with their subordinate objectives, are presented in the following categories: Land Use: Distribution and Intensity, Housing, Transportation, Water Infrastructure, Public Services and Facilities, and Economic Development. These goals and objectives also set the stage for the more specific proposed strategic action recommendations. The purpose of the recommendations is to identify a variety of actions necessary to implement the Plan within critical (i.e., immediate), short, medium, and long-range timeframes. Implementation of this plan will be subject to the policy directives established by the governing body of the City, as deemed appropriate for the conditions and opportunities that may arise in the future.

PART II

COMMUNITY PROFILE

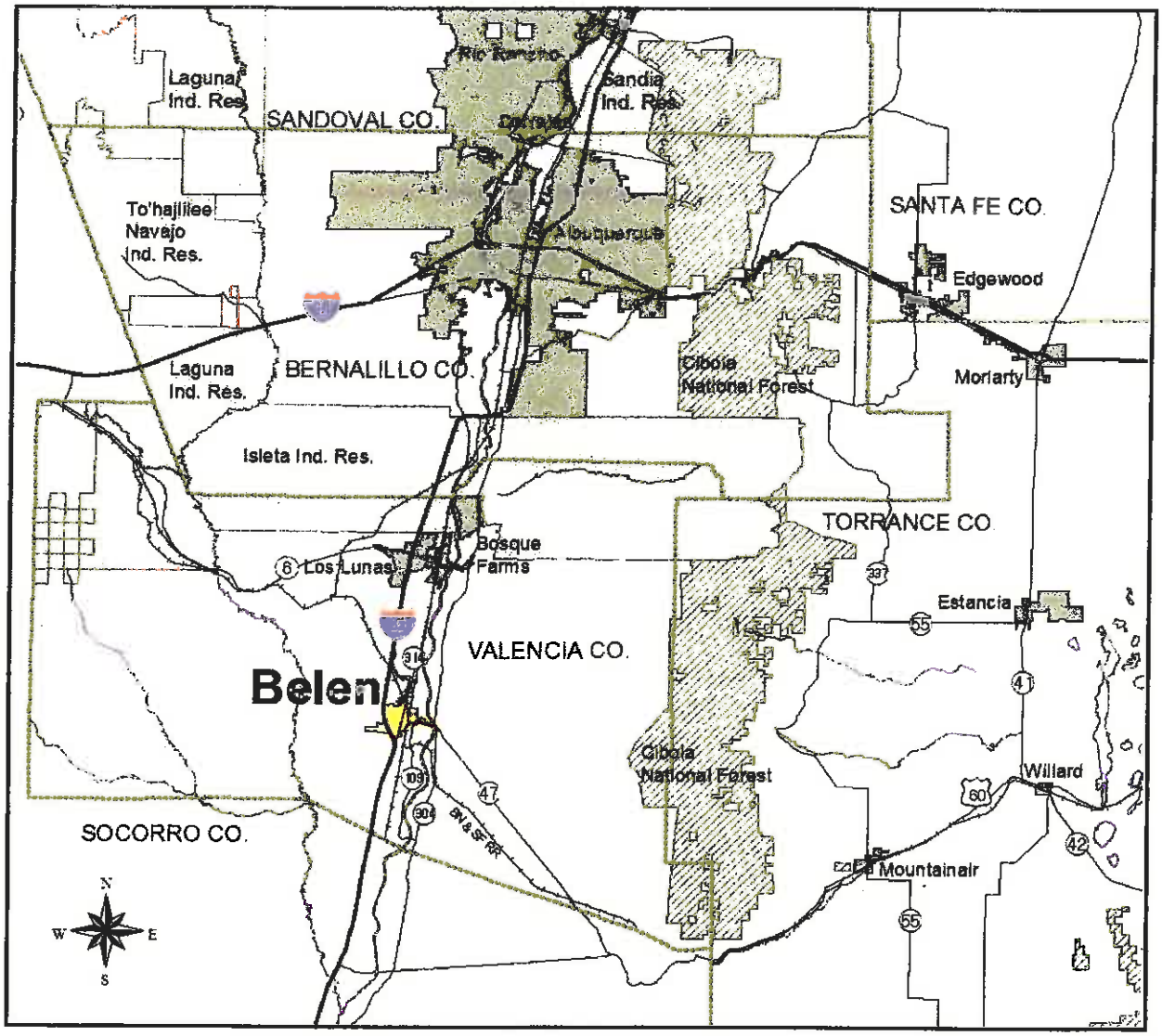
Prior to determining an overall plan for guiding and managing future development, it is necessary to understand and evaluate both the historical background and present-day conditions of the City. The subsequent community profile is an extensive overview of Belen, and is intended to establish a common understanding of the City and its inhabitants. This community profile describes the fundamental character of the City, with information and relevant statistics concerning the regional setting, present character of development, development history, population and housing, local economy, transportation and circulation, and community services and facilities that are available to Belen residents.

Regional Setting

The City of Belen is located in the southern portion of Valencia County; approximately 33 miles south of Albuquerque (see Figure 1). Geographically, the City of Belen is bordered on the east by the Rio Grande and a gradually sloping plateau which leads up to the Manzano Mountains. To the west lies a mesa escarpment and uplands which form the divide between the Rio Grande and the Rio Puerco valleys.

Belen and Manzano Mountains

Belen's neighboring municipalities include Los Lunas, Bosque Farms, and the following unincorporated communities: Rio Communities, Jarales, Adelino, Los Chavez, and Tomé. Belen is the second largest municipality in Valencia County. The City is often referred to as the "Hub City" because of the numerous transcontinental freight trains that stop, refuel, and receive services in Belen. Belen is also situated on El Camino Real, which is a designated scenic byway and one of the oldest and most historic trails in the United States. El Camino Real (Royal Road or King's Highway) served as the main highway for the Spanish for over three centuries and extended 1,150 miles from Mexico City to Santa Fe. Interstate Highway 25 runs parallel to this historic corridor, and serves as the major roadway connecting Belen with Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and El Paso. New Mexico Highway 314 runs through the middle of the City, serves as the City's Main Street, and connects Belen with Los Lunas (the County Seat).



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City of Belen
Comprehensive Plan
Figure 1
Regional Map

Present Character of Development

The urban form of Belen reflects a history influenced by both travel and transportation. The gridded street pattern adjacent to the railroad yards contains the historic business core of the community. Recent commercial and business development is spreading along the major regional highway corridors (N.M. 314, N.M. 309, and I-25). This linear development is changing the character of the community, making it more dependent on vehicle trips. The major travel corridors run parallel to the river in a north-south orientation. In fact, east-west travel is inhibited by significant physical features; such as the Rio Grande, I-25 and the railroad tracks.

Although Belen retains its small town character, there are a growing number of larger buildings and structures in the commercial and business areas. The City is experiencing greater density of development in the central business core area, yet there is dispersed development occurring in the outer portions of the City. Concurrently, the area of the City is expanding through annexation and is thus providing new lands for urbanization. In particular, the I-25 corridor is inducing growth and pulling urbanization towards the western mesa.

Development History The earliest known settlements in the Belen area were established by Native Americans. With the coming of the Spanish in 1598, several ranchos were built in what is now Tomé, Valencia (north of Belen) and Las Barrancas (south of Belen).

In the 18th century, the Spanish set their eyes on the Rio Abajo lands because of its agricultural value in the valley of the Rio Grande. The upper portion of the Rio Grande, from La Bajada Hill north (near Santa Fe), was referred to as Rio Arriba, while the lower portion, from La Bajada Hill south to El Paso del Norte, was referred to as Rio Abajo.

In 1740, a Royal Grant by the King of Spain was given to Captain Don Diego de Torres, his brother-in-law, Antonio de Salazar, and 31 other Spanish settlers to establish the community of Belen. The settlers were given industrial land allotments that became their land after living on it for five years. The settlement was known as Nuestra Senora de Belen, or Our Lady of Bethlehem. Later, the community was referred to as simply Belen.

The Belen land grant was situated in the flat valley on the west side of the Rio Grande. Dry tablelands were found to the west and east of the valley and elevated to as much as 300 feet above the valley floor. Covering this tableland were native grasses that became the grazing land for the herds of sheep of the Belen settlers. Though the Rio Grande was a slow-moving river, it deposited sediments in the valley around Belen for centuries, thus resulting in rich farmland. Belen's section of the Rio Grande valley remains, even today, as

some of the finest agricultural land in New Mexico. The plains surrounding the Belen area were ideal for stock raising, which figured prominently into the Belen economy at that time.

The Belen community thus developed with little difficulty. As the population increased, settlers began to disperse into ranchos throughout the fertile fields of the valley. These ranchos were built around a plaza (town square) that could easily be closed off, in case of an Indian attack. The settlers diverted water from the river to acequias (ditches) by using wooden shovels to channel the water flow. Farming adjoined the various plazas, and sheep, cattle, and horses grazed in the common lands of the grant.

There was a military presence in Belen throughout its earlier years. In the year 1750, a military outpost was established in Belen to protect the missions and haciendas located along the Rio Abajo from Indian marauders, which included the Apaches and Comanches from the east, and the Navajos from the northwest. Protection provided by the military against the Indians continued well into the 19th Century. Belen's last Indian raid was in 1864, when the Navajos swept into the City, driving off cows, goats, and sheep.

During Spanish and Mexican rule, sheep became the basis of the economy in the Rio Abajo. By 1840, New Mexico flocks had grown to an estimated one and half million sheep. By 1880, there were four million sheep, (most of which were located in the Rio Abajo) and this number did not decline until around 1910.

Historically, Belen has been known as a place of trade. El Camino Real ran along the east side of the river and linked Santa Fe with Mexico City. During the 18th century, mission supply caravans composed of ox carts carried friars, settlers, mail, religious items, merchandise, and various other freight materials along the Camino Real. Fur trappers and traders followed El Camino Real throughout the 19th Century. Belen was a port of entry for caravans moving south to Parral, El Paso, Chihuahua, Durango, and Mexico City. A branch customs house was also established in Belen in the early 1800's. Traders from Santa Fe often conducted business in Belen with any merchandise not sold at Taos, Albuquerque or Tomé. Mutton, dried beef, chili, onions, and beans were taken to Bernalillo, Acoma, Laguna, and Socorro in trade for wine, grapes, and other commodities.

As a result of its various owners, many flags have flown over Belen throughout the years. Originally under Spanish jurisdiction, New Mexico was annexed as a territory of Mexico after the Mexican Revolution of 1821. Although Belen was loyal to the Union, the Confederate flag flew briefly over the City from March to July 1862. Finally, in 1912, New Mexico was admitted to the Union as a state. Belen was incorporated in 1918, and Bernard Jacobson was the City's first mayor (1918-1922).

With the arrival of John Becker in 1871, the role of the merchant was introduced to the Belen community. Becker was a German immigrant who brought goods from outside of the region into Belen and in return sold the raw goods of the region to eastern manufacturing plants. Becker realized a railroad cut-off that ran through Belen would contribute greatly to the City's economy. Becker made an enormous contribution to Belen by donating the land needed for the cut-off and 40 percent of the costs.

The arrival of the Belen cut-off in 1907 created a major boom in Belen's economy. The railroad's route initially entered New Mexico over the Raton Pass. As a result of the extreme grade of the pass, several engines were needed to haul the train over the pass. In order to alleviate this problem, a cut-off was created in 1907 that linked Amarillo and Belen through Abo Canyon. The Belen cut-off eliminated the wear and tear on engines coming over the Raton Pass and also helped the railroad to double track from central Kansas to Belen, New Mexico. The cut-off also required the construction of a roundhouse, cooling station, shops, 100-ton ice plant, depot, and the Harvey House. All transcontinental freight trains were required to stop in Belen for refueling, water, and to change crews. The railroad became a magnet for the rural population surrounding Belen, in addition to luring many unemployed eastern laborers.

The construction of the Belen cut-off and its support facilities impacted the community economically, socially, and culturally. It also dramatically affected the community by transforming its status from rural to urban. The population increased 300 percent during that time, and many farmers and families came to Belen to work for the railroad.

Even today, the railroad has continued to support the Belen community. In 1980, the Santa Fe Railroad employed about 380 workers; primarily train operators and mechanical and freight office personnel. In addition, hotels provided accommodations for out-of-town workers, restaurants provided their meals, and stores provided their clothing, medicine, and other needs.

The first automobiles came to Belen in the early 20th century, thus creating a need for roads and bridges. Construction has been ongoing as the population and need has increased. After World War II the highway system was improved, which allowed citizens of Belen to commute to jobs in Albuquerque. In the early 1960's work began on I-25. The Interstate highway supports businesses that cater to travelers, such as hotels, gas stations and restaurants. Auto dealerships are also actively involved in sales throughout the region.

Commonly referred to as the "Hub City", Belen is still an economic and social hub for the surrounding region. Many people in the outlying areas come to shop at the local stores, socialize and pray at the local churches, and visit the variety of businesses Belen has to offer. The Harvey House, an eatery in its

former days located throughout the country, is today the only original such structure in the State still open to the public. The Harvey House is currently home to a museum sponsored by the Valencia County Historical Society.

Population and Housing

Belen is a medium-sized municipality located in southern Valencia County. The year 2000 Census population of Belen was 6,901 persons. Table 1 displays Belen's population and housing data from U.S. Census information from 1960 to 2000. Although Belen lost some of its population during the 1960's, the City has been steadily increasing in population since the 1970's.

Table 1
1960-2000 City of Belen
Population, Housing, and Households

Year	Population	Housing Units*	Households	Belen Average Household Size**	National Average Household Size
1960	5,031	1,471	1,354	3.72	3.33
1970	4,823	1,719	1,477	3.27	3.14
1980	5,617	2,230	1,963	2.86	2.76
1990	6,547	2,622	2,310	2.79	2.63
2000	6,901	2,952	2,596	2.61	2.59

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and MRCOG
* Includes vacant units
**A portion of the population does not live in households, but in group quarters, dormitories, etc.

Another trend shown in Table 1 is the decreasing ratio of persons per household. National housing trends for decades have been toward smaller families, more childless couples, and more singles. Belen appears to be following these national housing trends, and coming very close to the national average household size.

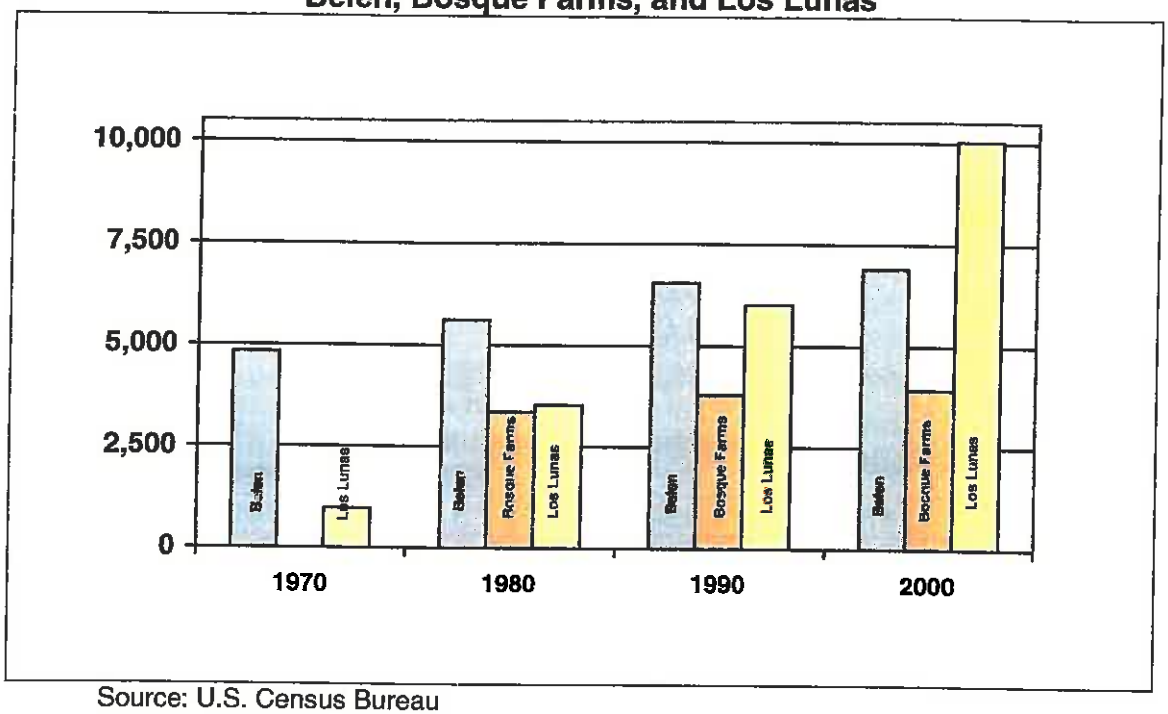
The other incorporated municipalities in Valencia County are Bosque Farms and Los Lunas. Belen was the largest municipality in Valencia County until the 1990's, when the Village of Los Lunas overtook Belen as the largest municipality in the County (see Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2
1970-2000 Population
Belen, Bosque Farms, and Los Lunas

	1970	1980	1990	2000
Belen	4,823	5,617	6,547	6,901
Bosque Farms	--	3,353	3,791	3,931
Los Lunas	973	3,525	6,013	10,034

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

FIGURE 2
1970-2000 Population in
Belen, Bosque Farms, and Los Lunas



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population Characteristics The age/sex characteristics of the City have changed to some extent over the past decade; the population is slightly older in 2000 than in 1990. In 1990, 31.3 percent of the population was under 18 years of age; in 2000, the percent of the population under 18 had decreased to 28.8 percent. The proportion of the population age 65 and over increased slightly, from 14.9 percent in 1990 to 15.1 percent in 2000. Also, the proportion of the population between ages 45 and 64 increased from 16.8 percent in 1990 to 21.0 percent in 2000.

Overall, the City residents are slightly older than residents of Valencia County, but quite similar to residents of the State of New Mexico. The City has a higher percentage of retirees (15.1 percent) than both Valencia County (10.1 percent) and the State of New Mexico (11.7 percent). The City's percentage of children (28.8 percent) is slightly lower than that of Valencia County (30.2 percent) and slightly higher than the State (28 percent). In addition, the median age of City residents (34.6 years) in 2000 is a bit older than that of the County (33.8 years), but exactly the same as that of the State (34.6 years). Trends and comparisons of the age and sex characteristics with those of Valencia County and New Mexico are shown in Table 3.

Table 3
1990 and 2000 Age and Sex Distributions for
Belen, Valencia County and New Mexico

2000

Age Group	Belen		Valencia County		New Mexico	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
< 18	29.2	28.4	30.7	29.6	29.0	27.0
18-24	10.1	9.1	8.6	8.1	10.1	9.5
25-44	26.5	24.6	29.9	29.4	28.6	28.1
45-64	21.5	20.6	21.6	21.8	21.9	22.5
65-over	12.7	17.3	9.2	11.1	10.4	12.9
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Persons	3,297	3,604	33,186	32,966	894,317	924,729

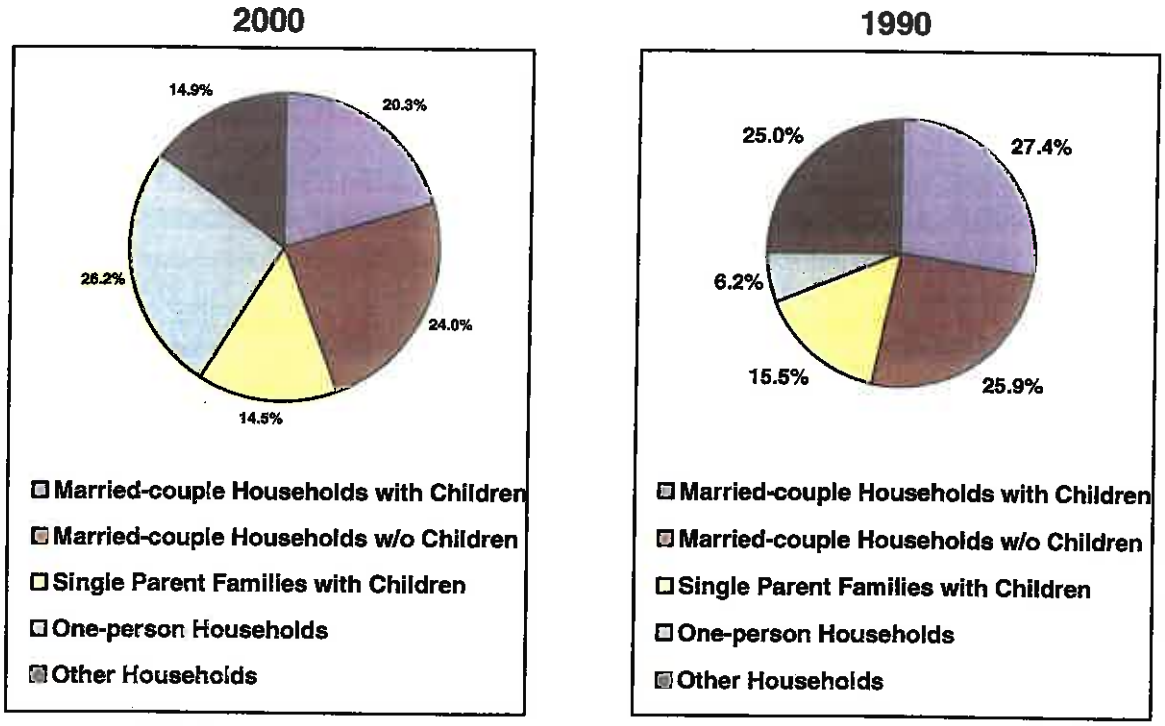
1990

Age Group	Belen		Valencia County		New Mexico	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
< 18	33.2	29.6	31.2	30.4	30.6	28.4
18-24	9.6	9.7	8.5	8.3	10.3	9.8
25-44	28.2	26.6	32.9	32.3	32.2	31.7
45-64	16.4	17.2	18.1	18.1	17.4	18.1
65-over	12.6	16.9	9.3	10.9	9.5	12.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Persons	3,095	3,452	22,703	22,532	745,253	769,816

Source: 1990 Census and 2000 Census

The composition of households and families in 1990 and 2000 are provided in Figure 3. In 1990, 53.3 percent of the households were headed by a married couple; the percentage of married couple households decreased to 44.3 in 2000. Also, the percentage of single parent families with children decreased from 15.5 percent in 1990 to 14.5 percent in 2000. The percentage of non-traditional households also decreased, from 25.0 percent to 14.9 percent. The percentage of one-person households increased significantly, from 6.2 percent to 26.2 percent during the decade.

FIGURE 3
1990 and 2000 Household and Family Composition for Belen



Source: 2000 Census

Source: 1990 Census

In general, the educational attainment of Belen residents is comparable to the residents of Valencia County as a whole. Among Belen residents, 70.2 percent had at least graduated from high school and 12.6 percent had graduated from college. The corresponding percentages for Valencia County were 76.1 percent and 14.8 percent. Among residents of the State of New Mexico, 78.8 percent had graduated from high school and 23.4 percent had also graduated from college. Compared to the State, a smaller percentage of persons had graduated from high school and a smaller percentage had finished college.

Table 4
2000 Education Levels for Persons Age 25 and Over
in Belen, Valencia County, and New Mexico
(in percentages)

	Belen	Valencia County	New Mexico
Less than 9th Grade	9.0	9.1	9.3
9th-12th Grade, No Diploma	20.8	14.8	11.9
High School Graduate	32.3	32.3	26.6
Some College, No Degree	17.9	23.2	22.9
Associate Degree	7.4	5.8	5.9
Bachelor Degree	9.9	9.6	13.6
Graduate or Professional Degree	2.7	5.2	9.8
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Persons	4,254	40,917	1,134,801

Source: 2000 Census

The responses to the race and Hispanic origin questions have been cross-tabulated in Table 5, and indicate how individuals categorize themselves. More than two thirds of Belen residents identified themselves as Hispanic. Also, more than a quarter of persons who considered themselves to be of Hispanic ancestry selected "other" as the best description of their race. By contrast, slightly more than half (55 percent) of the residents of Valencia County considered themselves to be Hispanic. In 2000, 42 percent of the population of New Mexico regarded themselves to be Hispanic.

Table 5
2000 Race and Hispanic Origin Distribution
for Belen

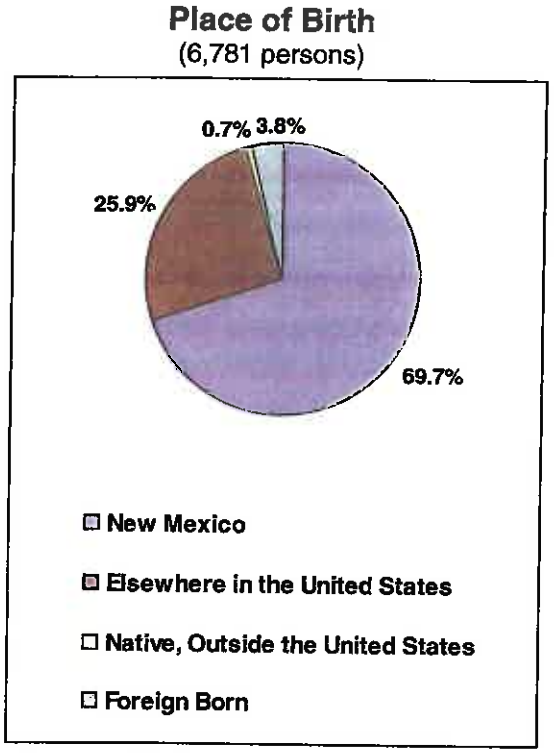
Race	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	Total
Total Population:	4,735	2,166	6,901
White	2,738	1,920	4,658
Black	13	61	74
American Indian	33	81	114
Asian or Pacific Islander	12	11	23
Other	1,735	17	1,752
Bi-racial	193	69	262
Multi-racial	11	7	18

Source: 2000 Census

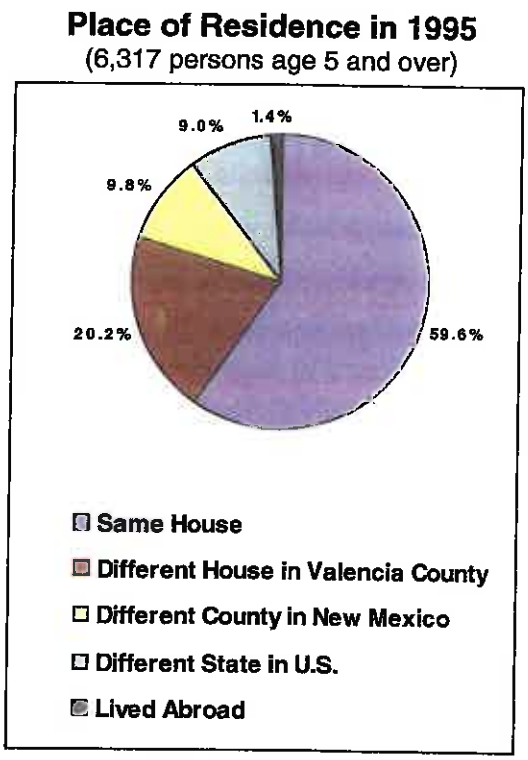
Almost 70 percent of the residents in Belen were born in New Mexico (see Figure 4), significantly greater than the statewide average (51.5 percent) and the County (61.6 percent). There were few foreign born persons in the City (3.8 percent) compared to a statewide average of 8.2 percent.

Nearly 60 percent of the population age 5 and over lived in the same house for at least 5 years prior to the 2000 Census (see Figure 4). This is somewhat higher than the statewide average of 54.4 percent. In fact, 79.8 percent had lived in Valencia County 5 years prior and 89.6 percent had lived in New Mexico 5 years prior. This was higher than the statewide percentage of 85.6 percent, but about the same as Valencia County's percentage of 90.1 who had lived in New Mexico 5 years prior.

FIGURE 4
Nativity and Migration for 2000
Belen Residents



Source: 2000 Census



Source: 2000 Census

Housing Characteristics The housing in Belen is well established but aging, with nearly half (46 percent) of the structures built in the 1960's or earlier. Housing tenure data is provided in Table 6. A majority of the homes are occupied by their owners (61.5 percent), which is slightly lower than in 1990 (63.7 percent). The percentage of homes occupied by renters increased from 24.4 percent in 1990 to 26.4 percent in 2000. The balance of the housing was vacant, about 12 percent in both 1990 and 2000.

The 2000 vacancy rate was 12.1 percent, which is the highest rate in Valencia County. By comparison, Bosque Farms had a vacancy rate of 3.7 percent, Los Lunas had a vacancy rate of 6.3 percent, and Valencia County had a vacancy rate of 8.0 percent. However, this vacancy rate is relatively low when compared with other municipalities that are located a comparable distance from Albuquerque; the vacancy rates in those municipalities ranged from 13.1 percent (San Ysidro) to 24.2 percent (Jemez Springs).

Table 6
2000 Housing Tenure
in Belen

	2000 Number	2000 Percent	1990 Percent
Total Units (occupied and vacant):	2,952	100.0	100.0
Owner Occupied	1,815	61.5	63.7
Renter Occupied	781	26.4	24.4
Vacant	356	12.1	11.9

Source: 1990 Census and 2000 Census

The age of occupied housing units is reported in Table 7. Nearly half of the occupied housing units were constructed prior to 1970, including 247 housing units that were constructed prior to 1940. The increase in the City's housing units has remained stable, mirroring the steady growth in Belen's population over the years.

Table 7
2000 Age of Occupied Housing Units
in Belen
(vacant units excluded)

Year Structure Built	Number of Units
1999 – March 2000	50
1995 – 1998	229
1990 – 1994	189
1980 – 1989	545
1970 – 1979	524
1960 – 1969	434
1940 – 1959	627
1939 or Earlier	247

Source: 2000 Census

The housing is designed primarily for single family occupancy (see Table 8 and Figure 5). In 2000, single family houses and mobile homes accounted for 83.2 percent of the housing, while 15.1 percent were multifamily housing units. The percentage of mobile homes increased from 1990 to 2000; now nearly one out of every five houses in Belen is a mobile home. Therefore, most of the new

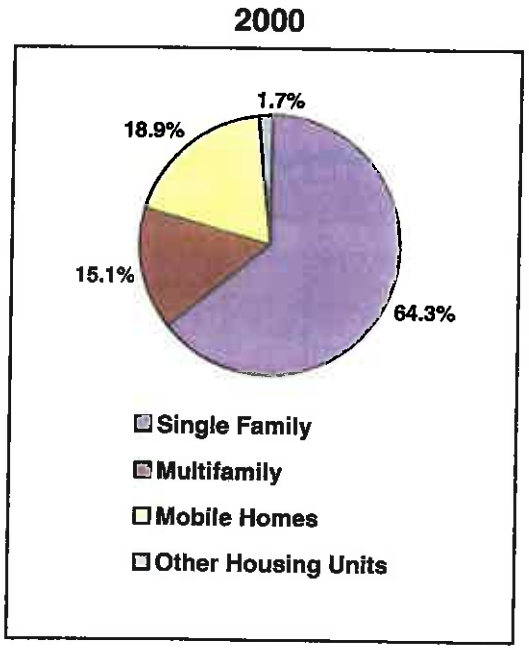
housing in the past decade in Belen has been provided through the installation of mobile homes or manufactured housing. Nearly all of the housing units are heated with natural gas (see Figure 6).

Table 8
1990 and 2000 Housing Type in Belen
(all housing units including vacant)

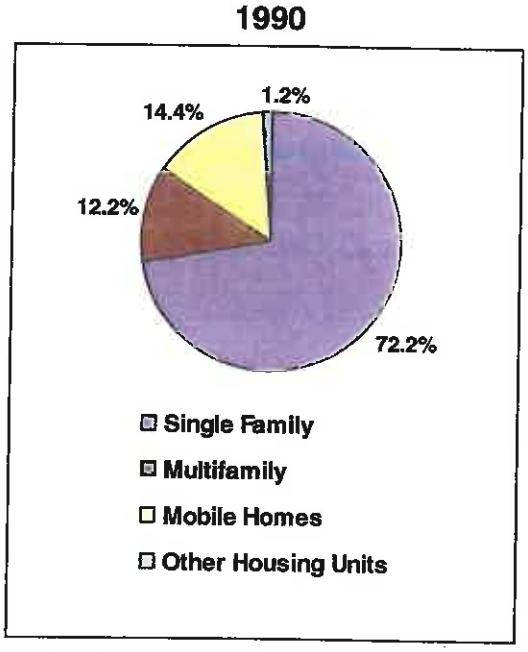
Type	2000 Number of Units	2000 Percent	1990 Percent
Single Family	1,828	64.3	72.2
Multifamily	431	15.1	12.2
Mobile Homes	538	18.9	14.4
Other Housing Units	48	1.7	1.2
Total	2,845	100.0	100.0

Source: 2000 Census and 1990 Census

FIGURE 5
1990 and 2000 Housing Type
in Belen
(all housing units including vacant)

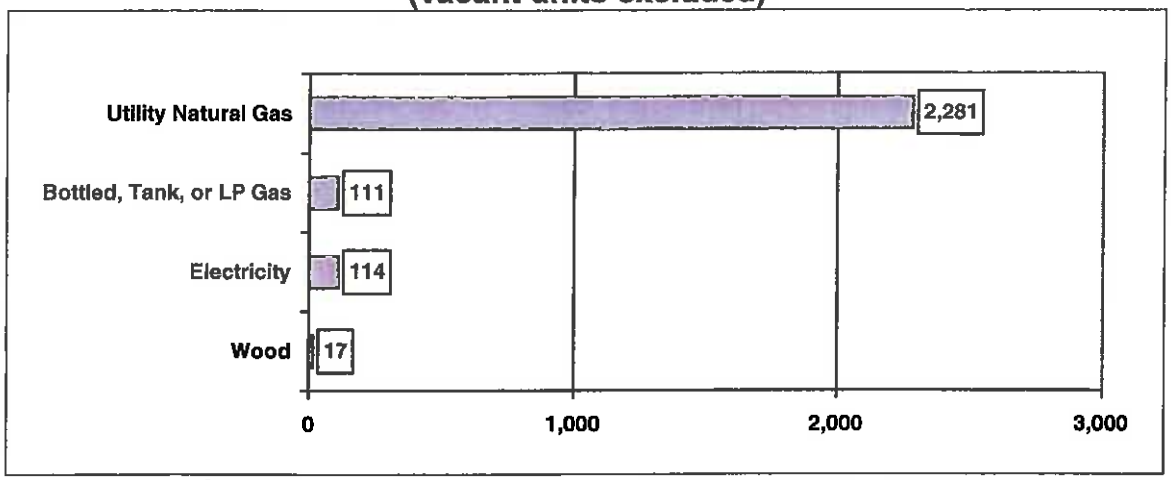


Source: 2000 Census



Source: 1990 Census

FIGURE 6
2000 Housing Heating Fuel for Occupied Units in Belen (vacant units excluded)



Source: 2000 Census

During the 15 months prior to the 2000 Census, 50 new housing units were reported (Table 7) but 594 new householders were reported (Table 9). Both of these data items were taken from sample data, so they should be considered approximations rather than exact numbers. These data indicate that Belen has a considerable number of householders (544 householders or 21.6 percent of the City's householders) who moved into existing units during that fifteen month period, even though the City's annual growth in population was roughly less than half of a percent.

Table 9
2000 Year Householder Moved Into Unit

Year	Number of Units	Percent
1999 to March 2000	594	23.5
1995 to 1998	620	24.6
1990 to 1994	338	13.4
1980 to 1989	363	14.4
1970 to 1979	231	9.2
1969 or earlier	377	14.9
Total	2,523	100.0

Source: 2000 Census

Local Economy

The economic characteristics of Belen provide insight into the basic conditions of the community. A healthy local economy provides both employment opportunities for residents and a strong tax base for the City.

Labor Force, Employment and Earnings Slightly more than 56 percent of the persons age 16 and over were in the labor force, and 92.1 percent of those were employed. The 2000 labor force and employment for Belen is presented in Table 10, with comparisons to Valencia County and the State of New Mexico. The percentage of the population in the labor force is lower in Belen than either Valencia County as a whole, or the State. The main difference is the percentage of females not participating in the labor force, since the male percentage was only slightly lower than the County and State rates. The unemployment rate for Belen was 7.9 percent, compared to 6.3 percent in Valencia County and 7.3 percent in the State as a whole.

Table 10
2000 Labor Force and Employment
for Belen, Valencia County, and New Mexico

	Belen		Valencia County	New Mexico
Classification	Number	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
Total Persons Age 16 and Over:	5,046	100.0	100.0	100.0
In Civilian Labor Force	2,826	56.0	59.7	60.2
In Armed Forces	5	0.1	0.3	0.8
Not in Labor Force	2,215	43.9	40.0	39.0
Civilian Labor Force:	2,826	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	2,603	92.1	93.7	92.7
Unemployed	223	7.9	6.3	7.3
Males Age 16 and Over:	2,328	100.0	100.0	100.0
In Civilian Labor Force	1,503	64.6	65.3	66.2
In Armed Forces	0	0	0.4	1.4
Not in Labor Force	825	35.4	34.3	32.4
Females Age 16 and Over:	2,718	100.0	100.0	100.0
In Civilian Labor Force	1,323	48.7	54.2	54.4
In Armed Forces	5	0.2	0.1	0.3
Not in Labor Force	1,390	51.1	45.7	45.3

Source: 2000 Census

A categorical listing of occupations for the employed residents of Belen is displayed in Table 11. There is a wide cross section of workers living in the City, with the categories similar to Valencia County and the State. Compared to the State, there were fewer persons in the management/professional occupations and more persons in the production/transportation/material moving occupations. Compared to Valencia County, there were slightly fewer Belen residents in the construction/extraction/maintenance and sales/office occupations, and slightly more in the production/transportation/material moving and service occupations. The major rail center in Belen accounts for the large number of workers in the production/transportation/material moving sector.

Table 11
2000 Civilian Occupations for Employed Residents in Belen, Valencia County, and New Mexico

	Belen		Valencia County	New Mexico
Occupation	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Total Employed Persons Age 16 and Over:	2,603	100.0	100.0	100.0
Management, Professional, and Related Occupations	675	25.9	26.9	34.0
Service	515	19.8	17.3	17.0
Sales/Office	631	24.2	25.7	25.9
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0	0	0.6	1.0
Construction/Extraction/ Maintenance	301	11.6	14.4	11.4
Production/Transportation/ Material Moving	481	18.5	15.1	10.7

Source: 2000 Census

Table 12 shows the jobs of Belen residents according to industry categories. The largest number of jobs was in education/health/social services, followed by retail trade and then manufacturing. Education and public administration jobs were accountable to the Belen City Government and the

Table 12
2000 Industries for Residents of Belen

Industry Categories	Number	Percent
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	13	0.5
Construction	175	6.7
Manufacturing	264	10.1
Wholesale Trade	47	1.8
Retail Trade	426	16.4
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	178	6.8
Information	50	1.9
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	131	5.0
Professional/Scientific/Management/ Administrative/Waste Management Services	132	5.1
Education/Health/Social Services	548	21.1
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation/Accommodation/ Food Services	253	9.7
Other Services (except public administration)	165	6.4
Industry Categories	**Number**	**Percent**
Public Administration	221	8.5
Total jobs	2,603	100.0

Source: 2000 Census

Belen Consolidated Schools. About one tenth of the residents in Belen worked in the manufacturing sector, at companies such as Cavco Industries, SOLO Cup Company, Castillo Ready Mix, Avonite Inc., and United Desiccants. However, Cavco Industries has since closed its production facility in Belen.

Workers were defined as those persons who went to work during the week prior to the Census date. This is a slightly different total than the total employed residents. The place of work was determined to be the primary work location during the week prior to the Census date. Nearly three quarters (about 72 percent) of the 2,511 workers residing in Belen found work in Valencia County. Four out of every five workers drove to work alone, while another 15.5 percent used carpools as a means to get to work (see Table 13). The average travel time to work was 22 minutes.

Table 13
2000 Commuting to Work for Residents of Belen

Mode of Transportation	Number	Percent
Total workers 16 years and over:	2,511	100.0
Drove Alone (car, truck, or van)	2,010	80.1
Carpool (car, truck, or van)	390	15.5
Public Transportation (including taxicab)	27	1.1
Walked	11	0.4
Worked at Home	73	2.9

Source: 2000 Census

A distribution of 1999 household income is provided in Table 14. The 1999 median household income for Belen was $26,754, well below the median for Valencia County ($34,099). It is also considerably below the New Mexico median of $34,133 and the United States median of $41,994. Likewise, the per capita income for Belen ($12,999) is well below that of Valencia County ($14,747), New Mexico ($17,261), and the United States ($21,587). As would be expected, Belen residents have supplemented their incomes with the following assistance programs: Social Security income (32.7%); retirement income (19.2%); Supplemental Security income (6.8%); and public assistance income (5.5%).

Belen has a relatively high percentage of low-income persons compared to the County, State and Nation. In Belen, 24.8 percent of the population was determined to be below the poverty level. This is a higher percentage of individuals living in poverty than Valencia County (16.8 percent), New Mexico (18.4 percent) and the United States (12.4 percent). An economic development strategy of bringing higher wage jobs to the City is needed to raise the median household income in Belen.

Table 14
1999 Household Income in
Belen, Valencia County and New Mexico

	Belen		Valencia County	New Mexico
Category	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Less than $10,000	398	15.6	9.8	12.5
$10,000 to $14,999	312	12.2	8.7	8.4
$15,000 to $24,999	486	19.0	17.0	15.8
$25,000 to $34,999	361	14.2	15.6	14.4
$35,000 to $49,999	451	17.7	19.0	17.0
$50,000 to $74,999	328	12.9	17.1	16.5
$75,000 to $99,999	156	6.1	8.2	7.8
$100,000 to $149,999	39	1.5	3.2	5.0
$150,000 to $199,999	5	0.2	0.8	1.3
$200,000 or more	16	0.6	0.6	1.3
Total Households	2,552	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 2000 Census

Municipal Revenues and Expenditures New Mexico relies heavily on gross-receipts and selective-excise taxes, such as gasoline taxes, cigarette taxes, and motor vehicle fees, to fund local government operations. Compared to other states, New Mexico relies more heavily on the gross-receipts tax, ranking the third highest in the country for this tax as a percentage of personal income (Hain, 1994). Furthermore, New Mexico's reliance on this tax has increased throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The State collects a 5 percent gross-receipts tax and, in turn, distributes 1.225 percent of those gross-receipts tax revenues to municipalities. Municipalities may also enact local-option gross-receipts taxes and local-option infrastructure gross-receipts taxes.

The major sources of Belen's municipal revenues (excluding capital and enterprise fund revenues) are shown in Table 15. In the past three years, gross receipts taxes (municipal gross-receipts and municipal local-option gross-receipts) have accounted for between 72.9 and 78.1 percent of Belen's general revenues, and they have accounted for about 60 percent of the City's total municipal revenues, excluding capital and enterprise fund revenues. Since taxable gross receipts are essential for financing the City's services, it will be necessary for the City to take steps to ensure that its commercial activities are sustained.

Table 15
1999-2001 Belen Municipal Receipts
(Excluding Capital and Enterprise Fund Revenues)

Year	2001	2000	1999
General Fund			
Franchise Tax	$ 146,117	$ 127,963	$ 182,385
Cigarette Tax	21,141	24,084	21,404
Municipal Gross Receipts (1.225%)	2,378,713	2,347,013	2,140,533
Liquor Licenses	3,065	3,270	3,510
Other Licenses and Permits	58,567	38,534	12,773
Administrative Fees	172,727	121,388	97,000
Small Cities Assistance	25,000	25,000	15,000
Municipal Local Option Gross Receipts	1,456,454	1,437,034	1,310,368
Property – Current	397,371	391,734	364,044
Gasoline Tax – Regular	0	0	164,497
Motor Vehicle	56,834	68,067	68,950
Other	313,952	258,754	352,185
General Fund Subtotal:	$5,029,941	$4,842,841	$4,732,649
Correction Fees	42,544	31,281	24,751
Emergency Medical Services	8,779	8,827	9,211
Fire Protection	75,790	56,880	91,160
Law Enforcement Protection	29,000	21,804	23,925
Lodgers' Tax	51,382	63,184	50,993
Municipal Street	410,844	305,000	200,960
Recreation	41,618	49,837	47,778
Senior Citizen	53,563	48,622	54,800
Other	664,705	752,498	484,408
Total:	$6,408,166	$6,180,774	$5,720,635

Source: N.M. Department of Finance and Administration, Local Government Division

Belen's primary expenses (excluding capital expenditures and enterprise funds) are shown in Table 16. The table clearly shows that Belen's greatest expense is public safety, and records show that Belen has experienced a general trend of increasing funds spent on public safety throughout the last decade. In fact, spending on public safety in Belen more than doubled during the 1990's, from $675,144 in FY 1991, to $1,454,372 in FY 2001. This is a significant increase, considering that while the population increased only 5.4 percent during the 1990's, spending on public safety more than doubled.

In 2000, Belen spent $861 per resident to provide the public services contained in Table 16. This is greater than the two other municipalities in Valencia County, as the Village of Bosque Farms spent $533 per resident and the Village of Los Lunas spent $678 per resident. Belen also spent more per resident during 2000 than a comparably-sized municipality in Sandoval County, the Town of Bernalillo, which spent $427 per person to provide basically the

same services as is listed in Table 16. The largest differences between the disbursements in Belen and the disbursements in the other municipalities were in streets & drainage, public safety, financial, and "other".

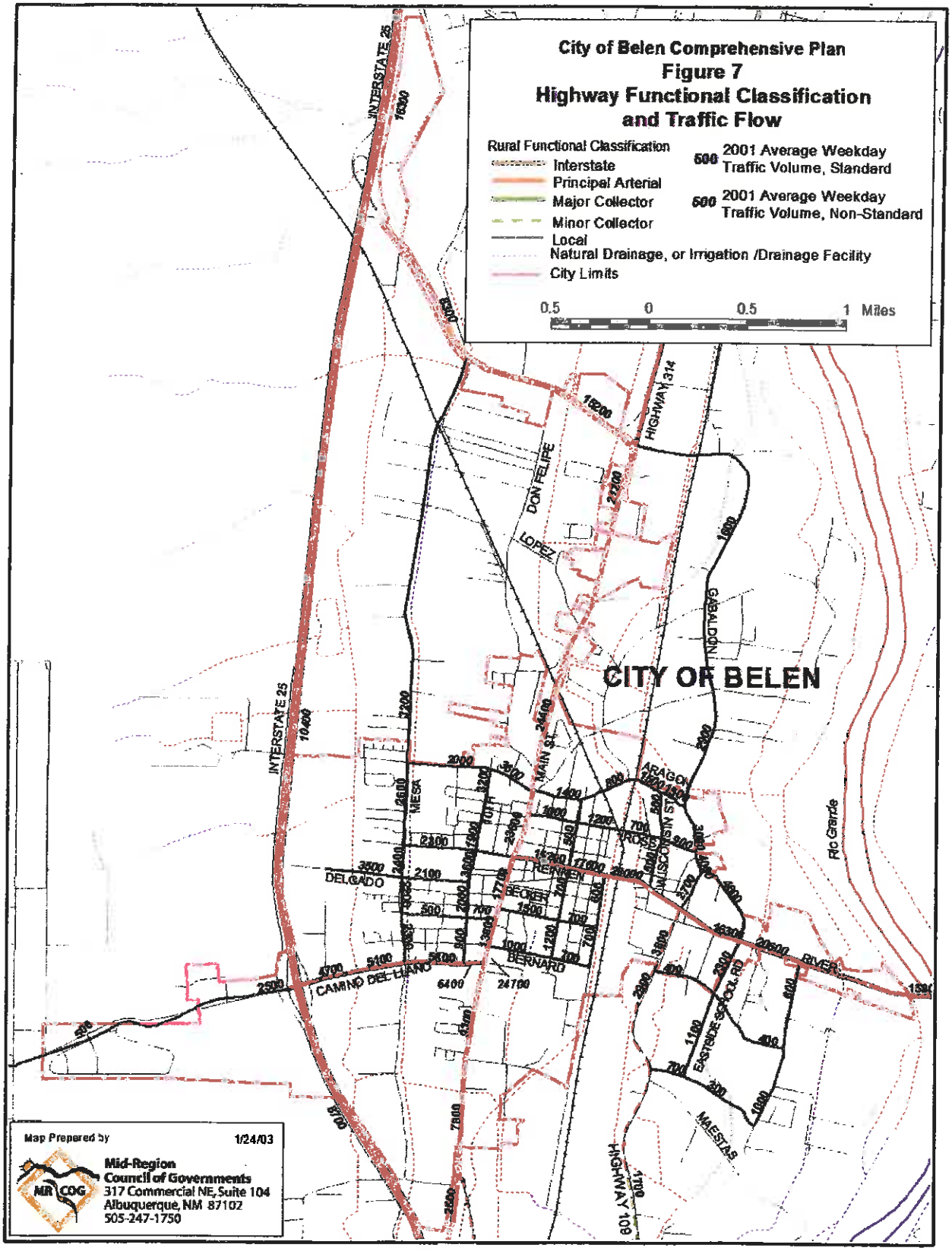
Table 16
1999-2001 Belen Municipal Disbursements
(Excluding Capital and Enterprise Fund Expenditures)

Year	2001	2000	1999
General Fund:			
Executive/Legislative	$ 80,354	$ 70,065	$ 68,992
Judicial	155,561	121,804	123,133
Financial Administration	673,370	793,925	843,749
Parks & Recreation	546,415	447,428	470,681
Other	882,634	691,537	786,775
Library	236,351	192,355	175,592
Community Development	8,596	17,722	19,114
Planning & Zoning	125,538	128,895	81,637
Public Safety	1,454,372	1,339,080	1,319,956
Fire & Ambulance	275,512	182,744	173,910
Streets & Drainage	605,598	589,444	613,476
General Fund Subtotal:	$5,044,301	$4,574,999	$4,677,015
Corrections	38,341	21,081	17,170
Emergency Medical Services	9,256	10,175	8,568
Fire Protection	56,935	24,255	65,510
Law Enforcement	28,626	26,398	45,823
Lodgers' Tax	51,488	61,291	57,362
Streets	523,923	282,171	292,524
Recreation	33,955	29,361	40,811
Senior Citizen	126,575	124,757	112,494
Other	718,130	789,846	511,781
Total:	$6,631,530	$5,944,334	$5,829,058

Source: N.M. Department of Finance and Administration, Local Government Division

Transportation and Circulation

The City of Belen is serviced by Interstate-25, NM 314, and NM 109. I-25 is the major north-south freeway in the State, and NM 314 is a Principal Arterial that serves as Belen's Main Street and connects Belen to Los Lunas and Albuquerque. NM 109 is a Minor Collector connecting NM 314 to NM 304. A map showing the street system, functional classification of the major roadways, and traffic flow in Belen is shown in Figure 7. Functional classification is divided into three categories: 1) Arterial streets, which consist of continuous or long-distance travel routes providing regional connections among urban and rural communities, and emphasize a high level of mobility for movement through the region; 2) Collector streets, which provide a linkage between local roads and


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 7
Highway Functional Classification
and Traffic Flow
Rural Functional Classification
Interstate
Principal Arterial
Major Collector
Minor Collector
Local
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
500 2001 Average Weekday Traffic Volume, Standard
500 2001 Average Weekday Traffic Volume, Non-Standard
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GABALDON
MAIN ST
ARAGON
WISCONSIN ST
ROSS
REINKEN
BECKER
BERNARD
DELGADO
MESA
CAMINO DEL LLANO
RIVER
EASTSIDE SCHOOL RD
MAESTAS
HIGHWAY 109
Rio Grande
Map Prepared by
1/24/03
Mid-Region
Council of Governments
317 Commercial NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-247-1750

arterial highways; and 3) Local streets, which provide direct access to all abutting lands and direct traffic to the higher capacity collectors and arterials. The functional classification of streets and highways is used to define how specific transportation routes are used in serving the community, both currently and in the future. Functional classification also implies design standards necessary to provide adequate traffic-carrying capacity on the street network. Generally, the street design and right-of-way standards related to the functional classification are established in the adopted Subdivision Regulations for the City.

The most current traffic counts (2001) on the major roadways are shown in Figure 7. Traffic counts are highest along Main Street, Reinken Avenue, River Road, and at the North I-25/Belen interchange. Historic traffic counts in Belen are shown in Table 17. Traffic has more than doubled on 10th Street north of Delgado Road since 1993. Traffic has also increased significantly at Camino del Llano east of I-25, at Main Street north of Camino del Llano, and at Mesa Road north of Reinken Avenue in the past decade.

Table 17
Average Daily Traffic in Belen

Location	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001
Camino del Llano (just east of I-25)	2600	3800	4400	3600	4700
Main St. (just north of Camino del Llano)	15600	19900	23800	24000	24700
Delgado Rd. (just west of Mesa Rd.)	2200	1900	2300	3400	3500
Mesa Rd. (just north of Reinken Ave.)	1400	1900	2400	2300	2600
10th St. (just north of Delgado Rd.)	1700	2800	2900	3800	3600
Aragon Rd. (just west of Main St.)	2300	2700	2800	3100	3600
Main St. (just south of Aragon Rd.)	18600	17400	22800	23200	23600
Reinken Ave. (just west of Wisconsin St.)	19000	22000	21200	22300	23000
River Rd. (just east of Eastside School Rd.)	15200	17700	18900	20000	20600

Source: MRCOG

Traffic crash data obtained from the University of New Mexico (UNM) Division of Government Research (DGR) was reviewed for the years 1998-2001. These data are based on reports received by the Traffic Safety Bureau, and do not include non-injury crashes and crashes not reported to Santa Fe. Table 18 shows the locations of the fatal and injury crashes which occurred in the City during that four-year period. Figure 8 (High Accident Intersections) shows these high accident locations on a map.

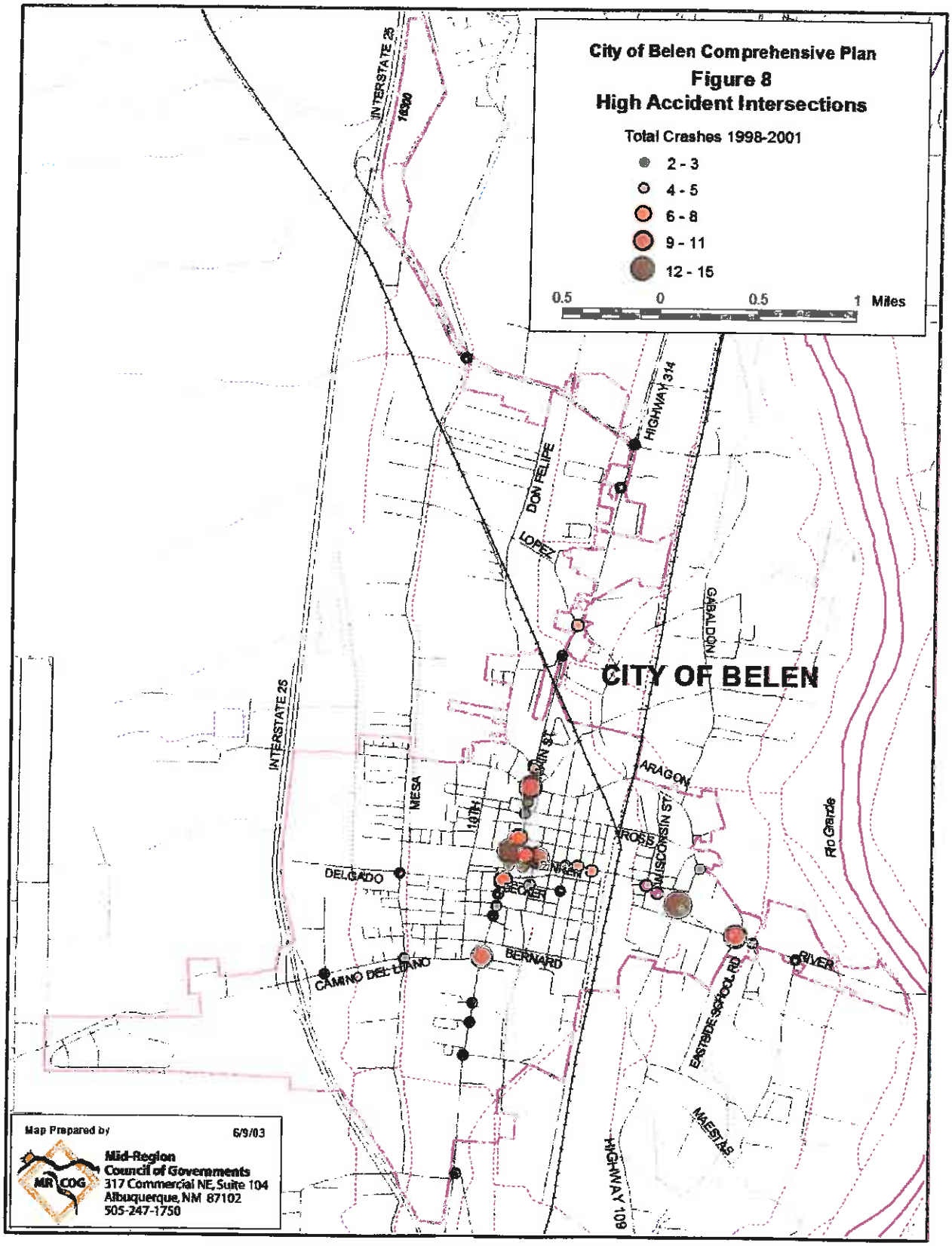

City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 8
High Accident Intersections
Total Crashes 1998-2001
2 - 3
4 - 5
6 - 8
9 - 11
12 - 15
0.5
0
0.5
1 Miles
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GABALDON
ARAGON
MESA
10TH
WISCONSIN ST
DELGADO
BECKER
BERNARD
CAMINO DEL LLANO
RIVER
EASTSIDE SCHOOL RD
MAESTAS
HIGHWAY 109
Rio Grande
Map Prepared by
6/9/03
Mid-Region
Council of Governments
317 Commercial NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-247-1750

Table 18
Most Dangerous Intersections in Belen

Street	Cross Street	Intersection Rank	Total Crashes
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	Jarales Rd (NM 109)	1	15
Main St (NM 314)	Reinken Ave (NM 309)	1	15
Main St (NM 314)	Camino del Llano (NM 548)	2	11
Main St (NM 314)	Aragon Rd	3	9
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	6th St	3	9
River Rd (NM 309)	Eastside School Rd	3	9
Main St (NM 314)	Chavez Ave	4	8
Main St (NM 314)	Becker Ave	5	7
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	7th St	6	6
Main St (NM 314)	Don Felipe Rd	7	5
Main St (NM 314)	Lopez Rd	7	5
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	3rd St	7	5
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	Michigan St	7	5
Main St (NM 314)	Sanchez Rd	8	4
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	2nd St	8	4
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	Wisconsin St	8	4
Main St (NM 314)	Gilbert Ave	9	3
Main St (NM 314)	Martha Jean Rd	9	3
Main St (NM 314)	Mesa Rd	9	3
Main St (NM 314)	NM 116	9	3
Main St (NM 314)	Torres Ave	9	3
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	4th St	9	3
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	Caldwell St	9	3
Becker Ave	4th St	10	2
Becker Ave	6th St	10	2
Delgado St	Mesa Rd	10	2
Didier Ave	Main St (NM 314)	10	2
Gabaldon Rd (NM 385)	Main St (NM 314)	10	2
Gabaldon Rd (NM 385)	Sunshine Rd	10	2
Goebel Ave	7th St	10	2
Main St (NM 314)	Castillo Ave	10	2
Main St (NM 314)	Esperanza Dr	10	2
Main St (NM 314)	Geobel Ave	10	2
Main St (NM 314)	Rivera Rd	10	2
Main St. (NM 314)	Ross Ave	10	2
Main St (NM 314)	Vivian Rd	10	2
Reinken Ave (NM 309)	NM 47	10	2
River Rd (NM 309)	Gonzales	10	2
River Rd (NM 309)	Jaramillo	10	2
San Lorenzo Dr	Main St (NM 314)	10	2
Camino del Llano (NM 548)	Christopher Rd	10	2
Camino del Llano (NM 548)	Mesa Rd	10	2

Source: University of New Mexico Division of Government Research

Community Facilities and Services

One of the primary objectives in any community planning process is to determine the type and extent of public services necessary to provide for the residents' needs. This portion of the community profile examines those facilities and services currently being provided to Belen residents.

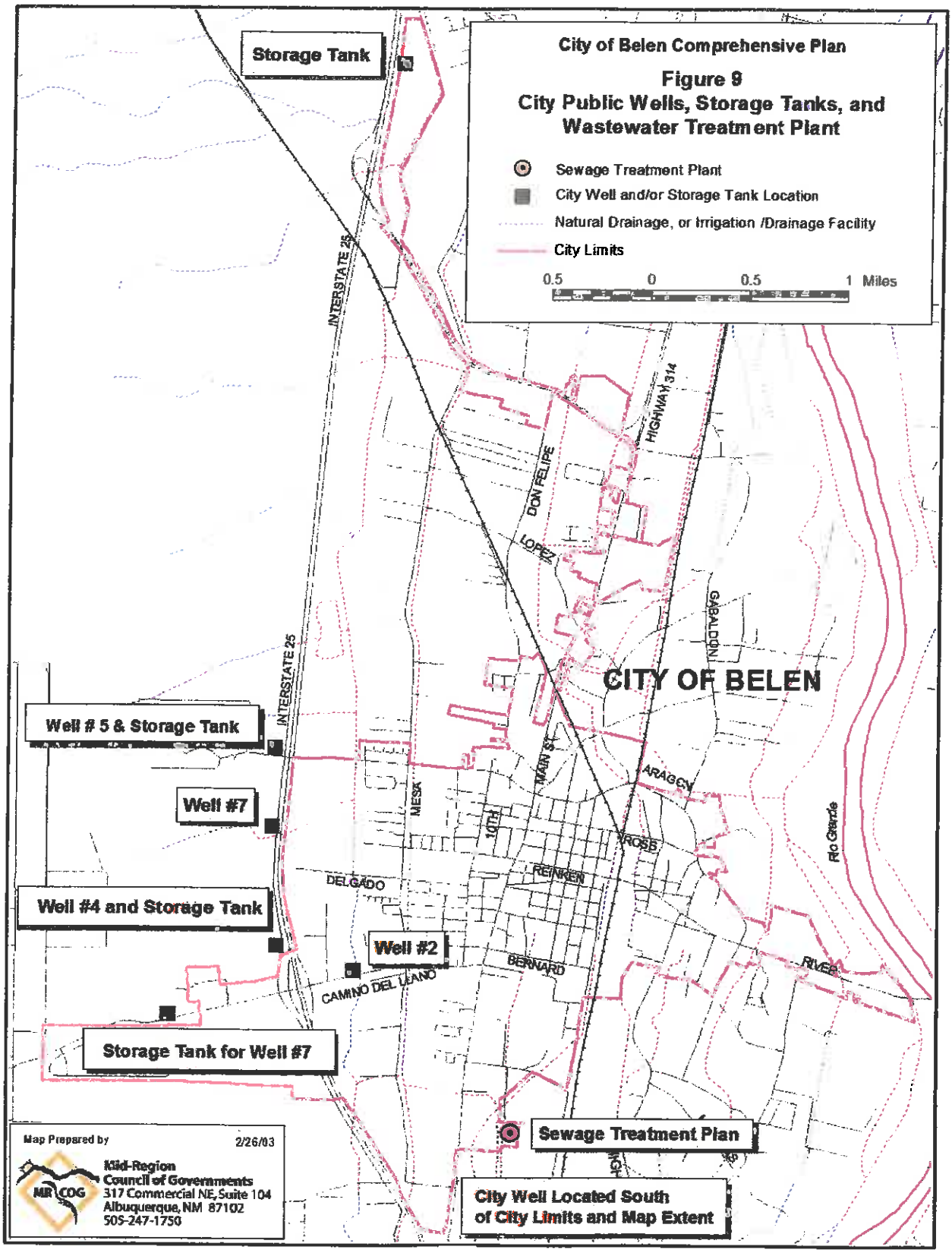
Local Government Operations The City of Belen is an incorporated municipality in Valencia County, and has a Mayor-Council form of government with a City Manager. There are six elective positions: the Mayor, the four City council members, and the Municipal Judge. Elected officials serve four-year, staggered terms.

Belen City Hall

City officials appointed by the Council are the City Manager, Chief of Police, Fire Chief, and the Airport Manager. The City's department heads include the Library Director, Parks Director, Human Resources Director, Wastewater Supervisor, Planning and Zoning Director, Retired Senior Volunteer Program Director (RSVP), Utilities Director, Water Supervisor, Community Service Director, Finance Officer, Recreation Director, and Street Supervisor. The total number of persons employed by the City is approximately 120 full and part-time employees. There are also several appointed committees and advisory bodies: the Planning and Zoning Commission, Library Board, Airport Commission, Belen Dr. Martin Luther King Multicultural Commission, Lodgers Tax Committee, Economic Development Committee, Parks and Recreation Committee, Library Board, and the RSVP Board.

Water Supply and Wastewater Disposal The City of Belen provides municipal water and wastewater treatment systems for its residents. The average water usage is approximately 900,000 gallons per day. The peak demand is 1,200,000 gallons per day, while the storage capacity is 5,500,000 gallons. The system currently has 2,736 connections. The City's water is tested regularly and treated with Chlorine. Water rates are $13.02 for the first 3,000 gallons, and $1.36 per 1,000 gallons over 3,000 gallons.

Belen has six wells, five of which are in operation (see Figure 9). All of the wells meet the current Environmental Protection Agency's arsenic regulations, and will also meet the new federal standards. The City of Belen also has a contract with the San Juan Chama Project for 500 acre-feet a year. An acre-foot contains about 326,000 gallons of water. The City operates an activated-sludge wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater disposal system feeds in to a local


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 9
City Public Wells, Storage Tanks, and Wastewater Treatment Plant
Sewage Treatment Plant
City Well and/or Storage Tank Location
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
Storage Tank
Well # 5 & Storage Tank
Well #7
Well #4 and Storage Tank
Well #2
Storage Tank for Well #7
Sewage Treatment Plan
City Well Located South of City Limits and Map Extent
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GABALDON
MAIN ST
ARAGON
ROSS
REINKEN
BERNARD
DELGADO
CAMINO DEL LLANO
MESA
10TH
Rio Grande
RIVER
Map Prepared by
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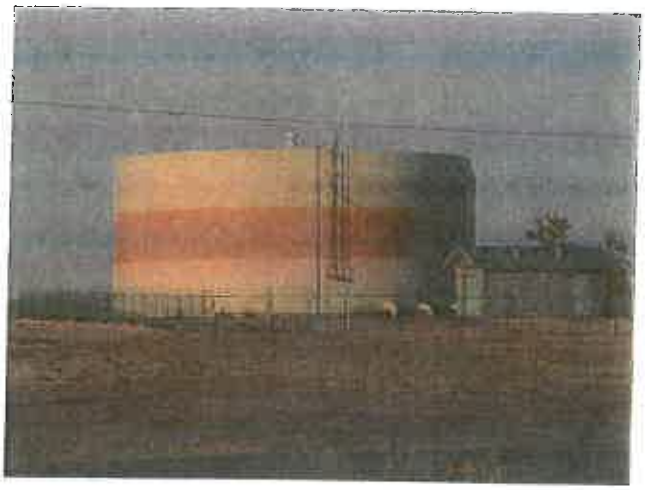
drainage ditch, which then feeds into the Rio Grande after treatment. The current system maintains 2,465 connections, which serves all of the City's residents. The average flow is 800,000 gallons per day, with a capacity of 1,200,000 per day. The wastewater system is 20 years old. The City believes the system will need minor renovations in the future. Sewer rates are $9.00 for the first 3,000 gallons, and $1.36 per 1,000 gallons over 3,000 gallons.

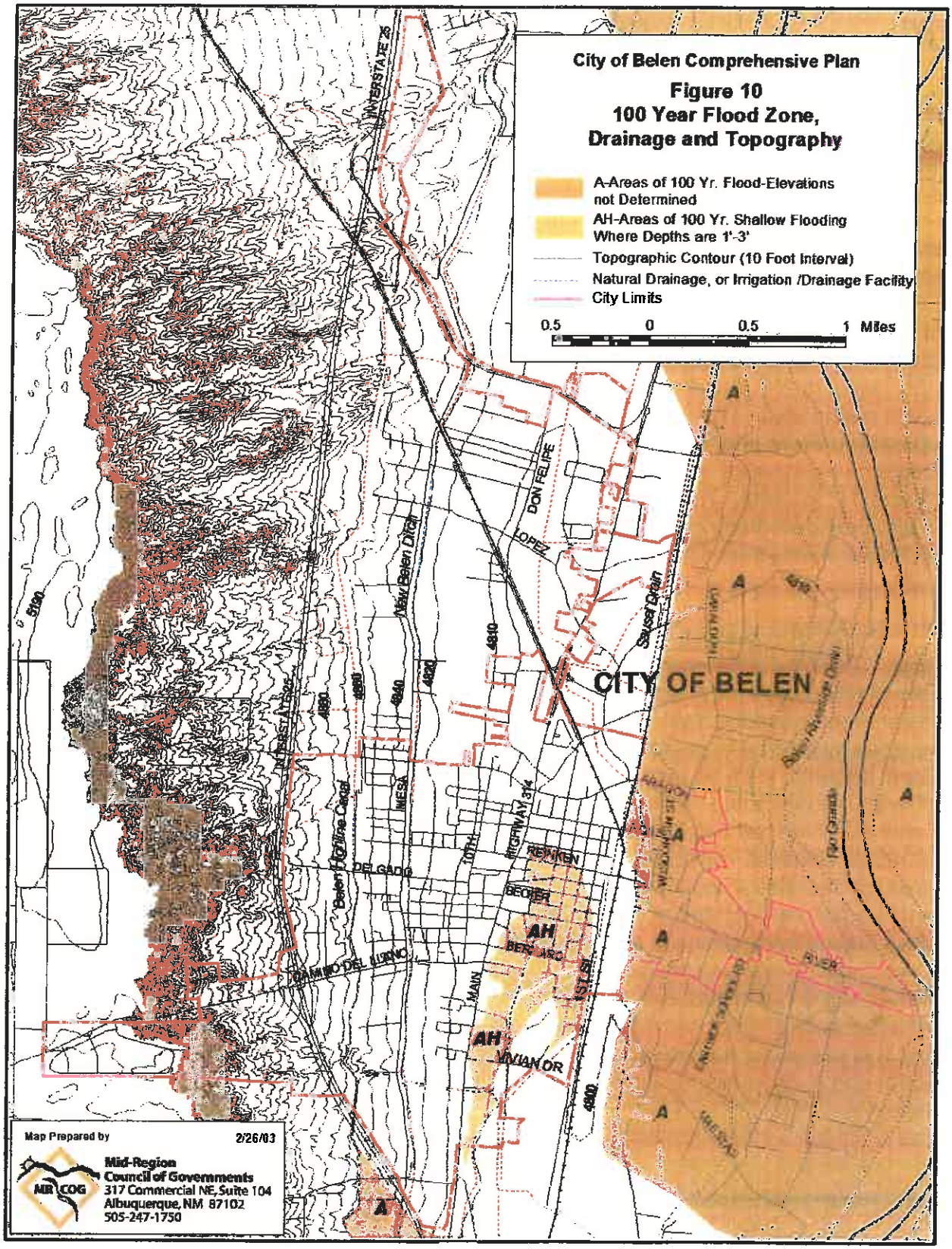


Water Storage Tank in Belen

Stormwater Management A significant portion of the City of Belen is located in the 100 year flood plain. The 100 year flood plain generally covers the area from Reinken to Vivian and from 1st Street to Main Street (see Figure 10). This area has received significant flooding in the past and is prone to future flooding. The 100 year flood zone also covers all of Belen between the rail yard and the Rio Grande on the far east side of the City. Other areas subject to flooding include those locations that are close to irrigation/drainage ditches and areas where natural drainage occurs (such as the arroyos west of I-25). The Belen Highline Canal and the New Belen Ditch on the west side are prone to flooding, as are the Sausal Drain and Lower Belen Riverside Drain on the east side of the City. The west mesa has several arroyos where natural drainage could cause flooding.

Rio Grande in Belen

The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) has played an important role in managing the Rio Grande and helping those communities (such as Belen) that border the river. The MRGCD was organized in 1927 to control devastating floods, drain waterlogged lands, and provide irrigation to croplands. The services provided by MRGCD have evolved and improved over the years. MRGCD is now involved in protecting wildlife


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 10
100 Year Flood Zone,
Drainage and Topography
A-Areas of 100 Yr. Flood-Elevations not Determined
AH-Areas of 100 Yr. Shallow Flooding Where Depths are 1'-3'
Topographic Contour (10 Foot Interval)
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
New Belen Ditch
Sausal Drain
Belen Highline Canal
IMESA
HIGHWAY 314
10TH
REINKEN
DELGADO
BECKER
CAMINO DEL LLANO
MAIN
1ST ST
VIVIAN DR
Rio Grande
A
AH
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habitat and vegetation, creating open space and recreation areas, improving groundwater recharge and water quality, and cleaning up and improving Bosque areas.

Arid conditions are normal in Belen. The average annual precipitation for Belen is only 9.9 inches. However, about half (4.67 inches) occurs during the summer monsoons, between July and September. These monsoon rains are often brief but intense storms, which can lead to flooding.

Belen has experienced significant floods throughout its history. There was a major flood in 1937, but the flood of 1969 was probably the worst flood of the century in Belen. On June 15, 1969, a thunderstorm poured three inches of rain on the City in less than an hour. The estimated flood damage to Belen and its citizens was $1.5 to 2 million, and the City was declared a disaster area on a state level. The flood damaged streets, sidewalks, curbs, the sewage treatment plant, sewer mains, the water system, at least 25 businesses and more than 200 private residences. The hardest hit businesses included the Feil and Ellermeyer Department Store and Tommy's Lounge at Main Street and Baca Road. The hardest hit residences were located on Gilbert, Didier, Dillon, Rosedale Circle, 10th and 11th Streets. The west side of the City was damaged by the runoff from the irrigation and drainage ditches, while the area east of Main Street and south of Reinken Avenue was hurt by standing water, as a result of poor drainage.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space The City of Belen has several parks that are used for a variety of different recreational activities. Parks and open spaces can provide many natural benefits, such as groundwater recharge, air cleansing, scenic beauty, as well as increased property values and health benefits. All public recreation facilities in Belen are identified and categorized in Table 19. Willie Chavez Park, which is located on the outlying east end of Belen (on River Road) is not included in the table below because it is not owned by the City. It is owned by the Belen School District and is not currently open to the public.

Anna Becker Park

Table 19
Parks and Recreation Resources in Belen

Name	Acres	Facilities/Equipment
Anna Becker Park	2.0	1 basketball court, 6 picnic tables, 4 benches, gazebo, water fountain, 1 playground, 1 set swings
Vivian Fields	9.97	3 little league baseball fields, 1 storage unit, bathroom facility, 8 sets bleachers
Rosedale Park	1.80	4 picnic tables, 4 benches, 1 playground set, 1 basketball court
Jose Gallegos Park	0.60	3 benches, 2 picnic tables, 1 basketball court, 1 pavilion, 2 barbecue pits, 1 set swings
Jardin De Belen Park	0.20	1 small playground, 1 picnic table, 1 bench
10th & Ross Mini Park	0.31	2 picnic tables, 1 basketball court
Multipurpose Park	47.35	6 sets bleachers, 4 softball fields, 2 playground sets, 4 tennis courts, 4 volleyball courts, 8 basketball courts, bathroom facility, 4 soccer fields, 1 skaters park, 6 picnic tables, 8 benches, walking trails
Coronado Mini Park	0.04	1 bench

Source: City of Belen

Police, Fire, and Ambulance The City's Police Department is located on Becker Avenue, just off of Main Street. The Department consists of one Police Chief, two lieutenants, three patrol sergeants, one detective sergeant, two detectives, and eleven patrolmen. The Police Department operates 23 patrol cars. The Department also employs 11 civilian personnel that provide help in maintaining records and dispatch. The Department has one holding cell, however all prisoners are transferred to the detention facility for Valencia County. The Police Department also employs two animal control officers that have two cars for animal control.

Fire protection in the City of Belen is provided by six full time firemen and 35 volunteers. The City presently owns two pumper trucks, one ladder truck, and

one quick attack truck. The Current Fire Protection rating is Class 6 as determined by ISO/CRS.

The City of Belen Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department provides ambulance service for those living with the Belen City limits. EMS has three EMT paramedics, four EMT IV techs, and thirteen EMT basics. The City owns two rescue vehicles that provide emergency services.

Solid Waste Disposal Waste Management of New Mexico provides weekly curbside pickup of residential solid waste in Belen. The current (2002) fee for residential services is $12.00 per month. The City of Belen performs the billing for all solid waste disposals. A receptacle is provided for each residence. The residential solid waste is transported to a sanitary landfill site in Rio Rancho, N.M. The collection of commercial solid waste is also provided by Waste Management of New Mexico. Commercial rates are based on the size of the container and the frequency of pickup. The current minimum commercial rate is $12.00.

Street Maintenance All of the public streets in Belen are paved. Interstate 25 and State Highways 314, 309, 548, 116, 385, and 109 are maintained by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). The City of Belen does basic maintenance on City roads, such as patching pot holes, grating, and overlaying. Maintenance vehicles owned by the City include two dump trucks, a grater, a roller, a water truck, a front-end loader, a backhoe, and a sweeper.

Health Care The City of Belen has a variety of different health care services. Presbyterian Health Care Services provides family practice to infants, the elderly, and everyone in between seven days a week. Presbyterian also provides x-rays, ultrasounds, and urgent care. Presbyterian has its own lab and also has an ob-gyn, podiatrist, and a pediatrician.

Belen Public Health provides the following services: immunizations, family planning, STD testing, Families First, Women's Infants and Children's Program (WIC), and TB testing. Belen Public Health has one nurse practitioner and several nurses to serve the public. Belen also has a First Choice Community Health Care Center, which provides family practice and dental services. Belen also has a physical therapy center, two pharmacies, and dental care available.

Finance, Communications, and Energy Financial services are provided to Belen by the following banks: Wells Fargo, Ranchers Banks, Bank of Belen, State National Bank, First Security Bank, First State Bank, and the Bank of Albuquerque.

The *Valencia County News-Bulletin* has served Belen and Valencia County since 1910 and is published twice weekly. The Belen area is also served by the *Albuquerque Journal* and the *Albuquerque Tribune*.

Telephone service is provided by Qwest; Comcast Cable is the local cable TV provider for the Belen area; while KARS Radio, 860 AM, is the local radio source. Public Service of New Mexico (PNM) supplies electric power to the Belen area by 115 kV and 46 kV transmission lines. The average cost per kilowatt hour is 0.09 cents. Socorro Rural Electric provides electricity to Belen as well. Natural gas service is also provided to Belen by PNM at an average cost of 0.34 cents per therm.

PART III

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Forecast of Population, Housing, and Employment for 2025:

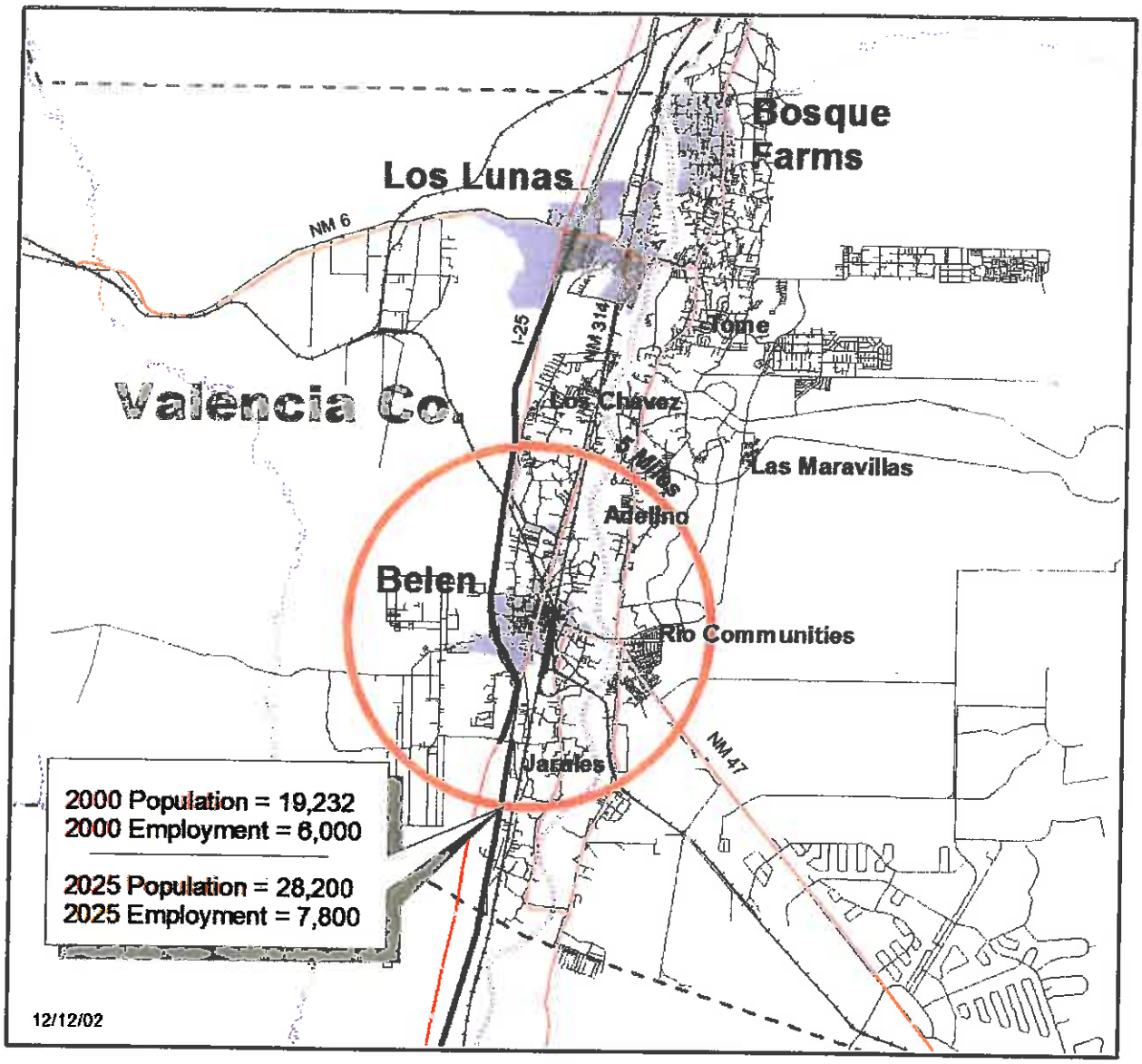
Population Between 1970 and 2000 Belen's population grew at a consistent, but moderate growth rate. In the 1970's and 1980's the City grew at a modest rate of 1.54 percent per year, while in the 1990's the growth rate slowed to 0.53 percent per year. Only the 1960's experienced a decrease in the growth rate, with an average annual growth rate of -0.42 percent (see Table 20).

Table 20
Belen Population History

Year	City of Belen Population	Average Annual Growth Rate
1960	5,031	
1970	4,823	-0.42
1980	5,617	1.54
1990	6,547	1.54
2000	6,901	0.53

Sources: U.S. Census and MRCOG

The Mid-Region Council of Governments has developed two projections for the City of Belen: a low and a high. The low projection is based on a calibration of the 1990 to 2000 growth rate for Belen. The migration factors, which were included in the low population projection, tended to constrain the projected population and predict an older population. The migration factors indicated an out-migration from Belen, especially among young persons. The high projection assumed no net migration and considered only births and deaths. The high projection results not only in a higher population projection, but also a younger population. This population projection was forecast for the current municipal limits of the City of Belen (see Table 21). An annexation that incorporated a populated area would be an addition to the projections in Table 21. A projection of population and employment within a 5-mile radius of the City of Belen to the year 2025 was also developed (see Figure 11).



City of Belen Comprehensive Plan

Figure 11
2000 and 2025 Population and Employment
Within a 5 Mile Radius of the City of Belen

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Source: 2000 US Census, MRCOG, and NM Dept. of Labor.

Table 21
Belen Population Projections

Year	Low Population Projection	Low Average Annual Growth Rate	High Population Projection	High Average Annual Growth Rate
2000	6,901	0.53	6,901	0.53
2005	7,061	0.44	7,098	0.54
2010	7,204	0.40	7,309	0.59
2015	7,333	0.36	7,522	0.58
2020	7,441	0.29	7,710	0.50
2025	7,516	0.20	7,838	0.33

Sources: U.S. Census and MRCOG

The historical and projected percentages of the Valencia County population residing in Belen are calculated in Table 22. The growth rate for Valencia County is also presented which can be compared to the growth rates for the low and high projections for Belen in Table 21.

Table 22
Percentage of Valencia County Residents Living in Belen in 2025

Year	Valencia County* Population	Valencia County Growth Rate	Percentage of Population in Belen-Low	Percentage of Population in Belen-High
1960	16,146		31.16	31.16
1970	20,451	2.39	23.58	23.58
1980	30,769	4.17	18.26	18.26
1990	45,235	3.93	14.47	14.47
2000	66,152	3.87	10.43	10.43
2005	76,152	2.81	9.23	9.28
2010	86,708	2.53	8.31	8.43
2015	97,330	2.34	7.53	7.73
2020	108,064	2.11	6.89	7.13
2025	118,593	1.88	6.34	6.61

* The Valencia County data for years prior to 1990 has been calculated for the current boundaries of the County. Sources: U.S. Census, University of New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), and MRCOG

In 1960, Belen accounted for 31 percent of the population within the current area of Valencia County. This percentage has dropped dramatically over the past 40 years. By 2000 Belen accounted for only about 10 percent of the County population. Most of the growth over the past four decades has been outside the boundary of Belen. According to the low and high projections for Belen, this trend will continue up to 2025, however, at a slower rate than over the last 40 years. The decline in the Belen percentage is largely due to a projected slower rate of growth for Valencia County.

There are a number of factors that affect residential location. These factors include: availability of housing, cost of housing, quality of schools, proximity to employment, shopping, services, and quality of life issues such as community appearance, traffic, parks and open space, pollution, safety, and other amenities.

The low and high forecasts are compared to median age, percent of population under age 20, and percent of population age 65 and over in Table 23. The table shows that the population of Belen was generally older than the current 2000 population. The low forecast is generally older than the high forecast due to the migration assumptions. There is little difference in the percentage of the population under age 20 (between 2025 low and high projections), however, there is considerable difference in the population age 65 and over (between 2025 low and high projections). Currently, many young adults leave Belen, the low forecast assumes that will continue. The high forecast assumes that there will be sufficient opportunities in Belen to keep the young adults in the area.

Table 23
Projections of Median Age, Population under Age 20, and Age 65 and Over in 2025

Year	Median Age	Percent of Population Under Age 20	Percentage of Population Age 65 and over
1990	31.1	34.2	14.9
2000	34.6	31.7	15.1
2025 Low	37.8	28.2	19.0
2025 High	35.9	28.5	16.6

Sources: U.S. Census and MRCOG

Housing Population residing in households was forecast from historical data. Prior to 1990, there does not appear to be any residents not residing in households. Since 1990, there have been persons not residing in households, and nearly all of these persons were residing in nursing homes. Future non-household population was projected to be nursing home residents. The population for nursing homes was projected as a factor of the population age 75 and over. This factor was calculated from 2000 Census data. Population in households was calculated as projected population minus non-household population. The low and high projections for population in households are found in Table 24.

Table 24
1960–2025 Population in Households, Number of Households, and Household Size

Year	Population in Households-Low	Number of Households-Low	Population in Households-High	Number of Households-High	Average Household Size
1960	5,031	1,354	5,031	1,354	3.72
1970	4,823	1,477	4,823	1,477	3.27
1980	5,617	1,963	5,617	1,963	2.86
1990	6,435	2,310	6,435	2,310	2.79
2000	6,766	2,596	6,766	2,596	2.61
2005	6,919	2,676	6,957	2,690	2.59
2010	7,061	2,774	7,167	2,816	2.55
2015	7,189	2,847	7,379	2,922	2.53
2020	7,287	2,922	7,564	3,033	2.49
2025	7,339	2,966	7,681	3,105	2.47

Sources: U.S. Census and MRCOG

Households were calculated from household population by dividing the population residing in households by the projected average household size. The average household size was calculated by applying projected trends from the Census Bureau to the current average household size for Belen. In 2000, the average household size for Belen was almost identical to that of the United States (2.61 in Belen and 2.59 for the nation). It is reasonable to project the future Belen average household size to be similar to the national average.

Housing units were forecast as a function of households. Occupied housing units are equivalent to households. The 1990 Census reported that 88.1 percent of the housing units were occupied, while the 2000 Census reported that 87.9 percent of the housing units were occupied. Since the occupancy rates were nearly the same for both Census reports, MRCOG forecast that 88 percent of housing units in Belen would be occupied.

A high and a low forecast for both single family and multiple family housing units can be found in Table 25. These housing units were based on a previous forecast by MRCOG for housing by type for Valencia County. The increase in multifamily units in Belen was projected to be at the same rate as the increase in multifamily units for Valencia County. The housing in Belen is projected to be predominantly single family, however, there is a gradual increase projected in the percentage of multifamily housing. The percentage of multifamily housing units increased from 14.4 percent in 1990 to 15.1 percent in 2000. MRCOG forecasts that multifamily units will account for 17.6 percent of Belen's housing by 2025.

Table 25
1990–2025 Single and Multifamily Family Housing Units in Belen

Year	Single Family Units-Low	Multifamily Units-Low	Total Housing Units-Low	Single Family Units-High	Multifamily Units-High	Total Housing Units-High
1990	2,244	378	2,622	2,244	378	2,622
2000	2,505	447	2,952	2,505	447	2,952
2005	2,593	447	3,040	2,609	447	3,056
2010	2,641	511	3,152	2,681	518	3,199
2015	2,703	531	3,234	2,775	545	3,320
2020	2,760	560	3,320	2,865	581	3,446
2025	2,777	593	3,370	2,907	621	3,528

Sources: U.S. Census and MRCOG

Employment MRCOG collected employment data for the Data Analysis Subzones (DASZs) in the Belen area for the first time in 1988; however this data did not include self-employment and agricultural employment. An estimate of employment which included self-employment and agricultural, as well as unpaid family workers was first completed in March 1995. Another estimate was made for March 2000. MRCOG used the available Belen data plus the more extensive Valencia County data to develop two forecast scenarios; a high and a low. These forecasts are for the current boundaries of the City of Belen.

The low forecast was based on the relationship between Belen employment and Valencia County employment. Between 1995 and 2000, employment growth was very similar for Belen and Valencia County. The ratio for this five-year period between the Belen rate of employment growth and Valencia County employment growth was 0.94. The ratio of the Belen rate to the Valencia County rate applied to the forecast rates for Valencia County to generate average annual employment growth rates for Belen.

The high forecast was based on the proportion of Valencia county employment located within the City of Belen. In 1990, between 26 and 27 percent of Valencia County employment was located inside Belen. By 1995, it was estimated by MRCOG that Belen's share of the Valencia County employment was 28.27 percent, and by 2000 this share was 28.0 percent. Since the Belen share of Valencia County employment has been very consistent for the past 10 years, MRCOG forecasts that Belen will maintain 28.0 percent of Valencia County employment through 2025. The low and high forecasts are presented in Table 26.

Table 26
2000–2025 Employment and Average Annual Growth Rate Forecasts

Year	Low Employment Forecast	Average Annual Growth Rate-Low	High Employment Forecast	Average Annual Growth Rate-High
2000	4,152		4,152	
2005	4,550	1.85	4,575	196
2010	5,031	2.03	5,088	2.15
2015	5,444	1.59	5,532	1.69
2020	5,852	1.46	5,971	1.54
2025	6,258	1.35	6,410	1.43

Source: MRCOG

Historically, Belen has been a commercial and industrial center in Valencia County. It is projected that Belen will maintain its historic roles and continue to attract its share of employment that is locating in Valencia County.

Employment growth is projected to be more rapid than population growth. This is consistent with the history of Belen over the past several decades. It is also consistent with the growth patterns in Valencia County where much of the new residential development is occurring outside the boundaries of the municipalities.

In 2000, MRCOG estimated that the 4,152 jobs in Belen were divided into categories as follows: 853 (20.5 percent) basic sector jobs, which included construction, manufacturing, transportation (railroad), and wholesaling; 1,457 (35.1 percent) retail jobs, which included eating and drinking establishments; and 1,842 (44.4 percent) service jobs, which included finance, insurance, real estate, public schools, medical, legal, repair services, business services, personal services, lodging, and government. MRCOG expects the future distribution of jobs to be similar.

Employed persons (or workers) are a variable that is sometimes referred to as employment; it is a count of the number of persons who are employed. It is noted that one worker can work more than one job. A worker may also commute out of the area for work. In 2000, MRCOG estimated that there were 4,152 jobs within the City of Belen. The 2000 Census counted 2,608 persons residing in Belen that were employed. Clearly, Belen is a commercial center that attracts workers from outside its boundaries. This is a situation that should continue.

The 2000 Census also reported commuting patterns. In 2000, the Census found that 44.6 percent of the employed persons residing in Belen also worked in Belen. Among the 55.4 percent of the Belen workers who worked outside Belen, half of these worked outside Valencia County. The Census Bureau has not yet

released the data on the commute destination for workers; however, it is probably reasonable to suggest that most of the Belen residents that worked outside of Valencia County (28.3 percent of the workers) were working in Bernalillo County.

Typically, between five and ten percent of the workers will be multiple jobholders. If we assume that 7.5 percent of the Belen workers hold multiple jobs, it can be estimated that Belen residents account for about 1,250 of the estimated 4,152 jobs located in Belen. Therefore, approximately 2,900 people commute into Belen for work each day. About 70 percent of the persons working in Belen live outside the municipal limits.

Land Use

The reputation and character of a community is often influenced by the arrangement of land uses. The manner by which the City of Belen manages land use activities will affect the location, intensity, and utilization of future land. A current Belen land use map is included in this report (Figure 12). The current Belen land use map was prepared based on a detailed and comprehensive inventory and classification of each parcel of land in the City as of 2003.

The current (2003) land use map is intended to provide information that would be useful in conjunction with zoning and subdivision administration, and to provide development policy direction in the location and placement of various types of land uses. The current land use distribution in Belen is divided into six major categories: residential, commercial, industrial, open space/recreation, agriculture, and vacant (see Table 27). The total acreage calculated from the 2003 Land Use Map does not include streets, public rights-of-way, waterways, or drainage easements. The percentages indicate the proportional extent of these land uses. Vacant land (30%) is the predominant land use throughout Belen. The high percentage of vacant land indicates that Belen will easily be able to absorb future new housing and jobs within the present boundaries of the City. It also suggests that Belen should promote and pursue infill development before annexing new land currently outside of the City boundaries.

The residential land use category is broken down into subcategories, which include residential single unit, residential mobile home, residential manufactured, and residential multiple units (see Table 28). Subcategories such as institutional, schools/universities, other non-residential, and not classified, are not included in the Belen land use categories. They are separate and distinct from the residential, commercial, industrial, agriculture, open space/recreation or vacant land use categories, and make up the remainder of the percentages in the total area.

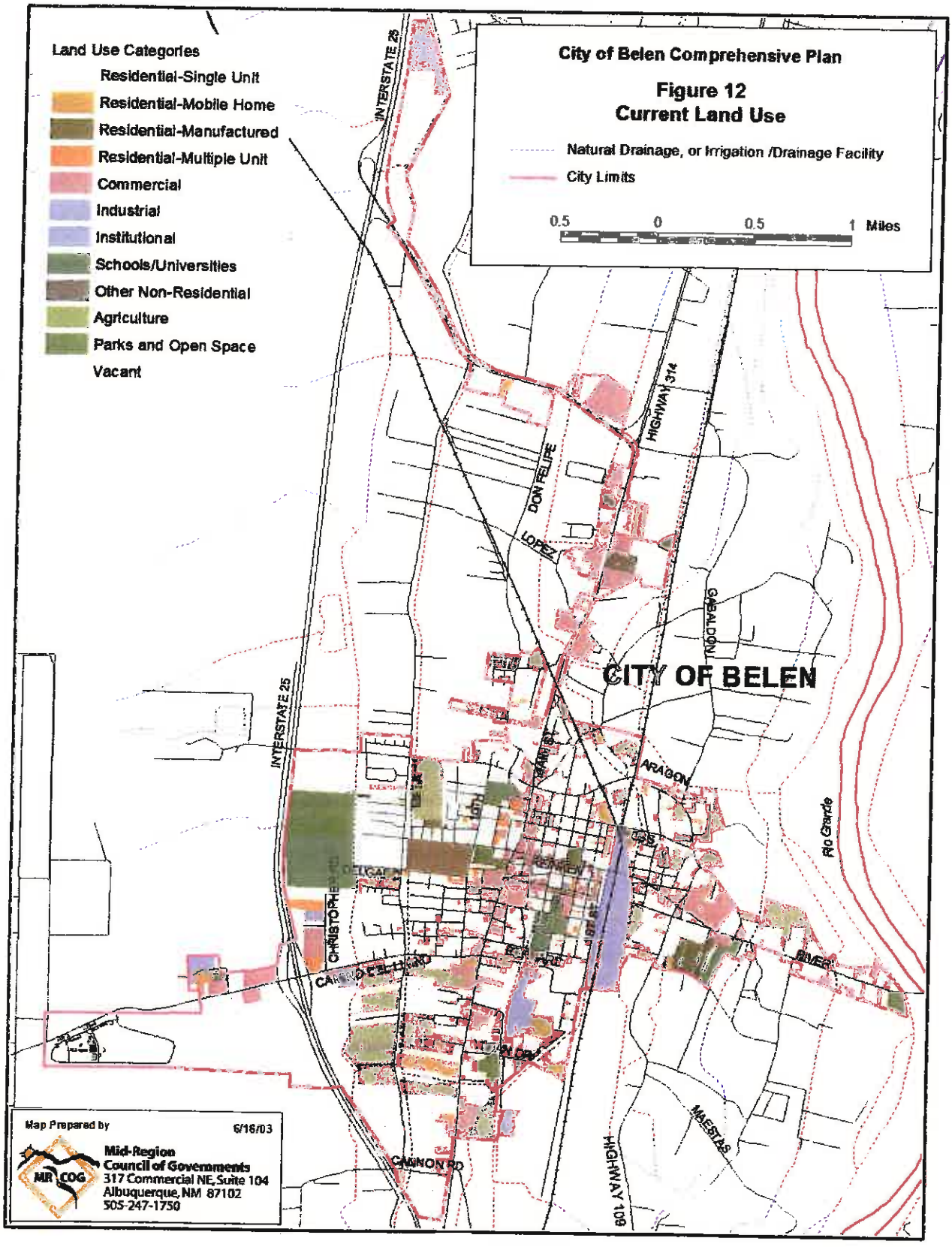
City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 12
Current Land Use
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
Land Use Categories
Residential-Single Unit
Residential-Mobile Home
Residential-Manufactured
Residential-Multiple Unit
Commercial
Industrial
Institutional
Schools/Universities
Other Non-Residential
Agriculture
Parks and Open Space
Vacant
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GABALDON
ARAGON
Rio Grande
CHRISTOPHER
CANNON RD
HIGHWAY 109
MAESTAS
RIVER
Map Prepared by
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Table 27
Major Land Uses in Belen

Land Use Category	Percentage
Residential Lands	27.33
Commercial Lands	8.64
Industrial Lands	4.35
Agricultural Lands	7.05
Vacant Lands	30.03
Open Space/Recreation Lands	2.55

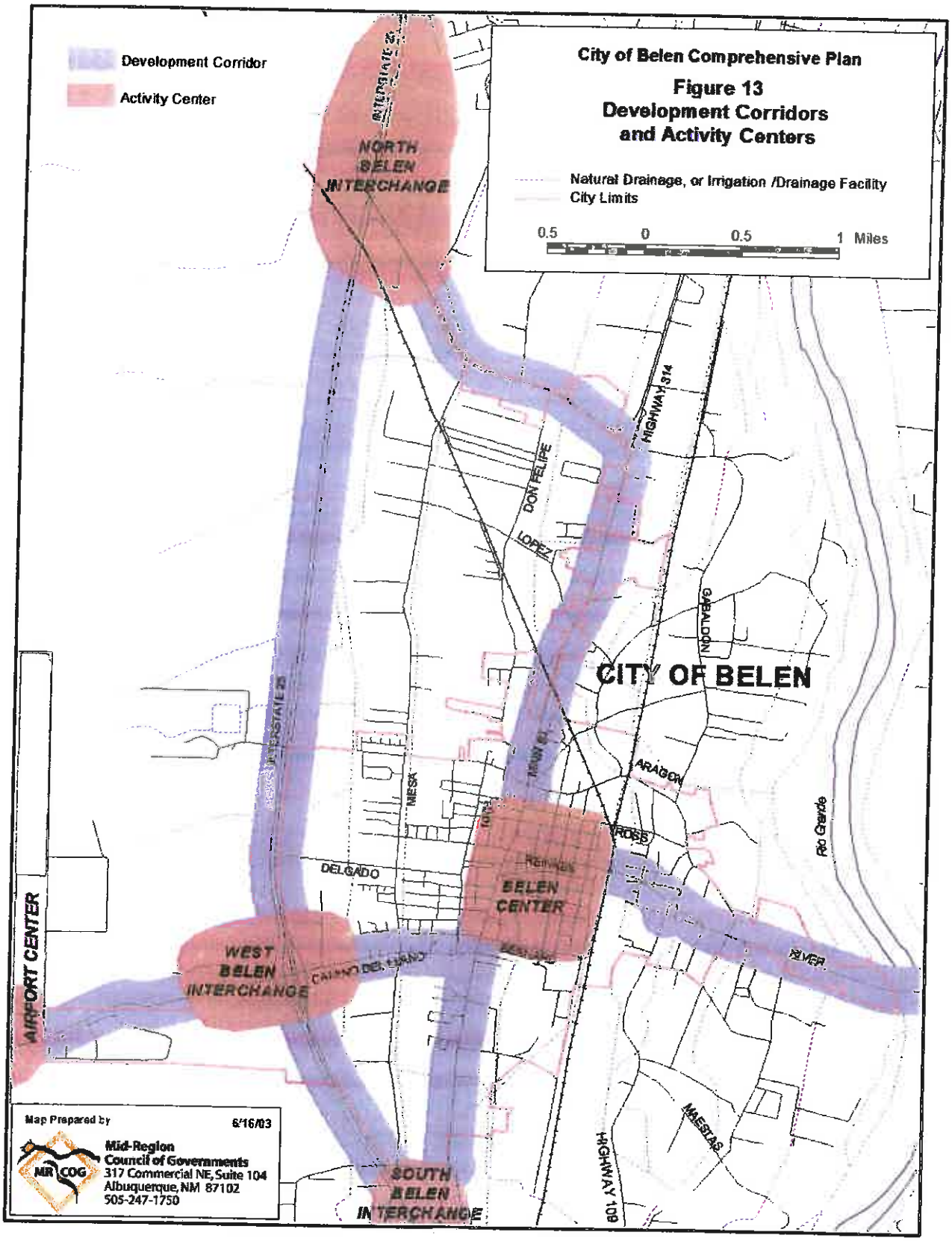
Source: City of Belen and MRCOG

Table 28
Land Use Subcategories in Belen

Land Use Subcategory	Total Acres	Percentage
Residential Single Unit	685.85	21.44
Residential Mobile Home	89.93	2.81
Residential Manufactured	51.34	1.61
Residential Multiple Units	46.95	1.47
Commercial	276.23	8.64
Industrial	139.17	4.35
Institutional	11.91	0.37
Schools/Universities	96.16	3.01
Other Non-Residential	50.72	1.59
Agriculture	225.43	7.05
Parks and Open Space	81.64	2.55
Vacant	960.55	30.03
Not Classified	30.76	0.96
Total	**2746.6**	**85.88**

Source: City of Belen and MRCOG

In addition to the Current Land Use map, a City Development Corridors and Activity Centers map is also included in this report (see Figure 13). This map designates proposed future corridors and activity centers throughout Belen. This form of development distribution is largely an extension of the current and historical trends in the development of Belen. By attracting the most intensive development to the principal commercial corridors and to special activity nodes, the residential areas of the community can be somewhat protected from large-scale or incompatible land activities. Nevertheless, there should be allowances for mixed use and non-residential activities within the residential areas of the community. The objective of this form of development is also to accommodate higher capacity infrastructure, facilities, and public services to key areas throughout Belen. For comparison to actual land use, the Belen Zoning Categories are shown in Table 29.


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 13
Development Corridors
and Activity Centers
Development Corridor
Activity Center
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
NORTH BELEN INTERCHANGE
CITY OF BELEN
BELEN CENTER
WEST BELEN INTERCHANGE
SOUTH BELEN INTERCHANGE
AIRPORT CENTER
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GABALDON
MESA
MAIN ST.
ARAGON
CROSS
DELGADO
CAMINO DEL LLANO
RIVER
Rio Grande
MAESTAS
HIGHWAY 109
Map Prepared by
6/16/03
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MR COG

Table 29
Zoning Categories in Belen

Zoning Category	Total Acres	Percentage
A-R Agricultural Residential	539.56	17.88
C-1 Commercial	623.59	20.66
C-R Commercial Residential	79.11	2.62
M-C Manufacturing/Commercial	88.22	2.92
R-1 Single Family Residential	1358.63	45.02
R-1A Single Family Mixed	218.21	7.23
R-2 Multi-Family Residential	81	2.68
SU-1 Special Use	7.73	0.26
Total	**2996.05**	**100**

Source: City of Belen and MRCOG

Residential Land Use Currently residential land uses occupy 27.3 percent of the land in Belen. Residential Single Unit is the predominant land use among residential subcategories (21.4%), and is scattered all throughout Belen. Residential Mobile Home (2.8%) is also spread throughout Belen; however the majority of mobile homes are located in the south central part of the City. Residential Manufactured (1.6%) is found in various locations, with large lots on the east side of Belen. Residential Multiple Unit (1.5%) land uses are scattered throughout the downtown area, while some large multiple unit lots are found just east of I-25 on Camino del Llano and Christopher Road.

Belen has abundant room for new growth in the current City limits (30% of the land is vacant). Much of the growth can be absorbed on the west side of Belen (west of Mesa Rd and on both sides of I-25), where large tracts of land remain vacant. There is also ample vacant land between Main Street and 1st Street that can be used for infill development. Infill development of existing vacant areas should be examined because the City can make use of the existing infrastructure and community services. The cost of extending new infrastructure can be very costly to the City and to the taxpayers.

Development on Belen's west Mesa

Belen will likely be affected by residential and commercial development taking place outside of the City limits and in the neighboring communities of Los Lunas, Rio Communities, Tomé, Los Chavez, Las Maravillas, Adelino, and Jarales. In fact, most new growth is forecast to take place in these outlying communities. The population within a five-mile radius surrounding Belen is forecast to increase from 19,232 to 28,000 people; while employment is forecast to grow from 6,000 to 8,000 jobs (see Figure 11).

Commercial Land Use

Commercial land uses occupy only 8.6 percent of the land in Belen, the majority of which is made up of small offices and retail stores along the major streets of the City. The most significant area of commercial land is located along NM 314 (Main St). Commercial development is found to a lesser degree along other corridors such as NM 309 (River Rd.), Becker Ave., Reinken Ave., and I-25.

Main Street, Belen

It is anticipated that commercial land use will increase significantly over the next 20 years. The forecast areas where development will take place in the next two decades have been identified as development corridors and activity centers. The following areas have been defined as the future activity centers in Belen: Belen Center, North Belen Interchange, West Belen Interchange, South Belen Interchange, and the Airport Center (see Figure 13).

The Belen Center includes the original downtown Belen where much of the commercial land use is clustered in a multi-block area emanating from the railroad depot. Even though this area already has significant commercial and mixed-use activities, there is sufficient vacant land in this downtown area which can be developed in the future. There are also many older structures (some historic) that are suitable for redevelopment. The Belen Center has the greatest potential for development in terms of its rich historical character and unique qualities as the heart of Belen.

A more-recently developing corridor extends to the east from the Belen Center along Reinken and River Road to the Rio Grande river-crossing bridge. Substantial commercial development already exists along this corridor and there is capacity for continued growth. Additional development corridors spread out from the Belen Center north and south on Main Street, connecting to the North Belen Interchange and South Belen Interchange. The corridor connecting to the North Belen Interchange has a growing attraction for commercial development

with the recent extension of utilities. This corridor includes a Super Wal-Mart and has the greatest potential for both commercial and industrial growth. The development corridor on Main Street connecting Belen Center and South Belen Interchange also has quite a bit of commercial development and has experienced an upsurge in redevelopment since the improvement of N.M. 314 and Camino del Llano with its connection to I-25.

The lands around the North Belen Interchange are currently devoid of almost any development. Presently, this area consists of mostly vacant land, although there is an industrial site nearby (the Cavco building). However, this interchange provides access only to the east and, if improved, it would need to be reconstructed to become fully directional (i.e., add access to the west). There is also consideration of a proposed intermodal center (a regional transportation center that would process both rail and road freight) on land west of the freeway along the railroad that could induce further development in this area.

A development corridor is also proposed to connect the North Belen Interchange and the West Belen Interchange. This corridor along I-25 is mostly outside the City limits and has virtually no development today. At the moment, the West Belen Interchange has attracted the most development of the three Belen interchanges. Hotels, restaurants, and various businesses have recently located in this area, and with the close proximity of Belen's downtown and the large amount of vacant land, this area could develop rapidly.

Holiday Inn at West Belen Interchange

Additional development corridors extend out of the West Belen Interchange: one connecting to Belen's downtown via Camino del Llano, another connecting to the airport center, and the other connecting to the South Belen Interchange along I-25. The development corridor along Camino del Llano currently consists of mostly residential development with some vacant land. Development along this corridor could intensify if development from the Belen Center and West Belen Interchange spreads out. Increased housing development and subsequent traffic pressures will also play a significant role in this corridor.

The development corridor that connects the West Belen Interchange and the South Belen Interchange also has virtually no development. The east side of this corridor along I-25 is mostly vacant land, and the west side is outside of the

City boundaries. This area could develop commercially or industrially as a result of expansion of the two connected activity centers: the West Belen Interchange and the South Belen Interchange.

The South Belen Interchange has the potential for new development. A small commercial land use is found just north of Cannon Road, while the rest of the land is classified as either residential or vacant. This interchange is not fully directional and does not have direct access to the west side of the interstate highway. A fully directional interchange at this location would greatly improve development possibilities at this activity center.

The final activity center to be defined is the Airport Center, which is also connected to the West Belen Interchange by a development corridor. As the Alexander Municipal Airport in Belen expands in its operations and receives more capital improvements (such as constructing additional runways, acquiring land, and installing buildings and equipment) this activity center will continue to grow and develop. There are also proposals for privately-financed industrial development around the airport itself.

A recent community survey indicates that Belen citizens are supportive of concentrating commercial development along Belen's Main Street (NM 314) and around the freeway interchanges. Over 63 percent agreed that commercial development should be concentrated along Main Street, and over 72 percent agreed that intensive development around freeway interchanges should be encouraged.

Industrial Land Use Industrial land uses make up 4.35 percent of land within Belen. Belen has several areas classified as industrial land use throughout the City. The largest industrial land use area is the Belen Rail Yard. Unless the City annexes more land immediately south of the Belen Rail Yard, this area should not expand and will be confined to the actual Rail Yard. Another large industrial area is located at the former Cavco manufactured housing production building, which is located at the far north end of the Belen City limits, just east of I-25. Industrial activities in this area could expand slightly to the south where there is ample vacant land, but this area will most likely become highway-related commercial land with direct access to I-25. Another fairly large industrial area is located immediately east of Melanie Drive between Vivian Drive and Bernard Avenue. A construction company that services water and sewer lines is located in this industrial area. An additional industrial area located at the south end of Conservancy Road contains the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Another small industrial area is located just west of I-25 on Roldan Drive, north of Camino del Llano. This area contains a sheet metal business and some warehouses. The City of Belen Industrial Park is located outside the City limits approximately two miles south of the South Belen Interchange. This Industrial Park contains about 200 acres but has poor access and limited utilities at the present time.

Open Space/Recreational Land Use Lands classified as Open Space/Recreational land uses occupy 2.55 percent of land in Belen. These land uses are found in eight parks in Belen. They include the following: Anna Becker Park, Vivian Fields, Rosedale Park, Jose Gallegos Park, Jardin de Belen Park, 10th & Ross Mini Park, Multipurpose Park, and Coronado Mini Park.

Multipurpose Park

A recent community survey indicates that the majority (nearly 65 percent) agreed that more parks, recreation sites and open space areas are needed. The City could develop an open space planning policy that requires new subdivisions to include a minimum amount (5-10%) of dedicated open space for park and recreation purposes. The City could also consider purchasing some of the abundant vacant land in Belen, and convert this into open space/recreational areas. The land used for a pedestrian/bicycle trail could also be incorporated into open space/recreational land.

Belen should encourage coordination and joint use between municipal recreation and local schools facilities. The community could share the use of school open spaces to serve as neighborhood parks. This would increase the amount of open space/recreational land use without having to spend money for new acquisitions.

Agriculture Land Use Agriculture land uses currently occupy 7.05 percent of the land. Land that is being actively irrigated for crop production is classified as agriculture, and is found in various areas throughout Belen. The vast majority of agricultural land is used to grow alfalfa. Livestock containment is not calculated as part of this acreage. Large tracks of agricultural land are found mostly along Mesa Road, and south of Camino del Llano. There is also a considerable amount of land classified as agriculture between Aragon Road and West Chavez Avenue, just east of Mesa Road. There are many parcels of land throughout Belen (mostly vacant land) that would appear to be agricultural, but because they are not actively farmed (at the time of the land use inventory in 2003), they are classified as vacant or as some other land use.

Land that is classified as agriculture land use will be subject to intense demand for conversion to residential or commercial uses within the next two decades. Belen should preserve and support local small-scale agricultural

activities where possible. However, because agricultural land requires significant amounts of water, Belen should encourage farmers to utilize the most efficient watering techniques possible. A recent community survey revealed that protecting Belen's future water supply was a very high priority. Over 92 percent of those interviewed agreed that Belen should take stronger steps to protect its future water supply.

Future Transportation Network

Long Range Street System The major roads that intersect Belen are I-25, NM 314 (Main Street), NM 309 (River Road), and NM 109 (Jarales Road). Two other major roads in Valencia County, NM 47 and NM 304, are located just outside of the Belen City boundaries, on the eastern side of the Rio Grande. The amount of traffic on these roads is expected to increase as population and employment intensifies in Belen and in neighboring communities over the next 20 years. The City should plan for the improvement and increased capacity of the local street network, and a more efficient transportation system in general.

A long range transportation plan for Belen should have a regional perspective, and should be based on future forecasts which reflect the anticipated development in the region. The trend for future growth and development in the Belen area implies more traffic generated for travel in and out of the City, with increasing congestion on the road network. Of particular concern is the growth on the east side of the river which generates traffic seeking to access I-25 by traveling through the center of Belen. Alternative routes may need to be considered as a relief to congested areas, such as the I-25/NM 314 interchange, I-25/Camino del Llano intersection, and the NM 47/NM 309 intersection. An area-wide street network should function to provide effective relief to congested through-routes and major intersections, more balanced distribution of traffic, and greater access to developed areas.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities The City of Belen is using Transportation Program Enhancement (TPE) funds to construct a bicycle/pedestrian trail. Phase I of the Delgado Street Trail in Belen will run parallel to the Belen Highline Canal from the Belen Multipurpose Recreational Park to the Belen High School entrance; and will connect to the one-mile jogging/walking trail already in the Park. The trail will then continue east along Delgado Street to Mesa Road. Phase II will continue east along Delgado Street, beginning at Mesa Road and ending at Tenth Street. The first two phases of the Delgado Street Trail should be completed by 2004.

Other phases of the bicycle/pedestrian trail system in Belen may eventually connect to Main Street, the west side, and other parts of the City. If the Delgado Street Trail were to cross the river to Rio Communities it could connect with the proposed Rio Communities Core Links, Rio del Oro Pathways, and Greenways bicycle/pedestrian trails, which would give Belen residents trail

access to parts of Rio Communities, Adelino, Tomé, Valencia, Las Maravillas, and El Cerro-Monterey Park (see Figure 14).

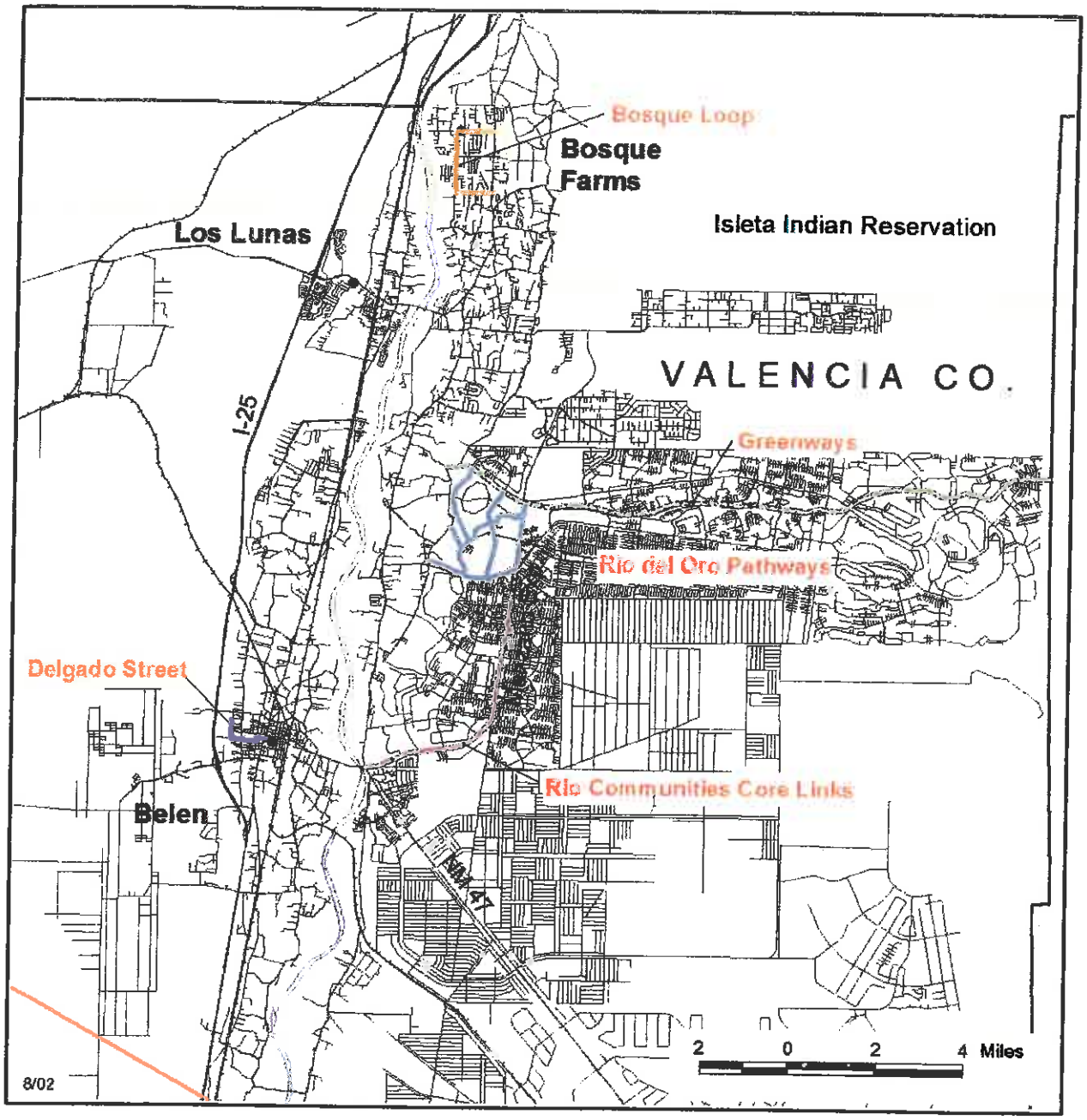
Transit Facilities and Services The City of Belen does not have a public transit system of its own; however, there are several transportation options for those that qualify (generally elderly or disabled residents). The City of Belen receives Section 5311 (program provides funding for public transportation in rural areas) funding for the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) to operate a nine-passenger lift-equipped van. RSVP provides demand response service to the general public in Belen and Rio Communities. Although service is usually limited to Belen and Rio Communities, passengers can also be transported to Albuquerque for special events.

Other transportation options are available for Valencia County residents that qualify through Valencia Counseling Services, Adelante, and the Village of Los Lunas. Valencia Counseling Services receives funding for a 16-passenger handicapped accessible van for the mentally ill in Valencia County. There is no cost charged to those that qualify for this demand response system that travels between Los Lunas and Belen. Adelante is a non-profit corporation providing non-medical transportation services to people with severe disabilities attending programs for vocational, community living, training, and support in Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia Counties.

The Village of Los Lunas receives funding from the Section 5311 program to operate three 15-passenger vans, which provide a demand response service throughout Valencia County. Los Lunas also receives Section 3037 funding (Job Access and Reverse Commute), a program that operates four vans countywide for employment, counseling, medical, and daycare services. This service also transports Valencia County residents to Bernalillo County.

Good quality accessibility and mobility options should be available to all people, including minority, low-income, and transit dependent populations. The transit dependent includes the following groups: the elderly (age 65 and over), age groups under age 15, and low-income groups (which usually include a disproportionate number of minority groups).

Federal regulations require that Environmental Justice (EJ) be included in the transportation planning decision making process. EJ is based upon three fundamental justice principles: 1) to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations; 2) to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process; and 3) to prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations.



City of Belen Comprehensive Plan

Figure 14
Proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Paths in Valencia County

Mid-Region Council of Governments
317 Commercial NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-247-1750

Belen has a high minority population (72.2%), a high proportion of elderly people (15.1%), a high proportion of the population under 15 (24.1%), a low per capita income ($12,999) and low median household income (26,754), and a high percentage of people living below the poverty level (24.8%). As a result of Belen's high proportion of minority groups, high percentages of people under age 15, age 65 and over, low income levels, and high poverty rates (see Tables 30 and 31), the City could potentially be affected by EJ.

Table 30
Comparison of Population Under 15, 65 and Over, and Minority Population for Belen, Valencia County, New Mexico, and U.S.

Category	Belen	Valencia County	State of New Mexico	United States
Under 15 %	24.1%	25.1%	23.0%	21.4%
65 and over %	15.1%	10.2%	11.7%	12.4%
Minority Population %	72.2%	60.6%	55.3%	30.5%

Source: 2000 Census

Table 31
Comparison of Per Capita Income, Median Household Income, and Percentage Living Below Poverty Level for Belen, Valencia County, New Mexico, and U.S.

Category	Belen	Valencia County	State of New Mexico	United States
Per Capita Income	$12,999	$14,747	$17,261	$21,587
Median Household Income	$26,754	$34,099	$34,133	$41,994
% Living Below Poverty Level	24.8%	16.8%	18.4%	12.4%

Source: 2000 Census

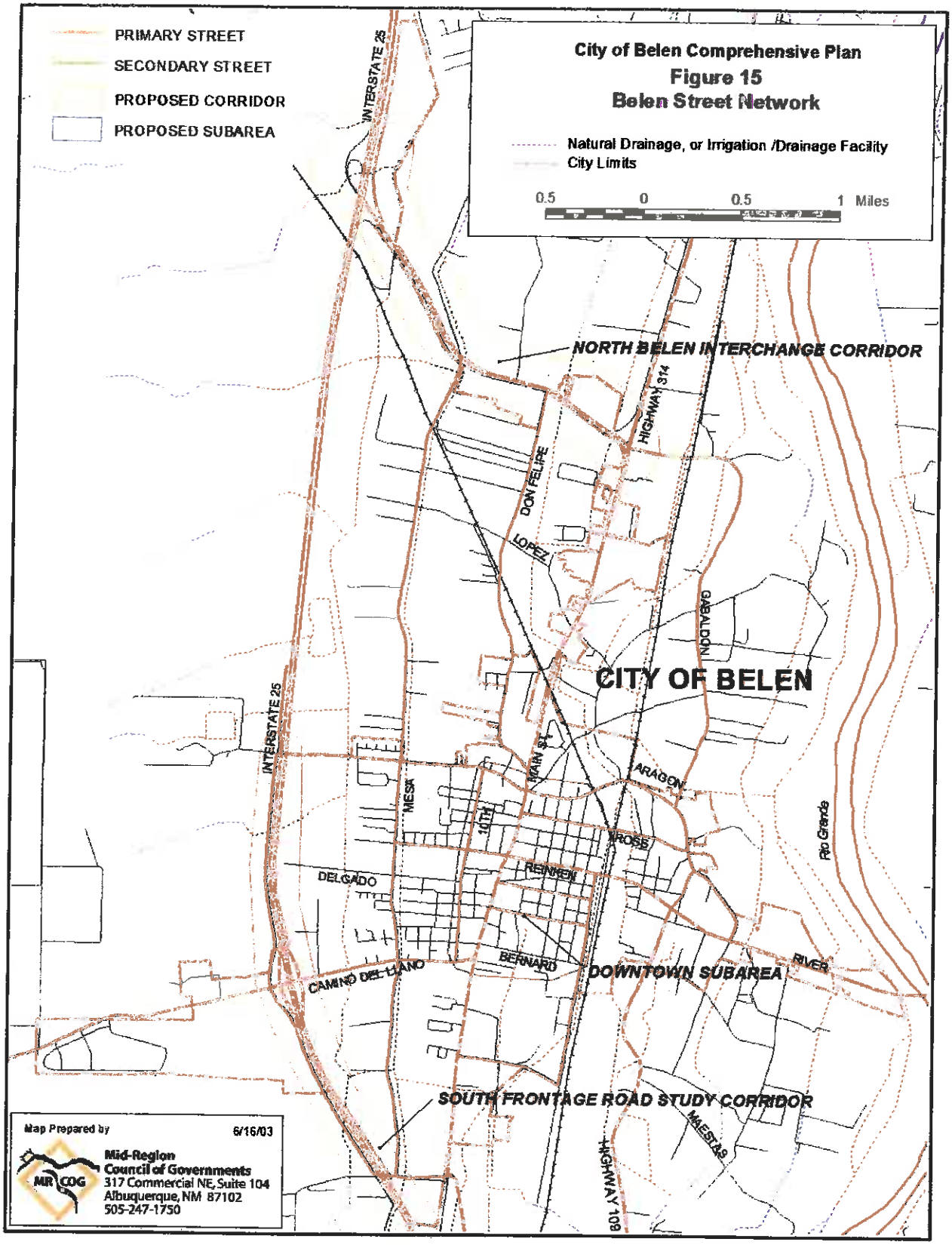
Scheduled intercity bus service in Belen is provided by TNM&O. TNM&O travels throughout the U.S. southwest, serving many cities in New Mexico (including Belen, Albuquerque, Cuba, Encino, Estancia, and Moriarty), Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Kansas, providing connections to Greyhound and many other nation-wide carriers.

Transportation Improvements Transportation improvements are needed in Belen, Valencia County, and regionally throughout the Albuquerque metropolitan commuter shed (the commuter shed includes Belen, Albuquerque, Los Lunas, Bosque Farms, Moriarty, Edgewood, Rio Rancho, Corrales, and Bernalillo). Significant development in the commuter shed area over the next 20 years will have a tremendous impact on the regional transportation system.

Major roadways, transit, and aviation will need to be improved and upgraded over the next 20 years.

Belen can contribute to the enhancement of the regional transportation system by improving its own transportation network. A recent community survey asked if the City's roads are adequate to handle growth. Over 52 percent of the respondents disagreed, indicating that Belen residents are not satisfied with the current road system's ability to handle growth in the future. It is not known exactly which streets Belen residents are concerned about; however, proposed study corridors and sub-areas along with an identification of primary and secondary streets have been identified in Figure 15 (Belen Street Network). This classification of streets is based on an analysis of current and historic traffic flow, previous plan recommendations on streets and highways in Valencia County, and designated functional classification of highways. These proposed study corridors and sub-areas include the following: North Belen Interchange Corridor, South Frontage Road Study Corridor, and the Downtown Transportation Sub-area. Although expensive to build, improvements in these areas would greatly improve transportation and circulation in Belen, as well as enhance the opportunities for commercial development (especially if a frontage road system was constructed).

The primary and secondary streets indicated in Figure 15 are not classified by a functional classification in accordance with the criteria established by the Federal Highway Administration; but were identified by the Belen Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to highlight a basic network of major streets for the City of Belen. Functional classification of streets as identified by the state highway department is based on different criteria and can be found in Figure 7.


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 15
Belen Street Network
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
PRIMARY STREET
SECONDARY STREET
PROPOSED CORRIDOR
PROPOSED SUBAREA
NORTH BELEN INTERCHANGE CORRIDOR
CITY OF BELEN
DOWNTOWN SUBAREA
SOUTH FRONTAGE ROAD STUDY CORRIDOR
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
GAVALDON
MESA
10TH
MAIN ST
ARAGON
ROSE
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Railroads have historically played an important role in the City of Belen. Traditionally, the majority of rail traffic traveling through Belen and the regional planning area has consisted of hauling goods rather than people. This could change if Amtrak service is expanded or if the proposed commuter rail between Belen and Bernalillo becomes a reality. Amtrak currently provides daily passenger service between Chicago and Los Angeles (passing through Albuquerque). Amtrak proposals for future passenger rail service have included a Dallas-Fort Worth-Lubbock-Clovis-Vaughan-Mountainair-Belen-Albuquerque train.

Belen Rail yard

With the exception of Amtrak's national service that passes through and stops in Albuquerque, there is currently no passenger rail service in the regional transportation system. However, there have been local studies of commuter rail connecting Belen and Bernalillo. The Belen-Bernalillo commuter rail study was recently (2001) examined by the Middle Rio Grande Connections project (a mutual effort of NMSHTD, City of Albuquerque Transit Department and MRCOG). The existing railroad track between Belen and Bernalillo consists of Class 3 and Class 4 welded rail, which is extensively signalized to modern standards, and could allow operating speeds of up to 79 m.p.h. The existing track and bi-directional signalization is in excellent condition, Amtrak trains presently operate on this track between Bernalillo and Albuquerque, and freight trains currently operate throughout the day passing through Belen. In addition to the railroad alignment being relatively flat, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) connects the communities of Belen, Los Lunas, Bernalillo, and Isleta and Sandia Pueblos directly to downtown Albuquerque, and allows a number of parcels along the corridor to be potentially developed as rail stations. While the proposed Belen-Bernalillo commuter rail is only a study, the increase in population, employment, and traffic congestion in the Middle Rio Grande region over the next twenty years may necessitate a commuter rail or other high-capacity transportation system.

Aviation is another vital link in the regional transportation system. Industries such as manufacturing, construction, trade, real estate, and tourism rely to some extent on efficient and dependable air transportation. The Alexander Municipal Airport in Belen is the only airport in the regional airport system classified as a "gateway" airport. A gateway airport provides business access for general aviation, attracts business to a community, and is a higher classification than "key" airports. The airports in Estancia, Los Lunas, Moriarty,

Mountainair, and Edgewood are all classified as key airports. The Alexander Municipal Airport also acts as a supporting airport for the air operations at Albuquerque International Airport and the Double Eagle II Airport in Bernalillo County.

The following capital improvements are scheduled at Alexander Municipal Airport over the next couple of years: construct a crosswind runway and a parallel taxiway with Medium Intensity Runway Lighting (MIRL); widen parallel taxiway from 30' to 40'; acquire additional land; install lighted runway/taxiway signs and retro reflective markers; install visual approach aids; preserve and maintain existing pavement; improve hangar area; install security (chain link) fencing; install supplemental wind cones; construct snow removal equipment building and acquire snow removal equipment.

Alexander Municipal Airport

PART IV

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In basic terms, goals are broad, visionary statements describing the direction that a community wants to go; while objectives are related statements that describe how goals can be achieved. The combination of goals and objectives provide a framework for the policy direction and strategies for action necessary to implement the Plan. Goals and objectives are not mandatory. In essence, the goals and objectives are the heart of the Plan and establish the basis for current and future programs, projects, and local regulations.

Citizen Participation Process

Concerns and perceptions about development, as expressed by the citizens of the community, are valuable sources of information in the planning process and can provide broad-based support for the goals, objectives, and recommendations submitted in the final Plan. Many opportunities were provided for the local residents to voice their opinions. The public involvement program for development of the Belen Comprehensive Plan was both organizational as well as procedural.

One of the first courses of action in the development of this Plan document was to establish a local Steering Committee. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee was to establish a local group of individuals who represented the varied interests and opinions of the community. This Belen Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee served to oversee the development of the Plan, and to ensure adequate public participation and involvement. Much of the work of this Committee involved the review and comment on draft elements of the planning documents including surveys, maps, and reports. The Committee also helped formulate the Goals and Objectives and Strategic Action Recommendations, assisted with the Key Person Interview Questionnaire, and provided priority ratings for the Objectives. Committee members were appointed by the Mayor.

The most significant public input was accomplished through community surveys. Two techniques were used: 1) a mail-out survey, and 2) personal interviews with prominent individuals in the community. Consequently, many of the concerns, values, and opinions of the residents could be identified and considered in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan for the City. The methodology, analysis, and results of these surveys are documented in a report entitled City of Belen Community Survey (MRCOG, 2002).

Public meetings and workshops were also conducted as major portions of the Plan were completed. Two public workshops were held to present the major components of the Belen Comprehensive Plan. The first workshop was

conducted to present and discuss the draft goals and objectives. Comment Sheets were handed out to solicit individual suggestions, opinions, and views regarding the comprehensive planning process leading to the draft goals and objectives. The second workshop presented the draft Strategic Action Recommendations to the public and gathered suggestions and ideas to refine and enhance these recommendations.

Two public meetings were held, one after each workshop, wherein the City Council approved the goals and objectives and the strategic action recommendations in separate meetings. Taken together, all of these public participation activities help to develop consensus and public support for the eventual Plan.

Community Survey Results

The community survey program was comprised of two parts. The first part utilized a mail-out questionnaire form distributed with the water bills. The purpose of the mail-out survey was to ask residents of the City about their attitudes and expectations concerning the future development of the community. More than 22 percent of those who received this survey returned a completed form, many with additional written comments. The questionnaire listed 18 issue statements pertaining to the future of Belen. Respondents were asked to rate those statements on a five-point scale indicating their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement. The results of this survey indicated that Belen should retain its character, culture, friendly atmosphere, historic structures, build bicycle/pedestrian trails to provide recreation and circulation, improve the road network to handle growth, take action to protect the future water supply, and establish a community hospital/24-hour urgent care facility.

The second part of the survey program involved personal interviews with people who were prominent individuals or long-standing residents of the community. This group included business owners, government employees, educators, and professional people. A questionnaire form was used, containing 16 oral questions, some with follow-up questions, to conduct in-person interviews. The key person interviews were conducted by members of the Belen Comprehensive Steering Committee. More focused issues were brought into consideration, such as the condition of the local economy, community image and appearance, specific challenges in providing services to a growing population, traffic congestion, industrial development, and local control over growth and development in general.

Overview of Goals and Objectives

The formulation of goals and objectives is an outgrowth of the public comments, opinions, and suggestions about the future direction of the City. The goals and objectives which follow are composed as positive statements and potential actions that reflect the concerns expressed throughout the public input

process, but also respond to basic community needs identified through planning research and staff interviews. A variety of action alternatives are implied by these goals and objectives. Furthermore, these goals and objectives may be used as a justification for future community programs and City projects.

As indicated previously, these goals and objectives are not a mandate of the City, and are not legal commitments by the governing body. However, as part of an adopted Comprehensive Plan, goals and objectives do provide a blueprint or framework for specific actions which may be taken in regard to the future management and development of the City of Belen.

There are a total of 16 goals and 65 objectives which provide policy guidance as the core of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Belen. Goals, with their subordinate objectives, have been grouped into the following six categories: Land Use: Distribution and Intensity; Housing; Transportation; Water Infrastructure; Public Services and Facilities; and Economic Development. In many cases, these goals and objectives can be traced back to the community issues identified through the public involvement process. In other cases, goals and objectives were specifically constructed to enhance the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Land Use: Distribution and Intensity

Goal A: Preserve and enhance the unique character and historical culture of Belen.

Objective: Protect the integrity of established residential neighborhoods.

Objective: Encourage the establishment of neighborhood associations within the City to help promote residential quality and safety.

Objective: Provide support and incentives to preserve historic structures such as: the Belen Hotel, the Central Hotel, the Harvey House, the Felipe Chavez House, and other historic residences.

Objective: Redefine and regulate the designated historic district which is currently located near the railroad terminal.

Objective: Promote and support the development of a combined historic and cultural district to accommodate the local arts community.

Objective: Use zoning and other regulatory ordinances to maintain historical and cultural elements in the community.

Objective: Develop architectural design standards that are appropriate for the community and promote quality, history, and prosperity.

Goal B: Use long-range planning and land use management techniques that ensure a desirable mix of land uses and densities in future development.

Objective: Allow flexibility for mixed-use zoning and enlarge the range of densities and housing types.

Objective: Update the City's Comprehensive Plan every five years, with summary reviews every one to two years as required.

Objective: Establish a municipal extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction for the unincorporated lands adjacent to the City.

Objective: Adopt an annexation policy that requires an explanation of the purpose and conditions, the costs and benefits, and the overall impact regarding the annexation of lands to the incorporated area of City.

Objective: Investigate the advantages, disadvantages, costs and consequences of a Belen – Rio Communities merger.

Objective: Evaluate all commercial, agricultural, and industrial growth on their water and air quality impacts. Develop a cost benefit ratio to compare the negative impacts over positive impacts.

Goal C: Maintain the appearance of a clean and scenic community.

Objective: Encourage scheduled clean-up days and a City-wide beautification effort that removes weeds and litter to improve the scenic and visual impressions of Belen.

Objective: Maintain nuisance abatement programs to control graffiti, noise, litter, and other such nuisances.

Objective: Strictly enforce the animal control ordinance to address the problems with livestock and domestic pets within and along the border of the City Limits.

Objective: Encourage the restoration or re-building of old abandoned buildings in the community that are structurally sound. Intervene as soon as possible on buildings if owners are not maintaining them.

Objective: Screen off outdoor storage yards on commercial enterprises. Keep residential areas clear of junk such as inoperative motor vehicles and boats and accessory buildings in disrepair.

Goal D: Concentrate commercial development in specified corridors and centers.

Objective: Encourage commercial and/or industrial activities to be located around the I-25 freeway interchanges.

Objective: Designate primary commercial corridors in Belen and provide incentives for growth and intense development along these major streets.

Objective: Allow for small minor commercial activities in residential areas that contribute to the neighborhood identity.

Goal E: Provide open space areas for recreation, public appreciation, and natural resource protection.

Objective: Work with local citizen groups to adopt and implement a recreation and open space plan and program for the City.

Objective: Work with MRCOG, Valencia County, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, and neighboring municipalities on a regional open space initiative that protects major natural resources and identifies types of open space that the City would like to protect and preserve.

Objective: Encourage cluster development in new planned unit developments to preserve open space in appropriate areas of the community.

Objective: Explore methods to finance open space purchases, compensate landowners for open space preservation, and transfer or purchase development rights.

Objective: Ensure open space that is functional, appropriate, maintainable, and which serves more than one purpose.

Housing

Goal F: Provide adequate housing for all residents of the City of Belen.

Objective: Provide opportunities for multi-family housing units to be located in areas where higher density is acceptable and designed in a

manner that would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Objective: Locate higher density development in existing multi-family residential zones for more effective land use and to conserve natural resources.

Objective: Encourage housing that is permanent and adds to the tax base of the community.

Transportation

Goal G: Maintain and improve the existing road network in Belen.

Objective: Establish a City road monitoring process to identify system deficiencies.

Objective: Identify priorities for road maintenance and improvements from high to low priority over the next 20 years.

Goal H: Establish a comprehensive, safe, and efficient future street network of sufficient capacity to meet local and regional circulation needs.

Objective: Designate a local "functional classification" of streets in Belen and adopt associated right-of-way and construction standards.

Objective: Investigate and implement traffic management and control measures throughout the community.

Objective: Create a Traffic Impact Analysis process to study the impact of proposed large scale developments on the surrounding transportation system.

Objective: Design roads and rights-of-way to accommodate anticipated future growth or full build-out conditions.

Goal I: Promote a variety of transportation systems in the community, including transit services, bicycles, pedestrians, equestrians, ride share services, and aviation.

Objective: Plan and develop a system of local bikeways and pedestrian trails with connections to regional systems where possible.

Objective: The City should develop a multi-modal community transportation terminal that has facilities for park-and-ride, express and local bus stop, carpooling, vanpooling, taxi pick-

up, connections between local and regional transportation systems, and travel information.

Objective: Promote the establishment of railroad passenger services and intermodal transportation facilities in Belen, with connections to cities in the Albuquerque metropolitan region and to other metropolitan areas of the Southwest.

Objective: Improve and expand the Belen Alexander Airport to handle larger aircraft, more aircraft operations, and serve as a reliever airport to the Albuquerque metropolitan area.

Water Infrastructure

Goal J: Ensure an adequate supply of quality water for current and future needs of the City.

Objective: Aggressively acquire and secure water rights to meet projected future demands.

Objective: Adopt and maintain a water conservation program which measures residential and business water consumption, offers conservation incentives, and includes a drought contingency plan.

Objective: Educate water users about the benefits of water conservation, and other specific water conservation techniques and practices (xeriscaping).

Objective: Develop a ground-water protection plan in cooperation with neighboring communities to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination from on-site liquid waste disposal systems, leaking underground storage tanks, and improper handling or disposal of hazardous materials.

Objective: Protect groundwater by preventing land uses that pollute the groundwater from locating in floodplains, groundwater recharge areas, and wellhead protection zones.

Goal K: Protect the community from the damaging effects of storm water runoff.

Objective: Develop and implement a drainage plan and program.

Objective: Develop and implement a storm water pollution control plan and program.

Public Services and Facilities

Goal L: Build and maintain public facilities and provide services in response to public need.

Objective: Carry out periodic public opinion surveys to identify level of satisfaction and potential need for publicly provided services and facilities.

Objective: Make use of bond elections to enhance revenue sources for major public facilities.

Objective: Promote and support the establishment of senior citizen facilities, services, and businesses for the elderly residents in the community.

Objective: Coordinate with the public school district and other institutions in order to develop joint or multiple-use facilities and expanded programs by pooling resources.

Objective: Promote the development of a community hospital or 24-hour urgent care health center and better emergency care (paramedics, ambulances).

Goal M: Enhance and expand the recreational opportunities for all citizens.

Objective: Explore the need for additional recreational facilities such as parks, ball fields, recreation areas, skate parks, and theatres.

Objective: Satisfy the need for additional organized social and recreational programs in town.

Goal N: Improve fire protection and emergency services.

Objective: Improve Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating for fire protection in order to upgrade City fire services and to decrease homeowner's insurance costs.

Objective: Require the Fire Department to maintain a schedule for replacement of fire-fighting equipment and fire-flow infrastructure such as fire hydrants.

Objective: Develop an area-wide and multiple agency plan for coordinated emergency response to accidents involving hazardous materials spills.

Economic Development

Goal O: Support and promote the local business community.

Objective: Improve infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, roads, rail, telephone, fiber optics, gas, electricity) and services to make Belen more attractive to prospective employers.

Objective: Improve the skills and abilities of the local workforce through education, drop-out intervention, and literacy programs.

Objective: Provide job training programs through partnerships of local businesses and educational institutions.

Objective: Recruit businesses that create higher-wage jobs, preferably jobs tied into producing a product or service most of which is exported outside the community.

Objective: Preserve and protect historic and cultural attractions (Harvey House, Belen Hotel, railroad depot) as a means of attracting tourism.

Objective: Encourage tourist-oriented businesses such as restaurants, galleries, and small specialty shops to locate in the downtown area and along Belen's Main Street.

Objective: Support agencies and groups who recruit businesses into the Belen area.

Objective: Cooperate and coordinate with other area communities and the State Economic Development Department to identify Belen as a featured city for showing incoming businesses and prospective employers wishing to relocate to New Mexico.

Goal P: Encourage industrial activities in appropriate areas of the City.

Objective: Encourage new development in the City's designated industrial parks and industrial-zoned lands.

PART V

STRATEGIC ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Goals, objectives, and strategic action recommendations serve as the foundation for the Belen Comprehensive Plan. Goals are statements that describe a future condition or state of affairs. Objectives are measurable targets set for each goal. Strategic action recommendations are a course of action or set of guidelines to be used in achieving specific objectives. Goals, objectives, and recommendations describe a preferred future for Belen and identify how the preferred future might be realized. These aspirations can be effected by setting priorities that are relative to factors such as costs, ease of implementation, time scheduling, and appropriateness. However, the decision to implement this plan ultimately falls upon the City of Belen governing body. As well as providing a strategy for the implementation of goals and objectives, the strategic action recommendations form a timeframe for addressing the multiple needs of the community.

These goals, objectives, and strategic action recommendations were put together by the Belen Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, MRCOG staff, and then modified and revised subsequent to public hearings, and then adopted by the City Council. A resolution adopting the strategic action recommendations was adopted by the City of Belen on July 21, 2003 (see Appendix A).

Overview of Recommendations

Specific strategic action recommendations are presented below, including brief explanatory information further describing each action. Following the explanation of each strategic action recommendation is a letter and number that corresponds to the appropriate goals and objectives. For example, A.6 would refer to the sixth objective under Goal A. All of these actions are recommendations that may or may not be initiated by the governing body to carry out the implementation of the Belen Comprehensive Plan. These plan recommendations are placed into the same categories used in the listing of goals and objectives, and identify a time framework in terms of the following priority ratings: critical, short, medium, and long range actions. Critical recommendations are those strategic action recommendations that have the highest priority. Short range means an action that may be achieved within a one to five year time frame. Medium range means an action that may be achieved within a five to ten year time frame. Long range means an action that may be achieved within a ten to twenty year time frame. The "Ongoing" priority rating simply means that the strategic action recommendation should be carried out now and in the foreseeable future over the next 20 years (encompassing short, medium, and long range actions).

Category: Land Use and Character of Development

Designate Belen historic districts and landmarks
Significant historical areas, buildings, and structures in the City need to be formally recognized and protected in order to capitalize on the unique history and culture of Belen. The City must protect key structures such as the Harvey House, Belen Hotel, and the railroad depot. In a recent citizen survey conducted by the City, 80 percent of respondents agreed that the City should preserve its historic structures.

Hotel Belen

The City should reactivate the Historic Properties Review Board as authorized in Chapter 15.16 of the Belen Municipal Code. This Board must carry out its responsibilities by identifying potential historic districts and potential historic landmarks within the City (see Figure 16). Other and subsequent duties of the Board should be conducted in accordance with Chapter 15.16 of the Belen Code. [A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, O.5]
Priority Rating: Short Range

Improve the enforcement of land use regulations The character and appearance of Belen is largely affected by the ability of the City to establish and administer regulations for land use and development. Recent surveys have indicated that a majority of respondents support stringent enforcement of zoning regulations. In order to maintain an effective regulatory program, the City should continue to adopt more explicit procedures and specific criteria for land use management. A monitoring and enforcement process needs to be clarified in the zoning ordinance. Also, zoning requirements for a new industrial category need to be established and mapped for appropriate location. In general, all regulatory programs of the City should be carried out in accordance with the policies and principles established in the Belen Comprehensive Plan which should be reviewed annually and updated every five years. [A.6, A.7, B.2, B.6]
Priority Rating: Ongoing

Designate City development corridors and activity centers The evolving form of development for the City of Belen is one of strip commercial with scattered concentrations of development of related land use activities. Future development will likely continue the pattern of development along major corridors and around activity centers. This pattern can be enhanced and improved through zoning and other land use management techniques. The City should designate specific corridors and activity centers in order to provide adequate

City of Belen Comprehensive Plan

Figure 16
Historic Districts and Landmarks

Map Prepared by 5/6/03

Mid-Region Council of Governments
317 Commercial NE, Suite 104
Albuquerque, NM 87102
505-247-1750

capacity for future infrastructure, coordinated public services, and convenient facilities in those areas. In particular, future concentrations of commercial and industrial activities should be encouraged to locate around each of the I-25 freeway interchanges in order for the City to capture interstate highway-related commerce (see Figure 13). [D.1, D.2]
Priority Rating: Short Range

Establish annexation policies and procedures The City needs to adopt an annexation policy resolution that establishes criteria for making decisions regarding annexation of new territory to the City's incorporated area. Criteria should include a clarification of purpose, the costs and benefits of the annexation, and the anticipated long-term effects on infrastructure, facilities, and services of the City. Annexation can be used to provide additional lands for housing and commercial activities. The City should target specific areas for annexation feasibility studies such as Rio Communities and neighboring industrial activities. [B.4, B.5]
Priority Rating: Critical and Short Range

Establish a municipal extraterritorial zoning authority In order to ensure orderly and compatible development on lands outside but adjacent to the municipal boundary, the City of Belen should initiate a joint powers agreement with Valencia County to establish an extraterritorial zoning authority with jurisdiction within a one-mile radius of the City boundary. State Statutes allow for the creation of a joint municipal/county zoning authority and zoning commission to administer a special zoning ordinance and map within a specified area surrounding the municipality. [B.3]
Priority Rating: Short Range

Adopt a City calendar for scheduled clean-up days The City should take the lead in organizing, promoting, and advertising scheduled (i.e., quarterly by season) clean-up days in an effort to frequently remove weeds and litter. The City should also promote recycling in Belen by assisting collection organizations and supporting businesses that recycle or reuse recycled materials. Recycle collection sites should be designated by City regulatory authority and periodically advertised to the public. Analysis of a recent key person interview indicates that improving community appearance should be a primary goal for the City of Belen. Scheduled clean-up days and recycling efforts could be done in coordination with the City's solid waste operator (currently Waste Management of New Mexico, Inc.), business organizations, and volunteer service-oriented groups such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Knights of Columbus, 4-H Club, National Honor Society, and others. [C.1]
Priority Rating: Critical and Short Range

Category: Housing and the Residential Sector

Designate city neighborhoods Belen should identify and officially designate major neighborhoods throughout the City's planning area. Distinctive neighborhood identity can promote and ensure adequate localized representation concerning programs, services, and special events of the City. The City can refer to specific areas within the community by a commonly-used neighborhood name such as the Old Town Area (Plaza Vieja) or Central Belen (see Figure 17). Such neighborhoods can be useful for planning purposes and characterized by data and information specific to each neighborhood. A self-organized structure of neighborhood associations should be encouraged and facilitated by the City. The integrity of residential neighborhoods can be ensured through localized pride and advocacy for safe and secure communities. [A.1, A.2]
Priority Rating: Short Range

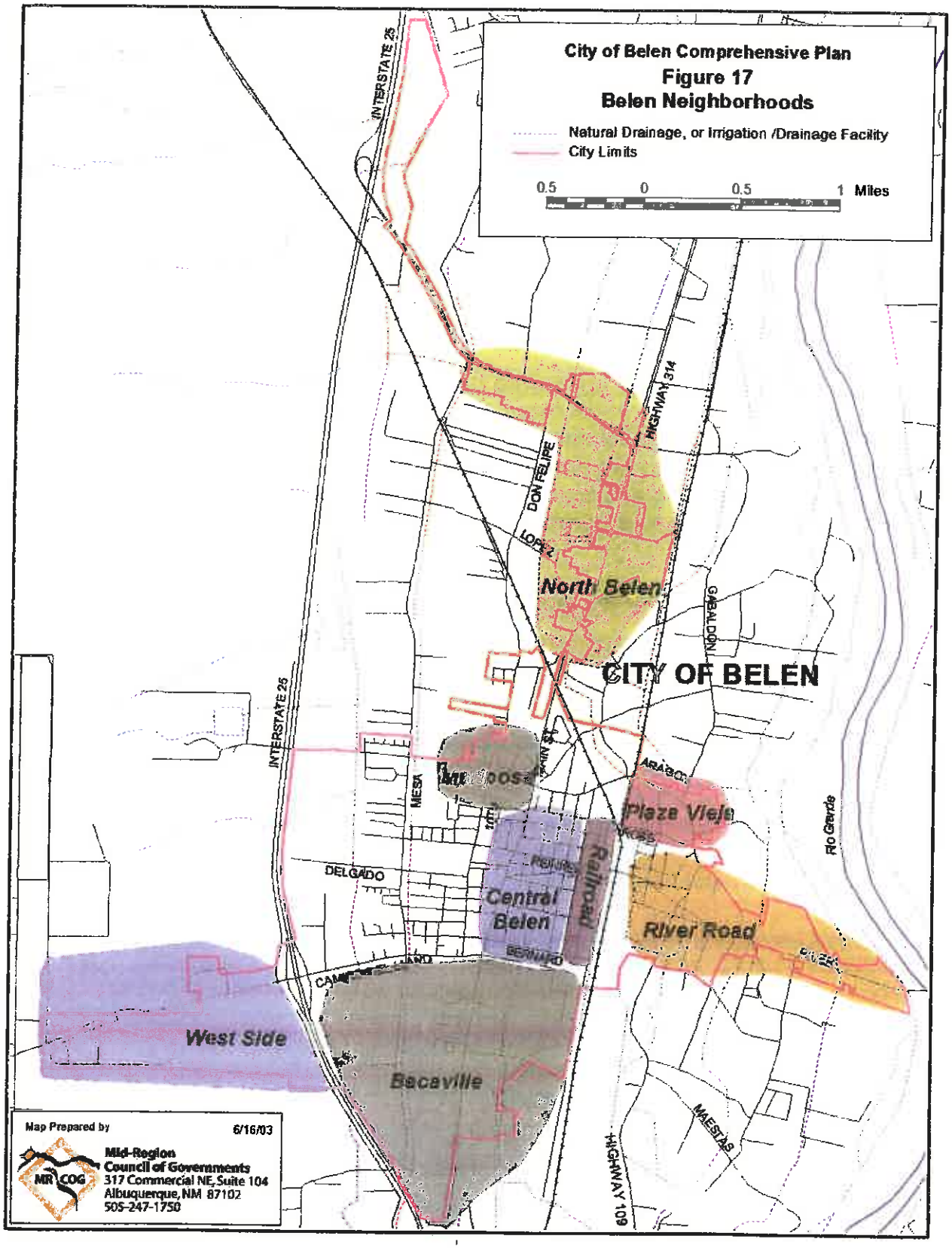
Establish a program for improving the local building stock The City needs to develop a process to encourage housing rehabilitation and the removal of dilapidated buildings and structures in order to improve community appearance, enhance property values, and protect the public health and safety. The City should consider the adoption of a housing code and a means for enforcement of housing standards. [A.6, C.4, F.3]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Category: Community Water Infrastructure

Prepare and implement a water management program for the City Belen must take steps to ensure that the future water supply for the community is secure. The City can protect the community's drinking water supply by adopting and maintaining an active water management program which includes elements such as water rights acquisition, conservation strategies, a drought contingency plan, and a groundwater protection plan. Since water resources are regional by nature, primary consideration should be made in regard to any State and regional water plans affecting the City. [J.1, J.2, J.4]
Priority Rating: Critical and Ongoing

Adopt and implement a water conservation program Assuming that there will be limitations on future water supply, the City should adopt a water conservation program containing strategies such as water metering/monitoring, low flow devices, xeriscaping incentives, water pricing mechanisms, recycling and reuse of water, and an extensive education program to ensure voluntary public support and participation. [J.2, J.3]
Priority Rating: Critical and Short Term

Develop a groundwater protection plan The public water supply for Belen is drawn from the aquifer underlying the Rio Grande valley. A groundwater protection plan would reduce the potential for contamination by various sources.


City of Belen Comprehensive Plan
Figure 17
Belen Neighborhoods
Natural Drainage, or Irrigation /Drainage Facility
City Limits
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles
INTERSTATE 25
HIGHWAY 314
DON FELIPE
LOPEZ
North Belen
GABALDON
CITY OF BELEN
INTERSTATE 25
MESA
Plaza Vieja
Rio Grande
DELGADO
Central Belen
Railroad
River Road
BERNARD
West Side
Bacaville
MAESTAS
HIGHWAY 109
Map Prepared by
6/16/03
Mid-Region Council of Governments
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Groundwater may be vulnerable to contamination due to land use and development activities. The City's water supply needs protection specifically at the location of the public water wells. A well head protection ordinance should be adopted by the City in order to control land use activities that might contaminate groundwater within the capture zone of the public water supply well. Also, the Flood Protection Regulations for the City should be reviewed and revised to manage development in flood prone areas to minimize flood damage as well as prevent hazardous and toxic materials from entering storm water runoff and infiltrating into the groundwater. Belen can utilize flood control structures and non-structural techniques to minimize the pollution picked up and deposited by storm waters. [J.4, J.5]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Develop and implement a drainage master plan Large portions of Belen, especially between Reinken and Vivian from the railroad to Main Street, lie in a flood-prone area. Other areas of Belen could also be flooded by overflow from the Rio Grande, rainfall runoff from the west mesa, or a breakdown of any of the drains, ditches or canals that carry water through the City. The purpose of a drainage master plan is to evaluate the potential for flooding and identify a list of priorities for drainage control projects to alleviate flooding and other problems associated with flooding. Storm water runoff is intensified by impervious surface areas such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops. In addition to flood proofing structures and building flood conveyance channels, flood control techniques may include: construction of grassy swales, terraces and retention structures, water harvesting, and vegetation management. [K.1, K.2.]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Category: Transportation and Circulation

Adopt a long-range street system plan A long-range street system plan portrays a future street network for Belen and the surrounding area, and should be adopted and periodically updated by the City Council. The long-range street system plan establishes a basis for identification of transportation projects to be implemented in the City's short-range transportation improvement program. Also, in the form of a map, the long-range street system plan provides a framework for review of land subdivisions, street capacity improvements, route location study corridors, future right-of-way acquisition, and other transportation-related issues (see Figure 15). Associated with the long-range street system plan are right-of-way, design, and construction standards. [H.1]
Priority Rating: Short Range

Implement a city streets evaluation system The City needs to establish criteria for monitoring and evaluating street conditions as part of an ongoing, systematic analysis of overall transportation needs. A street conditions rating system can be developed to provide a basis for the distribution of City resources where street maintenance and improvements are most crucial for the

movement of people and goods. An evaluation system is essential in setting priorities for the short-range transportation improvement program. Also, traffic management and control measures can be justified or warranted through such an evaluation system. A related process of the streets evaluation system is a Traffic Impact Analysis procedure adopted by the City to determine the traffic load on the street system resulting from proposed large scale developments. [G.1, H.2]
Priority Rating: Critical and Ongoing

Conduct a study of freeway access to the City Belen currently has direct access to the I-25 freeway at three interchanges. Both the North Belen and South Belen interchanges are limited in directional flow and do not provide access to the west side of the interstate highway. Also, there have been related suggestions to add new interchanges in the Belen area and to reconfigure the grade-separated intersection at N.M. Highway 314 at the I-25 Belen Business Loop Road. [G.2]
Priority Rating: Short and Medium Range

Expand the function of the North Belen I-25 Interchange Access to the west side of the North Belen Interchange is not part of the current design configuration. Because of increasing traffic flow through the interchange, extremely close proximity of a major rail line, and the growing potential for land development west of the freeway, this particular interchange needs to be designed and reconstructed as a fully directional facility. Due to the necessity of Congressional authorization with a long lead time for planning such a major revision to the Interstate highway system, the City should place high and immediate emphasis on the design process for this interchange. [G.2, H.4]
Priority Rating: Critical and Short Range

Adopt a bicycle and trails plan A bicycle and trail network would improve local access and circulation as well as provide relief to the street network, and enhance recreational opportunities throughout Belen. A recent community survey revealed that over 70 percent of the respondents believed that bicycle and pedestrian trails should be built to improve circulation and increase recreational opportunities. In order to develop a City-wide bicycle/trails network, the City should designate certain streets as bicycle routes, create reserved lanes on streets for bicycles, and establish recreation trails for bicyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians that are closed to automotive traffic. The City should pursue Federal funding assistance to construct new facilities such as the Delgado Street Trail. Furthermore, a bicycle and trail network should be regional in scope and should link with other trail systems such as the Rio Communities Core Links trail located east of the Rio Grande (see Figure 14). [I.1]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Expand transportation alternatives in Belen In order to reduce congestion on the streets and highways, the City of Belen should promote and

support a greater range of transportation opportunities as an alternative to the single occupant vehicle. In a recent community survey, the majority (54.4 percent) of the respondents agreed that Belen should have a public transportation system. The City should investigate the feasibility of a public transportation system that serves Belen and enables connections and coordination with other local systems in Valencia County such as the transit system and multi-modal transportation facility (under development) in Los Lunas. The City should conduct a feasibility study for a public transit system and a multi-modal transportation hub in Belen. The *Middle Rio Grande Connections* project (NMDOT) recently identified a proposed high-capacity travel (i.e., commuter) corridor between Belen and Bernalillo. This corridor might support a light rail or express bus service in the Belen area. [I.2, I.3]
Priority Rating: Medium and Long Range

Protect future development at Belen Alexander Airport
Aviation is part of a multi-modal transportation system. The Belen Alexander Airport has been recently improved and expanded, and is on the New Mexico Aviation Division's Capital Improvement Program for the New Mexico Airport System Plan. The airport serves to some extent as a supporting airport to Albuquerque International Sunport and Double Eagle II Airport, both located in Bernalillo County.

Alexander Municipal Airport

In a recent community survey, 49.4 percent of the respondents agreed that the City should intensify development (i.e., expand commercial development) at the Belen Alexander Airport and surrounding lands. In order to do this, the City needs to annex and impose zoning controls around the airport property to safeguard the future success of the airport. [I.4]
Priority Rating: Critical and Short Range

Category: Special Public Services and Facilities

Develop a Recreational/Open Space Master Plan The City of Belen has a substantial investment in recreational lands and facilities. In order to coordinate and distribute recreational activities to maximize their use and availability, a long range master plan for recreational facilities and open space should be adopted. The master plan should investigate timing for new and expanded facilities, joint ownership and multiple-use facilities, passive recreation and open space assets such as the Rio Grande Bosque, and a mechanism for dedicated funding of recreational facilities and operations. According to a recent

survey, a majority of respondents agreed that more parks, recreational sites, and open space areas are desired. The City should appoint a special advisory committee to develop a Recreational/Open Space Master Plan, comprised of public officials and local citizens and representing the City, County, Belen Public School District, and the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. [E.1, E.2, E.4, E.5, L.4, M.1, M.2]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Expand facilities and services for senior citizens The City should promote and support the continued development of facilities, services, and businesses for the elderly. Existing as well as new facilities and services for elderly populations might include local retirement homes, gerontology medical care, specialized housing (i.e., assisted living quarters) and community centers, and transportation for transit-dependent persons. [L.3]
Priority Rating: Medium Range

Promote a community hospital or 24-hour urgent care facility in Belen Belen is currently without a hospital or a 24-hour urgent care center. The nearest medical facilities providing such services are in Albuquerque (30 miles) and Socorro (40 miles). According to a recent survey, Belen residents are in strong support (86.4 percent of respondents were in favor) of establishing a community hospital and/or 24-hour urgent care center. In general, there is a need for improvement of all emergency response services available in Belen. The City needs to investigate costs and benefits and the overall feasibility of developing and supporting a community hospital or 24-hour urgent care facility. [L.5]
Priority Rating: Critical and Ongoing

Continue to improve emergency response services Belen has a basic responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Of paramount importance is the ability to respond to emergency situations. The City provides law enforcement, fire protection, and rescue services but there are limited resources to operate at peak efficiency. Additional and dedicated funding is needed to maintain the most efficient current and future emergency services in the City. Improved services require additional staffing and training, up-to-date equipment and vehicles, and specialized contingency plans for major emergency situations (i.e., Bosque wildfires, terrorism activities, loss of water supply, hazardous chemical spills, etc). Wherever possible, these services should be linked through joint use of facilities, consolidated operations, or by standard agreements with related agencies. [N.1, N.2, N.3]
Priority Rating: Ongoing

Category: Economic Development

Implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan The City of Belen should implement appropriate portions of the 2002 Strategic Plan developed by the Belen Economic Development Corporation. The Strategic Plan includes goals to: 1) retain and create additional jobs by strengthening and expanding existing businesses; 2) diversify the local economy by attracting businesses to locate in and create new jobs in Belen; 3) prepare the local populace to enter the work force by developing the best possible vocational and other skill training targeted to employer's needs; 4) build the community's capacity to apply effective economic development practices and tools; and 5) clarify the City's zoning regulations and processes and rationalize them to ensure that they promote timely and sound business expansion, new business development, business parks and industrial parks. [O.1, O.2, O.3, O.4, O.5, O.6, O.7, O.8]
Priority Rating: Critical and Ongoing

Improve and expand community infrastructure In order for Belen to attract and retain business and industry in the City, basic infrastructure (i.e., water, sewer, road network, telecommunications, and power) must be in good condition with capacity to handle future growth. The City should focus on infrastructure needs as a high priority in its ongoing capital improvement program. Where applicable, the City should support public utilities that provide infrastructure systems in the area. [O.1]
Priority Rating: Critical and Ongoing

Support continuing education and job training The City should work in cooperation with the Belen Public School District, UNM Valencia Campus, and business organizations to increase post-secondary educational opportunities and job training programs (e.g., in-plant training) available in the community. Support should be given by the City for any efforts to improve the skills, abilities, and educational levels of the local work force through education, drop-out intervention and adult literacy programs. [O.2, O.3]
Priority Rating: Ongoing

Promote Belen as a unique and special city Belen needs to become recognized regionally and nationally as a special type of community to attract visitors, businesses, and home buyers. Belen should capitalize on its proximity to Albuquerque, its history (name relates to biblical Bethlehem) and culture, its easy-going lifestyle, its special events, and other amenities. Tourist-oriented businesses such as restaurants, galleries, and specialty shops should be encouraged with incentives to locate in the central business district. The City should collaborate with other entities to feature Belen as prime location in which to live and work. [O.8]
Priority Rating: Ongoing

Support business and recruitment activities To the extent possible, the City should support and assist any efforts to target and recruit business and industrial employers to locate in the City. Ideally, there should be a growth in higher-wage jobs, preferably jobs involved in producing a product or service most of which is exported outside the community. [O.4, O.7]

Priority Rating: Ongoing

Table 32
Strategic Action Priorities

Strategic Action Recommendations	Critical Need	Short Range 1-5 yrs.	Medium Range 5-10 yrs.	Long Range 10-20 yrs.
Land Use and Character of Development				
Designate Belen historic districts and landmarks		●		
Improve the enforcement of land use regulations		●	●	●
Designate City development corridors and activity centers		●		
Establish annexation policies and procedures	●	●		
Establish a municipal extraterritorial zoning authority		●		
Adopt a City calendar for scheduled clean-up days	●	●		
Housing and the Residential Sector				
Designate city neighborhoods		●		
Establish a program for improving the local building stock			●	
Community Water Infrastructure				
Prepare and implement a water management program for the City	●	●	●	●
Adopt and implement a water conservation program	●	●		
Develop a groundwater protection plan			●	
Develop and implement a drainage master plan			●	
Transportation and Circulation				
Adopt a long-range street system plan		●		
Implement a city streets evaluation system	●	●	●	●
Conduct a study of freeway access to the City		●	●	
Expand the function of the North Belen I-25 Interchange	●	●		
Adopt a bicycle and trails plan			●	
Expand transportation alternatives in Belen			●	●
Protect future development at Belen Alexander Airport	●	●		
Special Public Services and Facilities				
Develop a Recreational/Open Space Master Plan			●	
Expand facilities and services for senior citizens			●	
Promote a community hospital or 24-hour urgent care facility in Belen	●	●	●	●
Continue to improve emergency response services		●	●	●
Economic Development				
Implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan	●	●	●	●
Improve and expand community infrastructure	●	●	●	●
Support continuing education and job training		●	●	●
Promote Belen as a unique and special city		●	●	●
Support business and recruitment activities		●	●	●

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APPENDIX A

RESOLUTION NO. 2003-12

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELEN, NEW MEXICO, ADOPTING STRATEGIC ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BELEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Belen City Council has undertaken a process to develop a Comprehensive Plan for the City, funded in part by a federal Community Development Block Grant administered by the New Mexico Local Government Division, and prepared by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) under a Planning Services Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Belen Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, appointed by the City Council, has been working with the staff of the MRCOG in the development of the Comprehensive Plan document; and

WHEREAS, Goals and Objectives for the Belen Comprehensive Plan were adopted on December 16, 2002, by the Belen City Council to serve as a guide for policy decisions regarding the future development of the City of Belen; and

WHEREAS, the adopted Goals and Objectives have provided a foundation for the preparation of Strategic Action Recommendations which are intended to further define a comprehensive plan for the City of Belen; and

WHEREAS, proposed Strategic Action Recommendations were presented for public input at an advertised public workshop on May 14, 2003; and

WHEREAS, Strategic Action Recommendations constitute the central component of the Comprehensive Plan document for the City and provide a working basis for Plan implementation.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Belen City Council does adopt the Strategic Action Recommendations for the Belen Comprehensive Plan hereby attached and made a part of this Resolution.

PASSED, ADOPTED, and APPROVED this 22nd day of July, 2003, by the Belen City Council.

Ronnie Torres, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sally G. Garley, CMC, City Manager

17.60.020 - Conditional use procedures.

A. No conditional use shall be established in any zone district except upon permit issued by the planning and zoning commission, which shall be guided in making a decision by the criteria set forth in this section. Any person seeking a conditional use permit shall provide to the planning and zoning commission such information as it may reasonably require to determine whether the grant of the requested conditional use permit is consistent with the intent and purpose of this title.

B. Any request for a conditional use permit shall be submitted to the planning and zoning commission through the zoning enforcement officer on prescribed application forms. The planning and zoning commission shall approve or disapprove the application following consideration at one (1) of its regular meetings. The planning and zoning commission shall conduct a public hearing on each request for conditional use. Public notice shall be given in a newspaper of general circulation in the area at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the meeting. Notice of the public hearing, time, date, place and a brief description of the requested conditional use shall be mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested to the owners of land within one hundred (100) feet of the exterior boundary of the tract of land where the conditional use is requested.

C. In considering an application for a conditional use permit, the planning and zoning commission shall not grant any conditional use permit unless satisfactory provision and arrangement has been made concerning the following, where applicable:

1. Ingress and egress to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control, and access in case of fire or catastrophe;
2. Off-street parking and loading areas where required, with particular attention to refuse and service areas;
3. Public and private utilities, with reference to locations, availability, and compatibility;
4. The economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the conditional use on adjoining properties; and
5. General compatibility with adjacent properties and other property in the district.

D. The following conditional uses are limited to six (6) months duration, at the end of which time such use must be reviewed and a new permit granted in order for it to be continued:

1. Amusement parks, carnival, circus. Conditional use in any A-R, C-1 or M-C zone.
2. Dwelling, temporary watchman or caretaker. Conditional use in all zones.
3. Offices, temporary (real estate sales, etc.). Conditional use in all zones.
4. Flea markets as a conditional use in the C-1 and M-C zones, subject to the following requirements:
    a. There shall be at least two (2) off-street parking spaces per rental stall on the premises;
    b. Adequate refuse containers shall be provided to control litter;
    c. Adequate sanitary facilities (restrooms), either portable or permanent, shall be provided on site;
    d. Sale of animals is prohibited with the exception of dogs, cats, rabbits, birds and other common household pets;
    e. No merchandise intended for sale shall be stored on site after business hours which shall be between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.,
    f. All tarps, tents or sunshades must be securely attached to prevent a safety hazard and must be removed at daily closing time; and
    g. A site plan designed in accordance with the above requirements shall be submitted as part of the approval process.

E. The planning and zoning commission may impose supplementary regulations and special conditions on requests for conditional uses. Any special conditions imposed by the planning and zoning commission shall apply in addition to the district regulations, and shall govern over any less restrictive zoning regulation.

(Ord. No. 2015-14, 11-16-2015)

City of Belen, New Mexico
Submittal Checklist
Conditional Use Permit

Required Submittals:

The following material must be delivered to the Planning & Zoning Department in order to satisfy all submittal requirements.

( ) Filing fee payment of **$150.00**

( ) Letter of transmittal, state nature of request, include name of applicant and address where conditional use is requests.

( ) Affidavit of ownership

( ) Scaled drawing of property indicating location of structures, on-site parking and point(s) of access to public streets.

CITY OF BELEN, NEW MEXICO
APPLICATION FOR CONDITIONAL USE

REGULAR _____ ***SIX MONTHS*** _____

NOTE: The following conditional uses are limited to six months duration, at the end of which time such use must be reviewed and a new permit granted in order for it to be continued:

- ***Amusement Parks, Carnival, Circus. Conditional use in any A-R, C-1 or M-C zone.***
- ***Dwelling, Temporary Watchman or Caretaker. Conditional use in all zones.***
- ***Offices, Temporary (Real Estate Sales, Etc. Conditional use in all zones.***
- ***Flea Markets. Conditional use in C-1 and M-C zones only, subject to district regulations and any supplementary regulations or special condition imposed by the Planning & Zoning Commission.***

Applicants Name:_____ Phone:_____
Address:_____
Authorized AgentsName:_____ Phone:_____
Address:_____

Address of Property:_____
Block and Lot:_____ Addition:_____
Tract Number:_____ Map:_____
Total acreage in Tract:_____
Number of Dwellings:_____ Density/Acre:_____
Zoning of Property:_____ Present Use:_____

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following material must be provided by applicant.

- Filing fee payment of **$150.00**
- Letter of transmittal, state nature of request, include name of applicant and address where conditional use is requested.
- Affidavit of ownership
- Scaled drawing of property indicating location of structures, on-site parking and points of access to public streets

The Applicant must also do the following:

- Post and maintain one or more signs on the premises involved at least fifteen days prior Public Hearing Date and remove such signs within five days after Public Hearing Date.

NOTE: Failure to do so is grounds for deferral or denial of this application.

Accompanying this application are the above listed requirements for the proposed Conditional Use. I have examined and am familiar with the zoning regulations of the present zone and the requested Conditional Use. I understand that the City of Belen will not assume any liability for a possible lack of understanding on my part.

_____ _____
Signature of Applicant Date

THIS APPLICATION REQUIRES A PUBLIC HEARING BY THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Date:_____ Approved/Disapproved:_____
FEE PAID:_____ RECEIPT NO.:_____ DATE:_____