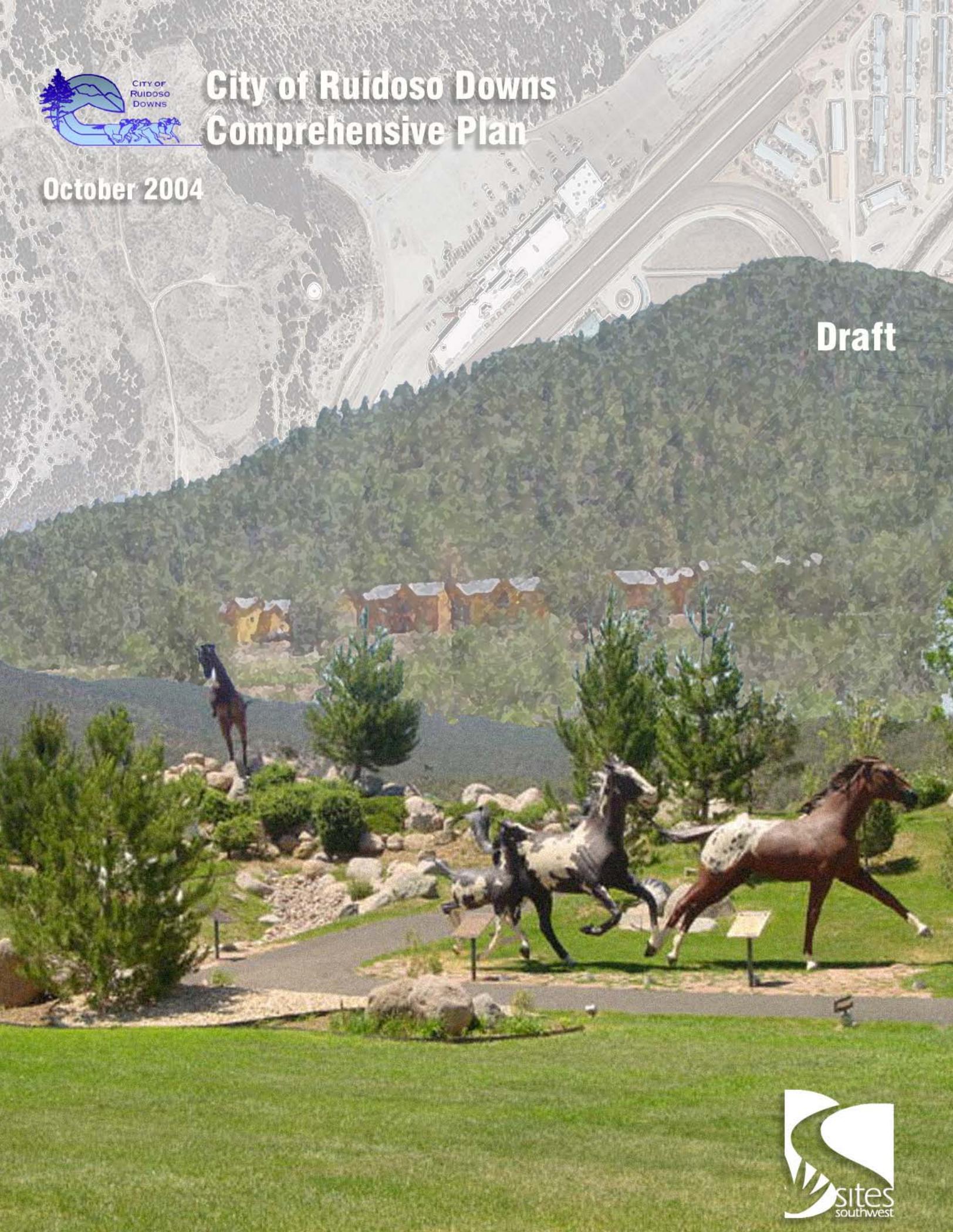




City of Ruidoso Downs Comprehensive Plan

October 2004

Draft



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Executive Summary

The 2004 City of Ruidoso Downs Comprehensive Plan describes the community's vision for the physical development of Ruidoso Downs over the next twenty years. This vision has been developed with significant input from City residents, business owners, and elected and appointed officials. The Plan is intended to be used as a general policy guide to decisions by City officials concerning the location, character, and rate of growth in the community.

The Comprehensive Plan focuses in detail on several key elements of the community that pertain to its growth and development, including

- ▶ Land Use
- ▶ Infrastructure
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Housing
- ▶ Economic Development
- ▶ Community Character
- ▶ Community Facilities and Services

For each of these elements, the Plan documents existing conditions in the community, identifies future needs and community preferences for improvement, and presents goals, objectives and strategies to bring about the desired development of the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Key Issues and Concerns

By definition, a comprehensive plan addresses a wide variety of topics and concerns in the community. The following issues, however, are of particular importance for the City of Ruidoso Downs:

Land Use and Community Character

- ▶ The December 2003 annexation of the Agua Fria subdivision and other areas on the east side of the City. The Draft ETZ Ordinance is being used in the annexed area.
- ▶ The lack of a well-defined center for the City
- ▶ The overall need to improve the appearance of the community
- ▶ Extraterritorial zoning

Infrastructure

- ▶ The need to acquire additional water rights
- ▶ The need to improve water storage capacity
- ▶ Frequent storm flooding throughout the City

Transportation

- ▶ Poor roadway conditions in various parts of the City
- ▶ A lack of east-west roadway connections through the City

Housing

- ▶ The need for more affordable rental housing

Economic Development

- ▶ The limited supply of locally-serving businesses such as family-style restaurants
- ▶ Few sites at present that are suitable for industrial development
- ▶ Opportunities created by the local Economic Development Act and the Community Business Plan

Community Facilities and Services

- ▶ The need for additional recreational facilities and programs, especially for youth
- ▶ The need for a civic center

Implementation

While the Comprehensive Plan takes a long-term view of the City of Ruidoso Downs and its surrounding area, it also recognizes the importance of providing a clear guide to steps that the City can take to accomplish its goals in the short-term. The implementation element of the Comprehensive Plan identifies action steps to be taken in each topic area over the next five years.

Land Use and Community Character

- ▶ Update the zoning code and City zone map to include the following
 - Zone recently annexed lands to correspond to the future land use map contained in the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Develop design guidelines for commercial buildings along U.S. 70.
- ▶ Amend the annexation policy contained in the zoning code to specify immediate, medium-term and long-term categories of priority for future expansion of the City as shown on the future land use map.
- ▶ Install gateway signs at entry points into the City.
- ▶ Develop a concept plan for the proposed city center in the vicinity of the Downs Drive intersection.

Infrastructure

- ▶ Develop and fund a water rights acquisition strategy.
- ▶ Implement water system improvements identified in the 40-year Water Plan and the City of Ruidoso Downs Water Master Plan and listed in the Infrastructure section of this plan.
- ▶ Implement sewer collection and treatment system improvements identified in the Infrastructure section of this plan.
- ▶ Construct storm drainage improvements identified in this plan and provide 100-year flood protection within the City limits.
- ▶ Revise City ordinances and procedures to ensure that new development incorporates adequate storm drainage facilities.

Transportation

- ▶ Construct near-term street improvements identified in this plan and in the City's ICIP.

- › Conduct a conditions assessment of roadways in Agua Fria Subdivision.
- › Complete a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes linking residential areas with the city center.

Housing

- › Complete strategic plan for attracting affordable housing developer(s) to the City.

Economic Development

- › Complete the requirements to become certified through the Certified Communities Initiative.
- › Develop marketing brochures describing the City's attributes for new industry, retail businesses and tourist oriented businesses to Ruidoso Downs.
- › Develop marketing brochures oriented to tourists and work with local tourist oriented businesses to create vacation packages for visitors.
- › Participate in regional efforts to draw visitors to the area.

Community Facilities and Services

- › Construct community facilities in the city center, including a new City Hall, a recreation center, small civic center and library.
- › Complete improvements to All American Park.
- › Complete plans and construct park, open space and trail improvements identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
- › Construct an indoor public swimming pool.
- › Provide improved social and recreational services to City residents, including senior services and a youth recreation program.

I. Introduction

A. Historical Background

The first home in the area of what would be present day Ruidoso Downs was built in the 1880s by Lowery Hale. Mr. Hale owned most of the land in the area and acquired over 800 acres. The early 1900s saw the construction of the two-story White Mountain Inn on the banks of Rio Ruidoso. A man named J.V. or Rev. S.M. Johnson built the Inn, and this originally was the only business in the area. The Johnson family also operated a general store, post office, and dance hall.

The mid 1930s saw the opening of Turner's Tavern, a saloon, and filling station, followed by a garage and general mercantile store that later became Fox Merchandise. The first community sawmill was started by Ed Hoagland in 1936. Timber played an important part of the City's development until heavy cutting decimated the area's timber resources.

The original townsite was laid out in 1933, and the community was named Palo Verde. The name did not last long, and with the opening of the post office in 1947, the U.S. Postal Administration changed the town's name to Green Tree. At this time, Green Tree was incorporated as a Village, largely due to the need for a reliable community water system. It wasn't until 1958 that City residents voted to change by special election the name to Ruidoso Downs and not until 1961 that the town officially became Ruidoso Downs with the opening of the new post office.

The Ruidoso Downs Racetrack opened in 1946 and became an instant attraction for Texans who were cashing in on the oil boom. The All American Futurity, the world's most prestigious and richest quarter horse race, debuted in 1958. The Billy the Kid Casino at the east end of the racetrack opened in 2000.

Despite these tourist attractions, Ruidoso Downs maintains a small town atmosphere which is highly valued by its residents. Ruidoso Downs is well known throughout the southwest and Texas as a community with the friendliest people. Figure 1 shows Ruidoso Downs and surrounding communities.

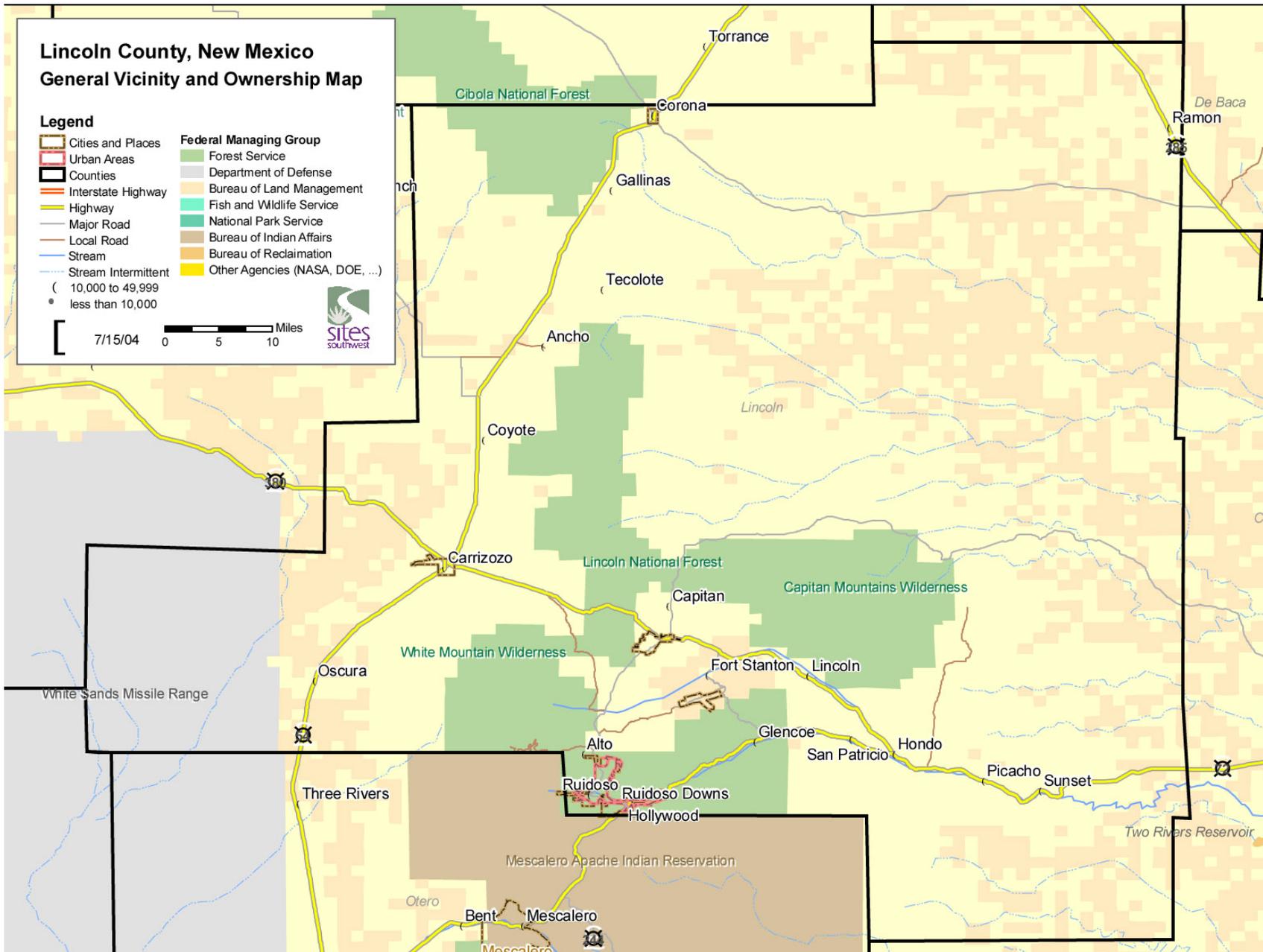
B. Governmental and Regulatory Structure

This section reviews the governmental structure and budget for the City of Ruidoso Downs to determine local capacity for carrying out the recommendations of the comprehensive plan. It also reviews municipal revenue sources and tax structure to evaluate the resources the City has to fund projects on its own.

The City of Ruidoso Downs is governed by an elected mayor and four city councilors. The City has the following departments and staff:

- ▶ City Hall Employees:
 - City Administrator
 - City Clerk/Treasurer
 - Procurement/Asset Control Manager
 - Utility Clerk
 - Secretary/Finance Administration
 - Personnel/Payroll/Loss Control Manager

Figure 1. General Vicinity and Ownership Map



- Utility Clerk
- Secretary/Finance Administration
- ▶ Personnel/Payroll/Loss Control Manager
- ▶ Police Department
 - Ten full-time officers and 8 non-commissioned employees
- ▶ Fire Department
 - Two paid, full-time firefighters, 14 volunteers, and five PD/FD officers
- ▶ Public Works Department
- ▶ Planning and Zoning Department
 - Code Enforcement Supervisor
 - Code Enforcement Secretary
 - Departments:
 - Animal Control
 - Building Permits
 - Code Enforcement
 - Emergency Management
 - Flood Plains Management

The City also has a Planning and Zoning Committee with a chairman and four committee members. This committee is appointed by the Mayor, subject to approval by City Council.

The City of Ruidoso Downs had municipal receipts of \$3,401,359 in FY 2004 from a variety of sources. Gross receipts taxes provided 60.7 percent of the total. Utilities charges accounted for another 17.7 percent. Property taxes accounted for 4.3 percent of the total. State and federal grants and other assistance accounted for 2.9 percent of total municipal receipts.

Ruidoso Downs had municipal disbursements of \$3,553,766 in FY 2004. The largest portion of the budget – 57.8 percent – went to the general fund for public safety, executive/legislative functions, financial administration, planning and zoning functions, fire and ambulance services, parks and recreation, and streets and drainage (among others). Enterprise fund (utility) expenditures accounted for another 25.1 percent of the budget. The remainder covered municipal streets, fire protection, promotional activities, emergency medical services, and senior citizens services.

Ruidoso Downs has a gross receipts tax rate of 6.3125%, which is in the middle of the range for New Mexico municipalities. (Ruidoso has the highest rate at 7.1875% while Lovington Industrial Parks has the lowest at 5.2500%). The municipal portion of the rate is 1.5625% and the County portion 0.2500%. The remainder goes to the State of New Mexico, which returns 1.225% to all municipalities in the state. In FY 2004, the City received a total of \$2,359,765 in gross receipts tax revenues on \$94,062,630 in taxable gross receipts generated by business activity in Ruidoso Downs.

The property tax rate within the City limits is 23.566 mils for residential property and 29.713 mils for nonresidential property. (A mil is one dollar per \$1,000 of net taxable value). These revenues primarily fund county operations and debt service and the school district. Ruidoso Downs itself imposes a property tax of 5.368 mils for residential and 7.274 mils for nonresidential property to

generate revenues for the City (it has the authority to levy a rate of 7.650 mils, but the current rate is capped by statutory yield control limitations). Property tax revenues in FY 2004 were \$158,724.

Ruidoso Downs had a General Obligation (G.O.) bonding capacity of \$1,008,422 as of June 30, 2003, or four percent of the net taxable value of \$25,210,541. According to the NM Department of Finance and Administration there were general purpose G.O. bonds outstanding.

The City had \$45,000 in outstanding Gross Receipts Tax revenue bonds and \$386,000 in other types of revenue bonds as of June 30, 2004.

The City collected \$116,851 in lodger's tax receipts in FY 2004. This money is used for promotion and advertising for special events, promotional items, and the City's web site. Non-promotional projects include improvements to All American Park, and will be used in the future to benefit other recreational attractions.

C. Adopted Policies and Plans

1. City of Ruidoso Downs Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP), October 2002

The Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan outlines the goals and priorities for improving and upgrading the current infrastructure system in Ruidoso Downs. These goals and priorities are discussed and ranked in priority order by the City Council. The 2003-2007 Capital Improvement goals and project priorities are as follows:

- ▶ Provide an adequate amount of clean water for our citizens, visitors and fire protection, as indicated in the recently completed Water Master Plan.
- ▶ Develop an alternate water source in case of continued sole-source spring failure, as indicated in the recently completed Water Master Plan.
- ▶ Upgrade the wastewater treatment plant to meet all federal and state standards and provide for experienced growth in population and tourism.
- ▶ Implement our recently completed Drainage Master Plan to alleviate flooding problems throughout the City.
- ▶ Provide paved streets with proper drainage to the entire City.
- ▶ Provide prompt, quality emergency services to citizens and visitors in the City.
- ▶ Provide quality, cost-effective services to the citizens of Ruidoso Downs.
- ▶ Provide clean parks with ample recreational facilities for all citizens and visitors of Ruidoso Downs.
- ▶ Provide all homes in the City with sanitary sewer service.

2. Infrastructure Master Plans

The City has adopted Master Plans for water and drainage systems and is in the process of completing Wastewater Master Plan. These documents are described in Section III. Infrastructure.

3. Article 12 – City of Ruidoso Downs Planning and Zoning Ordinance

The Subdivision ordinance was adopted in July 2001 to regulate the division of lands within the City boundaries and to ensure the proper planning and development of the City. The ordinance provides development regulations on platting procedures and design standards for lot dimensions, grading and drainage, street layouts, water facilities, sewage, sidewalks, and installation of utilities.

4. City Ordinance 2000-01

This ordinance governs the excavation in, tunneling under or disturbance of the surface of any street, alley or other compacted traveling surface within the limits of the City of Ruidoso Downs. The ordinance requires any entity that desires to tunnel under or to make any excavation in any street or traveling surface to obtain a permit and comply with the terms of the permit.

5. City of Ruidoso Downs Building and Zoning Code (Chapter 9)

Specific requirements of the Building and Zoning Code are summarized below.

Article 1 – Electrical Code

The City of Ruidoso Downs requires that all electrical wiring of any sort or type within the limits of the City shall fully conform to the National Electrical Code and adopted by the National Fire Protection Association.

Article 2 – Fire Prevention Code

This article requires the City of Ruidoso Downs to have a Fire Prevention Code for governing conditions hazardous to life and property from fire and explosion.

Article 3 – Excavation

The purpose of this article is to eliminate unwarranted and unsatisfactory excavation in, or tunneling under, any public street, alley or other public place in the City and to place this control under the City Street Department.

Article 4 – Moving of Buildings

The City of Ruidoso Downs allows no building or other structure to be moved on the streets or alleys of the City unless the person desiring to move such building or structure shall first by written petition to the Board of Trustees secure a permit to move the building or structure.

Article 5 – Building Code

The City of Ruidoso Downs requires all construction, demolition, repairs and maintenance of buildings and structures to comply with the New Mexico Uniform Building Code.

Article 6 – Plumbing and Gas Code

The City of Ruidoso Downs requires the minimum standards regulating the installation of plumbing and gas systems including appliances within the City based on compliance with the Plumbing Code and Natural Gas Code of the State of New Mexico

Article 7 – Flood Hazard Regulations

The New Mexico state legislature has delegated to local governments the responsibility to adopt regulations to minimize losses due to floods. In 1982 the City of Ruidoso Downs developed flood hazard regulations to address these concerns. These regulations were created to protect public health and safety, to minimize rescue and relief efforts, to reduce public expenditures, to ensure appropriate development and to minimize damage to public facilities. Based on these principles, the City adopted the following five methods to accomplish their goals.

- ▶ Restrict or prohibit uses that are dangerous to health, safety or property in times of flood, or which cause excessive increases in flood heights or velocities.
- ▶ Require that uses vulnerable to floods, including facilities which serve such uses, be protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction.
- ▶ Control the alteration of natural floodplains, streams, channels and natural protective barriers which are involved in the accommodation of floodwaters.
- ▶ Control filling, grading, dredging and other development which may increase flood damage.
- ▶ Prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert floodwaters or which may increase flood hazards to other lands.

Article 8 – Signs and Outdoor Displays

The purpose of the sign code is to regulate signage within the city limits to provide uniform standards and safety measures, to maintain a neat and pleasant-appearing environment and to provide tax revenues. This ordinance permits by right outdoor advertising signs in the C-1, PD, PC-C and PD zoning districts. The sign ordinance sets forth regulations on signage based on classification, structural and design requirements, spacing and permitting.

Article 9 – Mobile Home Regulations

The City of Ruidoso Downs restricts the use of mobile homes within the city limits. Mobile homes require a permit from the City Clerk's Office and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Article 10 – Zoning and Land Use

The planning and zoning ordinance was adopted by the City Council in 2001 to regulate the use of land within city limits. This ordinance establishes eight residential zones, four commercial zones and one industrial zone. Within each zone, certain uses are permitted by right while other conditional uses require review and approval by the Planning Commission. The zoning and land use ordinance also provides for planned unit developments through the use of overlay zones. A description of each zone and their uses follows.

General districts

- ▶ **R-1 - *Single-Family Residential District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for the development of low density, single-family detached dwellings (gross residential densities of not more than four dwelling units per acre) and related accessory uses. Permitted uses include: single-family detached dwellings and public parks. Conditional

uses include: day care centers; electrical substations, gas regulating stations, water pump stations and lift stations; public buildings; churches; schools; and bed-and-breakfasts. Permitted accessory uses include: private garages, greenhouses, tool houses, sheds and other storage areas for domestic supplies, swimming pools and tennis courts, home occupations, and TV and radio-receiving facilities.

- ▶ **R-2 - Two-Family Residential District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for the development of low-density, single-family detached dwellings; two-family dwellings (gross residential densities of not more than seven units per acre) and related accessory uses. Permitted uses include: single-family detached dwellings, two-family detached dwellings, and public parks. Conditional uses include all conditional uses permitted in R-1. Permitted accessory uses include all uses allowed in R-1.
- ▶ **R-3 - Multiple-Family Residential District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide high-density housing in multi-family dwellings (gross residential densities of up to 14 units per acre) and related accessory uses. Permitted uses include: single and two-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings not to exceed six units or 135 linear feet, and public parks. Conditional uses include all conditional uses permitted in R-1 and group homes. Permitted accessory uses include all uses allowed in R-1.
- ▶ **R-4 - High-Density Residential District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide high-density housing in multi-family structures (gross residential densities of up to 20 units per acre) and related accessory uses. Permitted uses include: multi-family structures containing four or more dwelling units, and townhouse clusters or condominiums of at least four units, but not more than 170 feet in length. Conditional uses include all conditional uses permitted in R-1 and group homes. Permitted accessory uses include all uses allowed in R-1.
- ▶ **AR-1 - Agricultural/Residential District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to allow agricultural uses such as farming and ranching and single-family detached dwellings and related accessory uses. Permitted uses include: farms and ranches and single-family residences. Conditional uses include: churches and schools; electrical substations, gas regulating stations, water pump stations and lift stations; public buildings; radio, TV or microwave transmission towers. Permitted accessory structures include: all structures accessory to farming and ranching; private garages; tool houses, sheds and other storage areas for domestic supplies; swimming pools and tennis courts; TV and radio-receiving facilities; and private stables.
- ▶ **AR-2 - Agricultural/Medium Density Residential District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to allow agricultural uses such as farming and ranching and single-family detached dwellings and related accessory uses while allowing smaller minimum lot sizes than AR-1. All permitted uses, conditional uses and accessory structures are the same as in the AR-1 zoning district. The AR-2 district permits no livestock other than horses, up to 8 horses per acre, and no confined animal feeding operations.

- ▶ **M-1 - *Low-Density Mobile Home District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to promote affordable housing by permitting low-density mobile home developments (gross residential densities of not more than four dwelling units per acre). Permitted uses include: mobile homes, and single-family detached dwellings. Conditional uses include all conditional uses permitted in R-1. Permitted accessory uses include all uses allowed in R-1.

- ▶ **M-2 - *Medium-Density Mobile Home District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to promote affordable housing by permitting medium-density mobile home developments (gross residential densities of not more than ten units per acre). Permitted uses include: mobile homes, and single-family detached dwellings. Conditional uses include all conditional uses permitted in R-1. Permitted accessory uses include all uses allowed in R-1.

- ▶ **C-1 - *Neighborhood Commercial District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for convenient retail outlets in predominately residential areas. Permitted uses include: antique and arts and crafts stores; art studios or galleries; retail bakeries; barbershops; beauty shops; hotels and motels not to exceed 50 units; candy and ice cream stores; convenience stores not to exceed 2,000 square feet; branch libraries; drugstores, variety stores and notion and soft goods stores not to exceed 2,000 square feet; professional offices not more than 2,000 square feet; public buildings; self-service laundries and cleaning pick-up stations; and restaurants. Conditional uses include: conditional uses permitted in R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4; convenience food stores with no more than four gas pumps; resident health care facilities; hotels and motels over 50 units; mini warehouses; and commercial stables and outfitters.

- ▶ **C-2 - *Community Commercial District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for low-intensity retail or service outlets. Permitted uses include: All uses allowed in C-1. Conditional uses include: automobile, boat and RV sales and supplies; banks; churches; exercise facilities; public and utility services; hotels, motels and cabin rentals; offices; radio and TV studios; rental stores; restaurants and bars; retail sales and services; schools; automobile service stations; car washes; convenience food restaurants; drive-in theaters; campgrounds; mini warehouses; public utilities services; auditoriums; nightclubs; theaters; arcades; swimming pools; tattoo parlors; lumberyards; adult businesses, commercial stables; mobile vending stands; animal hospitals; and dressmakers.

- ▶ **C-3 - *Midtown Commercial District*:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for commercial retail and service establishments with integrated multi-family residential, entertainment and public parking facilities in the "Midtown" area of the city. Permitted uses include all permitted uses in C-2 zone. Conditional uses include: convenience restaurants, day care centers, residential uses permitted in the R-4 district, radio and TV towers, attached one- and two-bedroom apartments with associated business, and mobile vending stands.

- ▶ **C-4 - Heavy Commercial District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for construction-oriented businesses and service operations. Permitted uses include: contractor's offices, shops and yards; feed, grain and related sales and storage; building materials sales and storage; exterior storage of goods and materials; automobile service stations; car washes; heavy equipment sales and service; warehousing, storage and distribution of bulk goods; auto repair, paint and body shops; heavy equipment service and repair; mini storage units; tire sales, repair and service; freight houses or truck terminals; and automobile, boat and RV sales and service. Conditional uses include: kennels, stables, RV parks, amusement parks, wrecker service, recycling centers, any permitted use in the C-2 zone except residential, radio and TV towers, and mobile home parks.

- ▶ **I-1 - Industrial District:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for the development of storage, warehousing, industrial and office uses. Permitted uses include: all uses permitted in the C-4 zone; production, testing and processing facilities; car washes; auto repair and service; building material sales and storage; bulk storage on non explosive liquids; contractors offices, shops and yards; dog kennels; railroad tracks and passenger stations; restaurants; stadiums and arenas; trade schools; and sales or rental lots. Conditional uses include: airports; sewage treatment plants; theaters and drive-ins; campgrounds; any permitted use in the C-2 zone; feed, grain and fertilizer sales; and propane or butane storage less than 350 gallons.

Special districts:

- ▶ **PUD - Planned Unit Development District Overlay Zone:** The purpose of the Planned Unit Development District is to allow for flexibility in applying the zoning code throughout the City, promote infill of vacant lands, and locate housing, recreation, shops, offices and industrial uses convenient to each other. The Planned Unit Development Districts are composed of the following overlay zones:

- ▶ **R-PUD - Residential Planned Unit Development:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for residential and commercial development and allows the permitted uses in the R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4 and C-1 districts containing at least 70 percent residential uses. The Planning Commission determines the density per project, but it shall not exceed 25 units per acre.

- ▶ **C-PUD - Commercial Planned Unit Development:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for commercial and residential uses. C-PUD allows the permitted uses in the C-1, C-2 and C-3 and all permitted uses in R-1, R-2, R-3 and R-4 with residential not to exceed 50 percent of the development area.

- ▶ **M-PUD - Mixed Use Planned Unit Development:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for mixed use development in any combination of land uses integrally developed under one concept and shall be permitted in any zone or combination of zones. The mixed use development is to be approved by the Planning Commission and not to exceed 25 residential units per acre.

- **I-PUD – Industrial Planned Unit Developments:** The purpose of this zoning district is to provide for industrial development and allows the permitted uses in the I-1 and C-4 districts only and may include conditional uses in the I-1 and C-4 districts upon Planning Commission approval.

Article 11 - Lot and Structure Numbering

The City of Ruidoso Downs requires that all lots, buildings and structures in the City shall be numbered in accordance with a plan adopted by the City Board of Trustees. The City Clerk shall keep a map showing the proper street number of every lot in the City.

6. Comprehensive Plan, Ruidoso – Ruidoso Downs, 1976

The existing plan, adopted in 1976, identified goals for public services, natural resources, economic development and ongoing planning. Plan elements included land use, annexation, circulation, open space and recreation, public services and utilities and housing. The plan for the Villages envisioned small, self-contained communities with planned future growth through scheduled annexations. The plan envisioned low densities and significant open space. The City of Ruidoso Downs' dependence on U.S. 70 and the need for completion of a collector roadway system was identified in the plan, and the plan recommended that developers be required to provide paved access to subdivisions.

The highest priority capital improvements projects for Ruidoso Downs were expansion of water and sewer facilities, and the construction of a civic facility, which were ranked as urgent needs. Drainage improvements, traffic control and road paving were identified as necessary.

The 1976 plan will be replaced by the 2004 plan.

7. Draft ETZ Ordinance, May 2003

The draft ETZ ordinance, when adopted by the City and Lincoln County, will set land use policy for the area within one mile of the City limits. The intent is to establish standards for areas that are contiguous to the City limits and may be annexed in the future. As areas are annexed into the City limits, the ETZ designations will become the City zoning classifications.

8. Local Economic Development Act (Ordinance No. 2004-01)

This ordinance established the eight-member Local Economic Development Board, which is charged with representing the City of Ruidoso Downs on all economic developments efforts of the City. The Board is designated to meet and negotiate with prospects, and is the entity that will develop and carry out community business plans.

D. Population and Demographics

1. Existing Population

According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, the City of Ruidoso Downs had a population of 1,824 people, an increase of 98.3 percent over the 1990 figure of 920 people. The 2000 population count omitted residents in the areas of Colorado, Wood Lane and Inspiration Heights. The City estimates its population to be 2,300 to 2,400. Population growth in Ruidoso Downs has been significantly faster than the State of New Mexico as a whole, where growth for the same 10-year period was 20.1 percent. Population characteristics are shown in detail in Table 11 in the Appendix.

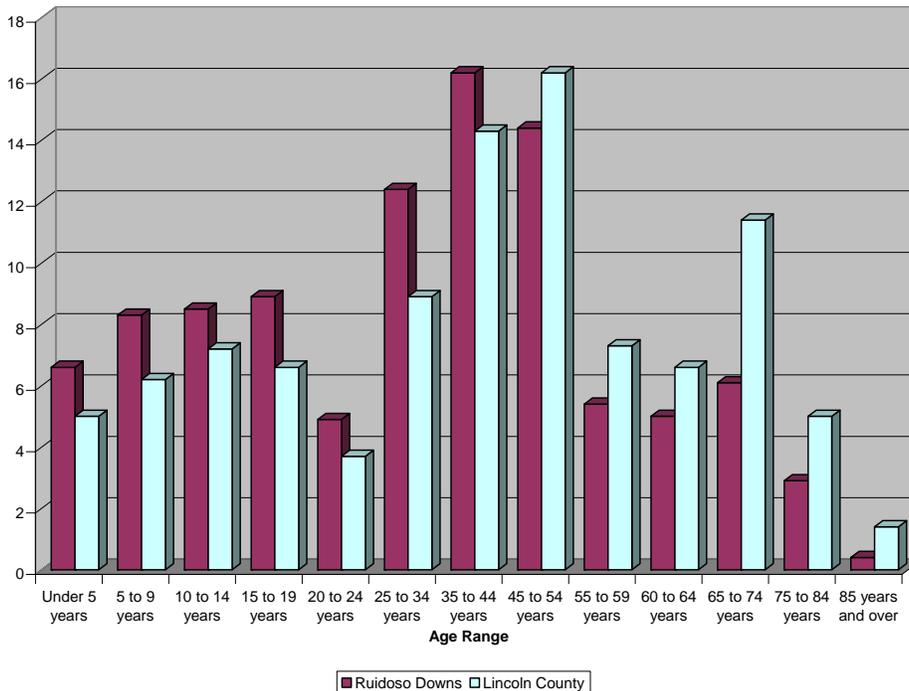
In addition to the year-round population counted by the Census, over 150 homes in Ruidoso Downs are for seasonal use. The seasonal population increases the total population during peak tourist seasons.

The regional population of approximately 25,000 provides a market for retail and service businesses located in Ruidoso Downs.

2. Age

The median age for residents of Ruidoso Downs was 35.2 years old, slightly higher than the statewide figure of 34.6 years old. City residents 18 years or older make up 70.9 percent of the total population, compared with 72.0 percent for the State as a whole. Residents 62 years and older make up 12.0 percent of the total population, compared with 14.0 percent statewide. Ruidoso Downs' population is younger, on average, than the population of Lincoln County, as shown in Figure 2 and in the Appendix.

Figure 2. Age Distribution of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County Residents, 2000



3. Race and Ethnicity

Table 11 in the Appendix shows race and ethnicity characteristics of the City. When compared to Lincoln County, Ruidoso Downs is more racially and ethnically diverse – more similar to New Mexico’s demographic makeup than to its immediate region.

4. Households

The average City household had 2.68 persons and the average family had 3.09 persons, close to the statewide figures of 2.63 persons and 3.18 persons, respectively. Ruidoso Downs had a total of 680 households in 2000. Of these, 72.2 percent were family households (i.e., the members are related by blood or marriage) and 27.8 percent are non-family households. This ratio is slightly higher than that of the State as a whole, where 68.8 percent of households are family households and the remaining 31.2 percent are non-family households. In 2000 39.0 percent of all families had their own children less than 18 years of age living in the house, somewhat higher than the statewide figure of 34.7 percent and significantly higher than Lincoln County. Ruidoso Downs has a correspondingly low percentage of retirement age households.

Table 1. 2000 Household Characteristics of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County

Household Characteristics	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE				
Total households	680	100.0	8202	100.0
Family households (families)	491	72.2	5631	68.7
With own children under 18 years	265	39.0	2152	26.2
Married-couple family	332	48.8	4562	55.6
With own children under 18 years	157	23.1	1465	17.9
Female householder, no husband present	118	17.4	761	9.3
With own children under 18 years	82	12.1	501	6.1
Nonfamily households	189	27.8	2571	31.3
Householder living alone	144	21.2	2193	26.7
Householder 65 years and over	35	5.1	823	10.0
Households with individuals under 18 years	296	43.5	2404	29.3
Households with individuals 65 years and over	128	18.8	2446	29.8
Average household size	2.68		2.34	
Average family size	3.09		2.80	

5. Population Growth

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of New Mexico projects that Lincoln County will grow in population from 19,411 people in 2000 to 29,715 people in 2030. This is an overall 30-year growth rate of 53.1 percent. If the Lincoln County growth rate of 53.1 percent is applied to Ruidoso Downs, the City population would be projected to grow from 1,824 people in 2000 to 2,236 people in 2010, 2,547 people in 2020, and 2,792 people in 2030. This could be considered the conservative growth trend for Ruidoso Downs (shown in Table 2 below).

Table 2. Population Growth Projections with Conservative Growth Trend

Conservative Growth Projection	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
Population by Year	Number	Percent Growth	Number	Percent Growth
1990	920	-	12219	-
2000	1824	98.3	19411	58.9
2010	2236	22.6	23792	22.6
2020	2547	13.9	27100	13.9
2030	2792	9.6	29715	9.6
Overall Growth 2000-2030		53.1		53.1

An intermediate level of growth can be projected using the 1990 to 2000 Ruidoso Downs growth rate of 98.3 percent compared to the Lincoln County growth rate of 58.9 percent. The City growth rate was 1.694 times greater than the County from 1990 to 2000. An intermediate level of growth in Ruidoso Downs can be projected by applying the 1.694 multiplier to projected Lincoln County growth rates in each 10-year interval from 2000 to 2030. This would project the City population growing from 1,824 in 2000 to 2,523 in 2010, 3,118 in 2020, and 3,626 in 2030. Figures for this intermediate projection are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Population Growth Projections with Intermediate Growth Rates

Moderate Growth Projection	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
Population by Year	Number	Percent Growth	Number	Percent Growth
1990	920	-	12219	-
2000	1824	98.3	19411	58.9
2010	2523	38.3	23792	22.6
2020	3118	23.6	27100	13.9
2030	3626	16.3	29715	9.6
Overall Growth 2000-2030		98.8		53.1

The Ruidoso Downs 1990 to 2000 growth rate of 98.3 percent can be used to develop a very aggressive growth trend. Using this rate of growth forward for each 10 year cohort to 2030, the City population could be projected to grow from 1,824 in 2000 to 3,617 in 2010, 7,172 in 2020 and 14,223 in 2030. This represents an overall growth rate of 680.0 percent from 2000 to 2030. This high rate of growth is extremely optimistic but could be useful for general planning and infrastructure capacity planning purposes. This data is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Population Growth Projections with Aggressive Growth Rates

Aggressive Growth Projection	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
	Number	Percent Growth	Number	Percent Growth
1990	920	-	12219	-
2000	1824	98.3	19411	58.9
2010	3617	98.3	23792	22.6
2020	7172	98.3	27100	13.9
2030	14223	98.3	29715	9.6
Overall Growth 2000-2030		680.0		53.1

E. Planning Process and Public Participation

1. City of Ruidoso Downs Public Meeting Input – December 4, 2003

A public meeting was held in the City of Ruidoso Downs to obtain input from residents regarding issues and concerns facing the community. This meeting was held on Thursday, December 4, 2003, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Senior Center and was attended by more than 20 residents. The first part of the meeting was an open house where residents could spend time reviewing infrastructure maps and background information about the community and ask any questions. Then, the planning consultants explained the elements of a comprehensive plan and reviewed the evening’s agenda and the objectives of the meeting. Next, the meeting was split into two groups and the consultants led participants in a community analysis identifying the values, strengths, needed improvements, opportunities, threats, and future vision for the City of Ruidoso Downs. Their answers were recorded on flip charts and later rearranged into the categories below. Participants were instructed to indicate their agreement with comments made during the public meeting by placing green dots next to issues on the recorded sheets. The vote totals are shown in parentheses.

- **Strengths:** The residents of Ruidoso Downs value the many characteristics typical of a small, close-knit community: the people, the lack of congestion and traffic, the blend of rural and residential, and the affordable housing and taxes. The laid-back character of Ruidoso Downs is enhanced by its convenient location near a major highway, a pleasant climate, clean air, nearby services including Wal-Mart, and many local recreation opportunities. Further enhancing the City’s prosperity is Ruidoso Downs’ less restrictive building codes and lower sales and property taxes than the adjacent Ruidoso, plus major tourist attractions like Ruidoso Downs Racetrack, Billy the Kid Casino, and the Hubbard Museum of the American West.
- **Vision:** The residents’ long-term vision includes a community center with an Olympic-size pool, affordable housing and health insurance, the appearance of a clean community, development of an annual City event, and more senior services as well as youth programs and activities. Growth is expected to increase the population, provide tourists and locals with more activities; boost revenues to support better roads, water,

and waste facilities; and create more employment opportunities that pay higher wages. Residents support limited regulations to preserve the rural, small town character.

- **Land Use/City Ordinances:** Major land use issues include code enforcement, residents' not taking pride in their properties, and the need for properties to be cleaned up. Residents did note that one of the biggest strengths in the City was that building codes in Ruidoso Downs were less restrictive than those in the adjacent Village of Ruidoso. Another strength was the addition of a new code enforcement officer, which should lead to the needed improvements residents addressed.
 - Strengths: Fewer building code restrictions than Ruidoso (4G), fewer restrictions on home businesses (1G), only place to grow in the area (1G), acreage around water source – potential for open space, new code enforcement officer
 - Needed improvements: Better enforcement of ordinances and for beautification (3G), people need to take pride in their properties (2G), property clean-up and fix-up (1G), fix/remodel existing housing stock (1G), no trash, weed, litter ordinance

- **Infrastructure/Utilities:** Residents identified new roads, obtaining more and better quality water, improving the existing water system and development of a new and improved wastewater treatment center as major infrastructure requirements. The development of the 40-year water plan was recognized as a major strength and should help to guide future water issues for the City.
 - Strengths: 40-year water plan (4G), Hwy 70 (2G), water and sewer (1G), better supply of water than Ruidoso
 - Needed improvements: Roads (5G), more water (5G), sidewalks along Hwy 70 (4G), fire line and defensive perimeter around City (4G), septic systems to sewer system (3G), water system needs improvement (3G), quality of water (3G), sewer system (2G), new wastewater treatment plant (2G), curbs, gutters, and better drainage (2G), move solid waste out of town (1G), paving (1G)
 - Opportunities: Highway improvement – better driving conditions
 - Threats: Water rights (2G), highway improvement – creates more traffic

- **Community Services/Facilities:** The largest single tally vote for any issue was in support of a new community center with an Olympic-size pool. Residents also emphasized that more activities are needed for young people as well as new neighborhood parks and a city plaza. Residents indicated that existing City facilities are in good condition and that the current City staff (City Manager, City Clerk, and Mayor) is doing a good job. It was also noted that there is an opportunity and need for a safe house for women and children within the community.
 - Strengths: Parks and ball fields (1G), gymnastics program (1G), City facilities and services in good shape – police, fire (1G), recent purchase of 15 acres of

- land on river available for park, current City Manager, current City Clerk, Mayor, senior program-meals/center, new grade school proposed
- ▶ Needed improvements: New community center – big or small with pool (22G), more activities for young people (11G), neighborhood parks (4G), car bridge over the river (4G), city plaza (3G), pedestrian bridge across Hwy (3G), school in community – public or private (2G), quarterly town clean-ups (2G), more and centrally located roll-offs/dumpsters (1G), nature walks/trail on City's 80 acres (1G), new City Hall, better recycling – city program
 - ▶ Opportunities: Safe house for women and children (4G), satellite health lab with home visits
 - ▶ Threats: Lack of transportation/public transit
- **Economic Development:** The City has a strong pro-business attitude. Major economic development issues identified include more business growth, the addition of a family restaurant, an improved Chamber of Commerce, and more tourist attractions. The City possesses many strengths and opportunities for economic growth which include healthy gross tax revenues, an assortment of motels and restaurants, a strong retail base, and existing tourist attractions such as the racetrack and museum.
 - ▶ Strengths: Good gross receipts tax revenues (6G), gateways (2G), motels and restaurants (1G), potential industry/tourism (1G), Ruidoso Downs Racetrack and Billy the Kid Casino (1G), tourist attractions, many independently owned businesses, Wal-Mart, the Hubbard Museum of the American West
 - ▶ Needed improvements: More business growth (5G), family restaurant (4G), Chamber of Commerce needs improving, more diversified tourist attractions, evening restaurant, encourage more and a variety of businesses
 - ▶ Opportunities: Chamber of Commerce (3G), new businesses (1G), more tourist attractions, smaller town with access
 - **Environment:** Most of the comments on the environment centered on the good weather and proximity to forests, the mountains, and the river. Only a few needed improvements were noted, specifically the clean-up of the watershed and more water conservation. Potential environmental conditions like fire, drought, and no snow were all identified as threats.
 - ▶ Strengths: Good weather – warmer than Ruidoso (1G), river, forests, climate, mountains
 - ▶ Needed improvements: Clean-up watershed (1G), water conservation
 - ▶ Threats: Fire (2G), drought, no snow
 - **Miscellaneous:** Miscellaneous issues do not fit into any of the above categories. One of the major concerns residents noted was the needed addition of more affordable rentals and housing. Residents remarked that the people, the small town atmosphere, the diversity, and the population growth were all strengths. Residents expressed some concern, however, that loss of identity could accompany more growth.

- Strengths: Small town atmosphere (4G), affordable housing (2G), small and friendly (1G), people (1G), diversity (1G), population growth
- Needed improvements: More and affordable rentals (4G), need better quality, affordable housing (2G)
- Opportunities: Growing independent from Ruidoso
- Threats: Loss of identity, negative image of the community – considered the “slums” or the “other side of the tracks”

2. Second Public Meeting Input – February 5, 2004

A second public meeting was held to allow residents of the area annexed in December 2003 to give their input regarding the comprehensive plan. This meeting was held on Thursday, February 5, 2004, from 6pm to 8pm in the Senior Center. More than 30 people were in attendance.

Since most of the participants had not attended the first public meeting and represented a new perspective, an agenda and procedure similar to the first meeting was followed. Participants were asked to identify the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and to say what they would like the City to be like in 20 years. The meeting comments are summarized below by category. The numbers in parentheses indicate the favorable votes the comments received from participants.

- **What do you value most about the community:** Meeting participants value the City’s small-town atmosphere and friendly people. They noted that it is more affordable to build homes there than in the Village of Ruidoso. Residents of the recently annexed areas mentioned the quiet, low-density character of their community and the restrictive covenants that protect the quality of life in their neighborhoods.
- **Land Use and Community Character:** Meeting participants strongly agreed that the City needs to be cleaned up. They called for stricter enforcement of City codes and ordinances regarding trash, litter and weeds.

Residents of the recently annexed Agua Fria subdivision said that they would like to see the rural character and quality of life of their community preserved; e.g., no sidewalks or street lights, larger lots, an open Southwestern feel, and the presence of wildlife.

A number of people also showed support for creating a town plaza and a river walk.

- Strengths: The quality of annexed area’s subdivisions (1)
- Needed Improvements: Cleanup City (33); better enforcement of ordinances (18); downtown with plaza and river walk (6); develop architectural standards for the City(5); take advantage of the river (1)
- Opportunities: Continuing growth (1)
- Threats: Continuing growth (1)
- Vision: Responsible property owners keep their properties clean (11); wildlife is present in the community (7); controlled growth (5); preserve/set aside open

space throughout the entire City (3); maintain rural quality of life in annexed areas (3)

- **Transportation:** Participants identified road paving, the installation of a traffic light in front of the fire station, and the construction of a bridge across the Rio Ruidoso as the main improvement needs for the City's transportation network.
 - Strengths: Location on U.S. 70 (1)
 - Needed Improvements: Pave roads in annexed area (14); install traffic light in front of Fire Station (7); establish better connections between the City and the newly annexed areas, i.e., roads, bridges (1)

- **Infrastructure:** Participants identified water, sewer, and drainage improvements as major infrastructure requirements. Many who live in the Agua Fria subdivision indicated that they would like to see those systems extended into the recently annexed areas.
 - Strengths: The City's water system (1)
 - Needed Improvements: City sewer system (24); City water system (10); extend sewer system to annexed areas (7); extend water system to annexed areas (7); install streetlights in annexed areas (3); drainage improvements in Agua Fria and citywide (2)
 - Threats: Availability of water; lack of infrastructure in place

- **Housing:** A number of participants said that the City needs more affordable housing.
 - Needed Improvements: More affordable housing (4)

- **Economic Development:** Residents said that the City needs more family restaurants.
 - Strengths: Location on U.S. 70 will encourage commercial development (3); new chamber of commerce (2)
 - Needed Improvements: new family restaurants (8); more shopping in the City (1)
 - Opportunities: Tourism (2)

- **Community Facilities and Services:** Residents identified the completion of the All-America Park and the establishment of a community center and public pool as important needs for the City.

A number of residents of Agua Fria said that they now expect the City to extend basic services to the annexed areas- police and fire protection, trash pick-up, and animal control.

- ▶ Needed Improvements: Improved services, including police, fire, animal control, and trash pick-up (17); establish a paid fire department (10); completed All-America Park (7); community center and pool (5); mobile City library unit (4); day care services (4); health clinic (1)
- **Miscellaneous Comments:** Several people from the annexed area said they would just like to be left alone by the City.
 - ▶ Strengths: Property values/tax base in the annexed areas (4)
 - ▶ Needs for improvement: Shuttle service to tourist areas (3)
 - ▶ Vision: Ruidoso Downs as a family community with lots of children and plenty of things for them to do (9), more citizen participation (8), more of a home town and open government (7), a single cohesive community that works for the common good (2)

II. Land Use

The Land Use element of the comprehensive plan addresses the overall physical form of the community. It considers the location of the principal land uses, including residential, commercial, office, industrial, institutional, and public land uses, as well as the amount of land that they occupy. It also examines how the community is growing and suggests strategies to meet that growth.

The community's evolving physical form has important implications for the other elements of the comprehensive plan. It determines where roads, utilities, and community facilities should be located to properly serve the community's neighborhoods, businesses and institutions. It also suggests appropriate and advantageous locations for new housing and business development.

A. Existing Conditions

1. Principal Land Uses

Figure 3 shows existing land use in the City of Ruidoso Downs. The city covers an area of 1,570 acres. The distribution of land among the main land use categories is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Existing Land Use, City of Ruidoso Downs

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Single-Family Residential	511.6	32.7%
Multi-Family Residential	19.1	1.2%
Mobile Home Park	37.6	2.4%
Commercial	405.0	25.9%
Industrial	42.1	2.7%
Public Institutional	16.5	1.1%
Private Institutional	35.0	2.2%
Vacant Land	442.2	28.2%
Green	19.5	1.2%
Public Right of Way	37.4	2.4%
TOTAL	1565.9	100.0%

Residential land uses cover 36.3 percent of the City's total land area. Over 90 percent of this land area is single family housing. Commercial land uses account for another 25.9 percent of the total. Ruidoso Downs Race Track, at ___ acres, accounts by itself for ___ percent of the city's commercial land. Industrial land makes up just 2.7 percent of the total. This consists largely of a single 44-acre tract of land. Finally, 28.2 percent of the city's land is vacant.

2. Zoning

Figure 4 shows existing zoning in the City of Ruidoso Downs. The distribution of zone categories is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Zoning, City of Ruidoso Downs

Zoning District	Acres	Percent
R1 - Single Family Residential	636.6	40.7%
R3 - Multiple Family Residential	0.5	0.0%
R4 - High Density Residential	14.6	0.9%
AR1 - Agricultural/Residential	205.3	13.1%
AR2 - Agricultural/Medium Density Residential	38.7	2.5%
M1 - Low-Density Mobile Home	73.8	4.7%
M2 - Medium-Density Mobile Home	56.9	3.6%
C1 - Neighborhood Commercial	31.9	2.0%
C2 - Community Commercial	391.8	25.0%
GREEN	19.5	1.2%
I1 - Industrial	57.6	3.7%
P-3	1.5	0.1%
Public Right of Way	37.4	2.4%
TOTAL	1565.9	100.0%

Single-family residential zoning covers 65.5 percent of the City. Almost two-thirds of this is R-1 single-family zoning. Agricultural residential zoning makes up another quarter of the single-family total. Commercial zoning covers 27.0 percent of the City. Just 3.7 percent of the City is zoned industrial.

3. Recent Annexations

In December 2003, the City of Ruidoso Downs annexed about 590 acres of land, mainly along U.S. 70 to the east. This area includes the Agua Fria subdivision, commercial properties along the highway frontage, and residential and agricultural properties along the Rio Ruidoso.

Figure 3. Existing Land Use

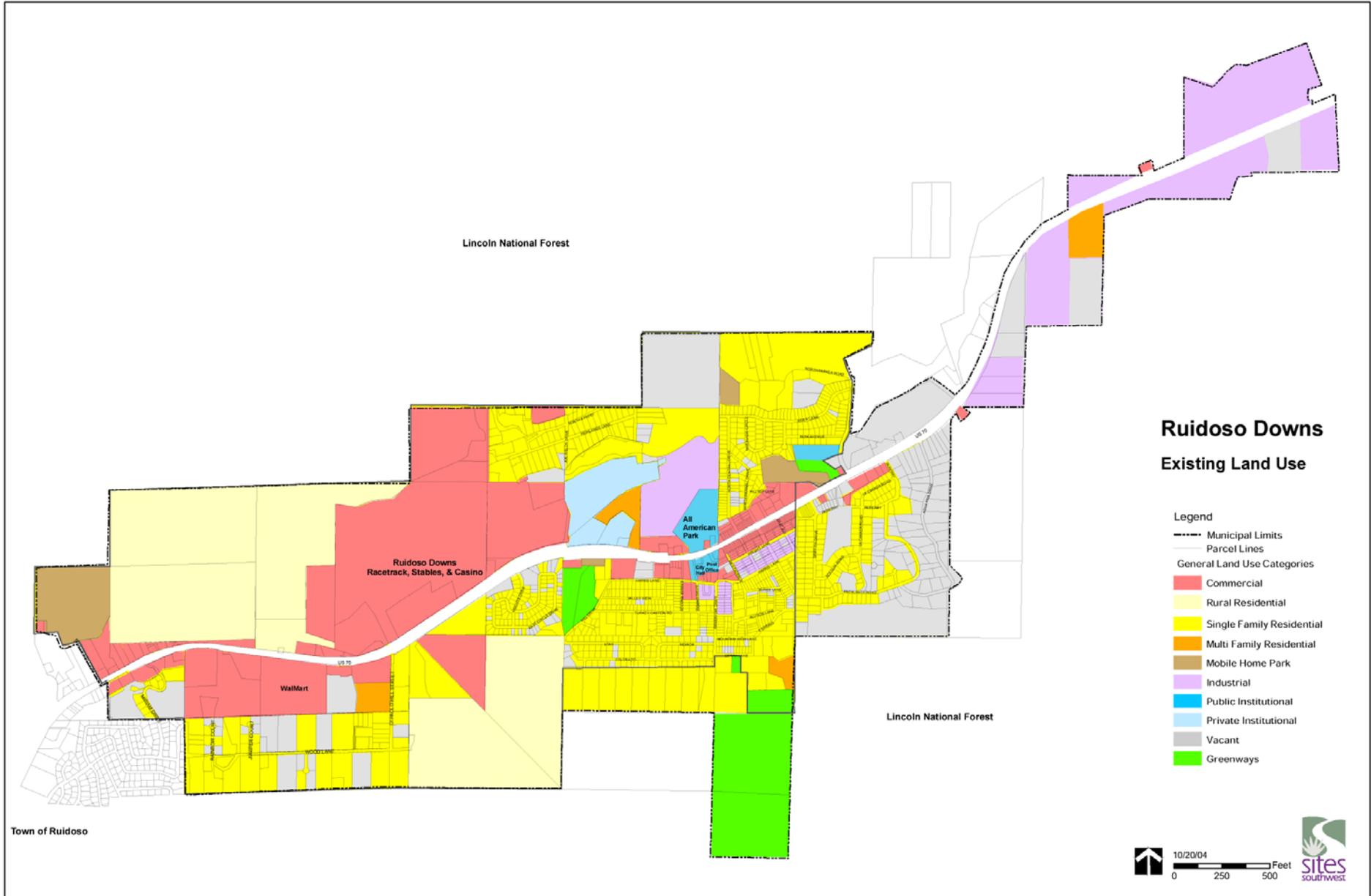
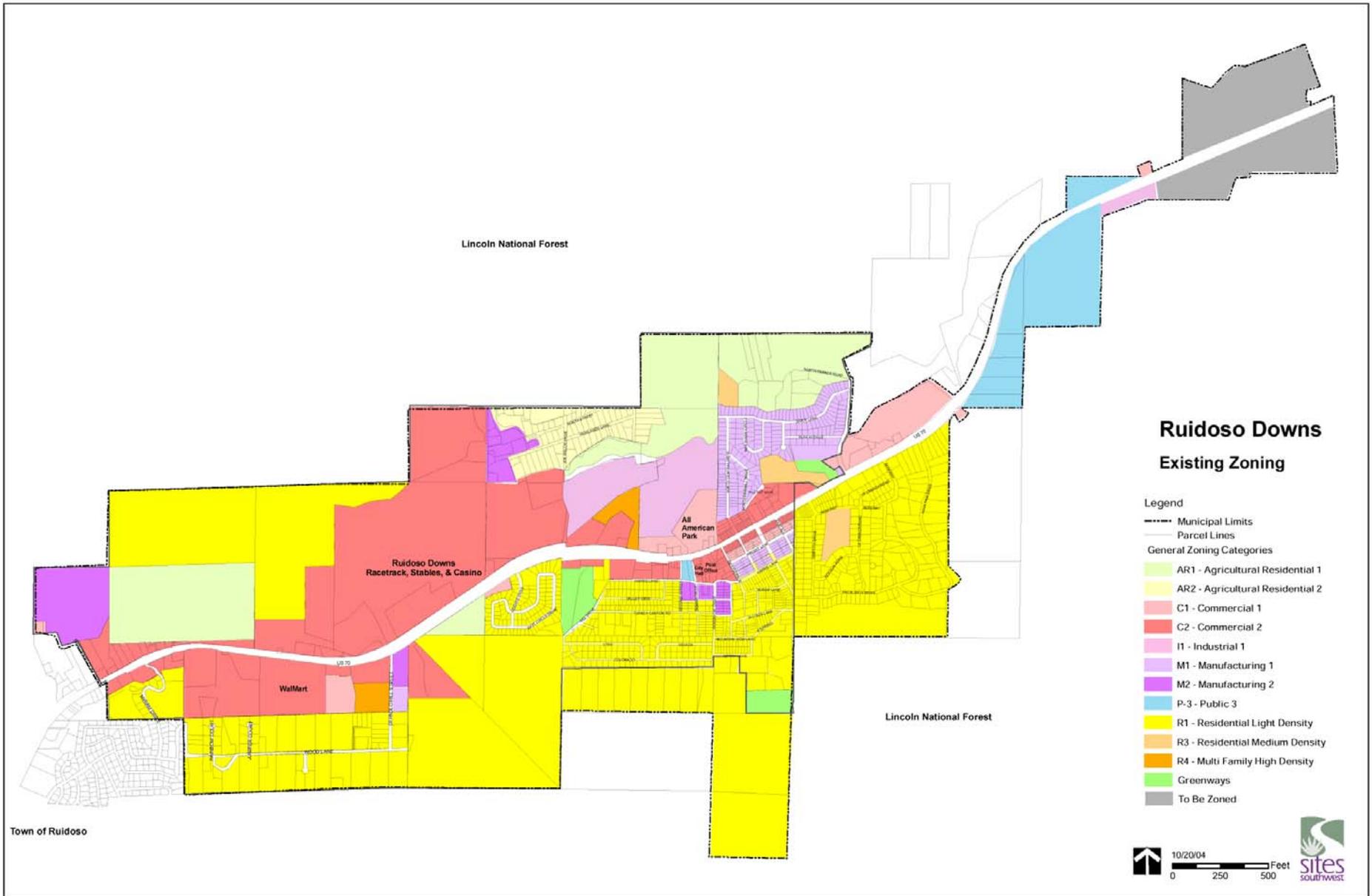


Figure 4. Existing Zoning



4. City Form

The city of Ruidoso Downs gets its distinctive elongated form from the narrow Rio Ruidoso canyon in which it is situated. U.S. Highway 70, running along the bottom of the canyon, forms the central spine of the city, which extends for about 2.3 miles along the road to a depth of about 2,000-3,000 feet on either side of the highway. U.S. 70 also provides the only east-west route through the city.

Commercial uses predominate along the road frontage, interspersed with some vacant land. The result is an intermittent commercial strip that extends the length of the city. There is no distinct city center. Most businesses are set back from the roadway with parking located in front of the building. The largest commercial use – Ruidoso Downs Race Track and its supporting facilities – extends for almost a mile along the north side of the highway in the center of the City. Altogether it covers ___ acres, or ___ percent of the City's total land area. Most of the activities associated with the race track are located near the back of the property, several hundred feet from the roadway.

Residential neighborhoods are generally located behind the commercial areas on the slopes of the canyon, or in the canyon bottom along the river. Manufactured housing and mobile homes are common, and many properties have horse corrals and barns, giving a semi-rural feel to the area.

A few public uses – the City administrative offices, the City fire department, the All-America Park and the senior center – are clustered together on either side of the highway near the intersection of Downs Drive and U.S. 70. These facilities could form the basis of a future city center.

At the western edge of the city, the commercial strip continues without interruption into the Village of Ruidoso; there is no distinct boundary between the two communities. To the east of the City, agricultural uses along the river and miscellaneous commercial uses along the highway frontage continue.

B. Public Preferences

Several participants complained about the condition of properties in the City. They expressed support for improved code enforcement and efforts to encourage owners to clean up their properties. A number of residents also advocated the continued presence of wildlife in the community and called for setting aside land for open space.

C. Future Land Use

The population growth scenarios presented previously show that the City of Ruidoso Downs should grow by between 968 and 1,802 people from 2000 to 2030. Using the City's current average household size of 2.68 people, the number of additional households in Ruidoso Downs will range from 361 to 672 households. Assuming an average lot size of one-quarter acre, the amount of land required to accommodate this

population growth would range from about 90 to 168 acres. Assuming an average lot size of one acre, the amount of land required would range from about 360 to 670 acres.

Ruidoso Downs currently has about 440 acres of vacant land within the municipal limits. Much of this land, however, is characterized by steep slopes that would make development expensive or (in some cases) impractical (see Figure 5).

One of the major factors in Ruidoso Downs' future growth is its strategic location on U.S. 70. Recent improvements to this highway have provided the community with better access. As the mid-point between Ruidoso and Tularosa, Ruidoso Downs is well located to serve the needs of travelers along the highway.

A limited amount of land with frontage onto U.S. 70 remains undeveloped within the City's pre-annexation boundary. Here, too, the presence of steep slopes may place constraints on future development, particularly west of the race track. North of the highway, the terrain slopes down sharply toward the river, while to the south it climbs up abruptly into the surrounding foothills. The Wal-Mart site, however which was cut into a steep hillside on the south side of U.S. 70, shows that large-scale, highly-capitalized commercial development is potentially feasible under these conditions.

The overall concept for the future development of the City is shown in Figure 6. This shows the location of the city center, trail locations and the primary tourist and entertainment district. Proposed future land use is shown in Figure 7.

D. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Provide for the orderly and fiscally responsible growth of the City.

Objective 1. Annex land into the City limits as needed to meet the needs of the growing population.

Strategy 1. Amend the annexation policy contained within the zoning code to specify general categories of priority for expansion of the community. Areas outside of the City should be classified for immediate, medium-term, or long-term annexation and development according to the following criteria:

- Proximity to existing development
- Availability of major infrastructure needed to serve the area
- Inclusion within the City's current ICIP of major infrastructure needed to serve the area

Objective 2. Provide suitable locations for new industry.

Strategy 1. Provide an adequate supply of industrially-zoned land in areas with good transportation access and proximity to sewer and water lines.

Figure 5. Slope

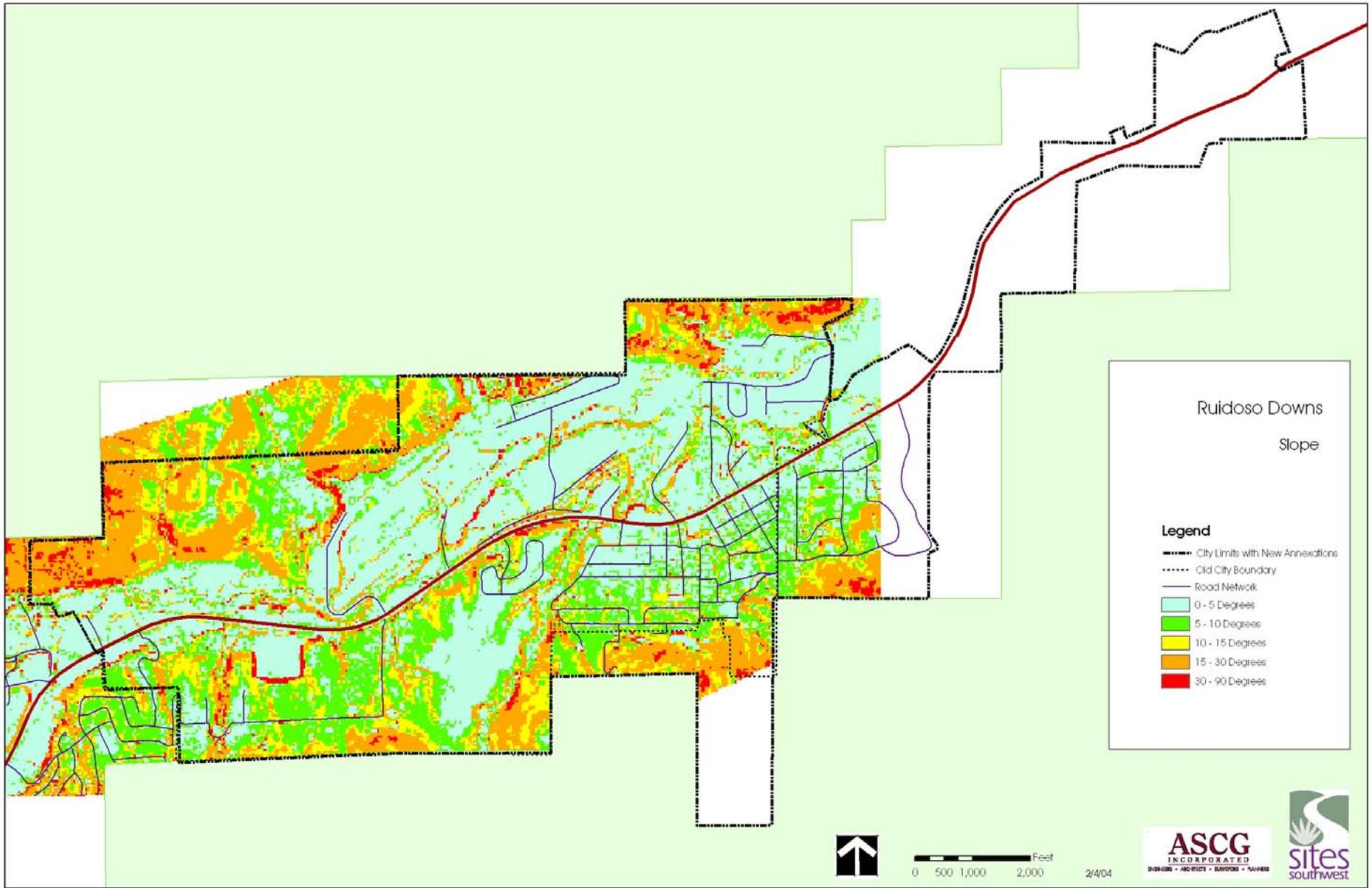


Figure 6. Community Design Concepts

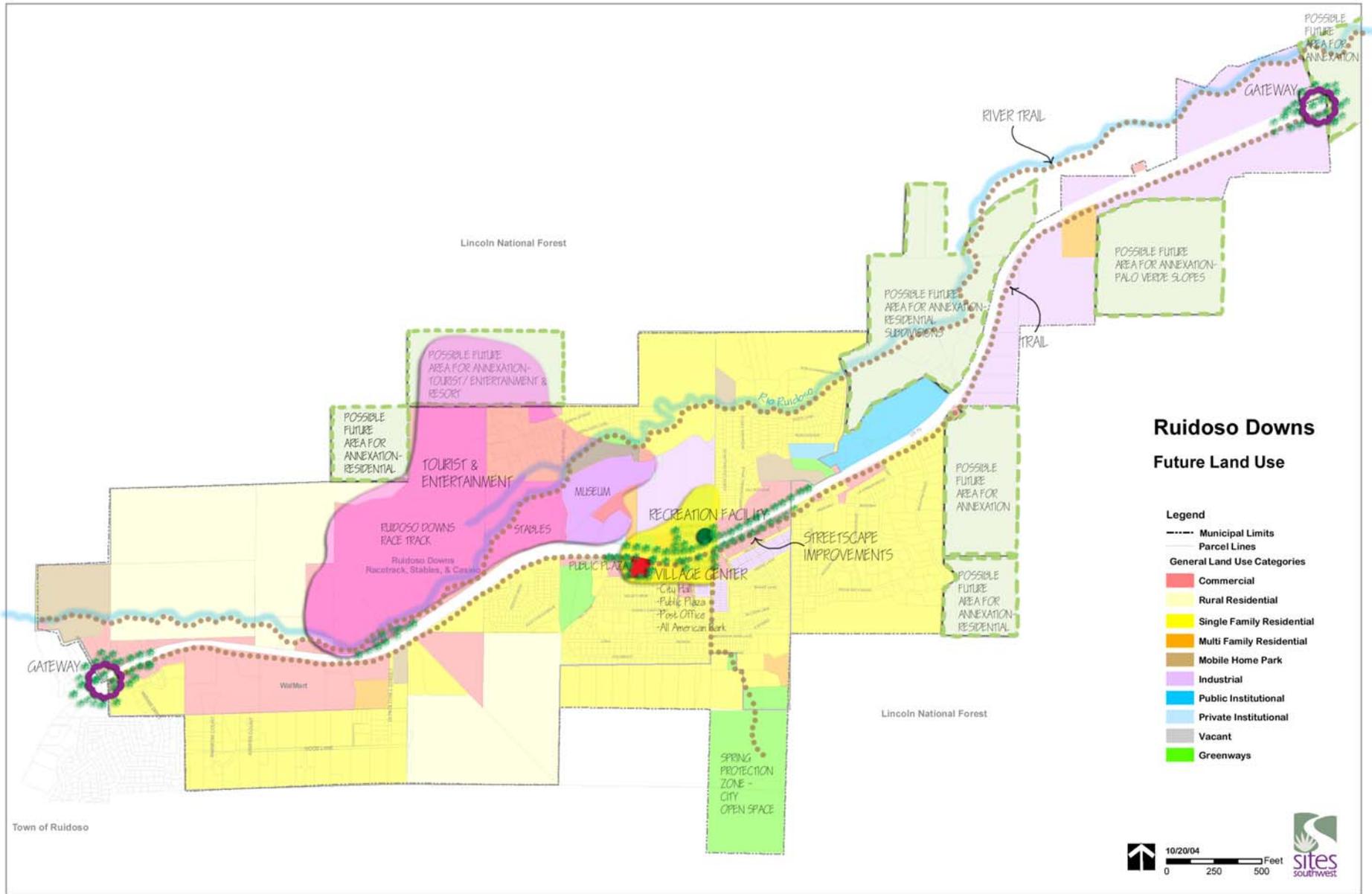
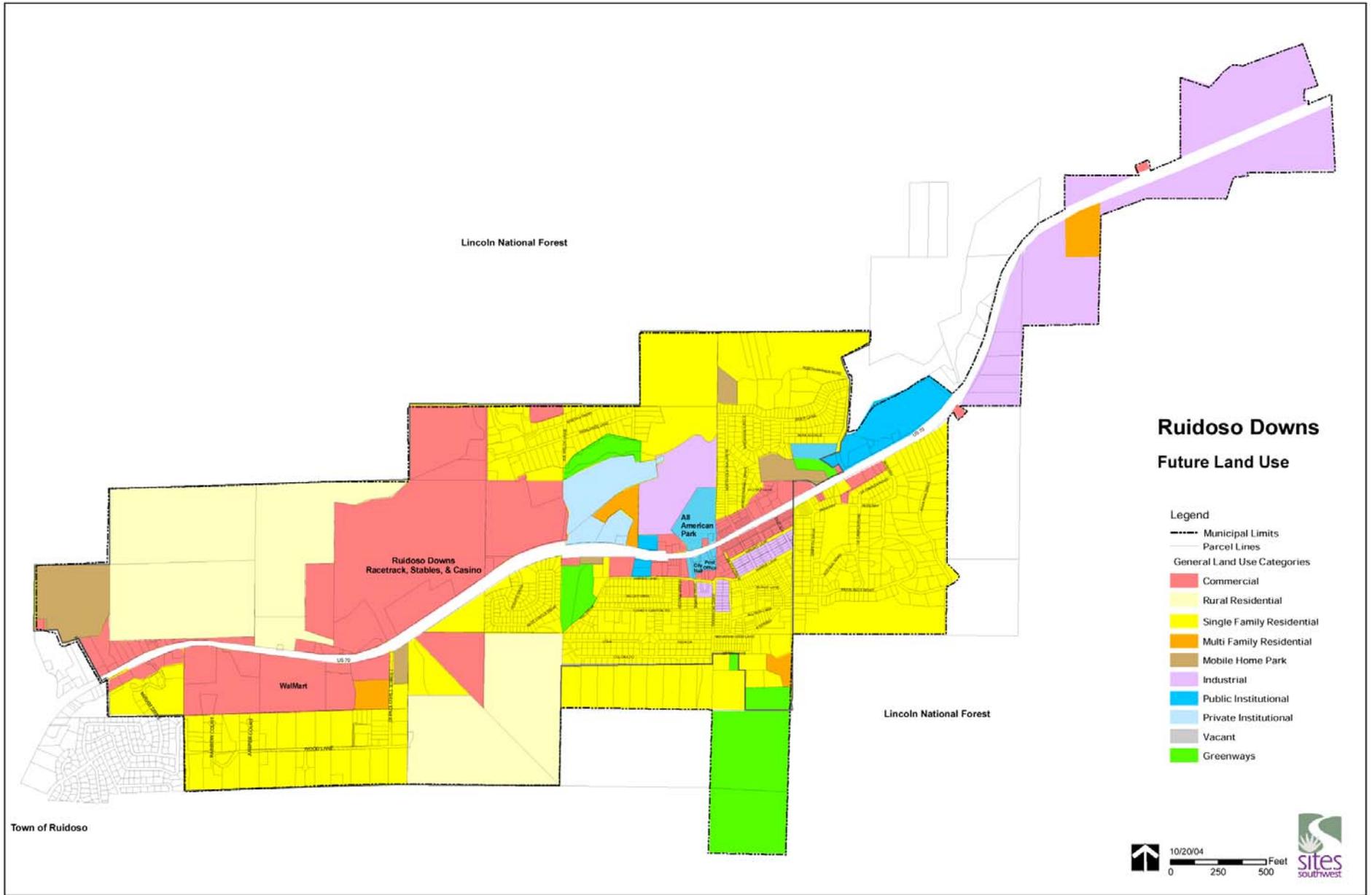


Figure 7. Future Land Use



Objective 3. Amend the City's zoning code

Strategy 1. Update the zoning code to correspond to the Future Land Use Map contained in this comprehensive plan. Include the draft ETZ regulations for applicable areas newly annexed into the City limits.

Strategy 2. Create a commercial zone in which adult businesses are a permissive use in a location that does not conflict with nearby uses.

Goal 2: Reinforce the identity of Ruidoso Downs as an independent City within the region.

Objective 1. Create an identity for the City through high quality new development at key locations.

Strategy 1. Provide identity features at gateways and the City's municipal services center at U.S. 70 and Downs Drive.

Goal 2: Enhance Ruidoso Downs's visual and aesthetic character.

Objective 1. Enhance the appearance of the entrance routes to the city.

Strategy 1. Install gateway signs at entry ports into the City

Objective 2. Encourage attractive building design along US 70.

Strategy 1. Develop design guidelines for commercial buildings.

Objective 3. Establish a city center in the vicinity of the Downs Drive intersection.

Strategy 1. Develop new public facilities in this area.

Strategy 2. Make streetscape improvements, such as landscaping, signs, and other design features, to mark this area as the center of the city.

Strategy 3. Develop a plaza as a central gathering place for the City and as the anchor for a mixed-use town center development.

Strategy 4. Develop All American Park with paved parking, lighting, landscaping and maintained turf areas.

Objective 4. Encourage City residents and business owners to maintain their properties.

Strategy 1. Hold periodic city cleanup days.

Strategy 2. Hire an additional code enforcement officer in order to increase enforcement of the City's "General Nuisances" ordinance.

III. Infrastructure

A community's infrastructure refers to the various public utility systems, such water treatment, wastewater treatment, storm drainage, solid waste disposal, as well as private utilities such as gas, electric and telephone service that serve the different types of land use. The location of these systems, as with the road network, has a powerful influence on the location and rate of growth in the community.

The Infrastructure element of the comprehensive plan assesses whether these systems are sufficient to meet the current and future needs of the City and recommends improvements to these systems.

A. Existing Conditions

1. Water

Setting

The City of Ruidoso Downs is located in Lincoln County in south central New Mexico, and is approximately three square miles in size. The City's base residential population as tabulated in the 2000 Census was 1,824 people. The Year 2000 population represents nearly double the City's 1990 Census population of 920 people, attesting to the high growth observed in the area for new residents. This base population is supplemented with a substantial transient population associated with area tourism.

Water demands

Historical water demands for the City have been estimated at 210 gallons per capita per day (gpcd) based on annual average water production versus 145 gpcd based on consumption records from water sales (ASCG, 2001). This large discrepancy between the volume of water produced and the volume of water accounted for through customer sales is attributed to both inefficiencies in system operation as well as inaccuracies in customer billing. The City is presently working to rectify both of these situations through a combination of strategic capital improvements and improved system management. The large influx of visitors to the City during various times of the year results in a peak day demand estimated at 2.5 times the average day demand and a peak hour demand estimated at 3.2 times the average day demand. The resulting estimated water production need based on the 2000 population for the City is 383,040 gallons per day (gpd) for average daily use and 957,600 gpd for peak day use.

Water supply

The City's currently available water supply is derived from two different water sources. These sources include the Griffith Spring for surface water and the Yeso formation for groundwater supply. Within these two supply sources, the City currently possesses water rights in the Griffith Spring in the amount of 564.55 acre-feet per year (consumptive right) and water rights in the two wells, known as the Denton Wells, in the amounts of 31.0 acre-feet per year (diversion right). Both the spring and the wells draw water from the Yeso formation and are

believed to be hydraulically connected. Using its currently available water rights, the City has access to a combined average flow rate of 369 gallons per minute (gpm). Water quality testing for these sources has been performed. It has been determined that the water quality complies with all US EPA Primary Drinking Water Standards with the exception of radon, which is a naturally occurring radionuclide contaminant found in groundwater in this region.

Water Distribution System

The existing water distribution system features two pumping facilities, a network of transmission and distribution pipelines ranging in sizes from two to ten inches in diameter, four pressure reducing stations, and five ground storage reservoirs whose combined total storage capacity is 1,070,000 gallons. These facilities are located as shown in Figure 8. Hydraulically, the system operates by obtaining water from the spring and wells, disinfecting it by chlorination, and transferring the water to ground storage tanks for storage and subsequent distribution to customers. Operation of the existing system has been proven to be difficult due to varying tank overflow elevations and inoperable pressure reducing stations. The existing distribution system configuration and operation results in system pressures of nearly 150 pounds per square inch (psi) during low demand periods versus a typical recommended high pressure of 100 psi. This excessive pressure exacerbates water losses from system leaks and also promotes excessive water use by customers. Additionally, hydraulic testing of the existing system has been performed in accordance with standard fire hydrant flow testing procedures in order to determine the system's capacity. These test results indicate that the existing system cannot meet minimum requirements for fire protection in many locations.

2. Wastewater Management

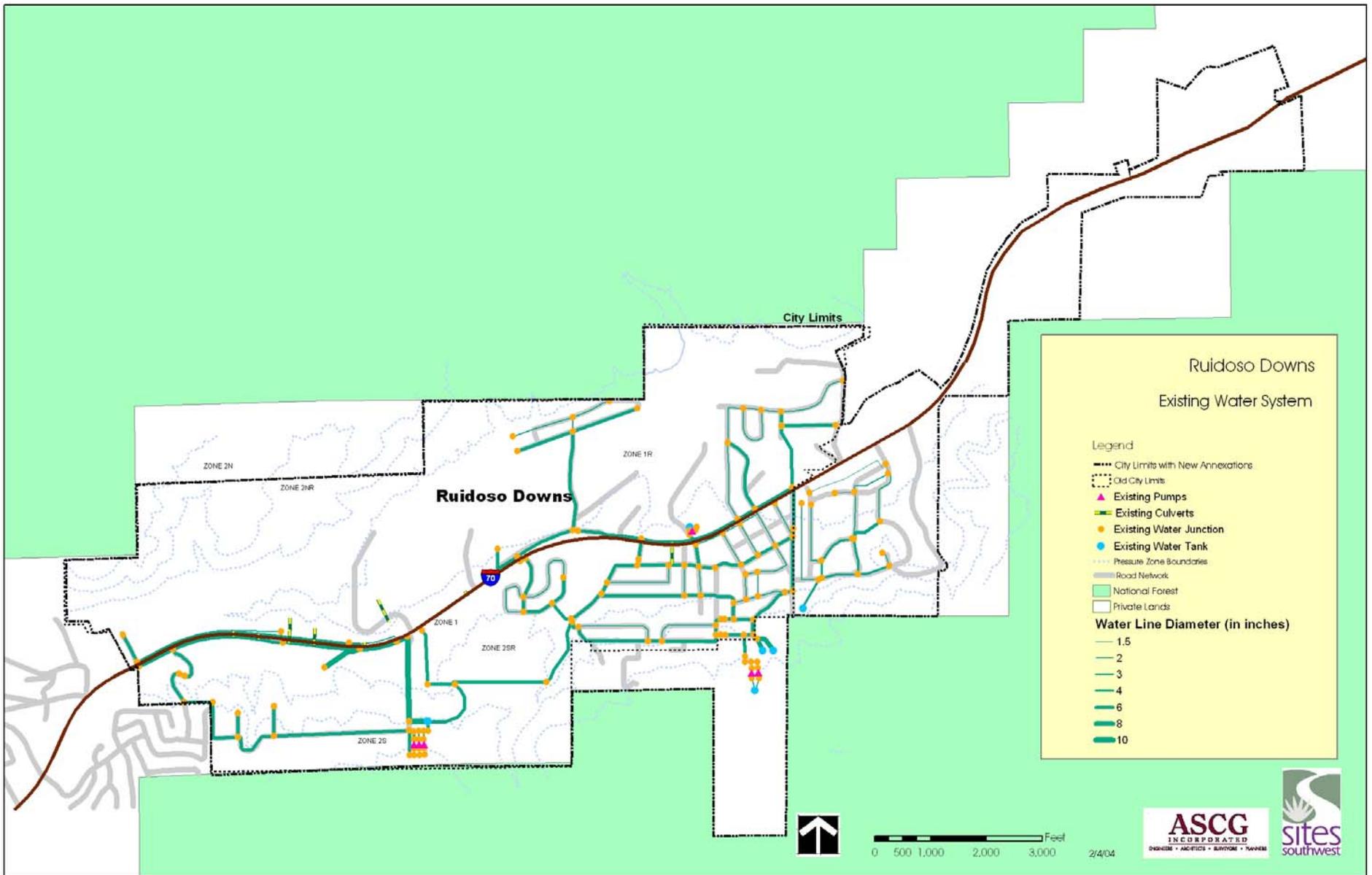
Figure 9 shows that central collection and treatment service is provided to most of the developed areas within the current City limits with the following exceptions:

- Development north of the Rio Ruidoso along North Parker Road
- Agua Fria Subdivision
- Development along Miriam Drive in the far southwest corner of the City
- Residential developments that were platted with lot sizes ≥ 1 acre; for example, the neighborhood, including Rainbow Lane, along Wood Lane between Juniper Lane and Dipaolo Hill Street

The City currently serves an estimated 2,300 residents as well as various businesses located within its boundaries. This includes customers located within the recently annexed area. The City is currently in the process of confirming the number of residents and businesses in the annexed area that have been receiving sewer service so that arrangements for monthly customer billing for them can be completed.

Figure 9 also shows the City's drainage basin boundaries along with locations of main sewer lines. The slope of terrain in the City allows for an essentially all-gravity collection system that drains to a single trunk interceptor that follows the Rio Ruidoso.

Figure 8. Existing Water System



The City's collection system currently has just two duplex lift stations that transfer flows from small sub-basins in the neighborhood south of Turkey Canyon Road to adjacent gravity lines.

The City owns and maintains all sewer lines located within its boundaries except for the main trunk interceptor. The trunk interceptor is owned by the Ruidoso-Ruidoso Downs Regional WWTP Joint Use Board (RRDRJUB). This Board is a partnership between the Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs that was formed during the late 1970s to operate and maintain the interceptor plus a single treatment plant that receives all flows collected in the Village and the City. As described in the Wastewater Collections System Master Plan (ASCG 2004), the plant lies some 2,000 feet northeast of the City's far eastern boundary. In accordance with the RRDRJUB's enabling charter, the City pays for 15 percent of all capital (?) and operating costs for the interceptor and treatment plant, whereas the Village of Ruidoso pays the remaining 85 percent. The 85/15 percent split was determined by comparing the amount of flow contributed by the City to the total effluent flow leaving the plant. A flow metering station on the interceptor located at the western boundary between the City and the Village records the Village's flow contribution. As the majority partner on the Board, the Village of Ruidoso has the authority and responsibility to manage and administer the operation and maintenance of jointly-owned interceptor and plant facilities.

3. Storm Water Drainage

Essentially all runoff in the City is conveyed to the Rio Ruidoso, which traverses the City from west to east. US 70 also traverses the City south of and essentially parallel to the river. Lands to the south and north of the Rio Ruidoso are relatively flat close to the river and become steeper and more forested toward the City limits. Several drainage basins outside the City limits drain through the City to the Rio Ruidoso. The Rio Ruidoso is listed as an impaired waterway by the New Mexico Environmental Department due to stream bottom sediments and plant nutrients.

Essentially all drainage is conveyed on the surface, mostly down streets and small roadside ditches. The existing underground drainage systems or storm sewers within the City are limited to those along US 70. A small storm drain is located in this roadway to collect local runoffs and several culverts convey runoff from the steep lands located to the south of the roadway across the roadway.

The City's location in south central New Mexico at an elevation of approximately 6,000 to 7,000 feet subjects it to short intense thunderstorms as well as longer general storms that can last several hours. The average annual rainfall is approximately 23 inches. Rainfall amounts for 24-hour storm events with different return frequencies are: 1 percent annual probability (100 yr storm) = 4.3 inches, 10 percent annual probability (10-yr storm) = 2.8 inches, 50 percent annual probability (2-year storm) = 1.8 inches.

The City is a participant in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Other agencies with facilities and interests within the City include the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the US Forest Service and Lincoln County.

Drainage Management Plan

The City has prepared a Drainage Management Plan (DMP) covering the entire City and surround NMDOT right-of-way, Lincoln County and Lincoln National Forest. (Smith Engineering Company, 2002) This plan primarily addresses local drainage problems identified by City staff. The mapping for the City's DMP is aerial photography completed in 2001 with 2 foot contours. The DMP does not directly address floodplain impacts in the City but does set the groundwork for evaluation of flood events. The DMP utilizes the AHYMO_97 Hydrologic Program, a hydrologic software program accepted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The DMP evaluated drainage system improvements and identified options and facilities to reduce local flooding problems. Facilities and Options are prioritized and implementation phases recommended. A DMP should be done for all newly annexed areas, and a drainage management plan should be completed as part of future annexations.

The DMP identifies the need for stormwater quality management facilities to reduce the pollutant load in the Rio Ruidoso. Specific Best Management Practices (BMPs) and facilities are not identified however.

The initial project recommended for implementation (Phase I – Options 5 & 6) is being designed with a construction budget of approximately \$430,000. The Phase I project provides local limited flood protection and is designed to be upgraded to provide 100-year flood protection. During the preliminary design of Phase I, a discrepancy was found in the cost estimates used in the DMP. A more detailed cost estimate developed during the Phase I design was approximately twice the DMP estimate. To account for this discrepancy as well as others that may have been included in the DMP, the costs for recommended drainage improvements presented here have been doubled from those costs originally presented in the DMP. A more detailed investigation of realistic costs for the proposed improvements should be conducted prior to applying for funding.

B. Future Requirements/Public Preferences

1. Water

In order to accommodate increasing water demands, the City has identified two key goals for its water supply system which are 1) providing additional terminal storage and 2) obtaining additional water rights that are not located within the Yeso formation. Improvements in system operation, hydraulic capacity and fire demand can be improved by matching water storage tank overflow elevations, creating distinct pressure zones, and increasing the size of waterlines. The City's Water Master Plan (ASCG, 2002) identifies critical steps and outlines the phasing that should be followed in order to address these issues. The Water Master Plan must be updated to include newly annexed areas east of Agua Fria.

2. Wastewater Management

The sewer service population is projected to grow from the current 2,000 persons to 5,374 persons by the Year 2040. About 60 percent of the projected growth is expected to occur in the area east of Agua Fria Drive. The Wastewater Collection System Master Plan (ASCG, 2004) presents the results of hydraulic modeling for the RRDRJUB main interceptor. The modeling work shows that the main interceptor has ample capacity to convey all of the City's future projected flows as well as an additional 3.34 MGD that is projected to be contributed by the Village of Ruidoso. As such, the existing main interceptor should not require any capacity upgrades.

Nonetheless, this line has been in service for over 22 years. It was constructed of vitrified clay pipe and is suspected to have suffered structural damage in several locations. Sections of the interceptor adjacent to the Rio Ruidoso are believed to be partially submerged in groundwater. In these reaches, structural damage to the line is a major concern because it will collect groundwater and eventually impact treatment plant operations. All told, a thorough cleaning of the trunk interceptor, followed by TV inspection, is long overdue. This inspection could also be used to confirm the presence of unauthorized service connections to the trunk interceptor.

The RRDRJUB treatment plant discharges to the Rio Ruidoso under a federally-issued National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit (Permit # NM0029165). When the permit was last renewed in January 1, 2001, it contained a provision that the phosphorous content in treated wastewater discharges could not exceed 0.10 mg/L as PO_4 during any time of the year. This year-round PO_4 limit of 0.10 mg/L is believed to be the most stringent NPDES limit for any treatment plant in the United States (Waters, 2003).

In response to this stringent PO_4 limit and to provide for a nominal increase in treatment capacity from 1.7 MGD to 3.4 MGD, the RRDRJUB is currently planning a major capital improvement program with an estimated cost of \$21 million. Of this amount, the City would be expected to contribute \$3.15 million in accordance with the RRDRJUB charter. The majority of this cost however, is associated with treatment facilities needed to comply with the PO_4 limit.

The Wastewater Collection System Master Plan describes another conceptual option the City may want to consider for wastewater treatment. This option consists of disconnecting from the RRDRJUB system by:

1. Building 26,000 feet of new gravity interceptor that parallels the existing main interceptor and which would divert City wastewater flows around the main interceptor
2. Constructing 13,000 feet of new interceptor from a point 1,000 feet southwest of the existing RRDRJUB plant to convey City wastewater flows to a new treatment plant site
3. Building a new 0.43 MGD capacity treatment plant complete with land-based effluent disposal system at the new site

4. Cleaning, inspecting, and repairing structural damage to the section of RRDRJUB trunk line that the City would continue to use to collect wastewater generated within its boundaries.

The City's new treatment and disposal system would not discharge to the Rio Ruidoso but would dispose of treated effluent through a combination of landscape, pasture, and forest irrigation. As noted in Appendix A of the Wastewater report, the City's conceptual cost to implement this option is \$9.86 million including all new interceptor lines, treatment and disposal facilities, easements, plant site acquisition and development costs, engineering, and related implementation costs.

Participants expressed strong support for acquiring additional water rights, improving the City's water and wastewater systems, and adding curbs and gutters to City roads in order to improve storm drainage.

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1. Provide water service to meet the current and future needs of the City of Ruidoso Downs.

The goals of the City's Water Master Plan and the 40-Year Water Plan provide a road map for increasing water supply, providing adequate fire protection, and increasing the ease and efficiency of water system operation.

Objective 1. Acquire water rights as needed to meet existing and projected water demand in the City.

Strategy 1. Conduct a water resources assessment to quantify where supplemental groundwater is available as needed to meet future demands.

Strategy 2. Develop and initiate a specific plan to acquire those water rights and provide funding needed for the City to access the groundwater resources identified in strategy. Impact fees and water rates are potential revenue sources.

Objective 2. Make improvements to the water production and distribution systems as needed to meet the current and future needs of the City of Ruidoso Downs. These projects, except for the Riverside well, are identified in the City's Water System Plan. Phasing and funding priorities are set in the City's Local Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP).

Strategy 1. Develop future northwest well field and install future northwest distribution system (pressure zones 2N and 2NR) (Phase 1A)

Strategy 2. Replace undersized/leaking water lines, reduce excessive system pressures, and integrate the Agua Fria system into the main system (Phase 1B).

- Strategy 3. Expand system storage, including modifications to the Redman Tank, install a transmission line for water transfers to the City's western area, and formally establish pressure zones 1R and 1 in the system. (Phase 1C)*
- Strategy 4. Construct the facilities needed to establish pressure zone 25R, including the new Turkey Canyon Reservoir, the pump station at Spring Clearwell, and the transmission line to Turkey Canyon Reservoir, pressure-reducing station 25R-2 and related waterlines.*
- Strategy 5. Construct waterlines in pressure zone 25 and pressure-reducing stations 25R-1 and 25R-3.*
- Strategy 6. Expand storage at the Turkey Canyon site, construct new storage tanks at the Northwest and Agua Fria High zone sites, and construct additional master-planned waterlines and pressure-reducing stations.*
- Strategy 7. Construct the Riverside well.*

Figure 10 shows the general locations of the improvements recommended for implementation. The estimated costs for each of these phases are summarized below:

Table 7. Water Improvement Costs

Strategy #	Phase # from Waster Master Plan	Cost
1	1A	\$1,700,000
2	1B	\$1,300,000
3	1C	\$3,300,000
4	2	\$1,800,000
5	3	\$1,000,000
6	Long Range	\$2,500,000

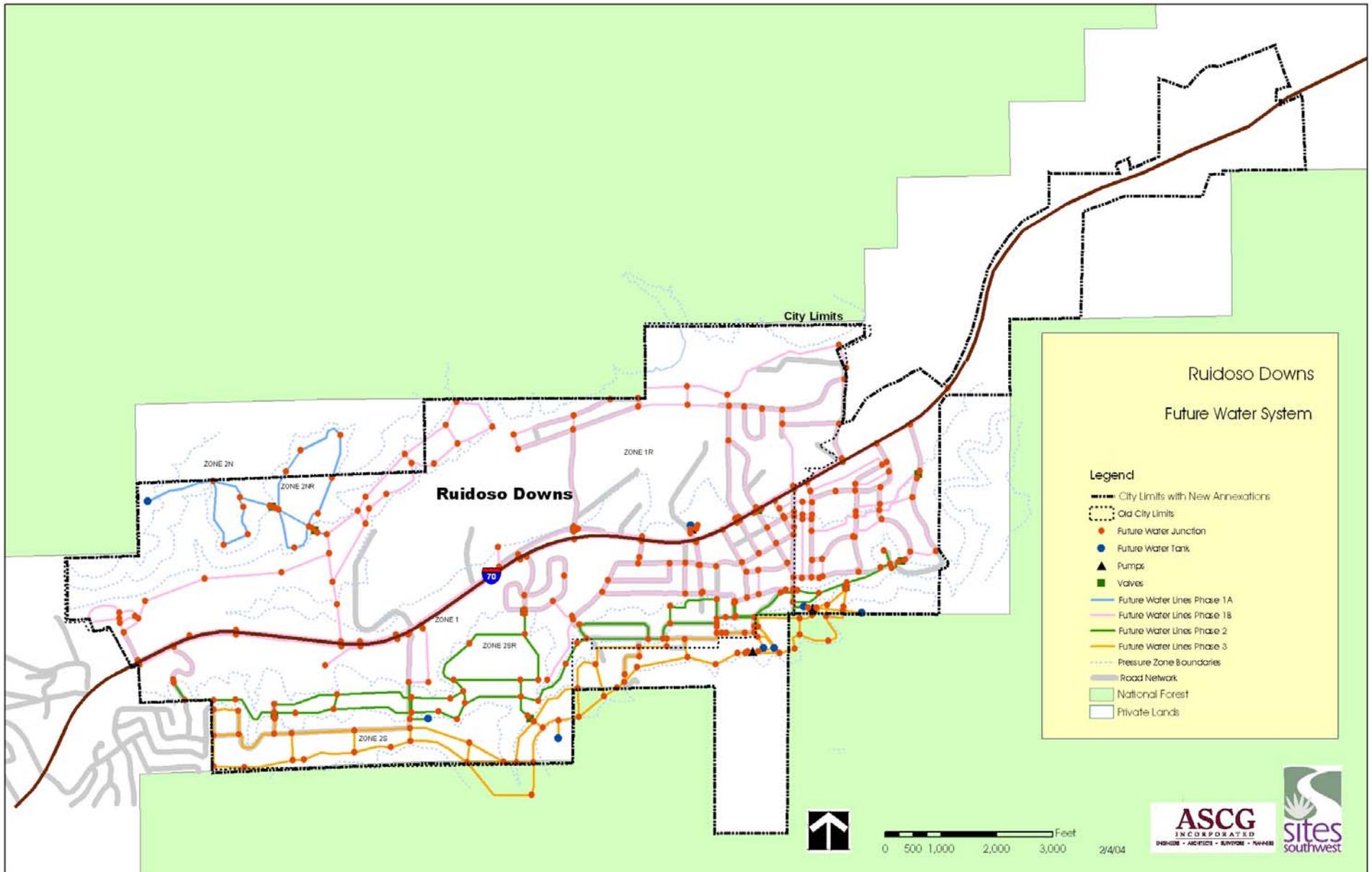
By implementing these improvements, the City will be able to maintain a consistent level of quality water service to serve its current and future water customers.

Goal 2. Provide sanitary sewer service to meet the current and future needs of the City of Ruidoso Downs.

One of the City's goals is to manage wastewater generated within its boundaries in an environmentally acceptable manner that complies with governing regulations while providing this service at a reasonable cost to its residents. In the case of single family dwelling units located on lots greater than one acre in size, it is expected that there will be continued use of on-site treatment and disposal systems, septic tanks and leach fields, specifically where local soil conditions allow for use of such systems.



Figure 10. Future Water System



For all other areas, the City plans to provide central collection and treatment service whenever the density of development warrants such service.

Objective 1. Make improvements to the sewer collection and treatment system as needed to meet the current and future needs of the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Strategy 1. Extend sewer service to Miriam Drive.

Strategy 2. Extend sewer service to North Parker Road

Strategy 3. Extend sewer service to Juniper Court, Rainbow Court, Wood Lane and Dipaolo Hill Street.

Strategy 4. Eliminate a flat section of sewer line in Central Avenue.

Strategy 5. Extend sewer service to the Agua Fria subdivision.

Objective 2. Continue to investigate the feasibility of constructing a new treatment plant for the City of Ruidoso Downs.

A summary of costs for these projects as developed in the Wastewater Collection System Master Plan is presented in the table below:

Table 8. Wastewater Project Costs

Project	Estimated Cost
Miriam Dr Sewer Extension	\$104,000
North Parker Rd Sewer Extension	\$238,000
Wood Ln Dipaolo Hill St	\$199,000
Central Ave flat section	\$25,000
Agua Fria Sewers – Phase 1	\$637,000
Agua Fria Sewers – Phase 2	\$390,000
Total for near-term collection system work	\$1,593,000.00

The City plans to eventually extend sewer service to the Agua Fria Subdivision as well. In accordance with the goals of providing affordable collection and treatment service to its residents while complying with governing environmental regulations, the City is currently comparing the option of staying with the existing RRDRJUB system with the option of disconnecting from this system and implementing its own treatment plant as described in the Wastewater Collection System Master Plan. Based on the analysis presented in the Master Plan, it is recommended that the City continue using the RRDRJUB treatment plant for its treatment needs.

Goal 3. Protect public safety and property in the City of Ruidoso Downs from threats due to stormwater flooding.

Objective 1. Provide sufficient stormwater drainage facilities to protect public safety and property in the City of Ruidoso Downs.

- Strategy 1. Rebuild the Parker River Ditch and make drainage improvements to River Lane.*
- Strategy 2. Make drainage improvements to North Central Drive and North Parnell Drive.*
- Strategy 3. Make drainage improvements to Utah Lane and Nevada Lane.*
- Strategy 4. Make drainage improvements to Harris Lane and the south side of U.S. 70.*
- Strategy 5. Make drainage improvements to Dipaolo Hill Drive, Colorado Lane, Dakota Lane, and Utah Lane.*

Improvements identified in the DMP to address local drainage issues along with conceptual budget estimates for these improvements are shown in the following table.

Table 9. Stormwater Drainage Improvements Costs

Phase	Description	Budget Estimate
1 – Option 5 & 6	Rebuild the Parker Drive Ditch & Improve River Lane	\$850,000 (1)
2 – Option 4 & 8	Improve N. Central Dr. and N. Parnell Dr.	\$860,000
3 – Option 1	Utah Lane and Nevada Lane Improvements	\$830,000
4 – Option 2 & 3	Harris lane Improvements and US 70 South Side Improvements	\$740,000
5 – Option 9 & 10	Diapolo Hill Dr. and Dakota, Colorado and Utah Lane Improvements	\$660,000

(1) Phase 1 is partially funded and currently being designed (Sept. 2003).

Objective 2. Provide 100-year flood protection in the City of Ruidoso Downs.

- Strategy 1. Upgrade the proposed DMP improvements to provide protection against a 100-year flood.*
- Strategy 2. Make drainage improvements in other parts of the City as needed to provide protection against a 100-year flood.*

Objective 3. Provide for stormwater quality enhancement.

- Strategy 1. Implement the NM Department of Transportation National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Manual for Storm Water Management Guidelines for construction and industrial activities.*



Strategy 2. Incorporate best management practices (BMPs) for storm water quality enhancement in new developments and facilities.

Objective 4. Ensure that new development incorporates adequate storm drainage facilities.

Strategy 1. Review and, where necessary, revise existing polices and regulations to ensure that flood protection and US EPA NPDES requirements are met.

Strategy 2. Work with other agencies and property owners to promote an understanding of City drainage issues and develop a willingness to participate in providing adequate drainage facilities.

IV. Transportation

A well-designed and balanced transportation system is crucial for the orderly functioning and development of a community. The location of roads and other transportation facilities helps determine which parts of the community are able to develop and so has an important influence on the community's overall form and rate of growth.

The Transportation element of the comprehensive plan evaluates the City's roads, pathways, and other means for people to get around the community and recommends improvements to these systems.

A. Existing Conditions

1. Surface Transportation

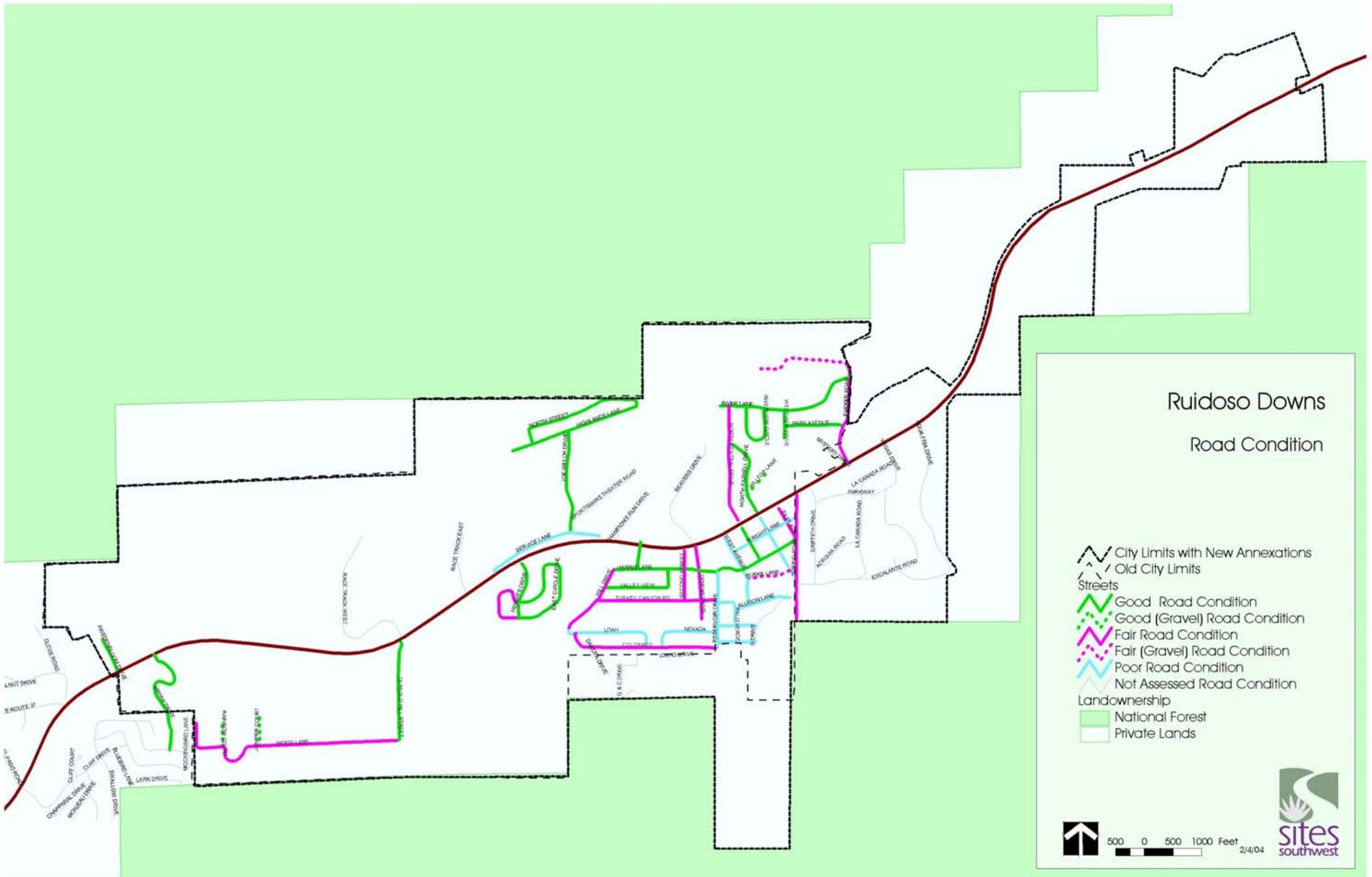
The City's surface transportation system consists entirely of roads serving vehicular traffic. The existing road system features a single east-west arterial route, US 70, that is maintained by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and 11.7 miles of residential streets that branch away from US 70 and serve the City's neighborhoods. Figure 11 shows the City's current road network, and Table 10 summarizes overall conditions of road surfacing based upon a recent inventory performed by the City. The street conditions survey does not include Agua Fria Subdivision, which needs to be surveyed.

Table 10. Summary of Street Surface Conditions

CONDITION	MILES	LINEAR FT	PERCENT
GOOD	5.6	29,600	48%
GOOD (GRAVEL)	0.3	1,600	3%
FAIR	3.6	19,000	31%
FAIR (GRAVEL)	0.4	2,100	3%
POOR	1.8	9,500	15%
TOTAL	11.7	61,800	100%

The data show that 85% of all City streets are considered to be in "good" or "fair" condition. Additionally, 79% of the roads feature some type of paved surfacing. Table 10 includes 2,000 feet for "Service Road" which is an NMDOT-maintained road that parallels the north side of US 70 and in which US 70 was formerly aligned. Roads whose conditions were not assessed include private service roads (the majority of which are located north of US 70) and public streets located within the recently annexed Agua Fria Subdivision.

Figure 11. Road Condition



US 70 is presently being widened by NMDOT to provide four driving lanes along with a left turn storage lane for its entire length within the City limits. The US 70 project is scheduled for completion in Fall 2004. In addition, the City just completed reconstruction of Allison Lane and Turkey Canyon Rd between 2nd St and Palo Verde including new curb and gutter and asphalt concrete surfacing. Therefore the condition of these roads has been upgraded to "Good".

The City has an ongoing overlay program. The City accomplished paving of two to three streets per year using its own equipment, and crew. One additional street is paved using state co-op paving funds. Unpaved streets are the highest priority, but these resources also pave streets that are in poor condition.

Because road paving has an effect on drainage patterns and the amount of runoff from streets, paving projects should be reviewed against the Drainage Management Plan and appropriate stormwater management put in place as part of the paving project.

B. Future Requirements/Public Preferences

Participants pointed to the need to improve road conditions and construct sidewalks along U.S. 70. They also suggested constructing a car bridge over the Rio Ruidoso.

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

1. Surface Transportation

The City's overall goal for its streets is to re-surface all streets currently classified in either "Fair" or "Poor" condition with either chip-seal or asphalt concrete surfacing as well as address appurtenant drainage issues associated with these streets. Near-term street capital improvement projects the City is now planning include the following:

- ▶ Conditions assessment of street surfacing throughout the Agua Fria Subdivision
- ▶ Chip-sealing of Hill Drive, West Avenue, Turkey Canyon Road west of 2nd St, and Wright Lane
- ▶ Chip-sealing of Escalante Road located within the Agua Fria Subdivision

The City has also set a goal of improving Service Lane which is presently NMDOT-owned and maintained. One possible option for implementing the desired improvements would be through NMDOT's Municipal Arterial Pavement System (MAPS) program. Under the MAPS program, NMDOT would pay for 75 percent of the cost of improving Service Lane, with the City paying for the balance. At the completion of improvements, maintenance responsibilities and ownership of Service Lane would transfer to the City.

Goal 1. Provide for safe and convenient vehicle transportation access throughout the City of Ruidoso Downs.

Objective 1. Resurface existing streets that are currently classified as being in “fair” or “poor” condition with either chip-seal or asphalt concrete surfacing, and address drainage issues associated with those streets. The City will accomplish paving projects with a combination of City crews using the City’s asphalt lay down machines and state co-op paving funds.

Strategy 1. Undertake a conditions assessment of street surfacing throughout the Agua Fria Subdivision.

Strategy 2. Chip seal the following streets:

- Hill Drive
- West Avenue
- Turkey Canyon Road (west of 2nd Street)
- Wright Lane
- Escalante Road

Objective 2. Provide convenient access to businesses on U.S. 70.

Strategy 1. Request that NMDOT improved and take over responsibility for maintenance of the service lane on U.S. 70.

Objective 3. Expand the road network to improve connections within the City.

Strategy 1. Make improvements to the bridge across the Rio Ruidoso on Parker Road.

Strategy 2. On the South side of U.S. 70, develop a road to connect Wood Lane and Hill Drive.

Strategy 3. On the north side of the river, develop a road to connect River Land and Highlands Lane.

Goal 2. Improve pedestrian access within the City

Objective 1. Construct sidewalks along U.S. 70.

Objective 2. Consider constructing trails in lieu of sidewalks in Agua Fria subdivision.

V. Housing

Housing is perhaps the most fundamental land use of a community. It almost always encompasses the largest land area and so has an important impact on the physical character of the community. Even more importantly, it has the most direct effect on the intimate lives of residents, providing the place for family life and for socializing with friends.

The Housing element of the comprehensive plan addresses several aspects of the City's housing supply: the number, type, and age of existing housing units; the occupancy rate; and the cost of housing for both owners and renters. It also identifies the number of new housing units that will be required in the future to meet the needs of population growth.

A. Existing Conditions

The following data from the 2000 Census do not include recent annexations. In addition, neighborhoods within the City limits in the Colorado Lane, Wood Lane and Inspiration Heights were inadvertently left out of the City's Census count. The actual number of housing units in the City is approximately 1,200. Housing statistics are listed in Table 12 in the Appendix.

1. Housing Inventory

The 2000 US Census indicates that the City of Ruidoso Downs has a total housing inventory of 921 units. Almost 50 percent (449 units) of the homes in the City in 2000 were mobile homes. Single-family detached dwellings accounted for 33.8 percent and multi-family units for 12.1 percent of the housing stock. In comparison, more than 64 percent of the housing in Lincoln County was single-family detached and only 22.5 percent mobile homes.

2. Age of Housing

The housing stock in Ruidoso Downs is a mix of ages. Approximately 42 percent of the structures were built within the last 20 years. The decade with the most new home construction was 1970 to 1979 when 34.3 percent of the City's housing was built. By contrast, the housing in Lincoln County tends to be newer; with 52.9 percent of the housing built in the last 20 years, and the majority (27.4 percent) built during 1980 to 1989.

3. Housing Occupancy

Nearly three quarters of housing units in Ruidoso Downs (73.8 percent of 680 units) were occupied in 2000. Of the 241 vacant units, 156 units (64.7 percent) were for seasonal, recreational or occasional use. The occupancy rate was lower in Lincoln County; 53.6 percent of total housing. More than 85 percent of the vacant housing units in the county were for seasonal, recreational or occasional use, however.

4. Housing Tenure

Of the 680 units of occupied housing in Ruidoso Downs, 482 units (70.9 percent) are owner-occupied. The remaining 29 percent are renter-occupied housing. This is similar to Lincoln County where 77.2 percent is owner-occupied and 22.8 percent is renter-occupied

housing. The 2000 Census indicates that the average household size in Ruidoso Downs of owner-occupied units is 2.65 persons, and the average household size in renter-occupied units is 2.75 persons. The average county household size was slightly less at 2.33 persons in owner-occupied units and 2.36 persons in renter-occupied units.

5. Mortgage Payments

Based on the 2000 Census, the median monthly mortgage payment in Ruidoso Downs was \$644. In Lincoln County, the median monthly mortgage was considerably higher at \$819. Monthly rents in the City were \$462 compared with \$468 in the county.

6. Affordability

Relative to nearby communities and to the State of New Mexico, housing in Ruidoso Downs is affordable. Census data indicate that the situation has improved considerably since 1990. In 1990 over 53 percent of the renters in Ruidoso Downs were paying more than 30 percent of their household income as gross rent. This figure was 25.9 percent of renters in 2000 (more than 12 percent of the households were not computed). In comparison, 35.4 percent of renters in Lincoln County paid more than 30 percent of their household income as gross rent in 1990 and 34.9 percent of renters in 2000 (although more than 17 percent of households were not computed). Of the homeowners in Ruidoso Downs, 25.7 percent paid more than 30 percent of their household income as monthly mortgage payments in 1990. For 2000, this figure declined to 21.4 percent of homeowners. In Lincoln County, 27.4 percent of homeowners paid more than 30 percent of household income as mortgage payments based on 1990 Census data compared with only 20.4 percent of homeowners in the 2000 US Census.

The median value of an owner-occupied house in Ruidoso Downs was \$47,500 in 1990. This rose to \$75,500 in 2000, an increase of 58.9 percent. During the same time period an owner-occupied house in the adjacent town of Ruidoso was valued at \$80,900 in 1990 and \$113,900 in 2000, an increase of 40.8 percent. Overall, the median value of an owner-occupied house in the state of New Mexico was \$70,100 in 1990 and \$108,100 in 2000, falling between prices in Ruidoso Downs and Ruidoso.

B. Future Requirements/Public Preferences

Table 12 shows the number of new housing units required to meet the needs of the residents of the City in 2030, according to the population growth scenarios presented in Section 1. The number of new housing units needed ranges from 364 to 1,244 units. The current housing stock will be substantially older in 2030, requiring renovation or replacement of some existing housing units as well.

Public meeting participants said that the City needs more rental housing that is affordable.

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Provide housing to meet the needs and incomes of City residents.

Objective 1. Increase the availability of affordable housing.

Strategy 1. Identify federal and state funding programs that support the development of additional multi-family housing.

Strategy 2. Provide information to renters about State programs for first-time home buyers.

Strategy 3. Through the Economic Development Board and City Council, develop a strategy to use zoning or other ordinances and land use policies to encourage development of affordable housing for the area workforce.

VI. Economic Development

The local economy helps determine growth in a community, the prosperity of its residents, and the resources available to the City government to implement improvements in the community.

The Economic Development element of the comprehensive plan addresses several aspects of the city's economy: income levels of residents; jobs and employment, the inventory of existing businesses, and tourism. It identifies obstacles hindering the expansion of business activity in the community. It also recommends business development initiatives to meet the everyday needs of residents and to make the city a more attractive destination for visitors.

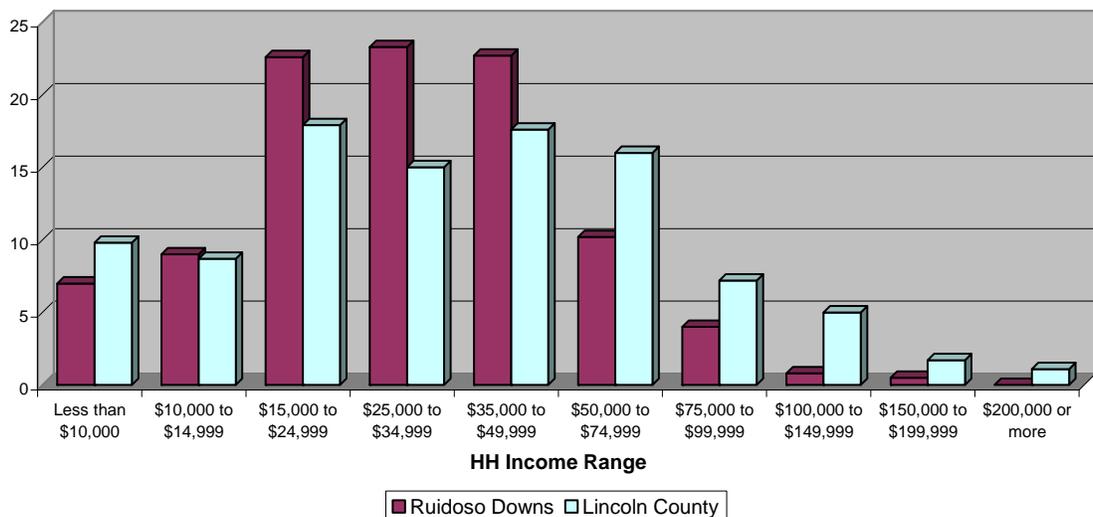
A. Existing Conditions

1. Income

On average, household incomes in Ruidoso Downs are lower than in the state. The median household income in Ruidoso Downs was \$29,375 in 1999. This is 86 percent of the state median of \$34,133. As shown in Figure 12, a larger percentage of households fall into the \$15,000 to \$40,000 income ranges in Ruidoso Downs than in Lincoln County.

The median family income in Ruidoso Downs was \$30,500 or 77.4 percent of the State median family income of \$39,425. Per capita income in Ruidoso Downs was \$12,144 compared with \$17,261 for the State. Table 13 in the Appendix shows detailed income statistics for the City.

Figure 12. Household Income Distribution, 1999



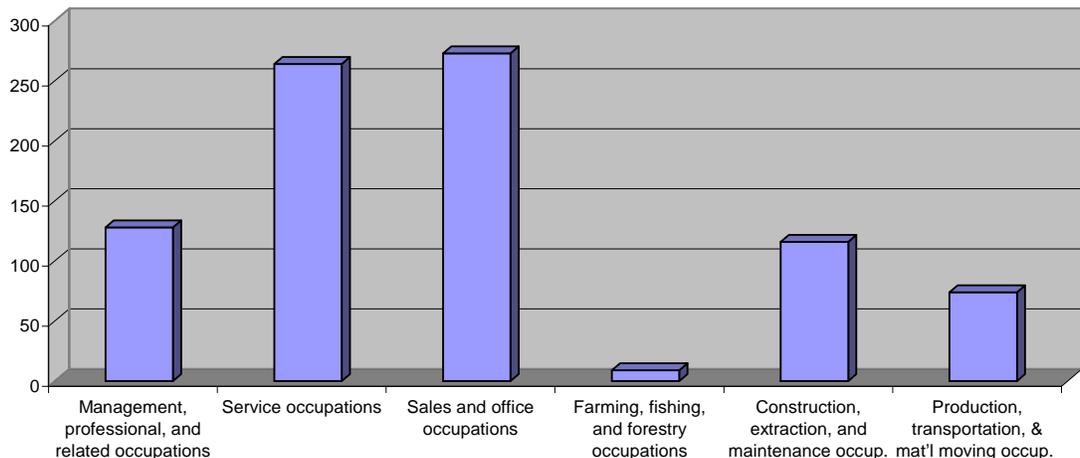
2. Poverty

Over 20 percent of individuals and 17.4 percent of households in Ruidoso Downs had incomes below the federal poverty level in 1999. Statewide, the figures were slightly lower at 18.4 percent and 14.5 percent, respectively. (The poverty level income thresholds established by the federal government in 2000 were \$8,794 for an individual and \$17,463 for a family of four).

3. Employment

In 2000 there were approximately 892 residents in the labor force or 64.4 percent of the population 16 years and older. This figure is slightly higher than the statewide rate of 60.1 percent. Of those employed, more than 31 percent were in sales or office occupations, as shown in Figure 13. Some 30 percent were employed in service occupations, and almost 15 percent in management, professional, and related occupations. Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations accounted for 13 percent, and a little more than 8 percent of residents were employed in production, transportation, and material-moving occupations. Statewide, the largest occupational category was management, professional and related occupations, at 34.0 percent, while a substantially lower percentage of workers – 17.0 percent – were in service occupations.

Figure 13. Employment by Occupation



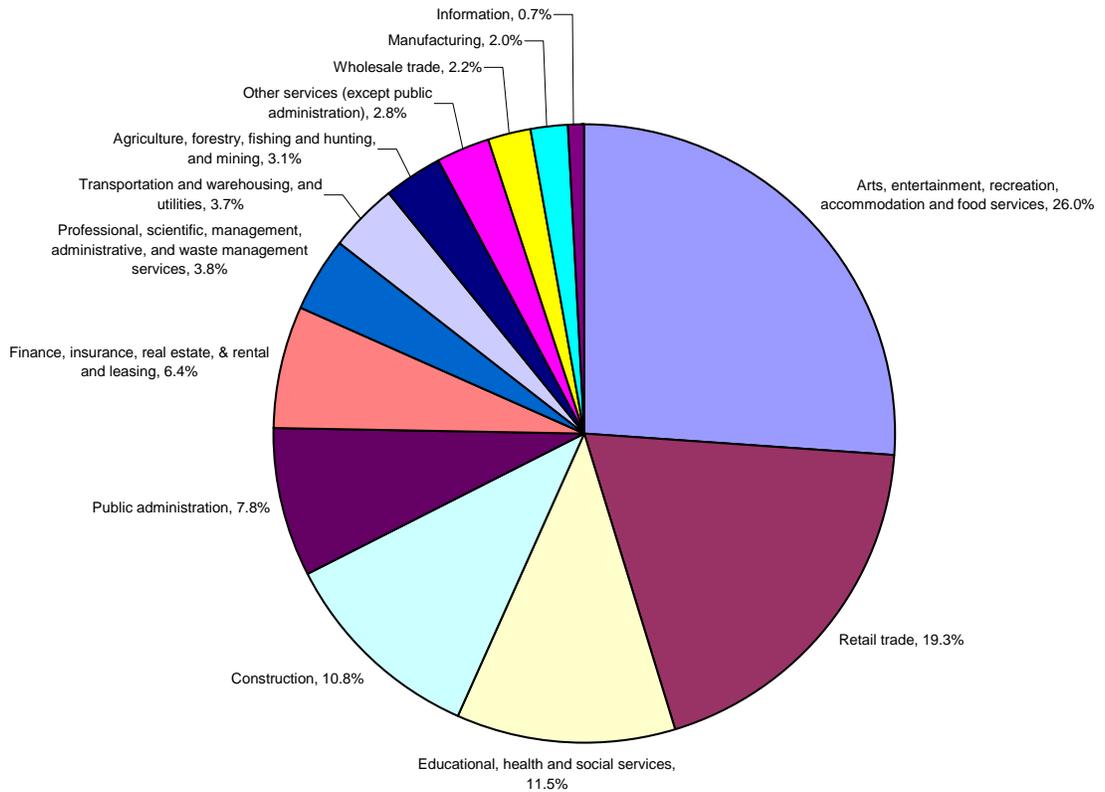
Private businesses employed the largest proportion (72.2 percent) of people earning wages and salaries in Ruidoso Downs. An additional 15.5 percent were government workers and 11.7 percent were self-employed. Statewide, a relatively smaller percentage of workers were privately or self-employed (68.5 percent and 8.4 percent, respectively) and a larger percentage – 22.7 percent – were employed in government.

Employment and labor force statistics are shown in Table 14 in the Appendix.

4. Jobs by Industry

The local economy is heavily oriented to the tourist industry and retail trade. Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services industries accounted for 26 percent of all jobs in Ruidoso Downs, compared with just 9.8 percent statewide. Retail trade jobs also made up a comparatively large proportion of the job pool, 19.3 percent versus 12.2 percent for the State as a whole. In contrast, only 11.5 percent of workers were employed in educational, health, and social services, whereas the statewide figure was 21.7 percent. The distribution of jobs by industry is shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14. Distribution of Jobs by Industry



5. Major Employers

The following businesses are the major employers (defined as having 25 or more employees) for the City of Ruidoso Downs:

- Federal Government
- Hubbard Museum of the American West
- Lincoln Transportation, Inc.
- Ruidoso Downs Racetrack and Billy the Kid Casino
- Wal-Mart Super Center
- City of Ruidoso Downs

6. Businesses

Ruidoso Downs is a retail center for the immediate area. Ruidoso Downs's businesses include the following types:

Convenience commercial businesses

(These are businesses that serve the everyday needs of city residents.)

- ▶ Wal-Mart Superstore
- ▶ Convenience store
- ▶ Two branch banks

"Shoppers' Goods" stores

(These are businesses that offer higher-priced goods such as clothing, housewares, home electronics, etc.)

- ▶ Wal-Mart Superstore
- ▶ Sears
- ▶ Two furniture stores
- ▶ Television and appliance store

Auto-oriented businesses

- ▶ Five auto repair shops
- ▶ One new car dealership
- ▶ Two used-car dealerships
- ▶ Tire store
- ▶ Auto parts store

Tourist-oriented businesses

- ▶ Ruidoso Downs Racetrack and Casino
- ▶ Five motels
- ▶ Five RV parks
- ▶ Seven chain saw art (bear carvings) shops

Miscellaneous retail businesses

- ▶ Seven restaurants
- ▶ Lumber yard
- ▶ Two manufactured home dealers
- ▶ Sportswear store
- ▶ Propane gas equipment and supplies
- ▶ Two antique stores
- ▶ Sign shop
- ▶ Gift shop
- ▶ Pottery studio and gallery
- ▶ Art gallery
- ▶ T-shirt and sports cards store

Miscellaneous service businesses

- ▶ Accounting and tax preparation service
- ▶ Attorney
- ▶ Two real estate offices
- ▶ Appliance repair
- ▶ Septic tank service
- ▶ Taxi service
- ▶ Riding stables
- ▶ Backhoe service
- ▶ Chimney sweeping service

Industrial Enterprises

- ▶ Cement plant and sand and gravel operation (B&B Ready Mix)
- ▶ Sierra Compacting and Composting

The largest businesses in Ruidoso Downs are Wal-Mart, Ruidoso Downs Racetrack and Casino.

Most of the businesses in the City are independently owned. National chain businesses include Wal-Mart, Sears, Denny's, Big O Tires, and several hotels.

The number of convenience commercial businesses and "shoppers' goods" businesses is relatively small, but this situation is counter-balanced by the presence of the Wal-Mart superstore, which sells a wide variety of goods. City residents can also obtain a large selection of goods and services in nearby Ruidoso.

Industrial activity is limited to a cement plant, a construction company, contracting and composting, and a transportation company.

7. Economic Development Board

The City adopted a local economic development ordinance in March 2004, which established an Economic Development Board for the City. As the official economic development organization for Ruidoso Downs, the EDB is charged with business retention and expansion, recruitment, and marketing the community. The EDB has adopted a mission statement and is currently developing a Community Business Action Plan as part of the City's efforts to become a Certified Community under the State's Certified Communities Initiative.

8. Ruidoso Downs Chamber of Commerce

Until recently, the only local business organization in the area was the Ruidoso Valley Chamber of Commerce. Seeing a need for an organization focused on the needs of Ruidoso Downs, local business people joined together to form the Ruidoso Downs Chamber of Commerce, which officially incorporated in June 2003. The Chamber currently has about 50 members, most of which are businesses. At present its efforts are focused on establishing a functioning office space to house its operations. The initial programmatic thrust of the

organization, according to the executive director, will be to promote the City as a place to do business and improve the image of Ruidoso Downs.

9. Tourism and Recreation

The region and Ruidoso Downs are home to a wide variety of recreational amenities and visitor attractions. These places are key contributors to Ruidoso Downs' service-based economy.

- ***Ruidoso Downs Racetrack*** – The Ruidoso Downs Racetrack opened in 1946 and is home to the most prestigious and richest quarter horse race in the world, the All-American Futurity. There is a one million dollar purse to the winner and a two million dollar total purse. Live horse racing takes place May 23 through September 1 every Thursday through Sunday with occasional races on Monday. The racetrack also offers live concerts.
- ***Billy the Kid Casino*** – Located at the east end of the Ruidoso Downs Racetrack, the Billy the Kid Casino opened in 2000. With over 15,000 square feet, the casino offers visitors an off-track betting facility, over three hundred slot machines, two restaurants, one deli, and several small shops. The casino is open daily from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and on Friday from noon to midnight.
- ***Billy the Kid National Scenic Byway*** – A proportion of the Billy the Kid National Scenic Byway runs through Ruidoso Downs. This Byway was originally part of New Mexico's Billy the Kid Trail and received a Scenic Historic Byway designation from the Federal Highway Commission in June of 1995. In June of 1998, the designation was upgraded to a National Scenic Byways.
- ***Mescalero Apache Reservation*** – The Mescalero Apache Reservation is over 460,000 acres of pine forests and mountains located in Otero County near Ruidoso. The Mescalero Apache Reservation offers the following services and amenities.
 - ▶ ***Ski Apache*** – Located approximately 20 miles northwest of Ruidoso Downs, Ski Apache offers skiing and snowboarding opportunities on over 750 acres. The resort has 11 ski lifts – one gondola, two quads, five triples, one double, and two surface lifts with a lift capacity of 16,500 skiers per hour. Other amenities include two cafeterias, three snack bars, two burger stands, ski and snowboard lessons, and various ski shops. Annually, Ski Apache averages 200,000 skier visits per winter.
 - ▶ ***Mescalero Apache Cultural Center*** – The Mescalero Apache Cultural Center features photo exhibits, basketry and clothing of the three Apache tribes indigenous to the area.
 - ▶ ***Casino Apache*** – The casino offers blackjack, craps, roulette, slot machines, poker tournaments, and video games. It is open daily seven days a week.
 - ▶ ***Inn of the Mountain Gods Golf Course*** – This 18-hole championship golf course was built around a man-made lake and ranked among the top 20 resort golf courses in the United States.

- ▶ *Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino* – The Mescalero tribe is working on the completion of a world-class resort scheduled to open April 2005. Included at the resort is a new 50,000-square-foot casino that will contain up to 1,500 slot machines, 34 gaming tables, and room for keno and bingo.
 - ▶ *Casino Apache Travel Center* – This brand new travel center opened May 22, 2003.
 - ▶ *Outdoor activities* available at the Mescalero Reservation include: big game hunting, seasonal hunts, hunting packages for elk, bear, turkey, sporting clays, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, and other activities.
- ***Links at Sierra Blanca*** – Located in the adjacent Village of Ruidoso, the Links at Sierra Blanca is an 18-hole championship Scottish-style golf course designed by PGA professional, Jim Colbert, and built on the town's old airport. The course is open year-round and was ranked by Golf Digest as the sixth best golf course in New Mexico. There are approximately 30,000 rounds of golf played annually at the Links.
 - ***Hubbard Museum of the American West*** – Located near the Ruidoso Downs Racetrack on Highway 70, the Hubbard Museum originally started as a museum about horses, but now includes a large collection of fine art, western memorabilia, and artifacts. The museum houses the Anne C. Stradling Museum of the Horse as well as the Race Horse Hall of Fame in addition to operating the Lincoln County Cowboy Symposium and the Billy the Kid National Scenic Byway Visitors Center. Annually, the Billy the Kid National Scenic Byway Visitors Center serves more than 130,000 visitors.

Since 1998, the Hubbard Museum has seen a steady decline in visitor attendance. The annual visitor attendance for 2002 was 29,510 visitors and a 20 percent decline in total visitor attendance is expected for 2003. Museum admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors and military, and free for children under the age of 16.

- ***Lincoln National Forest*** – Located in south central New Mexico and covering over 1,103,441 acres, Lincoln National Forest is the birthplace of the original Smokey Bear, the living symbol of the campaign to prevent forest fires. The national forest consists of three ranger districts – the Sacramento, Smokey Bear, and the Guadalupe. The Smokey Bear Ranger District is headquartered in Ruidoso and manages over 375,000 acres. There are two wilderness areas with over 86,000 acres as well as the Ski Apache Resort located in the district. Elevations in the district range from 5,400 to 11,580 feet with vegetation varying from semi-desert plants, pinon pine to spruce, and high-elevation grasses. Outdoor activities include: camping, fishing, hiking, backpacking, scenic views, wilderness, and skiing.
- ***Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts*** – Set on a high mesa just outside the adjacent Village of Ruidoso, the Spencer Theater is a state-of-the-art eight-story, 515-seat performing arts hall that features world class performances in a breathtaking setting. The theater hosts Broadway shows, dance troupes, and music from around the world.

Performances have included pop conductor Marvin Hamlisch, jazz great Dave Brubeck, and the Russian national ballet.

B. Future Requirements/Public Preferences

Participants expressed a desire to see more business growth in the City, especially family restaurants and tourist attractions. They also mentioned designating more sites suitable for industrial development, a goal addressed in the Land Use section.

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Diversity the local economy to broaden the City's tax base and create an economy that is resilient through national and regional economic cycles.

Objective 1. Support the development of infrastructure, educational resources, and small business services to attract and retain a diverse range of businesses to Ruidoso Downs.

Strategy 1. Support public infrastructure improvements that are needed to accommodate the community's future growth.

Strategy 2. Work with telecommunications service providers to ensure state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure to the community.

Strategy 3. Improve the City's web site so that information about Ruidoso Down's assets is easily available to site locators

Strategy 4. Position the local business community to take advantage of Ruidoso Downs' location on U.S. 70, a major trade corridor between Mexico and points east.

Goal 2: Increase the number of well-paying jobs in the community.

Objective 1. Support the expansion of existing businesses and the development of new businesses.

Strategy 1. Promote the development of area businesses and attractions that will take advantage of increased tourist and commercial truck traffic on US 70.

Strategy 2. Clarify local ordinances affecting economic development in order to improve and streamline the processes that businesses and developers must undertake to obtain government approvals.

Strategy 3. Through the Economic Development Board provide information regarding small business assistance programs to local entrepreneurs.

Objective 2. Attract light industry to the community.

- Strategy 1. Provide suitable locations in the City for industry with appropriate zoning, access, and infrastructure.*
- Strategy 2. Support the development of a light industrial park.*
- Strategy 3. Develop marketing materials designed to attract light-industrial businesses to the City. These materials should include the following information:*
 - General demographic information for the area, including historical and projected population growth and visitor information
 - Inventory of area businesses
 - Inventory of available commercial land
 - Information on available infrastructure, access and zoning
- Strategy 4. Seek certification by the New Mexico Economic Development Department under the Certified Communities Initiative (CCI).*
- Strategy 5. Through the Economic Development Board, maintain an understanding of rural economic development programs that can be used to assist existing businesses and attract businesses to Ruidoso Downs.*

Objective 3. Support the development of a professional office park to attract professional service providers to the community.

Objective 4. Maintain and foster relationships with adjacent communities, Lincoln County and the Mescalero Apache Tribe.

- Strategy 1. Participate in regional economic development activities and promotion of the region for business development.*

Goal 3. Provide a well-educated and trained work force to meet the needs of existing and new businesses.

Objective 1. Develop workforce training to meet the needs of area businesses.

- Strategy 1. Through the Economic Development Board, support interaction between educational resources and area businesses.*

Goal 3. Reinforce Ruidoso Downs as the regional center for shopping.

Objective 1. Attract additional commercial businesses to the city.

- Strategy 1. Provide suitable locations in the City for larger commercial businesses.*

- Strategy 2. Develop marketing materials designed to attract larger commercial businesses to the City. These materials should include the following information:*

- General demographic information for the region, including historical and projected population growth

- Inventory of area businesses
- Inventory of available commercial land and buildings
- Estimate of consumer expenditure potential for the area

Goal 3. Strengthen Ruidoso Downs as a tourist destination.

Objective 1. Attract additional tourist-oriented businesses to the city.

Strategy 1. Develop marketing materials designed to attract tourist-oriented businesses to the City. These materials should include the following information:

- General demographic information for the area, including historical and projected population growth
- Inventory of area tourist businesses and attractions
- Estimates of annual visitors to the area and visitor expenditures. A visitor survey for the region could supplement existing information, providing details on length of stay, purpose and frequency of visits, expenditures, attractions visited and perceptions.

Objective 2. Through the Economic Development Board, coordinate with private developers to provide new venues that will attract visitors to Ruidoso Downs.

Strategy 1. Identify suitable sites for new attractions and include these in marketing materials for site selectors.

Objective 3. Reinforce the identity of Ruidoso Downs as an independent community within the region.

Strategy 1. Develop marketing materials that highlight the unique attributes and attractions of Ruidoso Downs.

VII. Community Facilities and Services

A city's community facilities make an important contribution to the overall quality of life. They provide places for recreation and relaxation, learning, cultural activities, and gathering with family and friends.

The Community Facilities element of the comprehensive plan considers the existing inventory of community facilities in the City of Ruidoso Downs and recommends additional facilities.

A. Existing Conditions

1. Community Facilities and Services

Community services and facilities include a City police force, volunteer fire department, access to high quality health care services, senior center, and various parks.

Health Care

The residents in Ruidoso Downs are supported by a network of medical facilities with most located in the adjacent Village of Ruidoso. The following is a list of health facilities available to residents of Ruidoso Downs.

- **Lincoln County Medical Center** – An award-winning hospital providing complete emergency medical, diagnostic, and surgical care. Located in Ruidoso, the hospital is operated by Presbyterian Healthcare Services of Albuquerque. The hospital operates a complete emergency medical service unit that has five paramedic-equipped life support ambulances. Lincoln County Medical Center works in collaboration with over 15 physicians who have full-time practices in Ruidoso and more than 30 physicians who have part-time local specialty clinics in association with Presbyterian Healthcare Services. This unique structure provides the residents of Lincoln County with more than 15 different specialists.
- **Immediate Care Clinic** – An affordable family care clinic specializing in general medical services. Located in Ruidoso with hours of operation from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday and 8:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday.
- **Home Health Services of Lincoln County** – A non-profit agency providing skilled nursing, pediatric nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, personal care and homecare in Ruidoso across from the Lincoln County Medical Center.
- **Rio Pecos Family Practice of Lincoln County** – Family health care services with offices in Ruidoso and Capitan.

- **The Rose Clinic** – A non-emergency, walk-in family health care clinic located in Capitan. Hours of operation are Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. to noon on Friday.
- **Ruidoso Home Care** – Full-service home health care for the elderly, adults, infants and pediatrics.
- **Ruidoso Physical Therapy Clinic** – Provides traditional physical therapies and specializes in Myofascial Release.

2. Education

The City of Ruidoso Downs is part of the Ruidoso Municipal School District which encompasses 165 square miles. The public school district has approximately 2,324 students based on 2002-2003 school year enrollment counts and includes the towns of Ruidoso, Ruidoso Downs, and the surrounding county. The district is comprised of six schools including one high school, one middle school for seventh and eighth graders, one intermediate school for fifth and sixth graders, one elementary school for third and fourth graders, a primary school for first and second graders, and an early childhood center with Headstart, Kindergarten, and developmental programs.

Opportunities for higher education are found locally at Eastern New Mexico State University – Ruidoso Instruction Center in the adjacent Village of Ruidoso.

3. Library

The City of Ruidoso Downs is served by the public library in the adjacent Village of Ruidoso. Library staff includes one librarian and five other staff members. The 1999-2000 budget was \$302,795. The library contains approximately 53,135 books with a total circulation of 63,250. The public has access to five computer workstations with internet access on three computers. The hours of operation are Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

4. Senior Center

The Ruidoso Downs Senior Center is located across the street from City Hall on Hwy 70. The center provides seniors with a wide range of activities and events. A weekday lunch is served Monday through Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to seniors as well as the opportunity to play pool or cards, arts and crafts, and to socialize with other seniors. Additionally, coordinated events such as line dancing, “42” tournaments, shuffleboard tournaments, or pool tournaments are scheduled monthly for interested seniors.

5. Parks and Recreation

The All-American Park is adjacent to the senior center. The park provides passive and active recreational opportunities which include a baseball diamond, walking trails, and a children’s playground. Completed in August 2002, Heights Park is a small neighborhood park located on Heights Drive. A future park is planned along the river off Joe Welch Drive.

6. Fire

The Ruidoso Downs Fire Department is a combination of paid and volunteer firefighters. The department is staffed by two permanent full-time firefighters, six cross-trained public safety officers and fourteen volunteer firefighters. The fire station is located on Downs Drive across from City Hall. The City has a fire insurance rating (ISO) of 8. An additional fire station is planned for Dipaolo Drive in 2005.

7. Police

The City of Ruidoso Downs is served by the Ruidoso Downs Police Department. The department is commanded by the Chief of Police and staffed by ten full-time officers and eight non-commissioned employees.

B. Future Requirements/Public Preferences

Participants expressed strong support for building a community center with an Olympic-sized pool. They pointed to a need for more recreational opportunities for youth and additional neighborhood parks. A number of residents called for improved fire, police, animal control and trash pick-up services, in particular a paid fire department. Several advocated a domestic shelter for women and children as well as day care services.

C. Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Provide city residents with opportunities to relax, recreate, and socialize.

Objective 1. Provide facilities to meet the social, cultural and educational needs of the community.

Strategy 1. Establish a community recreation center.

Strategy 2. Establish a small civic center.

Strategy 3. Establish a library or mobile library unit.

Strategy 4. Construct a City plaza or square as part of a mixed-use town center development.

Objective 2. Provide a system of parks, open space and trails.

Strategy 1. Complete improvements to the All American Park.

Strategy 2. Expand the number of neighborhood parks in the city.

Strategy 3. Develop a public park adjacent to the Rio Ruidoso.

Strategy 4. Develop a trail corridor along the Rio Ruidoso.

Strategy 5. Develop pedestrian and bicycle routes linking residential areas with the city center.

Objective 3. Provide facilities and services to meet the recreational needs of the community.

Strategy 1. Build an indoor public pool.

Strategy 2. Develop a youth recreational program.

Strategy 3. Provide lighting for existing All American Park and a new parking lot, basketball courts and skate park.

Goal 2: Provide adequate public facilities for City government.

Objective 1. Construct or find a location for a new central municipal facility.

Goal 3: Improve services to better protect the health, safety and welfare of residents

Objective 1. Establish a domestic shelter for women and children if warranted by a needs assessment.

Objective 2. Establish or encourage the establishment of day care services.

Objective 3. Upgrade fire and police protection, trash pick-up, and animal control services.

Strategy 1. Replace volunteer fire protection positions with paid positions as the budget allows.

Strategy 2. Extend services to the Agua Fria Subdivision.

VIII. Implementation

A. Plan Adoption and Ongoing Review

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy guide for City leaders as they make decisions that affect the future growth and development of the community. The plan also provides a guide to officials as they oversee the operations of City departments and agencies. The following action steps should be carried out to ensure that the City's programs, plans and policies are consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Adopt the Comprehensive Plan by resolution of the City Council.
2. Prepare, approve and implement programs, plans and processes as necessary to carry out the plan.
3. Amend the City's existing plans, codes and regulations in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan's goals, objectives and strategies.
4. Consider amendments, revisions, additions or deletions to the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis.

B. Plan Implementation

The following initiatives are steps that the City of Ruidoso Downs can take in the next five years to carry out the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Land Use and Community Character

- Update the zoning code to include the following
 - Zone recently annexed lands to correspond to the future land use map contained in the Comprehensive Plan. Include the draft ETZ regulations for applicable areas newly annexed into the City limits.
 - Develop design guidelines for commercial buildings that will improve the physical character along U.S. 70.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Planning Grant

- Amend the annexation policy contained in the zoning code to specify immediate, medium-term and long-term categories of priority for future expansion of the City as shown on the future land use map.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources –CDBG Planning Grant

- Install gateway signs at entry points into the City.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – Lodgers Tax; legislative appropriation

- Develop a concept plan for the proposed city center in the vicinity of the Downs Drive intersection. This will show the locations of potential public facilities, streetscape improvements, plaza location, other landscape improvements, signage and other design features.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Planning Grant, legislative appropriation

2. Infrastructure

- Develop and fund a water rights acquisition strategy.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – Water rates, impact fees

- Implement water system improvements identified in the 40-year Water Plan and the City of Ruidoso Downs Water Master Plan and listed in the Infrastructure section of this plan. Highest priority projects, costs for each phase and priority ranking are contained in the City's Local Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP), which is submitted to the State. One high priority project not included in the ICIP at this time which should be implemented in the construction of the Riverside well. This well should be added to the next ICIP.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – legislative appropriation, CDBG Grant, USDA Rural Development, Rural Water and Waste Disposal Loans (CFDA 10.418), Communities Facilities Loans (CFDA 10.423), Infrastructure/Equipment Finance Loan Program (NM Finance Authority), Water/Wastewater Planning Grant Fund (NM Finance Authority)

- Implement sewer collection and treatment system improvements identified in the Infrastructure section of this plan, according to the phasing and priority established in the City's ICIP.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – legislative appropriation, CDBG Grant, USDA Rural Development, Rural Water and Waste Disposal Loans (CFDA 10.418), Communities Facilities Loans (CFDA 10.423), Infrastructure/Equipment Finance Loan Program (NM Finance Authority), Water/Wastewater Planning Grant Fund (NM Finance Authority)

- Review and update Drainage Management Plan to correct cost estimates and flow estimates.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Grant, FEMA, State legislative appropriation

- Construct storm drainage improvements identified in this plan and provide 100-year flood protection within the City limits.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Grant; FEMA, US Army Corps of Engineers (major projects along regulatory floodplains); State legislative appropriation, joint projects with roadway improvements projects; Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund – low interest loans through USEPA, administered by NMED; depending upon impact of stormwater runoff on Rio Ruidoso, may be eligible for other funding through USEPA, Clean Water Act related grants.

- Revise City ordinances and procedures to ensure that new development incorporates adequate storm drainage facilities. This would include requiring developers of new subdivisions to complete a drainage management plan and construct DMP improvements as part of subdivision development and incorporating regulations to ensure flood protection and compliance with NPDES requirements in new development.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Planning Grant (potentially included with zoning code revision project)

3. Transportation

- Construct near-term street improvements identified in this plan and in the City's ICIP.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Grant, State Co-op Paving Funds, City General Fund (with City crews and the City’s asphalt lay down machine).

- Conduct a conditions assessment of roadways in Agua Fria Subdivision.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Planning Grant, Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP), Local Government Road Fund, (NM Department of Transportation), Infrastructure/Equipment Finance Loan Program (NM Finance Authority)

- Complete a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes linking residential areas with the city center.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator, Public Works Department

Potential Funding Sources – CDBG Planning Grant; National Recreational Trails Fund Program (NM Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department); Transportation Enhancement Activities (NM Department of Transportation)

4. Housing

- Complete strategic plan for attracting affordable housing developer(s) to the City, including identifying potential funding programs and potential development entities.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Council, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority; Rural Housing and Economic Development Program (US Department of Housing and Urban Development)

5. Economic Development

- Complete the requirements to become certified through the Certified Communities Initiative.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – City General Fund

- Identify and amend ordinances that hinder economic development.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Council, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – City General Fund

- Provide land for industrial development

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Council, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources - Rural Housing and Economic Development Program (US Department of Housing and Urban Development); Section 108 loan guarantee and Economic Development Initiative Grant (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

- Develop marketing brochures describing the City's attributes for new industry, retail businesses and tourist oriented businesses to Ruidoso Downs.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – City General Fund; Certified Communities Initiative

- Develop marketing brochures oriented to tourists and work with local tourist oriented businesses to create vacation packages for visitors.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – City General Fund; Lodgers Tax; Cooperative Advertising Program (NM Department of Tourism)

- Participate in regional efforts to draw visitors to the area.

Lead Party – Local Economic Development Board, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – City General Fund, Lodgers Tax; Cooperative Advertising Program (NM Department of Tourism); National Scenic Byways Grants – related to Billy the Kid Trail National Scenic Byway

6. Community Facilities and Services

- Construct community facilities in the city center, including a new City Hall, a recreation center, small civic center and library.

Lead Party – City Council, Village Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – Legislative appropriations, CDBG Grant

- Complete improvements to All American Park, including parking lot pavement, lighting, basketball courts, a skate park and landscaping. Provide for ongoing maintenance.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – legislative appropriation, park impact fee

- Complete plans and construct park, open space and trail improvements identified in the Comprehensive Plan, including new neighborhood parks, a park and trail corridor adjacent to the Rio Ruidoso, and pedestrian and bicycle routes.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – legislative appropriation; park impact fee; CDBG Grant; Transportation Enhancement Activities (NM Department of Transportation)

- Construct an indoor public swimming pool.

Lead Party – City Council, City Administrator

Potential Funding Sources – Legislative appropriation; CDBG Grant

- Provide improved social and recreational services to City residents, including senior services and a youth recreation program.

Lead Party – City Administrator, City Council

Potential Funding Sources – legislative appropriations; General Fund; program user fees; local volunteers and non-profit organizations

IX. Appendix Tables

Table 11. 2000 Population Characteristics of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County

Population Characteristics	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	1824	100.0	19411	100.0
Sex and Age				
Male	893	49.0	9503	49.0
Female	931	51.0	9908	51.0
Under 5 years	121	6.6	984	5.0
5 to 9 years	152	8.3	1202	6.2
10 to 14 years	155	8.5	1400	7.2
15 to 19 years	162	8.9	1276	6.6
20 to 24 years	90	4.9	715	3.7
25 to 34 years	226	12.4	1729	8.9
35 to 44 years	295	16.2	2780	14.3
45 to 54 years	262	14.4	3152	16.2
55 to 59 years	99	5.4	1416	7.3
60 to 64 years	91	5.0	1289	6.6
65 to 74 years	111	6.1	2222	11.4
75 to 84 years	53	2.9	977	5.0
85 years and over	7	0.4	269	1.4
Median age in years	35.2		43.8	
Race				
White	1267	69.5	16660	85.8
Black or African American	23	1.3	109	0.6
American Indian and Alaska Native	82	4.5	563	2.9
Asian	22	1.2	81	0.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	7	0.4	18	0.1
Some other race	481	26.4	2483	12.8
Hispanic				
Hispanic	797	43.7	4975	25.6
Not Hispanic or Latino	1027	56.3	14436	74.4

Table 12. 1999 - 2000 Housing Characteristics of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County

	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS	2000	% Total	2000	% Total
Total Housing Units	921	100.0%	15,298	100.0%
Housing Occupancy				
Occupied Housing Units	680	73.8%	8,202	53.6%
Vacant Housing Units	241	26.2%	7,096	46.4%
- for seasonal, recreational or occasional use	156	16.9%	6,021	39.4%
Tenure of owners and renters				
Occupied Housing Units	680	73.8%	8,202	53.6%
Owner-Occupied housing units	482	52.3%	6,336	41.4%
- % of occupied housing units	70.9%	--	77.2%	--
Renter-Occupied housing units	198	21.5%	1,886	12.3%
- % of occupied housing units	29.1%	--	23.0%	--
Housing Type				
- 1-unit, detached	310	33.8%	9,815	64.2%
- 1-unit, attached	36	3.9%	541	3.5%
- 2-units	5	0.5%	252	1.6%
- 3 or 4 units	26	2.8%	470	3.1%
- 5 to 9 units	49	5.3%	400	2.6%
- 10 to 19 units	6	0.7%	75	0.5%
- 20 or more units	26	2.8%	114	0.7%
- Mobile home	449	49.0%	3,441	22.5%
- Boat, RV, van, etc.	9	1.0%	190	1.2%
Total Housing Units	916	99.5%	15,298	100.0%
Age of Housing				
- Less than 1 year old – 1999 to March 2000 (for 2000)	17	1.9%	690	4.5%
- 2 to 5 years old – 1995 to 1998	60	6.6%	1,605	10.5%
- 6 to 10 years old – 1990 to 1994	49	5.3%	1,613	10.5%
- 11 to 20 years old – 1980 to 1989	258	28.2%	4,198	27.4%
- 21 to 30 years old – 1970 to 1979	314	34.3%	3,538	23.1%
- 31 to 40 years old – 1960 to 1969	103	11.2%	1,308	8.6%
- 41 to 60 years old – 1940 to 1959	101	11.0%	1,473	9.6%
- 61 years or older – 1939 or older	14	1.5%	873	5.7%
Payments				
Mortgage Median Cost Per Month	\$ 644	--	\$ 819	--
Rental Median Cost Per Month	\$ 462	--	\$ 468	--

Table 13. 1999 - 2000 Income Characteristics of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County

Income Characteristics	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
INCOME IN 1999				
Households	656	100.0	8,206	100.0
Less than \$10,000	46	7.0	806	9.8
\$10,000 to \$14,999	59	9.0	714	8.7
\$15,000 to \$24,999	148	22.6	1,467	17.9
\$25,000 to \$34,999	153	23.3	1,231	15.0
\$35,000 to \$49,999	149	22.7	1,441	17.6
\$50,000 to \$74,999	67	10.2	1,314	16.0
\$75,000 to \$99,999	26	4.0	591	7.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5	0.8	413	5.0
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3	0.5	136	1.7
\$200,000 or more	0	0.0	93	1.1
Median household income (dollars)	\$ 29,375	--	\$ 33,886	--
Families				
Families	470	100.0	5,650	100.0
Less than \$10,000	42	8.9	348	6.2
\$10,000 to \$14,999	37	7.9	367	6.5
\$15,000 to \$24,999	101	21.5	854	15.1
\$25,000 to \$34,999	98	20.9	830	14.7
\$35,000 to \$49,999	123	26.2	1,147	20.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	45	9.6	1,043	18.5
\$75,000 to \$99,999	19	4.0	506	9.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5	1.1	351	6.2
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0.0	130	2.3
\$200,000 or more	0	0.0	74	1.3
Median family income (dollars)	\$ 30,500	--	\$ 40,035	--
Per capita income (dollars)	\$ 12,144	--	\$ 19,338	--
POVERTY STATUS IN 1999 (Numbers below poverty level)				
Families	82	--	611	--
Percent below poverty level	--	17.4	--	10.8
Individuals	369	--	2,855	--
Percent below poverty level	--	20.6	--	14.9
18 years and over	227	--	1,771	--
Percent below poverty level	--	17.2	--	11.9
65 years and over	9	--	296	--
Percent below poverty level	--	5.9	--	8.7

Table 14. Labor Force Characteristics of Ruidoso Downs and Lincoln County

Labor Force Characteristics	Ruidoso Downs		Lincoln County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
TOTAL POPULATION	1,824	100.0	19,411	100.0
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Population 16 years and over	1,385	100.0	15,541	100.0
In labor force	892	64.4	8,902	57.3
Civilian labor force	890	64.3	8,888	57.2
Employed	864	62.4	8,539	54.9
Unemployed	26	1.9	349	2.2
Percent of civilian labor force	2.9	--	3.9	--
Armed Forces	2	0.1	14	0.1
Not in labor force	493	35.6	6,639	42.7
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	864	100.0	8,539	100.0
OCCUPATION				
Management, professional, and related occupations	128	14.8	2,384	27.9
Service occupations	264	30.6	1,670	19.6
Sales and office occupations	273	31.6	2,373	27.8
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	9	1.0	154	1.8
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occup.	116	13.4	1,179	13.8
Production, transportation, & mat'l moving occup.	74	8.6	779	9.1
INDUSTRY				
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	27	3.1	382	4.5
Construction	93	10.8	1,000	11.7
Manufacturing	17	2.0	218	2.6
Wholesale trade	19	2.2	161	1.9
Retail trade	167	19.3	1,298	15.2
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	32	3.7	363	4.3
Information	6	0.7	164	1.9
Finance, insurance, real estate, & rental and leasing	55	6.4	655	7.7
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	33	3.8	525	6.1
Educational, health and social services	99	11.5	1,423	16.7
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	225	26.0	1,392	16.3
Other services (except public administration)	24	2.8	487	5.7
Public administration	67	7.8	471	5.5
CLASS OF WORKER				
Private wage and salary workers	624	72.2	5,622	65.8
Government workers	134	15.5	1,489	17.4
Self-employed workers in un-incorporated business	101	11.7	1,335	15.6
Unpaid family workers	5	0.6	93	1.1

X. References

ASCG, City of Ruidoso Downs 40-year Water Plan, February 2002

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