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4.0 Land Use, Community Places, and Open Space and Parks

The city of Santa Fe, New Mexico, is shaped by its history, cultural connection to the arts, and beautiful desert setting. This chapter examines existing and future land use, community places and corridors, and open space, parks, and trails.

The City of Santa Fe General Plan (the City) serves as a policy document that shapes land use, infrastructure, and development decisions. This update is an opportunity to address opportunities and challenges, and redefine the City's long-term vision for growth, transportation investments, housing policies, economic development strategies, and sustainability initiatives that reflect changing demographic and economic conditions in the community.

The City of Santa Fe is the county seat for Santa Fe County and is New Mexico's fourth largest city by population and fourth largest by land area at approximately 52 square miles, following Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Rio Rancho. Both the City and County are responsible for a mix of long-range planning, land use regulation, and sustainability initiatives to guide growth while preserving the area's distinctive character. The County has its own Sustainable Growth Management Plan that guides development outside the city limits, intended to ensure that urban expansion occurs in a sustainable manner.

The Santa Fe region is characterized by a spectacular natural setting, including Bandelier National Monument to the northwest and by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east and Jemez Mountains to the west. Regional influences include Albuquerque, New Mexico's largest city, which often serves as an economic base. The Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), one of the sixteen research and development laboratories of the United States Department of Energy, has spurred a bioscience and technology industry bringing business and jobs growth to the region.

4.1 Key Findings

Character: Santa Fe identifies as 'The City Different,' which speaks to the distinctive culture that sets it apart from other cities through a unique blend of history, art, and architecture. Santa Fe has a distinctive architectural heritage that has been central to Santa Fe's *identity, culture, and tourism appeal.*, evolving from a long history of settlement. In 1912, the *Santa Fe Style* was developed, influenced by both traditional Pueblo and Territorial architecture.

The City of Santa Fe was laid out according to the Laws of the Indies, which arranged development around a central plaza with government and religious

The Santa Fe Style

Santa Fe Style architecture is inspired by a distinctive blend of traditional Pueblo and Spanish Colonial design, characterized by earth-toned contoured adobe walls, flat roofs, nichos, and wood elements, such as vigas or beams. This aesthetic, deeply rooted in the city's 415-year Western history, was formalized in 1957 through a preservation ordinance mandating traditional styles in new constructions. The style evolved over time, incorporating elements from Territorial, Greek Revival, and Victorian influences, yet maintained its unique identity. There are many efforts, including land use overlays and districts, aimed at preserving this architectural heritage that has been central to Santa Fe's cultural conservation and tourism appeal.

buildings organized around the plaza. On its north side is the Palace of the Governors, the oldest public building in continuous use constructed by Europeans in the United States, and now a museum. On the east side of the plaza is the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, the mother church of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. A radiating grid of streets centers on the central plaza, with narrow alleyways and courtyards.

Sante Fe Plaza serves as the heart of the city, a compact and historic core with narrow streets, plazas and courtyards creating a comfortable and walkable urban fabric. The Downtown is heavily influenced by the Santa Fe Style, a blend of Spanish, Colonial and Pueblo architecture. The street network extends outward from the central core in a radial pattern, transitioning to more dispersed development.

Historic native settlements and agricultural lands along the Santa Fe River informed the city's development pattern as it grew, organized around the Camino Real, The River and acequias that traversed the region. Access to the Santa Fe River and water resources resulted in long, narrow lots that are fed by acequias for irrigation, which has created development challenges in recent years.

The Camino Real was a historic trade route that connected Mexico City with Santa Fe and other settlements or *parajes* (stopping places) along the trail. La Cienega, 4,500 acres of ecologically and historically sensitive lands just eight miles southwest of Santa Fe, was a vital *paraje* for travelers on the Camino Real, serving as a place to rest, trade, and resupply. The traditional village of Agua Fria has also been impacted by regional growth pressures, impacting the agricultural character of these once rural communities. In recent development, much of Santa Fe urban form takes a more suburban development pattern, with larger residential areas and commercial corridors along major thoroughfares.

Land Use: The historic city core, including Santa Fe Plaza, is the heart of the city and central to community identity. Santa Fe's urban development balances historic character and development within the core of the city. Growth pressures trend towards the edges, particularly the southern edge of the city where there are more automobile-oriented development patterns. Urban sprawl is a threat to the character of traditional villages and areas like La Cienega, emphasizing the need for more sustainable and connected communities. Commercial and industrial activity is unevenly distributed, with commercial development concentrated along Cerrillos Road and St. Michaels Drive, and industrial uses to the south and west.

The 1999 General Plan is 25 years old, necessitating a comprehensive look at the existing conditions of the community and how this document serves as a guide for growth and development. Many changes have occurred in the past 25 years and both land use zoning policy and future land use maps have incurred many, often conflicting, changes that hinder progressive and contemporary development trends while established areas and corridors have received less planning attention. Progressive trends include compact and infill development, mixed-use development, and transit-oriented development to accommodate in certain, appropriate contexts. Several opportunities exist for revitalization near corridors like St. Francis Drive and around key transit nodes. One benefit of allowing for more diversity in development patterns include pedestrian-friendly places that reduce car dependence, enhance connectivity, and preserve open space. At the same time, the city's extensive historic preservation standards, while vital to maintaining cultural identity, can limit adaptive use and investment. To ensure Santa Fe's evolving neighborhoods reflect their heritage and support future needs, the General Plan must prioritize flexible, inclusive planning approaches that align preservation, enhancement and investment with sustainability, affordability, and cultural continuity

Community Places: Santa Fe’s community places and facilities are largely concentrated along central transportation and commercial corridors, offering strong access in areas like Downtown, the Railyard, South Capitol, and Cerrillos Road. However, residents in outlying neighborhoods, such as West Alameda, Las Soleras, the Northern Foothills, and La Tierra, face limited access to shopping, entertainment, and essential services. While public art and community facilities are more dispersed than commercial destinations, significant service gaps remain, especially in semi-rural and northern areas. Key deficiencies include limited senior centers, youth services, and specialized health and social support—particularly in underserved neighborhoods. Addressing these disparities will require aligning new development with transportation improvements and expanding public facilities and programs. Emphasizing access to fresh food, healthcare, and services—especially for seniors, families, and vulnerable populations—will be critical to supporting quality of life for residents. Future planning should also leverage Santa Fe’s tourism appeal by integrating lodging, retail, and recreation into a multi-modal transportation framework that benefits both residents and visitors.

Parks, Open Space, and Trails: Santa Fe’s parks and trails support recreation and community health, but gaps remain—especially in the southeast and southwest neighborhoods. Many parks need upgrades for accessibility, infrastructure, and accessible amenities. While the existing trail network is strong, improved connectivity within the city, such as bike lanes and transit access, will help create a more sustainable and accessible mobility options. Given the region’s semiarid climate, there is an opportunity for future park planning to prioritize sustainability through native plants and water-efficient systems.

4.2 Concurrent Plan Efforts

Plans completed by the City of Santa Fe support recommendations that advance current efforts and identify cross-organizational actions utilizing combined resources.

The following summary includes relevant planning efforts and efforts that may align or support the General Plan.

4.2.1 The Santa Fe General Plan (1999)

The General Plan is adopted by City Council and establishes the ordinance or resolution of the policies, goals, and objectives. The following is a summary of Chapters 1, 3, 4, and 5:

1999 General Plan Chapter 1 – Plan Themes

- Affordable Housing – Actively participate in the creation of affordable housing.
- Quality of Life – Enhance the quality of life of the community and ensure the availability of community services for residents.
- Transportation Alternatives – Reduce automobile dependence and dominance.
- Economic Diversity – Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to increase job opportunities, diversify the economy and promote arts and small businesses.
- Sustainable Growth – Ensure that development is sustainable, and that growth, conservation, redevelopment and natural resource protection are balanced.
- Regional Perspective – Maintain a regional growth management perspective and work with other private and governmental entities towards that goal.
- Water – Undertake comprehensive efforts to conserve water and ensure adequate supplies with growth.
- Character – Maintain and respect Santa Fe’s unique personality, sense of place and character.
- Urban Form – Promote a compact urban form and encourage sensitive/compatible infill development.
- Community-oriented Downtown – Put community activities back into downtown.
- Community-oriented Development – Orient new development to the community; foster public life, vitality and community spirit.
- Mixed Use – Provide a mix of land uses in all areas of the city.
- Review Process – Streamline the planning and development review process.
- Implementation – Ensure consistency between the General Plan, implementing ordinances.

4.2.1.1 Chapter 3 – Land Use

The Land Use chapter identifies Themes Alignment, Guiding Policies, and Implementing Policies, Land Policy Overlays, and Future Land Use. The Land Uses are intended to support compact urban form, where growth is concentrated toward the core of Santa Fe, reaffirming downtown as the heart of the city. A mix of housing types, mixed-use centers, and access to transit are encouraged to support walkability and access to goods and services. Compact development types support the protection of natural areas and access to open spaces. Chapter 3 further describes the Use Classifications that are outlined in Section 3.4.

4.2.1.2 Chapter 4 – Growth Management

The Growth Management chapter addresses new development compatibility with the future vision of the city. Impacts from growth include traffic congestion, loss of open space, infrastructure capacity, and concerns around a loss of culture. The General Plan encourages development that is proactive to decrease sprawl through infill and compact development, affordable housing options, and multi-modal solutions. Planning projections consider population growth, housing, and employment needs. Growth

management strategies include an urban area boundary, annexation policy, and managing densities through infill. Growth management should consider water and sewer needs and additional influences in the region.

4.2.1.3 Chapter 5 – City Character

City Character and Urban Development addresses Urban Design in the city of Santa Fe to create an urban fabric, which honors the unique sense of place, the traditional urban form, and pedestrian-oriented design. Urban Design Standards separate from the General Plan should be incorporated into the City Code. The General Plan highlights policies for neighborhood/residential, downtown, commercial development, office, and industrial development.

4.2.2 Land Use and Urban Design Standards (2008)

This document was developed to prepare for the update to the City of Santa Fe’s 1999 General Plan by looking at recent and anticipated development trends to define a vision for future growth. The plan provides community demographics and profiles that indicate an aging and declining population. Central to this is the Urban Design and City Character, which identifies best practices for residential development, a focus on community in the downtown, redevelopment of major corridors including Cerillos Road, and a focus on economic development through jobs and neighborhoods. This plan was not adopted by the City and serves as reference but is not guiding policy.

4.2.3 Midtown Master Plan (2022)

The Midtown Master Plan effort took place between 2018 and 2022. It was developed by City staff, an interdisciplinary consultant team, community members, organizations, and stakeholders to provide a vision for the Midtown Site, the Midtown Master Plan, and the Midtown Community Development Plan. The Plan focuses on increasing housing options, improving walkability and transportation choices, creating jobs, and advancing climate change resiliency. The Midtown Master Plan guides land uses and provides an infrastructure framework to enable development and future investment. Within the Site, the Plan sets development standards to implement the vision for growth. The built character is guided by standards that articulate design expectations for the public realm, the sidewalk and frontage conditions, and the massing composition of new buildings. This plan is codified in the Midtown LINC overlay and should be considered in looking at the Midtown area for guidelines and standards.

4.2.4 City of Santa Fe Affordable Housing Plan (2024)

This plan provides a demographic assessment and strategies to address housing gaps in the city of Santa Fe. Recommendations are made to complement the current range of programs the City has to meet affordability needs, organized under three principles; (1) increasing housing production to grow strategically and sustainably; (2) increasing housing stabilization to mitigate against displacement pressures; and (3) sustaining and expanding opportunities for residents with the highest housing instability risks.

4.3 Land Use

This section outlines an understanding of existing and future land use within the city of Santa Fe. The Existing Zoning Map shows the current zoning classifications for all properties in the city of Santa Fe through specific zoning districts and determines what types of development and land uses are allowed in each area. The map is enforced by the Land Development Code (LDC) regulations, ensuring that land

use aligns with established zoning laws. The Future Land Use Map shows the city's vision for growth and development.

4.3.1 Santa Fe's Land Development Code

Santa Fe's LDC establishes zoning regulations that determine how land can be used, what types of buildings can be constructed, and what densities are permitted. Land use should be aligned with updates to the LDC, ensuring that zoning regulations, density bonuses, and infrastructure improvements support future growth patterns and land use goals.

The City is in the process of rewriting the LDC to better align with the updated General Plan and to create a more user-friendly and effective set of regulations. Coordination with the LDC is essential to ensure that zoning regulations support evolving land use goals while maintaining Santa Fe's unique character and sense of place. The LDC may require updates to support the proposed land uses and ensure efficient zoning practices.

This first phase, LDC Foundations, identifies opportunities to improve the organization, clarity, and general user-friendliness of the LDC. This phase will create the foundation for a new LDC that is accessible and easy to understand, simple to administrate, and that provides consistent and transparent regulations.¹

In addition, Section C, page 46, refers to the Purpose and Applicability of the General Plan. Annexations must be in compliance with the General Plan.

A preliminary review of the LDC Foundations Draft Assessment and impacts to current zone districts are indicated as 'LDC Alignment' when applicable in the following sections.

4.3.2 Existing Zoning Map

The Existing Land Use Map and Existing Land Use Chart represent the distribution of land use across Santa Fe. The city is divided into planning districts as shown on the official zoning map, which, as amended, is adopted by reference and declared to be a part of Chapter 14 of the LDC. The [Official Zoning Map](#) is maintained online and in GIS. Figure 4-1 represents the current distribution of land use within Santa Fe. Figure 4-2 shows the current distribution of land use within Santa Fe by percentage of acres (Santa Fe Zoning Districts GIS).

¹**14.01.05 General Plan.** The General Plan is the basic policy guide for the administration of Chapter 14. The General Plan serves as the statement of goals, recommendations and policies guiding the development of the physical environment of Santa Fe and any other geographic areas specifically addressed by the General Plan. The goals, vision, recommendations, and policies of the General Plan may be amended from time to time to meet the changing requirements of the City. Procedures for amending the General Plan are set forth in §14.02.01C [159463_298ac4f25c0d4a558259ca50715716bf.pdf](#)

Figure 4-1. Existing Zoning Map

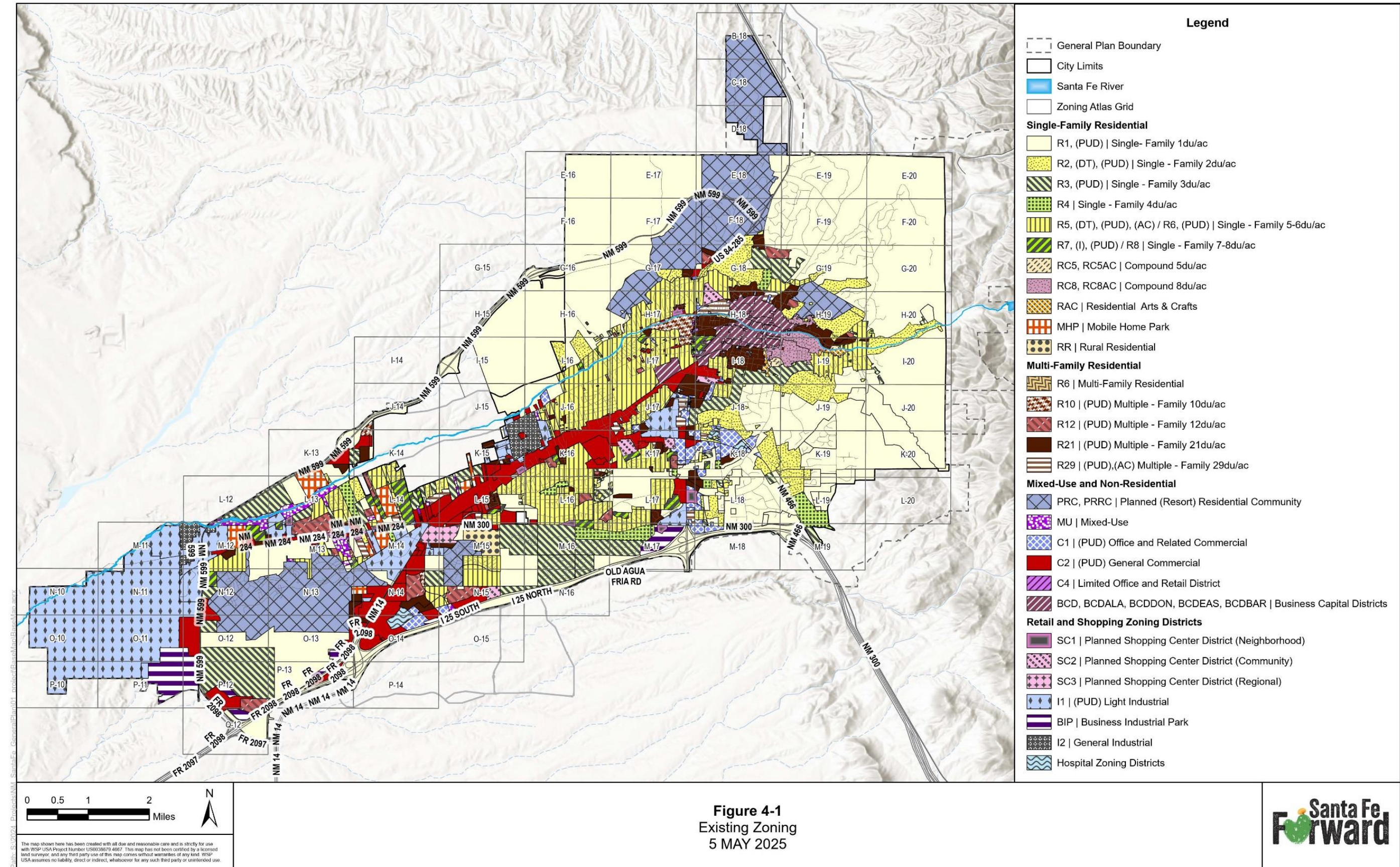
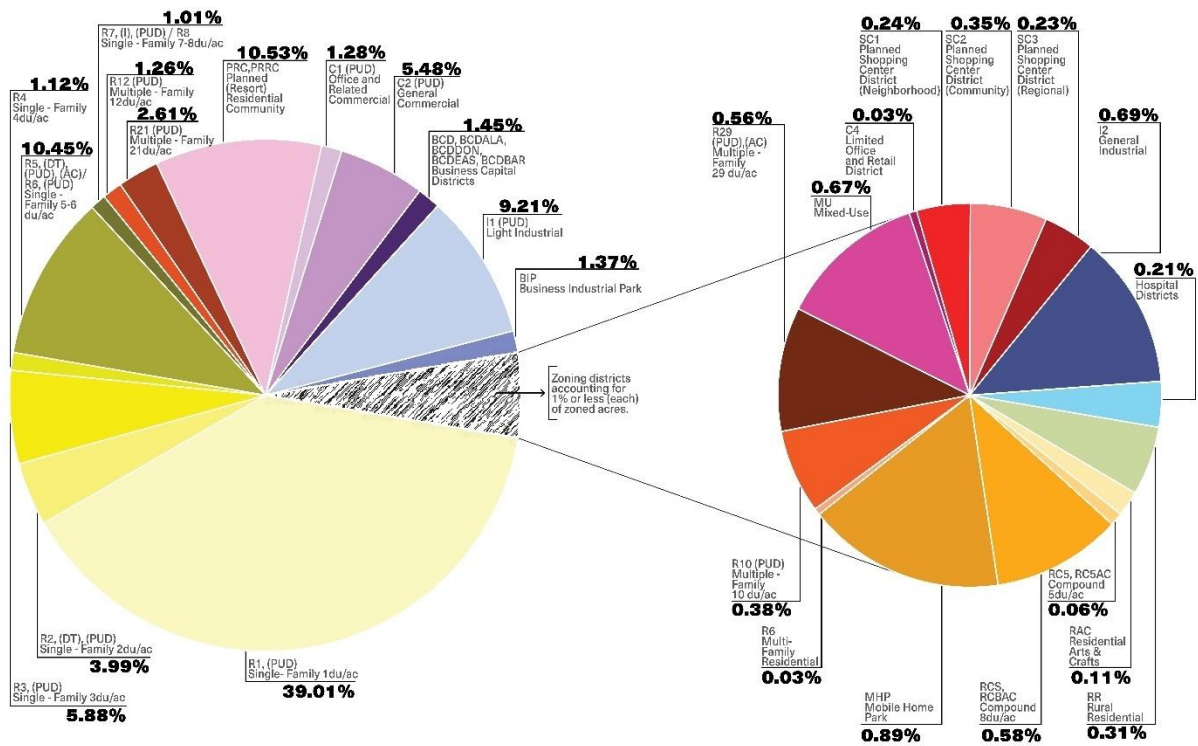


Figure 4-2. Existing Zoning Chart



4.3.3 Zoning Districts²

The community is divided into a collection of zoning districts, which identify the land uses allowed within those districts. The current Santa Fe LDC has 31 established base zoning districts and 8 overlay districts. The LDC Foundations alignment recommends removing unnecessary districts and making any necessary adjustments to current district standards, as well as adding some new zoning districts. A summary of LDC alignment is noted following the descriptions of the zoning districts below. Overall General Zoning District recommendations will include combining purpose statements and dimensional standards and clarifying the relationship between base zoning and overall districts. Descriptions of the zoning districts are provided in Table 4-1 through Table 4-3.

² Article 14-4 - ZONING DISTRICTS | Code of Ordinances | Santa Fe, NM | Municode Library

4.3.3.1 Residential Zoning Districts

Table 4-1. Residential Zoning Districts Established

Abbreviation	District Name	Purpose	District Described
RR	Rural Residential	This district is intended to respect the existing rural character of these areas.	§14-4.2C
R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6	Low-Density Residential	These districts are residential areas with lower population densities.	§14-4.2D
R-7, R-8, R-9	Moderate-Density Residential	These districts are designed to allow a greater intensity of residential land use. This supports infill development and promotes compact urban form. Benefits include the efficient use of public infrastructure and enables affordability.	§14-4.2E
R7(I)	Single-Family Residential Infill	This district encourages infill single-family residential development on undeveloped or underdeveloped land within or adjacent to established residential areas, consistent with the lot patterns and densities of those areas. <i>A Property is eligible for rezoning to R-7(I) if the property is less than 5 acres in size and located within or adjacent to an established residential area that is zoned R-4, R-5 or R-6 if all other applicable requirements are satisfied.</i>	§14-4.2F
RC-5, RC-8	Residential Compound	These districts are intended to be medium-density residential areas allowing the development of new dwelling units (DUs) in harmony with the existing character of the city's compound areas.	§14-4.2G
R-10, R-12, R-21, R-29	High-Density Residential	These provide medium- and high-density residential supporting a diversity of housing types and a wide range of household needs.	§14-4.2H
RAC	Residential Arts and Crafts	This district is to serve and preserve the prevalent characteristics of certain limited areas of the city where residential uses are mixed with small arts and crafts shops, studios, and galleries.	§14-4.2I
MHP	Manufactured Home Park	This is limited to homes in existence prior to December 10, 2012, or for the development of residential subdivisions or attached multiple-family dwellings.	§14-4.2J

LDC Foundations Alignment: Phase 1 of the LDC update suggests consolidation of residential districts, specifically R-2 through R-6. The LDC Foundations report suggests changing high-density residential districts to be permitted by right for anything over 10 DU per acre and proposes standards for setbacks.

4.3.3.2 Non-residential and Mixed-use Districts

Table 4-2. Non-residential and Mixed-use Zoning Districts Established

Abbreviation	District Name	Purpose	District Described
C-1	Office and Related Commercial	This district provides areas for government offices; professional and business offices; hospitals, medical and dental offices or clinics, care facilities, laboratories, pharmacies and related complementary businesses.	§14-4.3A
C-2	General Commercial District	This district includes areas along primary roadways where commercial uses are appropriate to guide future additions or changes so as to discourage extension of existing and formation of strip commercial, preserve the function of the roadway, and provide off-street parking and loading.	§14-4.3B
C-4	Limited Office, Retail and Arts and Crafts District	This district provides a specific area for limited office, retail and arts and crafts commercial uses of a nature not likely to generate heavy vehicular traffic, protecting residential areas and maintaining neighborhood character.	§14-4.3C
HZ	Hospital Zone	This district recognizes the need for hospital medical and related offices and services in the Christus St. Vincent Hospital Zone District and the Las Soleras HZ district.	§14-4.3D
BCD	Business-Capitol District	This district provides for a mixture of land uses, including residential uses, designed to promote the district's economic wellbeing while preserving the unique architecture, townscape and aesthetics. This also includes BCD, BCDALA, BCDDON, BCDEAS, and BCDBAR Zoning Districts.	§14-4.3E
I-1	Light Industrial	This district is intended primarily for light manufacturing, processing, storage, warehousing, distribution and similar commercial uses to prevent friction between uses within the district and protect adjacent neighborhoods. This section includes a "townscape" element, which considers the urban form and character.	§14-4.3F
I-2	General Industrial District	This district allows general manufacturing and closely related uses. Also allowed in the district are commercial and other uses allowed in some commercial districts	§14-4.3G
BIP	Business and Industrial Park	This district provides for the development of jobs in research and development, activities and in offices, institutions and limited light industrial settings.	§14-4.3H
PRC	Planned Residential Community	This district provides for the comprehensive and coordinated planning of large-scale residential developments that allows for a phasing of	§14-4.3I

Abbreviation	District Name	Purpose	District Described
		development that will take place over a long period of time. This district allows and encourages single-family residences in conventionally platted subdivisions and clustered residential developments based on a design concept that applies innovative site-planning techniques; a mixture of residential densities intended to achieve a balanced community for all types of families; and neighborhood commercial uses of a type and intensity serving the residents of the PRC and the surrounding areas.	
PRRC	Planned Resort-Residential Community District	This district provides for the comprehensive and coordinated planning of large-scale resort-residential developments that allows for phasing of development that will take place over a long period of time. This district allows and encourages the development of resorts in conjunction with a mixture of residential uses, densities and building types within the range of the economic market the development proposes to serve.	§14-4.3J
SC-1, SC-2, SC-3	Planned Shopping Center (Neighborhood, Community, Regional)	The SC-1, SC-2, and SC-3 districts allow for neighborhood, community, and regional shopping centers with stores and services that provide for the regular needs and convenience.	§14-4.3K
MU	Mixed-use District	This district allows for infill development underused and vacant land and buildings, allowing for office, commercial, and residential uses in the same building or on the same property: https://library.municode.com/nm/santa_fe/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH14LADE_ART14-12DE_14-12.1DE_BUILDING .	§14-4.3L
PO	Parks and Open Space	*Phase 1 LDC – Suggested Additional District for Parks, Open Space, and Trails	proposed

LDC Foundations Alignment: Phase 1 of the LDC suggests updated purpose statements to better align with desired development patterns and reorganize the commercial districts. Future phases will explore mixed-use districts that may be more tailored to density and scale and determine location for industrial uses. A limitation was identified for mixed use zoning applicability in historic districts, and future efforts should explore residential adjacency standards. Additionally, much of the BCD is in the Historic Overlay District and may require additional study to a consistent set of standards, exploring dimensional standards rather than FAR and land use credits. Short-term rentals in the BCD area are also an opportunity to address and there is consideration of dividing the Downtown and Eastside historic district into a Downtown district and Eastside district in order to recognize the distinctive character of each.

There is an addition of a 'parks and open space district' that may also include trails. Suggestions include removal or consolidation of the following: removal of special-purpose districts; consolidation of PRRC and PRC into a planned unit development (PUD) overlay; removal of Business and Industrial (BIP) and Hospital Zone (HZ) Districts, promotion of less single use and more mixed-use districts. SC districts should be consolidated to a standard commercial or mixed-use district.

4.3.3.3 Overlay Zoning Districts³

Table 4-3. Overlay Zoning Districts

Overlay District	Purpose
Historic Districts	These districts allow for the review and preservation of the architectural heritage, buildings and landmarks.
The Archeological District	This overlay district recognizes the value of archaeological resources from all periods of history and prehistory and provides the means for identifying sites, requiring surveys and test excavations, depending on the district, through a review and permit process.
The Arts and Crafts (AC) District/Native American Arts or Crafts District	This overlay district allows arts and crafts and other related commercial uses in eligible underlying districts.
Highway Corridor Protection Districts	These overlay districts include the South Central Highway Corridor Protection District to retain openness, quiet and continuity in the south-central section of the city as the area develops. It also includes the Cerrillos Road Highway Corridor Protection District, one of Santa Fe's busiest thoroughfares, primary entranceways, and the community's major commercial strips.
Midtown Local Innovation Corridor (Midtown LINC) Overlay District	(See Midtown Plan)
The Escarpment Overlay District	This overlay is established in order to promote economic welfare through harmonious, orderly growth and conserve the value of buildings and land to encourage appropriate uses.

³ [Article 14-5 - OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS | Code of Ordinances | Santa Fe, NM | Municode Library](#)

The overlay zoning districts of this article are intended to apply in combination with the underlying zoning districts of Article 14-14 to impose regulations and standards in addition to those required by the underlying districts. Figure 4-3 shows areas designated within overlay zoning districts.

The following overlay zoning districts are identified in the LDC but are not identified on the current map.

- **The Planned Unit Development District** allows for the creation of planned districts and allows for innovative site planning and design to ensure that future development is compatible.
- **The Ecological Resource Protection District** is established to protect trails and open spaces for the recreation of all Santa Fe citizens, habitat protection and water conservation.
- **Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts** serve to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents so that neighbors will be allowed to conserve their neighborhoods by collectively identifying their neighborhood's distinctive characteristics.

FDC Foundations Alignment: The listed overlay districts with nothing on the map will be eliminated in Phase 1 of the LDC update.

Figure 4-3. Overlay Zoning District Map

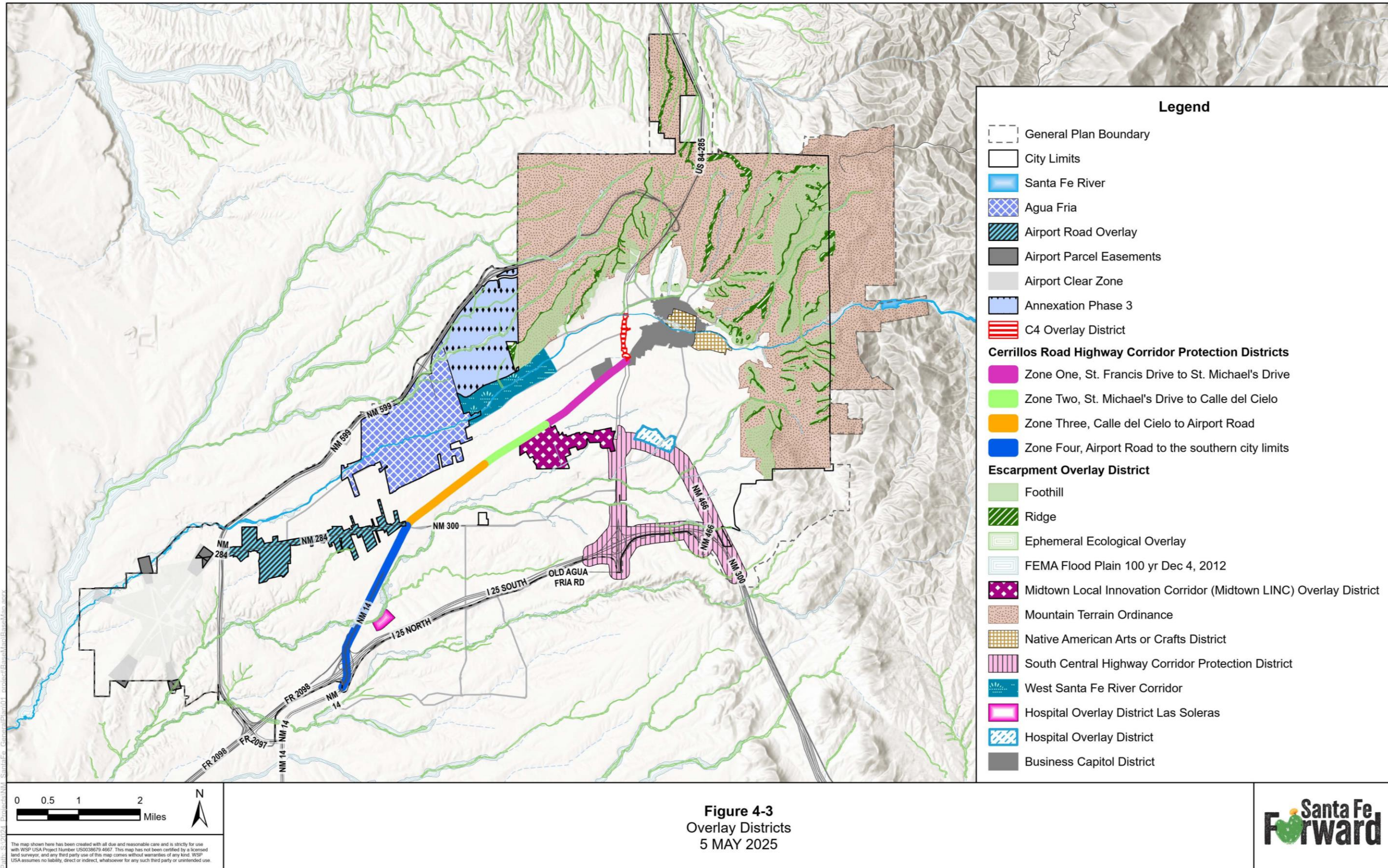


Figure 4-3
Overlay Districts
5 MAY 2025



LDC Foundations Alignment: Phase 1 proposes the elimination of the RS Overlay and ER Overlay as well as the continuation of the Midtown LINC overlay without changes. The creation of new overlays should be removed and relocated to respective subsections (Historic, Neighborhood Conservation, and PUD). This removes the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay. It is recommended to explore relocating the Arts and Crafts Overlay District to a consolidated Neighborhood Mixed-use District. Additional direction is needed to address Agua Fria Traditional Historic Community. The Airport Clear Zones should be consolidated with the C-4 Overlay. Recommend a Mountain Terrain Overlay that is separate from the Escarpment Overlay. The Highway Corridors Overlay includes minor modifications to support development.

4.3.4 Future Land Use Map

- The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) offers a blueprint for Santa Fe’s growth and future land uses as illustrated in Figure 4-4. This map indicates where the city expects to see growth, including areas for residential, mixed-use, and commercial developments. The current General Plan Future Land Use Map has been regularly amended with rezoning requests. The land use categories are very specific and therefore require regular amendments, which creates inconsistencies.

The LDC Foundations Alignment Draft states:

“Approval of a change in zoning district designation that is inconsistent with the land use classification shown on the General Plan’s future land use map. The determination of consistency shall be made based on review of the future land use map and applicable policies of the General Plan, recognizing that there may not be in every case a direct correspondence between the land use classifications in the General Plan and the zoning district designations in Chapter 14.”⁴

How is a Future Land Use Map different from a Zoning Map?

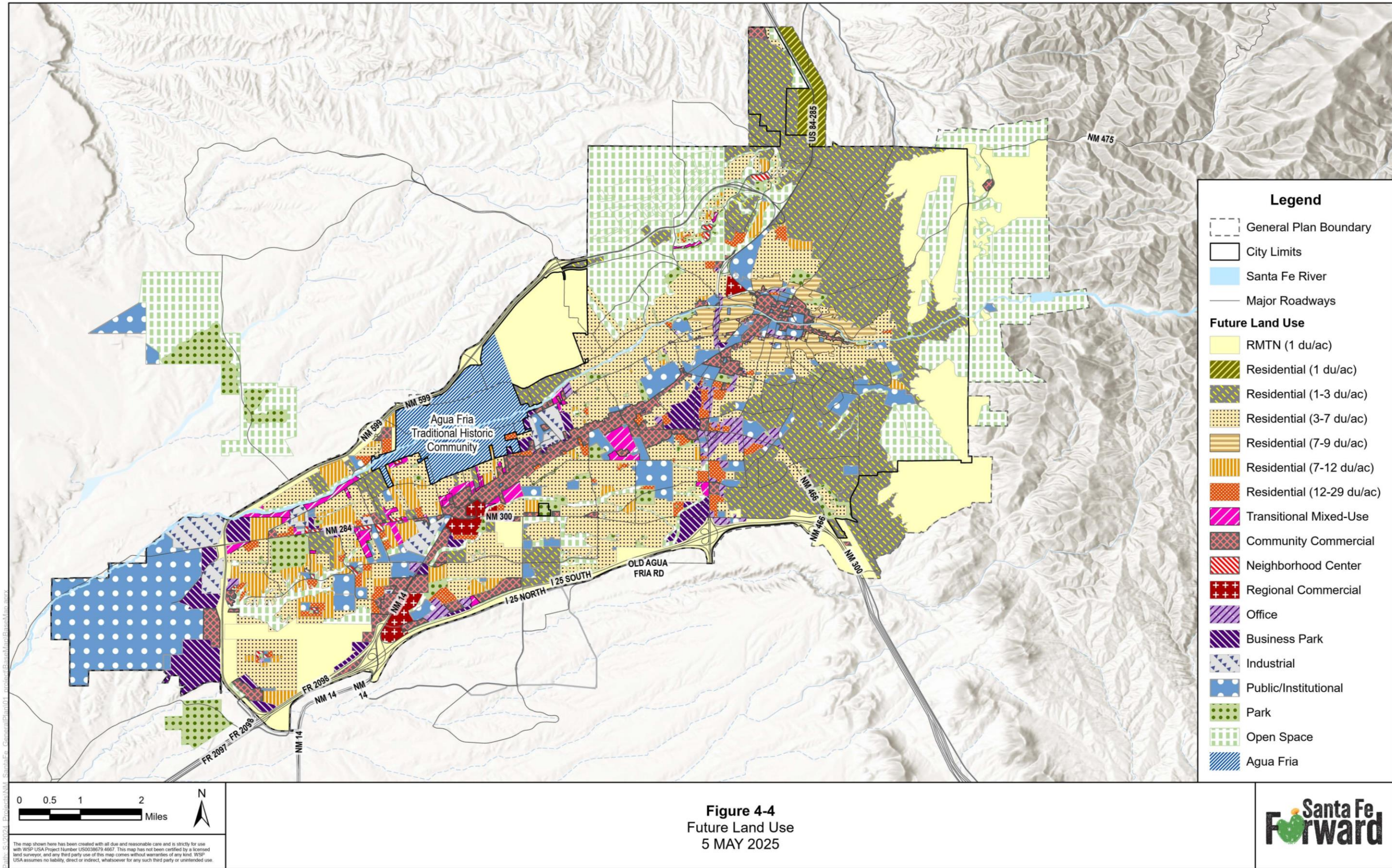
A Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and Existing Zoning are both planning tools used in land use regulation, but they serve different purposes. The FLUM often informs zoning updates, but they are not the same.

A FLUM is a policy guide to outline long-term land use goals and visions, representing desired land use patterns for future development, rather than what is currently allowed. It is not legally binding but helps guide zoning decisions and policy changes.

The Existing Zoning Map regulates what can currently be built and how land can be used. It consists of specific zoning districts with rules on lot size, building height, density, and permitted uses and is legally enforceable, meaning development must comply with the zoning code unless a rezoning or variance is granted.

⁴ [159463_298ac4f25c0d4a558259ca50715716bf.pdf](#)

Figure 4-4. Existing Future Land Use Map



The map shown here has been created with all due and reasonable care and is strictly for use with WSP USA Project Number US020979 4567. This map has not been certified by a licensed land surveyor, and any third party use of this map comes without warranties of any kind. WSP USA assumes no liability, direct or indirect, whatsoever for any such third party or unintended use.

Since the 1999 General Plan, the land use classifications have evolved notably through map amendments. Section 3.5 of the General Plan (pages 3 to 8) indicates a different set of land use classifications from the current map. While the map has been amended, the descriptions remain from the 1999 General Plan. The following classifications in Table 4-4 and Table 4-5 are identified on the FLUM and include a description based on the 1999 General Plan document.

4.3.4.1 Residential Land Use Classifications

Table 4-4. Residential Land Use Classifications

Land Use Classification	Description
RMTN (1 DU per acre)	Identified as Very Low Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document, allowing Low Density Residential at 1-3 units per acre, allowing for detached single-family residential.
Residential (1 DU per acre)	Identified as Very Low Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allowing Low Density Residential at 1-3 units per acre, allowing for detached single-family residential.
Residential (1-3 DU per acre)	Identified as Very Low Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document. Low Density Residential at 1-3 units per acre, allowing for detached single-family residential.
Residential (3-7 DU per acre)	Identified as Low Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allowing for Low Density Residential at 1-3 units per acre, allowing for detached single-family residential, as well as multifamily units with ground floor living and outdoor space.
Residential (7-9 DU per acre)	Identified as Moderate Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allowing for detached single-family as well as attached or multifamily typical to existing and historic buildings in proximity to downtown.
Residential (7-12 DU per acre)	Identified as Medium Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allowing for both single-family and multifamily such as duplexes, triplexes, apartments and condominiums.
Residential (12-29 DU per acre)	Identified as High Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allowing for apartments, condominiums, and other forms of multifamily housing.
The Greater Agua Fria Area	Identified in the 1999 General Plan as a Traditional Historic Community and located in the County, the designation of the Traditional Village of Agua Fria was done by the County.

4.3.4.2 Commercial, Institutional, and Industrial Land Use Classifications

Table 4-5. Commercial, Institutional, and Industrial Land Use Classifications

Land Use Classification	Description
Regional Commercial	This outlines shopping areas, existing regional centers and specifying Santa Fe Outlet Centers, Villa Linda (currently Santa Fe Place) Mall, and DeVargas Mall.
Community Commercial	This provides for retail shopping, plazas and a variety of businesses which may include restaurants, stores, service, personal wellness, sales business, education and social services.
Neighborhood Center	This classification specifies the requirement of a central plaza, and allows for a mix of uses including commercial, retail, civic and residential uses. A pedestrian environment is encouraged, and parking meets the code, reducing the auto-dominated landscape. Residential is limited to 12 units per acre.
Office	This classification provides for administrative, financial, business, professional, medical, public and public offices and related uses such as small-scale restaurants in a commercial area.
Regional Commercial	No classification is identified for this use in the 1999 General Plan document. This use may have been added in subsequent years to the current FLUM.
Industrial	This classification is intended to protect industrial land and manufacturing, agricultural and industrial processing, and general services. Retail and Commercial uses are not encouraged.
Public/Institutional	This classification allows for schools, childcare, human services, museums, libraries, and other community assets.
Park	Identified as Park/Open Space in the 1999 Plan document, including parks, recreation, public and private golf courses, and limited special use parks.
Open Space	Identified as Park/Open Space in the 1999 Plan document with a limited description of Open Space. This use may have been added in subsequent years to the current FLUM.

4.3.4.3 Unused or Outdated Land Use Classifications

The following classifications are outlined in the 1999 use classifications that are NOT identified on the current FLUM. Some Land Uses have been codified in a Zone District or an Overlay District in Chapter 14 of the LDC.

- **RMTN** has inconsistent classification standards, the dwellings per acre field in the current GIS attribute table indicate that RMTN has 1 DU per acre. However, The 1999 General Plan States: **Mountain Density Residential**. Up to 1 unit per 10 acres depending on slope and length of ownership as specified in the City Code. **Residential (1 DU per acre)** does not exist in the 1999 General Plan, BUT it is on the current FLUM and GIS table as “RCOR” and is listed as 1/du per acre. **Very low (1-3)** through **high (12-29)** all match in terms of the DU/acre and description between the 1999 General Plan and the current GIS table.
- **Business Park** – Identified as Medium Density Residential in the 1999 Plan document allows for moderate to low intensity industrial and business uses. Currently Codified as BIP and IP in Chapter 14.
- **Mountain Density Residential** – Up to 1 unit per 10 acres depending on slope and length of ownership as specified in the City Code. Located above the 7,400-foot contour. Clustered development, taking into consideration the natural character of the land, will be required. On existing parcels with 30 percent slopes or greater, only one residential unit per existing legal parcel is permitted. This is possibly codified in the Escarpments Overlay District in Chapter 14.
- **Historic Preservation Neighborhood Conversation** – Currently codified as Neighborhood Preservation Overlay District and Historic Overlay District(s) in Chapter 14.
- **Business Capital** Currently Codified as the BCD Zone District in Chapter 14.
- **Cerrillos Road/Airport Road/St. Michaels Drive Redevelopment Corridor** – Currently codified as Highway Corridor Protection Overlay District in Chapter 14. The 2004 Land Use and Urban Design Plan identifies St. Michaels Drive as a mixed-use corridor, connecting Cerrillos Road and St. Francis Drive, suggesting a road diet and enhance streetscape and vibrant commercial, retail, housing and business use.
- **Corridor Protection Area** – Currently unidentified in the 1999 General Plan document.
- **Rodeo Road/Interstate 25 (I-25) Corridor** – Currently unidentified in the 1999 General Plan document.
- **Old Pecos Trail Scenic Corridor** – Currently unidentified in the 1999 General Plan document but is noted on the 1999 FLUM
- **Greater Agua Fria Area** – Not currently indicated on the FLUM. The Greater Agua Fria Area is identified in the 1999 General Plan as a Traditional Historic Community.
- **Siler Road Redevelopment District** – Currently unidentified in the 1999 General Plan document. The 2004 Land Use and Urban Design Plan identifies Siler Road as an Employment Center with redevelopment opportunities. Not currently identified on the FLUM.

4.3.5 Land Use Pattern

Within the city of Santa Fe, 68.14 percent of the total land area of the city’s zoned parcels is designated as residential use (60.49 percent of which is low-density residential), 18.93 percent of mixed-use and non-residential, and 12.92 percent of special purpose. The heart of the city is the central plaza of downtown Santa Fe. Surrounding the plaza are important religious and civic buildings, including the Palace of the Governors. Older, denser ‘estates’ and ‘compound’ development to the northeast of town feature small, narrow streets. Newer development, primarily to the south and west of the downtown core has a lower density, suburban form, with larger lot patterns, including Tierra Contenta and Las

Soleras. Neighborhoods, such as Don Gaspar Historic District, expand to the south from the core along Galisteo, including narrow, winding streets with shorter blocks. Along the Santa Fe River, Agua Fria historic village demonstrates long narrow lots called ‘ranchos,’ that provide access to the river for agricultural uses and ensure each property has water for irrigation. More recently, the urban infill development at the Santa Fe Railyard and transit hub is an example of pedestrian oriented mixed-use development and adaptive reuse of historic buildings. This area hosts events, shops and dining that have a significant cultural and economic impact.

The traditional central plaza and corresponding radial street system leads to an organic street pattern, following the Santa Fe River and natural topography. Primary corridors include Cerrillos Road (NM-14), St. Michaels Drive, Old Santa Fe Trail and Old Pecos Trail, Airport Road, Guadalupe Street and Canyon Road. Cerrillos Road, and Airport Road serve as primary commercial corridors. Whereas Old Santa Fe Trail, Guadalupe Street, and Canyon Road Arts District provide cultural and historic resources for residents and tourists. Major regional connections include US-84/285 and I-25 and the Rail Runner Express commuter train. I-25 defines the southern edge of the city, Veterans Memorial Highway defines the northern edge, and US-285 runs north through the central core.

The Santa Fe River runs through the heart of the City of Santa Fe, originating in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at Lake Peak, Northeast of the City, and flow Southwest to the Rio Grande. The River has served as a Lifesource for humans and wildlife living in the region for thousands of years serving as a critical source for drinking water and irrigation for agriculture. Access to water has shaped the land, including settlements along the River and acequias, irrigation ditches that brought water to farms and homesteads, resulting in long and narrow lot configurations. As the City grew, so did the demand for water, resulting in the McClure and Nichols Reservoirs, which provides about 37% of the City’s water⁵. Today, the Santa Fe River is considered endangered, and is dry most of the year, flowing primarily during large precipitation events and therefore prone to flash flooding. There have been many projects and partnerships through the years to aid river health and protect water supply, including diversion channels, river restoration (such as naturalization and slope stabilization), and channelization (such as gravel or concrete lining). The Living River Ordinance of 2012, manages the water released each year, based on snowpack levels and is approved by the Santa Fe River Commission. The Santa Fe River Trail began construction in the late 2000’s and continues to be built today. This serves as an important trail connections within the City, though some gaps remain, and also allows residents to be stewards of the River as an important part of Santa Fe’s history and a critical aspect of maintaining life in the City for the future.

The central core of downtown Santa Fe is a key employment hub and includes the BCD and the South Capital Complex. Outside the core major employment centers include CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center, The College of Santa Fe, and Siler Road commercial area.

4.4 History

Santa Fe, New Mexico, has a rich and complex history shaped by many cultures, including, but not limited to, Indigenous peoples, Spanish colonization, and American expansion. The region around Santa

⁵ [Santa Fe River | City of Santa Fe](#)

Fe has been inhabited by Puebloan peoples since time immemorial, and who built complex, multi-story adobe villages and practiced agriculture along the Rio Grande River. The region was part of a larger Indigenous trade network, connecting the Pueblo peoples with the Plains tribes and other indigenous groups to the south and west and trade that extended south to the Toltec, Maya, and Aztec areas. The period of Spanish Colonization and westward expansion between 1598 to 1821 was a time of establishment, conflict, and religious missions that blended the Spanish and Pueblo cultures. In 1610, Santa Fe was officially founded by Governor Pedro de Peralta, making it the oldest capital city in the United States.. Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, and Santa Fe became part of the newly formed Mexican Republic. Santa Fe was captured prior to 1848, in 1846, when the Mexicans loss the Battle of Cañoncito, when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo formally ceded this part of New Mexico to the United States. New Mexico became the forty-seventh state in 1912, with Santa Fe as its capital and since has been a cultural and artistic hub, attracting artists, writers, and intellectuals inspired by its robust multicultural influences.

Santa Fe has robust historic preservation regulations through both with designated historic and archaeological districts to protect its architecture and cultural heritage, while also allowing for responsible new development. Santa Fe has strict preservation rules, ensuring that new development in historic districts aligns with traditional architectural styles. The Historic Preservation Division oversees modifications to properties within designated historic districts overseen by two boards, the [Archaeological Review Committee \(ARC\)](#) and the [Historic Districts Review Board \(HDRB\)](#).

4.4.1 Historic Districts⁶⁷

The Historic Districts Review Board is composed of seven individuals appointed by the Mayor with the consent of the City Council and oversees the historic status and modification of buildings and structures that cannot be administratively approved within the City of Santa Fe’s five historic districts. Table 4-6 describes the City of Santa Fe’s five Historic Districts as defined by the Historic Districts Handbook. Figure 4-5 shows the six Historic Districts, areas for potential historic designation, and historic height amendment areas along with Points of Interest and Landmarks that have cultural significance.

Table 4-6. Historic Districts

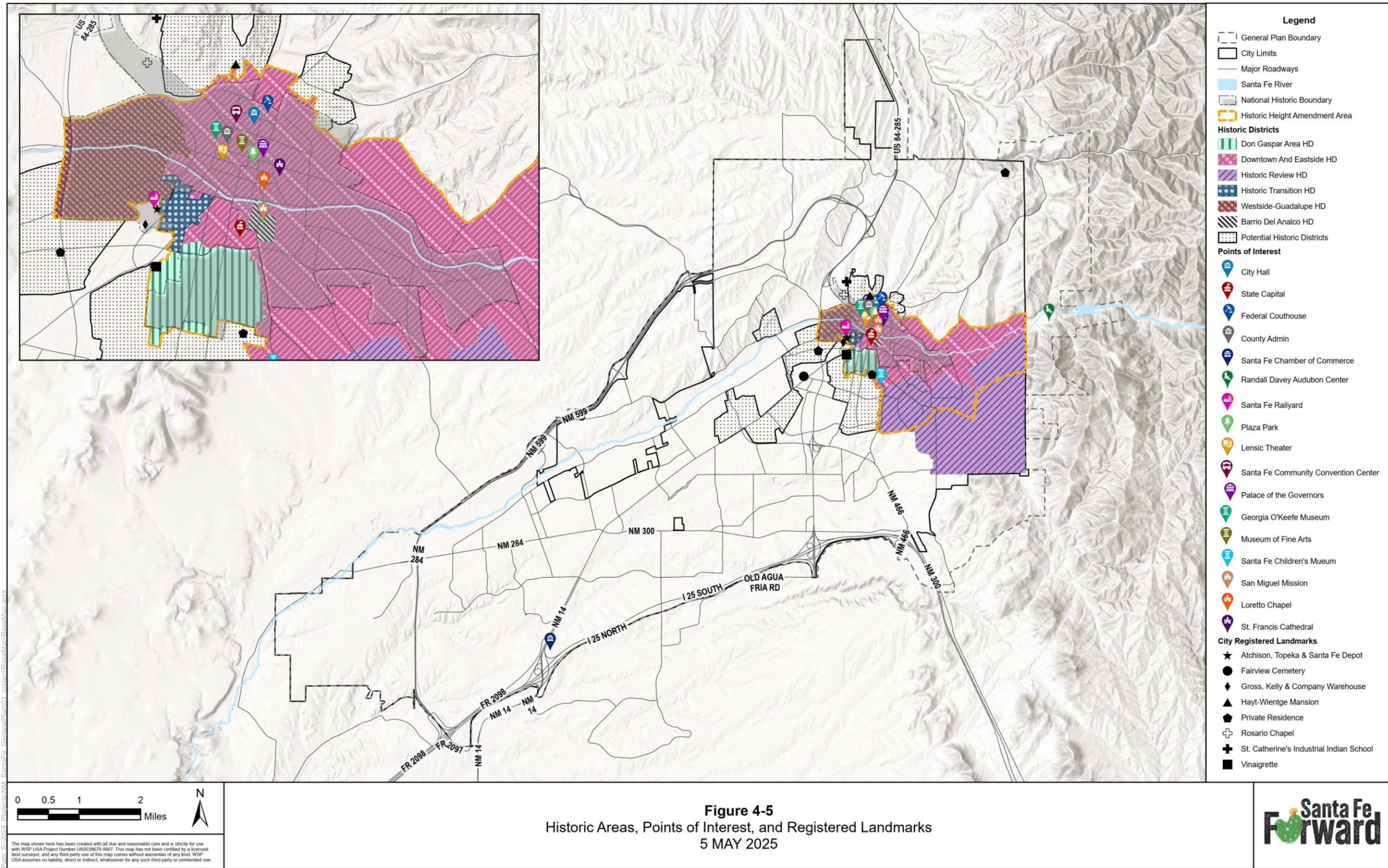
Historic District	Description
Westside-Guadalupe	The Westside-Guadalupe neighborhoods with homes typically made of adobe in the traditional Spanish-Pueblo style, originated as clusters of Hispanic farms on the outskirts of Santa Fe’s more developed plaza area, with long, narrow parcels designed to provide access to the acequia system.
Historic Transition	The Historic Transition District was first subdivided in the 1880s in anticipation of Santa Fe's first railroad, leading to the construction of some commercial and residential buildings while many lots remained vacant. The area's prospects of becoming the city's main commercial center were dashed when the Santa Fe Branch of the

⁶ [1b - Historic Districts Handbook 2021 \(1\).pdf](#)

⁷ [Santa Fe River | City of Santa Fe](#)

	Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad, informally known as the “Chili Line,” ceased operations in 1941.
Don Gaspar Area	The Don Gaspar Area Historic District is mainly residential, with its earliest structures built before the 1900s. Many of these early buildings reflect traditional Spanish Pueblo and Territorial architectural styles.
Downtown and Eastside	The Downtown and Eastside Historic District includes Santa Fe’s downtown area along with the Canyon Road, Acequia Madre, Camino del Monte Sol, and East Palace Avenue neighborhoods. It contains many of the city’s oldest and best-preserved examples of Spanish-Pueblo and Territorial architecture, with colonial-era features like narrow grid-patterned streets, a central plaza, and a historic acequia network still visible.
Historic Review	The Historic Review District lies south of the historic Eastside in proximity to the Canyon Road, Acequia Madre, and Camino del Monte Sol neighborhoods, as well as a historical connection to the Santa Fe Trail and important regional museums.

Figure 4-5. Historic Areas, Points of Interest, and Registered Landmarks



4.4.2 Landmark Sites and Registered Landmarks

The city contains over 100 individually listed properties on the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Cultural Properties, Sites and Districts. National Historic Landmarks Sites located within Santa Fe are described in Table 4-7.

Table 4-7. National Historic Landmark Sites

National Historic Landmark Site	Description
The Santa Fe Plaza (1610)	A square plaza in the traditional form of Spanish-American cities is a destination for events, gathering and culture.
Fort Marcy Historic Monument and Park (1846)	Certified as a site along the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, the fort is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Cultural Properties. Additionally, the Officer’s residence was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 by the National Park Service.
Palace of the Governors (1960)	Served as the seat of government in New Mexico for centuries and is the country’s oldest government building still in use, built in the territorial architectural style in 1610.
Barrio del Analco Historic Districts (1968)	At the center of this district, formed in 1968, is the San Miguel Chapel, a Spanish colonial mission, which is the oldest church in the United States, dating back to the early 1600s. Its original adobe walls were built in part by Tlaxcalan Indians that accompanied Spanish settlers from Mexico.
National Parks Service Headquarters (1987)	Built in the 1930s by crews of the Civilian Conservation Core, this site exemplifies Spanish Pueblo Architectural style.

In addition to National Historic Landmark Sites, the City of Santa Fe recognizes the following sites as City-registered Landmarks as described in Table 4-8 and highlighted on Figure 4-5.

Table 4-8. City-registered Landmarks

City-registered Landmark Sites	Description
Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Depot (1909)	The Depot is a California Mission Style building, which was designed by the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway office in 1909. This depot is one of just a few that has survived as a connecting point between small villages and towns throughout New Mexico and is currently the end of the New Mexico Rail Runner Express commuter train from Belen ⁸ .
Fairview Cemetery (Est. 1884)	Fairview Cemetery is the oldest non-Catholic cemetery in Santa Fe, and has approximately 3,700 documented burial sites dating back to the 1860s. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places in

⁸ [Atchinson, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Depot — Historic Santa Fe Foundation](#)

City-registered Landmark Sites	Description
	2005 and is operated and maintained by a non-profit organization, the Fairview Cemetery Preservation Association ⁹ .
Gross, Kelly and Company Warehouse (1913)	<i>“The Gross, Kelly and Company Warehouse contributes to the district by virtue of its age, style, and integrity. Moreover, as an early work of one of the creators of the Spanish Pueblo Revival style, Isaac Hamilton Rapp, it is of landmark significance in the history of that style which has become one with the architectural identity of the city of Santa Fe. It has additional importance for its association with one of the large wholesale companies which played a major role in the history of commerce in the Southwest.”¹⁰</i>
Hayt-Wientge Mansion (~1864)	This vintage home is historically and architecturally significant as one of few surviving Victorian-style homes in Santa Fe ¹¹ .
Rosario Chapel (1807)	This Chapel stands on the original encampment site of Diego de Vargas and his army during the reconquest of Santa Fe in 1692. Today it holds historic, religious, and cultural significance as the starting point for the annual De Vargas procession as well as a place for prayer and devotion ¹² .
St. Catherine’s Industrial Indian School (Est. 1886)	<i>“The School is a remnant of a contested system of Indian boarding schools... first developed in nineteenth century New Mexico to educate, assimilate, and “civilize” Indigenous children into Euro-American culture. The campus closed its doors in 1998. The City of Santa Fe now owns the substantial site and plans to adaptively reuse the property.”¹³</i>
Santa Fe Airport Terminal Building (1957)	Designed in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style by Leo J. Woolgammood and Alfred R. Millington, the Terminal Building embodies significant characteristics of the Santa Fe style and is an important gateway for visitors. It is also considered eligible for listing on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties and the National Register of Historic Places.
Private Residences	The following private residences are recognized for their historic and architectural significance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 914 Hickox Street¹⁴. • 300 E Houghton Street¹⁵. • 210 Brownell-Howland Road¹⁶.

⁹ [Fairview Cemetery Santa Fe](#)

¹⁰ [National Register of Historic Places Inventory for the Santa Fe Historic District, Page 11](#)

¹¹ [National Register of Historic Places - Inventory Form](#)

¹² [Santa Fe’s Rosario Chapel History - History in Santa Fe](#)

¹³ [St. Catherine’s Industrial Indian School — Historic Santa Fe Foundation](#)

¹⁴ [City of Santa Fe - Bill 2015-45](#)

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

4.4.3 Downtown Attractions and Points of Interest

The City of Santa Fe’s downtown is a vibrant destination for arts and culture, offering a range of amenities that attract and serve both residents and visitors. In addition to sites, such as Palace of the Governors, Santa Fe Plaza, Santa Fe Railroad, and Loretto Chapel, these include IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, New Mexico History Museum, New Mexico Museum of the Arts, DeVargas Center, Santuario de Guadalupe, and Fort Marcy Ballpark. Points of interest within the city, as described in Table 4-9, further contribute to the rich culture and fabric of the Santa Fe identity.

Table 4-9. Points of Interest

Landmark	Description
Santa Fe Community Convention Center	Built in 2008, the Community Convention Center offers over 38,000 square feet of meeting space with modern amenities and historic charm. It is located within the Historic District, downtown, and is a popular destination for locals as well as for visitor-based events.
Lensic Theater	Built in 1931 as vaudeville stage and movie palace, the Lensic Theater underwent significant renovation and reopened as a non-profit community organization in 2001. Today, the theater has 821 seats and is a cultural landmark located downtown.
Randall Davey Audubon Center	This property was gifted to the National Audubon Society by the heirs of Randall Davey and was opened as a sanctuary in 1983. Today, visitors can experience the 135-acre site through hiking trails, guided bird walks, and tours of the Randall Davey home.
Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce	Established in 1882 as the Santa Fe Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce serves as a regional voice for the business community and aims to strengthen the local economy.
City Hall	Located downtown, City Hall houses City departments, administration, and government offices.
State Capitol	“Today’s New Mexico State Capitol, known as the Roundhouse, is the only round capitol building in the country. It was built by Robert E. McKee with a design by W.C. Kruger that combined elements of New Mexico Territorial style, Pueblo adobe architecture, and Greek Revival adaptations. The 232,000-square-foot Roundhouse was dedicated on December 8, 1966. From a bird’s-eye view, the Roundhouse resembles the Zia sun symbol, which is also emblazoned on the New Mexico state flag. ¹⁷ ”
Federal Courthouse	Although intended to be the territorial capital of New Mexico, the site never served its original purpose. Upon completion in 1889, the building housed a land claims court and several other federal courts since. The U.S. Courthouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and is located in the Federal Plaza.

¹⁷ [TOURISM Santa Fe New Mexico State Capitol](#)

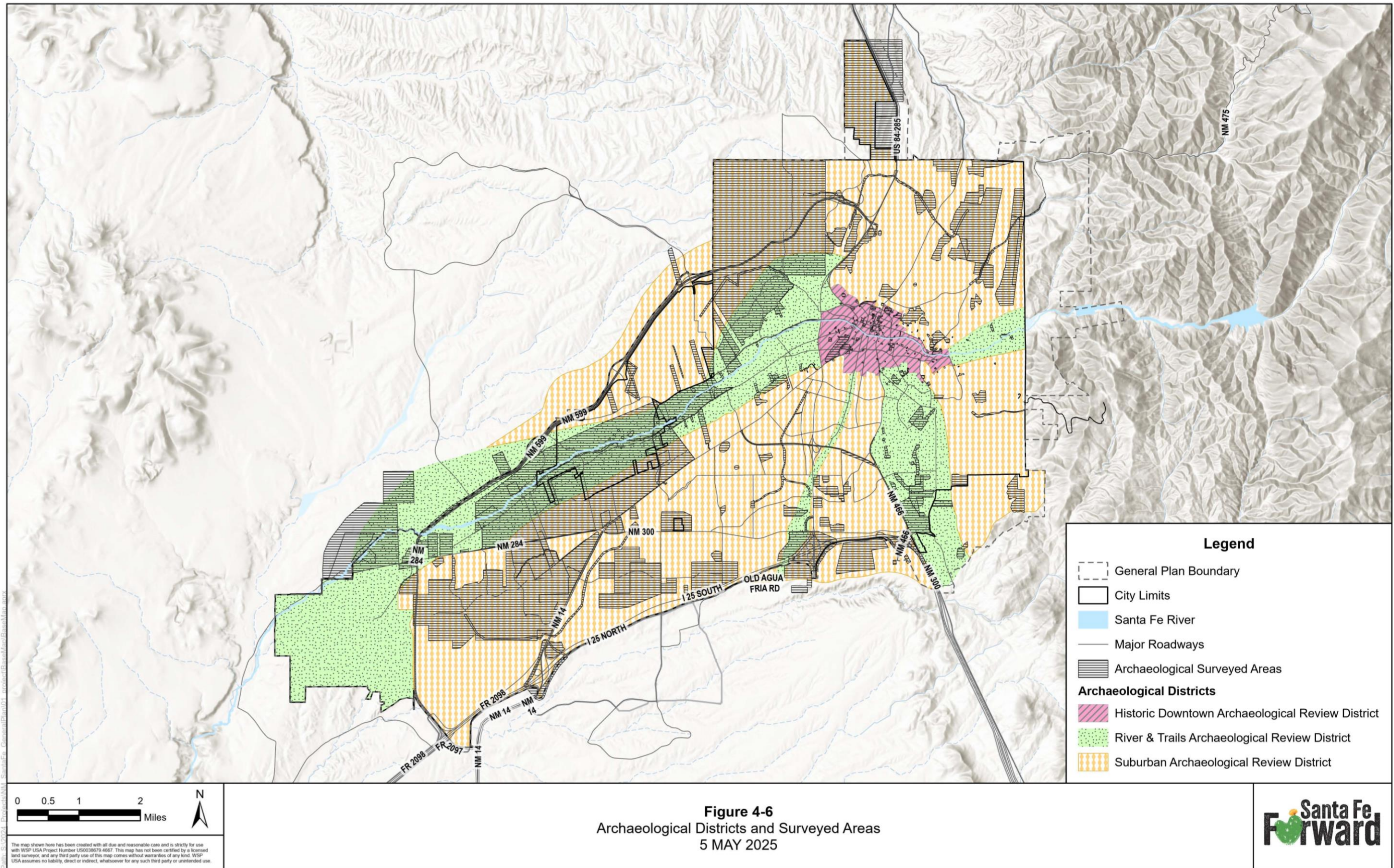
4.4.4 Archaeological Review Districts¹⁸

Archaeological Review Districts in Santa Fe are designated areas where development and land use activities require archaeological assessment and oversight by the Archaeological Review Committee to protect significant cultural and historical resources. Figure 4-6 illustrates the surveyed areas within the city as well as the three Archaeological Review Districts, which are established to preserve qualities relating to the unique cultural traditions, prehistory and history of Santa Fe.

- **Historic Downtown Archaeological Review District:** The center of Santa Fe since 1610 and occupied by Native Americans prior to that time, is the historic core of Santa Fe.
- **River and Trails Archaeological Review District:** An area of prehistoric Native American occupation, settled by early Spanish colonists, and being primary transportation routes important to the settlement of Santa Fe. The River and Trails Archaeological Review District is part of the Santa Fe River corridor, including floodplain, escarpments, and ridges above the escarpment. The area contains historic trails such as Santa Fe Trail, Galisteo Road and Agua Fria.
- **Suburban Archaeological Review District:** Land within the suburban archaeological review district is not a part of the historic downtown or river and trails archaeological review districts.

¹⁸ [Article 14-5 - OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS | Code of Ordinances | Santa Fe, NM | Municode Library](#)

Figure 4-6. Archaeological Review Districts and Surveyed Areas.



4.5 Land Use Issues and Opportunities

The historic city core serves as the heart of the community, with different urban forms than more suburban and rural areas surrounding the downtown area. Commercial areas are concentrated in districts like Cerrillos Road, St. Michaels Drive, and parts of Downtown Santa Fe, while industrial uses are primarily located in the eastern and northern parts of the city. The city has a mix of developed and undeveloped land with varied densities. The challenge of urban sprawl is evident in developments spreading outward from the core. Rapid development could impact portions of the city's rural character, where development pressures and urbanization could affect existing rural or agricultural uses.

Both the preservation of cultural areas and revitalization of key community spaces is essential to address in the General Plan. This can be addressed by moving away from sprawling development patterns and single use zoning toward mixed-use development projects that encourage more community interaction and economic activity. Infill development rather than greenfield development is key to respecting the city's historic fabric. New development should complement rather than overshadow Santa Fe's distinctive architectural style.

The current Zone Districts and Overlays are cumbersome with many overlapping policies and guidelines. The current LDC Foundations Update addresses some of the needed consolidation, but further exploration on the General Plan should look at denser mixed-use developments, affordable housing policies, and sustainable development practices. Current dimensional standards, setbacks and requirements limit compact, neighborhood development types. The General Plan effort should incentivize transit-oriented development near key transportation hubs, like the Santa Fe Rail Trail and South Capitol Rail Runner Station, to promote connectivity and reduce automobile dependence.

Opportunities exist for infill development in vacant lots, particularly along corridors like St. Francis Drive and near the Santa Fe Place Mall. These areas could be revitalized with mixed-use infill development in underdeveloped or vacant areas. That combines residential, commercial, and public spaces to reduce sprawl, leveraging existing transportation infrastructure to support compact, pedestrian-friendly developments, which by nature is more sustainable and promotes more vibrant retail and commercial development patterns. This also supports the preservation of open space and historic areas to ensure the cultural significance of Santa Fe remains intact.

The City of Santa Fe is full of historic and cultural assets that create a sense of place and identity for this unique city. However, there is a need to balance the character of historic Santa Fe and new development patterns outside the historic core to ensure this culture is reflected within the whole of the community identity. Older neighborhoods, such as Barrio de Analco Historic District, face infrastructure constraints, including outdated utilities and narrow streets. On the other hand, newer neighborhoods offer opportunities for more sustainable, mixed-use development. Neighborhoods along key transportation corridors, such as St. Francis Drive, Cerrillos Road, and I-25, could see further development that promotes affordable housing and mixed-use spaces, supporting Santa Fe's population growth.

To protect the city of Santa Fe's substantive architectural, archeological, and cultural resources, the City has implemented robust historic preservation regulations and standards. These standards are essential to ensuring that new development aligns with traditional architectural styles, and that culturally representative environments are ultimately preserved. However, extensive regulations also restrict the

City's ability to adapt and respond to evolving needs within the community. As the City of Santa Fe considers future land use and development in alignment with existing trends and potential tradeoffs facing communities, it will be crucial to assess how areas may be preserved in the face of change.

Opportunities exist to create more seamless connections between edge areas and the historic city core, through improved public transportation services and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Some areas face challenges related to connectivity and a lack of pedestrian infrastructure, which could be addressed through improved walking and biking paths, especially in neighborhoods on the outskirts, which are not well served by public transit.

4.6 Community Places

Community Places demonstrate how each neighborhood in Santa Fe has its own unique identity, shaped by historical, cultural, and environmental factors. These places include historical landmarks, such as the Santa Fe Plaza, Loretto Chapel, and the Palace of the Governors, as well as newer community hubs like the Santa Fe Railyard and Cultural Arts District. The preservation of these places is critical to maintaining the city's rich cultural heritage and sense of community.

4.6.1 Character Areas and Corridors

Figure 4-7 outlines the existing boundaries of character areas and corridors throughout Santa Fe. This map illustrates the variation in neighborhood characteristics, from historic areas like downtown Santa Fe and Railyard District to newer developments in areas like La Tierra and Las Soleras. The Character Areas and Corridors map used for the Santa Fe Assessment Report was developed as a foundational planning tool to help visualize and contextualize the unique identities, functions, and development patterns of neighborhoods, districts and other areas. See Section 2.5 for more information on the development of the Character Areas and Corridors map.

Figure 4-7. Map of Character Areas and Corridors

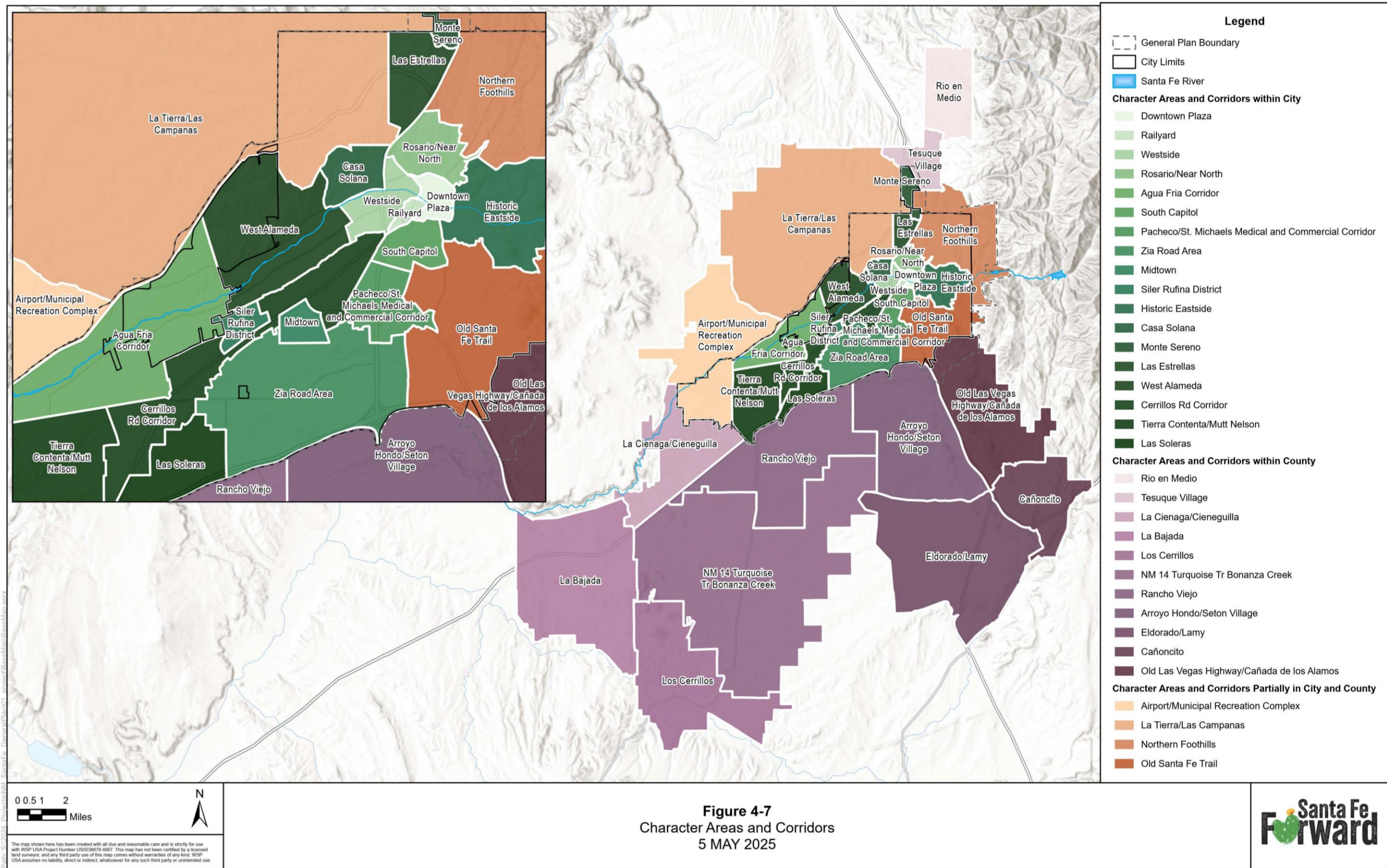


Table 4-10. Character Area Descriptions

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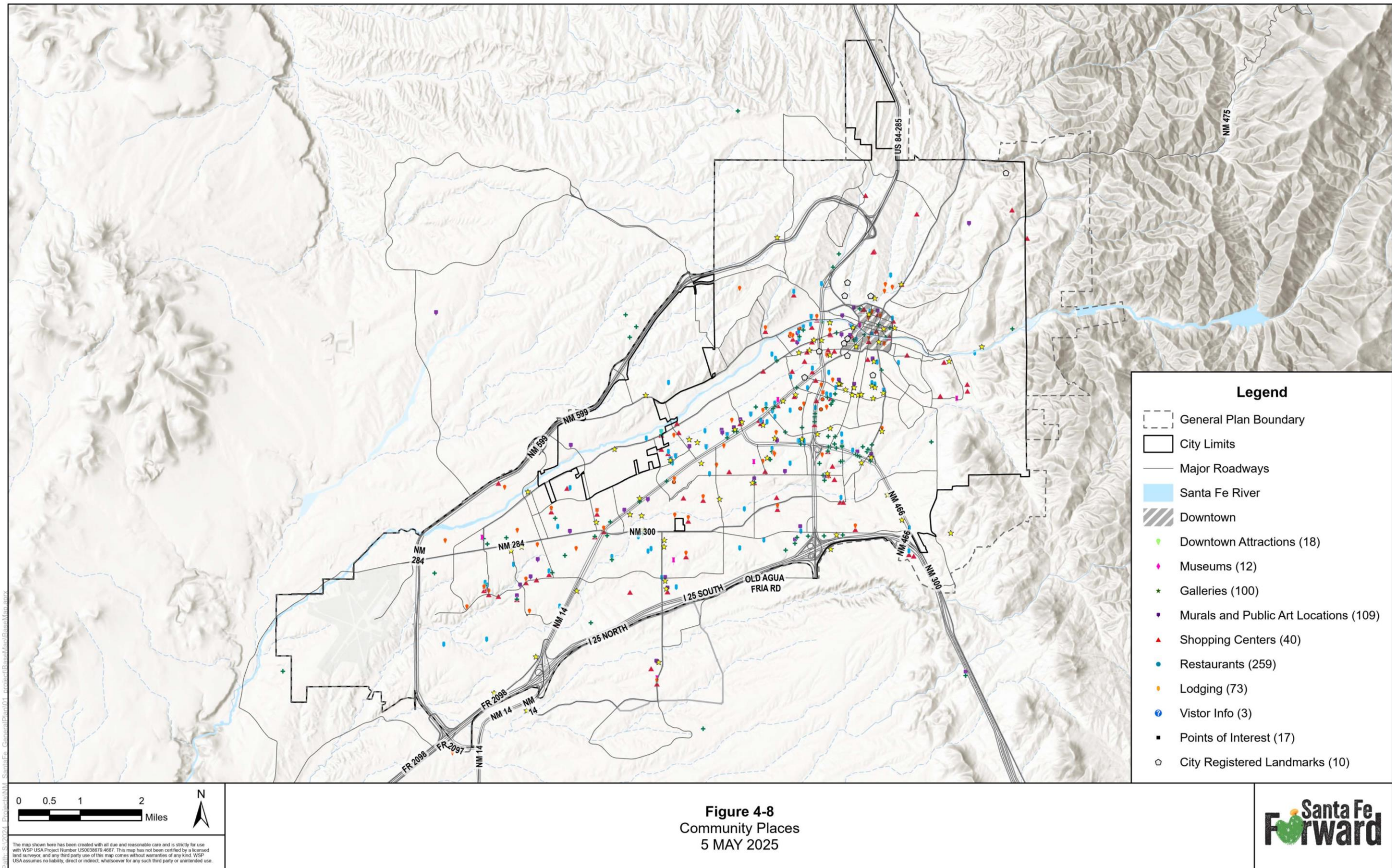
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4.6.2 Community Places

Figure 4-8 identifies significant places, such as cultural landmarks, downtown attractions, museums, galleries, shopping areas and restaurants, that contribute to the unique identity and culture of Santa Fe. This map illustrates focal points for both residents and visitors, offering spaces for cultural activities, events, and social gatherings.

Figure 4-8. Community Places



4.6.2.1 Arts and Culture

Santa Fe, New Mexico, has one of the most vibrant and diverse arts and cultural scenes in the United States. Celebrating 20 years as a UNESCO Creative City, it is a hub for visual arts, literature, music, and performance, deeply influenced by its Indigenous, Hispanic, and Anglo-American heritage. The city's creative identity is shaped by its historic adobe architecture, world-class galleries, and strong artistic traditions.

UNESCO

UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is an agency of the United Nations that promotes international cooperation in education, science, culture, and communication.

Santa Fe is the first city in the United States to be recognized on the world stage for the City's contributions for creativity and innovation. UNESCO is committed to fostering equality and sustainable practices that honor the culture and traditions of the City of Santa Fe.

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network promotes cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development. This serves as the background for a thriving arts community.

-
- **Cultural Sites and Architecture:** The Palace of the Governors, built in 1610, is a UNESCO site, and home to exhibits on Santa Fe's history. The Palace sits on the Santa Fe Plaza, the heart of the City's cultural life. More recent additions include the Railyard District, including a mix of public art, gardens, and performance spaces in Santa Fe's arts district and is home to the first ever Meow Wolf immersive art experience.
 - **Murals and Galleries:** Santa Fe is known for its Native American art with The Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, The Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, and The International Folk Art Museum. Canyon Road is lined with more than 100 galleries, featuring everything from traditional Pueblo pottery to contemporary paintings and sculptures. Other parts of the city and region include the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum and SITE Santa Fe, an internationally acclaimed contemporary art museum.
 - **Events, Festivals and Performing Arts:** There is a vibrant music scene, with the famous open-air Santa Fe Opera House, the Lensic Performing Arts Center that hosts ballet, theater, music and film, as well as the Summer Concert Series at the Santa Fe Band Stand. Summer brings a series of markets, including the Santa Fe Indian Market, a large native American art show, the Spanish Market, with colonial arts and crafts, the International Folk Art Market, and the Santa Fe Film Festival and Indigenous Film Festival.
 - **Culinary Arts:** Santa Fe's food scene is strongly influenced by Santa Fe's Native, Spanish, and Mexican roots, along with its longstanding and contemporary multicultural heritage. Local ingredients like green and red chile and blue corn tortillas serve as the foundation for New Mexican and Southwestern cuisine.

4.6.2.2 Museums

As a hub for creativity and vibrant arts and culture, Santa Fe has a wide range of museums and public art offerings. Museums are clustered in the downtown core, with five in city center and six located just southeast of downtown. Museums located southeast of downtown are referred to as part of "Museum Hill". One museum, El Rancho de las Golondrinas, is outside of the city boundary, southwest of Santa Fe. Art galleries are also clustered, with the majority on Canyon Road, Lincoln Avenue, and South Guadalupe Street.

Murals and public art installations are more widely dispersed throughout the city, with installations showing a diverse range of art types, including murals, paintings, plaques, sculptures, stone monuments, wall displays, and wood carvings.

4.6.2.3 Lodging and Visitor Information

As a popular destination for tourism, the city of Santa Fe has a diverse range of lodging options, including hotels, motels, B&Bs, short-term rentals and timeshares, with most located downtown and along Cerrillos Road. Three visitor information locations are also available downtown.

4.6.2.4 Shopping Centers and Restaurants

The community places map highlights 259 restaurants and 40 shopping centers. Some of the most popular shopping centers in Santa Fe include Santa Fe Plaza, De Vargas Mall, and the Railyard District. As shown on the map, both shopping areas and restaurants are concentrated along Cerrillos Road, West Cordova Road, North Guadalupe Street, Saint Michaels Drive, along Airport Road, and within the downtown area. Restaurants are also clustered near galleries along Canyon Road.

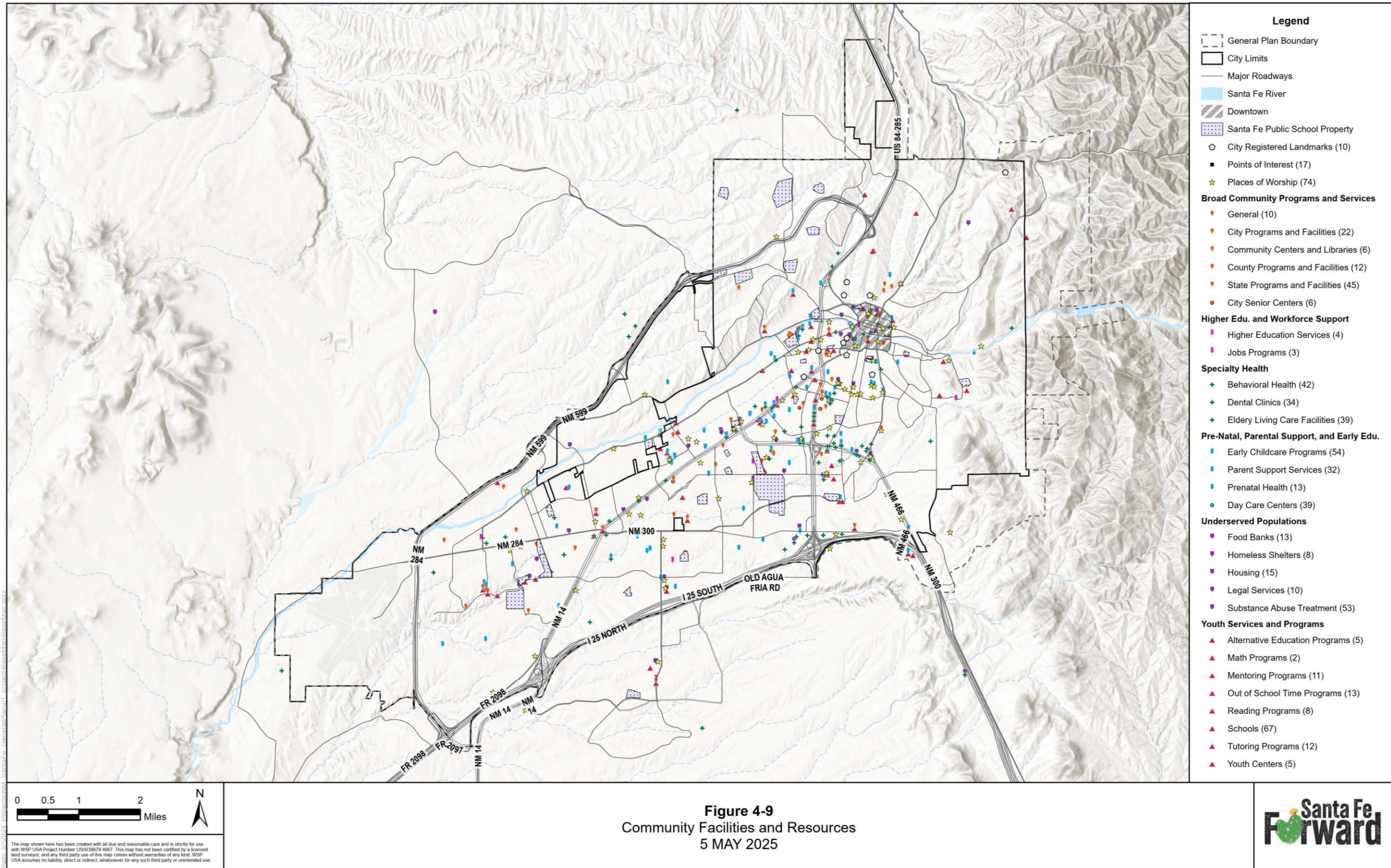
4.6.2.5 Community Facilities and Resources

Figure 4-9 shows significant institutions and resources that support the local community of Santa Fe through a network of services and programs such as daycare centers, food banks, community centers and libraries, schools, places of worship. The community facilities and resources map shows the distribution of programs and services by category within the City of Santa Fe. These include:

- Broad Programs and Services include 101 State, County, and City programs such as summer food service programs, foreclosure prevention programs, community centers, and county-wide senior centers. City Senior Centers include six facilities that are primarily located off of South Saint Francis Drive.
- Prenatal, Parental Support, and Early Education facilities encompass 103 locations within the city of Santa Fe and General Plan boundary.
- Higher Education and Workforce support facilities are widely dispersed across the city with three jobs programs and three higher education institutions, including St. Johns College, Southwestern College, and Santa Fe Community College.
- Specialty health facilities serve a range of behavioral health, dental, and elderly specific needs. There are 119 locations shown on the map.
- Underserved populations' facilities include food banks, homeless shelters, housing, legal services, and substance abuse treatment programs. There are 108 locations shown on the map, many of which are clustered near or within downtown or along Cerrillos Road.

- Youth Services and Programs include schools, youth centers, and out of school time, tutoring, reading, math, mentoring, and alternative education programs. There are 131 facilities identified on the map.
- There are three libraries with one downtown and two southwest of the downtown area, which include the Main Library, La Farge Library, and South Side Library.
- Places of Worship include 76 facilities offering services for a range of belief systems, including Christian, Buddhist, and Jewish faiths.

Figure 4-9. Community Facilities and Resources



4.7 Community Places – Issues and Opportunities

Community places and facilities are essential for residents to maintain a high quality of life and for visitors to experience and connect with the city’s rich history, culture, and artistic identity. Santa Fe’s existing network of places and services is strong and well established throughout major, central transportation and commercial corridors. However, there are apparent gaps, particularly within more remote areas.

Shopping centers, restaurants, and lodging and attractions are most densely clustered throughout the Downtown, Railyard, South Capitol, and Cerrillos Road Corridor character areas. Murals and public art expand further into residential areas away from commercial nodes; however, access to goods, services, and entertainment is limited further away from primary transportation corridors. Character areas, such as West Alameda, Casa Solana, Las Soleras, the Northern Foothills, Las Estrellas, La Tierra/Las Campanas and Old Santa Fe Trail, have more limited access to these types of destinations.

Similar to community places, community facilities are clustered around the downtown core and major corridors. Community facilities are slightly more dispersed and widely accessible in areas further from the commercial hubs. Broad community programs and services are not found in the Siler Rufina District, Las Estrellas, the Northern Foothills, Historic Eastside, and Las Soleras character areas. City senior centers are only found within Cerrillos Road corridor, the Westside character area, and Pacheco/St. Michaels Medical, W. Alameda, and Commercial Corridor. Specialty health facilities, prenatal/early childhood/parental support, and services for underserved populations are substantially limited in the northern and eastern areas of the city. Youth services and programs are dispersed throughout the city but also have some scarce patterns in rural areas.

As Santa Fe plans for the future, it is essential to consider the supply of shopping areas, access to fresh food as well as essential services, in particular, within the context of improved multi-modal transportation networks, and the distribution of residential areas. This approach will help mitigate food deserts, and improve access for all ages, stages, and ability-levels.

Given Santa Fe’s position as a well-established tourist destination with a mix of vibrant urban culture and outdoor recreation, integrated transportation planning with development of lodging, shopping, and restaurants will align with the needs of both residents and visitors.

Similar to community places, future plans for facilities, especially for seniors, underserved populations, and youth, should address gaps observed in more rural areas through a combination of partnerships, program expansion, and public transportation investments.

4.8 Open Spaces and Parks

Santa Fe is located along the western edge of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and along the Santa Fe River, in the northern portion of the Rio Grande Valley at an elevation of approximately 6,900 feet above sea level. The higher elevations offer more moderate temperatures, a semi-arid climate, and ample sunshine and cool nights. The high desert landscape includes pinion-juniper woodlands, ponderosa pine forests, and semi-arid deserts.

4.8.1 Parks, Open Space and Trails

Figure 4-10 highlights the city's network of parks, trails, and protected open spaces with a 0.25-mile buffer. These assets are crucial for recreation, environmental protection, and stormwater management. The Santa Fe River Corridor provides ecological and recreational value, with the Santa Fe River Trail offering access to walking and biking paths. Table 4-11 provides a list of parks by classification along with map identification numbers to indicate their location on Figure 4-10.

Figure 4-10. Parks and Open Spaces Map

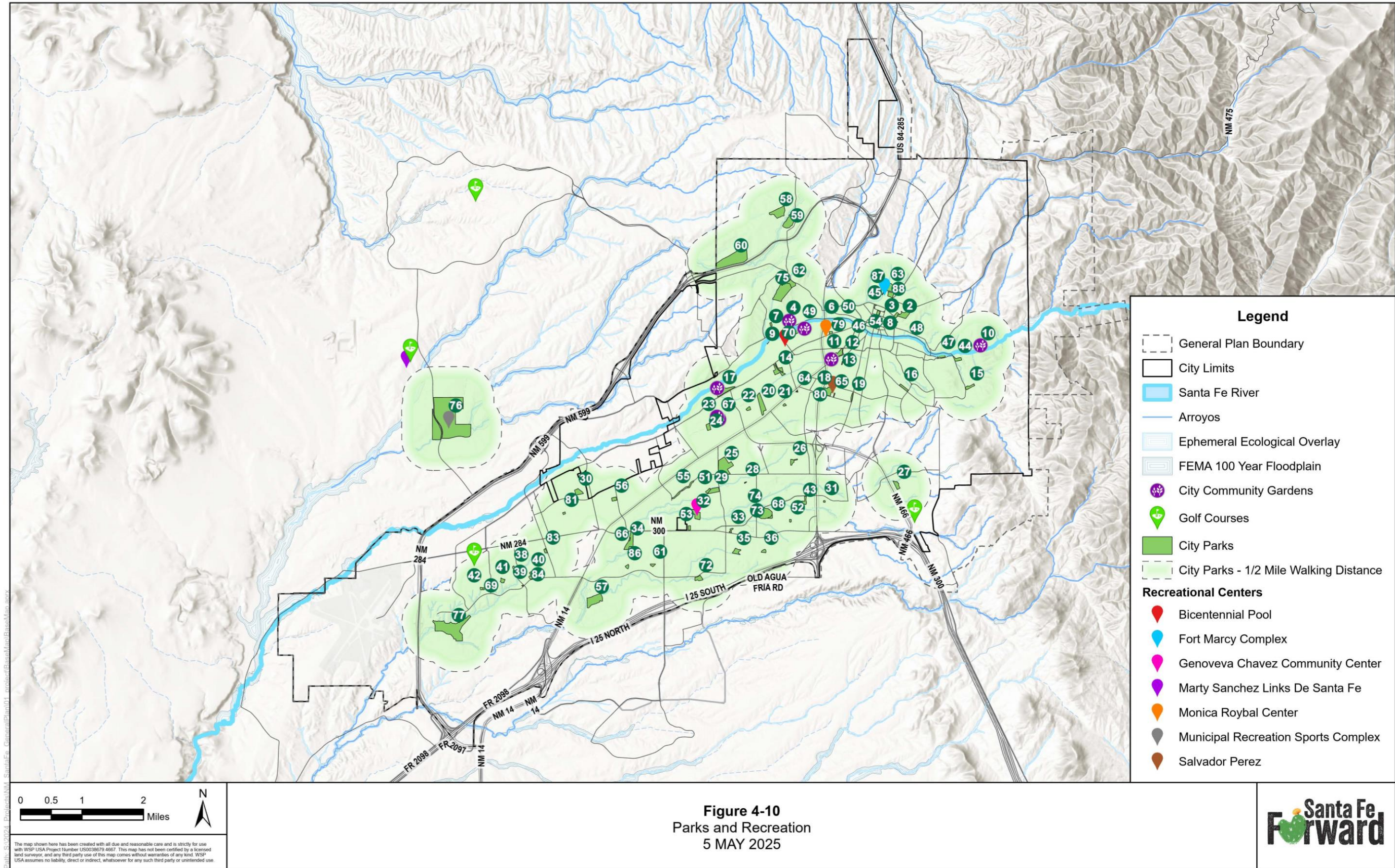


Table 4-11. Parks Classifications Table

MAP ID #	PARK NAME	SIZE (ACRES)	PARK DISTRICT
<i>Pocket Parks</i>			
4	Sunnyslope Meadows Park	0.53	3
5	Thomas Macaione Park	0.32	1
6	Boys & Girls Club Park Louis Montona Park	0.63	3
12	Don Diego/Entrada Park	0.30	2
31	Plaza Entrada	0.48	4
39	Arroyo Sonrisa Park	0.26	5
42	Valentine Park	1.02	5
45	Peralta Park	0.58	1
55	Marc Brandt Park	4.93	4
64	Casa Linda Park	0.29	2
78	Federal Oval	0.06	1
80	Alta Vista Strip	0.34	2
82	City Hall City Hall	1.92	1
<i>Neighborhood Parks</i>			
7	Torreon Park (Mike T Jaramillo)	3.21	3
9	John F. Griego Park (Vietnam Vets)	0.93	3
10	Adam Gabriel Armijo Park	6.39	1
13	Orlando Fernandez/Pueblo Park	0.47	2
16	Amelia E White Park	2.96	2
21	Young Park	0.91	3
22	Gregory Lopez Park	1.91	3
23	Cielo Vista	1.23	3
24	La Cieneguita Park Dos Hermanos Rodriguez Park	3.76	3
26	Calle Lorca Park	3.02	5
27	Alvarado Park	4.86	5
28	Rancho Siringo Park	0.29	5
29	Herb Martinez Park	7.38	5
30	Las Acequias Park	5.82	5
32	Monica Lucero Park	10.31	4
33	Martin Luther King Jr. Park	1.22	5
35	Villa CABALLERO PARK	4.88	4
36	Las Estancias Park	1.99	4
38	Los Milagros Park	1.16	5
40	Rancho Del Sol Phase II Park	1.11	5
41	Colonia Prisma Park	2.54	5

MAP ID #	PARK NAME	SIZE (ACRES)	PARK DISTRICT
43	Candeler Park	6.07	4
51	La Resolana Park	1.97	5
52	Galisteo Park	0.78	4
56	San Isidro Village Park	2.76	5
57	Las Soleras Park	21.22	4
61	Villa Sonata	1.52	4
62	Frank S. Ortiz Park	5.73	3
67	Maclovia Park	1.20	3
72	Pueblos Del Sol Park	4.85	4
81	Vistas Bonitas S/D Park Dawson's	0.83	4
86	Nava Ade Park Nava Ade Park	1.66	4
Community Parks			
8	Cathedral Park	0.65	1
11	Railyard Park	8.98	2
14	Larragoite Park	9.60	3
17	Frenchys Field Park & Commons	16.11	3
20	Ashbaugh Park	13.84	3
34	Villa Linda Park	13.04	4
44	Power Plant Park Water History & Museum Park	3.51	1
47	Monsignor Patrick Smith Park	4.64	1
48	Santa Fe River Park	8.70	1
49	Santa Fe River Park	11.73	3
50	Santa Fe River State Park	5.56	3
53	Genoveva Chavez Park	1.73	4
88	Magers Field Park Magers Field Park	4.31	1
Recreation Parks			
18	Salvador Perez Park	11.27	2
25	General Franklin E. Miles Park	28.93	5
71	Bicentennial Park Alto-Bicentennial Park	12.91	3
73	Ragle Park	20.81	4
76	Municipal Recreation Center	198.35	0
77	Swan Park	64.73	5
Special Use Parks			
1	Fort Marcy Tennis Courts	2.66	1
2	Prince Park	10.20	1
3	Cross Of The Martyrs	2.35	1
15	Atalaya Tennis Courts	3.58	1

MAP ID #	PARK NAME	SIZE (ACRES)	PARK DISTRICT
19	Cornell Park (Rose Garden)	1.54	2
46	De Vargas Park (East/West)	2.85	2
54	Plaza Park	1.07	1
63	Fort Marcy Ballpark	7.81	1
74	Ragle Park Handball Park	1.22	4
ATV/MX & Bike Skills Parks			
60	Buckman Track Buckman Track ATV/MX Park	55.55	0
58	Dirt Jumps	17.06	0
59	Freeride Jump Park	16.11	0
68	Ragle Park Ragle Pump Tracks	1.27	4
69	Zona Pump Tracks Zona Pump Tracks	0.58	5
70	Bicentennial Park Alto Pump Tracks	0.22	3
Dog Parks			
65	Salvador Perez Dog Park	0.45	2
66	Villa Linda Dog Park	0.57	4
75	Frank S. Ortiz Dog Park	32.18	3
87	Fort Marcy Dog Park Fort Marcy Dog Park	0.54	1
Maintenance Only			
79	Monica Roybal Youth Center Monica Roybal Youth Center (Grounds Only)	1.20	2
83	Sweeney Elementary Sweeny	1.64	5
84	Cesar Chavez Elementary Cesar Chavez	1.28	5

4.8.2 Parks and Recreation

Santa Fe includes 77 developed parks and 26 undeveloped parks¹⁹. These parks offer a variety of amenities, including ballfields, tennis courts, disc golf, playgrounds/”tot lots,” walking paths, picnic shelters, swimming pools, and barbecue grills. Parks range from small neighborhood parks to large regional parks, including the Southwest Area Node, Santa Fe’s newest regional park, and the 13-acre Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza. According to ParkServe, 81 percent of Santa Fe residents live within a 10-minute walk (approximately half a mile) of a park.²⁰ However, Santa Fe has an average Walk Score of 39, classifying it as a car-dependent city where most errands require a car. Certain neighborhoods, particularly around downtown Santa Fe, are rated as Very Walkable, with scores around 82, indicating

¹⁹Traditional parks and recreation classifications have included mini-parks, neighborhood parks, school parks, community parks, large urban parks, natural resource areas, greenways, sports complexes, and special use facilities. However, these classifications do not recognize the wide variety of facilities and spaces found in modern parks systems... therefore, many communities are developing their own classifications systems to better reflect their needs and priorities “ [Alternatives for Determining Parks and Recreation Level of Service \(PAS Memo May-June 2016\)](#)

²⁰ [ParkServe®](#) | [Trust for Public Land](#)

that most errands can be accomplished on foot in those areas.²¹ While people may live within a one-quarter (5-minute walk) or one-half mile (10-minute walk) of a park, barriers to connectivity, including roadways without pedestrian facilities, a lack of sidewalks, or private development, may impede access to the amenities.

Santa Fe has several recreation centers, including the [Municipal Recreation Sports Complex \(MRC\)](#), a public multi-purpose recreational facility to serve the residents of the city of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, and the many visitors. Adjacent is the Marty Sanchez Links de Santa Fe golf course. The MRC includes soccer fields, play areas, softball fields, rugby fields, football fields, and a BMX track. There are also several skateparks and dog parks. Private recreation and cultural facilities include three private golf courses and the Santa Fe Botanical Garden.

4.8.3 Trails

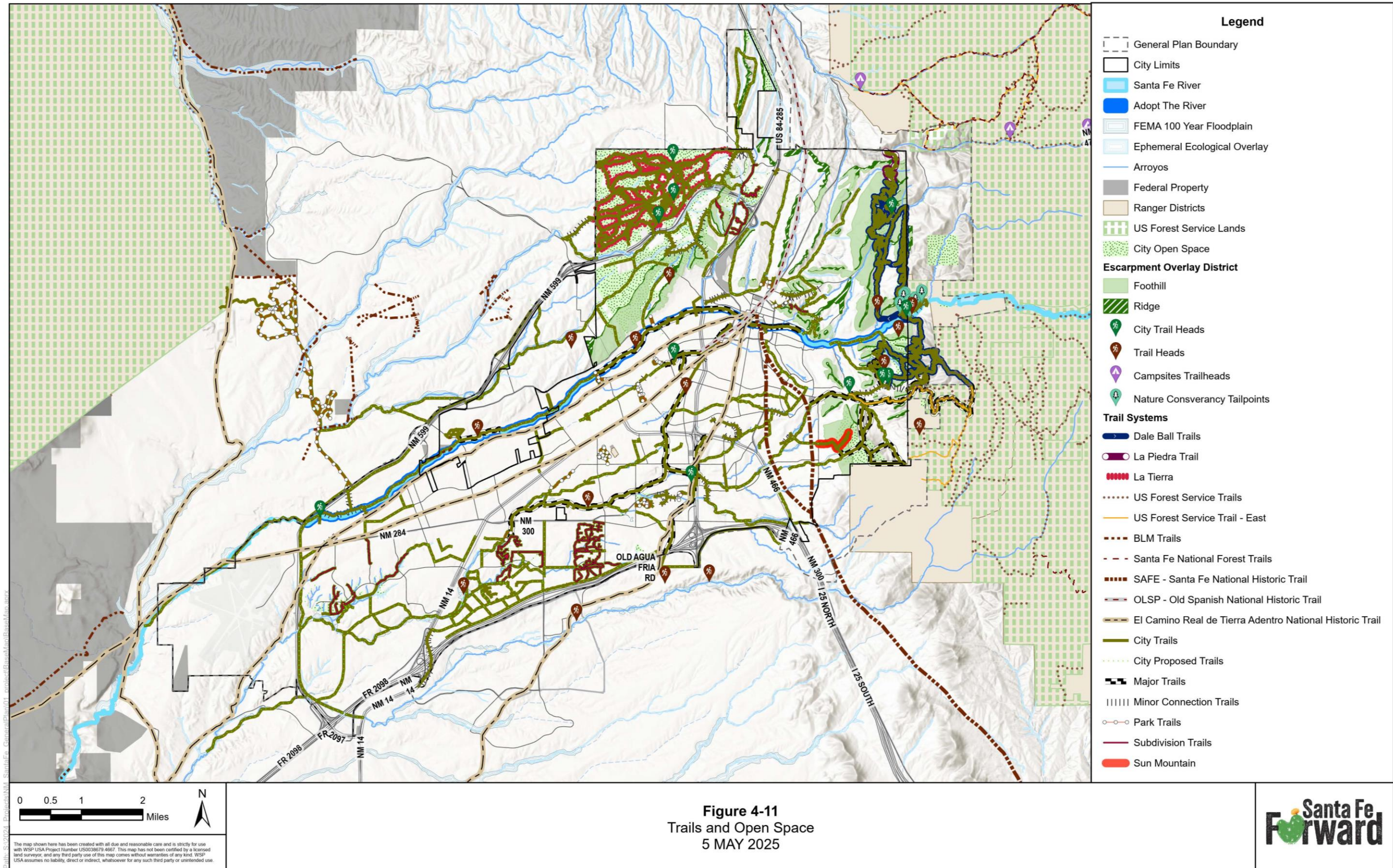
Figure 4-11 illustrates regional open spaces, trails, and green areas that are important for recreation, environmental protection and stormwater management. The city of Santa Fe has over 170 miles of trails, offering a variety of terrain, from urban pathways to mountain trails as shown on Figure 4-11. The Santa Fe River Greenway, a paved multi-use trail following the Santa Fe River, provides a natural corridor through the city with trails and riparian restoration. Part of the Santa Fe River Greenway is designed for both recreation and environmental restoration. Dale Ball Trails (indicated in blue on Figure 4-11) are a popular 22-mile network for hiking and mountain biking in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, which are easily accessible from the city. The La Piedra Trail (indicated in red and white on Figure 4-11) offers 3 miles of public trails, which connect Dale Ball Trail North with the Little Tesuque Creek Trail. The La Tierra Trails (indicated in red on Figure 4-11) are multi-use trails for hiking, biking, and equestrian use. Protected by the Trust for Public Land, Sun Mountain Trail is a steep 1.6-mile hike leading to stunning views as the peak of Sun Mountain.

The Santa Fe National Forest encompasses 1.6 million acres of wilderness areas that reflect the rich historical heritage and cultures of the landscape. National Historic Trails include the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, which are designated to protect the remains of significant overland or water routes to reflect the history of the nation.

At the heart of the city is the Santa Fe Rail Trail following the historic railroad tracks, ideal for walking, biking, and running beginning at the center of the city. The Parks and Open Space Department offers 'Prescription' Trail Guides in English and Spanish, for walking or wheelchair rolling at city parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.

²¹ [Santa Fe NM - Walk Score](#). Walk Score evaluates walkability based on proximity to amenities, population density, and road metrics.

Figure 4-11. Trails and Open Spaces Map



The map shown here has been created with all due and reasonable care and is strictly for use with WSP USA Project Number US0036079 4667. This map has not been certified by a licensed land surveyor, and any third party use of this map comes without warranties of any kind. WSP USA assumes no liability, direct or indirect, whatsoever for any such third party or unintended use.

4.8.4 Open Spaces

Open spaces in Santa Fe offer environmental value by protecting native habitats and supporting local wildlife. Some of these open spaces offer opportunities for hiking, biking, wildlife watching and provide important wildlife corridors and act as critical areas for habitat restoration. The character of these open spaces varies and features the varied terrain for the local landscape of Santa Fe, including the following:

- **The Santa Fe River** – The river is a seasonal waterway, originating in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and flowing westward toward the Rio Grande. It serves as a vital ecological and cultural corridor, though often dry due to limited rainfall and upstream diversions. The City has engaged in ongoing restoration efforts to improve water flow, riparian habitats, and public green spaces. The Santa Fe River Greenway features trails, parks, and revitalized natural areas, enhancing recreation and conservation in the city.
- **Escarpments** – The escarpments are prominent geological features that appear as steep slopes or cliffs, formed by erosion. These rugged landforms are particularly visible at the northern and western edges of the city. Escarpments contribute to the area's landscape and influence drainage patterns, vegetation growth, and habitat for wildlife. Section 14.04.04 establishes an overlay district to ensure the protection of the environment and considerations for future development.
- **Arroyos** – These serve as natural drainage systems, dry creek beds, or seasonal water channels, which carry runoff during heavy rains, particularly during the summer monsoon season, helping to direct water through the city. Arroyos are ecologically important to support native vegetation and wildlife but are also a hazard during intense storm when flash flooding is a risk.

Some notable open spaces include Frank S. Ortiz Park, which includes a dog park and Japanese Internment Camp Remembrance Site, yet much of it is undeveloped open space with rolling hills, arid desert, and piñon-juniper forests, which are preserved for wildlife and habitat restoration. The Arroyo Hondo Open Space is a protected open space south of the city, featuring Santa Fe's high-desert landscape, grassland and a deep arroyo. Open space to the east of the city along the Santa Fe River offers access to the Dale Ball Trails and is a key wildlife corridor, offering riparian habitat and canyon environments. La Tierra Open Space, in partnership with the Santa Fe Conservation Trust, includes a trail system for hiking, cycling and equestrian use, with much of the land in conservation.²²

²² [La Tierra Trails | Santa Fe Conservation Trust](#)

Stormwater in Parks and Open Space

The City watershed provides drinking water for residents. The upper Santa Fe River watershed, east of town, stores 40 percent of the water Santa Feans use within two large reservoirs. Nichols Reservoir is one of two reservoirs holding a large portion of the City's water supply. The urban watershed is important to allow water to permeate to the groundwater. Stormwater in the city is critical to address in the parks and open space in Santa Fe, reducing pollution, sedimentation and stormwater surges in urban areas.

"The Acequia Madre is the largest and longest acequia within the City. It is a 400-year-old irrigation ditch that is still in use today. Most days the Acequia Madre headgate is closed, and water from the upper watershed reservoirs continues to flow directly into the Santa Fe River. On scheduled delivery days, the gate is opened and some water flows into the Acequia Madre. The acequia water traverses the neighborhoods alongside Acequia Madre Street and then into the heart of town. Water that is not used along the way flows back into the Santa Fe River downstream 22."

The City of Santa Fe is working to incorporate stormwater design into all aspects of urban infrastructure. This includes green infrastructure such as xeriscape/low-water use landscape, rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable pavements to reduce runoff and recharge groundwater.

4.9 Parks and Open Spaces, Issues and Opportunities

Parks and open spaces are vital for the city's residents, and Santa Fe offers some large parks for recreation and a strong system of trails to get outside and connect with nature.

However, some parks distribution gaps exist, notably in the southeast and southwest neighborhoods, lacking sufficient access to recreational facilities. Many existing parks require upgrades, including better infrastructure, more diverse recreational amenities, and enhanced accessibility for people with disabilities. Given the semiarid context and water scarcity in the region, parks planning should integrate sustainability measures, such as native plantings, water-efficient systems, and stormwater management practices, to align with Santa Fe's environmental goals.

Santa Fe also has a strong trails network of trails but could look to make more seamless connections and address gaps. An active transportation network including improved bike lanes and public transit options will help to create a more connected, sustainable city.