

Goals & Policies

Goals and policies herein reflect action needed to encourage desired development patterns, support economic strength, preserve and protect natural resources, provide fiscal direction and foster a strong, diverse and unified community.

Unifying Policies

- Policy #1: Response to Environmental Changes** – This plan recognizes that significant changes in the region’s environment have occurred, and are likely to continue to occur. The city will study, plan and prepare for likely changes, and take responsible actions to lessen or prevent changes that adversely affect the health, safety, welfare and economic strength of the community.
- Policy #2: Response to Demographic and Economic Shifts** – Ensure that the city’s land use, transportation, housing and other policies anticipate and respond to ongoing major changes in the community’s age profile, social and economic characteristics.
- Policy #3: Evaluation of Alternative Scenarios** – This plan recognizes that there have been significant changes to economic, environmental and demographic factors affecting the community in recent years, and that it will continue to be difficult to accurately forecast future trends. These circumstances mean that the policies in this plan will take into account the likely range of possible future conditions, and that progress in implementing the plan will need to be evaluated periodically.
- Policy #4: Measure & Evaluate** – Where feasible and cost-effective, develop measurements to evaluate the policies, implementation and impacts of this plan.
- Policy #5: Regional Partnerships** – Work and collaborate with Santa Fe County, the State of New Mexico, and federal agencies as well as non-governmental entities on regional land use, transportation, environmental, health and social issues.

Natural Setting & Environment

Goal: Santa Fe intends to maintain a healthy, balanced natural environment.

- Policy #1: The Santa Fe River & the Living River Initiative** – Support efforts to ensure that the Santa Fe River functions as a natural living system and also continues to serve as an appealing urban habitat.
- Policy #2: Ground Water & Surface Water** – Support comprehensive efforts to conserve and protect both ground water and surface water within the Santa Fe water shed and aquifer basin.
- Policy #3: Air Quality** – Monitor Santa Fe’s air quality and trends that help to ensure that healthful air quality can be maintained.
- Policy #4: Escarpments, Ridge Tops and Steep Slopes** – Protect visual open space, hillsides and ridge tops through the escarpment ordinance, thereby helping to preserve the city’s beautiful, but more sensitive terrain.
- Policy #5: Wildlife** – Support protection of all animal species, especially those that are native to Santa Fe and New Mexico.
- Policy #6: Collaboration on Environment Issues** – Work with other governmental agencies and non-governmental partners to ensure that environmentally sensitive areas are protected within the city limits and in areas surrounding the city.
- Policy #7: Urban Forest** – Support the urban forest as an important element of the City’s environmental resources and civic space. Increase the tree canopy to reduce the heat island effect and continue to assess and promote appropriate tree species. Require new development to protect and enhance the urban forest.
- Policy #8: Vegetation** – Minimize the direct loss and/or modification of riparian and wildlife habitat, corridors and wetlands within the Santa Fe area.
- Policy #9: Environmentally Sensitive Areas** – Protect, enhance and restore environmental and biological resources, including the Santa Fe River and habitats that are sensitive or declining within the Santa Fe urban area.
- Policy #10: Cultural Landscapes** – Protect, preserve and restore natural and cultural landscapes and open space landmarks.
- Policy #11: Sensitive Landscapes** – Land Development should include vegetative buffers to sensitive landscapes such as riparian areas.
- Policy #12: Access to Natural Environment** – Encourage development patterns and capital improvement projects that enhance public access to the natural environment and recreational activities.

History & Preservation

Goal: Santa Fe will remain an internationally recognized center of history and culture.

- Policy #1: Preservation of Historic Structures** – Preserve structures that exhibit individual architectural merit and that collectively exhibit the sense of place that Santa Fe possesses through the review and consideration of amendments to existing land use laws.
- Policy #2: Maintain Physical Character, Landscapes and Views** – Maintain Santa Fe’s unique low-profile physical character, its characteristic landscape features, and preserve views and vistas within and beyond the city for the benefit of the community through a continual examination and revision to land use and development codes.
- Policy #3: The Preservation Movement** – Continue to educate the community about the existing historical, archaeological and cultural resources in the city.
- Policy #4: Historic Regulations** – Assess how existing regulations succeed in supporting Santa Fe’s historic, archaeological and cultural resources, and in balancing those goals with the goal of accommodating reasonable improvements on historic properties and new development within historic districts.
- Policy #5: Historic Buildings and Places** – Continue to identify, preserve and protect historically significant buildings and places in the city, including landmarks located outside of historic districts.
- Policy #6: Historic Districts** – Preserve the character of the identified historic sub-districts that surround the downtown, and require that new development be compatible with their historic character.
- Policy #7: Historic Downtown** – Maintain the historic character of downtown Santa Fe as a destination that attracts visitors from all over the world, while continuing to integrate and encourage local customs, traditions and celebrations in and around the Plaza. Require that new downtown development be compatible with its historic character.
- Policy #8: Archaeological Sites** – Continue to require archaeological exploration in the review districts and require that findings be reported to the city for future reference and knowledge.
- Policy #9: Ordinance Review and Amendments** – Review and amend the Archaeological Review Districts and Historic Districts ordinances to ensure that the proper treatment of heritage resources continues.

- Policy #10: Foster Awareness** – Foster municipal and community awareness, positive appreciation, and support for Santa Fe’s archeological, cultural and historic resources.
- Policy #11: Partnerships and Education** – Strengthen and encourage partnerships with non-city historic preservation entities, including those at the federal, state, local and private levels through participation in special projects, offering and receiving technical assistance, accepting grant funding to further programming and disseminating information about such entities to the public through educational opportunities.
- Policy #12: Cultural Activities & Historic Resources** – Support diverse cultural activities that occur in Santa Fe which bring residents and visitors into physical contact with its tangible heritage resources, and develop programs aimed at the preservation of the historic cultural traditions.
- Policy #13: State and National Registers** – Encourage and participate in the preparation of State Register of Cultural Properties and National Register of Historic Places nominations for resources which qualify for such listing.
- Policy #14: Resource Surveys** – Continue existing efforts to survey and resurvey resources.

Land Use & Growth Management

Goal: Santa Fe will be a livable city through innovative and efficient land use planning and prudent growth management resulting in a compact urban center.

Guiding Principles

- **Urban Form:** Promote a compact urban form with compatible infill and respect for neighborhoods.
- **Density:** Encourage smaller lots and smaller housing units in growth areas.
- **Development:** Promote future growth in centers, along corridors and other areas of infill opportunity.
- **Conserve:** Conserve historic areas, parks and designated open space.

Policy #1: Balance Neighborhood and Community Goals – New development within and adjacent to existing neighborhoods should be done in ways that enhance or minimize disruption of the neighborhood’s character, while recognizing that some degree of change will be needed in many neighborhoods to accomplish community-wide goals.

Policy #2: Protection of Residential Neighborhoods – Consistent with the Santa Fe City Charter, protect established residential neighborhoods from the intrusion or encroachment of incompatible uses. Wherever possible, allow non-residential uses that are compatible with residential uses, such as low-impact home businesses and small-scale residential care facilities. Where warranted by increased traffic volumes or evolving changes in the types or intensity of land use patterns, support land uses and densities that provide a transition to established residential neighborhoods.

Policy #3: Coordination of Development with Provision of Infrastructure – In most cases, development projects will be required to install and/or fund the infrastructure to meet the service needs they generate. City financing and construction of infrastructure will be reserved for meeting the needs of the community as a whole, or where specifically targeted to support major civic projects, affordable housing or economic development projects.

Policy #4: Master Plan Newly Annexed Areas – Study how best to integrate incremental development in rural and semi-rural areas, including areas that have recently been annexed. Develop area plans and/or development regulations that address desirable land use patterns, the appropriate level of infrastructure needed to support new development, and how to fund that infrastructure. Identify any existing infrastructure deficiencies, and plan for how those needs can be met and how they can be funded.

Policy #5: Land Use Regulations – Modify existing land use regulations to better implement the policies in this plan, including consistency between land use categories on the Future Land Use Map and the zoning districts shown on the zoning map.

Policy #6: Land Use Regulations – Study and amend land use regulations to provide more flexibility in the types of uses permitted, with appropriate safeguards to ensure compatibility with other nearby existing and permitted uses. Modernize the land use categories and modify parking requirements to reflect current usage rates and to encourage parking demand management.

Policy #7: Metro Area Growth – Work with Santa Fe County to ensure necessary provision of services, administration and infrastructure throughout the larger Santa Fe Metro Area.

Policy #8: Annexation – Complete the annexation of the urban area according to the City/County Annexation Agreement (2008) and phasing amendments including the provision of services and infrastructure as set out in the agreement.

Policy #9: Annexation – Limit city utility and infrastructure extensions where annexation is not intended nor supported.

Policy #10: Annexation Areas – Conduct studies to identify desirable land use patterns and plan for infrastructure and growth in identified annexation areas. (i.e. Mutt Nelson Road Area).

Policy #11: Centers & Corridors – Encourage mixed use and residential uses in the redevelopment of existing commercial centers and along major corridors to better utilize existing infrastructure.

Policy #12: Future Development – Encourage future development to be built with: greater densities; a mix of uses among and within buildings; interconnected networks of complete streets; tree-lined, pedestrian-oriented streetscapes; and range of housing types.

Policy #13: Infill – Promote infill residential development with the same or similar density and character as the surrounding neighborhood, or at slightly higher densities if transitioning to adjacent non-residential development.

Policy #14: Planned Urbanization – Support significant increases in residential density where it is part of a plan for a neighborhood or significant part of a neighborhood, including in a semi-rural area when roads and sewer and water become available.

Policy #15: Mixed Use – Promote, encourage and allow residential, office and retail uses within the same development, and within the same building, along Mixed Use Corridors, in Planned Communities and in other non-residentially zoned areas.

Policy #16: Connectivity – All land development and roadway projects should enhance system connectivity. Discourage cul-de-sacs and gated communities. Encourage connectivity to multi-use trails and pedestrian networks including sidewalks.

Policy #17: Protect Visual Open Space – Protect visual open space, hillsides, and ridge tops through adoption of an Escarpments ordinance.

Policy #18: City Plan Implementation – Work to implement City Plan’s policies through the City’s Land Development Law (Chapter 14).

Policy #19: Residential Density Ranges – Where city water and wastewater systems are to be used in new development, an overall minimum gross residential density range of 5-7 units per acre should be encouraged.

Policy #20: Intergovernmental Coordination – Facilitate intergovernmental cooperation in areas of overlapping jurisdiction (such as roads, utilities, government buildings, etc.)

Housing

Goal: Santa Fe will have decent, safe and affordable housing for all residents.

Guiding Principles

- **Healthy Market Mix:** Help create a housing market in which ownership and rental options meet market demand through a range of housing types for all income levels.
- **Focused Incentives:** Support higher housing densities with green technologies on major corridors, in appropriate infill areas and in designated growth areas through reduced development fees and expedited approval processing.
- **Inclusionary Zoning:** Continue to implement the Santa Fe Homes Program which helps support affordability and this plan's goals of greater density, redevelopment, pedestrian access and water and energy efficiency.

- Policy #1: Santa Fe's Neighborhoods** – Preserve the scale and character of the city's existing neighborhoods.
- Policy #2: Future Housing** – Encourage a greater mix of housing types and lots in new developments.
- Policy #3: Affordable Housing** – Support the creation of more affordable housing as defined by the Santa Fe Homes Program.
- Policy #4: Inclusionary Zoning** – Continue to require that all new housing developments provide affordable homes or housing units to help better integrate socio-economic diversity within neighborhoods.
- Policy #5: Housing Resources** – Continue to support financial and management structures that will promote availability of affordable housing in new affordable housing developments for those who could not otherwise afford it, including the homeless population.
- Policy #6: Homelessness** – Prevent homelessness from becoming permanent by connecting families, individuals, veterans and youth to appropriate services and facilities.
- Policy #7: Aging Population** – Accommodate aging in place, residential care facilities, senior daycare in neighborhoods.
- Policy #8: Apartments/Multi-Family Housing** – Encourage multi-family development in appropriate locations in order to meet the needs of seniors and younger more mobile populations.
- Policy #9: Workforce Housing** – Target workforce housing needs and retention as part of strengthening the city's job creation efforts.

Transportation

Goal: Santa Fe will have a complete, well-connected transportation network.

Guiding Principles

- **Reduce Automobile Dependence:** Promote alternative modes and enhance safety.
- **Complete Streets:** Include wide sidewalks, street trees, bike lanes, narrower driving lanes and adequate pedestrian crossings.
- **Multi-Use Trails:** Encourage pedestrian, bike & recreational use on a complete trail system.
- **Local & Regional Transit:** Promote and enhance public transit (Santa Fe Trails, RTD system).
- **Connectivity:** Ensure connectivity between and among streets, multi-use trails, pedestrian/bicycle facilities and public transit throughout the city.

- Policy #1: Road Network** – Provide a well-maintained road system of complete streets that is easily shared by different modes, especially bikes and pedestrians.
- Policy #2: Transit** – Integrate transit, including Santa Fe Trails, as a viable and preferred alternative to private automobiles.
- Policy #3: Commuter Rail** – Encourage commuter service and study/consider future local train service within Santa Fe.
- Policy #4: Bicycles & Pedestrians** – Improve bike and pedestrian facilities, while building an interconnected network of paved urban trails throughout the city.
- Policy #5: Downtown Parking** – Enhance Downtown accessibility for residents and visitors by providing transit and other transportation options in addition to parking opportunities.
- Policy #6: Airport & Aviation** – Support the Airport Master Plan for general aviation and encourage appropriate commercial use.
- Policy #7: Safety** – Increase the safety of the transportation system for all users.
- Policy #8: Maintenance** – Adequately maintain the existing transportation system.
- Policy #9: Upgrade the Road Network** – Identify and prioritize projects to correct and prevent safety problems and congestion.
- Policy #10: Connectivity** – All land development and roadway projects should provide for connections within and between neighborhoods and commercial centers. Minimize cul-de-sac road patterns.
- Policy #11: Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)** – Implement those portions of the Santa Fe MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan that are recommended within the City and urban area.
- Policy #12: MPO Bicycle Master Plan** – Implement the MPO Bicycle Master Plan.
- Policy #13: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** – Ensure that transportation facilities meet ADA requirements.
- Policy #14: Innovative Road Design** – Consider innovative road design (including roundabouts) as an option for all new and reconstructed intersections.
- Policy #15: Multi-Modal Access** – Provide for bicycle and pedestrian access and facilities at transit hubs and centers.
- Policy #16: Park & Trail Linkages** – Provide pedestrian, trail and bikeway linkages, including sidewalks, between parks, open space and recreational facilities. Protect existing trails when possible.
- Policy #17: Major Arterial Design Standards** – Recognize major arterials as commercial corridors and important civic spaces and support their redevelopment with enhanced design standards that include landscaping, public furnishings and public art.
- Policy #18: Transit Centers** – Encourage Transit Centers with enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Policy #19: Land Use / Transportation Connection** – Encourage land use and transportation patterns that promote use of alternatives to the automobile including pedestrian, bicycling, bus transit and carpooling.
- Policy #20: Public Art & Transit** – Continue to incorporate public art into public transit facilities and on buses.
- Policy #21: Enhanced Design** – Encourage enhanced design standards near schools, commercial areas, civic areas and high density residential areas that promote bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Sustainability & Energy

Goal: Santa Fe is committed to creating a sustainable, energy-efficient city for future generations.

Guiding Principles

- **Natural Resources:** Continue comprehensive efforts to conserve natural resources including water, energy, and air quality.
- **Land Use:** Practice sound development management through efficient land use patterns that help conserve natural resources.
- **Resiliency:** Increase Santa Fe's resiliency to adapt to the effects of climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy #1: Sustainable Planning – Make the principals of sustainability a central aspect of every city policy, every major city project, and of the city government's day to day operations, to align with the city's 25-year Sustainable Santa Fe Plan.

Policy #2: Mitigate and Adapt to the Effects of Climate Change – Addressing the complex challenges caused by a changing climate, the city will work with others to analyze the impacts of climate change on Santa Fe's environment and develop mitigation and adaptation strategies to reduce and reverse the negative impacts of climate change.

Policy #3: Reduce Emissions – Develop policies and programs that make construction methods, transportation modes and waste disposal more effective and energy-efficient.

Policy #4: City Facilities – Continue to install, cost-effective energy efficient and renewable energy technologies on city-owned facilities.

Policy #5: Renewable Energy Community – Encourage the Santa Fe community to use energy efficient and renewable energy technologies and sources to achieve greater local, regional and national self-reliance, energy independence and a cleaner environment for future generations.

Policy #6: Energy & Water Efficient Buildings – Adopt building codes that reduce energy and water use, employ energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies, and ensure healthy indoor environments.

Policy #7: Storm water – Capture, infiltrate and utilize storm water on-site and integrate into the design of all projects, including roadways. Coordinate storm water management such as good grading practices, bio-remediation and landscape development and support.

Policy #8: Solid Waste & Recycling – Reduce solid waste generation and improve recycling participation through education programs and by providing the community with single-source recycling capabilities.

Policy #9: Wastewater – Optimize reclaimed wastewater for re-use and make it a significant part of integrated water resources planning.

Policy #10: Healthy/Active Communities – Encourage healthy and active communities by strengthening pedestrian and bicycle connections through design and development incentives.

Policy #11: Groundwater – Reduce groundwater use through the retirement of domestic wells.

Economic Development

Goal: Santa Fe will have a more diverse economy.

Guiding Principles

- **Job Opportunities:** Develop land use policies to recruit, attract and grow business.
- **Diversify Economy:** Promote a healthy mix of targeted industries.

Policy #1: Economic Challenges – Continue to improve and cultivate a pro-business climate, simplify City Hall's approval/permit process and focus on local workforce training and education.

Policy #2: Economic Opportunities – Use economic development land-use tools to promote infill, redevelopment and targeted industries identified in the Economic Development Plan.

Policy #3: Workforce Housing – Develop workforce housing that retains local talent and partners with regional employers to meet current and on-going demand.

Policy #4: Traditional Infrastructure – Ensure that road, water and wastewater infrastructure are adequate to serve existing and future needs of city businesses. Work with public and private utility providers to ensure that infrastructure needs for telecommunication (including fiber optic), electricity and natural gas are met.

Policy #5: Emerging Infrastructure – Create an environment that encourages, supports, enables and funds existing and emerging information technology.

Policy #6: Economic Development / Land Use – Link desired and targeted industries and businesses through land use incentives such as multi-use overlay districts and city fee reductions.

Policy #7: Economic Development / Sustainability – Encourage businesses to operate in a sustainable manner consistent with the Sustainable Santa Fe Plan.

Policy #8: Regional Economic Hub – Encourage development of Santa Fe's position as a regional center for governmental, medical, cultural, educational, and commercial activities.

Policy #9: Business Startups and Development – Encourage and support small business development and startups at a variety of scales.

Parks, Open Space, Recreation & Trails

Goal: Santa Fe will create and maintain an extensive parks, open space, trails and recreation system.

Guiding Principles

- **Flexibility:** City park requirements for new residential subdivisions should allow for some flexibility in determining an appropriate mix and location of parks, open spaces and trails.
- **Responsibility:** The city has primary responsibility for planning and location of parks, open spaces and trails.
- **Park Programming:** Park programming and development should reflect the needs of the surrounding population.

Policy #1: Park & Open Space Standards – Use the city’s Parks & Open Space standards as a goal to be achieved through land acquisition (per the land development code).

Policy #2: New Parks in Growth Areas – Focus new park development in growth areas.

Policy #3: Turf Alternatives for Parks – Where possible and appropriate use natural turf alternatives.

Policy #4: Open Space & Trails – Develop an open space system that extends along the city’s trail network, highlighting the city’s wilderness trail system.

Policy #5: Natural Systems – Preserve natural systems of open space along the river, acequias, hillsides, ridgetops, watersheds and utility easements.

Policy #6: Urban Trail System – Continue to plan, design, construct and connect the city’s major urban trail network as contained in the Trails Master Plan.

Policy #7: Recreation Facilities – Encourage joint use of school recreational facilities.

Policy #8: Urban Trees – Support and encourage the planting of trees and enhancing Santa Fe’s urban forest as vital to the city’s health and well-being.

Urban Design

Goal: Santa Fe will continue to enhance a livable, walkable urban environment.

Guiding Principles

- **Design:** Encourage innovative urban design through the land use code.
- **Great Streets/Public Spaces:** Encourage pedestrian-scaled, landscaped streets and community spaces.
- **Mix of Uses:** Encourage multiple uses that provide pedestrian connectivity through the way buildings relate to the streetscape.

Policy #1: Residential Design – Encourage traditional Santa Fe design and smaller lots, connecting streets, and neighborhood vitality.

Policy #2: Multi-Family/Rental Residential – Encourage incrementally higher density multi-family rental projects in appropriate neighborhoods and the urban core.

Policy #3: Downtown Design – Reinforce and encourage the historic ambiance of downtown and its unique setting as the heart of the City.

Policy #4: Urban Centers - Encourage the design & establishment of additional centers throughout Santa Fe.

Policy #5: Live / Work – Allow and encourage residential uses in and around identified commercial centers within the city to provide day-to-day uses.

Policy #6: Community Centers – Encourage redevelopment of public and private facilities as community centers with a mix of uses.

Policy #7: Railyard District – Encourage and support vibrant activities in and around the Railyard District to allow for a broad range of uses and services to serve the entire Santa Fe community.

Policy #8: Corridor Redevelopment – Encourage vibrant, street-oriented settings that have well-designed public spaces with shade trees and allow a greater range of uses in existing developed areas and newly developing areas. Encourage public and private funding for improvements in corridor right-of-ways.

Policy #9: Mixed Use Corridor Design Standards – Encourage innovative design standards for mixed use corridors that address items such as: access management, parking, building placement, signage and landscaping.

Policy #10: Parking Lot Redevelopment – Envision, encourage and allow new development near the street on underused parking lots to more efficiently use urban land and establish streetscape vibrancy.

Policy #11: Public Art – Encourage and incorporate public art along major corridors and as part of new land development and redevelopment projects.

Policy #12: Mixed Use Zoning – Continue to encourage mixed use development and, where necessary, amend the “Mixed Use” zoning district to provide flexibility and meet changing conditions.