



# City of Carlsbad

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



DRAFT 8.18.2025



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*Thank you to the Carlsbad residents who participated in the planning process to update the City's Comprehensive Plan. Your input is appreciated.*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ An introduction to the *Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan*, including a description that it is the City's primary policy document and a high level overview of the purpose and intent of the *Comprehensive Plan*
- ▶ Guiding principles of the *Comprehensive Plan*, including regular updates, community engagement, linking with the ICIP, basing future grant applications on the goals, objectives, and strategies; and establishing and maintaining strong partnerships
- ▶ Key planning themes that run throughout the *Comprehensive Plan*
- ▶ A high level summary of each plan chapter, including existing conditions, issues, recommendations, and the primary intent of the goals, objectives, and strategies

Carlsbad is a growing, dynamic community located in southeastern New Mexico within Eddy County. Carlsbad sits within the Permian Basin, which holds the natural resources for the oil and gas industry that contributes to and drives the strong economic prosperity both in the local community and state-wide. The Pecos River flows through Carlsbad and provides a multitude of recreational opportunities and a respite from high temperatures in the summer months.

The *City of Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan* is the City's primary policy document that provides the foundation to guide growth and development for the next 20 years. It is a living document that is intended to be used and referenced by the elected officials and community members alike.



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## 1.1 PURPOSE & INTENT

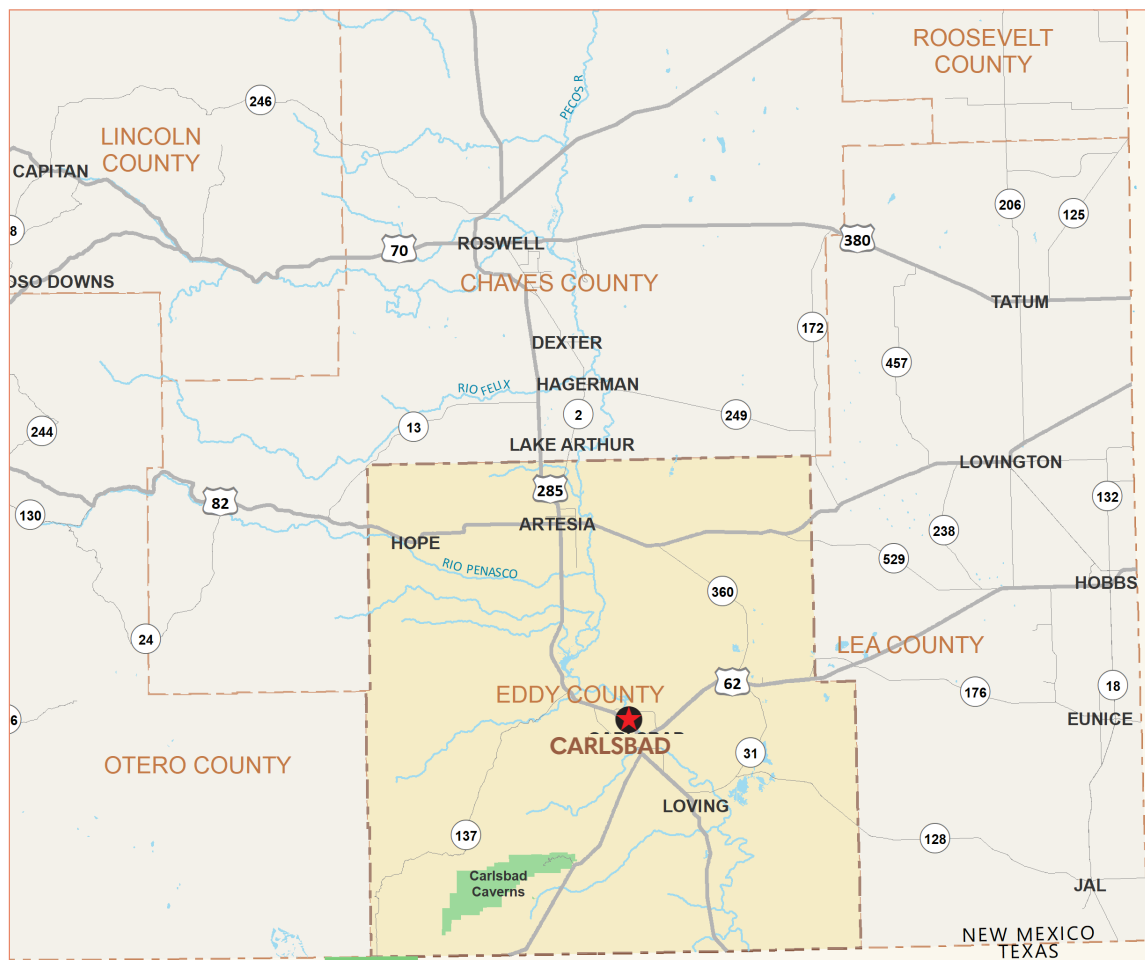
The City of Carlsbad initiated an update to the *Comprehensive Plan* in October 2024 to address the changes that have occurred in Carlsbad since the adoption of the previous *Comprehensive Plan* in 2020 and by using a measured and systematic approach. The City of Carlsbad determined that it was in the best interest of the community to keep this key policy document relevant, up to date, and as a means to engage the community and to best express the community's vision and aspirations for the future.

The *Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan*:

- ◀ Seeks to enhance those qualities that are unique and special to Carlsbad

while embracing the growth and relative economic prosperity that the community has experienced from new investment;

- ◀ Provides the community vision for the future through goals, objectives, and strategies that were crafted in response to community input and best planning practices;
- ◀ Provides the necessary operational framework to be used by elected officials, City departments, community organizations, and residents working together towards implementation; and
- ◀ Recognizes that Carlsbad's actively engaged citizens are key to shaping the community's future and achieving their shared vision.



CARLSBAD REGIONAL CONTEXT

## 1.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles to ensure the successful implementation and relevancy of the *Comprehensive Plan* include:

- ◀ Reviewing the *Comprehensive Plan* on a regular basis and updating it every five years. An annual review will ensure that *Comprehensive Plan* stays relevant and useful in decision-making;
- ◀ Engaging a wide cross section of the public on all updates to the *Comprehensive Plan*;
- ◀ Linking the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan to the implementation strategies contained in each *Comprehensive Plan* element. As annual ICIP's are created, they should be inserted into the *Comprehensive Plan* so readers understand the need for repair, replacement, or development of infrastructure;
- ◀ Pursuing available funding sources and programs for implementation of capital improvements; and
- ◀ Basing future grant applications and funding requests on the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Many of the strategies in the *Comprehensive Plan* involve large capital improvements that will need to be prioritized and completed in phases. Establishing and maintaining strong partnerships with other local, regional, state entities to address community needs will help the City implement the *Comprehensive Plan*.

## 1.3 KEY PLANNING THEMES

There are several common planning themes that run throughout the *Comprehensive Plan*. These themes are based on issues and aspirations identified through the planning process and are addressed through goals,

objectives, and implementation strategies. The *Comprehensive Plan* addresses all aspects of the community and its projected growth, balanced with the residents' desire to retain the character of the community they cherish.

### MORE HOUSING NEEDED

Adding to the City's existing housing stock is one of the primary planning themes and drivers of the *Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan*. The lack of housing and rising housing costs permeate all aspects of growth, economic development, transportation, and community services in Carlsbad. The growth that has occurred in oil and natural gas extraction within the Permian Basin has drawn thousands of workers into Carlsbad, which has added unprecedented economic prosperity, but completely overwhelmed the local housing market and has led to the temporary housing in the form of "man-camps".

The City has become more proactive in helping to increase the housing stock (both affordable housing and market rate) by identifying and acquiring properties appropriate for new housing development, endeavoring to extend infrastructure to currently unserved areas, and developing incentives that encourage developers and builders to build new single-family, multi-family, and workforce housing units in accordance with the *Comprehensive Plan*. As new housing comes online in Carlsbad, an important aspect will be to provide alternatives to temporary



"Man camp"; temporary housing for oil and gas workers.

housing (man-camps and RV camps) that has been growing in Carlsbad and Eddy County.

### IMPROVING THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Roadway conditions and congestion are a major concern of Carlsbad residents and public safety officials. The City should continue to prioritize improvements to local streets using a planned, systematic approach and continue working with the NMDOT and Eddy County on addressing regional transportation that will help divert traffic away from central Carlsbad. This is a significant quality of life and public safety issue that cannot be understated.



Large trucks driving on Canal Street.

### INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensuring the City has the capacity to serve existing residents and future population growth. This includes extending utilities to identified areas of growth, including South Carlsbad and annexation to the north of the municipal boundary, providing sewer services to areas that are at risk of contaminating the groundwater and the Pecos River, and making improvements to the water reuse system to preserve potable water. An important component of this is to adopt a planned, systematic approach to improving and maintaining the City's water, sewer, and storm water systems.

### STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Every service provided by the City of Carlsbad must be evaluated for the ability of the City to serve the anticipated population growth. It is crucial that the City of Carlsbad stay proactive instead of reactive to stay ahead of the demand for services in every aspect of the community, be it acquisition of parkland or expansion of public safety facilities, personnel, and equipment. Carlsbad has done an excellent job of determining priorities for investments in facilities and services, and the challenge is to secure funding for these investments in the community.

### MAINTAINING CARLSBAD AS A MAJOR TOURIST DESTINATION

Carlsbad is privileged to be located close to two National Parks; Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains. Carlsbad Caverns National Park has always been a major tourist destination, with Carlsbad handsomely reaping the benefits. However, it has become more difficult to accommodate tourists in Carlsbad due to the lack of available and affordable hotel rooms, restaurants, and other hospitality-related businesses. The City of Carlsbad should continue working on attracting additional hotel developers to the community to increase the number of hotel rooms available to visitors. This will also have the impact of lowering the current high cost of hotel rooms in Carlsbad.



The Big Room at Carlsbad Caverns.

## 1.4 PLAN CHAPTERS

Each of the *Comprehensive Plan* elements include a description of existing conditions, a summary of issues gleaned from research and the community engagement process, and goals ('the what'), objectives ('the why'), and strategies ('the how'). The first two chapters, Community Engagement and Community Profile, provide the basis for the recommendations contained in the various Plan elements. This section provides a brief description of each chapter.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CHAPTER 2)

This chapter provides a summary of the community engagement process, including meetings with the *Comprehensive Plan* Steering Committee; results from the Community Survey; a summary of issues gleaned from meetings with stakeholders; and summaries of the public meetings held during the planning process. Key takeaways from the Community Survey and vision statements from the first public meeting are presented in this chapter.

### COMMUNITY PROFILE (CHAPTER 3)

The community profile provides a description of the community context, including geography, geology, and biological attributes of Carlsbad. This chapter also provides a summary of the history of Carlsbad and the region; demographics, including historic population and trends, migration, and population projections to 2050; and an educational profile, including school enrollment projections and educational attainment of Carlsbad residents.

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS (CHAPTER 4)

The Housing and Neighborhoods chapter provides a housing profile, including household characteristics; property values and the existing housing market; housing units, occupancy, type, and age; housing costs and affordability including mortgage costs and

rental costs; housing for special populations, including seniors, veterans, and the homeless; a summary of housing conditions on a neighborhood level; summary of existing housing studies; description of affordable housing projects and recent and planned subdivisions and apartment projects; colonias including Standpipe, which was previously designated as a colonia; description of housing organizations in Carlsbad and the region; and housing challenges.

As one of the primary themes of the *Comprehensive Plan*, the goals, objectives, and strategies are focused on increasing the diversity and supply of market rate, affordable, and workforce housing; protection and preservation of existing neighborhood character; addressing housing for special needs populations; and creation of quality neighborhoods that include housing, neighborhood-scale commercial services, parks, and trails.

### LAND USE (CHAPTER 5)

The Land Use chapter provides written and graphic descriptions of existing land use on a neighborhood character level; existing zoning regulations; historic preservation and the *Historic Preservation Ordinance*; and land use issues, including rapid growth, housing supply challenges and temporary housing, code enforcement, and commercial development deficiencies. It also includes an overview of growth and annexation and annexation legislation. The highlight of the Land Use chapter is the Future Land Use Scenario that illustrates graphically and in narrative how Carlsbad would like to grow in the next 20 years, including through infill and annexation. Accompanying the Future Land Use Scenario are the future annexation of areas appropriate for development of new neighborhoods that are envisioned to accommodate the anticipated population growth and resulting need for additional housing.

Goals, objectives, and strategies address growing the City through infill and annexation; focusing industrial development in appropriate locations; increasing commercial development; historic preservation education and initiatives, and creating a more attractive built environment along commercial corridors, residential areas, and the Pecos River.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CHAPTER 6)**

Chapter 6 provides an economic profile of existing industries and occupations, major employers, median household income, average wages, unemployment and poverty rates, and tax revenues, including a retail gap analysis; and an overview of existing major industries, including potash mining, oil and gas extraction, agriculture, and tourism and the major tourism destinations, including Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountain National Parks, and nuclear energy and energy diversity. It also includes a summary of economic tools and initiatives in Carlsbad and the region; and an overview of economic development organizations, including the Carlsbad Department of Development, Chamber of Commerce, Carlsbad MainStreet, and the Small Business Development Corporation; opportunities and assets, including the Creative Economy, industrial development, transloading and rail, and the sharing economy; and planned improvements to support economic development.

Goals, objectives, and strategies emphasize creating a strong, balanced, and diversified economy; developing and maintaining a trained workforce; expanding industrial and commercial development; Downtown Carlsbad as the City's retail center and arts and cultural hub; and promotion of Carlsbad as a tourism destination.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE (CHAPTER 7)**

Chapter 7 provides an overview of the City's existing water supply and distribution system; water demand and growth areas and water planning at the local and state level and priority

water projects and improvements; sewer collection and treatment system, effluent reuse program, and planned improvements; storm drainage facilities and planned improvements; solid waste collection, transfer, recycling, and composting; private utilities; and infrastructure issues and initiatives.

Goals, objectives, and strategies are designed and focused on helping the City maintain safe and efficient utility systems at appropriate levels of service to accommodate existing development and population growth; capital improvements to increase infrastructure capacity and correct deficiencies; protecting the community against losses to public and private property through stormwater management; and promotion of reduction, reuse, and recycling to ensure a more sustainable community and extend the life of the Sandpoint Landfill.

### **TRANSPORTATION (CHAPTER 8)**

Chapter 8 provides an overview of travel characteristics and transportation costs; existing transportation network of streets, bypass loops, pedestrian and bicycle network, trails, public transit, alternative energy infrastructure, air and rail transit, including the Cavern City Air Terminal. It also includes summaries of transportation planning, projects, and project prioritization and planned improvements to the City's transportation network.

Goals, objectives, and strategies address the creation of a multi-modal transportation system that balances the mobility needs of motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users; systematic maintenance and improvements to streets, sidewalks, and ramps; expansion of general aviation, air cargo, and air passenger facilities and services at Cavern City Air Terminal; improving and expanding rail and transloading operations; and increasing electric vehicle mobility and infrastructure in Carlsbad.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES (CHAPTER 9)

The Community Facilities & Services chapter provides summaries of the existing services and facilities provided primarily by the City, including parks and recreation; public facilities such as the Carlsbad Public Library, Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center and North Mesa Senior Center; and public safety facilities and services provided by Carlsbad Police and Fire Departments. It also includes profiles of public education provided by Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Southeast New Mexico College; and community health, including health rankings and health care providers and services. Goals, objectives, and strategies address maintaining and expanding upon quality of life elements including an integrated and comprehensive system of park, open space, and recreation facilities and services; community facilities that meet the social and educational programming needs of the Carlsbad community; delivery of public safety services and maintenance of existing facilities; equal access to education and learning opportunities; and increasing the health care services available in Carlsbad.

## HAZARD MITIGATION (CHAPTER 10)

Chapter 10 provides a description of best practices in hazard mitigation from FEMA and the American Planning Association; summaries of existing emergency plans and preparedness at the state, county, and local levels; assessment of existing hazards and issues in Carlsbad, including severe weather, land subsidence, flooding and dam failure, drought, hazardous materials, etc.; and the unique challenges of potential accidents during transport to WIPP.

Goals, objectives, and strategies that address reducing the community's vulnerability to hazard events through education, improvements to stormwater systems and conveyances; allocation of funding and resources to respond to events; and improving

the community's capacity to respond to hazardous material spills and accidents.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CHAPTER 11)

Chapter 11 describes the intent for implementing the *Comprehensive Plan* through staff and City Council oversight; basing decisions regarding growth and development and grant applications on the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The purpose of the Implementation Plan is to provide a system of checks and balances to ensure the *Comprehensive Plan* is implemented and reference by decision makers, City staff, and community members.

The Implementation Plan repeats the strategies from each of the *Comprehensive Plan* elements and identifies a time line (short-term, medium-term, long-term, and ongoing) for completion and responsible entities, including City departments and other community partners, where applicable.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ A summary of the public engagement program, including the Steering Committee and Steering Committee meetings, Community Survey that was distributed early in the planning process, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings held at key points in the planning process
- ▶ Key takeaways and results from the Community Survey, which were incorporated into the specific *Comprehensive Plan* chapters
- ▶ Vision statements from the participants in the first public meeting

Community engagement helps to ensure that the *Comprehensive Plan* reflects the knowledge, values, and aspirations of Carlsbad residents. The *Comprehensive Plan* reflects the community vision for the future, with a 20-year planning horizon. Providing a range of public input options ensures that all members of the community are given equal opportunity to express their views in a variety of manners and settings. Each stage of the planning process was designed and executed to glean the most current information from the participants. The community engagement process for the *Comprehensive Plan* included the establishment of and meetings with a City-appointed Steering Committee, public meetings, creation and administration of a comprehensive Community Survey, and stakeholder interviews.



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## 2.1 STEERING COMMITTEE

At the onset of the planning process, the City of Carlsbad established a Steering Committee to be the “eyes and ears” of the community and to provide feedback to the consultants throughout the planning process. The Steering Committee members were comprised of community leaders, general public, and City staff. Each Steering Committee member provided input on what makes Carlsbad a unique and special place to live, the challenges Carlsbad currently faces, and input on what could change to make Carlsbad a better place to live. The Steering Committee was instrumental in guiding the *Comprehensive Plan* to ensure it reflected the community’s vision, aspirations, and priorities.

## 2.2 COMMUNITY SURVEY

An excellent strategy to engage the highest number of community members in a community planning effort is through a survey. Consensus Planning created an on-line survey that covered a range of topics pertinent to the *Comprehensive Plan*. Questions were designed to extract information about growth and development, quality of life, employment and economic development, land use and urban design, community facilities, transportation, and demographics.

A total of 1,370 people took the survey between January 28 and March 31, 2025. The surveys were available on-line and hard copies were distributed at public locations. Key survey findings for each element are summarized below. The full survey results are provided in Appendix D.

### PROFILE

- ◀ 65% of the respondents were female and 60% were between the ages of 25 to 49 years of age.
- ◀ Nearly all respondents, 98%, said they lived in Carlsbad full-time. Of those, 58% said they lived in the community for more than 20 years; and 30% said they lived in Ward 4.
- ◀ Of the 9% who said they do not live in Carlsbad, 24% said they lived in Otis and 16% said they lived in Eddy County. Notably, 10% said they lived outside New Mexico.
- ◀ 43% of the respondents said the highest level of education they attained was 'some college/associate degree/vocational certificate' and 39% have obtained either a graduate or undergraduate degree.
- ◀ 28% of the respondents said their total household income was between \$100,000 and \$149,999 and 28% was \$150,000 and above. Notably, 5% said their household income was less than \$30,000.
- ◀ Asked the main reasons why they live in Carlsbad, 54% of the responses said “I grew up here”; 47% were “my family lives here”; and 46% were “permanent employment”.
- ◀ Asked how likely they are to live in Carlsbad for the next 2 to 5 years, 79% of the respondents said “very likely or likely”.
- ◀ Of those respondents that said they were unlikely or very unlikely to stay in Carlsbad, 55% of the responses were “high cost of living”; 53% were “higher quality of life amenities elsewhere”; and 50% were “lack of healthcare access”.
- ◀ Asked how likely they are to live in Carlsbad for the next 2 to 5 years, 79% of the respondents said “very likely or likely”.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

- ◀ Asked to rate the quality of life in Carlsbad, 47% said “fair” and 34% said “good”. Only 3% said “excellent”.
- ◀ Asked their favorite aspects of Carlsbad, 56% of the responses were “close to family”; 44% were “outdoor recreation”; and 32% were “climate”.
- ◀ Asked what public facilities they or their family currently uses, 69% of the responses were “parks”; 46% were “Carlsbad Water Park” and 44% were “Carlsbad Public Library”.
- ◀ Asked their level of satisfaction with public safety services, 74% said “good or fair” while 11% said “exceptional”.
- ◀ Asked their level of satisfaction with parks and recreation facilities, 78% said “good or fair” while 10% said “exceptional”.
- ◀ Asked their level of satisfaction with community facilities, 68% said “good or fair” while 8% said “exceptional”.
- ◀ Asked if the visual appearance of Carlsbad needed improvements, 92% said they “strongly agreed or agreed”.
- ◀ Asked what areas of improvement to the visual appearance were needed, 80% of the responses were “reduce litter and dumping”; 60% were “commercial buildings or properties”; 59% were “residential buildings or properties”, and 58% were “streetscapes”. Notably, only 2% of the responses were “no improvements needed”.

## EMPLOYMENT

- ◀ 81% said they were employed; 89% said they had a full-time job; and 18% said they had more than one job.

- ◀ 9% said they had a spouse, domestic partner, or children that lived in another city or state; of those, 92% said they had lived in Carlsbad for over a year.
- ◀ Asked what is preventing them and their family from moving permanently to Carlsbad, 18% said “lack of housing that suits my needs”; 35% said “other”, which included education, access to healthcare, lack of restaurants, lack of retail amenities, etc.
- ◀ Asked to characterize their job location, 80% said “in-person/employer site” and 9% said “hybrid - in-person and remote”.
- ◀ Of those employed, 13% said their job is in “oil and gas extraction”; and 11% each said “education” and “government”.
- ◀ Of those unemployed, 41% said they were “retired” and 31% said they were a “stay at home parent or caretaker”.
- ◀ Asked what type of job training or education they need, 19% said “business administration” and 16% said “health sciences”.

## GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

- ◀ Asked what types of new jobs or industry are needed, 71% of the responses were “retail”; 67% were “restaurant and food service”; and 43% were “health sciences”.
- ◀ Asked where they go for shopping and commercial services, 62% of the responses were “online”; 59% were “Roswell”; and 58% were “Lubbock”;
- ◀ Asked the reasons they travel outside of Carlsbad, 82% of the responses were “medical care”; 76% were “entertainment”; and 74% were “dining”
- ◀ Asked what types of commercial development are needed, 80% of the responses were “restaurants”; 78% were

“grocery stores”; and 77% were “clothing and accessories stores”.

- ◀ Asked what, if anything, is limiting growth in Carlsbad, 79% of the responses were “lack of affordable housing”; 62% were “fewer amenities than other locations”; and 59% were “lack of healthcare access”
- ◀ Asked their level of agreement with encouraging infill development, 77% said they “strongly agreed or agreed”.
- ◀ Asked their level of agreement with encouraging mixed-use development, 59% said they “strongly agreed or agreed”.

### DOWNTOWN & TOURISM

- ◀ Asked if Downtown is a fun place to visit, shop, and walk around, 65% said they “disagreed or strongly disagreed”; 32% said they “strongly agreed or agreed”.
- ◀ Asked what Downtown needs more of, 79% of the responses were “sit-down restaurants”; 73% were “retail stores”; and 55% were “entertainment venues”.
- ◀ Asked if they believe the tourist economy is important to Carlsbad, 90% “agreed or strongly agreed”.

### TRANSPORTATION

- ◀ Asked which transportation modes they use, 99% of the responses were “personal car, truck, or motorcycle”; 13% were “walk”.
- ◀ Asked their level of satisfaction with the City’s multi-modal transportation system, 56% said “fair or poor”; only 21% said “good” and 2.5% said “exceptional”.
- ◀ Asked what transportation and infrastructure improvements the City should focus on, 71% of the responses

were “street maintenance”; 58% were “expansion of storm drainage systems” and 55% were “sidewalk replacement or installation”.

### HOUSING

- ◀ Asked if they own or rent their homes, 82% said they “own/purchasing their home”.
- ◀ Of those that rent, 55% said they anticipate renting for “more than 1 year” while 25% said “indefinitely”.
- ◀ Renters were asked why they have not purchased a home, 62% of the responses were “cannot afford the down payment”; 57% were “cannot afford the mortgage and ongoing costs”; and 41% were “cannot qualify for a mortgage”.
- ◀ For those who cannot qualify for a mortgage, they were asked what obstacles are preventing them from qualifying, 75% of the responses were “cannot find a home in an affordable price range” and 47% were “cannot find an affordable home where I want to live”.
- ◀ Asked their level of agreement whether Carlsbad has an adequate supply of affordable housing, 76% “disagreed or strongly disagreed”.
- ◀ Asked which housing development types Carlsbad needs more of, 83% of the responses were “affordable housing”; 71% were “starter homes”; and 47% were “mixed-income housing”
- ◀ Asked which housing types Carlsbad needs more of, 88% of the responses were “single-family detached homes”; 37% were “townhouses”; and 31% were “senior housing with care facilities”.
- ◀ Asked what the most important housing issues facing Carlsbad, 86%

of the responses were “housing is too expensive” and 66% were “lack of affordable homeownership options”.

## 2.3 STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Consensus Planning met with a wide range of stakeholders early in the planning process. Meetings were held with representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- ◀ Carlsbad City staff
- ◀ Carlsbad MainStreet and Carlsbad Arts and Cultural District
- ◀ Carlsbad Department of Development
- ◀ Southeast New Mexico College

The participants expressed the following common concerns:

- ◀ There is a critical need to expand the City's housing stock. This includes all types of housing, including rental and owner-occupied market rate housing, workforce housing, and affordable housing.
- ◀ The impact of the population growth as a result of the oil and gas industry brings the concern that the charm and character of Carlsbad could be lost.
- ◀ The general impact of heavy oil and gas trucks on local road conditions and traffic congestion continues to grow.
- ◀ There is an inadequate level of healthcare services available to serve the community so many residents travel to other communities for healthcare reasons.
- ◀ There are not enough commercial services to support the community, so like healthcare, residents travel to other communities to access those services.

## 2.4 PUBLIC MEETINGS

A total of three public meetings were held during the planning process. The public meetings were advertised via the City of

Carlsbad's website, Facebook page, email, and fliers that were placed in public locations. The public meetings provided a meaningful way for the community to come together and listen to each other, provide feedback to the consultants, and stay connected to the *Comprehensive Plan* process. Each public meeting is summarized below:

### FEBRUARY 13, 2025 PUBLIC MEETING

The first public meeting for the *Comprehensive Plan* was held at the City Annex Building on February 13, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Jeff Patterson (Director, City of Carlsbad Planning and Engineering Department) welcomed the participants and then provided a brief introduction. He described how the City of Carlsbad had undergone a significant amount of change since 2020 when the previous *Comprehensive Plan* had been adopted and engaged Consensus Planning to complete an update to the 2020 *Comprehensive Plan*, also written by the firm.

Jackie Fishman (Consensus Planning) provided a brief presentation that included an introduction to the Consensus Planning Project Team and the planning process; an overview of the current *Comprehensive Plan*, including the planning themes and the Future Land Use Scenario; and a summary of the public outreach strategies, including a summary of the community survey results to date. Following the presentation, the consultant asked the following series of thought provoking questions to generate a discussion on the positive aspects and challenges facing Carlsbad:

1. How would you describe Carlsbad to someone who was thinking about moving here?
  - ◀ Transient, “oily” atmosphere
  - ◀ Welcoming, hidden gems
  - ◀ Friendly and outgoing
  - ◀ “Bigger small town

- ◀ Can be involved as much as you want
  - ◀ More attractive than surrounding areas
  - ◀ You get out what you put in
  - ◀ Outdoors, family oriented
  - ◀ Happy, booming, and happening!
  - ◀ Ample employment opportunities
  - ◀ Community-driven
  - ◀ Fast growing
  - ◀ You can advance your career
2. What are the three most important aspects of Carlsbad that should be preserved for the future?
- ◀ Great, local affordable college
  - ◀ Beach area
  - ◀ Strong vocational programs
  - ◀ Historic and cultural heritage
  - ◀ Adaptable programs
  - ◀ All parks and green spaces
  - ◀ Living Desert [Zoo and Gardens State Park]
  - ◀ Patriotism - love of country and community
  - ◀ Sports and youth activities
3. What are the three most important aspects of Carlsbad that should be changed for the future?
- ◀ Attitudes
  - ◀ Rerouting truck traffic
  - ◀ Healthcare industry has been struggling - address/commit to this improving,
- attract providers [through] loan forgiveness and other tools
  - ◀ Improve on parks and recreation
  - ◀ Supportive of energy
  - ◀ Better traffic flows/timing/signalization
  - ◀ Look at next big thing in energy
  - ◀ Look at accommodating smaller businesses - where can they go besides Canal Street?
  - ◀ Air travel options
  - ◀ More affordable housing
  - ◀ More childcare
4. What areas or neighborhoods in Carlsbad are most in need of improvement?
- ◀ Ward 4
  - ◀ Downtown street improvements (Mermud, etc.)
  - ◀ Speed bumps - too many
  - ◀ Target blighted homes for fixing or demolition
  - ◀ Beautify /improve look of man camps
  - ◀ Businesses, commercial buildings - when they leave, they aren't taking down signs, too lackluster
5. It's now 2045, how would you describe Carlsbad to someone who was thinking about moving here? (see vision statements, next page)



Public meeting on February 13, 2025.



# VISIONING THE FUTURE

*Carlsbad is a thriving beautiful place to live & raise a family. Came for the beauty enjoy the industry & opportunities.*

\*\*\*

*Great place to raise a family. The town has grown a lot... I miss the open spaces.*

\*\*\*

*More big box stores. More restaurants. Better traffic flow. Fewer homeless people. Better pay for law enforcement. More community investment.*

\*\*\*

*Clean. Lots of character. Community involvement & Support. Quaint. Enjoyable. Great local businesses. Healthy/More food options. Variety in Shopping. Great healthcare. Beautiful outdoor spaces. Aesthetically pleasing. Safe.*

\*\*\*

*We have tackled & adequately addressed our homeless population & providing adequate services to those who need it. The oil & gas "booms & busts" have leveled off & not be so volatile. The community has diversified its economy through different industry & not rely on heavy on certain ones.*

\*\*\*

*Our vacant buildings are filled with rising entrepreneurs, working towards enhancing the economic vitality of our community as a whole.*

\*\*\*

*It is a big city with a small-town atmosphere.*

*Carlsbad has small town fill with a big town live style. Great place to raise children. Pecos River right through the middle of town. Boating, fishing, hunting!*

\*\*\*

*Carlsbad is the energy hub of the southwest U.S. The community is a welcoming, caring place to work, live, and play. A great place to raise a family.*

\*\*\*

*A great National Parks small city still on the way up. A place with great focus on service & energy. There is no place like Carlsbad- still! Unique, western & special.*

\*\*\*

*Warm climate, warm people. Great healthcare. Clean. A lot of "franchise" stores & Mom & Pop Shops. Everything you need, you can get in Carlsbad!*

\*\*\*

*Still a happy & happening place, good housing at various income levels. Great place to find a job, learn new tricks, move up the ladder! Great place to raise a family or to retire to. Energy capital of the West & always working towards next greatest venture.*

\*\*\*

*Carlsbad, NM is a beautiful place to live & to raise a family. Housing is affordable for a family with average income & there are a lot of options regarding healthcare in the community.*

## C A R L S B A D , N E W M E X I C O

*It's nice plenty of housing & entertainment, people are friendly, and we have the best youth programs in sports. Best food old & new, some of the best dining experiences.*

\*\*\*

*Don't miss out if you want a great place for outdoors & a great place to raise your family.*

\*\*\*

*Come retire in Carlsbad because we have great healthcare especially for seniors. There is affordable facilities for retirees. We have great weather for outdoor activities.*

\*\*\*

*There is a variety of grocery stores and places for nutritious dining. For youngsters the opportunity to get good jobs where they can raise a family and give back to the community.*

\*\*\*

*If Improvements aren't made. Too much traffic. No shopping center. Few improvements.*

\*\*\*

*A medium size community, with lots of small business, lots of outdoor recreational activity, many entertainment options & restaurants and affordable housing.*

\*\*\*

*Still has green areas & recreation areas. Much improved medical facilities including a new hospital. Great place to retire. Most industry moved to National Parks Highway.*

*Schools are much better. Energy capital.*

*Carlsbad is a great place to raise kids, that the job economy is booming and people can make a livable wage. Housing would be affordable, and the "kids" that leave have come back.*

\*\*\*

*It's a beautiful community with affordable housing, a great educational system, and many quality-of-life amenities. You should definitely move to Carlsbad, there are career opportunities, and the people are friendly and community minded.*

\*\*\*

*It is a great place to raise a family, public safety is top priority and it's a wonderful beautiful place to live.*

\*\*\*

*As our energy driven economy shifts towards solar & wind so should the vocational training and education. We will be challenged with hotter climate and water challenges. I see more conservation efforts with opportunities in the field of this science. The city shall continue to grow as will the opportunities in large businesses interest in the area.*

### JUNE 3, 2025 PUBLIC MEETING

The second public meeting was held at the Carlsbad Annex Building on June 3, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to present and receive input on the draft goals and objectives, which were written for each plan element, and three alternative land use scenarios. The final results of the Community Survey were presented on large format boards to allow the participants to review at their leisure during the public meeting.

Jackie Fishman started the meeting with a presentation on the draft goals and objectives organized by planning element, which were updated from the current *Comprehensive Plan*. Ms. Fishman gave an overview of each set of the draft goals and objectives, and then asked the participants to indicate their preferences by "voting" on them with sticky dots. A green dot signified "Good to go", a yellow dot signified "I like this, but may need some wordsmithing"; and a red dot signified "I don't like this". The participants were given approximately 20 minutes to complete this exercise.

The participants were then asked to return to their chairs and Ms. Fishman proceeded with the presentation on the three draft land use scenarios graphically showing how Carlsbad could grow and develop over the next 20 years. One of the three scenarios was the "Future Land Use Scenario" contained in the previous *Comprehensive Plan*. The other two draft land use scenarios were created new for the update to the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Each of the three draft alternative land use scenarios identified areas for infill development, annexation, and new residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial development. Scenario A from the previous *Comprehensive Plan*, showed a very large amount of annexation, 12 areas totaling over 8,300 acres. Scenarios B and C also included

annexation but a far less amount of acreage than Scenario A. The participants were given a worksheet and asked to evaluate, vote, and comment on which of the three alternative land use scenarios they preferred and why. Scenario C was clearly the preferred scenario, with some minor adjustments.

### THIRD PUBLIC MEETING

*(To be filled in after the meeting is held)*

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ Community context that describes the geographic, geologic, and biological attributes of Carlsbad
- ▶ History of Carlsbad and the region from its earliest beginnings through incorporation, Carlsbad Caverns becoming a National Park, and establishment of the WIPP project
- ▶ Demographic data, including historic population, race and ethnicity, birth rate, migration, disabilities, and veterans
- ▶ Population projections in 5-year increments to 2050 for Eddy, Lea, Chaves, and Roosevelt counties
- ▶ Educational profile, including educational attainment and school enrollment trends and projections

The City of Carlsbad, the county seat of Eddy County, is located in southeastern New Mexico in the Pecos River Valley approximately 25 miles north of the Texas border. The community lies east of the foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains and at the northeastern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert. The population of Carlsbad has been growing since 2010, but took a dip between 2020 and 2022. The 2022 estimated population of Carlsbad was 31,755, making it the largest city in Eddy County, which had an estimated 2022 population of 61,264. These population estimates may not capture temporary workers, such as those in the oil and gas industry.



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### 3.1 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

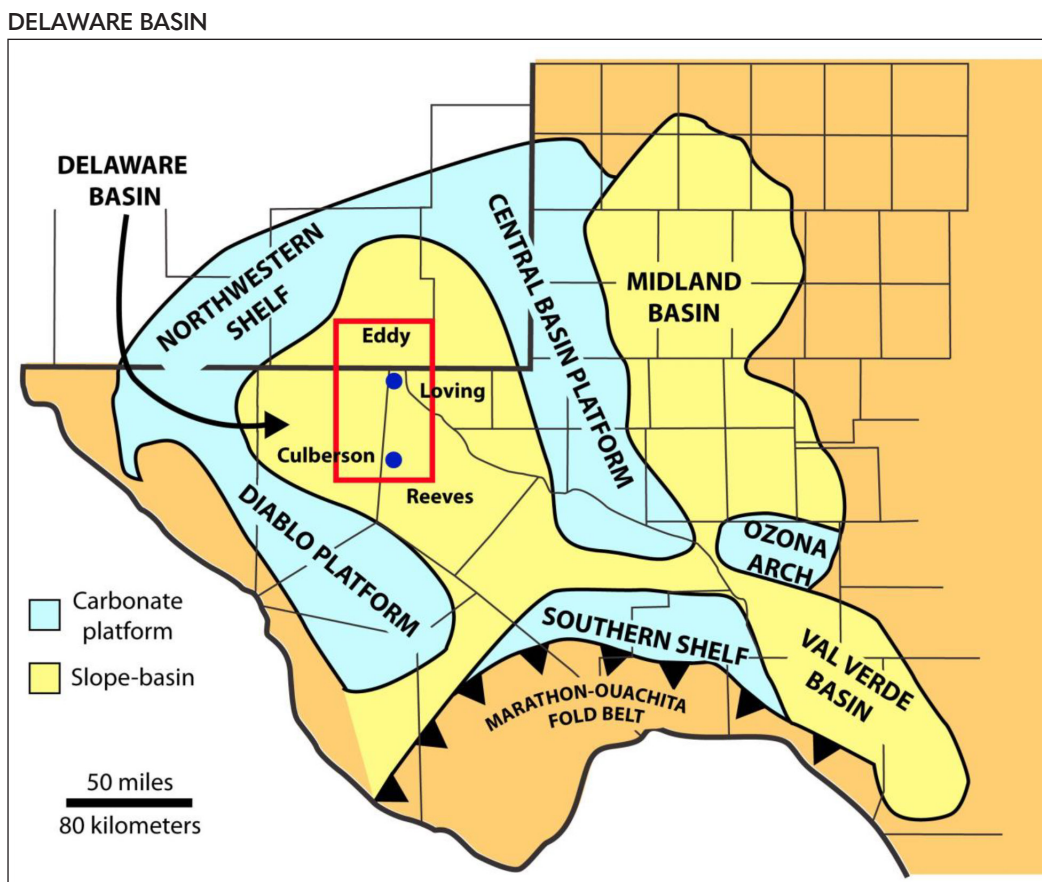
Carlsbad is situated in southeast New Mexico, relatively far away from major metropolitan areas. The nearest metropolitan area is Midland-Odessa, Texas, 115 miles southeast of Carlsbad, and El Paso, Texas, 166 miles to the southwest. Loving and Artesia, the other incorporated communities in Eddy County, are approximately 12 and 36 miles away, respectively.

Carlsbad sits at an elevation of 3,100 feet on the northern edge of the Chihuahuan Desert, which is the largest desert in North America, spanning across Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and south into Mexico. Winter temperatures are cool with monthly averages dropping to 28 degrees in December and January. Summer temperatures are hot, with an average daytime high of 96 degrees in July. Carlsbad receives limited rainfall, receiving approximately 14

inches annually. While some rain falls in the winter, most precipitation occurs during the summer monsoon season from July to September.

The Chihuahuan Desert is considered the most diverse desert in the western hemisphere and one of the most diverse arid regions in the world. Yucca and agave grow alongside grasses and creosote bush, giving the desert its characteristic appearance. Prickly pear and Mormon tea are also prevalent. Tarbush is sometimes a dominant shrub. Honey mesquite grows along washes and playas. Whitethorn acacia, althorn, and ocotillo are other large, conspicuous plants of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Carlsbad sits at the western edge of the Delaware Basin (see map below), a geological formation comprised of large amounts of limestone formed by ancient fossilized reefs that have been exposed at the surface.



Source: Stolz, 2014.

Carlsbad Caverns, part of the Guadalupe Mountains, was formed between 3.9 to 4 million years ago by sulfuric acid enriched water flowing through the fossilized limestone deposits.

The Delaware Basin is part of the larger Permian Basin formation, which is known for its large oil and natural gas deposits that cover much of southeastern New Mexico and West Texas. In the last decade, an increasing amount of oil has been produced from wells near Carlsbad, with approximately 5,400 active gas wells and approximately 14,000 active oil wells in Eddy County in 2024. Deposits of oil have also been found to be more substantial than previously thought, with the New Mexico Commissioner of Public Lands stating that New Mexico's portion of the Permian Basin had a "50-year supply of oil." A 2018 report estimated that two underground layers of the Delaware Basin contained 46.3 billion barrels of oil and 281 trillion cubic feet of natural gas – one of the largest reserves of oil and gas ever discovered in the United States. In 2023, Lea and Eddy counties became the top-producing counties in the United States.

The Permian Basin is also a major source of potash, which is used in fertilizer production and other products. The amount of recoverable ore is expected to satisfy demand for the foreseeable future, based on recent production trends. Local oil and gas extraction and mining and its impacts on the region are covered in further detail in Chapter 6, Economic Development.

### 3.2 HISTORY OF CARLSBAD

Southeast New Mexico is noted for the first discovered archaeological site of the Clovis people, one of the earliest recorded human habitations in North America. Arrowheads dating as early as 25,000 BC have been discovered in the area.

The Jornada Mogollon people settled in the desert plains area by 100 to 400 AD, with established agriculture around El Paso and parts of present-day Eddy County. It appears that the heaviest occupation by this group near Eddy County occurred between 900 AD and 1250 AD.

Around 1300 AD, the Athapaskan people traveled south from what is now Canada, and eventually reached the New Mexico territory. This group then split; some went west, forming the Navajo tribes, while the Apaches headed south. In the Eddy County area, the Mescalero Apaches inhabited the Sacramento and Guadalupe Mountains as well as the surrounding plains. They resided in the mountains, but crossed the Pecos River to the east to hunt buffalo. Although their population was not large, they had firm control over what would become Eddy County when the Europeans first encountered them, and fought to retain their lands well into the 19th century (Southeastern New Mexico Historical Society, 1982).

In 1536, Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was the first of the Spanish explorers to cross southeastern New Mexico. During the Spanish Colonial, Mexican, and Territorial periods, trade routes that would make Albuquerque and Santa Fe prosper largely bypassed the Middle Pecos Valley at the northern edge of the great Chihuahuan Desert.

Following the Civil War and the advent of a United States military presence in the southwest, Texas cattlemen attempted to graze cattle in the area. In 1866, Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving established a route up the Pecos from Texas to Wyoming known as the Goodnight-Loving Trail, which ran through what is now the Carlsbad region. By 1867, John Chisum had driven herds into the area that today is known as Eddy County.

## TOWN OF EDDY

In 1884, New Yorkers Charles B. and John Eddy formed a livestock company with Amos Bissell to operate in southeast New Mexico. One of their first ventures was the Halagueño Ranch, which covered the area from Seven Rivers to La Huerta, New Mexico. In 1887, Charles B. Eddy built the Halagueño diversion ditch on the Pecos River, three miles above what would later be the site of Avalon Dam, and incorporated the venture as the Pecos Valley Land and Ditch Company. He sought funds from a Swiss bank to attract European settlers to the clean air and sunny climate.

By late 1888, Charles Eddy teamed with Pat Garrett. Grandiose plans to irrigate half a million acres through water projects (including a system of dams and a flume to transport water over the Pecos) were seen by Charles Eddy as vital to attracting settlers to the arid desert.

Charles Greene joined with Eddy to create a system of canals and flumes for diversion of water to their properties. Greene secured potential investors from the east, including Robert W. Tansill, the manufacturer of the Punch five-cent cigar. Eddy and his partners laid out plans for a new town on the south bank of the Pecos River, which was incorporated as the Town of Eddy on September 15, 1888.

In 1889, the first school in Eddy opened on South Main with 35 pupils. In 1890, the Witt brothers completed construction of a wooden flume near Eddy for irrigation, and the county seat moved from Seven Rivers to the new town of Eddy. In the same year, the bridge over the Pecos River at Greene Street was completed, and Avalon Dam and its attendant canal system were constructed. On January 10, 1891, the first railroad train arrived in Eddy on the newly completed line from Pecos, Texas.

## EDDY BECOMES CARLSBAD

In 1899, by a vote of 83-43, the community was renamed Carlsbad, after the famous European health resort, Karlsbad, Bohemia. The general content and related healing properties of the water in the two cities, continents apart, were virtually identical. The Pecos Flume, one of the most impressive structures in Carlsbad, was rebuilt with concrete following a large flood in 1902. The concrete aqueduct is Carlsbad's own "Believe It Or Not" entry: the river that crosses itself. Originally built of wood, the flume, at the time of reconstruction, was the largest concrete structure in the world. It is still in use, carrying Pecos River water from Lake Avalon across the river.

Despite the setbacks caused largely by flooding (the Pecos would flood more than 12 times between 1888 and 1907), City leaders convinced the U.S. Department of the Interior's new Bureau of Reclamation to initiate the nation's second reclamation project in Carlsbad. In 1907, the Bureau rebuilt a system of dams and canals that irrigated 25,000 acres of previously unfarmed land, far less than from Charles Eddy's plans to irrigate half a million acres, but enough to sustain the young community. A year later, a road to El Paso was built, and an airport followed in 1926. During World War II, the airport would be improved as Carlsbad Army Air Field, a site for Army Air Corps glider training.

## CARLSBAD CAVERNS

Carlsbad Caverns is New Mexico's second most visited National Park, after White Sands National Park. Carlsbad Caverns is a network of limestone caves that began capturing the imaginations of early residents in the early 1900s. The geological formations quickly began to draw visitors. First created as a National Monument in 1923, President Calvin Coolidge named Carlsbad Caverns a National Park in 1930, preserving its beautiful formations for posterity. Carlsbad Caverns contains more

than 119 caves within a Permian-age fossil reef, including the nation's deepest and third longest at 1,597 feet. At 14 acres, with a ceiling up to 250 feet high, the Big Room is one of the largest cave chambers in the world.

### CARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) operated a camp at Rattlesnake Springs from 1938 to 1942 and conducted substantial construction and development work at Carlsbad Caverns National Park. This included the Carlsbad Caverns National Park Historic District, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. The CCC undertook trail development and landscaping work and constructed residences and maintenance facilities that are still in use today.

As described in the National Register of Historic Places nomination form, two parking terraces cut into the hillside at the bottom of Bat Cave Draw were completed by September 1927. In 1935, plans were prepared under the direction of A. W. Burney, then National Park Service Acting Chief Engineer, for enlargement of the parking lot. The work was done with

Public Works Project funding. At the lower side of the hill near the arroyo, the inner retaining wall of a double wall that formed a cactus bed was removed, leaving only the outer wall a few feet farther downhill. At the upper side of the hill, the bedrock was cut back to add a few more feet of parking space. The parking lot was also asphalted at this time.

The trail replaced a long flight of wooden stairs that had been constructed at the cave entrance in 1925. As originally constructed in 1930, the trail had eight switchbacks, the position of the top switchback is now occupied by the amphitheater, and the lower guard wall of the amphitheater is built upon the curved contour of the lower side of the top switchback. In 1936, the trail was asphalted in accordance with plans by A. W. Burney.

### WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT (WIPP)

Starting in 1980, Carlsbad became the primary community associated with the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). WIPP is the nation's only repository for the disposal of transuranic waste (spent nuclear fuel) generated by atomic energy defense activities to be permanently



Carlsbad Caverns National Park Historic District features Pueblo Revival and New Mexico Territorial Revival architectural styles.

disposed in deep underground vaults. Solutions for disposing of the resulting waste products began as early as 1955 with U.S. Atomic Energy Commission studies. In 1975, a test bore was drilled in Carlsbad, largely as the result of lobbying by Joe Gant, a Carlsbad State Senator. Congress authorized WIPP in 1980, and excavation began in 1982. By 1988, seven rooms of a vast 2,150-foot-deep subterranean network had been dug. The first barrels of transuranic waste arrived at WIPP in 1998.

The WIPP project created new jobs in Carlsbad and attracted a new generation of scientists and engineers to the area. WIPP and the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Environmental Management Carlsbad Field Office promote science education in the region with the annual Southeastern New Mexico Regional Science Bowl that started in 2024, where the local high school winners go on to represent the region at the National Science Bowl® in Washington D.C.

to 32,238, a 2.3% annual growth rate from 2010. In 2022, the population slightly dipped to 31,755. While these population levels are the official figures provided by the US Census Bureau, it may represent an undercount of the day to day population of Carlsbad since many of the oil and gas field workers may be temporarily residing in Carlsbad and reporting another location as their home.

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

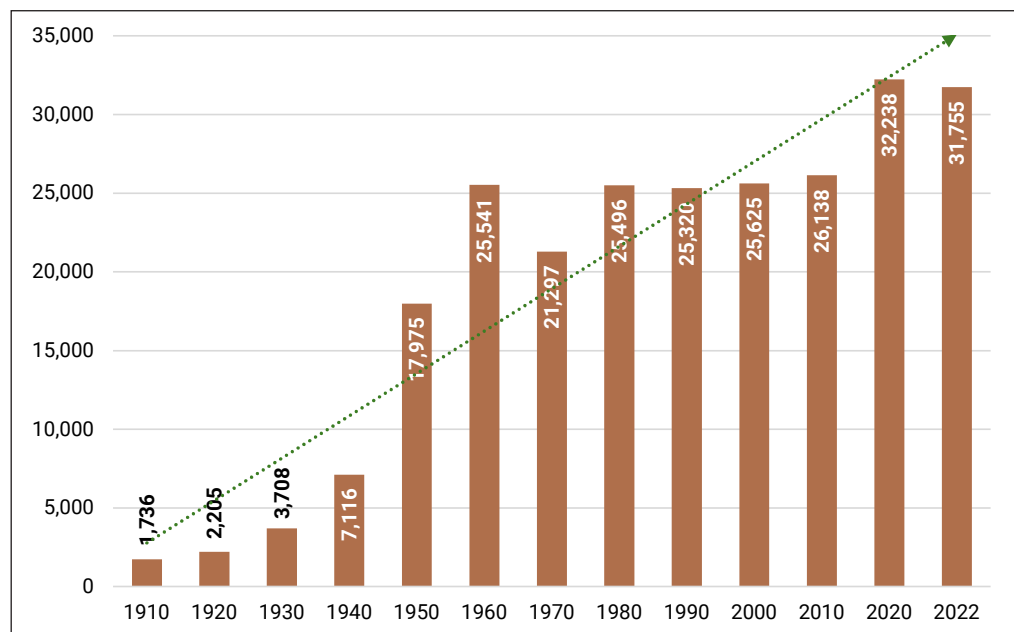
The 2022 population of Carlsbad was estimated by the American Community Survey (ACS) as 31,755, a growth rate of 21.4% from 2012 when the population was estimated at 26,158 (see *Table 3.1*). Nearly all of the age cohorts grew during this 10-year period, with the exception of the 45 to 54 and 75 to 84 cohorts, which decreased by 10.6% and 1.6%, respectively. The cohorts that grew at the highest rate during this period were 65 to 74 years (52.6%), 25 to 34 years (42.6%), and 15 to 19 years (36.5%). The median age decreased by 4.9%, from 36.8 to 35.0 years. In

## 3.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

### HISTORIC POPULATION

The historic population of Carlsbad shows a positive trend starting in 1910 when the population was 1,736 and grew steadily to 1960 when the population reached 25,541. There was a dip in the population in 1970 to 21,297, but between 1980 through 2010, the population hovered between 25,000 and 26,000. By 2020, the population grew

FIGURE 3.1: CARLSBAD HISTORIC POPULATION



Source: US Census Bureau and ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

comparison, the median age in New Mexico in 2022 was 38.6 years.

Figures 3.2 and 3.3 graphically illustrate the changes by age cohort for males and females. Overall, the population is evenly divided between males and females. In 2022, the working age male population in Carlsbad represented a larger portion of the population than of the same age cohorts, which can likely be attributable to a higher level of employment in the oil and gas industry.

## RACE & ETHNICITY

The US Census Bureau defines race as a person's self-identification with one or more social groups. These categories are not prescribed, but are selected by the respondent in accordance with how they self-identify. Ethnicity is different than race; a person may consider themselves Hispanic or Latino, and White, Black, or another race.

In 2022, Carlsbad residents who identified as "White" alone comprised 66.3% of the population (see Table 3.2). This was a significant decrease of 21.6% from 2012 when 88.1% of Carlsbad residents identified as "White". Residents that identified as "two or more races" comprised 19.0% of the population, which represented a 22.6% increase from 2012. In comparison, New Mexico residents that identified as "White" alone decreased by 34.7%.

In 2022, Carlsbad residents who self-identified as Hispanic comprised 56.9% of the population, which was a significant increase from 2012 when 41.0% of the population self-identified as Hispanic. In comparison,

New Mexico residents that self-identified as Hispanic grew from 46.3% to 49.8% between 2012 and 2022.

## BIRTH RATE

Birth rates are continuing to decline across the country and New Mexico, and Eddy County is no exception. Eddy County experienced an increase in the birth rate from 2010 through

TABLE 3.1 CARLSBAD POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

	2012	2022	% Change
Total population	26,158	31,755	21.4%
Male	13,197	16,051	21.6%
Female	12,961	15,704	21.2%
Under 5 years	1,825	2,438	33.6%
5 to 9 years	1,856	2,059	10.9%
10 to 14 years	1,758	2,006	14.1%
15 to 19 years	1,918	2,618	36.5%
20 to 24 years	1,662	2,038	22.6%
25 to 34 years	3,306	4,714	42.6%
35 to 44 years	3,251	4,079	25.5%
45 to 54 years	3,447	3,080	-10.6%
55 to 59 years	1,542	1,920	24.5%
60 to 64 years	1,797	1,972	9.7%
65 to 74 years	1,955	2,983	52.6%
75 to 84 years	1,317	1,296	-1.6%
85 years and over	524	552	5.3%
Median age (years)	36.8	35.0	-4.9%
Under 18 years	6,618	7,972	20.5%
65 years and over	3,796	4,831	27.3%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

TABLE 3.2: CARLSBAD RACE & ETHNICITY

Race	2012	2022	% Change*
Total population	26,158	31,755	21.4%
White	88.1%	66.3%	-21.6%
Black or African American	0.8%	2.3%	21.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1.1%	1.6%	33.6%
Asian	0.1%	1.0%	10.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	14.1%
Some other race	6.6%	9.8%	36.5%
Two or more races	3.3%	19.0%	22.6%
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	41.0%	56.9%	68.4%
Not Hispanic or Latino	59.0%	43.1%	-11.3%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

\*Change is based on the actual numbers.

2013, well above the New Mexico birth rate, but declined sharply between 2014 and 2018. There were up-ticks in 2019 and a lesser increase in 2022, but remaining below the higher rates of the 1990s.

## MIGRATION

With the boom-bust cycle in the oil and gas industry, Carlsbad is accustomed to shifts in the population. In 2021, the population was 31,525. The American Community Survey estimated that 4,700 people moved into Carlsbad in 2022. Of those people, 3,493 moved from somewhere within Eddy County, 572 moved from another county within New Mexico, 540 moved from a different state, and 95 moved from a different country. However, between 2021 and 2022, the population increased by only 0.7%, from 31,525 to 31,755 (230 people). This means while a significant number of people moved to Carlsbad in 2022, a significant number of residents left Carlsbad.

FIGURE 3.2: CARLSBAD AGE COHORTS BY GENDER, 2022

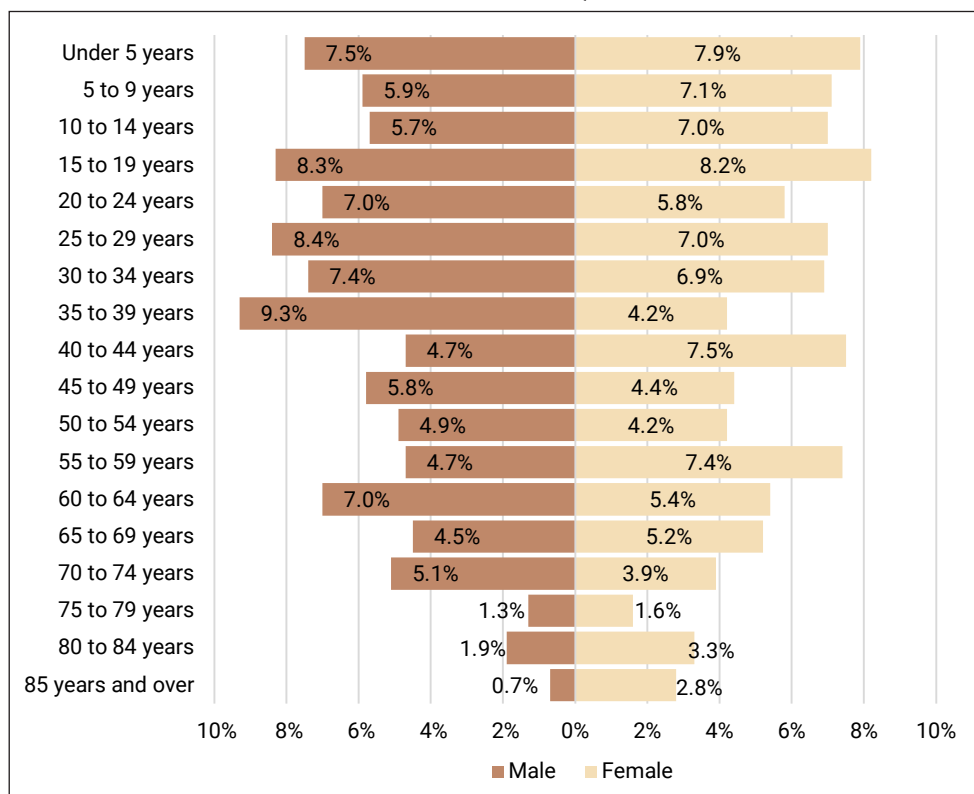
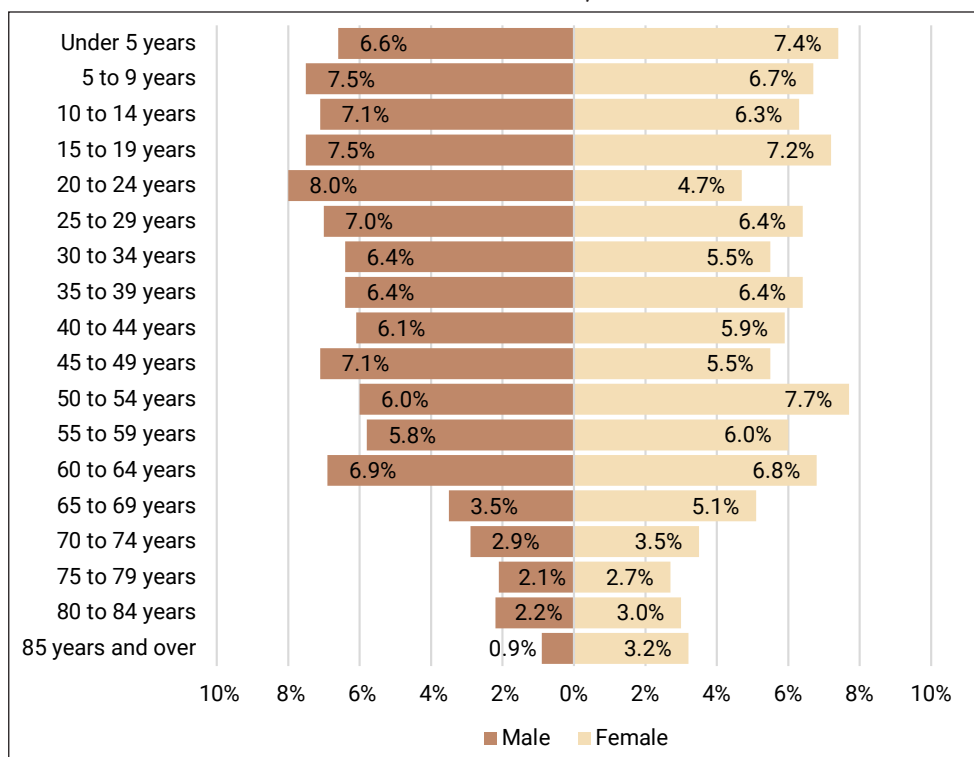


FIGURE 3.3: CARLSBAD AGE COHORTS BY GENDER, 2012



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022 & 2012.

## DISABILITIES

In 2022, 16.9% of residents in Carlsbad identified as having had a disability. This rate is relatively consistent with the New Mexico statewide average of 16.3%. As shown in Table 3.3, disability includes hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and difficulty with independent living. It is typical to see an increase in disability as people age, which points to the need for senior living services and in-home care givers in the community.

## VETERANS

In 2022, veterans comprised approximately 7.4% of Carlsbad residents that were 18 years and older. This is lower than the rate in New Mexico, which had a veteran population of 8.4%. As the population ages, the number of veterans for prior wars decreases (see Table 3.4). There is also a higher rate of veterans with a disability than the general population; 42.5% of veterans have a disability compared to 18.4% of non-veterans with a disability.

TABLE 3.3: DISABILITY CHARACTERISTICS

	2012	2022	% Change
Total Population	25,722	31,755	23.5%
Population with Disability	4.1%	16.9%	173.7%
With a hearing difficulty	2.3%	5.1%	173.7%
With a vision difficulty	2.7%	3.8%	73.8%
With a cognitive difficulty	3.4%	6.5%	136.0%
With an ambulatory difficulty	3.2%	8.6%	231.8%
With a self-care difficulty	3.3%	2.9%	- 8.5%
With an independent living difficulty	3.1%	6.3%	150.9%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

\*Change is based on the actual numbers.

TABLE 3.4: VETERANS

	2012	2022	% Change*
Civilian population 18 years and over	19,537	23,760	21.6%
Veterans	12.0%	7.4%	-25.0%
<b>Period of Service</b>			
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) veterans	4.8%	7.1%	11.4%
Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	18.3%	12.8%	-47.6%
Vietnam era veterans	38.5%	36.1%	-29.6%
Korean War veterans	12.8%	6.1%	-64.2%
World War II veterans	9.3%	0.0%	-100.0%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

\*Change is based on the actual numbers.

## 3.4 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections for the State of New Mexico are developed by the University of New Mexico Institute for Geospatial and Population Studies (GPS). GPS states "the current projections highlight expected changes based on recent trends. Future trends may be different due to the cyclical nature of migration and due to policy changes that directly aim to impact migration or other components of population change.

The 2023 projections for Eddy County show the population peaking in 2040 with approximately 71,376 permanent residents (see Figure 3.2). Between 2020 and 2040, GPS projected an average annual growth rate in Eddy County of 0.7%, which is higher than the projected growth rate for New Mexico (0.1%). The population of Eddy County is projected to decline by 2045 and will continue

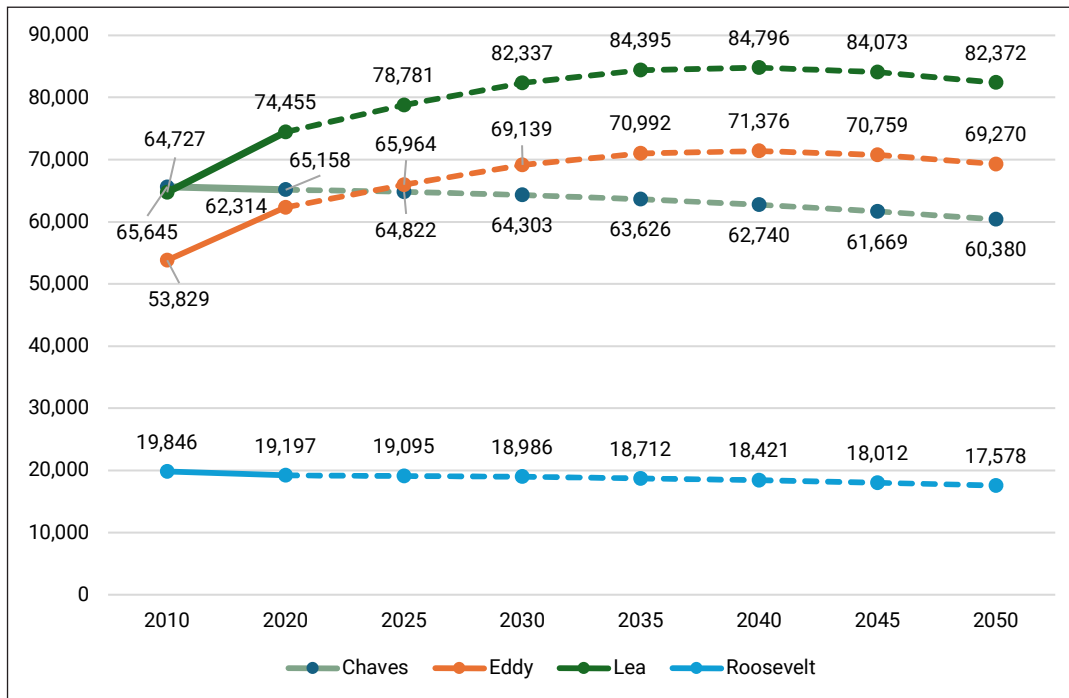
to decline by 2050 to a population of 69,270. The populations of Chaves, Lea, and Roosevelt counties are similarly projected to decline.

## 3.5 EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

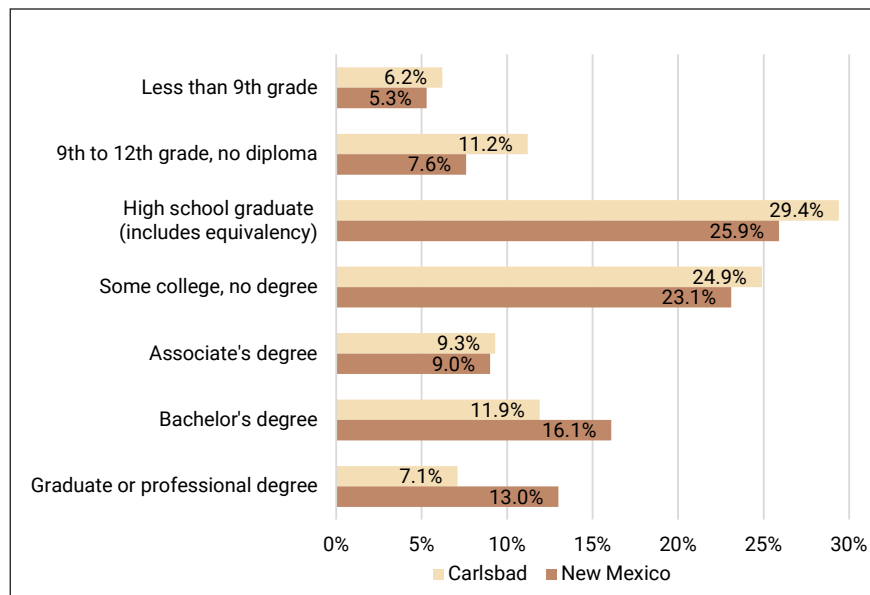
The educational attainment of residents in Carlsbad has been relatively stable since 2012. The portion of residents 25 years and older with less than a 9th grade education declined from 8.1% in 2012 to 6.2% in 2022. Residents with a graduate or professional degree decreased from 8.1% in 2012 to 7.1% in 2022. The portion of residents with bachelor's degrees grew at a higher rate, from 8.8% in 2012 to 11.9% in 2022. In comparison, New Mexico residents attained an overall higher level of education than Carlsbad residents, at the bachelor's and graduate or professional degree levels (see Figure 3.5).

FIGURE 3.4: COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS



Source: US Census, UNM Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

FIGURE 3.5: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2022



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

School enrollment projections are another important indicator of growth within a community. The New Mexico Public Schools Facility Authority (NMPSFA) reports annual enrollment for all public schools in New

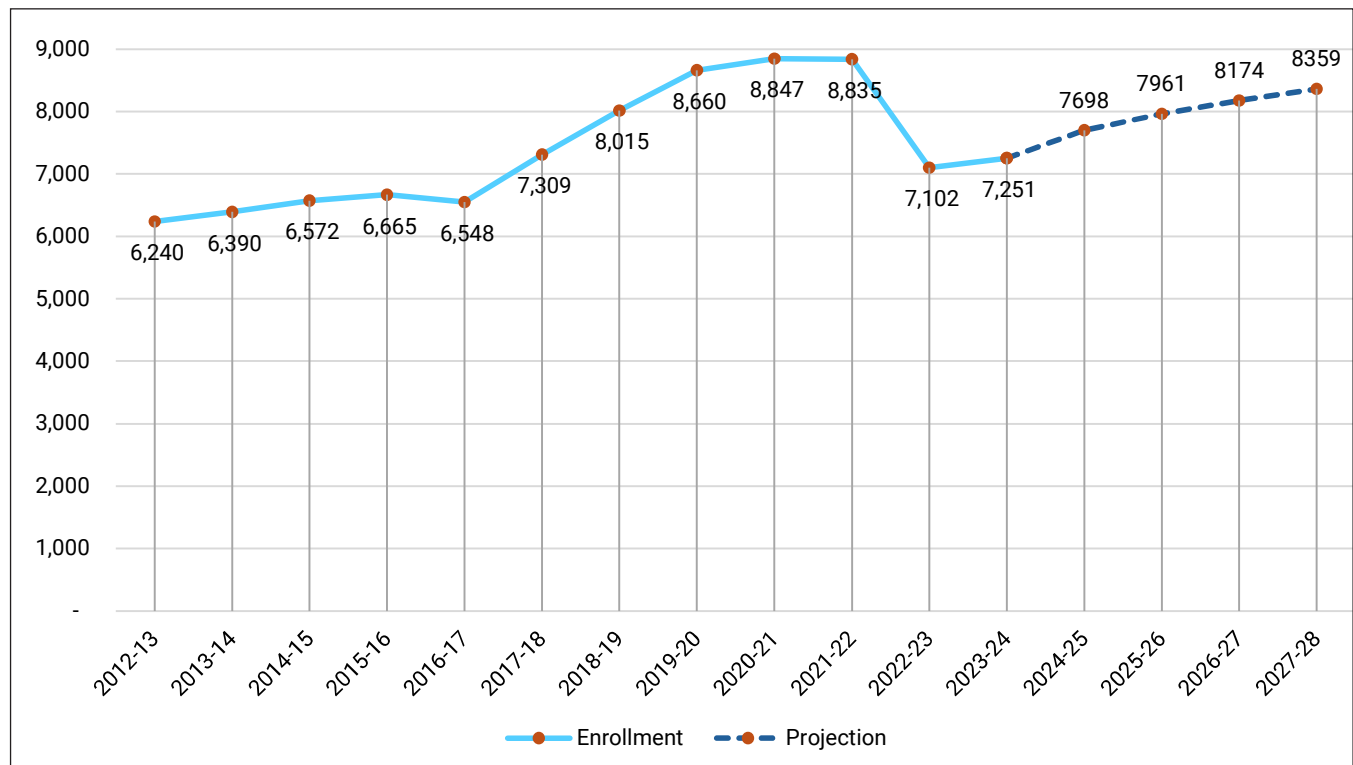
Mexico and provides enrollment projections for New Mexico school districts.

For the 2012-13 school year, enrollment at Carlsbad Public Schools was 6,240 and it continued to slightly increase each year until

the 2015-16 school year. Enrollment took a big jump in the 2017-18 school year to 7,309 students and continued to grow through the 2020-21 school year, when the student population peaked at 8,847 students. The increase in 2017 was due to the opening of Pecos Connections Online Academy, while the drop in enrollment to 7,102 is attributed to this school becoming a state-charter school in 2022-23.

The enrollment for Carlsbad Public Schools is projected by the New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority (PSFA) to steadily climb again through the 2027-28 school year to a peak of 8,359 students (see Figure 3.6). This is consistent with the strong growth of school-aged cohorts in Carlsbad, likely reflecting an increased in-migration of families related to the growth of the oil and gas industry.

FIGURE 3.6: CARLSBAD SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT & PROJECTIONS



Source: New Mexico Public School Facilities Authority.

# HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ A housing profile, including household characteristics; housing units, occupancy, housing type; housing age; property values; and current housing market
- ▶ Housing costs and affordability, including mortgage costs, rent, cost-burdened households, and special populations, including seniors, veterans, and the homeless
- ▶ General housing conditions by subarea
- ▶ Summary of existing housing studies, Affordable Housing Ordinance, and existing affordable housing projects in Carlsbad
- ▶ Recent and planned subdivisions and multi-family projects
- ▶ Description of colonias, including the formerly designated Standpipe area and available funding resources
- ▶ Summary of local and regional housing organizations
- ▶ Overview of housing challenges, including low inventory, high costs, and lack of on-campus housing for students at Southeast New Mexico College
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies to increase and diversify the housing inventory; stabilize existing neighborhoods; and the framework for developing new neighborhoods

Housing is basic need that must be met for a community to thrive. Without an adequate and diversified housing inventory, other aspects of the community suffers. With the continued growth in the oil and natural gas industry, Carlsbad's available housing stock has been stretched to its limits and housing costs have continued to rise to levels out of reach for many existing and future residents. Providing a full array of housing development and types will help attract, retain, and support the local workforce. The City is focused on increasing and diversifying the housing stock to alleviate the current situation and prepare for future growth and demand for housing.



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## 4.1 HOUSING PROFILE

### HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

As defined by the U.S. Census, a household consists of the people that occupy a housing unit. This includes families, those that are related by birth, marriage, or adoption, and non-family households, those that consist of people who live alone or who share their residence with unrelated individuals.

Between 2012 and 2022, the total number of households in Carlsbad grew by 19.3%, from 9,868 to 11,772. The average household size grew by 1.5%, from 2.60 to 2.64. In comparison, the average New Mexico household size in 2022 was 2.55. In 2022, Carlsbad households included 7,907 family households and 3,865 non-family households.

Family households grew by 23.6% between 2012 and 2022, from 6,399 to 7,907. In 2022, family households represented 67.2% of the total households in Carlsbad. Of those, 5,447 were married couple family households, 943 male householder (no wife present), and 1,517 female householder (no husband present).

	2012	2022	% Change
Total households	9,868	11,772	19.3%
Family households (families)	6,399	7,907	23.6%
With own children under 18 years	2,941	3,526	19.9%
Married-couple family	4,500	5,447	21.0%
With own children under 18 years	1,907	2,276	19.3%
Male householder, no wife present, family	566	943	66.6%
With own children under 18 years	344	578	68.0%
Female householder, no husband present, family	1,333	1,517	13.8%
With own children under 18 years	690	672	-2.6%
Non-family households	3,469	3,865	11.4%
Householder living alone	2,757	3,552	28.8%
65 years and over	1,116	1,496	34.0%
Households with one or more people under 18 years	3,281	3,967	20.9%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	2,653	3,485	31.3%
Average household size	2.60	2.64	1.5%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

Between 2012 and 2022, the total number of non-family households grew by 11.4%, from 3,469 to 3,865. Of those, 3,552 were householders living alone.

TABLE 4.2: HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY

	2012	2022	% Change*
Total housing units	11,169	13,714	22.8%
Occupied housing units	88.4%	85.8%	19.3%
Owner-occupied	69.7%	71.0%	21.5%
Renter-occupied	30.3%	29.0%	14.2%
Vacant housing units	11.6%	14.2%	49.3%
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.0%	1.4%	1.1%
Renter vacancy rate	9.9%	6.7%	1.7%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

\*Change is based on the actual numbers.

### HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY

New people moving to Carlsbad and current residents looking to move into new housing have limited housing options. The lack of housing supply in Carlsbad, coupled with high housing costs, are some of the reasons residents cite for considering leaving Carlsbad.

Between 2012 and 2022, there was an increase of 22.8% in total housing units, from 11,169 to 13,714. Of those 2022 housing units, 85.8%

(11,767) were occupied and 14.2% (1,947) were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, 71.0% were owner-occupied and 29% were renter-occupied. The rate of occupied housing units in 2022 for Carlsbad was similar to that of New Mexico, which was 86.2%.

Between 2012 and 2022, the overall number of vacant housing units increased by 49.3%, from 1,301 to 1,942 units. The vacant housing units include homeowner and renter vacancy rates, which were 1.4% and

6.7% in 2022. Between 2012 and 2022, both homeowner and renter vacancy rates grew at a relatively modest rate of 1.1% and 1.7%, respectively.

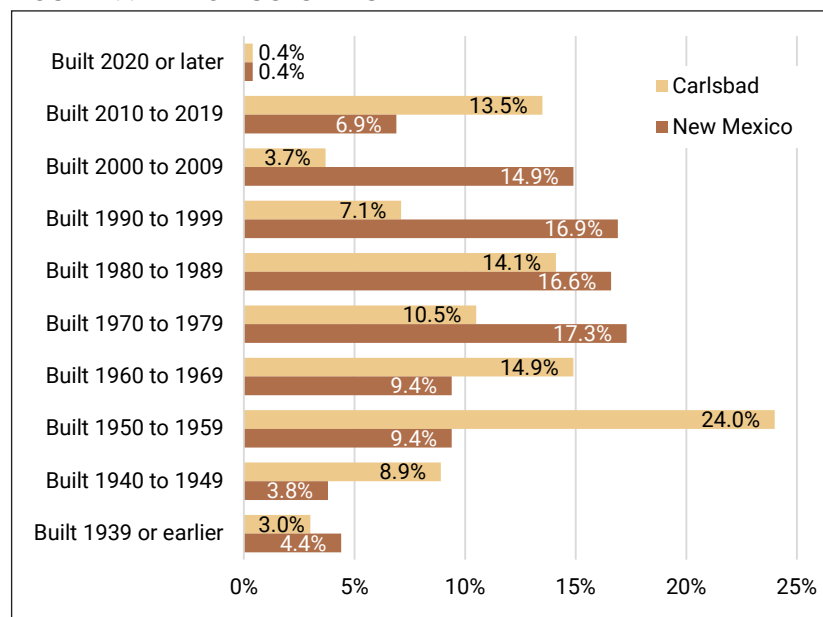
## HOUSING UNITS & TYPE

In 2022, there were 13,714 total housing units in Carlsbad. Of those, 77.6% (10,642) were single-family detached units and 9.4% (1,289) were mobile homes. Multi-family housing containing between 2 to 19 units per structure represented 11.5% of the housing inventory in Carlsbad. Despite significant gains made in increasing the number of housing units, the housing type in Carlsbad has remained relatively limited and an effort should be made to increase multi-family options.

## HOUSING AGE

The ACS estimates show 61.3% of the current housing stock in Carlsbad was built before 1980, down from 74.4% in 2012 (see Figure 4.1). The majority of the housing stock, 24.0%, was built between 1950 to 1959 and 13.5% was built between 2010 and 2019. Only .4% has been built since 2020 despite a concerted effort by the City to encourage new residential development. The median year for housing

FIGURE 4.1: YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimate 2022.

TABLE 4.3: HOUSING TYPE

	2012	2022	% Change*
Total housing units	11,169	13,714	22.8%
1-unit, detached	77.3%	77.6%	23.2%
1-unit, attached	2.4%	1.2%	-39.0%
2 units	2.1%	1.1%	-35.7%
3 or 4 units	1.8%	3.6%	137.9%
5 to 9 units	1.6%	4.6%	258.5%
10 to 19 units	2.4%	0.3%	-85.1%
20 or more units	4.1%	1.9%	-42.6%
Mobile home	7.7%	9.4%	49.5%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.6%	0.4%	-20.8%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

\*Change is based on the actual numbers.

built in Carlsbad was 1969; in New Mexico, the median year was 1984.

## RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY VALUES

The Eddy County Assessor's Office determines the fair market value of a property to ensure the tax burden can be fairly and equitably distributed. Property valuations are categorized by residential and non-residential.

In 2022, the largest portion of residential property in Carlsbad, 23.1%, was valued at between \$200,000 to \$299,999, followed by 20.1% of property valued between \$150,000 to \$199,999 (see Figure 4.2).

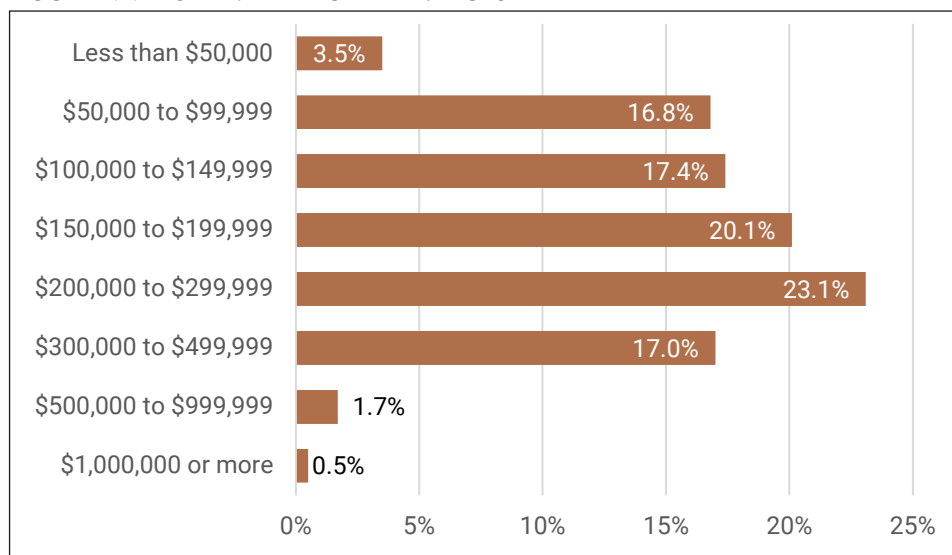
Carlsbad's median residential property value in 2022 was \$172,500, which was an increase of 77.5% from 2012 when it was \$97,200.

For comparison, the largest portion of residential property in New Mexico, 24.9%, was valued at \$200,000 to \$299,999, followed by 19.6% of property valued between \$300,000 to \$499,999. The median residential property value in 2022 was considerably higher than Carlsbad at \$216,000, an increase of 33.7% from 2012 when it was \$161,500.

TABLE 4.4: PROPERTY VALUES			
	2012	2022	% Change*
Less than \$50,000	955	289	-69.7%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	2,619	1,401	-46.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,342	1,453	8.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,109	1,681	51.6%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	459	1,928	320.0%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	301	1,419	371.4%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	64	144	125.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	26	38	46.2%
Median (dollars)	\$97,200	\$172,500	77.5%

Source: ACS 5-year Estimates, 2012 and 2022.

FIGURE 4.2: RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY VALUES



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

## HOUSING MARKET

Another set of metrics that reveal the current housing situation in Carlsbad is data for median home sales. Recent data from the Realtors Association of New Mexico for Eddy County shows that the median home sale price slightly decreased from \$264,950 in 2020 to \$260,000 in 2022. There were 652 home sales in total for that year (*New Mexico Association of Realtors Housing Trends Reports, 2020 & 2022*).



Current house on the market.

## 4.2 HOUSING COSTS & AFFORDABILITY

### MORTGAGE COSTS

In 2022, there were 3,999 households in Carlsbad that paid a mortgage. Of those, the largest portion, 40.5%, paid between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month (see *Table 4.4*). The second largest portion of households, 21.2%, paid between \$1,500 to \$1,999 per month. Between 2012 and 2022, the median owner costs with a mortgage in Carlsbad increased by 51.5%, from \$930 to \$1,409. In comparison, the median mortgage costs in New Mexico grew at a much slower rate of 17.1%, from \$1,244 to \$1,457.

### GROSS RENT

In 2022, there were 3,113 households in Carlsbad that paid rent. Like households that paid a mortgage, the largest portion of renter households, 33.8%, paid between \$1,000 and \$1,499 per month. Households that paid between \$500 and \$999 were the second highest category at 33.3%. Between 2012 and 2022, the median renter costs increased by 64.9%, from \$693 to \$1,143. For New Mexico, the median renter costs increased by 31.3%, less than half the rate of Carlsbad renters; from \$736 to \$966.

### COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

Housing and utilities are typically the largest monthly expenses for most households. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers households that pay over 30% of household income to housing and utility costs to be "cost-burdened", and households that pay more than 50% are considered "severely cost-burdened." Households whose housing costs exceed these thresholds are likely to struggle to pay for other basic needs.

In 2022, there were a total of 8,353 owner-occupied housing units with and without a

**TABLE 4.4: SELECTED HOUSING COSTS, 2022**

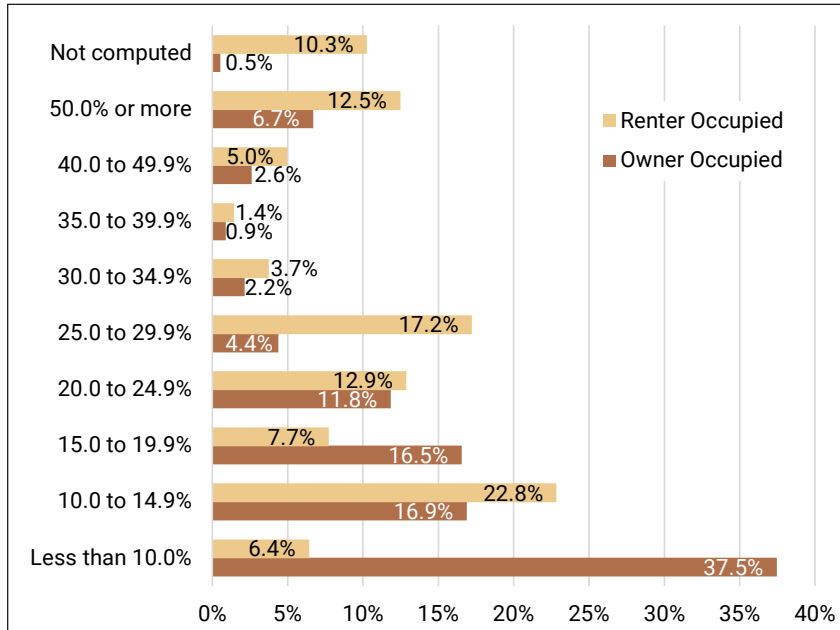
Owner Costs with a Mortgage		
Total units	3,999	
Less than \$500	16	0.4%
\$500 to \$999	731	18.3%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	1,621	40.5%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	847	21.2%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	465	11.6%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	253	6.3%
\$3,000 or more	66	1.7%
Median (dollars)	\$1,409	
Gross Rent		
Total units paying rent	3,113	
Less than \$500	200	6.4%
\$500 to \$999	1,037	33.3%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	1,052	33.8%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	347	11.1%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	295	9.5%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	182	5.8%
\$3,000 or more	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$1,143	
No rent paid	306	

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

mortgage in Carlsbad. Of those, 12.3% were considered cost-burdened, including 6.7% severely cost-burdened (see *Figure 4.3*). In comparison, 28.4% of New Mexico owner-occupied households were cost burdened, including 12.4% severely cost-burdened.

In 2022, there were a total of 3,419 renter-occupied units in Carlsbad. Of those, 22.6% were cost-burdened, including 12.5% severely cost-burdened. This is far below the state-wide rate of cost-burdened renter-occupied households where 43.9% were cost-burdened, including 22.1% severely cost-burdened.

FIGURE 4.3: PERCENTAGE OF INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

## 4.3 SPECIAL POPULATIONS

### SENIORS

Providing affordable, safe housing for senior populations is a growing and important component of housing stock. Senior housing can be very diverse, from affordable apartments, town-homes, or assisted living, which can support the needs of seniors as they age.

The participants in the Community Survey strongly agreed that senior housing is a major need in Carlsbad. As shown in the Community Profile, approximately 15% of Carlsbad residents were 65 years of age or older in 2022, which was a significant increase in that age cohort.

Senior living communities in Carlsbad include:

- ◀ **Lakeview Christian Home:** Lakeview is a continuum of care facility that offers independent living, assisted living, nursing care, and home care. It contains a mix of single-family and patio homes along the Pecos River and assisted living units.

Services include music and memory care; long term care; activities such as golf, recreation, and entertainment activities; skilled nursing care and rehabilitation; and hospice/end of life care for those with a terminal illness. Currently, there is no wait list.

- ◀ **River Bend Retirement Community:** River Bend is an Independent Retirement Community for 55+ residents that are still active and want to maintain their independence. It is located at 1905 W. Pierce Street along the Pecos River and next to Lake Carlsbad

Golf Course. River Bend offers single-family and patio home dwelling units.

- ◀ **Landsun Homes:** Landsun Homes is a continuing care retirement community at 1900 Westridge Road. Founded in 1965, Landsun offers homes and apartments, comprehensive health care services, and several levels of care, including independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing.
- ◀ **Good Life Senior Living and Memory Care:** Good Life is located at 801 and 801 W. Cherry Lane. It offers a residential care home in a family-style setting and memory care services.

### VETERANS

Veterans are particularly at risk for experiencing homelessness or lack of reliable housing due to poverty, mental health disorders, history of substance abuse, lack of support from family and friends, and precarious living conditions. The Veterans' Administration estimates that in 2018 veterans were nearly 10% of the population experiencing homelessness in the United States. Veterans are two times as likely to

experience chronic homelessness as other Americans.

Approximately 7% of the Carlsbad population are veterans. Most of these veterans served in Vietnam (36%), the first Gulf War (Aug. 1990 through Aug. 2001, 13 %), and the second Gulf War and later (Sept. 2001 to present, 7%). To serve these veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs has dedicated a Veteran Field Office with a Service Officer that can help with veteran benefits, healthcare, tax breaks, employment opportunities, education and training assistance, recognition, burial, homeless and at-risk, and transportation issues.

## HOMELESS POPULATION

Caring for the homeless population is a challenge faced by all local governments. Protecting vulnerable individuals from homelessness can be a difficult task due to trauma, mental illness, and lack of resources. In 2022, the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness Point-In-Time Count estimated that 1,283 people in New Mexico, with the exception of Albuquerque, were experiencing homelessness on the night January 31st of that year.

It is difficult to count the total homeless population in Carlsbad due to the large number of individuals that are in temporary housing situations. Historically, individuals experiencing homelessness or housing crises have tended to follow the highs and lows of the City's economic cycles.

- ◀ **Carlsbad Community of Hope Center:** In partnership with United Way of South Carlsbad and Eddy County, the Center provides on-on-one counseling, emergency warm shelter and meals twice per week. Fundraising and draft plans are in progress to construct a new facility to provide shelter, meals and counseling under one roof.

- ◀ **Carlsbad Transitional Housing and Homeless Shelter:** The overnight shelter is open in various church locations throughout Carlsbad for those that need overnight shelter. These shelters provide overnight services, shower facilities, and meals.
- ◀ **Carlsbad Schools Federal Programs Support:** The Carlsbad School District has stepped in to support families that are in temporary housing situations. This has involved creating contacts between families, housing support, and working with non-profits to provide food and clothing support to students and their families.

The City of Carlsbad has identified the need to provide an emergency/homeless shelter to house evacuees during emergency events and provide shelter to the homeless population.

## 4.4 HOUSING CONDITIONS

Housing conditions throughout Carlsbad vary considerably between neighborhoods, depending on the age and condition of the housing stock and the amount of reinvestment that has gone into the neighborhood. As described in more detail in Chapter 5 Land Use, the first neighborhoods in Carlsbad initially developed to the west of Downtown beginning in the 1920's. The City steadily expanded west of Downtown and along the Pecos River, and south along US 62/National Parks Highway. Housing in unincorporated areas of Eddy County around Carlsbad also developed on larger lots adjacent to farmland, some of which has been annexed by the City and redeveloped at higher densities. To describe the housing conditions throughout Carlsbad in more detail, the City is broken up into seven subareas. Existing land use within these same subareas are described in Chapter 5: Land Use.



Pecos Vista Luxury Apartments in North Carlsbad - 204 units.

## NORTH CARLSBAD

Situated to the north and east of the Pecos River, North Carlsbad has grown significantly since 2012. Homes in this area are generally newer, larger, and are home to more affluent households. Ocotillo Elementary School, built in 2016, serves this area. The single-family homes to the east of the Ocotillo Elementary School were developed since it opened. There are also two newer, high-end apartment complexes in North Carlsbad (Pecos Vista Apartments and Copperstone Apartments), both containing numerous amenities for the residents. Additional single-family residential development to the west of Ocotillo Elementary School and within the City boundary is in the development and construction process. The area to the north of this subarea is proposed for annexation for the development of new housing.

## NORTHWEST CARLSBAD

This subarea runs south and west of the Pecos River and west of Downtown, and contains the majority of the residential neighborhoods in Carlsbad. These were the first neighborhoods to be subdivided and developed in the 1920s through 1940s.

Housing and neighborhood conditions vary considerably. Areas to the north of Pierce Street along the Pecos River are generally more affluent and consist of larger, single-family

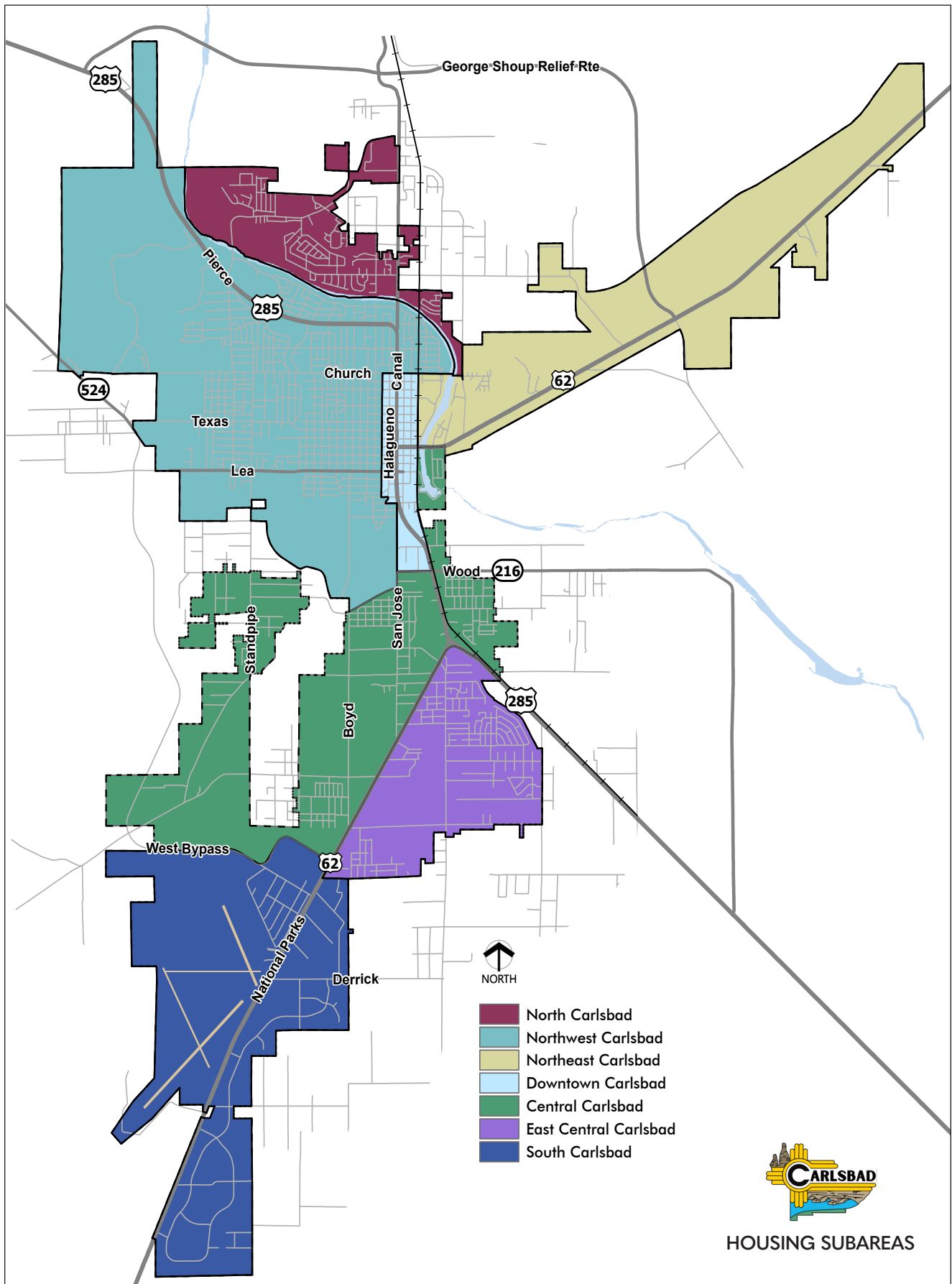
homes on larger lots. The neighborhoods west of the Carlsbad Canal are generally in good condition and are comprised primarily of single-family homes, with a few smaller apartment buildings integrated along some of the larger streets such as Church Street. The areas west of the Carlsbad Canal are less affluent and have some blocks with homes in poor condition. Although this area includes a large amount of vacant land, most of it is not developable due to the topography of Ocotillo Hills. Newer affordable homes have also developed along Church Street just north of Happy Valley, and single-family home development is underway east of the Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex.

## DOWNTOWN CARLSBAD

This area is bound by US 285/North Canal Street to the west, Church Street to the north, Pecos River to the east, and south to Wood Avenue. There is very little residential development in the Downtown core, with single-family homes adjacent to commercial buildings on the blocks outside the core. Carlsbad MainStreet would like to see more mixed-use development in Downtown with commercial on the ground floor and residential on upper floors.

## EAST CARLSBAD

East Carlsbad extends from east of the Pecos River and Downtown along US 62/ E. Green



Street/ Hobbs Highway. Most of the land along E. Green Street is zoned for industrial development. The existing housing in this area is along the Pecos River and east of Downtown, including some older residential development and subdivisions. This area also includes larger and more upscale housing in the Ridgecrest neighborhood adjacent to the Lake Carlsbad Golf Course. Overall, the housing conditions in these neighborhoods are good. There is potential for additional residential development, particularly in the more rural areas north of US 62.

### SOUTH CENTRAL CARLSBAD

The South Central Subarea lies south of the Northwest and Downtown subareas, south of the curving Carlsbad Irrigation Canal, and bound to the south by US 180/ National Parks Highway and US 285. This is the second largest residential area, primarily comprised of single-family homes and mobile homes on larger lots. Housing conditions in this part of the City are fair to poor. This area had previously been designated as a colonia due to the lack of sewer infrastructure and lower median incomes.

The Central South Carlsbad Subarea also contains is the residential development along San Jose Boulevard, which includes older single-family neighborhoods that developed in the 1940s just south of the Carlsbad Canal. This housing is in fair condition, although the neighborhoods in this area would benefit from transportation and infrastructure improvements. Previously vacant parcels adjacent to San Jose Boulevard have developed as large RV parks and other temporary housing sites. A newer apartment building, the Villa San Jose Apartments, has been developed in this area. Ongoing infill and development of vacant tracts of land are possible in this area.

Residential development to the west of the National Parks Highway and south of the

intersection of Canal Street and National Parks Highway includes scattered single-family developments on larger lots, mobile home developments, several RV parks, man-camps, and some multi-family development. Some lots in this area have temporary use permits that allow for large RV parks and modular housing units. Due to the infrastructure that has been provided to these areas, including water and electricity, some of these RV parks could be redeveloped as single-family or smaller-scale multifamily developments. Overall, the housing conditions are fair to poor, due to the temporary nature of much of this housing. However, this area still contains a large amount of developable land, especially the areas south of Kircher Street adjacent to Boyd Drive and San Jose Boulevard.

### EAST CENTRAL CARLSBAD

The Southeast Carlsbad Subarea is situated between the National Parks Highway and US 285. This area contains moderately-aged, single-family residential development with some newer housing development. The Farmview area, just east of Old Cavern Highway, is home to scattered single-family residential development adjacent to existing farmland. The 90-acre Martin Farms Subdivision is being built out, as is the recently annexed 85 acres south of US 285. The developed housing in the area is in good condition overall, although there are several lots that remain vacant or have developed at low densities. Additional single-family housing on standard residential lots is developing or has been planned for this area. Some of these developments are replacing farmland within the City boundaries.

### SOUTH CARLSBAD

This area straddles National Parks Highway/ US 180 and encompasses the Cavern City Air Terminal and Carlston Ranch. It also includes manufactured homes on smaller lots, RV parks, and scattered sites containing stick-built

single-family residential dwelling units. While much of the South Carlsbad Subarea is zoned industrial, east of the highway is a continuation of this housing configuration, containing an additional RV Park, some apartments and manufactured housing, as well as the Carlston Ranch Subdivision. This planned unit development will include a significant amount of new housing.

## 4.5 HOUSING STUDIES

### CARLSBAD DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT HOUSING STUDY

To better understand the housing shortage in Carlsbad and Eddy County, the Carlsbad Department of Development commissioned the *CDOD Housing Study* in April 2022. The study focused on three areas, including housing availability and affordability; employer housing; and future development.

According to the *Housing Study*, the apartment occupancy rate was 92%. Several apartment projects were under construction at that time. When these new units are finished, there will be a total of 2,040 units. Currently, all apartment complexes that provide income-based rental pricing are at capacity with 100% occupancy.

The *Housing Study* looked at apartment occupancy, hotel rates and occupancy, RV parks, and temporary housing. As of December 2021, there had been an overall decrease in hotel nightly rates, most likely attributable to COVID-19 travel restrictions, more hotel rooms being added to the market area, and solar and pipeline construction projects ending in December of that year. There was an average hotel occupancy of 70% at that point in time.

An employer survey, completed as part of the *Housing Study*, showed that 25% of employers offered housing for their employees

of which 83% lived in the Carlsbad service area and the remainder residing in surrounding communities such as Artesia, Hobbs, or Roswell. Approximately 54% of employers said that suitable housing availability is a factor affecting their employees, down significantly from the 77% reported previously.

### CARLSBAD HOUSING ANALYSIS & STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2015 *Housing Analysis and Strategic Plan*, found that the cost of housing in Carlsbad increased significantly since 2010 due in part to a rapid increase in the workforce and a limited supply of additional housing units. As a result, rental housing vacancy rates were extremely low in 2015, while the cost of rental housing had risen to approximately \$900 for a one-bedroom apartment, leaving many households cost-burdened. Due to the housing shortage, many workers were living in RV parks and campgrounds.

The *Housing Analysis and Strategic Plan* identified the number of affordable housing units, workforce housing, owner-occupied single family housing, maintenance assistance, and supportive housing units needed. Since the document is over 10 years old, the need for new housing has increased and have been documented in more recent housing studies by the Carlsbad Department of Development (CDOD).

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING ORDINANCE

In 2006, the City of Carlsbad passed an *Affordable Housing Ordinance* (Ord. No. 2006-05, §§ 1-7) to implement Carlsbad's Affordable Housing Program. The Act provides guidance to developers on the criteria required to obtain affordable housing tax credits and grants from the City of Carlsbad and Housing New Mexico. The Ordinance requires that multi-family housing with multiple apartments must maintain 60% affordable units to qualify for affordable housing funds and grants.

## 4.6 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECTS

Affordable housing is available for individuals and families that are in need of housing assistance. Subsidized housing receives assistance from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) through Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) and assistance to the property owners for a portion of the rent charged allowing the owner to reduce the rental cost. Prospective renters must meet income and other eligibility requirements to qualify for housing assistance. The following is a list of affordable housing projects in Carlsbad as identified by HUD:

- ◀ **Colonial Hillcrest Apartments:** Multi-family project located at 604 N. Fifth Street that provides housing 1, 2, and 3-bedroom subsidized units with monthly rents ranging from \$600-\$900 for low-income, elderly, and special needs residents.
- ◀ **Carlsbad Senior Community Apartments:** A 24-unit, 1- and 2-bedroom housing development located at 214 W. Pecan Street that provides housing for households with at least one 62+ very low income person.
- ◀ **Mission La Posada Apartments:** A 68-unit, multi-family housing development located at 805 Hueco Street that provides 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units for low income, elderly, and special needs residents.
- ◀ **La Posada Apartments:** A 12-unit, multi-family housing development located at 710 Hueco Street that provides 2-bedroom units for low income, elderly, and special needs residents.
- ◀ **Villa San Jose:** A 60-unit housing development located at 415 Del Rio Street that provides 1-bedroom units for elderly (62+) residents. This development is also supported by HUD Section 202

Supportive Housing for the Elderly program.

An important tool available to encourage development of affordable housing is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). To qualify for LIHTC funding, the property owner must provide affordable rents (less than 30% of household income) to tenants who qualify. HUD has identified two LIHTC projects in Carlsbad.

- ◀ **Mesa Grande Apartments:** Multi-family project located at 4601 Forrest Drive that contains a total of 72 one-, two-, and three-bedroom units.
- ◀ **Northgate Plaza Apartments:** A multi-family project located at 1018 Lamont Street that includes 20-units.

## 4.7 RECENT & PLANNED HOUSING

Since 2020, there has been numerous new single-family and multi-family residential developments either approved or in the planning process. The City of Carlsbad has approved or is in the process of approving several new single-family and multi-family housing developments. New developments include:

- ◀ **Southridge Subdivision:** Located along Davis Street near Etter Street, this development is planned for eight new single-family residential lots.
- ◀ **The Flumes Subdivision:** Located along Callaway Drive north of the Callaway low water crossing, The Flumes Subdivision will yield approximately 390 new single-family residential lots commencing with Phase 1 plans to include up to 110 new lots.
- ◀ **Cielo Lindo Subdivision:** Located at the southwest corner of Standpipe Road and West Lea Street, a total of 152 new single-family residential lots are planned, of which 51 are completed in Phase 1. Phase

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- 2 of the project is nearly complete with 18 new lots.
- ◀ **Oasis Subdivision:** Located to the north of the Farmview Subdivision Phases 1 through 4 and east of the Martin Farms Subdivision, Oasis yielded 290 new single-family residential lots. All planned phases are built and homes are currently being constructed.
  - ◀ **Martin Farms Subdivision Units 3, 4, and 5:** Located along Old Cavern Highway just east of Martin Farms Subdivision Units 1 & 2, this subdivision created 192 single-family residential lots. Phases 3 & 4 have been completed and houses built while work continues in Phase 5.
  - ◀ **Carlston Ranch Master Planned Community:** Located on the south side of Derrick Road and the east side of National Parks Highway, this 1,300 acre-plus master planned community includes residential, commercial, and industrial developments. Preliminary use plans estimate that up to 1,800 new multi-family units and 2,200 new single family residential units will be built as part of this development. City infrastructure is currently being installed to realize this development.
  - ◀ **Sunwest Subdivision:** Located at 4209 Boyd Drive west of Sunwest Subdivision Unit 7, this development contains 50 new single-family lots and is intended to accommodate manufactured housing.
  - ◀ **BLM/City-Planned Housing:** Located north of Ocotillo Elementary and directly east of the Carlsbad Canal, this City-led housing development is planned for housing and ancillary commercial uses. The City of Carlsbad is currently working with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to purchase approximately 500 acres of land, which will then be annexed into the City. The City is planning to construct the backbone infrastructure and major roadway system to serve this area.
  - ◀ **Klein Subdivision:** Located along Dona Ana Street off of Standpipe Road, this property was recently annexed into the City for a residential subdivision that will create approximately 35 new lots for development.
  - ◀ **Kestrel Housing:** Located at the northeast corner of West Rose Street and Boyd Drive, Kestrel is a City-led project in which the City selling the subject property to Kestrel, who plans to build approximately 147 new apartment units, some of which will be reserved for affordable and work-force housing.
  - ◀ **Arrowstone Apartments:** Located at the northeast corner of Hidalgo Road and Boyd Drive, Arrowstone will yield approximately 300 new units upon completion. Phase 1 and 2 of the project are complete and 200 apartment units are occupied. Phase 3 will begin work soon.
  - ◀ **Cavern City Apartments:** Located at 301 W. Chapman Road, Cavern City Apartments when fully built will contain 220 apartments. Phase 1 has been completed, with 120 units occupied. Phase 2 construction is nearing completion.

## WORKFORCE HOUSING

Rapid growth in the oil and natural gas industry has drawn thousands of new workers into Carlsbad and Eddy County. Housing needs for these workers are being met with mobile homes, RVs, hotels and motels, rental units, and temporary workforce housing complexes called “man-camps”.

By January 2019, the City approved 4,973 units for temporary housing; 1,770 within man-camps and 3,203 for units in temporary RV parks. Man-camps or crew-camps have been a concern in Carlsbad and Eddy County. In 2015, the City of Carlsbad added

requirements for Temporary Housing in the Code of Ordinances, Sec. 56-80, Temporary Use Regulations. According to the Ordinance, temporary housing is only permitted in the C-2 Commercial District and the R-R, Rural Residential District, and must be on lots no less than 2 acres.

## 4.8 COLONIAS

Colonias are rural communities with a population of less than 25,000 near the U.S-Mexico border. Colonias lack access to basic services, such as potable water, sewage systems, or decent, safe, and sanitary housing. It is often difficult for governments to gather socioeconomic data on populations living in colonias for a variety of reasons, including language barriers; undocumented immigrant residents; high poverty conditions; inadequate roads; and squatter like settlement patterns.

The Standpipe Road area, adjacent to Carlsbad within Eddy County, has been designated in previous years as a colonia. Housing conditions in the Standpipe Road area are severely dilapidated. These homes are often rented to temporary workers and not regularly maintained, which contributes to the blighted housing conditions in the area.

The State of New Mexico has a number of funding programs to finance infrastructure improvements within colonias, including:

- ◀ Rural Infrastructure Program (NMED);
- ◀ Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (NMFA);
- ◀ Clean Water State Revolving Fund (NMFA);
- ◀ Water Trust Board Fund (NMFA);
- ◀ Public Project Revolving Fund (NMFA);
- ◀ Local Government Planning Fund (NMFA);
- ◀ Colonias Infrastructure Fund (NMFA); and
- ◀ Community Development Block Grants

(NM Department of Finance and Administration).

## 4.9 HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS

Several housing programs offer assistance to Carlsbad and Eddy County. These programs offer services including housing vouchers, mortgage and rent assistance; new housing construction for eligible families; and emergency services. The following is a summary of the housing assistance programs serving Carlsbad residents.

### EASTERN REGIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

Located in Roswell, the Eastern Regional Housing Authority is responsible for delivering affordable housing to Eddy County. Eastern Regional Housing Authority is one of three housing authorities operating under the authority of Housing New Mexico.

Eastern Regional Housing Authority is responsible for creating partnerships with local governments, state entities, non-profit organizations, and the private sector to plan, finance, and create affordable housing. The Housing Authority also manages the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and the Low Rent Program or public housing.

As of January 2025, the Housing Choice Voucher program in Eddy County is closed. The Public Housing Program is open indefinitely and is accepting pre-applications for families and senior/disabled households.

### SOUTHEAST NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY ACTION CORPORATION

The Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation (SNMCAC) offers a variety of services including rent and utility assistance and works with volunteers to rehabilitate homes for seniors, disabled, and low-income households. The SNMCAC has developed programs that have immediate and tangible

benefits to assist those that qualify for and are in need of supportive services. The SNMCAC provides the following services in Carlsbad:

- ◀ Adult Day Programs;
- ◀ Attendant Services for People With Disabilities;
- ◀ Child and Adult Care Food Programs;
- ◀ Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites;
- ◀ Developmental Disabilities Day Habitation Programs;
- ◀ Foster Grandparent Program;
- ◀ Home Delivered Meals;
- ◀ Mortgage Payment Assistance;
- ◀ Preschools;
- ◀ Rent Payment Assistance;
- ◀ Specialized Information and Referral; and
- ◀ Utility Assistance.

### CARLSBAD HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

The Carlsbad Habitat for Humanity serves the communities of Carlsbad and Loving. Habitat for Humanity builds homes for individuals in need of decent, affordable housing for homeownership. Local Habitat for Humanity local offices chose homeowners based on their level of need; willingness to partner with Habitat; and their ability to repay a mortgage through an affordable payment plan. The area Habitat for Humanity ReStore, which sells reusable and surplus building materials, furniture, and appliances is located in Alamogordo.

for tourists and visitors, which impacts Carlsbad's biggest tourist attraction, Carlsbad Caverns.

- ◀ Carlsbad has difficulty attracting workers that are not employed by the oil and gas industry due to lack of affordable housing. This includes teachers, service workers, and public sector employees.
- ◀ Southeast New Mexico College does not provide on-campus student housing and students cannot afford to live in the City. This discourages students from surrounding communities to attend.
- ◀ Workers are relocating alone, leaving families in other states because they either cannot find affordable housing that is suitable for families or they do not want to remove their children from their current schools. These workers send their income back to their home states rather than keeping it in the local Carlsbad economy.
- ◀ Rents and home ownership costs are unaffordable, especially for those households with an average median income below 80%.

## 4.10 HOUSING CHALLENGES

The biggest challenges faced by Carlsbad are directly and indirectly related to the lack of available and affordable housing, including:

- ◀ Oil companies continue to rent hotel rooms to house their employees. Although this problem is not as severe in 2025 as was in previous years, the unintended consequence is the high cost and/or shortage of hotel rooms available

## 4.11 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS GOAL 1

Increase the housing supply in Carlsbad to include a diversity of housing types, unit sizes, and price ranges.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To encourage the development of market rate, workforce, and affordable housing to meet the needs of Carlsbad households.*
- ◀ *To reduce housing costs for low-income renter- and owner-occupied households.*
- ◀ *To ensure the housing needs of special needs populations, such the disabled, veterans, seniors, and the unhoused, can be met.*

#### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 1.1

Secure and allocate funding for the acquisition of properties and/or buildings that would be appropriate for contribution towards affordable housing projects.

#### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 1.2

Develop incentives, such as density bonuses, extension of utilities, and land donations, for private developers to build affordable housing for income-qualified households, including but not limited to special populations (i.e., veterans, seniors, people with disabilities).

#### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 1.3

Initiate the development of a community outreach program to provide information on available affordable housing programs, credit counseling, first time home buyer programs; rehabilitation and maintenance assistance programs for seniors and veterans; down payment and closing cost assistance; and referrals to local lenders approved by Housing New Mexico.

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 1.4

Continue efforts to acquire, annex, master plan, and develop backbone infrastructure and major roadways within the planned annexation area to the north of the existing municipal boundary for the purpose of developing housing.

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 1.5

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units in residential zones and create development standards that address size, height, setbacks, and parking for those unit types.

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS GOAL 2

Support the revitalization and stabilization of existing residential neighborhoods in Carlsbad.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To preserve the character, identity, and integrity of established neighborhoods.*
- ◀ *To address the negative impact that blighted and substandard housing conditions have on the quality of life.*
- ◀ *To encourage the on-going maintenance of rental and owner-occupied properties.*
- ◀ *To ensure public reinvestment and improvements in existing neighborhoods.*

### HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 2.1

Identify opportunities and coordinate with local and regional housing providers, such as the Eastern New Mexico Housing Authority and Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation, on applying for rehabilitation funds for single family homes from the HOME Investment Partnership Program and USDA Rural Development Section 504 Home Repair grants for eligible seniors aged 62 and older.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 2.2

Develop a program to acquire vacant and abandoned houses with clear title that can be later purchased for the development of new housing by homebuilders or non-profit housing providers.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 2.3

Pursue funding from the Colonias Infrastructure Fund to help support infrastructure improvements and housing development and rehabilitation in the Standpipe area.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 2.4

As more residential projects are developed, work with representatives of the oil and gas industry on a plan to move their workers out of man-camps and hotels and into rental housing, and limit the number and duration of temporary housing permits as the available housing inventory begins to grow at a more rapid pace.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 2.5

Support the Carlsbad Beautification Committee's efforts and work with community groups and Carlsbad youth on improving conditions in residential neighborhoods and businesses through landscape maintenance and improvements, and trash and weed removal.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS GOAL 3

Promote the development of quality residential neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing development types.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To foster new single-family and multi-family residential development.*
- ◀ *To ensure new residential neighborhoods have convenient access to neighborhood-scale commercial services, schools, parks, trails, and other community amenities.*
- ◀ *To foster healthy, social interaction between neighborhood residents.*

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 3.1

As the City moves forward with annexations, require master planning that includes a mix of residential densities, parks and trails, commercial services, and school sites, where appropriate and in consultation with Carlsbad Municipal Schools.

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 3.2

Identify appropriate locations for new mixed-use developments on vacant properties within the existing developed area of Carlsbad and the future annexation areas, including but not limited to areas as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario (see Chapter 5: Land Use).

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS STRATEGY 3.3

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require adequate landscape buffers between residential and heavy commercial and/or industrial development.

# LAND USE

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ◀ Descriptions of existing land use, zoning, historic preservation, neighborhood character areas; and recent growth and areas of change.
- ◀ A Future Land Use Scenario that graphically illustrates how Carlsbad intends to grow in the next 20 years through a rational and balanced mix of land uses.
- ◀ Annexations of areas appropriate for development of new neighborhoods supported by commercial services, parks, and schools.
- ◀ Strategies to address the projected growth balanced with the desire to retain Carlsbad's character.

One of the fundamental roles of the *Comprehensive Plan* is to anticipate, guide, and plan for the City's physical growth and development as a means to help the community achieve its vision for the future. This involves addressing the general pattern of land use and ensuring the land use mix is balanced and able to support economic development and allow for a range of options for where and how people want to live, work, and shop in the community. Addressing land use conflicts and maintaining the character of healthy, established neighborhoods while allowing the community to evolve to meet the changing needs of the residents are other important components of land use.



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## 5.1 EXISTING LAND USE

Carlsbad contains a wide range of existing land uses, residential densities, and land use intensities (see *Table 5.1 and the Existing Land Use map, page 52*). The consultant conducted a windshield survey to determine the land use types, conditions, and general land use pattern of Carlsbad. The survey was used to provide general conditions of buildings and neighborhood character, and to identify neighborhood issues.

The largest residential areas in Carlsbad are located to the west of Canal Street and south of Pierce Street. These neighborhoods were the original subdivisions developed in Carlsbad, beginning in the 1920's. Later residential growth occurred to the west of the Carlsbad Main Canal, and along both sides of the Pecos River just north of Pierce Street.

More recent residential growth areas include neighborhoods to the north of the Pecos River, along Callaway Drive, and new subdivisions to the east of US 180 in the southeast quadrant of Carlsbad. Martin Farms is a newer subdivision with a large volume of development.

Multi-family development in Carlsbad includes smaller, single- and two-story apartment complexes in older neighborhoods, as well as several newer and larger apartment complexes. These include White Oaks Apartments, Pecos Village Apartments, and the Copperstone Apartments, which are located north of the Pecos River. Newer multi-family development includes the Cavern City Apartments and Phase 2 of the Arrowstone Apartments. Both are located in the south end of Carlsbad.

Mobile home parks are found to the south of Downtown along US 62/180. Some of these areas also include large RV camps, with temporary housing units that are regulated by temporary use permits.

**TABLE 5.1: EXISTING LAND USE**

Land Use	Acres	% Share
Low Density Residential	240.8	1.3%
Medium Density Residential	3,745.5	20.4%
High Density Residential	872	0.5%
Mobile Home Park	104.3	0.6%
Mixed-Use	578	0.3%
Commercial	1,031.6	5.6%
Industrial	4,133.2	22.6%
Institutional	621.4	3.4%
Agriculture	942.4	5.1%
Park	1,375.9	7.5%
Open Space	249.0	1.4%
Utilities and Drainage	122.2	0.7%
Vacant	5,607.8	30.6%
<b>Total*</b>	<b>18,319.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Land Use Survey, January 2025, Consensus Planning.

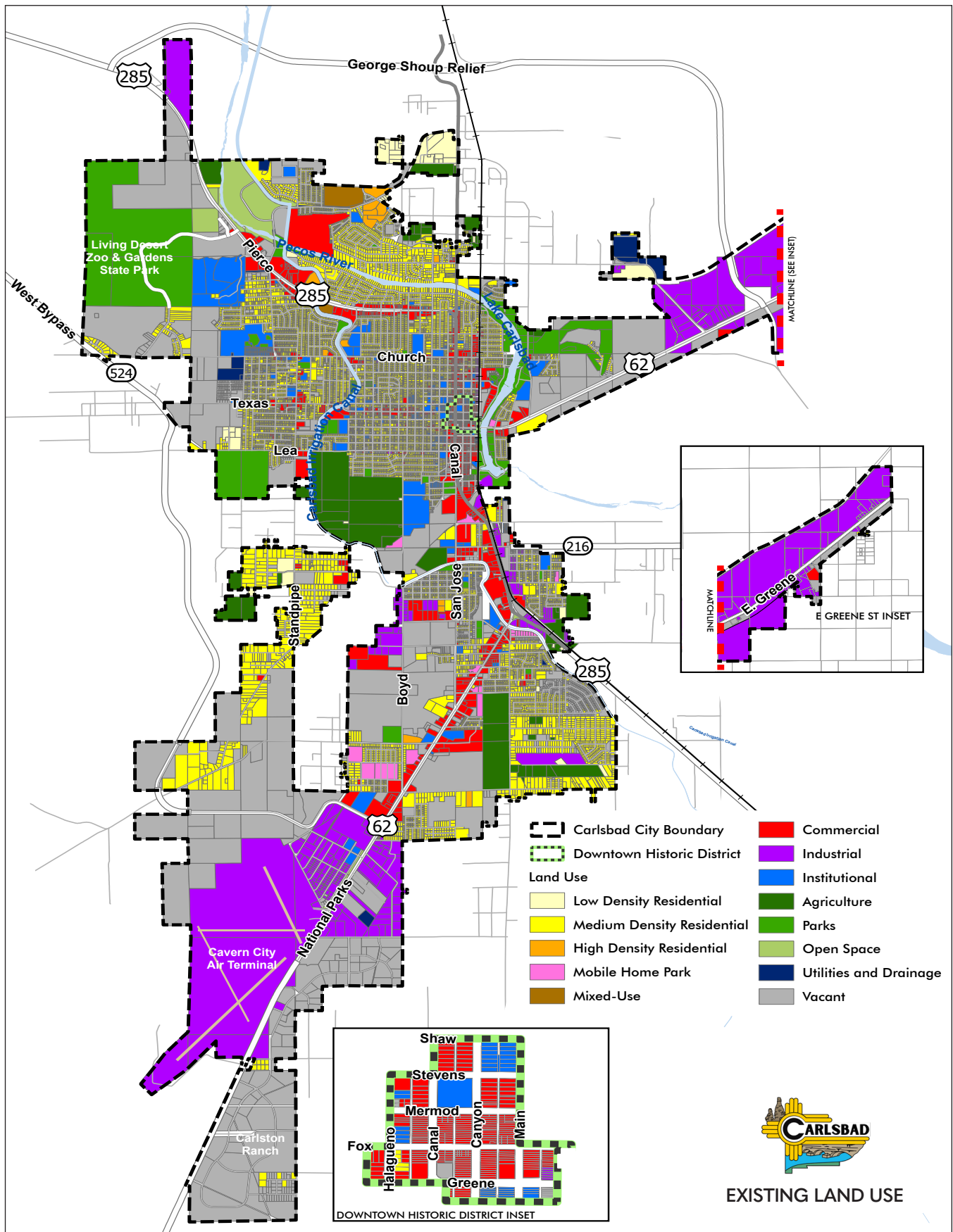
\*Excludes rights-of-way.

Commercial land in Carlsbad is located primarily along major roadway corridors, including Pierce Street, Canal Street, US 180, and within Downtown. Several other streets, including Mermod Street and Church Street, have a mixture of older commercial uses and residential uses mixed together.

Industrial land is primary located to the south along US 180 near the Cavern City Air Terminal and to the northeast along E. Greene Street/US 62/180. Areas to the northeast also include uses associated with oil and gas drilling and energy development.

Park land includes the Pecos River Riverwalk that stretches along both sides of the Riverfront adjacent to Downtown; the 146-acre Lake Carlsbad Golf Course in the northeast; and the 159-acre Youth Sports Complex along Lea Street to the west of Downtown. Smaller parks are found throughout residential neighborhoods. Open space areas within the City are within major drainage ways.

Two state agencies own land within Carlsbad, including the New Mexico State Parks Division (Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park) and the Bureau of Land Management owns land to the east of Living Desert.



## 5.2 LAND USE SUBAREAS

To better understand existing land use, development patterns, and potential areas for development, the consultant delineated seven geographic subareas in Carlsbad. Each of these land use subareas are described and illustrated on the following pages.

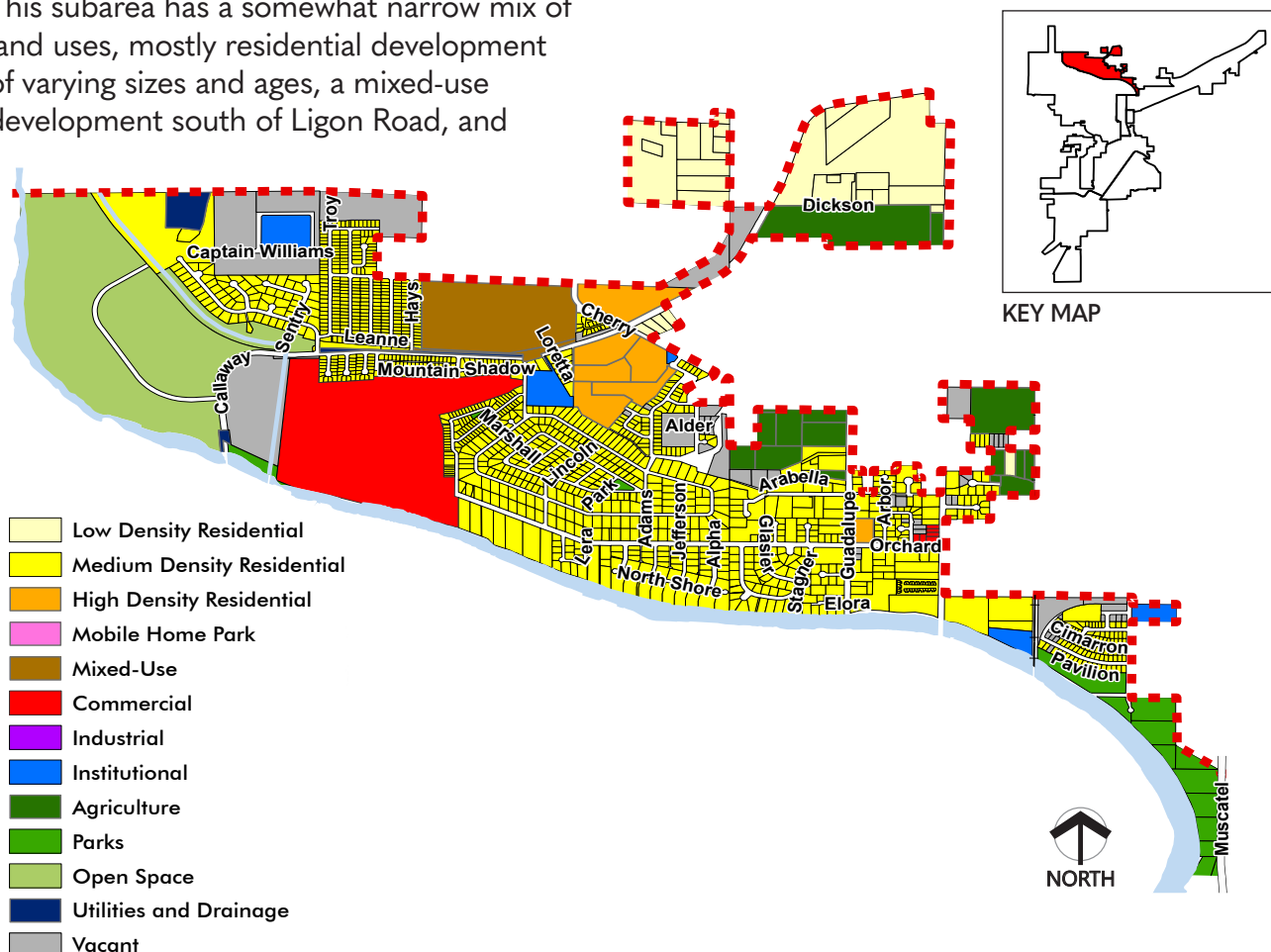
### NORTH CARLSBAD

The North Carlsbad subarea extends along the north and east side of the Pecos River for about four miles, from the north end in the neighborhood around the Ocotillo Elementary School down to the Pecos River Village Conference Center and the Playground on the Pecos. The Riverside Country Club is located between the Pecos River and Callaway Drive. A large area of open space sits north and west of Callaway Drive based on its hilly topography.

This subarea has a somewhat narrow mix of land uses, mostly residential development of varying sizes and ages, a mixed-use development south of Ligon Road, and

agriculture use. There is a concentrated area of multi-family residential use (Pecos Vista Apartments and Copperstone Apartments) at the intersection of Callaway Drive/Indian Road and Cherry Lane. There is very little commercial use within North Carlsbad.

North Carlsbad is a growing area of Carlsbad, with agriculture use being converted to single-family residential use in recent years, thus moving away from its former more rural character. Some of the new single-family and multi-family development is on the higher end of housing affordability. To the north of this subarea is the BLM land that the City of Carlsbad is pursuing for acquisition, annexation, and development of affordable housing and neighborhood commercial uses.



## NORTHWEST CARLSBAD

The Northwest Carlsbad subarea is bounded by the City limits to the north, west, and south, and the Pecos River to the northeast, and Halagueño Street and San Jose Boulevard to the east along the Downtown corridor. The area includes a wide range of residential and commercial development at different scales.

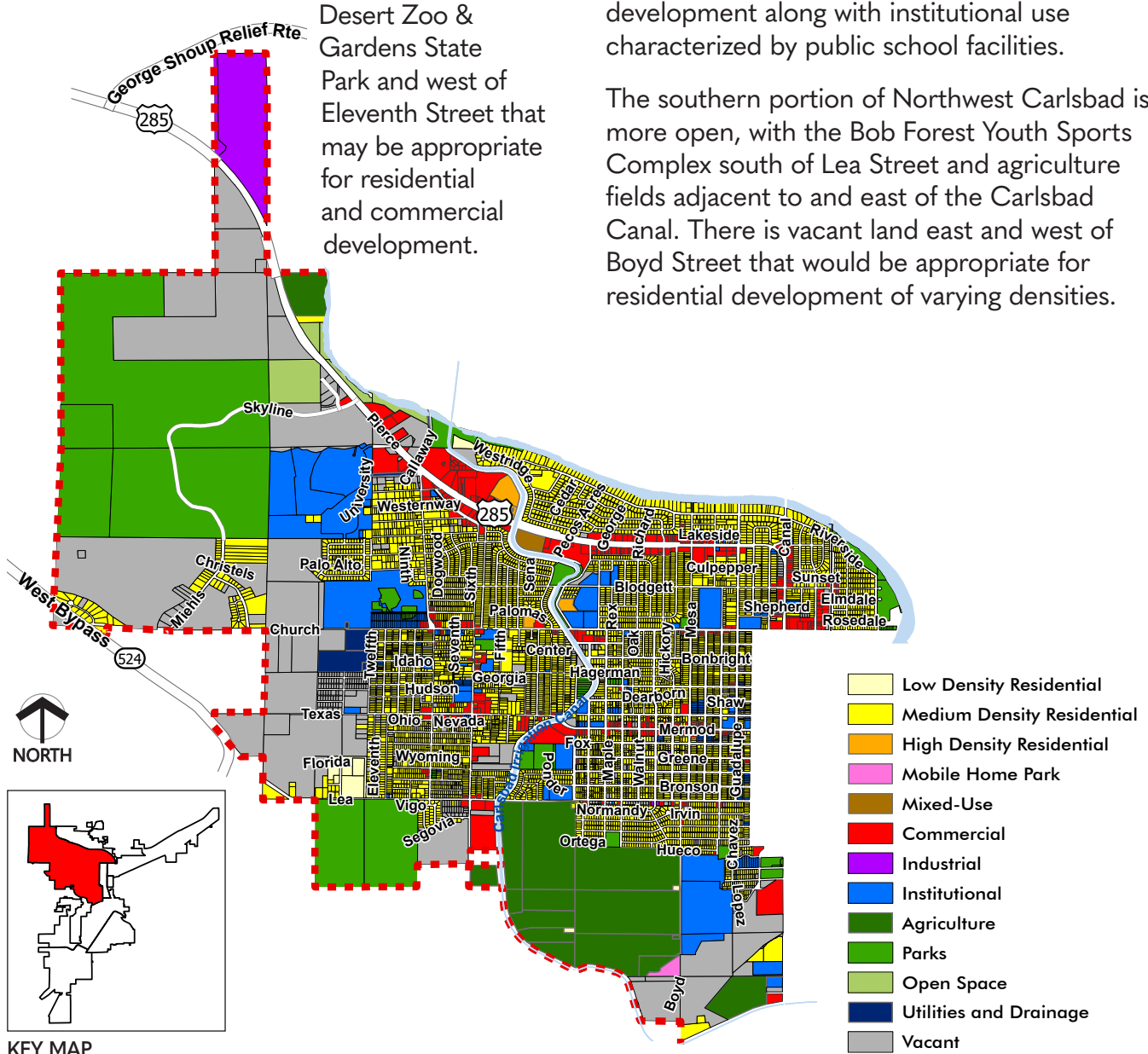
The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park tucked into the northwest, and retains the sparse, open nature of the surrounding hilly, undeveloped land. There is a significant amount of vacant land to the north and south of Living

Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park and west of Eleventh Street that may be appropriate for residential and commercial development.

Large commercial development is along the north end of US 285/Pierce Street, which transitions to smaller scale commercial development further south and east along Pierce Street. The smaller scale commercial development follows along US 285 turns south and becomes Canal Street. W. Church Street and W. Mermod Street are the two east-west commercial corridors.

Similar to Pierce Street, gridded streets of single-family residential use are outside the commercial corridors. Northwest Carlsbad contains most of the City's residential development along with institutional use characterized by public school facilities.

The southern portion of Northwest Carlsbad is more open, with the Bob Forest Youth Sports Complex south of Lea Street and agriculture fields adjacent to and east of the Carlsbad Canal. There is vacant land east and west of Boyd Street that would be appropriate for residential development of varying densities.



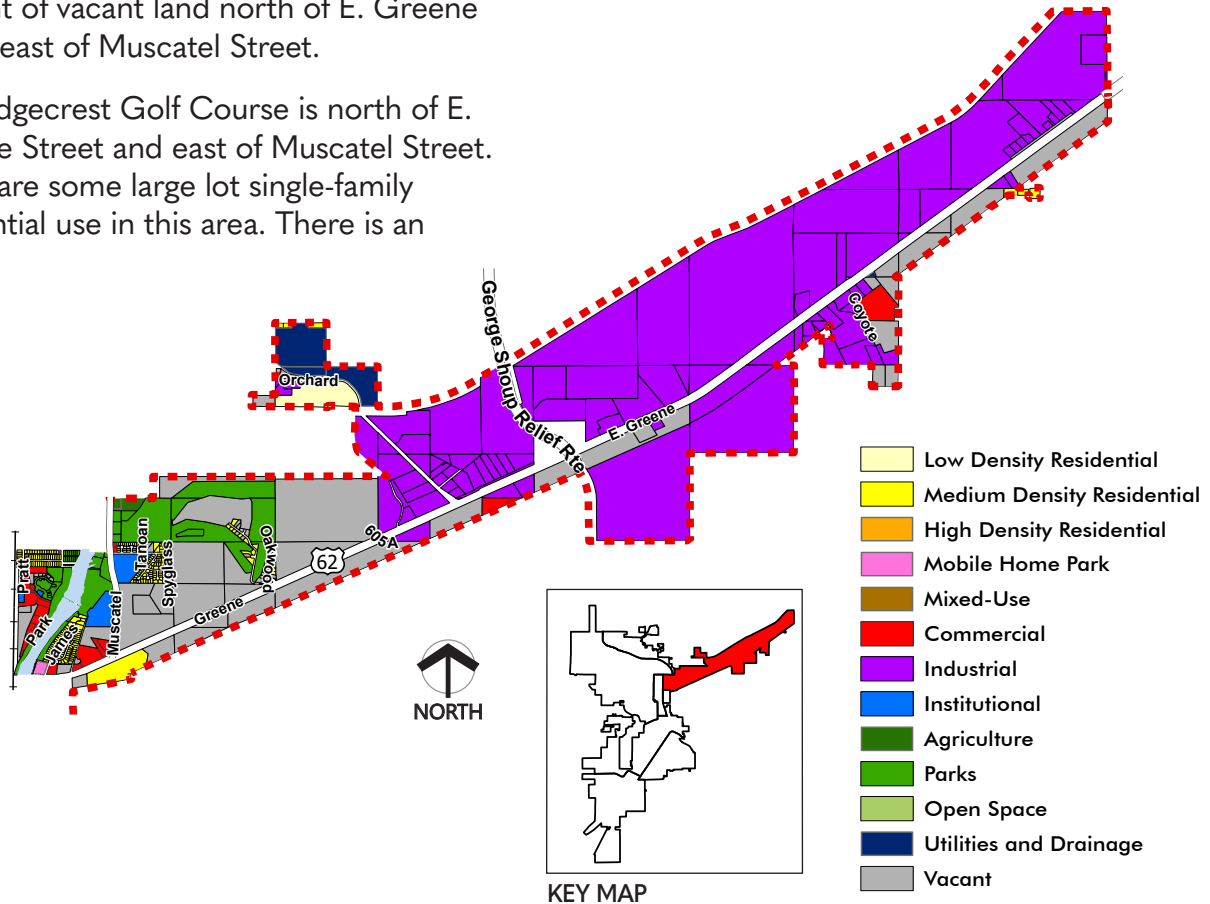
## NORTHEAST CARLSBAD

The East Carlsbad subarea runs along US 62/E. Greene Street/ Hobbs Highway for about five miles from the Pecos River, just east of the railroad. The subarea primarily contains large-scale industrial uses, with some vacant land along the south side of E. Greene Street, east of Coyote Street and west of the George Shoup Relief Route. There is also a significant amount of vacant land north of E. Greene Street east of Muscatel Street.

The Ridgecrest Golf Course is north of E. Greene Street and east of Muscatel Street. There are some large lot single-family residential use in this area. There is an

opportunity for infill residential development on all sides of the Ridgecrest Golf Course.

The vacant properties south of E. Greene Street and east of George Shoup Relief Route would be appropriate for additional industrial development if municipal services were extended to serve this area.



## DOWNTOWN CARLSBAD

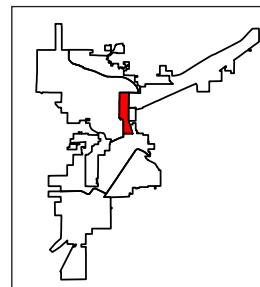
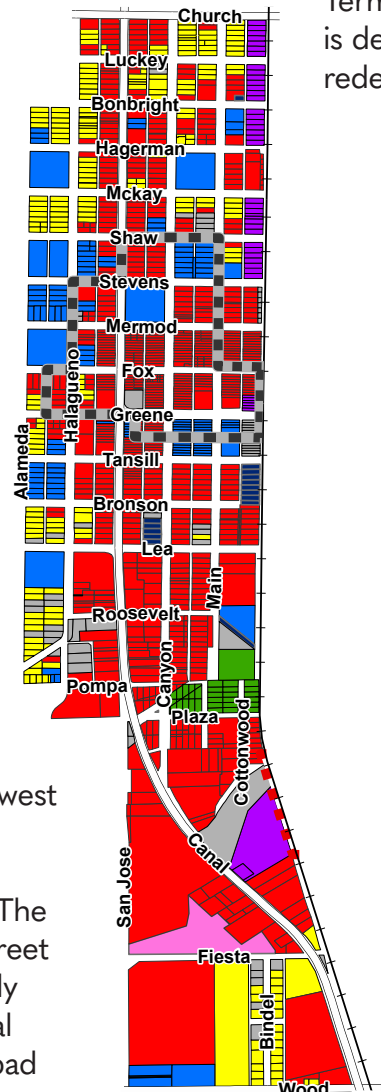
The Downtown Carlsbad subarea is bounded by Church Street on the north, Wood Street on the south, the railroad to the east, and Alameda Street to the west. Canal Street runs north-south through the center of the commercial core, carrying a heavy amount of traffic.

The majority of Downtown Carlsbad is commercial use. It also includes a concentration of institutional use on both sides of Canal Street. Carlsbad Municipal Building, Carlsbad Public Library, and Carlsbad Municipal Court are located on Halagueño Street. The Eddy County Courthouse is located on the east side of Canal Street; Eddy County Detention Center is located on the west side of Main Street; and the Eddy County Administrative Complex is on W. Greene Street.

The Historic District is within this subarea, which includes the historic Trinity Hotel and Restaurant at the southwest corner of Canal Street and Fox Street and the Cavern Theatre on Canyon Street. The properties along Canyon Street and Main Street are primarily office with some commercial retail use. Downtown Carlsbad would be well-suited for mixed-use development with

commercial use (i.e. restaurants, coffee shops, retail) on the ground floor and higher density residential use on upper floors. This would help bring more people into Downtown Carlsbad, create a more 24-hour environment, and help revitalize Downtown.

The Eddy County Detention Center, located behind the Cavern Theater, is planned for demolition by Eddy County and replacement with a new detention center on the south side of Carlsbad near the Cavern City Air Terminal. Once the existing Detention Center is demolished, the property will be available for redevelopment.



KEY MAP



## CENTRAL CARLSBAD

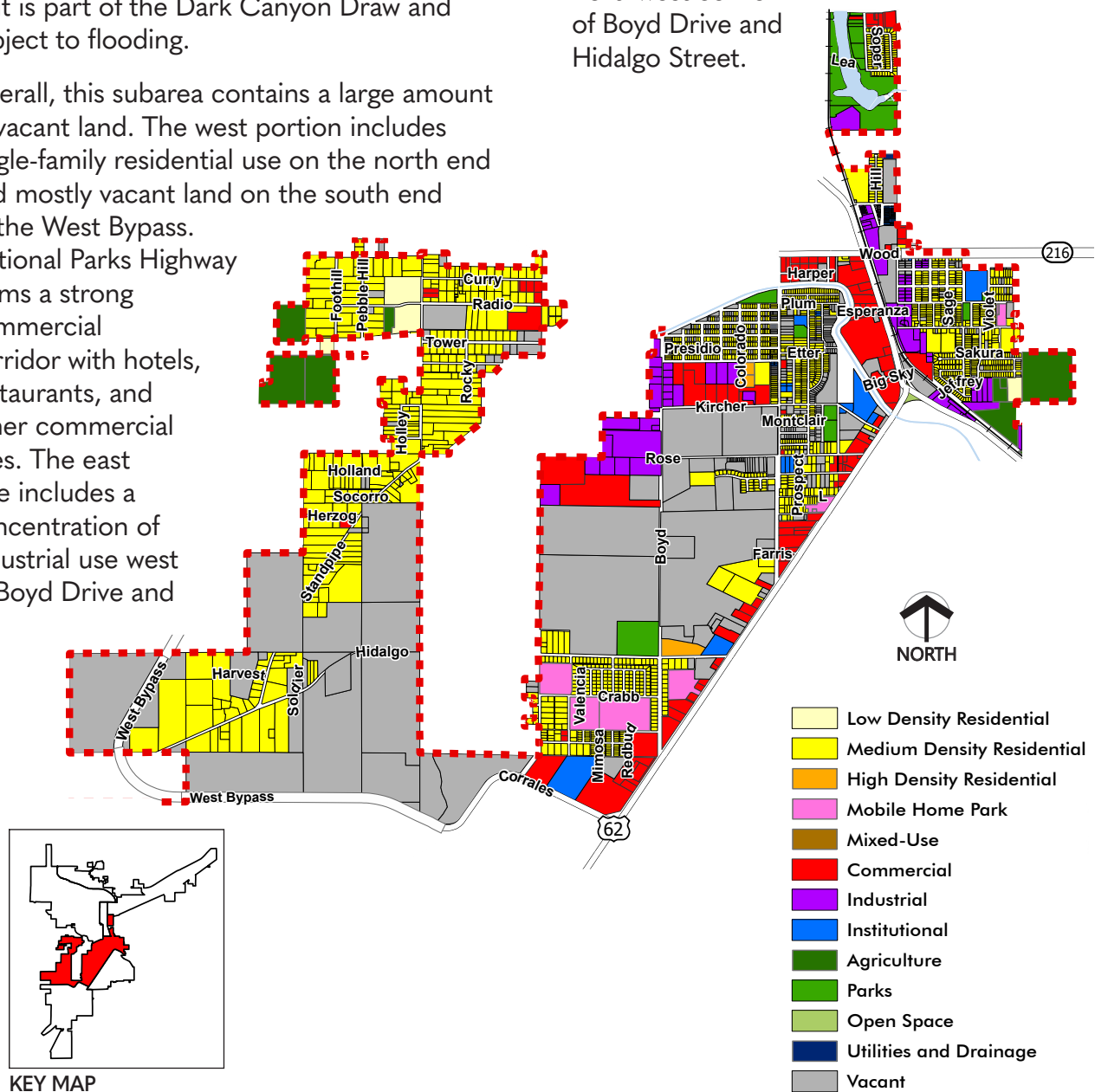
The Central Carlsbad subarea is roughly bounded by Wood Avenue/NM 216 and the municipal boundary on the north, Corrales Street and the West Bypass to the south, National Parks Highway/US 180/US 62 and Tulip Street to the east, and the municipal boundary to the west. A large unincorporated island of Eddy County running north-south splits this subarea into east and west areas. Some of the unincorporated area, as well as a portion of the vacant land southeast of Standpipe Road, is unsuitable for development as it is part of the Dark Canyon Draw and subject to flooding.

Overall, this subarea contains a large amount of vacant land. The west portion includes single-family residential use on the north end and mostly vacant land on the south end to the West Bypass.

National Parks Highway forms a strong commercial corridor with hotels, restaurants, and other commercial uses. The east side includes a concentration of industrial use west of Boyd Drive and

north of Kircher Street. There is potential for additional residential use of varying densities and commercial development in this area.

This area has a concentration of mobile home and RV parks south of Hidalgo and east and west of Boyd Drive. There is a small area multi-family residential use (Arrowstone Apartments) at the northeast corner of Boyd Drive and National Parks Highway. Park use surrounds the Lower Tansill Dam at the north end and there are other park uses further south, including the Carlsbad Softball Complex at the northwest corner of Boyd Drive and Hidalgo Street.



## EAST CENTRAL CARLSBAD

The Southeast Carlsbad subarea is bounded by National Parks Highway on the northwest, US 285 and the Canal to the northeast, and the municipal boundary formed by Airport Avenue and Chapman Road to the south. This subarea contains a significant portion of agriculture use and vacant land.

The frontage along National Parks Highway is comprised of commercial use, a small amount of single-family residential use, and a large area of vacant land, which provides an opportunity for new commercial use along the roadway and residential use to the east. The north portion area has a mix of old and new single-family residential use that has transitioned from agriculture

use. Since 2016, the Martin Farms subdivision on the east side replaced approximately 175 acres of agriculture land with new single-family residential use that is currently under construction. There is currently 200 acres of agriculture land of which approximately 40 acres will be developed for a new public school to support the growing community.

There are small areas of multi-family residential and mobile home and RV parks, which increase the housing density in this subarea. As new residential development continues in this subarea, an effort should be made to acquire and develop new neighborhood-scale parks to serve the residents.



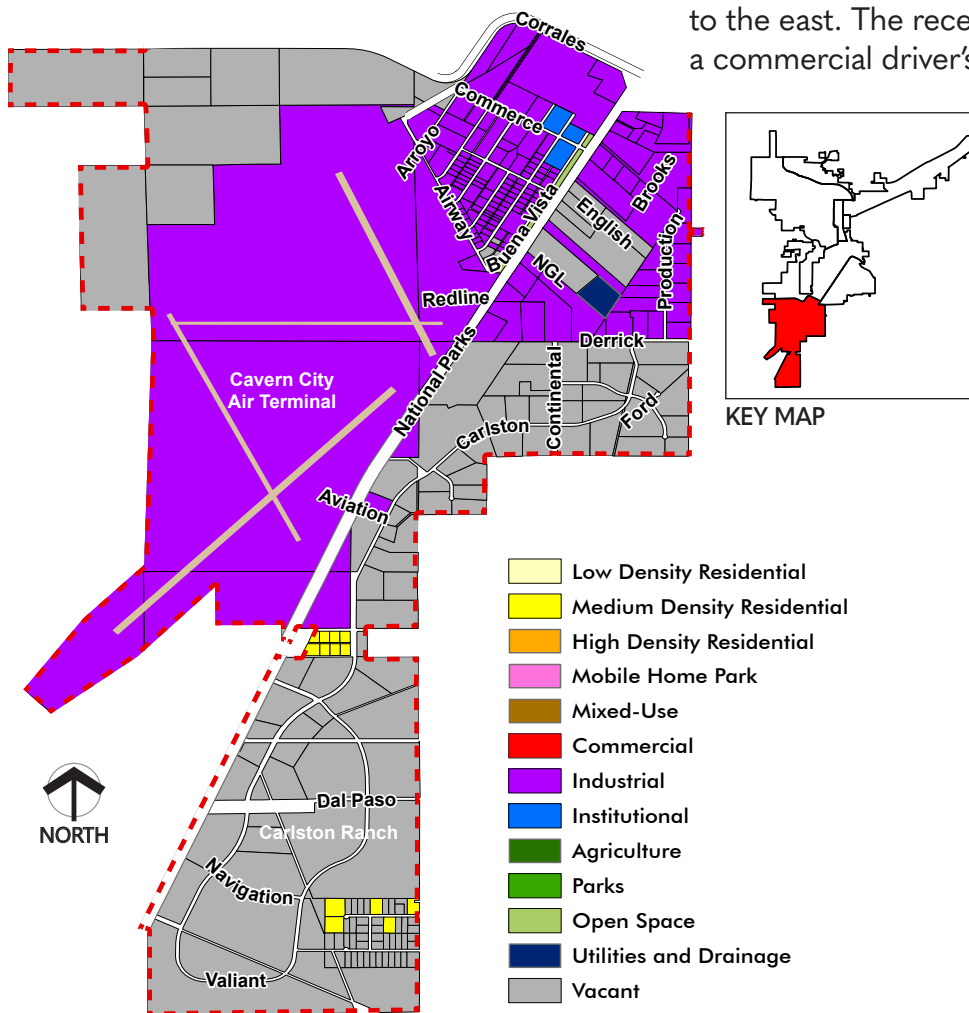
## SOUTH CARLSBAD

The South Carlsbad subarea is bounded by the West Bypass and Corrales Road to the north and the municipal boundary to the west, south, and east. It is dominated by industrial use and vacant land. The Cavern City Air Terminal accounts for a significant amount of the industrial use. Industrial and heavy commercial uses extend north along the west side of National Parks Highway to Corrales Road and along the east side from Derrick Road to Corrales Road.

In the center and to the north of the Cavern City Air Terminal is the Dark Canyon Draw, a

natural drainageway that is not suitable for development.

The majority of the vacant land on the east side of National Parks Highway and up to Derrick Road is Carlston Ranch, a master-planned community. The City of Carlsbad is in the process of expanding sewer infrastructure to support the development of Carlston Ranch. The Carlston Master Plan identifies a full range of land uses, residential densities, active adult, commercial, industrial, business park, elementary school, parks, and open space. Commercial and higher density uses will be located along the National Parks Highway as a buffer to the less intense residential use to the east. The recently constructed Coterra, a commercial driver's license (CDL) training center, is located within Carlston Ranch.



## 5.3 EXISTING ZONING

The City of Carlsbad's current Zoning Code (Chapter 56 in the City's Code of Ordinances) was adopted in 2011 and was amended in 2016 and 2017. The Zoning Code includes sections outlining the City's zoning districts, permissive and conditional uses, specific use requirements, parking and landscape requirements, administrative processes, and enforcement guidelines. The Code includes seven zoning districts, which are outlined below.

### RURAL RESIDENTIAL (R-R) DISTRICT

The Rural Residential District is intended to accommodate agricultural, ranching, and natural resource uses and very low-density residential uses, until other development and uses are appropriate. Residential development is limited to one primary residence per lot. Minimum lot sizes are 1-acre for parcels without access to City utilities and 10,890 square feet (1/4 acre) for lots with access to City utilities. The maximum allowed height is 40 feet. Rural Residential zones are primarily located on the edge of the City where existing low-density housing, farming, and open space lands are located. Approximately 38.9% of the City is zoned R-R, which limits the developable density of the City.

### RESIDENTIAL 1 (R-1) DISTRICT

The Residential 1 District is intended to accommodate moderate-density, single-family residential development and to protect single-family development from other uses (such as industrial uses). The R-1 District allows for a maximum of one primary residence per lot and does not allow accessory dwellings (such as granny flats). The minimum lot size is 6,000 square feet and the minimum lot width is 50 feet. Minimum setbacks are 30 feet in front (for new development) and 10 feet in the rear. The R-1 district is the primary zoning established for most residential neighborhoods

TABLE 5-2: ZONING DISTRICTS

Zoning District	Acres	Percent*
R-R: Rural Residential	7,021.3	38.9%
R-1: Residential	38.9%	15.1%
R-2: Residential	574.3	3.2%
C-1: Commercial	151.9	0.8%
C-2: Commercial	1656.7	9.2%
I: Industrial	4616.4	25.6%
PUD: Planned Unit Development	1,314.3	7.3%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>18,054.9</b>	<b>100%</b>

Note: Based on City of Carlsbad Zoning Layer, 2025.

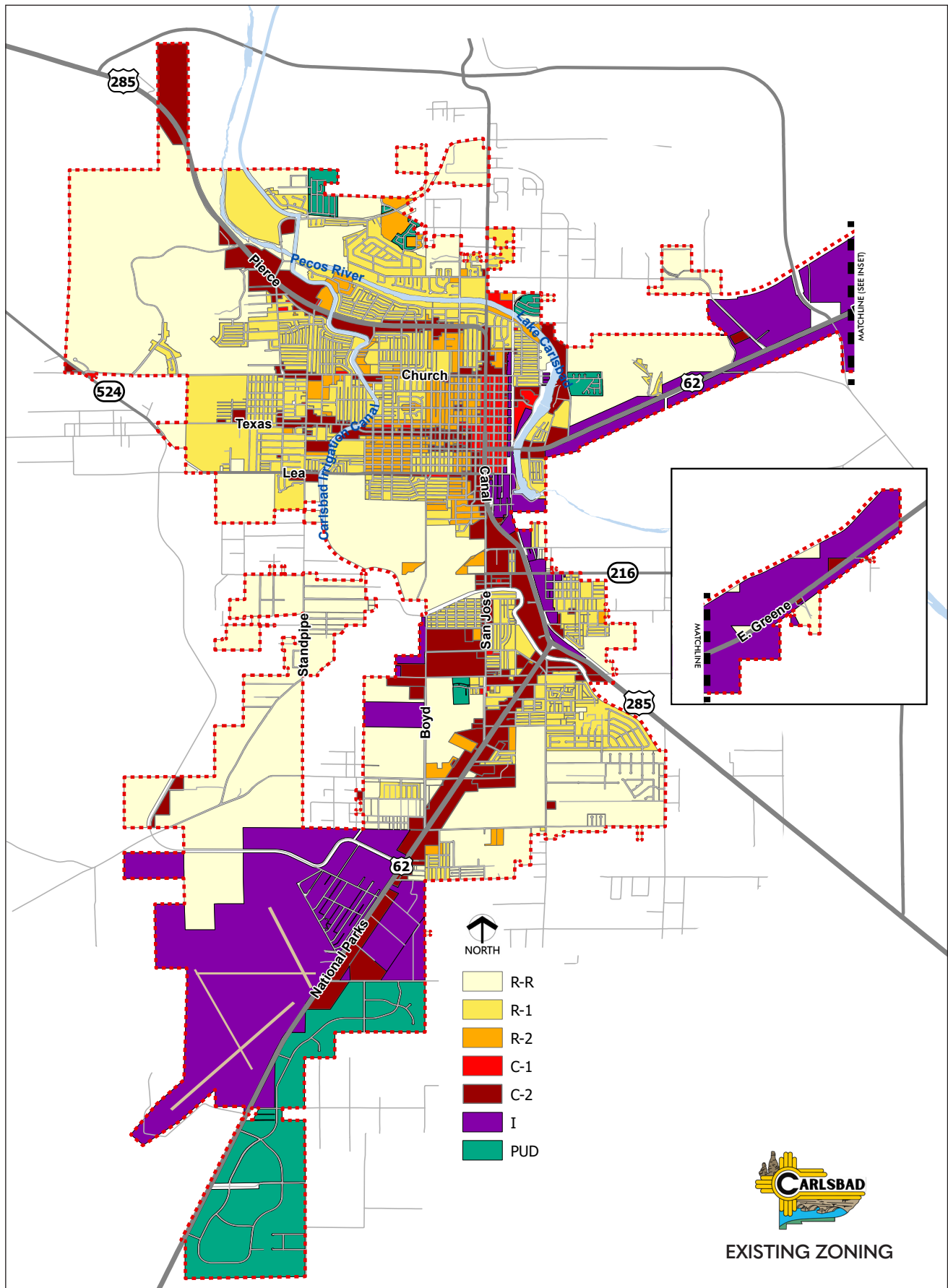
in Carlsbad and accounts for approximately 15.1% of zoned land.

### RESIDENTIAL 2 (R-2) DISTRICT

The Residential 2 District is intended to accommodate higher density single-family, duplex, multi-family, and mobile home parks. The minimum lot size in the R-2 District is 2,500 square feet and the maximum building height is 40 feet, which limits multi-family developments to three stories. The minimum lot width is 50 feet and there are no setback requirements except for a 10-foot setback in the rear. The R-2 District accounts for 3.2% of land in Carlsbad, which is a relatively low portion for a community that is looking to diversify its housing inventory.

### COMMERCIAL 1 (C-1) DISTRICT

The C-1 District is intended to accommodate neighborhood-scale retail, office, and customer service uses, and also allows for single-family and multi-family residential uses. C-1 zoning is intended to reduce adverse impacts on surrounding residential development and is located in Downtown Carlsbad, along segments of Church Street, and large segments of Canal Street. As with the R-2 district, the minimum lot size in the C-1 District is 2,500 square feet. The maximum allowed height is 50 feet, which would allow for the development of a four-story building. The C-1 District accounts for 0.8% of land in Carlsbad.



## COMMERCIAL 2 (C-2) DISTRICT

The Commercial 2 District is intended to accommodate community and regional-scale retail and commercial uses. This district allows for some residential development (primarily multi-family) as a conditional use. Commercial uses are regulated in order to be compatible with surrounding uses and existing infrastructure. Minimum lot sizes for the District are 2,500 square feet. C-2 zoning is located along the primary roadway corridors of the City, including US 180, Pierce Street, Texas Street, parts of Boyd Drive and Mermod Street. The C-2 District accounts for 9% of land in Carlsbad.

## INDUSTRIAL (I) DISTRICT

The Industrial District is intended to accommodate heavy and/or concentrated fabrication, production, research, manufacturing, and industrial uses. Industrial Districts are located to the east along Greene/ U.S. 180, in the Cavern City Air Terminal and Carlsbad Industrial Park, and along sections of the BNSF railroad. Industrial zoned land accounts for approximately 25% of land within the City.

## PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) DISTRICT

The Planned Unit Development District is intended to accommodate only uses that are allowed in other zoning districts, but to allow more innovative design, massing, orientation, and clustering in development patterns. The Carlston Ranch Master Plan Area is the primary PUD in Carlsbad, although the Fairway, Riverbend, and Spring Hollow subdivisions also have PUD zoning. Overall, PUD zoned land accounts for approximately 7% of the City.

## 5.4 OTHER DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

### SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

The City of Carlsbad reviews and approves subdivisions of land within its municipal limits. Subdivision regulations are contained within Chapter 47 of the City's Code of Ordinances and were last updated in 2013. The intent of the subdivision regulations is to provide for the orderly development of the City during the subdivision process. The subdivision regulations include requirements for streets, utilities, community facilities, drainage, open space, and land dedication to mitigate the impacts of private development. Design standards are provided for streets and sidewalks, block and lot sizes, grading and drainage, and utility easements. Subdivisions are reviewed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### PLANNING & PLATTING JURISDICTION

State law allows municipalities to establish an Extraterritorial Zone (ETZ) extending two miles from the municipal boundary. Within this area, cities may establish extraterritorial zoning districts to control the development of land that may be annexed into that city in the future. The City of Carlsbad unilaterally adopted zoning within its ETZ in 1977, which was allowed under state law at the time. The extraterritorial zoning had three zoning districts, but has since been repealed.

The City of Carlsbad's planning and platting jurisdiction (PPJ) extends to five miles outside the municipal limits. Within this five-mile radius, the City has subdivision and building permit review authority. The minimum lot size for subdivisions under Carlsbad's PPJ is one acre. Subdivisions of land located within both jurisdictions must be approved by both the City and County Planning Commissions.

## TEMPORARY USES

Due to the high demand for housing within Carlsbad, and the influx of workers for oil and gas industry jobs, the City has been issuing Temporary Use Permits to allow for the short-term operation (up to 10 years) of large RV parks and other temporary housing (Section 56-80). The City of Carlsbad defines temporary housing broadly as:

*“Housing for individuals or families, on a temporary basis, either in pre-fabricated, self-contained modular structures with other amenities, OR individual self-contained recreational vehicles, not including tents, truck campers or camper shells. Specifically for the purpose of this definition, Temporary Housing may also be referred to as crew-camp housing, work force housing, congregate residence or employee housing. Residents living within the temporary housing may be employed solely by one company, industry or project or may be employed by a variety of employers.”*

Further, the City defines self-contained temporary housing as:

*“Temporary Housing that does not require connection to city utilities, is served by an independent waste water and freshwater delivery service, and that includes sleeping, cooking, dining, toilet and shower facilities, contained within an individual RV or contained within individual or multiple modular structures.”*

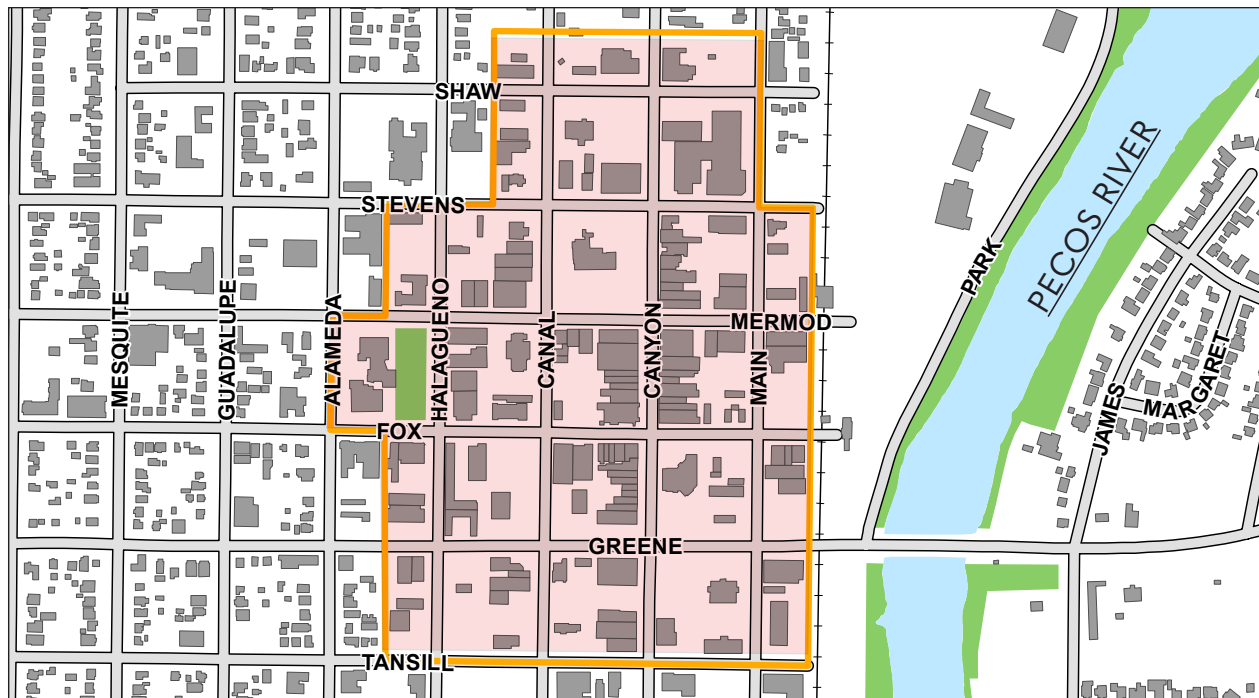
Temporary housing is currently only allowed in C-2 and R-R zoning districts on lots that are at least 2-acres in size. All housing is required to have access from an arterial street and must be connected to City water and sewer or be entirely self-contained. Housing must also be connected to the electrical service through the City’s utility provider. As a temporary use, permanent changes, such as long-term infrastructure development or site grading, are not allowed. Temporary Use Permit

holders currently pay lodgers’ taxes for the units housed on their properties; however, traditional property taxes are not assessed at the same rate as permanent housing.

Temporary Uses are approved by the Planning Director and forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission for recommendation to City Council. Once approved, Temporary Uses may be approved by City Council for a period of up to five years, and permits may be renewed for an additional five years if the Planning Director determines a need still exists for temporary housing in the City. Temporary Use Permits are also used for public events, garage and yard sales, parking lot sales, and temporary real estate sales offices.

## FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

Carlsbad’s Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (Chapter 8, Article 5) is designed to minimize the loss of life and property due to flood conditions. The City has three primary flood hazards: the Pecos River, Hackberry Draw, and the Dark Canyon Draw. All properties within regulatory floodplains, as determined by FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), are subject to the Ordinance. The Ordinance is enforced by the Floodplain Administrator, who ensures that building permits are only issued to projects within a floodplain if they comply with the required hazard reduction provisions and applicable state and federal permitting requirements.



Carlsbad Downtown Historic District.

## 5.5 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Downtown Carlsbad contains many historic buildings that were constructed between 1890 and 1960. In an effort to preserve and protect these buildings, the Downtown Historic District was designated in August 2009 on the State Register of Cultural Properties. The Downtown Historic District is bounded by Shaw Street on the north, Tansill Street on the south, railroad tracks on the east, and Alameda Street on the west. The District includes 93 structures, 57 of which were considered to be contributing historic structures.

The architecture and period of significance of Downtown Carlsbad is described in the application for registration on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties (Heather Barrett, 2007). The period of significance for the Carlsbad Downtown Historic District began in 1890 with the construction of the First National Bank of Eddy (now referred to as the Trinity building) and ended in 1964 when the Federal Building was enlarged and remodeled by Arthur Gorrell. Some of the buildings within

the Historic District boundary were updated in the 1950s and 1960s, but most retain an appropriate scale and architectural details that contribute to the District. Buildings range from one to three stories and are mostly constructed of brick. Architectural styles include the Decorative Brick Commercial style, Art Deco, and a large sample of period revival styles, such as early 20th Century Mission, Pueblo, and Spanish-Colonial Revival. The Historic District also includes a distinctive example of armory architecture with its medieval crenellated parapet and crests.

The Trinity Hotel, located at 201 South Canal Street, was built in 1890 by E. Krause and contractors Caple and Hammer as the First National Bank. The building simultaneously housed local offices of the Pecos Irrigation & Improvement Company, Pecos Valley Railway, Pecos Valley Town Company, and the First National Bank of Eddy. The two-story brick building was later used as the headquarters for the Carlsbad Irrigation District for nearly a century. The building was purchased in 2007 and now serves as a boutique hotel

TABLE 5.3: REGISTERED HISTORIC PROPERTIES IN CARLSBAD

Property	Location	State Register	National Register
Armandine, Col. Etienne Bujac Estate	1301 N. Canal Street	9/18/1998	5/29/2003
Carlsbad Downtown Historic District	Boundaries: Stevens Street (north), Greene Street (south), Main Street (west), Halagueño Street (east)	8/14/2009	NA
Carlsbad Reclamation Project			
National Historic Landmark	McMillan Dam and Reservoir (Artesia); Avalon Dam and Reservoir; right-of-way and major engineering features of the project's Main, East Side, and Black River Canal; and First National Bank of Eddy building	-	10/15/1966
Dam- Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area	742 Sitting Bull Falls Road	7/16/1999	12/12/1993
Eddy & Bissell Livestock Company Headquarters	<sup>1</sup>	5/18/1973	-
Eddy County Courthouse	102 N. Canal Street	5/9/1986	-
Eddy National Bank (Trinity Hotel)	201 S. Canal Street	3/1/1971	12/12/1976
Group Picnic Shelter Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area	742 Sitting Bull Falls Road	7/16/1999	12/12/1993
J.J. Hagerman House	112 W. Hagerman Street	9/24/1976	-
Lake Avalon	Lake Avalon	1/20/1978	-
Lusk Ranch Site	<sup>1</sup>	3/20/1970	-
Phenix Adobe	<sup>1</sup>	9/24/1979	-
Picnic Shelter- Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area	742 Sitting Bull Falls Road	7/16/1999	12/12/1993
Pope's Well Site	<sup>1</sup>	3/13/1972	-
Public Works of the CCC in Lincoln National Forest	<sup>1</sup>		
Robert and Mary Tansill House	1612 N. Guadalupe Street	6/2/2002	10/10/2002

Source: New Mexico State Historic Preservation Office.

<sup>1</sup>The physical location of these cultural resources were not disclosed.

and restaurant. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in December 1976 under the name Eddy National Bank. The building is one of the most substantial examples of 19th century commercial architecture in Carlsbad.

The Cavern Theatre is one of the last historically significant structures to be constructed within the District. The Theater opened in 1951 and closed in the 1990s, but has been used for musical performances and other entertainment events. After sitting vacant for years, restoration is currently underway that will accommodate regular film and live performances. The iconic marquee sign has also been refurbished. The original

Cavern Theatre on South Canyon Street, a Spanish-Colonial two-story building with stucco exterior, is now used for retail purposes.

The Carlsbad Irrigation District was designated as a National Historic Landmark in October 1966 for the innovative reclamation system. The project represents the historical evolution of western American reclamation activity, engineering, and policy. The Irrigation District allowed for the population of Carlsbad to expand, diverting water from the Pecos River and the Black River to local residents and farmers. The historic Irrigation District includes dams, reservoirs, and primary canals that were most integral to the operating system and display a high level of historic integrity,

including the Avalon Dam. It also includes the Eddy National Bank Building. The Irrigation District is now managed by the United States Bureau of Reclamation. The infrastructure currently provides irrigation water to Carlsbad and surrounding areas.

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY

The City of Carlsbad's Historic District was established after its application to the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 2007. In 2023, the City adopted Ordinance 2023-31, which established the City's Historic Preservation Overlay Zone and a five-member Historic Preservation Advisory Board. The Board is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council and Planning Commission on the designation, protection, retention, and preservation of historic areas and sites within Carlsbad.

The *Historic Preservation Ordinance* mandates procedures concerning the exterior alteration or possible demolition of designated structures via a certificate prior to work being performed on a designated building within the Historic Preservation Overlay (HP-O). The certificate is required for building facades but is not required for ordinary maintenance and repair on a building's interior features. Owners work with the Planning Department and the Advisory Board to obtain a *Historic Property Alteration Certificate*, for which the owner must meet the following conditions as certified by the Historic Preservation Board:

- ◀ The proposed work will preserve, enhance or restore the building and shall not damage or destroy the significant features of the resource as identified in the nomination for designation; and
- ◀ The work will be compatible with the relevant historic, cultural or architectural qualities or characteristics of the structure.

Relevant elements include but are not limited to "size, scale, massing, proportions,

orientation, materials, surface textures, patterns, details and embellishments and the relation of these elements to one another."

The Historic District is roughly bounded by Stevens Street on the north, Main Street on the east, Greene Street on the south, and Halagueño Street on the west. It was expanded to Tansill Street on the south and a westernmost portion extends beyond Halagueño Street to Alameda Street on the west (see *Historic District map*, page 64).

## 5.6 LAND USE ISSUES

The primary land use issues identified during meetings with City staff, officials, and residents included the urgent need to construct more permanent housing in the City to support the influx of new workers, as well as a need to improve code enforcement efforts to address ongoing issues with illegal and/or non-conforming uses, particularly condemnations. These issues are discussed in more detail below.

### RAPID GROWTH

As discussed in Chapter 3: Community Profile, Carlsbad continues to experience a relatively high rate of growth, which puts pressure on the City to address the impacts of this growth, including alleviating traffic congestion, allowing for temporary housing, supporting new housing development, and providing an adequate level of City services. This growth has also changed the character of the City, leading to more residents who feel the small-town vibe and history have been negatively altered.

The increase in population also has large-scale implications for land use. The City of Carlsbad must weigh the costs and the benefits in trying to accommodate this growth by either steering development to areas that are currently served by or adjacent to existing infrastructure, or by investing in areas that are not currently served with infrastructure.

Carlsbad is fortunate to have a large amount of vacant land within the City and adjacent to the City that can be developed to accommodate this additional growth. Land use strategies can help to ensure that ongoing growth does not continue to overwhelm Carlsbad. The Future Land Use Scenario illustrates a multitude of areas that are currently vacant and would be appropriate for new residential development (see pages 71-72).

The supply of new housing is struggling to keep pace with demand. This is due to a combination of factors that include both the rapid pace of growth, as well as a lack of development-ready sites within Carlsbad that can support larger subdivisions with adequate infrastructure. In addition, developers have been hesitant to construct a large amount of new permanent housing due to the temporary nature of many jobs, which could lead to a sudden fall in demand if these jobs move elsewhere (see *Chapter 4 Housing and Neighborhoods for more information on these issues*).

The housing shortage has also led to issues with overcrowding of existing homes, as residences are rented out to more and more workers sharing one home. Overcrowding of homes has also led to parking issues in some neighborhoods that are overrun with too many cars competing for limited on-street parking.

## HOUSING SUPPLY & DEMAND

Although there have been several areas that have been planned and subdivided for new development in recent years, the supply of new housing is struggling to keep pace with demand. This is due to a combination of factors that include both the rapid pace of growth, as well as a lack of development-ready sites within Carlsbad that can support larger subdivisions with adequate infrastructure. In addition, developers have been hesitant to construct a large amount of new permanent housing due to the temporary nature of many

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The housing shortage has also led to issues with overcrowding of existing homes, as residences are rented out to more and more workers sharing one home. Overcrowding of homes has also led to parking issues in some neighborhoods that are overrun with too many cars competing for limited on-street parking.

## TEMPORARY HOUSING & RV PARKS

The lack of permanent housing has led to the development of several dozen temporary, modular housing (“man-camps”) and RV camps that have grown in the last several years to meet housing demand. These sites are primarily located in areas south of Downtown, primarily San Jose Boulevard and Boyd Drive. Many of these are operated under Temporary Use Permits described above, which are designed to expire after five years, although many are approved for an additional five years because the demand for housing has not diminished.

## ZONING RESTRICTIONS & DENSITY

The City’s Zoning Code limits the maximum density of multi-family developments to approximately 17 dwelling units per acre (DU/acre), which is a lower density than typically allowed for multi-family development. Allowing for higher densities in the R-2 and C-1 zones (up to 30 DU/acre) would increase the type and scale of multi-family development that can be constructed in Carlsbad and meet the current need for several thousand additional housing units.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

Code enforcement is an issue throughout Carlsbad. Currently, the City has four code enforcement officer positions, and is considering adding a fifth position. The importance of having adequate code

enforcement staff will help to alleviate many of the following issues that affect public safety:

- ◀ Excess of weeds and debris
- ◀ Building issues requiring the securing of the structure/removal of ruins
- ◀ Illegal food trucks operating without a permit and food trucks that operate in a permanent location although they are technically “mobile”
- ◀ Un-permitted modification of homes to increase the number of bedrooms and/or number of residents living in each home
- ◀ Fire safety issues
- ◀ Illegal accessory dwelling units in R-1 zones
- ◀ Businesses operating without valid local business licenses, which reduces tax revenue
- ◀ Potentially large numbers of non-conforming or non-compliant uses that have not been reported or there is insufficient staff capacity to inspect

## COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

Although Carlsbad has many thriving local businesses and a large amount of land devoted to heavy commercial and light industrial uses, many new retail and services businesses are limited to the Pierce Street corridor. This roadway has experienced most of the recent commercial development, while other commercial corridors in the City have experienced disinvestment. Creating more opportunities and locations for commercial retail development in the City is both a short- and long-term need.

In addition, the redevelopment of older commercial corridors, including Mermod Street, Church Street, and streets in Downtown, could create additional opportunities to support local commercial service and retail businesses. The primary issues with redevelopment of these areas

include outdated buildings and infrastructure, and insufficient parking. One way the City can enable and incentivize redevelopment is to adopt Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs). Adopting an MRA would allow the City to contribute assets, such as land, financial resources, or infrastructure, to private development projects in key areas.

## 5.7 GROWTH & ANNEXATION

As discussed in the Chapter 3 Community Profile, Carlsbad grew slowly until about 2010, and then experienced rapid population growth. This growth is reflected in the City’s development pattern, which includes a large core area centered on the neighborhoods east of Downtown and south of the Pecos River. New development has occurred to the south along US 180 towards Carlsbad Caverns and along US 285 towards the Village of Loving. Additional growth has occurred to the north of the Pecos River, along Callaway Drive, and within unincorporated areas adjacent to the City limits.

### PREVIOUS ANNEXATIONS

Since the 1950’s, the City of Carlsbad has annexed large amounts of land extending southward along US 180 and US 285, and northeast along US 180 from the original core neighborhoods to the west of the Pecos River. These annexations have resulted in some parts of Carlsbad being disconnected from primary roadway corridors and infrastructure development. Most notably, the area adjacent to Standpipe Road remains an “island” within the City limits that is surrounded by unincorporated land in Eddy County. Annexation in this area preceded the development of adequate public infrastructure, resulting in an area that is under-served by utilities and disconnected from the City’s primary street network.

The City has annexed several larger areas for new development, most notably, the 1,232-acre Carlston Ranch Master Plan area to the southeast of the Cavern City Air Terminal. Other annexations larger than 10-acres since 2020 include:

- ◀ 71.4 acres north of Union Street
- ◀ 89.9 acres southwest of South Canal/Pecos Highway for the Martin Farms Subdivision
- ◀ 21.8 acres between E. Cherry Street and E. Peach Lane

## PLANNED ANNEXATION

Starting in 2024, the City of Carlsbad has been in the planning phase to acquire approximately 500 acres of land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the purpose of creating new housing. The property is situated to the north of the current City boundary and up to George Shoup Relief Route within a larger area identified for annexation in the 2020 *Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan*. The City of Carlsbad is planning to be the master developer responsible for designing and constructing the major roadway network and utilities to serve the annexation area. The goal is to create affordable single-family and multi-family residential development at a reduced housing price point for future residents. The majority of the dwelling units will be single-family residential and will include some multi-family residential development along with neighborhood parks, neighborhood-scale commercial development, and a limited amount of industrial development adjacent to George Shoup Relief Route at the north edge of the project.

The City engaged a consultant to create a land use plan for the 500-acre annexation area. The land use categories include single-family low density residential; single-family medium density residential; high density residential; commercial; RV storage; industrial; park; and greenway. The land use plan shows a yield of

approximately 2,537 dwelling units. A frontage road is shown adjacent to George Shoup Relief Route.

The City's ICIP lists infrastructure extensions and a public safety facility (police and fire services) to serve the future annexation area. Once the City purchases the property from the BLM, the City will reengage with the planning consultant to create a master plan that addresses land use, major roadway network, grading and drainage, water and sewer infrastructure, development standards, preservation of cultural resources, and phasing.

## ANNEXATION LEGISLATION

Municipalities in the State of New Mexico are granted the authority to annex territory from Section 3, Article 7 of the New Mexico State statutes. Pursuant to this section, there are three methods available to municipalities seeking to expand its regulatory and taxing authority to adjacent unincorporated land. Annexation can be used as a growth management tool to ensure that land use and development standards in adjoining areas are consistent with land use within the municipality, as well as with the goals and objectives of the community as expressed in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Areas to be considered for annexation must be contiguous with the municipal boundary and the municipality must be able to demonstrate the ability to provide services.

Each of the following three methods is based on specific goals and illustrates different degrees of legislative delegation of power to municipalities:

1. **Arbitration Method (Sections 3-7-5 through 3-7010 NMSA 1978):** This method allows a municipality to annex contiguous territory if the municipality can declare that the benefits of annexation can be made within a reasonable time frame to the desired territory.

2. **Municipal Boundary Commission Method (Sections 3-7-11 through 3-7-16 NMSA 1978):** This method establishes an independent commission to determine annexation of a territory to the municipality. The Municipal Boundary Commission will meet whenever a municipality petitions to annex a territory or if a majority of the landowners of a territory petition the Commission to annex the territory into the municipality.
3. **Petition Method (Section 3-7-17, NMSA 1978):** This method requires a petition signed by the majority of property owners in a contiguous territory supporting annexation into a municipality.

## 5.8 FUTURE LAND USE SCENARIO

The Future Land Use Scenario provides the vision for how the City of Carlsbad would like growth and development to occur in the next 20 years. It responds to the existing conditions and issues identified by stakeholders and illustrates the community's preferences expressed during the public engagement process. Most importantly, the Future Land Use Scenario takes a pro-active approach to addressing the demand for new housing by identifying new areas appropriate for residential development and commercial areas to serve those residential uses.

The existing land use and existing zoning provided the starting point for creating the Future Land Use Scenario. Preferred land uses are identified for the large portion of vacant land (30.7%) within the existing municipal boundary and other areas that are appropriate for annexation. New school, park, and commercial areas envisioned to serve residents are shown in close proximity to neighborhoods in an effort to provide a more equitable distribution of services.

Overall, the Future Land Use Scenario illustrates a strong, pro-growth strategy that includes infill of existing vacant land and annexation of properties that together would provide the needed areas to accommodate the new residents and growth projected to occur in Carlsbad by 2045. Table 5.3 provides a list of existing land uses that are identified as a percentage of the total land use area and their relative percentage of the overall Future Land Use Scenario, including the annexation areas.

### SCENARIO FEATURES

#### LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL USE

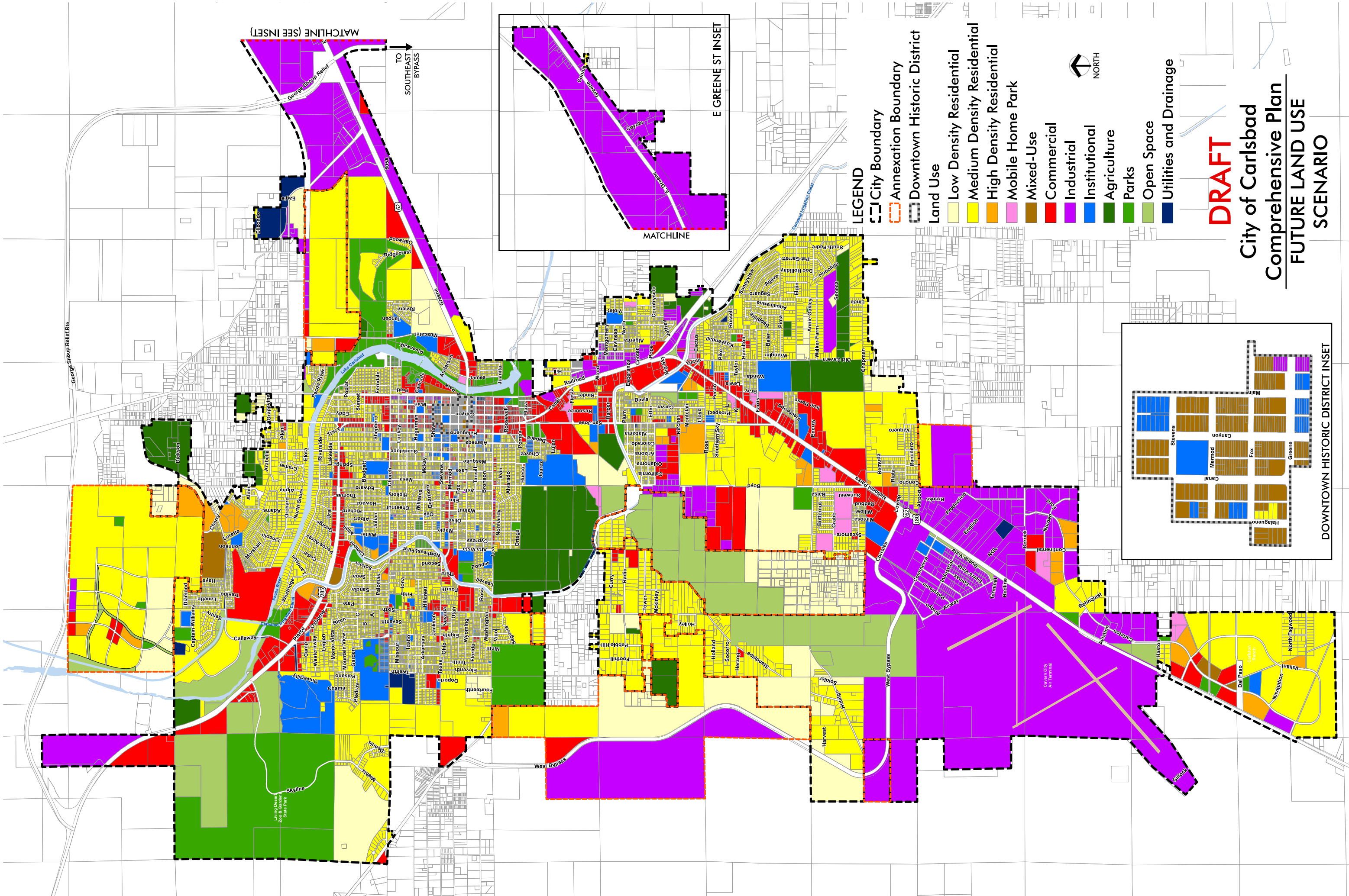
Low density residential use primarily occurs within existing large lot development areas to the north, northwest, and west that are lacking in services. Existing low density residential use represents approximately 1.3% (249.8 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, low density residential use increases to 8.1% (1,784.7 acres).

#### MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL USE

Medium density residential represents the typical single-family residential lot in Carlsbad. This use is envisioned to occur on existing vacant properties throughout the City. Existing medium density residential use represents approximately 20.4% (3,745.5 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, medium density residential increases to 33.2% (7,294.0 acres).

#### HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL USE

High density residential use includes apartments, townhouses, and duplexes. An increased share of high density residential use is envisioned to provide more options for affordable, workforce, and market rate rental housing. Existing high density residential use represents approximately .05% (87.2 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, high density residential increases to 1.6% (356.0 acres).



MATCHLINE (SEE INSET)

TO  
SOUTHEAST  
BYPASS

E GREENE ST INSET

MATCHLINE

LEGEND

City Boundary

Annexation Boundary

Downtown Historic District

Land Use

Low Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

High Density Residential

Mobile Home Park

Mixed-Use

Commercial

Industrial

Institutional

Agriculture

Parks

Open Space

Utilities and Drainage



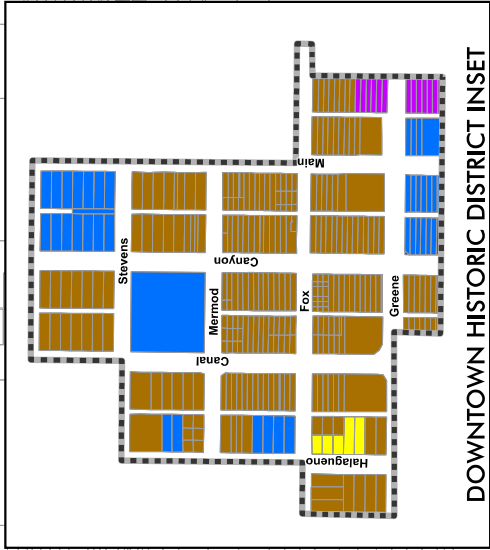
DRAFT

City of Carlsbad

Comprehensive Plan

FUTURE LAND USE

SCENARIO



DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT INSET



TABLE 5.1: EXISTING &amp; FUTURE LAND USE

Land Use	Existing Land Use		Future Land Use	
	Acres	% Share	Acres	% Share
Low Density Residential	240.8	1.3%	1,784.7	8.1%
Medium Density Residential	3,745.5	20.4%	7,294.0	33.2%
High Density Residential	872	0.5%	356.0	1.6%
Mobile Home Park	104.3	0.6%	145.6	0.7%
Mixed-Use	578	0.3%	106.3	0.5%
Commercial	1,031.6	5.6%	1,625.9	7.4%
Industrial	4,133.2	22.6%	6,042.2	27.5%
Institutional	621.4	3.4%	668.2	3.0%
Agriculture	942.4	5.1%	938.9	4.3%
Park	1,375.9	7.5%	1,446.2	6.6%
Open Space	249.0	1.4%	1,439.4	6.6%
Utilities and Drainage	122.2	0.7%	122.2	0.6%
Vacant	5,607.8	30.6%	-	-
<b>Total*</b>	<b>18,319.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>21,969.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Annexation Total			3,797.5*	

\*Includes 1472 acres of rights-of-way.

### MIXED-USE

Mixed-use is an efficient and convenient development approach that combines residential use with non-residential use, typically neighborhood-scale in size and intensity that is designed to serve neighborhood residents. Existing mixed-use is 0.3% (578 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, mixed-use increases to 0.5% (106.3 acres). Additional mixed-use development would also be appropriate for other areas currently identified in the Future Land Use Scenario for medium or high density residential uses.

### COMMERCIAL USE

An increased share of commercial use is intended to better meet the commercial retail and service needs of the Carlsbad community. Existing commercial use represents approximately 4.4% (921.5 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, commercial use increases to 6.9% (1,515.7 acres).

### INDUSTRIAL USE

Industrial use is shown in appropriate locations within and around the Cavern City Air Terminal and along the West Bypass,

Derrick Road, and E. Greene Street. Existing industrial use represents approximately 22.6% (4,133.2 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, industrial use increases to 27.5% (6,042.2 acres).

### PARK USE

Park use includes typical municipal park facilities - neighborhood, community, and regional parks - and the public golf course. It also includes the Living Desert and Gardens State Park (783 acres) and private park facilities (24 acres). As the City continues to grow in area and population, it is important to maintain a high level of service delivery for this quality of life land use. Existing park

use represents 7.5% (1,375.9 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, park use increases to 6.6% (1,446.2 acres).

### OPEN SPACE

Open space provides outdoor recreation opportunities, expansive views, and visual relief from development. Existing open space represents 1.4% (249.0 acres) of Carlsbad; under the Future Land Use Scenario, open space increases to 6.6% (1,439.4 acres). This use is primarily within Dark Canyon Draw in the center of the Carlsbad from the Carlsbad Irrigation Canal to West Bypass.

### PREFERRED ANNEXATIONS

As illustrated on the Future Land Use Scenario and the Future Annexations map (see page 75), the City of Carlsbad would potentially annex a total of 3,797.5 acres (including 1472 acres of rights-of-way) within the unincorporated area of Eddy County. The annexations are comprised of seven separate areas that could be broken into smaller areas, depending on the preference of the City and the property owners. The annexation strategy places a strong emphasis on growing the City of Carlsbad to the north of the existing municipal

boundary because growth is already occurring in North Carlsbad.

Specific time frames for the annexations to occur have not been predetermined, rather, it is generally assumed that they would take place within the next 10-15 years. The intent is that each annexation area will be evaluated based on a cost-benefit analysis and an infrastructure capacity analysis to ensure the City of Carlsbad is able to provide utilities and other municipal services in a cost efficient manner. It should be noted that the annexation areas are not listed in order of priority or preference, and should be phased in accordance with the ability to serve those areas and in concurrence with the property owner.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 1**

Annexation Area 1 is approximately 1,039.5 acres and located between the north municipal boundary and George Shoup Relief Route and between the Pecos River and Canal Street. Approximately 500 acres is owned by the BLM and the City of Carlsbad is currently working on acquiring the property, and subsequently, will complete engineering studies to determine how to serve the area with utilities and roadways. The annexation area also includes an additional 500 acres to the east of the land the City is pursuing for acquisition. The intent is to provide a range of residential densities for the development of affordable housing, neighborhood commercial and parks to serve the future residents, and a small amount of industrial use adjacent to George Shoup Relief Route.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 2**

This annexation area is approximately 379.1 acres and located north of E. Greene Street/US 62. The Future Land Use Scenario envisions this area to continue developing with single-family residential use.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 3**

Annexation Area 3 is approximately 28.5 acres and is located to the east of the Bob Forrest

Youth Sports Complex and north of Union Street. The Future Land Use Scenario envisions this area to be development with single-family residential use.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 4**

Annexation Area 4 is approximately 827.4 acres and is located in an island of County land between Boyd Drive and Standpipe Road, and north of the west bypass. It includes Dark Canyon Draw, a large drainageway, and some existing residential development on the north and south ends. The developed portions of this area is in need of improvement and assistance, which both the City of Carlsbad and Eddy County have discussed in the past. This area may be appropriate for designation as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, which would enable the City to access more funding and utilize its resources to improve conditions for the benefit of these residents.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 5**

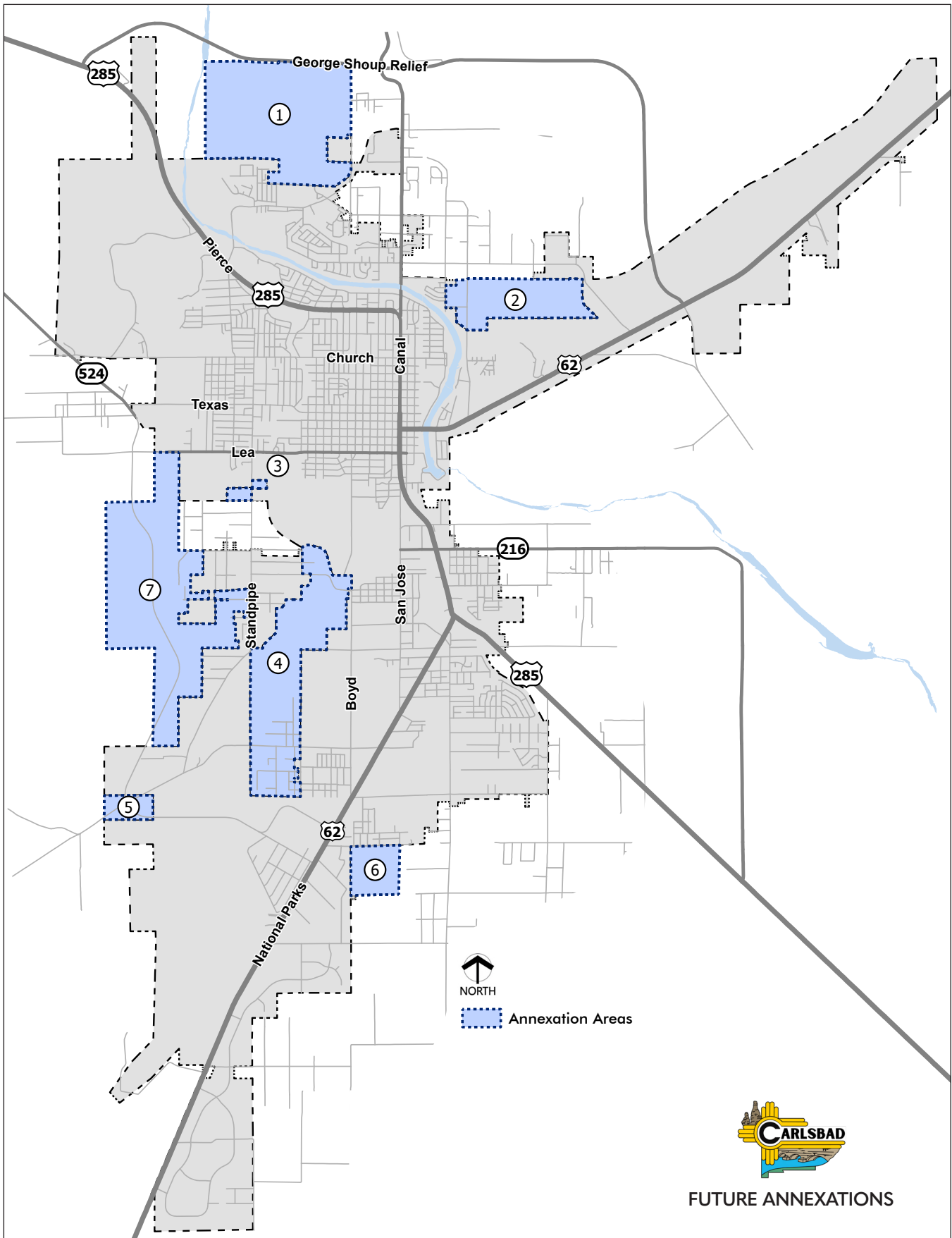
Annexation Area 5 is approximately 79.8 acres and straddles the West Bypass. It fills a small notch in the current municipal boundary and is envisioned by the Future Land Use Scenario to be developed with industrial uses.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 6**

Annexation Area 6 is approximately 161.0 acres and is located south of Airport Avenue and east of National Parks Highway/US 62 in an industrial area. The Future Land Use Scenario envisions this area to develop with a strip of residential use along the south side of Airport Avenue to reflect the existing development on the north side of the road. Further south is envisioned to develop with industrial use.

#### **ANNEXATION AREA 7**

At approximately 1,282.3 acres, Annexation Area 7 is the largest annexation of all the areas. It is located to the west of the Standpipe area and straddles the West Bypass. The Future Land Use Scenario envisions this area to develop with industrial use west of the West



Bypass and low and medium density single-family residential use to the east of the West Bypass. A small area of commercial use is shown on the north and abutting the east side of the West Bypass.

## 5.9 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & SCENARIOS

### LAND USE GOAL 1

Promote infill development and redevelopment of vacant, abandoned, or underutilized properties that are located throughout Carlsbad.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To create a more compact urban form in areas appropriate for residential, commercial, or mixed-use development that currently have access to community services.*
- ◀ *To identify alternatives to the expansion of temporary housing (RV parks and “man-camps”) in Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To increase the utilization and productive use of existing vacant land throughout Carlsbad, including the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area in South Carlsbad.*

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 1.1

Create a GIS-based inventory of existing vacant or underutilized properties that would be appropriate for infill development of residential, commercial, mixed-use, or redevelopment. Once complete, place the inventory on the City’s website to help facilitate interest from local and regional developers and builders.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 1.2

Work with local and regional developers and builders on creating and promoting incentives for infill development. This may include, but not be limited to, reductions or waivers in utility extensions and permit fees, expedited approval processes, density bonuses for residential development, and

where appropriate, reductions in minimum lot size, increased building heights and lot coverage, parking reductions, etc.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 1.3

In coordination with Economic Development Strategy 6.4.1, designate blighted areas, including the Standpipe area and Downtown Carlsbad, as Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs), and subsequently, solicit a consultant to create MRA plans that identify opportunity sites and allow the City to contribute to redevelopment activities and projects in accordance with the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Act.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 1.4

Pursue public/private partnerships on mixed-use development projects within Downtown Carlsbad and other desirable mixed-use areas, as allowed in MRAs, and as identified on the Future Land Use Scenario.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 1.5

Promote the City’s Public Improvement District (PID) policy that allows for the financing of infrastructure improvements for residential development, master planned communities, and major commercial development and redevelopment projects.

### LAND USE GOAL 2

Manage Carlsbad’s growth through a balanced inventory of land uses.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To increase the supply of commercial and industrial properties.*
- ◀ *To meet the commercial market demand and needs of existing and future Carlsbad residents.*
- ◀ *To encourage the location and development of commercial and industrial uses at and adjacent to the Cavern City Airport, Carlston Ranch Master Plan area, and along the West Bypass Road and George Shoup Relief Route.*

**LAND USE STRATEGY 2.1**

Complete a comprehensive update to the City Zoning Ordinance to include but not be limited to addressing permissive and conditional uses in residential, commercial, and industrial zones; minimum lot sizes and setbacks; maximum building heights, residential densities; allowance for accessory dwelling units; buffering between non-compatible land uses; etc.

**LAND USE STRATEGY 2.2**

In coordination and agreement with property owners, seek zone changes to properties identified as being appropriate for commercial or industrial use, as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario.

**LAND USE STRATEGY 2.3**

Create a GIS-based zoning map and dashboard that allows City staff and the public to view zoning and property data and information online.

**LAND USE GOAL 3**

Expand the City of Carlsbad through annexation of properties located adjacent to the municipal boundary and within the unincorporated area of Eddy County.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ *To focus new residential growth in the undeveloped area north and adjacent to the current municipal boundary.*
- ◀ *To capture tax revenues on properties that are currently receiving municipal services but are not located within the municipal boundary.*
- ◀ *To provide municipal services to developed but under-served areas adjacent to the current municipal boundary.*

**LAND USE STRATEGY 3.1**

Create an annexation policy that includes a process for evaluating proposed annexations. The evaluation should include a cost-benefit analysis that considers existing infrastructure capacity; feasibility, cost, and timeliness

of extending infrastructure, roadways, and public safety services to serve the property; economic development benefits and potential revenue stream to the City of Carlsbad; and a determination of the property owners' consent for the annexation.

**LAND USE STRATEGY 3.2**

Prioritize and pursue annexations that support new residential development and can be served by infrastructure, roadways, and public safety services, and are identified on the Future Land Use Scenario.

**LAND USE STRATEGY 3.3**

Utilize the annexation process to encourage the relocation of heavy industrial uses out of central Carlsbad to appropriate areas along E. Greene Street, the Cavern City Air Terminal area, Carlston Ranch, and properties along the BNSF railroad.

**LAND USE STRATEGY 3.4**

As properties are annexed into the City of Carlsbad, establish zoning designations that are appropriate and consistent with *Comprehensive Plan* goals and the Future Land Use Scenario.

**LAND USE GOAL 4**

Foster historic preservation and community pride in Carlsbad's history.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- ◀ *To cultivate a greater appreciation for the value in preserving and restoring the history of Carlsbad and the positive aspects of historic preservation.*
- ◀ *To ensure the vitality and livability of Downtown Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures to preserve cultural resources.*

**LAND USE STRATEGY 4.1**

Work with Carlsbad MainStreet and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division on educating owners of historic properties on

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

the benefits of having their properties listed on the national and state historic registers, including:

- ◀ State and federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation;
- ◀ Federal and state investment tax credits;
- ◀ Preservation easements to nonprofit organizations; and
- ◀ Fire and life-safety code compliance alternatives.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 4.2

Promote the use of the New Mexico State Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties and the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures in Carlsbad.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 4.3

Work with property owners on preserving historic structures as an alternative to demolition and consider historic preservation goals as part of the City's development review process.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 4.4

Develop a brochure and self-guided tour of the Carlsbad Downtown Historic District, Carlsbad Irrigation District, and historic structures in and around Carlsbad.

### LAND USE GOAL 5

Enhance the appearance of the built environment along commercial corridors, residential areas, and the Pecos River.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To improve the visual aesthetics of Canal Street, National Parks Highway, Greene Street, Mermod/Texas Street, and other major street corridors.*
- ◀ *To remove or improve nuisance properties, dilapidated structures, and inoperable vehicles.*
- ◀ *To foster community pride through participation in Keep Carlsbad Beautiful and other property clean-up efforts.*

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.1

Pursue and allocate resources to improve the properties and streetscape along Mermod/Texas Street that may include, but are not limited to, zone changes and street, sidewalk, and landscape enhancement projects.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.2

Create streetscape improvement plans for Canal Street, National Parks Highway, and Pierce Street that may include, but are not limited to, sidewalk improvements, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, entry signage, etc.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.3

Amend the City Zoning Ordinance to require industrial development to screen the view of outdoor operations from public rights-of-way.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.4

Create and maintain a substandard and/or vacant commercial property registry on the City's GIS database.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.5

Provide adequate staffing levels to enforce the regulations on code violations, including vacant and abandoned properties, dumping, removal of weeds and litter, and inoperable vehicles.

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.6

Support the efforts of Keep Carlsbad Beautiful and other organizations in clean-up efforts, including landscape improvements, weed and trash removal, and building facade improvements and maintenance

#### LAND USE STRATEGY 5.7

Submit grant applications for education and promotion, equipment purchase, youth employment, clean-up, and solid waste diversion projects to the New Mexico Tourism Department's Clean and Beautiful Program.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ An economic profile of existing employment and occupations by industry, employers, median household income, average wages, unemployment, poverty rates, tax revenues, and retail market analysis
- ▶ Major industries - potash mining, oil and natural gas extraction, agriculture, tourism, nuclear energy; and energy diversity
- ▶ Economic tools and initiatives - LEDA, Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas, and Opportunity Zone Program.
- ▶ Organizations - Carlsbad Department of Development, Chamber of Commerce, Carlsbad MainStreet, and the Small Business Development Center
- ▶ Opportunities and assets - National Cave and Karst Research Institute and Museum, Creative Economy, industrial development, transloading and rail, shared economy, and planned improvements
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies to create a strong, balanced, and diversified economy through promotion, partnerships, workforce training, and building on existing strengths

Economic development builds resiliency through attracting new employers, expanding on existing businesses, and capitalizing on community strengths. The growth of oil and gas drilling in the Permian Basin has expanded across Eddy and Lea counties and adds to the unmet demand for housing. As oil and gas extraction continues, City leaders and industry experts anticipate that Carlsbad's economy will continue to experience steady growth.

As strong as the oil and gas industry is in Carlsbad, the City's economic resiliency depends on building upon its unique assets and the innovation and hard work of its residents and business owners. This includes support for the local and regional education and health care sectors, and a strong tourism economy that is centered on the Pecos River, Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, and the two nearby National Parks - Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Guadalupe Mountain National Park - which bring visitors from across New Mexico and the United States, and the unique arts and cultural assets including the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Cultural District, Cavern Theater Performing Arts Center, Halagueño Arts Park, Carlsbad Museum & Art Center, and community events.



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## 6.1 ECONOMIC PROFILE

The economic mix of Carlsbad is stable and shows steady growth. The following analysis primarily uses data from the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey, with some data from other sources such as the Carlsbad Department of Development to better represent the current economic conditions in Carlsbad and to help forecast future trends. Some employment metrics, such as temporary workers in the oil and gas industry, may not be reflected in the data since Carlsbad may not be their home base.

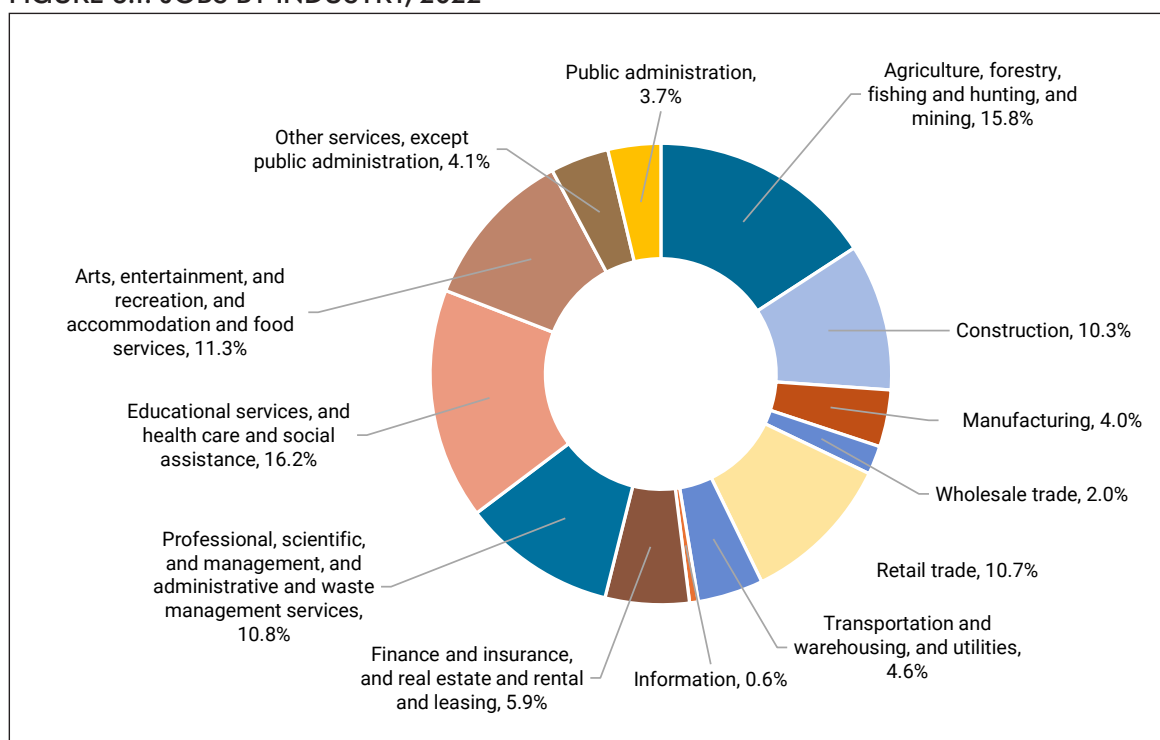
### EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

There were a total of 24,896 people 16 years and over in Carlsbad. Of those, 14,795 (59.4%) were in the workforce. This was a slightly higher level of participation in the labor force than New Mexico as a whole, where 57.6% of the population 16 years and over were in the labor force.

In 2022, the largest employment by industry, 16.2%, was in “Educational services, and health care and social assistance”. This was followed by “Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining” at 15.8% and “Arts, entertainment and recreation, and accommodations and food services” at 11.3% (see *Figure 6.1*). New Mexico’s rates of employment within these industries were 25.4%, 4.1%, and 10.3%, respectively.

Between 2012 and 2022, the biggest growth was in the industry category of “Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services”, which grew from 7.1% of the Carlsbad workforce to 10.8%. This was followed by “Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service”, which grew from 7.7% in 2012 to 11.3% in 2022. Construction grew from 7.3% to 10.3% and “Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining” grew from 13.3% to 15.8%.

FIGURE 6.1: JOBS BY INDUSTRY, 2022



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

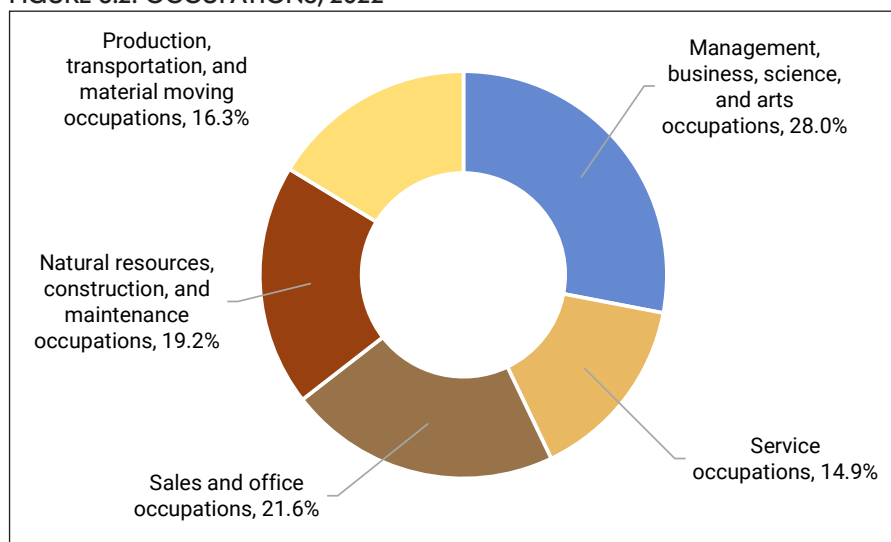
## OCCUPATIONS

Occupation is the type of work an employed person does, such as production or sales. Occupation is tracked by the US Census Bureau and the American Community Survey for the civilian population over 16 years of age.

Between 2012 and 2022, nearly all of the occupation categories grew, with the exception of “Service occupations”. The largest growth was in “Production, transportation, and material moving occupations”, which grew by 66.3%. “Sales and office occupations” and “Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations” grew by 29.8% and 28%, respectively.

In 2022, the largest occupation category in Carlsbad, 28%, was “Management, business, science, and arts occupations” (see Figure 6.2). This was followed by 21.6% for “Sales and office occupations” and 19.2% for “Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations”.

FIGURE 6.2: OCCUPATIONS, 2022



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

Like Carlsbad, the largest occupation category in New Mexico was “Management, business, science, and arts occupations” at 39.0%; a lower rate overall than Carlsbad. This was followed by 20.4% for “Sales and office occupations”. Where New Mexico significantly differed from Carlsbad was in the “Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations” at 10.9% in New Mexico versus 19.2% in Carlsbad.

TABLE 6.1: CARLSBAD INDUSTRY BY OCCUPATION, 2012 & 2022

Occupations	2012	2022	% Change
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	3,732	4,015	7.6%
Service occupations	2,272	2,134	-6.1%
Sales and office occupations	2,378	3,087	29.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	2,149	2,751	28.0%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,404	2,335	66.3%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022

## EMPLOYERS

The Carlsbad Department of Development (CDOD) compiles employment data for businesses operating in Carlsbad. The companies or agencies with the most employees in Carlsbad include those supporting the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (SIMCO), and public schools and local hospitals (see *Table 6.2*). Using a broader view, “support activities for mining” and “oil and gas extraction” account for a large number of employees and high average weekly wages. This includes employees across different industry codes, including office administration, payroll services, facilities management, and grounds maintenance.

The largest number of employees were in the “support activities for mining” category with 231 establishments employing an average of 4,082 employees, total wages of \$94,364,041, and an average weekly wage of \$1,778 (see *Table 6.3*). The next largest category in terms

of total wages, \$56,823,804, was “oil and gas extraction”, which had an average of 1,603 employees, 48 establishments, and the highest average weekly wage of \$2,726. Relative to wages, the category with the second highest average weekly wage was “justice, public order, and safety activities”, which provided an average weekly wage of \$2,122 but with a much lower average of 816 employees.

**TABLE 6.2: MAJOR EMPLOYERS, 2024**

Employer	Employees
SIMCO	1,200
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	968
City of Carlsbad	501
Artesia General Hospital	443
Carlsbad Medical Center	387
Eddy County	370
Intrepid	300
SENMC	227
Chevron (across all of NM)	250

Source: Carlsbad Department of Development, 2024.

**TABLE 6.3: CARLSBAD INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES, 2024**

Industry Codes	Industry	Establishments	Average Employees	Total Wages	Average Weekly Wage
213	Support Activities for Mining	231	4,082	\$94,364,041	\$1,778
611	Educational Services	34	2,158	\$37,309,131	\$1,330
237	Heavy & Civil Engineering Construction	52	1,865	\$40,158,347	\$1,657
722	Food Service & Drinking Places	105	1,713	\$11,259,068	\$506
211	Oil & Gas Extraction	48	1,603	\$56,823,804	\$2,726
238	Specialty Trade Contractors	106	1,382	\$25,455,088	\$1,417
562	Waste Management & Remediation Services	22	1,200	\$32,794,524	\$2,102
484	Truck Transportation	75	1,132	\$23,247,346	\$1,580
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	82	1,080	\$13,930,036	\$992
455	General Merchandise Retailers	20	842	\$6,167,692	\$564
922	Justice, Public Order, & Safety Activities	24	816	\$22,509,148	\$2,122

Source: Carlsbad Department of Development, 2024.

## MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

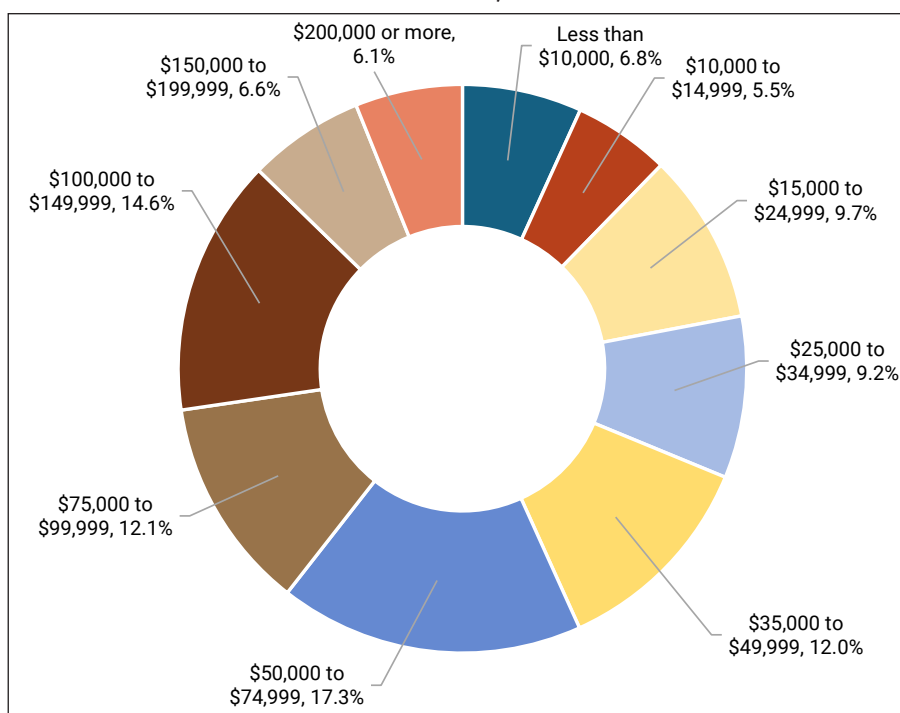
Between 2012 and 2022, the median household income in Carlsbad grew by 66.7%, from \$46,309 to \$77,209 (see Table 6.4). All of the income ranges from \$74,999 and below have decreased, while all of the household income ranges \$75,000 and above increased during that 10-year time period, with significant shifts in the \$150,000 to \$199,999 and \$200,000 and above; 183.8% and 587.1%, respectively.

In 2022, the median household income range that showed the largest portion of households, 17.3%, was \$50,000 to \$74,999. This was followed by 12.1% of households in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 range. While the \$200,000 and above range showed the largest increase between 2012 and 2022, it represents the smallest portion of households at 6.1%.

TABLE 6.4: CARLSBAD MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2012 & 2022			
Total households	2012	2022	% Change
Less than \$10,000	889	700	-21.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	530	527	-0.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,175	1,000	-14.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,169	754	-35.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,422	985	-30.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,972	1,548	-21.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	966	1,902	96.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,136	2,035	79.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	462	1,311	183.8%
\$200,000 or more	147	1,010	587.1%
Median household income	\$46,309	\$77,209	66.7%

Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

FIGURE 6.3: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2022



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2022.

## AVERAGE WAGES

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) provides employment and wage estimates at the county level. Compared to surrounding counties, Eddy County average hourly and weekly wages at \$38.17 and \$1,527 were significantly higher than Chaves, Lea, and Roosevelt counties, as well as New Mexico as a whole (see Table 6.5). Between Q4 2018 and Q4 2023, the average hourly and weekly wages in Eddy County increased by 62.4%, from \$23.50 to \$38.17 and from \$958 to \$1,527.

These higher than average wages in the area pose a challenge for retail, restaurant, and hospitality industries being able to hire the number of staff they need to operate their businesses. Adding to that challenge, some businesses have limited hours because of limited, despite the robust local economy and demand for goods and services.

**TABLE 6.5: AVERAGE WAGES, Q4 2023**

	Hourly	Weekly
Eddy County	\$38.17	\$1,527
Chaves County	\$26.23	\$1,049
Lea County	\$32.82	\$1,313
Roosevelt County	\$21.26	\$850
New Mexico	\$31.90	\$1,276

Source: NMDWS, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 4th Quarter 2023.

## UNEMPLOYMENT

In 2023, Eddy County had an unemployment rate of 2.6% in 2023, lower than Otero, Lea, Chaves counties and New Mexico as a whole. Unemployment in Eddy County decreased by 26.0% between 2019 and 2023, the largest decrease of the four counties. Overall unemployment in New Mexico fell by 23.4% during the same time period.

**TABLE 6.4: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES**

Race	2019		2023		% Change
	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	
Eddy County	35,372	3.2%	32,218	2.6%	-26.0%
Otero County	27,693	5.0%	27,296	3.8%	-25.1%
Lea County	31,370	4.1%	30,193	3.5%	-17.8%
Chaves County	7,970	4.5%	7,803	3.6%	-21.7%
New Mexico	963,599	5.0%	971,137	3.8%	-23.4%

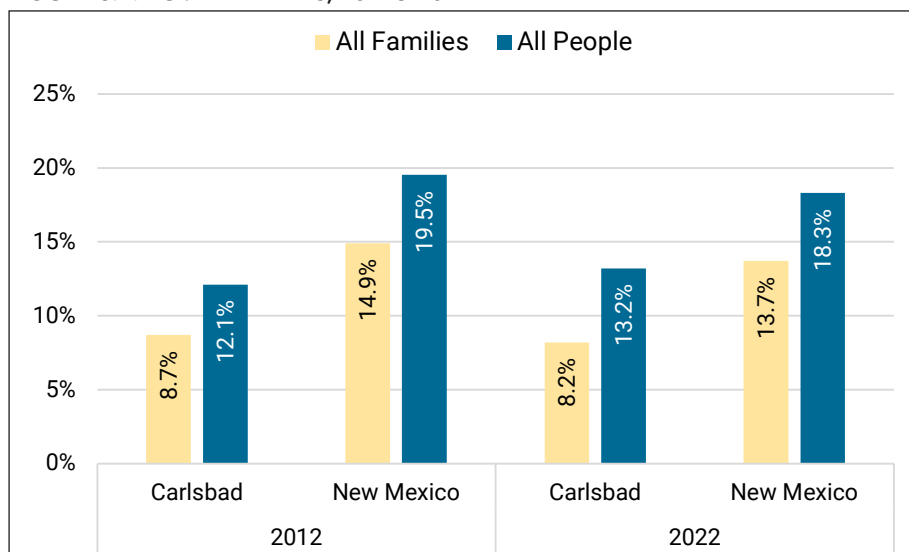
Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2019 & 2023.

## POVERTY RATES

Poverty rates are an important indicator of how an economy is performing for the population as a whole. When families and individuals live in poverty, they are more vulnerable to health issues, homelessness, hunger, and financial crises.

Between 2012 and 2022, the poverty rate slightly decreased from 8.7% to 8.2% for families and increased for individuals from 12.1% to 13.2% (see Figure 6.4). However, in both 2012 and 2022, the poverty in Carlsbad for both families and individuals was significantly lower than the New Mexico poverty rate.

FIGURE 6.4: POVERTY RATES, 2012 & 2022



Source: ACS, 5-year Estimates, 2012 & 2022.

## GROSS RECEIPTS TAX

The Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) in New Mexico is a tax imposed on businesses for a wide range of activities, including the sale of goods and services, leasing property, and granting franchise rights. Unlike traditional sales taxes that are levied on consumers, GRT is assessed on the total revenue businesses earn from these activities within the state, and are an indicator of economic output.

Like all communities, the GRT revenue in Carlsbad was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but has rebounded and surpassed the FY2020 high point of more than \$79,189,897. Since the low point in FY2021, GRT in Carlsbad has steadily climbed back to being slightly above FY2020 to \$79,686,251 in FY2024.

## LODGERS' TAX

In New Mexico, lodgers' tax is governed by the Lodgers' Tax Act, which allows municipalities and counties to levy a tax on the gross taxable

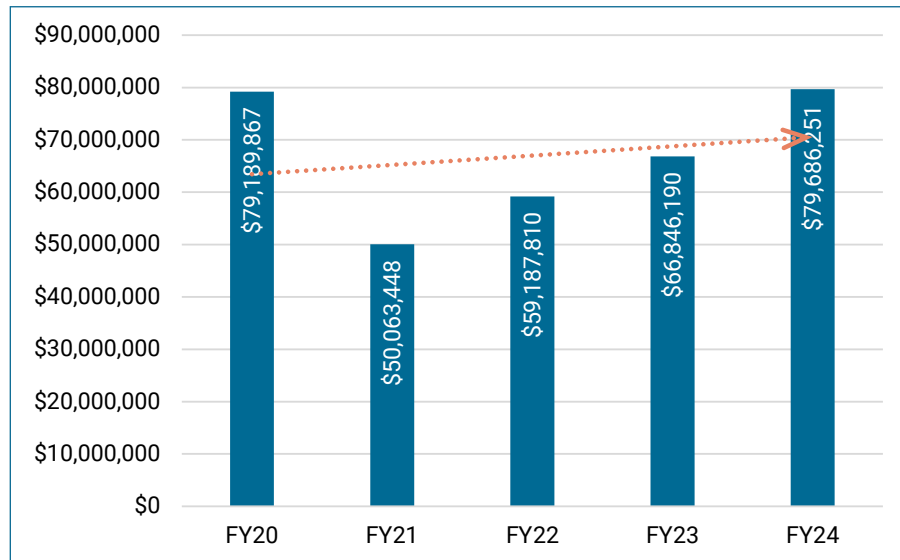
rent paid for lodging. The revenue is typically used for marketing and promoting the "destination" to tourists. Short-term rentals are required to pay local, state, and federal taxes, including lodgers' tax. Lodgers' tax revenues reflect how well the community is performing in tourism related activities.

In FY2020, lodgers' tax revenue in Carlsbad was \$3,598,110. Since the low point in FY2021, lodgers' tax revenue significantly and steadily rebounded with a high point of \$5,018,216 in FY2024.

New hotels in Carlsbad were completed in 2016, 2022, and 2023. Hotel occupancy and average daily rates in Eddy County climbed from 2017 through 2019, and dropped with COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. The rates recovered and continued to climb along with inflation from 2021 through 2024. Occupancy rates rebounded in 2021 and generally leveled out in 2022 through 2024 at a lower rate than the peak in 2019 (New Mexico Tourism Department, 2025).

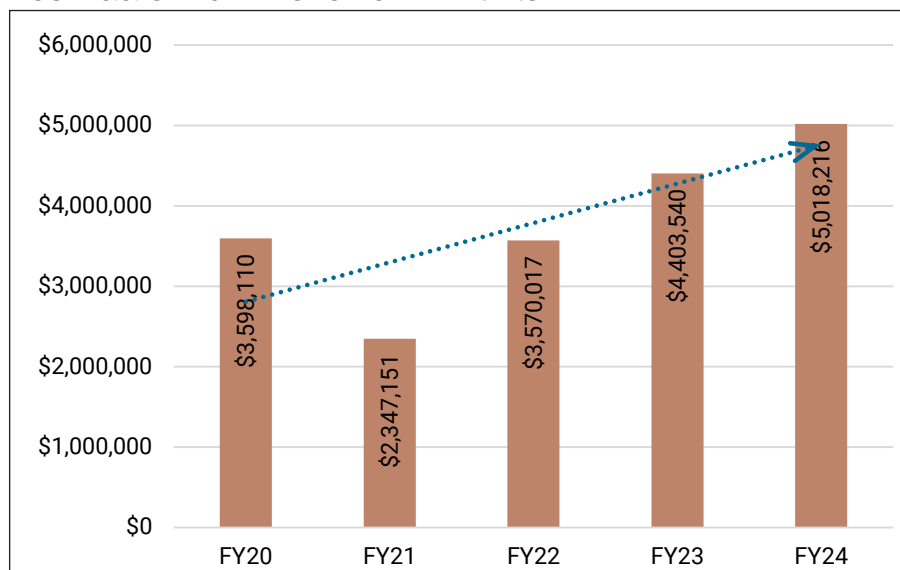
In 2018, New Mexico Senate Bill 108 removed the exemption that allowed property owners

FIGURE 6.5: GROSS RECEIPT TAX REVENUE



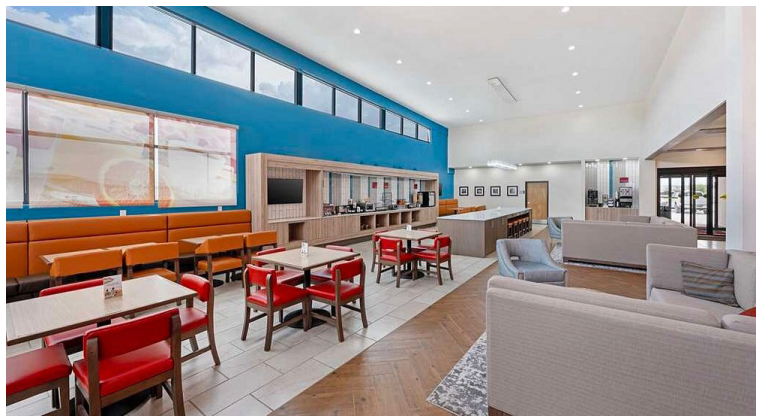
Source: City of Carlsbad, 2024.

FIGURE 6.6: CARLSBAD LODGERS' TAX REVENUE



Source: City of Carlsbad, 2024.

offering fewer than three rooms for rent to avoid paying lodgers' tax. This includes short-term rental properties with hosts such as AirBnB and VRBO. The change took effect in January 2020. As more short-term rental properties come on line in Carlsbad, there will be an increase in revenue collection.



Best Western Plus Hotel opened in 2023.

## RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

An important component in analyzing the current retail environment in Carlsbad is understanding the demand and supply for retail sales. Identifying the retail gaps and surpluses will help identify opportunities and focus the City's efforts on attracting new retail businesses to meet the retail demand of the Carlsbad residents.

A *Claritas Spotlight* report was generated to help analyze the current retail market in Carlsbad. The analysis demonstrates the relationship between demand (retail potential) and surplus (retail sales). When a retail market industry has a surplus, that means it is drawing customers from other geographic areas to spend money in Carlsbad. If a retail market industry is experiencing leakage, it means residents are leaving Carlsbad to spend their money elsewhere. The retail gap represents the difference between retail demand and supply.

In 2023 and with Carlsbad as the trade area, the total retail trade for Carlsbad had an estimated surplus of \$68,987,877. The highest retail surplus, \$73,969,808 was in the retail

industry category of "General merchandise stores". This was followed by \$70,898,237 for "Motor vehicle and parts dealers" and \$51,470,025 for "Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers".

There were several retail industry groups that experienced a retail gap in 2023. The retail industry group with the highest leakage, \$77,144,182, was "Non-store retailers", which primarily represents online retail sales. This was followed by \$20,423,607 for "Food and beverage stores" and \$15,154,149 for "Gasoline stations".

These findings are generally consistent with the feedback received from participants in the Community Survey and at the public meetings. Many residents noted that they shop online or travel to Roswell, Lubbock, El Paso, and Artesia, Hobbs, and Albuquerque, which is reflected in the large retail gap for "Non-store retailers". While a majority of participants said they travel out of Carlsbad for dining at restaurants, this category had a retail surplus of \$6,806,596. However, the top three commercial development types that

TABLE 6.5 CARLSBAD RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS, 2023

Industry Group	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap/ Surplus
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	\$130,042,165	\$200,940,402	\$70,898,237
Furniture and home furnishings stores	\$12,103,563	\$10,291,241	-\$1,812,322
Electronics and appliance stores	\$8,912,948	\$2,333,679	-\$6,579,268
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	\$39,656,449	\$91,126,474	\$51,470,025
Food and beverage stores	\$81,170,766	\$60,747,159	-\$20,423,607
Health and personal care stores	\$32,254,852	\$20,883,161	-\$11,371,692
Gasoline stations	\$45,346,614	\$30,192,465	-\$15,154,149
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	\$28,112,234	\$16,761,115	-\$11,351,120
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, and book stores	\$9,149,166	\$4,163,614	-\$4,985,551
General merchandise stores	\$71,540,796	\$145,510,604	\$73,969,808
Miscellaneous store retailers	\$12,058,772	\$26,723,874	\$14,665,102
Non-store retailers	\$97,145,343	\$20,001,162	-\$77,144,182
Food services and drinking places	\$72,349,300	\$79,155,896	\$6,806,596
<b>Total retail trade including food and drink</b>	<b>\$639,842,969</b>	<b>\$708,830,846</b>	<b>\$68,987,877</b>
<b>Total retail trade</b>	<b>\$567,493,668</b>	<b>\$629,674,950</b>	<b>\$62,181,282</b>

Source: Claritas Retail Market Power® 2023 Estimates.

were cited by the participants as being needed in Carlsbad were restaurants; clothing and accessory stores; and grocery stores.

## 6.2 MAJOR INDUSTRIES

### POTASH MINING

Potash mining and storage are an important component of the Carlsbad economy. Potash is used as an additive in fertilizers to replenish potassium into the soil. Potash mining activity is located outside of Carlsbad within Eddy County.

According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, potash prices spiked in 2022 after sanctions against Russia increased the price of domestically produced potash. The prices fell by 38.9% in 2023, plateauing at \$339 per metric ton in December 2023. The U.S. Geological Survey Mineral Commodity Summaries 2024 noted that the two companies in Eddy County produce the majority of the US-sourced potash, and nationwide potash production was 400,000 metric tons down from a production peak of 510,000 metric tons in 2019.

### OIL & NATURAL GAS EXTRACTION

The impact that oil and natural gas industry has on the economy of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and New Mexico as a whole is immense. Eddy County and Lea County have been producing oil and natural gas successfully for decades using traditional extractive methods in the Permian Basin, one of the largest oil and natural gas reserves in North America. With the advent of modern technologies such as hydrologic fracturing or “fracking” (which releases oil embedded in shale rock), mining for oil in the Permian Basin has become a lucrative investment for large oil companies.

The Delaware Basin has proven to be more productive than other regions of the Permian Basin that lie below Texas and New Mexico. Data shows that Lea and Eddy

counties accounted for 17% of all onshore oil production in the contiguous United States in 2023. Before the next decade, Eddy and Lea counties are expected to pump more oil than the next five biggest counties combined, according to reporting by Bloomberg. Data suggests that this region has significant capacity for future extraction, with only about one-third of the Delaware Basin already drilled, according to Novi Labs.

Revenues from oil and gas are significant contributors of Severance Tax payments to the State of New Mexico. Direct taxes on oil and gas totaled \$2.19 billion in 2023, and is expected to grow to \$3 billion in 2029, according to the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee.

Eddy County and Lea County are by far the two leading producers of oil in the state. In 2023, Eddy County ranked second in oil barrels produced at 264,943,928, up from 66,815,842 barrels in 2017.

In 2023, Eddy County was the largest producer of gas in the state, producing 1,416,107,078 thousand cubic feet (MCF), which was a significant increase from 359,828,995 MCF in 2017. While other regions of the state have seen stable or declining production, Eddy County and Lea County are continuing to see steady growth.

TABLE 6.6: OIL & GAS PRODUCTION, 2023

Oil (Rank)	Oil Barrels
Lea (1)	391,511,402
EDDY (2)	264,943,928
San Juan (3)	7,505,553
Sandoval (4)	2,223,394
Rio Arriba (5)	732,214
Gas (Rank)	Gas MCF
EDDY (1)	1,416,107,078
Lea (2)	1,190,123,733
San Juan (3)	277,999,516
Rio Arriba (4)	193,848,171
Colfax (5)	13,241,397

Source: ENMRD Production Reports, 2023.

## PERMIAN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The Permian Strategic Partnership (PSP) is a coalition of 29 energy companies operating in the region who work together with the mission *"to strengthen and improve the quality of life for Permian Basin residents by partnering with federal, state, and local leaders to develop and implement strategic plans that foster superior schools, safer roads, quality healthcare, and a trained workforce."* The PSP produces an annual economic report for the entire 33-county area that covers more than 86,000 square miles in New Mexico and Texas. The 2023 annual economic report found that over half of all active rigs that operate in the United States are in the Permian Basin. The Permian Basin has been forecast to comprise 50% of oil production in the United States by 2030. With this continued growth of production in the region, the PSP forecast a need for 184,300 new workers in 2040 to address retirements and other replacements, as well as new growth.

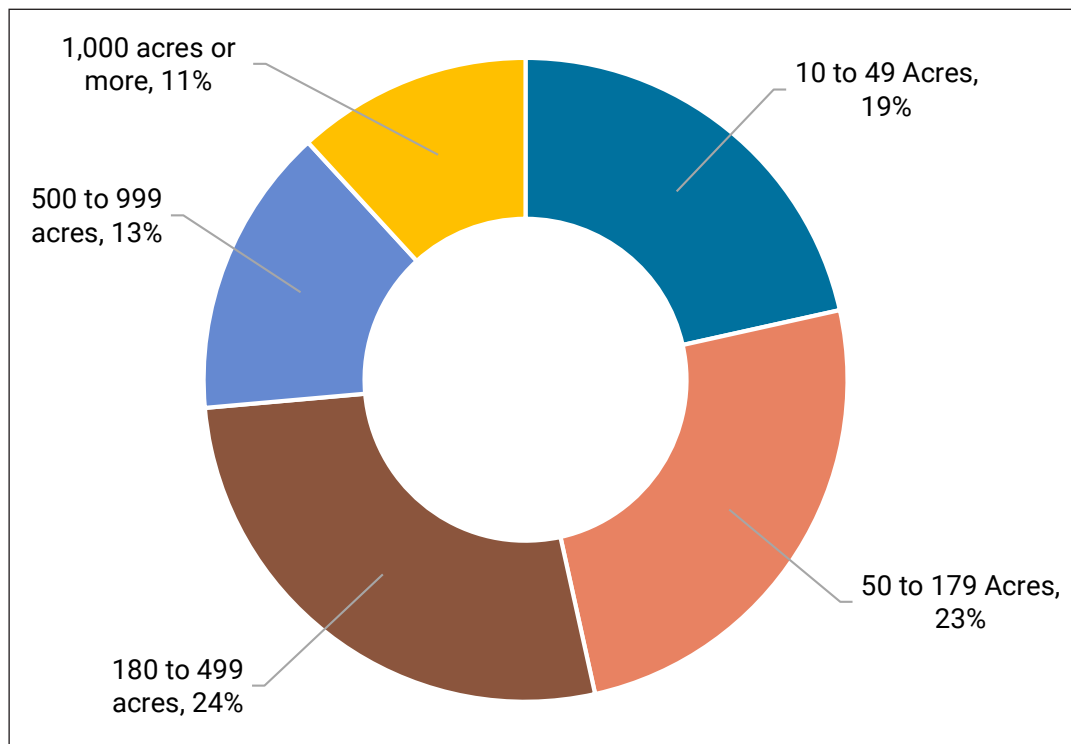
## AGRICULTURE

Agriculture currently comprises approximately 942 acres of land within Carlsbad. While not as robust as it once was, agriculture remains an important economic driver in Eddy County and Carlsbad. This section provides a profile of the agriculture industry in Eddy County, which is derived from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Agriculture.

In 2022, there were 346 farms in Eddy County, a 32% decrease from 2017. Of those farms, 96% were categorized as family farms. The land in farms also decreased between 2017 and 2022 by 41.0%, from 1,087,902 to 640,351 acres. However, the market value of products sold increased by 7.2%, from \$97,278,000 to \$104,275,000 (see Table 6.7).

In 2022, Eddy County generated 3.5% of the total in agricultural sales in New Mexico and ranked 8th overall in New Mexico for total market value of agricultural products sold. For crops, Eddy County ranked 6th in New Mexico for crops and 10th for livestock, poultry, and

FIGURE 6.7: SIZE OF FARMS IN EDDY COUNTY, 2022



Source: USDA 2022 Census of Agriculture.

products. Of the \$104,275,000 in agricultural products sold in 2022, 51.7% (\$53,937,000) was in crops and 48.3% (\$50,338,000) was in livestock, poultry, and products (see Table 6.8). The market value from milk from cows represented 71.2% of the total livestock, poultry, and products sold.

In 2022, Eddy County's top crops in acres were forage at 15,130 acres, pecans at 6,348 acres, cotton at 2,222 acres, corn for silage/greenchop at 2,110, and wheat for grain at 1,341 acres. In 2022, cattle and calves in Eddy County numbered 33,286, far above any other livestock see Tables 6.9 and 6.10).

**TABLE 6.7: EDDY COUNTY AGRICULTURE PROFILE, 2017-2022**

	2017	2022	% Change
Number of Farms	507	346	-32.0%
Land in Farms (Acres)	1,087,902	640,351	-41.0%
Average Size of Farm (Acres)	2,146	1,851	-14.0%
Market Value of Products Sold	\$97,278,000	\$104,275,000	7.2%
Average Net Farm Income	\$40,826	\$91,239	123.5%

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, 2017 and 2022.

**TABLE 6.8: EDDY COUNTY MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, 2022**

Commodity	Value	State Rank
<b>Crops</b>	<b>\$53,937,000</b>	<b>6</b>
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	(D)	13
Cotton and cottonseed	\$3,690,000	6
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	\$32,391,000	2
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod	(D)	12
Other crops and hay	\$15,197,000	4
<b>Livestock, poultry, and products</b>	<b>\$50,338,000</b>	<b>10</b>
Poultry and eggs	(D)	(D)
Cattle and calves	\$13,777,000	16
Milk from cows	\$35,838,000	7
Hogs and pigs	\$15,000	10
Sheep, goats, wool, mohair, milk	(D)	10
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys	\$447,000	8
Other animals and animal products	\$3,000	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$104,275,000</b>	<b>8</b>

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, 2022.

(D) is used to indicate data that is withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.

**TABLE 6.9: EDDY COUNTY TOP CROPS (ACRES), 2022**

Crops	Acreage
Forage (hay/haylage), all	15,130
Pecans, all	6,348
Cotton, all	2,222
Corn for silage/greenchop	2,110
Wheat for grain, all	1,341

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, 2022.

**TABLE 6.10 EDDY COUNTY LIVESTOCK INVENTORY, 2022**

Livestock	Quantity
Broilers and other meat-type chickens	160
Cattle and calves	33,286
Goats	352
Hogs and pigs	151
Horses and ponies	697
Layers	614
Pullets	120
Sheep and lambs	888
Turkeys	98

Source: USDA Census of Agriculture, Dec. 31, 2022.

## TOURISM

Tourism has long been an important driver of the Carlsbad economy. In 2021, southeast New Mexico was the third most active region of the state for overnight visitors, following central and north central New Mexico. Southeast New Mexico had 3.2 million overnight visitors, and an additional 3.3 million visitors came to the region for a day. In the Carlsbad area, major tourist attractions are the Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Guadalupe Mountains National Park. These tourist attractions continue to draw visitors to the Carlsbad region and have a tremendous economic impact on the local economy.

### CARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK

Carlsbad Cavern National Park, located approximately 30 miles southwest of Carlsbad, is one of New Mexico's premiere tourist destinations. There are more than 119 caves at Carlsbad Caverns, which were formed in the limestone reef of the Guadalupe Mountains. The Caverns were first declared a National Monument in 1923, a National Park in 1930, and in 1995, a World Heritage Site by the United Nations. Visitors are fascinated by the thousands of Mexican free-tailed bats that fly out of the caverns at night between May and October to feed. According to the National Parks Service, Carlsbad Caverns welcomes more than 500,000 visitors each year, making it the second most visited National Park in New Mexico.

Carlsbad Caverns offers a variety of options for visitors to explore the caves and above ground natural surroundings of the Chihuahuan Desert. Visitors can explore at their own pace along the "Big Room Trail" a 1.25 mile trail that takes about 1.5 hours to complete or a shorter trail which is about 0.6 miles and takes about 45 minutes to walk. Parts of the Big Room are wheelchair accessible. Ranger guided tours for more rigorous cave exploring are available on a limited basis for the King's Palace, Left Hand

Tunnel, Lower Cave, Hall of the White Giant, Spider Cave, and Slaughter Canyon Caves. Visitors can refer to the Carlsbad Caverns National Park website for details on times and clothing requirements for these tours. Other programs offered at the Park include the Bat Flight Program, Dawn of the Bats, and Night Sky Programs. Carlsbad Caverns also provides an important location for cave and karst studies through the National Cave and Karst Research Institute.

### ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIONAL PARKS

The National Park Service (NPS) provides estimates on the economic contribution of National Parks to the surrounding communities or "gateway regions". Economic impact data is collected and sorted into five categories, including Visitor Spending, Jobs, Labor Income, Value-Added, and Economic Output.

**Visitor Spending:** Overall visitor spending at National Parks refers to the direct spending that visitors spend in local gateway regions. Only the spending within the gateway region is counted as supporting economic activity. Visitor spending sectors include Camping; Gas; Groceries; Hotels; Recreation Industries; Restaurants; Retail; and Transportation.

In 2023, 394,000 park visitors spent an estimated \$29.1 million in local gateway regions while visiting Carlsbad Caverns National Park. These expenditures supported a total of 359 jobs, \$10.0 million in labor income, \$17.2 million in value added, and \$31.9 million in economic output in local gateway economies surrounding Carlsbad Caverns National Park.

Although Guadalupe Mountains National Park is located in Texas approximately 52 miles southwest of Carlsbad, visitors often travel through and rely on Carlsbad for goods and services because it is the largest community in proximity to the Park. In 2023, 227,000 park visitors spent an estimated \$27.5 million in

FIGURE 6.9: CARLSBAD CAVERNS NATIONAL PARK VISITOR SPENDING, 2023

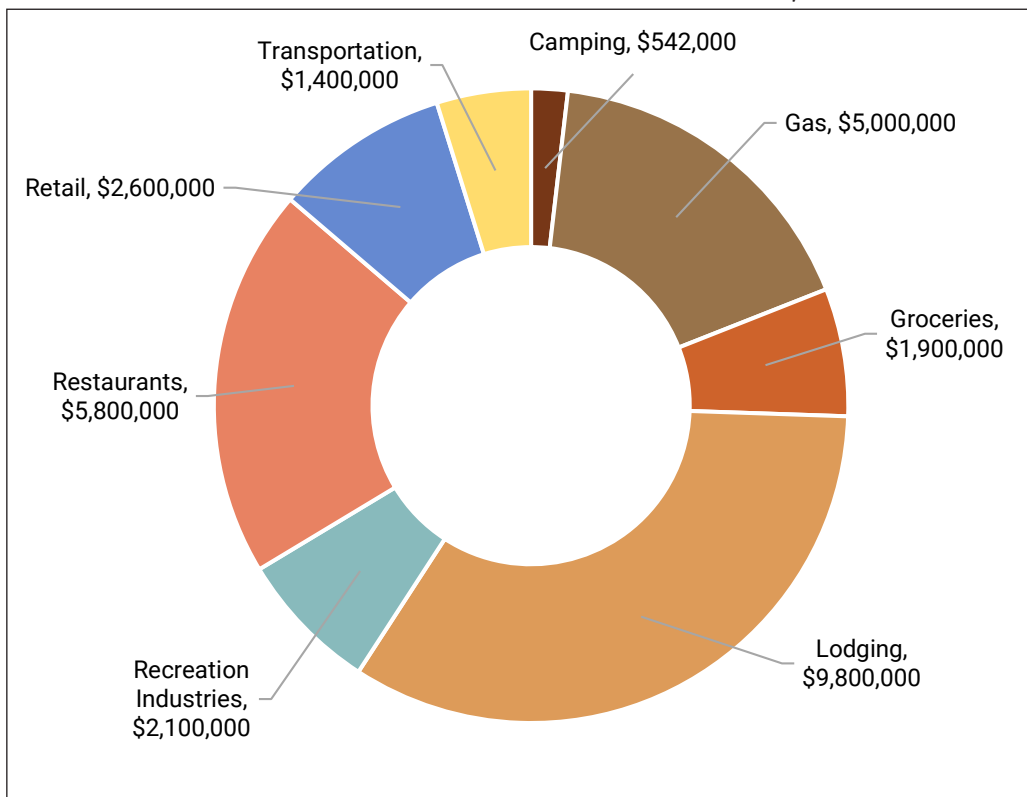
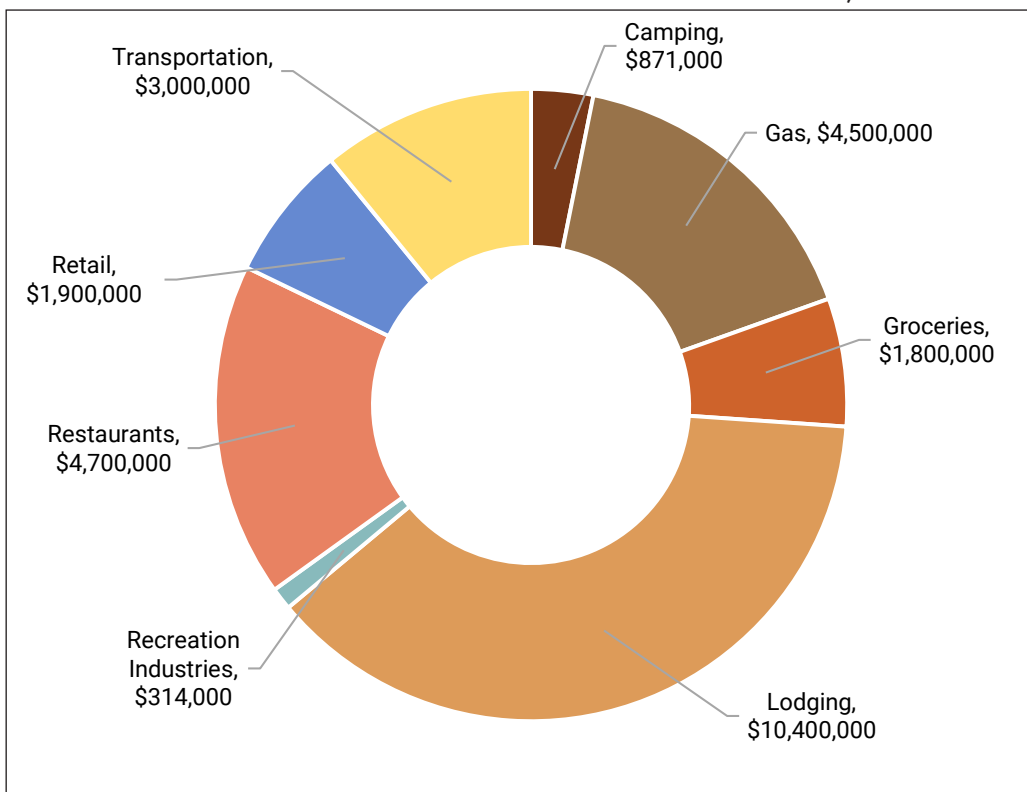


FIGURE 6.9: GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK VISITOR SPENDING, 2023



National Park Service - Economic Contributions of National Park Visitor Spending, 2023.

local gateway regions while visiting Guadalupe Mountains National Park. These expenditures supported a total of 325 jobs, \$11.2 million in labor income, \$18.6 million in value added, and \$32.7 million in economic output in local gateway economies surrounding Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

In 2023, the top three categories that visitors to Carlsbad Caverns and Guadalupe Mountains National Parks contributed to the local gateway economies were lodging (\$9.8 million and \$10.4 million, respectively), restaurants (\$5.8 million and \$4.7 million, respectively), and gas (\$5.0 million and \$4.5 million, respectively).

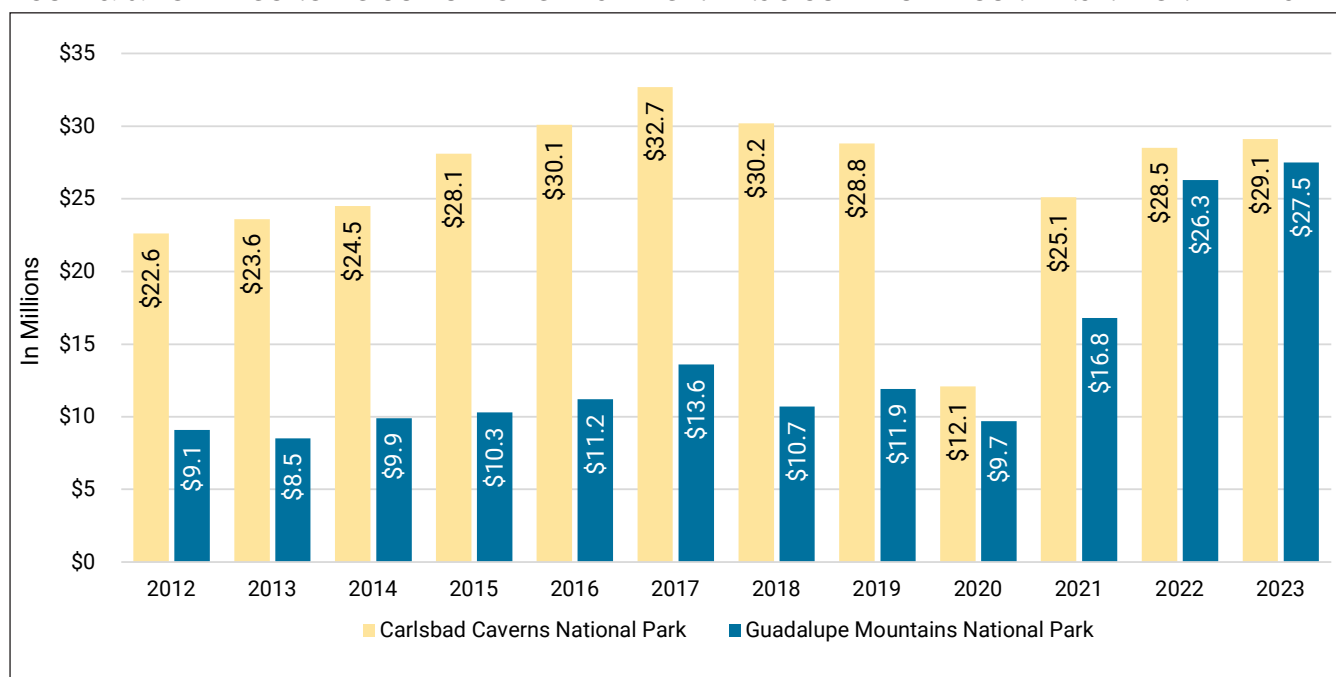
**Total Economic Output:** Economic output is a measure of the total estimated value of the production of goods and services supported by NPS visitor spending. This includes direct (income and employment resulting from direct visitor purchases of goods and services in local gateway regions) and secondary effects (economic multiplier effect resulting from the ripple effect of NPS visitor spending throughout

the economy). Total economic output for Carlsbad National Park peaked in 2017 at \$32.7 million, began to recover from the low period in 2020, and grew to \$29.1 million in 2023. Guadalupe Mountains National Park stayed relatively stable but started an upward climb in 2021 with \$16.8 million in economic output and grew to \$27.5 million in 2023 (see Figure 6.10).

### GUADALUPE RIDGE NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL

The Guadalupe Ridge National Recreation Trail was designated by the Department of the Interior in 2018 after years of coordination with federal and state agencies. The Guadalupe Ridge Trail is 100 miles in length and connects Carlsbad Caverns National Park and Guadalupe Mountains National Park via the Lincoln National Forest at the site of Sitting Bull Falls. The Guadalupe Ridge Trail begins close to the entrance to Carlsbad Caverns National Park and ends at Guadalupe Peak, which at 8,751 feet is the highest summit in Texas. Led by the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce, several trails were merged to

FIGURE 6.10: TOTAL ECONOMIC OUTPUT FOR CARLSBAD CAVERNS & GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARKS



National Park Service - Total Economic Output National Parks Contributed to Gateway Economies.

create the Guadalupe Ridge Trail that spans desert and mountainous terrain. This multi-state trail, connecting the two National Parks and a National Forest with notable natural, geologic, and historic sites, is a significant tourism draw for Carlsbad and Eddy County.

### **GUADALUPE BACK COUNTRY SCENIC BYWAY**

The Guadalupe Back Country Scenic Byway begins approximately 12 miles north of Carlsbad in the Chihuahuan Desert and ascends approximately 3,000 feet into the Guadalupe Mountains. The Scenic Byway runs between the intersection of US 285 and State Highway 137 (Queen Highway) near Brantley Lake State Park to the Lincoln National Forest. The Scenic Byway transitions from cholla cactus in the Chihuahuan Desert up into the pines of the Guadalupe Escarpment. Wildlife in the area include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, gray fox, scaled quail, mourning dove, a variety of songbirds, and small mammals. The Scenic Byway passes through an area of oil and gas wells, as it is located along the Capitan Reef of the Permian Basin. The plains give way to steep limestone outcrops cut by dry arroyos and below the surface are the caves of the nearby Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Interpretative signage along the Scenic Byway explain different aspects of landscape and the management of the public lands. The Guadalupe Backcountry

Scenic Byway is a gateway for rural tourism, providing access to many little-known attractions and public lands with excellent opportunities for hiking/ backpacking, primitive camping, caving, horseback riding, nature study, mountain biking, hunting, and other outdoor experiences.

### **LIVING DESERT ZOO and GARDENS STATE PARK**

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park, established in 1971, is a native wildlife zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The 1,100-acre park is located in the far northeast area of Carlsbad and exhibits more than 40 species of animals and hundreds of plant species native to the Chihuahuan Desert. Living Desert has hiking trails, picnic areas, and group facilities for events.

According to the New Mexico State Parks Division, the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park welcomed 37,418 visitors in 2024. New Mexico State Parks Division wants to increase the number of visitors and is working with local government and private entities to market Living Desert Zoo and Gardens to new residents of Carlsbad.

### **BRANTLEY LAKE STATE PARK**

Brantley Lake is the southernmost lake in New Mexico, located ten miles north of Carlsbad. Created in 1988 with the completion of the Brantley Dam, it is part of the long, regional



Guadalupe Ridge National Recreation Trail.

history of irrigation projects around Carlsbad. Brantley Dam harnesses the Pecos River to reduce the incidence of flooding.

Brantley Lake State Park was dedicated on May 13, 1989, and became one of New Mexico's newest recreation areas, providing a place for fishing and boating. The Park has 52 developed camping sites on the east side of the Lake that are primarily used for RV camping and primitive camping is available around the Lake. Seven Rivers Day Use area is on the west side of the Lake and contains four developed picnic areas. The visitor center includes historical exhibits about the "wild west" town of Seven Rivers and



Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park.

other regional history and nature. There are also 2.6 miles of trails within the Park.

According to the State Parks Division, Brantley Lake State Park had 97,738 visitors in 2024. Based on Park staff observations, park visitors consist of the following break-down:

- ◀ 70% are visitors to the Carlsbad Caverns;
- ◀ 10% are frequent visitors throughout the year;
- ◀ 10% are visitors from New Mexico; and
- ◀ 10% are visitors from out-of-state or other countries

The New Mexico State Parks Division is currently making improvements to the Seven Rivers Day Use Area. An update to the *Brantley Lake State Park Management Plan* is underway as of July 2025.

## NUCLEAR ENERGY

### WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT (WIPP)

Located approximately 26 miles southeast of Carlsbad, the U.S. Department of Energy WIPP is the nation's only deep geological repository for nuclear waste. The site disposes of transuranic (TRU) waste, which includes clothing, tools, rags, residues, soil, and other items contaminated with small amounts of plutonium and other man-made radioactive elements. The waste is permanently stored in



Brantley Dam at Brantley Lake State Park.

underground salt bed layers over 2,000 below the surface.

WIPP has helped clean up over 22 nuclear waste sites nationwide since 1999. In October 2024, WIPP celebrated the safe delivery of nuclear waste over 17 million miles since its opening, comprising over 141,700 TRU waste shipments.

WIPP employs over 1,200 people from the Carlsbad area, which includes employees supporting waste characterization and packaging activities at the generator sites. WIPP employees are highly trained to handle nuclear waste transportation and disposal. The WIPP facility also includes two mine rescue teams, emergency response teams, a fire department, security department, and information centers that are highly skilled and trained to respond to variety of emergency situations.

There is local interest in and support for new nuclear energy production in or near Carlsbad. The City hosts an annual Energy Summit to hear from a range of energy producers and researchers. In 2024, the Energy Summit included a presentation on small modular nuclear reactors and discussion with Carlsbad's nuclear task force. According to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the small reactors produce up to 300 megawatts, which is about a third of traditional reactors. The smaller reactors are intended to be more efficient, cheaper, and deployable into rural areas like Carlsbad.

## ENERGY DIVERSITY

In its 2023 annual report, the Permian Basin Partnership presented the wind and solar potential in the region. While Southeast New Mexico is not a strong candidate for wind power, the state leads the nation in percentage change of solar capacity estimated to be added in 2024.

## SOLAR ENERGY GENERATION

Solar farms generally require significant acreage and are typically developed outside of urban areas. The Cowboy Solar project, proposed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and NextEra Energy Resources, would generate 200 megawatts of solar power capacity from an array of solar panels installed on approximately 2,528 acres of public land in Eddy County, about 18 miles southeast of Loving. The facility is projected to go into service by 2027.

The US Department of Energy is also looking to develop 1,800 acres of the 5,000-acre WIPP facility with solar panels. This solar plant is estimated to generate up to 150 megawatts of electricity.

Many businesses and residences are adding solar panels, a growing field for employment. For example, Southeast New Mexico College is installing almost 1,800 panels produce to about 1.6 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year, enough for almost all of the campus' current energy needs, in addition to other energy-efficiency improvements.

## ENERGY STORAGE

Sustainable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, produce energy based on conditions, not demand. To bank the excess energy for later use, battery energy storage systems can be installed and deployed. The City of Carlsbad does not currently have development standards for such facilities; however, to respond to the rapid development of battery energy storage systems, other cities in New Mexico, such as Albuquerque, have created development standards for battery storage systems. The City of Carlsbad should create and incorporate development standards for this use as an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance.

## 6.3 ECONOMIC TOOLS & INITIATIVES

Carlsbad has several tools and initiatives that are intended to foster economic development. The following tools and initiatives can be utilized by the City to enhance and grow the economy.

### LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACT

The City of Carlsbad adopted a Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) in 2000 (Ordinance #2000-08, §§1-14). The LEDA Ordinance allows the City to financially assist businesses with local funds that would otherwise be deemed as violating New Mexico's "Anti-Donation Clause." The LEDA Ordinance allows the City to use public funds to assist businesses looking to improve, expand, relocate, and grow with the support of local government and state funds. The Ordinance outlines the criteria for a qualifying entity to apply for LEDA funds:

- ◀ Purchase, lease, grant, construct or reconstruct, improve or acquire land, buildings, or infrastructure;
- ◀ Implement public works improvements deemed essential to the location or expansion of a qualifying business;
- ◀ Provide payments for professional services contracts for implementing a plan or project;
- ◀ Provide direct loans or grants for land, buildings, or infrastructure;
- ◀ Provide loan guarantees;
- ◀ Purchase land for a publicly held industrial park; and
- ◀ Construction of a building for use by a qualifying business.

There have been numerous legislative amendments by the State Legislature, which are not reflected in the City's current LEDA

ordinance. It is important that the City ensures its LEDA ordinance is consistent with legislative requirements, best practices in economic development, and updated in accordance with §5-10-1 et seq. NMSA, as amended. This should include, for example, definitions that match NMSA 2019, project goals, joint powers agreements, and improvements to implementation policies and procedures.

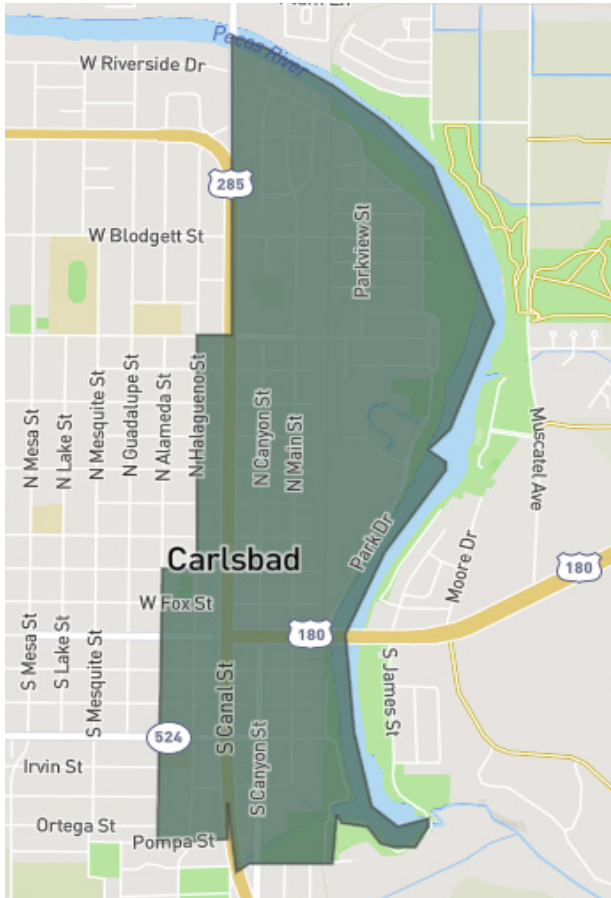
### METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA

The New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Article 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) provides municipalities with the option to designate a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) for those areas that meet the definition of blight and are in need of economic development. A MRA designation allows the municipality to donate public resources and partner with private developers without violating the New Mexico Constitution's Anti-Donation Clause. The MRA designation process includes the following steps:

1. The municipality formally designates the identified blighted area as appropriate for a MRA by approving an MRA Designation Report.
2. A MRA Plan is prepared, which identifies specific redevelopment projects including land acquisition, and improvements to streets, community facilities, public spaces, and housing.
3. Once the MRA is in place, a municipality can use it as a tool to direct both public and private investment into the MRA to reverse blighted conditions.

There are no MRA districts in Carlsbad at this time. However, Carlsbad MainStreet is interested in pursuing this designation as it would provide more tools and economic resources for redevelopment in Downtown. The MRA designation could extend to incorporate an area around the Pecos River,

## CARLSBAD OPPORTUNITY ZONE



Source: CLA Connect.

including the Cascades, as further discussed in the next section.

## OPPORTUNITY ZONE PROGRAM

Established by the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the Opportunity Zone Program was added to the tax code through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which allowed states to nominate economically distressed census tracts to be designated as an “Opportunity Zone” for the purpose of encouraging investment while offering tax benefits. The State of New Mexico nominated 63 census tracts to the Department of the Treasury for qualification as Opportunity Zones. All 63 census tracts were accepted and will retain the designation for ten years.

Eddy County submitted three census tracts for consideration and two were selected. The

designated Qualified Opportunity Zone is primarily located between Canal Street/US 285 and the Pecos River. A smaller portion runs from S. Canal Street to Halagueño Street and Alameda Street within Downtown Carlsbad (see *Carlsbad Opportunity Zone map*). This program provides a strong basis for investment in this area of Carlsbad.

## 6.4 ORGANIZATIONS

### CARLSBAD DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

The Carlsbad Department of Development (CDOD) is a private 501(c)(6) organization that works to improve the economies of Carlsbad and South Eddy County. Established in 1966, the CDOD assists local businesses to grow and expand, recruits new businesses to Carlsbad, and aids in housing and job-related issues. The CDOD conducts market research in the Carlsbad area regarding demographics, retail market analysis, and housing. The CDOD targets key economic growth factors, such as labor force readiness and training, technology transfer, and the availability of capital resources.

The CDOD currently has 96 members and 41 board members. It assists existing businesses and helping them grow in place, supporting their supply and infrastructure needs. The CDOD is working on development of the manufacturing sector to attract new industries and businesses to locate in Carlsbad.

The CDOD has cited the housing shortage in Carlsbad as a major challenge in growing the local workforce. This continued growth also impacts and is limited by transportation infrastructure. The CDOD also noted that commercial growth is currently focused in South Carlsbad, particularly the Carlston Ranch area. The City is extending infrastructure to this area to help support and attract new commercial development.

## THE CASCADES AT CARLSBAD

The CDOD invested over \$7 million in local private and federal grant money to purchase property located along the Pecos River for mixed-use development. The Cascades is located in the Carlsbad Designated Opportunity Zone, as previously mentioned, which provides additional investment opportunities and incentives for the development of the property.

## CARLSBAD MAINSTREET

Carlsbad MainStreet, a 501c3 organization, has been in existence since 1987. MainStreet works with local Downtown Carlsbad business owners, non-profits, and the business community to revitalize Downtown Carlsbad. Carlsbad MainStreet has a 13-member board, which is a mix of businesses owners, City staff, and community members.

In 2010, the City and Carlsbad MainStreet completed the *Downtown Master Plan*, which is long overdue for an update. The update should be done as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), which first requires that Downtown be designated as a MRA in compliance with the New Mexico Redevelopment Act. As discussed previously in this chapter, the MRA would provide a strong economic tool for making improvements to Downtown Carlsbad and pursuing public/private partnerships with private developers.

Carlsbad MainStreet has been instrumental in improving the facades of Downtown buildings, installing new benches, light fixtures, and trash cans, wayfinding signs, digital kiosks, and commissioning murals. In 2023, Carlsbad MainStreet saw \$659,988 in private reinvestment and \$96,000 in public reinvestment, logged 1,235 volunteer hours, rehabilitated 11 buildings, and completed four design/ placemaking projects. Carlsbad MainStreet also supported the establishment of the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (Ordinance No. 2023-31), intended to recognize and conserve the archaeological and historical heritage of the City (*see Chapter 5: Land Use for more detail*).

Carlsbad MainStreet, Pearl of the Pecos Arts & Cultural District, contractors, and a group of local supporters celebrated renovation of the Historic Cavern Theatre, one of Carlsbad's most beloved Downtown buildings, and held a grand reopening on June 20, 2025. The Cavern Theatre will serve as a multi-service, community-oriented, performing arts center with state-of-the-art sound and technical capabilities. Future goals are to construct a new parking structure once the adjacent Eddy County Detention Center is demolished.

Carlsbad MainStreet organizes several events in Downtown, including the Cavernfest music festival that has expanded from one to two days, holiday events, and the Carlsbad Downtown Farmers & Makers Market that runs twice a week from May to October.

Carlsbad MainStreet is focused on incorporating more mixed-use development in Downtown, including housing, restaurants, and retail. There is also interest in



Carlsbad MainStreet Downtown mural project.

adding gateway signage at Canyon Street and Greene Street, and signage to divert large truck traffic out of Downtown to make the area a safer, more walkable environment.

## CARLSBAD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce is located at corner of Greene Street and Canal Street at the entrance to Downtown Carlsbad. The Chamber is a supporter of the major industries in Carlsbad and Eddy County, including WIPP, oil and gas, and potash mining. The Chamber of Commerce has a Board of Directors consisting of representatives of Carlsbad businesses and industries, community and non-profit organizations, and government. The Chamber includes the following councils:

- ▶ **Ambassadors:** Acts as liaison between the Carlsbad Chamber and its members.
- ▶ **Carlsbad 40-Under-40:** Organizes and supports young leaders with professional development and growth.
- ▶ **Christmas on the Pecos:** Develops community-based event planning for the Christmas on the Pecos.
- ▶ **Governmental Affairs:** Assists and promotes business participation and promotes the interests of Carlsbad business in the political process.
- ▶ **Age-Friendly Communities:** Promotes Carlsbad as a attractive place for retirees.
- ▶ **Tourism:** Promotes tourism and solicits conventions for Carlsbad and South Eddy County.

The Chamber of Commerce also hosts several events throughout the year including:

- ▶ Carlsbad 40 Under 40;
- ▶ Annual Brews on the Pecos Festival;
- ▶ Annual Banquet and Meeting;
- ▶ Christmas on the Pecos; and
- ▶ Winter Wine Festival.

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Carlsbad's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is located in Downtown Carlsbad and managed by Southeast New Mexico College. The SBDC assists potential business owners with the following:

- ▶ Business Plan Development and Better Financial Management;
- ▶ Time Management and the "Four Disciplines" of Executions;
- ▶ Advanced Marketing and Sales Survival; and
- ▶ Management/Strategic Consulting.

The City and CDOD should partner with the SBDC to develop and strengthen existing small business to diversify and grow entrepreneurship in Carlsbad.

## 6.5 OPPORTUNITIES & ASSETS

### NATIONAL CAVE and KARST RESEARCH INSTITUTE and MUSEUM

The Cave and Karst Research Institute (NCKRI) conducts, supports, facilitates, and promotes programs in cave and karst research, education, environmental management, and data acquisition sharing. The organization is funded in partnership with the National Park Service, State of New Mexico, and the City of Carlsbad. Federal and state funding are administered by the New Mexico Institute of Technology.



National Cave and Karst Research Institute and Museum.

The NCKRI holds workshops and educational programming in the Carlsbad area. The Museum hosts a variety of exhibits on caving and karst activities and education. It was the first building in the world to incorporate a bat roost as part of the design. The roost is intended to give biologists a view of bat habits and the needs of bats in general.

Educational efforts at NCKRI focus on the protection of caves and karst landscapes. The effects of global climate change are affecting the earth's karst environments and they are under stress. NCKRI is leading the efforts to educate the public about the importance of the karst environments and understand the importance of karst to the overall health of the earth.

## CREATIVE ECONOMY

An important growth area for the State of New Mexico as a whole is in the area of arts and cultural tourism and production. Estimates from the Bureau of Economic Analysis at the U.S. Department of Commerce determined that in 2022, New Mexico ranked 30th among all states for value-added revenues from arts and culture production representing 2.7% of the total value-added revenues in the state. For comparison, of the states in the Four Corners Region, New Mexico's rate of value-added revenues was less than Colorado (3.7%), Utah (3.3%), and Arizona (3.0%).

In 2022, New Mexico's creative economy contributed \$6 billion in annual economic activity and \$1.6 billion in taxable annual wages. It estimated that 12% of all GRT establishments are within the creative industries and that the "arts, entertainment, and recreation" sector would grow by 118% through 2023.

## NEW MEXICO CREATIVE INDUSTRIES DIVISION

In 2023, the New Mexico Legislature passed House Bill 8 to create the Creative Industries Division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD). The

Creative Industries Division (CID) is charged with supporting the creative industries by:

- ◀ Increasing and advancing creative industry based economic development in New Mexico;
- ◀ Supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses in creative industries;
- ◀ Assisting organizations that support creative industry companies and workers;
- ◀ Supporting educational and workforce training initiatives that facilitate creative industry growth and success;
- ◀ Identifying and helping establish public infrastructure to support creative industries;
- ◀ Serving as an information clearinghouse by providing resources and opportunities to creative industry stakeholders; and
- ◀ Acting as a liaison between creative industries-related businesses and organizations.

In 2024, the CID initiated a study to help shape a strategic plan. The study was completed in partnership with Creative Startups, and contained the results of asset mapping, current needs, future opportunities, CID success metrics, and the pillars for CID success, including:

- ◀ **Ensure the CID Thrives:** Provide citizens of New Mexico with beneficial resources that ensures elected officials continue to support the CID.
- ◀ **Equip Communities to Lead from Within:** Pursue strategies that equip local communities to implement projects and plans that are relevant to their communities.
- ◀ **Invest in Ecosystems:** Cultivate innovation networks that traverse economic sectors, including rural and urban, traditional, artistic, and creative tech entrepreneurs, investors, and market channels.

- ◀ **Engage Beyond New Mexico:** Expand the capacity of New Mexico's creative businesses to reach markets beyond the state borders.

### MAYOR'S CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Mayor's Cultural Development Council works closely with the Creative Carlsbad Arts Council to develop arts and cultural events in Carlsbad. The Council consists of eleven distinguished individuals who are from Carlsbad and have become experts in their fields of performance and creative arts and now represent arts and cultural institutions across the United States. The Council works at expanding arts and culture in Carlsbad by working with local organizations to promote Carlsbad as a cultural destination across the country.

### CREATIVE CARLSBAD

Creative Carlsbad is an Arts Council that works closely with the City of Carlsbad to strengthen arts and culture organizations and to bring quality arts experiences for residents of Carlsbad and the surrounding area. Community arts organizations, businesses, and individuals can become members helping to advance the arts in Carlsbad. Members receive perks such as discounts at events and advertising on the organizations website and Facebook page. Creative Carlsbad's latest projects include:

- ◀ Partnership with Carlsbad MainStreet to renovate the Cavern Theatre marquee;
- ◀ Downtown Mural Project on electrical boxes in the Downtown area;
- ◀ Summer Concert Series at the Halagueño Arts Park; and
- ◀ Pearl of the Pecos Inaugural Initiatives to ensure forward movement and development of the Pearl of the Pecos Arts & Cultural District.

### PEARL OF THE PECOS ARTS & CULTURAL DISTRICT

The State of New Mexico adopted enabling legislation to create Arts and Cultural Districts in 2007. The intent of the legislation was to support arts and cultural based economic development for businesses, individuals, organizations, agencies, and institutions for the purpose of creating an economic market niche. The legislation established the New Mexico MainStreet Program Director as the coordinator of the state's efforts and the New Mexico Arts Commission as the authorizing body for Arts and Cultural Districts.



As part of the enabling legislation, local communities who formally designate an Arts and Cultural District have the ability to adopt



Mural depicting life in Carlsbad.

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA), and through referendum, pass the Municipal Infrastructure Gross Receipts Tax (MIGRT) to be utilized by the local Arts and Cultural District in the support and development of the District. The legislation also provides an incentive by allowing for a doubling of the state tax credit for rehabilitation of historic properties within an Arts and Cultural District.

In July 2018, with the leadership from Creative Carlsbad, the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Cultural District was designated in Carlsbad. The goal of the district is to integrate the arts into broader economic revitalization projects and promote cultural tourism. The City is currently working on an Arts and Cultural District Plan that will identify strategies and projects to grow and support the arts in Carlsbad.

The Pearl of the Pecos Arts & Cultural District is managed by MainStreet Carlsbad and is home to private and cooperative galleries, businesses that provide hands on training for artists, and Halagueño Arts Park, which contains a sculpture garden, performance space, and the Carlsbad Museum. Several local performance spaces will help create an entertainment district within the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Cultural District with several local restaurants and breweries hosting live music every day of the week.

In 2024, the Pearl of the Pecos Arts & Cultural District was granted State Authorization, the tenth New Mexico community to achieve this designation. The Pearl of the Pecos is eligible to receive additional incentives, including assistance with cultural plan development and historic building tax credits.

### CARLSBAD MUSEUM

The Carlsbad Museum opened in 1931 as New Mexico's first municipal museum. It collects, preserves, exhibits, and interprets artifacts, documents, and artwork related to Carlsbad

and southeast New Mexico. The Museum features permanent displays and temporary exhibits featuring a variety of southwestern artists, crafts persons, and history topics. The Museum is closely aligned with the greater Carlsbad community and hosts annual exhibits for the Carlsbad community and surrounding communities.



Carlsbad Museum.



The Cavern Theatre reopened on June 20, 2025.

### CAVERN THEATRE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Cavern Theatre is one of the most beloved Downtown Carlsbad landmarks. It was built in 1951 one block north of the Eddy County courthouse square. The Cavern Theatre was designed in the International Style with a large seating area and multi-colored neon marquee. In 2014, the Cavern Theatre was donated to the City of Carlsbad by private owners. The City developed a task force to transform it into a fully functional performing arts center and classroom spaces. The restoration of the neon marquee was completed in 2018 and renovations to the Cavern Theatre were completed for a grand opening on June 20, 2025. Carlsbad MainStreet is managing the facility and will hold events such as movie screenings, plays, and musicals.

### INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Carlsbad Industrial Park is located near the Cavern City Air Terminal and is approximately 450 acres in size. However, the Industrial Park is nearly at capacity with manufacturing primarily related to the oil and gas industry, and new areas should be designated and promoted for industrial development purposes.

There are large areas in Carlsbad that are either already zoned for industrial use or they are identified for industrial use on the Future Land Use Scenario (see *Chapter 5: Land Use*) that would be appropriate for new industrial/manufacturing business development. This includes properties along E. Greene Street, both within the City boundary and areas outside the City that would be appropriate for annexation, within the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area in proximity to the Carlsbad Cavern City Airport, and along National Parks Highway, Derrick Road, and the BNSF rail line.

### TRANSLOADING & RAIL

The need for reliable transportation to serve the oil and gas and potash industries is driving the strong increase in rail traffic in Carlsbad. BNSF has invested heavily in rail infrastructure to meet transport demands in and around Carlsbad. Statewide, BNSF shipped 66,720 carloads and intermodal units in 2023, with the majority being industrial products. In 2023, New Mexico received 58,694 carloads and intermodal units from BNSF, with a more even split between agricultural, industrial, and consumer products.

### SHARING ECONOMY

A fast growing economic trend in recent years is the "sharing economy". This includes using technology to facilitate the exchange of goods and services between parties. The exchanges take place through a shared marketplace or collaborative platform, which is a shared system or network that matches people with what they need with those that have it. The sharing economy is not necessarily new; however, access to technology through smartphones and apps has created an expanded market that has made sharing and collaborating efficient and convenient. It also provides income through contract employment or by charging a fee for services.

### SHORT-TERM RENTALS

A short-term rental (STR) is a unit rented to a person or group of persons for less than 30 days. STRs have become a major part of tourist economies across the globe, and have gained popularity through the use of online platforms that allow local residents to list homes, rooms, and residential units for rent. Popular platforms include Airbnb, VRBO (Vacation Rentals by Owners), Flipkey, and Homeaway; all four of these platforms have listings located in Carlsbad.

Short-term rentals contribute to local wealth, give residents the opportunity to earn money hosting guests, and may prevent economic

hardship and displacement. Residents hosting guests may utilize underused space or rooms in homes and revenue may be used to off-set the costs homeownership. STRs spread tourist dollars beyond the typical hotel and tourist districts, hosting travelers in less frequented neighborhoods (Sustainable Economies Law Center, 2016). STRs may also address some of the immediate needs for temporary lodging in Carlsbad.

STRs have been criticized for possible negative impacts on affordable housing, effects on community cohesion, and unfair competition with the hotel industry. Many cities, including Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos, have developed regulations on STRs, balancing opportunities for economic development and prioritizing community needs. The Sustainable Economies Law Center recommends establishing a registration and record keeping system for STRs, protecting the supply and affordability of housing, creating regulatory protections for guests and wellbeing of neighbors, and preserving public tax revenues. Adopting nuanced regulations on STRs channel income-earning opportunities to those who need them and reduce potentially negative effects on communities.

### TRANSPORTATION / RIDESHARING

One of the most popular examples of the sharing economy having a direct effect on the economy is ridesharing. Uber, Lyft, and other transportation companies allow drivers to use their own vehicles to transport people who connect with them via a free mobile app. Drivers are vetted by the companies and can create their own flexible schedules.

Currently, Uber operates in Carlsbad and can take riders across the region. Encouraging ridesharing in Carlsbad could be a strategy to offer more transportation options and allow people to take additional part- or full-time work that fits their schedules.

## PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Carlsbad has identified the following investments to support economic development in the City in the 2026-2030 ICIP:

- ◀ **MainStreet Wayfinding Signage:** Plan, design, and install wayfinding signage in Downtown Carlsbad as well as surrounding areas, that include both arts and cultural district and historical district.
- ◀ **MainStreet Property Acquisition for Parking:** Plan, design, acquire, construct, and equip a parking lot along the MainStreet district (also listed in Transportation).
- ◀ **Cavern City Airport Concession Renovations:** Plan, design, and construct renovations to reconfigure and renovate the Cavern City Airport Concession area and to add a vehicle rental area customer counter, and secured vehicle parking area (also listed in Transportation).

## 6.6 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1

Create a strong, balanced, and diversified local economy that fosters entrepreneurial activities and increases employment opportunities.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To promote Carlsbad as a regional employment center for southeastern New Mexico.*
- ◀ *To position Carlsbad for target industry growth and development.*
- ◀ *To encourage young families to remain in or relocate to Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To support locally-owned, small business development and retention.*

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.1

Create an economic development strategic plan that includes, but is not limited to:

- ◀ Engagement with existing major employers in Carlsbad and Eddy County;
- ◀ Fiscal baseline assessment that describes the existing tax base, service demand, revenues, and service costs;
- ◀ Retail, industrial/manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism market assessments;
- ◀ Economic base job goals and target industries;
- ◀ Identification of development opportunity sites, including properties along E. Greene Street, Carlston Ranch, S. National Park Highway, Derrick Road, West Bypass, and George Shoup Relief Route.
- ◀ Consideration of future annexations as identified on the Future Annexations map; and
- ◀ Implementation actions and key benchmarks.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.2

Promote the Cavern City Air Terminal to generate interest and development opportunities from aviation and defense related businesses seeking to expand or relocate to Carlsbad.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.3

Promote Carlsbad as a business-friendly community with an available water supply, rail and air access, cultural and recreational assets, and higher education opportunities (Southeast New Mexico College).

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.4

Complete a comprehensive update to the *City of Carlsbad LEDA* (Local Economic Development Act) Ordinance that identifies specific goals and targeted industries, updates definitions consistent with state legislation, provides for joint powers agreements between the City of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and Carlsbad Department of Development, and revises implementation policies and procedures, including claw back provisions.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.5

Work with the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce and Carlsbad Small Business Development Center on providing information on the New Mexico Small Business Investment Corporation, The Loan Fund, New Mexico Angels, and other organizations to assist with small start-ups and the expansion of small businesses in Carlsbad.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 1.6

Complete a feasibility study for developing a small business incubator in Downtown Carlsbad. The feasibility study should include an inventory of existing businesses and the local workforce, market demand and opportunities, potential assistance and services to be offered, financial feasibility and management, and potential locations for the facility.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 2

Create a well-trained and educated local workforce to meet the needs of existing and future employers.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To ensure the Carlsbad workforce can effectively compete for meaningful and productive employment and earn a living wage.*
- ◀ *To ensure the Carlsbad workforce is adequately trained for new employment opportunities in target industries, including healthcare, energy, aviation, manufacturing, and digital and other emerging technologies.*
- ◀ *To help Carlsbad households achieve economic prosperity by raising the median household income.*

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2.1

Collaborate with the Carlsbad Municipal School District and Southeast New Mexico College on strengthening, expanding, and promoting workforce training programs related to existing and future business clusters in the region, including oil and gas extraction, health sciences, industrial maintenance, value-added agriculture, alternative energy, creative industries, tourism and hospitality, etc.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2.2

Provide information on available job training incentives, including the New Mexico Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) managed by the New Mexico Economic Development Department, to companies interested in expanding in or relocating to Carlsbad.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2.3

Participate in job fairs for companies looking to hire new employees and graduates from Carlsbad and Eddy County.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 3

Expand and promote commercial and industrial development in appropriate areas of Carlsbad.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To strengthen and promote the Carlsbad Industrial Park located adjacent to the Cavern City Air Terminal property.*
- ◀ *To support new industrial development within the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area, along E. Greene Street/US 62, West Bypass, and Derrick Road.*
- ◀ *To accommodate new businesses and industries that are looking to relocate or expand in Carlsbad and Eddy County.*

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 3.1

Coordinate with existing companies located within the Carlsbad Industrial Park and the E. Greene Street industrial area to learn what they would need to expand their operations in Carlsbad.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 3.2

Recruit industries that are complementary to existing business clusters, including oil and gas, health sciences, value-added agriculture, aviation, and alternative energy, including wind, solar, or biomass, tourism and hospitality.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 3.3

Identify, prioritize, and secure funding for infrastructure improvements needed by target industries to encourage relocation or expansion in Carlsbad.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4

Promote Downtown Carlsbad as the community's retail center and arts and cultural hub.

### Objectives:

- ◀ To encourage the redevelopment of vacant and/or underutilized properties for commercial retail, food service, entertainment, and mixed-use development.
- ◀ To pursue public/private partnerships and commit available funding to improve the aesthetics and building and street conditions within Downtown Carlsbad.
- ◀ To foster the growth of the creative economy and expand community access to arts and culture.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 4.1

Designate Downtown Carlsbad as an Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), and subsequently, solicit a consultant to develop an MRA plan that identifies opportunity sites and allows the City to contribute to redevelopment activities and projects in accordance with the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Act.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 4.2

Prioritize and secure funding for capital improvements in Downtown Carlsbad, including improvements to the Cavern Theatre, Halagueño Arts Park, and the Carlsbad Museum.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 4.3

Support and promote the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Culture Coordinating Council on creating new events at the Cavern Theater Performing Arts Center and Halagueño Arts Park that feature art created by local and regional artists and other events, concerts, and murals that further the arts and culture in Carlsbad.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5

Strengthen and promote Carlsbad and the surrounding area as a tourism destination.

### Objectives:

- ◀ To market and increase regional and nation-wide awareness of Carlsbad's unique attractions, events, outdoor recreation, and arts and culture offerings.
- ◀ To foster the expansion of tourism-related businesses, including restaurants, hotels, and outdoor recreation retail and services.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 5.1

Coordinate with the New Mexico Economic Development Department, New Mexico True Campaign, Carlsbad Department of Development, and Carlsbad MainStreet to showcase Carlsbad's tourism destinations, including Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park, Pecos River and Riverside Park area, Cave and Karst Research Institute, Cavern Theatre Performing Arts Center, community events, and other attractions in Downtown Carlsbad on state and national media outlets.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 5.2

Develop a digital marketing plan to attract new hotels, restaurants, and outdoor recreation retail and service businesses that includes, but is not limited to, the current number of hotel rooms in Carlsbad and average hotel room cost, tourism trends and lodgers' tax revenues, unmet demand for hotel rooms, demographics and available work force, etc.

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## INFRASTRUCTURE

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ Description of Carlsbad's water supply and distribution system, including reservoirs, water wells, pressure zones and stations
- ▶ Water demand and growth areas, including peak day and future demand
- ▶ Water planning, including the New Mexico State Water Plan, 50-Year Water Plan, and water conservation
- ▶ Priority water projects, including the north annexation, Double Eagle Water System, and Carlston Ranch, and the ICIP
- ▶ Sewer system, including the WWTP, effluent reuse system, and planned sewer improvements, and the ICIP
- ▶ Storm drainage system, existing facilities, planned improvements, and the ICIP
- ▶ Solid waste collection, recycling, composting, and Riverblitz
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies to increase infrastructure capacity, correct deficiencies, and address growth

Infrastructure forms the backbone of every city and is a critical component that enables a city to support its population and allow it to grow. Urban infrastructure includes water supply and distribution systems, sewer collection and treatment systems, stormwater conveyance and management, and solid waste collection. In order to support new population growth, housing development, and industry expansion, it is crucial that the City of Carlsbad continues to address deficiencies, improve upon, and expand its infrastructure systems to serve the community's existing and future needs.



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## 7.1 WATER SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION

The City of Carlsbad has access to three water resources, including the Capitan Reef Aquifer, Ogallala Aquifer, and surface water from the Pecos River. Approximately 98% of Carlsbad's municipal water is obtained from drilling into the Capitan Reef Aquifer.

Groundwater is pumped from nine wells located seven miles southwest of Carlsbad in an area called Sheep's Draw in the foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains (see *Water System map, page 115*). The remaining 2% comes from wells in the Ogallala Aquifer, which are connected to the Double Eagle Water System. The portion of the aquifer mined by the City for use in the Carlsbad Municipal Water System is known as the Carlsbad Underground Water Basin. The City maintains a Wellhead Protection Program to protect the water from contamination and depletion (*Source: 2022 Annual Consumer Report on the Quality of Your Drinking Water*).

The City owns water rights to the Sheep's Draw well fields to the southwest (9,867 acre-feet), and to the Double Eagle well fields to the northeast near Maljamar in Lea County (7,648 acre-feet). The Double Eagle system serves mostly agricultural and industrial users, as well as the Ridgecrest Subdivision in Carlsbad, Connie Road, Blackfoot Road, E. Greene Street industrial park area, Brantley Lake State Park, and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The City of Carlsbad has invested in the Double Eagle Water System as a secondary supply of potable water.

Carlsbad also holds significant surface water rights from the Pecos River. Rights to the Pecos River are principally authorized for agricultural irrigation, but the City also relies on the Pecos River as an important recreational amenity.

The Ogallala Aquifer supplies water to the City-owned Double Eagle water system. Two rural water cooperatives in the planning area also utilize water rights in the Capitan Reef Aquifer, including the Otis Water Coop and the Happy Valley Water Coop. The Otis Water Coop owns and operates a water distribution system that borders the City of Carlsbad to the southeast. It supplies water to the unincorporated community of Otis, as well as the rural subdivisions to the south and east of US 285.

### WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM

The City of Carlsbad owns, operates, and maintains its water supply system. The City's water system was first constructed in the 1950's and replaced an earlier delivery system based on individual wells and a small network of distribution lines. Today, the system consists of nine wells, four ground storage reservoirs, three booster pump stations, seven pressure reducing stations, several miles of primary transmission lines ranging in size from 14 to 36 inches, and an even more extensive network of distribution lines to individual properties.

In 2022, the Water Department distributed 2.86 billion gallons of water to Carlsbad area customers through 1,162 miles of water distribution and transmission lines spread throughout the Carlsbad metro, Lea County, and Eddy County. The *2022 Annual Consumer Report* includes information on the water supply system quality, groundwater monitoring, Source Water Assessment & Protection Program (SWAPP), and leak detection and conservation tips for consumers.

### RESERVOIRS

There are currently four reservoirs serving the City of Carlsbad's water supply system and one reservoir is in the planning and design stage, which are described below:

- ◀ **Reservoir 1:** Located west of the intersection of 12th Street and Idaho

Street. The reservoir has a capacity of 5 million gallons and is 20 feet tall. Reservoir 1 is connected to Reservoir 2, which feeds Reservoir 1 when water levels drop below 13 feet. It primarily distributes its water to Reservoir 3.

- ◀ **Reservoir 2:** Located on Holland Street just west of Standpipe Road. Reservoir 2 has a capacity of 5 million gallons and is 20 feet tall. It serves the R2 Reduced Pressure Zone and Reservoir 1 when needed.
- ◀ **Reservoir 3:** Located on Skyline Drive, just north of Fountain Drive. Reservoir 3 is a steel tank with a capacity of 1 million gallons and is 30 feet tall. It serves the R3 Pressure Reducing Zone and the Ocotillo Reduced Pressure Zone.
- ◀ **Reservoir 4:** Located southwest of the City. Reservoir 4 is a steel tank with a capacity of 5 million gallons and is 40 feet tall. It is designed to collect water from the municipal wells and supply water to the rest of the water system.
- ◀ **Sheep's Draw Reservoir:** The Sheep's Draw Reservoir is currently in the planning and design phase and is slated to add an additional 5 million gallon capacity.

## WATER WELLS

Approximately 98% of Carlsbad's municipal water comes from nine wells drilled into the Capitan Reef Aquifer seven miles southwest of Carlsbad in an area called Sheep's Draw. These wells are connected to Reservoir 4, which supplies water to the rest of the water system. The remaining 2% of municipal water comes from the Double Eagle Water System, which uses wells drawing on the Ogallala Aquifer to the northeast.

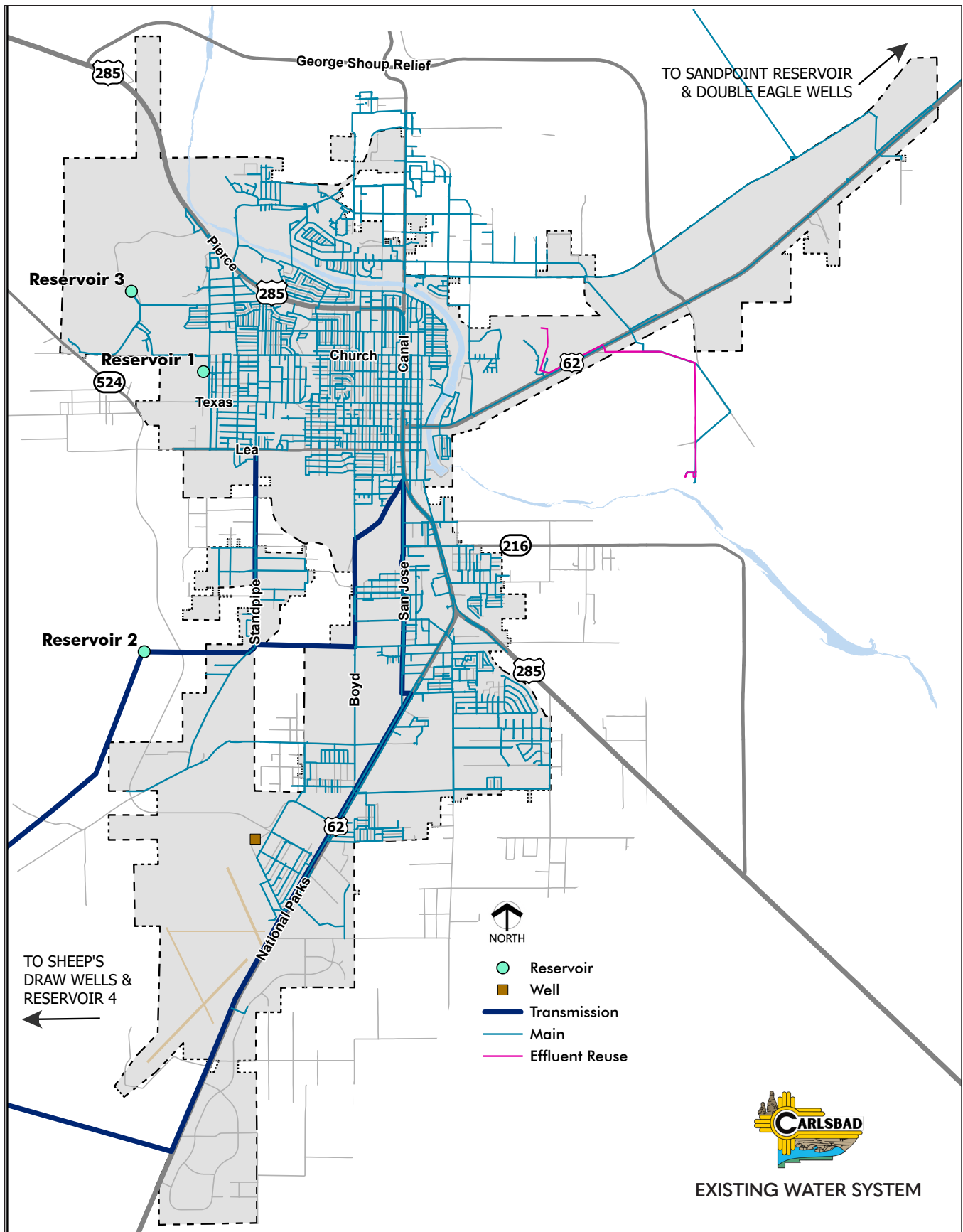
## PRESSURE ZONES & STATIONS

The City's water system consists of seven pressure zones that are controlled by pressure reducing stations and booster pump stations (see *Existing Water System*, page 115).

The seven pressure zones include:

- ◀ **R4 Gravity Pressure Zone:** Located just south of the Cavern City Airport. It is fed by Reservoir 4 and does not currently service any customers but will supply water to the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area in the future.
- ◀ **R3 Gravity Pressure Zone:** Located west and south of Skyline Drive. The pressure zone is fed from Reservoir 3.
- ◀ **R2 Gravity Pressure Zone:** Located south of Ferris Drive, west of Boyd Drive, and south of Lea Street. Fed directly by Reservoir 2.
- ◀ **R2 Pressure Reduced Pressure Zone:** Located north of Lea Street, east of Eighth Street, north of Ferris Street, and east of San Jose Boulevard. This pressure zone covers most of the City (Central Carlsbad) and uses pressure reducing valves for water supplied by Reservoirs 2 and 4.
- ◀ **University Reduced Pressure Zone:** Located north of Pierce Street, west of Johnson Street, and west of Desert Willow Drive. Fed by Reservoir 2.
- ◀ **Ocotillo Reduced Pressure Zone:** Located east of Skyline Drive, north of Church Street, and west of Twelfth Street. Fed by Reservoir 3.
- ◀ **La Huerta Pressure Zone:** Located north of the Roberts Subdivision and the City limits.

Booster pump and pressure reducing stations are used to control the water pressure in each zone when it becomes too high or low due to changes in elevation. Currently, water reducing stations are utilized to define pressure zones for the R2 Reduced Pressure Zone, University Reduced Pressure Zone, and the Ocotillo Reduced Pressure Zone. Booster pump stations are used to supply water to the City's reservoirs and support stable water pressure in the event of reduced supply from the City reservoirs.



## 7.2 WATER DEMAND & GROWTH AREAS

The City of Carlsbad has moved to a methodology where two distinct and separate zones are being evaluated via north and south with the dividing point at Mermod Street. The city's analysis resulted in assessing the needs of both sewer and water that resulted in two separate stand-alone plans in progress. The south will include the extension to Carlston Ranch and beyond that, the plan is to place a decentralized treatment plant within the next 10 years. A new consumer report as required by the EPA is planned to be published in the coming year.

### PEAK DAY

In addition to understanding the total gallons of water used on an average day, it is important to understand peak day and peak hour demands, which can affect the ability of the water system to meet higher demand on days when more water is being used (for example, in the summer for water lawns and cooling homes).

### FUTURE DEMAND

With the anticipated increased demand in the future, the City must ensure that there is enough capacity within the system to meet the demands on the system that exceed the daily average. The City is currently working towards a revised rate structure on water and sewer to support the General Fund.

## 7.3 WATER PLANNING

### NEW MEXICO STATE WATER PLAN

The *New Mexico State Water Plan* serves as an educational tool and resource guide to provide information about established water-related programs and to help elected officials support and advance the current policies, procedures, and programs that provide the baseline for creating New Mexico's

water future. The *New Mexico State Water Plan* is intended to be used by legislators, state agencies, county commissioners, local governments, public water suppliers, planners, businesses, irrigators, industry professionals, and residents of New Mexico. It is designed to assist in planning, policy making, project implementation, decision-making, seeking resources, and for pursuing funding opportunities.

Brief summaries of the three state statutes that govern regional and state water planning are as follows:

- ◀ **NMSA 72-14-3.1:** This statute provides the structure to implement a comprehensive State Water Plan in collaboration with the Interstate Commission, State Engineer, and Water Trust Board. The State Water Plan is a strategic management tool to promote stewardship of the state's water resources, the protection of water rights, water supply, and water quality while providing a basis for prioritizing infrastructure investment through statewide continuity of policy and water resources management. The plan includes water budgets for all major river basins and aquifer systems, water conservation strategies and policies, and drought management plan. It also includes consultation with the Indian nations.
- ◀ **NMSA 72-14-43:** This statute requires that New Mexico's water needs be met by allowing each region of the state to plan for its water future. The statute allows the state to assist in planning by implementing a state appropriation program to ensure an adequate supply of water in each region.
- ◀ **NMSA 72-14-44:** This statute provides authorization to the Interstate Stream Commission to appropriate groundwater or purchase water rights on behalf of the state's various regions. It also authorizes

the Interstate Stream Commission to grant or loan funds for regional water planning.

## 50-YEAR WATER ACTION PLAN

The Office of the Governor released the 50-year *Water Action Plan* (2023), which is an action plan to increase the water security in New Mexico. The *Action Plan* focuses on water conservation through the reduction of leaks, improved water storage, and incentivizing agricultural water conservation.

The *Action Plan* recommends seeking new water supplies by establishing a \$500 million strategic water supply to spur investments in desalination and wastewater treatment. It advises the adoption of policies to expand potable and non-potable water reuse. The *Action Plan* also encourages the cleanup and protection of the watershed by identifying contaminated groundwater sites and controlling pollution through discharge permitting program.

## WATER CONSERVATION

The Carlsbad area, like most of New Mexico, continues to experience drought conditions, which has put a strain on surface water supplies for irrigated agriculture. Since the City's water system relies on groundwater sources, it is less affected by periods of drought. However, the City of Carlsbad has put several policies in place to conserve water and plan for drought. The City's *Water Conservation, Emergency Response, and Drought Management Ordinance* sets out conservation measures for landscape irrigation. Currently, between April 1st and September 30th, no watering is allowed on Mondays and on any day between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Further conservation and rationing measures would go into effect in the event of a decline in municipal water levels. During a "Stage 2" conservation period, users would be restricted to watering just one day a week based on

their address number, while banning any new industrial connections to the City's water system. At "Stage 3" conservation period, all watering is prohibited and no new connections would be allowed.

## 7.4 PRIORITY WATER PROJECTS

Although located in an arid region and facing drought conditions, the City of Carlsbad continues to plan for a sustainable supply of water for the foreseeable future. As described above, the City owns extensive water rights to both the Capitan Reef Aquifer (9,867 acre-feet) and Ogallala Aquifer (7,648 acre-feet), as well as the Pecos River. Access to these water resources, as well as investment in water transmission infrastructure, ensures that the City will be able to support existing and future growth. Specific areas of the City are more advantageous for growth and will need to connect to the existing water supply system. Ensuring that targeted areas are served by the City's water system is important in its support for future growth.

## WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

### NORTH ANNEXATION

The City of Carlsbad has been working to complete the necessary hydrologic modeling for the planned 500-acre annexation to the north of the City on BLM land. Once public comment has been completed, the City will develop a focused strategy for moving forward with the annexation and the utilities required to serve the area.

### DOUBLE EAGLE WATER SYSTEM

To supplement the water resources provided by the Sheep's Draw wells that tap into the Capitan Reef Aquifer, the City has invested in the Double Eagle Water System to the northeast of the City near Loco Hills. This water system taps into the larger Ogallala Aquifer, which is one of the largest aquifers in North America. Improvements to the water

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

system are intended to double the City's water supply to support future growth and create redundancy for the wells that draw on the Capitan Reef Aquifer. The scope of this project is to plan, design, equip, install and construct a new water line from the Tatum Wells area to connect to the Double Eagle Water System. Due to the critical need, this project is ranked first on the 2026-30 ICIP.

The total cost of improvements is \$35 million over three phases. Phases One and Two installed 39 miles of new transmission lines between the existing reservoirs near Maljamar to the primary reservoir used by the Double Eagle Water System. Phase Three will add a new 5-million gallon tank and disinfectant facility, as well as a new transmission line to connect to water lines within the City of Carlsbad at Sheep's Draw. The design for Phase Three is complete and funding for the transmission line has been secured. Construction for Phase Three is expected to take 18 months to complete.

### CARLSTON RANCH

The Carlston Ranch Master Plan area will require extension of the water supply system from the primary transmission line in National Parks Highway. Planned improvements will be phased with the development and will be financed by the developer.

### FY2026-30 INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - WATER

The FY2026-30 ICIP listed the following improvements to Carlsbad's water system:

- ◀ **Double Eagle Waterline - Connection to Tatum Well Fields:** This project was moved to Capital Outlay Priority No. 1 due to the critical need for the necessary water infrastructure to sustain the planned future housing growth. The scope is to plan, design, equip, install, and construct a new water line from the Tatum Wells area to the existing Double Eagle Water System.

- ◀ **Double Eagle Waterline Replacement:** This project will be to plan, design, construct, and replace existing water lines of the Double Eagle water well field. The lines to be replaced serve as gathering lines and transmission lines from the two well fields.
- ◀ **National Parks Highway Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements:** This project will be to plan, design, and construct sewer infrastructure improvements (also includes water and roadways).
- ◀ **Affordable Housing Planning and Infrastructure:** This project will include a preliminary plan for sewer, water, and roads related to an affordable workforce housing development for current needs and continuing growth.
- ◀ **E. Greene Street Waterline Upgrade:** This project involves the repurposing of the existing waterline and installing new waterlines to increase fire flow capacities to the industrial park area along E. Greene Street.
- ◀ **Sheep's Draw Reservoir #5:** This project will be to plan, design, and construct a new 5-million gallon reservoir water tank in the Sheep's Draw water well field.
- ◀ **Davis Street Reconstruction:** This project will be to fully design and reconstruct the street, including new water and sewer lines.

## 7.5 SEWER SYSTEM

The wastewater collection system is owned, operated, and maintained by the City's Wastewater Department. Sewer service is limited to areas within Carlsbad's municipal limits and is not available to all neighborhoods. Residents of unincorporated Eddy County and the Standpipe Road area are outside of the wastewater service area and rely on

septic systems regulated by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED). However, annexation and the extension of sewer services are still needed for the Standpipe Road area. The New Mexico Environment Department requires a minimum lot area of 0.75 acres for septic system use, which limits the density and type of development that can be constructed in areas without sewer service.

## WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

The City's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is located at 45 Tell Tale Lane and processes over 2.5 million gallons of sewage on a daily basis. The WWTP utilizes an activated sludge process, equipped with primary and secondary clarification, and with chlorination and dechlorination systems for the effluent water before it is discharged into the Pecos River. The solids handling system consists of anaerobic digesters and paved sludge drying beds. Pathogen reduction is achieved via a composting process.

The WWTP produces Class A sludge, which when combined with wood mulch, grass clippings or leaves, produces a premium quality soil amendment product that is utilized at City parks and the municipal golf course. The compost facility is located at the WWTP.

The City completed a *Sanitary Sewer Master Plan* (HDR, 2013) that evaluated the system's capacity and recommended infrastructure improvements. Some of the hydrologic modeling is currently being reevaluated. The north/south system split analysis will also apply to sewer system assessments. Issues remain on how to improve the interceptors serving these areas. The main interceptor from Center Street South contains a sewer main that runs through the middle underneath Walmart and up to the Motel 6. Issues such as these are being assessed via the north/south assessment strategy to delineate projects within each zone in a more focused way.

According to the *Sanitary Sewer Master Plan* completed in 2013, the system consists of the following facilities (see *Existing Sewer System map*, page 120):

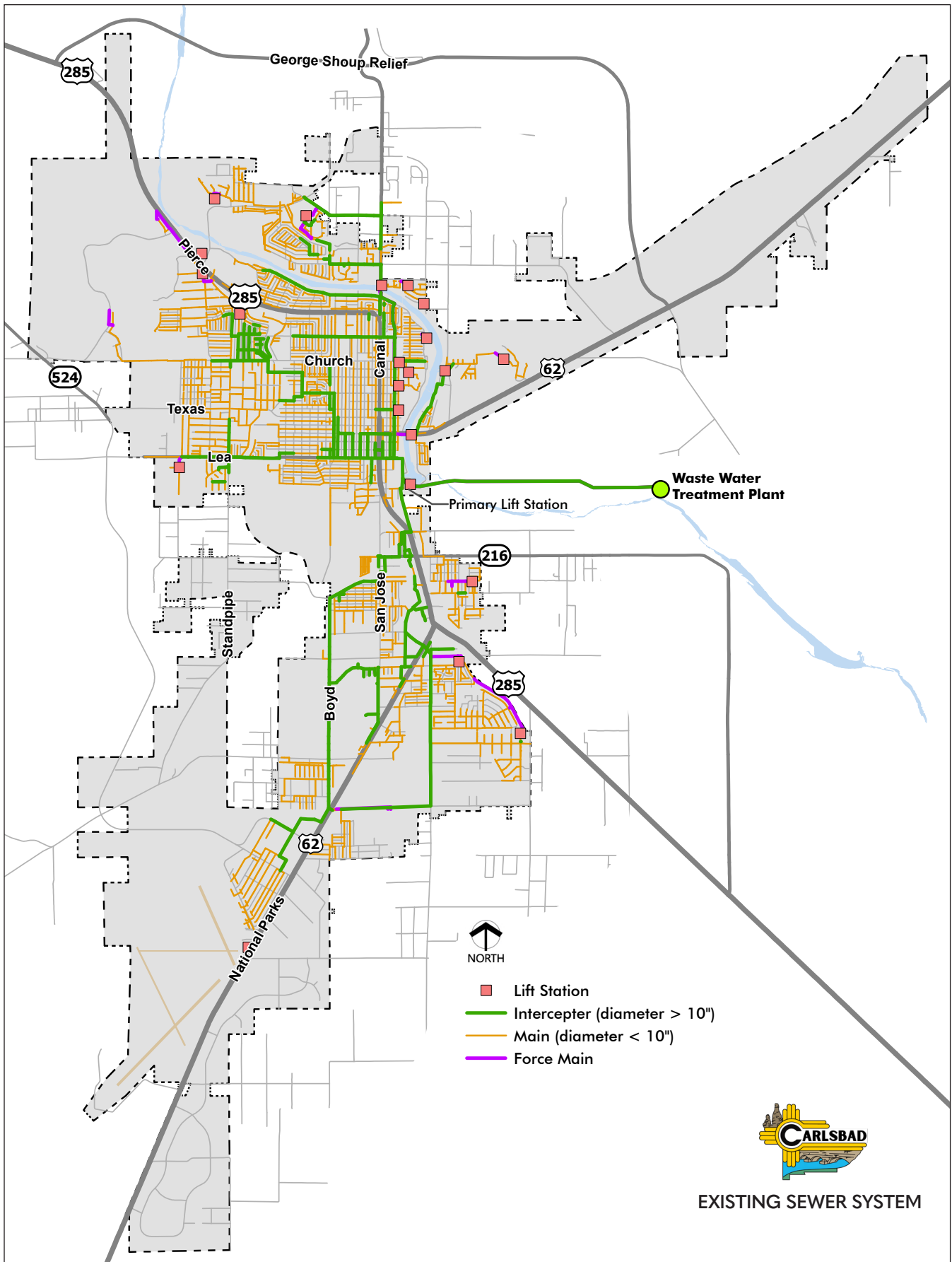
- ◀ Approximately 127 miles of gravity sanitary sewer mains, including 27 miles of sewer interceptors;
- ◀ Approximately 1,700 sanitary sewer manholes;
- ◀ 16 sanitary sewer lift stations ranging in capacity from 100 gallons per minute (GPM) to 10,000 gpm;
- ◀ Approximately 2 miles of sanitary sewer force mains; and
- ◀ A wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) rated for a peak design capacity of 6 million gallons per day (MGD).

## EFFLUENT REUSE PROGRAM

The City uses treated effluent to irrigate the Lake Carlsbad Golf Course and sells some of the treated water to local industry. The City is required to discharge a certain amount of its treated wastewater into the Pecos River. The City has been working on expanding the effluent reuse system to decrease the amount of potable water being used for irrigation of City-owned parks.

The City completed a *WWTF Effluent Reuse Preliminary Engineering Report* (HDR, 2014), which identified modifications needed to the WWTP and reuse system to support using treated effluent for irrigation of up to 750 acres of City-owned parks, cemeteries, and the Golf Course. The project was identified in two phases; 5A and 5B.

Phase 5A was constructed in 2016-2017 and included the construction of a new 2 million gallon storage tank, a new reuse transfer pump station, modification to an existing reuse pump station, modification of a chlorine building, addition of electrical and instrumentation work at the wastewater treatment facility, and



increasing the reuse pipe diameter from 10 inches to 12 inches along a 6,800-foot segment. This was done to improve chlorination of effluent and to provide storage and conveyance for treated reuse water.

Funding was secured from three sources, including the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSR); a Water Trust Board (WTB) grant/loan; and an EPA Special Appropriation Act Project FY10 (SAAP) grant. City funds were used to match the WTB and SAAP funds.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Standards (NPDES) program as regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency, is re-evaluating federal requirements on how communities may irrigate. As of June 2025, the irrigation system at Lake Carlsbad Golf Course is being replaced. Freshwater irrigation standards are required within 100 feet of any building. Additionally, U.S. Fish & Wildlife has declared a section of the Pecos River as a warm water fish hatching zone. Delivery of treated effluent may expand to serve a future cardboard recycling facility as determined by an ongoing feasibility study.

## PLANNED SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

Extensive repairs to the City's wastewater treatment plant were required to meet current EPA standards for health and safety. The *Sewer Master Plan* identified major interceptor lines that needed to be upgraded to meet existing demand and support future growth. Upgrades and rehabilitation of sewer lines, lift stations, and other facilities are needed due to age, condition, growth, and to ensure compliance with current regulations.

### CARLSTON RANCH

The City of Carlsbad is in the process of extending a sewer interceptor line to serve future development within the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area. After flowing through existing 8-inch sewer mains in Airway Drive and Sierra Vista Drive, the wastewater flow for Carlston

Ranch will discharge to the primary interceptor line in Boyd Drive. Upgrades to increase the capacity of four lines are needed.

## FY2026-30 INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - SEWER

The Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan listed the following improvements to Carlsbad's sewer system:

- ▶ **National Parks Highway Economic Development Infrastructure Improvements:** As reported in Section 7.1 Water, infrastructure improvements also include extension of sewer lines.
- ▶ **Affordable Housing Planning and Infrastructure:** This project will include a preliminary plan for sewer and water system improvements to support the 500-acre annexation to the north of Carlsbad.
- ▶ **Primary Sewer Lift Station Wet Well:** Plan and design a second sewer wet well for the City's primary sewer lift station. The City's entire sewer flow goes through this critical facility.
- ▶ **Carlsbad Sewer Improvements:** Design and construct the expansion of sewer lines to different areas located north of the Pecos River where sewer service is not currently available. This project includes the unincorporated area of La Huerta. The project will eliminate the use of septic tanks in an area adjacent to the Pecos River. This is a joint City of Carlsbad and Eddy County project.
- ▶ **Sewer Line Rehab Program:** Involves the acquisition of the equipment needed to clean and videotape sewer lines to identify problems and implement repairs to existing clay pipe lines over 40 years of age.
- ▶ **Davis Street Reconstruction:** Improve the street with sewer and water lines.
- ▶ **West Orchard Lane Sewer Upgrade:** Replace approximately 3,010 linear feet of undersized 12-inch vitrified clay pipe (VCP)

with 15-inch C-900 PVC pipe, including new manholes and service laterals, from a utility easement north of W. Orchard Lane near Country Club Way to the intersection of W. Orchard Lane and N. Canal Street.

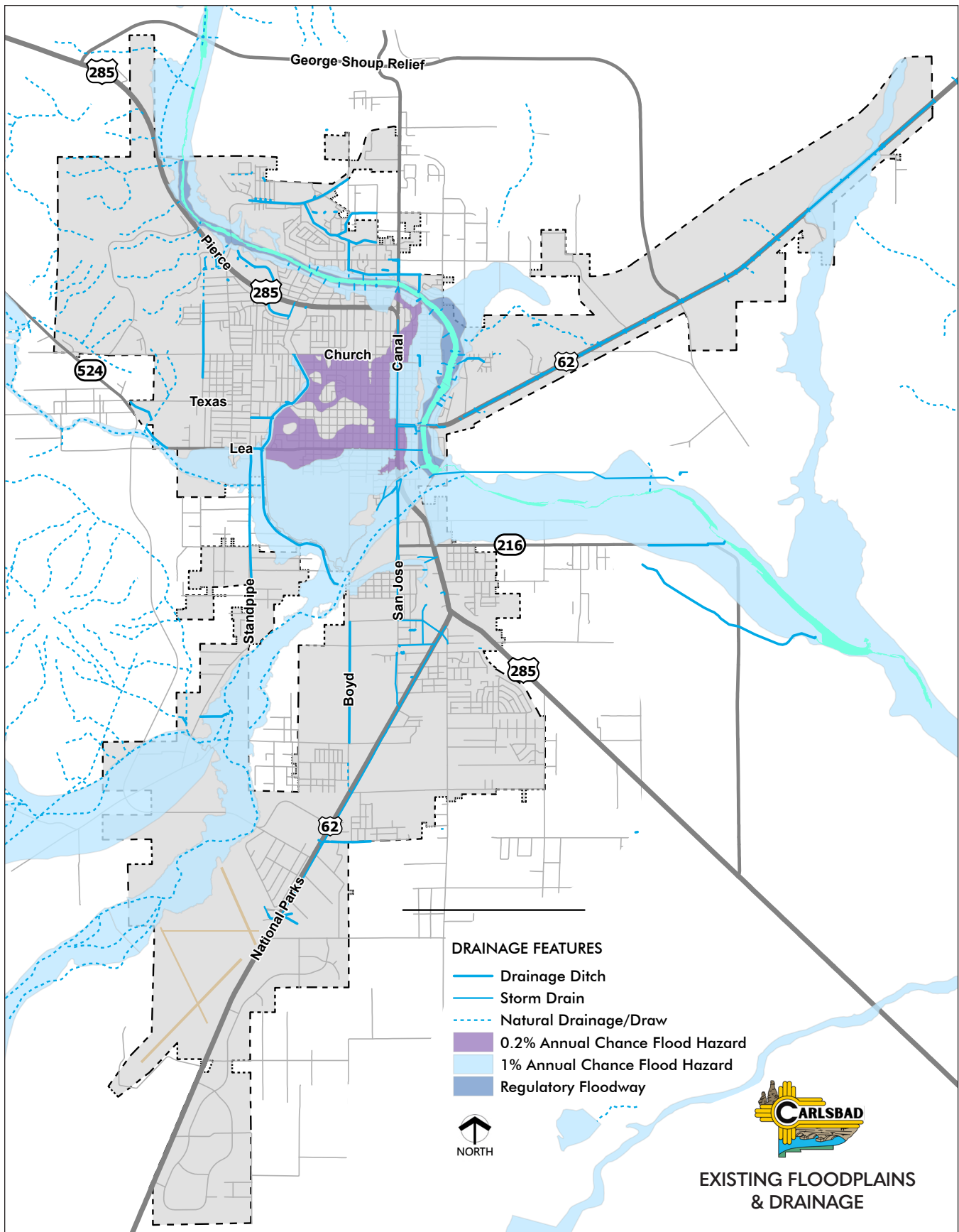
- ◀ **South Carlsbad Sewer Improvement:** Design and construct the expansion of sewer lines to different areas in south Carlsbad where sewer service is not currently available. The first phase of the project includes an infrastructure assessment by an infrastructure engineering firm. Once the assessment is complete, extending the sewer lines to areas such as Standpipe Road, Old Cavern Highway, Chapman Road, Radio Boulevard, Union Street, and Quay Street will be scheduled for subsequent phases. Phases will be set due to need and growth patterns. An RFP will be issued for the design, engineering, and construction.

## 7.6 STORM DRAINAGE

As the City of Carlsbad has grown, many of the natural drainage channels that previously connected to the Pecos River Watershed have been disrupted by development. This has affected the natural drainage patterns once present in the City and necessitated the need to construct a series of drainage facilities to control and mitigate stormwater flows. Such facilities include a system of storm drains, stormwater detention basins, ditches and channels, diversion structures, and others. These facilities have different design capacities and manage stormwater flows in different ways, which depend on the age of the facility, the original engineering standards, and the location within the City's storm drainage network. Other parts of the City – especially those areas to the southwest and around Standpipe Road – currently lack stormwater facilities to effectively handle runoff.



Flooding of Dark Canyon at San Jose Boulevard. Source: Carlsbad Current-Argus, August 2022.



The North Canal Drainage Project, a large-scale project funded by the federal government, commenced in March 2025. However, the Windstream Kinetic Fiber project is situated in the middle of the drainage project; therefore, the City plans to pause on construction until Windstream's work is complete.

## EXISTING FACILITIES

The City of Carlsbad maintains and operates a number of drainage facilities. In addition to subsurface storm drains, the primary facilities include:

- ◀ 12th Street Interception Channel;
- ◀ West Canal Channel from Sunset Park to the Pecos River;
- ◀ West Canal Channel from Church Street to Dark Canyon;
- ◀ US 285 Interception Channel; and
- ◀ Canal Street storm drains (Downtown).

According to the *Carlsbad Drainage Master Plan*, stormwater facilities vary in age, condition, and effectiveness. Due to the continuous use and changed operational conditions, some of these facilities may be operating at capacity or in a diminished capacity. Diminished capacity is the result of changed conditions, such as greater runoff rates or quantities due to development changes, debris build-up, or reduced capacity in detention ponds due to sediment build-up.

## DRAINAGE MASTER PLAN

The City completed the *City of Carlsbad Drainage Master Plan* (Souder Miller and Associates, 2014) to facilitate the growth of the City's drainage system and respond to pressures created by rapid growth and new development projects. The *Drainage Master Plan* identified existing stormwater infrastructure capacity and future infrastructure needs to support ongoing development.

The *Drainage Master Plan* utilized seven watersheds to analyze current stormwater runoff generation in different parts of the City, evaluate any water quality issues, and model the capacity and loading on existing drainage facilities such as the Carlsbad Canal (see *Floodplains and Drainage map, page 123*). This watershed-based approach allows the City to focus on specific issues within different parts of the City that may require the use of different stormwater management strategies and infrastructure investment. The *Drainage Master Plan* also included recommendations for future green infrastructure facility improvements, such as the use of rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration basins, porous pavement, and water harvesting techniques.

## PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Carlsbad continually undergoes rehabilitation projects, restoration projects, and repairs of stormwater facilities. These projects include emergency repair projects and routine maintenance or improvements projects. Planned drainage infrastructure improvements are focused on improving primary conveyance facilities for storm water runoff, while minimizing impacts to public and private property. Improvements are organized by watershed and include improvements to the main interceptor storm drains along 12th Street, Canal Street, and the Carlsbad Canal.

## FY2026-30 INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN - STORM WATER

The FY2026-30 Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan includes the following improvement project to Carlsbad's storm water system:

- ◀ **Halagueño/E. Greene (North Canal) Storm Drainage Improvements:** To plan, design, and construct extensions to the Canal Street Storm Drain.

## 7.7 SOLID WASTE

### COLLECTION & TRANSFER

The Carlsbad Solid Waste Department provides twice weekly trash collection services for residential and commercial customers.

The Department also provides pre-scheduled pick-up for bulky trash or bagged yard waste ("claw service") for residential customers, and recycling and household hazardous waste collection services.

Solid waste is transported to the Sandpoint Landfill located east of the City along US 62. The Sandpoint Landfill is jointly owned by the City of Carlsbad and Eddy County, and operated by Eddy County. The total landfill area is approximately 99 acres and is reserved for waste disposal comprised of non-hazardous residential, commercial, and industrial waste. The total permitted volume is approximately 13.8 million cubic yards. Eddy County was approved by the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to open Cell 5. According to Eddy County, the expected remaining life of the Sandpoint Landfill is estimated to be 37 years.

The City of Carlsbad operates two waste transfer stations for residential use only:

- ◀ Carlsbad Public Works Collection Center at 1702 W. Fox Road
- ◀ Carlsbad Convenience Center at 320 E. Plaza Street.

Hours of operation at the waste transfer stations are Monday through Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

### RECYCLING

The City of Carlsbad suspended recycling services in 2016 due to rising costs. The City has studied different options to restart the program. In 2024, Chevron donated \$100,000 to fund a study to examine the options and costs of a new cardboard recycling program.

The findings are expected to be announced in 2025. Respondents to the community survey supported the return of recycling to Carlsbad. The City also is looking for funding to construct a recycling facility, as listed in the FY2026-2030 ICIP.

### COMPOSTING

The Carlsbad Compost Program is intended to increase the life span of the Sandpoint Landfill. The City's compost facility is located at 45 Blackfoot Road.

The composting process involves dewatered biosolids mixed with organic materials to create a moist, porous mixture. The material is then pasteurized to kill the unwanted bacteria and viruses. After six weeks of composting and curing, the material is screened to remove any large particles and is then ready for use.

### CARLSBAD RIVERBLITZ

Carlsbad Riverblitz is a collaboration between Eddy County, BLM, City of Carlsbad, New Mexico Department of Tourism, and Salado Isolation Mining Contractors. Each year a large group of volunteers remove a tremendous amount of solid waste - 19,400 pounds in 2024 - from the banks of the Pecos River. Volunteers are based at the Riverwalk Recreation Center and the Chutes and cover a vast area, from Brantley Lake to Lower Tansil Dam, and certain sections on the Black River south of town.

## 7.8 PRIVATE UTILITIES

### COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone service in Carlsbad is provided by CenturyLink and other VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) services. Cellular service is provided by the major carriers, including Verizon, AT&T, and T-Mobile. Broadband internet service is provided by 13 internet providers including CenturyLink DSL, Spectrum Cable Internet, TDS (Cable), Windstream DSL and Fiber, and Plateau Telecommunications.

New Mexico ranks 44th in percentage of users statewide with 100/20 Mbps (megabits per second) broadband speeds with 53.4% of users. New Mexico is making good progress on this front, being the state with the most year-on-year increase in users achieving broadband speeds, with a 50% increase in 2024.

Expanding access to broadband is a local concern, with 27% of the respondents to the Community Survey indicating “access to broadband” as an area that the City should focus on for improvements to infrastructure. Improvements to internet access and speeds can increase economic opportunities for individuals and companies. According to NM Broadband, 99.2% of Carlsbad is served with broadband, as of June 30, 2024. Local speed tests provided by internet users present more nuanced information on broadband connection speeds and availability.

## ELECTRIC SERVICE

### XCEL ENERGY

Electric service in Carlsbad is provided by Xcel Energy. Since 2011, Xcel Energy has invested in more than 800 miles of new transmission lines, more than 30 new substations, and upgrades to another 40 existing substations across southeastern New Mexico. In 2018, Xcel Energy installed approximately 240 miles of new electric transmission infrastructure in southeast New Mexico and portions of Texas. The work is part of Xcel Energy’s “Power for the Plains” initiative to expand and update the electric grid to support growing industry in the area.

A major component of the initiative, an 86-mile, 345-kilovolt transmission line between Hobbs and the China Draw substation, is part of a \$400 million transmission improvement project that was completed in 2018. More recently, Xcel Energy completed a major high-voltage transmission line project in southeastern New Mexico. This includes a new 345-kilovolt line between the Eddy County

Substation and the Kiowa Substation, with the new Phantom Substation at the midpoint of the line.

To support economic growth in the region, Xcel Energy has launched a new Certified Site Program to promote industrial growth. The program includes an online inventory of Certified Site locations with detailed information on size, owner, asking price per acre, transportation access, utility information, site documents, and contact information.

## REGIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

The Oso Grande Wind Project includes 62 wind turbines in Chaves and Eddy counties that generate energy to serve the annual electric needs of about 100,000 homes in Tucson and delivered via transmission lines. The system has a capacity of approximately 247 megawatts, which prevents the release of 680,000 metric tons of carbon emissions from traditional energy production. In 2022-23, a 26-megawatt, 56,000-panel solar farm was constructed in Eddy County, east of Carlsbad, by Chevron to reduce its Permian Basin facility carbon emissions. These projects bring in many construction jobs to the Carlsbad area, and a few employees manage and maintain the facilities once complete. Renewable energy projects help diversify the energy production in the region.

## 7.9 INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES & INITIATIVES

### PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Due to the pressures created by growth, the City is facing infrastructure development challenges in multiple areas. Selecting projects that will have the most immediate and long-term impact is an ongoing issue that requires a prioritization process that coordinates multiple departments and agencies. The City of Carlsbad has prioritized projects as identified

in the FY2026-30 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan.

## FUNDING MECHANISMS

Securing funding for infrastructure projects remains a challenge. Although developments often pay for most initial infrastructure development such as roads and utility extensions, these developments do not always pay for costs associated with offside improvements or future maintenance or expansion costs.

In an effort to minimize the cost of development to the City while ensuring crucial housing development can occur, the City can utilize a number of financing tools, including Special Assessment Districts and direct infrastructure funding sources, such as grants and loans from the New Mexico Finance Authority.

## INFRASTRUCTURE EXTENSION POLICY

The City is working on developing an infrastructure extension policy that will identify the procedures and funding responsibilities for new development projects where infrastructure development is required. These policies are intended to support private development projects while also ensuring that infrastructure costs are shared by the developer.

Recently platted industrial subdivisions will benefit greatly from extended infrastructure. The Greene Street Industrial Subdivision, located at the corner of Greene Street and U.S. Refinery Road, created 34 industrial lots totaling 346 acres. The Branson Industrial Subdivision, located along W. Derrick Road just east of the Carlston Ranch Master Plan area, contains a 30-lot industrial subdivision pending annexation approval.

## 7.10 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL 1

Maintain a safe and efficient municipal water production and distribution system.

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To increase Carlsbad's water supply through improvements and expansion of the Double Eagle Water System transmission lines and storage.
- ▶ To ensure there is adequate capacity in the City's water production system to meet existing and future demand for potable and non-potable water resulting from future growth and industry expansion.
- ▶ To protect the water supply by eliminating household hazardous waste from the City's water supply system.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.1

Prioritize and complete the construction of the Double Eagle Waterline projects, including construction of a water line from the Tatum Wells area to the Double Eagle Water System and replacement of existing water lines at the Double Eagle well fields.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.2

Complete the design and construction of a new 5-million gallon reservoir water tank at the Sheep's Draw well field.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.3

Continue to plan for and make improvements to the municipal water system, including water line extensions, replacements, repairs to booster and pressure reducing stations, repairs to reservoirs, fire lines, and dead-end lines within Carlsbad, to the industrial park area along E. Greene Street, and to the proposed annexation areas.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.4**

Update the *Carlsbad 40-Year Water Plan* to quantify the water supply; protect the City's water rights; establish projections of future water demand; and provide recommendations for meeting future water demand resulting from projected population growth and new housing and industry development.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.5**

In conjunction with the cost/benefit analysis associated with future annexations, determine the demand and cost for expanding water services assuming full build-out for each future annexation area (see *Future Annexations map in Chapter 5: Land Use*).

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 1.6**

Sponsor community events on a biannual basis to increase the collection of household hazardous waste and educate the public on the proper disposal of hazardous materials, such as tires, fertilizers, paint, paint thinner, gasoline, pesticides, anti-freeze, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, household cleaning products, etc.

**INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL 2**

Promote the sustainable management of existing water resources through effluent reuse and water conservation efforts.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ To conserve the municipal water supply for drinking purposes by reducing the City's dependence on the Capitan Reef Aquifer.
- ◀ To ensure the municipal water supply is adequate to meet the community's existing and future water demand during drought conditions.
- ◀ To reuse water effluent generated from the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) for irrigation of City park facilities and Lake Carlsbad Golf Course.
- ◀ To decrease water losses caused by leaking water distribution lines.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2.1**

Continue water conservation measures, including water meter replacement, leak detection and repairs, expansion of the water reuse system, and evaluation of water rates, with adjustments as necessary.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2.2**

Secure funding for completing the Phase 5-B effluent reuse project designed to increase storage capacity, expand pumping transmission facilities, and add water aeration to support irrigation of City parks, municipal Lake Carlsbad Golf Course, and Carlsbad and Sunset cemeteries.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2.3**

Continue to educate residential and commercial customers on water conservation measures, the importance of repairing water leaks, installation of high efficiency toilets and washing machines, and replacement of high water use landscapes.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2.4**

Determine the feasibility of establishing a rebate program for the replacement of cool season turf grass with native landscape materials and replacement of high flow toilets and washing machines with high efficiency models.

**INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL 3**

Maintain a safe and efficient municipal wastewater collection and treatment system.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ To provide for the collection and treatment of wastewater and prevent the contamination of the City's water supply.
- ◀ To ensure there is adequate capacity in the City's wastewater system to meet existing and future demand for service resulting from future growth and development of infill properties and annexation areas.

- ◀ *To protect the municipal water supply system by extending sanitary sewer services to currently unserved areas within the City limits, such as South Carlsbad, that can be served at a reasonable cost.*
- ◀ *To systematically plan for, fund, and replace aging sewer lines, interceptors, lift stations, and wastewater treatment plant components.*

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 3.1

Secure funding for the assessment, design, and phased construction to expand sewer services to unserved areas in South Carlsbad, including Standpipe Road, Old Cavern Highway, Chapman Road, Radio Boulevard, Union Street, Quay Street, and National Parks Highway.

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 3.2

Coordinate with Eddy County on securing funding for the design and expansion of sewer services and removal of septic tanks adjacent to the Pecos River in the unincorporated area of La Huerta, design and construction of a 10-inch sewer interceptor along Standpipe Road south to Quay Street, and sewer collection lines to serve the area east and west of Standpipe Road.

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 3.3

Secure funding for the design and construction of a second sewer wet well for the City's primary sewer lift station.

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 3.4

Allocate funding for acquisition of equipment to clean and videotape existing sewer lines to help identify issues and replace existing clay pipe lines that are over 40 years old, including but not limited to W. Orchard Lane and Davis Street.

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 3.5

In conjunction with the cost/benefit analysis associated with future annexations, determine

the demand and cost for expanding wastewater services assuming full build-out for each future annexation area (see *Future Annexations map in Chapter 5: Land Use*).

## INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL 4

Minimize impacts and losses to public and private property through stormwater management.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To ensure that the storm drainage system (e.g., stormwater conveyance lines and channels, interceptors, and detention and retention ponds) is adequately maintained and sized to handle major storm events.*
- ◀ *To protect critical facilities and public utility systems (e.g., hospital, public safety facilities, water and gas mains, electric, telephone, sewer lines, streets, and bridges).*
- ◀ *To reduce the burden on the storm drainage system by allowing for more on-site drainage, stormwater infiltration, and water harvesting.*

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 4.1

Secure funding for the design and construction of improvements to the Canal Street Storm Drain through the planned extensions to McKay Street, along Hagerman Street to Halagueño Street, Tansill Street, Lea Street, Normandy Addition, Stevens Street, and Church Street.

### INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 4.2

Secure funding for the design and construction of improvements to the South Carlsbad Storm Drain, drainage run-off system in North Carlsbad (La Huerta) to the Pecos River, and on-street conveyance systems for substandard streets in South Carlsbad.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 4.3**

Amend the City's Subdivision Ordinance to allow for Low Impact Development (LID) design approaches to manage stormwater runoff, including water harvesting, infiltration, and preservation of natural drainage features, where possible.

**INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL 5**

Promote waste reduction, reuse, and recycling.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ *To reduce the solid waste stream and extend the life of the Sandpoint Landfill.*
- ◀ *To prevent hazardous materials from entering the Sandpoint Landfill.*
- ◀ *To promote environmental sustainability in Carlsbad and provide additional job creation opportunities.*

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 5.1**

Based on a determination that the City's recycling program will be reinstated, identify recycling drop-off locations that are centrally located and provide greater convenience to residents and determine the willingness of businesses to have recycling bins placed on their properties.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 5.2**

Develop a program to educate the public on the value of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling to extend the life of the Sandpoint Landfill and decrease contamination from plastic bags, scrap metal, diapers, glass, pizza boxes, televisions, paint, chemicals, and other hazardous materials.

**INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 5.3**

Develop and secure funding for a new cardboard recycling program and production facility and explore the opportunities for reuse of recycled products.

# TRANSPORTATION

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ An overview of travel characteristics and transportation costs
- ▶ Transportation network, including roadway classifications, bypass loops/relief routes, pedestrian and trail network, and local and regional transit
- ▶ Alternative fuel corridors, electric vehicle charging, and electric bicycles and scooters
- ▶ Air and rail transportation, including the Cavern City Air Terminal and the BNSF rail line
- ▶ Existing traffic conditions, including congestion, pavement conditions, bridges, and crash data
- ▶ Local and regional transportation planning and organizations, and transportation project prioritization
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies that emphasize creating a coordinated multi-modal transportation system, maintenance of existing assets, and expansion of air, rail, and transloading operations

The transportation system in Carlsbad originally followed a grid pattern that was first established in Downtown in the late 1800s. The transportation system expanded with development along US 62/180 and US 285 and the need to avoid major topographic features, such as the Pecos River and Dark Canyon Draw, and the neighborhoods expanding to the north and east of the Pecos River.

As the City has grown, the major transportation routes have shifted to a few key roadways, including Pierce Street (US 285), Canal Street, National Parks Highway (US 62/180), Lea Street, Church Street, Callaway Drive, and Greene Street, which carry both freight and local traffic. The mix of traffic types and population growth has led to an increase in congestion, higher road maintenance needs, public perception of decreased safety, and impacts to collector and local streets as motorists increasingly opt for alternative routes.

While personal vehicles are the dominant mode for travel, the Carlsbad Transit System has three fixed routes and demand response, as well as paratransit service. Alternative transportation modes include sidewalks and trails for pedestrian travel and bike routes.



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## 8.1 TRANSPORTATION PROFILE

Carlsbad is bisected by two major highways, US 285 and US 62/180, which run roughly diagonal through the City and carry a significant amount of traffic to and through Carlsbad. Despite the new byways around the City, through traffic that stays on either highway often continues through Carlsbad as the shortest route, with business and freight traffic coming into conflict with local motorists, leading to increased congestion, safety concerns (especially around schools), and parking issues for some businesses along Canal Street and Pierce Street.

### TRAVEL CHARACTERISTICS

Although the City of Carlsbad offers several transportation options, like many US cities, the primary means of travel in and around Carlsbad is the use of personal vehicles. According to 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, approximately 91% of workers drove a personal car or truck to work. Of these workers, about 81% drove to work alone, while 10% carpool. Approximately 3% of workers walked or traveled by other means to work and an estimated 1% took public transportation. In addition, 6% of workers worked from home.

Estimates show that Carlsbad residents enjoy a relatively short commute time, with an average travel time to work of 20.1 minutes (compared to 22.2 minutes in Albuquerque or 16.2 minutes in Lubbock). The average household in Carlsbad drives an estimated 20,172 miles per year.

The responses to the Community Survey support and expand upon the Census data. When asked to list their travel modes, 98.9% of the respondents said they use a personal car, truck, or motorcycle, 12.8% said they also walk, and 5.8% use the Cavern City Air Terminal. 3.4% carpool, 3.1% bicycle, and 1.5% use public transit.

## TRANSPORTATION COSTS

According to estimates from the Center for Neighborhood Technology, the average household in Carlsbad spends approximately \$14,192 (22%) of household income annually on transportation expenses. Adding transportation costs to the high cost of housing in Carlsbad means that many households may be cost-burdened by the combined costs of living and getting around the community. According to the ACS 2022 estimates, 34.8% of renters and 21.4% of homeowners were cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened by housing costs alone. It is recommended that households do not spend more than 45% of their total income on housing and transportation costs combined.

## 8.2 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The road network in Carlsbad ranges from four-lane arterials to two-lane local roads. The City's transportation network also includes sidewalks, bike lanes and paths, and three trail corridors. The City also operates the Carlsbad Municipal Transit System and the Cavern City Air Terminal. While rail runs through Carlsbad, it is solely dedicated to freight.

### ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Federally designated roadway classifications both reflect how roads are designed and operate. They are also tied to federal reporting, and some funding opportunities are limited to different functional classifications. Networks typically have a hierarchy of a few main arterials that move many vehicles at high speeds with few intersections, and connectors that gather traffic from slower speed local roads that provide direct access to homes, businesses, and other destinations.

### PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS

Principal arterials serve as the major roadway system for the community and are designed

to carry the largest amount of vehicular traffic, provide a high degree of mobility, and serve the major population and commercial centers of the City. Principal arterials in and around Carlsbad include:

- ◀ US 285/Pierce Street
- ◀ US 285/Canal Street
- ◀ US 62/ Greene Street
- ◀ US 180/National Parks Highway
- ◀ George Shoup Relief Route

US 62/180 and US 285 are the major routes that run through Carlsbad. US 62/180 begins in El Paso, Texas and ends in Niagara Falls, New York. It connects visitors in Carlsbad to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, and carried almost 28,000 vehicles in 2021, with 21% being heavy vehicles on the segment between Plaza Street and Fiesta Drive. Coming into Carlsbad from the southwest, US 62/180 is also known as National Parks Highway, and turns into S. Canal Street where US 285 joins from the southeast.

US 285 starts in Sanderson, Texas and runs through Fort Stockton and Pecos in Texas on the way to Carlsbad and ends in Denver, Colorado. US 285 is a main north-south arterial through Carlsbad, where the road is locally named Canal Street. The traffic count on US 285/Canal Street drops down to approximately 19,000 AADT between Tansil and Bronson Streets in 2021, with 9% heavy vehicles. North of Blodgett Street, US 285 heads west and N. Canal Street continues north. The traffic count on the northern end of US 285 decreases to approximately 5,000 AADT between Skyline Road and University Drive in 2023, also with 9% heavy vehicles.

### MINOR ARTERIALS

Minor arterials serve as secondary major routes that provide service for trips of moderate length, serve smaller geographic areas than principal arterials, and generally have lower posted speed limits and less traffic.

Minor arterials include:

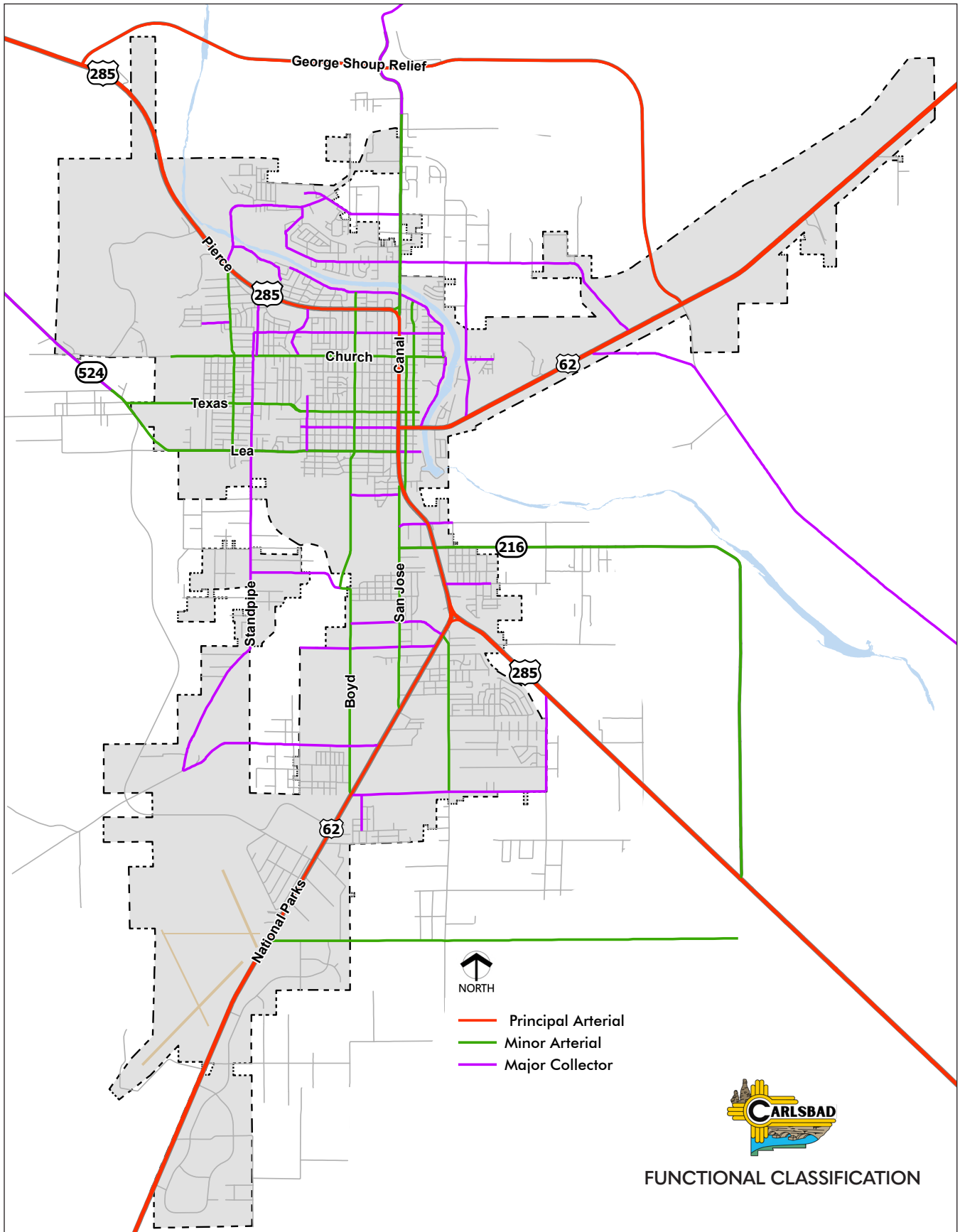
- ◀ Boyd Drive
- ◀ Canyon Street
- ◀ Church Street
- ◀ Derrick Road
- ◀ Eighth Street
- ◀ Main Street
- ◀ Mermod Street
- ◀ Mesa Street
- ◀ San Jose Boulevard
- ◀ Texas Street
- ◀ NM 216 (Wood Avenue)
- ◀ Segments of Canal Street, Lea Street, and Old Canyon Highway

### MAJOR & MINOR COLLECTORS

Major collectors serve to gather and direct traffic from local roads to arterial roadways. The differences between major and minor collectors are often small. Generally, major collectors routes are longer, have higher speed limits, are spaced at greater intervals, and have higher traffic volumes than minor collectors.

In Carlsbad, no roadways are designated as minor collectors; there are only major collectors. This is due to the way collectors were federally designated in the past, with the split between major and minor collectors only being present in rural areas, and urban areas had urban collectors. This changed in 2012 when the U.S. DOT simplified roadway classifications to create more consistency between rural and urban designations. In New Mexico, most urban collectors were reclassified as major collectors, as was the case for Carlsbad. Major collectors include:

- ◀ Blodgett Street
- ◀ Callaway Drive
- ◀ Chapman Road
- ◀ Hidalgo Road
- ◀ Lamont Street
- ◀ Muscatel Avenue
- ◀ Orchard Lane
- ◀ Park Drive
- ◀ Radio Boulevard



• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- ◀ Riverside Drive
- ◀ Sixth Street
- ◀ Standpipe Road
- ◀ Segments of Center Avenue, Fiesta Drive, Greene Street, Juarez Street, Kircher Street, Lea Street (NM 524), Rose Street, Thomason Road, and Westridge Road

## LOCAL ROADS

The remainder of the roads in Carlsbad are designated as Local Roads and account for most of the roadway miles in the City. Local roads provide direct access to residences and are designed to discourage through traffic, have lower speed limits, and support a lower level of traffic volume.

## ROADWAY RECLASSIFICATIONS

In addition to the lack of Minor Collectors, some notable roadways are not classified above Local Roads, such as the West Loop Bypass. To change roadway classifications, the City would first prepare a formal application and submit it to the Southeast Regional Transportation Planning Organization for discussion and approval at a quarterly policy board meeting. With regional approval, the request would go on to NMDOT, who then submits its list of roadways to reclassify to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for final review and approval. NMDOT also solicits updates following each decennial census, in coordination with RTPOs, after FHWA initiates urban area boundary updates with the states.

## OTHER ROADWAY DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

These roadway classifications are not explicitly associated with pedestrian, bicycle, and/or transit design criteria or facilities. "Complete streets" is a transportation policy and design approach that enables safe and convenient travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. Complete streets policies or design guidelines are not mandatory at the federal or state level, but NMDOT identifies

the state's *Complete Streets Strategic Plan* as a tool as part of its Target Zero initiative, which envisions "a transportation system where every journey is completed safely, with zero driving-related deaths in our state." The *Complete Streets Strategic Plan* will aid NMDOT in implementing Complete Streets throughout its processes.

## BYPASS LOOPS/RELIEF ROUTES

Since 2010, Eddy County and the City of Carlsbad have coordinated on developing a loop of bypasses or relief routes around the City. The four segments are:

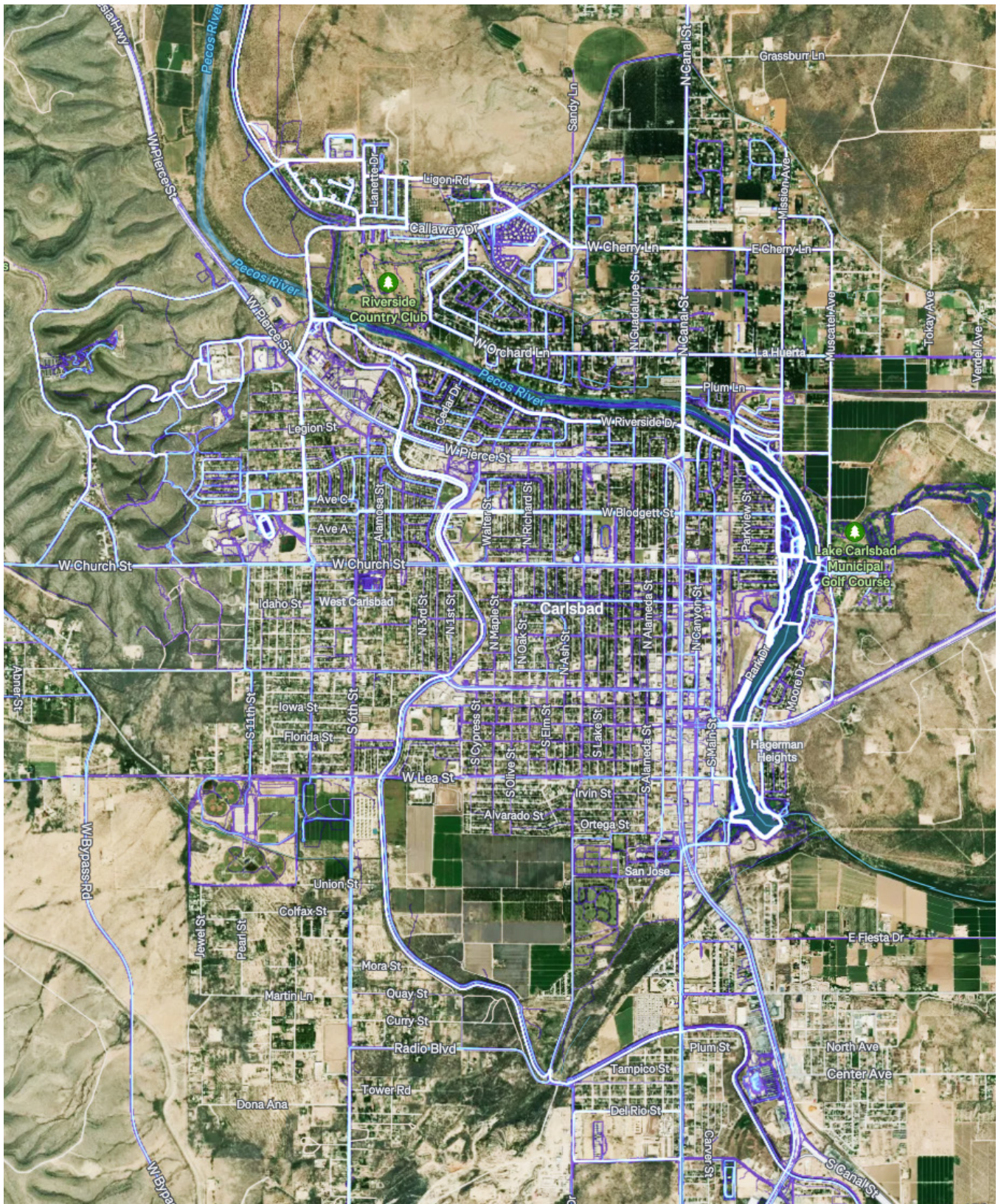
- ◀ **North:** George Shoup Relief Route, between US 285 to US 62
- ◀ **East:** Southeast Loop Road, CR-605/ Refinery Road, from US 62 south to NM 31/ Potash Mines Road to US 285, opened March 2024
- ◀ **South:** Derrick Road, between US 285 and US 62/180
- ◀ **West:** West Bypass, between US 62/180 north to NM 524, opened July 2023

While two lane roads serve through traffic well, such as George Shoup Relief Route and West Bypass Road, adding turn lanes would better serve the routes that serve both local and through traffic, particularly on Potash Mines Road and Derrick Road. NMDOT has identified future improvements to NM 31, including addition of acceleration/deceleration lanes and railroad crossing improvements. These improvements are split into two phases, with the first to improve the Southeast Loop Road section of NM 31.

## PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE NETWORK

One of the primary goals of the 2016 *Carlsbad Long Range Transportation Plan* was to "Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in roadway design when planning and implementing local road and trail improvements." This includes designing

## ALL SPORTS TRAILS MAP

*Heatmap of User-Submitted Trails and Routes*

roadway improvements and new roadways that are pedestrian friendly, Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-compliant, and have bicycle infrastructure, where appropriate. Although the City has the beginnings of a robust pedestrian and bicycle network, there are currently many gaps in the existing infrastructure. In addition to the on-system or street-side pedestrian and bicycle facilities, there are trails in and around the City.

### PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Sidewalks are the preferred accommodation for pedestrians, benefiting all users with safer travel options in all weather. While there are sidewalks in much of Carlsbad, there is community support for increasing sidewalks, particularly in low-income and high-traffic areas, as well as in neighborhoods around the River Walk. Many sidewalks may not include fully accessible ramps or have obstacles, such as streetlights, that limit accessibility for those using wheelchairs, strollers, walkers, canes, or have other mobility limitations. The City owns and operates a concrete milling machine to repair and maintain sidewalks and is systematically improving existing sidewalks and improving accessibility (see *Section 8.11 Transportation Projects & Planning for more information*).

### ON-STREET BICYCLE FACILITIES

Carlsbad has a limited number of marked on-street bicycle lanes or bicycle routes. Currently, the only roadways with marked bicycle lanes include Park Drive from Greene Street to the Cascades Development, a short segment of Lea Street west of Sixth Street, and segment of San Jose Boulevard. These bike routes, along with the Canal Trail (described below), create the beginnings of bicycle network, but more routes and connections are needed to make Carlsbad a bicycle-friendly community.

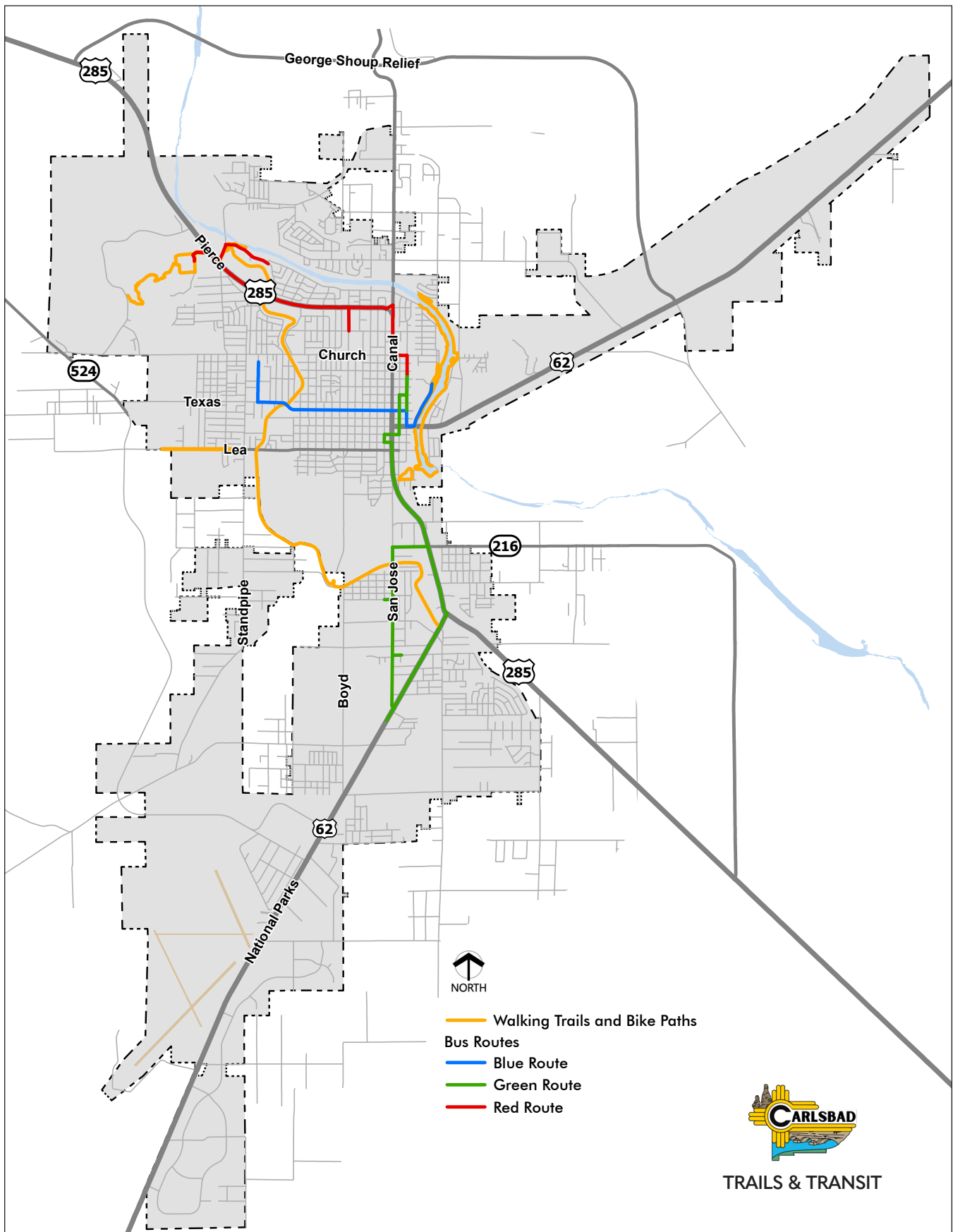
### TRAILS

There are two major trails and four shorter trails in Carlsbad. There is an extensive trail along the Pecos River waterfront known as the Riverwalk. This approximately 4.3-mile long trail runs through Riverfront Park and connects the major community facilities along the waterfront.

The City's second major trail and bicycle route follows the Carlsbad Canal from Heritage Park south all the way to National Parks Highway. This 6.5-mile long paved trail forms the north/south backbone for the rest of the City's bicycle network. Along its course, the trail connects Heritage Park, Carlsbad Spring Park, Sunset Park, Chief Ira J. Stockwell Park, Alta Vista Middle School, Troy Young Community Park, and many major streets, including Lea Street, Mermod Street, Radio Boulevard, San Jose Boulevard, Pierce Street, and National Parks Highway. Secondary on-street bicycles facilities could be developed in the future that span off from the central spine of the Canal Trail to create a stronger east/west network of bicycle connections to other community amenities.

The Ocotillo Hills Nature Trail in Living Desert State Park meanders from Skyline Road through the Ocotillo Hills to connect to the Southeast New Mexico College campus and a trail that loops around the campus. This unpaved trail is approximately 1-mile long. A smaller trail loops around the Living Desert Zoo and & Gardens Park site.

Other trails in Carlsbad include the Heritage Park and Flume Trails, which are shorter trails that start in Heritage Park and connect to the Pecos River at Carlsbad Spring Park. There is another trail in Martin Luther King Memorial Park just west of the Riverwalk that loops around the Park and is approximately 0.4 miles in length.



## OTHER PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE ROUTES

Another way to view the ways that people travel in and around Carlsbad is data that people share via fitness tracking apps. One example is the Strava app, which is largely used to track recreational walking, hiking, running, and bicycling trips, as seen on the All Sports Trails Map. This heatmap displays the most popular active routes with brighter colors, and is informative in highlighting popular trails and routes, but it may not be representative of the locations and volumes of all people walking, bicycling, and running in and around Carlsbad.

## 8.3 PUBLIC TRANSIT

### LOCAL TRANSIT

Public transit in Carlsbad is provided by the Carlsbad Municipal Transit System (CMTS). The system was established in 1996 and operates three services, including three fixed route bus lines; a Dial-a-Ride (demand response) service; and an ADA paratransit service. The systems provided a total of 7,235 rides on the fixed-route service and 26,422 rides on the demand response service between October 2023 and September 2024, for a total of 33,654 rides, a 16% increase in ridership from the previous year. Services are provided with a fleet of 20 ADA-accessible vans.

The three fixed routes follow the primary transportation corridors in the City (see the *Trails and Transit map, page 139*):

- ◀ **Red Line:** Runs from the Carlsbad Transit Station in Downtown north along Main Street and Canal Street and then west along Pierce Street where it connects to the Southeast New Mexico College campus and Landsun Homes along Callaway Drive.
- ◀ **Green Line:** Runs south along Main Street from the Carlsbad Transit Station and connects to south Canal Street where

it forms a loop between National Parks Highway, San Jose Boulevard, and Wood Avenue.

- ◀ **Blue Line:** Runs east from the Pecos River Recreation Area down Park Street, Mermod Street, and Texas Street, and then heads north along Fifth Street to the West Carlsbad Recreation Area.

All three routes operate from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with 1 hour headways. The Dial-a-Ride and ADA Paratransit services operate from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

While the three fixed-route services reach the core of Carlsbad, the on-demand services extend service to four additional regions. These are the northern residential expansion north of the Pecos, new annexations to the west, employee housing in the southwest beyond the Green Line, southern divisions in the southeast region of town, and out to Carlston Ranch at the far southern end of the City. CMTS is looking to expand its fixed-route services to these extended service regions to reduce the cost per passenger/trip. CMTS also has reached out to the National Park Service to develop a connection with Carlsbad Caverns.

CMTS has continued to maintain and upgrade their fleet, adding GPS tracking to the 20-van fleet, as well as tablets with infotainment packages. All the vans are ADA-accessible, and much of the vehicle maintenance can be done in-house. CMTS upgraded 19 bus stops to include shelters and new benches, and are planning to upgrade 10 shelters with solar lighting systems and bus trackers to provide real-time bus information for the fixed routes.

Carlsbad's 2016 *Long Range Transportation Plan* has a goal to "Provide transit opportunities for all segments of the population." This includes expanding fixed-route service, continuing the Dial-a-Ride service, and improving transit facilities along

existing routes. The Plan identifies limited funding and ridership as one obstacle to expanding service. Current fares are low (50 cents for a fixed route ride; \$2.00 for a Dial-a-Ride pickup) and pay for only a fraction of the costs to provide service, as is common for most transit services. To encourage increased ridership, Carlsbad Transit could opt to go fare-free, as Albuquerque's ABQ Ride did starting in 2022, providing increased access to this essential service.

## REGIONAL TRANSIT

Currently, there is not a public transit system that connects Carlsbad to adjacent communities unlike some other parts of the state that have regional transit districts. Greyhound operates regional transit services with a stop in Carlsbad, and stops in Roswell, Alamogordo, Ruidoso Downs, Las Cruces, Portales, Clovis, and Tucumcari in the southeast region of New Mexico.

Carlsbad should study the potential to partner with Roswell Transit on developing a regional transit district, which could bring transit service to Artesia and connect Carlsbad south to Carlsbad Caverns. Providing more transit options to better serve the residents and visitors to southeast New Mexico would support regional economic development.

## 8.4 ALTERNATIVE ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE

While gas and diesel are still the dominant fuel sources for private and public vehicles, there is a growing movement to support and develop alternative energy infrastructure for both passenger and freight vehicles. This section provides a brief overview of recent initiatives.

### ALTERNATIVE FUEL CORRIDORS

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Transportation started the Alternative Fuels Corridor (AFC) program, which was updated under Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The AFC program

set national requirements to help plan for and promote installation of EV charging, hydrogen, propane, and natural gas fueling infrastructure at strategic locations along major national highways. These corridors would be designated as "ready" when they met the criteria for frequency and features of the charging and fueling infrastructure, or "pending" when the criteria was not yet met. The BIL established funding to support the expansion of AFCs.

The NMDOT has identified US 285 as a key corridor for EV charging and hydrogen infrastructure, and the corridor is marked as "pending" from the New Mexico/Texas border all the way north to the New Mexico/Colorado border. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG, or Propane) is already available with enough frequency to designate US 285 as a "ready" corridor from Carlsbad north to Roswell.

### ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

According to Plugshare, a website and app resource that tracks electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, there are currently five EV charging stations in Carlsbad. This includes two low-speed wall-charging locations at RV parks in southern Carlsbad, one Tesla charger at a hotel, three chargers at a fast food restaurant, and two high power chargers at another fast food restaurant. In addition to EV charging infrastructure in publicly accessible spaces, both the *2021 New Mexico Commercial & Residential Energy Conservation Codes* contain requirements to support or include EV charging infrastructure adjacent to parking spaces in certain situations.

### ELECTRIC BICYCLES & SCOOTERS

Electric bicycles and scooters expand the range of travel for individuals at a lower cost point. There are no "micro-mobility" electric scooter or bicycle rental companies currently operating in Carlsbad, but the City could consider starting a municipal program to support and encourage low-cost rentals to help people move farther, faster.

## 8.5 AIR & RAIL TRANSPORTATION

### CAVERN CITY AIR TERMINAL

The Cavern City Air Terminal is a City-owned, Class-II public use airport located in southwest Carlsbad. The facility covers 1,980 acres and consists of four asphalt runways, a 10,000 square foot main terminal building, and 19 hanger buildings, totaling approximately 90,000 square feet. Cavern City is part of the Essential Air Service program, receiving federal subsidies to support regional air service.

Cavern City also offers general aviation services to pilots and charters for private use. In 2025, Cavern City connected local travelers to the Albuquerque International Sunport and Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix, Arizona. In the 2025 *Essential Air Service* survey administered by the City of Carlsbad, participants were asked to select two destination options for flights that the Cavern City Air Terminal should offer customers. Participants expressed their strong support for connecting Carlsbad to Albuquerque and Dallas, Texas; and some support for service to Albuquerque and Denver; Carlsbad to

Albuquerque and Phoenix, Arizona; and the least support for service to Albuquerque and Houston, Texas.

### AIRPORT MASTER PLAN

In 2016, the City completed the *Airport Master Plan* to address needs and prioritize capital improvement projects with a 20-year planning horizon. The *Airport Master Plan* forecast a growing demand for passenger air trips, based on the growing population of Eddy County and an increasing “travel propensity” that is associated with larger cities. By 2033, it was projected that Cavern City may handle a projected 11,700 total aircraft operations (a 70% increase from 2013). While subsequent years of enplanement data show growth, the rate is lower than projected (see *Figure 8.1*).

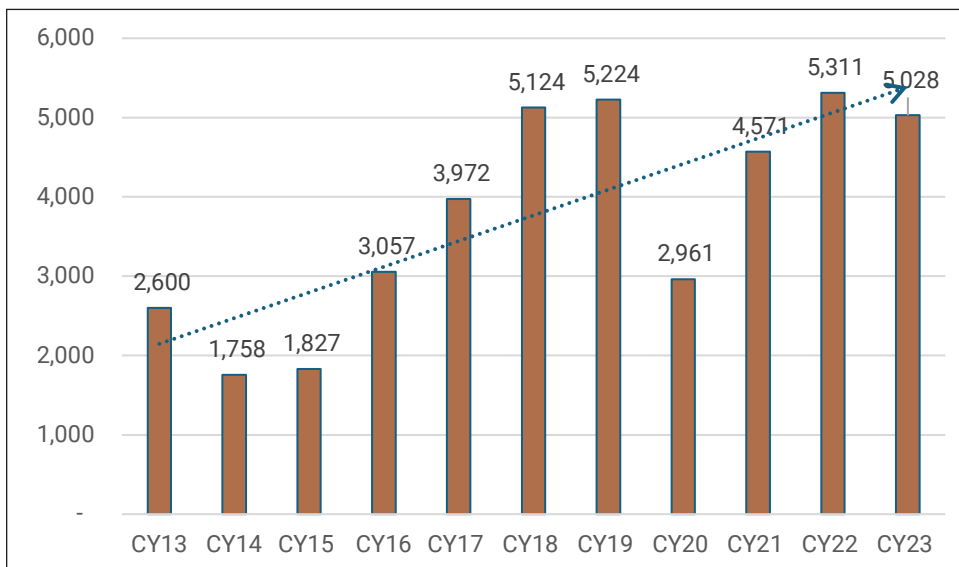
The *Airport Master Plan* recommended capital improvements to upgrade runways, taxiways, terminal building, and other support buildings. Many of these improvements were intended to increase the safety of operations at the airport by extending airport runways and runway protection zones, as well as operational improvements. Other capital projects were primarily maintenance-based and designed to secure long-term funding for

airport operations. To ensure that the planning priorities match changing needs and demands, the City should prioritize an update to the *Airport Master Plan*.

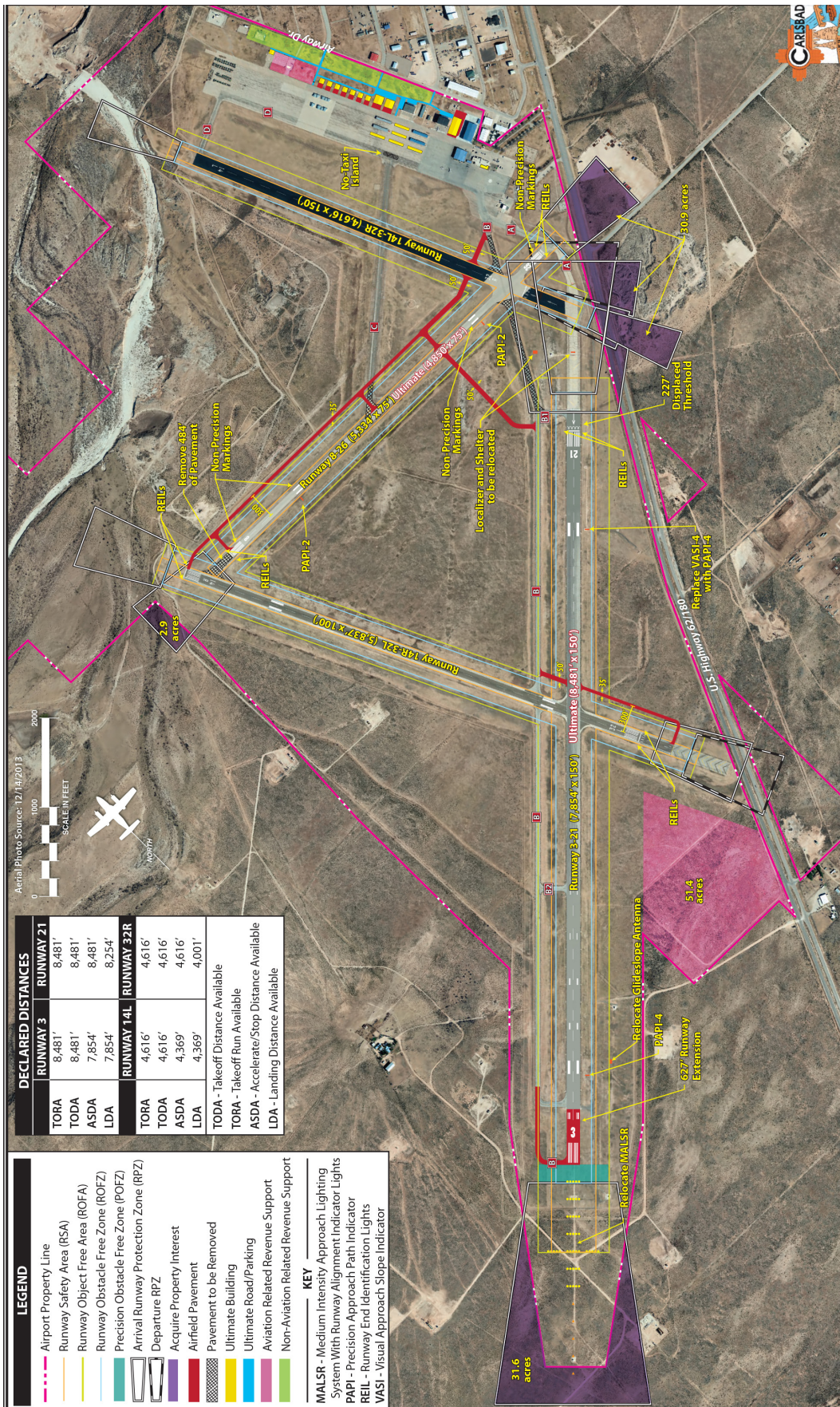
### RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Carlsbad, like many cities in the west, developed around the railroad, which allowed the City to ship local agricultural and mining products to other markets. Today, the BNSF

FIGURE 8.1: CAVERN CITY AIR TERMINAL ENPLANEMENTS



Source: FAA.



City of Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan  
2016 AIRPORT MASTER PLAN CONCEPT

railroad still passes through the City, although it no longer carries any passengers. Instead, the railroad carries a large amount of freight traffic, especially traffic associated with several truck-to-rail transloading facilities within Eddy County that serve the regional oil, gas, and potash industries.

The railroad runs parallel to US 285 and passes through the heart of Carlsbad, just east of Main Street in Downtown. The railroad tracks created an eastern edge to Downtown, and limit east/west access to the Pecos River, except at a few crossing locations include Greene Street and Church Street. From Downtown, the railroad continues to the south towards Loving along Canal Street (US 285). To the north of Downtown, the railroad branches to the east at Plum Lane. Just to the east of this branch, the railroad feeds into the La Huerta Switching Yard. It then continues east for 20 miles, parallel to US 62 for most of the way, before it splits again just west of the US 62/NM 360 intersection. The rail lines continue to several freight stubs.

## 8.6 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONDITIONS & ISSUES

The transportation network in Carlsbad is heavily used by passenger and freight traffic, as seen by the traffic volumes throughout the City and the maintenance budget. These high volumes can also mean a high number of crashes, and a greater need for roadway and bridge maintenance. The City also has identified areas to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety.

### TRAFFIC CONGESTION

While the 2016 *Carlsbad Long Range Transportation Plan* found that most roads in the City do not meet the definition for congestion based on volume to capacity ratios, drivers feel like roadways are congested, particularly during morning and afternoon peak

travel times. The previously conducted traffic study found that the only congested segment was a section of Lea Street between Halagueño Street and Canal Street.

Based on NMDOT data, the busiest roads in Carlsbad are US 62/180, US 285, W. Lea Street, W. Church Street, and W. Mermod Street/W. Texas Street, which are labeled on the Functional Classification map (see page 135). These are all four-lane roads, except W. Texas Street, which is two-lanes with a center two-way turn lane from 2nd Street to 8th Street, where it loses the center turn lane. The two US routes through Carlsbad also carry a significant volume of truck traffic, though these counts were done prior to the completion of all the bypasses around Carlsbad. With the completion of the bypasses, residents feel that truck traffic in Carlsbad has decreased, but still believe there are too many large trucks using the roads and driving through Downtown.

One example is W. Lea Street, which is locally reported as a truck-heavy route. NMDOT data shows more than 10,000 AADT, and in 2020, 35% of the traffic was heavy trucks before the West Bypass was completed. The City of Carlsbad and Eddy County should work with the NMDOT to install signage to route trucks to the bypasses. It is also recommended that the City and Eddy County prioritize funding for improvements to Derrick Road, which is designated as the South Bypass between US 285 and US 180/National Parks Highway, and is currently two-lanes. Improvements have been designed and funding is pending. This project could reroute northwest bound traffic around Carlsbad instead of through the City and on Lea Street.

### PAVEMENT CONDITIONS

The high volumes of semi-trailers is an additional concern, given that one pass of a 5-axle tractor/semi-trailer could cause as much highway asphalt pavement deterioration as 1,750 to 2,925 passes by a car (Allan Bradley and Papa-

Masseck Thiam, "Analysis of car and truck pavement impacts", *FPIInnovations*, Oct. 2018). NMDOT manages the state highways through Carlsbad, and City staff manages the local roads, with a street improvement program that focuses on specific neighborhoods each year, cycling around the City.

## BRIDGES

The NMDOT Bridge Bureau is responsible for the design, management, and inspection of all bridges and culverts in New Mexico. In Carlsbad, there are 19 such structures, as documented in the National Bridge Inventory. Eleven of the bridges and culverts were built between 1948 and 1958, and five were built since 2000. Five of the older bridges have been reconstructed with reconstruction dates ranging from 1978 to 2015. The US 285/S. Canal Street overpass over Plaza Street has been listed as a bridge to replace due to substandard load carrying capacity or substandard bridge roadway geometry, and seven other bridges have been identified as needing bridge rehabilitation because of general structure deterioration or inadequate strength.

## CRASH DATA

The NMDOT collects fatality, injury, and property-damage only crash data and reports on statewide statistics annually. In 2023, there were 966 crashes in Carlsbad, which was the second highest crash rate per 1,000 residents in New Mexico. Of these crashes, there were four fatality crashes, 272 injury crashes, and 690 property damage only crashes. NMDOT focused on vulnerable travelers and corridors of concern, assessed crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists, and identified High Injury Network Corridors. To address these corridors and crash hotspots, the NMDOT created lists of recommended countermeasures, divided into rural and urban roadway corridor types.

## LACK OF AVAILABLE FUNDING

As with infrastructure development, Carlsbad has been challenged by inadequate funding for much needed transportation projects. Although the need is great and projects have been programmed for many years on the City's ICIP, most projects have not been fully funded. Due to the magnitude of transportation issues, the City has a strong case to petition the state for increased funding, through both the legislative process and through NMDOT. Alternative sources of funding, as outlined in Appendix D: Funding Sources, should also be pursued.

## PROJECT COORDINATION

In addition to pursuing additional funding, continued coordination between the City of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and NMDOT is necessary to prioritize and secure funding for the numerous transportation improvements that have been proposed. Due to the long list of transportation projects, it is paramount that all entities work together to ensure necessary improvements are constructed. The joint participation in funding the Eddy County Southeast Relief Route is an excellent model for how these entities can continue to work towards regional transportation solutions.

## 8.7 TRANSPORTATION PLANNING & PROJECTS

Transportation planning in Carlsbad takes place at the local, regional, and state-wide level, with the City coordinating with a number of partners. The City develops transportation improvements with local, state, and federal funding through a range of programs. Transportation improvement projects are similarly prioritized in a number of local, regional, and statewide lists.

## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The City of Carlsbad plans transportation projects in several ways. The City of Carlsbad

and Eddy County have each developed long-range transportation plans. The City is also a member of the Southeast Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SERTPO), a regional transportation advisory body that develops a Regional Transportation Plan for its eight county region.

The SERTPO is the primary regional transportation planning organization for Chaves, Curry, De Baca, Eddy, Lea, Lincoln, Otero, and Roosevelt counties, and the municipalities within those counties. The SERTPO is part of the Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District/ Council of Governments. Its staff manages quarterly public meetings and coordinates regional transportation planning through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and a Policy and Technical Committee consisting of local government members.

Members of SERTPO also rank transportation projects in the eight-county region, creating a list of Regional Transportation Improvements Program Recommendations (RTIPR) for potential funding by NMDOT. The projects put forth by Carlsbad are described later in this chapter.

### 2025 CARLSBAD LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The City of Carlsbad has recently initiated an update to its *Long-Range Transportation Plan*, which was completed in 2016. The overall goal for the update is to have a working plan to improve the existing transportation system and to accommodate ongoing and future development. Using the goals in the 2016 *Long-Range Transportation Plan* as a foundation, the City will initiate public input on appropriate modifications and refinements in the update to accommodate the growth and other changes in the community since the last plan was adopted.

The goals from the 2016 *Long-Range Transportation Plan* include:

1. Consider the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in roadway design.
2. Provide transit opportunities for all segments of the population.
3. Encourage and support regional coordination on transportation planning decisions.
4. Improve safety throughout the transportation network.
5. Enhance connectivity and efficiency of the transportation system throughout the City.
6. Improve the roadway maintenance process.
7. Develop City policies to support the expansion and maintenance of the transportation system.

The City is seeking to align its goals in the update with state and federal priorities, and adopt a plan with attainable short and long-range objectives and action items. The update will include a high-level safety analysis, with recommendations for further analysis and effort to help the community leverage local funds for safety improvements.

### SOUTHEAST REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Regional Transportation Planning Organizations develop long-range transportation plans every five years with at least a 20-year planning horizon, discussing trends and identifying priorities for the region. The *Southeast Regional Transportation Plan*, completed in 2022, described the historic and projected population for the eight-county region, included socio-economic data, and identified key industries, including oil and gas, green energy, aerospace and defense, testing and storage facilities, agriculture, and tourism. It described the multimodal transportation network in the region, covering trails, roads,

rail, and air travel. Key challenges and opportunities for the region were identified as safety and safe facilities with a focus on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, poor conditions of specific highways, lack of adequate funding, driver behavior, public transportation, and law enforcement. The *Southeast Regional Transportation Plan* also identified goals, key priorities, and action items.

### EDDY COUNTY MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Complementing Carlsbad's 2016 *Long Range Transportation Plan*, Eddy County also completed the *Eddy County Master Transportation Plan* (Bohannon Huston, Inc.), which looked at transportation issues for the entire County. The *Eddy County Master Transportation Plan* analyzed commuting patterns into, around, and out of the County; freight traffic; major transportation improvements for Eddy County and state roads; and coordination between local jurisdictions, NMDOT, and Eddy County. It also proposed several bypass roads in and around Carlsbad, including a western bypass connecting northern US 285 to National Parks Highway, an eastern bypass continuing from NM 200 south to US 285, and a southern bypass connecting National Parks Highway to US 285 near Otis. While these bypasses have now been completed, the *Eddy County Master Transportation Plan* still supports regional transportation planning and coordination.

### METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Communities with a federally recognized population of over 50,000 people meet the threshold to form a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which bring new funding opportunities and add another set of municipal responsibilities. This would assist in increasing transportation funding and coordination on a regional level. MPO's are federally mandated regional policy bodies that are required in

urbanized areas with populations over 50,000. They are designated by local officials and the Governor. MPOs are responsible for the coordination of transportation policy, planning, and funding with the State Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). MPOs also coordinate regional compliance with federal transportation legislation, including air quality standards.

New Mexico has four MPOs, including the Albuquerque-area Mid-Region MPO (MRMPO); Santa Fe MPO; Mesilla Valley MPO (Las Cruces); and Farmington MPO. The Farmington MPO is the smallest of the four, and encompasses the cities of Farmington, Aztec, Bloomfield, Kirtland, and parts of San Juan County. The total population of Farmington MPO is similar to the population of Eddy County, but the communities are in close proximity to each other, whereas Artesia is almost 25 miles north of Carlsbad and there is sparse development between these cities. Carlsbad does not currently meet the threshold for an MPO, but the City could revisit the potential for creating an MPO as the regional population grows.

### PROJECT PRIORITIZATION CONGESTION & ROAD CONDITIONS

Residents and members of the Steering Committee identified high levels of congestion along certain roads and at key intersections as a major transportation issue in Carlsbad. Much of this congestion can be attributed to the increased volume of truck traffic associated with the oil and gas industry and the influx of new workers. Due to the high volume of truck traffic and the heavy usage of primary routes, roadway conditions are poor throughout Carlsbad. In addition, there are only a few major thoroughfares through the City, which creates bottlenecks at key intersections. Congestion at these intersections and along primary roads has led motorists to take alternative routes to reach their destinations,

which has in turn increased the amount of traffic on previously lower volume roads. Improving these roadways (and other primary routes) to improve condition and traffic flow should be a priority of the City.

### STREET MAINTENANCE

The City of Carlsbad prepares an annual budget that includes street improvements. This typically includes the estimated construction costs and the soft costs of engineering design and surveying. In 2025, the City budgeted approximately \$2 million for specific street improvements. Additionally, the City carries out regular maintenance of roadways, including repair of utility cuts and potholes or patching other age-related defects. The City also owns and operates a concrete milling machine to repair and maintain sidewalks.

### SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

In 2024, the City of Carlsbad repaired 2,200 feet of sidewalks, including ADA compliance at intersections, for a total of 14 sidewalks and 12 ramps. The City plans to continue making improvements in the coming years, and will work through a list of sidewalks that need improvement. The City also works with its Disabilities Advisory Board to address sidewalk deficiencies to ensure there is a suitable amount of handicap accessible parking.

The City has included four sidewalk improvement projects in its 2026-2030 Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP), as described later in this chapter, and detailed in Appendix A. There are also ADA improvements incorporated in other projects listed on the ICIP project list. For instance, intersection improvements include ADA improvements to the sidewalk ramps.

### FY2026-30 INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ICIP)

The City of Carlsbad has included 14 transportation projects on its FY2026-30 ICIP:

- ◀ **National Parks Highway Economic Development Infrastructure**
- Improvements:** Plan, design, and construct infrastructure improvements including sewer, water, and roadway for economic development.
- ◀ **Old Cavern Road Reconstruct:** Plan, design, and reconstruct 5,977 linear feet of roadway improvements along Old Cavern Highway.
- ◀ **Dark Canyon Bridge and Bikeway:** Plan, design, and construct a bridge at Boyd Drive and Radio Boulevard crossing Dark Canyon, including a bikeway.
- ◀ **MainStreet Pedestrian Safety and Public Restrooms:** Plan, design, and construct alley connections and safety pedestrian walkways and restrooms in the downtown MainStreet area.
- ◀ **Lea Street Road Improvements:** Plan, design, repave, and construct road improvements.
- ◀ **North Maple Street Improvements:** Plan, design, and construct road improvements including sidewalk and safety signals
- ◀ **Sage Area Sidewalk Improvements:** Plan, design, and construct sidewalks on Sage St., Montgomery, and Caviness Street.
- ◀ **E. Chapman Sidewalk Improvements:** Plan, design, and construct sidewalks including curb, gutter, drainage, drive-pads, and ADA curb cuts as needed.
- ◀ **Callaway Drive Sidewalk Improvements:** plan, design, and construct sidewalks including curb, gutter, drainage, drive-pads, and ADA curb cuts as needed.
- ◀ **Elgin Road Safety Improvements:** Plan, design, equip, and install safety improvements.
- ◀ **MainStreet Property Acquisition for Parking:** Plan, design, acquire, construct, and equip a parking lot along the MainStreet district (also listed in Economic Development).

- ◀ **Cavern City Airport Concession Renovations:** Plan, design, and construct renovations to reconfigure and renovate the Cavern City Airport Concession area and to add a vehicle rental area customer counter, and secured vehicle parking area (also listed in Economic Development)
- ◀ **CID Trails and Bike Path Improvements:** Plan, design, and construct improvements to develop a multi-use walking trail and bicycle path along the Carlsbad Irrigation District Canal.
- ◀ **Public Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:** Plan, design, construct, equip, install, and furnish publicly accessible electric vehicle charging stations in strategically placed areas for use by the community and the traveling public.

### SERTPO PROJECTS

The City of Carlsbad has two projects listed in the 2024 SERTPO Regional Transportation Improvements Program Recommendations for possible funding by the NMDOT. Carlsbad has the Canal Street Storm Drain Extension listed as the 12th Transportation Project Fund priority for SERTPO. The City is requesting additional funding for the administration, operations, and capital improvements for Carlsbad Municipal Transit Service, which was ranked first of six regional transit service funding requests.

### STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN (STIP)

In addition to projects identified on the City's ICIP, NMDOT continually works to maintain state highways by providing funding for transportation improvements based on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). Overall, 10 transportation projects are identified on the 2024-2027 STIP. These include safety improvements at the intersection of Hidalgo Road and US 62/180 (which residents identified as a dangerous intersection), intersection lighting on the Carlsbad Relief Route, Greene Street railroad

crossing improvement, and US 285 bridge rehabilitation.

## 8.8 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### TRANSPORTATION GOAL 1

Create and administer a coordinated and connected multi-modal transportation system that balances the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and large trucks.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To allow for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To reduce the community's reliance on passenger vehicles and promote a healthier, more active lifestyle.*
- ◀ *To address the impacts of traffic congestion, safety issues, and freight traffic on the major street network.*
- ◀ *To allow for a safe, comfortable, and connected on- and off-street pedestrian and bicycle network.*
- ◀ *To ensure that residents with mobility, medical, or financial challenges, or that prefer not to drive, have access to transit services.*

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.1

Continue to coordinate and work with the NMDOT on upgrading its facilities including roadways (US 285 and US 62/180), intersections and traffic signals (National Parks Highway and Hidalgo Road), and turn lanes within Carlsbad municipal limits and highways approaching the City.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.2

Expand Carlsbad Municipal Transit Service (CMTS) to address current needs, including securing funding for the replacement of the CMTS fleet and improvements to existing transit facilities, and providing

services to accommodate future growth and development covering a larger area of Carlsbad, particularly as the population continues to grow and annexation occurs to the north of the current municipal boundary. Analyze the current transit fee structure and determine whether an adjustment would be warranted.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.3

Create an off-street trails and bikeways master plan that expands the existing trails system to serve more neighborhoods and in proximity to schools and employment centers. Utilize best practices and the current NACTO and AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities standards for urban and rural designs, respectively.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.4

Evaluate average daily counts for major roadways within Carlsbad to determine whether changes to Roadway Functional Classification System should be pursued in coordination with the NMDOT and SERTPO.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.5

Determine the feasibility of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and the surrounding communities of Artesia and Loving becoming a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), track the regional population growth trends, and evaluate the administrative structure and federal regulations.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 1.6

Work with Carlsbad Municipal Schools, SERTPO, NMDOT, and the New Mexico Department of Health on developing a Safe Routes to School program that encourages children to walk or bicycle to school.

## TRANSPORTATION GOAL 2

Maintain safe street conditions in Carlsbad.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To provide ongoing monitoring of the existing conditions of roadways, including surface condition, drainage facilities, and traffic control.*
- ◀ *To ensure roadways, sidewalks, and handicap ramps are maintained, extended, or improved to meet current standards.*
- ◀ *To correct unsafe traffic conditions and reduce crash incidents.*

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 2.1

Create a preventative street maintenance plan that prioritizes and secures funding for resurfacing and reconstruction of deteriorated streets, and annual maintenance activities, including resurfacing, paving, crack sealing, and pavement marking. Continue to utilize the City's GIS mapping tool to track street improvements.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 2.2

Secure funding for the construction of a new bridge at Boyd Drive and Radio Boulevard that crosses Dark Canyon Draw.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 2.3

Continue the implementation of improvements to existing sidewalks, roads, ramps, and accessibility, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 2.4

Coordinate with SERTPO on pursuing funding for transportation projects through NMDOT programs, as applicable, including the Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local Government Road Fund; Municipal Arterial Program (MAP); Transportation Enhancement (TE); Recreation Trails Program (RTP); and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 2.5**

Adopt a policy that requires all new streets within annexation areas to be designed and built to City and road classification standards.

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL 3**

Expand general aviation, air cargo, and air passenger facilities and services at the Cavern City Air Terminal.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ *To meet current FAA design regulations and respond to changes in the general aviation industry.*
- ◀ *To eliminate physical constraints to commercial air service and aviation-related development in Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To foster economic growth in aviation-related industries.*
- ◀ *To create a positive customer service experience through improved services.*

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 3.1**

Complete an update to the *Cavern City Airport Master Plan* in compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration guidelines. The update should include, but not be limited to:

- ◀ Inventory and assessment of existing facilities, operations, airspace, environment, land use, and transportation access;
- ◀ Aviation activity forecast;
- ◀ Demand/capacity analysis and facility requirements;
- ◀ Evaluation of alternatives;
- ◀ Environmental review;
- ◀ Phasing of improvements; and
- ◀ Agency review and approval.

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 3.2**

Using the results of the *Essential Air Service* survey conducted in 2025, determine the number of flights taken by business passengers to Albuquerque and Dallas, Texas

and work with an Air Service Provider on expanding services accordingly.

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 3.3**

Based on the recommendations of the *Airport Master Plan* completed under Transportation Strategy 3.1, secure funding for improvements to runways, taxiways, lighting, terminal building, and support buildings, as needed.

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL 4**

Improve and expand rail and transloading operations in Carlsbad.

**Objectives:**

- ◀ *To ensure rail facilities can accommodate the transport needs of the oil and gas and potash industries in Carlsbad and Eddy County.*
- ◀ *To ensure safe transport of hazardous waste through and around Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To foster economic growth opportunities in rail transport.*

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 4.1**

Coordinate with the BNSF and representatives from the oil and gas and the potash mining industries to determine the existing and future demand for expanding transloading facilities in Carlsbad.

**TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 4.2**

Work with the BNSF, NMDOT, Eddy County Office of Emergency Management, New Mexico Hazardous Waste Department, and industry representatives on developing a plan for responding to hazardous spills and removals, and accidents along the rail line, La Huerta Switching Yard, and heavy industrial properties and ways to improve safety and transport of hazardous materials through Carlsbad.

## TRANSPORTATION GOAL 5

Increase electric vehicle (EV) mobility and infrastructure.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To incorporate electric vehicle and charging systems into existing public facilities.*
- ◀ *To facilitate the installation of EV infrastructure into new development.*

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 5.1

Install Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations at City-owned properties and Downtown Carlsbad in convenient locations.

### TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY 5.2

Create a transition plan for converting the municipal fleet to zero-emission vehicles. The transition plan should include:

- ◀ An analysis of vehicle operating information, such as current operating mileage and hours, fuel consumption, fuel types, dispatching logistics, and equipment replacement policies; Potential charger locations, current capacity at sites, and existing utility services;
- ◀ Transition timeline, useful life of vehicles, and specific needs of the City; and
- ◀ Operational costs, including maintenance, energy supply costs, and replacement costs.

# COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ Parks and recreation, including its benefits to the community and NRPA findings; existing neighborhood, community, and regional park facilities; level of service analysis; advisory boards; and the Land and Water Conservation Fund
- ▶ Public facilities including the Carlsbad Public Library, Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center, Senior Centers, etc.
- ▶ Public safety services and needs of the Carlsbad Police and Fire Departments
- ▶ Public education provided by Carlsbad Municipal Schools and Southeast New Mexico College and graduation rates
- ▶ Profile of community health and local health care and behavioral/mental health providers
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Carlsbad for current and future residents

Cities typically measure their success by the number of jobs created and increasing household incomes and wages. Quality of life amenities, including community centers, senior centers, libraries, parks, quality education, and public safety, are just as important to building and maintaining a healthy and vibrant community. Creating a culture of physical and mental wellbeing for youth, adults, and seniors can have a strong stabilizing effect on peoples' lives and the community at large. Investing in quality of life amenities supports a level of economic vitality that good paying jobs alone cannot achieve.



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## 9.1 PARKS & RECREATION

The City of Carlsbad prioritizes parks and recreation amenities for its residents and takes great pride in its expansive park system. It is a wonderful amenity for Carlsbad residents and brings visitors to Carlsbad, particularly to the amenities lining the Pecos River.

### BENEFITS OF PARKS & RECREATION

Recreation and exercise provide a multitude of benefits for youth, adults, and seniors. According to the National Institutes of Health, recreation and exercise result in:

- ◀ More energy and capacity for work and leisure activities;
- ◀ Greater resistance to stress, disease, anxiety, fatigue, and a better outlook on life;
- ◀ Increased stamina, strength and flexibility;
- ◀ Improved efficiency of the heart and lungs;
- ◀ Weight loss and help with staying at a desirable weight; and
- ◀ Reduced risk of heart attack.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), a national non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation, and conservation, conducts an annual survey to understand how Americans connect within their local park and recreation agency. The *Engagement With Parks Report* in 2024 found that nearly 7 in 10 survey respondents visited a local park or recreational facility at least once per month. However, 27% said they do not have walkable access to a park.

Parks are seen as a place to be with friends and family, to be more physically active, to be closer to nature, to access quality affordable child care and to learn a new skill or craft. Other key findings from the *Engagement With Parks* report include:

- ◀ A majority of survey respondents, 86%, said proximity to high quality parks, playgrounds, open spaces, or other

recreational facilities is an important factor when they are choosing a neighborhood or area to live.

- ◀ The importance of proximity to park and recreation facilities varies by generation, ethnicity, race, parental status, political affiliation, and level of physical activity. The "GenZ'ers" place the highest priority on the proximity of a park to their residence.
- ◀ A majority, 76%, said they visited a local park, playground, dog park, or other local open space every week. Gen Z'ers were the top users, 82%, of parks and recreation spaces.
- ◀ Hiking, biking, and walking on local trails was the second-most popular activity, with 53% of survey respondents engaging in those activities.
- ◀ The majority, 58%, said being with family or friends is the top reason for using parks and recreation facilities.
- ◀ Safe, accessible, inclusive, and welcoming spaces can impact a person's perception and use of park and recreation facilities. People who experience safe, accessible and inclusive park and recreation facilities visit those places more often than those that do not share the same experiences.
- ◀ The majority, 91%, of respondents agree that parks and recreation is a valuable service their local government produces.

The residents of Carlsbad are no exception to these findings; residents continue to support the City's efforts to improve and maintain park and recreation facilities.

### CARLSBAD PARKS & RECREATION

The City of Carlsbad owns and manages over 636 acres of parkland. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining parks, buildings, playground equipment, fishing piers, and boat docks, as well as assisting with special events and

recreational activities in coordination with the Police and Fire Departments.

City parks are listed by classification, location, and acreage in Table 9.1 (see *Park Facilities map, page 158*). Descriptions of park classifications are as follows:

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

A neighborhood park is typically defined as being a minimum of 5 acres and located in a residential area. They are intended to serve as the recreational focus of the neighborhood and include active and passive recreation. These parks usually serve an approximate 1-mile area radius to a residential neighborhood. Neighborhood Parks in Carlsbad range from small pocket parks under one acre, to larger parks of several acres with playgrounds and picnic areas. Others are designated sports fields. Neighborhood parks in Carlsbad total approximately 83 acres (see *Table 9.1*). As Carlsbad continues to annex new area to the north of the city limits and adds newer housing stock, parks will be added to serve those residents.

### COMMUNITY PARKS

A community park is typically defined as being 30-50 acres and designed to serve two or more neighborhoods. These parks usually serve a 3-mile radius. In addition to play equipment, community parks may contain ball fields, playing courts, picnic areas, pavilions, and restrooms. They are typically located along a collector or arterial street. There are seven community parks in Carlsbad that total approximately 122 acres (see *Table 9.1*). The community parks in Carlsbad include:

#### BATAAN RECREATION AREA

The Bataan Recreation Area is 27-acres and located along both sides of the Pecos River from the Upper Dam to the Lower Tansil Dam within the Lake Carlsbad Recreation Area. Facilities include boat docks and shade structures, and is used for practice by ball teams. The Dr. Martin

Luther King Jr. Memorial Park is contained within the Bataan Recreation Area and includes playground equipment, a covered picnic shelter, and restrooms.

#### RIVERVIEW PARK

Riverview Park is 7-acres and located on the north side of Lake Carlsbad between the railroad tracks and the Par 3 Municipal Golf Course. It contains large shaded structures with seating, walking trails, and picnic areas.

#### CARLSBAD SOFTBALL FIELDS / WILL MERCHANT PARK

This park contains four lighted softball fields, restroom facilities, a small playground, and off-street parking.

#### PECOS RIVER VILLAGE RECREATION AREA

This 16-acre park facility is located on the east side of the Pecos River north of the Lower Tansil Lake. It contains the Pecos River Village Conference Center, Riverwalk Recreation Center, and Playground on the Pecos.

#### SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL and SOFTBALL PARK

This 13-acre facility was created by a joint City/School District agreement. It contains lighted baseball and softball fields, restrooms, and parking.

#### TENNIS COMPLEX

Located at the south end of the Lake Carlsbad Recreation area, near the Tansil Dam, the 11-acre Carlsbad Tennis Complex contains three racquetball courts, three soccer practice fields, and restrooms facilities.

#### CARLSBAD SPRING PARK - CARTER PARK

This 27-acre natural park area is located at the northwest end of Lake Carlsbad on the south side of the Pecos River. It contains shade structures and walking trails.

TABLE 9.1: CARLSBAD PARK FACILITIES

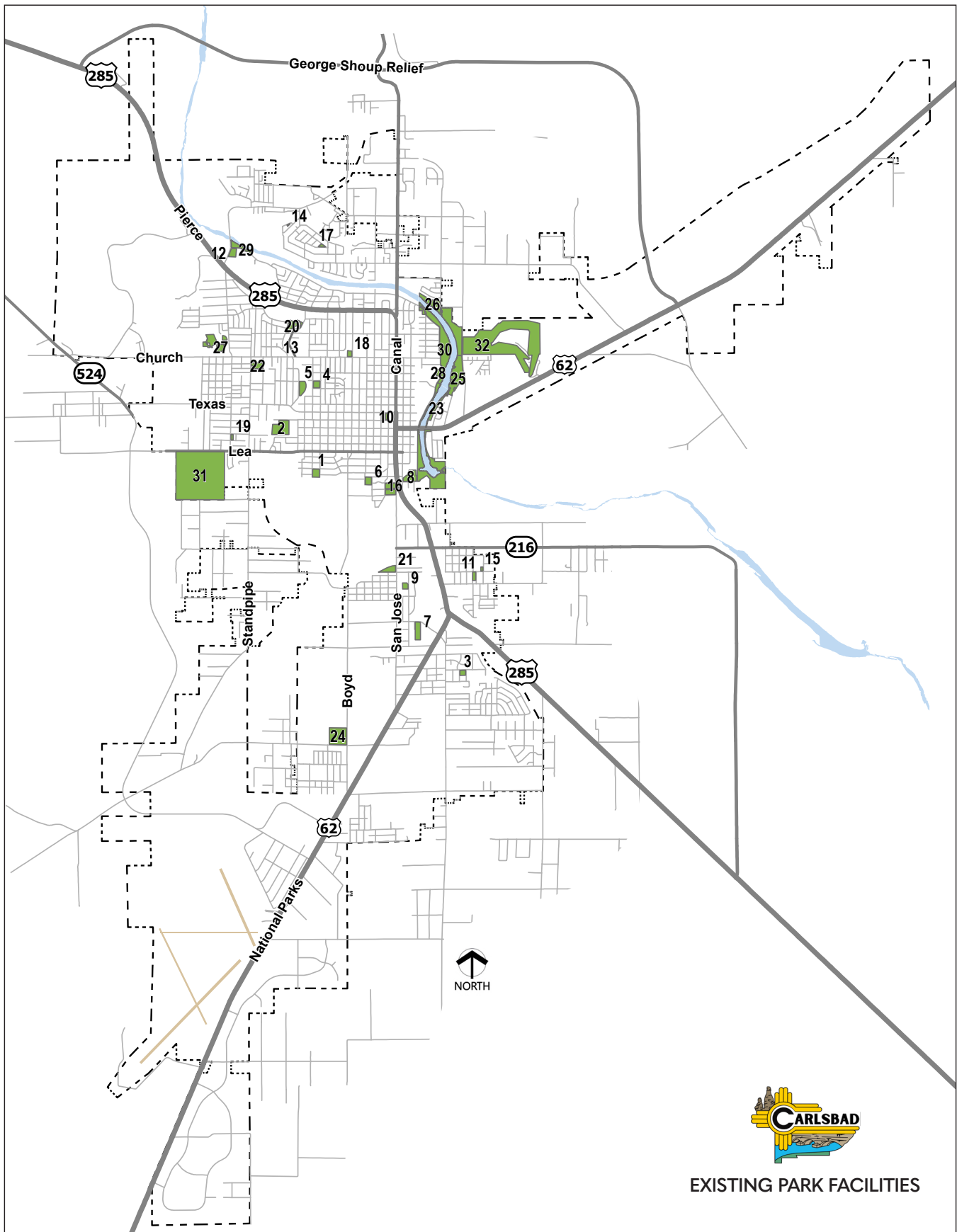
Neighborhood Parks	Location	Acres
1. Arcadia Park	1300 Ortega Street	4
2. Alta Vista Park	301 Alta Vista Street	9.2
3. Cass Park	Kuykendahl Street	1.9
4. C.H. McLenathen	1305 W. Hagerman Street	3
5. Chief Ira J. Stockwell Park	400 N. 1st Street	5
6. Cruz Fernandez Park	606 Pompa Street	3
7. Davis Park	Kircher Street	9
8. Dr. MLK Jr Memorial Park	203 Plaza Street	7.9
9. Hardwick/Jackson	Carver Street	1
10. Halagueño Arts Park	101 S. Halagueño Street	1
11. Hall Addition Park	North Street	1.5
12. Heritage Park	1500 Callaway Drive	3
13. Lamont Street Park	1610 Lamont Place	4.9
14. Desert Willow Park	1612 Desert Willow Drive	1.6
15. Puckett Park	Puckett School	1
16. Ray Anaya Plaza De San Jose	1004 DeBaca Avenue	7.5
17. Riverside Country Club Park	Bryan Circle/Park Street	1
18. Senator Milton R. Smith Park	N. Mesa Street/W. Church Street	2
19. South 8th Street Park	S. 8th Street/Florida Street	0.87
20. Sunset Park	1802 W. Blodgett Street	5
21. Troy Young Community Park	2207 San Jose Boulevard	6
22. West Carlsbad Recreation Area	611 N. 5th Street	4
Subtotal		83.37
Community Parks	Location	Acres
23. Bataan Recreation Center	S. James Street	27
24. Carlsbad Softball Complex/Will Merchant Park	902 Hidalgo Street	21
25. Pecos River Village Recreation Area	Muscotel Avenue	16
26. Riverview Park	Lake Carlsbad	7
27. Senior High School Baseball and Softball Park	North 8th Street	13
28. Tennis Complex	606 Pompa Street	11
29. Carlsbad Spring Park - Carter Park	Riverside Drive	27
Subtotal		122
Regional Parks*	Location	Acres
30. Lake Carlsbad Recreation Area	Riverside Drive/Park Drive	126
31. Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex	3001 W. Lea Street	159
32. Lake Carlsbad Municipal Golf Course	Muscotel Avenue	146
Subtotal		431
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>636.4</b>

\*Note: The Shooting Range is located outside City limits and not included in the total park acreage.

## REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks are typically large sites, 200 acres and above, with unique natural features such as rivers, diverse land formations, and with vegetation and wildlife indigenous to the region. Regional parks can typically

contain a variety of recreational amenities, such as soccer/softball fields, multi-use trails, and community facilities. There are three regional parks in Carlsbad that together total approximately 431 acres, which does not including the Shooting Range located outside





*Pecos River*

Carlsbad. The regional parks in Carlsbad include:

### **LAKE CARLSBAD RECREATIONAL AREA**

Located along the Pecos River, the Lake Carlsbad Recreation Area covers 126 acres that span from the railroad bridge on the south to the upper Tansill Dam. Visitors use the area for water sports, picnics, fishing, boating, and children's playgrounds. The recreation area includes green space with a six-mile walking trail that spans the length of area. Barbecue grills and shade structures are available for picnics and gatherings. The swimming area is open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, but visitors can use the recreation area year-round for other activities.

In late 2024, the New Mexico Economic Development Department's Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) awarded \$4.3 million in Outdoor Recreation and Trails grants across the state, of which \$1 million was awarded to the City of Carlsbad for major safety and accessibility renovations to the Lower Tansill Recreation Area.

### **BOB FORREST YOUTH SPORTS COMPLEX**

This 159-acre, state-of-the-art, centrally-located sports complex provides baseball, softball, soccer, and football fields. Youth sports leagues utilize the complex for regular season play. Community sports leagues use the complex facilities year-round and can hold private tournaments. The complex includes concession facilities, restrooms, and parking for each area. The splash pad is open to the public during the summer and is located outside the sports area.

### **LAKE CARLSBAD MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE**

The Lake Carlsbad Golf Course is 146 acres and located north of the Pecos River Village Recreation Area. Facilities include an 18-hole course and a 9-hole, par 3 course that runs along the Pecos River.

### **SHOOTING RANGE/ACTION SPORTS COMPLEX**

The Shooting Range is located outside municipal limits near Happy Valley. The area provides several rifle and pistol ranges, archery ranges, cross-wind runways for radio controlled model airplanes, competition go-cart tracks, restroom facilities, and picnic areas.



Lake Carlsbad Recreation Area.

## RECREATION CENTERS

### RIVERWALK RECREATION CENTER

Carlsbad's Riverwalk Recreation Center is located on the banks of the Pecos River. The three-story facility includes recreational activity rooms, meeting spaces and a dance floor, and full court basketball, racquetball and pickleball courts, and multi-purpose activity rooms. Outdoor facilities include a skatepark, hockey rink, football field, and a playground. Programs offered include ESL courses, exercise, arts and crafts, cooking basics, movie nights, and occasional open skate nights at the hockey rink.



Skatepark at Riverwalk Recreation Center.

## POOLS & AQUATIC CENTERS

### LAKE CARLSBAD RECREATION AREA

Lake Carlsbad Recreation Area is used for many community events throughout the year, such as the Chili Cook-off and the Fourth of July Fireworks Display. A sports complex that holds nine tennis courts, three racquetball courts, and three soccer fields is located at the south end of the Recreation Area. The facility has been expanded to include eight pickleball courts, two sand volleyball courts, an inclusive/accessible splash pad, and a basketball court.

### CARLSBAD WATER PARK

The Carlsbad Water Park is located along the shores of the Pecos River on Park Drive. Opened in 2016, the Carlsbad Water Park boasts five water slides, a lazy river, a pool area, and a zero entry children's play area. The pool area is lined with shade structures, lounge chairs, and picnic tables are available for visitors' use.

## TRAILS

### OCOTILLO HILLS NATURE TRAIL

The Ocotillo Hills Natural Trail is .9 miles in length. It begins at an elevation of 3,224 feet and gains approximately 229 feet. The trail

starts at Skyline Drive and ends at the Southeast New Mexico College campus. Hikers are treated to a beautiful view of Carlsbad.

### CARLSBAD BIKE/ JOGGING/WALKING TRAIL

This 6.4-mile long paved trail runs along the historic Carlsbad Irrigation Canal. The trail is lined with natural vegetation from the canal ecosystem. The trail runs between the Cavern Highway and Pierce Street. There are eight access points along the trail: National Parks Highway, San Jose Boulevard, Boyd Drive, Lea Street, Texas Street, Church Street, Pierce Street, and/or Westridge.

### PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publishes park data on communities across the country. The *2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review* includes a wide range of data and parkland calculations for small and large cities with population densities ranging from low to high.

According to the NRPA, in 2024, the typical park and recreation department provides one park for every 2,386 residents. For communities with populations between 20,000 to 49,000, the median level of service is one park per 2,062 people. The median acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is 10.6; for communities with a population between 20,000 and 49,999, the median level of service is 11.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

The City of Carlsbad has 636 acres of parkland, equating to approximately 3.1% of the total acreage within the City. It should be noted that park acreage shown in the Existing Land Use section of Chapter 4 includes the Living Desert



Riverwalk Recreation Center.

Park and Zoo and a couple other private park facilities within the park land use category, but are excluded from this calculation, which is based on City owned and managed park facilities. Based on the 2022 population of 31,755, this equates to a level of service (LOS) for total parkland at approximately 20.02 acres per 1,000 residents. This is above the average for cities similar in size to Carlsbad and is primarily due to the large regional park facilities along the Pecos River.

Assuming parkland remains the same and the medium growth population projection for 2040 of 55,493 is correct, the LOS for Carlsbad will decrease to approximately 11.5 acres per 1,000 residents. This means that if the City of Carlsbad wants to keep its residents well served with parks, it should start planning now for acquisition of approximately 624 additional acres of parkland.

### ADVISORY BOARDS

The City of Carlsbad has six separate advisory boards dedicated to overseeing the operation and management of the City's parks and recreation facilities. Each of these advisory boards are appointed by the Mayor, with the



Bridge over Lake Carlsbad.

description is provided below for each of these advisory boards:

**WALTER GERRELLS  
PERFORMING ARTS and  
EXHIBITION CENTRE  
ADVISORY BOARD**

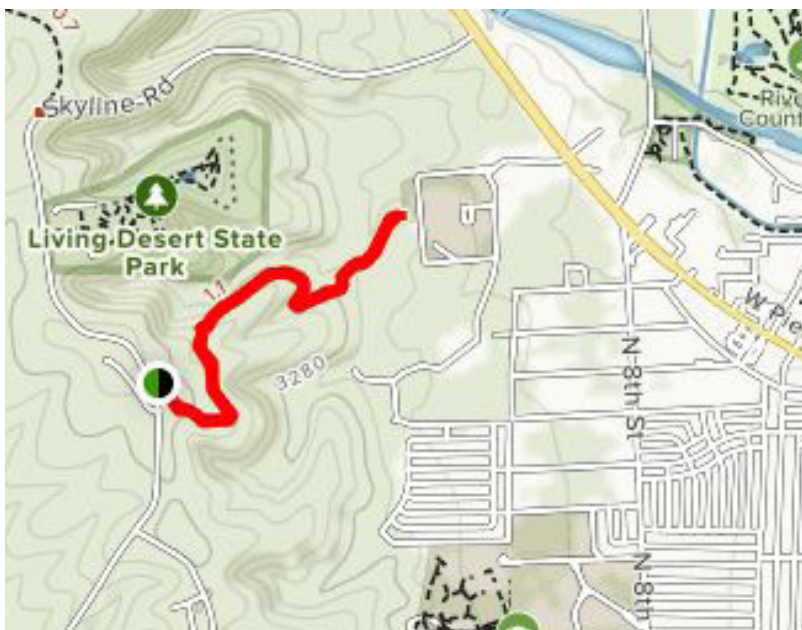
The Walter Gerrells Performing Arts and Exhibition Center Advisory Board consists of seven members that serve four-year, staggered terms. Responsibilities include promulgation of the rules and regulations for the operation, management, care, and custody of the Walter Gerrells Performing Arts and Exhibition Centre, including the annex. The Board is also responsible for establishing

consent of the City Council, and meet on a monthly basis. In addition to the traditional parks and recreation facilities, there are advisory boards in place for the Walter Gerrells Performing Arts and Exhibition Center, Bob Forrest Sports Complex, Carlsbad Municipal Golf Course, Riverwalk Recreation Center, and the Carlsbad Senior Recreation Center. A brief

the qualifications, advertising, and interviewing the applicants for manager of the facility.

**BOB FORREST SPORTS COMPLEX  
ADVISORY BOARD**

The Bob Forrest Youth Sports Complex Advisory Board consists of seven members that serve three-year, staggered terms. The Board meets on a quarterly basis. Responsibilities



Ocotillo Hills Nature Trail.



include promulgating the rules and regulations for the operation, management, care, and custody of the Bob Forrest Sports Complex and the Will Merchant Softball Complex.

### **CARLSBAD GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD**

The Golf Course Advisory Board consists of 11 members that serve four-year, staggered terms. The Board is responsible for promulgating the rules and regulations for the operation, management, care, and custody of the golf course facilities. In addition to the regular board members, the Mayor may appoint a golf professional to serve as an ex-officio member with no voting rights.

### **RIVERWALK RECREATION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD**

The Riverwalk Recreation Center Advisory Board consists of nine members that serve four-year staggered terms. The Board oversees the rules and regulations regarding the use and operation of the Riverwalk Recreation Center Skatepark facility and establishing the qualifications and advertising for the appointment of the director.

### **CARLSBAD SENIOR RECREATION CENTER ADVISORY BOARD**

The Carlsbad Senior Recreation Center Advisory Board consists of seven members that serve four-year, staggered terms. The Board oversees the management of the Senior Recreation Center and is responsible for promulgating the rules and regulations for the operation, management, care and custody of the facility.

## **LAND and WATER CONSERVATION FUND**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is the nation's premier land conservation program. The LWCF is funded by a portion of off shore drilling fees, that are then used to protect important land and

water for Americans. The LWCF provides funding for:

- ◀ Recreational areas, trails and waterways for paddling, hiking, biking, hunting, fishing and wildlife watching;
- ◀ Enhancing access to national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands;
- ◀ Preserving historic battlefields and cultural sites;
- ◀ Safeguarding rivers, watershed, water supplies, and clean water;
- ◀ Conserving working forests, farms, and ranches;
- ◀ Preserving natural areas and wildlife habitat;
- ◀ Creating and improving state and local parks; and
- ◀ Supporting local economies and jobs through increased outdoor recreation.

The City of Carlsbad should consider pursuing grants to fund land acquisition and the development of new parks and/or improvements to its existing park facilities and outdoor recreation areas.

## **9.2 PUBLIC FACILITIES**

The City of Carlsbad operates two senior centers: the North Mesa Senior Recreation Center and the Alejandro Ruiz (formerly San Jose) Senior Center, along with senior programs at the Carlsbad Public Library.

### **CARLSBAD PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Users of the Carlsbad Public Library have access to books, magazines, and newspapers via print, digital, and audio. In addition, the Library provides the following services:

- ◀ Pre-school story time and toddler time;
- ◀ SIM's Video Game Club;
- ◀ Stitches Anonymous;

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- ◀ Meeting space for community groups;
- ◀ Answering information requests by phone, text, email, or in person;
- ◀ Referrals to local, state, and federal assistance programs;
- ◀ Job search, resume building, and job skill training;
- ◀ Interlibrary loan and reader advisory service;
- ◀ Access to computers, printers, Internet, and current office suite programs;
- ◀ Research and report assistance;
- ◀ Pro se legal forms and tax forms; and
- ◀ New Mexico Motor Vehicle DWI Prevention partner and New Mexico Traffic School authorized test center.

In 2024, the Library had a total of 178,610 of digital and physical materials in circulation. The Carlsbad Public Library estimates that it receives approximately 12,245 visitors monthly. The programming consists of Summer Reading; Children, Teen, and Adult programs; Library Tours; and Community Outreach. The Library also supports the Permian Strategic Partnership's literacy initiative program to assist adults to obtain Level 3 literacy as an essential skill for typical jobs in the extractive industries.

The Carlsbad Public Library strives to provide free and accessible library services to all Carlsbad residents. Additional community meeting room space is needed based on the volume of community meeting and private study needs.

The Library Board of Trustees consists of nine members appointed by the Mayor and meets six times per year. The Board is charged with identifying and advocating for the educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the Carlsbad Public Library to the City Council.

### WALTER GERRELLS PERFORMING ARTS & EXHIBITION CENTER

The Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center is the premiere entertainment and meeting facility in Carlsbad and one of the largest facilities of its kind in southeastern New Mexico. The performance area seats 2,000 and boasts a 60-foot wide stage. The Exhibition and Banquet Hall and Lobby is approximately 14,000 square feet and has a capacity of 699. This portion of the hall frequently hosts wedding receptions, meetings, banquets, and art fairs.



Carlsbad Public Library on Halagueño Street.

## NORTH MESA SENIOR RECREATION CENTER

Located on the north side of Carlsbad, the North Mesa Senior Recreation Center provides the Carlsbad senior community with a variety of programming options ranging from fitness, arts and crafts, computer instruction, and recreational classes. The facility includes a fitness center, recreational activity center, and rooms for classes and meetings.

The Advisory Board for the North Mesa Senior Recreation Center consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor. The Board is charged with establishing rules and regulations for the Center and supporting the Center Manager.

## ALEJANDRO RUIZ SENIOR CENTER

The Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center had previously been Pate Elementary School and was donated to the City of Carlsbad by the Carlsbad Municipal School District prior to 2020. The building was not in good shape, so the City applied for and received grants and CDBG funds to renovate the building to improve the HVAC system and interior spaces, and add exterior walking paths. The Senior Center was dedicated in August 2022.

The Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation (SNMCAC) provides meals at the Senior Center. It also delivers meals to homebound seniors.

The Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center Advisory Board consists of five to seven members that meet monthly. The Advisory Board provides support to the Center manager in planning and formulating policies and advocacy to the City Council.

## PECOS RIVER VILLAGE CONFERENCE CENTER

The Pecos River Village Conference Center is located on the banks of the Pecos River and is owned by the City of Carlsbad and managed

by the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce. The “Village” contains:

- ◀ Five conference rooms of various sizes with larger rooms able to accommodate up to 100 people. These rooms are often used for classes or meeting spaces.
- ◀ The Carousel House is the largest room in the Village with space to accommodate up to 400. It is often used for larger meetings, banquets, or receptions.
- ◀ The Conference Center includes outdoor function spaces, a larger commercial kitchen, and landscaped courtyards and covered dock areas.

## 9.3 PUBLIC SAFETY

### CARLSBAD POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Carlsbad Police Department is the City’s primary public safety organization. It is headquartered at 602 W. Mermod Street. The Department is comprised of 69 certified officers in the following divisions:

- ◀ 34 Patrol Division;
- ◀ 3 Traffic Division;
- ◀ 5 Detective/Criminal Investigation;
- ◀ 2 School Resource;
- ◀ 1 Community Education;
- ◀ 2 K-9 Division; and
- ◀ 2 Animal Control Division.

The Department has five civilian staff working in evidence, records, and administration. Currently, the Police Department operates one station but would like to add a substation to shorten response times in some sectors of the City and ensure public safety services keep pace with the growth in population.

Crime rates in general have not increased; however, the number of crimes that the Police Department responds to has increased due to the increased population. The Department would like a more accurate count of the number of transient residents in Carlsbad to

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ensure staffing is adequate. The Department is staffed for a population of 25,000-30,000, which is likely an undercount. The Department has seen response times to cold calls increase in order to prioritize active calls.

The Department pools resources with the Eddy County Sheriff Department to respond to calls throughout the County. Recently, the number of calls south of Carlsbad near Loving have increased.

The Carlsbad Police Department's goals for the next three to five years include:

- ◀ Grow the number of certified officers from 69 to 95, along with updated units and equipment.
- ◀ Ensure Department growth is within budgetary constraints and is economically sustainable into the future; and
- ◀ Create a culture that is pro-active rather than reactive to current and future issues.

## CARLSBAD FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Carlsbad Fire Department serves Carlsbad and surrounding communities of Loving, Hope, and Otis. The Department has a total of 60 personnel, including administrative personnel, a Fire Chief, two Assistant Chiefs, one EMS Chief, one Fire Inspector, and one Training Division Chief. The Department operates seven stations.

The fire equipment and vehicles include the following:

- ◀ Five active Fire & EMS; primary or first-out engines;
- ◀ Two ladder trucks;
- ◀ One reserve fire engine;
- ◀ Two ARFF (Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting) located at the Airport Station for aviation response;
- ◀ Three rescue trucks outfitted for extrication from vehicle, swiftwater rescue, and mountain rescue; and

- ◀ Two boats for river/lake response and rescue.

The Fire Department handles approximately 6,200 calls per year. It works closely with Eddy County to assist areas outside the City. The Fire Department received an ISO 3 Rating in 2023. The evaluation revealed that the Department needs more personnel for the existing population as was reported in the 2018 study, and the need for flow test data results. The City has added a fire inspector with a goal to add a second fire inspector in the current fiscal year.

A concern for the Fire Department is the condition of the fire stations throughout the City. Many of the fire stations are aging and in need of renovations.

The Fire Department's goals include:

- ◀ Maintain high standards of staff training;
- ◀ Increase personnel for Fire Marshal inspections to keep up with overcrowding in buildings; this has been partially accomplished.
- ◀ Add an additional fire inspector;
- ◀ Addressing infrastructure needs such as roads to increase connectivity;
- ◀ Develop joint responses with WIPP for hazmat situations; and
- ◀ Increase the Department's capability to support the existing population and population growth by building a new main facility.

The City has expanded the Airport Fire Station and plans to add a new fire station to serve the 500-acre annexation area north of the current municipal boundary. The City has improved communications with the local fire union (FF Local #1687) by providing email accounts to firefighters to achieve timely communications initially to address COVID-19 response policies and has continued.

## 9.4 PUBLIC EDUCATION

### CARLSBAD MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

Carlsbad Municipal Schools serves Carlsbad and nearby surrounding areas. The District serves Pre-k through 12th grade and operates 14 school facilities. Table 9.4 provides a list of schools, location, grades served, and the 2024-2025 enrollment (see *Public Schools map, page 68 for school locations*). Between the 2019-2020 and 2024-2025 school years, enrollment declined from 8,677 to 7,461, according to New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED).

### PROGRAMMING

Beyond focusing on the fundamentals of learning and instruction, the District has highlighted the following programming advances:

- ◀ One-to-one devices for every student district-wide;
- ◀ Early College High School;
- ◀ Career/Technology instruction at high school;
- ◀ Fine arts and music instruction at all schools;
- ◀ Bilingual education; and

- ◀ Advanced science instruction.

### COORDINATION WITH CITY OF CARLSBAD

The Carlsbad Municipal School District has expressed the need to continue to open communication with the City of Carlsbad about growth and development. As new housing subdivisions come online, the District should be kept informed to ensure there is adequate facility and faculty capacity for new students. The District expects that as housing becomes more stabilized in the City, workers will relocate families and the schools will need to prepare for higher enrollment.

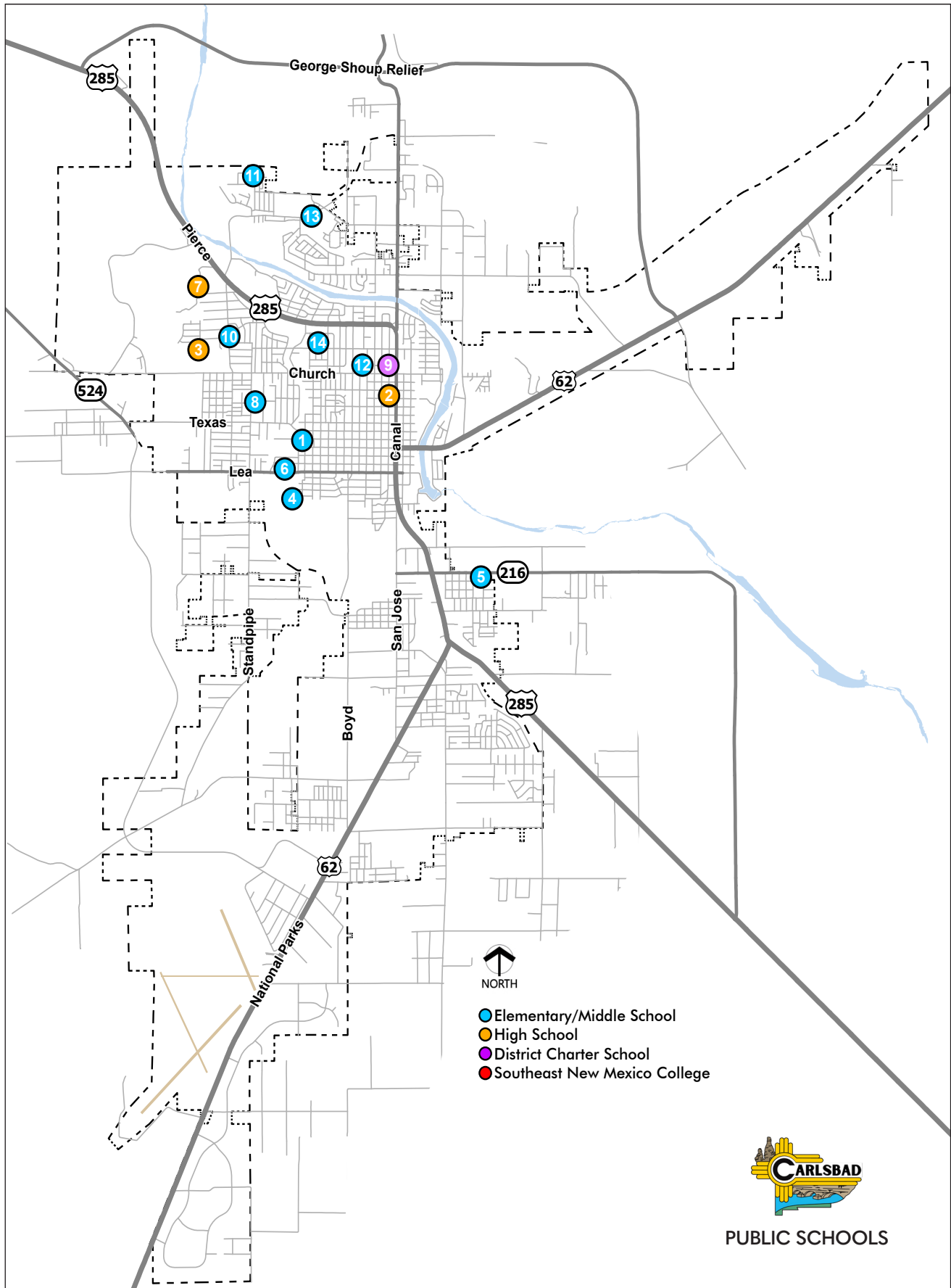
As the District continues to grow and expand the capacity of elementary schools, General Obligation Bonds (GOB) will be necessary for capital improvements. To complete the necessary upgrades to school facilities, the District asked the community to pass a GOB in 2023 for \$75 million.

Housing for teachers and staff remains a strong priority for the District. In the past, the Carlsbad School District experienced faculty shortages primarily due to lack of affordable housing. While the District compensates teachers with a higher than average wage,

**TABLE 9.4: CARLSBAD SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT, 2024-2025**

School	Location	Grades	Enrollment
1. Alta Vista Intermediate School	301 Alta Vista Street	6th - 8th	740
2. Carlsbad Enrichment Center	406 N. Alameda Street	9th - 12th	170
3. Carlsbad High School	3000 W. Church Street	9th - 12th	1,685
4. Cottonwood Elementary School	1609 W. Lea Street	1st - 5th	684
5. Desert Willow Elementary School	2100 Primrose Street	1st - 5th	667
6. Early Childhood Education Center	1801 W. Lea Street	Kindergarten	217
7. Early College High School	1500 University Drive	10th - 12th	200
8. Hillcrest Pre-School	215 N. 6th Street	Pre-K	316
9. Jefferson Montessori (Charter School)	101 S. Canal Street	K - 12th	215
10. Monterrey Elementary School	1001 N. 9th Street	1st - 5th	366
11. Ocotillo Elementary School	2106 Captain Williams Lane	1st - 5th	621
12. P.R. Leyva Intermediate School	800 W. Church Street	6th - 8th	908
13. Riverside Elementary School	1712 Johnson Street	1st - 5th	234
14. Sunset Elementary School	923 Walter Street	1st - 5th	438
<b>Total</b>			<b>7,461</b>

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department.



affordable housing options are preventing teachers from relocating to Carlsbad.

### GRADUATION RATES

An important measure of overall school district success is the graduation rate, which correlates with future earnings, higher incomes, and positive health outcomes. Carlsbad Municipal Schools' graduation rate in 2024 was 74.5%, which was a slight decline of 2.8% from 2019. The District has lower graduation rates than the surrounding school districts, with Hobbs Municipal Schools and Artesia Public Schools logging the highest rates among districts within southeast New Mexico of relatively similar size.

TABLE 9.5: GRADUATION RATES

District	2019	2024	% Change
Carlsbad Municipal Schools	76.7%	74.5%	-2.8%
Artesia Public Schools	89.1%	82.5%	-7.4%
Alamogordo Public Schools	79.2%	79.5%	0.4%
Hobbs Municipal Schools	78.7%	85.9%	9.2%
New Mexico	75.0%	78.1%	4.1%

Source: New Mexico Public Education Department.

### HIGHER EDUCATION

#### SOUTHEAST NEW MEXICO COLLEGE

Southeast New Mexico College (formerly known as New Mexico State University-Carlsbad) refers to itself as the oldest and newest community college in New Mexico. Founded in 1950 as the Carlsbad Instructional Center, it was the state's first two-year college. Ten years later, it became a branch campus of New Mexico State University.

With significant community support, SENMC was established as an independent college effective July 1, 2021, with the transfer of all functions, personnel, property, contracts, and references in law taking effect in April 2022. SENMC is the only higher education provider in the area. It has an enrollment of approximately 1,171 students and employs 566 full and part-time faculty and staff. SENMC does not provide student housing and there

are few affordable housing options for students in Carlsbad.

SENMC offers Associates' of Arts and Associates' of Applied Sciences degrees. In addition, SENMC hosts the regional Small Business Development Center and the Manufacturing Sector Development Program. SENMC also provides Adult Education Programming to assist adults in obtaining GED or High School Equivalence Certificates and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

The SENMC Board of Trustees approved a 2025-2026 budget that includes a part-time nursing education program slated to run in the late afternoon into the evening. It would mirror the current daytime SENMC Nursing program with no curriculum change required. Instead of being taught over four fall and spring semesters, SENMC plans to conduct the program over eight semesters, including summers with enrollment offered every three years. It would have half the credit hours of the SENMC regular program each semester and students could still finish in under three years after admittance, and four years with program prerequisites included. SENMC's goal is to offer the part-time nursing program as soon as fall 2026, depending on hiring essential faculty.

SENMC also has a goal of offering a two-year radiography program. SENMC is expanding its faculty to build up and oversee the program

with a projected program launch of fall 2027.

## 9.5 COMMUNITY HEALTH

Basic physical and mental health care are frequently considered the most important aspects to achieving a quality of life. Carlsbad has several organizations providing medical and behavioral health to its residents; however, overall access to health care in Carlsbad is a major challenge and is frequently cited as a concern by residents.

### EDDY COUNTY HEALTH RANKINGS

The annual County Health Rankings report (County Health Rankings & Roadmaps Program, University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute) was consulted to gain insight into community health in Eddy County. The report illustrates how place affects wellness and longevity by measuring a variety of health indicators. It serves as a tool for communities to pinpoint opportunities for improving overall community health.

The 2023 report ranks and groups a variety of factors for each county into two summary reports categorized under “Health Outcomes” and “Health Factors”. The following summary can assist Carlsbad and public health agencies in determining priorities for expanding and improving these metrics.

### HEALTH OUTCOMES

Health Outcomes in Eddy County and their ranking as compared to other counties in New Mexico are based on two metrics:

- ◀ **Length of Life (ranked 22nd):** Length of life is measured by years of potential life lost before age 75.
- ◀ **Quality of Life (ranked 2nd):** Quality of life is measured by the percent of people reporting poor or fair health and the number of physically and mentally unhealthy days within the last 30 days and the percent of low-birth-weight newborns.

TABLE 9.2: HEALTH OUTCOMES, 2023

Length of Life	Eddy County	New Mexico
Premature Death	11,100	10,000
Quality of Life		
Poor or Fair Health	15%	14%
Poor Physical Health Days	3.1	3.1
Poor Mental Health Days	4.0	4.3
Low Birthweight	8%	9%

Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2023.

Eddy County ranked 13th in overall Health Outcomes amongst New Mexico’s 33 counties. Eddy County had a higher number of years lost due to premature death (years of potential life lost before the age of 75 per 10,000 people) than the state average. Eddy County ranked similar to New Mexico in the other Health Outcome metrics (see *Table 9.2*).

### HEALTH FACTORS

Health Factors in Eddy County and their rankings as compared to other counties in New Mexico are based on the following four metrics:

- ◀ **Health Behaviors (ranked 25th):** Adult smoking, adult obesity, food environment index, access to exercise opportunities, excessive drinking, alcohol-impaired driving deaths, sexually transmitted infections.
- ◀ **Clinical Care (ranked 18th):** Teen births, insurance, medical, dental and mental health providers, preventable hospital stays, mammography screening, and flu vaccinations.
- ◀ **Social and Economic Factors (ranked 11th):** High school completion, college education, employment, children in poverty, income, children in single parent households, social associations, and injury deaths.
- ◀ **Social and Economic Factors (ranked 11th):** High school completion, college education, employment, children in poverty, income, children in single parent

TABLE 9.3: HEALTH FACTORS

Health Behaviors	Eddy County	New Mexico
Food Insecurity	12%	14%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	13%	14%
Drug Overdose Deaths	28	24
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	28	39
Insufficient Sleep	33%	31%
Clinical Care		
Uninsured	12%	13%
Primary Care Physicians	3,380:1	1,340:1
Dentists	3,020:1	1,500:1
Mental Health Providers	710:1	220:1

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 2024.

households, social associations and injury deaths.

- ▶ **Physical Environment (ranked 28th):** Air and water quality, severe housing problems, driving alone to work, and long commutes driving alone.

Eddy County ranked 19th overall in overall Health Factors as compared to other counties in New Mexico, which shows there is significant room for improvement. Table 9.3 shows areas where Eddy County and Carlsbad can focus their efforts on improving. The following is a summary of the key takeaways:

- ▶ Eddy County scored better than New Mexico on the food environment index, which includes access to health foods and food insecurity.
- ▶ Teen births are much higher in Eddy County than that of New Mexico, which can result in increased risks of health complications, social and economic and educational hardships, and potential strain on social support systems.
- ▶ Eddy County has a severe lack of medical care providers compared to New Mexico as a whole, which confirms the input received from participants in the Community Survey and public meetings.



Carlsbad Medical Center on W. Pierce Street.

- ▶ Injury deaths are greater in Eddy County, including deaths by unnatural means, such as motor vehicle crashes and poisonings.
- ▶ Eddy County ranked much higher in air pollution and particulate matter than the New Mexico average, and has had drinking water violations.
- ▶ A lesser percentage of the population experienced severe housing problems than the New Mexico average, which includes households with overcrowding, high costs, and lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities.

## HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

### CARLSBAD MEDICAL CENTER

Carlsbad Medical Center is the only full-service hospital in Carlsbad. The 115-bed facility includes inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic, medical, surgical, and emergency services. Carlsbad Medical Center is an accredited Level III Trauma Center with 40 health care professionals. Specialty medical services include:

- ▶ Anesthesiology;
- ▶ Cardiology;
- ▶ Colorectal Surgery;
- ▶ Emergency Medicine;
- ▶ Gastroenterology;
- ▶ General Surgery;
- ▶ Internal Medicine;
- ▶ Interventional Cardiology;

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- ◀ Neurology;
- ◀ Obstetrics/Gynecology; and
- ◀ Ophthalmology.

Carlsbad Medical Center has made strides in expanding medical services, facilities, and technologies. In 2024, capital projects totaled \$2 million and included renovation of the second and third floor patient rooms and a remodeled lobby, kitchen and cafeteria, and the addition of a new CT scanner. The Carlsbad Medical Center also added several primary care providers and specialists, and reopened the pediatric clinic. These are positive steps towards increasing Carlsbad residents' access to health care services.

### PECOS VALLEY PHYSICIAN GROUP

The Pecos Valley Physician Group is a 22-physician medical group affiliated with the Carlsbad Medical Center. Medical services provided to the community includes:

- ◀ Cardiology;
- ◀ Family medicine;
- ◀ Urgent Care;
- ◀ Internal Medicine;
- ◀ General Surgery;
- ◀ Radiation Oncology;
- ◀ Orthopedic Surgery;
- ◀ Pediatrics; and
- ◀ Obstetrics and Gynecology.

### ARTESIA GENERAL HOSPITAL

To address the travel times and wait times to obtain healthcare, Artesia General Hospital is expanding its offerings to serve the region, including within Carlsbad. The hospital is developing a state-of-the-art MRI suite and updating surgery rooms to accommodate robotic-assisted surgery for some procedures. Telemedicine services are also provided and non-emergency transit is available for in-patient needs. Artesia General Hospital is planning a 157,000 square-foot facility to increase emergency services, surgical capacity and the number of in-patient beds.

Artesia Healthcare Professionals, affiliated with Artesia General Hospital, has several physicians practicing in Carlsbad. Services include:

- ◀ Endocrinology and diabetes education;
- ◀ Family Practice;
- ◀ Open MRI imaging;
- ◀ Neurology;
- ◀ Orthopedics;
- ◀ Outpatient Behavioral Health;
- ◀ Pain management; and
- ◀ Laboratory services.

### ADVANCED HEART AND VASCULAR CENTER OF NEW MEXICO

To both augment the services offered by the Carlsbad Medical Center and to help address the region's volume of patients for heart health needs, the Advanced Heart and Vascular Center of New Mexico opened in 2021. It is helping to address the community's more specialized heart health concerns, serving the adult population of Carlsbad aged 18 years and over in the region. The clinic treats concerns of heart failure, atrial fibrillation (AFib), and other serious issues caused by diabetes, stimulant use, and other causes for acute cardiac events.

### BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH

There are limited behavioral and mental health treatment services available in Carlsbad. Regional needs are currently served by Artesia General Hospital, LifeHouse, and Presbyterian Medical Services-Behavioral Health. Acute psychiatric patients are sent to Roswell for treatment, as there are no facilities in Carlsbad to serve this need. Counseling services currently have a six month wait in Roswell.

Several community members expressed their concern that the City does not have adequate mental and behavioral health services to meet the need in Carlsbad and individuals must travel to other communities for treatment. Medical facilities that offer behavioral and mental health in Carlsbad are described below.

### LIFEHOUSE RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

Lifeshouse Carlsbad, a non-profit organization, provides a continuum of care for recovering addicts, including substance abuse disorder treatment, mental health treatment, and medical treatment. Lifeshouse has 85 employees and offers the following programs:

- ◀ **Residential Detox Program:** 12 beds for medically monitored care for individuals experiencing withdrawal symptoms.
- ◀ **Residential Treatment:** Operation of two residential treatment facilities, including Avalon for women and children and Villa de Esperanza in Carlsbad.
- ◀ **Sober Living Facilities:** Four sober living facilities in Artesia and Carlsbad. The sober living facilities are designated for women, men, and women with children.
- ◀ **Intensive Outpatient Care for Individuals with Addiction:** 16 week program that requires nine hours a week of group/individual therapy; in person and via telehealth.
- ◀ **Aftercare:** Provided with LifeMed Clinic and Peer Support services. Comprehensive Community Support Services are planned in 2023.
- ◀ **CRAFT Family Services:** Support for family members of people with a substance use disorders and to help loved ones prioritize their mental health and improve their happiness.
- ◀ **Detention Center Partnership:** Lifeshouse partnered with Eddy County to expand outreach to Eddy County Detention Center inmates with substance abuse issues and to provide training to correctional officers on how to deal with mental and behavioral health issues.

In 2023, Lifeshouse became part of a pilot program through the New Mexico Department of Health to provide mobile response for behavioral health crises. There are also plans to

expand outpatient mental health services and to build a sixth sober living facility for women and children.

### PRESBYTERIAN MEDICAL SERVICES-BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (BH)

The largest mental health provider in Carlsbad is Presbyterian Medical Services (PMS). PMS has four practitioners and accepts Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance. Services include:

- ◀ Therapy;
- ◀ Substance use treatment;
- ◀ Psychiatric medication management; and
- ◀ Crisis intervention.

Mental health services are also provided by Synergy Behavioral Health and Carlsbad Mental Health Center.

## 9.6 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES GOAL 1

Build a healthy community through an integrated and comprehensive system of park, open space, and recreation facilities and services.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To ensure that as Carlsbad continues to grow, the park and recreation needs of existing and future residents are being met through capital improvements to existing facilities and the acquisition and development of new parks.*
- ◀ *To ensure park and recreation facilities are equitably distributed and in reasonable proximity to neighborhoods, schools, and activity areas throughout Carlsbad.*
- ◀ *To collaborate and partner with Carlsbad Municipal Schools and Eddy County on the shared use of recreation facilities.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 1.1

Create and implement a parks and recreation master plan that includes, but is not limited to:

- ◀ A recreation needs assessment geared towards youth, adults, and seniors;
- ◀ GIS database of existing park facilities, amenities, and conditions;
- ◀ Public engagement;
- ◀ Population growth projections;
- ◀ Site selection criteria for new park facilities;
- ◀ Identification and strategies for acquisition of new parkland in areas not currently served and future annexation areas as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario (see Chapter 5: Land Use);
- ◀ Outdoor and indoor recreational programming for youth, adults, and seniors; and
- ◀ Implementation and phasing for capital expenditures.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 1.2

Establish and implement an ongoing preventative maintenance and improvement program for all existing park facilities based on priorities, needs, and best practices. The program should address:

- ◀ Installation or replacement of playground equipment;
- ◀ Installation of shade structures and picnic tables;
- ◀ ADA upgrades, as needed;
- ◀ Maintenance and replacement of irrigation systems, turf and plant materials, and court equipment; and
- ◀ Water conservation through effluent reuse for irrigation purposes and irrigation best practices.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 1.3

Work with Carlsbad Municipal Schools and Eddy County on developing joint use agreements to allow for the shared use of outdoor recreation facilities by the public.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES GOAL 2

Provide a full range of community facilities to meet the social and educational programming needs of the community.

### Objectives:

- ◀ *To ensure that as the City continues to grow, the community facility needs of existing and future residents are being met through capital improvements to the existing library, senior center, and youth facilities and the development of new facilities.*
- ◀ *To ensure community facilities and programs meet the multi-generational needs of existing and future residents.*
- ◀ *To expand and support the ability of seniors to remain active, healthy, and living independently in the community.*

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 2.1

Complete a Senior Facility and Programming Needs Assessment to determine whether programming needs, fitness and recreation space and equipment, and the demand for respite care, senior day care programs, and senior meals, and staffing levels based on the existing population and future population growth are being met. Secure funding for facility and programming improvements as determined in the Needs Assessment, including the design and construction of the planned Phase 2 improvements at the Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 2.2

Complete a Library Needs Assessment to determine whether programming needs, meeting space, computer equipment, and staffing levels based on the existing population and future population growth are being met. Secure funding for facility and improvements as determined in the Needs Assessment, including expanding the facility to allow for more community meeting space.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 2.3

Create, fund, and implement an ongoing preventative maintenance and replacement program for all City-owned community facilities, including the North Mesa Senior Center, Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center, Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center, Pecos River Village Conference Center, Cavern Theatre, Carlsbad Museum, City Administration Building, etc.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES GOAL 3

Deliver and operate an adequate level of fire, police, and emergency facilities and services.

### Objectives:

- ◀ To ensure that as the City continues to grow, the public safety needs of existing and future residents are being met through appropriate staffing levels, facilities, and equipment in the Fire and Police Departments.
- ◀ To ensure shorter response times to emergency calls for service and maintain an excellent Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 3.1

Complete a comprehensive Public Safety Needs Assessment that identifies programming and training needs; technology, equipment, vehicle, and building needs; and

determines adequate staffing levels to ensure the safety of current and future residents based on population growth and future annexations.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 3.2

Prioritize and secure funding for the design and construction of two fire station facilities, including a new main fire station and a new fire station within the planned annexation area north of the municipal boundary, as identified on the Future Annexation map in Chapter 5: Land Use.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 3.3

Continue to coordinate with and assist Eddy County Fire and Rescue, Eddy County Sheriff, Artesia Fire Department, Artesia Police Department, and the Village of Loving Police Department on responding to emergency calls for service, as needed.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES GOAL 4

Support equal access to high quality, public education and learning opportunities.

### Objectives:

- ◀ To coordinate with Carlsbad Municipal Schools and Southeast New Mexico College on developing and maintaining an adequate level of public education programs and school facilities to address the needs of existing and future residents.
- ◀ To ensure educational and learning opportunities are available to Carlsbad residents of all ages.
- ◀ To ensure existing and future educators in Carlsbad have access to affordable housing.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 4.1

Initiate an annual town hall that facilitates a dialogue between the City of Carlsbad,

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Southeast New Mexico College, and Eddy County on educational initiatives, joint high school/college credit programs, workforce training, and expanding opportunities for high school students and graduates.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 4.2

Support and be a conduit of information on adult education programs and classes, including GED preparation, computer literacy, career training, in collaboration with Southeast New Mexico College, Eddy County, and New Mexico Workforce Connection.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 4.3

Advocate for the development of affordable workforce housing to serve existing and future Carlsbad educational providers.

### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES GOAL 5

Increase the level of health care services available in Carlsbad.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To coordinate with Carlsbad Medical Center and other local and regional health care providers on developing and maintaining an adequate level of health care services in Carlsbad to address the needs of existing and future residents.*
- ◀ *To ensure Carlsbad residents have equal access to health care and behavioral health services.*
- ◀ *To ensure there are an adequate number of health care professionals to serve the existing and future residents of Carlsbad.*

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 5.1

Work with Carlsbad Medical Center on developing a public service outreach program on available community health

services and prenatal care to reduce the level of premature deaths in Carlsbad and Eddy County.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 5.2

Work with Southeast New Mexico College, New Mexico Department of Health, Carlsbad Medical Center, and other local and regional health care providers on a strategic initiative that promotes Carlsbad and identifies incentives for attracting and retaining health care and mental health professionals and students in health science education programs.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES STRATEGY 5.3

Provide financial support for the construction of a behavioral health residential treatment facility - Avalon Ranch - for mothers with small children and to LifeHouse Carlsbad for its substance abuse, recovery, and mental health programs.

# HAZARD MITIGATION

## WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ▶ Description of best practices in hazard mitigation from FEMA and the American Planning Association
- ▶ Summary of emergency plans and preparedness at the state, county, and local levels
- ▶ Assessment of existing hazards and issues, including severe weather, land subsidence, flooding and dam failure, drought, hazardous materials, etc.
- ▶ The unique challenges of potential accidents during transport to WIPP
- ▶ Goals, objectives, and strategies that address reducing the community's vulnerability to hazard events through education and preparedness; improvements to stormwater systems and conveyances; allocation of funding and resources to respond to events; and improving the capacity to respond to hazardous material spills and accidents.



Hazard mitigation describes actions taken to help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards or disasters, such as extreme weather events, flooding, drought, wildfire, or dam failure. As Carlsbad continues to plan for new development and improvements to existing infrastructure, mitigation can and should be an important component of the planning effort.

Hazard mitigation takes a long-term view of rebuilding and recovery following disasters. The implementation of such hazard mitigation actions leads to building a stronger and safer community that is better able to reduce future injuries and damage.

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## 10.2 BEST PRACTICES IN HAZARD MITIGATION

Traditionally, community hazard planning has focused on mitigation and less on adaptation, response, and recovery. True community resilience should integrate new methods of responding to emergency events that may be stronger and more destructive.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Planning Association (APA) work together to provide resources to communities for hazard mitigation planning. The report, *Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning* (2010), identified effective multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation strategies and tools based on a series of case studies for towns of all sizes and rural jurisdictions across the United States.

In 2020, the APA Board adopted the *Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide*, which included 13 Guiding Policies on Hazard Mitigation that frame specific policy declarations. The *Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide* is closely linked to other APA policy guides, including guides on climate change, equity, and housing. It supplements and supports the FEMA and APA's *Hazard Mitigation: Integrating Best Practices into Planning* report, with a focus on recent severe hazard occurrences due to global climate change, including drought and severe weather, both of which impact Carlsbad. The *Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide* is useful for developing future hazard mitigation policies and strategies.

The APA *Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide* included policies regarding climate change and the specific steps communities should take to mitigate the impact of climate-related disasters. Extreme weather events continue to endanger lives and have negative impacts on health, property, and the environment. It is crucial that communities prepare and adapt to

the changing climate and the emergencies that may occur as a result.

The *Hazard Mitigation Policy Guide* described a three-part set of interrelated strategies to improve community resilience to hazards:

- ◀ **Hazard Mitigation:** A series of actions that lessen the severity or intensity of the hazard's impact when it strikes and begins with avoidance and minimization.
- ◀ **Adaptation:** Modifying the natural or building environment to make it more suited to changed or changing conditions and situations. Adaptation also includes changing community behavior to safeguard human and environmental health when faced with the stresses imposed by hazards of all types.
- ◀ **Response/Recovery:** The response during and after an event to protect public safety, health, and well-being, and to facilitate community recovery through repair or replacement, ideally to a more resilient condition. This may include changes in land uses, densities, development techniques, building codes, utility locations and installation methods, infrastructure investments, and community services.

## 10.2 EMERGENCY PLANS & PREPAREDNESS

This section describes the various emergency plans, hazard mitigation, and emergency management efforts by the State of New Mexico, Eddy County, City of Carlsbad, and the municipalities of Artesia, Hope, and Loving. Eddy County takes the lead in emergency management for the entire county area.

### STATE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The *State of New Mexico Hazard Mitigation Plan* (2023) was intended to reflect hazard profiles and analysis on a Preparedness Area

scale. The City of Carlsbad falls under the Preparedness Area 1. Local jurisdictions within the Preparedness Area 1 identified drought, floods, high winds, land subsidence, severe winter storms, thunderstorms, and wildfire as being high priority concerns. The state has made an effort to analyze and identify potential vulnerabilities to hazards profiled in that area. Through funding and technical assistance, the State Hazard Mitigation Planning Team is working with communities to identify solutions for reducing these vulnerabilities to natural hazards. Some of the strategies include:

- ◀ Comprehensive public education;
- ◀ Providing a repository of hazard mapping;
- ◀ Training emergency management personnel in damage estimation software;
- ◀ Implementing actions to improve forest and watershed health;
- ◀ Rehabilitating or removing unsafe dams;
- ◀ Mandating xeriscaping with drought resistant species at state facilities;
- ◀ Increasing the number of communities participating in the Community Rating System; and
- ◀ Requiring the use of hail resistant material in new state funded construction.

## EDDY COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Eddy County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) was created by a Joint Powers Agreement between Eddy County, the municipalities of Carlsbad, Artesia, Loving, and Hope, and the Department of Energy to cooperatively address emergency planning and disaster mitigation in the area. The OEM's mission is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated program that will enhance public safety and reduce the loss of lives and property. Emergency management focuses on preparing for disaster before it happens, disaster response (e.g. emergency evacuation, quarantine, mass decontamination, etc.),

as well as supporting and rebuilding society after natural or human-made disasters have occurred. Emergency Management is the continuous process by which all individuals, groups, and communities manage hazards in an effort to avoid or ameliorate the impact of disasters. Effective emergency management relies on the integration of emergency plans at all levels of government and non-government involvement.

## EDDY COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

The OEM developed and maintains the 2017 *Eddy County Hazards Emergency Operations Plan*, which provides the framework for local response to a large-scale emergency or disaster. It delineates the organization and assignment of responsibilities in the event of a disaster and identifies the specific coordinated response effort for the County and local municipalities to follow. The Plan describes the existing resources available in case of a disaster or emergency, and the responsibilities of various agencies to respond to and recover from the situation.

## EDDY COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The 2023 *Eddy County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* identified the different natural and man-made hazards that endanger the health, safety, and welfare in Eddy County and Artesia and Carlsbad. The Plan assessed the different risks and hazards, mitigation actions, and proposed a mitigation plan with an accompanying implementation strategy. FEMA approved the plan on August 13, 2024.

The primary threats faced by Carlsbad are severe weather, land subsidence, flooding, drought, and dam failure. Other threats faced by Carlsbad are related to the extractive industries and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The *Eddy County Hazard Mitigation Plan* included a Priority Risk Index, and the summary for each hazard is listed in their

respective areas under Section 10.2, Existing Hazards & Issues.

## LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Eddy County also has a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), which was created in 1994. LEPCs were mandated by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 as a way to plan for and respond to chemical emergencies. The members of the Eddy County LEPC include representatives of the oil and gas industry, public safety officials, health officials, the Eddy County Cooperative Extension Service, and emergency planners.

## ADVANCED EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS

Eddy County operates an Alert Center service, which allows residents to sign up for weather, emergency, and road alerts throughout the County, including within Carlsbad. In 2024, the City of Carlsbad, City of Artesia, and Eddy County implemented Smart911 to improve communication between residents and emergency responders throughout Eddy County. Smart 911 is a free service that allows residents to create a safety profile with information about the members of the household, phone numbers, medical conditions, medications, vehicles, pets, and emergency contacts that is available to first responders during emergencies and 911 calls. Participants can also sign up for emergency and weather alerts either in conjunction with Smart911 or they may sign up for emergency and weather alerts only. This service is in addition to the national wireless emergency alerts that allow authorized public safety officials to send alerts through FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) to alert wireless users in affected areas.

## 10.3 EXISTING HAZARDS & ISSUES

This section includes a summary of the existing hazards in Carlsbad as identified in the *Eddy County Hazard Mitigation Plan*. It also includes a discussion of man-made hazards, such as hazardous material spills and incidents. Since there is generally a low risk of wildfire in Carlsbad, the potential for wildfire was not evaluated in the *Eddy County Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

### SEVERE WEATHER

Severe weather events, such as high winds, thunderstorms, lightning, dust storms, hail, drought, substantial rainfall (that can cause localized flash flooding), and periodic temperature extremes, are high risks in Carlsbad, posing potential damage to new and older buildings that do not meet current building codes. Thunderstorms can bring hail and even tornadoes. Between 2012 and 2024, there were 53 hail events across Eddy County, some localized and some broad-ranging. While most hail events did not cause damage, 15 events caused nearly \$1.7 million in damages, though those impacts were limited to about \$15,000 in Carlsbad.

There were five tornadoes recorded in Eddy County of which four were reported having winds between 65-85 mph with the potential to cause light damage. The fifth had winds between 111 to 135 mph, which caused approximately \$20,000 in damage in Malaga.

The Priority Risk Index (see *Table 10.1*) lists the probability for thunderstorms in Carlsbad as possible, with a minor impact and moderate spatial extent. The warning time could be 6-12 hours, and duration of more than a week.

### LAND SUBSIDENCE

Sinkholes, subsurface cavities, and depressions in the land surface are all related. In regions where bedrock is composed of soluble rock types, such as limestone, dolomite, or gypsum,

TABLE 10.1: PRIORITY RISK INDEX (PRI) SUMMARY FOR CARLSBAD

Priority	Hazard	Probability	Impact	Spatial Extent	Warning Time	Duration	Priority Risk
1	Thunderstorms	Possible	Minor	Moderate	6-12 Hours	< Week	2.0
2	Land Subsidence	Likely	Critical	Moderate	6-12 Hours	< Week	3.2
3	Flood	Likely	Critical	Moderate	< 6 Hours	< Week	3.1
4	Drought	Likely	Limited	Large	> 24 Hours	> Week	2.8
5	Dam Failure	Unlikely	Critical	Moderate	< 6 Hours	< 24 Hours	2.4

Source: Eddy County Emergency Management Mitigation Plan (2023).

groundwater moving through joints dissolves the rock, creating cavities in the subsurface, also known as karst. In addition, human activity, such as fluid withdrawal (e.g. pumping of water, oil, or gas) from underground reservoirs, can cause land subsidence.

In arid and semi-arid areas like southeastern New Mexico, karst features are commonly formed in evaporitic bedrock. Evaporites are a type of rock produced by salts left behind during the evaporation of saline water. The most common types of evaporite rock are gypsum, composed of calcium sulfate, and halite, the mineral name for sodium chloride, or table salt. Thick deposits of gypsum and halite are present at the surface and in the subsurface throughout the Permian Basin region of southeastern New Mexico and west Texas.

The Priority Risk Index lists the probability for land subsidence in Carlsbad as likely, with potential for a critical impact and moderate spatial extent. The warning time could be less than six hours, with a duration of less than a week.

## FLOODING

Due to late summer rains during the monsoon season, there is a high level of flooding risk along the Pecos River in Carlsbad, most often happening as flash flooding, with heavy or excessive rainfall in a short period of time, generally less than six hours. Since 2012, Carlsbad has experienced flooding 19 times and Eddy County as whole has experienced 35 floods, mostly flash floods. Flash floods

can cause significant damage to property and structures, injury and death. Low-water crossings during flooding are a particular concern, as people can underestimate depth and strength of the water and try to drive across. While much of Carlsbad is outside of mapped flood hazard zones, an area along the Pecos River and a large area south of W. Lea Street to Standpipe Road are within the 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard elevation. An area in northwest Carlsbad between W. Church Street and W. Lea Street and west from the Pecos River to the Carlsbad Irrigation Canal is within the 0.2% annual chance flood hazard (*see the Floodplains & Drainage map, page 123*).

The Priority Risk Index lists the probability for flooding as likely, with potential for a critical impact and moderate spatial extent. The warning time could be less than six hours, with a duration of less than a week. The City of Carlsbad has developed plans to improve the Dark Canyon Bridge and North Canal Drain, two key features that have been impacted by prior flooding. Improvements to these features will reduce the potential for Carlsbad to flood.

## DAM FAILURE

In times of heavy rains and high water levels, dam failure would inundate the developed communities located downstream. Brantley, Avalon, and Hackberry Draw Sites No. 1 and 2 dams are upstream of Carlsbad and are all listed as having high dam hazard potential, based on the potential impact of a dam failure (breach) or mis-operation (unscheduled



Construction on the Upper Tansil Dam. Source: Smithco Construction.

release) would have on downstream areas. The extent of potential impact of a dam failure is described in specific dam Emergency Action Plans that are maintained by each facility. The Upper and Lower Tansil Dams are smaller, recreational dams along the Pecos River in Carlsbad, and are classified as having “significant” dam hazard potential in case of failure or mis-operation.

Of these six dams, Hackberry Draw Site No. 2 and Lower Tansil Dam are marked with deficiencies based on a lack of design information. The 2023 *Eddy County Hazard*

*Mitigation Plan* noted that the Upper Tansil Dam was in need of maintenance and there was a lack of design information. In 2019-20, work on the Upper Tansil Dam included two new knife gate valves with valve actuators and the construction of a concrete stabilization structure to replace the existing slide gate valves.

The Priority Risk Index for dam failure within Carlsbad is unlikely, and the impact would be critical. Spatial extent is moderate, the warning time could be less than six hours, and the duration could be less than 24 hours.

## DROUGHT

The Mitigation Planning Team has identified drought as a priority hazard in Eddy County. The Priority Risk Index lists the probability for drought as likely, with a limited impact and moderate spatial extent. The warning time could be 6-12 hours, and duration of more than a week.

Carlsbad’s climate is semi-arid, which causes extended periods of diminished flow in area rivers and streams. A decrease in precipitation can create drought conditions in a relatively short time. The critical facilities connected to the City’s municipal water system need water for multiple purposes, from potable water to fire suppression.

Critical facilities near City limits may be connected to private systems that are not as reliable as the municipal system. Since

TABLE 10.2: CARLSBAD AREA DAMS

Name	River	Owner	Purpose	EAP? (Y/N)	Classification
Avalon Dam	Pecos River	Bureau of Reclamation	Irrigation	Y	High
Brantley Dam	Pecos River	Bureau of Reclamation	Flood Control	Y	High
Hackberry Draw Watershed Site No. 2 Dam	Hackberry Draw	Hackberry Draw Watershed District	Flood Control	Y	High
Lower Tansil Dam	Pecos River	City of Carlsbad	Recreation	N	Significant
Upper Tansil Dam	Pecos River	City of Carlsbad	Recreation	N	Significant

Source: Eddy County Emergency Management Mitigation Plan (2023).

groundwater in Carlsbad is typically recharged by surface water from the Pecos River, a continuation of the current drought and lower water levels in the Pecos River will lower the water table even further and require deeper wells. Deeper groundwater requires more intensive treatment to filter out arsenic and minerals.

Carlsbad recycles treated effluent for irrigation purposes to reduce the pressure on groundwater supplies. As discussed in Chapter 7: Infrastructure, the City is investing in improvements to the Sheep's Draw Wellfield located seven miles southwest of Carlsbad in the Guadalupe Mountains, which is the main source of groundwater for Carlsbad.

The City's water supply can be impacted by New Mexico's compliance with the Pecos River Compact, particularly in years with less precipitation. In past years, thousands of acres of irrigated farmland have been purchased to secure water right for state-line delivery to Texas. With prolonged drought, further such purchases or leases may need to be made to comply with the Pecos River Compact.

A prolonged drought also raises the probability of other hazards. While these affect primarily rural areas, Carlsbad could also be impacted by wildfires, erosion, flash flooding, and dust storms. There were two dust storms recorded in the NOAA Storm Events Database in Eddy County in May 2022 and June 2024, though it is unclear how close these were to Carlsbad.

## OTHER HAZARDS

### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

These include hazardous materials releases, nuclear facility accidents, and terrorism (medium risk in Carlsbad). Based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data, there are a number of facilities that store and transport hazardous waste in Eddy County, including the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) 30 miles to the east of Carlsbad. In addition,

four major transportation routes, including the railroad, are used to transport hazardous materials.

Although WIPP is the most well-known hazardous waste facility near Carlsbad, the City and its developing urban areas are outside the 10-mile emergency planning zone for WIPP, and the City's growth is not likely to impact the emergency-planning zone in the near future. Much has already been done to protect against nuclear accidents in the development of the WIPP site and its transportation practices.

The WIPP Transportation Safety Program is a joint effort of seven New Mexico agencies, including:

- ◀ Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department;
- ◀ Environment Department;
- ◀ Department of Health;
- ◀ Department of Transportation;
- ◀ Department of Public Safety;
- ◀ Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and
- ◀ State Fire Marshal's Office (non-voting).

As such, the most appropriate action for the City is to continue to coordinate with the WIPP Transportation Safety Program and stay informed on any changes to procedures.

Other hazardous materials are transported through Carlsbad on local highways and the BNSF railroad, including sand used for hydraulic fracturing, pipe, crude oil, diesel, and potash as rail as become a bigger part of the logistics network in getting products out of the Permian Basin and avoiding the traffic congestion in Carlsbad and Loving.

The primary hazard is related to accidents along primary transportation routes, including US 62, US 285, and the BNSF rail line. The City can plan for possible accidents related to hazardous materials by continuing to educate the public, raise awareness, develop evacuation

procedures, and work with state and federal regulators to discuss how to mitigate any hazards associated with regulated industries.

## EARTHQUAKES

Although the majority of the earthquakes in New Mexico occur in the area of the Rio Grande rift, there has been a small cluster of earthquakes south of Artesia in Eddy County. Atomic bomb testing caused three earthquakes in New Mexico, including underground explosions near Carlsbad in 1961 and east of Farmington in 1967.

While the potential for earthquakes in Carlsbad was not evaluated in the *Eddy County Hazard Mitigation Plan*, wastewater injection related to hydraulic fracturing appears to have caused numerous minor earthquakes in the region. A recent study of the Permian Basin found that wastewater injection has caused existing faults to slip, producing more than 4,000 magnitude  $\geq 3.0$  earthquakes with 10 magnitude  $\geq 5.0$  as of October 2024 (USGS Earthquake Hazards Program). Magnitude 3 earthquakes are similar to the passing of a large truck and magnitude 5 earthquakes are still below the threshold of causing property damage.

## WATER QUALITY

As hydraulic fracturing activities ramp up in the Delaware Basin, the City of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and other surrounding communities should be aware of the impacts these activities can have on drinking water in some circumstances and continue monitoring. The EPA published a study in 2017 titled *"Hydraulic Fracturing for Oil and Gas: Impacts from the Hydraulic Fracturing Water Cycle on Drinking Water Resources in the United States"* that reviewed the hydraulic fracturing water cycle and potential impacts. The EPA found scientific evidence that water resources are impacted under certain conditions, including:

- ◀ Water withdrawals for hydraulic fracturing in times or areas of low water availability,

particularly in areas with limited or declining groundwater resources;

- ◀ Spills during the handling of hydraulic fracturing fluids and chemicals or produced water that result in large volumes or high concentrations of chemicals reaching groundwater resources;
- ◀ Injection of hydraulic fracturing fluids into wells with inadequate mechanical integrity, allowing gases or liquids to move to groundwater resources;
- ◀ Injection of hydraulic fracturing fluids directly into groundwater resources;
- ◀ Discharge of inadequately treated hydraulic fracturing wastewater to surface water; and
- ◀ Disposal or storage of hydraulic fracturing wastewater in unlined pits resulting in contamination of groundwater resources.

## AIR POLLUTION

Eddy County experiences a higher rate of air pollution than the state average. The EPA has documented air quality impacts in areas such as Eddy County that have natural gas development activity. These areas have seen increases in emissions of methane, volatile organic compounds, sulfur dioxide, and hydrogen sulfide. This is in addition to the pollutants released from vehicle emissions.

The EPA has implemented the STAR Program in which partner companies have identified technologies and practices that can cost-effectively reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector. Several of the companies operating in the Permian Basin are involved in this program.

In 2021 and 2022, the New Mexico Environment Department and Oil Conservation Division adopted new regulations that increase gas capture and ban the flaring or the burning of excess gas except in emergencies. The

new rules require oil and gas operators to capture 98% of their natural gas waste by the end of 2026. The New Mexico Environment Department's Air Quality Bureau also monitors air quality across the state, including an air quality monitoring station in Carlsbad to monitor nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>).

As oil and gas excavation continues in the Delaware Basin, it is important that air monitoring stations continue to measure pollutants that could have an impact on public health. The City should work with state and federal government agencies and industry to ensure levels do not exceed standards set by the EPA and that violators are penalized.

## 10.4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & STRATEGIES

### HAZARD MITIGATION GOAL 1

Reduce the community's risk and vulnerability from natural hazard events using an all-hazards approach.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To provide adequate warning for major hazards, including flood events, severe weather, and dam failure.*
- ◀ *To improve emergency preparedness and response during natural hazard events.*
- ◀ *To ensure essential and emergency services stay operational during hazard events.*
- ◀ *To provide adequate shelter facilities to the community during hazard events.*

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 1.1

Develop a emergency preparedness public education program that includes:

- ◀ Educating residents on creating an emergency communications plan with family members;
- ◀ Registering with Eddy County's Smart911 service and/or emergency and weather alerts;

- ◀ Designating a safe space during emergencies;
- ◀ Creating an emergency supply kit that includes basic essentials, such as drinking water, flashlights, first aid kits, batteries, non-perishable food, cell phone with a battery backup, emergency phone numbers, blankets, whistle, etc.; and
- ◀ Methods for protecting property from the impacts of hazard events.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 1.2

Develop a vehicle routing and evacuation plan for passenger, commercial, and emergency vehicles during major hazard events.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 1.3

Provide adequate accommodations, including non-perishable food and water, basic health care, generator hook-ups and generators, and accommodations for domestic animals, at the City's designated emergency shelters.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 1.4

Incorporate data on major hazard events, critical infrastructure, and emergency shelters into the City's GIS mapping system.

### HAZARD MITIGATION GOAL 2

Reduce the community's vulnerability to flooding and dam failure.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To improve the City's capacity and capability to mitigate impacts from flooding and minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.*
- ◀ *To shorten the recovery time from a flooding event or dam failure.*
- ◀ *To provide education to the public on flooding, dam failure, and floodplain management practices.*

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 2.1

In conjunction with Infrastructure Strategy 7.4.1 and 7.4.2, increase the capacity of

stormwater detention basins and improve storm drains (e.g. Canal Street and South Carlsbad Storm Drains), culverts, low water crossings, and bridges to prevent washouts, debris obstructions, and erosion from flood events.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 2.2

Work with FEMA to update floodplain maps (Flood Insurance Rate Maps - FIRMS) and conduct new hydrologic studies, where necessary, to determine potential changes in discharge characteristics.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 2.3

Continue the City of Carlsbad's participation in and compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 2.4

Adopt development regulations that address mitigating the impact of development within floodplains.

### HAZARD MITIGATION GOAL 3

Improve the community's capacity to respond to hazardous material spills and accidents.

#### Objectives:

- ◀ *To ensure a rapid and coordinated response to hazardous material spills and accidents on the railroad and major roadways.*
- ◀ *To provide adequate equipment and staff trained in specialized emergency response.*

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 3.1

Provide adequate funding for equipment, ongoing training, and staffing levels in the City's Environmental Services Department to respond to household hazardous waste spills and hazard waste disposal, such as fertilizer, paint thinner, gasoline, oil, household cleaning products, paint, pesticides, etc.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 3.2

Continue on-going cooperation and communication between the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau, and WIPP Transportation Safety Program to prevent spills of transuranic mixed waste during transport through Carlsbad to WIPP.

#### HAZARD MITIGATION STRATEGY 3.3

Work with BNSF; oil and gas, potash, and transloading companies; Eddy County Emergency Management; and the City of Artesia and the Village of Loving on the developing and administering procedures for responding to hazardous spills and removals along rail lines, rail switching stations, and transloading facilities.

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## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### WHAT YOU WILL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER:

- ◀ Provides the structure and a system of checks and balances to ensure the *Comprehensive Plan* is implemented and referenced when decisions are made regarding growth and development and capital expenditures
- ◀ Tables that list the strategies identified under each element contained in the *Comprehensive Plan*, supplemented by an anticipated timeframe in terms of short-term, medium-term, long-term, and those strategies that are on-going without an end date.
- ◀ Identifies City departments that are responsible for implementing the strategies and potential partnerships are also identified.

The planning process to update the *Comprehensive Plan* can be engaging and rewarding, but there is little value in the process if the Plan does not get implemented. Ensuring the strategies are achievable and realistic is the first step towards implementing the *Comprehensive Plan*. Deciding what happens first, second, third, and so on, takes a series of value judgments and assessments to determine the priorities. Keeping a score card to determine what strategies have or have not been achieved, and making adjustments to respond to fiscal constraints or changing conditions is also crucial to the successful implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*.



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## 11.1 IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The *Carlsbad Comprehensive Plan* consists of seven major planning elements, including Housing and Neighborhoods, Land Use, Economic Development, Infrastructure, Transportation, Community Services and Facilities, and Hazard Mitigation. Each of these elements contain goals, objectives, and strategies that were developed based on research, existing conditions, public engagement, consultation with the *Comprehensive Plan* Steering Committee and Carlsbad staff, and best practices in community planning.

The Implementation Plan is intended to assist the City of Carlsbad in planning and securing funding for capital improvements and allocating resources for administrative changes or amendments. The Implementation Plan is intended to be non-binding and flexible, and dependent on available funding, staff resources, and the City's ability to engage in partnerships with other local and regional entities. Appendix D contains a comprehensive list of agencies and resources that can be pursued for funding capital improvements.

Successful implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan* requires diligence and accountability to ensure the strategies identified through the planning process are implemented and the goals and objectives are referenced when determining whether a development application is consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan*. It is recommended that the Carlsbad City Council create a system of checks and balances that should include:

- ◀ Appointing City staff to oversee the progress towards implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- ◀ Developing and maintaining partnerships with other public and private sector entities to accomplish the implementation strategies.

- ◀ Linking the ICIP to the implementation strategies and priorities identified in the *Comprehensive Plan*.
- ◀ Basing future grant applications on implementation strategies and priorities identified in the *Comprehensive Plan*.

## 11.2 IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

The Implementation Plan tables start on page 192 and provide the complete list of strategies organized by *Comprehensive Plan* element. Projected time frames for completion of the strategies and responsible entities are identified in the tables. For additional information and background on the strategies crafted to achieve the community's goals and objectives, refer to the specific chapter. The Implementation Plan tables are organized as follows:

- ◀ Chapter 4: Housing & Neighborhoods (page 192)
- ◀ Chapter 5: Land Use (pages 193-194)
- ◀ Chapter 6: Economic Development (pages 195-196)
- ◀ Chapter 7: Infrastructure (page 197-198)
- ◀ Chapter 8: Transportation (pages 199-200)
- ◀ Chapter 9: Community Services & Facilities (pages 201-202)
- ◀ Chapter 10: Hazard Mitigation (page 203)

The time frames for implementing the strategies as identified are Short-Term (2026-2028); Medium-Term (2029-2033); Long-Term (2034-2046); and On-Going (no end date).

The implementation tables starting on the next page provide the complete list of strategies contained in the *Comprehensive Plan*. The strategies are organized by Plan element and are supplemented by projected time frames for completion. For more detail on each of the strategies or the goals and objectives, refer back to the specific Plan element.

CHAPTER 4: HOUSING and NEIGHBORHOODS IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 4.1.1: Secure and allocate funding for the acquisition of properties and/or buildings that would be appropriate for contribution towards affordable housing projects.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.1.2: Develop incentives, such as density bonuses, fee waivers, and land donations, for private developers to build affordable housing for income-qualified households, including but not limited to special populations (i.e., veterans, seniors, people with disabilities).	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.1.3: Initiate the development of a community outreach program to provide information on available affordable housing programs, credit counseling, first time home buyer programs; rehabilitation and maintenance assistance programs for seniors and veterans; down payment and closing cost assistance; and referrals to local lenders approved by Housing New Mexico.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.1.4: Continue efforts to acquire, annex, master plan, and develop backbone infrastructure and major roadways within the planned annexation area to the north of the existing municipal boundary for the purpose of developing housing.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.1.5: In conjunction with Land Use Strategy 5.2.1, amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units in residential zones and create development standards that address size, height, setbacks, and parking for those unit types.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.2.1: Identify opportunities and coordinate with local and regional housing providers, such as the Eastern New Mexico Housing Authority and Southeast New Mexico Community Action Corporation, on applying for rehabilitation funds for single family homes from the HOME Investment Partnership Program and USDA Rural Development Section 504 Home Repair grants for eligible seniors aged 62 and older.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Community Development Dept
Strategy 4.2.2: Develop a program to acquire vacant and abandoned houses with clear title that can be later purchased for the development of new housing by homebuilders or non-profit housing providers.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Legal Dept and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.2.3: Pursue funding from the Colonias Infrastructure Fund to help support infrastructure improvements and housing development in the Standpipe area.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Eddy County
Strategy 4.2.4: As more residential projects are developed, work with representatives of the oil and gas industry on a plan to move their workers out of man-camps and hotels and into rental housing, and limit the number and duration of temporary housing permits as the available housing inventory begins to grow at a more rapid pace.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Legal Dept and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.2.5: Support the Carlsbad Beautification Committee's efforts and work with community groups and Carlsbad youth on improving conditions in residential neighborhoods and businesses through landscape maintenance and improvements, and trash and weed removal.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Beautification Committee
Strategy 4.3.1: As the City moves forward with annexations, require master planning that includes a mix of residential densities, parks and trails, commercial services, and school sites, where appropriate and in consultation with Carlsbad Municipal Schools.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept; Parks Dept; and Carlsbad School District
Strategy 4.3.2: Identify appropriate locations for new mixed-use developments on vacant properties within the existing developed area of Carlsbad and the future annexation areas, including but not limited to areas as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario (see Chapter 5: Land Use).	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 4.3.3: In conjunction with Land Use Scenario 5.2.1, amend the Zoning Ordinance to require adequate landscape buffers between residential and heavy commercial and/or industrial development.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept

CHAPTER 5: LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 5.1.1: Create a GIS-based inventory of existing vacant or underutilized properties that would be appropriate for infill development of residential, commercial, mixed-use, or redevelopment. Once complete, place the inventory on the City's website to help facilitate interest from local and regional developers and builders.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.1.2: Work with local and regional developers and builders on creating and promoting incentives for infill development. This may include, but not be limited to, reductions or waivers in utility extensions and permit fees, expedited approval processes, density bonuses for residential development, and where appropriate, reductions in minimum lot size, increased building heights and lot coverage, parking reductions, etc.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Planning & Regulation Dept; Projects Dept; Utilities Dept; and Public Works Dept
Strategy 5.1.3: In coordination with Economic Development Strategy 6.4.1, designate blighted areas, including the Standpipe area and Downtown Carlsbad, as Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs), and subsequently, solicit a consultant to create MRA plans that identify opportunity sites and allow the City to contribute to redevelopment activities and projects in accordance with the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Act.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Planning & Regulation Dept; Carlsbad MainStreet; and Eddy County
Strategy 5.1.4: Pursue public/private partnerships on mixed-use development projects within Downtown Carlsbad and other desirable mixed-use areas, as allowed in MRAs, and as identified on the Future Land Use Scenario.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Carlsbad MainStreet
Strategy 5.1.5: Promote the City's Public Improvement District (PID) policy that allows for the financing of infrastructure improvements for residential development, master planned communities, and major commercial development and redevelopment projects.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.2.1: Complete a comprehensive update to the City Zoning Ordinance to include but not be limited to addressing permissive and conditional uses in residential, commercial, and industrial zones; minimum lot sizes and setbacks; maximum building heights, residential densities; allowance for accessory dwelling units; buffering between non-compatible land uses; etc.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.2.2: In coordination and agreement with property owners, seek zone changes to properties identified as being appropriate for commercial or industrial use, as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Carlsbad Dept. of Development and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.2.3: Create a GIS-based zoning map and dashboard that allows City staff and the public to view zoning and property data and information online.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.3.1: Create an annexation policy that includes a process for evaluating proposed annexations. The evaluation should include a cost-benefit analysis that considers existing infrastructure capacity; feasibility, cost, and timeliness of extending infrastructure, roadways, and public safety services to serve the property; economic development benefits and potential revenue stream to the City of Carlsbad; and a determination of the property owners' consent for the annexation.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.3.2: Prioritize and pursue annexations that support new residential development and can be served by infrastructure, roadways, and public safety services, and are identified on the Future Land Use Scenario.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.3.3: Utilize the annexation process to encourage the relocation of heavy industrial uses out of central Carlsbad to appropriate areas along E. Greene Street, the Cavern City Air Terminal area, Carlston Ranch, and properties along the BNSF railroad.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.3.4: As properties are annexed into the City of Carlsbad, establish zoning designations that are appropriate and consistent with <i>Comprehensive Plan</i> goals and the Future Land Use Scenario.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept

CHAPTER 5: LAND USE IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 5.4.1: Work with Carlsbad MainStreet and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division on educating owners of historic properties on the benefits of having their properties listed on the national and state historic registers, including: 1) State and federal preservation grants for planning and rehabilitation; 2) Federal and state investment tax credits; 3) Preservation easements to nonprofit organizations; and 4) Fire and life-safety code compliance alternatives.	Ongoing (no end date)	Community Development and Carlsbad MainStreet
Strategy 5.4.2: Promote the use of the New Mexico State Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties and the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives program to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures in Carlsbad.	Ongoing (no end date)	Community Development
Strategy 5.4.3: Work with property owners on preserving historic structures as an alternative to demolition and consider historic preservation goals as part of the City's development review process.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.4.4: Develop a brochure and self-guided tour of the Carlsbad Downtown Historic District, Carlsbad Irrigation District, and historic structures in and around Carlsbad.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Community Development and Carlsbad MainStreet
Strategy 5.5.1: Pursue and allocate resources to improve the properties and streetscape along Mermod/Texas Street that may include, but are not limited to, zone changes and street, sidewalk, and landscape enhancement projects.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Parks Dept; Projects Dept; Planning & Regulation Dept; and City Administration
Strategy 5.5.2: Create streetscape improvement plans for Canal Street, National Parks Highway, and Pierce Street that may include, but are not limited to, sidewalk improvements, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, entry signage, etc.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Parks Dept; Projects Dept; Planning & Regulation Dept; and Community Development Dept
Strategy 5.5.3: Amend the City Zoning Ordinance to require industrial development to screen the view of outdoor operations from public rights-of-way.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.5.4: Create and maintain a substandard and/or vacant commercial property registry on the City's GIS database.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 5.5.5: Provide adequate staffing levels to enforce the regulations on code violations, including vacant and abandoned properties, dumping, removal of weeds and litter, and inoperable vehicles.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Beautification Committee
Strategy 5.5.6: Support the efforts of Keep Carlsbad Beautiful and other organizations in clean-up efforts, including landscape improvements, weed and trash removal, and building facade improvements and maintenance.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept; Beautification Committee; and Community Groups
Strategy 5.5.7: Submit grant applications for education and promotion, equipment purchase, youth employment, and clean-up and solid waste diversion projects to the New Mexico Tourism Department's Clean and Beautiful Program.	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Beautification Committee

CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 6.1.1: Create an economic development strategic plan that includes, but is not limited to: 1) Engagement with existing major employers in Carlsbad and Eddy County; 2) Fiscal baseline assessment that describes the existing tax base, service demand, revenues, and service costs; 3) Retail, industrial/manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism market assessments; 4) Economic base job goals and target industries; 5) Identification of development opportunity sites, including properties along E. Greene Street, Carlston Ranch, S. National Park Highway, Derrick Road, West Bypass, and George Shoup Relief Route; 6) Consideration of future annexations as identified on the Future Annexations map; and 7) Implementation actions and key benchmarks.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Carlsbad Dept of Development
Strategy 6.1.2: Promote the Cavern City Air Terminal to generate interest and development opportunities from aviation and defense related businesses seeking to expand or relocate to Carlsbad.	Ongoing (no end date)	Carlsbad Dept of Development; Chamber of Commerce; and Community Development Dept
Strategy 6.1.3: Promote Carlsbad as a business-friendly community with an available water supply, rail and air access, cultural and recreational assets, and higher education opportunities (Southeast New Mexico College).	Ongoing (no end date)	Community Development Dept and Chamber of Commerce
Strategy 6.1.4: Work with the Carlsbad Chamber of Commerce and Carlsbad Small Business Development Center on providing information on the New Mexico Small Business Investment Corporation, The Loan Fund, New Mexico Angels, and other organizations to assist with small start-ups and the expansion of small businesses in Carlsbad.	Ongoing (no end date)	Community Development Dept; Chamber of Commerce; and Carlsbad Small Business Development Center
Strategy 6.1.5: Complete a comprehensive update to the <i>City of Carlsbad LEDA</i> (Local Economic Development Act) Ordinance that identifies specific goals and targeted industries, updates definitions consistent with state legislation, provides for joint powers agreements between the City of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and Carlsbad Department of Development, and revises implementation policies and procedures, including claw back provisions.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Carlsbad Department of Development
Strategy 6.1.6: Complete a feasibility study for developing a small business incubator in Downtown Carlsbad. The feasibility study should include an inventory of existing businesses and the local workforce, market demand and opportunities, potential assistance and services to be offered, financial feasibility and management, and potential locations for the facility.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Carlsbad Dept of Development; Carlsbad MainStreet; and Chamber of Commerce
Strategy 6.2.1: Collaborate with the Carlsbad Municipal School District and Southeast New Mexico College on strengthening, expanding, and promoting workforce training programs related to existing and future business clusters in the region, including oil and gas extraction, health sciences, industrial maintenance, value-added agriculture, alternative energy, creative industries, tourism and hospitality, etc.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Carlsbad School District; and Southeast New Mexico College
Strategy 6.2.2: Provide information on available job training incentives, including the New Mexico Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) and Step Up Program managed by the New Mexico Economic Development Department, to companies interested in expanding in or relocating to Carlsbad.	Ongoing (no end date)	Carlsbad Dept of Development; Workforce Solutions
Strategy 6.2.3: Participate in job fairs for companies looking to hire new employees and graduates from Carlsbad and Eddy County.	Ongoing (no end date)	Personnel Dept; Police Dept; and Fire Dept
Strategy 6.3.1: Coordinate with existing companies located within the Carlsbad Industrial Park and the E. Greene Street industrial area to learn what they would need to expand their operations in Carlsbad.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept; Projects Dept; and Certified Building Official
Strategy 6.3.2: Recruit industries that are complementary to existing business clusters, including oil and gas, health sciences, value-added agriculture, aviation, and alternative energy, including wind, solar, or biomass, tourism and hospitality.	Ongoing (no end date)	Carlsbad Dept of Development

CHAPTER 6: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 6.3.3: Identify, prioritize, and secure funding for infrastructure improvements needed by target industries to encourage relocation or expansion in Carlsbad.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Utilities Dept
Strategy 6.4.1: Designate Downtown Carlsbad as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), and subsequently, solicit a consultant to develop a MRA plan that identifies opportunity sites and allows the City to contribute to redevelopment activities and projects in accordance with the <i>New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Act</i> .	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept; Carlsbad MainStreet; and City Administration
Strategy 6.4.2: Prioritize and secure funding for capital improvements in Downtown Carlsbad, including improvements to the Cavern Theatre, Halagueño Arts Park, and the Carlsbad Museum.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Municipal Services Dept
Strategy 6.4.3: Support and promote the Pearl of the Pecos Arts and Culture Coordinating Council on creating new events at the Cavern Theatre Performing Arts Center and Halagueño Arts Park that feature art created by local and regional artists and other events, concerts, and murals that further the arts and culture in Carlsbad.	Ongoing (no end date)	Creative Carlsbad Arts District
Strategy 6.5.1: Coordinate with the New Mexico Economic Development Department, New Mexico True Campaign, Carlsbad Department of Development, and Carlsbad MainStreet to showcase Carlsbad's tourism destinations, including Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park, Pecos River and Riverside Park area, Cave and Karst Research Institute, Cavern Theatre Performing Arts Center, community events, and other attractions in Downtown Carlsbad on state and national media outlets.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Municipal Services Dept; Creative Carlsbad Arts District; Community Development Dept; Carlsbad MainStreet; NM Creative Industries Division; and Public Information Officer
Strategy 6.5.2: Develop a digital marketing plan to attract new hotels, restaurants, and outdoor recreation retail and service businesses that includes, but is not limited to, current number of hotel rooms in Carlsbad and average hotel room cost, tourism trends and lodgers' tax revenues, unmet demand for hotel rooms, demographics and available work force, etc.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Carlsbad Dept of Development

CHAPTER 7: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 7.1.1: Prioritize and complete the construction of the Double Eagle Waterline projects, including construction of a water line from the Tatum Wells area to the Double Eagle Water System and replacement of existing water lines at the Double Eagle well fields.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.1.2: Complete the design and construction of a new 5-million gallon reservoir water tank at the Sheep's Draw well field.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.1.3: Continue to plan for and make improvements to the municipal water system, including water line extensions, replacements, repairs to booster and pressure reducing stations, repairs to reservoirs, fire lines, and dead-end lines within Carlsbad, to the industrial park area along E. Greene Street, and to the proposed annexation areas.	Ongoing (no end date)	Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.1.4: Update the <i>Carlsbad 40-Year Water Plan</i> to quantify the water supply; protect the City's water rights; establish projections of future water demand; and provide recommendations for meeting future water demand resulting from projected population growth and new housing and industry development.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.1.5: In conjunction with the cost/benefit analysis associated with future annexations, determine the demand and cost for expanding water services assuming full build-out for each future annexation area (see <i>Future Annexations map in Chapter 5: Land Use</i> ).	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.1.6: Sponsor community events on a biannual basis to increase the collection of household hazardous waste and educate the public on the proper disposal of hazardous materials, such as tires, fertilizers, paint, paint thinner, gasoline, pesticides, anti-freeze, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, household cleaning products, etc.	Ongoing (no end date)	Beautification Committee and Solid Waste Dept
Strategy 7.2.1: Continue water conservation measures, including water meter replacement, leak detection and repairs, expansion of the water reuse system, and evaluation of water rates, with adjustments as necessary.	Ongoing (no end date)	Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.2.2: Secure funding for completing the Phase 5-B effluent reuse project designed to increase storage capacity, expand pumping transmission facilities, and add water aeration to support irrigation of City parks, municipal Lake Carlsbad Golf Course, and Carlsbad and Sunset cemeteries.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.2.3: Continue to educate residential and commercial customers on water conservation measures, the importance of repairing water leaks, installation of high efficiency toilets and washing machines, and replacement of high water use landscapes.	Ongoing (no end date)	Public Information Officer; Utilities Dept; Beautification Committee
Strategy 7.2.4: Determine the feasibility of establishing a rebate program for the replacement of cool season turf grass with native landscape materials and replacement of high flow toilets and washing machines with high efficiency models.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.3.1: Secure funding for the assessment, design, and phased construction to expand sewer services to unserved areas in South Carlsbad, including Standpipe Road, Old Cavern Highway, Chapman Road, Radio Boulevard, Union Street, Quay Street, and National Parks Highway.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.3.2: Coordinate with Eddy County on securing funding for the design and expansion of sewer services and removal of septic tanks adjacent to the Pecos River in the unincorporated area of La Huerta, design and construction of a 10-inch sewer interceptor along Standpipe Road south to Quay Street, and sewer collection lines to serve the area east and west of Standpipe Road.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Eddy County; and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.3.3: Secure funding for the design and construction of a second sewer wet well for the City's primary sewer lift station.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Utilities Dept

CHAPTER 7: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 7.3.4: Allocate funding for acquisition of equipment to clean and videotape existing sewer lines to help identify issues and replace existing clay pipe lines that are over 40 years old, including but not limited to W. Orchard Lane and Davis Street.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.3.5: In conjunction with the cost/benefit analysis associated with future annexations, determine the demand and cost for expanding wastewater services assuming full build-out for each future annexation area (see <i>Future Annexations map in Chapter 5: Land Use</i> ).	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.4.1: Secure funding for the design and construction of improvements to the Canal Street Storm Drain through the planned extensions to McKay Street, along Hagerman Street to Halagueño Street, Tansill Street, Lea Street, Normandy Addition, Stevens Street, and Church Street.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Utilities Dept and Municipal Services
Strategy 7.4.2: Secure funding for the design and construction of improvements to the South Carlsbad Storm Drain, drainage run-off system in North Carlsbad (La Huerta) to the Pecos River, and on-street conveyance systems for substandard streets in South Carlsbad.	Long-Term (2034-2046)	Utilities Dept and Municipal Services
Strategy 7.4.3: Amend the City's Subdivision Ordinance to allow for Low Impact Development (LID) design approaches to manage stormwater runoff, including water harvesting, infiltration, preservation of natural drainage features, etc.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept and Utilities Dept
Strategy 7.5.1: Based on a determination that the City's recycling program will be reinstated, identify recycling drop-off locations that are centrally located and provide greater convenience to residents and determine the willingness of businesses to have recycling bins placed on their properties.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Utilities Dept and Solid Waste Dept
Strategy 7.5.2: Develop a program to educate the public on the value of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling to extend the life of the Sandpoint Landfill and decrease contamination from plastic bags, scrap metal, diapers, glass, pizza boxes, televisions, paint, chemicals, and other hazardous materials.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Public Information Officer and Solid Waste Dept
Strategy 7.5.3: Develop and secure funding for a new cardboard recycling program and production facility and explore the opportunities for reuse of recycled products.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Solid Waste Dept

CHAPTER 8: TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 8.1.1: Continue to coordinate and work with the NMDOT on upgrading its facilities including roadways (US 285 and US 62/180), intersections and traffic signals (National Parks Highway and Hidalgo Road), and turn lanes within Carlsbad municipal limits and highways approaching the City.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration; Public Works Dept; Projects Dept; Eddy County; and NMDOT
Strategy 8.1.2: Expand Carlsbad Municipal Transit Service (CMTS) to address current needs, including securing funding for the replacement of the CMTS fleet and improvements to existing transit facilities, and providing services to accommodate future growth and development covering a larger area of Carlsbad, particularly as the population continues to grow and annexation occurs to the north of the current municipal boundary. Analyze the current transit fee structure and determine whether an adjustment would be warranted.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Public Works Dept and Municipal Services Dept
Strategy 8.1.2: Create an off-street trails and bikeways master plan that expands the existing trails system to serve more neighborhoods and in proximity to schools and employment centers. Utilize best practices and the current NACTO and AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities standards for urban and rural designs, respectively.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Public Works Dept
Strategy 8.1.4: Evaluate average daily counts for major roadways within Carlsbad to determine whether changes to Roadway Functional Classification System should be pursued in coordination with the NMDOT and SERTPO.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Public Works Dept; and NMDOT
Strategy 8.1.5: Determine the feasibility of Carlsbad, Eddy County, and the surrounding communities of Artesia and Loving becoming a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), track the regional population growth trends, and evaluate the administrative structure and federal regulations.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration; Census Committee; Planning & Regulation Dept; and Eddy County
Strategy 8.1.6: Work with Carlsbad Municipal Schools, SERTPO, NMDOT, and the New Mexico Department of Health on developing a Safe Routes to School program that encourages children to walk or bicycle to school.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Planning & Regulation Dept; Projects Dept
Strategy 8.2.1: Create a preventative street maintenance plan that prioritizes and secures funding for resurfacing and reconstruction of deteriorated streets, and annual maintenance activities, including resurfacing, paving, crack sealing, and pavement marking. Continue to utilize the City's GIS mapping tool to track street improvements.	Ongoing (no end date)	Public Works Dept
Strategy 8.2.2: Secure funding for the construction of a new bridge at Boyd Drive and Radio Boulevard that crosses Dark Canyon Draw.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Public Works Dept; and Projects Dept
Strategy 8.2.3: Continue the implementation of improvements to existing sidewalks, roads, ramps, and accessibility, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.	Ongoing (no end date)	ADA Advisory Board and Safety Coordinator
Strategy 8.2.4: Coordinate with SERTPO on pursuing funding for transportation projects through NMDOT programs, as applicable, including the Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local Government Road Fund; Municipal Arterial Program (MAP); Transportation Enhancement (TE); Recreation Trails Program (RTP); and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).	Ongoing (no end date)	Municipal Services Dept and Public Works Dept
Strategy 8.2.5: Adopt a policy that requires all new streets within annexation areas to be designed and built to City and road classification standards.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Public Works Dept
Strategy 8.3.1: Complete an update to the <i>Cavern City Airport Master Plan</i> in compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration guidelines. The update should include, but not be limited to: 1) Inventory and assessment of existing facilities, operations, airspace, environment, land use, and transportation access; 2) Aviation activity forecast; 3) Demand/capacity analysis and facility requirements; 4) Evaluation of alternatives; 5) Environmental review; 6) Phasing of improvements; and 7) Agency review and approval.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Community Development Dept

CHAPTER 8: TRANSPORTATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 8.3.2: Using the results of the <i>Essential Air Service</i> survey conducted in 2025, determine the number of flights taken by business passengers to Albuquerque and Dallas, Texas and work with an Air Service Provider on expanding services accordingly.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Community Development Dept
Strategy 8.3.3: Based on the recommendations of the <i>Airport Master Plan</i> completed under Transportation Strategy 3.1, secure available aviation funding for design and improvements to runways, taxiways, lighting, terminal building, and support buildings, as needed, from the FAA and the NMDOT-Aviation Division grant and funding programs.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Community Development Dept
Strategy 8.4.1: Coordinate with the BNSF and representatives from the oil and gas and the potash mining industries to determine the existing and future demand for expanding transloading facilities in Carlsbad.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	City Administration and Carlsbad Dept of Development
Strategy 8.4.2: Work with the BNSF, NMDOT, Eddy County Office of Emergency Management, New Mexico Hazardous Waste Department, and industry representatives on developing a plan for responding to hazardous spills and removals, and accidents along the rail line, La Huerta Switching Yard, and heavy industrial properties and ways to improve safety and transport of hazardous materials through Carlsbad.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Carlsbad Dept of Development
Strategy 8.5.1: Install Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations at City-owned properties and Downtown Carlsbad in convenient locations.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Public Works and Community Development Department
Strategy 8.5.2: Create a transition plan for converting the municipal fleet to zero-emission vehicles. The transition plan should include: 1) An analysis of vehicle operating information, such as current operating mileage and hours, fuel consumption, fuel types, dispatching logistics, and equipment replacement policies; 2) Potential charger locations, current capacity at sites, and existing utility services; 3) Transition timeline, useful life of vehicles, and specific needs of the City; and 4) Operational costs, including maintenance, energy supply costs, and replacement costs.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Public Works and Community Development Department

CHAPTER 9: COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 9.1.1: Create and implement a parks and recreation master plan that includes, but is not limited to: 1) A recreation needs assessment geared towards youth, adults, and seniors; 2) GIS database of existing park facilities, amenities, and conditions; 3) Public engagement; 4) Population growth projections; 5) Site selection criteria for new park facilities; 6) Identification of new parkland in areas not currently served and future annexation areas as shown on the Future Land Use Scenario in Chapter 5: Land Use; 7) Outdoor and indoor recreational programming for youth, adults, and seniors; and 8) Implementation and phasing for capital expenditures.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Parks Dept and Community Development Dept
Strategy 9.1.2: Establish and implement an ongoing preventative maintenance and improvement program for all existing park facilities based on priorities, needs, and best practices. The program should address: 1) Installation or replacement of playground equipment; 2) Installation of shade structures and picnic tables; 3) ADA upgrades, as needed; 4) Maintenance and replacement of irrigation systems, turf and plant materials, and court equipment; and 5) Water conservation through effluent reuse for irrigation purposes and irrigation best practices.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration and Public Works Dept
Strategy 9.1.3: Work with Carlsbad Municipal Schools and Eddy County on developing joint use agreements to allow for the shared use of outdoor recreation facilities by the public.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration; Eddy County; and Carlsbad School District
Strategy 9.2.1: Complete a Senior Facility and Programming Needs Assessment to determine whether programming needs, fitness and recreation space and equipment, and the demand for respite care, senior day care programs, and senior meals, and staffing levels based on the existing population and future population growth are being met. Secure funding for facility and programming improvements as determined in the Needs Assessment, including the design and construction of the planned Phase 2 improvements at the Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Municipal Services Dept
Strategy 9.2.2: Complete a Library Needs Assessment to determine whether programming needs, meeting space, computer equipment, and staffing levels based on the existing population and future population growth are being met. Secure funding for facility and improvements as determined in the Needs Assessment, including expanding the facility to allow for more community meeting space.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Municipal Services Dept
Strategy 9.2.3: Create, fund, and implement an ongoing preventative maintenance and replacement program for all City-owned community facilities, including the North Mesa Senior Center, Alejandro Ruiz Senior Center, Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center, Pecos River Village Conference Center; Cavern Theatre, Carlsbad Museum, City Administration Building, etc.	Ongoing (no end date)	Public Works Dept
Strategy 9.3.1: Complete a comprehensive Public Safety Needs Assessment that identifies programming and training needs; technology, equipment, vehicle, and building needs; and determines adequate staffing levels to ensure the safety of current and future residents based on population growth and future annexations.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Public Works Dept; Fire Dept; and Police Dept
Strategy 9.3.2: Prioritize and secure funding for the design and construction of two fire station facilities, including a new main fire station facility and a new fire station within the planned annexation area north of the municipal boundary, as identified on the Future Annexation map in Chapter 5: Land Use.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration and Fire Dept
Strategy 9.3.3: Continue to coordinate with and assist Eddy County Fire and Rescue, Eddy County Sheriff, Artesia Fire Department, Artesia Police Department, and the Village of Loving Police Department on responding to emergency calls for service, as needed.	Ongoing (no end date)	Fire Dept; Police Dept; Eddy County; and Village of Loving

CHAPTER 9: COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 9.4.1: Initiate an annual town hall that facilitates a dialogue between the City of Carlsbad, Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Southeast New Mexico College, and Eddy County on educational initiatives, joint high school/college credit programs, workforce training, and expanding opportunities for high school students and graduates.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration; Carlsbad Municipal Schools; Southeast New Mexico College; and Eddy County
Strategy 9.4.2: Support and be a conduit of information on adult education programs and classes, including GED preparation, computer literacy, career training, in collaboration with Southeast New Mexico College, Eddy County, and New Mexico Workforce Connection.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration and Southeast New Mexico College
Strategy 9.4.3: Advocate for the development of affordable workforce housing to serve existing and future Carlsbad educational providers.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration
Strategy 9.5.1: Work with Carlsbad Medical Center on developing a public service outreach program on available community health services and prenatal care to reduce the level of premature deaths in Carlsbad and Eddy County.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration
Strategy 9.5.2: Work with Southeast New Mexico College, New Mexico Department of Health, Carlsbad Medical Center, and other local and regional health care providers on a strategic initiative that promotes Carlsbad and identifies incentives for attracting and retaining health care and mental health professionals and students in health science education programs.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration
Strategy 9.5.3: Provide financial support for the construction of a behavioral health residential treatment facility - Avalon Ranch - for mothers with small children and to LifeHouse Carlsbad for its substance abuse, recovery, and mental health programs.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Community Development Dept

CHAPTER 10: HAZARD MITIGATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Implementation Strategies	Date	Responsible Entity
Strategy 10.1.1: Develop a emergency preparedness public education program that includes: 1) Educating residents on creating an emergency communications plan with family members; 2) Registering with Eddy County's Smart911 service and/or emergency and weather alerts; 3) Designating a safe space during emergencies; 4) Creating an emergency supply kit that includes basic essentials, such as drinking water, flashlights, first aid kits, batteries, non-perishable food, cell phone with a battery backup, emergency phone numbers, blankets, whistle, etc.; and 5) Methods for protecting property from the impacts of hazard events.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Fire Dept; Police Dept; and Eddy County Emergency Management
Strategy 10.1.2: Develop a vehicle routing and evacuation plan for passenger, commercial, and emergency vehicles during major hazard events.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Fire Dept; Police Dept; and Eddy County Emergency Management
Strategy 10.1.3: Provide adequate accommodations, including non-perishable food and water, basic health care, generator hook-ups and generators, and accommodations for domestic animals, at the City's designated emergency shelters.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Fire Dept; Police Dept; Eddy County Emergency Management; Community Development Dept; and Public Works Dept
Strategy 10.1.4: Incorporate data on major hazard events, critical infrastructure, and emergency shelters into the City's GIS mapping system.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 10.2.1: In conjunction with Infrastructure Strategy 7.4.1 and 7.4.2, increase the capacity of stormwater detention basins and improve storm drains, culverts, low water crossings, and bridges to prevent washouts, debris obstructions, and erosion from flood events.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Utilities Dept and Municipal Services Dept
Strategy 10.2.2: Work with FEMA to update floodplain maps (Flood Insurance Rate Maps - FIRMS) and conduct new hydrologic studies, where necessary, to determine potential changes in discharge characteristics.	Medium-Term (2029-2033)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 10.2.3: Continue the City of Carlsbad's participation in and compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).	Ongoing (no end date)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 10.2.4: Adopt development regulations that address mitigating the impact of development within floodplains.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	Planning & Regulation Dept
Strategy 10.3.1: Provide adequate funding for equipment, ongoing training, and staffing levels in the City's Environmental Services Department to respond to household hazardous waste spills and hazard waste disposal, such as fertilizer, paint thinner, gasoline, oil, household cleaning products, paint, pesticides, etc.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration and Environmental Services Dept
Strategy 10.3.2: Continue on-going cooperation and communication between the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico Environment Department Hazardous Waste Bureau, and WIPP Transportation Safety Program to prevent spills of transuranic mixed waste during transport through Carlsbad to WIPP.	Ongoing (no end date)	City Administration
Strategy 10.3.3: Work with BNSF; oil and gas, potash, and transloading companies; Eddy County Emergency Management; and the City of Artesia and the Village of Loving on the developing and administering procedures for responding to hazardous spills and removals along rail lines, rail switching stations, and transloading facilities.	Short-Term (2026-2028)	City Administration; Eddy County Emergency Management

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# APPENDICES

**A: Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan**

**B: Glossary of Terms**

**C: Community Survey Results**

**D: Funding Sources**



## Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan FY 2026-2030

### Carlsbad

#### Project Summary

ID	Year	Rank	Project Title	Category	Funded to date	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total Project Cost	Amount Not Yet Funded	Phases?
42740	2026	001	National Parks Hwy Area ED Infrastructure Imp.	Economic Development	0	4,000,000	0	0	0	0	4,000,000	4,000,000	No
42809	2026	002	Affordable Housing Planning and Infrastructure	Facilities - Housing-Related Cap Infrastructure	121,000	22,500,000	0	0	0	0	22,621,000	22,500,000	Yes
15936	2026	003	Double Eagle Waterline Improvements	Water - Water Supply	330,757	17,990,000	0	0	0	0	18,320,756	17,990,000	Yes
22529	2026	004	Recycling Program Improvements	Other - Solid Waste	100,000	300,000	2,700,000	0	0	0	3,100,000	3,000,000	Yes
25091	2026	005	Halagueno/East Greene Storm Drainage Improvements	Water - Storm/Surface Water Control	600,000	3,900,000	0	0	0	0	4,500,000	3,900,000	No
35856	2026	006	Old Cavern Road Reconstruct	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	300,000	2,868,704	0	0	0	0	3,168,704	2,868,704	Yes
34354	2026	007	Dark Canyon Bridge and Bikeway	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	4,375,000	30,000,000	0	0	0	0	34,375,000	30,000,000	Yes
37463	2026	008	Primary Sewer Lift Station Wet Well	Water - Wastewater	1,500,000	4,400,000	0	0	0	0	5,900,000	4,400,000	Yes
38907	2026	009	East Greene St. Waterline Improvements	Water - Water Supply	1,800,000	4,303,000	3,929,000	1,513,000	0	0	11,545,000	9,745,000	Yes
42811	2026	010	Shorthorn (Sunset) Park Rehabilitation	Facilities - Other	1,600,000	3,500,000	0	0	0	0	5,100,000	3,500,000	Yes
39093	2026	011	Carlsbad Police Main Station Renovations	Facilities - Public Safety Facilities	1,840,000	1,200,000	0	0	0	0	3,040,000	1,200,000	Yes
42815	2026	012	Public Safety Complex - Fire, EMS, and Police	Facilities - Public Safety Facilities	0	500,000	33,781,668	0	0	0	34,281,668	34,281,668	Yes
42819	2026	013	Dispatch and Emergency Operations Command Center	Facilities - Public Safety Facilities	0	500,000	1,250,000	0	0	0	1,750,000	1,750,000	Yes

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32729	2026	014	Museum Archives/Collections Annex	Facilities - Museums	947,000	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	1,947,000	1,000,000	Yes
41999	2026	015	Fire Dept- Ladder Truck Purchase	Vehicles - Public Safety Vehicle	0	2,500,000	0	0	0	0	2,500,000	2,500,000	No
12794	2026	016	Repair Riverwalk Recreation Center	Facilities - Other	4,063,551	500,000	1,200,000	0	0	0	5,763,551	1,700,000	Yes
41997	2026	017	Sheep's Draw wellfield Generator	Water - Other	700,000	700,000	700,000	0	0	0	2,100,000	1,400,000	Yes
22568	2026	018	Sheep's Draw Reservoir #5	Water - Water Supply	136,000	6,000,000	0	0	0	0	6,136,000	6,000,000	No
42002	2026	019	Lower Tansill Boating & Fishing Recreation Area	Facilities - Other	999,927	500,000	500,000	500,000	0	0	2,499,927	1,500,000	Yes
32790	2026	020	MainStreet Pedestrian Safety and Public Restrooms	Facilities - Cultural Facilities	0	100,000	900,000	0	0	0	1,000,000	1,000,000	Yes
24134	2026	021	PD In-Car Video Systems	Equipment - Public Safety Equipment	48,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	348,000	300,000	Yes
24132	2026	022	PD vehicle fleet replacement	Vehicles - Public Safety Vehicle	200,000	800,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,800,000	1,600,000	Yes
42828	2026	023	Smith Park Safety Fencing	Facilities - Other	0	175,000	0	0	0	0	175,000	175,000	Yes
42829	2026	024	Playground on the Pecos Renovations	Facilities - Other	0	2,015,291	0	0	0	0	2,015,291	2,015,291	Yes
42849	2026	025	Police Department Handheld Radio Upgrades	Equipment - Public Safety Equipment	0	1,514,046	0	0	0	0	1,514,046	1,514,046	Yes
42850	2026	026	Youth Sports Complex LED Lights & Solar RV Hookups	Facilities - Other	320,000	3,169,100	0	0	0	0	3,489,100	3,169,100	No
42008	2026	027	Transportation Plan	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	100,000	0	0	0	0	100,000	100,000	No
42009	2026	028	Carlsbad Energy Efficiency and Conservation Plan	Facilities - Other	10,000	100,000	0	0	0	0	110,000	100,000	No
43067	2026	029	Lea Street Road Improvements	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	447,638	0	0	0	0	447,638	447,638	No
43069	2026	030	North Maple Street Improvements	Transportation -	0	447,638	0	0	0	0	447,638	447,638	No

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32648	2026	031	Fire Station 2 Remodel	Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	375,000	2,125,000	0	0	0	2,500,000	2,500,000	Yes
35843	2026	032	Civic Center Improvements	Facilities - Fire Facilities	550,000	650,000	650,000	150,000	0	0	2,000,000	1,450,000	Yes
10953	2026	033	New Main Fire Station	Facilities - Convention Facilities	0	300,000	1,000,000	9,050,000	0	0	10,350,000	10,350,000	Yes
37478	2026	034	Sage Street Area Sidewalk Improvements	Facilities - Fire Facilities	0	498,000	0	0	0	0	498,000	498,000	Yes
29718	2026	035	PD Evidence Holding and Processing Facility	Transportation - Other	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	1,000,000	1,000,000	Yes
40424	2026	036	Fire Station One Solar Carport	Facilities - Administrative Facilities	0	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000	50,000	Yes
19674	2026	037	Carlsbad Sewer Improvements	Facilities - Fire Facilities	2,378,211	600,000	2,695,695	515,217	3,771,915	7,277,710	17,238,748	14,860,537	Yes
22566	2026	038	Sewer Line Rehab Program	Water - Wastewater	0	349,774	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	0	2,349,774	2,349,774	Yes
28179	2026	039	Davis Street Reconstruction	Water - Wastewater	0	300,000	1,300,000	0	0	0	1,600,000	1,600,000	Yes
42010	2026	040	E. Chapman Sidewalk Improvements	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000	Yes
42011	2026	041	Callaway Dr. Sidewalk Improvements	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000	Yes
43076	2026	042	Carlsbad Police Department K-9 Training Field	Transportation - Highways/Roads/Bridges	0	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000	Yes
43095	2026	043	Park Pavilion Roof Replacements	Facilities - Public Safety Facilities	0	36,000	0	0	0	0	36,000	36,000	Yes
43100	2026	044	Hagerman Lift Station	Facilities - Other	0	1,250,000	0	0	0	0	1,250,000	1,250,000	No
43102	2026	045	City of Carlsbad Community Garden	Water - Water Supply	0	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000	No
42821	2026	046	Lower Tansill MLK Park Improvement Initiative	Facilities - Other	0	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000	200,000	No
43110	2026	047	Elgin Road Safety Improvements	Facilities - Other	0	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000	200,000	No

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43113	2026	048	Cherry Lane Park Improvements	Facilities - Other	0	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	150,000	No
43115	2026	049	Water Park Improvements	Facilities - Other	0	350,000	0	0	0	0	350,000	350,000	No
39059	2026	050	Library HVAC Renovations	Facilities - Libraries	0	600,000	0	0	0	0	600,000	600,000	No
38956	2026	051	Six Mile Dam Recreation Area	Facilities - Other	0	900,000	0	0	0	0	900,000	900,000	Yes
18723	2026	052	MainStreet Wayfinding Signage	Transportation - Bike/Pedestrian/Equestrian	0	80,000	0	0	0	0	80,000	80,000	No
42013	2026	053	Mainstreet Property Acquisition for Parking	Transportation - Other	0	160,000	640,000	0	0	0	800,000	800,000	Yes
42012	2026	054	Library Employee Solar Panel Parking Structure	Facilities - Libraries	0	350,000	0	0	0	0	350,000	350,000	No
15932	2026	055	Double Eagle Waterline Replacement	Water - Water Supply	6,559,752	3,000,000	0	0	0	0	9,559,752	3,000,000	Yes
39090	2026	056	West Orchard Lane Sewer Upgrade and Upsize	Water - Wastewater	0	1,900,000	0	0	0	0	1,900,000	1,900,000	Yes
43124	2026	057	Carlsbad Conference and Event Center	Facilities - Convention Facilities	0	500,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	4,500,000	4,500,000	No
43129	2026	058	Cavern City Airport Concession Renovations	Transportation - Airports	0	200,000	500,000	500,000	0	0	1,200,000	1,200,000	Yes
43165	2026	059	CID Trails and Bike Path Improvements	Transportation - Bike/Pedestrian/Equestrian	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	500,000	500,000	Yes
43168	2026	060	Public Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	Transportation - Other	0	1,500,000	0	0	0	0	1,500,000	1,500,000	Yes

<b>Number of projects:</b>	60	<b>Funded to date:</b>	29,479,200	<b>Year 1:</b>	132,289,192	<b>Year 2:</b>	56,231,364	<b>Year 3:</b>	14,588,217	<b>Year 4:</b>	5,131,915	<b>Year 5:</b>	8,637,710	<b>Total Project Cost:</b>	246,357,568	<b>Total Not Yet Funded:</b>	216,878,400
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# GLOSSARY

**Affordable Housing:** Defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as rental or ownership housing and utilities whose monthly cost burden represents no more than 30% of the gross income of an individual or a family. Affordable housing is supported and incentivized by many programs administered through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**Annexation:** The process that municipalities use to expand their boundaries and municipal services, regulations, voting privileges, and tax authority to new territory. In New Mexico, there are three methods of annexing territory to a municipality: (1) the arbitration method as provided in Sections 3-7-5 through 3-7-10 NMSA 1978; (2) the boundary commission method as provided in Sections 3-7-11 through 3-7-16 NMSA 1978; and (3) the petition method as provided in Section 3-7-17 NMSA 1978. Territory may be annexed to a municipality by any one of the three methods of annexation provided for in Sections 3-7-5 through 3-7-18 NMSA 1978 except where limitations of annexation are provided by law. The provisions of this section apply to annexations of all municipalities except those that are otherwise specifically provided by law. The arbitration method of annexation may be used for municipal annexation of a traditional historic community only upon petition of a majority of the qualified electors of the territory within the traditional historic community.

**Buffer:** A strip of land established to protect one type of land from another. Normally, buffering is landscaped and kept as open space.

**Certified Local Government (CLG):** A public/private partnership program operated through the National Park Service and the Historic

Preservation Divisions, whereby communities become certified by institutionalizing historic preservation through local ordinances and receive grants to support historic preservation activities.

**Community Services:** Uses of public, nonprofit, or charitable nature generally providing a local service to people of the community on a continuing basis, not just for special events, and generally providing on-site services or involving regular employee activity at the site. Examples include detention facilities, libraries, museums, senior, community, and youth centers, social service facilities and temporary shelters.

**Design Standards:** Specific criteria and limitations placed on development, which are intended to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community and to enhance the aesthetic value of a development. Design standards may specify criteria for architectural, engineering, landscape and other proposed development.

**Density, Net:** The number of residential dwelling units per the total developable acreage of land, excluding public rights-of-way, open space, and utilities.

**Density, Gross:** The number of residential dwelling units per the total acreage of land.

**Easement:** A right liberty, advantage or privilege that one individual or entity has in lands of another, either express or imputed (utility, grant or necessity).

**Economic Development:** The process by which a community improves the local economy and social well-being of the people. This could include an improvement in the number of jobs, incomes, education levels, organization capacity or other forms of capital.

**Economic Base Job:** A job in which services or goods provided are exported outside the local

economy (i.e., sold to outside customers) and bring new money into the economy. Economic Base jobs are the key to a community's economic growth and support a strong retail sector.

**Flood Zone:** A flood hazard area as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, categorized by the likelihood and depth of flooding expected annually. More information about flood zone categories can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/flood-zones>.

**Gateway:** A monument, signage, and/or landscape feature that provides a sense of entry and arrival to a community.

**Geographic Information System (GIS):** A computer based system to store, manage, analyze, edit, output, and visualize geographic data. The most common use is for generating maps comprised of different informational elements such as topographical data, roadways, property lines, land use, etc.

**Gross Receipts:** The gross amounts realized on the sale or exchange of property, the performance of services, or the use of property or capital (including rents, royalties, interest and dividends) in a transaction which produces business income.

**Groundwater:** The supply of freshwater under the surface in an aquifer or geologic formation that forms the natural reservoir for potable water.

**Historic Preservation:** The protection, rehabilitation, and restoration of the districts, sites, buildings, structures, and artifacts, significant in history, architecture, archeology, or culture.

**Housing New Mexico:** Previously known as the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA), Housing New Mexico is the state government's designated housing agency. It oversees all state and federal housing programs

and provides oversight of New Mexico's regional housing authorities. Housing New Mexico works with other agencies, nonprofits, and government entities to provide affordable housing and implement homeownership programs.

**Infill:** The development of vacant or partially developed parcels that are surrounded by or in close proximity to areas that are substantially or fully developed. For example, the construction of a new home on an empty lot within an existing developed residential subdivision.

**Infrastructure:** The underlying foundation or basic framework of a city including streets, water, sewer, storm drainage, parks, bridges, and street lights.

**Land Use:** Denotes how a parcel of land is currently used, what activities are or are not permitted on a parcel of land, and the possible requirements for future uses.

**Light Industry/Industrial:** The assembly, fabrication, or processing of goods and materials, using processes that ordinarily do not create noise, smoke, fumes, odors, glare, or health or safety hazards outside of the building or lot where such assembly, fabrication, or processing takes place, where such processes are housed entirely within a building.

**Local Economic Development Act (LEDA):** Legislation that allows for the public support of economic development to foster, promote, and enhance local economic development efforts while continuing to protect against the unauthorized use of public money and other public resources (i.e., Anti-Donation Clause in the New Mexico Constitution). Public entities use LEDA to enter into a "public/private partnership" for an economic benefit such as city-wide economic development or redevelopment of a historic building.

**Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC):** The LIHTC program provides federal income tax credits to individuals or organizations that develop affordable housing through new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation. The tax credits provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the developer's tax liability for a 10-year period. Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Census Tracts must have 50% of households with incomes below 60% of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or have a poverty rate of 25% or more. In order to receive tax credits, a developer must set aside and restrict rent for a number of units for occupancy by households below 60% of the area median income. These units must remain affordable for a minimum of 30 years.

**Lodgers' Tax:** An optional tax, imposed at the city or county level, on persons using commercial lodging accommodations. The tax provides revenues to administer the taxing program and to promote tourist-related events, activities, and facilities.

**Lot:** A portion of a legally platted subdivision that is shown on the records of the County Clerk and held in separate ownership. A portion of land that was subdivided from other land in accordance with the then existing zoning and subdivision requirements.

**Manufactured Home:** A movable or portable single-family dwelling unit with a heated area of at least 36 feet by 24 feet and at least 864 square feet designed to be moved on its own chassis in one or more separate units, installed with or without a permanent foundation, and constructed in a factory to the Housing and Urban Development National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974.

**Manufacturing, Heavy:** The assembly, fabrication, or processing of goods and materials that have greater than average

impacts on the environment or that ordinarily have significant impacts on the use and enjoyment of other surrounding properties relative to noise, fumes, odors, or other health and safety hazards.

**Manufacturing, Light:** The assembly, fabrication, or processing of goods and materials in a fully enclosed building using processes that do not create noise, fumes, odors, or health and safety hazards outside the building.

**Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA):** A designated area within a New Mexico municipality that has been targeted for reinvestment and public improvements due to the presence of "blighted" conditions that arrest the orderly development of the municipality. Municipalities may contribute public funds to private projects as well as public improvements. Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas are regulated by the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Article 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978).

**Mobile Home:** A movable or portable single-family dwelling unit with a heated area larger than 40 feet by 8 feet and is more than 320 square feet designed to be moved on its own chassis, installed without a permanent foundation which cannot be construed as real property, and constructed in a factory prior to 1976 but not to the Housing and Urban Development National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974.

**Mobile Home Park:** A parcel or lot designed and developed for long-term residential use and intended for rent or lease where the residents live in mobile homes or manufactured homes exclusively.

**Mobile Home Subdivision:** A subdivision designed and developed with individual lots for long-term residential use and intended for

sale where residents are in mobile homes or manufactured homes exclusively.

**Modular Home:** A factory-built home that is constructed in modules and built to the same Uniform Building Codes as site-built homes, and transported to and installed on the home site, but not built on a chassis. Modular home does not include manufactured home.

**Multi-modal:** Transportation infrastructure that allows for the safe and effective travel of all users by providing multiple transportation choices (i.e., modes), including options for motor vehicles, public transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and other users.

**New Mexico Finance Authority (NMFA):** NMFA was created to finance infrastructure projects for the state's counties and cities. NMFA issues tax-exempt bonds to obtain the funds it loans to New Mexico governmental entities. Programs include the Public Project Revolving Fund, Local Government Planning Fund, and New Markets Tax Credit.

**Nuisance:** Anything offensive to the sensibilities of reasonable persons, or any act or activity creating a hazard that threatens the health and welfare of inhabitants of the city, or any activity which by its perpetuation can reasonably be said to have a detrimental effect on the property of a person or persons within the community.

**Open Space:** Land area unoccupied by building, driveways, parking areas, roads, streets or structures. Such open space includes, but is not limited to, sidewalks, walkways, landscaped areas, gardens, common courtyards and other common open areas. Specialties, such as sheltered and open picnic areas, covered and uncovered play areas, uncovered sports courts, or open-walled structures, may be considered on their own merits as qualifying for open space characterization. Open space may include

privately owned courtyards and other yards if they are not enclosed by fences or walls.

**Ordinance:** A municipal statute or legislative action adopted by a local government that has the force of law.

**Overlay District:** Supplemental regulations that have been tailored to a specific area of the City. The regulations are applied in conjunction with a general or base zone to address specific issues.

**Plat:** Any map, chart, survey, plan or replat certified by a licensed or registered surveyor which contains a description of the subdivided land with ties to permanent monuments.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD):** A development and zoning district designed to accommodate varied types of residential and/or non-residential development in patterns or layouts not otherwise permissible in other zone districts of the zoning ordinance. Planned unit developments are designed and intended to provide additional amenities or benefits to the City in return for flexibility in the design, layout, and dimensions of the development.

**Planning and Platting Jurisdictions (PPJ):** The area within five miles outside of the Carlsbad City limits that provides the authority to the City of Carlsbad to review and comment on building permits and other planning matters. Within the Carlsbad PPJ, the minimum lot size is 1 acre.

**Public Health:** The study and promotion of the overall health of a population, as opposed to looking at the health of individuals alone. Public health includes efforts to improve health outcomes in a community by addressing factors that may impact many residents, such as pollution, disease exposure, access to clean water, access to health facilities, etc.

**Public Improvement District:** A Public Improvement District (PID) is established

by the governing body through a petition of the majority of property owners within the district to impose an additional annual property tax assessment on their properties. The assessment is based upon an agreed upon formula used for the purpose of financing upfront costs of public infrastructure improvements such as water and sewer lines, street and sidewalk improvements, mass transit or trail improvements, parking lots, park and recreation facilities, libraries and cultural facilities, landscaping, public art, and public safety facilities. The projects are typically financed through bonds with a minimum of 10-year (and more commonly 20 or 25 year) payback periods. The municipality is allowed to contribute funds, equipment, or in-kind services in assistance to the PID.

**Redevelopment:** The process of renovating, replacing, and improving the built environment through reinvestment, new construction, and reuse. Redevelopment usually involves occupation and habitation of vacant buildings, rehabilitation of older buildings, construction of new facilities, public investment in infrastructure, and other economic development activities.

**Redevelopment Area:** see Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA).

**Renewable Energy:** An energy resource that is rapidly replaced by a natural process, such as power generated from the sun or from wind. Includes biomass resources, such as agriculture, animal waste, or small diameter timber, but does not include energy generated by the use of fossil or nuclear energy.

**Resolution:** A formal expression of the opinion or will of an official municipal body adopted by a vote. Unlike ordinances, resolutions do not have the force of law.

**Setback:** The required distance between a structure and a lot line; includes front, side, and rear areas of the lot.

**Streetscape:** A design term referring to all the elements that constitute the physical makeup of a street and that, as a group, define its character including building frontage, street paving, street furniture, landscaping (trees and other plantings), awnings and marquees, signs, and lighting.

**Subdivision:** The division of land into two or more parts by platting or by metes and bounds description into tracts and/or lots in any one calendar year for the purpose of selling for building purposes; laying out a municipality or any part thereof; adding to a municipality; laying out suburban lots; or a resubdivision.

**Subdivision Ordinance:** A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority, usually a city or county, to control the division of land by requiring development according to design standards and procedures.

#### **Tax Increment Development Districts**

**(TIDD):** A TIDD is a financial tool for public infrastructure programs that a municipality or a property owner may not be able to generate on their own. Bonds are generated to pay the upfront costs of the TIDD infrastructure. The TIDD can capture two types of tax increment - the gross receipts tax increment and the property tax increment. The captured revenues from the increment must be spent on the public infrastructure within the district. The local governing body, the New Mexico Board of Finance, and the State Legislature must all approve a TIDD. The TIDD can be used both on brownfield and “greenfield” (undeveloped) sites.

#### **Tax Increment Finance District (TIF):**

A Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) can be used as a redevelopment tool of blighted “brownfield” (previously developed and potentially contaminated) sites. The municipality can target a blighted area for redevelopment projects that will raise the assessed property values within the TIF district.

The new “increment” rise in property taxes is then captured by the municipality and designated for reinvestment in public projects and infrastructure within the district.

**Temporary Use:** A specific, permitted use established for a specified period of time. Temporary uses do not involve the construction or alteration of a permanent structure, and may include real estate sales offices ancillary to model home sales.

**Vacant Building:** A dwelling, dwelling unit, efficiency dwelling unit, habitable space, residential building, or structure lacking the continuous habitual presence of human beings who have a legal right to be on the premises for a period of 90 days or longer but excluding property under a listing agreement with a real estate agent licensed in New Mexico.

**Zoning:** The division of a municipality into different districts, or zones, in which specific land uses are permitted or prohibited.

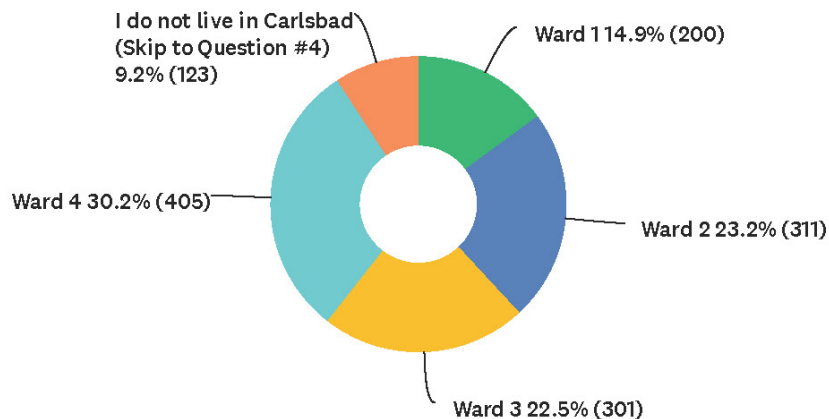
**Zoning Permit:** A permit issued by the Planning Director that authorizes the recipient to make use of the property in accordance with the requirements of the zoning ordinance.

# COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

As part of the planning process to update the City of Carlsbad *Comprehensive Plan*, Consensus Planning designed a survey to receive public input on a wide range of community issues. The survey was distributed between January 28 and March 30, 2025. The survey was available electronically via Survey Monkey and printed versions were distributed at certain public locations in Carlsbad. A total of 1,370 people responded to the survey. The full survey results (with the exception of the written comments) follow below.

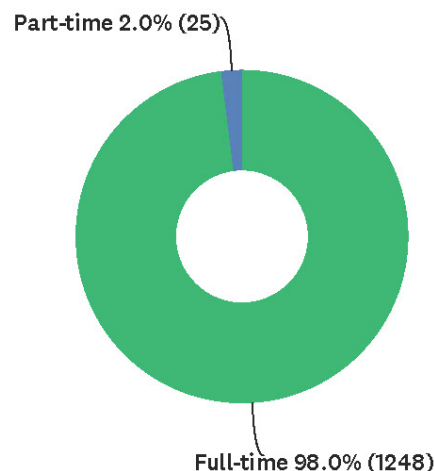
## Q1 Referring to the map above, which Carlsbad City Council Ward do you live in?

Answered: 1,340 Skipped: 30



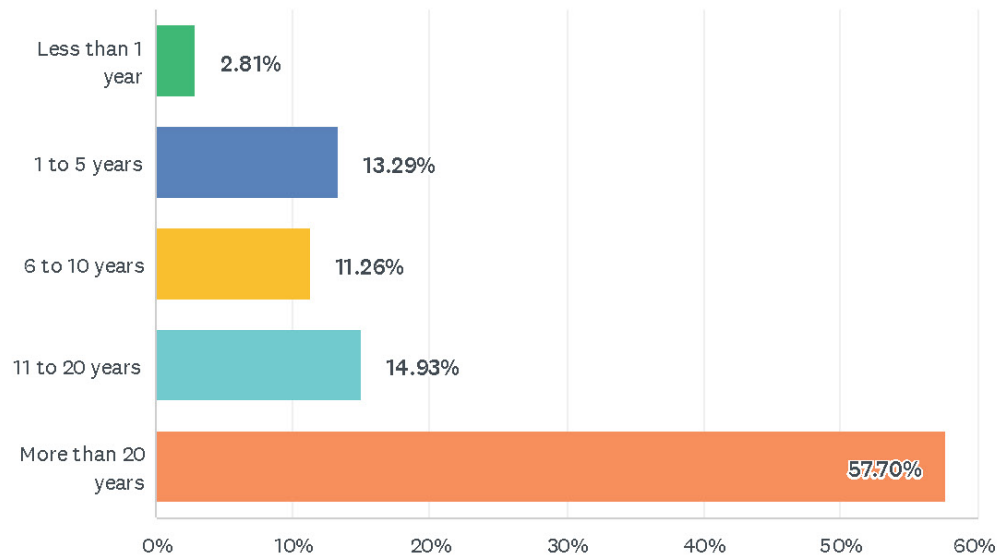
## Q2 Are you a full-time or part-time resident of Carlsbad?

Answered: 1,273 Skipped: 97



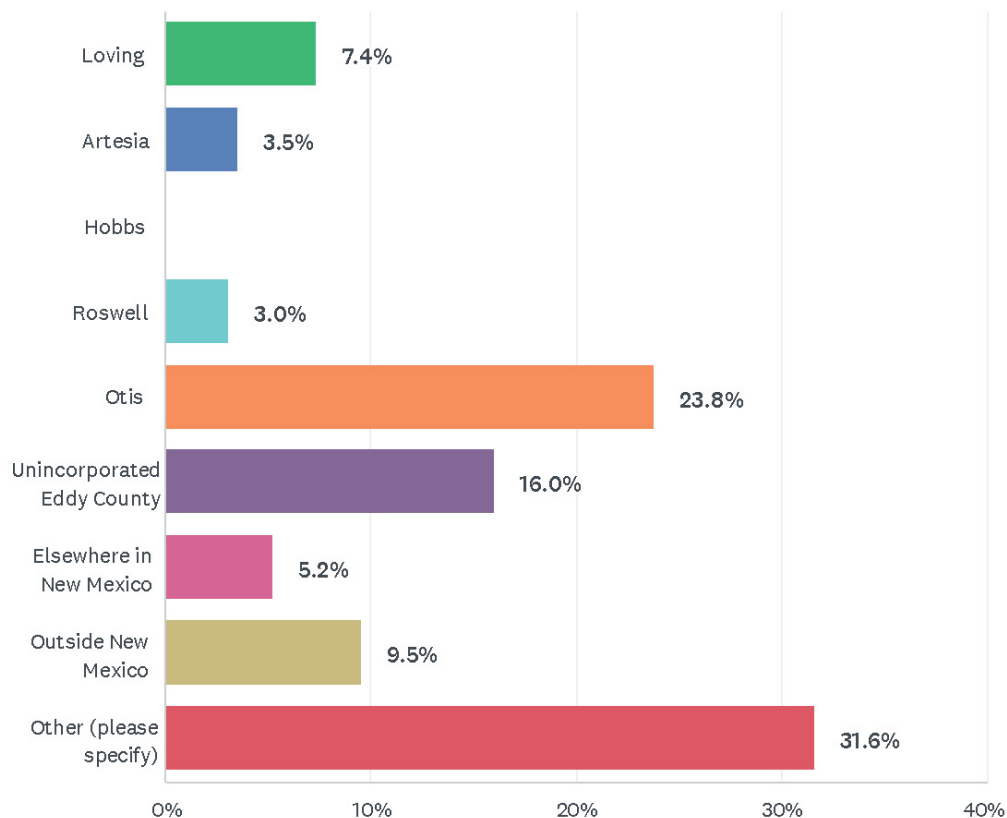
### Q3 How long have you lived in Carlsbad?

Answered: 1,279 Skipped: 91



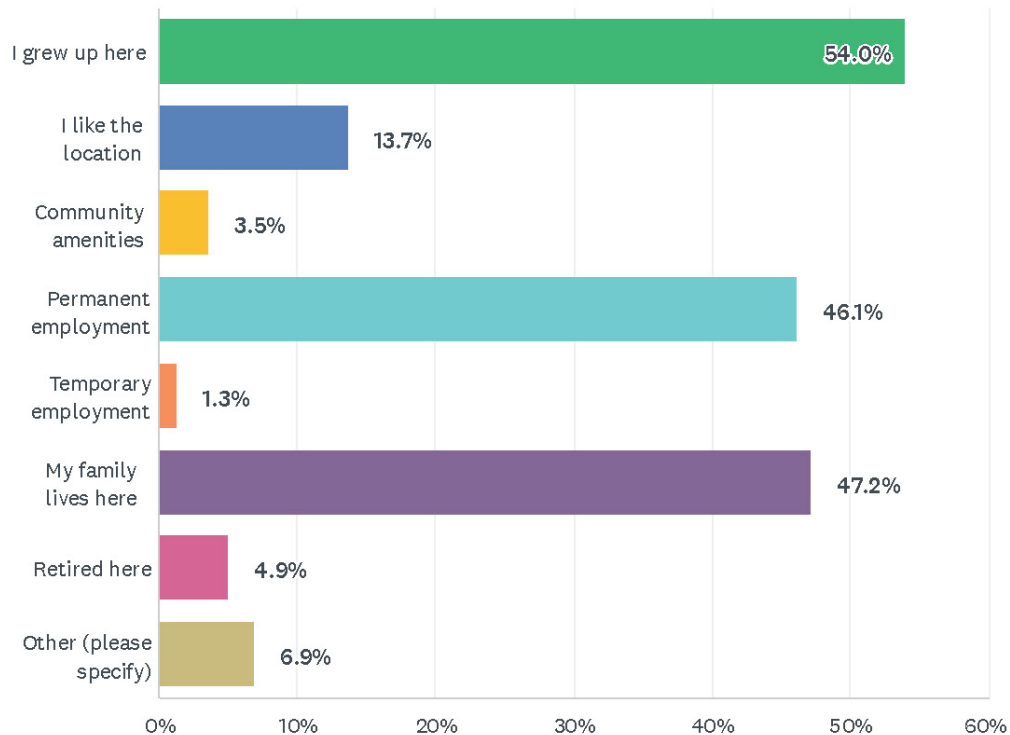
### Q4 If you do not live in Carlsbad, where do you live?

Answered: 231 Skipped: 1,139



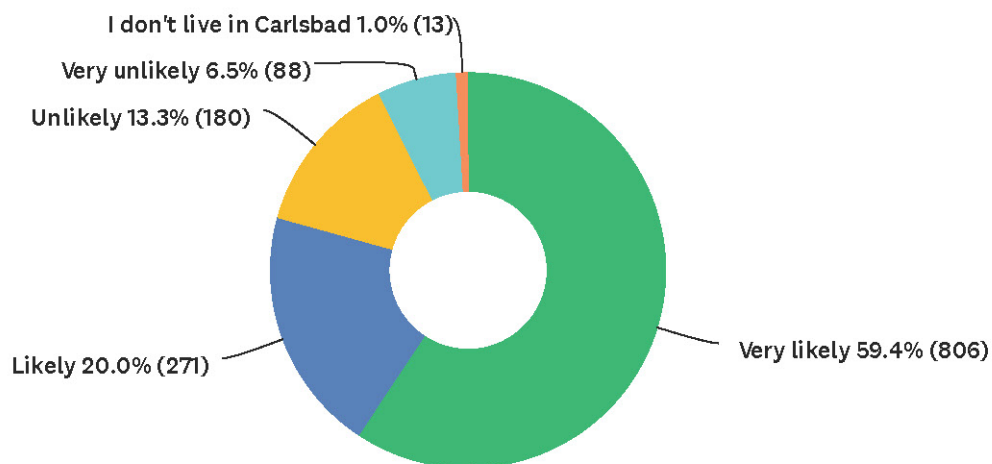
### Q5 What are the main reasons why you live in Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,355 Skipped: 15



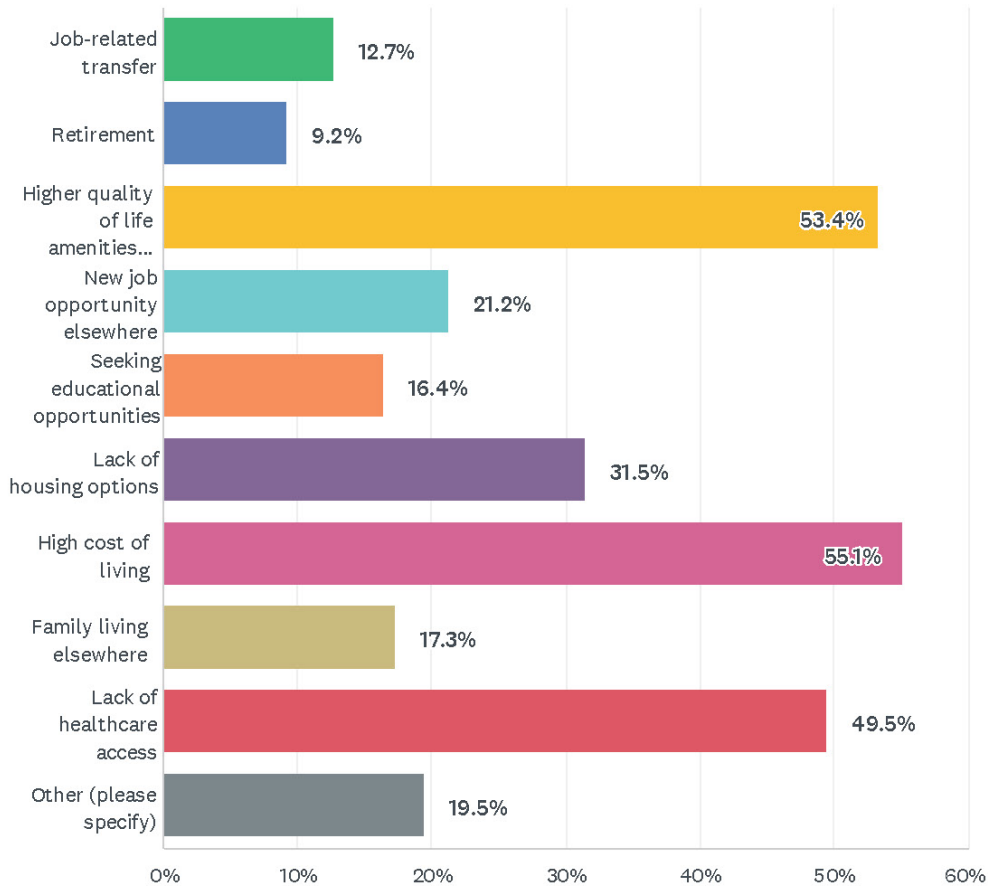
### Q6 How likely are you to live in Carlsbad for the next 2 to 5 years?

Answered: 1,358 Skipped: 12



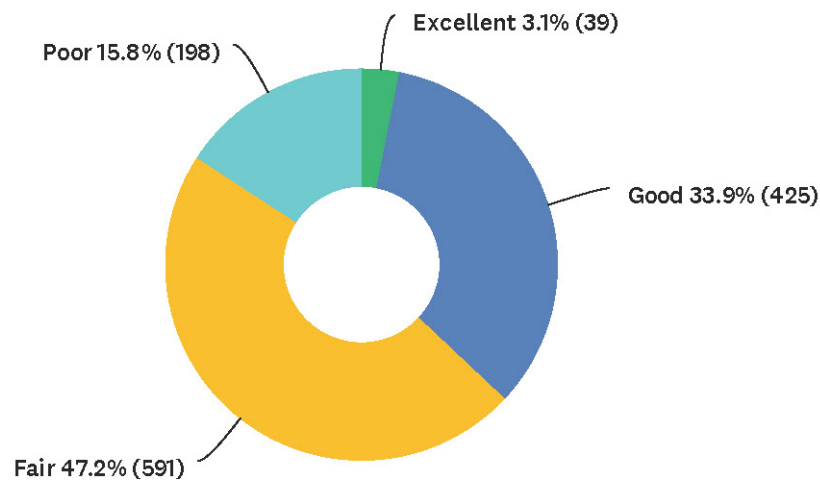
Q7 If you answered "Unlikely" or "Very unlikely" to Question #6, which of the following reasons would cause you to leave Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 457 Skipped: 913



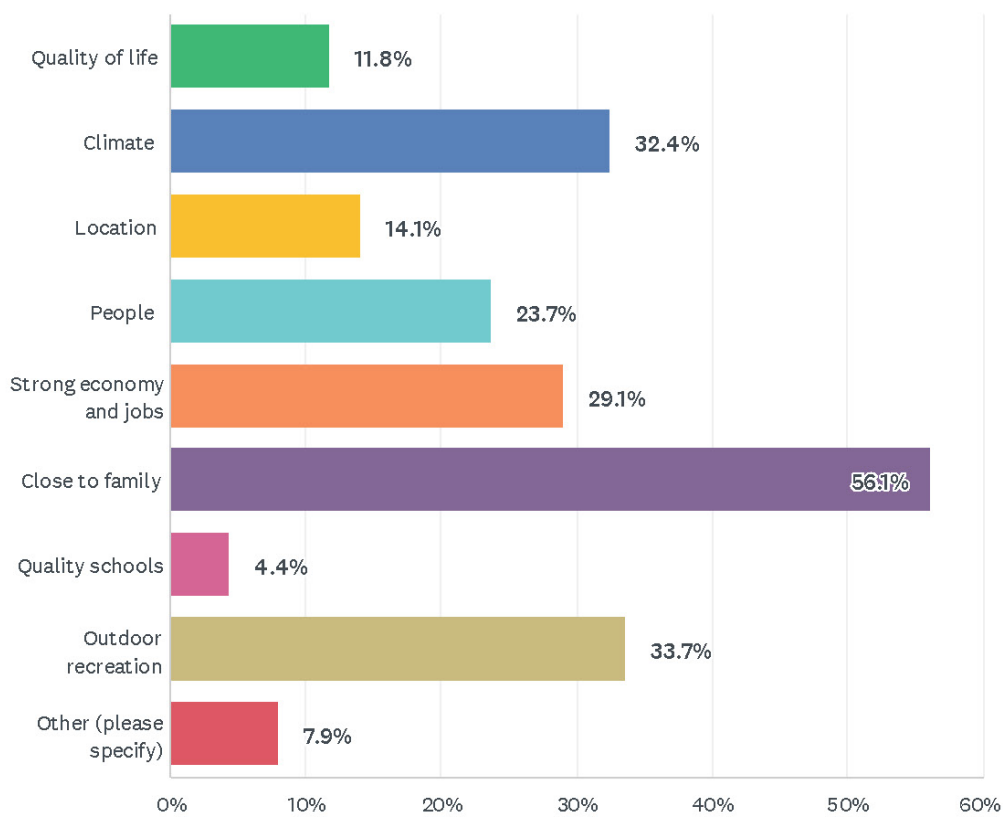
## Q8 How would you rate the quality of life in Carlsbad?

Answered: 1,253 Skipped: 117



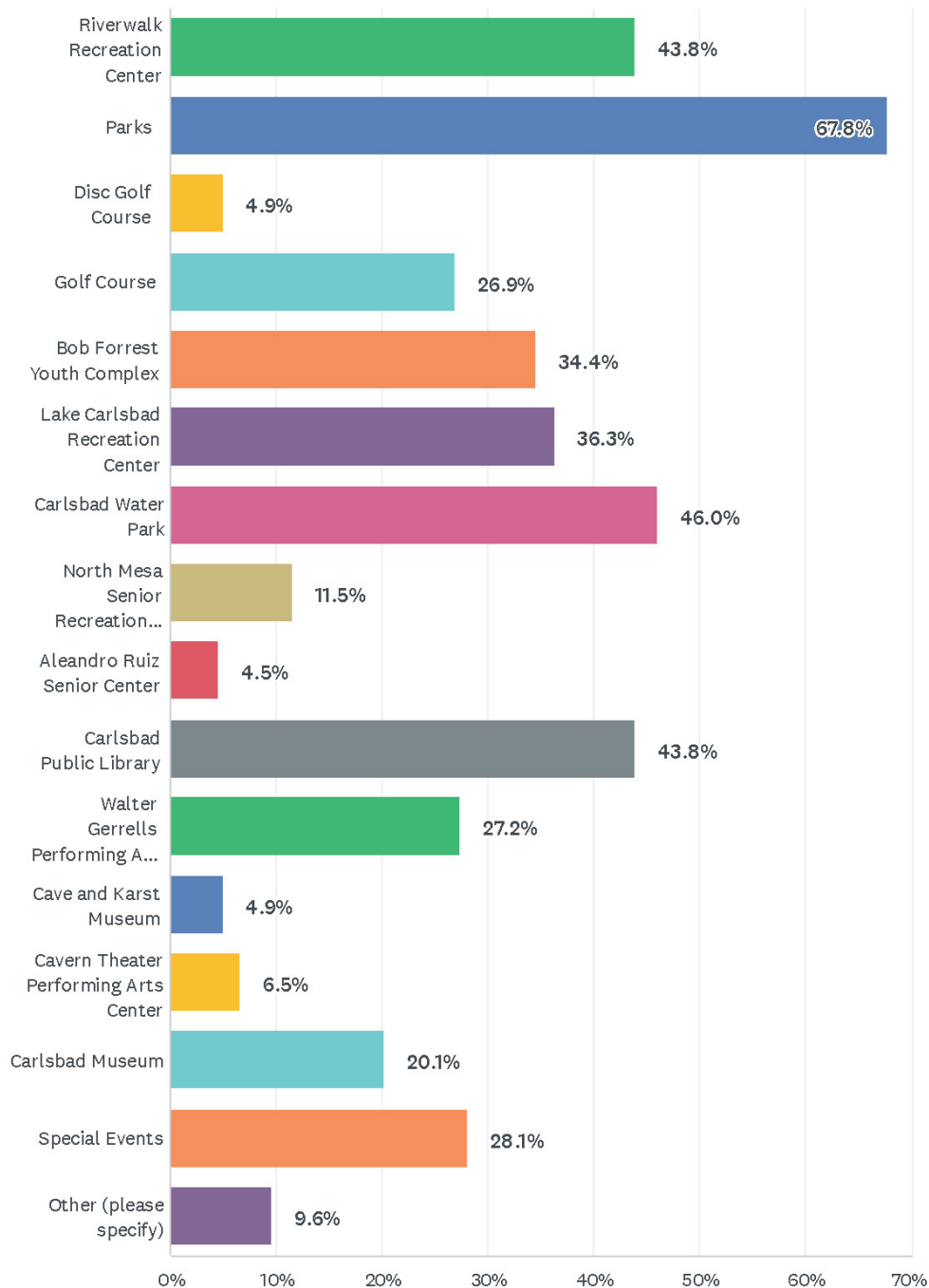
## Q9 What are your favorite aspects of Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,224 Skipped: 146



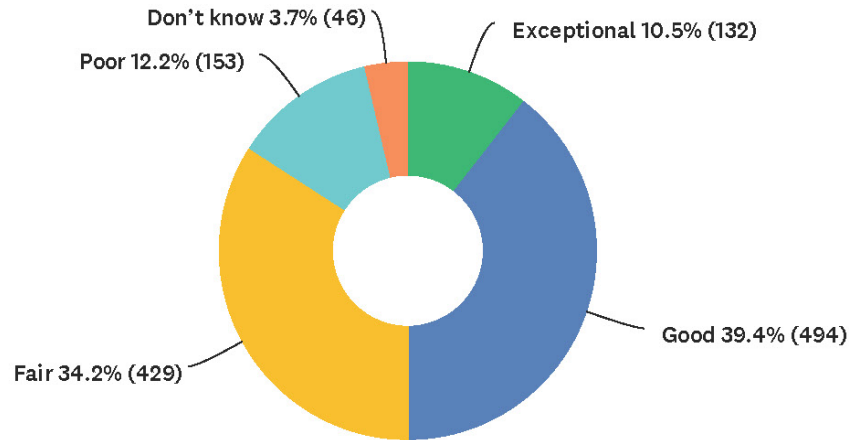
## Q10 Please indicate the public facilities that you or members of your family currently use. (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,182 Skipped: 188



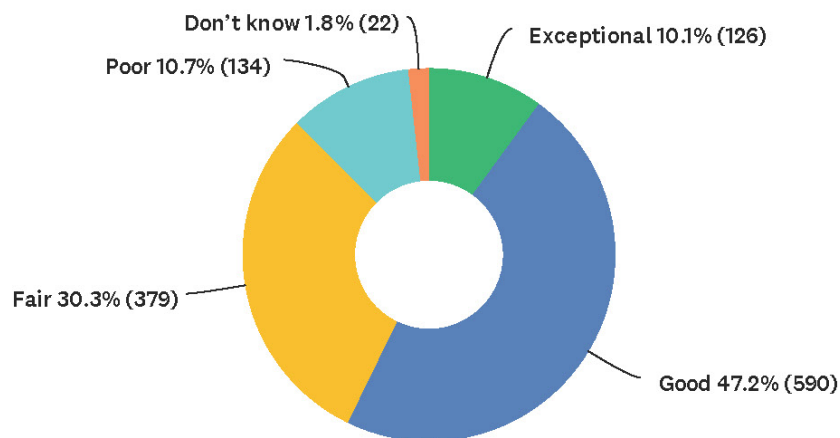
### Q11 What is your level of satisfaction with public safety services in Carlsbad? (police, fire, emergency services)

Answered: 1,254 Skipped: 116



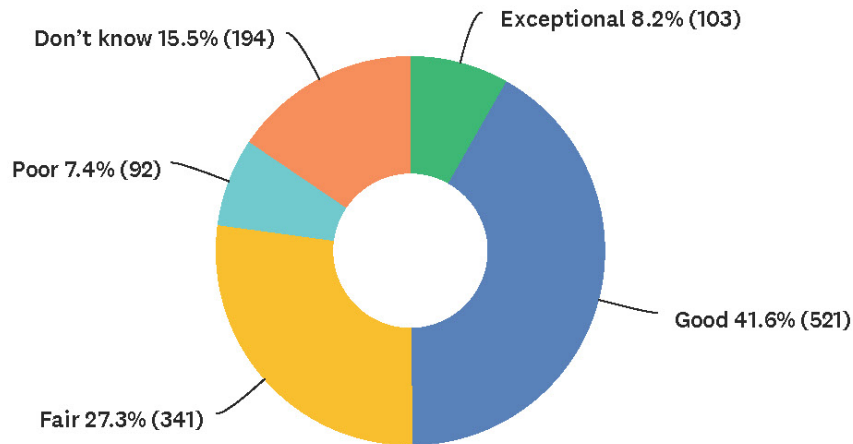
### Q12 What is your level of satisfaction with parks and recreation facilities in Carlsbad?

Answered: 1,251 Skipped: 119



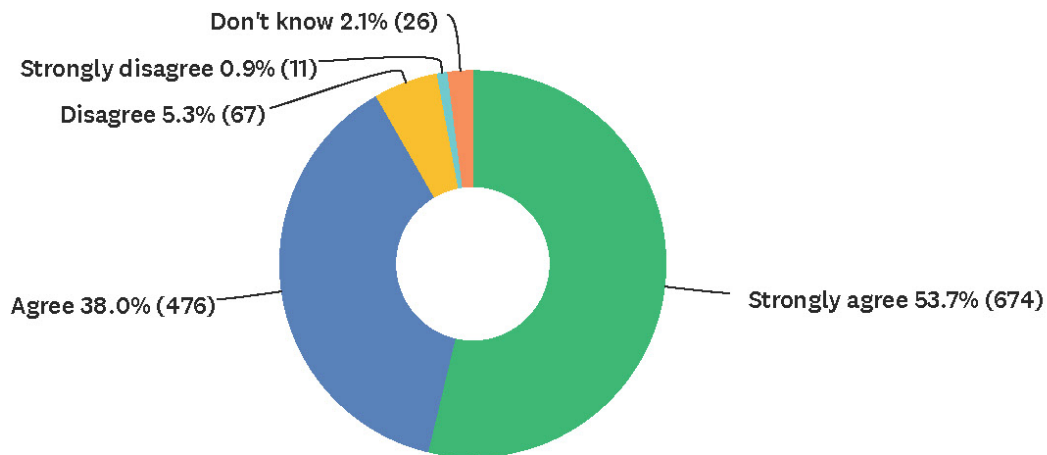
### Q13 What is your level of satisfaction with community facilities in Carlsbad? (Senior center, community center, library)

Answered: 1,251 Skipped: 119



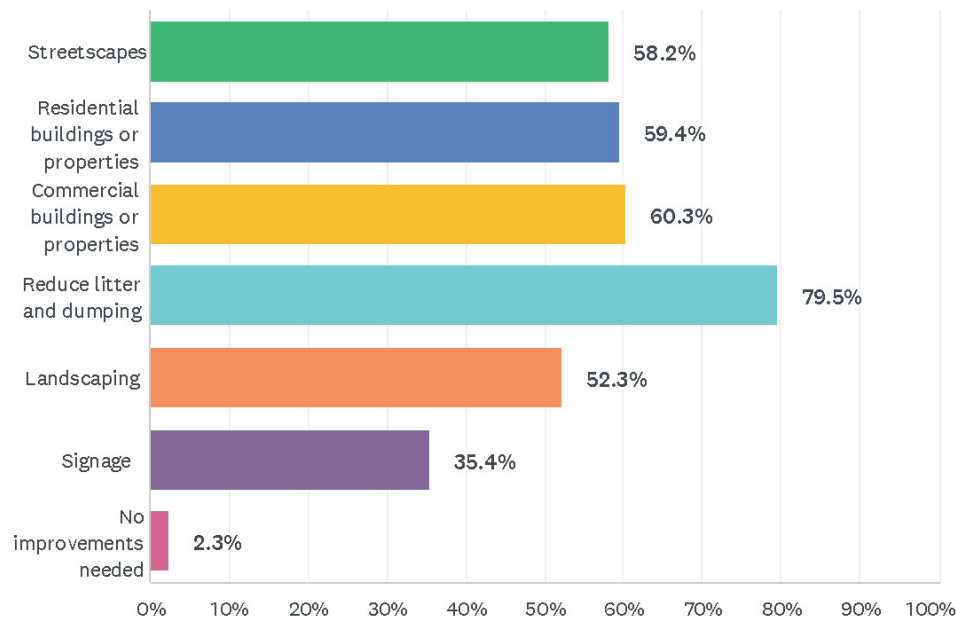
### Q14 Does the visual appearance of the City need improvements?

Answered: 1,254 Skipped: 116



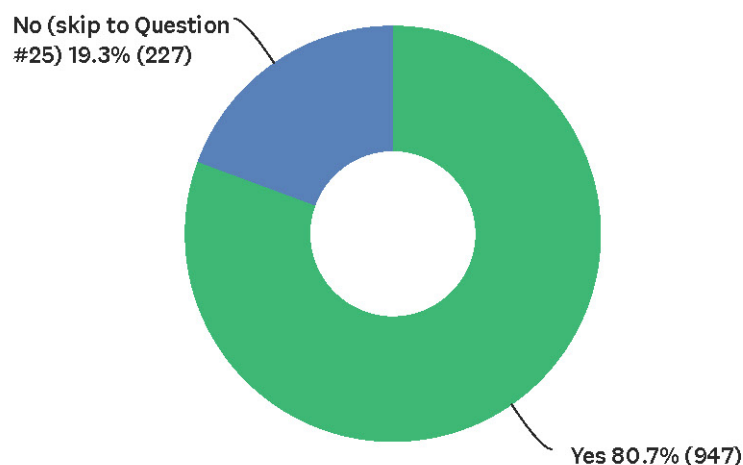
Q15 If your answer to #14 was “Strongly agree” or “Agree,” what areas of improvement to the visual appearance of Carlsbad do you feel are needed, if any? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,154 Skipped: 216



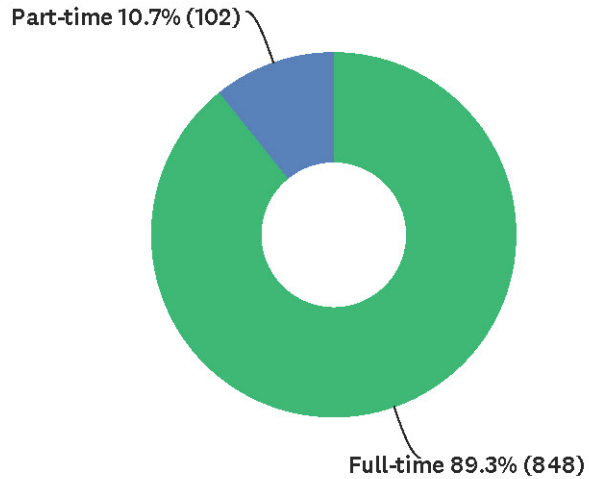
Q17 Are you currently employed?

Answered: 1,174 Skipped: 196



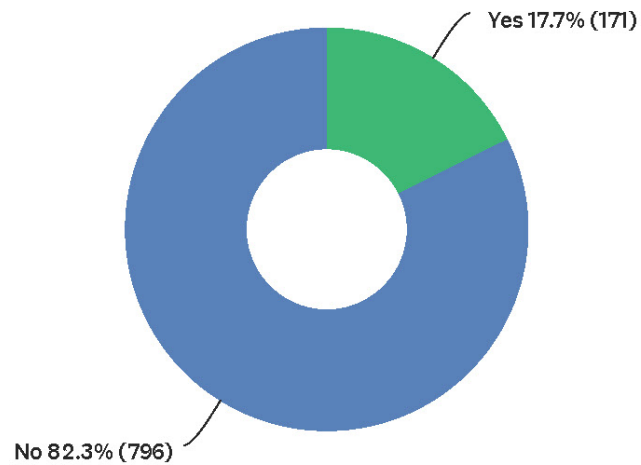
## Q18 Is your job full-time or part-time?

Answered: 950 Skipped: 420



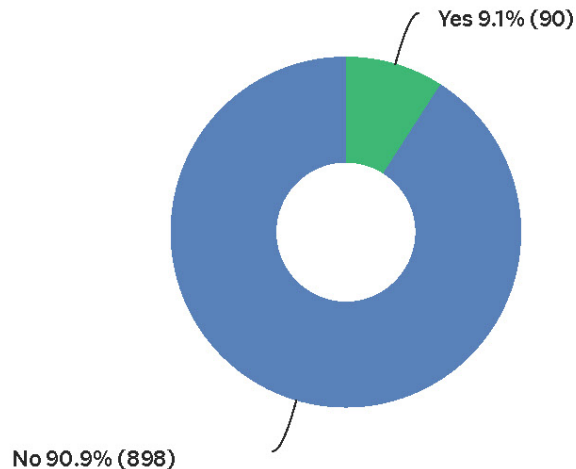
## Q19 Do you have more than one job?

Answered: 967 Skipped: 403



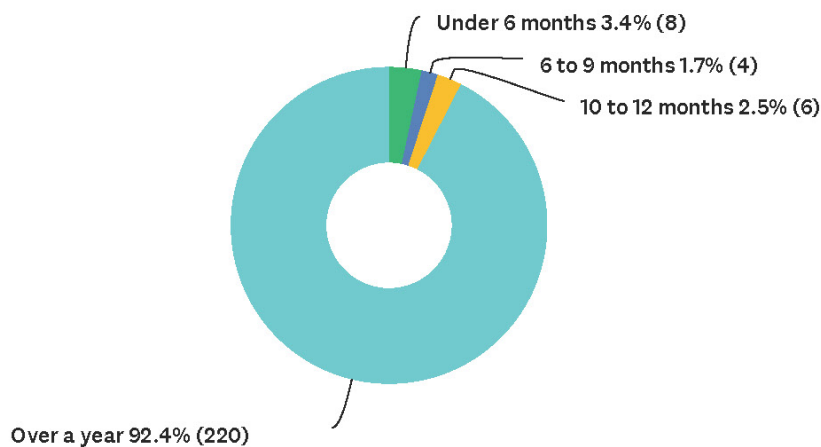
Q20 Do you have a spouse, domestic partner, or children that live in another city or state while you are employed in Carlsbad?

Answered: 988 Skipped: 382



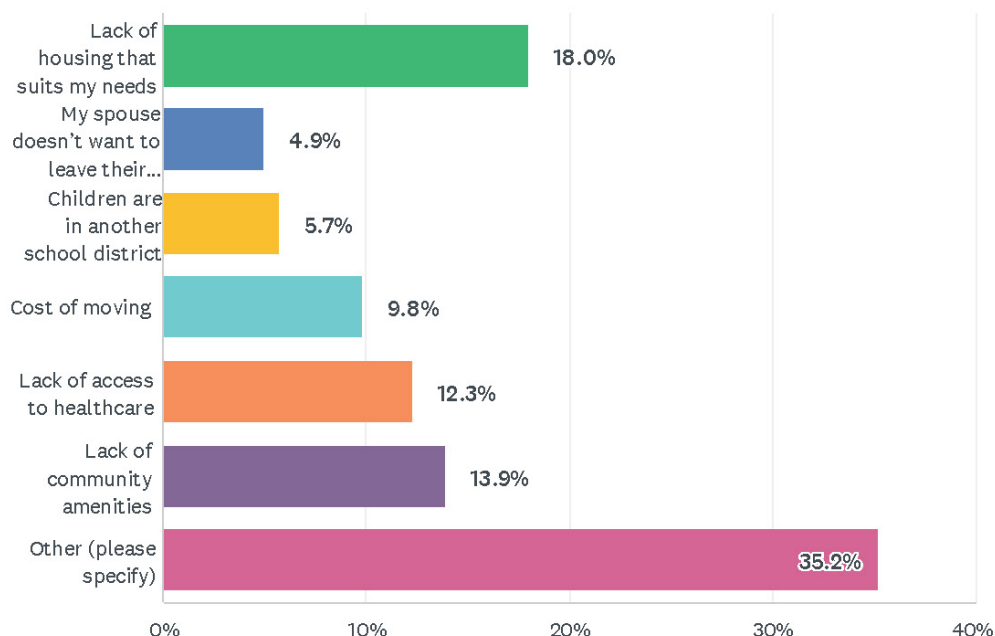
Q21 If your answer to Question #20 was yes, how long have you worked in Carlsbad?

Answered: 238 Skipped: 1,132



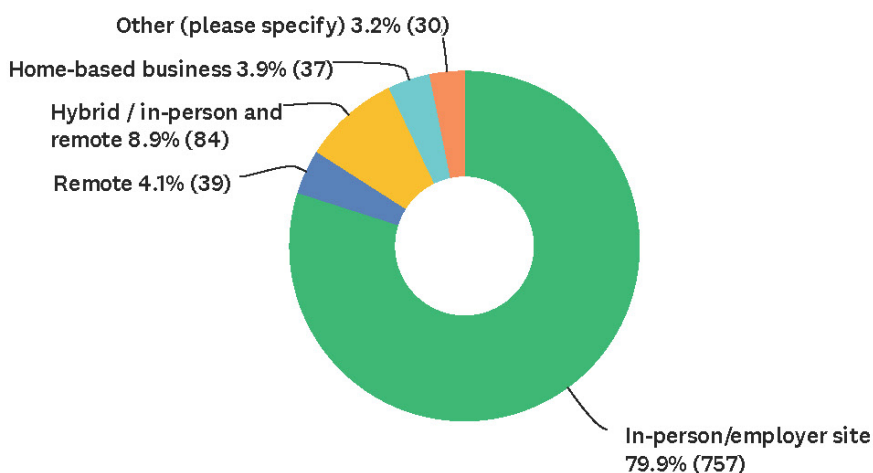
## Q22 If your answer to Question #20 was yes, what is preventing you and your family from moving permanently to Carlsbad?

Answered: 122 Skipped: 1,248



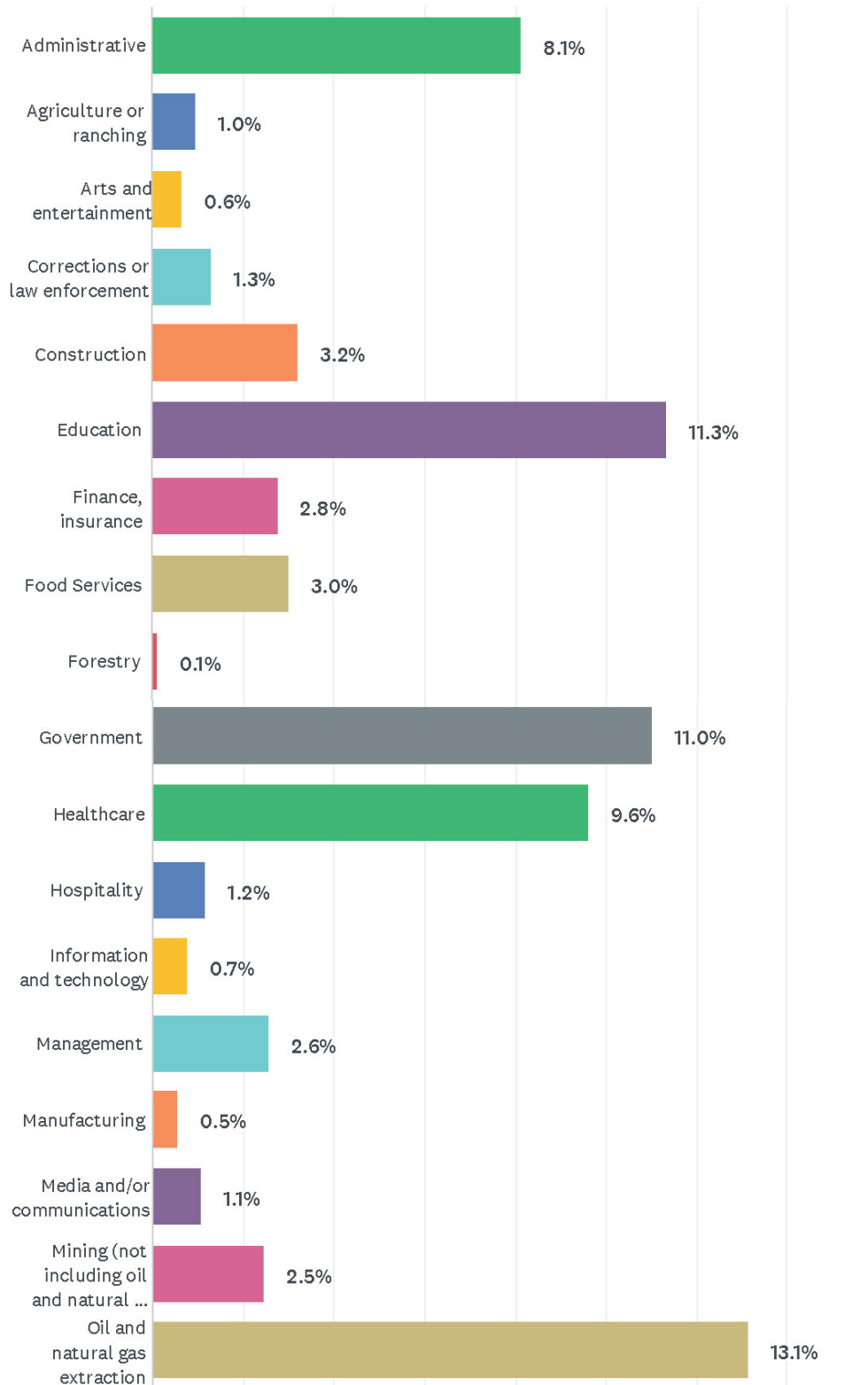
## Q23 How would characterize your job location?

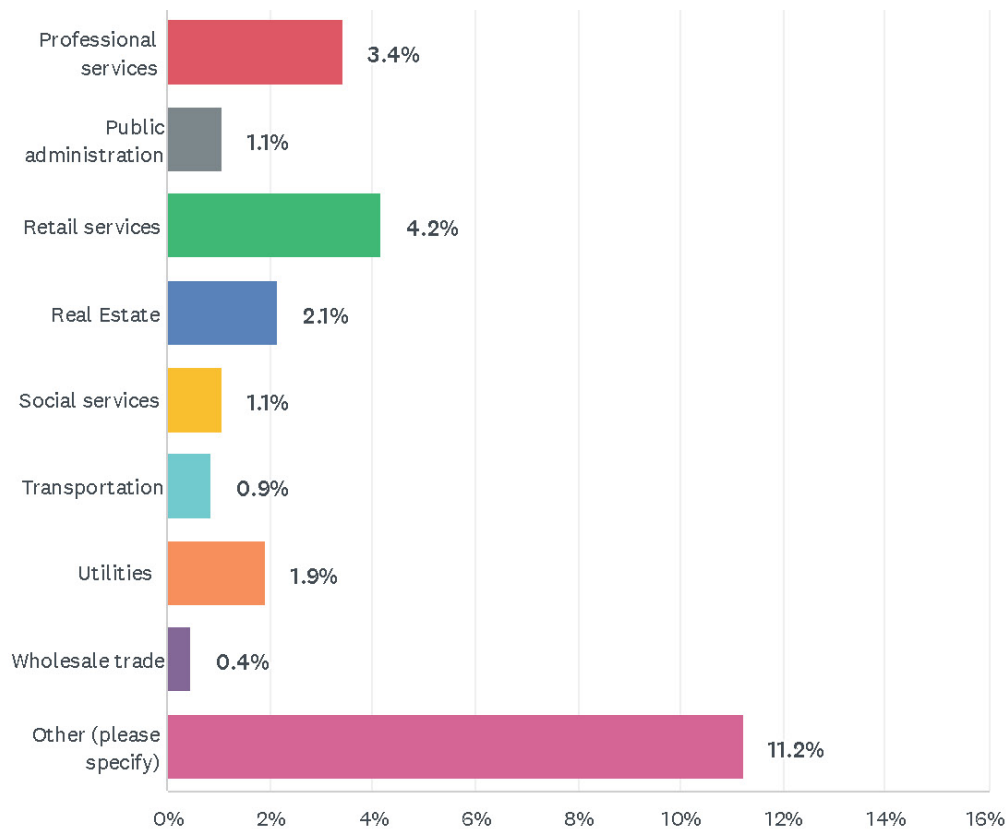
Answered: 947 Skipped: 423



## Q24 If your answer to Question #17 was yes, what type of employment are you engaged in?

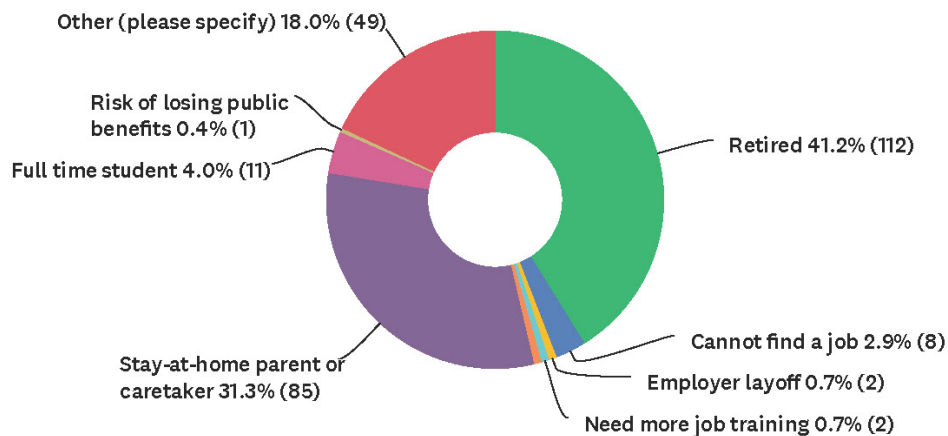
Answered: 936 Skipped: 434





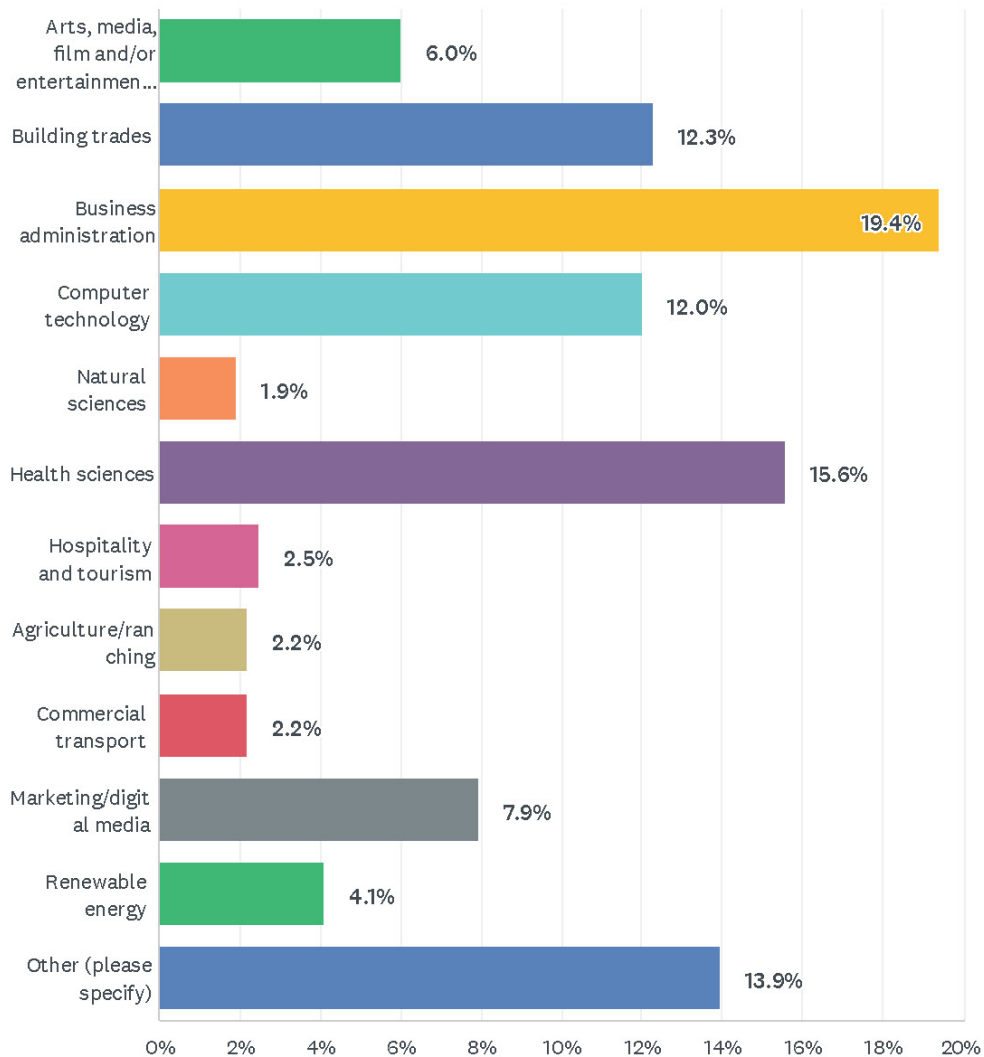
Q25 If you are unemployed, what is the main reason that has prevented you from getting a job?

Answered: 272 Skipped: 1,098



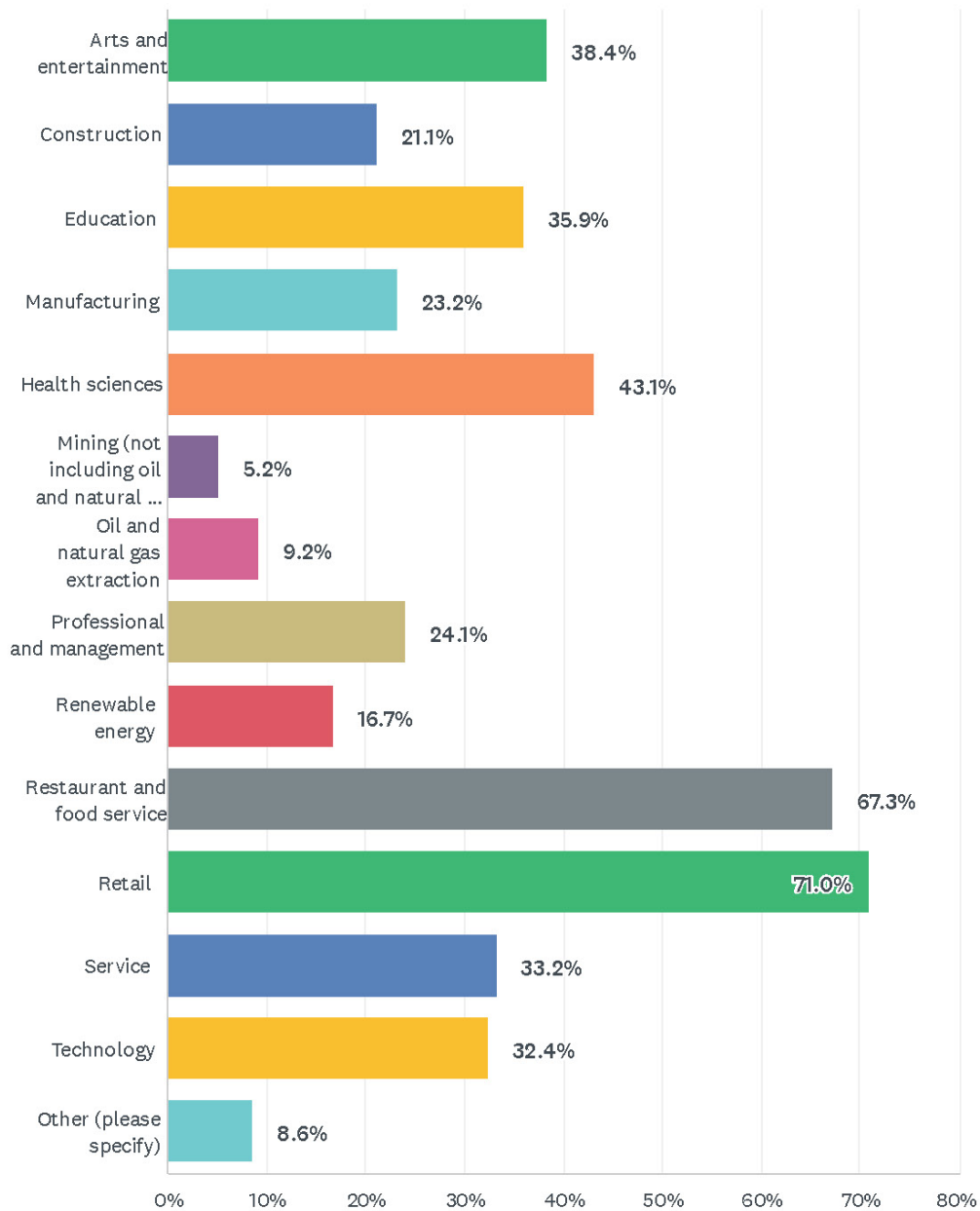
## Q26 If you feel like you need more job training, what type of training or education would that be?

Answered: 366 Skipped: 1,004



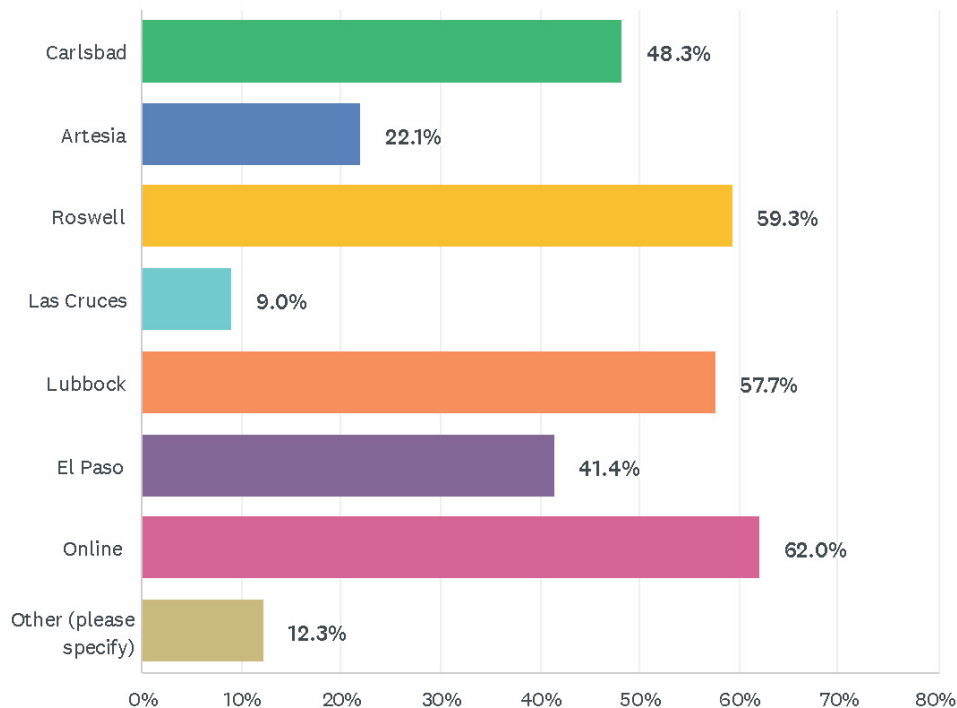
## Q27 What types of new jobs or industry are needed in Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,060 Skipped: 310



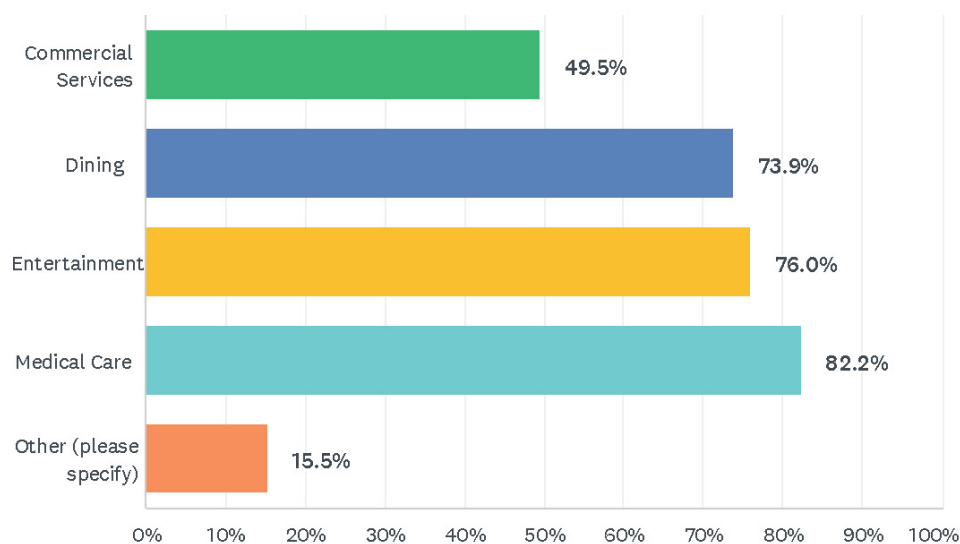
## Q28 Where do you currently go for shopping and commercial services? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,119 Skipped: 251



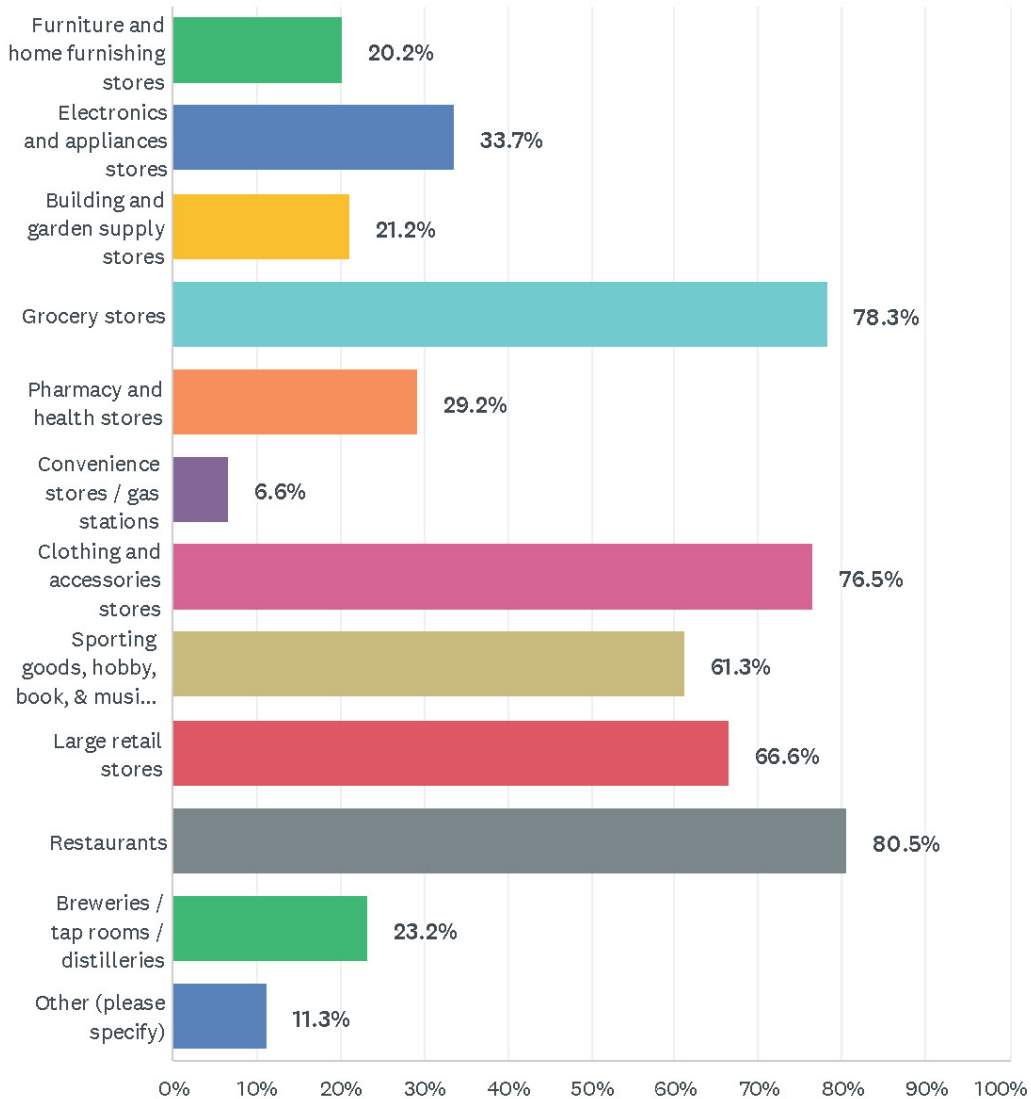
## Q29 For which of the following reasons do you travel outside of Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,113 Skipped: 257



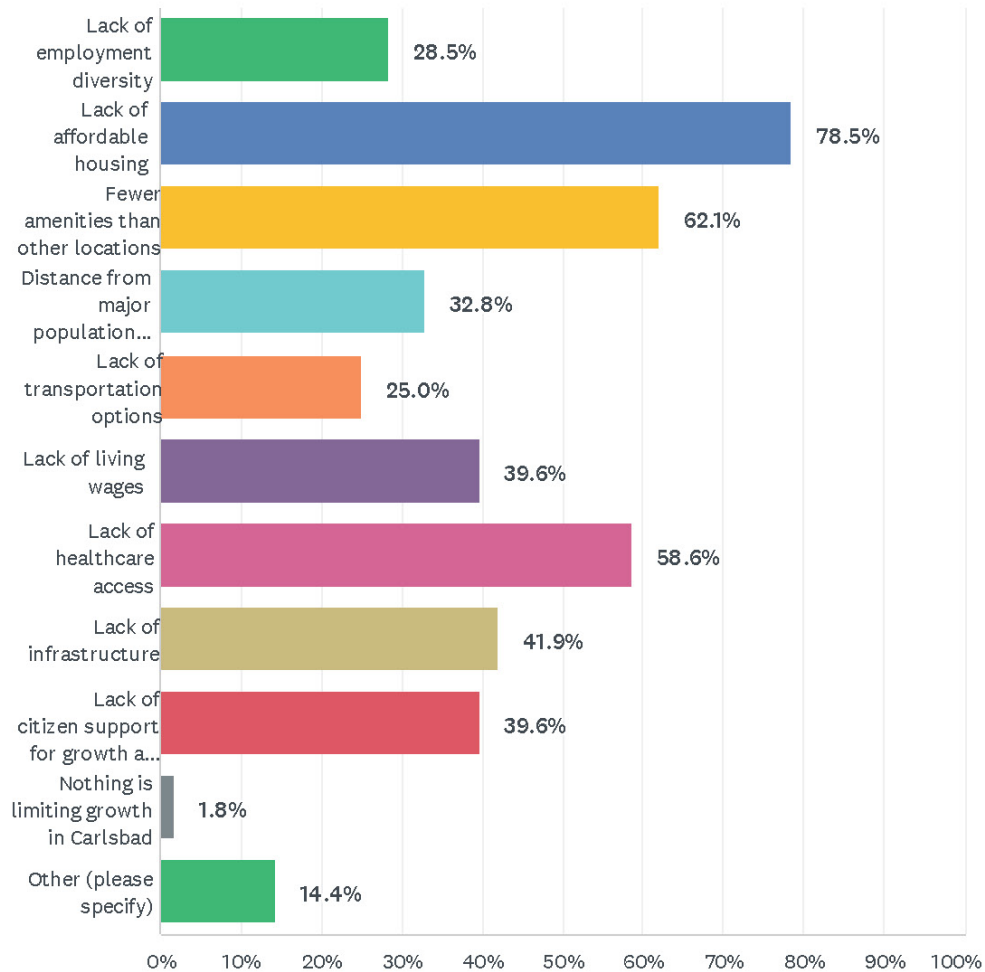
## Q30 What types of commercial development are needed in Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,113 Skipped: 257



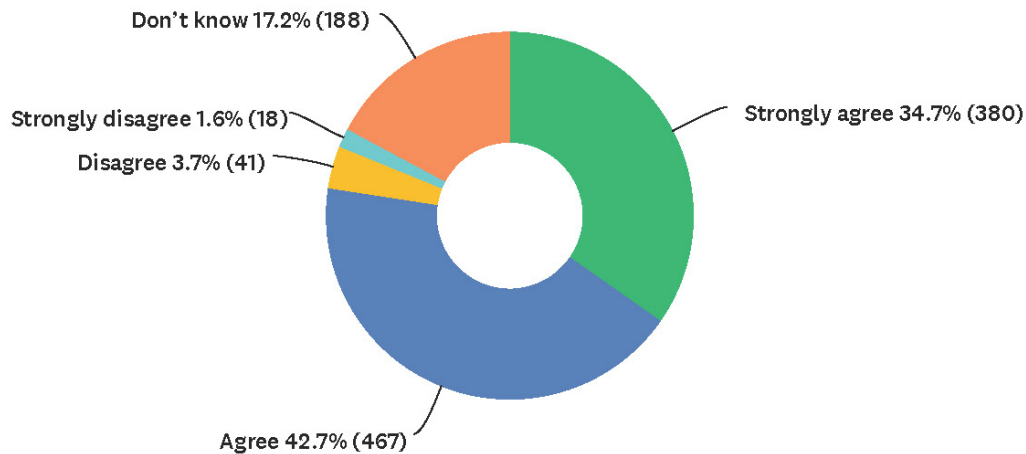
### Q31 What, if anything, do you feel is limiting growth in Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,114 Skipped: 256



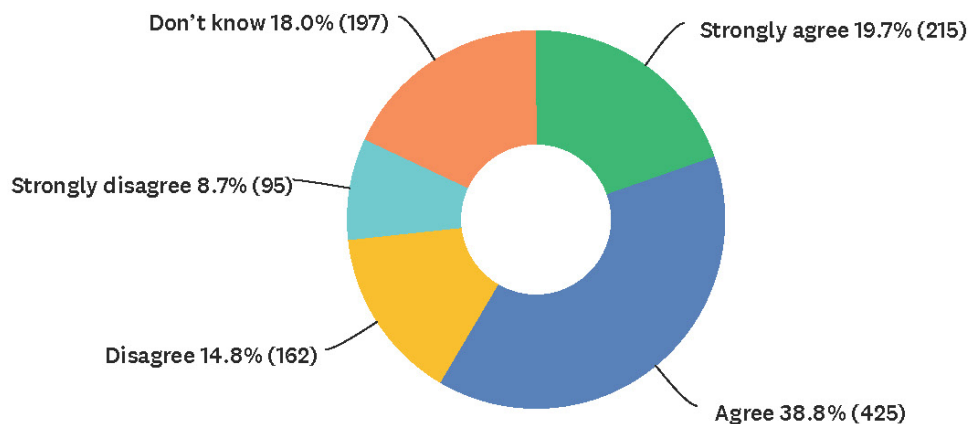
Q32 What is your level of agreement with encouraging infill development? (Development of vacant or underutilized parcels in areas that are already largely developed).

Answered: 1,094 Skipped: 276



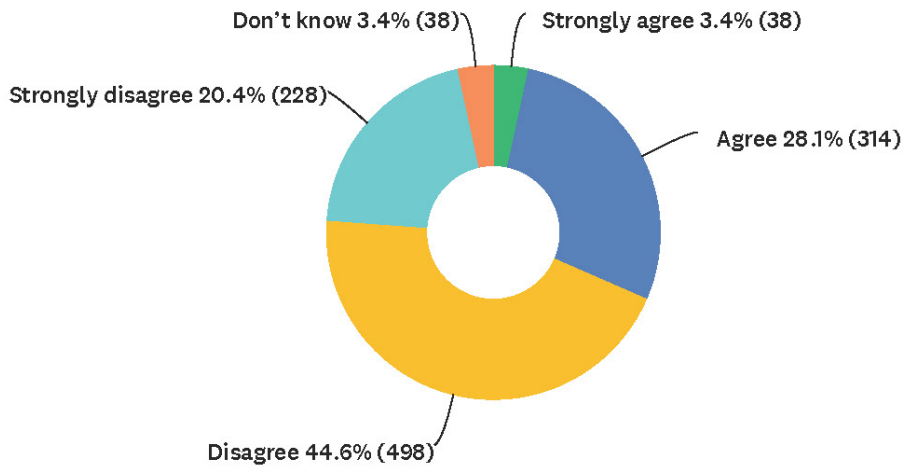
Q33 What is your level of agreement with encouraging mixed-use development? (Development that includes residential and non-residential, either in the same building or on the same site).

Answered: 1,094 Skipped: 276



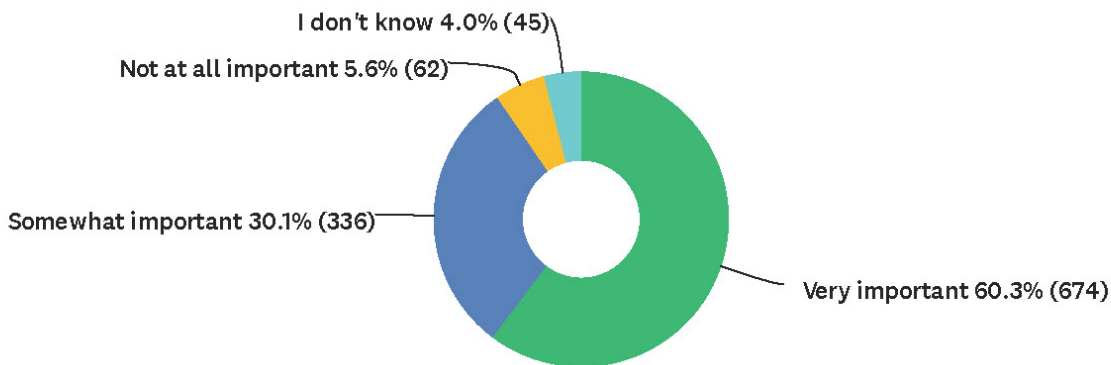
## Q34 Downtown Carlsbad is a fun place to visit, shop, and walk around.

Answered: 1,116 Skipped: 254



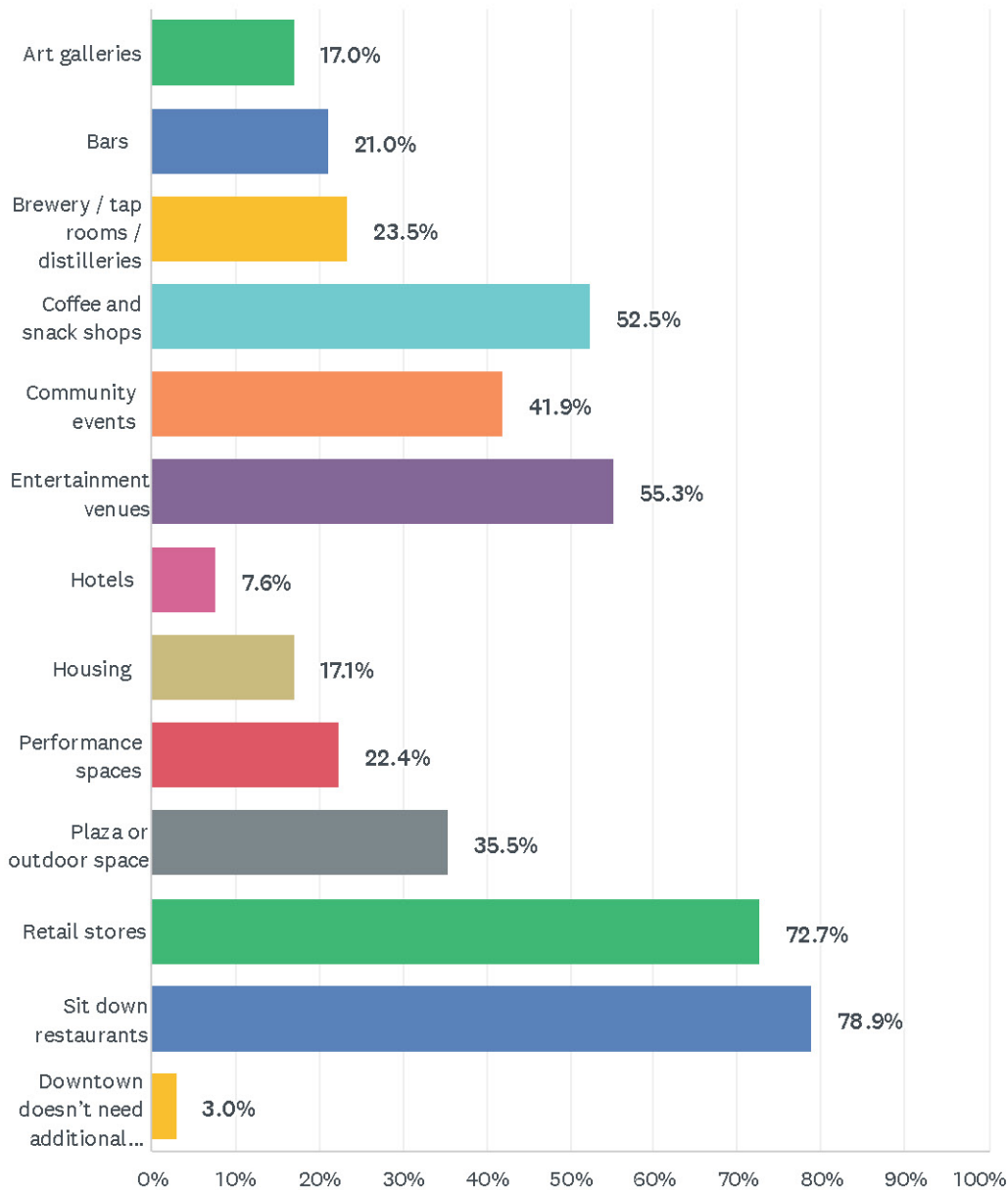
## Q36 How important is the tourist economy to the City of Carlsbad?

Answered: 1,117 Skipped: 253



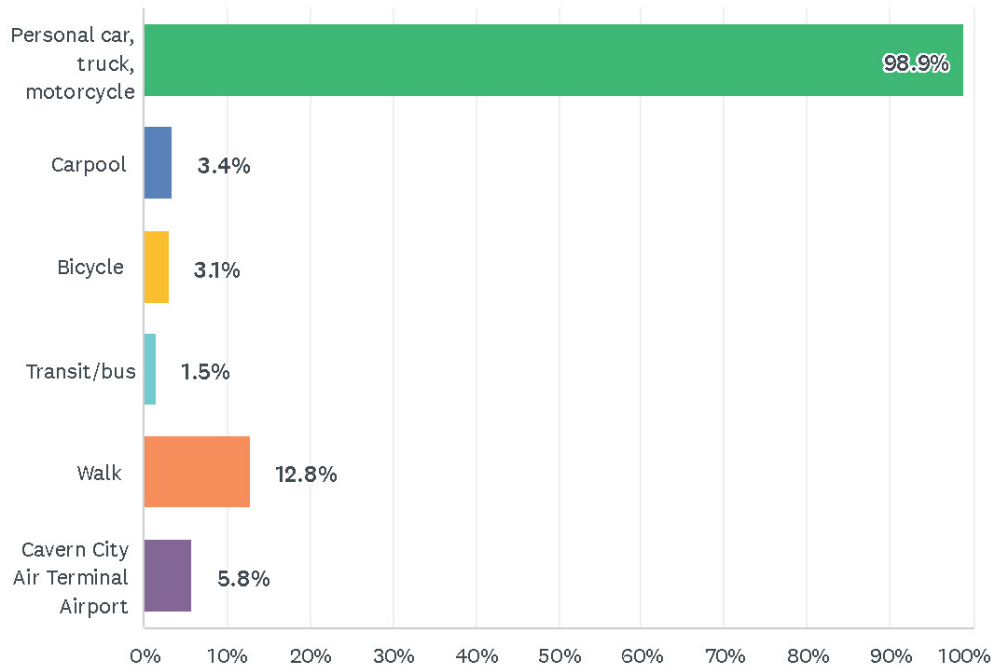
## Q35 Downtown Carlsbad needs more of the following: (check all that apply)

Answered: 1,099 Skipped: 271



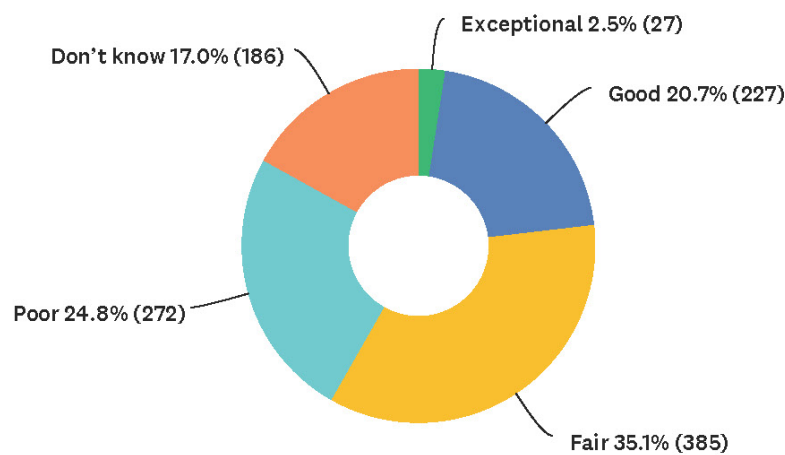
### Q37 Which transportation modes do you currently use? (Check all that apply).

Answered: 1,102 Skipped: 268



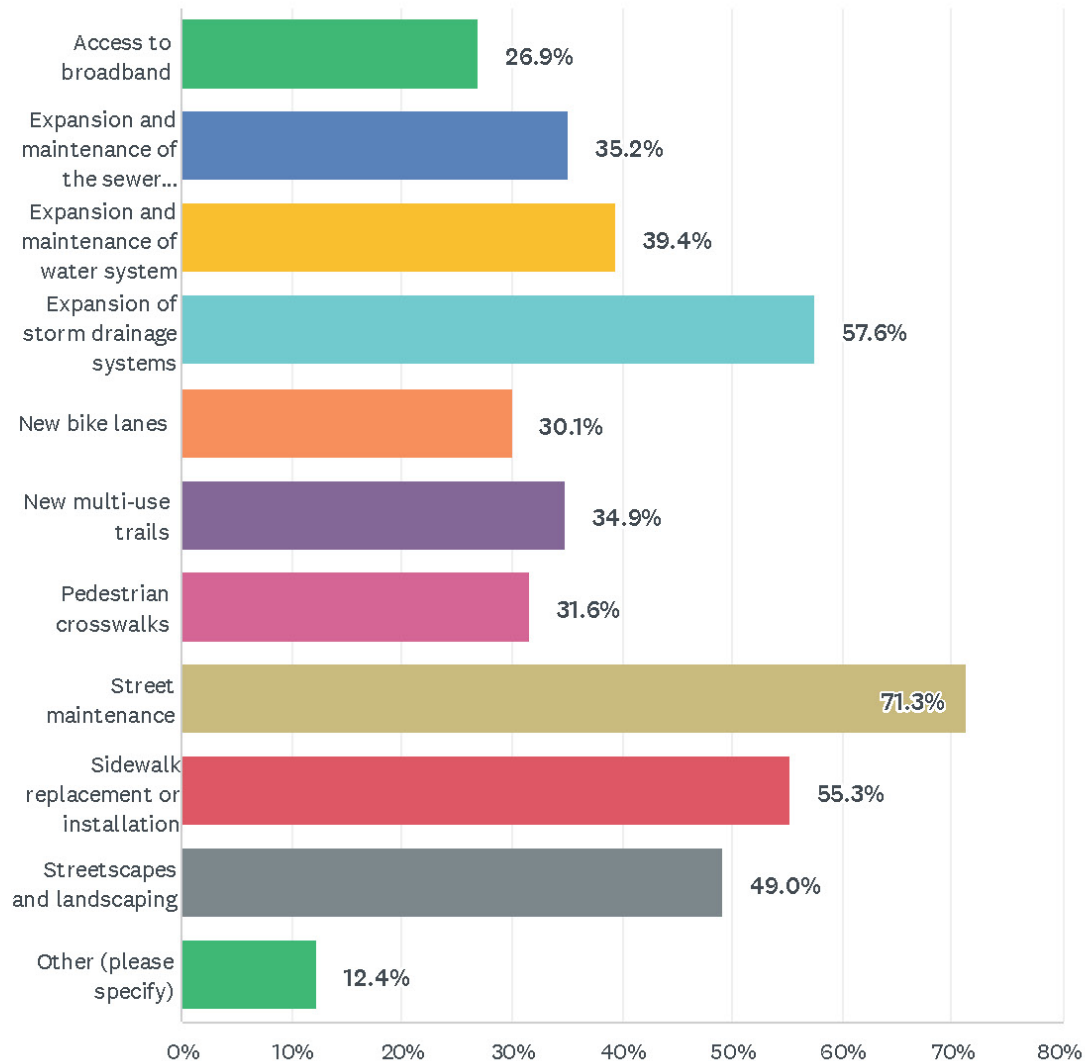
### Q38 What is your level of satisfaction with the City's multi-modal (vehicle, transit, bicycle, trails, sidewalks) transportation system?

Answered: 1,097 Skipped: 273



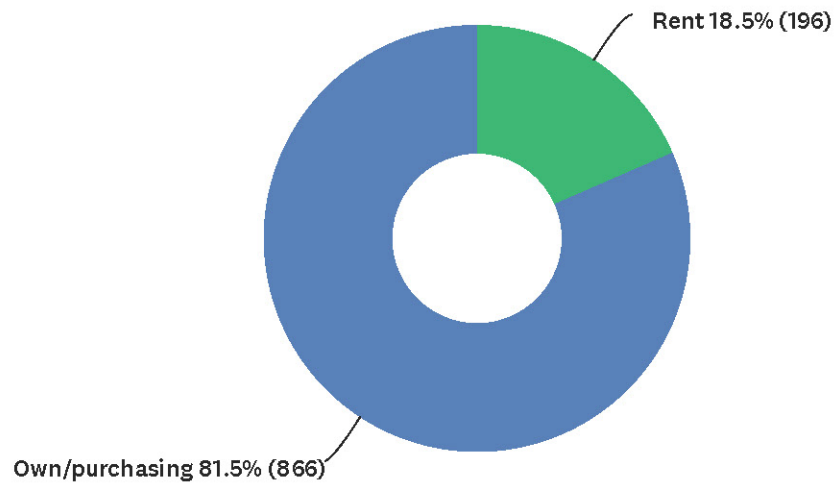
## Q39 The City should focus on the following transportation and infrastructure improvements (check all that apply)

Answered: 1,044 Skipped: 326



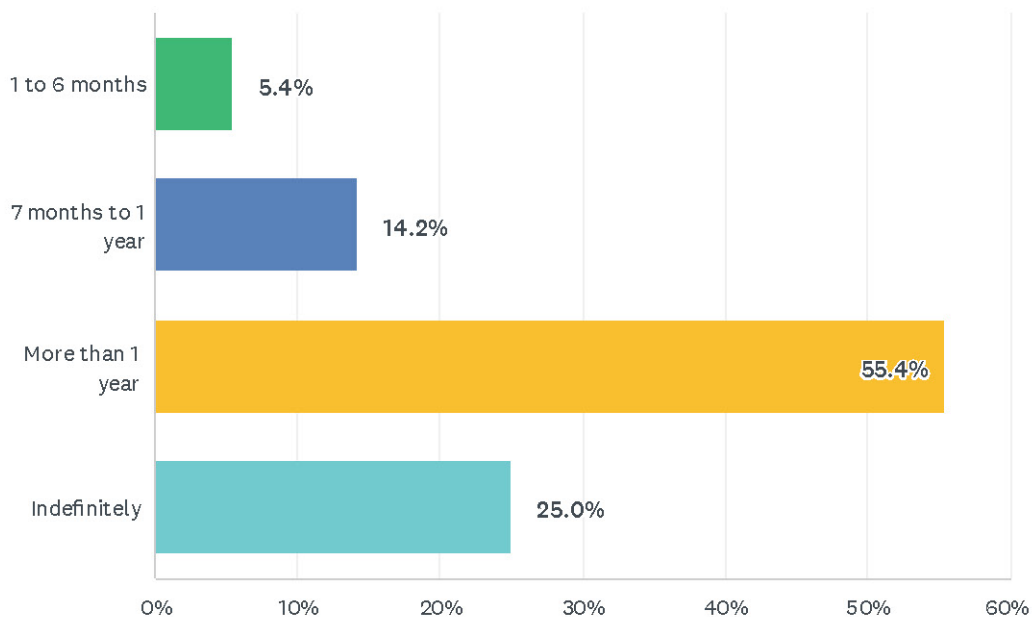
## Q40 Do you rent or own your home?

Answered: 1,062 Skipped: 308



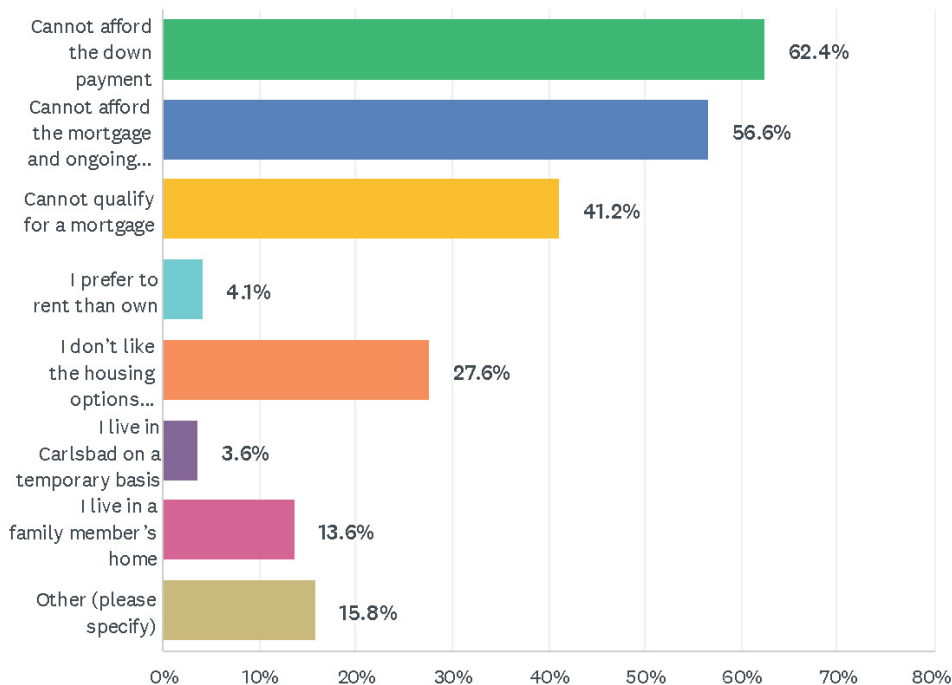
## Q41 If your answer to Question #40 was "Rent", how long do you anticipate renting?

Answered: 204 Skipped: 1,166



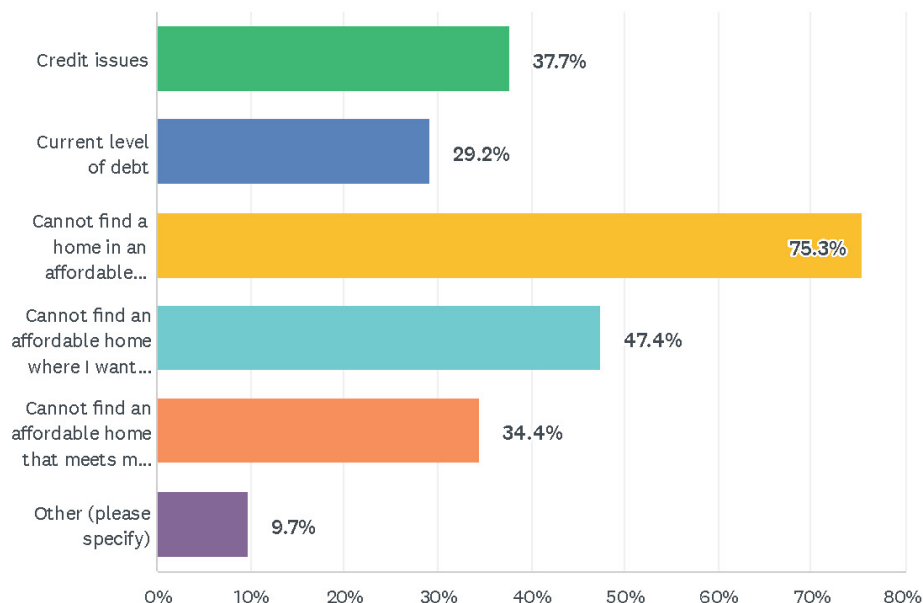
### Q42 If your answer to Question #40 was “Rent”, why have you not purchased a home? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 221 Skipped: 1,149



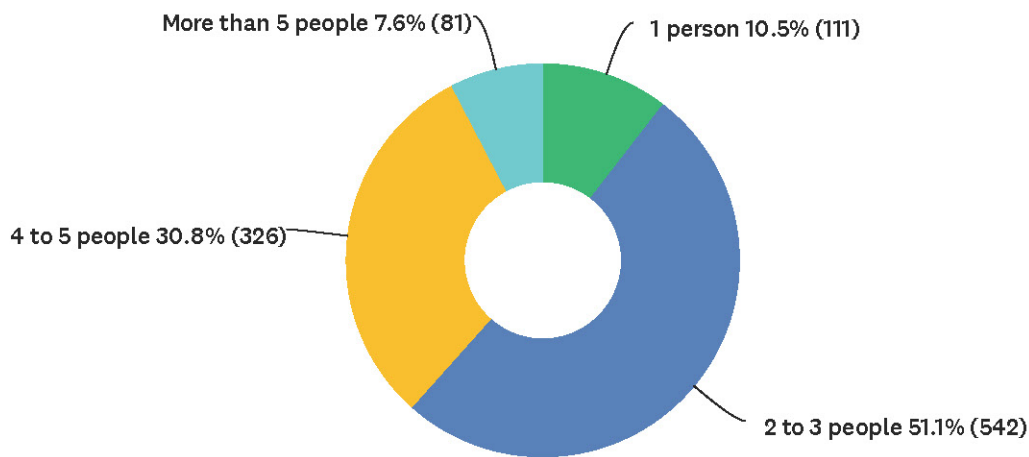
### Q43 If your answer to Question #42 was “Cannot qualify for a mortgage”, what obstacles are preventing you from being able to qualify? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 154 Skipped: 1,216



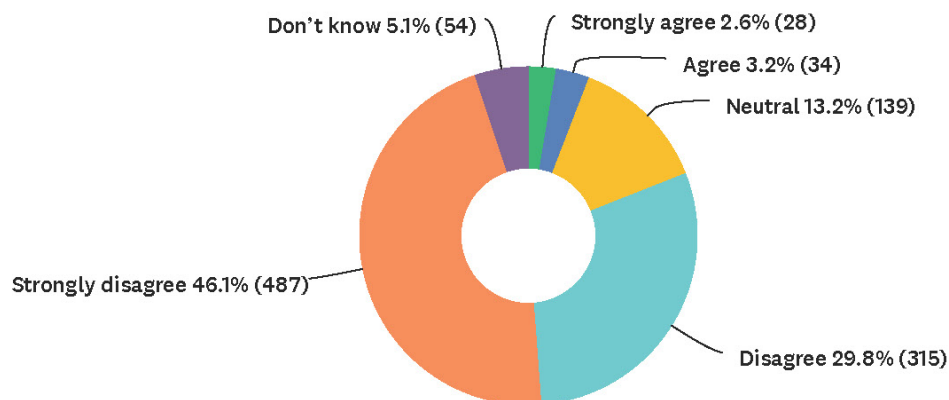
## Q44 How many people live in your household, including yourself?

Answered: 1,060 Skipped: 310



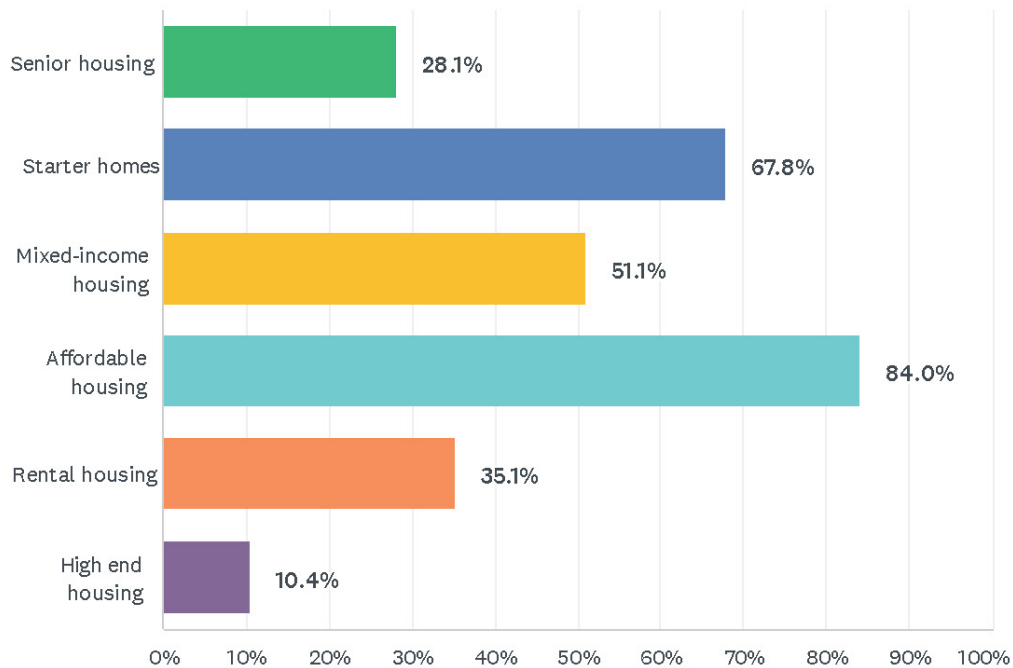
## Q45 What is your level of agreement whether the City has an adequate supply of affordable housing? (Defined as housing for which occupants are paying no more than 30% of income on housing and utilities)

Answered: 1,057 Skipped: 313



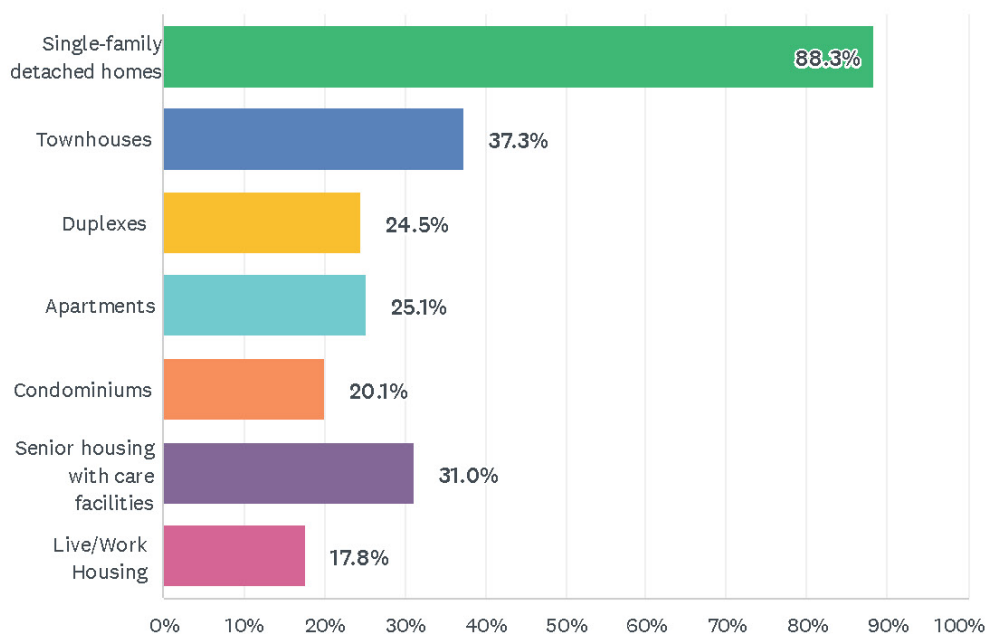
## Q46 Which housing development types does the City need more of? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,040 Skipped: 330



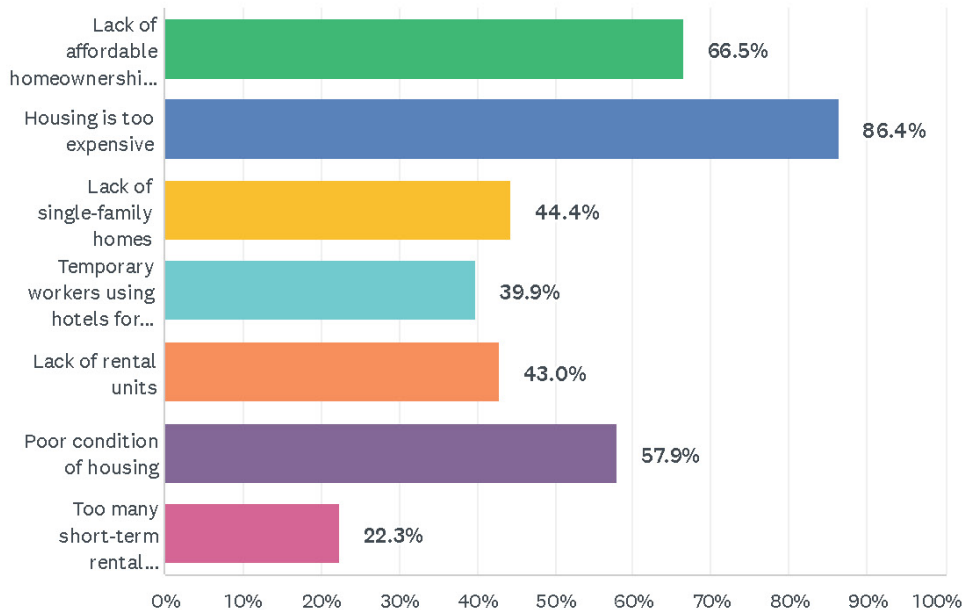
## Q47 Which housing types does Carlsbad need more of? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,018 Skipped: 352



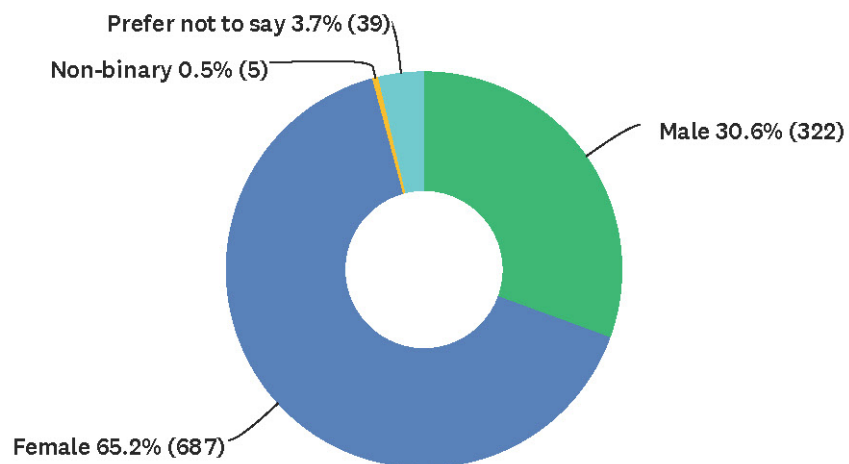
### Q48 What are the most important housing issues facing Carlsbad? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 1,043 Skipped: 327



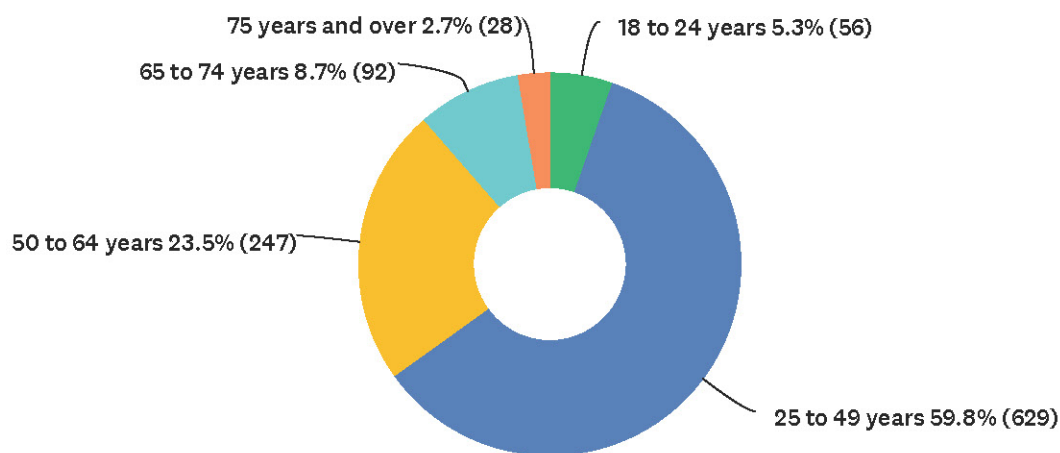
### Q49 What is your gender?

Answered: 1,053 Skipped: 317



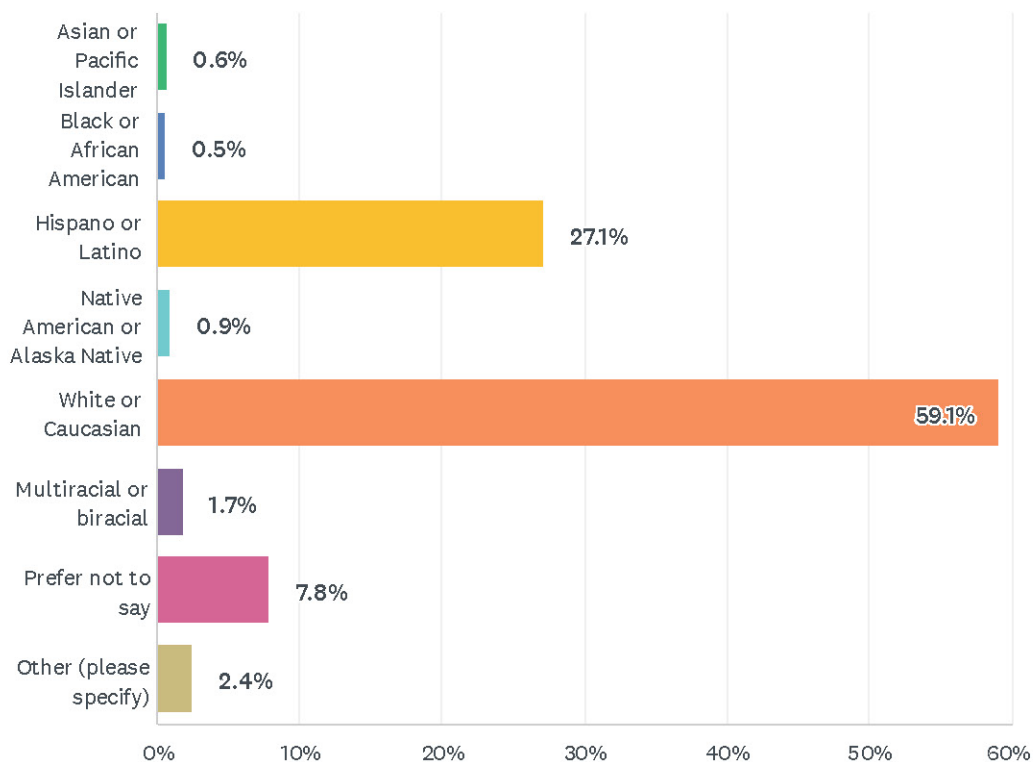
## Q50 What is your age category?

Answered: 1,052 Skipped: 318



## Q51 How do you describe yourself?

Answered: 1,042 Skipped: 328



# FUNDING SOURCES

This section includes a brief list of federal and state economic, business, infrastructure development, and housing resources available to both local governments and people interested in redevelopment, business development, in need of a small business loan, historic preservation, housing assistance, etc. Each of these programs require applicants to meet certain qualifications in order to be eligible for funding. Contact information is provided for each program.

These funding programs and their respective websites can change over time. The Southeast New Mexico Economic Development District (SNMEDD) is a local partner that can help identify and pursue funding opportunities. The New Mexico Congressional Delegation can also help identify funding opportunities at the state and particularly the federal level.

## 1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### COLONIAS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT FUND

The Colonias Infrastructure Project Fund provides grants and loans for qualified projects in colonias communities in New Mexico. Funding is available for infrastructure planning and development in order to improve the quality of life and encourage economic development in colonias. A qualified project may include water and wastewater systems, solid waste disposal facilities, flood and drainage control, roads or housing infrastructure. It does not include general operation and maintenance, equipment, housing allowance payments or mortgage subsidies. Eligible entities include incorporated municipalities, counties, mutual domestic water consumers' associations and other local governments that are located within 150 miles of the United States-Mexican Border that have areas designated as colonias prior to November 1990.

Contact: Colonias Development Council  
1050 Monte Vista  
Las Cruces, NM 88005  
Phone: (575) 647-2744  
Website: <http://coloniasnm.org>

### LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

This program is administered by the National Park Service. The state side of the LWCF provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The New Mexico State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department administers the state program. State agencies, municipalities, counties, schools, and tribes have developed and improved over 1,000 close to home outdoor recreation areas in response to the needs of its citizens and visitors by providing a permanent legacy of parks, facilities, and open space.

Contact: Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102  
Phone: (402) 661-1588  
Website: [nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/](http://nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING FUND

This fund provides up-front capital necessary to allow for proper planning of vital water and wastewater projects. The 2005 Legislature (HB 304, Sandoval) broadened project eligibility to include master plans, conservation plans

and economic development plans and to allow NMFA to “forgive” the loan if the entity finances the project through NMFA.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority  
810 W. San Mateo  
Santa Fe, NM 875015  
Phone: (505) 984-1454  
Toll Free: (877) ASK-NMFA  
Email: LGPF@nmfa.net  
Website: <https://www.nmfa.net/local-government-planning-fund/>

## NEW MEXICO FUNDIT

The FUNDIT program was created in order to provide local governments’ access to simultaneous financing options which saves time, eliminates duplication, improves project effectiveness, and ensures strategic investment with public resources. Projects can include business development such as incubators or industrial parks, community development such as feasibility studies and comprehensive plans, infrastructure development such as capacity increasing, updating or replacing existing facilities and services, housing, and downtown revitalization. The project must be prioritized in the local Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP), Economic Development Plan, or *Comprehensive Plan*.

Contact: Economic Development Department  
Joseph M. Montoya Building  
1100 St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 479-2071  
Website: <https://nmfundit.org>

## PUBLIC PROJECT REVOLVING FUND (PPRF)

The Public Project Revolving Fund (PPRF) offers many examples of NMFA’s investment of time, expertise, and capital. The PPRF has provided the means for unusual projects to receive financing. The PPRF is being looked at to provide an increasing array of public projects. Many of these projects have less

proven revenue streams but do not have other viable sources of financing. Created in 1994, the PPRF program assists a wide range of public credits in accessing the capital markets with advantage of offering to all borrowers (regardless of their credit worthiness) fixed ‘AAA’ - insured interest rates.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority  
810 W. San Mateo  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 992-9639  
Toll Free: (877) ASK-NMFA  
Email: pprf@nmfa.net  
Website: <https://www.nmfa.net/public-infrastructure-capital-financing/>

## SMALL CITIES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

This program is administered by the State of New Mexico through the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance and Administration for communities with populations under 50,000. Funds can be applied towards planning projects, economic development activities, emergency activities, construction or improvement of public buildings, and rehabilitation or repair of housing units. CDBG funds can be used for towns engaged in downtown revitalization including redevelopment of streets and fund facade improvement programs. There is a \$500,000 grant limit per applicant (\$50,000 maximum for planning efforts) and a 5% cash match by the applicant is required.

Contact: NM DFA Community Development Bureau  
131 S. Capitol  
Bataan Memorial Bldg., Suite 201  
Santa Fe, NM 87503  
Phone: (505) 827-8053  
Website: <https://nmdfa.state.nm.us/local-government/community-development-bureau/>

## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The USDA provides assistance to rural communities including loan and grant programs that address small businesses and rural businesses, rural housing, rural community facilities, and rural utilities. The USDA provides loan programs such as the B&I Loan and also grant programs. USDA rural development grants can be made directly to small businesses that are accomplishing innovative economic development work or energy efficiency installations, but must flow through a non-profit or local government intermediary. Assistance is available through the following programs:

- ◀ Business and Industry Loan Guarantees
- ◀ Single-Family Housing Direct Home Loans
- ◀ Single-Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program
- ◀ Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program
- ◀ Single-Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants
- ◀ Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program

Contact: USDA Rural Development New Mexico Office  
100 Sun Avenue NE, Suite 130  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Phone: (505) 761-4950  
TTY: (505) 761-4938  
Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/nm>

## VALUE-ADDED PRODUCER GRANT

This grant provides funds for farmers and ranchers for planning or working capital to increase their revenue and customer base through the processing and marketing of value-added products for local marketing of raw agricultural food commodities. Applicants are encouraged to consult with Rural Development staff before submitting an application to receive helpful application information. Eligible activities include planning activities to evaluate

a value-added project, such as conducting feasibility studies, developing business plans or developing a marketing plan, and working capital activities to implement a value-added project, including costs such as labor and advertising, inventory and office supplies. Eligible applications include independent producers, farm or rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled producer-based business ventures.

Contact: USDA Rural Development New Mexico - Roswell Field Office  
300 N. Pennsylvania, Suite 4  
Roswell, NM 88201  
Phone: (575) 622-8745 Extension 4  
Website: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/business-programs/value-added-producer-grants>

## WATER TRUST BOARD

This program provides funding for a variety of water projects statewide. The Water Trust Board provides recommendation to the Legislature projects to be funded through the Water Project Fund. Awards are a combination of grants and loans. Eligible project types include:

- ◀ Water conservation or recycling, treatment, or water reuse projects
- ◀ Flood prevention projects
- ◀ Endangered Species Act (ESA) collaborative projects
- ◀ Water storage, conveyance or delivery projects
- ◀ Watershed restoration and management projects

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority  
810 W. San Mateo  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 984-1454  
Website: <https://www.nmfinance.com/water-trust-board/>

## 2. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### DREAMSPRING

DreamSpring, formerly known as ACCION New Mexico, makes loans to small businesses that may not qualify for bank loans, and also provides business support services.

Contact: DreamSpring  
2000 Zearing Avenue NW  
Albuquerque, NM 871024  
Phone: 800-508-7624  
Website: [www.dreamspring.org](http://www.dreamspring.org)

### EMPLOYMENT ENHANCEMENT TAX CREDITS

New Mexico has a number of tax credits that employers can qualify for by adding employees in the state, including:

- ◀ Corporate-Supported Child Care
- ◀ High-Wage Jobs
- ◀ Investment (for purchasing equipment introduced into New Mexico for use in a new or expanded manufacturing operation)
- ◀ Job Mentorship
- ◀ Rural Jobs
- ◀ Technology Jobs
- ◀ Welfare-to-Work

Contact: NM Taxation and Revenue Dept.  
1200 South St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
Phone: 866-285-2996  
Website: <https://www.tax.newmexico.gov/tax-professionals/tax-credits-overview-forms/employment-enhancement-tax-credits/>

### JOB TRAINING INCENTIVE PROGRAM (JTIP)

The Job Training Incentive Program is one of the most valuable incentives offered to new employers in New Mexico, and can be used effectively in recruitment packages. This program reimburses 50 to 90% of employee wages and required travel expenses during an extended training period for new hires for new and expanding companies in

New Mexico. Custom training at a New Mexico public educational institution may also be reimbursed. The JTIP must be applied for and approved prior to reimbursable wages being paid.

Contact: Economic Development Department  
1100 S. St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 827-0300  
Website: <https://edd.newmexico.gov/business-development/edd-programs-for-business/job-training-incentive-program/>

### NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS

Funded by the NMFA, the NMTC program provides loan funds to New Mexico businesses located in low-income areas. In order to be eligible, businesses must be located in a low-income census tract and must be developing commercial, industrial, and/or retail real estate projects (including community facilities) or developing for sale housing in low-income census tract areas. Projects are typically between \$5 million and \$25 million.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority  
810 W. San Mateo  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 992-9664  
Toll Free: (877) ASK-NMFA  
Email: [NMTC@nmfa.net](mailto:NMTC@nmfa.net)  
Website: <https://www.nmfinance.com/business-financing/new-markets-tax-credits/>

### NEW MEXICO ANGEL TAX CREDIT

This tax credit allows for an investor (who files a NM income tax return and is an accredited investor) to take a tax credit of 25% of an investment (up to \$62,500 per investment, for five investments per taxable year) for an investment made in a New Mexico company that is engaging in research or manufacturing, given that each investment is in a different qualified business. Any unused portion of the credit can be rolled over and applied for three consecutive years.

Contact: New Mexico Angels, Inc.  
1451 Innovation Parkway SE, Suite  
600  
Albuquerque, NM 87123  
Phone: (505) 932-6435  
Website: [www.nmangels.com](http://www.nmangels.com)

## NEW MEXICO BUSINESS INCUBATOR PROGRAM

This program provides a process to certify business incubator facilities in order to receive state support. The primary goal of each incubator is to mentor early stage businesses, provide training, and to provide a space/location at below-market cost to ensure the sustainability and prosperity of these new businesses. Eligible applicants are entities that have been certified by the EDD as meeting the requirements for a business incubator facility, are owned by a non-profit organization, governmental or tribal entity, and provide services to their clients which contribute to their success and allow them to grow out of the incubator to a job-creating New Mexico businesses.

Contact: Economic Development Department  
1100 S. St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Toll Free: 800-374-3061  
Website: <https://edd.newmexico.gov/community-development/business-incubator-certification/>

## NEW MEXICO MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

The New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership provides efficiency training, training in and assessment of lean manufacturing, value stream mapping, kata, cybersecurity, lean kaizen, scale-up, advanced manufacturing, automation, problem solving, and leadership to the state's small and medium sized businesses.

Contact: New Mexico Manufacturing  
Extension Partnership  
8600 San Mateo Blvd NE #100

Albuquerque, NM 87113  
Phone: (505) 262-0921  
Website: [www.newmexicomep.org](http://www.newmexicomep.org)

## NEW MEXICO PARTNERSHIP

The New Mexico Partnership is a private, non-profit organization that offers assistance to businesses looking to expand or relocate to New Mexico. It can assist businesses on a variety of business initiatives including:

- ▶ Initiate real estate searches;
  - ▶ Coordinate site-selection trips;
  - ▶ Personalize briefings and orientations;
  - ▶ Assist in evaluating and applying for incentives;
  - ▶ Facilitate the permitting process;
  - ▶ Organize strategic meetings with key government and community officials;
  - ▶ Collaborate on media and public relations; and
  - ▶ Provide data on key business factors.
- ▶ NM Partnership can also assist with agri-business tax credits.

NM Partnership can also assist with agri-business tax credits.

Contact: New Mexico Partnership  
500 Marquette Ave NW, Suite 710  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
Phone: (505) 247-8500  
Toll-free: (888) 715-5293  
Website: <https://www.nmpartnership.com>

## SBA 7A LOAN PROGRAM

SBA 7A Loan Program is the standard SBA loan guarantee program. Up to 80% of a bank loan to a private business can be guaranteed. Banks still accomplish normal due diligence, but may be willing to accept slightly more risk. This program increases the aggregate amount of funds available to small business in the banking system. It can also serve to extend term.

Contact: U.S. Small Business Administration,  
New Mexico District Office  
500 Gold Ave SW, Suite 11301

Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 248-8225  
Website: <https://www.sba.gov/partners/lenders/7a-loan-program/types-7a-loans>

## SMART MONEY LOAN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

This program is administered by the New Mexico Finance Authority and intended to leverage funds provided by local New Mexico banks for businesses that create quality jobs. The program provides bank participation loans, direct loans, and loan and bond guarantees on behalf of private for-profit and non-profit entities. The program is designed to create greater access to capital for businesses throughout New Mexico, lower the cost for the borrower, and share the risk with the bank creating a benefit to both the bank and borrower. Business loans must result in job creation and economic benefit and carry a minimum of risk.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority  
810 W. San Mateo  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
(505) 984-1454  
Email: [business@nmmfa.net](mailto:business@nmmfa.net)  
Website: <https://www.nmfa.net/business-financing/business-loan-participation-program/>

## THE LOAN FUND

The Loan Fund provides loans, training, and business consulting to small businesses that do not qualify for a bank loan, but still have a viable need for a loan and the ability to pay it back. This program started out as a micro-lending organization, but can now make loans up to \$200,000 in exceptional circumstances. Loans carry a higher than market rate to compensate for risk.

## SBA 504 LOAN PROGRAM

SBA 504 Loan Program is a cooperative loan program between the SBA, a bank, and a certified development corporation. An SBA 504 loan is a participation loan in which the SBA loans money directly to a business in participation with a bank. This loan can only be used for fixed asset financing. The primary benefit to borrowers is that it allows for minimal equity (10%) and it can also serve to extend the term.

### SBA MICROLOAN PROGRAM

Loans to small businesses up to \$50,000. Loans can be used for; working capital, inventory or supplies, furniture or fixtures, machinery or equipment. Loans less than \$10,000 carry interest rates of 8.7%. Loans above \$10,000 carry interest rates of 7.875%. All loans can have up to 6 years.

Contact: The Loan Fund  
423 Iron Avenue SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102-3821  
(505) 243-3196  
Website: [www.loanfund.org](http://www.loanfund.org)

## WESST

The WESST Roswell office serves emerging and existing small business owners (men and women) in seven counties, including Chaves, Curry, De Baca, Eddy, Lea, Lincoln, and Roosevelt counties. WESST Roswell is one of seven WESST offices that houses a Women's Business Center Program (WBC), funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration. The WBC Program offers a variety of training and consulting services geared to, but not limited to women. If loans are needed, WESST will assist clients with their loan packages, financial projections, and provide information about various loan sources within the community, including their loan fund. WESST

is also a participant in the SBA's microloan program.

Contact: Bank of America Building  
500 N. Main Street, Suite 700  
Roswell, NM 88201  
Phone: (575) 624-9850  
Website: <https://www.wesst.org/roswell/>

### 3. REDEVELOPMENT & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

#### CULTURAL PROPERTIES RESTORATION FUND

The Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund was established to support conservation and preservation projects in the State of New Mexico. The Department of Cultural Affairs New Mexico Historic Preservation Division administers this program through the Cultural Properties Restoration Fund by offering agencies and other political subdivisions of the State up to \$250,000 to fund historic preservation efforts.

Contact: NM Historic Preservation Division  
407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236  
Santa Fe, NM  
Phone: (505) 827-6320  
E-mail: [nm.shpo@state.nm.us](mailto:nm.shpo@state.nm.us)  
<https://nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/grants-cultural-properties-restoration-fund.html>

#### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

The EPA Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to

direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters. EPA Brownfield Grants include:

- ◀ Assessment
- ◀ Cleanup
- ◀ Multipurpose
- ◀ Revolving Loan Funds
- ◀ Job Training
- ◀ Technical Assistance

#### BROWNFIELD ASSESSMENT GRANTS

Assessment grants provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. Two assessment grant programs are available; Community-wide Assessment Grant and Assessment Coalition Grant. The Community-wide Assessment Grant is appropriate for communities that are beginning to address their brownfield challenges, as well as for communities that have ongoing efforts to bring sites into productive reuse. Applicants may request up to \$500,000 to assess sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants or petroleum. Performance period is up to 4 years. The Assessment Coalition Grant is designed for one "lead" entity to partner with two to four entities that do not have the capacity to apply for and manage their own EPA cooperative agreement and otherwise would not have access to Brownfields Grant resources. The coalition must have at least one non-lead member that has never been awarded a Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund, or Cleanup (MARC) Grant. Applicants may request up to \$1.5 million to assess sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants or petroleum. Performance period is up to 4 years.

#### BROWNFIELD CLEANUP GRANTS

Cleanup grants provide funding for cleanup activities at brownfield sites owned by the

• CITY OF CARLSBAD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

applicant. An eligible entity may apply for up to \$500,000 or up to \$4 million to address one or more brownfield sites contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants or petroleum. Applicants may submit only one Cleanup Grant application each competition cycle.

### BROWNFIELD MULTIPURPOSE GRANTS

Multipurpose Grants are appropriate for communities that have identified through community engagement efforts a discrete area (such as a neighborhood, a number of neighboring towns, a district, a corridor, a shared planning area or a census tract) with one or more brownfield sites. The target area may not include communities in distinctly different geographic areas. Applicants must own a site(s) that meets the CERCLA § 101(39) definition of a brownfield site within their target area where cleanup activities may be conducted. Applicants can apply for up to \$1 million and should demonstrate how grant funds will result in at least one of the following: Phase II environmental site assessment; Site cleanup; or Overall revitalization that includes a feasible reuse plan for one site. Grant recipients may be required to provide a \$40,000 match in the form of a contribution of money, labor, materials or services for eligible costs. Performance period is up to 5 years.

Contact: Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 6  
1201 Elm Street, Suite 500  
Dallas, TX 75270  
Phone: (214) 665-2268  
Website: <http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-funding>

### FEDERAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES PROGRAM

This tax incentive program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the IRS and State Historic Preservation

Offices. The NPS must certify all rehabilitation projects of certified historic structures seeking the 20% tax credit. In order for a rehabilitation project to become certified, the NPS must find that the rehabilitation is consistent with the historic character of the property, and where applicable, with the district in which it is located. Abandoned or under-used schools, warehouses, factories, churches, retail stores, apartments, hotels, houses, and offices in many cities have been restored to life in a manner that retains their historic character. The program has also helped to create moderate and low-income housing in historic buildings.

Contact: National Park Service Technical  
Preservation Services  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7243  
Washington, DC 20240  
Phone: (202) 354-2028  
Email: [NPS\\_TPS@nps.gov](mailto:NPS_TPS@nps.gov)  
Website: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/index.htm>

### NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit organization that provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities. The National Trust Preservation Fund offers several types of financial assistance to nonprofit organizations, public agencies, for-profit companies, and individuals involved in preservation-related projects.

Contact: National Trust for Historic  
Preservation  
600 14th Street NW, Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: (800) 944-6847  
Email: [info@savingplaces.org](mailto:info@savingplaces.org)  
Website: <https://savingplaces.org/>

## STATE TAX CREDIT FOR REGISTERED CULTURAL PROPERTIES

This program is available to owners of historic structures who accomplish qualified, rehabilitation on a structure or stabilization or protection of an archaeological site. The property must be individually listed in, or contributing to a historic district listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties. The credit is applied against New Mexico income taxes owed in the year the project is completed and the balance may be carried forward for up to four additional years. Maximum in eligible expenses is \$50,000 for a tax credit of \$25,000, unless the project is within a state-approved and certified Arts and Cultural District, in which case the maximum is \$50,000. There is no minimum project expense. This program is accessible for small projects.

Contact: NM Historic Preservation Division  
Bataan Memorial Building  
407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
Phone: (505) 827-6320  
E-mail: nm.shpo@state.nm.us  
Website: [www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/tax-credits.html](http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/tax-credits.html)

## PAUL BRUHN HISTORIC REVITALIZATION GRANTS PROGRAM

This program fosters economic development in rural communities through the rehabilitation of historic buildings in those communities. The program provides recipients (referred to as prime grantees) with a single grant that is then regranted in smaller amounts to individual projects (subgrants). Prime grantees design and administer subgrant programs that support the economic development goals and needs in their chosen service area. Subgrants could be limited to a single town, made available to rural communities in a particular county, or throughout a multi-county

region or an entire state. Similarly, it is up to the prime grantee to determine what types of buildings and community resources will be eligible for subgrants. This program funds physical preservation projects for historic sites, including architectural and engineering services through subgrants to communities determined rural by the US Bureau of the Census. Eligible properties must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or determined eligible for listing at the National, State, or local level of significance and located within rural (non-urban) communities with populations less than 50,000.

Contact: National Park Service Technical Preservation Services  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7243  
Washington, DC 20005 20240  
Phone: (202) 354-2028  
Website: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/paul-bruhn-historic-revitalization-grants-program.htm>

## 4. HOUSING ASSISTANCE

### HOUSING NEW MEXICO

Housing New Mexico (previously named New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority) provides financing for housing and other related services to low- to moderate-income New Mexicans. There are 37 state and federal programs administered by Housing New Mexico that provide financing for housing, including low interest mortgage loans and down payment assistance, weatherization, green building and rehabilitation, and tax credit programs. Housing New Mexico partners with lenders, realtors, non-profit, local governments, and developers. All state and federal housing programs are administered by Housing New Mexico, including Section 8 housing funds and other HUD projects. Some of the primary rental and homeownership

programs administered by Housing New Mexico include:

### **HOMEOWNER REHABILITATION PROGRAM**

The Homeowner Rehabilitation Program provides funding for the rehabilitation and essential improvements of homes occupied by eligible income qualified households. Rehabilitation work must primarily focus on items needed to bring the home into compliance with program property standards outlined below:

- ◀ Code Compliance Requirements
- ◀ Health & Safety Issues & Substandard Conditions
- ◀ Structural Requirements
- ◀ Sanitation Requirements
- ◀ Mechanical System(s) Requirements
- ◀ Safety Requirements
- ◀ Resource Efficiency and Healthy Homes Standards

Qualified homeowners receive rehabilitation assistance in the form of 0% interest, deferred payment forgivable loan. After the completion of the rehabilitation, homeowner must maintain ownership for a period up to 15 years and is subject to recapture provisions. Household income must not exceed 80% of the Area Median Income adjusted for location and household size.

### **NEW MEXICO HOUSING TRUST FUND**

Provides flexible funding for affordable housing initiatives for persons or households of low or moderate income. Nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, governmental housing agencies, regional housing authorities, governmental entities, governmental instrumentalities, tribal governments, tribal housing agencies and other entities. Costs of infrastructure, construction, acquisition and rehabilitation necessary to support affordable single-family or rental housing. Interest rates are approximately 1 to 5% per annum.

Construction is up to two years (current maximum \$3 million). Long term amortizing up to 40 years (current maximum: \$2 million). Requirements for rental households are those earning 60% or less AMI. Requirements for single-family households are those earning 50% or less AMI.

### **PRIMERO LOAN PROGRAM**

The Primero Loan Program is a flexible, low cost loan program created to finance the development of affordable rental or special needs residential facilities that would be considered "high risk" by traditional lenders. The purpose of the program is to leverage other public and private funds and to expand the housing development capacity of New Mexico's nonprofit, tribal, and public agency housing providers. The Primero Loan Program has been broadened over the years to include the financing of all types of projects that cannot be accommodated by existing sources -- particularly the secondary market -- and to develop new delivery systems through nonprofit organizations and other institutions to increase affordable housing production. Public and tribal agencies, and for-profit and nonprofit sponsors are all eligible. Rental, owner occupied and special needs projects of any size maybe financed under this program during any stage of the development process. New construction, conversion and acquisition/rehabilitation projects may be financed.

### **NEW MEXICO PRESERVATION LOAN FUND**

The purpose of this program is to provide a flexible funding source for multifamily properties at-risk of exiting the affordable housing stock, providing opportunities for the preservation of affordable housing in the state of New Mexico. Eligible borrowers include nonprofit organizations, for-profit organizations, governmental housing

agencies, regional housing authorities, governmental entities, governmental instrumentalities, tribal governments, tribal housing agencies and other entities.

### VENTANA FUND

The Ventana Fund is a Certified Development Financial Institution (CDFI) established in 2014 to meet the critical need for an increased supply of early stage financing for affordable housing construction and rehabilitation projects in New Mexico. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation organized by private citizens and housing professionals who are dedicated to increasing the number of decent affordable homes available to New Mexico's lower-income residents. The Ventana Fund is committed to financing affordable housing in low-income communities, economically distressed communities, and market niches that are under-served by traditional financial institutions. Target markets include low-income populations earning less than 80% AMI), tribal communities, rural communities, and CDFI investment areas. The Ventana Fund also focuses on hard-to-finance projects, such as older rental projects needing rehabilitation.

### LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS (LIHTC)

LIHTC provides federal income tax credits to individuals or organizations that develop affordable housing through new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation. The tax credits provide a dollar for dollar reduction in the developer's tax liability for 10 years. Tax credits can also be used by nonprofit or public developers to attract investment to an affordable housing project by syndicating, or selling, the tax credit to investors. In order to receive tax credits, a developer must set-aside and rent restrict a number of units for occupancy by households below 60%

of area median income. These units must remain affordable for a minimum of 30 years. This program is a resource provided by the Internal Revenue Service. In addition to tax credits, the financing "gap" for certain LIHTC projects may be filled with a below market rate HOME loan. Tax credits and rental HOME loans are awarded annually through a competitive application process according to the state's Qualified Allocation Plan.

Contact: Housing New Mexico | MFA  
7425 Jefferson Street NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Phone: (505) 843-6880  
Website: <https://www.housingnm.org>

## 5. TRANSPORTATION

### NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (NMDOT)

The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) manages a number of state and federal funding opportunities. At both the state and national level, funding programs can change from year to year. The following are not an exhaustive list of funding opportunities, but a highlight of recurring funding. Programs are administered by different groups or units within NMDOT, and there is also the regional District office, who can answer questions.

Contact: NMDOT District 2 Office  
4505 W. Second Street  
Roswell, NM 88201  
Phone: (575) 840-3035  
Website: <https://www.dot.nm.gov/contact-us/districts/district-2/>

### COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS PROGRAM (COOP) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROAD FUND

The program assists local governments and other public entities to improve, construct, maintain, repair, and pave highways and

streets and public parking lots. Funds must be used for the construction, maintenance, repair, and the improvements of public highways, streets, and parking lots. The local match is 40% and awards range from \$9,000 to \$192,000. Funds are made available at the beginning of the fiscal year and must be encumbered and spent no later than the end of the fiscal year.

#### **MUNICIPAL ARTERIAL PROGRAM (MAP) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROAD FUND**

This program assists municipalities construct and reconstruct streets which are principal extensions of the rural highway system and other streets which qualify under New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) criteria. Municipalities are required to contribute 25% to the cost of the project. There is no set limit to the amount of awards, but the state share typically ranges from \$50,000 to \$1.1 million per project. Applications must be received by March 15th for funding to be considered by the fiscal year beginning July 1.

#### **TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT (TE)**

The Transportation Enhancement (TE) activities offered funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 12 eligible TE activities related to surface transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation. TE projects must relate to surface transportation and must qualify under one or more of the 12 eligible categories.

Contact: NMDOT State Grants Manager  
1120 Cerrillos Road  
P.O. Box 1149  
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149  
Phone: (505) 699-9946

Website: <https://www.dot.nm.gov/business-support/project-oversight-division/t-lpa-documents-and-information/>

#### **RECREATIONAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (RTP)**

Local and tribal public agencies can apply to NMDOT for RTP funding for trails and trail-related facilities for hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrianism, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, and off-road four-wheel driving.

#### **TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)**

TAP funds street-adjacent sidewalks, non-motorized and paved, shared-use paths, bike lanes, bicycle racks (including for buses), as well as bicycle and pedestrian education for children in grades K-12.

Both programs are recurring, competitive, federal reimbursement programs that can fund up to 85.44% of the eligible project costs, and some project types can be funded by either program. NMDOT typically issues calls for two years of funding at a time for both programs.

Contact: NMDOT Active Transportation and Recreation Programs Group  
Website: <https://www.dot.nm.gov/planning-research-multimodal-and-safety/planning-division/multimodal-planning-and-programs-bureau/active-transportation-and-recreational-programs/>

#### **NMDOT AVIATION DIVISION**

The Aviation Division coordinates and administers state grants for improving the aviation infrastructure in the State of New Mexico. It also authorizes the expenditure of money from the state aviation fund for construction, development and maintenance

of public use airport facilities. The Division supports and encourages air service to the smaller communities within the state through the Air Service Assistance Program. Any city or town in New Mexico can apply for a aviation-related grant through the Department of Transportation.

#### **AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE OR REMODELING TAX DEDUCTION**

Receipts from maintaining, refurbishing, remodeling or otherwise modifying a commercial or military carrier (aircraft) over 10,000 pounds gross landing weight may be deducted from gross receipts.

#### **AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING TAX DEDUCTION**

Receipts of an aircraft manufacturer or affiliate from selling aircraft or aircraft parts, or from selling services performed on aircraft or aircraft components or from selling aircraft flight support, pilot training or maintenance training services may be deducted from gross receipts.

#### **RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TAX DEDUCTION**

Aerospace services are the research and development services sold or for resale to an organization for resale by the organization to the U.S. Air Force. When R&D services are sold to another corporation for resale to the Air Force, the seller's receipts are deductible. If the R&D services are sold to an intermediary for resale to a corporation for resale to the Air Force, those receipts are also deductible.

Contact: NMDOT - Aviation Division  
3501 Access Rd C  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
Phone: (505) 795-1401  
Website: <https://www.dot.nm.gov/planning-research-multimodal-and-safety/modal/aviation-division/>

## **6. ARTS & CULTURE**

### **ARTSPACE**

ArtSpace is a national non-profit arts organization specializing in creating, owning, and operating affordable spaces for artists and creative businesses. These spaces include live/work apartments for artists and their families, working artist studios, arts centers, commercial space for arts-friendly businesses, and other projects.

Contact: ArtSpace  
528 Hennepin Avenue, Suite 700  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
Phone: (612) 333-9012  
Website: [www.artspace.org](http://www.artspace.org)

### **CREATIVE CAPITAL**

Creative Capital supports innovative and adventurous artists across the country through funding, counseling, gatherings, and career development services. Through the Artist Support program, Creative Capital identifies and selects artists from all disciplines to receive the Creative Capital Award, which provides each project with up to \$50,000 in direct funding and the State of the Art Prize provides unrestricted artist grants of \$10,000.

Contact: Creative Capital Foundation  
15 Maiden Lane, 18th Floor  
New York, NY 10038  
Email: [connect@creative-capital.org](mailto:connect@creative-capital.org)  
Website: <https://creative-capital.org>

### **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**

The NEA provides funding for a range of projects and activities, including the Our Town Grants, which support creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Our Town offers support for projects in two areas: 1) arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects. Matching grants range from \$25,000

to \$200,000; and 2) projects that build knowledge about creative placemaking. These are projects available to arts and design service organizations and other organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work. Matching grants may be requested for up to \$10,000.

Contact: National Endowment for the Arts  
400 7th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20506  
Phone: (202) 682-5400  
Website: [www.arts.gov/grants/](http://www.arts.gov/grants/)

## NEW MEXICO ARTS

New Mexico Arts is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Its primary function is to provide financial support and technical assistance or arts services and programs to non-profit organizations statewide and to administer the public art program for the State of New Mexico. The organization enters into arts services contracts with eligible organizations that perform specified arts services within a particular time period. All funding must provide a 50% match by the applicant organization, at least half of which must be in cash. New Mexico Arts is a partner of the New Mexico Arts and Cultural Districts program.

Contact: New Mexico Arts  
Bataan Memorial Building  
407 Galisteo Suite 270  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Phone: (505) 827-6490  
Website: [www.nmarts.org](http://www.nmarts.org)

## 7. OUTDOOR RECREATION

### INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION

The International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) provides Trail Accelerator Grants to jump-start the pace of trail building in communities that have the interest and political support to develop trail systems

but need assistance to get projects up and running. Grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$30,000 and require a one-to-one match. Projects that will be considered include those that will increase access to mountain bike experiences; leverage additional resources to ensure success of the project; and promote community development, including engaging marginalized community members. There are two grant application periods; in spring and summer.

Contact: International Mountain Bicycling Association  
PO Box 20280  
Boulder, Colorado 80308  
Phone: (303) 545-9011  
Website: [www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com)

### NEW MEXICO OUTDOOR RECREATION

The NMOR Division was created to grow and champion the New Mexico outdoor recreation as an powerful economic engine to grow wealth and job opportunities. The following three funding programs are available:

#### OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND

This fund aims to support transformative outdoor experiences for New Mexico youth that foster stewardship and respect for New Mexico lands, waters, and cultural heritage. Applicants must be from an area that serves a population where at least 40% of youth are low income. Awards range from \$1,500 to \$15,000.

#### OUTDOOR RECREATION TRAILS+ GRANT

This grant funds local and regional projects, with awards ranging from \$25,000 to \$1 million, with a 1:1 match requirement for urban applicants and 2:1 for rural communities. Funding is intended to support conservation-minded shovel-ready projects that are open to the public, increase access to outdoor opportunities, and demonstrate a clear economic benefit to the community through improved quality

of life, better public health outcomes, and/or increased eco-tourism.

### OUTDOOR MARKETING GRANT

This grant program empowers communities and nonprofits to enhance their outdoor recreation marketing efforts, increasing outdoor participation, promoting ecosystem stewardship, and improving access to outdoor opportunities

Contact: New Mexico Economic Development  
Outdoor Recreation Division  
1100 South St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Website: [www.nmoutside.com](http://www.nmoutside.com)

## 8. ADDITIONAL GRANTS & RESOURCES

### NEW MEXICO CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL

The Tourism Department offers funding and technical assistance to municipalities, counties, Tribal Governments, and units of government through a competitive grant to support litter eradication, waste reduction, and community beautification initiatives. This grant requires a 25% match. Eligible projects must contribute to the following established goals:

- ◀ End littering
- ◀ Reduce waste
- ◀ Beautify communities
- ◀ Empower youth
- ◀ Increase program capacity

Contact: Tourism Development Department  
2491 Old Santa Fe Trail  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
Phone: (505) 992-9687  
Website: [www.newmexico.org](http://www.newmexico.org)

### THE KELLOGG FOUNDATION

The Kellogg Foundation is an independent, private, philanthropic foundation. The Kellogg Foundation works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work, and life.

Contact: 7601 Jefferson Street NE, Suite 350  
Albuquerque, NM 87109  
Phone: (505) 433-6159  
Website: <https://www.wkkf.org>

### URBAN LAND INSTITUTE (ULI) FOUNDATION

The ULI Foundation is the philanthropic arm of the Urban Land Institute. The Foundation raises funds to support the key initiatives and priorities of the Institute. The Foundation also provides a resource guide for financing creative and transformational projects: <http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/ULI-Documents/Creative-Finance-for-Smaller-Communities.pdf>

Contact: Urban Land Institute  
2001 L Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington DC 200036  
Website: <https://foundation.uli.org/>