

# Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045



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City Council Members:

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Susan Gomez - District 6

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### Steering Committee

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#### **New Mexico Border Authority**

Gerardo Fierro

#### **Border Industrial Association**

Jerry Pacheco

#### **City of El Paso, Texas**

Joaquin Rodriguez

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- The **time and expertise** invested by all committee members in providing feedback and guidance
- The **shared commitment to excellence** that drove this project forward
- The **community engagement** that ensured this plan reflects the voice of Sunland Park residents

This comprehensive plan represents more than a planning document. It embodies the collaborative spirit between communities, agencies, and nations working together toward a shared vision for sustainable growth and prosperity.

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The City of Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan was developed through the generous contribution of time, expertise, and resources from all acknowledged parties. This collaborative effort demonstrates the power of working together across borders and jurisdictions to create a better future for our communities.





## Resolution







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# Executive Summary

The City of Sunland Park is entering a pivotal era. Nestled at the convergence of New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, this vibrant community of nearly 18,000 residents is poised to become a model for binational cooperation, sustainable development, and regional economic prosperity. The **Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045** charts a visionary yet practical path forward—one that aligns with community values, regional opportunities, and cross-border partnerships.

Grounded in extensive public engagement and data-driven analysis, this plan builds on the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and responds to new challenges and opportunities arising from rapid population growth, shifting economic conditions, and evolving infrastructure needs. It establishes a clear vision for Sunland Park as a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous city that celebrates its unique cultural identity and strategic location.

By 2045, Sunland Park will be a thriving, multi-modal, binational community—where families prosper, businesses flourish, cultures blend, and two nations collaborate to foster shared prosperity. With a robust local economy, modern infrastructure, and a high quality of life, Sunland Park will be recognized as a leading border community in the Southwest.

## Planning Context and Community Voice

Sunland Park has grown rapidly, with a 24% population increase over the past decade. As of 2022, the city is home to 17,665 residents, a number expected to rise significantly by 2045. Its position on the U.S.-Mexico border—adjacent to El Paso and Ciudad Juárez—creates unmatched potential for binational trade, tourism, and regional connectivity.

The planning process was grounded in an inclusive, bilingual public engagement strategy. A 2024 community-wide survey and numerous stakeholder meetings revealed a strong consensus around several core priorities:

- **Infrastructure:** 94.1% of residents ranked water systems as “very” or “extremely important.”
- **Economic Development:** 69.1% want more restaurants and cafes; 47.9% desire expanded retail options.
- **Quality of Life:** 63.8% support more parks and playgrounds; 55.3% seek recreation centers.
- **Mobility & Safety:** 64.3% rated safer streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks as a top priority.
- **Healthcare Access:** 45.7% support expanded medical services, including urgent care.

## Strategic Framework: The Five Pillars of Development

The plan's structure is organized around five interconnected pillars that address the city's physical, economic, and social fabric.

### 1. *Community Vision and Identity*

Sunland Park is a cultural bridge between nations. The plan embraces this heritage by promoting development that reflects Mexican colonial and Southwestern architecture, while protecting the character of established neighborhoods and supporting cross-border family and economic ties. Growth strategies focus on equity, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship.

### 2. *Land Use and Development*

A new Future Land Use Map supports compact, walkable growth and mixed-use corridors. Updated Land Development Code provisions encourage high-quality design, affordable housing, and infill development. Key policies:

- Mixed-use development along NM 273, McNutt, and Sunland Park Drive
- Preservation of rural estate character in designated areas
- Clear development standards to streamline approvals and attract investment

### 3. *Housing and Neighborhoods*

With 59% of renters experiencing cost burden and high vacancy rates in aging units, housing affordability and quality are top concerns. The plan promotes:

- A more diverse housing stock beyond the 77.6% single-family unit dominance
- Homeownership support and expanded rental options
- Rehabilitation programs and code enforcement
- Housing for seniors, essential workers, and binational families

### 4. *Transportation Excellence*

Sunland Park is positioning itself as a regional multi-modal hub. The plan integrates walking, biking, transit, and road networks, including:

- **Futurity Drive Entertainment Corridor** – \$3 million secured for a family-focused district
- **NM 273 Multi-Purpose Trail** – 10-mile corridor under construction in 2025
- **Rio Grande Trail Network** – City is one of only three trailhead communities in NM
- **Vision Zero Principles** – Commitment to eliminating traffic deaths through safer infrastructure
- **Camino Real Port of Entry** – A proposed binational POE to support trade, tourism, and regional logistics

## 5. Economic Development and Prosperity

Economic diversification is central to Sunland Park's future. The plan focuses on:

- Attracting restaurants, retail, healthcare, and professional services
- Growing the tourism and recreation economy around natural assets
- Supporting transportation and logistics businesses
- Leveraging cannabis industry revenue for public infrastructure

### *Recent economic milestones:*

- \$3 million revenue surplus in 2023
- 16 cannabis dispensaries contributing tax revenue
- Industrial investments are positioning Sunland Park as a logistics center.

## Phased Implementation Strategy

Implementation is divided into three strategic phases:

### *Phase 1: 2025–2030*

- **Municipal Complex:** \$15–20M investment for centralized services
- **Water & Wastewater Improvements:** \$25–30M infrastructure upgrade
- **Urgent Care Center:** Part of a mixed-use medical and housing development
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Fiber optic expansion to support economic growth
- **Trail & Road Projects:** NM 273 trail and Futurity Drive roundabout

### *Phase 2: 2030–2040*

- **Camino Real International POE:** \$80M project to enhance binational connectivity
- **Medical District:** Healthcare, housing, and commercial services integrated into one site
- **Tourism & Industry Clusters:** Development of regional visitor attractions and targeted industry support

### *Phase 3: 2040–2045*

- Full integration of transportation systems
- Completion of recreational trail networks
- Regional hub status achieved for logistics, tourism, and binational cooperation.

## Supporting Infrastructure & Sustainability

- *Water Security:* Transition from CRRUA to municipal control enhances flexibility. A 2023 NMSU desalination study confirms long-term viability.
- *Drainage Master Plan:* Green infrastructure and stormwater systems to reduce flood risk and heat exposure.
- *Sports Complex:* Regional anchor for recreation, home to El Paso Locomotive FC's elite teams and college-bound athletes.

## Financial Strategy

Sunland Park employs a layered funding approach:

- *Federal:* IIJA, BUILD grants, CDBG
- *State:* NMFA, DOT coordination
- *Local:* Cannabis tax revenue, property tax base expansion, and public-private partnerships

A proven record of accomplishment of “shovel-ready” projects has led to successful funding, e.g., inclusion in Rep. Vasquez’s top 15 projects for federal allocation.

## Accountability and Continuous Improvement

A measurable performance framework ensures transparency:

- *Growth Targets:* Population target of 45,000 by 2034
- *Housing Metrics:* Increased diversity and affordability
- *Infrastructure:* 15-mile trail goal by 2030; reliable utility service
- *Quality of Life:* Safety, sustainability, and resident satisfaction benchmarks

Annual reviews, five-year assessments, and adaptive management will guide implementation to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.

## Regional and Binational Coordination

The city’s strategic location requires deep collaboration across jurisdictions:

- *Federal/State:* CBP, FHWA, NMDOT, NMFA
- *Regional:* El Paso MPO, SCRTD, Doña Ana County
- *Binational:* IMIP and Ciudad Juárez leadership in cross-border planning, POE coordination, and tourism development

## Community Engagement and Transparency

Extensive outreach informed every aspect of the plan, from land use to transportation. The city remains committed to:

- *Annual Community Meetings* and updates
- *Quarterly Progress Reports* and dashboards
- *Youth, Senior, and Business Engagement* through ongoing advisory committees

## Conclusion: A Call to Action

The **Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045** is more than a policy guide. It is a collective vision for the future, shaped by residents, rooted in place, and responsive to opportunity. With a clear implementation strategy, strong partnerships, and unwavering public engagement, Sunland Park is ready to emerge as a national model for binational planning and sustainable border community development.



# 1. Community Vision

## Comprehensive Plan Overview

Comprehensive plans serve as foundational guiding documents that shape community growth and development. These strategic frameworks help local governments make informed decisions across diverse subject areas that directly impact residents' quality of life, including land use patterns, parks and recreation, natural resource management, and critical infrastructure systems.

### Plan Applications and Uses

The City of Sunland Park should utilize this comprehensive plan as a multi-faceted resource serving four primary functions:

- *Decision-Making Reference:* When considering development proposals, rezoning requests, or new ordinances, municipal leadership should consult this plan's recommendations to ensure alignment with the community's vision and strategic objectives.
- *Economic Development Tool:* The plan serves as a marketing instrument for attracting quality development that aligns with community goals and enhances Sunland Park's competitive position in the regional economy.
- *Information Repository:* This document provides detailed existing conditions data and analysis that supports informed planning and development decisions.
- *Community Voice Documentation:* The plan captures and summarizes extensive community feedback on key issues, ensuring resident perspectives guide future development decisions.

### Legal Purpose of the Plan

Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 was prepared in compliance with the New Mexico Statutes Annotated (NMSA 3-19), which guide comprehensive city planning within the state of New Mexico. Per Section 3-19-9 of the NMSA, the Plan was created "with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity or the general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development."

The **Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045** articulates a transformative vision for Sunland Park's future while establishing a comprehensive implementation roadmap to achieve the community's aspirations. This forward-looking plan addresses the evolving needs of Sunland Park through 2045 and beyond, providing clear goals and actionable strategies to guide municipal decision-making over the next two decades.

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### Our Vision:

To foster a **vibrant and cohesive community** by enhancing the area's identity, supporting **diverse development**, and creating a **strong sense of place**.

★

### Our Mission:

To drive **commercial and residential development** through **improved infrastructure**, **community activation**, and the integration of **green spaces**, ensuring that the area becomes a **desirable and well-connected place** to live and visit.

The [Border Task Force](#) envisions the Paso del Norte region as a world-class hub for trade that celebrates culture and enhances quality of life through dignified border crossings and shared binational spaces. This aligns with Sunland Park's vision of becoming a strategic, inclusive, and collaborative border community. The report emphasizes coordinated regional action and shared infrastructure planning as essential to achieving that vision.



Strategic Initiatives (Source: NMSU \_Border Task Force Report)

## 1. Community Vision

## Planning Process

The **Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045** was developed through a comprehensive four-phase process that emphasized data-driven analysis, inclusive public engagement, and cross-border coordination to guide the city's strategic growth through 2045.



**Phase 1**  
Kickoff, Research & Analysis

Project initiation with comprehensive research and data analysis to establish foundation and understanding

The planning process began with a project kickoff and comprehensive review of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. This foundational phase examined existing conditions, identified needed updates, and determined new topics to address emerging priorities. The analysis drew from current data, demographic trends, and prior planning initiatives to establish a foundation for informed decision-making.



**Phase 2**  
Vision, Input & Direction

Collaborative visioning process gathering stakeholder input to define clear direction and strategic goals

Community engagement was central to plan development. A Steering Committee meeting on June 5, 2024, established the framework for creating a binational vision emphasizing regional connectivity and exploring opportunities for a future international port of entry. In July 2024, targeted input was gathered through a Stakeholders Workshop on July 10 and a bilingual Binational Committee meeting on July 12 in Ciudad Juárez to facilitate cross-jurisdictional coordination. The public engagement phase expanded with a public meeting on September 26, 2024, followed by a community-wide bilingual survey from September 26 through December 1, 2024.



**Phase 3**

**Draft Plan & Evaluation**

Development of initial plan draft with thorough evaluation and assessment of feasibility and effectiveness

Community feedback from Phase 2 was synthesized with the data analysis from Phase 1 to develop a comprehensive draft plan. The draft underwent a thorough review by the Steering Committee, Stakeholders, and members of the Binational Committee. To ensure transparency and encourage community engagement, we made the draft publicly available for a 30-day comment period through various channels, including the City of Sunland Park website, social media platforms, and direct outreach to community organizations.



**Phase 4**

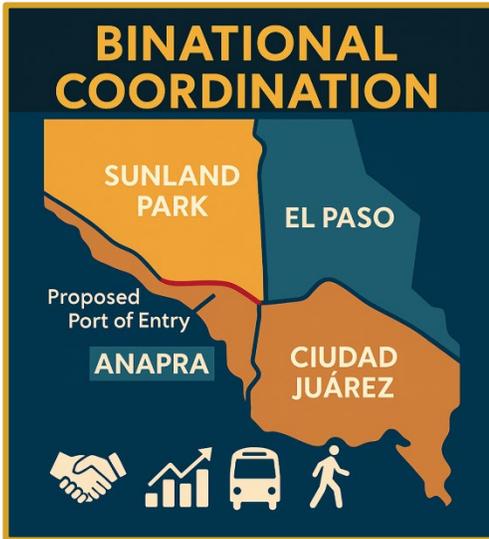
**Final Draft Plan & Adoption**

Completion of final plan with formal adoption process ensuring successful implementation and rollout

After the public comment period, we incorporated revisions based on community feedback and stakeholder input to finalize the plan. We then presented the completed plan at public hearings conducted by both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council. The formal adoption of the Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 by these governing bodies marked the successful completion of the comprehensive planning process.

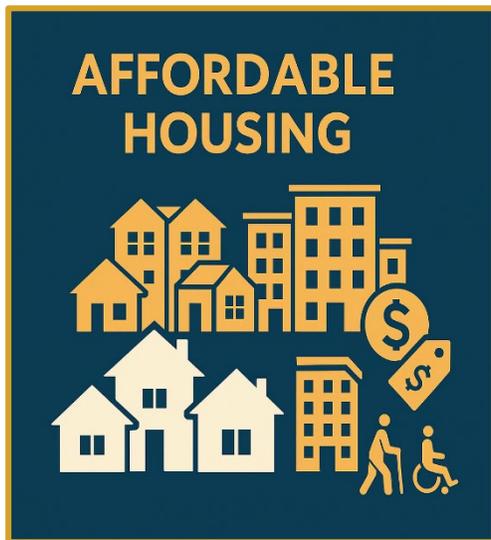
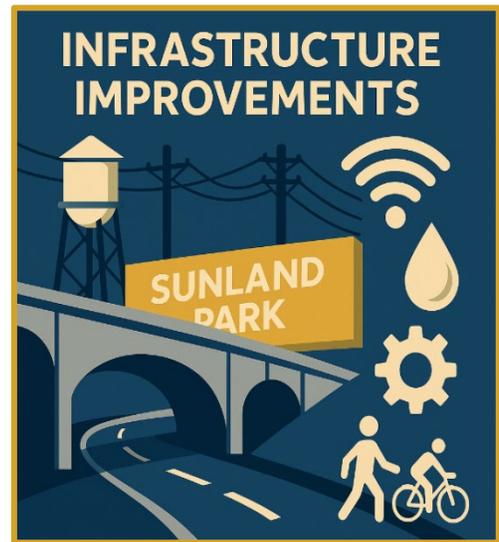
This methodical four-phase approach allowed the final plan to reflect both technical expertise and community values while promoting meaningful cross-border collaboration and regional coordination.

## Strategic Goals

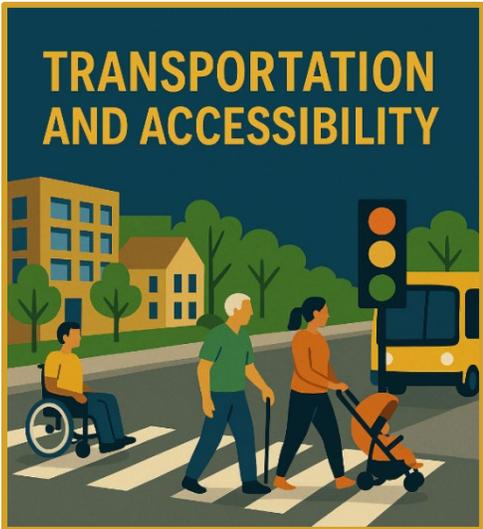


*Binational Coordination:* Ensure effective cross-border coordination to integrate regional projects and address infrastructure impacts, recognizing Sunland Park's unique position as an international border community.

*Infrastructure Improvements:* Address and resolve critical infrastructure challenges that impact plan execution and sustainable development throughout the community.

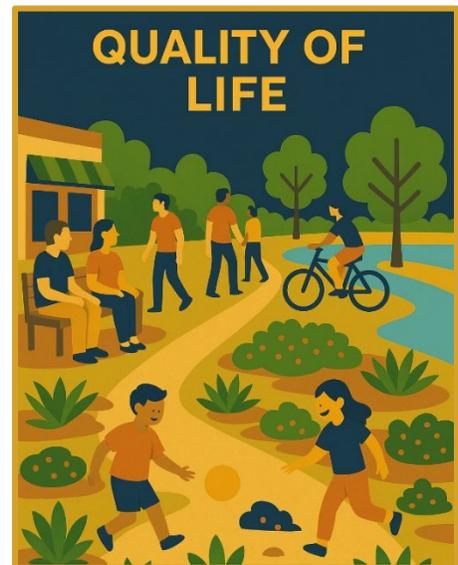


*Affordable Housing:* Utilize available funding mechanisms, including USDA resources and the [New Mexico Finance Authority](#) affordable housing initiative, to increase housing options while supporting local employment opportunities and workforce development.



*Transportation and Accessibility:* Enhance neighborhood connectivity and safety by improving streets, walkways, and crosswalks, incorporating ADA features and traffic-calming measures. Provide equitable and convenient access to public transit while balancing investments across all modes to support safety, accessibility, and economic growth.

*Quality of Life:* Utilize green spaces and recreational amenities for activities that enhance public health, environmental sustainability, and overall community quality of life.



## Plan Implementation and Adaptation

The Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 encompasses goals, policies, and action items designed to guide municipal leadership through 2045. However, this twenty-year strategic framework must remain dynamic and responsive to changing conditions rather than becoming static over time.

The city should establish a systematic review process that includes an annual evaluation of the implementation plan to assess progress on various action items and determine necessary adjustments. Additionally, comprehensive five-year reviews should examine the entire plan to identify needed amendments, including potential updates to the Future Land Use Plan and other key components.

### 1. Community Vision

## Sunland Park Guiding Principles



### **Community Amenities**

Enhance binational identity by investing in sustainable infrastructure, inclusive public spaces, and quality-of-life amenities that support a livable and connected border community.



### **Socio-Cultural**

Celebrate and preserve the city's Hispanic heritage and binational identity through cultural programming, cross-border events, and public art that reinforce community pride and international collaboration.



### **Aesthetics and Sensory**

Create a visually cohesive, welcoming, and inspiring environment through public realm improvements, wayfinding, and design standards that reflect Sunland Park's unique identity and regional role.



### **Accessibility**

Ensure equitable access to multiple modes of transportation—walking, biking, transit, and future cross-border travel—by investing in safe, ADA-compliant infrastructure and binational mobility strategies.



### **Land Use**

Advance coordinated, cross-jurisdictional land use planning that supports compact growth, mixed-use development, and a future international port of entry while respecting natural and cultural assets.



### **Housing**

Support affordable and workforce housing near employment centers and future international crossings while diversifying housing types and increasing access to public and private funding mechanisms.



### **Economic**

Strengthen local and regional economies by supporting entrepreneurship, attracting investment, and creating jobs that reduce outbound commuting and leverage the city's strategic position as a logistics and tourism hub.



### **Natural Resources**

Safeguard environmental assets through binational conservation partnerships, sustainable development practices, and expanded access to recreational green spaces and the Rio Grande trail.



**Safety**

Promote a safe, healthy, and resilient city through crime prevention, hazard mitigation, and cross-border emergency coordination ensuring resident well-being in a dynamic border setting.



**Community Engagement**

Embed transparency, bilingual engagement, and inclusive governance into all public processes to ensure that all residents—on both sides of the border—can shape the city’s future.



**Mobility**

Plan and implement a multimodal transportation system that integrates local needs with regional trade flows, border access, and emerging binational infrastructure partnerships.



**Public Health**

Foster a healthy, active, and connected population through complete neighborhoods, access to parks and healthy foods, and collaboration on public health services and education.

## Addressing Community Evolution

As plans progress for a new international port of entry and given that Sunland Park’s previous comprehensive plan was finalized in 2018, the community has undergone significant demographic and economic changes. The Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 addresses these shifts by providing a strategic framework designed to capitalize on emerging opportunities while preserving the city’s unique identity as a future international border gateway and regional economic hub.

This plan recognizes Sunland Park’s unique assets, including its strategic binational location, access to quality employment opportunities, and abundant natural amenities. By building upon these foundational strengths while addressing contemporary challenges, the plan positions Sunland Park to thrive as a vibrant, well-connected community that honors its heritage while embracing future opportunities.

The success of this comprehensive plan depends on the consistent application of its principles, regular evaluation of progress, and willingness to adapt strategies as conditions evolve. Through this approach, Sunland Park can achieve its vision of becoming an even more vibrant, cohesive, and desirable place to live, work, and visit.





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## 2. Community Profile

### The Story of Sunland Park

In the heart of the American Southwest, where the Rio Grande curves toward the Gulf of Mexico and three states converge at an international border, lies a community that embodies the spirit of binational cooperation and cross-cultural prosperity. Sunland Park is more than one city. It is a living bridge between nations, cultures, and economies, where 17,665 residents call home a place that serves as a gateway to limitless possibilities.

This is the story of a community that has grown by 24% in just over a decade, where 95.7% of residents share a proud Hispanic heritage and where nearly 90% of households maintain their linguistic roots while building bridges to broader economic opportunities. It is a place where ancient Native American settlements gave way to Spanish colonial trade routes, where railroad dreams became modern realities, and where a young, dynamic population is writing the next chapter of binational collaboration.

### Sunland Park at a Glance

Demographics		Economics	Housing Profile
<b>17,665</b> Current Population (2022 ACS)	<b>95.7%</b> Hispanic/Latino Community Identity	<b>\$38,477</b> Median Household Income	<b>7,013</b> Total Housing Units
<b>+24%</b> Growth Rate (Since 2010)	<b>33.2%</b> Foreign-Born International	<b>31.3%</b> Poverty Rate	<b>5,752</b> Occupied Housing Units
<b>29.2</b> Median Age	<b>89.7%</b> Spanish- Speaking Households	<b>53.6%</b> Labor Force Participation	<b>89.7%</b> Owner- Occupied Housing Units

Data Sources: 2022 US Census • New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions • American Community Survey

## A Journey Through Time: The Evolution of Sunland Park

To understand Sunland Park's potential for 2045, we must first appreciate the remarkable journey that brought this community to its current position as a binational gateway. From ancient civilizations to modern incorporation, each era has contributed to the unique character that defines Sunland Park today.

 **Ancient Foundations (4,000+ years ago)** Native American settlements flourish in the area, leaving behind archaeological evidence in what is now Keystone Heritage Park. These early communities establish the region as a crossroads for trade and cultural exchange.

 **Spanish Colonial Era (1600's)** Spanish conquistadors develop the El Camino Real Trail, establishing the area as a crucial link between New Mexico and New Spain. This historic trade route becomes the foundation for centuries of international commerce.

 **Border Formation (1848)** The Rio Grande becomes the official boundary between Texas and Mexico territories, positioning the future Sunland Park at the heart of international relations and cross-border activity.

 **Railroad Revolution (1924)** Southern Pacific Railroad purchases the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad, establishing the town of Anapra. Railroad employees and their families settle permanently, creating the community's first stable residential base.

 **Mount Cristo Rey Monument (1939)** The iconic 29-foot stone cross is erected atop Mount Cristo Rey, creating a landmark visible throughout the region and establishing the area as a pilgrimage destination that attracts thousands annually.

 **Entertainment Destination (1959)** Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino opens as the region's only legal gambling venue, establishing the area as a major entertainment and tourism destination that continues to drive economic activity.

 **Municipal Incorporation (1983)** The communities of Anapra, Meadow Vista, and Sunland Park unite to incorporate as the City of Sunland Park, creating a unified municipal government and shared vision for growth.

 **Strategic Planning Era (2004-2024)** Multiple comprehensive planning efforts, including master plans, economic development strategies, and regional transportation studies, position Sunland Park for coordinated growth and binational collaboration.

 **Binational Future (2025-2045)** The Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 charts a course for sustainable, inclusive growth that leverages the community's unique position to create prosperity on both sides of the border.

## Regional Context and Strategic Position

Sunland Park's location at the intersection of three states and two nations creates unprecedented opportunities for economic development, cultural exchange, and binational collaboration. Sunland Park is part of the Paso Del Norte region, home to approximately 2.6 million residents. This dynamic binational area encompasses the El Paso metropolitan area in Texas, Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, Santa Teresa and the City of Sunland Park in southern Doña Ana County, New Mexico.

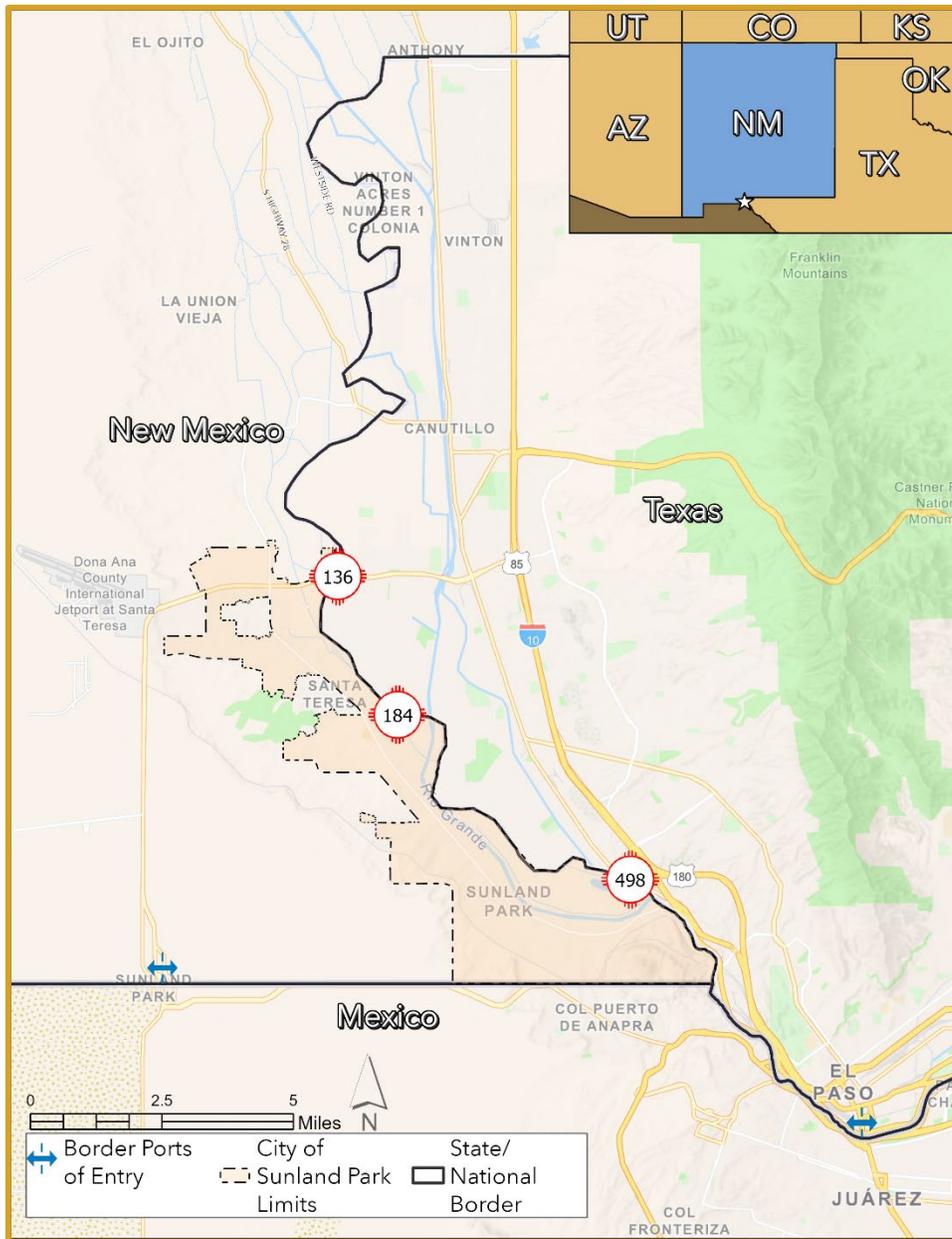
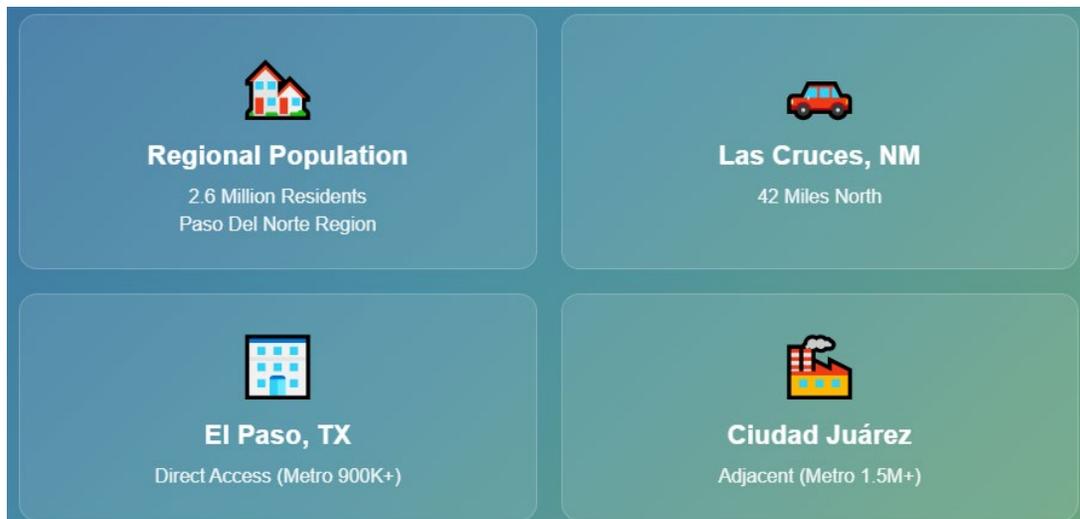


Figure 2-1 Sunland Park Location Map

Sunland Park is an incorporated municipality while Santa Teresa is a Census-Designated Place (CDP). Census-Designated Places are locally recognized communities with a population concentration but are not legally incorporated as a municipality. While these two communities possess some distinct characteristics, their location bordering Texas and Mexico contributes to shared interconnected infrastructure, economic systems, and environmental challenges.

## Strategic Regional Connections

### Binational Gateway Positioning



### Strategic Advantages

- Tri-state intersection (New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua)
- International border crossing opportunities
- Access to 2.6M+ regional population
- Binational workforce and consumer markets
- Trade corridor positioning (United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement [USMCA] benefits)
- Cultural bridge for cross-border business

### Joint Planning and Regional Coordination

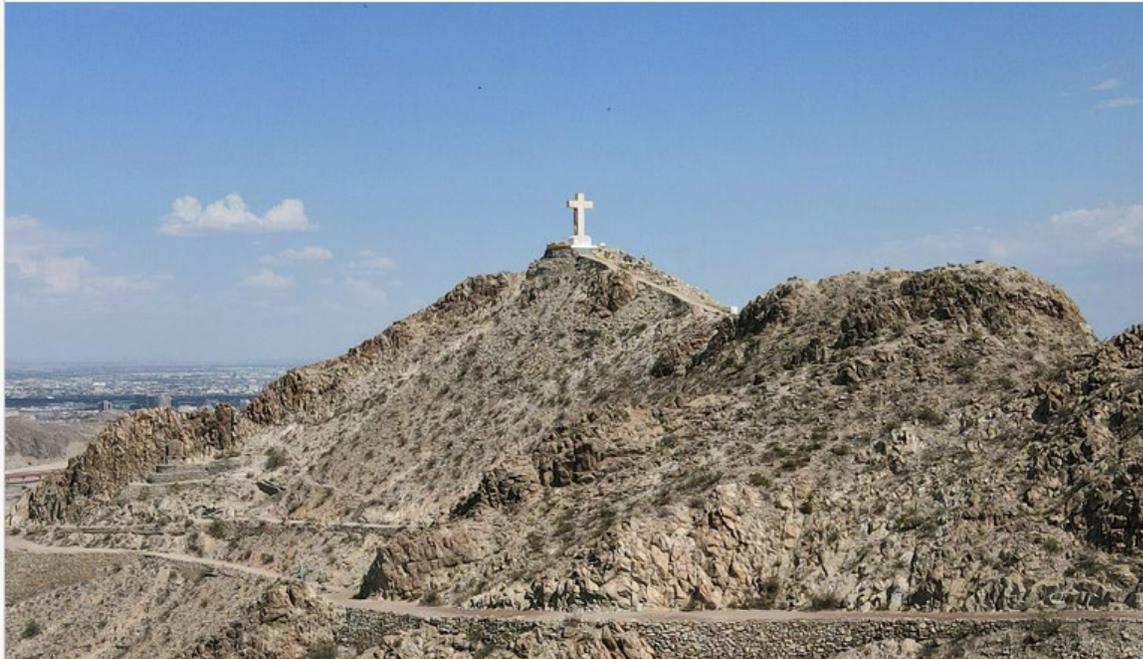
Sunland Park's establishment of the Joint Subdivision, Zoning, Planning & Platting Authority with Doña Ana County demonstrates the community's commitment to coordinated regional development. This collaborative approach includes:

- Regional transportation coordination
- Cross-border economic development initiatives
- Binational tourism and cultural programs
- Shared infrastructure planning

## Sunland Park's Cultural and Tourism Assets

Authentic attractions that draw visitors from across the region while celebrating the community's unique binational character.

### Mount Cristo Rey



### Mount Cristo Rey

**Height:** 4,675 feet above sea level

**Monument:** 29-foot stone cross erected in October 1939 on a site of Roman Catholic pilgrimage

**Historical Significance:** Located on the northernmost peak of the Juárez Mountains, the iconic hand-sculpted limestone statue is visible from miles away in all directions

**Impact:** Major pilgrimage destination visible throughout the region, drawing thousands of annual visitors each October for the anniversary celebration. A major landmark in the El Paso region serving the broader El Paso metropolitan area.

## Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino



### Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino

**Established:** 1959 as a thoroughbred racetrack

**Legacy:** Region's first legal gambling venue, originally the only legal gambling venue in the region

**Horse Racing:** Hundreds of thoroughbred horseraces are held each year at the track, maintaining its tradition as a premier racing destination

**Gaming Evolution:** New Mexico legislators allowed slot machines at the track in 1999 to combat declining popularity of casinos

**Current Role:** Major entertainment destination and significant employer generating substantial economic impact, combining live horse racing with casino gaming.

## Western Playland



### Western Playland

**Size:** 30-acre amusement park

**Features:** Around 30 diverse rides, rollercoasters, and attractions

**Location:** Located near the Sunland Park Racetrack and Casino

**Market:** Regional family entertainment destination serving the broader El Paso metropolitan area as a key destination for people and tourists of Sunland Park and the surrounding area.

## Rio Grande



### Rio Grande

**Length:** Nearly 6 miles of river frontage along Sunland Park's eastern edge

**Historical Significance:** Since 1848, the Rio Grande has marked the boundary between Texas and Mexico territories

**Scale:** Fourth largest river system in North America with a total length of 1,896 miles, flowing from south-central Colorado to the Gulf of Mexico

**Features:** Unique desert geological features and biodiversity along the river corridor

## Dinosaur Tracks



### Dinosaur Tracks

**Age:** 97-million-year-old prehistoric tracks discovered at the bottom of Mt. Cristo Rey

**Size:** Nearly 200 acres of accessible dinosaur tracks near the northern base of the mountain

**Research:** Scientists and geologists from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) study and uncover prehistoric tracks at the site

**Development:** Nature trails have been recently developed with signs being constructed and installed by volunteers from UTEP Geological Sciences

**Access:** Currently unprotected and can be seen anytime, though discussions are ongoing about future protection involving key stakeholders

## Nature Trails



### Nature Trails

**Development:** Recently developed nature trails with educational signage

**Volunteer Support:** Signs being constructed and installed by volunteers from UTEP Geological Sciences

**Features:** Trail system connecting to dinosaur tracks and geological sites

**Educational Value:** Interpretive trails showcasing unique desert geological features and local biodiversity

**Accessibility:** Open access trails allowing visitors to explore the natural landscape year-round

## Ardovino's Desert Crossing



### Ardovino's Desert Crossing

**Location:** Located in southern Sunland Park offering fine dining with regional reputation

**Dining Experience:** Exceptional views and banquet hall facilities for events, featuring one of southern Doña Ana County's finest restaurants

**Regional Recognition:** Patrons from Sunland Park and surrounding cities enjoy the food and ambiance

**Cultural Events:** Regular celebrations connecting American and Mexican traditions

**Farmers' Markets:** Local food and cultural experiences available in the area

## Other Key Destinations in Sunland Park, NM

### Sunland Park Sports Complex



### Educational and Community Facilities

**Doña Ana Community College:** Higher education institution serving the regional community

**University of Phoenix Learning Center:** Satellite campus providing accessible higher education

**Sunland Park Sports Complex:** Athletic facilities supporting community recreation and events

**Community Centers and Parks:** Local gathering spaces and recreational facilities

**Santa Teresa High School:** Educational institution serving the broader area

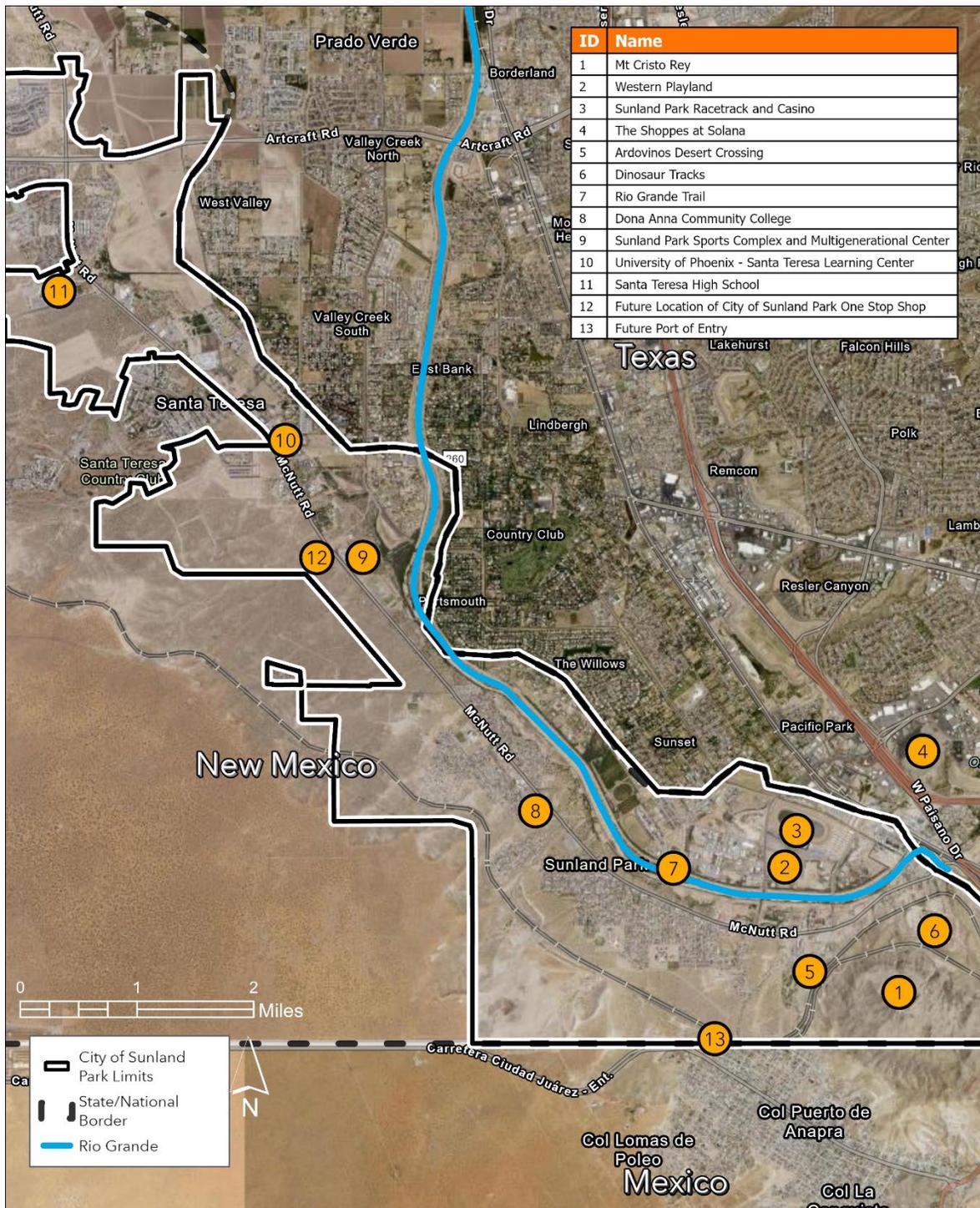
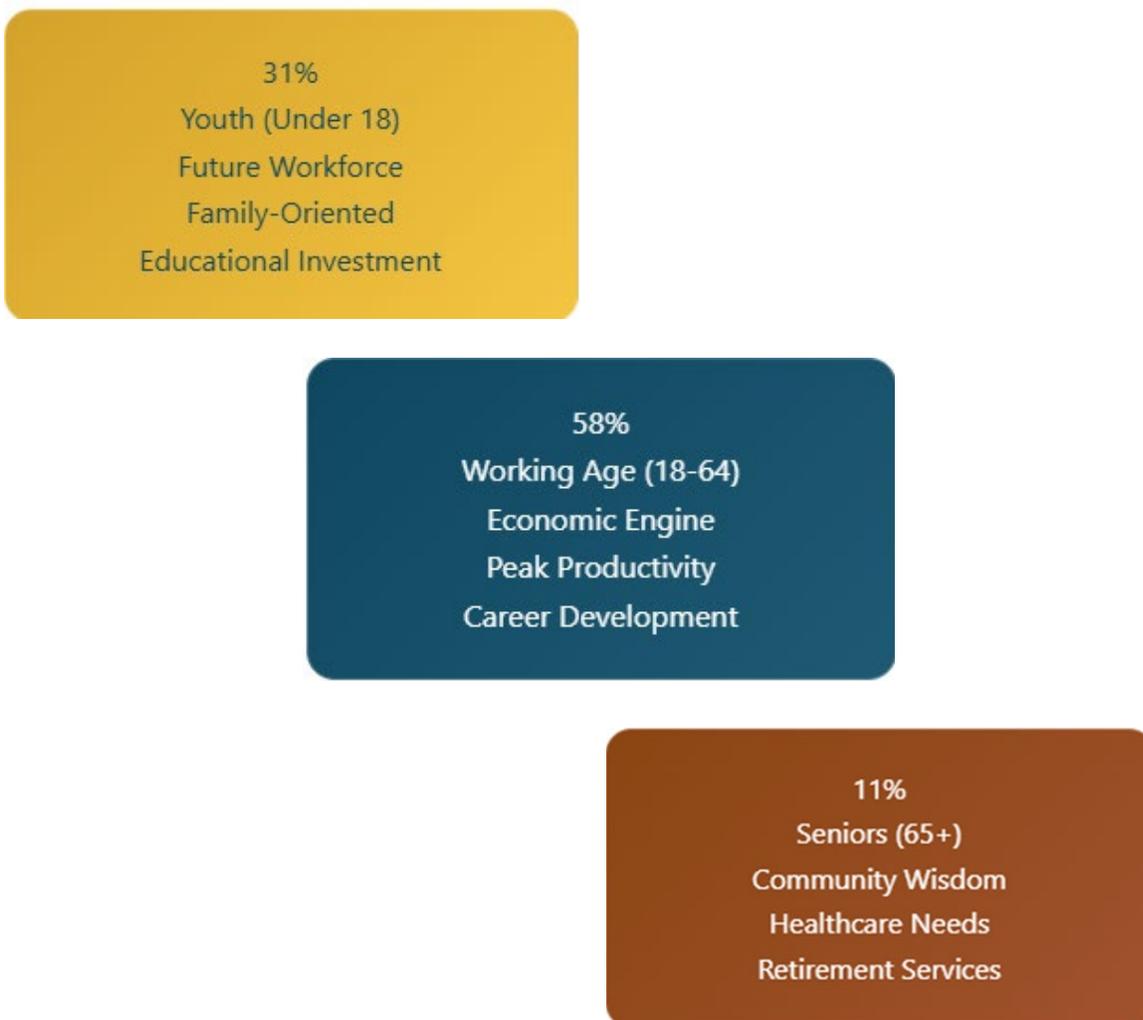


Figure 2-2. Existing and Future Key Destinations Map

## A Portrait of Growth: Demographics and Community Character

Today's Sunland Park reflects the energy and optimism of a community in transition. With a population that has grown from 14,267 residents in 2010 to 17,665 in 2022, the city demonstrates the kind of sustained growth that attracts businesses, families, and investors seeking dynamic opportunities.

### Age Structure: A Community of Energy and Potential



## ✿ Cultural Strength and Identity

Sunland Park's cultural composition represents one of its greatest assets for binational development. With 95.7% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 33.2% foreign-born, and 89.7% of households speaking Spanish at home, the community maintains authentic connections to both American and Mexican heritage. This cultural foundation creates unparalleled opportunities for cross-border business, cultural exchange, and economic collaboration.



## 📁 Economic Landscape: Challenges and Opportunities

Sunland Park's economic profile reveals a community at a critical juncture, where significant challenges coexist with tremendous opportunities for growth and development.

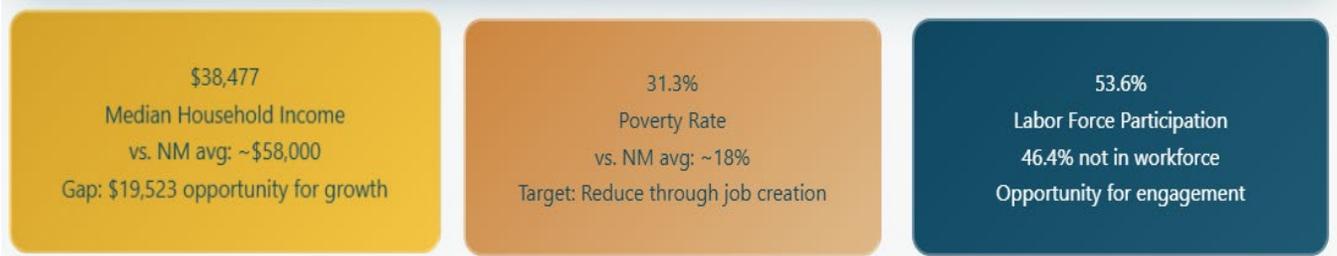
### 🚗 The Commuter Community Challenge

Understanding Sunland Park's daily employment flows reveals both the challenge and opportunity facing the community:



### 📊 The Math: The Opportunity

- 7,200 total employed residents vs 3,600 local jobs
- 2:1 ratio = MASSIVE potential for business growth!
- Solution: Attract businesses that employ local residents
- Develop commercial & light industrial zones
- Support entrepreneurship & small business development
- Leverage binational trade opportunities



## Educational Foundation and Human Capital Development

Education represents both Sunland Park's greatest challenge and its most significant opportunity for transformation. Current educational attainment levels indicate substantial room for improvement, while the community's educational infrastructure provides a foundation for development.



## Educational Infrastructure Assets

Sunland Park benefits from established educational institutions including Doña Ana Community College, the University of Phoenix-Santa Teresa Learning Center, and Santa Teresa High School. These institutions, combined with growing workforce development programs and bilingual education advantages, provide a foundation for expanding educational opportunities and human capital development.

### Strategic Focus Areas:

- Expand adult education & literacy programs
- Strengthen pathways from high school to college/careers
- Develop workforce training for target industries
- Leverage bilingual skills as competitive advantage

## Looking Forward: Foundation for 2045

As Sunland Park charts its course toward 2045, the community's demographic profile, cultural assets, economic potential, and strategic location create a powerful foundation for sustainable, inclusive growth that honors its binational character while building prosperity for all residents.

### **Demographic Strengths**

- ▶ Young, growing population with workforce potential
- ▶ Deep cultural connections enabling binational collaboration
- ▶ Strong family and community orientation
- ▶ Bilingual capabilities for international business

### **Economic Opportunities**

- ▶ Significant potential for job creation and income growth
- ▶ Established tourism and entertainment infrastructure
- ▶ Proximity to major employment centers and trade routes
- ▶ Cross-border business and trade potential

### **Development Priorities**

- ▶ Educational attainment and workforce development
- ▶ Local job creation to reduce commuting patterns
- ▶ Infrastructure investment to support continued growth
- ▶ Binational collaboration initiatives

### **Cultural Assets**

- ▶ Rich historical heritage connecting multiple cultures
- ▶ Established tourism destinations and natural resources
- ▶ Strong community identity and civic engagement
- ▶ Authentic binational character and connections



## The Path to 2045

Sunland Park's journey toward 2045 will build upon the foundation of a young, culturally connected population, strategic international location, and established infrastructure to create sustainable, inclusive development that honors the community's binational character while building economic opportunity for all residents.

The story of Sunland Park is one of transformation—from ancient crossroads to modern gateway, from railroad town to binational community, from challenge to opportunity. As the city moves toward 2045, this rich foundation of cultural identity, strategic location, and community resilience will guide the development of a truly binational community that serves as a model for cross-border collaboration and shared prosperity.

### Data Sources and Methodology

This community profile incorporates the most recent demographic and economic data from multiple authoritative sources to provide a comprehensive foundation for planning and decision-making:

- **U.S. Census Bureau:** 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- **Employment Data:** [Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics LEHD](#) and [OnTheMap](#) 2021.
- **Historical Context:** City of Sunland Park archives and regional planning documents.
- **Regional Planning:** Destino 2040, Doña Ana County regional plans, and binational economic studies.
- **Tourism and Cultural Data:** Regional tourism boards and cultural organizations.
- **Educational Data:** New Mexico Public Education Department and local institutions.



### 3. Community Engagement

The Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 serves as more than just a planning document. It embodies the collective dreams, concerns, and aspirations of a vibrant border community. This comprehensive engagement process captures the authentic voice of Sunland Park residents and honors the unique binational character that defines this remarkable place where two nations meet, and cultures blend.

Community engagement was central to the development of the Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045. Recognizing that effective planning requires meaningful participation from residents, businesses, government officials, and binational partners, the planning process incorporated multiple touchpoints to ensure diverse voices were heard and incorporated into the plan's vision and strategies.

The engagement process was designed to be inclusive, accessible, and culturally responsive, offering materials and meetings in both English and Spanish to serve the community's bilingual population.

This comprehensive approach ensured that the plan reflects the authentic needs, priorities, and aspirations of the Sunland Park community while acknowledging its unique binational context. The process unfolded over six months, incorporating everything from intimate stakeholder meetings to broad community surveys, creating a planning foundation built on genuine community input and cross-border collaboration.



## 31 Engagement Framework and Timeline

The engagement strategy was carefully orchestrated to build momentum and deepen participation over time. Beginning with foundational framework development among key stakeholders, the process expanded to include targeted focus groups, cross-border collaboration, and finally broad community input. Each phase was designed to inform and enhance the next, creating a comprehensive understanding of community needs and binational opportunities.

### June 5, 2024 Phase 1: Foundation and Framework

The planning journey began with a pivotal Steering Committee meeting that set the ambitious tone for creating a truly binational comprehensive plan. This was more than an update to existing planning documents. It was a reimagining of Sunland Park's future as an integrated cross-border community. The committee established a bold vision to evolve the 2018 plan into a "binational master plan" that would incorporate a future international port of entry while preserving the community's unique character.

Strategic Vision Development	Regional Collaboration Framework	Mobility and Connectivity Goals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Binational Master Plan Evolution:</b> Transforming the 2018 plan to integrate a Rio Grande crossing and the Sunland Park-Anapra International Port of Entry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>NMDOT Partnership:</b> State highway integration and transportation coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Complete Streets Initiative:</b> Multi-modal transportation infrastructure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Regulatory Consolidation:</b> Unifying the zoning and subdivision regulations into a single land development code by 2025</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>El Paso MPO Alliance:</b> Regional transportation and land use planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Regional Transit Expansion:</b> Connecting Sunland Park, El Paso, and Anthony</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Entertainment District:</b> 24–36-month timeline for restaurants, retail, and cultural venues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Border Authority Coordination:</b> International crossing and security planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Active Transportation:</b> Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle networks</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Civic Center Integration:</b> One-stop municipal complex for consolidated services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Chihuahua State Cooperation:</b> Cross-border policy and project alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Cross-Border Mobility:</b> Coordinated planning for residents and commerce</li> </ul>

July 10, 2024 **Phase 2: Targeted Stakeholder Engagement**

The comprehensive stakeholder workshop marked a turning point in the planning process, bringing together diverse voices from across the community for intensive, focused discussions. Held at the Sunland Park City Council Chambers, this day-long event featured morning presentations on key development areas followed by specialized breakout sessions. The workshop's design ensured that every major aspect of community development from infrastructure to economic growth received dedicated attention from relevant experts and stakeholders.

 **Infrastructure Focus Group**

- **Foundation Systems:** Water and sewage infrastructure as development prerequisite
- **Natural Assets:** The views of the Franklin Mountains are a natural asset and a community attraction.
- **Educational Partnerships:** Insights Museum collaboration for community programming
- **Recreation Development:** Equestrian facilities and hiking trail networks
- **Public Health Integration:** Green spaces for community wellness and activity

 **Development Focus Group**

- **Affordable Housing Funding:** \$150M available through USDA and NM Finance Authority
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Solar-powered internet repeaters for underserved areas
- **Community Activation:** Event-based programming, including bike races and food festivals
- **Developer Requirements:** Contribution standards for public amenities and green spaces
- **Gateway Enhancement:** Improved wayfinding and signage

 **Business Development Focus**

- **Process Modernization:** Online permitting system for business efficiency
- **Tax Incentives:** GRT rebates for local businesses purchasing land
- **Strategic Marketing:** 250th Anniversary celebration as an 18-month promotional opportunity
- **Business Compatibility:** Targeted recruitment of coffee shops, restaurants, & complementary services
- **Property Development:** Incentives for vacant land development and utilization

 **Local Government Focus Group**

- **Regulatory Streamlining:** Simplified entitlement processes, reducing costs and timeframes
- **Cross-Border Coordination:** Enhanced communication protocols with El Paso jurisdiction
- **Code Modernization:** Addressing ambiguities in current UDC and planning documents
- **Regional Integration:** Coordinating local projects with broader infrastructure initiatives
- **Implementation Focus:** Prioritizing infrastructure as the foundation for development success

July 12, 2024 Phase 3: Binational Committee Meeting

The binational meeting in Ciudad Juárez represented a historic moment in cross-border planning collaboration. Held at IMIP (Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación), this gathering brought together officials, planners, and technical experts from both sides of the border to establish frameworks for coordinated development. The meeting demonstrated remarkable political will and technical capacity for genuine binational cooperation, with concrete commitments emerging for major infrastructure investments and ongoing coordination mechanisms.



➤ **Infrastructure Construction:**  
Construction of 4 wastewater collectors and three stormwater retention basins near Arroyo de las Víboras

➤ **Flood Prevention:**  
Coordinated systems to mitigate flood-related contamination of the Rio Grande.

➤ **Watershed Management:**  
Recognition that Juárez pollution directly impacts Sunland Park and vice versa

➤ **Environmental Integration:**  
Shared responsibility for cross-border water quality



➤ **Investment Confirmation:**  
\$400M+ investment confirmed for Sunland Park-Anapra crossing infrastructure

➤ **State Endorsement:**  
Official State of Chihuahua support, including federal communications

➤ **Funding Readiness:**  
The state prepared to advance negotiations and secure financing

➤ **Feasibility Progress:**  
Advanced studies with detailed cost estimates and technical specifications

**US** **Historic Cross-Border Collaboration**  
 The first formal binational planning committee meeting established frameworks for coordinated infrastructure development, environmental protection, and economic integration between

**MEX** Sunland Park and Ciudad Juárez.



## Technical Coordination Framework



## Implementation Strategy

➤ **Data Harmonization:**  
 Bilingual digital mapping and GIS coordination between jurisdictions

➤ **Phased Development:**  
 Infrastructure improvements prioritizing foundational systems

➤ **Planning Integration:**  
 Synchronized land use planning and zoning coordination

➤ **Working Groups:**  
 Joint coordination for drainage, zoning, and transit planning

➤ **Community Engagement:**  
 Metropolitan Citizen Planning Council model for inclusive governance

➤ **Security Integration:**  
 Gateway area improvements around El Cigarro Monument

➤ **Professional Exchange:**  
 Technical staff and expertise sharing across borders

➤ **Regulatory Coordination:**  
 Early integration of U.S. federal requirements (NEPA, FHWA)

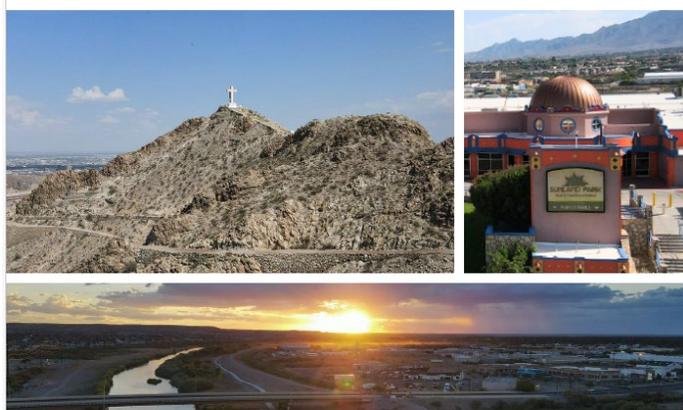
Sept. 26 – Dec. 1, 2024 **Phase 4: Community-Wide Engagement**

The planning process opened to the entire community during the final phase through a public meeting and a comprehensive bilingual survey that ran for over two months. This effort went beyond mere data collection; it provided every resident the chance to share their voice and shape the future of their community. We designed the survey to be both accessible and comprehensive, covering a range of topics from basic demographics to complex policy preferences. This approach ensured that the final plan truly reflected the community's priorities and concerns.



**CITY OF SUNLAND PARK**  
Public Meeting: City of Sunland Park  
Binational Comprehensive Plan

**Date:** September 26, 2024    **Location:** Multigenerational Center  
**Time:** 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM    4700 McNutt Rd, Santa Teresa, NM 88008



The City of Sunland Park invites you to a public meeting on the **Binational Comprehensive Plan**, a key initiative to guide the city's growth and development. Join us to share your insights on infrastructure, economic growth, transportation, and cross-border collaboration.

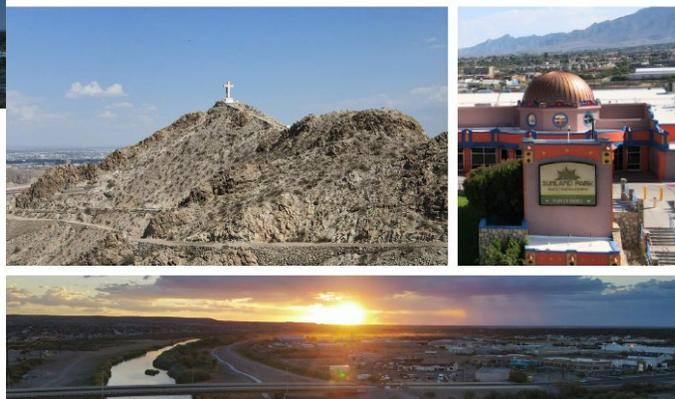
**Your input is vital to shaping Sunland Park's future.**

For questions, contact Angélica Bryant at [angelica.bryant@wilsonco.com](mailto:angelica.bryant@wilsonco.com).  
**We are excited to hear your thoughts and look forward to your participation!**



**CITY OF SUNLAND PARK**  
Reunión Pública: Plan Integral Binacional  
de la Ciudad de Sunland Park

**Fecha:** 26 de septiembre del 2024    **Lugar:** Centro Multigeneracional,  
**Hora:** 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM    4700 McNutt Rd, Santa Teresa, NM 88008



La Ciudad de Sunland Park le invita a  
**una reunión pública sobre el Plan Integral Binacional**,  
una iniciativa clave para guiar el crecimiento y desarrollo de la ciudad.  
Únase a nosotros para compartir sus ideas sobre temas como infraestructura,  
crecimiento económico, transporte y colaboración transfronteriza.

**Su opinión es vital para dar forma al futuro de Sunland Park.**

Para preguntas, contacte a Angélica Bryant en [angelica.bryant@wilsonco.com](mailto:angelica.bryant@wilsonco.com).  
**¡Estamos emocionados de escuchar su opinión y esperamos su participación!**

## Survey Results and Community Insights

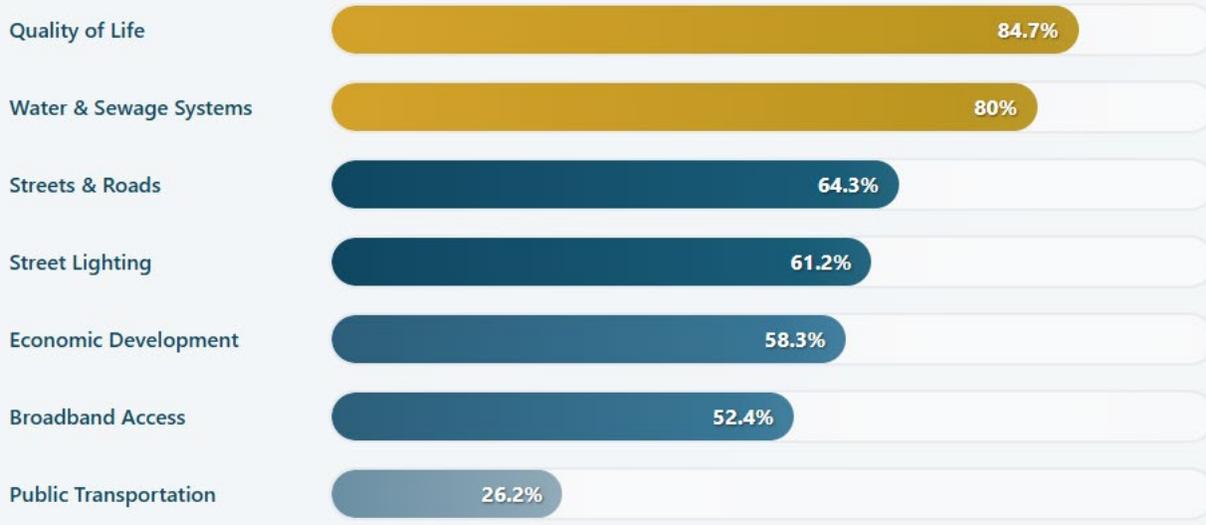
The community survey results reveal a nuanced portrait of Sunland Park, a community with deep roots, clear priorities, and thoughtful perspectives on growth and development. The 94 respondents represent a cross-section of the community, with robust participation from long-term residents and property owners who have invested in the community's future. Their responses provide crucial insights into community values, development preferences, and the challenges that must be addressed in any successful comprehensive plan.



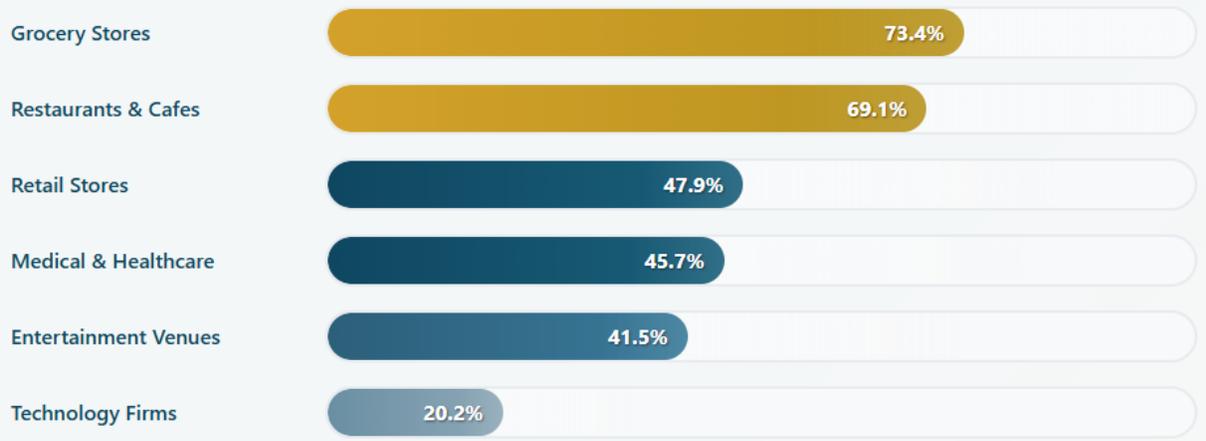
### Critical Planning Alert

Water infrastructure crisis (80% priority) + Economic leakage (73% lack grocery access) = Immediate action required for sustainable binational growth

### Infrastructure Crisis Analysis



### Economic Development - Retail Gap Crisis



**Economic Leakage Alert:** 73.4% lack grocery access means significant tax revenue and jobs flowing to neighboring jurisdictions. Immediate retail recruitment strategy needed.

## Binational Port of Entry Analysis

### Community Sentiment

- 35.3% **oppose** new international port of entry
- 44.7% **want enhanced** border security measures
- 40.4% **support** road expansions for port traffic
- **Mixed reception** requires careful stakeholder engagement

### Strategic Implications

- **Infrastructure preparation** essential before port activation
- **Community benefits** must be clearly communicated
- **Regional collaboration** with El Paso (47.5% support)
- **Economic opportunities** vs. community concerns balance



## Smart Growth Strategy

### Growth Management Preferences



● Infill Development (55.3%)    ● New Area Expansion (33%)

### Housing Density Rejection



## Strategic Planning Insights for 2024



### Water Infrastructure Crisis

80% prioritize water systems - binational water management agreements essential for sustainable cross-border development



### Economic Leakage Crisis

73% lack grocery access causing major revenue loss to neighboring areas - immediate retail recruitment strategy required



### Binational Port Strategy

Mixed support (35% oppose) requires comprehensive community engagement and clear benefit demonstration before proceeding



### Anti-Density Mandate

91.5% reject high-density - comprehensive plan must focus on smart infill and single-family development strategies



### Regional Collaboration

47.5% support El Paso coordination - leverage binational opportunities while maintaining community character



### Transportation Infrastructure

85% car-dependent

54% want road improvements

**Infrastructure is a must**



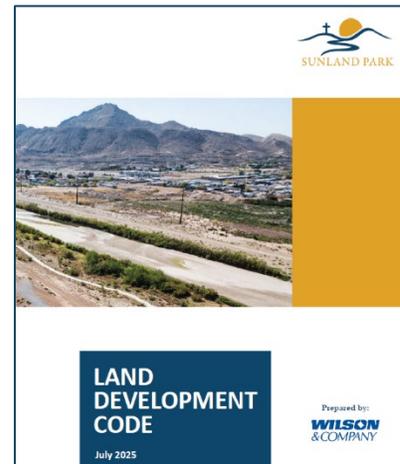
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## 4. Land Use

Land use planning serves as the foundation for Sunland Park's development as "the Gateway to the Land of Enchantment." This chapter establishes a comprehensive framework for managing growth, preserving community character, and leveraging the city's unique position as a binational border community. The policies outlined in this chapter build upon the goals and objectives established in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan while incorporating emerging priorities identified through the 2025 Binational Comprehensive Plan Update process.

The Land Development Code serves to implement the vision outlined in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, as well as the emerging goals of the 2025 Binational Comprehensive Plan Update. As required by New Mexico Statute § 3-21-5 (2021)(A), "Regulations and restrictions... are to be in accordance with a comprehensive plan."

The unified Land Development Code, which consolidates the previous Title 10 (Zoning) and Title 11 (Subdivision) regulations, provides the regulatory framework necessary to achieve the community's land use vision through practical, enforceable standards.



### Existing Conditions and Community Character

Understanding Sunland Park's existing conditions provides a foundation for informed land-use planning decisions. The city's unique position as a binational border community shape both its physical characteristics and development patterns. This analysis is supported by several key planning documents and maps that illustrate current conditions and future aspirations.

The Existing Zoning Map displays the current regulatory framework governing land use within the city limits, showing the distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, and special-use districts. This map serves as the legal foundation for development decisions and provides the baseline for evaluating proposed changes to land use regulations.

The Future Land Use Map represents the community's vision for long-term development patterns and serves as the primary policy tool for guiding zoning decisions and infrastructure investments. While advisory in nature, this map provides the framework for evaluating annexation requests, development proposals, and regulatory updates to ensure consistency with community goals.

## Urban Design and Connectivity

The process of giving form, shape, and character to a city, neighborhood, or group of buildings is known as urban design. Urban design helps establish a framework to make connections between people and places, as well as between nature and the built environment. The existing urban design of Sunland Park can be understood through the analysis of five key elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks.

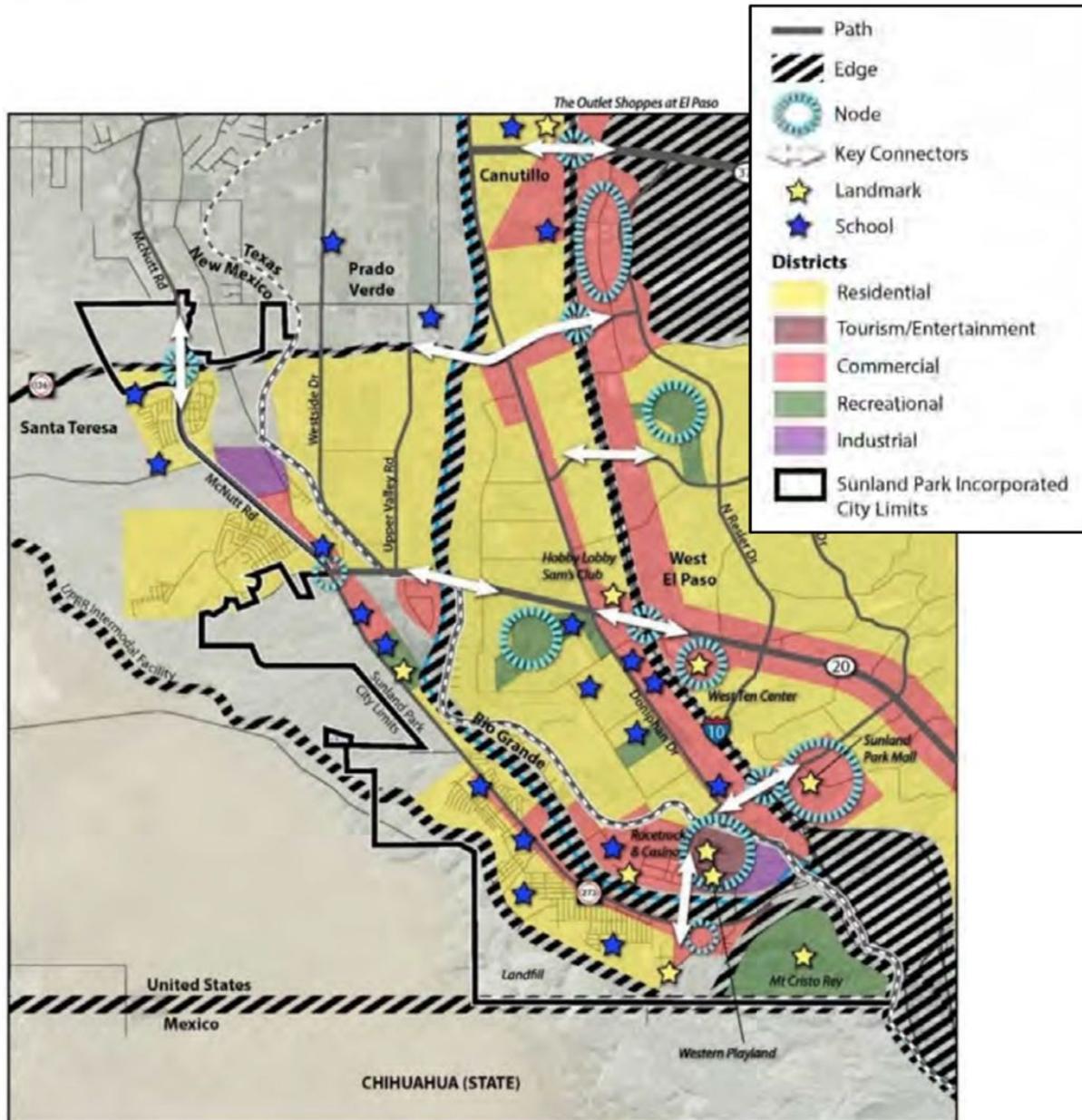


Figure 4-1 Urban Design Map

# Sunland Park Urban Design

Exploring the five key elements that shape our city's connectivity: paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks



## Paths

Channels of movement that connect people and places throughout the city.

- ▶ I-10 Interstate Highway
- ▶ Union Pacific Railroad
- ▶ NM-273 (McNutt Road)
- ▶ Country Club Drive
- ▶ NM-136 (Pete Domenici)
- ▶ Rio Grande waterway



## Edges

Linear boundaries that define and shape the city's limits and growth patterns.

- ▶ Rio Grande (Eastern edge)
- ▶ Railroad & Mesa (Western barrier)
- ▶ US/Mexico border (Southern boundary)
- ▶ Texas/New Mexico border
- ▶ I-10 corridor (Eastern limit)



## Districts

Areas with common characteristics that define different zones within the city.

- ▶ Residential (Single & Multi-family)
- ▶ Tourism/Entertainment
- ▶ Commercial (Retail & Office)
- ▶ Recreational Areas
- ▶ Industrial (Manufacturing & Warehousing)



## Nodes

Gathering places and concentration points that attract people and activities.

- ▶ Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino
- ▶ Municipal Buildings
- ▶ McNutt Road & Country Club intersection
- ▶ Commercial retail centers
- ▶ Entertainment venues



## Landmarks

Distinctive and recognizable places that serve as reference points and destinations.

- ▶ Western Playland
- ▶ Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino
- ▶ Mt. Cristo Rey
- ▶ Ardovino's Restaurant & Farmers Market
- ▶ Sunland Park Sports Complex
- ▶ Dinosaur tracks & Archaeological sites



## Educational Landmarks

### Elementary Schools

Riverside Elementary, Desert View Elementary, Sunland Park Elementary

### Middle School

Santa Teresa Middle School

### Higher Education

Dona Ana Community College, University of Phoenix-Santa Teresa Learning Center

### District Overview

Gadsden Independent School District: 3 facilities in Sunland Park, 21 in southern Dona Ana County

## Community Character Elements

Sunland Park's distinctive character emerges from several key elements:

- **Binational Identity:** The city's position along the U.S.- Mexico border creates unique cultural and economic opportunities
- **Natural Setting:** The Rio Grande, Mt. Cristo Rey, and desert landscape provide dramatic backdrops and recreational opportunities
- **Entertainment Focus:** The concentration of gaming, racing, and recreational facilities establishes a regional destination character
- **Rural Heritage:** Agricultural and rural estate areas preserve connections to the community's historical development patterns
- **Gateway Function:** Strategic location provides access to both the El Paso metropolitan area and international markets

## Current Land Use Patterns

### District-Style Development

Sunland Park promotes district-style development, aggregating similar uses within concentrated areas to create recognizable districts that help residents and visitors navigate the city while fostering economic growth.

 <b>Entertainment District</b> Anchored by the Racetrack & Casino, hotel, and Western Playland, serving as the primary economic engine and regional destination.	 <b>Residential Areas</b> Ranging from rural estate lots to higher-density developments, accommodating diverse economic segments and lifestyle preferences.	 <b>Commercial Corridors</b> Concentrated along major transportation routes like McNutt Road for maximum visibility and accessibility to businesses.
 <b>Industrial Areas</b> Located in designated zones with adequate infrastructure and transportation access, supporting employment generation.	 <b>Agricultural Land</b> Preserving the community's rural character and historical agricultural heritage in appropriate areas.	 <b>Recreational District</b> Including Sunland Park Sports Complex and Mt. Cristo Rey, providing gathering places for outdoor activities.

### Property Ownership Patterns

The Ownership Map reveals the predominantly private ownership structure throughout Sunland Park, with strategic public holdings concentrated in key areas. This ownership pattern provides opportunities for coordinated development while respecting private property rights and existing community investments.

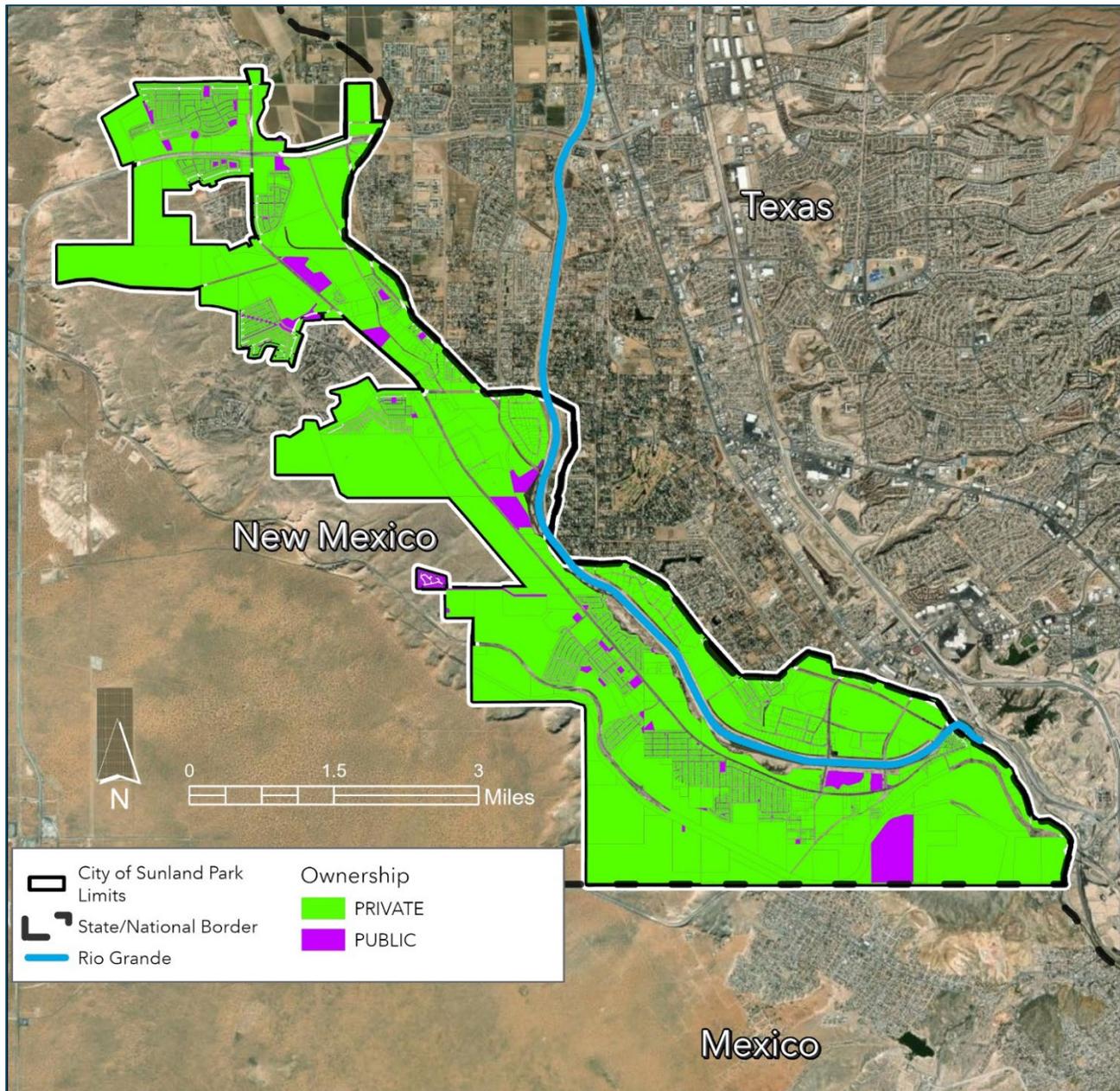


Figure 4-2 Property Ownership Map

## Land Use Evolution in Sunland Park: A Seven-Year Transformation (2018-2025)

The period between 2018 and 2025 represents a critical phase in Sunland Park's development trajectory, reflecting the city's transition from a predominantly undeveloped border community to a more diversified urban center. This comparative analysis examines the significant changes in land use patterns, development intensity, and spatial distribution that have occurred over these seven years. The transformation reveals key trends in residential growth, commercial expansion, and the ongoing conversion of vacant land to productive uses, providing insights into the city's evolving character and future development potential along the New Mexico-Texas border corridor.

Complete Land Use Comparison Table					
LAND USE TYPE	2018 ACRES	2025 ACRES	CHANGE (ACRES)	% CHANGE	2025 SHARE
Residential Land	1,354	1,540	+186	+13.7%	18.4%
Mobile Home Park	13	13	0	0%	0.2%
Multifamily	4	5	+1	+25%	0.1%
Commercial	219	411	+192	+87.7%	4.9%
Commercial Acreage	914	807	-107	-11.7%	9.7%
Dairy	2	0	-2	-100%	0%
Grazing Land	2	2	0	0%	0.02%
Tillable Land	499	312	-187	-37.5%	3.7%
Vacant Land	4,813	5,064	+251	+5.2%	60.7%
Vacant Lot	183	61	-122	-66.7%	0.7%
Other Uses	140.25	132.6	-7.65	-5.5%	1.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,142</b>	<b>8,347.6</b>	<b>+205.6</b>	<b>+2.5%</b>	<b>100%</b>

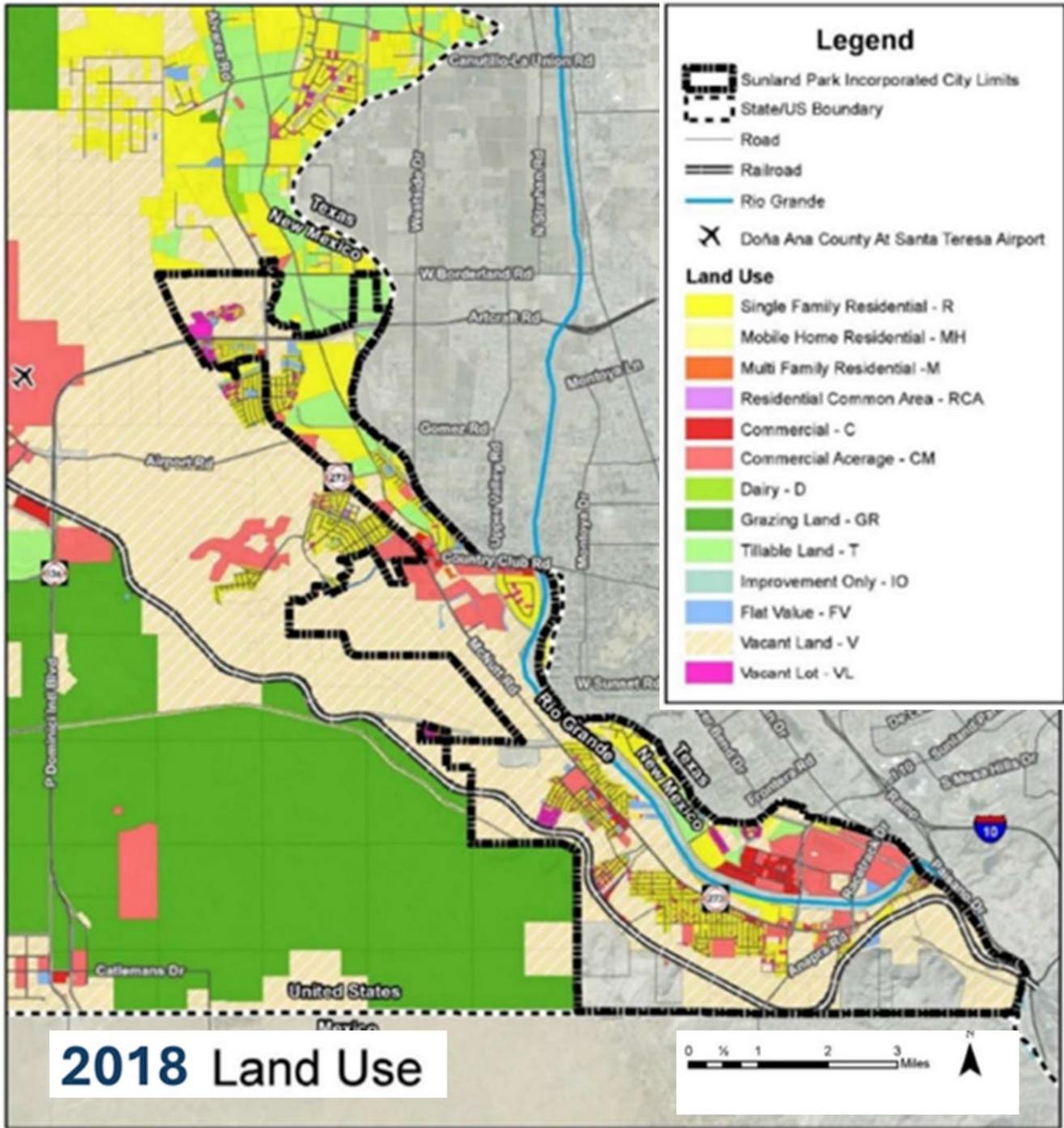


Figure 4-3 2018 Land Use Map

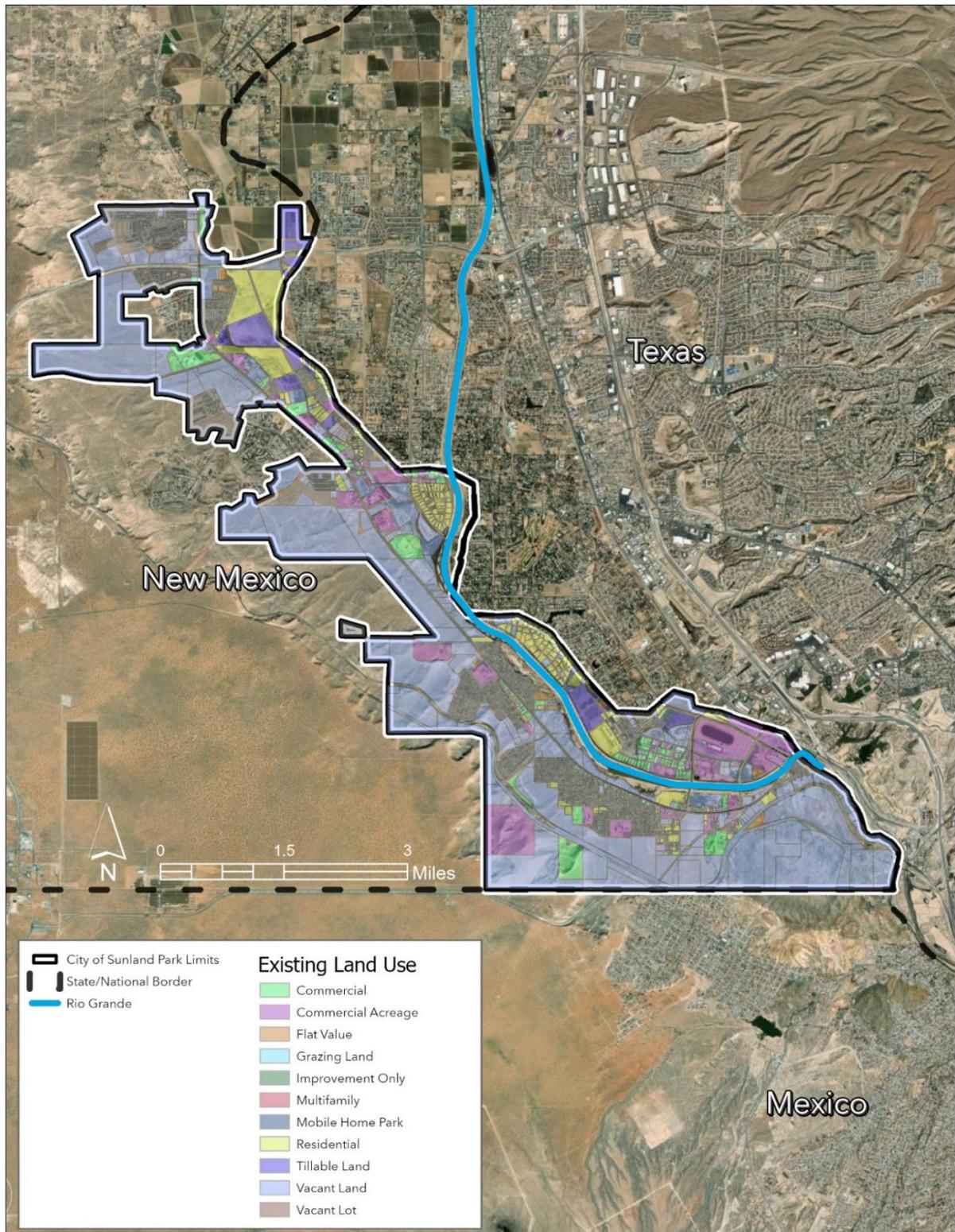


Figure 4-4 Existing Land Use Map

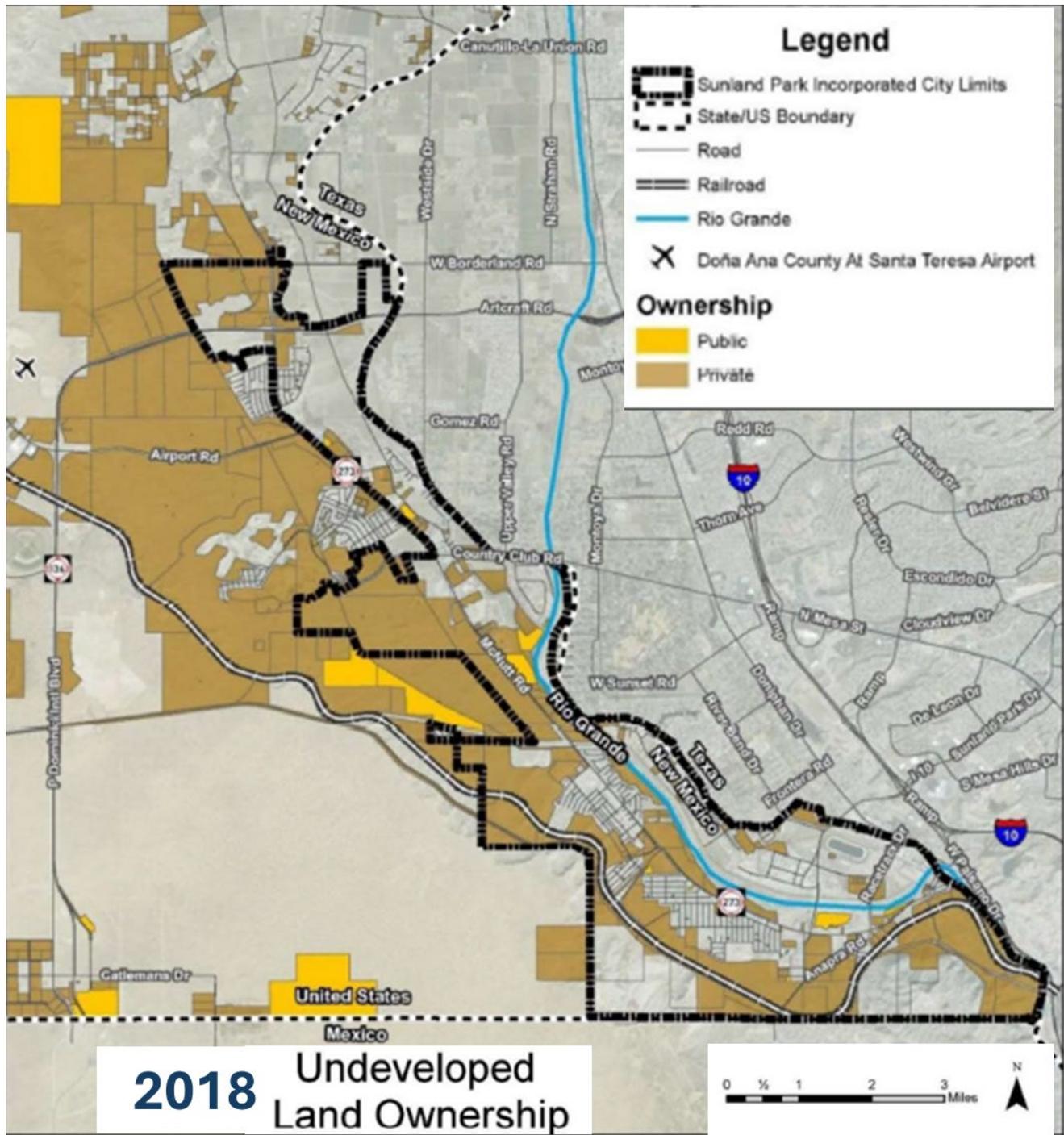


Figure 4-5 2018 Undeveloped Land Ownership Map

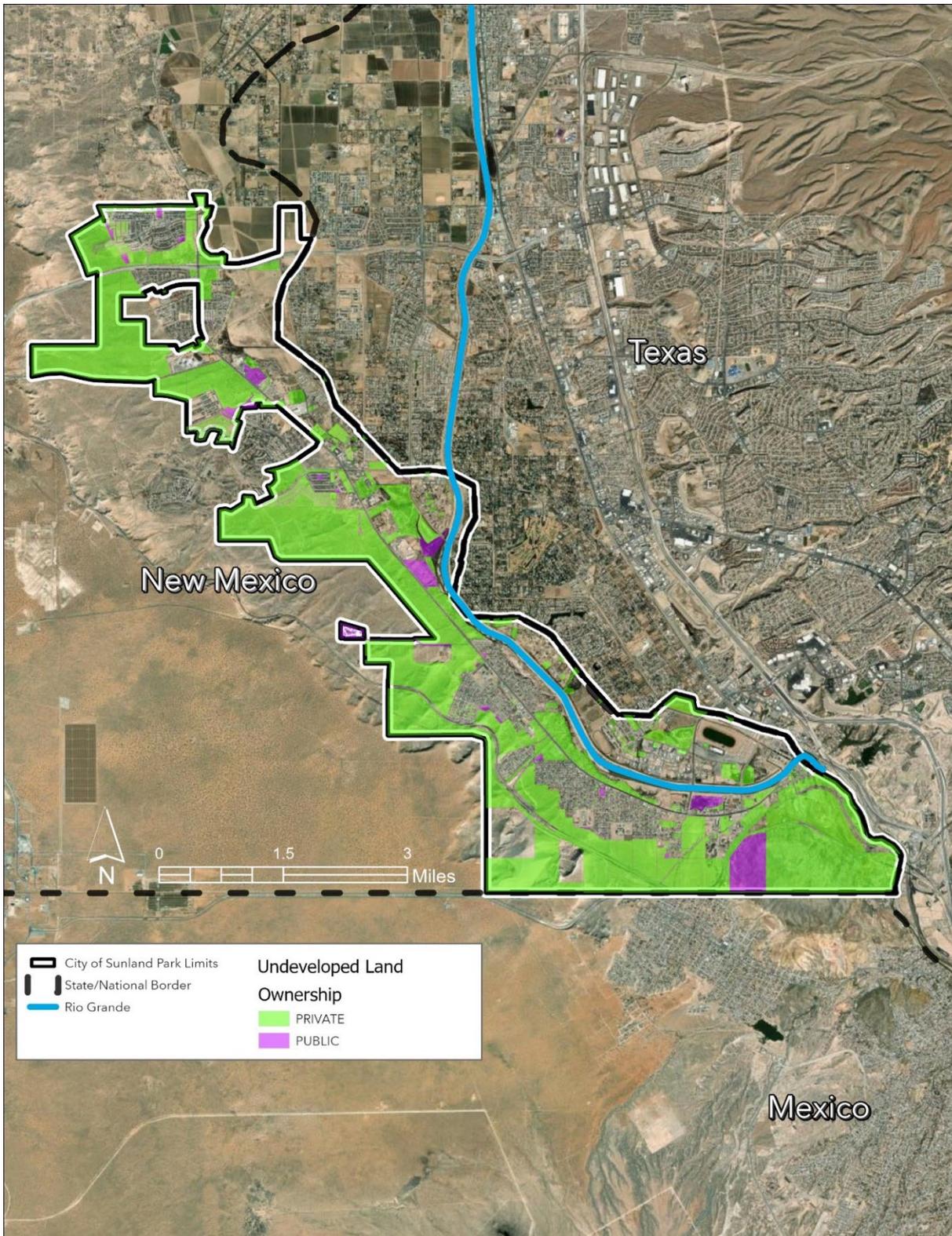


Figure 4-6 Existing Undeveloped Land Ownership Map

## Strategic Insights & Analysis

### *Controlled Urban Growth Pattern*

Sunland Park demonstrates measured expansion with only 2.5% total growth over seven years, emphasizing strategic infill development and efficient land use rather than aggressive sprawl. This approach preserves the community's character while accommodating necessary growth.

### *Residential Development Leadership*

The addition of 187 acres of residential land represents the strongest growth sector, with 99% being single-family homes. This reflects strong population growth, housing demand, and community preference for low-density residential development patterns.

### *Commercial Sector Diversification*

Small-scale commercial space nearly doubled from 219 to 411 acres, indicating robust local business growth and improved service provision. The reduction in large commercial acreage suggests more intensive use of existing commercial land.

### *Agricultural Transition Pressure*

The 37.6% reduction in agricultural land reflects significant pressure from urbanization. The complete elimination of dairy operations and a substantial loss of tillable land indicate an economic shift toward development and urban uses.

### *Strategic Lot Development*

The 66.7% reduction in vacant lots, combined with stable extensive vacant holdings, suggests efficient subdivision and development processes while maintaining strategic land reserves for future planned growth.

### *Border Community Characteristics*

Despite growth pressures, Sunland Park retains its character as a land-rich community, with 61.4% of its land remaining vacant, providing substantial opportunities for future development while maintaining the open space character of border communities.

### *Overall Assessment*

Sunland Park's land use evolution from 2018 to 2025 demonstrates a community successfully managing growth while preserving its distinctive character. The measured pace of development, focus on residential growth, and retention of significant vacant land reserves position the city well for future sustainable development along this critical binational corridor.

## Strategic Land Use Vision

Building upon these existing conditions, Sunland Park’s land use strategy centers on promoting orderly, sustainable growth that supports both local community needs and the city’s role as a binational gateway. The city’s approach emphasizes fiscal responsibility, efficient infrastructure delivery, and the preservation of environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.

This balanced framework recognizes that land use decisions must serve multiple objectives: accommodating growth pressures from the El Paso metropolitan area, maintaining the community’s distinctive character, and capitalizing on cross-border economic opportunities.

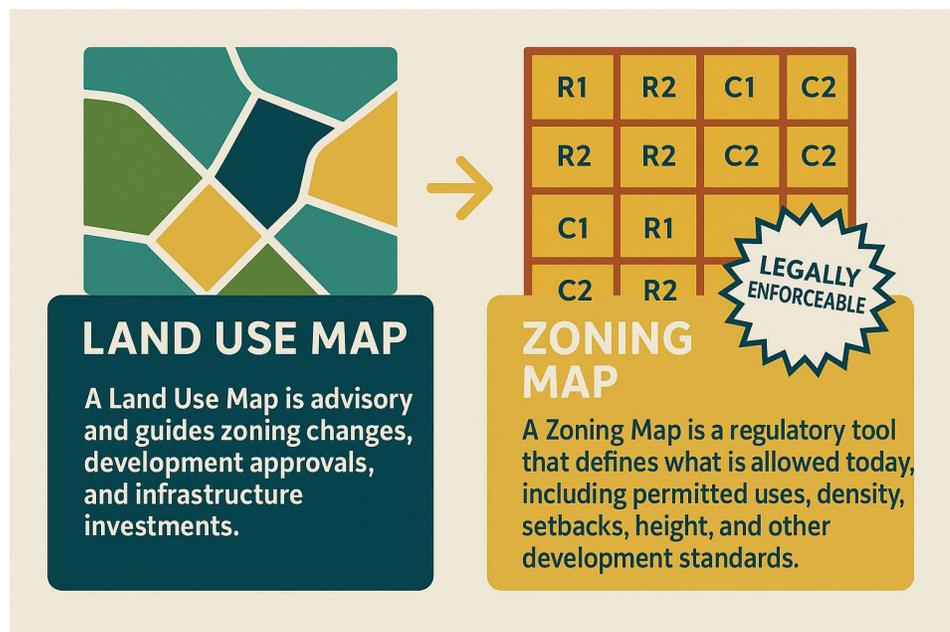
The Land Use Map serves as the primary policy tool guiding zoning decisions and future updates to the regulatory framework. This advisory document outlines desired future land uses based on long-term planning goals and provides the foundation for evaluating rezoning requests, development approvals, and infrastructure investments.

The relationship between the Land Use Map and the legally enforceable Zoning Map ensures that development patterns align with community vision while providing flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

### Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the City of Sunland Park’s long-term vision for balanced growth and district-style development. The map organizes land uses into distinct, recognizable districts that promote coordinated development, economic vitality, and efficient public service delivery. This vision integrates transportation corridors, parks, and employment centers into a cohesive urban framework that supports both local and regional connectivity.

The land use framework emphasizes a compact, mixed-use urban form, strategically locating commercial and entertainment districts along major corridors such as McNutt Road, Country Club Road, and Sunland Park Drive to maximize accessibility and visibility. Industrial and logistics districts are concentrated near the Santa Teresa Airport and along State Route 9 to



capitalize on regional trade opportunities and proximity to the proposed Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry (POE).

Master Planned Neighborhoods form the core of future residential development, designed to integrate housing with parks, schools, and small-scale retail to encourage walkable, family-oriented communities. Institutional areas support civic, educational, and community facilities distributed throughout the city to ensure equitable access. The park system includes both neighborhood and regional parks that protect natural corridors such as the Rio Grande and provide recreational amenities for all residents.

This map also recognizes areas of future growth beyond the current city limits, as well as special zones for coordinated development near the border and along emerging transportation corridors. Collectively, these designations guide future zoning, infrastructure investment, and policy decisions that advance the city’s vision of becoming a sustainable, economically diverse, and regionally connected community.

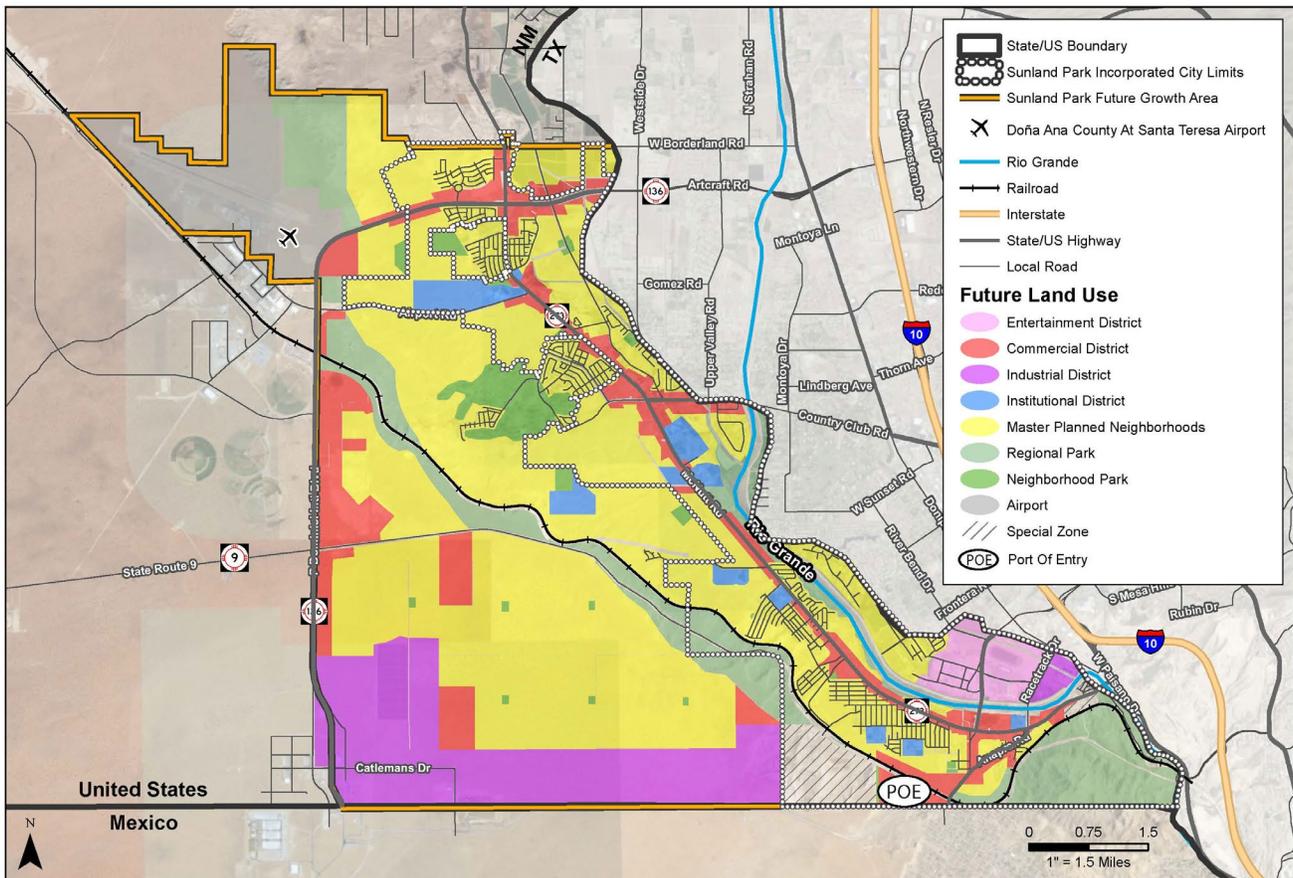


Figure 4-7 Future Land Use Map

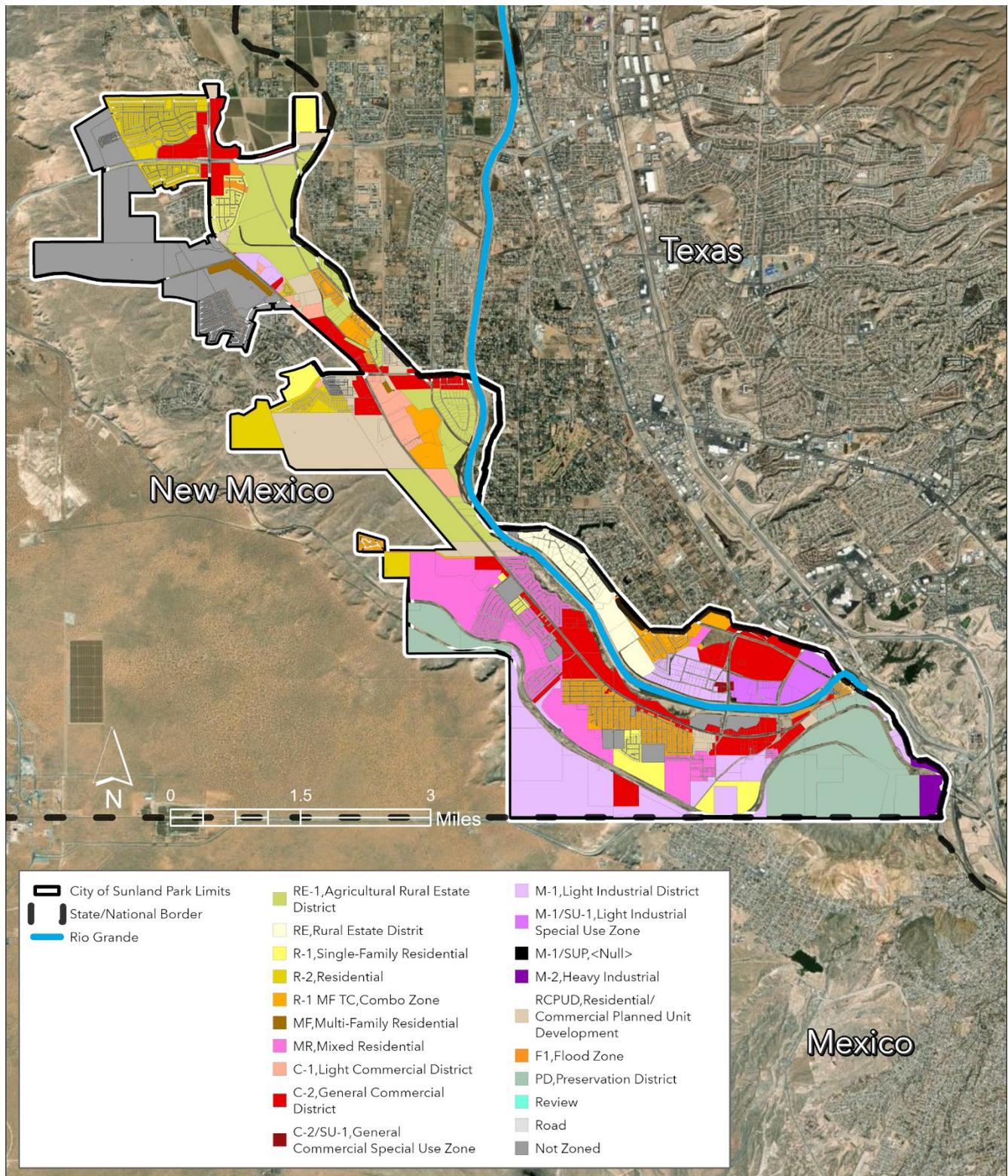


Figure 4-8 Current Zoning Map

The existing zoning map shows a comprehensive regulatory structure that includes:

- Rural Estate Districts (RE-1, RE) preserving low-density character
- Single-Family Residential Zones (R-1, R-2) supporting traditional neighborhoods
- Multi-family zones (MF, MR) provide housing diversity.
- Commercial Districts (C-1, C-2) supporting local and regional businesses
- Industrial Zones (M-1, M-2) accommodating employment-generating uses
- Special Districts (RCPUD, PD) allow innovative development approaches.

## Core Land Use Policies and Existing requirements

### Core Vision

General Plan Direction

#### LU-1 Balanced Growth Framework

Promote a balanced mix of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses that support both local community needs and the city's role as a binational gateway while preserving environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.

### Residential Development Policies

#### LU-2 Diverse Housing Options §10-4-3

- Support a range of housing types, from rural estate lots to higher-density multifamily developments
- Encourage mixed-income neighborhoods that provide housing opportunities for all residents
- Promote innovative housing solutions, including manufactured home communities and accessory dwelling units

#### LU-3 Neighborhood Character and Compatibility §10-4-8, §10-3-3

- Ensure new residential development is compatible with existing neighborhood character
- Require adequate buffering and screening between different housing types and intensities
- Preserve the rural character of estate areas while allowing appropriate infill development

### Economic Development and Commercial Policies

#### LU-4 Strategic Commercial Development §10-4-4

- Concentrate commercial development along major corridors and at key intersections
- Support neighborhood-serving commercial uses that reduce travel distances
- Encourage mixed-use development combining residential and commercial uses

#### LU-5 Industrial Development Strategy §10-4-4, §10-4-6

- Designate appropriate areas for light and heavy industrial uses with adequate infrastructure
- Ensure industrial development is adequately buffered from residential regions
- Support sustainable industrial practices that minimize environmental impacts

#### LU-6 Binational Economic Opportunities §10-4-5, §10-4-17

- Leverage the city's border location to attract businesses serving both sides of the international boundary
- Develop the Entertainment District as a regional destination
- Support commercial development that takes advantage of cross-border economic relationships

## Growth Management and Annexation Policies

**Strategic Focus:** Pursue logical annexation that supports fiscal sustainability while maintaining quality municipal services.

### LU-7 Strategic Annexation Framework §10-2-2

- Pursue annexation of adjacent areas that are logical extensions of the city's growth pattern
- Ensure annexed areas contribute to the city's fiscal sustainability
- Coordinate with the Water and Wastewater Utilities department (formerly CRRUA)

### LU-8 Annexation Criteria and Standards §10-2-2

**Priority areas that:**

- Are contiguous to existing city boundaries
- Can be efficiently served by municipal infrastructure
- Support economic development or housing goals
- Eliminate unincorporated enclaves within the city

### LU-9 Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Coordination §10-2-2

- Exercise extraterritorial subdivisions and platting authority within three miles of city limits
- Coordinate with Water and Wastewater Utilities department on development standards in extraterritorial areas
- Utilize extraterritorial authority to safeguard areas designated for future annexation

## Infill Development and Redevelopment Policies

### LU-11 Compatible Infill Design §10-3-5, §10-4-6

- Ensure infill development is compatible with surrounding neighborhood character
- Allow modest density increases for projects providing community benefits
- Require infill development to address parking, traffic, and infrastructure impacts

### LU-12 Brownfield and Redevelopment Areas §10-3-5, §10-4-6

- Identify and prioritize redevelopment of underutilized commercial and industrial areas
- Support environmental remediation and redevelopment of contaminated sites
- Encourage mixed-use redevelopment creating vibrant, walkable neighborhoods

## Planned Unit Development Policies

### LU-13 Innovative Development Through PUDs §10-5-6

- Use PUD processes to encourage innovative, high-quality development
- Require PUDs to demonstrate superior design, environmental performance, or community benefits
- Ensure PUD flexibility serves public purposes rather than developer convenience

### LU-14 Residential-Commercial Planned Unit Development Standards §10-5-6

- Promote RCPUD for large developments (min. 2 acres) integrating residential and commercial uses
- Limit residential density to 4 units per acre, up to 8 units per acre with enhanced amenities
- Require comprehensive master planning addressing traffic impacts and infrastructure needs

### LU-15 PUD Design Excellence Requirements §10-5-6

- Require PUDs to exceed minimum city design standards
- Mandate significant open space preservation (minimum 1 acre per 20 residential units)
- Ensure PUD developments include diverse housing types and price points

## Planned Unit Development Policies

### LU-16 PUD Community Benefits §10-5-6

**Required measurable community benefits:**

- Enhanced open space and recreational facilities
- Affordable or workforce housing components
- Infrastructure improvements beyond project needs
- Preservation of natural or cultural resources
- Innovative sustainability features

## Special Districts and Overlay Areas

### LU-17 Entertainment District Development §10-4-17

- Promote the Entertainment District as a vibrant, mixed-use area with distinctive architectural character
- Encourage pedestrian-friendly design with active street frontages
- Support entertainment, hospitality, and retail uses serving local and regional markets

### LU-18 Historic and Cultural Preservation §10-4-5

- Protect areas of archaeological, historical, and cultural significance
- Require development to respect view corridors and scenic resources
- Integrate cultural heritage considerations into all development review processes

## Environmental and Infrastructure Policies

### LU-19 Environmental Stewardship §10-4-12, §10-3-3

- Protect floodplains, drainage courses, and environmentally sensitive areas
- Require water-efficient landscaping and sustainable design practices
- Promote development patterns that preserve natural features and wildlife corridors

### LU-20 Infrastructure-Supportive Development §10-4-12, §10-3-3

- Direct higher-intensity development to areas with adequate infrastructure capacity
- Require new development to provide or contribute to necessary infrastructure improvements
- Coordinate land use planning with utility providers

### LU-21 Transportation-Land Use Integration §10-4-12, §10-3-3

- Promote development patterns supporting multiple transportation modes
- Concentrate higher-density development near major transportation routes
- Require traffic impact analysis for major developments

### LU-22 Strategic Use of PIDs §10-3-7

- Utilize Public Improvement Districts to finance infrastructure for new development
- Require PID projects to demonstrate clear public benefit and fiscal sustainability
- Ensure PID financing supports community-wide goals

### LU-23 PID Standards and Oversight §10-3-7

- Establish minimum project size (\$3 million) for PID consideration
- Require comprehensive financial feasibility studies and independent oversight
- Maintain City Council control over PID governance

## Design and Development Quality

### LU-24 High-Quality Development Standards §10-3-3, §10-4-13

- Require architectural design standards that enhance community character
- Promote building designs compatible with regional climate and cultural context
- Encourage sustainable building practices and energy-efficient design

### LU-25 Connectivity and Accessibility §10-3-3, §10-4-13

- Ensure all development provides adequate pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Require universal design principles to ensure accessibility for all users
- Promote street networks that enhance connectivity while maintaining neighborhood character

Commitment: Conduct regular assessments of annexation outcomes and PUD performance, adjusting policies based on monitoring results and changing community needs.

## Implementation and Performance Monitoring

### LU-26 Adaptive Planning Approach §10-1-3

- Maintain flexibility in land use regulations to respond to changing conditions
- Use planned unit development and special use processes for innovative approaches
- Regularly review and update land use regulations

### LU-27 Community Engagement in Development §10-1-3

- Require meaningful public participation in review of major development proposals
- Ensure development benefits are shared equitably across all neighborhoods
- Support community-initiated development and improvement projects

### LU-28 Regional Coordination §10-1-3

- Coordinate land use planning with neighboring jurisdictions, particularly El Paso
- Consider regional impacts and opportunities in local land use decisions
- Participate in binational planning initiatives affecting border communities

### LU-29 Development Impact Assessment Plan-Level Action

- Monitor cumulative impacts of development on infrastructure, environment, and community character
- Require mitigation measures when development impacts exceed acceptable thresholds
- Use performance-based standards to ensure development achieves desired outcomes

### LU-30 Growth Management Metrics Plan-Level Action

#### Measurable indicators for successful growth management:

- Infrastructure capacity utilization rates
- Jobs-housing balance ratios
- Percentage of development occurring through infill versus greenfield development
- Community satisfaction with development quality and character

## Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan

Strategic direction for managing growth through annexation, promoting efficient infill development, and utilizing innovative tools while maintaining community character and fiscal responsibility.

## Implementation Framework

The implementation of land use policies occurs through a coordinated system involving multiple city departments and external partners. The Planning Department bears primary responsibility for most policies, often working collaboratively with Economic Development, the Planning Commission, the Building Department, and specialized entities such as the Water and Wastewater Utilities Department, formerly CRRUA. This collaborative approach reflects the interconnected nature of land use decisions with infrastructure provision, economic development, and regional coordination.

## Regulatory Tools and Process Improvements

The unified Land Development Code introduces several key improvements to support policy implementation:

***Streamlined Development Processes:*** Clear pre-application requirements, Design Review Team integration, and defined approval pathways reduce uncertainty and processing times. The code establishes distinct processes for minor and major subdivisions, with an Alternative Summary Procedure for qualifying projects involving two or fewer parcels.

***Enhanced Use Regulations:*** A comprehensive use table across all districts provides precise, consistent terminology and specific standards for conditional uses. The elimination of the Board of Zoning Adjustment in favor of the Governing Body oversight streamlines the approval process while maintaining appropriate oversight.

***Enhanced Public Notification:*** The property owner notification requirements have been improved to include bilingual notices (English and Spanish), certified mail to owners and tenants within 300 feet, and posted signs on public rights-of-way with a minimum 15-day posting period.

***Buffer and Transition Standards:*** Specific buffer requirements address compatibility between different land uses, including 30-foot buffers between multi-family and single-family developments, 50-foot buffers between commercial and residential uses, and 20-foot buffers between duplexes and single-family areas.

### ***Development Standards and Design Quality***

The updated development standards emphasize quality and compatibility while providing flexibility for innovative development approaches. RCPUD improvements include flexible development options with front setbacks ranging from 6 to 15 feet, requiring a minimum of three different setback measurements for every five contiguous lots to create visual variety. Enhanced compatibility requirements ensure that structures are spaced appropriately and integrate seamlessly with the surrounding neighborhood character.

Traffic impact analysis requirements for major developments include comprehensive analysis through Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA), Average Daily Traffic Projections, and Right-of-Way acquisition forecasts. These requirements ensure that land use decisions consider transportation system capacity and support coordinated infrastructure planning.

### *Fee Structure and Financial Framework*

The updated fee structure aligns with administrative costs and regional standards while providing clarity for developers. Preliminary plan fees are calculated at 4% of estimated public improvement costs using engineer-certified estimates based on NMDOT Unit Bid prices, with 15% contingency and applicable taxes. Annual escalation factors, based on the Consumer Price Index, ensure that fees remain current with the cost of construction.

Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) provide a mechanism for financing infrastructure improvements while protecting existing residents from additional tax burdens. The city establishes a minimum project size of \$3 million for PID consideration and requires comprehensive financial feasibility studies with independent oversight to ensure fiscal responsibility.

## Development Process Support and Guidance

### *Create a Development Guidebook (Recommendation)*

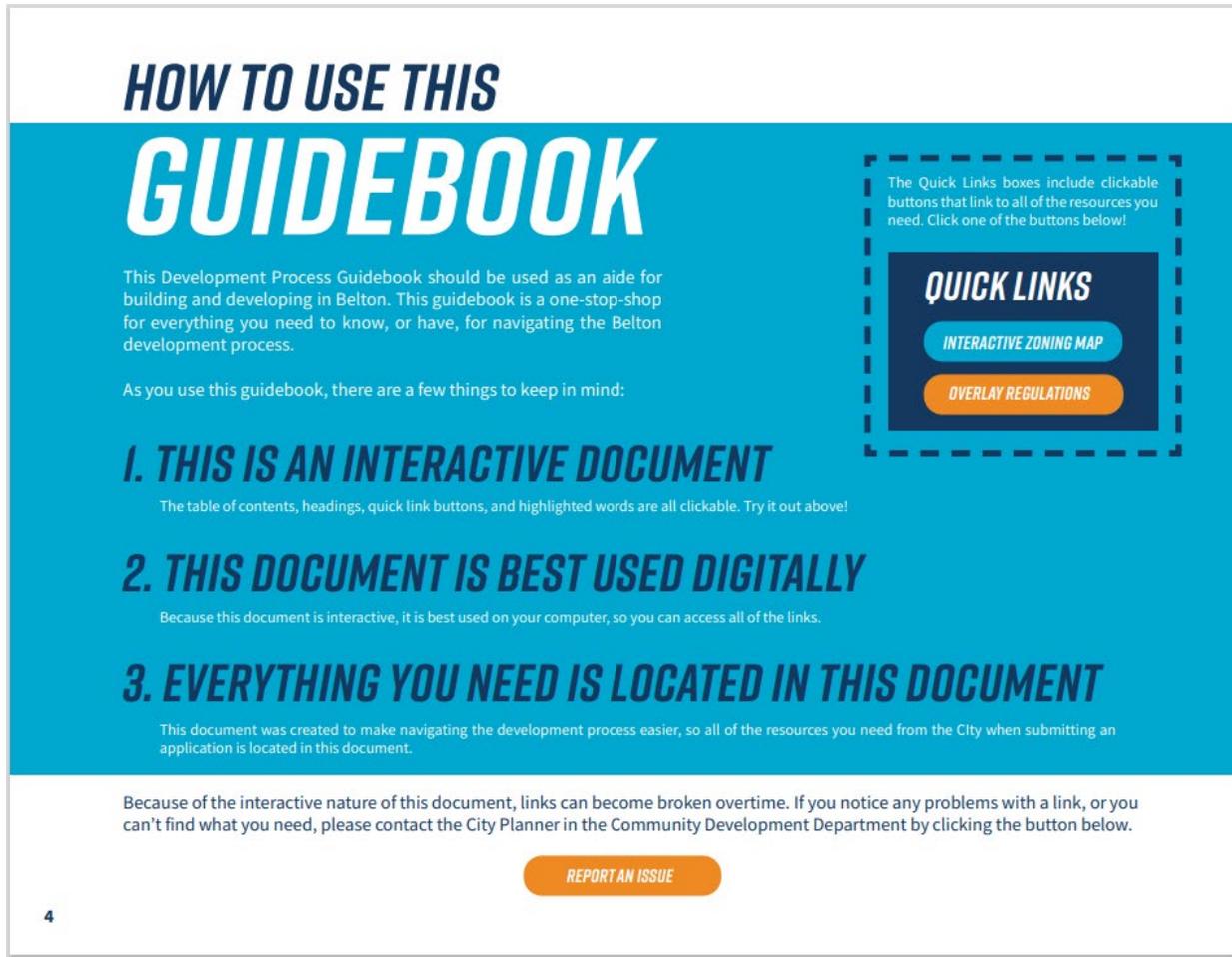
The City should create and deploy a [Development Guidebook](#) to outline the timelines and steps required for development approval. The guidebook should detail the planning and platting review process, permitting requirements, and occupancy or licensing requirements for all developers and individual homebuilders on the City's website. This comprehensive resource will:

- Provide clear step-by-step guidance for navigating the development approval process.
- Include realistic timelines for each phase of review and approval.
- Outline required documentation and submission requirements.
- Specify points of contact within city departments.
- Offer examples of successful applications and common pitfalls to avoid.
- Include both English and Spanish versions to serve the community's bilingual population.
- Feature flowcharts and visual aids to simplify complex processes
- Address frequently asked questions from developers and builders.

The Development Guidebook should be regularly updated to reflect changes in regulations, processes, or contact information, ensuring developers have access to current and accurate information. This tool will enhance transparency, reduce processing delays, and improve the

overall development experience while maintaining quality standards and regulatory compliance.

An example guidebook from the City of Belton, MO [development-guidebook-2024.pdf](#)



**HOW TO USE THIS  
GUIDEBOOK**

This Development Process Guidebook should be used as an aide for building and developing in Belton. This guidebook is a one-stop-shop for everything you need to know, or have, for navigating the Belton development process.

As you use this guidebook, there are a few things to keep in mind:

**1. THIS IS AN INTERACTIVE DOCUMENT**  
The table of contents, headings, quick link buttons, and highlighted words are all clickable. Try it out above!

**2. THIS DOCUMENT IS BEST USED DIGITALLY**  
Because this document is interactive, it is best used on your computer, so you can access all of the links.

**3. EVERYTHING YOU NEED IS LOCATED IN THIS DOCUMENT**  
This document was created to make navigating the development process easier, so all of the resources you need from the City when submitting an application is located in this document.

Because of the interactive nature of this document, links can become broken overtime. If you notice any problems with a link, or you can't find what you need, please contact the City Planner in the Community Development Department by clicking the button below.

**REPORT AN ISSUE**

4

## Regional Coordination and Binational Opportunities

Sunland Park's unique position as a border community requires coordination with neighboring jurisdictions, particularly El Paso and surrounding areas, as well as consideration of binational planning initiatives. The city leverages its border location to attract businesses serving both sides of the international boundary while developing the Entertainment District as a regional destination that draws visitors from both countries.

The extraterritorial jurisdiction framework enables the city to exercise subdivision and platting authority within a three-mile radius of the city limits, ensuring compatible development patterns and safeguarding areas designated for future annexation. Coordination with the Water and Wastewater Utilities Department, formerly CRRUA, on development standards in extraterritorial areas supports efficient utility service delivery and infrastructure planning.

## Performance Monitoring and Adaptive Management

The implementation framework includes robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure policies achieve desired outcomes. Annual tracking of development patterns, infrastructure capacity utilization rates, jobs-housing balance ratios, and the percentage of development occurring through infill versus greenfield development provides data for policy adjustments.

The city conducts regular assessments of annexation outcomes and PUD performance, utilizing measurable indicators to ensure successful growth management. Community satisfaction surveys regarding development quality and character help ensure that technical compliance translates into tangible improvements in quality of life.

This adaptive management approach acknowledges that effective land use planning necessitates ongoing attention to shifting conditions, emerging opportunities, and evolving community priorities. The policy framework provides stability and predictability while maintaining the flexibility necessary to respond to the dynamic challenges facing a binational border community.

## Conclusion

The land use policies and implementation framework outlined in this chapter provide Sunland Park with the tools necessary to manage growth effectively while preserving community character and leveraging unique binational opportunities. The integration of policy vision with practical regulatory mechanisms ensures that the city's land-use decisions support long-term sustainability, economic vitality, and a high quality of life for all residents.

Through the coordinated implementation of multiple departments and regional partners, ongoing monitoring of outcomes, and adaptive management practices, Sunland Park is well-positioned to achieve its vision as the Gateway to the Land of Enchantment while serving as a model for effective binational community planning. The addition of comprehensive development guidance tools, including the proposed Development Guidebook, will further support these objectives by making the development process more transparent, efficient, and accessible to all stakeholders.



# 5. Housing and Neighborhoods

## A Foundation for a Thriving Binational Community

Housing forms the cornerstone of community stability, economic opportunity, and quality of life in Sunland Park. As a growing binational city uniquely positioned along the Rio Grande corridor and at the intersection of New Mexico and Texas, Sunland Park faces both promising opportunities and pressing challenges in addressing the evolving housing needs of its residents.

This chapter provides a forward-looking framework to guide housing development through 2045. It draws from 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) data, robust public engagement, and alignment with the City’s Land Development Code and New Mexico’s statewide housing strategies. The intent is to promote housing solutions that are inclusive, economically sustainable, and reflective of the city’s rich binational heritage.



## A Community in Transition

Sunland Park is increasingly regarded as a desirable place to live, particularly for families and individuals seeking affordable housing alternatives in the broader El Paso region. However, low vacancy rates, rising housing costs, and rapid population growth signal that the current housing supply is not keeping pace with demand.

Despite strong indicators of community growth, the City faces structural and regulatory barriers to achieving its housing goals. A lack of coordinated planning and historic gaps in code enforcement have allowed deteriorating and noncompliant mobile home developments to negatively affect surrounding neighborhoods. At the same time, the city’s predominantly single-family zoning pattern limits flexibility for infill and higher-density development.

To better understand current development patterns and inform future housing strategies, the map in Figure 5.1 illustrates the existing residential land uses across Sunland Park. It highlights the predominance of single-family residential areas and mixed-use corridors that follow the Rio Grande and McNutt Road. The limited presence of multifamily residential areas underscores the zoning and market constraints discussed in this chapter. This spatial analysis emphasizes the need for targeted updates to land use and strategic investments in housing that support a more balanced, connected, and inclusive community.

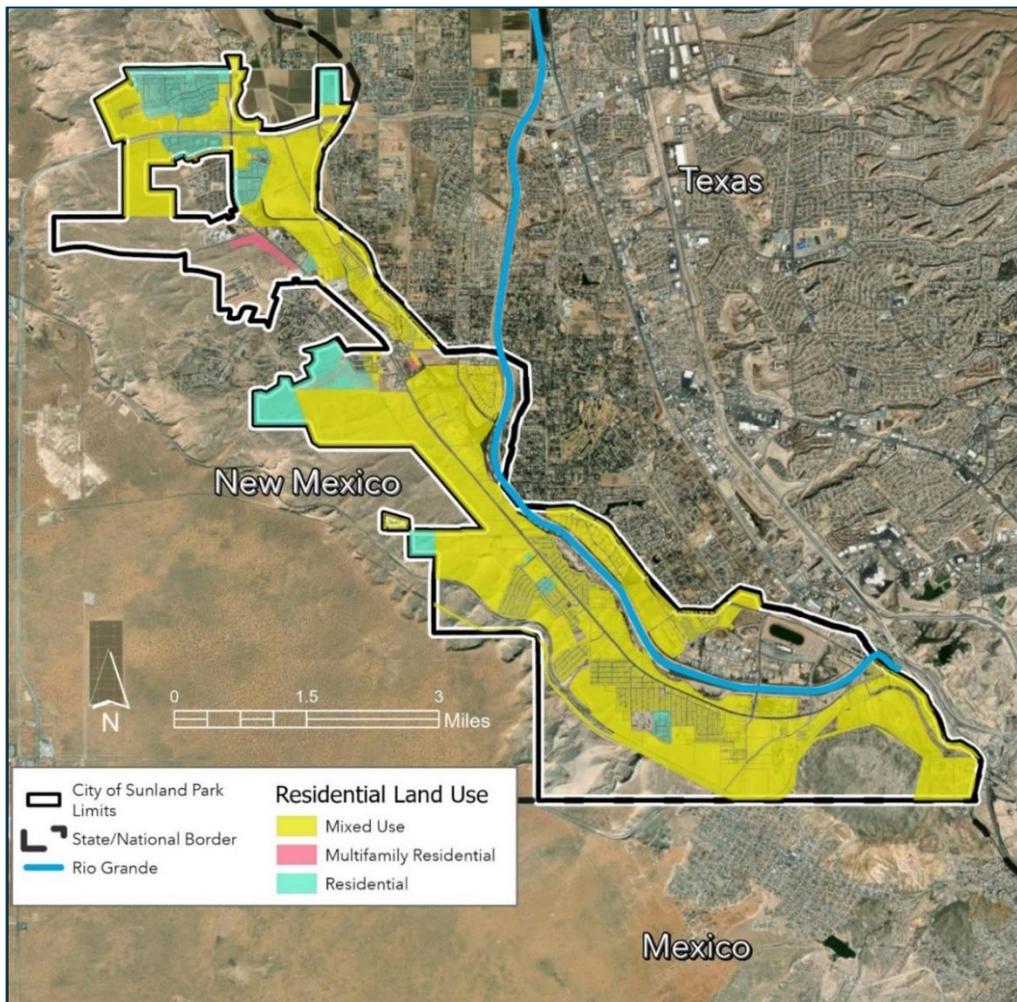


Figure 5-1 Residential Land Use Map

## Key Housing Needs and Opportunities

The City must proactively support a more diverse housing stock that meets the needs of a mixed-income population. A healthy housing ecosystem—one that includes affordable rental units, quality manufactured housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and multifamily options—is essential to:

- Attract and retain residents.
- Foster economic development.
- Enhance neighborhood character.
- Advance binational equity and sustainability goals.

### Alignment with Land Development Code

Many housing policies are already codified in Sunland Park's Land Development Code. Here's how current zoning and development standards align with the Housing Strategy:

#### Existing Zoning Districts Support Housing Diversity

##### Land Development Code §10-4-3

- *Rural Estate (RE)*: 1+ acre lots for agricultural/low-density residential
- *R-1 & R-2*: Single-family residential (6,000 & 5,000 SF minimum)
- *Mixed Residential (MR)*: Single-family and manufactured homes (7,000 SF)
- *Multi-Family (MF)*: Higher-density residential development
- *Townhouse (TC)*: Attached housing (3,000-4,000 SF lots)

#### RCPUD Enables Mixed-Income Development

##### Land Development Code §10-4-3.8

- *Density Flexibility*: Up to 4 units/acre (8 with open space)
- *Mixed-Use Allowed*: Residential and commercial integration
- *Setback Variety*: Staggered setbacks (6-15 feet) for visual interest
- *Height Options*: Up to 35 feet with adequate setbacks

## ✓ Manufactured Housing Integration Standards

### Land Development Code §10-4-7.2(2)

- *Quality Requirements:* Permanent foundations and skirting
- *Architectural Compatibility:* Design standards that match the surrounding development
- *Deck/Porch Requirements:* A solid deck or porch at the main entrance equal to at least 5% of the home's heated square footage ("Heated square footage" refers to the interior living space of the home that is climate-controlled [heated and/or cooled].)
- *Compliance Enforcement:* 20-day removal period for non-compliance

## ✓ Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) Permitted

### Land Development Code §10-4-7.2(97)

- *Secondary Housing:* Accessory units on the same parcel as the principal structure
- *Increased Options:* Supports the rental housing shortage addressed in the Housing Strategy
- *Zoning Compatibility:* Allowed in appropriate residential zones

## ✓ Mobile Home Park Standards

### Land Development Code §10-4-3.9

- *Minimum Standards:* 5-acre minimum with 10% open space
- *Infrastructure Requirements:* Internal streets, lighting, drainage
- *Quality Controls:* Perimeter walls, storage facilities, refuse management
- *Affordable Housing Component:* Supports 21.6 of the manufactured housing market

## ✓ Subdivision Standards Support Housing Goals

### Land Development Code §10-3

- *Master Plan Requirements:* Comprehensive planning for RCPUD developments
- *Land Dedication:* 1 acre per 100 units (single-family), 1 acre per 200 units (multi-family)
- *Fee in Lieu Option:* Alternative for subdivisions under 5 acres
- *Infrastructure Coordination:* PID financing mechanisms available

## Implementation Tools Already in Place

### Public Improvement Districts (PIDs)

§10-3-7: Infrastructure financing for housing development

### Home Occupations

§10-4-7.2(103): Supporting live-work arrangements

### Dimensional Standards

§10-4-8: Flexible lot sizes and setbacks

### Special Use Districts

§10-4-5.2: Innovative housing projects

## Land Development Code Findings and Strategic Recommendations

A detailed review of the Land Development Code reveals several strengths and areas for improvement:

### *Single-Family Zone Capacity*

- **R-1, R-2, and MR zones** effectively serve the city's strong single-family market (77.6%).
- A variety of lot sizes supports diverse ownership opportunities.

### *Multifamily Development Constraints*

- The **MF zone** allows up to 50 units per lot (0.60 FAR), yet multifamily housing comprises just **2.1%** of the current housing stock.
- Contributing factors include:
  - Low public support (only 17% in recent survey)
  - Limited incentives for developers
  - Lack of graduated transitions between residential densities

### *Manufactured Housing*

- Manufactured homes account for 14.8% of the market, primarily in the **MR zone**.
- Enhanced development standards are needed to ensure structural quality, safety, and compatibility with adjacent uses.

### Addressing Renter Cost Burden (59% of Renters)

The current code lacks key affordable housing tools:

- No **inclusionary zoning** requirements
- Minimal **density bonuses** for affordable units
- No provisions for **ADUs** in single-family areas
- Missing **fast-track permitting** for affordable housing projects

### Vacancy and Property Maintenance Challenges

An **18% vacancy rate** may reflect poor housing quality and a lack of reinvestment.

- Solutions include:
  - Enhanced **property maintenance standards**
  - **Rehabilitation incentives** for aging or underutilized units
  - Support for **infill development**
  - Improved **code enforcement capacity**

## Strategic Code Update Priorities

To support a healthy and inclusive housing market, the following LDC reforms are recommended:

- *Affordable Housing Overlay Zone*: Include density bonuses, reduced parking requirements, and expedited permitting.
- *Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Provisions*: Enable rental options in single-family neighborhoods.
- *Mobile Home Quality Standards*: Require upgraded materials, aesthetic compatibility, and code compliance.
- *Rehabilitation Incentives*: Target vacant and substandard units for improvement.
- *RCPUD Enhancements*: Require housing mix and affordability components in large-scale planned developments.

By adopting these strategies, Sunland Park can better meet its residents' housing needs, enhance neighborhood resilience, and realize its vision of becoming a vibrant, inclusive, and well-planned binational city.

## Sunland Park Housing & Neighborhoods Analysis

This housing analysis examines the Sunland Park residential landscape across six key dimensions, comparing local conditions to regional benchmarks, including the Las Cruces MSA and El Paso MSA. Utilizing 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) data and current affordable housing inventories, this report provides an overview of housing challenges and opportunities in the border community, which comprises approximately 5,752 households.

The six tables reveal key strengths and vulnerabilities in Sunland Park's housing market. The data shows a family-oriented community with high homeownership rates and predominantly single-family housing. However, significant affordability challenges burden renters, unusual vacancy patterns suggest market inefficiencies, and the limited affordable housing inventory highlights gaps in assisted resources. These findings point to a community with strong family foundations and homeownership culture that must address critical rental housing affordability through strategic policy action.



## Cost Burden Analysis

Sunland Park faces significant housing affordability challenges, with renters experiencing particularly severe cost burdens. **Approximately 33% of renters face a mild burden (spending 30-50% of their income on housing), and 26% face a severe burden (spending more than 50% of their income on housing)**, meaning nearly 60% of all renters are cost-burdened. This exceeds both the New Mexico state average (53.3% total) and the Las Cruces MSA level (55.3% total). Homeowners fare better, with 26% experiencing a cost burden compared to 22% statewide, although the severe burden rate matches the state average at 9%. The data reveals that Sunland Park's rental market is particularly strained, likely reflecting limited affordable rental stock and income constraints.

Cost Burden by Tenure Detail (ACS 2023)			
Geography	Category	Mild Burden (30–50%)	Severe Burden (>50%)
New Mexico (state)	Renters	31.3%	22%
New Mexico (state)	Homeowners	13%	9%
Sunland Park, NM	Renters	33%	26%
Sunland Park, NM	Homeowners	17%	9%
Las Cruces MSA	Renters	35.3%	20%
Las Cruces MSA	Homeowners	15%	5.1%
El Paso MSA / County	Renters (all incomes)	9.3%	9%
El Paso MSA / County	Renters (extremely low-income)	12%	28%
El Paso MSA / County	Homeowners	7.5%	5%

### Goal H-1: Preserve & Expand Homeownership

Maintain an exceptional 80%+ homeownership rate while expanding opportunities through first-time buyer programs, manufactured housing integration, and affordable homeownership development.

## Household Composition Patterns

Sunland Park exhibits a distinctly family-oriented community structure, with **82.1% of households being family households**, significantly higher than those in the Las Cruces MSA (62.8%) and El Paso MSA (72.4%). The community exhibits strong traditional family structures, with 51.7% of families being married-couple households. Notably, **22.9% are female-headed households with no spouse present**, substantially higher than regional averages (14.4% in Las Cruces and 16.3% in El Paso). Only 17.9% of households are non-family households, compared to 37.3% in Las Cruces, indicating a lower proportion of single professionals and students. This family-heavy composition suggests strong community ties but also highlights potential economic vulnerability due to the high proportion of single-parent households.

Household Type (ACS 2023)						
Household Type	Sunland Park, NM (Number)	Sunland Park, NM (%)	Las Cruces MSA (Number)	Las Cruces MSA (%)	El Paso MSA (Number)	El Paso MSA (%)
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>5,752</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>87,688</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>301,927</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Family Households</b>	<b>4,721</b>	<b>82.1%</b>	<b>55,015</b>	<b>62.8%</b>	<b>218,491</b>	<b>72.4%</b>
<b>Married-couple family</b>	<b>2,977</b>	<b>51.7%</b>	<b>38,126</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>154,129</b>	<b>51.0%</b>
<b>Other family:</b>	<b>1,744</b>	<b>30.3%</b>	<b>16,889</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>64,362</b>	<b>21.3%</b>
<b>Male householder, no spouse present</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>4,264</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>15,248</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Female householder, no spouse present</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	<b>12,625</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>49,114</b>	<b>16.3%</b>
<b>Nonfamily Households</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>17.9%</b>	<b>32,673</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>83,436</b>	<b>27.6%</b>
<b>Householder living alone</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>27,286</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>69,424</b>	<b>23.0%</b>
<b>Householder not living alone</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>5,387</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>14,012</b>	<b>4.6%</b>

**Bottom Line:** Sunland Park has a distinctly family-oriented housing market with high rates of single-parent households, indicating need for family-sized affordable housing.

## Housing Stock Characteristics

Sunland Park's housing landscape is dominated by single-family detached homes, comprising **77.6% of all housing units**, which is higher than both Las Cruces (68.4%) and El Paso (61.8%) MSAs. The community has limited multi-family housing options, with only 3.2% of units in buildings with 10 or more units, compared to 7.9% in Las Cruces and 9.1% in El Paso. Notably, **9.8% of housing consists of mobile homes**, reflecting more affordable housing options but potentially indicating lower housing values. The predominance of single-family homes suggests a suburban character, but it may also contribute to affordability challenges for renters and limit the diversity of housing choices.

Housing by Units in Structure (ACS 2023)						
Structure Type	Sunland Park, NM (Number)	Sunland Park, NM (%)	Las Cruces MSA (Number)	Las Cruces MSA (%)	El Paso MSA (Number)	El Paso MSA (%)
Total housing units	7,013	100%	93,944	100%	327,232	100%
1-unit, detached	5,439	77.6%	64,246	68.4%	202,381	61.8%
1-unit, attached	255	3.6%	3,104	3.3%	14,698	4.5%
2 units	68	1.0%	1,354	1.4%	4,117	1.3%
3 or 4 units	219	3.1%	2,655	2.8%	7,302	2.2%
5 to 9 units	122	1.7%	2,617	2.8%	9,862	3.0%
10 or more units	222	3.2%	7,464	7.9%	29,712	9.1%
Mobile home/other	688	9.8%	12,504	13.3%	59,160	18.1%

**Single-Family Dominance**

**77.6% detached homes**

Higher than Las Cruces MSA (68.4%) and El Paso MSA (61.8%)

**Missing Middle Housing**

**4.1% in 2-4 units**

Gap in medium-density housing options

**Limited Multifamily**

**3.2% in 10+ units**

Far below Las Cruces MSA (7.9%) and El Paso MSA (9.1%)

## Housing Market Dynamics

Sunland Park exhibits an unusual housing occupancy pattern, with a **high vacancy rate of 18.0%**, which is significantly higher than that of the Las Cruces MSA (6.6%) and the El Paso MSA (7.7%). This suggests either seasonal housing, housing in poor condition, or affordability mismatches. Despite a high vacancy rate, the community exhibits a strong homeownership rate of 65.5% (calculated from occupied units), although the rental market serves only 14.8% of the total housing stock. The high vacancy rate, combined with challenges to rental affordability, suggests potential market inefficiencies – vacant units may not be accessible or affordable to those who need them, particularly cost-burdened renters.

Housing Occupancy (ACS 2023)						
Indicator	Sunland Park, NM (Number)	Sunland Park, NM (%)	Las Cruces MSA (Number)	Las Cruces MSA (%)	El Paso MSA (Number)	El Paso MSA (%)
Total housing units	7,013	100%	93,944	100%	327,232	100%
Occupied housing units	5,752	82.0%	87,688	93.4%	301,927	92.3%
Vacant housing units	1,261	18.0%	6,256	6.6%	25,305	7.7%
Owner-occupied units	4,717	65.5%	52,508	59.9%	192,514	63.7%
Renter-occupied units	1,035	14.8%	35,180	40.1%	109,413	36.3%

### Goal H-2: Diversify Housing Stock

Reduce vacancy from 18% to 12% by 2030 through strategic infill development, housing diversity standards, and streamlined development processes.

**Bottom Line:** Sunland Park has a distinctly family-oriented housing market with high rates of single-parent households, indicating need for family-sized affordable housing.

### Goal H-3: Preserve Housing Quality

Implement proactive code enforcement and upgrade 43.2% of the housing stock built before 1980 through rehabilitation programs and adherence to quality standards.

## Affordable Housing Infrastructure

The community has established a modest affordable housing portfolio with **305 dedicated affordable units** across eight properties, representing approximately 5.3% of total occupied housing units (305/5,752). The portfolio includes diverse populations: families (majority), seniors through Villa Del Sol (30 units), and public housing via Villa Del Rio (68 units). Most developments target 50-60% Area Median Income (AMI) through LIHTC programs, with some project-based Section 8 assistance. However, given that nearly 60% of renters are cost-burdened and renters represent 1,035 households, the 305 affordable units serve roughly 29% of rental households, indicating a significant unmet demand for affordable housing.

Sunland Park Affordable Housing Units (2025)				
Property	Total Units	Unit Mix (Beds)	Population Served	Income Limits
Meadow Vista I & II	43	2-4 BR	Families, accessible units	LIHTC ≤60% AMI
Meadow Vista Apartments II	16	Not specified	Families, voucher-accepting	LIHTC 50% & 60% AMI
Meadow Vista Homes	27	Not specified	Families	LIHTC 50% & 60% AMI
Playa II Apartments	44	Not specified	Families, voucher-accepting	Project-based rental assistance
Playa Apartments (Phase I)	36	0-4 BR	Families, accessible	Income-based
Vista Del Rey Apartments	41	Not specified	Families	Income-based
Villa Del Sol Senior Housing	30	1 BR	Seniors (55+)	Section 8 Subsidized
Villa Del Rio (Public Housing)	68	Not specified	Very low-income families	HUD Public Housing
<b>Total Affordable Units</b>	<b>305</b>	-	-	-

### Goal H-4: Serve Special Populations

Create specialized housing for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and binational families, while celebrating their cultural heritage and cross-border living patterns.

**Bottom Line:** Affordable housing supply is very limited relative to need, with only 305 units serving a community of 5,752 households.

## Household Size and Tenure Patterns

Sunland Park households are notably larger than regional averages, with **an overall average household size of 3.41 people** compared to 2.65 in Las Cruces and 3.21 in El Paso. Both owner-occupied (3.43) and renter-occupied (3.34) households are substantially larger than Las Cruces equivalents (2.77 and 2.43, respectively). The community boasts an exceptional homeownership rate of **82.0% among occupied units**, significantly surpassing those of Las Cruces (59.9%) and El Paso (63.7%). This combination of large households and high homeownership suggests a family-oriented, settled community, but also indicates that the limited rental housing stock must accommodate larger-than-average families, potentially contributing to cost-burden challenges in the rental market.

Tenure by Household Size (ACS 2023)			
Indicator	Sunland Park, NM	Las Cruces MSA	El Paso MSA
Occupied Housing Units	5,752	87,688	301,927
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	4,717 (82.0%)	52,508 (59.9%)	192,514 (63.7%)
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	1,035 (18.0%)	35,180 (40.1%)	109,413 (36.3%)
Avg. Household Size: Owner-Occupied	3.43	2.77	3.42
Avg. Household Size: Renter-Occupied	3.34	2.43	2.91
Avg. Household Size: Overall	3.41	2.65	3.21

### Large Households

3.41 average size

Higher than Las Cruces MSA (2.65) and El Paso MSA (3.21)

### Owner-Occupied Size

3.43 people

Indicates need for larger family housing

### Renter-Occupied Size

3.34 people

Similar to owner-occupied households

**Bottom Line:** Households are significantly larger than regional averages, indicating strong need for family-sized housing units.

## Housing Context & Key Challenges

### Current Housing Challenges

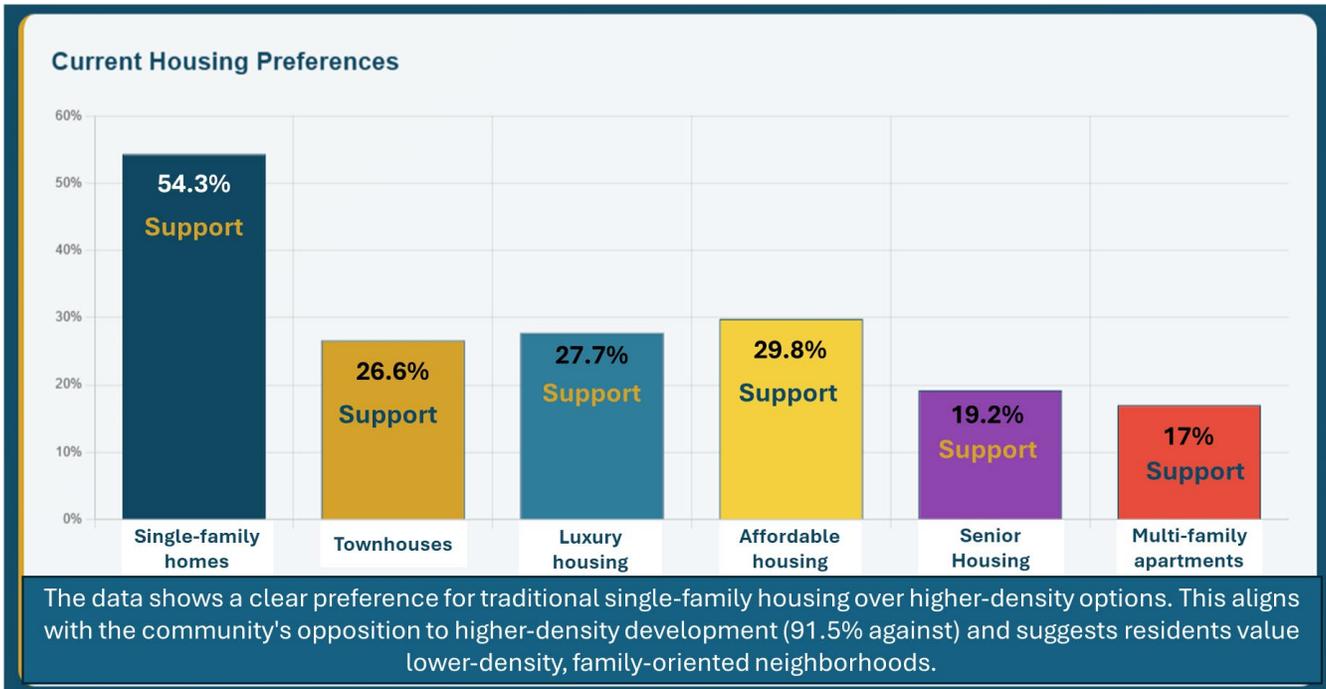
- *High Vacancy Rate:* 18% vs. 6.6% regional average indicates housing market inefficiencies
- *Cost Burden Crisis:* 59% of renters and 26% of homeowners are cost-burdened
- *Limited Housing Diversity:* 77.6% single-family, only 2.1% multi-family 5+ units
- *Affordable Housing Gap:* Only 194-234 affordable units vs. significant need
- *Mobile Home Quality:* 14.8% manufactured housing needs quality standards

### Housing Strengths & Opportunities

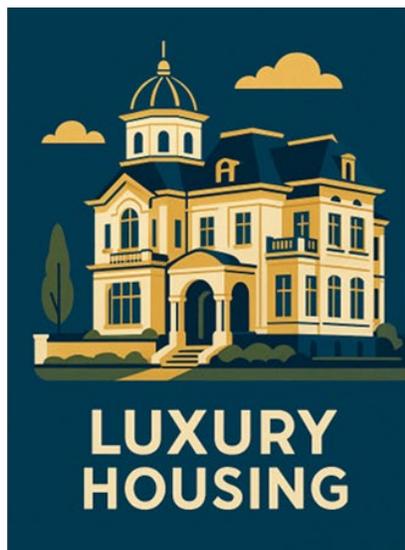
- *High Homeownership:* 82% rate indicates community stability
- *Family-Oriented:* 82.1% family households, large household sizes
- *Manufactured Housing Market:* Significant affordable option at 14.8%
- *Regional Demand:* Low vacancy in Las Cruces/El Paso suggests market potential
- *Existing Infrastructure:* Opportunities for infill development

## Sunland Park Housing Survey Analysis

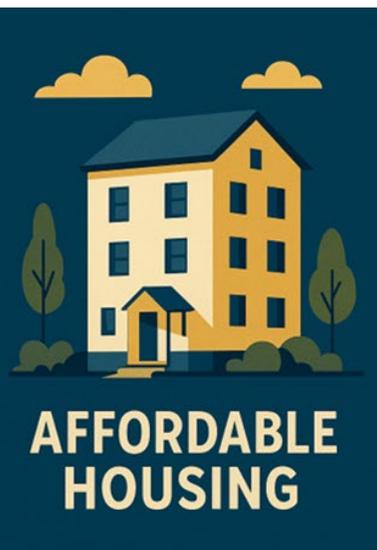
This analysis examines housing preferences and needs based on the City of Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan public survey. The survey captured responses from 94 participants, providing valuable insights into current housing situations, future preferences, and community priorities. The data reveals significant trends in housing demand, with strong preferences for single-family homes and concerns about affordability, while also highlighting the community's desire for improved infrastructure and local amenities.



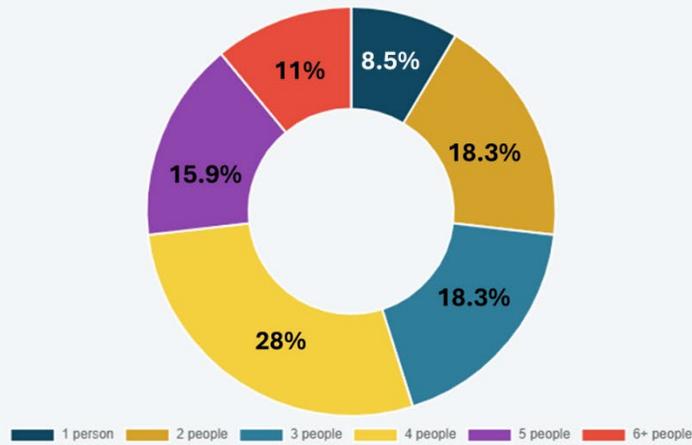
27.7%  
Support



29.8%  
Support

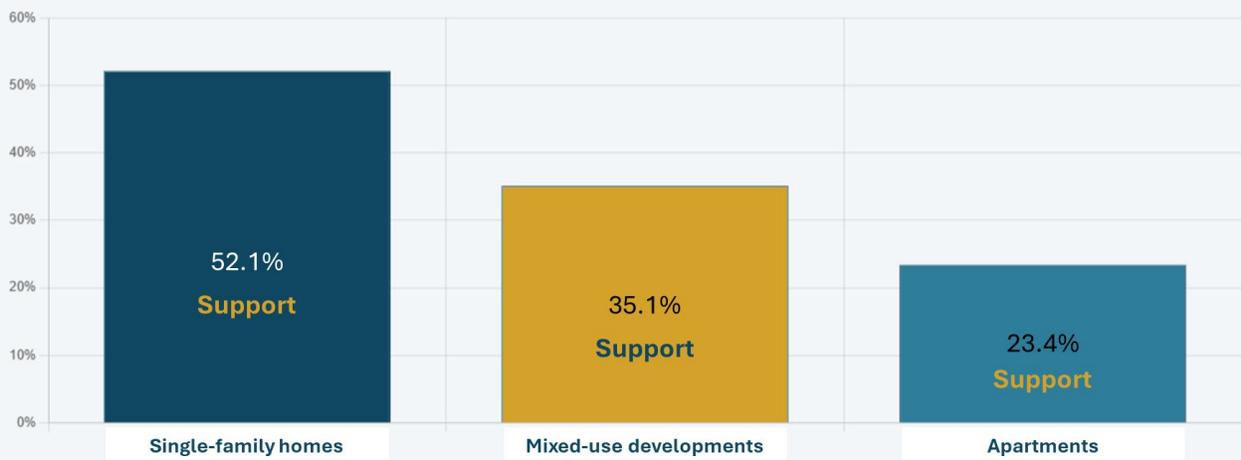


Household Size Distribution

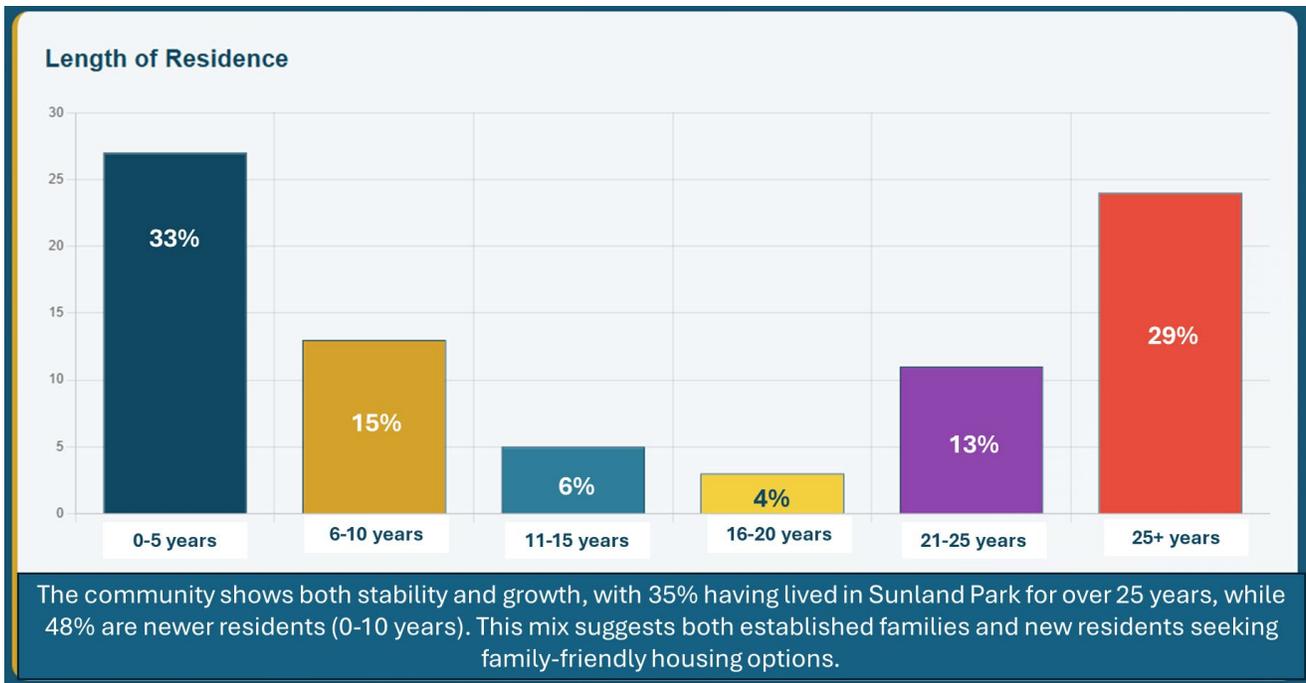


Nearly 55% of households have 4 or more people, indicating strong demand for family-sized housing. This supports the preference for single-family homes over smaller apartment units.

Affordable Housing Preferences



Among those who support affordable housing, single-family homes are still the preferred option (52.1%), followed by mixed-use developments (35.1%). This suggests that affordability concerns don't necessarily translate to acceptance of higher-density housing.



### Key Housing Insights

- **Strong preference for single-family homes:** 54.3% of respondents want to see more single-family dwellings, significantly higher than any other housing type (45.7% oppose).
- **Low demand for high-density housing:** Only 17% support multi-family apartments (83% oppose), and 91.5% oppose higher-density housing developments (8.5% support).
- **Moderate interest in affordable housing:** 29.8% support more affordable housing options (70.2% oppose), with single-family homes being the preferred affordable option at 52.1% (47.9% oppose).
- **Established community:** 35% of residents have lived in Sunland Park for more than 25 years, indicating a stable, long-term community, while 40% are newer residents (0-10 years).
- **Family-oriented households:** 54.9% of households have four or more people (45 out of 82 responses), suggesting strong demand for family-sized housing.
- **Limited support for mixed-use:** Only 27.7% support mixed-use developments (72.3% oppose), and only 35.1% support mixed-use for affordable housing (64.9% oppose).
- **Townhouse interest:** 26.6% support more townhouses (73.4% oppose), making it the second most popular housing type after single-family homes.
- **Senior housing limited demand:** Only 19.2% support senior housing (80.8% oppose), despite having residents aged 65+ in the community.

## Survey Results vs. Comprehensive Plan Alignment

 **Single-Family Housing Preference:** The survey indicates that 54.3% of respondents prefer more single-family homes, aligning with the current dominance of this housing type (77.6%). The Comprehensive Plan supports this through Master Planned Neighborhoods.

 **Multi-Family Resistance vs. Plan Goals:** Only 17% support apartments, yet the Comprehensive Plan aims to balance single-family and multifamily housing options to address market needs.

 **Affordable Housing Gap:** While only 29.8% of survey respondents prioritize affordable housing, the data reveals 58% of renters are cost-burdened, indicating a critical disconnect between perceived and actual needs. The Comprehensive Plan addresses this through a formal affordable housing strategy.

 **Family-Oriented Development:** Large household sizes (3.43-3.97 avg.) align with survey data showing 4-person households as most common. The Comprehensive Plan prioritizes family housing to meet this demand.

 **Implementation Challenge:** Survey preferences favor the status quo, but the Comprehensive Plan requires housing diversification to achieve balance across housing types and reduce renter cost burden.

## Detailed Policy Framework

### GOAL H-1: Preserve and Expand Homeownership Opportunities

#### **Policy H-1.1: First-Time Homebuyer Support**

- Partner with the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) for down payment assistance programs
- Establish local homebuyer education programs offered in English and Spanish
- Create shared equity programs for workforce housing that preserve long-term affordability
- Support employer-assisted housing programs for essential workers

#### **Policy H-1.2: Manufactured Housing Integration**

- Update development standards for manufactured housing communities to ensure quality and neighborhood compatibility
- Require permanent foundations and architectural compatibility with surrounding development
- Establish design standards that reflect binational architectural heritage
- Support manufactured housing community improvements and resident ownership opportunities

#### **Policy H-1.3: Affordable Homeownership Development**

- Implement inclusionary housing requirements for residential developments over 20 units
- Utilize Public Improvement Districts (PIDs) to finance infrastructure supporting affordable housing
- Create a land banking program for future affordable housing development
- Establish a housing trust fund to support affordable homeownership initiatives

## GOAL H-2: Diversify Housing Stock and Increase Supply

### Policy H-2.1: Strategic Infill Development

- Prioritize development in areas with existing infrastructure capacity
- Encourage mixed-use development in designated areas as shown in the Comprehensive Plan 2045
- Support Transit-Oriented Development near the future enhanced port of entry
- Promote development that efficiently uses existing utility and transportation infrastructure

### Policy H-2.2: Housing Diversity Standards

- Update zoning standards to encourage diverse housing types, including townhouses, condominiums, and small-scale multi-family
- Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in appropriate residential zones to increase housing options
- Promote live-work arrangements in mixed-use developments along major corridors
- Support innovative housing types, including tiny homes and co-housing arrangements, where appropriate

### Policy H-2.3: Development Facilitation

- Streamline permitting processes for affordable and workforce housing projects
- Offer density bonuses and fee reductions for developments providing community benefits
- Use PID financing mechanisms to support infrastructure for new housing development
- Establish expedited review processes for housing projects meeting community priorities

## GOAL H-3: Preserve and Improve Existing Housing Quality

### **Policy H-3.1: Housing Preservation Programs**

- Establish rehabilitation assistance programs for low-income property owners
- Create weatherization and energy efficiency programs aligned with state environmental goals
- Implement regular property inspections with technical assistance and compliance support
- Partner with nonprofit organizations to provide home repair assistance

### **Policy H-3.2: Manufactured Housing Quality Standards**

- Enforce skirting, tie-down, and foundation requirements in manufactured housing areas
- Require architectural compatibility improvements for manufactured housing communities
- Support the manufactured housing community infrastructure improvements
- Provide resources for manufactured housing owners to upgrade and maintain their properties

### **Policy H-3.3: Neighborhood Preservation**

- Establish neighborhood beautification programs, recognizing well-maintained properties
- Provide property maintenance education and resources to residents
- Support community pride initiatives that enhance neighborhood character
- Implement design guidelines that preserve architectural heritage while allowing appropriate updates

## GOAL H-4: Serve Special Populations and Cross-Border Families

### **Policy H-4.1: Senior and Accessible Housing**

- Encourage the development of age-restricted housing communities with appropriate services
- Ensure universal design features and ADA compliance in all new multifamily developments
- Support aging-in-place modifications for existing homes
- Develop one senior housing facility by 2030 with supportive services

### **Policy H-4.2: Binational Community Services**

- Provide bilingual housing services and real estate assistance to serve Spanish-speaking residents
- Develop housing designs that reflect Mexican colonial and Southwestern architectural traditions
- Support cross-border workforce housing needs while maintaining community character
- Create housing solutions that accommodate binational families' unique living arrangements

### **Policy H-4.3: Universal Access**

- Promote universal design principles in new housing development
- Support modification programs for existing housing to improve accessibility
- Ensure affordable housing options include accessible units
- Coordinate with disability services organizations to identify and address housing needs

## Strategic Recommendations

### Immediate Actions (2025-2026)

- Establish inclusionary housing requirements for developments over 20 units
- Create a housing trust fund with sustainable revenue sources
- Implement expedited permitting for affordable housing projects

### Medium-term Strategy (2026-2030)

- Develop 200 affordable housing units targeting 80% AMI and below
- Activate development potential through strategic infrastructure investment
- Create a senior housing facility with supportive services

### Long-term Vision (2030-2045)

- Maintain 15% affordable housing stock through ongoing development
- Establish transit-oriented development near the enhanced port of entry
- Create binational workforce housing solutions

## Funding Strategy

Multi-layered approach leveraging federal, state, and local resources:

### Federal Resources

- USDA Rural Development Section 515
- Community Development Block Grant
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
- HOME Investment Partnership

### State & Local Tools

- New Mexico Finance Authority
- Public Improvement Districts
- Land banking strategy
- Fee reductions & incentives

## Code Alignment Summary

The Land Development Code provides a strong foundation for implementing the Housing Strategy's four main goals:

- *Goal H-1 (Homeownership)*: Supported by diverse residential zoning districts and manufactured housing standards
- *Goal H-2 (Housing Diversity)*: Enabled through RCPUD, ADUs, mixed-use provisions, and PID financing
- *Goal H-3 (Quality Preservation)*: Addressed through building standards, setback requirements, and compliance mechanisms
- *Goal H-4 (Special Populations)*: Accommodated via institutional uses, accessibility requirements, and flexible zoning

## The Path Forward

Sunland Park's housing strategy strikes a balance between community preferences for single-family housing and the critical need for diverse, affordable options. With robust Land Development Code provisions already in place, success requires coordinated implementation of existing regulatory tools, strategic funding utilization, and ongoing community engagement to ensure housing development aligns with the city's unique binational character and economic development objectives.



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## 6. Transportation

Transportation is the foundation of Sunland Park’s identity and its evolution as a dynamic binational gateway. Strategically situated at the confluence of New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, the City’s transportation network links residents to jobs, schools, healthcare, and cultural destinations across the broader Paso del Norte region. It also serves as a critical engine of regional economic integration, enabling cross-border mobility, supporting international trade through the Santa Teresa Port of Entry, and facilitating daily commutes to El Paso and Las Cruces.

This chapter presents a transformative, forward-looking transportation strategy for Sunland Park through the year 2045. Developed through robust community engagement, technical analysis, and binational coordination, the plan outlines a comprehensive roadmap for creating a multimodal, resilient, and equitable transportation system. It addresses pressing mobility challenges—such as limited north-south connectivity, incomplete pedestrian infrastructure, and growing cross-border freight volumes—while advancing the City’s role as a regional hub for commerce, connection, and opportunity.

Anchored in the City’s Land Development Code, this strategy integrates transportation and land use policy through key mechanisms, including Traffic Impact Analyses, Complete Streets standards, and Public Improvement Districts. These tools help ensure that growth supports mobility goals, leverages infrastructure investments, and reinforces regulatory alignment.

### Vision for 2045

By 2045, Sunland Park will be served by a fully integrated and sustainable transportation network that reflects the community’s binational identity, diverse mobility needs, and environmental values. This system will:

- Connect all residents to regional opportunities.
- Reduce dependency on single-occupancy vehicles.
- Enhance safety and equity for all users.
- Strengthen international trade and freight mobility.
- Support economic prosperity across borders.



## Key Findings from Community Engagement and Analysis

- *Seventy-eight percent of residents* cited road maintenance, pedestrian safety, and limited public transportation as their top concerns.
- *NM 136 carries approximately 8,000 vehicles per day, with 30% of the traffic* consisting of heavy commercial vehicles.
- *Infrastructure capacity limitations* pose a significant risk to future economic growth.
- There is a *critical need for alternative Rio Grande crossings* to maintain regional competitiveness.
- While *only one respondent currently uses public transit* for commuting, *26.2% ranked it as “Extremely Important.”*

## Critical Infrastructure Priorities

To realize the 2045 vision, Sunland Park must advance several strategic transportation investments, including:

- *Development of alternative Rio Grande crossings*, potentially via Frontera Road, to alleviate congestion, support emergency response, and improve north-south connectivity within the region;
- *Implementation of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry (Sunland Park, NM – Anapra, Mexico)*, a critical binational infrastructure project designed to enhance trade efficiency, improve cross-border mobility, and alleviate congestion at existing ports of entry. This project requires coordination among federal, state, and local agencies in both the U.S. and Mexico, and aligns with regional and national goals for border infrastructure modernization.
- *Construction of the Border Highway Connector*, a high-priority initiative outlined in the Santa Teresa Strategic Plan (pp. 55–58), to improve freight and passenger vehicle movement between industrial zones and major corridors;
- *Expansion of SCRTD’s Purple Route service*, increasing transit frequency and geographic coverage to address growing ridership needs and reduce transportation barriers for underserved populations.

## Building Connectivity for a Binational Gateway Community

The city’s transportation system must cater to both local mobility—ensuring safe and multimodal connections within neighborhoods—and broader needs, such as managing freight logistics and facilitating efficient cross-border movement through existing and planned ports of entry. Sunland Park is also emerging as a key hub for international trade and workforce mobility. This dual role requires coordinated planning that enhances community livability while also supporting regional economic objectives.

### Key Insights:

- Sunland Park’s transportation challenges are fundamentally different from those of typical suburban communities due to its binational character and freight responsibilities.
- The integration of local mobility needs with international trade flows requires unprecedented coordination between multiple jurisdictions and agencies.
- Community survey data reveals significant gaps between transportation supply and demand, particularly for transit and pedestrian infrastructure.
- The Land Development Code provides essential tools for ensuring new development supports multimodal transportation goals.

### Strategic Geographic Context

Sunland Park’s transportation network must serve multiple interconnected functions that extend far beyond the typical municipal boundaries. The city’s mobility system operates within a complex web of local, regional, state, national, and international transportation networks, each with distinct requirements and operational characteristics.

The transportation system must accommodate:

- *Local residential circulation* connecting neighborhoods to schools, parks, and commercial areas
- *Regional commuter patterns* linking Sunland Park residents to employment centers in El Paso, Las Cruces, and Santa Teresa
- *International freight logistics* moving goods between Mexico, the United States, and Canada
- *Cross-border workforce mobility* supporting the daily movement of workers between the U.S. and Mexico
- *Binational social and cultural connections* facilitating family, educational, and cultural exchanges

### Key Insights:

- The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan identifies critical regional projects that directly impact Sunland Park’s transportation network, including the Industrial Loop Extension (pp. 102-104) and Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58).
- Coordination with multiple agencies is essential, including NMDOT, TxDOT, SCRTD, Sun Metro, the Water and Wastewater Utilities department (formerly CRRUA), the Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación (IMIP), the Junta Municipal de Agua y Saneamiento (JMAS), and the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), among others.
- The city’s location creates unique opportunities for economic development but also presents complex infrastructure coordination challenges.
- The Futurity Drive Entertainment Corridor represents a priority roadway project that received \$3 million in federal funding through Congressman Vasquez’s CDS top 15 projects. This family-oriented entertainment District integrates art, placemaking, and culture with pedestrian-friendly design, connecting existing anchors like the casino, racetrack, and Western Playland.

## Family Oriented Entertainment Corridor



### Regulatory and Policy Framework Integration

This Transportation Chapter seamlessly integrates with and reinforces multiple layers of planning documents, regulatory frameworks, and policy initiatives that collectively shape Sunland Park’s development trajectory. The comprehensive approach ensures consistency across all planning efforts while providing specific implementation mechanisms for transportation improvements.

### Primary Integration Points:

- *The Sunland Park Land Development Code (LDC)* establishes fundamental requirements for connectivity, multimodal design, and infrastructure provision in new developments.
- *The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan* identifies regional projects, including the Industrial Loop (pp. 102-104), Strauss Road Extension (p. 104), and Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58), that directly impact Sunland Park’s circulation network.
- *The El Paso MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan* provides regional context and funding coordination for cross-jurisdictional projects.
- [The SCRTD Ten-Year Transit and Financial Plan \(2021-2030\)](#) designates Sunland Park as a core service area for future route expansion and service improvements
- *Binational coordination frameworks* with the IMIP (Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación), the Junta Municipal de Agua y Saneamiento (JMAS), the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), and other entities.

### Key Insights:

- The LDC’s Traffic Impact Analysis requirements (§10-3-2) ensure that new development contributes to transportation infrastructure needs.
- Public Improvement Districts (LDC §10-3-7) provide financing mechanisms for transportation enhancements in areas of growth and development.
- Regional coordination is essential for securing funding and ensuring project compatibility across jurisdictions.

## Transportation Vision Statement

*“By 2045, Sunland Park will serve as a model binational community where safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation choices seamlessly connect all residents to opportunity while supporting the region’s role as a premier international gateway for commerce, culture, and collaboration.”*

This comprehensive vision statement encompasses multiple interconnected dimensions of transportation excellence:

The City of Sunland Park is actively pursuing development as a multi-modal transportation city, representing a comprehensive approach that includes walking, biking, driving, and transit options that connect to public open spaces and leverage natural resources, including the Franklin Mountains viewsheds and the Rio Grande.

### Connectivity Dimension:

- Seamless multimodal networks linking neighborhoods, employment centers, educational facilities, and recreational destinations
- Regional transportation integration connecting Sunland Park to El Paso, Las Cruces, Santa Teresa, and Ciudad Juárez
- Binational infrastructure supporting workforce mobility and international commerce
- Digital connectivity through intelligent transportation systems and smart infrastructure

### Safety Dimension:

- Vision Zero principles prioritize the protection of all users, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable populations, including children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.
- Safe Systems Approach, incorporating redundant safety measures and forgiving design principles
- Emergency preparedness and response capabilities, including evacuation route planning and redundant access systems
- Security coordination with border protection agencies and law enforcement

### Equity Dimension:

- Transportation justice ensures equitable access to mobility options regardless of income, age, ability, or documentation status.
- Community-responsive planning processes that meaningfully engage all residents in transportation decision-making

- Investment prioritization that addresses historic inequities in infrastructure provision
- Multilingual and culturally appropriate transportation services and information

**Sustainability Dimension:**

- Climate-resilient infrastructure designed to withstand extreme weather events and environmental challenges
- Low-carbon transportation options, including electric vehicle infrastructure, enhanced transit, and active transportation facilities
- Green infrastructure integration supporting stormwater management and urban heat island mitigation
- Resource efficiency in the construction, operation, and maintenance of transportation facilities

**Economic Vitality Dimension:**

- Strategic freight and logistics infrastructure supporting international trade and regional economic competitiveness
- Transit-oriented development patterns that reduce infrastructure costs while enhancing economic development opportunities
- Workforce mobility infrastructure connecting residents to employment opportunities throughout the region.
- Tourism and recreational infrastructure supporting economic diversification and community vitality

**Key Insights:**

- The vision statement reflects community priorities identified through extensive public engagement and survey research.
- Implementation of this vision requires unprecedented coordination between local, regional, state, national, and international agencies.
- Success depends on sustained political leadership, community engagement, and financial commitment over multiple decades.
- The vision positions Sunland Park as a leader in binational transportation planning and implementation.

## Existing Transportation Network and Multimodal Connectivity

Automobiles remain the dominant mode of transportation in Sunland Park, making the roadway network a critical element of the city’s transportation system and a primary factor in shaping its physical and economic development. The city’s key corridors—*NM-273 (McNutt Road)*, *NM-136 (Pete V. Domenici Highway/Artcraft Road)*, and *Country Club Road*—serve as vital connectors for regional mobility, cross-border access, and future growth.

While public transit service in Sunland Park is limited, it provides essential connections to neighboring jurisdictions. *Transit routes from Sunland Park offer direct links to Sun Metro’s Westside, Northgate, and Downtown Transit Centers*, expanding regional access for commuters and residents without personal vehicles.

To promote greater accessibility and mobility for all users, the city is also investing in multimodal infrastructure, including:

- *Shared-use paths* that accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists,
- *Bike lanes* are designated for safer cycling,
- *Sharrows* indicating shared lanes for bicycles and vehicles, and
- *Sidewalks* support pedestrian circulation in residential and commercial areas.



In addition, regional freight and economic infrastructure—such as the *Doña Ana County International Jetport* and the *Union Pacific Intermodal Facility* in Santa Teresa—reinforce Sunland Park’s strategic role as a *multimodal gateway* within the broader *binational and regional transportation network*.

## Roadway Network Analysis and Functional Classification

Sunland Park’s roadway network forms the foundation of the transportation system, providing connectivity for all modes of transportation and serving as the framework for land use development. The network includes state highways, regional arterials, local collectors, and neighborhood streets, each serving distinct functions within the overall transportation hierarchy.

**Table 5-1** and **Figure 5-1** illustrate the roadway facility types in Sunland Park, capturing operational characteristics such as speed limits, traffic control, and access management. These classifications also include the *functional classification* of each roadway, which defines how a street serves the community’s mobility and accessibility needs.

Roadway Segment	Location	Facility Type	Adopted Functional Classification
NM-136; Pete Domenici Boulevard	Mexico Border to Texas Border	Principal Arterial	Principal Arterial
NM-273; McNutt Road	NM-136 to Texas Border	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial
Sunland Park Drive	McNutt Road to Texas Border	Major Collector/Minor Arterial	Minor Arterial
Borderland Road	McNutt Road to Texas Border	Major Collector	Major Collector
Naranjo Road	McNutt Road to Crawford Road	Local	Minor Collector
Racetrack Drive	McNutt Road to Texas Border	Local	Minor Arterial
Crawford Road	Naranjo Road to Country Club Road	Local	Minor Collector
Country Club Road	McNutt Road to Texas Border	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial
Airport Road	McNutt Road to the airport	Minor Arterial	Major Collector
McNutt Road	NM-136 to Westside Drive	Principal Arterial/Minor Arterial	Major Collector
Westside Drive	NM-28 to Texas Border	Minor Arterial	Minor Collector

Among the roadways classified as *Principal Arterials*, NM-136 (*Pete Domenici Boulevard*) and NM-273 (*McNutt Road*) carry the highest volumes of traffic. McNutt Road serves the majority of existing development within the city, while Pete Domenici Boulevard functions as the primary route to and from the *Santa Teresa Port of Entry (POE)*. Notably, NM-136 is part of the *National Highway System*, making it eligible for various federal funding programs. The city’s proximity to the POE contributes to significant freight traffic along this corridor.

There are *five signalized intersections* in Sunland Park—all located on McNutt Road—at Pete Domenici Boulevard, Country Club Road, Riverside Drive, Sunland Park Drive, and Racetrack Drive. Additional regional connectivity is provided by *Doniphan Drive, US-85, and I-10* in Texas, which serve both residents and visitors to Sunland Park (see Figure 5-1).

Roadways designated as *New Mexico State Highways* are funded and maintained by the *New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT)* through state gas tax revenues, state transportation programs, and federal grants. *Local roads* are typically funded and maintained by municipal or county governments, though state and federal funding may also be leveraged for improvements to arterial roads or those critical to regional mobility.

## Primary Corridor Analysis:

### **NM 273 (McNutt Road) - Principal Arterial:**

- Serves as the primary north-south corridor connecting residential neighborhoods to employment centers
- Carries approximately 12,000-15,000 vehicles per day
- Experiences congestion during peak hours, particularly at major intersections
- Serves as the primary route for the SCRTD Purple Route and regional transit connections
- Significant freight traffic creates conflicts with pedestrian and bicycle access
- Sidewalk coverage is incomplete, with numerous ADA compliance gaps

### **NM 136 (Pete V. Domenici Boulevard) - Principal Arterial (NHS):**

- Federally designated National Highway System route serving the Santa Teresa Port of Entry
- Handles approximately 8,000 vehicles daily, with 30% heavy commercial traffic
- Critical freight corridor connecting the port of entry to the Interstate 10 system
- Limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities due to freight orientation
- Intersection capacity constraints at major crossings, including McNutt Road

### **Country Club Road - Minor Arterial:**

- Primary east-west arterial corridor along the Texas border
- Serves both local circulation and regional connectivity functions
- Experiences conflicts between residential access and through traffic
- Limited sidewalk coverage and pedestrian crossing facilities
- Potential for enhanced bicycle infrastructure with adequate right-of-way

### **Sunland Park Drive - Minor Arterial:**

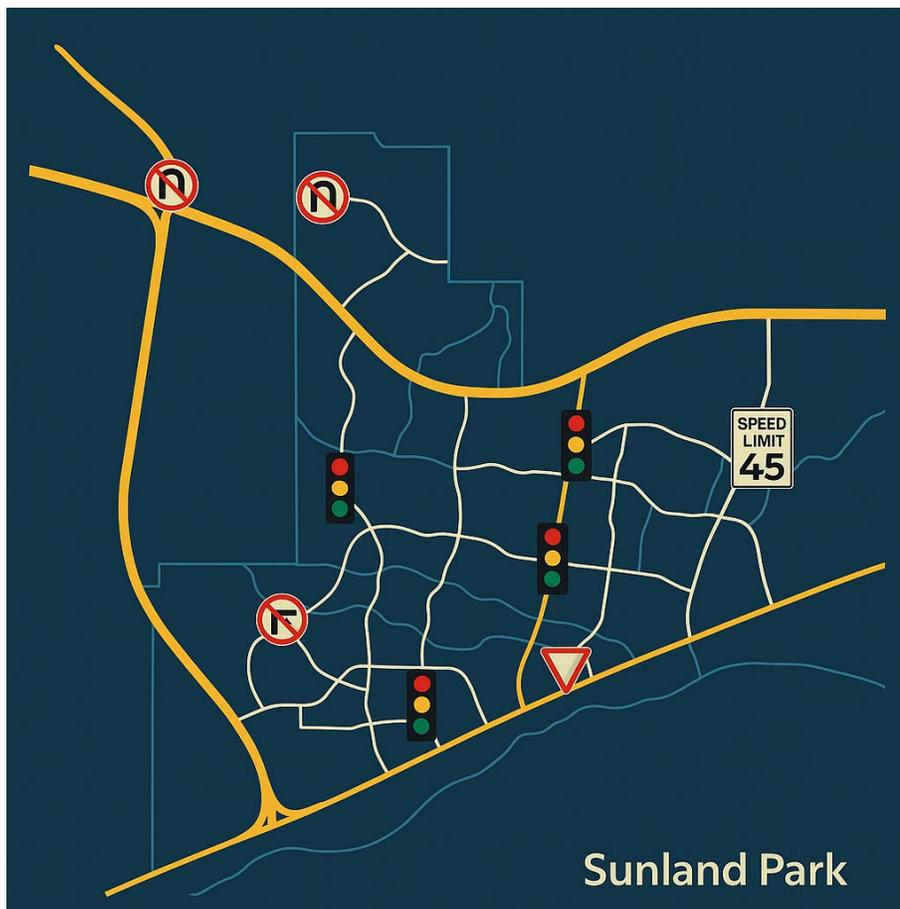
- Secondary east-west corridor linking local neighborhoods
- Serves as the primary Rio Grande crossing for local traffic
- Experiences capacity constraints during peak periods
- Limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- Critical corridor for access to the proposed Medical District

### Racetrack Drive - Major Collector:

- Serves local circulation and access to recreational facilities
- Connects residential areas to the arterial network
- Limited infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle access
- Intersections with arterials experience capacity constraints during events

### Key Insights:

- The functional classification system reflects both local needs and regional responsibilities.
- Freight traffic on state highways creates challenges for local circulation and pedestrian access.
- Intersection capacity constraints limit network efficiency.
- The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan identifies regional improvements, including the Industrial Loop Extension (pp. 102-104) and Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58), that will impact local circulation.



This image is for illustrative purposes only.

## Roadways Functional Classification

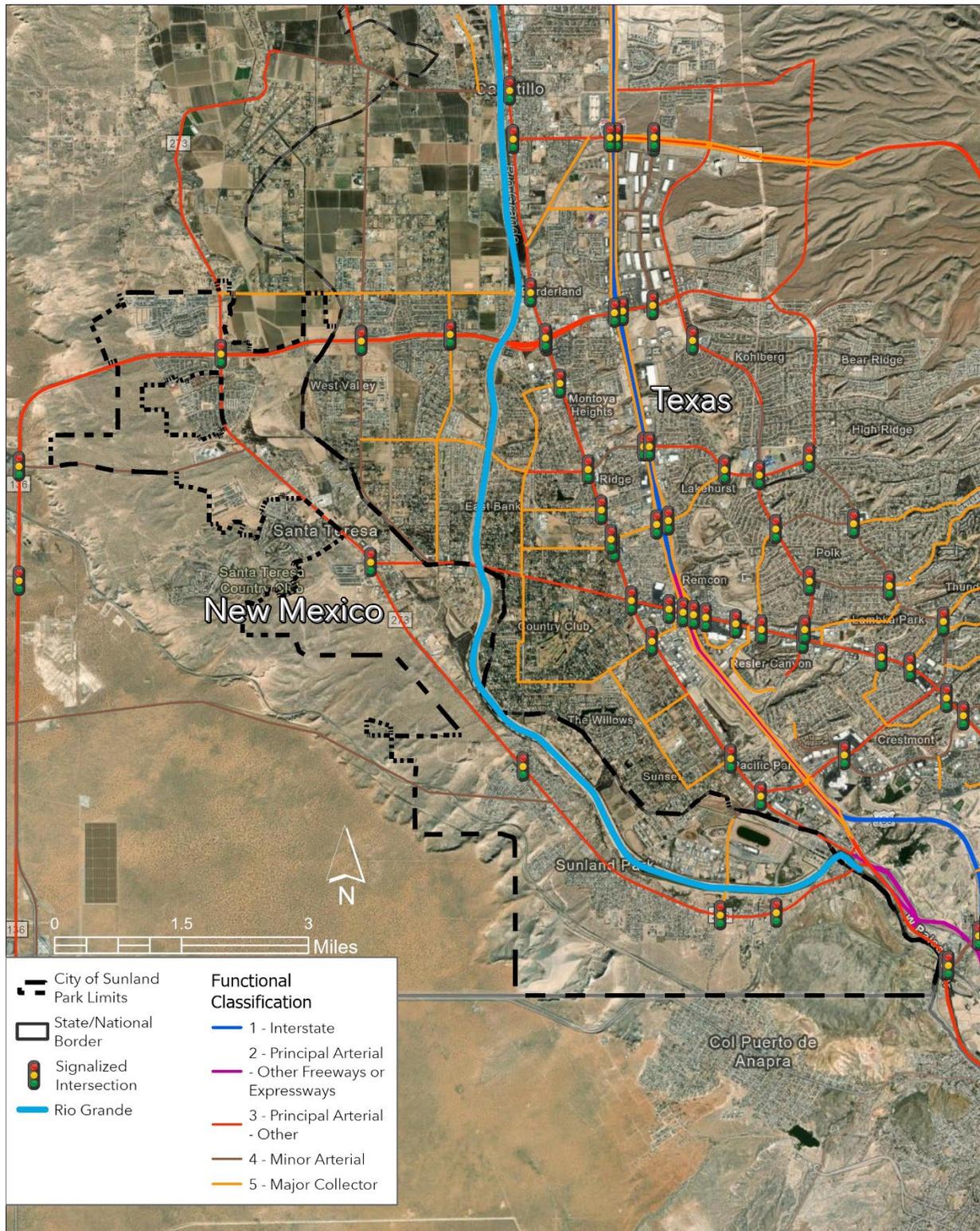


Figure 6-1 Existing Functional Classification Map

## Future Functional Classification

Sunland Park's 2045 Transportation Vision establishes a connected, multimodal network that enhances regional mobility and binational coordination. The Future Functional Classification Map identifies the city's planned roadway network through 2045, illustrating proposed arterials, collectors, and multimodal corridors that connect residential, industrial, and binational districts.

### **Key Components of the Transportation Network:**

The vision includes transformative investments such as the North–South Corridor, Strauss Road Extension, McNutt Multimodal Corridor, Rio Grande Trail extension, and enhanced access to the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Port of Entry. Together, these projects will create a resilient system linking neighborhoods, employment centers, and industrial hubs while supporting active transportation and regional connectivity.

### **Rio Grande State Boundary Crossing Alternatives:**

The map depicts two potential Rio Grande state boundary crossing alternatives—Frontera Road and Redd/Gomez—that will be evaluated in the future to determine a single preferred alignment. These alternatives would cross the Rio Grande at the state boundary to enhance regional connectivity between Doña Ana County, New Mexico, and El Paso County, Texas, improving emergency access, freight efficiency, and local circulation.

When evaluation occurs, feasibility, traffic, environmental, and floodplain analyses will be conducted in partnership with Doña Ana County, El Paso County, NMDOT, TxDOT, and the El Paso MPO. A single preferred alternative will then be selected and advanced to final design and construction. Selection criteria will include traffic performance, emergency response improvement, environmental impacts, floodplain management, construction costs, right-of-way requirements, and community input.

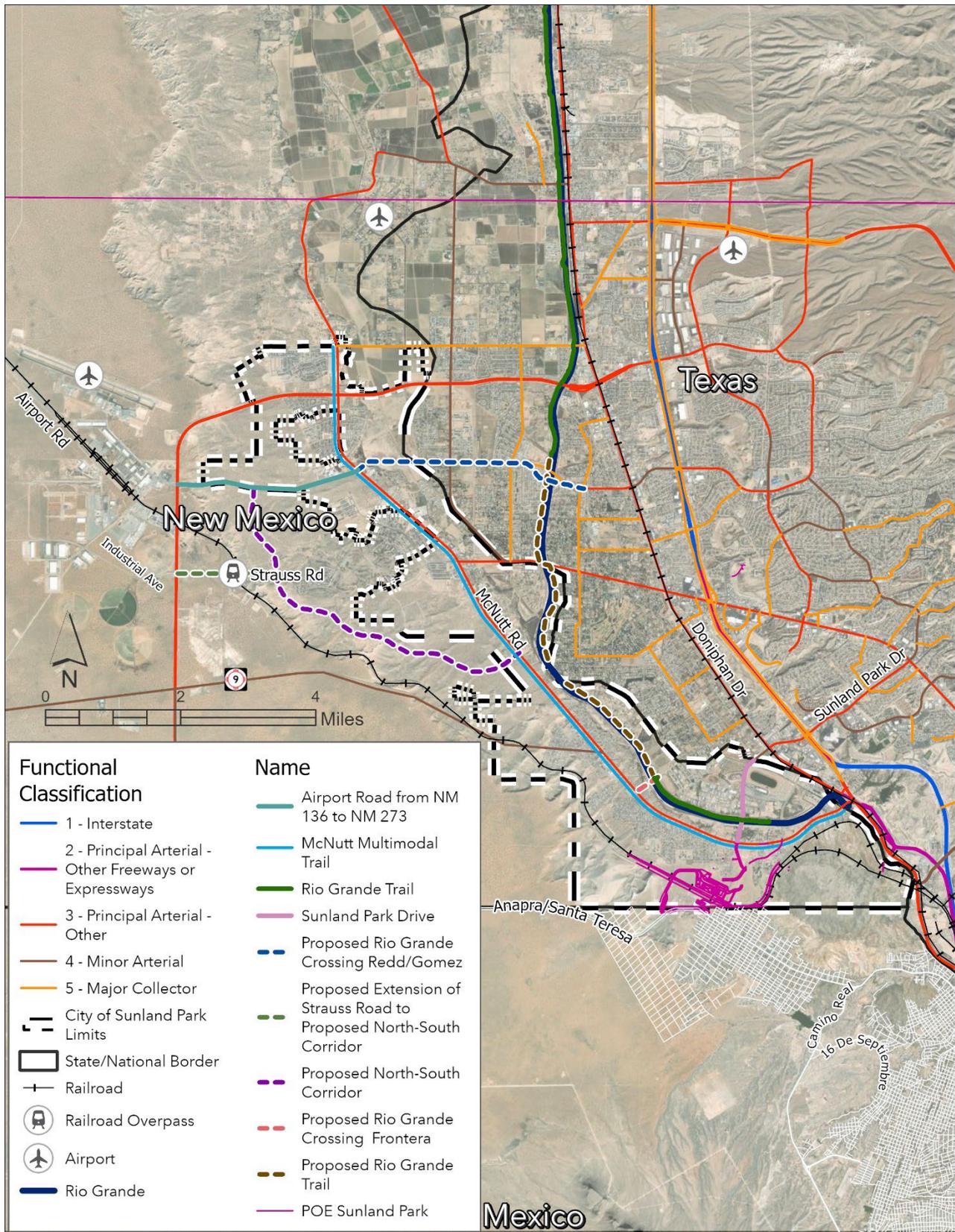


Figure 6-2 Future Functional Classification Map

## Existing Transit Service

While public transit service within Sunland Park is limited, it provides essential and growing connections to the broader Paso del Norte region. Two transit agencies—*Sun Metro*, the City of El Paso’s mass transit system, and the *South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)*—serve the area with fixed-route bus services that connect Sunland Park residents to key destinations in El Paso and southern New Mexico.

### South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)

The *South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)* operates three color-coded fixed-route services—*Yellow, Purple, and Silver*—that directly serve *Sunland Park* and provide vital connections to *Downtown El Paso*, as well as *Sun Metro’s Westside and Northgate Transit Centers*. These routes also extend to key regional destinations, including *Santa Teresa, Chaparral, Anthony, Las Cruces, Hatch, and Truth or Consequences*.

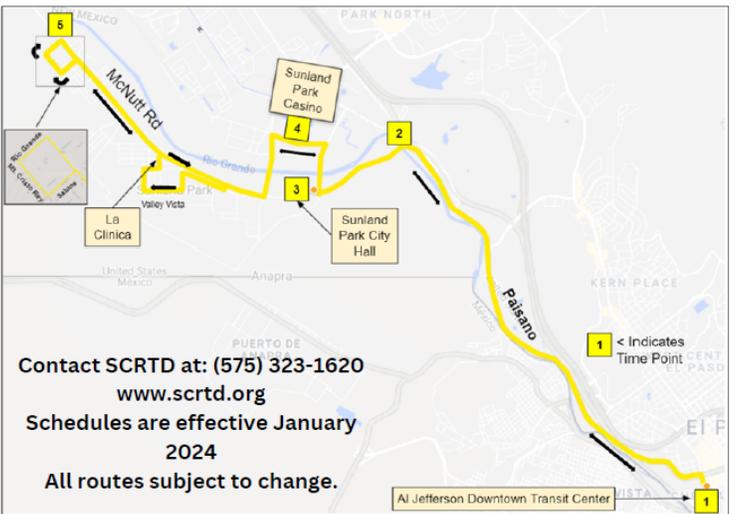
**Yellow Route:** Serves as a key east-west spine connecting *Sunland Park* to *Downtown El Paso*, with 38 stops throughout the city. This route, formerly operated by *Sun Metro* as Route 83, was incorporated into SCRTD’s system in *October 2020* and continues to provide seven-day-a-week service, including weekday hours from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM and weekend hours from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM. The El Paso stop is located at *4th Avenue and Santa Fe Street*, across from the *Bert Williams Downtown Transfer Center*.

## Yellow Line/ Linea Amarilla



FREE Fare starting January 5, 2025 until  
January 1, 2026

All Routes are subject to change.

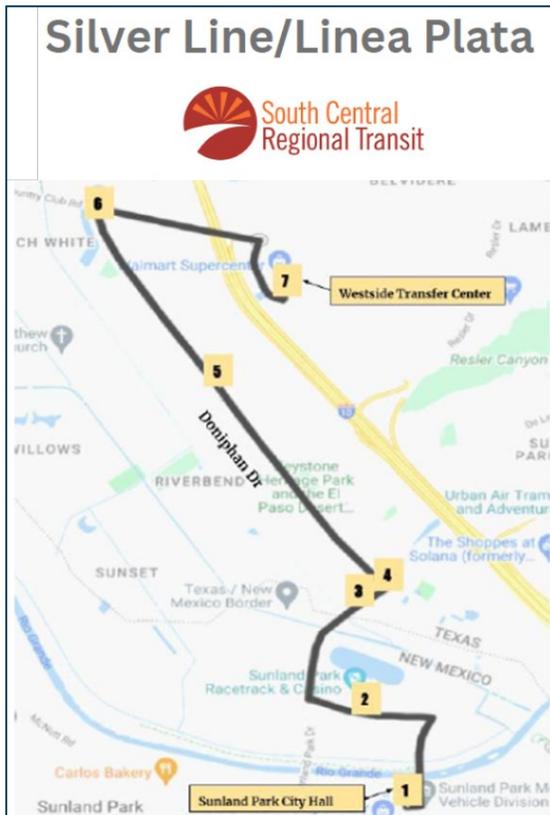
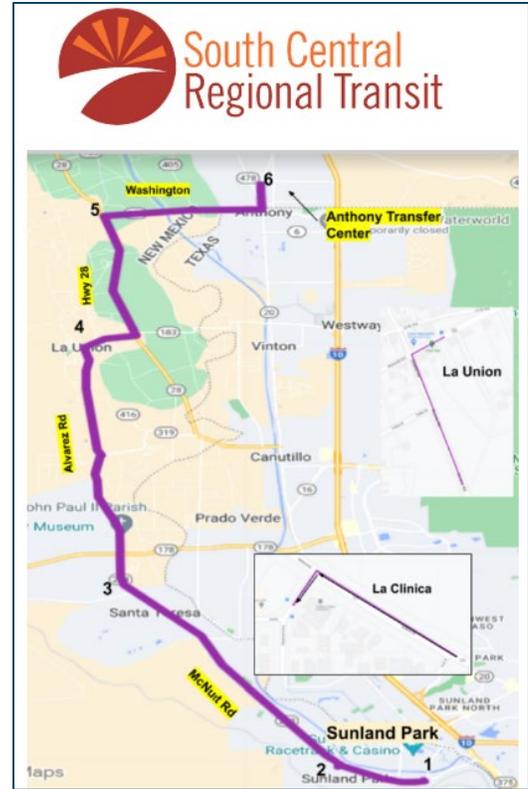


Contact SCRTD at: (575) 323-1620  
[www.scrtd.org](http://www.scrtd.org)

Schedules are effective January  
2024

All routes subject to change.

*Purple Route:* Travels along NM-273 (McNutt Road) and NM-136 (Pete Domenici Boulevard), linking Sunland Park to the Santa Teresa Port of Entry and Sun Metro’s Westside Transit Center, with extended regional access via Anthony and Chaparral.



*Silver Route:* Travels through Doniphan Drive and Anthony, with connections to both Sun Metro’s Northgate Transit Center and the Westside Transit Center, enhancing access to the broader El Paso metropolitan area.

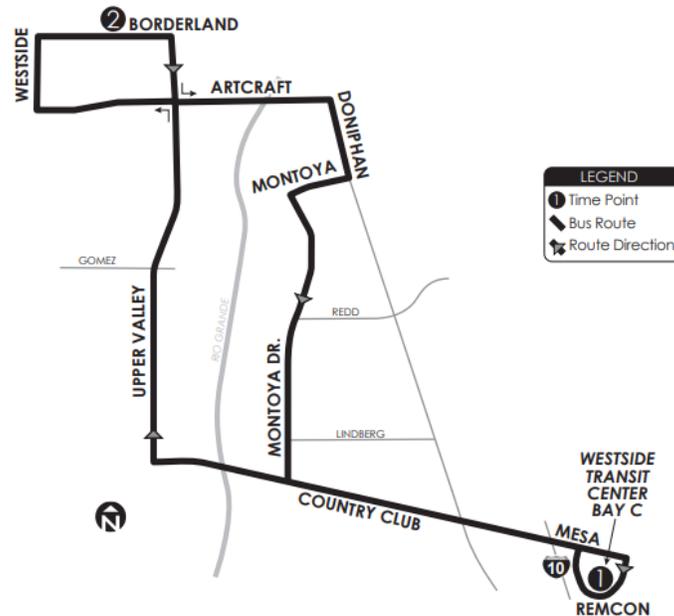
All SCRTD buses are equipped with *Wi-Fi* and feature *hybrid-electric vehicles* on higher-capacity routes, such as the Yellow Route. While the fleet is not yet fully electric, SCRTD is investing in cleaner technologies and upgrading its vehicles. The district is committed to equitable mobility and sustainability, offering *fare-free service through January 1, 2026*, and maintaining *onboard safety features* including plexiglass shields, vinyl seating, and free mask distribution. These routes converge at *Sunland Park City Hall*, forming a critical transfer point that enhances local and regional transit connectivity.

## Sun Metro

Although Sun Metro does not operate directly within Sunland Park, it remains a key transit partner for the region. Several Sun Metro routes, including *Route 16 (Upper Valley Circulator)*, operate near Sunland Park’s boundaries, particularly along *Westside Drive* near *Country Club Road*, providing indirect access to *El Paso’s transit network*, including the *Westside, Northgate, and Downtown Transit Centers*. Sun Metro currently manages *53 fixed bus routes* throughout El Paso County.

# 16 Upper Valley Circulator

WESTSIDE TRANSIT CENTER ROUTES  
12, 13, 15, 16, 19, PA90, Brio,  
NM Gold Route, CR 10  
SPECIAL TRIPS: 14



Mon-Fri		
Westside TC Bay C	Borderland/Bea Martinez	Westside TC Bay C
① 7:40	② 8:13	① 8:55

0422

## Regional Express Service

The *New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT)* also operates the *Gold Route*, an intercity express service connecting *Las Cruces, Anthony, and El Paso's Westside Transit Center*. Although it does not stop in Sunland Park, it complements regional travel options.

GOLD ROUTE Eastbound				
Las Cruces		Anthony		El Paso
NMSU	Mesilla Valley TC	Anthony Lot	Westside	Down-town
5:10am	5:21am	5:48am	6:05am	6:30am
6:29am	6:42am	7:09am	7:26am	7:45am
—	7:46am	—	8:25am	8:44am
7:37am	7:50am	8:17am	8:34am	8:53am
8:57am	9:10am	—	9:49am	—
2:56pm	3:10pm	3:37pm	3:59pm	4:27pm
4:30pm	4:44pm	5:11pm	5:28pm	5:47pm
5:31pm	5:45pm	6:12pm	6:29pm	6:48pm
6:09pm	6:23pm	6:50pm	7:07pm	7:26pm
6:20pm	6:34pm	7:01pm	7:18pm	7:37pm
7:20pm	7:34pm	8:03pm	8:20pm	8:39pm

GOLD ROUTE Westbound				
El Paso		Anthony		Las Cruces
Downtown	Westside	Anthony Lot	NMSU	Mesilla Valley TC
—	4:32am	—	5:10am	5:21am
—	5:14am	5:31am	6:00am	—
5:24am	5:43am	6:00am	6:29am	6:42am
6:32am	6:51am	7:08am	7:37am	7:50am
7:56am	8:11am	8:28am	8:57am	9:10am
—	3:17pm	—	3:55pm	—
4:36pm	4:55pm	5:12pm	5:41pm	5:55pm
5:15pm	5:34pm	5:51pm	6:20pm	6:34pm
6:15pm	6:34pm	6:51pm	7:20pm	7:34pm

**GOLD ROUTE**

**ONE-WAY FARE:** El Paso-Anthony-Las Cruces \$3 (exact fare required)

**MONTHLY PASS:** El Paso-Anthony-Las Cruces \$90

A new mobile ticketing option is being offered through Token Transit.  
Visit: <https://tokentransit.com/app>

Monthly Passes are available on-line at: [www.nmparkandride.com](http://www.nmparkandride.com)

For Monthly Pass Sales Outlets, contact:  
All Aboard America! at (505) 424-1110  
Or visit: [www.nmparkandride.com](http://www.nmparkandride.com)

**DAYS OF SERVICE:** Park & Ride operates week-days, except designated state holidays: New Years Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday following Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Exceptions: Holidays that fall on Saturday will be observed on Friday and those that fall on Sunday will be observed on Monday.

**PGRealTime:** Visit <http://nmdotparkandride.transloc.com/> for real-time GPS bus tracking and schedule information.



Las Cruces — Anthony — El Paso

**PICK-UP and DROP-OFF LOCATIONS:**

**Bert Williams Downtown Transit Center**  
601 Santa Fe Street, El Paso, TX.  
Bay P- between 4th Ave. and Father Rahm Ave.

**West Side Transfer Center**  
7535 Remcon Circle, El Paso, TX.  
South of the N. Mesa St. Wal-Mart. Board at Bay D.

**Anthony, Texas**  
Lowes Big 8 parking lot, 2000 Antonio St.

**NMSU**  
Northeast corner of Stewart St. & Arrowhead Dr., Las Cruces

**Mesilla Valley Intermodal Transit Terminal**  
300 W. Lohman Ave. at S. Alameda Blvd., Las Cruces

**For information on connecting services contact:**  
El Paso Sun Metro: (915) 533-3333  
Las Cruces RoadRUNNER Transit: (575) 541-2500  
El Paso County Transit: (915) 834-8242




For more information:  
[www.nmparkandride.com](http://www.nmparkandride.com)  
email: [nmparkandride@state.nm.us](mailto:nmparkandride@state.nm.us)  
(866) 551-RIDE (7433) or  
(505) 424-1110



*NMDOT Park and Ride's Gold Route is a General Public Transportation service of the New Mexico Department of Transportation, partially funded by the Texas Department of Transportation through the County of El Paso.*

**Table 5-2** provides a summary of transit service characteristics, and **Figure 5-2** illustrates the current fixed-route transit network in and around Sunland Park.

Existing Fixed-Route Transit Service		
Agency	Route Name	Description
South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)	Yellow Route	Seven-day-a-week service connecting Sunland Park to Downtown El Paso with 38 stops. Formerly Sun Metro Route 83. Fare-free through Jan 1, 2026. Terminates at 4th Ave & Santa Fe St., El Paso.
South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)	Purple Route	Runs along NM-273 and NM-136, linking Sunland Park to Santa Teresa POE and Sun Metro Westside Transfer Center. Fare-free through Jan 1, 2026.
South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)	Silver Route	Travels through Doniphan Drive and Anthony, connecting to Sun Metro’s Northgate and Westside Transit Centers. Fare-free through Jan 1, 2026.
Sun Metro	Route 16 – Upper Valley Circulator	West El Paso service between Westside Transfer Center and Westside Dr & Artcraft Rd. Runs every 80 minutes from 6:20 AM to 9:00 PM. \$1.50 fare.
NMDOT	Gold Route	Express route between Las Cruces, Anthony, and El Paso Westside Transit Center. Runs ~5 AM to 8 PM. \$3.00 fare. Does not stop in Sunland Park.



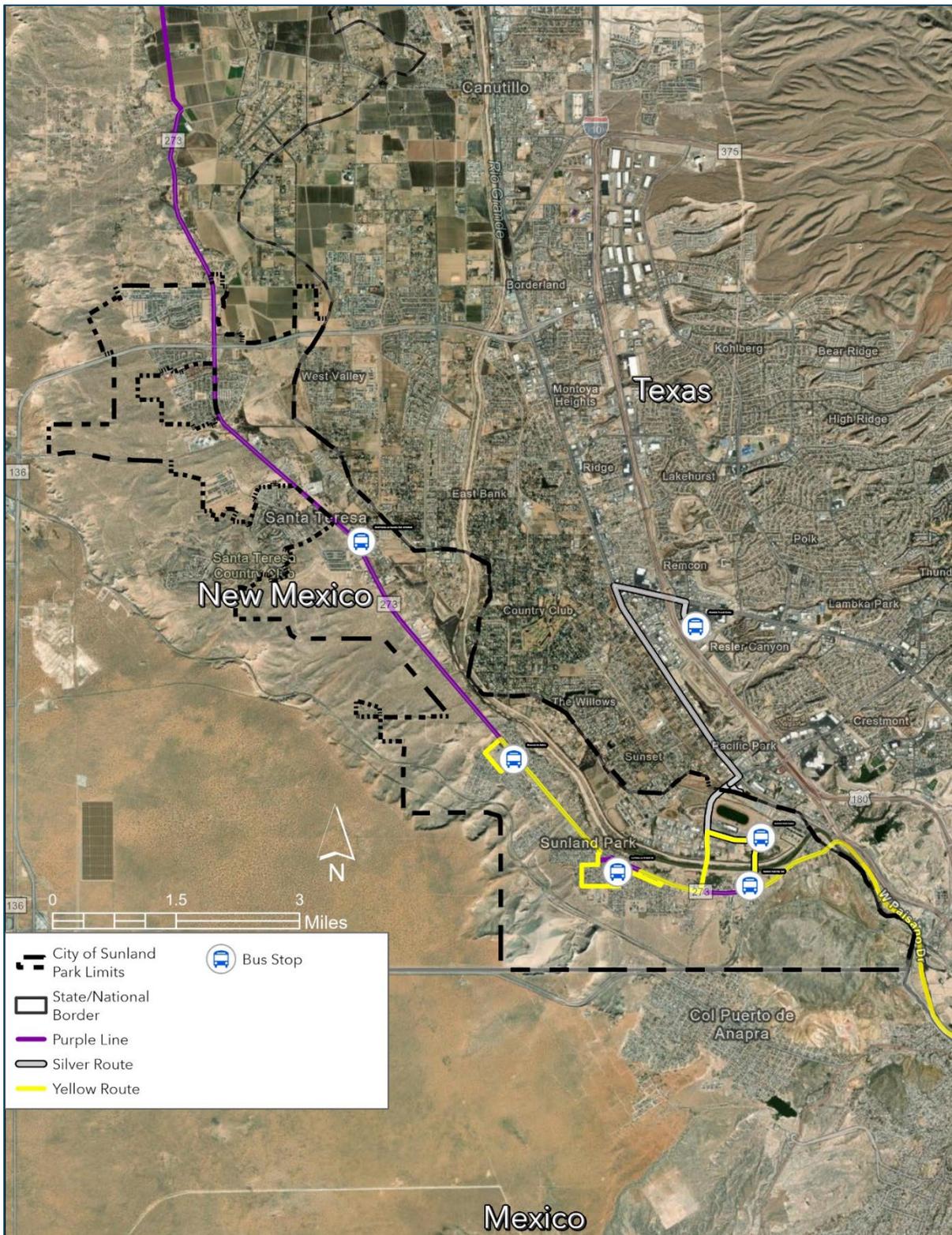
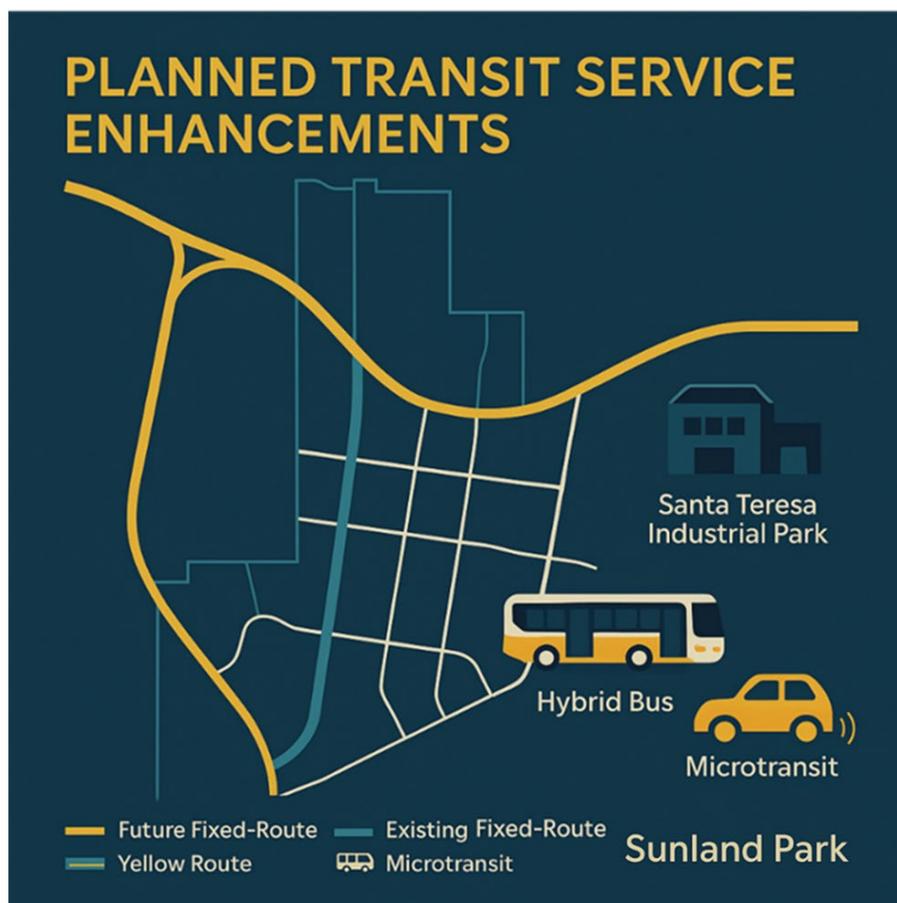


Figure 6-3 SCRTD Service Map

## Future Transit Improvements for Sunland Park (SCRTD)

SCRTD's Ten-Year Transit and Financial Plan (2021–2030) identifies *Sunland Park* as a core service area and outlines several planned service enhancements directly benefiting the community. Future improvements include *expanding fixed-route coverage* to the *Santa Teresa Industrial Park*, *increasing the frequency of Saturday service*, and *extending weekday service hours*. The Plan recommends ongoing modernization of the SCRTD fleet through *incremental replacement of older gasoline and diesel vehicles* with more *electric and hybrid-electric buses*—a process already underway, as the *Yellow Route is operated by two large hybrid-electric Gillig buses* to support high ridership demands.

Additionally, the *Sunland Park facility on Futurity Drive* is slated for infrastructure upgrades to support the expansion of *maintenance and administrative operations*. Notably, the Plan introduces *microtransit* as a complementary future service strategy to improve *flexibility and coverage in low-density or underserved areas*, addressing *first-mile/last-mile connections* and *service gaps* that traditional fixed routes cannot efficiently reach.



This image is for illustrative purposes only.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure Assessment

Current facilities are limited and discontinuous, creating barriers to non-motorized transportation and contributing to safety concerns for vulnerable road users.

### Sidewalk Network Analysis:

The sidewalk network in Sunland Park consists of both attached and detached sidewalks, marked crosswalks, and a shared-use path along McNutt Road. While pedestrian infrastructure exists throughout much of the city, sidewalk coverage, quality, and connectivity remain inconsistent. These gaps are especially pronounced along arterial corridors, near schools, and in undeveloped or older residential areas. Addressing these deficiencies is critical for creating a safer and more connected pedestrian environment.

The City's Land Development Code (LDC) provides a regulatory foundation for sidewalk installation in new subdivisions. §10-3-3.2 requires sidewalks on both sides of newly constructed streets, unless otherwise waived. §10-3-5.3 and §10-3-5.4(D) further mandate that sidewalks must have a minimum width of five feet (5'), meet ADA Standards for Accessible Design, and be constructed under the supervision of the City Engineer by their specifications. Additional protection for pedestrians is provided in §10-4-9(F), which prohibits vehicles from encroaching onto sidewalks. §10-3-5.3(B) and §10-3-5.4(B) stipulate that curbing, gutters, and sidewalks must be installed concurrently with street paving under the supervision of the City Engineer, following utility installation, and subject to specific width and material specifications for surfacing.

Additionally, §10-4-17.9(J) establishes pedestrian accommodations within the Entertainment District, requiring sidewalks with a minimum width of 10 feet when adjacent to a public roadway and 5 feet elsewhere. It also requires ADA-compliant connections between storefronts, parking fields, and the public sidewalk network. Crosswalks must be marked using visible traffic paint, and bump-outs are encouraged to reduce crossing distances and enhance safety.

### Existing Sidewalk Coverage

#### *General Coverage:*

Approximately 60% of arterial and collector roads in Sunland Park include sidewalks on at least one side. Sidewalk infrastructure is more complete in newer subdivisions and almost entirely lacking in older neighborhoods built before the adoption of modern standards.

*Sidewalk Types:* Both attached sidewalks (adjacent to the curb) and detached sidewalks (separated by landscaped buffers) are used throughout the city. Detached sidewalks are generally safer and more comfortable for pedestrians; however, their implementation varies depending on the era and context of the development.

**Detached (Left) and Attached (Right) Sidewalk Example**



*Gaps and Discontinuities:*

- Many sidewalks end abruptly or fail to connect with adjacent subdivisions and civic uses.
- Unplatted parcels and long commercial frontages often create gaps in pedestrian access.

**Sidewalk Gaps within Sunland Park**



## ADA Compliance Assessment

### *Curb Ramps and Detectable Warnings:*

A significant number of intersections in older neighborhoods lack ADA-compliant curb ramps or do not include tactile warning surfaces. These deficiencies restrict accessibility for individuals with mobility or visual impairments.

### *Cross-Slope and Grading Issues:*

Street and sidewalk grades present recurring challenges in legacy areas. According to §10-3-3.2(D) of the City's Land Development Code, grades on major thoroughfares must not exceed five percent (5%), while grades on other streets are limited to a maximum of 8.33% (1:12 slope) by ADA standards. A minimum grade of 0.30% is also required on all streets to support proper drainage and prevent ponding along pedestrian paths.

### *Audible Signals:*

Audible pedestrian signals are limited or absent at most major crossings, presenting safety concerns for users with visual disabilities.

### *Sidewalk Obstructions:*

Vehicle encroachments onto sidewalks, particularly in residential neighborhoods, hinder accessibility and violate §10-4-9(F), which protects pedestrian circulation within the public right-of-way.

## Crosswalk Availability and Safety

### *Marked Crosswalks:*

Crosswalk striping is most common around schools and major intersections. Current installations include:

- Sunland Park Drive at McNutt Road
- Riverside Elementary School
- Country Club Road

### *Crossing Barriers:*

- High vehicle speeds and wide lanes on McNutt Road inhibit pedestrian crossings.
- The shared-use path on the east side of McNutt Road is inaccessible from the west side due to a lack of mid-block or signalized crossings.

## Priority Sidewalk and Crossing Gaps

### *McNutt Road:*

- Fill gaps with continuous sidewalks from Racetrack Drive to Sunland Park Drive.
- Introduce mid-block pedestrian crossings or hybrid beacons to provide safer access to the shared-use path and bus stops.

### *Sunland Park Drive:*

- Upgrade non-compliant curb ramps and install audible signals near school zones.
- Complete missing sidewalk segments along both sides of the corridor.

### *Country Club Road:*

Add new sidewalks on both sides and implement marked crosswalks at key junctions.

### *School Zones:*

Implement Safe Routes to School projects, particularly near Santa Teresa High School and elementary campuses, to ensure ADA compliance and consistent sidewalk connectivity.

## Challenges and Opportunities

### *Challenges:*

- Wide commercial driveways and inconsistent sidewalk construction create hazardous pedestrian environments.
- Unregulated parking on sidewalks continues to obstruct pedestrian movement, despite §10-4-9(F).
- Older neighborhoods lack adequate pedestrian infrastructure due to legacy development patterns.

### **Opportunities:**

- Enforce subdivision sidewalk requirements during platting as outlined in §10-3-3.2, §10-3-5.3, and §10-3-5.4(D).
- Leverage state and federal pedestrian funding programs to retrofit missing links in older areas.
- Extend the McNutt Road shared-use path and integrate it with the city's comprehensive network of pedestrian and trails.
- Consider adopting a formal sidewalk and buffer width policy to guide future subdivision and commercial development design.
- Implement §10-4-17.9(J) in all applicable mixed-use districts to reinforce crosswalk visibility, sidewalk connectivity, and ADA accessibility.

## Key Insights

- Sunland Park’s sidewalk network is moderately developed but lacks comprehensive coverage, consistency, and ADA accessibility, particularly in pre-2000 subdivisions.
- The Land Development Code provides a legal basis for sidewalk inclusion (§10-3-3.2, §10-3-5.3, §10-3-5.4(D)) and protects sidewalk clearance (§10-4-9(F)), but the City must enhance enforcement and retrofit legacy areas.
- Street grade standards—maximum 5% for major roads, 8.33% for others, and a minimum of 0.30% per §10-3-3.2(D)—support both safety and ADA compliance but require active monitoring during plan review.
- Strategic investment in McNutt Road, school zones, and underserved neighborhoods can address the most critical pedestrian safety and access challenges.
- A citywide pedestrian access policy, aligned with ADA standards and reinforced through public works and zoning coordination, will be essential to delivering a walkable, inclusive community.
- The application of §10-4-17.9(J) provides a model for enhancing pedestrian access and visibility in designated districts and may be considered for broader implementation throughout Sunland Park.

## Bicycle Infrastructure Analysis:

### Current Bicycle Facilities

Sunland Park’s existing bicycle infrastructure includes a limited number of designated facilities, with three primary types currently in use:

- **Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows):** Present along Sunland Park Drive between the Rio Grande and McNutt Road, these markings indicate that cyclists and motorists share the travel lane.
- **Bike Lanes:** Designated lanes are provided in both directions along Sunland Park Drive from the Texas–New Mexico border to the Rio Grande. These lanes range in width from 4 to 8 feet, with most exceeding 6 feet; however, dirt and sand accumulation often impedes their usability.
- **Off-Street Paths:**
  - A primary off-street path runs along McNutt Road, beginning at 3005 McNutt Road and extending north to NM-136. It is 6 feet wide for the first three miles and widens to 8 feet, with sections showing erosion damage.
  - An additional path is located on the south side of NM-136 east of the city limits.
  - A 1.3-mile segment along the east bank of the Rio Grande, west of Racetrack Drive under Sunland Park Drive, is part of the planned 500-mile Rio Grande Trail. However, there is a four-mile gap separating this trail from the next continuous segment in El Paso.

Despite these facilities, Sunland Park lacks a cohesive bicycle network, and key gaps remain in connectivity, wayfinding, and access to destinations such as schools, parks, and public buildings.

### Existing Bicycle Lanes and Infrastructure Map

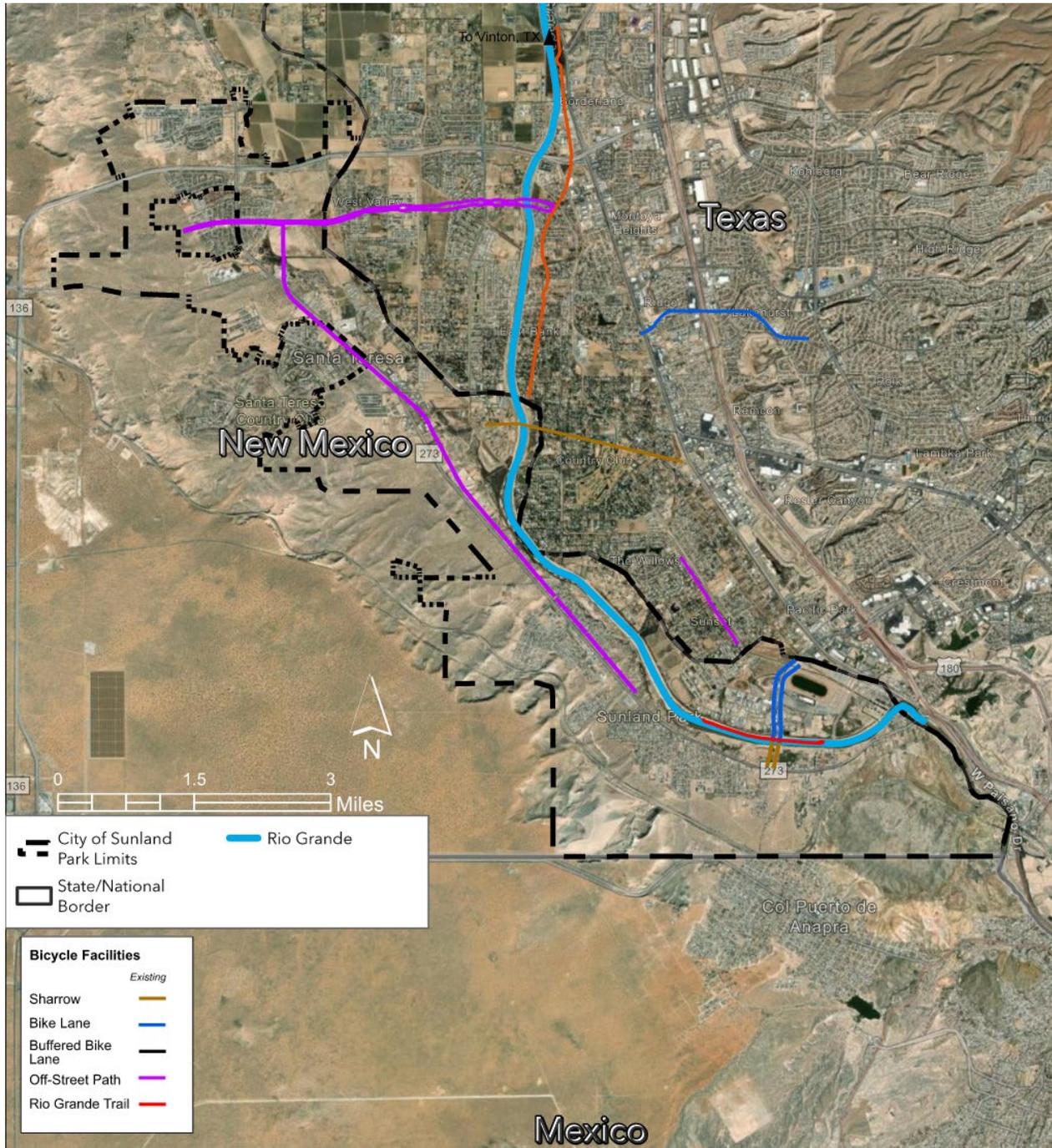


Figure 6-4 Existing Bicycle Lanes and Infrastructure Map

## Barriers to Bicycle Transportation

- *Limited Network Connectivity:* Bicycle routes are fragmented and do not form a continuous, citywide network.
- *Safety Risks on Major Corridors:* Arterials such as McNutt Road and Sunland Park Drive lack protected or buffered bike lanes and are characterized by high speeds and vehicle volumes.
- *Maintenance Issues:* Accumulated debris and erosion on existing facilities reduce safety and usability.
- *Inadequate Infrastructure at Intersections:* Intersections along key corridors lack bicycle-friendly treatments and safe crossings.
- *Topographic Constraints:* Steep grades in parts of the city may deter commuter and recreational cycling.
- *Lack of Amenities:* Minimal bike parking, poor signage, and a lack of wayfinding elements limit accessibility and comfort for cyclists.

## Existing Bike Lane and Off-Street Path



## Opportunities for Bicycle Infrastructure

- *Roadway Reconfiguration:* Sunland Park Drive and McNutt Road have potential for implementing protected or buffered lanes through restriping, road diets, or redesign.
- *Off-Street Path Expansion:* The existing off-street network along McNutt Road and the Rio Grande could be enhanced with improvements in wayfinding, maintenance, and connectivity.
- *Regional Trail Integration:* Continued coordination with IBWC, El Paso MPO, and Doña Ana County could facilitate the completion of the Rio Grande Trail and other cross-jurisdictional routes.
- *Utilization of Easements:* Flood control corridors and utility easements present an opportunity to expand the off-street trail system.
- *New Facilities on Country Club Road:* Adequate right-of-way exists to introduce separated bicycle facilities.

### Existing and Proposed Bicycle Lanes Map

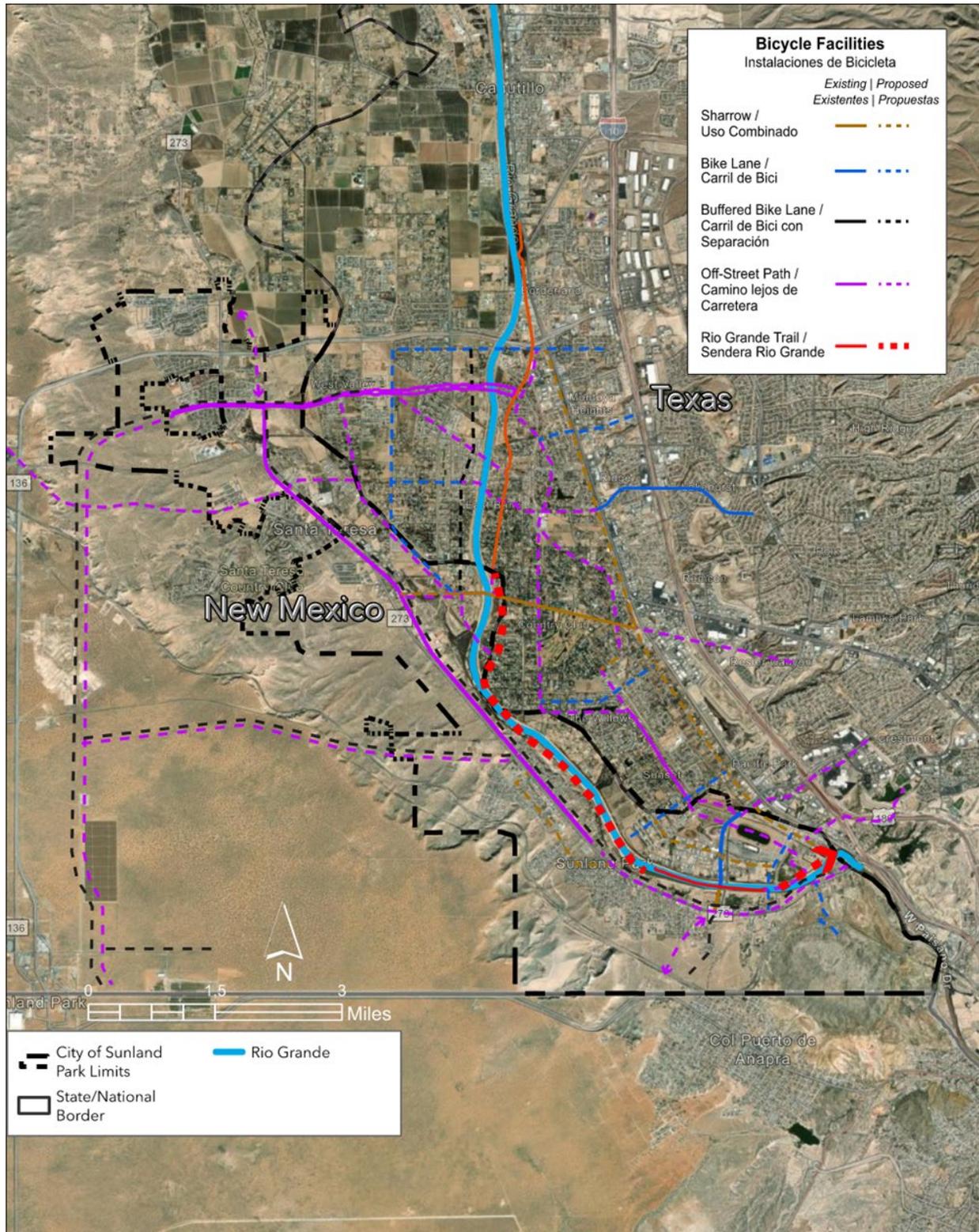
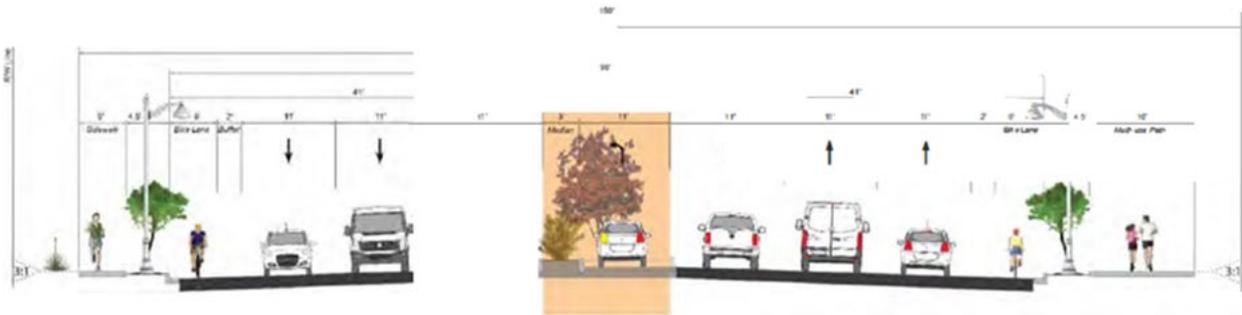


Figure 6-5 Existing and Proposed Bicycle Lanes Map

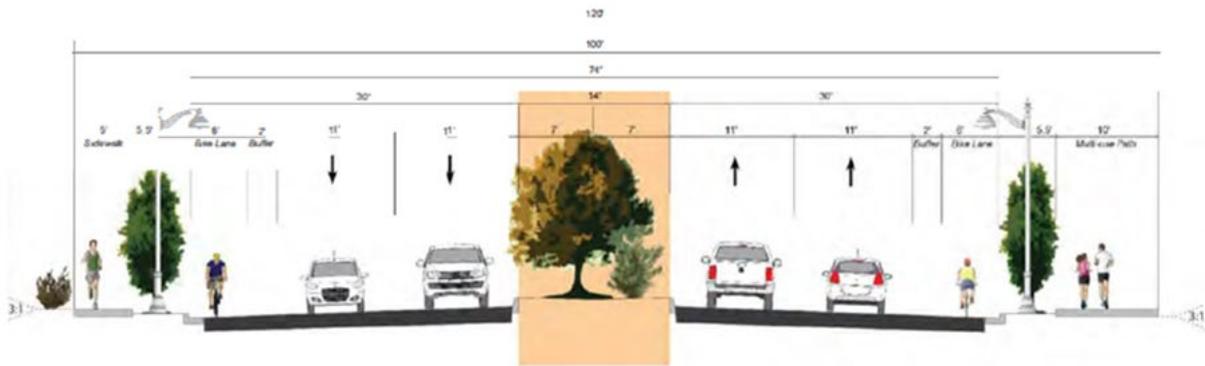
## Key Insights

- *Connectivity Gaps Limit Usability:* The current infrastructure fails to provide a continuous and reliable network for cyclists, particularly those commuting to schools or employment centers.
- *Safety and Comfort Are Central Concerns:* High-speed traffic and inadequate facilities are the primary barriers to widespread bicycle use.
- *Maintenance and Design Standards Must Improve:* Existing paths suffer from degradation and obstruction, requiring regular upkeep and design enhancements.
- *Public Support Exists for Bicycle Investments:* Community surveys reflect strong interest in expanded and safer bicycle options.
- *Strategic Investment Needed:* Prioritizing infrastructure that fills gaps, alleviates traffic congestion, and enhances network cohesion will support both local and regional mobility objectives.

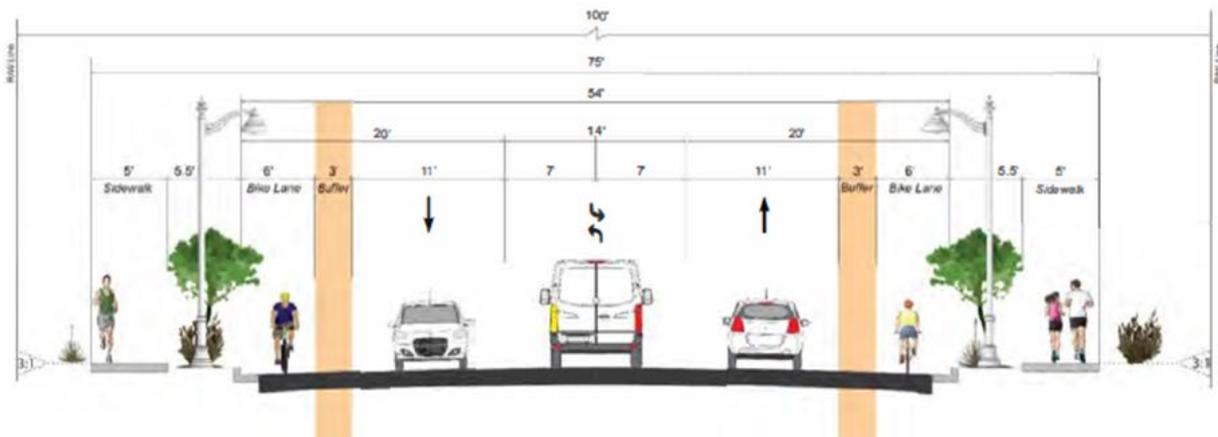
Proposed Principal Arterial Section (Single Left Turn)



Proposed Minor Arterial Section



Proposed Collector Section



## Freight and Industrial Transportation Analysis

Freight transportation plays a critical role in Sunland Park's transportation system and regional economy. The city's proximity to the Santa Teresa Port of Entry and its location on major freight corridors create both opportunities and challenges for freight movement and community livability.

### Regional Freight Context:

#### Santa Teresa Port of Entry Operations:

- Processes approximately 8,000 vehicles daily with significant commercial traffic
- Handles \$39.5 billion in annual trade volume
- Projected growth of 760 additional daily truck crossings from the Bridge of the Americas redirection
- Critical infrastructure for regional economic development and international trade

### Regional Freight Infrastructure Supporting Sunland Park

While not located within Sunland Park city limits, the Union Pacific Santa Teresa Intermodal Terminal and Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park (STGRP) are critical regional assets immediately adjacent to the community. These facilities play a transformative role in shaping Sunland Park's position within the broader Paso del Norte freight corridor and binational economy.

#### Union Pacific Santa Teresa Intermodal Terminal

The Union Pacific Santa Teresa Intermodal Terminal serves as a major logistics hub in the Southwest, directly influencing regional goods movement and cross-border trade. Though located just west of Sunland Park, its impacts extend across jurisdictional boundaries, enhancing freight connectivity and economic opportunity throughout the region.

- *Strategic Binational Location:* Situated near the El Paso–Juárez border, the terminal links Sunland Park to major markets across North America, including Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston. Its location alleviates pressure on more congested border crossings and positions the region as a gateway for efficient international freight.
- *High-Capacity, Modern Facility:* The terminal features an eight-lane automated gate system for streamlined truck entry, a ramp with a capacity of 225,000 container lifts annually (expandable to 700,000), and 1,266 container and trailer parking stalls. These features ensure consistent throughput and staging capabilities for high-volume freight operations.
- *Environmental and Economic Advantages:* Union Pacific trains offer significant sustainability benefits, moving freight four times more fuel-efficiently than trucks. Each train can replace up to 300 trucks on the road, reducing emissions, roadway wear, and transportation costs.

- **Multimodal Integration:** With direct rail access and proximity to I-10 and NM-136, the terminal allows seamless coordination between truck and rail modes. This multimodal connectivity strengthens regional supply chains, supporting Sunland Park’s role in binational logistics.
- **Streamlined International Trade:** The Streamline Passport program provides door-to-door service between the U.S. and Mexico, integrating customs and logistics systems to minimize delays and enhance cost efficiency for international shippers.



Source: [https://www.up.com/cs/groups/public/@uprr/@customers/documents/up\\_pdf\\_nativedocs/pdf\\_up\\_inter\\_overview.pdf](https://www.up.com/cs/groups/public/@uprr/@customers/documents/up_pdf_nativedocs/pdf_up_inter_overview.pdf)

### Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park (STGRP)

The Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park complements the intermodal terminal by offering developable industrial land with direct rail service. Located just west of Sunland Park, it supports regional goals for freight access, job creation, and sustainable economic development.

- **Rail-Served Industrial Park:** STGRP spans 1,300 acres and connects directly to Union Pacific’s Intermodal Complex through 74,000 feet of dedicated track. Ironhorse Resources operates three locomotives across 14 miles of internal track, providing reliable short-line service for tenants and connectivity to national rail and seaport networks.

- *Positioned in the Binational Trade Zone:* Located within a designated 12-mile overweight cargo zone along the U.S.–Mexico border, the park is part of a 70,000-acre Binational Community Master Plan. This strategic location offers logistical advantages for warehousing, manufacturing, and distribution.
- *Development-Ready Parcels:* Rail-accessible parcels ranging from 5 to 50+ acres are available, complete with full utility infrastructure at the property line. These ready-to-build sites are ideal for logistics users seeking to leverage proximity to cross-border infrastructure.



Source: <https://ironhorsesresources.com/santa-teresa-gateway-rail-park/>

### Key Insight:

Sunland Park benefits directly from its proximity to this state-of-the-art freight infrastructure. The proximity of the intermodal terminal and rail park strengthens the city’s access to global supply chains, supports regional workforce mobility, and enhances its attractiveness for industrial development, making them vital assets in Sunland Park’s long-term transportation and economic development strategy.

## Freight Corridor Analysis:

### NM 136 (Pete V. Domenici Boulevard):

- Primary freight corridor connecting the port of entry to Interstate 10
- Handles approximately 30% commercial traffic
- Intersection capacity constraints at major crossings
- Planned improvements identified in the Santa Teresa Strategic Plan

### NM 273 (McNutt Road):

- Secondary freight route through Sunland Park's urban core
- Creates conflicts between freight movement and residential circulation
- Safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists due to heavy vehicle traffic
- Noise and air quality impacts on adjacent residential areas

## Freight Impact Analysis:

### Neighborhood Compatibility Issues:

- Freight traffic on McNutt Road creates noise and safety concerns for residents
- Limited truck staging and parking facilities within city limits
- Intersection design challenges for large vehicle turning movements
- Conflicts between freight schedules and school/pedestrian activity periods

### Infrastructure Wear and Maintenance:

- Heavy truck traffic accelerates pavement degradation on roads not designed for industrial use
- Increased maintenance costs for infrastructure serving freight corridors
- Need for enhanced intersection design to accommodate large vehicle movements

## Regional Coordination Requirements:

### Santa Teresa Strategic Plan Integration:

- Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58) is planned to reduce freight traffic on McNutt Road
- Industrial Loop Extension (pp. 102-104) will provide an alternative freight routing
- Strauss Road Extension (p. 104) will improve industrial area connectivity
- Coordinated investment is essential for freight management effectiveness

## Key Insights:

- Freight movement is essential for regional economic development, but it creates local challenges
- Strategic routing and infrastructure improvements can reduce neighborhood conflicts
- Regional coordination is critical for effective freight management
- The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan provides a framework for addressing freight infrastructure needs

## Transportation Safety Analysis

Transportation safety represents a critical concern for Sunland Park residents and a fundamental requirement for creating livable, walkable communities. Current safety conditions reflect infrastructure limitations, operational challenges, and the need for comprehensive safety improvements.

### Crash Data and Safety Concerns:

#### High-Injury Network Identification:

- NM 273 (McNutt Road) experiences elevated crash rates, particularly at major intersections
- Sunland Park Drive near elementary schools has pedestrian safety concerns
- Country Club Road lacks adequate pedestrian crossing facilities
- The junction of McNutt Road and Pete Domenici Boulevard experiences capacity and safety issues
- The Sunland Park Dr./Futurity Dr. intersection roundabout project received \$3 million in federal funding and is scheduled for construction in summer 2026. This addresses current Level of Service F (failure) conditions during PM peak hours and 19 reported crashes between 2018 and 2022, with nine being rear-end collisions.



### **Vulnerable Road User Safety:**

- Limited pedestrian infrastructure increases exposure to vehicle conflicts
- Lack of protected bicycle facilities discourages cycling and creates safety risks
- School zone infrastructure is inadequate for student safety
- Elderly residents face particular challenges with the existing infrastructure

### **Community Safety Concerns:**

- Survey data indicates over 65% of residents cite safety concerns
- Poorly lit intersections identified as major safety hazards
- Unmarked crosswalks create pedestrian safety risks
- Speeding in residential areas is a frequent community concern

### **Safety Infrastructure Gaps:**

- Inadequate lighting on pedestrian routes and at intersections
- Missing or non-compliant pedestrian crossing facilities
- Lack of traffic calming measures in residential areas
- Insufficient signage and wayfinding for all transportation modes

### **Key Insights:**

- Safety concerns are pervasive across all transportation modes and user groups
- Infrastructure improvements are needed to address both actual and perceived safety risks
- Vision Zero principles should guide safety improvement strategies
- Community engagement is essential for identifying and addressing safety priorities

## Regional Transportation Coordination

Sunland Park's transportation system operates within a complex regional framework that requires coordination with multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and planning organizations. Understanding these coordination requirements is essential for effective transportation planning and implementation.

### Key Regional Partners:

#### **New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT):**

- Responsible for the state highway system, including NM 273 and NM 136
- Provides funding for local transportation improvements through various programs
- Coordinates with local governments on project development and implementation
- Maintains the Traffic Impact Analysis review authority for state highway access

#### **El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):**

- Coordinates regional transportation planning and federal funding allocation
- Develops Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program
- Facilitates coordination between Texas and New Mexico jurisdictions
- Provides technical assistance and planning support for regional projects

#### **Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT):**

- Manages transportation infrastructure on the Texas side of the regional network
- Coordinates with New Mexico partners on cross-border connectivity
- Provides funding and technical support for regional transportation projects

#### **The Water and Wastewater Utilities Department (formerly CRRUA):**

- Manages utility infrastructure that impacts transportation corridor development
- Coordinates with transportation agencies on utility relocations and improvements
- Provides a framework for regional infrastructure coordination

#### **International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC):**

- Manages Rio Grande infrastructure that affects transportation connectivity
- Coordinates with local governments on crossing and access issues
- Provides opportunities for trail development on easements and rights-of-way

**Key Insights:**

- Regional coordination is crucial for the effectiveness of transportation systems.
- Multiple funding sources and agencies must be coordinated for project success.
- Binational coordination requirements add complexity to transportation planning.
- Strong regional partnerships are critical for addressing transportation challenges.

## Existing Aviation Infrastructure, Gaps, and Opportunities

Sunland Park does not currently have an airport or aviation facility within its municipal boundaries. However, it benefits from its proximity to multiple regional aviation hubs that serve the broader Paso del Norte region. Understanding the current aviation context is crucial for evaluating opportunities related to freight, emergency response, and economic development that are linked to air access.

### Existing Regional Aviation Facilities

The nearest public-use aviation facility is the *Doña Ana County International Jetport*, located approximately 12 miles northwest of Sunland Park in Santa Teresa. The Jetport supports general aviation, cargo logistics, and limited charter services. It is an essential part of the regional freight infrastructure, serving the Santa Teresa Industrial Base and cross-border supply chains.

#### *Doña Ana County International Jetport*



Source: <https://www.donaanacounty.org/home/showpublisheddocument/947/638234738403930000>

The *War Eagles Air Museum*, located at the Doña Ana County Airport, showcases a remarkable collection of historic aircraft from World War II and the Korean War. The museum is dedicated to preserving and displaying these aviation artifacts, many of which have been carefully restored. It is open to the public Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors and military personnel, and free for children and students.



The *El Paso International Airport (ELP)* is located approximately 18 miles from Sunland Park and offers comprehensive commercial passenger and cargo services, with over 15 non-stop destinations, multiple airlines, and customs facilities. ELP plays a central role in air connectivity for Sunland Park residents and businesses.



Additional aviation infrastructure includes the *Las Cruces International Airport*, located to the northwest, which offers general aviation services and aviation training programs through New Mexico State University.



Source: <https://www.lascrucesbulletin.com/stories/las-cruces-international-airport-debuts-48-million-in-upgrades,5055>

## Gaps and Challenges

- Lack of direct aviation infrastructure within Sunland Park limits local emergency response capacity and small-scale air transport options.
- Limited multimodal connectivity (e.g., public transit or direct shuttle service) between Sunland Park and El Paso International Airport reduces access to air travel for residents without personal vehicles.
- Absence of aviation-related economic development zones or policies within the current Land Development Code.

## Opportunities

- Explore partnerships with Doña Ana County to expand services and ground transportation options to the Santa Teresa Jetport.
- Develop a regional park-and-ride connection or dedicated transit route from Sunland Park to El Paso International Airport and the Jetport.
- Promote aerospace and logistics-related business development within Sunland Park's industrial and commercial zones, leveraging proximity to both the Jetport and ELP.
- Evaluate zoning updates or incentives to support aviation-adjacent uses or air-supportive logistics parks (consistent with LDC §10-4-7 and industrial zones).

## Community Transportation Needs and Priorities

### Comprehensive Community Engagement Framework

Understanding community transportation needs requires comprehensive engagement that reaches all segments of the population and provides meaningful opportunities for input on transportation priorities, concerns, and vision. Sunland Park’s approach to community engagement acknowledges the city’s diverse population, comprising English and Spanish speakers, residents with varying transportation needs, and individuals with varying levels of engagement in municipal planning processes.

The foundation of this transportation plan rests on extensive community engagement conducted between September and December 2024, which included a bilingual community-wide survey, public meetings, stakeholder interviews, and focused engagement with specific populations, such as seniors, youth, and residents with disabilities. This comprehensive approach ensures that the transportation plan reflects authentic community priorities and addresses the real transportation challenges faced by residents.

#### Key Insights:

- Community engagement revealed significant gaps between the current transportation infrastructure and the needs of residents.
- Bilingual outreach was essential for reaching the full spectrum of community members.
- Transportation concerns are closely linked to broader community development priorities, including economic development and quality of life.
- Residents demonstrate strong support for multimodal transportation improvements despite limited current usage of alternatives to driving.

### Community Survey Results and Analysis

The bilingual community-wide transportation survey provides crucial baseline data on resident transportation behaviors, priorities, and concerns. The survey results reveal both quantitative data on transportation usage patterns and qualitative insights into the barriers and opportunities that shape resident transportation choices.

#### Comprehensive Survey Findings:

##### *Transportation Infrastructure Priorities:*

- **64.3%** of respondents ranked streets, walkways, and crosswalks as “Extremely Important”
- **32.1%** marked street infrastructure as “Very Important”
- **35.7%** ranked ADA compliance as “Extremely Important”
- **52.4%** identified broadband access as a high priority, signaling support for smart infrastructure

*Public Transit Usage and Demand:*

- Only *one respondent* reported using public transit for daily commuting.
- **26.2%** ranked public transit as “Extremely Important,” indicating significant unmet demand
- **61%** rated public transit as at least “Moderately Important”
- Multiple open-ended responses emphasized the need for reliable transit options, particularly for low-income and elderly residents.

*Safety and Accessibility Concerns:*

- Over **65%** of participants cited safety concerns related to poorly lit intersections
- Residents identified unmarked crosswalks as major safety hazards
- Speeding in residential areas was frequently mentioned as a concern
- School zone safety was identified as a priority across multiple districts

*Regional Connectivity Needs:*

- Respondents noted a lack of coordination between El Paso transit routes and Sunland Park infrastructure
- Comments stressed the importance of enhancing access to El Paso’s Westside, Northgate, and Downtown Transit Centers
- Job seekers and students identified regional connectivity as essential for economic opportunity

**Key Insights:**

- The significant gap between the importance of public transit (26.2%) and its usage (0.3%) indicates substantial unmet demand.
- Safety concerns are pervasive across all transportation modes and age groups.
- Regional connectivity is considered essential for economic opportunities and a high quality of life.
- ADA compliance is recognized as necessary by over one-third of respondents, indicating community support for accessibility improvements

**Priority Transportation Needs Matrix**

Based on comprehensive community input, stakeholder engagement, and technical analysis, the following transportation needs have been identified and prioritized according to their impact on the community, safety concerns, and implementation feasibility.

**Demographic and Geographic Analysis**

Transportation needs vary significantly across Sunland Park’s six council districts, reflecting differences in development patterns, population characteristics, infrastructure age, and connectivity to regional transportation networks. Understanding these variations is crucial for

ensuring equitable transportation investment and addressing the specific needs of individual communities.

### **District-Specific Transportation Characteristics:**

#### *Districts 1-2 (Central Areas):*

- Higher density development with mixed residential and commercial uses
- Better existing sidewalk coverage, but aging infrastructure
- Direct access to McNutt Road and regional transit services
- Freight traffic conflicts with residential uses

#### *Districts 3-4 (Established Residential):*

- Lower-density residential development with infrastructure gaps
- Limited sidewalk coverage and ADA compliance issues
- Reduced access to transit services
- Higher concentration of elderly residents requiring accessible transportation

#### *Districts 5-6 (Growth Areas):*

- Newer development with some modern infrastructure
- Incomplete street networks and connectivity gaps
- Limited transit service coverage
- Opportunities for incorporating complete streets principles

### **Key Insights:**

- Historic underinvestment in Districts 3–4 has created significant infrastructure gaps.
- Growth areas in Districts 5–6 provide opportunities for implementing best practices.
- Transit service coverage is uneven across districts, with some regions lacking convenient access to public transportation.
- The LDC’s subdivision design standards (§10-3-3) help address pedestrian and vehicular circulation issues in new development by requiring coordinated street layouts, sidewalk infrastructure, and dedication of right-of-way.

## Accessibility and Special Needs Analysis

Sunland Park’s commitment to transportation equity necessitates a special focus on the needs of residents with disabilities, elderly residents, low-income households, and other vulnerable populations that may face barriers to transportation access. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides minimum standards, but the city’s vision goes beyond compliance to create truly accessible and inclusive transportation systems.

### **ADA Compliance Assessment:**

- Significant gaps in curb ramp provision at intersections throughout the city
- Many existing sidewalks lack adequate width or have cross-slope issues
- Transit stops generally lack ADA-compliant boarding areas
- Pedestrian signals are not consistently equipped with audible indicators

### **Elderly and Mobility-Impaired Residents:**

- Survey data indicates 35.7% of residents view ADA compliance as “Extremely Important.”
- Need for enhanced transit services, including door-to-door options
- Importance of well-maintained sidewalks with appropriate grades
- Requirement for adequate seating and shelter at transit stops

### **Low-Income Transportation Needs:**

- High dependence on public transit and walking for daily transportation
- Need for affordable transportation options and fare assistance programs
- Importance of transit connections to employment centers and essential services
- Vulnerability to transportation service disruptions

### **Youth Transportation Requirements:**

- Safe Routes to School infrastructure at all educational facilities
- Bicycle infrastructure connecting neighborhoods to schools and recreational facilities
- Transit services supporting after-school and weekend activities
- Pedestrian-friendly design in areas with high youth activity

### **Key Insights:**

- ADA compliance gaps represent both legal requirements and community priorities
- Special needs populations often rely most heavily on public transportation and pedestrian infrastructure
- Addressing accessibility needs benefits all residents, not just those with disabilities
- The LDC’s design standards (§10-3-3.4) require ADA compliance in new development

## Transportation Behavior and Mode Choice Analysis

Understanding current transportation behavior and the factors that influence mode choice is essential for developing effective strategies to promote sustainable transportation options. Sunland Park's analysis reveals significant opportunities for mode shift with appropriate infrastructure investments and service improvements.

### **Current Transportation Patterns:**

- Overwhelming reliance on personal vehicles for daily transportation
- Limited public transit usage despite expressed interest and need
- Minimal bicycle usage due to infrastructure and safety concerns
- Walking is primarily limited to short trips within neighborhoods

### **Barriers to Alternative Transportation:**

- Lack of complete sidewalk networks discourages walking
- Absence of protected bicycle infrastructure limits cycling
- Infrequent transit service reduces reliability and attractiveness
- Safety concerns about pedestrian and cyclist interactions with vehicles

### **Opportunities for Mode Shift:**

- High interest in public transit improvements (26.2% rating as "Extremely Important")
- Community support for walkability improvements (64.3% prioritizing sidewalks)
- Potential for bicycle infrastructure on lower-traffic corridors
- Regional connectivity needs that could support enhanced transit services

### **Key Insights:**

- Current transportation behavior reflects infrastructure limitations rather than preferences
- Significant latent demand exists for alternative transportation modes
- Safety concerns are the primary barriers to walking and cycling
- Regional connectivity needs could support enhanced transit services

## Integration with Land Development Code Requirements

The Sunland Park Land Development Code (LDC) provides essential tools for ensuring that new development supports transportation planning objectives and contributes to the creation of complete, connected communities. Understanding how community transportation needs relate to LDC requirements is crucial for implementation.

### Relevant LDC Provisions:

#### Traffic Impact Analysis (LDC §10-3-2.4):

- Requires developments generating more than 100 peak-hour trips to conduct traffic impact analysis
- Ensures new development addresses off-site transportation impacts
- Provides a mechanism for requiring developer-funded transportation improvements
- Supports coordination between land use and transportation planning

#### Roadway Classification and Design Standards (LDC §10-3-3):

- Establishes a hierarchy of roadway types with appropriate design standards
- Requires sidewalks and pedestrian accommodation in all new street construction
- Mandates connectivity between developments and existing street networks
- Provides a framework for ensuring adequate emergency access and circulation

#### Public Improvement Districts (LDC §10-3-7):

- Enables the creation of special assessment districts for transportation improvements
- Provides a financing mechanism for infrastructure in growth areas
- Supports coordination between development and infrastructure provision
- Allows for phased implementation of transportation improvements

#### Complete Streets Integration (LDC §10-4-13 and §10-4-17):

- Mandates landscaping and streetscape improvements for pedestrian comfort
- Establishes lighting standards for pedestrian safety and visibility
- Supports the creation of attractive, walkable streetscapes

#### Key Insights:

- The LDC provides comprehensive tools for implementing transportation planning objectives
- New development can be required to contribute to transportation infrastructure needs
- Complete Streets principles are embedded in development regulations
- Public Improvement Districts offer financing mechanisms for transportation improvements

## Multimodal Transportation Strategy

### Complete Streets Implementation Framework

Complete Streets represent a fundamental shift in transportation planning and design, moving from automobile-centric infrastructure to comprehensive networks that safely and efficiently accommodate all users regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Sunland Park's Complete Streets framework recognizes that streets serve multiple functions beyond vehicle movement, including pedestrian circulation, bicycle transportation, transit operations, freight movement, and community placemaking.

The implementation of Complete Streets principles requires integration across all aspects of transportation planning, from corridor design and intersection configuration to maintenance practices and operational procedures. This comprehensive approach ensures that transportation investments create value for all community members while supporting broader community development objectives, including economic development, public health, and environmental sustainability.

### Complete Streets Design Principles:

#### Universal Accessibility:

- All transportation facilities must be designed to accommodate users with disabilities
- ADA compliance must be integrated into the design process from initial planning through construction
- Universal design principles applied to benefit users of all ages and abilities
- Wayfinding and information systems accessible to users with visual, auditory, and cognitive disabilities

#### Context-Sensitive Design:

- Transportation infrastructure must be designed to reflect and enhance community character
- Design standards adapted to local conditions, including climate, topography, and development patterns
- Integration with the existing built environment and planned community development
- Consideration of historic and cultural resources in transportation design

#### *Safety and Comfort:*

- Infrastructure must be designed to minimize conflicts between different transportation modes

- Adequate separation and protection for vulnerable users, including pedestrians and cyclists
- Lighting, visibility, and sightline design that enhances safety for all users
- Comfort amenities including seating, shelter, and landscaping

*Connectivity and Network Integration:*

- Transportation facilities must be designed as integrated networks rather than isolated corridors
- Seamless connections between different transportation modes and facilities
- Regional connectivity that supports local circulation and access needs
- Integration with existing and planned transportation infrastructure

**Key Insights:**

- Complete Streets implementation requires changes to design standards, review processes, and maintenance practices
- The LDC's Complete Streets policies (§10-4-12) provide a regulatory framework for implementation
- Community engagement is essential for ensuring that Complete Streets design reflects local needs and priorities
- Regional coordination is necessary for creating seamless multimodal networks

## Pedestrian Network Development Strategy

Pedestrian infrastructure forms the foundation of a multimodal transportation system, providing essential access for all residents while supporting transit usage, neighborhood connectivity, and community vitality. Sunland Park's pedestrian network development strategy prioritizes safety, accessibility, and connectivity while addressing the specific challenges of a binational border community.

The development of a comprehensive pedestrian network requires systematic attention to infrastructure gaps, safety concerns, and accessibility barriers.

### Priority Pedestrian Corridor Development:

#### McNutt Road Pedestrian Improvements:

- Complete continuous sidewalk network from Racetrack Drive to Sunland Park Drive
- Install ADA-compliant curb ramps at all intersections
- Enhance pedestrian crossing facilities with high-visibility markings and signals
- Provide adequate lighting for pedestrian safety during evening hours
- Install pedestrian-scale streetscape improvements, including trees and landscaping

#### Sunland Park Drive Complete Street Reconstruction:

- Redesign the corridor to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users
- Install protected pedestrian crossing facilities at major intersections
- Provide a continuous sidewalk network with adequate width and ADA compliance
- Integrate stormwater management and green infrastructure elements
- Enhance lighting and visibility for pedestrian safety

#### School Zone Pedestrian Safety Enhancements:

- Install Safe Routes to School infrastructure at all educational facilities
- Provide raised crosswalks and speed reduction measures in school zones
- Install flashing beacons and advanced warning signage
- Create safe waiting areas and pick-up/drop-off zones
- Coordinate with the school district on education and enforcement programs

### Country Club Road Pedestrian Infrastructure:

- Construct a new sidewalk network on the corridor lacking pedestrian facilities
- Install pedestrian crossing facilities at key intersections and mid-block locations
- Provide adequate lighting and visibility improvements
- Integrate bicycle infrastructure with pedestrian improvements
- Address drainage and maintenance issues that affect pedestrian safety

## Bicycle Infrastructure Development Plan

Bicycle infrastructure development is a crucial component of Sunland Park’s multimodal transportation strategy, offering sustainable transportation options that promote community health, environmental quality, and economic development. The bicycle infrastructure plan acknowledges that cycling serves multiple purposes, including transportation, recreation, and fitness, which necessitate diverse infrastructure types and design approaches.

The development of a comprehensive bicycle network requires attention to connectivity, safety, and accessibility while supporting broader community development objectives.

### Bicycle Network Hierarchy:

#### Multi-Use Trail Development:

- Rio Grande Corridor Trail: Recreational and transportation trail along the river corridor
- Drainage Canal Trails: Utilize existing drainage infrastructure for trail development
- School and Park Connections: Trail segments connecting neighborhoods to recreational facilities
- Regional Trail Connections: Coordinate with Santa Teresa and El Paso trail systems
- The 10-mile NM 273 (McNutt Road) corridor in Sunland Park features an adopted master plan for 10-foot-wide multi-use trails on both sides, designed with native landscaping and coordinated irrigation, with Phase I construction set to begin in August 2025. As one of only three locations positioned to fully embrace New Mexico’s 500-mile Rio Grande Trail network, Sunland Park has completed 1.25 miles of trail and is designing five additional miles with integrated wayfinding to align with the state’s broader trail vision.



### **Protected Bicycle Lanes on Major Corridors:**

- Country Club Road: Protected bike lanes with physical separation from vehicle traffic
- Sunland Park Drive: Buffered bike lanes integrated with complete street reconstruction
- McNutt Road: Bicycle accommodation designed to minimize conflicts with freight traffic
- Racetrack Drive: Shared-use facilities connecting residential areas to recreational destinations

### **Neighborhood Bicycle Facilities:**

- Bicycle boulevards on low-traffic residential streets
- Shared-lane markings and wayfinding on secondary streets
- Traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds and improve bicycle safety
- End-of-trip facilities, including bicycle parking and repair stations

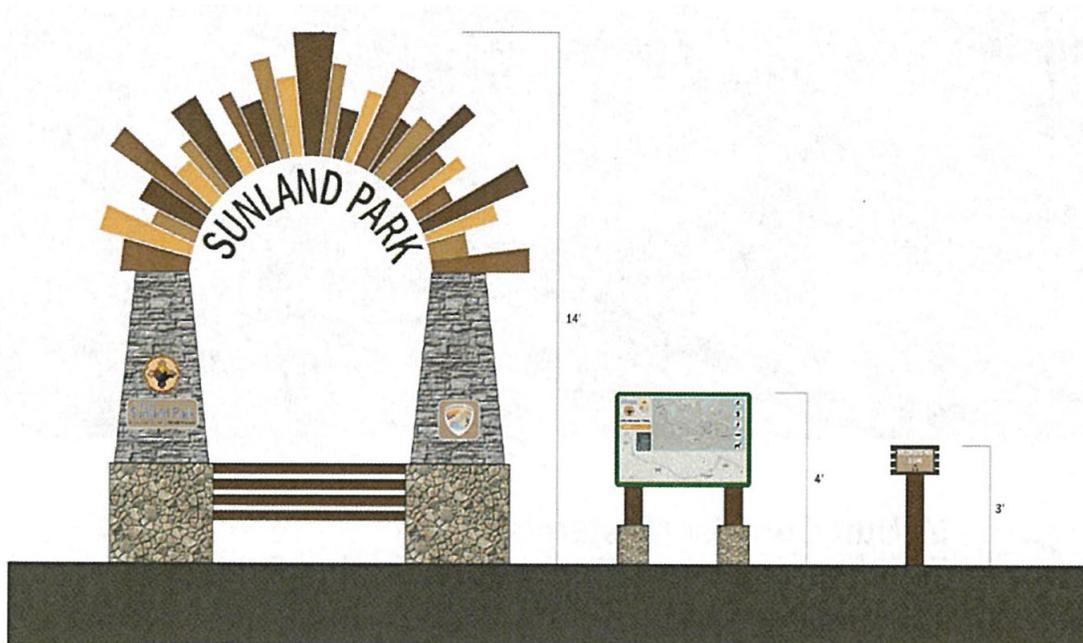
## Design Standards and Safety Considerations:

### Protected Infrastructure:

- Physical separation between bicycle facilities and vehicle traffic on high-speed corridors
- Adequate width and design standards for users of all ages and abilities
- Intersection design that minimizes conflicts and enhances visibility
- Integration with pedestrian infrastructure and transit facilities

### Network Connectivity:

- Seamless connections between different facility types and corridors
- Wayfinding and signage systems that support navigation and safety. Comprehensive wayfinding systems are being developed to connect the 10 miles of Rio Grande Trail with the 10 miles on NM 273, providing clear direction to restaurants, stores, and recreational facilities. Signage design incorporates distinctive "Sunland Park" branding similar to popular tourist destinations.
- Integration with regional trail and transportation networks
- Accessibility for users with disabilities and adaptive equipment
- El Paso County has 67 miles of trail spanning its entire county, with about two-thirds already constructed. Combined with New Mexico's 500 miles, this creates unique opportunities for regional bicycle tourism and recreational connectivity.



### Key Insights:

- Bicycle infrastructure development requires a coordinated approach addressing safety, connectivity, and accessibility
- Community support for bicycle improvements is evident, but requires infrastructure investment to realize potential
- Integration with regional systems enhances the value and utility of local investments
- The LDC's Complete Streets requirements support bicycle infrastructure development in new construction

## Public Transit Enhancement Strategy

Public transit enhancement represents a critical component of Sunland Park’s multimodal transportation strategy, providing essential mobility options for residents while supporting broader community development objectives, including economic development, environmental quality, and social equity.

The development of enhanced transit services requires attention to frequency, coverage, accessibility, and regional coordination while supporting land use patterns that promote transit ridership and community vitality.

### Service Enhancement Priorities:

#### SCRTD Purple Route Improvements:

- Increase service frequency from the current 80-90 minute headways to 30-45 minute headways
- Extend service hours to include evening service until 8:00 PM
- Add Saturday service to provide weekend connectivity
- Enhance vehicle accessibility and comfort features
- Improve real-time information and passenger amenities

#### Coverage Expansion:

- Extend service to Districts 4, 5, and 6 through route modifications or new routes
- Provide service to the Santa Teresa Industrial Area, supporting employment access
- Connect to the proposed Medical District and entertainment facilities

#### Transit Facility Improvements:

- Install ADA-compliant bus stops with level boarding areas
- Provide weather protection through shelters and canopies
- Enhance lighting and security at transit stops
- Install real-time arrival information systems
- Provide bicycle parking and secure storage at key stops

## Regional Transit Integration:

### Binational Transit Services:

- Develop a circulator service connecting the proposed Port of Entry to regional destinations
- Coordinate with Mexican transit providers for seamless cross-border connections
- Provide shuttle services for special events and seasonal activities
- Explore microtransit options for first- and last-mile connections

### Regional Coordination:

- Enhance coordination with Sun Metro for seamless transfers and integrated service
- Participate in regional transit planning initiatives, including fare integration
- Coordinate with NMDOT on intercity and regional express services
- Develop park-and-ride facilities supporting regional commuting patterns

### Transit-Oriented Development Support:

- Implement zoning and development standards that support transit ridership
- Reduce parking requirements near transit stations and corridors
- Encourage mixed-use development and density near transit facilities
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit stops

### Key Insights:

- Transit enhancement requires coordination between service improvements and land use planning
- Community demand for transit improvements is evident (26.2% rating as “Extremely Important”)
- Regional coordination is essential for transit system effectiveness
- The SCRTD Ten-Year Plan provides a framework for service improvements

## Freight Management and Economic Development Strategy

Freight management is a critical component of Sunland Park's transportation strategy, balancing the economic benefits of efficient freight movement with the community's concerns for livability.

The development of effective freight management requires coordination with regional partners, strategic infrastructure investments, and operational strategies that minimize conflicts between freight movement and community activities.

### Freight Corridor Management:

#### Designated Truck Route System:

- Restrict truck traffic on residential streets through signage and enforcement
- Coordinate with regional partners on freight routing and management

#### Infrastructure Improvements:

- Enhance intersection capacity and design for large vehicle movements
- Improve pavement design and maintenance for freight corridors
- Install intelligent transportation systems for freight monitoring and management
- Develop truck staging and parking facilities near industrial areas

### Neighborhood Compatibility:

#### Conflict Minimization:

- Enhance noise mitigation measures along freight corridors
- Provide buffer zones between freight facilities and residential areas

#### Community Engagement:

- Involve residents in freight management planning and policy development
- Provide regular updates on freight traffic and management initiatives
- Establish complaint and response procedures for freight-related issues
- Coordinate with law enforcement on freight regulation enforcement

#### Key Insights:

- Freight management requires balancing economic development benefits with community livability concerns

- Regional coordination is essential for effective freight management
- The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan provides a framework for regional freight infrastructure development
- Community engagement is critical for developing acceptable freight management strategies

### Regional Coordination:

#### Santa Teresa Strategic Plan Integration:

- Support the development of the Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58) to reduce freight traffic on McNutt Road
- Coordinate on Industrial Loop Extension (pp. 102-104) for improved freight circulation
- Participate in the Strauss Road Extension (p. 104) planning for industrial connectivity
- Align local freight policies with regional freight management strategies
- The South Connector Road connects NM 136 to NM 273, supporting economic development and directing northbound traffic into the planned Entertainment District. This project involves close coordination with NMDOT for drainage, utilities, and access provision.

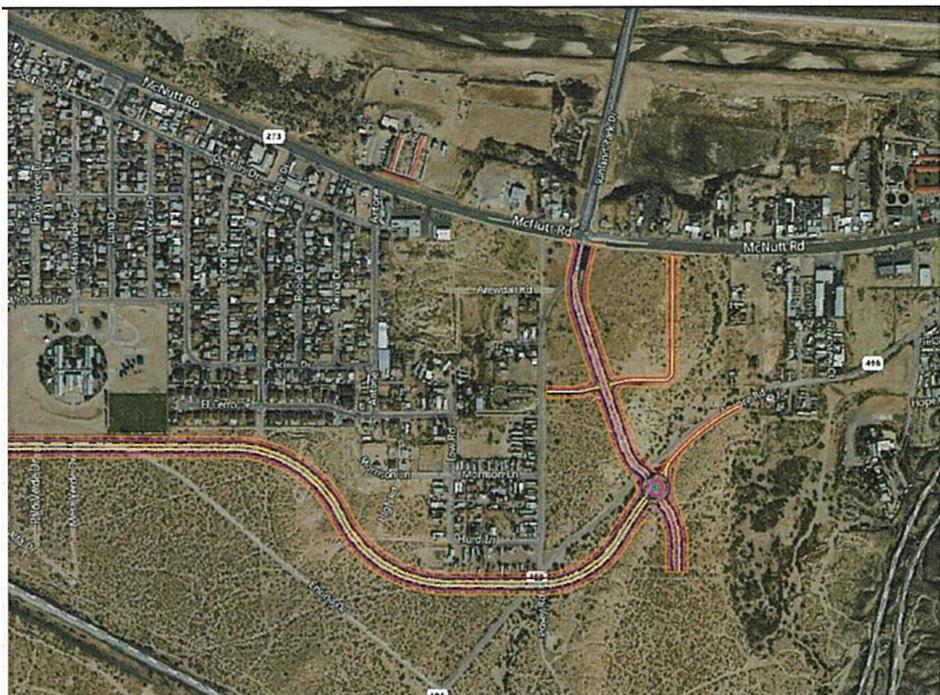


Figure 6-6 South Connector Road

### Port of Entry Coordination:

- Coordinate with CBP and port operators on freight processing and staging
- Support infrastructure improvements that enhance freight efficiency
- Participate in regional freight planning and coordination initiatives
- Monitor freight traffic impacts and adjust management strategies accordingly

## Intelligent Transportation Systems Integration

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) represent an emerging component of Sunland Park’s multimodal transportation strategy, providing opportunities to enhance safety, efficiency, and user experience through the strategic application of technology.

The strategy addresses the specific opportunities and challenges of implementing ITS in a binational border community, including coordination with regional systems, integration with security requirements, and support for diverse user needs and languages. The development of ITS capabilities requires attention to both current technologies and emerging innovations while ensuring that technology supports community objectives rather than replacing human-centered design principles.

### ITS Implementation Framework:

#### Traffic Management Systems:

- Adaptive traffic signal control for major intersections
- Real-time traffic monitoring and incident detection
- Dynamic message signs for traffic and emergency information
- Coordination with regional traffic management centers

#### Transit Technology Integration:

- Real-time transit arrival information at bus stops
- Mobile applications for trip planning and payment
- Integration with regional transit information systems

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Technology:

- Pedestrian countdown signals and audible indicators
- Bicycle detection at traffic signals
- Wayfinding systems for pedestrians and cyclists
- Mobile applications for active transportation route planning

#### Emergency Response and Security:

- Emergency vehicle preemption systems
- Incident detection and response coordination
- Public safety communication systems
- Integration with border security technologies

**Key Insights:**

- ITS implementation must support all transportation modes and user groups
- Bilingual and accessible technology interfaces are essential for community acceptance
- Regional coordination is necessary for ITS effectiveness
- Technology should enhance rather than replace fundamental infrastructure improvements

## Binational Transportation Integration

### International Infrastructure Planning Framework

Sunland Park’s role as a binational gateway community requires sophisticated coordination and planning that extends beyond traditional municipal boundaries to encompass international relationships, federal regulations, and complex institutional arrangements.

The development of international infrastructure necessitates attention to security requirements, operational efficiency, and community compatibility, while supporting the broader objectives of binational cooperation and regional integration.

In September 2025, the Cities of El Paso and Sunland Park executed a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate land-use and infrastructure planning along their shared border corridor. The agreement establishes procedures for mutual review of development proposals within 1,000 feet of the state line, shared traffic-impact analyses, and quarterly joint planning and engineering meetings.

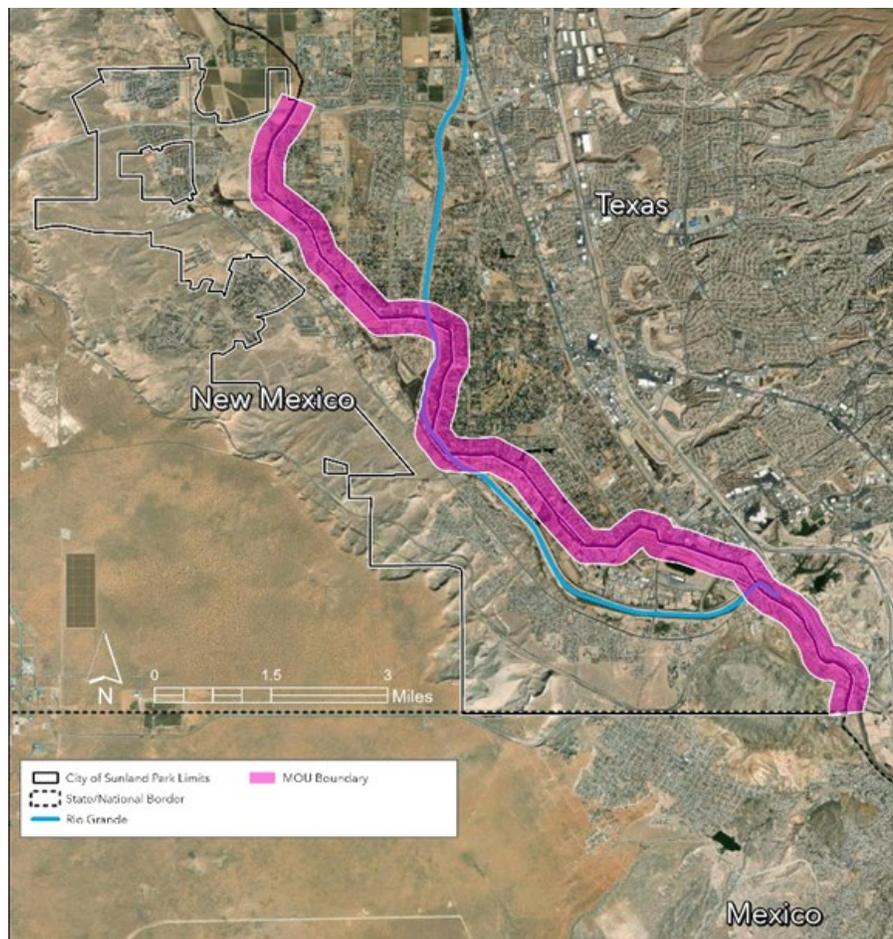


Figure 6-7 El Paso–Sunland Park MOU Coordination Boundary (2025)

This cross-jurisdictional partnership will help synchronize roadway design standards, drainage systems, and utility planning, ensuring that both sides of the border grow cohesively and efficiently. The initiative directly supports the goals of the Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 by promoting consistent, data-driven decision-making and integrated transportation investment across the Texas–New Mexico boundary.

### **Binational Coordination:**

- Meaningful engagement with Mexican planning institutions and government agencies
- Coordination with the Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación (IMIP) on cross-border planning
- Integration with Ciudad Juárez transportation and land use planning
- Participation in binational planning initiatives and working groups

### **Federal and State Coordination:**

- Compliance with federal requirements for international infrastructure
- Coordination with U.S. Customs and Border Protection on security and operational requirements
- Integration with state transportation planning and funding programs
- Alignment with federal trade and economic development policies

### **Economic Development Alignment:**

- Supporting regional economic development objectives through strategic infrastructure investment
- Enhancing competitiveness in international trade and commerce
- Attracting businesses and investment through improved connectivity
- Balancing economic development with community livability and sustainability

### **Community Integration:**

- Ensuring that international infrastructure supports local community needs
- Minimizing negative impacts on neighborhoods and residential areas
- Providing community benefits from international infrastructure investments
- Maintaining community character and identity in international development
- Transportation infrastructure incorporates bi-national, tri-city design elements that reflect the unique geographic position at the confluence of New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, including both US and Mexican cultural features in trail and corridor development.

### **Key Insights:**

- International infrastructure planning requires unprecedented coordination between multiple levels of government and agencies.

- Community engagement is essential for ensuring that international infrastructure serves local needs.
- Long-term planning horizons are necessary due to the complex approval and implementation processes involved.
- Success depends on sustained political and institutional commitment across multiple jurisdictions.

## Bi-National, Tri-City Design Elements



## Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry

The proposed Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry represents a transformational infrastructure investment that will fundamentally alter transportation patterns, economic development opportunities, and community character in Sunland Park.

The port of entry will serve as a non-commercial crossing, focusing on pedestrian and personal vehicle traffic, to provide enhanced connectivity between Sunland Park and Anapra, Ciudad Juárez, while supporting workforce mobility, family connections, and cultural exchange.

### Facility Design and Operations:

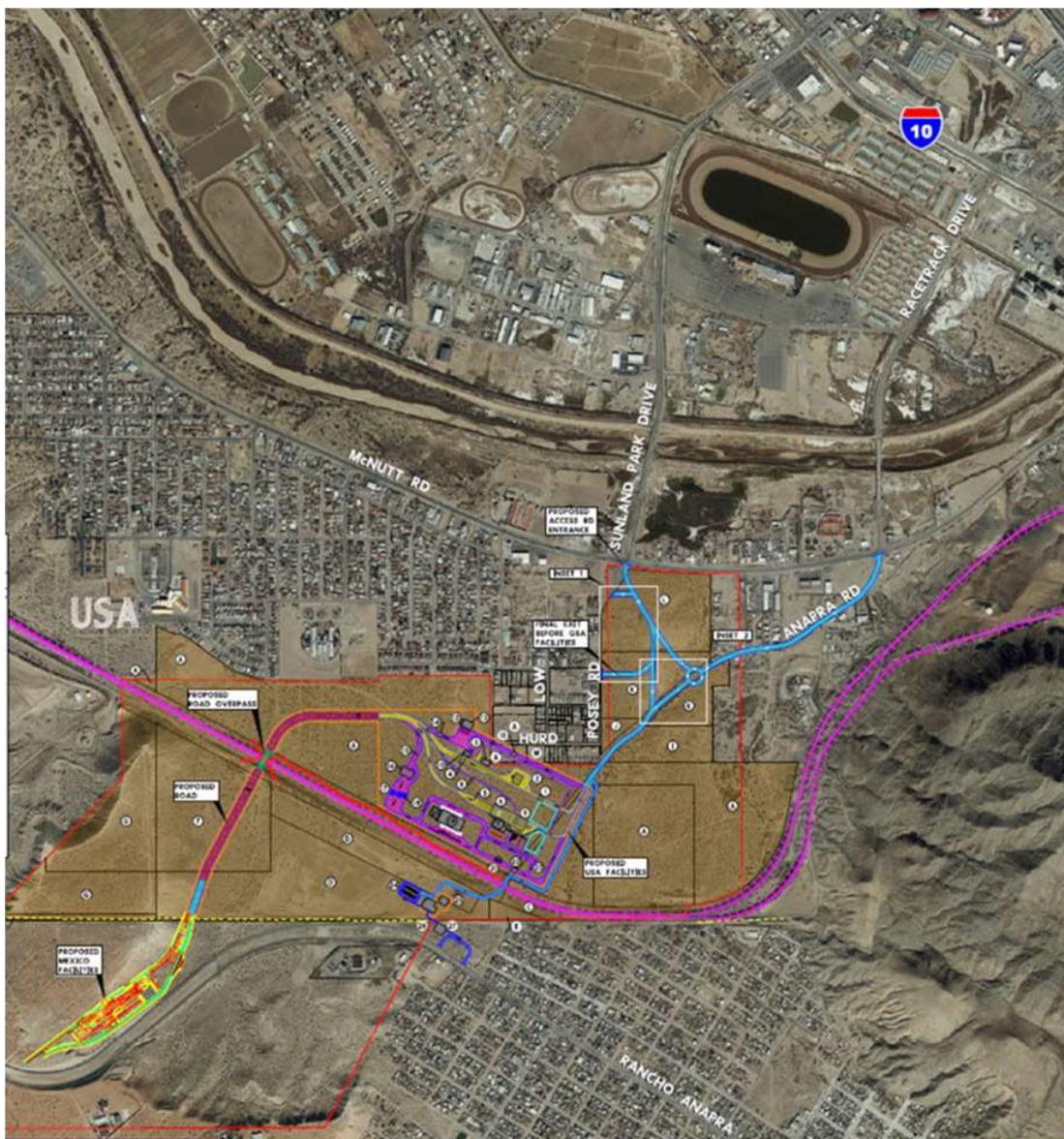


Figure 6-8 Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry

### **Processing Infrastructure:**

- Dedicated pedestrian processing lanes with weather protection and comfort amenities
- Personal vehicle processing lanes with modern inspection technology
- Administrative and operational facilities for CBP and Mexican customs operations
- Security infrastructure meeting current federal requirements and standards

### **Multimodal Integration:**

- Transit staging areas for SCRTD and potential binational transit services
- Kiss-and-ride facilities for passenger drop-off and pickup
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding neighborhoods
- Parking facilities for users crossing on foot or utilizing transit services

### **Community Integration:**

- Architectural design reflecting binational character and community identity
- Landscaping and public realm improvements enhancing community appearance
- Economic development opportunities, including retail and service businesses
- Integration with the proposed Medical District and entertainment facilities

### **Transportation Connectivity:**

#### **Local Circulation:**

- Enhanced street network providing access to the port of entry facility
- Traffic management systems minimizing impacts on residential neighborhoods
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections to surrounding areas
- Coordination with emergency services and public safety agencies

#### **Regional Integration:**

- Connections to regional transportation networks, including highways and transit
- Coordination with the El Paso and Las Cruces transportation systems
- Integration with freight and logistics networks
- Support for regional economic development initiatives

## Implementation Requirements:

### Federal Approval Process:

- Environmental impact assessment and NEPA compliance
- Security review and approval by relevant federal agencies
- Coordination with the Congressional delegation and federal funding agencies
- Compliance with international agreements and treaties

### Binational Coordination:

- Formal agreements with Mexican government agencies
- Coordination with IMIP and Ciudad Juárez on facility development
- Integration with Mexican transportation and land use planning
- Cultural and community engagement on both sides of the border

### Key Insights:

- Port of entry development requires long-term commitment and sustained coordination
- Community benefits must be clearly defined and protected throughout the development process
- Regional coordination is essential for maximizing economic development benefits
- Success depends on effective integration with local transportation networks

## Rio Grande Crossing Development Strategy

The development of additional Rio Grande crossings represents a critical infrastructure need to address current capacity constraints and support future growth in the Sunland Park region. These crossings require comprehensive feasibility analysis, environmental review, and coordination with multiple agencies and jurisdictions to enhance regional connectivity between Doña Ana County, New Mexico, and El Paso County, Texas.

### Strategic Crossing Locations:

#### Sunland Park-West El Paso Vehicular Bridge:

- Proposed crossing connecting Sunland Park to west El Paso
- Designed to handle local and regional traffic while providing emergency redundancy
- Integration with Medical District and Civic Center development
- Support for residential and commercial development on both sides of the border

#### Rio Grande State Boundary Crossing Alternatives (Frontera Road and Redd/Gomez):

- Two potential crossing alignments—Frontera Road and Redd/Gomez—will be evaluated in the future to determine a single preferred alignment
- These alternatives would cross the Rio Grande at the state boundary to improve emergency access, freight efficiency, and local circulation
- When evaluation occurs, analyses will be conducted in partnership with Doña Ana County, El Paso County, NMDOT, TxDOT, and the El Paso MPO
- Selection criteria will include traffic performance, emergency response improvement, environmental impacts, floodplain management, construction costs, right-of-way requirements, and community input
- Assessment of traffic distribution and congestion relief benefits

#### Long-term Crossing Options:

- Evaluation of additional crossing locations based on growth patterns and regional demand
- Coordination with Coordination with the planned Border Highway Connector system and regional transportation planning initiatives
- Integration with freight and logistics network development supporting the Santa Teresa industrial corridor
- Support for binational economic development objectives and Port of Entry expansion

## Implementation Framework:

### Feasibility and Environmental Analysis:

- Comprehensive feasibility studies for all potential crossing locations
- Environmental impact assessment and mitigation planning, including floodplain analysis
- Traffic modeling and economic impact analysis to assess regional benefits
- Engineering and design analysis for preferred alternatives

### Funding and Financing:

- Federal funding opportunities, including Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act programs
- State funding coordination with NMDOT and TxDOT
- Regional funding through the El Paso MPO, Mesilla Valley MPO and other agencies
- Public-private partnership opportunities for planning, construction and operations

### Regulatory and Approval Process:

- Environmental clearance and permitting requirements (NEPA compliance)
- Coordination with the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC)
- Integration with regional transportation planning processes and metropolitan planning organizations
- Community engagement and public input opportunities throughout the evaluation process

### Key Insights:

- Multiple crossing locations are needed to address current capacity constraints and provide emergency redundancy
- Comprehensive feasibility and environmental analysis is essential for identifying optimal crossing locations that balance traffic performance, environmental protection, and floodplain management
- Regional coordination with Doña Ana County, El Paso County, state DOTs, and MPOs is critical for securing funding and regulatory approval
- A phased approach allows for prioritization based on demand, funding availability, and environmental considerations
- Community engagement is necessary for ensuring local support, addressing concerns, and minimizing impacts on existing neighborhoods

## Binational Transit and Mobility Services

The development of binational transit and mobility services represents an innovative approach to addressing cross-border transportation needs while supporting workforce mobility, economic growth, and community connections. The development of binational transit services necessitates coordination with various agencies and jurisdictions, while addressing regulatory, operational, and funding challenges specific to cross-border transportation.

### Service Development Framework:

#### **Cross-Border Circulator Service:**

- Fixed-route service connecting Anapra, Sunland Park, and El Paso destinations
- Integration with existing SCRTD and Sun Metro services
- Specialized vehicles and operational procedures for border crossing
- Multilingual service and passenger information systems

#### **Park-and-Ride Hub Development:**

- Strategic location near the proposed port of entry facility
- Integration with regional transit services and cross-border connections
- Secure parking for 100+ vehicles with lighting and security features
- Electric vehicle charging and bicycle parking facilities

#### **Demand-Responsive Services:**

- Microtransit services for first- and last-mile connections
- Specialized services for elderly and disabled passengers
- Employment-focused services connecting residents to job centers
- Medical transportation services supporting healthcare access

### Operational Coordination:

#### **Service Integration:**

- Coordinated scheduling with existing transit services
- Integrated fare systems and payment methods
- Seamless transfers between different service providers
- Real-time information and passenger communication systems

### Regulatory Compliance:

- Compliance with federal regulations for cross-border transportation
- Coordination with immigration and customs requirements
- Insurance and liability considerations for international service
- Safety and security protocols for cross-border operations

### Key Insights:

- Binational transit services require innovative approaches to regulatory and operational challenges
- Community demand for cross-border transportation services is significant
- Regional coordination is essential for service effectiveness and sustainability
- Success depends on sustained commitment from multiple agencies and jurisdictions

## Institutional Coordination and Governance

The development and operation of binational transportation infrastructure requires sophisticated institutional coordination and governance mechanisms that can address the complex relationships between multiple levels of government, agencies, and stakeholders.

The development of effective institutional coordination requires attention to legal requirements, cultural differences, and operational challenges while maintaining focus on community needs and regional objectives.

### Governance Structure:

#### Binational Infrastructure Task Force:

- Formal coordination body with representatives from key agencies and jurisdictions
- Regular meetings and communication protocols
- Shared planning and decision-making processes
- Conflict resolution and problem-solving mechanisms

### Key Institutional Partners:

#### U.S. Federal Agencies:

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- General Services Administration (GSA)

#### Mexican Government Institutions:

- Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación (IMIP)
- Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE)
- Secretaría de Desarrollo Agrario, Territorial y Urbano (SEDATU)
- Ciudad Juárez municipal government

#### Regional and State Agencies:

- New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT)
- Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
- El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- South Central Regional Transit District (SCRTD)

## Coordination Mechanisms:

### Planning Integration:

- Joint planning processes for binational infrastructure
- Shared data collection and analysis procedures
- Coordinated environmental review and approval processes
- Integrated funding and financing strategies

### Operational Coordination:

- Joint operational protocols for cross-border facilities
- Shared maintenance and operational responsibilities
- Coordinated emergency response and security procedures
- Regular performance monitoring and evaluation

### Community Engagement:

- Binational community engagement processes
- Cultural and language considerations in public involvement
- Cross-border communication and information sharing
- Joint community events and educational programs

### Key Insights:

- Effective institutional coordination requires sustained commitment and resources
- Cultural and language differences must be addressed in coordination processes
- Success depends on building trust and relationships across traditional boundaries
- Community engagement is essential for maintaining support for binational initiatives

## Safety, Equity, and Resilience

### Vision Zero Implementation Framework

Vision Zero represents a fundamental paradigm shift in transportation safety planning, moving from accepting traffic fatalities and serious injuries as inevitable consequences of transportation systems to recognizing that all traffic deaths and serious injuries are preventable through systematic improvements to infrastructure design, operational practices, and policy implementation.

The framework is grounded in the Safe Systems Approach, which recognizes that humans make mistakes and that transportation systems must be designed to minimize the consequences of human error while actively preventing crashes from occurring. This approach requires comprehensive attention to all elements of the transportation system, including infrastructure design, vehicle technology, operational procedures, and user behavior, while maintaining a focus on the most vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, children, and elderly residents.

#### **Safe Systems Approach Implementation:**

##### *Infrastructure Design for Safety:*

- Roadway design that encourages appropriate speeds and provides clear guidance to users
- Intersection design that minimizes conflict points and enhances visibility
- Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that offers physical protection from vehicle traffic
- Lighting and visibility improvements that improve safety during all weather conditions and times of day

##### *Speed Management Strategy:*

- Posted speed limits that reflect actual roadway conditions and adjacent land uses
- Infrastructure design that encourages compliance with posted speed limits
- Traffic calming measures in residential areas and areas with high pedestrian activity
- Enforcement strategies that focus on the most dangerous behaviors and locations

*Vulnerable User Protection:*

- Special attention to the safety needs of pedestrians, cyclists, children, and elderly residents
- Infrastructure design that provides physical protection for vulnerable users
- Enhanced crossing facilities and intersection design for pedestrian and bicycle safety
- School zone improvements that create safe environments for children

*Emergency Response and Trauma Care:*

- Rapid emergency response systems that minimize the time between crash occurrence and medical treatment
- Trauma care systems that provide immediate and comprehensive medical treatment
- Coordination with regional emergency medical services and trauma centers
- Post-crash response procedures that prevent secondary crashes and enhance scene safety

**High-Injury Network Analysis:**

**Corridor-Specific Safety Improvements:**

- *NM 273 (McNutt Road):* Speed management, enhanced crossing facilities, and intersection redesign
- *Sunland Park Drive:* Traffic calming, pedestrian improvements, and school zone enhancements
- *Country Club Road:* Complete street reconstruction with pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- *Major Intersections:* Signal timing optimization, sight distance improvements, and conflict reduction

**Data-Driven Safety Planning:**

- Comprehensive crash data collection and analysis
- Proactive safety assessment using predictive modeling and risk analysis
- Community input on safety concerns and near-miss incidents
- Regular safety audits and infrastructure assessments

### Key Insights:

- Vision Zero implementation requires cultural change in how transportation agencies approach safety
- Community engagement is essential for identifying safety concerns and building support for improvements
- Success depends on sustained commitment and adequate funding for safety improvements
- Regional coordination is necessary for addressing safety issues on state highways and regional corridors

### Transportation Equity and Environmental Justice

Transportation equity ensures that all residents, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, ability, or immigration status, have access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options that connect them to employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services.

The framework recognizes that transportation decisions have disproportionate impacts on low-income communities and communities of color, requiring proactive efforts to address historic inequities and prevent future discrimination.

### Title VI and Civil Rights Compliance:

#### *Non-Discrimination Requirements:*

- Prohibition of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability
- Equal access to transportation services and facilities for all residents
- Meaningful participation opportunities for protected populations in transportation planning
- Complaint procedures and resolution mechanisms for civil rights violations

## Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy

Climate resilience and adaptation represent essential considerations for transportation planning in the 21st century, recognizing that climate change will fundamentally alter the environmental conditions in which transportation infrastructure operates.

The development of climate-resilient transportation requires the integration of climate science, engineering best practices, and community resilience planning, while maintaining a focus on safety, equity, and economic development objectives.

### **Climate Impact Assessment:**

#### *Temperature and Heat Impacts:*

- Increasing maximum temperatures are affecting pavement performance and user comfort
- Extended periods of extreme heat creating safety hazards for pedestrians and transit users
- Urban heat island effects concentrated in areas with extensive pavement and limited vegetation
- Cooling system demands and energy costs for transit and transportation facilities

#### *Precipitation and Flooding Impacts:*

- Intense precipitation events causing flooding and infrastructure damage
- Drainage system capacity limitations during extreme weather events
- Erosion and scour impacts on transportation infrastructure
- Debris flow and mudslide risks in areas with steep topography

#### *Wind and Dust Impacts:*

- High wind events affecting vehicle operations and infrastructure stability
- Dust storms reducing visibility and creating safety hazards
- Erosion and sedimentation impacts on transportation facilities
- Maintenance requirements for keeping infrastructure functional during dust events

### **Resilience Design Principles:**

#### *Adaptive Infrastructure Design:*

- Transportation facilities must be designed to withstand projected climate conditions
- Redundant systems and backup capabilities for critical infrastructure
- Modular design approaches that allow for future adaptation and upgrading
- Integration of green infrastructure for climate regulation and stormwater management

*Extreme Weather Preparedness:*

- Emergency response protocols for severe weather events
- Communication systems for alerting users to hazardous conditions
- Evacuation route planning and capacity analysis
- Coordination with emergency management agencies and regional partners

*Heat Mitigation Strategies:*

- Shade structures and cooling elements at transit stops and pedestrian facilities
- Cool pavement materials and surface treatments
- Urban forestry and landscaping for temperature regulation
- Water features and misting systems for pedestrian comfort

*Stormwater Management Integration:*

- Bioswales and rain gardens must be integrated into transportation corridors
- Permeable pavement surfaces for groundwater recharge
- Detention and retention facilities for flood control
- Coordination with regional watershed management initiatives

**Sustainability and Emissions Reduction:**

*Transportation Demand Management:*

- Land use planning that reduces vehicle miles traveled
- Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure promoting mode shift
- Telecommuting and flexible work arrangements supporting reduced travel demand
- Regional coordination on transportation demand management strategies

*Low-Carbon Transportation Options:*

- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure for personal and commercial vehicles
- Transit fleet electrification and alternative fuel technologies
- Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure supporting zero-emission transportation
- Coordination with utility providers on renewable energy for transportation

**Key Insights:**

- Climate resilience requires the integration of climate science into transportation planning

and design

- Adaptation strategies must address both current climate variability and projected future conditions
- Community engagement is essential for developing locally appropriate resilience strategies
- Regional coordination is necessary for addressing climate impacts that cross jurisdictional boundaries

## Emergency Preparedness and Transportation Security

Emergency preparedness and transportation security represent critical components of a resilient transportation system, ensuring that infrastructure and services can continue to operate during emergencies while supporting community safety and security. The development of comprehensive emergency preparedness requires attention to prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation while maintaining focus on community safety and continuity of essential services.

### Emergency Response Coordination:

#### *Multi-Agency Coordination:*

- Coordination with federal agencies, including CBP, ICE, and FEMA
- Integration with state emergency management agencies and NMDOT
- Cooperation with local law enforcement and fire departments
- Regional coordination with El Paso and Doña Ana County emergency management

#### *Communication Systems:*

- Emergency communication networks linking all transportation agencies
- Public information systems for alerting residents to transportation emergencies
- Coordination with media outlets and community organizations
- Multilingual emergency information and communication capabilities

#### *Evacuation and Emergency Access:*

- Evacuation route planning and capacity analysis
- Emergency access routes for first responders and emergency vehicles
- Transportation services for residents without personal vehicles
- Special needs populations, including elderly and disabled residents

## Transportation Security:

### *Border Security Coordination:*

- Coordination with CBP and other federal agencies on security requirements
- Integration of security considerations into transportation infrastructure design
- Coordination with Mexican security agencies on binational security issues
- Community engagement on security concerns and procedures

### *Critical Infrastructure Protection:*

- Essential protection of transportation infrastructure from security threats
- Cybersecurity for intelligent transportation systems and communication networks
- Access control and monitoring systems for sensitive transportation facilities
- Coordination with regional security agencies and organizations

### *Business Continuity and Economic Security:*

- Procedures for maintaining essential transportation services during emergencies
- Economic impact mitigation strategies for transportation disruptions
- Coordination with businesses and industries on continuity planning
- Regional economic security and resilience planning

## Key Insights:

- Emergency preparedness requires coordination across multiple agencies and jurisdictions
- Community engagement is essential for developing effective emergency response strategies
- Success depends on regular training, exercises, and plan updates
- Regional coordination is necessary for addressing emergencies that cross jurisdictional boundaries

## Land Use and Transportation Integration

### Complete Communities Development Framework

The integration of land use and transportation planning represents a fundamental strategy for creating complete communities where residents can access their daily needs, including employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and recreation, through multiple transportation modes. This approach requires coordination among transportation planning, land use regulation, economic development, and community design, while maintaining a focus on affordability, accessibility, and community character.

#### **Complete Communities Design Principles:**

##### *Mixed-Use Development:*

- Integration of residential, commercial, and office uses in walkable districts
- Vertical and horizontal mixing of uses to create vibrant, active neighborhoods
- Appropriate scale and design that enhances rather than conflicts with existing development
- Flexible zoning that can adapt to changing market conditions and community needs

##### *Transit-Oriented Development:*

- Higher density development within walking distance of transit stations and corridors
- Reduced parking requirements and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Mixed-use development that supports transit ridership and reduces vehicle trips
- Design standards that create attractive, walkable environments around transit

##### *Walkable Neighborhood Design:*

- Street networks that provide multiple routes and connections for pedestrians
- Block sizes and building orientation that support pedestrian activity
- Streetscape design that prioritizes pedestrian comfort and safety
- Public spaces and amenities that encourage walking and community interaction

##### *Complete Streets Integration:*

- Street design that accommodates all transportation modes safely and efficiently
- Context-sensitive design that reflects neighborhood character and function
- Infrastructure that supports economic development and community vitality
- Coordination between transportation and land use planning processes

## Land Development Code Integration:

### Zoning for Complete Communities:

- *Mixed-Use Zoning Districts (LDC §10-4-4)*: Support integration of residential, commercial, and office uses
- *Transit-Oriented Development Overlays*: Encourage higher density and reduced parking near transit
- *Pedestrian-Oriented Design Standards*: Require building orientation and streetscape improvements
- *Flexible Development Standards*: Allow innovation and adaptation to local conditions

### Transportation Impact Management:

- *Traffic Impact Analysis (LDC §10-3-2)*: Ensure new development addresses transportation impacts
- *Connectivity Requirements (LDC §10-3-3.4)*: Mandate street and pathway connections
- *Complete Streets Standards (LDC §10-4-12)*: Require multimodal accommodation in street design
- *Parking Management (LDC §10-4-9)*: Reduce parking requirements in walkable areas

### Infrastructure Financing:

- *Public Improvement Districts (LDC §10-3-7)*: Finance transportation improvements in growth areas
- *Impact Fees*: Require new development to contribute to transportation infrastructure
- *Developer Agreements*: Negotiate transportation improvements as part of development approval
- *Grant Coordination*: Leverage federal and state funding for transportation improvements

### Key Insights:

- Complete communities require integration of transportation and land use planning from the earliest stages
- The LDC provides comprehensive tools for implementing complete community principles
- Success depends on sustained commitment to integrated planning approaches
- Community engagement is essential for ensuring that complete communities reflect local needs and values

## Transit-Oriented Development Strategy

Transit-oriented development (TOD) represents a strategic approach to integrating land use and transportation, concentrating higher-density, mixed-use development around transit stations and corridors. The development of TOD requires attention to market conditions, infrastructure capacity, and community character while maintaining focus on affordability, accessibility, and sustainability.

### TOD Implementation Framework:

#### Transit Corridor Analysis:

- *McNutt Road Corridor*: Primary transit route with the highest development potential
- *Sunland Park Drive*: Secondary corridor with opportunities for mixed-use development
- *Future Transit Routes*: Planned service to Santa Teresa and the Medical District
- *Binational Transit Connections*: Integration with cross-border transit services

#### Development Intensity and Design:

- *Station Area Planning*: Detailed planning for areas within walking distance of transit stops
- *Density Bonuses*: Incentives for higher-density development near transit
- *Design Standards*: Requirements for pedestrian-oriented development and streetscape improvements
- *Parking Reduction*: Lower parking requirements for development near transit

#### Market Analysis and Economic Development:

- *Housing Market*: Support for diverse housing types and price points near transit
- *Commercial Development*: Retail and service businesses that support transit users
- *Employment Centers*: Office and institutional development near transit corridors
- *Economic Incentives*: Tax increment financing and other tools for TOD development

#### Community Benefits and Affordability:

- *Affordable Housing*: Requirements or incentives for affordable housing in TOD areas
- *Anti-Displacement*: Strategies to prevent gentrification and community disruption
- *Community Facilities*: Schools, parks, and other amenities serving TOD residents
- *Local Business Support*: Programs to support existing businesses in TOD areas

## TOD Implementation Tools:

### Regulatory Tools:

- *Overlay Zoning*: Special zoning districts for TOD areas with modified development standards
- *Form-Based Codes*: Design-based regulations that prioritize building form and streetscape
- *Parking Maximums*: Limits on parking provision to encourage transit use
- *Height Bonuses*: Additional building height allowed in exchange for community benefits

### Financial Tools:

- *Tax Increment Financing*: Capture property tax increases to fund TOD infrastructure
- *Public-Private Partnerships*: Coordinate public infrastructure with private development
- *Impact Fee Reductions*: Lower impact fees for TOD to encourage development
- *Grant Funding*: Federal and state grants for TOD planning and implementation

### Key Insights:

- TOD requires long-term commitment and coordination between multiple agencies and stakeholders
- Success depends on both transit service quality and supportive land use policies
- Community engagement is essential for ensuring that TOD benefits existing residents
- Regional coordination is necessary for TOD effectiveness in a multi-jurisdictional area

## Economic Development and Transportation Synergy

The relationship between transportation infrastructure and economic development represents a fundamental aspect of comprehensive planning, recognizing that strategic transportation investments can catalyze business development, job creation, and community prosperity. Sunland Park's economic development strategy leverages the city's unique position as a binational gateway and its proximity to world-class freight infrastructure while ensuring that transportation infrastructure supports diverse economic opportunities and community needs.

### Economic Development Sectors:

#### International Trade and Logistics:

- *Port of Entry Development:* Camino Real de Tierra Adentro POE supporting non-commercial trade
- *Regional Rail and Intermodal Access:* Proximity to Union Pacific Santa Teresa Intermodal Terminal, providing access to national freight networks and reducing truck traffic through residential areas
- *Industrial Development Opportunities:* Potential for logistics and distribution facilities that leverage rail connectivity while serving local economic development goals
- *Cross-Border Business:* Services supporting international commerce and workforce mobility
- *Trade Facilitation:* Infrastructure and services that reduce transaction costs and delays

#### Tourism and Recreation:

- *Cultural Tourism:* Infrastructure supporting visits to historic and cultural sites
- *Recreational Tourism:* Trails, parks, and outdoor recreation facilities
- *Event Tourism:* Infrastructure supporting festivals, conferences, and special events
- *Binational Tourism:* Coordination with Mexican partners on tourism development

#### Local Business Development:

- *Small Business Support:* Infrastructure and services supporting local entrepreneurship
- *Workforce Development:* Transportation connections to employment and training opportunities

- *Downtown Revitalization:* Transportation improvements supporting the central business district
- *Neighborhood Commercial:* Local businesses serving residential neighborhoods

### Technology and Innovation:

- *Smart City Technologies:* Intelligent transportation systems supporting innovation
- *Telecommunications:* Broadband infrastructure supporting technology businesses
- *Research and Development:* Coordination with universities and research institutions
- *Start-up Support:* Infrastructure and services supporting new technology businesses

### Transportation-Economic Development Integration:

#### Strategic Corridor Development:

- *McNutt Road:* Mixed-use development supporting transit and economic activity
- *Sunland Park Drive:* Commercial and medical district development
- *Industrial Corridors:* Freight and logistics infrastructure supporting industrial development
- *Tourism Corridors:* Scenic routes and recreational infrastructure supporting tourism

#### Workforce Mobility:

- *Regional Connections:* Transportation links to employment centers throughout the region
- *Skills-Based Transportation:* Connections to workforce training and educational opportunities
- *Cross-Border Workforce:* Transportation supporting binational workforce mobility
- *Transit-Jobs Connections:* Transit routes serving major employment centers

#### Key Insights:

- Economic development and transportation planning must be coordinated from the earliest stages
- Success depends on understanding regional economic trends and competitive advantages
- Community engagement is essential for ensuring that economic development benefits all residents
- Binational coordination creates unique opportunities for economic development

## Growth Management and Infrastructure Coordination

Growth management represents a critical component of land use and transportation integration, ensuring that community development occurs in a planned, coordinated manner that supports infrastructure efficiency, environmental sustainability, and community livability.

The development of effective growth management requires coordination between multiple agencies and stakeholders while ensuring that growth benefits are broadly shared throughout the community.

### Growth Management Principles:

#### Planned Growth Patterns:

- *Infill Development*: Priority for development in areas with existing infrastructure
- *Compact Development*: Concentrated development that supports efficient service delivery
- *Phased Development*: Coordinated timing of development with infrastructure provision
- *Preservation*: Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and agricultural lands

#### Infrastructure Coordination:

- *Concurrent Infrastructure*: Development timing coordinated with transportation infrastructure provision
- *Adequate Public Facilities*: Standards ensuring that infrastructure capacity meets development needs
- *Regional Coordination*: Integration with regional infrastructure planning and financing
- *Sustainable Infrastructure*: Development patterns that support long-term infrastructure efficiency

#### Fiscal Impact Management:

- *Impact Fees*: Development contributions to transportation infrastructure costs
- *Public Improvement Districts*: Special assessment areas for infrastructure financing
- *Cost-Benefit Analysis*: Evaluation of development proposals based on fiscal impacts
- *Long-term Sustainability*: Development patterns that support sustainable municipal finances

### Environmental Protection:

- *Sensitive Area Protection*: Preservation of the Rio Grande corridor and other environmentally sensitive areas
- *Green Infrastructure*: Integration of natural systems into development patterns
- *Climate Adaptation*: Development standards that address climate change impacts
- *Resource Conservation*: Efficient use of water, energy, and other natural resources

### Growth Management Implementation:

#### Development Review Process:

- *Comprehensive Plan Compliance*: Evaluation of development proposals for consistency with the comprehensive plan
- *Traffic Impact Analysis*: Assessment of transportation impacts and mitigation requirements
- *Infrastructure Adequacy*: Verification that adequate infrastructure exists or will be provided
- *Community Input*: Meaningful public participation in development review processes

#### Monitoring and Evaluation:

- *Growth Indicators*: Regular monitoring of development patterns and infrastructure capacity
- *Performance Standards*: Measurable criteria for evaluating growth management effectiveness
- *Adaptive Management*: Flexibility to adjust growth management strategies based on changing conditions
- *Regional Coordination*: Coordination with regional agencies on growth management issues

#### Key Insights:

- Growth management requires proactive planning and coordination across multiple sectors
- Success depends on balancing development opportunities with infrastructure capacity
- Community engagement is essential for maintaining support for growth management policies
- Regional coordination is necessary for addressing growth impacts that cross jurisdictional boundaries

## Goals, Objectives, and Policies

### Framework for Transportation Excellence

These comprehensive goals framework establishes the strategic direction for Sunland Park's transportation system development through 2045. Each goal represents a critical dimension of transportation planning that must be addressed simultaneously to achieve the community's vision for a connected, safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility system. This structure ensures accountability while maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing conditions and opportunities over the 20-year planning horizon.

#### Key Insights:

- Goals reflect community priorities identified in the 2024 transportation survey, where 78% of respondents identified road maintenance, pedestrian safety, and limited public transit as top concerns.
- The framework integrates Vision Zero principles, Complete Streets standards, and environmental justice considerations.
- Implementation requires coordination with Land Development Code provisions and regional planning initiatives.
- Performance measurement and adaptive management are integral to the framework's structure.

### Goal 1: Create a Safe and Secure Transportation System

Transportation safety represents the fundamental foundation upon which all other transportation goals must be built. Without safe infrastructure and operations, residents cannot fully access employment, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities. This comprehensive approach acknowledges that human error is inevitable and focuses on creating forgiving systems that minimize the consequences of mistakes while actively preventing crashes from occurring.

#### Key Insights:

- Community survey data reveals that over 65% of participants cited safety concerns related to poorly lit intersections, unmarked crosswalks, and speeding in residential areas.
- The High-Injury Network includes NM 273/McNutt Road, Sunland Park Drive near schools, and Country Club Road.
- Safety improvements must address both traffic safety and personal security concerns, particularly for vulnerable populations.

- The LDC's design standards (§10-3-3.4) provide mechanisms for ensuring safety in new development.

### Objective T1.1: Eliminate Traffic Fatalities and Serious Injuries

The elimination of traffic fatalities and serious injuries requires a comprehensive approach that addresses infrastructure design, operational practices, enforcement strategies, and community education. This objective reflects the city's commitment to Vision Zero principles and the Safe Systems Approach promoted by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

- *Policy T1.1.1: Vision Zero Implementation:* Formally adopt Vision Zero principles in all transportation projects, including comprehensive safety assessments, speed management strategies, and infrastructure improvements designed to prevent fatal and serious injury crashes.
- *Policy T1.1.2: High-Injury Network Redesign:* Systematically redesign corridors with elevated crash rates using Safe Systems Approach principles, including speed management, improved visibility, protected facilities for vulnerable users, and intersection redesign.
- *Policy T1.1.3: Speed Management Program:* Implement comprehensive speed management strategies including posted speed limit adjustments, traffic calming infrastructure, automated enforcement where legally permissible, and design modifications that encourage appropriate speeds.
- *Policy T1.1.4: Safety Audit Requirements:* Require comprehensive safety audits for all new development projects, infrastructure improvements, and operational changes, with particular attention to impacts on vulnerable road users and emergency response capabilities.

### Objective T1.2: Enhance Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

Pedestrian and cyclist safety requires specialized attention due to the vulnerability of these users in conflicts with motor vehicles. Sunland Park's commitment to enhancing non-motorized transportation safety reflects both community priorities and regional best practices for creating walkable, bikeable communities.

- *Policy T1.2.1: Complete Sidewalk Networks:* Provide continuous, ADA-compliant sidewalk networks on all arterial and collector roadways, with priority given to routes serving schools, parks, medical facilities, and commercial areas.
- *Policy T1.2.2: Protected Bicycle Infrastructure:* Install protected bike lanes, separated paths, and other infrastructure that physically separates cyclists from motor vehicle traffic on corridors with high cycling potential or demand.

- *Policy T1.2.3: Safe Routes to School Program:* Implement comprehensive Safe Routes to School programs at all educational facilities, including infrastructure improvements, education programs, and enforcement strategies
- *Policy T1.2.4: Intersection Safety Enhancement:* Enhance intersection safety through design improvements, including high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and traffic calming measures.

### **Objective T1.3: Improve Transportation Security and Emergency Preparedness**

Transportation security encompasses both routine personal security concerns and emergency preparedness requirements. Sunland Park's binational character and role in international commerce create unique security considerations that must be addressed through coordination with multiple agencies and jurisdictions.

- *Policy T1.3.1: Border Security Coordination:* Coordinate with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and other federal agencies on transportation infrastructure design and operations that support border security objectives.
- *Policy T1.3.2: Intelligent Transportation Systems:* Implement intelligent transportation systems (ITS), including traffic monitoring, emergency communication, and incident response capabilities that enhance both routine operations and emergency response.
- *Policy T1.3.3: Emergency Access and Evacuation:* Ensure redundant emergency vehicle access routes and evacuation capabilities, with particular attention to vulnerable populations and areas with limited connectivity.
- *Policy T1.3.4: Personal Security Enhancement:* Enhance personal security through improved lighting, visibility, emergency communication systems, and coordination with law enforcement agencies.

## Goal 2: Provide Equitable Access to Transportation Options

Transportation equity ensures that all residents, regardless of income, age, ability, race, ethnicity, or documentation status, have access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options that connect them to employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services.

### Key Insights:

- Historic underinvestment in Districts 3, 4, and 5 has created transportation equity gaps that must be systematically addressed.
- The community survey revealed that 35.7% of respondents ranked ADA compliance as "Extremely Important," indicating strong community support for accessibility improvements.
- Bilingual and culturally appropriate outreach is essential for meaningful community participation in transportation planning.
- The LDC's connectivity requirements (§10-3-3.4) provide tools for ensuring equitable access in new development.~~

### Objective T2.1: Ensure Transportation Justice

Transportation justice requires proactive efforts to address historic inequities in transportation investment and ensure that all communities benefit from transportation improvements. This objective reflects the city's commitment to environmental justice principles and community-responsive planning processes.

- *Policy T2.1.1: Equity Priority Areas:* Prioritize transportation investments in historically underserved areas, with particular attention to Districts 3, 4, and 5, where infrastructure gaps are most significant.
- *Policy T2.1.2: Civil Rights Compliance:* Conduct a Title VI analysis for all major transportation projects, ensuring that improvements provide net benefits to protected populations and do not create disproportionate negative impacts.
- *Policy T2.1.3: Affordable Transportation Access:* Provide affordable and accessible public transportation options, including fare assistance programs, multilingual information, and coordination with social service agencies.
- *Policy T2.1.4: Community Engagement Excellence:* Engage all communities in transportation planning through culturally appropriate outreach, multilingual materials, accessible meeting formats, and meaningful participation opportunities.

## Objective T2.2: Serve All Users and Abilities

Universal accessibility ensures that transportation infrastructure and services accommodate users of all ages, abilities, and mobility characteristics. Sunland Park's commitment to universal design reflects both legal requirements and community values that prioritize inclusion and accessibility.

- *Policy T2.2.1: ADA Compliance Excellence:* Achieve and maintain full compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements in all transportation facilities, including sidewalks, transit stops, parking areas, and public buildings.
- *Policy T2.2.2: Universal Design Principles:* Design transportation infrastructure to accommodate users of all ages and abilities, including children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those using mobility assistance devices.
- *Policy T2.2.3: Transportation Options Diversity:* Provide diverse mobility options for residents without personal vehicles, including public transit, shared mobility services, pedestrian infrastructure, and bicycle facilities.
- *Policy T2.2.4: Multilingual Access:* Ensure bilingual signage, information, and communication in transportation systems, with a particular focus on Spanish-language materials and services.

## Objective T2.3: Address Geographic Disparities

Geographic disparities in transportation access create barriers to opportunity and contribute to social and economic inequities. Sunland Park's commitment to addressing these disparities necessitates strategic investment in underserved areas and comprehensive improvements to connectivity.

- *Policy T2.3.1: Complete Network Coverage:* Ensure that all neighborhoods have access to complete transportation networks, including sidewalks, bicycle facilities, transit service, and roadway connectivity.
- *Policy T2.3.2: Transit Access Equity:* Provide equitable transit access across all city districts, with particular attention to areas with high concentrations of transit-dependent populations.
- *Policy T2.3.3: Infrastructure Investment Balance:* Balance transportation infrastructure investments to address historic inequities while supporting strategic growth and development objectives.
- *Policy T2.3.4: Connectivity Enhancement:* Enhance connectivity between all neighborhoods and key destinations, including employment centers, educational facilities, healthcare services, and recreational opportunities.

## Goal 3: Support Economic Development and Regional Competitiveness

Transportation infrastructure plays a fundamental role in driving economic development and regional competitiveness.

Strategic investments in freight infrastructure, workforce mobility, and binational connectivity can simultaneously support local business development and enhance the region's role in international trade.

### Key Insights:

- The Santa Teresa Strategic Plan identifies regional projects, including the Industrial Loop Extension (pp. 102-104) and Border Highway Connector (pp. 55-58), that directly support economic development objectives.
- Freight traffic accounts for approximately 30% of traffic on NM 136, underscoring the importance of efficient freight movement.
- The proposed Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Port of Entry represents a transformational economic development opportunity.
- Public Improvement Districts (LDC §10-3-7) provide financing mechanisms for infrastructure supporting economic development.~~

### Objective T3.1: Facilitate Efficient Freight Movement

Efficient freight movement is essential for supporting existing businesses and attracting new economic development opportunities. Sunland Park's strategic location necessitates sophisticated freight management that strikes a balance between economic benefits and neighborhood livability concerns.

- *Policy T3.1.1: Designated Truck Route System:* Designate and maintain official truck routes that provide efficient freight movement while minimizing impacts on residential neighborhoods and sensitive land uses.
- *Policy T3.1.3: Freight-Supportive Development:* Support development of logistics, distribution, and freight-related facilities in appropriately zoned areas with adequate infrastructure and transportation access.
- *Policy T3.1.4: Freight Management Systems:* Implement comprehensive freight management strategies, including truck staging areas, routing enforcement, and operational coordination with central freight generators.

### Performance Measures:

- Reduce freight travel time through the city by 15% by 2035
- Achieve 95% compliance with designated truck routes by 2030
- Support the development of 500,000 sq ft of logistics facilities by 2040
- Maintain average commercial vehicle speeds of 35+ mph on designated routes
- Establish coordination agreements with regional freight facilities by 2026

*Implementation Timeline:* Short-term (2025-2030), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, NMDOT, CBP, Economic Development Union Pacific, Santa Teresa Gateway Rail Park

*Funding Sources:* INFRA, FASTLANE, Private Investment, Local CIP

### Objective T3.2: Enhance Binational Connectivity

Binational connectivity represents a unique competitive advantage for Sunland Park and the broader region. Strategic investments in cross-border infrastructure can enhance economic opportunities while supporting workforce mobility and social connections.

- *Policy T3.2.1: Port of Entry Development:* Advance development of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Port of Entry through coordination with federal agencies, Mexican partners, and regional stakeholders.
- *Policy T3.2.2: Rio Grande Crossing Expansion:* Pursue development of additional Rio Grande crossings, including the proposed vehicular bridge, and evaluation of Frontera Road crossing potential.
- *Policy T3.2.3: Binational Planning Coordination:* Coordinate with Mexican partners, including IMIP (Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación) and Ciudad Juárez, on binational transportation planning and infrastructure development.
- *Policy T3.2.4: Workforce Mobility Support:* Integrate cross-border workforce mobility needs into transit planning, infrastructure design, and operational coordination.

### Performance Measures:

- Complete environmental review for the new Port of Entry by 2027
- Reduce border crossing wait times by 25% by 2035
- Establish formal binational planning agreements by 2026
- Increase cross-border transit ridership by 50% by 2040

*Implementation Timeline:* Medium-term (2025-2035), Long-term (2035-2045).

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, CBP, GSA, Mexican Partners

*Funding Sources:* Federal Appropriations, INFRA, Binational Programs

### **Objective T3.3: Support Tourism and Recreation**

Transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting tourism and recreational economic development. Sunland Park's proximity to natural amenities and cultural attractions creates opportunities for economic diversification through tourism-related development.

- *Policy T3.3.1: Recreational Access Enhancement:* Enhance transportation access to recreational facilities, including parks, trails, and natural areas, through improved connectivity and wayfinding systems.
- *Policy T3.3.2: Tourism Infrastructure Development:* Support tourism-related infrastructure development, including visitor parking, wayfinding signage, and connections to regional attractions.
- *Policy T3.3.3: Cultural Heritage Integration:* Integrate cultural heritage and historic elements into transportation infrastructure design and wayfinding systems.
- *Policy T3.3.4: Event and Festival Support:* Design transportation systems to accommodate special events and festivals that support economic development and community vitality.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- Complete 25 miles of recreational trails by 2040
- Install a comprehensive wayfinding system by 2030
- Increase tourism-related economic activity by 30% by 2035
- Support 12+ annual community events with enhanced transportation access

*Implementation Timeline:* Medium-term (2030-2040)

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Tourism Board, Parks & Recreation

*Funding Sources:* RTP, LWCF, Tourism Taxes, Grants

## Goal 4: Promote Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience

Environmental sustainability and climate resilience are essential considerations for transportation planning in the 21st century. This comprehensive approach recognizes that transportation systems must be both environmentally responsible and operationally reliable over multi-decade service lives.

### Objective T4.1: Reduce Transportation Emissions

Transportation emissions reduction requires a comprehensive approach that addresses both vehicle efficiency and travel demand management. Sunland Park's strategies for emissions reduction focus on mode shift, land use integration, and support for low-emission transportation technologies.

- *Policy T4.1.1: Mode Shift Promotion:* Prioritize investments in transit, walking, and cycling infrastructure that provide attractive alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle use.
- *Policy T4.1.2: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure:* Support the development of electric vehicle charging infrastructure for both personal and commercial vehicles, including coordination with utility providers and regional partners.
- *Policy T4.1.3: Transit-Oriented Development:* Encourage compact, mixed-use development patterns near transit corridors that reduce vehicle miles traveled and support sustainable transportation choices.
- *Policy T4.1.4: Regional Coordination:* Promote regional coordination on transportation demand management, emissions reduction strategies, and sustainable transportation investments.

### Performance Measures:

- Reduce transportation GHG emissions by 40% below 2025 levels by 2040
- Install 50 public EV charging stations by 2035
- Achieve a 15% mode share for walking/cycling/transit by 2040
- Reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled by 20% by 2040

*Implementation Timeline:* Short-term (2025-2030), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Utility Providers, SCRTD

*Funding Sources:* NEVI, VW Settlement, Climate Grants, Utility Programs

## Objective T4.2: Build Climate-Resilient Infrastructure

Climate-resilient infrastructure must be designed to withstand and adapt to changing environmental conditions while maintaining reliable service over multi-decade service lives. Sunland Park's approach to climate resilience addresses both current environmental challenges and projected future conditions.

- *Policy T4.2.1: Extreme Weather Adaptation:* Design transportation facilities to withstand extreme weather events, including intense heat, flooding, high winds, and dust storms.
- *Policy T4.2.2: Green Infrastructure Integration:* Incorporate green infrastructure elements, including bioswales, permeable surfaces, and urban forestry, into transportation projects for stormwater management and cooling benefits.
- *Policy T4.2.3: Heat Mitigation Strategies:* Provide shade structures, cooling elements, and heat-resistant materials in pedestrian and transit facilities to address extreme heat challenges.
- *Policy T4.2.4: Sustainable Construction Practices:* Use sustainable materials, construction practices, and lifecycle assessment principles in transportation infrastructure development.

### Performance Measures:

- Design all new infrastructure to withstand 100-year climate projections
- Install shade coverage at 90% of transit stops and major pedestrian areas by 2035
- Implement green infrastructure in 75% of transportation projects by 2030
- Achieve a 25% reduction in infrastructure lifecycle carbon emissions by 2040

*Implementation Timeline:* Immediate (2025-2027), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, NMDOT, Design Consultants

*Funding Sources:* PROTECT, IJA Climate Programs, State Climate Funds

## Objective T4.3: Enhance Environmental Quality

Environmental quality encompasses air quality, water quality, noise pollution, and other environmental factors that affect community health and quality of life. Transportation planning can significantly impact environmental quality through the design of infrastructure and the implementation of operational strategies.

- *Policy T4.3.1: Air Quality Improvement:* Implement transportation strategies that improve air quality, including emissions reduction, dust control, and vegetation enhancement.
- *Policy T4.3.2: Water Quality Protection:* Protect water quality through stormwater management, pollution prevention, and coordination with water resource agencies.
- *Policy T4.3.3: Noise Pollution Mitigation:* Mitigate transportation-related noise pollution through routing strategies, barrier installation, and operational modifications.
- *Policy T4.3.4: Ecosystem Protection:* Protect and enhance natural ecosystems through wildlife corridors, native vegetation, and environmentally sensitive design practices.

**Performance Measures:**

- Achieve "Good" air quality ratings 90% of days by 2035
- Install stormwater treatment for 100% of new transportation projects
- Reduce transportation noise complaints by 50% by 2030
- Plant 2,000 native trees along transportation corridors by 2035

*Implementation Timeline:* Short-term (2025-2030), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Environmental Agencies, NMDOT

*Funding Sources:* CMAQ, Environmental Grants, Green Infrastructure Funds

## Goal 5: Integrate Transportation and Land Use Planning

Transportation and land use planning integration is essential for creating efficient, sustainable, and livable communities. This approach necessitates coordination among transportation planning, land-use regulation, and economic development strategies.

### Objective T5.1: Support Complete Communities

Complete communities provide residents with access to their daily needs, including employment, education, healthcare, shopping, and recreation, through multiple transportation modes. Sunland Park's approach to complete communities focuses on creating walkable, bikeable neighborhoods with transit access and mixed-use development opportunities.

- *Policy T5.1.1: Mixed-Use Development Promotion:* Encourage mixed-use development near transit corridors and in neighborhood centers to reduce travel distances and support sustainable transportation choices.

- *Policy T5.1.2: Complete Streets Implementation:* Implement Complete Streets standards in all new development and infrastructure projects to ensure accommodation of all transportation modes.
- *Policy T5.1.3: Parking Management:* Reduce parking requirements near transit stations and in walkable areas while ensuring adequate parking for areas with limited transportation options.
- *Policy T5.1.4: Infill Development Priority:* Promote infill development and redevelopment over outward expansion to create more efficient land use patterns and reduce infrastructure costs.

### Performance Measures:

- Achieve 30% of new development as mixed-use by 2035
- Complete streets design for 100% of new infrastructure projects
- Reduce parking requirements by 25% in transit-accessible areas by 2030
- Direct 70% of new development to infill/redevelopment sites by 2040

*Implementation Timeline:* Immediate (2025-2027), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Planning Department, Developers

*Funding Sources:* EPA Smart Growth, Local CIP, Developer Contributions

### Objective T5.2: Coordinate Regional Development

Regional development coordination is crucial for ensuring that local transportation investments align with broader regional objectives, while regional projects meet the needs of local communities. Sunland Park's approach to regional coordination emphasizes active participation in regional planning processes.

- *Policy T5.2.1: Regional Plan Alignment:* Align local transportation investments with regional growth patterns and development strategies identified in regional plans.
- *Policy T5.2.2: Regional Planning Participation:* Actively participate in regional transportation planning organizations, including El Paso MPO, SCRTD, and binational planning initiatives.
- *Policy T5.2.3: Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination:* Coordinate with El Paso MPO, NMDOT, TxDOT, and other agencies on cross-jurisdictional transportation projects and planning initiatives.

- *Policy T5.2.4: Binational Planning Integration:* Integrate binational planning perspectives and coordination requirements into local transportation and land use decisions.

**Performance Measures:**

- Achieve formal participation agreements with 100% of relevant regional organizations
- Align 90% of local projects with regional transportation plans
- Establish binational planning protocols by 2026
- Coordinate on 5+ cross-jurisdictional projects by 2035

*Implementation Timeline:* Immediate (2025-2027), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Regional Partners, MPO

*Funding Sources:* Regional Planning Grants, MPO, Local Contributions

**Objective T5.3: Enhance Development Quality**

Development quality encompasses both the physical design of development and its integration with transportation infrastructure. Sunland Park’s approach to development quality focuses on creating places that support multiple transportation modes while enhancing community character and economic vitality.

- *Policy T5.3.1: Transit-Oriented Design:* Promote transit-oriented design principles in development near existing and planned transit corridors.
- *Policy T5.3.2: Pedestrian-Oriented Development:* Require pedestrian-oriented design in new development, including building orientation, sidewalk connectivity, and streetscape enhancements.
- *Policy T5.3.3: Context-Sensitive Design:* Ensure that transportation infrastructure design is context-sensitive and enhances community character and placemaking objectives.
- *Policy T5.3.4: Development Impact Management:* Manage development impacts on transportation infrastructure through impact fees, traffic impact analysis, and infrastructure provision requirements.

**Performance Measures:**

- Achieve transit-oriented design standards for 100% of development within 0.5 miles of transit
- Require pedestrian-oriented design for 90% of new commercial development

- Complete context-sensitive design guidelines by 2026
- Collect adequate impact fees to fund 75% of growth-related transportation infrastructure

*Implementation Timeline:* Short-term (2025-2030), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Planning Department, Developers

*Funding Sources:* Impact Fees, Development Agreements, Local CIP

## Goal 6: Preserve and Maintain Transportation Infrastructure

Systematic preservation and maintenance of transportation infrastructure ensure long-term system performance, maximize the return on public investment, and maintain community mobility and safety standards.

### Objective T6.1: Implement Asset Management Practices

Comprehensive asset management ensures optimal allocation of limited maintenance resources while maximizing infrastructure lifespan and performance.

- *Policy T6.1.1: Asset Management System:* Develop and maintain a comprehensive asset management system that tracks condition, performance, and investment needs for all transportation infrastructure.
- *Policy T6.1.2: Preventive Maintenance:* Prioritize preventive maintenance strategies that extend infrastructure lifespan and reduce long-term costs compared to reactive repairs.
- *Policy T6.1.3: Performance Standards:* Establish and maintain performance standards for all transportation infrastructure categories, including roadways, sidewalks, bridges, and signals.
- *Policy T6.1.4: Lifecycle Cost Analysis:* Use lifecycle cost analysis to guide maintenance and replacement decisions, considering long-term financial and performance implications.

### Performance Measures:

- Maintain 85% of roadways in good or excellent condition
- Achieve 95% of traffic signals operating within performance standards
- Complete infrastructure condition assessments every 3 years
- Extend average infrastructure lifespan by 20% through preventive maintenance

*Implementation Timeline:* Immediate (2025-2027), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Public Works, NMDOT

*Funding Sources:* STBG, Local Maintenance Funds, State Asset Management Programs

### **Objective T6.2: Ensure Sustainable Funding**

Sustainable funding mechanisms ensure adequate resources for ongoing maintenance and operations while supporting system expansion and improvement.

- *Policy T6.2.1: Dedicated Funding Sources:* Establish dedicated funding sources for transportation maintenance, including impact fees, transportation utility fees, or special assessment districts.
- *Policy T6.2.2: Grant Coordination:* Actively pursue federal and state grants for maintenance and preservation projects, including STBG, HSIP, and specialized preservation programs.
- *Policy T6.2.3: Public-Private Partnerships:* Explore public-private partnership opportunities for infrastructure maintenance and operations where appropriate and cost-effective.
- *Policy T6.2.4: Regional Cost-Sharing:* Coordinate with regional partners on cost-sharing arrangements for infrastructure serving multiple jurisdictions.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- Secure dedicated funding for 80% of annual maintenance needs by 2030
- Achieve 25% of maintenance funding from grants and external sources
- Establish regional cost-sharing agreements for 100% of shared infrastructure
- Maintain transportation infrastructure reserve fund equal to 15% of annual maintenance costs

*Implementation Timeline:* Short-term (2025-2030), Ongoing.

*Responsible Agencies:* City of Sunland Park, Finance Department, Regional Partners

*Funding Sources:* Local Revenue, Federal/State Grants, Regional Partnerships

## Implementation Framework

### Monitoring and Evaluation

#### *Annual Performance Reviews:*

- Conduct annual assessments of progress toward performance measures
- Prepare a yearly transportation report card for the community and stakeholders
- Adjust strategies and priorities based on performance data and changing conditions

#### *Five-Year Plan Updates:*

- A comprehensive review and update of the transportation plan every five years
- Incorporate new data, technologies, and community priorities
- Align with regional transportation plan updates and federal requirements

#### *Continuous Improvement:*

- Implement adaptive management practices that allow for course corrections
- Engage community and stakeholders in ongoing evaluation and feedback
- Integrate lessons learned into future planning and implementation efforts

### Coordination and Partnerships

#### *Internal Coordination:*

- Establish a Transportation Coordination Committee with representatives from all relevant city departments
- Integrate transportation considerations into all city planning and development processes
- Coordinate with capital improvement programming and budget development

#### *Regional Coordination:*

- Maintain active participation in El Paso MPO transportation planning processes
- Coordinate with SCRTD on transit planning and service development
- Participate in binational planning initiatives and border infrastructure coordination

#### *Community Engagement:*

- Conduct annual community transportation forums
- Maintain a transportation advisory committee with diverse community representation
- Provide multiple opportunities for ongoing public input and feedback

## Funding Strategy and Implementation Priorities

### Short-Term Priorities (2025-2030)

#### *Immediate Safety Improvements:*

- Complete sidewalk gaps on McNutt Road and Sunland Park Drive
- Install protected intersections at five high-crash locations
- Implement Safe Routes to School at all schools
- Funding Sources: HSIP, SRTS, Local CIP

#### *Equity Infrastructure:*

- Complete sidewalk networks in Districts 3, 4, and 5
- Install ADA-compliant bus stops and curb ramps
- Enhance lighting on pedestrian corridors
- Funding Sources: BUILD, TAP, CDBG, Local CIP

#### *Transit Service Enhancement:*

- Increase SCRTD Purple Route frequency to 30-45 minutes
- Extend service hours and add Saturday service
- Install real-time information systems
- Funding Sources: FTA 5307, Local Match, SCRTD

### Medium-Term Priorities (2030-2040)

#### *Complete Streets Implementation:*

- Reconstruct Sunland Park Drive as a complete street
- Install protected bike lanes on Country Club Road
- Complete McNutt Road pedestrian improvements
- Funding Sources: STBG, BUILD, INFRA, Local Bonds

#### *Binational Infrastructure:*

- Complete Camino Real Port of Entry
- Advance Rio Grande crossing feasibility studies

- Implement binational transit connections
- Funding Sources: Federal Appropriations, INFRA, Binational Programs

### *Climate Resilience:*

- Install shade structures at all transit stops
- Implement green infrastructure program
- Complete heat mitigation strategies
- Funding Sources: PROTECT, Climate Grants, Utility Programs

## **Long-Term Priorities (2040-2045)**

### *System Completion:*

- Complete comprehensive bicycle network
- Implement the ITS system citywide
- Complete transit-oriented development projects
- Funding Sources: Federal Programs, Private Investment, Regional Partnerships

## **Performance Management System**

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

#### *Transportation Performance Monitoring:*

- Annual traffic counts and safety analysis
- Transit ridership and performance tracking
- Pedestrian and bicycle usage surveys
- Community satisfaction assessments

#### *Infrastructure Condition Assessment:*

- Pavement condition surveys are conducted every 3 years
- Sidewalk and ADA compliance audits are conducted annually
- Bridge and culvert inspections per federal standards
- Traffic signal performance monitoring

*Equity Tracking:*

- Investment distribution analysis by district
- Community engagement participation rates
- Environmental impact monitoring
- Title VI compliance reporting

**Adaptive Management Approach**

*Regular Plan Updates:*

- Annual implementation progress reports
- Five-year comprehensive plan reviews
- Integration with regional transportation plan updates
- Incorporation of new federal guidance and requirements

*Flexibility and Innovation:*

- Pilot project programs for testing new approaches
- Technology integration and smart city initiatives
- Partnership development and financing innovation
- Community-driven priority adjustments

**Financial Planning and Sustainability**

**Revenue Projections and Needs Assessment**

*Current Revenue Sources:*

- Federal transportation grants
- State transportation funding
- Local general fund allocation
- Development impact fees

*Projected Investment Needs:*

- Total 20-year investment requirement
- Annual average investment need
- Maintenance and operations
- New infrastructure and improvements

## Funding Strategy Development

### *Grant Pursuit Strategy:*

- Federal discretionary grants (BUILD, INFRA)
- Federal formula programs (STBG, TAP, HSIP)
- State and regional partnerships: 15% funding
- Local sources and private investment: 15% of funding

### *Local Funding Mechanisms:*

- Transportation impact fees for new development
- General obligation bonds for major capital projects
- Special assessment districts for localized improvements
- Public-private partnerships for specific projects

## Cost-Benefit Analysis Framework

### *Economic Impact Assessment:*

- Job creation and economic development benefits
- Property value impacts from transportation improvements
- Business development and attraction potential
- Tourism and recreation economic benefits

### *Social and Environmental Benefits:*

- Public health improvements from active transportation
- Equity benefits from improved access and mobility
- Environmental benefits from reduced emissions
- Safety benefits from crash reduction and prevention

## Regional and Binational Coordination Strategy

### Institutional Framework

#### *Regional Transportation Coordination:*

- Active participation in El Paso MPO planning processes
- SCRTD board representation and service planning coordination
- New Mexico DOT project coordination and funding partnerships
- Texas DOT collaboration on cross-border infrastructure

*Binational Planning Integration:*

- Formal partnerships with Ciudad Juárez and IMIP
- Federal agency coordination (CBP, GSA, DOS)
- Mexican federal and state agency engagement
- Academic and research institution partnerships

**Cross-Border Infrastructure Development**

*Port of Entry Planning:*

- Environmental impact assessment coordination
- Community engagement on both sides of the border
- Economic impact analysis and benefit sharing
- Cultural and historic preservation integration

*Transit and Mobility Services:*

- Cross-border transit service development
- Workforce mobility program coordination
- Tourism and cultural exchange facilitation
- Emergency response and security coordination

**Technology Integration and Innovation**

**Smart Transportation Systems**

*Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS):*

- Adaptive traffic signal control implementation
- Real-time traffic and transit information systems
- Emergency response and incident management systems
- Integration with regional transportation management centers

*Digital Infrastructure:*

- Fiber optic network development for transportation systems
- 5G wireless infrastructure for connected and autonomous vehicles
- Data collection and analysis systems for performance monitoring
- Mobile applications for multimodal trip planning and payment

## Innovation and Pilot Programs

### *Emerging Technology Integration:*

- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure expansion
- Autonomous and connected vehicle preparation
- Shared mobility and microtransit pilot programs
- Smart parking and curb management systems

### *Research and Development Partnerships:*

- University collaboration on transportation research
- Technology company partnerships for pilot projects
- Federal and state innovation grant pursuit
- Best practice sharing with other border communities

## Implementation Governance and Oversight

### Organizational Structure

#### *Transportation Planning Committee:*

- City staff from multiple departments
- Regional partner representatives
- Community and business stakeholder participation
- Technical advisory support from consultants and agencies

#### *Community Engagement Framework:*

- Annual transportation forums and public meetings
- Ongoing advisory committee with diverse representation
- Project-specific community engagement for major initiatives
- Multilingual and culturally appropriate outreach programs

### Accountability and Transparency

#### *Public Reporting:*

- Annual transportation report card with performance metrics
- Quarterly progress updates on significant projects and initiatives
- Financial transparency in transportation spending and revenues
- Community feedback integration and response tracking

### *Continuous Improvement:*

- Regular evaluation of implementation effectiveness
- Adaptation to changing conditions and new opportunities
- Integration of lessons learned from completed projects
- Benchmarking against other similar communities and best practices

This enhanced Goals, Objectives, and Policies framework provides Sunland Park with a comprehensive, measurable, and implementable roadmap for achieving its transportation vision through 2045. The framework balances community priorities with regional coordination requirements while establishing clear accountability measures and flexible implementation approaches that can adapt to changing conditions and opportunities over the 20-year planning horizon. Policy T3.1.3: Freight-Supportive Development: Support development of logistics, distribution, and freight-related facilities in appropriately zoned areas with adequate infrastructure and transportation access.

Transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in supporting tourism and recreational economic development. Sunland Park's proximity to natural amenities and cultural attractions creates opportunities for economic diversification through tourism-related development.

## Transportation Vision for 2045

### **Transformational Outcomes and Community Benefits**

By 2045, Sunland Park will have undergone a fundamental transformation in how residents, workers, and visitors navigate the community and region. This transformation will be evident not only in the physical infrastructure but also in the daily experiences of community members, the region's economic vitality, and the city's role as a model for binational cooperation and sustainable development.

The vision recognizes that transportation is not an end in itself but a means to achieving broader community goals, including economic prosperity, social equity, environmental sustainability, and quality of life.

### **Connected and Accessible Community:**

#### *Universal Mobility Access:*

- Every resident will have access to safe, affordable, and reliable transportation options regardless of age, ability, income, or car ownership.
- Complete sidewalk networks will connect all neighborhoods to schools, parks, commercial areas, and employment centers, providing a seamless and accessible transportation system.

- A comprehensive bicycle infrastructure network will provide safe, comfortable routes for cyclists of all ages and abilities.
- Enhanced transit services will connect Sunland Park residents to opportunities throughout the region.

### *Seamless Regional Integration:*

- Efficient transportation connections will link Sunland Park to El Paso, Las Cruces, Santa Teresa, and Ciudad Juárez.
- Binational transportation services will support workforce mobility and cultural exchange.
- Regional freight systems will efficiently transport goods while minimizing their impact on neighborhoods.
- Intelligent transportation systems will provide real-time information and optimize system performance.

### *Barrier-Free Accessibility:*

- All transportation infrastructure will meet or exceed ADA standards
- Universal design principles will ensure that facilities serve users of all abilities.
- Multilingual signage and information systems will serve the community's diverse population.
- Transportation services will be affordable and accessible to all residents.

## **Safe and Secure Transportation System:**

### *Vision Zero Achievement:*

- Traffic fatalities and serious injuries will be eliminated through systematic safety improvements.
- All streets will be designed using Safe Systems principles that prioritize human life.
- High-injury corridors will be redesigned entirely to prevent crashes and minimize injury severity
- Emergency response systems will provide a rapid, coordinated response to any incidents.

### *Personal Security and Comfort:*

- A well-lit and well-maintained infrastructure will provide a safe environment for all users.
- Security systems will ensure personal safety while respecting privacy and community values.
- Emergency communication systems will provide a rapid response to security concerns.
- Community policing and engagement will maintain safety through partnership and cooperation.

*Climate-Resilient Infrastructure:*

- Transportation facilities will be designed to withstand extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change.
- Green infrastructure will provide cooling, stormwater management, and air quality benefits.
- Heat mitigation strategies will protect pedestrians and transit users during extreme temperatures.
- Renewable energy systems will power transportation facilities and reduce environmental impacts.

**Economic Prosperity and Regional Competitiveness:**

*International Gateway Excellence:*

- The Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Port of Entry will efficiently process cross-border traffic.
- Additional Rio Grande crossings will provide redundancy and capacity for regional growth.
- Freight infrastructure will support international trade while protecting neighborhood livability.
- Binational coordination will enhance economic development opportunities.

*Local Economic Development:*

- Transit-oriented development will create vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Transportation improvements will support existing businesses and attract new investment.
- Tourism infrastructure will showcase the community's unique binational character.
- Innovation districts will attract technology and knowledge-based businesses.

*Regional Leadership:*

- Sunland Park will serve as a model for other binational communities.
- Regional coordination will enhance competitiveness and economic development.
- Innovation in transportation technology and services will attract attention and investment.
- Sustainable development practices will demonstrate environmental leadership.

## Key Insights:

- The transformation will be comprehensive, affecting all aspects of community life.
- Success will be measured not only in infrastructure but also in the improved quality of life.
- Regional leadership will enhance local economic development and community pride.
- Sustainable development will ensure long-term prosperity and environmental stewardship.~~

## Community Quality of Life Improvements

The transportation improvements envisioned for 2045 will fundamentally enhance the quality of life for all Sunland Park residents, creating opportunities for improved health, stronger social connections, economic advancement, and environmental stewardship. The quality of life improvements will be particularly significant for residents who currently face barriers to mobility and access.

## Public Health and Well-being:

### *Active Transportation and Physical Health:*

- A comprehensive walking and cycling infrastructure will support daily physical activity
- Safe Routes to School will encourage children to walk and bike to school
- Recreational trails will provide opportunities for exercise and outdoor recreation
- Air quality improvements will reduce respiratory health risks

### *Mental Health and Social Well-being:*

- Walkable neighborhoods will support social interaction and community connection
- Access to parks and recreational facilities will provide opportunities for relaxation and stress relief
- Reduced traffic stress will improve mental health and quality of life
- Community events and festivals will be supported by enhanced transportation access

### *Healthcare Access:*

- Improved transit connections will enhance access to healthcare facilities
- Medical District development will provide local healthcare options
- Emergency transportation systems will ensure rapid access to emergency medical care
- Specialized transportation services will serve elderly and disabled residents

## Social Equity and Community Cohesion:

### *Reduced Transportation Burden:*

- Affordable transportation options will reduce household transportation costs
- Improved transit services will provide alternatives to car ownership
- Walking and cycling infrastructure will provide free transportation options
- Regional transportation connections will expand employment opportunities

### *Enhanced Community Connections:*

- Improved transportation will strengthen connections between neighborhoods
- Binational transportation will support cultural and family connections
- Community facilities will be accessible to all residents regardless of transportation limitations
- Public spaces will be connected and accessible through multimodal transportation

### *Educational and Economic Opportunities:*

- Enhanced school access will improve educational outcomes for children
- Transportation connections to job centers will expand employment opportunities
- Workforce development programs will be accessible through improved transportation
- Higher education access will be enhanced through regional transportation connections

## Environmental Quality and Sustainability:

### *Improved Air Quality:*

- Reduced vehicle emissions will enhance the quality of air throughout the community
- Active transportation will reduce pollution from personal vehicles
- Transit improvements will reduce overall vehicle miles traveled
- Green infrastructure will help filter air pollutants and improve environmental quality

### *Climate Resilience:*

- Heat mitigation strategies will reduce the impacts of extreme temperatures.
- Flood management systems will protect infrastructure and communities.
- Renewable energy systems will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Sustainable transportation choices will reduce environmental impacts.

**Natural Resource Conservation:**

- Reduced vehicle dependency will lead to decreased fuel consumption.
- Efficient transportation systems will reduce infrastructure maintenance costs and extend the lifespan of facilities.



## 7. Community Facilities and Infrastructure

The Community Facilities and Infrastructure chapter serves as the cornerstone of Sunland Park's ambitious vision to become a sustainable, well-connected binational community by 2045. As a city positioned uniquely at the crossroads of two nations, three states, and multiple cultures, Sunland Park faces both exceptional opportunities and complex challenges in developing community facilities and infrastructure systems that support projected growth from 17,000 to over 45,000 residents while maintaining its distinctive binational character.

This comprehensive analysis examines current municipal facilities, healthcare and educational infrastructure, public safety services, and critical utility systems, including water, wastewater, stormwater management, and digital infrastructure. The chapter establishes a strategic framework that aligns facility development with infrastructure capacity to support the city's vision for enhanced community services.

### Recent Achievement: Enhanced Service Delivery

The City of Sunland Park proudly celebrated the official ribbon cutting of our newly expanded Motor Vehicle Division facility located at 3465 McNutt Road on July 28, 2025. A significant step forward in enhancing access to essential services for our community.



City of Sunland Park Motor Vehicle Division facility

## Infrastructure Foundation

Sunland Park's community facilities and infrastructure foundation represent the critical backbone that will determine the city's capacity to achieve its 2045 vision of becoming a thriving binational community. Current municipal facilities and utility systems, initially designed for a smaller population, now face increasing demands from rapid growth, changing climate patterns, and evolving community expectations for service quality and accessibility.

### Strategic Analysis & Key Insights

- *Infrastructure Transformation Opportunity:* Current municipal facilities concentrated along the McNutt Road corridor provide a foundation for comprehensive redevelopment supporting binational commerce and community development.
- *Community Cohesion Challenge:* 58.5% of residents report a lack of community sense, indicating a critical need for centralized gathering spaces and enhanced social infrastructure.
- *Economic Development Catalyst:* Absence of essential retail services creates immediate opportunity for strategic business recruitment.
- *Binational Competitive Advantage:* Strategic location at the proposed new port of entry positions Sunland Park for significant cross-border economic development.
- *Infrastructure Capacity Imperative:* Current systems designed for 17,000 residents require substantial expansion and modernization.

## Community Facilities Assessment

Sunland Park's community facilities infrastructure reflects the city's dynamic evolution from a small border community to an emerging binational hub positioned for substantial growth. The current concentration of municipal services along the McNutt Road corridor creates both operational efficiencies and accessibility challenges as the city expands westward and northward.

This comprehensive assessment reveals significant opportunities for enhanced service delivery, community gathering spaces, and recreational facilities that align with the city's 2045 vision of becoming a premier destination for families, businesses, and visitors. The analysis incorporates feedback from extensive community engagement, including partnerships with organizations such as El Paso Locomotive FC, which operates elite soccer programs at the city's Sports Complex.

## Municipal Facilities: Current Operations and Strategic Development

The city's municipal operations currently center around the McNutt Road and Racetrack Drive intersection, creating a concentrated service delivery model that has served the community well during its growth phase. Recent facility improvements, including the expansion of motor vehicle services, demonstrate the city's commitment to enhancing resident access to essential government services.

Municipal Facilities		
Facility	Location	Services
Sunland Park Municipal Court	1000 McNutt Road	Judicial services for municipal matters and traffic violations
Sunland Park City Hall	1000 McNutt Road	Administrative headquarters housing city management and council chambers
Motor Vehicle Department	3465 McNutt Road	Recently expanded facility provides enhanced driver licensing and vehicle registration services
Sunland Park Public Library	1000 McNutt Road	Open Mon-Thu 10 am-6 pm, Fri 10 am-5 pm. Computer access, literacy programs, and community programming
Water and Wastewater Department	4700 McNutt Road	Municipal utility operations headquarters with a commitment to transparency and community-responsive service delivery



## One Stop Shop Municipal Complex: Transformative Vision for 2045

### Catalytic Municipal Project - Cornerstone of 2045 Comprehensive Plan

The One Stop Shop Municipal Complex represents the most significant municipal infrastructure investment in Sunland Park's history, designed to create a modern, efficient service delivery model while establishing the community gathering space identified as a priority by 62.5% of survey respondents.

#### Comprehensive Facility Programming:

- *Building M1:* Administration headquarters with integrated fire station for enhanced emergency response
- *Building M2:* New City Hall featuring council chambers, community meeting spaces, and public service counters
- *Building M3:* Community services hub housing expanded library, daycare facilities, and senior center programs
- *Building M4:* Modern municipal court facility with enhanced security and accessibility features

#### Strategic Impact Analysis - 2045 Alignment:

- *Community Cohesion Catalyst:* Creates the centralized "town center" requested by residents, addressing the current deficit in community gathering spaces
- *Service Delivery Innovation:* Consolidates dispersed municipal services, reducing operational costs while improving accessibility and efficiency
- *Economic Development Engine:* Mixed-use design integrates commercial and residential components, supporting local business development
- *Binational Positioning Tool:* Modern facility enhances city's profile for cross-border partnerships and international investment
- *Smart City Foundation:* Infrastructure designed to support digital service delivery and future municipal innovations

## Healthcare Infrastructure: Building Community Health Capacity

Healthcare accessibility represents both a critical service gap and a significant economic development opportunity for Sunland Park. With 45.7% of survey respondents supporting expanded medical services and specific community calls for urgent care facilities, the current healthcare landscape reveals substantial room for growth. The city's strategic location offers unique potential for developing binational healthcare partnerships and medical tourism opportunities.

Healthcare Facilities			
Facility	Location	Primary Services	Expansion Potential
Sunland Park Public Health Center	3807 McNutt Road	Preventive care, immunizations, family planning, health screenings	Community health programs, wellness initiatives
New Mexico Family Services	3465 McNutt Road	Primary care, behavioral health, adult day care, food assistance	Integrated social services, workforce programs
Peak Behavioral Health Hospital	5055 McNutt Road	Behavioral health and mental wellness services	Community outreach, preventive mental health
Santa Teresa Children's Night Clinic	1245 Country Club Road	After-hours pediatric care and emergency services	After-hours pediatric care and emergency services
La Clinica de Familia	2625 McNutt Road	Family medicine and community health services	Specialty care referrals, telehealth services

### 2025 Urgent Care Center Development Initiative

Following Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's 2025 request, the City of Sunland Park is actively developing a comprehensive urgent care center as part of a mixed-use development project. This initiative addresses the critical healthcare access crisis affecting both city residents and the broader southern Doña Ana County region.

#### Project Scope and Impact:

- **Strategic Location:** Three-acre site along NM 273/Sunland Park Drive, providing convenient access to I-10, Santa Teresa, and surrounding communities.
- **Mixed-Use Integration:** Comprehensive development including medical facilities, housing (210 multifamily dwelling units), grocery store, office space, and pharmacy.

- *Regional Service Area:* Designed to serve Sunland Park residents and surrounding unincorporated communities including Chaparral, La Unión, and San Miguel.
- *Economic Impact:* Project aims to reverse the trend of 6,000 New Mexicans crossing into Texas for medical care, retaining healthcare spending in New Mexico.
- *Cost Reduction:* Projected to reduce medical costs by up to 40% by keeping New Mexicans within state boundaries.

### Development Timeline and Next Steps:

- *Land Acquisition:* Replat process for 3-acre deeding to City of Sunland Park
- *Market Analysis:* Comprehensive medical market analysis for facility programming
- *Infrastructure Planning:* Development of infrastructure support plan for utilities and access
- *Provider Procurement:* Strategic recruitment of qualified medical providers, including discussions with Memorial Medical Center (MMC)
- *Funding Strategy:* \$8 million ICIP request for construction and construction management

### Healthcare Infrastructure Strategic Analysis:

- *Service Accessibility Gap:* Limited specialized medical services require residents to travel 20+ miles to El Paso or Las Cruces for comprehensive care.
- *Demographic Growth Opportunity:* Young population (median age 28.6) with growing families creates demand for pediatric, family practice, and preventive care services.
- *Binational Health Hub Potential:* Strategic border location positions Sunland Park for medical tourism development and cross-border healthcare partnerships.
- *Economic Development Anchor:* Quality healthcare facilities serve as powerful tools for business attraction, family retention, and workforce development.
- *Healthcare Crisis Documentation:* Current healthcare access challenges often have serious, even deadly, consequences, with residents forced to travel nearly an hour to Las Cruces for in-state medical care.
- *Regional Economic Leakage:* Significant healthcare spending currently flows to Texas facilities, representing lost economic development opportunities for New Mexico.
- *Zoning Compatibility:* Proposed urgent care center complies with existing C2 zoning that permits mixed-use residential and commercial development.

## Educational Infrastructure: Supporting Growth and Excellence

Sunland Park's educational infrastructure serves as both a community asset and a critical component of its economic development strategy. The Gadsden Independent School District provides comprehensive K-12 services, while capacity constraints at elementary schools reflect broader challenges in supporting rapid population growth. The presence of Doña Ana Community College and the University of Phoenix Learning Center creates opportunities for workforce development that align with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan's economic diversification goals.



### Educational Infrastructure Critical Insights:

- **Immediate Capacity Crisis:** Riverside (607 students) and Santa Teresa Elementary (627 students) significantly exceed GISD's 550-student capacity target, requiring new elementary school development
- **Projected Growth Pressure:** Current 4,192 total enrollment will strain all facilities as the population approaches 45,000 by 2034, necessitating comprehensive capacity planning
- **Workforce Development Gap:** Limited integration between educational programming and targeted economic development industries presents an opportunity for enhanced partnerships
- **Higher Education Asset:** Existing college and university presence provides foundation for workforce development programs aligned with binational economic opportunities
- **Community Partnership Model:** The El Paso Locomotive FC partnership demonstrates potential for innovative programming and facility utilization

### Community Partnership Spotlight: El Paso Locomotive FC

The city's Sports Complex houses El Paso Locomotive FC's elite youth programs, including their U20 Academy team that serves as a reserve for the professional team. This partnership has resulted in *11 seniors receiving collegiate athletic scholarships* and demonstrates the potential for public-private collaborations in community facility programming.



Educational Institutions			
Institution	Grades/Level	2024-2025 Enrollment	Capacity Status
Santa Teresa On-Track Pre-K Center	Pre-K	180	Within Capacity
Desert View Elementary	K-5	488	Near Capacity
Riverside Elementary	K-5	607	Over Capacity
Sunland Park Elementary	K-5	324	Within Capacity
Santa Teresa Elementary	K-5	627	Over Capacity
Santa Teresa Middle School	6th- 8th	721	Adequate Capacity
Santa Teresa High School	9th-12th	1,245	Adequate Capacity

## Public Safety Infrastructure: Ensuring Community Security

Public safety services in Sunland Park face the dual challenges of rapid population growth and the unique security considerations of a binational border community. With 19 police officers and 14 firefighters serving an expanding geographic area, current staffing levels require strategic planning to maintain optimal service ratios as the population approaches 45,000 residents.

Survey results indicating that 58.5% of residents prioritize safety and security underscore the critical importance of these services in supporting community confidence and economic development. The 2017 police audit provided a roadmap for systematic improvements, while the city's partnership with the Gadsden Independent School District for school resource officers demonstrates a comprehensive approach to community safety.

<b>Public Safety Facilities</b>		
<b>Facility</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Services</b>
<b>Police Department Headquarters</b>	1000 McNutt Road	19 sworn officers serving city limits with school resource officer program at high schools and middle schools. Regular community engagement through neighborhood meetings.
<b>Fire Station #1</b>	1000 McNutt Road	Primary fire and emergency medical services station. Part of a 14-firefighter department with additional forest fire management responsibilities.
<b>Fire Station #2</b>	880 McNutt Road	Secondary fire station providing coverage for the expanding service area. Supports citywide emergency response and mutual aid agreements.
<b>Emergency Medical Services</b>	Contracted Services	Private ambulance services are provided through American Medical Response (AMR), located in Santa Teresa, with coordination through the city fire department.

## Community and Religious Infrastructure

While Sunland Park's five churches provide important community gathering spaces, the overall infrastructure for social cohesion requires enhancement to address survey findings that only 41.5% of residents feel a strong sense of community. The city's commitment to improving community connections is demonstrated through regular town hall meetings, partnership development with organizations like El Paso Locomotive FC, and the planned One Stop Shop Municipal Complex that will create dedicated community gathering spaces.

- *Santa Teresa Presbyterian* - 5400 McNutt Road - Community worship and social gathering space
- *San Martin de Porres* - 1885 McNutt Road - Catholic parish serving the Hispanic community
- *Healing Place Church - El Paso* - 5312 Rio Bravo Drive - Contemporary Christian worship and community outreach
- *Korean Church of Las Cruces* - 1074 Country Club Road - Cultural and spiritual center for the Korean-American community
- *Santa Teresa Baptist Church* - 5750 McNutt Road - Baptist worship and community programming



## Infrastructure Systems Performance

### Water and Wastewater Systems: Municipal Transition and Community Trust

The evolution of Sunland Park's water and wastewater services reflects broader themes of community growth, service accountability, and municipal capacity building. The recent transition from the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA) to direct municipal operation represents a significant milestone in the city's development, providing opportunities for enhanced community responsiveness while requiring substantial investment in operational capacity and infrastructure improvements.

#### Utility Service Evolution Timeline

**1983-2009:** City-operated water and wastewater services during the initial growth period

**2009-2025:** Camino Real Regional Utility Authority (CRRUA), a private management with a regional service approach

**2025-Present:** Municipal Water and Wastewater Department with community-focused service delivery and transparency initiatives

#### Recent Municipal Achievement: Infrastructure Transition Success

The City Council approved a resolution providing clear direction for utility department creation, with verbal commitments ensuring infrastructure investments within city limits remain municipal assets. Recent approval of Joint Powers Agreement amendments allows migration of fiscal and administrative services to city control, serving 90% of the customer base within city limits.

#### Current Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Capacity

The dual treatment plant system provides the foundation for current service delivery while creating opportunities for improved efficiency and expanded capacity. The recent completion of construction at the North Wastewater Treatment Plant provides enhanced treatment capacity and system redundancy critical for supporting projected population growth.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Facilities		
Facility	Type	Description
Sunland Park Wastewater Treatment Plant (SPWWP)	Primary Treatment Facility	Main wastewater processing facility with opportunities for efficiency improvements and capacity optimization
North Wastewater Treatment Plant (NWWP)	Secondary Treatment Facility	Recently completed construction provides enhanced system capacity and redundancy for the growing service area

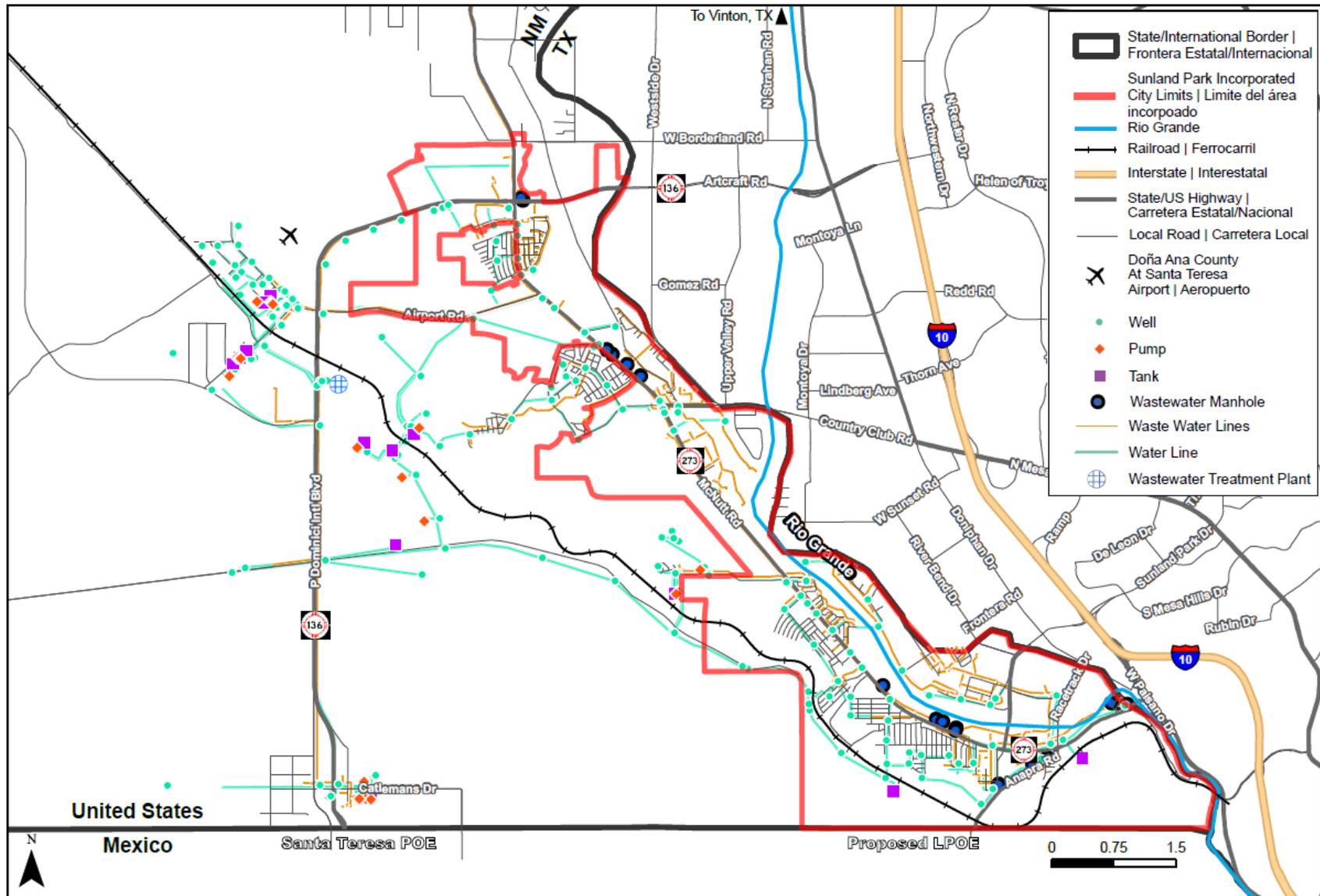


Figure 7-1 Sanitary Sewer and Water Infrastructure Map

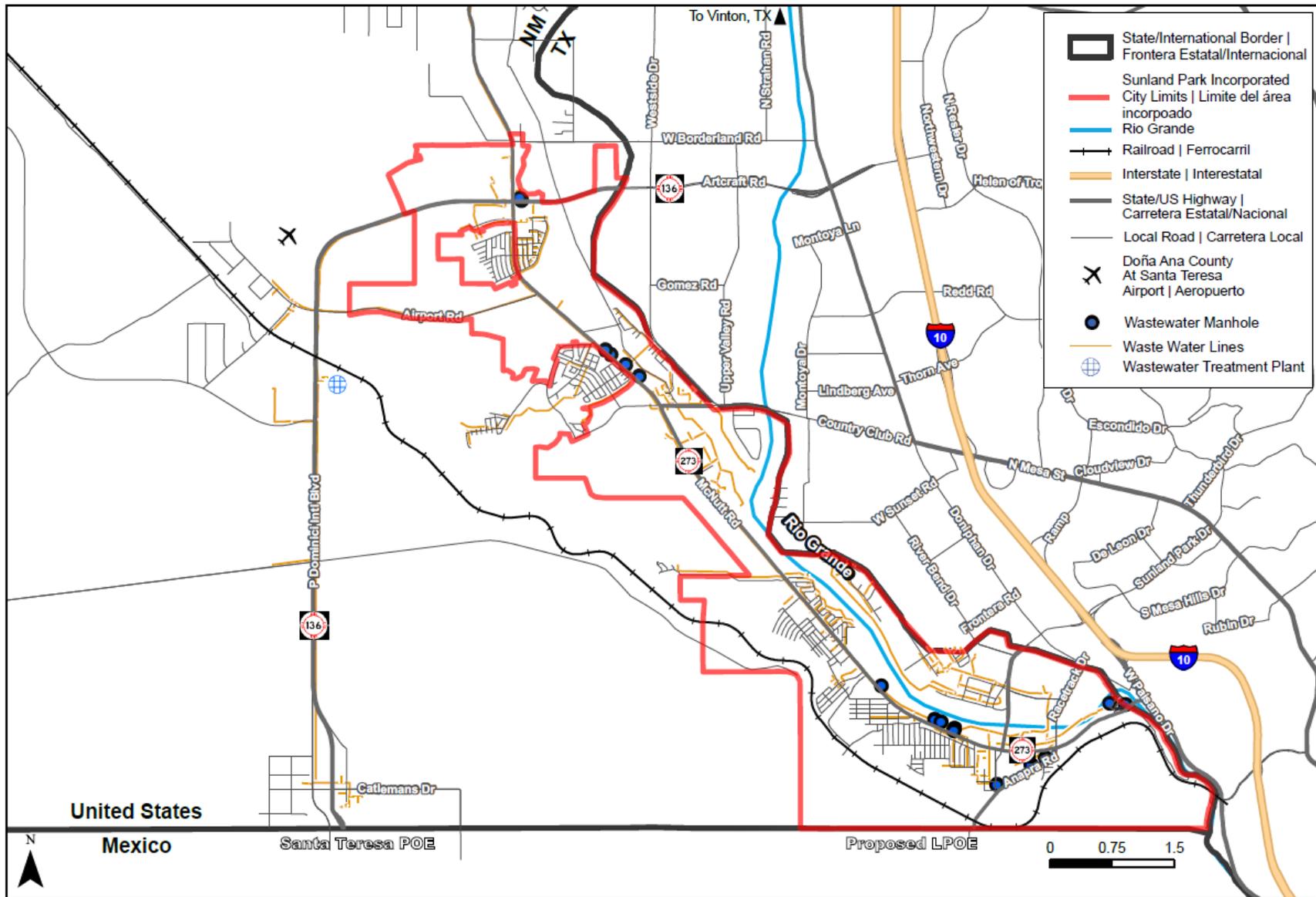


Figure 7-2 Wastewater Infrastructure Map

## Binational Wastewater Infrastructure Partnerships

Sunland Park's water infrastructure planning benefits from significant cross-border collaboration and investment, demonstrating the strategic importance of binational cooperation in addressing regional water quality challenges.

### NADBank-Funded Regional Projects:

- Colonia Anapra Wastewater Project (Completed): \$8.02 million investment serving 28,600 residents in Juárez, including wastewater collection system, treatment plant with activated sludge secondary treatment, and reclaimed water distribution network for landscape irrigation
- Ciudad Juárez Wastewater Collection System Improvements (Under Construction): \$26.9 million project serving 246,860 residents, replacing 60,827 feet of deteriorated wastewater lines and installing sedimentation boxes to prevent up to 22.8 million gallons per day of untreated wastewater from reaching the Rio Grande

### Regional Water Quality Impact:

- *Cross-Border Pollution Prevention*: These projects directly benefit Sunland Park by preventing untreated wastewater runoff that previously flowed north from Anapra toward Sunland Park due to natural topography
- *Rio Grande Protection*: Infrastructure investments eliminate potential discharge of contaminated water into the Rio Grande, a critical binational water source
- *Public Health Enhancement*: Reduced exposure to waterborne diseases and elimination of street-level sewage overflows that previously created health hazards

## 2023 Water Desalination Feasibility Study - NMSU

A comprehensive feasibility study conducted by NMSU's Department of Civil Engineering, funded by the Bureau of Reclamation, demonstrates the technical and economic viability of brackish water desalination for the Santa Teresa region, which directly serves Sunland Park's water infrastructure planning.

### Key Technical Findings:

- *Desalination Plant Capacity*: Preliminary design for a 5 MGD (Million Gallons per Day) Brackish Water Reverse Osmosis facility capable of meeting projected regional water demand growth.
- *Water Demand Projections*: Regional; service area demand will increase from 3.1 MGD in 2020 to 6.0 MGD in 2027 and 15 MGD in 2042, supporting population growth from 21,752 to 79,071 residents.

- **Treatment Specifications:** 75% water recovery rate with two-stage reverse osmosis processing, treating brackish water with 2,500 mg/L total dissolved solids.
- **Infrastructure Requirements:** Complete system including new brackish water supply wells, treatment facility, deep injection wells for concentrate disposal, and distribution connections.

### Economic Analysis:

- **Construction Cost:** \$115.5 million for 5 MGD BWRO treatment facility construction (2023 USD)
- **Total Project Investment:** \$269.4 million for complete system including supporting infrastructure
- **Life Cycle Cost:** \$313.3 million over 20 years including operations and maintenance
- **Unit Water Cost:** \$4.00 per 1,000 gallons of treated water, competitive with other regional desalination projects

### Implementation Framework:

- **Funding Sources:** Multiple identified funding mechanisms including Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, Water Trust Board funding, Colonias funding, Capital Outlay, and Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART programs.
- **Regulatory Pathway:** Established permitting process through NMED Ground Water Quality Bureau for injection wells and environmental compliance
- **Timeline:** Estimated 2027+ operational date following hydrogeological investigations, permitting, land acquisition, and final design phases

### Water Infrastructure Strategic Analysis:

- **Community Trust Imperative:** Survey results revealing community concerns about water quality require comprehensive transparency initiatives and visible infrastructure improvements
- **Capacity Expansion Requirements:** Current systems designed for 17,000 residents must undergo systematic upgrades to serve a projected 45,000+ population by 2034 reliably
- **Municipal Control Advantages:** Direct city operation enables responsive customer service, community accountability, and alignment with broader economic development goals
- **Regional Service Commitment:** City maintains commitment to serve county areas, including the Casas Grandes neighborhood, demonstrating regional cooperation and

service continuity

- *Investment Priority Alignment:* 94.1% resident rating of water systems as very/extremely important mandates infrastructure investment as top municipal priority
- *Regional Water Security Crisis:* Texas has filed suit against New Mexico in the US Supreme Court, claiming that withdrawals of groundwater hydrologically connected to the Rio Grande have intercepted Texas water, creating an urgent need for New Mexico's Lower Rio Grande region to diversify its water supply.
- *Brackish Water Resources Assessment:* The binational Mesilla Basin contains an estimated 65 million acre-feet of economically recoverable fresh to slightly brackish water, with sustainable groundwater resources primarily replenished by brackish underflow from local sources.
- *Desalination Technology Solution:* Brackish Water Reverse Osmosis (BWRO) desalination represents a critical technology for producing safe drinking water and sustaining economic development in the Santa Teresa/Sunland Park region.

## Stormwater Management and Climate Resilience

Climate change impacts and intensified development pressure have exposed critical vulnerabilities in Sunland Park's stormwater infrastructure, requiring comprehensive planning that integrates with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan's sustainability goals. Recent extreme weather events have demonstrated the inadequacy of current drainage systems while highlighting the economic costs of infrastructure failure through property damage and ongoing maintenance expenses.

The city's location in an arid climate with intense monsoon seasons creates unique engineering challenges that require innovative solutions combining traditional drainage infrastructure with green infrastructure approaches. The development of a comprehensive Drainage Master Plan represents a critical investment in community resilience and long-term economic stability.

## Critical Infrastructure Vulnerability

Recent high-rainfall events caused significant culvert erosion, exposing gas and fiber optic lines. Multiple survey respondents identified poor road conditions and inadequate drainage as primary concerns affecting daily life, property values, and community safety.



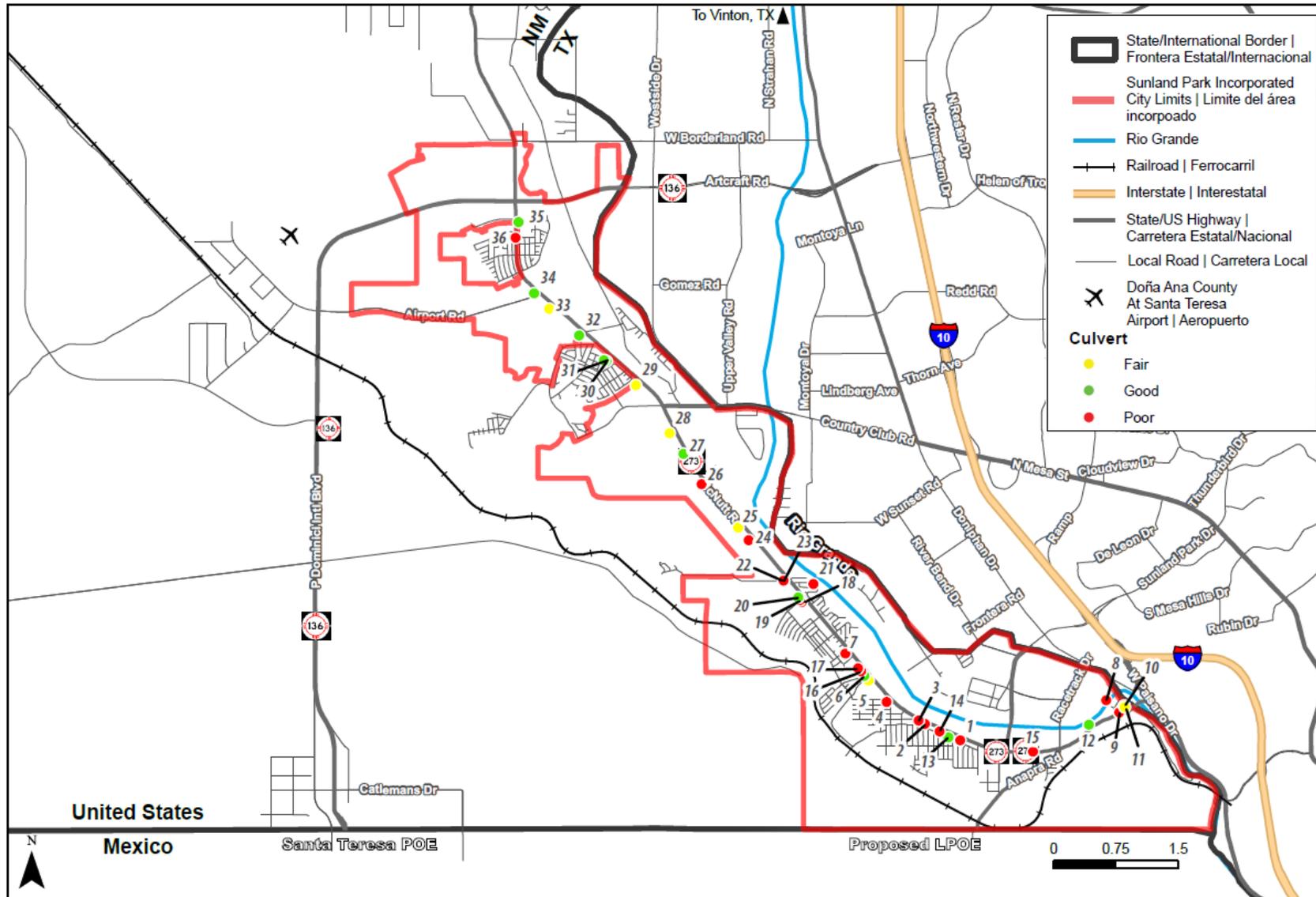


Figure 7-4 Existing Culvert Conditions Map

## Carlos Aguirre Court Drainage Analysis Case Study

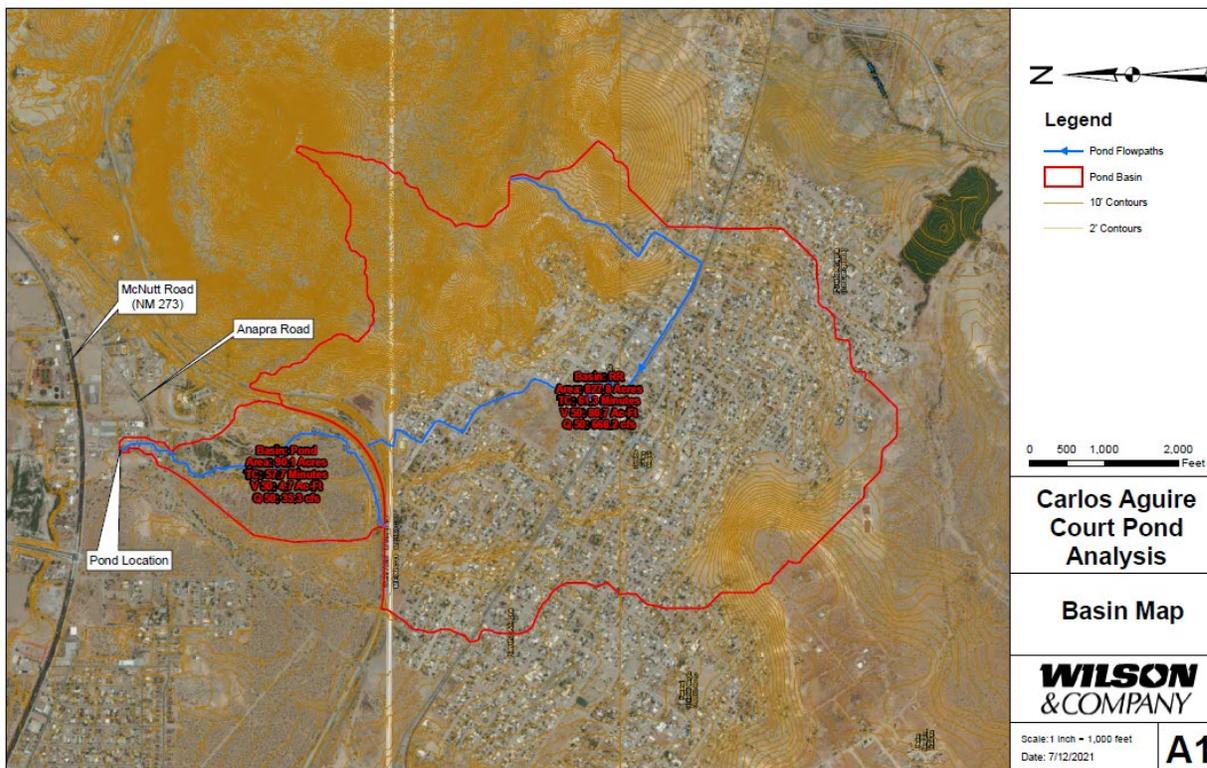
A comprehensive 2021 drainage analysis by Wilson & Company of the Carlos Aguirre Court pond demonstrates the scale of stormwater challenges facing Sunland Park. The study revealed that the existing 0.12-acre-foot retention pond receives inflow from a 918-acre upstream drainage basin, creating a capacity mismatch that results in significant flooding and sediment deposition issues.

### Key Findings from Technical Analysis:

- **Capacity Crisis:** The existing pond receives 287.9 cubic feet per second (cfs) of inflow during 100-year storm events, with a total volume of 135.93 acre-feet - far exceeding current storage capacity
- **Sediment Loading:** Heavy sediment deposition in roadways upstream of the pond indicates significant erosion and infrastructure degradation during storm events
- **Infrastructure Constraints:** The upstream Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) crossing functions as an artificial dam, with undersized 42-inch culverts creating additional flood risk
- **Regional Impact:** The drainage basin extends beyond city limits, requiring coordination with upstream development and regional stormwater planning

### Recommended Solutions:

- **Bypass Channel Options:** Two potential channel alignments (East and West) with 8-foot bottom width, 3:1 side slopes, and 0.5% minimum slope to handle 100-year flows
- **Detention Pond Integration:** Upstream detention facilities to reduce peak flows and protect downstream infrastructure
- **Infrastructure Upgrades:** Replacement of existing 48-inch culverts with 8' x 4' concrete box culverts (CBC) to accommodate design flows
- **Maintenance Protocol:** Regular sediment removal after major storm events to maintain pond functionality



### Stormwater Infrastructure Critical Analysis:

- **Climate Vulnerability Assessment:** Current infrastructure proves inadequate for increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, requiring comprehensive system upgrades
- **Economic Impact Quantification:** Infrastructure failures create cascading costs through property damage, emergency repairs, utility disruptions, and reduced property values
- **Development Constraint Resolution:** Inadequate drainage capacity limits sustainable development potential, requiring proactive investment to support economic growth
- **Regional Coordination Imperative:** Watershed management requires enhanced coordination with Doña Ana County, the El Paso region, and international partners for comprehensive solutions
- **Green Infrastructure Integration:** Opportunities exist for innovative stormwater management combining traditional engineering with sustainable practices
- **Technical Engineering Standards:** Based on NMDOT Drainage Design Manual criteria, including 96-hour drain time requirements and proper overflow weir sizing for natural waterway discharge

### Digital Infrastructure and Smart City Foundation

Sunland Park's energy and telecommunications infrastructure represents both an asset and a significant limitation for achieving 2045 binational community goals. While gas and electric services provide reliable coverage through New Mexico Gas Company's extensive regional

network, the absence of high-speed fiber optic service creates substantial barriers to economic development, smart city initiatives, and competitive business attraction.

### Digital Infrastructure Priority

More than fifty-two percent (52.4%) of residents rated broadband access as extremely important, underscoring the urgent need for investment in telecommunications infrastructure to support modern economic development, digital inclusion, and future smart-city initiatives.

#### Digital Infrastructure Strategic Analysis:

- *Economic Competitiveness Gap:* Lack of fiber optic service significantly limits business attraction, retention, and modernization efforts compared to competing communities
- *Smart City Development Barrier:* Limited broadband capacity constrains municipal technology initiatives, digital service delivery, and operational efficiency improvements
- *Business Development Limitation:* Modern businesses require high-speed internet for operations, cloud computing, and competitive market participation
- *Binational Commerce Opportunity:* Enhanced telecommunications infrastructure could significantly support cross-border business development and international partnerships

### Strategic Challenges and Opportunities Assessment

The comprehensive analysis of community facilities and infrastructure reveals Sunland Park at a pivotal moment in its development trajectory. The convergence of rapid population growth, infrastructure transition, federal investment opportunities, and binational economic potential creates both unprecedented opportunities and significant implementation challenges.

### Community Engagement and Priority Alignment

The 2025 Public Survey, completed by ninety-four residents, provides valuable insight into community priorities, highlighting both pressing infrastructure needs and key opportunities for strategic, value-driven development that aligns with residents' long-term expectations for Sunland Park's future.

#### Critical Community Priorities from 2025 Survey Analysis

##### *Infrastructure and Utility Priorities:*

- 94.1% rated water systems as "very important" or "extremely important"
- 64.3% rated streets/roads/walkways as extremely important
- 61.2% rated street lighting as extremely important

### *Economic Development and Business Priorities:*

- 69.1% want restaurants and cafes
- 47.9% want retail stores
- 45.7% support the expansion of medical and healthcare services

### *Community Development and Quality of Life:*

- 63.8% want parks and playgrounds
- 55.3% want recreation centers
- 62.5% rated enhanced community engagement as very important

## Infrastructure Development Challenges and Strategic Response

The transition to municipal utility management, while providing enhanced community control and responsiveness, requires substantial investment in operational capacity, infrastructure improvements, and community trust-building initiatives.

### Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Challenges

In 2003, the city received a \$6 million grant to improve both wastewater treatment plants. The completion of North Wastewater Treatment Plant construction has enhanced system capacity, but expansion opportunities remain limited due to development encroachment near existing facilities.

### Climate Resilience and Flood Control

The city continues to face significant localized flooding challenges, with the 2006 severe monsoon flooding serving as a critical reminder of infrastructure vulnerability. The International Boundary and Water Commission's ongoing involvement in regional flood control planning creates opportunities for coordinated solutions.

### Infrastructure Challenge Analysis:

- *Capacity vs. Growth Pressure:* Infrastructure designed for 17,000 residents faces immediate pressure from a projected 45,000+ population
- *Climate Resilience Gap:* Current systems are inadequate for increasing extreme weather frequency and intensity
- *Municipal Capacity Building:* Utility management transition requires investment in technical expertise and operational systems
- *Regional Coordination Complexity:* Cross-border location requires sophisticated coordination with multiple jurisdictions
- *Technology Integration Requirements:* Legacy infrastructure must adapt to smart city technologies and sustainability standards

## Economic Development and Business Attraction Framework

The community's clear prioritization of essential businesses—particularly grocery stores, restaurants, and healthcare services—creates immediate opportunities for strategic business recruitment while addressing quality of life concerns that affect resident retention and family attraction.

### Public-Private Partnership Success Model

The El Paso Locomotive FC partnership demonstrates effective public-private collaboration, utilizing the Sports Complex for elite youth programming that has resulted in 11 college scholarships for local students. This model provides a template for additional partnerships in community facility programming and economic development initiatives.

## Strategic Recommendations and Implementation Framework

The recommendations presented in this section represent a comprehensive strategy for transforming Sunland Park's facilities and infrastructure to support the 2045 Comprehensive Plan's vision of a sustainable, prosperous binational community.

## Community Facilities Strategic Development

### Municipal Service Delivery Transformation

The One Stop Shop Municipal Complex represents the cornerstone investment in modernizing municipal service delivery while creating the community gathering space identified as a priority by residents.

*Phase 1 (2025-2026):* Complete design development, secure construction funding, and finalize utility coordination with the Water and Wastewater Department.

*Phase 2 (2026-2027):* Begin construction with Building M1 (Administration/Fire Station) to maintain emergency services during the transition.

*Phase 3 (2027-2028):* Complete remaining buildings with emphasis on minimizing service disruption through temporary facilities.

*Phase 4 (2028-2029):* Final integration, technology implementation, and community programming launch.

### Education Infrastructure Enhancement Strategy

The GISD Facilities Master Plan recommendation for new elementary school development must align with residential growth projections and workforce development goals that support the city's economic diversification strategy.

### Strategic Education Initiatives - 2045 Vision Alignment:

- *Capacity Planning Coordination:* Partner with GISD to develop school capacity expansion that anticipates and supports residential development through 2045.
- *Workforce Development Integration:* Develop partnerships between educational institutions and target industries.
- *Binational Education Opportunities:* Explore cross-border educational partnerships leveraging proximity to UTEP, NMSU, and Mexican institutions.
- *Community Asset Marketing:* Utilize high-quality educational facilities as primary tools for family attraction and retention.

### Healthcare Development Strategy

Strategic healthcare facility recruitment and development represent a critical component of economic development while addressing community-identified service gaps.

### Healthcare Strategic Development Framework:

- *Comprehensive Care Network Development:* Recruit urgent care, family practice, and specialty medical services.
- *Binational Health Hub Creation:* Explore medical tourism opportunities and healthcare partnerships with El Paso and Juárez medical communities.
- *Aging Population Preparation:* Develop senior care facilities as the median age increases from the current 28.6 years.
- *Economic Development Integration:* Position quality healthcare infrastructure as a primary business attraction tool.

## Infrastructure Investment Strategy

### Water and Wastewater System Modernization

The municipal utility transition provides immediate opportunities to address community concerns while building infrastructure capacity for projected growth.

### Water Infrastructure Strategic Priorities:

- *Trust Rebuilding Program:* Implement comprehensive transparency measures, including regular water quality reporting and community meetings.
- *Capacity Expansion Implementation:* Execute 2014 Infrastructure Plan updates with accelerated timeline to support population growth projections.
- *Sustainability Integration:* Incorporate water conservation technologies and renewable energy systems.
- *Regional Service Coordination:* Maintain commitment to serve county areas while building municipal operational capacity.

## Climate Resilience and Stormwater Management

### Critical Investment Priority: Comprehensive Drainage Master Plan

Development of a \$1 million+ investment strategy for the comprehensive City-wide Drainage Master Plan (DMP) represents the most urgent infrastructure need identified through recent weather events and community feedback.

#### Climate Resilience Strategic Framework:

- *Regional Drainage Coordination:* Integrate with Rio Grande flood control systems and coordinate with the El Paso region and Mexican authorities.
- *Green Infrastructure Integration:* Incorporate sustainable stormwater management practices, including bioswales and permeable surfaces.
- *Development Standards Modernization:* Establish drainage and climate resilience requirements for new development.
- *Emergency Preparedness Enhancement:* Improve flood warning systems, emergency response protocols, and community education programs.

## Digital Infrastructure and Smart City Development

High-speed telecommunications infrastructure represents the foundation for economic competitiveness, smart city initiatives, and modern municipal service delivery.

#### Digital Infrastructure Strategic Development:

- *Fiber Optic Network Deployment:* Partner with telecommunications providers to expand high-speed internet access citywide.
- *Smart City Foundation Implementation:* Deploy digital infrastructure supporting municipal operational efficiency and resident services.
- *Business Attraction Technology Platform:* Position advanced telecommunications as a competitive advantage for business recruitment.
- *Binational Digital Connectivity:* Explore opportunities for enhanced cross-border digital infrastructure.

## Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Strategies - Sunland Park

### 2045

The following comprehensive framework represents the strategic roadmap for achieving Sunland Park's 2045 vision of becoming a sustainable, prosperous binational community. These goals integrate community priorities identified through the 2025 public survey with technical infrastructure requirements, federal funding opportunities, and regional development coordination.

## Comprehensive Plan 2045 Integration Framework

Economic Prosperity, Environmental Sustainability, Community Wellbeing, Binational Cooperation & Technology

### SP-2045 Goal CF-1: Provide Comprehensive Health and Human Services Infrastructure

*Community Wellbeing, Economic Prosperity, High Priority*

#### Objectives:

- **CF-1.1:** Expand healthcare services to meet growing population needs and reduce dependence on external providers.
- **CF-1.2:** Develop binational healthcare partnerships leveraging cross-border opportunities and medical tourism potential.
- **CF-1.3:** Create an integrated senior services infrastructure, preparing for demographic transition.
- **CF-1.4:** Establish healthcare facilities as economic development anchors and workforce attraction tools.

#### Implementation Strategies & Timeline:

- **CF-1.1.1 (2026-2027):** Recruit urgent care and specialty medical services through targeted incentive programs.
- **CF-1.1.2 (2025-2026):** Partner with Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and Burrell School of Osteopathic Medicine.
- **CF-1.2.1 (2026-2028):** Explore medical tourism opportunities and establish cross-border healthcare partnerships.
- **CF-1.3.1 (2026-2027):** Integrate senior services into the One Stop Shop Municipal Complex planning.
- **CF-1.4.1 (2025-2030):** Develop healthcare facilities as part of a mixed-use development strategy south of McNutt Road.

### SP-2045 Goal CF-2: Deliver Advanced Public Safety and Emergency Services

*Community Wellbeing, Binational Cooperation, High Priority*

#### Objectives:

- **CF-2.1:** Expand police and fire services to maintain optimal response times as the population grows to 45,000+
- **CF-2.2:** Implement smart city technologies for enhanced emergency response and community safety
- **CF-2.3:** Strengthen regional and binational security partnerships

## Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045 (First Draft)

- **CF-2.4:** Develop climate-resilient emergency management capabilities

### Implementation Strategies & Timeline:

- **CF-2.1.1 (2025-2026):** Complete comprehensive fire station capacity analysis and develop an expansion plan
- **CF-2.1.2 (2025-2027):** Implement 2017 Police Audit recommendations and establish regular performance review cycles
- **CF-2.2.1 (2026-2028):** Deploy integrated emergency communication systems and real-time response technologies
- **CF-2.3.1 (2025-2030):** Enhance coordination protocols with Border Patrol, El Paso agencies, and Mexican authorities
- **CF-2.4.1 (2026-2027):** Develop climate emergency response protocols and community education programs

## SP-2045 Goal CF-3: Provide Excellence in Educational Infrastructure and Workforce Development

*Economic Prosperity, Community Wellbeing, High Priority*

### Objectives:

- **CF-3.1:** Support educational infrastructure expansion to accommodate projected population growth through 2045.
- **CF-3.2:** Integrate workforce development programming with target industry recruitment and economic development.
- **CF-3.3:** Develop binational educational partnerships and cross-border learning opportunities.
- **CF-3.4:** Enhance community education, library services, and cultural facilities

### Implementation Strategies & Timeline:

- **CF-3.1.1 (2025-2030):** Coordinate with GISD on new elementary school development and capacity planning
- **CF-3.2.1 (2026-2028):** Partner with Doña Ana Community College and the University of Phoenix for workforce training programs
- **CF-3.3.1 (2027-2030):** Establish educational partnerships with UTEP, NMSU, and Mexican institutions
- **CF-3.4.1 (2027-2028):** Expand Sunland Park Public Library and integrate enhanced programming into the One Stop Shop
- **CF-3.4.2 (2025-2026):** Develop partnerships with organizations like El Paso Locomotive FC



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## 8. Economic Development

The City of Sunland Park is strategically positioned at the confluence of New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico, making it one of New Mexico's fastest-growing cities with unprecedented economic development opportunities. Since the previous comprehensive plan update in 2018, Sunland Park has experienced significant transformation, driven by strategic infrastructure investments, emerging industries, and its unique binational character.

**17,986**  
2024 Population

**1.68%**  
Annual Growth Rate

**\$52,147**  
Average Household  
Income

With a 2024 population of 17,986, Sunland Park is currently growing at a rate of 1.68% annually, reflecting the city's increasing attractiveness as both a residential and business destination. The city has evolved from a bedroom community of El Paso into a dynamic economic center with diverse revenue streams and development opportunities.

### Key Economic Transformation Insights

- Municipal revenues exceeded projections by \$3 million, indicating strong economic momentum
- The cannabis industry emerged as a significant revenue generator with 16 dispensaries
- Strategic infrastructure investments positioning the city as a regional logistics hub
- Community survey reveals strong preference for business diversification
- A binational location creating unique economic development opportunities

### Current Economic Landscape

#### Key Economic Indicators

#### Demographic and Economic Analysis

**Population Growth:** The 7.07% population increase since 2020 significantly exceeds state and national averages, indicating strong economic attraction factors and quality of life improvements.

**Income Trends:** The average household income of \$52,147 represents improvement from previous periods, though the 25.12% poverty rate indicates continued need for economic development focused on family-wage employment.

*Municipal Financial Health:* The \$3 million budget surplus demonstrates effective fiscal management and a growing economic base, providing resources for strategic infrastructure investments.

## Emerging Economic Drivers

### 1. Cannabis Industry

Since New Mexico legalized recreational marijuana sales in 2022, a booming marijuana economy has emerged in Sunland Park, sustained primarily by Texans who travel to New Mexico to purchase marijuana. As of January 2024, sixteen marijuana dispensaries operated in Sunland Park, the second-most in the state after Albuquerque.

#### *Community Perspective on the Cannabis Industry*

While the cannabis industry provides significant tax revenue, multiple survey respondents expressed concerns about over-concentration of dispensaries and requested limits on new cannabis businesses in favor of diverse retail options.

### 2. Transportation and Logistics Hub

#### *Santa Teresa Port of Entry Proximity:*

- Contributes approximately \$2 billion annually to the New Mexico economy
- Supports 7,000 jobs regionally
- Ranks fifth among the largest commercial ports of entry by trade volume
- Handles more than \$31 billion in goods annually
- Accounts for 63% of New Mexico's exports to the world

#### *Border Highway Connector Impact Analysis*

The \$150 million Border Highway Connector represents a transformational infrastructure investment that will:

- Reduce travel time from Sunland Park to Santa Teresa Port from 25 minutes to 8-10 minutes
- Create new retail and commercial opportunities due to increased traffic flows
- Position Sunland Park as a logistics and distribution hub
- Support regional economic integration with the El Paso and Santa Teresa industrial areas

### 3. Entertainment and Tourism

The city's entertainment district, anchored by the Sunland Park Racetrack & Casino, continues to serve as an economic driver. Western Playland amusement park, which shut down in November 2021, reopened in 2023 under new ownership, adding to the area's tourism appeal.

#### 4. Multi-Modal Transportation Development

According to the Transportation Infrastructure Revenue Subcommittee presentation from July 17, 2025, Sunland Park is actively pursuing development as a multi-modal transportation city. This comprehensive approach includes:

- *Futurity Drive Entertainment Corridor*: A priority roadway project that received \$3 million in federal funding through Congressman Vasquez's CDS top 15 projects.
- *Rio Grande Trail Master Plan*: Part of the 500-mile statewide trail initiative, with Sunland Park serving as the gateway into the trail system.
- *NM 273 (McNutt Road) Corridor*: A 10-mile trail corridor master plan was recently adopted by the City Council.
- South Connector Road integration with regional transportation planning.

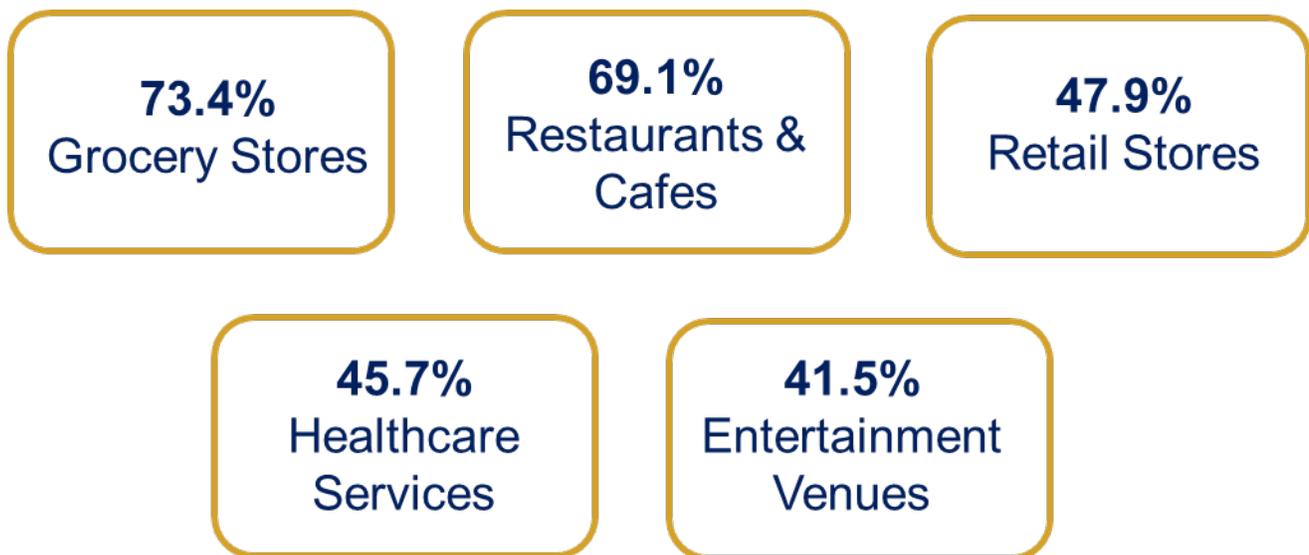
#### 5. Sports and Recreation Economy

The City has developed a significant partnership with El Paso Locomotive FC, which operates youth soccer programs at the Sports Complex. This partnership includes:

- Housing the most elite teams that have provided scholarship opportunities for 11 high school seniors to advance to collegiate athletic careers.
- The US U20 Academy team serves as the reserve team to the professional team.
- Community camps and programs serving 30+ youth through partnerships with local facilities like "The Hive" daycare.
- Annual community clinics and partnerships with local soccer clubs.

### Community Survey Results - Economic Development Priorities

#### Business Attraction Priorities (2024 Community Survey)



## Survey Insights Analysis

*Community Priorities:* The overwhelming preference for grocery stores (73.4%) and restaurants (69.1%) indicates significant gaps in basic commercial services that residents currently travel to El Paso to access.

*Economic Development Support:* 71.1% ranked supporting local businesses as "Very Important," and 58.3% rated economic development as "Extremely Important," showing strong community backing for business development initiatives.

*Cannabis Concerns:* Multiple open-ended responses called for limits on cannabis businesses and greater business diversity, suggesting community desire for balanced commercial development.

## Current Economic Landscape Key Insights

- Sunland Park is experiencing unprecedented growth and economic diversification.
- Strategic location at a binational crossroads, creating unique competitive advantages.
- Infrastructure investments positioning the city for major economic expansion.
- The community strongly supports business development but seeks greater diversity.
- Regional economic integration opportunities through the Santa Teresa logistics hub.
- Municipal finances are strong, providing capacity for strategic investments.
- Multi-modal transportation development creates a foundation for the growth of the tourism and recreation economy.
- Strong partnerships with regional organizations (El Paso Locomotive FC, South Central Regional Transit District), enhancing economic development capacity.
- The outdoor recreation economy has significant potential, with trail development accounting for 1.8% of its growth and supporting 28,000 regional recreation jobs.

## Strategic Economic Development Framework

This framework establishes four comprehensive goals with specific objectives and policies designed to guide Sunland Park's economic development through 2045, balancing community priorities with strategic opportunities.

### Goal ED-1: Diversify the Economic Base

#### *Objective ED-1.1: Reduce Dependency on Single Economic Sectors*

**Policy ED-1.1.1:** Actively recruit businesses in target sectors, including healthcare, retail, restaurants, and professional services, to balance the current cannabis-heavy commercial landscape.

**Policy ED-1.1.2:** Develop incentive packages for businesses that provide family-wage jobs and serve community needs identified in the public survey.

**Policy ED-1.1.3:** Create sector-specific development strategies for tourism, logistics, and binational commerce.

#### *Objective ED-1.2: Support Existing Business Growth*

**Policy ED-1.2.1:** Establish a formal business retention and expansion program to support existing enterprises.

**Policy ED-1.2.2:** Provide business development assistance through partnerships with regional organizations.

**Policy ED-1.2.3:** Streamline permitting and regulatory processes to reduce barriers to business expansion.

### Goal ED-2: Leverage Strategic Location and Infrastructure

#### *Objective ED-2.1: Maximize Benefits from Transportation Infrastructure*

**Policy ED-2.1.1:** Coordinate with the Border Highway Connector development to attract logistics and distribution businesses.

**Policy ED-2.1.2:** Work with Santa Teresa industrial stakeholders to capture overflow economic benefits.

**Policy ED-2.1.3:** Develop industrial and commercial zoning along key transportation corridors.

#### *Objective ED-2.2: Advance the Camino Real Port of Entry Project*

**Policy ED-2.2.1:** Continue pursuing federal approvals and funding for the proposed non-commercial port of entry.

**Policy ED-2.2.2:** Plan complementary commercial development around the proposed port location.

**Policy ED-2.2.3:** Coordinate with Mexican partners to ensure binational project success.

## Goal ED-3: Develop Tourism and Entertainment Economy

### *Objective ED-3.1: Create Destination Attractions*

**Policy ED-3.1.1:** Develop the Rio Grande Trail and riverfront recreational facilities as identified in survey priorities. Implement the 500-mile statewide Rio Grande Trail Master Plan with Sunland Park serving as the gateway, including the 5-mile trail segment currently in the design phase.

**Policy ED-3.1.2:** Support the development of mixed-use entertainment districts around existing assets. Advance the Family Oriented Entertainment District Corridor along Futurity Drive, integrating art, placemaking, and culture with pedestrian-friendly design.

**Policy ED-3.1.3:** Promote cultural tourism, highlighting the community's binational heritage. Incorporate bi-national, tri-city design elements that reflect the unique geographic position at the confluence of New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico.

### *Objective ED-3.2: Enhance Visitor Services*

**Policy ED-3.2.1:** Recruit hotels, restaurants, and retail businesses to serve visitors and residents.

**Policy ED-3.2.2:** Develop wayfinding and tourism infrastructure. Implement comprehensive wayfinding systems connecting the 10 miles of Rio Grande Trail with the 10 miles on NM 273, providing clear direction to restaurants, stores, and recreational facilities.

**Policy ED-3.2.3:** Create special events and festivals to attract regional visitors. Leverage partnerships with organizations like El Paso Locomotive FC to host community events and annual clinics that draw regional participation.

## Goal ED-4: Build Economic Development Capacity

### *Objective ED-4.1: Establish Economic Development Organization*

**Policy ED-4.1.1:** Create or partner with a formal economic development organization to lead business recruitment and retention efforts.

**Policy ED-4.1.2:** Develop strategic partnerships with regional economic development entities.

**Policy ED-4.1.3:** Establish a business-friendly permitting and development review process.

### *Objective ED-4.2: Workforce Development*

**Policy ED-4.2.1:** Partner with educational institutions to align workforce training with economic development goals.

**Policy ED-4.2.2:** Support entrepreneurship development programs.

**Policy ED-4.2.3:** Develop youth retention strategies to keep educated young people in the community.

## Strategic Framework Key Insights

- The framework addresses both immediate community needs and long-term strategic positioning.
- Policies balance economic growth with the preservation of community character.
- Infrastructure leverage strategies maximize public investment returns.
- Binational coordination is essential for realizing the full economic potential.
- Workforce development is critical for sustainable economic growth.

## Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy provides a phased approach to achieving economic development goals, with specific actions organized by timeframe and priority level to ensure systematic progress toward the 2045 vision.

### Short-Term Actions (2025-2027)

#### 1. *Business Recruitment Initiative*

- Target grocery stores, restaurants, and healthcare services are identified as community priorities.
- Develop incentive packages for priority business types.
- Create a streamlined business permitting process.

#### 2. *Tourism Development*

- Implement Rio Grande Trail connections as part of the 500-mile statewide trail system.
- Complete design and begin construction of the Futurity Drive Entertainment District master plan
- Create a marketing strategy for regional tourism.

#### 3. *Infrastructure Coordination*

- Actively participate in Border Highway Connector planning.
- Prepare development sites near transportation improvements.
- Coordinate with the Port of Entry project advancement.
- Complete the Sunland Park Dr./Futurity Dr. roundabout intersection project with \$3 million federal funding, scheduled for construction in the summer of 2026

#### 4. *Multi-Modal Transportation Implementation*

- Begin construction of the NM 273 Multi-purpose Trail Corridor Master Plan Phase I in August 2025

- Complete 15% design progress on the McNutt Corridor Master plan with a 10-ft wide multi-use trail on both sides of the Rio Grande
- Implement wayfinding systems integration between trail segments and community destinations.

## Medium-Term Actions (2027-2035)

### 1. *Economic Diversification*

- Establish a business incubator or entrepreneurship center.
- Develop a medical district around healthcare facility recruitment, including the mixed-use project with ground-level retail/commercial and 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floor multifamily housing.
- Create mixed-use developments integrating residential and commercial uses.

### 2. *Regional Integration*

- Strengthen economic ties with the Santa Teresa industrial area.
- Develop cross-border business facilitation services.
- Pursue regional tourism partnerships.
- Complete the South Connector Road integration connecting NM 136 to NM 273, supporting economic development and direct northbound traffic into the planned Entertainment District.

### 3. *Sports and Recreation Economy Development*

- Expand partnerships with athletic organizations, building on the El Paso Locomotive FC model.
- Develop sports tourism facilities and programs leveraging the Multi-generation Center Trail Phase I
- Create recreational amenities that attract regional visitors, including native landscape and irrigation design elements.

## Long-Term Vision (2035-2045)

### 1. *Economic Hub Development*

- Establish Sunland Park as a recognized binational economic center.
- Develop specialized industry clusters.
- Create sustainable revenue streams supporting municipal services.

### 2. *Quality of Life Enhancement*

- Achieve balanced commercial development serving resident needs.
- Establish diverse employment opportunities to reduce commuting.
- Create attractive community amenities supporting population retention.

## Implementation Analysis

*Phased Approach Rationale:* The three-phase implementation strategy aligns with infrastructure development timelines, allowing economic development to capitalize on transportation improvements and build momentum through early wins.

*Priority Setting:* Short-term actions focus on addressing immediate community needs (grocery stores, restaurants) while laying the groundwork for larger development projects.

*Resource Coordination:* Implementation requires coordination between multiple funding sources and regional partners, necessitating strong project management and stakeholder engagement.

*Transportation Integration:* The multi-modal transportation city concept provides the framework for coordinating economic development with infrastructure investments, ensuring projects like the Futurity Drive Entertainment Corridor and Rio Grande Trail create synergistic economic benefits.

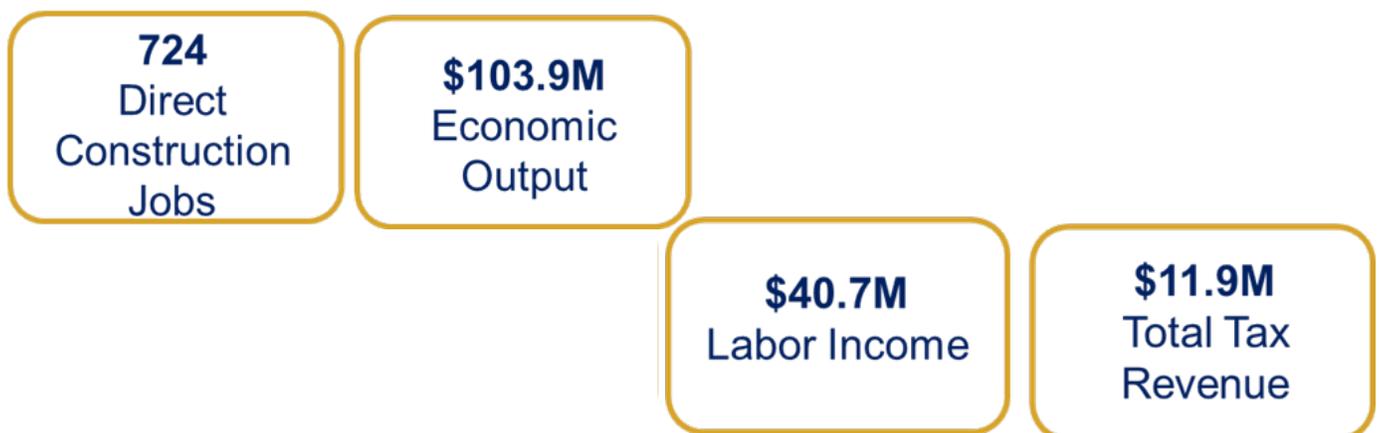
## Implementation Strategy Key Insights

- Early wins in business recruitment will build community confidence and momentum.
- Infrastructure investments must be coordinated with economic development initiatives.
- Regional partnerships are essential for accessing larger markets and resources.
- Sustained implementation requires dedicated economic development staffing.
- Success metrics and regular evaluation are critical for adaptive management.

## Economic Impact Projections

Based on the Phase 2 Entertainment District Economic Impact Study and regional development trends, this section projects the economic benefits of planned development and infrastructure investments through quantitative impact analysis.

### Phase 2 Entertainment District Impact Analysis



### Construction Phase Economic Analysis

*Direct Employment Impact:* The 724 direct construction jobs represent significant short-term employment opportunities for residents, with multiplier effects creating an additional 208 indirect and induced jobs.

*Economic Output Analysis:* The \$103.9 million in total economic output demonstrates substantial economic stimulus, with direct construction spending of \$57.6 million generating additional indirect and induced economic activity.

*Tax Revenue Benefits:* The \$11.9 million in total tax revenue includes \$4.4 million for New Mexico state and local governments, providing resources for public infrastructure and services.

### Ongoing Operations Economic Impact



### Ongoing Impact Analysis

*Sustainable Employment:* The 299 ongoing jobs (162 hotel operations + 137 visitor spending) provide permanent employment opportunities in hospitality and service sectors.

*Tourism Multiplier Effect:* Hotel guest spending of 60% of on-site expenditures in the local economy demonstrates a significant visitor economic impact beyond hotel operations.

*Revenue Sustainability:* Annual tax revenue of \$3.4 million provides ongoing municipal revenue to support public services and infrastructure maintenance.

### Regional Economic Integration Benefits

### Santa Teresa Economic Impact Context

Santa Teresa Port of Entry and industrial areas contribute \$2 billion annually to New Mexico's economy and support 7,000 jobs. Sunland Park's strategic positioning to capture overflow benefits from this economic engine represents significant growth potential.

### Border Highway Connector Economic Projections

*Travel Time Reduction:* Cutting travel times from 25 minutes to 8-10 minutes will make Sunland Park more attractive for:

- Logistics and distribution businesses seeking Santa Teresa proximity
- Workers commuting to Santa Teresa industrial jobs
- Commercial development serving increased traffic flows

*Development Opportunities:* Enhanced connectivity is expected to generate:

- New retail and service businesses along transportation corridors
- Industrial development leveraging logistics advantages.
- Residential growth supporting the regional workforce

### Economic Impact Projections Key Insights

- Entertainment district development provides both construction stimulus and an ongoing economic base.
- Regional infrastructure investments are multiplying local economic opportunities.
- Tax revenue generation supporting municipal capacity for additional investments
- Employment creation spanning construction, hospitality, and service sectors
- Strategic positioning capturing benefits from \$2 billion Santa Teresa economic engine.

## Funding and Implementation

Successful implementation of Sunland Park's economic development strategy requires diverse funding sources and strategic partnerships. This section outlines available resources, partnership opportunities, and performance measurement frameworks.

### Revenue Sources

#### Federal Infrastructure Funding

- *Border Highway Connector*: \$150 million investment improving regional connectivity
- *Camino Real Port of Entry*: \$80 million federal project creating binational gateway
- *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*: Ongoing opportunities for transportation and broadband improvements

#### State and Local Resources

- *Cannabis Industry Tax Revenue*: Growing revenue stream from 16 dispensaries
- *New Mexico Economic Development Incentives*: LEDA, JTIP, and other state business recruitment tools
- *Municipal Revenue Growth*: \$3 million budget surplus, providing investment capacity
- *Public Improvement Districts*: Special assessment financing for infrastructure
- *Congressional Funding*: \$3 million awarded through Congressman Vasquez's CDS top 15 projects for Futurity Drive improvements
- *Transportation Funding*: Access to the Transportation Program (T2PF) through District 1 coordination for ongoing transportation projects

## Public-Private Partnerships

- *Entertainment District Development:* Hotel and convention center private investment
- *Commercial Real Estate:* Private development of retail and service businesses
- *Tourism Infrastructure:* Joint public-private recreational facility development
- *Sports and Recreation Partnerships:* El Paso Locomotive FC partnership providing programming and facilities management at the Sports Complex
- *Medical District Development:* Cost-share agreement with private landowner for mixed-use medical district project

## Funding Strategy Analysis

*Diversified Approach:* Multiple funding sources reduce dependence on any single revenue stream and provide flexibility for different types of projects.

*Leverage Opportunities:* Municipal investment can leverage significant federal and state infrastructure spending, maximizing return on local resources.

*Revenue Sustainability:* Cannabis tax revenue and growing municipal revenues provide ongoing capacity for economic development initiatives.

*Project-Ready Strategy:* The city's approach of planning, designing, and constructing projects in advance positions Sunland Park to be competitive for federal and state funding opportunities, as demonstrated by the successful \$3 million Futurity Drive award.

## Regional Partnerships

### Key Partners

- • Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA)
- • Border Industrial Association
- • New Mexico Border Authority
- • El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Binational Partners

- • Ciudad Juárez municipal government
- • Instituto Municipal de Investigación y Planeación (IMIP)
- • Mexican federal trade agencies
- • Binational business organizations

## Partnership Strategy Analysis

*Regional Coordination:* Active participation in regional economic development organizations is essential for accessing larger markets and coordinating infrastructure investments.

*Binational Opportunities:* Cross-border partnerships are critical for Port of Entry development and capturing trade-related economic benefits.

*Resource Sharing:* Regional partnerships provide access to technical expertise, funding opportunities, and market intelligence beyond local capacity.

## Performance Metrics

### Success Measurement Framework

#### *Business Development:*

- Business license growth and diversity
- Target sector business recruitment
- Commercial square footage development

#### *Employment & Income:*

- Job creation by sector
- Average wage growth
- Unemployment rate reduction

#### *Municipal Finance:*

- Revenue diversification
- Tax base growth
- Infrastructure investment capacity

#### *Tourism & Development:*

- Visitor numbers and spending
- Hotel occupancy rates
- Special event participation

## Funding and Implementation Key Insights

- A diversified funding strategy reduces risk and maximizes investment opportunities.
- Regional partnerships are essential for accessing federal and state resources.
- Cannabis revenue provides immediate capacity for economic development investments.
- Performance metrics are critical for demonstrating progress and securing continued support.
- Public-private partnerships leveraging municipal investments for greater impact.

### Conclusion

Sunland Park stands at a critical juncture in its economic development trajectory. The city is working to transform itself from a bedroom community of El Paso into a self-sustaining city with diverse economic opportunities. With strategic infrastructure investments, emerging industry opportunities, and strong community support for economic diversification, Sunland Park is positioned to become a significant economic center in the binational region.

## Transformation Analysis

*Historical Context:* The evolution from unincorporated communities to a dynamic city of nearly 18,000 residents demonstrates the potential for continued strategic growth.

*Current Momentum:* Record municipal revenues, major infrastructure investments, and emerging industries create unprecedented opportunities for economic development.

*Strategic Positioning:* The unique binational location, combined with transportation infrastructure improvements, positions Sunland Park to capture economic benefits from regional growth trends.

## Critical Success Factors

*Community Alignment:* Survey results demonstrate substantial community support for economic development, with 71.1% ranking local business support as "Very Important."

*Infrastructure Leverage:* The \$150 million Border Highway Connector and \$80 million Port of Entry investments provide foundations for significant economic expansion.

*Regional Integration:* Proximity to \$2 billion Santa Teresa economic engine offers substantial overflow opportunities for strategic development.

Success will require coordinated implementation of business recruitment strategies, infrastructure development, and tourism initiatives while maintaining the community's unique character and addressing resident priorities for diverse, quality business development that serves local needs.

## Implementation Requirements

- *Dedicated Economic Development Capacity:* A Formal economic development organization or staff position is essential for business recruitment and project coordination
- *Strategic Infrastructure Coordination:* Active participation in regional transportation and border infrastructure development
- *Business Diversification:* Balanced approach addressing community needs for grocery stores, restaurants, and healthcare while leveraging cannabis revenue
- *Regional Partnership Development:* Sustained engagement with binational, state, and federal partners for funding and project coordination
- *Community Engagement:* Ongoing public participation ensures economic development aligns with resident priorities and community character

## Economic Development Vision Key Insights

- Sunland Park's transformation represents a unique opportunity for binational economic development.
- Strategic infrastructure investments create a foundation for sustained economic growth.
- Community priorities align with economic development opportunities.

- Regional economic integration is essential for maximizing local benefits.
- A balanced development approach preserves community character while enabling growth.
- 2045 vision achievable through coordinated implementation and sustained commitment
- Multi-modal transportation strategy positioning Sunland Park as a regional destination for outdoor recreation and sports tourism
- Strong municipal leadership and professional planning capacity enable successful grant competitions and project implementation.
- Binational, tri-city geographic advantages create unique marketing and development opportunities not available to other communities

*"The combination of strategic location, infrastructure investments, and emerging economic opportunities provides a strong foundation for sustainable economic growth through 2045, positioning Sunland Park as a premier binational economic center."*



# 9. Natural Resources

## Strategic Context and Community Vision

Natural resources in Sunland Park serve as the foundation for both quality of life and economic development. Since the 2018 plan, community priorities have crystallized around enhanced recreational amenities, with the Sports Complex emerging as a catalyst for regional tourism and the Rio Grande Trail system offering unprecedented connectivity opportunities. *Sunland Park is positioning itself as "the gateway to the land of enchantment," developing as a multimodal transportation city with unique opportunities for both recreational and economic development through strategic partnerships and infrastructure investment.*

Natural resources provide Sunland Park residents with recreational opportunities and benefits through economic development and tourism. Since the 2018 plan, community priorities have evolved to emphasize enhanced recreational amenities, improved connectivity, and sustainable development practices. Recent community surveys indicate strong resident support for parks and recreational facilities, with *63.8% supporting new parks and playgrounds* and *55.3% supporting recreation centers.*

### Multi-generation Center Trail Phase I – NM 273



*Key Insight: The Sports Complex has emerged as Sunland Park's most significant recreational asset, representing 36% of total city parkland and serving as the cornerstone for regional recreational development. The facility currently hosts El Paso Locomotive's most elite teams, providing scholarship opportunities for high school seniors and serving as a home base for the US U20 Academy team, demonstrating its regional competitive significance.*

Sunland Park features outstanding natural features, including the Rio Grande River, Mt. Cristo Rey, and the Mesa located to the west of the city. A network of arroyos adds distinctive features to the city's landscape and provides opportunities for open space networks. The Sports Complex at 4700 McNutt Road has emerged as a significant 17.95-acre recreational asset, serving as a cornerstone for the city's recreational infrastructure.

### Existing Natural Resources and Recreational Amenities

Analysis of the current park inventory reveals significant opportunities for enhancement and strategic development, with the Sports Complex positioned as the primary regional recreational hub.

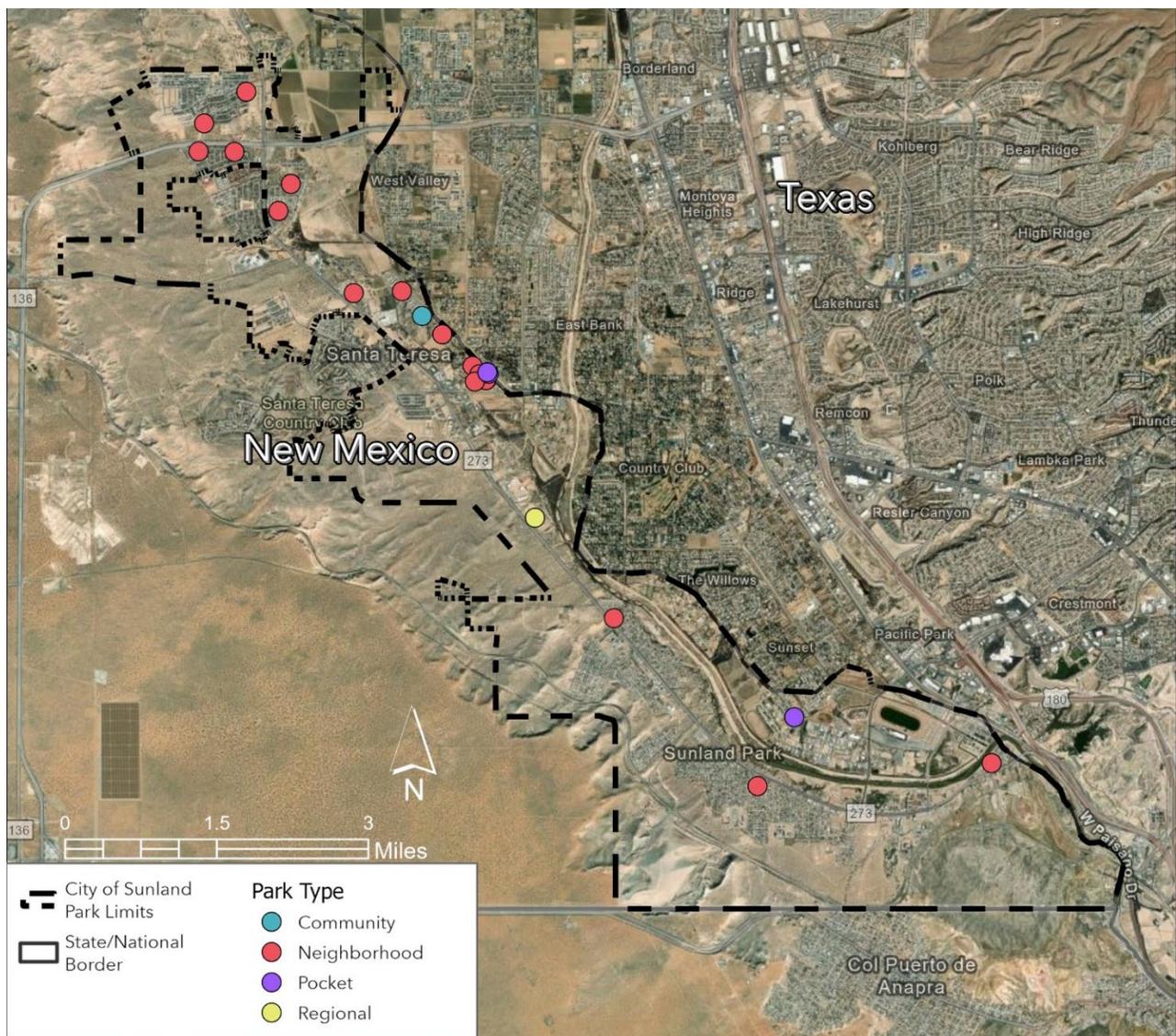


Figure 9-1 Park Location by Type Map

## Current Park Inventory and Performance

### Critical Gap Analysis

Sunland Park's current park system operates at a significant deficit compared to national standards. With only 49.67 acres serving over 17,000 residents, the City provides just 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents - far below the NRPA recommended 9.6 acres per 1,000 residents.

As of 2025, Sunland Park maintains 49.67 acres of parkland across 21 facilities, representing approximately 0.6% of the municipal boundaries. The city owns 28.74 acres while homeowners associations (HOAs) manage the remainder. This represents a significant deficit compared to National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards.

**49.67**

Total Park Acres

**21**

Park Facilities

**28.74**

City-Owned Acres

**221**

Acre Deficit vs. NRPA Standards

### Current Parkland Distribution by Type:

Park Type	Current Acres	2040 Goal	Status
Pocket Parks	4.7 acres	8-16 acres	Below Target
Neighborhood Parks	19.19 acres	32-64 acres	Below Target
Community Parks	7.83 acres	160-256 acres	Significant Deficit
Regional Parks	17.95 acres	320+ acres	Foundation Established

## Sports Complex as Regional Asset

### *Strategic Positioning Analysis*

The Sports Complex represents 36% of Sunland Park's total parkland and serves as the city's primary competitive advantage in regional recreational development. Its scale and location make it ideal for tournament hosting and regional event programming. *Current partnerships include El Paso Locomotive FC, which operates their Technical Academy at the facility, runs weekly programs for local daycares, including "The Hive" serving 30+ kids, and hosts annual community clinics. The complex has graduated 11 seniors to collegiate athletic careers, demonstrating a measurable impact on youth development.*

The Municipal Sports Complex at 4700 McNutt Road represents the city's largest recreational investment at 17.95 acres. Current facilities include:

- **Walking trails** connecting to a citywide network
- **Multiple sports fields** suitable for league play
- **Playground equipment** serving various age groups
- **Skate park** with regional draw potential
- **Splash pad** providing summer recreation
- **Concession stand** and public restrooms

*Planned Enhancements:* The city is designing a new recreation center within the complex featuring an indoor pool and gymnasium. Master planning efforts have identified potential for additional community center space, amphitheater, restaurant facilities, and leasable commercial space to enhance the complex's regional appeal. The complex serves as the home base for numerous camps and programs, partnering with local organizations like Sun FC soccer club, and is expanding its role as a regional destination for competitive athletics and community programming.

## Natural Environment and Distinctive Features

### Tourism and Economic Development Potential

Sunland Park's natural features represent untapped economic development opportunities. Mt. Cristo Rey attracts regional pilgrimage tourism, while the Mesa offers potential for specialized recreation that could draw visitors from across the Southwest.

*Rio Grande River System:* The Rio Grande continues to serve as Sunland Park's defining natural feature, providing both recreational opportunities and flood management challenges. The existing 1.3-mile multi-use path represents the foundation for expanded trail connectivity.

*Mt. Cristo Rey:* This 4,675-foot landmark continues to provide pilgrimage and recreational opportunities, with nearly 200 acres of accessible dinosaur tracks at its northern base. Security challenges limit year-round access, creating opportunities for coordinated management approaches.

*The Mesa:* Located west of railroad tracks, this elevated area remains popular for off-highway vehicle recreation, representing potential for formal recreational development and regional destination creation.

*Arroyo Network:* The city's arroyo system provides natural stormwater management while offering linear open space opportunities for trail development and habitat preservation.

### Natural Resource Issues and Opportunities

Community priorities have evolved since 2018, with a clear emphasis on recreational amenities, environmental sustainability, and leveraging natural assets for economic development.

#### Community Priority Alignment

##### Survey Data Reveals Clear Priorities

The 2025 community survey provides definitive guidance on recreational preferences, with strong majorities supporting traditional park amenities while also embracing innovative recreational concepts like river walks and outdoor event venues.



#### Transportation and Connectivity Challenges:

- **54.3%** of residents prioritize improved road conditions
- **35.1%** support expanded bike lanes and pedestrian paths
- Limited connectivity between natural assets and residential areas

## Environmental Sustainability Focus

### *Growing Environmental Consciousness*

Survey results indicate significant community support for environmental initiatives, suggesting residents are ready to support policies that balance development with environmental protection and sustainability.

Survey results indicate growing environmental consciousness:

- **43.6%** support recycling and waste reduction initiatives
- **42.6%** favor preservation of natural habitats and green spaces
- **40.4%** support urban gardening and community farming
- **37.2%** each support renewable energy and water conservation programs

## Water Resource Challenges and Opportunities

### *Water Resource Management Priority*

Community survey data reveals persistent water quality concerns, with residents prioritizing improved water infrastructure and conservation measures as fundamental community needs. Approximately 17% of residential structures remain within the 100-year floodplain, requiring coordinated flood management and recreational development strategies.

**Floodplain Considerations:** Ongoing challenges in the Anapra and Tierra Madre areas require innovative solutions combining flood management with recreational opportunities.

**Critical Issue:** Community survey responses highlight persistent water quality concerns, with residents expressing distrust of current water service providers and prioritizing improved water quality as a fundamental infrastructure need.

## Economic Development Through Natural Assets

Community feedback emphasizes leveraging natural resources for economic development:

- Tourism potential through Mt. Cristo Rey and dinosaur tracks
- Rio Grande Trail connectivity for regional attraction
- Sports Complex expansion for tournament hosting
- Outdoor recreation industry development
- Regional positioning as a gateway to a 500-mile statewide trail network with connections to El Paso's 67-mile system

## Natural Resource Development Strategies and Recommendations

Strategic recommendations focus on maximizing the potential of existing natural assets while creating new regional destinations that serve both residents and visitors.

### Sports Complex Enhancement Strategy

#### *Regional Competitive Positioning*

The Sports Complex represents Sunland Park's best opportunity to establish itself as a regional recreational destination. Strategic enhancements can position the facility to compete with larger metropolitan recreational facilities while serving local community needs.

#### *Immediate Priorities (2025-2027):*

- Complete recreation center construction with indoor pool and gymnasium
- Develop a master site plan integrating community center and amphitheater facilities.
- Establish the Sports Complex as a tournament destination for regional athletic events.
- Implement connectivity improvements linking the complex to the citywide trail network.

#### *Long-term Vision (2028-2040):*

- Expand the complex to serve as a regional recreational hub.
- Develop commercial partnerships for restaurant and retail amenities.
- Create Sports Complex-centered tourism packages linking to Mt. Cristo Rey and Rio Grande activities.

### Rio Grande Recreational Corridor Development

#### *Regional Trail Network Integration*

The Rio Grande Trail system offers an unprecedented opportunity for regional connectivity, linking Sunland Park to broader recreational networks while providing economic development opportunities through trail-oriented commercial development. *Sunland Park is strategically positioned as one of only three geographical locations that can truly embrace and leverage the Rio Grande Trail system throughout New Mexico's 500-mile network. The city recently completed 1.25 miles of trail and is currently designing five additional miles, with wayfinding systems that will integrate with the state's broader trail vision. This includes connections to El Paso County's 67-mile trail system, creating a combined 567-mile regional network.*

**Enhanced Trail Development:**

- Extend the existing 1.3-mile trail to create a comprehensive 6.3-mile Riverpark Trail.
- Establish connections to the El Paso Riverpark system and the planned 500-mile New Mexico Rio Grande Trail.
- Implement pedestrian improvements at Sunland Park Drive, Racetrack Drive, and Anapra Road bridges.
- Integrate wayfinding systems with the New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division's statewide vision, featuring distinctive "Sunland Park" signage similar to popular tourist destinations like Cancun.
- Develop 10-foot wide multi-use trails on both sides of the Rio Grande with native landscape design and coordinated irrigation systems.

**Community Amenities:**

- Develop boardwalk sections bringing users to the river's edge.
- Create performance spaces and gathering areas.
- Install comprehensive wayfinding, lighting, and art installations.
- Incorporate bi-national, tri-city design elements celebrating the unique border location with both US and Mexican flags and cultural features.
- Establish coordinated bus shelters with the South Central Regional Transit District to support multimodal access to the trail network.

**Trail Design Amenities**



## Mt. Cristo Rey Regional Park Development

### Stakeholder Coordination:

Working with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces, Insights El Paso Science Center, Mt. Cristo Rey Restoration Committee, and Border Patrol to:

- Enhance security measures, enabling year-round access.
- Develop science center/museum facilities showcasing dinosaur tracks.
- Create an amphitheater performance space.
- Establish a comprehensive wayfinding and interpretive signage system.

## Mesa Recreation Destination

### Off-Highway Vehicle Park Development:

- Conduct a feasibility study for a formal OHV park in the Mesa area.
- Assess annexation and development costs.
- Engage regional stakeholders to determine demand and operational structure.
- Design a park with designated trails, parking, and amenities.

## Recreation-Transportation Integration

### *Natural Resource Enhancement Through Transportation Infrastructure*

Transportation infrastructure projects provide opportunities to enhance natural resource access and recreational connectivity. The Entertainment District development and McNutt Road corridor improvements integrate natural resource planning with transportation infrastructure to maximize community benefit.

### Entertainment District Natural Resource Integration:

- Extensive landscaping and green space creation to break up impervious surfaces and provide shade along the Futurity Drive corridor
- Integration of art, placemaking, and cultural elements celebrating binational heritage within recreational and natural settings
- Pedestrian-priority design connecting existing recreational anchors (casino, racetrack, Western Playland) to the Sports Complex via a trail network.
- Support for the outdoor recreation economy, contributing \$2.4 billion in statewide outdoor recreation revenue
- Cross-reference: \*See Transportation Chapter for infrastructure and safety improvement details\*

### McNutt Road Recreational Corridor Elements:

- 10-foot wide multi-use trail development as part of the 500-mile statewide Rio Grande Trail network
- Native landscape design with efficient irrigation systems and drought-resistant plantings, enhancing natural corridor character
- Trail amenities including benches, trash receptacles, and integrated wayfinding systems connecting to the Sports Complex and natural areas
- A policy framework requiring all new developments to connect to the citywide recreational network
- Coordination with natural resource conservation and habitat preservation along the 10-mile corridor
- Cross-reference: \*See Transportation Chapter for infrastructure coordination and implementation timeline details\*

*Integration Approach:* These projects demonstrate how transportation infrastructure can enhance natural resource access and recreational opportunities while supporting environmental sustainability through native landscaping and trail connectivity.

## Natural Resource Goals, Objectives, and Implementation Policies

Comprehensive policies integrate community priorities, environmental sustainability, and legal compliance to create a robust framework for natural resource management and development.

### Natural Resource Goal 1: Comprehensive Recreational System

**Objective NR 1-A:** Promote public health, community involvement, and quality of life through passive and active recreational activities aligned with survey-identified priorities.

**Objective NR 1-B:** Develop Sports Complex as regional recreational hub while maintaining diverse neighborhood-level amenities.

**Objective NR 1-C:** Ensure universal accessibility and multimodal connectivity for all recreational facilities.

#### *Policy NR-1.1: Park Development Standards and Maintenance*

- Adopt standardized design templates for all park amenities to ensure ADA compliance and simplify maintenance protocols.
- Require drought-resistant landscaping and water-efficient irrigation systems in all new park developments.
- Establish maximum maintenance ratios: one full-time employee per four neighborhood parks (4 acres each) or one community park (15+ acres)
- Implement cluster development principles that preserve 40% of developable land as permanent open space.

*Policy NR-1.2: Alternative Development Models*

- Encourage cottage development as transitional housing between single-family and multifamily, requiring integrated community green spaces.
- Allow cluster development that reduces road and utility costs while preserving natural features and rural character.
- Promote mixed-use developments with ground-floor commercial and upper-level residential, incorporating public plaza spaces.

*Policy NR-1.3: Land Dedication and Payment-in-Lieu Framework (LDC 10-3-3.6)*

- **Mandatory Land Dedication:** Require subdividers to dedicate parkland per Land Development Code standards:
  - Single-family/duplex developments: 1 acre per 100 dwelling units
  - Multifamily developments: 1 acre per 200 dwelling units
  - Prohibit steep slopes or floodplain land from being dedicated as a park unless expressly approved by the Governing Body.
- **Payment-in-Lieu Alternative:** Allow developers to pay fees per the City Development Fee Schedule instead of land dedication for non-large-scale developments
- **Land Banking and Acquisition:** Implement a 5-year land reservation requirement when compromise cannot be reached, allowing City/County acquisition for park purposes
- **Fund Management:** Hold Payment-in-Lieu fees in a dedicated trust fund exclusively for parks and recreational facilities benefiting contributing subdivision residents

*Policy NR-1.4: HOA Partnership and Oversight*

- Establish minimum standards for HOA-maintained parks, including accessibility, safety, and maintenance requirements.
- Require HOA parks to remain accessible to all residents within walking distance (¼ mile radius)
- Implement an annual inspection and compliance program for HOA-managed recreational facilities.
- Prohibit HOAs from converting dedicated parkland to private use without city council approval and community replacement.

**Natural Resource Goal 2: Regional Tourism and Recreation Identity**

**Regional Positioning Strategy**

Leveraging Sunland Park's unique binational location and natural assets to create distinctive recreational experiences that attract visitors while serving resident needs represents a significant economic development opportunity.

**Objective NR 2-A:** Leverage unique natural assets for family-friendly regional attractions.

**Objective NR 2-B:** Celebrate community history and culture while preserving the natural environment.

**Objective NR 2-C:** Market Sunland Park as an outdoor recreation destination throughout the El Paso metropolitan region.

*Policy NR-2.1: Regional Asset Development and Management*

- Establish Sports Complex as a tournament-hosting regional facility with a minimum of 17.95 acres dedicated to competitive sports infrastructure.
- Require all regional recreational facilities to incorporate revenue-generating amenities (concessions, equipment rental, event hosting)
- Mandate regional park facilities include public restrooms, parking for 100+ vehicles, and emergency services access
- Implement a user fee structure for regional facilities with resident discounts and non-resident premium pricing.
- Establish a formal Adopt-a-Bench program allowing community organizations to sponsor trail maintenance and improvements.

*Policy NR-2.2: Natural Resource Tourism Development*

- Create Mt. Cristo Rey Regional Park through multi-agency coordination with the Roman Catholic Diocese, Border Patrol, and educational institutions.
- Establish Mesa Regional Recreation Area as a formal OHV destination with designated trails, safety facilities, and environmental protection measures.
- Develop the Rio Grande Trail corridor with commercial nodes every 2 miles featuring food service, equipment rental, and interpretive facilities.
- Require all tourism development to maintain a 50-foot minimum buffer from sensitive environmental areas.

*Policy NR-2.3: Climate Resilience and Water Conservation*

- Mandate water-efficient irrigation systems for all parks larger than 2 acres, with smart controllers and soil moisture monitoring
- Limit natural grass areas to active sports fields and high-use picnic areas; require xeriscaping for all other landscaped areas.
- Implement stormwater best management practices in all park designs, incorporating bioswales and permeable surfaces.
- Establish heat island reduction requirements: minimum 30% canopy coverage for all parks by 2030

*Policy NR-2.4: Volunteer and Partnership Integration*

- Establish a formal Adopt-a-Park program allowing community organizations to sponsor park maintenance and improvements.
- Create a volunteer coordination position within the Parks Department to manage community partnerships and service projects.
- Develop school district partnerships for environmental education programs and student volunteer opportunities.
- Implement graffiti removal. Adopt an Adopt-a-Spot program with quarterly volunteer appreciation events.

**Natural Resource Goal 3: Environmental Resilience and Sustainability**

**Climate Adaptation and Water Security**

Environmental policies must address both immediate community concerns about water quality and long-term sustainability challenges in the arid Southwest, while creating recreational amenities that enhance rather than compromise environmental quality.

**Objective NR 3-A:** Reduce vulnerability to natural hazards while preserving environmental quality.

**Objective NR 3-B:** Promote sustainable development practices aligned with community values.

**Objective NR 3-C:** Improve water quality and conservation in coordination with natural resource protection.

*Policy NR-3.1: Multi-Purpose Flood Control and Recreation Integration (LDC 10-3-3.6.B)*

- **Large-Scale Development Coordination:** Require developers of large-scale projects to consult with the City during early master planning to determine multi-purpose land dedication potential
- **Flood Control Recreation Facilities:** Design detention basins and open channels as dual-purpose facilities serving both stormwater management and recreational needs
- **Maintenance Cost Reduction:** Utilize recreational park designation to reduce long-term maintenance costs, illegal dumping, and unauthorized activities through increased public use
- **Regional Coordination:** Integrate multi-purpose facilities with the citywide drainage master plan and regional trail connectivity objectives

*Policy NR-3.2: Water Quality and Conservation Management*

- Implement advanced irrigation infrastructure with drip systems and moisture sensors for all parks exceeding 1 acre.
- Establish alternative water sources for park irrigation, including reclaimed water and rainwater harvesting systems.

- Require water quality testing for all recreational water features with quarterly public reporting.
- Mandate low-water native plant palettes for 70% of all landscaped park areas by 2027.

*Policy NR-3.3: Sustainable Operations and Maintenance*

- Establish an equipment standardization program, reducing maintenance costs through consistent tools and training.
- Implement integrated pest management, reducing chemical applications by 50% within five years.
- Require LEED or equivalent green building standards for all park structures exceeding 1,000 square feet.
- Develop waste reduction targets: achieve 40% waste diversion through recycling and composting programs at all major parks.

*Policy NR-3.4: Urban Forest and Heat Mitigation*

- Establish a tree preservation ordinance requiring 1:1 replacement of removed mature trees, with 2:1 replacement for trees over 12 inches in diameter.
- Create Urban Forestry Team following the Yuma, Arizona model with community education and school partnership programs.
- Mandate shade structures at all playgrounds and sports facilities to address extreme heat concerns
- Develop a community tree planting program with the goal of 500 new trees annually through volunteer partnerships.

## Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Accountability through measurable outcomes ensures continuous improvement and demonstrates return on investment in natural resource development and management.

### Key Performance Indicators

#### *Data-Driven Decision Making*

Performance metrics provide objective measures of success while enabling adaptive management based on changing community needs and environmental conditions.

#### *Recreation Access Metrics:*

**9.6**

Target Acres per 1,000 Residents by 2030

**95%**

Residents Within 1/2 Mile of Park Access

**12**

Annual Tournament Events at Sports  
Complex

**\$500K+**

Annual Economic Impact Target

#### *Environmental Sustainability Metrics:*

- **30% reduction** in park water consumption through efficient irrigation and native landscaping
- **40% waste diversion rate** at all major recreational facilities
- **500 trees are planted annually** through community partnerships and volunteer programs

#### *Community Satisfaction Indicators:*

- **80%+ resident satisfaction** with park quality and accessibility
- **65% residents support** park funding initiatives in future surveys
- **200 active community members** participating annually in volunteer programs

## Annual Review and Adaptation

*Continuous Improvement:* The Natural Resources section shall be reviewed annually with updates incorporating community feedback, budget performance, regional coordination opportunities, and climate adaptation needs.

The Natural Resources section shall be reviewed annually with updates incorporating:

- Community survey feedback and changing priorities
- Budget performance and revenue generation data
- Regional coordination opportunities with El Paso, Texas, and Chihuahua, Mexico
- Climate adaptation needs and environmental monitoring results
- Sports Complex performance and regional tourism development impacts

## Financing and Partnership Strategy

Successful implementation requires diversified funding sources and strategic partnerships that leverage local investment with regional and federal resources.

### Funding Sources

- Federal and state outdoor recreation grants
- New Mexico Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department partnerships
- Regional tourism development funds
- Public-private partnerships for Sports Complex enhancements
- Developer impact fees for parkland acquisition
- *Congressional Community Development Spending allocation (\$3M for Futurity Drive project)*
- *Cannabis tax revenue (50% allocated to park maintenance and improvement programs)*

### Key Partnerships

- County of El Paso for Rio Grande Trail system coordination
- State of New Mexico for the 500-mile Rio Grande Trail development
- Roman Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces for Mt. Cristo Rey access
- Regional tourism organizations for marketing and promotion
- Educational institutions for environmental and cultural programming
- South Central Regional Transit District for coordinated multimodal transportation services and technical support
- New Mexico Department of Transportation for infrastructure development on state rights-of-way and corridor planning

- El Paso Locomotive FC for Sports Complex programming, youth development, and regional athletic competition hosting
- Local organizations, including Sun FC soccer club, The Hive daycare, and community service groups, for ongoing programming and volunteer support

### Land Development Code Integration Summary

#### *Legal Framework and Innovation*

The updated Natural Resources policies fully incorporate Land Development Code Section 10-3-3.6 requirements while expanding implementation guidance to maximize community benefit and environmental sustainability.

#### Key LDC Compliance Elements:

- **Mandatory park dedication** standards (1 acre per 100 single-family units, 1 acre per 200 multifamily units)
- **Alternative compliance mechanisms** through the Payment-in-Lieu program with dedicated trust fund management
- **Land quality standards** prohibiting steep slopes and floodplain areas except for approved multi-purpose facilities
- **Five-year land banking** provision allowing municipal acquisition when private development negotiations fail
- **Multi-purpose flood control integration** for large-scale developments, combining stormwater management with recreational benefits

#### Enhanced Implementation Framework:

- **Geographic equity**, ensuring Payment-in-Lieu funds benefit contributing subdivision residents.
- **Trust fund transparency** with quarterly reporting on fund balance and expenditure patterns
- **Early consultation requirements** for large-scale developments to maximize multi-purpose facility opportunities
- **Regional coordination** linking LDC requirements to citywide drainage master planning and trail connectivity objectives

**Integration Success:** This integration ensures Sunland Park's Natural Resources policies operate within the existing legal framework while maximizing community benefit through innovative multi-purpose facility design and strategic fund management.

## Conclusion

The Natural Resources section reflects both Sunland Park's foundational natural assets and evolved community priorities, emphasizing recreational amenities, environmental sustainability, and regional connectivity. The Sports Complex emerges as a critical anchor for recreational development, while traditional assets like the Rio Grande and Mt. Cristo Rey offer enhanced tourism potential. *The city's strategic positioning as "the gateway to the land of enchantment" and development as a multimodal transportation hub create unprecedented opportunities for leveraging natural resources for both community benefit and economic growth.*

Implementation success will depend on coordinated planning, strategic partnerships, and phased investment aligned with community priorities and available resources. *Key partnerships with organizations like El Paso Locomotive FC, South Central Regional Transit District, and NMDOT demonstrate the collaborative approach necessary for successful implementation. At the same time, ongoing projects like the Futurity Drive Entertainment Corridor and McNutt Road trail development provide concrete examples of progress toward the comprehensive vision.* This comprehensive framework positions Sunland Park to become a regional recreational destination while serving the evolving needs of its growing population.



# 10. Implementation Strategy

The *Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045* is a visionary framework designed to position the City as a model for binational planning, sustainable development, and regional integration. This Implementation Chapter translates vision into action by identifying strategic steps, tools, and partnerships necessary to achieve measurable outcomes through 2045. Implementation will be phased, adaptive, and grounded in community priorities and cross-border collaboration.

## 1. Governance and Oversight

### Plan Stewardship

The City of Sunland Park will lead implementation in coordination with regional partners. Oversight responsibilities should be housed within the City Manager’s Office, with support from the Planning Department, Public Works, Economic Development, and the Water and Wastewater Utilities Department.

### Implementation Oversight Committee

Transition the existing Steering Committee into an **Implementation Oversight Committee** that meets at least twice per year to:

- Monitor progress on goals and strategies,
- Prioritize updates to the Land Development Code,
- Recommend adjustments based on shifting conditions and new opportunities.

## 2. Short-Term Actions (0–5 Years)

### Regulatory and Policy Actions

- *Finalize and adopt Land Development Code revisions* that incorporate streamlined development review processes, buffer and transition standards, and incentives for infill and mixed-use development; *maintain an ongoing schedule for periodic updates* to ensure the code remains responsive to emerging trends, binational coordination needs, and implementation outcomes.
- Implement **Affordable Housing Overlay Zones** and *expedited permitting* for projects that meet defined housing affordability and workforce criteria.
- Launch a *Development Guidebook*, available in English and Spanish, which outlines development steps, permitting timelines, and regulatory requirements, increasing transparency and reducing barriers for applicants.

## Key Capital Investments

1. *Advance phased development of the Rio Grande Multi-Use Trail Corridor, with Phase II construction beginning in the coming months*, following the successful completion of Phase I. As part of the short-term implementation strategy, the City will *initiate planning, preliminary engineering, and funding identification for the final five miles* needed to complete the whole 10-mile corridor outlined in the Trail Master Plan.
2. *Kick-start infrastructure development for the Family-Oriented Entertainment District* along Futurity Drive, including roadway improvements, utility extensions, and public amenities to catalyze investment and create a regional recreation and tourism anchor.
3. *Initiate site planning and predevelopment for a Park-and-Ride facility* near the proposed Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry. This facility will serve as a key mobility hub supporting binational commuting, regional transit integration, and SCRTD service expansion.

## Binational Coordination

- Establish the *Binational Planning Working Group* with IMIP, JMAS, and other Mexican agencies to coordinate POE design, transportation, housing, and environmental strategies.
- Formalize data-sharing agreements for coordinated planning across borders.

## 3. Mid-Term Actions (5–10 Years)

### Infrastructure & Mobility

- Complete full buildout of *Rio Grande Trail* and expand regional connectivity through Frontera Road improvements.
- Support phased development of the *Camino Real de Tierra Adentro International Port of Entry*, ensuring multimodal integration and resiliency.
- Expand SCRTD's *transit service coverage and frequency*, prioritizing routes to El Paso, Anapra, and Santa Teresa employment centers.

### Economic Development & Housing

- Launch a *workforce housing pilot program* to serve binational workers, seniors, and essential service employees.
- Expand industrial infrastructure west of Sunland Park Drive and north of the POE to attract logistics and light manufacturing employers.

## 4. Long-Term Actions (10–20 Years)

### Regional Integration

- Complete construction of the *Rio Grande vehicular crossing* and ensure safe pedestrian/bicycle connections.
- Establish governance for a *Binational Port Authority* or intergovernmental framework to oversee POE operations, land use, and fee structures.

### Sustainability and Resilience

- Implement regional *stormwater management systems* using green infrastructure in high-risk areas.
- Promote *transit-oriented development* (TOD) near regional transit hubs and the POE.

## 5. Performance Monitoring and Adaptation

### Annual and Five-Year Reviews

- Conduct an *annual implementation review*, tracking metrics such as:
  - Jobs-housing balance,
  - Infill vs. greenfield development,
  - Housing production by type and affordability,
  - Transportation system usage and crash data.
- Every five years, complete a *comprehensive plan update* to revise the Future Land Use Map, funding priorities, and key implementation tools.

### Community Reporting and Transparency

- Create a *public-facing dashboard* summarizing key milestones and investments.
- Conduct biennial *Community Satisfaction Surveys* to assess perceptions and gather feedback on growth and quality of life.

## 6. Funding and Partnership Strategy

### Funding Tools

- Leverage:
  - Capital Outlay and NMFA funding,
  - USDOT BUILD and INFRA grants,
  - FEMA BRIC and HUD CDBG for resiliency and housing,
  - Public Improvement Districts (PIDs),
  - Developer agreements and land value capture tools.

## Partnerships

- Partner with:
  - *SCRTD* for expanded transit service and joint grant applications,
  - *Doña Ana County* for road and aviation coordination,
  - *IMIP and JMAS* for binational housing and infrastructure alignment,
  - *NMDOT, TxDOT, and FHWA* for regional mobility planning.

## Conclusion

A bold vision requires deliberate, coordinated action. The implementation of the *Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045* will hinge on intergovernmental cooperation, phased investments, and responsive planning mechanisms. With a dynamic framework and a commitment to inclusive growth, Sunland Park is poised to become a thriving binational gateway community, uniting cultures, commerce, and opportunity across borders.





# Sunland Park Binational Comprehensive Plan 2045

Prepared by:

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