



# Village of Los Lunas

# 2040 Comprehensive Plan



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**RESOLUTION NO. 22-12**

**WHEREAS**, THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS COUNCIL, the governing body of the Village of Los Lunas, has retained the authority to adopt master plans for the physical development of areas within its planning and platting jurisdiction as authorized by Chapter 3, Article 19, NMSA 1978, and

**WHEREAS**, municipal zoning regulations and restrictions are to be in conformance with a comprehensive plan, as provided by Section 3-21-5 NMSA 1987; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission, acting as advisor to the Village in matters related to planning has reviewed and recommended the 2040 Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission recognizes the need for this as well as other master plans to guide the Village of Los Lunas and other agencies and individuals involved in land use and environmental decisions to ensure orderly development; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2040 Village of Los Lunas Comprehensive Plan has been developed in accordance with findings of supporting studies and in response to the desire and needs of the Village.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS, NEW MEXICO**, that the attached 2040 Comprehensive Plan, including the plan map shall hereafter be designated the Comprehensive Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL**, that the overall densities, character and design of all land uses and development, including residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and recreational and open space shall be in accordance with the policies and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL**, that the provisions, maintenance, and design of public and private facilities and services, including roads, public safety, educational employment, solid waste disposal, drainage, and water and sewer systems shall be in accordance with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this 28<sup>th</sup> Day of July, 2022.

A blue ink signature of Charles Griego, Mayor, over a blue ink signature of the Village Administrator.

Charles Griego, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

A blue ink signature of Gregory D. Martin.

Gregory D. Martin, Village Administrator



**VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
660 MAIN ST. NW,  
Los Lunas, New Mexico 87031**

**VILLAGE COUNCIL**

Mayor Charles Griego  
District 1 - Councilor Christopher Ortiz  
District 2 - Councilor Gino M. Romero  
District 3 - Councilor Cruz Munoz  
District 4 - Councilor James Runyon

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

At Large - Chairman, Commissioner Andy Gomez  
District 1 - Commissioner Michael Montoya  
District 2 - Commissioner Ben Romero  
District 3 - Commissioner Daniel Salas  
District 4 - Commissioner Marcia Spencer

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE**

A special thanks to the community  
members who volunteered their time.

Clara Cates  
Jim Rickey  
Pia Louchios

**VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS STAFF**

Village Administrator - Gregory D. Martin  
Community Development Director - Erin Callahan  
Community Planner - Alex Ochoa  
Planning Technician - Sonia Walker

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## **CHAPTER 1: FORWARD**



Sunset Over Manzano Mountains

### **COMPLEXITY**

City planning has traditionally been about land use and zoning. However, more importantly, planning is about the people living in communities and creating practical ways to accommodate their many diverse and changing needs. For example, community members should have access to recreation, entertainment, retail, transportation, and public services among the places they live and work. Nonetheless, establishing an environment that is desirable to the entire population can be complex. What works here may not work there; what works today may not work tomorrow.

### **CHANGE**

If the world remained relatively static and people's reactions to their environment persisted, our communities would be rather dull. But, luckily, the world around us is constantly changing, whether natural or human-made, requiring many populations to accommodate change. Though the repercussions of our actions can be unpredictable, we have to remain cognizant of our past decisions and plan for the future accordingly.

### **DEVELOPMENT FACTORS**

While the Village of Los Lunas has grown considerably over the last nine decades since its incorporation, geographical features have influenced development, like I-25, old Route 66, railroads, and the Rio Grande. In addition, well-established incorporated communities to the north, south, and east have limited the possibility of expansion in those areas. Although the annexation of Valencia County's unincorporated regions is plausible, the Village must be conscious of the impact on the environment, cultural identity, and long-term happiness.

Yet growth is inevitable, but it does not necessarily mean sprawl. Instead, there are opportunities to focus on in-fill development and rehabilitation while respecting agricultural heritage through zoning, public-private partnerships, and federal funding. Multi-purpose neighborhood activity centers where recreation, entertainment, local retail, and live/work situations are possible, but on the other hand, expansion through annexation and suburban development is also feasible.

## FORWARD

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### SUCCESSES

Planning for the Village can be just as complex as the residents we serve. It would be straightforward to make assumptions and establish future goals without community input. However, we must be aware of the residents' ambitions to plan for the future more effectively, and as a result, this plan was developed alongside the community, which strives to provide excellent quality of life and community services for its residents.

### COMMITMENT

It is not enough for planners to anticipate and plan for change; the implementation of the plan is vital to the continued success of Los Lunas. Community members, Village staff, and Elected Officials must work together to make the future vision a reality.

## CHAPTER 2: VISION STATEMENT

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A vision statement is a proclamation of what a community strives to become in the future; a message not only to the people the Village represents but also to the greater community, and with that:

- The Village of Los Lunas is finding sustainable ways to grow our job opportunities, neighborhoods, and amenities while protecting our natural resources, cultural heritage, and hometown character.



1st Place Winner, Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest - Ken Vincent | Sunrise Over Los Lunas

# Village of Los Lunas

Isleta Pueblo

Bosque Farms

Valencia  
County

Belen

## Legend

### Boundaries

 Village of Los Lunas

 Surrounding Communities

 Valencia County

 Recreation

 Water

N



0 0.5 1 2 Mile

Village of Los Lunas Map

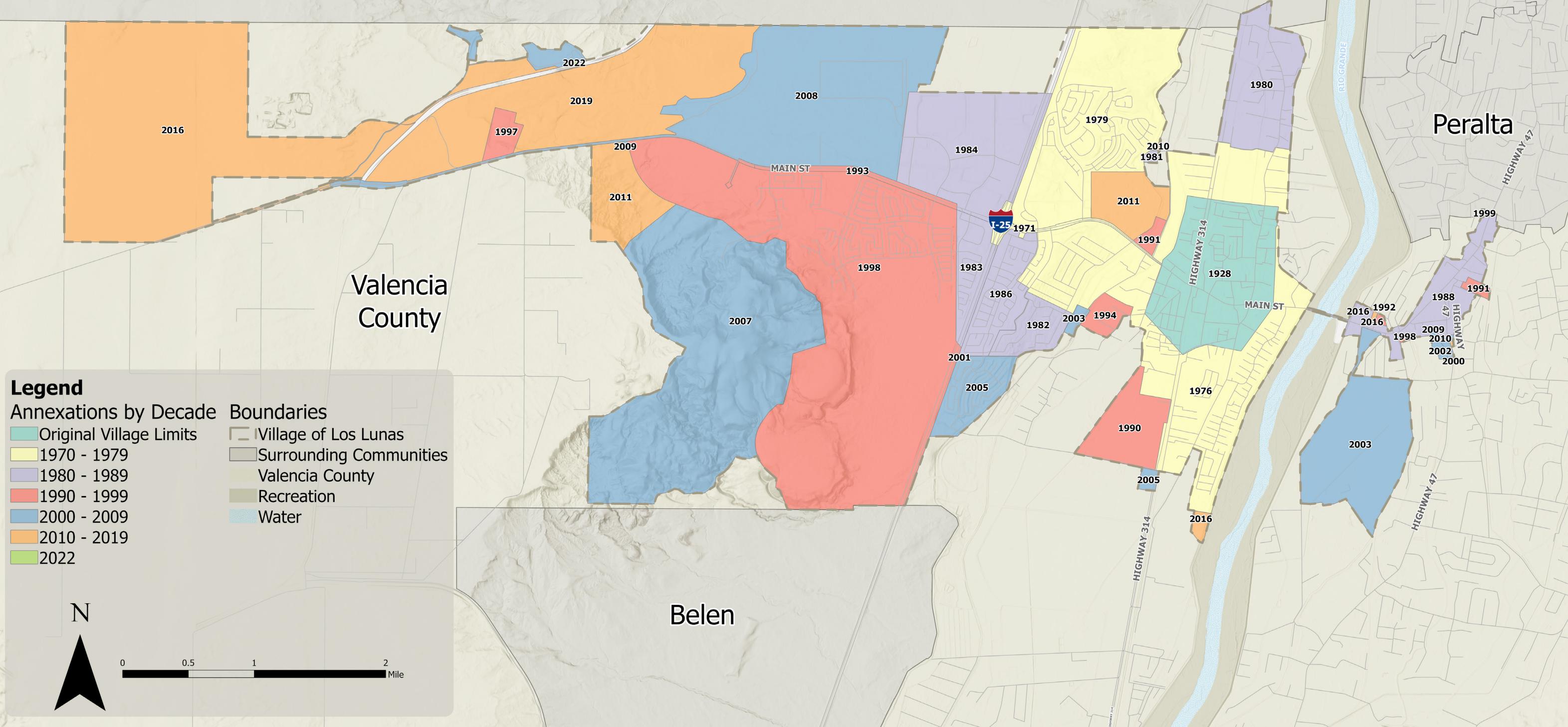
# Annexation Map by Decade

Isleta Pueblo

Bosque Farms

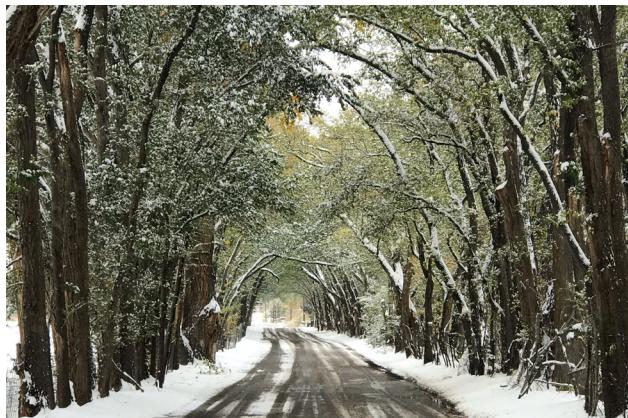
Valencia County

Belen



Village of Los Lunas Annexation Map

## **CHAPTER 3: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



2nd Place Winner, Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest -  
Adolph Lopez | Tondre Rd in the Snow

Not long ago, Los Lunas was a small community that subsisted primarily from farming and where the neighborhood church was the town center. In the last 70 years, the Village has grown from less than 1000 people to over 17,000. Much of that growth occurred in the previous two decades, partially through the annexation of surrounding areas, but most notably through new suburban residential and commercial developments on the west side of the Village. As a result, the community has changed substantially over time, affecting how we conduct business, recreate, travel,

live, and interact with the broader region and beyond. Anticipating the kinds of trends that will influence our future in the next 20 years is a tremendous challenge.

- What types of jobs will people have?
- How will we travel?
- How will our lifestyles change?
- How will changes in our population affect recreation, cultural services, and programs?
- How will neighborhoods and buildings adapt to meet a changing community?
- Will the Village be called upon to provide new services, reduce, or change others?

### **NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GROWTH TRENDS**

As a whole, the nation is growing; in 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau projected that the United States population would increase slowly but is still expected to reach over 373 million people by 2040. This growth trend is also likely to occur in New Mexico despite the current local, national, and world events. Today, Valencia County's population is close to 77,000 residents. However, it is expected to stay steady over the next 20 years, according to the University of New Mexico's Geospatial and Population Studies Group's growth projections. Currently, 21% of Valencia County's population resides in Los Lunas, but that percentage is forecast to increase within the same time frame as people migrate toward urbanized centers from rural areas.

### **WHAT TRENDS WILL INFLUENCE LOS LUNAS IN THE FUTURE?**

Los Lunas could double in size to 30,000 residents or more by 2040. The growth depends on several global, national, and regional factors. The current financial situation will bear on near-term population growth for the region, but its long-term effects remain unknown.

The following is an overview of trends that will influence Los Lunas in the future.

### **CHANGES IN DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS**

The United States is an aging population. The "baby boom" era from 1946 to 1964 saw the most significant number of births the nation has ever seen over a comparable period.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Baby Boomers will turn 65 between 2011 and 2030, leading to substantial changes in the nation's demographic profile. This demographic trend in the aging population will affect Los Lunas as well. As our population ages, there will be a need for greater and better access to health care, alternative modes of transportation, and other services.

Additionally, the Urban Land Institute studies indicate that Millennials and Generation Z are the first to prefer transit and other alternate modes of transportation over single-occupancy vehicles. This trend is likely to continue, and youth will migrate to larger metropolitan areas that offer better access to mass transit unless we provide the quality of life they desire.

### **TRAFFIC CONGESTION**

As the Los Lunas population grows, it stands to reason that the number of vehicles on our roadways will also increase. Traffic congestion on Main Street is one of the primary concerns for residents, emergency services personnel, and planners alike. Regionally, traffic projections for the future are staggering as well. As a result, the way we plan for and view the relationship between land use and transportation will have to change as we prepare for future growth.

### **RESOURCE LIMITATIONS**

While Los Lunas and the western U.S. as a whole are projected to grow over the next 20 years, questions remain about the ability of natural resources to support such growth without severe consequences. Meeting growing demands for water in an arid climate sustainably, conserving valuable natural resources, improving air quality, addressing energy needs, understanding impacts on wildlife, and many other important considerations will need to be addressed. In addition, such resources will need to be acknowledged and protected if a high quality of life is to be maintained.

### **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE: LOS LUNAS 2040**

The title of this plan refers to the process of preparing an update to the existing Village of Los Lunas Comprehensive Plan, also known as the city plan. The city plan is the document that illustrates how we envision the Village in the next twenty years and beyond, and providing direction for implementing that vision. The updated version will carry over many of the same concepts and values from the previous plan but with current community demographics and development information.

### **CITY PLAN HISTORY**

The Village has developed several comprehensive plans during the last 50 years. In 1968, the first plan was prepared by Kenneth W. Larson & Associates *Comprehensive Plan for the City of Belen, the Village of Los Lunas and the Rio Grande Valley Area of Eastern Valencia County*. One of the significant concerns in Los Lunas was the accumulation of dilapidated housing, mostly old adobe construction. According to the 1968 plan, the enforcement of zoning and fire codes was the recommended remediation effort because "Los Lunas is much too small of a community to consider an urban renewal program at the present time. Therefore the above solution is the only hope of improving housing conditions in Los Lunas in the near future." At the time, Los Lunas had approximately 600 housing units compared to almost 6,700, as estimated by the U.S. census in 2020.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The following planning effort occurred in 1973 when the Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments secured a Community Planning Assistance Grant funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which produced various planning reports for the Village. Subsequently, in 1985, the Village Council approved by resolution *Community Development Policy Goals* consisting of land use, transportation, and public facilities/services.

It was not until the late 1990's that the Village sought to develop its first Los Lunas centric comprehensive plan. It was completed and approved by 1999 and included policy guidelines for land use, transportation, community services, economic development, natural resources, and environmental planning. By the late 2000s, Village staff had amended the 1999 comprehensive plan to include two supplemental documents: the [\*Huning Ranch Area Plan\*](#) adopted in 2006 and the [\*Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan\*](#) adopted in 2008.

By the 2010s, the Village saw an increase in development and forecast growth to maintain a steady pace, which prompted the need for a revised comprehensive plan. As a result, in 2013, the Village Council approved the [\*2035 Comprehensive Plan\*](#) and the [\*Master Transportation Plan\*](#). Since adopting the 2035 plan, Los Lunas has maintained its forecast growth, which indicated the need for another update.

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS: DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY IDENTITY**

Within Central New Mexico, the Village of Los Lunas has primarily remained in the shadow of the State's largest city, Albuquerque. However, because of the proximity to Albuquerque, modern amenities, and the influx of development over the last decade, Los Lunas is gaining more recognition regionally and nationally. Still, as a community, we needed to rediscover our identity and determine what residents and visitors alike perceive and value.

In 2013 the Village embarked on a community branding campaign with the assistance of the Idea Group of Santa Fe LLC. This venture garnered an excellent response from the community and resulted in the current identity of the Village. While the branding campaign was the stepping stone to developing the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, reoccurring topics surfaced during community stakeholder interviews. Many of these issues were noted and meant to be addressed through the policy actions of the comprehensive plan. Thus, in 2019 several years after implementing the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the Village developed the [\*Quality of Life Community Assessment\*](#). The assessment comprised 32 questions relating to community priorities and level of satisfaction regarding Parks and Recreation, Library and Cultural Services, and Transportation. The survey amassed 965 responses from the community. Many of the key findings from the report were consistent with the priorities of the Village Departments. Although not every objective has been complete, Los Lunas has kept on track with the community priorities and is trending in a favorable direction.

### **CARRYING FORWARD VALUES AND IDEAS FROM PREVIOUS EFFORTS**

As previously stated, this update will carry over many of the same concepts and values from the earlier plan but with the expectation that it will reflect the current efforts of the Village. In addition, many of the related plans and policies to this document will be referenced and hyperlinked for further exploration.

## CHAPTER 4: HISTORY

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF LOS LUNAS, NM

By Diana Crowson, Edited by Troy M. Ainsworth  
 Originally printed in Village of Los Lunas 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

The modern Village of Los Lunas is the county seat of Valencia County and was officially incorporated in 1928. Located in the north-central area of the county, approximately nineteen miles south of Albuquerque, Los Lunas is nestled between Isleta Pueblo to the north, the Village of Tomé to the south, the plains to the west, and the Manzano Mountains to the east.

The Village's name is derived from the Luna family, early settlers in the area, and not the



Simon Neustadt General Store formerly located on Main Street near Los Lentes Road

Earth's satellite, as is commonly assumed. Located along the banks of the Rio Grande, the Village of Los Lunas traces its history to the homesteading of Domingo de Luna near the present day community shortly after Don Diego de Vargas re-established Spanish authority in New Mexico in 1693. In 1716, Spanish officialdom issued to Don Felix Candelaria a land grant known as the San Clemente Grant two years after his mother had petitioned the Crown. Few changes occurred on the San Clemente Grant until the Luna family assumed legal possession of the land and founded a small settlement in

about 1808, approximately one year after Spanish troops escorted Captain Zebulon Pike and a contingency of American soldiers south to Ciudad Chihuahua from near the headwaters of the Rio Grande in southern Colorado along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

The Spanish military escort of the American troops in 1807 bypassed the future site of Los Lunas as the cavalcade plodded southbound near the left bank of the Rio Grande along the approximate route of present day New Mexico Highway 47. When settlement in the area of present Los Lunas began in the following year, Spanish rule remained intact and would continue until Mexico cast off colonialism in 1821. The far northern frontier of Mexico, which stretched from Texas on the east to California on the west, remained a part of the Republic of Mexico until the end of the war between Mexico and the United States from 1846 to 1848. With the provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico ceded its entire northern frontier, including New Mexico, to the United States. Thus, within forty years of its establishment, Los Lunas began as a settlement on a braid of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in Spain's New World Empire before flying the sacred flag of Mexico for nearly three decades before becoming a part of the newly organized Territory of New Mexico of the United States of America.

As a modest agricultural and ranching settlement connected to the outside world by the

## HISTORY

Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the route linking Mexico City to north of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Los Lunas, and indeed most other settlements in New Mexico from the north to the south along the Rio Grande, was dependent on supplies shipped along Camino Real. For centuries prior to Don Francisco Vázquez Coronado's entrada into the interior of present New Mexico and into the Great Plains in 1540 through 1542, indigenous people traced routes throughout the overall region, which later became segments of the routes used by Spanish explorers, including the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Decades later, in 1598, Don Juan de Oñate led a large contingency of Spaniards and thousands of livestock to the far north from central Mexico. Along the way, the sites where the wayfarers camped, the course they traveled, and the pueblos they visited all became identifiable points along the Camino Real, or Royal Road. Over the next four centuries, trade caravans traversed north and south along the Royal Road to supply settlements such as Los Lunas, although the caravans arrived infrequently at times. The overall route featured treacherous segments, such as the 100-mile-long, waterless Jornado del Muerto in southern New Mexico, which interfered with the caravans' efficiency and schedules. Nonetheless, a system of commercialism developed over time whereby cloth, metalwork, household tools and implements, and other products unavailable in New Mexico were shipped



San Clemente Church prior to 1949 which has subsequently been renovated and expanded

north while agricultural products, furs, hides, and other locally-produced goods were then carted southward to markets in Mexico. As a result of the extensive distance between Mexico and settlements in New Mexico and the long pauses between the arrival of the trade caravans, colonists in New Mexico learned to make many items for their households and churches.

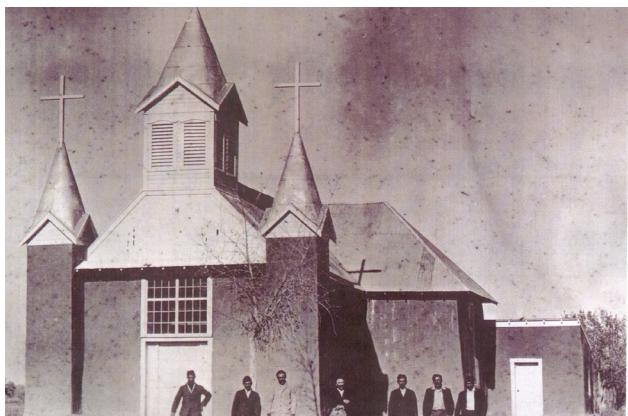
The infrequent schedule resulted in the advent of a unique art form that continues to be crafted in Los Lunas—the hand-carved images of saints, known as santos. As colonists did not have access to the religious iconography that adorned churches elsewhere in Spain's colonial empire and elsewhere in the world, santeros ("saint-makers"), woodcarvers who honed their skill at creating sculptures and paintings for the nichos and alters in their own churches, contributed to the rise of a distinctive folk art in New Mexico. With the carving of bultos (sculptures) and retablos (paintings on wood), santeros frequently depicted stories from the Holy Bible of saints, the holy family, and Jesus Christ, often painted in bright colors. Santos are considered a "primitive" form of art in that they are unlike the realistic statuary usually seen in churches and are typically more abstract in nature.

Nineteenth-century Los Lunas existed as a bucolic rural village until the arrival of the railroad toward the end of the century, although the immediate region had been populated for centuries prior to Coronado's expedition in 1540. Indeed, when Coronado dispatched Captain Hernando de Alvarado to explore the Rio Grande in the vicinity of the Pueblo of

## HISTORY

Isleta in 1540, Alvarado saw firsthand the thriving pueblo, as well as a satellite settlement downstream from the pueblo that had existed for several centuries. On the site of the latter, the settlement of Los Lentes came into being in the seventeenth century. When Alvarado and his men explored the region in 1540, however, the Spaniards witnessed indigenous people working the fields of hundreds of acres planted with crops along the banks of a deep, turbulent river. In the seventeenth century, Matias Lente, a resident of Isleta Pueblo, married a local woman and relocated from Isleta to the ancient settlement to the south, and within some years with the influx of new settlers the community became known as Los Lentes.

With the census numeration of 1790, the Plaza of San Antonio de Los Lentes numbered twenty-two households centered around the Church of San Antonio. Many of these residents were of indigenous ancestry, although a handful traced their heritage to the Iberian Peninsula through marriage or birth. As noted in the colonial census, the residents of the Plaza of San Antonio engaged in livestock raising, farming, and weaving.



San Antonios de Los Lentes c. 1900

Various contemporary censuses between 1750 and 1830 accounted for the residents of nearby settlements, including Plaza de Los Jarales, Plaza de Sausal, Los Chávez, Plaza de Los Garcías, Plaza de Los Trujillos, Plaza de la Purissima Concepción de Tomé, Plaza de San Fernando, La Sangre de Cristo Puesto de Valencia, San Clemente, and Belén. The census returns suggest that settlements existed along the river, including the one settled by descendants of Don Domingo de Luna, who arrived in Mexico in the seventeenth century. De Luna's ancestry includes Dukes, Archbishops, Cardinals, and

Viceroy, and as a result of "eminent services to the crown," Don Francisco Fernandez de la Cuerve Enriques y Valdes, the Duke of Alburquerque bestowed upon de Luna a land grant in New Mexico in the seventeenth century that encompassed territory from the Rio Puerco to the Rio Grande and included choice acreage containing ample water. Of note, the spelling of Enriques y Valdes's surname differs slightly from the modern spelling of the county seat of present day Bernalillo County, New Mexico. Inexplicably, the first "r" was later dropped in the spelling of the city's name, although the Duke's title has historically retained its original spelling.

Several plazas were well-established in the middle Rio Grande region prior to the native uprising against the Spaniards in August 1680. By that crucial moment, members of such families as the Oteros, the Jaramillos, and the Bacas, along with the Lunas, had laid claim to the land encompassed by the San Clemente Grant. The twelve-year-long interregnum wrought by native restlessness and angst in opposition to Spanish overlordship only briefly absented members of these families from the region. From the end of the seventeenth century and into the early years of the eighteenth century, representatives of these Spanish

## HISTORY

colonial families returned to the middle Rio Grande region. Over the progression of time and through intermarriage and alliance, these families secured and consolidated their power in the area, which remained uninterrupted until the middle decades of the twentieth century. Upon the resumption of Spanish control in 1692 and 1693 and the gradual return of displaced families, settlements were reestablished along the length of the river. Crops such as beans, cotton, corn, tobacco, chiles, and melons were raised throughout the region, which became the basic staples for food and clothing.

Sheep and cattle raising were also prevalent throughout the region beginning in the late-seventeenth century. Livestock herds, however, and isolated settlements became choice targets for nomadic bands of Apache and Navajo warriors and later the Comanche, who were widely regarded as the supreme horsemen of the Great Plains. Native American raids punctuated extensively life along the Rio Grande well into the latter decades of the nineteenth century, yet the settlers sought to defend their homesteads in a manner similar to Anglo-Americans in the nineteenth century during their quest to claim the land between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. In present day Valencia County and nearby to Los Lunas, the village of Tomé, the first county seat, was established on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro as a defensive site against the raiding "Indios" from the north and east. Ironically, the first settlers of Tomé were genizeros, people of native blood who were born of the union of Spaniards and indigenous people. The introduction of natives into Spanish households prior to the revolt of 1680 was frequently referred to as "servitude," a euphemism for slavery. Genizeros gradually became increasingly acculturated into Spanish society and were known for such skills as artistry, woodworking, farming, livestock herding, and fighting the natives.



San Clemente Church c. 1949

Spanish colonial society was punctuated by Catholicism and the omnipresence of the Church and priests. Indeed, the triumvirate for Spain's New World explorations was expressed as "God, gold, and glory." Spanish exploration of New Mexico yielded little gold or other mineral wealth, but souls in abundance resided in the pueblos. The first Catholic church erected in the vicinity of present day Los Lunas was the mission church San Antonio de Isleta in circa 1613. During the period of 1680 to 1692, natives destroyed much of the tangible evidence of Spanish presence, and San Antonio de

Isleta was among the buildings that natives exerted their wrath. By 1716, the church had been rebuilt and consecrated as San Agustín de Isleta. From this church, several other mission churches were established in the vicinity, including Nuestra Señora de la Concepción (1750) in Tomé, San Antonio de Los Lentes (1789), Sangre de Christo (1801) in Valencia, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (1892), and San Clemente Church (1894). The latter church in Los Lunas was severely damaged by flood water from the Rio Grande and was rebuilt in its current location in 1949.

## HISTORY

Beginning in the early nineteenth century, the descendants of Don Domingo de Luna dominated the political scene of Valencia County and Los Lunas and would continue to do so well into the next century. Antonio José Luna, a direct descendant of Domingo de Luna, was born in 1808, and he is considered the father of Los Lunas. By the middle of the century, Antonio José Luna had become one of central New Mexico's leading political figures. During this period, Luna and a business partner, Antonio José Otero, began driving herds of sheep to California, with one herd estimated to number approximately 50,000 sheep. In the late 1840s and early 1850s, thousands of settlers migrated west to California, and prices for all consumer items were much higher out west than other corners of the United States. The price for one sheep exemplifies the drastic price differential: in Valencia County sheep sold for about fifty cents per head, but in California a sheep would command between \$10 and \$15 a head. Herding sheep to California made Luna and Otero wealthy and increased their prestige in New Mexico, which consequently ensured their influence on local political matters in Valencia County.



The original Valencia County Courthouse

The late 1840s also marked the formal transfer of political control of New Mexico to the United States following the war with Mexico. With the political transfer came the arrival of Anglo-American settlers and the United States Army, the latter establishing depots and posts throughout the newly-created Ninth Military District. The Department of War authorized the leasing of buildings in Los Lunas for occupation in January 1852; in that month, the Post of Los Lunas was established under the command of Captain Richard Ewell of the 1st Regiment of Dragoons. A small military outpost on

the American frontier, the Post at Los Lunas comprised one of a chain of installations situated along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and the Santa Fe Trail devised to protect settlers from depredations by native warriors. Dragoons and Infantry troops were stationed at Los Lunas until the eve of the American Civil War when the post was permanently abandoned. During the war, however, the Territory of New Mexico figured centrally into the Confederate and Union campaigns in the West, and the Territory itself was strongly contested in 1862. Upstream from Los Lunas at Bosque del Pinos near present day Peralta, opposing forces fought an artillery duel across the river on April 15, 1862.

The Territorial era in New Mexico (1848-1912) proved profitable and fortuitous for families such as the Lunas and the Oteros in Valencia County. The combination of wealth, political influence, and intermarriage between the two families afforded the Lunas and the Oteros to shape the region's direction. A notable example is the relocation of the county seat from the village of Tomé to Los Lunas in 1876 due to their influence. Within their respective families, Luna and Otero children were often sent east for their educations, as was the case for Eloisa Luna and her brother Solomon. Their brother Tranquilino was elected to Congress

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to represent the Territory of New Mexico and later served as sheriff of Valencia County. Tranquilino Luna and his wife Amalia Jaramillo y Romero's son Maximiliano made his mark in Los Lunas lore when he volunteered to serve in Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War in 1898.



Solomon Luna

Solomon Luna (1858-1912) became a prominent member of the Luna family who contributed significantly to politics in the Territory of New Mexico. As with many members of his family, he raised sheep in Los Lunas and engaged in other business activities as well. Solomon Luna served as president of the Bank of Commerce in Albuquerque; the Valencia County probate clerk in 1885; Valencia County Sheriff in 1892; Valencia County Treasurer in 1894; and was elected in 1896 as one of six representatives from New Mexico, including Thomas B. Catron, to the National Republican Committee. Luna's greatest contributions to his native land occurred during the Constitutional Convention in 1910 when delegates throughout the Territory convened to draft a constitution in anticipation of statehood. Luna's life ended in mysterious circumstances in late August 1912 when he drowned in a sheep dipping vat on the ranch of Montague Stevens near Horse Springs, New Mexico, but his demise occurred well after the long-sought effort to achieve statehood.

Solomon Luna's marriage to Adelaida Otero cemented the union between the two powerful Republican families that dominated Valencia County politics. Adelaida Otero's lineage figured prominently in central New Mexico. Her grandfather, Antonio José Otero, was the business partner of Antonio José Luna and the son of wealthy Vicente Otero of Valencia, Spain. Upon his settlement in New Mexico on acreage east of present Los Lunas across the Rio Grande, Vicente Otero named the land of his homestead Valencia in honor of his homeland. Otero was among the local residents responsible for the establishment of Valencia County, and presently portions of Valencia are within the boundaries of the Village of Los Lunas. Antonio José Otero was serving as a magistrate in New Mexico in 1846 when American troops under General Stephen Watts Kearny, and years later his daughter, the future wife of Solomon Luna, had secured her reputation as a social leader known for her charity work and hostess skills.

With the arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad into New Mexico in early 1880s, settlements along the route of the iron tracks prospered as a result. In anticipation of the tracks reaching Los Lunas, a depot was constructed in 1879 on land provided by the Antonio José Luna family in exchange for \$13,000 to build a Second Empire and Italianate-inspired residence for the Lunas. Located just west of the railroad tracks and known as the Luna Mansion, the residence exemplifies the significance of the Luna family to the history of the Village and the region. Tragically, Antonio José Luna died shortly before the majestic residence was completed in 1881. Luna's eldest son Tranquilino inherited the newly-constructed mansion and lived

## HISTORY

there with his family until his death in 1892, at which time Solomon and Adelaida Luna subsequently inherited the property. As a result of their childless marriage, when Solomon died in 1912 the residence transferred to his nephew Eduardo Otero.



Nina Otero Warren

Solomon Luna's sister Eloisa married Manuel B. Otero, a prominent rancher in the Los Lunas area and nephew of Antonio José Otero. Manuel was killed in a dispute over land in 1883, but before his death he and Eloisa became parents to three children: Eduardo Manuel, Maria Adelina Emilia (better known as Nina), and Manuel Basilio. Their eldest son became a prominent sheep rancher and politician, while their younger son also entered politics and ran for governor in 1924 as a Republican candidate. Their daughter Nina was a suffragette, educator, politician, homesteader, and author. She was briefly married to Rawson Warren, a U.S. Army cavalry officer and retained his surname after they divorced. She unsuccessfully ran for Congress in 1922, although she won 80% of the Hispanic districts, which was a remarkable accomplishment for a woman in the early 1920s.

After Manuel B. Otero's death in 1883, his widow Eloisa Luna Otero married Alfred Maurice Bergere, who had immigrated to the United States from England in 1892. Six years after his arrival in North America, Bergere settled in Valencia County, where he operated a mercantile store, raided livestock, and sold insurance. Eloisa bore Alfred nine children: Anita Isabel Eloisa; Elvira Estella, who married Aldo Leopold, the father of the American environmental conservation movement; Mary Bernadita; Antonio José Luna; Maria Eduvigen Consuelo; Maria Rosina; Maria Nestora Christina Ysabel; Joseph Charles; and Maria Dolores Bergere. In 1898, the family moved from Los Lunas to Santa Fe for Bergere to further his political career, first serving as the district court clerk.



Josephita Manderfield Armijo Otero

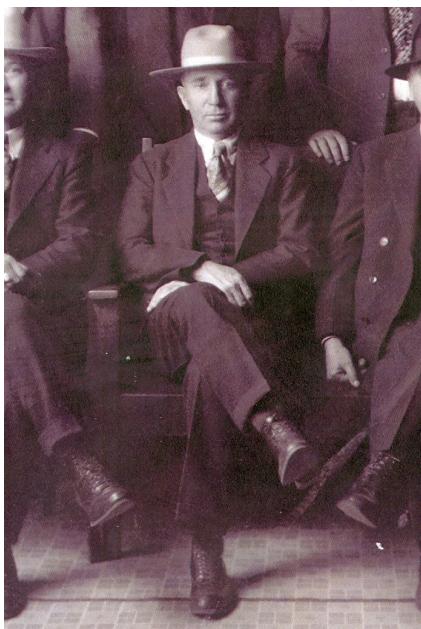
Eloisa Luna Otero's oldest son, Eduardo Otero, married Josephita Manderfield Armijo, whose father was William Manderfield, publisher of the Santa Fe New Mexican newspaper. Josephita's first husband was George Washington Armijo, whose grandfather, Colonel J. Francisco Chaves, had served as president of the New Mexico

Territorial Senate. Like Maximiliano Luna, George Washington Armijo also served in Theodore Roosevelt's 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry, as the Rough Riders were formally known, in the brief but bloody fight for Cuba in 1898. In Roosevelt's honor, George and Josephita

## HISTORY

named their son Theodore, and the former volunteer cavalry commander was the boy's godfather.

Following the divorce of George Washington Armijo and Josephita Manderfield Armijo, she married for a second time, her second husband being Eduardo Otero. The couple lived in the large Luna residence in Los Lunas, and during the 1920s Eduardo and Josephita expanded the house's living space. The construction of the solarium and the portico and the installation of iron fencing around the property were the three major projects they undertook. Over the



Eduardo Otero

next five decades, the Luna residence changed ownership several times until the house was adaptively reused as an elegant restaurant called the Luna Mansion.

Directly to the north of the Luna Mansion across NM Highway 6, Main Street through town, stands the former residence of Dr. William Frederick Wittwer. Born in 1871 to Swiss parents and reared in southeastern Nebraska, Wittwer was educated at Valparaiso University in Indiana, where he was conferred a Bachelor of Science degree in 1893 and a Doctorate of Medicine degree in 1897; one year after completing his formal education, the twenty-seven-year-old doctor served as a Private in the Hospital Corps during the Spanish-American War. In 1899, only months after the war's conclusion, Dr. Wittwer was en route to El Paso, Texas, through New Mexico, and upon stopping in Los Lunas he decided to remain in the village rather than continue to border town further south. Dr. Wittwer, the village's only doctor for many years, practiced general medicine in Los Lunas for more than fifty years to aid, heal, and comfort the village's residents. He worked tirelessly to eliminate smallpox and pellagra in the area, and, of course, he delivered many babies in Los Lunas. Some years after his passing in 1965, his residence was also modified to become a restaurant, which is known as Teofilo's Restaurant.



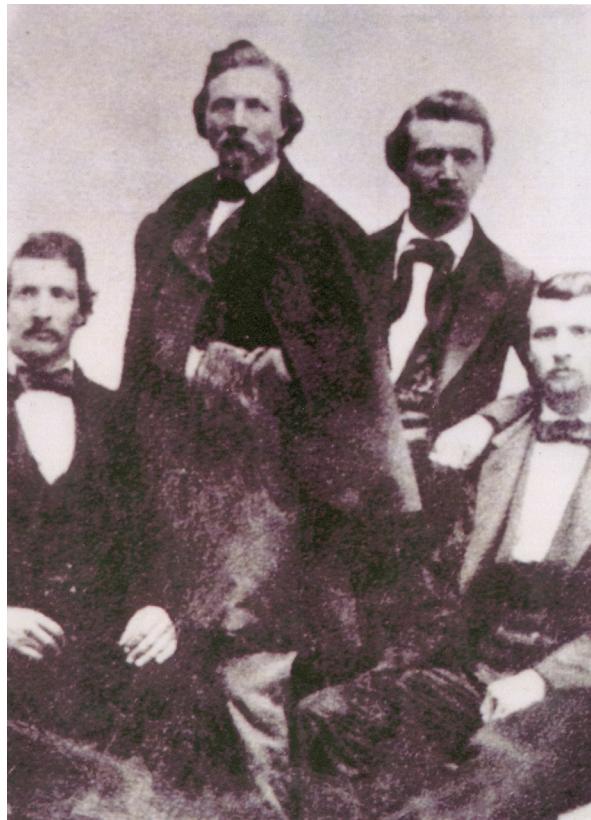
Dr. William Frederick Wittwer

In the middle years of the Nineteenth Century, merchants and traders from the United States began arriving in New Mexico in greater numbers, and the Huning brothers were notable contributors to the growth of the Rio Abajo region during the era. Franz Huning immigrated to the Territory of New Mexico in 1849 from his German homeland, where the Revolution of 1848 was violently reshaping that confederacy of municipal states. By 1855, Franz was firmly settled in Albuquerque and engaged in various business enterprises and was later joined by his brothers Louis, Henry, and Carl. The Huning Brothers established mercantile stores in the

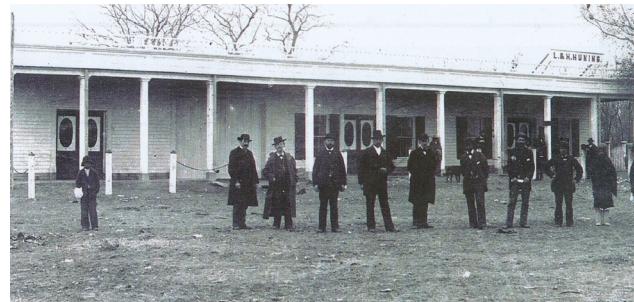
## HISTORY

territories of New Mexico and Arizona and owned extensive livestock herds. At one point, the Hunings reportedly owned approximately 60,000 head of sheep and 8,000 head of cattle. In 1858, Louis Huning arrived in New Mexico and settled in Los Lunas where he became a clerk in a mercantile store. Two years later he purchased the business and operated it under the name Huning Mercantile Store, and from 1860 to 1994 the store was in continuous operation; constructed of adobe bricks, the building reflects the popular Territorial Style of architectural design prevalent in New Mexico during the second half of the Nineteenth Century. In 1873, Louis Huning married Emma Gehrling of Missouri, but she died within several years. Three years after his first marriage, Louis remarried, his second wife being Henrika Busch. Henny, as she was called, was of the family that formed half of the beer-brewing partnership Anheuser-Busch of St. Louis, Missouri. Louis and Henny raised four children in Los Lunas—Emma, Fredrick, Lewie, and Lolita—and were cornerstones of the village for many years. Several of Louis's employees at the Huning Mercantile Store later started their own businesses in Belen, New Mexico, including John Becker, Frederick Scholle, and Oscar Goebel.

In 1900, Louis Huning died, but his and Henny's children, including Frederick D. Huning, Sr. who was born in 1880, would witness an era of great change in the early decades of the Twentieth Century. In the years immediately following the Great War of 1914-1918, America embarked upon a massive national undertaking to exert its new-found vitality and strength. Skyscrapers rose in American cities, new time-saving appliances and devices transformed the American household, and the automobile was becoming increasingly affordable to



Left: Louis, Franz, Karl "Charles", and Henry Huning

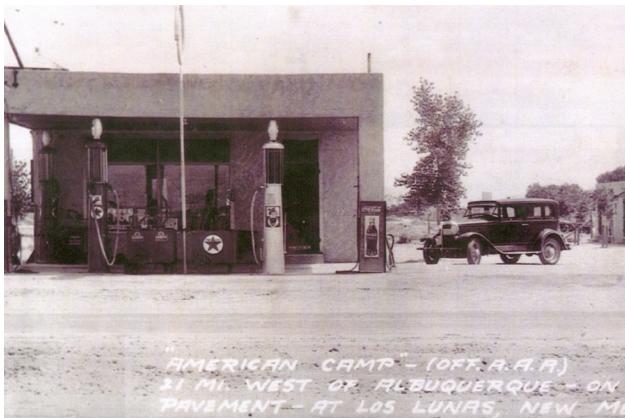


Huning Mercantile c.1860

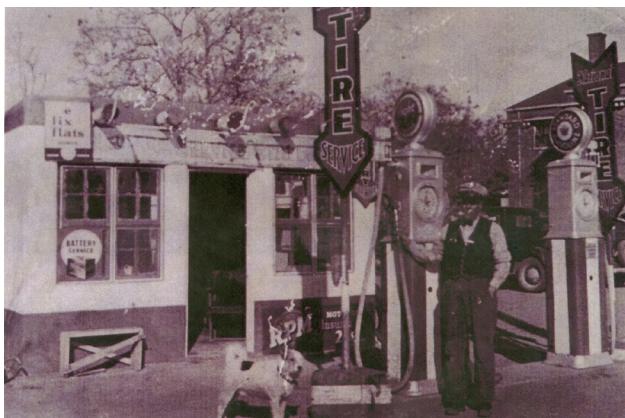


July 4th c.1890  
From left to right,  
1st Row: Fred Huning, Louis B. Huning;  
2nd Row: Henricka Busch Huning, Mrs. Goebel, 2 unknown, Emma Huning, Nina Otero, 3 unknown;  
3rd Row: Charles Reinken, 2 unknown, Paul Dalies, John Becker Jr., L.C. Becker, Karl Huning and 3 unknown.

## HISTORY



Texaco Gas Station



Climaco Aguirre and Fifi

to connect directly Santa Rosa and Albuquerque. The original, pre-1937 route that linked Albuquerque and Los Lunas paralleled segments of the old Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Thus, Los Lunas remained on the route to California, and many tourists and travelers, as well not a few migrant field workers, passed through the village via the Mother Road en route to a new life on the West Coast during the years of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl. The inevitable advent of the automobile service station along Route 66 was evident in Los Lunas as many places elsewhere. Several service stations appeared along the main street in Los Lunas, including one where Climaco Aguirre worked. As an employee of the service station, he was authorized to issue automobile licenses, and in his capacity as village clerk he was able to issue marriage licenses—sometimes from the service station—and as the superintendent of Valencia County Schools he was actively involved in the county's educational programs. One of the era's service stations remains on Main Street in Los Lunas on the northwest corner of the intersection of Highway 6 and Highway 314 as a testament to the glory age of the Mother Road.

A second major event impacted the village in 1925 when the New Mexico State Legislature voted to approve the construction of the Los Lunas Hospital and Training School. The purpose of the facility was to provide a home for "wayward" girls, a euphemism for unmarried mothers. Initially, no funding was approved for the undertaking, but in 1927 the Legislature

most consumers. America bristled with youthful energy during the decade, and gradually a nationwide network of roadways was constructed to help move people throughout the country. The Rio Abajo area was no exception. In 1925, a stretch of automobile highway was completed in Los Lunas. This road was part of a circuitous route that ran from Santa Rosa to Las Vegas before turning south to Santa Fe and on to Bernalillo and Albuquerque and then Los Lunas. As a member of the State Highway Commission, Frederick D. Huning, Sr. was instrumental in overseeing the paving of this portion of highway. As the highway construction work was ongoing, on Armistice Day in 1926 the establishment of United States Route 66 was realized. This new national highway, popularly known as Route 66 or the Mother Road and made famous by John Steinbeck in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1938) and in various other American popular culture media, connected Chicago, Illinois, with Santa Monica, California, and a considerable stretch crossed New Mexico. In 1937, the highway was straightened

## HISTORY

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obligated \$37,500 for the construction of the first building on site, Dillon Hall, which was opened for use in April 1929. Three years later, boys began to be admitted to the school and training center, and part of their responsibilities entailed working the adjacent agricultural fields. Over time, the facility gradually changed its mission to care for and educate mentally and physically disabled individuals, and prior to its official closure in 1997, the Los Lunas Training School was one of the greatest employers in the county.

Perhaps the most significant moment in the civic history of Los Lunas occurred in 1928 when the village was incorporated by the State of New Mexico. Since that date, Los Lunas has been administered by a mayor and council form of government. Ten mayors have served the community from 1928 to the present: Antonio J. Archuleta (1928-1930); Emiliano Castillo, Sr. (1930-1932); Diego Aragon (1932-1934); José Castillo (1934-1936); Fred Huning, Sr. (1936-1952); Fred Castillo (1952-1962); Howard Simpson (1962-1968); Emiliano Castillo, Jr. (1968-1982); Louis F. Huning (1982-2009); and Robert Vialpando (2009-present). In the early years of the Twenty-first Century, Los Lunas continues to grow and develop as a community, and the demands of the age present certain challenges and obstacles that previously did not exist. One of the major problems is land use management in the pursuit of managed growth while retaining open space and rural character of the Village's environs. Another challenge centers on the matter of protecting and preserving the Village's remaining historic structures to tell the story of the community's past. The expansion of Highway 6 and Highway 314 and the wholesale construction of Interstate 25 have impacted the Village both positively and negatively—the latter instance resulting in the demolition of many buildings and structures from earlier era of Los Lunas' past.

The Village of Los Lunas directly confronts these contemporary challenges. Long-term planning with input from community residents, elected officials, and staff of the Village of Los Lunas appear throughout the Village of Los Lunas 2035 Comprehensive Plan, a document designed to sensibly guide the community's growth over the next several decades. The changes to the Village's character wrought by the highway and interstate system will inform the next chapter of Los Lunas's history, but the opportunities for positive impact are present. For example, the service station, the Luna Mansion, and Dr. Wittwer's former residence, all located at the intersection of the Village's two highways, can serve as models for design guidelines for future construction in the community while being identified as the Village's tangible connection to its past. The open space fronting the former Huning Mercantile Store also represents a harkening to the Village's past in the resumption of the annual fair and festival that was held in appreciation of the community's support. With the scope of its history reaching back into antiquity and encompassing eras shaped by Spain, Mexico, and the United States, the Village of Los Lunas possesses a rich tradition and a bright, promising future.

# HISTORY

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Route 66 Gallegos Service Station & Cabins c. 1932



Los Lunas High c. 1940



Route 66 Acoma Service Station



Luna Mansion c. 1880

## **CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW**

The Village of Los Lunas is located in Central New Mexico and, more specifically, in the north-central section of Valencia County, about a 25-minute drive south of Albuquerque. The Village was initially established in the mid-17th century by Spanish settlers: it later became the county seat of Valencia County in 1876, and 52 years later, in 1928, it was incorporated as a municipality with only 466 residents. Historically, the Village was an agricultural community and once the center of the local dairy industry, while hay and alfalfa were the area's two main forage products. As late as 1968, 78% of the developed land within Los Lunas was agricultural.

### **POPULATION**

After the incorporation of the Village, the population grew at a gradual rate until the 1960s. A national trend of declining birth rates slowed the population growth for roughly a decade. However, the 1980 Census reported a 262% increase, which would kick off a steady 39% growth on average per decade over the next forty years. This growth rate is projected to stay on pace for the foreseeable future in Los Lunas and Valencia County.

T1: Village of Los Lunas Population	
Year	Population
1928*	466
1950	889
1960	1,186
1970	973
1980	3,523
1990	6,013
2000	10,034
2010	14,835
2020	17,242
U.S. Census Bureau: Decennial Census *Special Census for 1928 Incorporation	

### **AGE**

According to the 2010 US Census, residents' median age in Los Lunas was 34.7, lower than the national average of 37.2. However, the median age nationally is projected to increase in the next decade. As a more current indicator of that trend, the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates show that the median age in Los Lunas increased to 38.1, almost on par with the national median of 38.2. As the population ages, the Village continues to struggle, retaining younger working-class individuals but, on the other hand, is continuing to attract families. Planning efforts need to adapt and evolve to the ever-changing current and future housing, education, recreation, and health trends. The needs of every age group need to be addressed and accounted for.

## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

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### EDUCATION

The Village is consistent with statewide educational attainment for high school and college graduates, although the same data points differ from the national percentages. 2020 ACS five-year estimates show that the Village retains more high school graduates than the same age group with a bachelor's degree or higher. This data may imply that more students graduate high school and move directly into the local workforce or trade school than those who return following college graduation. Los Lunas is working to build relationships with local institutions to foster an environment that encourages residents to seek further education beyond high school, whether in a trade school or college setting. A great example is the University of New Mexico's Valencia County Workforce Training Center; it currently offers job training and career placement for Los Lunas and the surrounding communities.

T2: Educational Attainment				
	Village of Los Lunas		Valencia County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Population 18-24	1,198		6,764	
Less Than High School	147	12.3%	1,326	19.6%
High School Graduate (GED)	448	37.4%	3,192	47.2%
Some College or Associate's Degree	525	43.8%	2,000	29.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	78	6.5%	246	3.6%
Population 25 +	10,538		51,847	
Less Than High School	1,319	12.5%	7,951	15.4%
High School Graduate (GED)	2,990	28.4%	16,762	32.3%
Some College or Associate's Degree	3,656	34.7%	16,832	32.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	2,573	24.4%	10,302	19.9%
New Mexico		United States		
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
	198,269		30,435,736	
Population 18-24	30,831	15.6%	3,701,839	12.2%
Less Than High School	67,210	33.9%	9,773,642	32.1%
High School Graduate (GED)	86,719	43.7%	13,368,543	43.9%
Some College or Associate's Degree	13,509	6.8%	3,591,712	11.8%
Population 25 +	1,415,298		222,836,834	
Less Than High School	191,076	13.5%	25,562,680	11.5%
High School Graduate (GED)	370,125	26.2%	59,421,419	26.7%
Some College or Associate's Degree	455,809	24.6%	64,496,416	28.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	389,288	28.1%	73,356,319	32.9%
U.S. Census Bureau: S1501 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates				

## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

### INCOME

The median household income in Los Lunas was \$59,636, according to the 2020 ACS five-year estimates, \$8,835 more than Valencia County and \$8,393 more than statewide median incomes. While wages are higher in Los Lunas, the unemployment rate is also lower than statewide percentages and on par with national percentages. Although there are many reasons for a lower unemployment percentage than the State, the Village strives to recruit employers that provide higher-paying jobs and a quality work-life balance.

T3: Median Income (2020 Dollars)				
	Village of Los Lunas	Valencia County	New Mexico	United States
Household	59,636	50,801	51,243	64,994
Family	65,132	57,231	62,611	80,069
Married Couple	71,842	66,557	77,968	95,485
Nonfamily	40,278	31,538	31,640	39,027

U.S. Census Bureau: S1901 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

### ECONOMY

Los Lunas has a strong agricultural tradition that predates its incorporation and, at one time, was the most significant contributor to the local economy. Over the past two decades, the Village has expanded its range of industries. It has brought in several prominent national anchors like the Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Wal-Mart Super Center, Home Depot, Lowes, Harbor Freight, and many others, most notably, the Meta Data Center and Amazon. Along with the larger retail centers, other nationwide chains like Starbucks, Applebee's, and Chili's, have found their place alongside the many local establishments. As Los Lunas has become an economic center in Valencia County, the housing stock has been in high demand. Builders have added almost 2000 new households over the past twenty years and are projected to continue developing.



The New Mexico Rail Runner Express at the Los Lunas Transportation Center

## **CHAPTER 6: FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE**

Los Lunas has become one of the fastest-growing municipalities in New Mexico due to annexation and expanding development. As a result of the significant growth within the Village, the U.S. Census designated Los Lunas as an urbanized area. Much of the new commercial development has taken place on Main St along the primary transportation corridor. This stretch of Main St provides various development opportunities from small commercial to large industrial businesses. As commercial activity has grown, so has the need for housing; several master-planned communities are in the process of development with the intent of providing a quality living environment.

While economic growth and expanding development have contributed to the Village's financial stability, they have also presented environmental challenges. The conservation of rural land and open space is an essential aspect of Los Lunas' character. One of the objectives of this plan is to strike a delicate balance between preserving our natural and agricultural lands while promoting our economic development success.

Although planning is an ever-changing field, we must be optimistic about the opportunities created through a thoughtful approach to shape the Village's future. However, growth compels residents to adapt and evolve to change, sometimes creating an additional challenge, the lack of identity. The absence of foresight is the brunt of the issue, which has caused several problems like the loss of historic structures and the lack of a town center. Nevertheless, the Village continuously learns from the past and applies those missteps to plan for the future. Currently and in recent years, there has been advancement with new development and planned projects. These include the Transportation Center/Rail Runner Station, the adoption of the [Station Area Plan](#) establishing a transit-oriented development (TOD), improving pedestrian access along Hwy 314, rebranding the Village, the Morris Rd and I-25 interchange an east-west corridor, and many other projects.



Valley View Park

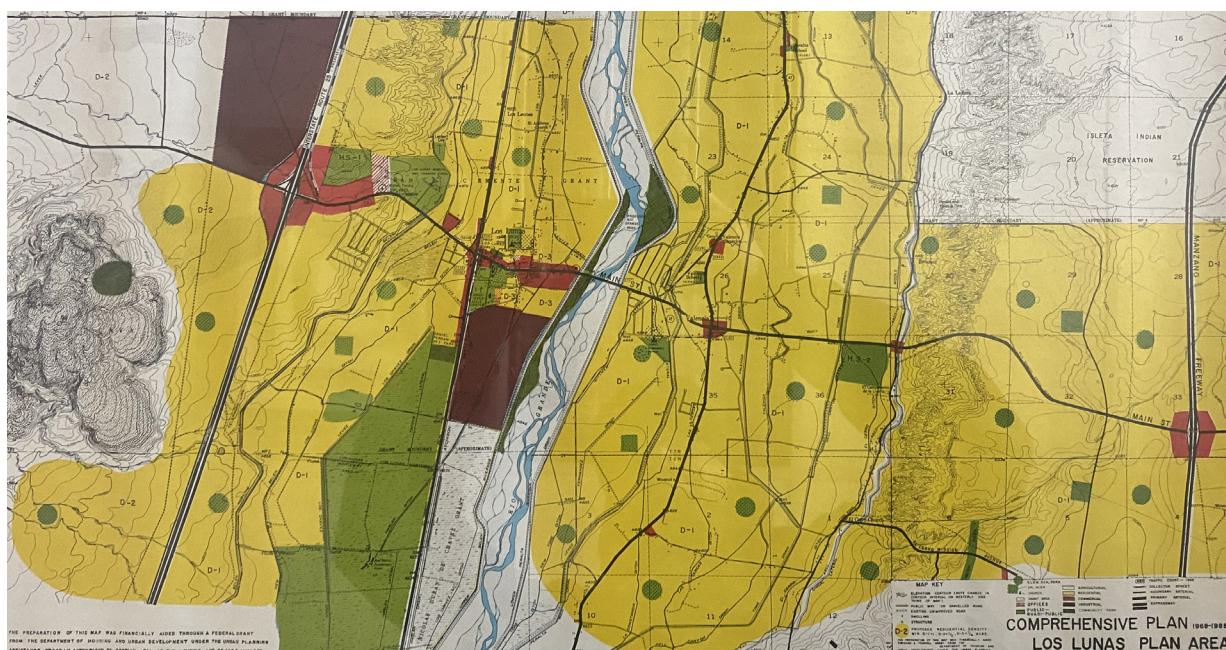
## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Land use in the Village has evolved from primarily agricultural to diverse recreational, housing, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses. These uses and their arrangement tend to determine the community's character and feel, which places great importance on current and long-range planning. Therefore, a current analysis of the existing land use can help identify trends to better plan for the future and guide community decisions. Table T4 shows the evolution of land use from 1973 to 2022.

T4: Land Use by Area							
	1973 (Base Year)	1995	1973-1995 Difference	2013	1995-2013 Difference	2022	2013-2022 Difference
Single Family	157.00 ac	1,075.70 ac	918.70 ac	1,470.60 ac	394.90 ac	2,215.40 ac	744.80 ac
Multi-family	2.00 ac	48.50 ac	46.50 ac	39.80 ac	-8.70 ac	47.03 ac	7.23 ac
Commercial	34.00 ac	131.90 ac	97.90 ac	391.30 ac	259.40 ac	471.37 ac	80.07 ac
Industrial	21.00 ac	59.30 ac	38.30 ac	424.90 ac	365.60 ac	2,385.06 ac	1,960.16 ac
Institutional	41.00 ac	212.20 ac	171.20 ac	735.60 ac	523.40 ac	1,088.76 ac	353.16 ac
Agriculture	151.00 ac	360.90 ac	209.90 ac	710.70 ac	349.80 ac	1,592.94 ac	882.24 ac
Open Space	0.00 ac	49.40 ac	49.40 ac	2,015.80 ac	1,966.40 ac	1,929.07 ac	-86.73 ac
Right of Way	56.00 ac	209.80 ac	153.80 ac	90.00 ac	-119.80 ac	118.89 ac	28.89 ac
Vacant	140.00 ac	1,906.90 ac	1,766.90 ac	3,179.20 ac	1,272.30 ac	3,244.23 ac	65.03 ac
Total Developed	462.00 ac	2,147.70 ac	1,685.70 ac	5,878.70 ac	3,731.00 ac	9,848.52 ac	3,969.82 ac
Total ac	602.00 ac	4,054.60 ac	3,452.60 ac	9,057.90 ac	5,003.30 ac	13,092.75 ac	4,034.85 ac
Total sqmi	0.94 sqmi	6.34 sqmi	5.40 sqmi	14.15 sqmi	7.81 sqmi	20.46 sqmi	6.31 sqmi

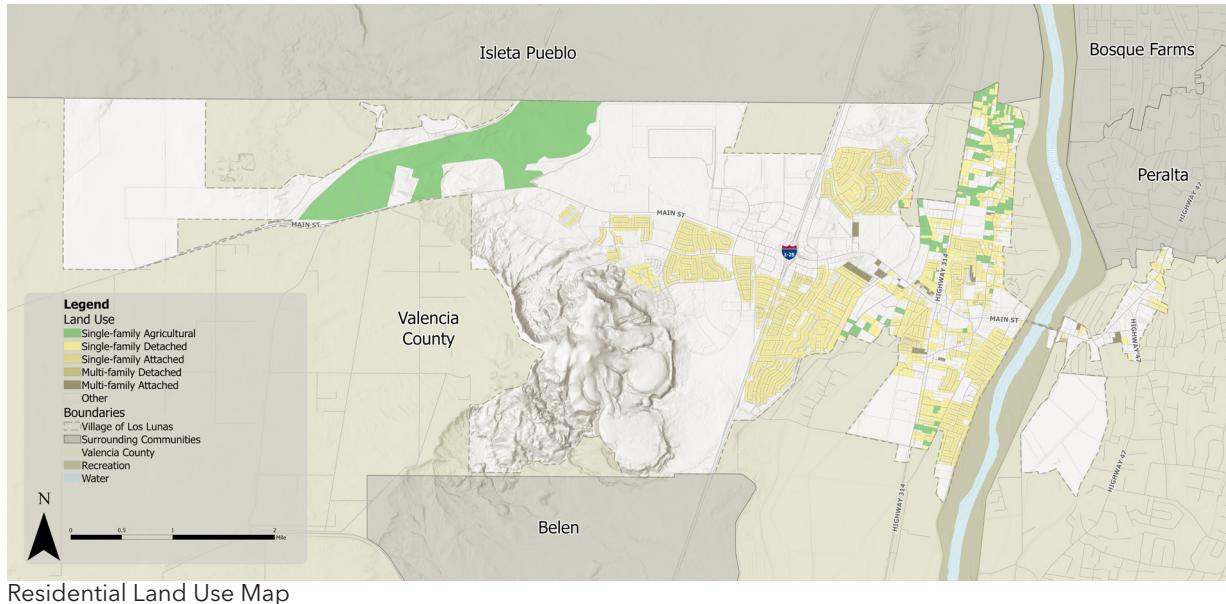
Village of Los Lunas Community Development Department Land Use Data



Original 1968 Los Lunas & Surrounding Area Comprehensive Plan

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

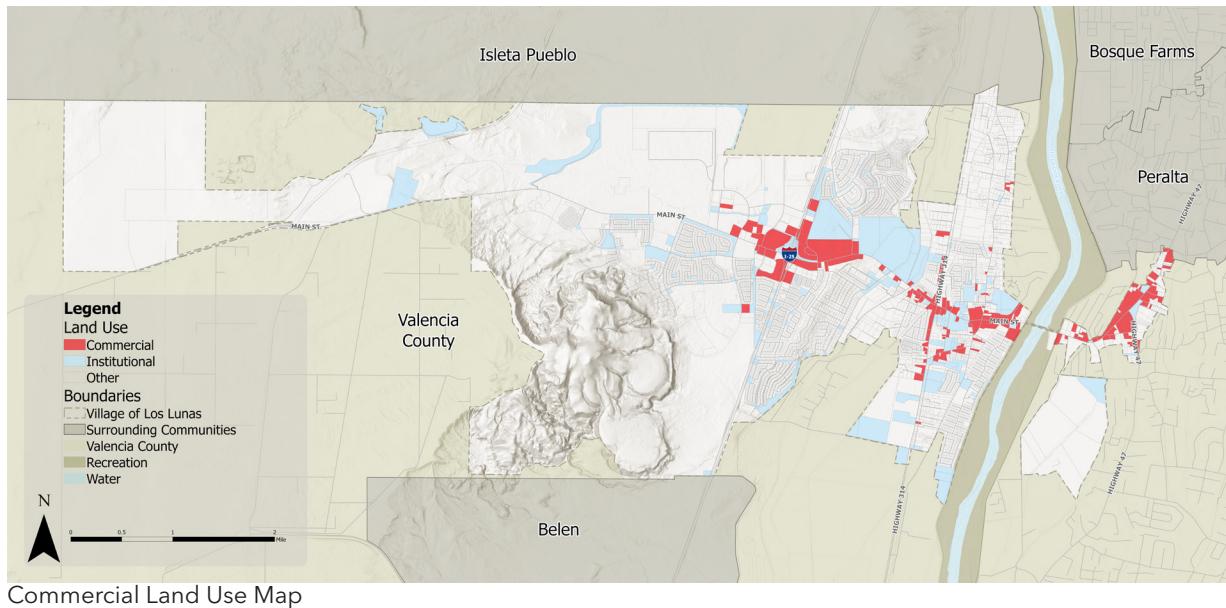


Residential land use in the Village exists today in three forms: rural residential (agricultural), low to medium density single-family, and high-density multi-family. The rural residential is a smaller agricultural parcel; much of this land is situated within the “green belt” along Los Lentes Rd north of Main St and Sichler Rd to the south. Single-family is the vast majority of housing found throughout the Village north and south of Main Street and east and west of I-25. While the Village supports multi-family housing, there are not many options but are typically located along Main St.

Although there are several different housing types throughout Los Lunas, there are challenges in regulating lot splits and development standards. The older areas tend to be large lot agriculture, and with that comes the traditional practice of a family split. The process of subdividing land is typically done through the administrative summary plat process. Village staff works with the property owner to ensure proper access easements, emergency vehicle access, and adequate water and sewer access. The process for small to medium density single-family housing is quite different and is typically done by a developer. Large land areas from the tens to hundreds of acres are designed by splitting the land into parcels, right of way, easements, drainage, and open space. The developer will then meet with the Village staff to review their design for any potential issues before applying the minor or major subdivision procedure, heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission and Village Council. Multi-family housing is a vital housing type, which is currently a small percentage within Los Lunas. Staff is working to attract developers who want to build higher-density housing. The transit-oriented development area around the transportation center is a prime location for a mixed-use work-live environment. Residential land use is essential to the structure of a community and its character. Cohesively providing different types of housing is an integral part of the planning process.

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE



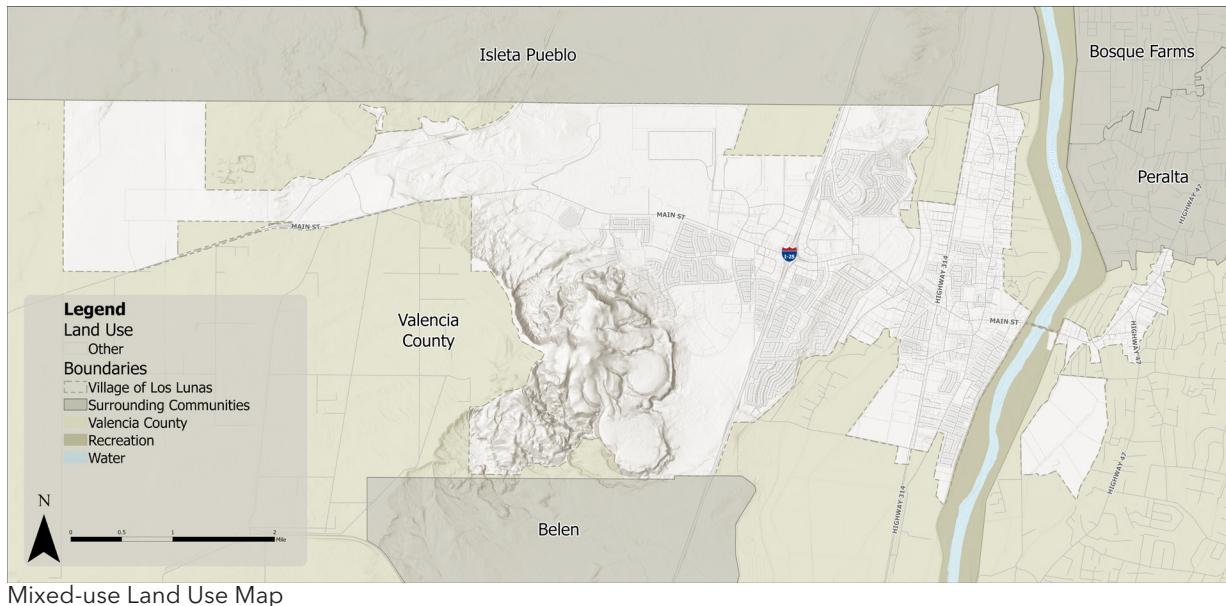
Los Lunas is the largest commercial hub in Valencia County, providing regional access to grocery shopping, restaurants, home improvement, and other retail amenities. While neighboring Albuquerque may provide more diverse and specialized shopping opportunities, Valencia County residents can easily meet their daily needs in Los Lunas. However, as the community continues to grow, the local markets begin to demand more diversity.

Throughout the Village, there are three different but also distinct commercial corridors centered mostly around Main Street. The oldest area is the original village limits surrounding the intersection at Main Street and NM-314, where several local restaurants, professional services, and government buildings exist. East of the Rio Grande, where Main Street meets NM-47, also known as the "Y," several shopping centers provide space for local and national businesses. The Y also includes three full-service grocery stores. Finally, the fastest growing and most modern corridor is from Los Cerritos Road to Sand Sage Road along Main Street. Several well-established and new up-and-coming businesses take advantage of the growing economic hub like the many restaurants, retail stores, entertainment venues, and big-box stores like Wal-Mart, Lowes, and Home Depot.

In addition to the commercial corridors, there is a large amount of land dedicated to public and institution use. These uses are typically governmental operations like Village Hall, Los Lunas Public Schools, churches, court houses, the solid waste transfer station, and drainage facilities. These facilities are an integral part of maintaining a quality of life for the residents of the Village.

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### MIXED-USE LAND USE



In May of 2008, the Village adopted the [Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan](#), which created two mixed-use zoning districts in the vicinity of the Transportation Center, a Rio Metro bus stop and Rail Runner train station. This regional rail system links the Village to several other communities: Belen, Isleta Pueblo, Albuquerque, Sandia Pueblo, Bernalillo, Kewa Pueblo, and Santa Fe.

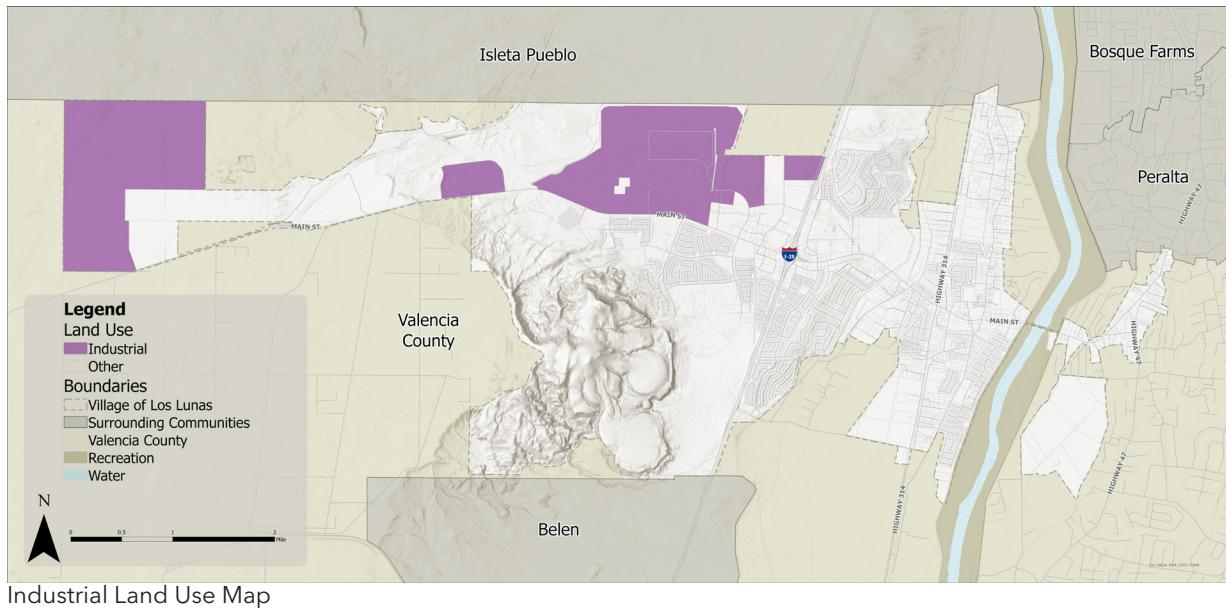
Since the station's development, the Village has seen a year-over-year increase of commuters from around Valencia County utilizing it as a park and ride. This building was also designed to serve as a multi-use facility to house Village staff offices, a large auditorium for public and private events, and a cafe.

The station area plan created a future vision that would foster growth and bring economic and housing opportunities typical of transportation centers. The station area plan was formed with a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in mind, an approach to mixed land use that supports pedestrian activity, live-work situations, and maximized flexibility for landowners and developers alike.

Public transportation is the central aspect of a TOD; this form of land use promotes many alternate modes of transportation and enhancement to the pedestrian domain. While improvements are ongoing, several projects have been constructed, like the realignment of Courthouse Road, trails, and landscaping along NM-314. In addition, the Village is continuously working to obtain funding for public improvement to the area, encouraging private investment.

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### INDUSTRIAL LAND USE



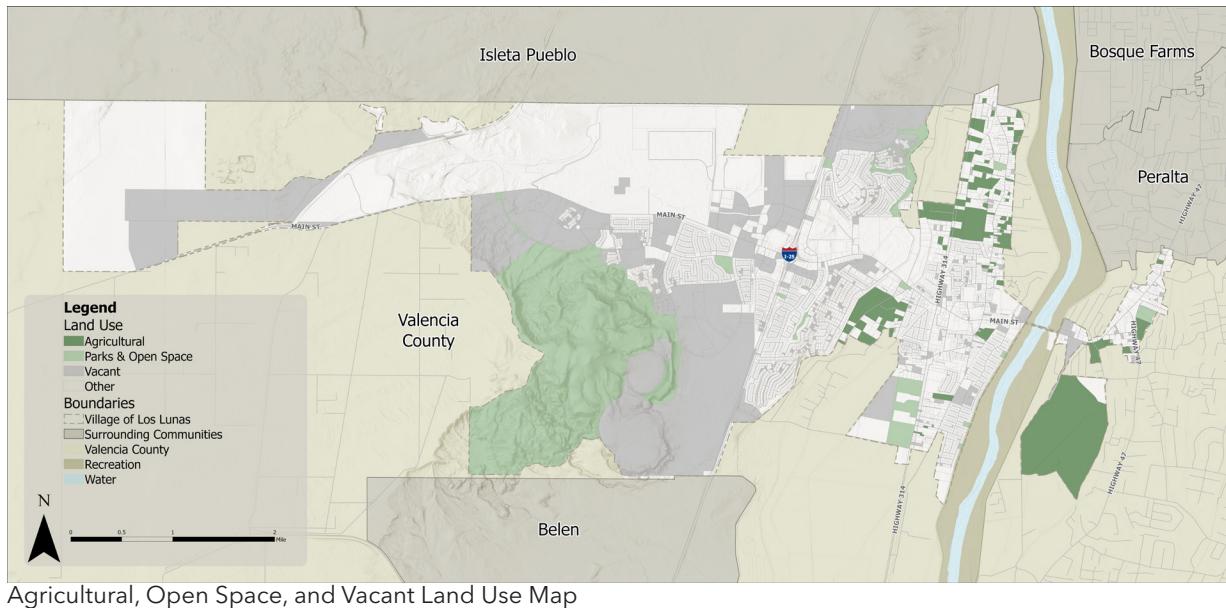
West of I-25 and north of Main Street, the Village industrial area is roughly 4,200 acres in size and comprises two business parks and a rail park. The Los Morros Business Park, the smaller of the two at 500-acres, is currently more established with several large commercial and industrial users like the State's only Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Wal-Mart Super Center, Fesenius Medical Supply, Niagara Bottling, Tillery Buick GMC, and Accurate Machine & Tool Company. In addition, smaller retail and service establishments fill in some of the frontages along Main St.

Directly to the west of Los Morros is the Huning Ranch Business Park, larger in size at about 2,000-acres and is home to New Mexico's largest data center, Amazon, and two solar sites. The Meta Data Center is currently operating six buildings, with the remaining two under construction, and is expected to be complete by 2023. To the South of Meta is the Amazon warehouse, which began construction in late 2021. PNM runs the two grid-connected solar sites adjacent to Meta, which provide 19 megawatts combined or enough power for 7,700 homes. Although Huning Ranch Business Park continues to acquire users, about 1,000 acres remain vacant and slated for other manufacturing and industrial end-users.

At the most western extent of the Village municipal limits, the Central New Mexico Rail Park is a 1,420-acre industrial park located next to the BNSF Transcontinental Rail Line. The park is large enough to accommodate several different manufacturing, warehousing, or distribution centers. Shortly before the approval of this plan, Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham announced that a recycled aluminum sheet metal manufacturer had signed a purchase agreement for 1,300 acres. In addition, the site has also generated interest from a solar panel manufacturer.

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### AGRICULTURAL, OPEN SPACE, AND VACANT LAND USE



The open space and agricultural land within the Village give the community its historically rural identity. The older roadways and agricultural parcel orientations show that the development patterns were based on irrigation access, whether from the Rio Grande or one of the many ditches. The preservation of these areas is one of the most essential culturally relevant topics.

The most prominent and well-known open space in Los Lunas and throughout Valencia County is the El Cerro de Los Lunas Preserve, known by many names like El Cerro, the Hill, or Los Lunas Hill. It serves as a visual marker from almost anywhere in the county, rising to 5,922 feet in elevation above the Rio Grande Valley. The open space was generously donated by the Huning family to be preserved and used as an outdoor recreation area. In 2014, the Village's Recreation Division hosted the inaugural King of the Hill 5k, 10k, & Half Marathon along several established trails within El Cerro open space. Since then, it has been a major yearly event attracting over 700 attendees. The preserve is open year-round for any outdoor enthusiast to enjoy the grand vistas, miles of trails, and picnics.

Though El Cerro Preserve is the most prominent landmark in the area, the Rio Grande Bosque extends along the Rio Grande, which also runs through the Village, from Santa Fe roughly 200 miles south to the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge near Socorro. The Bosque is thought to be the largest continuous cottonwood forest in the world. This lush green belt provides a habitat for many wildlife species, numerous trails, and access to the Rio Grande. In addition, the Riverside Park, a seven-acre recreational area complete with trails, picnic tables, and fishing areas, is located along the Bosque and operated by the Village that draws consistent use by residents.

## FUTURE GROWTH AND LAND USE

### ZONING, LAND USE, & FUTURE LAND USE

#### Zoning & Land Use

Throughout Los Lunas, there are various land use types that the Village works to regulate in an orderly fashion. Each land use and associated development are managed through the municipal zoning code: a set of standards dictating time, place, and manner. This control tool places reasonable restrictions on each zone regulating allowable uses, density, height, parking, and setbacks, among other standards, which will differ depending on the parcel's zone. Additionally, all development on private property must meet the standards of that parcel's zone.

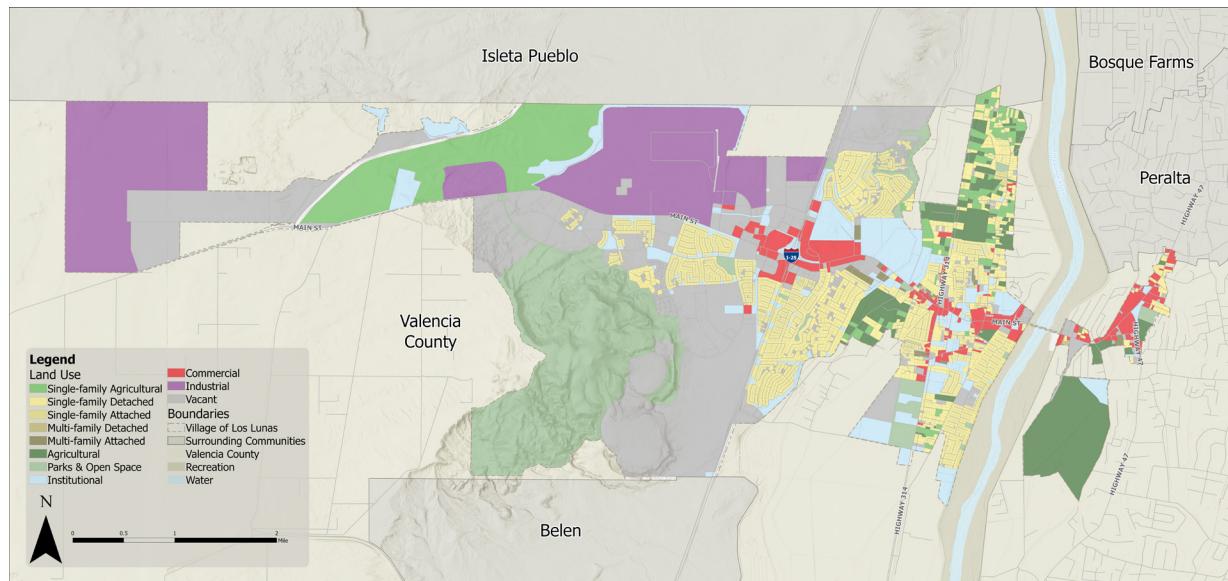
Should a property owner wish to develop their parcel in a manner prohibited in that zone, a zone change must first be obtained before development can proceed. The Village Council must approve this request.

#### Future Land Use

In addition to the zoning code, a Future Land Use Map is adopted as the guiding document for development. This map reflects the vision for land use in the future but may not reflect the current land use or zone designation of a specific parcel. If a zone change is requested, the Future Land Use Map guides staff recommendations on whether the proposed change is consistent with the future vision.

#### Planning and Development Documents and Maps

- Current Zoning can be found on page 27
- Future Land Use Map can be found on page 28
- [Municipal Zoning Code](#)
- [Village Planning Division Webpage](#)



Current Land Use Map

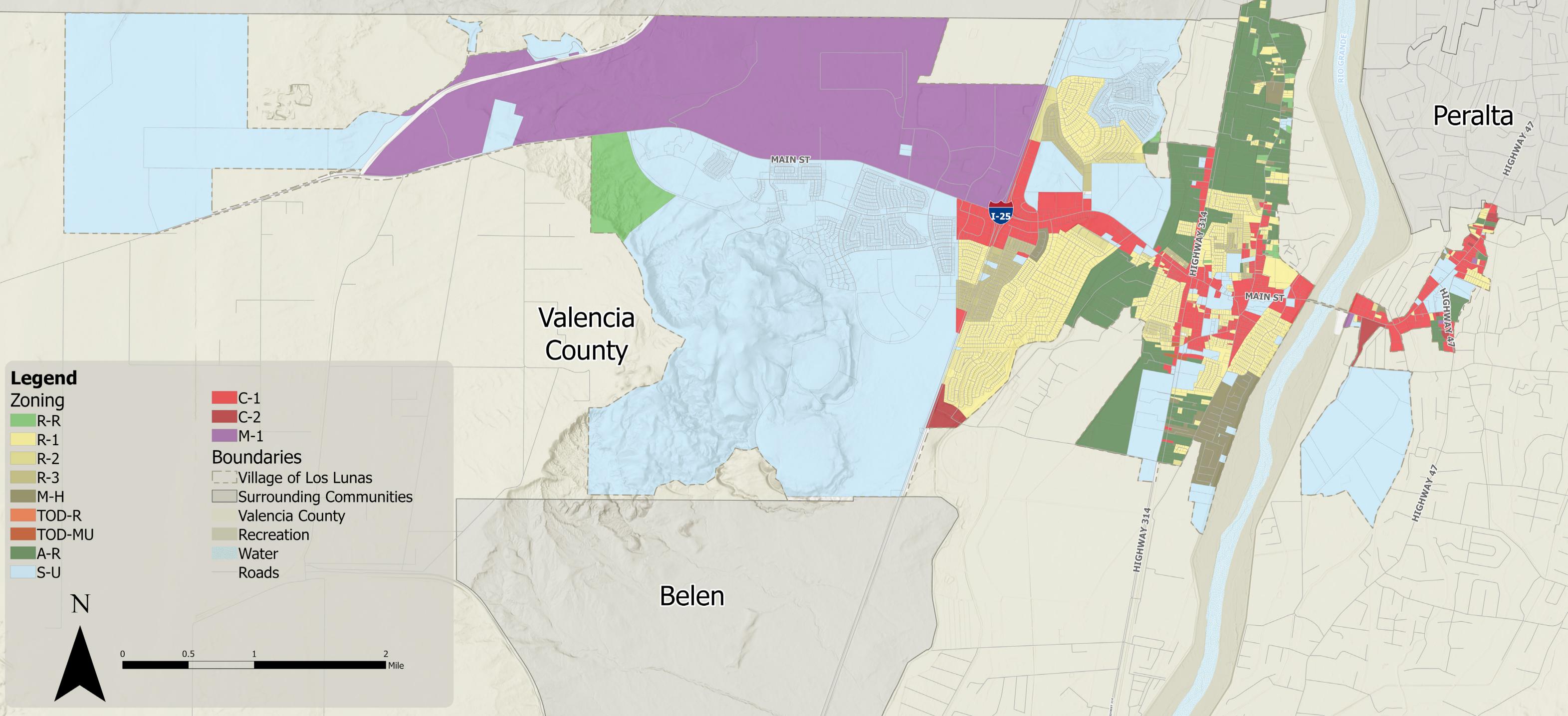
# Current Zoning Map

Isleta Pueblo

Bosque Farms

Valencia  
County

Belen



Current Zoning Map

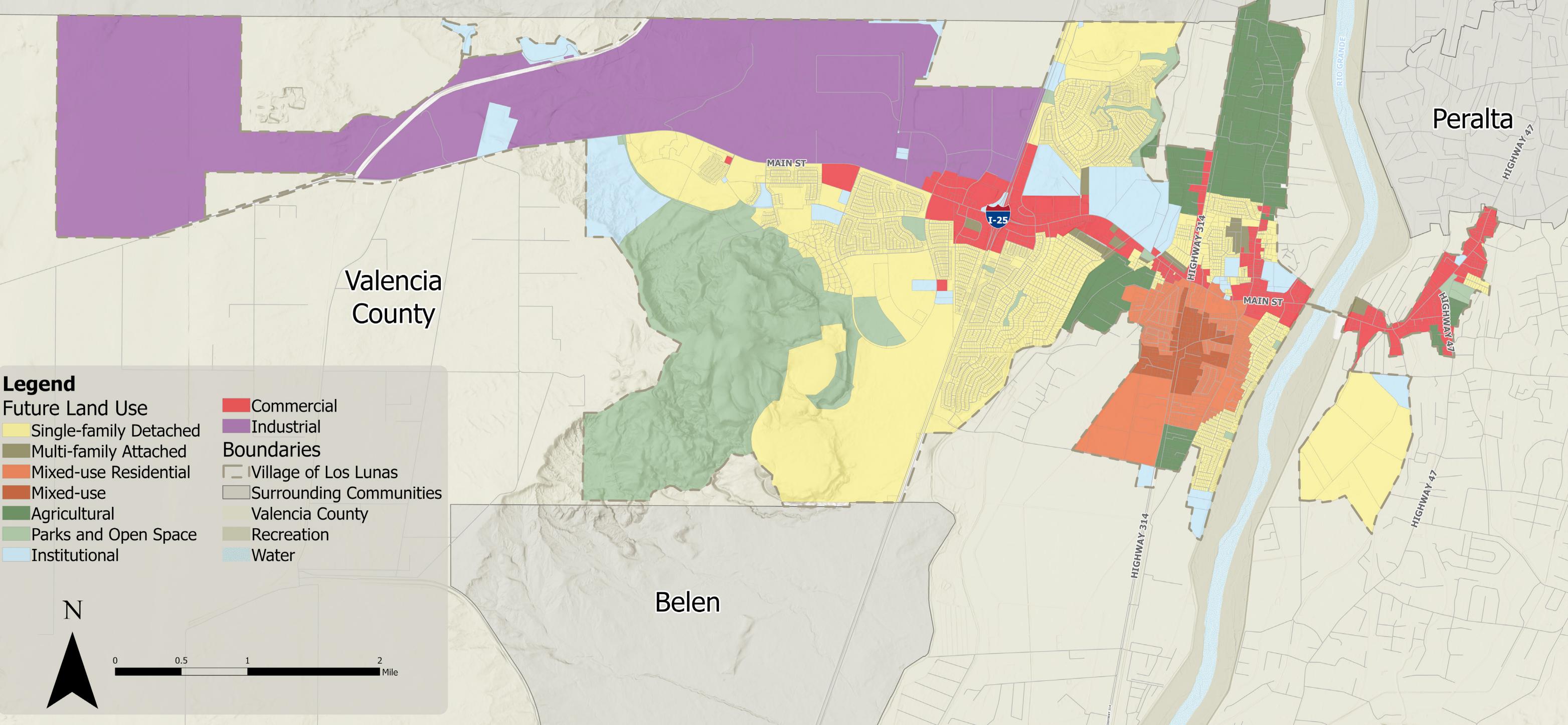
# Future Land Use Map

Isleta Pueblo

Bosque Farms

Valencia County

Belen

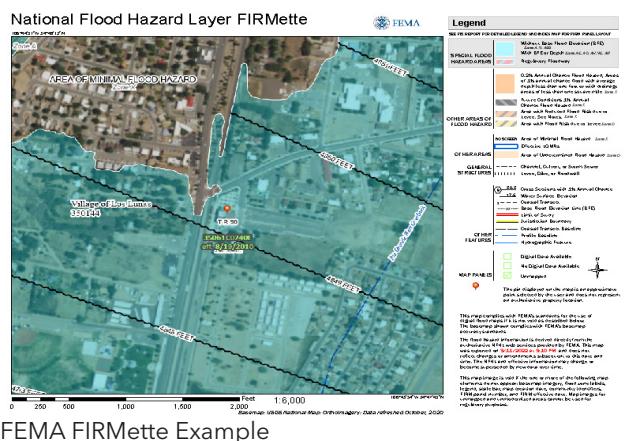


Future Land Use Map

## CHAPTER 7: ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

New Mexico is well known for its diverse terrain ranging from gypsum dunes to snow-capped mountains and lush riparian forests, locally known as the Bosque. Our cold semiarid climate brings mild winters and hot, dry summers, with most of the yearly precipitation occurring during the monsoon season from mid-June to mid-September. As a result, the lack of constant rainfall in the region heightens the chance of drought and wildfires. However, water and fire hazards are not the only environmental issues that require consideration when planning future development within our communities. Los Lunas is no exception; this section will look at the environmental and natural resources present within the municipality that may be impacted by future growth and development.

### TOPOGRAPHY, FLOOD ZONE, & SOIL



[Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) Special Flood Hazard Area. This area has been identified as an AE Zone, which requires specific regulations relating to new development and significant property improvements.

Additionally, soil compositions need to be considered during environmental mitigation and future development. Within the Village, there are roughly [50 different soil compositions](#), and on the west side, the majority can generally be described as Bluepoint Loamy, Wink-Madurez, and Rock Outcrop-Akela. In the river basin and to the eastern limits of the Village, the soil composition can be characterized as Gila Loam, Vinton Loam, Gila Clay Loam, and Auga Loam. Although none of the soils in the Village prohibit development, developers must exercise caution and work to mitigate future hazards and erosion by water runoff, blowing dust, vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

### HAZARD MITIGATION

Like much of New Mexico, Los Lunas is lucky to be mostly unaffected by natural disasters or hazardous weather. However, the keywords are certainly “mostly unaffected,” which means that the Village is not entirely immune. The most common hazardous weather we receive is high temperatures, high winds, wildfire, flooding, and hail.

While cold semiarid climates aren’t typically known for their extreme summer temperatures,

Within the municipal boundary, Los Lunas varies in elevation roughly 1,100ft from the Rio Grande Bosque Riverside Park (4,845ft) to El Cerro de Los Lunas Preserve’s Western Summit (5,955ft). The topography in between is relatively flat, with a general slope of less than 1.5%, which typically allows for a more manageable development.

However, flood hazards and soil compositions can become a complication in the development process. East of the New Belen Ditch, which bisects the Village running north to south, is a [Federal](#)

## **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

Los Lunas is still at risk of high heat, which can exacerbate drought, dust storms, and fire danger. Nonetheless, the community is subject to high winds known to gust upwards of 60 miles per hour during the spring. Because of the Village's location, the wind typically blows dust and debris off the west mesa across I-25 and into the low-lying areas near the Bosque, creating local air quality and visibility issues. Moreover, the combination of high temperatures, drought, and high winds can be a dangerous concoction waiting to ignite a wildfire. In the past, Los Lunas has temporarily closed access to the Bosque and Rio Grande River due to extreme fire danger in the hopes of mitigating any damage to the environment. Unfortunately, the Village cannot monitor all the open space 24/7, so fires do happen, but fortunately, our first responders have adequately managed the many hazards and prevented catastrophic damage.



Valencia County OEM Logo

In addition, because of the community's proximity to the Rio Grande, several risks are related to development in the flood zones. As mentioned previously, the Village adheres to FEMA standards and maintains a Floodplain Manager; who works to educate the community on current standards. Though the Village has not been subject to severe flooding since 2006, there are currently drainage systems and mitigation measures to alleviate any issues, for example, the [Valencia County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan \(VCCEMP\)](#). The Village of Los Lunas worked cooperatively with

[Valencia County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan \(VCCEMP\)](#). The Village of Los Lunas worked cooperatively with

Valencia County, the project lead, City of Belen, Village of Bosque Farms, Town of Peralta, City of Rio Communities, and community members. The result was a planning document that outlines how to prevent disasters, reduce Valencia County residents' vulnerability, respond effectively to disasters, and provide recovery in any emergency or disaster aftermath.

The plan is reviewed regularly, updated as need, but activated rarely. However, during the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020, the world was subject to the COVID-19 pandemic. Around March 11, 2020, New Mexico reported its first presumptive positive cases. On March 19, 2020, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued a public health order closing all non-essential businesses and limiting gatherings to reduce the spread of the novel Carona virus. During that time, the Village of Los Lunas and the other agencies established the [Incident Command System \(ICS\)](#) and all the supporting mitigation techniques laid out in the VCCEMP in preparation for the County's first case, which appeared on March 29, 2020.

Between the time of the first case in Valencia County and the height of the pandemic, around Thanksgiving of the same year, the emergency management team worked continuously to provide any available resources to the community. While it was a struggle to control the spread of COVID-19 nationwide and locally in New Mexico and Valencia County, the emergency management team was optimistic. Toward the end of 2020 and the beginning of

## **ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

2021, the State of New Mexico coordinated the vaccine distribution to local jurisdictions. The local jurisdictions set up inter-agency vaccination sites through the help of the VCCEMP and the ICS standards, which helped curb the spread of COVID-19 to date. Although a deadly virus is not typically the first disaster that comes to mind, it shows that a well-thought-out hazard mitigation plan can be adapted to any situation to support and protect the greater community.

## **CHAPTER 8: COMMUNITY SERVICES**

The Village of Los Lunas strives to provide the highest quality services to residents and the greater community. Many of which fall into one of two categories (a) services required for health, safety, and welfare, and (b) services tailored to quality of life. Because Los Lunas is the most prominent activity center in the county, many quality of life services are also utilized by county residents, like parks or community centers. It is essential to remain cognizant that the services are impacted by population change, demographics, and development. As a result, it is imperative that each Village department maintain a current strategic plan focusing on their specific functions.

This section will cover a basic overview of each department.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Los Lunas Fire Department is responsible for fire protection, Basic Life Support, and Intermediate Life Support throughout the Village; a private ambulance service provides advanced Life Support and transport to Albuquerque hospitals. The department consists of 30 full-time firefighters, two Volunteers, one Fire Marshal/Investigator, and an administrative assistant. Currently, the Fire Department operates two locations, Fire Station #1 at 465 Main

Street SE and Fire Station #2 at 465 Sand Sage Road NW, which was completed in 2018.



Los Lunas Fire Station 1

Since 2013, the department has seen an increase in fire and medical calls. As the population continues to grow and age, the calls for service have a strong probability of increasing. The additional calls for service have required the department to expand its staff and incorporate the latest resources and technology to better their community response.

### **LIBRARY AND MUSEUM OF HERITAGE AND ARTS**

The Los Lunas Public Library and the Los Lunas Museum of Heritage and Arts work to provide the best possible services to the greater community. In addition to housing an excellent collection of books, audio, and digital formats, the library has internet access and

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

several other high-quality resources. They are designed in such a way that encourages an educational, social, and inspirational environment. While the Museum of Heritage and Arts is in a separate building about a block west of the library, it is very much complementary to the organization. The museum commits to telling the region's visual, written, and oral histories through informative and emotional rotating exhibits and community events.



Museum of Heritage and Arts

Although the Library and the Museum of Heritage and Arts are two popular gathering spaces for cultural events in Los Lunas, the Village is currently working on developing an additional community asset, the pre-1937 Route 66 Museum. The project's first phase took place between December 2018 and November 2020 and focused on site planning, historic rehabilitation, and architectural design plans. The plans were developed through a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Grant and a partnership with the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning,

Village staff, and community members. It will focus on the pre-1937 alignment, which is not widely acknowledged as this particular era was quite different from the well-known neon signs and fancy cars of years following WWII. The Village is looking for a way to pay homage to the community members and travelers alike during those early years of Route 66 while also creating a revitalized community asset, museum, tourist destination, and economic opportunity.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

As one of the larger departments in the Village, Parks and Recreation holds a significant role in residents' overall quality of life as they operate and maintain many of the community's recreational assets, for example, the 17 parks consisting of 124 acres. The department also promotes community engagement by hosting several events throughout the year, from a 4th of July parade and a haunted house to a summer block party. Many of the events are attended by locals and are extremely popular with visitors from outside Valencia County. For example, King of the Hill, a competitive 5K, 10K, and half marathon cross-country race along the varying terrains of El Cerro De Los Lunas. The inaugural race in 2014 kicked off an annual event drawing over 700 participants, quickly becoming one of the most popular foot races in the region.



Daniel Fernandez Park

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Additionally, the department maintains several facilities like the Fred Luna Multi-generational Center, Transportation Center, Daniel Fernandez Recreation Center, and the newly constructed Badlands Drive-In Theater. Throughout 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic required many governmental agencies to get creative in providing services to their communities. The Parks and Recreation Department looked back to yesteryear at the peak of drive-in theaters and how they provided entertainment at a distance. While the Badlands Drive-In Theater helped provide safe entertainment during a pandemic, it has also created a unique and nostalgic community space that will persist.

Although the department maintains many of the Village facilities and hosts events, they are continuously working to provide a better environment. Whether it's adopting policies, developing new facilities, planning events, or running youth programs. The process is complex, and planning for the community's future needs to be approached conscientiously.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Los Lunas Police Department focuses primarily on the community's safety and welfare through proactive community policing techniques. The philosophy of community-oriented policing, introduced by former Police Chief Naithan Gurule and continued by current Police Chief Frank Lucero, appointed in 2022, encourages communication and feedback from Village residents and business owners. As of 2020, Los Lunas has seen progress as overall crime rates have dropped 20%. While crime has not disappeared completely, local law enforcement is continuously working to better the community.

The Police Department headquarters is located within the Village Administrative Building at Main Street and Don Pasqual Road. The department is staffed with 44 officers and utilizes patrol cars, motorcycles, mountain bikes, and drones. Additionally, they are equipped and regularly working with the latest resources and technology.



Los Lunas Police Mobile Command Center at the National Night Out Event

## CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Like many other small communities, Los Lunas is presented with several challenges in maintaining a healthy and growing economy because the State of New Mexico, in general, faces a potential slow-growth future. However, the Village still provides quality amenities such as schools, fire, police, public facilities, competitive housing prices, and development opportunities. As a result, Los Lunas has certainly garnered positive attention within the Albuquerque Metro area.

### LOCAL ECONOMY AND WORKFORCE

The Village of Los Lunas was incorporated as an agricultural community in 1928 and did not evolve into today's economic hub until much later. However, beginning in the 1990s, a proactive economic development strategy was implemented, which saw the growth of local establishments and the influx of major national employers like Wal-Mart, and Home Depot, among many others. Today that growth continues with the development of the Meta Data Center, UNM Valencia Workforce Training Center, and the Amazon Distribution Center.

T5: Village of Los Lunas Employment by Occupation Categories				
Occupation	Total 2013	Total 2020	Difference	Percent Change
Total Employed population 16 years and over	6005	6423	418	7.0%
Management, business, science, and arts occupations:	1778	2312	534	30.0%
Service occupations:	1152	1325	173	15.0%
Sales and office occupations:	1993	1330	-663	-33.3%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations:	558	572	14	2.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations:	524	884	360	68.7%
U.S. Census Bureau: S2401 2013 and 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates				

Over the seven-year period from 2013 to 2020, the Village had a 7% job growth, outpacing the State of New Mexico by more than 5.5% and adding 418 jobs. As the table above depicts, 6,423 Los Lunas residents 16 years and older are employed in various occupations, and two categories, management and production show tremendous growth. The job growth can be tied to the immense development the Village has seen over the past decade, as the subcategories of architecture/engineering and material moving have skyrocketed by 397% and 670%, respectively, over the same seven-year period. On the other hand, the Village has also seen a decrease in sales and office administration occupations. While there are many reasons for the shift in employment, many of the workers have moved into a different field rather than experiencing unemployment.

#### Future Workforce Development Goals:

- Strengthen the Los Lunas education system.
- Continue to support the newly established UNM Workforce Training Center.
- Continue to support local mom and pop shops.
- Seek employers who support higher wages.
- Seek employers who will utilize the local workforce from entry to senior levels.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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### **EDUCATION AND MIGRATION**

According to the Census data, Los Lunas has seen an uptick in migration when comparing 2013 to 2020, which is similar to other metrics. The Village is outpacing the greater Albuquerque metro area and the State of New Mexico in almost every category.

T6: Village of Los Lunas Migration					
Place	Population 1 and Older	Moved, Within Same County	Moved, From Different County Same State	Moved, From Different State	Moved, From Abroad
Village of Los Lunas	15,568	3.8%	3.9%	4.2%	0.7%
City of Rio Rancho	97,006	5.4%	3.6%	2.7%	0.6%
City of Albuquerque	554,784	10.4%	1.8%	2.6%	0.6%
State of New Mexico	2,075,584	7.3%	2.3%	2.9%	0.5%
U.S. Census Bureau: S0701 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates					

This gradual rise in migration to the Village can be attributed to the scale of development, whether it be new housing or new manufacturing/warehousing facilities. In addition, the recent growth has expanded the labor market greatly within the construction and transport occupations as the Village attracts anywhere from 600 to 3000 workers a day.

While job growth and migration to the Village have been exceptional, there is an unintended trend many communities have been dealing with nationwide: a housing shortage. Although the need is nothing new, it has become more prevalent in recent years. Many communities have experienced a shift in how people prioritize their live-work situations in a post-pandemic world. Since the beginning of 2020, the Village has added more than 700 dwelling units and is continuing to add more to address the housing shortage.

As people continue to settle within Los Lunas and the surrounding communities, the educational system will need to support a growing number of school-aged children. Currently, within the Los Lunas School District, there are 16 schools providing pre-k through 12th-grade education for a little over 8,000 students. In addition, the School of Dreams Academy (SODA) is the only charter school in the area providing an alternative education focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). The priority of the local schools is to maintain a quality education system that promotes the successful transition of each student after high school graduation into the local workforce, trade school, or college.

One of the ways the Village hopes to encourage a strong local workforce and continued education is through the partnership with the UNM Valencia Campus and the UNM Workforce Training Center. The UNM Valencia Campus in unincorporated Valencia County offers a wide range of associate degrees, certificates, and credential programs aimed at providing an accessible education to its body of more than 2,000 students. In addition, the UNM Workforce Training Center is within Los Lunas; it is intended to effectively train the local workforce to meet the demands of economic development in terms of professional and technical skills.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

While small, the campus maintains several facilities focused on vocational and computer labs, instructional rooms, offices, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC is designed to benefit the community by establishing new local businesses and assisting with business development, loan packaging, marketing, websites, and many other services vital to daily operations.

### **DEVELOPING THE ECONOMY**

#### **Community Branding**

Since 2010 Los Lunas has underscored the importance of branding and its benefit to the community with long-term marketing. A simple slogan can make a lasting impact on an external audience and call attention to the admirable traits of the community it represents. While the Village has three slogans, they represent a notable attribute of our community:

- Small Community. Big Possibilities.  
As the leading slogan of the Village, the phrase instills the importance of a tight-knit community and emphasizes the ability to accomplish great things. The Village has become the economic hub of Valencia County through perseverance and the desire for a better quality of life.
- Roads Less Traveled  
The tourism branding was established to accentuate the region's rural character and identify local points of interest off the beaten path. Still, the Roads Less Traveled always lead back to Los Lunas, where visitors have a memorable destination to play and stay.
- A Community That Works  
Although the phrase can take on a couple of different meanings, it was initially established when the Village enacted the Home Occupation regulations, allowing the community to live and work out of their primary residence. While this was the original intent, the phrase has now become the namesake of the Economic Development Division, referencing the strong and diverse local workforce.

#### **Local Incentives**

Parallel to many communities, Los Lunas provides a variety of incentives to encourage job growth and economic development. However, as markets adjust and ideologies fluctuate, the development team seeks to maintain more progressive, dynamic, and compelling options for potential employers, whether small or large. A few examples are listed below.

- High Wage Job Tax Credit
- Rural Jobs Tax Credit
- Local Economic Development Act
- Industrial Revenue Bonds
- Manufacturer's Investment Tax Credit
- Alternative Energy Product Manufacturer's Tax Credit
- Job Training Incentive Program



3rd Place Winner Shoot Your Shot  
Photo Contest - Elissa Gomez |  
Rio Grande Bosque

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Local Economic Development Act**

Los Lunas established the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) in 2015, which allows the Village to support local economic development and protect against the unauthorized use of public funds. Furthermore, LEDA is a mechanism that helps foster economic growth through public-private partnerships in which projects can be developed to suit the community's needs, like the development of infrastructure or economic drivers, creating a healthy tax base. For example, the Meta Data Center utilized LEDA incentives for the development of public infrastructure, an incentive that helped encourage the company to locate in Los Lunas

### **DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Industrial**

On the Village's west side, there are roughly 4,000 acres zoned adequately for heavy commercial, industrial, and manufacturing, consisting of the Los Morros Business Park, Huning Ranch Business and Technology Park, and the Central New Mexico Rail Park. The business parks are the sites of the most recent large-scale economic development projects establishing the Meta Data Center, Wal-Mart, Wal-Mart Distribution Center, and Amazon Warehouse, to name a few. In addition, the area is intended for heavier use, although the land provides for small-scale operations such as restaurants, gas stations, or commercial retail.

#### **Commercial**

Along the Village's main thoroughfares, there are several nodes of commercially zoned property, providing ample opportunity for local businesses to operate. Many of these areas are best suited for sit-down restaurants, pubs, walkable retail, hotels, and professional offices.

#### **Residential**

Similar to surrounding communities, the bulk of the land use and zoning is residential. Los Lunas is no exception with the ever-growing housing stock with close to 20 subdivisions building and the influx of interest in multi-family housing. The Village is responding to the migration of individuals and families into the market.

#### **Highways/Roads**

As development continues within the community, the Village understands the importance of appropriate access and traffic flow for residents and businesses alike. As a result, Main St has been redesigned west of I-25 in anticipation of new residential dwelling units and increased freight. Additionally, funding has been acquired for a new I-25 interchange at Morris Rd., which is in the final design and property acquisition stage; the project is scheduled to break ground in 2023, alleviating traffic congestion on Main St east of I-25.

### **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

Los Lunas is on the right track and has seen great success since the 2013 update of the Comprehensive Plan. Several goals have been met, for example, the I-25 & Main St beautification project, the development of the UNM Workforce Training Center, and procuring funds for the I-25 & Morris Rd interchange project, among many others. However, Los Lunas is a Village with a vision, untapped potential is abundant, and Village staff will continue to aim for quality of life and economic benefit.

## CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION

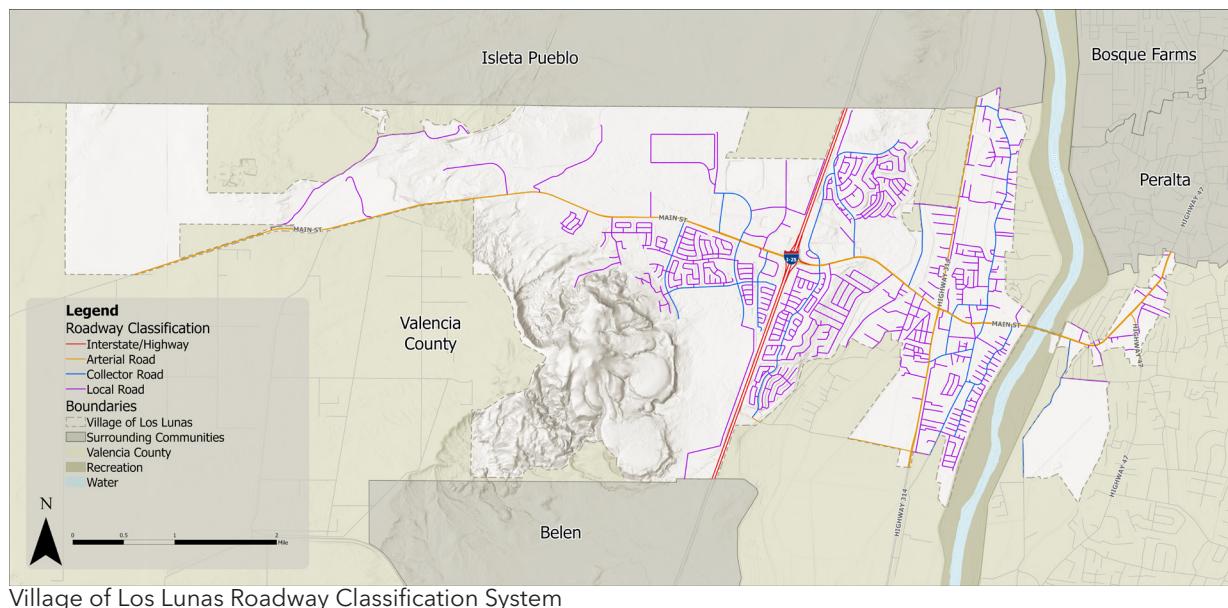
Transportation networks are a critical element of any community, and the structure of which helps dictate the characteristics of land use and planning. As the Village has grown, the need for an extensive network of transportation improvements and alternatives to alleviate congestion has been a long-standing initiative of the Public Works and Community Development Departments.

### EXISTING NETWORK

Today the roadway network throughout the Village consists of an interstate, state highways, arterial, collector, and local roads. In addition to the vehicle roadways, there is a substantial and growing pedestrian network with bikeways, multi-use trails, and a regional bus system.

The main thoroughfares within the Village are Interstate 25, Main St (State Highway 6), State Highway 314, and State Highway 47. These larger capacity roadways provide access to adjacent commercial properties and a means for freight transit in and out of the industrial/manufacturing areas. Additionally, Main St and Hwy 47 have historical significance in the area as they were a portion of the pre-1937 Route 66 alignment. While this era of Route 66 is lesser known than the neon lights of the 1950s, this was a significant part of the movement west during the great depression.

Collector roads are accessed off highways or arterials; these roads are the main routes allowing traffic flow to neighborhoods from commercial or higher traffic areas. An example of a collector road can be represented by Los Lentes Rd, Los Cerritos Rd, Camelot Blvd, or Huning Ranch Lp. The lowest level of the roadway network is the local road, which can be described as the internal neighborhood circulation system. Often, these roads are accessed from collector roads and provide a direct connection to residences or similar access.



## TRANSPORTATION

### CHALLENGES

While the roadway classification system is an asset to orderly transportation planning, the Village is not without its transportation challenges. The most significant issue is the lack of connecting roads throughout all but the newest developments. The Village was incorporated in 1928 as an agricultural community, and as large family farms split into smaller residential properties, a number of roads were developed that don't interconnect, creating a heavy burden on the main thoroughfares. Additionally, these thoroughfares are primarily state highways, which requires the Village to coordinate with an outside agency for development and maintenance. The other major issue is that the Village is bounded on the north, east, and south sides by existing development, driving major development westward and creating a constant need to develop new roadways.



Main St Traffic at Rush Hour

### MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Over the past decade, the Village has worked toward a more proactive and progressive stance on transportation planning to create a community and pedestrian-based network rather than a car-centric one. As a result, in conjunction with the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, the [Village of Los Lunas Master Transportation Plan \(MTP\)](#) was also approved. The MTP serves as a much-needed guide for developing future roadways and network extensions for vehicles and pedestrians alike. Although development can seem slow, several vehicular and pedestrian projects have been completed or are in the design stage.



Village of Los Lunas Transportation Center

As the Village continues to develop, the MTP will need to go through an amendment process to account for new roadways, housing, businesses, and annexations. This will help identify recent development trends and allow for an adequately planned future, especially on the west side of the Village. A significant partner in the planning and update process is the Mid Region Council of Governments which acts as a fiscal agent for federal funds and provides assistance to member agencies with subcommittees, data acquisition, and research.

## CHAPTER 11: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

With any public project, small or large, community input is necessary for its success and implementation. The Village of Los Lunas 2040 Comprehensive Plan update was no exception; while the process began in January of 2020, it hit an unexpected obstacle, as did the rest of the world with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the initially scheduled outreach activities were no longer possible; the Planning Division worked to create alternative activities in which community members could participate remotely. As a result, all remote activities were available online and physically via the US Postal Service.

### OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

#### 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update Website

The Village Planning Division created an accessible website for the Comprehensive Plan update; this was intended to be the hub for information and activities related to the process.

2040 Comprehensive Plan Update Website

### Community Surveys

In the interest of learning more about the community, the Planning Division developed three surveys with varying topics, all of which were optional and not a requirement to interact with the website.

- Community Demographics: This was intended to gather basic information about community members' live/work situation, sex, age, race, and ethnicity. In addition, the respondent had the opportunity to provide further information about themselves and let staff know if they would like to stay up-to-date with the progress of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- Vision Statement: The 2035 Comprehensive Plan has a vision statement that is more of a vision paragraph, and a vision statement should be just that, a statement. Short, concise, and has meaning. This survey provided the community an opportunity to rank staff-created statements or to contribute their own.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- **Personality Quiz:** Different from the other two, this survey was designed to be an entertaining, low-pressure activity modeled after a lighthearted magazine quiz. Community members had an opportunity to interact with the Comprehensive Plan less formally but still received an insight into the planning process and learned how they might want to see the Village develop in the future.

Congratulations! You have helped the Village of Los Lunas develop its vision for growth over the next 20 years! But what is your vision for Los Lunas? Score your quiz and see which Los Lunas is YOUR perfect Los Lunas!

If you haven't taken the quiz yet, go back to the beginning and do that first!

NAME: Camille [REDACTED]  
STREET ADDRESS: [REDACTED] SE. Los Lunas  
EMAIL ADDRESS (to stay involved with the Comprehensive Plan update): [REDACTED]@yahoo.co

**ANSWER KEY**  
Score your quiz and write in your total below:  
1. a: 4, b: 2, c: 1, d: 3  
2. a: 1, b: 4, c: 3, d: 2  
3. a: 4, b: 3, c: 1, d: 2  
4. a: 2, b: 4, c: 1, d: 3  
5. a: 3, b: 2, c: 4, d: 1  
6. a: 1, b: 4, c: 2, d: 3  
7. a: 2, b: 1, c: 4, d: 3  
8. a: 2, b: 1, c: 4, d: 3  
9. a: 1, b: 2, c: 4, d: 3  
10. a: 4, b: 1, c: 3, d: 2  
TOTAL: 22

**10 - 17 pts:**  
Traditional Agricultural Community with Strong Connections to its Roots

**18 - 25 pts:**  
Bustling Small Town with Lots of Shops and Activities

**26 - 32 pts:**  
Active Hub for Outdoor Enthusiasts

**33 - 40 pts:**  
Regional Employment Center

Don't forget to send your scoring sheets back to the Village so that we can use your feedback in our Comprehensive Plan update!

Email to: ochoaa@loslunasnm.gov  
Mail to: Community Development Department  
Comprehensive Plan Quiz Activity  
PO Box 1209  
Los Lunas, NM 87031  
Or drop off at Village Hall, 660 Main St. NW

The answers leaned toward "bustling small town" but I see myself more in the traditional agricultural group. It is just I move here from another small ranching community in SW New Mexico. I hope we can keep a rural community with strong family and historic traditions & values. Thank you

Community Member Submittal | Bustling Small Town With Lots of Shops and Activities

### Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest

As an additional creative activity, the Planning Division ran the Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest to engage the community in a lively competition. While the participants had the opportunity to win prizes from local businesses and have their photos featured in this Comprehensive Plan, the main point of the activity was for the community to show pride in and reflect on their vision of the Village. The photos of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers are displayed on pages II, 1, and 36, respectively.

The Community Development Department and Planning Division would like to thank the local business that made the contest possible. Andy's Boots, Mariscos Altamar, Raks Building Supply, and Smiths Grocery.

THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS  
**PERSONALITY QUIZ...SCORING!**

Congratulations! You have helped the Village of Los Lunas develop its vision for growth over the next 20 years! But what is your vision for Los Lunas? Score your quiz and see which Los Lunas is YOUR perfect Los Lunas!

If you haven't taken the quiz yet, go back to the beginning and do that first!

NAME: William [REDACTED]  
STREET ADDRESS: [REDACTED] SW Los Lunas NM 87031  
EMAIL ADDRESS (to stay involved with the Comprehensive Plan update): [REDACTED]@yahoo.com

**ANSWER KEY**  
Score your quiz and write in your total below:  
1. a: 4, b: 2, c: 1, d: 3  
2. a: 1, b: 4, c: 3, d: 2  
3. a: 4, b: 3, c: 1, d: 2  
4. a: 2, b: 4, c: 1, d: 3  
5. a: 3, b: 2, c: 4, d: 1  
6. a: 1, b: 4, c: 2, d: 3  
7. a: 2, b: 1, c: 4, d: 3  
8. a: 2, b: 1, c: 4, d: 3  
9. a: 1, b: 2, c: 4, d: 3  
10. a: 4, b: 1, c: 3, d: 2  
TOTAL: 26

**10 - 17 pts:**  
Traditional Agricultural Community with Strong Connections to its Roots

**18 - 25 pts:**  
Bustling Small Town with Lots of Shops and Activities

**26 - 32 pts:**  
Active Hub for Outdoor Enthusiasts

**33 - 40 pts:**  
Regional Employment Center

Don't forget to send your scoring sheets back to the Village so that we can use your feedback in our Comprehensive Plan update!

Email to: ochoaa@loslunasnm.gov  
Mail to: Community Development Department  
Comprehensive Plan Quiz Activity  
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Los Lunas, NM 87031  
Or drop off at Village Hall, 660 Main St. NW

Community Member Submittal | Active Hub for Outdoor Enthusiasts



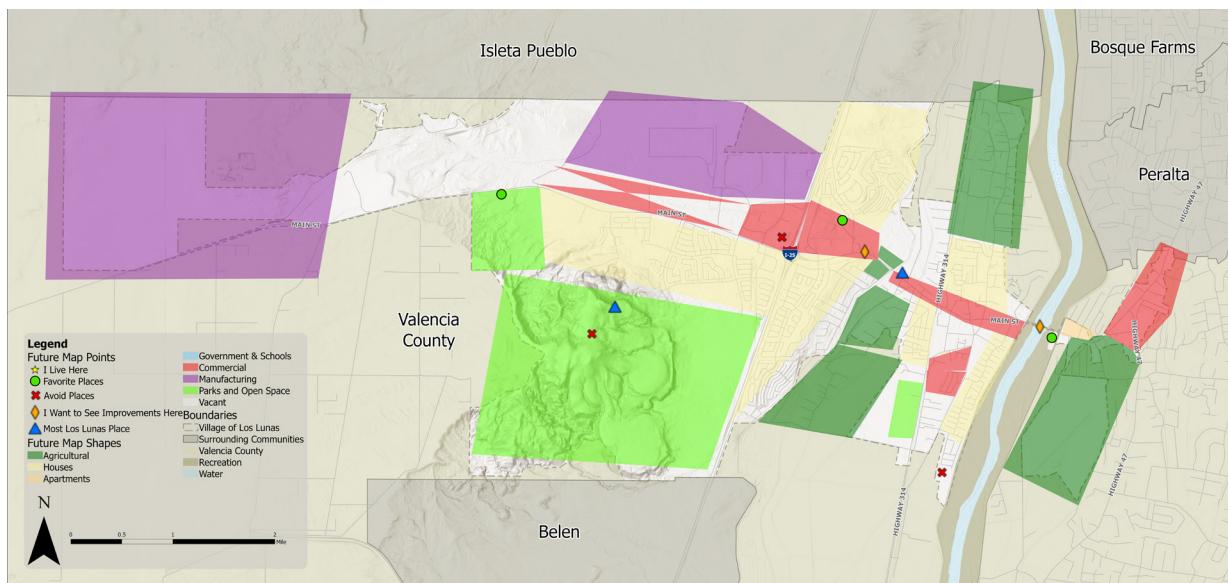
Honorable Mention Shoot Your Shot Photo Contest - Anonymous

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Cognitive Mapping

Cognitive mapping categorizes elements that include landmarks, routes, nodes, edges, and zones. This categorization represents the city as an individual understands it. What psychologists call a cognitive map is not like the map one keeps in a glove compartment or views on a smartphone. It encompasses a wide variety of mental processes that humans use to store and recall spatial information. This, in turn, shapes how people live and travel. (Mondschein et al., 2013)

A cognitive map created by an individual or a group assists planners in understanding how a community views itself. This community-based process can better guide future development in a way that is complementary to the needs and wants of a community.



Community Member Cognitive Map, Future Land Use

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE

Although this plan was based on the 2035 Comprehensive Plan, it was only possible with input and participation from the community. The most notable efforts were from the Comprehensive Plan Committee, comprised of three members who volunteered their time over a few months. This committee met to discuss the past, present, and future land use frustrations and achievements in order to develop more pragmatic outcomes.

Many of those outcomes are outlined in the following chapter.



Village of Los Lunas Riverside Park Autumn

## CHAPTER 12: COMMUNITY GOALS

Village Staff and the Comprehensive Plan Committee developed the following list of community goals through collaboration. The intention is to establish each objective within its respective timeline. However, each goal will require a partnership between each Village Department for success.

### Short-term Goals: 1 to 3 years:

- Establish an effective tourism initiative, including community events, points of interest, and businesses.
- Village beautification projects along major thoroughfares and interchanges.
- Establish an inventory of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) assets & Village maps.

### Mid-term Goals: 3 to 10 years:

- Encourage & promote historic preservation and establish a community-driven initiative.
- Provide higher quality community programs for youth, young adults, families, and seniors.
- Encourage recreational activities at parks, open spaces, and pedestrian trail networks.
- Rehabilitate transportation networks by encouraging traffic mitigation and promoting east/west mobility.
- Foster the expansion of alternate modes of transportation by establishing pedestrian networks.

### Ongoing and Long-term Goals: 10 to 20 years:

- Provide the community with access to quality educational, cultural, and recreational assets.
- Support community inclusion through housing, employment, and community services/outreach.
- Continue to promote the Village of Los Lunas branding through quality marketing.
- Continue to encourage economic development and employment opportunities for mom & pop shops and large businesses.
- Work to preserve the rural character of the Village of Los Lunas through development standards.
- Maintain and preserve existing open space and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and protect the environmental quality of natural resources through development and economic standards.



Daniel Fernandez Park on July 4th

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