

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SERVICES

Transit and Ridesharing

Virtually all of the Albuquerque metropolitan areas having local bus service at present have densities greater than five dwelling units per acre, with many route portions that travel through even higher density areas. A majority of the area south of Rio Bravo and on the upper slopes of the Southwest Mesa is proposed to be low density residential in the plan, i.e., less than five dwelling units per acre. At today's level of technology, it would not be cost-effective to provide transit service in these low-density areas. Rather, paratransit options might be more effective.

Paratransit is the family of transportation services, which falls between the single occupant automobile and fixed route transit. Conventional fixed route transit service usually means buses traveling on specific streets at regular time intervals. While conventional transit planning tends to be corridor oriented, paratransit services are typically planned to serve subareas, or even single activity centers. Paratransit services are designed to meet specific market needs by utilizing vehicles and travel patterns which are specially tailored to meet the unique characteristics of an area. Alternative paratransit services that continue to grow in popularity are route deviation systems. These systems operate on fixed routes but deviate from their fixed routes to pick up individuals upon request. Guidelines are established that dictate the extent to which a route can be deviated.

This type of paratransit system might be appropriate in low-density areas of the South Valley. The fixed portion of each route, theoretically, would serve at least one area of clustered commercial, office, public service and residential uses such as the historic village centers. Ideally, such routes should be connected with fixed routes to provide for intra-community travel.

Bikeways

The Bikeways Master Plan has bicycle routes programmed or proposed along most of the major streets north of Rio Bravo Boulevard and on Coors Boulevard. Provision for a separated bicycle path the entire length of Unser Boulevard through the plan area is important and should be incorporated into the planning and design of this principal arterial.

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Pedestrians

Pedestrian travel and wheelchair accessible facilities are recommended throughout the plan area in: (1) the clustering of residential developments, commercial and office complexes, and industrial employment areas; (2) planning and designing the connections of the historic village centers to each other with a continuous open space trail; (3) including open space links and an urban park in the Westgate Urban Center (4) providing handicapped accessible pedestrian paths or sidewalks in the design of open space trails throughout the plan area; and (5) requiring roads within the plan area to be planned, designed, constructed and improved with the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as a primary concern on those roads where people on foot and bicycles are likely to be.

Equestrians

The rural life-style of the South Valley has encouraged horseback riding for generations. Facilities for the continuation of horseback riding is provided through a network of equestrian trails throughout the South Valley and the Southwest Mesa Slopes. These trails will allow riders to enjoy the views from the Southwest Mesa, ride down the slopes through the South Valley to the bosque to the Rio Grande.

