



One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan

Doña Ana County, New Mexico

Executive Summary

Anthony - Hatch - Las Cruces - Mesilla - Sunland Park

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Chapter 1, Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

“Nearly 210,000 people now live in our part of the Rio Grande valley—along the river, on desert mesas, and in mountain foothills. We live in communities of many sizes, celebrate a multi-cultural heritage, and work in a highly diversified economy.

Doña Ana County has become a vibrant, diverse place that is well positioned to face whatever challenges come our way.

We can shape our own destiny. Doña Ana County can be a prosperous, beautiful place for everyone if we face the future together—united by a common vision, dedicated to work hard, and committed to making good decisions based on the best available information.”

— *Billy Garrett, Doña Ana County Commissioner*

Doña Ana County possesses many resources that help create the vibrant and diverse atmosphere recognized and embraced by its residents expressed in Figure 1-1, “Our Vision.” From the focus groups held in 2008 about the “best thing about my community is,” residents frequently mentioned the benefits of living in a mild climate with lots of sunshine. They value the many open vistas and accessibility to a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Many people value the tranquil lifestyle and warm-friendly people. Residents indicated they liked the variety of things to do living near the Rio Grande, in the Chihuahuan desert, and near the many mountains accessible to the communities in Doña Ana

Our Vision

Figure 1-1

We want to make Doña Ana County and all its communities a truly great place to live, work, and play for residents of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, and economic levels.

Our vision encompasses planned and managed growth in areas such as jobs, economy, tourism, and infrastructure, and encourages new opportunities that improve our quality of life.

We envision strong economic growth in the region. We are prepared to take advantage of arising opportunities to provide new and better jobs and to increase the economic vitality of the area for all of our residents.

As we plan our future, we recognize the value of our mountains, desert environment, rivers, agriculture, as well as private-property rights and the importance of planning to live within the limitations of our unique land and natural resources.

We envision a development plan that embraces the rich historical and cultural heritage of Doña Ana County, as well as its ties with Mexico and Texas. We embrace the value of an integrated multimodal transportation network that connects people with each other as well as with economic, housing, recreational, medical, and educational opportunities.



County. This variety can be seen throughout the county in the range of housing options and prices in rural, agricultural, suburban, and urban settings. Many people enjoy the thriving cultural experiences and historical sites throughout the region, including the large number of performing and visual arts for a region of its size.

The foundation of this regional plan reflects comments and guidance provided by the residents of the county, given through surveys, stakeholder meetings, public forums, public meetings, and public comment periods. To achieve a basis of consensus, development of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan used an intensive inventory and public engagement process described in Section 3.2, “Public Engagement.” Developing this plan allowed for residents from the entire county an opportunity to contribute their voice and vision to the plan for the county’s growth between now and the year 2040.

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan has a planning area that spans the political boundary of Doña Ana County, New Mexico. Map 1, “Location Map,” illustrates the region in relationship to

“Our work (on the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan) has resulted in a well thought-out projection of what our area can become economically and physically while still maintaining the natural beauty and the special culture that has drawn so many people to our land.”

— *William “Bill” Mattiace and Charlie Scholz, Vision 2040 Advisory Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman*

surrounding counties. The plan addresses all incorporated municipalities and unincorporated portions of the county.

The region has five incorporated municipalities: Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, Mesilla, and Sunland Park. Each municipality offers its own character and contributes to the region’s quality of life. Las Cruces is the most urban, providing a full array of amenities and services typically found in larger communities. It has a variety of residential developments, commercial businesses, industrial areas, an international airport, golf courses, visual arts, educational facilities, and health care facilities. Sunland Park is a suburban community with many urban amenities. It has a thriving entertainment district centered around outdoor amusement, casino, and equestrian uses. Anthony is a growing community along I-10 with many residential and business opportunities. Mesilla has a greenbelt of agricultural lands centered on its nationally recognized historic plaza offering cultural events, specialty retail, galleries, dining, and drinking establishments. Hatch centers on its agriculture, particularly the chile, and its small town main street, known as the “Chile Capital of the World.”

Chapter 1, Executive Summary

"If you do not think about or plan for the future, it may not be the future you would like to see."

— Valerie Beversdorf, Vision 2040 Advisory Steering Committee

The unincorporated portion of Doña Ana County has the majority of the undeveloped desert and mountains in the region residents value for their beauty, recreation, and ranching activities. The unincorporated area has many of the region's agricultural and dairy farms, most near the Rio Grande. It is home for many of the residents living in the 37 designated colonias. Many of these colonias are historic developments. For example, Rincon was founded in 1883 as a hub for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway. The unincorporated portion of Doña Ana County also contains White Sands Missile Range, a major employer in the area, and the Santa Teresa Port of Entry, a growing hub for transportation and industrial activity with the nearby Doña Ana County airport and intermodal Union Pacific rail yard. In addition, it encompasses the five-mile planning jurisdiction around Las Cruces known as the Extra-Territorial Zone (ETZ), which is a development transition area and the location of New Mexico State University (NMSU).

There is no state statute or other requirement to adopt the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. However, participating elected governing bodies within the

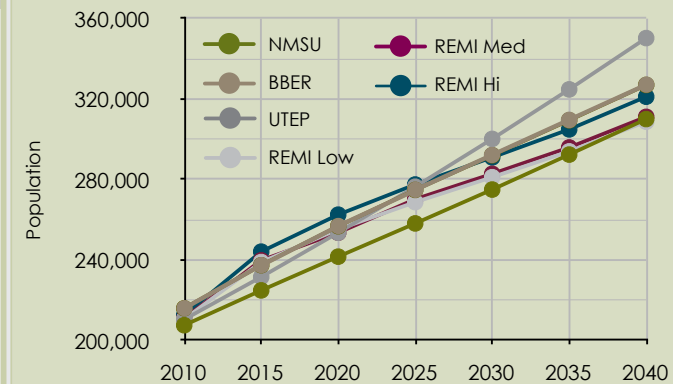
region cooperated as a way to improve intergovernmental cooperation, work toward a more effective regional response to issues beyond their respective political boundaries, and provide a policy framework for the long-term growth of the region.

The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan serves as an advisory document intended to act as a guiding framework for mindful decision making when planning and implementing future development within the region. It covers the broad aspects of what the residents of Doña Ana County would like to see in terms of development. It does not provide detailed direction on any of its plan elements; the local comprehensive plans serve this function. Rather, it describes overarching principles and goals. The intent of this document is to serve as a platform for use in developing more detailed comprehensive, master, and site plans. For local elected and administrative officials, it may also serve as guidance on policy, programming, and capital improvement decisions.

1.2 Document Framework

Chapter 1, "Executive Summary," provides an overview of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan. The Executive Summary is part of the regional plan, but designed to be a separate document. As such, there is some duplication of the maps, figures, and tables found in other chapters of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan.

Projected Population Growth Doña Ana County

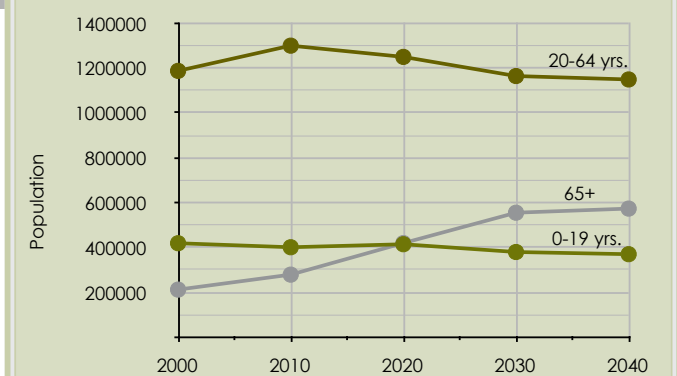


Source: New Mexico State University Arrowhead Center (NMSU), New Mexico Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), University of Texas El Paso Border Regional Modeling Project (UTEP), and City of El Paso Regional Economic Model (REMI).

Chapter 2, "Regional Vision Statement," and Figure 1-1, "Our Vision," in the Executive Summary states the vision expressed by the residents of Doña Ana County. This vision is the foundation of the One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan.

Chapter 3, "Introduction," explains the purpose of this plan, summarizes the public engagement process, lists the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT), and provides demographic data, focusing on the historic and future population growth for Doña Ana County. For planning purposes, the plan uses a population of 325,000 to represent a likely midrange forecast for the year 2040 with an increase of approximately 115,000 residents from the 2010 population estimate of 210,000 people. This population forecast derives from examining population projection calculations from four different institutions as illustrated in Figure 1-2, "Projected Population Growth." A noted trend of the population for the county is the projected increase in the number of persons over 65 years of age as illustrated in Figure 1-3, "Age Group Projections."

Age Group Projections State of New Mexico



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim State Population Projections; 2040 projection based on growth rate of previous years and stable population total

Chapter 4, "Concepts," describes the concepts of sustainability and smart growth. Both of these concepts have increased in importance in recent years as communities attempt to manage their resources in the best way possible. These concepts encourage an approach geared toward resilience, adaptability, stewardship, and acknowledgement of the interconnected relationships of the economy, society, and environment. For this plan, these concepts helped shape the ten guiding principles shown in Table 1-1, "Guiding Principles."

Chapter 5, "Regional Snapshot," identifies twelve resource topics: Land Use; Water; Air Quality; Environmental Resources; Hazards; Transportation; Community Facilities & Services; Utilities & Infrastructure; Housing; Economy; Community Character, Design & Historical Preservation; and Intergovernmental Cooperation. The "Regional Snapshot" chapter expounds on each topic, providing information on existing conditions, issues, and accomplishments.

Chapter 6, "Regional Goals & Strategies," builds off the issues identified for each of the

Table 1-1

Guiding Principles

- Create safe, clean, and affordable places to live that offer economic and other opportunities.
- Keep intact values for individual liberty, democracy, and private-property rights.
- Recognize natural market forces exist that are best left alone; however, opportunities to use, respond to, or guide these forces should be pursued to better manage the region's resources.
- Welcome growth in a way that is mindful of its impact to important historic, cultural and natural resources.
- Use renewable and finite resources wisely in a way that minimizes or reuses waste.
- Address the inter-relationship of the resource topics identified in this plan.
- Encourage communities to move toward sustainable practices over time.
- Use an open process that affords everyone opportunities to participate in public decisions.
- Foster a sense of community that best matches the region, municipalities and neighborhoods.
- Try to anticipate changes or events that may threaten the usual way of doing things so the region is more resilient.

twelve resource topics. The goals represent common approaches to resources of regional significance within Doña Ana County. The strategies for each goal identify possible ways to achieve the goal and may

not apply in all circumstances or parts of the county. Table 1-2, "Regional Goals," lists the goals identified through the public engagement process for this plan.

Chapter 7, "Types of Communities," describes some broad characteristics of four categories of communities within Doña Ana County: Municipality, Colonia, Extra-Territorial Zone, and County. These types of communities represent distinct areas with their own administrative or planning functions to develop future comprehensive or master plans, have appointed or elected bodies that address the physical developmental pattern for a defined area, or are a recognized community type by New Mexico State Statute.

Chapter 8, "Regional Growth Strategies," describes the housing and development methodologies used to develop the concept plan of Map 11, "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040." The "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040" includes a key assumption to encourage approximately two-thirds of new population distribution to occur within existing municipalities and the remaining one-third of new population distribution to occur within the unincorporated portions of Doña Ana County. The 2010 population distribution had 54 percent of people residing within existing municipalities and 46 percent of people residing in unincorporated portions of the county. Table 1-3, "Consensus Growth Strategy Assumptions - 2040," provides the key assumptions envisioned with Map 11, "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040."

Regional Goals

Table 1-2

Land Use

- Land use should serve as the element of the regional plan upon which all other elements of One Valley, One Vision 2040 are based.
- Provide a general form or pattern for the location, distribution, and characteristics of future land use within Doña Ana County to the year 2040.
- Prepare a future land use plan that is fiscally resilient.
- Create and integrate Smart Growth principles in planning.
- Guide development in a manner that will both protect the rights of private landowners and the interests of the public.
- Encourage development where adequate facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.
- Encourage the development of communities with a mixture of land uses.
- Encourage retention of open space, scenic aspects of rural areas, entranceways to urban areas, and transition areas between urban areas.
- Promote the region's status as one of New Mexico's most productive and economically important agricultural areas.

Water

- Ensure the availability of a safe, dependable, affordable, and sustainable water supply to meet or exceed the needs of all reasonable beneficial uses.
- Protect existing surface and groundwater from pollution and ensure it meets or exceeds water quality standards.

Air Quality

- Support regional efforts to maintain and improve air quality by meeting or exceeding State and Federal Air Quality Standards.

Environmental Resources

- Make land use decisions that protect and enhance the natural environment.
- Protect and maintain natural habitat and wildlife connectivity to the greatest extent possible and mitigate damage that may result from development.
- Minimize impacts created by development and human activities to realize the full potential of the environmental resources as a community asset.

Regional Goals

Table 1-2

Hazards

- Protect people and property from hazards.
- Protect people and property from the negative effects of stormwater.

Transportation

- Encourage the development of a safe, efficient, and effective multimodal transportation system for a variety of transportation choices.
- Coordinate transportation planning with other functions, including land use planning.
- Increase access to non-motorized transportation options to promote healthy living and provide mobility alternatives.
- Increase transit ridership, accessibility, and convenience.

Community Facilities & Services

- Provide community facilities and services that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.
- Meet the existing and projected needs of residents through location, access, extent and timing, staffing, and category of community facilities and services.
- Coordinate with other local government, special districts, school districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of community facilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.
- Ensure that local governments provide adequate, properly located recreational and leisure opportunities.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation to utilize open spaces to a greater extent.

Utilities & Infrastructure

- Provide utilities and infrastructure that are necessary or desirable to support the future land use plan.
- Meet the projected needs of residents through location, access, character, extent and timing of public utilities and infrastructure.
- Coordinate with other local governments, utility districts, and state and federal agencies on the provision of utilities that have multijurisdictional impacts.
- Develop and implement comprehensive measures to maximize resource conservation.

Regional Goals

Table 1-2

Housing

- Create livable mixed-use neighborhoods with increased mobility options and a strong sense of community.
- Provide a range of housing alternatives that provides safe, clean, comfortable, and affordable living environments.

Economy

- Sustain and attract economic activities that play a vital role to the region in providing jobs, services, and adding to quality of life.
- Diversify business communities to enhance economic vitality and workforce opportunities.
- Establish communities that attract and retain a well-trained workforce.
- Enhance the economic potential of the Rio Grande in a way that protects its environmental and agricultural functions.
- Provide sustainable and efficient infrastructure to advance economic growth and revitalization.

Community Character, Design, & Historic Preservation

- Preserve and respect scenic views, sites, and corridors in a manner that reasonably compensates, provides incentives, maintains similar existing property rights, or in another similar manner that balances the public and property owner interests.
- Encourage innovative design that is compatible with the surrounding character.
- Support a visually cohesive region respecting the character of communities that makes them unique.
- Identify, preserve, and enhance the historic and cultural resources of Doña Ana County.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

- Improve effective intergovernmental cooperation in addressing regional matters and guiding quality growth.
- Engage a diverse group of residents in the process of local government and intergovernmental cooperation.

Chapter 1, Executive Summary

The "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040" is a hybrid strategy of three different growth strategy alternatives considered during the planning process for this plan: trend, satellite, and compact. Figure 1-4, "Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square," and Figure 1-5, "Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040," convey the core concepts of the "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040" and the guiding principles of this plan.

Chapter 8, "Regional Growth Strategies," describes the jobs methodologies used to develop the concept plan of Map 12, "Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040." The "Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040" includes a key assumption to double the number of jobs from 95,000 to 180,000 by 2040. In addition, this strategy encourages a jobs/housing balance and economic gardening approach. The jobs/housing balance strives to locate jobs and housing at price ranges

that economically match the range of jobs within a reasonable commute time. The economic gardening approach looks to create a nurturing environment allowing smaller, local companies to grow. Table 1-4, "Consensus Jobs Strategy Assumptions - 2040," provides the key assumptions envisioned with the "Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040."

Chapter 8, "Regional Growth Strategies," concludes with Map 13, "Regional Plan - 2040." The "Regional Plan - 2040" is a composite of the concept plans "Consensus Growth Strategy - 2040" and "Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040." The concept plan "Regional Plan - 2040" recognizes growth will and can occur outside designated growth areas; however, growth should be incentivized toward the identified growth areas. This plan represents the large-scale conceptual vision for Doña Ana County in regards to growth and employment.

Figure 1-4: Rural Illustration Small Community Central Square



Table 1-3

Consensus Growth Strategy Assumptions - 2040 Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Consensus Growth Strategy
2010 Land Use Supply (Undeveloped)	397 sq. mi.
2040 Land Use Demand	5.39 sq. mi.
Population Distribution	70% Municipalities 30% County
Infrastructure	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure.
Density	Central city & small community cores more dense
Growth Pattern	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

Table 1-4

Consensus Jobs Strategy Assumptions - 2040 Doña Ana County Region

Key Assumptions	Jobs Growth Strategy
2011 Jobs Supply	95,000 Jobs total
2040 Jobs Demand	180,000 Jobs total
Jobs Distribution	Jobs housing balance & economic gardening
Infrastructure	Growth incentivized impact fee infrastructure
Density	Central city & small community more dense
Growth Pattern	Concentrated in central city & small planned communities
Building Envelopes	Mid-hi rise central city & low rise small communities

Chapter 1, Executive Summary

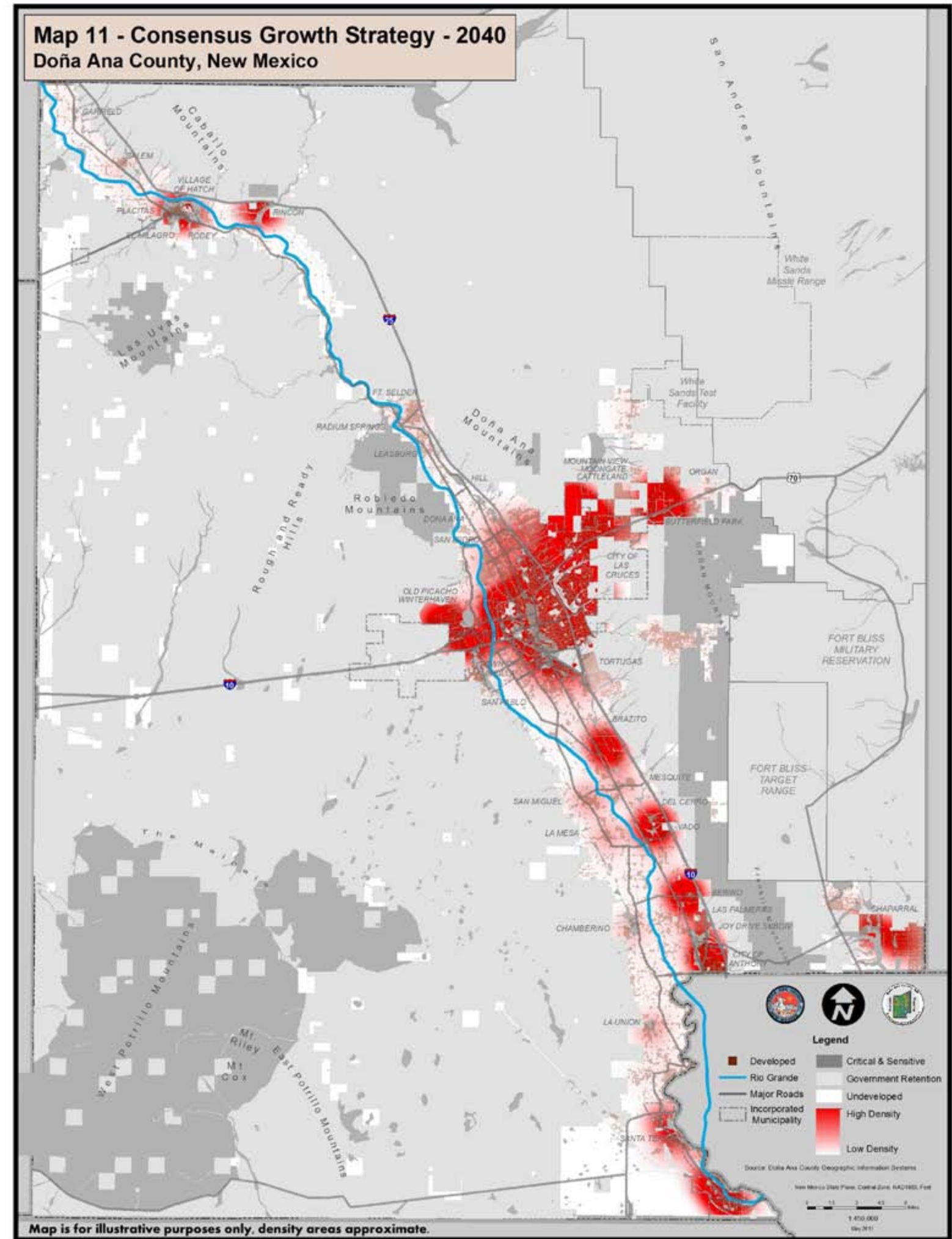
Chapter 9, "Implementation," describes who will monitor the plan, the amendment process, the application of this plan in the planning decision-making process, and a preliminary list of actions local governing bodies might consider over the next five years in Table 9-1, "Regional Action Plan." The "Regional Action Plan" lists the goals associated with each action, primary responsible entities, and a priority ranking of actions for 2012 to 2013.

The last chapters in the plan are Chapter 10, "Acronyms & Glossary" and Chapter 11, "Bibliography."

1.3 Conclusion

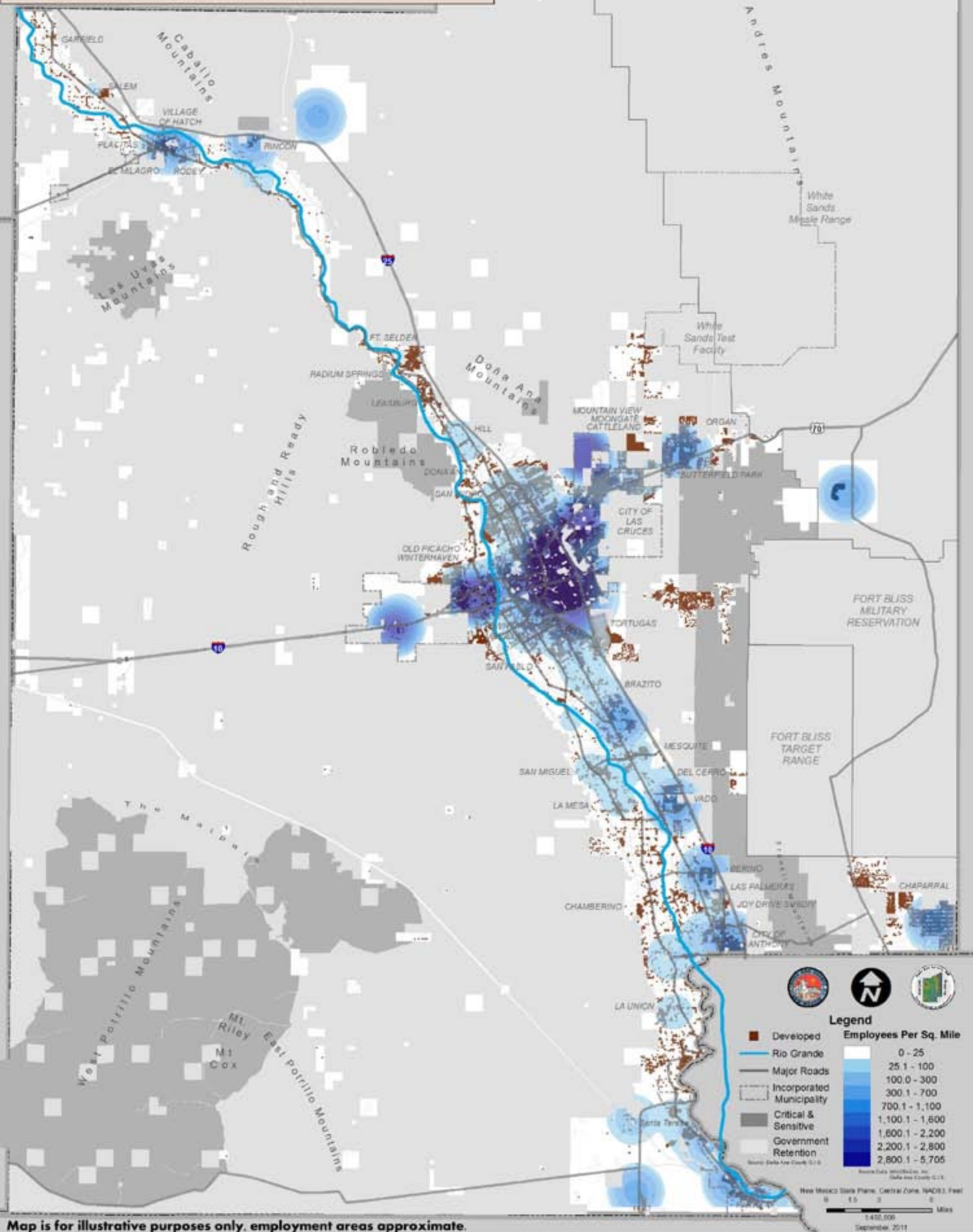
The One Valley, One Vision 2040 Regional Plan intends to create a unified sense of direction, describing the vision expressed by the residents of Doña Ana County. It is a cumulative expression of the values, concerns, and goals of the people here. It shows the resources valued and how they want to protect those resources in the future. It shows how they want to accommodate future growth, while protecting and maintaining the valuable aspects of the region. As a whole, this regional planning effort has created a collaborative vision; together we are shaping our destiny by working together as one valley with one vision.

Figure 1-5: Urban Illustration of Downtown Las Cruces, NM 2040



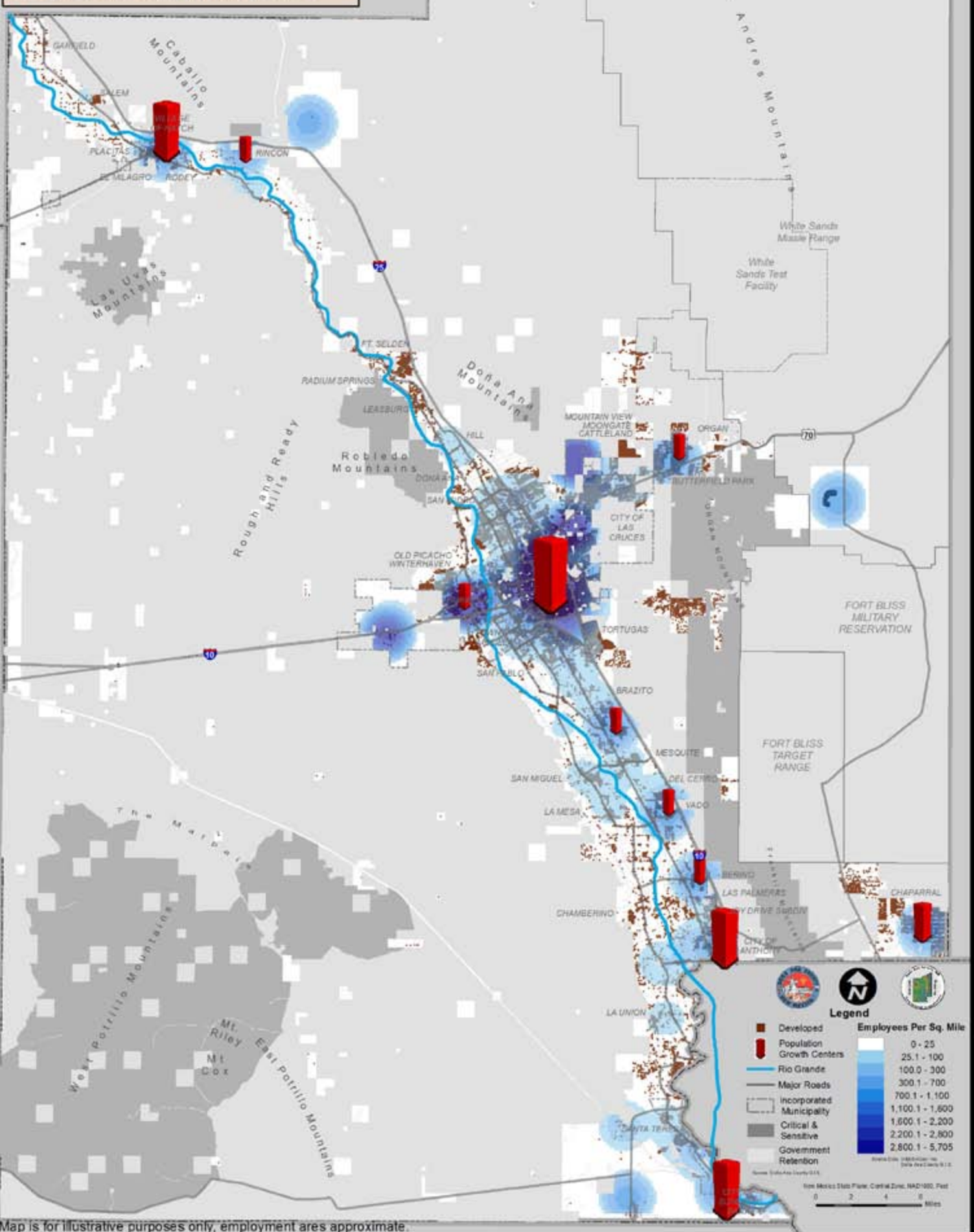
Map is for illustrative purposes only, density areas approximate.

Map 12 - Consensus Jobs Strategy - 2040
Doña Ana County, New Mexico



Map is for illustrative purposes only. employment areas approximate.

Map 13 - Regional Plan - 2040
Doña Ana County, New Mexico



Map is for illustrative purposes only. employment areas approximate.



One Valley, One Vision
2040

Doña Ana County, New Mexico
Regional Plan

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