



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The following are the summary minutes for the meeting of the **Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee** held on Wednesday, May 29, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall, Room 2007-B, 700 North Main Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

**Members Present:**

- Sharon Thomas, Chair
- Harvey Gordon, Member (Departed 12:07)
- John Moscato, Member
- Christina Ainsworth, Member (Departed 12:15)
- Todd Stuve, Member
- George Vescovo, Member
- Heather Watenpaugh, Member
- Roberta Gran, Member (Departed 11:56)
- James Bennett, Member (Departed 12:45)

**Members Absent**

- Mary Ann Hendrickson, Vice Chair
- La Vonne Muniz, Member
- Abraham Sanchez, Member
- Russ Smith, Member

**Staff Present:**

- Srijana Basnyat, Community Development
- John Castillo, Community Development
- Dominic Loya, Community Development
- Mark Miller, Community Development
- Larry Nichols, Community Development
- David Weir, Community Development

**Others Present:**

- Jim Carrillo, Halff Associates
- Christian Lentz, Halff Associates
- Kendall Howard, Halff Associates
- Jason King, Dover, Kohl & Partners
- Kasandra Gandara, City Councilor
- David Chavez

1 **I. Call to Order (10:00 a.m.)**

2  
3 Chairperson called the meeting to order.

4  
5 **II. Introduction**

6  
7 Introductions all around.

8  
9 **III. Approval of Minutes**

10  
11 **1. May 9, 2019**

12 The minutes were postponed to the end of the meeting.

13  
14 **IV. Project Status and Update**

15  
16 Halff Associates discussed the project status and Future Development Map of  
17 Elevate Las Cruces. They noted their appreciation of the Board's feedback and  
18 mentioned that the Community Profile now includes the most recent data for 2017.

19  
20 **V. Future Development Maps – Discussion**

21  
22 **1. Future Development Map Review Exercise**

23 Halff Associates explained that the first volume of the plan would include an  
24 updated Vision Statement, Future Development Map, policies and a Major  
25 Thoroughfare Map. Halff Associates asked the CPAC to discuss the maps and  
26 place types using the consensus growth scenario as a base.

27  
28 A member of the CPAC mentioned the new State Land Commissioner's interest  
29 in reinstating previous Joint Planning Agreements with the City and past land  
30 swap discussions with BLM.

31  
32 Halff Associates noted that the Future Development Map, regardless of  
33 ownership, should reflect how Las Cruces wants to develop. They noted that  
34 the place type classifications are continually being refined, and that they have  
35 added more examples of amenities likely found within each (educational  
36 campuses, airport, industrial parks, etc.) place type. Halff Associates noted that  
37 existing blueprints and neighborhood planning areas will be shown in a  
38 secondary map including areas such as Amador Proximo and Apodaca. They  
39 emphasized that the plan will embrace the idea of special area and district  
40 planning.

41  
42 CPAC discussed that the Future Development Map should show how the City  
43 wants to grow and should not focus solely on investments. Halff stated that they  
44 have a sense of the market, but this plan is about the vision of Las Cruces.

1 CPAC discussed enticing people to develop in areas such as the airport. Staff  
2 noted that the Goals, Policies and Action items will provide the means to direct  
3 development.  
4

5 CPAC discussed areas around Red Hawk and Halff Associates asked for  
6 direction on where to place neighborhood centers. The CPAC expressed that  
7 the City needs to be more entrepreneurial rather than governmental.  
8

9 Halff Associates gave an overview of each place type and asked for further  
10 input from the CPAC on each one individually.  
11

12 **Open space preserve**

13 Halff Associates noted that the growth of the City could be accommodated  
14 within the existing City limits. They reviewed that the Future Development Map  
15 shows where the community decides to grow so that the City can focus growth  
16 and public infrastructure in those areas. They noted the map focuses on the  
17 type of growth, not individual zoning.  
18

19 CPAC discussed the need for schools, hospitals, clinics, and fire stations  
20 especially east along US 70. Staff reminded the CPAC that this plan would be  
21 amended every 10 years and would allow for some flexibility. They also noted  
22 that the Fire Department has stations 9 and 10 planned.  
23

24 CPAC discussed the arroyos and noted that they are an area of concern. Halff  
25 Associates agreed to better define the arroyos and how they relate to the  
26 neighborhoods around them.  
27

28 **Rural reserve**

29 Halff noted the intent with this place type is to encourage conservation  
30 neighborhoods, cluster development and the preservation of nature areas.  
31

32 There was a discussion on how topography will play a part in development on  
33 the East Mesa. CPAC discussed whether the East Mesa would be better suited  
34 for cluster development rather than suburban development. Some members  
35 expressed opinions that city growth should be moved further east into the East  
36 Mesa because of the demand for suburban development. Staff reminded CPAC  
37 that the City would have to maintain the infrastructure.  
38

39 CPAC discussed adding a minimum of a 100-foot buffer to be dedicated around  
40 arroyos to respect water and to maintain existing topography.  
41

42 Staff asked the CPAC to consider whether the area of the East Mesa should  
43 be preserved with its natural topography, alignment, and whether design should  
44 consider existing topography.  
45

1 Halff agreed to explore options of the East Mesa and possibly move suburban  
2 development slightly east to follow the same pattern currently shown.

3  
4 **Suburban Neighborhood**

5 Halff Associates explained that residential development is changing and that  
6 the average person wants different styles of homes for different chapters of  
7 their life. They referenced a number of new trends desired in residential:  
8 connectivity, walkability, and multi-generational neighborhoods.

9  
10 CPAC noted that older neighborhoods tend to have parkways and trees making  
11 them more appealing to walk along. They noted the difference in newer  
12 neighborhoods that tend to be warmer due to the lack of a cooling effect, which  
13 leads them to be more unattractive to live in.

14  
15 A CPAC member thought that the city's design standards required a 7-foot  
16 parkway for trees to be planted which would limit opportunities. The CPAC  
17 recommended focusing trees on the people rather than within the medians and  
18 noted the importance of identifying streets for parkways.

19  
20 **Regional Commercial**

21 CPAC mentioned a lack of parking lot connections on El Paseo.

22  
23 Halff Associates noted that most communities do a good job making sure that  
24 sidewalks are put in but forget to think about how the pedestrians get from the  
25 sidewalks to the buildings. They mentioned that Regional Commercial is  
26 intended to be more car-oriented, but that the CPAC should also consider the  
27 walkable development policies to accomplish a pedestrian-friendly  
28 environment. CPAC mentioned Oro Valley in Tucson, AZ as an example.

29  
30 Staff stated the need to create visual consistency and harmony in architecture,  
31 but not limit business owner's creativity.

32  
33 David Chavez discussed the issues that have affected Las Cruces including  
34 urban renewal in the '60s and '70s, which closed Main Street. He noted the  
35 desire to create neighborhoods that have different and unique architecture to  
36 emphasize our region of the country. He encouraged consistent architecture  
37 that complements our cultural heritage.

38  
39 **Downtown**

40 Halff Associates mentioned that downtown is the single most important area of  
41 the City and that the development of the City must complement the downtown  
42 district.

43  
44 CPAC discussed the concept of complete neighborhoods and how the idea  
45 varies throughout different neighborhoods.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45

**Neighborhood Centers**

Halff Associates noted the potential to use neighborhood centers to tie together the feel of an entire neighborhood.

CPAC asked for clarification on the distance between neighborhood centers.

Halff Associates responded that in a perfect world, there would be a neighborhood center every quarter mile.

CPAC mentioned the 10 years that the City took to restart downtown. They expressed concerns about the amount of buy-in from the community.

**2. Major Future Thoroughfare Map Exercise**

Staff noted that the current MTP includes large streets (collectors and above) but does not include local streets or policies.

CPAC mentioned the MPO is much more committed to this type of discussion but that the City has no control over funding and would need a population of over 200,000 to receive better funding.

**VI. Design Workshop Demonstration Sites – Discussion**

Jason King discussed the Elevate Las Cruces meeting held last evening and noted that additional meetings would be held over the next couple of days. He mentioned the need for more walkability, coffee shops and small grocery, art, housing types for all, repurposed malls, downtown parking garages, changing parking to developments or parks, more art, children's museum. They discussed using word clouds today and in the future.

Halff Associates asked the CPAC if they had comments on the Future Development Map. CPAC noted that University Avenue was shown as a Mixed-Use Corridor.

Halff Associates discussed that many of the roads in Las Cruces tend to be wide to accommodate a large number of cars but are uncomfortable for other users. They discussed the sliding scale of mobility with the highway as an example: the more vehicular mobility, the less access. They noted that streets need to be balanced for all users and that slower traffic and calmer streets can lead to economic development. They mentioned treatments to existing roadways to make them multi-modal including adjusting lane widths.

Halff Associates discussed that in general rural streets tend to be designed for vehicular mobility and tend to connect people to employment centers or residential areas while lacking curb and gutter. They said sidewalks and bicycle

1 accommodations tend to be optional on these types of roads. They noted that  
2 Dover Kohl will be developing examples of how place types can be designed and  
3 developed throughout the week during the Design Workshop.  
4

5 **VII. Public Comment Period**

6  
7 There was no public comment.  
8

9 **VIII. Next Steps**

10  
11 Survey Number 2 will open to the public in the next few weeks. The next CPAC  
12 meeting was announced to be during the upcoming summer.  
13

14 **IX. Approval of Minutes**

15  
16 George Vescovo proposed an edit that the last slide in his presentation referenced  
17 gross receipts tax rates across the state of New Mexico.  
18

19 George Vescovo moved to approve the minutes with the change mentioned  
20 previously. Heather Watenpaugh seconded the motion. The motion passed  
21 unanimously.  
22

23 **X. Adjournment**

24  
25 Heather Watenpaugh moved to adjourn the meeting. George Vescovo seconded  
26 the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:02 p.m.