



2024 Village of La Bajada Community Plan



Acknowledgements

The Village of La Bajada Planning Committee was open to the entire community and the following individuals participated in the planning process:

LA BAJADA PLANNING COMMITTEE

MEMBERS:

Alonzo Gallegos

Anselmo Mariscal

Darrin Muenzberg

Dolores G. Baca

Eva Seifert Muenzberg

Evangeline J. Tinajero

George Gallegos

Gloria Gormley

Josefina Mariscal

Lucia Blaugh

Luis Mariscal

Maria Lopez

Patricia Montoya

Patrick Gallegos

Rozella M. Lopez

Shawn Gormley

COUNTY OFFICIALS:

Justin Greene, Commission District 1

Anna Hansen, Commission District 2

Camilla Bustamante, Commission District 3

Anna T. Hamilton PhD, Commission District 4

Hank Hughes, Commission District 5

COUNTY MANAGER:

Greg Shaffer

COUNTY PLANNING DIVISION:

Alexandra Ladd, Growth Management Director

Leandro Cordova, Growth Management Director-Interim

Gary Brett Clavio, Planning Manager

Adeline Murthy, Planning Team Leader, Open Space & Trails

Maxx Hendren, Planning Team Leader, Capital Planning

Herbert Foster, Planning Team Leader, TDR Program

Benjamin B. Bachwirtz-Lopez, Senior Transportation Planner

Valerie Rangel, Senior GIS Planner

Nate Crail, Senior Community Planner

Joseph Scala, Community Planner

Monica Harmon, Open Space Resource Management Specialist

Rose Masters, Open Space Interpretive Ranger

FRONT COVER PHOTOS:

Top left - view of Santa Fe River

Bottom left - iconic view of Tetilla Peak

Right - a friendly sheep

Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Section I: Introduction.....	7
Intent & Purpose.....	9
Village of La Bajada District Description	10
Challenges and Opportunities.....	10
Planning History and Community Outreach.....	11
Related Plans, Policies and Programs.....	12
Community Vision.....	15
Community Plan Process.....	17
Santa Fe County Policy Framework.....	18
Santa Fe County Zoning Context.....	18
Community Context.....	19
Village of La Bajada Demographics.....	20
La Majada Land Grant.....	21
Section II: Plan Elements.....	25
Land Use.....	27
Economic Development.....	41
Agricultural and Ranching.....	47
Resource Conservation.....	57
Open Space, Trails, Parks and Recreation.....	63
Public Safety.....	69
Transportation.....	73
Water, Wastewater and Stormwater.....	85
Adequate Public Facilities and Financing.....	95
Housing.....	101
Governance.....	107
Section III: Implementation and Goals.....	111
Appendix.....	120

List of Maps

La Majada Grant Map.....20
Existing Land Use.....28
Future Land Use.....34
Historic Roads.....77
NPS Historic Trails and Roads.....78
La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic Water Association, Acequia.....88
La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic Water Association, Pipeline.....89
Hydrographic Survey, 1976.....90

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMMUNITY VISION

The Village of La Bajada continues to be a vibrant and safe community which maintains the traditional Spanish settlement pattern with a central plazita, safe and secure community water and necessary infrastructure.

The residents continue to have fulfilling relationships with the surrounding communities and share in gatherings for feast days, breaking of bread and sharing comidas nativas, and celebrations. There is an understanding of a respectful land ethic shared among neighbors such that access to the surrounding landscape and resources may occur sustainably. Community stewardship and interpretation of our cultural heritage continues to maintain a vibrant community.

The Plan is organized into eleven subsections: 1) Introduction 2) Land Use 3) Economic Development 4) Agricultural and Ranching 5) Resource Conservation 6) Open Space, Trails, Parks and Recreation 7) Public Safety 8) Transportation 9) Water, Wastewater and Stormwater 10) Financing 11) Housing 12) Governance.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

The 2024 Village of La Bajada Community Plan (Plan) covers the Traditional Community of La Bajada. The Plan will provide a foundation for amendments to the Village of La Bajada Community District Overlay in the SLDC. The purpose of the Plan is to ensure the vision for the Village of La Bajada's is documented and supported by the County. The Plan aims for consistency with the Santa Fe County Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP).

SECTION II. PLAN ELEMENTS

The 2024 Village of La Bajada Community Plan includes a comprehensive set of elements designed to guide the future development and preservation of the village. These elements address a wide range of critical areas, including land use, economic development, agriculture, resource conservation, open space, public safety, transportation, and water management. Each element is tailored to the unique needs and opportunities of La Bajada, ensuring a balanced and sustainable approach to growth.

SECTION III. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation section prioritizes key projects, assigns them priority rankings, and identifies potential funding sources to ensure critical initiatives are addressed. It compiles goals, strategies, and actions from each plan element to provide a comprehensive overview of required initiatives, ensuring a coordinated approach to project execution. The plan includes a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress, emphasizing community engagement to foster collaboration and address the community's needs. By following this structured approach, the village can ensure efficient and effective realization of the Community Plan, achieving its long-term vision and addressing immediate needs.

SECTION I: Introduction







INTENT & PURPOSE

The community planning process establishes a role for property owners and residents to participate in shaping the future through developing a vision for the Village of La Bajada. This plan provides the context of the village within the overall County through a series of dialogues and shared understanding of the desired future for the community.

The purpose of this planning process is to ensure that the community's voice is represented and that future development is in balance with both natural and human systems, sustaining traditional lifeways in harmony within the natural environment and cultural setting.

This plan is intended to reinforce the unique, historical, rural character of the plan area while serving evolving community needs. There is a need for intergovernmental coordination in order to address complex issues in the community such as maintenance of infrastructure, water, roads, and access. A thread throughout this plan is to work towards approaches to problem solving and cross-jurisdictional understandings in order to address issues of mutual interest and concern.

The County's Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) lays

the foundation for building more effective regional partnerships in the County. The health of Santa Fe County's communities, including Traditional Communities, tribal governments, the incorporated municipalities, the rural areas of the County and the welfare of the region are interconnected.

Intergovernmental cooperation may involve multiple jurisdictions to communicate and address and resolve issues of mutual interest. Establishing greater efficiency and effectiveness in the planning process is an on-going effort that the County in coordination with its communities seeks to improve upon. Good governance also lays the foundation for building more effective regional partnerships in the County and is key for the community's sustainability.

Since passage of **Public Law 98-344** (To declare that the United States holds certain lands in trust for the Pueblo de Cochiti), **Public Law 106-307** (El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail Act) and **Public Law 106-425** (Santo Domingo Pueblo Claims Settlement Act of 2000) by the Congress of the United States, there has been an ongoing need for village representatives to engage with neighbors and agencies including Santa Fe County, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Cochiti Pueblo, Kewa Pueblo (also known as Santo Domingo), Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The easements to existing and historical rights of way in and around the Village of La Bajada have yet to be issued by the Secretary of the Interior at time of this writing.

VILLAGE OF LA BAJADA DISTRICT DESCRIPTION

The La Bajada Community Plan covers the Traditional Community of La Bajada which is located about 15 miles southwest of the City of Santa Fe in the unincorporated area of southwestern Santa Fe County. The Village of La Bajada Community District is an area is bordered by Federal Lands held in trust by Pueblo de Cochiti on all sides. The area includes approximately 74 acres and is fed by way of acequia from the Santa Fe River. The Village of La Bajada is home to 26 residents (2020 Census).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The plan addresses new and changing conditions within the Village of La Bajada community. Among the conditions addressed are:

Community Access

The topic of community access in the Village of La Bajada is of critical importance, encompassing various aspects such as transportation, emergency services, and intergovernmental cooperation. There is a need for reliable and accessible transportation options for all members. Currently, there is only one way in and out of the village. Access through the former Route 66, also known as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, was disrupted in 2016, when Pueblo de Cochiti closed the road. This change has been a source of contention for the community. Additionally, the lack of general road maintenance further complicates access to the village.

Road Maintenance

Road maintenance is a crucial aspect for community access and development. There is a need to restore clear, legal road access, because historic access points such as Route 66 have been cut off, this is particularly important for Tetilla Peak Road and La Bajada Village Road, currently the only access points for the village. The plan also highlights the significance of inter-jurisdictional cooperation to address road maintenance issues, including the dedication of La Bajada Road to the County for maintenance. Additionally, the plan underscores the need for regular meetings with representatives from governmental agencies to discuss options for collaboration and compromise regarding inter-jurisdictional matters. Overall, the plan emphasizes the essential role of road maintenance in ensuring safe and accessible transportation access for the community.

Agricultural Viability/Food Security

There are various strategies and actions aimed at supporting and enhancing the agricultural sector in the Village of La Bajada. By establishing an agricultural overlay to support ongoing agricultural activities, the viability of agriculture for food security and sustainability is enhanced. Addition-

ally, collaborations with local agricultural institutions for technical assistance, the use of agricultural and grazing special method valuation for taxation benefits, and increasing awareness of criteria and qualification processes for agricultural valuation are other ways to support the village's agricultural future. Furthermore, ensuring continued surface water flow for agricultural irrigation, engaging in water management discussions, and provide training and education on best practices for water reclamation and reuse. The village has a long-standing tradition of raising sheep and other livestock. Ensuring access to local grazing lands, some of which are situated on federal land, is of significant importance to the community.



Infrastructure Funding

Infrastructure funding is central to supporting the construction, maintenance, and improvement of public facilities. It highlights the necessity of public finance to address infrastructure funding, ensure access to local resources such as grazing lands, preserve water rights, and implement land preservation tools and incentives. There is a need to fund a cadastral survey to assess the planning boundaries in the village. Additionally, the community desires to construct a small plaza by the church to serve as a community gathering space.

Internet/Broadband Connectivity

Cellular and internet services in the village are limited. Despite numerous efforts to engage various service providers, the church remains the sole



Tree with a bench in a residential yard in the village

point of internet access. The community members rely on mobile data connections. Community members express a strong desire for internet access within their homes.

Open Space and Trails

The Village of La Bajada presents unique opportunities for developing and enhancing its open spaces and trails. The central placita near the San Miguel Church could serve as a focal point for community gatherings, cultural events, and small-scale businesses. By developing this space, the village can create a vibrant hub that supports its vision for sustainable growth and cultural preservation. Additionally, the existing network of trails offers potential for eco-tourism and agritourism, providing economic benefits and promoting the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

PLANNING HISTORY & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The community planning process establishes a role for property owners and residents to participate in shaping the future through developing a vision for the Village of La Bajada. This plan provides the context of the village within the overall County through a series of dialogues and shared understanding of the desired future for the community.

The purpose of this planning process is to ensure that the community's voice is represented and that future development is in balance with both natural and human systems, sustaining traditional lifeways in harmony within the natural environment and cultural setting. This plan is intended to reinforce the unique, historical, rural character of the plan area while serving evolving community needs.

There is a need for intergovernmental coordination in order to address complex issues in the community such as maintenance of infrastructure, water, roads, and access. A thread throughout this plan is to work towards approaches to problem solving and cross-jurisdictional understandings in order to address issues of mutual interest and concern.

Since passage of Public Laws 98-344 and 106-425 by the Congress of the United States, there has been an ongoing need for village representatives to engage with neighbors and agencies including Santa Fe County, Bureau of

Indian Affairs, Cochiti Pueblo, Kewa Pueblo (also known as Santo Domingo), Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The easements to existing and historical rights of way in and around the Village of La Bajada have yet to be issued by the Secretary of the Interior at time of this writing. The La Bajada Community Ditch & Mutual Domestic Water Association Registered Organization and La Bajada Traditional Village Community Organization submitted a Letter of Intent to form the Village of La Bajada Planning Committee on April 29, 2017. This letter was submitted based on a series of community meetings beginning in May 2016 that established the justification for a community planning process based on community needs and key issues identified.

The kick-off meeting for the La Bajada Community planning process was held on July 15th, 2017. At this meeting, staff facilitated a discussion about Planning Committee process in accordance with the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) and Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC). The Village of La Bajada planning committee includes representation from the La Bajada Community Ditch & Mutual Domestic Water Association Registered Organization and La Bajada Traditional Village Community Organization and community members. Planning committee meetings have been open for participation and have been conducted in accordance with the community plan process established by the County Sustainable Land Development Code. Planning committee meetings provided opportunities for residents of the Village of La Bajada to have their voice heard regarding the future of their community.

Meetings were held in an accessory structure at a private residence in the community since there is no County facility in the Village of La Bajada. A meeting was also held at the La Cienega Community Center which is approximately 15 miles from the Village of La Bajada.

The process included numerous site visits, interviews, meetings, and intergovernmental discussions. The development of the plan identifies community members' perspective to include the community vision statement, the historical background and the existing land uses enjoyed by the residents of the Village of La Bajada.

Next Steps:

The Village of La Bajada Community Plan will be implemented on an on-going basis through a variety of mechanisms including amendments to the SLDC, capital improvement programming of community projects and programs as identified throughout this document. The Village of La Bajada Community, Santa Fe County and other agencies will have an important role in implementation as well as supporting plan goals and objectives.



Montoya Adobe home

RELATED PLANS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

As part of the Village of La Bajada Community Plan planning process, the following plans, policies, and programs were reviewed in order to understand the current policy and regulatory framework that guides development in the area and determine appropriate amendments to the framework:

The Village of La Bajada Planning Committee was established via Resolu-

tion 2017-55 on May 30th 2017. This Resolution authorized the community planning process for the Village of La Bajada.

2015 Santa Fe County Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP)

- The Santa Fe County Sustainable Growth Management Plan provides policy direction for managing future growth across the County, including direction on creating, adopting, and implementing community plans.

Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC)

- 2016 Santa Fe County SLDC provides zoning regulations and standards for new development. The SLDC implements the County's SGMP.

Capital Planning

- Santa Fe County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP): Guides public investment in projects to serve existing and future development.
- Santa Fe County Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP): Comprised of projects generated by the County and project requests from the community that are submitted to state legislature for capital outlay funding.

Regional Organizations

- La Bajada Community Ditch Mutual Domestic
- Santa Fe River Traditional Community Collaborative
- Caja del Rio Majada Cooperative

State and Federal Agencies

- Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission- Responsible for administering the state's water resources.
- NM Environment Department- Administers programs and regulations to promote a healthy, high functioning environment. The agency's responsibilities include the administration of the Liquid Waste Program and Drinking Water Program.
- NM Department of Transportation- Responsible for planning a safe, integrated, and multi-modal transportation system. The agency's responsibilities include managing construction

activities on state roads and highways.

- US Army Corps of Engineers: A formation of the US Army that assists in planning, design, building and operating civil engineering projects, particularly flooding protection systems, across the United States.
- US Forest Service: Manages the Santa Fe National Forest.
- Bureau of Reclamation: Lead federal agency for managing and implementing the Aamodt Settlement.
- Office of the State Engineer: Handles applications for replacement well permits.

Tribal Governments

- Pueblo de Cochiti
- Santo Domingo Pueblo (also known as Kewa Pueblo)

Community Vision

“The Village of La Bajada will continue to be a vibrant and safe community which maintains the traditional Spanish settlement pattern with a central plazita, safe and secure community water and necessary infrastructure.”

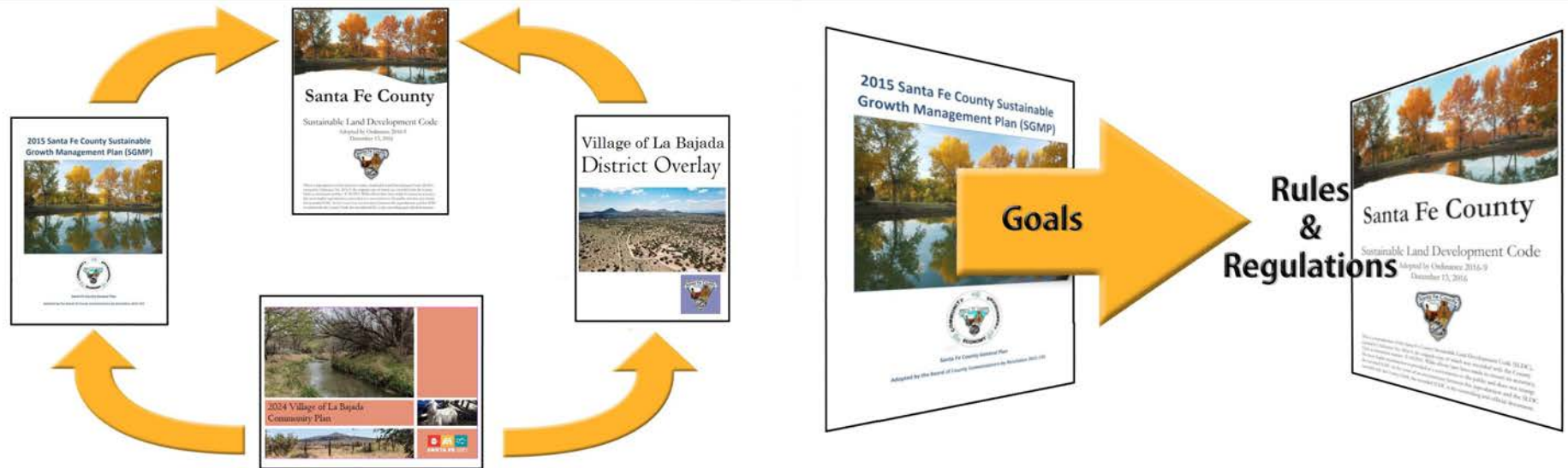
“The Village of La Bajada is beautiful and peaceful, a ‘piece of heaven.’ In the Village of La Bajada, future generations will continue to learn from the land and lead self-sufficient lifeways to include growing food, raising livestock, earning a living from the land, and enjoying a high quality of life.

Residents have created several small-scale, successful enterprises which harness the community’s unique natural and cultural heritage inspired by the village’s historic role as a paraje on a longer journey. The village remains an oasis for travelers on the historic Camino Real. The Village of La Bajada will continue to be a vibrant and safe community which maintains the traditional Spanish settlement pattern with a central plazita, safe and secure community water and necessary infrastructure.

The residents will continue to have fulfilling relationships with the surrounding communities and share in gatherings for feast days, breaking of bread and sharing comidas nativas, and celebrations. There will be an understanding of a respectful land ethic shared among neighbors such that access to the surrounding landscape and resources may occur sustainably. Community stewardship and interpretation of our culture heritage continues to maintain a vibrant community.”



2024 VILLAGE OF LA BAJADA COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS



Santa Fe County Policy Framework

The Village of La Bajada Community Plan ultimately has a direct influence on two important policy documents that govern growth and development in Santa Fe County.

The first, the Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP), outlines the goals, policies, and strategies behind the County-wide rules and regulations.

The second, the Sustainable Land Development Code (SLDC), outlines the rules and regulations for all development in Santa Fe County.

The Village of La Bajada Community Plan outlines the vision, goals and actions that are especially important to the community. This document will amend the SGMP, creating the basis for changes to the Village of La Bajada Community District Overlay (land use regulations) in the SLDC.

Santa Fe County Zoning Context

The SLDC is the regulatory document which the County uses for Building and Development permit review. Applications to the County are reviewed according to Uses in the SLDC Use Matrix, which are either Permitted (P), Conditional (C), or Prohibited (X).

When developing their land, residents and business-owners in the Village of La Bajada District must comply with the SLDC's Village of La Bajada Community District Overlay, which has slightly different standards than the general code.



Community Context

This section assembles economic, demographic, land use, regulations, and historic information to provide an understanding of the community context today and how it evolved.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF LA BAJADA

The La Majada Grant is the historic ejido for the village of La Bajada. Throughout its history the La Majada Grant has been diminished by the U.S. Government from 54,000 acres to the size of the varas held by today's community comprising of approximately 87 acres. The Village of La Bajada has a historic pattern of diverse and mixed land uses which has carried through to the present including residential, agricultural, and until approximately 1940, also included limited transportation service and transient lodging. The area around La Bajada has been continuously settled for generations and has been known by several names throughout its history, including 'San Miguel de Dominguez', 'San Miguel de La Majada', 'Rancho de San Miguel', 'San Miguel de La Bajada'. This place has been known as the village of 'La Bajada' since 1727.

The Village of La Bajada is located near where the Santa Fe River flows out of the canyon. This area has historically been an access route with footpaths connecting the lower lands with the higher mesa. It was settled in response to the increasing number of travelers using the corridor. The corridor, referred to as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (El Camino Real), translated as "The Royal Road of the Interior Lands," was a major transportation network between Mexico City and northern New Mexico and was the main corridor used by the Spanish while founding the colonies. Along with its use as a transportation corridor, it also served as a source of communication and trade. The Village of La Bajada was established as an area of rest before an exhausting trip through the river canyon to the northern communities, including Santa Fe. The area worked well for a settlement since the location of the river created a prime location for agriculture and the escarpment served as protection. Settlement of the area was encouraged to prevent raiding of pueblos by nomads.

The Santa Fe River flows through the Santa Fe River Canyon to the southern end of La Majada land grant. This canyon was used by colonists and caravans traveling El Camino Real. The scouting party of the Coronado expedition came through the area between 1540 and 1541, and encountered the difficult task of scaling the massive escarpment. They entered the canyon and moved upstream until reaching Tzeguma and Guicú pueblos—the upriver location of today's La Cieneguilla and La Ciénega. Prior to its use by the Spanish, the paths that would become known as El Camino Real was used by Indigenous peoples, as a vital artery for trade, communication, and travel among their communities.

For the next eight decades, Spanish caravans from the south passed through this area as they approached the end of their protracted journey. A *paraje* (permanent campsite) near the mouth of the Santa Fe River likely offered fresh water for travelers and animals traveling through the canyon into Santa Fe.

In addition to transportation along the Camino Real, the Village of La Bajada contributed to the expansion of the railroad by providing water for locomotives at the ATSF railroad station in Domingo (Wallace) from the 1880s to the 1950s. In exchange for this water, the railroad constructed La Bajada's first domestic water system. In 1975, the railroad returned all right and interest to waters of the Santa Fe River to the La Bajada Community Ditch.

In 1926, during the rise of the automobile era, the El Camino Real corridor became part of the Route 66 Federal Highway System. A tourist camp and service station were constructed adjacent to the Santa Fe River before the steep incline up the La Bajada Mesa over the dirt segment of the Route 66 switchbacks. Pueblo de Cochiti purchased the property in 1983. Remnants of the camp are visible today.

In 2005, National Old Trails Road Historic District at La Bajada and Route 66 were listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district includes six miles of roadway, associated structures, the 1926 timber bridge across the Río Santa Fe and the Walden Tourist Camp.

That the Village of La Bajada has maintained a continuous habitation for generations is a testament to the resiliency of its people. It has maintained a strong connection to the traditional lifeways of their ancestors. The future of the village is entwined with the continued flow of water in the Santa Fe River, access to the village, agricultural and traditional land use and the relationships of those that live within the village and their neighbors.

DEMOGRAPHICS, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

Demographics

The Population of La Bajada has fluctuated significantly over the years, reflecting the village's rich history and the impact of various historical events. In 1870, the population was recorded at 300 persons, and by 1920, the Montoya family was one of the predominant families in the village. By the 1940s, other families such as Gallegos, Sánchez, Ortiz, Gonzales, Dimas, Baca, Armijo, Lucero, Valdez, Martínez, and Benavides had joined the community. The arrival of the U.S. highway system and the ultimate bypassing of the village in 1932 led to significant challenges, and the village population dwindled to just 3 residents by the 1950s. However, in the late 1960s, generations began to return to family homesteads, and the village population grew to 15 residents by the 1970s. The 1980s saw another increase in population with the arrival of families from Mexico, continuing the centuries-old tradition of migration and cultural influence along the Camino Real. Since the 1990s, the village of La Bajada has grown to 48 residents, and the 2020 Census recorded 26 residents, highlighting the ongoing evolution of the community.

Housing

The village features a mix of traditional and modern housing structures. Many of the homes are adobe constructions, reflecting the historical and cultural heritage of the area. The San Miguel Church serves as a central gathering place and a significant historical landmark. This plan will show

that if there is to be more housing built, there is a need for that housing to align with the community's traditional character.

Employment

The village has a strong agricultural tradition, however, while many residents engaged in farming and ranching activities most residents are employed outside of the community and commute for their employment. This plan discusses the potential for small-scale businesses and home-based enterprises, particularly in the areas of agritourism, eco-tourism, and cultural interpretation. The economic development section outlines strategies to support local food producers and promote the village's unique natural and cultural assets.



Remnants of historic adobe home

La Majada Land Grant

The history of the La Majada Land Grant is a significant piece of New Mexico's history, reflecting the complex interplay of Spanish, Mexican, and American governance over the region. The land grant system was a method used by the Spanish and later the Mexican governments to distribute land to individuals or communities. The origins of the La Majada Land Grant can be traced back to the Spanish colonial period in New Mexico. The Spanish Crown granted lands to individuals or communities to encourage settlement and agriculture. These grants were often vague in terms of boundaries and were intended to support the development of the region.

The situation changed dramatically for the La Majada Land Grant and others like it after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which ended the Mexican-American War and ceded vast territories, including New Mexico, to the United States. The treaty guaranteed that the land rights of Mexican citizens would be respected, but in practice, many land grant holders faced challenges in proving their claims under the new American legal system. Prior to statehood, grants were partitioned by newly arrived speculators.

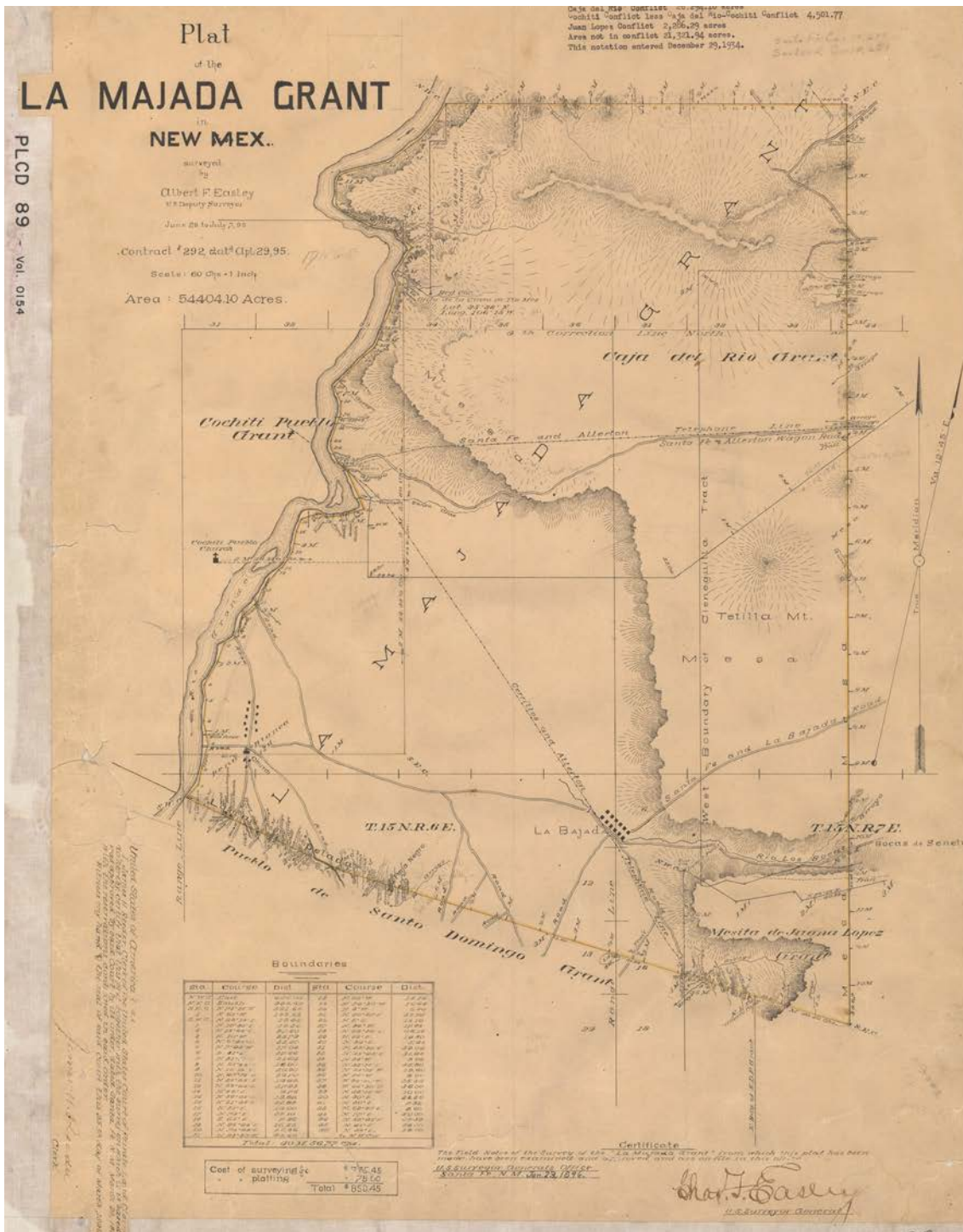
By the 1930s, many villagers lost holdings in Federal New Deal loan schemes that were meant to improve agricultural production. The US government purchased the La Majada Land Grant from the old consortium of speculators. This transaction occurred in the 1935, marking a significant shift in the ownership and management of the land. After acquiring the land, the United States government transferred management of most of the Caja del Rio plateau to the Forest Service. This move was part of a broader effort to consolidate and manage federal lands for various purposes, including conservation, recreation, and resource management.

The legal battles over the La Majada Land Grant and others like it were protracted and often resulted in the loss of land to American settlers, railroads, and other interests. The grantees and their descendants faced not only legal challenges but also cultural and economic pressures as the

region transformed under American rule.

The history of the La Majada Land Grant reflects broader themes in the history of the American Southwest, including the struggle for land and resources, the clash of legal systems and cultures, and the resilience of communities in the face of change. The land grant system, while intended to promote settlement and development, became a source of conflict and litigation that lasted for generations.

Today, the legacy of the La Majada Land Grant and others like it continues to influence land ownership, water rights, and cultural identity in New Mexico and the broader Southwest. The story of these land grants serves as a reminder of the complex history of the region and the ongoing struggle to balance development with the rights and traditions of long-standing communities.



La Majada Land Grant
Albert Easley
April 29 1895

A legal record of a patent (pictured to the right) issued by the United States of America, grants land to the heirs, assigns, and legal representatives of Jacinto Polaes and Maria Polaes, as well as to Benigno Ortiz y Sandoval, Luciano Ortiz, Jose Ignacio Dimas, and Marcelino Baca. This document represents the revalidation by the United States government of the 1695 Grant from the King Philip II.

The land, known as La Majada Grant, is situated in New Mexico, specifically in Townships fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen north of Ranges six and seven east of the New Mexico Meridian, in the Counties of Bernalillo and Santa Fe. The grant encompasses fifty-four thousand four hundred four and ten-hundredths acres and is bounded by specific geographical features. The patent is issued in accordance with the Act of Congress approved on March 3, 1891, which established a court of private land claims and provided for the settlement of such claims.

The patent is signed by President Theodore Roosevelt and is dated October 26, 1908. This document serves as a formal record of the United States government's grant of La Majada land to specific individuals, outlining the boundaries, size, and conditions of the grant. It is a significant historical document that reflects the process of land distribution and settlement in the United States during the early 20th century.

(RECORD OF PATENTS.)
4-401-577.

24394

P. L. C.
No. 168, New Mexico. No all to whom these presents shall come. Granting:
No. 89.

The United States of America,

WHEREAS, In accordance with the provisions of the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1891, entitled "An Act to establish a court of private land claims and to provide for the settlement of private land claims in certain States and Territories," the claim of the heirs, assigns and legal representatives of Jacinto Pelaez and Maria Pelaez, and to Benigno Ortiz y Sandoval, Luciano Ortiz, Jose Ignacio Dimas, and Marcelino Baca has been duly established to private land grant known as La Majada Grant, situated in Townships fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen north of Ranges six and seven east of the New Mexico Meridian, in the Counties of Bernalillo and Santa Fe, New Mexico, described as follows:

On the north by a line running from east to west one league north of the spring on the said tract known as the Ojito de la Cueva de Tio Mes, on the south by the north boundary line of the land of Indian Pueblo of Santa Domingo, on the east by the Bocas de Senetu, and on the west by the Rio Grande. Said claim containing fifty-four thousand four hundred four and ten-hundredths acres, according to the plat and survey of said claim approved by the court of private land claims March 25, 1896, on file in the General Land Office:

NOW KNOW YE, That the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in consideration of the premises, HAS GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DOES GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said heirs, assigns and legal representatives of Jacinto Pelaez and Maria Pelaez, and to Benigno Ortiz y Sandoval, Luciano Ortiz, Jose Ignacio Dimas, and Marcelino Baca, and to their heirs, the lands above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature thereunto belonging, unto the said heirs, assigns and legal representatives of Jacinto Pelaez and Maria Pelaez, and to Benigno Ortiz y Sandoval, Luciano Ortiz, Jose Ignacio Dimas, and Marcelino Baca, and to their heirs and assigns forever: Provided, That this grant shall not confer any right or title to any gold silver or quicksilver mines or minerals of the same, but all such mines and minerals shall remain the property of the United States, with the right of working the same; and that the said grant is made subject to all the limitations and terms of the said Act of Congress of March 3, 1891.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

(SEAL.) GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the
twenty-sixth day of October, in the year
of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eight
and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred
and thirty-third.

By the President, *Theodore Roosevelt*
By *M. W. Stewart* Secretary.
H. J. ...
Recorder of the General Land Office.

SECTION II. Plan Elements



Land Use
Economic Development
Agricultural and Ranching
Resource Conservation
Open Space, Trails, Parks, and Recreation
Public Safety
Transportation
Water, Wastewater and Stormwater
Adequate Public Facilities and Financing
Housing
Governance



Land Use Element





Existing Land Use & Structures

The Village of La Bajada is characterized by a variety of existing land uses and structures that reflect its deep-rooted heritage and culture. The community has a historic pattern of diverse and mixed land uses, including residential, agricultural, and until the mid-20th century, limited transportation service and transient lodging. The land use plan aims to protect and preserve these assets, such as irrigable and arable agricultural land, acequia corridors, and riparian zones, while guiding future development in appropriate areas.

The Traditional Community (TC) land use designation is central to the village's character, accommodating residential, small-scale commercial, and traditional agricultural uses consistent with existing development patterns. This designation recognizes and preserves historic and cultural landscapes, protects agricultural uses, and promotes clustered development and transfers of development rights to conserve open space and protect scenic features and environmentally sensitive areas.

The community's agricultural viability is evident in the 14 parcels receiving special valuation for agriculture, which constitute a significant portion of La Bajada's total acreage. The traditional development pattern of long rectangular lots bisecting various ecological zones has maintained


the continuity of open arable farmland for agricultural purposes. The village also features the San Miguel Church, which has historically served as a community gathering place, and there are existing agricultural and accessory structures that could potentially be developed to support the community's future vision.



Santa Fe County
La Bajada Community
Existing Land Use 2024

Legend

 Santa Fe County Boundary

 Community Boundary

 Tetilla Peak (paved)

 La Bajada Road (unpaved)

 Land Parcel Boundaries

Existing Landuse 2024


Property Class (SF County Assessor)

 Agricultural

 Commercial

 Federal Trust Land

 Mobile Home

 Multi-residential

 Single Residential

 Vacant

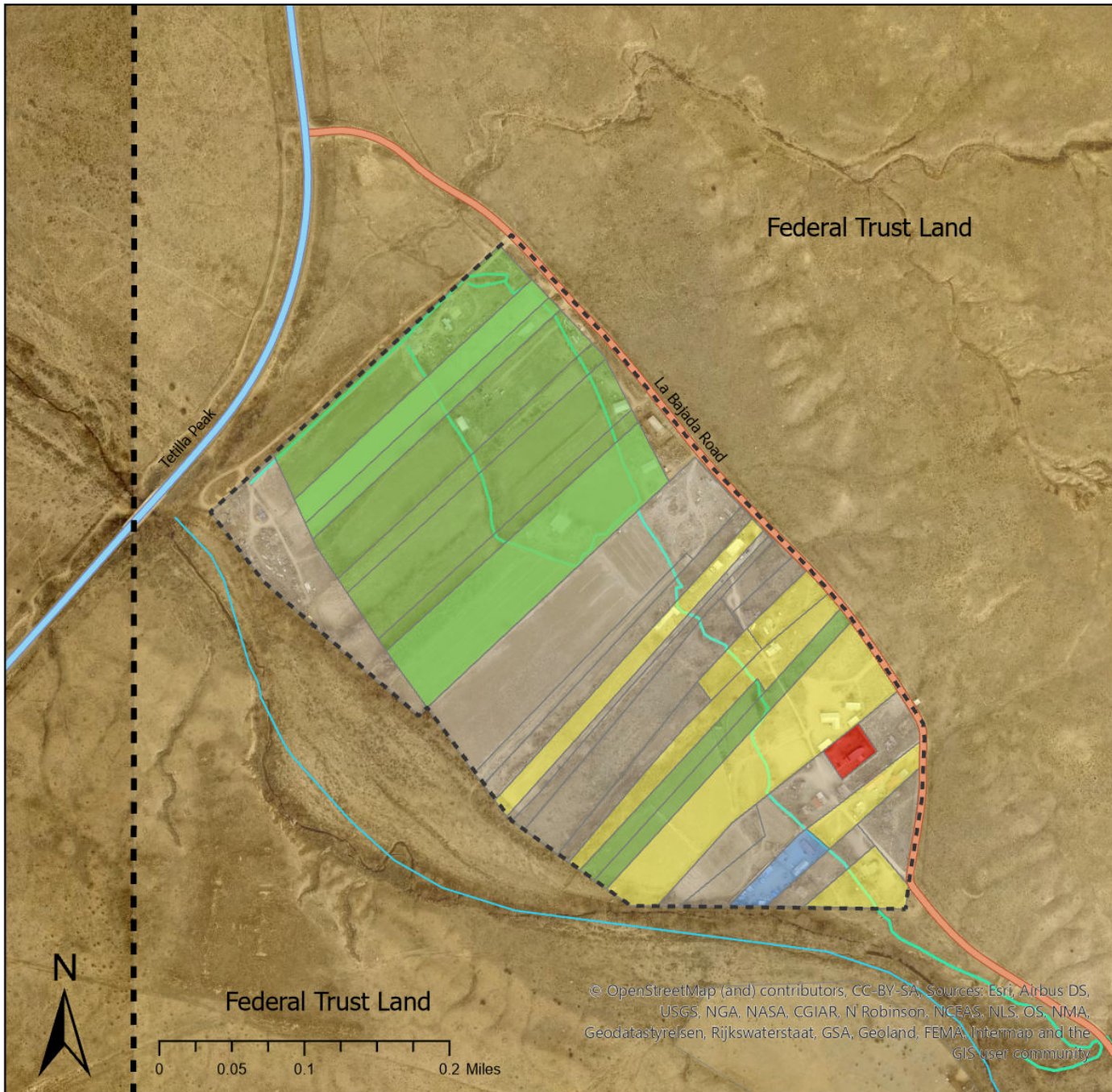
Acequias (UNM Earth Data Analysis Center)

 Ditch

 Major Rivers and Streams



Santa Fe County
Growth Management
Department Planning Division
July 2024



© OpenStreetMap (and) contributors, CC-BY-SA, Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community

Traditional Community

The Village of La Bajada is designated as a Traditional Community in the SGMP.

Traditional Communities were identified in the SGMP as:
...the first permanent settlements in Santa Fe County ... with continuous settlement exhibiting historic patterns of diverse and mixed community land uses which continue to the present. Each traditional community has historic structures or developed features, the existence of an entryway, a corridor and a village center or centers.

Traditional Communities have been in existence for over 100 years, but were formally recognized under the 1980 General Plan and the 1999 General Plan, which recognized a total of 29 Traditional Communities. These designations were established with the intent for these villages to accommodate a mixture of uses such as agriculture, residential, large scale residential community service, institutional, nonresidential or recreational uses anywhere inclusive of the boundaries of the village, provided the performance standards and criteria set forth by the Land Development Code were met.

The County Sustainable Land Development Code and Zoning Map designates the Traditional Community Zoning District which has a base density of 1 dwelling unit per .75 acres. The entire Village of La Bajada has a zoning designation of 'Traditional community'. The uses and density of the Traditional Community zone reflects the distinct land use patterns and mixture of agricultural, residential and non-residential uses historically present in traditional communities and which continue to the present.





Traditional Community Lifeways & Livelihoods

In addition to the continuity of the traditional land uses and development patterns, the community is interested in identifying appropriate land uses that would support the sales of locally-grown produce, arts and crafts, agri-tourism and/or eco-tourism, or other similar smaller-scale uses. Small scale businesses have existed historically in the Village of La Bajada, and the vision for future land uses of this nature include the condition that such enterprises would be operated by village landowners in support of the community's vision.

There is a tourism and economic development opportunity for the Village of La Bajada as it is adjacent to Tetilla Peak Recreation Area. Cochiti reservoir and the Tetilla Peak Recreation Area have been identified as potential opportunities for residents to gain economic benefits associated with the culture of lakeside recreation. The lake may still play a role in future economic development opportunities for residents. This economic development is dependent on the restoration of public roads access in the vicinity. This requires interjurisdictional cooperation among Santa Fe County, Cochiti Pueblo, and Santo Domingo Pueblo, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Agricultural Overlay

The area designated as appropriate for the Village of La Bajada Agricultural Overlay is identified on the future land use map and is bounded to north by the La Bajada Community Ditch, and to the east, south and west by the La Bajada Community District boundary. In addition to those uses allowed in the traditional community, the Village of La Bajada Agricultural Overlay supports the following types of uses:

- Crop production greenhouses, hoop-houses, other controlled-environment agricultural structures and related season extension structures for personal and/or commercial use
- Agricultural-related structures, including, but not limited to, barns, sheds, farm buildings, animal housing, propagation houses, for accessory agricultural uses and seasonal protection for livestock or horses
- Cold storage for agricultural uses and products
- Fermenting (manufacturing) wine. Any structure necessary for any stage of the process relating to the harvest, storage, fermentation of wine or any other beverage
- Food processing
- Traditional agricultural structures including thermal walls, subterranean root cellars
- Farm stands or other similar structures for selling products grown or crafted by community members in the Village of La Bajada
- Aquaculture



Commercial Overlay

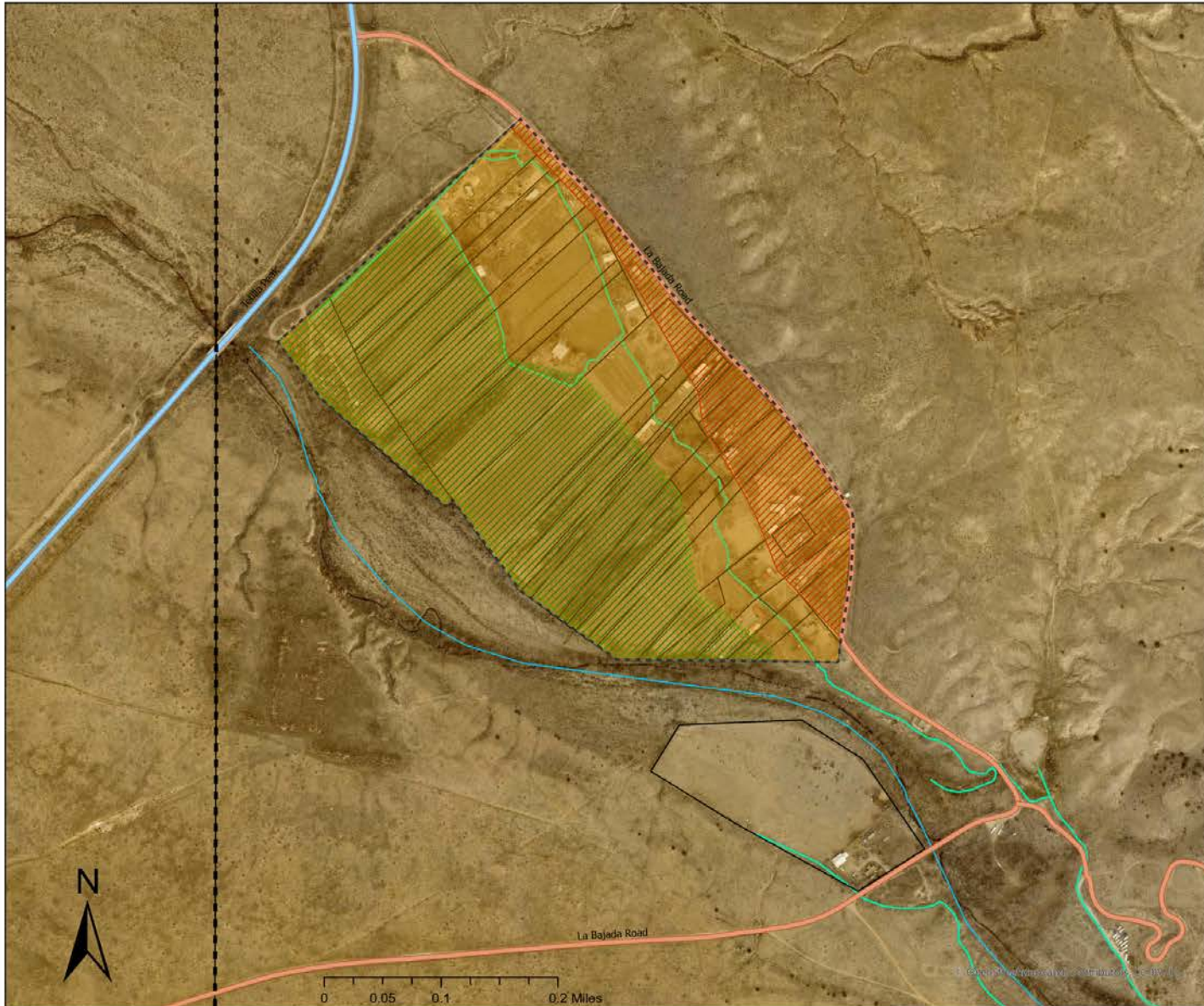
The La Bajada Rural Commercial Overlay is proposed as a location for residential and small scale non-residential uses to support agricultural production and small scale home businesses. The proposed La Bajada Rural Commercial Overlay includes uses identified in the La Bajada Traditional Community Zoning District. In addition, the following types of small-scale uses are examples of uses proposed for the La Bajada Rural Commercial Overlay:

- Agriculture production, storage and food processing facilities, business, services
- Farmer's market/Co-op
- Greenhouses, plant nurseries, and landscapers
- Kennels and small scale feed and farm supplies
- Day-care and child-care services
- Animal feed stores, tack shops, farm supplies
- Gallery and exhibition space
- Lodging (bed and breakfast)
- Café and restaurant









Santa Fe County
La Bajada Community
Future Land Use Map

Legend

▣ Santa Fe County Boundary

▣ Community Boundary

— Tetilla Peak (paved)

— FS 24 (unpaved)

— Historic US 66 Route (unpaved)

— La Bajada Road (unpaved)

— La Bajada Road (unpaved)

Community Overlay

▨ Agricultural Overlay

▨ Rural Commercial Overlay

▨ Traditional Community Zoning District

▭ Parcel Boundaries

Acequias (UNM Earth Data Analysis Center)

— Ditch

— Major Rivers and Streams



Santa Fe County
Growth Management
Department Planning Division
July 2024

Goals, Strategies & Actions

Goal 1: Promote land uses appropriate for the Village of La Bajada to maintain the Traditional Community characteristics

Strategy 1.1: Modify existing zoning and land uses suitable for the Village of La Bajada Traditional Community based on community needs, culture and traditional community lifeways by creating a Community District Overlay.

Action 1.1.1: Establish the Village of La Bajada Community District Overlay including an Agricultural Overlay and a Rural Commercial Overlay. This overlay would permit appropriately scaled agricultural, residential and non-residential uses that align with the community's future vision.

Action 1.1.2: Revisit the Community District Overlay with the Planning Committee every 3-5 years to assess the effectiveness

Goal 2: Delineate the community boundary

Strategy 2.1: Conduct a Cadastral Survey to redefine village boundaries and rights of way

Action 2.1.1: Seek Funding for the Cadastral Survey to Align Boundaries with the Santa Fe River

Economic Development Element





Transfer of Development Rights

The County created a transfer of development rights (TDR) program as a tool to support the goals and implement the policies of the SGMP to include preservation of agricultural land, open space and other critical resources (Sending Areas) while directing growth to designated growth areas (Receiving Areas). Transfer of development rights can be an effective way to promote preservation of agriculture, rural open space and character, scenic vistas, natural features, areas of special character or special historic, cultural or aesthetic interest or value, and environmental resources.

The number of TDRs for each Sending Area is determined by the size of the sending area and the base density allowed within the zoning district. If a property meets the TDR criteria, one TDR may be allocated for each primary residential dwelling unit that could be constructed in accordance with the zoning and lot size. Sending sites with valid irrigation water rights receive an additional unit of density for each area of irrigated land equivalent to the base density if the property owner agrees to an enforceable restriction on the transfer of water rights acceptable to the County. TDRs from Sending Areas may be sold by the property owners to developers in Receiving Areas. Developers who purchase TDRs can increase density or changes to intensity to incentivize development in designated growth areas.

The TDR program is a voluntary, incentive-based and market-driven program where landowners who choose to go through the TDR Certification process are able to receive financial compensation for the TDRs without having to sell or fully develop their land.

The Village of La Bajada TDR Sending Sites

The Village of La Bajada is within the Traditional Community Zoning District which allows a maximum density of one dwelling unit per .75 acres. The majority of land in the area is undeveloped and a significant percentage of the land has been classified through the Santa Fe County Assessor as land used primarily for agricultural purposes. La Bajada community members have identified this tool as a way to preserve their agricultural land and water rights.



Facing the escarpment that looms above the Village of La Bajada

Economic Development Element

Goal 3: Support community lifeways and livelihoods by enabling community scale commercial enterprises.

Strategy 3.1: Establish the Village of La Bajada Rural Commercial Overlay to allow greater flexibility for appropriate residential and non-residential uses in alignment with the community's vision.

Action 3.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee will work with County Planning staff to develop and implement the Rural Commercial Overlay regulations.

Action 3.1.2 : Planning staff will market the AgriGate to local farmers/ranchers to increase their revenue

Strategy 3.2 : Community members should work with County Economic Development Division to identify and support potential business opportunities that align with the community's vision.

Action 3.2.1: Planning staff will put Economic Development Division in contact with the La Bajada Village planning committee

Strategy 3.3 Establish a farmers' market or co-op to support local producers and economic development.

Action 3.3.1: The Village of La Bajada producers should coordinate with County and the New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association to set up a regular farmers' market or co-op within the community.

Goal 4: Enhance the economic viability of the community through tourism and recreation.

Strategy 4.1: Community members should develop and promote agritourism and ecotourism opportunities by working with the County and the State tourism offices

Action 4.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with County staff, County and State tourism offices to create a tourism plan

that promotes the village's natural and cultural assets.

Goal 5: Improve infrastructure to support commercial activities within La Bajada Village.

Strategy 5.1: Conduct an infrastructure assessment and to ensure that roads and utilities are adequate to support commercial development.

Action 5.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with County staff to place an infrastructure assessment on the ICIP.

Goal 6: Enhance Internet Connectivity to the Village to support community development

Strategy 6.1: La Bajada Village should collaborate with local, state and federal government agencies to improve internet access.

Action 6.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with Planning staff to coordinate internet expansion through the County's Economic Development Division, the New Mexico Office of Broadband, Access and Expansion and Senator Heinrich's office.

Goal 7: Identify and utilize financial incentives for economic development.

Strategy 7.1: La Bajada Village should work with County staff to investigate local, State and Federal programs that support economic development.

Action 7.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with County staff to explore State, local and Federal programs that offer tax incentives and other financial incentives for local businesses..



Agricultural and Ranching Element





Agricultural History

Looming above the canyon are volcanic-capped mesas and high, fluted rocks known as Peñasco Blanco or, more currently, La Bajada Mesa—where abundant springs and productive soil allowed large pre-European pueblo villages to prosper. Archaeological discoveries in 1915 indicated that nearby sandy grasslands had been put to agricultural use early on.

Irrigation methods have been long established in the area which included diverting the water from the river and a system of ditches to distribute water to the fields and return water to the river. This area was also blessed by cold-water springs situated near what would eventually be called El Río Santa Fe (Santa Fe River), just 2 miles east of El Río del Norte (Río Grande).

The origin of La Bajada village stems from the establishment of Spanish Colonies in 1598 and the Spanish Land Grants that followed. On Feb. 10, 1695, Gov. Diego de Vargas granted Jacinto Peláez La Merced del Ojito (the little cold spring land grant) in compensation for services rendered as a soldier during the reconquest campaign. La Merced del Ojito was conferred as pasturelands for stock with La Majada being the corral for stock near the majadal. The merced has been referred to as La Majada grant since its re-survey by the Mexican government in 1826.

The grazing lands of La Majada, the majadal, nurtured large quantities of beef and mutton in addition to hides, wool and agricultural produce for trade or barter in nearby communities and also La Villa de Santa Fe. The majada (a natural overnight shelter for sheep) was located upriver from the village of La Bajada near a pond on the north side of the Río Santa Fe.

The Village at La Bajada continued its slow growth, favored by springs, river water, fertile soil, grazing land for stock and protection provided by the escarpment. Families settled at the base of the large mesa at Las Bocas del Cañón protecting the ojito frío, digging acequias, building their houses, and creating a permanent village at the former paraje site. With the establishment of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1862, Eastern-style concepts and methods of commercialized farming and ranching were introduced.

Such concepts and methods were out of place in a region like the Southwest. The fragile environment of the Territory of New Mexico contained populations who knew how to survive and had managed to thrive for centuries in this delicate land because of their deep-seated respect for the earth, the waters and everything that was part of the natural world.

The Partido Partidario—a contract sharing sheep with shepherders—was initiated again in 1865 with venture capitalists, who purchased merino sheep in Missouri, brought them to New Mexico and began contracting with shepherders who could no longer find markets for their native churro sheep. The venture capitalists encouraged land grantees to use their common and pasture lands for grazing this new breed that drank more water and needed more pasture. The new market-centered system encouraged a few of the wealthier native ranchers to take on more stock and overgraze their pasturelands, thereby contributing to their depletion, including parts of La Majada and La Bajada land grants and mesas.



According to William Dunmire's *New Mexico's Livestock Heritage*, cattle barons such as John Chisum from Texas arrived in southeastern New Mexico in 1870 with large herds and the authority of the Homestead Act to move onto "public domain" lands in order to stake their claims. A severe drought from 1870 to 1883 made matters worse. The cattle barons brought in thousands of cattle—too many for the grazing lands they had purchased. Residents on La Majada land grant and in the village of La Bajada suffered with their livestock during that period due to cyclical droughts but not due to overgrazing. They had cared for the land in the same manner as their ancestors and reduced their herds during this drought even though they had to sell at a lower price.

Historic orchard crops grown in La Bajada included apples, peaches, pears, cantaloupes, watermelons, and grapes. Peaches, plums, cherries, and apricots were reestablished after the drought in the 1930s with help from the Soil Conservation Service and Civilian Conservation Corps. A vine restoration initiative begun in the 1970s is still in progress. Young orchards of various trees are present in the long lot fields. Despite the continuance of agriculture over the years there has been a significant decline in irrigated lands.

Field and traditional subsistence crops were common on the irrigated lands of La Bajada in the 60s. Today alfalfa remains the primary crop and has been since the 1960s. Villagers also produce small crops of vegetables such as tomatoes, carrots, spring onions, asparagus, and historic crops such as chile, corn, beans, squash, grapes, plums, apples, and cherries.

In the 1980s, the Gallegos family transitioned their land into an organic farming business called La Bajada Ranch. They were among the first organic farms certified in New Mexico through the state of California, as New Mexico had not yet established a state organic certification program. The farm grew a wide variety of vegetables on over 40 acres, including greens, tomatoes, herbs, onions, root crops, cucumbers, squash, beans and corn.

They had a diversified marketing model, which included both wholesale accounts and direct sales. They supplied their produce to area grocery stores, restaurants, and had a presence at farmers' markets. Northern New Mexico's period of prolonged drought in the early 2000s affected the farm so dramatically that La Bajada Ranch stopped production due to the unpredictable and scant water supply. Village irrigation is dependent on flow of treated effluent from the City of Santa Fe's Paseo Real Wastewater Treatment Plant. Pristine water has been replaced with effluent due to continuing development of the City and County of Santa Fe prior to the County's Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP).



Equine Culture

Horses are an essential part of the lives and livelihood in La Bajada. Traditionally, and to the present day, they serve many purposes, including herding the livestock, means of transportation, and are relied upon in the event of an emergency. For example, if there was a dramatic flood that cut off access to the road, people would be able to ride out on horseback through the canyon. Horses, mules, and burros are not considered ‘pets’, but are working farm animals---vehicles “just like your truck. You just have to feed them differently.” It was noted by several community members that in the last 10 years, horses had been employed in field cultivation on various occasions.

Horses are integral to the folkway of life still lived in La Bajada. Horses were traditionally raced all over northern New Mexico in town plazas that were converted to racing tracks. People would travel to different towns to gather and share in the entertainment of the horse races. The Montoya family used horses for everything, and a community member, Patricia Montoya, commented that her grandfather had been a horse whisperer, or *jiñete*. A *jiñete* has a special way with horses, and she shared that the horses loved him and responded to him in a way that they would not respond to other family members, including her father.





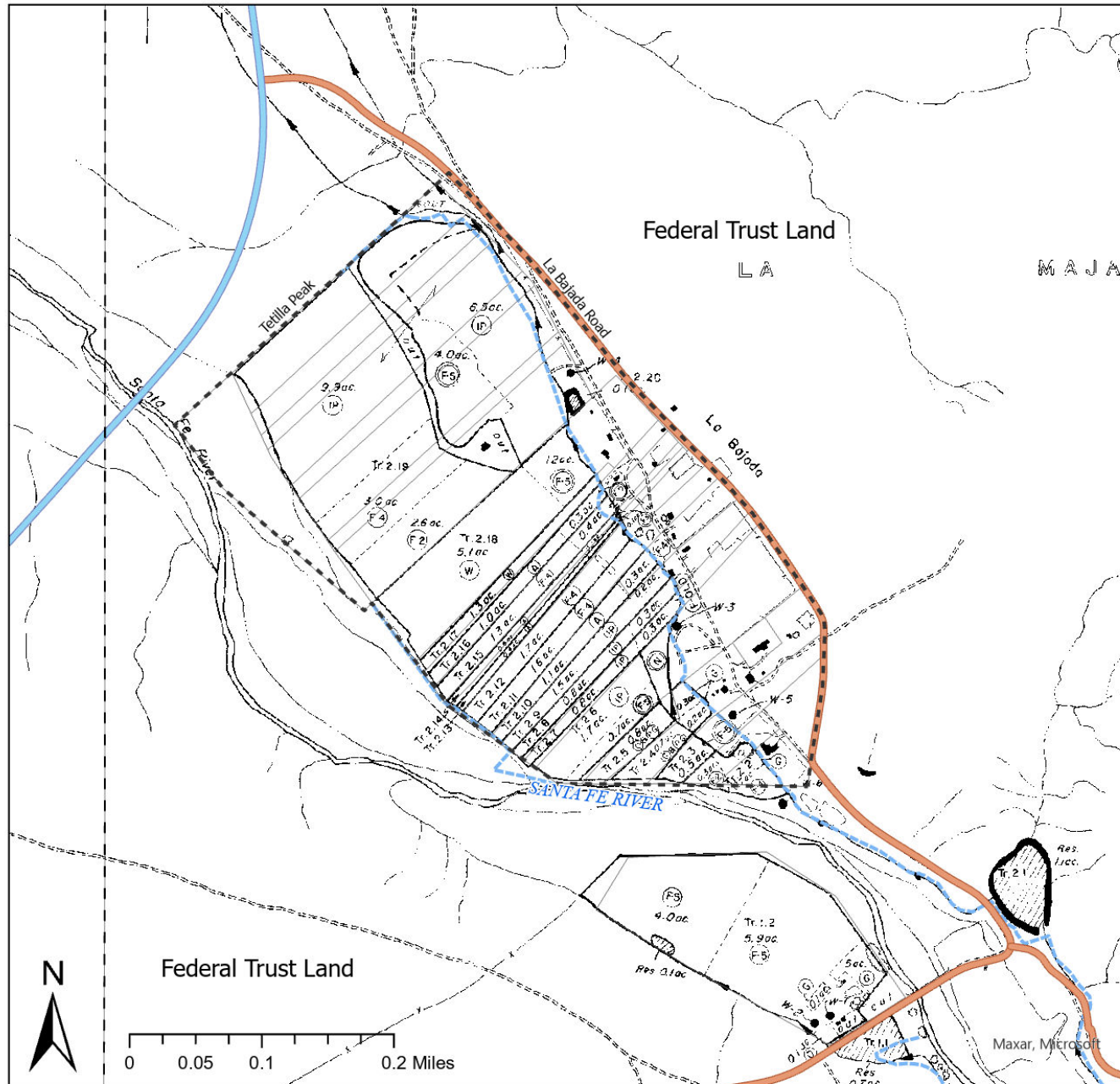
Ranching

Ranching has continued in and around the Village of La Bajada for hundreds of years, and there were vast acreages of lands available for ranching. Approximately 54,000 acres of La Majada land grant was purchased by the US Federal Government in 1935. In 1941, the Soil Conservation Service administered permits to neighboring communities. In 1984, the Pueblo of Cochiti began phasing grazing rights from BIA Administered Lands under Public Law 98-344. In 2014, grazing rights were extinguished by Cochiti Pueblo.

Currently, ranching capacity is diminished due to limited access to rangeland, due to the end of the grazing leases that residents had previously utilized. Livestock is currently being trucked to the rangelands. It's a 60-mile round trip along the Camino Real to get up to the mesa where the cattle are, and the method of trucking the cattle alters the way that ranching had historically been done on horseback, or along roads to BLM and USFS lands that access has been obstructed since 2016.



Agricultural Use Map



Santa Fe County La Bajada Community Agricultural Use

- Legend
- ☐ Santa Fe County
 - ⬢ Community Boundary
 - Tetilla Peak (paved)
 - FS 24 (unpaved)
 - Historic US 66 Route (unpaved)
 - La Bajada Road (unpaved)
 - La Bajada Road (unpaved)
 - ☐ Parcel Boundaries
- Layer
- Grazing Parcels, and Irrigated and Dryland Farming Parcels
- ▨ Grazing
 - ▨ Irrigated Farming
 - ▨ Irrigated Farming + Grazing
 - ▨ Dryland Farming
 - ▨ Dryland Farming + Grazing
 - ▨ Dryland Farming + Irrigated Farming
 - Mapped Acequias
 - Stream and Arroyo Names
- Source: OSE Hydrographic Surveys 1976



SANTA FE COUNTY
 Santa Fe County
 Growth Management
 Department Planning Division
 April 20, 2021

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 8: Expand the economic viability of agricultural enterprises in La Bajada Village.

Strategy 8.1: Farmers and ranchers in La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to reestablish La Bajada Village as a substantial provider of local food to the regional market.

Action 8.1.1: Planning staff will work with local food producers to add them to the AgriGate website and link them to markets

Action 8.1.2: Planning staff shall work with SF Food Policy Council to promote agricultural enterprises in La Bajada Village

Strategy 8.2: Collaborate with local ag. institutions (i.e.; UNM) and County Economic Development Division receive technical assistance for crops and business plans.

Action 8.2.1 La Bajada Village farmers and ranchers should consult with faculty and staff in appropriate departments at UNM, NMSU, the County's Economic Development Division, USDA to pursue technical assistance for crops and business plans.

Strategy 8.3: Ensure qualified properties are able to utilize "Agricultural and Grazing Special Method Valuation" for agricultural and ranching taxation exemptions.

Action 8.3.1: Farmers and ranchers in the Village of La Bajada should contact with the County's Assessor's Office to apply for the Agricultural and Grazing Special Method Valuation.

Goal 9: Allow for tax benefits for the animal husbandry of horses

Strategy 9.1: Reform rules so that horses qualify for tax breaks

Action 9.1.1: La Bajada Village can lobby or hire a lobbyist to advocate to policy makers at state and local levels that horses are integral and essential to the agricultural and ranching lifeways of the Village of La Bajada.

Goal 10: Create a monthly farmers/makers market to support local producers and promote community engagement

Strategy 10.1: La Bajada ranchers and farmers should establish a market committee composed of local residents and business owners to develop and oversee the planning and execution of the market

Strategy 10.2: La Bajada Village should work with County staff, New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association to explore funding sources to develop a farmer's market comprehensive plan

Action: 10.2.1: La Bajada ranchers and farmers should work with the County and the State to secure funding for the farmer's market comprehensive plan

Action 10.2.2: Create and implement a detailed farmer's market comprehensive plan that includes the layout, vendor requirements, and operational guidelines.



Resource Conservation Element

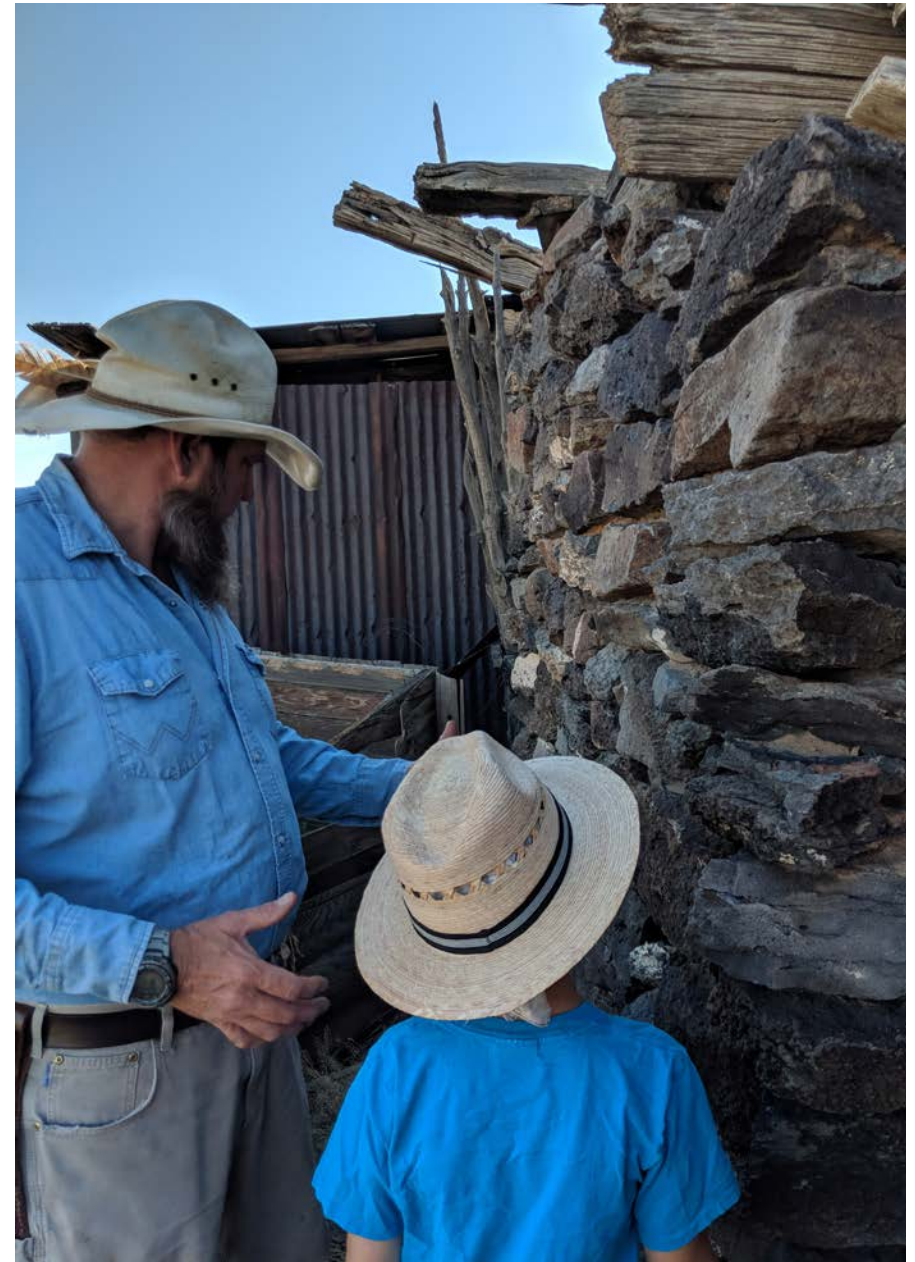




Community Identity and Cultural Resources

The village of La Bajada was formed as a paraje where the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro enters the Santa Fe River Canyon. Signage is an asset that would support the village's connection to the greater landscape and traditional communities along the Santa Fe River. Identification of La Bajada in the greater context of the watershed is critical for a holistic understanding of the village's current context, as its location is tied to the larger geographical picture, the bigger narrative of the Santa Fe region. There is a living acequia culture that still exists in La Bajada and it is becoming more and more rare nowadays that acequias are still organizational aspects of community life.

The village currently is lacking any signage that indicates a traditional community exists in the midst of the vast landscape. It is important to recognize the village, as many of the other 29 traditional communities in Santa Fe County have been acknowledged for their distinct characteristics and historic longevity. Signage would also provide for safety and environmental awareness so that passersby, visitors and tourists would be made aware of the village's proximity and watch their speed and pack out their waste.



Community Gathering

On the 1727 site of the Morada, the spiritual and social heart of the community commenced beating. In 1737, Franciscan Friars helped the residents of La Bajada to build a small church there, and dedicated it to San Miguel de Dominguez de La Majada, according to uncatalogued papers in the archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

The Church of San Miguel remains the traditional center of the village of La Bajada. In the mid 1970's, the original base, walls, and collapsed roof was saved from complete ruin after decades of neglect. Flora Lucero Barreras, who in her youth had attended church in La Bajada with her grandmother Ignacita Sanchez, had promised to see it restored.

Devoting her time, resources, and artwork from her studio and gallery in the village, she was joined in the effort by her brothers Abad Lucero, Osmundo Lucero, and Arnold Lucero; as well as Eloy and Odelia Montoya, Frank Gamache, Ross and Stella Rivera, and the Franciscan Friars and Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament from Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Peña Blanca. Barreras revived the Fiesta de San Miguel as a “Country Day” fundraiser for the restoration of the church. The community continues to celebrate its “Fiestecita” annually during the last weekend in September (Feast of the Archangels).



Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 10: Enhance inter-jurisdictional communication and coordination to address infrastructure, access, and maintenance issues.

Strategy 10.1: Continue regular meetings with representatives from governmental agencies to include Federal, Tribal, State and County government to discuss options for collaboration and compromise with regard to inter-jurisdictional matters.

Action 10.2: Application to NPS “Certified Local Government” program

Goal 11: Strengthen La Bajada Traditional Community identity

Action 11.1: Restore and augment official signage to clearly identify La Bajada Village at NM 16 and Tetilla Peak Road intersection, at the Santa Fe River, and at all Village entrances.

Actions 11.2: Explore options for small-scale home businesses and employment opportunities that relate to travel, nearby recreation, and ecological, agricultural, and cultural and historical interpretation.

Goal 12: Support and enhance community gathering opportunities

Action 12.1: Seek funding for gathering spaces such as a potential community center, co-op, or other shared-use community facility which may include repurposing of existing, underutilized structures in the Village.

Strategy 12.1.1: Conduct surveys and hold community forums to gather input on what types of facilities and services are most desired or needed.

Goal 13: Preserve the cultural landscape and historic ruins of La Bajada

Strategy 13.1: Identify and document significant historical and cultural features within La Bajada. This includes cataloging ruins, landscapes, tra-

ditional land-use patterns, and other culturally significant elements.

Strategy 13.1.1 : Collaborate with historians, archaeologists, cultural anthropologists, and local community leaders to ensure a comprehensive understanding and assessment.

Action 13.1: Create incentives for land owners to protect important historic features or unique cultural characteristics on their properties.

Goal 14: Protect natural resources

Action 11.1: Ensure that land uses in riparian areas are conducive to environmental health and supportive of maintaining or enhancing water quality for downstream users and for environmental integrity.

Action 11.2: Explore options for cleanup of existing areas of concern along the river corridor.



Open Space, Trails, Parks, and Recreation Element





Opportunities

The Village of La Bajada had also been a historic paraje, or resting place, where travelers could stop and prepare for the challenging journey into the canyon. It was a place where one could change out horses, as it was the last known place with solid pasture to feed, water, and rest the horses. Travelers would get their fresh horses ready for continuing along the difficult northbound trail to La Cienega and then Santa Fe. Residents in the village enjoyed the ability to get on a horse and be out in the countryside.

AGRITOURISM

Today there is still a vast network of trails and terrain surrounding the village that has traditionally been traversed on horseback. The spectacular landscape, river, and living history provide ample opportunities for tourism, including cultural interpretation and scenic tours, and there is a great potential for horses to be incorporated into the village's future economic development strategy. Horses, mules, and donkeys would play an important role in this type of economic development activity, as visitors could experience the expansive area and learn about its history while on horseback. La Bajada provides a "trailhead" for interpretation of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and New Mexico history and culture generally.

CENTRAL PLAZITA

The concept of developing a small plaza in La Bajada aligns with the broader goals of enhancing open space, trails, and parks within the village. The central plazita, particularly one located near the San Miguel Church, could serve as a focal point for community gatherings and cultural events, while also providing a gateway to the village's extensive network of trails.

The plaza could be designed to incorporate elements that reflect the community's cultural heritage, such as traditional architectural features and public art that tells the story of La Bajada's role as a historic paraje on the Camino Real. This space could also include signage that directs visitors to nearby trails and recreational areas, promoting the village's natural and

cultural assets.

Moreover, the plaza could function as a hub for small-scale businesses and home enterprises, offering locally-grown produce, arts and crafts, and other products that support the community's vision for economic development through agri-tourism and eco-tourism. By doing so, it would not only provide economic opportunities for village landowners but also contribute to the preservation of the community's cultural landscape and historic ruins.

In terms of infrastructure, the development of the plaza would need to be accompanied by improvements to road access and maintenance, ensuring that both residents and visitors can safely access the area. This would also facilitate the promotion of recreational and tourist activities, which is approached with caution in the plan to protect the long-term sustainability of the village.

To realize this potential, the Village of La Bajada could engage in strategic planning, public-private partnerships, and community involvement to identify priority areas, secure funding, and manage these resources sustainably. By doing so, La Bajada can enhance the quality of life for its residents, attract visitors, and preserve its unique cultural and natural heritage for future generations.

The potential for open space, trails, and parks in La Bajada is significant, given its rich history, scenic landscapes, and the extensive network of trails that surround the village. These natural and cultural assets offer a unique opportunity for the community to develop and enhance its recreational infrastructure. However, it is imperative to recognize that without the necessary infrastructure, particularly well-maintained roads, the promotion of recreational and tourist activities in the area should be approached with caution. This cautious approach ensures that any development aligns with the community's long-term sustainability and does not compromise the integrity of the natural and cultural assets that make La Bajada unique.



Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 14: Develop a small Plaza in front of the San Miguel Church for community gathering purposes.

Strategy 14.1: County staff and the La Bajada Village planning committee should meet to identify amenities for the plaza.

Strategy 14.2: Reference “Law of the Indies” for Plaza design standards

Action 14.2.1: Include conceptual planning for a Plaza on the ICIP.

Goal 15: Support open space, parks, trails and recreation as a component of economic development

Strategy 15.1: Develop and install interpretive signage around the village in support of recreation and history.

Action 15.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with planning staff to identify key locations and themes for interpretive signage, ensuring that the signage reflects the community’s vision and values.

Action 15.1.2: County staff and the La Bajada Village planning committee should work with the Public Works department to install and maintain the signage in the locations specified by the community.

Public Safety Element





Public Safety Element

Ensuring the safety and security of the Village of La Bajada is a top priority. The community faces unique challenges, including poor signage, limited access and the need for reliable emergency services. Currently, the community is serviced by Sandoval County, which provides essential emergency services. However, the remote location and limited access points pose significant challenges for timely emergency response. To address these issues, the Village of La Bajada Community Plan outlines several goals, strategies, and actions aimed at enhancing public safety and improving emergency response capabilities.



Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 16: To have reliable and efficient emergency services in the Village of La Bajada.

Strategy 16.1: Restore secondary access to the community for emergency services

Action 16.1.1: Develop a working group consisting of local residents and other stakeholders to help establish of clear, legal secondary access along historic Route 66 and Camino de La Bajada, to include Santa Fe County, Sandoval County, USACE, Pueblo de Cochiti, Kewa Pueblo, BLM.

Action 16.1.2: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff and 911 rural addressing staff to ensure that addressing is up-to-date.

Action 16.1.3: La Bajada Village should work with County planning and GIS to revise County E911 Addressing records to route emergency services via La Bajada Road, not Historic Route 66, which is currently blocked by a gate.

Goal 17: Maintain roads in good condition to enhance safety and accessibility for residents and emergency vehicles.

Strategy 17.1: Turn over La Bajada Road to the County for ensure year-round maintenance

Action 17.1.1: The Village of La Bajada should petition the county to adopt La Bajada Road as a County maintained road.

Goal 18: Have a prepared community which can respond to emergencies effectively, including natural disasters.

Strategy 18.1: La Bajada Village should work with the County fire department RECC to identify potential threats to the community.

Action 18.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with the County fire depart-

ment to receive training on fire prevention and response.

Action 18.1.2: La Bajada Village should develop and distribute an Emergency Preparedness Guide to all residents, outlining steps to take before, during, and after an emergency.

Action 18.1.3: La Bajada Village should organize regular community drills and training sessions to familiarize residents with emergency and evacuation procedures.

Action 18.1.4: La Bajada Village should establish a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to learn basic disaster response skills and to provide additional support to vulnerable populations during emergencies.

Transportation Element





Transportation History

The historic transportation conditions in La Bajada are deeply rooted in its role as a *paraje*, a resting place for travelers along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. This ancient trade route was a significant artery for commerce and cultural exchange between Mexico and the northern territories, including what is now the southwestern United States. La Bajada's strategic location made it an ideal spot for travelers to rest and prepare for the challenging journey ahead, particularly the steep ascent to Santa Fe.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, La Bajada played a crucial role in the expansion of the railroad, providing water for locomotives at the AT&SF railroad station in Domingo (Wallace). In exchange for this service, the railroad constructed La Bajada's first domestic water system, highlighting the interplay between transportation and infrastructure development in the village.

The rise of the automobile era in the 1920s brought about further changes in transportation, with the El Camino Real corridor becoming part of the Route 66 Federal Highway System. A tourist camp and service station were established to accommodate the increasing number of motorists traversing the route. This period marked a shift towards automobile-based travel, with La Bajada positioned as a stopover for travelers embarking on the iconic Route 66.

To address the current transportation challenges, it is necessary to explore options for access to historic travel routes, including El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro and US Route 66. The plan also calls for dedicating La Bajada Road to the County for maintenance and installing regulatory signage, including a Speed Limit sign, to enhance safety and security. These actions are part of a broader strategy to improve the community's infrastructure and ensure sustainable development that respects its cultural and natural heritage.



Existing Conditions

Access to La Bajada Village is provided by NM-16, Tetilla Peak Road, and La Bajada Road. Most or all of each road's alignment is located on tribal trust land.

NM-16 is a state-owned roadway made up of two lanes and paved shoulders on both sides of the road. It runs for approximately eight (8) miles from Interstate 25's Exit 264 to NM-22 just north of Peña Blanca in Kewa Pueblo. The road crosses Kewa Pueblo and Pueblo de Cochiti land, and public travel on the road is permitted with easements established with the tribal nations. The roadway is in good condition with minor longitudinal and transverse cracking.

Approximately 3.7 miles east of Exit 264, Tetilla Peak Road intersects with NM-16 and extends north. Tetilla Peak Road was constructed and is maintained by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as an access route to the USACE's Tetilla Peak Recreation Area located on the eastern shores of Cochiti Lake and approximately seven (7) miles north of La Bajada Village and 9.7 miles north of NM-16. The road is paved with two lanes, with unpaved shoulders. Public travel on this road is allowed through an agreement with Pueblo de Cochiti. Tetilla Peak Road is in poor condition, with significant potholing, transverse and longitudinal cracking, and erosion of pavement markings. Village residents report the roadway is occasionally repaired by film crews that use the road. An approximately 200-foot-long bridge carries Tetilla Peak Road across the Santa Fe River just southwest of La Bajada Village. The condition of the bridge has been completely restored, but the road remains in poor condition.

The only ingress/egress point to the Village of La Bajada is now via La Bajada Road, which intersects with Tetilla Peak Road on the north side of the village. La Bajada Road is an unimproved road located on Pueblo de Cochiti land. The Pueblo has agreed to allow village members to use the road. The road is in fair to poor condition with significant washboarding and occasional potholing present. County Sustainable Land Development Code standards require proof of legal road access for each lot which needs

to meet County road standards.

A road extends from Tetilla Peak Road to the La Bajada escarpment, where the old switchback road that climbs the escarpment is located. The road passes approximately 1,000 feet south of La Bajada Village and crosses the Santa Fe River southeast of the village. This road, together with portions of today's Tetilla Peak Road and NM-16, make up the route of former U.S. Route 66 and NM-1. The road is controlled by the Pueblo de Cochiti. Use of the road by the public, including Village members, is not permitted. A locked gate at Tetilla Peak Road prevents unauthorized access to the road from the south.

The alignment of another historic road, the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, is present near La Bajada Village. El Camino Real is the road extending from Mexico City to Ohkay Ownigh in New Mexico. In 2000 the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail was added to the National Trails System. Several parallel segments of the Camino Real are present near La Bajada Village; the two nearest to the community roughly parallel Tetilla Peak Road and the former U.S. Route 66, passing south and east of the village. Near La Bajada Village, public access to Camino Real is prohibited


















Santa Fe County La Bajada Vicinity Historic Roads

Legend

-  Santa Fe County
-  Tetilla Peak (paved)
-  FS 24 (unpaved)
-  Historic US 66 Route (unpaved)
-  La Bajada Road (unpaved)
-  La Bajada Road (unpaved)
-  Federal Trust Land
-  Historic US 66 Route
-  La Bajada Community Planning Area

Streams and Arroyos

- Type
-  Major Streams and Arroyos
 -  Minor Streams and Arroyos
- Stream and Arroyo Names
-  Acequia Ditches

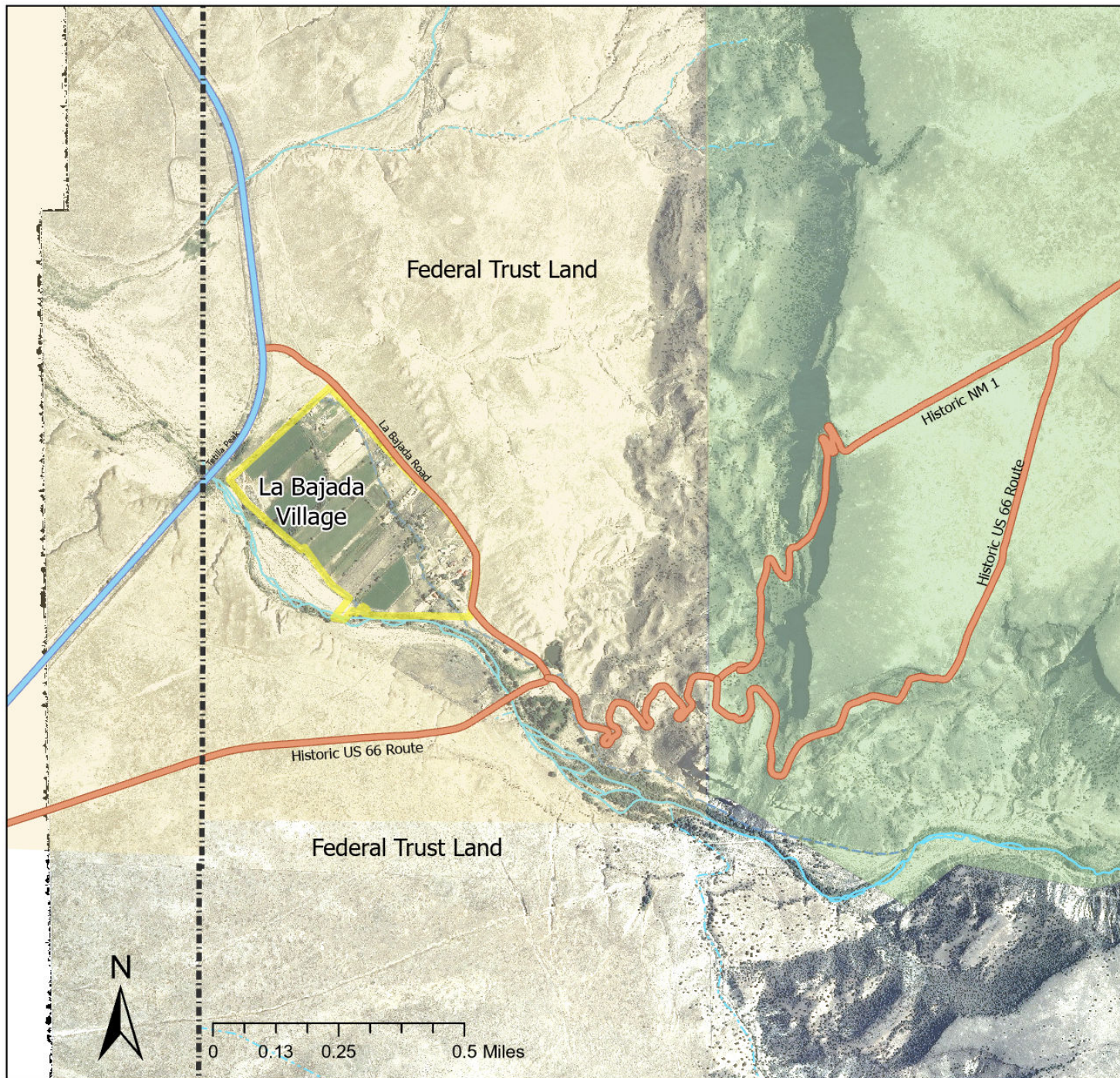
- U.S. Forest Service Lands
-  U.S. Forest Service

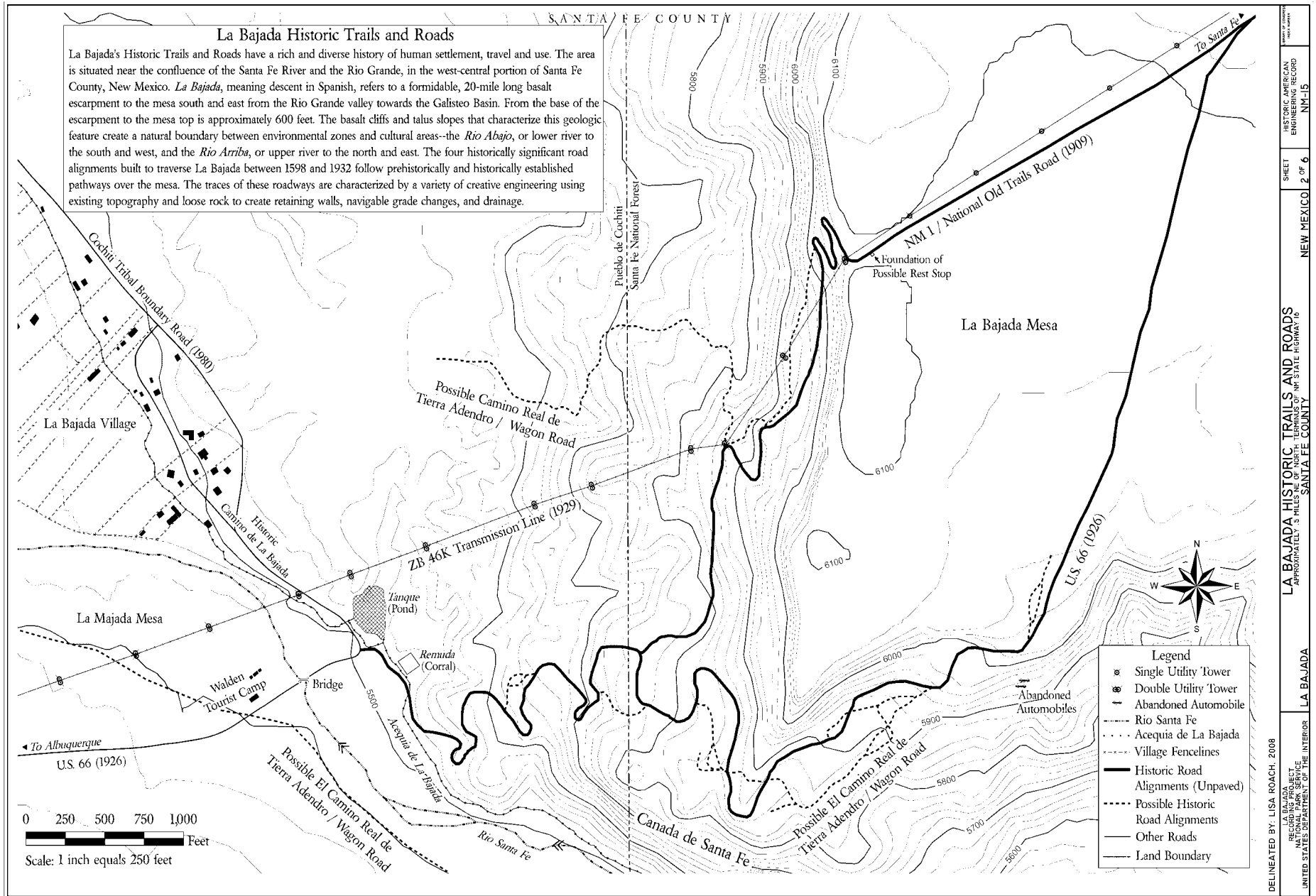
Santa Fe County 2009 Aerial Photograph



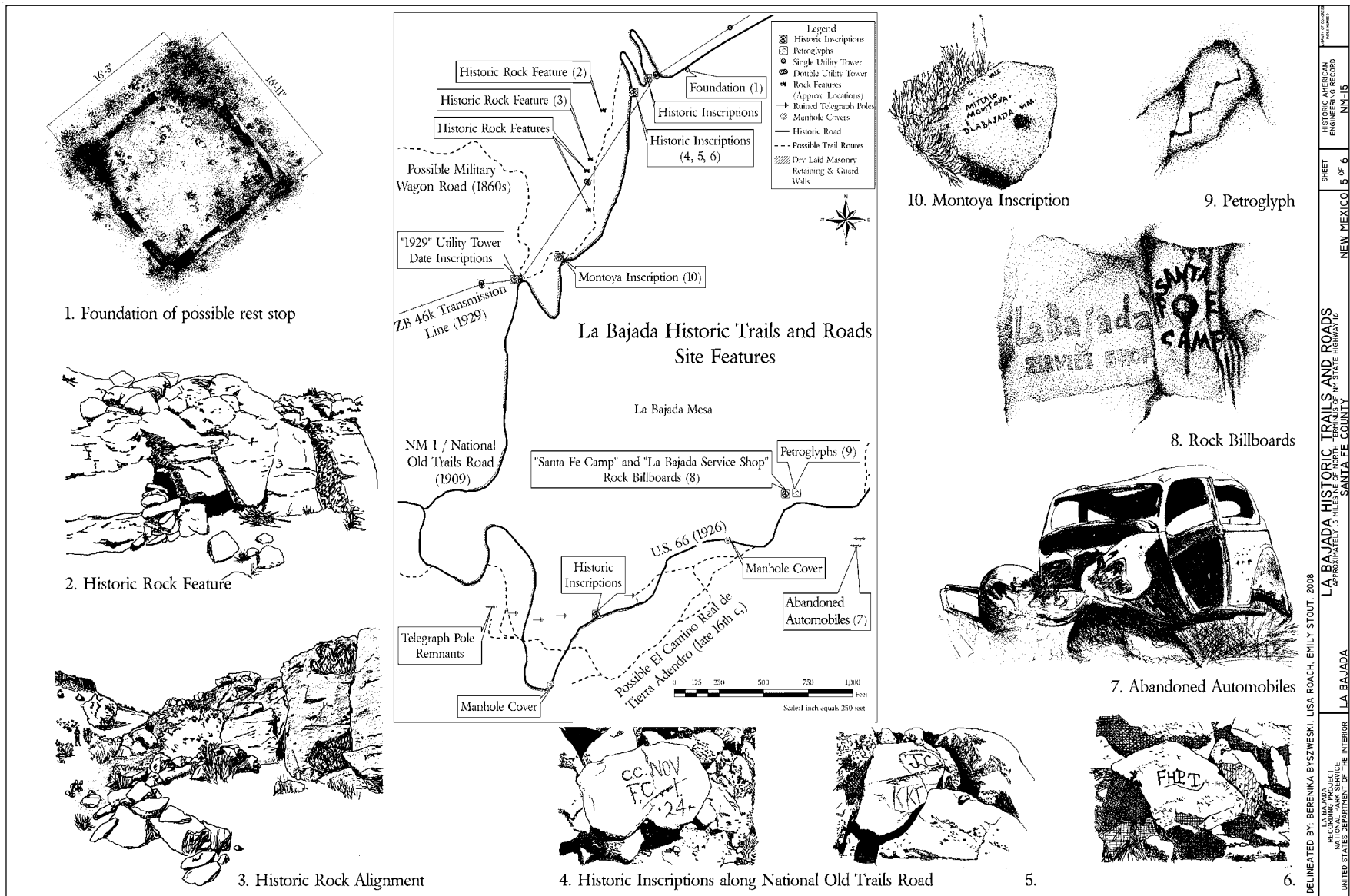
SANTA FE COUNTY

Santa Fe County
Growth Management
Department Planning Division
February 19, 2019





From National Parks Service La Bajada Recording Project 2008



From National Parks Service La Bajada Recording Project 2008



Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 19: Safe and convenient access to and from the Village of La Bajada

Strategy 19.1: La Bajada Village should work with County planning staff to create a working group, consisting of local residents and other stakeholders who will be affected by the establishment of clear, legal access to La Bajada Village. Affected roadways include 1) Historic Route 66 (Kewa Pueblo and Cochiti Pueblo) 2) Camino de La Bajada (Cochiti Pueblo) 3) Tetilla Peak Road (USACE) 4) La Bajada Road (Private Easement from Cochiti Pueblo to the Village of La Bajada)

Action 19.1.1: The working group should develop a road access and maintenance agreement. The group should include Santa Fe County, Sandoval County, USACE, Pueblo de Cochiti, Kewa Pueblo, BLM, and additional agencies and tribal governments as necessary.

Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Element





Water History

Water has been the life blood of La Bajada since the ancient times. The early settlements used water from spring sources, as well as directly from the Santa Fe River. Residents from La Bajada would draw water from the river for irrigation, drinking, and cooking, and for over a century there was no centralized water system for the community.

The advent of the railroad brought modern technology to the forefront. In March 1880, the ATSF railroad line between Lamy Junction and Albuquerque was completed. A railroad station and water supply point was established in Wallace (later renamed Domingo), as town named after Territorial Governor Lew Wallace. Growth in the area was slow despite agricultural production in the surrounding towns like Pena Blanca. For a year the town of Wallace struggle to survive. The main obstacle to progress was the lack of water. The only secure water source was from the spring located at the Santa Fe River. ATSF officials moved quickly to construct the gallery and pipeline needed to supply water to Wallace and to the associated railroad infrastructure so that the ATSF could ship agricultural produce from Pena Blanca and mining products from Golden and San Pedro.

From about 1880 to 1921 the water system primarily served the ATSF water storage facilities. In 1921, ATSF officials drafted an agreement that recognized La Bajada's ownership of the water rights from the Santa Fe River and that they were being inconvenienced during periods of heavy water use by the railroad. In exchange for the historic use of the water, and of its continued use the agreement stipulated that ATSF provide a 1" pipeline diverting water from a valve junction box at Station 294 + 38, running to La Bajada Village and ending at a spilt level 1,000-gallon concrete storage tank in the village.

In 1927 La Bajada Community Ditch, an organization of local property owners and farmers, filed a declaration of collective water rights (0569) with the Office of the State Engineer. The declaration stated that the community owned approximately 300 acres of land within the exterior boundaries of La Majada Grant and that the appurtenant water rights

amounted to approximately 600 acre feet. This constituted the entire natural flow of the Santa Fe River at the point of diversion. Popular crops grown during this period included corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, chile, and wheat. Although crops of corn, beans, squash, and chile continued to be grown into the twentieth century, alfalfa became a staple crop and was used to feed village livestock as well as being bundled and sold. Gradually the irrigated lands began to diminish with the condemnation of 135 acres north of the village by the US Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960s for the construction of the Cochiti Dam.

The La Bajada Community water system is situated on patent lands (1908 Patent). It originates from the Santa Fe River and traverses through Federal and Tribal land. The original mortared stone infiltration gallery is now decommissioned and a new infiltration gallery was constructed further from the streambed to mitigate contamination of the water supply. The gravity-flow distribution system consists of a 7-mile pipeline that extends west to a new gallery which diverts water to a 8,600 gallon storage tank and then flows north to supply La Bajada. From 1921 until the late 1960s, the water line operated via the stream bed alignment. During this time, improvements to the system included the addition of a new 500-gallon underground storage tank. In the 1960s, the City of Santa Fe obtained a discharge permit for its wastewater treatment plant which allowed the city to discharge treated effluent into the Santa Fe River. At this time, the original infiltration gallery was decommissioned in order to prevent the wastewater from entering the new water storage gallery.

ATSF officials entered into a termination agreement on May 17, 1974. The agreement specified that all ATSF water rights would be returned to the community of La Bajada. In addition, all rights, title and interest of ATSF in the pipeline from the Santa Fe River together with all water tanks and appurtenances were conveyed to the La Bajada Community Ditch, Inc., which is now the La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic Water Association.

La Bajada Community Ditch

La Bajada's acequia dates to the 17th century. The acequia system was rooted in Spanish colonial tradition, and implemented to irrigate fields in the arid New Mexico climate. The La Bajada acequia is a defining feature of the community landscape, as it has shaped the circulation pattern and defined field and farmland. As in typical Northern New Mexican traditional community landscapes, residential development generally occurred upslope from the acequia adjacent to roadway access in order to minimize road compaction and maximize the irrigable pasture and farmland.

The acequia does not just serve the agricultural needs of the village; it also serves as a form of local government with an elected board and commissioners. The La Bajada Community Ditch and the La Bajada Mutual Domestic Water Association are led by a President, Board of Directors, Mayordomo and various members who serve to issue watering days to the villagers and organize maintenance activities such as the spring cleaning of the ditch.

The acequia runs in a southeast to northwest direction and is a gravity-fed system that pulls its main source of water from the Santa Fe River at La Presa. Water is diverted here into the La Bajada Ditch (Acequia Madre) where it closely parallels the river to the north, crossing a culvert under the Historic El Camino Real and Route 66 before entering a reservoir or tanque. Water is stored for use to build sufficient head pressure for flood irrigation of furthest field and released from the reservoir in a regulated manner to a second segment of the ditch, where it follows the contour of the land into the village along the northeast edge of the fields. The system is described in the Historic American Engineering Record 18-NM (Library of Congress).

The fields are oriented in a linear northeast-southwest direction so that the northeast edge of each has access to the ditch. Regadores or small diversion gates divert water from the ditch to the individual fields. The Acequia Madre is diverted in the center of the village. The main channel continues in a northerly direction, while the Sangria Acequia Diversion

continues south. Both meet at the desague, the end point where the water drains back into the river. Water flows through the fields in a southwest direction, following the contours of the land and is then re-deposited into the Santa Fe River in a complete cycle. A series of diversionary ditches or sangrias have been built in the fields off the main ditch. A concrete/basalt stone head-gate, flumes, and sluices were added to the acequia system by the Soil Conservation Service in the 1940s. In La Bajada Village, the acequia retains its original earthen form and a high degree of historic integrity, however in 2014, approximately 1 mile of the acequia was piped underground for portions of the acequia for erosion control, and conservation by reduced evapotranspiration.

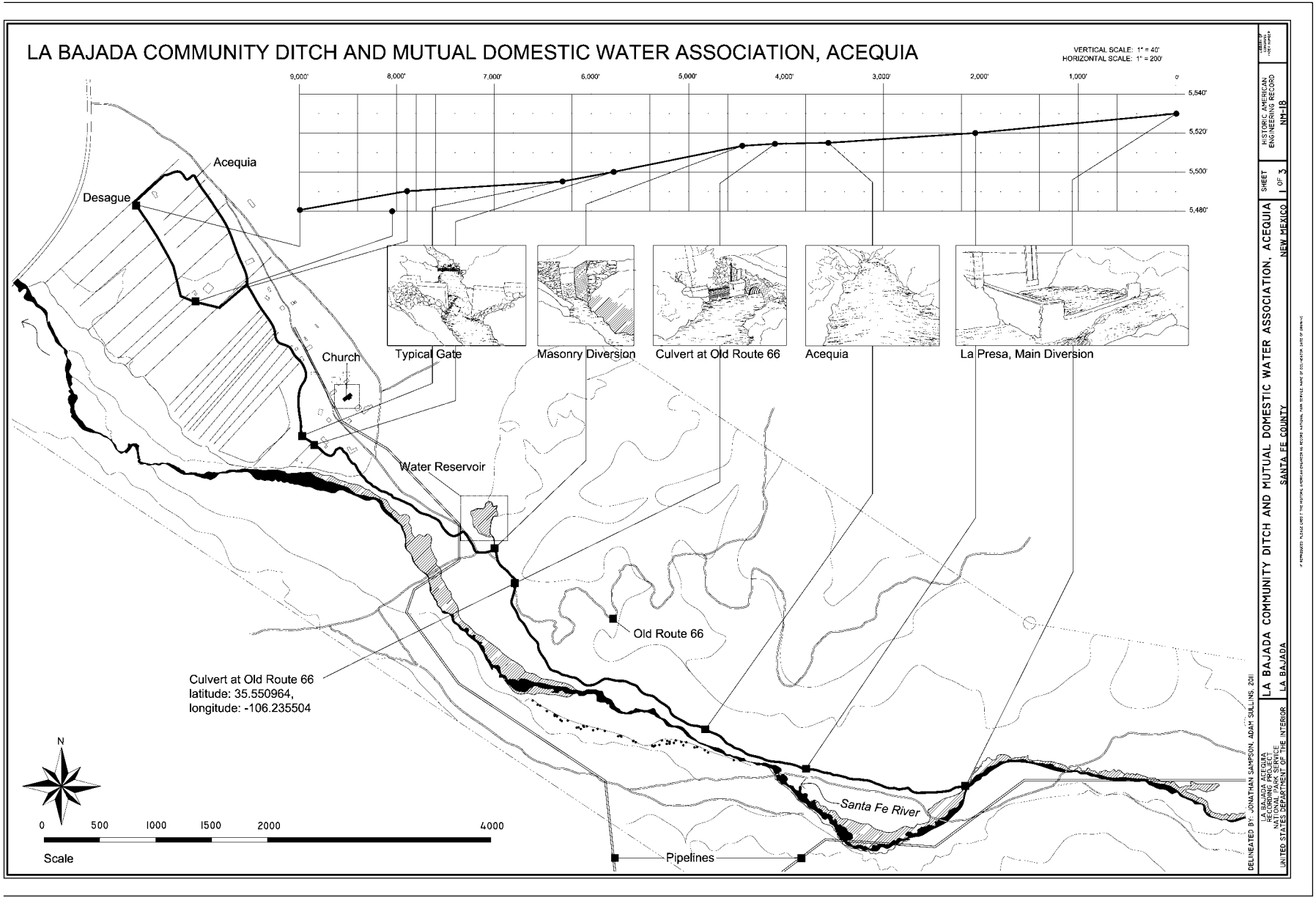


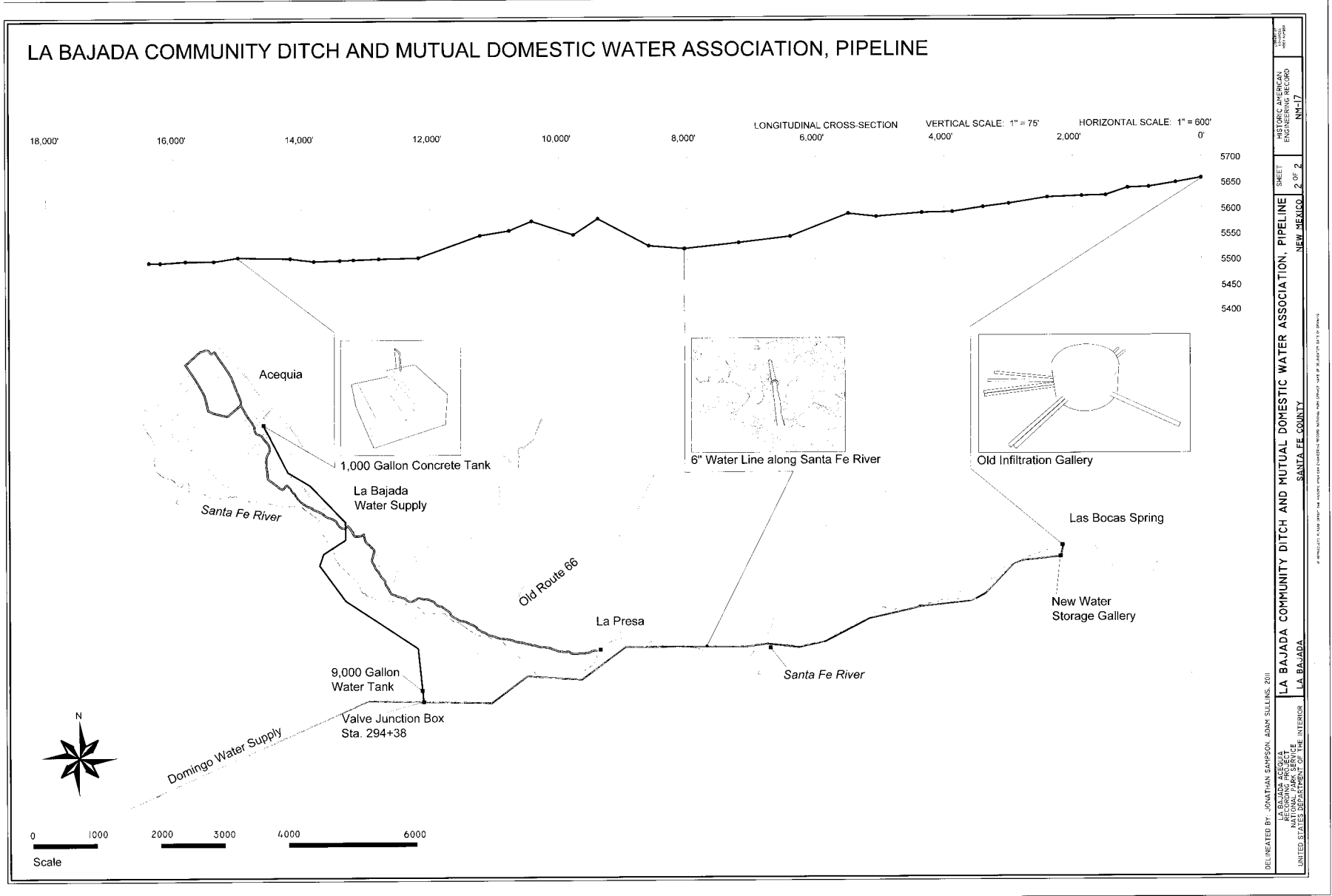
La Bajada acequia is described in HAER no. NM-18 and notes that ‘Although some modernization of the acequia is evident, the existing system, associated landscape and settlement patterns still retain integrity and the characteristics that convey a sense of the historic agricultural development in the area. The Acequia Madre or “Mother Ditch” has essentially maintained a consistent configuration. It retains earthen-lined ditches, and the setting is still consistent with its historic period. Most importantly, the acequia continues to serve agricultural needs in the community as well as traditional cultural values and practices.’

In 1975 the District Court for Santa Fe County issued an order to the Office of the State Engineer to conduct a hydrographic survey for claims on the use of water from the Santa Fe Stream System. Declaration 0569 filed in 1927 reflects continuous beneficial use for 100 years prior to the 1827 priority date for La Bajada water rights. The storage reservoir, constructed in 1888 and rebuilt in 1918 to store water for irrigation was measured at 1.2 acres. The crop irrigation requirements are 4.0-acre feet per acre per year.

At periods of time, throughout history and continuing to the present, water availability has been challenging. In the early 2000s, a community member recalled that the entire river went dry and everything in the river died, including vegetation and aquatic life. Wildlife patterns were altered during this time as animals came down out of the canyon, looking for food and water. In response to the river’s water shortage, communities on the Santa Fe River formed the Santa Fe River Traditional Community Collaborative to collectively address issues of water availability. Also during this time, around 2011, beavers were found to have created multiple dams, and the OSE Water Master reported that up to 200 acre feet of water had been impounded by these beaver dams, which greatly reduced the flow of the river and negatively impacted the ability to farm.







Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 20: Consistent long-term surface water flow of the Santa Fe River and the La Bajada ditch for agricultural irrigation.

Strategy 20.1: La Bajada Village should establish a relationship with the Santa Fe River Traditional Communities Collaborative (SFRTCC) (to include upstream and downstream users) to ensure consistent long-term surface water flows.

Action 20.1.1: Engage in regular communication and meetings with the SFRTCC to discuss water management strategies.

Strategy 20.2: Ensure that any plans for re-use of surface water by the Paseo Real water treatment plant include consideration of the water quality needs and water rights of La Bajada Community, and promote direct reuse of potable water reclaimed at the Paseo Real water treatment plant.

Action 20.2.1: La Bajada Village should utilize the Water Policy Advisory Committee and the Board of County Commissioners to develop policies on re-use of surface water.

Strategy 20.3: La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic should work to claim and reuse water

Action 20.3.1: La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic should provide training and education to community members on best practices for water reclamation and reuse, including water conservation, storage, treatment, and distribution.

Goal 21: Preserve the Village of La Bajada's historic water rights tied to the Santa Fe River

Strategy 21.1: La Bajada Village should actively participate in the water rights adjudication process through the Office of the State Engineer. This includes protesting new water appropriations and applications to safe-

guard the existing water rights of La Bajada Village.

Action 21.1.1: La Bajada Village should monitor new water appropriations and applications that may affect historic water rights and prepare to protest these actions if necessary.

Action 21.1.2: La Bajada Community Ditch should seek representation on the WPAC

Strategy 21.2: La Bajada Village should coordinate with Federal Agencies to restore access for the La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic Water Association, to its ditch, pipelines, reservoir, tanks, and diversions from the Santa Fe River Watershed.

Action 21.2.1: La Bajada Community Ditch, and Mutual Domestic Water Association should communicate with the respective federal agencies to cooperate on the restoration project to meet the needs and expectations of all parties involved.

Strategy 21.3: Diversify La Bajada's water portfolio through exploration of options to include establishing a community supplemental well for domestic and irrigation uses.

Action 21.3.1: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to procure an assessment of La Bajada's current water resources, including surface water, groundwater, and any existing wells. This will help identify potential areas for a new well and assess the feasibility of such an endeavor.

Adequate Public Facilities and Financing Element





Adequate Public Facilities and Financing Element

This element outlines several critical concerns regarding the provision of essential public facilities and the financial resources needed to support them. These concerns relate to the promotion of agricultural and economic growth, and the construction of a central plazita to accommodate community gathering.

Food Processing Facility and Central Placita

The establishment of a food processing facility in the Village of La Bajada is essential for supporting the community's agricultural and economic development goals. This facility will provide the necessary infrastructure to process and preserve locally produced goods, enhancing food security and promoting economic opportunities for local producers. Additionally, the development of a central plazita will serve as a community gathering place and a potential site for a farmers market, further enhancing the village's economic and social vibrancy.

The food processing facility will be designed to handle a variety of products, including fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy, to support the agricultural sector and create economic value. The facility will ensure that locally produced food can be processed and preserved, reducing waste and ensuring a stable food supply for the community. There is currently a structure on one of the parcels that the community seeks to use to process produce and meat before sale. This would directly support the development of the community's food system but also their economic development as they could also process foods from nearby producers. By providing the necessary infrastructure to process their products, the facility will facilitate the success of local farmers and ranchers. While this project could not be funded through capital outlay, Gross Receipts Tax (GRT), and general obligation bonds, there are a number of external grant opportunities which the community can seek out, such as The Community Food Project grants, Community Food Systems Grants, USDA Local Food Promotion Program, Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Farmer/Rancher Grant.

The central placita will be developed near the San Miguel Church, serving as a focal point for community gatherings and cultural events. This space

will also function as a hub for small-scale businesses and home enterprises, offering locally-grown produce, arts and crafts, and other products that support the community's vision for economic development through agritourism and eco-tourism. This location could also serve as host to a monthly farmers market, which will provide a platform for local producers to sell their goods directly to the community and visitors, fostering a sense of community and promoting the village's unique cultural and natural heritage.

To ensure the authenticity and cultural significance of the placita, the community should incorporate elements of the Law of the Indies, a set of urban planning guidelines established by the Spanish Crown in the 16th century. These guidelines dictated the layout and design of colonial towns, emphasizing the importance of a central plaza as a social and administrative hub. By adhering to the principles of the Law of the Indies, the central placita in La Bajada will maintain its historical integrity and serve as a symbol of the village's deep-rooted Spanish colonial heritage.





Santa Fe County La Bajada Vicinity Public Facilities

Legend

- Proposed Community Center/ Meeting Place
- Proposed Food Processing Facility
- Proposed Placita
- San Miguel Church



Santa Fe County
Growth Management Department
Planning Division
October 2024

Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 22: Establish a Food Processing Facility to Support Community Food System

Strategy 22.1: The Village of La Bajada should work with the County's Economic Development Division to identify potential funding sources

Strategy 22.2: The Village of La Bajada consult with the Santa Fe Farmers' Marketing Association for technical assistance and trainings

Action 22.1.2: Apply for Grants to Fund the Food Processing Facility

Housing Element





Housing Element

The Village of La Bajada Traditional Community consists of the following:

- A total of 75.64 acres in La Bajada (based on 2023 data from Santa Fe County's Assessor's Office)
- A total of 31 parcels
- 14 residential parcels totaling 40.05 acres
- 19 dwelling units
- 16 undeveloped parcels totaling 30 acres
- Existing San Miguel Church
- Existing agricultural and accessory structures
- Historic ruins
- 14 parcels are currently receiving special valuation agriculture totaling 53.45 acres which consists of 71% of the total acres of La Bajada



The majority of the residences are generally located near the access roads to the village. Traditionally land in the village was divided in long rectangular lots which bisect all of the major 'life zones' of the local ecology, including river, riparian regions, fertile bottom land, upland scrub, piñon-juniper forest and badlands. This traditional development pattern clusters development upslope near the circulation networks to preserve the continuity of open arable farmland downslope from the acequia for agricultural uses.

14 of the parcels in La Bajada are currently receiving special valuation for agriculture, according to the 2023 data from Santa Fe County's Assessor's Office. The church was built and rebuilt by the community and traditionally has served as a place of gathering. There is also a barn and some accessory structures on a parcel of land adjacent to the church that are potentially available to be developed for uses supportive to the community's future vision.

The community has identified a location for the placement of a community water tank adjacent to the church.





Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 23: Preserve and refurbish the traditional characteristics of existing housing structures

Strategy 23.1: Consider architectural design standards in the overlay process

Strategy 23.2: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with county staff (planning and treasurer's office) to identify potential properties that would qualify for Home Rehabilitation and Energy Efficiency Program

Action 23.2.1: Eligible property owners should apply for this program

Governance Element





Governance Element

Despite the governance challenges La Bajada encounters, particularly concerning road access on tribal and federal lands, there are strategies and initiatives within the community and its planning process that can mitigate many of the issues. Through these efforts, the Village of La Bajada has established a path forward to enhance its governance capabilities. The community planning process establishes a role for property owners and residents to participate in shaping the future through developing a vision for the Village of La Bajada. This plan provides the context of the village within the overall County through a series of dialogues and shared understanding of the desired future for the community.

The purpose of this planning process is to ensure that the community's voice is represented and that future development is in balance with both natural and human systems, sustaining traditional lifeways in harmony within the natural environment and cultural setting. This plan is intended to reinforce the unique, historical, rural character of the plan area while serving evolving community needs.

There is a need for intergovernmental coordination in order to address complex issues in the community such as maintenance of infrastructure, water, roads, and access. A thread throughout this plan is to work towards approaches to problem solving and cross-jurisdictional understandings in order to address issues of mutual interest and concern.

The County's Sustainable Growth Management Plan (SGMP) lays the foundation for building more effective regional partnerships in the County. The health of Santa Fe County's communities, including Traditional Communities, tribal governments, the incorporated municipalities, the rural areas of the County and the welfare of the region are interconnected. Intergovernmental cooperation may involve multiple jurisdictions to communicate and address and resolve issues of mutual interest. Establishing greater efficiency and effectiveness in the planning process is an on-going effort that the County in coordination with its communities seeks to improve upon. Good governance also lays the foundation for building more effective regional partnerships in the County and is key for the community's sustainability.

Since passage of Public Laws 98-344, 106-307 and 106-425 by the Congress of the United States, there has been an ongoing need for village representatives to engage with neighbors and agencies including Santa Fe County, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pueblo de Cochiti, Kewa Pueblo (also known as Santo Domingo), Bureau of Land Management, the US Forest Service, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The Village of La Bajada seeks to maintain the most traditional form of New Mexico participative democracy that has withstood the Spanish Empire, Mexican Government and the United States Territorial Government. The easements to existing and historical rights of way in and around La Bajada have yet to be issued by the Secretary of the Interior at time of this writing.



Goals, Strategies and Actions

Goal 24: Ensure implementation of the community plan by maintaining regular planning committee meetings.

Strategy 24.1: The Village of La Bajada planning committee should establish regular meetings to monitor and implement the plan.

Action 24.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should hold meetings with sufficient frequency and meet as needed with County staff to implement the plan.

SECTION III. Implementation and Goals

The Implementation Element is designed to provide a structured approach to executing the goals, strategies, and actions outlined in the plan. This element includes a comprehensive table that lists key projects, their priority rankings, and potential funding sources. The purpose of this table is to guide the community and relevant stakeholders in prioritizing projects, securing funding, and ensuring the timely implementation of initiatives that will enhance the quality of life in La Bajada. Additionally, it compiles the goals, strategies, and actions from each section of the plan to ensure a cohesive and actionable implementation strategy.

Implementation Matrix

Priority	Project	Implementation
1	Cadastral Survey	ICIP/Survey grants/indigent fund
2	Road Maintenance and Adoptions	Santa Fe County Public Works and Planning
3	Signage and Wayfinding	NMDOT and Santa Fe County Public Works
4	Inventory of Community Assets	SF Historic Foundation grants, State Archives grants, Certified Local Government program (County would apply)
5	Food Processing Facility/Trainings	see Public Facilities Element
6	Community Gathering Space/Plaza	ICIP
7	Internet/Broadband	See Economic Development Element

Land Use Element

Goal 1: Promote land uses appropriate for the Village of La Bajada to maintain the Traditional Community characteristics

Strategy 1.1: Modify existing zoning and land uses suitable for the Village of La Bajada Traditional Community based on community needs, culture and traditional community lifeways by creating a Community District Overlay.

Action 1.1.1: Establish the Village of La Bajada Community District Overlay including an Agricultural Overlay and a Rural Commercial Overlay. This overlay would permit appropriately scaled agricultural, residential and non-residential uses that align with the community's future vision.

Action 1.1.2: Revisit the Community District Overlay with the Planning Committee every 3-5 years to assess the effectiveness

Goal 2: Delineate the community boundary

Strategy 2.1: Conduct a Cadastral Survey to Redefine Village Boundaries

Action 2.1.1: Seek Funding for the Cadastral Survey to Align Boundaries with the Santa Fe River

Economic Development Element

Goal 3: Support community lifestyles and livelihoods by enabling community scale commercial enterprises.

Strategy 3.1: Establish the Village of La Bajada Rural Commercial Overlay to allow greater flexibility for appropriate residential and non-residential uses in alignment with the community's vision.

Action 3.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee will work with County Planning staff to develop and implement the Rural Commercial Overlay regulations.

Action 3.1.2 : Planning staff will market the AgriGate to local farmers/ranchers to increase their revenue

Strategy 3.2 : Community members should work with Economic Development Division to identify and support potential business opportunities that align with the community's vision.

Action 3.2.1: Planning staff will put Economic Development Division in contact with the La Bajada Village planning committee

Strategy 3.3 Establish a farmers' market or co-op to support local producers and economic development.

Action 3.3.1: The Village of La Bajada producers should coordinate with County and the New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association to set up a regular farmers' market or co-op within the community.

Implementation and Goals

Goal 4: Enhance the economic viability of the community through tourism and recreation.

Strategy 4.1: Community members should develop and promote agritourism and ecotourism opportunities by working with the County and the State tourism offices

Action 4.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with Planning staff, County and State tourism offices to create a tourism plan that promotes the village's natural and cultural assets.

Goal 5: Improve infrastructure to support commercial activities within La Bajada Village.

Strategy 5.1: Conduct an infrastructure assessment and to ensure that roads and utilities are adequate to support commercial development.

Action 5.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to place an infrastructure assessment on the ICIP.

Goal 6: Enhance Internet Connectivity fto the Village to support community development

Strategy 6.1: La Bajada Village should collaborate with local, state and federal government agencies to improve internet access.

Action 6.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with Planning staff to coordinate internet expansion through the County's Economic Development Division, the New Mexico Office of Broadband, Access and Expansion and Senator Heinrich's office.

Goal 7: Identify and utilize financial incentives for economic development.

Strategy 7.1: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to investigate local, State and Federal programs that support economic development.

Action 7.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to explore State, local and Federal programs that offer tax incentives and other financial incentives for local businesses..

Agriculture and Ranching Element

Goal 8: Expand the economic viability of agricultural enterprises in La Bajada Village.

Strategy 8.1: Farmers and ranchers in La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to reestablish La Bajada Village as a substantial provider of local food to the regional market.

Action 8.1.1: Planning staff will work with local food producers to add them to the AgriGate website and link them to markets

Action 8..1.2: Planning staff shall work with SF Food Policy Council to promote agricultural enterprises in La Bajada Village

Strategy 8.2: Collaborate with local ag. institutions (i.e.; UNM) and County Economic Development Division receive technical assistance for crops and business plans.

Action 8.2.1 La Bajada Village farmers and ranchers should consult with faculty and staff in appropriate departments at UNM, NMSU, the County's Economic Development Division, USDA to pursue technical assistance for crops and business plans.

Strategy 8.3: Ensure qualified properties are able to utilize "Agricultural and Grazing Special Method Valuation" for agricultural and ranching taxation exemptions.

Action 8.3.1: Farmers and ranchers in the Village of La Bajada should contact with the County's Assessor's Office to apply for the Agricultural and Grazing Special Method Valuation.

Goal 9: Allow for tax benefits for the animal husbandry of horses

Strategy 9.1: Reform rules so that horses qualify for tax breaks

Action 9.1.1: La Bajada Village can lobby or hire a lobbyist to advocate to policy makers at state and local levels that horses are integral and essential to the agricultural and ranching lifeways of the Village of La Bajada.

Goal 10: Create a monthly farmers/makers market to support local producers and promote community engagement

Strategy 10.1: La Bajada ranchers and farmers should establish a market committee composed of local residents and business owners to develop and oversee the planning and execution of the market

Strategy 10.2: La Bajada Village should work with County staff, New Mexico Farmer's Marketing Association to explore funding sources to develop a farmer's market comprehensive plan

Action: 10.2.1: La Bajada ranchers and farmers should work with the County and the State to secure funding for the farmer's market comprehensive plan

Action 10.2.2: Create and implement a detailed farmer's market comprehensive plan that includes the layout, vendor requirements, and operational guidelines.

Resource Conservation Element

Goal 11: Strengthen La Bajada Traditional Community identity to support cultural resource conservation.

Strategy 11.1: La Bajada Village to collaborate with planning staff to develop community and wayfinding signage to support the cultural identity of the community.

Action.11.1.1.: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to develop a signage plan and install the signage to clearly identify La Bajada Village at NM 16 and Tetilla Peak Road intersection, at the Santa Fe River, and at all Village entrances.

Goal 12: Preserve the cultural landscape and historic ruins of La Bajada Village

Implementation and Goals

Strategy 12.1 :La Bajada Village planning committee should consult with the Santa Fe Historic Foundation and SHPO fto ensure a comprehensive understanding and assessment of the cultural resources in the village.

Action 12.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee with the Historic Foundation and SHPO should document significant historical and cultural features within the Village of La Bajada. This includes cataloging ruins, landscapes, traditional land-use patterns, and other culturally significant elements.

Action 12.1.2: La Bajada Village and planning staff will work with New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs to explore opportunities to develop a history museum.

Action 12.1.3.: Create incentives for land owners to protect important historic features or unique cultural characteristics on their properties through the Transfer of Development Rights program

Goal 13: Protect natural resources

Strategy 13.1: Maintain and enhance water quality by restricting land uses in riparian areas to those which are conducive to the environmental health of the area.

Action 13.1.1: County planning staff and the La Bajada Village planning committee will review and approve specific, allowable land uses and design standards through the Community District Overlay process.

Open Space, Trails, Parks, and Recreation Element

Goal 14: Develop a small Plaza in front of the San Miguel Church for community gathering purposes.

Strategy 14.1: County staff and the La Bajada Village planning committee should meet to identify amenities for the plaza.

Strategy 14.2: Reference “Law of the Indies” for Plaza design standards

Action 14.2.1: Include conceptual planning for a Plaza on the ICIP.

Goal 15: Support open space, parks, trails and recreation as a component of economic development

Strategy 15.1: Develop and install interpretive signage around the village in support of recreation and history.

Action 15.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with planning staff to identify key locations and themes for interpretive signage, ensuring that the signage reflects the community’s vision and values.

Action 15.1.2: County staff and the La Bajada Village planning committee should work with the Public Works department to install and maintain the signage in the locations specified by the community.

Public Safety Element

Goal 16: To have reliable and efficient emergency services in the Village of La Bajada.

Strategy 16.1: Restore secondary access to the community for emergency services

Action 16.1.1: Develop a working group consisting of local residents and other stakeholders to help establish of clear, legal secondary access along historic Route 66 and Camino de La Bajada, to include Santa Fe County, Sandoval County, USACE, Pueblo de Cochiti, Kewa Pueblo, BLM.

Action 16.1.2: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff and 911 rural addressing staff to ensure that addressing is up-to-date.

Action 16.1.3: La Bajada Village should work with County planning and GIS to revise County E911 Addressing records to route emergency services via La Bajada Road, not Historic Route 66, which is currently blocked by a gate.

Goal 17: Maintain roads in good condition to enhance safety and accessibility for residents and emergency vehicles.

Strategy 17.1: Turn over La Bajada Road to the County for ensure year-round maintenance

Action 17.1.1: The Village of La Bajada should petition the county to adopt La Bajada Road as a County maintained road.

Goal 18: Have a prepared community which can respond to emergencies effectively, including natural disasters.

Strategy 18.1: La Bajada Village should work with the County fire department RECC to identify potential threats to the community.

Action 18.1.1: La Bajada Village should work with the County fire department to receive training on fire prevention and response.

Action 18.1.2: La Bajada Village should develop and distribute an Emergency Preparedness Guide to all residents, outlining steps to take before, during, and after an emergency.

Action 18.1.3: La Bajada Village should organize regular community drills and training sessions to familiarize residents with emergency and evacuation procedures.

Action 18.1.4: La Bajada Village should establish a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to learn basic disaster response skills and to provide additional support to vulnerable populations during emergencies.

Transportation Element

Goal 19: Safe and convenient access to and from the Village of La Bajada

Strategy 19.1: La Bajada Village should work with County planning staff to create a working group, consisting of local residents and other stakeholders

Implementation and Goals

who will be affected by the establishment of clear, legal access to La Bajada Village Affected roadways include 1) Historic Route 66 (Kewa Pueblo and Cochiti Pueblo) 2) Camino de La Bajada (Cochiti Pueblo) 3) Tetilla Peak Road (USACE) 4) La Bajada Road (Private Easement from Cochiti Pueblo to the Village of La Bajada)

Action 19.1.1: The working group should develop a road access and maintenance agreement. The group should include Santa Fe County, Sandoval County, USACE, Pueblo de Cochiti, Kewa Pueblo, BLM, and additional agencies and tribal governments as necessary.

Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Element

Goal 20: Consistent long-term surface water flow of the Santa Fe River and the La Bajada ditch for agricultural irrigation.

Strategy 20.1: La Bajada Village should establish a relationship with the Santa Fe River Traditional Communities Collaborative (SFRTCC) (to include upstream and downstream users) to ensure consistent long-term surface water flows.

Action 20.1.1: Engage in regular communication and meetings with the SFRTCC to discuss water management strategies.

Strategy 20.2: Ensure that any plans for re-use of surface water by the Paseo Real water treatment plant include consideration of the water quality needs and water rights of La Bajada Community, and promote direct reuse of potable water reclaimed at the Paseo Real water treatment plant.

Action 20.2.1: La Bajada Village should utilize the Water Policy Advisory Committee and the Board of County Commissioners to develop policies on re-use of surface water.

Strategy 20.3: La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic should work to claim and reuse water

Action 20.3.1: La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic should provide training and education to community members on best practices for water reclamation and reuse, including water conservation, storage, treatment, and distribution.

Goal 21: Preserve the Village of La Bajada's historic water rights tied to the Santa Fe River

Strategy 21.1: La Bajada Village should actively participate in the water rights adjudication process through the Office of the State Engineer. This includes protesting new water appropriations and applications to safeguard the existing water rights of La Bajada Village.

Action 21.1.1: La Bajada Village should monitor new water appropriations and applications that may affect historic water rights and prepare to protest these actions if necessary.

Action 21.1.2: La Bajada Community Ditch should seek representation on the WPAC

Strategy 21.2: La Bajada Village should coordinate with Federal Agencies to restore access for the La Bajada Community Ditch and Mutual Domestic Water Association, to its ditch, pipelines, reservoir, tanks, and diversions from the Santa Fe River Watershed.

Action 21.2.1: La Bajada Community Ditch, and Mutual Domestic Water Association should communicate with the respective federal agencies to cooperate on the restoration project to meet the needs and expectations of all parties involved.

Strategy 21.3: Diversify La Bajada's water portfolio through exploration of options to include establishing a community supplemental well for domestic and irrigation uses.

Action 21.3.1: La Bajada Village should work with planning staff to procure an assessment of La Bajada's current water resources, including surface water, groundwater, and any existing wells. This will help identify potential areas for a new well and assess the feasibility of such an endeavor.

Adequate Public Facilities and Financing Element

Goal 22: Establish a Food Processing Facility to Support Community Food System

Strategy 22.1: The Village of La Bajada should work with the County's Economic Development Division to identify potential funding sources

Strategy 22.2: The Village of La Bajada consult with the Santa Fe Farmers' Marketing Association for technical assistance and trainings

Action 22.1.2: Apply for Grants to Fund the Food Processing Facility

Housing Element

Goal 23: Preserve and refurbish the traditional characteristics of existing housing structures

Strategy 23.1: Consider architectural design standards in the overlay process

Strategy 23.2: La Bajada Village planning committee should work with county staff (planning and treasurer's office) to identify potential properties that would qualify for Home Rehabilitation and Energy Efficiency Program

Action 23.2.1: Eligible property owners should apply for this program

Governance Element

Goal 24: Ensure implementation of the community plan by maintaining regular planning committee meetings.

Strategy 24.1: The Village of La Bajada planning committee should establish regular meetings to monitor and implement the plan.

Implementation and Goals

Action 24.1.1: La Bajada Village planning committee should hold meetings with sufficient frequency and meet as needed with County staff to implement the plan.

Appendix

Sources & Key Documents Index

1. “La Bajada Cultural Landscape Report” by Baker H. Morrow. 2016.
2. “Declaration of Right of Way” by La Bajada Community Ditch & Mutual Domestic Water Association. 20222015.
3. 1908 Patent
4. 1983 Cochiti Boundary Easement
5. Public Law-98-344 “Indian Land and Water Claims Settlement Act of 1984”
6. Public Law-106-307 “El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail Act”
7. Public Law-106-425 “Cochiti Dam and Lake Enhancement Act of 2000”
8. La Bajada Statement of Resolve 2017



