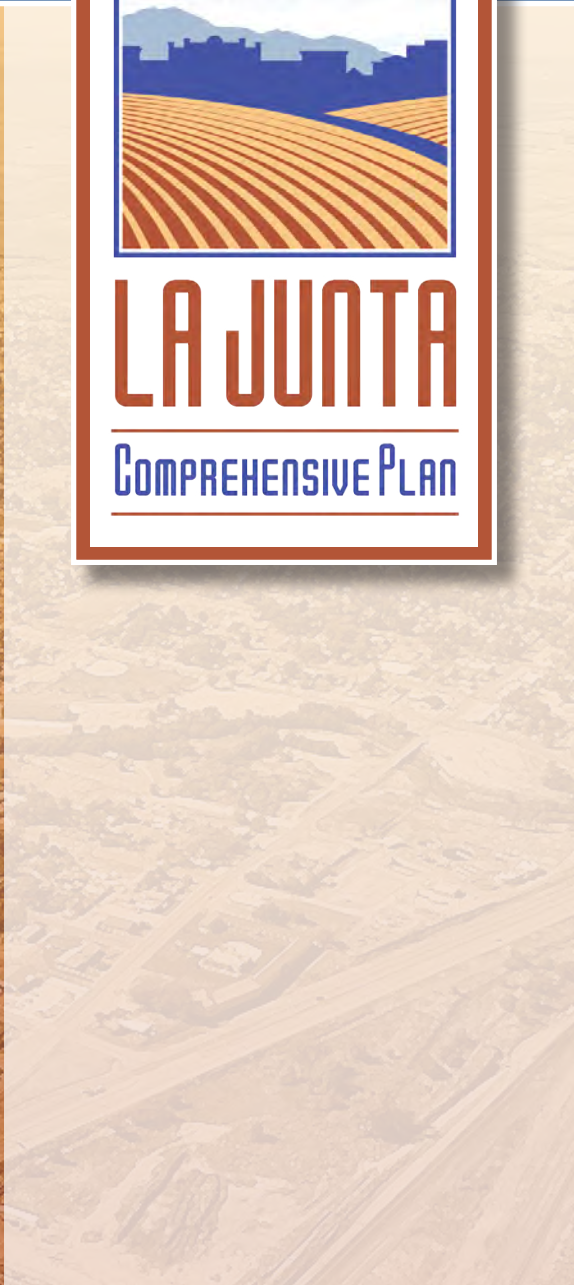


LA JUNTA
Comprehensive Plan

The logo is contained within a white rectangular box with a brown border. It features a stylized sunburst at the top, a blue silhouette of a city skyline in the middle, and a field of orange and red stripes at the bottom. Below the graphic, the text "LA JUNTA" is written in a large, bold, brown serif font, and "Comprehensive Plan" is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.



LA JUNTA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





Prepared for:



*City of La Junta
P.O. Box 489
601 Colorado Ave.
La Junta, Colorado 81050*

August 2017

Prepared by:



Please see the next page.



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Mr. Jim Goodwin – Ward 1

Mrs. Jeffri Pruyn – Ward 2

Mr. Frank McKenzie – Ward 2

Mr. Ed Vela – Ward 3

Mr. Scott Eckhart – Ward 3

Planning Commission

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Mr. Ed Vela – Mayors Appointee

Mr. Joe Kelly - Mayors Appointee

Mr. Jim Goodwin – Council’s Appointee

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Mr. Aaron Eveatt – Fire Chief

Mr. Todd Quick – Police Chief

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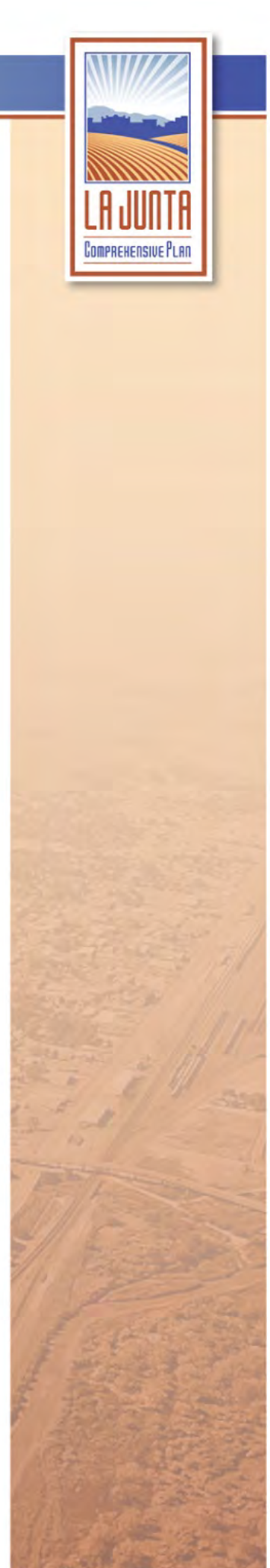
Mr. Reuben De Leon – Electrical Superintendent

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Public Input

The City of La Junta would like to thank all of the citizens who gave their time in assisting in the development of the Comprehensive Plan by participating in the community workshops and corresponding with members of the Planning Commission and City Council.



Colorado Department of Local Affairs

The update of the La Junta Comprehensive Plan was prepared under the direction of the City of La Junta, with financial support from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The content reflects the views of the City of La Junta and does not necessarily reflect the views of the DOLA.

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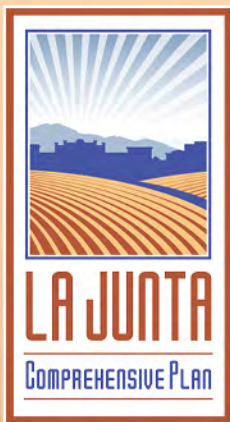


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Please see the next page.



1. Introduction and Background

The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide to help facilitate the growth of a community. The Plan provides the framework that should guide the future growth and development of La Junta. This chapter explains the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, establishes the Comprehensive Plan's guiding Vision Statement, provides a history of La Junta, and analyzes the demographic and socioeconomic trends present in the community.

Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan

The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to guide City officials, residents, developers, and merchants in sound decision making for current and future development. While not legally binding, the Comprehensive Plan is an official public document, which establishes an advisory framework for land use decisions, public service expansions, park and trail development, economic development strategies, and the general growth of the city. This plan serves to guide current and short-term decisions against the long-range vision developed by the community. The La Junta Comprehensive Plan has the following three defining features:

- **General.** The comprehensive plan provides general guidance that will be used to direct future land use and resource decisions.
- **Comprehensive.** As the name implies, the comprehensive plan covers a wide range of social, economic, infrastructure, and natural resource topics. Topics include land use, transportation, community facilities, and others.
- **Long-Range.** The comprehensive plan provides guidance on reaching a vision 20 or more years in the future. To achieve the vision, the comprehensive plan includes goals, policies, and actions that address both immediate and long-term needs.

The City of La Junta's 2017 Comprehensive Plan is comprised of six different elements, which are Introduction and Background; Economic Development; Land Use; Circulation and Mobility; Community Services, Facilities, and Buildings; and Natural Resources, Recreation, and Tourism. Each element has two primary sections. These are:

- **Existing Conditions.** The existing conditions provide context and background for the development of the Plan's goals and policies. This section of each element describes La Junta as it exists in 2014 and includes a number of maps, graphics, and tables, making it concise and easy to read.
- **Goals and Policies.** This section of each element contains the goals and policies that will guide future decisions in La Junta. It also identifies implementation measures that will be used to help implement and achieve the goals and policies.

Plan Authority

Title 31, Article 23, Section 206 of the Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) requires municipalities that have a population of 2,000 or more to adopt a Master, or Comprehensive, Plan. Comprehensive Plans are typically advisory documents, but parts of



the Plan can be made binding if they are included in the municipality's adopted subdivision, zoning, platting, planned unit development, or other land use regulatory documents.

Comprehensive Plan Process

The development process for the La Junta Comprehensive Plan was a joint planning effort between the citizens of the City of La Junta, City staff and elected officials, and planning consultant Matrix Design Group.

The work to complete the Comprehensive Plan was conducted in four phases:

Phase 1 – Project Start-up: Components integral to the success of the Comprehensive Plan were finalized; these included the project schedule and the overall document outline and format.

Phase 2 – Gathering Input / Visioning: Input was garnered from the public through a community workshop and through multiple interviews with community leaders and stakeholders. The City of La Junta vision statement was derived from these outreach efforts.

Phase 3 – Draft Plan Development: Land Use alternatives were developed and agreed upon by City staff. Two additional community workshops were held during this phase and a draft of the Comprehensive Plan was produced.

Phase 4 – Final Draft / Adoption: Public comments and input from City staff were incorporated to create the Final Comprehensive Plan.

Public Outreach Process

An essential part of any comprehensive plan is community engagement. Participation by a broad cross section of interests increases the likelihood that the Plan's goals and objectives will be based on community consensus. Strong consensus increases the likelihood for successful plan implementation.

From the very early stages of the project, City staff and leadership emphasized the need for a robust and creative stakeholder engagement program. The elements of the community involvement program are described below in more detail.

Community Workshops and Outreach

Community workshops are a standard engagement component of any comprehensive planning program. Due to the limited timeframe for plan development, state review and formal adoption, the project team identified key points in the work program to engage stakeholders in a workshop, meeting, or community forum setting. These outreach efforts are described briefly below. Detailed information concerning these workshops was uploaded to the project website for public review following each event.

Workshop 1: Introduction, Visioning, Issue & Opportunity Identification

Held on September 27, 2016 at the La Junta Senior Citizens Center, Workshop 1 introduced the project to the public. The main objectives of the workshop were to collect ideas about issues that La Junta has been facing and may face in the future. After an introductory power point presentation, attendees participated in small group exercises focused on developing a draft vision statement, and initial issues and opportunities identification. This information was essential in helping the team frame the plan's focus and ultimately, implementation strategies.



The Vision Statement captures what residents hope the city will be in the future and is, thus, the foundation for the goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The City's Vision Statement is provided later on in this chapter.

Workshop 2: Plan Visioning

This workshop was held on January 31, 2017 again at the La Junta Senior Citizens Center. This workshop consisted of two parts, the first of which consisted of a PowerPoint presentation updating residents about the progress of the project to-date. The second part of the workshop had participants working together in small groups on two exercises. The first exercise was to develop / map a set of land use alternatives for the city and the second was to provide input on policy ideas for the goals and policies of each element in this Plan. The information garnered in this workshop ultimately influenced the future land use plan developed in the Land Use Chapter of this document and helped with the creation of goals and policies for the Plan.





Workshop 3: Focus Areas

Workshop 3 was held on June 7, 2017 at the La Junta Senior Citizens Center. A finalized Vision Statement was presented at the workshop which represented input received from the previous two workshops. At this workshop, participants were asked to identify areas / topics around the city that they would like to see improved. As a part of the same exercise, participants were asked how they thought Downtown could be renewed. Attendees provided written comments about improvements they thought should be made and then marked on a map of Downtown where these improvements should occur.

Stakeholder Interviews

The project team, Matrix Design Group, conducted interviews of nine community stakeholders as identified by the City. The purpose of the interviews was to gather insights into key issues and concerns that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The individuals interviewed are listed below and the description in parenthesis highlights the group each person was representing.

- Rick Klein (City Manager)
- Lynn Horner (Mayor)
- Lorenz Sutherland (Utilities Board)
- Jim Rizzuto (Otero Junior College)
- Nancy Bennet (Urban Renewal Authority)
- Rick Lovato (La Junta Schools)
- Ryan Stevens (La Junta Economic Development)
- Curtis Peacock (La Junta Planning Commission)
- Darren Adame (La Junta Engineering Department)

Historical Context and Factors

The City of La Junta was originally incorporated as a town on April 4, 1881. The town's name is Spanish for "the junction," which was fitting because La Junta was established at the junction of the Santa Fe Trail and the road leading to the City of Pueblo. The Santa Fe Trail was constructed in the 19th century and historically used for trade and as a connecting road for the new southwest territories when the United States was expanding westward. This was a strategic location for the town to be settled due to the influx of people and trade the nearby Santa Fe Trail, Bent's Post, and railroad brought to the area.

(Source: Dawson, John Frank. Place names in Colorado: why 700 communities were so named, 150 of Spanish or Indian Origin.)

Government Structure

In 1967, La Junta established itself as a home rule municipality, meaning that by state law the City has the right to govern itself over local issues. The City adopted a home rule charter in the late 1960's, which serves as the local governing document similar to a constitution. La Junta has a council-manager form of government in which citizens elect City Council members to represent them, who then in turn help enact policies, local ordinances, and other legislations. In La Junta there are seven elected City Council members, two elected from each of the three wards in the city and one who is elected at large and carries the title of "Mayor." The City Council is also responsible for appointing a City Manager whose job is to guide the day-to-day operations of the City, among many other responsibilities.

Regional Context

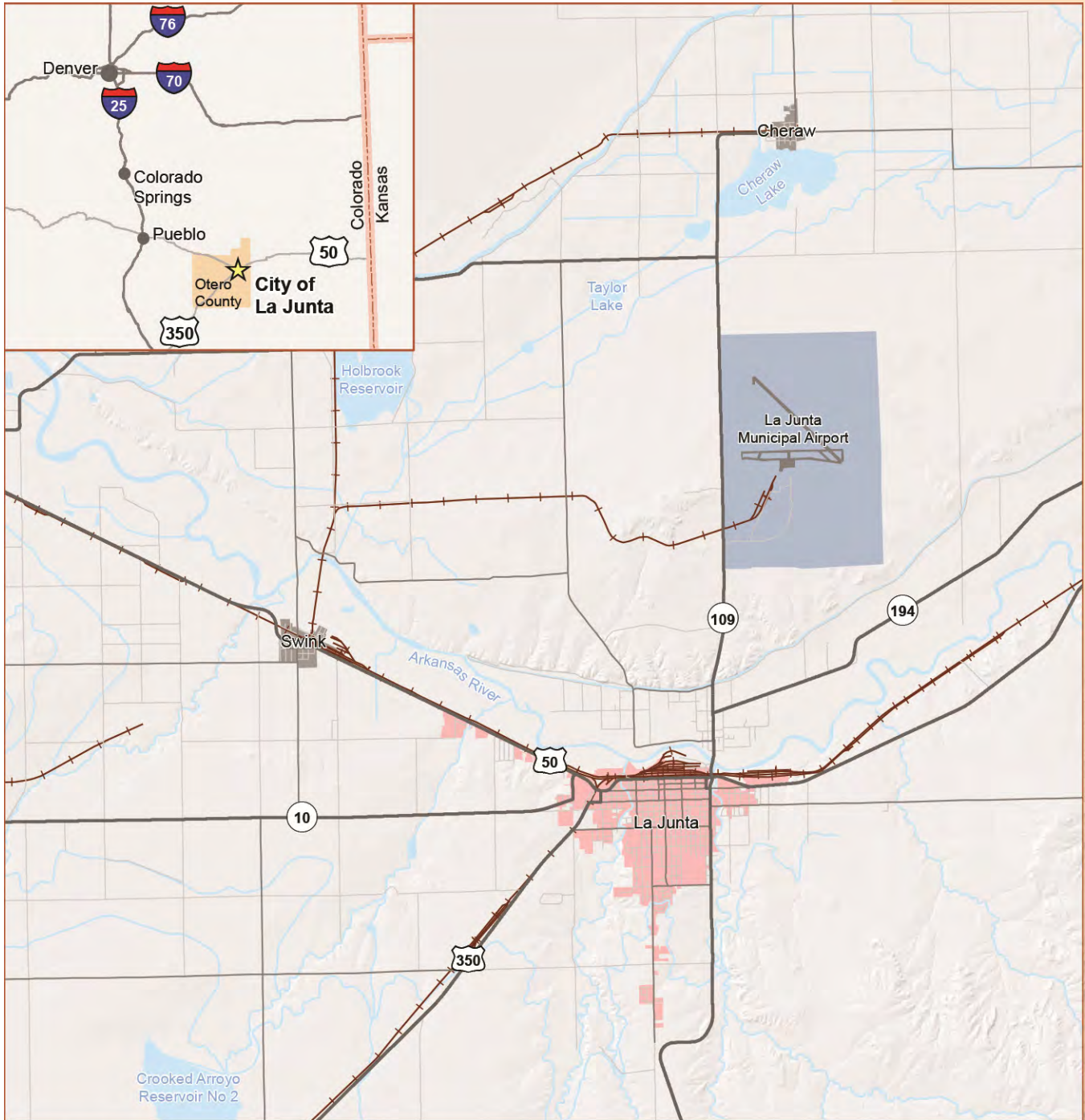
The City of La Junta is approximately three square miles, and located in southeastern Colorado, roughly 65 miles east of the City of Pueblo. As displayed in Figure 1-1, the City of La Junta is located in Otero County, and serves as the county seat, with the largest population of all the incorporated communities within the county. La Junta and all of Otero County are located within the Southeast Transportation Planning Region (TPR), which serves as a transportation policy-making organization facilitating the collaboration of its member governments, stakeholders, and the public in important planning processes. The Southeast TPR is discussed more fully in Chapter 4, Circulation and Mobility.

Population and Socioeconomic Characteristics

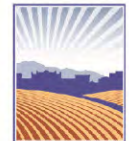
The majority of the demographic information contained in the Plan was derived from statistical data provided by the 2010 Census, 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), and the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). The ACS is an ongoing survey conducted by the US Census Bureau every year to collect current economic, social, demographic, and housing data. The survey provides data on a 1-year, 3-year, or 5-year cycle, rather than once every 10 years, as with the Decennial Census.

While this data alone provides a good snapshot of La Junta, it is also helpful to compare the city to other communities in the area to provide a comparative analysis. The other communities in Otero County, the County itself, and the State of Colorado as a whole will be used for comparative analysis.

1. Introduction and Background



- City of La Junta
- City-owned Property
- Other City
- Highway / Freeway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Stream / Canal



Matrix
DESIGN GROUP

LA JUNTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



0 1/2 1 1 1/2 2 Miles

Source: Matrix Design Group, 2017.

Figure 1-1
La Junta Vicinity

Population

Table 1-1 provides population data for La Junta and the other communities in Otero County. Along with having the largest population of the incorporated communities within the county, La Junta is also the largest community in terms of square mileage and has the highest population density. Communities like La Junta with high population densities allow for the swift and efficient delivery of services such as water and other essential utilities.

Table 1-1. Municipalities in Otero County

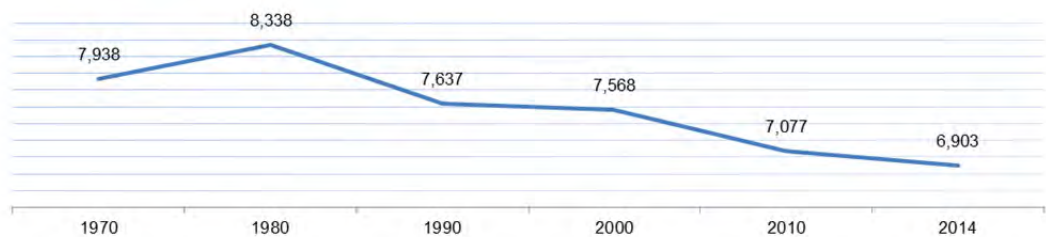
Community	2000	2010	% Change, 2000 to 2010	2014	% Change, 2010 to 2014	2014 Square Miles	2014 Average Persons per Square Mile
Cheraw	216	252	16.7%	245	-2.8%	0.2	49
Fowler	1,209	1,182	-2.2%	1,152	-2.5%	2.6	443.1
La Junta	7,552	7,079	-6.3%	6,903	-2.5%	3.02	2285.8
Manzanola	522	434	-16.9%	423	-2.5%	0.3	126.9
Rocky Ford	4,270	3,958	-7.3%	3,854	-2.6%	1.7	2267.1
Swink	695	617	-11.2%	601	-2.6%	0.3	180.3
Unincorporated Area	5,779	5,316	-8%	5,202	-2.1%	1,261.9	4.1
Otero County	20,243	18,838	-6.9%	18,380	-2.4%	1,270	14.5

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2014

All of the communities in Otero County experienced minor decreases in population between the years 2010 and 2014. The decreases were between -2.1% and -2.8%, with La Junta experiencing a -2.5% decrease in population.

Since La Junta’s inception as a town in the late 1800’s, the city showed steady and continuous population growth throughout the 20th century, only registering declines between 1920 and 1930 and from 1980 through the end of the century. La Junta’s population was at its highest in 1980, with 8,338 residents, and has since declined to 6,903 in 2014. Figure 1-2 depicts this progression, showing the La Junta’s population from 1970 through 2014.

Figure 1-2. City of La Junta Population



Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2014



Valuable insight can be gained by comparing La Junta with Otero County, along with the state population trends. Table 1-2 shows the population for the city, county, and state in 2000, 2010, and 2014. The recent population trends for La Junta mirror those of Otero County, with both jurisdictions experiencing minor decreases; conversely, the state of Colorado has been experiencing steady population growth since the year 2000. This shows that while the southeastern portion of the state is remaining stagnant or declining slightly, other areas of Colorado are growing and expanding.

Table 1-2. City of La Junta 2000, 2010, 2014 Population

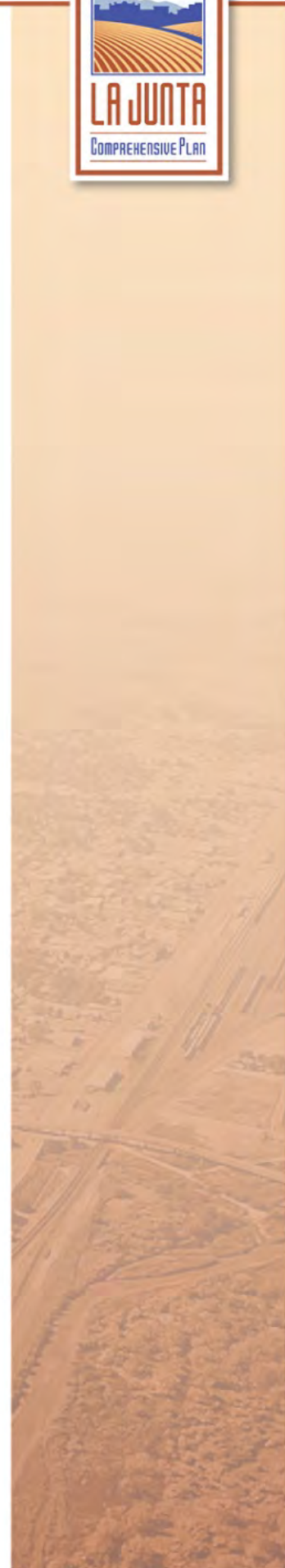
Year	La Junta		Otero County		Colorado	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2000	7,568	-	20,311	-	4,301,261	-
2010	7,077	-6.5%	18,831	-7.3%	5,029,196	16.9%
2014	6,903	-2.5%	18,380	-2.4%	5,353,471	6.4%

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, 2014

Age and Sex

The age of a community has direct implications on the types of services and amenities required to service a community's residents. A community that has a high number of senior citizens may provide a high number of adult care facilities and public transportation options, while a community that has a high number of children and youth may provide ample quantities of parks, open spaces, and schools.

A tool that helps to understand the age and sex of a community is the population pyramid. Population pyramids graphically display total population separated by age and sex. As illustrated on Figure 1-3, male and female residents are separated vertically and are further separated horizontally by age, sorted by youngest on the bottom to the oldest on the top. Population pyramids display the percentage or actual amount of a population broken down by gender and age in five-year age increments. Graphically illustrating a population allows decision-makers to see long-term population trends.



The median age in La Junta is 40.1. This is slightly higher than Otero County (39.8), Colorado (36.2), and the country as a whole (37.2).

City of La Junta

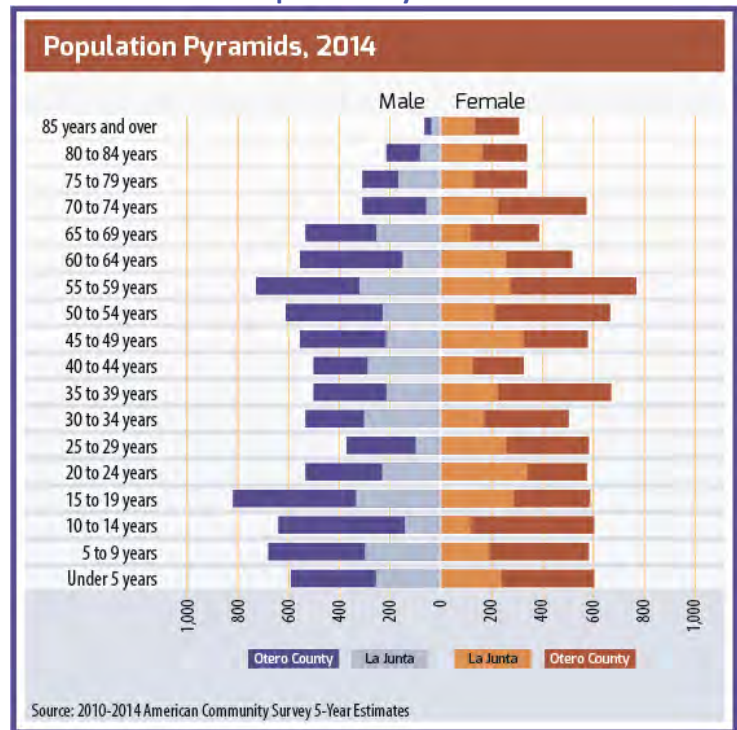
The La Junta population pyramid illustrates that the city is relatively stable. As Figure 1-3 shows, there are gaps in the city’s population in some key areas. La Junta’s male population for the age cohort 25 to 29 years is estimated to be 90. This is almost a **third of the size of the** female population of the same cohort which is estimated to be 247.

This is an important age group for a community because this group typically represents recent college graduates who are ready to enter the workforce and establish a family. Another gap in La Junta’s population is the 10 to 14 years age cohort. This cohort consists of 243 males and females and is about half the size of both the five to nine years and 15 to 19 years cohorts. This is also an important age group for a community because these residents represent the future of the community and are almost ready to enter the workforce, where they will typically hold entry-level service and retail jobs that are necessary for a community to thrive.

With a relatively high median age of 40.1, La Junta’s population is aging. An aging population has a number of implications for a community, mainly a need for more services and facilities for older residents. La Junta already has a number of medical care facilities and in the coming years a skilled nursing facility (SNF) will be constructed in the city. However, additional public programming and enhanced public transportation services may need to be explored in the coming years as the city’s population continues to age.

Communities with a population pyramid such as La Junta’s would normally expect to either sustain a steady population or decrease slightly, similar to La Junta’s growth patterns since the year 2000. This is because all of the age cohorts are of similar size, with exception to the cohorts experiencing gaps as previously mentioned. A population pyramid for a community

Figure 1-3. City of La Junta & Otero County, 2014 Population Pyramid



Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2014, Matrix Design Group



experiencing steady growth would look like a triangle with a wide base that tapers off as it nears the top. A triangular population pyramid shows a community with a large population of younger residents.

Otero County

The Otero County population pyramid is reflective of a stable community. The county’s population pyramid presents a much more conventional age composition. A recognizable bulge in the pyramid can be seen on the 55 to 59 years cohort. This bulge represents the “Baby Boomers” generation where the country experienced a sharp rise in the national birth rate after World War II. Another bulge can be seen on the 15 to 19 years cohort. This is a healthy sign for a young and growing community.

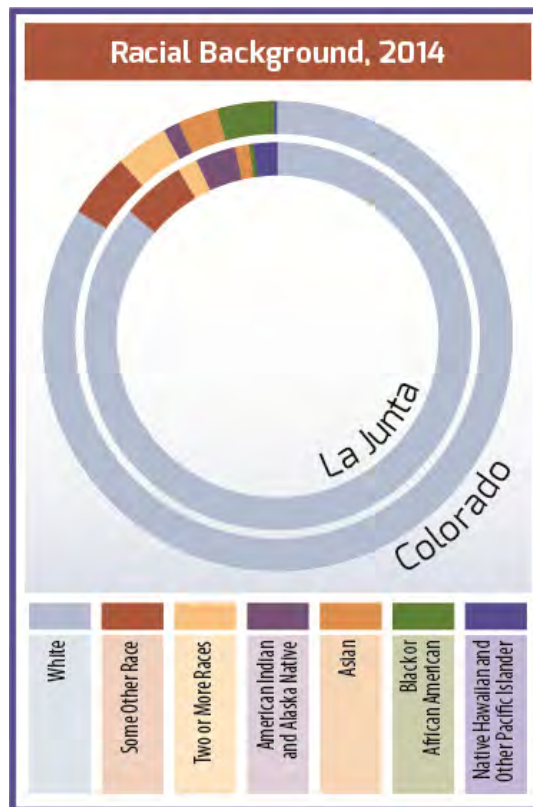
Like La Junta’s population pyramid, the county pyramid shows a gap in the male population for the 25 to 29 years age cohort. This shows that both the county and the city are having issues attracting and keeping young adult males. This could be due to any number of reasons, but the most probable factor leading to a gap in this age group, whether male or female, is a lack of attractive jobs that would interest young professionals.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2014 the vast majority of the residents in La Junta, 86.3%, were white. The second most prominent race among the city’s residents is “Some other race” at 5.1%; which is any race that was not represented on the ACS. Other races within the city include American Indian and Alaska Native, 3.1%, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 2%, Asian, 1.4%, and Black or African American, 0.2%. The racial breakdown for both La Junta and Otero County is graphically represented on Figure 1-4.

Similar to La Junta, the vast majority of Colorado’s population identify as being white. 4.6% of the state population identifies as being “Some other race” and 4% of the population identifies as being Black or African American.

Figure 1-4. City of La Junta & Otero County, 2014 Racial Breakdown



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Matrix Design Group

Despite 86.3% of the population being white, La Junta has a rich Hispanic and/or Latino culture. Over 43% of the residents in La Junta identify as being Hispanic or Latino; in Colorado, just over 20% of the population identifies as being Hispanic or Latino.

Racial diversity makes a community a unique and enticing place to live. Different races help create different types of cultures, and these cultures impact the way a community develops.

Educational Attainment

Table 1-3. City of La Junta, 2014 Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Percentage
Less than 9th grade	7.1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	12.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	25.4%
Some college, no degree	28.3%
Associate's degree	12.8%
Bachelor's degree	8.9%
Graduate or professional degree	5.4%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Educational attainment is based on the highest education level attained by residents 25 years of age and older. In La Junta, it is estimated that 4,738 residents are either 25 years of age or older. 2014 figures for La Junta residents' educational attainment can be seen in Table 1-3. As the table shows, it is estimated that 55.4% of La Junta residents have either taken

some college courses or have attained a collegiate level degree. This figure is larger than that of Otero County (55.1%), but lower than statewide averages (67.5%).

Studies have shown that educational attainment is connected to both median income and unemployment rates. It is estimated that individuals who have received a Bachelor's degree on average earn 41% more than individuals who only attained a high school diploma. Additionally, the unemployment rate for individuals with a Bachelor's degree is 2.8, compared to an unemployment rate of 5.4 for individuals with a high school diploma. (Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Housing Characteristics

La Junta's housing stock primarily consists of single-family homes. It is estimated that in 2014 La Junta had 3,487 total housing units, of which 2,578 were single-unit, detached homes. This development pattern, with a focus on single-family homes, is consistent with many cities throughout the country. La Junta specifically has developed along a grid system, with small blocks and ample sidewalks, making the city low-density and family friendly.

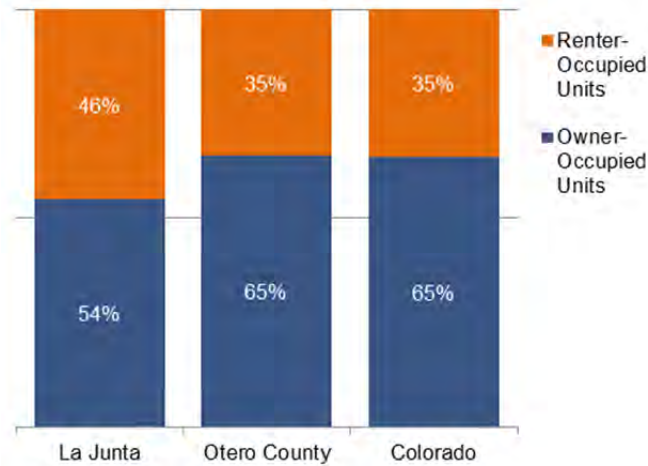
Occupancy and Tenure

Of the 3,487 housing units in La Junta, it is estimated that 2,835, or 81%, are occupied. These rates are consistent with the rates of Otero County (82.7%) and are marginally lower than statewide averages (89.3%).



Figure 1-5 shows comparisons of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing rates between La Junta, Otero County, and the state of Colorado. Renter-occupied rates in La Junta are estimated to be 46%, 11% higher than in both Otero County and the state of Colorado as a whole. This means that of the 2,835 occupied housing units in La Junta, 1,291 of them are renter-occupied and 1,544 of them are owner-occupied.

Figure 1-5. Owner-Occupied vs. Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 2014



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The prevalence of renter-occupied units within La Junta could be influenced by Otero Junior College being located within city borders. The college can house up to 315 students on campus with an expansion in 2016 that will increase their overall capacity. Additionally, under current City of La Junta zoning regulations, up to four unrelated persons can be considered a “family” and are permitted to live together in a house and share rental costs, furthering the incentive to rent a property rather than buy. There has been a lot of debate on the impacts that student rentals of single-family homes has on a community and more studies will be needed to yield conclusive results.

Home Value and Rental Costs

Table 1-4 shows the median home value and median gross rent for La Junta, Otero County, and the state of Colorado. La Junta’s median home value is slightly larger than the County’s and is less than half of the State’s. Similar trends can be seen with the median gross rent statistics as well; La Junta’s median gross rent is slightly larger than Otero County’s and is more than a third less than Colorado’s.

Table 1-4. City of La Junta, 2014 Median Home Value and Gross Rent

Housing Statistic	La Junta	Otero County	Colorado
Median Home Value	\$93,800	\$93,200	\$239,400
Median Gross Rent	\$697	\$646	\$969

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Single-family homes and suburban living gained prevalence in America after the Second World War. Since the 1940s, single-family homes have accounted for around 60% of all housing units in the country.

It is estimated that between the years 2010 and 2014, the median home value in La Junta increased by \$500 and the median gross rent increased by \$89.

Figure 1-6. City of La Junta Median Household Income, 2014



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Matrix Design Group

Cost of housing has major implications on the affordability of a community. While higher home values are conventionally seen as a positive index of wealth for a community, studies have shown that affordability goes down when home prices are high. This is because there is a disparity between the rate at which housing prices and household incomes rise. A good measure of affordability in a community is the Price-to-Income ratio. The Price-to-Income ratio compares the price of a home to an individual's income. Figure 1-6 lists the median household income for La Junta, Otero County, and Colorado; using these figures and the median home value (listed on Table 1-4), the Income-to-Home ratio can be calculated.

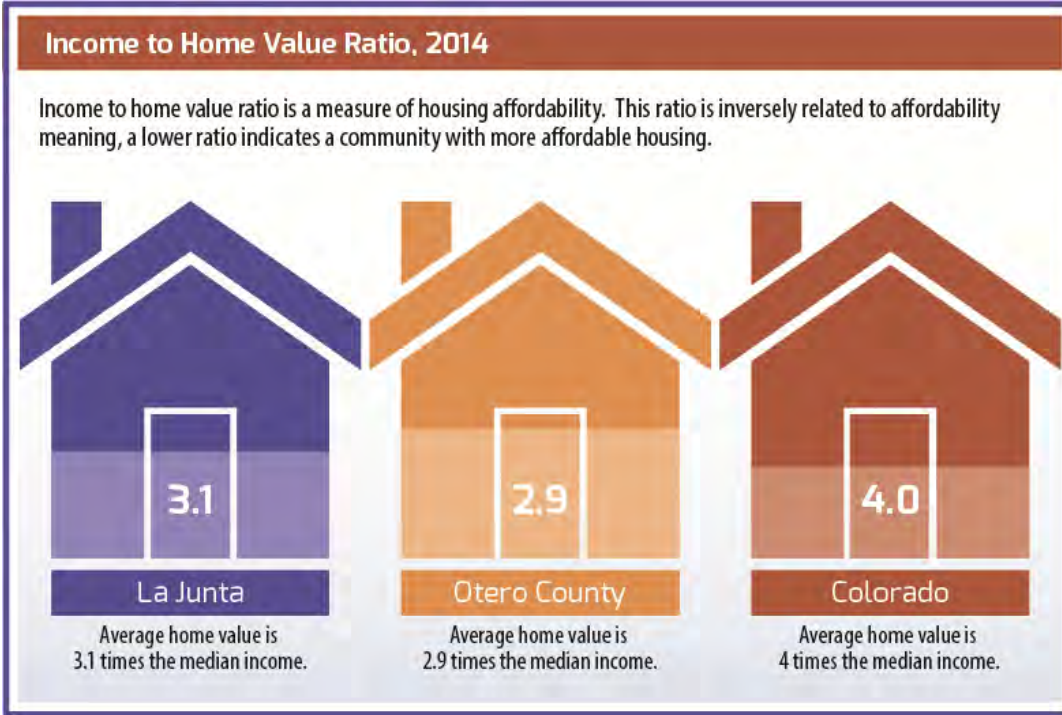
Income-to-Home Ratio

The median household income in La Junta is estimated to be \$30,010, making the Income-to-Home ratio in the city 3.1. As displayed in Figure 1-7, this is slightly larger than Otero County (2.9) and considerably smaller than Colorado (4).

Although median incomes in La Junta are less than county and state averages, La Junta residents benefit from more affordable housing prices. Therefore, residents of La Junta are spending less of their income on housing, giving them the ability to use their income on other necessities like food, clothing, and transportation.



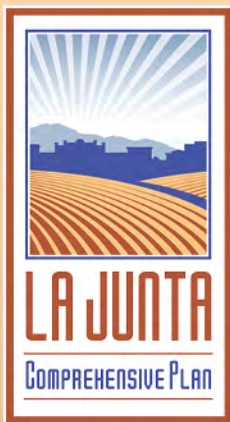
Figure 1-7. Income-to-Home Ratio, 2014



Source: Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Matrix Design Group



Please see next page.



2. Planning Framework

While Chapters 3 thru 7 provide the goals and policies that will guide land use and resource decisions, this chapter sets an overall planning framework for the community. Contained in this chapter is the City's Vision Statement and descriptions of several key opportunities that will be a key part of the community's future.

City of La Junta Community Vision

A Vision Statement reflects what community members value the most about their community and the shared aspirations of what they want their community to become in the future. The Vision Statement should be inspirational and set the tone for the Comprehensive Plan's goals, policies and actions.

As part of the community input process, residents took part in a visioning exercise as part of Community Workshops 1 and 2. The exercise was used to develop a Vision Statement to guide the Comprehensive Plan. Utilizing all input from the workshops and stakeholder interviews, a Vision Statement was developed and adopted as part of this Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Vision Statement

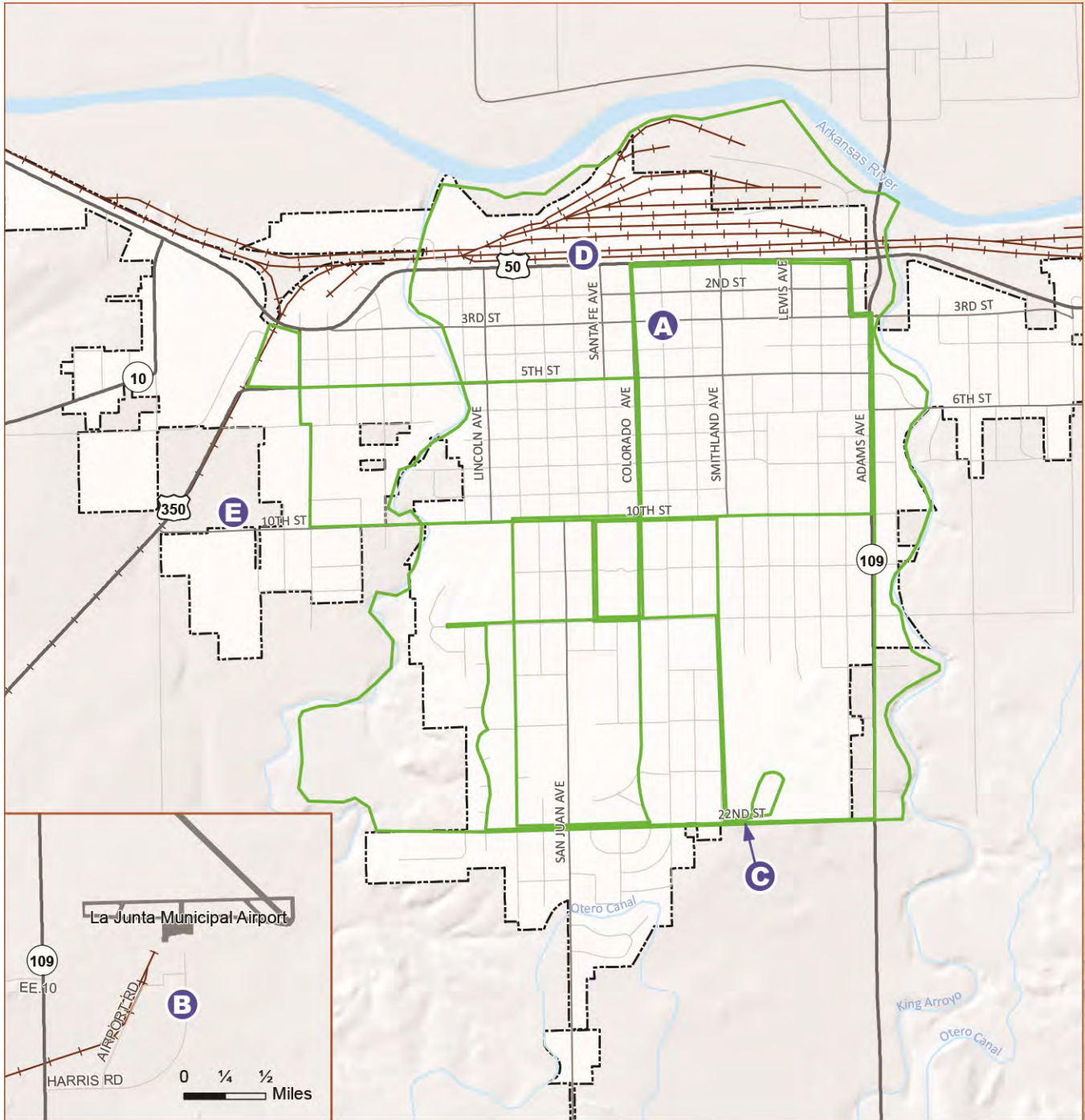
La Junta in 2040 is recognized as a welcoming and family-oriented city built on openness and determination. Our community, with its rural lifestyle, recreation amenities, schools, and city services provides a great place to live and do business.

Focus Areas

Throughout the development of this Plan, City staff and public input identified a number of projects that would enhance the city and the quality of life of residents. A number of these projects have been discussed publicly, some of them for many years, and they range from enhancements to existing amenities in the city to the construction of entirely new facilities. The focus areas are referenced below and further described later in this chapter. These areas are identified on Figure 2-1:

- A** Downtown Enhancements
- B** Airport Area
- C** Trails Plan
- D** La Junta Transit & Visitor's Center
- E** La Junta Skilled Nursing Facility

2. Planning Framework



- Focus Areas**
- A** Downtown Enhancements
 - B** Airport Area
 - C** Trails Plan
 - D** La Junta Transit & Visitor's Center
 - E** La Junta Skilled Nursing Facility

- City of La Junta
- Highway / Freeway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Stream / Canal



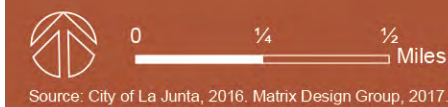


Figure 2-1
Focus Areas

A: Downtown Enhancements

City staff and input received from the public for this plan have identified a desire for a revitalized Downtown area. The aim is to breathe new life into La Junta’s Downtown, increasing activity and opportunities for shopping, congregating, and building community. Two of the avenues the City will take to revitalize Downtown will be enhancing community events held in the city and the amenities in the Downtown area.

Downtown Events

Part of having an active downtown is hosting regular events for the enjoyment of residents and the attraction of visitors / tourists. The following events in La Junta should be continued:

- Early Settlers Days (Autumn)
- 4th of July Wet / Dry Parade (Summer)
- Parade of Lights (Winter)

The City should also aim to increase the number of events held in the community for the spring through autumn seasons. These events could tie into the attractive amenities the community already has, including Koshare Indian Museum / Koshare Indian Dancers, Bent’s Old Fort, and the railroad. Key events should be scheduled on a monthly basis, with care to not over schedule making the events seem trivial.

Downtown Amenities

A number of amenity enhancements to Downtown could help revitalize and draw activity to the area. These include enhancing lighting, adding street furniture, refreshing the city’s tree canopy, and adding residential units two second floor retail / business buildings.

- **Street Lighting:** Enhancing the lighting to the Downtown streetscape will provide new impetus for activity in Downtown. The basic function of street lighting is to provide safety and security, enabling daytime activities to continue after the sun sets. With careful design consideration, street lighting can also lead to a visually appealing environment and create a distinctive image for the area in which they are utilized.



Celebration at the first annual 4th of July Wet / Dry Parade

Source: <http://centennial.legion.org/colorado/post9/gallery/first-annual-4th-july-wet-dry-parade>

- **Tree Canopy:** It has been shown that tree lined downtown shopping districts lead to longer and more frequent visits by shoppers, supporting a healthy economy and local businesses. La Junta's Downtown has for many years had an expansive inventory of street trees. In recent years however, many of the city's trees have begun to decay and die leading to downtown adding to the look of disrepair in the area. City staff estimates that about one third of the city's street tree canopy is dying. The City should replace the decaying trees in Downtown with new trees and establish a regular maintenance program including a bi-annual pruning schedule where trees are pruned every other year. The City should also removing existing tree grates that can cause damage to trees and create a tripping hazard for passersby.

(Source: Colorado State Forest Service, La Junta Downtown Street Tree Inventory)

- **Street Furniture:** Street furniture enhances the public realm and indicates that residents and visitors are welcome. These amenities can add visual detail and interest to an area while providing functional utility to users. The types of street furniture to be considered for La Junta's Downtown include benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, and transit shelters.



Source: <http://www.tectonica-online.com>

- **2nd Story Residential:** Many of the buildings in Downtown have second stories that are suitable as residential dwellings. Downtown is an area of La Junta with a lot of character, which will be motivation for residents to move to this portion of the city. These types of development with retail / business use on the ground floor and residential uses on the upper floors are called mixed-used. Mixed-use is commonly seen as a vehicle for revitalizing struggling areas within a community and spurring economic development.

B: Airport Area

The City has a number of projects planned to increase activity at the Airport Industrial Park. One of the main projects at the Airport Industrial Park is the construction of a new 30,000 square foot building to serve as an industrial business incubator. The building will be equipped with the necessary infrastructure to support a variety of industrial-related businesses that will be able to lease out space within the facility for their operations.

Other projects at the industrial park will include an additional 250,000-gallon municipal water tank for storage of potable water, the construction of a new air ambulance hangar at the La Junta Municipal Airport, and two new La Junta Police Department buildings. The buildings for the police department are slated to be constructed in 2017 and will be used to enhance training opportunities for new officers.

C: Trails Plan

Trails will be an important community feature in La Junta in 2040 and the City has developed a plan for trail expansion, which is being included in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan for the trails plan can be seen on Figure 2-2; the figure includes the routes of the six different trails (totaling 22 miles) to be developed as well as important places of interests accessible via the trails.

Trails provide numerous benefits to residents and help form an interconnected community. The six trails in the trails plan have been planned to provide connections to each of the other trails enabling users to access a wide variety of residential areas and places of interests throughout La Junta. The trails will provide residents opportunities for recreation and the ability to commute to work and school via walking or bicycling.

Santa Fe Junction Trail

The Santa Fe Junction Trail is 3.1 miles long and is located in the northeastern portion of La Junta. The northern border of the trail follows 1st Street, the eastern border follows Adams Avenue to 6th Street, the trail follows 6th Street and loops around City Park, and ends following Colorado Avenue to 1st Street. The Santa Fe Junction Trail will provide connections to the Downtown area, the future La Junta Transit & Visitor's Center, La Junta Intermediate School, Inspiration Field, City Park, and Veterans' Field.

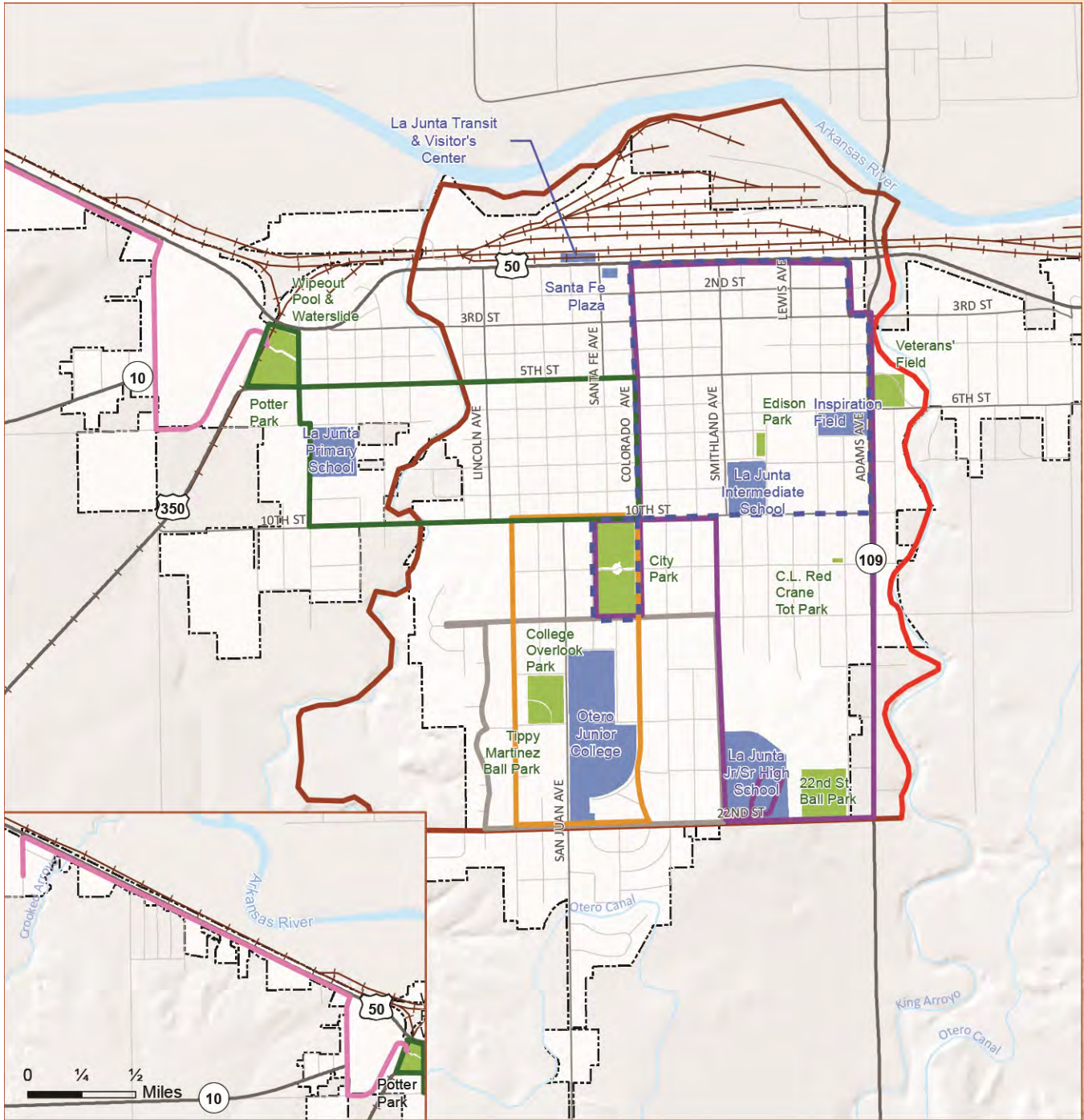
Potter Trail

Potter Trail covers 2.8 miles in the northwestern portion of the city. The primary borders for the trail are 5th Street to the north, Colorado Avenue to the east, 10th Street to the south, and Topeka Avenue to the West. Potter Trail also travels west along 5th Street to Potter Drive, providing access to Potter Park and Wipeout Pool & Waterslide. Other points of interest Potter Trail will provide access to include the Downtown area, La Junta Primary School, and City Park.

Carson Trail

Carson Trail is the shortest trail in the trails plan at 2.1 miles long. The trail is located south of the Downtown Area and is bordered on the north by 10th Street, on the east by Colorado Avenue, on the south by 22nd Street, and on the west by Carson Avenue. Carson Trail will provide access to City Park, College Overlook Park, the Tippy Martinez Ball Park, and Otero Junior College.

2. Planning Framework



Trails, Parks, and Places of Interest

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Anderson Trail West-Anderson Brickyard Trail | Potter Trail | City of La Junta | Water Body |
| Campus Trail | Santa Fe Junction Trail | Highway / Freeway | Stream / Canal |
| Carson Trail | Tigers Trail | Major Roads | |
| King Trail East | Westside Trail | Local Roads | |
| | Park | Railroad | |
| | Places of Interest | | |



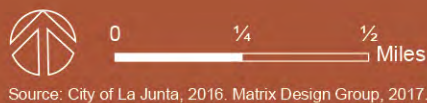


Figure 2-2
Trails Plan

Tigers Trail

Tigers Trail covers 5 miles. The trail primarily covers the entire eastern portion of the city bordered to the north by 1st Street, to the east by Adams Street, to the south by 22nd Street, and to the west by Smithland and Colorado Avenues. Tigers Trail will provide access to the Downtown area, the future La Junta Transit & Visitor’s Center, Inspiration Field, La Junta Intermediate School, La Junta Jr / Sr High School, City Park, Veterans’ Field, and the 22nd St. Ball Park.

Campus Trail

Campus Trail covers 2.4 miles and is located primarily in the southern portion of the city. 14th Street and City Park form the northern border of the trail; Smithland Avenue form the eastern border, 22nd Street forms the southern border, and College Drive / Lincoln Avenue forms the western border. Campus trail encircles Otero Junior College, providing access to the school and the other amenities the campus has to offer, as well as providing access to La Junta Jr / Sr High School, College Overlook Park, and the Tippy Martinez Ball Park.

King Trail

King Trail covers 1.7 miles. A portion of this trail extends beyond the city limits, traveling along the King Arroyo east of the city. The trail runs from 22nd Street to Highway 50, connecting to the Anderson Brickyard Trail forming a loop that encircles the majority of the city. The King Trail provides access to La Junta Jr / Sr High, Inspiration Field, the 22nd Street Ball Park, and Veteran’s Field.

Anderson Brickyard Trail

The Anderson Brickyard Trail covers 5 miles. Like the King Trail, a large portion of this trail is outside of city limits, traveling along the Anderson Arroyos to the west of the city and a small portion of the Arkansas River to the north of La Junta. The trail provides access to the natural areas surrounding the city and Otero Junior College.

D: La Junta Transit & Visitor’s Center

In the spring of 2017, the City received preliminary designs / site plans for a new joint Transit & Visitor’s Center facility to be built at 101 West First Street, west of the La Junta Amtrak station. The new facility will serve as a hub for the La Junta Transit bus service, providing offices and space to enhance the operations of the service. The center will include a ticketing office for residents to purchase bus tickets and a dedicated room for vending machines and drinking fountains. The building will be used as a stop for the interstate bus service that stops in the city.



Potential designs for the La Junta Transit and Visitor's Center

Source: University Technical Assistance, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, University of Colorado

The Visitor's Center component of the facility will serve as a place for visitors / tourists to stop and learn about La Junta. Informational materials about La Junta and the surrounding attractions are expected to be included at the center, as well as a shop for tourists to purchase souvenirs. The Transit & Visitor's Center will also provide office space for those staffing the facility.

The City has been considering developing a Visitor's Center for a long time, holding a number of public meetings to discuss the topic with members of the community. A public meeting held in January 2016 identified the six potential sites for the Visitor's Center. The idea was also included on the Downtown Colorado, Inc. Community Assessment Report from 2015. The proposed location along 1st Street will provide the Visitor's Center with good exposure to visitors / tourists entering the city via US Route 50.

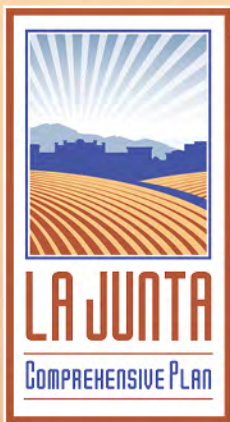
E: La Junta Skilled Nursing Facility

Another new facility to be constructed in the coming years is the La Junta Skilled Nursing Facility. The goal of the facility will be to provide patient- and family-centered care in an environment that will improve patient experience and satisfaction. The Skilled Nursing Facility should include rooms for short- and long-term patients, dining facilities, therapy gym, and administrative offices. Health care and social assistance is the leading industry in the city and the Skilled Nursing Facility will further expand on the highly rated health care facilities La Junta has to offer its residents and the region as a whole.



Rendering of a sample Skilled Nursing Facility

Source: Veritas Management Group and TREANORHL



3. Economic Development

Economic development is the basis for the growth of businesses and overall employment within a community. Through economic development efforts, La Junta can stimulate growth and development in the city's businesses. This chapter explores the economic trends in the community and incentive programs available to the businesses of La Junta.



LJED is located in the SCORE Center on the Otero Junior College campus

Table 3-1 covers both the City of La Junta and businesses in the City's Airport Industrial Park. Other data in this section is limited to the city limits due to how data is reported by the Census and other sources.

Introduction

Economic development is the foundation upon which a community is able to grow and generate revenue. Municipal economic development efforts generally focus on job creation, job retention, and increasing local tax revenues. These three focal points of economic development will help continue improving the quality of life for the residents of La Junta.

La Junta Economic Development

Economic development has been a priority within the city since 1983, with the formation of La Junta Economic Development (LJED). Over the years, the structure and organization of LJED has changed to facilitate a more modern and streamlined process. LJED provides consulting and business development services and works with the La Junta Chamber of Commerce to enhance economic development for the city and to support job creation and the growth and expansion of existing businesses.

Employment and Jobs Information

Leading Employers

Table 3-1 shows the leading employers in the City of La Junta and the City's Airport Industrial Park. These employers represent a wide variety of industries including retail trade, wholesale trade, manufacturing, public administration, educational services, health care, and transportation. The assortment of employers and industries within La Junta shows that there is a diverse economic climate within the city. Not only does this increase economic security by having the community's economic health tied to a multitude of industries instead of just one, but it also helps support an innovative environment through which organizations and companies are able to share ideas and products in joint ventures.

Table 3-1. Major Employers, 2017

Employer	Employees
Otero Junior College	357
Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center	340
→ Lewis Bolt	240
Wal-Mart	240
Otero County	165
East Otero School District	150
City of La Junta	128
Inspiration Field	95
Southeast Health Group	95
→ DeBourgh	82
→ Oliver	52
→ SECOM	50
BNSF	50
Coffee Holding Company	45
→ SECPA	25
→ UPS	14
→ First Impressions Learning Center	12

Source: City of La Junta, 2017

Note: → These businesses are located in the Airport Industrial Park, which is owned by the City of La Junta but is not within the La Junta city limits.



Employment

Table 3-2 shows employment statistics for La Junta, Otero County, and Colorado. As of 2015, La Junta's total labor force is estimated to be 4,150. With a population of 6,929, 59.9% of the population is in the labor force, 89.4% of the labor force is employed, and 10.6% is unemployed, which is slightly less than Otero County's unemployment rate (10.7%) but higher than Colorado's rate (6.9%).

Table 3-2. City of La Junta Employment, 2015

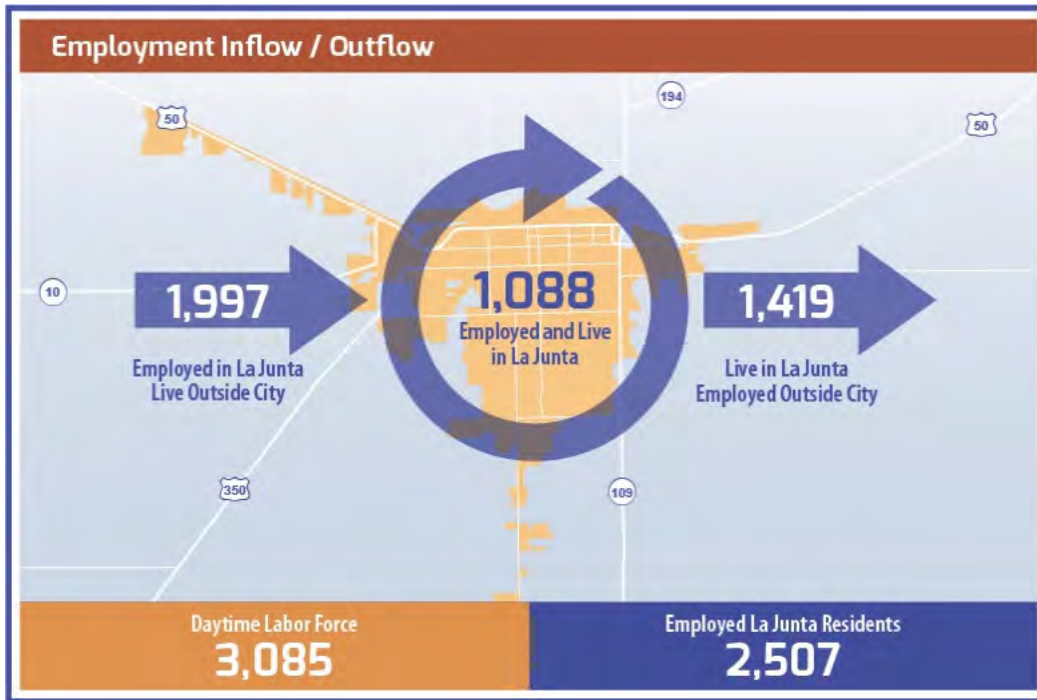
Employment Statistic	La Junta	Otero County	Colorado
In Labor Force	4,150	8,193	2,852,439
Employed	3,712	7,314	2,624,436
Unemployed	438	879	195,578

Source: 2010-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Inflow and Outflow

The inflow and outflow of primary jobs in the City of La Junta is illustrated on Figure 3-1. Inflow and outflow patterns can help the City understand the strength or weakness of the local jobs base. The Center for Economic Studies (CES) estimates the La Junta resident labor force at 2,507 in 2014 (due to different sources and years, this figure is different than the ACS numbers shown in Table 3-2, however, this shows the general flow of workers).

Figure 3-1. Commuting Pattern for City of La Junta



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, 2014

Further information on any of these programs and other programs not listed can be found on the LJED website: www.lajuntaeconomicdevelopment.com/

Facilities like OJC and Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center, Valley Wide Health Facility help support the Educational and Health Care Services industry sector.

In 2014, of the 2,507 employed residents, it is estimated that 1,088 work within the city, while the remaining 1,419 residents commute to other communities for work. To the benefit of La Junta, 1,997 non-residents commute to La Junta for work. This brings the daytime labor population to 3,085 in the city. This is slightly higher than the resident labor force, indicating a stable local job market.

Employment by Industry Sector

Table 3-3 shows a summary of La Junta’s employment by industry sector for the years 2000, 2010, and 2015. The largest industry within the city is the Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance sector. Institutions like the Otero Junior College (OJC) and the Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center help support the La Junta job base by providing numerous employment opportunities. The second largest industry sector within La Junta is Retail Trade. Together, these two sectors combined account for 1,421 jobs, 41.5% of the total jobs in the city.

Table 3-3. City of La Junta Employment by Industry, 2000, 2010, and 2015

Industry	2000	2010	2015
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	124	113	112
Construction	170	174	183
Manufacturing	265	164	107
Wholesale trade	141	54	50
Retail trade	395	312	581
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	162	251	387
Information	62	97	51
Finance and insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	105	172	112
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	156	71	153
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	904	840	840
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food	229	379	314
Other services, except public administration	182	185	187
Public administration	315	193	342
TOTAL	3,210	3,005	3,419

Source: 2010-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Between the years 2010 and 2014, nine of the industries within La Junta experienced decreases in employment. The other four industries, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation, and Public Administration all experienced growth, with Retail Trade experiencing the most growth with 172 new jobs. The industry that experienced the largest decrease in jobs was the Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance industry.



The employment by industry trends outlined in Table 3-3 follow the recent population trends that were explored in Chapter 1, Introduction and Background. The city has experienced an 8.6% decrease in population between the years 2000 and 2014, totaling 665 people, leading to a decrease in the employment rate and a loss of 582 jobs since the year 2000.

Economic Development Incentive Programs

The state of Colorado coordinates with LJED to promote job growth within the city through numerous incentive platforms including finance, tax credits, and workforce development programs. The following is a brief description of these incentive programs.

Finance Programs

Advanced Industries Accelerator Program

The Advanced Industries (AI) Accelerator Program promotes development within seven specific industries identified by the State by encouraging creativity, speeding up sales of new technology, facilitating public-to-private business relationships, improving accessibility to beginning-stage funds, and fostering a solid ecosystem that works to increase Colorado's worldwide engagement. This program supplies proof of concept grants to experimental organizations with technology exchange offices, beginning-stage businesses, and non-profit companies that patch holes in AI environmental systems.

Advanced Industries Grant Program

The AI Grant Program is a State economic grant program for new and existing export companies in Colorado's advanced industries. These advanced industries include aviation, bioscience, consumer electronics, natural energy resources, commercial infrastructure engineering, and information technology. The AI Grant Program supports both small- and mid-sized companies in these industries, mitigating overseas business growth and associated advertising costs during the export process.

Certified Capital Companies Program

The Certified Capital Companies Program (CAPCO) offers business capital funds to new and/or developing small companies all over the State. It promotes new company advancement and growth by making funds available for investing purposes to companies all throughout Colorado. CAPCO is expected to generate new job opportunities throughout the State and enhance the state's economic development.

Rural Jump-Start Zone Program

This is a tax reduction program for both early-stage companies and new employees located in specified rural areas referred to as "Jump-Start" zones. Jump Start zones are considered to be counties with a population of less than 250,000 residents; this makes companies in Otero County eligible for this program.

Further information on any of these programs and other programs not listed can be found on the LJED website: www.lajuntaeconomicdevelopment.com/

Companies participating in this program are not required to pay state and local income, sale, usage, or personal property tax fees. Certain company employees can also be individually exempted from state income taxes. To participate, companies must be integrated into the economic base, and cannot presently be doing business in Colorado or competing with a currently existing Colorado business.

Strategic Cash Fund Incentive

This is a skill-based grant used to generate new jobs within the State that satisfy specific conditions. It facilitates and promotes new company expansions and relocations for the purpose of creating new work opportunities throughout the state of Colorado. The Strategic Cash Fund Incentive also offers guidance on projects located in important statewide and local industries.

Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit

The Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit (JGITC) is a skill-based program that offers State tax incentives to companies that develop new careers that could not have been created without it. The primary function of the JGITC is to assist companies and showcase them to the Colorado Economic Development Commission.

Local Tax Authority Incentives

Local governing bodies, including La Junta, can offer property tax breaks or incentive payouts according to the volume of rising property taxes for eligible startup companies within their particular zones. La Junta is considered to be in the South Central Administrative Zone.

Workforce Development

Colorado First & Existing Industry Job Training Programs

These are two grant programs distributed by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) and the State's community college program. Colorado First is a training program that focuses companies on relocating and/or expanding to the State and provides funds to new hires. Existing Industry is a training program that focuses on keeping companies already located in the State competitive in their respective industries.

By covering expenses accrued by job-training companies, the grants promote interchangeable job skills which boost Colorado companies' competition and the state's capacity for attracting new companies. It also enhances employee resumes and permanent job opportunities.



Procurement Technical Assistance Center

The Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provides technical support to companies pursuing contracted and subcontracted options with regional, local, and federal governments. There are numerous PTAC locations throughout the State of Colorado; the closest location to La Junta is the Colorado Springs location located at the El Paso County Citizens Service Center.

Future Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Perhaps the biggest challenge La Junta will face in the future regarding economic development is a decreasing work force. La Junta has been experiencing decreases in population since the 1980s, which has led to a diminishing workforce. But, with available land and housing, and good access to Highway 50 and the railroad, new employers should be able to attract workers.

Opportunities

La Junta's largest opportunity regarding economic development is the Industrial Park north of the city limits. With 3,500 acres, the Industrial Park has plenty of room for the expansion and relocation of existing businesses within the city; and for the establishment of new businesses.

Another opportunity that can help spur economic growth within La Junta is the transportation corridors present in the community and the city's proximity to nearby markets. La Junta has an expansive transportation network available to businesses for the export of goods and services including transportation options for road freight vehicles (US Routes 50, 350, and State Highway 109), rail freight (BNSF Railroad), and air freight (La Junta Municipal Airport). La Junta is in close proximity to the Denver Metropolitan Area, which has a diverse and rich economic climate.

Solar energy development presents a potential opportunity for the City of La Junta. The region receives over 300 days of sunshine a year, making the solar energy development a potentially lucrative market for solar businesses. According to the Colorado Energy Office (CEO), \$305 million was invested in solar installations in the state in 2015 and the state as a whole is ranked ninth in the nation for installed solar capacity.

Goals and Policies

Goal ED-1

Build and maintain a diverse and stable economy.

Policy ED-1.1

Work with the Private Sector

La Junta should work with private sectors in areas of finance, real estate, taxation, planning, and provision of public and private services to promote the maintenance and strengthening of a diverse economy.

Policy ED-1.2

Central Business District

The City should maintain, enhance, and revitalize the Central Business District with an emphasis on attracting new businesses and encouraging businesses near the edge of the La Junta city limits to relocate to downtown.

Policy ED-1.3

SCORE Center

La Junta should support the SCORE Center on the Otero Junior College campus.

Policy ED-1.4

Participation in the Regional Market Place

The City should utilize existing transportation corridors, such as US 50 and the BNSF railroad to increase participation in the regional market place.

Policy ED-1.5

Business and Industrial Expansion

The City should identify key industries for business and industrial expansion.

Policy ED-1.6

Otero Junior College

The City should promote Otero Junior College as an employer and job generator for the community.

Policy ED-1.7

Business and Industry Diversity

The City should encourage development of businesses and industries oriented toward differing segments of the market place.

Policy ED-1.8

Local Products, Goods, and Services

Existing businesses and industries should utilize local products and supply goods and services on a local, regional, and national basis.



Goal ED-2	La Junta promotes and enhances the development of the Industrial Park.
Policy ED-2.1	Site Certification The City should certify sites within the Industrial Park that are ready for development.
Policy ED-2.2	Aviation Development Zone The City should create an Aviation Development Zone (ADZ) at the La Junta Municipal Airport to support job creation in that industry.
Policy ED-2.3	Improvements to Municipal Programs and Tools La Junta should meet with land and business owners in the Industrial Park to assess their needs and discuss / implement potential improvements to municipal programs and economic development tools.
Policy ED-2.4	Convenience Store / Restaurant Attract a convenience store and / or restaurant to the Airport Industrial Park.
Policy ED-2.5	Value Added Agricultural Manufacturing La Junta should pursue / attract value-added agricultural manufacturing businesses to the Industrial Park.
Policy ED-2.6	La Junta Raceway The City should continue to promote and support development of the La Junta Raceway.
Goal ED-3	La Junta identifies areas throughout the city that are appropriate for commercial, office, and industrial development and / or expansion.
Policy ED-3.1	Appropriate Zoning The City should examine zoning and encourage appropriate zoning for all areas that would be well-suited for future development
Policy ED-3.2	Infrastructure for Industry and Commerce The City should coordinate with private utilities providers to supply infrastructure for new and expanding industry and commerce.
Policy ED-3.3	Expansion of Existing Businesses The City should create an environment that allows, encourages, and supports the expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of compatible new businesses to the downtown area.



Policy ED-3.4 Existing Businesses
 La Junta should support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.

Policy ED-3.5 Business Incentives
 La Junta should identify available and appropriate incentives to encourage business attraction.

Goal ED-4 La Junta enhances the community and the local economy through public infrastructure improvements and community amenities.

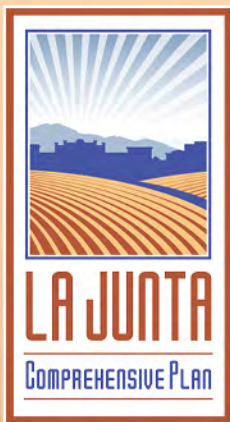
Policy ED-4.1 Infrastructure Enhancements
 La Junta should consider funding for enhancements to existing infrastructure.

Policy ED-4.2 Infrastructure Expansion
 La Junta should fund infrastructure expansion projects including the addition of a fiber network.

Policy ED-4.3 Community Activities
 The City should host one community activity each month designed to attract La Junta Residents, residents from adjacent communities, and tourists.

Policy ED-4.4 Downtown Enhancements
 The City should work with the public on identifying, and then implementing, suitable enhancements to Downtown in an effort to spur economic development. Potential options include adding street lighting, installing street furniture (i.e., benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, transit shelters, etc.), refreshing the city’s tree canopy, and promoting second story residential.

Policy ED-4.5 Trails Plan
 La Junta should actively seek grants, private donations, and city funding for the implementation of the Trails Plan.



4. Land Use

Land use constitutes the array of activities occurring in a community, including businesses, residences, parks and open space, community facilities, and others. Consideration for land use will help city staff and officials guide development in an orderly manner while balancing growth to protect assets within the community. This chapter looks at the land use in La Junta as it exists today, and provides a plan for future land use within the community.

Introduction

Land use is the collection of activities in the natural and built environment that occur in the geographic area comprising a community. A community’s mix of land uses helps define its character and give it its sense of place. The overall objective of the Comprehensive Plan is to establish the future vision for the community. With that objective in mind, a thorough understanding of existing land uses will provide the opportunity to guide future land uses towards a more functional urban pattern, to the benefit of the whole community. This chapter of the plan provides an overview of current development patterns and outlines various ways and means to influence compatible land use characteristics in the years ahead.

Existing Land Use

Growth Factors and Trends

The dominant factors influencing the growth of the City of La Junta have been the topographic features of the surrounding area, including the Arkansas River and the Anderson and King Arroyos. Other predominant influences to the physical development and growth patterns of La Junta have been the railroad corridors and federal and state highways present in the area. These natural and manmade factors combine to produce the development patterns that presently characterize the La Junta community. Existing land use acreages have been calculated for each category and are listed in Table 4-1. It is important to note that these acreages account for the existing land use within the La Junta city limits, and any land outside the city limits, including the Industrial Park, are excluded. A map of La Junta’s existing land use can be seen on Figure 4-1.

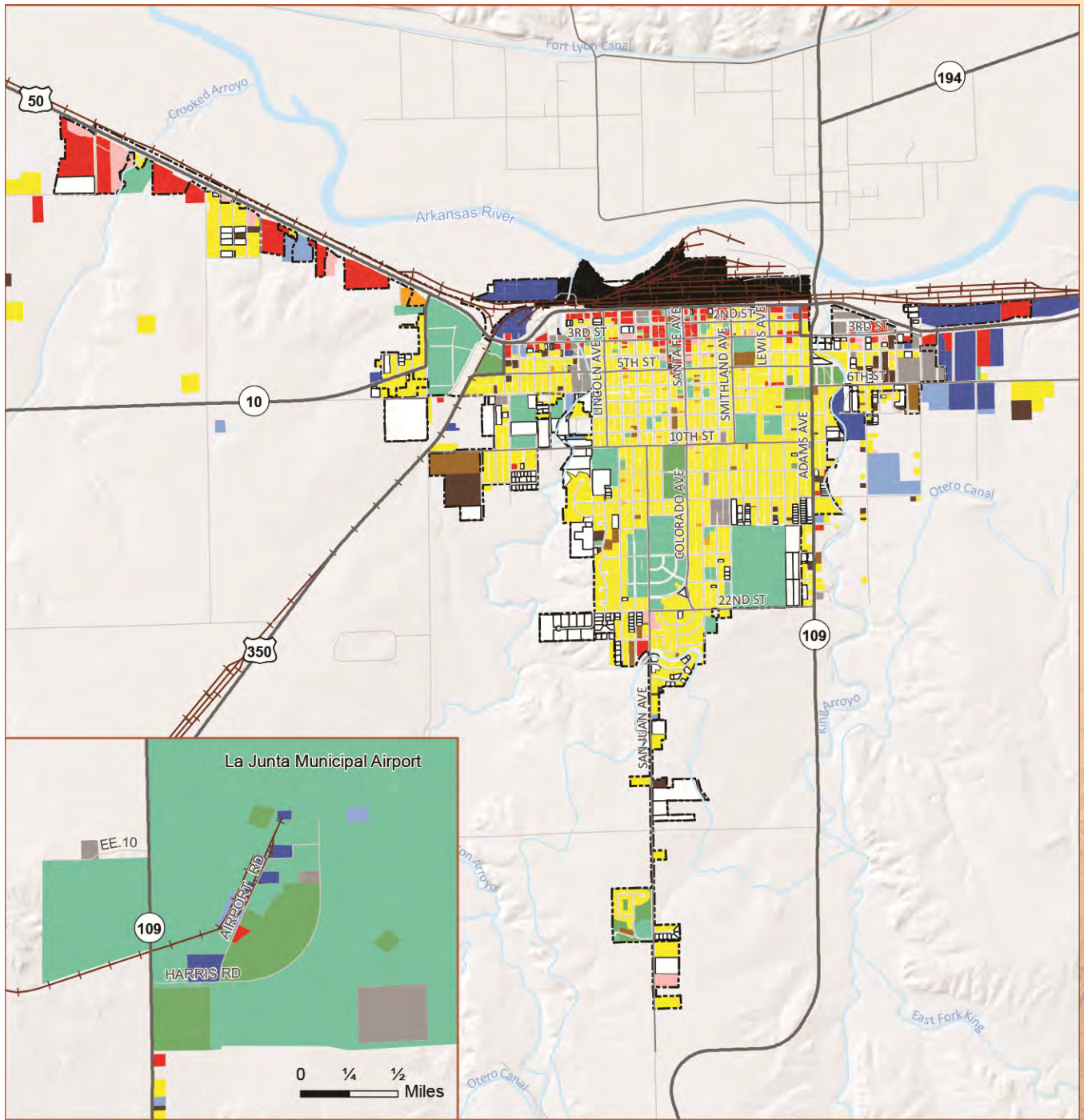
Table 4-1. Existing Land Use Summary, 2000

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage
Single-Family Residential	529.8	36.8%
Two-Family Residential	7.1	0.5%
Multi-Family Residential	36.0	2.5%
Manufactured Housing	31	2.2%
Service Commercial	28.1	2%
Retail Commercial	112.8	7.8%
Light Industry	14.4	1%
Heavy Industry	53.3	3.7%
Utilities and Communications	43.4	1%
Public and Quasi-Public	214.4	14.9%
Parks and Recreation	40.9	2.8%
Railroads	112.1	7.8%
Undevelopable Land	214.9	14.9%
TOTAL	1,438.2	100%

Source: City of La Junta, Matrix Design Group

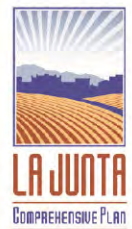
Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not round up to 100%

4. Land Use



Existing Land Use

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Heavy Industry | City of La Junta |
| Two Family Residential | Utilities and Communications | Highway / Freeway |
| Multi-Family Residential | Public and Quasi-Public | Major Roads |
| Manufactured Housing | Parks and Recreation | Local Roads |
| Service Commercial | Railroads | Railroad |
| Retail Commercial | Undeveloped Land | Water Body |
| Light Industry | | Stream / Canal |



Source: City of La Junta, 2000.

Figure 4-1
Existing Land Use

Residential

Residential land uses, including single-family, two family, multi-family, and manufactured housing, is the largest land use category in the city, comprising 42% of all land uses. Overall growth that La Junta has experienced in the recent past has been primarily residential in nature. The growth trends the city has been experiencing have been similar to those identified in the city's 2000 Comprehensive Community Plan Phase I Update, with residential expansion primarily occurring on either side of San Juan Avenue near the southern border of the city, as well as between the Anderson Arroyo and Highway 350 on the western edge of La Junta.

Public and Quasi-Public

Public and Quasi-Public land uses comprise 14.9% of all land uses in La Junta, making it the second largest category in the city. These land uses are largely undeveloped, government owned lands. Public and quasi-public lands that have been developed in the city include Otero Junior College (OJC), the Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center, and Fairview Cemetery. A large portion of the Industrial Park north of the city limits is considered to be public and quasi-public as well.

Commercial

Commercial land uses, both service and retail commercial, comprise 8% of all land uses in La Junta. Service commercial land uses are considered to be lower intensity commercial uses, like small privately owned medical facilities or family-owned shops. These commercial land uses are generally located on the edge of neighborhoods and provide services to the proximate residential areas. Additionally, service retail land uses serve as a buffer between residential land uses and higher intensity land uses such as retail commercial and industrial.

Retail commercial land uses are considered to be higher intensity commercial uses, such as large department stores and hotels. These uses are generally located in the downtown area and along the US Highway 50 (US 50) highway corridor. There has been a continuation of commercial expansion westward along the US 50, consisting of businesses requiring large tracts of land unavailable in the downtown shopping district. Due to the downtown area largely being built out, it is likely that this general pattern of growth along US 50 will continue for the near future.

Industrial

Industrial land uses, light industrial and heavy industrial, comprise 4.7% of all land uses in La Junta. These land uses are largely congregated along the railroad and US 50, as they are able to utilize these services for exporting goods. Expansion in industrial land uses have been focused along two areas: the US 50 highway corridor (both on the eastern and western fringes of La Junta) and in the La Junta Industrial Park located three miles north of the city. While there has been growth in industrial development along US 50, the majority of growth has been in the La Junta Industrial Park, where numerous new businesses have developed in



recent years. The La Junta Industrial Park contains an extensive number of shovel ready lots and it is expected that any future industrial expansion will occur here.

Industrial Park Master Plan Update

In 2001, the City of La Junta prepared a Master Plan update for the Industrial Park. The Master Plan provides information on existing conditions in the Industrial Park and recommendations for future expansion and development. The Plan provides for specific acreages to be allocated to specific land uses. They are as follows:

- Medium and Large Site Industrial: 180 acres
- Mixed-Use: 70 acres
- Corporate: 59 acres
- Small Site Industrial: 36 acres
- Aviation: 11 acres

The vision of the Industrial Park Master Plan Update is for the La Junta Industrial Park to consist of mostly industrial land uses, while still providing for other land uses like the La Junta Municipal Airport, La Junta Municipal Golf Course, and the La Junta Raceway which are all currently sited in the park.

Railroads

Railroads account for 7.8% of all land uses in La Junta. This land use is solely located north of the downtown area and comprises the La Junta Station, at 1st Street and Colorado Avenue, and the railroads themselves, which serve as the mainline for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad.

Current Zoning

Zoning is a land use control tool used by municipalities that helps strategically organize land uses and promote orderly growth. Zoning is enacted with the intent of promoting and serving the public health, safety, morals, comfort, and general welfare of the citizens of the city. To achieve this, zoning typically regulates land use, building height, occupancy standards, and other physical characteristics of the built environment.

A Zoning Ordinance serves as one of the primary tools used to implement the goals and policies of a Comprehensive Plan.

Acreage totals for each zoning district can be seen in Table 4-2. Additionally, a description of each zoning district is provided below and a map of the districts can be found on Figure 4-2. The total acreage provided on Table 4-2 is larger than the total acreage on Table 4-1 (existing land use), because the rights of way (ROW) in the city are included in the zoning data, whereas they are left out on existing land use. As the zoning map shows, there is an order and set form for the city.

Heavy Industrial (I-2) is located north of US 50 and Light Industrial (I-1) is largely located east of the downtown, away from residential zones. South of the industrial zones are the commercial zoning districts, of which the largest category is Highway Service (C-S) with 10.3%. Generally, the lowest density zoning of commercial is located nearest residential uses, which provides a buffer between higher intensity zones like C-S and I-2.

South of the areas zoned commercial are the residential zones. Residential zones are the most prevalent districts in the city, comprising 67.1% of La Junta. Generally, the highest density residential zones, Multiple-Family (R-3) and Two-Family (R-2) are placed directly abutting the areas zoned commercial. This is to provide a buffer between the lower density residential zones, Single Family (R-1 and R-1A), and the areas zoned commercial. This hierarchical order of zoning helps ensure that suitable land uses are sited next to one another.

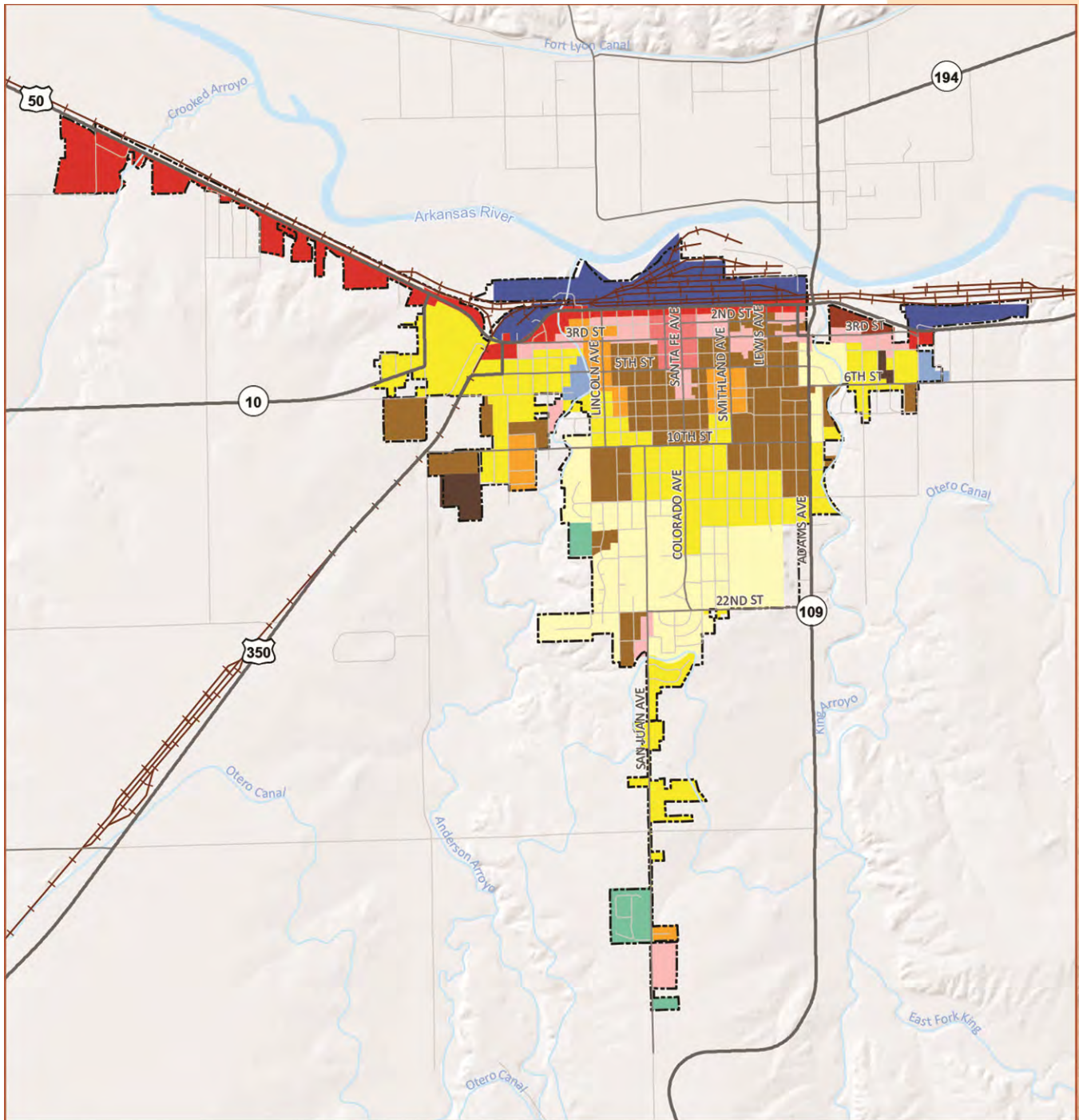
Table 4-2. Zoning Summary, 2000

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage
C-1: General Commercial	107.0	5.7%
C-2: Central Shopping	31.1	1.6%
C-S: Highway Service	195.8	10.3%
C-S_HCH	12.9	0.7%
I-1: Light Industrial	20.5	1.1%
I-2: Heavy Industrial	185.4	9.8%
M-P: Mobile Home Park	26.1	1.4%
PUD: Planned Unit Development	45.2	2.4%
R-1: Single Family	463.9	24.5%
R-1A: Single Family	356.8	18.9%
R-2: Two-Family	86.2	4.6%
R-3: Multiple-Family	361.4	19.1%
TOTAL	1,892.5	100%

Source: City of La Junta

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not round up to 100%

4. Land Use



Zoning

- R-1A Single Family
- R-1 Single Family
- R-2 Two-Family
- R-3 Multiple-family
- M-P Mobile Home Park
- C-1 General Commercial
- C-2 Central Shopping
- C-S Highway Service
- C-S HCH
- I-1 Light Industrial
- I-2 Heavy Industrial
- PUD Planned Unit Development

- City of La Junta
- Highway / Freeway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Stream / Canal

Matrix
DESIGN GROUP



0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1 Miles

Source: City of La Junta, 1999.

Figure 4-2
Zoning

2000 Future Land Use

Table 4-3 provides acreages for the future land use designations from the City’s most recent Comprehensive Plan Update from the year 2000. The largest future land use category is Public and Quasi Public. It is expected that growth in this category will largely occur in the Industrial Park, in line with the Industrial Park Master Plan. Future Residential is the second largest land use in the city showing that La Junta will continue to strive to provide excellent housing options to residents.

2000 Future Land Use Map

One of the most recognizable parts of the Comprehensive Plan is the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The FLUM is a diagram that shows the types and locations of existing and future development that the Comprehensive Plan envisions. The City of La Junta 2000 FLUM is provided on Figure 4-3.

Based on the 2000 FLUM, growth within the community was largely expected to occur west and north of State Route (SR) 10; and east of SR 109 and south of US 50. The development in the western portions of the city was expected to be primarily residential, with the exception of commercial growth along the US 50 corridor. The development in the eastern portion of the city was a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Similar to the existing land use section, residential land uses are largely buffered by more intense industrial uses near commercial land uses.

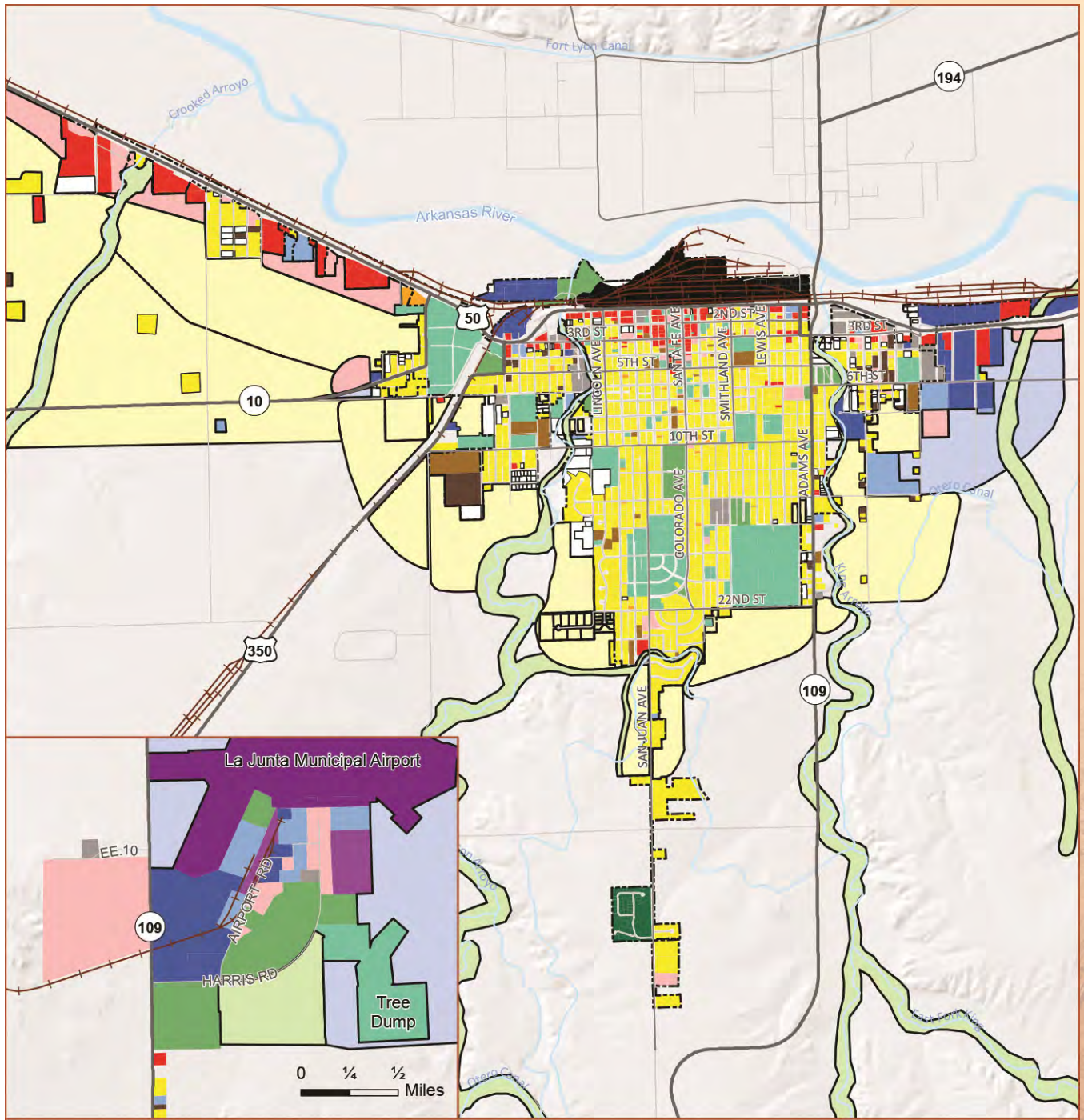
Table 4-3. Future Land Use Summary, 2000

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage
Future Commercial	178.6	1.7%
Future Parks and Recreation	1,015.5	9.9%
Future Public and Quasi-Public	14.8	0.1%
Future Residential	3,090.6	30.1%
Single Family Residential	713	6.9%
Two Family Residential	9.2	0.1%
Multi-Family Residential	59.7	0.6%
Manufactured Housing	44.1	0.4%
Service Commercial	31.6	0.3%
Retail Commercial	142.3	1.4%
Light Industry	76.1	0.7%
Heavy Industry	161.1	1.6%
Utilities and Communications	120.2	1.2%
Public and Quasi-Public	3,964.1	38.6%
Parks and Recreation	209.8	2.0%
Railroads	114.2	1.1%
Undeveloped Land	169.6	1.7%
TOTAL	10,114.5	100%

Source: City of La Junta

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may not round up to 100%

4. Land Use



Future Land Use

Future Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Utilities and Communications	City of La Junta	Railroad
Future Commercial	Manufactured Housing	Public and Quasi-Public	Highway / Freeway	Water Body
Future Industrial	Service Commercial	Planned Unit Development	Major Roads	Stream / Canal
Future Public and Quasi-Public	Retail Commercial	Parks and Recreation	Local Roads	
Future Parks and Recreation	Light Industry	Railroads		
Single Family Residential	Heavy Industry	Undeveloped Land		
Two Family Residential	Mixed Use			
	Aviation Related Use			

Matrix DESIGN GROUP
LA JUNTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Source: City of La Junta, 2000.

Figure 4-3
2000 Future Land Use

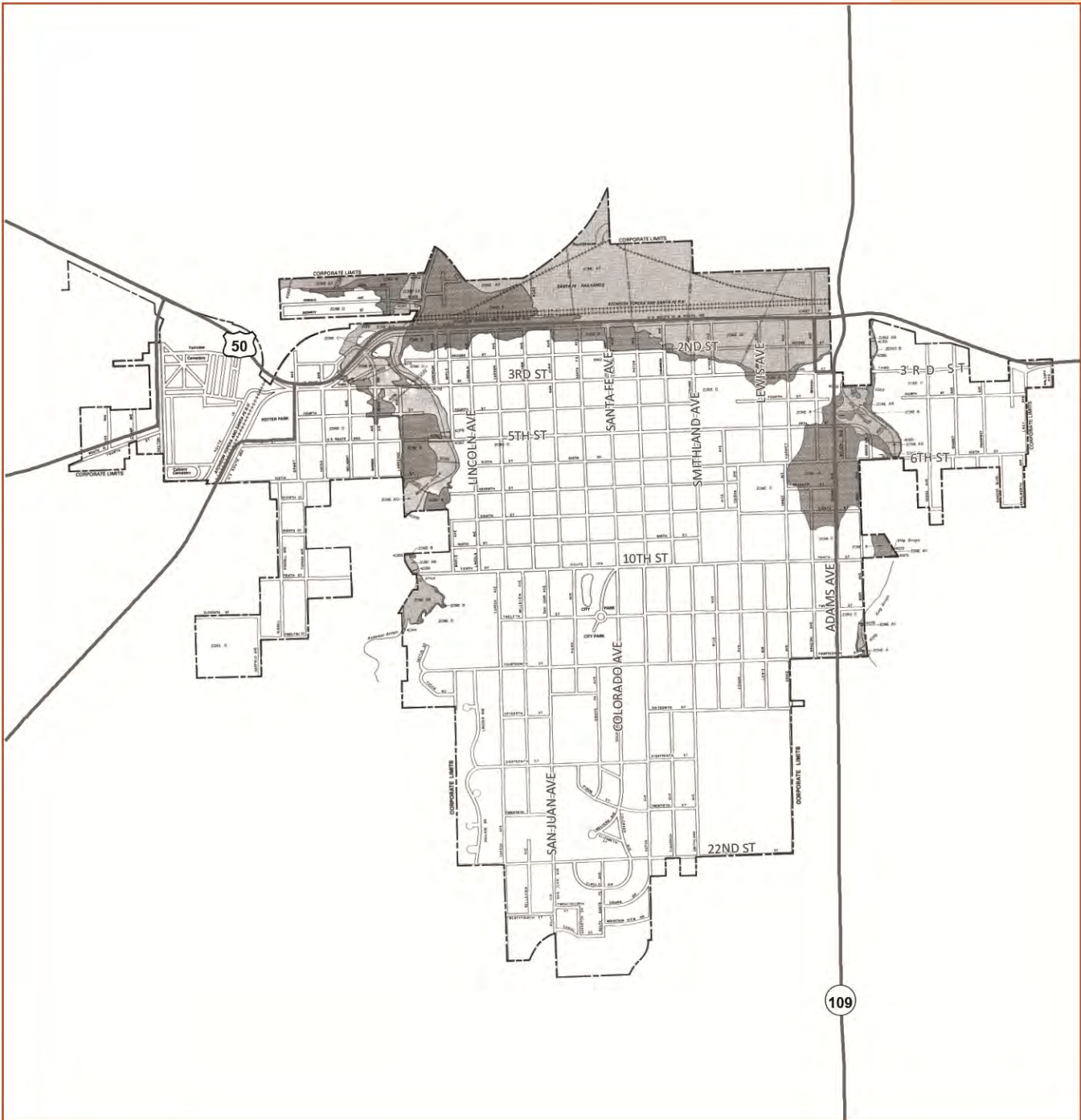
Development Constraints

The 1983 La Junta Comprehensive Plan noted a number of physical conditions that would affect long-range development patterns. These included the floodplain of the Arkansas River and the flowage ways of King and Anderson Arroyos. Also noted were areas that have steep slopes and unfavorable soil conditions. The presence of these constraints has and will continue to affect the ultimate patterns of physical growth and development. The City has completed adoption of the formal floodplain regulations and associated flood hazard maps that are considered for all new development proposals.

The current flood potential maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are shown on Figure 4-4.

Overall, while these constraints will have definite impact to long-range development patterns, they will not limit or severely restrict the overall growth potential of the city and its surrounding extraterritorial jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan of 1983 notes the following regarding this issue:

"Although some degree of physical constraint for development will always be present in all areas of the community, the background analyses and the land use development plan show that such constraints, with proper practice, need not severely limit future expansion and within the framework of probable future need for space, need not prevent future development from occurring in a rational and planned manner."



Flood Potential Zones
 ■ 100-Year Flood Boundary
 ■ 500-Year Flood Boundary

This figure is for illustrative purposes only. To determine the location of flood potential zones, please contact the City of La Junta for further information.



Figure 4-4
Flood Potential Zones

2017 Future Land Use Designations and Standards

The following describes the 2017 future land use designations, how they are expressed, and outlines the associated development standards for each of the designations shown on the City of La Junta's 2017 Land Use Diagram (Figure 4-5).



It is typical for the Land Use and Circulation Diagrams to be updated over time. Please check with the City of La Junta to ensure you have the current version.

A copy of the Land Use Diagram is available from the City's Engineering Department or by download from the City's website.

Development Standards

Density and intensity refer to the scale of development compared to the area of the property. Residential uses are stated in terms of density, or the allowable maximum dwelling units per net acre. In determining net area, the following types of areas are excluded: sensitive features such as creeks, habitats of rare or endangered plants and animals, and significant trees; land dedicated in fee to the public for streets or neighborhood parks.

Residential Designation

Standards of building density for residential uses are stated as the allowable maximum dwelling units per net acre. In determining net area, the following types of areas are excluded: sensitive features such as creeks, habitats of rare or endangered plants and animals, and significant trees; land dedicated in fee to the public for streets or neighborhood parks.

4. Land Use

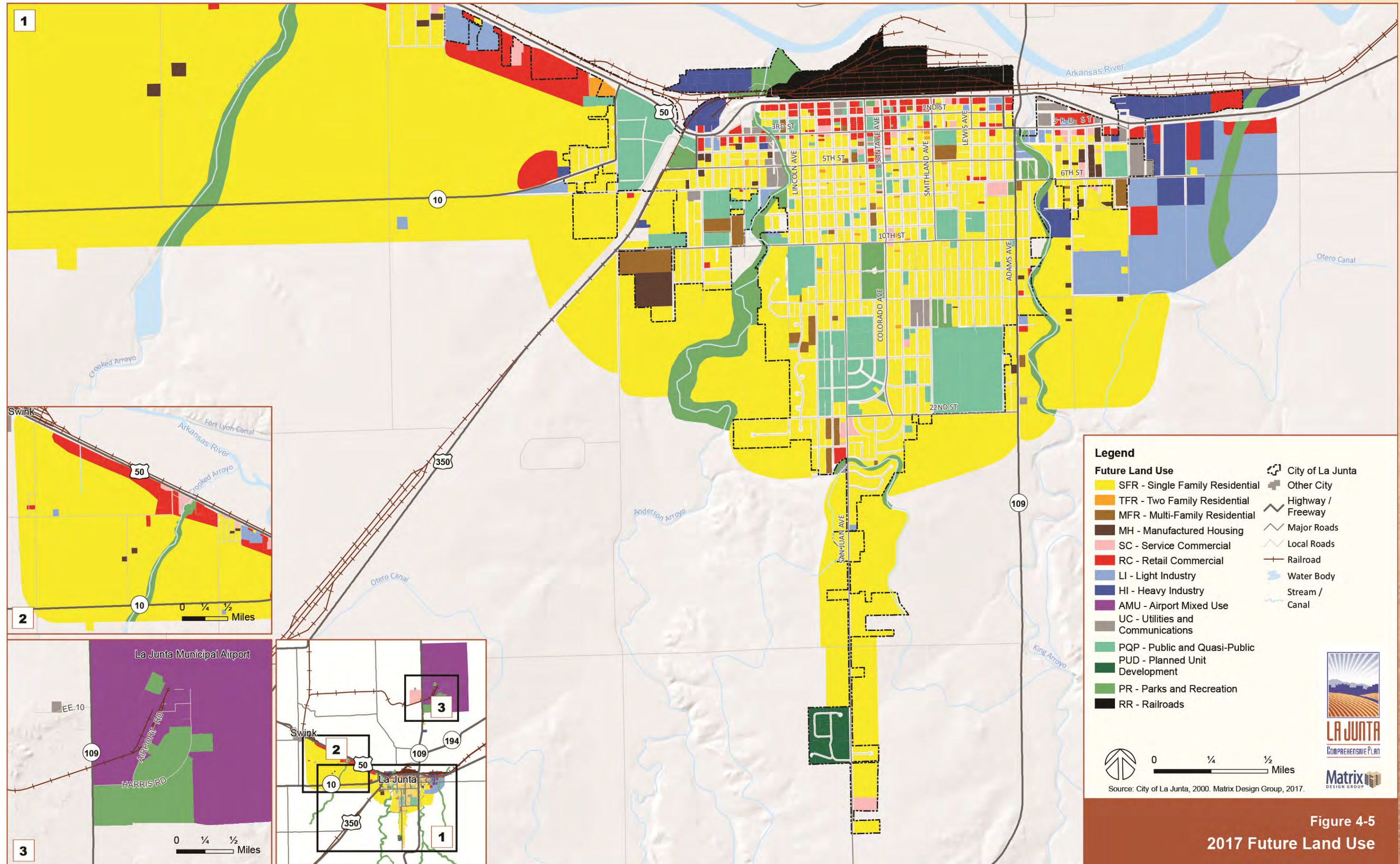


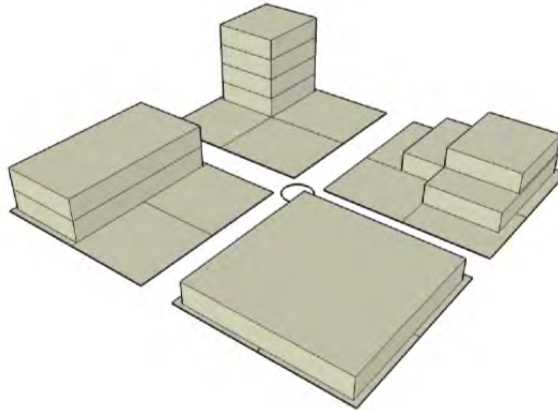
Figure 4-5
2017 Future Land Use

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Non-residential Designations

Standards of building intensity for non-residential uses, such as commercial and industrial uses, are stated as a maximum allowed floor-area ratio (FAR) that describe allowed development intensity. FAR is the gross floor area of a building or buildings on a site divided by the net site area. Floor area ratio does not include below grade or subterranean parking garages and basements or similar non-conditioned floor space. For example, on a lot with 25,000 square feet of land area, a FAR of 1.0 would allow 25,000 square feet of floor area which, depending on site constraints and development standards could be distributed on one floor or several floors. A FAR of 2.0 would allow 50,000 square feet of floor area and a FAR of 3.0 would allow 75,000 square feet of building area in this example. The graphic to the right illustrates conceptually how buildings of one, two, and four stories could be developed on a given lot with a FAR of 1.0.



While FAR provides for the overall development size and intensity, it does not specify the form or character of the building. The guidelines for each designation describe key physical form characteristics envisioned for the designation. Other La Junta regulations, such as the City's Zoning Ordinance, will guide the form of buildings within a given FAR range.

Land Use Designations

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram includes residential, non-residential land use designations that depict the types of land uses that are permitted within the city. Table 4-4 describes all of the designations along with their corresponding development intensity standards, as follows:

- **Designation.** This column provides the name of each designation and the acronym used when referring to this designation. To the right of each name is the color that is assigned to this designation on the City's Land Use Diagram.
- **Description.** In this column is a description of the purpose and application of each designation. The City's Zoning Regulations provide further refinement and expansion to the designation as well as providing a list of uses allowed on any given property. For any given site, not all uses listed may be appropriate for a given property due to location, adjacent uses, other applicable Comprehensive Plan policies, or other site specific issues.

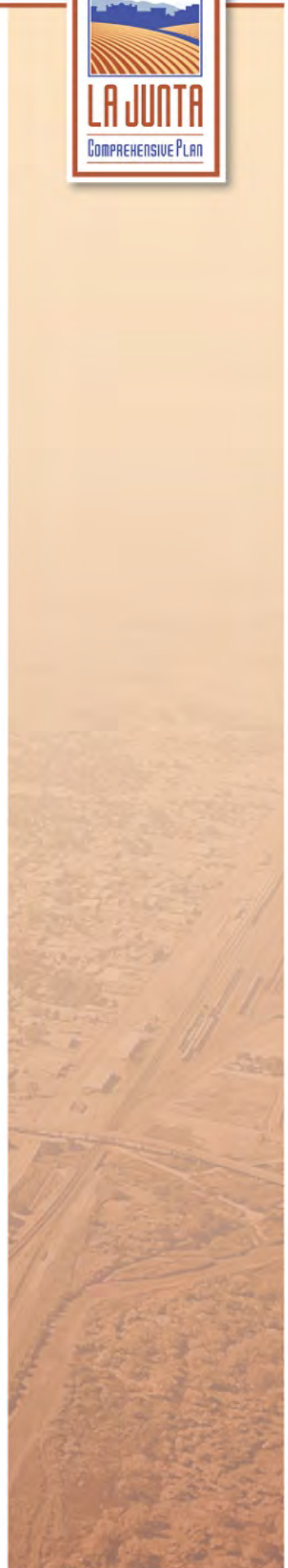
- Density / Intensity.** For residential designations, a maximum density is provided, expressed as dwelling units per acre (du/ac). For non-residential uses, a maximum floor-area ratio (FAR) is provided.

Table 4-4. 2017 Future Land Use Categories

Designation	Color	Description	Density / Intensity
Residential Designations			
Single Family Residential SFR		<p>The Single Family Residential designation provides for a suburban lifestyle with planned single family residential communities. This designation also supports open space, recreation and cultural opportunities, schools, churches and neighborhood facilities.</p> <p>Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are R-1, R-1a</p>	Maximum Density: 5 du/ac
Two Family Residential TFR		<p>The Two Family Residential designation allows for a combination of single family attached and detached dwellings, and duplexes. The variety of housing types may be in planned and cluster development settings. Substantial common open space for visual relief and recreation amenities that would serve residents would be typical of these developments.</p> <p>Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are R-1, R-1a, R-2</p>	Maximum Density: 9 du/ac
Multi-Family Residential MFR		<p>The Multi-Family Residential designation provides for multi-family dwellings that may include multi-story structures. These designations would allow for townhouses, condominiums and apartments. Substantial common open space, recreational amenities and on-site support facilities would be provided to serve residents.</p> <p>Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are R-1, R-1a, R-2, R-3, R-4</p>	Maximum Density: 17 du/ac
Manufactured Housing MH		<p>The Manufactured Housing designation provides for low density manufactured home development, which would be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood(s). This designation supports open space, recreation and cultural opportunities, schools, churches, home occupations, and neighborhood facilities.</p> <p>Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are M-S, M-P</p>	Maximum Density: 6 du/ac



Commercial and Industrial Designations		
Service Commercial SC		The Service Commercial designation provides for commercial nodes on individual parcels. The intent this designation is to provide development types on a single site, which through sensitive and creative building design, orientation of buildings, access, lighting, signs, parking, landscaping and adherence to neighborhood scale, is compatible with adjacent neighborhoods and development. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are C-S, C-1 Maximum FAR: 2.0
Retail Commercial RC		The Retail Commercial Designation provides for the grouping of retail merchandising activities into a concentrated area, serving the general shopping needs of the area. The grouping of activities is intended to strengthen the business level of Downtown. This designation also supports above ground floor residential uses. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are C-S, C-1, C-2 Maximum Density: 20 du/ac Maximum FAR: 3.0
Light Industrial LI		The Light Industrial designation is intended to provide areas for the development and perpetuation of light industrial activity involving light manufacturing, assembling, warehousing, and wholesale activities and the associated office space and support uses. The area designated for Light Industrial have adequate transportation and infrastructure access with an emphasis on minimal conflict with existing adjacent land uses. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are I-1 Maximum FAR: 1.0
Heavy Industrial HI		The Heavy Industrial designation is intended to provide for capital-intensive operations that manufacture or fabricate products within enclosed or partially enclosed structures. Heavy Industrial provides for the development and accommodation of intense industrial activity involving manufacturing, warehousing, assembly, storage, and industrial processes. These industrial activities involve significant amounts of noise, heat, mechanical and chemical processing, large amounts of materials transfer, and large-scale machinery and structures. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are I-2 Maximum FAR: 1.0



Other Designations			
Airport Mixed Use AMU		The Airport Mixed Use designation provides for the operations of the La Junta Municipal Airport and industrial related businesses at the Airport Industrial Park. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are C-1, C-2, C-S, I-1, I-1	
Utilities and Communications UC		The Utilities and Communications designation refers to all locations supporting public utilities and communication facilities in La Junta. As expected, these land uses are sporadically dispersed throughout the city.	
Public and Quasi-Public PQP		The Public and Quasi-Public Designation identifies land presently in quasi-public, public and municipal use for facilities and infrastructure support. Such facilities include the Woodruff Municipal Library, City Municipal Facility, La Junta Municipal Cemetery, public infrastructure, both public and quasi-public utility sites, and other similar public and quasi-public uses.	
Planned Unit Development PUD		This designation provides for cohesive, large-scale development plans that incorporate multiple uses. Planned Unit Developments are intended to offer development flexibility, while still reflecting the existing character and values in the city. Zoning districts consistent with this land use designation are PUD	Maximum Density: Not Specified Maximum FAR: Residential: 0.4 Commercial: 0.35 Industrial: 0.35
Parks and Recreation PR		The Parks and Recreation designation identifies existing and planned City parks, open-space sites and corridors intended for public recreation and resource conservation.	N/A
Railroads RR		The Railroads designation identifies the land associated with the BNSF railroad located in the northern portion of La Junta.	N/A



Zoning and Future Land Use Designations Consistency

Zoning is generally considered to be the primary tool for implementing the general plan. Because of this, state law requires that the zoning ordinance be consistent with the comprehensive plan. This means the land uses allowed by the zoning ordinance must be compatible with the goals, policies and land uses specified in the general plan. The consistency of existing City Zoning categories with proposed future land use designations is illustrated in the following consistency matrix (Table 4-5).

Table 4-5. Comprehensive Plan / Zoning Consistency Matrix

	Land Use Designation	R-1A	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	M-S	M-P	C-1	C-2	C-S	I-1	I-2	PUD
SFR	Single Family Residential	○	○											○
TFR	Two Family Residential	○	○	○										○
MFR	Multi-Family Residential				○	○								○
MH	Manufactured Housing	●	●	●	●	●	○	○						○
SC	Service Commercial								○		○			○
RC	Retail Commercial								○	○	○			○
LI	Light Industry								●			○		○
HI	Heavy Industry								●				○	○
AMU	Airport Mixed Use								○	○	○	○	○	○
UC	Utilities and Communications	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		○	○	○
PQP	Public and Quasi-Public	●	●	●	●	●	●		○	○	○	○	○	○
PUD	Planned Unit Development													○
PR	Parks and Recreation	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○			○
RR	Railroads													○

- Denotes zoning is consistent with future land use designation
- Denotes zoning is consistent with land use designation subject to Special Use Permit



Three-Mile Plan

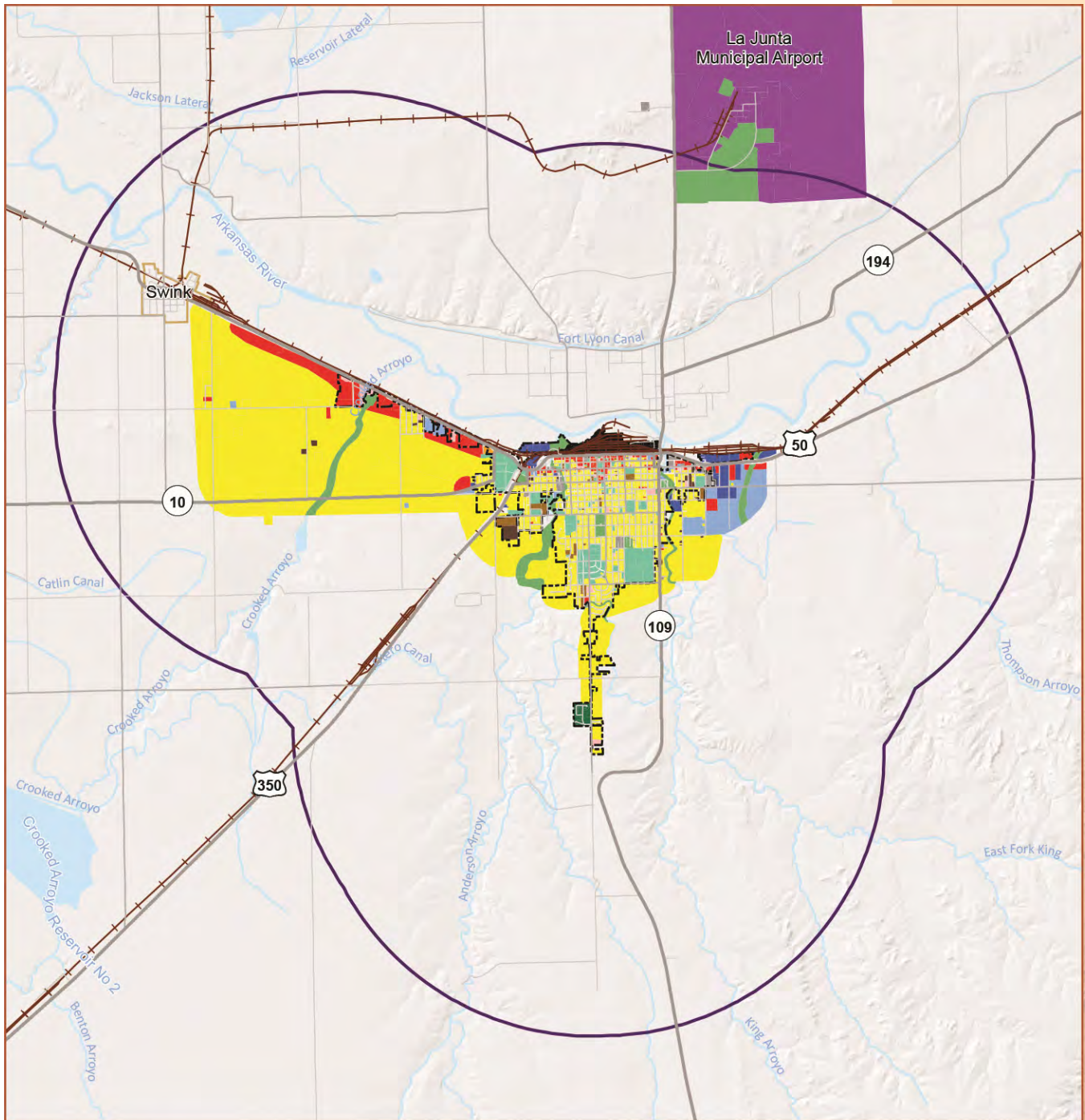
In Colorado, communities are limited from annexing lands that are more than three miles from their existing municipal boundaries in a given year. To ensure that annexed lands can be adequately served by the community, cities are required to prepare and adopt a three-mile plan prior to annexing property into their municipal boundaries.

The current (2017) three-mile area is shown on Figure 4-6.

Goals and Policies

Goal LU-1	La Junta applies sound growth management practices.
Policy LU-1.1	<p>Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan New development should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>
Policy LU-1.2	<p>Infrastructure Needs New development should be responsible for their proportionate share of infrastructure cost and / or development.</p>
Policy LU-1.3	<p>Impacts of New Development La Junta should evaluate the impact of new development on the City’s future water supply, considering land use, intensity, and proposed conservation measures.</p>
Policy LU-1.4	<p>Spatial Transitions and Buffers Uses with different densities, intensities and / or character should incorporate appropriate transitions to reduce potential negative impacts. Appropriate transitions may include but are not limited to, varied lot sizes, landscape buffers, setbacks, as well as roadway and building design.</p>
Policy LU-1.5	<p>Connectivity New development should provide adequate connectivity to existing transportation networks.</p>
Policy LU-1.6	<p>Three-Mile Plan La Junta should maintain a three-mile plan covering the area that is three miles outside of the current municipal boundaries and in keeping with the requirements specified in C.R.S. 31-12-105 et. seq.</p>

4. Land Use



Future Land Use

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| La Junta 3 Mile Plan Area | SC - Service Commercial | PUD - Planned Unit Development | Railroad |
| City of La Junta | RC - Retail Commercial | PR - Parks and Recreation | Other City |
| Future Land Use | LI - Light Industry | RR - Railroads | Water Body |
| SFR - Single Family Residential | HI - Heavy Industry | Highway / Freeway | Stream / Canal |
| TFR - Two Family Residential | AMU - Airport Mixed Use | Major Roads | |
| MFR - Multi-Family Residential | UC - Utilities and Communications | Local Roads | |
| MH - Manufactured Housing | PQP - Public and Quasi-Public | | |



LA JUNTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Matrix
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0 1/4 1/2 3/4 1 Miles

Source: City of La Junta, 2000. Matrix Design Group, 2017.

Figure 4-6
La Junta 3 Mile Plan Area

Goal LU-2 La Junta has attractive neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents.

Policy LU-2.1 Affordable Housing Options
Affordable housing options within La Junta should be promoted and incentivized.

Policy LU-2.2 Neighborhood Preservation
La Junta should maintain older neighborhoods, encouraging the replacement of obsolete structures with new units, where appropriate.

Policy LU-2.3 Prevent Incompatible Uses
Residential areas should be protected from heavy through-traffic and from encroachment of incompatible land uses.

Policy LU-2.4 Residential Walkability
Residential areas should have convenient, walkable access to schools and parks.

Policy LU-2.5 Safe Residential Areas
Promote safe and sanitary dwelling units, free from overcrowding.

Policy LU-2.6 Senior Living Facilities
La Junta should support senior living facilities in the community that provide services to the elderly.

Goal LU-3 La Junta revitalizes and removes blight from deteriorating neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Policy LU-3.1 Colorado Main Street Program
La Junta should become a full member with the Colorado Main Street Program with an aim of rejuvenating downtown.

Policy LU-3.2 Commercial Revitalization / Reuse
The City should support revitalization and appropriate reuse of commercial areas within the community.

Policy LU-3.3 Code Enforcement
La Junta should create and enforce property maintenance standards that apply to all property owners.



- Policy LU-3.4** **Downtown Relocation**
Where appropriate, the City should promote compatible existing businesses within La Junta to relocate to downtown, such as Walmart.

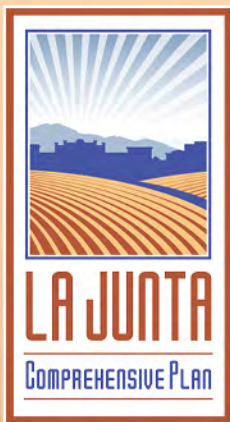
Goal LU-4 Commercial land uses meet the needs of present and future residents, the regional community, and visitors.

- Policy LU-4.1** **Central Business District**
The City should promote and renew commercial development within the existing central business district.
- Policy LU-4.2** **Commercial Land Designation**
The City should designate sufficient commercial land to meet the future needs of the city.
- Policy LU-4.3** **Local Shopping and Dining**
The City should encourage local, unique shopping and dining options in the community, particularly in the Central Business District.
- Policy LU-4.4** **Otero Junior College**
La Junta should support the continued operations of Otero Junior College.

Goal LU-5 Industrial land uses are located in appropriate locations.

- Policy LU-5.1** **Industrial Land Use Buffers**
The City should require that industrial land uses be buffered from incompatible land uses and protected from encroachment by residential or other incompatible land uses.
- Policy LU-5.2** **Industrial Development Densities**
Industrial development densities should be kept low to avoid undue environmental degradation and to facilitate satisfying aesthetics of development.
- Policy LU-5.3** **Environmental Consideration**
The City should seek to attract industrial development that avoids or minimizes substantial pollution, noise, glare, odor, or other significant offensive activity that would negatively affect adjacent uses and other areas of the city.

Please see the next page.



5. Circulation and Mobility

Circulation and Mobility are vital to every community. A circulation system serves as the veins of a city, facilitating the daily movement of students, parents, business owners, and goods. This chapter will provide an overview of the La Junta circulation system as it exists today and how the residents of the city get around.

Introduction

A well-functioning transportation network is essential for any community. The network supports growth of the community through the movement of goods and services, as well as growth of social capital through the movement of people. Additionally, a transportation network helps form the identity of a city. The City of La Junta can be easily recognized by its mature north-south gridded street network, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad, US Routes 350 and 50, and State Route 109. These transportation landmarks provide for easy orientation and wayfinding when using the network.

The City of La Junta offers a multi-modal transportation network that incorporates automobile, rail, air, and pedestrian mobility. This chapter discusses the existing transportation network within La Junta and opportunities on how it can be improved.

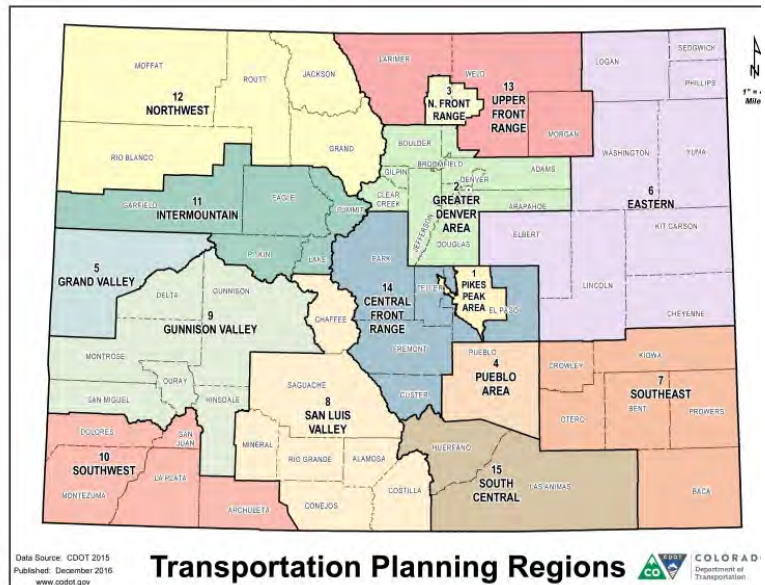
Transportation Planning Districts

In the state of Colorado, regional transportation planning is delegated to ten rural Transportation Planning Regions (TPRs) and five Metropolitan Planning Areas. La Junta is covered by one of the 10 rural TPRs as shown in Figure 5-1.

Southeast Transportation Planning Region

As the name implies, the Southeast TPR encompasses the southeast portion of the State of Colorado and includes Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, Otero, and Prowers Counties. The TPR is a predominately rural planning area with a 2011 population of 48,890 and nearly 1,600 miles of roadways.

Figure 5-1. Colorado Transportation Planning Regions



The Southeast Colorado Transportation Planning Commission serves as part of the Southeast TPR. The regional transportation planning commission prepares regional transportation plans (RTPs) identifying the long-range transportation needs of the entire TPR. Southeast Colorado



Enterprise Development, Inc. (SECED) serves as the administrative entity for the Southeast TPR. SECED is a non-profit economic development corporation providing services to Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, and Prowers Counties.

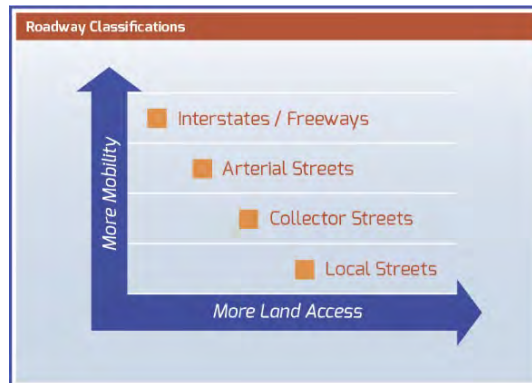
In 2015, the commission prepared the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan to plan for the future transportation needs of the region. As identified in the RTP, La Junta is located along the US 50 regional priority corridor. A regional priority corridor is a transportation corridor identified by the TPR as having either a high importance to the region's transportation system or a need for near-term improvements. The US 50 corridor starts on I-25 in Pueblo, passes through La Junta, and ends at the Kansas state line. The RTP identifies the following goals for the US 50 regional priority corridor:

- Accommodate increases in freight and tourist / recreation traffic;
- Increase safety and local mobility;
- Support economic development, maintain environmental quality; and
- Provide regional bus service.

Roadways

Classification of Streets and Roads

Streets and roads are classified according to access of property and travel mobility. Four classifications are customarily recognized that offer varying levels based on these two issues; these classifications are local streets, collector streets, arterial streets, and interstates or freeways and expressways.



Local Streets

Local streets maximize access to nearby properties, businesses, and residences. As such, traffic generated from nearby land uses is typically light and speed limits are low on these streets. Local streets should be designed to discourage through traffic and should not be utilized by large trucks and buses.

Collector Streets

As the name implies, collector streets collect traffic from local streets and distribute it to arterial streets. Collectors are typically designed to provide both access to adjacent properties and mobility for through traffic. These streets are wider and allow higher travel speeds than local streets.

Arterial Streets

Arterial streets are the main corridors within a city that support high traffic volumes at high speeds. Because arterials support high travel mobility, they generally provide either limited or no access to adjacent developments and properties.

Interstates, Freeways, and Expressways

These roads are designed to provide maximum mobility intended to support the largest traffic volumes at the highest speeds. These roadways are built to provide a means for intercity transportation. Interstates, freeways, and expressways are maintained by various transportation agencies depending on their ownership, such as the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) or the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

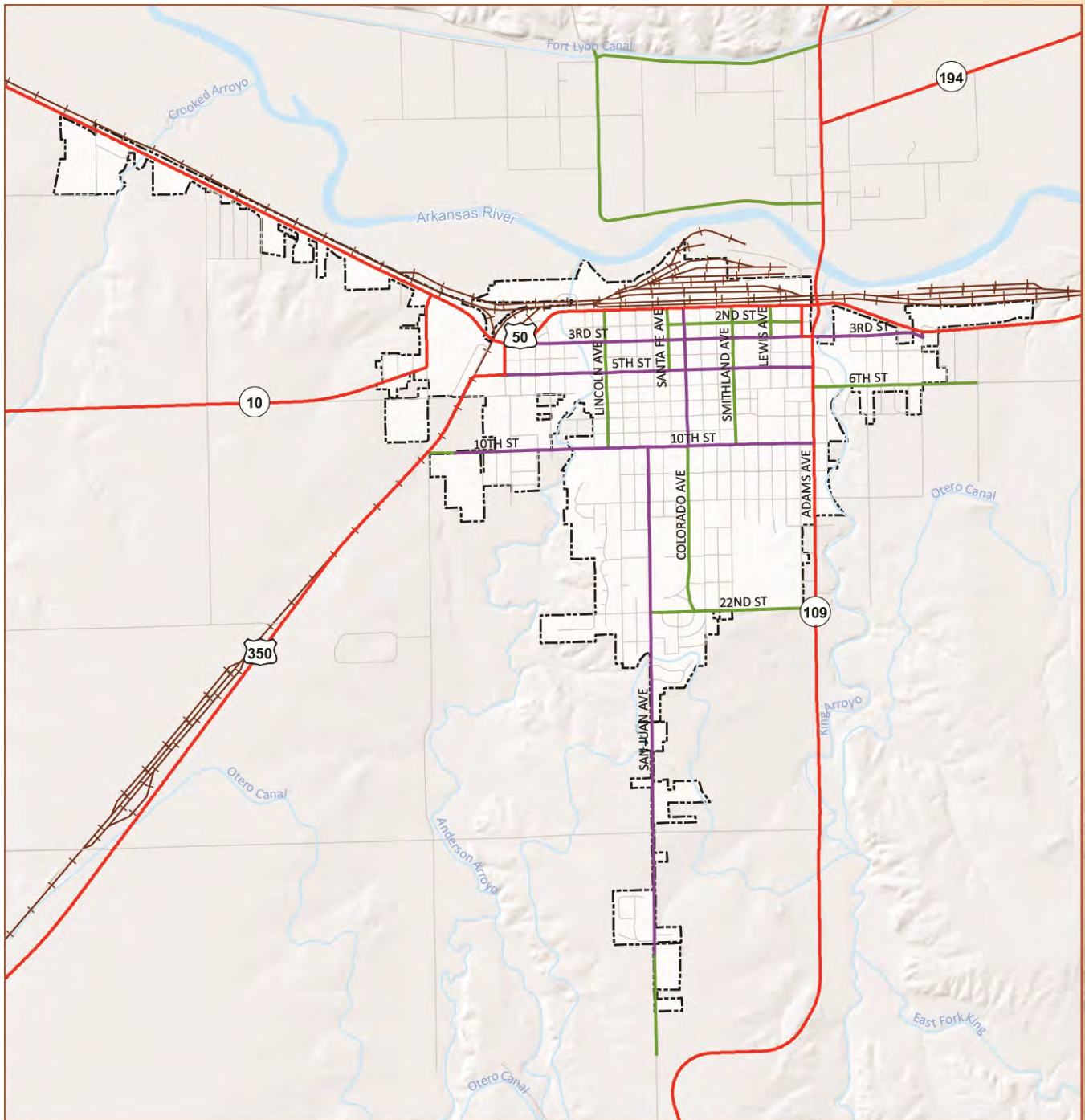
La Junta's complete traffic circulation map can be seen on Figure 5-2.

Roadway Ownership and Maintenance

The roads in La Junta are owned by various entities and each jurisdiction is responsible for conducting maintenance and repairs on the roads that they own. The City of La Junta owns and maintains 44.5 miles of paved roadways within the city. In addition to the paved roadways, La Junta also has a complex network of unpaved alleyways throughout the City. These alleyways provide rear entrances to businesses and residences and serve as pick-up locations for municipal trash.

The City identifies roadway maintenance projects on a yearly basis in the capital outlay section of their adopted budget. The capital outlay is a 10-year plan that is used to program construction and on-going maintenance and operations of the City's buildings and infrastructure. There are 16 different streets related projects totaling \$14,120,000 for the 10-year period covered in La Junta's 2016 adopted budget. These projects include sidewalk replacements, street widening, intersection enhancements, and bridge repairs.

5. Circulation and Mobility



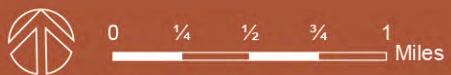
Traffic Circulation

- Freeway or Expressway
- Arterial
- Collector
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- City of La Junta
- Water Body
- Stream / Canal



Matrix
DESIGN GROUP

LA JUNTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Source: CDOT, 2016.

Figure 5-2
Traffic Circulation

Mode Choice

Mode choice provides information on how residents within a community commute to their place of work. Trends in mode choice can help determine the needs of the community in regards to transportation improvements and expansions. Table 5-1 shows a comparison of mode choice data for the residents of La Junta and the State of Colorado for the years 2000, 2010, and 2014.

Table 5-1. Mode Choice 2000, 2010, and 2014

Mode	La Junta			Colorado		
	2000	2010	2014	2000	2010	2014
Single-Occupancy Automobile	72%	67.2%	68.7%	75.1%	74.5%	75.0%
Multi-Occupancy Automobile	16.3%	15%	17.3%	12.2%	10.5%	9.8%
Public Transportation	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	3.2%	3.3%	3.2%
Walk	7.2%	7.3%	6.0%	3%	3.0%	3.0%
Work at Home	3.8%	7.3%	6.5%	4.9%	6.3%	6.5%
Other	0.5%	3.2%	1.3%	1.5%	2.4%	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 - 2010 & 2010 - 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As the table shows, workers in both La Junta and the State commute primarily by single-occupancy automobile. Between the years 2000 and 2014, La Junta has seen a decrease of 3.3% of this mode choice, whereas the percentage for Colorado has remained largely the same. The second largest category in La Junta and Colorado is multi occupancy automobile, with 17.3% and 9.8% of workers commuting by this mode respectively. Carpooling in La Junta has experienced a 1% increase since the year 2000, while carpooling in the State has decreased by 2.4% since 2000. For La Junta and the State, over 80% of workers are reliant on personal automobiles to get to their places of business. An overreliance on personal vehicles can lead to increased traffic congestion, parking costs and crowding, energy costs, emissions, and road maintenance and repair costs. Many communities are seeking to diversify their transportation network by improving and expanding options for commuting through the implementation of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies. TDM strategies generally focus on promoting alternative modes of transportation other than single-occupancy vehicles.

As of 2014, 14% of the workers in La Junta are not reliant on personal automobiles to get to their place of business. 6.5% of the workers in the city do not need to commute as they work from home, 6% walk using La Junta’s robust pedestrian network, 1.3% commute via other means (taxicab, motorcycle, bicycle, etc.), and 0.2% use public transportation. Commuting by means other than personal vehicle offers numerous benefits to not only the commuter, but also the community as a whole. Commuters who choose to walk or bike to work tend to spend less of their income on transportation costs and have better levels of health and



fitness. Communities with larger portions of workers commuting via other means than personal vehicle also provide transportation options for residents of all income levels. This is important, because infrastructure improvements and enhancements to roadways are largely experienced by those using personal vehicles as their primary mode of transportation. This can cause inequity as members of the community who do not own a personal vehicle, or cannot afford one, are not benefitting from these improvements and in many cases are paying for them through local taxes.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle Facilities

At the present time, the City of La Junta has no dedicated bicycle facilities, although the City is well placed to provide ample facilities for its residents in the coming years. La Junta covers a small geographic area of 3.02 square miles, giving residents the opportunity to make trips, both recreational and utilitarian, by bicycle. Additionally, for much of the year La Junta experiences mild temperatures and dry weather, making it pleasant and feasible to traverse the city by bicycle. Finally, as noted by Downtown Colorado Inc. in their 2015 La Junta Community Assessment, many of the streets throughout the city are wide of enough to incorporate a striped on-street bike lane.

Pedestrian Facilities

The City of La Junta has an extensive sidewalk network for pedestrians. Many of the city's neighborhoods feature recessed sidewalks separated from the street by a landscaped buffer. This not only adds to the safety and comfort of the pedestrian, but also adds to the beauty of the La Junta. Additionally, many of La Junta's prominent intersections, including Colorado and Santa Fe Avenues, incorporate crosswalks into their design. This adds to the walkability of the City of La Junta and helps promote walking as a viable form of transportation.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs

The ability to bike and walk in a community has been linked to the perceived quality of life for residents. As such, it is important for the City of La Junta to provide adequate facilities within the community for these modes of transportation. There are a number of programs available to La Junta that can help improve the city's bicycle facilities and walkability.

The State of Colorado is ranked as the fourth most bicycle friendly state in the country by the League of American Bicyclists.

Safe Routes to School

CDOT administers a state-run program called Safe Routes to School (SRTS). SRTS is a program that makes school routes safe for children when walking and bicycling to school. The program provides funding to qualified groups for infrastructure improvements that increase the safety of walking and bicycling to school. Funding is also provided for curriculum-based projects that educate and engage students, encouraging them to walk and bike safely to and from school. Funding for SRTS projects comes from the State of Colorado, the Federal government, or some combination of the two.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are streets that are designed to enable safe access for all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. The National Complete Streets Coalition is a non-profit organization started in 2004 committed to the development and implementation of Complete Streets policies and practices. Currently, there are 950 agencies throughout the country that have adopted Complete Streets policies; these include the State of Colorado and multiple municipalities and counties throughout the state.

Other Transportation***La Junta Transit***

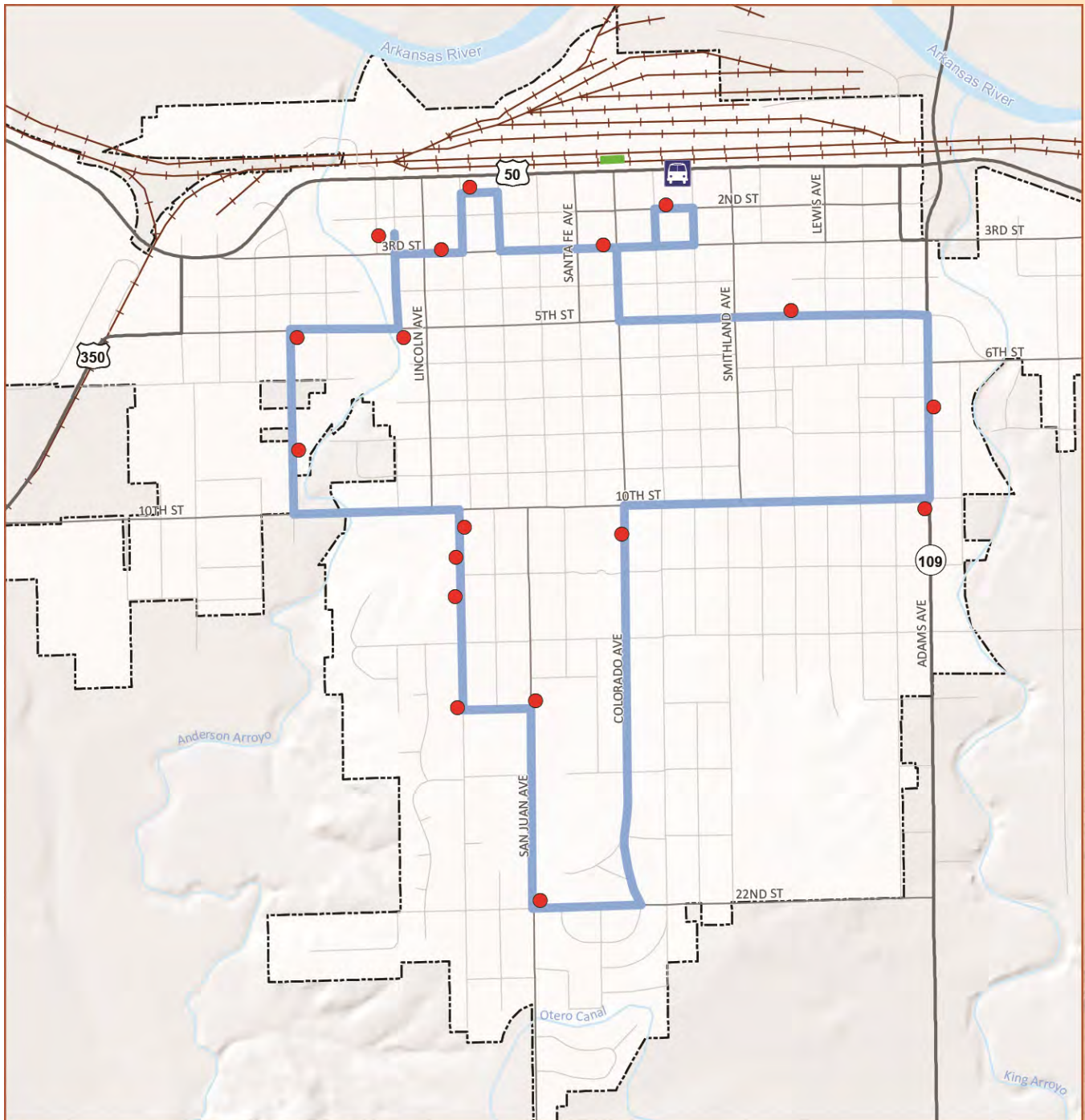
La Junta Transit is a City-operated bus line that starts and ends its route at the La Junta Senior Center. The bus service operates Monday through Friday from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The La Junta Transit service area covers a large portion of the city and provides route deviation off the normal route, including trips to the industrial park, upon reservation. The bus service also provides weekly trips to the Wal-Mart in western La Junta on Fridays. The La Junta Transit route is shown on Figure 5-3.

While La Junta Transit offers a valuable service to the community, the operating hours of 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. currently prevent anyone holding a traditional 9-to-5 job from utilizing the bus. Additionally, on the weekends the bus cannot be used to access La Junta's parks and other recreational activities, as weekend bus service is not offered.

Other Bus Services

Two private bus services have routes that run through the City of La Junta. An interstate bus service offers daily trips from Wichita, Kansas to Pueblo, Colorado making a stop in La Junta. Greyhound Lines also makes a stop in La Junta and offers residents access to the bus line's extensive countrywide network of stops. The stops for both the interstate bus service and Greyhound are at the Travel Inn at 110 E. 1st Street. The location of the bus stop is included on Figure 5-3.

5. Circulation and Mobility



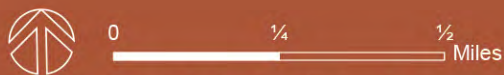
Public Facilities

- Bus Stop
- Bus Route
- La Junta Amtrak Station
- Bus Greyhound Bus Stop
- City of La Junta
- Highway / Freeway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Stream / Canal



LA JUNTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Source: City of La Junta, "La Junta Transit Brochure: Bus Stops and Times"

Figure 5-3
Transit

In 2015, USDOT awarded the City of La Junta \$15.2 million in grant money for the rehabilitation of the rail line along the Southwest Chief route. The grant money will be used to add approximately 39 miles of new rail and to repair over 20 miles roadbed along the Southwest Chief route between Waldo, NM and Garden City, KS.

(Source: Amtrak)

Rail Transportation

The railroad that runs through La Junta is one of the city’s defining features and continues to bring industry to the city and offer transportation options to residents. The rail line that runs through La Junta is owned, maintained, and operated by BNSF as a part of its Boise City subdivision of railroads. As the line approaches the western edge of the city, a branch turns to the southwest along the Santa Fe Trail toward the City of Trinidad, while the mainline continues west to Pueblo. The rail line serves the states of Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Utah, and Nevada.

BNSF has an agreement with Amtrak allowing Amtrak to use the rail for transportation purposes. Amtrak runs two daily trains through La Junta as a part of its *Southwest Chief* route that originate and terminate in Chicago and Los Angeles. The passenger trains that run through La Junta stop at the La Junta Station north of downtown at 1st Street and Colorado Avenue. The facility was built in 1955 and is owned and maintained by BNSF. It is estimated that in 2015 the station had a ridership of 7,256 and generated \$678,873 in revenue. The La Junta Amtrak Station is provided on Figure 5-3.

Source: <http://www.greatamericanstations.com/Stations/LAJ>

Air Transportation

The La Junta Municipal Airport (LHX) is located three miles north of the city in the La Junta Industrial Park and is owned and operated by the City of La Junta. The airport has two runways; runway 8-26 is 3,000 feet in length with an east-west orientation, and runway 12-30 is 2,400 feet in length oriented from northwest to southeast. LHX has a fixed-base operator with 12 locally based single-engine aircraft. While the airport does not have a regularly scheduled commercial air-carrier located on-site, commercial air charter service can be arranged. The nearest commercial air carrier service is at Colorado Springs, a distance of approximately 130 miles. Table 5-2 shows information regarding 2013 operations at LHX.

Table 5-2. LHX 2013 Operations

Operations	Number
Air Carrier	0
Air Taxi	0
General Aviation Local	1,752
General Aviation	4,204
Military	318
TOTAL	6,274

Source: Federal Aviation Administration

In 1942, the airport was leased by the United States Army and became known as the La Junta Army Airfield. The airfield served as a flying school operating multiple twin-engine and single-engine aircraft. After multiple re-designations to different base units, the La Junta Army Airfield was deactivated in February 1946, and ownership of the airfield was returned to the City of La Junta. The military is still loosely affiliated with LHX as it is estimated that 318 military flights occurred out of the airport in 2013.



Goals and Policies

Goal CM-1

La Junta actively supports the Regional Transportation Plan

Policy CM-1.1 Retaining the Southwest Chief

La Junta should work with the Southeast TPR to keep the Amtrak Southwest Chief on its current alignment through southeastern Colorado.

Policy CM-1.2 Regional Funding Solutions

The City should support long-term state wide and regional funding solutions for implementation of US 50 regional priority corridor projects.

Policy CM-1.3 Advocate for State Highways 10, 109, and 194

La Junta should advocate for the inclusion of SH 10, 109, and 194 as a part of the US 50 regional priority corridor.

Goal CM-2

La Junta has a balanced and flexible transportation system accessible to all users.

Policy CM-2.1 Street and Rural Road System

La Junta should develop a major street and rural road system, which will reduce accident potentials, congestion, and delays.

Policy CM-2.2 Residential Streets

Local residential streets should be designed to discourage heavy traffic through residential neighborhoods.

Policy CM-2.3 Municipal Airport Development

The City should continue to develop and improve the municipal airport as a vital segment of local and regional transportation.

Policy CM-2.4 Encourage Growth of Airport Facilities

The City should encourage continued growth of business and industrial use of airport facilities and air transportation opportunities.

Policy CM-2.5 Accessible Designs

The City should consider the elderly and those with special needs when planning and designing streets, parking areas, and facilities.

- Policy CM-2.6** **Pedestrian Crossings**
Pedestrian crossings should be provided at major intersections along collector and arterial roadways.
- Policy CM-2.7** **Sidewalk, Bike, and Pedestrian Plan**
La Junta should develop a Sidewalk, Bike, and Pedestrian Plan to plan for the development and maintenance of sidewalks, street trees, bike facilities, and other pedestrian-oriented infrastructure / amenities.
- Policy CM-2.8** **Complete Streets**
La Junta should develop a complete streets policy.
- Policy CM-2.9** **Regional Coordination**
La Junta should continue to coordinate with the Regional Transportation District, the Colorado Department of Transportation, regional MPOs, and surrounding jurisdictions to ensure the City’s transportation plans are compatible with the ongoing regional transportation planning efforts.

Goal CM-3 La Junta has a continuous bicycle circulation network allowing access to all parts of the city.

- Policy CM-3.1** **Bicycle Routes**
The City should support the development of bicycle routes that provide access to key destinations throughout La Junta, including community facilities, downtown, neighborhoods, and places of business.
- Policy CM-3.2** **Bicycle Facilities**
Businesses should provide bicycle facilities for customers, visitors, and employees.
- Policy CM-3.3** **Bike Share Program**
The City should support a comprehensive bike share program.



Goal CM-4 La Junta Transit is a viable alternative mode of transportation for work trips and recreational trips.

Policy CM-4.1 **La Junta Transit Service Times**
The service times of La Junta Transit should be expanded to include the evenings and weekends.

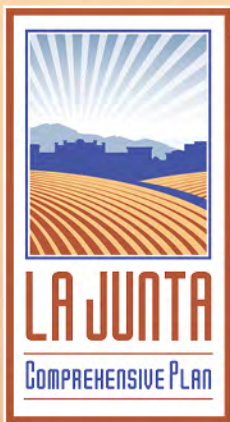
Policy CM-4.2 **Transit Stops / Shelters**
Transit stops / shelters should have accessible designs and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Goal CM-5 The City actively supports the transit services that have stops in La Junta.

Policy CM-5.1 **Other Bus Services**
La Junta should continue to support the interstate bus services that have bus routes through the city.

Policy CM-5.2 **Amtrak Services**
The City should support the continued services of the Southwest Chief Amtrak route through La Junta.

Please see the next page.



6. Community Services, Facilities and Buildings

Community services and facilities greatly impact the livability of a community. The wide-ranging services provided by La Junta include fire and police protection, potable water supply, and wastewater treatment. These services help contribute overall high quality of life in the city and lay the foundation for transforming a city into a more desirable place to live, work, and play. This chapter explores the expansive community services and facilities in the community that La Junta provides its residents.

Introduction

One of many responsibilities of a city is to provide its citizens with comprehensive community facilities. Facilities like the Station 1 fire station, the water treatment plant (WTP), and the Woodruff Municipal Library contribute to the community's quality of life and can make a city a safe and desirable place to live, work, and play. La Junta has invested in a wide array of community services and facilities offered to its residents. This investment embodies the city's desire to provide for the community.

Government Structure

The City of La Junta is a home rule municipality with a council-manager form of government. Home rule municipalities are considered self-governing and are able to enact a home rule charter that dictates the form of government for the municipality, as well as outlining the basic powers of municipal officials and agencies.

As a City with a council-manager form of government, La Junta has a City Council containing seven councilmembers; with two Council members representing each of the three wards of the city, and the last being elected at large and with the title of "Mayor." The mayor oversees all City Council meetings and is considered a key political leader and policy developer. The mayor serves a two-year term and the remaining six councilmembers serve four-year terms. The City Council is responsible for voting in public policy, passing local ordinances, and serving as the overall decision makers for the community.

Working alongside the City Council is the City Manager. The City Manager is appointed by the Council and is responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the City, directing the various departments of the City, and carrying out policies enacted by the City Council.

The City of La Junta also has a Utilities Board made up of five members, including the mayor, one councilmember, and three citizen members. It is the duty of the Utilities Board to establish the rates charged by any public utility that is operated by the City, such as garbage collection and potable water.

City Departments

Engineering Department

The Engineering Department is responsible for managing and conducting engineering surveys affiliated with municipal construction and renovation, code compliance, street and road layouts, and the design and construction of buildings for new business / industry within La Junta. Other responsibilities of the Engineering Department include:

6. Community Services, Facilities and Buildings



- Planning, Zoning, and Variances
- Maintenance to City equipment
- Overseeing the Street and Sanitation Departments

The City of La Junta publishes a yearly budget that includes a section on capital outlay which lists capital improvement projects (sidewalk and other infrastructure repairs, new equipment purchases, etc.) that will be occurring over the next ten years and how much they are estimated to cost. Over the next ten years, the City is planning to invest over \$14 million in infrastructure repairs and enhancements to the City's streets. This includes repairs to the bridge on 3rd Street and Anderson Arroyo, improving sidewalks in the downtown area, widening Barnes Avenue from 5th Street to 10th Street, and many other projects.

Street Department

The Street Department is overseen by the Engineering Department. The Street Department is charged with maintaining, repairing, and cleaning the paved roadways and unpaved alleyways in La Junta. Part of the Street Department's maintenance program is to repair potholes and perform street patching as needed.

Sanitation Department

The Sanitation Department helps keep La Junta clean and healthy by collecting and disposing of garbage, refuse, and sanitary sewage. The City offers pickup for residential and commercial garbage once per week and has large dumpsters available for rental with a monthly fee, or for sale. The City also provides services for special pickups of miscellaneous items that are too large to fit into trash receptacles. The Sanitation Department has a sanitation transfer facility located at 702 W. 5th Street that underwent a complete rebuild in 2016.

La Junta also participates in two voluntary regional recycling programs, one offered by Southeast and South Central Recycling, and the other by Clean Valley Recycling (CVR). Southeast and South Central Recycling will accept cans (steel and tin), glass, plastic and paper, and has recycling bins available at the following locations:

- Wal-Mart Parking Lot
- City Warehouse at 515 Lacy Avenue
- Vacant Lot at 3rd Street and Adams
- Across from the La Junta Street Department Garage on W. 5th Street
- Tennis Court Parking Lot at 16th Street and San Juan Avenue

CVR offers residential curbside recycling services to the multiple communities, including the towns of Swink, Manzanola, and Ordway and the cities of Rocky Ford, Las Animas, Lamar, and La Junta. They operate a drop off location at 4th and Adams Avenue.

According to City staff, there are 44.5 miles of paved roadways within La Junta.

In addition to protecting the community, the LJPD also oversees the enforcement of the Municipal Code and animal control ordinances, as well as managing the City of La Junta Animal Shelter.

Parks Department

The Parks Department is responsible for overseeing recreational programs and the maintenance and upkeep of the city's numerous parks, as well as the City of La Junta Municipal Cemetery. The city has an expansive inventory of parks and recreational facilities with the primary park being City Park. The park is located in the heart of La Junta at 10th Street and Colorado Avenue and dates back to 1905 when the City purchased the first 16.5 acres of land for the park. City Park supports a variety of activities including walking, jogging, and bicycling trails; playground equipment; basketball courts; tennis courts; a skate park; bandstand; horseshoe pits; and a large grassy area for passive and active recreation. Other parks and facilities in La Junta include Potter Park, the 22nd Street Ball Park, Veterans' Field, the Tippy Martinez Ball Park, Wipeout Pool & Waterslide, Edison Park, College Overlook Park, the Rodeo Grounds, C.L. Red Crane Tot Park, and the La Junta Municipal Golf Course.

An in-depth description of La Junta's parks and recreation services is provided in Chapter 7, Natural Resources, Recreation, and Tourism.

La Junta Police Department

The La Junta Police Department (LJPD) ensures the safety of the citizens of La Junta by overseeing the day-to-day enforcement of Municipal and State laws. The service area of the LJPD is the city limits of La Junta, or 3.02 square miles, and includes the 6,903 citizens of the city. The police department operates out of one station in La Junta located at the City Municipal Building. Additionally, the LJPD operates a shooting range which underwent upgrades in 2016. In 2017, two new buildings to be used by the Police Department for training will be built at the Industrial Park.

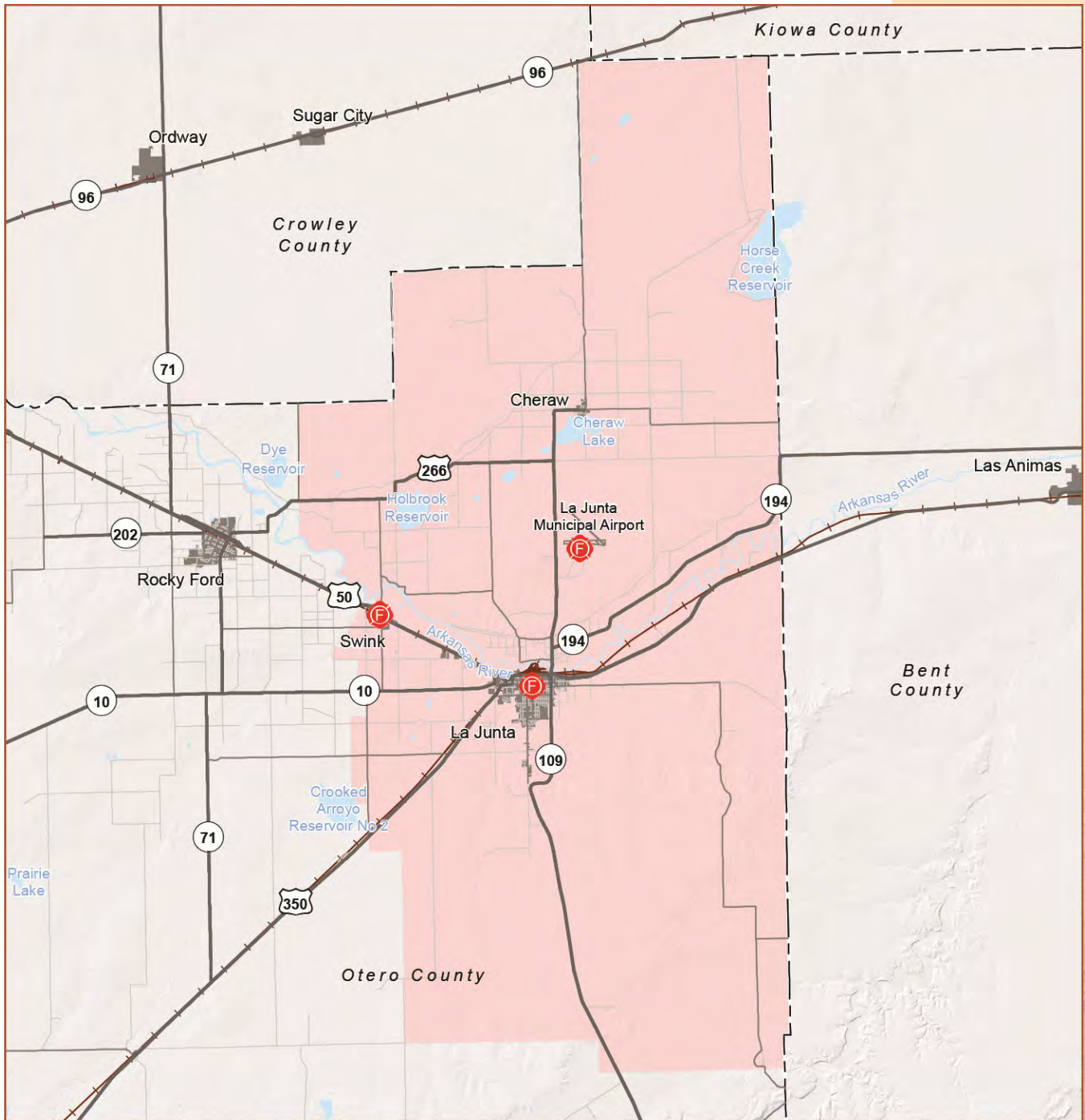
It is estimated that there are 1.98 officers per 1,000 residents within La Junta. This is a relatively low number when compared to other municipalities within the state that have similar population sizes as La Junta. The cities of Trinidad and Lamar have 2.71 and 2.83 officers per 1,000 residents, respectively. Additionally, the 2015 national average was 3.7 officers per 1,000 residents for cities with populations under 10,000, which includes La Junta. This indicates that the LJPD is small compared to the size of the community and that La Junta could benefit from more police officers.

La Junta Fire Department

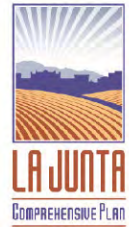
The La Junta Fire Department (LJFD) provides fire protection services, ambulance services, and runs multiple outreach programs. LJFD is also a part of the La Junta Rural Fire Protection District (LJRFPD), which encompasses La Junta and the Towns of Cheraw and Swink. The service area of the LJFD includes the 3.02 square miles of the city as well as an additional 352 miles of rural land. The total population of the service area is approximately 12,500.

The La Junta Rural Fire Protection District has entered into multiple agreements with Otero County and Baca, Bent, Crowley, Kiowa, and Prowers Counties to offer assistance in fire protection services in these areas. Figure 6-1 shows the entire service area for the LJRFPD.

6. Community Services, Facilities and Buildings



- La Junta Rural Fire Protection Station
- La Junta Rural Fire Protection District
- City
- County Border
- Highway / Freeway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water Body



Source: Matrix Design Group, 2017. City of La Junta, 2017.

Figure 6-1
La Junta Rural Fire Protection District Service Area

The fire department has a total of 27 firefighters, 8 of which are career and the remaining 19 of which are volunteers. The total number of emergency responders (including firefighters and EMTs) is 33. With a protected population of 12,500, the ratio of civilians to emergency responders is 379-to-1.

The LJFD has three different fire stations. Station 1 serves as the fire department's headquarters and is located at the City Municipal Building. The station is home to the department's administration offices, emergency operations center, training / meeting room, and has multiple advanced life support (ALS) ambulances, fire engines, and other fire fighting vehicles. Station 2 is located at the La Junta Industrial Park, strategically placed to provide fire protection services for the La Junta Municipal Airport, the northern portion of La Junta, and other regions of the LJRFPD.

Station 2 is equipped with an ALS ambulance, a fire engine, and two brush fire vehicles. Station 3 is located in the Town of Swink called Station 3 and was built in cooperation with the town and the LJRFPD. The Town of Swink has a small population of 601 residents and Station 3 allows LJRFPD firefighters to provide quick and efficient protection services to the Swink area. The station is equipped with a fire engine and two smaller fire fighting vehicles.

With the current facilities and personnel, the LJFD is able to respond to 82% of fire emergencies in the city in less than 7 minutes and 60% of rural fire emergencies in less than 11 minutes.

Water Department

Wastewater

The La Junta Wastewater Department is responsible for providing wastewater services to residents and maintaining all sewer lines within the city. The Wastewater Department provides wastewater services for residences, commercial businesses, and industrial businesses. Services are available to individuals outside the city limits at an increased rate.

Potable Water

The City's water supply is drawn from 14 groundwater supply wells for municipal water use and 1 groundwater well for industrial use. The 14 municipal groundwater wells provide a combined 16 million gallons per day (MGD). Once water is pumped from one of La Junta's groundwater wells, it is treated and stored in one of six different storage tanks. These storage tanks have a combined capacity of 4.9 million gallons, providing reserves for periods of increased demand. As the population has remained steady or has decreased slightly over the past 10 years, it is estimated that the City will have adequate water supplies for the considerable future.

The City of La Junta has a slip-lining program to repair and update the 50 miles of wastewater mains in the city.



La Junta's water quality is tested regularly to ensure it meets or exceeds federal water quality standards. Water quality test results are published in a yearly consumer confidence report (CCR), which are made available to the public. In the CCR that covers the 2015 calendar year, there were no contaminants found to be above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed. The full CCR can be found on the City of La Junta website.

Electric Department

The Electric Department is responsible for maintaining all of the equipment at the La Junta Light & Power Facility as well as all of the power lines and transformers throughout the city. The power-generating capabilities of the city are limited and cannot supply all the power needs of the residents. As such, the City of La Junta is a member of the Arkansas River Power Authority (ARPA), who supplies wholesale electric power to the city and its residents. ARPA gets its power from a multitude of sources including 20% from federal hydropower, 7% from wind farms, and the remaining from other supplemental sources.

Education

In the state of Colorado, students have the option to attend any school in any district, as long as the school has capacity for them. There are three districts near La Junta which provide opportunities for educating children: these are East Otero R-1 School District, Cheraw 31 School District, and Swink 33 School District.

Otero R-1 School District is located within the City of La Junta and owns and operates three different public schools to educate the children of the city. As of 2014, the district has a total enrollment of 1,309 students and 78 teachers educating these students. This is a student-to-teacher ratio of 17-to-1, better than the state average of 18-to-1.

Source: East Otero No. R1 School District. (n.d.). Retrieved October 05, 2016, from <http://www.publicschoolreview.com/colorado/east-otero-school-district-no-r1/805130-school-district>

All three of the La Junta public schools have student-to-teacher ratios either lower or equal to that of the state. This is a good indicator to go by in that it shows that, on average, students in La Junta public schools have the opportunity for more one-on-one education time with their teachers.

Existing Community Facilities

Municipally owned and / or operated public facility buildings in the City of La Junta are listed in Table 6-1. The public facilities include the City Municipal Building, public schools, Chamber of Commerce, the Woodruff Memorial Library, and others. The names and numbers in the reference table correspond to their location on Figure 6-2.

Table 6-1. La Junta Public Facilities

Label	Name	Label	Name
1	City Municipal Building (City Hall)	7	La Junta Light & Power
2	Transit Department / Senior Center	8	Chamber of Commerce
3	La Junta Municipal Airport	9	La Junta Public Schools
4	Wastewater Treatment Plant	10	La Junta Municipal Cemetery
5	Water Treatment Plant	11	Woodruff Memorial Library
6	Municipal Water Wells		

City Municipal Building (City Hall)

The City Municipal Building is located at the southeast corner of 6th Street and Colorado Avenue. The building is home to multiple departments of the Municipal Government including the LJFD, LJP, Utilities Department, Engineering Department, Municipal Court, and the City Manager’s Office.

La Junta Municipal Animal Shelter

The La Junta Municipal Animal Shelter is a Pet Animal Care Facilities Act (PACFA) licensed facility licensed through the Colorado Department of Agriculture and managed by the La Junta Police Department. The shelter houses stray, lost, and abandoned animals and assists pet owners in finding their lost pets. The shelter is not a rescue facility and therefore cannot accept surrendered pets. Owners looking to surrender their pets should contact the Pikes Peak Region Humane Society or the Second Chance Animal Rescue Foundation.

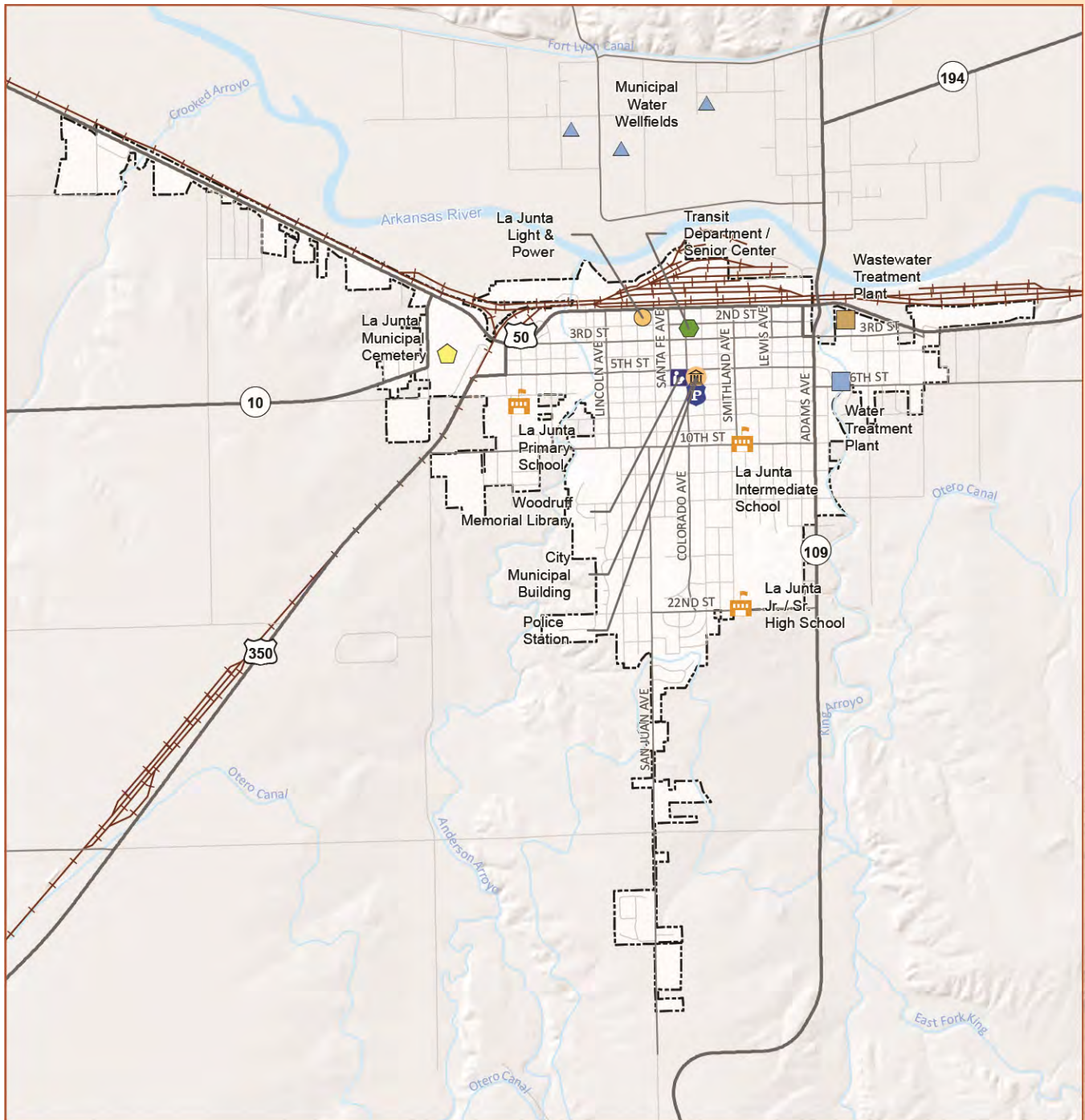
Transit Department / Senior Center

The La Junta Transit Department / Senior Center is the starting point for the La Junta bus service. The route is operated eight times daily from 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Senior Center is open weekdays and offers meals, recreational activities, and a Friday night dance to senior citizens.

La Junta Municipal Airport

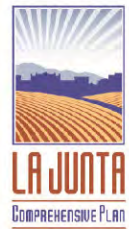
The La Junta Municipal Airport is located at the La Junta Industrial Park, three miles north of the city proper, and includes two runways and 77 acres of tarmac. The airport is considered to be the largest airport in southeastern Colorado. Per year, the airport averages 8,000 single engine aircraft flights, 400 twin-engine aircraft flights, 60 jet flights, 10 helicopter flights, 80 Flight for Life flights, and 300 military aircraft flights.

6. Community Services, Facilities and Buildings



Public Facilities

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Cemetery | Transit Department / Senior Center | City of La Junta |
| City Hall | Utility | Highway / Freeway |
| Library | Wastewater Treatment Plant | Major Roads |
| Police Station (Located at City Hall) | Water Treatment Plant | Local Roads |
| School | Wellfield | Railroad |
| | | Water Body |
| | | Stream / Canal |



Source: Matrix Design Group, 2017.

Figure 6-2
Public Facilities

The City is currently working on a new wastewater treatment plant to accommodate for future needs.

The La Junta Municipal Airport presents an economic development opportunity for the City of La Junta. The Industrial Park already has a number of businesses located within it and the airport provides an opportunity for increasing the transportation of goods and services. More information on the La Junta Industrial Park and the current businesses located there can be found in Chapter 3, Economic Development.

Water Treatment Plant

In 2004, the City built a water treatment plant (WTP) to ensure residents were provided with clean and safe potable water. The WTP was built to meet peak daily demand during the summer months when water usage is at its highest. Peak daily demands in the past have reached 4.68 MGD, and the WTP has a capacity of 6.6 MGD. The plant treats water through a process called “Reverse Osmosis”. During reverse osmosis, any salts or contaminants are removed from the water, leaving behind water that is safe to drink. The contaminants removed leave behind a substance called brine. Table 6-2 shows the amount of water produced, brine waste produced, and total water available for distribution for the years 2005 through 2014.

Table 6-2. Water Produced (in thousands of gallons), 2005 - 2014

Year	Brine Waste	Water to Distribution	Total Water Produced
2005	378,106	767,483	1,145,589
2006	306,810	712,823	1,019,633
2007	293,076	677,270	970,346
2008	348,876	685,126	1,034,002
2009	317,444	659,000	976,444
2010	330,730	697,159	1,027,889
2011	366,091	732,864	1,098,955
2012	391,588	770,498	1,162,086
2013	419,546	679,506	1,099,052
2014	360,152	672,453	1,032,605

Source: City of La Junta Water Conservation Plan Update

Municipal Water Wells

The 14 wells that the City draws from for municipal water use are located in three well fields north of La Junta, between the Arkansas River and the Fort Lyon Irrigation Canal.

La Junta Light & Power

The La Junta Light & Power Facility grants the City a certain degree of independence from the main power grid of ARPA, providing a 30-day reserve of fuel at all times in case of power outages.



Chamber of Commerce

The La Junta Chamber of Commerce is a local organization comprised of business owners aimed at growing the overall business climate of the city. The Chamber holds regular events that give local businesses and individuals the opportunity to come together.

La Junta Public Schools

La Junta Public Schools Central Office

The La Junta Public Schools Central Office serves as the administrative office for the Otero R-1 School District. This building focuses on the operations of the public schools in the Otero R-1 School District and includes the Superintendent's office, the human resources / payroll department, and others.

Public Elementary Schools

There are two public elementary schools within La Junta: La Junta Primary School and La Junta Intermediate School. La Junta Primary School educates children from kindergarten through the second grade. It is estimated that as of 2014 there are 320 students enrolled in La Junta Primary School with 23 teachers educating students. This is a student to teacher ratio of 14-to-1.

The second elementary school within the city is La Junta Intermediate School. This school educates students from the third grade through the sixth grade. In total there are 440 students at La Junta Intermediate School and 24 teachers, culminating a student-to-teacher ratio of 18-to-1, matching the ratio of the state as a whole.

Public Junior and High Schools

There is one combined junior and senior high school located within La Junta, the La Junta Junior / Senior High School. This public school educates student between the seventh grade and twelfth grade and it is estimated that there are 549 students enrolled at the school as of 2014. These 549 students are taught by 31 teachers, leading to an 18-to-1 student-to-teacher ratio.

Otero Junior College

Otero Junior College (OJC) is a community college that was founded in 1941. The campus is 40-acres and is considered one of the finest community colleges in the state. As of 2013, it is estimated that there are 1,449 students enrolled at the college with 76 educators on campus. This is a student-to-teacher ratio of 19-to-1. The campus offers degrees and certificates in 10 different fields. The college also has a banquet room available for rental, the Ed Stafford Theatre, and the Koshare Indian Museum.

Source: Otero Junior College. (n.d.). Retrieved October 5, 2016, from <http://www.usnews.com/education/community-colleges/otero-junior-college-CC06564>

La Junta Municipal Cemetery

The La Junta Municipal Cemetery is comprised of the Calvary Cemetery and the Fairview Cemetery. The Municipal Cemetery is run and maintained by the Parks Department and all cemetery records are kept in the City Clerk’s Office.

Woodruff Memorial Library

The Woodruff Memorial Library was opened in April of 1997 and is named after Thomas Woodruff, a Boston lawyer who was an early pioneer of the city. As early as 1888 Thomas Woodruff started compiling a collection of books that would be the first library for the city known as the Young Folks Library. After Woodruff’s death in 1919, he bequeathed five lots of land and a check for \$16,208.60 for the construction of a new public library building. This new library was known as the Woodruff Memorial Library and was dedicated in 1921. The 1921 facility gave way to the new Woodruff Memorial Library that serves the La Junta today. The library has a large collection of books available to the public, online resources to make renewing and reserving books easy, and hosts a multitude of community events.

Within the library is the Matthew Niklos Memorial Children’s Technology Center. At the time of its dedication in 1997, the center had two computers and a color printer. The technology center cost over \$12,000 and was entirely funded by private donations.

Goals and Policies

Goal CSFB-1 La Junta has community services that meet the needs of residents.

Policy CSFB-1.1 Public Improvement Programs
La Junta should continue to institute public improvement programs.

Policy CSFB-1.2 Public Services
New development should be served by a full range of public services.

Policy CSFB-1.3 Services Catered to the Population
Public services should be catered to the needs of a population, considering both the elderly and those with special needs.

Policy CSFB-1.4 Conditions of Approval
During the development review process, La Junta should not approve new development unless the following conditions are met:

- The applicant can demonstrate that all necessary infrastructure will be installed or adequately financed prior to occupancy;



- Infrastructure improvements are consistent with City infrastructure plans; and
- Infrastructure improvements should reduce impacts associated with the construction, operation, or maintenance of any required improvement.

Policy CSFB-1.5 Clean Valley Recycling

La Junta should continue to support recycling efforts (curbside and drop off locations).

Goal CSFB-2

La Junta has community facilities that meet the needs of residents.

Policy CSFB-2.1 Accessible Community Facilities

Community facilities should be conveniently located and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Policy CSFB-2.2 Annexation Requirements

A detailed public facilities and financing plan that considers both capital facilities and the fiscal impacts to the City's ongoing operation and maintenance costs should be required prior to any annexations to the City.

Policy CSFB-2.3 Prioritize Infrastructure Improvements

La Junta should prioritize public infrastructure improvements and investments to enhance service to existing development and new economic development opportunities.

Policy CSFB-2.4 Community Trash Bins

La Junta should place community bulk trash bins at convenient locations for use throughout the city with permission of the Utility Board.

Goal CSFB-3

La Junta's library system is full-service and high-quality

Policy CSFB-3.1 Adjusting Library Services

Library services should be adjusted as needed to meet the educational, informational, and cultural needs of all City residents.

Policy CSFB-3.2 Funding Mechanisms

Additional funding mechanisms should be evaluated for the construction and operation of libraries within the City.

Goal CSFB-4

La Junta has a water system capable of serving all residents and development. [

Policy CSFB-4.1 Reliable Supply of Water

La Junta should maintain its supply of water and secure additional water rights as needed.

Policy CSFB-4.2 Annual Water Supply and Demand Analysis

La Junta should conduct a yearly analysis of projected water supply and demand to ensure the city maintains a balance between supply and demand.

Policy CSFB-4.3 Achieve Water Conservation Plan Goals

La Junta should continue to work towards achieving the goals set in the 2015 Water Conservation Plan.

Policy CSFB-4.4 Maintain Water Facilities

The City should maintain its water lines and facilities in an effort to minimize leaks and wasted water.

Policy CSFB-4.5 Potable Water Quality

The City should provide high quality potable water to residents and businesses that meet or exceed federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Colorado regulations.

Policy CSFB-4.6 Adequate Water Supply for New Development

The City should require the availability of an adequate water supply to be demonstrated prior to approval of new development.

Policy CSFB-4.7 Water Saving and Conservation Standards

Require new development and City facilities to use the best available technologies (BAT) for water conservation in an effort to reduce overall water usage. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Water efficient fixtures and appliances,
- Water efficient landscape designs including landscaped public spaces, and
- Water efficient processes and equipment.



Goal CSFB-5 La Junta has a wastewater system capable of serving all residents and development.

Policy CSFB-5.1 Provisions of Wastewater Services
The City should continue to provide sanitary sewer services in a manner that does not endanger the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Policy CSFB-5.2 Reuse of Treated Water
The City should research viable options for the reuse of treated wastewater with priority to recreational, industrial users; landscaping along roadways; and wetland mitigation areas.

Policy CSFB-5.3 Land Uses near Wastewater Treatment Plant
The Wastewater Treatment Plant should be protected by promoting land uses adjacent to the facility, incorporating appropriate buffers and setbacks as needed. [New Policy]

Goal CSFB-6 There is adequate provision and sizing of storm drainage facilities to accommodate existing and planned development.

Policy CSFB-6.1 Stormwater Planning
The City should coordinate stormwater drainage and flood management with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and any appropriate Colorado and local agencies.

Policy CSFB-6.2 Stormwater Management Plan
La Junta should develop, implement, and update a stormwater management plan.

Policy CSFB-6.3 Stormwater Detention Basins
Stormwater detention basins should be designed to ensure public safety, be visually unobtrusive, and provide recreational use where feasible.

Policy CSFB-6.4 Development in 100-year Floodplain
Development, major fill, or structural improvements (except for flood control purposes) should be discouraged within the 100-year floodplain as regulated by FEMA.

Goal CSFB-7 La Junta supports the education system and school facilities present in the community.

Policy CSFB-7.1 Meet with East Otero R-1 School District
 La Junta should meet periodically with the East Otero R-1 School District to identify new school facility needs.

Policy CSFB-7.2 Support Otero Junior College
 La Junta should support Otero Junior College in expanding the programs offered to students, including technology training, vocational training, intelligence and transportation security administration (TSA) training, and geographic information systems (GIS) training.

Policy CSFB-7.3 Shared Use of Schools
 The City should work with the school committee and public school leadership to promote the shared use of school facilities and services.

Goal CSFB-8 La Junta has effective and efficient fire protection, emergency medical response, and law enforcement services.

Policy CSFB-8.1 Two-Way Communication
 La Junta should encourage friendly, regular, two-way communication between public safety personnel and the residents of the city.

Policy CSFB-8.2 Development Applications
 The City should review new development applications to assess potential impacts to existing fire, police, and emergency response protection services and the need for additional and expanded services.

Policy CSFB-8.3 Fire Hazard Education
 The City should continue to promote public awareness and prevention of fire hazards through fire protection programs, especially those aimed for elementary age students.

Policy CSFB-8.4 Response Times
 Continue to provide timely response times for emergency calls for service as specified by each provider.



Policy CSFB-8.5 Staffing and Training Opportunities

The La Junta Fire and Police Departments should continue adequate staffing and training opportunities to assure desired levels of fire and police protection.

Policy CSFB-8.6 Police Protection Education

The City should publicize police protection services throughout the education system, with an emphasis of the elementary school level.

Goal CSFB-9

Utility services in La Junta are capable of serving all residents and development.

Policy CSFB-9.1 La Junta Light & Power

The City should determine the necessity of maintaining the La Junta Light & Power facility.

Policy CSFB-9.2 Gas and Electric Service

La Junta should coordinate with gas and electricity providers in planning extension of gas and electrical facilities to serve existing and new development.

Policy CSFB-9.3 Coordinate with Utility Providers

New development should coordinate with utility providers to assure quality services to residents and businesses.

Goal CSFB-10

La Junta is conscious of municipal energy use and supports energy efficient practices

Policy CSFB-10.1 Shade Tree Planting

The City will encourage the planting of shade trees within residential lots.

Policy CSFB-10.2 Community Solar Garden

The City should support the use of renewable energy in La Junta, including a community solar garden.

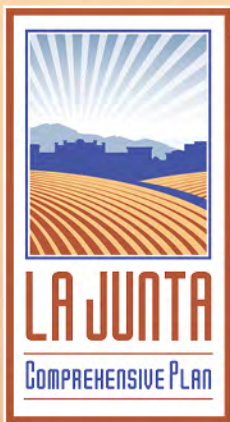
Policy CSFB-10.3 Energy Saving Retrofits

Where appropriate, municipal buildings should be retrofitted with solar energy generating systems or other renewable energy generating systems.

Policy CSFB-10.4 Promote Energy Conservation Awareness

The City should coordinate with local utility providers to provide public education energy conservation programs.

Please see the next page.



7. Natural Resources, Recreation, and Tourism

As a Colorado community, La Junta is surrounded by a wealth of natural beauty and recreational amenities. Within the city borders, La Junta has an expansive collection of parks and open space areas that are well-loved residents and provide the opportunity to recreate outdoors. This chapter will provide an overview of the natural environment and recreational amenities available to La Junta and how the City can best leverage these resources to influence tourism in the community.

Introduction

La Junta is blessed to be situated within some of the nation's most remarkable natural scenery and near thousands of acres of accessible, wild land. It is not a stretch to say that the natural beauty surrounding the City of La Junta is one of the main reasons people choose to establish businesses and / or families in the city. These natural resources are inexplicably tied to both the Arkansas Valley and Arkansas River that runs along the northern edge of the city.

This chapter examines the natural characteristics that exist near La Junta, the various outdoor recreational opportunities available to residents, and present and future tourism and heritage tourism in the city.

Existing Natural Characteristics

Location

The City of La Junta is located in southeastern Colorado situated along the Arkansas River, the second largest tributary in the Mississippi Missouri system. The river runs through the eastern portion of Colorado and continues into the states of Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. The area of the Arkansas River near La Junta is an ideal location for recreational activities like fishing.

Geology and Topography

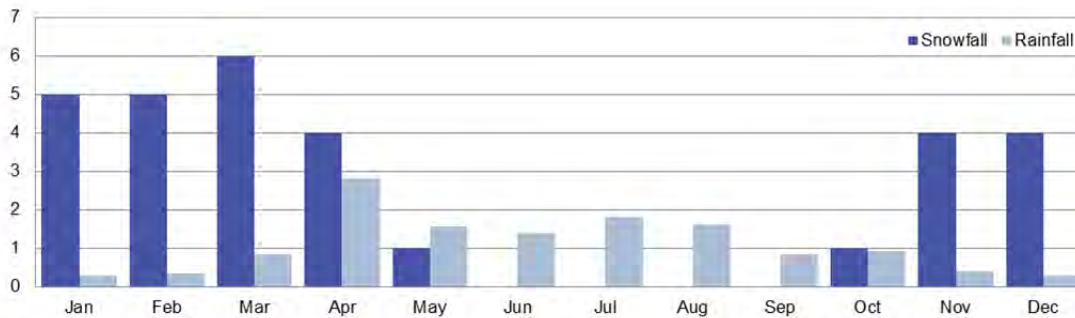
La Junta is at the crossroads of a unique combination of geological terrains and topographies. The Wet Mountains, a subset of the Sangre de Cristo Range, are to the west, the Spanish Peaks are to the south, and Pikes Peak to the north. The city itself is surrounded by large swaths of plains and lowlands. La Junta is located in the Southwestern Tablelands ecoregion consisting of sub-humid grassland and semiarid range land, considered to be high plains terrain.

Climate and Rainfall

La Junta is in an area of the state that experiences four distinct seasons throughout the year. The spring season brings the most rainfall to city. La Junta is considered to be in the hottest portion of Colorado, with the city experiencing numerous days above 100 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months. The fall and winter seasons bring low temperatures which can result in rainy days and multiple inches snow. On average, the city receives 11.5 inches of rainfall and 30 inches of snow per year. Figure 7-1 highlights the monthly averages of both snow and rainfall.



Figure 7-1. La Junta Average Snowfall and Rainfall in Inches



Source: U.S. Climate Data

Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation is essential for a well-balanced and healthy community. Studies have shown that even small amounts of outdoor recreation on a weekly basis can offer numerous health, social, intellectual, and emotional benefits ranging from reduced risks of developing chronic diseases to an increase in positive moods and reductions in stress. La Junta is fortunate to be surrounded by an abundance of outdoor recreational opportunities that are present in the region. This section will outline the various natural attractions in the region surrounding La Junta as well as the City-operated parks within La Junta.

Natural Attractions

La Junta and its citizens are among the many that benefit from and enjoy the surrounding natural environment. Natural attractions like the Arkansas River, Comanche National Grassland, Vogel Canyon, and others serve as an economic opportunity, bringing tourism to the city and attracting new jobs and businesses to the region.

Comanche National Grassland

The Comanche National Grassland consists of 443,784 acres of range land and is spread between Baca, Las Animas, and Otero Counties. The Grassland was created in 1960 when the U.S. government placed the lands recovered from the dust bowl under the control of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service. Ancient American Indian petroglyphs were found at Comanche National Grassland dating back potentially 8,000 years ago. Activities at the Comanche National Grassland today include bicycling, camping, fishing, hiking, horse riding, hunting, picnicking, scenic driving, and more.

Vogel Canyon

Vogel Canyon is a sandstone canyon 13 miles south of La Junta and within the Comanche National Grassland that consists of pinon pine trees and shortgrass prairie lands. The canyon was originally carved out by a tributary of the Purgatoire River. On top of forming the canyon, the flow of the tributary also led to the formation of three permanent springs

located at the base of the canyon. The sandstone walls of the Vogel Canyon also contain rock art from Native Americans that are estimated to have been carved in during the second century.

The Vogel Canyon area has four trails open to the public suitable for hiking, biking or horseback riding. The four trails are the Overlook Trail, Canyon Trail, Mesa Trail, and Prairie Trail. They range between one and three miles and offer the chance to see tremendous views of the canyon, Native American rock art, historic ruins of old settlements, rock corral, and natural springs.

Picketwire Canyonlands

The Picketwire Canyonlands, located south of Vogel Canyon and within the Comanche National Grassland, are home to the largest set of dinosaur tracks in the country. In the prehistoric era, the Canyonlands were a part of a large, shallow lake that Brontosaurus and Allosaurus inhabited. These dinosaurs left over 1,300 footprints in the canyon, now set in stone. Native American rock art dating back 375 to 4500 years can also be found at the Canyonlands.

The Withers Canyon Trailhead is the only access point for the Canyonlands, which is suitable for hiking, biking, and horseback riding. The trail encompasses over eight miles one-way and offers the opportunity to see the dinosaur tracks, the historic Dolores Mission and Cemetery built in the 19th century by Mexican pioneers, and Rourke Ranch, a former cattle ranch that was established in 1871.

Santa Fe Trail

Part of La Junta's history is the Santa Fe Trail. The city was initially established as a critical junction of the Santa Fe Trail which turns southwest and a road leading northwest to the City of Pueblo. Locations along the Santa Fe Trail include a hiking trail, nature trail, Timpas Picnic Area, and the Sierra Vista Overlook. The Overlook offers views of the Wet Mountain Range to the northwest, the Spanish Peaks to the southwest, and the surrounding prairielands, highlighting the State's varying landscapes.

Holbrook Reservoir State Wildlife Area

Holbrook Reservoir State Wildlife Area (SWA) is located in Otero County approximately 9 miles northwest of La Junta. The reservoir is maintained by the Colorado Division of Wildlife and includes the Holbrook Lake and surrounding hunting grounds, totaling 717 acres. The Holbrook Reservoir SWA offers opportunities to hunt, fish, sail, and camp.



City Parks / Trails

It is the desire of the City of La Junta to provide significant recreational opportunities within the community for the residents of La Junta and the region as a whole. The types of recreation can vary between active recreation (team sports, biking, etc.) and passive recreation (walking, picnicking, wildlife viewing, etc.). To help fulfill the recreational needs of the community, the City of La Junta has nine different parks that offer both active and passive recreational opportunities (see Table 7-1 for the names and amenities at each park). In addition to the public parks listed in Table 7-1, the three La Junta public schools and Otero Junior College (OJC) all have recreational facilities on their property, including playground equipment, football fields, and running tracks. Residents of La Junta have vocalized their support and appreciation for City-operated parks, stating that even though La Junta is a small community, the city has some of the best parks around.

Source: "A Letter to La Junta Parks & Rec." I Love La Junta. N.p., 15 Aug. 2016. Web. 13 Oct. 2016

Table 7-1. City of La Junta Parks

Park	Trails	Baseball/ Softball Field	Basketball Court	Tennis Court	Football Field	Picnic Shelter	Swimming Pool/ Waterslide	Other
City Park	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
Potter Park		✓						
22nd Street Ball Park		✓						
Veterans Field		✓			✓			
Tippy Martinez Ball Park		✓						
Wipeout Pool & Waterslide						✓	✓	✓
Edison Park						✓		✓
College Overlook Park			✓	✓		✓		✓
C.L. Red Crane Tot Park								✓
Rodeo Grounds								✓
La Junta Municipal Golf Course								✓

Source: City of La Junta

La Junta's parks and trails can be seen on Figure 7-2. The trails shown on Figure 7-2 are proposed trails and are still in the planning phase. They are discussed on the following pages.

City Park

Future projects at City Park include the addition of an inner trail within the park and renovations to the on-site public restrooms.

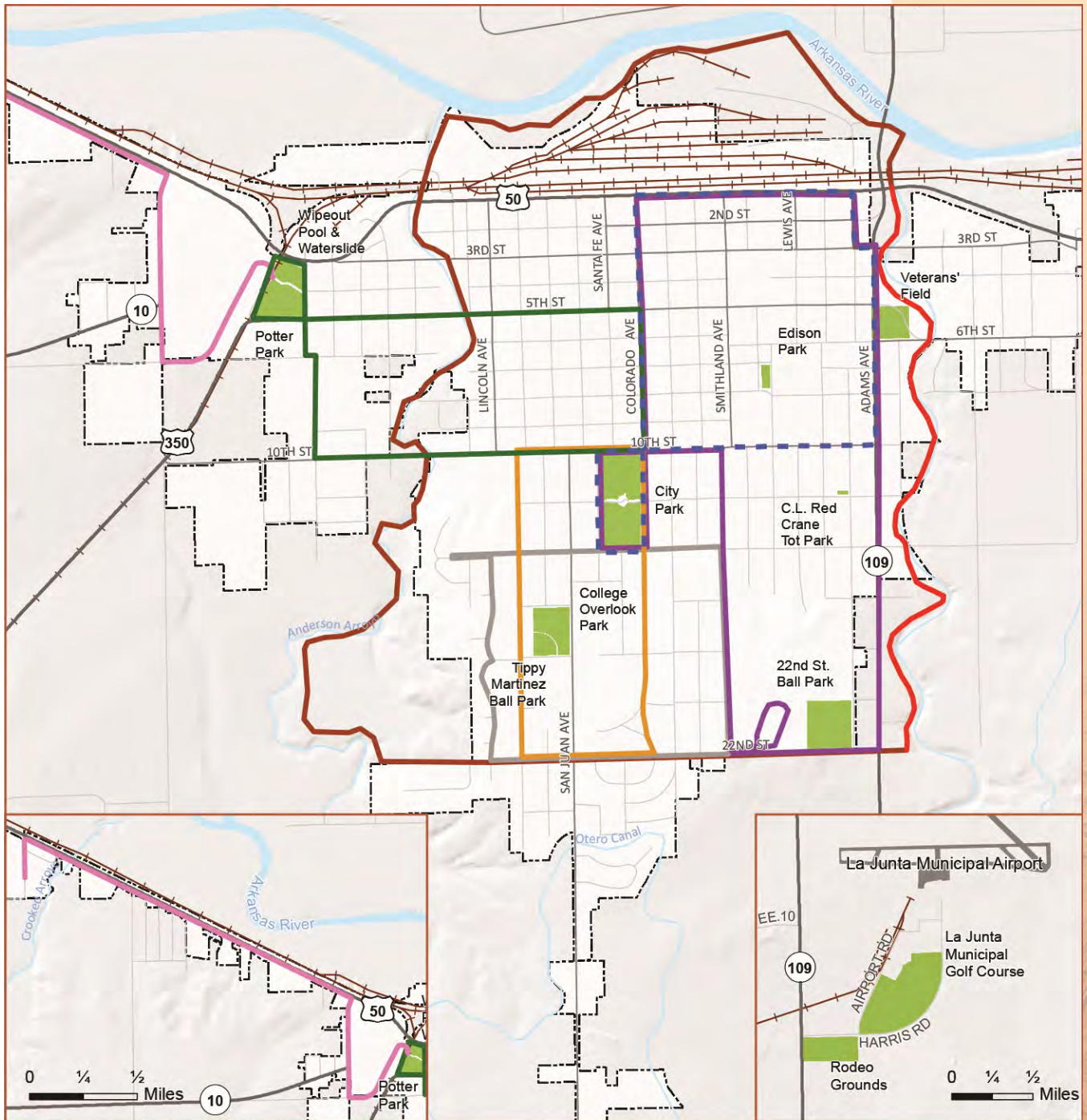
City Park is La Junta's most well-known park and is the only park in the city that has been developed in under the guidance of a Master Plan. It is located in the heart of La Junta at 10th Street and Colorado Avenue. The 16.5 acres of land for the park was originally purchased by the city in 1905. The land however had an arroyo running through it and had poor drainage that made the park susceptible to flooding. This ultimately led to the park being largely unused for many years. City Park was reborn in the late 1930's when New Deal projects carried out by the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA) revitalized the park. The CWA, a temporary work-relief program, began working in the park on November 27, 1933, focusing on improving the park's drainage system. The work on City Park was completed in the spring of 1934.

Today the park has many activities that are used by all ages including walking, jogging and biking trails, playground equipment, three picnic shelters, a fishing pond for children, basketball courts, tennis courts, a renowned skate park, a bandstand, horseshoe pits, and a large grassy open space. The stone wall that was built by the WPA was restored in 2013 and the outside walking trail (6/10th of a mile around the park) has just been completed with a new concrete surface.

Potter Park

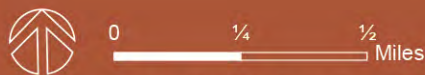
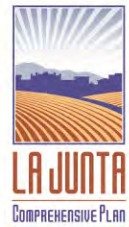
Potter Park was donated to the City of La Junta in the 1930s by an early settler of the city and the namesake of the park, Hezekial W. Potter. The Park is located in the northwest corner of the city at 5th and Grant Street. Potter Park used to host to the La Junta Fourth-of-July fireworks displays, the Native American Koshare Dances, the Kids Rodeos, and the La Junta Music at the Junction event, but today the park supports the La Junta Little League. Potter Park has two baseball fields, one for adults and one for children 10 years and under, and has bleachers and tables for the convenience of spectators.

7. Natural Resources, Recreation and Tourism



Parks and Trails

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Park | King Trail East | City of La Junta | Water Body |
| Anderson Trail West-Anderson | Potter Trail | Highway / Freeway | Stream / Canal |
| Brickyard Trail | Santa Fe Junction Trail | Major Roads | |
| Campus Trail | Tigers Trail | Local Roads | |
| Carson Trail | Westside Trail | Railroad | |



Source: City of La Junta, 2016. Matrix Design Group, 2017.

Figure 7-2
Parks and Recreation

All of the pools and waterslides at the Wipeout Pool & Waterslide facility are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

22nd Street Ball Park

The 22nd Street Ball Park is located in the southern portion of the city at 22nd Street and Bradish Avenue. The park is home to a baseball field utilized by both adults and youths. Baseball tournaments have been held at the 22nd Street Ball Park including a recent tournament sponsored by La Junta company Lewis Bolt & Nut held on Memorial Day of 2016.

Veterans' Field

Veterans' Field is located southeast of Downtown La Junta at 6th Street and Adams Avenue. The field has facilities for youth and adult baseball and softball, as well as for youth flag football. In 2015, the 10th Annual Hospice Softball Tournament was held at Veterans' Field drawing together teams from across the Arkansas Valley and the cities of Denver and Pueblo. The tournament is an effort to support and raise money for the Arkansas Valley Hospice located in La Junta.

Tippy Martinez Ball Park

Tippy Martinez Ball Park is located at 18th street and Carson Avenue. The ball park is named after a former Major League Baseball player, Tippy Martinez, who was born in La Junta. Tippy Martinez Ball Park is regularly used and supports youth baseball and is the home field for the La Junta High School and OJC women's softball teams.

Wipeout Pool & Waterslide

The site where the Wipeout Pool & Waterslide is located used to be the location where the Kids Rodeo was held, immediately north of Potter Park in northwest La Junta. When the Kids Rodeo moved locations in the 1950s, the waterpark was built in its place. The facilities at the waterpark include two waterslides, a lap pool, and a kids wading pool. The two slides total 184 feet in length and the waterpark is known as "the longest, wettest ride in southeastern Colorado". Other amenities at the waterpark include a picnic shelter, an area to play horseshoes, and a concessions stand.

Edison Park

Edison Park is a small park containing less than one acre of land located at 8th Street and Edison Avenue. The park has a picnic shelter and an open grassy field. Edison Park is an example of a park that supports passive recreational activities.

College Overlook Park

College Overlook Park is located in the southern La Junta on the same site as Tippy Martinez Ball Park. The park has a wealth of amenities including picnic shelters, three tennis courts, basketball courts, public restrooms, and playground equipment. The park is named for its close proximity to OJC, located just across the street on San Juan Avenue. College Overlook Park engages all members of the community with a blend of both passive and active recreational opportunities.



C.L. Red Crane Tot Park

C.L. Crane Tot Park is a small neighborhood park located at 12th Street and Bradish Avenue. The park was originally dedicated in November of 1978 in honor of C.L. "Red" Crane, a La Junta resident who originally cleared the area for the park and maintained it. The park contains less than one-quarter acre of land and is equipped with playground equipment and benches. The park underwent renovations in 2016 with the addition of new and updated playground equipment that replaced much of the original equipment from 1978. The City held an informal visioning workshop in June of 2015 to garner input from the public on what type of equipment they would like to see added to the park. As a part of the visioning workshop, new blue and orange playground equipment was installed in June of 2016. The original swing set was able to be salvaged and remains at the park. The renovations to C.L. Red Crane Tot Park were funded in part by a \$23,275 grant from Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO). Additionally, a new gazebo is going to be constructed at the park in 2017 and will provide families a shaded area to sit.

Source: http://www.goco.org/sites/default/files/Otero_0.pdf

Although small, the C.L. Red Crane Tot Park provides outdoor recreational opportunities for the children in the nearby neighborhoods and is a piece of La Junta history.

Rodeo Grounds

The La Junta Rodeo Grounds are located at the Industrial Park off Highway 109 and Harris Road. The grounds are home to the La Junta Kids Rodeo and Race Meet, a rodeo oriented around youth from ages 6 through 17. The rodeo has a rich history in La Junta dating back to 1938, when the event was first held. The La Junta Kids Rodeo and Race Meet is held once a year over a three day period and draws contestants and spectators from Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas, and New Mexico. From 1938 through 1954, the rodeo was held at Potter Park (Wipeout Pool & Waterslide has since been built in its place). The location of the event was moved to the La Junta Industrial park in 1955 and has been held there ever since.

Trails

La Junta has plans to develop an expansive network of connecting trails throughout the city. As of 2016, there are plans to build five trails totaling 22 miles that will connect key points in the city including downtown, City Park, and OJC. These trails have been developed as part of a Trails Plan and are more fully discussed in Chapter 2, Planning Framework.

Tourism and Heritage Tourism

Tourism in the State of Colorado is a multi-billion dollar industry. It is estimated that in 2015 the State earned over \$17 billion in tourism dollars. This consists of individuals traveling to Colorado from out-of-state as well as Colorado residents traveling within the state. It is

In 2016, the La Junta Kids Rodeo and Meet was held for the 79th time, making it one of the longest running events in the region.

estimated that in 2015 the Southeast District of Colorado (of which includes La Junta) earned approximately \$150.5 million and Otero County earned \$18.2 million in tourism dollars.

Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Colorado Tourism Office, Office of Economic Development and International Trade

Historic Preservation

City Historic Preservation Board

The City has a Historic Preservation Board responsible for the protection and preservation of the historic and cultural heritage of the city. The board provides for the designation of historic buildings, landmarks, sites, and districts. The La Junta Planning Commission serves as the members of the Historic Preservation Board and the board is in the process of becoming a Certified Local Government (CLG). Upon certification as a CLG, the board will be able to apply for competitive grants to fund preservation efforts within the city.

Being a city that dates back to the 19th century, La Junta has a number of historic properties that may warrant preservation including the US Post Office, Dr. Frank Finney House, Eugene Rourke House, and others.

Otero County Historic Preservation Advisory Board

The Otero County Historic Preservation Advisory Board (OCHPAB) was established in 2004 to assist municipalities / unincorporated areas of the county with preservation efforts and activities. The Preservation Board provides information concerning preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and reuse of historic resources; and assists with preservation projects, including technical assistance and suggestions of possible funding sources. As of 2017, La Junta has not signed an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with OCHPAB and does not work with the board on any preservation activities. Historic resources can often times be tourist attractions that draw large quantities of visitors.

Tourist Attractions

The following is a description of the attractions around La Junta that draw in tourists throughout the year. Many of the natural attractions and parks previously mentioned attract tourists, but this list is comprised of primarily historical and cultural attractions that draw tourists to the region.

Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

Bent's Old Fort is located five miles northeast of La Junta on the Santa Fe Trail. The Fort was historically the last United States trading post before crossing the Arkansas River and entering Mexico. The original fort was constructed in 1833, but was later destroyed in the 1850's. Bent's Old Fort was reconstructed in the 1970s based on historical excavations, paintings, and sketches of the original building and is now on the U.S. National Register of



Historic Places, and is considered a U.S. National Historic Landmark and U.S. National Historic Site. Numerous events are held at Bent's Old Fort throughout the year that offer visitors a chance to experience what life was like for traders at the fort during the 1800s.

Koshare Indian Museum

The Koshare Indian Museum (also known as the Koshare Indian Kiva or "The Kiva") is a museum owned by Otero Junior College that is home to a collection of Native American art and artifacts. The Kiva was built in 1949 by a La Junta Boy Scout troop called the Koshare Indian Dancers and is on the Colorado Register of Historic Properties. The troop gained an appreciation for Native American and Southwestern art and started collecting authentic art pieces and artifacts, which are housed in the Kiva. The Koshare Indian Dancers also perform authentic representations of Native American dance, which are both historically and culturally accurate. One of the rooms in the museum is home to the largest self-supported log roof in the world, containing 620 logs covering a span of 60 feet. The room was designed in such a way that the roof requires no support beams.

Otero Museum

The Otero Museum is owned and operated by the Otero Museum Association. The museum has exhibits that show historical artifacts dating as far back as 1875 and give insight into how residents of the area lived and worked. Some of the main exhibits at the museum cover railroads, the military, and agriculture; three main areas that have impacted the region's economy throughout its history. In total, the Otero Museum owns, maintains, and operates seven different historic buildings that offer tours or have exhibits, including the Sciumbato Grocery Store, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Birdwatching

Thousands of birdwatchers are drawn to the eastern plains surrounding La Junta each year to catch a glimpse of the birds that make their home in the region. Nearly 400 different bird species can be found in southeast Colorado; more bird species can be seen here than in any other region in the country. Three prominent birding trails near La Junta offer opportunities to experience the outdoors and see the variety of avian species throughout the region. These trails are the Pronghorn Trail (northwest of La Junta), Two Buttes Trail (east of La Junta), and Prairie Canyons Trail (south of La Junta).

Farmer's Markets

The Arkansas Valley has an abundance of agricultural lands, and the area is rich with fresh produce and farmer's markets. Every summer, visitors come to La Junta and other communities in the Arkansas Valley to buy fresh produce, including the renowned Rocky Ford melons, which are grown in the area. There are two farmer's markets in La Junta, Lusk's Farm Market and VanHook's Fruit and Vegetables. Both of these markets sell an assortment of produce including corn, peppers, onions, plums, peaches, and Rocky Ford watermelon, honeydew, and cantaloupe.

Goals and Policies

Goal NRRT-1

Establish and maintain a level of service for parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces commensurate to national standards.

Policy NRRT-1.1 Park Classification

La Junta’s park system will include park facilities under the following classifications.

a. Pocket Parks

Pocket parks are small-scale parks provided by the developer of a subdivision or employment center and maintained by the development. Pocket parks are designed to serve a specific, limited population, and are typically developed for a unique or single purpose, such as a recreation facility for a neighborhood, a recreation or eating location for employment uses, or to preserve an isolated open space resource such as a small clustering of trees.

Examples of amenities included within pocket parks are turf areas, play areas, picnic tables and shelters, and other amenities that are appropriate for the population they serve.

Pocket parks should be:

- Between ¼ acre and two acres in size;
- Located centrally in the interior of neighborhoods or employment areas served;
- Within ¼ mile of population to be served;
- Adjacent on at least one side by a public or private street to provide easy public access, visual surveillance, and parking;
- Usable space and not use of an un-developable “remainder” or odd-shaped parcel; and
- Designed to consider opportunities for preserving natural amenities

b. Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park can be generally defined as a landscaped park designed for informal recreation for the residential areas typically within ½ mile of the facility. Typical amenities found in these parks include multi-use turf areas, hard courts and playground equipment, picnic tables, and shelters.



Neighborhood parks fall into two categories: those located adjacent to school sites and those not located adjacent to school sites. In general, facilities located adjacent to school sites are larger and provide more active facilities (such as small team sport facilities), while those located away from school sites are smaller.

Neighborhood parks should be:

- Sized to fit the neighborhoods served, with parks adjacent to schools being larger (typically 6 to 8 acres) and provide more active facilities, such as team sport fields, and be developed as joint use facilities, and parks not adjacent to schools providing a minimum 5 acres of recreation area;
- Located centrally within or adjacent to neighborhood(s) served;
- Located with frontage on a collector street when possible, especially when located adjacent to schools sites;
- Accessible from at least two public roadways as to provide easy public access, visual surveillance, and parking;
- Accessible from the surrounding neighborhoods using sidewalks and/or trails;
- Sited to avoid separation of the park and the residential areas it serves by major arterial or other barriers; and
- Limited in activities that may generate traffic from outside the neighborhood.

c. Community Parks

Community parks are designed to accommodate a wider variety and higher intensity of recreational uses than neighborhood parks. Community parks are larger than neighborhood parks and are intended to serve several neighborhoods. Typical community park amenities may include large children's play areas, group picnic facilities, turf areas for unsupervised free play, sport fields for organized sports, community buildings, off-street parking and restrooms. Community parks may also include sport courts, skateboard facilities, outdoor concert areas or amphitheater and other special features. Community parks may be located adjacent to school facilities, generally intermediate or high schools. A community park may function as a neighborhood park for the area in which it is located.

Community parks should be:

- A minimum of 30 acres in size;
- Serve an area within 1 to 1 ½ miles of the park;
- Located with frontage on a major collector or arterial roadway;
- Located adjacent to an intermediate or high school, when possible;
- Designed so that larger, more active facilities are located away from any adjacent residential neighborhoods;
- Designed to provide off-street parking;
- Sized and designed to accommodate active sports fields or recreational facilities, as needed; and
- Integrated into the City’s trail system.

d. School Recreation Areas

School recreation areas are facilities that are sited adjacent to school land and may be jointly developed. The recreation facilities are shared by the City and school district, subject to use restrictions defined in specific joint-use agreements. Typical amenities at school recreation areas may include turf ball fields for organized sports, hard court surfaces, sports courts, playground equipment, and after school care facilities.

Policy NRRT-1.2 Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan

La Junta should develop a Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan to provide a framework for the City’s parks, trails, and open space relative to its natural resources.

Policy NRRT-1.3 Variety of Facilities

The City’s parks and recreation facilities should provide a range of active and passive recreational opportunities to meet the needs of the population.

Policy NRRT-1.4 Open Space and Facility Maintenance

The City should continue an aggressive program of open space and facility maintenance, repair, and replacement.



Policy NRRT-1.5 Enhance Existing Parks

La Junta should enhance existing parks with updated, well-maintained equipment and grounds.

Policy NRRT-1.6 Santa Fe Plaza

The City should add a splash pad and / or pool to Santa Fe Plaza.

Policy NRRT-1.7 Recreation Planning Program

Maintain an ongoing recreation planning program that is responsive to trends and needs for changes and modifications of recreational offerings.

Policy NRRT-1.8 Pocket Parks in the Industrial Park

Add communal picnic and shade areas in the form of pocket parks for use by all businesses at the Airport Industrial Park.

Policy NRRT-1.9 Public Activities

The City should encourage public activities that engage various neighborhoods, age groups, cultures, and incomes.

Goal NRRT-2

The City should plan for and develop a high quality trail network.

Policy NRRT-2.1 Trails System

The City should implement the Trails Plan, creating a trail system that provides linkages to key locations throughout the city. Trails should connect parks and recreational facilities with a focus on off-street trails and open space corridors where feasible.

Policy NRRT-2.2 Link to Regional Trails

La Junta should fund and prioritize city trail linkages to regional trail systems.

Goal NRRT-3

Conserve natural resources and preserve areas of special cultural interest.

Policy NRRT-3.1 Historic and Archaeological Sites

Historic and archaeological sites should be preserved for the benefit of future generations.

Policy NRRT-3.2 Scenic Areas

Scenic areas, such as woodlands, bluffs, and overlooks should be preserved.

Policy NRRT-3.3 Natural Resources

Natural resources should be managed as an essential asset of the community, contributing to La Junta’s economy, health, and well-being.

Policy NRRT-3.4 Grant Writer

La Junta should consider hiring a full-time grant writer to support efforts to fund tourism and recreation priorities. [New Policy]

Goal NRRT-4

Promote, preserve, and develop historical, cultural, and recreational facilities that support tourism.

Policy NRRT-4.1 La Junta’s Unique History

The City should leverage La Junta’s unique history and heritage to promote tourism within the city. Cultural Resource Management Plan

La Junta should consider developing a cultural resource management plan to identify / preserve the historic and cultural resources of the city.

Policy NRRT-4.2 Otero County Historic Preservation Advisory Board

La Junta should pursue becoming a CLG. If not capable, the City should maintain an intergovernmental agreement with Otero County to provide this service.

Policy NRRT-4.3 Preserve and Enhance Community Assets

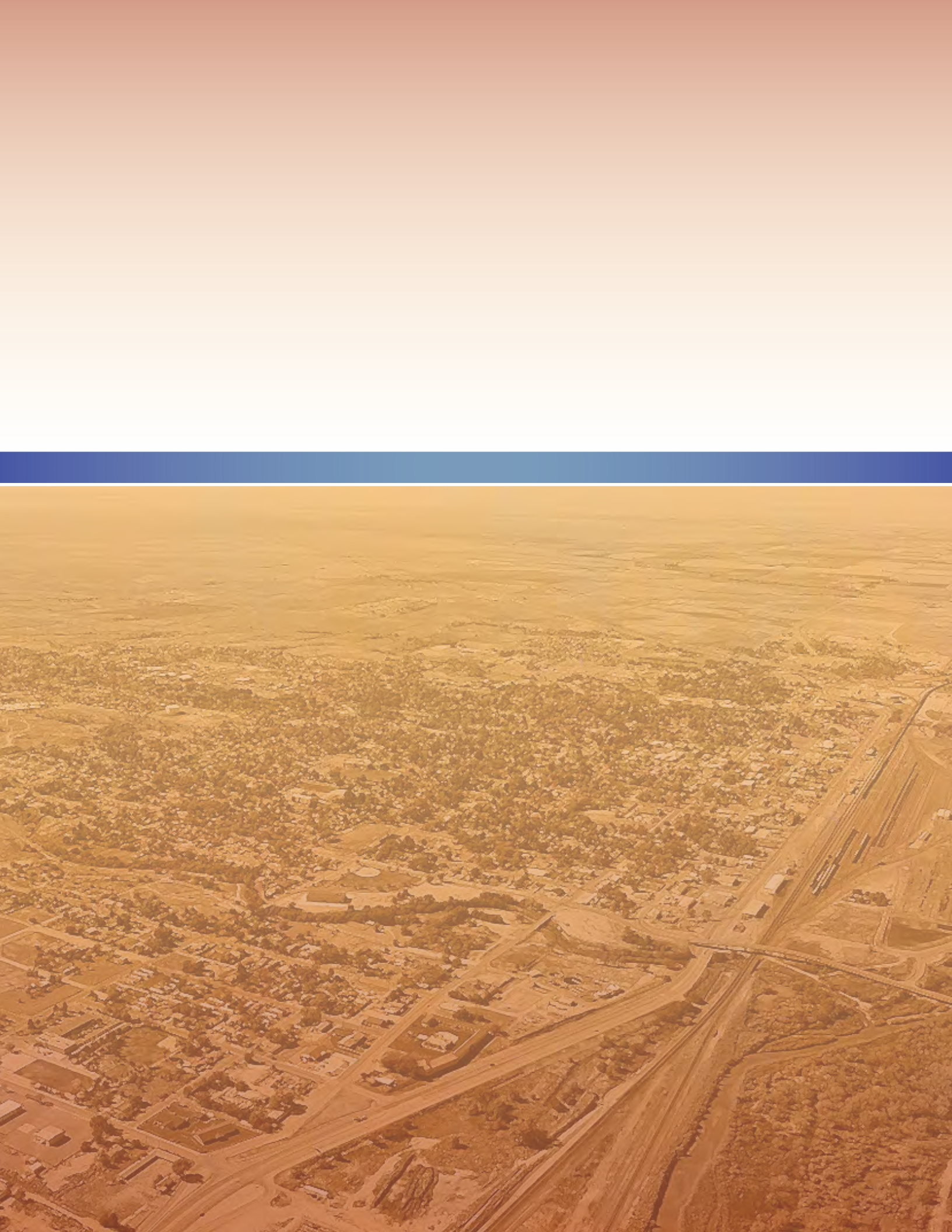
The City should fund efforts to preserve and enhance Bent’s Old Fort, Koshare Indian Museum, Otero Museum, and Local Farmer’s Markets.

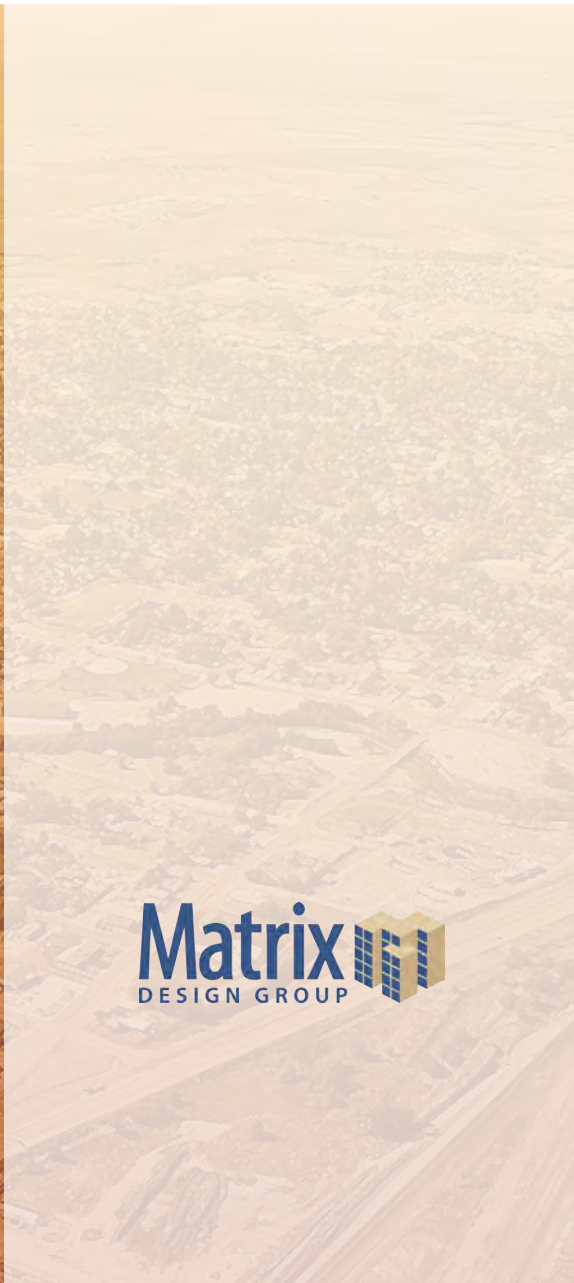
Policy NRRT-4.4 U.S. Forest Service / Colorado Division of Wildlife

La Junta should work with the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado Division of Wildlife to support the natural attractions of the region.

Policy NRRT-4.5 Colorado’s Cultural, Heritage, and Agritourism Mentor Program

La Junta should join Colorado’s Cultural, Heritage, and Agritourism Mentor Program (CHAMP) to improve and expand tourism in La Junta.





Matrix 
DESIGN GROUP