

CATRON COUNTY CIP/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



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ADOPTED
MARCH 21, 2007

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CATRON COUNTY

RESERVE, NEW MEXICO 87830

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BILL AYMAR
COUNTY MANAGER

RESOLUTION NO. 041-2007

ADOPTION OF THE CATRON COUNTY CIP/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Catron County Capital Improvement Plan/Comprehensive Plan has been developed with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the county which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development; and,

WHEREAS, under New Mexico case law, Dugger v. City of Santa Fe, 114 N.M. 47, 834 P.2d 424 (Ct. App. 1992), "the New Mexico Legislature intended any master plan adopted by a municipality to be advisory in nature"; and,

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan is dependent on available funding and resources and the authority of elected and appointed officials of the County of Catron; and,

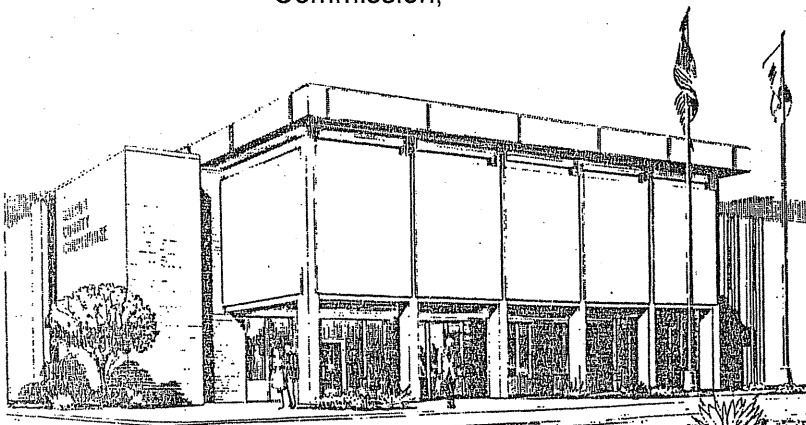
WHEREAS, due to the long-range nature of master plans, the Catron County Commission may amend, extend or add to the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan or carry any part of subject matter into greater detail; and,

WHEREAS, the Catron County staff have based the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan on careful and comprehensive studies of existing conditions, future growth of Catron County, and citizen input from area residents; and,

WHEREAS, The Catron County staff has recommended to the County Commission that the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan be adopted to include all sections of said plan, together with the accompanying maps, charts, descriptive and explanatory matter; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of the Catron County Commission meeting in regular session, and after having held public meetings on the matter,

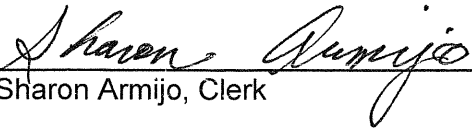
1. That the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan recommended for approval by the County of Catron is hereby approved and adopted by the Catron County Commission;



2. That a copy of the Catron County CIP/Comprehensive Plan shall be available for inspection at the Catron County Clerk's Office during normal and regular business hours at 100 Main Street, Reserve, New Mexico 87830.

ADOPTED in regular session at Reserve, Catron County, New Mexico this 21st day of March, 2007.

ATTEST:


Sharon Armijo, Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CATRON COUNTY, NEW MEXICO


Ed Wehrheim, Chairman


Allan Lambert, Member


Hugh B. McKeen, Member

Catron County Comprehensive/Capital Improvement Plan

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Catron County Comprehensive/ Capital Improvement Plan

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Background

This Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvement Plan (the Plan) identifies some of the policies that implement County residents' visions for Catron County over the course of the next five to twenty years. The Plan addresses and responds to several key issues that impact the County including those encompassed in the following planning areas:

- Land Use (including interface with public lands)
- Water
- Infrastructure and Transportation
- Housing
- Public Safety (including the CWPP)
- Economic Development

For each of these elements, the Plan describes existing conditions and issues, identifies some of the desires of County residents, and provides goals/objectives/strategies designed to bring about the desired outcome of County residents.

a. Purpose

The primary purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to:

- Protect the desired way of life, custom, and culture in the County as identified by its residents.
- Identify the capital projects necessary to serve areas where there is population concentration in the County.
- Work in tandem with previous and ongoing planning efforts underway in Catron County.
- Ensure that an adequate supply of water is available for use by existing residents, future development, and for use in fire fighting.
- Provide a mechanism for protecting private property rights while ensuring that land use planning decisions promote the health, safety, and welfare of the County.

- Help County leadership prioritize decisions relating to growth, development, and public spending.
- Protect the rights of County residents provided by federal and state acts and laws and guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the Constitutions of New Mexico and the United States.
- Maintain existing economic structures of mining, timber, ranching, and recreation while seeking new opportunities that are not in conflict with the existing economic structure.
- Recommend strategies for interface with federal and state agencies operating in Catron County and to act as a statement of will of County residents so as not to be negatively impacted by federal and state regulations.
- Address the nature, location, and quality of development that occurs in Catron County.
- Address how the County relates to Reserve, Pie Town, Quemado, Datil, Glenwood and the other communities located in Catron County.

The Plan is intended to respect the integrity of the bundle of rights and liberties that are bestowed upon all citizens of the United States of America by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of New Mexico and the United States. The Plan is also intended to be integrated with existing planning that has occurred previously within Catron County, notably the Catron County Comprehensive Land Plan, the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and the Catron County Subdivision Ordinance. These documents are still being used by the County for decision making. The intent of the Plan is not to override these documents, but rather to reaffirm critical strategies and policies contained in each of these documents.

Maintaining the custom and culture of the County is critical for community and economic stability. This stability is highly dependent on the right of Catron County citizens to pursue and protect their way of life and economic structures from outside forces such as federal and state regulations.

2. Key Issues

- Catron County physically is a very large County consisting of 6,898 square miles (approximately 4,395,500 acres). At the same time, the County has one of the smallest populations in New Mexico and a very small tax base.
- The County's large size puts a strain on County government's ability to provide services.
- Federal and state regulations regarding public lands need to respect the custom and culture of Catron County and are already constrained from adversely impacting the custom and culture.
- It is necessary to ensure the overall community and economic stability of the County's custom and culture by ensuring that federal and state statutes protect private property rights and the liberties guaranteed by the US Bill of Rights and Constitutions of New Mexico and the United States.
- Ensure that land is available to support future development given the limited amount of private land available.
- Identifying resources for the growth of small businesses within Catron County and seek new economic opportunities.
- Plan for key capital projects in all of the unincorporated communities located throughout the County.
- Integrate the Community Wildfire Protection Plan into the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations.
- Water is a critical need for all of New Mexico and particularly in Catron County where an adequate supply is needed for existing residents, future growth, and for hazard mitigation purposes such as fire fighting.
- Integrate the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations into the Catron County Land Plan.

3. Summary of Implementation Measures

The following tables summarize the Catron County Comprehensive Plan Implementation Actions per Comprehensive Plan elements. The tables

include both the specific strategy for implementing the goals and objectives, found within each planning element section. It also includes a time table for when each action should be carried out based upon the County's priorities. It is important to note that full implementation is dependent on available resources such as grants and funding as well as staff resources and available partnerships.

Land Use Implementation Measures	2007 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2026
Review Subdivision Standards for enforceability	X	X	X
Review fiscal data for new subdivisions	X	X	X
Prepare area plans for north, south and central County	X	X	
Develop "right to farm/ranch" covenants	X		
Develop and implement programs to reduce blight	X	X	X
Develop standards for wireless communications facilities	X		

Economic Development Implementation Measures	2007 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2026
Economic Vision Initiative	X		
Sponsor Job Training and Small Business Seminars	X		
Incentive Package Initiative	X	X	
Small Business Resource Initiative	X		
Rural Economic Development Through Tourism Initiative	X		
Develop Catron County Tourism Promotion Package		X	
Economic Development Web site		X	
Outdoor Recreation Initiative		X	X

Housing Implementation Measures	2007 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2026
Develop relationship with the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority	X		



Infrastructure/ICIP Implementation Measures (including Transportation and Water)	2007 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2026
Catron County 40-Year Water Plan	X		
Infrastructure Improvement Through ICIP Implementation	X	X	X
Wellhead Protection Program		X	
Road Maintenance Program	X	X	
Cell Tower Ordinance	X		
Cell Phone Service Marketing Program	X		

Community Services Implementation Measures	2007 - 2012	2013 - 2018	2019 - 2026
Localized Community Wildfire Protection Plans by Community	X		
Wildfire Urban Interface Area Fire Protection Treatment Initiative	X	X	X
Forest Health Community Outreach & Public Education Program	X	X	X
Establishment of Additional Fire Departments		X	X
Sheriff Substation in Quemado/Datil area		X	
Fire/Sheriff Training Initiative	X	X	X
Fire/Sheriff Equipment Upgrade	X	X	X

mately 16 residents in Reserve. Several e-mails were received regarding issues and follow up to the meetings.

b. Review of Existing Plans

The County recently adopted a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Because of the rural nature of the County, many of the issues that were investigated in the CWPP are pertinent to developing a comprehensive plan. The CWPP is current and was used as a valuable reference document in drafting this plan.

c. Approval Process

The final draft plan was made available to the County in electronic format to post on the County web site and/or make copies for distribution to interested members of the public. Legal notice was given in accordance with County standards and individuals who gave an e-mail address at the public meetings were also contacted. Public hearings by the County Commission were held on December 20, 2006 and March 21, 2007.

4. Summary of Planning Process

a. Public Input

The public input phase of the Catron County Comprehensive Plan consisted of three public meetings. Meetings were held in Quemado, Reserve, and Glenwood for the convenience of the residents and to solicit input from different areas of the County. After a short presentation, residents were asked to identify significant issues that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The meetings attracted over 20 County residents in both Quemado and Glenwood and approxi-

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B. COUNTY PROFILE

1. County Background

a. Location

Catron County is located in west-central New Mexico adjacent to the Arizona border. The County is the largest in New Mexico, but also one of the least populated, having a population density of only 0.5 persons per square mile. The County contains 6,898 square miles, a majority of which is owned by the Federal Government. The County includes the oldest declared wilderness area in the United States (1924, a portion of the Gila National Forest).

The nearest communities that provide higher level services to County residents are: Socorro to the east, Gallup and Grants to the north, Silver City to the south, and Springerville, Arizona to the west. The County is approximately the same distance to the major cities of Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Tuscon, Arizona.

The County does not have any interstate highways, railroads or significant commercial air passenger activity. U.S. Highway 60 traverses the County east-west from Socorro to the Arizona border, passing through the communities of Datil, Quemado, Pie Town, and Red Hill. From the northern County border, the main north-south route starts as State Route 36 and travels into Quemado. From Quemado State Route 32 continues south to Apache Creek, where State Route 12 becomes the main route. State Route 12 then continues southwest, past Reserve, to a juncture with U.S. Highway 180 that continues south to the southern County border, and eventually Silver City and Interstate 10.

The Continental Divide winds through the County and includes several peaks over 10,000 feet in elevation. The terrain varies throughout the County, but primarily consists of mountain ranges and high plateaus. Most of the streams in the County are ephemeral, except the Gila and San Francisco Rivers. The vegetation in the County also varies greatly from open grass lands to densely wooded conifer forests offering a wide range of wildlife

habitat, and recreational and commercial opportunities.

b. Relation to Reserve and other County Communities

Reserve is the only incorporated community in the County and serves as the County seat. Other communities in the County include Quemado, Datil, and Pie Town in the north, Cruzville, Luna, Apache Creek, Old Horse Springs, in the central part of the County, and Mogollon and Glenwood in the south. Since all of the communities, except for Reserve, are unincorporated, the County provides a wide range of services, including solid waste disposal and police services.

c. Brief History of the County

The County has a long history of settlement by native peoples. European descendants began settling the area in the 1860's. Settlements were first created along the San Francisco River near the current towns of Reserve and Luna. Mormon ranchers were also among the first settlers in the County. Some farming was established in the fertile river valleys and continues today. The discovery of silver near Mogollon in the southern portion of the County created a spike of development in the 1870's. The silver mines were soon exhausted, most of the boom towns were abandoned, and ranching again became the most prevalent economic activity. Much later, logging briefly became a major export of the County. However, changes to regulations for logging on Federal lands had a significant impact on the industry.

New Mexico became a state in 1912, but it was not until 1921 that Catron was established as a county. The County is named after Thomas B. Catron, who was a prominent New Mexico politician.

d. Government

The County currently employs 48-51 persons to provide a range of services, including, but not limited to: administration, emergency services, solid waste disposal, and road maintenance. The day to day operations of the County are managed by the County Manager. The County Commission consists of three members that meet twice a month, currently the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. The County does not utilize a planning commis-

sion and all land use decisions are made by the County Commission.



Catron County Building

The fiscal year 2006-2007 budget anticipates revenues of \$6,482,262, and expenditures of \$6,449,540. Historically the taxable gross receipts for the County have been as follows:

Table 1: Gross Taxable Receipts

1998	1999	2000
\$20,836,665	\$23,974,463	\$21,018,427
2001	2002	2003
\$19,617,922	22,501,042	26,777,518

Source: State of New Mexico

2. Demographics

a. Population Age

The following table shows the age of the population as it was recorded for the 2000 U.S. Census. The table shows that the population curve is decidedly on the older side, with the highest percentage of the population being 45 to 64 years of age. Between 1990 and 2000 the trend has been that the population has become older. In 1990 the population was more evenly distributed, with the largest age groups being in the 25 to 44 year old range. During the public meetings, it was expressed that older, often retired, households were moving into the new subdivisions. Based on the change between 1990 and 2000, this appears to be true, since the older population groups have grown significantly larger than aging of the

population would have predicted. For example, the 45 to 54 year old group numbered 290 in the 1990 U.S. Census, whereas, the 2000 U.S. Census shows the same group, now 10 years older (55 to 64 years old), as containing 630 individuals. So between 1990 and 2000 that age segment grew by 117%, or about three times the growth rate of the County as a whole.

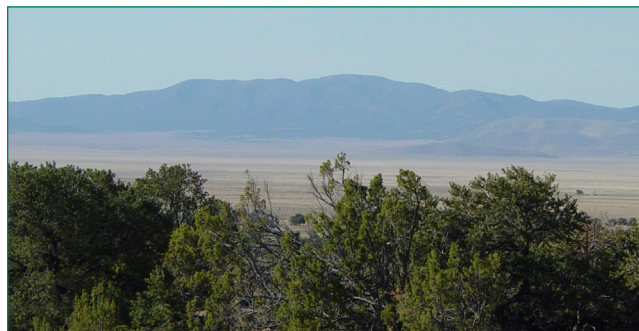
Table 2: Population Age

Age	Population	%
Under 5	148	4.2%
5 to 14	428	12.1%
15 to 24	320	9.0%
25 to 34	237	6.7%
35 to 44	455	12.8%
45 to 54	658	18.6%
55 to 64	630	17.8%
65 to 74	418	11.8%
75 to 84	196	5.5%
85 or older	53	1.5%

Source: 2000 US Census

b. Population Race

Catron County reported for the 2000 U.S. Census that 91.1% of the population is white and 19.2% of any race considers themselves Hispanic or Latino. This indicates that since the 1990 U.S. Census the County has become slightly more racially diverse. The 1990 U.S. Census indicated that 97.8% of the population was white and 28.4% of any race was Hispanic or Latino. Because of the small number of County residents, a limited number of new residents can significantly change the overall statistics; and therefore, statistics for race should be used with caution.



Eastern Catron County

c. Population Estimates

The following table shows the populations estimates developed by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research of the University of New Mexico (BBER).

Table 3: Population Estimate

2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
3,543	4,063 (+ 14.6%)	4,275 (+ 5.2%)	4,459 (+ 4.3%)	4,616 (+ 3.5%)	4,752 (+ 2.9%)

Source: Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of New Mexico (April 2004)

During our public meetings, it was stated that the population estimates appeared to be too low. The County grew approximately 38.2% between 1990 and 2000, which is significantly higher than the current estimates. As a potential high growth scenario, the following table shows estimated population with the assumption that the 1990 to 2000 growth rate is sustained:

Table 4: High Growth Population Estimate

2000	2010	2020	2030
3,543	4,896	6,766	9,350

The above table shows that if the County was to continue at a rate similar to the previous decade, it would more than double by 2030. However, it is unlikely that the growth rate will continue at such an accelerated rate due to the lack of major employers and limited availability of services and utilities. The number of new subdivisions that have recently occurred within the County may, however, result in a growth rate that is higher than predicted by the BBER.

3. Socioeconomic Statistics

a. Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the 1st quarter of 2006 was 6.6%. This rate was higher than the State average of 4.6% and the national average of 5.0% for the same period. The County has the fourth highest unemployment rate in the State, but is much lower than two other counties that have double digit unemployment.

b. Income.

The following table shows the income per household that was reported for the 2000 U.S. Census (1999 income). The average household income in Catron County was \$23,892, while the average household income for New Mexico for the same reporting period was \$34,133. The average income for the County has consistently edged upward according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce since 1993, but has not grown at the same rate as the more urbanized counties in New Mexico.

Table 5: Population Income

Income	Number of Households	Percentage of Total
Less than \$10,000	333	21.0%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	159	10.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	325	20.5%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	237	14.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	225	14.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	201	12.7%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	65	4.1%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	37	2.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3	0.2%
\$200,000 or more	2	0.1%

Source: 2000 US Census

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C. LAND USE

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Land Use Section is to examine the existing land use as it relates to land use issues within the County. The County recently analyzed land ownership patterns during preparation of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Generally, the County is rural with areas of more concentrated development taking place around community services. This plan illustrates that pattern of development on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This Plan does not seek to change the historical pattern.

This section is organized into subsections that discuss land use issues, the existing land use in the County, the land use plan, and goals, objectives and implementation measures that address the land use issues.

2. Land Use Issues

Meetings with the citizens and officials of the County were the primary method of determining what land use issues should be addressed in this plan. After reviewing the input received during the public input meetings, it became clear that many of the issues are created by the sheer size of the County. The County covers nearly 6,900 square miles, which is larger than the states of Rhode Island, Delaware and Connecticut. However, the County contains only 3,543 people, as of the 2000 US Census, for a density of only about one person for every two square miles of area covered by the County. Those same states rank #2, #7, and #4 in being the most densely populated states. The population density of the County is very similar to the population density of the state of Alaska.

In New Mexico, Catron County is the largest county, although several are within a few hundred square miles. Only two counties have less population than the County, De Baca and Harding Counties. Finally, only Harding County is less dense in population.

Although the County is immense, over 76% of the County is owned by the US Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management. This, however, does not mitigate the issues related to the size of the County, but exacerbates them. The high percentage of Federal ownership means that development, including roads and other infrastructure, is restricted to certain areas. Some of the privately held areas are relatively small, but the County must still provide service to these areas. The high Federal ownership and small population means that the amount of tax revenue available to the County is also limited.

The following land use related issues were identified during the public meetings:

New Subdivisions. Recently a significant number of new subdivisions have been approved in the County than has historically occurred. The public felt that there was inconsistency in enforcement of the subdivision regulations, which has created or intensified other challenges the County is facing, particularly for certain services. It was also noted that many of the lots appear to be purchased only for investment purposes and that no construction is occurring on the investment lots.

Conservation Easements. It was also brought up that the decline of ranching activities is encouraging some ranchers to sell permanent conservation easements on their land. These easements allow continued use as ranch land, but block any future development of the land restricting potential growth in certain areas of the County.

Government Owned Land. A substantial portion of the County is owned by the Federal and State government. This has a negative impact on the revenue that the County generates from property taxes and further restricts where growth in the County can occur. Many residents also felt that decisions concerning these public lands that impact the County are not made locally.

3. Existing Land Use

As was previously indicated, the County consists of vast tracts of US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other public lands that are not available for private development. Some of these lands may be available for some ranching and timber harvesting activities though. The land that is available for potential private development is primarily located in the northern part of the County. Most of this land is undeveloped or developed at very low rural densities with single-family homes, ranches, and/or agricultural activities.

Recently there have been several open space easements recorded on viable ranch/farm lands. These easements preserve the land permanently as open space, ensuring that no development occurs. The easements are being purchased by private conservation groups and generally allow for continued ranch/farming operation, while providing revenue to the property owner. The fact that these lands are no longer available to accommodate future growth in the County is a concern in that it further limits the lands available for population growth and economic development.



Reserve, NM

There is only one incorporated town in the County, Reserve. Reserve serves as the County seat and is also where the County's medical services are located. Reserve has retail businesses, lodging, restaurants, and several other services that are not available elsewhere in the County. Noticeably lacking in Reserve and the County as a whole, are banking services. One bank, 1st State Bank, is located in Reserve.

There are 15 unincorporated communities of varying sizes in the County. The land use and services in these communities differ widely. Many of the communities include a post office, limited retail businesses, and restaurants. The larger communities provide many business services similar to those in Reserve.

4. Land Use Plan

An over arching desire of the County residents is to maintain their rural lifestyle. In evaluating the land use patterns of the County, three land uses were identified. The three land uses are government controlled, rural areas, and community nodes. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan has been developed to match these land uses.

Land Uses

Government Controlled. Lands with this designation are lands owned and managed by Federal or State agencies. The agencies include, but are not limited to, the US Forrest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and National Park Service. These lands may or may not be open to the public. Some of the lands under government control may be available for use by ranching, logging, and similar uses. The most distinct feature of these lands is that they are generally undeveloped, except for various fire prevention/fighting, recreation, and administrative facilities. Some areas are virtually inaccessible by motor vehicles.

Rural. Rural designated areas are private lands that are characterized by ranches, agricultural activities, dwellings, limited commercial development, and limited government facilities, such as fire stations. Areas designated rural may have subdivisions at higher densities than the surrounding areas, but will still be much less dense than a typical urban area or community node.



Community Node. A community node is a concentration of commercial, governmental services, and/or housing. A community node is generally developed at higher densities than the surrounding countryside, but not necessarily so in the smaller nodes. One community node is incorporated, Reserve. The remaining nodes are not incorporated and include small communities throughout the County. As growth takes place in the rural areas, additional community nodes may develop to service those subdivisions. Many community nodes feature a post office, fire station, and community or religious facilities.



Quemado, NM

5. Goals, Objectives, and Implementation

a. Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are based on community input received at the public meetings, individual communication with citizens, and previously developed County plans.

Land Use Goal 1. Encourage logical and sustainable growth in the County.

Objective 1a. Strengthen subdivision standards to ensure that adequate services will be available to serve them and the neighboring residents.

Objective 1b. Review fiscal impacts for all new subdivisions as to their impacts on county services, including, but not limited to: road maintenance; solid waste disposal; emergency services; and general administration.

Objective 1c. Encourage development of new business and industry in the County.

Land Use Goal 2. Protect existing land uses, natural resources, and related economic activities.

Objective 2a. Develop community or area plans for more densely populated areas of the County.

Objective 2b. Develop “right to ranch/farm” covenants that are required for new subdivisions adjacent to active ranch/farm land. The primary purpose is to supplement existing State laws by notifying purchasers of nearby ranching and farming activities.

Land Use Goal 3. Protect the County’s natural beauty.

Objective 3a. Consider developing property maintenance standards and enforcement programs to remove and prevent blight.

Objective 3b. Develop design and placement standards for wireless telephone facilities.

b. Implementation

The following implementation measures are a starting point for realizing these goals and objectives. During actual implementation, additional or better methods of implementation may be discovered and should be encouraged.

Land Use Implementation Measure 1. Subdivision standards should be reviewed for enforceability. In particular, the standards should ensure that adequate services to new subdivisions will be provided. The standards should be evaluated annually to ensure that the standards are consistent with the State Subdivision Act and that minimum compliance with the standards is not resulting in subdivisions that are inadequately served or protected.

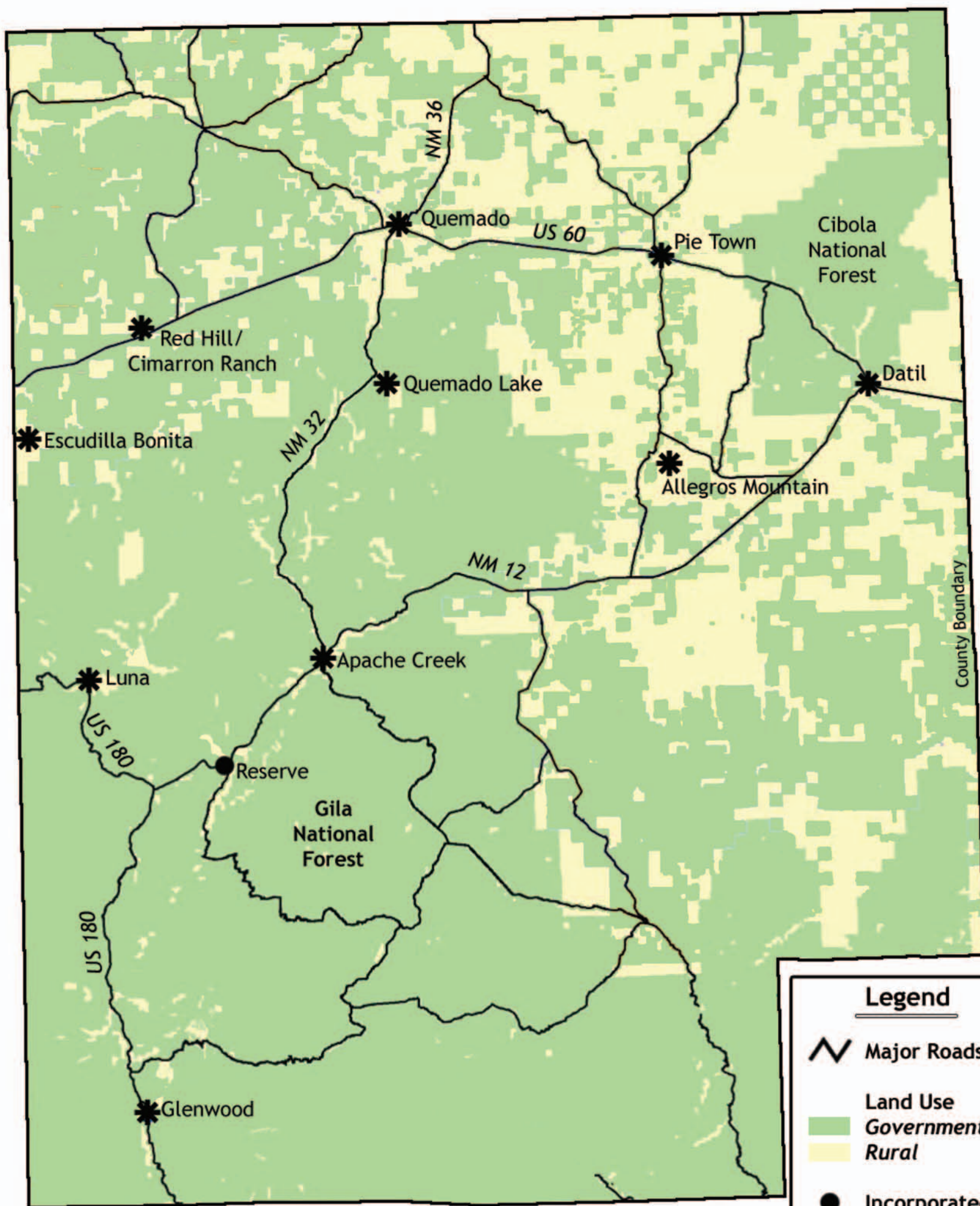
Land Use Implementation Measure 2. As part of the subdivision standards review, the County should consider requiring a fiscal analysis of the subdivision as to how it will impact County services. Subdivisions that require the expenditure of more funds than is generated should not be approved.

Land Use Implementation Measure 3. The County should seek grants to complete community or area plans for the more densely populated portions of the County. As an alternative the County may examine completing more generalized plans dividing the County into three zones: the northern portion, where the fastest growth is occurring; the center, where the County seat and majority of services are located; and the south, including Glenwood and the majority of public forest lands.

Land Use Implementation Measure 4. As part of the subdivision standards review, the County should consider developing “right to farm/ranch” covenants that would be recorded with new subdivisions that are adjacent to active farm/ranch lands. The primary purpose of the covenants is to put the new property owners on notice that farming and/or ranching is occurring in the vicinity and there may be impacts to the newly subdivided land, such as noise, odor, dust, pesticide use, etc., that is allowed and may occur on the active farm/ranch land near the site.

Land Use Implementation Measure 5. The County should take steps to improve the County’s image, particularly along major roads and highways. A program or work plan should be developed that includes at a minimum the following elements: designating or hiring personnel to combat blight; conduct a survey that prioritizes properties for physical improvements such as, clean up, signage removal, structure maintenance, and natural vegetation restoration; develop a comprehensive program that includes assistance in addition to enforcement; and seek grants or other funding to ensure continuation of the programs.

Land Use Implementation Measure 6. The County should develop standards for wireless communications towers and facilities that will help to lessen their impact on scenic vistas. The standards may include such requirement as using monopole facilities, painting to match their surroundings, use of stealth techniques where appropriate, and collocation of facilities.



Legend

Major Roads

Land Use

Government Controlled

Rural

Incorporated Community

Community Node

Catron County Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Map

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Development Section of the Catron County Comprehensive Plan examines the County's role in preserving the existing economic structure while growing the overall economy of the County. The purpose of this section is to provide a clear strategy on how the County should pursue economic development by building upon its strengths, overcoming its challenges, and working within regional partnerships that benefit the County, Reserve, and the unincorporated communities. Specifically, this section focuses on:

- Small Business retention and expansion in Catron County;
- Attraction of new and appropriate businesses to Catron County; and
- Increase of job opportunities in Catron County.

1. Economic Development Findings, Issues, and Opportunities

The Economic issues facing Catron County can be organized into a Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) analysis. In 2002, the Catron County Economic Development Advisory Council convened a meeting with key stakeholders in the County to develop a SWOT analysis for Catron County's Economic Development Strategic Plan. The purpose of the SWOT analysis is to identify all of the external and internal forces that impact the County's economic growth and potential. Issues comprising the SWOT analysis have been identified from a variety of sources including socioeconomic research, key observations, the 2002 stakeholder meetings, and an analysis by the New Mexico Rural Development Response Council conducted in 2004.

a. Strengths

Strengths are considered to be internal assets or conditions that can generate economic growth. Catron County's strengths include:

- Tourism potential based upon the County's outdoor recreation attraction, its scenic beauty, and the "old west" or frontier characteristics



Mogollon, NM

- The County's population is generally used to volunteering and is well educated
- Retirees are beginning to discover the County
- The County boasts several talented artisans
- Presence of government jobs through the US Forest Service and other agencies
- Well maintained US Highways serving as a route to Arizona

b. Weaknesses

Weaknesses are challenges to economic growth that the County is facing. Some of the identified weaknesses include:

- Young people moving out of the county after high school
- Lack of job training and skills
- Shopping opportunities are lacking
- Small tax base and physically large County puts a strain on the County's ability to provide services
- Isolation and high transportation costs to ship items into and out of the County
- Negative image to non-residents, County population seen as anti-social and isolationist
- Lack of high speed communications and cell phone service
- Abundance of federal land and restrictions to its use
- Lack of certain goods and services require that County residents travel outside the County to purchase these items resulting in leakage of tax dollars

- Long travel time for some of the County's middle and high school children leads to decreased enrollment (particularly in the Glenwood/Mogollon areas)
- Lack of medical care
- Low population that is spread out across great distances
- Rural road system needs improvement

c. Opportunities

Opportunities represent either internal or external forces that are available to Catron County that could help to drive economic growth. Opportunities in the County include:

- Presence of successful retired people in the community
- Healthy Forest Initiative may open up forests for more economic development opportunities
- Desire on the part of each community to work together as a region to promote economic growth among the Catron County communities
- County owns land that could be used for an industrial park
- Potential for the development of small cottage industries as a result of artisans and woodworkers
- Renewed interest in reviving forestry related industries with a focus on smaller diameter trees and through forest restoration projects
- Growth of tourism with a focus on hunting large and small game, working/dude ranches, and exclusive resorts



Gila National Forest

- Presence of groups dedicated to expanding economic opportunities such as the Quemado Community Advisory Board, Pie Town Chamber of Commerce, and Catron County Economic Development Advisory Board
- Revitalization of Reserve and Quemado's Main Street could lead to increased visitation and willingness of motorists to stop in these communities
- Under-utilized partnerships with the State of New Mexico Economic Development Department

d. Threats

Threats are those external and internal forces, which may have a negative impact on the County's ability to realize economic growth. Threats include:

- Continued perception by the rest of the State of being isolationist
- Distance makes it difficult for regional collaboration
- Resistance to change
- Continued lack of access to public lands will make it difficult to maintain traditional economic structures of timbering, hunting, and outdoor sports. The recent drought and resultant fires have also negatively impacted access
- Powerful national environmental groups putting pressure on the ability to thin the forests and utilize larger diameter trees
- Large amount of public land restricts the amount of developable land. Establishment of conservation easements is also eliminating development potential of some additional privately owned lands
- Juniper infestation impacting forest thinning and water supply

2. Overview of the Catron County Economy

a. Economic Indicators

Analysis of the existing economic conditions in the County provides a general overview of all the components that comprise Catron County's economy. The following table provides an overview of key economic statistics for both Catron County and the State of New Mexico.

Table 6: County and State Economic Indicators

Economic Indicator	Catron County	New Mexico
Persons in Labor Force (2006)	1,484	393,111
Unemployment Rate (May 2006)	4.6%	4.2%
Median Household Income	\$24,173	\$34,133
Poverty Rate	24.5%	18.4%

Source: New Mexico Department of Labor, US Census Bureau

b. Catron County Economic Base

The following table shows a breakdown of industries that employ Catron County residents.

Table 7: County Employment by Industry

Industry	Number of Employees*	Percentage of Labor Force
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing/Hunting	252	20%
Education, Health, Social Services	218	17%
Construction	184	15%
Retail Trade	115	9%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	87	7%
Public Administration	87	7%
Other Services	84	7%
Manufacturing	69	5%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative Services	51	4%
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	50	4%
Finance, Real Estate, and Rental	35	3%
Wholesales Trade	24	2%

*Fluctuations in employment may yield a number slightly different from the total persons in the labor force

Source: US Census Bureau; Many employees of the Forest Service classify their positions under Forestry rather than public administration.

The dominant industries employing Catron County employees are the Agriculture/Fishing/Hunting industry, the Education/Health/Social Services industry, and the Construction Industries. People

employed in the Education/Health/Social Services industry generally work in the County's school districts (Reserve and Quemado). Those employed in the Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting industry work for the US Forest Service, BLM, or for private outfitters. These numbers reflect those County residents who work within Catron County as well as those who leave the County for their jobs. Many County residents commute to work in the Grant County Mining District, Springerville, Arizona, and even as far as Las Cruces.

c. Large Employers in Catron County

Government remains the largest employer in the County with many residents employed by the US Forest Service, school districts, the State of New Mexico, and local government (Catron County or Village of Reserve). Individual large employers in Catron County include (20 or more employees):

- Quemado Independent School District;
- Catron County;
- Socorro Electric Co-op;
- US Forestry Service;
- Reserve Independent School District; and
- the State of New Mexico.

d. Analysis of Catron County Industrial Base Traditional Economic Structure

Catron County's economy has traditionally been tied to the land. Timber, cattle ranching, recreational uses, and mining have been sustaining the County for some time. The timber and cattle ranching industries have been in decline as illustrated by the closing of the Reserve Sawmill in 1993. County officials attribute the decline of these industries on control of public lands by the Federal Government and efforts by environmental groups to limit timber production, particularly the utilization of trees with a diameter sufficient enough to meet market demands. While many ranching families continue to work the land, others have left the profession, opting to subdivide their land in order to obtain an economically viable use. For some ranching families, the cost of ranching exceeds the benefit and several have resorted to selling conservation easements to compensate.

With regard to timber, efforts have been launched to revive the timber industry in some capacity

that is focused on utilization of smaller diameter trees. The smaller diameter trees can be used for products like furniture, artisan projects, and custom made doors. Leading the way in the effort to focus on smaller diameter tree products is Lower Frisco Wood Products, a small local establishment that is using the site of the former mill for their operations (south of Reserve).

With the decline of the ranching and timber industries over time, the County's economy is more reliant on government employment and needs to diversify in order to create a sustainable economic base. There are opportunities for diversification to take place by focusing on the growth of small business and strengthening of existing industries.

Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Potential

Tourism has been increased slightly and has been spurred by hunting/outfitters and camping, particularly in the southern part of the County. The challenge in cultivating a stronger tourism industry in Catron County is that the infrastructure needed for the hospitality industry is not generally in place. Reserve, Glenwood, and Quemado have small motels and a few restaurants but no real visitor information or organizations, other than the outfitters who focus on hunting. At the same time, there is a great deal of potential for the tourism industry to flourish with some investment. Tourism assets include:

Hunting/Outfitter Establishments – Area outfitters in both the Reserve and Glenwood area claim that the hunting in southwest New Mexico ranks as some of the world's best based on trophy size, experience, and shot success rates. The outfitters based in Catron County serve a worldwide clientele, bringing many people into the area. The outfitter organizations are also represented well on the internet. In addition to the hunts, many outfitters provide additional services related to preparing the meat for shipment to the customer's home.



Elk

Outdoor Recreation – With the County's vast supply of forest and public lands, there are opportunities to expand outdoor recreation and tourism (in addition to hunting). Outdoor recreation includes hiking, mountain biking, photography, fishing, and camping. Increasing access to public lands for outdoor recreation will require close coordination with the Forest Service to identify locations that are appropriate for outdoor recreational activities.



Quemado Lake

Dude and Working Ranch Vacations – Catron County is home to working ranches that offer vacation packages to those seeking the experience of working on a ranch. As with the outfitters, these ranches are well represented on the internet and provide a wide range of services including organized rides, meals, lodging, and other guest services. The working ranches also offer the chance to live the life of a cowboy by driving cattle, posting fence, and assisting in animal care.

Resorts/Campgrounds – In addition to opportunities for dude ranches, there is potential for resort development in the County. Other opportunities exist for campgrounds that specialize in certain activities (i.e. boy and girl scout camps).

Main Street Enhancements – One of the recommendations from the recently completed Village of Reserve Comprehensive Plan was that Reserve pursue a downtown revitalization strategy. Implementation of such a strategy might encourage people traveling the back way to Arizona to get out of their cars, stay the night, eat at restaurants, and obtain goods and services required for their trips. A similar opportunity is viable for Quemado's main street, which also has small businesses fronting the street. There may also be additional opportunities in other highway fronting communities.



Reserve, NM

County Attractions – Catron County has many attractions that could be the corner stone for a tourism plan. First and foremost is the County's scenic beauty. Picturesque vistas, rock formations, and forests, make driving through the County an enjoyable experience. In addition, there are several rodeos and the County fair that provide additional opportunities for drawing people into the County. Finally, Catron County boasts an "old west" and frontier history that makes it attractive.

Retail Opportunities

Within each of the communities, particularly Reserve and Quemado, there are smaller retail and service establishments that employ County residents and provide services such as food, gas, and groceries. However, there are many services not available in the County, which means that residents go to other communities outside the Coun-

ty, and sometimes the State, for these services. Outside spending causes a leakage of tax monies from the County meaning that residents in other communities are reaping the benefits of the spending patterns of Catron County residents. The small businesses that already exist in Catron County are comprised of smaller stores, motels, restaurants, outfitters, taxidermists, and realtors. These existing businesses already play a vital role in providing jobs, enhancing the gross receipts potential of the County and its communities, and by providing a measure of convenience.

3. Catron County Economic Development Strategy

The following economic development strategy represents a multi-pronged approach to achieving economic development within Catron County and seeks to focus on the County's strengths and opportunities, providing the infrastructure necessary for economic growth to occur, and seeking out partnerships to make economic development happen. This strategy will also provide economic priorities that provide Catron County, its communities, and other relevant stakeholders with a balanced action agenda based upon building up existing businesses, attracting new opportunities, tapping into existing resources, and making the County more competitive.

a. Maintain Economic Development Leadership and Vision

Since Catron County does not have an economic development department, the County must rely on other organizations to represent its interests. There are different groups that have addressed economic development issues in the County. These groups include, but are not limited to:

- Catron County Citizens Group (CCCG);
- Catron County Chamber of Commerce based out of Reserve;
- Glenwood Chamber of Commerce in Glenwood; and
- the Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments.

Having these organizations active in the County is important since a good economic development strategy starts with cultivating strong leadership to assist in implementation. For economic development to succeed, there needs to be an individual or group taking the lead on solving economic issues. The Catron County Citizens Group is the best positioned group to play the role of leader for economic development in the County. The CCCG has taken the initiative over the years in undertaking projects that improve the County's economic base and create jobs and is comprised of people from throughout the County.

After leadership is established, there should be an effort to identify how Catron County wants to pursue economic growth, including the types of businesses appropriate for the County and where growth should take place. Adopting an economic vision will help those devoted to economic development in the County stay focused. It is recommended that an economic development committee be re-established and made up of representatives from the groups listed above and other interested stakeholders.

b. Retaining Existing Businesses and Growing New Small Businesses

It is vital for existing businesses throughout Catron County to be retained, while growing new small businesses. It is a well recognized fact that small businesses create and sustain the most jobs nationwide. Catron County can help facilitate the retention of small business and the growing of new small businesses through its continued support of economic development efforts and by encouraging residents to take advantage of existing programs aimed at cultivating small business development. In addition, there are organizations that assist in small business development such as the State of New Mexico Economic Development office, New Mexico Department of Labor, and the Southwestern Small Business Development Center at Western New Mexico. These organizations provide small business owners or potential entrepreneurs with training, counseling, workshops, and information.

c. Workforce Development Training

Workforce development training is essential for Catron County's future economic growth, especially given the lack of population. One of the biggest issues regarding business retention and attraction is the lack of training for people entering the workforce. Workforce development and training is especially important should the timber industry become viable again or to meet new opportunities such as potential growth in the construction industry. Workforce training and development ensures that the existing labor force adapts to the changing work environment and technology. There are several programs that have been established by the State that focus on workforce development but are often under-utilized by employers. Catron County business owners and residents need to be made aware of these opportunities. The County should also recommend and support efforts by the Reserve and/or Quemado School Districts to initiate vocational training programs and classes to build certain skills.



Reserve High School

d. New Mexico State Incentive Programs

The State of New Mexico has several incentive programs that it can offer businesses relocating to or growing in the State. Catron County should partner with the State of New Mexico Economic Development Department to steer potential businesses in the County toward these incentive packages, many of which go untapped by small businesses in the State. Incentive programs include:

Compensating Tax Abatement

This provides a company the opportunity to abate gross receipts taxes on purchases made within the State and on equipment brought in from outside the State that will be used in the plant.

New Mexico Investment Credit

The State offers a tax credit for manufacturers that is applied to the value of equipment purchased for use in their operations. In order to qualify for this credit, the manufacturer must create local jobs.

New Mexico In-Plant Training Program

One popular program among small business owners is the in-plant training program, which pays half of the salary of employees during their training period, up to 1,040 hours, as well as training costs incurred by the employer. For communities outside one of the State's four metropolitan areas (Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, Farmington), the employer will be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed 65% of the trainee's hourly wage.

Workforce Investment Act

This Federal program provides classroom and on-the-job training to economically disadvantaged individuals, seniors, and dislocated workers.

e. Targeted Industries

While it is important that Catron County and its communities retain existing businesses, a balanced economic development strategy is needed in which economic development stakeholders attract appropriate businesses to the area. At the same time, the industries need to be appropriate to Catron County and take into consideration existing County resources such as water and values, meaning that new industries should prove to respect the County's overall health, welfare, and values. Based upon community input, existing conditions, and background research the following industries are reasonable for targeting for location to Catron County.

Table 8: Targeted Industries

Industry	Reasons for Locating to Catron County	Industry Needs
Tourism (outdoor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Good access to County along US and State highways.● Scenic beauty.● Area already desired for resort location (Vintage Resort).● Proximity to Gila Cliff dwellings, Catwalks.● Existing Attractions.● Availability of public lands.● Ranches could be used for dude ranches, working ranches, and resorts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prime location for hunting.● Semi-skilled labor force.● Water.● Visibility and access (location on or near a highway desired).
Specialty Retail (smaller shops focusing on specific product such as wood-crafts, arts/crafts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Timber products are available.● Retirees who may be attracted to these businesses.● Desire to revitalize Reserve Main Street could provide opportunities for increasing retail space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Retail space.● Advertising ability (through signage).● Semi-skilled work force to act as support staff.
Bio-Fuels	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Utilization of forest waste products under Healthy Forests Initiative.● Available land for processing.● Available transmission lines.● Growing demand for alternative fuels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Skilled work force that requires job training.● Interest by the State of New Mexico to invest in this activity.
Traveler Convenience Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Catron County communities located on well-maintained US and State Highways.● Communities located along alternative route into Arizona.● Retail space available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Semi-skilled work force.● Access and visibility along highway.● Advertising ability.

4. Goals, Objectives, and Implementation

a. Goals and Objectives

Economic Development Goal 1. Support efforts to retain existing jobs by strengthening existing businesses and supporting their expansion while attracting new appropriate businesses and industries to the County.

Objective 1a. Increase and enhance the County's job training skills by working with workforce training organizations to hold job training and skills workshops.

Objective 1b. Increase awareness of State programs designed to provide technical assistance to small business owners and entrepreneurs.

Objective 1c. Hold regular economic development discussions with Catron County residents to identify the types of economic development appropriate.

Objective 1d. Per the Healthy Forest Initiative, continue to work with the US Forest Service in order to support efforts to revive the timber industry in the County with a focus on smaller diameter trees and wood products.

Economic Development Goal 2. Assist in the development of infrastructure and amenities that need to be in place for economic development to occur.

Objective 2a. Work to improve the telecommunications infrastructure in Catron County by attracting cell phone service providers to the area (cross referenced with the Infrastructure section of this Plan).

Objective 2b. Support the development of tourism and visitor amenities such as campgrounds, visitor/information centers, picnic grounds, and hunting/fishing lodges.

Objective 2c. Work to develop additional camping, hunting, picnic, and public use areas in the Gila National Forest for visitors.

Objective 2d. Apply for rural infrastructure grants and monies that are designed for infrastructure improvements.

Economic Development Goal 3. Support efforts to revitalize the commercial areas of the County including, but not limited to, the Reserve and Quemado main streets and other nodes of commercial development in the County.

Objective 3a. Initiate discussions with New Mexico Main Street, New Mexico Department of Economic Development, the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning, and community members to develop vision for the Reserve and Quemado main streets.

Objective 3b. Work with property owners to rehabilitate or remove dilapidated buildings from the Reserve and Quemado main streets.

Economic Development Goal 4. Support and work with third party organizations and entities working to bring about economic development and diversification for Catron County.

Objective 4a. Work with the Catron County Citizens Group and other organizations to develop an economic development vision and to recruit new businesses to the County.

Objective 4b. Host regular economic development summits with local businesses, the CCCG, the Reserve Chamber of Commerce, and Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments to discuss local, county-wide, and regional wide economic development activities.

Objective 4c. Co-sponsor grant applications and other initiatives to support economic development activities in Catron County.

b. Implementation Actions

Economic Development Implementation Measure 1. Catron County should take the lead in developing economic vision workshops for the County based on the direction from County residents. The workshops should involve all area economic development stakeholders.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 2.

The County should initiate and work with the State of New Mexico Economic Development office, New Mexico Department of Labor, and the Southwestern Small Business Development Center at Western New Mexico to hold job training workshops and small business seminars for those wishing to start their own businesses or expand existing businesses. The seminars should focus on providing information to participants about programs and resources available for business establishment and expansion. Current employers should be made aware of resources for job training of current or future employers.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 3.

Catron County should work with the New Mexico Economic Development Department's District representative to identify a package of incentives that would be feasible for the County to provide to employers who may want to locate to the County.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 4.

Catron County should serve as a resource for disseminating information to potential small business owners related to programs, training, and grants that are available. This can be accomplished by designating an area within the County offices and community centers to provide information with the overall goal of increasing County resident's awareness of these programs.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 5.

In order to increase opportunities for developing tourism, Catron County should work with the Rural Economic Development Through Tourism program at New Mexico State University. The goal of the program is to educate, train, and assist communities and counties in creating tourism growth. This is done through technical assistance and mini-grants. In order to qualify for the mini-grants, Catron County should encourage the establishment of a County Tourism Council, a requirement of the grants.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 6.

As part of its efforts to support the establishment of tourism discussed in Implementation Measure 5, Catron County should work with the private County organizations to secure funding for putting

together a promotional package or visitors/relocation guide. A part of this implementation measure should be the development of a Catron County Tourism page to be located on the Catron County web site.

Economic Development Implementation Measure 7.

As a long-term implementation measure, the County should work with the US Forest Service to identify new areas appropriate for campgrounds and other public recreation areas.

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E. HOUSING

Typically, housing is the largest single expenditure of a household's income on a monthly basis. The condition, value and availability of housing all have a significant affect on the image of the county in the eyes of its residents and visitors. A county that has housing available that is well maintained and moderately increasing in value can be attractive to new residents, industries, and businesses. Conversely, if the housing does not meet these criteria, it may discourage new residents and employers.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan examines the existing housing in Catron County and recommends goals, objectives and implementation measures to assist the County in ensuring the County's housing is adequate for the current residents and future growth.

1. Housing Issues

The following is a description of the existing conditions of housing in Catron County. The most detailed information available for this analysis is from the 2000 U.S. Census. While some changes have occurred in the County, the changes have been small and do not significantly alter the information contained in the census.

a. Condition of Housing Stock

In 2000 the County had 2,548 residential structures of various types. The most common type of housing is detached, single-family homes. The County has an unusually high percentage of mobile homes (32.2%, 820 units) and non-traditional housing, such as recreational vehicles (5.2%, 133 units). The following table shows the break down of housing structures by type that existed in the county as shown in the 2000 Census.

Table 9: Units in Structure

Type of Housing	Number	Percent
1-unit, detached	1,565	61.4%
1-unit, attached	16	0.6%
2 units (duplex)	12	0.5%
3 or 4 units	2	0.1%
Mobile homes	820	32.2%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	133	5.2%

Approximately two-thirds of the housing stock in the County is less than 35 years old and well maintained. Rehabilitation of many of the older housing units is needed. The older housing may also need other upgrades and improvements to make the housing safer, such as, installation of smoke alarms, and replacement of older plumbing and electrical systems. The following table shows when the residential structures in Catron County were built. The table shows that there has been a steady number of new housing built each decade.

Table 10: Year Structure Built

Year Structure Built	Number	Percent
1939 or earlier	368	14.4%
1940 – 1959	293	11.5%
1960 – 1969	249	9.8%
1970 – 1979	402	15.8%
1980 – 1989	495	19.4%
1990 – 1994	216	8.5%
1995 – 1998	363	14.2%
1999 – March 2000	162	6.4%

The median value of housing in 2000 in Catron County was \$82,000. A review of the current MLS listing showed 14 dwellings for sale in the County at the time of the search. The homes for sale varied widely in price from a low of \$89,999 to \$1,400,000. Several homes were about \$160,000 and several were priced near \$1,000,000. The value of housing for owner occupied units as shown in the 2000 Census is shown in the following table.

Table 11: Housing Value

Value	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	103	23.4%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	193	43.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	61	13.9%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	17	3.9%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	54	12.3%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	3	0.7%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	0	0%
\$1,000,000 +	9	2.0%

An indicator of the condition of housing is the lack of certain features that are found in modern homes. Specifically homes that lack complete plumbing facilities and/or complete kitchen facilities are at a disadvantage to other more modern homes. While a home without one or more of these features may be immaculately maintained, the home should still be considered in need of rehabilitation to provide these facilities. Phone service is also an issue in some of the more isolated areas of the County. The table below shows the number of units that do not have these facilities. The facilities listed in the table are not cumulative and there may be homes missing one or all of the facilities. It should be noted that a household may choose not to have a telephone, but that the service may be available to the unit. It was also found that a significant number of homes in the County rely on wood for their heating during colder months, instead of gas, electric, or other fuels. No homes were reported as being completely without a heat source.

Table 12: Facilities/Services

Missing Facility	Number	Percent
Lacking complete plumbing	75	4.7%
Lacking complete kitchen	61	3.9%
No telephone service	152	9.6%
Wood heating only	728	46.0%

b. Housing Cost

The percentage of household income used to pay for housing expenses is a major indicator of the fiscal health of the household. Generally, banks will not lend money for a mortgage if the housing expenses are more than 28 percent of the household's gross income. Many affordable housing advocates suggest that any household paying more than 35 percent of their monthly income for housing is considered distressed and if over 50 percent is in danger of becoming homeless, particularly in the case of an unexpected calamity. The 2000 Census showed that 75.2 percent of owner occupied housing was not burdened by a mortgage. The remaining 24.8 percent of owners paid an average of \$646 a month in mortgage payments. Renters paid an average of \$392 per month. The following two tables show the per-

centage of a household's income that was devoted to housing expenses in 1999.

Table 13: Owner Housing Cost as a Percentage of Income

Percentage of Income	Number	Percent
Less than 15%	239	54.3%
15% - 19.9%	55	12.5%
20% - 24.9%	18	4.1%
25% - 29.9%	23	5.2%
30% - 34.9%	14	3.2%
35% +	70	15.9%

(Not computed 4.8%)

Table 14: Renter Housing Cost as a Percentage of Income

Percentage of Income	Number	Percent
Less than 15%	61	24.6%
15% - 19.9%	34	13.7%
20% - 24.9%	19	7.7%
25% - 29.9%	8	3.2%
30% - 34.9%	6	2.4%
35% +	58	23.4%

(Not computed 25.0%)

c. Housing Demands or Needs in Catron County

Vacancy rates in Catron County are relatively low at 5.2% for rental units and 4.2% for owner occupied units. The 2000 Census shows that a high percentage of units are used for seasonal or recreational use (25%). The following two tables show the projected population of the County through 2030. Table 15 shows modest growth predicted by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (University of New Mexico) and table 16 is calculated based on a high growth scenario using the 1990-2000 growth rate as a basis.

Table 15: Population and Housing Demand

Year	Estimated Population**	Total # of Housing Units Needed*
2000	3,543 (base year)	1,589 (2,548 available, including seasonal and recreational units)
2010	4,063	1,822
2015	4,275	1,917
2020	4,459	2,000
2025	4,616	2,070
2030	4,752	2,131

*Based on 2000 Census Average Household size of 2.23 persons.

**From Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER),
University of New Mexico, April 2004

Table 16: High Growth Scenario (38%, 1990-2000 rate)

Year	Estimated Population	Total # of Housing Units Needed*
2000	3,543 (base year)	1,589 (2,548 available, including seasonal and recreational units)
2010	4,889	2,192
2020	6,746	3,025
2030	9,309	4,174

*Based on 2000 Census Average Household size of 2.23 persons.

The above tables show the net number of units that will be needed to house the projected population. The tables also show that under the high growth scenario, the population and the number of housing units needed by 2030 will be approximately double what are predicted by the BBER.

Substandard housing units may need to be replaced to remain a viable part of the housing stock. The Facilities/Services table showed that at least 75 and potentially 136 dwellings are substandard and should be upgraded or replaced to meet modern standards. The age of many of the dwellings suggests that there are potentially many other dwellings that may need substantial upgrades or replacement due to structural instability (framing and/or foundation), faulty wiring, inadequate plumbing, presence of lead paint/pipes and/or asbestos, pest infestations (termites), and

other potential threats to the life and safety of the occupants. In addition to inspections because of a sale of the property, some of these issues may be detected during construction of additions or remodels. In any case, when these deficiencies are found, they should be mitigated to ensure the viability of the dwelling.

d. Rehabilitation

Besides the life and safety issues mentioned earlier that are a threat to the occupants and housing stock, rehabilitation may be desirable to improve the appearance and sustainability of the existing housing stock. The appearance of dwellings, particularly those along major routes in the County, can have a significant impact on how the County is viewed by visitors and residents. Since Catron County derives a significant amount of business from tourism related industries, this is particularly important. The condition of housing and its “curb appeal” directly impacts the value of the housing, which translates into impacts on the County’s long-term property tax revenues, population growth, and economic development. The County has a high rate of homeownership and the County should consider developing programs to assist the residents in upgrading and/or improving their homes. The County also has a very high number of mobile homes and non-traditional housing types, and the County should consider conducting a survey to determine how many of these are used for permanent housing as opposed to recreational/seasonal housing. Non-traditional housing used for permanent residence should be a high priority for conversion to site built housing.

Various programs and grants are available for this purpose. If properly structured, the programs can become self-sustaining through the use of low interest rates, profit sharing, and similar mechanisms. The highest priority for rehabilitation should go to housing that is in danger of being lost.

2. Goals, Objectives, and Implementation

a. Goals and Objectives

Housing Goal 1. Upgrade substandard housing in the County to meet modern standards of convenience and safety.

Objective 1a. Create and implement a voluntary inspection program of housing in the County to identify deficiencies.

Objective 1b. Conduct an inspection of all dwellings more than 30-years old prior to the issuance of a building permit for any addition to identify any deficiencies. If deficiencies are identified, they must be corrected prior to issuance of a permit to expand.

Objective 1c. Develop a program of low interest loans for owner occupied units for the purpose of rehabilitation and/or replacement of dwellings that do not meet modern standards of convenience or safety.

Objective 1d. Research and secure grants that can fund rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of deficient housing.

Housing Goal 2. Improve the appearance of housing in the County.

Objective 2a. Develop a program of low interest loans for owner occupied units for the purpose of upgrading the appearance of dwellings.

Objective 2b. Work with local civic organizations to develop a program where members of the organization assist elderly or disabled citizens with minor exterior maintenance of their homes.

Objective 2c. Examine the feasibility of developing a program establishing regular household clean up days, where bulky and/or hazardous materials can be safely disposed of.

Objective 2d. Adopt an enforceable property maintenance ordinance that highlights the acceptable level of property maintenance in the County.

Objective 2e. Develop a prioritized code enforcement program that works with citizens to correct violations.

Objective 2f. Develop an outreach program to inform citizens of the various programs available for rehabilitation and/or improvement of housing.

Housing Goal 3. Develop a range of new housing to meet the demands of future County residents.

Objective 3a. Work with communities to encourage a variety of housing types in more urbanized areas, including multiple family housing.

Objective 3b. Bi-annually review infrastructure plans to ensure that they are adequate to support construction of new housing in community nodes.

Objective 3c. Where feasible and appropriate, require that new development oversize facilities to ensure that future housing areas will have adequate infrastructure available.

Housing Goal 4. Develop affordable housing opportunities within the County.

Objective 4a. Work with the school officials to institute job training programs in the County for construction and building trades. A local source of skilled labor will reduce construction costs.

Objective 4b. Develop a program of incentives for affordable housing in appropriate community nodes, such as reduced/waived fees, expedited review times, and/or other incentives.

Objective 4c. Continue and enhance economic development efforts that will increase household earnings.

b. Implementation

Several of the objectives listed previously can be accomplished with available County staff and/or volunteers and at very minimal cost. However, the more ambitious objectives will typically require an outside source of funding, usually provided through a State or Federal program.

The primary source of Federal funding for housing is the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA), a quasi-public entity that has been designated to administer affordable housing. The MFA provides a variety of affordable housing programs. Since its establishment in 1975, the MFA has provided more than \$3.2 billion in affordable housing in New Mexico. MFA relies on nonprofits, housing authorities, and local governments to administer the homeowner rehabilitation program. Funds are awarded through an RFP/Application process and proposals are reviewed and evaluated by several committees, and approved by the MFA Board. MFA has also reserved funds for the Reservation Rehabilitation program to provide loans to homeowners on a house-by-house, first-come, first-served basis. The MFA administers the largest source of funding for rehabilitation, the Federal HOME program. The MFA also works with Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs). CHDOs are the conduit for many Federal programs for affordable housing. Most Federal housing money is managed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Several Federal programs that the County may consider using are listed below.

HOME. The homeowner rehabilitation program provides assistance to low-income homeowners who lack the resources to make necessary repairs to their homes. Assistance can be used for reimbursement of costs for rehabilitation, which includes the following: compliance with applicable codes, standards or ordinances, rehabilitation standards, essential improvements, energy-related improvements, lead-based paint hazard reduction, accessibility for disabled persons, repair or replacement of major housing systems, incipient repairs and general property improvements of a non-luxury nature, site improvements and utility connections.

Participating jurisdictions (PJs) may choose among a broad range of eligible activities, using HOME funds to provide home purchase or rehabilitation financing assistance to eligible homeowners and new home buyers; build or rehabilitate housing for rent or ownership; or for “other reasonable and necessary expenses

related to the development of non-luxury housing,” including site acquisition or improvement, demolition of dilapidated housing to make way for HOME-assisted development, and payment of relocation expenses. Up to 10 percent of the PJ’s annual allocation may be used for program planning and administration. The County can become a PJ.

Some special conditions apply to the use of HOME funds. PJs must match every dollar of HOME funds used (except for administrative costs) with 25 cents from non-federal sources, which may include donated materials or labor, the value of donated property, proceeds from bond financing, and other resources. The match requirement may be reduced if the PJ is distressed or has suffered a Presidentially declared disaster. In addition, PJs must reserve at least 15 percent of their allocations to fund housing to be owned, developed, or sponsored by experienced, community-driven non-profit groups designated as CHDOs. PJs must ensure that HOME-funded housing units remain affordable in the long term (20 years for new construction of rental housing; 5-15 years for construction of homeownership housing and housing rehabilitation, depending on the amount of HOME subsidy). PJs have two years to commit funds (including reserving funds for CHDOs) and five years to spend funds.

WAP (Weatherization Assistance Program). WAP provides limited assistance to low income homeowners to improve the energy efficiency of their homes to reduce their utility costs. To be eligible homeowners must have incomes relative to family size at or below 150% of federal poverty guidelines, but due to the scarcity of resources, priority is given to the lowest income households. WAP may be used for the following: Leakage reduction including repair or replacement of broken glass or thresholds; packing cracks, caulking or weather-stripping; installation of door sweeps, fireplace dampers, water heater insulation blankets, thermostat controls, exterior doors, or exterior windows; incidental repairs including lumber to frame or repair windows and doors, roofing materials to patch or repair

leaks; protective materials (paint), or repair materials; health and safety including stove pipes, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, space heaters, furnace repair/replacement, moisture related problems, wiring problems; ceiling, wall and floor insulation; measures for mobile homes; and electric base load measures like new refrigerators. The amount of assistance can not exceed an average of \$2,744 per household with a maximum per house of \$3,762.

SHOP. Shop provides funds for eligible national and regional non-profit organizations and consortia to purchase home sites and develop or improve the infrastructure needed to set the stage for sweat equity and volunteer-based homeownership programs for low-income persons and families. SHOP funds are used for eligible expenses to develop decent, safe and sanitary non-luxury housing for low-income persons and families who otherwise would not become homeowners. Home buyers must be willing to contribute significant amounts of their own sweat equity toward the construction of the housing units.

SECTION 108 LOAN GUARANTEES. Section 108 is the loan guarantee provision of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Section 108 provides communities with a source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities, and large-scale physical development projects. This makes it one of the most potent and important public investment tools that HUD offers to local governments. It allows them to transform a small portion of their CDBG funds into federally guaranteed loans large enough to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects that can renew entire neighborhoods. Such public investment is often needed to inspire private economic activity, providing the initial resources or simply the confidence that private firms and individuals may need to invest in distressed areas. Section 108 loans are not risk-free, however; local governments borrowing funds guaranteed by Section 108 must

pledge their current and future CDBG allocations to cover the loan amount as security for the loan.

Activities eligible for Section 108 financing include: economic development activities eligible under CDBG; acquisition of real property; rehabilitation of publicly owned real property; housing rehabilitation eligible under CDBG; construction, reconstruction, or installation of public facilities (including street, sidewalk, and other site improvements); related relocation, clearance, and site improvements; payment of interest on the guaranteed loan and issuance costs of public offerings; debt service reserves; public works and site improvements in colonies; and in limited circumstances, housing construction as part of community economic development, Housing Development Grant, or Nehemiah Housing Opportunity Grant programs.

The following programs are available to private developers through the MFA:

Primero Loan Fund. The Primero Loan Fund provides short-term loans to help finance the development of affordable rental or special needs facilities throughout the state.

BUILD IT! Loan Guaranty Program. The Build It! program guaranties conventional bank interim loans for non-profit, public or tribal agency sponsored projects with set asides and local government commitments.

The County should contact the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority at 344 4th Street SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102 (505-843-6880) for more information regarding the programs that are available to the town. The MFA can also direct the County to CHDOs that are currently working in the area.

F. COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. Existing Conditions and Issues

- Catron County consists of a large area with thousands of acres. The vast nature of the County puts a strain on sheriff and fire services;
- The County must partner with other law enforcement agencies to assist in responding to calls;
- Several Catron County residents expressed the desire for increased opportunities for solid waste disposal in the County, particularly in the northwest.
- The County recently approved the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which provides strategies on wildfire prevention for the entire County;
- Catron County is under constant threat from wildfire particularly in times of drought as indicated by recent fires during the summer of 2006; and
- The County is in need of improving its 13 volunteer fire departments in terms of planning, equipment, and training.

a. Recreation

The rural nature of the County is one of its biggest assets for recreational opportunities. The Forest Service has improved and unimproved lands that are available for a wide range of outdoor activities, including hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, and similar activities. The sparse population also, however, means that there are not many other recreational opportunities, particularly for youths. Organized activities for youths are primarily related to schools, 4-H, and religious organizations.

There are several small annual festivals, fairs and events in the County that serve the local residents and attract some visitors. The most well known of these festivals and fairs are: the Catron County Fair; Luna Rodeo and Pioneer Days; Pie Town Festival; Glenwood Fireworks, Dance and Raffle; and the Glenwood Fishing Derby. The lack of motel accommodations for visitors gives these events a distinct local flavor.

Except for needing youth activities and hunting and fishing related to tourism, the residents did not identify recreational needs as a high priority.

b. Community Services

Medical services were identified by County residents as a need in the County. The majority of medical services that are available in the County are available from or through the clinic located in Reserve. However, the services available are very limited. Some basic medical services are also provided on a traveling basis, generally at the local community centers. Residents must travel outside the County to obtain surgery and other more specialized medical treatment. Ambulance service is provided by many of the volunteer fire departments located throughout the County. The dispersal of the small population through out the County and the distances involved, inhibit providing major medical services.

As with medical services, offices for social services are generally not available in the County and residents must travel to adjacent more populated counties to obtain services. Also similar to medical services, the County population is not concentrated sufficiently to feasibly locate permanent, full-time social service offices to serve County residents.

Since these two needs in particular are not being met within the County and directly contribute to quality of life, the County and State should explore ways that the services can be provided. Shared offices, part-time personnel, and traveling personnel are all avenues that should be explored. A shuttle service, ride sharing program, or similar programs could be explored for transporting people to where the services are available until the County begins to reach the threshold where these services are available locally.

c. Solid Waste Disposal

Residents attending Comprehensive Plan public meetings in Glenwood and Quemado revealed that solid waste disposal was an issue since some residents had to drive long distances to dispose of trash. These residents expressed a desire for increased landfill capacity, conveniently located convenience centers, or more drop off locations.

As with most community services, providing dumpster locations and scheduling pick-ups is difficult for a County with limited resources and a large area to service. However, the County may want to evaluate the location of existing dumpster locations to determine whether the locations are appropriate or if new locations are needed to accommodate current and future residents.

d. Public Safety/Disaster Planning

Sheriff

Catron County has one sheriff, one undersheriff, and four deputies on staff. According to County officials, only two of the deputies can work per shift, which puts a strain on the Sheriff's Department given the physical size of the County. To ensure adequate coverage, the County relies on other law enforcement agencies, such as the New Mexico State Police, to assist in responding to calls. Agreements should be maintained with these agencies to meet the public safety needs of the County. As population growth occurs, the County should consider adding a substation and additional personnel in the Quemado/Datil area to serve the northern part of the County.

Fire

Catron County faces a continual threat of wildfires, especially in times of extreme drought, as the summer of 2006 exemplified when wildfires scorched more than 83,000 acres in Catron and Grant Counties. The 2006 fires were started by lightening, and impacted the western side of the County consisting of three fires. According to news reports posted by KOB-TV on June 25, 2006, two of the fires, jointly named the Reserve Complex Fires burned approximately 15,436 acres and the other fire, named the Bear Fire, burned approximately 47,196 acres. Both fires caused the evacuation of several subdivisions.

In 2003 the County saw the need to begin planning for potential wildfire events. As a result, in December 2003, the Catron County Commission created a task force called the Intergovernmental Task Force for Expediting Reduction of Hazardous Fuels. The Task Force oversaw the preparation of the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), a collaborative effort to create a landscape scale-county wide wildfire

protection plan. The stated common goal of the Plan includes:

"The goal for the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been to create a plan by and for the stakeholders (private and public landowners, and people who use the land) to protect the values of those stakeholders from damage or loss by wildfire."

In order to achieve the goal, objectives were prepared that dealt with; identification of areas and values most at risk from catastrophic wildfire; prioritization of treatment needs by area based on values to be protected and level of risk; suggestion of mitigation actions for the protection of life, property, critical infrastructure, and wildlands in the County; provide information and planning to develop local Community Wildfire Protection Plans in a coordinated manner.

The Plan states that the goal and objective's purpose is to protect the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas (defined as an area in or adjacent to a community, including isolated parcels of private property containing structures, and/or infrastructure and watershed). There are 196 WUI areas identified in the Plan. In essence, the CWPP identifies areas and priorities for areas to be protected in the County. The CWPP has specific details on how this protection should take place but its most significant recommendation is that each smaller community in Catron County prepare its own Fire Protection Plan.

The challenges that the County faces in its fire protection relate to the physical size of the County, limited resources, and the number of approved subdivisions. The CWPP identified the following existing conditions related to fire protection.

- 450,000 – 1,460,000 acres needed immediate fire protection treatment;
- 1,760,000 – 2,420,000 acres are in need of moderate fire protection treatment;
- 10% to 20%, of the 2,000,000 acres presently in low threat and low priority condition but will grow into a denser condition without maintenance or treatment;



- There are 2,863 E911 (Emergency 911) addresses in the County;
- As of the summer of 2004, 83 subdivisions were recorded by the Catron County Clerk and over 40 subdivisions are located 5 miles or more from a fire station;
- There are 13 volunteer fire departments in the County with an average age of vehicles ranging from 13 to 38 years old depending on department;
- Catron County residents report that the volunteer fire departments suffer from lack of participation despite the presence of experienced (retired) fire fighters living in the County;
- ISO ratings range from 5 to 10 (10 being the lowest) for the 13 fire departments; and
- Water supply varies from very poor to excellent.

With the prospect of population growth, particularly in the northern part of the County, addressing fire protection should become more of a priority for the County and its residents. The CWPP states that local fire departments need additional training, equipment, and planning. Furthermore, an additional 13 equipped fire stations are needed to adequately cover new subdivisions in the northern portion of the County.

2. Goals, Objectives, and Implementation

a. Goals and Objectives

Community Services Goal 1. Provide recreational opportunities for all residents of the County.

Objective 1a. Develop organized activities for youths.

Objective 1b. Support local fairs and festivals.

Community Service Goal 2. Provide adequate medical services for the residents of the County.

Objective 2a. Develop a public shuttle service to nearby cities for medical and social services.

Objective 2b. Develop a ride share program to provide transportation to nearby cities for medical and social services.

Objective 2c. Investigate with State officials the potential for opening satellite offices for certain social services that are in higher demand within the County.

Objective 2d. Investigate with State officials the potential for traveling personnel for certain social services that are in higher demand within the County.

Community Service Goal 3. Protect Catron County residents, property, infrastructure, and wild lands from the threat of wildfire by ensuring a high level of readiness and fire fighting capability.

Objectives 3a. Continue to follow and implement the objectives from the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Objectives 3b. Maintain and improve the infrastructure required for fire fighting capabilities.

Objective 3c. Work with fire departments and communities to develop their own local wildfire protection plans with consistent and complementary strategies.

Objective 3d. Establish new fire stations in the northern part of Catron County to ensure coverage in the higher growth areas.

Objective 3e. Seek funds and opportunities to increase training of volunteer firefighters and improve fire fighting equipment, including vehicles.

Community Service Goal 4. Initiate short and long-term management practices to maintain forest health.

Objective 4a. Create opportunities for community outreach and public education regarding forest health and wildfire protection.

Objective 4b. Develop a prioritization schedule for treating Wildland Urban Interface areas for wildfire protection strategies beginning for those identified as highest risk by the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Objective 4c. Encourage forest restoration by reducing the amount of hazardous biofuels in the Forest.

Community Service Goal 5. Ensure adequate sheriff's protection for all resident's of Catron County

Objective 5a. Continue to maintain relationships with other area law enforcement agencies to assist the Catron County Sheriff's department in responding to calls.

Objective 5b. Establish a Sheriff's substation in the Quemado/Datil area to respond to growth of subdivisions in the North.

Objective 5c. Increase training for all Sheriff's department personnel and improve equipment.

Community Service Goal 6. Ensure that all Catron County residents have convenient access to solid waste disposal near their homes.

Objective 6a. Evaluate the locations and number of convenience centers and dumpster locations on an annual basis in order to determine if these services are easily accessible for all County residents.

b. Implementation Measures

Community Services Implementation Measure 1. Pursue and/or support governmental and private grants for youth recreational activities. In addition to typical governmental programs, there are a number of private foundations that grant money for youth activities and facilities.

Community Services Implementation Measure 2. Organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, YMCA, and other similar organizations should be contacted about establishing camps and/or programs within the County.

Community Services Implementation Measure 3. The County should work with local fair/festival organizers and community leaders to promote the activities. As a minimum, the County can post

events on the County web site. The County may consider including a newsletter or flyers indicating the dates of various fairs and festivals with tax bills or other County-wide distributions.

Community Services Implementation Measure 4. The County should work with State officials to determine what social services are in the greatest demand in the County. With this information, the County should open dialogue with the various State agencies, with the assistance of local State legislators, to explore if services can be provided on a part-time or scheduled basis within the County.

Community Services Implementation Measure 5. Catron County should support efforts by the smaller communities to prepare their own local Wildfire Protection Plans as recommended by the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The County should provide leadership to initiate the development of plans and co-sponsor grant applications for the funding and/or support the generation of local funding.

Community Services Implementation Measure 6. Catron County should work with area fire departments and the US Forest Service to implement objectives from the Catron County Community Wildfire Protection Plan with an emphasis on treatment of high risk areas for wildfires. Treatment includes either hand removal of materials that is easy to ignite or controlled burns.

Community Services Implementation Measure 7. Catron County should begin planning for and seeking funding for the establishment of new fire stations as needed in the County. The County should also establish a Fire Station Facility Master Plan that identifies specific locations for new fire stations and develop strategies on how to fund and attract volunteers to staff the stations.

Community Services Implementation Measure 8. Catron County should prepare a Wildland Urban Interface Areas Treatment Schedule that prioritizes the areas, acreage, method of treatment, and funding. The Schedule should be used as a guide for initiating the treatment that prioritizes critical areas but ensures that all at-risk areas are treated.



Community Services Implementation Measure 9.

Catron County should initiate a community outreach and education program designed to promote the overall health of the forest and wildfire prevention. This implementation measure involves a multi-pronged approach including:

- Using media and the Catron County web site, to include: wildfire prevention tips; progress on the treatment; and actions needed to keep the forests healthy
- Creating programs to educate school children on forest health and wildfire prevention
- Using area volunteer fire departments to help disseminate information on wildfire prevention and scheduled treatments

Community Services Implementation Measure 10.

Catron County should establish a Sheriff's substation in the Quemado/Datil area in order to serve the northern and growing part of the County. The County should begin planning for the station's location and seek funds to develop it through the ICIP process.

Community Services Implementation Measure 11.

Catron County should continue to seek funding for equipment and training for its fire and sheriff departments through the ICIP process and other sources of grants designed to assist in community safety efforts.

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G. INFRASTRUCTURE/ICIP PLAN

The purpose of the Infrastructure and ICIP section of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide guidance for the County's capital infrastructure projects. While the County does not maintain water or wastewater systems directly, the primary emphasis of this section is to address the water issues from a quality/quantity standpoint as well as identifying any issues with the County's road network and State highways. The County is involved with infrastructure relating to water storage, throughout the County, given its susceptibility to wild fire. Another important component of the Infrastructure/ICIP Plan component is addressing the communications issue, particularly high speed internet and cell phone service.

Significant Infrastructure/Water/ICIP Plan key findings include:

- Catron County needs to undertake several projects to upgrade its water storage systems particularly in the smaller communities and outlying areas
- Future water supply is extremely important to the future economic health and overall quality of life of the County
- The State of New Mexico and the southwestern United States has faced several years of drought
- Maintenance of County roads is a challenge for the County due to the number of miles maintained and a limited staff
- Several State and US Highways pass through the County, many of which are well maintained; some of which are fairly isolated and do not carry much traffic
- Catron County is served by three small airports, the Glenwood-Catron County airport, the Reserve Airport, and a landing strip near Apache Creek
- Some recently approved subdivisions in Catron County have been approved with only one entrance/exit point. This can create problems for emergency access

1. Transportation

a. Transportation Analysis

Transportation in Catron County primarily focuses on Federal and State Highways, and County roads. US 60 provides the primary east-west access into Catron County, entering from Socorro County, east of Datil and passing through Pie Town and Quemado on the way into the eastern Arizona community of Springerville and resort area of Pine Top. The highway is generally in good condition with very few curves. The other US Highway serving the County, US 180, is located on the west side of Catron County, entering from Grant County in the south and exiting the County in Arizona, also headed to Springerville, Arizona. US 180 provides access to Glenwood and eventually Silver City.

Catron County is also served by several State Highways. New Mexico State Highway 12 is the primary transportation corridor through the County, providing a link between US 60 and Reserve. NM 12 terminates southwest of Reserve at the intersection of US 180. Another significant State Highway is NM 32, which links Reserve to Quemado. From Quemado, State Highway 36 heads north into Cibola County and NM 117, which eventually leads to Interstate 40.

Both the US Highway and State Highway system passing through Catron County are utilized by people traveling between Albuquerque and eastern Arizona resort areas and Phoenix/Tucson. The highways also provide key transportation corridors as people travel to Springerville, Silver City, or Socorro for goods and services.

The primary issue concerning the State Highways is that they tend to become impassible during the winter and in times of significant rainfall, due to large amounts of snow, water, and mud accumulation. NM 117 for example, has been closed intermittently since late July 2006 due to flood watches and mud/rocks on the roadway.

Catron County is located in the New Mexico Transportation Department's District 6. Currently there are no significant plans for roadway expansion.

sion or work on the State Highways that serve Catron County. The US Highways located in the County are serviceable and in good repair. The State Highways are also generally in good condition and don't carry a significant amount of traffic. With Catron County growth occurring, however, there may be a need to prioritize improvement projects, particularly in the Quemado, Pie Town, and Datil areas in the future. Being the only incorporated community in the County, the Village of Reserve maintains a network of local roads.

County roadways are the other component of the overall transportation network in the County. Catron County maintains over 962 miles of County roadways, with two of these miles paved. The remaining 960 miles are dirt roads that become difficult to maintain, during the winter and the summer monsoon season. Maintenance is problematic for the County in general since the County has a very small staff, small budget, and large amount of mileage to maintain. The County would like to upgrade its roads by paving more of its roadways. Another improvement the County would like to initiate is sprinkling its dirt roads in the dry season in order to help with grading of the roads. To accomplish this, the County needs to purchase a water truck. The County is experiencing increased pressure to improve its roadway system due to the submission of new subdivisions in the north.

Another component of the County's transportation system deals with air travel. There are three small airports in Catron County, one located approximately five miles outside of Reserve, another located outside Glenwood, and another outside Apache Creek. All three have small runways and very limited pilot amenities.

2. Water

The Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan represented a significant planning effort addressing water issues for a four County region, including Catron County. The Plan was completed in 2005 and provides background into the region's water resources as well as provides recommendations on how water planning should be conducted

in Southwest New Mexico. Per the template outlined in the Interstate Stream Commission's Regional Water Handbook (1994), the scope and content of the Plan addressed the following questions:

1. What is the water supply available to the region?
2. What is the region's current and projected demand for water?
3. What are the region's alternatives for using available supplies to meet projected future water demands and how will they be implemented?

a. Existing Conditions

According to the Southwest Regional Water Plan, the majority of surface water in the southwestern New Mexico region is derived from three primary river basins, two of which encompass the southern portion of Catron County. The basins that are located within Catron County include the Gila River Basin, the San Francisco River Basin. The surface water flows result from snow melt during the spring and monsoonal rainfall in the later summer. Another basin within Catron County includes the San Agustin Plains Basin in the eastern part of the County and is considered to be the most extensive groundwater resource in the northern portion of the Southwest New Mexico region. The Little Colorado Basin is also located in the northwestern portion of the County, an area with very little irrigated agriculture but larger amounts of stock grazing.

Water in the Southwestern New Mexico region has typically been used for irrigation and mining activities, which has required significant pumping. This pumping has outpaced the natural recharge in much of the Southwest New Mexico region. In particular, the largest water user in Catron County has traditionally been irrigated agriculture, which has accounted for 81% of water consumption throughout the County. Livestock represents the next highest user of water followed by domestic wells.

b. Catron County Water Users

The New Mexico Rural Water Association identifies seven community or public water systems operating in Catron County. These include the following:

Table 17: Catron County Municipal Community Water Systems

Water System Name	Well Field/Water Rights (acre feet per year)	Type of System	Estimated Population Served	Estimated Number of Connections
Aragon MDWCA	8.54	Unincorporated Community	45	12
Homestead Landowners Association	10	Unincorporated Community	40	53
Pie Town MDWCA	30	Municipal	84	48
Quemado Lake Estates	-	Unincorporated Community	20	76
Rancho Grande Water Works MDWCA	19.36	Municipal	240	142
Reserve Water Works	146.84	Municipal	318	220

c. Impact of Statewide Drought

For the past few years, the State of New Mexico has been experiencing a prolonged drought that has impacted the entire state and the southwestern United States. The drought became so severe that in 2003, the Governor issued a statewide drought emergency. As part of the drought emergency, a Drought Task Force was established to develop strategies to better deal with the drought. The winter and summer of 2005 were wetter with increased snow falls and rain throughout the state. Thus far, the summer of 2006 has provided additional significant rainfalls; however, it is still unclear whether the region is out of the drought. The June 2006 Drought Status Map, prepared by the New Mexico Drought Committee, indicated that conditions in the far southern portion of Catron County (including Glenwood) registered an emergency/severe status, while the remainder of Catron County registered a warning/moderate status. The Drought Monitor Index Map for August 2008 prepared by the US Department of Agriculture/National Drought Mitigation Service/Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration indicated that Catron County was abnormally dry despite the heavy rains that New Mexico received in late July/early August 2006.

In addition, the Governor's Drought Monitoring Work Group issued a report on Statewide drought conditions through July 2006, which included a measure of precipitation for several areas throughout the State. The report indicated that both the Reserve and Quemado areas were both below the normal precipitation from November 2005 to July 2006.

d. Water Quality

The Southwestern Regional Water Plan indicates that in general, the water quality in Catron County is good; however, there have been cases of point source contamination, contaminated supply wells, and areas of high saline content, particularly in the Zuni Salt Lake Area. The County can help to promote water quality by encouraging the implementation of well head protection programs among municipal and community water systems throughout Catron County.

e. Future Water Demand

The Southwest Regional Water Plan forecasts a flat to slow growth rate for Catron County. Growth that occurs can be attributed to subdivision platting and some development in the northern part of the County in the Quemado, Datil, and Pie Town

area. Since a slower growth rate is predicted for the County, despite the subdivision platting, the demand for water will continue to come from irrigated agriculture. Water, however, should be monitored since the trend of ranch land conversion to subdivision platting is becoming a trend in terms of land use. However, many of these subdivisions exist as “paper” subdivisions only, meaning that they have been platted but no significant development has taken place. The Southwest Regional Water Plan predicts that growth in the County is anticipated to be slow and not expected to substantially increase water demand.

The following table summarizes the anticipated water demand in Catron County by land use sector (numbers provided represent a high growth scenario) over the course of the next 35 years. For a detailed analysis, refer to the Southwest Regional Water Plan. It should be noted that the high growth rate scenario used by the water plan is only slightly higher than the BBER estimated growth, and much lower than the high growth scenario presented in the population section of this comprehensive plan.

Table 18: Water Demand

Land Use Sector	2010 Water Use (acre-feet)	2020 Water Use (acre-feet)	2030 Water Use (acre-feet)	2040 Water Use (acre-feet)
Commercial	46	49	49	50
Industrial	8	8	8	8
Mining	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Power	0	0	0	0
Irrigated Land	22,764	22,764	22,764	22,764
Livestock	349	367	386	405
Domestic	301	337	377	422

Source: 2005 Southwest Regional Water Plan

The table indicates that in a high growth rate scenario for each sector that irrigated land will demand the most water, however, demand in this sector is anticipated to be stable. The livestock and domestic demand is anticipated to increase every 10 year period. The projections also assume the re-establishment of mining activities

and/or revitalization of the timber industry (such as the type using smaller diameter trees).

f. State Water Planning

The Interstate Stream Commission recently completed a State Water Plan in 2003. The State of New Mexico has made it a policy to integrate its water goals through coordination with all levels of government. Section C.10. of the 2003 New Mexico State Water Plan states:

“Promote strategies and mechanisms for achieving coordination with all levels of government.” (page 46)

As part of its implementation strategies for this goal statement, the Office of the State Engineer and Interstate Stream Commission will promote cooperation and communication in order to ensure that state and county policies are consistent in achieving the aim of ensuring an adequate water supply for all New Mexicans. In order to promote this cooperation, the Office of the State Engineer/ Interstate Stream Commission offers counties and municipalities technical assistance in implementing water conservation measures and funding resources for carrying out these programs. One program particularly relevant to Catron County is the Agricultural Conservation Fund, which provides farmers and ranchers low-interest loans to convert current irrigation systems to water-efficient systems. The program is managed by the Interstate Stream Commission, (505) 827-6103.

g. Water Planning Alternatives and Recommendations

The Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan’s Steering Committee developed a set of alternatives that could be used for water planning in the region. The Committee separated the alternatives and recommendations into two areas; priority alternatives and other alternatives, not requiring as much analysis. The priority alternatives include:

Priority Alternatives

- Municipal conservation and management (applicable to Village of Reserve and other Catron County municipal water associations)
- Agricultural Water Conservation
- Watershed Management
- Enhancement of surface recharge



- Provide water for natural riparian and aquatic habitat on the Gila and San Francisco Rivers
- Aquifer storage for recovery of Gila River flows
- Water banking
- Groundwater development

Additional Alternatives

- Water quality protection
- Groundwater management planning
- Border groundwater management
- Rain harvesting
- Industrial conservation
- Restrictions on domestic wells

A full analysis of these alternatives are located in the Southwest New Mexico Regional Water Plan. Catron County, in cooperation with the Interstate Stream Commission, engineers, and water providers should review the alternatives to decide upon a proper course of action that would be appropriate for the County.

3. Wastewater

The majority of residents in Catron County are on septic systems for liquid waste disposal. The Village of Reserve has its own sewer system. It is the responsibility of the County to ensure that development follows a safe and efficient method of liquid waste disposal, which it does through its Subdivision Regulations. Limiting the number of septic tanks, promoting large lot development, and encouraging the use of community liquid waste disposal systems are all ways to protect the ground water from septic system contamination.

4. Communications Infrastructure

Another significant issue that County residents identified during the planning process is that the County suffers from a lack of communications infrastructure, namely cell phone service. The lack of cell phone service, residents believe, contributes to the sense of isolation for visitors and is an impediment to economic development. Some residents also feel that having no cell phone service also is a health and safety issue, as demonstrated by the recent fires, in which some residents were

cut off from all communication. County residents who attended the meetings indicated that the County should work with cell service companies to bring cell phone service to Catron County.



Typical Lattice Cell Tower

Internet access is available in the County but the quality and speed of the service varies depending on the location in the County. Some County residents expressed the need for better, faster, and more reliable internet service, especially for those who work out of their home. Home based businesses are a viable means for economic development and improving internet service would greatly assist some County residents involved in this activity.

It is important to note that both cell service and internet service are functions of the private sector, meaning that private service providers must make the business decision to locate cell towers and fiber optics within the County. The role of the County should be one of active recruitment and ensuring that restrictions do not prohibit these services from locating in the County. Catron County should also work with the US Forest Service on establishing emergency cell towers that could serve residents during emergencies. Temporary towers were placed in the County during the fires of 2006.

5. Catron County ICIP for Infrastructure

Most of Catron County's ICIP with regard to infrastructure deals with the need for improvements to water storage capacity and capability for fire fighting. The table on the following page provides an overview of the infrastructure related items, for which the County has requested Capital Outlays:

Table 19: Capital Outlays

Project	Requested Outlay	Justification for Project
Wildwood Substation Water Tank	\$90,000	Purchase and installation of 75,000 – 85,000 gallon tank for fire suppression. Few water resources are available in the area to provide sufficient water for a large fire. A tank would allow for trucks to be filled numerous times
Drilling of Water Well for Wildwood Substation	\$11,000	Drill and equip a well for fire suppression. A water source is not available at the substation.
Water Tank for Datil Fire Department	\$90,449	Purchase and install a 100,000 gallon water storage tank for fire suppression. Few water resources are available in the area to provide sufficient water for a large fire. A tank would allow for trucks to be filled numerous times.

The wildfires that struck eastern Arizona and Catron County in the summer of 2006 underscored the need that the County has for improving and expanding its fire fighting capabilities.

6. Goals, Objectives, and Implementation

a. Goals and Objectives

Infrastructure Goal 1. Improve and maintain County roadways and work with the State of New Mexico Department of Transportation for improvements to the State Highway system through the County.

Objective 1a. Through the subdivision ordinance, ensure that all subdivisions have two or more ingress/egress points into the subdivision, unless waived by the responsible fire department.

Objective 1b. Establish a priority system for identifying County roadways that should be improved on an annual basis and as funds become available.

Objective 1c. Ensure that all County and State roads are passable during times of inclement weather in order to avoid isolating subdivisions, homes, and other parts of the County.

Objective 1d. Communicate regularly and work with other entities such as the State NMDOT, Village of Reserve, and surrounding counties to address regional transportation issues.

Infrastructure Goal 2. Plan for the efficient use of water throughout Catron County.

Objective 2a. Prepare a Catron County Forty-Year Water Plan and Catron County Drought Management Plan.

Objective 2b. Review and implement the recommended alternatives from the Southwestern New Mexico Regional Water Plan that are appropriate for Catron County water providers and users.

Objective 2c. Protect water quality in Catron County by implementing a well head protection program and/or other actions designed to ensure the quality of the County's potable water.

Objective 2d. Complete current infrastructure projects involving water supply and plan for new improvements such as new wells and water tanks for under served areas.

Infrastructure Goal 3. Improve and enhance communication infrastructure in Catron County.

Objective 3a. Initiate communication with the New Mexico Economic Development Department to identify incentives directed at communication providers.

Objective 3b. Prepare informational materials aimed at describing the market demographics for cell phone service to potential providers.

Objective 3c. Prepare a cell tower ordinance to identify standards for cell towers in order to ensure compatibility between land uses and cell towers in Catron County.

Objective 3d. Work with the US Forest Service and emergency service providers to identify locations for cell towers in Catron County.

Objective 3e. Plan for an emergency communications network, including cell phone service, in the event the County is faced with a significant fire or other disaster.

b. Implementation Measures

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 1. Catron County should develop a Road Maintenance Plan that assesses the condition of all county roads in order to develop a prioritization schedule for future maintenance and improvement projects. The Plan should also address strategies for keeping roadways in the County passable during periods of inclement weather.

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 2. Catron County should supplement the Southwest Regional Water Plan with a specific Catron County Forty-Year Water Plan that includes strategies for ensuring a sustainable water supply of high quality and include strategies for efficient water usage.

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 3. Catron County should follow through on the infrastructure improvements related to water storage capacity listed in its ICIP and begin to plan for additional water storage improvements in areas with high risks of wildfires.

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 4. Catron County should take the initiative in working with water providers to implement a well head protection program for wells within the County.

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 5. Catron County should prepare and implement a cell tower ordinance that provides regulation for the siting of cell towers in the County while providing predictability for cell phone providers. Adoption of a cell tower ordinance before cell towers are located in the County could help to maintain the scenic beauty of the County while still providing for their location. As part of the ordinance, the County should work with the US Forest Service to identify areas appropriate for cell phone locations. The scope of work of the ordinance should include speaking to cell phone service providers on items needed for locating cell phone service in an area and to ensure that the ordinance is not overly restrictive, but serves the needs of the County.

Infrastructure Implementation Measure 6. Catron County should initiate a program designed to attract cell phone providers to the County. The program should demonstrate need and contain demographics on the County population, income, and employment.