



# Growth Management Report

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El Paso County, Texas | 2022

# Acknowledgments

## Commissioners Court

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David Stout, Precinct 2

Iliana Holguin, Precinct 3

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This document includes four chapters and an appendix. The Introduction provides an overview of El Paso County and lays out the planning context; the Growth Analysis illustrates trends and tells the story of growth throughout the County; the Public Safety Analysis provides an overview of public safety services in the County; finally, recommendations are provided for the County to consider.

# 01

## Introduction

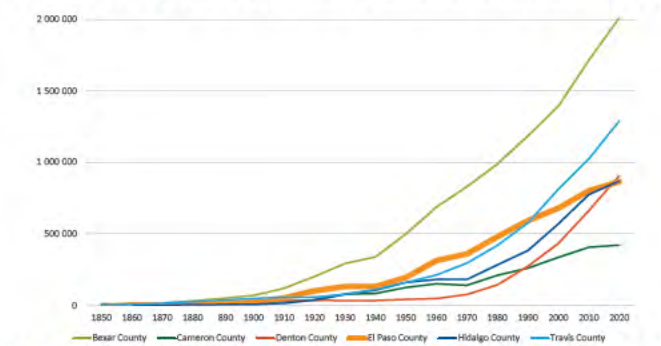
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# 1. Introduction

The *El Paso Growth Management Report* examines the growth occurring throughout El Paso County, Texas, studies public services provision, and introduces strategies to manage regional growth for a thriving future.

El Paso is growing steadily. This growth is taking place within the City of El Paso, several smaller municipalities in El Paso County, and in unincorporated areas of the County. Growth impacts many aspects of governance, facilities, and services.

To ensure long term high quality provision of cost-effective services and facilities, the County has analyzed growth trends and developed recommendations that seek to protect and enhance quality of life throughout the County.

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# What is Growth Management?

Growth management is a set of planning tools and strategies the County, in coordination with other local and regional jurisdictions, uses to ensure the current and future populations receive adequate services, facilities, and infrastructure as the region grows.

In communities around the country, these tools and strategies consist of policies such as:

- Level of service considerations for infrastructure and services
- Municipal annexation policy
- Growth tracking and monitoring
- Subdivision and development regulations
- Preservation of farmland and open space
- Stimulation of rural economies
- Impact fees and special assessment districts
- Density transfer programs

Growth management is implemented through a variety of municipal and county plans and programs, and requires coordination across multiple jurisdictions. These plans include comprehensive plans, small area plans, corridor plans, master plans, parks and trails plans, and transportation plans.

Growth management is important because how we grow impacts traffic, fiscal balance, economic development, stormwater runoff, air and water quality, environmental sustainability and resilience, quality of life and transportation options, social equity, and cost of living.

Effectively managing growth throughout El Paso County requires establishing efficient development patterns that support the County's growth objectives. The County does not have the power of zoning within most of its jurisdiction, however subdivision regulations, capital investments, service provision, and dialogue with private and public sector stakeholders can steer development and shape its form.



Growth management is a circular process that involves collecting and analyzing data, reporting results, comparing those results to anticipated growth expectations, and adjusting or adopting policies and strategies to address new challenges and opportunities.

# How to Use This Document

This report is intended to provide decision-makers with a snapshot in time of current population and household characteristics, growth trends, and geographic accessibility to services. Importantly, this document also provides projections for future growth, based upon current growth trends.

Projections are not crystal balls, and should be updated as conditions in the county change. But they are helpful in the process of ensuring the county is able to provide high quality services for current and future residents over the long run.

In addition to providing analyses of trends and conditions, this document also includes recommendations to the County government for potential future actions that could help manage growth. Those recommendations include:

- Rewrite the subdivision regulations
- Convene an Interjurisdictional Working Group
- Consider a Municipal Extent Map
- Consider creating a complete streets policy
- Develop small area plans in strategic locations
- Encourage use of fiscal impact studies



## Residents & Business Owners

Residents and business owners should use this document as a resource for county plans, policies, and strategies, as well as growth trends and allocation of services and infrastructure.

## Developers & Landowners

Developers and landowners in the County should use this document as a resource to help guide future developments, including reference to the other listed plans and policies.

## County Officials & Jurisdictional Partners

County officials and jurisdictional partners should reference this document for capital planning and consideration of the recommended strategies.

# Jurisdictions in El Paso County

## El Paso Jurisdictions

Interjurisdictional coordination is key to good governance. El Paso has multiple abutting and overlapping jurisdictions. El Paso County government provides some services and infrastructure countywide, including within municipalities and special districts. Some services and infrastructure, particularly those related to planning and development, are primarily provided outside of other jurisdictions and within unincorporated areas. It also serves a role as a convener, finding solutions and resolving potential disputes between the multiple smaller jurisdictions.

El Paso County is uniquely situated within and adjacent to multiple states and an international border. Hudspeth County, Texas abuts El Paso to the east. The state of New Mexico, Dona Ana and Otero Counties, border El Paso to the northwest and north. Ciudad Juárez, within the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, borders El Paso to the South.

Within El Paso County there are seven incorporated municipalities, as shown on the next page. The county may partner with certain municipalities to provide service delivery, while others provide those services on their own entirely to their residents.

Finally, there are also numerous local governments throughout El Paso County called special purpose districts, providing a variety of services and holding the authority to raise revenue through taxes, user fees, and debt issuance.

These include:

- El Paso Community College District
- University Medical Center Hospital District
- 2 Emergency Services Districts
- 11 Paseo del Este Municipal Utility Districts
- Horizon Regional MUD
- El Paso County Water Improvement District #1 (Irrigation District)
- El Paso County Water Control and Improvement District #4 (Fabens Water District)
- Hacienda Del Norte Water District
- Lower Valley Water District
- Tornillo Water District

## Extra-Territorial Jurisdictions

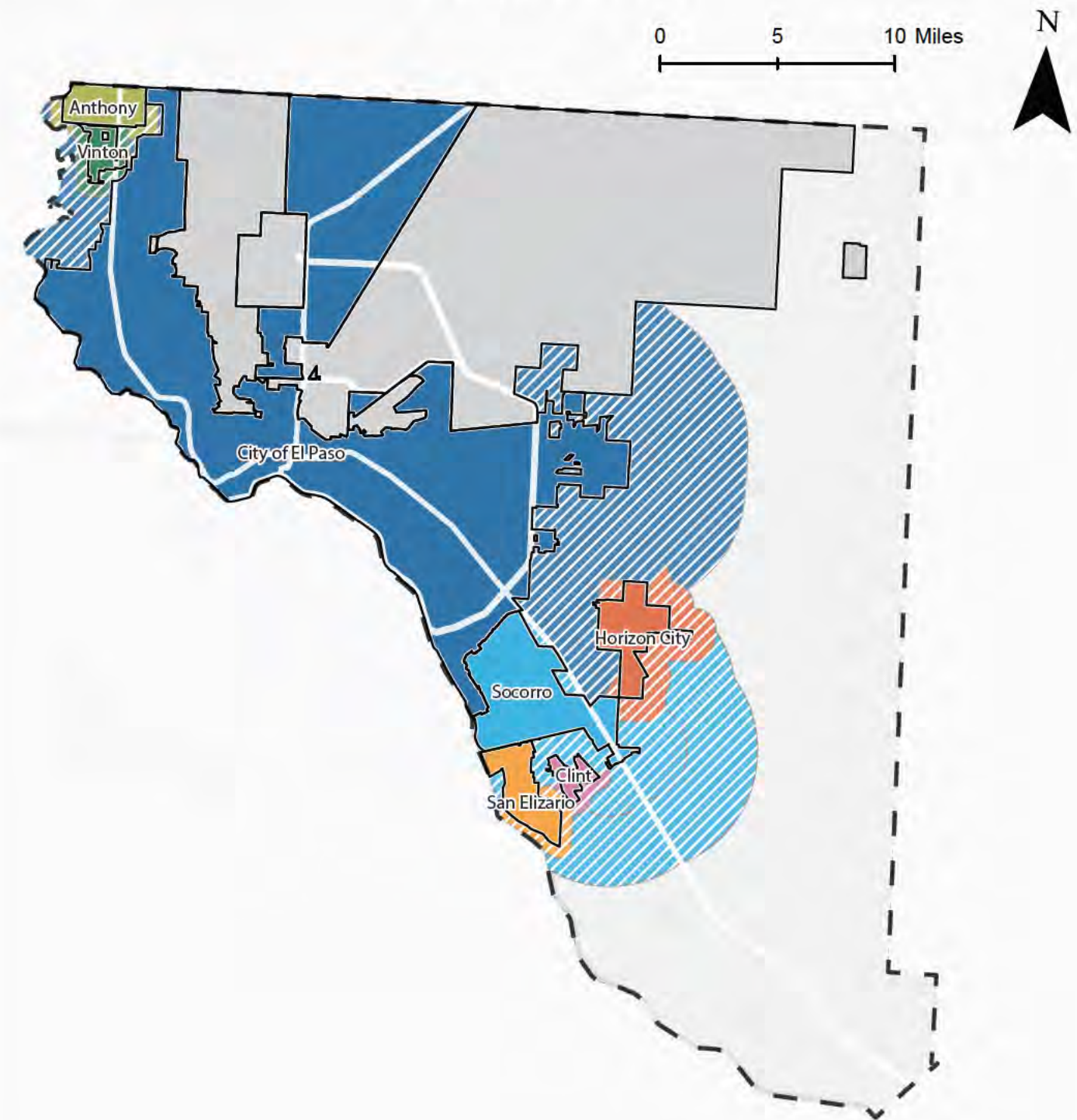
The Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is a designated buffer area located just outside of municipal limits. Each municipality is afforded an ETJ by the Texas Local Government Code as a way of defining potential growth and future service boundaries. An ETJ boundary cannot overlap with another municipality's ETJ, and property owners cannot elect which boundary they want to be part of, unless mutually agreed upon by the municipalities.

The extent of an ETJ is dependent on the population size of the municipality. A municipality's population only incorporates those within the City Limits and does not include the residents within the ETJ. An ETJ can extend as little as one half mile (less than 5,000 inhabitants) or as much as 5 miles (100,000 inhabitants or more). Although municipalities regulate certain things within their ETJ, those areas are still part of the unincorporated county.

Municipalities control land division and other elements of the subdivision process, however, unlike many other states, municipalities cannot apply zoning and land use regulations in their ETJ. Texas counties also do not have zoning authority, with some exceptions for certain areas. The municipalities and El Paso County may abate public nuisances, such as dumping, noxious odors, and junk vehicles, if they pose a danger to public health.



## El Paso County Municipal and Extra-Territorial Jurisdictions



# Relationship to Strategic Plan

Although El Paso County does not have its own long range comprehensive plan, it does have a strategic plan. The El Paso County Strategic Plan provides goals, objectives, and milestone activities to guide County government decision-making from 2020 to 2024. The Strategic Plan is the County's highest level policy document and provides guidance to other planning efforts. Below are the County's Vision and Mission. The next page includes Strategic Plan goals and objectives that are most relevant to growth management.



## El Paso County Vision

*Our unique heritage, diverse economy, and unified regional leadership provide an extraordinary quality of life for all.*

## El Paso County Mission

*Delivering sound and exceptional public service to the people of El Paso County through judicious, efficient, and responsive government, and the conscientious development of ideas that produce compassionate solutions to our community's obligations, challenges, and ever changing demands.*

## Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives



### 2. Transform Economic Development

- 2.1: Increase Commercial Tax Base
- 2.2: Focus on Attracting Higher Wage Industries
- 2.8: Attract and Support more options for transit/connectivity direct routes (flights, train, etc.)
- 2.11: Invest in a big transformative project that attracts investment, business, people, like the San Antonio river restoration project
- 2.15: Increase Agricultural related initiatives



### 3. Increase Tourism

- 3.1: Implement Mission Trail Master Plan with partners and earn UNESCO designation
- 3.2: Further historic preservation efforts including completing the downtown historic district survey, the countywide historic assets master plan, and implementing a robust heritage tourism marketing plan
- 3.3: Invest in Ascarate "Meadows" and in the all-abilities playground and increase visitors to the park



### 4. Upgrade Infrastructure

- 4.1: Build infrastructure to meet the needs of the community
- 4.2: Expand the Public Transit System
- 4.4: Downtown revitalization participation via world-class County facility and garage (new space) and improved courthouse (green space, aesthetics, offerings, etc.)
- 4.5: Support the Development of fiber infrastructure to create platform for tech boom, higher incomes, and increased employment
- 4.6: Partner with utilities to push service to non-incorporated areas
- 4.7: Build sustainable neighborhoods and parks for families to thrive
- 4.8: Promote Sustainable Development



### 5. Promote Collaboration and Engagement

- 5.3: Collaborate internally to increase cohesion and be able to obtain results
- 5.4: Collaborate externally to achieve better outcomes
- 5.5: Community and market the County broadly



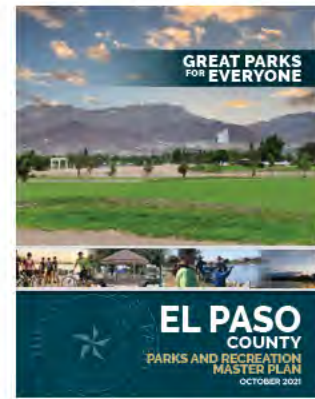
### 8. Strengthen Financial Health

- 8.1: Align Revenue and Expense Growth

# Relevant Plans and Policies

## County-Adopted Plans and Policies

Several key planning, policy, and regulatory documents contribute to planning and managing growth in El Paso. Below are key County-adopted plans and policies. Additionally, the County's **Subdivision Regulations**, accompanied by design standards, are among the strongest tools for managing growth and development in unincorporated El Paso County. Other plans: The **Airport Business Development Plan** and **County MTP**.



### Parks and Recreation Master Plan

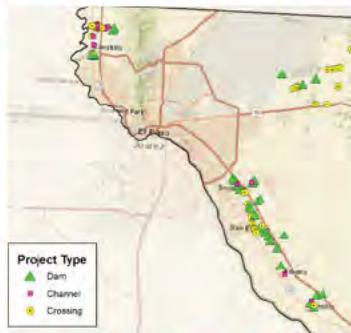


**Jurisdiction:**  
El Paso County  
**Year Adopted:**  
2021

**Plan Content:**  
The plan includes a parks inventory, needs assessment, community preferences, recommendations, and implementation program.



### Stormwater Master Plan



**Jurisdiction:**  
El Paso County  
**Year Adopted:**  
2022

**Plan Content:**  
The plan includes critical flood hazard mitigation projects throughout the County and guides future capital investments that enhance health, safety and welfare.

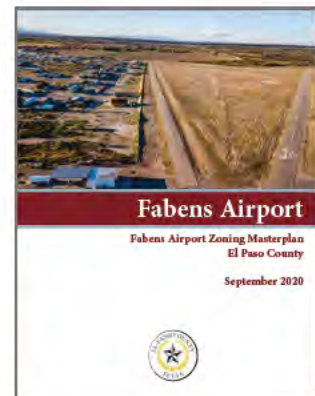


### Mission Trail Master Plan



**Jurisdiction:**  
El Paso County  
**Year Adopted:**  
2019

**Plan Content:**  
The plan recommends complete centers around each mission, protecting historic and agricultural assets, adding destinations, trails, and street connectivity.



### Fabens Airport Zoning Master Plan



**Jurisdiction:**  
El Paso County  
**Year Adopted:**  
2020

**Plan Content:**  
Provides guidance to El Paso County to implement zoning around the County owned and managed Fabens Airport, as permitted by Chapter 241 of the Texas Local Government Code.

## Other Key Plans and Policies

Several plans have been adopted by communities within, adjacent, or overlapping El Paso. Below are four plans that influence transportation, land use, and development patterns within and abutting El Paso County's jurisdiction.



### Plan El Paso



**Jurisdiction:**  
City of El Paso  
**Year Adopted:**  
2012

**Plan Content:**  
The City of El Paso's comprehensive plan, touching on a broad array of topics. Includes the Future Land Use Map. Potential update within the next several years.



### Shaping Our Horizon: 2030

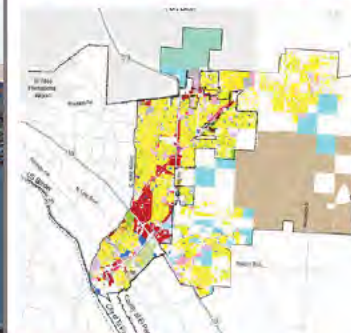


**Jurisdiction:**  
Town of Horizon  
**Year Adopted:**  
2020

**Plan Content:**  
The Town of Horizon's Comprehensive and Strategic Plan includes the town's highest level policy direction and includes the Town's Future Land Use Map.



### East Side Master Plan



**Jurisdiction:**  
City of El Paso  
**Year Adopted:**  
2019

**Plan Content:**  
This plan contains plenty of relevant analysis and policy in and around the Mission Ridge focus area of the county's unincorporated jurisdiction within the City of El Paso's ETJ.



### RMS 2050



**Jurisdiction:**  
El Paso MPO  
**Year Adopted:**  
2022

**Plan Content:**  
The El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization's new Metropolitan Transportation Plan, also known as the Regional Mobility Strategy.

## 2. Growth Trends & Conditions

This section helps tell the story of El Paso's recent growth and current development conditions. It includes countywide trends and introduces six focus areas to illustrate growth patterns in unincorporated areas.

El Paso's growth is occurring unevenly across the county, driven in large part by availability and location of large tracts of unencumbered land, countywide economic growth, accessibility of services, particularly water and sewer, and the motivations of large landowners. As a result, significant growth is occurring in targeted areas.

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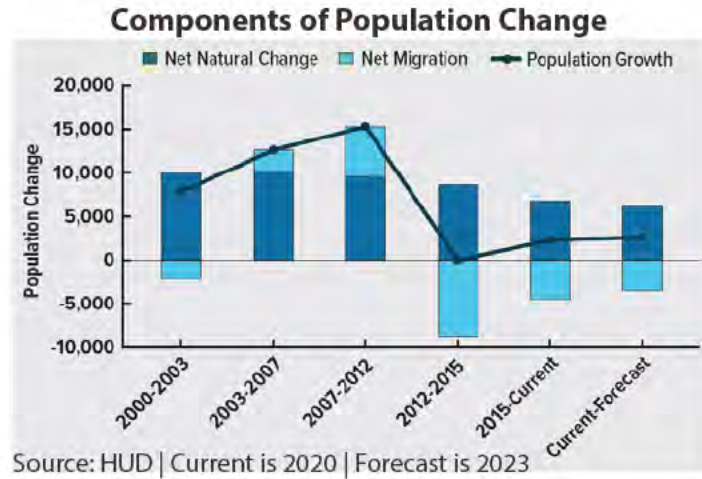
Growth Projections 30



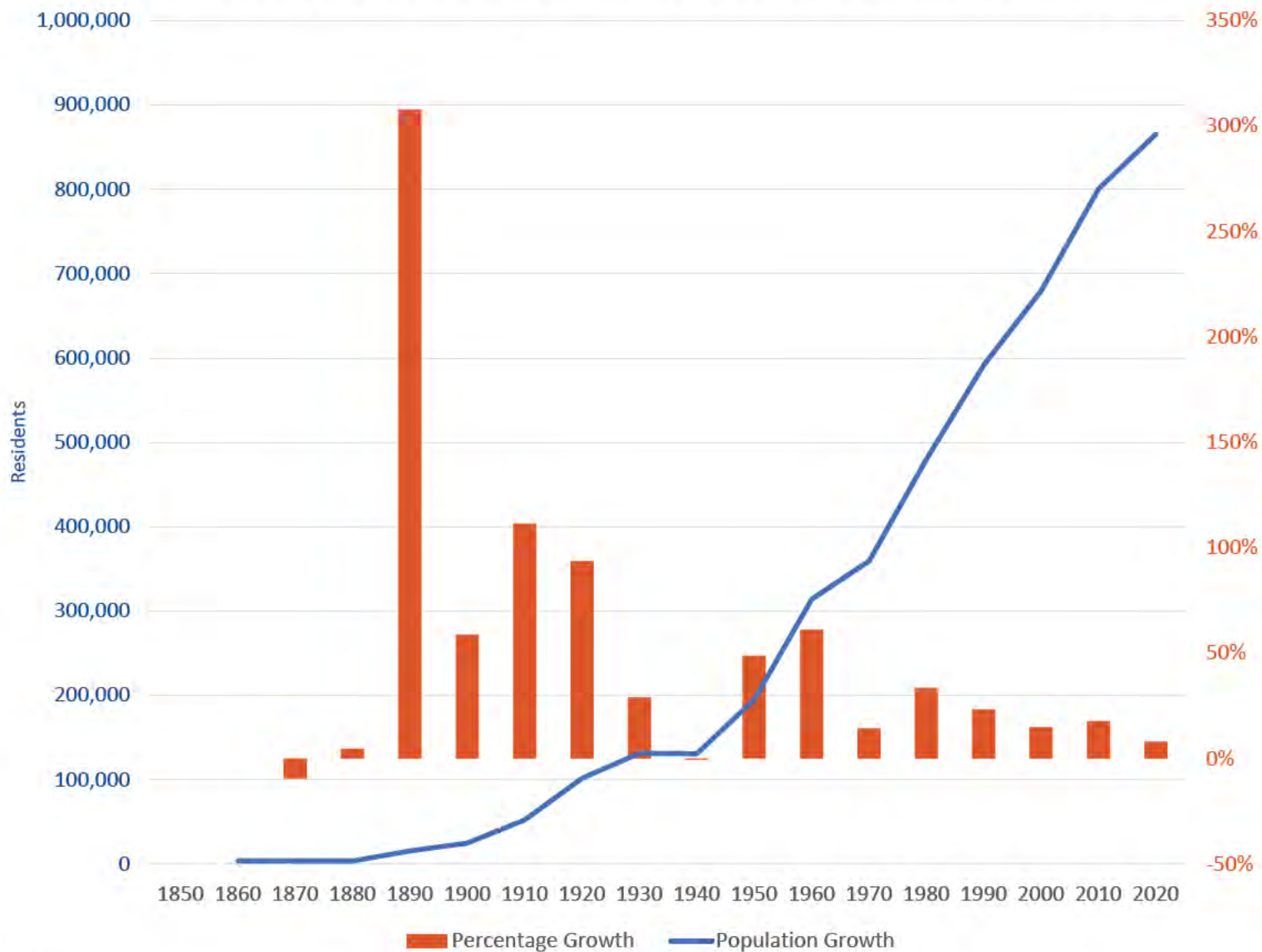


# Countywide Growth Trends

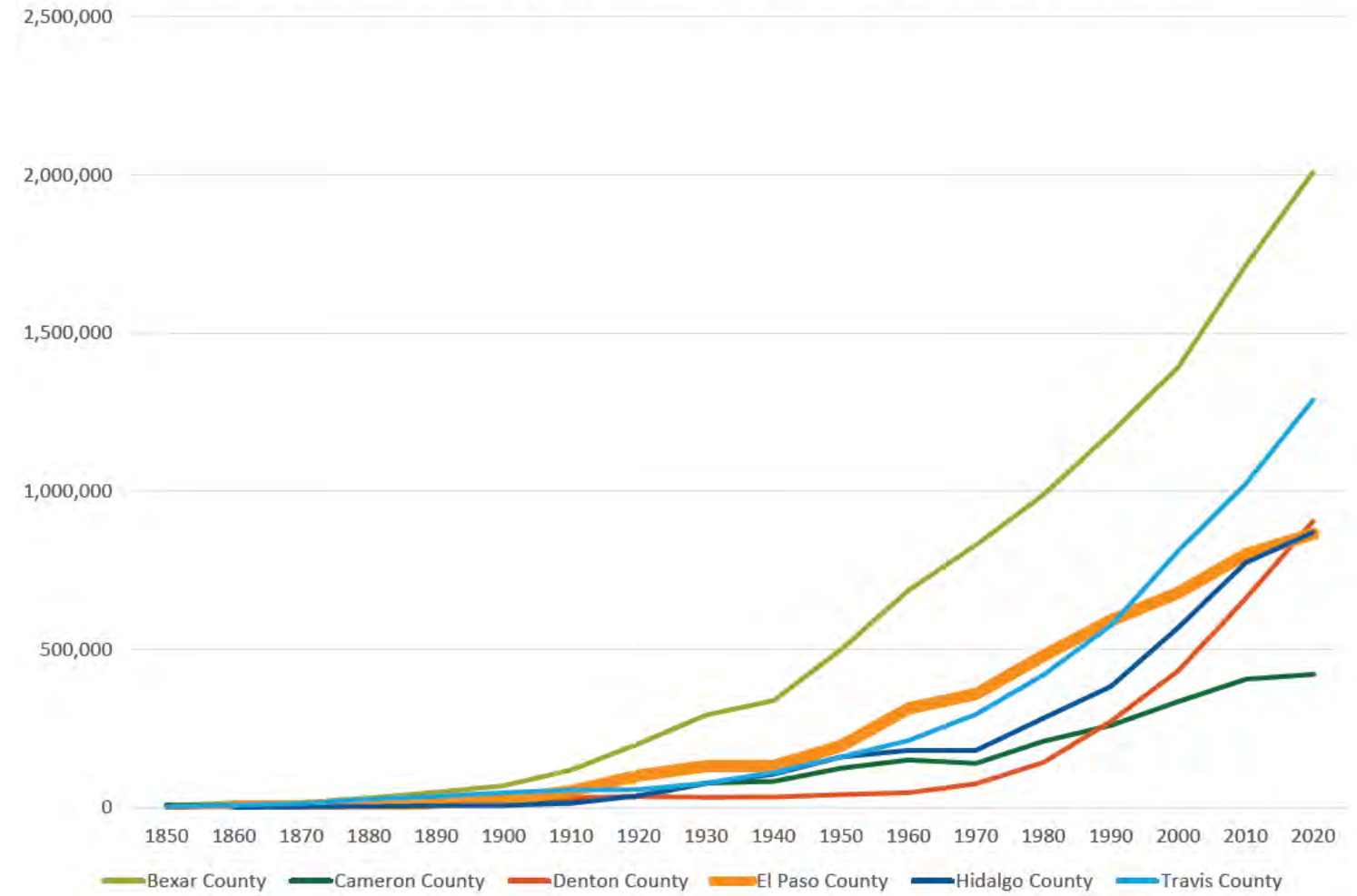
The chart below displays two metrics: (1) The total number of El Paso County residents is shown on the left Y-axis, which corresponds with the blue line. (2) The percentage growth, calculated between each decade is displayed on the right Y-axis, which corresponds with the orange bar chart. It shows steady growth over the past several decades. El Paso grew rapidly in the 2000s (18% growth) and then growth slowed between 2010 and 2020 (8% growth) due to net outmigration (chart on right).



## Total Population, Growth in El Paso County



# Population Growth in Texas Counties



The chart above displays a comparison of growth between El Paso County and five other comparable Texas counties. Cameron, El Paso, and Hidalgo Counties are all border counties. Bexar County (San Antonio), Denton County, and Travis County (Austin), are more central to Texas, but similar in population and containing a major central city.

This chart shows that the border counties have grown relatively slowly and steadily compared with the other three. In 1980, El Paso County was the second most populous county of the six and today it is the fifth most populous.

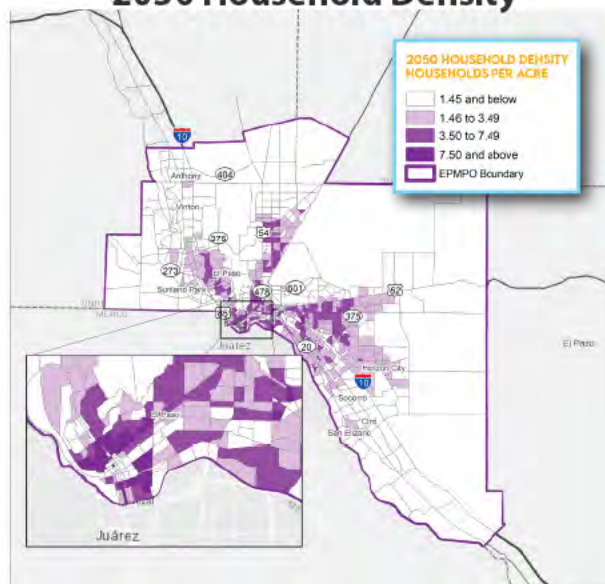


The El Paso MPO's Regional Mobility Strategy includes projections for household and job growth throughout El Paso County, including the maps displayed below.

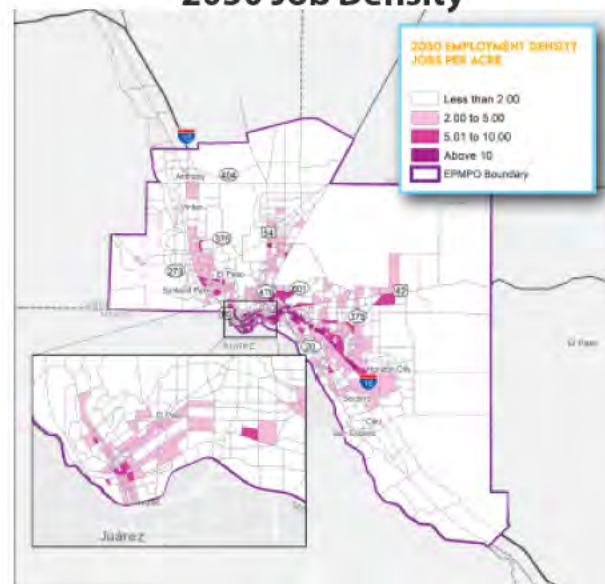
Due to the availability of land on the City of El Paso's periphery, those areas are projected to undergo higher percentages of growth than built-out and established existing neighborhoods.

Note that projections represent a single scenario and that growth can occur differently, intentionally or unintentionally.

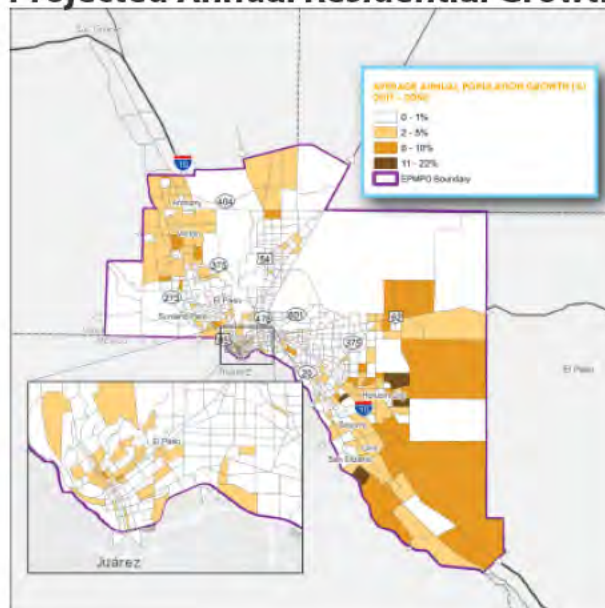
**2050 Household Density**



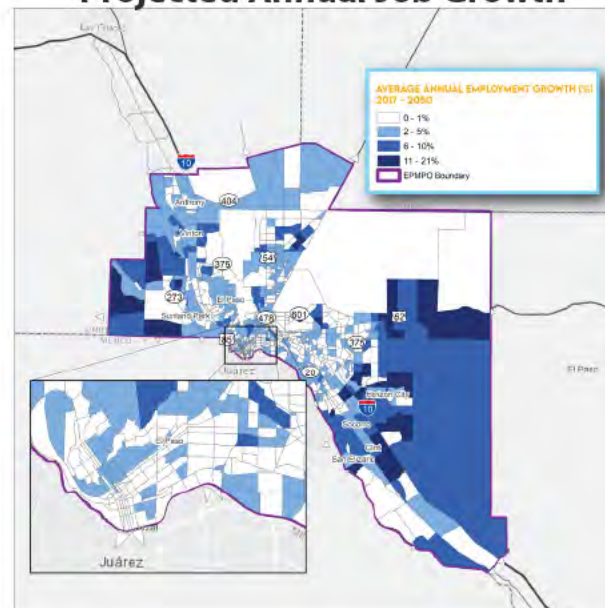
**2050 Job Density**



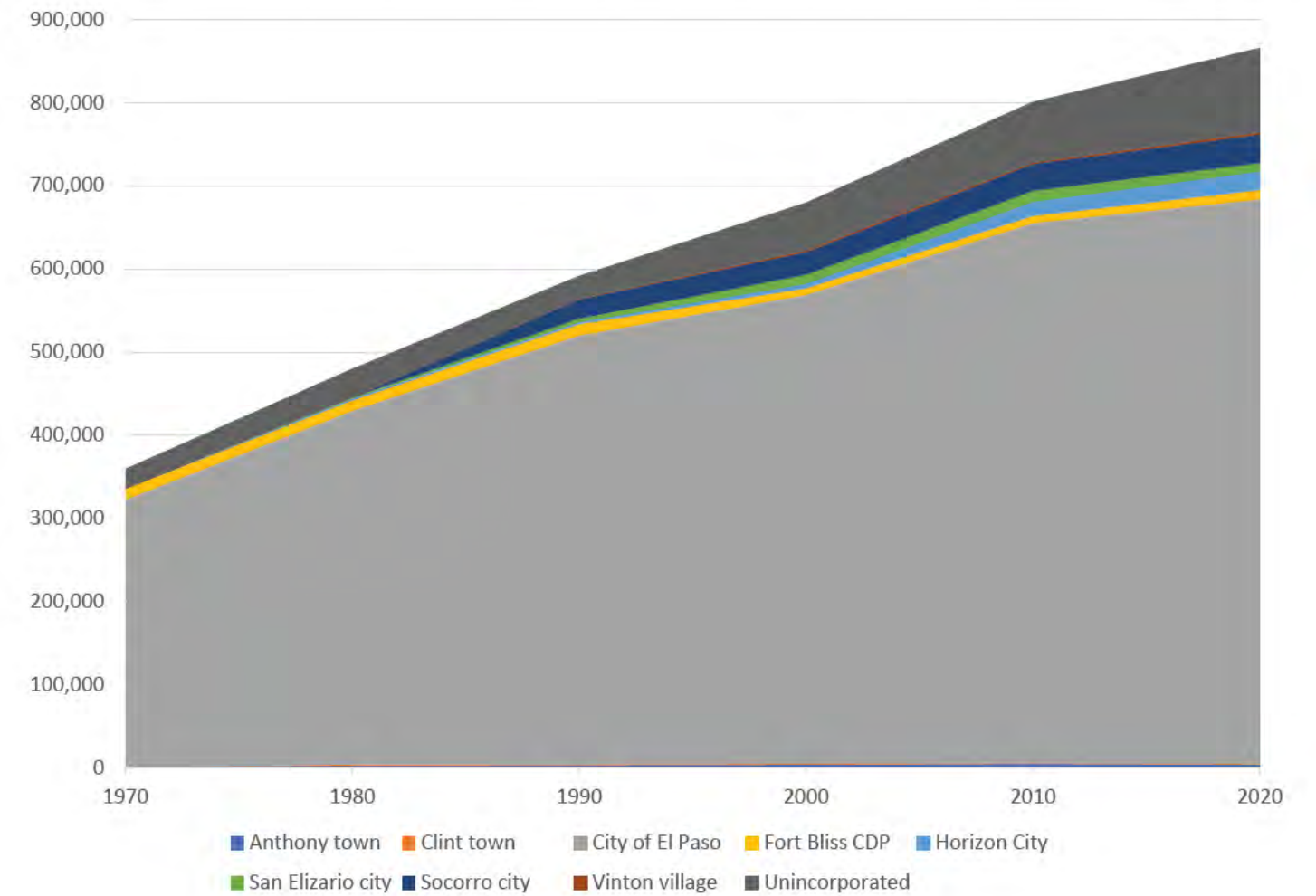
**Projected Annual Residential Growth**



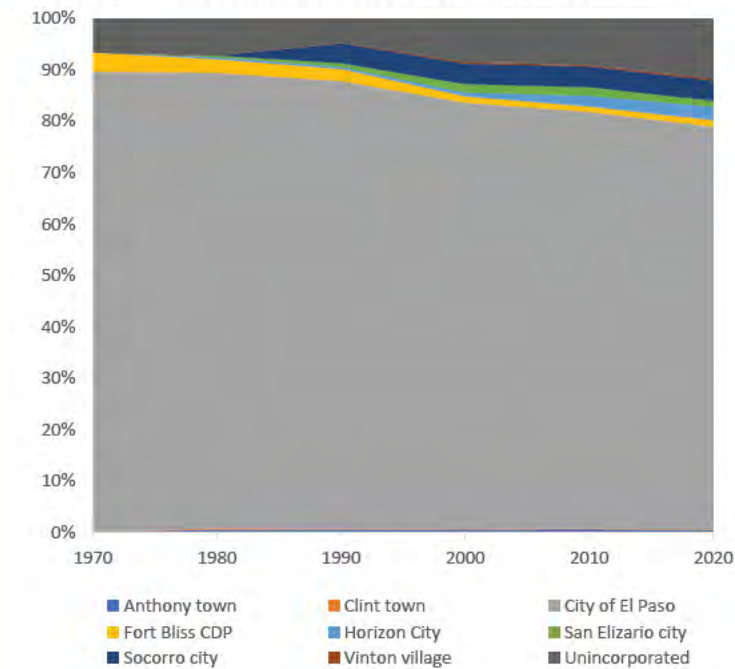
**Projected Annual Job Growth**



# Total Population in El Paso



# Proportion of Countywide Population



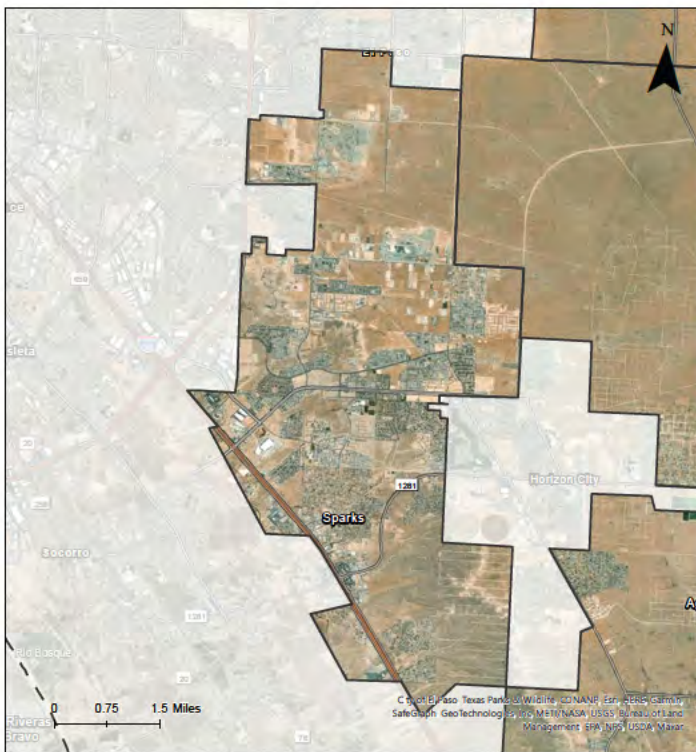
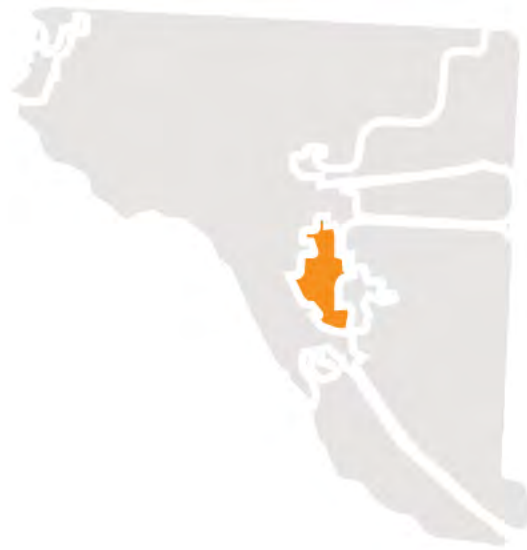
Since 1970, El Paso County has seen uneven amounts of growth within the City of El Paso, Fort Bliss, other newly incorporated cities, towns, and villages, and within unincorporated areas of the County. The chart above shows that most residential population is located with the City of El Paso, and represents its centrality of a monocentric County.

The chart to the left illustrates the same information as a proportion of the total Countywide population. It shows that since 1970, even as the City of El Paso continues annexing land (despite state law changes), a greater proportion of population is now located in smaller cities and unincorporated areas than the City of El Paso.

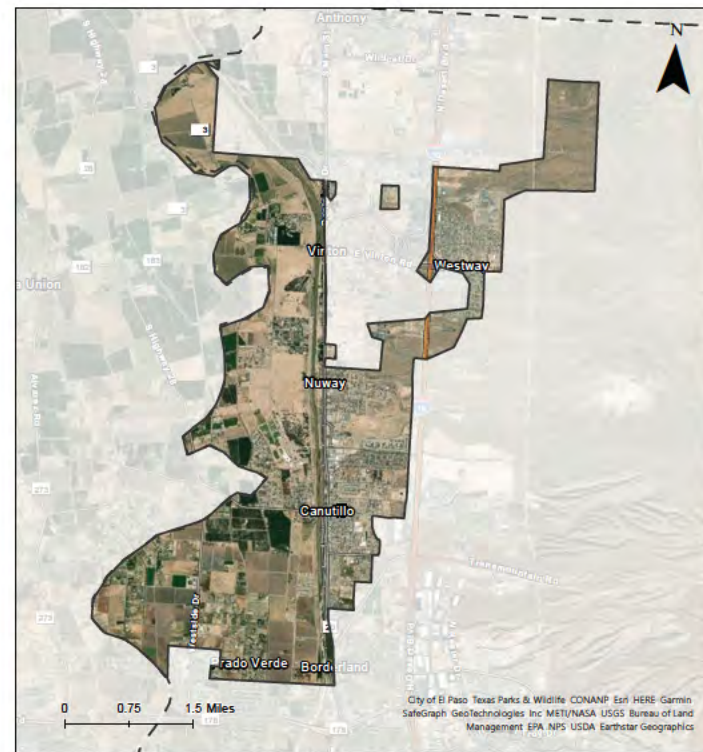
# Growth in Unincorporated Areas

This section examines growth taking place in El Paso County's unincorporated areas. To better understand growth trends, six focus areas are used, as listed below and on the following two pages.

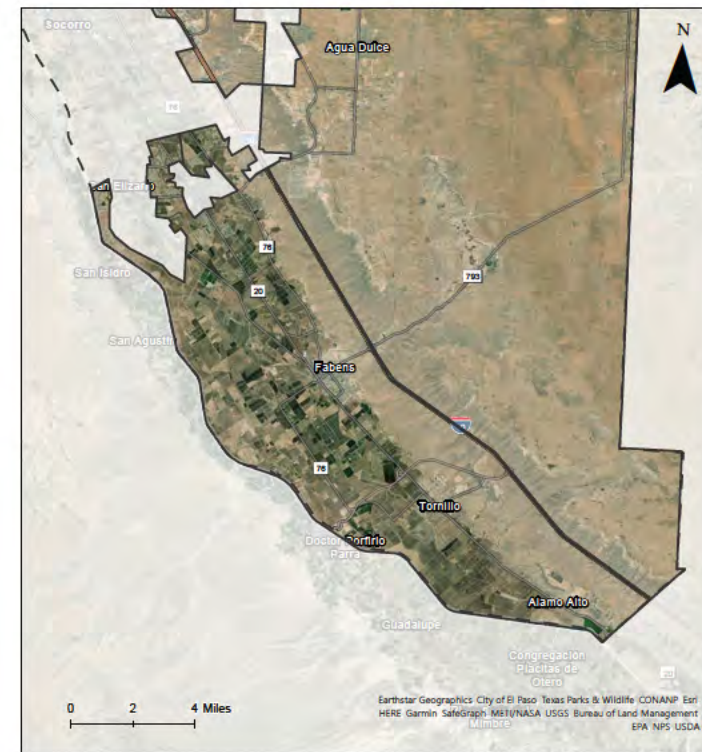
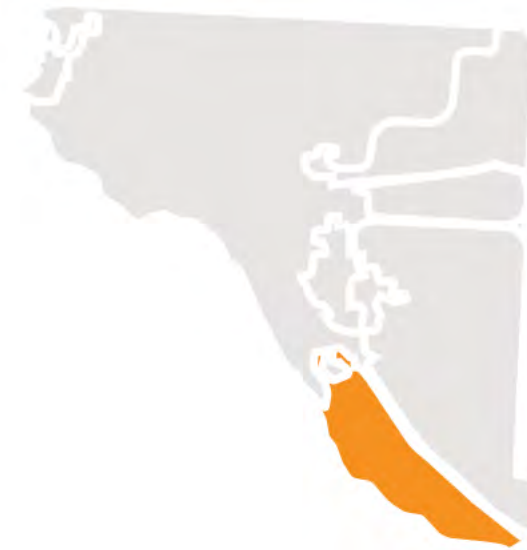
## Mission Ridge



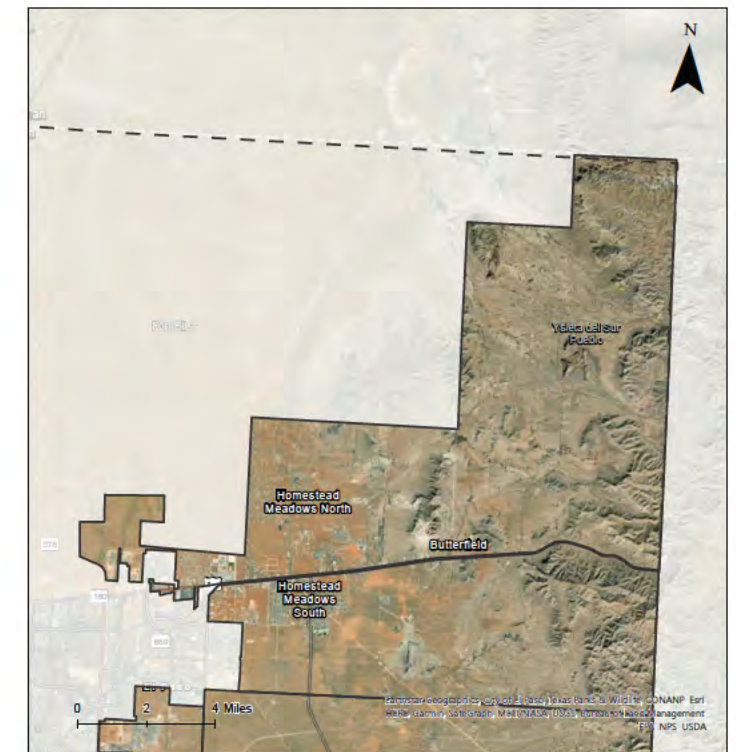
## Northwest



## Cotton Valley



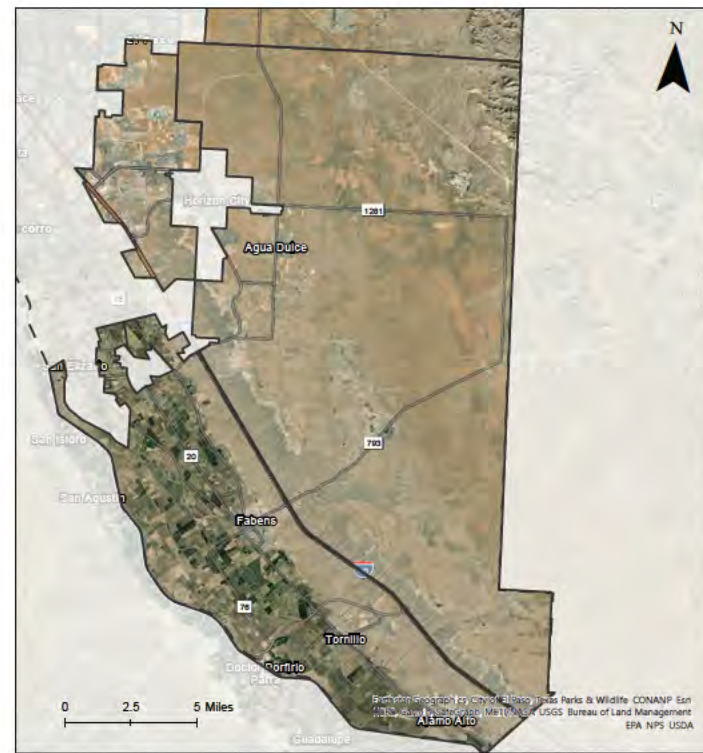
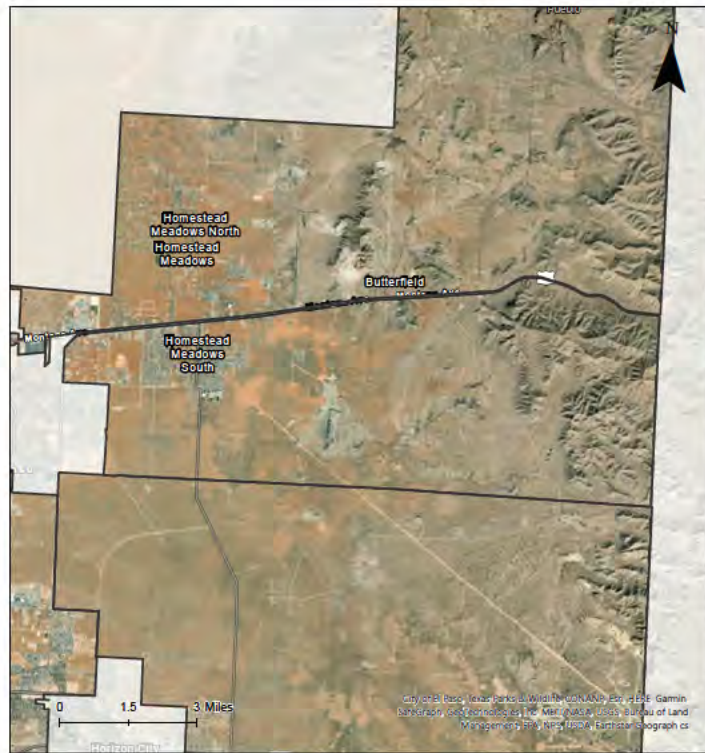
## Montana Vista - North



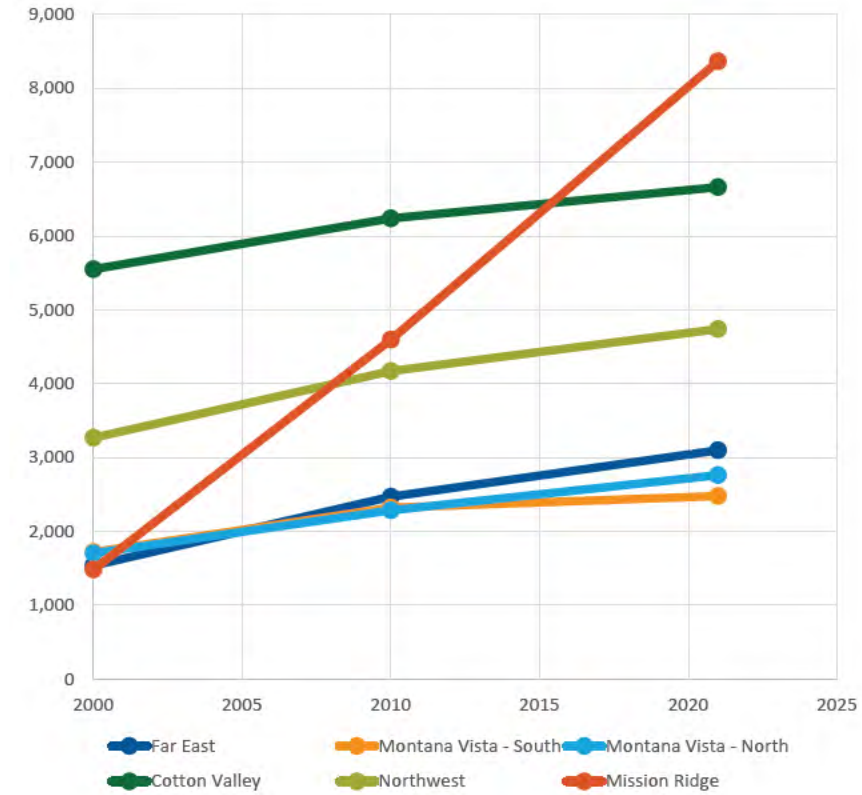
## Montana Vista - South



## Far East



## Housing Units in County Focus Areas

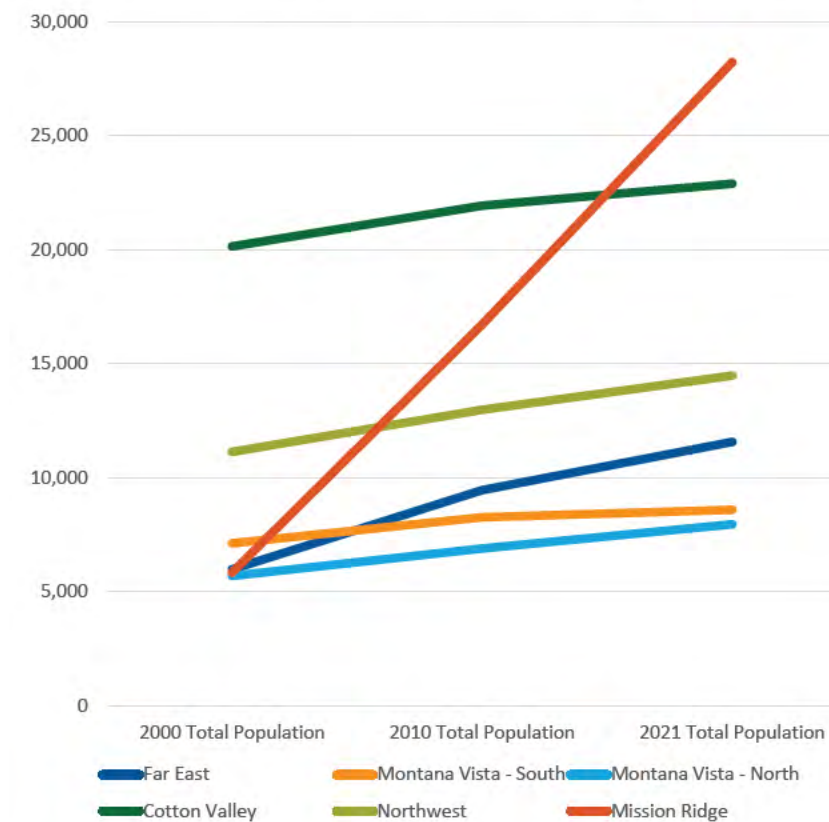


Housing units have increased steadily throughout El Paso's unincorporated areas, with a greater increase between 2000 and 2010 than 2010 to 2020 in most focus areas.

Growth within the Mission Ridge focus area was substantially higher and grew from 1,500 units in 2000 to 4,500 in 2010 and 8,400 units in 2021.

While the Cotton Valley focus area is the second most populous, it grew by only about 400 units between 2010 and 2021.

## Residential Population in County Focus Areas

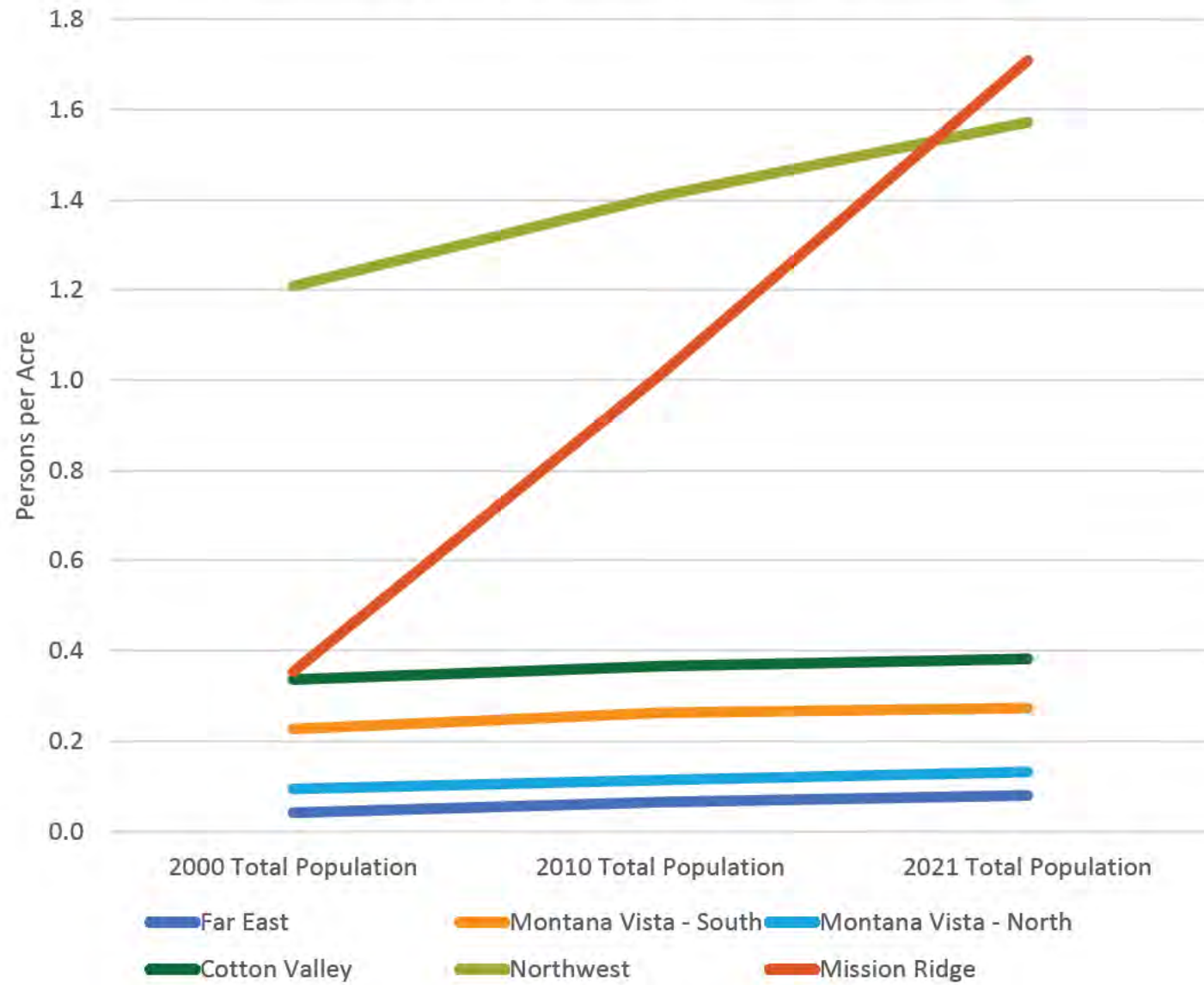


The chart to the left illustrates the same trends as that above. It shows total residential population growth driving housing development.

Notably, the population of the Mission Ridge focus area grew from just under 6,000 residents in 2000 to 17,000 in 2010 and 28,000 in 2021.

Cotton Valley's population grew from 20,150 to 22,900 from 2000 to 2021. The Northwest area grew by a little over 3,000 residents over those 21 years.

## Density of County Focus Areas

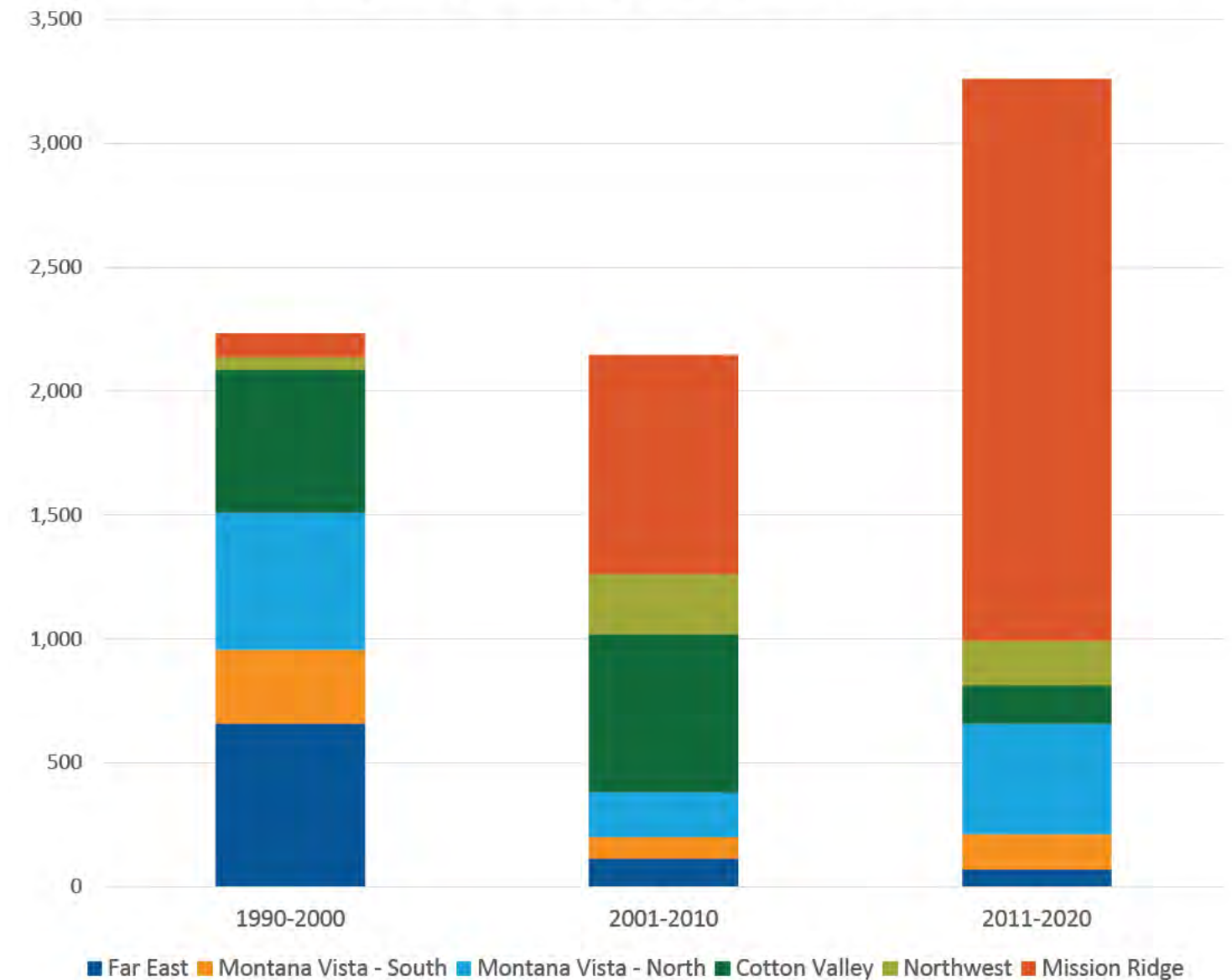


The chart above displays the change in residential density for each of the unincorporated areas. As a reference, the density of the City of El Paso is approximately 4 persons per acre.

While the Cotton Valley focus area is home to the second highest total population in El Paso County's unincorporated area, the population density remains very low, with just under 0.4 resident per acre. Montana Vista South, Montana Vista North, and the Far East focus areas are even lower density. The residential density of the Northwest focus area grew from 1.2 in 2000 to nearly 1.6 in 2021, which is much more rapid than the previously mentioned four focus areas.

The Mission Ridge focus area grew significantly both in total population and persons per acre. In 2000 the density was comparable to Cotton Valley. Today the density is the highest of all six focus areas, with a density of 1.7 residents per acre. While this is still a very low density, it is worth noting that growth in counties tends to occur within incorporated areas where there are usually more services and where municipalities are able to use zoning. This rapid level of urbanization occurring outside of incorporated areas is worth continued observation.

## Acres of Filed Subdivisions



The bar chart above illustrates the total acreage of filed subdivisions throughout unincorporated El Paso County. Between 1990 and 2000, subdivision acreage was relatively evenly split between those in the Far East, Montana Vista North, and Cotton Valley. Between 2001 and 2020, acreage of filed subdivisions grew substantially within Mission Ridge.

Subdivisions can be filed for a number of reasons, however they tend to indicate and anticipate residential and job growth. While the county does not have zoning authority, they are able to ensure certain development standards and infrastructure provision through subdivision regulations.

# Focus on Mission Ridge

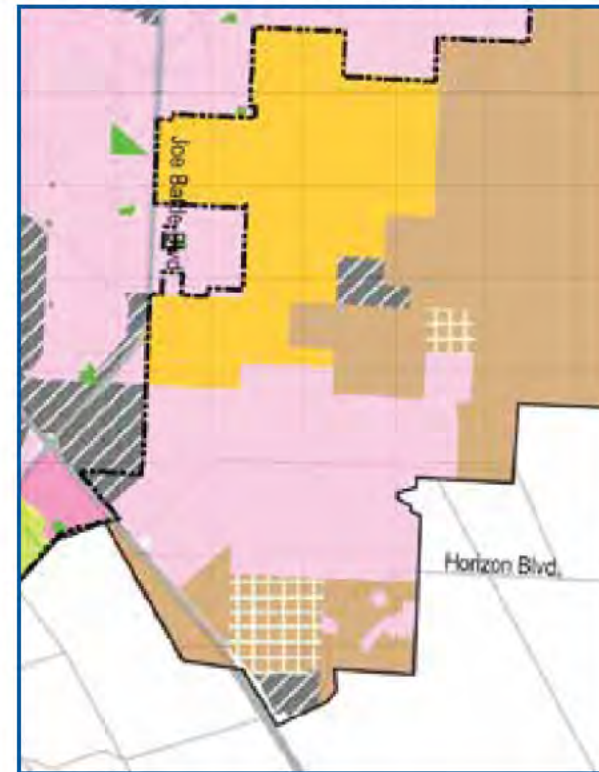
Because of the rapid growth occurring in the Mission Ridge Focus Area, this report includes a close examination of that area.

We project an increase of households in Mission Ridge from 8,400 units in 2021 to just under 19,000 in 2050, an increase of 10,320 units. Within the focus area, there are approximately 8,250 acres of developable land.

If recent development characteristics remain consistent into the future, and taking into account streets, schools, nonresidential development, and environmental constraints, Mission Ridge has a development capacity of approximately 23,100 single family housing units.

Thus, the physical capacity for development is not necessarily a constraint on development potential over the next 30 years in the Mission Ridge Focus Area.

Plan El Paso Future Land Use

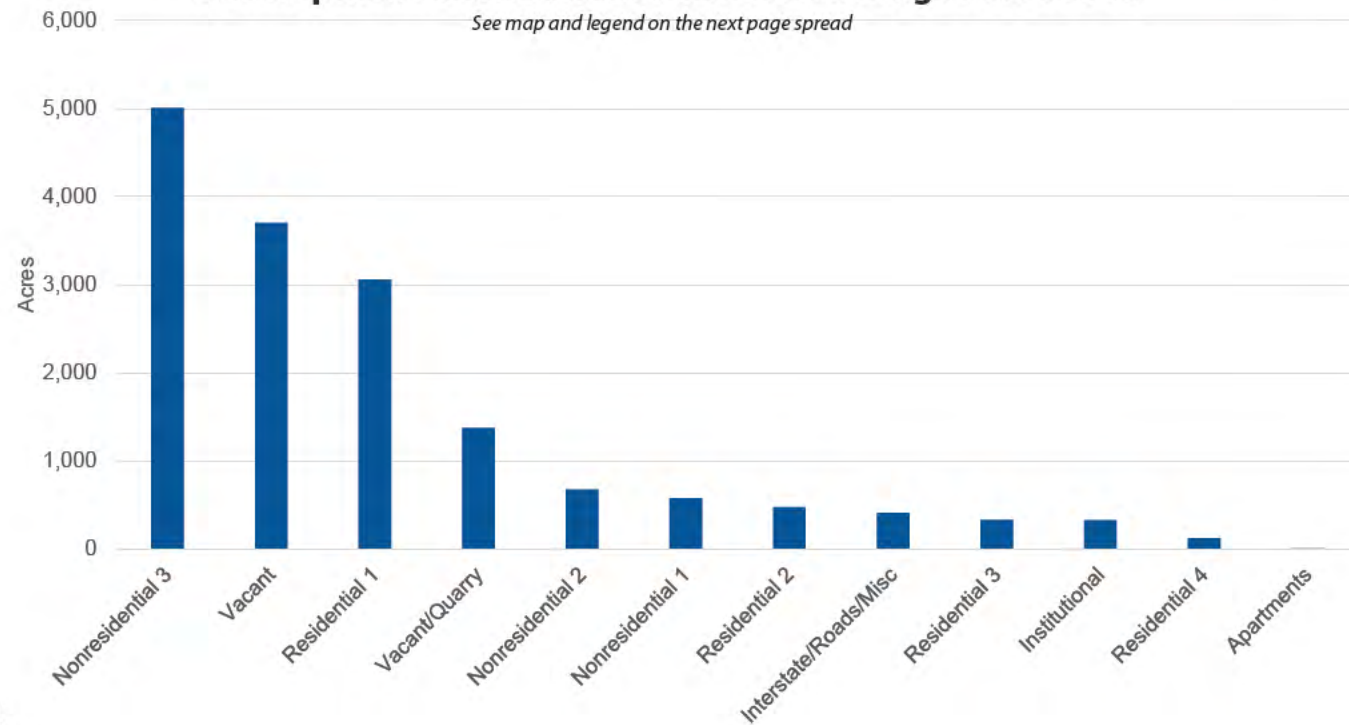


### Top 3 Landowners in Mission Ridge

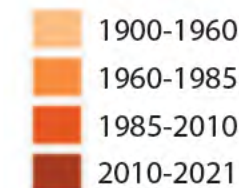
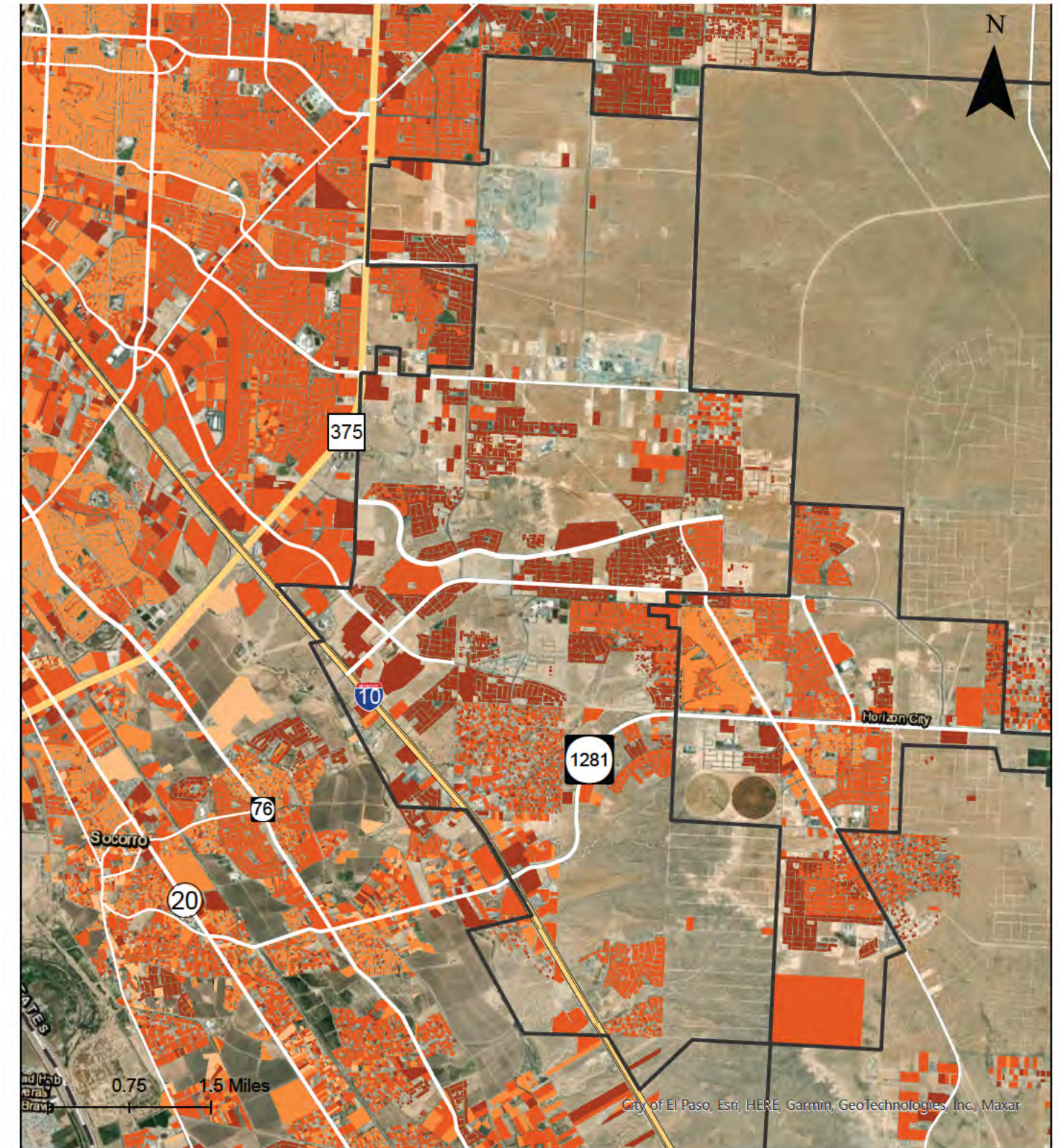
- State of Texas: **2,200 acres**
- Hunt properties: **1,230 acres**
- Socorro Independent School District: **365 acres**

Development Characteristics in Mission Ridge Focus Area

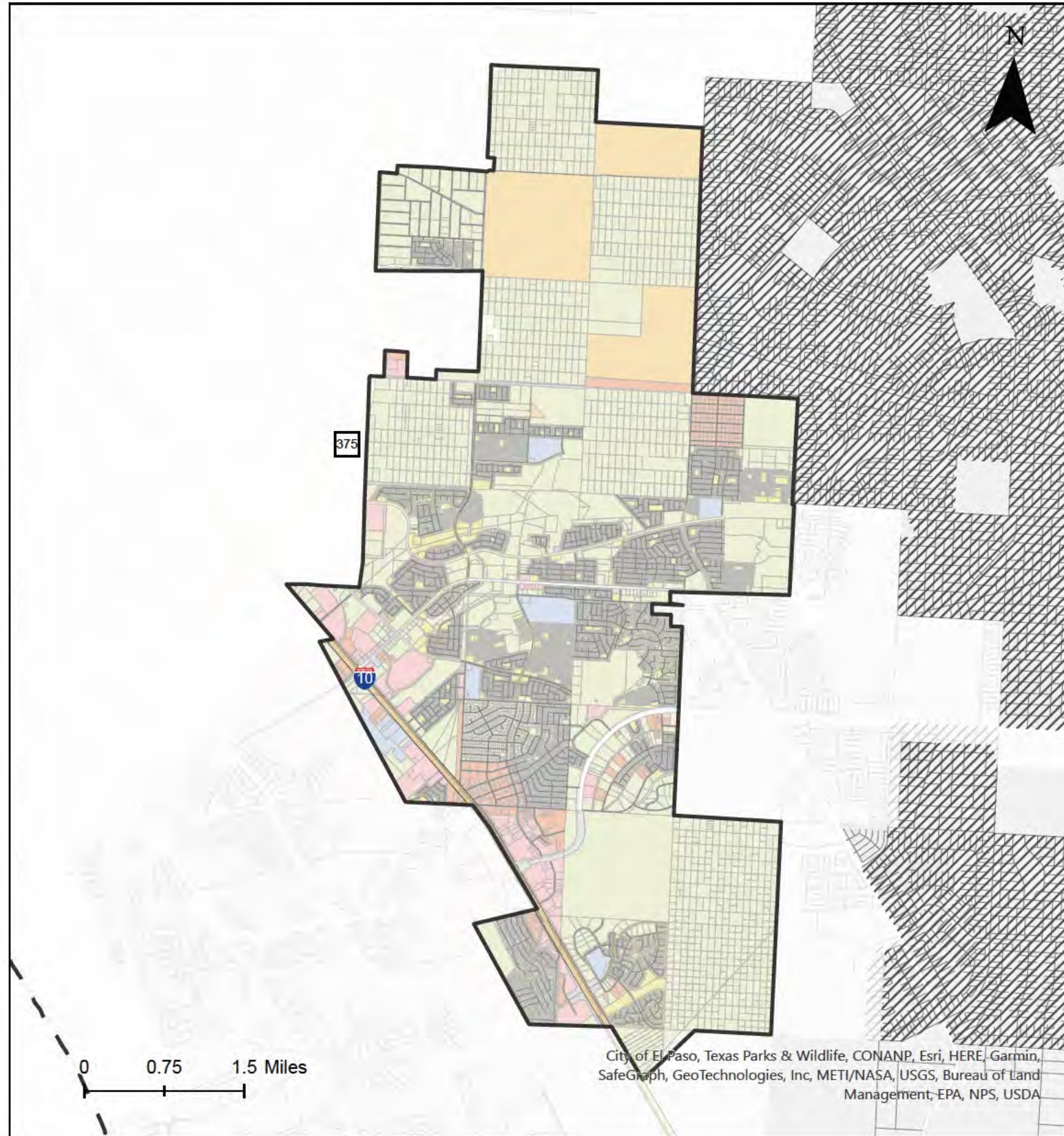
See map and legend on the next page spread



# Development Year




# Mission Ridge Development Characteristics




**Vacant**

- Large, developable parcels of land
- Assumed development potential: 4 units per acre with 30% discount




**Residential 4**

- Mostly empty platted single family lots
- Some lots occupied by residential and nonresidential uses




**Vacant/Quarry**

- Large parcel where quarrying activity is occurring
- Limited opportunity and expectations for other types of development




**Nonresidential 1**

- Nonresidential uses, particularly retail uses, with generally high improvement-to-land value ratios




**Residential 1**

- Recently-platted and built single family development using modern subdivision standards




**Nonresidential 2**

- Smaller-scale nonresidential uses with generally low improvement-to-land value ratios
- Often mixed with residential uses




**Residential 2**

- Primarily residential uses
- Some retroactive curb and street paving




**Nonresidential 3**

- Mostly vacant 5-acre parcels
- Some nonresidential uses, especially related to trucking
- Assumed development potential: 4 units per acre with 30% discount




**Residential 3**

- Lacks curb and gutter, other modern subdivision standards
- Residential mixed with commercial uses



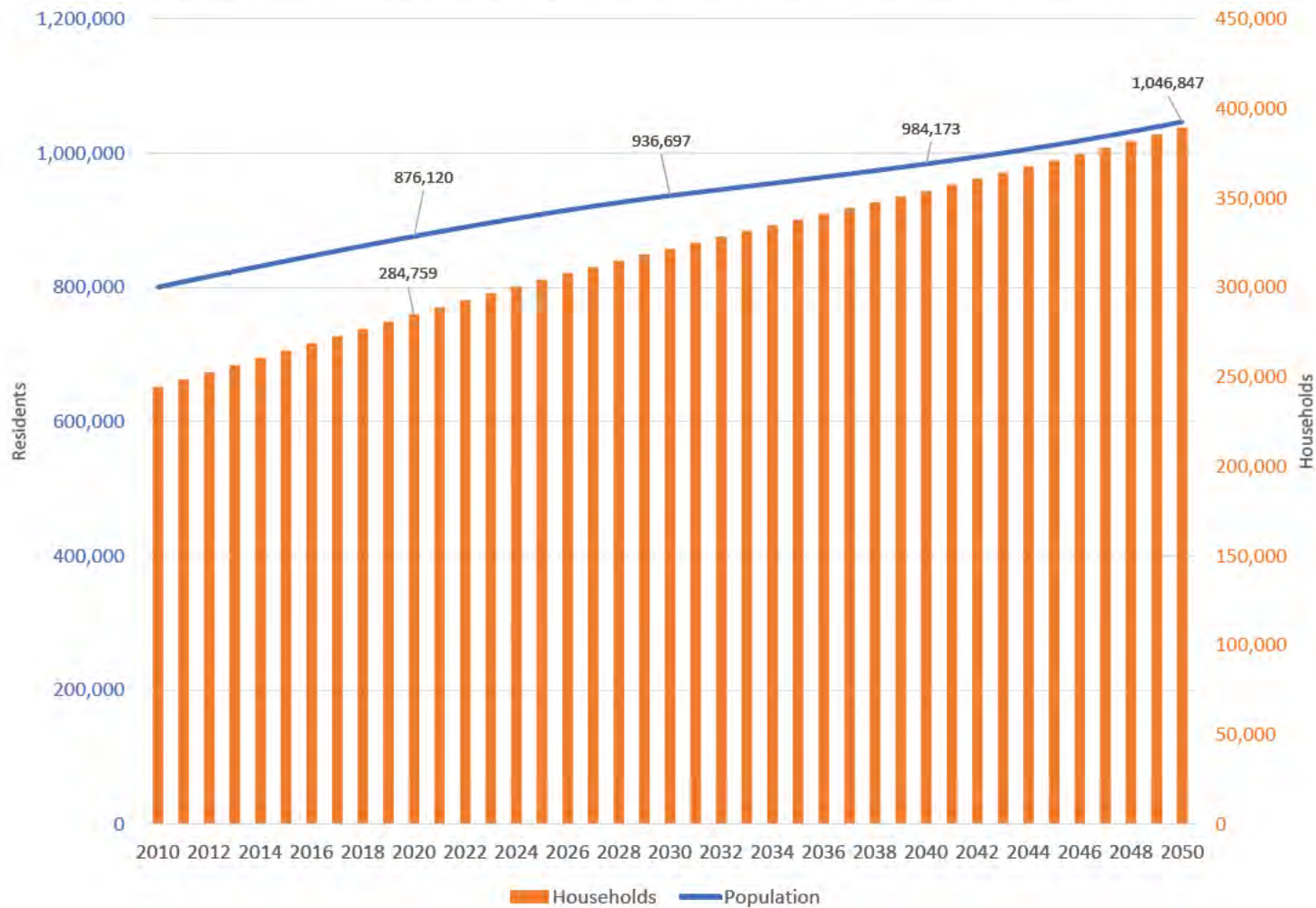
**Institutional**

- Schools, community colleges, utilities, churches, and other related uses



# Growth Projections

## Population and Household Projections in El Paso County

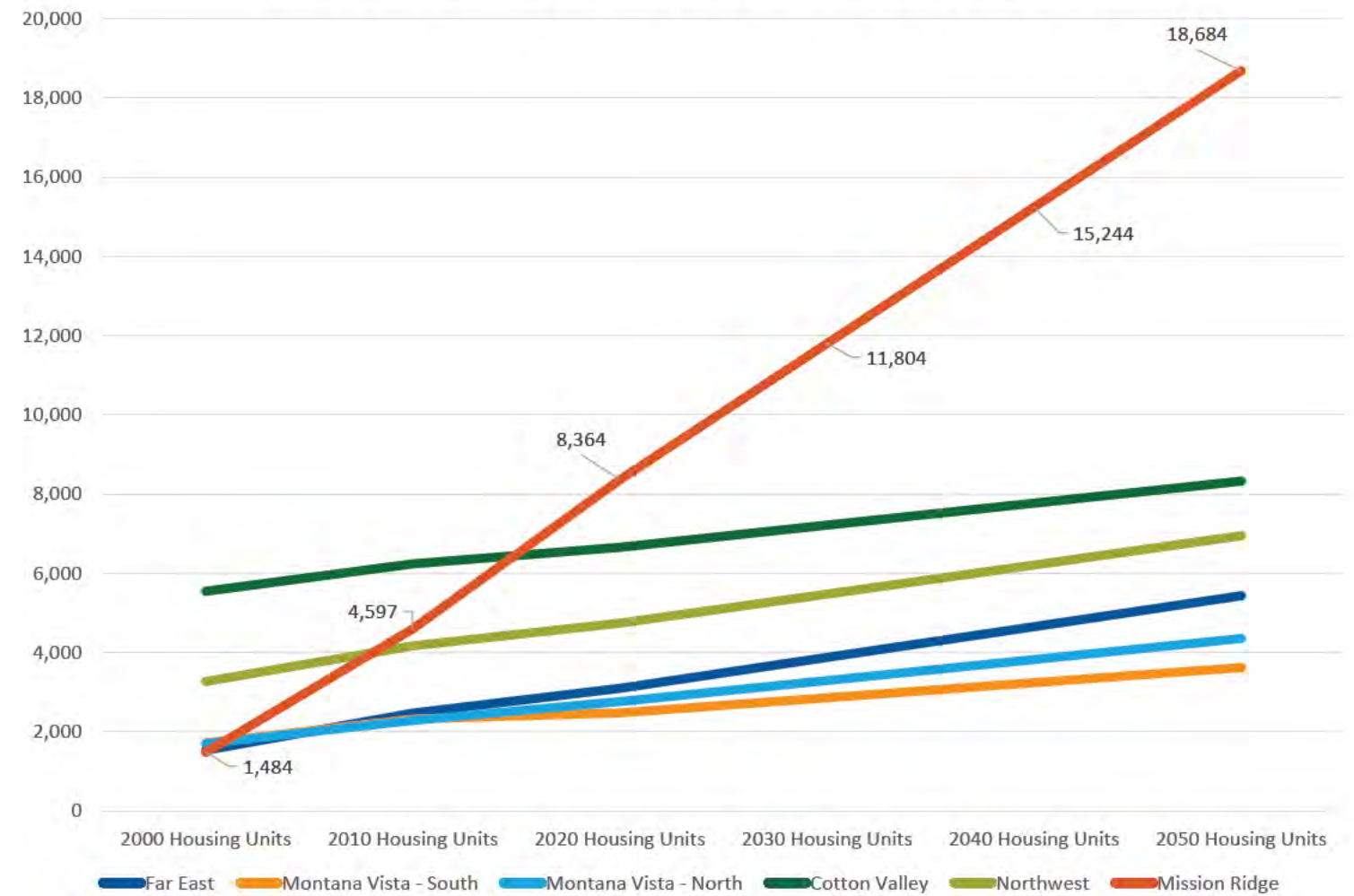


The above projections were created as part of the projection series of the Texas Demographic Center (TDC) in April 2021. These projections are intended as a means of understanding the potential impacts of population and demographic change on the State of Texas and its counties and regions. In general, the projections use prevalence rates from the most recent U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) data which are applied to the latest version of TDC population projections. Changes in policy, the economy, and other social and cultural factors can affect changes in these rates.

The chart shows El Paso County growing from a population of 876,000 residents in 2021 to approximately 1,047,000 by 2050. The total number of households in the County is projected to increase from 285,000 in 2021 to 390,000 by 2050.

Annexation laws in Texas have undergone several changes over the past decade. The most recent changes in annexation laws in the state handicap growing municipalities abilities to annex land. Under the current annexation laws, it is likely that much of the future growth in El Paso County will occur within the unincorporated areas.

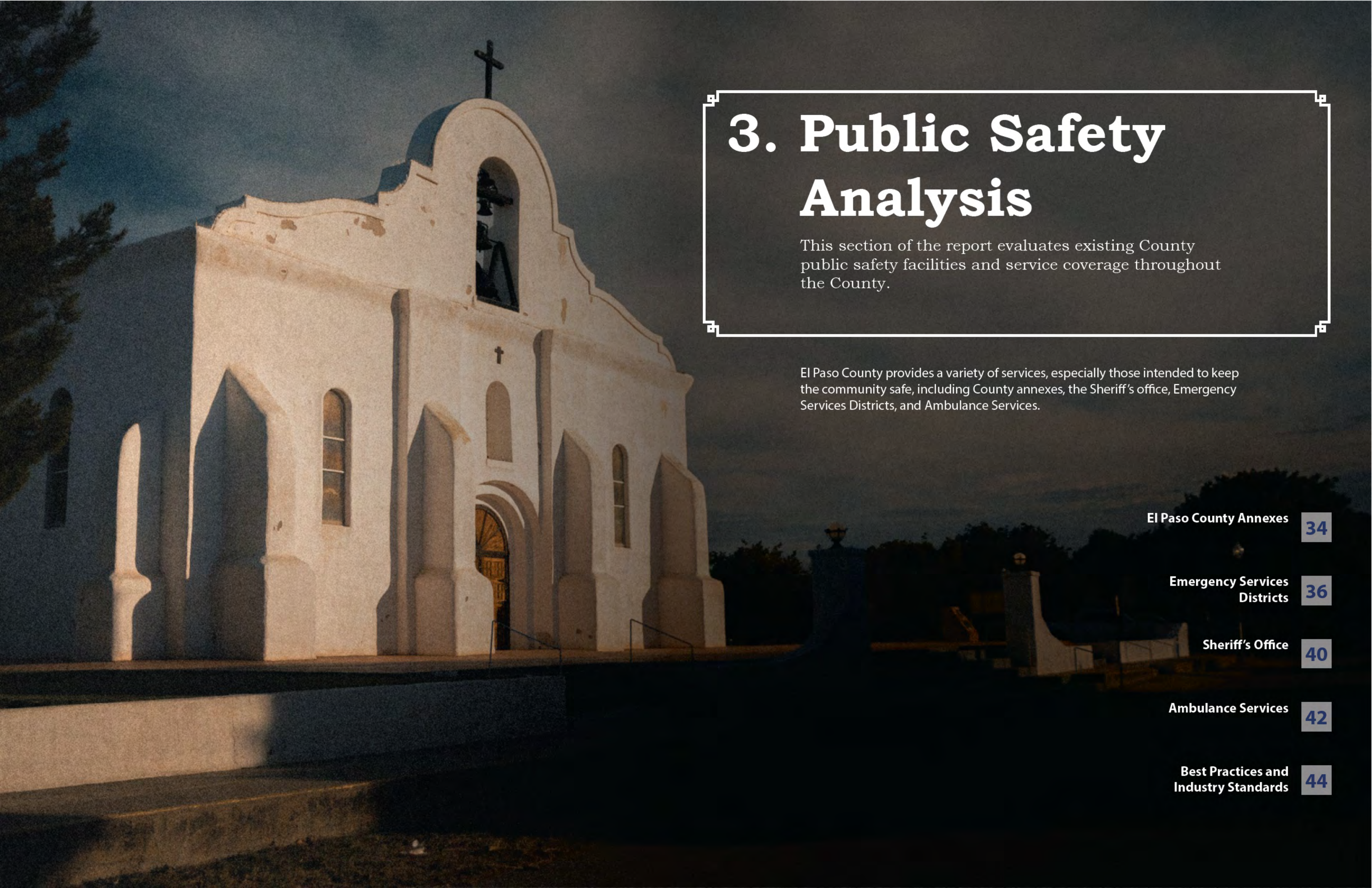
## Household Projections in Focus Areas



The chart above displays the projections for total numbers of households within each of the six focus areas. These projections should not be interpreted as fact, but can help prepare for planning, services, and infrastructure needs. Based upon recent growth, planned development, housing demand, and capacity for homes, Mission Ridge is projected to continue to grow substantially and at higher rates than the other five focus areas. The number of households in Mission Ridge is projected to more than double from approximately 8,400 units in 2021 to over 18,000 units by 2050. These projections suggest there will be a substantial growth in demand for schools, parks, services, nonresidential uses, and facilities in that area.

Because of a current initiative to convert land within existing paper plats to consolidated, developable land, it is possible the Far East focus areas could see additional growth. Other factors could impact growth potential in other focus areas as well, however, these factors carry uncertainties that cannot yet be incorporated into these projections.





## 3. Public Safety Analysis

This section of the report evaluates existing County public safety facilities and service coverage throughout the County.

El Paso County provides a variety of services, especially those intended to keep the community safe, including County annexes, the Sheriff's office, Emergency Services Districts, and Ambulance Services.

El Paso County Annexes **34**

Emergency Services Districts **36**

Sheriff's Office **40**

Ambulance Services **42**

Best Practices and Industry Standards **44**

# El Paso County Annexes

## County Annex Services

El Paso County residents are able to access a variety of County services at the downtown County Courthouse. Additionally, residents have access to the following County annex buildings spread geographically throughout the County:

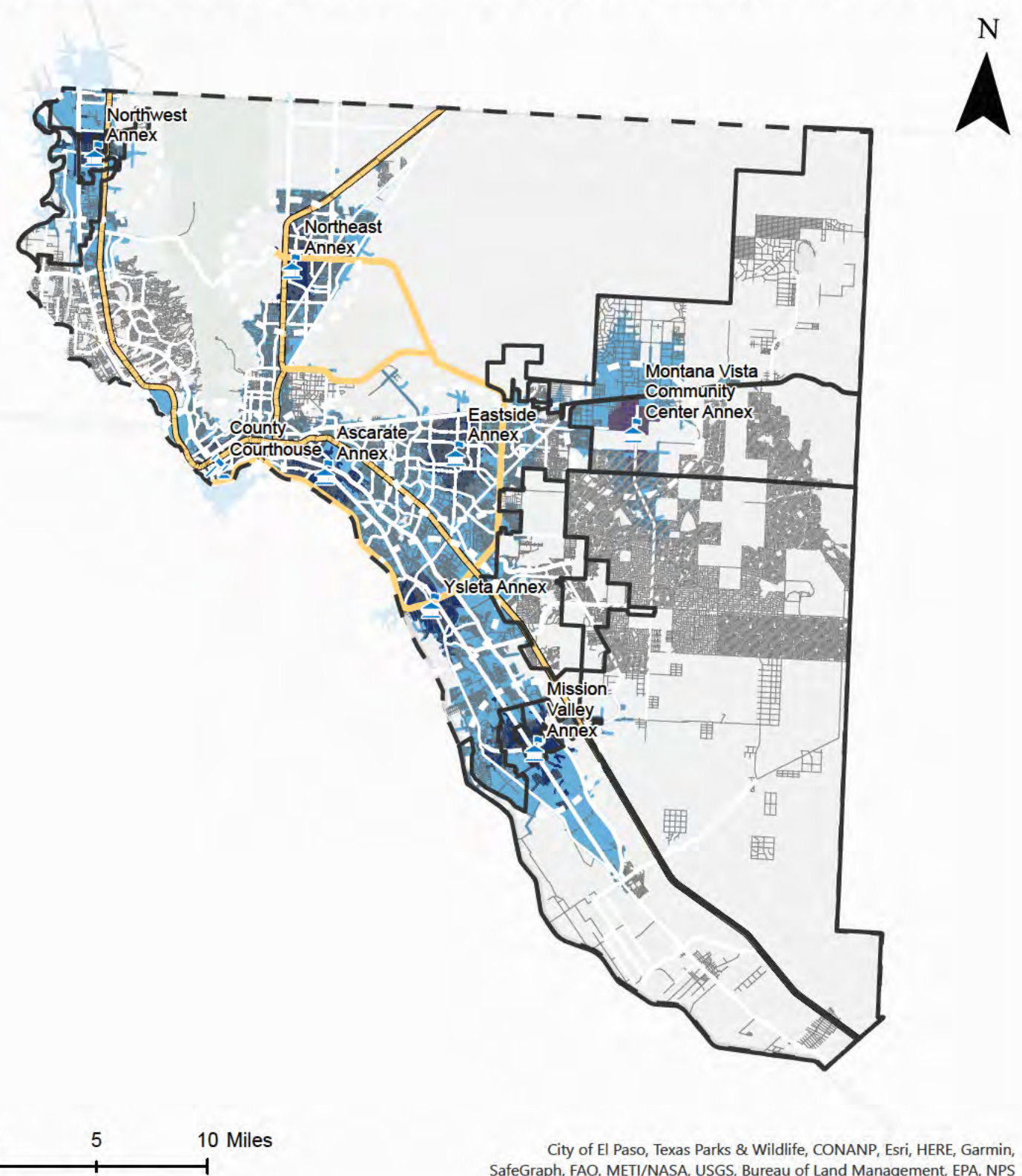
- Northwest Annex
- Northeast Annex
- Ascarate Annex
- Eastside Annex
- Ysleta Annex
- Mission Valley Annex
- Montana Vista Community Center Annex

## Analysis of Annex Locations

The map on the next page displays driving access to annexes. The dark blue polygons represent areas that have very good access to annexes within about a five minute drive. Light blue areas represent good access with places located within a ten minute drive. Most residents are able to access the services provided at a County annex within a ten minute drive and there are only a few instances where County residents cannot reach an annex within a 15 minute drive. Although the analysis uses driving time, ideally, annexes are also accessible to transit-riders and other people using non-automotive forms of transportation.



# El Paso County Annex 5-10 Minute Service Areas



## NOTES:

[1] For detailed views of this map, see appendix pages 58-63.

[2] The 5 and 10 minute coverage areas are approximate. There are other factors that could impact coverage areas such as time of day and accidents or other street blockages.

City of El Paso, Texas Parks & Wildlife, CONANP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS

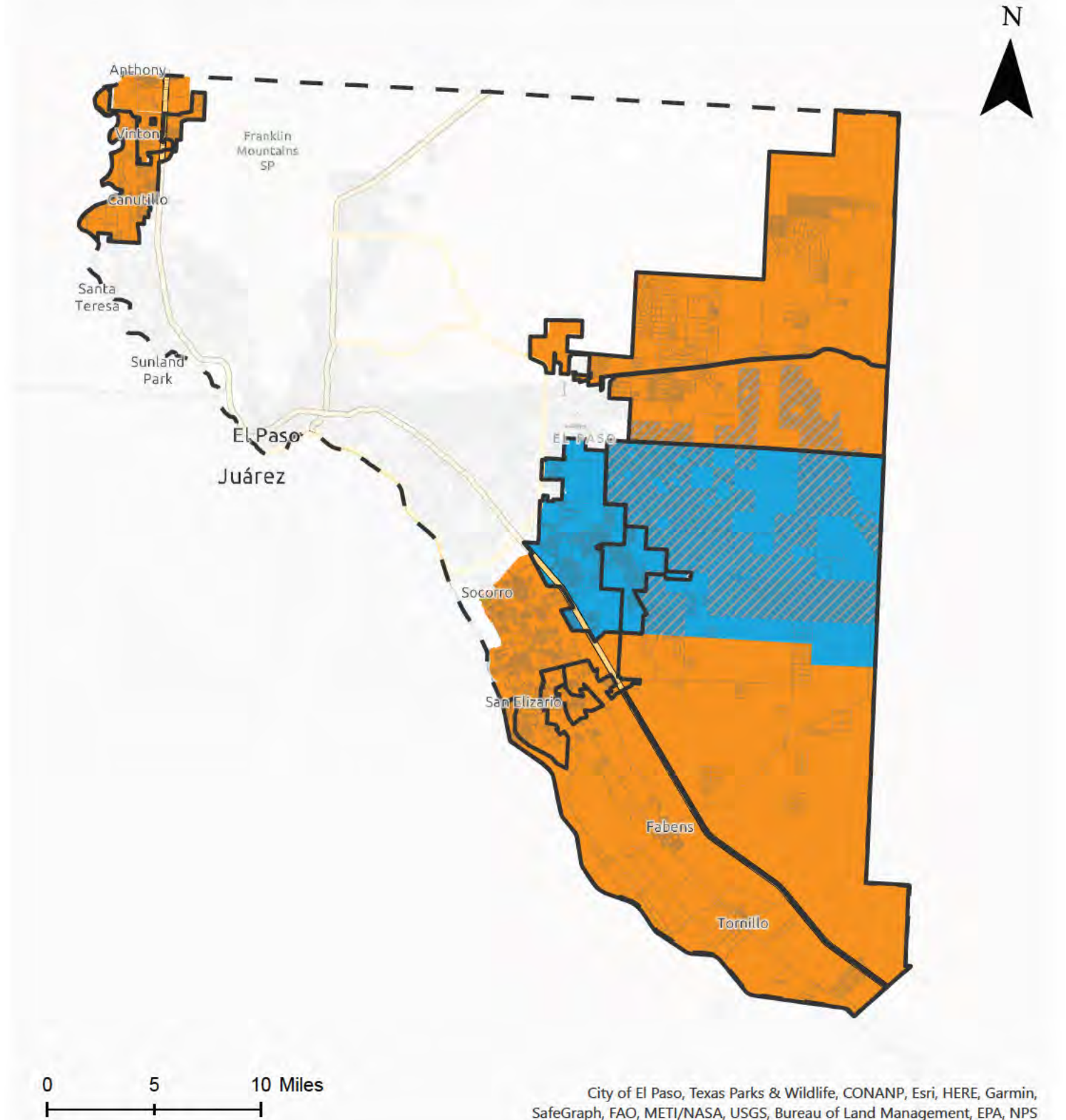
# Emergency Services Districts

There are two emergency services districts (ESDs) that provide fire protection throughout the unincorporated county, municipalities, and mutual aid to other fire departments when needed. Emergency Services District 2 is the largest force and covers a large area and population throughout El Paso. Emergency Services District 1 covers the rapidly growing Mission Ridge, Horizons City, and other smaller communities. El Paso's ESDs conduct strategic capital planning to ensure adequate time responses and coverage.



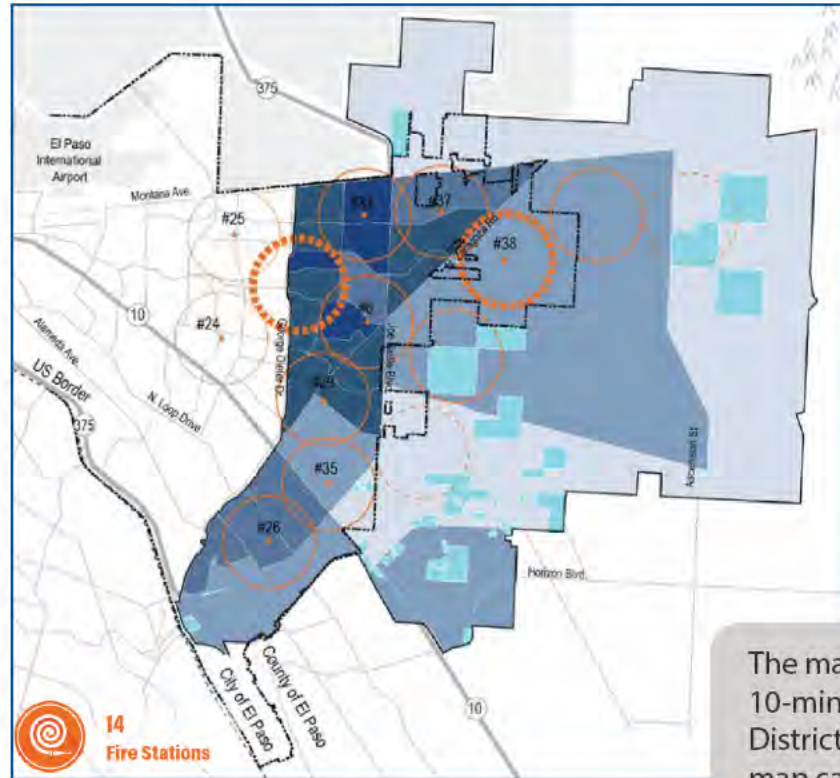
	EPCESD 1	EPCESD 2
Communities Served	Town of Horizon City, Paseo del Este, Sparks, El Paso Hills, Horizon View Estates, Colonia Revolucion, Agua Dulce and Lakeway Estates	Anthony, Canutillo, Clint, Fabens, Montana Vista, San Elizario, Socorro, Tornillo, Vinton
Year District Established	1994	1987
Number of Stations	2 (2 additional planned)	6 departments 14 stations
FTEs (firefighters)	6	12 (30 total FTEs)
Part Time	8	15
Volunteers	86	167
Approx. Residents Served (2022)	60,000	120,000
Residents Projected (2050)	120,000	165,000
Area Covered (sq mi)	146.6	410
Capital Planning	Strategic Plan: Build Station #3 in 5 years Build Station #4 in 10 years	Key projects: MV Station #1 demo and new building 13978 Montana SFD Fire Station #2 property purchase

# El Paso Emergency Services Districts

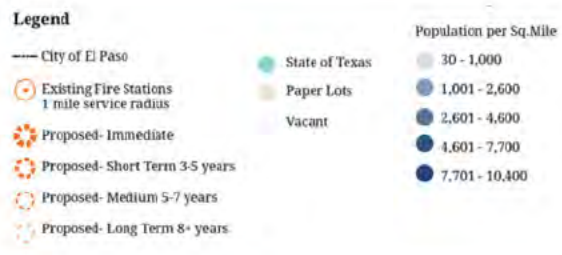


City of El Paso, Texas Parks & Wildlife, CONANP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS

## City of El Paso Eastside Master Plan Fire Station Recommendations



The map to the left illustrates the City of El Paso's Eastside Master Plan recommendations for Fire Stations within the Eastside planning area, covering portions of both the incorporated city and unincorporated county.



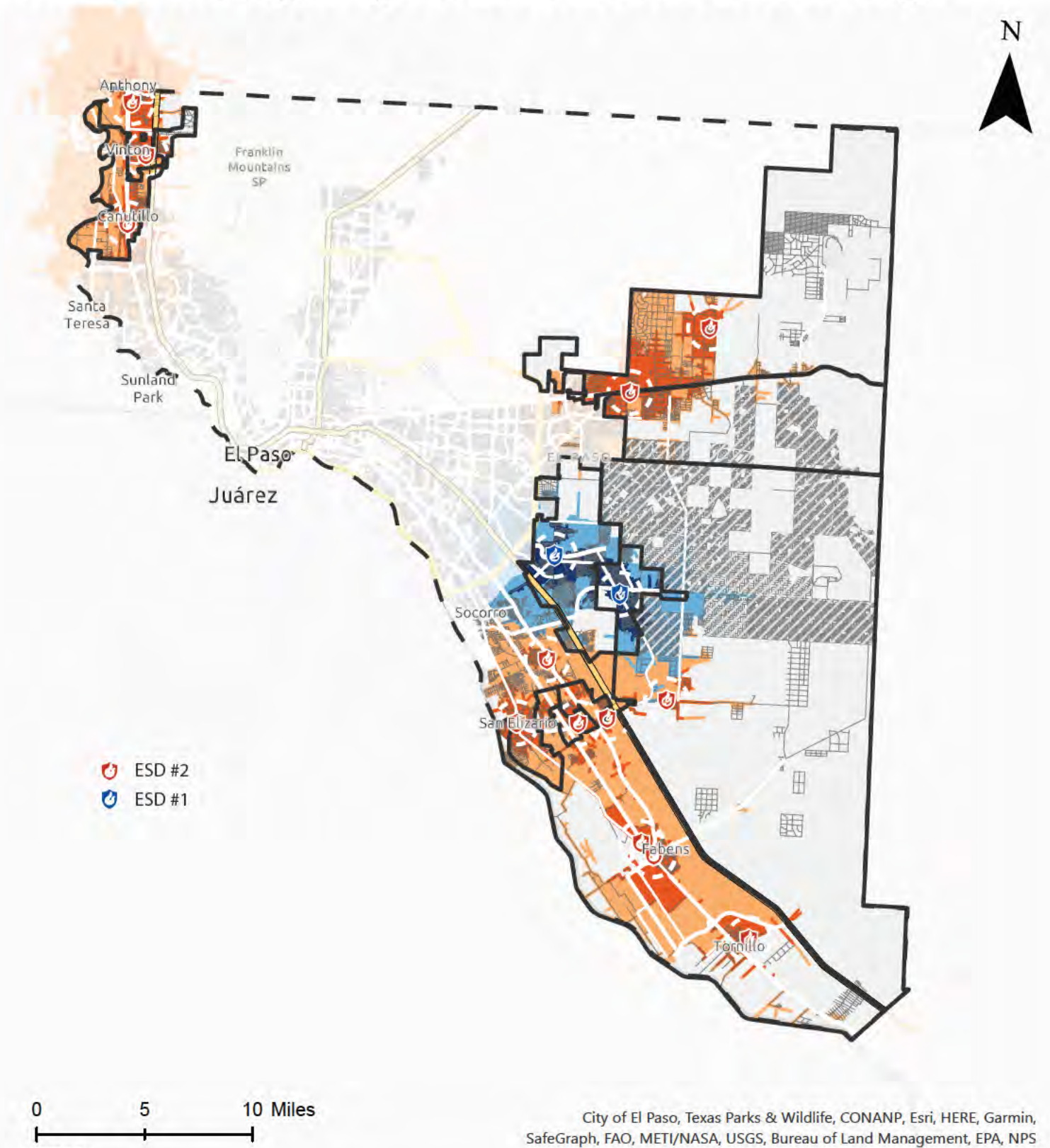
The map on the opposite page shows 5- and 10-minute coverage areas for Emergency Service Districts 1 and 2 fire stations. Detailed views of the map can be viewed in the Appendix.

### Fire Department Coverage

	Northwest	Montana Vista North	Montana Vista South	Far East	Cotton Valley	Mission Ridge
<b>Area (sq mi)</b>	14.4	94.7	49.18	228.12	93.7	25.82
<b>Population</b>	14,486	7,965	8,598	11,577	22,901	28,239
<b>Households</b>	4,311	2,416	2,230	2,837	6,172	7,687
<b>Approx. lots [1]</b>	4,311	2,430	2,796	3,735	7,625	16,000
<b>Avg HH Size</b>	3.36	3.15	3.86	4.08	3.7	3.65
<b>5 minute</b>	3,800	1,294	1,672	1,538	6,486	10,844
<b>10 minute</b>	511	1,025	1,124	2,041	832	5,156
<b>5 min. %</b>	88%	53%	60%	41%	85%	*68%
<b>10 min. %</b>	12%	42%	40%	55%	11%	*32%
<b>Total 10 min.</b>	100%	95%	100%	96%	96%	100%

NOTES: This table shows the number and percentage of households or, for the purposes of this study, estimation of occupied residential lots ("Approx. lots [1]") for each of the unincorporated focus areas. \*Mission Ridge is undergoing significant subdivision platting. The number or residential lots identified do not represent occupied lots but are provided here to indicate platting occurring in that focus area. As a result, note that the percentage of lots within 5 minutes shown here is lower than the actual percentage, but that a new station(s) will be required to service future residences.

## El Paso Emergency Services Districts Coverage



NOTES:

[1] For detailed views of this map, see appendix pages 64-69.

[2] The 5 and 10 minute coverage areas are approximate. There are other factors that could impact coverage areas such as time of day, speed of emergency vehicle, and accidents or other street blockages.

Page redacted pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.076.

# Ambulance Services



El Paso County contracts with Life Ambulance Service, Inc. to provide ambulance services throughout the incorporated and unincorporated county. Socorro and Horizon contract with Elite Medical Transport.

The table below compares response calls and average times for the same time periods in 2020 and 2021. It shows a 59 percent increase in service calls between those two periods and an increase in average response times countywide of 18 seconds, due primarily to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each ambulance station has two certified personnel at all times.

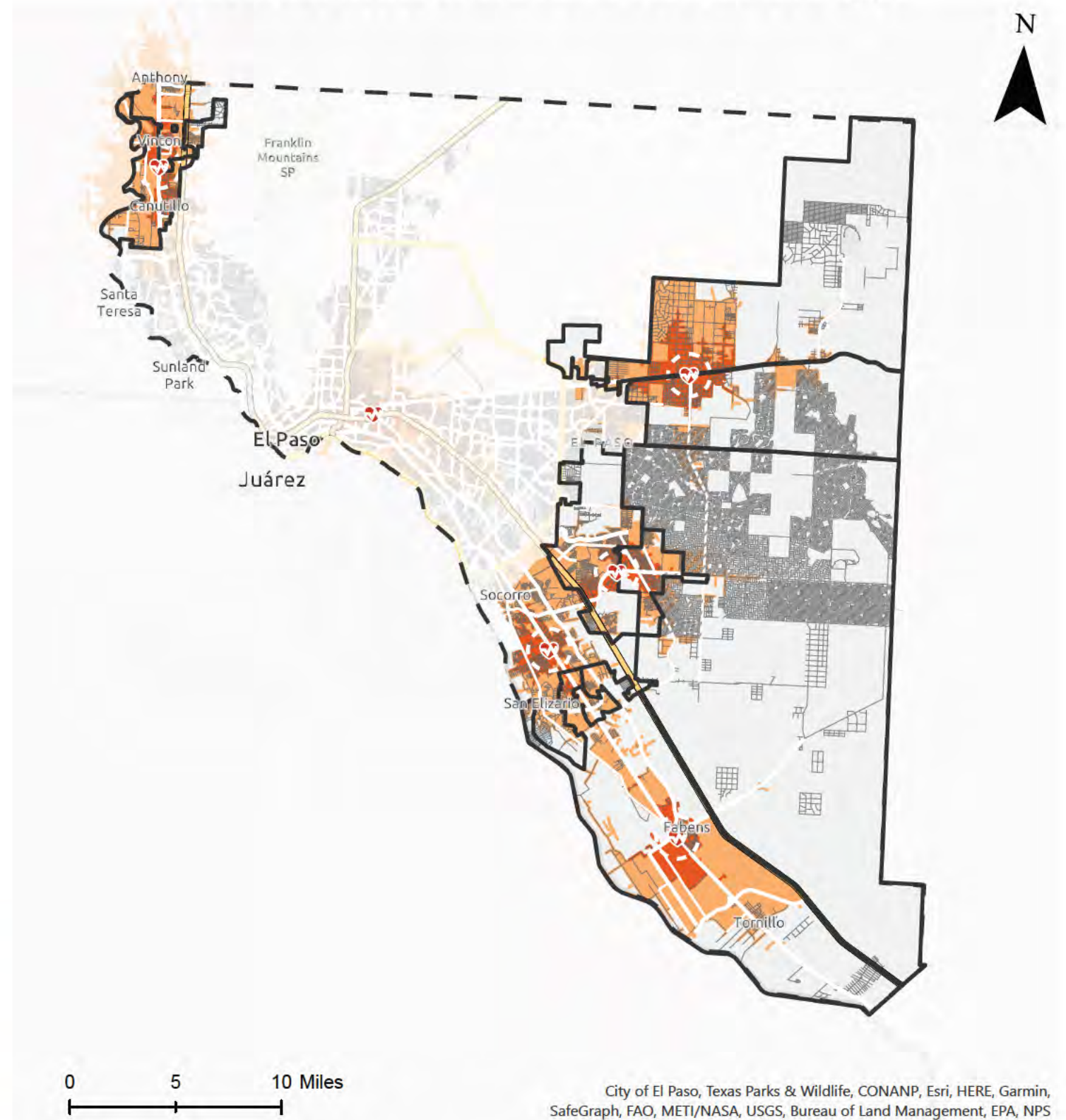
The map on the next page displays the locations of properties owned by Life Ambulance where ambulances and personnel are stationed. The dark orange polygons represent areas that can be served within a five minute drive of Life Ambulance properties. The light orange polygons represent areas that can generally be reached by an ambulance from the closest Life Ambulance property within 10 minutes.

In addition to the areas displayed on the map, Life Ambulance has five designated post points that are used when ambulances are available.

	Jan-Sept 2020 Calls	Jan-Sept 2020 Avg. Response Times	Jan-Sept 2021 Calls	Jan-Sept 2021 Avg. Response Times
Countywide	5,568	8:24	8,864	8:42
Fabens	959	8:18	2,101	9:22
Socorro	813	9:27	953	9:35
Horizon [1]	2,858	8:24	3,152	9:26
Vinton	867	7:11	1,454	9:14
Montana Vista	864	8:34	863	8:22
City Responses	207	12:05	331	15:56

Note:  
[1] For the purposes of this report, the Horizon area refers primarily to the Mission Ridge Focus Area.

## El Paso Ambulance Service Coverage



### NOTES:

[1] For detailed views of this map, see appendix pages 70-75.

[2] The 5 and 10 minute coverage areas are approximate. There are other factors that could impact coverage areas such as time of day, speed of emergency vehicle, and accidents or other street blockages.



# Best Practices and Standards

This section of the report looks into some standards, examples, and best practices for emergency services. The following provides discussion on emergency services response times for fire and ambulance services and allocation of sheriff deputies.

## Emergency Services Response Times

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) provides codes and standards for fire safety. *NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments*, provides requirements for effective and efficient organization and deployment of fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations by fire departments. The performance objectives in NFPA 1710 are the following:

- Alarm answering time: 15 second 95%; 40 seconds 99%
- Alarm processing time: 64 seconds 90%; 106 seconds 95%
- Turnout time<sup>1</sup>: 60 second EMS; 80 seconds Fire
- First engine arrive on scene time: 240 seconds (4 minutes)
- Initial full alarm (low and medium hazard): 480 seconds (8 minutes)
- Initial full alarm (high hazard): 610 seconds (10 minutes, 10 seconds)

Communities have numerous and varying methods for measuring and enumerating standards for response times.

Lane County, OR has adopted response time goals for emergency ambulance transport service (in the Lane County Code) of 2 minutes or less for 80% of emergency calls for call processing; 2 minutes or less for 80% of emergency calls for turnout time; and specific times for defined zones (covering urban, suburban, rural, and frontier areas).

Within Lane County, the City of Springfield defines time standards in their adopted Strategic Plan of 80% of fire calls responded to under 5 minutes and 90% of medical responses by ambulance under 8 minutes within city limits.

**Recommendation:** The County may benefit from analyzing its existing response time goals and further standardizing its method of measuring and tracking emergency response times. If desired, the following steps are recommended for consideration:

- Consider developing a comprehensive report such as the Eugene Springfield case study, or using the information and discussion provided in this report
- Define urban, suburban, rural, and frontier response time zones on a map
- Establish response time goals for both ambulance and fire within each zone
- Consider defining response time goals for 80% of emergency call processing, turnout times, and specific times for defined zones



The Standards of Response Coverage for Eugene Springfield Fire addresses the emergency response resources and deployment strategies necessary to deliver a defined level of emergency service. It provides a comprehensive snapshot of the current complement of emergency services delivered, identifies how they are performing, and reflects on future initiatives to increase efficiencies in the delivery of those services. Specifically, the report analyzes (1) risk factors; (2) on-scene operations and critical tasks; (3) emergency response times; (4) distribution of resources; (5) performance measurement and quality assurance; and (6) historical analysis and future planning.

## Ambulance

Response times are critical and longer times are directly associated with worse outcomes and greater threats to life in trauma patients.

The County's 2019-2022 contract with Life Ambulance was amended to extend the term of the agreement for one year from February 1, 2022 to January 31, 2023. The contract contains certain requirements for service delivery, including response times. The agreement requires that the following average times be met for responding to calls under most circumstances:

Upper Valley: 5 - 9 minutes on average

Lower Valley: 8 - 13 minutes on average

Life Ambulance provides regular quarterly reports containing ambulance call numbers and response times to areas and communities throughout the county.

A 2017 study<sup>2</sup> of 911 calls for emergency medical services from around the United States found the following median and mean response times:

	Median (interquartile range), minutes	Mean, minutes
Suburban	6 (4-10)	7.7
Urban	6 (4-9)	7.0
Rural	13 (8-19)	14.5
Overall	7 (4-10)	7.9

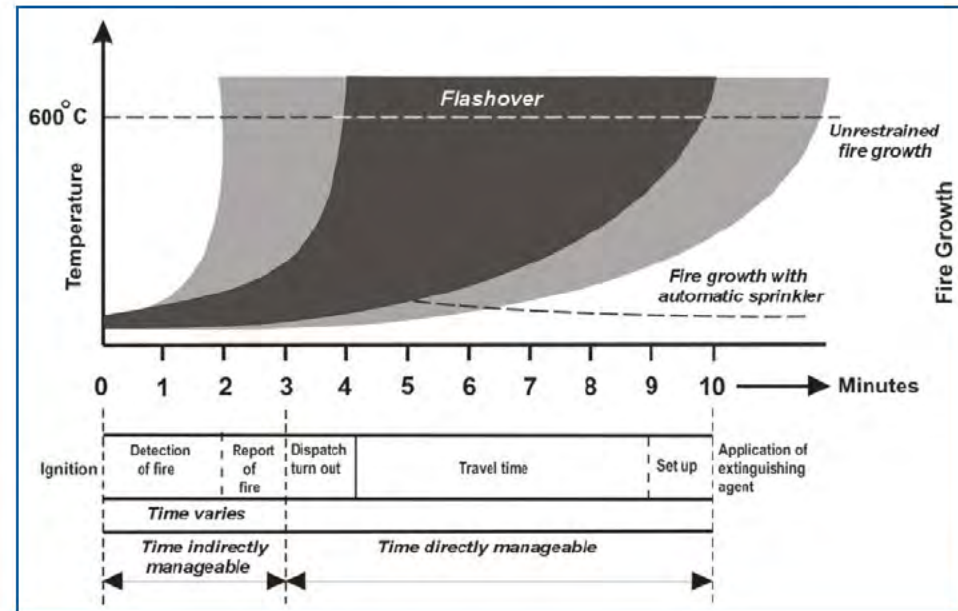
Life ambulance calls emergency response times tend to exceed the median and mean nationwide response times for suburban areas and fall below the mean and median nationwide response times for rural areas.

<sup>1</sup> The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) defines turnout time in Standard 1710 as the time beginning when units acknowledge notification of the emergency to the time point of the beginning of the response.

<sup>2</sup> Mell, Howard K et al. "Emergency Medical Services Response Times in Rural, Suburban, and Urban Areas." JAMA surgery vol. 152,10 (2017): 983-984. doi:10.1001/jamasurg.2017.2230

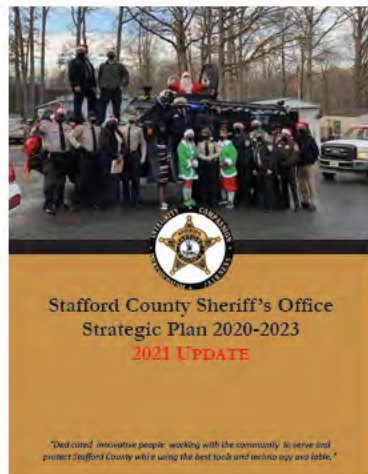
## Fire

El Paso County does not currently have adopted guidance for fire department response times and only occasionally receives reports from ESD 1 and ESD 2 on response times, unlike ambulance services which provide quarterly reports. See Emergency Services Response Times on the previous page spread.



The diagram generally illustrates fire growth over time and the sequence of events that may occur from ignition to suppression, depending on a multitude of factors. Flashover most often occurs between 4 and 10 minutes but can occur earlier or later. It shows how important response times are in emergency situations. Setting goals that reflect the community's values, managing growth, and efficiently distributing infrastructure and facilities is critical to making response times possible.

Section redacted pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.076.



The Stafford County Sheriff's office maintains a three year strategic plan that is made available to the public. The plan includes a brief profile of the sheriff's office, vision, mission, and values, strategic focus areas, goals, objectives, implementation strategies and timelines, strategic plan achievements, and internal questionnaire results.





# 4. Recommendations

This section includes recommendations of policies and actions for the County to consider in order to help plan for and manage growth.

These recommendations seek to move El Paso County toward its Strategic Planning Goals and Objectives, as they relate to managing growth and considering new locations for expanded services.

Growth Management **50**

Public Safety **52**

# Recommendations to Manage Growth

Below are recommendations for strategies El Paso County can consider to help manage growth, and ensure new development is coordinated, sustainable, and fiscally balanced.

## Rewrite Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations are one of the key tools Texas counties have to manage growth and ensure orderly development. El Paso County should rewrite its subdivision regulations with the following considerations:

- Better align the County's subdivision procedures and standards with those of the City of El Paso (consider that the City may be updating their regulations within the next several years)
- Adopt connectivity and maximum block length requirements for development for areas that are urbanizing
- Adopt park improvement and dedication requirements similar to those of the City of El Paso
- Consider requiring lot frontage onto arterial and collector roads with on-street parking and rear alley access in order to eliminate "rock wall tunnels" in new subdivisions
- Consider requiring street trees between the curb and sidewalk on arterials, collectors, and local streets
- Although the County lacks zoning powers, encourage that new subdivisions include a physically and functionally integrated mix of housing types and uses



**Approximate Duration**  
1-2 years  
**Status**  
Underway

## Convene Interjurisdictional Working Group

Establish an interjurisdictional working group of planning leaders from each of El Paso County's municipalities (and adjacent governments if necessary). The interjurisdictional working group should meet regularly (2-4 times per year) to discuss growth management and share updates.

The purpose of the working group is to maintain dialogue between jurisdictions as El Paso continues to grow and jurisdictions begin abutting. There will be opportunities to avoid potential conflicts and share resources and ideas.

The working group could also consider developing systems of tracking and monitoring key countywide and jurisdictional (standardized across) metrics. The County should encourage growth, particularly walkable, compact, mixed use development within municipalities, with reduction of VMTs and enhanced access to parks and transit.



**Approximate Duration**  
Ongoing  
**Status**  
Underway

## Consider a Municipal Growth Extent Map

Consider developing and adopting a map that delineates urban boundaries for the extent of each municipality. The purpose of this map is to provide assurance for future growth areas of each municipality, and to discourage municipalities from competing with each other over future annexations.



Case Study: Wake County, NC adopted a "General Classifications" map (left), which establishes future growth areas among the county's 12 municipalities.



**Approximate Duration**  
1-2 years  
**Status**  
Pending

## Other Recommendations

- Consider creating and adopting a Complete Streets Policy; the City of El Paso is currently in the process of adopting their own policy
- Develop small area plans, corridor plans, and master plans for targeted areas of opportunity, including around the Tornillo Port of Entry and County-owned property located by Joe Battle; on County-owned land, ensure best practices in walkable, mixed use, and sustainable form, use, and design
- Encourage municipalities to develop and use a fiscal impact study, fiscal impact model, and/or cost of land use study to ensure their growth is fiscally balanced over the long run
- Consider a countywide Comprehensive Plan, focused primarily on opportunities for interjurisdictional coordination
- Public Safety Recommendations: In addition to the map-based guidance provided on the following pages, there are recommendations provided within the Best Practices and Standards section of this report.



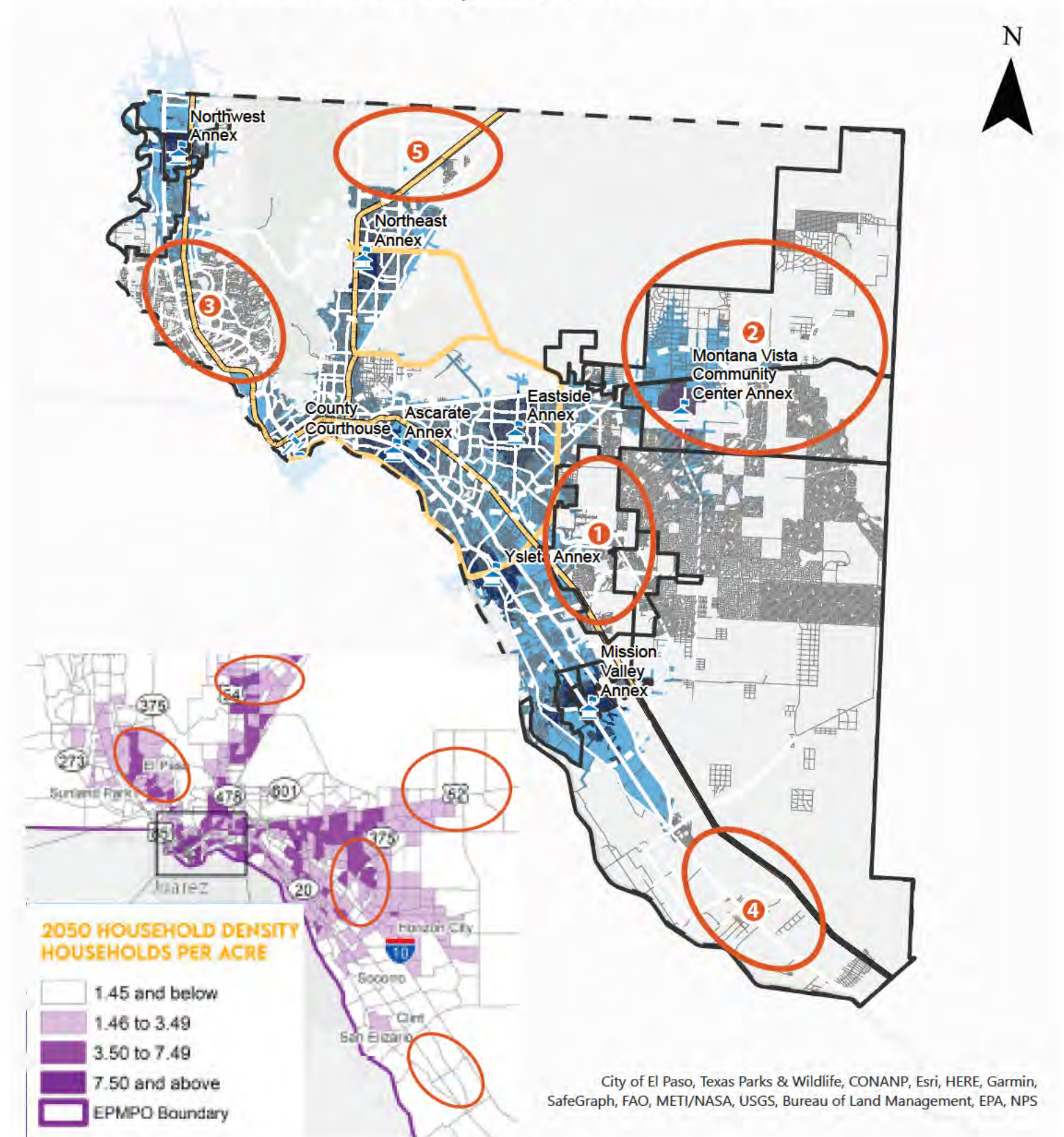
# Recommendations for Targeted County Services

Below are observations on areas where there are currently gaps in El Paso County annex services. Potential county annex locations are listed in order of recommended priority.

## Recommendation: County Annex Location

- 1 Top Priority:** This is a very high growth area, with an increasingly connected street and roadway network as development occurs. The County also owns significant amounts of land and is considering options for development on its property. Due to the rapid growth, the growing densities, and the adjacency to Horizons and other communities which currently lack access to annexes, this is the highest priority area for a new County annex.
- 2** This area consists of low residential density and average household incomes are low. The Montana Vista Community Center Annex does not provide a comprehensive array of county services. Despite the low density, some growth is occurring in the western portion of this area with more growth expected over the next thirty years. It is not the highest priority area for a County annex but could benefit from upgrades to the existing annex site.
- 3** This area consists of major commercial corridors and stable residential neighborhoods with above-average household incomes. This is a medium density area that is not projected to grow substantially by 2050. It is also relatively near the County Courthouse (within a 15 minute drive), which offers the widest range of County services. While this area could benefit from a County annex, it is not the highest priority area.
- 4** This area consists of rural communities. It is relatively isolated from growing population centers and is expected to remain this way over the next thirty years. Although some growth is likely to occur in this area, and it would benefit from an annex, it is not the highest priority for a new County annex.
- 5** This area includes the last remaining undeveloped tracts of land in Northeast El Paso. Currently, this area is not within a ten minute drive to a County annex, however as the area grows and additional street connectivity is added, accessibility to the Northeast Annex will grow. This area is not currently a high priority for a new County annex.

## Potential County Annex Locations



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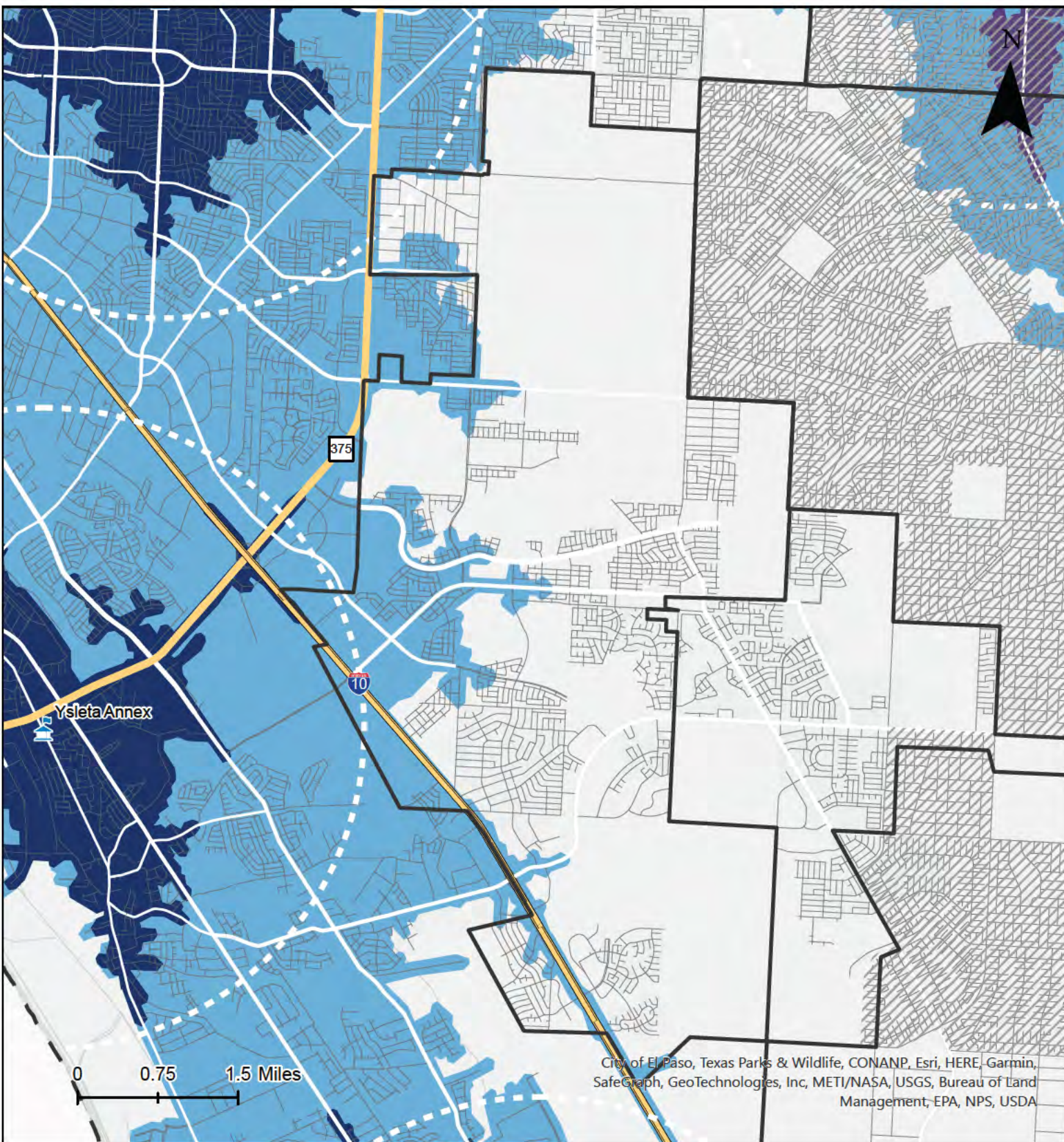
# 5. Appendix

El Paso County Annexes 56

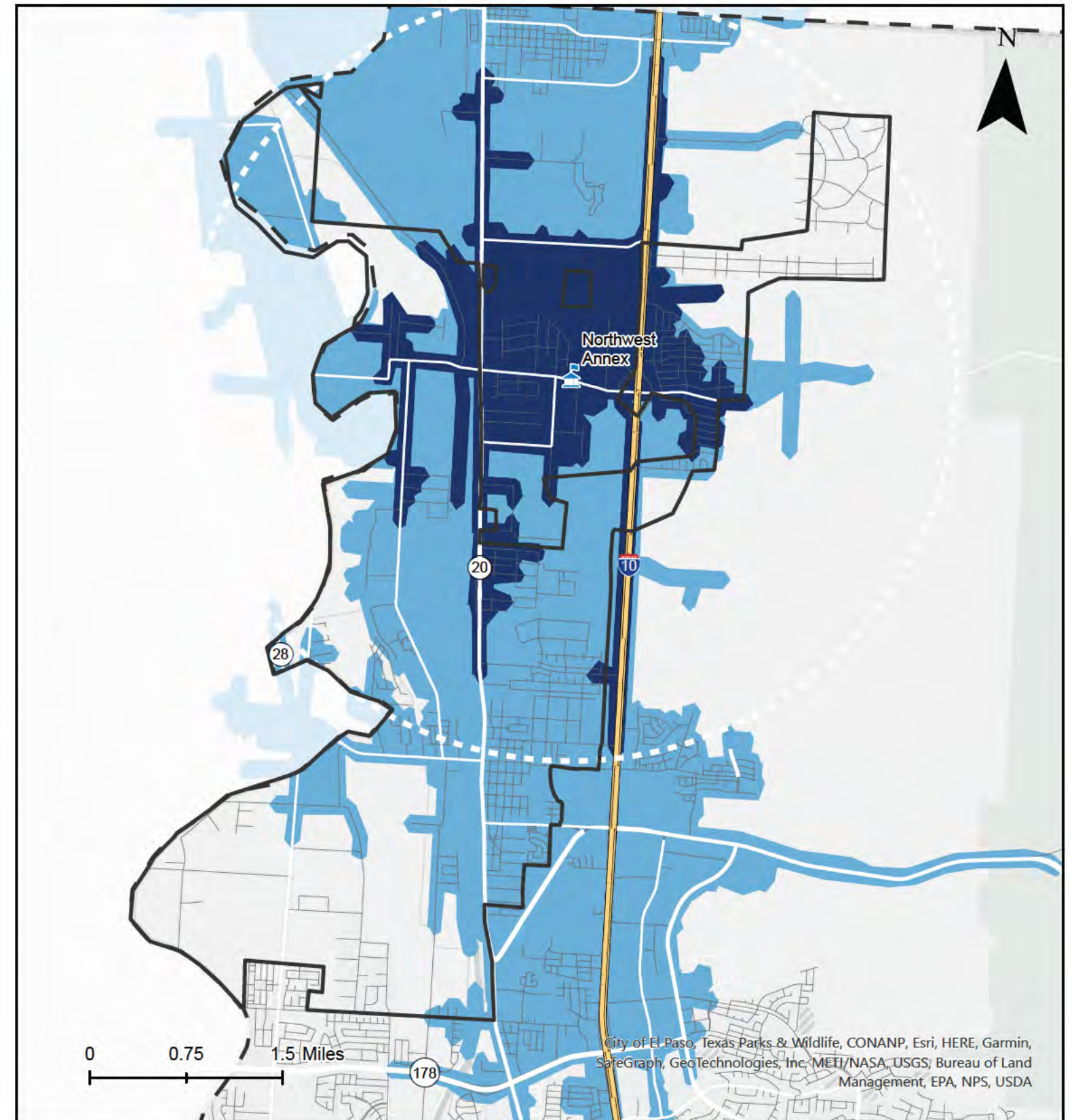
Emergency Services Districts 62

Ambulance 68

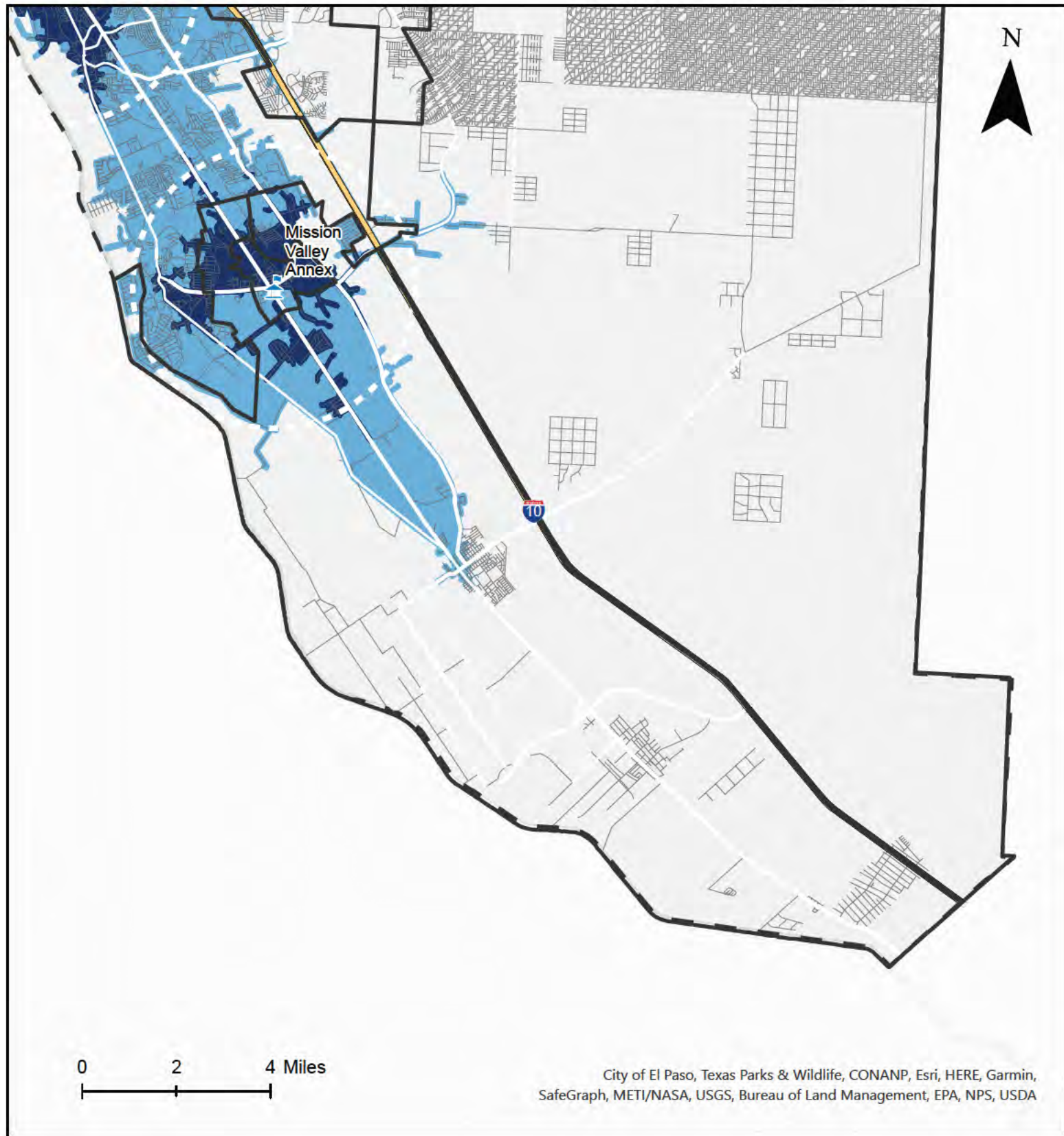
# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



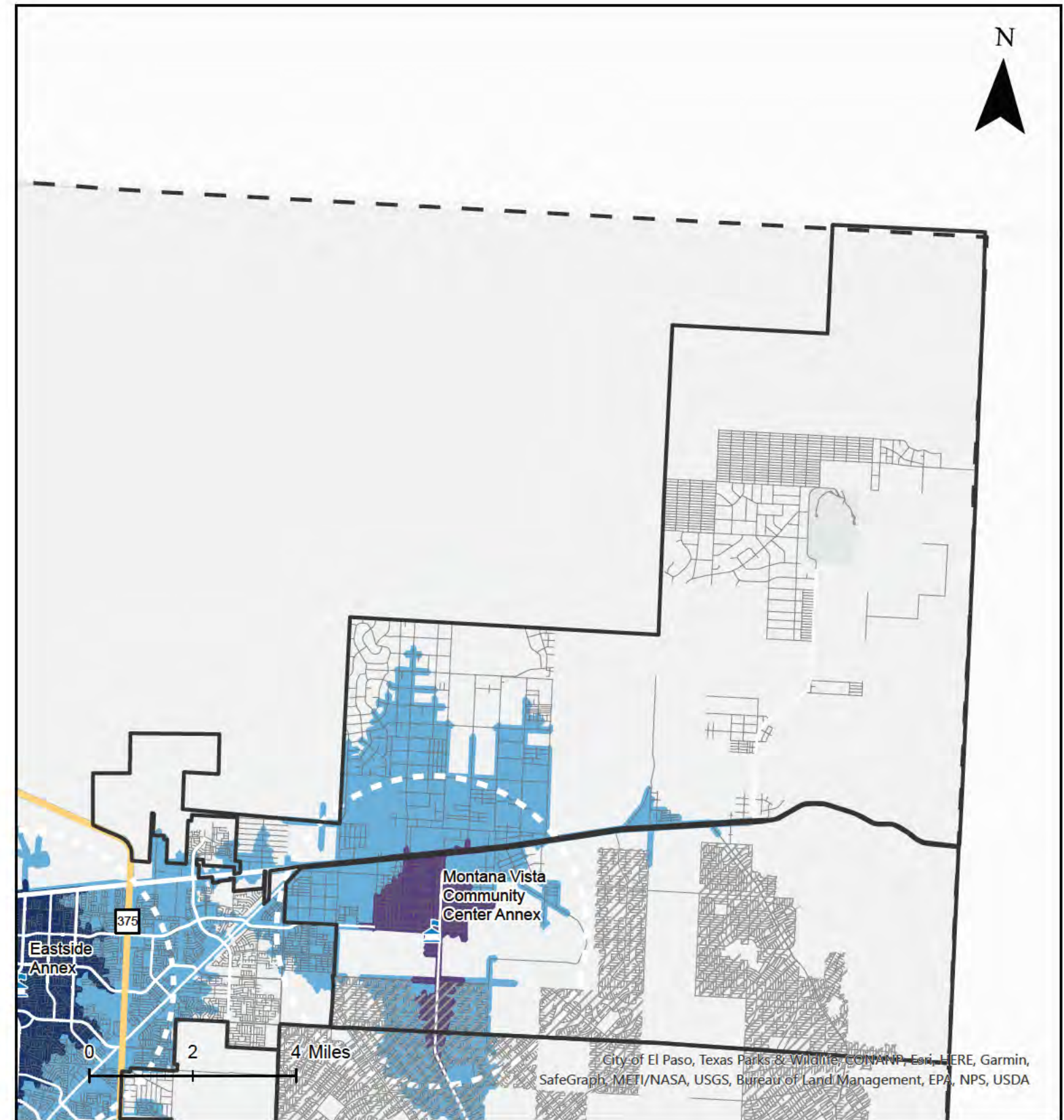
# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes

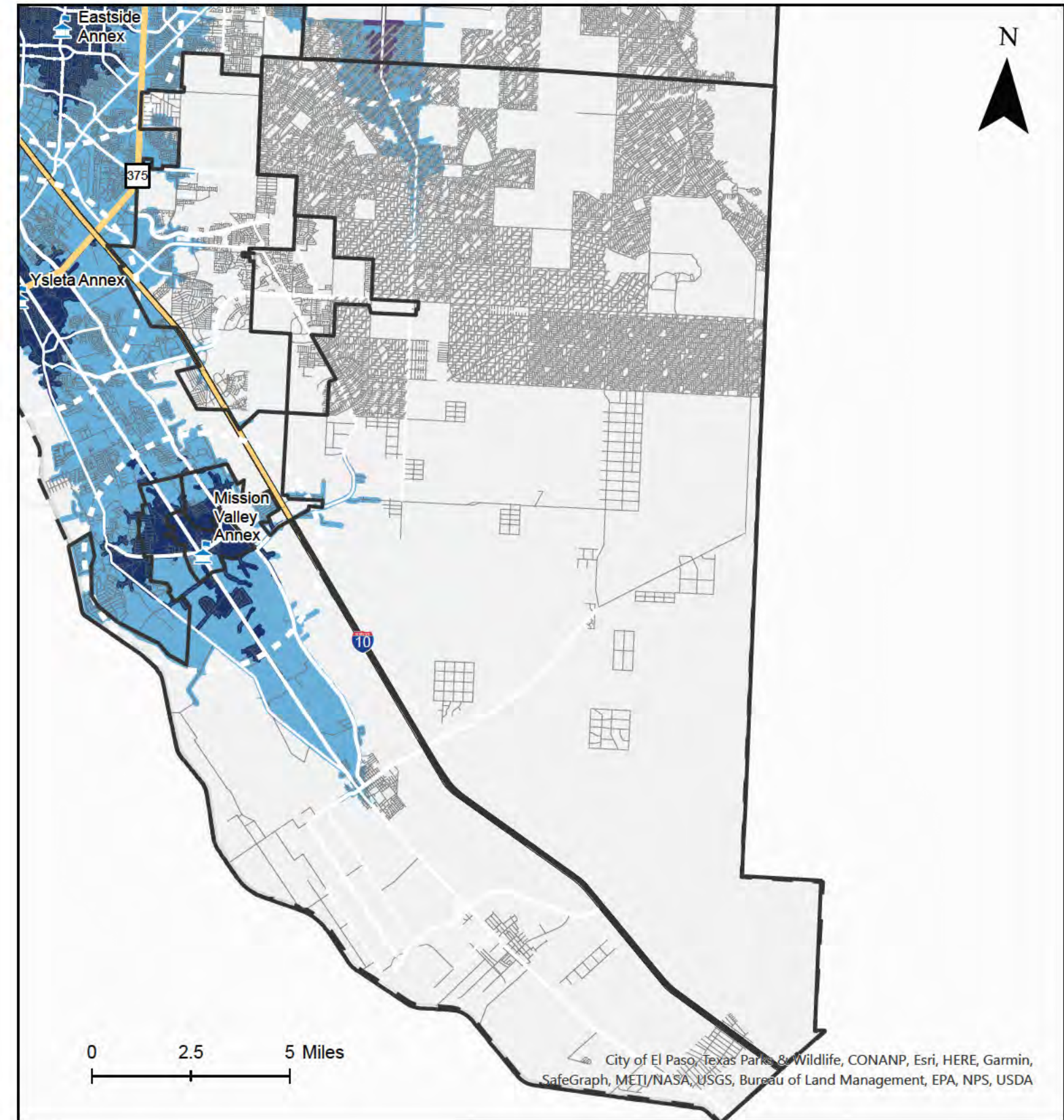
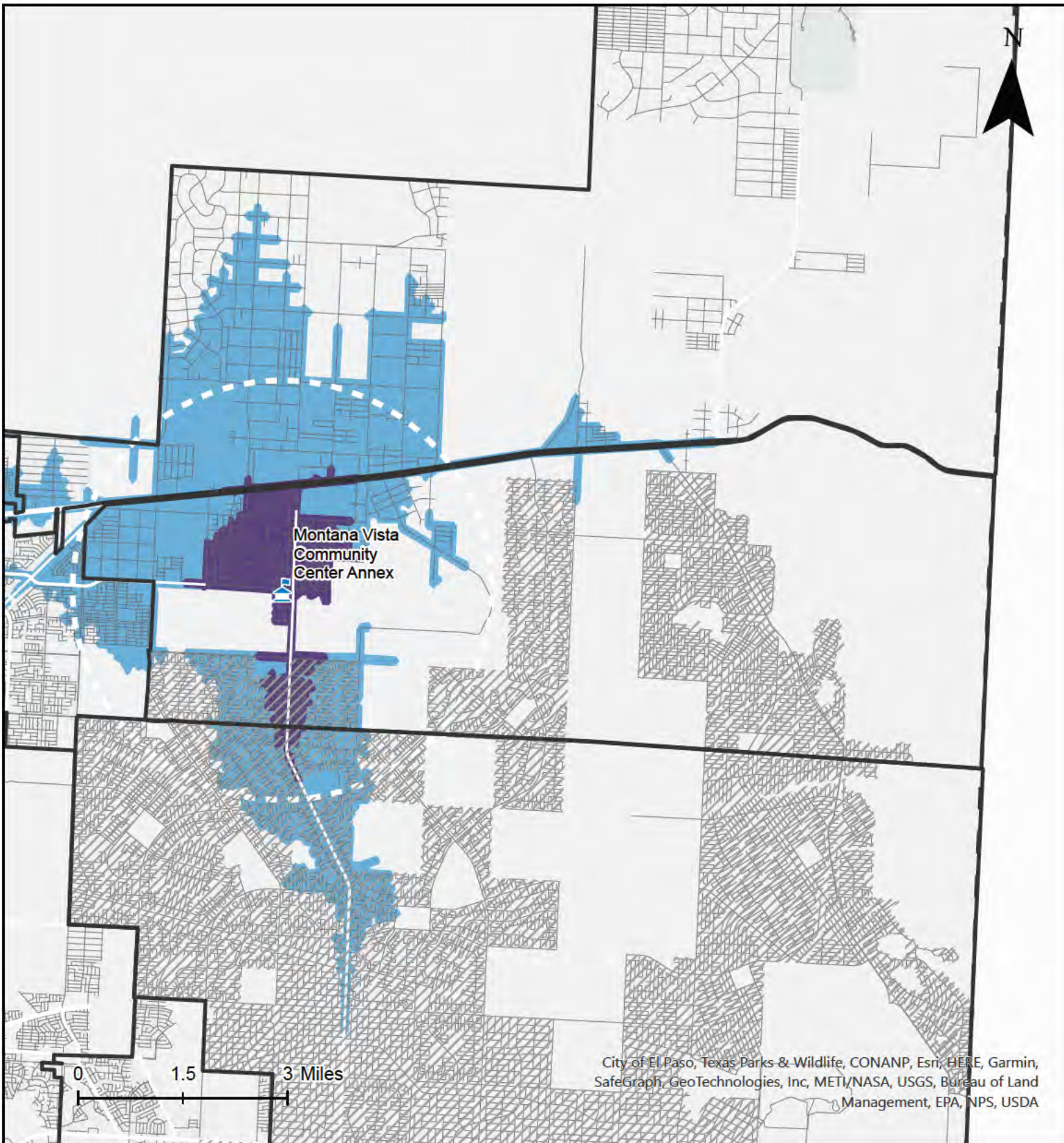


# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



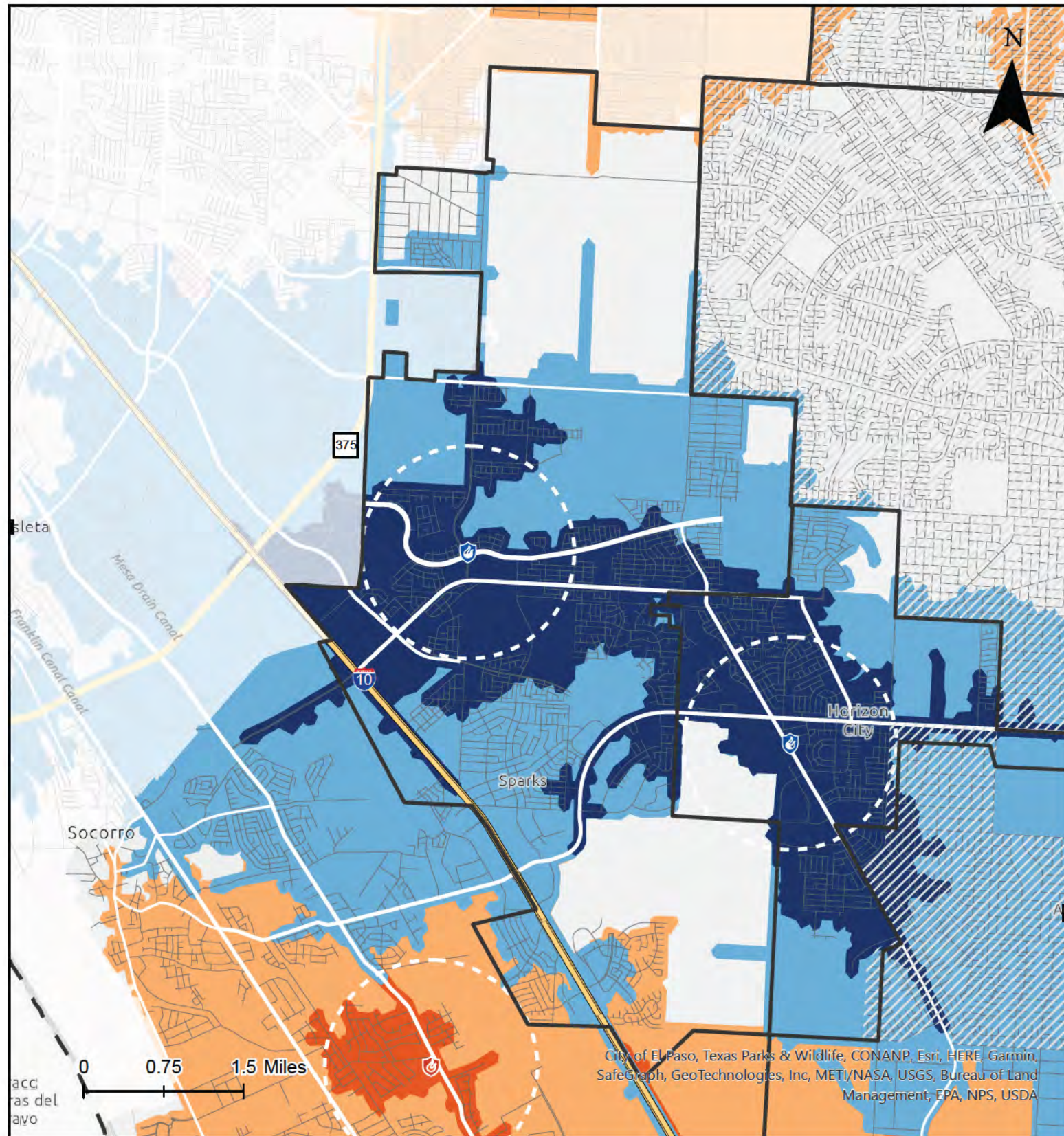
# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes

# Annex Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes

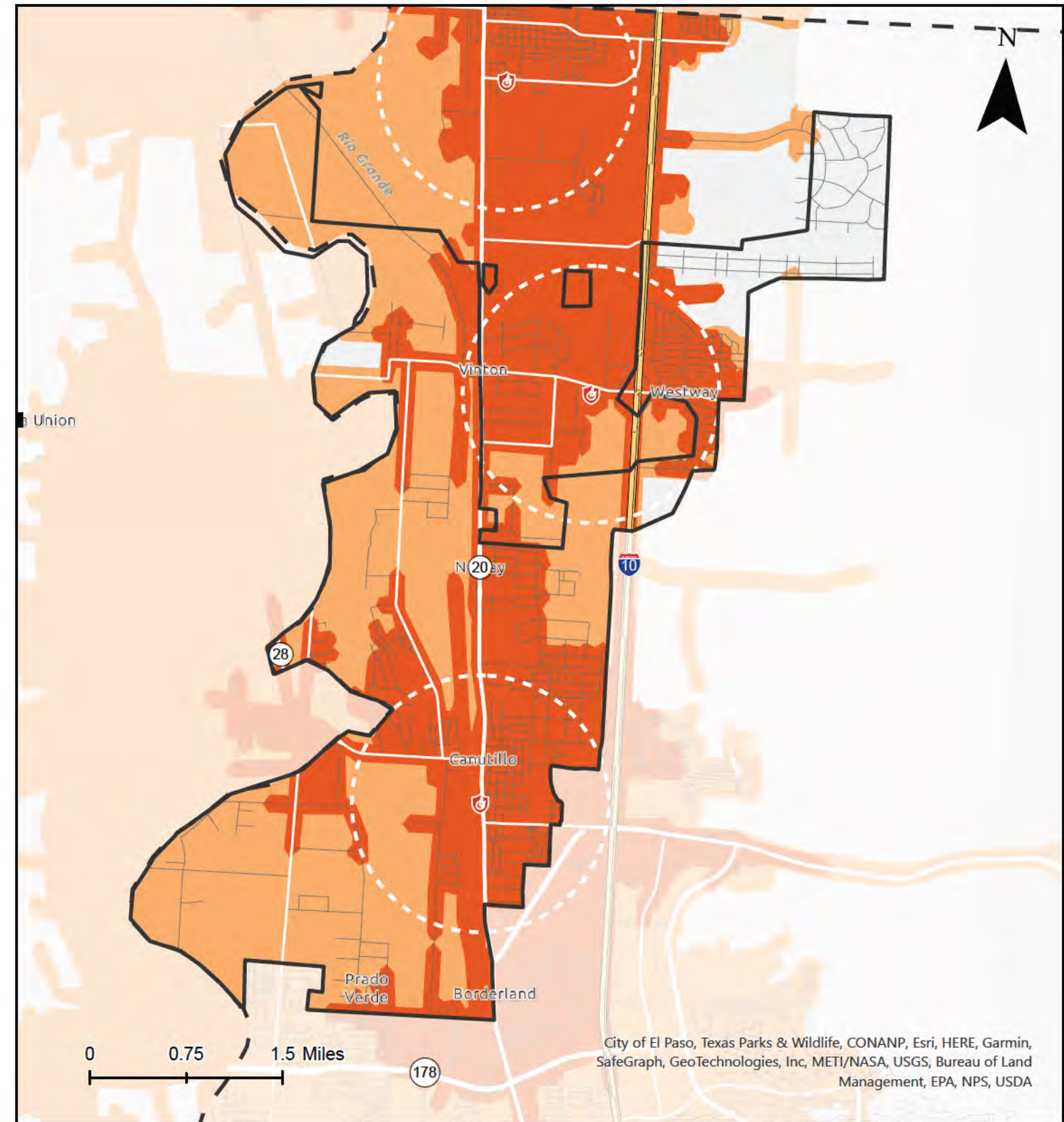




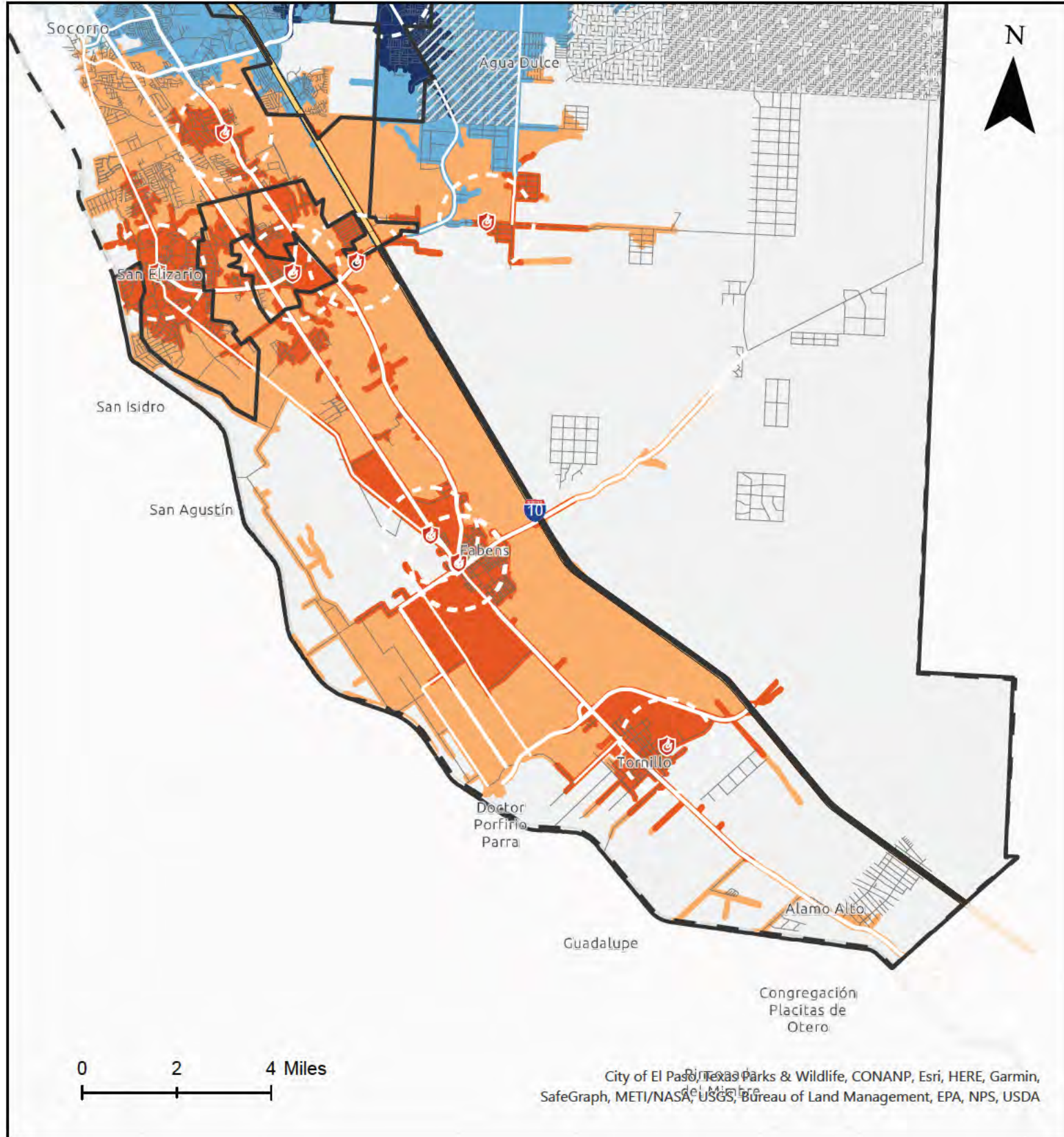
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



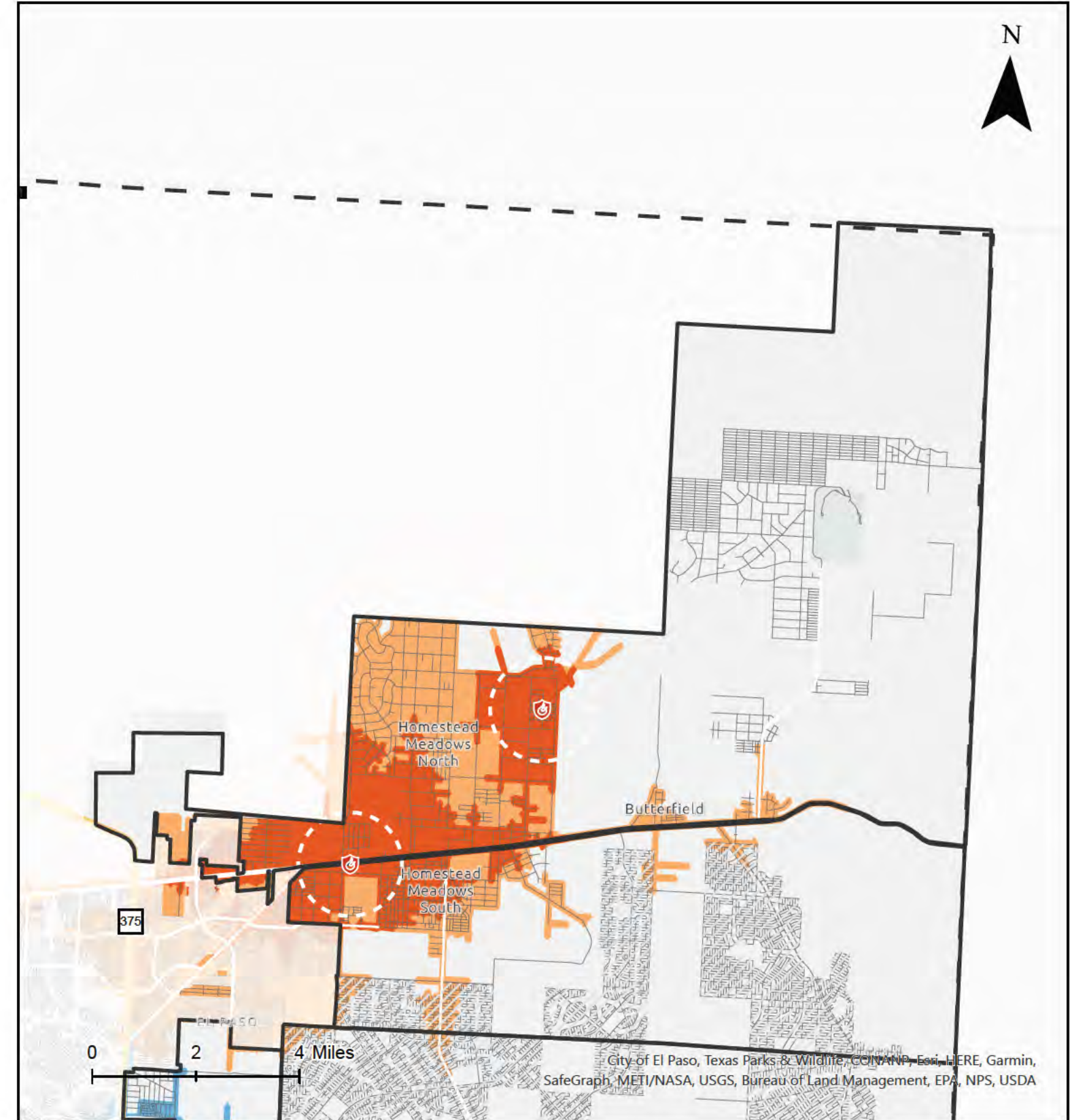
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



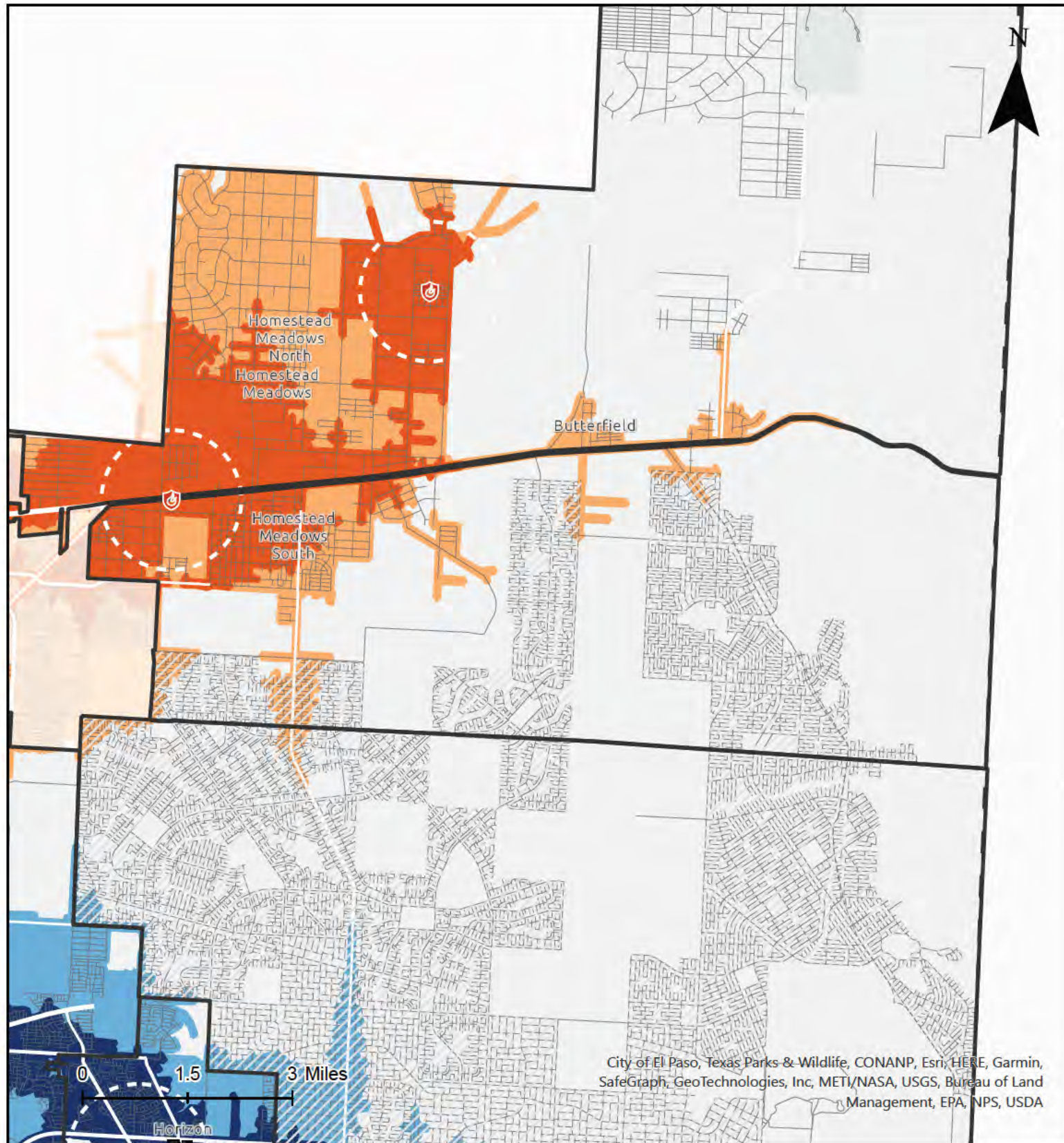
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



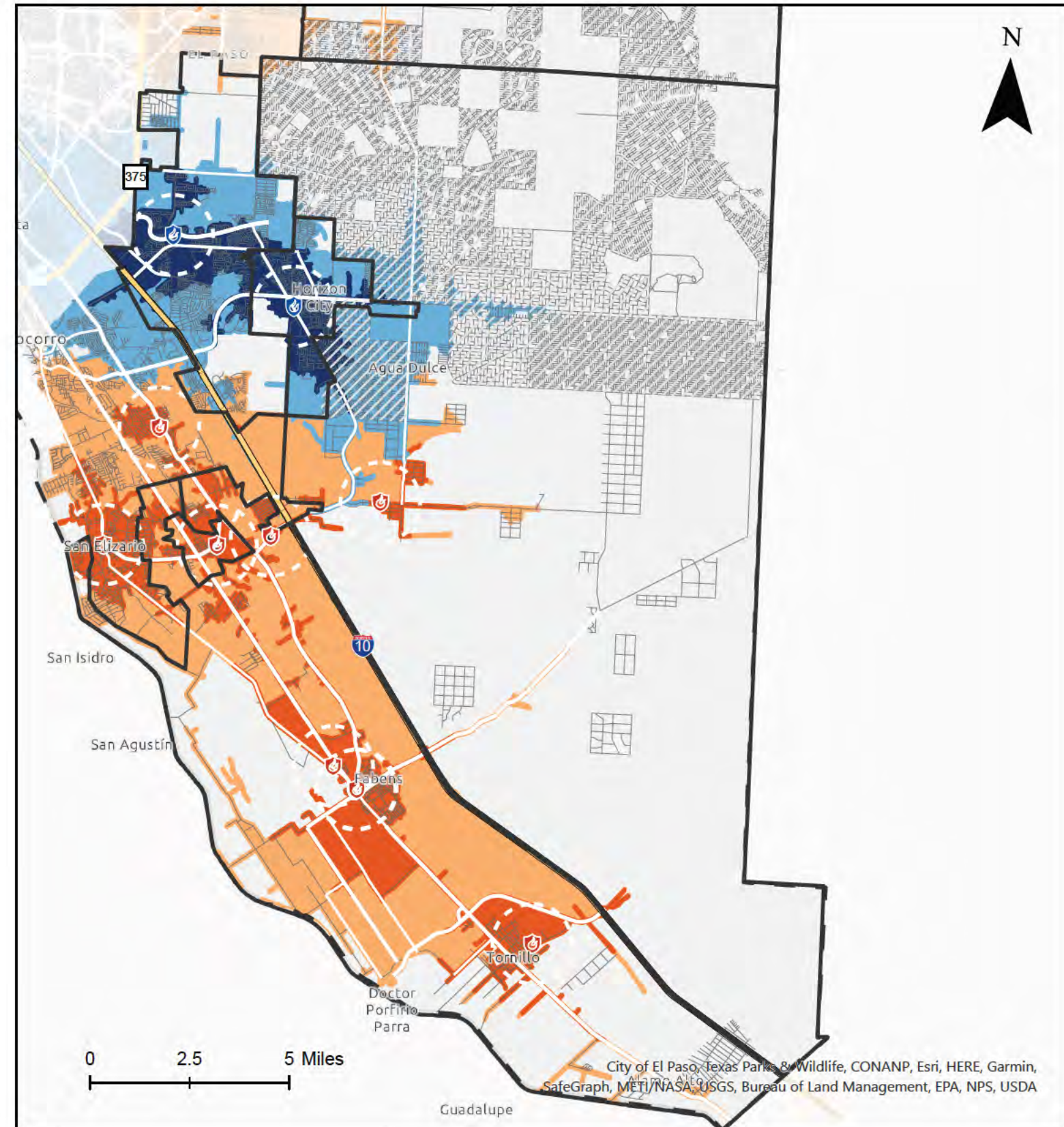
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



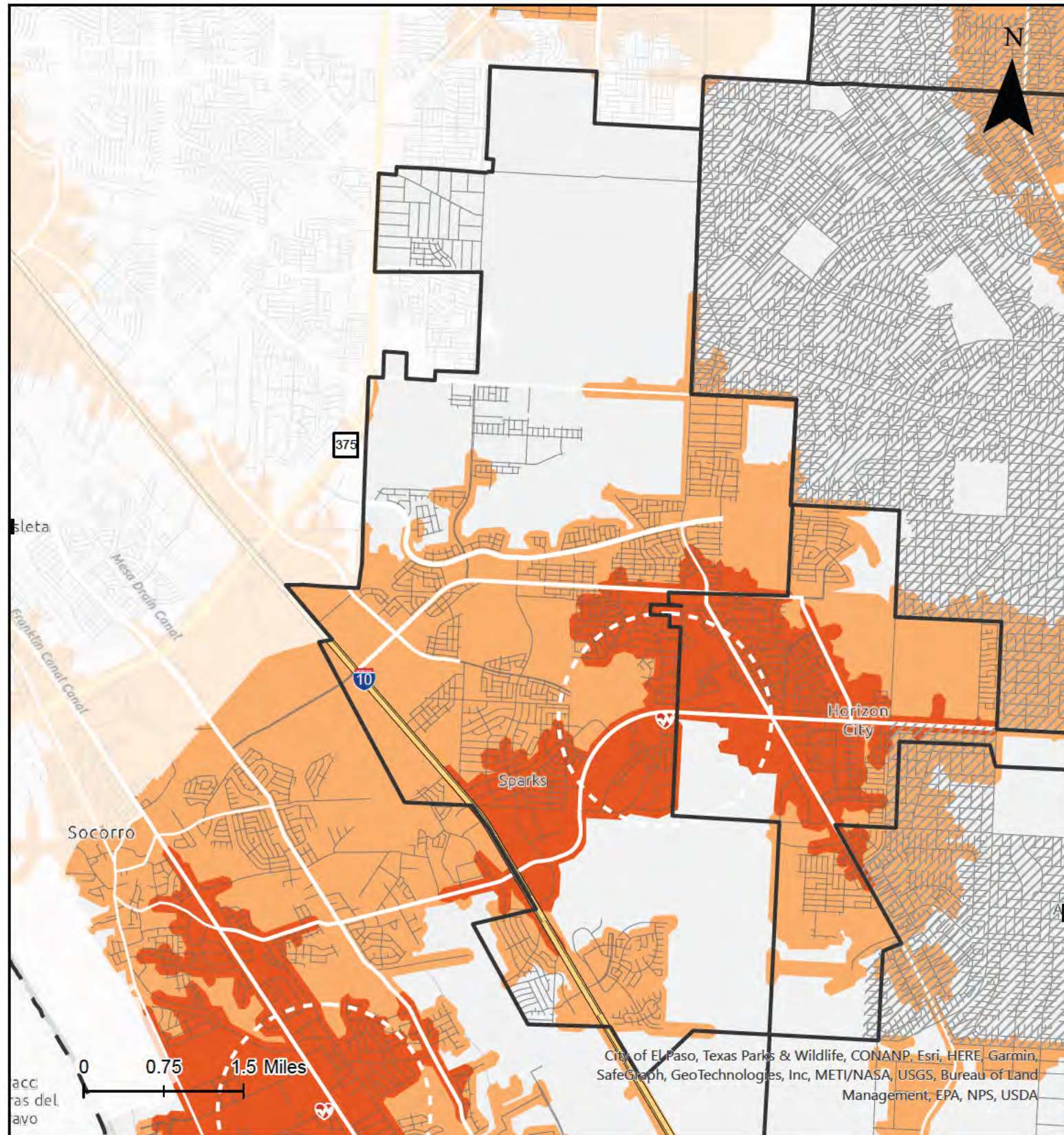
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



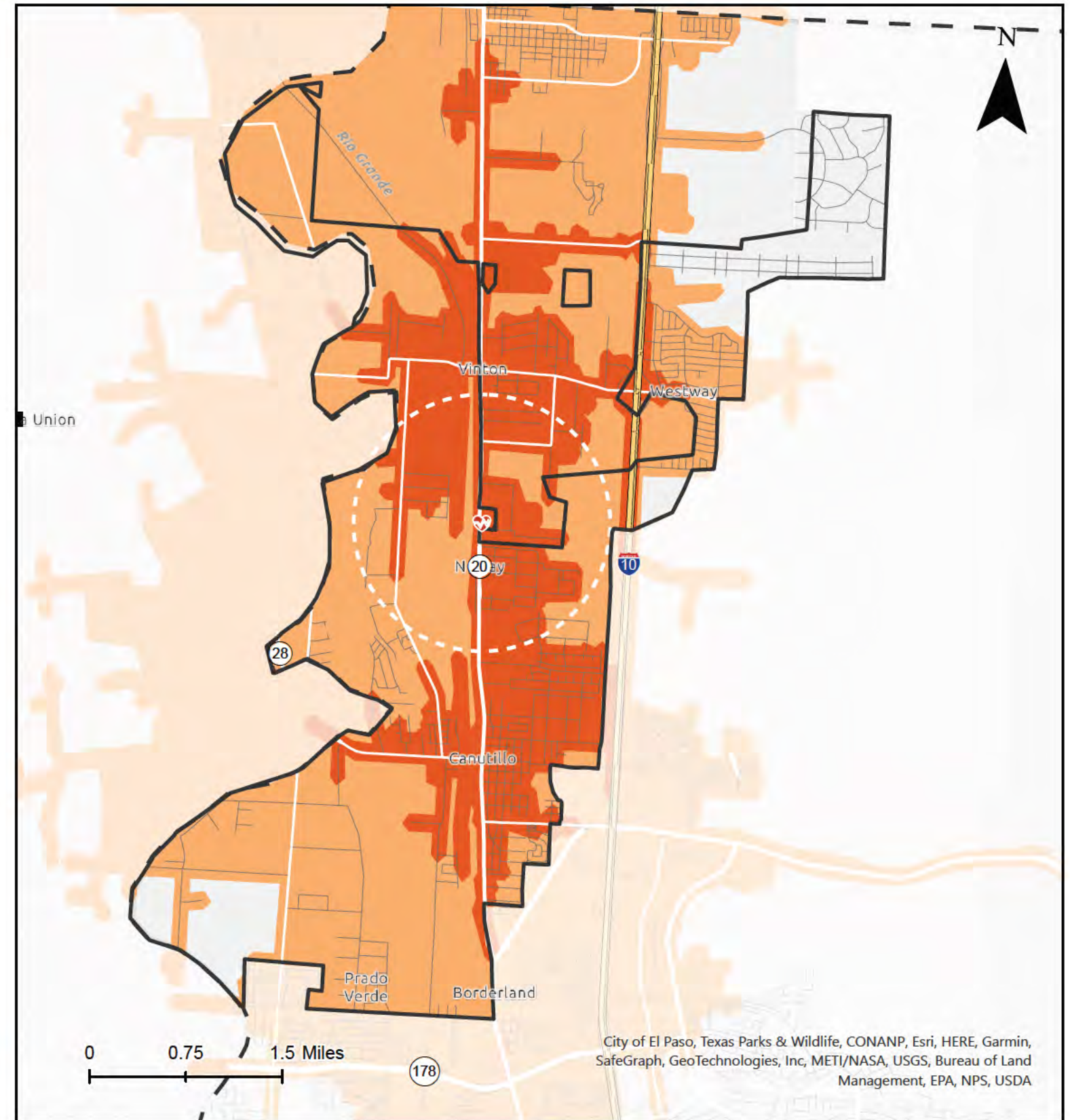
# ESD Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



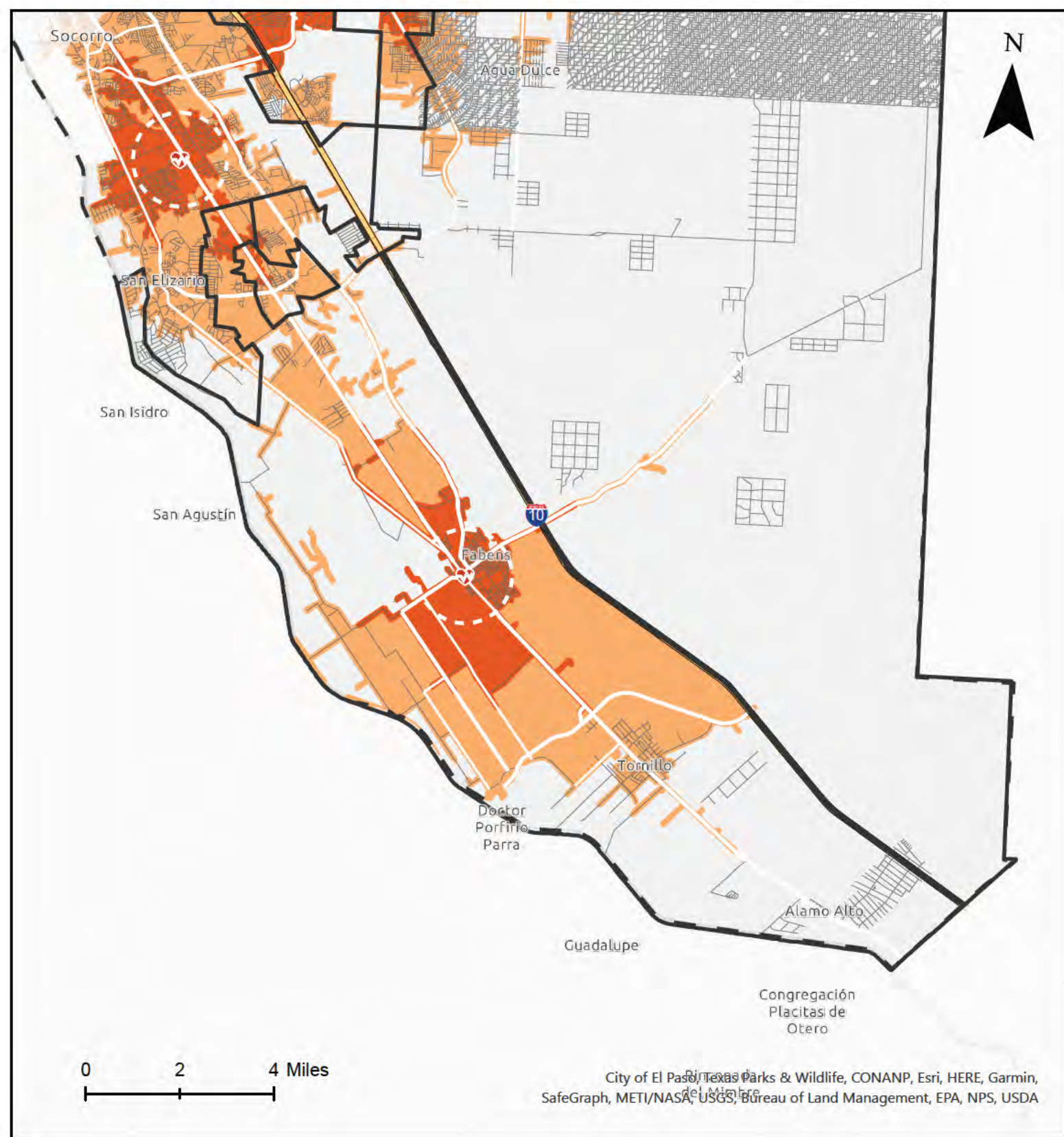
# Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



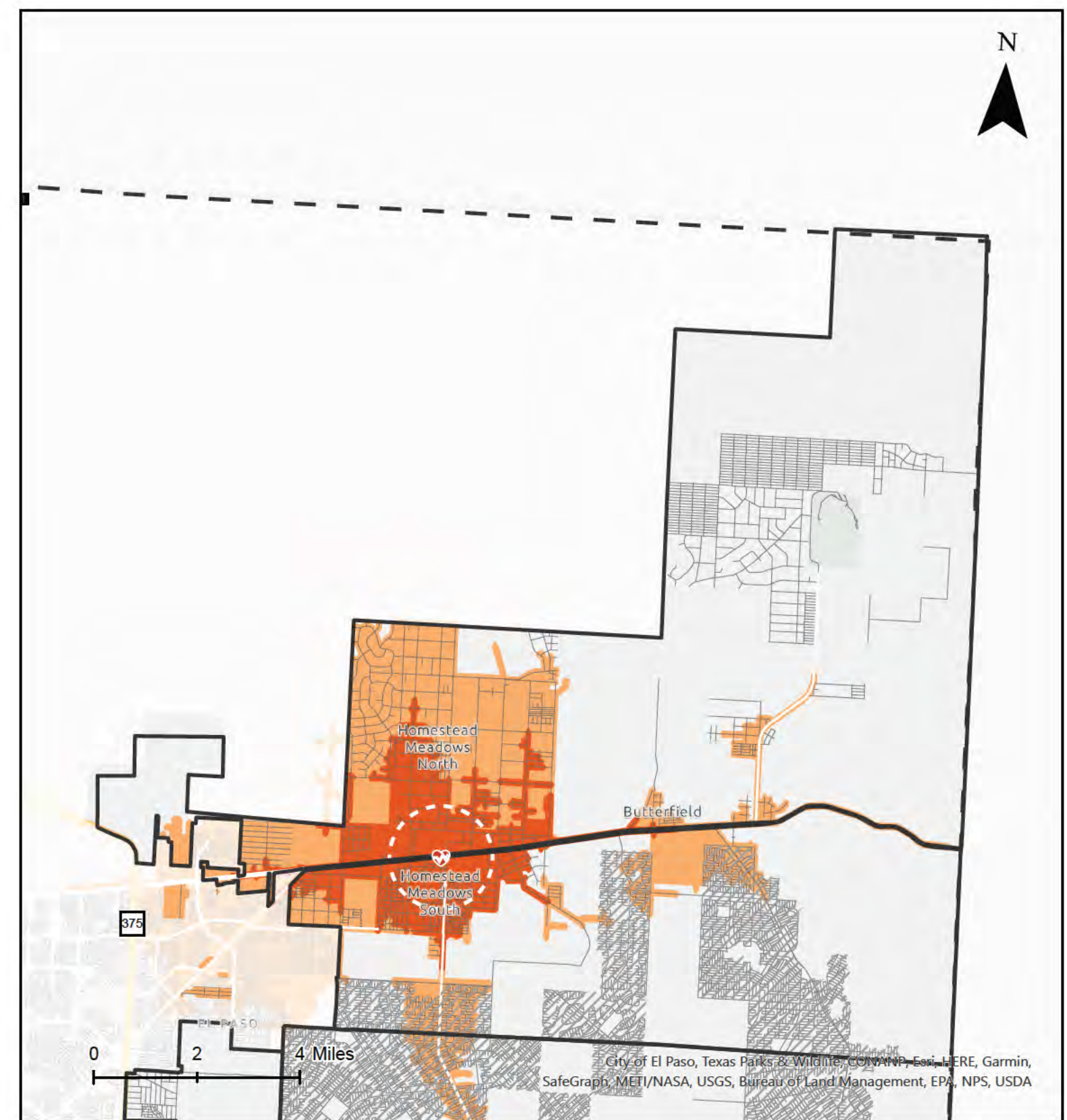
# Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



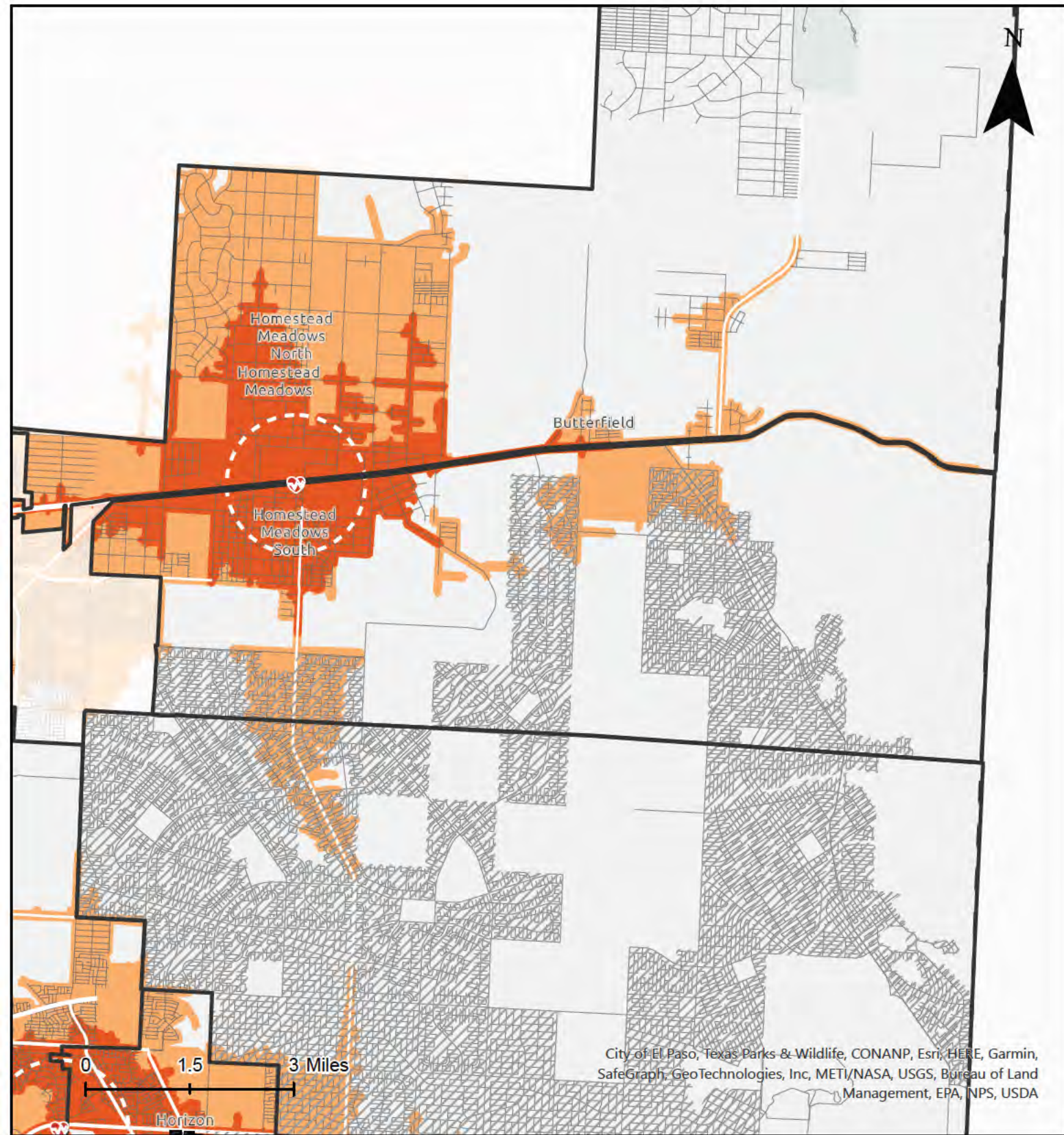
## Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



## Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



# Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes



# Ambulance Service Areas - 5 & 10 Minutes

