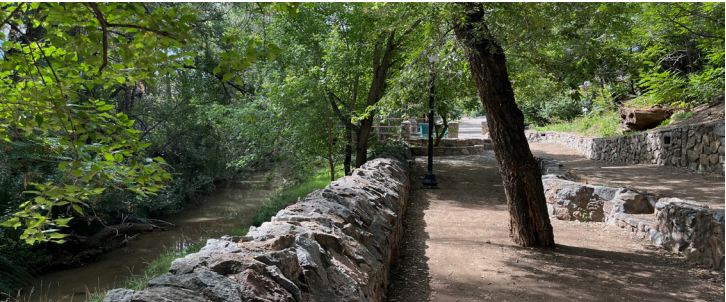


Stewardship Areas

Silver City’s community forest encompasses a diverse range of landscapes—from historic parks and downtown corridors to riparian areas and open spaces—each with unique ecological functions, infrastructure, and management needs. To ensure effective and targeted management, these landscapes are organized into five Stewardship Areas:

- » Residential Neighborhoods
- » Arts, Culture, and Tourism
- » Community Services and Athletic Facilities
- » Urban Corridors
- » Natural Landscapes and Open Space

This structure allows this community forest management plan to tailor management strategies to the specific conditions and priorities of each landscape type. By recognizing the distinct purposes, challenges, and benefits of every area, Silver City can apply resources more efficiently, coordinate maintenance and restoration work, and strengthen collaboration among partners and community members. Together, the five Stewardship Areas create a clear framework for sustaining a resilient, equitable, and connected community forest that supports Silver City's long-term environmental and social goals.



Priority Community Forestry Projects

TheCommunityContext,CommunityForestAssessment, and Community Forest Stewardship sections of this plan identify many general recommendations within stewardship areas, and specific projects to improve the health of Silver City’s community forest. This section of the plan synthesizes these recommendations into specific community forest projects. These projects strive to achieve the most benefits from the community forest through efficient management while balancing cost and resource demands.

- 1 Gough Park and Penny Park Area
- 2 Virginia Street Park Area
- 3 Downtown Historic District
- 4 Big Ditch Park
- 5 Little Walnut Road
- 6 East 32nd Street/North Silver Area
- 7 32nd Street Bypass/US-180
- 8 Murray Ryan Visitor Center
- 9 La Capilla
- 10 Brewer Hill & Surrounding Area
- 11 Harrison Schmitt Elementary School Area

From Planning to Action

Community participation will be vital as Silver City moves from planning to implementation. Residents, nonprofits, and local boards will help shape neighborhood projects through outreach, education, and volunteer efforts, supported by the CFN. By integrating tree planting with stormwater management, park revitalization, and neighborhood greening, the town can address challenges such as heat, flooding, and drought while building shared stewardship and civic pride. With strong leadership and community collaboration, Silver City is well positioned to expand its canopy, revitalize historic landscapes, and strengthen the resilience of its natural infrastructure for generations to come.

Example priority project areas include Big Ditch Park, Murray Ryan Visitor Center, and La Capilla.



Rendering of Penny Park, reimagining the west entrance and parking buffer transformed with healthy street trees, a modest areas of green grass and native plants. Created by Anthropopulus Design and Planning.

Executive Summary

Silver City’s Community Forest Management Plan is ready to get growing! The plan contains helpful information about the town's community forest, with specific recommendations for its growth and care. While the community forest includes all trees and vegetation within the town’s boundaries—across parks, streets, yards, and open spaces—much of the emphasis of the plan is on managing trees and plants in public spaces.

At first, it might seem as though a community forest management plan would only need one sentence: Plant more trees! A well-managed community forest can provide multiple benefits that support Silver City's goals for its development. However, just like any infrastructure, a community's trees and landscapes require an ongoing investment of both time and money to ensure they remain healthy and provide the benefits and services that the community values. Planting must also be balanced against tree water needs to use water wisely in New Mexico’s desert communities.

Southwest New Mexico Community Forestry Network

The Southwest New Mexico Community Forestry Network (CFN) is here to help Silver City with the implementation of this plan. Western New Mexico University (WNMU) received a 5-year-grant from the USDA Forest Service to increase tree canopy in six communities: Bayard, Deming, Hurley, Lordsburg, Santa Clara, and Silver City. WNMU leads the project in collaboration with project partners Gila Resources Information Project (GRIP) and Integrated Biological Solutions (IBIS).

The network will help maintain existing trees, plant trees across the communities, and provide support and technical assistance over the remaining years of the grant. The network website, swnmforestry.org, is designed to help coordinate efforts and share information between communities and project partners.



How to Use The Plan

Silver City's Community Forest Management Plan is intended as a practical guide for town leadership and staff, outlining specific implementation strategies for the planting, care, and management of the community forest. It reflects the community’s stated values, plays to the town’s strengths, identifies key challenges and opportunities, and charts a path toward achieving Silver City's goals for the development of both the community forest and the town at large. **Designed with a five year life-span (2025–2030) in mind**, the plan is a dynamic document that encourages the application of adaptive management practices to respond to changing conditions and shifting priorities.

Basis for the Plan

This section provides background information on how the plan was developed, including community context, analytical data regarding Silver City's community forest, and methodologies for identifying key priorities and strategies. This section can **help grant writers and project planners to provide justification for proposed projects and budgets** and may be of interest to those actively engaging in Silver City and its community forest.

Action Plan

This section identifies six broad goals for Silver City’s community forest, strategies within each of these goals, and specific actions to achieve these goals. It provides tailored recommendations for the physical care of trees, as well as recommendations on policy, funding, community planning, training, and agency and volunteer support. **Silver City’s Action Plan is meant to be a working “to do” list.**

Additional Resources

This section is an appendix to the plan and provides guidance and templates to support the implementation of activities identified within the *Action Plan*. It is meant to serve as an **educational resource** for anyone actively involved in Silver City’s community forest. Many of these resources are linked on the Southwest Community Forestry Network website (swnmforestry.org) which will continue to be updated as more resources are created and collected by the network.

Recommended Goals and Strategies

Silver City’s Community Forest Management Plan sets six goals, listed on the following page, that support a vision of a healthy community forest and help organize the work ahead. Strategies within each goal set actionable and measurable tasks to help realize those goals. The *Action Plan* near the end of the plan expands upon these Goals to recommend Actions within each Strategy, including timelines for completion, roles of partners and collaborators, and available resources.

Goal 1 is the primary, overarching goal for Silver City’s community forest, with cross-cutting strategies. Goals 2-6 are each focused around one of five community forest **Stewardship Areas**, or landscape types, which are discussed in greater detail on the following page. While some of the strategies within each goal can be applied to multiple landscape types, they are organized under the Stewardship Area with greatest alignment.

1. Silver City collaboratively manages a resilient community forest that contributes to broader community goals.

1A. Build a community forest network with representatives from municipal, county, state, federal, and institution professional staff.

1B. Monitor community forest health to prioritize tree maintenance and tree risk reduction.

1C. Develop, implement, and evaluate town-wide community forest policies, plans and initiatives that support Silver City's community forest goals.

1D. Provide guidance and training to non-profits, town boards, and local experts to empower participation in community forestry monitoring and maintenance.

1E. Invest in building staff expertise to further strengthen Silver City's community forest management.

1F. Implement green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) in high stormwater runoff areas such as pavement, roofs, and other impermeable surfaces to water trees and reduce localized erosion and flooding.
2. Silver City develops and expands neighborhood community forests based on connectivity and need.

2A. Expand and revitalize parks and elementary school landscapes, prioritizing neighborhoods with highest need.

2B. Develop a street tree initiative that focuses on connecting people to parks and services while lowering harmful heat levels.

2C. Engage residential community members in the growth and care of the community forest.
3. Silver City plans for community forest succession while still supporting and protecting legacy trees.

3A. Revitalize Silver City’s historic landscapes by reducing tree risk and supplementing existing landscapes with new and replacement plantings.

3B. Prioritize developing and implementing a maintenance plan for Big Ditch Park.
4. Silver City's community forest enhances public health and quality of life for residents and visitors.

4A. Focus resources on improving and expanding the community forest in town landscapes and recreation areas.

4B. Cool pedestrian walkways, bus stops, parking lots, and other high pavement areas through the use of trees and landscaping.
5. Silver City proactively integrates the community forest into residential and commercial growth.

5A. Develop cohesive streetscaping on US-180 and NM-90 to create attractive business districts and foster a distinctive sense of place.

5B. Proactively integrate tree infrastructure and irrigation into new and expanding residential developments along streets and in parks and other public spaces.
6. Silver City actively manages the community forest in natural and open spaces for environmental services, wildlife habitat, and human benefit.

6A. Improve the health of the community forest in riparian channels within Silver City municipal boundaries.

6B. Incorporate community forest maintenance and monitoring into Open Space Area management.

