

H NEW MEXICO **HIGHLANDS** UNIVERSITY[®]

New Mexico Highlands University **Capital Outlay Master Plan**

April 2023



Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated



Albuquerque, New Mexico



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Appendix Items Available for Download

 <https://www.arcforms.info/nmhu2023>



The electronic version of this report contains clickable bookmarks, hyperlinks, and interactive elements for supported PDF viewing applications.



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
ACS	US Census American Community Survey
ADA	Americans With Disabilities Act
ARC	Architectural Research Consultants, Incorporated
BSW	Bachelor in Social Work
CIP	Capital Improvement Project
Covid	Coronavirus Respiratory Disease (SARS-CoV-2)
CR	Classroom
DNP	Doctor of Nursing Practice
FBT	Fanning Bard Tatum Architects
FCA	Facility Condition Assessment
FCI	Facility Condition Index
FICM	Education Facilities and Classification Manual (Codes)
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GO	General Obligation (Bond)
GSF	Gross Square Feet
HC	Headcount; Tally of the Number of People Present
HED	(NM) Higher Education Department
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
I&G	Instructional and General (Square Footage)
ID	Identification
MACC	Maximum Allowable Construction Cost
MSN	Masters of Science in Nursing
MSW	Master of Social Work
NASF	Net Assignable Square Feet
NCES	National Center for Educational Statistics
NM	State of New Mexico
NM HED	New Mexico Department of Higher Education
NMAC	New Mexico Administrative Code
NMHU	New Mexico Highlands University



Abbreviations and Acronyms (Continued)

Acronym	Definition
RUR	Room Utilization Rate
SF	Square Feet
SUR	Station Utilization Rate
TPC	Total Project Cost
UNM GPS	UNM Geospatial and Population Studies
US	United States
WRH	Weekly Room Hours
WSCH	Weekly Student Contact Hours

Introduction / Background

Purpose

This document presents a capital outlay master plan for New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU). NMHU is a public, state-run comprehensive institution located in Las Vegas, New Mexico, with campus locations in Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, and Farmington [Ex-01].

The plan examines how each campus and its facilities may evolve to address the long-term needs of students, faculty, and staff. The plan then seeks to articulate a future development vision that aligns with NMHU's strategic goals, and provides a capital investment "road map" for 2023-2028 to attain that vision.

Previous Plans

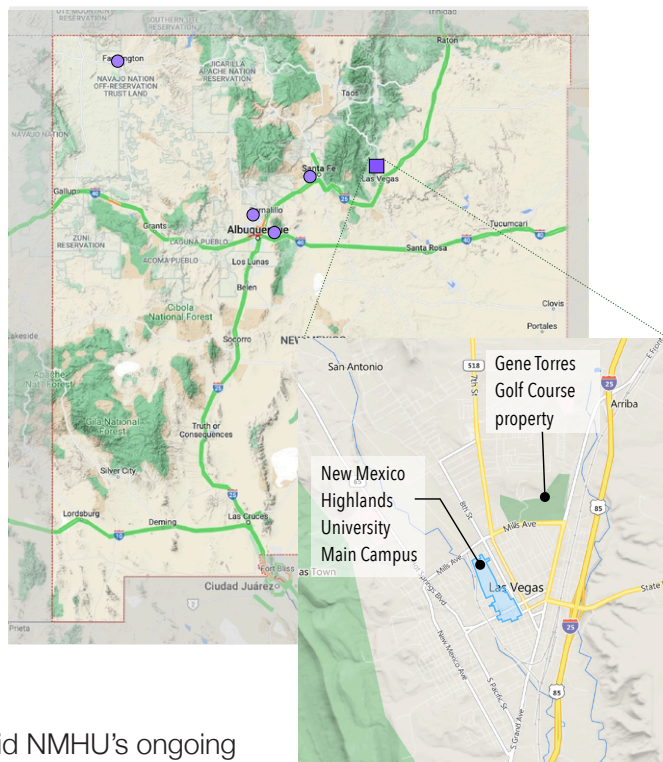
The NMHU 2023-2028 Capital Outlay Master Plan adopts and builds upon the goals in NMHU's Strategic Plan, as well as those established by previous master planning efforts initiated in 2010 and updated in 2017 [Ex-02].

The 2023-2028 plan also seeks to provide detailed data and tools to aid NMHU's ongoing work to maintain and improve the condition and use of its buildings.

This 2023-2028 Capital Outlay Master Plan primarily focuses on NMHU's Main Campus in Las Vegas, but also addresses the impact of recent enrollment growth in the Albuquerque / Rio Rancho metropolitan area.

This master planning document provides an overview of the existing and future conditions that influence capital planning decisions along with a recommended five-year capital plan strategy. Detailed reports and supporting resources are available in the appendix. (See [Appendix A.1] through [Appendix A.6])

Ex-01: NMHU Campus Locations



Ex-02: NMHU Master Plan Guiding Goals

NMHU Master Plan Guiding Goals	
Strategic Plan Goals	Master Plan Goals
Goal 1: Teach and mentor students to integrate a broad range of academic skills, a breadth and depth of curricular knowledge, and an interdisciplinary understanding.	Goal 1: Balance the immediate and strategic goals of the University with the physical campus by maximizing the utilization of existing campus buildings and facilities and identifying priority maintenance and renovation projects.
Goal 2: Inspire students to action through environments that foster scholarship and produce graduates equipped to address regional and global issues.	Goal 2: Establish a more pedestrian-oriented environment by clarifying and improving pedestrian corridors and activating open spaces throughout the campus.
Goal 3: Engage with and serve our communities for mutually beneficial exchanges of knowledge, services and resources.	Goal 3: Reinforce the identity of Highlands University and promote a vibrant campus environment by activating indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, improving signage, and continuing to beautify the campus's open spaces.
Goal 4: Advance excellence in diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.	Goal 4: Promote the historic, cultural, economic, and social aspirations of the community by collaborating with civic improvement enterprises and encouraging economic vitality to enhance both the University and the community.
Goal 5: Be a comprehensive educational provider for all students including traditional, non-traditional, online, distance, community, and lifelong learners.	

Background

NMHU History

Established with a land grant from the Mexican government in 1835, the layout of Las Vegas originated as a traditional Spanish Colonial style with buildings surrounding a central plaza as a protective barrier from potential external attack. Las Vegas soon prospered as a stop on the Santa Fe Trail, the famed 19th-century trade route running through central North America.

The arrival of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad in 1879 spurred the development of a new town east of the plaza, creating a separate, rival New Town. The Las Vegas region continued to grow, quickly becoming one of the largest cities in the American Southwest. Civic leaders decided that the booming Las Vegas area needed an institution of higher education, and in 1893, the Territorial Legislature established New Mexico Normal School.

The school opened in 1898 under the guidance of a young educator and anthropologist, Dr. Edgar Lee Hewett, who was to take a prominent place in New Mexico history as founder of both the Museum of New Mexico and the Institute of American Archaeology in Santa

Fe. From a charter class of 92 students and six faculty members, the institution continued to expand and attract attention, later adopting the name New Mexico Normal University. As its academic ambitions and prominence grew, the *New England Journal of Education* recognized the thriving school as “one of the best normal schools in the country.”

By 1901, enrollment had surpassed 300 students. The growth of the institution increased with the admission of New Mexico into the Union in 1912, and in 1917 the school became a four-year teacher training college. Over the next decades the school achieved formal accreditation, constructed new buildings, and introduced graduate programs in several departments. The school continued to flourish, and in recognition of its expansion and beautiful Northern New Mexico environment, received its current name of New Mexico Highlands University in 1941.

Today, New Mexico Highlands University remains known for its research activities, multi-ethnic student body, small classes, student and faculty achievements, and opportunities for students to combine study with real-world experience. Through distance education, flexible Internet courses, and on-site faculty, Highlands also offers degree completion and graduate programs in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, and Farmington. NMHU has an open enrollment policy, changing many lives by providing access to higher education to students who would not be admitted elsewhere.

Mission / Vision / Core Values

NMHU Principles	
Mission 	New Mexico Highlands University is a public comprehensive university serving its local and global communities. The school’s mission is to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering creativity, critical thinking and research in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions within a diverse community.
Vision 	To be a premier comprehensive university transforming lives and communities now and for generations to come.
Core Values 	• Excellence • Diversity • Accessibility • Responsiveness

Instructional Programs

NMHU offers graduate and undergraduate programs in arts and sciences, business, education, and social work.

The colleges and schools of New Mexico Highlands University include:

- Facundo Valdez School of Social Work
- School of Education
- School of Business and Technology
- Counseling
- College of Arts and Sciences
- Nursing

Site and Facilities

Main Campus

NMHU's main campus occupies approximately 74 acres in the historic downtown area of Las Vegas, New Mexico [Ex-03]. NMHU resides amongst historically significant buildings and neighborhoods, just a quarter mile from the historic "old town" plaza. NMHU also owns a nearby golf course property, which recently reopened as a joint effort with the City of Las Vegas and San Miguel County.

Existing Buildings

The main campus encompasses about 1.15 million gross square feet (GSF) and features 48 buildings. [Ex-04] The majority of NMHU's buildings are more than 50 years old (71% by number, 63% by gross square footage). Seven of the campus buildings are on the historic register, which lends the prestige of cultural significance but may also constrain development options. [Ex-05] The aging building stock requires increasing levels of maintenance and capital investment.

Condition of Buildings and Site

The planning team conducted facilities condition assessments (FCAs) of 22 of NMHU's 48 campus buildings. The total cost to address all noted deficiencies of the assessed building is \$127.8 million, with additional recommendations amounting to \$88.34 to be done in five years, if possible. [Ex-05] to [Ex-07]

The FCA process assesses the condition of all the building systems that results in an industry-standard Facility Condition Index (FCI) rating. This rating is simply the cost of noted repairs needed divided by the building replacement value. This narrow metric indicates that most of NMHU's buildings are currently in poor or very poor condition.

ARC also scores the building on a broader scale that takes into account the functional adequacy of the building and condition and adequacy of the immediate site. The average rating of the main campus using the ARC score is a "D," or in borderline condition.

As noted previously, the age of the building stock impacts the need for capital investment to renew building systems.

The FCA identified \$17.6 million of repairs needed for residential structures. However, the FCA encompassed only 4 of the 9 existing residential structures. Note that the repair, renovation, and replacement of existing residence halls is an identified immediate and long-term need for NMHU in order to maintain a quality that attracts and retains students. Because these facilities fall under the category of "auxiliary structures," no state revenue source is available to address their needs.

Ex-03: NMHU Main Campus





Ex-04: NMHU
Building Inventory

Map ID	HED ID	Building ID	Building Name	Year Built	GSF	LSF
Main Campus						
24	1	ARCH	Archuleta Hall	1962	37,903	
27	2	ARRH	Arrott House	1958	19,569	
21	0	AF	Art Foundry	1951	6,098	
15	3	BH	Burris Hall	1956	30,171	
33	4	MU	Champ Tyrone Music Building	1961	13,959	
3	5	UCEB	Communications East Building	1955	20,786	
25	7	CONH	Connor Hall A, B, & C	1966	42,854	
17 & 18	8	LIB	Donnelly Library	1966	97,337	
2	9	DH	Douglas Hall	1928	33,530	
23	10	ENGR	Engineering Building	1969	11,054	
32	13	FS	Facilities Services (Shops and Warehouse)	1962	12,849	
46			Facilities Warehouse	1992	5,000	
11	15	FMTZ	Felix Martinez Center Building	1983	18,318	
34	19	GREH	Gregg House	1961	19,569	
44	20		Guadalupe Building	1963	3,575	
10	21	HH	Hewett Hall	1955	14,779	
12	22	ILF	Ilfeld Auditorium	1917	23,781	
28	23	AI	Industrial Arts Building/Outdoor Recreation Center	1971	14,823	
20	24	HSCI	Ivan Hilton Science Tech Building	2004	100,326	
43	50	PE	John A. Wilson Physical Education Complex	1983	85,074	
36	25	FLDH	John Lerva Field House	1975	7,244	
6	26	EKYH	Kennedy East	1939	21,066	
7	27	NKYH	Kennedy North	1955	7,064	
8	28	SKYH	Kennedy South	1960	9,350	
9	29	WKYH	Kennedy West	1939	13,870	
19	30	LS	Lora M. Shields Building	1955	35,165	
31	31	MHTB	McCaffrey Historic Trolley Building/Media Arts	2016	21,027	
29	32	MELH	Melody Hall	1965	27,169	
37	33	SWMPL	Natatorium	1966	12,613	
48	35		President's House	1968	5,056	
5	36	PB	Purchasing Building	1927	7,486	
14	40	RAB	Rodgers Administration Building	1936	17,865	
1	41	SM	Sala de Madrid	1962	10,408	
19	44		Science Annex	1958	15,153	
22	45	SH	Sininger Hall	1961	26,373	
35	46	STU	Stu Clark Building	1951	51,546	
16	3	SUB	Student Union Building	2013	69,672	
30	48	STEC	Victoria D. de Sanchez Teacher Education Center	1969	65,045	
26	49	VCH	Viles & Crimmin Hall	2009	98,634	
46			1306 9th Street Residence		1,961	
Total Campus					1,150,084	
Centers (Leased)						
39				Rio Rancho		23,118
43				Albuquerque		12,123
14				Farmington		3,167
42				Santa Fe Center		3,575
Total Centers						41,983

Ex-05: NMHU Building Age and Historic Designation



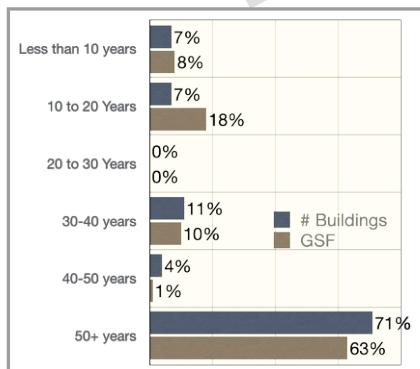
Renovated McCaffrey Historic Trolley Building (31)



Douglas Hall (2)



Ifeld Auditorium (12)



Rodgers Administration Building (14)



Kennedy North (9)

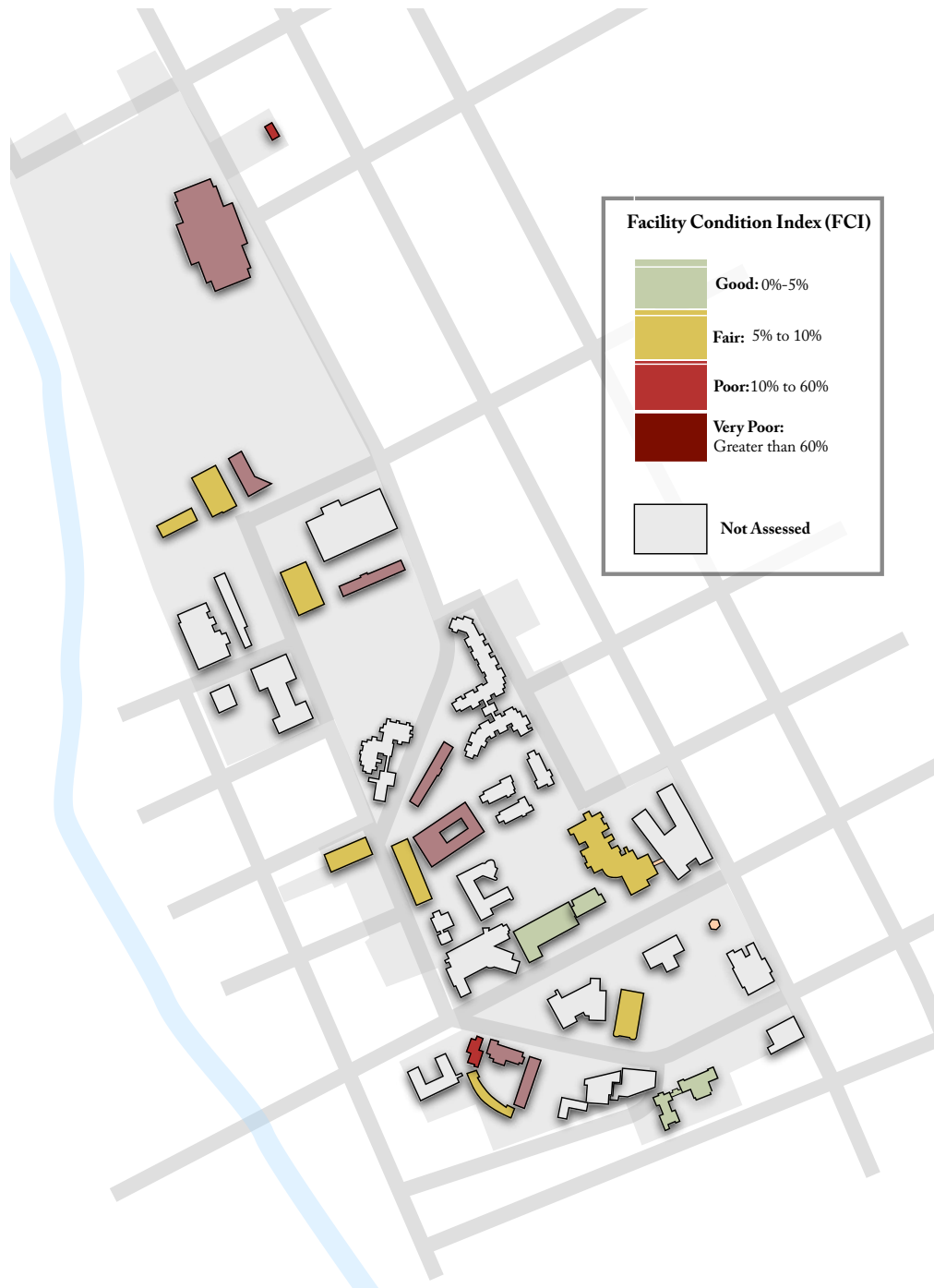
A report documenting these findings is available as a standalone document that includes:

- A history of the building and when it may have been renovated and remodeled
- Assessment scores for its site, and physical plant assessment, and adequacy/ environment
- Narratives describing the characteristics for each category and system for the building
- Detailed Capital Improvement Project (CIPs) recommendations to address identified deficiencies

Ex-06: NMHU FCA Summary Table

ID	Facility Name	Age	GSF	ARC %	ARC Tier	FCI Score	Project Budget
24	Archuleta Hall	61	37,903	68.70%	D Borderline	0.0788 Fair	\$11,888,215
27	Arrott House	65	19,569	66.10%	D Borderline	0.2106 Poor	\$2,904,074
33	Champ Tyrone Music Center	62	13,959	75.30%	C Satisfactory	0.1375 Poor	\$1,000,510
2	Douglas Hall	95	33,530	85.60%	B Good	0.1902 Poor	\$2,763,506
23	Engineering Building	54	11,054	76.10%	C Satisfactory	0.1762 Poor	\$3,698,163
46	Facilities Warehouse	41	5,000	72.90%	C Satisfactory	0.4791 Poor	\$858,285
47	Gene Torres Golf Course Clubhouse	70	5,300	76.20%	C Satisfactory	1.2504 Poor	\$2,379,920
48	Golf Course House	54	1,410	3.60%	F Poor	0 Good	\$40,136
34	Gregg House	62	19,569	65.70%	D Borderline	0.2801 Poor	\$2,776,329
12	Ilfeld Auditorium	109	23,781	70.30%	C Satisfactory	0.1629 Poor	\$4,973,972
28	Industrial Arts Building	52	14,823	78.10%	C Satisfactory	0.1802 Poor	\$3,000,880
43	John A Wilson Physical Education Complex	37	85,074	64.50%	D Borderline	0.6288 Poor	\$18,267,880
36	John Levra Football Field House	63	7,170	69.90%	D Borderline	1.335 Poor	\$2,961,239
6	Kennedy East	81	21,950	61.20%	D Borderline	2.0613 Poor	\$16,353,215
7	Kennedy North	81	7,064	43.40%	F Poor	1.8692 Poor	\$4,367,242
8	Kennedy South	63	12,600	72.50%	C Satisfactory	1.9461 Poor	\$9,501,547
9	Kennedy West Alumni Hall	81	17,300	66.60%	C Borderline	0.9472 Poor	\$5,549,654
19	Lora M Shields/Science Annex	68	50,318	82.70%	B Good	0.0325 Good	\$14,477,402
37	Natatorium	70	12,605	76.00%	C Satisfactory	0.0423 Good	\$507,098
50	Residence House at 9th St	68	1,515	1.10%	F Poor	0 Good	\$43,124
101	Rio Rancho Center	26	23,470	87.30%	B Good	0.0119 Good	\$43,124
17 & 18	Thomas C Donnelly Library	57	97,337	77.90%	C Satisfactory	0.5743 Poor	\$16,769,514
42	University Track				NA	NA	\$1,412,221
				65.5% Average		0.629 Average	\$127,789,484

Ex-07: NMHU FCA Summary Map



Further information about the FCA and a link to download a standalone report of its findings are available in the Appendix. [\[Appendix A.1\]](#)

■ Vehicular Access and Parking

NMHU's main campus exists as an island within the city's overall grid road network. The University owns all the roads within its campus borders. **[Ex-08]**



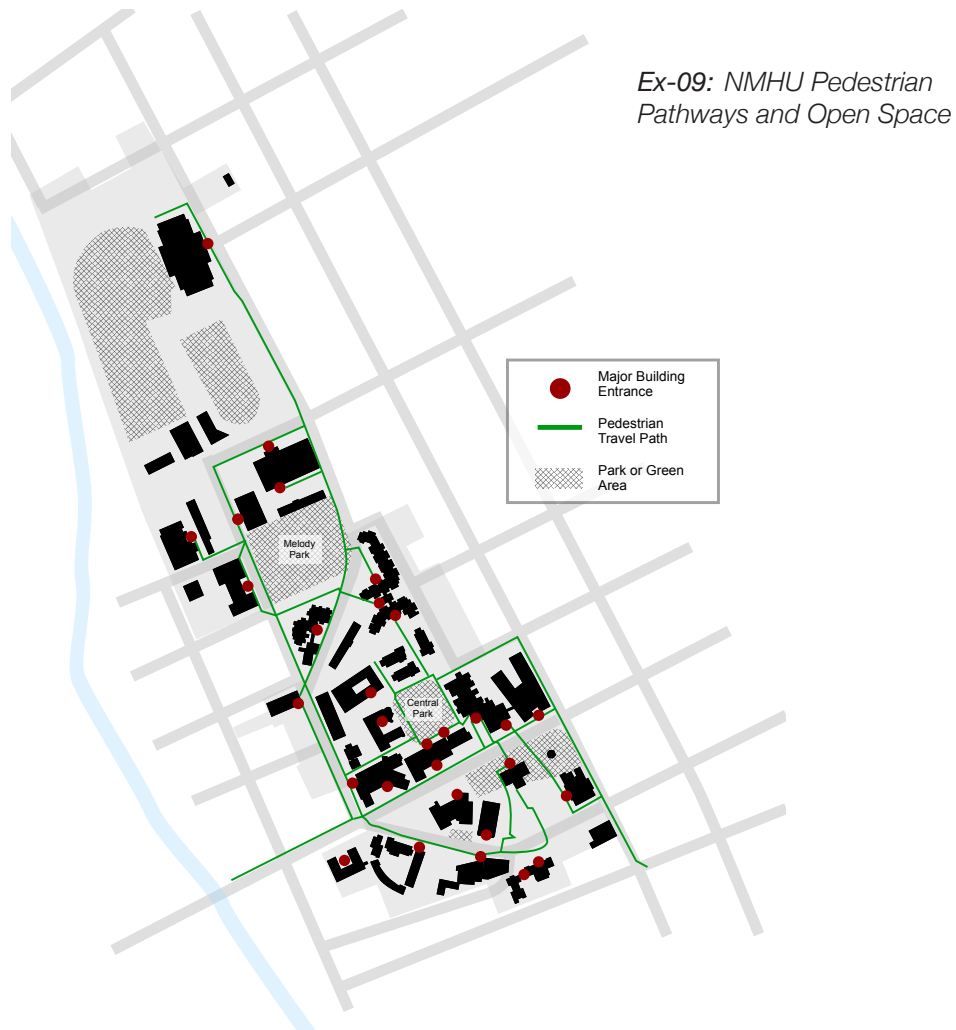
Ex-08: NMHU Access and Parking Map

Bridge Street / National Avenue bisects the southern portion of the campus while the rest of surrounding streets generally terminate at the campus borders. Internal to the campus is a system of one-way and two-way streets that may be confusing to uninitiated visitors. Previous campus master plans and City of Las Vegas plans have suggested changes to the one-way patterns on University Avenue, road closures, and methods to slow traffic and encourage pedestrian access. **[Appendix A.2]**

Based on inspection of satellite imagery from mapping services such as Google Earth, the campus provides an estimated 970 parking spaces within lots and dedicated street parking generally distributed on the periphery of the site. Fall 2022 utilization analysis indicates a peak student station occupancy of about 750. Parking was not identified as a concern in an online survey or by stakeholder interviews.

Open Space and Pedestrian Travel

The main campus has well-developed pedestrian pathways connecting campus areas with a focus on the two internal parks — Melody Park and Central Park. A main goal of the 2010 and 2017 campus plans was to make the campus a more pedestrian-oriented environment through the clarification and improvement of campus pedestrian corridors and the activation of campus open spaces. [\[Ex-09\]](#)



Interviews and online surveys indicate strong community support for the continued improvement of pedestrian pathways and landscape improvements. The previous master plans have provided numerous recommended changes that should be considered as resources allow. [\[Appendix A.2\]](#)

Remote Sites

NMHU operates four remote sites:

- Highlands Santa Fe at the Santa Fe Higher Education Center
- Highlands Farmington at San Juan Community College
- Highlands Albuquerque
- Highlands Rio Rancho

All the sites are in leased facilities. The NMHU Foundation owns the Rio Rancho location. NMHU is considering consolidating the Rio Rancho and Albuquerque Centers at one location. The Appendix provides information about an analysis of explored options. [\[Appendix A.6\]](#)

One of the options under consideration for potential campus consolidation is to purchase the Rio Rancho center. [\[Ex-10\]](#)



Ex-10: Highlands Rio Rancho Site

Located at 1700 Grande Blvd. SE, Rio Rancho, west of NM 528 near the Intel "Fab 11X" site

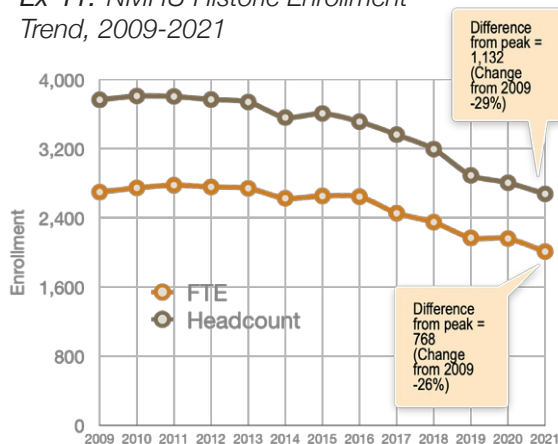


Historic Enrollment

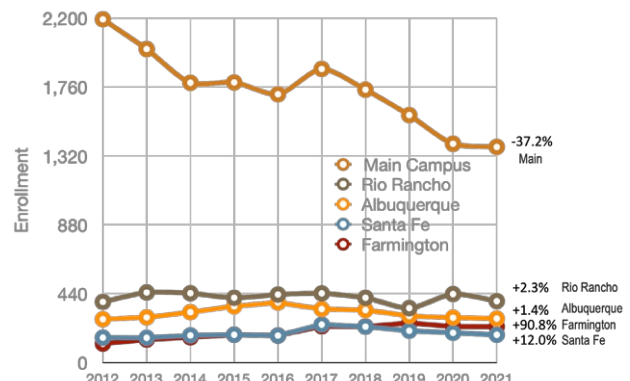
NMHU's overall 2021 enrollment has declined since 2009, reflecting both national and regional higher education enrollment trends. Enrollment headcount has declined by 1,132 students (-29%) since 2009. Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment has declined by 768 students (-26%) over the same period. [Ex-11]

Most of the enrollment decline has been at the main campus in Las Vegas. Headcount enrollment at NMHU's educational centers at Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, and Farmington has remained relatively steady since 2012 and now makes up approximately 40% of NMHU's total headcount enrollment. [Ex-12]

Ex-11: NMHU Historic Enrollment Trend, 2009-2021



Ex-12: NMHU Historic Enrollment by Location, 2012-2021



Source: NMHU Fact Book

Analysis of Fall 2019 scheduling data shows class instruction to be approximately 60% face-to-face, with the remaining 40% conducted online. NMHU expects this trend of online instruction to increase proportionally, affecting primarily graduate and remote center instruction.

General reasons cited in national studies for the decline of higher education enrollment include:

- Declining birthrates
- Declining number of high school graduates
- Focus on careers and job placement
- General aging of the population
- More part-time students
- Class schedules that do not align with many student needs

NMHU's Factbook, a publication of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research in the Office of Academic Affairs, indicates that 79% of incoming freshmen originated from New Mexico (Fall 2018 to Fall 2021). The largest proportion is from San Miguel County (33%), with most of the rest clustered around Albuquerque/Rio Rancho, Farmington, and Santa Fe. [Ex-13]


Ex-13: Annual NMHU Factbook Publication



FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMAN COUNTY ENROLLMENT

New Mexico Counties	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Total
San Miguel	82	56	48	36	222
Bernalillo	28	29	18	10	85
Catron	0	0	0	0	0
Chaves	1	0	1	1	3
Cibola	2	5	7	1	15
Colfax	8	2	2	0	12
Curry	1	1	0	1	3
De Baca	0	0	0	0	0
Dona Ana	2	0	1	1	4
El Paso	0	4	0	0	4
Grainger	2	2	0	0	4
Guadalupe	3	9	3	0	15
Hidalgo	1	0	0	0	1
King	0	0	0	0	0
Lincoln	2	0	1	0	3
Los Alamos	0	1	2	0	3
Luna	0	0	0	0	0
McKinley	10	7	5	2	24
Mora	16	11	9	4	40
Otero	3	0	1	1	5
Quay	0	4	1	0	5
Rio Arriba	8	14	10	3	35

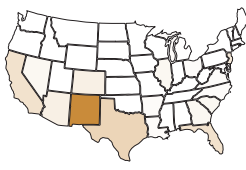
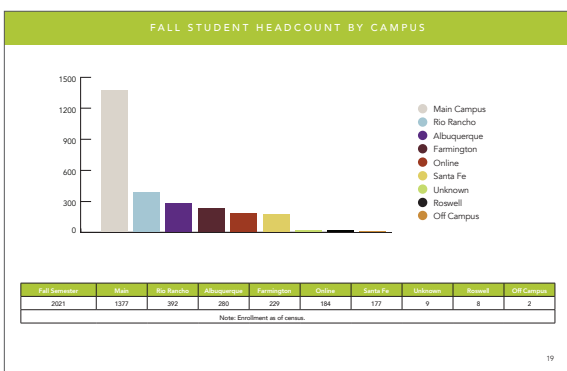
San Juan	8	4	3	5	22
Sandoval	9	16	10	12	47
Santa Fe	18	20	14	4	56
Serra	1	0	1	0	2
Socorro	2	5	1	0	8
Tara	2	8	4	1	15
Torrance	1	4	0	0	5
Union	0	3	0	3	6
Valencia	5	4	3	0	12
Total	215	222	145	85	667



FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME FRESHMAN STATE ENROLLMENT ORIGIN

US States	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Total
New Mexico	215	222	145	85	667
Alabama	5	3	0	1	9
Arkansas	0	0	0	2	2
California	15	7	0	7	29
Colorado	2	2	0	5	9
Florida	4	12	0	4	20
Georgia	3	1	1	0	5
Hawaii	0	0	0	1	1
Illinois	3	4	2	1	10
Indiana	1	0	0	0	1
Iowa	1	0	2	1	4
Michigan	1	0	0	2	3
Minnesota	1	2	2	0	5
Mississippi	3	8	0	2	13
Montana	1	0	0	0	1
North Carolina	1	1	0	0	2
Ohio	0	0	0	2	2
Rhode Island	1	0	0	0	1
South Carolina	1	0	1	0	2
Tennessee	0	1	0	0	1


Texas	11	8	13	23	55
Utah	0	1	0	0	1
Virginia	2	0	0	0	2
Washington	1	0	0	0	1
Total	272	272	166	140	850

2020-2021 STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The table below highlights where students were either very satisfied or satisfied with the three main areas of curriculum and instruction, support and overall assessment.

Curriculum and Instruction	#	% Satisfied	Mean
Quality of instruction in your major	246	95.50%	3.52
Quality of instruction outside your major	244	93.90%	3.42
Quality of academic advancement	246	82.90%	3.26
Availability of courses in your major	244	87.70%	3.33
Quality of intellectual challenge of your program	246	93.50%	3.44
Support			
Adequacy of financial assistance (S)	246	72.80%	3.16
Quality of career counseling and advancement	245	68.20%	3.08
Contact with faculty outside of class	243	85.60%	3.41
Adequacy of laboratory facilities and equipment	244	37.70%	3.08
Adequacy of library facilities	244	91.80%	3.17
Adequacy of computer facilities	244	48.20%	3.06
Overall Assessment			
Value of your education, relative to cost	245	88.60%	3.20
Your sense of community on campus	245	58.00%	3.21
Your preparation for work or graduate school	242	83.90%	3.31
Your satisfaction with your college experience	244	89.30%	3.35



Facility Use and Instructional Utilization

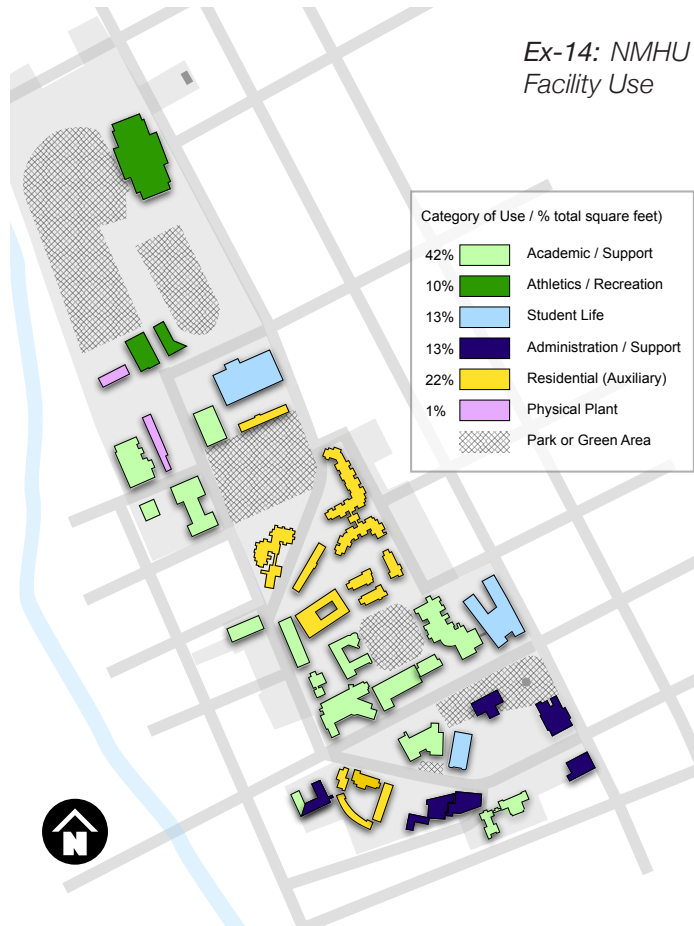
Functional Use

Facilities devoted to instructional or instructional support purposes make up 42% of total square footage on the main campus. Residential facilities comprise 22% of the total square footage. [Ex-14]

Comparison to Peer Colleges

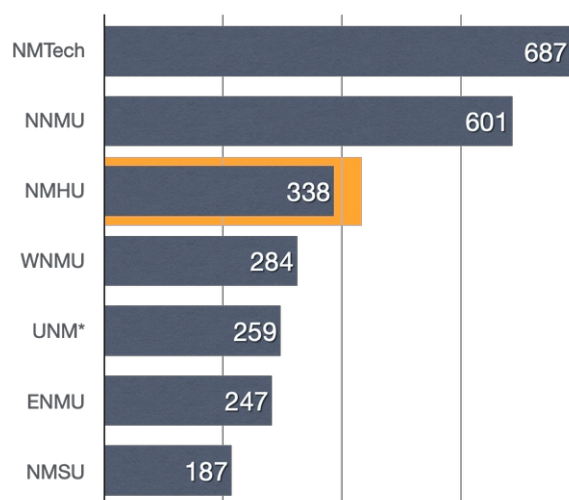
One broad measure of space utilization is the total amount of space (gross square feet, or GSF) divided by the total number of full-time equivalent students (FTE). The lower the number, the better the use of space.

Based on HED 2022 Summer Hearing data, NMHU is about mid-way in the amount of Instructional and General (I&G) gross square footage per FTE student compared to other 4-year higher educational institutions in New Mexico. [Ex-15]



Ex-15: I&G GSF / FTE Student of NM 4 Year Colleges, 2022

Note: Exhibit Data Excludes Online FTE



Source: NM HED 2022 Summer Hearing
*Not including Health Sciences Center

Instructional Space Utilization

Analysis of instructional use indicates that NMHU has capacity on its main campus to accommodate additional enrollment. Given the enrollment declines the main campus has experienced, these results are consistent with expectations.

NMHU has 135 instructional spaces, 101 are currently scheduled (75% of the total). [Ex-16] The 14 instructional spaces at the Albuquerque and Rio Rancho Centers are fully scheduled.

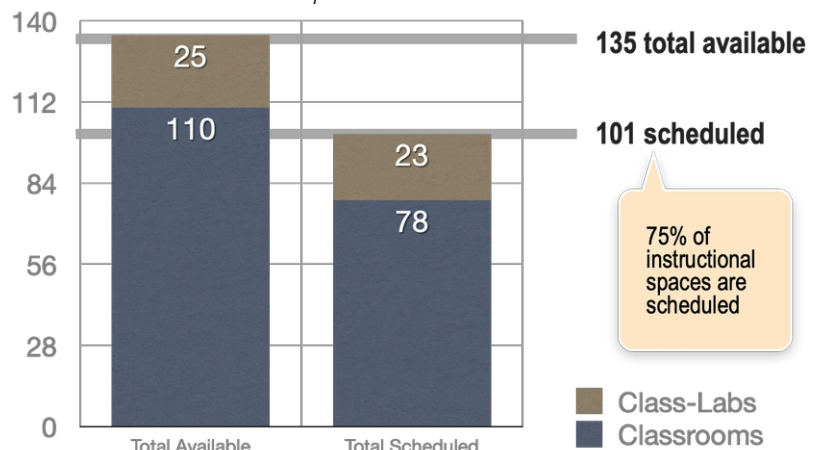
ARC analyzed the Fall 2019 (representing pre-COVID enrollment demand) and Fall 2022 scheduled instructional use. While New Mexico has not established instructional use targets, ARC based its examination on various state utilization studies that represent the range of commonly adopted higher educational utilization standards. [Ex-17]

Of those scheduled for use, peak instructional use on the main campus is between 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday and Wednesday.

The average Station Occupancy Ratio (SOR) of instructional space is 26% for all sites, a measure that indicates the percentage of instructor-desired seats occupied when the room is scheduled. The generally-accepted target for this metric is 65 to 80% depending on the type of space.

The blended Room Utilization Rate (RUR, the average number of hours per week an instructional room is scheduled) for is 23.29, based on 70 possible hours per week, as compared with a metric of 30-40 hours per week. The average Station Utilization Rate (SUR, the average hours per week a station is scheduled) is 6.42 hours compared to a metric of 21 to 30 hours per week, depending on when a station is scheduled.

Ex-16: Instructional Spaces - Available and Scheduled



Data Source: NMHU, Fall 2019 Schedule, and Space Utilization Report.Main Campus.xlsx (FICM 110 = Classroom, FICM 210, 350, 310, 610, 520 = Class-lab). Includes Albuquerque and Rio Rancho Campuses

Ex-17: Instructional Space Utilization Metrics

Campus	Rooms Scheduled	Stations Available	SOR	RUR	SUR
NMHU@Las Vegas (Main Campus)	89	3,320	26.86%	23.01	6.18
NMHU@Albuquerque	6	169	37.27%	32.61	12.15
NMHU@Rio Rancho	8	214	28.90%	19.4	5.61
All Building Totals	103	3,703	27.57%	23.29	6.42

SOR: Station Occupancy Ratio. Proportion of stations scheduled for use when the room is scheduled. *Calculation: (WSCH / Stations) / (WRH / Classrooms)*

RUR: Room Utilization Rate. Average number of hours per week a group of rooms is scheduled. *Calculation: WRH / Classrooms*

SUR: Station Utilization Rate. Average number of hours per week a station is scheduled. *Calculation: RUR x SOR*

Given the enrollment decline and the number of unscheduled rooms, NMHU's existing capacity is more than sufficient to accommodate current and expected enrollments. This indicates that within this planning period, constructing additional instructional space is unnecessary. Opportunities to improve instructional utilization include reconfiguration, renovation, or removal of some existing instructional spaces to meet changing program demands and optimize overall space use.

Service Area Demographic and Economic Scan

The majority of NMHU's student population is from the Las Vegas region and the general San Miguel County area, with attendance concentrated at the Main Campus in Las Vegas. Students from the Albuquerque metropolitan area attend both the Albuquerque and Rio Rancho educational centers.

Population and demographic trends in San Miguel indicate further decline in the higher education population base. However, NMHU's Albuquerque and Rio Rancho campuses are well-positioned to serve a growing population by offering the state's primary public higher educational programs in social work and comprehensive education. With their robust online offerings, these programs may expect to remain strong and grow to serve a broader audience both in-person and remote attendance.

Las Vegas and San Miguel County

Population and Enrollment

Population size in San Miguel County had two distinct periods of growth in the last century: first in the 1930s, and again in the two decades leading up to its peak of 30,126 in 2000. In this century, population has declined steadily, falling by just under 3,000 to 27,201 in 2020.

Enrollment at NMHU, though amplified comparatively, has reliably tracked the same County trends, with periods of growth in the 1930s and 1990s, and a subsequent decline. County population tends to correlate closely with enrollment trends, and appears likely to continue to reliably inform future enrollment trends at NMHU.

Population Projections

Demographers expect San Miguel County's population to continue declining; the most recent population projection series from UNM Geospatial and Population Studies (UNM GPS) published in early 2020 projects that by 2040, San Miguel County's population will have fallen below 23,000 for the first time in at least 50 years. However, even this may be optimistic. Official US Census counts for 2020 indicate a steeper decline than UNM GPS had projected, suggesting an even lower 2040 population.

Births and Birth Rates

Births are a primary component of population growth and directly drive enrollment. Trends in an area's birth rate establish the ground floor for future enrollment, and are predominately driven by economic stability.

Birth rate, or the number of births each year per 1,000 total population, has been in steep decline in San Miguel County for several decades, as have birth rates in the state and nation as a whole.

The impact of these low birth figures is clearly evident in the county's age pyramid, which is shrinking at the top and widening at the bottom as the community ages. Clear gaps are also evident in the working and professional age groups indicating weaknesses in the housing and jobs market driving these groups to larger and more fruitful markets. These groups tend to be family-aged groups who leave the local community and are unlikely to return.

Economic Drivers

Economic factors are fundamental drivers to population levels. The primary drivers of population size are births and migration, and both are intrinsically tied to the availability of well-paying employment and general economic stability.

Stability and Resilience

Resiliency is a product of economic diversity, including stable economic base industries, effective leadership, and adequate infrastructure and workforce. Economic stability and resilience can be measured fairly well by looking at unemployment and wages. Economic stability is quickly revealed by measuring economic resilience, or capacity to recover from downturns. San Miguel County saw job growth from 2000 to 2007, but in the wake of the recession in 2008, growth reversed course and jobs have been in a steady downward slope since, with continued losses in employment to the present day. This lack of any real recovery points to limited economic resilience.

Diversification

One cause of such limited resilience is a lack of diversification in the economy. Heavily reliant on government jobs, the county's base economy jobs account for just 15% of all jobs and just five industries make up 75% of all jobs in the county (government 36%, health care 15%, retail 10%, farm 7%, accommodations 6%, and all other industries 26%).

Wages

The other main economic driver of migration is wages. The average wage in San Miguel County is \$36,827. Federal government jobs bring the highest wages in the county at about \$23,000 above that average, but a fair share of industries provide wages within \$10,000 of the average including education and health, professional and business, and information. Still, the County average wage is well below the national average of \$55,628.

Community Trends & Drivers of Enrollment

Without improved diversification and increases in base economic jobs, the area's overall economy will continue having difficulty recovering from downturns, hindering opportunities to thrive and grow.

That lack of stability and persistently low wages will continue dragging down birth rates and limiting graduate retention and local family establishment. These conditions ultimately fail to provide the momentum needed to counter national trends of declining enrollment in higher education.

Albuquerque and Rio Rancho

NMHU's campuses in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho serve the local population as well as students from other areas who attend online classes. The social work program at Highlands Albuquerque offers Bachelor in Social Work (BSW) and Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees in three concentrations: clinical practice; leadership and administration; and bilingual/bicultural studies. A dual MBA/MSW program is available for students seeking admission into the two-year MSW.

The Rio Rancho Center offers courses and degrees in teacher education, business administration, social work, and arts and sciences, specializing in criminal justice, psychology, and university studies.

UNM GPS expects the Albuquerque metropolitan area (Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Valencia Counties) population to grow about 5.2% from 890,583 in 2020 to 936,873 in 2040.

The degree programs at the NMHU branch campuses in central New Mexico are well-positioned to serve the growing need for trained professionals in education and social services fields.

Target Enrollment

NMHU's Strategic Plan has a target total headcount enrollment of 3,000 by FY25, reflecting an approximate gain of 500 students. Although the demographic / economic scan indicates NMHU is facing enrollment headwinds at its main campus, there are positive indicators of increasing enrollment at the main campus, its remote centers, and online programs.

Online instructional will likely increase in proportion, affecting graduate programs and remote center instruction. NMHU would like to focus undergraduate instruction delivery as face-to-face at the main campus with a target of increasing incoming freshman enrollment to 200 (now at 160).

In November 2020, NMHU contracted with Wiley University Services to provide marketing and enrollment services for selected online degree programs. NMHU launched three programs in Fall 2021, and has subsequently added two more. As of the latest report,



See [\[Appendix A.3\]](#) for a detailed presentation regarding the Demographic and Economic Scan of the Las Vegas / San Miguel County Service area.



enrollment at these programs has reached 249 students. Enrollment during the 2023 semester increased by 70 students, with further growth likely to continue. NMHU will add a new Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) program in Summer 2023, as well as a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program in the future. Projections indicate that average annual enrollment from all partnered programs will surpass 600 students by the time the current contract with Wiley concludes.

NMHU has initiated aggressive marketing efforts to grow and promote its brand and enrollment. NMHU is currently running an advertising campaign throughout New Mexico and across the country on multiple platforms, including digital formats (i.e., social media, video streaming, and podcast platforms), television, radio and audio streaming, and outdoor media.

Stakeholder Input

Interviews

The planning team held interviews with NMHU vice presidents, deans, and program directors to understand existing functional organization and issues.

A number of themes arose in the interviews addressing facilities, overall site, programs, on-campus presence, and campus housing. [Ex-18]

Ex-18: NMHU Interview Themes

Interview Theme	
Facilities	NMHU has sufficient building space
	The university's biggest challenge is addressing deferred maintenance and facility renewal. Late 50s and 60's buildings require infrastructure replacement and renovation to modernize
Site	Improve "front door" identity
	Improve landscaping / outdoor gathering spaces with appropriate seating and furnishings
	Replace areas with synthetic playfield grass (such as AstroTurf brand) with xeriscape / native plantings
	Improve walkability of the campus
Programs	Think strategically about which programs need a physical presence
	Consider taking over management and development of online programs
	Expect growth in graduate programs
	Professional schools have historically strong programs: Education, Social Work, Business
	Highlands graduates 32% of teachers in the state across 12 programs. Much of the current Education programs are in Rio Rancho
	Social Work has a great reputation / national accreditation. Program has offerings at all Highlands locations, but 60% of enrollment is in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho

Ex-20: NMHU Interview Themes (Continued)

Interview Theme	
	College of Arts and Sciences is the largest program with 13 academic departments in half a dozen buildings. The A&S Forestry Program is unique and is growing in enrollment and bringing in funding.
	There is potential for additional program offerings associated with the Film industry
	Hope to launch a nursing graduate program in the next 2-3 years
Remote Programs	Centers now provide almost half of Highland's enrollment
	Need to look at the possibility of merging the Rio Rancho and Albuquerque Centers to one location
Presence on Campus	Graduate Students seem to prefer distance education delivery
	Undergraduate students want the socialization that comes with on-campus learning and living
Campus Housing	Housing is important for recruitment but lacks state funding, impacting maintenance and upgrades
	NMHU needs more residential housing options for students and transitional housing for faculty and staff

Online Survey

An online survey asked community members four open-ended questions about desired instructional programs, favored campus facilities, and desired physical changes. The survey garnered limited participation, but those who did respond generally echoed the need to refurbish and renovate older building and improve landscaping. (See [Ex-19] and [Appendix A.5].)

Ex-19: Online Survey Response

3. What physical building- or site-related changes do you recommend to improve the quality of life for students, staff, faculty, administration, visitors, and the community?

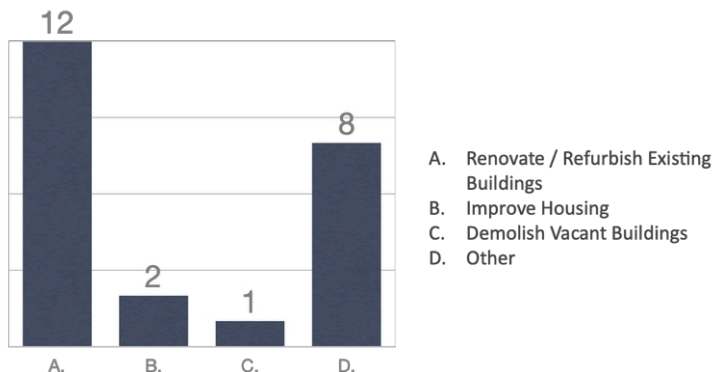
4. What do you think is the one most important physical building- or site-related improvement for NMHU to complete over the next 10 years? Please explain why.

5. Please provide any other comments or thoughts you have that may impact NMHU's long-range Capital Master Plan.

Submit Form

[Or cancel and return to introduction.](#)

Question 4 – What do you think is the one most important physical building- or site-related improvement for Highlands to complete over the next 10 years?*



Capital Strategy

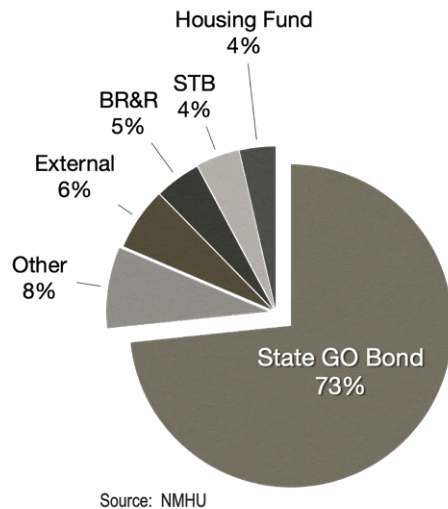
Capital Resources

NMHU has traditionally relied on a variety of sources to fund its capital needs. Of the \$27.2 million that NMHU has expended for capital improvements since 2016, 74% has been funded by the Statewide Higher Education General Obligation Bond (GO Bond) that residents vote upon every two years in an even-year election cycle. [\[Ex-20\]](#)

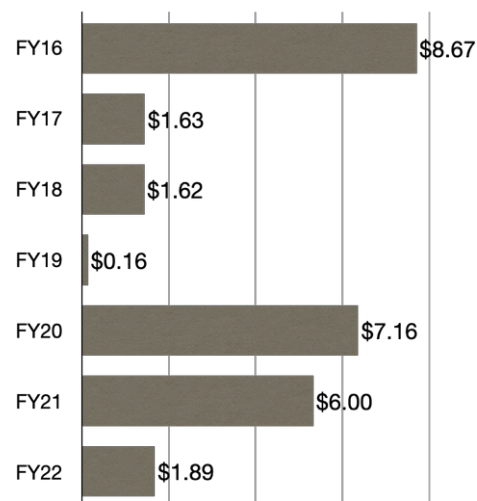
Higher education institutions submit their capital project requests to the Higher Education Department (HED) for review and potential recommendation. The process is competitive amongst all other higher education institutions, with approval and funding priorities based on the criteria set forth in NMAC 5.3.9.8. HED's priorities typically favor projects that improve infrastructure and do not add any additional square footage. Allocation from this source is based on a highly competitive process with other New Mexico higher education institutions.

State allocations from all sources can vary widely from year to year. [\[Ex-21\]](#)

Ex-20: NMHU Sources of Capital Funding 2016-2022



Ex-21: NMHU Capital Expenditures FY 2016-2022



Note:
 STB = Severance Tax Bond
 BR&R = Building Renewal and Replacement Fund

Capital Strategy 2023-28

The major focus of the 2023-2028 capital plan is the renewal of facility and infrastructure and targeted renovation to address:

- Aging infrastructure and buildings
- Deferred maintenance
- The need to attract and retain students, faculty and staff by improving facilities to meet state-of-the-art educational delivery

NMHU's capital strategy includes five projects with a state request of \$31.47 million. [\[Ex-22\]](#)

Ex-22: NMHU Capital Strategy FY 2023-2028

HED Priority Criteria	
1. Strongly related to instructional programs/support institutional mission	5. Unforeseen conditions that may result in major property deterioration
2. Provide high quality educational settings / up-to-date technologies	6. Renovate facilities / make wise use of existing resources
3. Necessary to accommodate enrollment growth	7. Improve utility Systems or building energy efficiency / result in reduction of energy costs
4. Address major health and safety problems / eliminate physical barriers for handicapped persons (ADA)	8. Projects with no other available or appropriate funding

NMHU Capital Plan Priorities																
Project Name	\$ Millions					% Local Match	Year Funding Received	HED Priority Criteria								
	Total Project	State Request	STB	State GO	Total			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. Ivan Hilton Science Building - Equipment Replacement and Accompanying Electrical Upgrade	\$4.00	\$4.00		◆	◆	0%	2023-24	◆	◆					◆	◆	
2. Infrastructure Upgrades (Phase 3)	\$3.09	\$8.00	◆	◆	◆	2%	2024-25								◆	
3. Donnelly Library & Annex Renovation	\$9.81	\$9.81		◆	◆	0%	2025-26	◆			◆			◆	◆	
4. Wilson Complex Renovation and Parking Lot	\$8.21	\$8.21	◆	◆	◆	0%	2026-27	◆			◆			◆	◆	
5. Champ Tyrone Renovation	\$3.5	\$3.5		◆	◆	0%	2027-28	◆			◆			◆	◆	
Total	\$28.61	\$33.52														




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Appendix

Previous NMHU plans, reports, and supporting material described in this appendix are available from the following location:

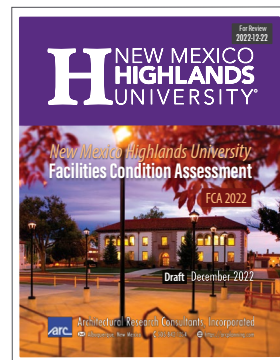
Appendix Items Available for Download

 <https://www.arcforms.info/nmhu2023>



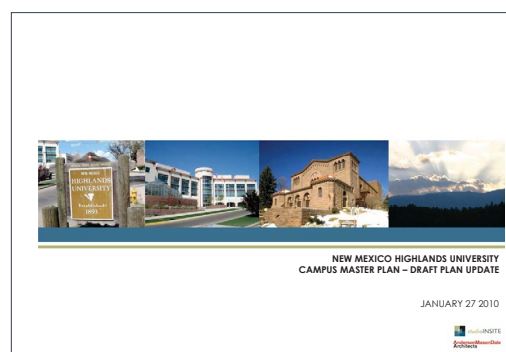
A.1 Facilities Condition Assessment Report

This document presents a facility condition assessment (FCA) of New Mexico Highlands University conducted in 2022. An FCA examines the existing state of a site and its buildings, which helps guide future planning for facilities renovation/expansion, improved campus infrastructure, and efficient space utilization.



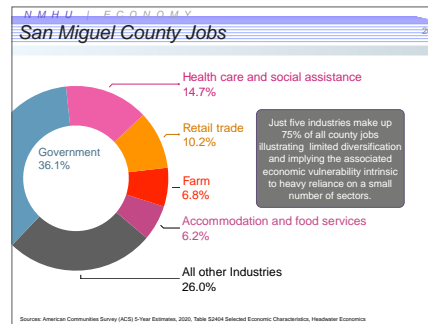
A.2 Previous NMHU Master Plans

NMHU completed a Campus Master Plan for the main campus in 2010, and followed up with an update in 2017.



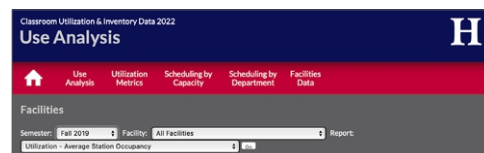
A.3 Demographic / Economic Scan

ARC conducted an analysis of demographic and economics of NMHU's primary geographic service area in 2022, and compiled a summary as a presentation.



A.4 Instructional Utilization

NMSU maintains several websites to gauge and analyze classroom utilization throughout its campuses. Inventory tools are available for the Las Vegas, Albuquerque, and Rio Rancho educational centers.

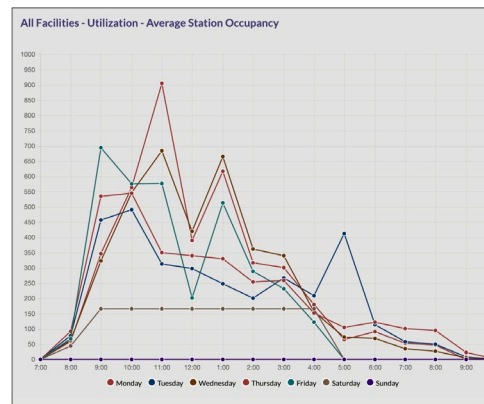


For Further Detail

Highlands Las Vegas Campus (Main)
<https://www.arcforms.info/nmhulv2022suite>

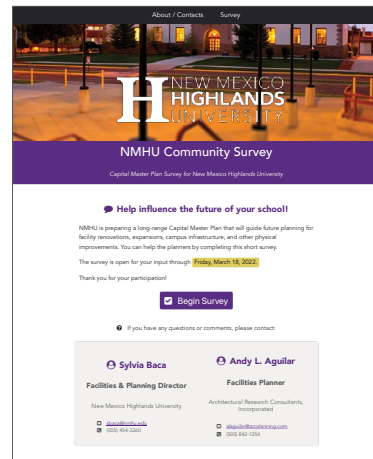
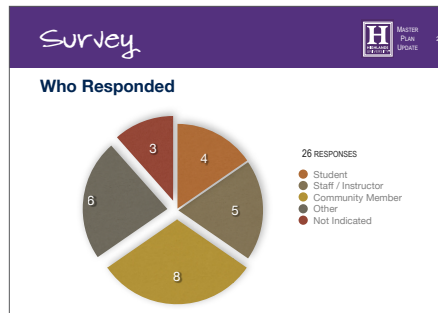
Highlands Albuquerque Center
<https://www.arcforms.info/nmhuabq2022suite>

Highlands Rio Rancho Center
<https://www.arcforms.info/nmhurr2022suite>



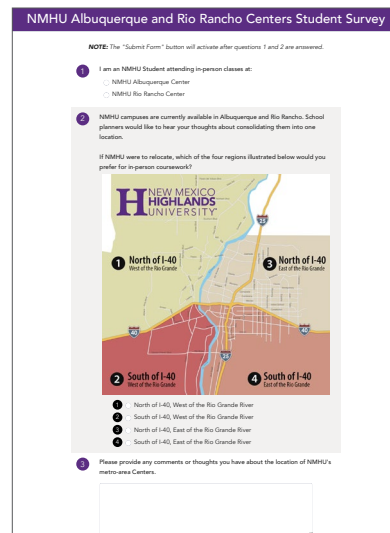
A.5 Online Survey Results

Planners conducted an Internet survey that asked four open ended questions about desired instructional programs, favored campus facilities, and potential physical changes. Community response generally echoed the need to refurbish and renovate older building and improve landscaping.



A.6 NMHU Albuquerque and Rio Rancho Centers Consolidation Study

Planners conducted a study examining the potential consolidation of NMHU's educational centers in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho.



NMHU Albuquerque and Rio Rancho Centers Student Survey

NOTE: The "Submit Form" button will activate after questions 1 and 2 are answered.

1 I am an NMHU Student attending in-person classes at:
☐ NMHU Albuquerque Center
☐ NMHU Rio Rancho Center

2 NMHU campuses are currently available in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. School planners would like to hear your thoughts about consolidating them into one location.
 If NMHU were to relocate, which of the four regions illustrated below would you prefer for in-person coursework?

1 North of I-40
 West of the Rio Grande

2 South of I-40
 West of the Rio Grande

3 North of I-40
 East of the Rio Grande

4 South of I-40
 East of the Rio Grande

3 Please provide any comments or thoughts you have about the location of NMHU's metro-area Centers.

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