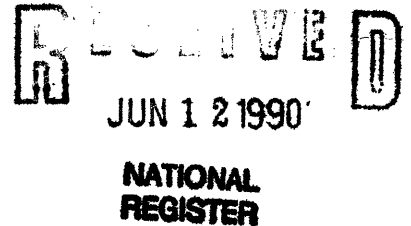


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form



This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

The Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upland Valleys
of Western Mora County

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Agricultural Settlement, 1835-1930
Commercial, Governmental, and Service Center Development of Mora, 1851-1939

C. Geographical Data

Mora Quadrangle, USGS Map, 7.5 Series

☐ See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

Thomas W. Herber SHPO
Signature of certifying official

6-1-90
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Beth Boland
Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

7/27/90
Date

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The phrase used in the Multiple Property Listing, The Upland Valleys of Western Mora County, denotes a specific portion of Mora County and refers to the geographic area in which the historic agricultural settlement occurred. This nomination uses other phrases as well to denote the same geographic area, including the upper Rio Mora and the upper Mora Valley. Unless noted in a specific instance, these phrases, just as the one in the Multiple Property Listing, refer to the western portion of Mora County and include the contiguous valleys which are part of the Rio Mora drainage.

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Discuss each historic context listed in Section B.

INTRODUCTION TO WESTERN MORA COUNTY'S HISTORIC CONTEXTS

From the conveyance of the Mora Land Grant by the Mexican government in 1835 until the Great Depression, the upland valleys of western Mora County comprised an important Hispanic agricultural area. The valleys are all above 7,000 feet in elevation and with small streams and rivers draining off of the eastern slopes of the spine of the Sangre de Cristo range. Trails through these valleys connected the High Plains to the east of the mountains with the Pueblo and Spanish agricultural villages of the Rio Grande Valley to the west. By the early 19th century, as the Spanish settlements on the mountains' western slopes became overcrowded, settlers began pushing eastward in search of irrigable lands where they might carry on their subsistence agricultural and grazing practices. They settled first in the upper Mora Valley and then in other nearby valleys, constructing buildings of earth and wood much as they had done in their earlier villages. At first isolated and vulnerable to Indian attacks in their new valleys, the early settlers of the area were soon confronted with other challenges to their culture in the form of the early Anglo-American traders arriving over the Santa Fe Trail, and then, in 1851, with the establishment of Fort Union, twenty miles to the east. After mid-century, a pattern of agriculture and rural settlement emerged in the upland valleys that would persist into the 20th century despite changes in agricultural production and the effects of a cash economy that would ultimately undermine those patterns. Many of the farmsteads, rural churches, stores, mills and granaries date to this historic period and reflect ways in which Hispanic building traditions incorporated Anglo and French Colonial building influences. During the seven decades (1850-1920) of the valley's agricultural importance, the village of Mora prospered as the commercial, religious, educational and governmental center of the area, a role it continues to play as the county seat. The vast majority of buildings in the village date from this period. Over the last fifty years, outside forces have eroded much of the economic and social vitality of the area. The residents of these upland valleys, however, are seeking to hold on to their past, and through an economic cooperative, which includes a committee on local history, are attempting to identify and preserve their built past.

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1. AGRICULTURE AND SETTLEMENT IN WESTERN MORA COUNTY (1835-1930)

Historic Context

Even before the formal designation of the Mora Land Grant in 1835, Spanish settlers, or pobladores, had been moving out of their overcrowded narrow valleys of the west side of the Sangre de Cristo mountains. At the risk of Indian attacks, they sought out the richer, irrigable valleys on the range's east side. With the opening of the Santa Fe trail in 1821 and then the establishment of the huge supply depot at Fort Union in 1851, the need for agricultural supplies on the east side of the mountains grew, fueling the prosperity of the upper Mora valley. During the second half of the 19th century, the upland valleys of western Mora County (established in 1860) achieved a reputation for their excellent wheat, corn, potatoes, plums, and other produce. Yet even as agriculture increased in these upland valleys and farmers began to move from a subsistence, barter-based economy to a cash economy, forces appeared that would ultimately undermine the relationship the early settlers had with the land. A series of court cases deprived the villagers of access to most of the common lands that the early settlers had used for grazing and wood cutting. The advent of a cash economy, while it made material goods available to farmers, gradually enticed farmers to leave their fields in search of wage-paying jobs. It also led to patterns of indebtedness that often resulted in families selling their ancestral lands. Following World War I the worldwide drop in agricultural prices further weakened farming in these upland valleys. As a result of these intrusive forces, many farmsteads have been abandoned as people have left the valleys, seeking work in the larger cities of the Southwest. One consequence of this prolonged local depression is that little change has occurred in many of these isolated valleys since the 1920s. Many houses, farm buildings and land use patterns remain much as they were during the area's period of agricultural importance. Increasingly, local residents, including several who have retired to their ancestral farms after having spent most of their adult lives working at jobs in other states, regard these upland valley farmsteads as important, and usable, reminders of their past.

The Sangre de Cristo, or Blood of Christ, Mountains compose the southeastern spur of the southern Rocky Mountains. Consisting of hard Precambrian granites and quartzites, the mountains soar to elevations of over 13,000 feet and embrace a

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range of ecological zones from the Hudsonian alpine tundra on the highest peaks to the conifer woodlands giving way to sub-alpine grasslands on the lower slopes. While these mountains appear sharp and jagged from the west, from the east they appear as enormous humps with Jicarita Peak, in particular, stretching as an extended green ridge, often holding winter snows on its slopes well into the summer.

The spine of the Sangre range extends over eighty miles, north to south and rises over a mile above the floor of the Rio Grande valley. This rise influences weather patterns, forcing clouds driven by the prevailing westerly winds to rise and cool as they seek to clear this hurdle. As a result, western Mora County receives from twenty to thirty inches of precipitation annually, well above averages on the plains just a few miles to the east. Most of this precipitation appears in the form of mid-summer showers and winter snowfalls. Arriving at approximately the same time that the snowfields on the nearby mountain slopes are disappearing, the summer rains keep the irrigation ditches, or acequias, full until the harvest season. With the Alfisols and Mollisols which compose the valleys' soils having a high base saturation and being particularly suited to irrigation, the area lends itself to irrigated agriculture. (Williams 1979:20)

Compared to the crowded, drier, narrower valleys of the western slopes, the protected, southeasterly-facing valleys of the upper Mora drainage must have seemed lush, moist, and inviting to the inhabitants of Truchas, Las Trampas, Chamisal, Embudo and the other western slope villages. Following Governor DeAnza's defeat of Cuerno Verde and his band of Comanches in southern Colorado in 1779 and the subsequent signing of a peace treaty with the Comanches in 1786, Spanish settlement expanded beyond its century-old bounds, setting off what one writer terms a "spontaneous folk migration." (Rosenbaum and Larson 1987:277) Yet, even as the pobladores looked west, east, and even north for new valleys to settle and to carry on their farming and grazing traditions, other external forces of change were in motion. French and American trappers and traders were pushing westward, looking to the rich valleys and streams of the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains for furs and, later, as gateways to the Spanish colonies. As a result, by the early nineteenth century the eastern slopes and valleys of the New Mexican Rockies were open and inviting lands, a geographical vacuum upon which several diverse groups were converging.

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Moving over the mountains, however, was no easy task. The spine of the Sangre de Christos is also a wall, a barrier to human movement. Only at breaks in that wall can east-west travel occur. Forty miles to the south of the Mora Valley at Glorieta Pass, near what was once Pecos Pueblo, lies one such break. Another lies at the steeper, more arduous pass where three small tributary canyons of the eastward-flowing Mora River come within a mile of Tres Ritos Canyon, the headwaters of the Rio Pueblo that flows west to the Rio Grande. Several miles down the Rio Pueblo to the west lies Picuris Pueblo, which through the eighteenth century served as the guardian of this strategic gateway from the High Plains to the Rio Grande. Pueblo Indians moved eastward through this historic gateway to hunt buffalo which grazed on the rich grasslands that began on the lower slopes of the Sangres. Comanche and later Jicarilla bands moved westward through this pass to raid or trade with the Rio Grande villages.

It was probably from their dealings with the Indians of Picuris Pueblo that the Spanish first learned of upland valleys of what is now western Mora County. The Spanish knew that the buffalo hunters, or ciboleros, of Picuris went into the valley to hunt buffalo. In 1696, Don Diego de Vargas followed the Picuris band into the Mora Valley as they fled to the plains after an unsuccessful rebellion against Spanish authority. (Thomas 1935:58) Then, in 1715 Don Juan Paez Hurtado launched a campaign against the Faraones Apaches, travelling down the Mora Valley. (Thomas 1935:93) Later, in 1754, Governor Velez Cachupin referred to Comanche raiders entering the Rio Grande Valley "at the entrances through Mora, which is to the northeast of this villa (Santa Fe) on the flank of the pueblo of Picuris," and described the valley as the gateway to the "bison plains and Comanche Country beyond." (Chavez 1955:319) By 1778, in his "Plano Geografico de los Descubrimientos" Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco noted the valley, "Rio de Mora," along the eastern periphery of the map, and in his map of the following year, "Plano de la Provincia interna de el Nuevo Mexico" included "R de Mora." (UNM Map Collection)

This evidence suggests that despite the efforts of some writers to explain the derivation of the name, Mora, as being a corruption taken from the French phrase, "l'eau de mort," or "river of the dead," a more likely explanation lies in a Spanish origin. (Clark 1936:42; Chavez 1950:32; Hanoush 1967:2) In Spanish "Mora" denotes a mulberry but is also more broadly

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applied to blackberries and raspberries, of which a wild variety of the latter abounded in the area. While many local place names do, in fact, bear French names, Ledoux, Gascon, Sapello, and while some building elements appear to be French-influenced, it is impossible that a French-derived nomenclature could have entered the language of Spanish administrative reports by the mid-eighteenth century.

Given this official knowledge of the Mora Valley as well as a local familiarity with it on the part of Spanish villagers from the western slopes who ventured up Tres Ritos Canyon and down into the valley in search of buffalo, the first attempts to establish a permanent settlement in the area occurred well before the Mexican government issued the land grant of 1835. As early as 1818, settlers in the area requested a priest and were described as within the "ecclesiastical orbit of the Picuris Mission and civil jurisdiction of San Juan." (Rivera 1979:np) Two years later Fray Juan Bruno Gonzalez of Picuris made a "confession tour" to San Antonio de lo de Mora where the three hundred residents of the village, "todos castellanos," (that is, all Castillian-Spanish, not Indians) petitioned him to send a secular or regular priest. (Chavez 1955:319)

In 1835 the Mexican government formalized this eastward-moving migration by granting to Jose Tapia, his daughter, Carmen Arce, and seventy-four other settlers 827,621 acres of land, known as the Mora Grant, or "la merced de Mora." The grant was one of several huge grants issued by the Mexican government as it sought to establish a buffer zone between itself and the encroaching Americans along the eastern slopes of the Sangres. The decree was issued by Governor Albino Perez on September 28, 1835, and Alcalde Manuel Sanchez of San Jose de las Trampas conveyed the grant on October 20, 1835. The boundaries of the grant were described in a petition to the surveyor general of New Mexico in 1861 as "bounded on the north by the Rio de Ocate, on the east by the Aguage de le Llegua, on the south by the mouth of the Sapello, where it empties into the Rio de Mora, and on the west by the Estillero, all of which points and boundaries are well-known landmarks in the said county of Taos." (Twitchell 1914:173)

As was often the case with the conveyance of grants, the administrative justice, or alcalde, accompanied the grantees to their land. Upon surveying the land, he determined how it would be divided. A certain portion was set aside for the village, or

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plaza, and for public roadways into the plaza, and then each grantee was assigned a portion of irrigable land, measured in varas (ca. 33 inches). The balance of the land was designated as common lands for grazing and wood cutting. Judge Sanchez designated two plazas, one known as San Antonio de lo de Mora (now Cleveland), and one lying three miles to the east, Santa Gertrudis de lo de Mora (now the village of Mora). Since the names of these plazas appear in earlier documents, it is quite likely that the conveyance simply recognized already existing settlements. In fact, given the threat of attack, one in which Jose Tapia was killed, the grantees probably welcomed newcomers, as was the custom with many community grants, and provided them with unassigned irrigable lands.

The tasks facing these early settlers were threefold. First, they needed to protect themselves from attack by creating a fortified plaza. Second, they needed to clear the valley floor so that they could begin to farm it. Often, they burned the wooded areas and then removed the charred tree trunks, a practice that is denoted in the place name Quemado, or burnt land, a name used in the upper Mora Valley near Chacon. Third, they needed to irrigate the lands they had cleared. To accomplish this they dug acequias, the gravity-based irrigation ditches as they had done in their previous homes. If oxen were available, the settlers used them to pull plows to cut the initial trench, but often they were forced to pull their primitive wooden plow themselves. So important to their survival was this task that they worked at it year round, in winter heating the rocks and then pouring cold water over them to crack and remove them from the ditch's course. (Blake 1932:2) Not only was the ditch water essential to their agriculture, in the upland valleys it also helped maintain the water table at a sufficient level to supply the wells of the villages.

Church registers and the 1845 Mexican Census help to detail the often vague story of the early years of settlement. The villages of origin of these seventy-six settlers reveal an immigration pattern that would continue to shape settlement in the upland valleys of the area for the next fifty years. Nine of the grantees were from the Rio Grande villages of Alcalde, Velarde and Embudo; the other sixty-seven were from the western slope villages of Santa Barbara, Chamisal and Trampas. (Chavez 1955:321) By 1845 the precinct "Lo de Mora" listed 489 persons in 115 households, the precinct of "El Valle de San Antonio" listed 474 persons in 103 households, and farther up the valley a

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new settlement, El Rito (present day Chacon) listed sixty-six persons in eleven households. (Mexican Census of 1845) Not only does this census suggest how extensive this Hispanic folk migration had become by mid-century, the list of names also suggests how frequently settlers moved. Only twenty names of the original seventy-six grantees appear on the census. The others had either died, or sold their land and moved on, as in the case of Carmen Arce who migrated to California.

These upland valleys continued to draw people from the overcrowded settlements over the mountains. Despite a major smallpox epidemic in 1856 that took over a hundred lives, population grew in the Mora Valley. The United States Census of 1860 shows that of 236 household heads in the village of Mora precinct, 119 listed their county of birth as Rio Arriba, which lies to the west of the mountains. The vast majority of children under the age of ten, however, were born locally. Even more significant, Cebolla precinct, immediately south of Mora, with a population of 837 in 188 households, lists 103 household heads as born in Rio Arriba County. With many small villages, including North Carmen and Ledoux, in 1860 the Cebolla Valley was a recently settled area. It was formed by what Kutsche and Van Ness refer to as the "budding process." (Kutsche and Van Ness 1976:6) The term denotes a form of settlement expansion in which newly arriving settlers, as well as earlier settlers' offspring, would select a nearby unsettled valley offering water and irrigable lands and move to it, informally replicating the settlement pattern in the previously settled valley. It was through this "budding process" that the outlying upland valleys of the upper Mora drainage, including Guadalupita and Chacon, were eventually settled.

Life in the Mora Valley prior to the establishment in 1851 of Fort Union twenty miles to the east was both difficult and dangerous. Although an uneasy peace existed with the Comanches until 1846, bands of Apaches still posed a threat to the settlement. Cut off from the settlements of the Rio Grande by the mountains, the pobladores subsisted largely on what they could produce themselves. Each year some of the village men would venture eastward toward the plains to hunt buffalo while others would seek out bands of plains Indians to trade with them. These ciboleros and comancheros not only supplied the settlers with meat, hides and horses, they also represent an early example of a seasonal migration out of the upland valleys in search of material goods and wealth that farming could not supply.

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During the first decade after receiving their land grant, the settlers were also increasingly confronted with another group of recent arrivals in the region, the Anglos, a term used regionally to denote both the Americans and recent European immigrants entering the region from the East. Since the first pack animals had come over the Santa Fe Trail in 1821, use of the overland route had increased so that during 1843 an estimated 200 wagons made the crossing. (Meline 1867:108) Although the trail itself lay twenty miles to the east of the upper Mora Valley, some traders would leave the trail near where it crossed the Rio de Mora and proceed up the valley, using it as a cut-off to Taos. Naturally, some of these passersby were attracted to the fertile valley and chose to remain, marking the introduction of outside influences into the Hispanic culture. Across the plains to the east lay the short-lived Texas Republic. Pursuing expansionist goals, in 1843 it sent a contingent of soldiers under Col. Charles A. Warfield westward to New Mexico seeking to take additional lands from Mexico. This invasion was stemmed after a pitched battle at Mora in 1843. Four years later, in January, 1847, after the occupation of New Mexico by the U.S. army, the villagers in Mora joined in the Taos revolt, killing six American merchants and trappers as they passed through the town. In reprisal, an American cavalry unit from Las Vegas came into the valley and, after fierce fighting in the village streets, used a cannon to level Mora.

This prolonged period of conflict is significant in the history of the area for, in part, it explains the stubborn resistance and suspicion future generations have held toward outsiders. While the upland valleys with their proximity to the eastern gateways to New Mexico would become the home of many Anglos, as well as European immigrants, this resistance has resulted in an assimilation in which the local Hispanic culture has absorbed a variety of outside practices while largely retaining its Hispanic characteristics. Certainly, it was the newcomers who brought with them trading goods, who opened many of the first village stores, who introduced new building practices and materials. But in time, the newcomers and their descendents would speak Spanish, build their homes using a preponderance of local materials and traditional house plans, and farm using the irrigation methods of the early Hispanic settlers.

This early era of violence is also significant in how it shaped the first settlement patterns, and how, when the violence subsided, settlement patterns also changed. Prior to the

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creation of Fort Union, the only security the residents of the Mora Valley had was that which they furnished themselves. They necessarily built their homes in the two defensible village plazas, Santa Gertrudis and San Antonio, and ventured daily to work their outlying fields, to herd their stock, and to cut wood. These plazas suggest efforts to replicate elements of the settlement pattern with which they were already familiar. The fortified plaza was prescribed during the Spanish colonial period in the Laws of the Indies, which provided formal ordinances for planning town sites that would provide both a central plaza and protection. In northern New Mexican villages these prescriptions, though rarely adhered to closely, did provide the basis for an informal, more dispersed settlement that included a church facing a plaza and an encircling cluster of houses that formed a defensible unit. As noted, the alcalde had specified two such sites when he conveyed the grant to Tapia and his group of settlers. Viewed by an early American soldier, Mora was a "defensible square... containing 200 houses" necessary "to avoid the attacks of the Eutaws and Navajoes." (Emory 1951:45)

To construct their village homes the settlers used the building materials with which they were familiar, earth and wood. At first they used jacal, a form of vertical post construction in which they placed logs vertically in a trench fitted with a grooved cross-piece log and then covered them with earthen plaster. With more time they later shifted to the adobe wall and beam construction that characterizes northern New Mexican Hispanic housing. Adobe bricks were made of a mixture of earth, water, and straw placed in a wooden mold. In Mora the thick adobe walls were sometimes set on rock and stone foundations and were capped with roughly-hewn logs. Roof beams, known as vigas, were overlaid with trimmed saplings, latias, which were then covered with layers of grass, clay and straw to form a flat roof. Small openings near the juncture of the walls and roof from which the residents could pour boiling water or fire rifles enabled them to defend their homes. (Hanoush 1967:15)

Following the levelling of the village of Mora in 1847, the town that succeeded it became the area's commercial and governmental center. Stores, a mill, hotel, courthouse and a school were built over the next decade with most of the public and commercial buildings located along the main roadway. Although this linear pattern is thought of as an Anglo-American fashion, it had also appeared in many Spanish Colonial villages

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as early as the eighteenth century as officials' control over settlement weakened and as settlers sought to protect their fields. (Simmons 1979:103-106) Until Fort Union was completed, small cavalry units were garrisoned in the new village. The only reminder of the village's early plaza configuration was the church that was rebuilt in the center of the square, one block removed from the main street. Although the church was destroyed by fire about 1965 and replaced by a new one on the same site, a number of historic parish buildings, including the rectory, the convent, and some school buildings, and two, two block-long rows of houses continue to face on the church site.

The increase in the area's security led to a dispersal of farmsteads throughout the upland valleys. Farmers began to build less fortified, linear homes nearer to their fields, often along a common roadway that ran above the fields, paralleling an acequia. The result was the irregular, linear settlement pattern which characterized many of the later Hispanic agricultural settlements and which persists in the upland valleys today. Not only is this pattern apparent along the paved state road that extends up the Mora Valley from Buena Vista to Chacon; it is also apparent in the Cebolla Valley along the roads extending from Ledoux to Abuelo and from Puertocito to North Carmen. In some instances, houses fronting long, narrow rectangular properties face the road with a variety of farm buildings including small barns, corrals, and garages located to the rear. Behind them narrow fields stretch to distances of over a half mile, gradually rising up to an acequia dug along the contours of the foothills. In the case of the narrower valleys, the road often parallels a nearby acequia with the house and then the farm buildings lying below, and with a lateral ditch carrying the water to a garden plot and then on to the fields below.

This rearrangement of the area's settlement patterns at mid-century coincided with other changes in the settler's lives. Increases in traffic over the Santa Fe Trail, which would total over 5,000 wagons annually by the mid-1860s, Fort Union's needs for agricultural supplies, and the growth of Las Vegas, thirty miles down the eastern slopes of the Rockies, began to transform Mora from a remote eastern outpost on the Hispanic frontier to one of the important agricultural regions in the Territory. Waves of farmers would continue to pour over the mountains and to clear and settle the more remote valleys in the area. But rather than farming solely for their own needs, they would become a part of a larger bartering and, ultimately, cash economy that would

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link these upland valleys to army logistics in the West, the overland wagon trade, and finally, the railroad towns of the High Plains. In effect, life in the Mora Valley was reoriented away from its origins in the core of Spanish settlement along the Rio Grande to the west and toward a developing economy extending up and down the eastern slopes of the Sangres.

Descriptions from those travelling through these upland valleys provide a sense of how the area appeared during the first decades of American rule. Visitors were always struck by the area's beauty, particularly with the mountains that seemed to encircle it. Kirby Benedict, a territorial district judge, referred to the "rich and splendid valley of Mora" as "one of the fairy places of the varied earth" and noted the fields around the village of Mora as lying "as level as a planed floor." Marveling at the "unsurpassed fertility" of the area and that farmers had harvested 60,000 bushels of wheat in 1863, he concluded, "If the people of this valley do not thrive and progress in natural advantages and mental culture, it will not be because they are impeded by any natural circumstances." (Benedict 1956:55) Another writer noted "the succession of beautiful valleys, well-cultivated and irrigated" and the practice of herders taking small flocks of cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, and burros onto the common lands during the day but corralling them at night. (Meline 1867:104)

Marvelling that they were "some of the beautifulist valleys I ever saw" another traveller noted that the farmers raised wheat, corn and potatoes in abundance. Calling it the "nicest wheat I ever saw," he described how they "thresh it on the ground in large yards twenty-five feet diameter, turn in cows, mules, goats, sheep and drive them over it. To clear it up they use wooden bowles and a little whip." (Davis 1931:412) Although another writer was less sure that the short growing season would permit farmers to harvest their crops, he also acknowledged that the wheat and corn production in the area was "greatly on the increase." (Lane 1964:412) Such accounts indicate how the valleys of western Mora County had become a primary breadbasket of the Territory by the 1860s.

When it had established Fort Union, the army decided that rather than undertaking the costly effort to ship foodstuffs overland from the Midwest it would try to procure them locally. Some of those efforts at local production, such as the army's own

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garden projects near Ocate, were not successful. On the other hand, the army was successful in obtaining food supplies from Mora's farmers. Ceran St. Vrain, a former trapper and soldier, obtained contracts in 1850 to supply flour to several forts, including Fort Union. As an army sutler, he often visited Mora, opening a wooden grist mill there that same year. Able to sell flour to the army at roughly half the cost of shipping it overland, St. Vrain was the first of several millers to provide the area's farmers with a nearby outlet for their wheat. As a result of this development, granaries became an important property-type around Mora, for they enabled St. Vrain and other merchants to store wheat until they could grind it. The Fort Union trade, as well as the bartering that developed with Las Vegas and lower elevation communities along the Rio Grande led many valley residents to work in shipping-related occupations. By the 1860 Census, the Mora precinct listed nine men as teamsters, three as blacksmiths and two as wagonmasters. (U.S. Census, 1860)

<u>Population of Mora County</u>			
Date	Population	Date	Population
1860	5,566	1930	10,322
1870	8,056	1940	10,981
1880	9,751	1950	8,720
1890	10,618	1960	6,028
1900	10,304	1970	4,673
1910	12,611	1980	4,205
1920	13,915		

In light of this agricultural prosperity, it is not surprising that the subsistence and bartering economy that had characterized early settlement in these valleys began to change. Prosperous farmers sought to consolidate their positions by acquiring more land through purchases from descendants of the grantees, and merchants began to acquire lands from farmers, often as a form of payment as the farmers sought to reduce their indebtedness. Vicente Romero, for instance, had acquired 33,000 acres by 1851 as he assembled the La Cueva Ranch [REDACTED] (SR #142). The 1871 county tax assessments show that Romero, St. Vrain and Frank Metzger, a Prussian-born merchant, had the highest property valuations, with each one assessed at over thirty thousand dollars. (Mora Tax Assessments, 1871)

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Subsequent tax records show that this trend would continue through the remainder of the century as newcomers to the area, such as the Doughertys and Cassidys, combined their commercial or milling activities with farming and ranching and acquired substantial amounts of land. Since tax assessments are listed according to precinct, it is also evident that this concentration of wealth was more common in the Mora Valley. In the more remote valleys such as those in the Cebolla area, Guadalupita, and Chacon, Hispanic farmers continued to own and work their smaller farms. The 1883 tax lists, for example, assess only two properties in Cebolla precinct over one thousand dollars. (Mora Tax Assessments, 1883)

This trend toward larger land holdings suggests other changes in people's relationship to the land. Occupational listings in the various census enumeration sheets from 1870 to 1900 show an increase in the number of entries for farm laborers, day laborers and farm-by-share farmers relative to those listed as farmers. In the outlying precincts the percentage of those listed as farmers remains higher. Together, the tax and census data imply that in the upland valleys farm sizes remained relatively small and that their owners worked the land themselves. Toward the end of the century, however, even these small farms became threatened as the number of larger farms depending on either day laborers or tenant farmers increased. In 1880, for instance, all of the 187 farms in the county that were less than twenty acres were owner operated. In contrast, of the 126 farms greater than fifty acres, forty-six were farmed through sharecropping. (United States Census, Agricultural Statistics 1880:74,75) Ten years later, the number of small, owner-operated farms had dropped to 130 while the number of those greater than fifty acres had jumped to 254. While this increase in the number of large farms is somewhat deceptive due to the rise in the number of homesteads in the eastern grasslands of the county, it nevertheless indicates that the vitality of small-scale, independent farming in the upland valleys was weakening. (United States Census, Agricultural Statistics 1890:166)

Census figures also offer a general sense of the type of farming that occurred on the area's small farms. Because of their narrowness and steep slopes, the upland valleys were never conducive to large-scale grazing. Farmers maintained small flocks of sheep to meet the household needs of food and clothing and to barter. Additionally they raised a few hogs, goats and dairy cows and either oxen, mules, or horses for farm work, herding

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them by day and corralling them by night. The county never ranked above sixth and fifth in the territory for beef cattle and sheep production respectively, even when the county's eastern grasslands were settled.

It was cereal and cool climate vegetable production that earned Mora County the sobriquet, the "breadbasket of the West." Consistently the county ranked first or second in the production of hay, wheat, oats, and sweet potatoes, and was also noted for its Irish potatoes, barley, peas, and green plums. (United States Census, Agricultural Statistics 1880:298;1890:196) Since most of these crops require irrigation, it was in the upland valleys that production was concentrated. Noting the importance of irrigation in the Mora Valley, one report described the upper end of the valley as having "an ample supply of water" that diminished farther downstream leading to "disappointment and loss to the farmer." (United States Census, Irrigation Report 1890:198) Territorial pamphlets promoting the county often described it as "one of the leading agricultural counties" and extolled the irrigation potential of the Rio Mora. (Bureau of Immigration 1890, 1906)

The picture that the 1890 Irrigation Report paints of Mora County underscores the important role that the small Hispanic farms continued to play in shaping the county's landscape. It ranked first in the Territory in percentage of land under irrigation, and third in the percentage of people engaged in farming. Three quarters of those farming used irrigation (dry farming among homesteaders in the eastern portion of the county accounts for much of the balance), and the average acreage a farmer irrigated was thirty-three acres. The report also notes that much of the farming was done by what it terms Mexicans who combined their farming with herding and day labor. (United States Census, Irrigation Report 1890:195)

In recognizing that the Hispanic farmers also worked at other jobs, the report intimates at a profound change that had begun to alter their lives. Despite the successes these farmers had in raising cereals and other crops, the small scale farming that they practiced was faced with some overwhelming challenges. The closing of Fort Union in 1891 marked the loss of a nearby market which had been "one great source of revenue" for local farmers. (Weatherby 1942:33) Despite the growth of large mercantile houses in Las Vegas where farmers were able to sell or

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trade their farm goods, without Fort Union many lost a source of cash that enabled them to continue farming and were forced to seek income elsewhere. Cash poor, but land rich, many small farmers began to sell off parcels of land to pay their bills.

Often they sold to land speculators who, as they pieced together larger parcels of land, began to fence it. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, counties in the Territory with high percentages of land lying within Spanish and Mexican land grants were the first to receive extensive fencing. This enclosure was, in part, the result of these outside speculators, such as Thomas B. Catron and Samuel B. Elkins in the case of Mora County, acquiring rights to portions of the grants through quiet title cases or purchases of land from the descendants of grantees and then fencing those lands. This process whereby farmers were alienated from their common lands is reflected in statistics showing that Mora County ranked third in 1880 and first in 1890 in money spent for "land, fence and building improvements." (United States Census, Agricultural Statistics 1880:127; 1890:220)

As a result of this redistribution of land ownership, many small farmers lost access to the once common lands of the Mora Grant. As the population of the upland valleys had swelled with newcomers, the hillsides and mountain meadows had remained open to all who chose to use them. The Hispanic sense of property viewed such lands as belonging to the community, and membership in the community in the form of a farmstead and access to irrigation rights also implied that residents might graze their livestock and chop wood on the common lands. The Anglo view of property differed radically, and with the coming of more Anglo settlers into the area conflicts arose. For the Anglos, property became a commodity, one that an individual bought, sold, and fenced. Yet even after the Anglos had gained ostensible control of much of the formerly common lands, many Hispanic residents continued to operate small timber mills on the slopes of the upland valleys and to earn their income by cutting ties for the railroad. These longtime users of the once common lands were now seen as squatters and trespassers who, in the words of one land attorney "paid no royalty and recognized no title in you [Catron]." (Ely/Catron Correspondence, UNM SC)

The exploits of Catron and Elkins in the matter of gaining control of large portions of several Spanish and Mexican land grants are well documented. (Westphall 1973; Ebright 1908) Their efforts, both as partners and then individually, in the case of

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the Mora Grant are particularly striking. Acting first as attorneys for the grant claimants in 1871 and then pursuing a careful plan in which they sought to purchase shares of the grant from the hundreds of descendants of the original grantees, the two, by 1903, owned well over half of the land included in the grant. In some cases they simply purchased land outright; in other cases they purchased a portion of an heir's land to enable him to satisfy a tax claim, and in other cases they purchased land after a court had advised an heir to sell the land to provide financial security for her children. (District Court, County of Mora Cases 1237, 1261, Deposition 1518) By 1910, only 60,000 acres of the original Mora Grant of over 800,000 acres was held "by settlers with good title." (Ely/Catron) Most of this remaining acreage consisted of the small farmsteads located in the upland valleys.

The implications of this alienation of the land for the rural settlement patterns of the upland valleys are substantial. In denying the farmers access to their former common lands, the new landowners also forced many farmers to give up working the land. Without the ability both to work a farm and to graze animals, many farmers were no longer able to survive in a cash economy. While farmers might still take their wheat to a mill in Mora to have it ground in exchange for a portion of the flour it produced, they were also faced with buying essentials from merchants with cash. The merchants themselves, especially in the small villages such as Ledoux, often received hefty advances from the large mercantile houses such as Gross and Kelly and the Ilfelds in Las Vegas. However, the agricultural products the farmers brought the village merchants rarely covered the cost of the goods they bought over the year. (Parish 1961:20, Trujillo 1988)

Since the county's tax base rested more on the irrigated fields, orchards, and meadows and not on the dry grazing lands and woodlands that the speculators owned, the tax burden became increasingly heavy on those least able to pay. County Commission records dating from the 1880s through the 1910s show a chronic problem with meeting the county's debts. As a result, projects essential to farmers were often curtailed. Roads into the upland valleys were often neglected, making farmers' access to markets even more difficult; and, in 1915, the county was forced to terminate its contract with New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts for a county agriculture agent because it had "to

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meet other financial obligations." (County Commission Records, 1915)

Denial of access to the once common lands did provoke instances of violence. Robert Sammon, the Catron agent for the grant, was murdered in 1910, and Charles Catron, Thomas Catron's son, was warned that he "would not be safe up there on the grant." (Catron Collection 111, Vol 1 p. 132) However, the task of surviving and sustaining families led most farmers to seek other solutions. One remedy was for farmers to take outside jobs. In addition to joining the swelling numbers of farm laborers and tenant farmers, many farmers turned to other trades. The 1900 Census, for instance, shows a substantial increase in those listing their occupations as carpenters and masons, a fact that may account for much of the pitched roofing and raised stone foundations that appear in houses dating to that period.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century agriculture in the upland valleys benefitted from the prosperity that favored all American farmers, and the mixed barter/cash economy continued with the farmers trading with the merchants in the small villages, the millers along the Rio Mora, or even shipping their loads over the rough wagon roads to Las Vegas. But with the end of World War I and the lower demand for farm goods, many marginal farmers were forced to look elsewhere in order to survive. A gradual exodus from the upland valleys began in which the farmers and their male offspring began to leave the area, going to Colorado to work in factories, mines, or the railroad, or on to Wyoming to work on the large ranches. Others moved to Albuquerque and on to California, seeking wage-paying work. Much as their cibolero forebearers had left the valley generations earlier to feed their families, these workers left behind farms and families to survive in a cash economy.

This exodus from the upland valley farms swelled during the agricultural depression of the early and mid-1920s and continued into the early 1930s, stabilizing only temporarily during the New Deal years when a number of programs sought to teach trades and provide work in the western portion of the county. (See population chart) With the advent of World War II, people resumed their exodus, moving to Las Vegas, Raton, Santa Fe and Albuquerque, and beyond to Pueblo, Denver and California, looking for jobs that do not exist in Mora. While the creation of the Carson National Forest in 1906 and the New Deal and subsequent

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government programs have created some local jobs in the Forest Service, the road department, and in education, unemployment remains high and the county remains poor. Only in the past forty years have the major state roads through the upland valleys been completely paved.

Ironically, this prolonged period of economic and cultural disintegration has contributed to the preservation of the area's historic resources. Many abandoned farmsteads remain much as they appeared over fifty years ago. Neglect has caused many buildings to deteriorate, but some absentee owners have attempted to preserve their family homes. Other buildings have been rehabilitated, though modified, through programs funded by Community Block Development Grants. In recent years many former residents who left their upland homes in the 1920s and 1930s have retired to Mora County to spend their retirement years. Some have sought to restore their ancestral homes and to resume at least a limited level of farming. Still others have begun to see in the many farmsteads and villages that dot the upland valley landscape a valuable link with their past, a most tangible evidence of their family history in the area. Together, these groups believe that at least a partial solution to addressing the area's social and economic difficulties is to identify and celebrate its past as an important element of the development of tourism.

2. COMMERCIAL, GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE CENTER DEVELOPMENT OF
MORA (1851-1939)

While much of the history of western Mora County concerns the agricultural settlement of the upland valleys, the village of Mora is an integral part of that history. Located near the

[REDACTED] The upland valleys with their lines of farmsteads all connect, directly or indirectly, with the Upper Mora Valley and the village at its heart. From its earliest formal settlement in 1835 to the present, Mora has reflected the area's periods of prosperity and depression. As the commercial center and, after 1860, the county seat, the village has been the focal point of local economic patterns evolving from a barter to a mercantile system, educational and religious activities,

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and county development projects. It has also been the place where newly arriving cultural influences have had their greatest impact on the local Hispanic culture. As a result of the confluence of these forces as well as the prolonged period of economic decline that has afflicted the area, the vast majority of buildings in the village date from the period of its growth as a commercial and governmental center.

Santa Gertrudis de lo de Mora was one of two plazas that Manuel Antonio Sanchez, the alcalde of Las Trampas, designated when he distributed the lands of the Mora Grant in 1835. An area measuring approximately one hundred yards from north to south and 150 yards from east to west, the site was located on a slight rise above a broad meadow. In all likelihood Mora was the second plaza to be settled.

[REDACTED], it was much more vulnerable to attack from the eastern plains.

To protect themselves the early settlers built their homes in an informal cluster around a plaza. Susan Shelby Magoffin, passing down the nearby Santa Fe Trail in 1846, visited the village and was struck by "its nice little cottages and its courthouse in the center." (Magoffin 1926:81) So taken was Magoffin with the picturesque quality of the village that as she notes cattle in a mountain meadow "grazing at their leisure" she proclaims a tie so strong "to this spot" that "till it is removed may I never leave it." Unfortunately, further evidence of the appearance of this early settlement is lacking, for Mora was destroyed on February 1, 1847 when a detachment of American troops levelled the village to punish the residents for their part in the Taos uprising.

The absence of non-Hispanic names on the 1845 Mexican census suggests that it was not until after the imposition of American rule that those arriving in New Mexico from over the Santa Fe Trail began to settle in Mora. By 1860 when Mora County was carved out of Taos County, over a dozen non-Hispanic names appear on the enumeration sheets for the village precinct. (United States Census, 1860) Their presence, as well as the protection that the establishment of Fort Union, twenty miles to the east in 1851 provided, may have contributed to the village being rebuilt along a linear pattern characteristic of Anglo settlements. Although linear settlement patterns are evident in other late Hispanic agricultural settlements, the grant

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conveyance description as well as the account of the levelling of Mora in 1847 indicate that the original village was arranged more in a plaza-like cluster than a linear pattern. Some evidence of that earlier clustering of houses remains, particularly in the "China Block." The commercial and public buildings central to Mora's importance, however, were located along the village's main east-west road.

Early descriptions of Mora suggest how quickly the villagers rebuilt their community and how the Anglo presence began to alter the subsistence, barter economy that characterized the Hispanic frontier. An early traveller, Sylvester Davis, visited the area in 1859 and wrote of village as having "suburbs" and several stores stocked with sugar, calico and "shoes of all kinds from a Ladys Slipper up to a man's brogan." (Davis 1931:412) Davis also observed two other things about Mora that anticipate future developments affecting the village. He noted the availability of fruits from warmer climates, suggestive of the lively trade that would develop between Las Vegas and Mora; and he observed a reaper demonstration, "the first reaper that they ever had in New Mexico and all of the people in town were out to see it run." (Davis 1931:412) Five years later District Judge Kirby Benedict noted the village's health, commenting on "some very good buildings" including a two-story adobe courthouse and the "safest jail in the territory." He also noted the "considerable and profitable" trade in which local merchants, "mostly German" bartered with local farmers (Benedict 1956:54).

Such comments convey the important commercial role Mora had assumed just after mid-century. Although traders had moved goods up and down the Camino Real during the Spanish colonial and Mexican periods, and although local men had engaged in the comanchero trade during the first half of the century, trade during those periods was generally limited to bartering. There was what the economic historian, William Parish calls "a rather immature development of retail trade." (Parish 1960: 2) Attributing much of this commercial backwardness to tariffs and official corruption, Parish sees the settlers on the Hispanic frontier as victims of "protective complacencies which weaken those within, strengthening to those without." (Parish 1960:7) With the Mora Valley so close to the Santa Fe Trail and with its great agricultural potential, Mora was a natural site for newly arriving merchants to open their stores.

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Many of the first merchants were German, often Jewish. In 1864, the Ilfeld brothers, founders of what would become one of the largest mercantile houses in the territory, travelled through Mora enroute from Taos to their new headquarters in Las Vegas. Noting the potential of the valley to provide the army with supplies, they encouraged young German-Jews to settle in Mora and other villages and to open stores. By cultivating these proteges, the Ilfelds were able to establish a far-flung mercantile empire over the next two decades. Henry Biernbaum and, later, Louis Kahn were two prominent merchants in Mora who developed close connections with the Ilfelds. (Parish 1960:15) Other German names including Metzger, Gandert, May, Olenstdorf, Menges, Rohman, and Wedelez appear on early precinct roles and are listed as merchants or clerks. This evidence suggests the extensive role German merchants played in the commercial development of the village. While these merchants arrived in Mora by travelling over the Santa Fe Trail, the villagers did not group them as Anglos but saw them as separate "independent, eclectic and adaptable" individuals (Parish 1960:23). Often they married the daughters of local farmers, learned to speak Spanish, and remained in the area.

In the early years prior to the emergence of a solely cash economy, much of the merchants' trade depended on their role as middlemen. With contracts to supply the army at Fort Union and various Indian agencies, the merchants would obtain agricultural products and, increasingly, timber from the upland valley sawyers in exchange for manufactured goods and then ship the materials to the army. In order to process the wheat into flour, these middlemen built several grist mills, including the St. Vrain and Jacob Fuss mills, and granaries in the village. Thus not only was the village's growth the result of commercial activity; it was also the result of its increased importance as a supply and shipping center.

Army contracts generated a wide range of other jobs in Mora. Some men became teamsters, others wagonmasters, and others wheelwrights and blacksmiths; all drew wages through their involvement in shipping local goods for the government. To a great degree, the coming of the army into the region was catalytic in shifting Mora's economy from one based on barter to one based on cash. With its regular payroll and its need for supplies and services, Fort Union was analogous to a twentieth century public works project pumping cash into the local economy.

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Drawn by the promise of a lucrative army trade, other Europeans and Anglo-Americans settled in Mora, and along with some soldiers who mustered out of the army at Fort Union and chose to remain in Mora, contributed to the diversification of the village's economy. By 1860 Joseph Rouelle from Illinois had opened a hotel, and John Bickell, an Englishman, a saloon (United States Census, 1860). An army surgeon, a Dr. Kane, settled in Mora and is said to have performed the first major surgical operation in the territory. (WPA #216 1936)

The 1860 enumeration sheets show that in the early years of commercial growth the only carpenters listed are newcomers, a French-Canadian and a Belgian by birth. It is not until twenty years later that a good number of Hispanic names are also identified as carpenters. Inferentially, these listings may help to explain an observation that the historian, Fray Angelico Chavez, has made about Mora's unique architecture, that "even made of adobe, the old Mora homes had that very same Midi-French rural flavor." (Chavez 1950:34) It is likely that these first carpenters sought to replicate elements of the styles with which they were familiar--pointed Gothic windows, stone walls, and both steeply pitched roofs and hipped roofs with gablets.

While they did not reproduce entire structures using those imported styles, their influence appeared in a number of structures. One such project was the addition of a board-and-wood-shingle pitched roof to the Santa Gertrudis Church in 1861. The parish priest attributed the project's success to the presence of "American carpenters who understood their trade well." (Salpointe 1967:235) Although the church succumbed to fire during the 1960s, other evidences of this outside influence remain in the gambrel roof of the St. Vrain Mill, in the scoring of adobes to simulate stone, and in the unusually steep pitching of many buildings' roofs, such as that found in the Mora parish rectory. Although later generations of local carpenters would continue to embrace the traditional Hispanic linear house plan, incorporating some Anglo influences such as doubling up linear modules to form a square plan two rooms deep, residues of this earlier influence remain, especially in a number of steeply-pitched hipped roofs.

Not only does the presence of newcomers with diverse skills signal the commercial and service center vitality of Mora in mid-century, so do a range of other indicators. By 1870 Mora led the territory in the value of its milled products, recording over \$300,000 in sales. (United States Census 1870) Five water wheels

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and one steam engine were employed, with the village lying at the center of this activity. The village precinct tax assessments listed five merchants with property values, including inventories, at over \$10,000. During the 1880s and 1890s there were sporadic efforts to publish a newspaper in the village as well.

In addition to serving as the commercial center for the region, Mora was also the focal point of area's religious and educational institutions. Although the early settlers had long practiced Roman Catholicism, their isolation from the regular ministrations of a priest had created a spiritual need that Archbishop Lamy and his representative, Father Salpointe, sought to redress through education. Having invited the Sisters of Loretto to the Territory in 1852, Lamy, over time, established schools in sixteen different locations. One was begun in Mora in 1865. Called Saint Mary's College, it became a boarding school in 1870, and listed five teachers and thirty-six boarding girls. (US Census, 1870) During the 1860s, the Christian Brothers also came to Mora and opened a boy's school which listed three teachers and forty-seven boarding boys in 1870. This school lasted until 1884, after which the Sisters of Loretto taught the boys as well. In 1881, the Presbyterian Church, whose missionaries had gained many converts in the Mora Valley, also opened a boarding school that continued through 1895 and was then removed to Albuquerque and renamed the Menaul School. The breadth of this educational activity suggests how Mora's importance as a commercial center also drew institutions to the village. For several decades the Roman Catholic parish in Mora stretched over eighty miles along the foothills of the Sangres strengthening the village's influence over the upland valleys.

In 1859 the Territorial Legislature divided Taos County with the portion lying east of the Sangre crest designated as Mora County with the village of Mora as its county seat. A two story adobe building was erected to serve as the county courthouse with the court room on the second floor and the jail below. In 1889, the original courthouse was replaced by a new two story structure, designed by the architectural firm of Kirchner and Kirchner, and built in a Richardsonian Romanesque style. Using locally quarried brown stone, the building served as a courthouse until 1939 when a two story Pueblo Revival Style building funded by Public Works Administration monies replaced it. Two decades later the second court house was razed. This succession of buildings, and the employment those construction projects

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created, provides one example of how being the center of local government contributed to the economic activity of the village.

County jobs ranging from tax assessment to law enforcement stimulated the village's economy. Moreover, many of the decisions facing the county commission over the years pertained to the village and the area immediately around it. For example, by the 1910s many of the conveniences that had become available in larger cities and towns became available to smaller communities as well. In 1913 a contract was given to J.J. Fuss to construct and install an electric light and water works that would serve the most densely settled part of the county, extending three miles on either side of Mora; and in 1914 the commission contracted with local businessmen to install six miles of telephone lines in and around the village. (Board of County Commissioners Proceedings, 1906-1914)

These efforts to stimulate economic growth through the involvement of local government were not always successful, however, and much as the farmers of the upland valleys began to experience a decline in their economic well-being during the 1890s, so too did the county government. In some instances corrupt officials were the cause of county's financial woes, but larger forces also were at play. As the railroad came to dominate territorial commerce, the towns located along its tracks prospered while those towns which it did not reach often faltered. With the coming of the Santa Fe Railroad onto the territory's eastern plains (1878-80), the High Plains towns of Springer and Las Vegas, and even Wagon Mound in eastern Mora County, increased in vitality with access to rail shipping. Meanwhile Mora began to languish. Although the county's forests provided timber for ties, the western part of the county remained isolated. Plans to add a spur up the Mora Valley in 1899 never materialized, and seven years later a territorial promotional piece conceded that Mora needed a railroad "to become large and prosperous." (Bureau of Immigration 1906:271)

Not only did the absence of a railroad hinder the village's growth, so did the absence of good roads. Much as the farmers in the upland valleys found themselves at a disadvantage in their inability to ship products to market, Mora's merchants and shippers faced the same problem. Limited by its modest budget in the road improvements the county could make, it found itself turning to the territorial government. In 1909 the County Commission's attorney wrote to Governor Curry, hoping that he

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would supply territorial monies to build a "good permanent road into the town of Mora." (Board of County Commissioners Proceedings, 1909) The problem of bad roads would persist well into the twentieth century when the area's primary automobile roads were some of the last to be paved. (State Highway Maps, UNM Map Collection)

The relationship between the problems that the county government faced and the commercial decline of village of Mora became increasingly apparent by the turn of the century. The result was a ripple effect reaching throughout the economic life of the county. Generally, the local merchants extended credit to local farmers so that they could purchase goods and then accepted their produce as a way of reducing the farmers' balance. As long as the profits remained in Mora, the village prospered as a commercial center, but after the coming of the railroad economic patterns began to change. Without the vital direct access to railroad shipping, the merchants in the non-railroad villages also became secondary figures in the economic system, depending on the larger commercial houses in Las Vegas to supply them with credit and goods. The result was that while general merchandise stores remained in Mora, they were no longer central in the larger, regional mercantile structure. The 1903 territorial business directory, for example, lists five general merchandise stores in Mora; yet they were dependent upon the larger mercantile warehouses in Las Vegas for supplies and credit. (NM Business Directory 1903:376,377) It also lists five saloons, two flour mills, two hotels, two physicians, two clergymen, two notaries public, a convent and Catholic school, a photography studio, barbershop, and abstract office, suggesting the range of businesses and services the village offered during its height of activity.

Through the first four decades of the twentieth century, Mora continued to serve as a commercial, educational, governmental and service center for Mora County. With the gradual improvement of the area's roads in the 1930's, people began to drive to Las Vegas once a month to do their shopping. The improved roads also contributed to the village's emergence as the center of an outdoors recreational area, and a number of roadside commercial services including service stations and a motel appeared. Road building, forest service and tourism-related work provided some of the few cash-paying jobs available to those who remained in the area. During the 1930s a number of New Deal projects including tanning, weaving and a woodworking school were begun to

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try to provide young people with work skills in locally based jobs. In addition, the gradual consolidation of the county's schools created a number of jobs in the village, as did the growth of the county government bureaucracy. However these measures did not slow the economic decline of Mora. With few jobs available many residents left the area, seeking work in the Southwest's larger cities. The population flight has further weakened the county's tax base, and in 1988 the county faced bankruptcy. Some state leaders even suggested partitioning the county among neighboring counties as a solution.

Nevertheless, the village of Mora remains at the center of the county's long and varied history. Although the economic decline has brought with it the loss of several of the village's landmark buildings, the buildings of the village that remain continue to convey a strong feeling of its historic significance. The county's recent economic crisis has prompted many local residents, as well as state planners, to look closely at ways of initiating both an economic and cultural recovery in Mora. Most residents feel that emphasizing the village's historic and architectural resources is the best place to begin that recovery.

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Outline of Property Types

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 - A. Building Traditions, Materials and Ornamental Vocabulary
 - B. Subtype: Linear
 - C. Subtype: Hipped Cottage
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2. Outbuildings
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 - A. Gristmills
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4. New Mexico Vernacular Churches and Religious Buildings
5. Agricultural Village District
6. Commercial Center Historic District

1. Vernacular Dwellings

Description:

The earliest surviving properties in the upland valleys of western Mora County are those rural and village dwellings that reflect a Hispanic vernacular building tradition which the area's early settlers brought with them from their villages on the western slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. This property type, which is general over northern New Mexico, has been termed the New Mexico Vernacular Style for the state's Historic Building Inventory. Using a basic building technology employing locally available materials of stone, log, and adobe, the settlers and their descendants fashioned an initially flat-roofed dwelling which consisted of a single, usually rectangular, self-sufficient room with a single door located on one of the long sides. They also used that technology for the modest outbuildings they constructed. As family size increased and time and resources permitted, they added other rooms, each similar to the first. The result was a linear plan in which access to each module was from an exterior door.

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With the advent of the railroad in 1879, new styles and mass-produced materials became more readily available. As a result, variations appeared in the local vernacular style, including the addition of porches, pitched roofs, dormers, and changes in the massing of the building. The first such variation was the Folk Territorial Style, appearing in the last decades of the nineteenth century. It is characterized by modest wooden details often simply added onto the New Mexico Vernacular Style dwelling. A second major variation, here termed the Hipped Cottage, saw the rooms massed into a four-square, cubic shape and topped by a hipped roof. These closely related New Mexico Vernacular, Folk Territorial, and Hipped Cottage building styles continued into the early twentieth century and comprise the vast majority of historic properties in the area. Later, in the 1930s, variations on the cubic shape in the form of Southwest Vernacular Style dwellings, characterized by flat roofs, stucco exteriors and irregular parapets, appeared in small numbers in the area. All of the historic dwellings in western Mora County and the range of ornamentation they present are manifested in these subtypes of vernacular houses.

A. Building Traditions, Materials and Ornamental Vocabulary

When the early settlers migrated into the upland valleys of the Rio Mora, they brought with them a traditional building style that used the materials available to settlers on the northern New Mexican frontier. From nearby wooded mountain slopes they cut pine and fir and from the valley floors cottonwood. Their earliest houses were called jacales, a term denoting a vertical post construction covered with earthen plaster. A grooved beam was laid over these posts to provide a frame on which cross beams, known as vigas, were placed. These roof beams were covered with saplings, known as latias, which were then covered with layers of hay or grass and mud.

As in other areas along the northern New Mexican frontier, when time permitted, the settlers shifted from jacal to adobe as the preferred building material. By the 1860s, as settlers began to settle in the more remote upland valleys, including the Cebolla Valley, they resorted to mixing earth, water, and straw in wood molds to form a stiff mud mixture that they then dried in the sun to form adobe bricks. Sometimes building directly on the ground, sometimes building on a trench filled with stone rubble and earthen mortar, these settlers constructed their adobe walls and then topped them with a beam, repeating the flat roof

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construction they had used earlier in the jacal structures. These slightly tilted flat roofs were protected by parapets and drained by carved wood ducts, known as canales, that projected through the parapets to carry the water clear of the adobe walls before it fell to the ground.

With the advent of local sawmills in the 1860s, milled planks or even bark strips, known as capotes, removed in the first pass of the saw over a trunk, were sometimes substituted for latias as a roofing material. In time, the traditional flat roof gave way to pitched roofs. Given the relatively high annual precipitation in the upland valleys, leakage had been a chronic problem, and the steeply-pitched roofs offered an imported solution that was widely adapted toward the end of the century. An examination of many deteriorating buildings in the upland valleys shows that the residents first built board on board or wood shingle pitched roofs but that when corrugated metal became available locally they then added that imported material over the wooden roof.

Gable ends were usually constructed of vertical or sometimes horizontal planks, or in the case of some churches, wood shingles. Entry to the attic was limited to an exterior wooden door in one of the gables. Unlike settlers in some of the other valleys on the Hispanic frontier, such as the upper Chama Valley or the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado or nearby Wagon Mound, the builders in the upland valleys of western Mora County did not seek to create an extra dwelling room in the gable area by raising the dwelling's walls to create an extra half story. The gable space seems to have been limited to use as a drying and storing area.

Beginning in the late 1870s, a series of imported building styles, particularly the Greek and Gothic Revival Styles, began to appear in the Territory. In remote areas rarely were these styles copied completely. More often local builders simply borrowed ornamental elements and adapted them to the local folk style. This borrowing gave rise to the Folk Territorial Style which appeared in the Hispanic upland valleys from the late 1870s through the early 1900s and assumed local characteristics reflecting the equipment, skills and knowledge of local builders. In the upper Mora Valley, it was embraced by both prosperous Hispanics and recently arrived Anglo-American or immigrant merchants. The dwellings incorporating this style tend to be some of the larger residences in the area and are generally restricted to the Mora Valley itself. More modest examples, however, do

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appear on the isolated farms and villages of the Cebolla and other valleys. In all cases, the dwellings use the stone, adobe and timber employed in the traditional New Mexico Vernacular dwellings and then, in varying degrees, incorporate wood ornamental elements.

This style is characterized by the use of traditional local building materials combined with simple Greek and Gothic Revival details. Innovative wood ornamentation, often the result of local carpenters experimenting with newly acquired woodworking tools or newly available milled lumber, appears frequently. Polychrome wood details are common and often articulate invented elements. Defined locally more by the application of exterior ornamental details than by a discernable specific floor plan, this style uses both traditional Hispanic linear floor plans and the imported central hall. Most Folk Territorial dwellings are either one or one and a half stories, the latter with gable dormers, often wood-shingled. Roofs are pitched or hipped, and of corrugated metal. Like their closely related New Mexico Vernacular Style counterparts, these dwellings often have vertical or horizontal plank gables, often with small doors. Fenestration ranges from four-over-four to one-over-one double hung windows, and most doors include large single or paired upper lights. Many of the Folk Territorial Style elements appear at the porches, doors and windows. Pedimented lintels, deep wooden reveals, transoms and sidelights, and, in one case, an elaborate porch with a frieze, brackets, and carpenter "Corinthian" wooden columns comprise the Greek Revival and Gothic elements of these buildings. In the more modest versions found in the more remote upland valleys, gabled dormers, chamfered porch posts and perhaps a few modestly cut porch brackets denote local carpenters' efforts to adapt the style.

The Hipped Cottage, which appeared in the area around the turn of the century, continues many of the ornamental features found in the Folk Territorial. Built of adobe, this subtype is characterized by a hipped roof, generally steeply pitched. Often it is broken by gablets with small ventilator windows marking the roof ridge, a detail reminiscent of French colonial building in the Mississippi Valley and Caribbean but rarely found in the other upland valleys of northern New Mexico. The majority of the dwellings have front porches, with either gable or shed roofs, that display a variety of lumberyard ornamentation ranging from brackets and latticework to posts with molding "capitals." The

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front door and windows are usually symmetrically arranged, with transoms, sidelights and paired windows.

Most likely influenced by styles appearing in the towns along the Santa Fe Railroad, such as Wagon Mound and Las Vegas, local builders embraced the Hipped Box style but continued to use local materials such as rock, pine, and adobe as they adapted the style. All of the Hipped Box style houses in the area are of adobe, and, in the instances where foundations are visible, all employ a rubble base. Many are covered with a pebbled-texture stucco or cement plaster.

Later, in the late 1930s, an additional imported style, the Southwest Vernacular Style, resulted in other ornamental elements being introduced into local dwellings. A decade earlier features from the various Revival Styles of the Southwest, including the California Mission, the Mediterranean, and the Spanish-Pueblo Revival Styles, had begun to appear in the vernacular domestic building of the state's urban areas. Inspired by those models, local builders incorporated simplified decorative elements from these styles in a few houses in the village of Mora. All of these dwellings are one story and are flat-roofed. Exterior walls are cement plaster or stucco, usually over adobe. Ornamentation includes the use of red tile, arched porches, paired windows and symmetrical or irregular parapets. The dwellings are massed as a slightly offset cube with cutout porches.

B. Subtype: Linear Plans

In addition to using traditional materials and construction techniques, the settlers used a traditional house plan. The single room comprised the basic, self-sufficient housing unit. With a single exterior door and a small fireplace with an adobe chimney built into one corner, the room provided a space for cooking, sleeping, and the entire range of family activities. Later, as a family increased in size and time and resources permitted, other similar units were added. Often these units, each with its own exterior door, were added in a line to form single file or L-shaped or U-shaped plans. Depending on the terrain and the materials used, even the units of simple, single file houses varied somewhat from one another as to elevation and size. Particularly in the earlier era when security was still a concern, adobe walls were added to houses to completely

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enclose stock pens and buildings inside a courtyard. This construction of dwelling and farm buildings is referred to as a casa-corral. In such an instance, entry into the compound was through a covered passage, known as a zaguan, through the body of the house, or simply through a gate in the adobe courtyard wall. Oral tradition holds that both of the remaining examples of the casa-corral date to the mid-nineteenth century when the danger of Indian attack was still imminent.

Just as new building styles resulted in changes in the exteriors of New Mexico Vernacular Style houses, outside influences also led to interior changes. Most notable is addition of doors between the adjoining units, permitting interior circulation. With this change rooms increasingly took on specific uses so that some have become public rooms such as kitchens or living rooms while others have become private bedrooms. Beginning with the 1870s, residents also added stoves to their dwellings, supplanting the corner hearth.

Many of the modest Folk Territorial dwellings continue the local tradition of the linear plan while other examples suggest a linear Hispanic floor plan modified to permit interior circulation from room to room. The larger Folk Territorial dwellings employ more complex floor plans including hallways. House plans also include linear and L-shaped dwellings, rectilinear forms with central hallways, and, in the case of the Valdez House, a casa corral remodeled around the turn of the century to embrace a range of Folk Territorial elements (one of which filled in the zaguan entry with a Territorial door with transom and sidelights). Later adaptations of the Folk Territorial Style to the cubic mass employ a more complex floor plan in which interior doors permit uninterrupted circulation among the four principle rooms.

C. Subtype: Hipped Cottages

Beginning around 1900 and continuing through the next two decades, a style which the New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual refers to as the Hipped Box Style, or Hipped Cottage appeared in the upland valleys and villages of western Mora County. Generally a one story, though sometimes two story, cube, this property type had a moderate to steeply pitched roof and often employed gables punctuating a roof ridge that was

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often perpendicular to the front entry. In several instances a small shed or gable porch marks the front door. The use of adobe, a simple floor plan and minimal ornamentation suggest that these dwellings represent the efforts of local builders to adapt an imported style to the area's traditional building practices.

The majority of dwellings have a front door offering entry into the larger of two front rooms. Serving as a public space, this room offers two interior doors permitting entry into the dwelling's private spaces to the side and to the rear. While this property type does permit interior access, and in that sense marks a departure from the modular, self-contained Hispanic floor plan, a close look at an abandoned hipped box suggests that in some cases, especially in the more remote upland valleys, a close connection with the older linear style persisted. In this instance, the disparity in the rock foundation between the two front rooms and the two rear rooms as well as a break in the pattern of adobe blocks between the front and rear units suggests that the front rooms may have been an addition to an older linear house. The addition illustrates how a local builder adapted a new style to a traditional linear house, supplying a hipped roof to convey its modern aspirations. In the case of one of the rare two story hipped box dwellings, the rectangular rather than square plan as well as the three front doors and disproportionately lower second story indicate that the second story may be an addition to a traditional linear plan.

The Hipped Cottage is a relatively uncommon property type in the area, appearing more frequently in or near the village of Mora, where examples of imported building styles are more common. Like the earlier folk building styles in the area, the New Mexico Vernacular and Folk Territorial Styles, it also has suffered from neglect and remodeling so that few pristine examples remain. Many of the Hipped Cottages located in the outlying areas have been abandoned and are deteriorating. Several of those located near Mora continue to serve as dwellings but have received some alterations, particularly as porches have been enclosed as a winterizing measure.

D. Subtype: Southwest Vernacular Dwellings

The Southwest Vernacular dwellings mark an elaboration on the Hipped Cottage with the cubic massing being slightly offset to create a more picturesque style evoking the range of popular

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revival styles in the Southwest. Generally one story, flat-roofed, and stuccoed, these dwellings employ a variety of decorative elements such as tiled roofs, undulating parapets, archways, and grouped windows to recall Mediterranean, Spanish-Pueblo Revival and California Mission styles. The floor plans divide the building into public and private spaces in a manner similar to the Hipped Cottages. A slight offsetting of the cube and, often, the greater size of the dwelling, however, result in a more complex floor plan. Front porches offer entry into a public space such as a parlor or living room as well as offer the residents a public outdoor space facing on the road. Interior halls lead to private spaces as well as to the kitchen, a second public space. The second entry, near the rear of the house, offers convenient access to the dweller's private automobile located in a garage to the rear of the property. The few examples in the area are in good condition and are well-maintained.

Significance:

Located in linear settlement patterns and situated on the long properties characteristic of the gravity-based irrigation employed by Hispanic settlers, or clustered in the small agricultural villages that dot the upland valley landscape, the earliest vernacular dwellings of the upper Mora Valley are representative of the agricultural settlement that accounted for the growth and prosperity of the upper Rio Mora during the second half of the nineteenth century. Using locally available materials, the early settlers continued the folk housing tradition which they had learned on the other side of the mountains. Even as the Anglo-American traders came into the area, first over the Santa Fe Trail and then by railroad, the descendants of the early settlers continued to adhere to the basic folk building practices they knew. The linear house plan continued into the twentieth century as the most common vernacular house form. In the cases in which local builders did borrow imported styles, they continued to use local materials and to interpret those imported styles from their local folk building perspective.

As the agricultural economy of the area became more integrated into the railroad-oriented trade of the region centered in Las Vegas, outside building styles began to influence local builders. Wealthier merchants and land owners, in

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particular, sought to emulate building styles they saw in the larger towns of the Territory, and during the last decades of the nineteenth century often tried to incorporate various eclectic revival elements into their dwellings in order to assert their position within the community. Because of its association with the dwellings of the prominent in larger towns, the Territorial Style appealed to those attaining success even in the Territory's more remote areas. With lumberyards in Las Vegas and local sawmilling appearing in the 1870s, a number of men, including Frenchmen who had immigrated into the area and locally-born men, worked as carpenters and were able to imitate a variety of Territorial Style details. The Folk Territorial buildings embody the efforts these local builders to adapt those imported revival styles. They are also reminders of how the early agricultural settlement of the area gradually evolved, producing a class able to afford more elaborate housing. Even as they borrowed outside elements, builders continued to use the materials and basic plans traditional to the area, deviating only to the degree that milled elements and their ingenuity enabled them to apply ornamentation to these dwellings.

The specific influences that lead vernacular builders to incorporate new elements into their traditional styles often remain speculative. Certainly the Territorial Style buildings at nearby Fort Union stood as models for the Mora teamsters who hauled their farm goods and wood to the post and then returned and helped in building local dwellings. A second source of influence were the carpenters who settled in the valley as early as the 1850s, bringing with them the tools and building skills they had acquired in the eastern United States, Canada, and Europe. The latter, in particular, are noteworthy. A number of Europeans among them the Belgian, John Aerts, and several Frenchmen including Sebastian Rimbaud, Victor Albrand, Jean Baptiste St. Vaux, and, by 1900, Julian Aerts, are listed in the various census enumeration from 1860 to 1900. Most likely, it is because of their influence that many of the linear dwellings received the unusually steeply pitched roofs they did. And it is also most likely that it was these outsiders who influenced the roof configuration of the hipped cottages, steeply pitching them and then adding gablets much as they had built roofs in their homelands.

The cube massing of the Hipped Cottage also marks a significant change in the area's vernacular housing patterns. The interior circulation from room to room signaled a departure from

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the linear plan with multiple exterior doors. As a result of this change, the multi-purpose nature of the traditional Hispanic room began to shift in favor of specialized rooms serving either public or private purposes. Significantly, this change occurred during the period in which the area was shifting from a subsistence to a cash economy, for the diversification of house spaces implies the need for a greater range of house furnishings. This style may well stand as a reminder of how outside influences were altering traditional family patterns including enlarging the linear house to compensate for extended families. At the same time, a few of the Hipped Cottage examples in the outlying valleys also signify the resilience and adaptive capacities of local folk building traditions. Those dwellings in which the hipped box cube was derived simply through a doubling of the linear plan suggest how local building traditions evolved in response to outside influences.

With the Southwest Vernacular Style dwellings, builders continued the trend begun with the Hipped Cottage away from the traditional linear floor plan. A slight shifting of the cube to create an irregular massing of rooms and a cut-out porch resulted in a continued differentiation of space within the house, often with the private spaces to the rear. This integrated front porch enlarged for group sitting marks a rearranging of the residents' relationship with the road, permitting a new "room" from which the residents might view passersby--and be viewed as well. The rear exit oriented toward a backyard garage further signifies a change in which the modern dwelling was closely linked to the rising importance of the family automobile.

These surviving examples of vernacular dwellings including the various subtypes that have evolved in the area stand as evidence of the vitality of the region's folk building traditions. Viewed as a group these buildings offer a fine collective example of agricultural settlement patterns and folk building practices. Ironically, because of the economic and cultural disintegration which has forced so many of the original settlers' descendants to leave the area and has resulted in relatively little new building over the past sixty years, the percentage of total structures in the upland valleys that these vernacular buildings comprise remains unusually high, well over fifty percent of all the buildings in the study area. As a result, the continuity of the historical landscape is pronounced even more dramatically.

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Registration Requirements

The dwellings included within this property type represent the evolution of vernacular housing in western Mora County from the oldest and most numerous of surviving properties, the linear dwelling, to the rare local examples of the Southwest Vernacular Style. A careful analysis of these buildings provides insight not only into the area's early patterns of development, but also how area builders responded to outside influences and adapted them to local building traditions. In their almost universal use of the same building materials and two basic plans, these vernacular dwellings offer a catalogue of local popular taste over a one hundred year period. They are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural settlement in the area from the 1830s to the 1930s. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged on the nineteenth century Hispanic frontier and continued into the first decades of the twentieth century.

To qualify for listing, these properties must be good and intact examples of one of the identified subtypes, including Linear, Hipped Cottage, or Southwest Vernacular, or one of their variants such as the Folk Territorial. In order to be considered the properties must retain their historic integrity. Specifically, they must be recognizable to their period of significance and retain their original plan, materials and exterior finishes. If additions reflect the local folk practice of incremental units and employ traditional materials and building techniques, the dwellings are eligible for listing. In the case of adobe dwellings whose walls have been hard-plastered as opposed to retaining their mud plaster, this addition is consistent with historic efforts to stabilize exteriors and does not diminish the integrity of the building. In contrast, the enclosure of a porch or the addition of aluminum door and sliding windows detracts from the integrity of the building and renders it ineligible.

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2. Outbuildings

Description:

Another agricultural settlement property type is the outbuilding, consisting of a variety of storage sheds, small barns and corrals that appear behind many of the houses in the upland valleys. Since the agricultural economy of the upland valleys of western Mora County was primarily one of supplying grains and grasses to merchants who used it to fulfill government contracts or sold it to other outside buyers, the large barns and stock pens characteristic of stock raising areas never appeared here. Moreover, the early Hispanic farmers closely tended their stock, herding them across the common lands of the grant rather than keeping them in enclosures near their dwellings. Thus, the early casa-corrals with their additive adobe units forming stock pens facing on a central courtyard offer rare examples of large stock complexes. The large commercial complexes, such as the Cassidy barns, granaries, and stock pens in Cleveland, stand as exceptions. More often, farmers built small storage sheds, known as trojas, to store farm implements, seeds and fodder for horses. An adjoining wood corral was used to hold a team of horses at night, and other small pens and sheds, often joined to form a small single complex, were used as chicken coops and hog pens.

The farmers of the upland valleys built their stock and storage sheds using horizontal wood logs and earthen plaster. Double saddle notching predominates in the area, and the logs were often chinked with earth. As they did with their houses, farmers generally adopted pitched roofs for their outbuildings, initially using board over board or shingle roofing and then often adding corrugated metal after it became available. Horizontal or vertical planks usually appear in the gables, but because of the small size of the building, there are rarely gable doors as there are in the dwellings. In some instances, shed roof increments appear to one side of the building, suggesting the local practice of adding units to original structures rather than replacing the outgrown unit with a newer, larger one. Other barns show unusual local building practices. One technique, here labeled adobe relleno or filled adobe, reveals a post and small plank barn in which plank boards have been added over adobe walls.

There are few corrals in the area, perhaps the result of the decline in farming and stockraising in the past sixty years as

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well as the widespread use of barbed wire in the area beginning just after the turn of the century. A look at several abandoned farmsteads with outbuildings suggests that corrals were sometimes built of adobe or stone but more often of double posts and rails or post and plank. Generally the corrals were located to the rear of the storage sheds. Depending on the particular orientation of the dwelling to the acequia, the corrals sometimes were located on arid land above the irrigated fields while in other instances they extended below the dwelling, bordering the fields.

Significance:

Although the outbuildings of the upland valleys do not offer the range of large modular barns characterizing other Hispanic upland valleys, they nevertheless serve as important reminders of the agricultural settlement of the area. In their construction methods they demonstrate how the folk building tradition used for dwellings also extended to sheds and small barns. In the case of the adobe relleño barn they also show how local builders used local materials in innovative ways. The location of the outbuildings behind the dwellings serves as a reminder of the spatial arrangements that characterized the frontier Hispanic farm. The irrigated fields, the outbuildings and the dwelling composed a family living unit that remained largely self-sufficient until the advent of a cash economy.

Registration Requirements:

These properties are noteworthy examples of the variety of outbuildings Hispanic farmers constructed as they settled new farmlands on the northern frontier. They reveal much about the local patterns of farming and livestock raising that contributed to the early agricultural prosperity of the area. They are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural settlement in the area from the 1830s to the 1930s. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged on the nineteenth century Hispanic frontier and continued into the first decades of the twentieth century. To qualify for listing, these properties must be good and intact examples of the identified types of outbuildings. They must be recognizable to their period of significance and retain their original plan, materials and exterior finishes.

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3. Vernacular Commercial Buildings of the Mora Valley

- A. Gristmills
- B. Granaries
- C. Stores

Description:

Falling within the historic contexts of early agricultural settlement in western Mora county, 1835 to 1930, and the growth of Mora as a commercial center, 1851-1939, but characterized more by their function and operation than by a consistent pattern of stylistic detailing are the area's commercial gristmills, granaries and stores. With the first commercial gristmill appearing in the early 1850s and others following over the next few decades, this property type, as well as granaries often located nearby because of their related functions, became an important fixture in the area through the remainder of the nineteenth and extending into the first decades of the twentieth century. Likewise small stores appeared in Mora around the mid-nineteenth century. As the area prospered, mercantile stores proliferated in the village and small satellite stores appeared in the outlying villages, often doubling as post offices and informal social centers. Unlike the gristmills, which reflect imported vernacular building techniques but employ the local building materials of stone, adobe and timber, the granaries and stores reflect the folk building techniques characteristic of the area's dwellings. Just as the building techniques for the dwellings continued largely unchanged except for the addition of a succession of various imported ornamental elements, the granaries and stores evolved in much the same manner. First, Folk Territorial Style and then, later, various elements characteristic of the range of revivals included in the Southwest Vernacular Style appear in the evolution of local commercial buildings.

Since water was their source of power, the gristmills were located near the Rio Mora. Water was diverted through an acequia to turn the typical vertical waterwheel. Rocks and crudely cut stone were used to house the waterwheel unit, while combinations of adobe, cut stone and wood plank were used for the walls. The roofs are pitched; and all of the mills are at least two stories, the height necessary to house the millworks, including the millstones, gear mechanisms, and hoppers. In some cases, one and a half story additions were used to store grain and the milled flour prior to shipment.

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Much like the gristmills, the granaries represent a building type that is characterized more by its function than any distinctive stylistic detailing. All of the granaries are one or one and a half stories and are built of adobe and plank construction with stone rubble foundations. Built to store the great grain harvests the local farmers produced, these structures push the rectilinear wood and adobe form to a larger than domestic scale. In the case of granaries attached to gristmills, there are rough plank floors. Because of the commercial importance of locally produced grains, the granaries are located near the mill or, in the case of the granaries in the villages of Mora and Cleveland, near a mercantile store. The granaries were most frequently used in the late summer and fall when farmers, some coming from farms more than thirty miles away, brought their wheat and other grains to be milled. Often they waited while it was milled and then took a percentage of the flour, generally over fifty percent, leaving the rest for the miller to sell. As a result of this barter system, granary additions characterize three of the four mills. Other granaries were built in back of stores where grains were stored until sold or shipped out of the area to meet government contracts.

Because of the need for high unbroken walls to protect the grains from rodents and moisture, these properties have little ornamentation. Small vent openings appear in both the gables and in the upper portions of the walls, however, with the latter sometimes set off with wood lintels and covered with lathed wooden screens. Corrugated metal pitched roofs appear in all of the granaries, with the deteriorating roof of the granary behind the Cassidy Store in Cleveland revealing a horizontal board over board roof beneath.

The area's vernacular commercial structures follow a similar pattern of pushing the traditional adobe and wood form to a larger than domestic scale. The added width permits placing the entrance in the gable and orienting it to the road. Thus the store appears as an extended traditional rectilinear unit, with counters and shelves located along a side and to the rear of the room. In some cases, warehouse additions have been built to the rear. In other cases, particularly those built around the turn of the century, a slight excavation has been combined with a raised rock foundation to create a storage basement beneath the store.

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The necessary conditions for the development of a gristmill in an area are agricultural production, a reliable summer and autumn flow of water and a market for meal and flour. While the Mora area possessed all of these by the early 1850s, no early Hispanic mills remain, and it is unclear whether any were ever constructed. The four remaining commercial mills were erected along the Mora River between 1864 and 1906. Their construction was stimulated by the ready market provided by the quartermaster's depot at nearby Fort Union and, later, by more distant markets opened by the coming of the railroad.

The water supply, in particular, was ideal and served to determine the location and design of the mills. The builders of the mills diverted water from the Rio Mora, locating headgates for their acequias from several hundred yards to a mile above the mill site. The millrace supplied a sufficient velocity of water to turn the vertical overshot waterwheels in a clockwise rotation. Large commercial waterwheels, all probably greater than twelve feet in diameter, rotated on an axle set in roughly cut stone. When the mill no longer required power, the headgates were then closed, and a control gate near the mill diverted the water into the return ditch.

Since the millworks required a height sufficient to feed the grain into a hopper and then convey it down to buhrstones or steel rollers, the buildings are necessarily at least two stories high. The corrugated metal roofs are pitched or gambrel with small ventilator doors in horizontal plank gables. In a few cases there are shed roof additions over small porches over entries into grain and flour storage areas. Foundations are of rock and rough cut stone, and the walls are of random-sized cut stone or adobe, in one case with a plank exterior. Given the function of this property type, fenestration is minimal, and the doors are plank with wood reveals.

Although the original mill equipment was repaired or replaced as stones cracked and gears became worn, all of these mills continued to operate into the 1920s, with the Cassidy Mill in Cleveland producing flour until it closed in the 1950s. Three of the area's four mills are already listed on the National Register, and their owners have maintained them to varying degrees. The remaining mill, the Gordon-Sanchez Mill, shows signs of deterioration and requires stabilization if it is to be preserved.

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Many of the earlier commercial buildings also display how elements of the Territorial Style had begun to spread beyond the large towns of the Territory. As it moved into the outlying regions, it became a part of local vernacular building practices, open to local builders' interpretations. In the upper Mora valley, Folk Territorial Style stores are characterized by door transoms and much milled ornamentation. Leaf doors, paneled windows with shutters, pedimented doorways, Doric columns, spindle railings and molded wood parapets convey the eclectic range of elements local carpenters used in defining the style. The interior spaces are arranged to permit the display of a wide range of goods characteristic of the inventory of the late nineteenth century mercantile store. Numerous glass display counters, often in a U-shape with the open side facing the entry, organize the space. Shelving lines the walls behind the counters. A rear room provides additional storage space.

While the small stores in the outlying villages continued to operate until well after World War II, the village of Mora continued to grow as the commercial, governmental and service center for the county. Most of the commercial building that occurred in the area, especially after the turn of the century, took place in Mora. With the improvement of roads in the upper Mora valley in the 1920s and 1930s, various roadside businesses appeared in the village. Some of these buildings were simply older vernacular structures that received a new commercial facade. Other newer structures were built in the Southwest Vernacular and Pueblo Revival Styles. Most buildings were one story with slightly pitched roofs masked by false commercial fronts. Adobe continued as the main building material, although by the 1920s a stucco coat was generally applied to the adobe.

The pitched roof that had appeared in the area during the last decades of the nineteenth century and proved so effective in these relatively wet upland valleys persists in many of the Southwest Vernacular commercial buildings. Local builders, however, disguised it through a variety of false-front parapets, some of which may have been added to older buildings, a few that were previously two story structures. Such alterations signify an attempt to make older buildings more attractive as roadside businesses during the first decades of automobile tourism in the area. These commercial facades are relatively simple and unadorned with standard commercial windows and doors, sometimes recessed, and with transoms.

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The Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style also appeared in a few area buildings in the late 1930s, most notably in a service station and motor court. Roofs are flat with stepped or curvilinear parapets. Adobe with an earth-toned stucco is the common building material. Although modest compared to buildings in this style found elsewhere, the buildings show the irregular massing characteristic of the style. The buildings also present many of the ornamental elements associated with the style including projecting vigas, canales, or traditional drainage spouts used in regional flat-roofed buildings, slight portales with corbel brackets, and buttresses.

The prolonged economic decline that has afflicted western Mora county has taken its toll on many of the vernacular commercial buildings. Three of the mills are in need of stabilization; the granaries are abandoned and in varying states of repair; and many of the stores, particularly in the outlying villages have been abandoned since the 1950's and are deteriorating.

Significance:

With the construction of Fort Union in 1851, the subsistence agriculture practiced by the Hispanic farmers of the upland valleys of western Mora County began to change. An outside market arose for the grain the farmers produced. Commercial milling and granaries in the area provided the means for farmers to sell or trade their grains in exchange for goods which diversified their lives. Commercial milling also drew outsiders into the area, contributing to the rise of more diverse occupations and a more diversified local economy. Accompanying the rise of the agricultural economy was the growth of local commerce, both in Mora and in the outlying villages. Built with the traditional local materials and techniques but adapted to commercial needs for larger interior spaces, these vernacular stores are reminders, not only of the resiliency and adaptive capacities of the local building tradition, but of the shift from a barter to cash economy.

Commercial milling implied adapting an imported building form to the local landscape. Through the use of acequias to feed the millraces and the use of local building materials to house the milling stones, gears, and other mechanisms shipped to the

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Territory, the miller-merchants and their millwrights, at first newcomers themselves, reproduced a building type that was essential to the economy of upland valley grain farming for almost three quarters of a century. These miller-merchants also provided a means by which the local economy began to change. The range of occupations within the local economy was greatly broadened. Some local men became millers, millwrights, teamsters, and clerks as a result of mills' presence. The flour the mill owners sold to government and private purchasers provided one of the few sources of cash for the local economy. Some of this money filtered down to the farmers, enabling them to modernize their equipment and to shift to a modified cash economy and stimulating the growth of small mercantile stores in the area. Often, however, the farmers simply traded with the miller, accepting a portion of the grain they had brought to the mill in the form of milled flour. This mixed economy, consisting partially of cash transactions partially of barter, remained the basis of the economic life of these rural settlements well into the twentieth century.

There are only four remaining historic gristmills in western Mora County, a small number compared to the number of dwellings, churches, and other commercial properties. Yet, the presence of four historic mills in a relatively small geographic area is noteworthy; no other New Mexican area has even two such mills remaining in a comparable area. Perhaps more than any other property type, these mills, and the related granaries, because of their function and role in defining western Mora County as "the breadbasket of the Territory," convey the associative and historic feeling of the area. The fact that three of the four remaining mills have already been listed on the National Register offers further evidence of their significance. By having these mills and granaries recognized as a distinct property type, the area's residents hope that a way will emerge to preserve them and to focus attention on their historic role in shaping the area's settlement patterns.

The village stores also stand as reminders of an important element in the agricultural settlement and commercial growth of the area. The opening of outside markets for Mora's grains brought merchants into the area. They often acted as middle-men, exchanging manufactured products for farm goods. As settlers moved into the more remote valleys, merchants opened small stores in those distant villages, often representing larger mercantile companies in Las Vegas or Wagon Mound. These satellite stores

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carried on mixed barter and cash trade with the villagers. They signify how a cash economy gradually supplanted the early subsistence and barter system.

These vernacular stores are also reminders of how pervasive local building traditions were. Even with the availability of milled lumber and carpentry tools permitting a wider range of innovation, the basic elements of the traditional Hispanic building style persisted, incorporating decorative elements from imported styles but still providing the basis for materials and floor plans. The result was the derivative and idiosyncratic Folk Territorial Style that varied from remote area to remote area and permitted creative woodworkers to innovate some highly individualistic ornamentation, as in the case of the elaborate columns of the Sanchez store porch. With the economic decline and loss of population that has occurred throughout the area, many of the late nineteenth century village stores have been closed for several decades and are deteriorating. Local residents hope that in recognizing the stores' historic importance at least a few of them can be rehabilitated and used to encourage economic development in the area.

Relatively few in number, the early twentieth century commercial buildings built in the Southwest Vernacular Style remain in relatively good condition. Some of the commercial structures have undergone varying degrees of alterations as local merchants have sought to modernize their structures in order to maintain viable businesses even as the area's economy has declined. In a few instances, entire facades have been replaced with more contemporary styles such as a vernacular version of the streamlined moderne or, more recently, a rusticated shingle and plank facade. In other instances, however, the facades remain much as they were when the stores first appeared as the village's modern roadside businesses.

The appearance of the Southwest Vernacular Style in western Mora County in the 1920s and 1930s marked the next phase in the ongoing practice of local builders adapting imported architectural styles to local building needs. Appearing at a time when the local economy and the area's population were both declining, this style never became as widespread as did earlier imported styles that appeared during periods of relative local prosperity. Nevertheless, the presence of several commercial buildings in this style illustrates that even with the onset of

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the Depression local merchants sought to keep alive the local commerce by adopting current building styles.

Mora's commercial area had long been linear with a series of stores, saloons, and hotels mixed with county buildings and residences along the thoroughfare passing through the village. Although the limited finances of the county government as well as the neglect of the state government had long retarded the building of good roads into the area, by the 1920s a graded automobile road enabled tourists to reach Mora. As did the merchants in small villages everywhere, local businessmen sought to develop roadside businesses to attract visitors as well as local customers. The service stations, garages and other commercial ventures that catered to this clientele sought to present an appearance that would meet their expectations. The Southwest Vernacular Style is a reminder of those efforts, for it presents a range of simple but evocative architectural ornaments representing the iconography of early roadside commercialism. The stepped parapets and the use of stucco when combined with large commercial windows conveyed a message of familiarity to those visiting the Southwest.

Many of the roadside businesses of the 1930s also used the Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style as a way attracting passersby by appealing to their romantic notions about the region through its architecture. In the case of a local service station, the necessary garage bay doors and small commercial windows were merely set into the larger mass which was a cube heavily ornamented to convey the Pueblo Style. The idiosyncrasies of this adobe building, particularly the continuous lintel and capped curvilinear parapets, serve as reminders of how local builders may have attempted to weave their version of the style into their basic building form.

Registration Requirements:

These gristmills and granaries are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural and commercial way of life in the county from 1835 to 1939. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged during the late nineteenth century in the Territory's agricultural areas as newly arriving

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entrepreneurs sought to reproduce two imported commercial building types for local use. To qualify for listing, the mills and granaries must have been constructed before 1939 for the processing, storing and shipping of grain. In their present state they must retain their original form and be recognizable to the period of their construction. Because only a few of these significant buildings were built, most remaining examples should qualify.

The vernacular stores in western Mora County compose only a small fraction of the total number of historic properties with almost all of them located in or near the village of Mora. Nevertheless these properties reveal much about the evolution of local commercial architecture in the area, particularly the way in which elements of imported forms were adapted to traditional building materials and techniques. These commercial buildings are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the commercial importance of the village of Mora from 1851 to 1939. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged during that period in the small towns located in the outlying agricultural areas of the state. To qualify for listing, these commercial properties must be good and intact examples of the various vernacular styles discussed herein, including the Folk Territorial and New Mexico Vernacular and Spanish-Pueblo Revival Styles. Although some minor changes may have occurred with time, the properties should be considered if they are recognizable to their period of significance and retain their original plan, materials, and exterior finishes.

4. New Mexico Vernacular Churches and Religious BuildingsDescription:

The vernacular churches and religious buildings of western Mora County closely resemble the vernacular dwellings of the area with respect to building materials, construction techniques and the evolution of ornamentation. Built of timber, adobe, and often with stone rubble foundations, they are generally one and one and a half stories. All have pitched roofs. Many are slightly wider than the dwellings with the entries shifted to the narrow gable end of the building. Since many of these buildings

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appeared during the period of agricultural prosperity in the last decades of the nineteenth century, many of them have a variety of ornamentation characteristic of the Folk Territorial Style.

In the small, modest churches using the New Mexico Vernacular Style, the floor plan varies from the dwellings only to the degree that the door has been shifted to the narrow gable end and the interior space enlarged and arranged to suit the needs of a church. The facade resembles a widened gable end of a dwelling to which an entry with steps has been added. While some of the larger, more elaborate churches have an ornamental window inserted in the gable above the entry, many of the simpler buildings have only horizontal planks. The widened gable end, afforded by longer vigas, permits double doors as well as a wider interior space for the placement of small pews. Most rural churches (and some later houses as well) have a cruciform plan with cross gables; often a slight wood belfry tower rests on the roof ridge just over the entry.

Much like the Folk Territorial Style houses of the area, the few rural churches built in that style are largely discernable from their New Mexico Vernacular Style relatives by the additional wood ornamental elements that have been applied to the building. Elements such as wooden Gothic bell towers, scale gable shingles, recessed porches, and proportioned wood panel doors and windows with pedimented lintels characterize the Folk Territorial Style churches in Ledoux, the deteriorating Presbyterian church near North Carmen, and the San Jose Chapel and old Convent in Mora. No doubt the arrival in the Territory of outside clerics such as the French-born Jean Baptiste Lamy and Jean Baptiste Salpointe, his representative in Mora, and various Protestant missionaries influenced local church builders to adopt elements of imported styles as a way of enhancing their church architecture.

Many of the churches reflect the hard times that the area has faced. As the population of the countryside has dwindled and the remaining residents have joined more centrally located churches, some churches have deteriorated. The Presbyterian Church near North Carmen with its striking Gothic Revival elements, for example, has collapsed. Yet in other instances parishioners have sought to stabilize and preserve their old churches, as in the case of a local project to renovate the San Jose Chapel.

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Significance:

The New Mexico Vernacular and Folk Territorial Style churches of western Mora County represent the religious growth that occurred in the area as a result of the agricultural prosperity of the second half of the nineteenth century. They serve as reminders of how the upland valleys, even as they began to shift from a subsistence, barter economy to a partial cash economy, retained many of the basic ingredients of the local folk culture, including strong religious commitments and traditional building practices.

From the earliest settlement when the isolated pioneers wrote to the priest in Picuris requesting him to travel to Mora to hear confession, religion played an important role in the lives of the Hispanic settlers. Later, as the "budding process" extended local settlement into the more remote upland valleys, many of the small village churches and chapels were named to commemorate the saint whose celebration day corresponded to the founding of the village. Even today, the feast day marking the celebration of the particular saint is often the only time during the year in which these remote churches are opened.

The church and church school building that occurred in the area during the last decades of the nineteenth century is also indicative of the local prosperity. The upland valleys of western Mora County were the site of a vigorous competition between the established Catholic Church and the recently arrived Protestants, particularly the Presbyterian Church. In the case of both groups, outsiders, bringing with them architectural sensibilities shaped in the eastern United States or France, asserted those values in the building styles they introduced. The Folk Territorial Style with its Gothic and Greek Revival elements offers at least a partial iconography of perceptions of status during that period; and the remaining churches and chapels stand as reminders of those early values.

These religious buildings are also reminders of how pervasive local building traditions were. Even with the availability of milled lumber and carpentry tools permitting a wider range of innovation, the basic elements of the traditional Hispanic building style persisted, incorporating decorative elements from imported styles but still providing the basis for materials and floor plans. The result was a hybrid style that varied from remote area to remote area and permitted creative woodworkers to

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innovate some highly individualistic ornamentation, as in the case of the recessed porch of the San Jose Chapel in Mora suggesting the temple in antis form used by Greek Revival designers or the dark shingle cross embedded in the light shingle gable of the San Jose Church in Ledoux.

Registration Requirements:

These properties are noteworthy examples a building type that served the spiritual and social needs of the area's settlers during the early agricultural settlement of western Mora county. They also reveal much about the evolution of vernacular architecture in the area as it was applied to religious buildings during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, therefore, qualify under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life, and under Criterion C for embodying the style, form and methods of construction that emerged during that period in the Territory's northern agricultural valleys. To qualify for listing these churches and religious buildings must have been constructed before 1930. In their present state they must retain their original form and be recognizable to the period of their construction. Because only a few of these significant buildings were built, most remaining examples should qualify.

5. Agricultural Village Historic Districts

Description:

Located

[REDACTED] are the many small Hispanic villages that grew out of the nineteenth century agricultural settlement of the area. Situated on or perched just above the valley floors with the water from mountain streams nearby, many of these villages remain isolated from the primary roads that have penetrated the western part of the county in recent decades. The few paved roads that do pass through some of these villages twist and turn, reflecting the earlier informal roadways which farmers used to take their produce to Mora or Las Vegas. The villages are clusters of informally arranged vernacular houses often with outbuildings to the rear. The dwellings are indistinguishable

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from the farmsteads scattered across the valleys except for their relative proximity to each other in the villages and to the presence of a nearby church and store.

These rural villages were formed by the "budding process" in which settlers would leave a crowded village in a nearby valley and move to an empty or less densely occupied nearby valley, seeking to replicate the same landuse arrangement with which they were familiar. As a result, these new settlers and then their offspring, tended to build their houses in clusters that, with the addition of the village church or chapel and, later, a small store, came to constitute a small community. Often the path of the community acequia served to organize the landscape, determining field arrangements, the location of permanent houses, and a common roadway. In the isolation of these villages the New Mexico Vernacular Style continued relatively unchanged well into the twentieth century. There are numerous examples of the linear house plan, many still using dried earth plaster. Even the imported stylistic elements such as the Folk Territorial and the Hipped Box Styles appear more as hybrids of the folk vernacular tradition in these villages than in the more centrally located Mora Valley. Appearing at a somewhat later date, the stores and some of the churches are more likely to reflect imported stylistic elements than are the houses.

Just as these remote villages were founded and grew as a result of the population growth and agricultural success of local farming, they have also suffered with the decline of farming. Population began to decline in the rural villages at least a decade before it did in Mora so that by the 1920s farmers were already abandoning these remote villages in search of jobs that would enable them to survive in a cash-based economy. Some villages, such as Abuelo, have been completely abandoned and are in a state of advanced deterioration. Others, however, continue to survive with a limited population. Many historic churches and dwellings are maintained, sometimes by retirees who have returned to their ancestral villages after an adult lifetime of working elsewhere. Although an occasional mobile home or modernized home appears in these villages, they are relatively unchanged from as they appeared sixty years ago and convey a sense of cohesiveness reflecting their historic period of importance.

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Significance:

The "budding process" is a significant factor in the Hispanic folk migration of northern New Mexico. It explains not only how a people pushed out their frontiers but also how they retained their sense of community and how they were able to sustain their folk architecture over many generations. The remote upland valley villages along the tributaries of the Rio Mora stand as some of the best examples of that pattern of folk migration. As the children of the original grantees of the Mora Grant sought to establish homes and as newly arriving families from the overcrowded villages on the western slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains pushed into the upper Mora region in the 1850s and 1860s, they were forced to climb out of the central valley of the Rio Mora and open new farmlands.

When they settled these upland valleys, they brought with them the building and land use practices they had known in their previous villages. They dug ditches, divided irrigable lands and built homes using the same materials and replicating the same vernacular style they and their parents had used before. They also built modest churches and chapels to commemorate the local patron saint. Much of the community life in the village revolved around religious festivals, seasonal farming cycles, bartering, and folk healing practices. In this isolated subsistence agricultural economy, the village became the all-important center of life, meeting most, if not all, of its inhabitants' physical, social and spiritual needs. This matrix of houses, garden plots, and outbuildings; church; and, later, perhaps a small store represents the heart of the rural Hispanic folk settlement.

In the late nineteenth century as the area's barter economy began to evolve toward one based on cash, the rural villages were the first to show symptoms of the accompanying social displacement. Access to common lands was cut off. The self-sufficient, mixed farming in which a family grew most of the things it consumed gave way to growing a single cash crop, one consequence of which was soil depletion and erosion. A few farmers were successful in adjusting, but many were forced either to sell their land or to leave it, seeking jobs elsewhere. This disintegration of the agricultural economy was especially prevalent in the remote valleys where the village populations began to drop as early as 1910. Ironically, one consequence of people leaving these isolated villages is that the villages have retained much of their historic quality with few buildings added

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in the last sixty years. The abandoned village stores, the seldom used churches, and the largely unaltered dwellings present a museum-like display of a late nineteenth century village-scape.

Registration:

The villages of the upland valleys of western Mora County were settled just after the mid-nineteenth century. Representing a local example of the "budding process," this second generation of local villages symbolizes the success of the early decades of agricultural settlement in the area. They stand as reminders of the nature of Hispanic folk agricultural settlements in which land, water, religion, and community responsibility were closely joined. These villages are historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural way of life in the county from the 1830s to the 1920s. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for representing a collective example of buildings embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged during the late nineteenth and continued into the twentieth century in isolated mountain valleys.

There are a number of isolated farm villages in the upland valleys of western Mora County, some that yet need to be surveyed. Many that have lost all or a high percentage of their inhabitants have deteriorated to such a degree that they no longer convey a sense of their historic importance. Others, however, retain their physical characteristics and associative qualities through their largely unaltered dwellings and local church or chapel and, often, an abandoned store. To meet registration requirements as historic rural districts, these villages must retain a sufficiently high percentage of historic buildings meeting the same criteria set for individual New Mexico vernacular buildings and their subtypes so that they continue to convey a feeling of the historic period with which the villages are associated.

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6. Commercial Center Historic District: The Village of Mora

Description:

The village of Mora lies [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a cleared area with wooded mountains surrounding it. Two state highways intersecting in the village and a number of dirt roads extending to the more remote areas of the valley provide access to the many small farms spread across the area. This informal pattern of linear settlement becomes more concentrated near the village so that the agricultural surroundings gradually give way to the more densely settled community. Surrounded by fields, many of which are irrigated by acequias passing through the village itself, Mora appears as a small town integrating both agricultural and commercial elements. Just as it mixes these elements, it also mixes a variety of building types including dwellings, stores, roadside businesses, churches, schools, and county buildings. These buildings represent a range of building styles including the prevalent New Mexico Vernacular and its previously discussed subtypes, including the Folk Territorial, the Hipped Box and the Southwest Vernacular, as well as the Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style. The greatest number of post-World War II buildings appear along the highways on the outskirts of the village. Arranged along the two paved state highways and several dirt roadways, some of which meander along both banks of the Rio Mora, the historic buildings reflect almost a century of vernacular building traditions. Given the prolonged economic hardships of the county, the buildings are in varying degrees of repair. Many retain their historic integrity, while others have been altered.

[REDACTED], that the first Hispanic settlements in the area occurred. Once the broad valley floors were cleared, they were ideal for the long, rectangular, gravity-irrigated fields that the settlers shaped. The two plazas, or small clustered settlements, that grew in those valleys became the first two commercial centers in the area. Today they are the villages [REDACTED]. The former

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retained its largely rural characteristics, while Mora developed as the commercial and, after 1860, governmental center for the newly formed county of Mora.

After the original village of Mora was levelled by United States soldiers in 1847 in reprisal for the villagers' part in the Taos Rebellion, a new predominantly linear village developed. Twenty miles from the Santa Fe Trail and along the Taos cut-off, Mora initially grew as a trade center, a position enhanced with establishment of Fort Union twenty miles to the east. Trade, government contracts for agricultural products such as hay and flour, and the providing of a variety of trail services including hotels, saloons, and blacksmithing provided the impetus for growth. Over the second half of the nineteenth century a number of buildings appeared along the village's roadways that would shape the town much as it appears today. Along the Rio Mora Ceran St. Vrain built his stone gristmill, one of several including the Fuss-Cassidy, La Cueva Mills, and, in 1906, the Gordon-Sanchez that milled the flour that drove the local economy. Along the east-west road hotels, granaries, saloons and mercantile stores began to appear. Two photographs of the main street, one taken in 1895 and another undated, portray a series of buildings lining the main street. Many of the buildings reveal New Mexico Vernacular elements, particularly of the Folk Territorial Style subtype, including corrugated metal pitched roofs, porches with posts with Classical moldings, and commercial false front facades. A photograph taken forty years later reveals little change in the overall appearance of the main street.

A Sanborn Insurance Map of Mora done in 1930 indicates that while most of the businesses lined the east-west road there also developed two densely clustered blocks of dwellings on the south side of the road. Both blocks fronted on the Santa Gertrudis Church and consisted of houses, the convent, the church school and related church buildings. Perhaps because of the influence of the French-born Archbishop Lamy as well as two local French-born carpenters, several of these buildings incorporated Gothic Revival elements such as steeply pitched roofs and fish scale wood shingle dormers. In addition, warehouses located to the rear of the commercial buildings added to the concentration of those blocks.

Other village properties, however, seem to fit more into the traditional Hispanic agricultural pattern of the long rectangular

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fields. The courthouse, slightly to the west of the two concentrated blocks, is located on a long narrow property. A similar pattern appears in the case of the modern Mora County Schools complex. These, as well as other similarly configured properties, may indicate that as the village has expanded in recent decades land previously used for farming has been turned over to other uses but has continued to retain its distinctive rectangular configuration.

An additional pattern discernable in the village is that of dirt roadways meandering from house to house. Although the paved roads themselves turn to conform to the irregular line of properties they encounter as they enter the town from the north and west, the dirt roadways compose a subset of one lane paths, offering access to perhaps fifty percent of the dwellings in the historic portion of the village. Two such roadways parallel the banks of the Rio Mora and are occasionally connected by informal plank bridges. Along these roadways are some of the most pristine examples of the New Mexico Vernacular Style in the village. Many are arranged in seemingly random clusters with the road conforming to their location.

The general appearance of the village is that of a local commercial, governmental and service center closely tied to the surrounding farmland. It conveys a feeling of having attempted to survive a prolonged period of social and economic disintegration. Several storefronts have been altered as their owners have attempted to modernize their buildings in hopes of attracting customers; others have been abandoned and while retaining their historic integrity are in need of repair; still others have been demolished. Nevertheless, the district does consist of over eighty percent of the buildings as contributing structures. Included are several primary contributing structures such as the St. Vrain Mill, the convent and school, five commercial buildings, and many dwellings encompassing the range of local and imported building styles significant to the village's period of historic importance.

Significance:

With their informally clustered houses concentrated along the meandering dirt roadways and with acequias feeding small garden plots, the portions of the village of Mora not facing on the two paved state roads are important reminders of the informal

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patterns of growth that characterized Hispanic villages in the nineteenth century. Combined with the more formally arranged commercial strip facing the highway, these two elements suggest the historical process by which Mora shifted from its subsistence agricultural roots to the county's most important commercial, governmental and service center. In the process of this shift, imported architectural influences emerged as well. As a result, the dwellings located along the dirt roadways offer many fine examples of the traditional linear Hispanic house plan while those dwellings and commercial structures along the important roads offer examples of the efforts of local builders to adapt elements of a number of imported styles using local materials. The Sanchez Store, the Doherty, St. Vrain, and Rouelle Houses, for example, present a range of Folk Territorial elements. Other stores and houses along these roads display Hipped Cottage, Southwest Vernacular and Spanish-Pueblo Revival Styles. The incorporation of traditional building materials in these structures representing changing architectural styles combined with the New Mexico Vernacular Style houses along the traditional roadways serve as reminders of how the area has absorbed so many outside influences yet retained much of its original identity. In effect, the state roads and the various architectural styles represented in the buildings along them may be viewed as a palimpsest overlaying the earlier building and circulation patterns. Extending the analogy, many post-war buildings, most of which lie outside of the proposed district, may be seen as representing yet another overlay of outside influences entering the area.

Taken as a whole, the buildings of Mora illustrate how a small, isolated commercial and governmental center evolved architecturally over a century marked by a period of prosperity then one of depression. The stylistic diversity of the buildings serves as a valuable catalogue of the sequential waves of stylistic influences that swept into the territory and then the state, especially after the coming of the railroad in 1880. Rather than presenting a single cohesive epoch in the area's history, the village district demonstrates the fluidity of change that a cash economy, new tools, and outsiders brought to Mora. The frequency with which the various styles appear may also be a partial index of the village's prosperity. The many Folk Territorial structures appear during a period of prosperity while dwellings reflecting the various revivals associated with the Southwest Vernacular, popular in the 1920s a period of local economic decline, are scarce.

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Mora's prolonged economic and social disintegration has not been without its effects on the village's buildings. Fires, neglect, and even well-intended efforts to update and modernize the appearance of local businesses have taken their toll, resulting in the razing of the Richardsonian Style stone courthouse and the burning of the historic Santa Gertrudis Church in the 1960s. Despite the loss of these important buildings and the alterations of some commercial buildings, the district remains a distinctive resource evoking a strong feeling of the village's historic importance. Recent events, including the listing of the county as one of the poorest in the country and its bankruptcy in 1987 have focused much attention on the village and led to a variety of proposed solutions. A number of community leaders view using the village's historic resources as one practical means of partially redressing the area's economic problems. A recently formed economic redevelopment cooperative which includes a committee on local history and planning projects conducted by students from the School of Architecture at the University of New Mexico are evidence of efforts to make use of these resources. Area residents feel that a historic district might lead to more restoration efforts in hopes of getting the many tourists passing through the village to stop and visit it.

Registration Requirements:

The village of Mora is significant as the commercial and governmental center of the area's agricultural economy. The limited but important range of building types as well as the range of architectural styles found in the village stand as reminders of how the original Hispanic agricultural settlement evolved over a century, shifting to a cash economy and adapting many imported building styles but retaining many of its folk building traditions as well. This commercial, government and service center is historically significant under National Register Criterion A as associated with the agricultural and commercial way of life in the county from 1851 to 1939. It is also architecturally significant under Criterion C for representing a collective example of buildings embodying the style, form, and methods of construction that emerged during the late nineteenth and continued into the twentieth century in the outlying communities of the state.

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The village of Mora is the only commercial, governmental and service center in western Mora County. In order to qualify as a historic district it must possess those physical characteristics and associative qualities necessary to identify it with the period of historic importance discussed in the statement of Historic Context. Specifically, it must present a high percentage of buildings that contribute to an understanding of the growth of commerce, government, and services in the community. It must also convey a sense of the historic setting in which the village grew. In order to achieve these criteria, the district is necessarily shaped in such a way to include the highest percentage of structures and the clearest sense of historic setting attainable. As a result, a few important individual buildings separated from the district by a number of non-contributing structures that would otherwise dilute the overall integrity of the district have been excluded and are treated as individually nominated buildings.

G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

☒ See continuation sheet

H. Major Bibliographical References

☒ See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- ☒ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency

- ☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository: Historic Preservation Division, Office of Cultural Affairs

I. Form Prepared By

name/title David J. Kammer Ph.D
organization contract historian date July 30, 1989
street & number 521 Aliso Dr. NE telephone (505) 266-0586
city or town Albuquerque state New Mexico zip code 87108

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SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The multiple property listing for the historic and architectural resources of the upland valleys of western Mora County, New Mexico, is based upon a 1980 architectural resources inventory of the southwestern portion of Mora County. Conducted by architectural historians Elmo L. Baca and Betsy Swanson under the auspices of the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Division, the survey was limited to the area covered by the Mora Quadrangle Map of the 7.5 Series of the United States Geological Survey. (The State Historic Preservation Division plans to fund an additional inventory that will include the additional outlying villages and farmsteads in nearby upland valleys located on adjacent quadrangle maps. The property types and historic contexts presented in this multiple property listing will apply to those additional properties as well.) The inventory identified more than 360 properties. Every passable road, public and private, leading to a known or suspected property was driven during the inventory and every building marked on the USGS topographical map was viewed and numbered. The surveyors also made some additions and corrections to the USGS map. Post-World War II properties were identified as such. All pre-war buildings were photographed and recorded on field survey forms in accordance with the methods of describing, dating, and categorizing as to architectural style prescribed in the New Mexico Historic Building Inventory Manual (1980). Local residents were often consulted to augment the historic and architectural description of particular buildings.

In 1988, Joseph Montoya and David Kammer contracted with the Historic Preservation Division to prepare a multiple resource nomination for the area, using the architectural resources inventory as the basis for the buildings to be included. Mr. Montoya, who has a B.A. in architecture from the School of Architecture at the University of New Mexico and is completing an M.A. in planning and public administration, has worked for the last eighteen months with three economic development groups in Mora County to produce a county comprehensive development plan. Mr. Kammer has a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of New Mexico. Architectural historian Chris Wilson also participated in the field evaluation of the properties and was consulted in the preparation of the nomination. The first step entailed confirming the findings of the original inventory, updating individual survey forms to show any alterations or changes in the buildings' status, and adding a few buildings that the original

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inventory had missed. The repository for all of the inventory materials is the Historic Preservation Division of the New Mexico Office of Cultural Affairs in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Because no scholarly history of the western portion of Mora County has been published, it was necessary to identify and examine numerous primary as well as some secondary sources. The 1845 Mexican and various United States Censuses, including the enumerators sheets and agricultural reports; Mora County District Court Records; and various county records, including tax assessments and the proceedings of the County Commission provided primary data that shaped the historic contexts of the nomination. In addition, early travel diaries, local newspapers, Territorial promotional materials, and various historic collections, including the papers of Thomas B. Catron and the Charles Ilfeld Company offered much valuable information.

Locally, many longtime residents including Tony Aragon, Fr. Walter Cassidy, Dan Cassidy, Levi Madrid, Max Maestas, Angela Medina, Mike Montoya, Gloria Olivas, Jose Pacheco, Red Quintina, Lillian Sanchez, Carlos Trujillo and Desiderio Valdez Jr. supplied a wealth of information including photographs, family papers, and information about specific buildings which greatly enriched the telling of the area's history. When combined with the data of the architectural resources inventory and earlier nominations of individual area buildings, particularly the three gristmills in the area, this range of primary sources helped to frame the scope of the nomination.

The properties are grouped under two historic contexts that best explain the early growth and significance of the area: the early agricultural settlement of the area initiated by the Hispanic folk migration into the upland valleys and then sustained by the milling and marketing of the area's agricultural products, and the subsequent growth of the village of Mora as the commercial, government and service center for the area. The two contexts are closely related. The agricultural successes of the area drew many of the early merchants to Mora, and the subsequent growth of Mora depended upon the exchange of farm products for merchandise, services and public services. Upon the completion of the next phase of the area's historic building inventory including several additional village churches and church schools, the State Historic Preservation Office anticipates the addition of an additional historic context examining religion and education in the area.

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The property types are organized to reflect the context with which they are more closely, but not exclusively, associated. They are then arranged chronologically by style and function. Just as the two contexts are closely related, so too are the property types so that a property type primarily connected with agricultural settlement may also appear within the commercially-oriented village of Mora. The entire range of subtypes of New Mexico Vernacular Style houses, for example, appears in the village of Mora as well in remote upland valleys, but since these house are more closely associated with the early agricultural settlement of the area, the date of significance reflects their association with the agricultural settlement context rather than the commercial center context. In all cases, the buildings convey a dual significance, reflecting both an historic and architectural importance.

The inventory identified a wide range of resources in the study area, spanning the late 1850's to World War II. Integrity requirements were based upon a knowledge of the existing properties within each property type. The result is that registration requirements vary from property type to property type--as defined in the statements of registration requirements. In the case of some of the rarer types, buildings which are historically evocative but in a deteriorated condition or which have been slightly altered are included for nomination, whereas buildings reflecting similar conditions but falling in a category with more numerous examples are not. The nominated properties are limited to the best examples of each property type discussed. Since this nomination includes the entire range of building property types in the area, it should facilitate the addition to the Register of individual properties and districts identified in future inventories.

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Section number G Page 4 Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upland
Valleys of Western Mora County

Although the acequias and field systems contribute to the greater cultural landscape of these agricultural villages as they are set in the upland valleys of the area, only the buildings located in the villages are presently being nominated. At some later date the State Historic Preservation Division hopes to expand its examination of the upland valleys to include all of the interrelated parts comprising this cultural mosaic.

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