

Near North Valley Sector Development Plan

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November 2006



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A list of public participants is in the Appendix.



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I. Introduction and Overview

A. Introduction to the Near North Valley

The Near North Valley Sector Development Plan Area lies west of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad tracks in Albuquerque, between Candelaria Road and Interstate-40. Its western boundary follows the Griegos Lateral and the Alameda Drain to, just short of Rio Grande Boulevard at I-40. It encompasses an area of approximately 1.5 square miles.

The area has gradually transitioned from agricultural to residential and other uses, but retains some of its rural flavor through individual residences on irregular-sized lots, giant cottonwood trees, open field areas, horse ownership, parks and family gardens. Irrigation drains and ditches crisscross the area. While some of the ditches still distribute water, their banks also serve as an informal trails network. (Some of these trails are being considered for incorporation into a regional “Ditches with Trails” project.) Second, 4th and 12th are the primary north-south streets, while Menaul Blvd. and Candelaria Rd. are the major east-west corridors. The area has convenient access to the downtown and University-area employment centers, and to cultural amenities such as the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, the Rio Grande Nature Center, the Bosque del Rio Trail, the Biological Park and Old Town with its museums, shops and plaza.

Fourth Street is the heart of the neighborhood’s commercial district. However, it is not thriving. The few neighborhood-oriented stores (a market, restaurants, a shoe repair shop, gas stations, used

furniture stores) are lost among automobile-oriented businesses (parts stores, car washes, repair shops, used car dealers) and small regional firms (vending machine service companies, an elevator repair office, a crematorium, construction businesses). Low-end uses such as payday lenders and a pawnshop contribute to the depressed appearance, as do some rundown, vacant and boarded-up properties. The former K-Mart property at Menaul Blvd. has been renovated as the 4th Street Market Place for commercial and warehouse use; current tenants include a dollar store, a tax preparation service, a beauty supply firm, a spa, a check-cashing firm and a sandwich shop.

Between 2nd Street and the railroad tracks is a mixed neighborhood of residences, two aged trailer parks, construction manufacturing businesses, warehouses and a few shops. St. Therese Church is a large and long-established institution, whose parochial school and parish hall anchor a small residential neighborhood between 2nd and 4th.

The areas west of 4th Street are primarily residential. Expansive semi-rural residences are found along parts of 12th Street, Los Arboles, Major and Garden Park Circle. Apartments and town homes line Menaul Blvd. west of 12th, with a mix of older homes and farmhouses east of 12th. At 12th and Candelaria, the John Brooks Supermarket anchors a redeveloping retail center with restaurants, a barber shop, a bingo parlor, a laundromat, a pet store and two gas stations. The older neighborhood east of the Indian School is bisected by 6th Street with its freeway entrances and exits, truck stop and other interstate-oriented businesses. The Corley Homes, along the Alameda Drain south of Matthew, is the only large-scale tract home subdivision in the area, dating from the late 1950s.

Neighborhood children attend Cochiti Elementary School or St. Therese School, Garfield Middle School and Valley High School. Recreational opportunities are available at four small parks: Graves, Garfield, 4-H and Los Tomases. The North Valley Senior Center and Los Griegos Multi-Service Center are focal points for community services. Public library service is available at Los Griegos Branch Library at 10th and Griegos. Residents have the opportunity to participate in the Near North Valley Neighborhood Association and the North Valley Coalition to address neighborhood issues

Recent City plans have addressed small areas within the Sector Plan boundaries. The City has begun implementing projects proposed in the Los Candelarias Village Center and Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan, which sought to create a revitalized neighborhood center at 12th and Candelaria. Some recommendations of the 12th and Menaul Study for planning, design and transportation of a large shopping and employment center on the Indian School property have been adopted, while others are still under consideration. The North 4th Street Redevelopment Study: Rank III Corridor Plan is making recommendations for the portion of 4th Street within the Sector Plan boundaries on a timetable parallel to the sector plan. It addresses many of the land use recommendations that emerged from the sector planning process.

The City undertook the Near North Valley Sector Development Plan process primarily to resolve the issue of second dwelling units that are either illegal or non-conforming with the current zoning code, and to address the issues of residential uses in industrially-zoned areas. The plan mentions relevant recommendations from the preceding plans, but readers should refer to those plans for details.

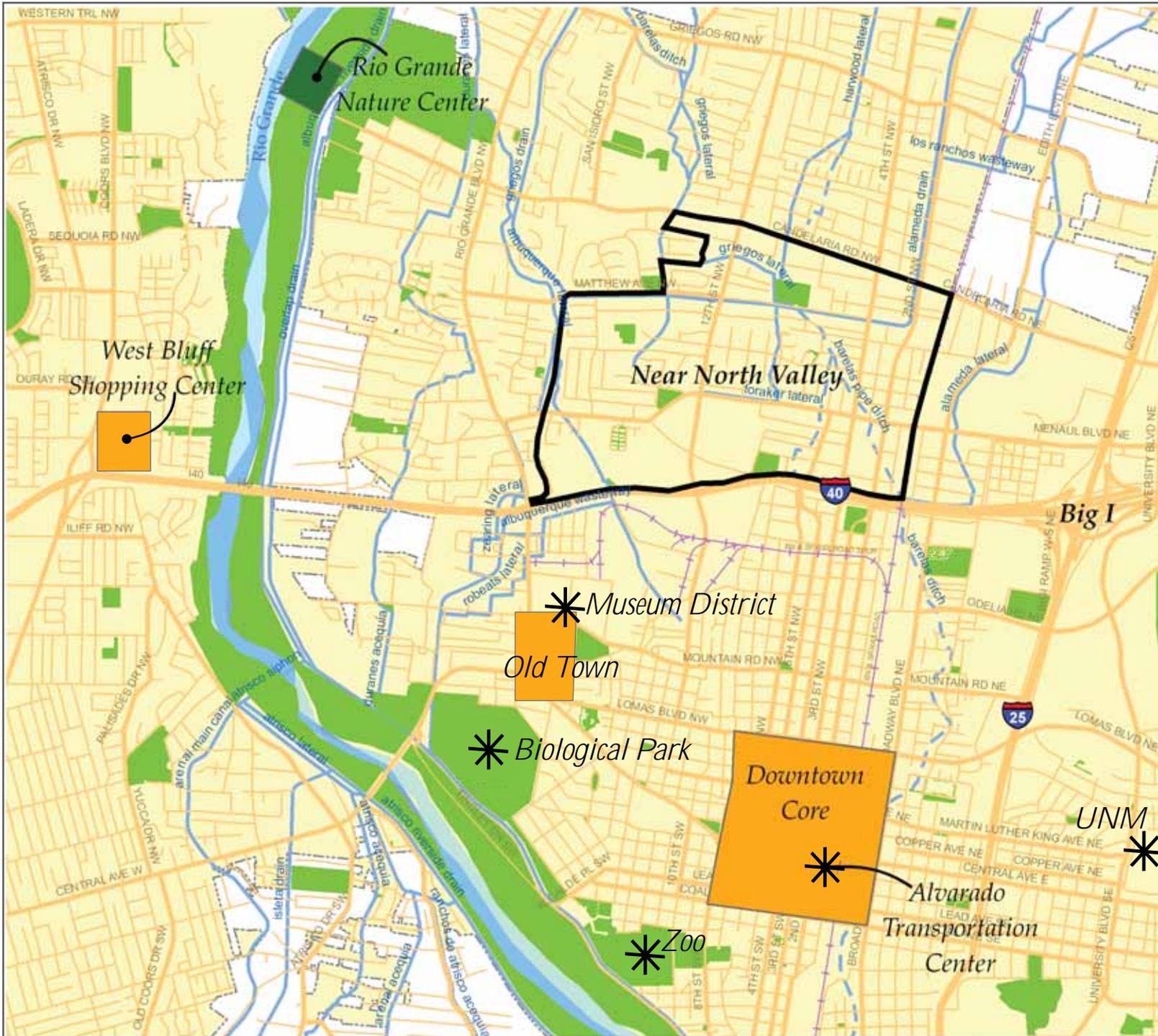
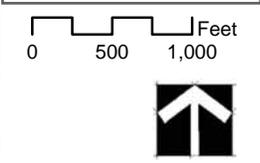


Figure 1: Vicinity



Legend

-  City of Albuquerque
-  Bernalillo County
-  Sector Plan Boundary
-  Landmarks



Martin J. Chavez Mayor



9/06

B. Purpose of the Plan

The City of Albuquerque's overall goals for sector plans are to implement the concept of Centers and Corridors, enhance the livability of communities, attain stakeholder agreement through the planning process, and develop capital project plans. A sector development plan describes existing conditions in the plan area, identifies things that the community wants to see protected or improved, and lists recommendations for action by the City, residents and the business community. It implements the policies of the Albuquerque /Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, planned growth strategies and North Valley Area Plan.

The City's plans are organized into three levels:

- **Rank One** (The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan)
- **Rank Two** (Area Plans such as the North Valley Area Plan or the Southwest Area Plan)
- **Rank Three** (Sector Development Plans or Metropolitan Redevelopment Plans)

The Near North Valley Sector Development Plan is a Rank Three plan, the most detailed planning level, intended to produce plans that can be implemented and enforced through policy, regulation, and capital improvements funding. Rank Three plans include parcel-specific and sub-area land use and zoning regulations, housing and other design standards and guidelines, streetscape recommendations, and capital project priorities. This approach recognizes

that planning and development issues in a growing city are numerous and complex, requiring a flexible program designed to respond both to area-wide and neighborhood-scale issues at the same time. It is also designed to address both new development and the policies that shape it, as well as preservation and redevelopment in existing and older neighborhoods.

The Near North Valley neighborhood includes a mix of residential uses, ranging from semi-rural to urban, with commercial and industrial areas clustering around 4th and 2nd Streets. The residential neighborhoods are in one of the most attractive physical settings in the Albuquerque metropolitan area. The Sector Plan's goal is to balance the various interests in the neighborhood to enhance the positive aspects of the area and preserve its character, while revitalizing the retail sector and mitigating the impacts of industrial operations. In addition, the Plan seeks ways to legalize the nonconforming second dwellings—an important source of affordable housing—as well as homes on industrially-zoned properties in the plan area. The plan is designed to be used by various groups and individuals. City staff and planning commissions and boards will refer to the plan while considering requests for site plan approvals or zone changes in the area. It will serve as a guide for potential private investors. It also will help the Near North Valley residents and businesses realize their vision for revitalization in the area.

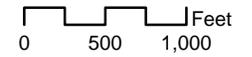
C. Plan Area Boundaries

The boundaries of this Plan, shown in Figure 2, are generally the same as the Near North Valley Neighborhood Association area: Candelaria Rd. on the North, the Burlington/Northern Santa Fe Railroad on the East, I-40 on the South, and the Gregos Lateral and Alameda Drain on the West.

D. Report Organization

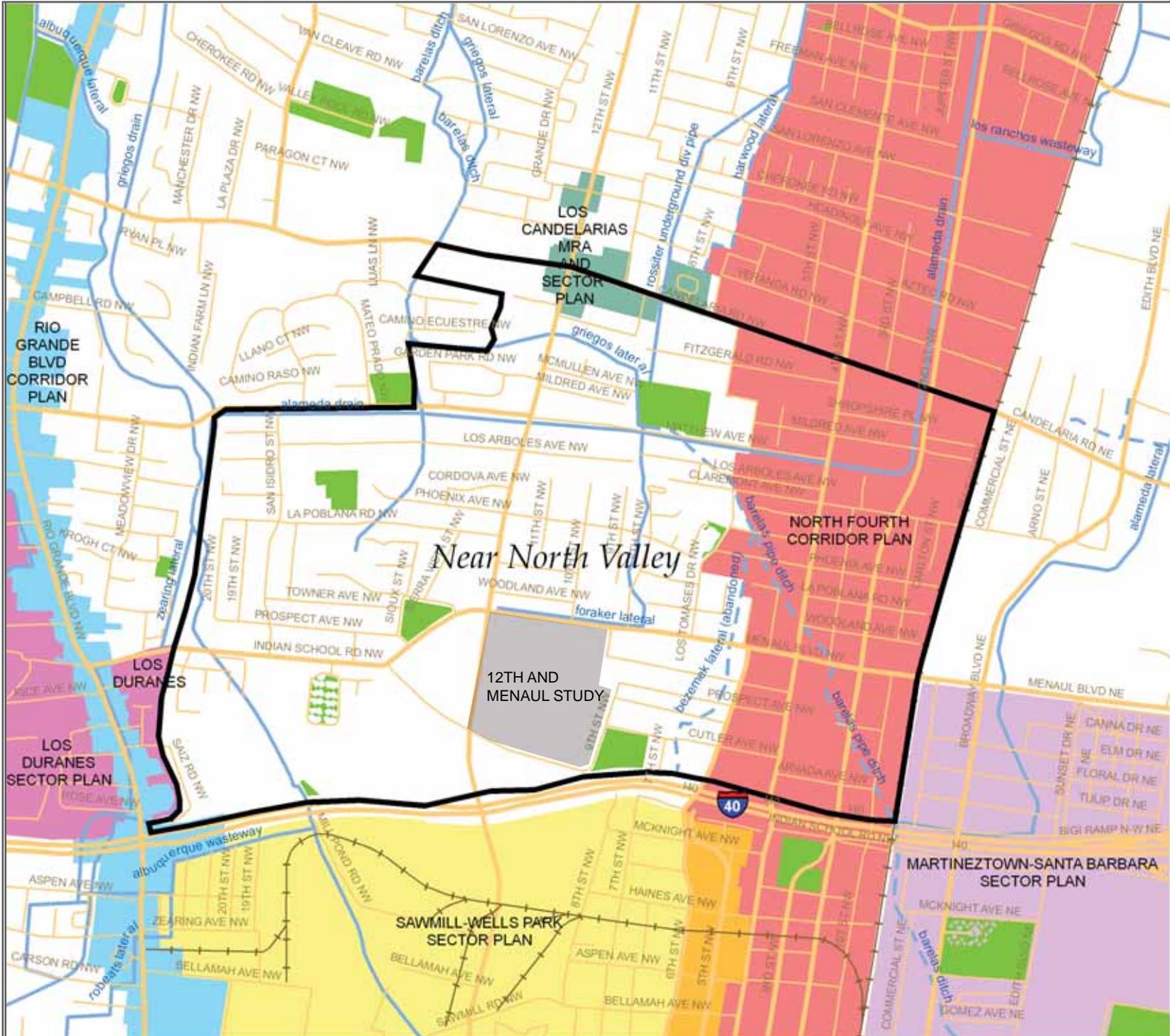
The report is organized into five parts. Part I offers an introduction to the Near North Valley and describes the plan's purpose and boundaries, the future vision and the planning process. Part II presents historical background on the area, as well as relevant policies from higher ranked plans and sub-area plans. Part III discusses existing conditions, issues and opportunities in the area by the topic areas of land use, housing, zoning, economic vitality, transportation systems (including cars, buses, pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian modes), and public facilities such as parks and social services. Part IV presents the plan's goals, policies and recommended actions. Part V contains regulations to be adopted to implement the plan as well as a chart listing recommended actions that carry out the policies, the lead agency responsible for implementation and potential funding sources.

Figure 2: Plan Boundaries



Legend

-  Sector Plan Boundary
-  North Fourth Corridor Plan
-  Los Candelarias
-  Los Duranes
-  Martineztown-Santa Barbara
-  Rio Grande Boulevard Corridor
-  Sawmill-Wells Park
-  12th & Menaul Study



Martin J. Chavez Mayor



9/06

E. Future Vision for the Near North Valley: The Guiding Principles

The vision for the Near North Valley is based on the desires of residents and business owners to redevelop and revitalize their three main commercial centers—N. 4th Street, 12th and Candelaria, and 12th and Menaul—while preserving interior features reminiscent of the area’s rural and historical character, such as the irrigation drains and ditches, open spaces, and areas with large lots and setbacks. Figure 3 shows the five to ten-minute walking radius around each of these centers, indicating that most residents live within walking distance of one of them. Creating a friendly pedestrian environment by improving the sidewalks along the arterial roads and linking them by accessible paths along the irrigation drains and ditches will encourage more residents and employees to walk or bicycle to these commercial centers. Higher density housing along N. 4th Street and new jobs at 12th and Menaul will promote the population increase needed to patronize the revitalized commercial centers without detracting from the quality of the area’s interior. Greater numbers of residents and employees in more concentrated areas will support better bus service.

The following vision was developed in consultation with the sector plan’s Steering Committee based on comments from residents and business people at the first public meeting and further refined during the subsequent two public meetings.

LAND USE: Near North Valley retains its historic character as primarily lower density residential with higher densities and mixed uses concentrated within one-quarter mile of 4th Street, where there are revitalized shops and businesses that meet the needs of local residents.

- Rural character is retained through low density infill (“gentle” infill), trees, small-scale agriculture, trails along ditches, parks, horses, space for wildlife, shielded lighting, and quiet.
- Most second dwelling units are legalized in the R-1 and RA-2 zones.
- The area is free of junk, trash, weeds, crime, and drug trafficking.

TRANSPORTATION: Near North Valley is a safe area for walking, biking, transit and horse riding, with good connections to schools, public facilities and community centers via streets with calm traffic that are lined with attractive lighting and plantings.

- A connected network of trails along ditches, sidewalks and bike lanes and streets make it easy and pleasurable for residents to walk, bicycle or ride horses to important destinations such as 4th street businesses, the 12th and Candelaria neighborhood center, schools, and parks.
- Residential streets are safe, with slow traffic and shielded lighting.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Area businesses are revitalized and serve the needs of local residents. Neighborhood retail clusters along 4th Street and 12th and Candelaria; with community retail and office at 12th and I-40.

- New businesses meet the needs of local residents: copy shop, fruits and vegetables, bookstores, café or restaurant, coffee shop, exercise club, dry cleaners, clothing stores. Additional auto-oriented businesses, tattoo parlors, liquor, and pawn shops are discouraged.
- Local businesses are revitalized and redeveloped. Vacant buildings are reused and facades improved.

F. Planning Process

This sector plan is the result of collaboration between the public and the City of Albuquerque, facilitated by a private consulting firm, Sites Southwest, LLC. The “public” in this project includes neighborhood residents, property owners, representatives of local businesses and civic and religious organizations, and other entities operating in the Near North Valley neighborhood. Public input was vital to the planning process and was realized through three community-wide public meetings, as well as 11 Steering Committee meetings. These meetings provided an opportunity for participants to identify and discuss issues, develop a vision and propose potential solutions.



January 17, 2006 Steering Committee Meeting

The Steering Committee was the primary vehicle for public input regarding this planning effort. It was composed of residents and business owners in the Plan Area, representatives of local organizations such as the Near North Valley Neighborhood Association, and other community stakeholders. This public participation enables residents, business owners and other stakeholders to work together effectively to create the plan and accomplish its goals after adoption. Hence, attendance and

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

participation in the meetings was very important. The Planning Department also established a technical team made up of various City departments, regional and state agencies to guide the project.

Steering Committee meetings were held monthly and were open to anyone interested in the planning process. Guests were invited on occasion to provide technical expertise and clarification, based on the topic of discussion. Most Steering Committee meetings addressed particular topics, including Land Use and Zoning; Transportation, Infrastructure and Utilities; Community Facilities, Parks, Environmental Quality and Economic Development; Second Dwelling Units; and Housing Densities. Other meetings focused on reviewing and clarifying information from Public Meetings and examining and editing drafts of the Plan. Two steering committee meetings were facilitated by the City Project Manager. One meeting reviewed the latest draft of the N. 4th Street Corridor Redevelopment plan to coordinate its goals and objectives with the sector plan, the second meeting re-examined the proposal to legalize second dwelling units on lots in single family residential zones.



September 19, 2006 Steering Committee Meeting

In addition to the monthly Steering Committee meetings, three public meetings were held. The first, on October 25, 2005, was attended by about 85 community members. Participants worked in small groups to discuss existing neighborhood conditions, their desired future for the community, and steps to achieve these visions. In the months following this meeting, the Steering Committee met to work on specific topics that emerged from the public meeting. They developed a vision statement and identified issues, goals, and possible actions regarding these topics. The City project manager also coordinated two charrettes, one to design a transit-oriented district at 4th and Menaul, and another with walkability expert Dan Burden to analyze pedestrian needs and improvements in the Garfield Middle School area and on N. 4th Street.

These were presented to the community for their review during the second public meeting on May 20, 2006. Community members commented on the goals and possible actions, added or removed them as appropriate, and prioritized the ones they felt were most important. Participants also had the opportunity to work in small groups organized by topic, including Transportation (Roadways, Bus Routes, Bikeways and Pedestrian Improvements); Parks, Trails, and Open Space; Land Use, Zoning, and Housing; Public Safety, Social Services, and Community Facilities; and Economic Development and Neighborhood Vitality. The results of the public meeting were then presented and discussed with the Steering Committee. From this work, a draft plan was developed, which was distributed to the community, the Steering Committee, and appropriate technical team members for review and revisions. The draft, with additional recommendations and proposals, was presented to the community for final input at the last public meeting, held on September 26, 2006.



May 20, 2006 Public Meeting



September 26, 2006 Public Meeting

Consultants incorporated revisions suggested at the public meeting, from Steering Committee members, from residents and business owners, and from City staff into a final draft which was posted on the City website on _____.

II. History & Planning Context

A. History of the Near North Valley

The North Valley of Albuquerque lies in the flood plain of the Rio Grande. There may have been as many as 16 sites in the Albuquerque area farmed by Pueblo peoples in prehistoric times, growing corn, beans, squash and cotton in the rich soil. When the Spanish colonial government established La Villa de Albuquerque in 1706, Spanish families established farms and ranches throughout the North Valley. The Spanish introduced a variety of vegetables, fruits and domestic animals to the agricultural economy. Small family settlements were established in the Valley beginning in the 1750s, including Los Duranes, Los Candelarias and Los Griegos. Chapels built by these settlers became centers for small villages. Irrigation ditches were built to bring water to the fields. While periodic flooding by the Rio Grande sometimes displaced these settlements, subsistence farming continued throughout the Spanish and Mexican period. After the American conquest in 1846, additional farms



Foraker Farmhouse

were established by newcomers from the Eastern US and Europe. In 1904 US Marshall Creighton Foraker built a 2-room structure on a 60-acre farm just north of the Albuquerque Indian School. Two additions resulted in the 2-story farmhouse which remains standing today. Another building of historic interest is the Santa Cruz Church, a family chapel on Los Tomases Drive, built in 1910.



Los Tomases Church

1. Railroad Years

The arrival of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway in 1880 connected New Mexico to the national economy. The Santa Fe railroad was built along the eastern edge of the valley, bypassing the old Villa (Old Town) and creating a new town. New Albuquerque (now Downtown) soon grew into a commercial center for the whole territory. Cattle, sheep, wool and farm crops raised for export affected the pattern of land use in the valley. A railroad spur brought timber to the American Lumber Company sawmill, built north of Old Town in 1903. The sawmill and the railroad became sources of wage work for many North Valley workers.

The Albuquerque Indian School began as the Indian Pueblo Training School, established by the Presbyterian Church in Duranes in 1881. The

following year, Albuquerque businesses raised \$4,300 to purchase a 66 acre campus at what is now the southeast corner of 12th St. and Menaul Blvd. In 1886, control of the school passed to the US Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Presbyterian Church obtained another tract of land to create the Menaul School as a boarding school for Spanish American students from northern New Mexico. Today it continues to serve as a Presbyterian-affiliated independent day school. In 1913, the Sisters of St. Francis established the St. Anthony's Orphanage on a 91-acre tract west of the Indian School. Each of these schools utilized adjacent lands to raise their own food and teach vocational agriculture. In 1971, the Orphanage property was transferred to the US Department of Labor for use as the Albuquerque Job Corps Center.

2. El Camino Real

With the coming of the automobile, the 1904 Territorial Legislature authorized the construction of a statewide north-south highway called "El Camino Real." The North Valley portion of this highway established a new road between Alameda and 4th Street in New Albuquerque. While sections of this highway remained unpaved until the late 1930s and it was subject to periodic flooding, 4th Street became the Valley's principal business boulevard. In 1926, it was designated by the US Bureau of Public Roads as part of US Highway 85. It also carried a section of US Route 66 until 1937, when the alignment through Albuquerque was shifted to Central Avenue. Tourist courts appeared along 4th St. as early as 1916, including the King's Rest at Indian School Rd. City bus service on 4th Street was extended to the area in 1921, terminating at Monkbridge, a housing development just north of Candelaria Road.

North Valley farms benefited from the growth of New Albuquerque, selling fruits and produce to local

residents. In the period before World War I, several commercial dairies were established, including Bezemek's, Becker's and Matthew's. In 1921, these dairies established the Albuquerque Cooperative Dairy Association and built processing facilities around Indian School Rd. and Second St. This Association became Creamland Dairies, and their plant is still the primary dairy product center for metropolitan Albuquerque. By 1929, there were six dairy operations in the near North Valley.

3. Flood Control and Irrigation

As New Mexico's population grew and farming and logging increased along the Rio Grande watershed, productive lands became waterlogged and increasingly severe floods occurred. Thousands of acres went out of production during the period from 1890 to 1920. To address this problem, the 1923 State Legislature created the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. The District worked with the Army Corps of Engineers to drain standing water, build ditches, create flood control drains and equitably distribute irrigation water. This was accomplished over a 10-year period beginning in 1928, and much farmland was returned to productivity. However, the Conservancy's added tax burden contributed to the sale and loss of land by original settlers. The Conservancy's placement of ditches and drains was also a major factor in the irregular development pattern of roads and housing in the Valley. Second St., built in the 1930s along the Alameda Drain, became an alternate route for 4th St. traffic. Industrial buildings, warehouses and construction companies tended to cluster east of 2nd St., adjacent to the railroad tracks. In 1931, County residents helped to build the new Stronghurst School after the North Fourth Elementary School was annexed into the City.

By the late 1930s, Albuquerque had overcome the worst of the Great Depression, and was experiencing economic growth. It had effectively used Federal New Deal funding to develop its infrastructure. Automobile tourism became an increasingly important business, along with the growth of automobile use by local residents. Tourist courts, service stations, auto parts stores and cafes were established along 4th St. New homes were being built throughout Albuquerque as World War II brought expanded job opportunities at Kirtland Air Force Base.

4. Post World War II

Following the war, the expansion of Kirtland Air Force Base and the establishment of the Sandia Corporation brought extraordinary population growth to Albuquerque. In the near North Valley, farms and vacant lands were subdivided, and hundreds of single family homes were built. By 1960, half the current housing stock had been built, and by 1980 few open tracts remained. The Corley Homes, built around 1965 along the Alameda Drain south of Matthew, was the only large-scale tract home subdivision built in the area. The area was annexed into the City in the early 1950s, and over a hundred locally-oriented businesses were established along 4th St. New schools were built: Garfield Junior High School, 1951; Valley High School, 1953; Cochiti Elementary School, 1961. St. Therese Parish was established in 1950, and soon added a parochial school. The current church was built in 1954. Several churches were built near the Albuquerque Indian Schools to serve the school's students and staff. Queen of Angels Mission and the Indian Assembly of God are still active churches. The City built public parks near the Indian School (Graves Park) and by the Bernalillo County Extension Service building (4-H Park). Garfield Park was added around 1985, and Los Tomases Park around 2000.



Historical Derrick Sign

The creation of the Federal Interstate Highway System in 1956 had a major impact on the character of the Near North Valley. Interstate 25 replaced US Highway 85, taking commercial and tourist traffic from 4th St. Interstate 40 displaced parts of Indian School Road, which was then merged into Menaul Boulevard west of 12th St. By the early 1970s, both Interstates were complete. Highway-oriented national chain businesses were established at the freeway off-ramps. Westway Plaza opened at 12th and Indian School in 1975 with a Woolco department store, a Foodway (later Smith's) Supermarket and a Walgreen's pharmacy. A Globe Discount City store opened at 4th and Menaul in 1972; it later became a K-Mart. The All-Indian Pueblo Council developed the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center on 12th St. as a major tourist attraction in 1976, on a portion of the Federal Indian School property. A Piggly-Wiggly Supermarket (now John Brooks) opened at 12th and Candelaria in 1955; the adjacent property was developed into a neighborhood shopping center around 1965 with a McClellan's Department Store, White's Auto Store, a drug store, the Sportsman's Barber Shop and other stores.

5. The Recent Past

In the 1980s, economic, demographic and transportation changes produced a period of economic stagnation for the Near North Valley. Infrastructure was neglected as the City extended services to newer areas. School enrollment declined. The number of locally-oriented businesses declined by half; even the national department stores (K-Mart, Woolco, McClellan's, White's Auto) closed. Most of the cluster of used furniture stores on 4th went out of business, while the number of automobile-oriented businesses increased. Both Westway Plaza and the 12th and Candelaria center had continuing turnover and vacancies. Several housing developments filled in much of the remaining open land with town homes and gated communities. In 2001, the interchange between I-40 and I-25 was rebuilt, and the I-40 westbound exit ramps and eastbound on-ramps at 2nd and 4th Streets were eliminated. This construction and the diversion of the I-40 entry and exit ramps to 6th St. had a negative impact on many adjacent businesses. The closing of the Albuquerque Indian School (AIS) in 1981 was the key event in the recent history of the neighborhood. The All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC), a federation of the 19 New Mexico Pueblos, took over management of the school from the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in 1977. Faced with a deteriorating physical plant, the AIPC chose to consolidate the school into the Santa Fe Indian School. In 1984, the US Government deeded the AIS property to the 19 Pueblos. The vacant campus began to decline; the lawns and trees died, vagrants

began occupying the buildings and fires destroyed several buildings. The remaining buildings were demolished in 1988 and the Pueblos sought to rezone the property for commercial purposes. In response, in 1989 a group of neighbors led by Rick Miera established the Old Indian School Neighborhood Association. (That Association subsequently broadened its focus and enlarged its boundaries to become the Near North Valley Neighborhood Association.)

In 1993, Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan Jr. conveyed title for the 43-acre property to the AIPC. They established the Indian Pueblo Federal Development Corporation (IPFDC) to develop the property. As sovereign Indian trust land, the property was no longer subject to local zoning and other state and local regulations. Concerns about incompatible development, particularly casino gambling, caused a group of neighbors to challenge the development politically and in court. Through the efforts of City Councilor Vince Griego and successive City administrations, IPFDC and the City jointly adopted a Development Agreement for municipal services in 2002. Under this agreement, the eastern half of the campus is becoming the Southwest Regional Office center for the BIA. A hotel and other retail developments are planned for the western half of the property. Across 12th St., the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center recently added a new wing, a convenience store and a gas station. Westway Plaza is being replaced with a large retail store and a rebuilt Walgreen's. To coordinate these developments, the

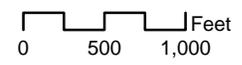
City worked with neighbors and property owners to prepare design guidelines and traffic mitigations in a 12th and Menaul Plan.

Recently, the K-Mart property has been redeveloped into commercial and office properties. Streetscape and traffic improvements were recently completed around 12th and Candelaria, following a community planning process to develop the Candelaria Village Center as envisioned by the North Valley Area Plan. These positive developments promise an improved business climate for the future of the Near North Valley as its sector development plan is implemented.

The map (Figure 4) indicates general locations of properties on the National and or State Registers as well as properties that are of historical significance but are as yet undesignated.

There are houses and residential areas in this sector to be evaluated, such as Los Arboles, NW and Garden Park Road, NW. North 4th may also have buildings of interest or significance beyond those here.

Figure 4: Historical Places & Cultural Properties



Legend

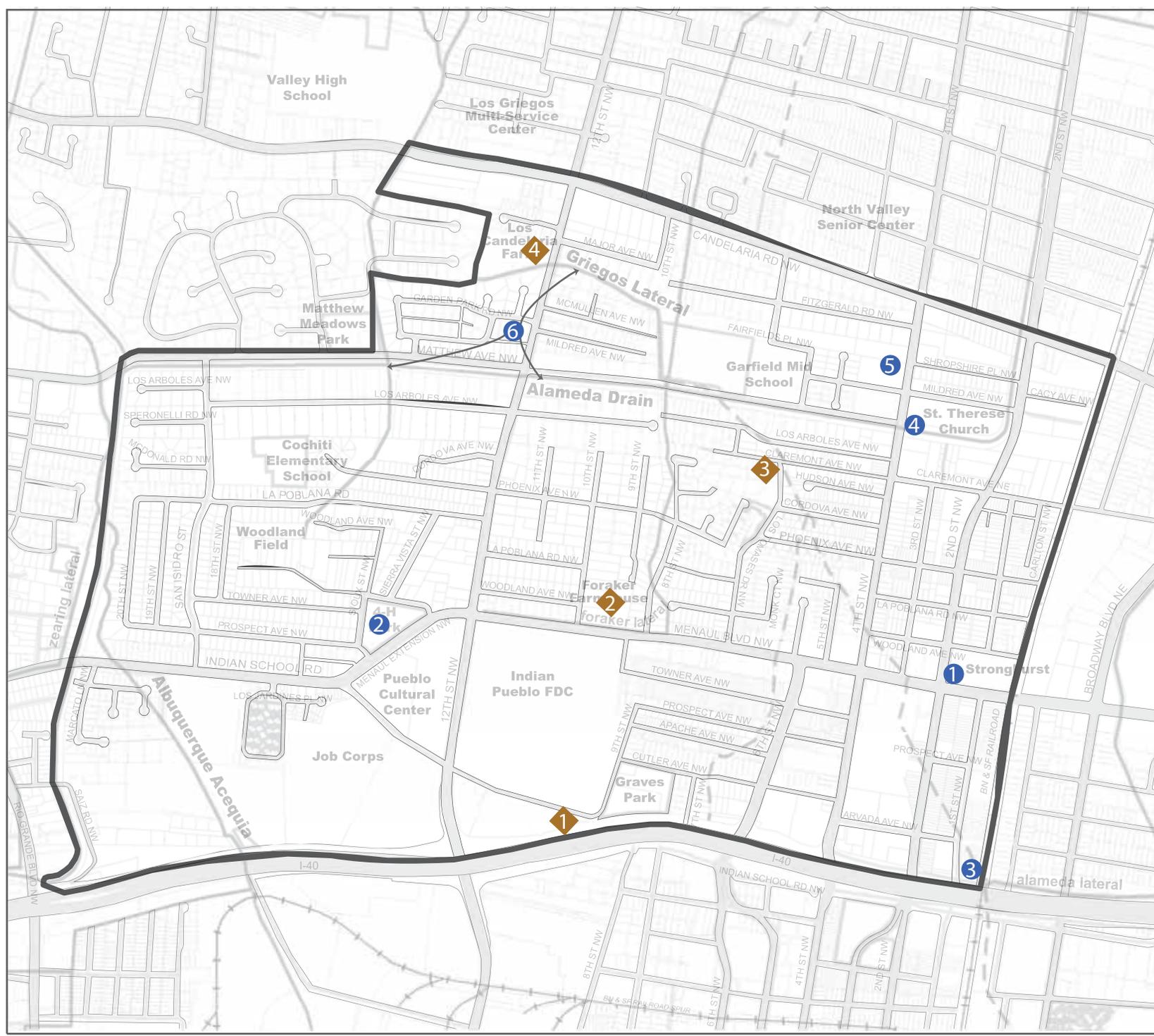


National and/or State Registered

- Albuquerque Indian School Employees
- Foraker Creighton Farmhouse
- Los Tomases Chapel
- Yott House

Significant - Undesignated

- Stronghurst School
- Park with Graves of Albuquerque Indian School Students
- Derrick Sign at Kohlhaas Corp.
- Saint Therese Little Flower Church
- Tire Distribution Services Building
- MRGCD Ditch Systems



Martin J. Chavez Mayor



5/20/06

B. Relevant City Policies and Planning Context

The Near North Valley did not have an existing sector plan, but the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (2002) and the North Valley Area Plan provided the framework for planning in the area. In addition, detailed planning for the area had been done for two sub-areas through the 12th and Menaul Study and the Los Candelarias Sector Development Plan. Moreover, the N. 4th Street Redevelopment Study: Rank III Corridor Plan from Lomas Boulevard to Solar overlaps part of the Sector Plan area. Both the N. 4th Street Corridor Plan and the Sector Plan will be adopted simultaneously by the City to assure coordination and consistency, especially in the overlap area.

The sector planning process was guided by policies of the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Growth Strategy and attempted to fit its recommendations with the other three plans to form a cohesive whole. The N. 4th Street plan incorporates land use and zoning recommendations from the sector planning process.

The following policies from the Comprehensive Plan were relevant to the Near North Valley area as it is designated a Developing and Established Urban Area.

1. Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan

Developing and Established Urban Areas (Sect II, B5)

- Policy a - The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses, resulting in an overall gross density up to 5 dwelling units per acre.

- Policy d - The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.
- Policy h - Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:
 - In designated Activity Centers.
 - In areas with excellent access to the major street network.
 - In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available.
 - In areas now predominantly zoned single-family only where it comprises a complete block face and faces onto similar or higher density development; up to 10 dwelling units per net acre.
 - In areas where a transition is needed between single-family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas.
- Policy k - Land adjacent to arterial streets shall be planned to minimize harmful effects of traffic; livability and safety of established residential neighborhoods shall be protected in transportation planning and operation.
- Policy m - Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.
- Policy o - Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.

Activity Centers (Section II, B7)

- Policy e - New Activity Centers may be designated and added to the Comprehensive Plan through local government review and approval based upon the following criteria:
 - The proposed Activity Center's potential for shaping the built environment, consistent with policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Market potential for concentrating activities to higher than average intensities, and potential for promoting infill of vacant land inside the existing urban services boundary.
 - Appropriateness of the proposed Activity Center, including location relative to the market area and access/connections including transit.
 - Fiscal impact of the proposed Activity Center on City government and private sector.
 - Compatibility of the proposed Activity Center with surrounding neighborhoods.
 - Capacity and availability of public services such as transportation, water, and sewer systems to support the Activity Center as proposed.
- Policy f - The most intense uses in Activity Centers shall be located away from nearby low-density residential development and shall be buffered from those residential uses by a transition area of less intensive development.
- Policy g - Activity Center locations shown on a Comprehensive Plan map, and their predominate uses in accordance with their unique roles and expected needs of the community, shall be developed in accordance with more specific sub-area planning efforts.

Environmental Protection and Heritage Conservation Historic Resources (Section II, C5)

- Policy a - Efforts to provide incentives for the protection of significant districts and buildings shall be continued and expanded.



- Policy b - Research, evaluation, and protection of historical and cultural properties in the City and County shall be continued.
- Policy c - Increase public and inter-agency awareness of historic resources and preservation concerns.

Cultural Traditions and the Arts (Section III, C7)

- Policy c - Coordination and promotion of the arts in the metropolitan area shall be supported.

Community Identity and Urban Design (Section II, C9)

- Policy c - The identity and cohesiveness of each community shall be strengthened through identification and enhancement of community Activity Centers that have a scale, mix of uses, design character, and location appropriate to the unique character of the community.
- Policy d - Development projects within Community Activity Centers should contribute the following:
 - Related land uses that effectively encourage walking trips from one destination to another within the center, including shopping, schools, parks or plazas, employment, entertainment, and civic uses such as public libraries, recreation or senior centers, post office or fire station.
 - Pedestrian linkages among uses in the Activity Center and connecting to surrounding neighborhoods.
 - Buildings designed and arranged to reflect local architectural traditions, scale, height, massing and setbacks appropriate to the community served by the Activity Center and that support public transit and pedestrian activity.
 - Landscaping, street furniture, public art, colored or textured paving and other improvements to the public realm that

reinforce the cultural, social and design traditions of the community served by the Activity Center.

- Policy e - Roadway corridors (collectors, arterials, Enhanced Transit and Major Transit) within each community and that connect the community's Activity Centers shall be designed and developed to reinforce the community's unique identity; streetscape improvements to these roadways shall be designed to:
 - minimize water use
 - screen parking areas
 - create useful and attractive signage and building facades
 - facilitate walking safety and convenience

Community Resource Management (Section II, D4)

- Policy a - The following table presents ideal policy objectives for street design, transit service, and development form consistent with Transportation Corridors and Activity Centers as shown on the Comprehensive Plan's Activity Centers and Transportation Corridors map in the Activity Centers section. Each corridor will undergo further analysis that will identify design elements, appropriate uses, transportation service, and other details of implementation.
- Policy b - The City will structure capital expenditures and land use regulations in support of creating additional housing and jobs within Major Transit and Enhanced Transit Corridors, and will promote ongoing public/private cooperation necessary to create private market conditions that support intensified development of jobs and housing in these corridors.

Transportation and Transit (section II, D4)

- Policy c - In order to add to transit ridership,

and where it will not destabilize adjacent neighborhoods, additional dwelling units are encouraged close to Major Transit and Enhanced Transit streets.

- Policy d - The frequency of driveways along principal and minor arterial streets will be reduced when possible, toward a spacing frequency of one or two drives per 300 feet of frontage on principal arterials, and one or two drives per 200 feet on minor arterials.
- Policy g - Pedestrian opportunities shall be promoted and integrated into development to create safe and pleasant non-motorized travel conditions.
- Policy h - A metropolitan area-wide recreational and commuter bicycle and trail network which emphasizes connections among Activity Centers shall be constructed and promoted.
- Policy q - Transportation investments should emphasize overall mobility needs and choice among modes in the regional and intra-city movement of people and goals.

Housing (Section II, D5)

- Policy a - The supply of affordable housing, shall be preserved and increased and the opportunity to obtain standard housing for a reasonable proportion of income assured.
- Policy b - Quality and innovation in new housing design and construction shall be promoted and quality of existing housing improved through concentrated renovation programs in deteriorating neighborhoods.
- Policy c - The displacement of low income households shall be ameliorated and the objectives of historic preservation and conservation of affordable housing balanced.
- Policy d - Availability of a wide distribution of decent housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, or handicapped status shall be assured.



Economic Development (Section II, D6)

- Policy b - Development of local business enterprises as well as the recruitment of outside firms shall be emphasized.

2. Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan in 2001 sought to encourage expansion and strengthen concentrations of several different types of activity centers located throughout the City and link them by transportation corridors with mixed residential and non-residential uses. The objective was to add 15,000 to 20,000 housing units by 2025 within the activity centers and transit corridors. The highest profiles, with heights up to 3 and 4 stories, would be located within the centers, with more modest profiles of 2- and 3-story residential buildings mixed with other uses located along the corridors. Successfully developed, these could create more life-style choices, reducing the need to travel by automobile, reducing trip lengths and allowing residents and visitors to walk, ride the bus, or bicycle to their destinations.

Activity Centers

Activity centers would comprise moderate and high-density mixed land use and social/economic activities that could create a more compact urban form, reduce auto travel needs and service costs, and promote transit and pedestrian access, enhancing the identity of Albuquerque and its communities. Two areas were mapped as Community Activity Centers in the Near North Valley—**12th and Candelaria** and **12th and Indian School**, although, as planned, 12th and Candelaria would function more like a Neighborhood Activity Center.

Neighborhood Activity Centers (5 to 15 acres) would provide for the daily convenience goods and personal services of the surrounding neighborhoods of about 15,000 people. Examples might be a small grocery store, dry cleaners, gift shop, coffee shop, library, post office, garden offices, apartments and townhouses, and an elementary school. These centers would be located within a quarter to half-mile walking distance and also serve as a recreational and social focal point. On-street parking would be encouraged. These were not mapped on the Centers and Corridors plan.

Community Activity Centers (15-16 acre- core) would serve a population of about 30,000 people within 3 miles. They would offer a greater variety of

commercial and entertainment uses along with civic land uses and employment, such as low-rise office buildings, restaurants and theatres, hotel/motel, medical facilities, religious institutions, middle or high schools. While located on a mix of large and small parcels, they would remain very walkable and offer predominantly off-street parking. Existing centers were mapped at such locations as **12th and Candelaria**, **12th and Indian School**, and San Mateo and Montgomery and others.

Major Activity Centers (300+ acres) would provide the entire metropolitan population and region with the most highly concentrated locations of commercial, service and employment uses. They would be located on major roadways and/or

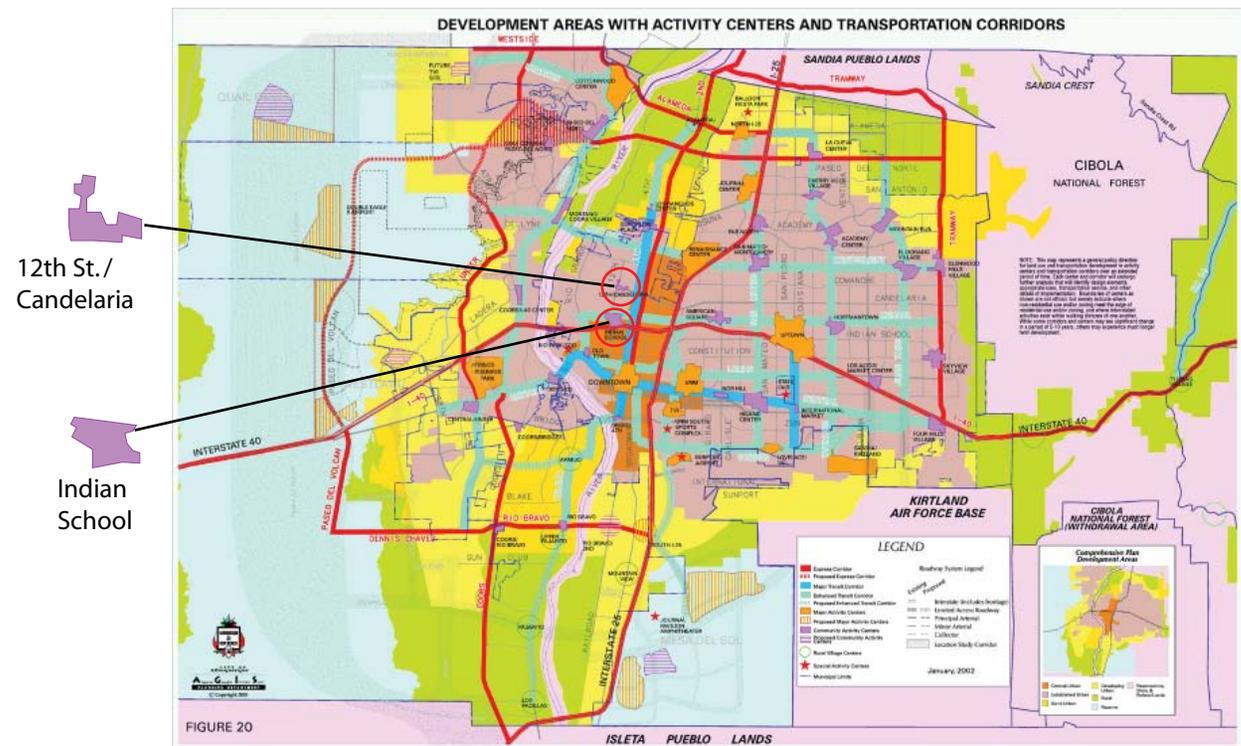


Figure 5: Centers & Corridors



major transit stops and transfer points and be accessible by all modes of travel. Land uses would be those typical in modern commercial, office and technology centers. These would include medium to high density residential in sensitive relationship to employment, major cultural centers, hotels, mid to high rise offices, retail, technology and light manufacturing, and higher education institutions. Uses would transition from the intense core to less intense residential neighborhoods. Examples of major activity centers are Journal Center, Uptown, UNM, Downtown, and the Renaissance Center. The Near North Valley is linked to these centers by corridors.

Roadway Corridors

Three types of roadways are designated in the comprehensive plan to link activity centers and strengthen the connection between land use and transportation. In the Near North Valley, *Second Street* and *I-40* are designated as Express Corridors, *N. 4th* is designated a Major Transit Corridor, and *Menaul Boulevard* is labeled an Enhanced Transit Corridor.

The Comprehensive Plan describes corridors as follows:

Express Corridors: These corridors are typically limited access, higher speed roadways with separate pedestrian and bicycle trails. Dedicated to developing higher speeds with fewer travel interruptions for cars and buses, they would provide efficient express bus service to the major activity centers where the largest share of the region's jobs are located. Future infill and redevelopment could bring in more people who live close enough to have good access to public transportation at selected locations. Examples are *I-25* and *I-40*, *Second Street*, *Alameda Boulevard*, and *Paseo Del Norte*.

Major Transit Corridor: These roadways are designed for public transit and moving large numbers of people in a very timely and efficient manner. They would stress short trips and convenience and be prime candidates for significant mixed-use infill and redevelopment. They could have dedicated bus lanes, wide sidewalks, bike lanes and potentially future light rail. Fourth Street, Central Avenue, and Louisiana Avenue are the only three designated Major Transit Corridors in the Comprehensive Plan.

Enhanced Transit Corridor: Similar to major transit corridors, these roadways are designed to improve transit and pedestrian opportunities for nearby residents and businesses. Their goal is to provide transit service competitive with the car and to develop adjacent land uses and intensities promoting the use of transit. Examples include *Menaul Boulevard*, Lomas, Montano, and parts of Rio Grande and University Boulevard.

3. North Valley Area Plan

The North Valley Area Plan is a Rank II plan that encompasses land between I-40 and Tramway/Roy Boulevard, and the Rio Grande River, and I-25 including the Near North Valley neighborhood. Its policies address zoning and land use; air quality; wastewater; drainage; transportation; housing; village centers; community design; and agricultural and rural character. Some of the goals most relevant to this Sector Plan are:

- To maintain the rural flavor of the North Valley
- To control growth and maintain low density development in single family residential areas
- To increase and improve public recreation and open space areas
- To encourage quality commercial/industrial development and redevelopment in already developed/established commercial and industrial zones
- To create a transportation system compatible with a semi-rural lifestyle
- To develop incentives to preserve farmland and open space and to maintain ditches and acequias for agricultural and low-impact recreational purposes

Furthermore, specific policies and implementation actions of the area plan are especially applicable to the Sector Planning effort. For example, the area plan encourages mixed-use housing developments, cluster developments that preserve open space, and preferential taxation for agricultural properties. The area plan also recommends undertaking the Acequia Multiple Use Study to provide better bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian trails for residents to enjoy this North Valley amenity.

4. Sub-Area Plans

In addition, Near North Valley residents joined in creating master plans for specific smaller sub-areas over the past several years:

Los Candelarias Village Center and Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan—encourages development of a neighborhood village center at 12th Street and Candelaria with these components:

- Mixed-use development includes residential, retail, office, plaza, and small parking areas rather than one big lot.
- Public and private investment is attracted to revitalize the area.
- Development is people-oriented and pedestrian friendly, connected with bike lanes; sidewalks are enhanced through acquisition of 5-foot private easements.
- Development supports culture and tradition, public art.
- Medians allow pedestrian refuge and mid-block crossings; traffic is calmed.
- Target market area: Rio Grande Blvd., 4th and Montano, Near North Valley Area,

12th and Menaul Study Recommendations (near I-40)—47.38 acres

- Mixed use of commercial, office/institutional (federal, museum), retail, cultural/institutional (Pueblo Cultural Center), shops, cafes, galleries.
- Office/commercial buildings 3-5 stories.
- Links to existing parks (4-H, Graves).
- New access ramp from I-40 leads into office parking.
- Roundabouts at Menaul and 12th, Menaul and Indian School slow traffic, allow pedestrian crossings.
- Slow traffic on 12th Street by narrowing roadway, on-street parallel parking.
- Slow traffic on Menaul by narrowing to two lanes with center turn or through bike lanes, on-street parking.
- Better bus service, especially north and south on 12th Street.

N. 4th Street Redevelopment Study: Rank III Corridor Plan

— A study of the N. 4th Street corridor underway at the same time as the Near North Valley Sector Development plan sets forth these recommendations:

- N. 4th becomes the main street with slower traffic; 2nd handles diverted through-traffic and Westside commuters.
- N. 4th encourages mixed uses, higher densities and more intense use of land.
- New development meets higher urban design standards.
- Contaminated sites are cleaned up and redeveloped.