

III. The Near North Valley Today

A. Population Characteristics

1. Population, Age and Gender

According to the 2000 Census, there are 7,730 people in the Near North Valley community, down slightly from 8,025 in 1990.¹

In a snapshot of the population in 2000 according to the Census, North Valley residents are similar in age and sex characteristics to Albuquerque residents generally. There is a higher percentage of children under nine years. There is a slight loss of women and men ages 20-29, which is normally associated with people moving away for college or for employment. There are fewer males ages 10-19 than would be expected based on the female population of the same age. In general, the presence of school-age children will be important to note in order to plan for the capacities for schools and recreation in the area.

¹The boundaries of block groups that make up census tracts changed slightly from the 1990 Census but generally overlap concurrent areas.

2000 data: Tract 30.01 – all, Tract 29 – BG 1, 2

1990 data: Tract 30.01 – all, Tract 29 – BG 3, 4, 5, 6

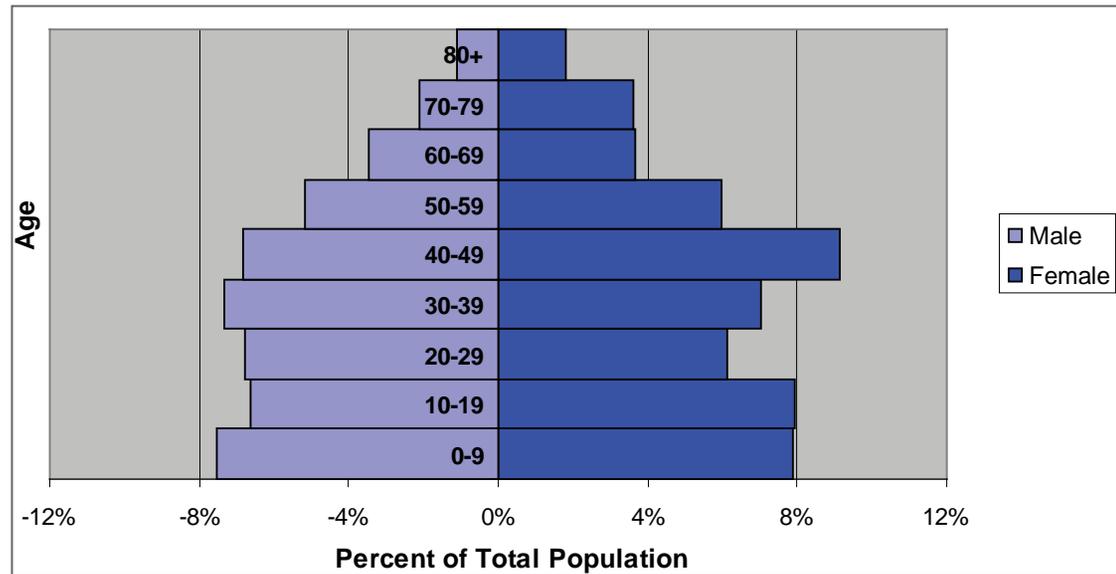


Figure 6: Near North Valley Population by Sex, 2000

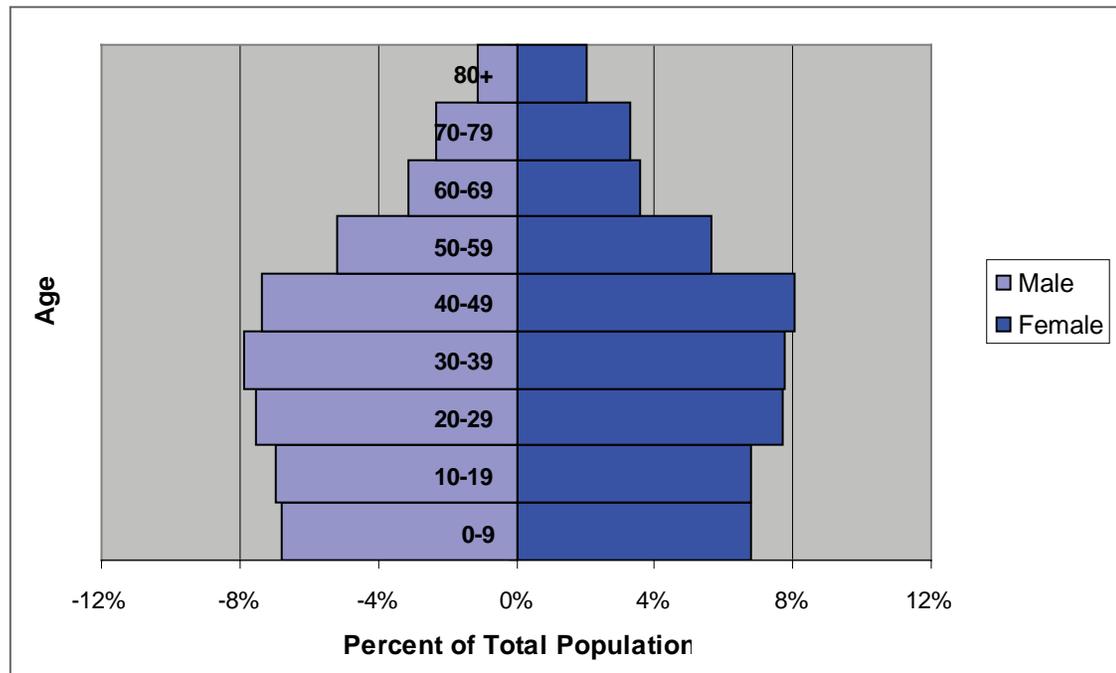


Figure 7: Albuquerque Population by Sex, 2000



2. Race and Ethnicity

The Near North Valley is predominantly White (66%). Sixty-three percent of the population identify themselves as Hispanic, a significantly higher percentage than in Albuquerque (40%). Spanish is spoken in 39 percent of households in the Near North Valley, compared with 23 percent of households in Albuquerque. Thirteen percent of Spanish-speaking households in the Near North Valley report being able to speak English “less than very well.”

Non-Hispanics are also predominantly white. Non-whites are similar in proportion to Albuquerque.

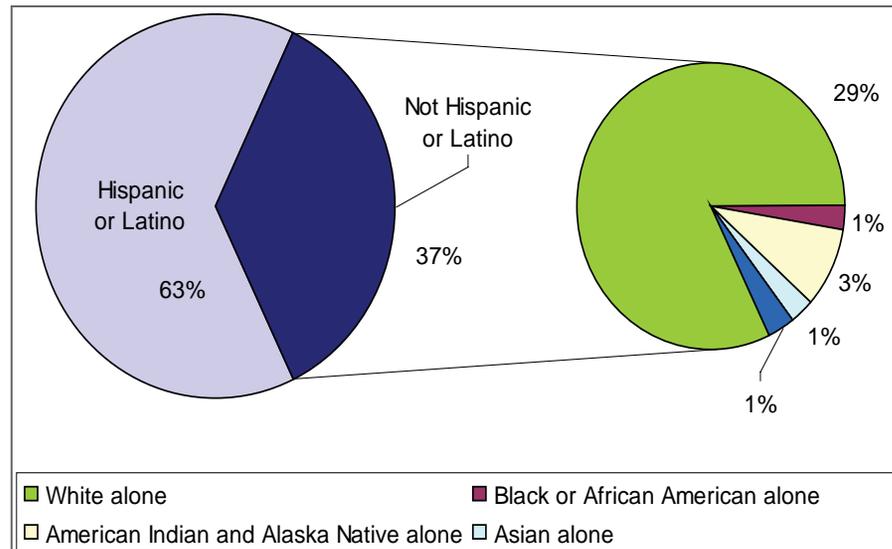


Figure 8: Near North Valley Race/Ethnicity

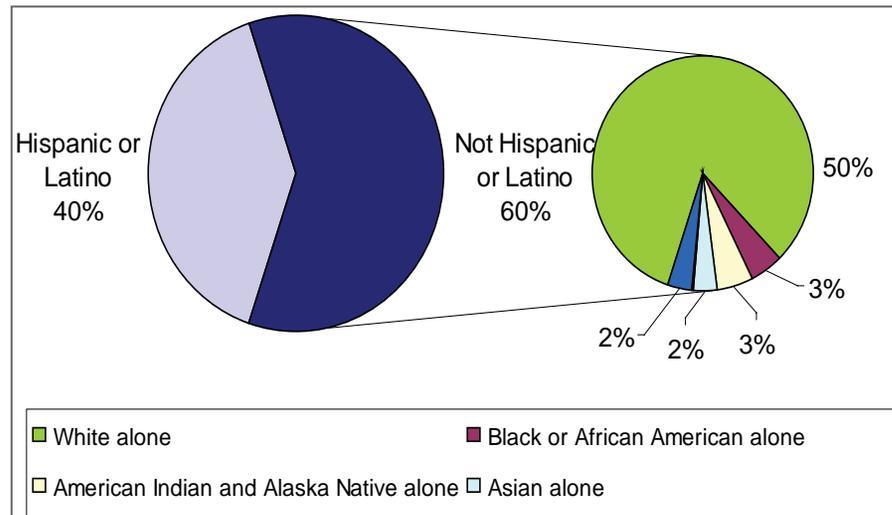


Figure 9: Albuquerque Race/Ethnicity

3. Household Size

The census defines a household as consisting of all the people who occupy a housing unit.

Families are defined as a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered to be members of one family.

The households that make up the Near North Valley are predominantly families, with a slightly higher percentage of families without children than other types. Of single families, more have female householders. The average household and family sizes are slightly higher than the City as a whole. Average household size is 2.7 people, versus 2.4 for the City. Average family size is 3.3, compared to 3.0 for the City as a whole.

4. Household Incomes

Household incomes tend to be lower in the Near North Valley than in the City. Nearly 54 percent of households in the Study Area had yearly incomes below \$35,000 compared to 46 percent of households in the City at-large. Some 66 percent of households in the Near North Valley earn less than \$45,000 a year.

Figure 10: Percent of Households by Income

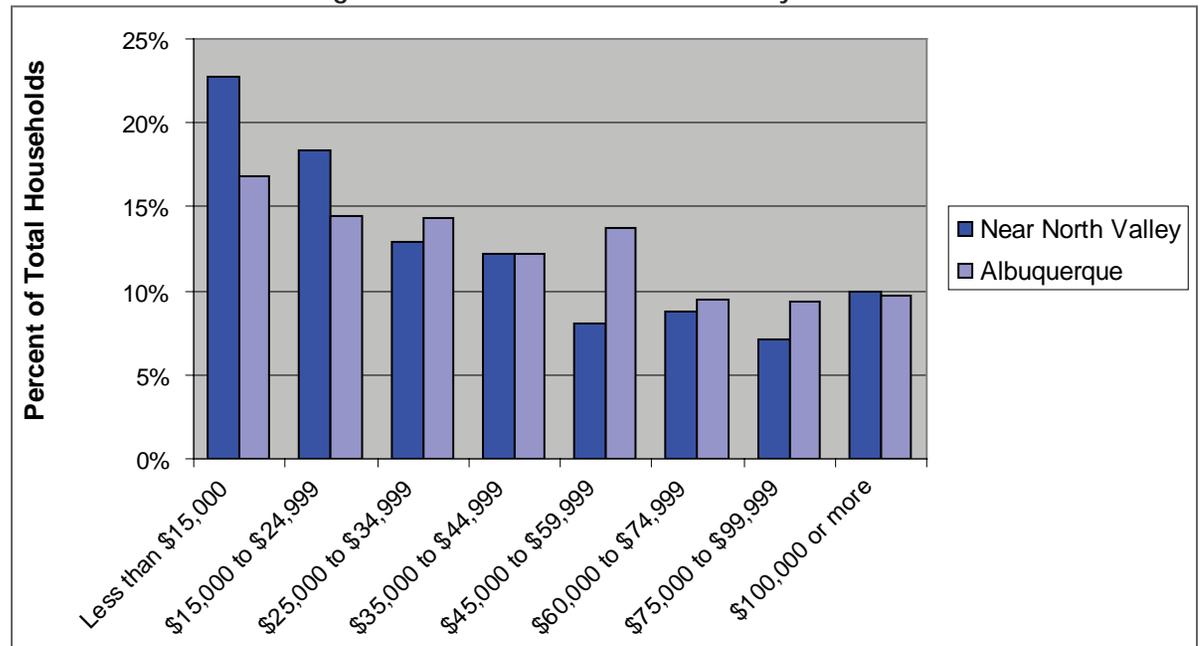


Table 1: 2000 Household Income

Household Income	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	2,876	100%	183,625	100%
Less than \$15,000	653	23%	30,815	17%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	527	18%	26,597	14%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	372	13%	26,293	14%
\$35,000 to \$44,999	350	12%	22,390	12%
\$45,000 to \$59,999	233	8%	25,179	14%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	251	9%	17,486	10%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	203	7%	17,097	9%
\$100,000 or more	287	10%	17,768	10%



5. Poverty Status

A significantly higher percentage of households in the Near North Valley have incomes less than \$15,000 (23 percent) compared with those in Albuquerque overall (17 percent). Moreover, 17 percent of households have incomes below the poverty line in the Near North Valley, slightly more than the 13 percent in Albuquerque. The per capita income of \$15,386 is also low in the Near North Valley when compared to Albuquerque's at \$20,884.

Table 2: 2000 Households by Poverty Status

	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
2000 Households by Poverty Status*	2876	100	183,625	100
Income At or Above Poverty Level	2292	80%	160,376	87%
Family	1343	47%	102016	56%
Married-Couple Family	1151	40%	77154	42%
Male Householder	100	3%	7698	4%
Female Householder	293	10%	17164	9%
Non-family	748	26%	58360	32%
Male Householder	354	12%	28219	15%
Female Householder	394	14%	30141	16%
Income Below Poverty Level:	489	17%	23,249	13%
Family	105	4%	11285	6%
Married-Couple Family	36	1%	3889	2%
Male Householder	18	1%	1404	1%
Female Householder	51	2%	5992	3%
Non-family	262	9%	11964	7%
Male Householder	191	7%	5198	3%
Female Householder	193	7%	6766	4%



6. Education Levels

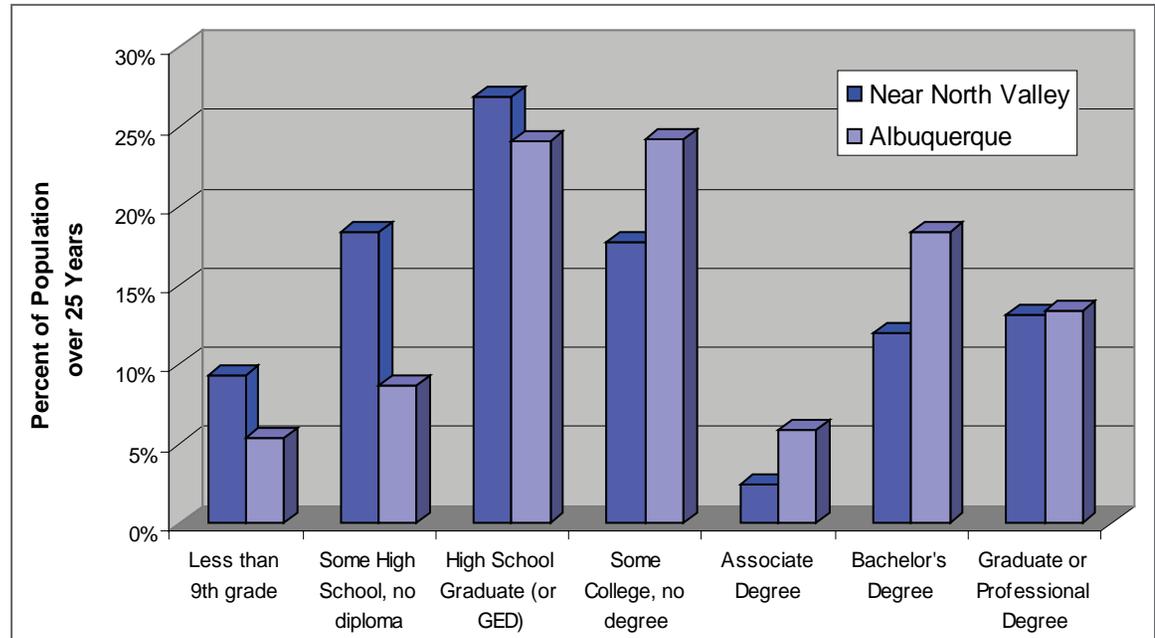
Education levels in the Near North Valley are dramatically different from those in Albuquerque, at both the lower and higher ends. In the Near North Valley, 28 percent of people over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. Almost 10 percent did not reach high school at all. At the opposite end of the spectrum, 27 percent of people over 25 have a college degree or higher.

In the City as a whole, only 14 percent of people over 25 have not graduated from high school, while 37 percent have college degrees. The greater incidence of lower educational attainment seems correlated with lower household incomes in the Near North Valley.

Table 3: 2000 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment

2000 Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment*	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	4,965	100%	291,485	100%
Less than 9th grade	461	9%	15,695	5%
Some High School, no diploma	910	18%	25,346	9%
High School Graduate (or GED)	1339	27%	70,221	24%
Some College, no degree	880	18%	70,518	24%
Associate Degree	124	2%	17,070	6%
Bachelor's Degree	598	12%	53,562	18%
Graduate or Professional Degree	653	13%	39,073	13%

Figure 11: Educational Attainment, 2000



7. School Enrollment

Enrollment in the public schools that serve the Near North Valley has dropped slightly in recent years. Schools have fewer students than the APS average at each level. Enrollment at Cochiti Elementary School declined slightly between 1990-2004. Garfield Middle School enrollment dropped precipitously (-33%).

While middle school enrollment declined across all Albuquerque Public Schools (APS), the decline at Garfield was nearly four times the average rate of decline. This may be partly due to its designation as “non-performing” under the No Child Left Behind Law, which opens the option for students to transfer out. Valley High School, the cluster high school for this area that includes additional feeder schools, also saw a drop in enrollment, dramatically steeper (-13%) than the average decline shown in other APS high schools over the same time period (-1%).

The total school-age population in the Near North Valley area dropped from 3,372 in 1990 to 2,199 in 2000. The overall population declined, and the percentage of school-age children dropped from 42 percent to 28 percent of the population. The relatively higher percentage of children enrolled in elementary school shown in Table 5 and the higher percentage of children under age 9 shown in Figures 6 and 7 indicate that the neighborhood is experiencing change as families age and new families move in. The schools in the area have more capacity for students than is being used, supporting proposals for additional residential units.

Table 4: Area APS School Enrollment

Area Schools	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	Total drop since 2000
Cochiti Elementary	387	390	388	378	374	-3%
% change		1%	-1%	-3%	-1%	APS Average +1%
<i>Elementary School Average</i>	511	509	513	512	516	
Garfield Middle School	673	644	623	525	454	-33%
% change		-4%	-3%	-16%	-14%	APS Average -9%
<i>Middle School Average</i>	812	781	753	748	742	
Valley High School	2300	2228	2295	2086	1992	-13%
% change		-3%	3%	-9%	-5%	APS Average -1%
<i>High School Average</i>	2110	2107	2092	2053	2098	

Table 5: School Enrollment (US Census 2000)

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	2,199	100	125,009	100
Nursery school, preschool	171	8%	7033	6%
Kindergarten	124	6%	5734	5%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	1011	46%	48745	39%
High school (grades 9-12)	446	20%	24639	20%
College	303	14%	30560	24%
Graduate or Professional School	144	7%	8298	7%



B. Land Use, Housing and Current Zoning

1. Existing Conditions

The Near North Valley area covered by this plan measures roughly one mile long by one mile wide and encompasses about 800 acres. The predominant land use is residential, particularly single family homes. Commercial, industrial and some public uses line N. 4th Street, 2nd Street, Candelaria Road, the railroad, Menaul Boulevard and the north and south ends of 12th Street. Several parks dot the area.

The 2000 US Census counted 3,117 housing units, yielding a gross density of four dwelling units per acre (total units divided by the total number of acres). The large majority—72 percent—of the housing units are single-family detached homes, higher than the Albuquerque percentage of 58 percent. Another 8 percent (247) are single-family attached dwelling units, and 8 percent are apartments with 50 or more units (241). The remainder are in small multi-family structures ranging from 2 to 29 units each or mobile homes. Sixty percent of the housing units in the Near North Valley are owner-occupied compared with 56 percent in Albuquerque. One-third are occupied by renters, and seven percent are vacant.

The housing in the area tends to be older than in Albuquerque in general. The majority of housing in the Near North Valley was constructed prior to 1980, with half of the dwelling units being built before 1958. By contrast, the median year in which housing was built in Albuquerque was 1975, with the majority constructed by 1990.

Single family homes tend to occupy the interior and western parts of the area, with large apartment buildings along Indian School Road near 12th Street. Some single family homes are next-door neighbors to industrial uses along 3rd Street, north of Menaul. New townhouses near 12th and Candelaria have sold briskly. Another single-family, largely Hispanic, community sits between the railroad tracks and 2nd Street north of Menaul.

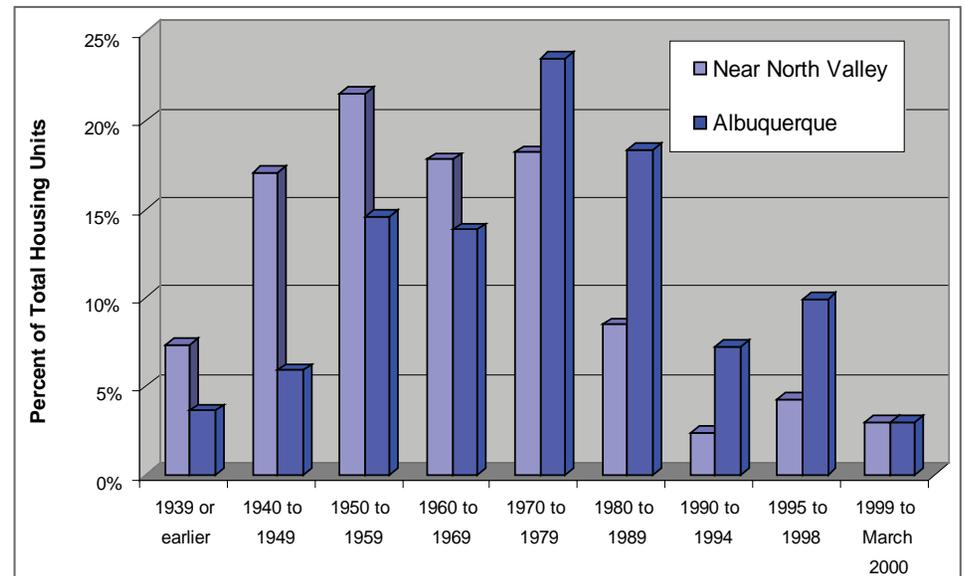
Table 6: Near North Valley Housing Units Per Structure, 2000

Units in Structure, 2000	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Total Housing Units	3,117	100%	198,714	100%
1, detached	2,239	72%	114,632	58%
1, attached	247	8%	12,011	6%
2	97	3%	3,880	2%
3 or 4	112	4%	12,945	7%
5 to 9	54	2%	9,662	5%
10 to 19	79	3%	10,515	5%
20 to 49	9	0%	8,267	4%
50 or more	241	8%	18,016	9%
Mobile home	39	1%	8,653	4%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0%	133	0%

Table 7: Near North Valley Housing Occupancy, 2000

Housing Units, 2000	Near North Valley		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Total Housing Units	3,117	100%	198,714	100%
Occupied	2,904	93%	183,406	92%
Owner occupied	1,864	60%	110,782	56%
Renter occupied	1,040	33%	72,624	37%
Vacant	213	7%	15,308	8%
For rent	91	3%	10,005	5%
For sale only	23	1%	2,371	1%
Rented or sold, not occupied	14	0%	681	0%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	6	0%	1,096	1%
For migrant workers	0	0%	7	0%
Other vacant	79	3%	11,448	1%

Figure 12: Age of Near North Valley/Albuquerque Housing Stock



2. Zoning

Most of the residential zoning is R-1, which allows a single family home on a minimum lot size of 5,000 to 6,000 square feet (the smaller size allowed after 1981). Lower density lots in the northwest corner of the plan area along Los Arboles and Garden Park are zoned RA-2 (Residential Agricultural), requiring a minimum lot size of 10,890 square feet (a quarter of an acre). A number of the single family lots, however, also contain a second, usually smaller, dwelling unit with a kitchen. The City and consultants counted at least 150 of these second units that do not conform to the zoning code.

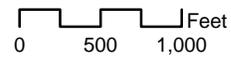
Small areas of R-2, allowing townhomes and medium density apartments, line the mid-section of Candelaria and encompass small areas of lots along Menaul, while a few lots zoned R-C (residential-commercial) lie east of 4th along Candelaria. The larger apartment buildings along Indian School Road are zoned R-3 (high density residential), while Los Jardines Townhomes exist under the City's SU-1 (Special Use) zone.

Residential neighborhoods east of 4th Street are commonly zoned for commercial or industrial use, creating non-conforming uses. One entire neighborhood of single family homes, some with second units, lies to the east of 2nd Street between Woodland and Claremont. These residences are considered non-conforming to the M-1 zoning.



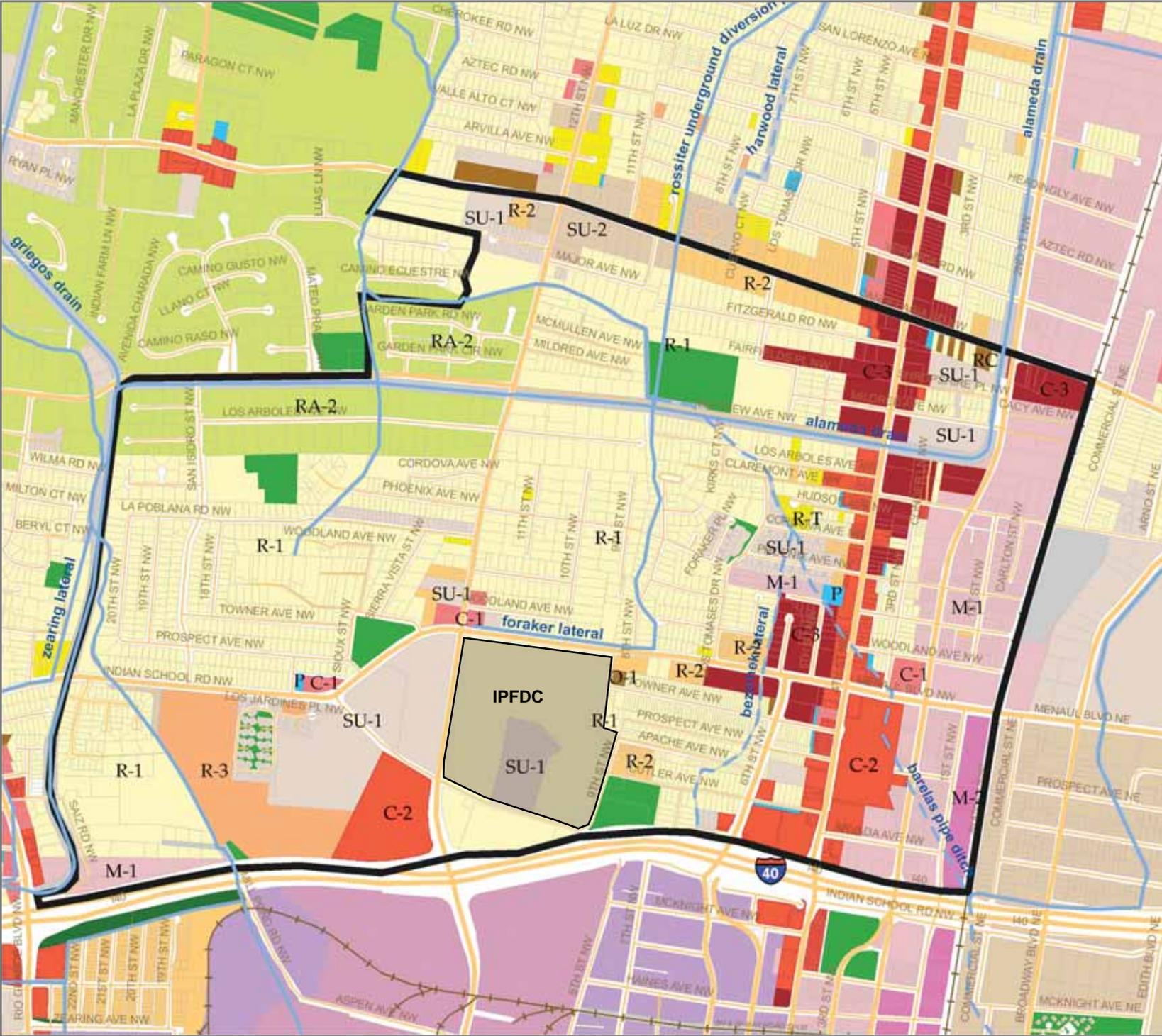
Some examples of typical housing in the Near North Valley

Figure 13: Existing Zoning



Legend

- Sector Plan Boundary
- A-1, A-2
- RA-2
- R-1
- R-T, R-LT
- R-2
- R-3
- S-R
- RC
- Com'1, C-1, C-N
- C-2 & Village Com'1
- C-3
- Public
- M-1
- M-2
- S-1
- S-M1
- SU-1
- SU-2
- Park
- Drainageways
- ROW



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9/06

3. Non-residential Uses

N. 4th Street forms the commercial spine of the area, offering groceries, car washes, gas stations, shoe repair, a restaurant, a fast food establishment, and a newer strip mall with a dollar store, check cashing, and other retail. It is blighted, however, by vacant industrial buildings, chain-link storage areas, broken windows and other evidence of disinvestment. Walking the length to shop is impeded by narrow sidewalks, many ill-designed curb cuts, obstacles such as light poles, broken sidewalks and a lack of street trees or landscaping. Revitalization of the street was a charge of the N. 4th Corridor planning process, which partially overlapped with the sector planning process.

Industrial zoning and land uses predominate along 2nd Street in the Near North Valley area, growing out of its proximity to the railroad. Some buildings are deteriorated and blighted along this corridor, as well, by vacancies, chain-link storage yards, run-down buildings, and a condemned trailer park. Single family homes squeeze in between the industries and storage yards. The areas would benefit from revitalization.



4. Land Use, Housing and Zoning Issues and Opportunities

Density and Future Land Use

Through discussions with the Steering Committee, it became evident that many of the area's identified problems—ranging from the lack of retail businesses and disinvestment along N. 4th Street to the circuitous bus service—are largely a result of the small population and household incomes. In other words, the services currently available are those that can be supported by the existing population and employees. To rejuvenate the area, a market study commissioned for the N. 4th Street Redevelopment Study called for adding 6,000 more dwelling units, or 15,000 more people, within walking distance of N. 4th from Mountain Road on the south to Solar Road on the north. As the Near North Valley Sector Development Plan covers about a third of that length, this translates into about 1,500 more units and 3,000 more people within walking distance (estimated to be a quarter mile) from the various commercial centers.

The Steering Committee spent several sessions mapping appropriate locations for higher density and debating what types of higher density would fit well with the existing neighborhood and goals to preserve the semi-rural character. They identified preferred locations along major streets, taking advantage of vacant and underutilized parcels. During a special workshop led by the City project manager, a subgroup also developed the concept for Transit-Oriented Development surrounding the 4th Street and Menaul intersection that would encourage the higher densities needed to revitalize 4th Street and obtain better transit services. Creating a more traditional street grid favorable to pedestrians where vacant land and future development provided the opportunity was also proposed.



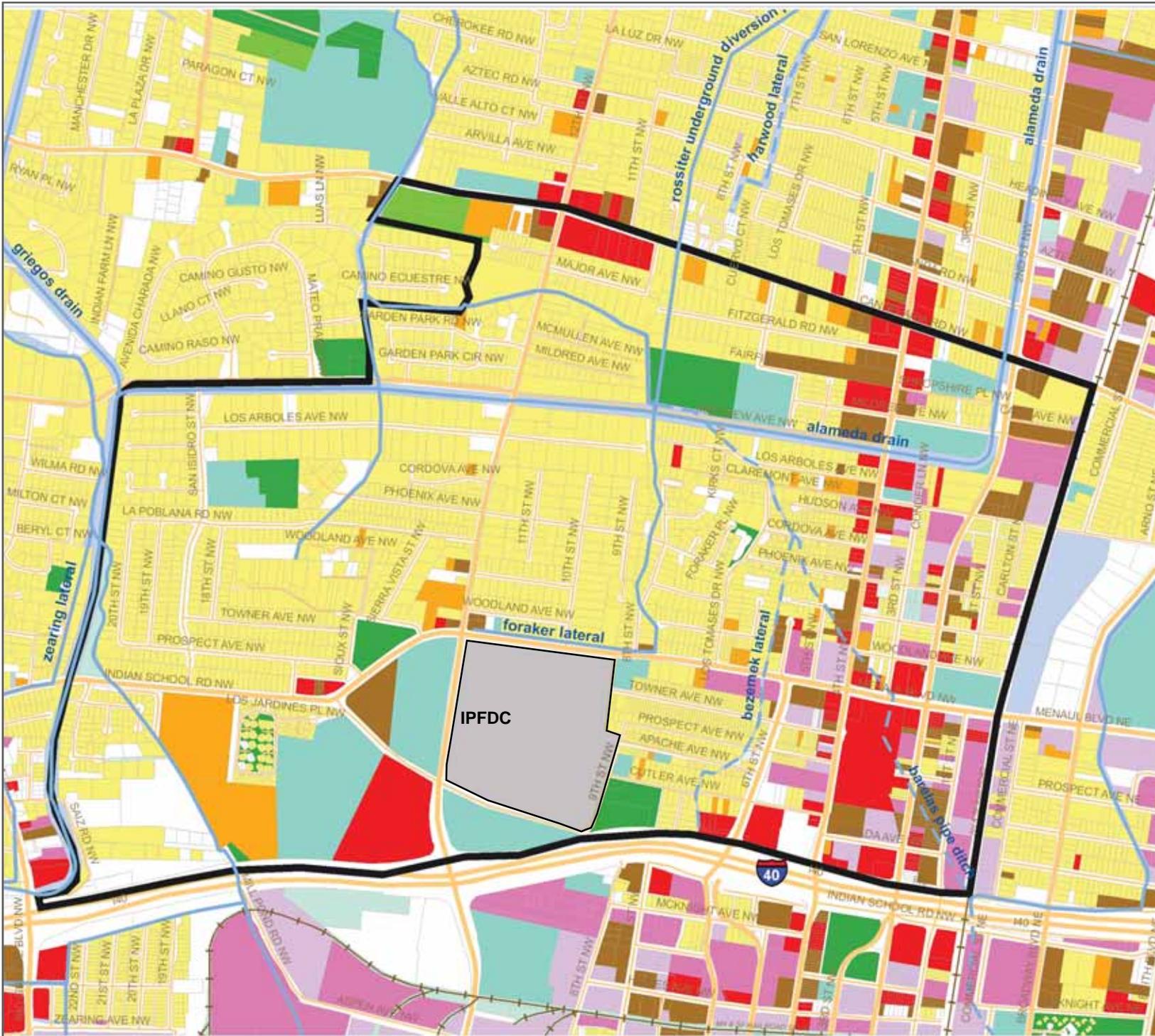
Figure 14: Existing Land Use

0 500 1,000 Feet



Legend

-  Sector Plan Boundary
-  Single Family
-  Multi-Family
-  Commercial Retail
-  Commercial Service
-  Wholesale & Warehousing
-  Industrial & Manufacturing
-  Transportation & Utilities
-  Public & Institutional
-  Parks & Recreation
-  Agriculture
-  Drainage & Flood Control
-  O-1



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The Steering Committee forwarded its proposals for land use to the N. 4th Street consultants as input to the N. 4th Street Redevelopment Study. Several of the land use proposals by the Sector Plan Steering Committee were incorporated in the final recommendations.

Non-Conforming or Illegal Second Dwelling Units With Kitchens On Single Family Lots

A major impetus for doing this sector development plan in the Near North Valley was the large number of single family parcels with nonconforming or illegal second dwelling units with kitchens (informally called accessory dwelling units, “granny flats” or “mother-in-law quarters”). The defining characteristic is the kitchen. The City zoning code allows “living quarters, accessory,” which is defined as an accessory building detached and smaller than the main building with no kitchen. City staff, with the help of the community, estimated there are at least 150 second units on single family lots in the Near North Valley study area. Most of the second units are smaller residences located to the back or sides of the main dwelling.

Before 1959, there was no zoning in Albuquerque. Areas developed and grew based on convenience. Homes located near jobs and small groceries opened within walking distances of homes. People worked out of their homes. Mixed uses abounded, allowing people to shop, eat, and work near their dwellings. Children walked or bicycled to school.

Over time, it became evident that not all uses, particularly industrial, were compatible with residential, and people desired alternative living choices. The City of Albuquerque in 1959 acted to eliminate nuisances, separate incompatible uses, and change mixed-use areas (such as residences mixed with industries) to uniform zoning districts. Zoning categories were assigned based on the



Photos: Nancy Traylor

Typical single family homes with second dwelling units on the same lot

predominant land use within the area, the need to separate incompatible uses, and, in some instances, at the request of property owners who desired more intense, higher-valued zoning. This resulted in uses that did not conform to the new zoning, or *nonconforming* uses; examples include two dwelling units on a single family lot or residences on land zoned for industrial use. The City decided at the time to eliminate non-conforming uses after a set period of time, typically 40 years (1999). Owners would have to convert or tear down their units by that time.

Due to the citywide prevalence of non-conforming uses and the fast-approaching 1999 deadline, the Environmental Planning Commission passed a resolution calling on the Planning Department to study the problem of non-conforming uses. The subsequent Non-Conforming Use Task Force met for nearly a year, delivering a final report with recommendations. They found that the majority of non-conforming uses were residential; they were located primarily in older areas of the City; they did not appear to be causing significant harm; and their numbers justified looking at alternate solutions. The Task Force also found that terminating the nonconforming uses 40 years into the future (amortizing) had a number of implications:

- Banks or other institutions are reluctant to loan money for non-conforming uses, knowing the use securing the loan must be terminated in the future.
- Owners cannot take advantage of attractive interest rates to improve or maintain their property or to refinance an existing loan.
- It may be difficult to sell property with a non-conforming use.
- Lack of investment can lead to deterioration of the property, eventually causing blight throughout the neighborhood.
- Many non-conforming residential uses provide affordable housing for low and moderate income residents.

After examining four alternatives, the task force recommended that non-conforming uses that were legal when built be legalized through individual application to the City and a hearing to determine whether the use met specific criteria. A new deadline was established: owners of nonconforming uses were given until March 2007 to come into conformance with the Zoning Code.

In 2004, the City of Albuquerque put into effect a Status-Established Building process for owners of nonconforming units (built legally before 1959) to be approved as legal. Two types of nonconforming uses have been identified in the Near North Valley.

- **Nonconforming second unit with kitchen** on R-1 or RA-2 zoned lots. Those built prior to 1959 became non-conforming in 1999. Those built after 1959 are simply illegal. Property owners with nonconforming units now have until March 27, 2007, under a City-authorized extension, to apply to the City of Albuquerque Zoning Hearing Examiner and get approval for the unit to become legal.
- **A residential unit on an industrially zoned property** is a nonconforming land use. The property owners face problems in getting bank loans and building permits to build an addition to the house or to build a new single-family house on a vacant industrially zoned lot. This issue is complicated by potential health and safety threats that stem from locating a residence near industry.

These dwelling units currently can become conforming uses through 1) the Status Established Building process, or 2) a zone map amendment.

Status Established Building Process. The Zoning Code defines it as, “A building nonconforming as to use which is approved to maintain its nonconforming use status.” Owners must apply to the City and provide an accurate site plan, documentation that the unit was built before 1959, and an affidavit asserting that the structure is safe for human habitation. Applications are heard by an appointed hearing officer (now the Zoning Hearing Examiner) and approved if continuance of the use is not contrary to the public health, safety or welfare, is not problematic for other nearby land, and does not create a significant disparity between existing zoning and the Status Established Building. It is the least costly method. After about a year, approximately six people had taken advantage of the process. Code inspections are not part of this process.

Zone Map Amendment. Second dwelling units with kitchens constructed after 1959 are illegal on lots zoned for one single family dwelling and can only become legal through a zone map amendment. Nonconforming second dwelling units may also become legal through this method. Under this process, property owners also apply to the City, but have to demonstrate that the existing zoning is inappropriate because 1) there was an error when the existing zone map pattern was created, or 2) changed neighborhood or community conditions justify the change, or 3) a different use category is more advantageous to the community, based on relevant planning documents. It generally cannot be a “spot” zone (a change that would give a zone different from surrounding zoning to one small area) and must be consistent with the public health, safety and welfare. It is a more costly process (several hundred dollars) and requires a public hearing before the Environmental Planning Commission.

The Sector Development Plan Process offered a third opportunity to legalize these units, as well as those built after 1959, through a blanket legalization process that would apply to a particular zone and/or particular geographic area in the Near North Valley.

The Steering Committee spent several meetings debating potential solutions. The advantages regarding second units were that they could create more affordable housing for all ages, provide a second income to the owner, encourage multi-generations to live together, and support local businesses and schools through infill development. In addition they could provide housing variety and potentially help maintain or increase property values. On the negative side, second units might attract transient tenants, they would not necessarily

be owner-occupied, the architecture could be out of scale with the neighborhood, and they could generate more traffic and potentially decrease property values.

After much debate, the Steering Committee decided that additional second units would not necessarily increase population density where it was needed to support commercial revitalization and better bus service—along corridors and near transit. The committee believed that the community would be better served by legalizing one existing second unit per single family lot but allowing no more. Properties with more than two units in R-1 and RA-2 zones should seek legalization through a zone change or the Status Established Building process. This will help maintain the single-family semi-rural character of the neighborhood. This change is recorded as part of the Near North Valley Sector Plan zoning code as detailed in the Implementation Chapter.

The Steering Committee did support providing mixed use and higher density residential development in the N. 4th Street Corridor between 5th/6th Streets and the railroad tracks.

Single Family Dwelling Units Non-Conforming To Zoning.

A related issue was what to do about single family dwellings located on lots zoned industrial, typically M-1, which are also deemed nonconforming uses. These property owners faced the same drawbacks as those with second units with kitchens on single family lots. Some of them also had such second units on their lots. Legalizing them had an additional complication in that proximity to industrial uses could be potentially harmful to their health, safety and welfare.

The Steering Committee and consultants decided to rezone a large area of such M-1 zoning residential uses between Second Street and the railroad and



Claremont and Woodland. Rezoning this area to RT (residential-townhouse) would legalize both the single family dwellings and the second units with kitchens, as the neighborhood desired. This change was accepted by the consultants in charge of the N. 4th Street Redevelopment Study: Rank III Corridor Plan and recorded on the proposed zoning map. It was decided that property owners of scattered single family dwelling units on industrial property should seek legalization through the zoning change or Status-Established Building process on a case-by-case basis to protect their health safety and welfare.



Homes on property zoned for industrial use

Preserving the semi-rural character of the area

Residents of the Near North Valley are proud of the area's agricultural heritage and pastoral character still evident in the acequia ditches and drains, remaining open fields, large cottonwoods, and large landscaped front yards. They wanted to retain the dominant land use pattern of single family homes by legalizing only existing second dwelling units with kitchens on single family lots and restricting higher density townhomes and apartments to land within walking distance of major street corridors. They hoped to preserve some of the vacant land as open space or for community farming. They also called for preserving and legalizing the trails along the ditches and drains (developed as policies in the Transportation Chapter). Along with this, they desired to identify and preserve historical buildings in the area, such as the Foraker Farmhouse and accompanying land.

Code enforcement

Field visits to various sections of the neighborhood showed a number of instances of materials improperly stored outdoors without screening, buildings in poor condition, and other potential code violations. Poorly maintained properties contribute to a poor image as well as health and safety concerns, particularly in the eastern part of the plan area.

Walls and gated communities

Walled communities are housing developments that are surrounded by fences, walls or other natural barriers to limit public access. Gated communities have private roads that are closed to general traffic by a gate across the primary access. Residents expressed concern about such new developments that "turn their back" on the community.

Home buyers are attracted to walled or gated communities by a perception of security, privacy, identity, traffic calming, and lifestyle choices. From the broader community's perspective, the walls and gates detract from the neighborhood's efforts to create a sense of community, limit the integration of the gated subdivision into the neighborhood and eliminate pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular connectivity within the neighbourhood. Walls shut out the rest of the neighborhood, disrupt the public street pattern and create an unpleasant, and often unsafe, experience for pedestrians.

A review of experiences in other cities indicates that it is difficult to prohibit subdivisions with private streets. Policies that limit fence heights, restrict walls or screens along public roads, or require permeable street networks can seek to prevent enclosure. Negotiated development agreements with developers of infill subdivisions provide planners with mechanisms to discourage gated communities, encourage attractive perimeter walls and provide access through the subdivision. In some cases, councils have considered or passed resolutions to ban private roads, limit fortification of properties, restrict the number of lots with backyards along public streets or prohibit the locking of gates. The Fire and Police Departments are concerned about lack of easy accessibility in case of emergencies.

Signs and Billboards

Residents also expressed a desire to limit the proliferation of billboards in the area.

C. Economic Vitality

1. Existing Commercial Centers

There are three main centers of commercial activity in the Near North Valley. The largest and most important is the 4th Street corridor, with restaurants, small retail stores, and strip mall shopping centers. Another commercial center at the corner of Candelaria and 12th Street includes a mid-size supermarket, a dollar store, a bingo parlor, and other small retail businesses and restaurants. The last commercial area near I-40 and 12th Street includes Walgreens, a recently added gas station, and a soon-to-be-constructed Lowe’s Home Improvement Center.



John Brooks Center



12th & Candelaria

2. Economic Issues and Opportunities

Future development planned for the Indian Pueblo Council property may include a small-business support center, hotel, large federal office buildings, and some retail, which could increase the number of customers in the area who would frequent and support nearby businesses. It could also provide jobs for existing and future residents.

In general, the commercial area has been experiencing declining business vitality and lack of reinvestment in recent years. Public input gathered as part of the Sector Plan process underlined that the area lacks businesses that nearby residents want and need. Specifically lacking are cafes, coffee shops, bookstores, exercise club/gyms, cleaners, clothing stores, fruit markets, beauticians/barbers, spas, used furniture stores, banks, and office supply/copy shops. Residents want more pedestrian-friendly, small-scale, locally-owned, and neighborhood-serving businesses to meet daily needs. They also envision streetscape and façade improvements that lend a sense of place and identity to the area as a whole, and transit/public transportation changes that support local businesses.



Future Development for Indian Pueblo FDC Property

A study performed as part of the City’s North 4th Street Redevelopment Study and Rank III Corridor Plan (N. 4th Street Plan) found high vacancy rates and low rents along 4th. The trade area has become known for inexpensive space, opening the door for uses such as used car lots, shelters, halfway houses, payday loan offices, and dollar stores. The businesses that do exist nearby do not match local consumer needs. While there are many automotive-related businesses and fast-food restaurants, other needed services cannot be found within the area. Instead, the majority of expenditures leave the trade area.



4th Street Shopping Center

The study also found a general deterioration of building stock. Two-thirds of the businesses had done or were doing some type of renovation or expansion, aided by the City’s façade programs.

During interviews performed as part of the study, most merchants reported that business was either up or steady, even though the turnover rate remains high. Overall, merchants' attitudes were more positive than three years ago. While merchants felt that police response had improved, crime—especially vandalism—was still high. The homeless population, often associated with drug activity, has increased and causes problems. Worsening traffic congestion and lack of parking negatively impact business. Taken together, merchants view these trends to be barriers to reinvestment.

Merchants have taken efforts in the past to revitalize the 4th Street corridor. In 2001, ARCA, located on 4th Street, received a grant to organize a business group to improve the street. The Camino Real Merchants Group functioned for several years, but ultimately failed. Three-quarters of a group of survey respondents believe it would be useful to reestablish a merchants group to improve the economic conditions of the street. The group was split on whether there should be one association for the entire street or several subarea groups. A strong recommendation from those who had participated in the original association was that specific projects with achievable objectives should drive the majority of the group's efforts.

The N. 4th Street Plan determined the following to be opportunities for revitalizing the corridor in the future (City of Albuquerque 2006):

- Inexpensive real estate makes it easier for someone to purchase and redevelop a property.
- It may be possible to clear large parcels of land for future development.
- The market is ripe for apartments, single-family housing, townhouses, and small office buildings.

The study recommended that retail needs to be rejuvenated by

1. Increasing population densities
2. Creating a destination or large anchor – which could be a major store or specialty area (districts with cohesive identities)

After talking to merchants, the study found that business owners and renters would support:

- Mixed-use development
- Parking exemptions and other incentives for redevelopment
- Design standards
- Streamlined permitting process
- Business assistance, including more loans for start-up and expansion; technical assistance and training; marketing tools; networking opportunities for businesses; corridor events; grants for façade improvements; Metropolitan Redevelopment Area designation and a Business Improvement District

D. Transportation Systems

Today the Near North Valley is served by multiple systems of circulation and movement. While the most dominant circulation system is that of the car and the broad streets and arterials that serve it, there are other modes of transportation that are important and even integral to maintaining the character of the area. Pedestrian and equestrian pathways are desired by many community members, while the bikeways and transit systems attempt to provide alternatives for those seeking to leave their cars behind. The following describes the existing conditions of each of the respective circulation systems and illustrates some of their strengths and weaknesses.

1. Roadways

Today, single-driver, automotive travel dominates the modal choice of Near North Valley residents, as is the case for Albuquerque residents in general. While a 2005 (Morelli, DATE) study showed that a higher percentage of people in the plan area carpool and ride share, this number is still well below five percent. Second Street is a major north-south regional arterial. With the expansion of the Montano Bridge, this arterial carries heavy flows at peak travel times and averages 16-19,000 vehicles per day (Figure 15). Fourth Street, considered a

minor arterial, carries less traffic volume per day (13-18,000 vehicles) than does 2nd Street, but has more commercial activity. Twelfth Street is also a north-south minor arterial but carries the smallest volume of traffic of the three north-south arterials. Principal east-west corridors include Menaul Boulevard /Indian School Road and Candelaria Road. With average daily traffic ranging from 15,600 to 20,200 vehicles, Menaul currently carries fewer vehicles per day on average than it is designed to handle in the plan area east of 12th Street.

The study area is bounded on the south by a major interstate highway, I-40. Since the reconstruction of the Big I, however, 4th and 2nd Streets no longer have direct access to I-40. This exists only from 6th and 12th Streets in the Study Area.

Existing Roadway Plans, Issues and Opportunities

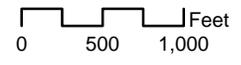
Second Street is classified as an express corridor designed for limited access, higher speed traffic and separate bicycle and pedestrian trails (Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2002). Despite plans to expand to six lanes in the future, City of Albuquerque Transportation planners consider the existing four lanes sufficient to handle traffic volumes projected for 2025 (MRCOG MTP).

This might change should N. Fourth Street be narrowed to two lanes through part of the study area, diverting more traffic to 2nd. By contrast, 4th Street is considered a commercial street and a major transit corridor. One proposal, which needs further study, would narrow it to two lanes approximately from Los Arboles nearly to Griegos to encourage more pedestrian and shopping activity (ARC Consultants 2006.) City planners also consider the four lanes on Menaul sufficient to carry the existing traffic of between 12, 000-15,000 vehicles per day.

Accident data for the study area was available from 2001 to 2004. Annual collisions along the major thoroughfares ranged from a high of 542 in 2001 to a low of 345 in 2004, with only one fatality. Pedestrians or cyclists were involved in only a few of these crashes, and property damage was more frequent than personal injuries. The highest number of collisions over the four-year period occurred along the I-40 East and West frontage roads (328) and along both Candelaria and Menaul between Rio Grande and the Railroad tracks (325 for each).

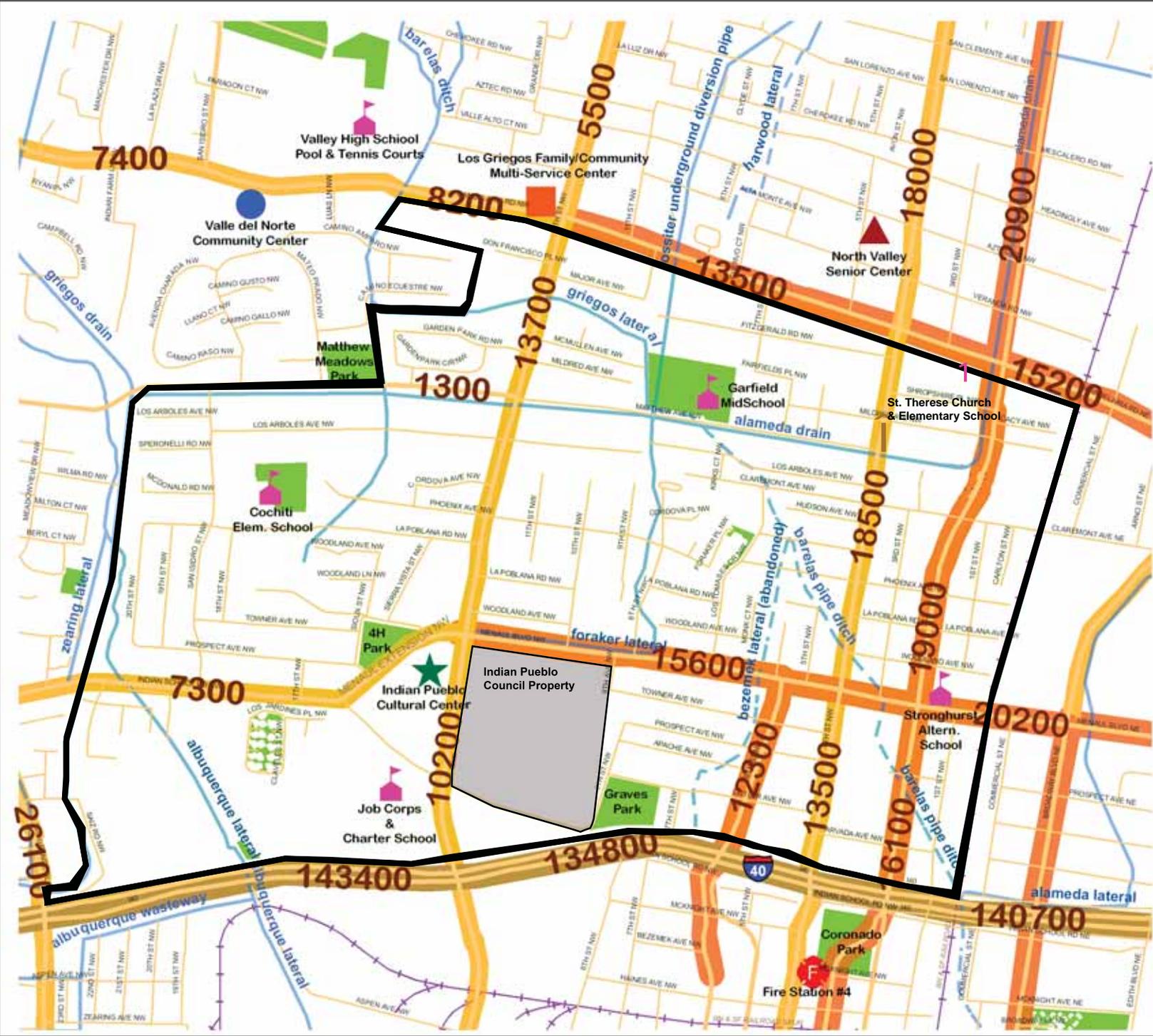
The most accident-prone intersections were at 4th and Candelaria and 12th and Candelaria, which both experienced a total of 81 collisions each, ranging between 15-29 a year. Next was 2nd and Menaul with an annual range of 8 to 35 crashes for a total of 75, followed by 4th and Menaul with a range of 15 to 20 a year for a total of 70. The intersection of 2nd and Candelaria was not far behind, with 9 to 22 crashes a year over the period for a total of 57.

Figure 15:
Traffic Counts
& Long Range
Roadway System



Legend

-  Sector Plan Boundary
-  School
-  Community Center
-  Fire Station
-  Los Griegos Multi-Service Center
-  Museum
-  Senior Center
-  Parks & Recreation
-  Existing Freeway
-  Existing Major Arterial
-  Existing Minor Arterial
-  Church



Marlin J. Chavez Mayor



9/06

Many community concerns were addressed earlier by the existing Los Candelarias Village Center and Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan and by the 12th and Menaul Study. Their main roadway recommendations follow:

Los Candelarias Village Center Plan

- Narrow the roadway and slow traffic on Candelaria by adding a 5-foot bicycle lane in each direction and a 14-foot wide landscaped median.
- Add a mid-block pedestrian crossing near the Los Griegos Multi-Service Center and between 11th and 12th streets.
- Widen existing sidewalks by acquiring 5-foot-wide easements on private land on either side of Candelaria and incorporating a planting strip and tall trees to buffer pedestrians from the roadway.

12th and Menaul Study

- Transform the four travel lanes on Menaul to two travel lanes, two bike lanes and a planted median
- On-street parking on south side, sidewalk both sides (Menaul east of 12th), sidewalk
- On-street parking both sides (Menaul west of 12th)
- A roundabout at 12th and another at Indian School
- Narrow travel and bike lanes on 12th between Candelaria and Menaul, widen turning lane
- Transform four travel lanes on 12th south of Menaul to one northbound, two southbound, with sidewalks and on-street parking on both sides (22 feet wide on the east).

Near North Valley Area-Wide

Remaining concerns of local residents tended to focus on congestion, residential cut-through traffic and speeding. Safety concerns focused on unsafe street crossings along routes to schools, churches and other public facilities, and streets that dead end into the railroad tracks with no cul-de-sac to turn around. Love's truck stop drew the ire of the neighborhood, in particular. Residents complained that semi trucks back up on 6th Street to the freeway waiting to turn into the service center. Trucks heading south on 6th into the station also block northbound traffic. Residents also cited the poor visibility at the I-40/ 6th Street off-ramp. Planners also received requests to convert several intersections to four-way stops. Such amenities as landscaped medians, sidewalks and street lights are also becoming more desirable to local residents.

The community considered the narrowing of part of 4th Street to two lanes (as proposed in the N. Fourth Street Plan) to inspire a shopping area with pedestrian amenities such as wider sidewalks and street trees. This was largely favored, with a few people seeking to also narrow the remainder of the street to I-40. Others worried about motorists being stuck behind buses and preferred to leave the existing four lanes.

Steering committee members proposed developing a transit-oriented district at 4th and Menaul, as opposed or addition to the one proposed in the N. Fourth Street plan at 4th and Candelaria. There were a number of reasons underlying this choice of location:

- Intersection of east/west and north/south bus service
- Vacant and underutilized land
- Proximity to Downtown and Old Town
- Opportunity for higher density housing and mixed-use development
- Proximity to job opportunities at the Indian Pueblo Council Property (12th and Menaul)
- 4th Street's designation as a major transit corridor in the City/County Comprehensive Plan

In addition, the Steering Committee worked on designs that would open new streets to create more of a traditional right-angle grid of streets. A street grid helps distribute traffic more evenly through a neighborhood, reducing congestion, and allows drivers to circle the block to find on-street parking. It would also create more walkable route options for pedestrians and provide access to N. 4th Street from the surrounding residential areas.

Along with this were proposals to add roundabouts in a number of locations to improve the traffic flow and make it easier for pedestrians to cross. Another proposal suggested leaving 2nd Street as four lanes but creating more capacity by constructing an underpass.

Table 8: Near North Valley Existing Roadway Plans

ROADWAY	SEGMENT	DESIGNATION	EXISTING LANES	PROPOSED LANES	ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS
Second Street	I-40 to Candelaria	Express Corridor/ Principal Arterial	4 lanes- 2 each way, narrow medians	6 lanes (MTP 2025)	
Menaul Blvd.	East of 12th TO 9th	Minor Arterial/Enhanced Transit Corridor	4 lanes- 2 each way; sidewalk on south side/ ditch on north side	2 travel lanes, 2 bike lanes, planted median**	Roundabout at 12 th ; on- street parking on south side; sidewalk both sides (14' S, 6' N)**
Menaul Blvd. Extension	West of 12th	Minor Arterial	4 lanes- 2 each way; sidewalk on south side	2 travel lanes, 2 bike lanes, planted median**	Roundabout at Indian School Road, On-street parking lanes both sides; right-in- right-out movement only at 18th Street north**
Candelaria	Railroad to 12 th	Principal Arterial	4 lanes-2 each way	4 lanes-2 each way, add bike lanes, planted median***	Wider sidewalks (7'), trees***
Candelaria	12 th to Rio Grande	Minor Arterial	4 lanes-2 each way, left turn lane at 12 th / bike route	4 lanes- 2 each way	
12 th Street	Menaul to Candelaria	Minor Arterial	2 travel lanes/turn lane/2 bike lanes	Narrow travel & bike lanes; widen turn lane**	
12 th Street	Menaul to I-40	Minor Arterial	4 travel lanes- 2 each way, sidewalk on west	1 northbound travel lane, median, 2 southbound travel lanes, traffic lights at IPCC**	Parking both sides, sidewalks both sides (22' on east)**

* N. Fourth St. Redevelopment Plan
 ** 12th and Menaul Study
 ***12th and Candelaria Study

Express Corridor: Limited access, higher speed roadways; separate bike and pedestrian trails

Major Transit Corridor: Provide level of transit service competitive with autos, improve pedestrian opportunities.

Major Arterial: Serves primarily regional traffic

Minor Arterial: Serves primarily local traffic



2. Transit

Existing Transit Conditions, Issues and Opportunities

There are three major and two commuter bus routes that serve the Near North Valley area as shown in Figure 16: Route #8 Menaul/6th street, Route #10 N. 4th, Route #36 12th/Rio Grande, and commuter routes #7 Candelaria Commuter and #13 Comanche Commuter. Although N. 4th Street is designated a major transit corridor, RapidRide routes do not yet serve the Near North Valley and travel times by bus can be long.

Regular routes tend to be circuitous, requiring transfers to reach major city and area-wide destinations. For example, travel time to Zimmerman Library on UNM's main campus from the Los Tomases Neighborhood can take up to 55 minutes by bus while the same trip takes as little as 25 minutes by car (Morelli DATE). Bus stops also are unattractive, consisting only of painted curbs and small signs. Further amenities such as benches and shelters are non-existent, with the exception of the remodeled bus stop in front of the newly redeveloped strip mall at 4th street and Menaul. Moreover, placement of the bus stops is irregular, and access to them requires crossing major arterials at unprotected crossings. The lack of amenities, low levels of service, and long travel times make choosing public transportation over driving unlikely and uncommon. In addition to improving the existing conditions above, further improvement of quality and frequency of transportation service depends on the type, scale, size and location of new development in the Near North Valley area and the N. 4th Street Corridor.

Claude Morelli, a transportation planner who lives in the area, previously proposed to the City Transit Department a series of alternative bus routes that would be less circuitous. The City developed a series of new routes from these. Proposed routes are contained in the Transportation Policies section.

3. Alternative Modes of Transportation

Existing Conditions, Issues and Opportunities

Pedestrian Circulation

Walking can be a challenge in the Near North Valley area due to the plan area's wide streets, heavy and fast-moving traffic and narrow or non-existing sidewalks. Obstacles such as light poles, numerous curb cuts, and disconnected streets present many barriers. Some of the area's commercial and residential buildings are spaced at distances reached more comfortably by car. Also, pedestrian-oriented travel tends to depend upon a higher level of transit service and commercial vitality than currently exist. Safety concerns focus on the lack of pedestrian-oriented lighting, sidewalks, mid-block crossings, ADA access, and streetscape design that is oriented toward creating an inviting pedestrian environment that encourages walking. A pedestrian-oriented environment would require significant changes to the streetscape to improve these conditions.

The Near North Valley has some existing assets that facilitate walking. Relatively narrow rights-of-way widths on 4th Street and buildings close to 2nd north of Menaul provide an opportunity to create pedestrian-friendly areas. The irrigation ditches that run throughout the plan area provide an informal trail system. As such, the ditch system becomes a narrow, linear open space for area residents. The trail system also provides safe passageways for children traveling to and from school.

Community members in the Near North Valley have joined in an effort with the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District to investigate the feasibility of opening the ditch trails to the public on a formal basis. Called the Ditches-with-Trails project, it includes two pilot projects to flesh out and resolve such issues as design, responsibility and liability for a potential trail system that could be applied regionally. One of the projects is along the Griegos Drain in the North Valley and the other is along the Atrisco and Arenal ditches in the South Valley

- Walking Survey** - During the working process leading up to the creation of the Near North Valley Sector Development Plan, groups of local residents, City and consultant staff and the City Councilor undertook walking tours sponsored by Walk Albuquerque to assess the walkability of the plan area. Two separate tours were conducted whose routes consisted of a mix of residential streets and major arterials and the system of informal trails along the ditches and laterals that run through the plan area. One group focused on Candelaria, 12th Street, and adjacent ditch trails. The other examined 4th Street, 2nd Street, the Alameda Drain and surrounds. Participants were asked to note elements that either added to, or detracted from, their walking experience including curbs, sidewalks, mid-block crossings, business frontages, and graffiti. Finally, the group was also asked to rate the level of ease with which they moved along the route, the level of safety they felt while walking and whether it was an overall pleasant experience.

NEAR NORTH VALLEY TODAY



Joe Sabatini, Ray Gutierrez, Nancy Traylor and Claude Morelli survey sidewalk conditions



Manjeet Tangri, Robert Cansino and others evaluate acequia path



MRGCD crossing over Alameda Drain



Sidewalk obstacle



Sidewalks lacking on north side of Menaul West of 8th Street



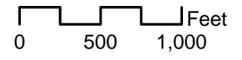
City Councilor Debbie O'Malley and others conduct walk audit



Sidewalk along 4th Street

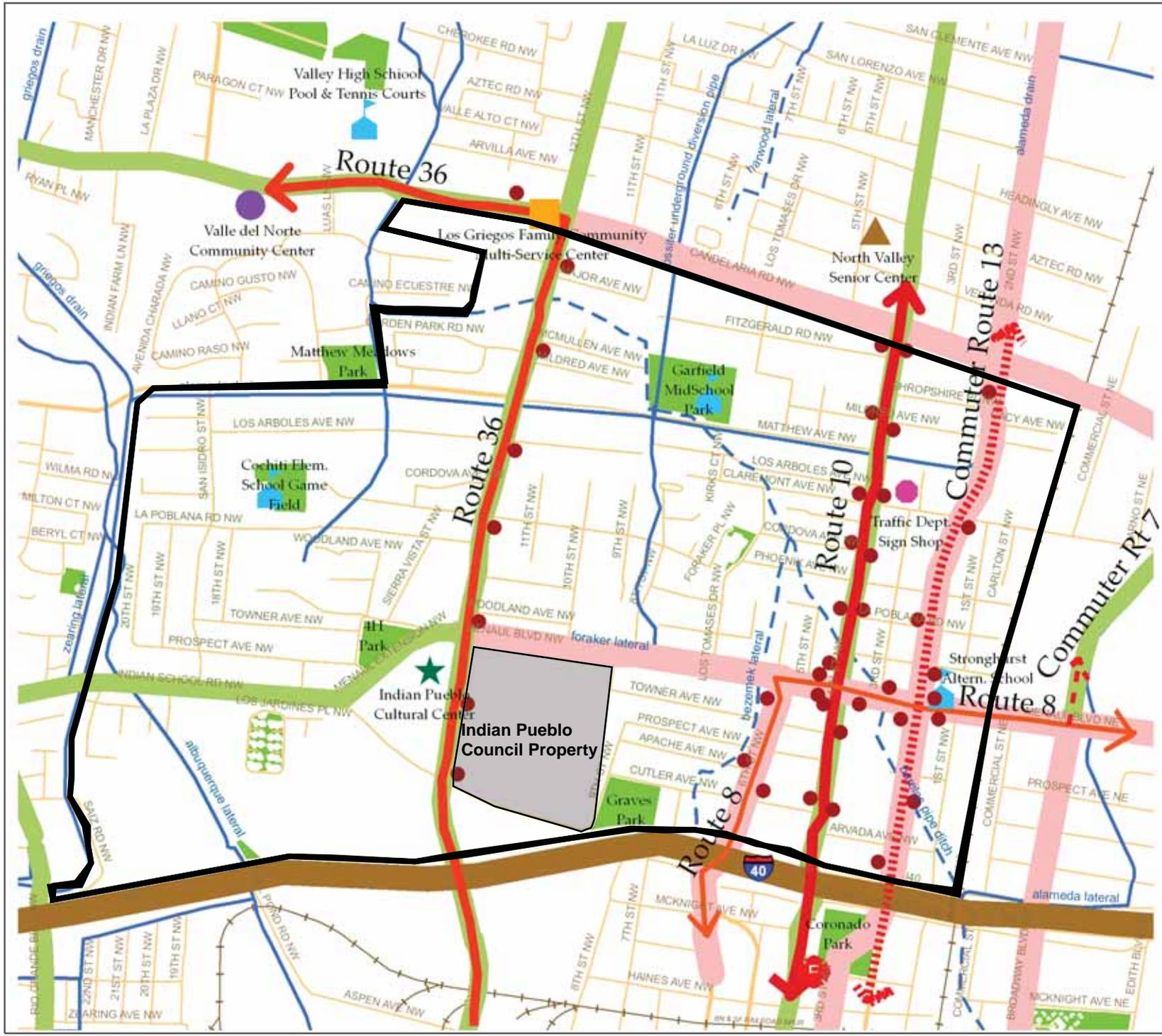


Figure 16: Existing Bus Route & Long Range Roadway System



Legend

- Sector Plan Boundary
- Bus Stop
- Bus Line**
 - 7
 - 8
 - 10
 - 13
 - 36
- Existing Freeway
- Existing Major Arterial
- Existing Minor Arterial




Martin J. Chavez Mayor



9/06

Though not scientific in nature, the findings are none the less illustrative of the nature of the pedestrian environment in the plan area. By overwhelming numbers, participants found walking in the plan area to be difficult, unsafe and generally unpleasant due to the obstacles described previously. Mid-block crossings in particular were very difficult, especially near the intersections of Candelaria and 12th, Candelaria and 7th and 4th and Mildred. Other impediments included missing “smush-down” curbs at intersections, light poles in the middle of narrow sidewalks and discontinuous sidewalks at various locations. Also, along ditches were thick undergrowth and large deposits of trash, making for difficult and unpleasant walking conditions.

The walking tour did highlight some strengths of the plan area’s walkability, however, that can be used to develop a more pleasant and comprehensive pedestrian circulation system. Many participants viewed that the ditches and laterals as the most pleasant parts of the walking tour despite trash and weeds. The laterals also contributed to the feeling of a rural character that residents would like to maintain in relevant areas. Although street crossings near the 12th and Candelaria intersection leave much to be desired, there was a higher level of perceived safety here, perhaps as a result of Los Griegos Multi-Service Center and recent intersection improvements.

Bicycle Circulation

Bicycling in the plan area can also be a major challenge. Currently, with the exception of Mathew east of 12th Street, and 12th Street between Candelaria and Menaul, there are no dedicated bicycle lanes on the major thoroughfares. Though there is ample space in the right-of-way for bicycles on the major arterials, the main barrier to bicycle use is safety. Traffic along the plan area streets moves

Table 9: Near North Valley Bicycle Projects in 2025 MTP

Location	Scope	Activity	Cost	Jurisdiction	Timeframe
Candelaria Rd.	4 th St. to Rio Grande Blvd.	Install bike lanes	\$1,054,000	COA	2003-2005
Alameda Drain	2 nd St. to I-40	Build trail	\$504,450	COA	2006-2010
Candelaria Rd.	I-25 to 2 nd St.	Install bike lanes	\$570,400	COA	2006-2010
Alameda Drain	I-40 to City Limits	Build trail	\$63,750	COA	2016-2025

too fast for bicyclists. This creates a situation that is perceived to be unsafe. Without the protection of a separated, dedicated bike lane, or off-street bike trail, traveling by bike becomes feasible for only a very small number of people. Further impeding people from choosing the bicycle as a mode of transportation is a lack of driver awareness, education and comfortability with sharing the road. This produces a stigma that any type of bicycling is unsafe and has no business on public rights-of-way that are not wholly dedicated and separated. Though a dedicated separate bicycle lane is perhaps desirable, it may not be possible everywhere. To create a connected network of bicycle routes in the plan area and Albuquerque at-large, bicycles and cars must learn to share the road.

The Long-Range Bikeways Plan shows a planned multi-use path along the Alameda Drain, leading west to another proposed path running north and south along the Griegos Lateral. Bike lanes are proposed for the stretch of Candelaria within the plan area as well as for Indian School Road and Menaul Boulevard to 6th Street, where it would head south along 6th to Downtown. Another bicycle lane is proposed for 2nd Street (see Figure 17).

Near North Valley residents agreed with all the proposals except the lane on 2nd Street, which they felt was too dangerous at current speeds and could be even worse if 2nd Street expands to six lanes, as

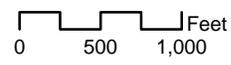
proposed in the Long Range Roadways Plan. They instead discussed retaining 2nd Street as four lanes (and perhaps installing an underpass to create more capacity) and placing an off-street bike trail along the west side that would connect to 1st Street through Menaul Boulevard and continue as an on-road bike lane south along 1st.

Equestrian Circulation

One of the most important characteristics of the Near North Valley, according to local residents, is its unique atmosphere of rural character. The retention of larger lots and livestock are central to this quality. As such, equestrian circulation is also important to the plan area. The informal, linear open spaces of the ditches are the central corridor for both equine recreation and movement. Though it is unlikely that horses would be used for daily transportation, it is still important to provide and improve access to these pathways. Multi-use pathways along the ditches work well to accommodate a variety of users, and more activity along the ditch trails would create the “eyes and ears” to help deter crime and promote a safe environment.

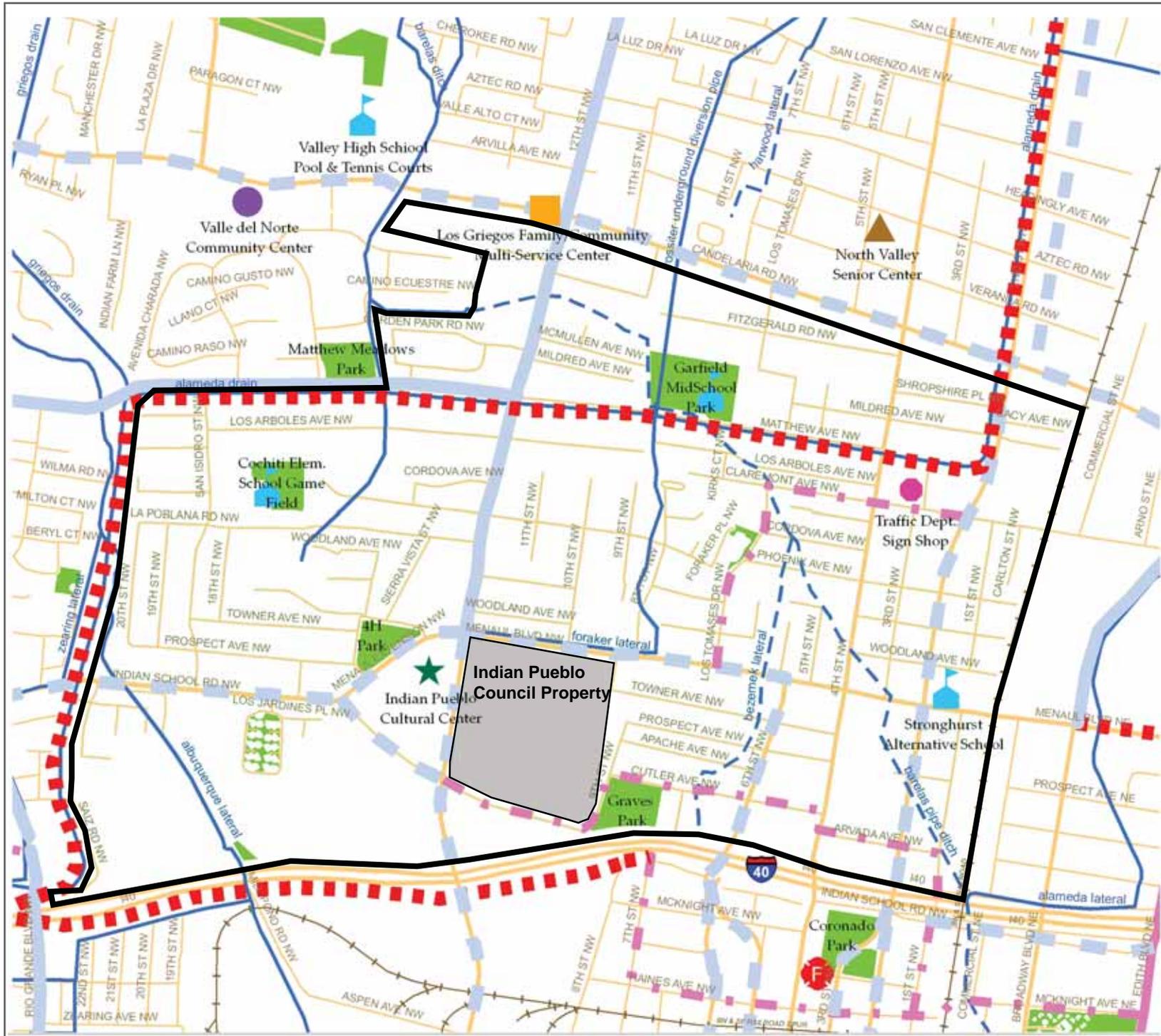


Figure 17: Existing Bikeways and Trailways



Legend

- Sector Plan Boundary
- Proposed Trail/Path
- Existing Lane
- Proposed Lane
- Existing Lane
- Proposed Lane



Martin J. Chavez Mayor

5/20/06

E. Public Facilities: Issues and Opportunities

1. Parks

There are five City parks spread throughout the study area: Los Tomases, Garfield, 4-H, Matthew Meadows, and Graves. Los Tomases Park is located in the Los Tomases neighborhood west of 4th and north of Menaul. Garfield Park is located just west of Garfield Middle School. 4-H is located on a triangular parcel just west of the Menaul and 12th Street intersection, before Indian School merges with Menaul. Matthew Meadows is located on the north side of Matthew Street, halfway between Rio Grande and 12th Street. Graves Park is located just north of Interstate 40, near the southeast corner of the Indian Pueblo Council site.

Los Tomases Park is a small finger park tucked into a residential neighborhood. The majority of usable space is dedicated to play equipment for small children, with a picnic table nearby. The rest of the park is set aside for storm water catchment. It is sparsely landscaped with native xeric plants. There are no trees, but the picnic table is covered with a shade structure. On the edges, nearest the street, the sidewalk is lined on the eastern edge with gravel, xeriscaping, and one park bench. Parking is available along the street, and the west side of the park terminates in a cul-de-sac for homes to the west, with limited parking opportunities.



Los Tomases Park

According to some residents, the park tends to attract some vandalism and littering and is relatively poorly used. The gravel is frequently kicked up over the sidewalks. Surrounding cinderblock walls tend to contribute to a lifeless feel. Poor visibility from outside the neighborhood and limited shade may contribute to the parks under use. The lack of access from the surrounding residential areas due to discontinued streets is also an obstacle.

Garfield Park is a large, flat grassy park with permanent soccer goal posts; large, mature shade trees; and three picnic tables at its edges. It is a pleasant outdoor exercise and sports field used by Garfield Middle School students for physical education programs and after-school sports. A chain-link fence surrounds the school's baseball field and two basketball courts just east of the park, limiting accessibility to the public after school.

Parking is available in a school lot to the east during school hours. Otherwise, autos must park on surrounding residential streets. The park's proximity to the Alameda Drain and Griegos Lateral makes it an occasional stopping point for walkers and bicyclists along these routes. Otherwise, the park has little visibility for surrounding neighborhoods, which may limit its use.



Garfield Park

4-H park is primarily a grass field with permanent soccer posts, a small play area with fairly extensive play equipment and nearby shaded bench, and one picnic table covered with a shade structure on a concrete slab and three picnic tables situated under trees for shade. Parking is on the street only. This park is well used by neighborhoods to the west



4-H Park

Matthew Meadows is a field with grass and trees, a small play area with play equipment, benches shaded by trees, trash receptacles, and on-street parking. The park is visible from Matthew Street but appears to be private, since its entrance doubles with that of the residential development to the north. There is a path along the drain immediately to the east, but it is fenced off from the park with chain-link.



Matthew Meadows Park



Graves Park was recently redesigned with input and support from the local community. It is a fairly large park, with a large grass field and large shade trees, a baseball field with chain-link backstop, and a small area for play equipment with a nearby unshaded bench. There is a small parking lot for approximately 25 cars, including several handicap-accessible spaces, located immediately north of the I-40 access road.



Graves Park

Access to the park is somewhat difficult. The I-40 access road is one-way going west, and the only other access is from the residential streets to the north that are all east-west streets connected to each other but with no exterior access on the north and west side.

The park is used primarily for weekend sports but is used sparsely on weekdays. Given its location immediately adjacent to the Indian School redevelopment site, the park seems a prime location for attracting office workers for noon-time strolls and picnic lunches.

Residents living on the north side of Menaul desire to gain better access to Graves Park via a new walking and bicycling path running along the eastern edge of the Indian School property. A gate in the wrought-iron fence would allow access if unlocked. The residents envision this path to be beautifully

landscaped and incorporated into a jogging loop running around the park. The pathway and jogging loop could also become an amenity for office workers on the Indian School site. Development of the pathway would require resolution of access issues on the Indian School property, as well as an improved pedestrian crossing of Menaul near 8th Street.

2. Public Safety

Near North Valley residents reported criminal activity including theft, drug use, and arson. There are some community policing and neighborhood watch programs, although some may need reactivating and strengthening.

Some physical interventions could increase safety in the area. In parks and along ditches, poor lighting may contribute to crime. Vacant lots, ditches, and alleyways are also perceived to be locations with criminal activity, especially those used by homeless people.

The charts below show the crime rate for the Near North Valley compared with the City for the years 2000 and 2004. In 2000, the Near North Valley showed a slightly higher rate than the City of crimes associated with assault, vandalism/disorderly conduct, and drugs. By 2004, theft and drug crimes spiked in the Near North Valley compared with the City, whereas other crimes were comparable or less frequent than in the City as a whole.

Figure 18: 2000 Crime Rates (per 1,000 people)

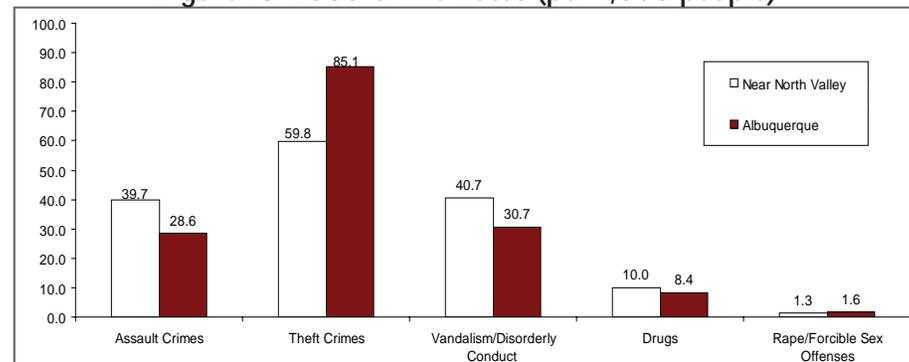
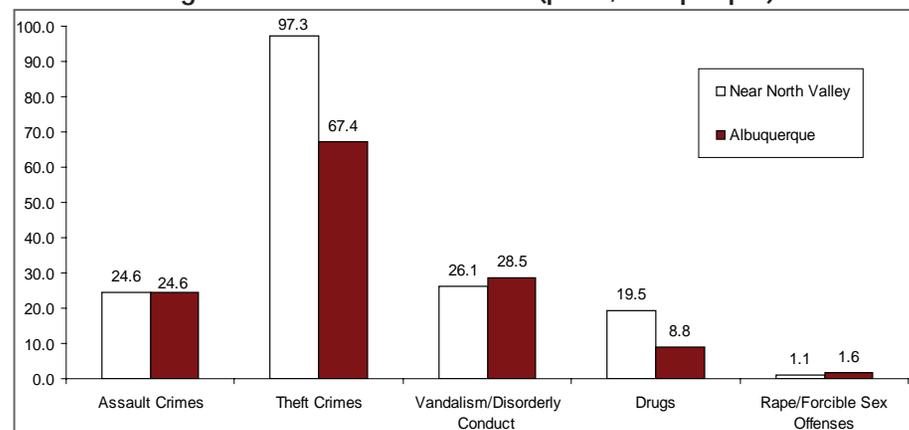


Figure 19: 2004 Crime Rates (per 1,000 people)



3. Social Services

Residents offered little input about social services. Reports of crime associated with the homeless population indicate a need for coordination between shelters and area residents to maintain a safe environment while providing needed social services.

The Near North Valley is fairly well-served by community facilities, including both the City's Los Griegos Health and Social Service Center and the Valle Del Norte Community Center. Residents requested more activities and programs that engage residents to be offered at both community centers, including hobbies and fitness classes. The Senior Center is located just outside the study area at 4th and Aztec.

Los Griegos Health and Social Service Center, open Monday - Friday 7 am – 5 pm, offers primary and prenatal health care, immunization clinics, dental care, nutrition classes and health fairs, community meeting spaces, and emergency assistance programs, including clothing, diapers, food, utilities, employment and housing.



Los Griegos Multi-Service Center

Valle Del Norte Community Center, open Monday, 8 am – 5 pm, offers limited programs and shares a building with a City-run Child and Family Development Services Program. The City

of Albuquerque, Albuquerque Public Schools, and community agencies have a collaborative partnership to provide early education to families at Child Development Centers. Preschool children of working or student parents who meet income guidelines are provided with safe learning environments to aid child development, with an emphasis on child-centered and developmentally appropriate curriculum, including early literacy.

Additional non-profit and private social programs nearby include Dismas House on Candelaria just east of the Plan boundary, a recovery house for both male and female clients; La Posada, a federal halfway house on 4th Street near I-40; and Casa Los Arboles, a recovery house for men on Los Arboles.

All Faith's Receiving Home for years housed abandoned children temporarily on an emergency basis until foster families could be found. Recently, this practice ended, and children are now placed immediately in foster care. All Faith's continues to provide support and counseling services for abused and neglected children.

Residents perceive there are more social service programs in their area than in others in the City, a disproportionate burden. The City recently limited the number of emergency shelters and residential treatment centers that are allowed in each Council District to one per 1,000 dwelling units, which may prohibit more facilities from locating in the area.

4. Affordable Housing

Currently, there is one City-run complex that provides senior housing in the Near North Valley and one near Menaul for affordable public housing. Valley Apartments and St. Anthony's Apartments were developed with subsidies from the Housing and Urban Department (HUD) to provide affordable units for 20 years. When that term ended, Valley

Apartments converted to market rate, but St. Anthony's remained affordable housing, receiving additional funding from HUD for a small community center with computers for residents' use.



Photo: Manjeet Tangri

Affordable Housing

The City also developed the 86-units Los Jardines Townhouse complex on the south side of Indian School Road.



Photo: Manjeet Tangri

Los Jardines Townhomes

A non-profit organization is finalizing plans to redevelop the former Larry's Drive-in (between Garfield Park and St. Therese's) as senior housing. While residents indicated a desire to have the City acquire the former Stronghurst School for an additional senior housing development, the high cost may be prohibitive.



5. Schools

The Near North Valley has two public schools within its boundaries – **Cochiti Elementary and Garfield Middle School**. Both are tucked into residential neighborhoods, Cochiti between Indian School and Candelaria west of 12th St, and Garfield near 4th Street and Candelaria. Garfield Middle School is immediately adjacent to Garfield Park and offers athletic facilities as well as a large grass area accessible to park users after school. Currently, residents desire more community programs and activities to promote these schools as neighborhood centers.

There are also two charter schools in the area, one at the Job Corps Center (a federal job training facility) and one affiliated with St. Therese Church.

Residents asked that the role of area churches also be supported, protected, and enhanced as centers of community life, particularly **St. Therese Church and School** east of 4th Street at Mildred Ave. and Stropshire Ave, respectively. The community would like to see a nearby community gathering site or plaza, as well as a small City park for residents east of 4th Street. At the very least, a safe pedestrian crossing at 4th Street between Mildred and the Alameda Drain should be provided to allow residents access to Garfield Park and St. Therese.



Pocket Park between St. Therese School and Church



Cochiti Elementary



Garfield Middle School



St. Therese Church