



# Downtown Neighborhood Area SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

DRAFT 9.17.2010



PREPARED FOR:  
CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

PREPARED BY:  
CONSENSUS PLANNING, INC.  
HARWICK TRANSPORTATION GROUP  
CHRISTOPHER WILSON



**Administration**

Richard J. Berry, Mayor  
David S. Campbell, Chief Administrative Officer

**City Council**

Ken Sanchez - District 1, President  
Trudy E. Jones - District 8, Vice-President  
Debbie O'Malley - District 2  
Isaac Benton - District 3  
Brad Winter - District 4  
Dan Lewis - District 5  
Rey Garduño - District 6  
Michael D. Cook - District 7  
Don Harris - District 9

**Environmental Planning Commission**

Doug Peterson, Chairman, District 8  
Laurie Moyer, Vice Chair, District 7  
Ron O. Garcia, Council District 1  
Jonathan Siegel, Council District 2  
Rob Dickson, Council District 3  
Joe Yardumian, Council District 4  
Richard Shine, Council District 5  
Len Malry, Council District 6  
Michael Dickson, Council District 9

**Landmarks & Urban Conservation Commission**

C. Robert Campbell, Chairman  
Phyllis Taylor, Vice-Chair.  
Marie Coleman  
Robert Gerard Heiser  
Charles Price III, Esq.

**Planning Department**

Deborah Stover, Director  
Russell Brito, Division Manager, Long Range Planning  
Petra Morris, Project Manager  
Mary Ellen Hennessy, Senior Planner, LUCC  
Juanita Garcia, Assistant Planning Manager, Code Enforcement Division  
Ed Boles, Historic Preservation Planner

**City Council Services**

Laura Mason, Director  
Kelly Sanchez-Pare, Policy Analyst to Councilor O'Malley

**Steering Committee**

Jim Clark, Chairman  
Anna Muller  
Bob Yuhas  
Chris Calott  
David Keleher  
Jacqueline Guilbault  
Jennifer DeGarmo  
Lee Blaugrund  
Robert Bello  
Steve Morrow  
Steven Littlejohn  
Sue Brych  
Susan Deichsel

**Consultants**

Consensus Planning, Inc.  
James K. Strozier, AICP, Principal  
Jacqueline Fishman, AICP, Project Manager

Harwick Transportation Group, Inc.  
Nevin Harwick, PE, PTOE

Historic Preservation Consultant  
Christopher Wilson



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>Section 1: Executive Summary</b> _____	<b>1</b>
Introduction _____	1
Sector Plan History and Background _____	1
Planning Policy Framework _____	3
Planning Process _____	3
Major Planning Themes _____	4
Sector Plan Sections _____	4
 <b>Section 2: History and Context</b> _____	 <b>7</b>
History of the Downtown Neighborhood Area _____	9
Farming Villages, Before 1880 _____	9
Railroad Additions _____	9
Most Fashionable Place to Build, 1900-1925 _____	12
Infill and Rise of the Auto, 1925-1950 _____	12
Decline Amid Suburbanization, 1950-1970 _____	13
Neighborhood Revitalization, 1970 to the Present _____	14
 <b>Section 3: Asset Inventory</b> _____	 <b>15</b>
Community Profile _____	17
Community Perspective _____	26
Existing Land Use and Zoning _____	29
Current Sector Development Plan _____	33
Historic Overlay Zones and Historic Districts _____	36
Existing Transportation Systems _____	45
Utilities _____	55
 <b>Section 4: Goals and Objectives</b> _____	 <b>57</b>
Introduction _____	59
Land Use and Zoning _____	59
Historic Preservation _____	60
Community Character _____	61
Transportation _____	61
Quality of Life _____	63
 <b>Section 5: Implementation Policies and Strategies</b> _____	 <b>65</b>
Introduction _____	67
Implementation Policies and Strategies _____	67
 <b>Section 6: Zoning Regulations and Development Standards</b> _____	 <b>89</b>
Introduction _____	91
SU-2/SF Single Family Zone _____	92
SU-2/TH Townhouse Zone _____	95
SU-2/MR Mixed Residential Zone _____	100
SU-2/OR Office Residential Zone _____	104
SU-2/MUM Mixed-Use Medium Zone _____	109
SU-2/MUL Mixed-Use Light Zone _____	114
SU-2/CC Central Corridor Zone _____	119

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
SU-2/NC Neighborhood Commercial Zone _____	124
SU-2/SU-1 Special Use Zone _____	126
Non-Conforming Uses _____	129
Demolition Review _____	129
 <b>Section 7: Action Agenda</b> _____	 <b>133</b>
Introduction _____	135
Implementation Tables _____	135
 <b>Appendices</b> _____	 <b>139</b>
Appendix A: Glossary _____	141
Appendix B: Street Trees _____	145
Appendix C: Excerpts from West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan _____	149
 <b>Maps/Tables/Figures</b>	
Plan Area _____	2
1886 Bird's Eye View _____	10
1898 Abstract Company Map _____	11
Census Tract 27 _____	23
Downtown Neighborhood Area _____	23
Existing Land Use _____	31
Existing Zoning _____	32
Registered Historic Properties _____	37
Fourth Ward Historic District _____	40
Eighth and Forrester Historic District _____	41
Manzano Court Historic District _____	42
La Orilla de La Acequia Historic District _____	43
Watson Addition Historic District _____	44
Roadway Functional Classifications _____	45
Study Area Intersections with Deficient Curb Ramps _____	46
2008 Roadway Volumes _____	47
Missing Sidewalk Sections _____	51
Bicycle Facilities _____	52
Transit Routes _____	53
On-Street Parking Restrictions _____	54
Proposed Boundary Adjustment _____	68
Opportunity Sites along Central Avenue _____	70
Opportunity Site along Fourth Street _____	70
12th Street South of Mountain Road to Granite Avenue, Plan and Section _____	80
12th Street and Lomas Boulevard Intersection, Plan and Section _____	81
Lomas Boulevard, Plan and Section _____	83
Front Yard Setback Determination _____	92
Front Yard Setback Angle _____	93
Typical Townhouse Development - 4 units, alley access _____	97
Typical Townhouse Development - 4 units, no alley access _____	98
Building Height and Stepbacks for Facades _____	121

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maps/Tables/Figures

Proposed Zoning\_\_\_\_\_127

Tree Planting Detail\_\_\_\_\_142

Shrub Planting Detail\_\_\_\_\_143

Rootwell Installation Guide\_\_\_\_\_143

Table 1.1: Downtown Neighborhood Area and Albuquerque, 1970 \_\_\_\_\_14

Table 2.1: Population Comparison\_\_\_\_\_17

Table 2.2: Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years, 2009\_\_\_\_\_21

Table 2.3: Percent of Population by Race\_\_\_\_\_22

Table 2.4: Percent of Population by Ethnicity\_\_\_\_\_22

Figure 2.1: Downtown Neighborhood Area Population\_\_\_\_\_18

Figure 2.2: Downtown Neighborhood Area, Age by Sex, 2009\_\_\_\_\_19

Figure 2.3: City of Albuquerque, Age by Sex, 2009\_\_\_\_\_20

Figure 2.4: Household Income, 2009\_\_\_\_\_20

Figure 2.5: Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years, 2009\_\_\_\_\_21

Figure 2.6: Census Tract 27 - Historical Population\_\_\_\_\_24

Figure 2.7: Census Tract 27 - Historical Tenure 1980-2000\_\_\_\_\_25







## SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“The Downtown Neighborhood Area is a beautiful and diverse residential neighborhood with well preserved historic homes, small apartments, and appropriately designed, neighborhood-oriented, commercial services located mainly along its primary thoroughfares; Central Avenue, Lomas Boulevard, and Mountain Road. The Downtown Neighborhood Area is a safe and walkable neighborhood with tree-lined streets, wide sidewalks, attractive street lighting, and well maintained parks. It is conveniently located between Downtown, Old Town, and the Museum District. The Downtown Neighborhood Area is a friendly place where neighbors know and interact well with each other.”*



**A. Introduction**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan is the culmination of a year-long planning process to update the original Sector Plan which was adopted in 1976. The Downtown Neighborhood Area is an area of Albuquerque that is unique in its rich history of development, architectural styles, diversity of residents, and location between Albuquerque’s Downtown Core and Old Town. The Plan celebrates these characteristics and seeks to preserve what is best about the neighborhood, while continuing to make improvements to ensure that the residents’ long term vision for the neighborhood is achieved. The primary goal of the Sector Plan is to ensure that it is consistent with the community’s goals to make the Downtown Neighborhood a more walkable community, provide appropriate and attractive infill development, and remain respectful of the neighborhood’s historical context and character.

**B. Sector Plan History and Background**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan was originally adopted by the City Council in 1976 (Resolution 158-1976). The Downtown Neighborhood Area had been designated a blighted area in accordance with the Community Development Law of the State of New Mexico. The Sector Development Plan was intended to guide redevelopment and improve the living conditions of low and moderate income families, while ensuring the historical development pattern was maintained and that a select group of historic buildings were conserved.

The Sector Plan’s primary goals were to rehabilitate houses, establish new zoning districts, acquire and develop a neighborhood park, solve drainage problems, and expand community services. The Sector Plan did not directly address historic preservation, multi-modal transportation systems, or the design implications of infill development. The zones contained in the existing Sector Plan reference specific zoning districts from the City Comprehensive Zoning Code, with some exceptions in regard to parking, useable open space, and building height.

An amendment to the Sector Plan was adopted by the City Council in March, 1999. The purpose of the amendment was to protect the neighborhood from the intrusion of commercial surface parking lots. The amendment impacted three zones contained in the Sector Plan; the HDA (High Density Apartment) zone, the RC (Residential Apartment) zone, and the MRO (Mixed Residential/Office) zone.

In addition to the economic and physical changes that have occurred over time, much has changed from a regulatory standpoint such as the adoption of the two Historic Overlay Zones; the Eighth and Forrester Historic Overlay Zone and the Fourth Ward Historic Overlay Zone. There is also a significant mismatch between land use and zoning in much of the Plan area. Other planning documents that were adopted since 1976 and have an impact on the Downtown Neighborhood Area have also necessitated this update.



**C. Planning Policy Framework**

Planning in the City of Albuquerque is organized by a ranking system. The Rank I plan is the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, which provides a broad policy framework for development throughout the City and County area. Rank II plans (area plans) provide more detailed analysis and policies for large sub-areas, and are intended to further the policy objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Rank III plans include Sector Development Plans, which are intended to cover the smallest area geographically and provide the most detailed planning on a neighborhood or corridor level. Sector Development Plans typically establish zoning on a parcel level, and contain more detail relative to the physical development of an area and capital improvements. The Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan is a Rank III plan. Lower ranking plans are required to be consistent with the Rank I plan.

In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Neighborhood Area must be consistent with other planning documents, policies, and regulations that apply to this area and are referenced in this Plan. These include the Comprehensive City Zoning Code; the Fourth Ward and Eighth and Forrester Historic Overlay Zones; City Development Process Manual; Facility Plan: Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities; and the West Downtown Corridor Plan for Central Avenue. The areas where the Downtown Neighborhood Sector Plan differs from these other plans, policies, and regulations are noted within the document.

**D. Planning Process**

The planning process for updating the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan was initiated in October, 2009. The Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan is a reflection of the input received regarding the area's strengths and weaknesses, community goals and objectives, and action steps needed to ensure the best aspects of the neighborhood character are protected and celebrated, and future growth is consistent with the community's vision for the future.

The public involvement process included meetings with the Sector Plan Steering Committee; three walking tours of the neighborhood with the Steering Committee and City staff; and three general public meetings on January 16, 2010; February 20, 2010; and September 25, 2010. The draft documents moving forward will reflect the comments received from the general public, City staff, Steering Committee, and property owners of the area.

### **E. Major Planning Themes**

Common themes were developed through the public involvement process that run throughout the Sector Plan. These are first articulated through the goals and objectives (Section 4) and are carried through into the Implementation Policies and Strategies (Section 5) and the Zoning Regulations and Development Standards (Section 6). Planning themes expressed in the Sector Plan include:

- Matching the zoning with the existing land use for properties within the Downtown Neighborhood Area.
- Preserving and celebrating the historic buildings and character of the Downtown Neighborhood Area.
- Reinforcing the Downtown Neighborhood Area as primarily residential, with mixed-use corridors.
- Creating a walkable, bike-friendly community that connects the Downtown Neighborhood Area with Old Town and Downtown.
- Allowing for appropriately-designed and scaled infill development, while respecting the historic character of the Downtown Neighborhood Area.
- Creating tree-lined streetscapes throughout the Downtown Neighborhood Area.
- Calming traffic speeds and reducing cut-through traffic on local streets through the Downtown Neighborhood Area.

### **F. Sector Plan Sections**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan is comprised of the following sections:

- Section 1: Executive Summary includes a broad overview of the Plan and its history, planning framework, and the planning process.
- Section 2: History and Context provides a historical account of the neighborhood's growth and development over time.
- Section 3: Asset Inventory is a detailed account of the physical and regulatory aspects of the neighborhood. It includes a broad array of information including a community profile (demographics), community perspective, existing land use and zoning, overview of the 1976 Sector Plan, historic overlay zones and districts, existing transportation systems, and utilities.
- Section 4: Goals and Objectives that were developed through the public involvement process and provide direction for the recommendations contained in later sections of the Sector Plan are included. The Goals

and Objectives cover Land Use and Zoning, Historic Preservation, Community Character, Transportation, and Quality of Life.

- Section 5: Implementation Policies and Strategies provide the direction needed to implement the community’s vision for the future. The Implementation Policies and Strategies cover a broad variety of action steps - regulatory, administrative, and capital improvements.
- Section 6: Zoning Regulations are provided to cover each of the zoning districts within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. The zoning districts are a combination of districts that correspond to existing zones contained within the Comprehensive City Zoning Code, but with exceptions, and districts that are completely unique to the Downtown Neighborhood Area. This section also includes non-conforming uses and demolition review.
- Section 7: Action Agenda provides the comprehensive list of action steps called for in the document, the entity responsible for implementing the action step, and the short-term, medium-term, and long-term timeframe for each.
- Appendix A: Glossary provides definitions for the terminology used within the document.
- Appendix B: Street Trees provides a list of appropriate plant materials and planting details for the street trees required in each of the zoning districts.
- Appendix C: West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan (excerpts) is included due to Central Avenue being the southern boundary of the Sector Plan area.







**SECTION 2:  
HISTORY & CONTEXT**



**A. THE HISTORY OF THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD AREA**

The identity of the Downtown Neighborhood Area and its revival over the past generation have been firmly grounded in its rich history. Situated between the 1706 Spanish Old Town to the west and the 1880 railroad New Town to the east, the development of Downtown Neighborhood Area mixed Hispanic and Anglo cultural patterns. The historic fabric of the area might be seen as the physical manifestation of the fact that it was one of the first and continues to be one of the most ethnically mixed of city neighborhoods.

**Farming Villages, Before 1880**

Puebloan farmers established villages every few miles along the Rio Grande starting about 1,200 A.D. One, known as Tiguex, was located near the site of the park that bears its name at the northwest corner of the current Downtown Neighborhood Area. During the 1600s, Spanish colonists established farm and ranching estancias in this stretch of the Rio Grande that they call the Rio Abajo. One of these, El Paraje de Huertas, stood near present-day Old Town. Driven out by Pueblo Indians in armed revolt in 1680, the Spanish colonists returned in the 1690s. In 1706, the territorial governor moved to establish a more permanent settlement, which he christened Albuquerque. While it was the administrative center for the Rio Abajo, and a trade center on the Camino Real, most residents worked as farmers in the surrounding fields, orchards and pastures.

While a handful of adobe houses from the Spanish, Mexican and early U.S. territorial periods remain in the western portions of the Downtown Neighborhood Area, the primary imprint of this early agricultural landscape is seen in the position of early roads, acequias, and field alignments. Traces of the old acequia madre snake from north to south just west of present-day 16th Street. The alignments of 8th, Forrester and Luna Streets, likewise, each run down the middle of old long lot fields that stretched south from Mountain Road. Mountain and Tijeras Roads also trace the routes taken by shepherds driving their flocks to the Sandia Mountains, and wood haulers returning to Old Town with loads of fire wood and building timbers. Both the annual Spanish trade caravan starting in the 1700s that assembled at Albuquerque before moving south, and the U.S. Army post at Old Town from 1846 until 1867, turned their livestock out in the pastures that began at the north and east edges of the Downtown Neighborhood Area.

**Railroad Additions, 1880-1900**

The arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1880 meant the establishment of a New Town around the depot to the east. A horse-drawn trolley running down Railroad (later Central) Avenue linked Old and New Towns. New stores in downtown, locomotive repair shops to the south, and a large lumber mill north of the Downtown Neighborhood Area offered many new jobs. The railroad's New Mexico Town Company platted a regular grid of blocks in 1880 at the southern edge of the Downtown Neighborhood Area, known as the Original Town Site. Jose Leandro Perea, owner of widespread properties around the New Mexico territory, followed suit the following year when laid out his own addition stretching between 11th and 16th Streets. When Huning's Highlands Addition, east of

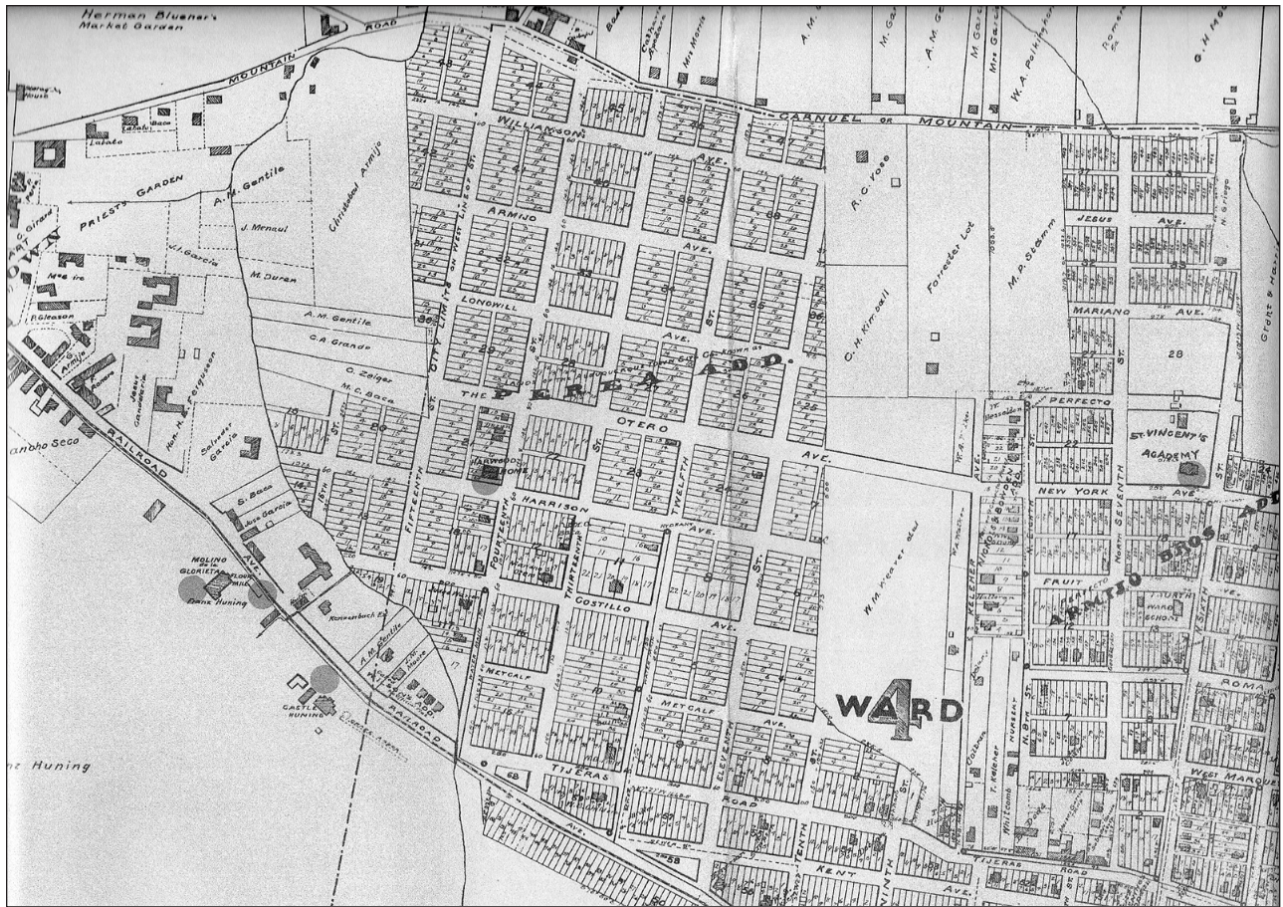
the tracks, emerged as the city's first fashionable neighborhood, the Downtown Neighborhood Area grew only gradually.

An 1886 bird's eye view of the City records orchards along the western edge of the Downtown Neighborhood Area (see map below). Flat-roofed adobe houses stretched along Mountain Road and the remnant of old Barelas Road (incorporated into Railroad Avenue), east from Old Town to 16th, constituted a linear Hispanic settlement form known as cordilleras. At the south edge of the District, the amenity of the City's first park, triangular Robinson Park, had already attracted four fashionable houses along its north side. Only 23 houses had been constructed in the Downtown Neighborhood Area, each in its own quarter to full city block planted with orchards and kitchen gardens. Most families had planted a ring of trees around their properties, thereby establishing the pattern of street trees usually placed every 25 feet. The two-story Italianate Hesselden House on Roma Avenue remains from these days, while the Coons-Pearl House at Marquette Avenue and 12th Street reflects the more numerous one-story picturesque cottages that dotted the neighborhood.



1886 bird's eye view showing Old Town on the top, Downtown lower left, and the Downtown Neighborhood Area in between.

Years later, Kenneth Balcomb, who grew up on 14th Street at the end turn of the century, remembered “the palatial Mariano Otero house” and its large barn on the north side of Roma Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets. “Mr. Otero seemed always to be dressed in a black coat, pin-striped trousers, and plug hat. When he and his lady would emerge from the great front door to go riding, the footman would place a stool to assist their stepping into the carriage.” Balcomb also recalled a barbed wire fence along the edge of Keleher Avenue as it stretched north from Tijeras Avenue to Mountain Road: “Across the fence was a weed- and brush-covered field extending to the west as far as a child’s eye could see. Cattle ran loose in the fields and were rounded up and branded when necessary - a miniature affair, no doubt, but a Wild West adventure to a child.”



1898 Abstract company map

### **Most Fashionable Place to Build, 1900-1925**

By the turn of the century, with Huning Highlands nearly filled with houses, the Downtown Neighborhood Area emerged as the city's most fashionable neighborhood. Augmenting the many available lots in the existing Original Town Site and Perea Additions, M. P. Stamm, Harriet Ackerman, and Solomon Luna each subdivided an old long lot field with new house lots on either side of Eighth Street and Forrester Street north of New York (now Lomas), and Luna Boulevard to the south, respectively. The City's Fourth Ward (Central Avenue to Mountain Road, railroad tracks to 14th Street) boomed from under 200 houses in 1900 to 615 houses a decade later. South of New York Avenue, fine Classical, Four-square, Colonial Revival, and Prairie style mansions, intermixed with one-story and story-and-a-half bungalows, were home to the families of merchants, attorneys, and businessmen (an area now recognized as the Fourth Ward Historic District). Their names - Bond, Simms, Rodey, Chavez, McCanna, and Otero - long figured prominently in City and State business and politics. North of New York, nearer the large sawmill, modest four-square cottages and bungalows housed working class families (now the Eighth and Forrester District). At the western edge of the Downtown Neighborhood Area, near the old acequia madre, Delores Otero Berg sold lots to Hispanic families who erected vernacular adobe homes (La Orilla de la Acequia district).

Soon after the turn of the century, the construction of the Alvarado Hotel by the depot, and of several TB sanitariums augmented existing employment in the locomotive shops and lumber mill. The horse-drawn trolley on Central Avenue was replaced with electric streetcars in 1904, and a new line developed north on 4th Street, then west on New York (Lomas), and north again at 12th street to the sawmill. Small shops and neighborhood groceries gravitated to street corners along these streetcar routes, and along historic Mountain and Tijeras Roads. Located primarily up at the sidewalks edge, many held homes for the merchant family at the rear, or, in a few cases, in second floor apartments.

The State designated Fourth Street as New Mexico Route 1 in 1915, which subsequently became the first alignment of U.S. Routes 66 and 85 in 1926. The western edge of downtown developed as a car sales and repair district, especially along Central and Copper. With booming auto ownership in 1920s, residential development began to shift east toward the University of New Mexico, and the streetcar system was converted to buses in 1924. In 1926, the newly-formed Middle Rio Grande Conservancy announced plans for a system of dams, irrigations canals, drains, and levees, that soon protected the Downtown Neighborhood Area from the threat of spring flooding.

### **Infill and Rise of the Auto, 1925-1950**

The opening of the Country Club Addition south of Central in 1929 ended the Downtown Neighborhood Area's quarter-century run as the most fashionable neighborhood in the city. Here and there in the Downtown Neighborhood Area, some entrepreneurs constructed Southwestern-style courtyard apartments on vacant lots, while others subdivided the few remaining undeveloped tracts. Houses stood back twenty feet on average from the north-south streets, and

typically a little less on the east-west side streets. The planting of street trees amid grass lawns, begun in the 1880s, became even more uniform when Mayor Clyde Tingley made free Siberian elms available from the city nursery starting about 1930. Anna Gotshall's 1923 Manzano Court Addition developed into a distinctive one-block, residential cul-de-sac (now on the National Register). The construction of a Central Avenue bridge over the Rio Grande in 1931, and a railroad underpass at Central in 1936, along with its designation as the new alignment of Route 66 the following year fostered the development of service stations and motor courts along the southern edge of the Downtown Neighborhood Area, and the emergence of Old Town as a tourist destination.

Various New Deal programs aimed at recovery from the Great Depression - known generically as the WPA - put men to work on these highway improvements, and the construction of sewers, paved roads, curbs and sidewalks in the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Another New Deal agency, the Federal Housing Administration, established in 1934, began offering home loan guarantees which allowed developers to erect homogeneous tracts of houses, in contrast to the earlier practice of small individual builders gradually filling in individual lots. I. E. Chacon platted a four block area at the northwest section of the Downtown Neighborhood Area in 1939, the last remaining former fields. Two years later, Chacon turned the subdivision over to builder Leon Watson. Working into the late 1940s, Watson erected the distinctive enclave of Spanish Pueblo Revival adobes known as the Watson Addition (now a historic district). The annexation of Old Town to the City of Albuquerque in 1949 brought the western edge of the Downtown Neighborhood Area into the City.

### **Decline Amid Suburbanization, 1950-1970**

After World War II, the rapid growth of UNM, the new Kirtland Air Force Base (founded in 1940), and the Sandia National Laboratories (1945) all added jobs to the economy, and pulled new development east up onto the East Mesa. The construction of the Interstates 40 and 25 in the late 1950s and early 1960s took through traffic off of Central Avenue and Fourth Street, while the construction of Winrock Mall in 1962 further undercut neighborhood and Downtown businesses. The widening of Lomas Boulevard circa 1977 to carry more cross town traffic took out a row of houses and businesses along the north side of the road. The creation of this wide arterial, and new businesses set back behind parking lots would cut the area in two, and would be the single most negative impact to the historic pedestrian character of the neighborhood. With little new construction in the area, and attention shifted to newly fashionable suburbs at the expanding eastern edge of town, formerly owner-occupied homes in the Downtown Neighborhood Area began to be converted into rentals. "Many of the old families continued to live in the neighborhood, however," wrote historian Susan Dewitt in 1979, "and while property values sank, it never got the reputation for crime and bleak conditions which plagued other inner-city districts."

The 1970 U.S. Census provides a snapshot of the Downtown Neighborhood Area:

**Table 1.1: Downtown Neighborhood Area and Albuquerque, 1970**

Population	DNA	Albuquerque
Spanish	70%	35%
Anglo	22	60
Indian	5	2
Black	2	2
Other	2	2

	DNA	Albuquerque
Families below poverty level	26%	12%
With no car	32	10
Walk to work	17	4
Renter occupied units	53	34

**Neighborhood Revitalization, 1970 to the Present**

The founding of the Downtown Neighborhood Association in 1974, one of the first in the City, brought together long-time families and young people moving into the center city. The City’s Downtown Neighborhood Area Plan of 1976 sought “the renewal of the area and improvement of the living conditions of low- and moderate-income families,” including, “upgrading the housing, public facilities and public services in the area while changing the zoning to maintain the historic development patterns of the area and allow some high density residential uses along the eastern boundary.” The call for the “acquisition and development of a small neighborhood park to serve the central part of the area,” lead directly to the construction of Mary Fox Park in 1979. The plan emphasized historic preservation, calling for the “conservation of a historically important neighborhood and preservation of select buildings which had historical and cultural significance.”

Not surprisingly given this statement and the grassroots preservation of houses already afoot in the area, the Downtown Neighborhood Area was an early focus of the Albuquerque Historic Landmarks Survey. The Watson Addition and La Orilla de la Acequia were both recognized as State Historic Districts in 1979. Both the Eighth and Forrester and the Fourth Ward areas were recognized as State and National Historic Districts in 1980. A decade later they became subject to historic design review when they were designated City Historic Overlay zones. Many in these districts have used the State Preservation Tax Credit to improve their houses, while the preservation and refurbishing of historic buildings has been widespread across the entire area. This broad-based commitment to preservation, the extensive historic building stock, and largely intact neighborhoods have been the bedrock of neighborhood revitalization over the past generation.





## SECTION 3: ASSET INVENTORY



**A. Community Profile**

This section is intended to provide an understanding of the population characteristics and trends of the Sector Plan area. The Downtown Neighborhood Area contains less than 1% of the total population of the City of Albuquerque, yet statistical comparisons between the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City are necessary in order to acknowledge the unique trends emerging within the study area. The data presented in this section was obtained from Nielsen Claritas, Inc., which is the industry-leading market research company that provides one-year estimates and five-year projections of demographic data, for any level of geography, based on the U.S. Census Bureau.

**Population**

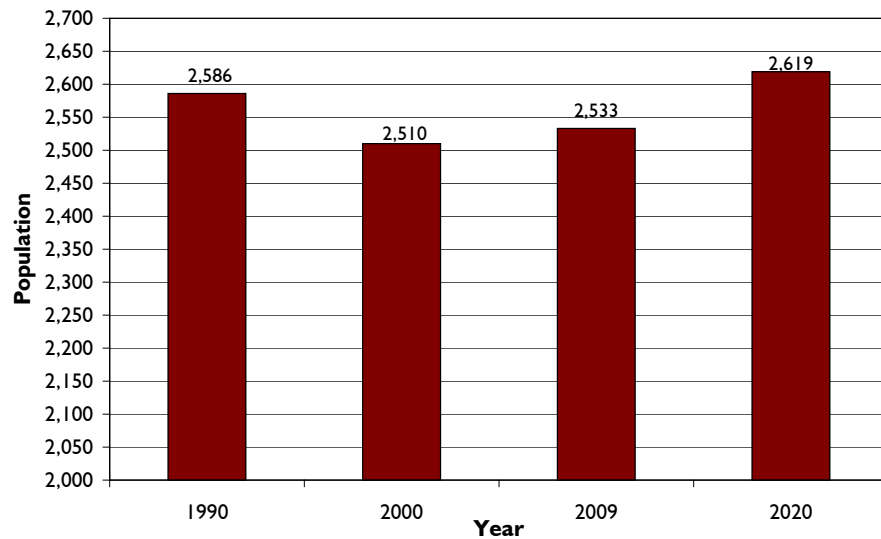
Table 2.1 provides a comparison of the total population of the City of Albuquerque and the Downtown Neighborhood Area. The population of the Downtown Neighborhood Area declined by nearly 3% between 1990 and 2000, while the City experienced a growth of 15%. From 2000 to the current 2009 estimate, the population of the Downtown Neighborhood Area has increased by 1%. The projected population of the Downtown Neighborhood Area in 2020 is 2,619 people, a 3.4% change from 2009. This projection is consistent with the current housing stock of the area, which is mostly comprised of single-family dwelling units; thereby leaving a very low probability for a larger population influx. Figure 1 illustrates the population change of the Downtown Neighborhood Area from 1990 to 2020. The 2020 population projections were calculated by taking the 2014 projections presented by Claritas, Inc. and assuming a constant rate of growth to 2020.

**Table 2.1: Population Comparison**

	1990	2000	2009	2020
City of Albuquerque	388,385	448,607	520,244	612,681
Percent Change		+15.15%	+15.96%	+17.80%
Downtown Neighborhood Area	2,586	2,510	2,533	2,619
Percent Change		-2.94%	+0.92%	+3.40%

Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

**Figure 2.1: Downtown Neighborhood Area Population**



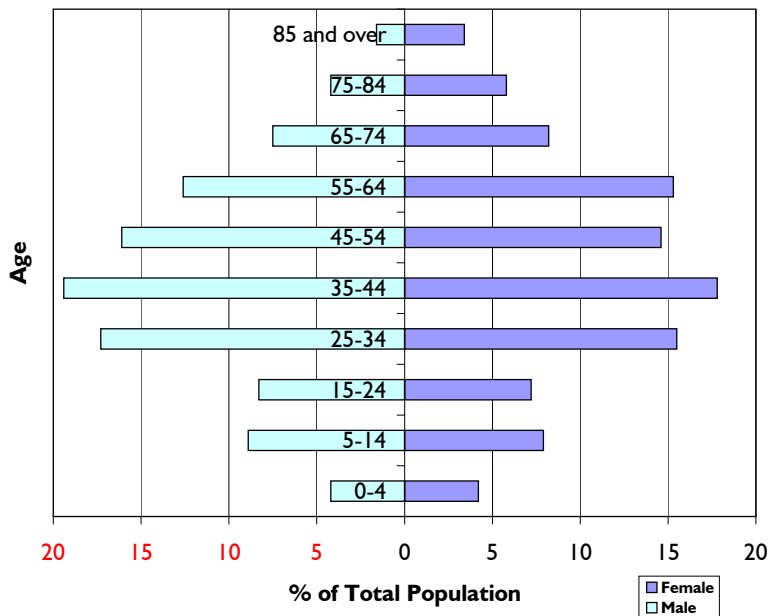
Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

### **Age by Sex Breakdown**

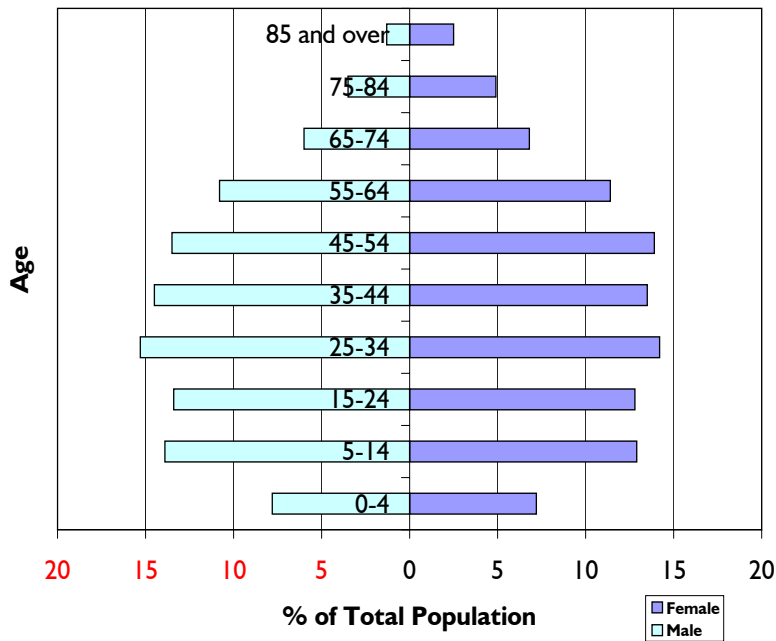
The estimated 2009 age by sex breakdown of the Downtown Neighborhood Area is shown in Figure 2.2. The population is balanced in terms of sex, 51% male and 49% female. There are more females over the age of 65 than males, 56% versus 44%. The majority of the population, 64%, consists of individuals between the ages of 25 to 64 (52% male and 48% female). This age cohort is usually considered as the working cohort, being older than traditional students and younger than those who are retired. In 2000, the Downtown Neighborhood Area's population had a larger percentage of people in the 15-24 age cohort, which is the cohort of high school and traditional college students. No other cohort displayed as much of a change from 2000 to 2009, which was an approximately -5% change. This age group is known for moving, typically out of their guardian's home, which is why the 25-34 age group did not experience a similar rise in population during the same time period.

Figures 2.2 and 2.3 display the estimated 2009 age by sex breakdown for the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City of Albuquerque, respectively. It is clear from this comparison that the City has a more balanced age distribution than the Downtown Neighborhood Area. The Downtown Neighborhood Area has 20% of its population between the ages of 0-24. This is a significantly smaller percentage than the City, which has 34% of its population in this cohort. The Downtown Neighborhood Area has a slightly larger percentage within the 25-64 age range, 64% versus 54%.

**Figure 2.2: Downtown Neighborhood Area, Age by Sex, 2009**



**Figure 2.3: City of Albuquerque, Age by Sex, 2009**

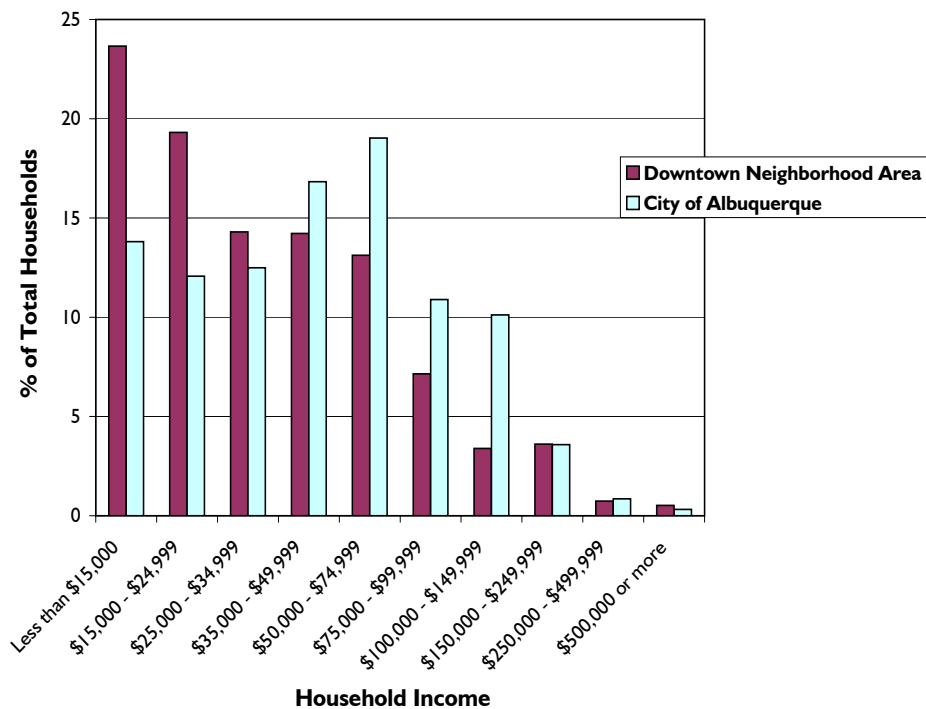


Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

**Household Income**

Figure 2.4 provides a comparison of the 2009 estimated household incomes for the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City of Albuquerque. The Downtown Neighborhood Area has a significantly higher concentration of annual household incomes below \$34,999, 57% compared to the City’s 38%. The percentages of households earning less than \$24,999 have decreased since Census 2000 from 51% to 43%. However, there is still a significantly higher percentage of these households in the Downtown Neighborhood Area than in the City of Albuquerque, 43% versus 26%. These numbers are in accord with the amount of renter occupied housing units contained within the study area. The 2009 estimated percentage of renter occupied housing units for the Downtown Neighborhood Area is 59%, whereas the City of Albuquerque is estimated at 38%. It is safe to assume there is a correlation between the lower incomes and the lower amount of owner occupied housing units.

**Figure 2.4: Household Income, 2009**



Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

**Educational Attainment**

Table 2.2 provides a comparison between the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City of Albuquerque in 2000 and 2009 of the educational attainment of individuals over the age of 25. The Downtown Neighborhood Area contains a 6% higher concentration of people with a less than 9th grade education, 11% versus 5% for the City. The Downtown Neighborhood Area contains an 8% lower concentration of individuals with some college education than the City, 16% versus 24%. These numbers coincide with the lower household income levels

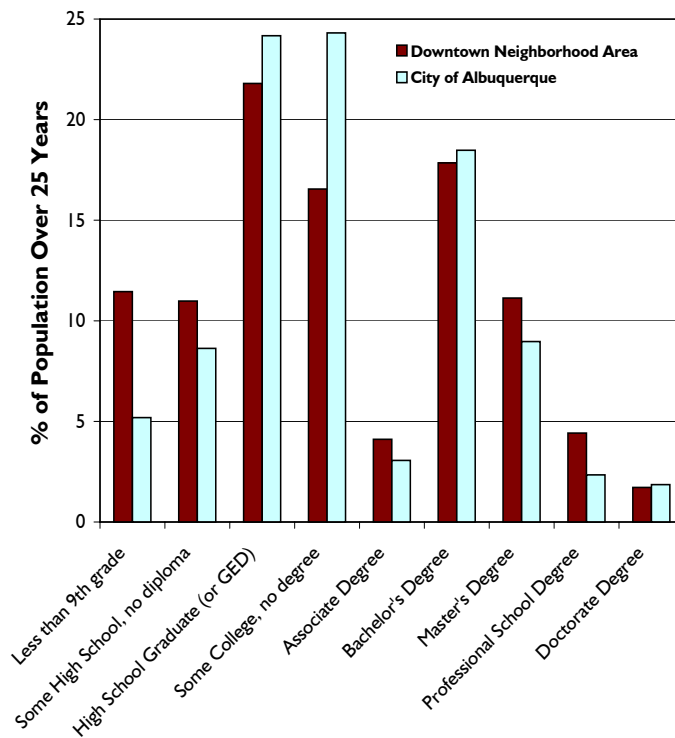
and higher concentration of renter occupied housing units discussed previously. As Table 2.2 displays, there is not a significant change in these numbers from Census 2000 to the current 2009 estimate. Figure 2.5 shows a comparison of the 2009 estimated educational attainment for the population over 25 years for the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City of Albuquerque. It is estimated that 17% of the Downtown Neighborhood Area has a Master’s, Professional School, or Doctorate Degree, compared to 13% for the City.

**Table 2.2: Educational Attainment for Population Over 25 Years of Age**

	2000		2009	
	ABQ	DNA	ABQ	DNA
Less than 9th grade	5.38%	11.22%	5.19%	11.34%
Some High School, no diploma	8.70%	10.87%	8.63%	10.90%
High School Graduate (or GED)	24.09%	21.89%	24.17%	21.94%
Some College, no degree	24.19%	16.53%	24.31%	16.49%
Associate Degree	5.86%	4.15%	6.06%	4.16%
Bachelor’s Degree	18.38%	17.95%	18.48%	17.93%
Master’s Degree	9.13%	11.22%	8.97%	11.24%
Professional School Degree	2.36%	4.45%	2.34%	4.36%
Doctorate Degree	1.91%	1.72%	1.86%	1.63%

Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

**Figure 2.5: Educational Attainment for Population over 25 Years, 2009**



Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

**Population by Race and Ethnicity**

Overall, the racial breakdown of the Downtown Neighborhood Area’s population does not significantly differ from the City of Albuquerque. Table 2.3 shows the percent of population by race for 2000 and 2009. The population of White Alone is the highest for both areas by a large margin, 73% for the Downtown Neighborhood Area and 68% for the City of Albuquerque.

**Table 2.3: Percent of Population by Race**

	2000		2009	
	ABQ	DNA	ABQ	DNA
White Alone	71.59%	71.06%	67.95%	72.60%
Black or African American Alone	3.09%	2.51%	3.61%	2.53%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	3.89%	4.90%	4.62%	5.65%
Asian Alone	2.24%	0.96%	2.39%	1.11%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	0.10%	0.08%	0.13%	0.16%
Some Other Race Alone	14.78%	15.74%	16.39%	12.95%
Two or More Races	4.31%	4.74%	4.90%	5.01%

Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

Table 2.4 depicts the percent of population by ethnicity for the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the City of Albuquerque. In 2000, the Downtown Neighborhood Area contained a 8% higher concentration of Hispanics or Latinos with 48% versus 40% for the City, but this percentage was estimated to have dropped in 2009 to 45% while the City of Albuquerque’s population of Hispanics or Latinos rose from 40% to 44%. The Downtown Neighborhood Area has a slightly more balanced distribution of these two ethnicity groups than the City.

**Table 2.4: Percent of Population by Ethnicity**

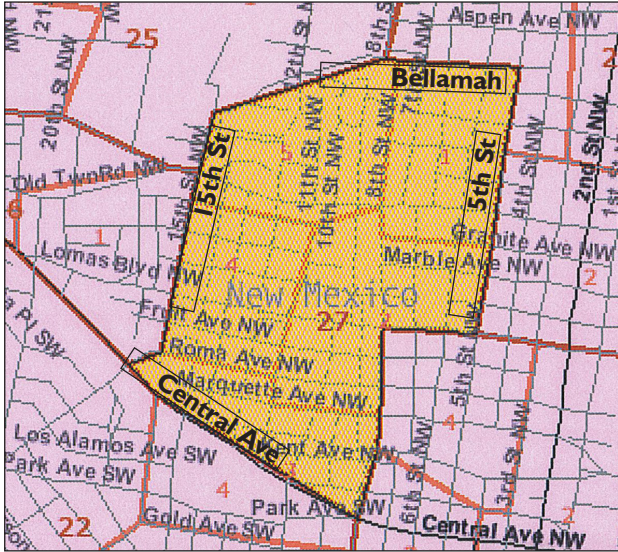
	2000		2009	
	ABQ	DNA	ABQ	DNA
Hispanic or Latino	39.92%	48.49%	44.19%	45.24%
Not Hispanic or Latino	60.08%	51.51%	55.81%	54.76%

Source: Claritas Inc., based on the US Census Bureau

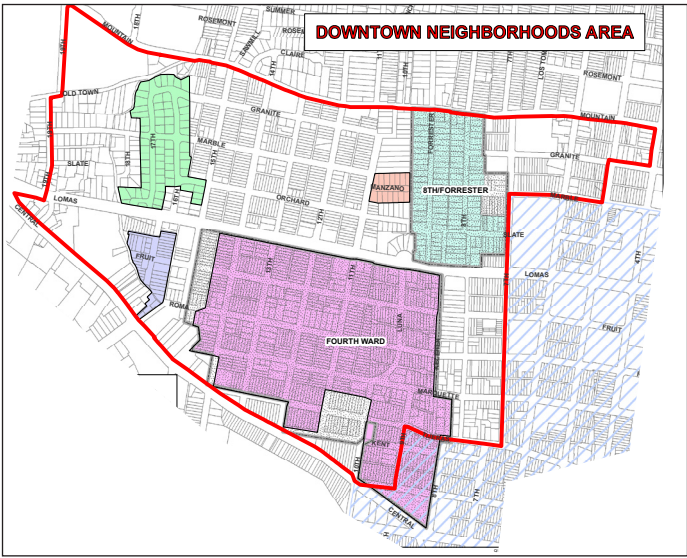


**Historical Population**

The 1976 Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan used Census Tract 27 for demographic information. However, since the tract boundaries have changed over time, (see maps below), it was not used in the previous sections. Regardless, it is important to know how this area has changed over time and how it compares geographically to the Plan area.

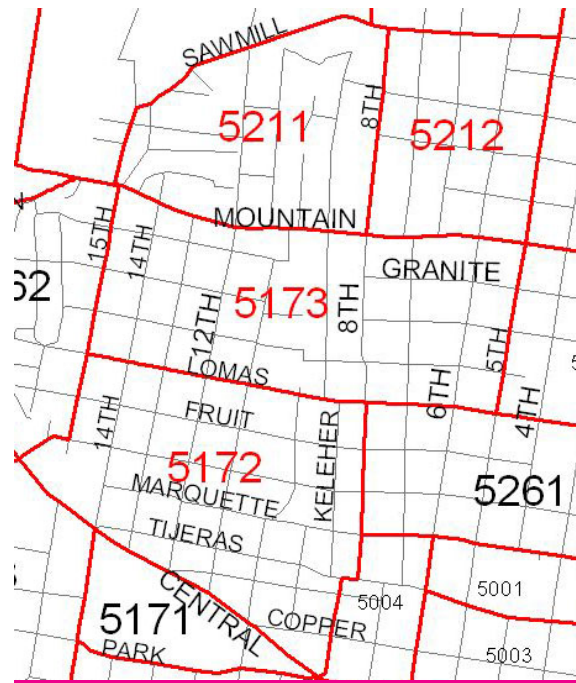


Census Tract 27



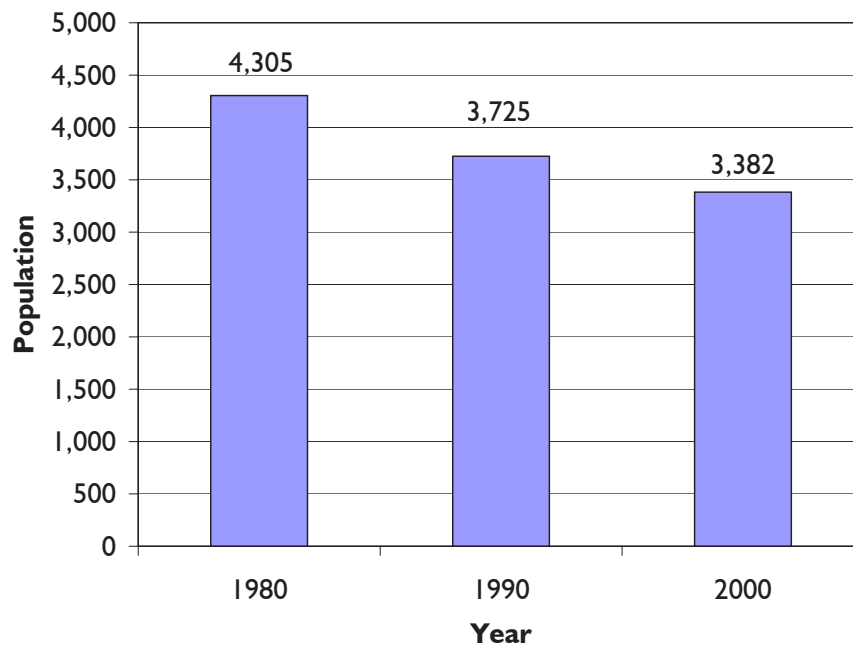
Downtown Neighborhood Area

The data in Figure 2.6 (see below) was obtained from the US Census Bureau and the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG). For 1980 and 1990, the Census Tract 27 boundaries were the same as the 1970 Census. Since this area experienced a decline in population, the 2000 Census Tract 27 boundaries were extended, and in order to ensure that the same geographic area was compared, Data Analysis Sub-Zone (DASZ) data was used. Figure 2.6 illustrates the decline in population that Census Tract 27 has experienced. The 1975 population estimate presented in the 1976 Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan was 4,153 people. The Census Tract population increased to 4,305 people in 1980, an approximately 4% increase, before it began to decline.



Data Analysis Sub-Zones

**Figure 2.6: Census Tract 27- Historical Population**

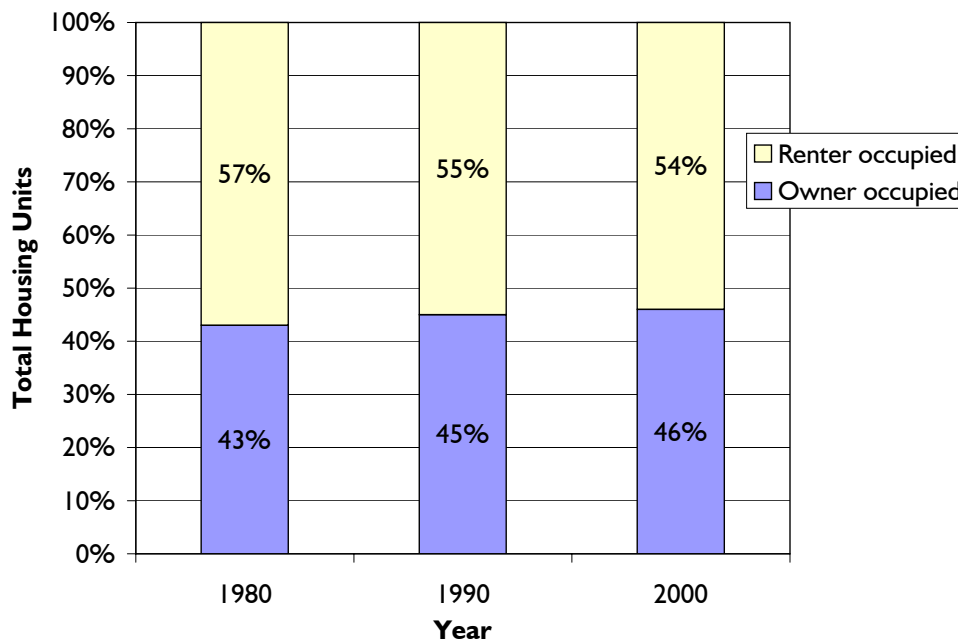


Source: US Census Bureau and Mid-Region Council of Governments

**Historical Housing Tenure**

In 1975, it was estimated by MRCOG that the number of renter-occupied housing units was 53% within Census Tract 27. Figure 2.7 shows the breakdown between renter-occupied and owner-occupied housing units for 1980-2000. The number of renter-occupied housing units for Census Tract 27 increased to 57% in 1980, but then experienced marginal decreases in 1990 and 2000. It should be noted that the Downtown Neighborhood Area contains a larger concentration of renter-occupied housing units than the area of the historic Census Tract 27. According to Claritas, Inc., the renter-occupied housing units in 2000 for the Downtown Neighborhood Area specifically was 59% and has remained the same for the 2009 estimate.

**Figure 2.7: Census Tract 27 - Historical Tenure 1980-2000**



Source: US Census Bureau and Mid-Region Council of Governments

**Age of Housing Units**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area is one of the oldest residential areas in the City of Albuquerque. The majority of the housing units in this area, 51%, are estimated to have been built prior to 1940. There are five historic districts in the Downtown Neighborhood Area: Watson Addition, Orilla de La Acequia, Fourth Ward, Manzano Court, and Eighth and Forrester.

## B. COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

A series of walking tours of the Downtown Neighborhood Area were conducted by the consultants with the Sector Plan Steering Committee in October, 2009. The walking tours were held during the information gathering stage of the Sector Plan update. The key observations gained during the walking tours and provided in this section were instrumental in setting the parameters for what would be contained in the update.

### General

1. There are a tremendous variety of subareas within the Sector Plan area – each with their own set of character defining elements including architectural styles and history, size and massing of buildings, land use, street trees and other landscaping, pedestrian accessibility, and overall condition of buildings and public infrastructure.

2. Most of the Plan area is in very good condition, with some exceptions. Areas of concern are located in the southern portion of the Plan area – rundown motels and properties along Central and Tijeras Avenues; in the eastern portion of the Plan area – non-conforming parking lots, buildings in need of rehabilitation adjacent to and along Fourth Street.



Non-conforming commercial parking lot along Fourth Street

3. Public infrastructure issues run throughout the Plan area. Many sidewalks are in poor condition, are missing, or are ADA non-compliant.



Distressed property along Mountain Road, west of 12th Street

4. Land use is primarily residential in varying densities, with commercial and office use located primarily along Fourth Street (Plan area's eastern boundary) and Central Avenue (Plan area's southern boundary) and to a lesser degree, along Mountain Road (Plan area's northern boundary) and Lomas Boulevard.

- There are numerous opportunity sites and buildings that could be used for redevelopment purposes either by the public or private sectors. These sites are identified in the detailed tour notes.



Opportunity site at 10th Street and Central Avenue

- Mountain Road has undergone a positive transformation with new development and rehabilitation of existing buildings. There are a good mix of neighborhood commercial and residential land uses along Mountain Road, particularly east of 12<sup>th</sup> Street. Some of these small businesses are struggling and some have gone out of business. Opportunity for redevelopment exists west of 12<sup>th</sup> Street, which has been identified in the tour notes.

- Much of the properties zoned for townhomes, primarily north of Lomas Boulevard, have not been utilized as such. Some of the townhome development has been designed well and fits within the neighborhood, while some projects do not fit from a height, massing, and garage orientation standpoint.



Townhomes along 11th Street with no area left for landscaping in the front setback

- Many of the properties zoned for RC (residential / commercial) and MRO (mixed residential office) and have office uses do not appear to be in compliance with the Zone Code, which requires a 50/50 split between the two land uses (100% residential is permitted, but non-residential can be no more than 50%). These are primarily located along Lomas Boulevard and in the eastern portion of the Plan area, north of Lomas Boulevard.

- There is a disconnect between the existing land use, predominantly single family homes in the historic districts, and the zoning. This is of special concern in those districts that are not regulated by the LUCC because it could be seen as an economic incentive to demolish existing structures and rebuild at higher densities. In the historic districts regulated by the LUCC, the LUCC historic design guidelines for the district are different from the zoning regulations.

10. There is a significant concern regarding the increase of bail bond offices within the Plan area and their apparent lack of compliance with the Zone Code. These businesses are open 24/7 and are a permissive use in the O-1 zone. The Sector Plan should specifically address bail bond offices and restrict their locations within the Sector Plan.



Bail bond office along Fourth Street

11. There is a need for more convenient and appropriately located commercial uses that serve the neighborhood. Location is everything; neighbors want services carefully sited and designed so they do not detract from the overall residential character of the Plan area. The scale of these neighborhood commercial uses is an important element.

12. Office uses are seen as an intrusion into the neighborhood, particularly south of Lomas Boulevard. The Sector Plan should look at limiting the amount of additional office use that can be built in the Plan area. It was noted that some of the larger, historic homes would be difficult to maintain as single family homes.

### Transportation Issues

1. Lomas Boulevard is the major east-west corridor through the Plan area. Lomas is designated a principal arterial by the Current Roadway Classification System by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG). Lomas appears to have excess right-of-way and consideration should be given to implementation of traffic 'taming' techniques such as curb extensions (bulb-outs) and lane narrowing in order to ease north-south pedestrian flow across Lomas. Pedestrian amenities such as benches and street trees are lacking or inconsistent along Lomas.
2. Central Avenue has been the subject of several studies looking at streetscape, cross sections, land uses, etc. There is also a current study that is being coordinated by the City Council (Central Avenue Road Diet), specifically Councilor Isaac Benton. Raynolds and Huning Castle Neighborhood Associations are working with Councilor Benton concerning specific improvements to Central Avenue. The Sector Plan should review these studies and include the relevant information as a part of the Sector Plan update process.

3. Pedestrian accessibility is a challenge in many parts of the Plan area. There are numerous streets with missing sidewalk sections, deteriorated sidewalks, or very narrow sidewalks. Many intersections are missing one or more ADA compliant curb ramps. Some curb ramps are significantly offset from the intersection.
4. Many sidewalk sections without parkway strips have ADA deficient driveway cut designs.
5. 12<sup>th</sup>/Mountain intersection has functional issues. Mountain Road has a left turn lane east of Seventh Street within a 32 foot face-to-face (curb-to-curb) roadway section. Can this be applied to 12th Street which is 31 feet face-to-face?
6. Maintenance of alleys is a concern within the Plan area. Most of the alleys are not maintained well and some have become a nuisance to the neighborhood attracting homeless people and trash accumulation.
7. Coordination is needed with the Great Streets Plan, which has been through the Environmental Planning Commission process, but has not been approved by City Council. Mountain Road is designated as a 'Bicycle Boulevard' with an 18 mph speed limit.

### Street Trees

1. While there are some streets that contain street trees, there are many streets that are missing a street tree canopy that is a character defining element for many parts of the Plan area. Sometimes one side of the street has trees and not the other side, and in many instances, there are no street trees at all. Specific streets that are lacking street trees are called out in the tour notes.
2. Street trees are uprooting sidewalks in some areas. A recommendation would be to identify appropriate species and planting techniques for this planting condition between the curb and sidewalk in the Sector Plan.

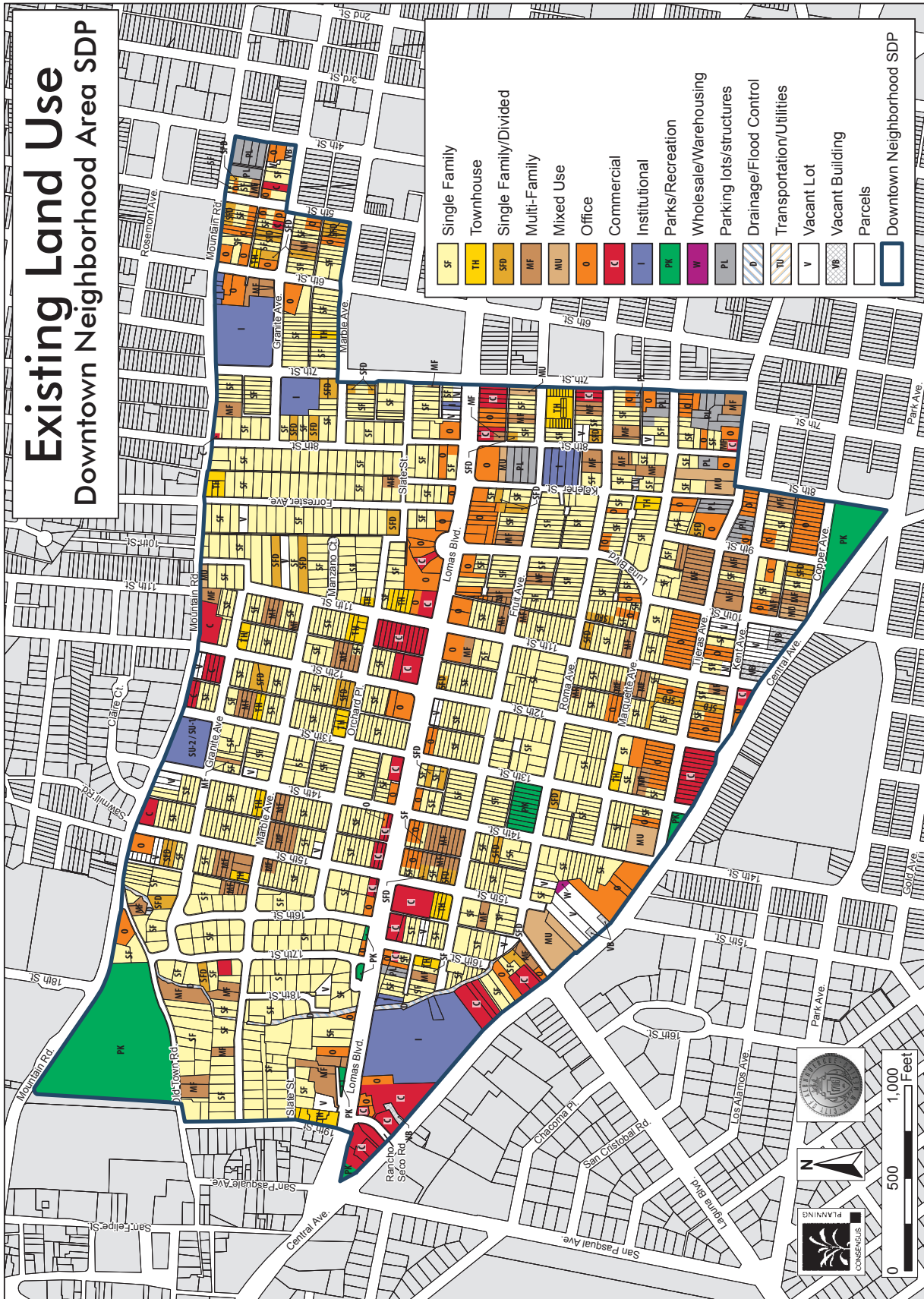
### C. EXISTING LAND USE and ZONING

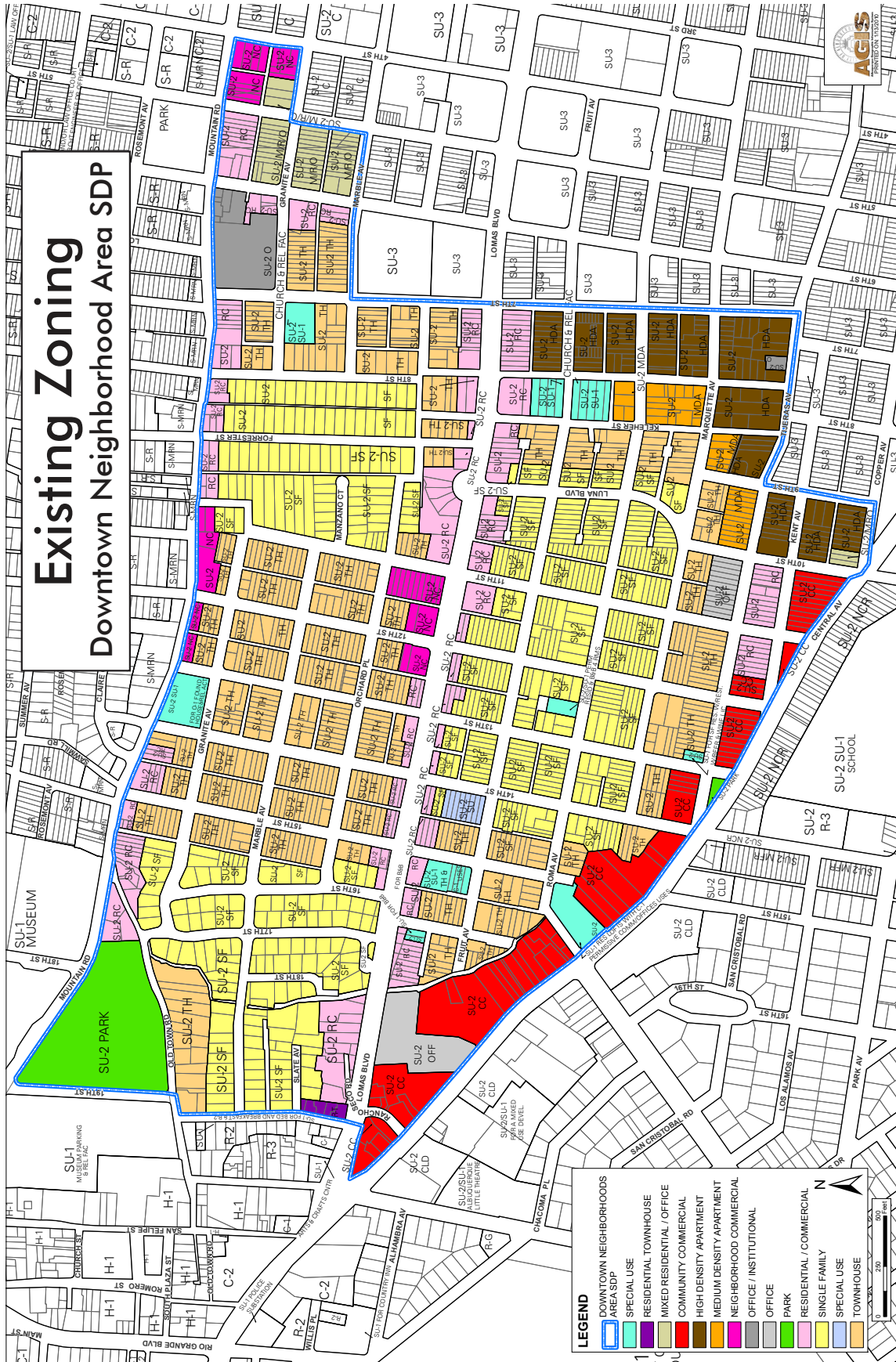
The Downtown Neighborhood Area is primarily composed of single-family detached residential development, and to a much lesser degree, townhomes and multi-family residential, neighborhood commercial uses, and offices (see page 31, *Existing Land Use*). As previously noted, however, the existing land use bear little relationship to the existing zoning. Key observations regarding existing land use are as follows:

- The non-residential uses are primarily located along the major roadways at the perimeter of the Downtown Neighborhood Area:
  - ◊ Central Avenue has a mix of office, hotel, and school uses;
  - ◊ Mountain Road has a mix of single family residential and townhome, neighborhood commercial, school, and institutional uses;

- ◇ Lomas Boulevard has a mix of office, residential, and some neighborhood commercial uses; and
- ◇ Fifth and Sixth Streets have a mix of residential, office (including bail bond offices), and commercial uses.
- The area around the federal, county, and metropolitan courthouses have a higher concentration of attorney and bail bond offices.
- There are many instances of single-family homes that have been converted to multi-family uses throughout the Downtown Neighborhood Area.
- There are three City parks in the current Downtown Neighborhood Area - Tiguex Park, an 8.42 acre community park located south along Mountain Road and east of 19th Street and Old Town; Mary Fox Park, an .82 acre neighborhood park located at 13th Street and Roma Avenue; and Soldiers & Sailors Park, an .15 acre neighborhood park at Tijeras Avenue/Central Avenue intersection. A fourth park, the City's oldest, is Robinson Park at Central Avenue and Eighth Street. The Plan recommends inclusion of this 1.6 acre community park in the Plan area boundary.
- Due to the prevalence of narrow residential lots (25 feet in width) many property owners own more than one lot. In many instances, buildings run perpendicular to the lot lines
- There are numerous distressed properties located along Central Avenue, and to a lesser degree, along Mountain Road, and Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Streets. These sites and structures are opportunities for adaptive reuse or redevelopment.
- While there is a large amount of townhouse zoning, there is are very few townhouses within the neighborhood zoned for that specific use. Existing townhouses are relatively new and in small groups of a few units each.
- There are only a few buildings within the Downtown Neighborhood that are over two stories in height. This is true even within the HDA zoned area, which allows building heights equal to the heights allowed in the Downtown 2010 Sector Plan.







**D. CURRENT SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The current Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan was adopted by the City Council in October, 1976. At the time of adoption, the Plan area had been designated a blighted area and as such, contained a community development plan that was created under the provisions of the Community Development Law of the State of New Mexico. The purpose was to guide redevelopment, eliminate blight, and preserve the historical development pattern and select buildings which had historical and cultural significance within the Downtown Neighborhood Area.

The 1976 Sector Development Plan contained data on population and housing conditions. The Sector Plan included a land use plan and established zoning within the DNA. Thirteen land uses were established, which corresponded to specific zones in the City Comprehensive Zone Code, including:

- SF Single Family (*corresponds to the R-1 zone with exceptions*)
- TH Townhouse (*corresponds to the R-T zone with exceptions*)
- MRO Mixed Residential/Office (*corresponds to the R-T zone with exceptions*)
- LDA Low Density Apartment (*corresponds to the R-2 zone with exceptions*)
- MDA Medium Density Apartment (*corresponds to the R-3 zone with exceptions*)
- HDA High Density Apartment (*corresponds to the R-4 zone with exceptions*)
- RC Residential/Commercial (*corresponds to the RC zone with exceptions*)
- O-1 Office/Institutional (*corresponds to the O-1 zone*)
- C-1 Neighborhood Commercial (*corresponds to the C-1 zone*)
- C-2 Community Commercial (*corresponds to the C-2 zone*)
- SU Special Use (*corresponds to the SU-1 zone*)
- P Parking (*corresponds to the P Parking Zone*)
- RP Reserve Parking (*corresponds to the P-R zone*)
- Park (*no zone called out*)

Most of the Plan area was rezoned from office to residential use, with substantial areas designated for medium to high density development. Mixed use zones were designated along Mountain Road and Lomas Boulevard, and commercial use was designated along Central Avenue. Non-conforming uses were given a period of 48 years to convert to conforming uses, which would be 2024 (14 years from this 2010 update to the Sector Plan).

Although the Sector Plan referenced existing zone districts within the City Comprehensive Zone Code, it customized the development standards through exceptions. The Sector Plan allowed for a decrease in the amount of off-street parking required for residential development and based the number of parking spaces per unit instead of the typical Zone Code requirement which bases the amount of parking on the number of baths. The Sector Plan decreased the amount of useable open space required in the RC zone from 750 square feet to 500 square feet per dwelling unit. The minimum lot area was decreased for RT

zoned property from 2,200 square feet to 2,000 square feet per dwelling unit. The Sector Plan made 100% office use conditional for properties in the RC zone along Lomas Boulevard as long as certain criteria were met. Properties zoned C-2 were prohibited from having package liquor sales; vehicle sales, rental, and storage; and outdoor storage.

An amendment to the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan was adopted by the City Council in March, 1999. The purpose of the amendment was to protect the neighborhood from the intrusion of commercial surface parking lots. Three of the zones in the Sector Plan were impacted by the amendment, which prohibited commercial parking lots; the SU-2 HDA (High Density Apartment) zone, the RC (Residential/Commercial) zone, and the MRO (Mixed Residential/Office) zone. The amendment allowed the continuation of existing parking lots, but required that parking lot owners submit a site development plan to include landscaping to the City Zoning Hearing Examiner and landscape improvements be installed within 60 days of approval. It appears that this requirement has not been met by all commercial parking lot owners, which continues to be an area of concern for residents.

#### **Plan Area Boundary**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area is adjacent to several other sector development plans, including the Sawmill/Wells Park Sector Development Plan (1996) to the north, the Downtown 2010 Sector Development Plan (2000) to the east, and the Huning Castle & Reynolds Addition Neighborhood Sector Development Plan (1981) to the south. The boundary of the Downtown Neighborhood Area has remained the same since adoption in 1976, with the exception of an adjustment to the eastern boundary at the time of adoption of the Downtown 2010 Plan. The current eastern boundary mostly follows Seventh Street until it gets to Tijeras Avenue, which then takes a jog to the west to Ninth Street. The boundary thereby excludes Robinson Park, and as such, puts the park within the Downtown 2010 Plan area. The boundary also excludes some single family homes, low level apartments, and some converted office buildings. In addition, the eastern boundary does not follow the boundary of the Fourth Ward Historic Overlay Zone and places a small part of the HOZ outside of the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Plan.

#### **Changed Neighborhood Conditions**

As previously noted, the primary intent of the Sector Plan was to address the blighting issues within the neighborhood and provide incentives for redevelopment. Zoning districts contained in the Sector Plan were specifically crafted to encourage redevelopment and increase the affordable housing stock. In large part, the blighting condition that was present in the neighborhood no longer exists. Broad-scale redevelopment never occurred in the neighborhood; instead, property owners have more commonly rehabilitated their buildings. The zoning districts were never utilized to their intended or fullest potential and, as a result, there is a significant disconnect between existing zoning and existing land use in the Downtown Neighborhood Area. The existing zoning for many portions of

the Downtown Neighborhood Area are contrary to the goals and objectives of the neighborhood.

City Resolution 270-1980 provides the criteria for changes to the City’s official zone map. The cornerstone criterion is a demonstration 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, as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan or other City Master Plan, even though (1) or (2) above do not apply.

The following conflicts exist in the current zoning:

HDA Zone - This zoning district corresponds to the R-4 zone and is intended to accommodate the highest density residential development (maximum floor area ratio of 3.0) and incidental uses located near an Urban Center such as Downtown Albuquerque. Permissive uses include non-residential use up to 10 percent of the gross floor area on the premises. Conditional uses include permissive uses in the C-2 zone up to 10 percent of the gross floor area on the premises. The HDA zone is located in the southeast corner of the Plan area along Seventh and Ninth Streets and Tijeras Avenue. However, a significant conflict between the intent and permissive uses of the HDA zoning district and existing land use is readily apparent. There are no apartments taller than 2 or 3 stories within the area zoned for HDA. The community desire is to change this zoning to a less intense multi-family zone that would allow apartments, townhomes, and potentially, some limited office uses.

MRO and RC Zones - These two zoning districts are intended to allow for a mix of residential and non-residential uses. They both reference to the R-T zone for the residential portion, but RC differs by allowing apartments up to 20 dwelling units per acre. For the non-residential portion, MRO allows up to 50% of the gross floor area in O-1 permissive uses and RC allows certain commercial uses up to 50% of the gross floor area. Both zones allow 100% of the floor area for office as a conditional use. The conflict arises with the non-residential restriction to 50% of the gross floor area. Most of these properties have either requested a conditional use permit to allow all of the gross floor area for office use or they are functioning as a zoning violation.

TH Zone - This district corresponds to the R-T district in the Comprehensive City Zoning Code. There is a large amount of TH zoning within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. At the time when the original Sector Plan was adopted, the intent was to encourage redevelopment of the neighborhood for affordable housing. However, very little of the property zoned TH is used for townhomes (see *Existing Land Use map, page 31*). Several new townhome projects have been constructed in the recent past with mixed results. Common complaints from the neighbors include the lack of landscaping provided in the front yard, a garage dominated street view, and massing and scale that is out of character with the surrounding residential character. There is

still support for keeping a certain amount of townhouse zoning within the Downtown Neighborhood Area, but decreasing the amount of properties zoned for townhouses to bring the zoning closer to what is currently existing and adding design standards that would provide better compatibility with the existing character are desired.

## **E. HISTORIC OVERLAY ZONES & HISTORIC DISTRICTS**

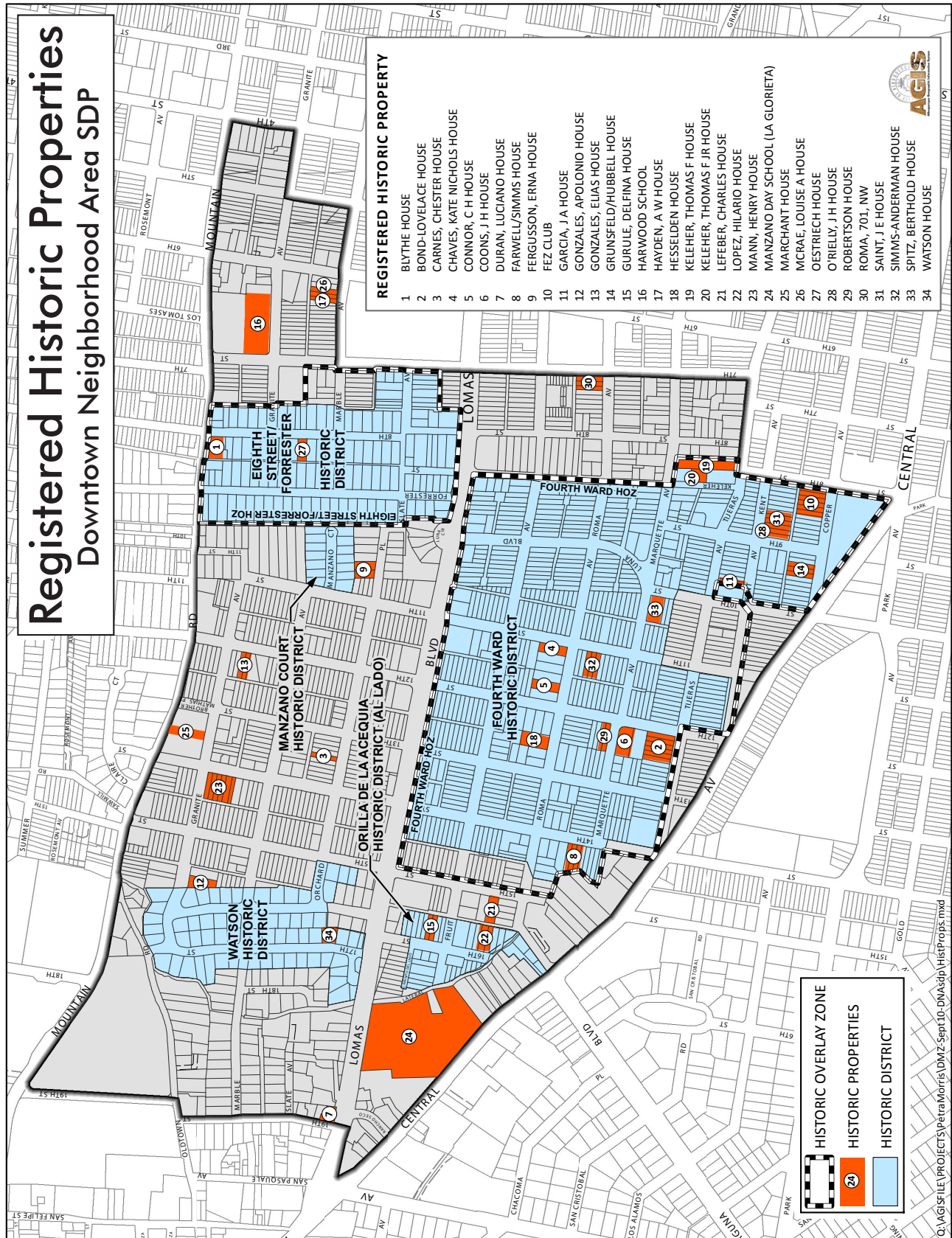
### **Registered Historic Districts**

There are currently five historic districts within the Downtown Neighborhood Area that are listed on the State and/or National Registers for historic properties, including the Fourth Ward, Eighth and Forrester, La Orilla de La Acequia, Manzano Court, and the Watson Addition. Each of these historic districts reflect different architectural styles and periods in the City's early growth. In addition to these historic districts, there are also many buildings located throughout the neighborhood that are listed individually on the historic registers (see *Registered Historic Properties map, page 37*). Unlike Historic Overlay Zones, a historic district designation does not require City development review. However, financial incentives are available for registered buildings and contributing buildings in registered historic districts. Those financial programs require review of proposed work by the State Historic Preservation Division.

### **Financial Incentives**

Buildings listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties or contributing buildings in a state-registered historic district are eligible for a State of New Mexico Investment tax credit for rehabilitation and improvements that promote the building's preservation. A tax credit covering 50% of qualified expenses up to \$50,000 may be awarded. The State of New Mexico also has a preservation Revolving Loan Fund providing below market rate loans for rehabilitation. Many homeowners take advantage of these benefits for various improvements to their properties including re-roofing, mechanical systems, plumbing, electrical, and restoration costs.

Income producing buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for 20% federal tax credits for qualified rehabilitation. However, this federal program is generally only useful for large-scale projects. If a property is not listed on the Historic Register, it may qualify for a 10% credit as a non-historic property. This applies to a property that was placed in service before 1936, is ineligible for individual listing on the National Register, and does not contribute to a National Register, or state or local historic district. The key project related criteria for both the 10% and 20% federal tax credits is that the property be income generating or used in trade or business. As such, the rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential properties does not qualify for the federal tax credit program.



### **Historic Overlay Zones and Development Review**

Currently, two historic districts, the Fourth Ward and the Eighth and Forrester historic districts, are designated as City Historic Overlay Zones (see maps on pages 40-44). The Fourth Ward and the Eighth and Forrester Historic Overlay Zones (HOZ) were designated by the City Council in March 1991. The HOZs were established to protect the unique historic character of these neighborhoods for future generations by providing for development review. The HOZs have been very successful in their missions to preserve the area's unique historic character by providing for the review of alterations to historic buildings in order to preserve their historic and architectural character, prevent the unnecessary demolition of historic buildings, and provide development standards to ensure that new development is compatible with the historic district.

### **Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance and Commission**

The City adopted the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Ordinance in 1978. The ordinance requires that within the boundaries of a historic zone, urban conservation overlay zone, or landmark site, the exterior appearance of any structure shall not be altered, new structures shall not be constructed, and existing structures shall not be demolished until a Certificate of Appropriateness has been approved. The Landmarks Ordinance created the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission (LUCC) and charged the LUCC with the responsibility to make decisions on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in accordance with the ordinance. A Certificate of Appropriateness is a document certifying that the LUCC or its staff has reviewed either proposed alterations to a property or new construction of a building, or an application for demolition and the work has been determined to meet the applicable development guidelines for the Historic Zone or City Landmark.

The Mayor appoints members of the LUCC and the Planning Department provides a designated staff person to evaluate projects and provide recommendations to the LUCC on development review applications. City staff also provides limited design assistance, historic preservation guidance and information to property owners, and reviews and may approve changes to buildings that do not require a building permit and/or small additions to buildings. Such alterations include fences, walls, re-roofing, small additions, and window or door replacement. Larger projects are reviewed by the LUCC at a public hearing held each month. All applications require a complete information package that clearly illustrates the proposed changes. A pre-application meeting with City staff is encouraged and staff will determine the level of review required for the proposed project. City staff will also assist with preparing the application.

A Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for interior alterations and routine maintenance that does not alter the exterior appearance of the building. All exterior work affecting the character, design, composition, form, or appearance requires review and approval by the LUCC or its staff.

The majority of the projects presented to the LUCC are either approved as submitted or approved with modifications. With proper planning and consultation



with City staff, projects that are out of compliance with the development guidelines can be avoided.

### Development (Design) Guidelines

The Landmarks Ordinance requires specific development guidelines for the HOZs. These guidelines provide the framework for evaluating development review applications. The development guidelines for projects within the HOZs are applied, in addition to other City codes and regulations. The guidelines for improvements to historic resources (contributing buildings) are oriented towards retaining the original architectural character. The development guidelines also encourage the protection of neighborhood character by including standards for non-historic (non-contributing) buildings and new construction to be generally compatible with the historic buildings and existing neighborhood character. Miscellaneous site features such as accessory buildings, fences, and walls are also addressed in the development guidelines since the overall visual character of the streetscape is affected by such features.

### Fourth Ward Historic District and Overlay Zone

The Fourth Ward Historic District and HOZ derives its name from the City's early system of political subdivisions called "Wards". This large historic district is bound by Lomas Boulevard to the north; Tijeras, Kent, and Central Avenues to the south; Keleher Avenue and Eighth Street to the east; and 14th and 15th Streets to the west (see *HOZ map, page 40*). A small portion of the district at the southeast corner is located outside of the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Plan boundary. There is also a slight difference between the City's HOZ boundary and the boundaries for the National and State Historic Districts.



The district contains a variety of homes built between 1880 and 1930, with most of the development beginning in the early twentieth century. Prior to 1900, most new housing was concentrated in Huning's Highland to the east of the railroad tracks and the Fourth Ward had a few houses on large parcels of land. After the turn of the century, the Fourth Ward became the fashionable neighborhood for Albuquerque's growing

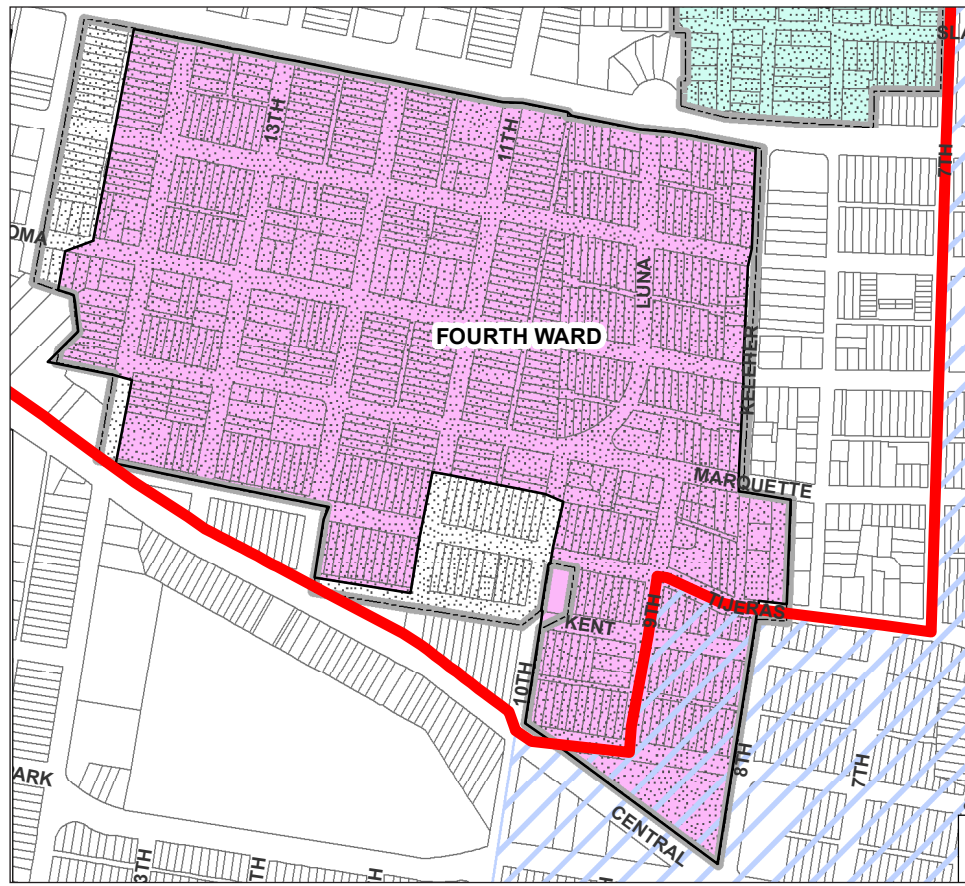


Fourth Ward Historic Overlay District

business class. A wide variety of architectural styles are represented in the district including Queen Anne, Bungalow, Hipped Box, Prairie, Federal Style, Territorial

Revival, Mission Revival, Spanish Pueblo Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, and Foursquare.

The area developed primarily as a residential neighborhood of mostly single-family dwellings, some multi-family apartments containing central landscaped courtyards, and a few commercial structures. Originally, the front yards were unfenced and street trees were planted in the strip between the curb and the sidewalks. The homes typically had a 20-foot front yard setback on the north-south streets and a 15-foot front yard setback on east-west streets. The Fourth Ward Historic District was listed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1979 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.



Fourth Ward Historic Overlay District

**Eighth and Forrester Historic District Overlay Zone**

The Eighth and Forrester HOZ is a neighborhood of simple lower-middle class housing bound by Mountain Road on the north, Lomas Boulevard on the south, the west side of Forrester Street on the west, and a portion of Seventh Street on the east.

The area was built up between 1905 and 1930, with a small area in the south-east corner built before 1900. The predominant architecture is the Hipped Box, a one-story, square house with a hipped roof and front porch, often with a projecting dormer from the front roof slope. The oldest houses are late adaptations to the Queen Anne style. In the late 1910's and 1920's, small versions of the Bungalow style were added, as well as Southwest Vernacular and Spanish Pueblo Revival styles. This is a neighborhood of modest houses, simplified versions of popular styles.



Eighth and Forrester Historic Overlay Zone - on right, contributing building at 9th and Forrester

Typical neighborhood characteristics include a planting strip between the sidewalk and back of curb, long blocks for streets running north-south, common setbacks, small homes on standard 50-foot lots, and mature deciduous trees. Typical building characteristics included a predominance of one-story homes, small simple structures with modest ornamentation, use of brick, frame, and clapboard, frame and stucco, or cast stone as common building materials, and many houses with hipped roofs. The Eighth and Forrester Historic District was listed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1979 and the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

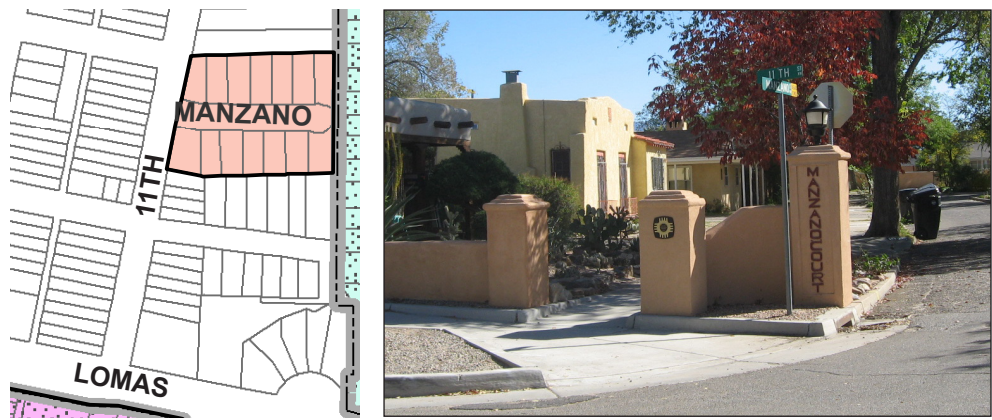
**Manzano Court Historic District**

Manzano Court, located off the east side of 11th Street north of Lomas Boulevard, is a small subdivision of single-family homes along a block-long cul-de-sac. The Manzano Court Addition was platted in 1923 as one of the last subdivisions within Albuquerque’s Original Town Site and is distinguished by its concentration of Southwest Vernacular style houses. There are only 12 houses in the district, most of which were built between 1925 and 1937.

The architecture of this district reflects the transition from the imported cottage and bungalow styles of architecture that are found in much of the surrounding neighborhoods, to the development of a distinctly regional style of architecture that borrowed elements from popular revival styles such as the California Mission, Mediterranean, and Spanish Pueblo Revival styles. The one-story houses have flat roofs with varying parapets and details that lend individuality to each. Anna S. Gotshall, one of Albuquerque’s first women designers, designed most of the contributing houses.

The historic houses typically have a single car garage located at the rear of the property that is also considered historic. Each garage is similar to the roofline and stucco finish of the main house.

With two sixteen-foot roadways flanking the richly planted median and an ample deciduous tree canopy, the streetscape has a park-like appearance. The low wall with piers along the west side of the subdivision is also a contributing structure. The Manzano Court Historic District was listed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 2003 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.

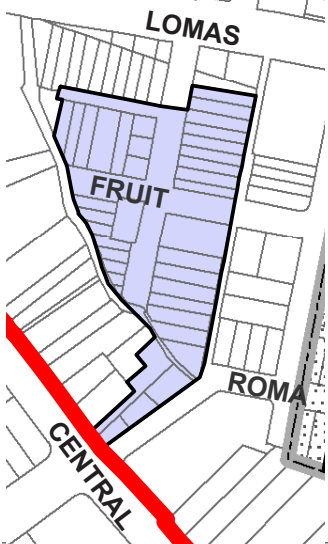


Manzano Court Historic District - on right, entry wall along 11th Street

**La Orilla de La Acequia Historic District**

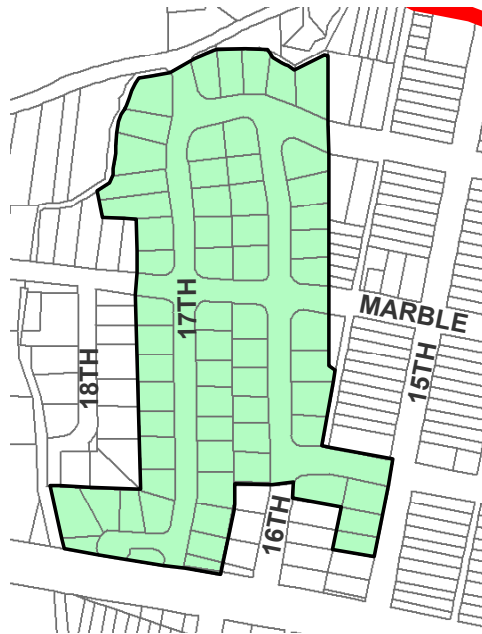
La Orilla de La Acequia (Al Lado del Acequia) is a small neighborhood located between Caminito del Lado to the north, Laguna Boulevard and the acequia to the south and west, and the alley between 15th and 16th Streets to the east. The neighborhood is tucked between Old Town to the west and the Fourth Ward to the east.

The name of the district is taken from the acequia that is at the district’s western boundary. La Orilla de la Acequia is characterized by its concentration of small adobe homes built in New Mexico vernacular architectural style mainly between 1910 and 1925. These houses are different from than the houses of the Fourth Ward just to the east and they reflect the continuity of Hispano building traditions. This was a neighborhood of laborers and railroad workers.



Orilla de La Acequia Historic District - on right, Delfinia Gurule home at 306 16th Street

The buildings in La Orilla de La Acequia sit close to the street. The buildings that held the neighborhood store, dance hall, and pool hall still exist, though they have been converted to residential uses. La Orilla de la Acequia was placed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1979.



**Watson Addition Historic District**

The Watson Addition Historic District, located between Lomas Boulevard and Old Town Road, covers an irregular shaped area that is centered on 16th and 17th Streets. The land was assembled and platted as the Chacon Addition in 1939, a controlled residential subdivision. The district is distinguished by its Spanish Pueblo Revival style architecture, a style that is unique to the southwest. Based upon a blending of the architecture of the Pueblo peoples with that of the Spanish colonists, this revivalist style was popular in Albuquerque between 1925 and 1950, and gained much popularity with local builders during the 1930's.



Watson Addition Historic District

Leon Watson, a local builder, purchased the land in 1941 and built houses for the F.H.A. loan market of middle to lower income families. Watson's appreciation for craftsmanship was evident in these high quality houses built in a unified style with the traditional building material of adobe with wood portals, corbels, vigas, and kiva fireplaces. The development's location at the edge of Old Town demonstrates a sensitive transition between the

architecture of the Old Town area and the Anglo-style buildings to the east of the district.

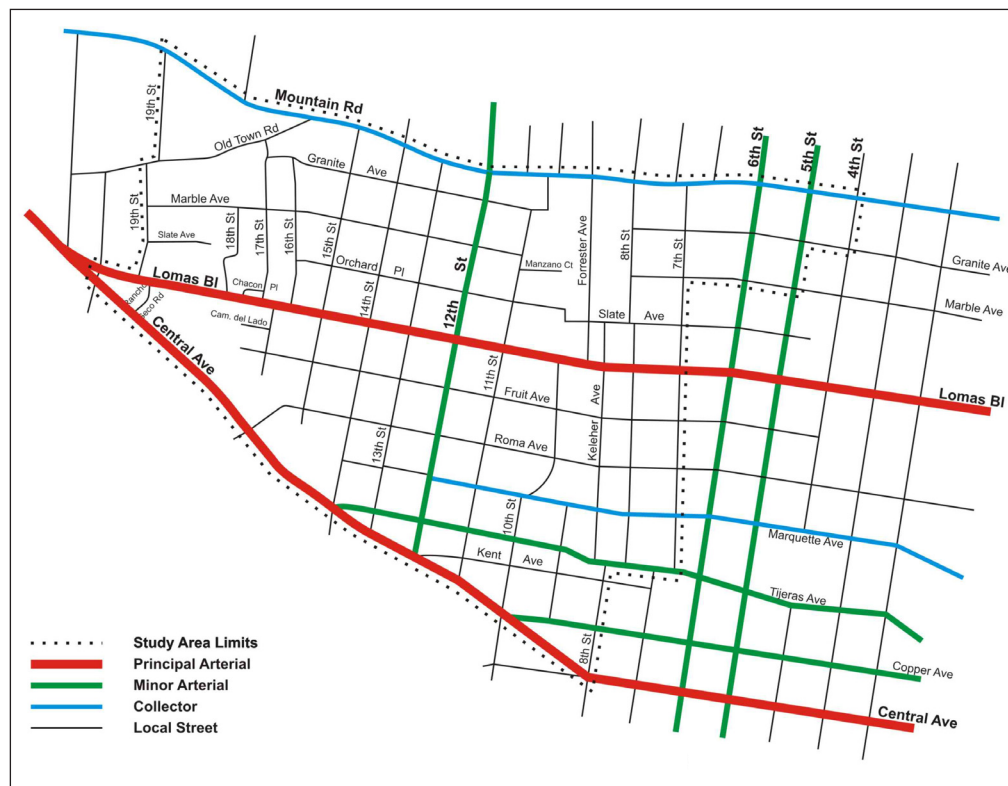
Sidewalks within the district are narrow and sit adjacent to the street, leaving no room for the street trees that are common in the Fourth Ward to the east. The Watson Addition was placed on the New Mexico State Register of Cultural Properties in 1979.

**F. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

Transportation is the means by which we move people and goods within and through a neighborhood and a community. Within the Downtown Neighborhood Area, numerous modes of transportation are utilized. Mobility to and from the Downtown Neighborhood Area is primarily via passenger vehicles and trucks, though the local transit system can help with area circulation. Pedestrians and cyclists are numerous within the Downtown Neighborhood Area, and these modes provide destination mobility within the area.

**Roadways**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area has a street grid pattern which provides access to homes and businesses, as well as access to the greater Albuquerque area. The neighborhood is bisected by one east-west principal arterial, Lomas Boulevard, a four-lane median divided roadway with wide parking aisles on each side of the road. Central Avenue is the southern boundary of the neighborhood, an east-west principal arterial street with four travel lanes and a median turn lane that demarcates north and south Albuquerque. These two roads are the two functionally classified principal arterials in the neighborhood.



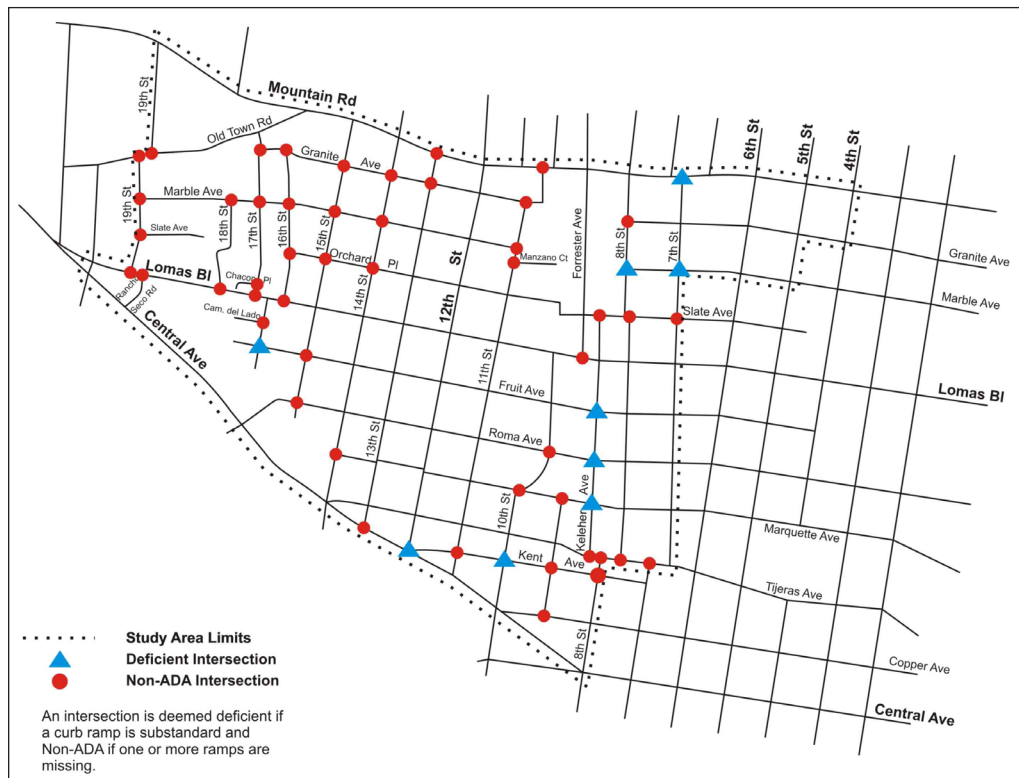
Roadway Functional Classifications

The Downtown Neighborhood Area contains a series of minor arterials. North-south minor arterials include the Fifth Street-Sixth Street one-way couplet and 12th Street near the heart of the neighborhood. The Fifth Street-Sixth Street one-way couplet streets are each two-lane roadways, with Fifth Street serving northbound and Sixth Street serving southbound traffic. These routes provide service to Interstate 40

to the north and the Albuquerque Central Business District to the south. The 12th Street corridor provides north-south circulation within the neighborhood and access to a light industrial neighborhood and I-40 to the north. Two east-west minor arterials serve the neighborhood – Tijeras Avenue and Copper Avenue. These two routes provide access between the Downtown Neighborhood Area and the Albuquerque Central Business District. Each of the minor arterials is a two-lane roadway.

Two east-west collector roads are located within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Marquette Avenue provides a connection from the Central Business District into the residential area and Mountain Road provides access from the University of New Mexico area to Old Town. Mountain Road is the northern boundary of the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Each of the collector roads is a two lane roadway. The remaining streets within the neighborhood are classified as local streets.

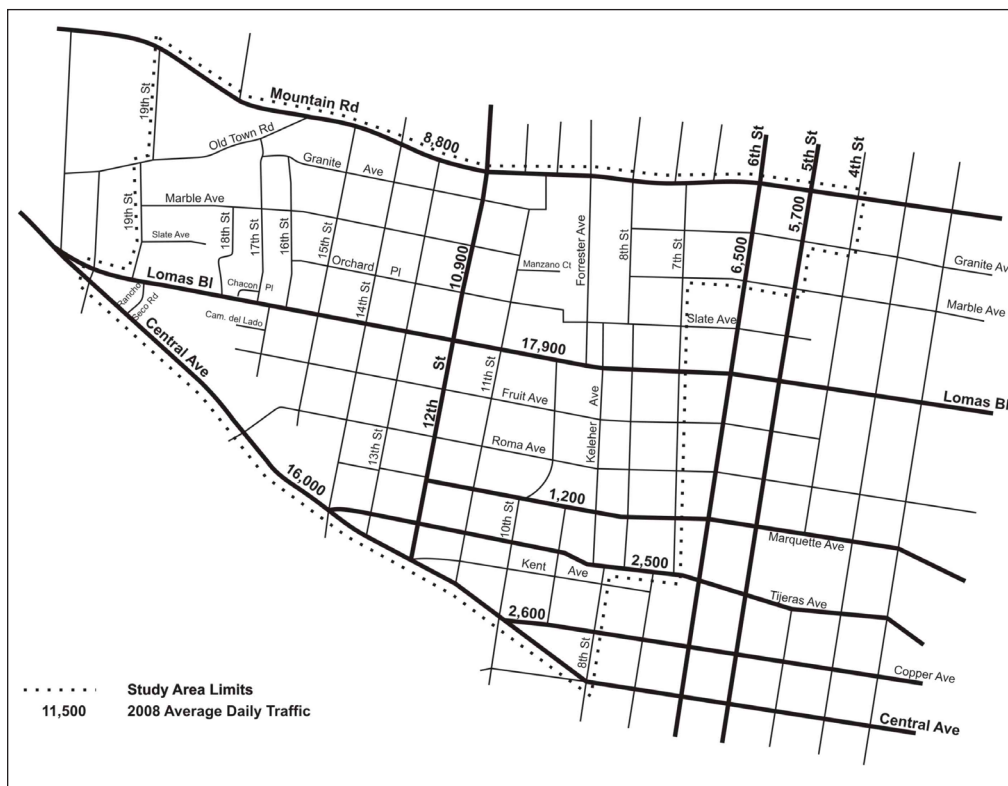
Each of the neighborhood roads and streets were inventoried to identify improvements that would increase safety and mobility for area residents and visitors. A significant deficiency noted was the lack of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance on many intersection curb ramps (see *Deficient Curb Ramps* graphic below). The neighborhood has 122 intersections, and 70% of the intersection returns are constructed in compliance with ADA guidelines. The remaining 30% were identified as non-compliant with 3.3% deficient and 26.7% having no curb ramp. It should be noted that many of the missing ramps were on the far side of a “T” intersection which does not have a curb return, but should have a ramp to receive a crossing pedestrian.



Study Area Intersections with Deficient Curb Ramps



Traffic volume data were available from the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG) for the year 2008 (see graphic below). The traffic volumes on the classified roadways range from 1,200 vehicles per day (vpd) to 17,900 vpd on Lomas Boulevard. Each of the roadways operate adequately given the traffic volumes, though 12th Street and Mountain Road have 10,900 vpd and 8,800 vpd respectively. Given the narrow roadway environments and moderately high volumes on these two streets, a planning level assessment of operations yielded level of service (LOS) D. All other road segments in the Downtown Neighborhood Area should operate at LOS C or better, indicating good operations.



2008 Roadway Volumes

The neighborhood residents have expressed concern about four roadways – Lomas Boulevard, Mountain Road, Central Avenue, and 12th Street:

**Lomas Boulevard**

Lomas Boulevard bisects the community, separating it to the north and south. The road is approximately 86 feet in width from face of curb to face of curb, and only has one signalized crossing within the study area at 12th Street. All remaining crossings are unsignalized. Lomas Boulevard has two 12 foot travel lanes in each direction, a raised, landscaped median with median openings at most intersections and left-turn lanes at seven cross streets. One mid-block crosswalk has been striped between 18th Street and 19th Street. All other legal crossings are unmarked. Wide parking lanes are provided in each travel

direction (approximately 11 feet in width), resulting in a visual 'sea of asphalt' for pedestrians to negotiate. Neighborhood residents wishing to cross Lomas Boulevard have concerns given the approximate 18,000 vehicles per day on the road, and there is a desire to create a more pedestrian friendly environment within the roadway prism.

### **Central Avenue**

Central Avenue has two travel lanes in each direction and a continuous two-way left-turn median along the south side of the Downtown Neighborhood Area from Copper Avenue to Laguna Boulevard. Parking alternates from the south to north side of the street in this segment. Between Laguna Boulevard and Lomas Boulevard, Central Avenue has four travel lanes and parking along each side of the street with no median area. Similar to Lomas Boulevard, there are infrequent signalized crossings to safely convey pedestrians across a 67 foot roadway cross section. (Based upon an average walking speed, the crossing time for Central Avenue would be 19 seconds, during which a vehicle can travel 975' at the posted speed limit.)

A study was undertaken by the City of Albuquerque to reduce the travel lanes and provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements in Central Avenue from Eighth Street to Rio Grande Boulevard. The goal is to improve the connection between Downtown and Old Town, and make the area more inviting for residents and visitors while supporting economic development along this critical corridor. The City is cautiously proceeding forward with a "near term improvement" which will involve restriping the roadway from Eighth Street to the Central Avenue/Lomas Boulevard intersection to a three-lane section. Central Avenue, Lomas Boulevard, and other parallel streets will be monitored for one year and an analysis performed to understand the impact to the transportation system. If the test proves successful, the "ultimate configuration" (to be phased over time) will include two travel lanes, plus one center turn lane, bike lanes, street crossings, on-street parking, wider sidewalks, and landscape improvements.

### **12th Street**

12th Street is a minor arterial corridor with primarily residential frontage within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. The narrow two-lane roadway is a principal link between the areas north and south of Lomas Boulevard because it is the only signalized crossing. Lighting is limited along 12th Street; pedestrian lighting exists north of Lomas Boulevard only and illumination exists at intersections south of Lomas Boulevard.

Utility poles line the east side of 12th Street, and their removal by placing the utilities under ground would improve the aesthetics, as well as create safer sight lines at intersections. Numerous intersections have utility poles placed within two feet of the street, many within intersection returns, compromising safety for motor vehicles and pedestrians. The Marquette Ave intersection has poles located within the curb ramps in two quadrants, impeding pedestrian mobility.

On-street parking is allowed only along the west side of 12th St through most of the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Traffic calming in the form of speed humps are installed south of Lomas Boulevard,

**Mountain Road**

Mountain Road is a collector road constructed within a limited right-of-way between Old Town Road and Fourth Street. The right-of-way appears to vary from approximately 38 feet to 50 feet, substandard per the City collector right-of-way requirement of 68 feet. The pavement width varies from 24 feet to 30 feet, including intersection left-turn lanes between Fourth Street and 7th Street. A principal consequence of the limited right-of-way is that the sidewalk is constructed behind the curb without a landscape buffer and many obstacles are constructed within the sidewalk. These obstacles most notably are street lights, utility poles, traffic signs and fire hydrants which interfere with pedestrian mobility. The sidewalk along section's of Mountain Road are further restricted by zero building and fence offsets from the sidewalk (property line), creating the perception of a very narrow walkway.

The intersection of Mountain Road and 12th Street is a concern for the community because there are no left-turn lanes to facilitate better traffic flow. The Mountain Road approaches are both 31 feet in width and 12th Street is 30 feet in width at the intersection. The desired minimum width for an intersection approach with one travel lane in each direction and a left turn lane is 34 feet for two 11 foot travel lanes and a 12 foot left-turn lane. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) roadway design guidelines (2004 edition) indicate that minimum roadway lane widths are 9 feet, and if all lanes at this intersection were 10 feet to 11 feet in width, a left-turn lane could be added. Should this be considered, it would be prudent to investigate truck restrictions because of their width (up to 8.5 feet), and improvements should be contingent upon a before and after safety evaluation.

**Sidewalks**

Sidewalks area constructed throughout the Downtown Neighborhood Area, and most of the streets have a landscape buffer between the sidewalk and back of curb. There are locations where the sidewalk was not constructed or has been removed, and some areas where obstacles are located within the sidewalk. A total of 36 sidewalk sections were identified as missing, and these extend from short segments to a block in length. There are also sidewalk segments that have deteriorated or are in need of repair from tree root damage. Many sections of sidewalk in the northwest part of the neighborhood are also very narrow (as narrow as two feet) and obstacles such as utility poles and fire hydrants are common in some areas (see photos below). The location of the Downtown Neighborhood Area between the Central Business District and Albuquerque Old Town results in substantial pedestrian activity and demand. Improvements to sidewalks in this area would increase pedestrian mobility for residents and visitors alike.



Deteriorated sidewalk



Fire hydrant obstructing very narrow sidewalk



Utility poles and guy wires obstructing the public sidewalk



Sidewalk that has been buckled by tree roots



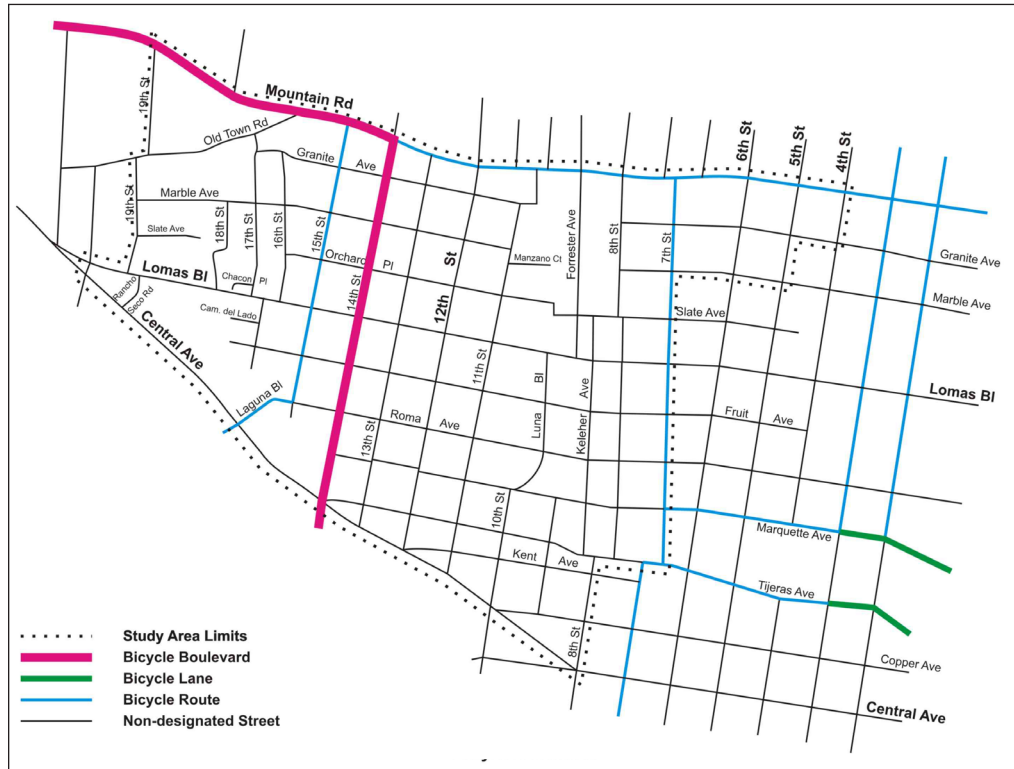
Missing Sidewalk Sections

**Bicycle Facilities**

The Downtown Neighborhood Area has good bicycling facilities because it is primarily a network grid of local streets. However, there are currently no bicycle lanes and minimal bicycle routes. There is a bicycle boulevard designated for part of Mountain Road and 14th Street. Mountain Road is the only designated east-west bicycle route. Part of the Central Avenue road diet is to include bicycle lanes in each travel direction between Eighth Street and Lomas Boulevard.

A bicycle boulevard is the ‘highest’ type of bicycle facility in the City of Albuquerque. There are bicycle boulevards along 14th Street and Mountain Road west of 14th Street. Characteristics of bicycle boulevards are that they should: 1) encourage the through movement of bicycles; 2) be constructed on roadways with wide shoulders or bike lanes; and 3) limit bicycle stops. Mountain Road has no shoulders or bicycle lanes within its limited right-of-way. The 14th Street segment is a 25 foot street with stop or signal control at six of the nine intersections within the Downtown Neighborhood Area; and parking is permitted along each side of the street north of Lomas Boulevard. The very low volumes on 14th Street are conducive to bicycle safety, however, the frequency of stops are frustrating for riders, the narrow roadway puts riders at greater risk, and it is difficult for cyclists to cross Lomas Boulevard at an unsignalized location. The closest signalized crossing is at 12th Street, but this would not be a good alternative as a bicycle boulevard.

Bicycle routes are signed on Mountain Road east of 14th Street, 15th Street, Laguna Boulevard, and 7th Street within the neighborhood. Mountain Road is the most restrictive of these routes. There are no bicycle lanes striped within the neighborhood.



Bicycle Facilities

**Transit**

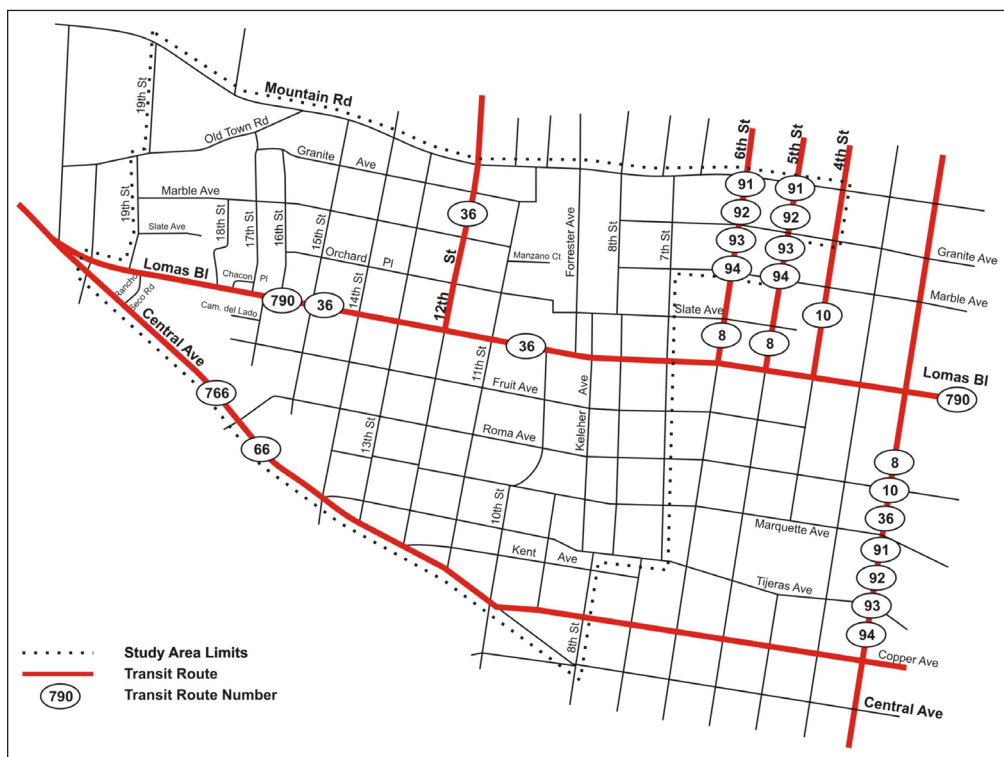
There are ten ABQ Ride routes that traverse the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Four of these routes provide local service within the neighborhood – #8, #10, #36, and #66. Routes #8 and #10 only serve one or two blocks within the Downtown Neighborhood Area, and provide little benefit. Route #66 provides daily cross town service along Central Avenue with 15 minute headways most of the day. The Route #66 has the highest ridership in Albuquerque. Route #36 is the only local route that penetrates the Downtown Neighborhood Area. This route currently has weekday and Saturday service,



Central Avenue Transit Route #66

and operates with one hour headways. This level of service does not adequately serve the Downtown Neighborhood Area.

The remaining six routes are express routes. The #766 and #790 are limited stop routes that use Central Avenue and Lomas Boulevard respectively, but neither route has a stop within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Each of these routes has a stop east of Central Avenue and Rio Grande Boulevard. The #766 next stops east of Sixth Street on either Gold Avenue (eastbound) or Copper Avenue (westbound). The #790 stops next on Lomas Boulevard east of Fourth Street. The remaining routes #91, #92, #93, and #94 are express buses that use I-40 and the Fifth Street/Sixth Street corridor for access to the interstate. These routes have two AM and two PM buses and no stops within the study area. Each of the local routes provides service to the Alvarado Transit Center to access the Rail Runner regional rail service.

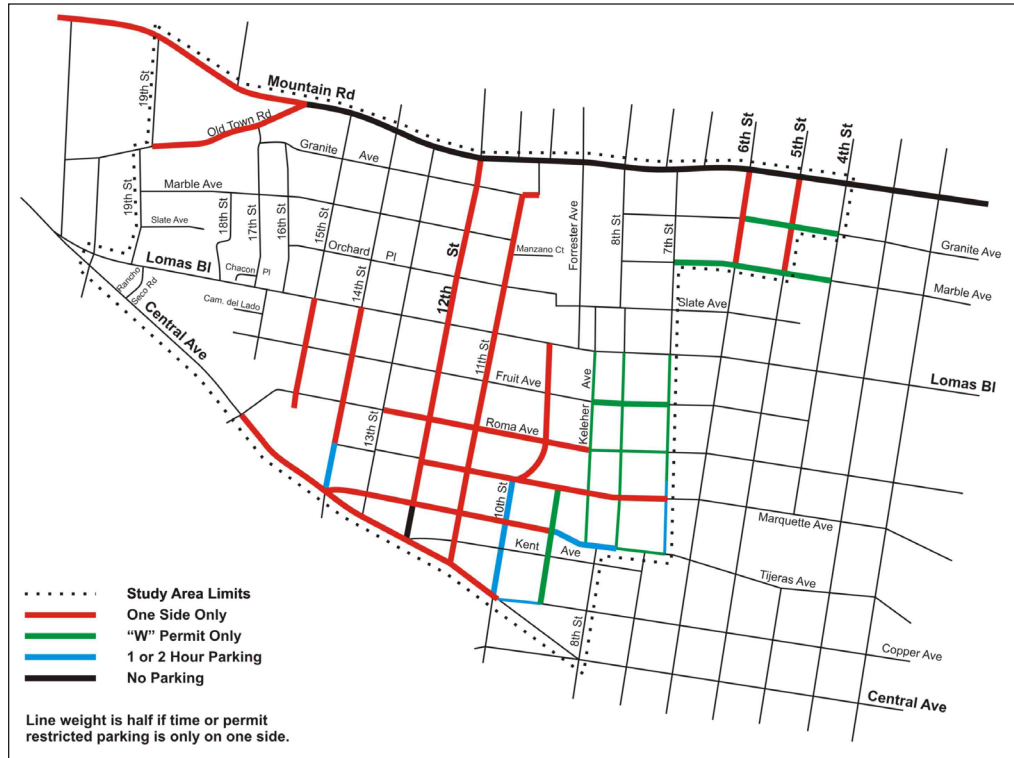


Transit Routes

**On-Street Parking**

On-street parking was inventoried within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. Approximately half of the roads had no parking restrictions, except at intersection returns to provide adequate sight triangles. The other half of the roads had restrictions that included prohibition, one or two hour parking limits, and/or permit parking. Parking prohibition was separated into prohibition on one side of the street or both sides. Permit parking in the Downtown Area west of the Central Business District is “W” permit parking. Most of the parking restrictions are located south of Lomas Boulevard.

Parking restrictions are primarily a result of location or roadway width. A number of more heavily traveled roads have parking restricted along one side when the roadway width was 30 feet or less. This includes roads such as Marquette Avenue, Tijeras Avenue, and 12th Street. Roads in near proximity to the Central Business District have time limitations along roads with commercial development and “W” permit parking is placed where there is residential frontage.



On-Street Parking Restrictions

**Lighting**

Roadway lighting is provided along Lomas Boulevard and Central Avenue within the Downtown Neighborhood Area. However, there is a perception amongst the residents that Central Avenue is unsafe due to the inadequacy of lighting. Pedestrian lighting is located along 12th Street north of Lomas Boulevard to Mountain Road and along Mountain Road from Fifth Street to 12th Street. All intersections have single luminaires to denote the location of intersections. Many of the luminaires appear to predate the New Mexico Night Sky Protection Act; therefore, as these luminaires are replaced, they should be replaced with Night Sky compliant fixtures.



## G. UTILITIES

### Electrical Service

The Public Service Company of New Mexico (PNM) provides electrical service to the City of Albuquerque. Although future growth within the Downtown Neighborhood Area is not anticipated to be particularly robust, PNM responds to growth by adding or expanding the capacity of its electric facilities based on system demands.

Transmission facilities are an important part of the existing infrastructure system in the area and are identified as protected transmission corridors in the City of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County 1995 Facility Plan: Electric Service Transmission and Subtransmission Facilities (1995-2005). The electric transmission service that serves the Downtown Neighborhood Area consists of two 46 kV transmission lines and one substation.

PNM has numerous energy saving programs and rebates available for residential and commercial property owners, both for new construction and retrofits. The PNM Energy Efficiency Program provides discounts and rebates on energy saving products for residences such as refrigerators, compact fluorescent light bulbs, power saving, and other Energy-Star qualified appliances. Programs for businesses include rebates and incentives for new construction, retrofits to existing buildings, evaporative cooling, and reducing energy use.

### Public Utility Easements

Public utility easements (PUEs) are placed across private property in order to ensure access to the utility company. Structures are not permitted to be built within the easements and landscaping must be placed so that it does not hinder access. The width of the public utility easement is typically 10 feet in width. Water, sewer, and storm drainage lines (wet utilities) are separated from gas, electric, and cable lines (dry utilities) for safety purposes.

### Landscape and Public Utility Easements

PNM has a preference that landscaping be planted outside of its public utility easements. However, landscaping may be planted within the easements in such a way as to minimize the impact to maintenance of facilities. Trees planted within PNM easements should be no taller than 25 feet in height at full maturity in order to avoid conflicts with electrical transmission lines. In addition, vegetation surrounding ground-mounted transformers and utility pads should allow 10 feet of clearance for access and to ensure the safety of maintenance crews. Coordination is required with utility providers to allow for adequate width, clearance, and appropriate locations for PUEs and utility rights-of-way. Coordination is necessary to address:

- Extension of public utility facilities and to ensure the safety of the public and utility crews who maintain and repair such facilities;
- Projections such as canopies, portals, stoops, balconies, shop fronts, and

- awnings in PUEs to be compatible with existing utility infrastructure;
- Parking areas and alleys to allow for adequate utility access;
- Utility easements within rear lots and alleys to allow adequate clearances for safe operation, repair, and maintenance;
- Mature tree height and necessary distances from existing and proposed electric utility easements; and
- Screening design to allow access to utility facilities.

**Natural Gas Service**

New Mexico Gas Company provides natural gas service to the Downtown Neighborhood Area.