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# NOB HILL HIGHLAND SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PREPARED BY:  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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# I. INTRODUCTION

The Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan, initiated by the Albuquerque City Council in 2004, is intended to guide the physical development of the Nob Hill and Highland neighborhoods of Albuquerque. These neighborhoods are located in the near heights immediately east of the University of New Mexico. The plan specifies standards for future development of these neighborhoods, including land use, zoning and capital improvements recommendations. As a detailed plan for two neighborhoods, the document is consistent with long-range plans for the County as a whole and area wide plans for streets and other infrastructure.

## A. Planning for Albuquerque

In 2002 the City of Albuquerque updated the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, which describes goals and policies for metropolitan development emphasizing the importance of Communities, Centers and Corridors in the successful functioning of the greater Albuquerque metropolitan area. The Comprehensive plan is a **Rank I** Plan. Contained within the jurisdiction of the Rank I plan are two plan types dealing with smaller geographic areas in greater detail. **Rank II** plans with large sections of the city like the Southwest Mesa and **Rank III** plans are the most specific dealing with particular sectors or neighborhoods such as the Nob Hill/Highland neighborhoods. All plans are intended to work together to support a desired direction for growth, as well as natural and cultural resource protection.

The Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan Area falls within the Near Heights Community Area as designated by the Comprehensive Plan and contains two Community Activity Centers (the Nob Hill, and Highland Centers), one Enhanced Transit Corridor (Lomas Boulevard) and one Major Transit Corridor (Central Avenue).

## B. What is a Sector Development Plan?

The Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan is a Rank III plan designed to benefit and enhance the livability of its neighborhoods. The Sector Development Plan describes existing conditions in the area, identifies things that the community wants

to protect or improve and lists recommendations for actions by the city and the community to implement the plan. Sector Plan objectives include attaining stakeholder agreement through the planning process, enhancing the livability of the community as well as reinforcing its identity relative to the Centers and Corridors policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan also aims to develop capital improvement projects and any zoning or code changes that might be necessary to respond to the particular needs for improvement of the built environment within that sector. Design standards and guidelines are also included in Sector Development Plans.



Figure 1: Centers & Corridors

## C. Boundaries

The boundaries of the Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan are Girard to the west, Lomas Boulevard to the north and San Mateo to the east. The southern boundary includes Zuni until it intersects with Morningside where the boundary jogs south along Morningside until it reaches Garfield Ave. which then becomes the southern most edge of the Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan.

## D. Why the Nob Hill Highland Area?

The goal of this plan, articulated in Council Bill R-04-189, is to update the 1987 Nob Hill Sector Development Plan and extend its boundaries to include the Central Highland and Upper Nob Hill area east of Washington. In the nearly twenty years since the 1987 plan was adopted, the Nob Hill Highland area has experienced many changes necessitating an updated plan to meet today's needs. In addition to concerns raised by the community, goals of the plan are to protect the established character of the neighborhood, its walkability, its successful business community and its historic structures. Another important reason for the plan update is the need to integrate the recommendations of the recently completed Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan for the Highland area. The Sector Plan will also act as a guide to manage future residential density levels as enhanced transit service along Central Avenue becomes a growing reality.

## E. Guiding Principles

Listed below are some of the Guiding Principles that have emerged from the community in the development of this Nob Hill Highland Sector Development Plan. A more detailed discussion of issues and recommendations pertaining to these principles and their desired outcomes is provided in the Plan Components section.

- Improve the pedestrian environment
- Identify and preserve the existing character of residential and commercial areas
- Encourage a mixture of compatible uses
- Preserve and enhance streetscapes
- Calm traffic
- Enhance public safety
- Stimulate commercial revitalization

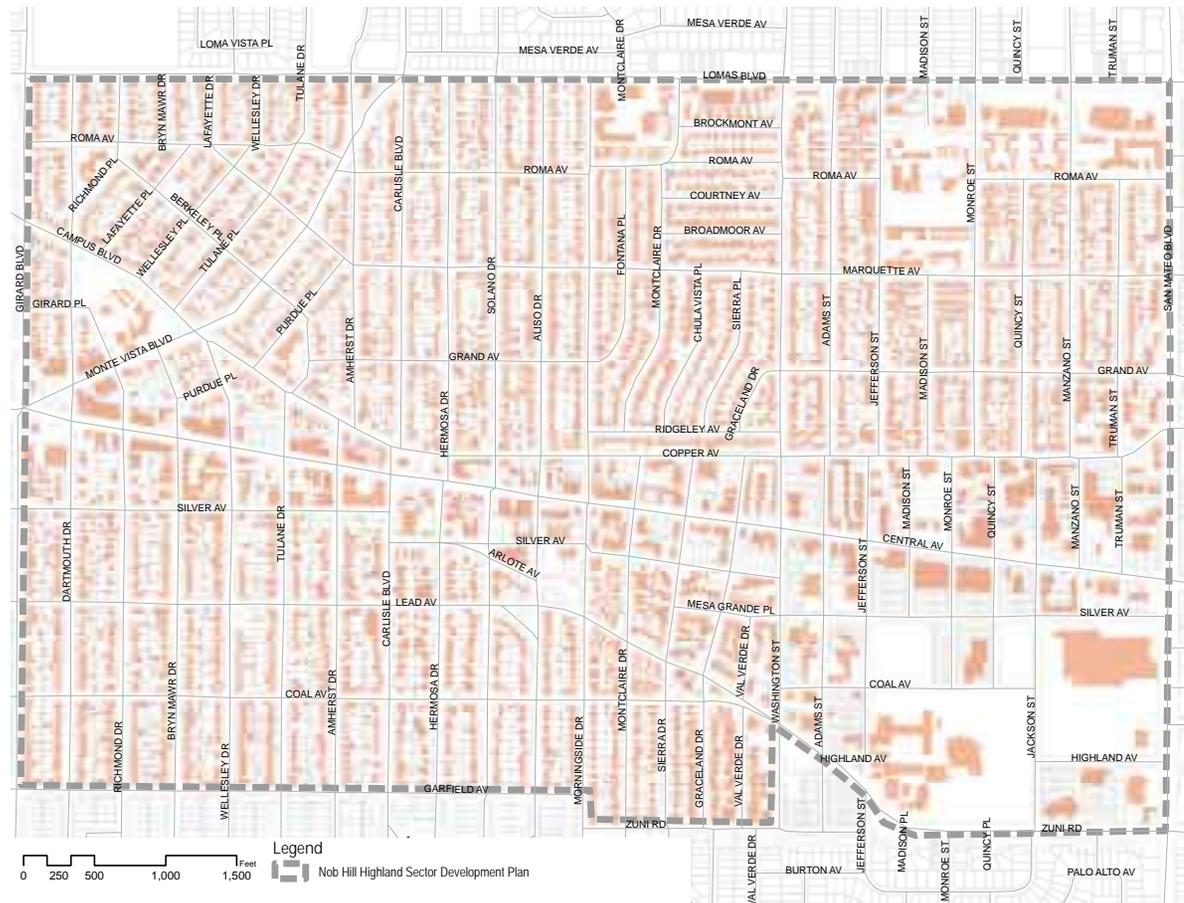


Figure 2. Plan Area Boundaries

- Improve conditions to emphasize multiple modes of transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular and transit)
- Stimulate economic development
- Encourage diverse housing types
- Establish regulations and guidelines for historic preservation
- Enhance human services
- Establish zoning regulations appropriate to areas of distinctive character and which address smooth transitions between commercial and residential areas
- Establish design guidelines to encourage development that is in keeping with areas of notable architectural character

## F. Comprehensive Plan Precedence

The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan articulates numerous policies that provide the basis for the Nob Hill Highland Sector Plan recommendations. The Nob Hill Highland Sector Plan recommendations, in turn, are intended to address the goals of the neighborhood. This Sector Development Plan also incorporates the work of many other existing plans and studies including the Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan for the Highland Area in 2005, the 1987 Nob Hill Sector Plan, the 2005 Nob Hill Highland Area Parking Inventory and Survey, the 1991 Downtown/City Center Transportation Study, and the 1997 Lead Coal Corridor Study, among others. Listed below are the 2002 Comprehensive Plan policies which have provided a framework for the Nob Hill Highland planning process:

### 1. Developing and Established Urban Areas

- Policy a - The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses, resulting in an overall gross density up to 5 dwelling units per acre.
- Policy d - The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.
- Policy h - Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:
  - In designated Activity Centers.
  - In areas with excellent access to the major street network.
  - In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available.
  - In areas now predominantly zoned single-family only where it comprises a complete block face and faces onto similar or higher density development; up to 10 dwelling units per net acre.
  - In areas where a transition is needed between single-family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas.
- Policy k - Land adjacent to arterial streets shall be planned to minimize harmful effects of traffic; livability and safety of established residential neighborhoods shall be protected in transportation planning and operation.
- Policy m - Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and

improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.

- Policy o - Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.

### 2. Activity Centers

- Policy f - The most intense uses in Activity Centers shall be located away from nearby low-density residential development and shall be buffered from those residential uses by a transition area of less intensive development.
- Policy g - Activity Center locations shown on a Comprehensive Plan map, and their predominate uses in accordance with their unique roles and expected needs of the community, shall be developed in accordance with more specific sub-area planning efforts.

### 3. Historic Resources

- Policy a - Efforts to provide incentives for the protection of significant districts and buildings shall be continued and expanded.
- Policy c - Increase public and inter-agency awareness of historic resources and preservation concerns.

### 4. Cultural Traditions and the Arts

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

### 5. Community Identity and Urban Design

- Policy c - The identity and cohesiveness of each community shall be strengthened through identification and enhancement of community Activity Centers that have a scale, mix of uses, design character, and location appropriate to the unique character of the community.



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

## 6. Transportation and Transit

- **Policy c** - In order to add to transit ridership, and where it will not destabilize adjacent neighborhoods, additional dwelling units are encouraged close to Major Transit and Enhanced Transit streets.
- **Policy g** - Pedestrian opportunities shall be promoted and integrated into development to create safe and pleasant non-motorized travel conditions.
- **Policy h** - A metropolitan area-wide recreational and commuter bicycle and trail network which emphasizes connections among Activity Centers shall be constructed and promoted.
- **Policy q** - Transportation investments should emphasize overall mobility needs and choice among modes in the regional and intra-city movement of people and goods.

## 7. Housing

- **Policy a** - The supply of affordable housing, shall be preserved and increased and the opportunity to obtain standard housing for a reasonable proportion of income assured.

- **Policy c** - The displacement of low income households, shall be ameliorated and the objectives of historic preservation and conservation of affordable housing balanced.
- **Policy d** - Availability of a wide distribution of decent housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, or handicapped status shall be assured.

## 8. Economic Development

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

## G. The Planning Process and Public Participation

The issues, goals and recommendations of the plan were developed through a public participation process of stakeholder groups that included the establishment of a steering committee comprised of stakeholders from community interest groups (residents, property owners, and business people). Members of this steering committee came from four major organizations in the Plan Area: The Nob Hill Neighborhood Association (NHNA), The Nob Hill Business Association (NHBA), The Highland Business and Neighborhood Association (HBNA), and the Nob Hill Highland Renaissance Corporation (NHHRC) a nonprofit, community-based development corporation. Institutional stakeholders provided additional input and technical assistance. These stakeholders included the City of Albuquerque Planning Department, Bernalillo County, the University of New Mexico and the Albuquerque Public Schools. In addition

to the steering committee, working groups made up of other community members were created to concentrate on specific areas of concern: Residential Character, Pedestrian Circulation, Public Safety and Character of Commercial and Transition Areas. Community participation and plan elaboration were facilitated by Sites Southwest, LLC in collaboration with the Albuquerque Planning Department.

All new or updated Sector Plans must be approved by the Environmental Planning Commission. Upon their approval, the plan goes to the Albuquerque City Council for Adoption. Once the plan is adopted, the zoning map, language, design standards and other recommendations of the plan become legal land use regulation for the plan area.



# INTRODUCTION



## II. HISTORIC CONTEXT AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Traveling up Central Avenue from Old Town, to New Town (Downtown) and then further up the East Mesa, Central Avenue becomes a time line through history. Architectural style and vernacular mix with national or global events to create unique, discernible neighborhoods that grow younger the further east one travels along Central Avenue.

## A. Pre World War II

Central Avenue and its surrounding areas between Girard and Carlisle developed in the late 1920s and 1930s, pre-dating Route 66 and post World War II growth in auto oriented travel and development. In that era development catered to a much more integrated interaction between the area's commercial activity and its residential environments. Though the Nob Hill Business Center was, in the late 1940s, considered to be state of the art auto oriented development, a focus on the pedestrian was still central to the development. That its commercial space was designed to interact with its surroundings on all sides of the building belies its Route 66-era conception. The free-flowing pedestrian entry to the shops and restaurants along Central and in the Business Center encouraged walkability and was dependant upon people who still came and went by foot or streetcar. This sense of continuity between the commercial and residential areas in many ways defines Nob Hill and is responsible for much of its success today.

The Nob Hill subdivisions platted through the 1920s and 30s reflect the evolution of subdivision development through that time period. The Monte Vista (1926) and University Heights (1916)

Additions, located between Girard and Carlisle have narrow, deep lots with alley access to rear yards. Monte Vista Addition is notable for platting that diverged from the typical grid, recognizing drainage patterns, and dedicated land for a school site. Further east, College View Addition (1926), Granada Heights Addition (1925) and Mesa Grande Addition (1931) follow the grid and have narrow, deep lots, but do not have alleys. Residents purchased lots and hired builders or contractors acquired a small number of lots to attract buyers, which created a mix of housing types and styles. Construction on these lots spanned from the 1920 through the 1950s



Broadmoor (1945) began the change to the post World War II pattern of tract housing and a break with the grid platting pattern, with a limited number of streets connecting to the arterials.

Commercial development along Central Avenue served two markets, the residential neighborhoods on either side and travelers through Albuquerque.

The late 1930s saw the realignment of U.S. 66 from its north/south orientation through Albuquerque to an east/west alignment along Central Avenue. By the 1940s and the early 1950s Route 66 had begun

to shape the surrounding landscape. Architectural styles of Route 66 were born of this modern age. Typical development along Route 66 that reflects its function as America's "mother road" can be found in its many gas stations, motor courts, neon signs, and roadside restaurants. Most were designed to attract the attention of people moving through the landscape at speeds only recently experienced with the wide popularity of the automobile.

## B. World War II and Beyond

With the entrance of the United States into World War II, Albuquerque assumed a pivotal role in early national defense efforts which later formed the nucleus of the present-day military-industrial complex of Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratory. The location of these facilities south of the Nob Hill Highland neighborhoods helped contribute to the area's desirability.

The area between Morningside and Washington developed in the post war boom of the late 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The built environment has some qualities of both the pre- and post-war eras. Some blocks have small scale shop frontages close to the street while other buildings step back allowing for a shallow parking lot, while still others swim in vast seas of parking forsaking the pedestrian almost completely. Residential development also changed. Lots became wider and shallower as the orientation of houses began to change. The garage that was detached and accessed from the alley or a long driveway moved forward and became integrated into the house, accessed by a driveway from the front. Ranch style houses and modernist architecture began to appear interspersed within the established architectural vernacular. Development also began to occur in large sections with contractors building the same or similar houses on one or more blocks.

The Highland area from Washington to San Mateo also developed during the late 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. However, zoning codes favored single use buildings and a separation of these uses from the surrounding residential areas. R-1 (single family residential zoning) gave way to R-3 (highest density residential zoning) in a bid to help alleviate housing shortages. Duplexes and courtyard style apartments gave way to larger buildings with more parking lots and as a result are less integrated into their surroundings. Dwellings in this area were assumed to be served by shops and amenities that would be reached by car. Central Avenue widened; buildings receded behind expansive parking lots separating commercial and residential districts. The later the development the more automobile oriented it became with little or no consideration for the pedestrian environment. East of the Hiland Theater the commercial areas are dominated by much larger stores surrounded by equally large parking lots. Central Avenue widens to six lanes and on-street parking has been eliminated in most blocks. Where buildings are set back with parking in front, the development pattern discourages walkability, street activity and neighborhood integration.



The Nob Hill commercial strip began a long period of decline in the early 1960s. Development of the Winrock and Coronado shopping malls along with construction of the interstate highway network

altered growth and transportation patterns citywide and shifted commercial focus away from Route 66. The community turned to the new malls to meet many of their shopping needs, while the Interstate diverted much of the traffic that once flowed on East Central. As a result, the prestige of the Nob Hill business district diminished, and the area lost its former luster. Buildings deteriorated, and uses changed.

## C. The Recent Past

By 1987, at the behest of Nob Hill's neighborhood and business associations, a sector development plan was drafted and adopted by the city of Albuquerque. Part of the 1987 plan included a Nob Hill Study, that looked at housing stock, neighborhood character, areas of concern and attitudes of local residents. One result of the study was the placing of many homes and buildings on the Historic Registry as many were reaching approximately fifty years in age or older. With this renewed interest and perspective on Nob Hill's place in history, property values began to rise attracting economic activity as well as working professionals and their families. By the mid 1990s Nob Hill area was carving out a unique and livable place in the city.

The Highland area was not included in the 1987 plan. Highland was also greatly affected by the construction of the new malls as it was previously Albuquerque's new uptown area. Standing in relative isolation, the Bank of the West building is indicative of this halted economic development in the Highland area. While Nob Hill was experiencing relief from the disinvestment of the 1980s due in part to its maturation as a historical neighborhood in Albuquerque, Highland experienced some development of chain stores and retailers, but largely lagged behind Nob Hill.

Highland, however, seems to be on the same path that Nob Hill was on a few years before. Many of the homes and buildings are now reaching 50 years old, with the potential to be recognized as historic based on their age, contribution to the chronicle of Albuquerque's past, and presence of original design and materials. In 2005 the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) plan saw the Hiland Theater as one of the neighborhood's assets and looked to it to help anchor redevelopment. Though Highland does not have the built foundation that Nob Hill has of its mix of pedestrian friendly shops and housing, it is finally coming into its own and many see its more open form as an exciting place from which to start again and create a highly livable, viable and successful urban landscape.



Today, the Nob Hill Highland Area plays host to a range of businesses, restaurants and activities. Transit opportunities have increased with RapidRide bus service and the University's presence adds to local vibrancy. However, concerns about traffic flow, pedestrian safety, crime, economic activity and the built environment persist. It is in this context that this plan aims to pick up where the 1987 plan left off. By building on the strengths of previous plans and the energy of community stakeholders, this plan will be an effective blueprint for the future.

## D. Historic Preservation

Today in the Nob Hill Highland area, the issue of maintaining its historic feel and character is as important as ever. Historic preservation is a primary goal of the plan.

As the Plan area furthers the creation of its identity as a walkable, urban area in Albuquerque, there is a desire by area residents to protect, preserve and enhance historic sites along the commercial corridors as well as in the residential neighborhoods. These places are a large part of what makes the Nob Hill Highland area special, contributing greatly to its character. The phenomenon of tearing down or extensively remodeling houses that have contributed to the historic character of the neighborhood is also a serious threat as it can change building massing on the lot, solar access, streetscape and architectural style. Residents believe that it is important to preserve the historic quality of their neighborhood, maintaining sympathetic architectural forms, building massing and streetscape. Furthermore, the State and National Historic Register designation are important resources for documenting and maintaining the area's historical fabric as well as educating the public at large about the history and significance of structures and building styles in the area.

An inventory of historic buildings conducted in 1995 by the City of Albuquerque and volunteer researchers surveyed as many buildings in Nob Hill as possible to complete basic historic research to lay the groundwork for identifying potential historic districts. Inventory forms were completed for approximately 615 residential and commercial

structures. An additional 415 previously surveyed buildings were field checked for major, subsequent modification, and basic dating research was completed for all 1,030 survey forms. The inventory information included a preliminary assessment of the contributing/non-contributing status of each building for potential future historic district and building registrations.

The building survey and research noted that residential areas north of Central had significant concentrations of buildings that would likely be contributing in an historic district, and the Monte Vista and College View Historic District was placed on the State Cultural Properties register in 1998 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2001.

Residential areas south of Central were also identified as having registration potential, and the inventory final report concluded that a survey of the University Heights neighborhood and portions of Granada Heights should be completed.

The report identified individually-listed commercial, institutional and residential buildings on the State and National Registers and identified additional buildings for nomination. The report identified notable buildings constructed from 1942 to 1952 and recommended that these commercial areas be reassessed after 2002 for potential listing on the State and National Registers.

Further historical research was completed for the City of Albuquerque by Parsons Brinckerhoff in March of 2005 in the form of a Cultural Resource Survey of the properties bordering Central Avenue. This cultural resource investigation was conducted under New Mexico State Archaeological Survey Permit No. 04-079 and 05-079 and was consistent with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended through 1992.

A map of the Plan area shows State and National Register Historic buildings in dark blue, State and National Register Historic Districts in yellow, buildings of potential historic interest in light blue and areas of potential historic interest in light red (see Figure 3). Other historic neighborhoods and structures remain to be surveyed in greater detail and evaluated for inclusion on the State and National Register.

Other recommendations of the 1995 building inventory were that the City consider Historic or Urban Conservation Overlay Zones for registered districts. The report also noted the importance of public education and recommended brochures and walking tours and workshops to encourage preservation-sensitive remodeling and a greater appreciation of the historic quality of commercial structures built through 1955. The intent of such measures would be to encourage renovations that are sympathetic and respectful of the historic character of these neighborhoods.



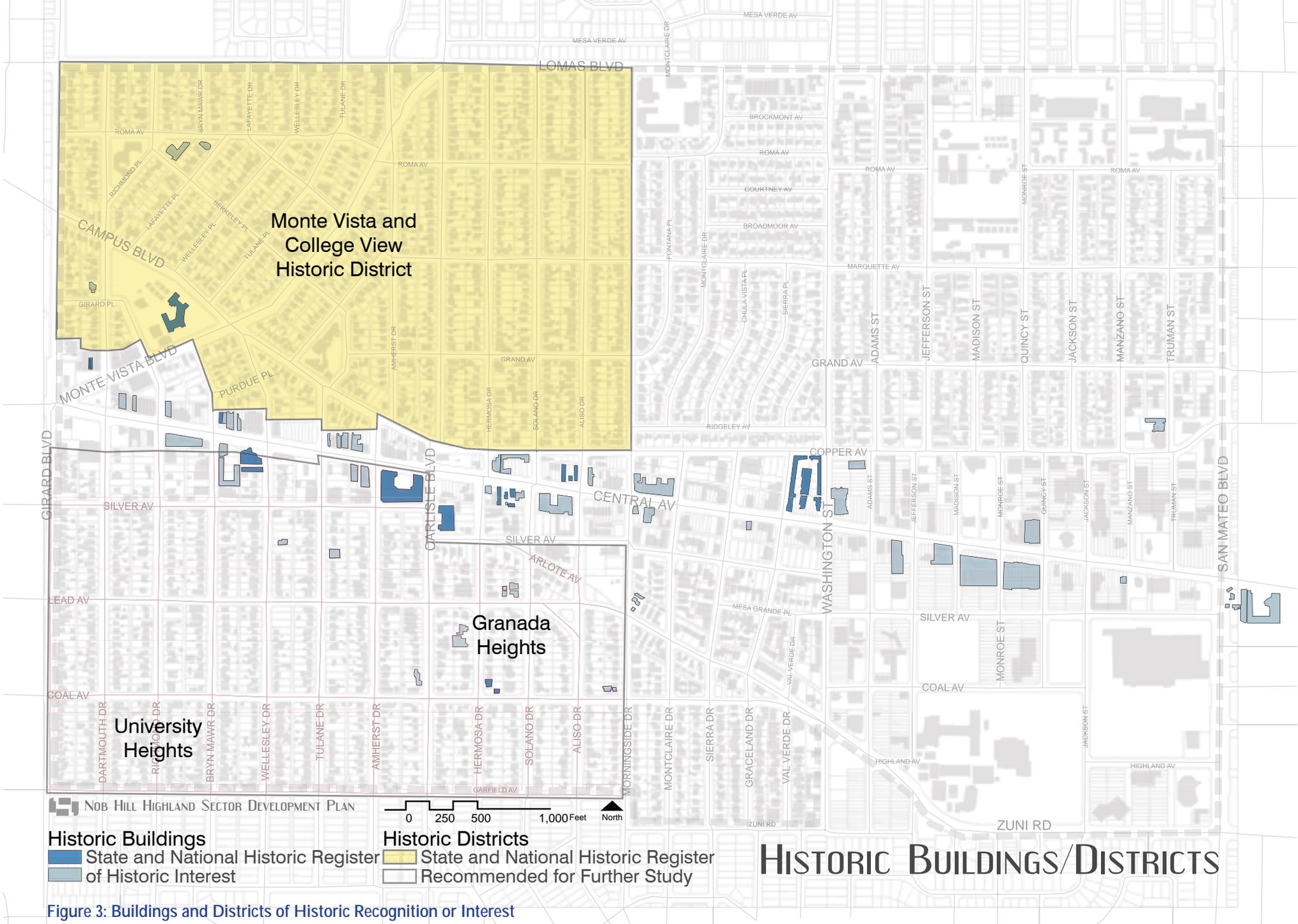


Figure 3: Buildings and Districts of Historic Recognition or Interest





### III. NOB HILL HIGHLAND TODAY

Land use in Nob Hill is predominantly retail and office along the blocks bracketing major streets, with neighborhoods of single family homes and small apartments in the interiors. Scattered within the neighborhoods are churches and Monte Vista Elementary School. Zoning in Nob Hill is a combination of the R-1 zoning that was established when zoning was adopted in Albuquerque in 1959 and special neighborhood office and commercial zoning that was put in place with the adoption of the 1987 Nob Hill Sector Development Plan.

## A. Land Use and Current Zoning

The Highland neighborhood has several large apartment complexes and a mix of single family homes, small apartment buildings and townhomes within the interior of the neighborhood. Second units on the same lot as a single family detached home are common in some blocks. Highland High School and Zia Elementary School are significant institutions in the neighborhood. Retail and office uses extend along major streets, and the area surrounding Highland High School is a mix of retail, office and multifamily uses. Zoning in the Highland area dates from 1959, with O-1, C-1 and C-2 zoning along major streets and south of Central Avenue to Zuni. Residential zoning in the Highland neighborhood is R-3.

In both neighborhoods churches are zoned SU-1/ Special Use and some surface parking lots are zoned PR/Parking Reserve

## B. Transportation Systems

Today, Albuquerque is a city that is dominated by automotive travel typically comprised of single occupancy vehicles traversing the well established road network. According to a 1996 Parsons Brinckerhoff transportation study entitled Albuquerque Transportation Evaluation Study, 20% to 30% of Albuquerque's total area is comprised of streets and their rights of way. By any measure this is a major type of land use and shapes the way the built environment is used and consumed.

The Nob Hill Highland area is no exception. Though the area is well-served by transit, bicycle and pedestrian routes relative to the City at large, transportation in the Plan area remains dominated by the car. Since its inception, Central Avenue has shaped commercial and residential development along its borders and today remains a major community form determinant in the Plan area. San Mateo, Zuni, Lead, Coal, and Lomas are also vital links to and for the rest of the city and typically carry heavy volumes of traffic at peak travel times. Transit service in the form of bus and RapidRide service is paving the way for a modern streetcar project on Central Avenue, which will be developed in the near future. In addition, there are many marked and/or dedicated bike lanes throughout the plan area that are part of the Albuquerque Bicycle Master Plan.

However, as the number of "vehicle miles traveled" and "vehicle hours traveled" continue to increase, there is a renewed effort to create truly walkable, pedestrian-oriented environments and development. The Plan looks to address this current situation and also point the way forward to viable communities free from auto-only dependency.

## C. Public Facilities

The Nob Hill Highland area is generally well-served by its parks and public facilities. Monte Vista and Zia Elementary Schools and Highland High School are natural community centers. Both the Monte Vista and Zia Elementary schools' playgrounds offer basketball courts and other play equipment for the community at large. Morningside Park, at Morningside and Lead, also offers play equipment for children. Highland High School with its track, football, baseball, soccer fields, tennis courts and pool facilities offer surrounding residents opportunities to exercise and participate in community sports leagues. The Wellesley Tennis Courts, at Lead and Wellesley, offer more community tennis courts.

The Triangle Community Park at the intersection of Girard, Monte Vista, and Central, offers some open space and houses a Police Community Substation. Yet, Central Avenue, as it makes its way through the Nob Hill Highland Area, lacks any major public place for gathering for festivals, concerts or other special events. These spaces are sorely needed as special events are forced to take place either in parking lots or in other parts of the City.



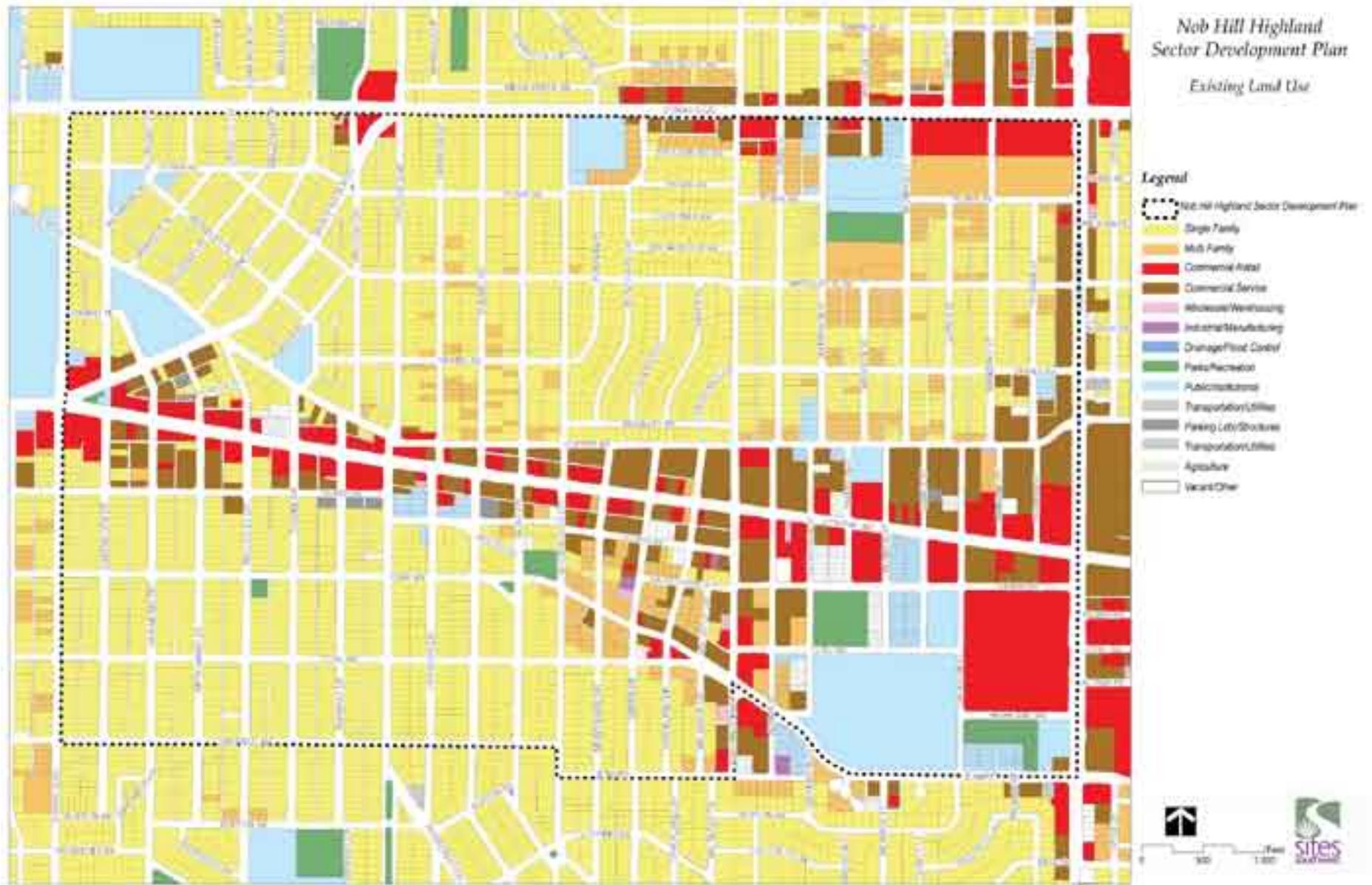


Figure 4: Existing Land Use

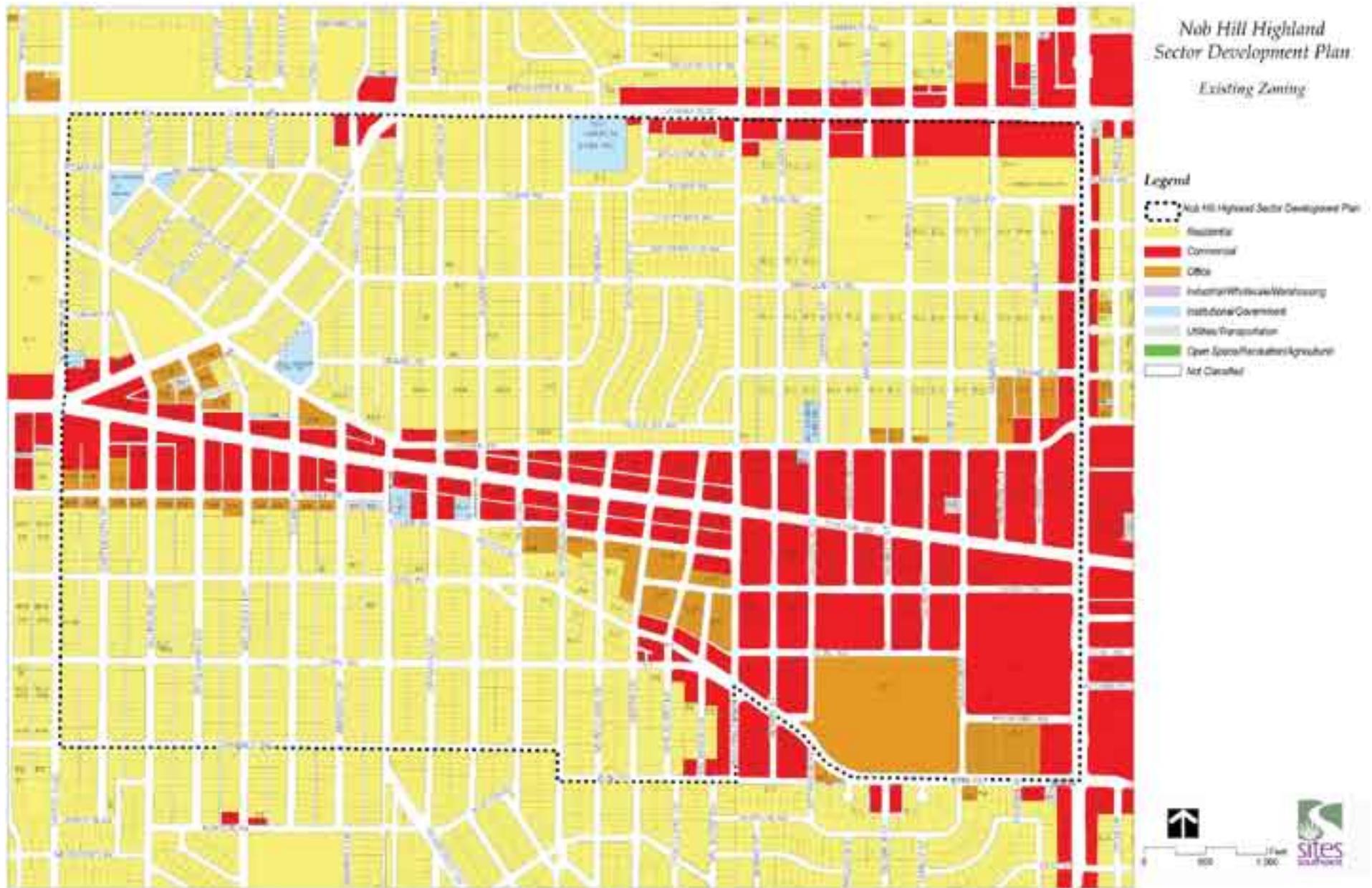


Figure 5: Existing Zoning

## D. Housing Characteristics

Housing in the Nob Hill Highland area in general is characterized by a greater propensity towards rental properties, which form 51% of the whole, versus 37% of the whole for Albuquerque at large (U.S. Census Bureau). Figure 6 shows the distribution of properties by ownership, based on 2005 Bernalillo County Assessor Records. Properties where the owner address and site address are the same are assumed to be owner-occupied. A majority (58%) homes are detached single family dwelling units. Of the multi-family dwelling units, the majority are duplexes and three or four-plexes. There are no mobile home parks and only (5%) of all dwelling units are in housing structures that have 50 or more dwelling units. The approximate median value of homes in the Nob Hill area was \$131,400 and in the Highland area was \$108,600 in 2000. However, the median home price in Albuquerque in 2000 was \$127,600 and then jumped up to \$169,200 in 2005, a 32% increase, according to the National Association of Realtors. Nob Hill Highland housing prices have likely followed or even exceeded this upward trend.

### 1. Age of Housing

Housing in the Nob Hill Highland Area tends to be older than the city-wide average. The median age of houses in Albuquerque is approximately 1975 while the median age of homes in the Nob Hill Highland area is 1952 creating a market of older housing stock. In the Nob Hill area, 69.7% of homes were mainly built prior to 1960 and almost a third of those were built prior to 1940. Only 18% of the housing units in Nob Hill were built from 1960 to 1980, and 11.4% were built after 1980.

### 2. Building Conditions

A 1985 survey, the most recent study, indicated that residential building conditions are generally good in the Nob Hill area, reflecting a pattern of regular maintenance. According to a May 22, 2006 interview with area historian David Kammer, since this survey was completed, the majority of building conditions and housing stock has improved. Reinvestment in Nob Hill, combined with the inclusion of more houses listed on the Historic Registry may have contributed to these improvements.

However, residents throughout the Nob Hill Highland area have voiced concern at the proliferation of investment properties. They claim that with real estate markets across the Southwest being superheated, many out-of-state investors are buying up property as a safe investment. These properties become vacant or rental units and are not kept up as well as owner-occupied properties, which creates a sense of disinvestment in the area.

Also, old Route 66 motels in the Highland area, such as the De Anza, present a unique opportunity for redevelopment. Though these motels currently act as affordable housing for some, area residents and neighbors complain of criminal activities as well as their physical condition. These buildings no longer function as potential community resources, but rather as blights on the landscape.



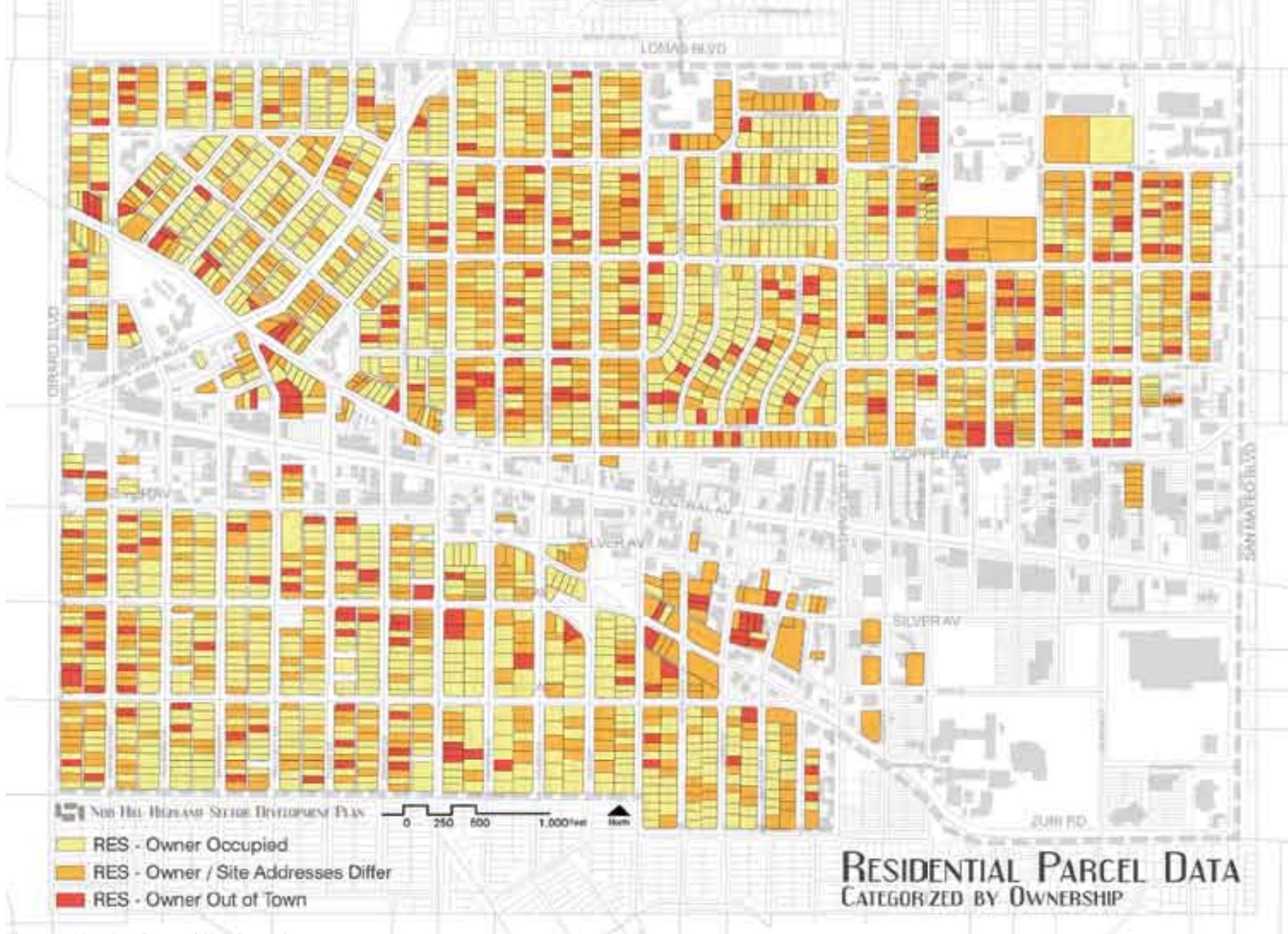


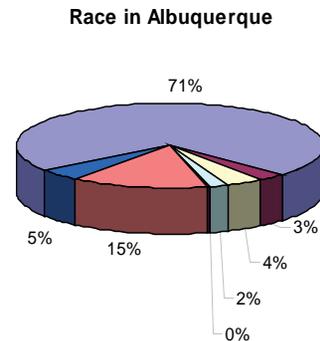
Figure 6: Housing Ownership Information



### E. Population Characteristics

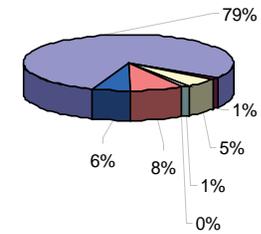
The total population for the Nob Hill Highland area in 1990 was 7,281 and in 2000 was 7,222. If this trend continues the population will remain steady. However, as infill becomes more predominant in Albuquerque, it is likely that the population of areas like Nob Hill Highland will increase as the neighborhoods become more urban.

The racial and ethnic make-up of Nob Hill Highland is predominately White and Non-Hispanic. 79% of people in Nob Hill Highland identified themselves as White only verses 71% for the city at large. Ethnically, 23% of people in Nob Hill Highland identified as themselves as Hispanic or Latino while 40% identified themselves as such City-wide.



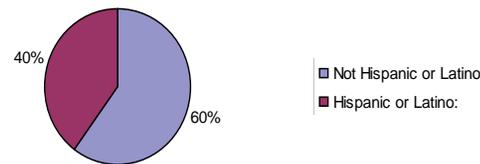
- White alone
- Black or African American alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Asian alone
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone
- Some other race alone
- Two or more races

Race in Nob Hill Highland, 2000



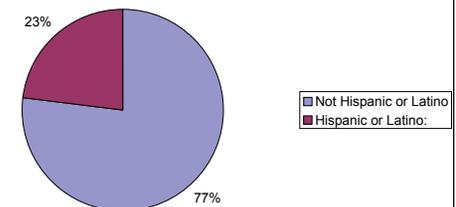
- White alone
- Black or African American alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Asian alone
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone
- Some other race alone
- Two or more races

Ethnicity Albuquerque



- Not Hispanic or Latino
- Hispanic or Latino

Ethnicity Nob Hill Highland



- Not Hispanic or Latino
- Hispanic or Latino

Figure 7: Race and Ethnicity Demographics



The Nob Hill Highland area population is characterized by a larger percentage of younger people who tend to have fewer children when compared to the City overall. This creates a propensity for relatively large numbers of one-person households. The neighborhood also has a larger 50-59 year old population than the rest of the City. The Plan area's largest population groups by age are the 20-29 and the 30-39 categories like that of Albuquerque's. However, these categories in the Plan area make up a higher percentage of its total population that Albuquerque's do. These young people have fewer children as compared to the rest of the City as Nob Hill Highland is underrepresented in the 0-9 and 10-19 year old age groups, and there is a smaller percentage of school-aged children.

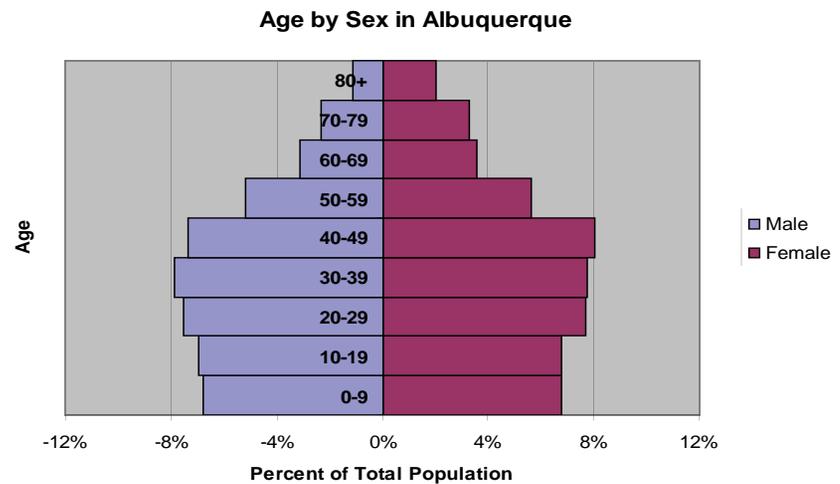
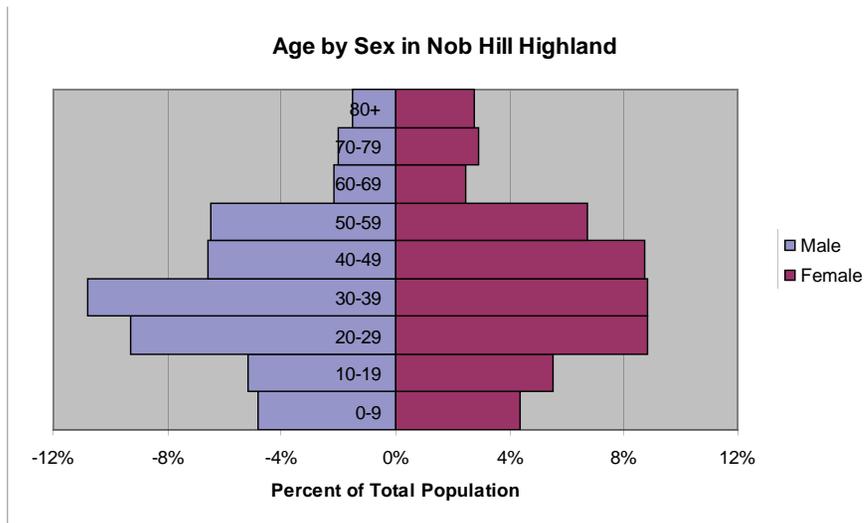
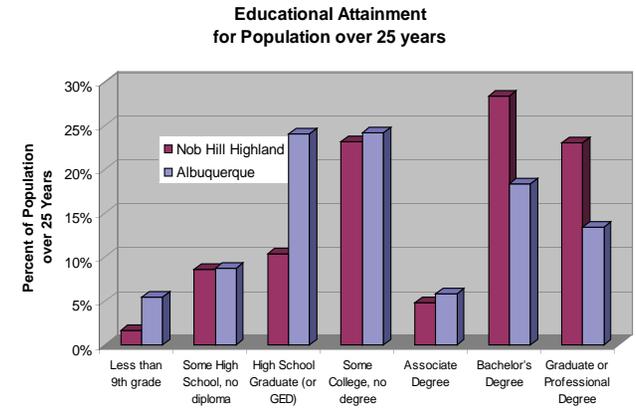
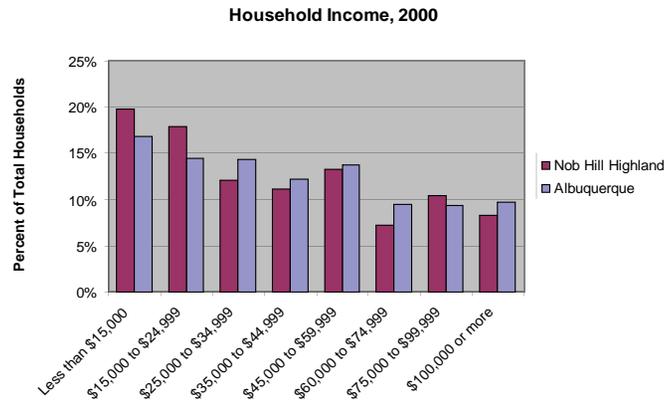


Figure 8: Age and Sex Demographics



Per capita income for the Nob Hill Highland Area is \$23,898 which is slightly higher than Albuquerque's per capita income of \$20,884. Household income across the earning spectrum does not deviate greatly from that of Albuquerque's, however, educational attainment does. Nob Hill Highland tends to be a well-educated part of the City. The percentage of people in the plan area who have their Bachelor's Degree is 28% versus 15.4% for Albuquerque at large. Those who have graduate or professional Degrees are 23% of the population in the Nob Hill Highland area versus Albuquerque's 6%. Furthermore, 89% of Nob Hill Highland residents are high school graduates versus 85.9% in all of Albuquerque.



2000 Population Age 25+ by Educational Attainment*	Nob Hill Highland		Albuquerque	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
	<b>4,785</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>291,485</b>	<b>100%</b>
Less than 9th grade	78	2%	15,695	5.4%
Some High School, no diploma	409	9%	25,346	8.7%
High School Graduate (or GED)	498	10%	70,221	24.1%
Some College, no degree	1107	23%	70,518	24.2%
Associate Degree	231	5%	17,070	5.9%
Bachelor's Degree	1360	28%	53,562	18.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1102	23%	39,073	13.4%

2000 Population Age 25+	Nob Hill Highland	Albuquerque
Percent without high school diploma	10.2%	14.1%
Percent high school graduate or higher	89.8%	85.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	51.5%	31.8%

Figure 9: Income and education demographics



F. Crime

The Nob Hill Highland area crime rates for 2004 were higher than that of Albuquerque in all categories except assault. The instances of assault fell by nearly half in the Nob Hill Highland area from 2000 to 2004, from 45 to 22.6 reported cases per 1000 people. Also, drug arrests fell by more than half from 22.4 to 10.3 incidents per 1000 people. The category with the highest crime rate in the Nob Hill Highland Area was that of theft crimes (larceny and burglary) at 78 instances per 1000 people. This is up dramatically since 2000 when theft crimes were just 44.3 incidents per 1000 people. The largest discrepancy between the Nob Hill Highland area and Albuquerque's crime rates in 2004 was in the vandalism/disorderly conduct category. Here Nob Hill Highland had a rate of 44.1 instances per 1000 people, 54.7% higher than that of Albuquerque's at 28.5 instances per 1000 people. The increase in theft crimes and vandalism supports residents concerns about the escalation in property crime.

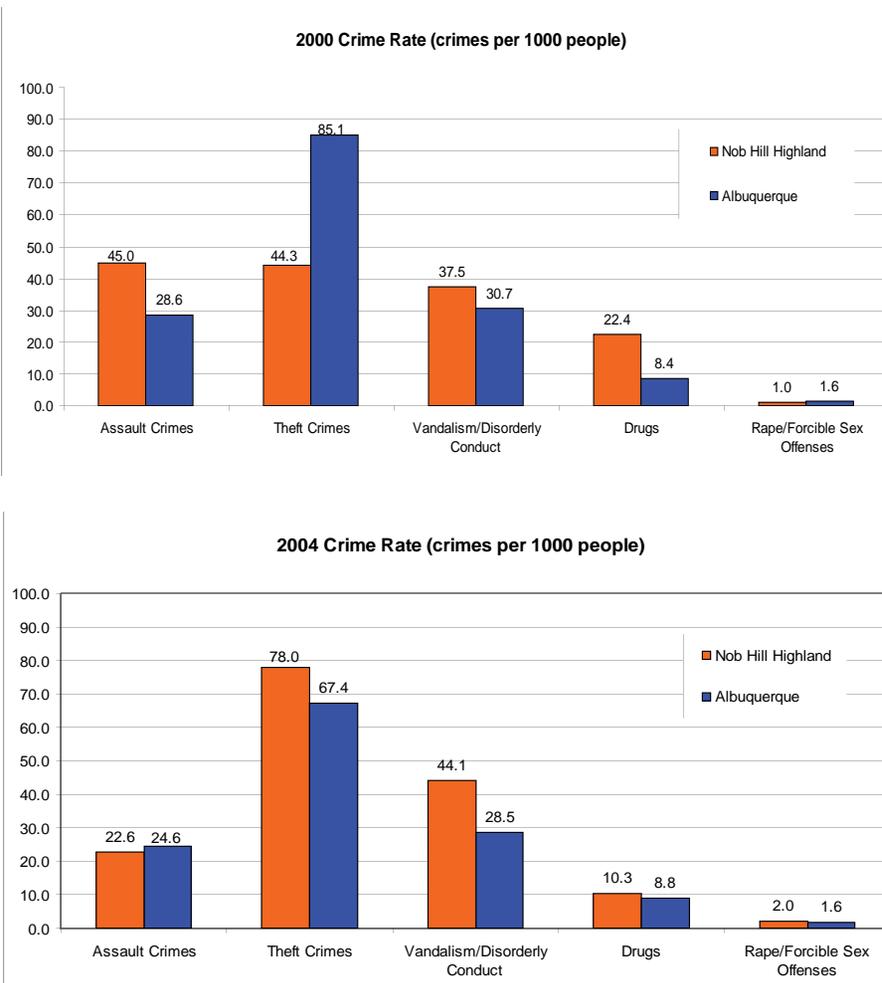


Figure 10: Crime rates



## G. Utilities

### 1. Water and Sewer

Water and sewer lines currently provide adequate service in the Nob Hill Highland area (see Figure 11). However, due to the age of the neighborhood's water and sewer lines, many will need to be replaced in the coming years. Since there is no major replacement project slated for the Plan area, improvement will occur in response to normal system and/or future redevelopment projects.

### 2. Drainage

Addressing the storm water runoff and drainage problem in the Nob Hill Highland Area is critical. A 100-year-flood zone extends from Girard to Washington and generally follows Campus/Copper, Central and Zuni (see Figure 12). These important transportation and commercial corridors function as storm water collection channels in lieu of the natural drainage systems they replaced. Existing drainage is approximately at the capacity of the streets which are subject to flooding when surface water flows are anything more than one foot at the curb (ASCG study). Proposed pedestrian and streetscape improvements, such as bulb-outs at corners, would reduce drainage and surface flow capabilities and greatly increase the instances of surface flooding. As a result, many of the proposed street improvements are predicated on the resolution of this problem.

One solution to this problem, as proposed by a 2006 ASCG Inc. study, was to increase the capacity of the Highland Detention Basin. However, this option is not desirable to local stakeholders and a new request for proposals (RFP) has been issued by the City to study the situation further and recommend alternatives. .

### 3. Gas, Electric, and Communications

The Nob Hill Highland area is a fully served area of the city regarding gas and electric utilities as well modern communications technologies. The scope of any infrastructure upgrades will be dictated by normal maintenance, or by future development evaluated on a project by project basis.





Figure 11: Water and Sewer Lines



Figure 12: Flood Zones



## H. Economic Vitality

The Nob Hill Highland area is one of Albuquerque's most vibrant economic centers. Economic activity is concentrated along Central Avenue, the area's "Main Street", and falls into three distinct commercial districts. As the Nob Hill Highland Renaissance Corporation outlines, the first is the Route 66 Historic Core from Girard to Carlisle; the second is Emerging Nob Hill from Carlisle to Washington, and the third is the Highland commercial district from Washington to San Mateo. To varying degrees, each commercial center is populated by a diverse array of shops, boutiques, cafés, restaurants and services. The Nob Hill Highland area also has a good balance of other establishments including grocery stores, bars, antique shops, automotive service centers and big box retailers like Wal-mart. Beyond Central Avenue, commercial activity along Lomas and San Mateo also provide local residents with basic services as well as additional services including, pet stores, pharmacies and child care.

Organizations charged with promoting the economic health of the plan area include the Nob Hill Business Association, the Highland Business and Neighborhood Association, and the Nob Hill Highland Renaissance Corporation. All are non-profit, community based organizations designed to foster reinvestment, protect historic resources, and create a safe environment in the area that translates into economic vitality.

Much of the concern of residents and business owners alike is how to improve on the area's existing economic strengths while retaining its character of small-scale, locally owned businesses. However, the Nob Hill Highland area also has more immediate concerns as well. The area along Central from Girard to Carlisle is the heart of Nob Hill. Yet, even along this corridor there is much available space for lease. Additionally, business tenure is a problem. With the exception of key anchor establishments that have been in business for more than ten years in the same spot (Master Cleaners, Red Wing Shoes, and the Flying Star to list a few), many business have a high turnover rate creating instability and, in turn, high vacancy. The point is not to list all vacant frontages, but rather to demonstrate that even in the heart of one of the City's most vibrant economic areas vacancies and high turnover rates are real concerns that need to be addressed.

The Highland area has similar problems with vacancy and turnover rates among its area businesses east of Carlisle to San Mateo. This district used to have a predominance of Route 66 road-side motels which in recent years served as havens for criminal activity, or simply stood vacant. Currently, only the Desert Sands remains, as others have been torn down. This leaves a gap in the physical and economic landscape, but also provides a prospect for redevelopment. The Hiland Theater has struggled economically in the recent past, but also presents an important opportunity to be an anchor for economic redevelopment in the area.

Other problems as expressed by business owner's are common to both Nob Hill and Highland. Litter removal, a large homeless population and safety are just a few of the recurring problems experienced in the plan area. The Nob Hill Highland area is in need of continued attention and reinvestment if it is to maintain and improve its economic vitality.

