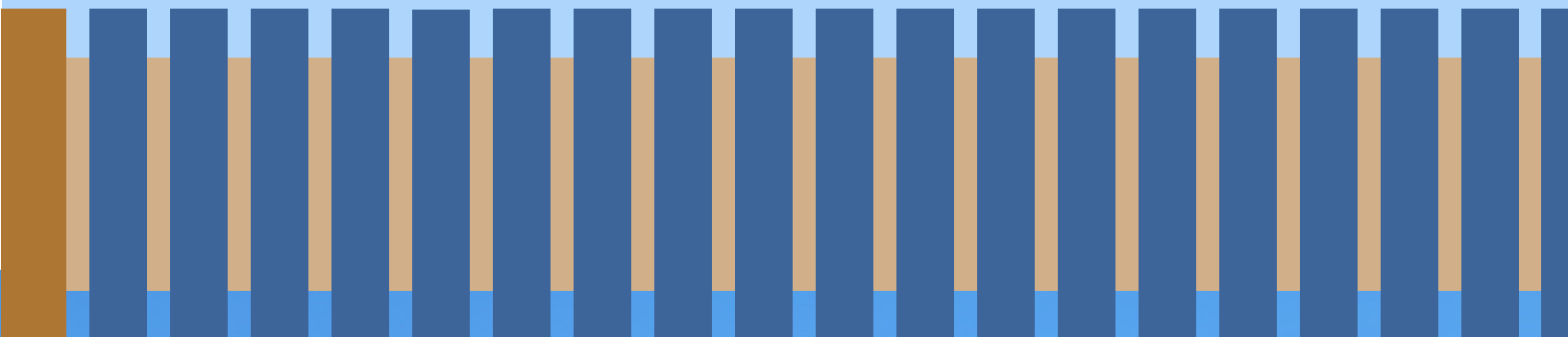


CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

# MENAU METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

ADOPTED MAY 2023



NO PARKING



PLANNING

CONSENSUS

Prepared By:

Consensus Planning, Inc.  
302 Eighth Street NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Terry Brunner, Director  
Karen Iverson, Manager

## CONSULTANT

**Consensus Planning, Inc.**  
Jacqueline Fishman, AICP  
Charlene Johnson, AICP



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## Chapter 1

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Menaul Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MR Area) Plan is the culmination of the third phase of the project completed on behalf of the Albuquerque City Council. The MR Area Plan identifies opportunities and strategies for redevelopment activities and projects that could catalyze private investment and prevent further disinvestment in the area. It also identifies public infrastructure and transportation improvements to be undertaken by the City of Albuquerque. The recommendations provided in the MR Area Plan are based on the findings of the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study, input received at three public meetings, results of a business owner survey, and individual meetings with business owners and other interested parties. The Menaul MR Area Plan is intended to initiate, direct, and facilitate positive action by the City to correct the existing blighted conditions and reverse the current trend of distress and disinvestment. The vision for the Menaul MR Area is for it to once again become a thriving business, hotel, and retail district that positively contributes to the well being of the greater community of Albuquerque.

The Menaul MR Area is located at the confluence of Interstate 40 and Interstate 25 (the Big I")

and within Albuquerque's Mid Heights, which has historically been characterized by high levels of economic output from commercial retail and services and industrial development. The designated MR Area boundaries are Phoenix Avenue to the north, Interstate 40 to the south, North Diversion Channel to the east, and Interstate 25 to the west. The purpose of the Menaul MR Area is to facilitate this area of Albuquerque to return to being a safe and desirable destination and business hub.

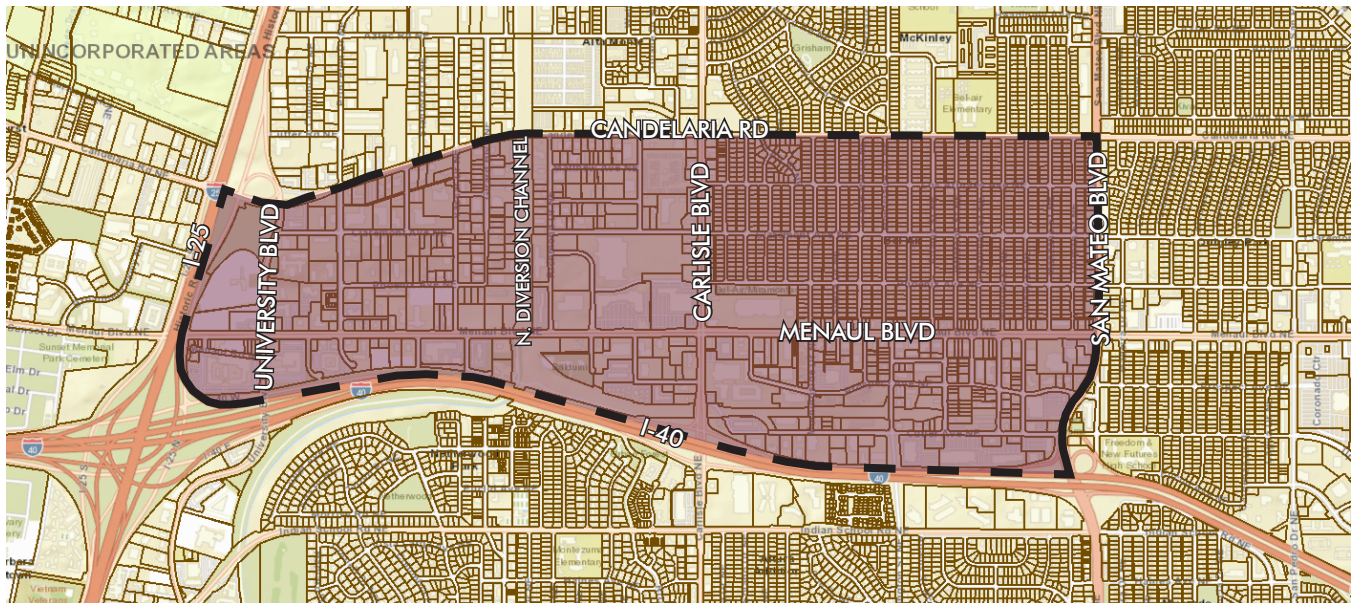
The Menaul MR Area Plan will be administered by the City's Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency. The state-enabling legislation allows the City to engage in the following revitalization efforts:

- ▶ Providing financial incentives for private development projects;
- ▶ Identifying and removing barriers and constraints that have been discouraging private investment (e.g. physical, economic, and regulatory);
- ▶ Investing in public infrastructure and transportation projects; and
- ▶ Initiating public-private partnerships for larger projects.



MENAU METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARY





**MENAU REDEVELOPMENT STUDY AREA (PHASE 1)**

## NEW MEXICO METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE & ANTI-DONATION

The Menaul MR Area Plan has been developed in compliance with the legislation provided under the New Mexico Redevelopment Code (§3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978), which provides New Mexico cities with the powers to correct blighted conditions in areas or neighborhoods that “substantially inflict or arrest the sound and orderly development” within the city.

The Anti-Donation Clause (Article IX, Section 14) of the New Mexico State Constitution is based on the principle that ...“the exercise of the tax power and expenditure of public funds must be for the benefit of the public and not private interests.” The Anti-Donation Clause serves to ...“demarcate the State from public-spirited groups that are not the state and not subject to state control and, thus, helps to ensure control, accountability, and transparency over the expenditure of public funds.” (Source: *New Mexico Finance Authority Oversight Committee, Jeremy Farris, D.Phil., J.D., August 30, 2022*).

The New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code allows for unique public/private partnerships in MR Areas because the public benefit provided by the elimination of slum and blight in an area outweighs any private incidental benefit on a

specific project. “Activities authorized and powers granted by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code are hereby declared not to result in a donation or aid to any person, association or public or private organization or enterprise. The necessity for these provisions and the power is declared to be in the public interest as a matter of legislative determination” (§3-60A-2.C. NMSA 1978). This provision specifically allows local government to sell, lease, or dispose of public assets; enter into public/private partnerships; carry out MR Area projects; invest in MR Area project funds; and issue bonds, loans, and grants.

## 1.2 ACTION PLAN

The Menaul MR Area Plan identifies a wide range of recommendations and actions that are intended to reverse the blighted physical and economic conditions in the area. One of the overarching principles of the Menaul MR Area Plan is to encourage public/private partnerships, particularly for the catalytic redevelopment projects identified in this document. Some of the projects are not capital intensive and instead are mostly administrative.

Table 1.1 provides the list of 22 action items and identifies the lead agency and potential partners for each project. Refer to Chapter 4: Recommendations for more detail on each of



TABLE 1.1: MENAUL MR AREA - ACTION PLAN

Project	Lead Agencies and Partners
<b>OPPORTUNITY SITES/REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS</b>	
1. Redevelop Opportunity Site 1 (NE corner of Menaul Boulevard and Vassar Drive)	Private Developer, MR Agency
2. Redevelop Opportunity Site 2 (South side of Menaul Boulevard, between University Boulevard and Fairfield Drive)	Private Developers, MR Agency
3. Redevelop Opportunity Site 3 (Combination of Little Anita's, Range Cafe, and Village Inn vacant restaurant buildings, north and south sides of Menaul Boulevard)	Private Developers, MR Agency
4. Convert Hotel/Motels to Multi-Family Residential	Private Developers, MR Agency
5. Redevelop Vacant Building for Albuquerque Community Safety Building	Albuquerque Community Safety Department, Dept of Municipal Development, Council Services
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE &amp; TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
6. Install Mobile Cameras at key intersections of Menaul, North Diversion Channel Trail, and Embudo Channel Trail	Albuquerque Police Dept
7. Add Code Blue Stations along the North Diversion Trail and Embudo Trail	Parks and Recreation Dept, Verizon
8. Street Lighting Improvements	Dept of Municipal Development, PNM, Council Services
9. Menaul Traffic Calming	Dept of Municipal Development, Council Services
10. Trail Improvements & Placemaking (Lighting, trail sponsorship program, trail markers/wayfinding signage)	Parks and Recreation Dept, AMAFCA
11. Transit Improvements (Shelter and bench maintenance, Adopt-a-Stop Program, bus shelter design modifications)	ABQ Ride
12. Landscaping & Wayfinding Improvements	Dept of Municipal Development, NMDOT
13. Building & Sidewalk Improvements	Private Developers/Property Owners, MR Agency, Dept of Municipal Development
14. Develop a Dog Park and Add Electric Vehicle Stations	Applebee's, AMAFCA, Dept of Municipal Development, Parks and Recreation Dept
15. Public Art/Orphan Signs	Council Services, Friends of the Orphan Signs
16. Create a Visitors' Center	Private Developer, Council Services, Visit Albuquerque
<b>SUPPORT ACTIONS</b>	
17. Conduct Regular Field Briefings	Albuquerque Police Dept
18. Increase PRT engagement from the APD Northeast Area Command	Albuquerque Police Dept
19. Determine feasibility of creating a Public Safety ECHO	Public Safety ECHO
20. Landfill Assistance	Solid Waste Dept, Environmental Health Dept
21. Zone Map Amendments & Comprehensive Plan Designations	Private Property Owners, City Council
22. Dialogue with Business Owners	Council Services, Economic Development Dept, MR Agency



the actions listed in the table. Chapter 5: Project Financing and Funding Sources provides an overview of financing mechanisms that could be employed to implement projects and a comprehensive list of funding sources organized by type. It is acknowledged that the larger projects, particularly those involving transportation improvements, may require more than one funding source and may require phasing.

### 1.3 REDEVELOPMENT VISION & GOALS

In addition to the overarching goals contained in the Comprehensive Plan, which are presented in Chapter 2, the following Master Plan vision and goals are intended to capture the essence of what the City of Albuquerque and the community is striving to achieve for the Menaul MR Area:

#### VISION

*The Menaul Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is a vibrant, walkable business district for hotel guests, workers, and residents alike. A rebirth of the area has occurred as new businesses - commercial retail and services, hospitality, and restaurants - have sprung up along the corridor and existing businesses continue to invest and take great pride in their properties. The area features a coordinated system of streets, sidewalks, multi-use trails, and transit services that provide connections to the larger Albuquerque community and encourage transit-oriented development.*

#### GOALS

- ◀ **Goal 1:** Mitigate unsafe building conditions within the MR Area by supporting the re-purposing of vacant, abandoned, and dilapidated buildings and properties.
- ◀ **Goal 2:** Assist existing businesses and attract new businesses willing to locate within the MR Area through the utilization of financing and funding mechanisms available to the City of Albuquerque.
- ◀ **Goal 3:** Promote creative placemaking opportunities that support the Menaul MR Area in becoming a more vibrant and attractive destination.

- ◀ **Goal 4:** Increase the amount of market rate and affordable housing within the MR Area through the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites and the conversion of non-residential buildings.
- ◀ **Goal 5:** Increase safety, mobility, and connectivity within the MR Area by improving street, sidewalk, trail, and transit systems.
- ◀ **Goal 6:** Amend the existing zoning to encourage a wider range of commercial and mixed-use development and decreases the amount of industrial zoning.

### 1.4 PLANNING PROCESS

#### PHASE 1 - MENAUL REDEVELOPMENT STUDY

The first phase of the project, the “Menaul Redevelopment Study”, was completed and subsequently approved by the City Council in November 2021. The study documented existing conditions that were contributing to a lack of investment and disinvestment within the larger area of Albuquerque bounded by Candelaria Road to the north, Interstate 40 to the south, San Mateo Boulevard to the east, and Interstate 25 to the west. The study focused on the non-residential properties and issues related to vacant buildings and properties, deteriorated conditions and crime, changing retail trends, and multi-modal transportation systems. The study did not include an analysis of the low density residential area between Menaul Boulevard and Candelaria Road, west of San Mateo Boulevard.

Blighted and deteriorated conditions were documented within a subarea of the larger study area as defined in the New Mexico Redevelopment Code, specifically:

- ◀ Deteriorated structures;
- ◀ Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- ◀ Deterioration of site improvements; and
- ◀ Low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment.

As part of Phase 1, Consensus Planning held two public meetings on May 20, 2021 and September



14, 2021, and developed a Business Owner Survey that asked participants to provide input on issues affecting the study area and their business. The first public meeting included conducting a SWOT analysis, which revealed many of the concerns of the business owners that have been addressed in the MR Area Plan (see Appendix A: *SWOT Analysis for more detail*).

The Business Owner Survey was advertised on a postcard that was mailed to every physical business address in the study area. The survey was open on Survey Monkey from April 26th to June 10, 2021 (see the full results of the survey results in the *Menaul Redevelopment Study*). The postcards also contained information about the online public meeting held on May 20, 2021.

The survey results confirmed the SWOT analysis and revealed deep concern from the area business owners regarding loitering and people experiencing homelessness, vandalism and property crime, and litter and trash. The participants indicated that the City should focus on crime prevention, lighting, and graffiti removal. Bike lanes, visual attractiveness, and lighting were rated as poor. The speed limit along Menaul Boulevard also emerged as a major concern. Sit down restaurants, retail stores, and breweries, distilleries, or tap rooms were identified as the types of new businesses most needed in the area. However, the participants also noted that proximity to Interstate 25 and Interstate 40 and visibility to be the primary benefits of having a business in the area.

## PHASE 2 - MR AREA DESIGNATION

The second phase of the project involved the creation of an MR Area Designation Report for the subarea within the Menaul Redevelopment Study along Menaul Boulevard, between Interstate 25 and the North Diversion Channel. The Designation Report documented blighted conditions including deteriorated structures; deterioration of site improvements; and low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment. There is ample evidence of business closures, lack of ongoing investment,

and disinvestment. The planning process also revealed a strong frustration expressed by business owners regarding the lack of City investment in the area and high rates of crime and vandalism. The Designation Report showed this area to be at a crucial crossroads; and projected that if the trend continues, blighting conditions and disinvestment in the area will surely worsen.

A public meeting was held on January 25, 2022, to present the draft MR Area Designation Report and receive input prior to meetings before the Albuquerque Development Commission and City Council. Participants at the public meeting expressed their strong support for the designation and repeated much of their previous comments regarding crime and vandalism, and their hope that the City will help bring change to the existing conditions.

The Designation Report was presented on February 17, 2022, to the Albuquerque Development Commission, which recommended approval of the MR Area designation to the Albuquerque City Council. Subsequently, a presentation was made on April 13, 2022, to the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee (LUPZ), which recommended approval of the designation to the City Council. That was followed by a final presentation to the City Council on May 16, 2022, which unanimously approved the designation.

## MR AREA PLAN - PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

City Council Services and Consensus Planning facilitated the first meeting for the Menaul MR Area Plan on August 11, 2022. The meeting was held online and attended by members of the general public and business owners within the MR Area and the larger study area. The participants were enthusiastic about getting to this point in the project and asked numerous questions regarding how the City intends to administer the project, what resources were available to improve existing conditions both for their individual businesses and the overall area, and the timeline for implementation.



A summary of the ideas provided by the participants at this public meeting included:

- ◀ Mitigating the high level of criminal activity in the area through investments in public safety initiatives
- ◀ Addressing issues associated with homelessness and providing support to those individuals that desire a change in their lives
- ◀ Improving the physical condition of properties and encouraging investment by the public and private sectors
- ◀ Lowering the speed limit and incorporating traffic calming measures along Menaul Boulevard
- ◀ Add housing to create a more integrated work/living environment
- ◀ Remove daily and weekly motels that contribute to crime and drug use in the area
- ◀ Add lighting to Fairfield Road to increase safety and reduce drug dealing
- ◀ Remove the quonset hut and add a public park in its place
- ◀ Replace the chain link fencing along Interstate 40 and add a wall similar to the one on the south side of Interstate 40 at the Carlisle Boulevard ramp
- ◀ Mixed-use redevelopment concept for one of the Opportunity Sites identified in the Menaul Redevelopment Study and carried forward to the Menaul MR Area Plan

The City of Albuquerque and Consensus Planning hosted the second online public meeting on November 29, 2022, to present the draft Menaul MR Area Plan. The meeting started with Councilor Tammy Fiebelkorn welcoming the participants and providing a brief introduction. The introduction was followed by a presentation of the draft Plan from Jackie Fishman. The presentation included an overview of the project history, the draft action plan, project financing and funding sources, and next steps in the planning process. The meeting participants expressed overall support for the draft

Menaul MR Area Plan and provided input to the Project Team, which is summarized below:

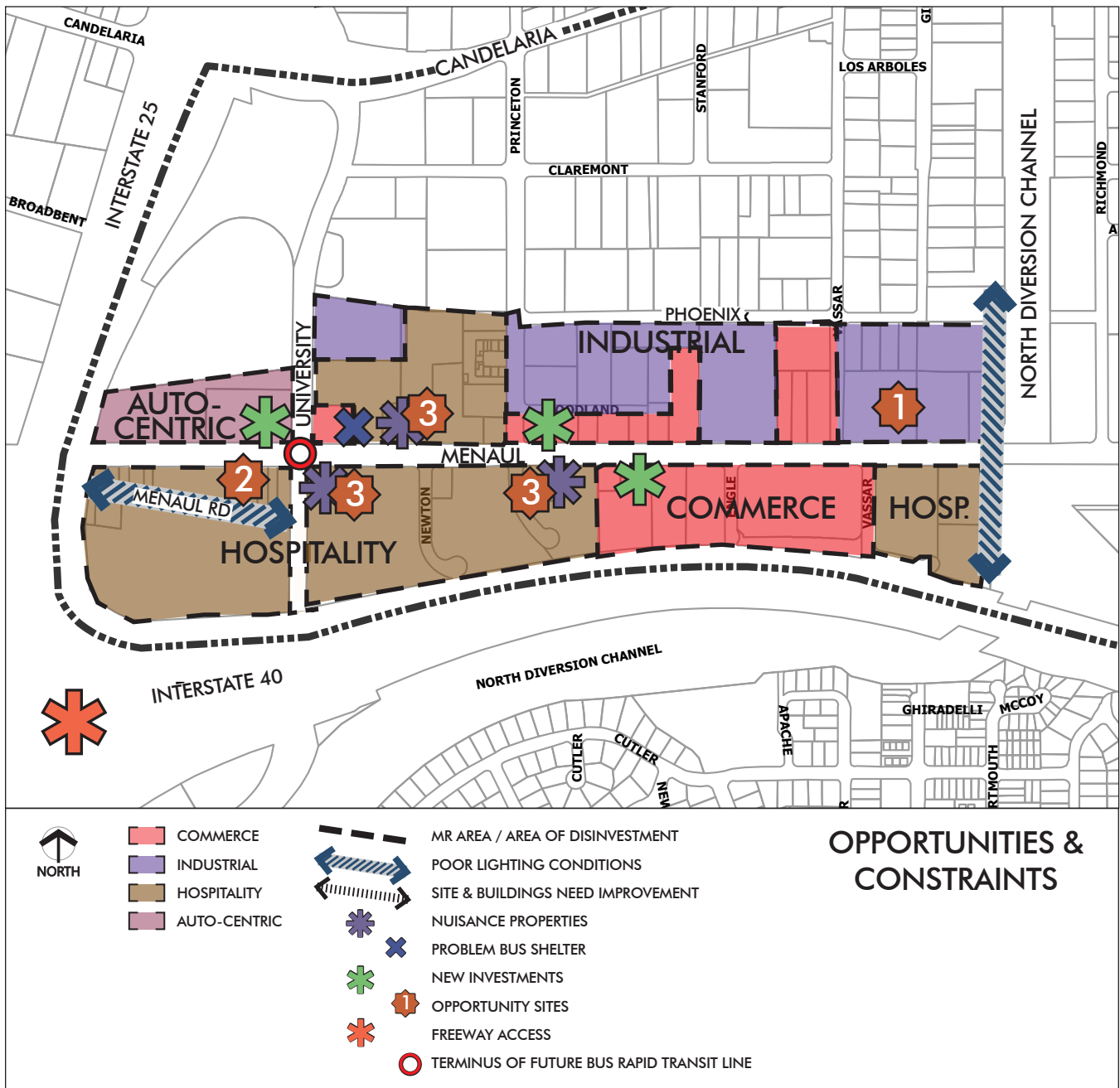
- ◀ As part of the traffic study for traffic calming recommended on Menaul Boulevard, ensure that existing area traffic is included. Before traffic calming measures are incorporated along Menaul, a comprehensive traffic study should be conducted.
- ◀ The City could consider waiving landfill tipping fees for projects within the two landfill areas and expediting the entitlement process to encourage redevelopment.
- ◀ Hotel/motel conversions to multi-family residential should ensure high-quality residential projects.
- ◀ The City should consider acquiring the Quonset hut property at the southwest corner of University Boulevard and Menaul Boulevard to kick-start redevelopment.

## 1.5 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

As part of the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study, Consensus Planning completed an Opportunities and Constraints analysis that identified existing conditions, including general land use categories of Commerce, Industrial, Hospitality, and Auto-Centric; nuisance properties; problem bus stops; areas of disinvestment; poor lighting conditions; etc. The proposed MR Area boundary was included in the Opportunities & Constraints analysis, referenced as an **“Area of Disinvestment”**. The MR Area has been extrapolated and expanded upon from that analysis (see *Opportunity & Constraints graphic*, page 9).

- ◀ **Opportunity Sites:** The Opportunities & Constraints analysis identifies three Opportunity Sites, including 1) Property on the south side of Menaul, west of University Boulevard; 2) Property on the north side of Menaul Boulevard between Vassar Drive and the North Diversion Channel; and 3) Three **“Nuisance Properties”** that were once occupied by Little Anitas, The Range,





Note: This graphic has been extrapolated from the Opportunities & Constraints analysis completed during the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study and expanded upon for the Menaul MR Area Plan.

and Village Inn restaurants (see Chapter 4: Recommendations for more detail on each of the Opportunity Sites).

- Poor Lighting Conditions:** Menaul Road is unlit and Menaul Boulevard has street lights that are not operational. The trails along the North Diversion Channel and the Embudo Channel are unlit.

- Problem Bus Shelter:** The bus shelter on the north side of Menaul Boulevard, east of University Boulevard, has been attracting negative activity and is a nuisance to the area. The bus shelter was recently removed by City Transit; however, the bus stop remains in operation.
- New Investment:** The Maverik gas station at the northwest corner of Menaul and



University Boulevards and Stripe's Burrito Restaurant and Urban 360 Pizza north and south of Menaul are relatively new to the area.

- ◆ **Terminus of Future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Line:** This is the general area for the future BRT line per the UNM/CNM/Sunport BRT Study by MRCOG (2013).



## Chapter 2

# AREA PROFILE





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## 2.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Menaul MR Area is centrally located in Albuquerque and within the Comprehensive Plan's designated Mid-Heights Community Planning Area, which is characterized by a suburban development pattern, commercial strip development, and a grid pattern of principal and arterial streets. The Comprehensive Plan provides the policy framework and addresses a myriad of issues that are relevant to the aspirations and efforts to facilitate development and redevelopment of the Menaul MR Area and its rebirth as a strong, prosperous, and safe business district. The Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) is the tool that implements the Comprehensive Plan through regulations and approval processes.

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies are applicable to the Menaul MR Area and the community values of strengthening community identity, fostering economic vitality, promoting sustainability, facilitating safe and equitable transportation mobility, and development of quality urban design. The recommendations and actions identified in the MR Area Plan will further the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies:

#### Community Identity

**Goal 4.1 Character:** "Enhance, protect, and preserve distinct communities."

##### **Policy 4.1.1 Distinct Communities:**

"Encourage quality development that is consistent with the distinct character of communities."

**Policy 4.1.2 Identity and Design:** "Protect the identity and cohesiveness of neighborhoods by ensuring the appropriate scale and location of development, mix of uses, and character of building design."

#### Land Use

**Goal 5.1 Centers and Corridors:** "Grow as a community of strong Centers connected by a multi-modal network of Corridors."

**Policy 5.1.11:** "Design safe Multi-Modal Corridors that balance the competing needs of multiple modes of travel and become more mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented over time."

##### **Goal 5.3 Efficient Development Patterns:**

"Promote development patterns that maximize the utility of existing infrastructure and public facilities and the efficient use of land to support the public good."

**Policy 5.3.1 Infill Development:** "Support additional growth in areas with existing infrastructure and public facilities."

**Goal 5.6 City Development Areas:** "Encourage and direct growth to Areas of Change where it is expected and desired and ensure that development in and near Areas of Consistency reinforces the character and intensity of the surrounding area."

**Policy 5.6.2 Areas of Change:** "Direct growth and more intense development to Centers, Corridors, industrial and business parks, and Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas where change is encouraged."

#### Transportation

##### **Goal 6.1 Land Use-Transportation Integration:**

"Plan, develop, operate, and maintain a transportation system to support the planned character of existing and future land uses."

**Policy 6.1.1 Matching Land Use:** "When designing and improving streets, prioritize transportation-related accommodations and amenities to match the desired development context (e.g. urban, suburban, or rural) and/or the intended intensity of land uses."

**Policy 6.1.2 Transit-Oriented Development:** "Prioritize transit-supportive density, uses, and building design along Transit Corridors."

**Policy 6.1.3 Auto Demand:** "Reduce the need for automobile travel by increasing mixed-use development, infill development within Centers, and travel demand management (TDM) programs."

**Policy 6.1.4 Premium Transit Corridors:** Prioritize transit vehicles within the travel



way and transit users in street design and improvements, incorporating pedestrian amenities, such as bulb-outs, pedestrian activated signals, and refuge medians at intersections and near transit stations.

**Policy 6.1.7 Multi-Modal Corridors:**

“Balance the competing needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, autos, and transit in street design and improvements by slowing auto traffic, minimizing curb cuts, and encouraging primary auto access to parking lots to be provided from intersecting streets.”

**Goal 6.2 Multi-Modal System:** “Encourage walking, biking, and transit, especially at peak-hour commuting times, to enhance access and mobility for people of all ages and abilities.”

**Policy 6.2.2:** “Incorporate Complete Streets concepts and policies into the development, retrofit, and rehabilitation of all transportation infrastructure at all phases, including planning, scoping, design, implementation, and performance monitoring.

**Policy 6.2.3 Pedestrian & Bicycle Connectivity:**

“Provide direct pedestrian and bicycle access to and circulation within Centers, commercial properties, community facilities, and residential neighborhoods.”

**Policy 6.2.7 Transit Network:** “Prioritize transit travel and pedestrian safety, especially near transit stops and stations and intersections.”

**Goal 6.3 Safety:** “Plan, develop, operate, and maintain a transportation system that provides safe access and mobility for all roadway users.”

**Policy 6.3.2 Pedestrians:** “Improve safety for pedestrians through street design.”

**Policy 6.3.3 Cyclists:** “Improve safety for cyclists through street design.”

**Goal 6.5 Equity:** “Expand mobility by providing safe and connected networks for non-auto travel and public transit for low-income and vulnerable populations.”

**Policy 6.5.1: Equitable Transportation Systems:** “Consider the needs of people of all ages

and abilities in the design, construction, and operation of transportation systems.”

## Urban Design

**Goal 7.2 Pedestrian-Accessible Design:**

“Increase walkability in all environments, promote pedestrian-oriented development in urban contexts, and increase pedestrian safety in auto-oriented contexts.”

**Policy 7.2.1 Walkability:** “Ensure convenient and comfortable pedestrian travel.”

**Policy 7.2.2 Walkable Places:** “Promote high-quality pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods and districts as the essential building blocks of a sustainable region.”

**Goal 7.3 Sense of Place:** “Reinforce sense of place through context-sensitive design of development and streetscapes.”

**Policy 7.3.2 Community Character:**

“Encourage design strategies that recognize and embrace the character differences that give communities their distinct identities and make them safe and attractive places.”

**Policy 7.3.3 Placemaking:** “Encourage efforts to establish and strengthen district identity within Centers, business districts, and neighborhoods.”

**Policy 7.3.5 Development Quality:** “Encourage innovative and high-quality design in all development.”

**Goal 7.5 Context-Sensitive Site Design:** “Design sites, buildings, and landscape elements to respond to the high desert environment.”

**Policy 7.5.1 Landscape Design:** “Encourage landscape treatments that are consistent with the high desert climate to enhance our sense of place.”

## Economic Development

**Goal 8.1 Placemaking:** “Create places where business and talent will stay and thrive.”

**Policy 8.1.1 Diverse Places:** “Foster a range of interesting places and contexts with different



development intensities, densities, uses, and building scale to encourage economic development opportunities.”

**Policy 8.1.2 Resilient Economy:** “Encourage economic development efforts that improve quality of life for new and existing residents and foster a robust, resilient, and diverse economy.”

**Goal 8.2 Entrepreneurship:** “Foster a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship and encourage private businesses to grow.”

**Policy 8.2.1 Local Business:** “Emphasize local business development.”

**Policy 8.2.2 Diverse Talent:** “Promote a more inclusive ecosystem for developing entrepreneurs.”

**Policy 8.2.3 Sustainable Business:** “Provide incentives for development projects and businesses that have sustainable economic characteristics.”

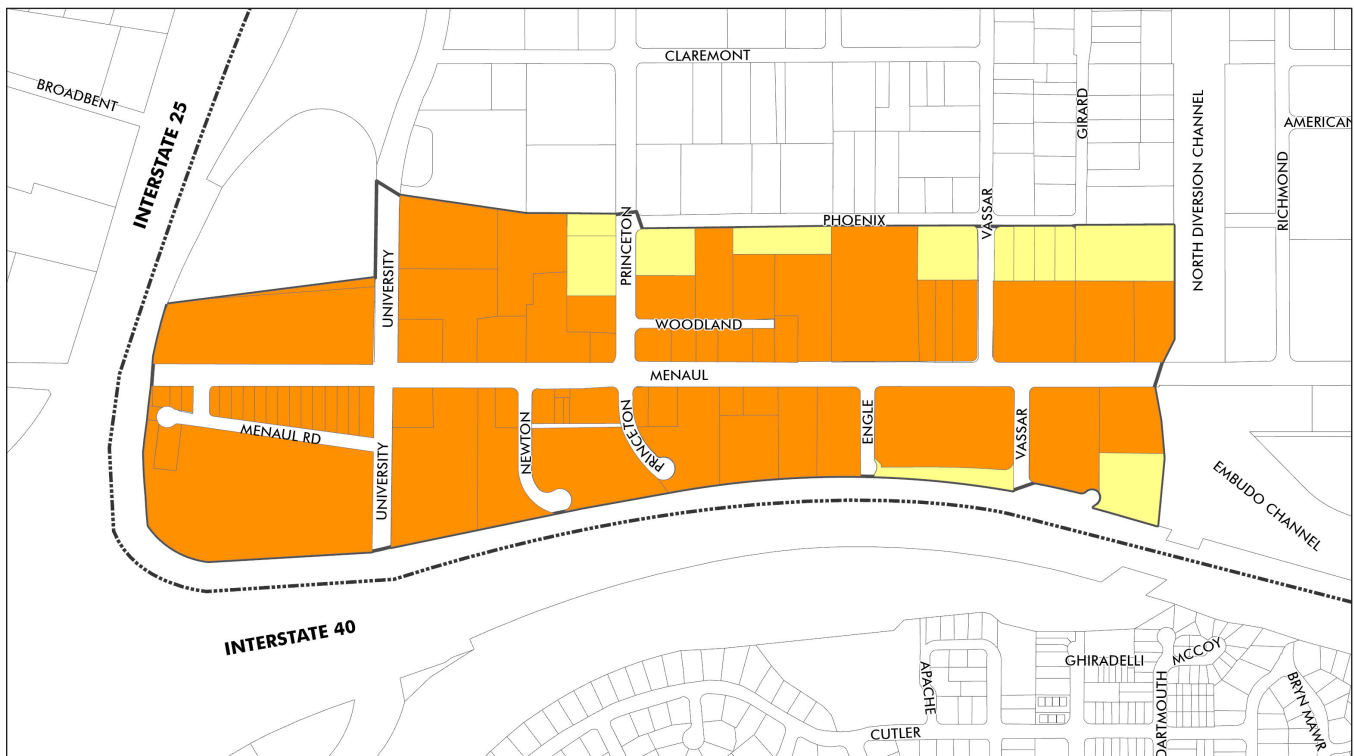
**Policy 8.2.4 Public Funds:** “Leverage public funds and efforts to support venture capital and private investment.”

## CITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS & ACTIVITY CENTERS

The Comprehensive Plan identifies two types of City Development Areas; Areas of Change and Areas of Consistency. Areas of Change are those locations where growth is encouraged and best served with transit and other infrastructure. Areas of Consistency are the locations where development should be designed to reinforce the character, scale and intensity of surrounding neighborhoods or non-residential development.

The vast majority of the properties within the Menaul MR Area are designated as Areas of Change. Regulations contained in the IDO, including development standards, deviations to development standards, site plan amendment thresholds, and zoning map amendments, are specific to whether the property is an Area of Change, Area of Consistency, and in locations where they are adjacent or abutting each other.

Most of the Areas of Consistency are designated along the south side of Phoenix Avenue, east



CITY DEVELOPMENT AREAS





and west of Princeton Drive, and east and west of Vassar Drive. There are also two relatively small areas north of Interstate 40, east and west of Princeton Drive.

There are currently no Activity Centers within the Menaul MR Area. However, there is a process for designating new Activity Centers as long as the applicable conditions are met and there is support for the designation by the City Council.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CORRIDORS

The Comprehensive Plan designates a network of significant corridors intended to balance street connectivity and ensure access to Activity Centers. Each of the five corridor types represents a different mix of transportation and land uses, and has a specific set of objectives and policies. The following corridors are designated within the MR Area (note there are no Major Transit Corridors currently designated within the Menaul MR Area):

- ◀ Commuter Corridors - Interstate 25 and Interstate 40;

- ◀ Multi-Modal Corridor - Menaul Boulevard; and
- ◀ Premium Transit Corridor - University Boulevard.

Commuter Corridors prioritize high-speed vehicular travel across Albuquerque, while Multi-Modal Corridors are intended to encourage the redevelopment of former auto-oriented commercial areas to mixed-use, pedestrian friendly environments that have multi-modal transit options. Premium Transit Corridors are high-frequency transit corridors.

### Premium Transit Corridors

University Boulevard is designated as a Premium Transit Corridor; however, there are no Premium Transit Station Areas at this time. Premium Transit Corridors are intended to be served by high-frequency public transit, as well as transit-oriented and mixed-use development with walking connections to transit stations. A Premium Transit Area classification applies to parcels within 660



- Premium Transit Corridor (Planned, Not Active)
- Multi-Modal Corridor
- Commuter Corridor

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CORRIDORS



feet in any direction of a transit station with a service of 15 minutes or greater on a Premium Transit Corridor. The Premium Transit Area designation primarily impacts development standards for mixed-use and non-residential zones; however, until station locations are identified and funded for the Premium Transit lines, these IDO standards will not apply.

### Major Transit Corridors

There are no Major Transit Corridors in the Menaul MR Area. However, a Major Transit Corridor designation may benefit the area's growth by enabling height bonuses for workforce housing and may be more appropriate for a more mixed-use corridor as envisioned in this Plan. Major Transit Corridors prioritize transit above other modes to ensure a convenient and efficient transit system. Walkability on these corridors is key to providing a safe and attractive pedestrian environment, as well as good access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users to

goods and services along these Corridors and the Centers they connect. Development along Major Transit Corridors should be transit- and pedestrian-oriented near transit stops, while auto-oriented for much of the Corridor.

## 2.2 EXISTING LAND USE

There is approximately 98.3 acres of land within the Menaul MR Area, not including public rights-of-way. A windshield survey was conducted by Consensus Planning on May 6-7, 2021, to determine existing land use and conditions as part of the Menaul Redevelopment Study.

Data was extrapolated from the survey for the Menaul MR Area. Parcel level observations were crosschecked with the City's ArcGIS data and reported business information from Google Maps. Table 2.1 lists the existing land use categories present in the Menaul MR Area, acreage, and their relative share of the total.





**TABLE 2.1: EXISTING LAND USE**

Land Use Category	Acreage	Share
Commercial	53.0	54.0%
Restaurant	3.1	3.2%
Industrial/Manufacturing	19.5	19.9%
Institutional	1.7	1.7%
Office	7.6	7.7%
Vacant Building	5.8	5.9%
Vacant Lot	7.5	7.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## COMMERCIAL & RESTAURANT

The dominant land use in the MR Area is commercial, representing 54.1% of the total area, including commercial and restaurant uses. Commercial development is located throughout the MR Area, and is particularly dominant on the south side of Menaul Boulevard. Restaurant use has been broken out into its own category, representing 3.1% of the total commercial use in the MR Area. Restaurant use is along the Menaul corridor clustered around Princeton Drive and adjacent to the North Diversion Channel on the south side of Menaul Boulevard.

## INDUSTRIAL/MANUFACTURING

Industrial/Manufacturing represents 21.0% of the MR Area, second only to commercial use. It is concentrated north of the commercial properties fronting Menaul Boulevard from University Boulevard to the North Diversion Channel. Commercial uses adjacent to these industrial sites are often being used for heavy commercial services. This suggests a relatively high level of compatibility between land uses.

## INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional use represents 1.7% of the MR Area and is comprised of one parcel that is adjacent to the Embudo Channel and north of Interstate 40. This parcel is owned and utilized by AMAFCA.

## OFFICE

Office use represents 7.7% of the MR Area. There is a relatively large cluster of office use in the center of the MR Area, north and south of Menaul

Boulevard, between Princeton Drive and Engle Drive. There is another area of office use west of Princeton Drive and south of Phoenix Avenue.

## VACANT LOTS & VACANT BUILDINGS

Vacant lots and vacant buildings comprise 3.6% and 5.8%, respectively, for a total of 9.4% vacancy in the MR Area. These sites are concentrated in a high visibility area along Menaul Boulevard from Interstate 25 to just east of Princeton Drive. This includes the now closed Little Anita's restaurant at the southeast corner of University Boulevard and Menaul Boulevard, Village Inn restaurant on the north side of Menaul Boulevard, east of University Boulevard, and the Range Cafe on the south side of Menaul Boulevard at Princeton Drive. These buildings have become places for homeless people to congregate and the buildings and properties have continued to deteriorate rapidly. The industrial zoned property west of the Maverik gas station on the north side of Menaul Boulevard has also become vacant, but plans are in process for a new food warehouse business and the site has recently been fenced to keep trespassers out of the property.

## 2.3 EXISTING ZONING

Zoning within the MR Area is dominated by three zones, NR-LM, NR-C, and MX-M. While the land use and zoning are generally consistent in the MR Area, some zoning map amendments to reduce the amount of NR-LM to either NR-C or MX-M may be warranted and could better match existing or future land uses.

### NR-LM NON-RESIDENTIAL LIGHT MANUFACTURING

The largest zoning district in the MR Area is NR-LM, representing 69.3%. The NR-LM zone is nearly uninterrupted between Interstate 25 and Vassar Drive on the north side of Menaul Boulevard. There is a small parcel of NR-LM east of Vassar Drive, south of Phoenix Avenue.

The purpose of the NR-LM zone district is to:

... "accommodate moderate-intensity commercial, light assembly, fabrication, and



TABLE 2.2: EXISTING ZONING		
Zoning Category	Acres	Share
MX-M Mixed Use-Medium Intensity	9.8	6.7%
NR-C Non-Residential-Commercial	35.8	24.0%
NR-LM Non-Residential-Light Manufacturing	52.7	69.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

light manufacturing uses, while buffering adjacent lower-intensity, Residential and Mixed-use zone districts from the traffic, noise, and other impacts of those uses.”

While the NR-LM zone is a relatively intense zone that allows hotel, motel, restaurant, light vehicle fueling station, and heavy vehicle fueling uses permissively, most of these NR-LM properties are not in use for industrial or manufacturing development. Rezoning some of these NR-LM parcels to NR-C (or MX-M) could provide more consistency between zoning and existing land use and would remove some permissive and conditional uses that could detract from the area

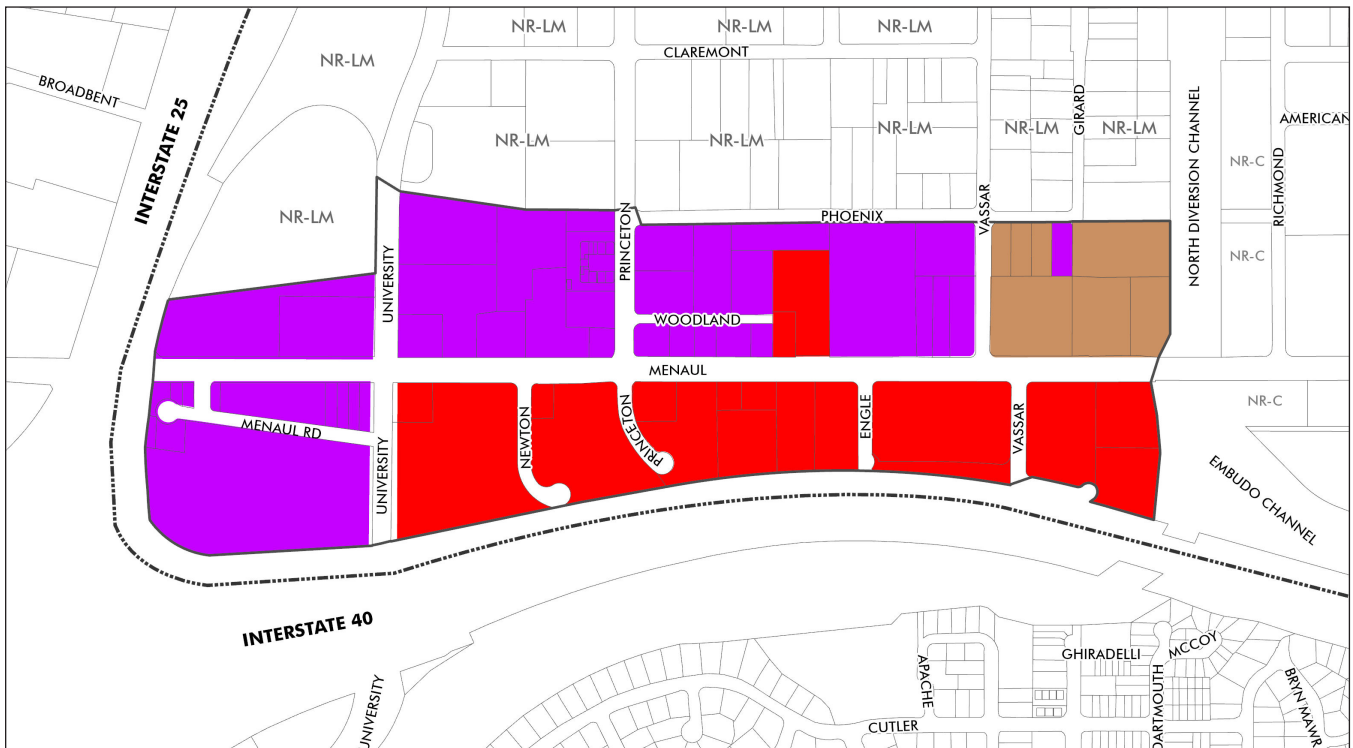
(e.g. freight terminal, salvage yard, fuel storage, heavy vehicle and equipment sales, rental, fueling, and repair) becoming a more pedestrian-oriented business, hotel, and retail district.

## NR-C NON-RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL

The NR-C zone represents 35.8% of the MR Area and is uninterrupted between University Boulevard and the North Diversion Channel on the south of Menaul Boulevard. There is also one area of NR-C on the north side of Menaul Boulevard that is surrounded by NR-LM on three sides.

The purpose of the NR-C zone is to:

...”accommodate medium-scale retail, office, commercial, and institutional uses, particularly where additional residential development is not appropriate or not desired because of a deficit of jobs or services in relation to housing units in the area. Primary land uses include a wide spectrum of retail and commercial uses



EXISTING ZONING



intended to serve both neighborhood and area-wide needs, as well as some light industrial uses.”

The difference in relative percentages between the NR-C zone and commercial land use underscores the abundance of the NR-LM zone being utilized for typical commercial development. As mentioned above, the NR-C zone could be a better fit for some of the properties being used for commercial purposes, particularly those with frontage on Menaul Boulevard and the area west of University Boulevard on the south side of Menaul Boulevard.

### MX-M MIXED-USE MODERATE INTENSITY

The smallest share of the existing zoning is MX-M, representing 6.7% of the MR Area. The MX-M zone is in one location north of Menaul Boulevard between Vassar Drive and the North Diversion Channel. A portion of this property was identified as an Opportunity Site in the Menaul Redevelopment Study and has been carried forward into the Menaul MR Area Plan with an

expanded area. The property owner is planning a mixed-use development containing multi-family residential, a brewery, and retail uses.

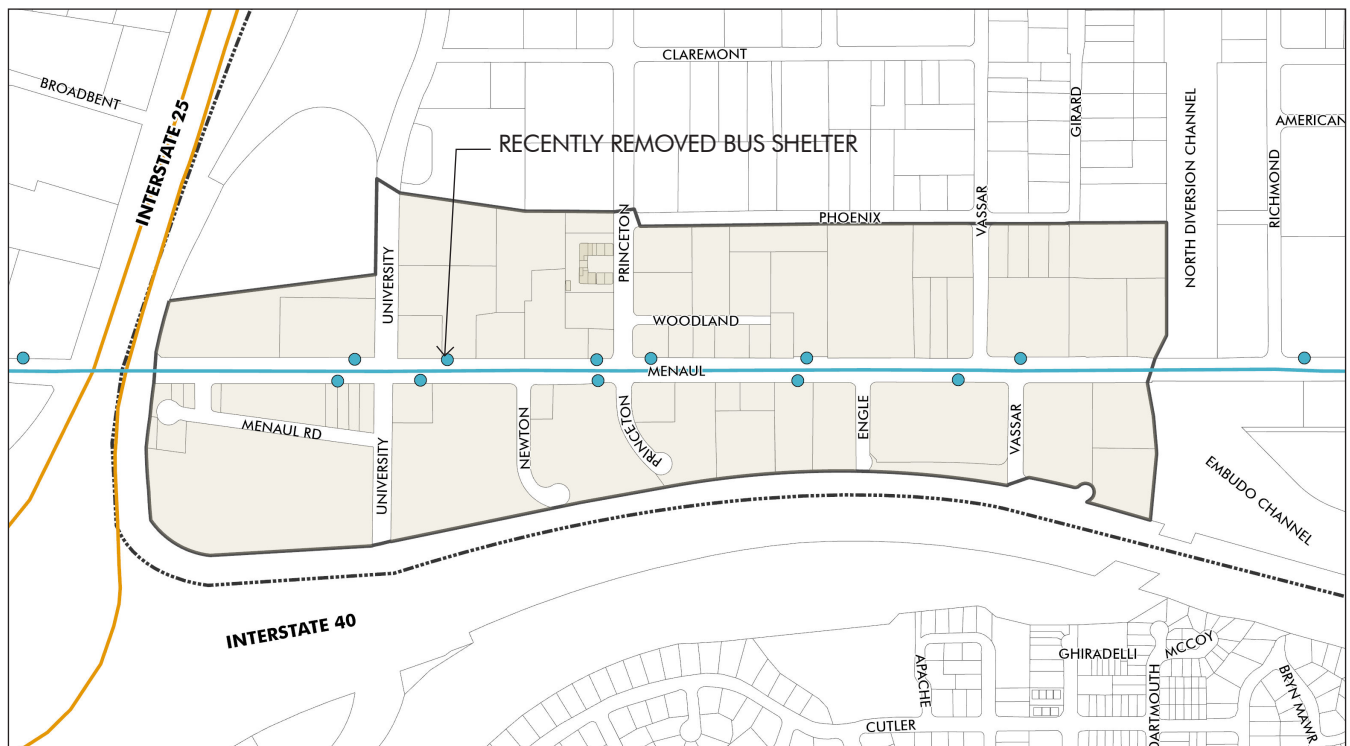
The purpose of the MX-M zone district is to:

...”provide for a wide array of moderate-intensity retail, commercial, institutional and moderate-density residential uses, with taller, multi-story buildings encouraged in Centers and Corridors.”

The MX-M zone could be an appropriate zone district for the existing hotels and motels within the MR Area, and would allow conversions to multi-family residential use, which is not allowed in either the NR-C or NR-LM zoning districts.

## 2.4 MOBILITY

Providing a safe, accessible, and connected transportation network that balances the needs of motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users will support redevelopment of the Menaul MR Area and is consistent with goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. While the MR Area has



● Bus Stop  
— Route 8

— Route 93

TRANSIT FACILITIES



some of these systems in place, there is need for improvements to transit service and infrastructure, multi-use trails and connections, and sidewalks and crosswalks. Menaul Boulevard is wide and relatively high speed corridor with a speed limit of 45 mph, six drive lanes, and a center turn lane, which is not conducive to a pedestrian-oriented business, hotel, and retail district.

It should be noted that the removal of the direct access to Interstate 25 from Menaul Boulevard has likely impacted the business environment. However, the business owners have consistently cited the proximity to the Interstates as a positive attribute of the area.

## TRANSIT

Bus stops in the MR Area have attracted some negative activity and are in varying condition (see *Transit Facilities map*, page 20). The bus shelter that was located on the north side of Menaul Boulevard just east of University Boulevard in front of the Circle K gas station became a magnet for people experiencing homelessness to congregate and has recently been removed by ABQ Ride; however, the bus stop remains operational.

Transit service is available within the MR Area through the following route:

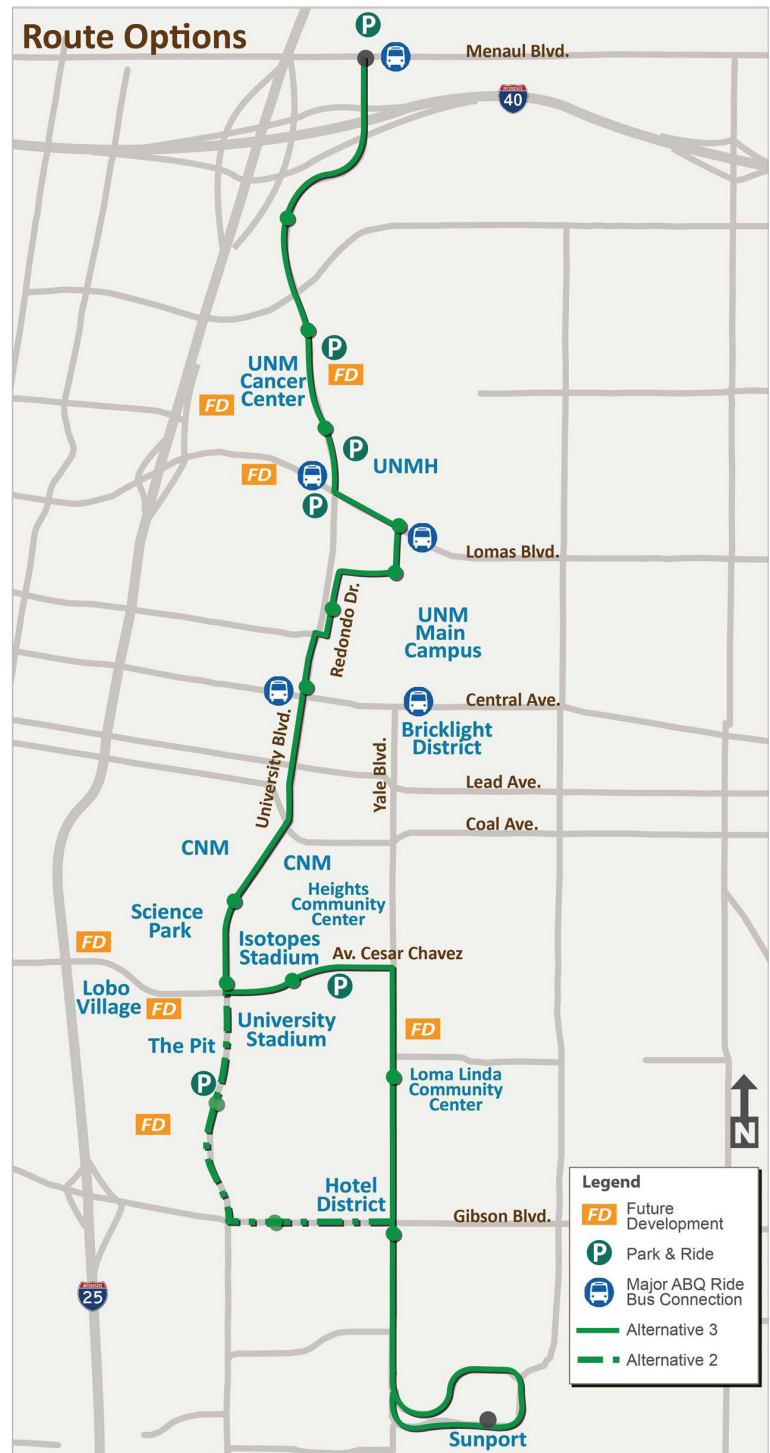
- ◀ **Menaul (Bus Route 8):** Runs along Menaul Boulevard every 20 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on weekends

The Academy Commuter (Bus Route 93) runs along Interstate 25 to Interstate 40 every 60 minutes Monday through Friday but does not have any stops within the MR Area.

## UNM/CNM/Sunport Study

The Rio Metro Regional Transit District, working with the Mid-Region Council of Governments and local stakeholders, identified a potential north-south Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route that would link the UNM/CNM/Sunport corridor. The “Preferred

Alternative” would run along University Boulevard from Menaul Boulevard to Avenida Cesar Chavez, where it would move east to Yale Boulevard and then south to the Sunport. The concept shows the north terminus, which would include a park and ride facility and bus connections, in the vicinity



**DRAFT UNM/CNM/SUNPORT LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**  
Source: Mid-Region Council of Governments.





*North Diversion Channel Multi-Use Trail.*

of the Menaul/University Boulevard intersection. Providing BRT service along University Boulevard would significantly increase mobility to and from the MR Area, and could attract new transit-oriented development to the area.

Some of the properties that may have been suitable for the park and ride facility have recently been developed or are planned for development. The stakeholders in this project should identify and allocate resources towards securing a preferred site for future development. The former motel at the northeast corner of Candelaria Road and University Boulevard is currently for sale, and could provide a possible location for this use.

### **OFF-STREET TRAILS and BIKE FACILITIES**

There are two paved, off-street multi-use trails adjacent to the MR Area; one is along the west edge of the North Diversion Channel and the other is along the west edge of the Embudo Channel. These two trails are major components of the City's off-street trail system and provide excellent connectivity and linkages to the City's trail system. As noted by the participants in the public meetings and business survey, these trails are unlit, rendering them unsafe to navigate at

night. A key recommendation is to work with AMAFCA on providing lighting along these two major trails.

The MR Area does not include any other bike facilities. The Menaul right-of-way contains six travel lanes, plus a center turn lane. Given the excessive width of the right-of-way, traffic calming that includes bike facilities is recommended for further study on Menaul Boulevard.

### **SIDEWALKS**

The majority of sidewalks along Menaul Boulevard are in navigable condition, but many do not follow current City standards for width, cross slope, or ramps, and lack landscape buffers between the back of curb and the sidewalk, which is important for separating pedestrians from vehicles. There are also some areas where sidewalks are missing, including the west side of University Boulevard, south of Menaul Boulevard. Improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian crossings as part of a road diet are recommended for the MR Area.

New development is required to meet current City sidewalk standards along the street frontages of



the project. Two good examples of where this has occurred are the Maverik gas station at Menaul and University Boulevards and the Galles car dealership at University Boulevard and Candelaria Road outside the MR Area.

## LIGHTING

Lighting is a component of transportation mobility and safety for all users. Lighting conditions were visually assessed based on a night-time windshield survey conducted by the consultants on June 15, 2021, from approximately 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Recently it has been observed that the street lights on Menaul Boulevard within the MR Area have not been operational and the area is very dark.

In addition to the roadways, the North Diversion Channel Trail and the Embudo Trail area unlit and unsafe at night. Participants in the public meetings cited lighting along dark streets and the trail network as a need. Ensuring adequate lighting will help to reverse the perception that the MR Area is unsafe to visit and will help discourage crime.

Areas where lighting improvements are needed are shown on the Opportunities & Constraints graphic, page 9. A more comprehensive lighting study should be conducted by the City in coordination with PNM to determine ownership and provide recommendations that address the lighting issues within the MR Area.

## 2.5 PAVEMENT CONDITION

The City Department of Municipal Development collected data in 2021 on general pavement conditions in the City. The rankings range from very good to very poor (see *Pavement Condition graphic below*). The Menaul corridor is ranked fair to poor within the MR Area. Only Vassar Drive, Newton Drive, and a portion of University Boulevard are ranked good. The MR Area does not contain any road pavements ranked very good. The linear feet of each category within the MR Area is as follows:

- ◀ Good: 5,282 feet
- ◀ Fair: 8,830 feet
- ◀ Poor: 8,903 feet
- ◀ Very Poor: 170 feet



- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very Poor

PAVEMENT CONDITION



Public investment into improving the Menaul corridor should be directed towards traffic calming roadway improvements that include pavement replacement, protected bike facilities, traffic calming, ADA-compliant ramps, pedestrian crossings, etc. Reduced speeds should be a part of this strategy.

## 2.6 LANDFILLS & LANDFILL BUFFERS

There are two documented old landfills within the MR Area, referred to as Menaul/University 1 and Menaul/University 2 (see *Landfills & Landfill Buffers map below*). Both appear to have been closed since the 1960s and both are believed to contain construction debris and municipal solid waste. AGIS mapping shows two landfills, the Menaul/ University 1 landfill, located at the southwest corner of Princeton Drive and Claremont Avenue, and the Menaul/University 2 landfill, located between Phoenix Avenue and Menaul Boulevard, west of the North Diversion Channel; however, landfill material may be found within the landfill buffer areas. Opportunity Site 1

is within the Menaul/University 2 landfill and the property owner has confirmed their awareness of the old landfill.

A 1,000-foot buffer area exists around both closed landfills; however, in discussions with City Environmental Health, the two landfills may actually be connected. Landfill buffer areas are regulated under IDO Section 5-2(H), which requires proposed development to follow the Interim Guidelines for Development within City Designated Landfill Buffer Zones of the City Environmental Health Department. Development within a landfill gas buffer requires a Landfill Gas Mitigation Approval to ensure that potential health and safety impacts are addressed. The mixed-use development proposed for Opportunity Site 1 will require going through this process before the development is approved.

The Coronado MR Area was designated by City Council because it contained an old landfill and public support was needed to allow for redevelopment of the property for multi-family



Landfills  
Landfill Buffer

LANDFILLS & LANDFILL BUFFERS



## EMPTY FREESTANDING SIGNS IN THE MR AREA



Upper left: Empty sign at former Little Anitas; Upper right: Empty sign at the former Range Cafe; Bottom: Two empty signs on Menaul Boulevard close to the La Quinta Hotel.

residential. The City Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (MRA) provided a tax abatement for the property.

## 2.7 EMPTY FREESTANDING SIGNS

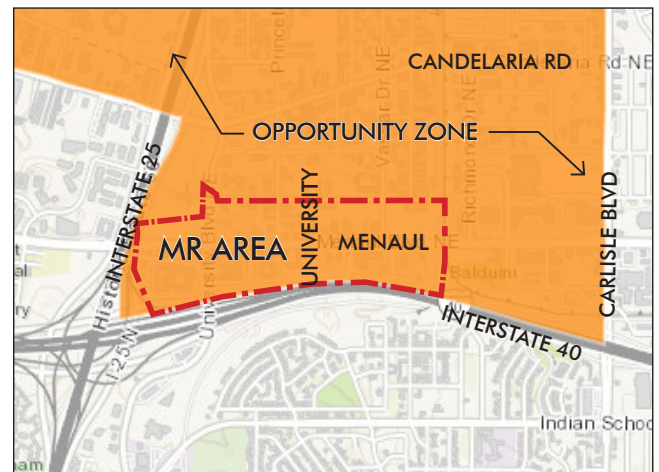
Given the level of vacant buildings and underutilized sites, there are a number of empty freestanding signs within the MR Area, particularly along the Menaul corridor (see photos below). These empty signs contribute to blighted conditions and give the area a strong sense of neglect. Using these signs as a form of public art is a proposal put forth by the Friends of the Orphan Signs and would be appropriate while these properties remain vacant and the area undergoes redevelopment.

## 2.8 OPPORTUNITY ZONE

In 2018, the US Department of the Treasury designated 63 Opportunity Zones in New Mexico. The purpose of the Opportunity Zones is to spur economic growth and job creation in low-income communities while providing tax benefits for investors who invest new capital in businesses operating in Qualified Opportunity Zones. Taxpayers can invest in these zones through Qualified Opportunity Funds (QOF).

Once a census tract is designated, it retains the Opportunity Zone tax status for at least ten years.

The entire Menaul MR Area falls within an opportunity zone in Census Tract 35001003400 (see graphic below). The City of Albuquerque and the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD) offer incentives, such as Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) and the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP), that can be layered on top of Opportunity Zone investments to increase the successful launch of a new business or support for an existing business.



OPPORTUNITY ZONE



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## Chapter 3

# BUSINESS PROFILE



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### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

A business and retail analysis was completed as part of the Menaul Redevelopment Study (Phase 1). Relevant information has been extrapolated and updated for the Menaul MR Area. The data is based on information gathered from Esri Business Analyst software and market data provided by NAI SunVista, a local commercial real estate firm. The analysis identifies the existing business context and the importance of both retail and industrial activity to the MR Area.

### 3.2 BUSINESS SUMMARY REPORT

A Business Summary Report was created for the MR Area to understand the current business and retail environment. The intent is to expose where the MR Area can be improved and help to draw additional businesses to the area. This analysis was completed using Esri Business Analyst software, which provides reports on the commercial environment for customized areas. Esri extracts business data from a comprehensive list of businesses and compiles them in the annual Business Summary Report and the Retail Marketplace Profile, which is provided in this section.

The Business Summary Report generated for the MR Area provides the total number of businesses categorized by NAICS industry codes and the number of employees per business. The 2022 Esri Business Summary Report for the MR Area showed 102 total businesses that employ 1,109 workers (see Table 3.1, page 30). The top industries according to their relative portion of the total businesses in the areas include:

- ◀ Retail Trade (14.7%)
- ◀ Construction (13.7%)
- ◀ Other Services (except Public Administration) (11.8%)
- ◀ Wholesale Trade (11.8%)

Of note, Retail Trade is significantly less in the MR Area than it is in the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study Area; 14.7% versus 22.0%. Accommodation & Food Services is significantly

below the top categories within the MR Area at 5.9%, down from 6.7% for the Menaul Redevelopment Study Area. These are the types of businesses that will help the MR Area prosper in the future and should be pursued with private developers.

A general profile for each of these six industries is provided below:

#### RETAIL TRADE

In 2022, the largest industry in the MR Area in terms of the number of businesses and the number of employees is Retail Trade. Retail Trade includes establishments engaged in retailing merchandise and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise, such as repair and installation. Nearly all of the retailers in the MR Area are “store retailers” that sell directly out of their physical location rather than “non-store retailers” that sell products through mail order, door-to-door, or temporary locations. Store retailers are reliant on walk in traffic and ease of access for customers.

Retail Trade in 2022 includes 15 businesses that employ 197 workers, comprising 14.7% of all businesses in the MR Area. The Retail Trade industry contains twelve subcategories, several that are not present in the MR Area. The largest subcategory under Retail Trade is Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers with three businesses that represent 2.9% of the total. The remainder of the Retail Trade subcategories are represented by 0-2 businesses.

#### CONSTRUCTION

The second largest industry in the MR Area in 2022 is Construction, representing 13.7% of the total businesses in the MR Area, including 14 businesses and 149 employees. This industry has a significantly higher portion of the total businesses as compared to the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study Area; 13.7% versus 8.9%. Construction businesses are primarily on the north side of Menaul Boulevard. The area contains construction yards and associated office spaces.



Industry	Businesses MR Area vs. Study Area	Business % MR Area vs. Study Area
Construction	14 / 65	13.7% / 8.9%
Manufacturing	8 / 51	7.8% / 7.0%
Wholesale Trade	12 / 61	11.8% / 8.4%
Retail Trade	15 / 160	14.7% / 22.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	2 / 10	2.0% / 1.4%
Information	2 / 12	2.0% / 1.7%
Finance & Insurance	2 / 23	2.0% / 3.2%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	3 / 23	2.9% / 3.2%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	8 / 53	7.8% / 7.3%
Legal Services	1 / 8	1.0% / 1.1%
Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation	3 / 24	2.9% / 3.3%
Educational Services	1 / 13	1.0% / 1.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	6 / 34	5.9% / 4.7%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2 / 18	2.0% / 2.5%
Accommodation & Food Services	6 / 49	5.9% / 6.7%
Accommodation	2 / 11	2.0% / 1.5%
Food Services & Drinking Places	4 / 38	3.9% / 5.2%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	12 / 85	11.8% / 11.7%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	5 / 26	4.9% / 3.6%
Public Administration	2 / 10	2.0% / 1.4%
Unclassified Establishments	5 / 32	4.9% / 4.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102 / 727</b>	<b>100% / 100%</b>

Esri Business Analyst, Business Summary Report, 2022.

## OTHER SERVICES

The third largest industry in the MR Area in 2022 is “Other Services”. This category includes a diverse group of commercial services, such as equipment and machinery repairing, dry cleaning and laundry services, death care services, pet care services, personal care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking, and dating services. There are 12 businesses under this category, representing 11.8% of the businesses and 88 employees in the MR Area, a similar proportion as the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study area. Of those, Automotive Repair and Maintenance was the largest sub-category with 5 businesses representing 4.9% of the total. The relative size of the “Other Services” industry as compared to the other categories points to the diversity of commercial development in the MR Area.

## WHOLESALE TRADE

Wholesale Trade tied with Other Services at 11.8% of the total businesses in the MR Area. This represents a larger share of the total number of businesses than it did in the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study area, which showed Wholesale Trade at 8.4%. Wholesale Trade includes 12 businesses and 216 employees. This category includes businesses that are engaged in wholesaling merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. Wholesalers typically operate from a warehouse or office and sell products for resale, capital or durable non-consumer goods, or raw and intermediate materials used in production.

## MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing comprises 7.8% of the businesses in the MR Area, with 8 businesses and 84 employees, a slightly higher portion





*La Quinta Hotel on Menaul Boulevard has been experiencing a high level of loitering, vandalism, and crime.*

than in the Menaul Redevelopment Study area. The Manufacturing sector comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products. The Manufacturing sector consists of a variety of trades, including manufacturers of commercial doors, cabinets, graphics, signs, etc.

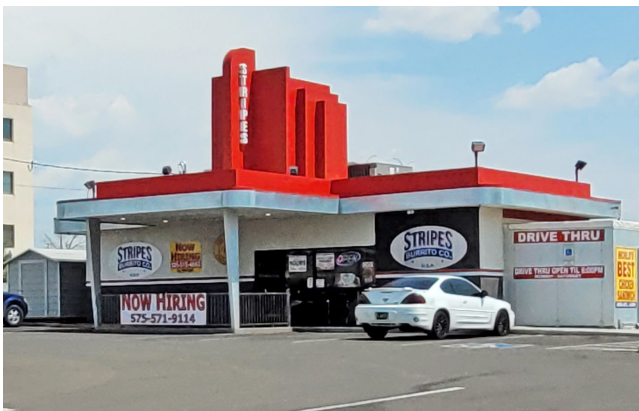
### ACCOMMODATION and FOOD SERVICES

The Accommodation and Food Services industry includes six businesses that employ a total of 119 workers, comprising 5.9% of total businesses in the MR Area. While the number of businesses in

this industry is relatively low, it employs one of the larger numbers of workers. However, this category is a smaller percentage of the total businesses as compared to the Menaul Redevelopment Study area.

Accommodation and Food Services draw in customers from around the City and travelers from Interstate 25 and Interstate 40. The MR Area contains several hotels, which are included under the Accommodation industry.

Restaurants are located along Menaul Boulevard. They mostly consist of fast food establishments with drive-through service windows. Several casual sit-down restaurants (i.e. the Range Cafe, Village Inn, and Little Anita's) near Menaul Boulevard and University Boulevard are closed and were identified in the Business Owner Survey and at the public meeting as nuisance properties that attracting homeless people and high rates of vandalism and illegal activity.



*Stripes Burrito Co., a relatively new redevelopment project on the south side of Menaul Boulevard.*

## 3.3 RETAIL MARKETPLACE PROFILE

A Retail Marketplace Profile for the MR Area was generated using Esri Business Analyst, which utilizes private data sources and the US Census of Retail Trade and Consumer Expenditure Surveys to



create the Retail Marketplace Profile on a semi-annual basis. This source was used to provide overall total retail sales and total sales for industries in Retail Trade and Food and Drink within the MR Area.

In 2021, retail sales in the MR Area totaled approximately \$1.582 million (see Table 3.2). While the scale of the sales figures for the larger Menaul Redevelopment Study area demonstrated its importance as a major contributor to Albuquerque's economy, retail sales within the MR Area are lackluster at best and have ample room for improvement.

Table 3.2 presents retail sales by industry in the MR Area. The largest category of retail sales in the MR Area is by far Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers at \$602,737. General Merchandise provided the second largest retail sales at \$197,220. Food and Beverage Stores provided the third largest retail sales at \$159,157, and was closely followed by Building Materials, Garden Equipment, and Supply at \$158,641.

### 3.4 REAL ESTATE MARKET

While industrial development in the MR Area and surrounding area is strong, commercial development along the Menaul corridor is considered by commercial real estate professionals to "lack energy". Issues associated with crime and homeless persons affect potential redevelopment and lease of available properties, but likely have a greater negative impact on commercial development, which relies more on walk-in traffic and aesthetic presentation, than industrial development. The real estate market analysis of the retail and industrial industries is based on current market information provided by NAI SunVista. The MR Area falls within the North I-25 and Northeast Heights retail submarkets (see Table 3.3).

**TABLE 3.2: RETAIL MARKETPLACE PROFILE**

Industry	Retail Sales
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$602,737
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	\$59,895
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$7,577
Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply	\$158,641
Food & Beverage Stores	\$159,157
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$69,712
Gasoline Stations	\$109,024
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$15,289
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music	\$37,159
General Merchandise Stores	\$197,220
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$28,406
Non-Store Retailers	\$12,783
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$125,000
<b>Total Retail, Food Services, and Drinking Places</b>	<b>\$1,582,581</b>

*Claritas, Retail Market Power Report, 2021.*

**TABLE 3.3: ALBUQUERQUE RETAIL SUBMARKETS**

Submarket	Average Asking Lease Rate	Average Available Retail (SF)
NORTH I-25	\$14.87	7,146
NORTHEAST HEIGHTS	\$13.34	4,848
Cottonwood	\$20.89	7,291
West Mesa	\$16.92	3,013
North Valley	\$17.68	5,054
Downtown	\$16.32	2,620
Southwest Mesa	\$13.64	6,067
University	\$14.19	3,502
Uptown	\$15.35	4,346
Southeast Heights	\$14.45	7,193
Far Northeast Heights	\$15.80	5,165

*Source: NAI SunVista, 2021.*

As previously noted in Chapter 2, Area Profile, the MR Area has a 13.5% vacancy rate including commercial and industrial buildings and land. The three vacant restaurant buildings and the large vacant property identified as "Opportunity Site 1" at Menaul Boulevard and Vassar Drive together represent a large portion of the vacancy rate in the MR Area. According to NAI SunVista, the land cost within the MR Area is \$14 per square foot.

### RETAIL

Retail activity in the MR Area has historically been supported by the hotels, which are currently struggling. Restaurant closures along Menaul



Boulevard within the MR Area have decreased the number of dining options within walking or short driving distance from the hotels and extended stay properties in this subarea.

The majority of commercial real estate properties are stand-alone buildings on 1/4-acre properties. The average for sale commercial retail cost is \$142 per square foot with the most available properties located along the north edge of Interstate 40. The average asking lease rate for retail properties is \$14.87 in the North I-25 submarket and \$13.34 in the Northeast Heights submarket. These lease rates are well below the average, \$17.75, for the Albuquerque retail submarkets, with the Northeast Heights submarket containing the lowest lease rates of all the submarkets (see Table 3.3).

Commercial activity is heavily influenced by safety and challenges with transients. Combining the lack of ongoing investment in these aging retail properties, lack of major activity generation, and safety issues have made the MR Area less desirable for commercial development.

## INDUSTRIAL

The industrial sector in Albuquerque is currently experiencing a 2% vacancy rate. While vacancy rates for the larger Menaul Redevelopment Area is on par with this vacancy or slightly higher, vacancy rates within the MR Area is higher due to challenges previously cited. The asset prices for industrial and warehouse investment properties reflect some of the highest in the Albuquerque market, which is primarily due to the proximity to Interstate 25 and Interstate 40. Land with convenient access to Interstate 25 and Interstate 40 is considered premium real estate for industrial development. The average cost for industrial property is \$106.13 per square foot and the average industrial lease rate is \$9.57 per square foot. These numbers are significantly impacted by the proximity to the Interstates.

## HOTEL and MOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

There are eight hotels/motels in the Menaul MR Area, offering a total of 1,527 rooms.

**TABLE 3.4: HOTELS AND MOTELS IN THE MR AREA**

Hotel/Motel	# of Rooms
Crowne Plaza	261
The Querque	189
Tree Inn	198
Ramada	339
La Quinta	72
Red Roof Inn	135
Holiday Inn	122
Siegel Select	211
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,527</b>

Source: Midtown Association, 2022.

## RECREATIONAL CANNABIS

Recreational cannabis was legalized in New Mexico under the Cannabis Regulation Act on June 29, 2021. The three zone districts within the MR Area are NR-C, NR-LM, and MX-M, all of which allow cannabis retail as a permissive retail sales use and cannabis cultivation and cannabis-derived products manufacturing as permissive industrial uses. As previously noted, the MR Area has high levels of NR-C and NR-LM zoning, 24% and 69%, respectively.

The IDO provides Use-Specific Standards for cannabis retail, cannabis cultivation, and cannabis-derived products manufacturing. For cannabis retail, a conditional use approval is required if the proposed business is within 600 feet of another cannabis retail establishment and is prohibited within 300 feet of any school or child day care facility. For cannabis cultivation and cannabis-derived products manufacturing, there are no separation requirements between businesses, but a conditional use is required if the business is within 300 feet of a school or child day care facility.

As shown on the City Planning Department's Cannabis Retail Location Approvals map, there are currently three cannabis retail locations



approved within the MR Area. It is anticipated that vacant properties along the Menaul corridor with commercial or industrial zoning will continue to attract additional cannabis retail, cannabis cultivation, and cannabis-derived products manufacturing, which will strengthen and bring new life to the area as a revenue generator for Albuquerque.



## Chapter 4

# RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN





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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Menaul MR Area has a somewhat narrow range of business types with varying physical conditions and needs. Obvious signs of disinvestment by the private and public sectors are clearly visible and have led to distress within the MR Area. This chapter addresses the action steps needed to reverse this trend through physical, regulatory, and administrative improvements. The designation and adoption of the MR Area along the Menaul corridor by the City Council in April 2022 was one of the recommendations from the Menaul Redevelopment Study.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are varied and cover redevelopment by the private sector with assistance from the City, and public sector investments that would improve existing conditions, thereby indirectly benefiting the business community and the general public that frequents this area of the City. The action plan identifies projects and lead entities and potential partnerships to implement the projects.

### OPPORTUNITY SITES

While there are ample opportunities for redevelopment throughout the Menaul MR Area, there are three sites that stand out from the others (see the *Opportunities and Constraints graphic*, page 9). This is not intended to suggest that these are the only properties that would be appropriate for redevelopment and/or assistance from the City.

Opportunity sites are properties that are either undeveloped, under-developed, and/or contain vacant buildings that once redeveloped, would have a positive catalytic impact on the area and encourage similar redevelopment on other properties. Identifying these properties as opportunity sites is not intended to suggest that the City of Albuquerque should purchase these properties for redevelopment purposes. However, the City could participate in certain aspects, such as building or site remediation for environmental contamination, street or sidewalk improvements,

utility extensions, Redevelopment Tax Abatement, etc.

The following three sites are identified on the Opportunities and Constraints graphic (see page 9), described below, and illustrated on the next page:

- ◀ **Opportunity Site 1:** A property consisting of seven, mostly vacant parcels totaling 8.58-acres located at the northeast corner of Menaul Boulevard and Vassar Drive (see *aerial graphic*, page 38). The property is one of the larger properties in the MR Area and is privately-owned. Existing zoning is MX-M, which allows for a wide range of commercial and multi-family residential development with a maximum building height of 48 feet. The property was previously a City-owned landfill (Menaul/University 2) and would likely require a landfill study and remediation plan to be completed prior to development. There is one .47-acre out-parcel facing Phoenix Avenue that is currently owned by a separate party; however, the owner of Opportunity Site 1 is negotiating the purchase of that out parcel as part of the proposed mixed-use project.

The property owner is a local Albuquerque developer who went through a zone map amendment from M-1 to C-2 in 2017 (prior to the adoption of the Integrated Development Ordinance) for these seven parcels to allow for the development of a mixed-use project. The zoning was converted to MX-M upon the adoption of the IDO. The property owner is in the process of designing a mixed-use project that includes multi-family residential, retail shop space, and a brewery and bike shop adjacent to the North Diversion Channel Trail.

There is interest from the property owner in seeking a Redevelopment Tax Abatement and a Brownfield Revolving Loan from the City's Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency, which would be consistent with the goals and recommendations of the Menaul MR



### OPPORTUNITY SITE #1



### OPPORTUNITY SITE #2



Area Plan. Public investment to support the development of this highly visible and accessible site would be game changing for this area and would introduce a new residential presence.

- Opportunity Site 2:** A series of six parcels containing vacant buildings and surface parking located along the south side of Menaul Boulevard, between University Boulevard and Fairfield Drive, with a total area of 2.6074-acres. Existing zoning is NR-LM, which could be rezoned to MX-M to

allow for the maximum flexibility in uses and discourage further industrial development at this location. The property is at a major entry to the MR Area and in close proximity to and visible from the two Interstates.

The two east parcels (including the parcel adjacent to University Boulevard that contains an old quonset hut) may have contamination issues, which may be appropriate for remediation through the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields and Land Revitalization Program. The quonset hut, which



is currently being used for storage purposes, is a priority for acquisition and will help kick-start redevelopment activities. The University Boulevard frontage is missing sidewalk and detracts from the area's pedestrian accessibility and should be addressed.

The owner of the two east parcels closest to University Boulevard has a local PO box address. The remaining four lots to the west are owned by the same owner as the

Crown Plaza Hotel with an address listed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

- ▶ **Opportunity Site 3:** Three separate and highly visible vacant buildings, one on the north side (former Village Inn) and two on the south side of Menaul Boulevard (former Little Anitas and the Range Cafe). Each of these buildings are listed for sale and would be suitable for redevelopment with a range of commercial (including restaurant or retail use), office, or institutional uses (see aerial

graphics for each of these sites comprising Opportunity Site 3). It is assumed that each of these buildings still contain a commercial kitchen, which are strong assets for the MR Area and would give a restaurant developer a heads start on redevelopment of any of these vacant restaurant buildings.

The former Village Inn property is .9183-acres and zoned NR-LM, which is primarily intended for light industrial use. This site has been identified for potential redevelopment as a new Albuquerque Community Safety substation. The building is set back from the street and has parking along the street edge. The building has been vacant for many years. The property owner's address is listed as being in Beverly Hills, California.

The former Little Anitas property is .6246-acres and zoned NR-C, which allows a wide range of uses although the site is relatively small and use would be limited

#### OPPORTUNITY SITE #3 - FORMER VILLAGE INN



#### OPPORTUNITY SITE #3 - FORMER LITTLE ANITAS





## OPPORTUNITY SITE #3 - FORMER RANGE CAFE



due to size. The site has excellent visibility and access from Menaul and University Boulevards. It is currently attracting significant negative activity. The site appears to have adequate parking and the building is set close to both street edges. The property owner is listed with an Albuquerque post office box, which likely means they are local.

The former Range Cafe property is .686-acres and zoned NR-C, which allows for a wide range of commercial uses. The site has adequate parking and the building is close to the street edge of Menaul Boulevard and Princeton Drive. The property abuts an Extended Stay motel on two sides; negative activity from the motel, which advertises daily, weekly, and monthly rates, was a contributing factor to the closure of the Range Cafe. There is a potential for redeveloping the restaurant and motel properties as one cohesive project. The owner for the former Range Cafe property is listed as being in Rio Rancho and the owner of the motel property (2.3497-acres) is an investment group with Santa Clara, California address.

### HOTEL/MOTEL CONVERSIONS

One of the key methods to increasing residential use is the conversion of outdated hotel and motels to multi-family residential use. This is an approach that has become more common in the Albuquerque metro (e.g. Millennium Flats, Sundowner, and Luna Lodge on Central Avenue and Rio Rancho Inn in Rio Rancho) and throughout the country. The Menaul MR Area has several hotels and motels that are long past their prime and could be redeveloped for affordable housing, including the motel abutting the former Range Cafe. These properties are either zoned NR-C or NR-LM, which do not allow residential uses and would require a zone map amendment for this purpose.

For properties with mixed-use zoning, the IDO allows non-residential development to be converted to multi-family residential without a zone map amendment. In mixed-use zones, the IDO allows an exemption from the typical definition of kitchen for conversions of non-residential development to residential use containing a maximum of 100 dwelling units, receive funding from the City Department of Family and Community Services, and meet specific criteria (e.g. a separate kitchen and bathroom). The kitchen exemption requires a sink for washing dishes and food, a refrigerator that includes a separate freezer compartment, a



countertop surface with an appliance (such as a microwave or hotplate) for warming food, and an electrical outlet that allows the appliance to be plugged in safely.

The City Environmental Planning Commission (and subsequently, the City Council) will be considering O-22-54, which proposes to amend the IDO to relax certain requirements for non-residential conversions to residential use, including the definition of kitchen. This amendment is intended to encourage conversion of hotels, motels, and office properties to multi-family residential, which could benefit the Menaul MR Area.

### INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY

Crime issues in the Menaul MR Area are of paramount concern to the local businesses and the community at large. Participants in the public meetings and business owner survey strongly support having a visible law enforcement presence to help reverse the crime trend in the MR Area.

The recommendation is to redevelop one of the vacant buildings along the Menaul corridor for an Albuquerque Community Safety Department building. This is a new department whose purpose is to respond to calls on inebriation, homelessness, addiction, and mental health. It is heavily invested in addressing behavioral health issues in Albuquerque.

As previously stated, one of the three vacant restaurant buildings along Menaul Boulevard (former Village Inn, Little Anitas, and The Range) that together comprise Opportunity Site 3, would be visible and well located for this purpose. There are likely other suitable locations along Menaul Boulevard that could also be considered as alternatives. This project would not rely on the MRA; rather, it could be accomplished by the City administration as a public safety investment for the Mid Heights Community Planning Area.

Additional public safety recommendations include:

- ◀ Installation of overhead mobile cameras at key intersections along Menaul Boulevard, North Diversion Channel Trail, and the

Embudo Channel Trail that would be linked to the City's Real Time Crime Center;

- ◀ Adding emergency Code Blue stations along the North Diversion Channel Trail, Embudo Channel Trail, and other areas;
- ◀ Conducting regular field briefings by APD within the MR Area;
- ◀ Increase PRT (Problem Response Team) engagement from the APD Northeast Area Command in the MR Area; and
- ◀ Determining the feasibility to create a City Public Safety ECHO program within the MR Area, which uses a model to address safety issues by bringing residents, workers, and businesses together to share skills, increase knowledge, and solve problems.

### STREET LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS

As previously noted in the Area Profile, there are street corridors within the MR Area that are dark, would benefit from lighting improvements, and would respond to public safety concerns. The recommendation is for the City to work with PNM on installation of streetlights along Menaul Road and ensuring the streetlights along Menaul Boulevard remain operational.

### MENAUl TRAFFIC CALMING

The Menaul corridor right-of-way is unnecessarily wide for the amount of traffic that it typically carries. With six drive lanes, a center turn lane, and medians, the excessive right-of-way encourages high speed limits with vehicles going above the posted 45 mph. There are no bike lanes and the sidewalks are relatively narrow and are at the back of curbs, with no landscape planting strip, thereby putting pedestrians at some risk.

The recommendation is to complete a traffic study that would consider the installation of roadway improvements for Menaul Boulevard that reduces drive lane widths or the number of drive lanes, and incorporates other traffic calming measures, protected bike facilities, sidewalk and landscape improvements, and replacement of ramps that currently do not meet Development Process



Manual (DPM) standards, and safe pedestrian crossings. The traffic study should evaluate existing and future traffic generation within the MR Area and the surrounding area context. The roadway improvements should start at the eastern edge of the MR Area and continue through the MR Area to Interstate 25. The speed limit should be lowered within this section of Menaul Boulevard to 35 mph to be consistent with the speed limit on Menaul Boulevard to the east of the MR Area. The project could be accomplished at a relatively low cost using striping and barriers that enhance overall safety, improve mobility, and protect bicyclists, but will require a future study separate from the Menaul MR Area Plan.

### TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS & PLACEMAKING

The North Diversion Channel Trail, an important and much used north-south commuter route with connections to the east-west routes of the Paseo del Nordeste and Paseo del Norte Trails, is a major asset to the MR Area and should be addressed as a placemaking opportunity that incorporates creative lighting and design improvements. The recommendation is to coordinate with AMAFCA on the design and installation of trail lighting and improvements along the North Diversion Channel Trail and the Embudo Trail to attract more trail users and increase safety for bikers and pedestrians. In addition to adding trail lighting and installing cameras and Code Blue stations (as listed under Public Safety recommendations), the Parks and Recreation Department should consider:

- ◀ Establishing a trail sponsorship program to support trail maintenance
- ◀ Installation of trail markers/wayfinding signage

### TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

As previously noted, the Menaul MR Area is served by transit routes along Menaul Boulevard. However, there are bus shelters on Menaul that attract homeless campers and negative activity. This issue was communicated to ABQ Ride during the earlier phases of the project. ABQ Ride is currently

evaluating how best to discourage people from camping out at the bus shelters. Some communities have removed the benches under the shelters to help prevent people from sleeping on them; others have stepped up their cleaning efforts. ABQ Ride has removed the problem bus shelter along Menaul Boulevard and continues to maintain the bus stop.

The recommendation is for ABQ Ride to continue its evaluation and implementation of best practices, including increasing the frequency of cleaning the bus shelters and benches, and emptying the trash receptacles to make these City facilities more conducive to being used for their intended purpose. Additional promotion of the Adopt-a-Stop Program in this area could enhance ownership and oversight of bus shelters by area residents and businesses. The City should also consider a variety of design changes at the bus shelters, including:

- ◀ Removing benches from the bus stops that only have a bench and replace them with a bus shelter;
- ◀ Removing the windscreens at existing bus shelters to improve visibility around and through the bus shelter;
- ◀ Removing shelters at bus stops if other approaches have been found to be ineffective; and
- ◀ Exploring other bench designs that would be inviting for bus passengers to wait for short durations but less inviting for longer durations.

There is not a single solution that would be effective in resolving all issues. What will ultimately be effective at each location will be dependent on the abutting land uses, route frequency, and stop productivity (i.e. number of riders at each bus stop).

### LANDSCAPING & WAYFINDING IMPROVEMENTS

The two Interstates and the Frontage Roads provide excellent visibility and access to the MR Area, and are a primary draw for businesses to



the area. While the NMDOT has completed a considerable level of landscape and aesthetic improvements within its rights-of-way, there are several areas within the MR Area that have not been improved, and as such, detract from the MR Area's visual attractiveness. The recommendation is for Council Services and the Department of Municipal Development to coordinate with the NMDOT on making improvements to wayfinding, landscaping, and screening for the currently unimproved areas within NMDOT's rights-of-way:

- ◆ East side of the East Frontage Road south of Menaul Boulevard
- ◆ North side of the Interstate 40 right-of-way from Exit 159D to University Boulevard

Wayfinding improvements should be designed to direct drivers from the Interstates to the attractions within the MR Area.

## BUILDING & SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Many of the small commercial properties and buildings along Menaul Boulevard are showing signs of distress and blight. This includes building facades, windows, parking lots, sidewalks, etc. These businesses are clearly struggling with maintaining their buildings and properties, and are discouraged by the level of neglect in this area by the public sector. The City should prepare a sidewalk improvement project to replace sidewalks in poor condition and install sidewalks where they are missing. The project should also include accessible ramps where they do not meet current City standards. The City should also provide information to the area business owners on available small business loans and design assistance through entities, such as the City's Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency and New Mexico MainStreet, for facade improvement grant programs. The Department of Municipal Development should evaluate the public sidewalks along Menaul Boulevard, University Boulevard, and area side streets and replace sections that are cracked or heaving and install handicapped curb ramps that do not meet current ADA standards.



### RECOMMENDED LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

*Top: East side of the East Frontage Road south of Menaul Boulevard; Bottom: North side of Interstate 40 westbound to University Boulevard.*

## LANDFILL ASSISTANCE

As previously mentioned, there are two old landfills within the MR Area. To support redevelopment projects, the recommendation is to determine whether landfill tipping fees could be waived or reduced. The City can waive or reduce



tipping fees for landfill removal on a case-by-case basis under Administrative Instruction 5-17 Tipping Fees Related to Mitigation by Removal of Former Landfill Sites, Policy 4.

## ZONE MAP AMENDMENTS & COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The MR Area is dominated by NR-LM and NR-C zoning, which limits the types of land uses allowed. Zone changes to MX-M or MX-H would allow for a greater variety of land uses and taller building heights, 48 feet and 68 feet, respectively. Zone changes to mixed-use districts would enable the development of high-density housing and the conversion of motels into affordable rental housing. Mixed-use parcels may also take advantage of height bonuses allowed in certain transit corridors. Zone changes should be led by prospective developers on an as-needed basis.

The IDO provides a 12-foot height bonus for projects with structured parking if they are within a designated Urban Center, Main Street, Premium Transit, or Major Transit Corridor. It also provides a 12-foot height bonus for projects within those same designated areas that contain 30% of its dwelling units as workforce housing. While Menaul Boulevard and University Boulevard are not designated accordingly, in the future there may be an opportunity to designate those roadways particularly if the UNM/CNM/Sunport Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project moves forward as recommended by the study.

Premium Transit bonuses would be limited to development sites within 660 feet of a Premium Transit Station. Few developments in the Menaul MR Area would be likely to take advantage of these benefits, if or when a Premium Transit Bus Route is added to University Boulevard. The City's Transit Department is currently undergoing a comprehensive review of existing transit services and considering ways to enhance its network and service options in its ABQ RIDE Forward Plan. Following the

publication of updated transit service routes along Menaul Boulevard, the City should consider, if appropriate, designating the Menaul corridor as a Major Transit Corridor in the next Comprehensive Plan update. This would allow nearly all developments within the Menaul MR Area to take advantage of Major Transit Corridor building height, setback, open space, affordable housing, and structured parking bonuses.

## DOG PARK & ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

AMAFCA approached the City with the idea of creating a dog park on land owned by Applebee's restaurant and abutting AMAFCA property. This would be a nice amenity for patrons of the nearby hotels that are traveling with their pets, employees who bring their dogs to work, and users of the two public trails that run adjacent to the property. There is also an opportunity to provide additional electric vehicle charging stations in this location, which could serve the general public and hotel guests.

DOG PARK / ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS





## FRIENDS OF THE ORPHAN SIGNS



Upper photos: Seedling Sign at 6th Street and Mountain Road.  
Lower left: on Central Avenue and Cagua Street; Lower right: on Central Avenue and Adams Street.

## PUBLIC ART/ORPHAN SIGNS

The City was approached by the Friends of the Orphan Signs (FOS) regarding adding public art to the empty sign structures that are prevalent in the MR Area. FOS is a local collaborative public art and education organization that brings artists-educators together with community members to revitalize abandoned or unused road signs with unique artwork and poetry that explore neighborhood identity. Images of previous projects by FOS are shown above on this page.

## DIALOGUE WITH BUSINESS OWNERS

One of the messages received from business owners was that they felt a sense of neglect from the City of Albuquerque regarding the crime and

vandalism issues they have been experiencing at their properties. The recommendation is that the City (e.g. Council Services or the Economic Development Department) continue the dialogue with the business owners, which should include seeking input from business and property owners about how future RFPs and grant programs should be structured to support redevelopment in the MR Area and attending meetings of the Midtown Business Association to help assess their priorities and needs. Having discussions with owners at their places of business is an effective way of maintaining communication, learning how best to assist the businesses, and demonstrating that the City will continue to advocate and support improving the MR Area.

## CREATE A VISITORS' CENTER

Given the concentration of hotels in the Menaul MR Area, a recommendation that came out of the public engagement process from the area hotels was to develop a small visitors' center either in or in close proximity to the Crowne Plaza Hotel along Menaul Boulevard. This is an action that is likely to require an initiative from the private sector, but could be supported by Council Services and Visit Albuquerque. A small visitors' center could help facilitate a more positive experience for guests at the area hotels.



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Chapter 5

# PROJECT FINANCING & FUNDING SOURCES





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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This section includes a thorough list of available resources and opportunities. Not every program will fit every need. Those that are interested in any of these programs should check on the programs' website and make sure that their project is eligible, there are funds available, and that all information on the program is current and up-to-date.

## 5.2 PROJECT FINANCING

Redevelopment projects proposed in the Menaul MR Area may access municipal financing tools. These include revenue enhancements, planning overlays and tax incentives, self-assessment tax strategies, municipal bonds and capital outlays, and public/private partnerships, and are described below.

### PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Utilizing public/private partnerships is an excellent approach used by municipalities to support redevelopment. The Menaul MR Area Plan provides the tool needed for Albuquerque (through its MR Agency) to participate in public/private partnerships without violating the New Mexico Anti-Donation Clause (Article IX, Section 14). There are numerous ways the City can engage in public-private partnerships, including land or building donation, land acquisition and disposition through an RFP (Request for Proposal) process to attract a private developer, assistance in securing or providing loans and grants, infrastructure improvements, or subsidizing leases for City-owned buildings.

A private sector investor group or individuals can play a significant role in strategically targeting building and property acquisitions, building rehabilitation and redevelopment, and new business start-ups. The City should make an effort to advertise redevelopment opportunities, to pursue public/private partnerships, and to support business retention efforts.

**Local Economic Development Act:** LEDA allows for the public support of qualified economic development projects for existing expanding

companies as well as for newly recruited ones to foster, promote, and enhance local economic development efforts while continuing to protect against the unauthorized use of public money and other public resources. This empowers communities to embark upon economic development projects tailored to their local needs. LEDA can be used to reimburse eligible expenses for hard assets. The City of Albuquerque also can act as the fiscal agent for state LEDA funds contributed to a qualified project.

Eligible expenses under Albuquerque's LEDA may include:

- ◆ Purchase, lease, grant, construction, reconstruction, improvement, or other acquisition or conveyance of land, buildings or infrastructure;
- ◆ Public works improvements essential to the location or expansion of a qualifying entity;
- ◆ Provision of loans/grants for land, buildings, or infrastructure;
- ◆ Purchase of land for a publicly-held industrial park; and
- ◆ Construction of a building for use by a qualifying entity for manufacturing, assembling and processing projects.

Qualifying entities under Albuquerque's LEDA include:

- ◆ Warehousing, distributing, wholesaling;
- ◆ A business that supplies services to the general public or government agency or a specific industry or customer, but not retail;
- ◆ Telecommunications sales enterprise that makes the majority of its sales outside NM (customer service, back office);
- ◆ Business that is the developer of a metropolitan redevelopment project; and
- ◆ Certain cultural facilities.

### IMPACT FEE WAIVERS

All projects located within a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area are eligible for a waiver of



City of Albuquerque impact fees. This does not apply to Water or Sewer Impact Fees assessed by the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority.

## REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS

### Municipal Gross Receipts Tax Revenues:

Local Option Gross Receipts Tax (LOGRT) is a financing tool that should be considered to fund infrastructure improvements. Municipalities in New Mexico may impose by ordinance an excise tax not to exceed a rate of 1.5% in a single ordinance or in aggregate. Increments for both infrastructure improvements and for “quality of life” projects could be imposed as a potential funding source. The advantage of GRT collection is that it includes revenue from tourists and shoppers from outside the municipal limits, allowing for broader collection of revenues than some special purpose funding sources to support public infrastructure projects.

**Quality of Life Gross Receipts Tax:** The legislation requires that the revenue must be dedicated to cultural programs and activities provided by the municipality and to cultural programs, events, and activities provided by contract or operating agreement with a non-profit or publicly-owned cultural organization.

**Ad Valorem Taxes:** Property taxes provide a smaller, but still important, revenue stream for municipalities. The City has seen an increase in ad valorem tax revenues.

## PLANNING TOOLS and TAX INCENTIVES

In addition to Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas and associated plans, other types of planning tools and tax incentives include:

**Metropolitan Redevelopment Tax Abatement (RTA):** The purpose of the City’s RTA program is to attract private investment and revitalize divested areas within Albuquerque. The RTA is a seven-year property tax abatement on the incremental property taxes for all taxing districts. Property owners continue to pay the pre-development property tax amount as a Payment In Lieu of

Taxes to the County Assessor. To receive the tax abatement, the City must take title to the property and the property is leased back to the original owner for the duration of the tax abatement period. Projects must achieve a minimum of 100 points on the community benefits matrix. This matrix reflects the City’s priority on sustainability, community benefit, placemaking, and equity.

**New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC):** New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) is a major federal incentive to spur new or increased private investments into operating businesses and projects located within low income communities. The NMTC program was established by Congress in 2000 as part of the Community Renewal and Tax Relief Act of 2000. The goal of the program is to spur revitalization efforts in low-income census tracts across the United States and Territories, as indicated by the American Community Survey. It is helpful for projects to be within a MR Area District. The NMTC program allows individual and corporate investors to receive tax credits for equity investments by certified Community Development Entities. The tax credit equals 39% of the original investment and is paid out over a period of seven years (5% for each of the first three years, and 6% for each of the remaining four years). One limitation is the required project threshold of \$5 million to be eligible for these tax credits.

**Hotel Parq Central:** The Memorial Hospital opened in 1926 as the hospital for employees of the Atchinson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad. The property consists of three buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The project to convert the historic Memorial Hospital into a boutique hotel with 73 guest rooms, conference rooms, and amenities provided 200 jobs during construction and approximately 34 permanent jobs. The total project cost was \$19.8 million. The project utilized \$13.8 million in NMTC financing from Finance New Mexico, combined with approximately \$2.6 million in Historic Tax Credits and equity to complete the financing. In addition, the project



utilized a \$14 million Industrial Revenue Bond issued by the City of Albuquerque that provided certain tax advantages, such as a 20-year abatement of property taxes.

#### **Tax Increment Development District (TIDD):**

A TIDD is another financing tool available for development in New Mexico. It has two major differences that set it apart from the more traditional TIF. First, it can capture two types of tax increment - the GRT increment and the property tax increment. Second, the TIDD can be used both on brownfield and "greenfield" (undeveloped) sites. The GRT portion can either be done as local only or include state GRT as well. State GRT requires approval of the State Board of Finance and the Legislature. Local approval requires a petition to be signed by 51% of the property owners within the proposed TIDD.

A TIDD is a major financial tool for public infrastructure programs that a municipality or a property owner may not be able to generate on their own. Bonds are generated to pay the upfront costs of the TIDD infrastructure and the tax increment revenues pay back the bonds. The captured revenues from the increment must be spent on the public infrastructure within the district. The local governing body, the New Mexico Board of Finance, and the State Legislature must all approve a TIDD. Due to the potential financial magnitude of a TIDD, the development and approval process is substantial and bond finance experts, economists, and attorneys are all typically involved in the application.

**City of Las Cruces:** Voters in the City of Las Cruces approved a TIDD to help fund revitalization efforts in the Downtown MR Area. The first use of TIDD funds was to close a \$1 million gap between the amount needed to fund the opening of the northernmost blocks of Main Street and the amount of funding the City allocated for the project. The loan was amortized for more than 15 years, but was repaid one year from the date the funds were borrowed due to the income generated by the TIDD.

**Tax Increment Finance District (TIF):** A TIF can be used as a redevelopment tool of blighted "brownfield" (previously developed and potentially contaminated) sites. The municipality can target a blighted area for redevelopment projects that will raise the assessed property values within the TIF district. The new "increment" rise in property taxes is then captured by the municipality and designated for reinvestment in public projects and infrastructure within the district. The traditional TIF district has been used to create TIF districts in Albuquerque.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT TAX STRATEGIES**

There are two popular programs available for property and business owners who wish to tax themselves incrementally in order to pay for improvements and services that enhance their properties. These self-assessment strategies are the Public Improvement District (PID) and the Business Improvement District (BID).

**Business Improvement District (BID):** The BID tool was created by the State of New Mexico in 1978 in Section 3 Article 63. A BID is similar to a PID in that it is established by the governing body, funded by a new increment of property tax assessment, and created through a petition of the majority of property owners in the district. A BID is established to provide additional funding for improvements in a business district. Revenues are collected annually through a special assessment by the City and returned to an approved BID management agency to support business recruitment, retention, and support. Typical BID services include enhanced safety and clean-up programs, cooperative marketing and signage, hospitality services, transportation services (trolleys, bike racks, safe rides home, etc.), improved lighting or landscaping, and other important district improvements and services.

**City of Gallup:** The Gallup City Council approved a local ordinance enacting a BID in 2009 after a majority of property owners within the boundaries of the District voted in favor. This involved a property assessment of



1% of the assessed value of each property within the District boundaries under then 2006 real property tax assessment. The Gallup BID was renewed by the City Council in 2014 and 2019. The average assessment bill is \$180.29, and there are 174 assessed properties in the District.

The Gallup BID is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that partners with Downtown property owners, merchants, City of Gallup, and the broader community to enhance business development, energize the Downtown District, and improve the overall quality of life in Gallup. The BID manages a facade improvement program designed to provide reimbursement for improvements made in the past 12 months to properties within the designated district, up to the assessed and paid amount. These improvements must benefit the appearance and/or safety of the BID area. Such improvements include, but are not limited to: facades, stucco, paint, signage, landscaping, alley improvements, security systems for outdoor areas, historic preservation, street furnishing, and demolition of offensive structures.

**Public Improvement District (PID):** A PID is established by the governing body through a petition of the majority of property owners within the district to impose an additional annual property tax assessment on their properties. The assessment is based on a formula used for financing upfront costs of public infrastructure improvements, such as water and sewer lines, street and sidewalk improvements, mass transit or trail improvements, parking lots, park and recreation facilities, libraries and cultural facilities, landscaping, public art, and public safety facilities. The projects are typically financed through bonds with a minimum of 10-year (and more commonly 20 or 25 year) payback periods. The municipality is allowed to contribute funds, equipment, or in-kind services in assistance to the PID.

## MUNICIPAL and CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS

Municipal bonds will be critical to support future redevelopment projects in the Menaul MR Area District. Requests for capital outlay appropriations may also help to fill the gap for a major redevelopment project. Once the Menaul MR Area Plan is adopted, the City should be in a good position to request capital outlay funds.

## PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

Private foundations can play a vital role in providing funding. There are many organizations and foundations that provide grants to municipalities and tax-exempt non-profit groups for redevelopment projects and improvements. The City should research the criteria and apply for grants that will help achieve the goals of the MR Area Plan. Some examples include the McCune Charitable Foundation, Lannan Foundation, New Mexico Community Foundation, etc.

## 5.3 FUNDING SOURCES

The funding sources section provides a list of local, state, and federal sources available to both local governments and individuals interested in starting a new business, in need of a small business loan, or engaging new affordable multi-family residential development within the Menaul MR Area. Each program has eligibility criteria and contact information.

## CITY BUDGET & TAXATION AUTHORITY

**Business Improvement District (BID):** (see BID description under Self-Assessment Tax Strategy)

### General Obligation Bonds (GO Bonds):

General obligation bonds may be issued by the City to finance capital improvement projects. The City pays the principal and the interest on the bonds and the bonds are redeemed with property tax revenue.

### Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan

**(ICIP):** Infrastructure projects are funded through capital outlay and the ICIP. City funds can be leveraged as matching funds to secure larger grants or loans by state or federal agencies.



**Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB):** The City can issue IRBs to finance economic-based industry projects (defined as exporting a majority of goods and services out of state). This includes construction or renovation of manufacturing plants, research and development facilities, corporate headquarters and certain other facilities, and purchase of land and equipment. Since the project is technically owned by the government entity and leased to the company, it is exempt for up to 20 years from property taxes on land, buildings, and equipment. Equipment purchased with bond proceeds is exempt from gross receipts or compensating taxes. The City of Albuquerque does not provide any direct financing; the company is responsible for securing its own financing.

**Local Options Gross Receipts Tax (LOGRT):** The City may opt for a vote by residents to raise the local gross receipts rate to help fund and provide additional revenue for economic development projects within MR Areas.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District:** The City has the option of establishing a TIF for the Menaul MR Area. This would allow future gains in gross receipts taxes or property taxes to help pay for streetscape, infrastructure, or building improvements or rehabilitation.

## CAPITAL OUTLAY

**Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP)**  
**Local Government Road Fund:** The COOP assists local governments and other public entities to improve, construct, maintain, repair, and pave highways, streets, and public parking lots. Funds must be used for the construction, maintenance, repair, and the improvements of public highways, streets, and parking lots. The local match is 40% and awards range from \$9,000 to \$192,000. Funds are made available at the beginning of the fiscal year and must be encumbered and spent no later than the end of the fiscal year.

Contact: NMDOT, Maintenance Section  
 1120 Cerrillos Road  
 P.O. Box 1149  
 Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149

Phone: (505) 827-5498  
 Website: <https://www.dot.state.nm.us>

**Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)**  
**Capital Outlay Funds:** The LEDA ordinance adopted by the City of Albuquerque can be used to help fund economic development projects. Grant funding is based on the receipt of capital outlay funds appropriated by the New Mexico Legislature and are provided on a reimbursable basis only. Guidelines for eligible projects generally include requirements such as the need to create permanent, full-time, private-sector jobs. The project must also be fully-funded and shovel ready, and must target specific industry clusters.

Contact: NM Economic Development Dept.  
 Joseph M. Montoya Building  
 1100 St. Francis Drive  
 Santa Fe, NM 87505  
 Phone: (505) 827-0264  
 Website: <https://www.gonm.biz>

**Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) Local Government Road Fund:** The MAP program assists municipalities in construction of streets that are principal extensions of the rural highway system and other streets which qualify under NMDOT criteria. Municipalities are required to contribute 25% to the cost of the project. There is no set limit to the amount of awards, but the state's share typically ranges from \$50,000 to \$1.1 million per project. Complete applications must be received by March for funding to be considered by the fiscal year beginning July 1.

Contact: NMDOT Engineer Maintenance Section  
 1120 Cerrillos Road  
 PO Box 1149  
 Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149  
 Phone: (505) 827-5498  
 Website: <https://www.nmshtd.state.nm.us>

**Transportation Project Fund (TPF):** The NMDOT Project Oversight Division is soliciting applications for the Department's Transportation Project Fund (TPF), formally known as Local Government Transportation Project Fund (LGTPF), for fiscal year 2022. Local and tribal governments in New Mexico are eligible to apply for state



funded grants. Eligible projects are in the following categories:

- ◀ Environmental and other studies;
- ◀ Planning;
- ◀ Design;
- ◀ Construction; and
- ◀ Acquisition of rights-of-way for the development of transportation infrastructure, including highways, roadways, bridges, crossing structures and parking facilities, including all areas for vehicular, transit, bicycle or pedestrian use for travel, ingress, egress and parking.

Contact: NMDOT  
1120 Cerrillos Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
Phone: (505) 699-9946  
Website: <https://www.dot.state.nm.us>

#### Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):

The TAP is administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation. TAP funds can be used for design and construction of streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, lighting, etc. The NMDOT has a competitive process for TAP funds based on how well the application addresses the goals of the program. Approximately every two years, the NMDOT coordinates with the state's seven RTPOs and five MPOs on soliciting TAP applications.

Contact: NMDOT  
1120 Cerrillos Road  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
Phone: (505) 827-5100  
Website: <https://www.dot.state.nm.us>

#### U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT):

The DOT provides funding for restoration projects through Transportation Enhancement funds, which are administered through NMDOT's Surface Transportation Program (STP). The STP program funds construction, improvement, and other transportation-related projects on roads functionally classified as Interstate, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, or Major Collector.

Contact: NMDOT General Office  
1120 Cerrillos Road

Santa Fe, NM, 87504-1149  
Phone: (505) 827-5100  
Website: <https://www.dot.state.nm.us>

## COMMUNITY GRANTS

#### Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):

This program is administered by the National Park Service. The state side of the LWCF provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The New Mexico State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department administers the state program. New Mexico has received millions in funding dollars from the LWCF program since its inception 40 years ago and funded hundreds of projects around the state from baseball and soccer fields to trails, playgrounds, and picnic areas.

Contact: National Park Service  
1849 C Street, NW, Org-2225  
Washington, D.C. 20240  
Website: <https://www.nps.gov>

**McCune Charitable Foundation:** The McCune Charitable Foundation is dedicated to enriching the health, education, environment, and cultural and spiritual life of New Mexicans. The McCune Foundation funds projects that benefit New Mexico in the areas of arts, economic development, education, environment, health, and social services. Grants for specific projects, operating expenses, and capital expenses are considered. Grants can be awarded to qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, federally-recognized Indian tribes, public schools, and governmental agencies, but not to individuals.

Contacts: McCune Charitable Foundation  
345 East Alameda Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
Phone: (505) 983-8300  
Website: <https://www.nmmccune.org>

#### National Endowment for the Arts (NEA):

The NEA provides funding for feasibility studies related to the renovation, restoration, or adaptive reuse of facilities or spaces for cultural activities,



architectural studies, projects that address cultural tourism, or the revitalization or improvement of cultural districts. Funding is not available for actual renovation or construction costs. The NEA also administers Our Town Grants, which support creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Our Town offers support for projects in two areas: 1) Arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects; and 2) Projects that build knowledge about creative placemaking. These are projects available to arts and design service organizations and other organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work.

Contact: National Endowment for the Arts  
400 7th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20506-0001  
Phone: 202-682-5400  
Website: <https://www.nea.gov>

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfields Program:** The Brownfields Program provides grants for rehabilitating affected historic properties. The Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters.

Contact: US EPA Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization  
Mail Code 5105 T  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20460  
Phone: (202) 566-2777  
Website: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

**ArtPlace America:** ArtPlace America focuses on creative placemaking and works with foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions in order to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development. The National Creative Placemaking Fund is a competitive national program that invests money in communities across the country in which artists, arts organizations, and arts and culture activity help drive community development.

Contact: ArtPlace America  
195 Montague Street, 14th Floor  
Brooklyn, New York 11201  
Phone: (347) 853-7817  
Website: <https://www.artplaceamerica.org>

## COMMUNITY/BUSINESS LOANS & ASSISTANCE

**ACCION New Mexico:** Accion is a non-profit organization that increases access to business credit, makes loans and provides training, which enables emerging entrepreneurs to realize their dreams and be catalysts for positive economic and social change in the community. Accion offers loans from \$200 to \$500,000 and above, as well as networking and training opportunities.

Contact: ACCION New Mexico  
2000 Zearing Road NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87104  
Phone: (505) 243-8844  
Website: <https://www.accionnm.org>

**Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (RLF):** The City of Albuquerque has an EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund to issue low-interest loans to qualified developers. The program goal is to encourage the redevelopment of contaminated properties in our community. As repayments are made, the funds are revolved, enabling the Brownfield Program to provide additional loans to borrowers. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and loans are made based on the availability of funding.

Contact: City of Albuquerque  
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency  
PO Box 1293  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
Phone: (505) 895-2142  
Website: <https://www.cabq.gov/mra>

**Chicanos Por La Causa CDFI:** The Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) Prestamos is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and Community Development Entity that has provided small business loans and high-quality technical support services to business owners in underserved communities since 1980. CPLC Prestamos is a small business lending program



that offers loan products, business consulting services, and investment opportunities. Prestamos loan products are designed to address common barriers to capital, such as lack of collateral, credit blemishes, and insufficient equity or cash flow. Loan products include micro-loans, small business loans, and SBA-Community Advantage Loans.

Contact: Chicanos Por La Causa CDFI  
1112 E. Buckeye Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85034  
Phone: (855) 849-2752  
Website: <https://www.cplc.org>

**Clearinghouse CDFI:** Clearinghouse Community Development Financial Institution (Clearinghouse CDFI) is a full-service, direct lender that finances projects to create jobs and services to help people work, live, dream, grow, and thrive in healthy communities. Clearinghouse CDFI finances direct loans for affordable housing, community facilities, small businesses, and commercial real estate. Loan types include construction, acquisition, renovation, expansion, and refinance. Clearinghouse CDFI offers both short and long-term permanent, fixed-rate mortgages from 3-years to 25-years fully amortizing. Loans and programs include commercial and multi-family loans, New Markets Tax Credits, and Opportunity Zones/Funds.

Contact: Clearinghouse CDFI  
23861 El Toro Road, Suite 700  
Lake Forest, CA 92630  
Phone: 1-800-445-2142  
Website: <https://www.clearinghousecdfi.com>

**Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP):** The JTIP is one of the most valuable incentives offered to employers in New Mexico and can be used effectively in recruitment packages. This program reimburses 50 to 70% of employee wages and required travel expenses during an extended training period for new hires for new and expanding companies in New Mexico. The JTIP must be applied for and approved prior to reimbursable wages being paid.

Contact: NM Economic Development Dept.  
Joseph M. Montoya Building  
1100 St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 827-0323  
Website: <https://www.gonm.biz>

**New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP):** The MEP provides efficiency training, training in lean manufacturing, and ISO 9001 certification to the state's small and medium-sized businesses.

Contact: NM MEP  
4501 Indian School Road NE, Suite 202  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
Phone: (505) 262-0921  
Website: <https://www.newmexicomep.org>

**New Mexico Partnership:** The New Mexico Partnership is a private, non-profit organization that offers assistance to businesses looking to expand or relocate to New Mexico. It can assist businesses on a variety of business initiatives, including:

- ◀ Initiate real estate searches;
- ◀ Coordinate site-selection trips;
- ◀ Personalize briefings and orientations;
- ◀ Assist in evaluating and applying for incentives;
- ◀ Facilitate the permitting process;
- ◀ Organize strategic meetings with key government and community officials;
- ◀ Collaborate on media and public relations; and Provide data on key business factors.

Contact: New Mexico Partnership  
110 Second Street SW, Suite 602  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 247-8500  
Website: <https://www.nmpartnership.com>

**SBA 7A Loan Program:** The SBA 7A Loan Program is the standard SBA loan guarantee program. Up to 80% of a bank loan to a private business can be guaranteed. Banks still accomplish normal due diligence, but may be willing to accept slightly more risk. This program



increases the aggregate amount of funds available to small business in the banking system.

Contact: Bank of Albuquerque  
2500 Louisiana Boulevard  
Albuquerque, NM 87110  
Phone: (866) 910-5218  
Website: <http://www.bankofalbuquerque.com>

### Small Business Administration (SBA) 504

**Loan Program:** The SBA 504 Loan Program is a cooperative loan program between the SBA, a bank, and a certified development corporation where the SBA loans money directly to a business in participation with a bank. This loan can only be used for fixed asset financing. The primary benefit to borrowers is that it allows for minimal equity (10%) and it can also serve to extend the term.

Contact: Enchantment Land Certified Development Company  
625 Silver Avenue SW, Suite 195  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 843-9232  
Website: <https://www.elcdc.com>

### SMART Money Loan Participation Program:

The SMART Money Loan Participation Program is intended to leverage funds provided by local New Mexico banks for businesses that create quality jobs. The program provides bank participation loans, direct loans, and loan and bond guarantees on behalf of private for-profit and non-profit entities. The program is designed to create greater access to capital for businesses throughout New Mexico, lower the cost for the borrower, and share the risk with the bank creating a benefit to both the bank and borrower. Business loans must result in job creation and economic benefit and carry a minimum of risk.

Contact: NM Finance Authority  
207 Shelby Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 992-9638  
Website: <https://www.nmfa.net>

**The Loan Fund:** The Loan Fund provides loans, training, and business consulting to small businesses that do not qualify for a bank loan, but

still have a viable need for a loan and the ability to pay it back. This program started out as a micro-lending organization, but can now make loans up to \$200,000 in exceptional circumstances. Loans carry a higher than market rate to compensate for risk.

Contact: The Loan Fund  
423 Iron Avenue SW / PO Box 705  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
Phone: (505) 243-3196  
Website: <http://www.loanfunds.org>

**WESST:** WESST is a non-profit, economic development organization that provides business skills training, product marketing, development opportunities, and small loans to viable start-up or growing New Mexico businesses owned by women and minorities.

Contact: WESST Enterprise Center  
609 Broadway Boulevard NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 246-6900  
Website: <http://www.wesst.org/>

## TAX INCENTIVES

**Angel Investment Tax Credit:** This program offers equity financing for private sector companies through tax credits that incentivize private investors. Credits are available for up to \$62,500 per taxpayer for an investment made in each of up to five New Mexico companies engaged in qualified research, technology, or manufacturing trades. Eligible companies must have most of their tangible assets and employees based in New Mexico.

Contact: NM Economic Development Dept.  
Joseph M. Montoya Building  
1100 St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505  
Phone: (505) 827-0330  
Website: <https://www.gonm.biz>

### Beer and Wine Producers Preferential Tax

**Rate:** The Liquor Excise Tax Act imposes taxes on beer, wine, and spirituous liquors. Microbreweries producing less than 5,000 barrels of beer annually and small wineries producing less than 560,000 liters of wine per year qualify for a



preferential tax rate. The basic tax rate for beer produced by a brewery is 41 cents; beer produced by a microbrewery (producing less than 5,000 barrels annually) is taxed at 8 cents per gallon.

Contact: NM Taxation and Revenue Department  
1100 South St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
Phone: (505) 827-0700  
Website: <https://www.gonm.biz>

**High Wage Jobs Tax Credit:** A taxpayer who is an eligible employer may apply for and receive a tax credit for each new high-wage economic-base job. The credit amount equals 10% of the wages and benefits paid for each new economic-base job created. Qualified employers can take the credit for four years. The credit may only be claimed for up to one year after the end of the four qualifying periods. The credit can be applied to the state portion of the gross receipts tax, compensating tax, and withholding tax. Any excess credit will be refunded to the taxpayer.

Contact: NM Taxation and Revenue Department  
1100 South St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
Phone: (505) 827-0700  
Website: <https://www.gonm.biz>

#### **Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC):**

The LIHTC program provides federal income tax credits to individuals or organizations that develop affordable housing through either new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation. The tax credits provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the developer's tax liability for a 10-year period. Tax credits can also be used by non-profit or public developers to attract investment to an affordable housing project by syndicating or selling the tax credit to investors. To receive tax credits, a developer must set aside and rent restrict a number of units for occupancy by households below 60% of the area median income and the units must remain affordable for a minimum of 30 years. In addition to tax credits, the financing "gap" for certain LIHTC projects may be filled with a below market rate HOME loan. Tax credits and rental HOME loans are awarded annually through

a competitive application process according to the state's Qualified Allocation Plan.

Contact: NM Mortgage Finance Authority  
344 Fourth Street SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 843-6880  
Website: <https://www.housingnm.org>

#### **Metropolitan Redevelopment Tax Abatement:**

The City of Albuquerque's Redevelopment Tax Abatement program is intended to attract private investment and revitalize divested areas within Albuquerque. The City seeks to stimulate high quality, sustainable development projects that provide tangible community benefits. Projects must meet the goals of the Menaul MR Area Plan and result in the elimination or prevention of blighted conditions currently present in the MR Area.

The Redevelopment Tax Abatement (RTA) is a 7-year property tax abatement on the incremental property taxes for all taxing districts. Property owners continue to pay the pre-development property tax amount as a Payment In Lieu of Taxes to the County Assessor. To receive the tax abatement, the City must take title to the property and the property is leased back to the original owner for the duration of the tax abatement period. Projects must achieve a minimum of 100 points on the community benefits matrix. This matrix reflects the City's priority on sustainability, community benefit, placemaking, and equity.

Contact: City of Albuquerque  
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency  
PO Box 1293  
Albuquerque, NM 87103  
Phone: (505) 810-7501  
Website: <http://www.cabq.gov/mra>

**New Market Tax Credits:** New Market Tax Credits are intended to help business investment in low-income census tracts. The fund provides financing for development of commercial, industrial, and retail real estate projects (including community facilities) and some housing projects. Loans for up to 25% of the project are available at low interest rates. NMTC loans are combined



with other sources of funding that is secured by the applicant and managed by Finance New Mexico.

Contact: NM Finance Authority  
207 Shelby Street  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
Phone: (505) 984-1454  
Website: <https://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org>

### **New Mexico Affordable Housing Tax Credit:**

This program encourages private investment in affordable housing by providing donors to qualified housing developments with a credit on their state taxes. The donation must be made to an affordable housing development that has been approved by MFA. Donors receive investment vouchers for up to 50% of the donation's value, which they can use towards a tax deduction on their state taxes. Eligible projects include the development of single-family homes and multifamily rental housing throughout New Mexico.

## **HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

*Note: While the Menaul MR Area will continue to be dominated by commercial and industrial development, there is an opportunity for development of mixed-use projects. As such, the following funding sources are programs administered by the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority.*

**New Mexico Housing Trust Fund:** The Housing Trust Fund provides flexible funding for affordable housing initiatives for persons or households of low or moderate income served by nonprofit and for-profit organizations, governmental housing agencies and entities, regional housing authorities, tribal governments, and housing agencies, etc. Interest rates are approximately 1 to 5% per annum. Construction is up to three years (current maximum \$1,500,000). Long-term amortizing up to 30 years (current maximum: \$500,000). Requirements for rental households are those earning 60% or less AMI, and for single family households, at or less than 80% AMI.

### **Primero Investment Fund Loan Program:**

Primero is a flexible, low-cost loan program created to finance the development of affordable rental

or special needs residential facilities that would be considered "high risk" by traditional lenders. The purpose of the program is to leverage other public and private funds and to expand the housing development capacity of New Mexico's nonprofit, tribal, and public agency housing providers. The Primero Investment Fund has been broadened over the years to include the financing of all types of projects that cannot be accommodated by existing sources, particularly the secondary market, and to develop new delivery systems through non-profit organizations and other institutions to increase affordable housing production. Public and tribal agencies, and for-profit and nonprofit sponsors are all eligible. Rental, owner-occupied, and special needs projects of any size maybe financed under this program during any stage of the development process. New construction, conversion, and acquisition/rehabilitation projects may also be financed.

**Ventana Fund:** The Ventana Fund is a Certified Development Financial Institution (CDFI) established in 2014 to meet the critical need for an increased supply of early-stage financing for affordable housing construction and rehabilitation projects in New Mexico. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation organized by private citizens and housing professionals. The Ventana Fund is committed to financing affordable housing in low-income communities, economically distressed communities, and market niches that are under-served by traditional financial institutions. Target markets include low-income populations earning less than 80% AMI, tribal communities, rural communities, and CDFI investment areas. Ventana Fund also focuses on hard-to-finance projects, such as older rental projects needing rehabilitation.

### **542(c) FHA-Insured Multi-family Risk Sharing:**

The purpose of this program is construction and permanent loans for affordable rental developments. Risk Share loans may be used as credit enhancement for bond transactions. Loans up to \$2 million may be funded by the MFA and are designed to minimize transaction/due diligence costs and expedite processing for small projects. Eligible borrowers



include single asset mortgagors including non-profit organizations, for-profit corporations, joint ventures, limited liability companies and partnerships. This program is available for new construction, substantial rehabilitation, and refinancing or acquisition of projects having no less than five units per site.

Contact: NM Mortgage Finance Authority  
344 Fourth Street SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102  
Phone: (505) 843-6880  
Website: <https://www.housingnm.org>



The following SWOT analysis was completed during the planning process for the larger Menaul

Redevelopment Study. It is based on the input received at the first public meeting.

<p><b>S</b></p> <p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p>	<p><b>W</b></p> <p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p>	<p><b>O</b></p> <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>T</b></p> <p><b>THREATS</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I-40 and I-25 make this a convenient location to stay for motorists</li> <li>• Because Lomas is underserved for hotels, this is a popular place to stay</li> <li>• University Hospital proximity for hotel guests</li> <li>• Area is a showcase for people coming to Albuquerque</li> <li>• Crown Plaza attracts visitors to the area</li> <li>• Access to the area by the freeways is good</li> <li>• Menaul is an efficient form of travel and alternative to the freeway</li> <li>• Diversity of businesses, good mix of uses, upgrades to medians</li> <li>• Good 1/2 mile visibility of the area from freeway</li> <li>• New tenants including the Maverik gas station</li> <li>• New construction and face-lifts on buildings</li> <li>• Lighting for La Quinta parcel is good</li> <li>• Median landscaping</li> <li>• Closure of the park by La Quinta and I-40</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High crime rate</li> <li>• High cost of doing business in the area due to crime</li> <li>• Issues with homelessness</li> <li>• Customers feel unsafe due to carjackings and stolen vehicles</li> <li>• Outdoor environment is unclean due to homeless</li> <li>• Frequent trespassing into buildings</li> <li>• Lack of police department resources and enforcement</li> <li>• Long police department response times</li> <li>• Concerns about safety for business owners, staff, and guests/customers</li> <li>• Parking lots can be dangerous</li> <li>• Fences are broken through often and are expensive to repair</li> <li>• Business owners spend their own money to prevent crimes</li> <li>• Some sidewalks in the area in disrepair</li> <li>• Vacant buildings that have been vacant for many years</li> <li>• Vacant buildings at southwest corner of University and Menaul</li> <li>• Truck stop north of Menaul brings in transients, drug use, and prostitution</li> <li>• Break-ins and drug use during burglaries</li> <li>• Lack of businesses open at night creates safety issues</li> <li>• Vandals damaging properties at night</li> <li>• Lack of lighting from Menaul to Quincy</li> <li>• Problem area in comparison to other parts of Albuquerque</li> <li>• Abuse and vandalism of bus shelters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring new businesses to vacant spaces</li> <li>• Change the way we deal with crime and overarching policy</li> <li>• Create a police substation in the area (Village Inn property potential location)</li> <li>• Add proactive police work in the area</li> <li>• Beautification incentive for the area</li> <li>• Subsidy for building face-lifts, providing your own site-safety mechanisms</li> <li>• Having community events</li> <li>• Renewing a sense of pride for the area</li> <li>• More bikeability, connection to the 50-mile bike loop from UNM North Golf Course</li> <li>• Make area more walkable; more trails and better sidewalks</li> <li>• Midtown Business Coalition as an agent for change</li> <li>• Meet ups to walk around and pick up trash</li> <li>• Revitalize and redesign bus stops (panic buttons, increase safety, etc.)</li> <li>• Having tourists return to the area</li> <li>• Interstates as drivers for new visitors to the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses leaving the area due to crime</li> <li>• General disinvestment</li> <li>• Long time property owners selling and leaving the area</li> <li>• Hotel raids and criminal activity putting other businesses in danger</li> <li>• Threat to personal safety for business owners, employees, and guests/customers</li> <li>• Close to the tipping point of disinvestment</li> </ul>