


PLAN COMPONENTS | RETAIL STRATEGY


Summary


Located between Albuquerque's trendy Nob Hill district and a recently expanded super Wal-mart, the Central-Highland-Upper Nob Hill area is ripe for a significant amount of new retail development. Both Nob Hill and Wal-Mart attract a wide range of shoppers to the area on a regular basis and could serve as necessary anchors to numerous restaurants, neighborhood services and community retail. This study estimates that up to 300,000-400,000 of new retail and restaurant development could be supported along Central Avenue between Carlisle and San Mateo Boulevard.


General Retail Plan

Presently, Central Avenue has a tired and dated appearance that does not reflect its surrounding renovated neighborhoods. The study area's near mile length is totally lined with older commercial uses that tend to blend together. Clustering of similar retail types between residential or residential-scaled projects will help to create a series of smaller-scaled commercial groupings that will help to establish identifiable places and to reinforce the brand of the Nob Hill area:

 Nob Hill & Antiques - nearby Nob Hill is bursting at the seams with lively restaurants and creative specialty home stores. Gibbs Planning Group recommends that the Nob Hill district be expanded east two blocks to the edge of the existing antiques district. These new retailers could include: theme restaurants, home furnishings and apparel stores. The expanded Nob Hill shops will help to reinforce the antiques district and to promote cross-shopping in the area.

 Restaurants - A grouping of major regional or national theme restaurants located near Central and Sierra could anchor the antiques district, help to pull pedestrians from Nob Hill and reinforce existing restaurants and clubs in the area.

 Neighborhood Retail - businesses appropriate in this area could include services which residents utilize on a more frequent basis such as dry cleaners, small food stores [farmer's markets, bakeries, etc.], coffee shops, gas stations, video rental stores, etc..

 Community Retail - The recently expanded Super Wal-Mart is one of the area's largest draws and could help to support numerous additional community level retailers. These community stores will range from 25,000 s.f.-50,000 s.f. and are suitable for many of the older hotels located along the eastern end of Central. In addition, these community stores will help to reduce the large amounts of retail sales that are presently leaving the area. Community retailers that are supportable in the east Central area include: hardware stores, renovation-oriented stores, sporting goods, office supply, apparel discount department stores, book sellers, home furnishings, electronics, etc.

Existing motels on the Central Ave. contribute much character to Route 66 corridor and they should be redeveloped where possible. Opportunities for re-use include upgraded motel rooms, boutique hotels, and housing and community retail [see previous paragraph.].



Specialty designer anchor stores such as DSW Shoes and Media Play are ideal community type retailers for the east end of Central near the Super Wal-Mart.



The form of new retail should include different scales of buildings, and should include flex space above it for uses such as office or housing.



Mixed-use building form appropriate for larger properties.

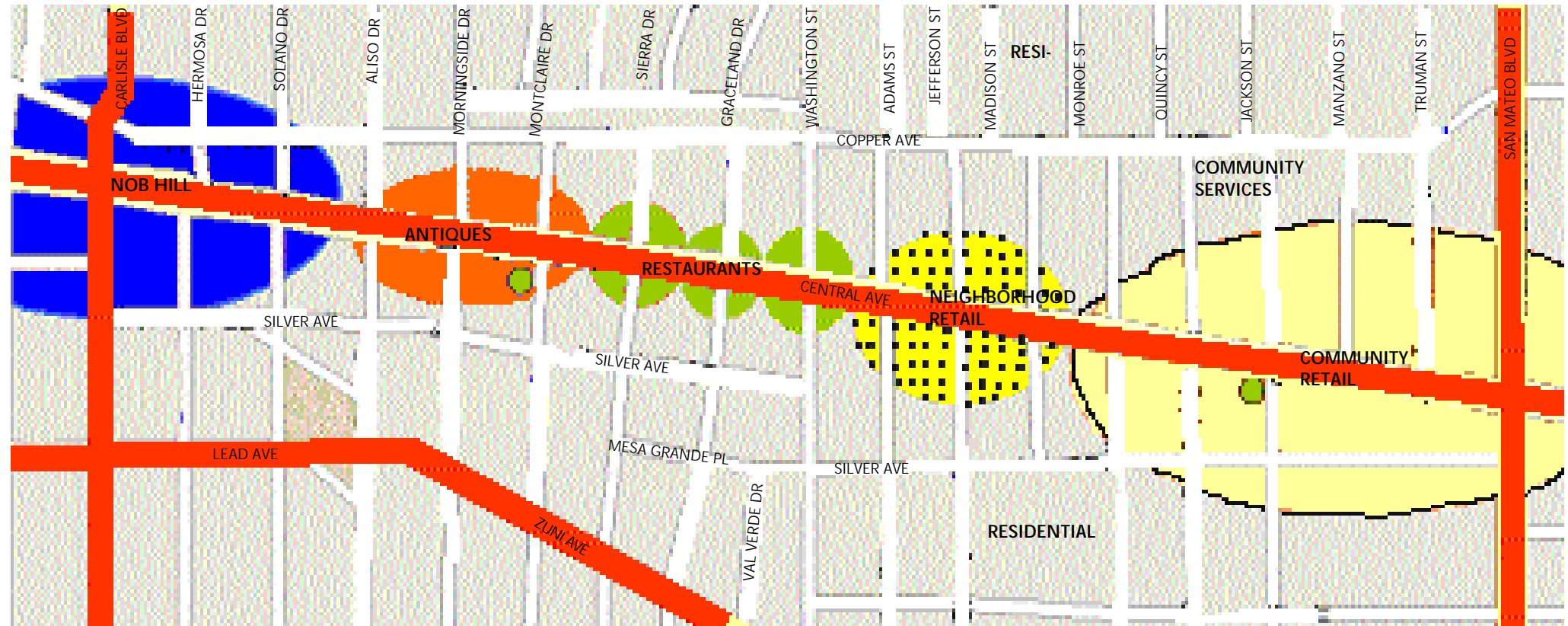
Demographics

One of the most unusual aspects of the Central-Highland-Upper Nob Hill area is the major renovation and upgrading that is taking place in the surrounding neighborhoods. Driving along Central is misleading, as the commercial re-development is lagging behind the residential. Over 50,000 persons live within the surrounding neighborhoods. These households have high education levels and incomes median incomes averaging over \$60,000. These residents are prime shoppers for Nob Hill's unique shops, restaurants as well as Wal-Mart. These residents are also significantly under-served for a full range of retail services including: groceries, restaurants, home furnishings and community box type retailers.

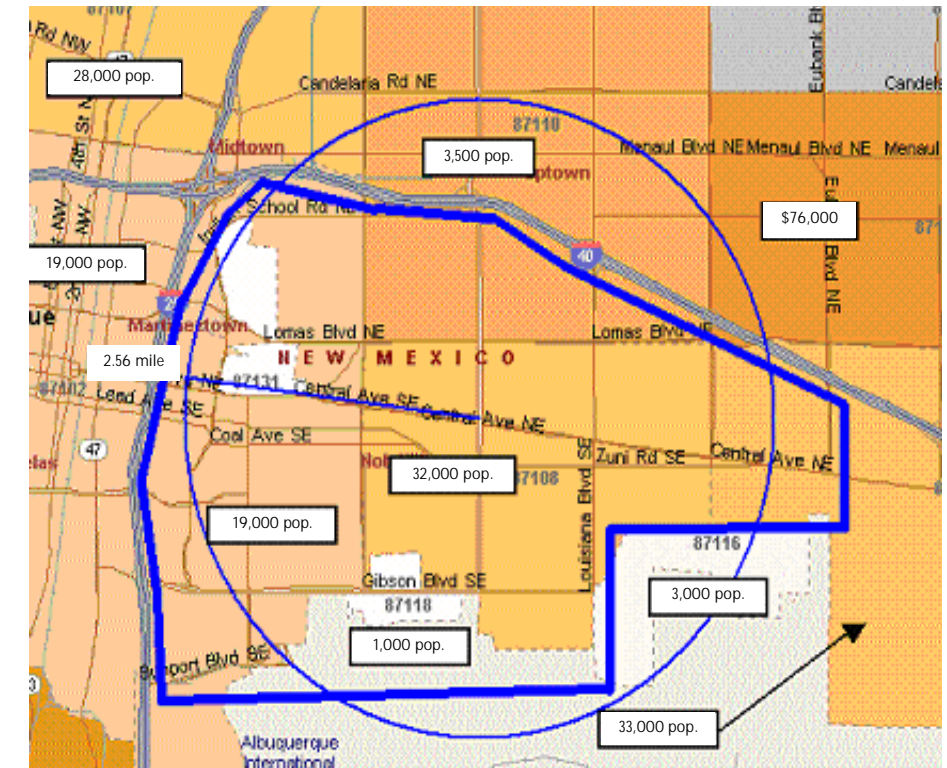
Next Steps

Retailers in the area will be well served by the Master Plan's organizing influence. Retail in general will be improved based on the proposed designs for the public realms of the street, sidewalks, and parking. Grouping the retail types as outlined in the General Retail plan will help produce a great impact for individual businesses, as well as for the district and city as a whole. The regulations section of this Master Plan will help ensure that properties develop in similar types and scales, giving a cohesive feeling to the district. Doubts about what might occur next to any given property will be, therefore, minimized.

Along with these physical organizing elements, it is suggested that the retailers along Central organize or agree to general principles to create a unique shopping district. These general principles include clear, single pane glazing for shop fronts, signage perpendicular to the street, similar operating hours [that should extend into the evening], and simplified displays in shop front windows. Business Improvement District [BID] or business associations are some means of organizing business owners in the area to manage such issues, as well as parking districts [see Park Once section].



General Retail Plan - Central Ave. should be broken into smaller commercial groupings that reinforce the adjacent Nob Hill and Walmart Super Center as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. Clustering antiques, restaurants, and neighborhood retail will help to promote cross-shopping between various districts and to relieve the Avenue's bland and dated character.



Demographics - the project area is surrounded with over 50,000 persons - a great thing for vital retail district.

PLAN COMPONENTS | AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

Traditional neighborhoods have always been defined as having a variety of housing types, numerous workplaces, adequate shopping, facilities for civic, religious, educational, and recreational life, all on a network of smaller, attractive streets, within a walkable area of limited size, one that is well-served by transit as well as the car. Fundamental to the diversity of a traditional neighborhood are housing and workplaces that are affordable for people of diverse incomes and at different stages of their life. Affordability is at the heart of the Master Plan, both in terms of an affordable lifestyle where most of life's daily needs may be met within walking distance - providing the possibility of lower car and transportation costs to working people - as well as in terms of individual buildings.

Affordable housing and workplaces should have the following characteristics:

1. Building type should be indistinguishable from market rate housing or workplaces.
2. They should be provided in a variety of building types.
3. They should be provided in smaller increments.
4. They should be mixed with market rate housing and workplaces.

The Master Plan enables and encourages the development of affordable housing and workplaces. While there are many affordability programs at both the private and public levels, we believe two are particularly worthy of note here:

1. The Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), administered by the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (www.housingnm.org). The LIHTC program has been in existence since 1986, as an incentive for developers to invest in the construction or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing. The Tax Credit provides the developer with a dollar-for-dollar reduction in personal or corporate income tax liability for a 10 year period, for projects meeting the Program's requirements. Those requirements generally involve making the housing available to residents making 60% or less of area median household income. LIHTC projects can, and are, successfully mixing market rate housing with the affordable housing.

2. Family Housing Development Program, City of Albuquerque (www.cabq.gov/family/fhdp.html) offers incentives that would encourage homebuilders to build houses that families whose incomes are 80% or below median income could afford to buy. For a family of four in 2004, that annual income is about \$43,350. The housing is a combination of affordable and market rate homes, built with standards that meet the quality and design standards of the surrounding community. The affordable housing shall be indistinguishable from the market rate housing in the subdivision. Incentives from the City include a 20% Density bonus, Design fee rebates [100% for infill areas], Building Permit fee rebates, and fast tracking thru some review processes.

3. The Downtown Albuquerque Civic Trust (www.AbqCivicTrust.org) stresses that the availability of convenient, affordable housing, and diverse commercial and arts spaces has been shown to be critical to the viability and sustainability of the community. Unfortunately, efforts that are making Downtowns more attractive, including Albuquerque, may ultimately make them less accessible to all but the affluent. The goal of the Albuquerque Civic Trust is to ameliorate these effects and sustain an urban center that is livable and affordable for all. Financing packages and other incentives are offered by the Trust. While this program is specific to downtown, it is suggested that the Trust be extended up the corridor of Central Ave., or a new similar chapter be started for Central-Highland-Upper Nob Hill.

Note: housing types are shown on the opposite side of this page.



Carriage houses provide excellent affordability



Duplex, tri-plex, or quad-plexes



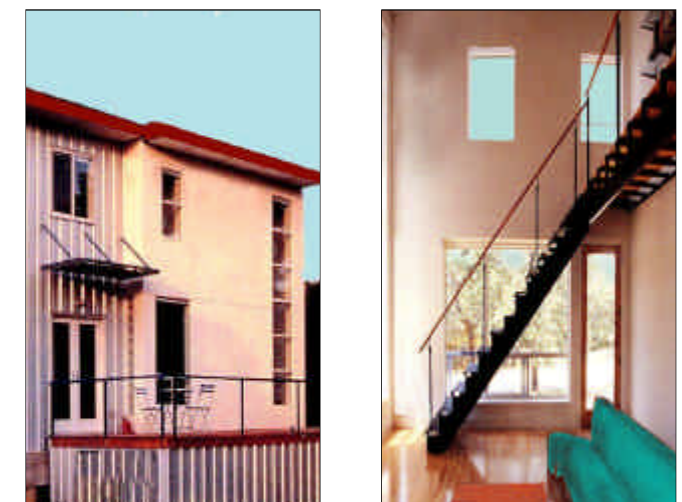
Row houses



Apartments & Live/work type units



Courtyard apartments



Manufactured or Pre-fabricated units

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