

North Corridor

Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan



Doorways to Imagination by Cassandra Reid

ADC Draft

Prepared for the City of Albuquerque
Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
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Introduction and Overview

Purpose of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan

The designation of the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (“MR Area” or North Corridor MR Area”) and the adoption and implementation of this Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan, (the “North Corridor Plan,” “MR Plan” or “Plan”) will allow the City of Albuquerque’s Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (“MRA”) to use the various resources at its disposal to implement public improvements and incentivize private redevelopment efforts within the area. The purpose of this plan is to analyze the existing conditions of the MR Area and to provide a framework for public and private sector improvements and investments that can be made to revitalize, beautify and improve the accessibility and functionality of the area through targeted enhancements to the built environment.

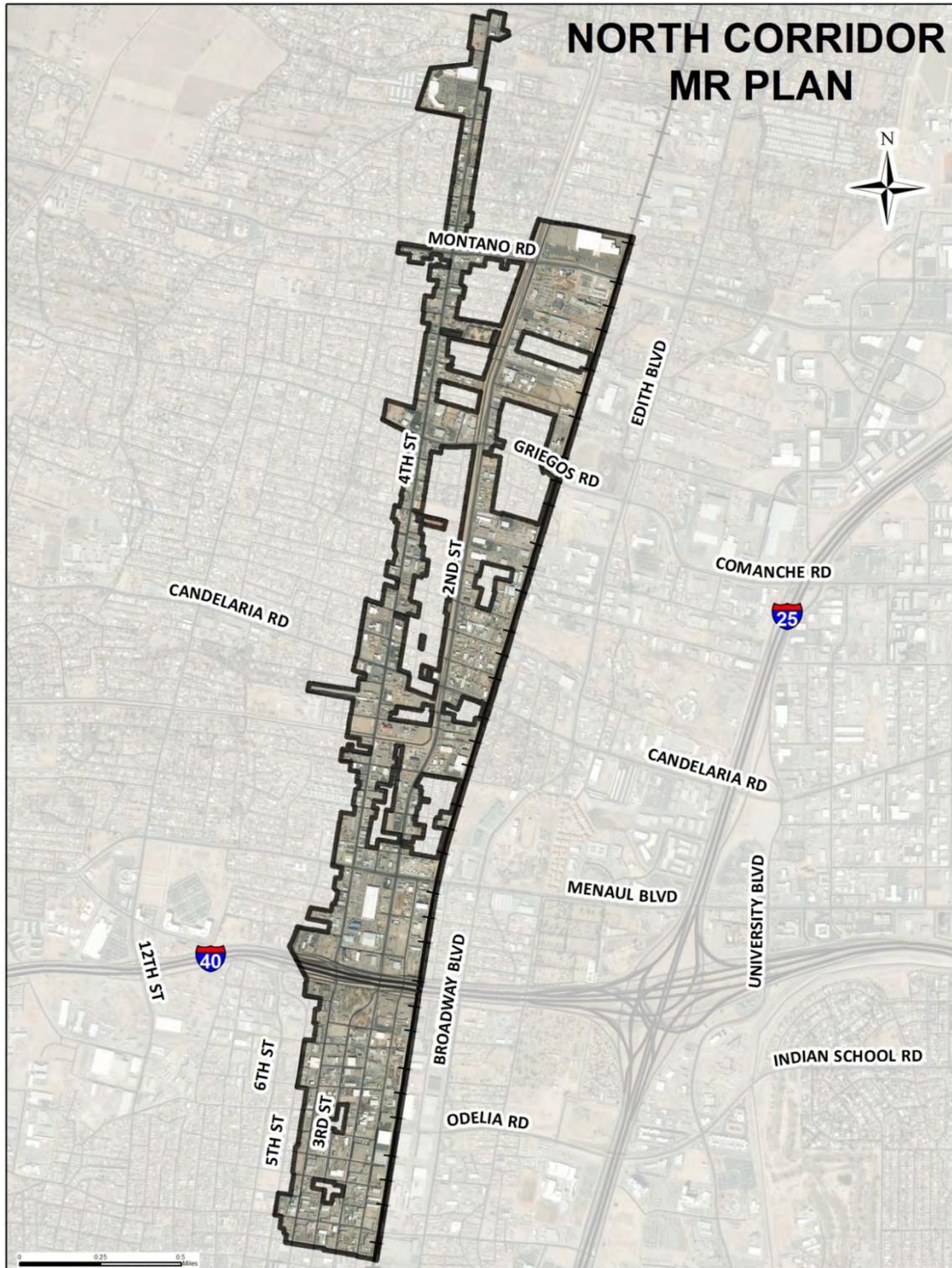
North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Boundary

As defined by the State of New Mexico Redevelopment Code §3-60A-7, an MR Area may be established by a local governing body, such as the Albuquerque City Council, with the adoption of a finding that “rehabilitation, conservation, slum clearance, redevelopment or development, or a combination thereof, of and in such area or areas **is necessary** in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the municipality.”

Following adoption of an MR Area, the local governing body may adopt a MR Plan. Under State of New Mexico Redevelopment Code § 3-60A-9, it must be found that:

- (1) *The proposed activities will aid in the elimination or prevention of slum or blight;*
- (2) *A feasible method is included in the plan to provide individuals and families who occupy residential dwellings in the metropolitan redevelopment area, and who may be displaced by the proposed activities, with decent, safe and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such individuals and families;*
- (3) *The plan conforms to the general plan for the municipality as a whole; and*

- (4) *The plan affords maximum opportunity consistent with the needs of the community for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the area by private enterprise or persons, and the objectives of the plan justify the proposed activities as public purposes and needs.*



The boundary for the MR Area was established by the Albuquerque City Council in August 2016 through R-16-49. A map of the MR Area boundary can be seen in Figure 1. The North Corridor MR Area includes properties that are not zoned for single-family residential uses within the area bounded by Granite Avenue on the south, the railroad tracks on the east, typically one property deep on the west side of 4th Street, and the commercial properties that line Montañó Road. However, due to the development of the area over time, there are a few single-family uses within the MR Area boundary. There are additional commercial properties included at the intersections of major roads with 4th Street and along 4th Street to the northern City limits.

Role of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency

The MRA, within the City of Albuquerque’s Planning Department, is primarily responsible for the implementation and execution of projects and programs that contribute to the revitalization of blighted areas, improvements to public spaces, activation of the public realm, the creation of jobs, and economic enhancement in designated MR Areas. The MRA works to initiate private and public investments through the use of specific financial resources, including the issuance of metropolitan redevelopment bonds and the waiver of impact fees, the acquisition of property, and creation of public-private partnerships for the development of catalytic projects.

The MRA partners with various public, private and non-profit groups to plan, develop and implement redevelopment projects that are beneficial to the area.

The role of the MRA in the North Corridor MR Area includes identifying areas that are in need of revitalization, overseeing the North Corridor MR Plan development and coordinating the execution of the Plan elements with other city departments. The MRA engaged the local community in the developing this Plan, including three public meetings with neighborhood members and business owners, which identified the boundaries and needs of the MRA. The meetings were attended by residents of the area, business owners, property owners, area stakeholders and staff from various City departments including the Planning Department, Municipal Development Department and City Council.

Figure 1.

Summary of Recommendations

To accomplish the goals of this Plan, a key set of recommendations are made to facilitate investment and implement improvements that will benefit the area. A summary of the recommendations is provided below. Further explanation of these recommendations follows later in this document.

- Public right-of-way improvements
 - Incorporate design features from the Complete Streets program. (A copy of the City's Complete Streets Ordinance is attached as an addendum to this Plan)
 - Modify streets and sidewalks to encourage safe and convenient pedestrian use
 - Develop traffic calming measures
 - Intersection improvements
 - Implement and support of the Alameda Drain and Trail Master Plan
 - Beautification of the public realm
 - Street Trees

- Private property improvements
 - Beautification
 - Trees/ landscaping

- Development of Catalytic Projects
- Mitigation of criminal activity
- Increase the housing options available in the Area
- Improve housing affordability
- Increase the employment levels in the Area
- Retention, adaptive re-use, and rehabilitation of historic buildings
- Public/Partnership Opportunities: As the redevelopment process gets under way, merchants, property owners and residents should continue to organize to redevelop the area. Follow-up actions to support the redevelopment process may include:
 - 1) Establishing a TIF or TIDD district
 - 2) Instituting a voluntary BID
 - 3) Participating in the State MainStreet program
 - 4) Supporting façade improvement programs
 - 5) Should local commitment to North Fourth Street redevelopment remain strong, a Community Development Corporation could be considered, possibly covering an area beyond North Fourth Street.

Relationship to Adopted City Plans and Policies

Development in the North Corridor MR Area, as well as the surrounding communities in the area, is guided by multiple plans and standards already in existence. The purpose of this Plan is not to supersede any existing plans and initiatives currently adopted and/or underway in the area, but rather to support and supplement the goals outlined in those initiatives. This Plan may assist in the facilitation of existing efforts by providing additional resources and funding sources. The other plans currently directing activities in the area include:

- **The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan:**

The Albuquerque/ Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (“Comprehensive Plan” or “Comp Plan”) is the City’s Master Plan. The Comp Plan provides general land use policies that guide physical development throughout the city in a controlled and specific manner. Much of the MR Area is designated by the Comp Plan as an Area of Change. Areas of Change are defined as: *An area designated as an Area of Change in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (ABC Comp Plan), as amended, where growth and development are encouraged, primarily in Centers other than Old Town, Corridors other than Commuter Corridors, Master Development Plan areas, planned communities, and Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas.*

4th Street, which runs throughout the MR Area, is designated as a Multi-Modal Corridor. Multi-Modal Corridors are defined in the Comprehensive Plan as: *Multi-modal corridors are intended to encourage the redevelopment of aging, auto-oriented commercial strip development to a more mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environment that focuses heavily on providing safe, multi-modal transportation options.*

The development of these corridors will enhance the environment for pedestrians and transit users, while nearby parallel streets will serve bicycle travel. The density and scale of development behind Multi-Modal Corridors should diminish quickly to minimize impacts on existing neighborhoods and respect established development patterns.
.(Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan p. 5-17)

Additionally, the Comp Plan designates 4th street as a “MainStreet”, *where it is defined as “Main Streets are intended to be lively, highly walkable streets lined with local-serving businesses, modeled after the American tradition of Main Street as a place for living, working, and shopping.....Main Streets should have one- to four-story buildings, usually placed right up to the sidewalk. Parking should be on-street and to the sides of or behind buildings. Away from the Main Street, density should quickly decrease to minimum impacts on nearby neighborhoods. This development pattern should be well-served by*

transit and contain safe and pleasant walking environments with street trees, landscaping and wide sidewalks. Public Investments in these areas should prioritize street and walkway improvements. (Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan p. 5-16)

2nd Street is designated as a Commuter Corridor, which is defined in the Comprehensive Plan as: *Commuter Corridors are intended for long distance trips across town by automobile, including limited-access streets. These roads tend to be higher-speed and higher-traffic volume routes. Development along these corridors should be more auto-oriented, but where the Corridors pass through Centers, development should include more mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented uses. Though Commuter Corridors can be attractive for developing a strip of retail, this type of development pattern would quickly lessen the utility of the corridor for its main purpose. Access controls on these corridors influence the location and mix of land uses and the design of development. Land uses along Commuter Corridors should be buffered from the corridor, and retail uses concentrated along Multi-Modal Corridors and in Centers.*

- **The Alameda Drain & Trail Master Plan:** The Alameda Drain & Trail Master Plan (the “drain plan”) provides a framework for improvements to the existing Alameda Drain (the “drain”), which runs along a nine-mile corridor from Interstate 40 to the northern end of 2nd Street. This master plan is the result of a collaborative, four party agreement between Bernalillo County, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), the City of Albuquerque and the Albuquerque Metropolitan Flood Control Authority (AMAFCA). The overall intent of this project is to enhance this historic drainage way, creating a multi-use trail that works in conjunction with the Drain and results in a more cohesive, aesthetic corridor.
- **Complete Streets Ordinance:** The Complete Streets Ordinance establishes a city-wide goal to expand safe use of city streets by requiring equal consideration of the efficiency and safety of all types of travel. The ordinance focuses on street design and adopts nationally-recognized standards for streets to efficiently serve all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and motorists. Complete Streets incorporate features such as street trees, on-street parking, bicycle lanes, traffic calming, wider sidewalks and pedestrian crossing features. The implementation of Complete Street measures to the North 4th MRA supports the Comprehensive Plan’s Main Streets policies and fosters a pedestrian friendly built environment supportive of retail and services.

North Fourth Street Rank III Corridor Plan (As of 2018 incorporated into the Integrated Development Ordinance): Enacted in 2010, the North Fourth Street Rank III Plan provided the initial framework for the development and redevelopment of properties along 4th street and identified the need for a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area designation. The plan also identified a need for 4th street to serve multiple modes of travel, including trucks, autos, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. Today, 4th Street serves as major route for commuters, local residents and business interests. It is a major carrier of traffic both east and west and north and south. It is in need of repair, reinvestment, and redesign to initiate its long-term transition into a corridor that serves auto and transit-accessible commercial needs as well as providing a pleasant and safe environment for local residents and pedestrians.

The North 4th Rank III Corridor Plan identified conceptual street cross-sections for varying parts of the 4th street corridor. In 2016, City Councilor Isaac Benton had these conceptual cross-sections engineered to 15% plans to aid in the implementation of improvements to the right-of-way. These plans will help developers understand the amount of right-of-way that will be required to provide for a safe, efficient space for vehicular users, bicyclists, and pedestrians alike.

History of the Area

The North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is a long and linear area located in an established part of Albuquerque's North Valley. Originally a largely agricultural area with large tracts of irrigated land, the Area has developed over time, primarily around the transportation routes of 2nd and 4th Streets, and the railroad tracks that run north-south along the eastern boarder of the MR Area.

The coming of the railroad in 1880 brought new development to the Albuquerque area. As "New Town," was developed a mile to the east of Old Town, streets and blocks were platted in a grid system. Turn-of-the-century maps show the grid, and also how sparsely developed the town actually was within a few blocks north of Central (Railroad) Avenue. New Town was 3.1 square miles in extent, with Mountain Road as its northern boundary. North Fourth Street began to extend outward from New Town with the advent of the automobile and was Albuquerque's first street truly formed by the auto and the dramatic changes it brought. As the early decades of the twentieth century proceeded, once undevelopable areas became agricultural lands as drainage projects were constructed, linked to the Downtown by Fourth Street.

Development along North Fourth Street was rarely planned in an orderly, sequential pattern. Some blocks were fully developed, while some had only a few buildings. Some buildings were

close to the street, while others were set back. Houses were scattered along the street between commercial structures, including Monkbridge Manor, a grand mansion that stood where the Wells Fargo Bank is located today. Schools, churches, supermarkets, movie theaters, motels, and tourist camps came and went with changes in consumer demand and population increases. Some buildings were demolished, while others remain today, but barely recognizable under decades of remodeling. A single building on North Fourth Street has received State of New Mexico Historic Register status: the Shalit House located at the southwest corner of Douglas MacArthur and North Fourth Street. The house, built in 1940, was converted to Powdrell's Barbecue in the 1980s.

The North 4th area functions as a spoke connecting the central business district of downtown Albuquerque with neighborhoods and communities to its north. Originally serving as a portion of historic Route 66, 4th Street has always been defined as a commercial and transit corridor moving people from south to north, and vice-versa. Along this corridor, over time, a variety of commercial, retail, restaurant, and industrial uses have existed to service those passing through the area.

Numerous commercial and institutional buildings define the historic and architectural character of the Fourth Street NW corridor within the Plan area. As does the nearby Los Alamos Addition Historic District, a swath of which is in the Plan area, and which was listed in the State Register in 2006. The Samuel Shalit House (now Mr. Powdrell's Barbecue House) was listed in the National Register in 1984. Several other commercial buildings along the corridor appear to be eligible for listing. Such listing may improve prospects for their rehabilitation by adding tax credit potential to rehabilitation financing. Historic registration of eligible buildings with owner consent is a goal of the Plan. Retention, adaptive re-use, and rehabilitation of historic buildings are also goals of the Plan. Retention and rehabilitation can occur whether the buildings remain in original use or other legal uses. The character of the corridor may be protected and enhanced through appropriate controls on rehabilitation projects.

In 1937, Route 66 was aligned along Central Avenue in Albuquerque and businesses along North 4th Street changed from catering to motorists to serving new residential neighborhoods. With the development of the interstate highway system in the late 1950's, the demand for services in the area began to decline. That decline is prevalent throughout the area today as many of the commercial buildings are vacant and in states of disrepair. In addition, the predominance of the rail business has dwindled over time, impacting the industrial land along the railway. Many of the industrial and warehousing properties have become vacant or underutilized and may be in need of revitalization.

Both 2nd and 4th Streets intersect with major east-west transit routes. Within the MR Area they intersect with Montano Road and Interstate 40, and just beyond the northern boundary of the

MR Area they intersect with Paseo Del Norte and Alameda Boulevard. All are major river crossing routes connecting the west side of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho with the employment centers and services that exist to the east of the Rio Grande. 2nd and 4th Streets provide direct access to and from the core of downtown Albuquerque. Today, many commuters pass through the area to get from one destination to another, rather than stopping at the existing businesses.

The Planning Process

The planning process for the North Corridor MR Area and Plan began on November 4, 2015 when MRA staff held a community meeting to present the initial intention of developing a boundary for the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area. A follow-up meeting was held on January 13, 2016. At both meetings, findings were presented by MRA staff to community members about the existing conditions documented throughout the area. The Community members asked questions and provided feedback on the findings and the proposed boundary of the MR Area. An Area Designation Report was developed and presented to the Albuquerque Development Commission and the Albuquerque City Council for approval in the Spring of 2019. See Appendices for North Corridor Area Designation Report.

Following the designation by the City Council of the North Corridor Metropolitan Area Boundary, the MRA held another community meeting on November 17, 2016 to obtain

community input in order to address the existing conditions and to incorporate recommendations into this Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan. The community meeting was held at the North Valley Senior Center and was well attended by property owners, business owners and interested stakeholders in the area. Break-out sessions were led by City staff and participants asked questions and provided insight to help formulate the goals and desired outcomes to be achieved through the execution and implementation of this Plan.

Areas of concern and focus that came out of the community engagement process included:

- Sidewalks throughout the area are in need of repair or currently do not exist.
- The area needs more greenery, trees, parks, landscaping, etc.
- Transient population is a detriment and needs to be addressed.
- Lack of trash cans in the area contributes to litter.
- Traffic congestion can become a problem at major intersections during peak travel times. The intersections of 4th Street and Montano Road, and 2nd Street and Montano Road were repeatedly identified as intersections in need of improvement.
- Interest in streetscape improvements and sidewalk improvements throughout the corridor so that it was easier to navigate for pedestrians.
- Traffic speeds could be reduced on both 4th and 2nd Streets.
- The 4th Street roadway is deteriorating and is in need of repaving.
- The corridor is lacking quality bicycle facilities.
- The property owned by the Albuquerque Public School System on the northeast corner of Menaul Blvd. and 2nd Street is an eyesore and a detriment to the surrounding community.

MR Area Analysis

As with any analysis, it is useful to try and understand all aspects and factors that contribute to the current state of the subject being analyzed, both positive and negative. Throughout the community engagement process and the ongoing analysis by MRA staff consistent issues and opportunities for improvement were brought up. Understanding these features, we are better able to identify areas that are in need of improvement and investment. We are also able to look at areas that are currently performing at a high level and work to strengthen their role and effectiveness. Below are the areas identified by community members and MRA staff for the North Corridor MR Area.

Existing Strengths of the Area

- Both 2nd and 4th Streets are major transit routes into and out of Downtown Albuquerque. These streets bring large numbers of people into the MR Area on a daily basis.
- Being located to the immediate north of downtown Albuquerque provides close proximity to the entertainment center and central business district of the city.
- The area is centrally located, and it provides connections to major portions of the city.
- Many vacant properties, many of which previously housed warehousing and industrial uses, have been repurposed into new businesses. There are growing and active brewery businesses in and around the southern portion of the creating somewhat of an unofficial “brewery district” drawing people and business activity back to the depressed area.
- There has been recent investment in the area showing viability in the marketplace. The infill properties located at 1319, 4322 and 4419 4th street, all with ground level retail and market rate housing above represent both the opportunity for new commercial business options and new quality housing stock in the area.

Areas in need of Improvement

- The levels of crime in the area, and/or the perception of crime, can deter economic investment. It can also keep away potential customers from the existing businesses.
- The transient population throughout the area contributes to the blighted perception of the MR Area.
- The lack of functional pedestrian scale infrastructure signals that the area is not pedestrian friendly and makes it difficult for businesses to attract customers.
- Decaying infrastructure is unsightly and can present unsafe situations for those in the area.
- There is a lack of true identity in the area. Many people just pass through and do not think of it as a unique and defined place.
- Even though there is significant daily traffic that travels through the area, there is no thriving commercial business activity.
- Many of the existing properties have a rundown and neglected appearance.
- There is a lack of public green space in the MR Area. Few parks and landscaped areas increase the harsh, industrial feeling of the Area.
- Many residents of the Area have expressed that a lack of affordable, quality housing in the area keeps new residents from investing in and around the neighborhoods that border the MR Area.
- There is a high business turnover rate in the Area. This leads to vacant commercial spaces and the perception of inactivity
- Traffic congestion during peak hours leads to backups at key intersections.

- There is a lack of new and affordable housing options in the Area.

Areas with Opportunity for Improvement

- There is opportunity throughout the MR Area to support improvements to businesses. This could include, but is not limited to: façade improvements, softening of property edges, public improvements, and private property improvements.
- Throughout the Area, there is a need to make improvements to sidewalks, and in some locations where sidewalks currently do not exist, to install new sidewalks. The improved quality of the sidewalks will encourage pedestrian activity and increase the level of safety for pedestrians in the Area.
- The Alameda Drain presents a unique opportunity to transform an existing facility and increase its usefulness and benefit to the public. It would be beneficial to the corridors to bring people to the area through the connections to the existing bicycle and trail network that exists throughout the city and activate a space that is currently underutilized.
- Public improvements, such as improved sidewalks, pedestrian scale landscaping and traffic calming measures could help to make business locations more attractive and accessible to consumers.
- The opportunity exists to soften the appearance of the Corridor and slow speeding traffic with landscaping, street trees, and other beautification efforts.
- Attract new business to the area due to the lower price per square foot on available retail space compared with other locations.
- There is the potential to provide new and improved housing options to the Area that will encourage new residents to locate to the community. An increase in residences may help to increase the demand for services to the Area.
- The high levels of vacant buildings available may allow for a lower cost of entry for a business concept to enter the marketplace.
- Criminal activity, or the perception of criminal activity, will deter businesses, residents and investment from the area. Increasing policing in the area may help give residents and business owners a feeling of safety and encourage new investment in the Area.
- Deteriorating public infrastructure shows a lack of support to the area. There is the opportunity for the upgrading and enhancement of public infrastructure.
- Creating a sense of place or identity throughout the area may help in the branding of the area as a destination and not just a place that is passed through.

On September 24, 2019, a community meeting was held at the UNMH Clinic on North 4th Street. The meeting was very well attended. The MR Planning Team presented an overview of the draft North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan that initiated a four-week community comment period. Community comments were received during this period and were overall in support of the plan. Some community comments included recommendations for community projects, areas for sidewalk repairs, street beautification and identification of vacant and underutilized property. Community concerns included unsafe intersections (Cutler Avenue and Fourth Street), areas where irregular street width creates unsafe conditions, unsafe sidewalks due to cracking concrete, utility pole obstructions and lack of sidewalks in general. Homelessness in the area and the concentration of homelessness at Coronado Park were also of concern. These comments were taken into consideration in updates to the plan.

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

The state of the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area has changed over time. The physical characteristics of the built environment represent the evolution of the area from a rural farming community, with larger tracts of land used primarily for agricultural purposes, to the modern urbanization of the area fueled by the increased dependence on the automobile and expansion of the city. Many of the developed properties in the MR Area pre-date the establishment of the City's zoning code, making for a patchwork of uses and property types throughout the area, as can be seen on Figure 2. Because of this, some properties lack setbacks and have boundaries that are irregular in shape. In many instances property lines, and built structures, come right up to the roadway or other public right of way, making sidewalk installation and location of public infrastructure items challenging.

Demographics

Note: Demographics focus on the area within the designated MR area boundary and the area within a .5-mile radius.

The North Corridor MR area has a population of 20,517 people. The population median is 38.5 years old for the MR area which is slightly more than the median of 36 years for the City of Albuquerque. The population age distribution in the MRA is lower for under 18 (15% vs 22%) and higher for over 65 (17% vs 15%) than the overall city population. The majority of the population is workforce age.

30% of the MRA population holds a bachelor's Degree compared to the city average of 34%. 9,074 people in the MR area are in the workforce. The unemployment rate for the MR area is 4.4%, lower than the 5.4% citywide for Albuquerque. The median household income at \$37,341 in the MR area is considerably lower compared to \$49,900 citywide.

The majority of the working population in the MR area commutes by car to work with 19% commuting more than 7+hours a week. 21% of the population uses alternative forms of transportation than single occupancy vehicle (SOV) commuting. 23% of homeowners and 31% of renters have one or less vehicles. These factors indicate there is a strong potential in the area for transit ridership.

The daily population in the MR area is at least 2 times higher than the residential population. There are 1,993 businesses in the MR area that employ 28,769 people while 20,517 people live in the MR area in 8,682 households. The average household is slightly smaller in the MR area at 2.3 vs 2.5 citywide.

Housing and Affordability

There is a total of 9,429 housing units North Corridor MRA and including an additional half-mile outside the MRA boundary, up from 9,160 units in 2010. The number of housing units is anticipated to continue to grow.

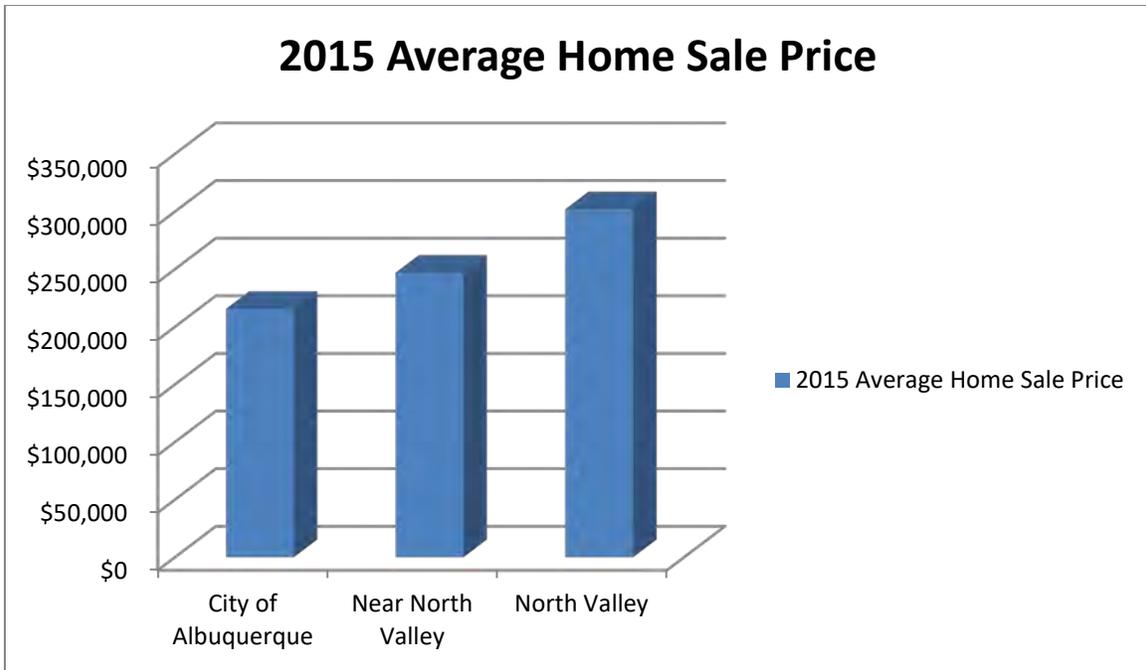
Homeownership in the North Valley, which is where the MR Area is located, can frequently span multiple generations. Many families have owned, passed down and inhabited the same property for some time. The study area includes a higher number of homeowners (52.6%) as compared to renters (39.7%) with normal vacancy rate of 7.7%. However, homeownership is lower than the Albuquerque average of 67.2%. 67.7% of the housing units have a mortgage. Over 20% of homeowners and renters spend over 30% of their income on housing.

The population moving into the study area is continuing to increase, though only slightly. The area saw a 15.9% increase between 2000-2009. Since then, the area has seen fewer increases with 8.7% from 2000 to 2014 and 2.6% after 2015. Current data indicates that there are 83 units of housing on the market in the study area, with 13 units recently sold.

The community generally wishes to preserve the area's semi-rural character. New construction and increased density are generally dissuaded against in most parts of the North Valley. As such, there tends to be a shortage of affordable entry level homes for those wishing to move into the area. In general, the housing stock in the study area is fairly old, with about 71% built before 1980 and almost 50% built before 1960. The last decade saw 237 new housing units (.026%). A similar rate of new units is projected for 2024. A high percentage of older housing stock indicates that housing may need substantial repairs to be habitable and may be costlier to maintain.

Although the plan area does not include single family zoned residential areas, it is important to note that housing costs in the plan area are higher in comparison to Albuquerque as a whole. For the calendar year of 2015, the average sale price of a single family detached home in the North Valley (East of Rio Grande River, South of Alameda, West of I-25, and North of Montgomery/Montano) was \$301,740. In the Near North Valley (East of Rio Grande River, South of Montgomery/Montano, west of I-25, and North of I-40) it was \$246,716. Those figures are significantly higher than the city average of \$215,331 over the same timeframe and can be seen in Figure 10. (*Statistics provided by the Greater Albuquerque Association of Realtors*).

Increased housing choices in strategic locations may have positive benefits to the MR Area and the North Valley as a whole. Some of those benefits are discussed in the recommendations section of this Plan.



Crime

As is the case in many parts of the city, crime is a constant concern for the area, including both property and violent crime. The presence of criminal activity, or the perception of such activity, contributes the disinvestment in, and exodus of businesses and residents from the MR Area. A summary of crime data can be found in the appendix.

South of I-40

The area within the MR Plan south of I-40 contains numerous large parcels and warehouses. Signs of re-investment in the area include the opening of several tap rooms and breweries. This area also has a large number of homeless individuals who frequent the area to access services. Coronado park is currently a pick-up point for Homeless services and has a high concentration of homeless individuals. Community members have expressed concern that the park no longer serves the general public. The Parks department has provided bathroom facilities in the area and extra trash pick-up service for Coronado Park. A localized redevelopment plan of this sub-area is recommended.

Zoning and Land Use

Zoning along 4th street is primarily MX-M, Mixed-Use Medium, allowing a mixture of residential and commercial uses. 2nd Street is primarily zoned NR-LM Non-Residential Light Manufacturing and NR-GM Non-Residential General Manufacturing. However, the land use in the North 4th MR Area consists of a diverse patchwork of uses resulting from early development responding to

the railroad, and early automobile corridors. Land use varies property to property with very limited large areas of consistent land uses.

The long-time incongruity in land use contributes to a lack of visual cohesion and does not generate an identifiable sense of place. The newly adopted IDO has incorporated consistent zoning categories for the area which allows for a mixture of uses while setting development standards that will, over time, guide development patterns.

Lack of Green Space and Functional Public Spaces

The North Corridor MR Area is predominately a commercial and transit corridor and as such, it does not contain very much green/park space or any true public gathering space. Figure 4 shows the existing parks in and around the area. One feature that runs through almost the entire MR Area from north to south is the Alameda Drain. The Drain runs along the western side of 2nd Street from beyond the northern boundary of the MR Area to just south of Candelaria Rd., where it deviates to the west. Though it is technically a public space that is accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, etc., the current condition of the Drain area could be enhanced to encourage its use. There are currently no amenities along the Drain such as landscaping, shading structures or benches. The embankment of the Drain currently consists of compacted dirt and gravel. The vacant and uninviting impression of the Drain often leads to illegal vehicle parking and dumping on its edges, contributing to its lack of use. Figure 5 shows the current state of the Drain.

The Alameda Drain and Trail Master Plan, adopted in 2016 by the City and Bernalillo County with MRGCD (Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District) and AMAFCA (Albuquerque Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control) provides design concepts and guiding principles for the nine-mile segment of the drain beginning at the Northern end of Second Street to Interstate 40. Key recommendations include potential trail alignments for a trail system for shared use and an Equestrian Trail, restoration of native landscape and additional amenities such as parking, rest areas, public art and foot truck courts. The Plan identifies opportunities in the plan area for linear parks along Second Street and Matthew Avenue. See Plan for details on trial alignment, cross section, materials, and intersections.

City streets can also contribute to the urban tree canopy. Second Street has a landscaped median with evergreen trees from Montano Boulevard to Menaul Boulevard. Fourth Street could benefit from the addition of shade trees in median areas and along carriage strips.

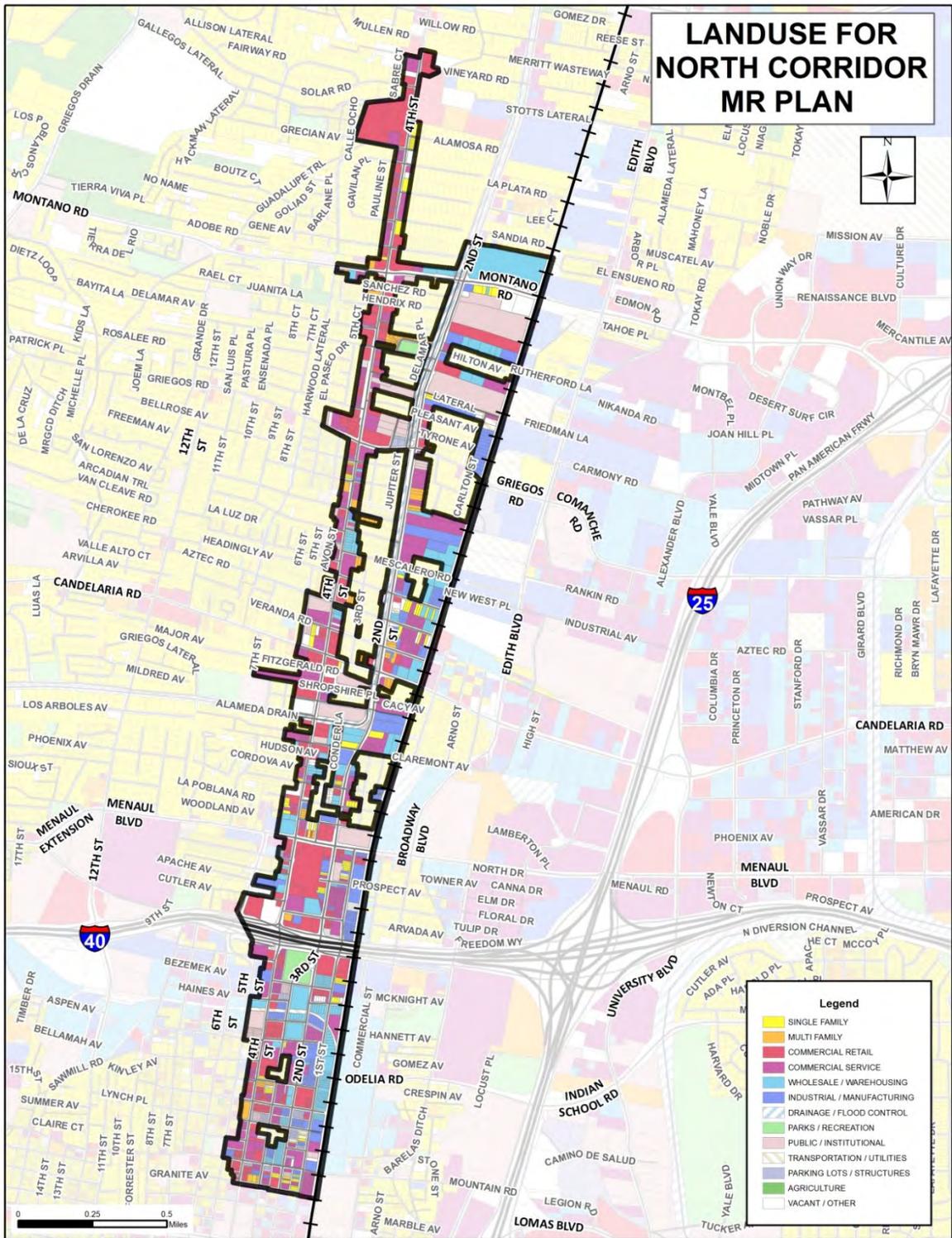


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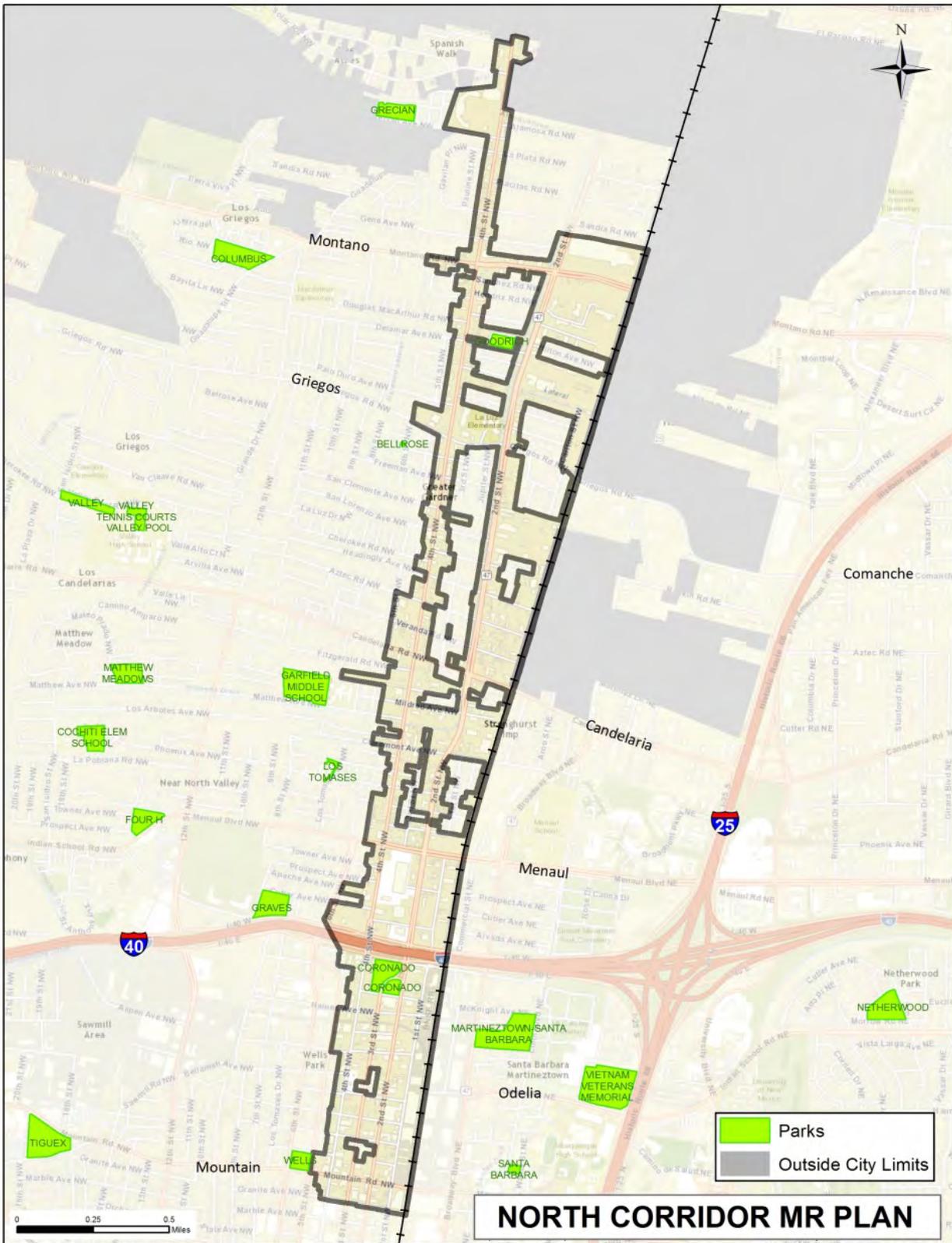


Figure 4 – Public open space in and around the MR Area

Blighted Private Property

Much of the physical appearance of the built environment throughout the Corridor is very harsh in nature. This assessment does not apply to all properties in the MR Area, but to enough that there is a detrimental effect to the appearance of greater area as a whole. This neglect across many fronts has led to reduced economic activity and investment in the area over time. Examples of the dilapidated appearance throughout the area can be seen in Figure 6, and include:

- Vacant, un-maintained and/or underutilized properties that show a lack of activity and investment in the Corridor.
- Chain-link fence, and other unattractive fencing and barriers, with razor wire toppings fronting public spaces.
- Vacant and blank walls facing the public realm.
- Graffiti on vacant structures throughout the area.
- Boarded up and/or abandoned buildings.
- Blank signs.
- Poor or deteriorating building facade



Figure 6 – Blighted appearance of the Area

Business Turnover and Vacancy Rates

Business turnover in the area is high, as is the vacancy rate for commercial space. This can be attributed to multiple factors that have influenced the business environment of the area over time. Much of the existing building stock for commercial uses is aging and in need of updating and modernization. The nature of the corridor, with high vehicular traffic and very few pedestrian amenities, make it difficult for businesses to attract customers. There are several established businesses that have been in the area for numerous years; however, there is not an influx of new businesses to this part of Albuquerque in the numbers similar to those that have occurred in other parts of the city, such as Uptown and the North I-25 Corridor.

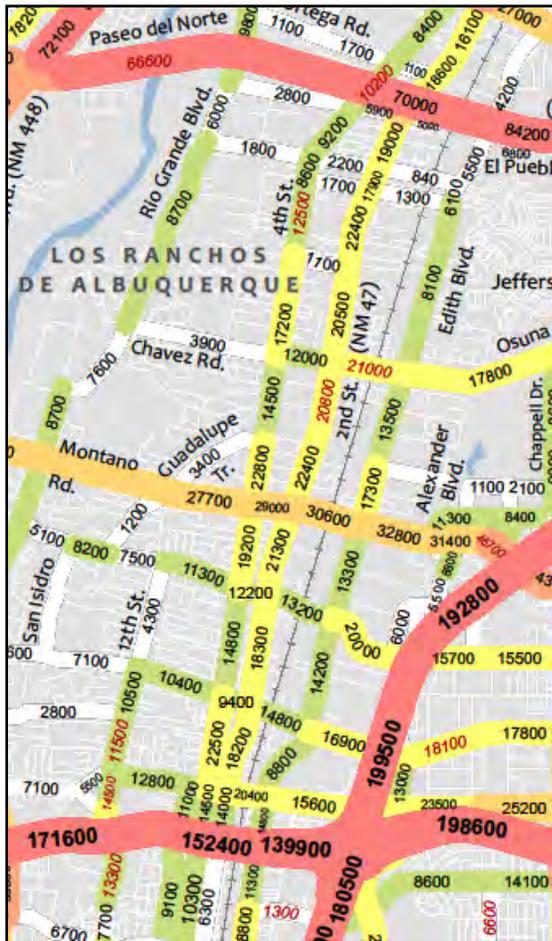


Figure 7 - 2017 Traffic Flow Map. Provided by MRCOG

Traffic

Much of the MR Area is defined by the fact that both 2nd and 4th Streets are major vehicular transportation pathways that connect the north and much of the Westside with Downtown Albuquerque. Much of the traffic activity through the area occurs during peak hours, on the morning and afternoon commutes to and from the Downtown employment center, causing congestion at major intersections. Daily traffic flows average between approximately 18,000 to 22,000 and 14,000 to 22,000 vehicles per day on 2nd and 4th Streets, respectively, as can be seen on Figure 7. Both 2nd and 4th Streets are vital to the success of the MR Area; and reducing excessive vehicle speeds and improving circulation and efficiency of traffic movement could benefit the area without causing a reduction in the overall capacity of the roadways.

Public Right of Way

Throughout the MR Area, there is a need for improvements to the elements of the public right-of-way including designing and updating the right-of-way to include ADA access. Sidewalks are crumbling and buckling in many locations due to age and lack of maintenance. Along several

stretches there is a complete lack of sidewalks altogether. This deficiency creates potential safety issues for pedestrians and motorists alike when people are forced to navigate uneven and dangerous conditions posed by the sidewalks or travel into the street to avoid obstructions. It is also a detriment to the many businesses that front the streets, discouraging pedestrian traffic between businesses and throughout the area. Utility lines and power poles are other obstructions in the walkways that create unsafe conditions throughout the area.

Through the community engagement process, the condition the 4th Street roadway was brought up as dangerous for motorists due to the substandard condition of the roadway. Throughout much of the MR Area, along both 2nd and 4th Streets, there is a lack of medians in the roadway, which coupled with the excessive lane widths in many areas creates a wide expanse of asphalt and contributes to the excessive speed and unsafe conditions seen throughout the Area. Examples of the neglected public right of way can be seen in Figure 9.



Figure 9 – Examples of public right-of-way deficiencies

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations in this section are based on the analysis of the area performed by the MRA staff, feedback from community members and business owners and the goals and desires of the existing planning efforts currently underway in and around the area. These improvements can expand accessibility to local businesses, provide beautification to the area, and aid in slowing vehicular traffic, all while helping to create an environment that deters criminal activity and encourages new investment. The recommendations have been broken down into five main categories; Public Right of Way Improvements, Private Property Improvements, Catalytic Projects, Mitigation of Criminal Activity, and Improving Housing Affordability. The recommendations to the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area are as follows:

PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY IMPROVEMENTS

Sidewalk Improvements

Throughout the MR Area sidewalks need to be examined and repaired to safe conditions suitable for pedestrian activity. In locations where there are presently no sidewalks the installation of sidewalks should be addressed to promote safety and ease of use. There are many benefits to having functional and accessible sidewalks. They allow a space where pedestrians can navigate the area without the need for a vehicle. Sidewalks can help to encourage increased business activity by connecting multiple locations and making it convenient for customers to access a variety of locations on foot. The increase of pedestrians in an area can also have traffic calming effects, causing motorists to pay more attention to the surrounding environment and operate at reduced speeds.

Traffic Calming Measures

As previously discussed, the MR Area does have high traffic volumes. Much of that traffic is necessary for the area to thrive, as it brings people and activity to the area that would otherwise not be there. In certain portions of the MR Area vehicle speeds greatly exceed the posted speed limits.

The North 4th Corridor Plan identified strategies for North Fourth Street from Mountain Road to Douglas Mac Arthur Road and from Douglas MacArthur Road to the Village of Los Ranchos Boundary and proposed conceptual street section redesigns which proposed narrowing traffic lanes and increasing areas for pedestrians based on available public R.O.W. Bulbouts and raised medians with pedestrian refuge areas are identified to reduce pedestrian crossing times.

Traffic calming measures should be considered for other areas as well. Depending on the location and precise need, traffic calming measures that could be implemented include, but are not limited to:

- Installing medians, bulbouts and carriage planting strips where road conditions will allow. Carriage planting strips should be prioritized to buffer the roadway from the pedestrian. Medians and bulbouts can reduce the overall width of the road as well as provide refuge for pedestrians when crossing the street. These roadway interventions can be landscaped to help beautify the area.
- Narrowing the width of traffic lanes. Wider traffic lanes encourage drivers to travel at higher rates of speed, while narrower lanes encourage the driver to pay more attention to the surrounding area and thus drive slower. Many portions of 2nd street have wide lanes that could be reduced in size without affecting the road capacity. Parking or bicycle facilities could be added to the side of the roadway where there is enough extra space provided by the narrowing of lanes.
- Installing bump-outs at major intersections to slow vehicles passing through intersections where there may be increased pedestrian activity near crosswalks. These will also aid in delineating on street parking locations.

Evaluation of Traffic Flow and Possible Improvements to Key Intersections Throughout the Corridor

Traffic congestion at key intersections was an issue that was brought up numerous times by members of the community during the outreach process. The major intersections of Montano Road at both 2nd and 4th Streets, as well as Griegos Road at both 2nd and 4th Streets were identified by community members as locations where improvements to the intersections could be made to increase the traffic flow and ease congestion at peak travel times. Further evaluation of the intersections and their role in the overall traffic system is needed to determine what actions could be taken regarding intersection redesign; traffic light timing and other potential improvements.

Implementation and Support of the Alameda Drain and Trail Master Plan

The Alameda Drain and Trail Master Plan is a plan intended to provide a framework for making improvements to the Alameda Drain. The Drain runs through most of the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area along the west side of 2nd Street. Through the community outreach that was conducted in preparation of this Plan, there was overwhelming support for the execution of the Master Plan. Residents and business owners felt the improvements proposed in the Master Plan would help encourage positive use of the Drain by area residents and others. The beautification that would occur along what is predominately a dirt pathway was seen as a major benefit to the area. The improvements made to the Drain will need to be

coordinated and funded by multiple agencies and the construction phased over time, but efforts should be made to aid the project as is feasible.

Beautification of the Public Realm

In order to help soften the feel and improve the impression of the built environment, beautification throughout the area is recommended. The physical impression that is given by an area can help encourage its use and activity level. Beautification strategies for the corridor could include:

- Providing landscaping on street frontages, installing carriage planting strips and medians (only needed on 2nd street).
- The introduction of street lighting to help improve the physical attractiveness of the corridor and provide an increased feeling of safety by not having dark locations that individuals avoid. An evaluation of locations throughout the area that are in need of street lighting should be undertaken and new lighting should be installed.
- Public art activities could be deployed throughout the area, on a permanent or temporary basis. Vacant buildings or blank walls could be potential locations for art installations.
- 2nd and 4th Street serve as primary entrance points to downtown from the Interstate and northern communities. Gateway signage and streetscape enhancement provides placemaking and identity for the area. Areas with visibility from I-40 should be considered for gateway signage.
- The Route 66 Action plan is undergoing a revision. This plan could be a good place to recommend some actions with respect to the Route 66 aspect of 4th street which may assist with the preservation of some of the older signs and older buildings.

PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

Beautification of Privately Owned Properties

The appearance and maintenance of privately owned property can help to improve the appearance of the MR Area. Steps that could be taken to encourage the beautification of privately owned properties could include:

- Cleaning up and façade improvements on unattractive and dilapidated structures. Implementation of a façade improvement program for commercial properties within the MR Area could help to support revitalization efforts.
- The removal of graffiti on walls and buildings. The City has a Graffiti Removal program that encourages citizens to report incidences of graffiti on public and private property.

The City will send crews out to remove the graffiti free of charge. Graffiti can be reported to the Citizen Contact Center by dialing 311.

- Encouraging property owners to use alternative design features that have a more harmonious interaction with the public realm. For example, instead of chain link fencing topped with razor wire, a more visually stimulating type of fencing or barrier could be used to define space. Educating businesses that razor wire fencing is currently not permitted on a Mixed-Use lot containing a residential use or in and abutting residential zone and may not be visible from a public street is an important step.
- One temporary measure that may be implemented could be to encourage artists to install temporary murals on blank walls and vacant buildings. This could help to activate some locations and show a renewed attention to the area.

CATALYTIC PROJECTS

Develop Catalytic Projects at Key Opportunity Sites

Throughout the MR Area there are numerous vacant lots, boarded up buildings and underutilized properties. In order to help encourage economic investment and activity in the area, steps must be taken to increase the viability of bringing businesses, people, growth and development to the area. One initial step in that encouragement effort can be through the execution of successful catalytic projects that showcase the ability to create a return on investment by developing successful projects in the area. As of the writing of this Plan, there have recently been three significant mixed-use infill development projects along 4th Street located at 1319, 4322 and 4419 4th Street NW. These development projects represent confidence and viability in the area from the private sector. In order to capitalize on that positive sentiment, additional investment in catalytic projects is necessary.



Figure 11 – New development along 4th Street. NW
Right – 1319 4th St. NW

The MR Area is large in size with countless properties that could become catalytic redevelopment sites. Many properties in their current state, or through future events; such as

the acquisition and assemblage of land parcels, the removal of buildings from sites, zoning changes, or any number of other events, could create a location where targeted investment and redevelopment should be focused. Potential catalytic sites should be viewed as properties where the redevelopment and addition of either new commercial or residential uses, or some combination thereof, would provide an improvement to the area from its current state with the potential to encourage additional economic investment. The designation of Metropolitan Redevelopment areas makes certain incentive tools available to those developing projects in the area, including the issuance of metropolitan redevelopment bonds that can provide some property tax abatement, the waiver of impact fees, the creation of public-private partnerships for development projects and on occasion, direct capital investment in projects.

Through the community engagement process, there are two properties that have initially been identified as potential catalytic sites for focused investment and redevelopment.

3520 4th St. NW

The property located at 3520 4th St. NW, is referred to as the “Brown Property”, and seen in Figure 12, is a potential catalytic site that could be redeveloped into a community asset. The property is currently owned by the City of Albuquerque and a working group has been put in place to work with the community plan for the issuance for a request for proposals to redevelop the site. The shape of the property may create design and use challenges that would need to be



Figure 12 – 3520 4th Street NW

examined during the preliminary design phase of any potential redevelopment of the site. There may also need to be environmental remediation on the site due to past uses.

201 Menaul Boulevard NW

The property located at 201 Menaul Boulevard NW, on the northeast corner of Menaul Blvd. and 2nd Street, was brought up by numerous members of the community at the facilitated meetings that occurred, as negatively impacting the MR Area. The property is approximately 3.79 acres and owned by the Albuquerque Public Schools Board of Education. Currently used as a storage facility for portable classrooms, the site is surrounded on all sides by a chain-link fence topped with razor wire. This property is underutilized and provides no real benefit to the adjacent residential neighborhood to the north or the greater community. This property presents an opportunity for investment and redevelopment into a functional and inviting development for the community at the hard corner of two major arterials. The current underutilization of the property makes the catalytic potential of this location very high. As the



Figure 13 – 201 Menaul Blvd. NW

site is currently owned by the Albuquerque Public School system, the acquisition or encouragement of redevelopment could pose obstacles. Further conversations between the City, the current property owners and the community would need to occur to evaluate the realistic feasibility for the redevelopment of this property.

MITIGATION OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Crime Reduction Measures

The occurrence and perception of crime is a significant problem in the North Corridor MR Area, and the greater city as a whole. Community members expressed a desire to reduce the amount of crime in the area in hopes that it would aid in revitalizing the MR Area. While the MRA supports the efforts of the Albuquerque Police Department for improved community policing and swifter response times, their activities and roles are beyond the scope and influence of this Plan.

The MRA does support planning and design efforts that can be implemented to discourage criminal activity and property crimes. The physical appearance of the built environment can contribute to increased occurrences of crime by signaling a lack of community activity and

involvement. Graffiti, trash accumulation and broken windows in buildings, in addition to other items, can lead to a higher level of crime by giving the perception that some amount of minor level crime is tolerated in the area, or at the very least, not addressed. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (“CPTED”) focuses on design interventions that can be undertaken in order to help deter some types of criminal activity. As highlighted in a 2015 article in Urbanland Magazine:

The concept for this approach to development dates to the 1971 book Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design by criminologist C. Ray Jeffery. Jeffery’s five prongs of CPTED are:

- *Natural surveillance: taking steps—such as limiting shrubs and adding lighting—to increase the perception that people can be seen.*
- *Natural access control: differentiating private and public space through design elements such as paths and fences.*
- *Natural territorial reinforcement: making it clear that property is not up for grabs—that it is either private or public—through design additions such as signage.*
- *Maintenance: keeping private and public properties well maintained to communicate the sense that the space is being used.*
- *Activity support: creating visual cues and active spaces, such as “children playing” signs and bike trails, to indicate that the space is being used and watched.*

The MRA recommends enlisting a professional experienced in CPTED to assess and share design strategies and best practices with business owners and residents to help improve the safety of the corridor and reduce the occurrences of crime.

IMPROVING HOUSING AVAILABILITY

Improve the Availability of Quality, Reasonably-Priced Housing

The MRA recommends that efforts be made to increase the amount of quality, and reasonably-priced housing stock in the Corridor and surrounding areas. This could include the redevelopment of key sites in the area into multi-family and single-family residential housing choices such as the Brown Property, 201 Menaul Blvd, or other properties that have yet to be identified. It is currently difficult to find quality housing options in the area for those of low and moderate-income households and those individuals or families new to homeownership. A moderate increase in the housing stock will help to bring additional people to the area, increasing business activity and strengthening the community. An increase in the number of residents inhabiting the area, and the overall density of the community, will help to attract more retail options and services to the community to service the increased demand.

ADDITIONAL REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS

Opportunities for Public/Private Partnerships

The North Fourth Redevelopment Rank III Corridor plan and MR planning effort identified the following tools as appropriate redevelopment strategies for the North 4th MR area.

A .TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is implemented by state enabling legislation to help local governments to improve economically sluggish areas. The focus of a TIF is to create new development/business and also to retain and improve existing businesses, with resulting additional private investment. An attractive feature of a TIF is that local governments can make improvements and provide incentives without tapping into general funds or raising taxes.

A tax increment is the difference between the value of property before district designation and after designation. If improvements are made to the MRA, the new increment of value is put into an MRA Fund for specific use for the area. The increment can also be based on simple inflation.

When a TIF project is set up, a base year is specified and locked in. Money from the increment increases as district conditions improve. The Albuquerque Development Commission and City Council make decisions for projects based on community input.

The TIF stream of income can continue for up to 20 years. The City can bond against it as amounts increase.

B. TAX INCREMENT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Like TIF financing, a TIDD is a district formed for the purpose of carrying out tax increment development projects to pay for public improvements. The state Tax Increment Development Act allows cities and counties to create TIDDs that can leverage the future gross receipts tax and property tax revenues within a defined area to finance the sale of public bonds. Bond dollars are then allocated to the project developer to pay the infrastructure costs.

C. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a special district that assesses additional property or gross receipts taxes on an area to finance services and improvements. Authorized under State law, only those properties that directly benefit are taxed. The assessment is on commercial properties only, not residential or non-profit.

BID funds augment services that a City normally provides, e.g., clean- up, special events, security patrols. To establish a North Fourth Street BID, the City and businesses must realistically plan the types of services that will best improve the area and community perceptions about it. To establish a BID would require a community board and staffing.

D. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

In 2006, the United South Broadway Corporation had a contract to work with businesses along North Fourth Street up to Griegos Road. Funds came from two programs: UDAG money was used for the area up to San Lorenzo, NW and CDBG money was used for the area from San Lorenzo, NW to Griegos Road, NW.

Section 5 Redevelopment Conditions & Opportunities Both programs provided small grants to business for improvements to facades - \$2,000 to \$3,000. They both also provide matching fund loans for \$10,000 to \$20,000, an amount that may be forgiven if the business operates at that location for five years.

Extending façade improvement programs along additional areas of North Fourth Street would benefit the overall appearance of the corridor and help businesses. In addition, the façade projects would work with implementing pedestrian and transportation improvements and design of the corridor.

E. THE STATE MAINSTREET PROGRAM

MainStreet areas are designated and provided with technical expertise and funding from the State of New Mexico. Albuquerque's Nob Hill is New Mexico's original MainStreet program and was initially funded by a federal program of the mid-1980s.

MainStreet communities receive state funding, seek grants and capital funding for infrastructure improvements, as well as for cooperative promotion of businesses, e.g., signage, banners, advertising, special events. They must hire a program coordinator at least halftime.

Requirements for becoming a certified MainStreet community include signing a memorandum of understanding to comply with the National Trust's MainStreet four-point approach that includes design, organization, promotion and economic positioning as well as participation in statewide meetings and training workshops, meeting program requirements, submitting reports, and stimulating community volunteer efforts.

F. CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE CAPITAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM AND GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

The City's CIP provides capital funding through a multi-year schedule of public physical improvements. The CIP administers funds for acquiring, constructing, replacing, upgrading and rehabilitating Albuquerque's built environment. For Albuquerque's redeveloped areas, the most visible changes may be seen in streetscape projects, but improvements also may include expansion of public safety facilities, libraries, parks and trails, senior and community centers. The main source of CIP funding is through passing General Obligation Bond Funds. City residents go to the polls every two years to vote on a new package of projects, most of which are approved. By ordinance, 1% of G.O. Bond funds are earmarked for public art projects.

Other major funding sources for capital improvements are: Enterprise Funds, primarily for the Aviation Department and for Water/Wastewater. Additional sources of funding include: Metropolitan Redevelopment Funds, Urban Enhancement Trust Funds for citizen-initiated cultural and capital projects.

G. METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT BONDS

Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds, while similar in some respects to Industrial Revenue Bonds, have certain differences. These bonds are restricted to financing projects in designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas and are available to a wider variety of projects. The public purpose for these projects is to stimulate redevelopment activities in economically distressed areas.

Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds provide a limited property tax abatement on the net improvements to the project site (i.e., current property taxes on the existing value of the property are not exempted). Also, Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds do not offer gross receipts or compensating tax exemptions on the purchase of equipment for the facility. However, they are a reasonable option for projects that may not generally qualify for Industrial Revenue Bonds.

As with Industrial Revenue Bonds, the City does not provide the financing or credit enhancement for the bonds; the applicant is responsible for finding their own financing, based solely on the rates they can negotiate with the purchasers of the bonds. Financing and legal costs are paid by the applicant.

H. PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

There are a number of opportunities for partnerships to occur between these various entities. Partnerships hold a high potential for redevelopment opportunities to occur in the North Corridor MRA area. The City can provide incentives through public financing land holdings, or eminent domain authority to serve as incentives/collateral for groups such as the New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund, ACCION, WESST, the US Small Business Association and private developers.

I. NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LOAN FUND

The New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund is a private, non-profit organization that provides loans, training and technical assistance to business owners and non-profit organizations. Their services support the efforts of low-income individuals and communities to achieve self-reliance and control over their economic destiny. Loans of from \$5,000 to \$500,000 are available to new and existing small businesses for such needs as equipment, inventory, building renovations and operating capital. Non-profits can seek loans for such needs as bridge financing against awarded private and public contracts, capital improvements and equipment, and loans to nonprofits that develop affordable housing.

J. STATE LEGISLATIVE FUNDING

State legislators from the North Valley have been extremely effective in securing capital projects for North Fourth Street. They respond to citizens' requests for capital projects and planning, which are funded by the State Capital Outlay Program. City staff also meets with legislators to develop project lists that result in a package of capital projects. The MRA can form the basis for requests to legislators in order to ensure ongoing, consistent project implementation.

K. FEDERAL FUNDING

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds remain a major source of funding for projects and programs. The City of Albuquerque receives several million dollars per year from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to pay for housing, commercial development, homeless programs, and some Capital Improvement Programs. The Albuquerque Citizens Team (ACT), an appointed citizen advisory group, allocates the federal funds using five-year plans that are updated each year through a community hearing process.

In 2006 a grant application for a senior housing project at the old Larry's Drive-in site, now owned by the City, was underway. If successful, the project would provide 60 apartments for

low-income seniors, using funds from HUD's Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program.

Other federal funds come from Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants from the Commerce Department. The community identifies specific public projects, and then goes through an application process that requires planning and preliminary design processes.

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Comp Plan Goals & Policies Related to North Corridor MR area

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. [ABC]

- a) Maintain and preserve the unique qualities of historic areas. [ABC]

Policy 4.1.3 Placemaking: Protect and enhance special places in the built environment that contribute to distinct identity and sense of place. [ABC]

Policy 4.1.4 Neighborhoods: Enhance, protect, and preserve neighborhoods and traditional communities as key to our long-term health and vitality. [ABC]

Policy 5.1.1 Desired Growth: Capture regional growth in Centers and Corridors to help shape the built environment into a sustainable development pattern. [ABC]

- a) Create walkable places that provide opportunities to live, work, learn, shop, and play.
- b) Structure capital investment and land use regulations to direct growth to Centers, in particular those in need of public and private reinvestment.
- c) Encourage employment density, compact development, redevelopment, and infill in Centers and Corridors as the most appropriate areas to accommodate growth over time and discourage the need for development at the urban edge.
- d) Encourage the development of multi-unit, multi-story apartments and mixed-use residential buildings in Downtown, Urban Centers, and Activity Centers to increase housing density and expand housing options and affordability.

Policy 5.1.2 Development Areas: Direct more intense growth to Centers and Corridors and use Development Areas to establish and maintain appropriate density and scale of development within areas that should be more stable. [ABC]

Policy 5.1.8 Premium Transit Corridors: Foster corridors that prioritize high-capacity, high-frequency transit service, with mixed-use, transit-oriented development within walking distance of transit stations. [ABC]

- a) Encourage higher-density residential developments within ¼ mile of identified transit station locations.
- b) Minimize negative impacts on nearby neighborhoods by providing transitions between development along Transit Corridors and abutting single-family residential areas.
- c) Encourage active public spaces and plazas within 660 feet of identified transit station locations and balconies and decks overlooking transit station areas.

Policy 5.1.9 Main Streets: Promote Main Streets that are lively, highly walkable streets lined with neighborhood-oriented businesses. [ABC]

- a) Prioritize street and walkway improvements, such as street trees, landscaping, lighting, wayfinding, and wide sidewalks, to create safe and comfortable pedestrian environments.

- b) Minimize negative impacts on nearby neighborhoods by providing transitions between Main Street development and abutting single-family residential areas.
- c) Ensure that Main Streets are well-served by multi-modal transportation.
- d) Follow Main Street policy guidance for private property and follow other Corridor designation policies for decisions related to the public right-of-way when a corridor has both the Main Street and another Corridor designation.

Goal 5.2 Complete Communities

Foster communities where residents can live, work, learn, shop, and play together.

Policy 5.2.1 Land Uses: Create healthy, sustainable, and distinct communities with a mix of uses that are conveniently accessible from surrounding neighborhoods. [ABC]

- a) Encourage development and redevelopment that brings goods, services, and amenities within walking and biking distance of neighborhoods and promotes good access for all residents. [ABC]
- b) Encourage development that offers choice in transportation, work areas, and lifestyles. [ABC]
- c) Maintain the characteristics of distinct communities through zoning and design standards that are consistent with long-established residential development patterns. [ABC]
- d) Encourage development that broadens housing options to meet a range of incomes and lifestyles. [ABC]
- e) Create healthy, sustainable communities with a mix of uses that are conveniently accessible from surrounding neighborhoods. [ABC]
- f) Encourage higher density housing as an appropriate use in the following situations: [ABC]
 - i. Within designated Centers and Corridors;
 - ii. In areas with good street connectivity and convenient access to transit;
 - iii. In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses, and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available;
 - iv. In areas now predominantly zoned single-family only where it comprises a complete block face and faces onto similar or higher density development;
 - v. In areas where a transition is needed between single-family homes and much more intensive development.
- g) Locate quality commercial development and redevelopment in existing commercial zones and designated Centers and Corridors as follows: [ABC]
 - i. In Activity Centers with development to serve adjacent neighborhoods with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle connections to nearby residential areas;
 - ii. In larger area-wide shopping centers located near intersections of arterial streets and provided with access via transit;
 - iii. Next to another shopping center at an intersection only when safe pedestrian crossings are provided to encourage shoppers to “park once” and walk to multiple stores; and
 - iv. In contiguous storefronts along streets in established neighborhoods and Main Streets.
- h) Encourage infill development that adds complementary uses and is compatible in form and scale to the immediately surrounding development. [ABC]

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. [ABC]

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. [A]

- a) Use Figure 5-6 created according to the methodology described in Section 5.1.2.5, to determine where Areas of Change policies apply.
- b) Encourage development that expands employment opportunities.
- c) Foster a range of housing options at various densities according to each Center or Corridor type.
- d) Encourage higher-density housing and mixed-use development as appropriate land uses that support transit and commercial and retail uses.
- e) Encourage job creation in business and industrial parks, near freight routes, and where adequate transitions and buffers can be provided to protect abutting residential uses.
- f) Minimize potential negative impacts of development on existing residential uses with respect to noise, storm water runoff, contaminants, lighting, air quality, and traffic.
- g) Encourage development where adequate infrastructure and community services exist.
- h) Encourage development in areas with a highly connected street grid and frequent transit service.

Goal 7.1 Streetscapes & Development Form

Design streetscapes and development form to create a range of environments and experiences for residents and visitors.

Policy 7.1.1 Design Elements: Prioritize design elements for transit-supportive design along Premium Transit Corridors, walkability within Centers, and a balance of land use and transportation considerations along other Corridors. [ABC]

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. [ABC]

- a) Improve the pedestrian environment through coordinated design of subdivisions, streets, development sites, and buildings.

- b) Improve pedestrian safety and comfort by providing wider sidewalks, street trees and landscape buffers, lighting, on-street parking, street furniture, and waiting areas and median refuges at large or busy intersections.
- c) Ensure the location and design of sidewalks reflects the existing or planned character and intensity of surrounding land uses.
- d) Enhance existing streets and trails as linear paths connecting destinations throughout the region.
- e) Promote trees and landscape elements in the public right-of-way, along trails, and within private development to ensure a high-quality, pleasant, and healthy built environment.

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

- a) Design streetscapes to incorporate street trees, landscape elements, and enhanced sidewalks to support vibrant pedestrian environments. [ABC]
- b) Encourage building and site design that activates the pedestrian environment through building frontage, entrances, parking areas, and gathering spaces. [A]
- c) Support pedestrian activity along streets, including sidewalk dining, parquitos/parklets, and open streets events. [A]

Goal 7.3 Sense of Place

Reinforce sense of place through context-sensitive design of development and streetscapes.

Policy 7.3.3 Placemaking: Encourage efforts to establish and strengthen district identity within Centers, business districts, and neighborhoods. [ABC]

- a) Identify, celebrate, and leverage special places.
- b) Distinguish district gateways and entrances with signage, lighting, monuments, etc.
- c) Develop distinctive signage, banners, and logos to use on businesses, in parks, near gateways and entrances, and on plazas.
- d) Prioritize capital projects to address key issues and leverage key assets.
- e) Encourage site design that includes gathering spaces for festivals, markets, and events.

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. [ABC]

- a) Invest in Centers and Corridors to concentrate a variety of employment opportunities for a range of occupational skills and salary levels. [ABC]

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. [ABC]

- a) Maximize opportunities for economic development that furthers social, cultural, and environmental goals.
- b) Encourage the production, local sale, and export of locally-grown and made goods.
- c) Prioritize local job creation, employer recruitment, and support for development projects that hire local residents.

Goal 9.1 Supply

Ensure a sufficient supply and range of high-quality housing types that meet current and future needs at a variety of price levels to ensure more balanced housing options.

Policy 9.1.1 Housing Options: Support the development, improvement, and conservation of housing for a variety of income levels and types of residents and households. [ABC]

- a) Increase the supply of housing that is affordable for all income levels. [ABC]
- b) Assure against discrimination in the provision of housing. [ABC]
- c) Assure the availability of a wide distribution of quality housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, or disabled status. [ABC]
- d) Protect the quality of existing housing stock through rehabilitation programs and training. [ABC]
- e) Provide for the development of quality housing for elderly residents. [ABC]
- f) Encourage community compounds to support multi-generational housing where such traditional development patterns exist. [ABC]
- g) Ameliorate the problems of homelessness, overcrowding, and displacement of low income residents. [ABC]
- h) Maintain an affordable housing supply in neighborhoods, in addition to creating market-rate housing, as part of revitalization efforts. [A]
- i) Provide for the development of multi-family housing close to public services, transit, and shopping. [A]
- j) Work on conservation, improvement, and expansion of the housing available to low- and moderate-income families until all housing in the area meets City Housing Code standards. [A]

Goal 9.3 Density

Support increased housing density in appropriate places with adequate services and amenities.

Policy 9.3.1 Centers & Corridors: Encourage higher density, multi-unit housing and mixed-use development in Downtown, Urban, Activity, and Village Centers, and along Premium and Major Transit Corridors to capture growth, relieve development pressure at the edge of the urban footprint, and maintain low densities in rural areas. [ABC]

Goal 9.6 Development Process

Promote cost-effective housing redevelopment and construction that meets community needs.

Policy 9.6.1 Development Cost: Reduce development costs and balance short-term benefits of delivering less costly housing with long-term benefits of preserving investment in homes and protecting quality of life. [ABC]

Policy 9.6.2 Incentives: Provide incentives for developing affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households, by aligning development regulations, infrastructure requirements, and fee structures with the priorities of City and County affordable housing programs. [ABC]

Goal 9.7 Partnerships

Coordinate strategic deployment of housing-related funds and partnerships with community-based organizations for projects that achieve housing goals.

Policy 9.7.2 Metropolitan Redevelopment: Identify and prioritize opportunities for catalytic projects that stabilize and serve blighted neighborhoods and support redevelopment in those areas. [ABC]

- a) Leverage partnerships with the private sector and community-based organizations as needed.
- b) Encourage development of mixed-use and mixed-income projects.
- c) Pursue remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites when feasible.

Goal 11.2 Historic Assets

Preserve and enhance significant historic districts and buildings to reflect our past as we move into the future and to strengthen our sense of identity.

Policy 11.2.1 Gentrification: Balance the objectives of historic preservation and conservation of affordable housing. [ABC]

- a) Work to maintain a range of housing options and affordability levels to ameliorate the displacement of low income households.
- b) Encourage renovation and rehabilitation to preserve and enhance the existing housing stock.

Policy 11.2.2 Historic Registration: Promote the preservation of historic buildings and districts determined to be of significant local, State, and/or National historical interest. [ABC]

- a) Preserve and maintain historically significant buildings and spaces.
- b) Recognize historic buildings and districts as vital elements of the community.
- c) Encourage the adaptive reuse of historic structures as a strategy to preserve character and encourage reinvestment.
- d) See Community Identity Goal 4.3 for character-defining elements of each Community Planning Area.

Policy 11.2.3 Distinct Built Environments: Preserve and enhance the social, cultural, and historical features that contribute to the identities of distinct communities, neighborhoods, and districts. [ABC]

- a) Consider local history and the visual environment, particularly features unique to Albuquerque, as significant determinants in development and redevelopment decisions in light of their relationship to and effect upon the following:
 - i. Architectural styles and traditions;
 - ii. Current and historic significance to Albuquerque;
 - iii. Historic plazas and Centers;
 - iv. Culture, traditions, celebrations, and events
- b) Encourage development that strengthens the identity and cohesiveness of the surrounding community and enhances distinct historic and cultural features.
- c) Design streets and streetscapes that match the distinctive character of historic areas.

Goal 12.1 Infrastructure

Plan, coordinate, and provide for efficient, equitable, and environmentally sound infrastructure to support existing communities and the Comp Plan's vision for future growth.

Policy 12.1.1 Infrastructure Design: Encourage design of visible infrastructure (surface and overhead) that respects the character of neighborhoods and communities and protects significant natural and cultural features. [ABC]

Policy 12.1.4 Drainage and Flood Control: Reduce or eliminate flooding by improving ponding and drainage capacities in an environmentally sensitive manner through the development process and in coordination with flood control agencies. [ABC]

Policy 13.3.2 Flood Mitigation: Prevent flood damage and coordinate flood control and response with other agencies. [ABC]

Appendix B – MR Designation Report



City of Albuquerque
Office of the City Clerk

Richard J. Berry, Mayor

Natalie Y. Howard, City Clerk

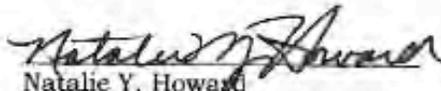
Interoffice Memorandum

August 15, 2016

To: CITY COUNCIL
From: NATALIE Y. HOWARD, CITY CLERK
Subject: BILL NO. R-16-49 ENACTMENT NO. R-2016-061

I hereby certify that on August 12, 2016, the Office of the City Clerk received Bill No. R-16-49 as signed by the president of the City Council, Dan Lewis. Enactment No. R-2016-061 was passed at the August 1, 2016 City Council meeting. The Mayor was unable to sign this legislation due to his absence during the allocated signature timeline. Pursuant to the Albuquerque City Charter Article XI, Section 3, this Resolution is in full effect without Mayor's approval or signature. This memorandum shall be placed in the permanent file for Bill No. R-16-49.

Sincerely,


Natalie Y. Howard
City Clerk

**CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY SECOND COUNCIL**

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-16-49 ENACTMENT NO. R:2016-061

SPONSORED BY: Isaac Benton, by request

1 RESOLUTION

2 DESIGNATING THE NORTH CORRIDOR METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT
3 AREA, MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS PURSUANT TO THE
4 METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE, AND AUTHORIZING AND
5 DIRECTING THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO PREPARE
6 A METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE NORTH CORRIDOR
7 METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA.

8 WHEREAS, Section 3-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment
9 Code ("MR Code") (Sections 3-60A-1 through 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) states: "A
10 municipality shall not prepare a metropolitan redevelopment plan for an area
11 unless the governing body by resolution determined the area to be a slum
12 area or a blighted area, or a combination thereof, and designated the area as
13 appropriate for a metropolitan redevelopment project."; and

14 WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque ("City") and the Metropolitan
15 Redevelopment Agency ("MRA") of the City's Planning Department and their
16 employees and agents, have for some time, engaged in a study of blighted
17 areas within the City and have submitted their findings and conclusions
18 concerning the area detailed in the North Corridor Metropolitan
19 Redevelopment Area ("North Corridor MR Area") Designation Report, which is
20 attached as Exhibit A to this Resolution and incorporated herein by reference;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 30-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the MR Code, the
23 Council caused to be published in the Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper of
24 general circulation, a notice containing a general description of the proposed
25 North Corridor MR Area and the date, time and place where the Council will
26 hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of this resolution and

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1 announcing that any interested party may appear and speak to the adoption of
2 this resolution; and

3 WHEREAS, the Albuquerque Development Commission held an advertised
4 public meeting on February 18, 2016, took testimony from the public, and
5 recommended to the Council the designation of the North Corridor MR Area,
6 as set forth in the Designation Report attached to this Resolution as Exhibit B;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, the Council has considered the Designation Report, including
9 Findings, Determinations and Conclusions in addition to the questions and
10 comments submitted by members of the public concerning the proposed
11 North Corridor MR Area.

12 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
13 ALBUQUERQUE:

14 SECTION 1. The City Council makes the following Findings of Fact with
15 respect to the designation of the North Corridor MR Area:

16 A. The North Corridor MR Area is shown on the map attached hereto as
17 Exhibit A. The boundary of the North Corridor MR Area includes properties
18 that are not residentially zoned for single family use within the area bounded
19 by Granite Avenue on the south, the railroad tracks on the east, typically one
20 property deep on the west side of 4th Street, and the commercial properties
21 that line Montañó Road. There are additional commercial properties included
22 at the intersections of major roads with 4th Street and along 4th Street to the
23 northern City limits.

24 B. The North Corridor MR Area has exhibited the following conditions:
25 (1) Business Turnover: The North Corridor MR Area displays high levels of
26 business turnover and a total reduction in the number of businesses operating
27 in the area since 1999; (2) Crime: The area has been subject to property and
28 violent crime; (3) Public Infrastructure: Much of the existing infrastructure has
29 started to deteriorate, has out-lived its usefulness or is out of date; (4) Private
30 Property: Some private property in the North Corridor MR Area is uninviting,
31 unkempt or unappealing, and there are vacant lots interspersed among
32 developments; (5) Household Income: Based on Block Group Data from the
33 US 2010 Decennial Census, the median income within and near the North

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1 Corridor MR Area is significantly below the City's area median income. These
2 conditions have led to the North Corridor MR Area having the following
3 conditions of blight as defined by the MR Code: (1) A significant number of
4 commercial or mercantile businesses that have closed or significantly
5 reduced their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to
6 operating in the area; (2) Low levels of commercial activity or redevelopment
7 or any combination of such factors; (3) Conditions that substantially impair or
8 arrest the sound growth and economic health and well-being of a municipality
9 or locale within a municipality; or (4) An area that retards the provisions of
10 housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social burden and is
11 a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present
12 condition and use.

13 C. The rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment or development, or a
14 combination thereof, of and in the North Corridor MR Area is necessary in the
15 interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of
16 Albuquerque.

17 SECTION 2. In accordance with the requirements of Section 3-60A-8 NMSA
18 1978, the Council hereby designates the area that is described in Section 1.A
19 above, and shown in the official North Corridor MR Area boundary map
20 attached hereto as Exhibit A, to be a 'metropolitan redevelopment area' as
21 defined by Section 3-60A-4 (M) NMSA 1978 and finds it to be appropriate for a
22 metropolitan redevelopment project or projects. This area shall be referred to
23 as the North Corridor MR Area to distinguish it from other metropolitan
24 redevelopment areas.

25 SECTION 3. The MRA of the Planning Department is hereby authorized and
26 directed to prepare a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan, as defined by Section
27 3-60A-4 (N) NMSA 1978, for the North Corridor MR Area, which, without
28 limitation, shall: (1) Seek to eliminate the problems created by the blighted
29 conditions of the area; (2) Conform to and coordinate with the
30 Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, any applicable Rank 2
31 and 3 plans, and any other applicable plans or policies; and (3) Be sufficient to
32 indicate the proposed activities to be carried out in the area, including, but not
33 limited to, any proposals for land acquisition, redevelopment, improvements,

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1 rehabilitation and conservation and the plan's relationship to definite local
2 objectives respecting land uses, improved traffic patterns and controls, public
3 transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, housing
4 facilities, commercial activities or enterprises, and other public improvements.
5 SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, sentence,
6 clause, word or phrase of this resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or
7 unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not
8 affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this resolution. The Council
9 hereby declares that it would have passed this resolution and each section,
10 paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any
11 provisions being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

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1 PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 1st DAY OF August, 2016
2 BY A VOTE OF: 8 FOR 0 AGAINST.

3

4

Excused: Lewis

5

6

7



8 Dan Lewis, President
9 City Council

10

11

12

13 APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2016

14

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16

17 Bill No. R-16-49

18

19

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21 _____
22 Richard J. Berry, Mayor
23 City of Albuquerque

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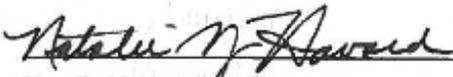
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ATTEST:

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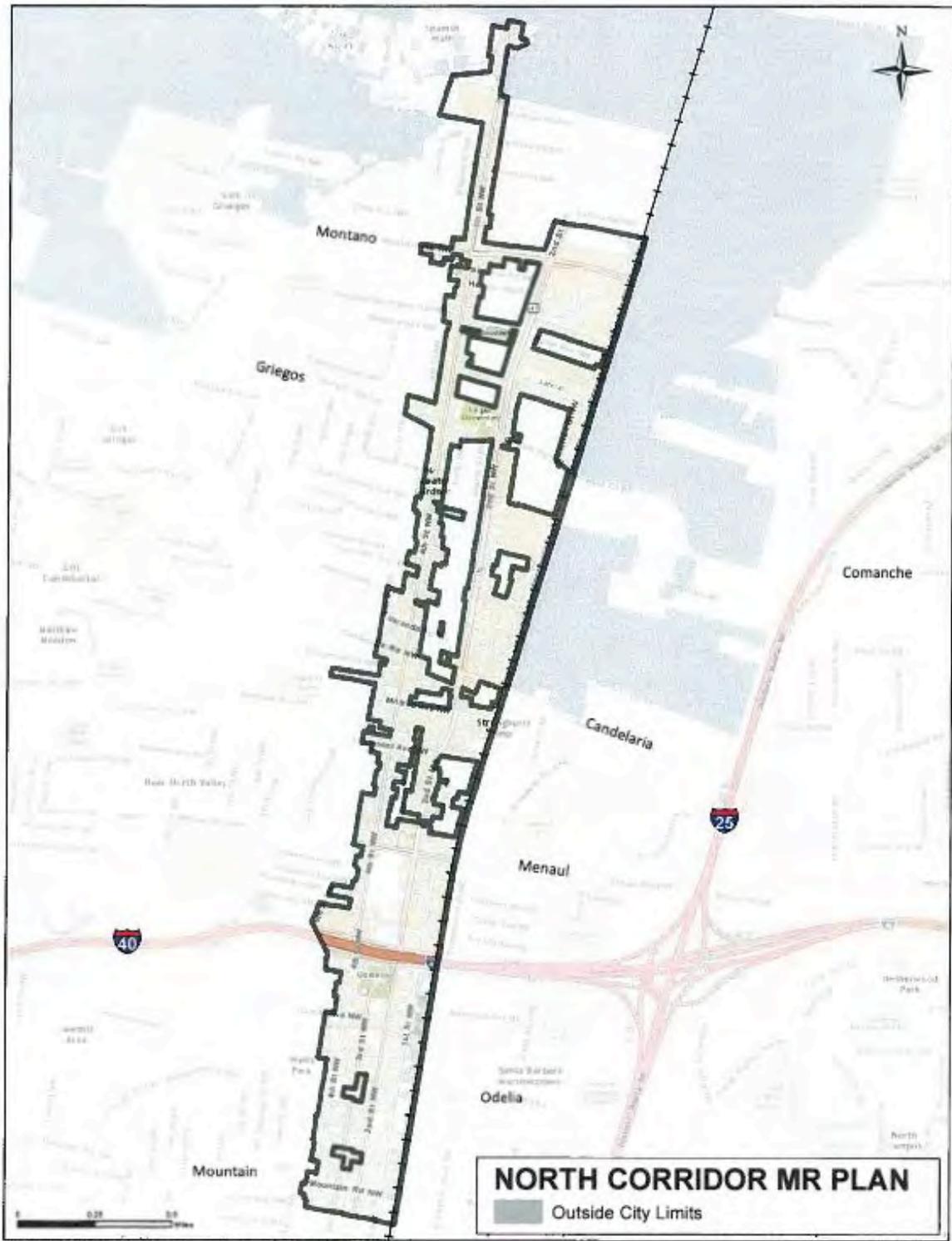
30 Natalie Y. Howard, City Clerk

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City of Albuquerque

North Corridor

Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (MRA) Area Designation
To Be Presented To the Albuquerque Development Commission

February 18, 2016



Richard Berry, Mayor

City Council

Isaac Benton, District 3

Albuquerque Planning
Department

Suzanne Lubar, Director

Metropolitan Redevelopment
Agency

Rebecca Velarde, Manager
(505) 924-3844

rvelarde@cabq.gov

Chris Hyer, Senior Planner
(505) 924-3927

chyer@cabq.gov



The North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area encompasses much of the North Valley's commercial areas, north of Granite Street, on the west side of the rail road tracks. The designation of this area as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area will allow a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan to be created. Once this Plan is adopted, public Metropolitan Redevelopment funds can be used to update aging infrastructure and provide for other publically funded projects in the proposed Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.

Introduction

In order to take advantage of the state Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, §§ 3-60A-1, et seq., NMSA 1978 ("MR Code"), the City of Albuquerque passed the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Ordinance, §§ 14-8-4-1, et seq., ROA 1994 ("MRA Ordinance"). The MR Code requires that a geographical area be declared "a blighted area" and there be a finding that the rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment or development, or a combination thereof, in the designated area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents before a municipality can exercise the powers conferred by the MR Code (MR Code, § 3-60A-7, NMSA 1978). The Albuquerque City Council has reserved to itself the power to declare an area blighted (MRA Ordinance, § 14-8-4-3 (A), ROA 1994). However, in creating the Albuquerque Development Commission ("ADC") as an advisory body and designating it the board of commissioners for the MRA, it is appropriate for the City Council to look to the ADC for recommendations regarding the existence, extent, and eligibility of appropriate areas of the City to be declared blighted (§ 14-8-6-2 (C), ROA 1994). This designation report is submitted pursuant to this function of the ADC.

This designation report on the proposed boundary for the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (the "MR Area" or "North Corridor MR Area") is based on analysis from existing conditions and public input. As shown on the map provided on the following page, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency ("MRA") would like to designate a new MR Area solely in North Valley areas that do not include single family homes. The boundaries of the area are roughly Granite Boulevard on the south, the rail road tracks on the east, typically one property deep on the west side of 4th Street, and the commercial properties that line Montañó Road. There are additional commercial properties included at the intersections of major roads with 4th Street and up to the City limits.

The North Corridor MR Area is a mixture of mature and redeveloped commercial, industrial, warehouse, office and multi-family properties. For example, uses presently located on old Route 66, 4th Street, include a handful of old motels, restaurants, tourist trade activities, automotive services and other retail shops. This is combined and interspersed with office, industrial and multi-family uses. This mix is indicative of the fact that this area was the main north-south corridor, or the "Mother Road," through Albuquerque as the City grew.

The MRA held the first public meeting on the proposed MR Area on November 4, 2015 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the University of New Mexico North Valley Center for Family and Community Health Services at 3401 4th Street NW. The meeting was well attended by residents and business owners of the study area. There were many questions asked about the proposed designation of a new MR Area and what it meant to have such a designation. There was good discussion about a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan (the "MR Plan") as well as the benefits of being in the MR Area and what current conditions could be addressed. The questions and comments from this meeting can be found in Appendix A.

A second public meeting was held January 13, 2016 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the North Valley Senior Center, 3825 4th Street NW. There were a lot of new faces and the meeting was again well attended by residents and business owners of the study area. The presentation was similar with the addition of responses to the questions that were asked at the previous public meeting. This helped all members of the public to have a better understanding of the intentions of the MR staff. However, the public is still mixed in their understanding of the different plans that provide guidance and regulations over this

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

area.

Since the relationship with the public is overall positive and they have suggested ideas for improvements to the Area, the recommendation of staff is to approve the proposed boundary of the North Corridor MR Area. After this area has been designated an MR Area, the MRA then can embark on drafting an MR Plan in order to promote real estate redevelopment, invest in infrastructure in the area, improve conditions for businesses and improve the overall health, safety and economic diversity within areas of the North Corridor MR Area.

*** "Blighted Area"**

Means an area within the area of operation other than a slum area that, because of the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, diversity of ownership, tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land, defective or unusual conditions of title, improper subdivision or lack of adequate housing facilities in the area or obsolete or impractical planning and platting or an area where a significant number of commercial or mercantile businesses have closed or significantly reduced their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to operating in the area, low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment, or any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth and economic health and well-being of a municipality or locale within a municipality or an area that retards the provisions of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social burden and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present conditions of use (Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, §3-60A-4 (l), NMSA 1978).

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

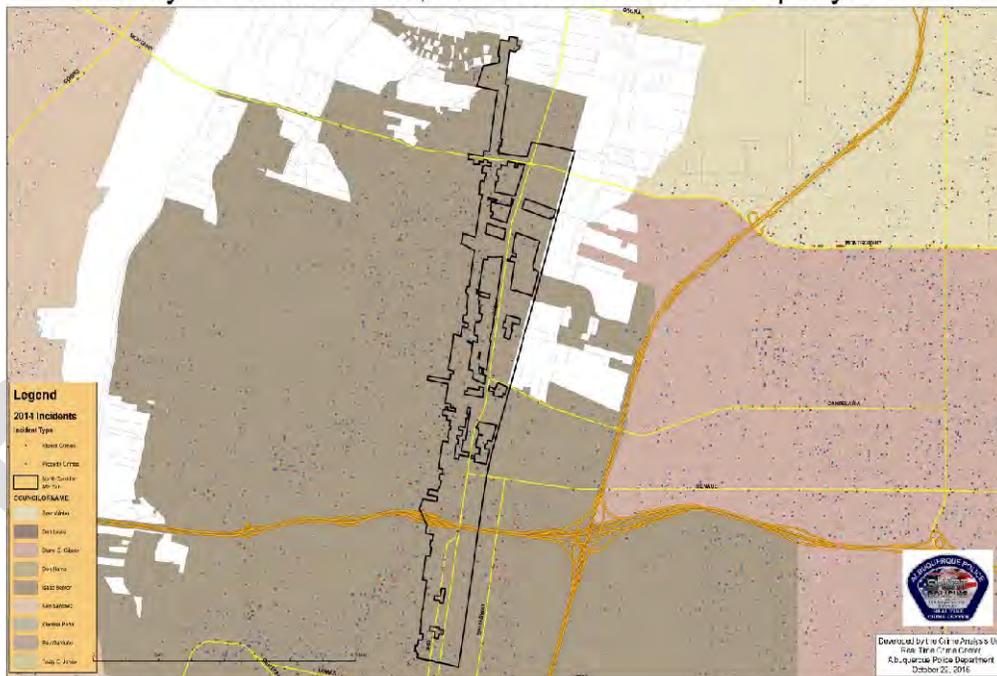
Causes for Blight in the North Corridor Area

In order for an area of the City to be designated as an MR Area, certain conditions of blight must be demonstrated as described in the state's MR Code (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (l), NMSA 1978). Through its analysis, the MRA has identified five categories of reasons that the proposed area should be considered an MR Area. The MRA acknowledges that other conditions that contribute to blight may exist.

1. Crime

Crime is not unique to this area alone as there is crime in all parts of the City. However, one way to describe an area as having some of the determinants of blight is to show that crime does exist. The map below shows occurrences of violent crime (represented by red dots) and property crime (represented by blue dots) in calendar year 2014. Both violent and property crime are prevalent in the area. The presence of crime ties back to the definition of blight in the MR Code because it creates an "unsafe condition" in the proposed MR Area (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (l), NMSA 1978).

January 1 - December 31, 2014: MRA Violent & Property Crimes



2. Household Income

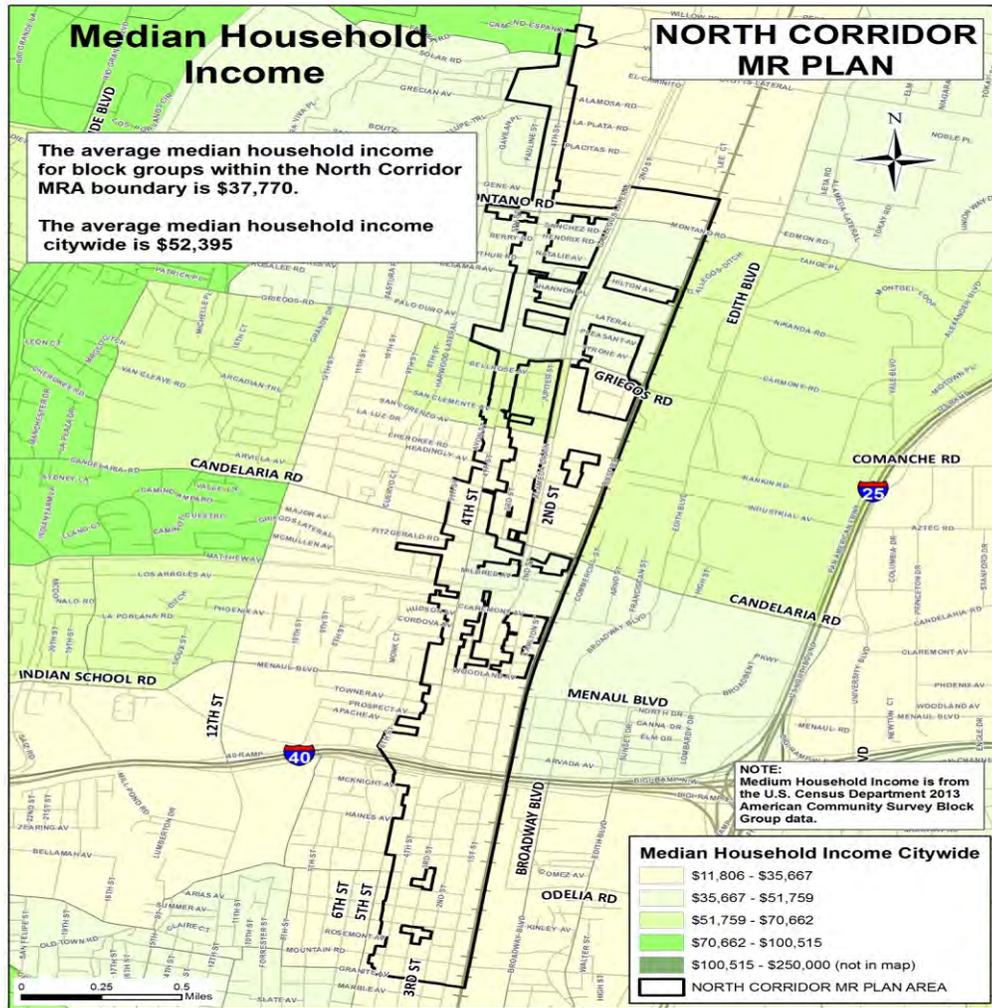
The MRA collected data on household income from the United States 2010 Decennial Census. The data used is from households that are located within the Census Tracts that are overlapping the proposed MR Area. The Census Tracts are

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

broken down into Block Groups, which provide more geographic detail. The average income levels by Block Group are shown on the map below.

Though the proposed MR Area does not include single family residential zoned properties, household income data from within and surrounding the MR Area compared to the City's area median income gives an indication of disinvestment for the general area. The area median household income for the entire City is \$52,395, and the North Corridor MR Area average median income is \$37,770.

The lower average household income has led to "low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment" in this area (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978).



[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

3. Poor/Aging Public Infrastructure

Public Infrastructure consists of any improvements or facilities that are readily used by the public and are not privately owned. This includes, but is not limited to, public streets, sidewalks, street lights, street furniture and utility poles.

As the corridors within the proposed MR Area were a central part of commerce in Albuquerque, extensive infrastructure was developed and used. Much of this infrastructure has started to deteriorate, has out-lived its usefulness or is out of date. The public infrastructure demonstrates the proposed MR Area is blighted as defined by the MR Code as it creates “unsafe conditions” and it shows “deterioration of site or other improvements” (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978). Additionally, out of date infrastructure can lead to “low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment.” (*id.*)

Sidewalks

As seen in the images below, the proposed MR Area contains extensive damaged sidewalks. Crumbling sidewalks have not been repaired. These sidewalks may have been damaged from heavy vehicles or shifting land underneath. The area also contains buckling sidewalks from tree roots growing under the pavement or shifting soils underneath.



Crumbling sidewalk from heavy vehicles



Buckling sidewalk and pavement



Crumbling sidewalk from shifting land underneath



Buckled sidewalk

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

Other sidewalk problems exist in this proposed MR Area. There are numerous occurrences of obstructions taking up part of the pathway created by the sidewalk. Thus, pedestrians must negotiate their path around these objects. In some instances, these areas are totally impassible for someone in a wheelchair.



Numerous obstructions in the sidewalk



Large power-pole in the sidewalk

This area also contains unfinished sidewalks. As seen in the images below, there are numerous places where sidewalks are partially finished and there is not a connection to other parts of sidewalks that have been finished.



Accessible ramp with no connecting sidewalk



Sidewalk abruptly ends

Power Poles

In addition to problems regarding the sidewalks, overhead power lines are plentiful in the proposed plan area. This area was developed when overhead power lines were the norm. However, these lines create clutter in the view shed and add to a feeling of blight.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



Various overhead power lines that are common throughout this area.

The North Valley is a transmission corridor for power – this could be placed underground. Visual clutter of the overhead power lines is worsened by a lack of street lights and pedestrian scale lighting along the sidewalks. This type of infrastructure could be added in addition to having modern street furniture along the side of the roadways.



Major overhead transmission lines with poles in the middle of sidewalks.

Medians

The vacant medians in the proposed MR Area contribute to blight in the area. The creation or infusion of landscaping in existing medians in the roadways could benefit the public along major roadways of the proposed MR Area. There are medians along portions of 2nd Street that are not landscaped. There is also a lack of medians on a large portion of 4th Street, which adds to a lack of safety for drivers facing oncoming lanes of traffic or for pedestrians wanting to cross the road.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



The lack of medians adds to a dangerous roadway for cars and pedestrians

Inconsistent Rights-Of-Way

Another problem with the roadways along this corridor is the lack of a consistent right-of-way. Many of the structures in the North Valley predate the City's adoption of the Zoning Code, and many of the existing buildings are not compliant to its regulations. These buildings are grandfathered in and are not in violation, but do create some problems with the alignment of the right-of-way that the roadways and sidewalks share.

Many buildings were built without taking into account front yard setbacks; there are buildings that are within a few feet of the roadway. This situation creates a unique problem when trying to place new sidewalks along the public right-of-way or adding street furniture to certain areas. The definition of blight within the MR Code describes this issue as "obsolete or impractical planning and platting" (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978).

4. Private Property

As with any other part of the City, the roadways are lined with privately owned properties. Many of these properties have improvements on them such as buildings, carports, signs, or developed parking areas. Interspersed among these developments are vacant lots that may or may not have had development at one time.

The proposed MR Area contains many buildings with commercial or industrial vacancy. Buildings that are vacant due to a business closing down with no new business replacing the closed business negatively impact both the financial health of the building owners and the economic health of the area. Because of their economic non-viability, private investment in these buildings decline, adding to the blight and constituting what the MR Code calls "the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures." (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978.)

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



Vacant Buildings in the Proposed North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area

The proposed MR Area also includes various vacant buildings, several of which are in disrepair needing investment and redevelopment. Buildings that have boards over the windows and doors compound the lack of economic health by sending signals to the market that the area is in decline and there is no longer vitality. This viewpoint can lead to other forms of blight as well.



Boarded up buildings and blank walls and signs send a negative signal to the market

Vacant land interspersed among development in a mature part of the City also signals poor economic health. This land creates a disconnect or a “hole of inactivity”. The lack of continuity could lead to visitors and patrons not continuing along a corridor due to a lack of interest on the street.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



Vacant lot along 2nd Street, south of I-40



Vacant lot on 4th Street, north of I-40



Vacant Lot along 2nd Street, north of I-40



Vacant lot along 4th Street, north of I-40



Empty lot not adding interest to the street



Empty lot adjacent to another empty lot



Empty lot behind fence



Empty lot next to boarded building

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

The proposed North Corridor MR Area includes some properties that may have an operating business on them, but send a negative signal to the market because of their interface with the street. Blank walls, vinyl or chain link fencing and razor (or barbed) wire often create an uneasy, uninviting feeling that does not encourage economic activity.



Business with blank wall



Business with chain link fencing



Business with blank, vinyl fencing



Business with chain link and vinyl fencing



Chain link fence topped with razor wire



Blank wall topped with razor wire

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

Along with how private property interfaces the street, the condition of buildings is an important factor that influences the vitality of an area. Though many buildings in the proposed MR Area are attractive, other buildings could use the assistance of the MRA to improve facades. Further, some buildings in the proposed MR Area have attractive facades but are not as well maintained as would be ideal.

The MR Code defines a blighted area as one that has “the presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures,” or “where a significant number of commercial or mercantile businesses have closed or significantly reduced their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to operating in the area” (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978).



Buildings that may consider utilizing the benefits of a façade improvement program.



Building façade could be improved

Building façade needs to be cleaned

The proposed MR Area also includes development with large parking areas between the street and the buildings. This type of development creates a less pedestrian-friendly environment compared to buildings being placed up front and interacting with the street with the parking area behind the building.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



Examples of buildings with large parking areas between them and the public right-of-way

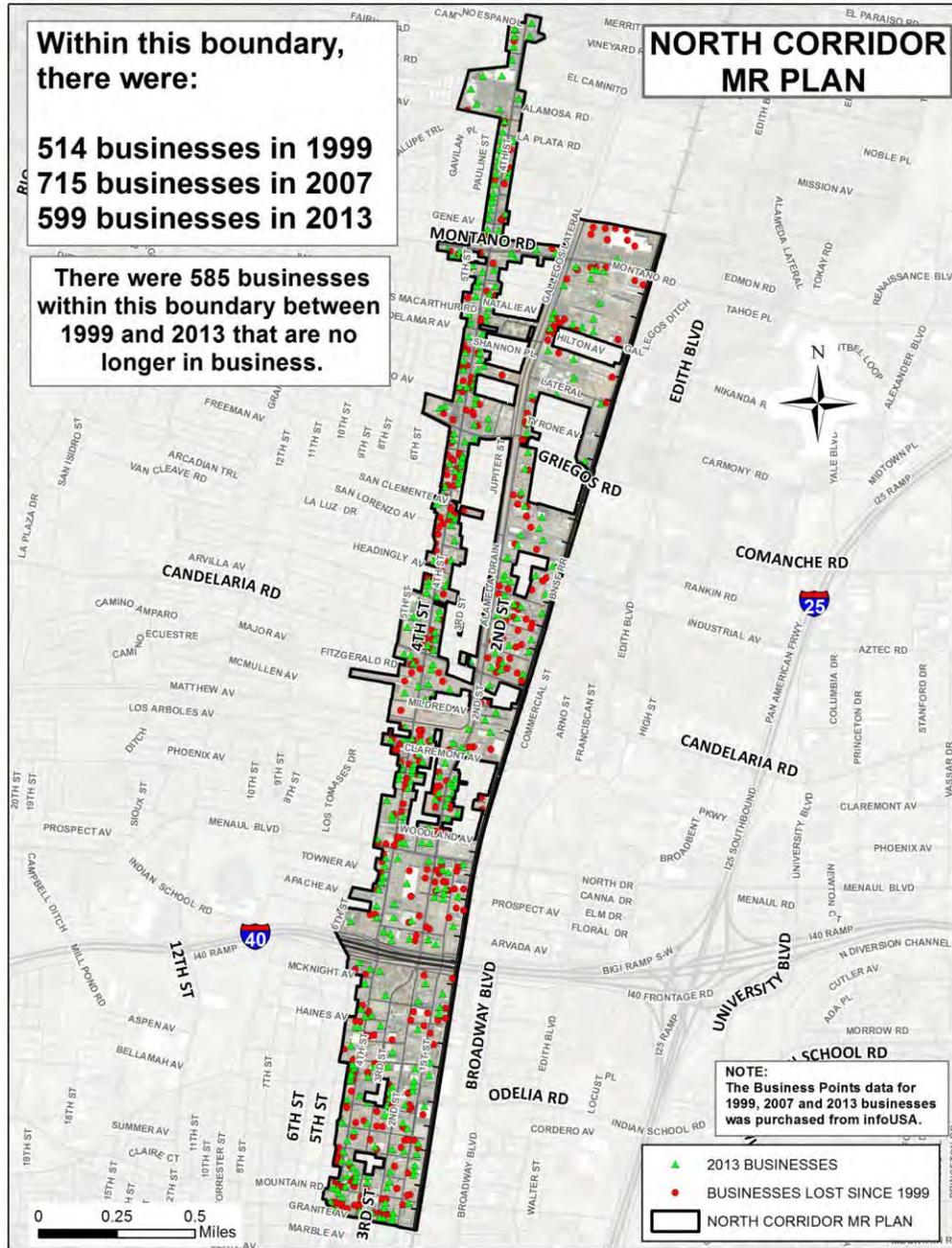
5. Business Turnover

Utilizing business data from infoUSA regarding how many businesses were open during a given year, the MRA has found the proposed North Corridor MR Area is a difficult area to own a business. The definition of a blighted area in the MR Code not only mentions that businesses in the area “have closed or significantly reduced their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to operating in the area”, but further the area displays “low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment” (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978).

The MRA manipulated data from years 1999, 2007 and 2013. If a business was operating in 1999 but was no longer operating in 2007, then it was deemed closed. Once this comparison was made between 1999 and 2007, the resultant data was compared to 2013. The MRA did not consider a business closed if a new business was placed at the same address with a similar name (e.g. – Bob’s Burgers became Bob’s Tasty Burgers).

The proposed MR Area had 514 open businesses in 1999, 715 open businesses in 2007 and 599 open businesses in 2013. However, over this time period, 585 businesses that were at one time open are no longer operating. Please see the following page for a map that shows where businesses have closed and those that remain open.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]



[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

The data points do not reveal any clustered area of (in)activity, but overall new businesses seem to locate where improvements to the general area were made. Areas along 4th Street that have a median have equal number or slightly more new businesses operating in the area. This is further supported by making physical observations that newer businesses tend to be attracted to improved areas, or the businesses themselves have realized better patronage by customers when improvements have been made to their properties.

Other Considerations

There are many transient services located in the corridor. These services are typically located where the services are most needed. As the area shows signs of economic decline and blight, many businesses are vacated allowing transient activity to increase in these areas. Reinvestment in this area will help the proposed MR Area to stabilize and become healthy and will thus decrease any perceived negative impacts from transient activity. This is an ongoing problem in the City and the designation of the proposed MR Area will not directly resolve this issue, but will help by reducing places of inactivity and catalyzing additional activity in the area.

Another key benefit from having this proposed area designated as an MR Area is to bring attention to the needs of the antiquated platting, especially along 4th Street. The Department of Municipal Development (“DMD”) in the City of Albuquerque started a 4th Street Corridor project focused on improving the public infrastructure that is needed to facilitate pedestrian-oriented redevelopment. This project has slowed down and having the area designated as an MR Area will allow the MRA to work with DMD to realize their intent by finding additional funding for the project.

One other consideration is that 2nd and 4th Streets are used by commuters that do not frequent the businesses in the area. These commuters simply traverse the area and add to the heavy rush-hour traffic, but do not stop in the corridor. Many of these commuters are west side residents that are attracted to the newer stores and businesses west of the river, closer to their communities. The designation of the proposed MR Area could allow traffic analyses to occur and may suggest ways of slowing the traffic along these corridors to allow people to frequent businesses in the area.

Neighborhood Input

Attached to this designation report are Appendices A and B, which are a listing of questions and concerns, expressed by citizens that own properties within the area. There are many items in their questions that should be addressed in an MR Plan.

[El Camino Real Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

Findings, Determinations, and Conclusion

The MRA concludes that the existing conditions within the proposed North Corridor MR Area meet the definition of “blight” as required for the designation by the MR Code (§ 3-60A-8). The condition of the proposed MR Area “substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth and economic health and well-being of a municipality or locale within a municipality ... or constitutes an economic or social burden and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present conditions of use” (MR Code, §3-60A-4 (I), NMSA 1978).

MRA staff recommends the Albuquerque Development Commission recommend City Council approval of an MR Area designation for the proposed North Corridor MR Area based on the five points that were discussed above. These points include:

- Crime. The proposed MR Area includes a significant amount of property and violent crime, which creates an unsafe environment.
- Household Income Levels. The median income in this area is well below the City average and has led to low levels of commercial activity.
- Poor/Aging Public Infrastructure. The proposed MR Area includes poor and/or aging public infrastructure that is unsafe and deteriorating. Further, inconsistent right-of-way points to obsolete or impractical planning and platting.
- Private Property. The area includes many buildings that are vacant, unmaintained or deteriorating. Additionally, many of the building facades in the area are not conducive to vitality. Finally, vacant parcels create holes of inactivity.
- Business Turnover. The proposed MR Area has experienced a decline in business activity and high business turnover, which have led to low levels of commercial activity.

It is determined that the designation of this area as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is needed. If the MR Area is approved by City Council, the MRA will utilize its powers made available through the MR Code and work with the community to create an MR Plan to encourage revitalization and private investment within the North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.

Appendix A

Comments and Questions at a Public Meeting on the Proposed North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area on November 4, 2015

- Will this make our taxes go up?
- Can you show us examples of projects from other neighborhoods?
- What is the timeline of this project?
- Will this impact the Sector Development Plan for 4th Street?
- The City is directing services for the homeless along the railroad corridor from Lomas to Candelaria. Places like the Hi-Lo Market are very burdened with shoplifters now. These policies are impacting our neighborhoods.
- Title loan companies are bottom-feeders – they’re causing lots of troubles here.
- What response do you want from us prior to going to the ADC?
- The City already has lots of planning processes going on in this area – do you plan to integrate with those other plans?
- Where is AMAFCA on this as they own 2nd Street? (reference was probably to the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District due to the ditch along 2nd Street).
- We’re a manufacturing and construction business – how do we fit into this plan?
- What if a property owner doesn’t want to participate, and just wants to leave their property as-is?
- What about businesses that shouldn’t be here anymore, like the truck stop?
- Will you be starting at one end and moving north or south?
- Can we find out how successful other MR areas have been?
- Will the City pay for the fire hydrants that they just made me pay for on my property?
- Until you do something about St. Martens (shelter), nothing will change.
- Is there a sunset date for these plans?
- What are the resources that you’ll be bringing to the area?
- Will developers come offer to buy my property?
- By offering property and money to developers (for City-owned properties), I’m concerned that development won’t come out like we expect.
- How many other MRAs are active right now? Are any finished?
- Will road diets be possible as part of this project?
- We have fundamental infrastructure problems with water and sewer – there are still septic systems in use here.
- There is a lot of skepticism in this area about anything the City says. St. Martens was supposed to be a church, but it turned into a shelter. Love’s Gas Station was supposed to be a “country store.”

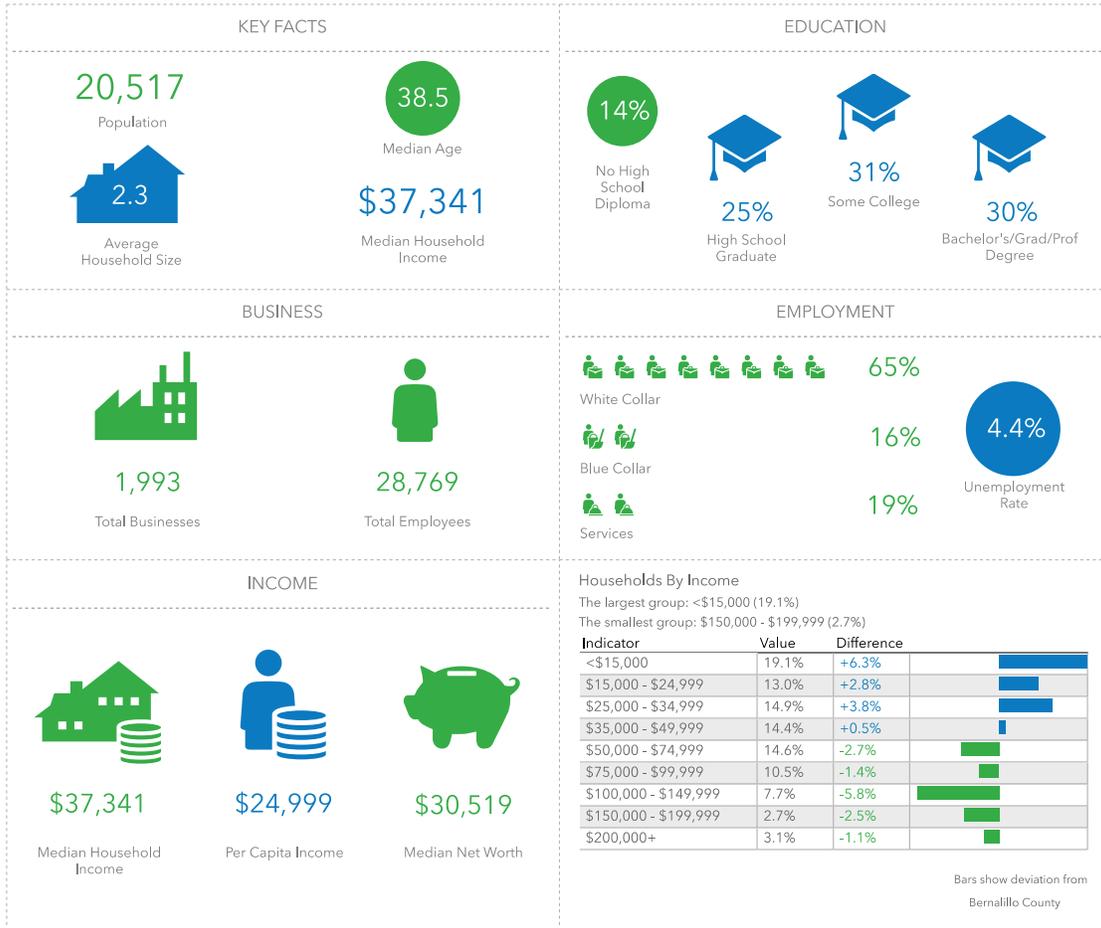
[North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation]

Appendix B

Comments and Questions at a Public Meeting on the Proposed North Corridor Metropolitan Redevelopment Area on January 13, 2016

- People live in the Valley because of vacant land; the City wants to fill it up.
- MR Area boundary should go to Edith.
- What is meant by public-private partnership?
- What is a road diet?
- 4th Street Sector Development Plan disallows certain properties, but not in whole plan area.
- Can City use Eminent Domain?
- Will there be an overlay zone on 2nd Street?
- What is diversity of ownership?
- Are there other MR Areas this size?
- How was the northern boundary determined?
- Would it make sense for the MR Area boundary to go to Solar and include Smith's or go to County on north?
- Can we tie the Plan Area to the County/Los Ranchos?
- Designation does not imply improvements to be made.
- Are any banks on board?
- Are there deadlines to improvements to be made?
- Would private property owners be treated like developers?
- How do the MR Plan and Parsons-Brinkerhoff street improvements combine?
- 4th Street Plan and redevelopment of private property - when can this happen?
- How are residences brought in?
- Are HUD funds specific to MR Areas?
- Is state funding targeted to MR Areas?
- With the MRA designation, does PNM underground utilities?
- Is there a plan for a community garden?

Appendix C – Demographic Data



COMMUTE PROFILE

North Corridor MRA with 0.5 mile Buffer

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis of the ACS from Esri's data team at www.esri.com/software/american-community-survey

WORKERS



9,074

ACS Workers Age 16+



72.9%

Drove Alone to Work

TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



4.2%

Took Public Transportation



9.3%

Carpooled



3.8%

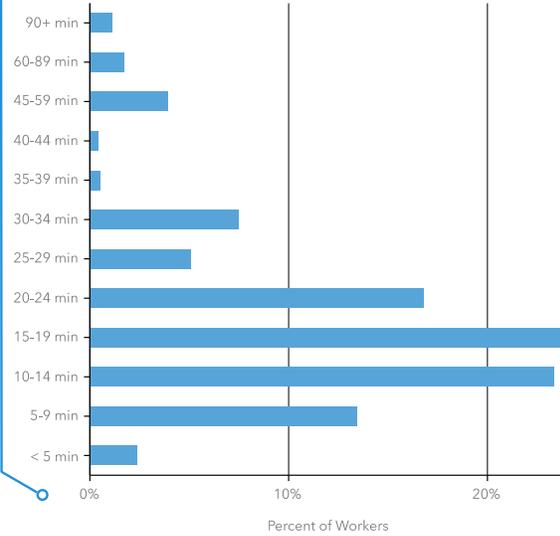
Walked to Work

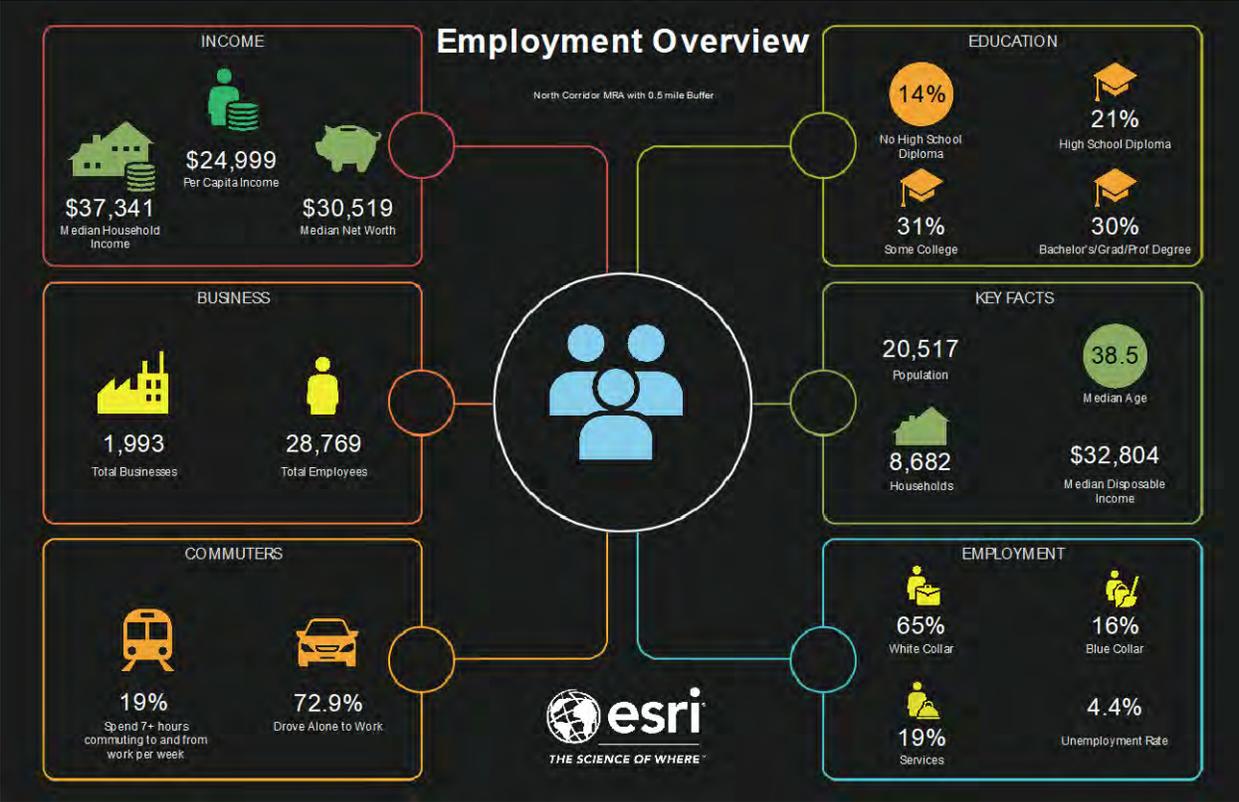


2.9%

Bike to Work

TRAVEL TIME TO WORK





DRAFT

Appendix D – Crime Data



Albuquerque Police Department

CAD Details Report

CAD calls July 1, 2018 – June 27, 2019



FINAL CALL DESC. (Top 20)

SUSP PERS/VEHS (Records: 1,858)
DISTURBANCE (Records: 1,656)
TRNG. STUDENT (Records: 995)
TRAFFIC STOP (Records: 835)
CONTACT (Records: 762)
TRAFF ACC NO INJ (Records: 549)
CHIEF'S OVERTIME (Records: 422)
ONSITE SUSPICIOUS (Records: 312)
THEFT/FRAUD/EMBE (Records: 309)
DIRECT TRAFFIC (Records: 272)
CRIME SCENE INV (Records: 253)
TRAFF ACC INJURI (Records: 202)
TRNG. INSTRUCTOR (Records: 180)
ONSITE TRAFFIC (Records: 171)
P-WATCH (Records: 169)

CRIMEVIEW

PAGE 1 OF 2
PRINT DATE: 06/28/2019
DATE RANGE: 7/1/2018 - 6/27/2019

CAD calls July 1, 2018 - June 27, 2019

FINAL CALL DESC (Top 20)

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY (Records: 161)

AGGR ASSAULT/BAT (Records: 160)

FAMILY DISPUTE (Records: 144)

WANTED PERSON (Records: 130)

TAC PLAN (Records: 117)

Others (Records: 1,843)

TOTAL RECORDS: 11,500

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CRIMEVIEW

PAGE 2 OF 2
PRINT DATE: 06/28/2019
DATE RANGE: 7/1/2018 - 6/27/2019



Albuquerque Police Department

Incident Details Report

North 4th Crimes July 1, 2018 - June 27, 2019



CRIME TYPE (INC) (Top 20)

ACCIDENT (Cases: 630 // Records: 630)

OTHER (Cases: 478 // Records: 478)

WARRANT (Cases: 112 // Records: 112)

VANDALISM (Cases: 110 // Records: 110)

FAMILY OFFENSE (Cases: 95 // Records: 95)

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT (Cases: 90 // Records: 90)

LARCENY - ALL OTHER (Cases: 82 // Records: 82)

SIMPLE ASSAULT (Cases: 64 // Records: 64)

BURGLARY - COMMERCIAL (Cases: 60 // Records: 60)

BURGLARY - VEHICLE (Cases: 54 // Records: 54)

TRESPASSING (Cases: 54 // Records: 54)

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT (Cases: 48 // Records: 48)

LARCENY - SHOPLIFTING (Cases: 45 // Records: 45)

DISORDERLY CONDUCT (Cases: 42 // Records: 42)

DUI (Cases: 37 // Records: 37)

CRIMEVIEW

PAGE 1 OF 2
PRINT DATE: 06/28/2019
DATE RANGE: 7/1/2018 - 6/27/2019

North 4th Crimes July 1, 2018 - June 27, 2019

CRIME TYPE (INC) (Top 20)

FRAUD (Cases: 31 // Records: 31)

SUSPICIOUS (Cases: 26 // Records: 26)

DRUG VIOLATION (Cases: 24 // Records: 24)

LARCENY - FROM BUILDING (Cases: 19 // Records: 19)

LARCENY - AUTO PARTS (Cases: 18 // Records: 18)

Others (Cases: 128 // Records: 128)

TOTAL CASES: 2,247

TOTAL RECORDS: 2,247

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CRIMEVIEW

PAGE 2 OF 2
PRINT DATE: 06/28/2019
DATE RANGE: 7/1/2018 - 6/27/2019

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