VISUALIZING DENSITY:
ALBUQUERQUE'S HOUSING TYPES & DENSITIES

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE PLANNING DEPARTMENT, MAY 2015

INTRODUCTION

As Albuquerque continues to grow, the City must try to balance the demand for new and rehabilitated housing with the need for managed growth on its urban fringe. One practical way to address the demand for new housing, while controlling the rate of the City's geographic expansion, is to encourage higher residential in areas already served by infrastructure, community facilities and schools, and goods and services. This strategy is sometimes referred to as infill development.

Residential density refers to the amount of dwelling units on a parcel of land. Adding residential density in appropriate locations can generate community, economic, and fiscal benefits while generally creating great places to live.

This document, drafted in 2015, chronicles the variety of Albuquerque's housing stock, placing particular focus on residential densities and housing types that meet a range of housing preferences.

The map on page 7 identifies the location of the housing units illustrated in this report.

This document illustrates a range of housing types with different densities in Albuquerque.

Housing Type	Pages
SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING	8-9
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BENEFITS OF DENSITY

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Higher densities reduce land consumption and protect valuable and/or sensitive areas.

REDUCED INFRASTRUCTURE COST

Increased housing density in areas already served by infrastructure lowers development costs, which promotes affordability for residents.

REDUCED RESOURCES & POLLUTION

Areas with higher residential densities use less energy and water resources, while generating less pollution than suburban areas.

EXPANDED TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

Compact development increases the efficiency of walking, bicycling, and public transportation, resulting in positive economic and environmental impacts.

HOUSING CHOICE & AFFORDABILITY

Denser development patterns offer a greater range of housing options, which in turn accommodates a broader range of lifestyles choices and household types.

ACCESS TO DIVERSE SERVICES/AMENITIES

Density brings more households closer to services and amenities, which strengthens local economies and improves quality of life.

IMPROVED SAFETY

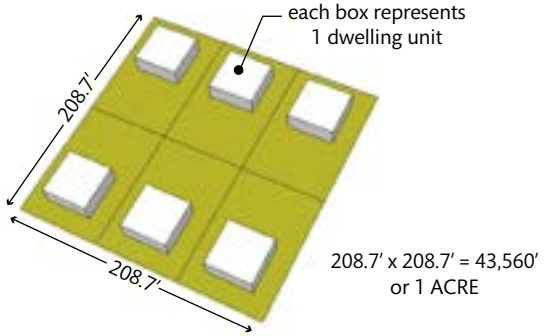
Density has the potential to increase social interaction and visibility, which can deter crime.

HOUSING DENSITY

Housing density or residential density refers to the number of dwelling units per unit of land. Residential densities are calculated using this formula:

$$\text{GROSS DENSITY} = \frac{\text{TOTAL RESIDENTIAL UNITS}}{\text{TOTAL DEVELOPMENT LAND AREA}}$$

$$\frac{6}{1} \text{ -OR- } 6 \text{ DU/A}$$



Appropriate residential densities vary from city to city. A sensible middle ground allows more density without developing buildings that are so big that they sacrifice the strong sense of community that makes our city thrive.

Even within a city, density will not look the same in every neighborhood. For example, density that is appropriate for downtown is not appropriate everywhere in the city. The Integrated Development Ordinance sets out building height limits and directs increased density to Centers and Corridors, where more urban development is appropriate.

It is also important to remember that increases in density can be achieved through smaller measures, such as by adding an extra floor to an apartment building, reducing lots sizes, allowing accessory dwelling units, or converting a single-family home to a duplex. This approach is sometimes called gentle infill, which is often appropriate in established neighborhoods.

ACCORDING TO THE MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, THE ALBUQUERQUE METROPOLITAN REGION WILL EXPERIENCE SIGNIFICANT GROWTH BY 2040, INCREASING TO 1.1 MILLION RESIDENTS[1]

Evolving demographics, generational preferences, and population growth are causing a pronounced shift in housing demand. Albuquerque's patterns of housing development and new housing stock will need to adapt in order to keep up with these evolving preferences.

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

More than **80%** of growth will be a **New Demographic Majority**.[2]

About **40%** of Albuquerque's growth will be **65+ in age.**[3]

More than **80%** of household growth will be **without children.**[4]

More than **40%** of household growth will be single persons.[5]

21% of Baby Boomers expect to have adult children living at home.[6]

19% of singles expect to have their parents or grandparents in residence.[7]

BABY BOOMER PREFERENCES

The baby boomer generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, currently totals 77 million (25%) of the total U.S. population. 10,000 boomers will turn 65 every day from 2011 through 2029. As this generation ages, their housing demands and choices are changing.[8]

- More interest in downsizing, opting towards condos and smaller, lower maintenance homes in order to have more time to pursue their own interests
- More interest in renting over buying
- An increased preference for amenities particularly, walkable neighborhoods close to shopping, grocery and drug stores and to bus and bike systems [9]

MILLENNIAL PREFERENCES

Millennials, those born between 1981 and 1999, are currently the largest generation within the United States, totaling 85 million (28%) of the total U.S. population. The choices made by Millennials will therefore have a profound impact on the U.S. housing market for decades to come.[10]

- More likely to live at home with their parents
- An increased preference in renting over buying
- An increased preference for living in urban areas
- A willingness to live in smaller units
- A preference for neighborhoods that are close to a mix of shops, restaurants and offices
- A preference for access to high quality, public transportation systems [11]

GENERATIONAL PREFERENCES OF BABY BOOMERS (AGES 51-70) AND MILLENNIALS (AGES 18-34) ARE DRIVING CHANGES IN HOUSING DEMAND

These trends demonstrate an extensive shift in housing demand away from large, single-family suburban homes toward smaller units located close to amenities. In 2014, the Pew Research Center found that nearly half of Americans choose walkable, urban neighborhoods over sprawling suburban ones. In light of these changes, Albuquerque is facing a major problem, since our current housing stock doesn't support such preferences.

The city has a huge unmet demand of housing stock for residents that seek urban, walkable lifestyles. In order to meet the projected demands, housing types that more people want will need to be constructed or converted, including apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and single-family homes on small lots (typically less than 1/6 acre, or 7,260 square feet.[12]

NEARLY HALF OF AMERICANS PREFER NEIGHBORHOODS THAT ARE CLOSE TO SHOPS, HAVE A MIX OF INCOMES, AND HAVE ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. [13]

1. Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Connections 2040
2. Albuquerque Trends & Opportunities to 2040 by Arthur C. Nelson
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. American in 2013 ULI Survey
7. Ibid
8. Trends in the Housing Market: An Update on Changing Demographics and Consumer Preferences
9. U.S. Housing Trends: Generational Changes and the Outlook to 2050
10. Trends in the Housing Market: An Update on Changing Demographics and Consumer Preferences
11. U.S. Housing Trends: Generational Changes and the Outlook to 2050
12. Albuquerque Trends & Opportunities to 2040 by Arthur C. Nelson
13. Political Polarization in the American Public (2014) by the Pew Reasearch Center

HOUSING TYPES

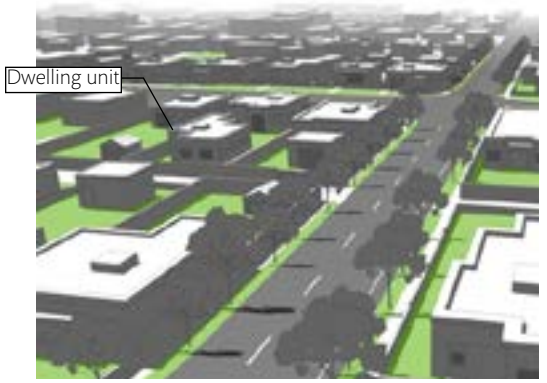
Housing can be built in a variety of configurations. At the most basic level, housing types can be divided either into detached single-family houses or attached dwellings for multiple households. The following illustrations show typical densities for each housing type.

SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSE

A residential building used for occupancy by 1 household that is not attached to any other dwelling unit. Single-family development on lots just over 7,000 square feet each results in about 6 dwelling units per acre. Smaller lots will result in higher density. Larger lots will be lower density.

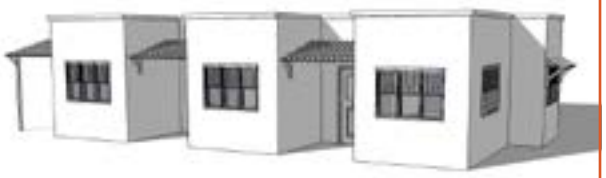
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

A dwelling unit that is accessory to a primary single-family house, duplex, or non-residential use. Accessory dwelling units may be attached to the primary dwelling, contained within the primary dwelling, or built as a detached building.



DUPLEX

A residential building containing 2 dwelling units, each of which is designed for or occupied by 1 family only, with kitchens for each. Each unit in a duplex is completely separated from the other by an unpierced wall dividing the 2 units side-to-side or back-to-front or by an unpierced ceiling and floor extending from exterior wall to exterior wall (over-under), except for a stairwell exterior to 1 of the dwelling units.



TOWNHOUSE

A building with 3 or more dwelling units divided from each other by vertical common walls, each having a separate entrance leading directly to the outdoors at ground level. Townhouses are often platted so that each unit is on its own lot.

MULTI-FAMILY

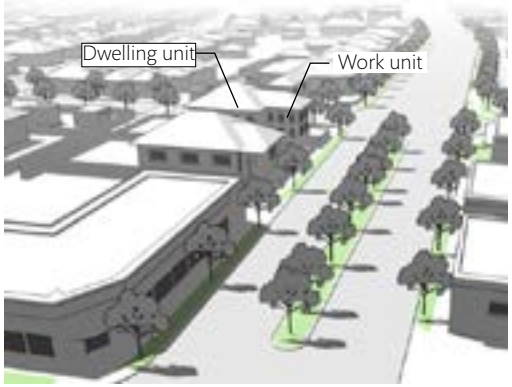
A building with 3 or more dwelling units that are accessed from a shared entrance, not separate entrances at ground level. Within mixed-use development, a building containing 2 or more dwelling units is considered multi-family.

CHANGING PREFERENCES

While typically not considered housing types, live-work & mixed-use developments are illustrated here because they meet the urban, walkable type of developments preferred by many people.

LIVE-WORK UNITS

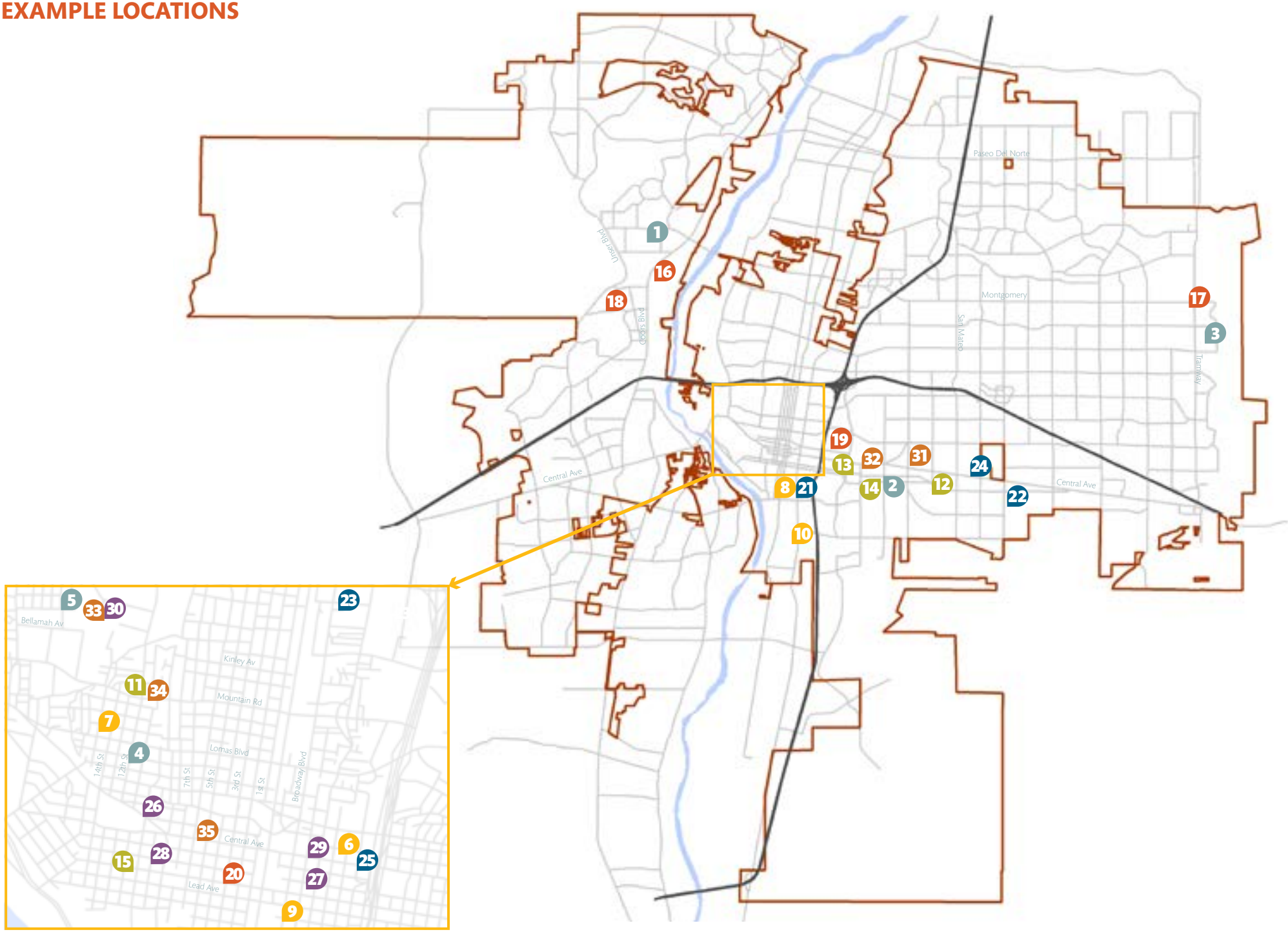
A residential dwelling unit that includes a dedicated work space accessible from the living area, reserved for and regularly used by one or more residents of the dwelling unit.



MIXED-USE

Properties with residential development and non-residential development on a single lot. Mixed-use development can take place in the same building (i.e. vertical mixed-use) or separate buildings on the same lot (i.e. horizontal mixed-use).

EXAMPLE LOCATIONS

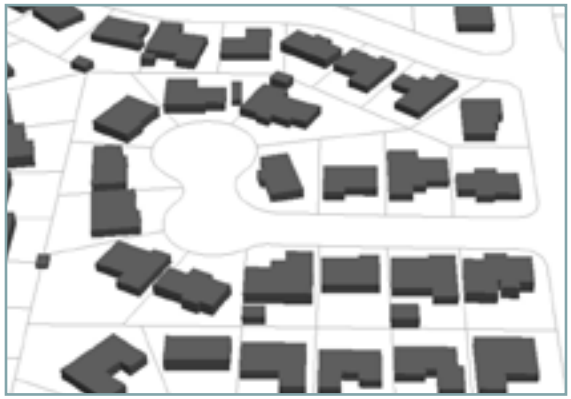


SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING

A residential building used for occupancy by 1 household that is not attached to any other dwelling unit through shared side or rear walls, floors or ceilings, or corner points.

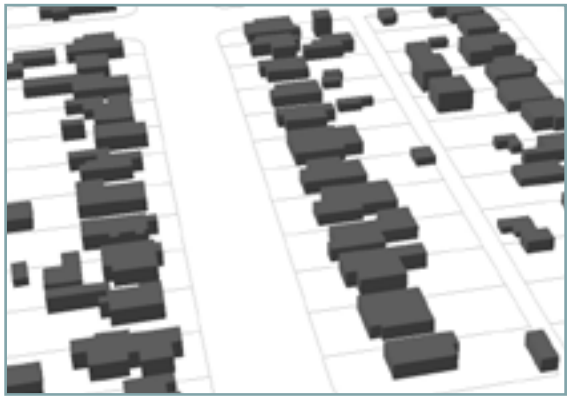
TAYLOR RANCH

Site Area: 6 Acres
Number of Units: 23
Gross Density: 4 DU/Acre
Built: 1970s and 1980s



UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

Site Area: 8 Acres
Number of Units: 35
Gross Density: 4 DU/Acre
Built: 1950s

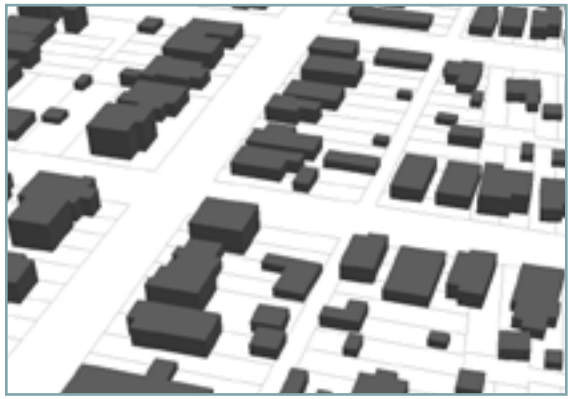


EMBUDO CANYON

Site Area: 9 Acres
Number of Units: 40
Gross Density: 4 DU/Acre
Built: 1980s and 1990s

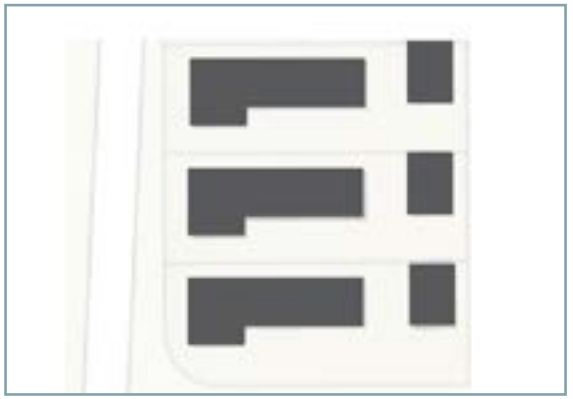
DOWNTOWN NEIGHBOR-HOODS

Site Area: 8 Acres
Number of Units: 36
Gross Density: 5 DU/Acre
Built: 1920s



SAWMILL COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Site Area: 0.32 Acres
Number of Units: 3
Gross Density: 9 DU/Acre
Built: 2000s



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

A dwelling unit that is accessory to a primary single-family or two-family detached dwelling or non-residential use. Accessory dwelling units may be attached to the primary dwelling, contained within the primary dwelling, or built as a detached building.

HUNING HIGHLANDS

Site Area: 0.32 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 6 DU/Acre
Built: 1880s to 1920s

PLAZA VIEJA

Site Area: 0.17 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 12 DU/Acre
Built: Pre-1880s

SOUTH BROADWAY

Site Area: 0.11 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 18 DU/Acre
Built: 1880s to 1920s

HUNING HIGHLANDS

Site Area: 0.11 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 18 DU/Acre
Built: 1880s to 1920s

HUNING HIGHLANDS

Site Area: 0.59 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 34 DU/Acre
Built: 1880s to 1920s

DUPLEX

A residential building containing 2 dwelling units, each of which is designed for or occupied by 1 family only, with kitchens for each. Each unit in a duplex is completely separated from the other by an unpierced wall dividing the 2 units side-to-side or back-to-front or by an unpierced ceiling and floor extending from exterior wall to exterior wall (over-under), except for a stairwell exterior to 1 of the dwelling units.

WELLS PARK

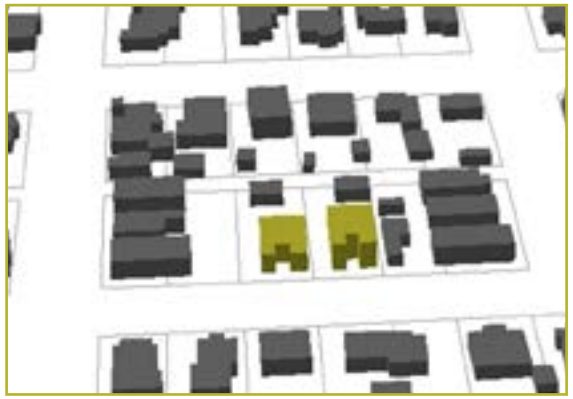
Site Area: 0.33 Acres
Number of Units: 5
Gross Density: 15 DU/Acre
Built: 2000

SOUTHEAST HEIGHTS

Site Area: 0.26 Acres
Number of Units: 2
Gross Density: 8 DU/Acre
Built: 2009

SILVER HILL

Site Area: 0.30 Acres
Number of Units: 4
Gross Density: 13 DU/Acre
Built: 1927

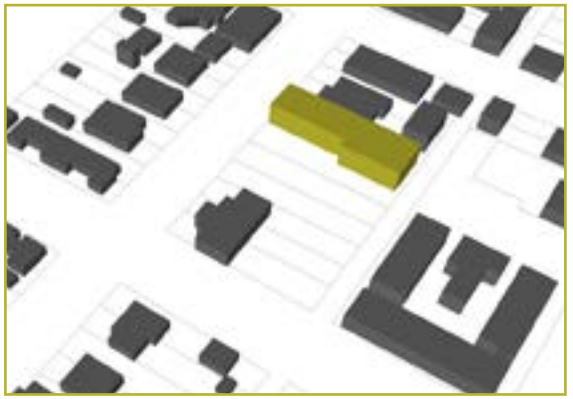


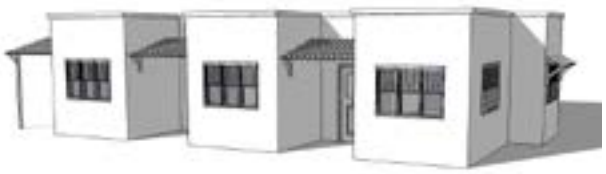
UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

Site Area: 0.16 Acres
Number of Units: 3
Gross Density: 18 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

SYCAMORE

Site Area: 0.32 Acres
Number of Units: 5
Gross Density: 16 DU/Acre
Built: 2014



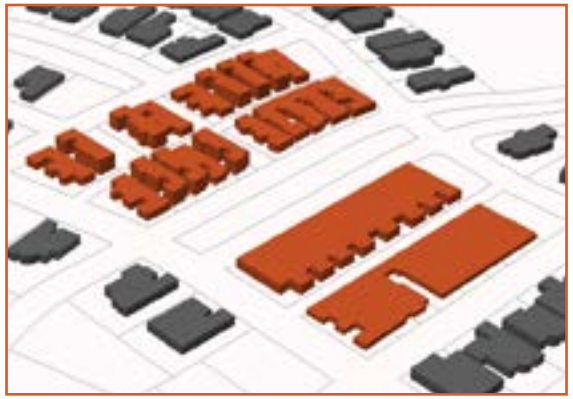


TOWNHOUSE

A building with 3 or more dwelling units divided from each other by vertical common walls, each having a separate entrance leading directly to the outdoors at ground level. Townhouses are often platted so that each unit is on its own lot.

ANDALUCIA TOWNHOUSES

Site Area: 8 Acres
Number of Units: 41
Gross Density: 5 DU/Acre
Built: 2014



GLENWOOD LOFTS

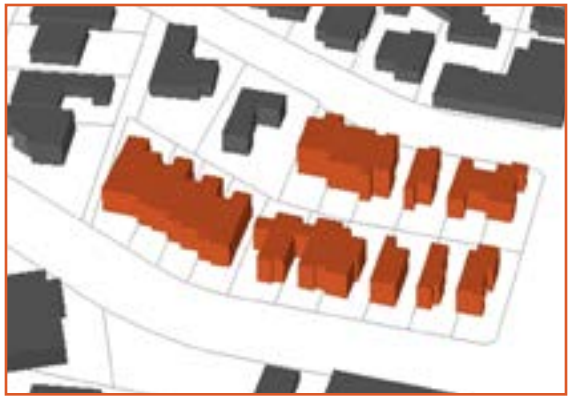
Site Area: 2.05 Acres
Number of Units: 21
Gross Density: 10 DU/Acre
Built: 2006

SAN BLAS PLACE TOWNHOUSES

Site Area: 4.04 Acres
Number of Units: 43
Gross Density: 10 DU/Acre
Built: 1985

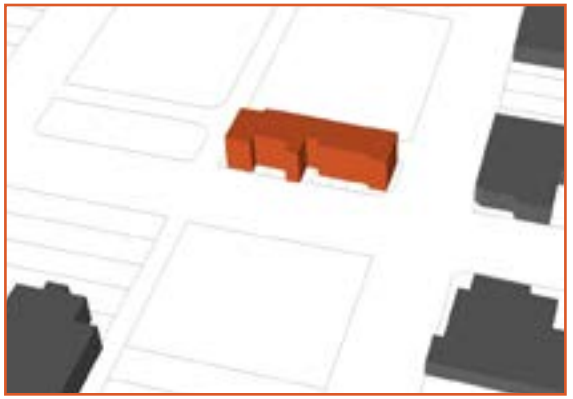
MARTIN LUTHER KING TOWNHOUSES

Site Area: 1.13 Acres
Number of Units: 16
Gross Density: 14 DU/Acre
Built: 2002



ELEMENTS TOWNHOUSES

Site Area: 0.14 acres
Number of Units: 7
Gross Density: 50 DU/Acre
Built: 2013



MULTI-FAMILY

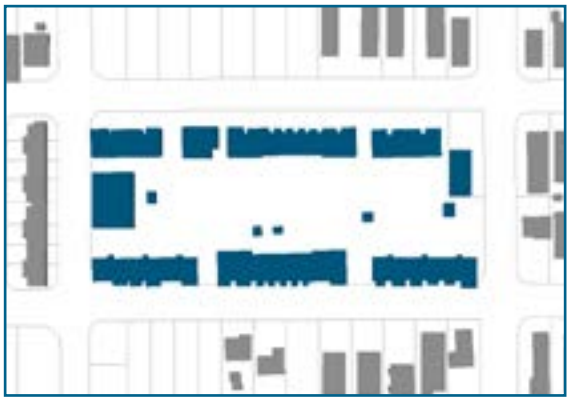
A building with 3 or more dwelling units that are accessed from a shared entrance, not separate entrances at ground level. Within mixed-use development, a building containing 2 or more dwelling units is considered multi-family.

ANDALUCIA VILLAS

Site Area: 15.86 Acres
Number of Units: 240
Gross Density: 15 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

PLAZA FELIZ

Site Area: 3.6 Acres
Number of Units: 66
Gross Density: 18 DU/Acre
Built: 2014



PLAZA CIUDANA

Site Area: 3.0 Acres
Number of Units: 74
Gross Density: 25 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

SUNDOWNER

Site Area: 2.7 Acres
Number of Units: 71
Gross Density: 30 DU/Acre
Built: Renovated 2014

SILVER MOON LODGE

Site Area: 1.38 Acres
Number of Units: 151
Gross Density: 110 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

LIVE - WORK UNITS

A residential dwelling unit that includes a dedicated work space accessible from the living area, reserved for and regularly used by one or more residents of the dwelling unit.

NEAR NORTH VALLEY

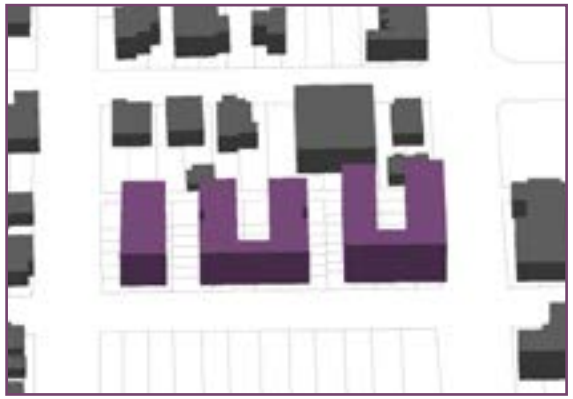
Site Area: 0.24 Acres
Number of Units: 3
Gross Density: 12 DU/Acre
Built: 1998

BELVERDE

Site Area: 1.77 Acres
Number of Units: 54
Gross Density: 30 DU/Acre
Built: 2008

SILVER LOFTS

Site Area: 0.97 Acres
Number of Units: 47
Gross Density: 49 DU/Acre
Built: 2005



HUNING HIGHLAND

Site Area: 0.31 Acres
Number of Units: 18
Gross Density: 59 DU/Acre
Built: 2004

ARTISAN VILLAGE

Site Area: 1.38 Acres
Number of Units: 151
Gross Density: 109 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

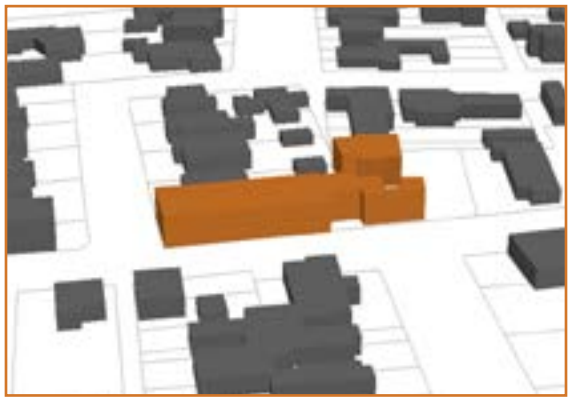
MIXED-USE

Properties with residential development and non-residential development on a single lot. Mixed-use development can take place in the same building (i.e. vertical mixed-use) or separate buildings on the same lot (i.e. horizontal mixed-use).

Photo source: bizjournals.com

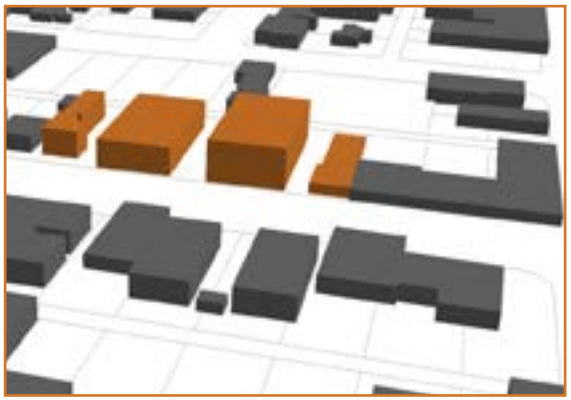
THE PLACE IN NOB HILL

Site Area: 0.85 Acres
Number of Units: 26
Gross Density: 31 DU/Acre
Built: 2005



BRICKLIGHT

Site Area: 0.79 Acres
Number of Units: 46
Gross Density: 58 DU/Acre
Built: 2003

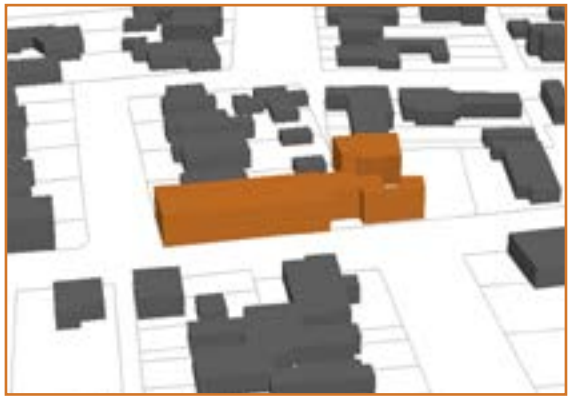


THE ARTISAN IN SAWMILL

Site Area: 0.31 Acres
Number of Units: 18
Gross Density: 59 DU/Acre
Built: 2004

URBAN MOUNTAIN

Site Area: 0.33 Acres
Number of Units: 45
Gross Density: 135 DU/Acre
Built: 2011



ANASAZI

Site Area: 0.24 Acres
Number of Units: 45
Gross Density: 187 DU/Acre
Built: 2014

CONCLUSION

The pictures throughout this document show the various housing types and residentials densities located throughout Albuquerque. This document also illustrates that density is affected by many different factors.

Housing Types and Density

Different housing types result in different residential densities. For example, on 10 acres of land, single-family homes on individual lots will often result in less density than a multi-family apartment complex on the same amount of land because of the number of dwelling units that can fit in the same space. Providing streets, parking, landscaping, and other types of infrastructure will generally lower the gross density of a development of any housing type. More dwelling units served by the same infrastructure generally lowers the cost to construct each unit, which can help to provide affordable housing.

Lot Size and Density

Lot size can affect density. Larger lots with single-family houses take up more space, resulting in fewer dwelling units per acre than smaller lots with houses.

Building Height and Density

When more than one dwelling unit is allowed in a building, a building's height or mass can affect density. Larger buildings will result in higher density than smaller buildings when the dwelling units are the same size.

Unit Size and Density

When more than one dwelling unit is allowed on a lot, the size of the dwelling can affect density. Smaller dwelling units can result in higher density than larger dwelling units in a building of the same size.

Building Coverage and Density

When more than one dwelling unit is allowed on a lot, the amount of lot that a building covers can affect density. A multi-family apartment complex on a large lot with lots of area devoted to parking and recreational amenities in a more suburban setting will often be less dense than a garden apartment on a smaller lot in a walkable neighborhood near transit, amenities, and services in a more urban setting.

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