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Los Lunas Transit Center: An Urban Design Proposal

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Los Lunas Transit Center:



An Urban Design Proposal

University of New Mexico — DPAC Studio

Fall 2004

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Design and Planning Assistance Center

DPAC is a community service of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of New Mexico. We work with community groups and not-for-profit organizations throughout New Mexico on architectural, planning, and landscape projects. DPAC was established in 1969 and is staffed by students in architecture, planning, and landscape degree programs.

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The many community members who shared their ideas with us

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Quarter-Mile Design Radius

Design Proposal

Elements

Anchors

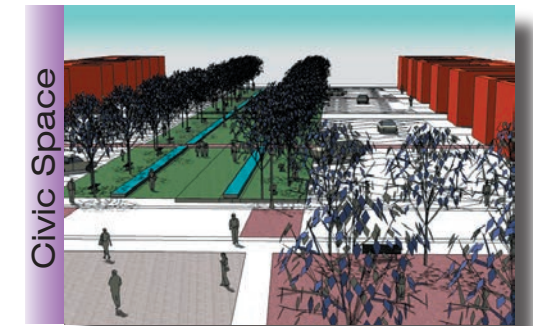
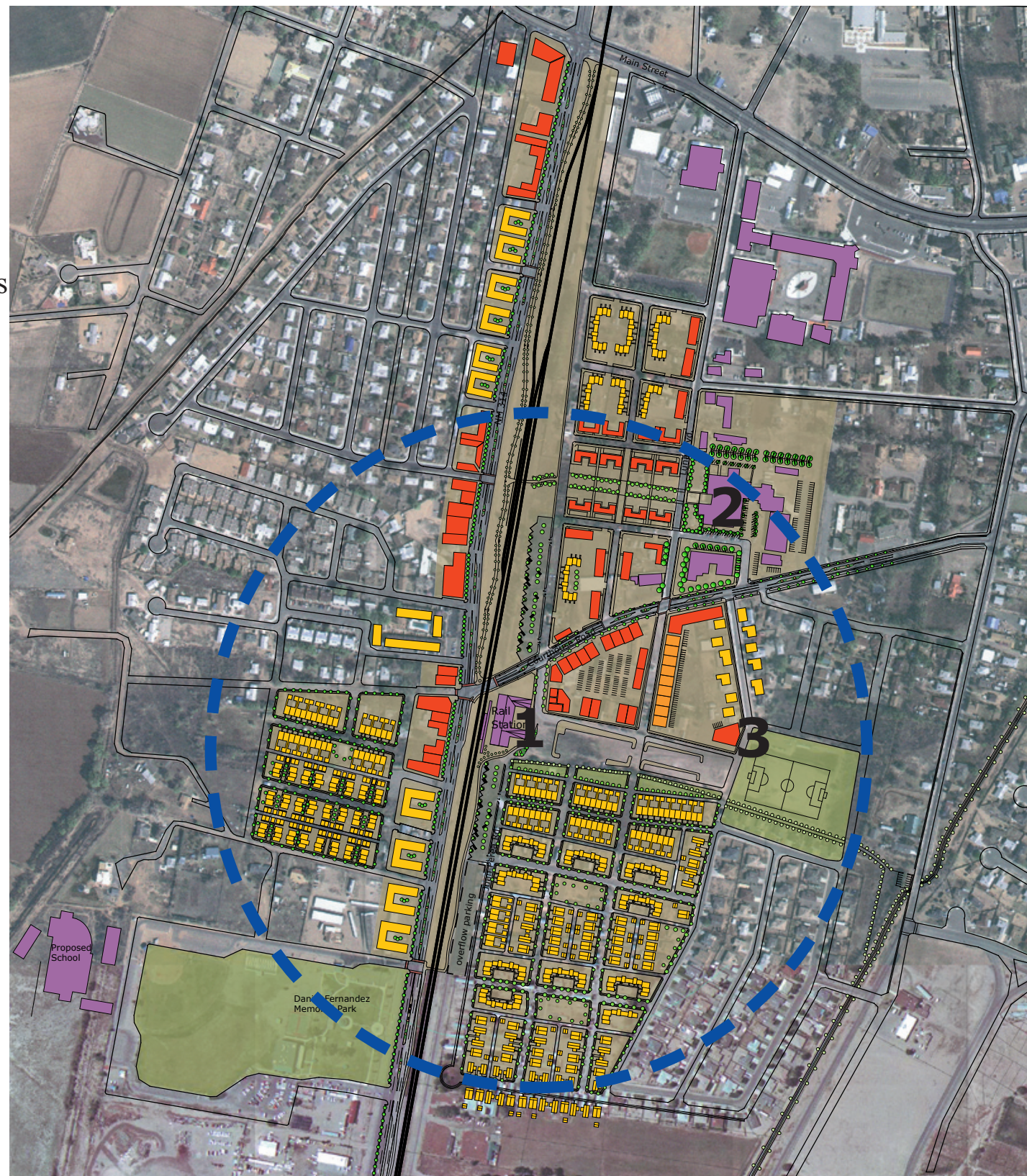
1. Transportation Center
2. County Seat Administrative Offices
3. Community Cultural Center

Fabric

- Trails
- Street Hierarchy
- Civic Services
- Commercial Destinations
- Housing

Design Principles

- Civic Space County Seat
- Commercial Destination
- Transportation Connectivity
- Residential Density
- Public Art District



Introduction

Over the course of its history, Los Lunas has transformed itself several times in response to changes in transportation technologies that bring with them changes in economy activity, land-use, and patterns of development. Los Lunas has experienced four main phases of built form: the founding of the Village as a ranching community based on the opening of the El Camino Real and Santa Fe Trail, the establishment of the Railroad Town after the Santa Fe Railroad in 1880, the rise of Los Lunas as a car community with the coming of Route 66, and the demotion of Los Lunas as a bedroom suburb of Albuquerque after the rise of the economic and service activities easily accessible via the Interstate 25 corridor.

Ranching/Agriculture

For thousands of years, the Rio Grande Valley has provided rich and fertile ground for farming, with good grazing land to the east and west. Named after the Luna family, Los Lunas originally developed as a ranching and farming community. The Lunas became a prominent family as sheep farmers, land-owners, and as early as 1846, state politicians.



Photo courtesy of Alyssa Shapkoff

The development of acequias for irrigating fields led to land being divided perpendicular to the river to preserve water access, and as it passed down to new generations and got further subdivided, land-use patterns emphasized thin, east-west lots with north-south regional connecting roads.

Railroad Town

The coming of the Santa Fe Railroad in 1880 further cemented the regional north-south circulation pattern. The railroad had to gain rights-of-way through the Luna property. In exchange for permission to build the railroad, the company agreed to build the Lunas a mansion, which stands to this day at the corner of Main Street and NM-314.



Los Lunas Train Station
Photo courtesy of Patricia Guggino

The railroad helped to establish a strong link between Los Lunas and Albuquerque. During this time, Albuquerque grew quickly in population and economic activity. Its rise as a railroad town saw the beginning of a regional hierarchy. Both Los Lunas and Belen to the south also grew as a result of the railroad, although not as quickly. This period also saw the rise of what would become NM-314 as the regional road that helped to serve the railroad.

Route 66 Reststop

When Route 66 was originally constructed in 1926, it jogged south from Albuquerque through Los Lunas before heading west to Gallup and on to California. During this rise of the car culture and opening of the West, Los Lunas did its best to attract and accommodate weary travelers and near-empty gas tanks. While Route 66 eventually changed course in 1937, the identity of Los Lunas as a community oriented around the car remained stamped on its physical and economic pattern of growth.



Acoma Service Station built for Route 66
Photo courtesy of Patricia Guggino

Commuter Community

Interstate 25 sealed the fate of the north-south emphasis for modern regional circulation. As Valencia County's growth has exploded in the last ten years, Main Street in Los Lunas has gathered more and more cars from local roads and New Mexico Highway 314 and delivered them to the Interstate. Since its construction in the 1960s, I-25 has come to usurp NM-314 and other north-south roads and is now the dominant corridor for the region. While the Interstate has opened the region to development and brought some economic activity to the area, it also allows people to by-pass Los Lunas at high speed and never see past the on- and off- ramps.



Photo courtesy of Nick Layman

In the last fifteen years, Valencia County has grown with the influx of residents who work in Albuquerque, the state's largest city and busiest economy. Los Lunas offers houses at low prices relative to Albuquerque, set in a beautiful landscape that still preserves its rural feel and agricultural ties.

While Valencia County and Los Lunas in particular have experienced a huge population growth, young people between the ages of 20-29 are still moving out of the area to attend college or to be closer to better-paying jobs.

As a result of increased population and a changing economy, Los Lunas has seen a major trend of land-use change from agriculture to housing development. A few subdivisions have been constructed at relatively higher density, but the majority of housing in Los Lunas remains laid out in a rural pattern at low density.

Los Lunas' built environment is connected locally by the spine formed by NM-314 running north-south and the major east-west arterial, Main Street. Most of the new economic activity in Los Lunas is clustered near the intersection of these two roads. While some new development is taking place east of the Rio Grande, the emphasis of economic activity is no longer dependent on the river. Current economic development is centered along Main Street, NM-314, and the West side of I-25. This form of growth stretches village services and shops along corridors, leaving a vacancy where a village center could exist.

District Revitalization

Context

Recent development adjacent to I-25 on the West side of Los Lunas has generated considerable controversy, as some residents see it as leap-frog development that will lead to more congestion of Main Street and more emphasis on economic activity that does not support local customers or local businesses.

The 2,200-acre Huning Ranch subdivision, master-planned for 6,000 units, recently broke ground just west of I-25 and north of Main Street and is estimated for full build-out within 10-15 years. This development will help provide housing for Los Lunas' many new residents. It will also generate significant traffic across the only bridge over I-25 into Los Lunas and onto Main Street.

The development is contentious to some current Los Lunas residents. In addition to concerns about traffic congestion, the subdivision will also encourage further expansion of development on the westside mesa. This development seems to run counter to the most recent Los Lunas comprehensive plan that sites higher-density, contiguous growth as a goal. At the same time, it does help to preserve agricultural land from subdivision development, and Village officials argue that the high water table, possible flooding, and expensive infrastructure costs preclude development in the valley.

A New Transportation Opportunity

Commuter Rail

By November 2005, a new commuter rail service will be up and running, connecting Belen, Los Lunas, Albuquerque, and the town of Bernalillo. The Belen to Bernalillo service is the first phase of Governor Richardson's commuter rail initiative, which will eventually run from Belen to Santa Fe by the fall of 2008.



Photo courtesy of Nick Layman

Four to eight trains will run daily, every hour and half during peak commuter times. There will also be weekend and special event trains.

The commuter rail stations are being designed by the Mid-Region Council of Governments, with funding from New Mexico Department of Transportation. In Los Lunas, the commuter rail station will be located just south and east of the intersection of NM-314 and Courthouse Road. The Village of Los Lunas is also planning on building a Transportation Center directly east of the commuter rail platform.

Transit District

Just as in every other period of Los Lunas' history, this new mode of transportation brings with it the potential to re-shape the built environment, change land-use patterns, and reorient the focus of economic activity.

Together with the activities surrounding the nearby Valencia County Courthouse, this transit center has the potential to develop into a lively pedestrian commercial district. By leveraging the activities of the Commuter Rail Station, the Transportation Center, and the Courthouse and Judicial Complex, this transit district will be able to support substantial retail activity.

The corner of NM-314 and Courthouse Road is a prime location for a large-scale retail development. Retail strip development will also most likely occur along NM-314 south of Main Street to the new Commuter Rail Station and Transportation Center. By instituting strict design standards and mandated rear-lot parking with alley access, the Village will benefit from the revitalization of a human-scaled built environment and economic activity.

Higher-density housing should also be encouraged in the transit district, both to support the commuter rail service and to enliven the pedestrian activity in

the area, which in turn helps to encourage and support additional retail in the area.

Providing a range of housing options can help ensure that the area remains diverse across incomes, ages, and ethnicities. Mixed-use building types with retail on the first floor and residential spaces above should also be encouraged to increase density in the area and support retail activity.

Transit-oriented design seeks to integrate a multi-modal system of transportation — including public transit, cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists — into a district that supports employment, retail, civic services, and community activities.

The introduction of commuter rail service often results in higher-property values in the area nearby. Increased retail activity and higher-density housing potential serves to elevate the land's value. It is important for the Village to commit to providing and protecting affordable housing both for new residents and current residents that do not want to move and will not be able to afford higher property taxes before these changes take effect. There are many innovative methods that have been developed to protect current residents and lower-income residents, including density bonuses with a percentage of affordable housing set aside, location-efficient mortgages, or caps on the rate of property tax increase for long-time residents until the land is sold.

This commercial district must be designed with the pedestrian in mind while planning for dense development with both housing and commercial spaces. People arriving by commuter train from Albuquerque or Belen should be able to walk to everything they need or easily access public transit that serves the most frequent local destinations. Because it is the County Seat, Los Lunas should see a considerable number of people using the commuter rail to go to the Courthouse or to the Village Administrative Offices. The livelier the district surrounding the Rail Station, the more likely pedestrians will use the train and stay in the area once they arrive, contributing to the social and economic development of Los Lunas.

Because people will be arriving by train and not coming to Los Lunas by car, the scale of design should prioritize the pedestrian and work to calm vehicular traffic to provide a safe environment for everyone. Traffic calming measures that guard the safety of pedestrians will also help support local retail, since drivers will have more time to notice the businesses they pass. Urban design gestures in the transit district should be made at the pedestrian scale, at a scale for slower traffic and more relaxed pace.

Transit-Oriented Design

Context

While the arrival of commuter rail service to Los Lunas provides many potential benefits for the community, the pivotal challenge to its successful integration into the built environment is the link between the east and west sides of Los Lunas. Historically, this east-west division was centered on the river, but recent developments on the westside have changed the focus of Los Lunas' center. Main Street is the only street that provides a connection between development along NM-314 and the new focus of development on the westside mesa. As both these areas continue to develop, Main Street will become more and more taxed, and more and more congested. Because of the three historic structures at the corner of Main & NM-314, Main Street cannot be widened further, so the Village should plan to maximize the use of the commuter rail station by eastside residents and mitigate congestion caused by westside residents travelling into Los Lunas. This can be done by encouraging development between I-25 and the Rio Grande as well as providing public transit from the West side of I-25 to the Transportation Center.

Market for Commuter Rail and Transit-Oriented Design (TOD)

There is a considerable market for commuter rail services and a transit district. Valencia County is the second-fastest growing county in state, with 45% of its population commuting to work in Albuquerque. While commuting times to Albuquerque are reasonable today, the explosive growth experienced by Valencia County will continue to tax I-25 and will eventually lead to very intense traffic congestion. I-25 cannot be widened through the Isleta Reservation, so transit is the best viable option for efficient commuting in the future.

Housing subdivisions on the westside mesa and the inability to widen Main Street will require some type of alternate solution to current traffic flows. An additional east-west

arterial does not look likely, given the contentious history of the proposed bridge from Tome to the Westside Mesa and I-25.

The majority of commuters from Los Lunas have jobs in the service industry and would potentially be able to use the time on the train for work, reading, or relaxing.

The introduction of a transit district with a more urban feel, more retail activity, public transit, and more entertainment would appeal to 20-29 who currently have to move away from their families to Albuquerque if they want that "big-city" feel. While the Village is working on encouraging local economic activity, these young people need the jobs provided by Albuquerque, and many of them are not willing to commute by car. Albuquerque also offers a range of housing options not currently available in Los Lunas. The transit district would introduce a range of housing types and square footages that would widen the market for singles, families, and residents wanting a second residence in order to take care of elderly parents living in Los Lunas.

Why TOD?

Transit-oriented design creates vibrant, community-oriented places for all people who enjoy the convenience of integrated housing, work, shopping, entertainment, restaurants, and transportation within walking distance. With increased investment in the quarter mile surrounding the Village's Transportation Center, this can become a reality for Los Lunas residents. Providing basic services, such as a library, parks, recreation center or trail system will bring people to the area and increase transit ridership.

Transit-oriented design benefits social relationships and improves our connection to the environment. By concentrating basic services within an easy walk, more open space can be preserved. Transit-oriented design can be

an integral part of neighborhood growth management objectives.

Cities such as Seattle and Portland have successfully harnessed the benefits of regional transit systems to create vibrant and lively retail areas. In Seattle's Northgate, a run-down, car-oriented area was transformed into a vital, mixed-use center of retail activity integrated with nearby residential neighborhoods.

Benefits of Density

Economic Revitalization

The benefits of transit-oriented design are mutually reinforcing. The more people use transit, the more retail activity can be supported in the area by the increased foot traffic. The more retail activity in the area, the more lively it becomes, and the more people will be likely to use transit. The more destinations there are in the area, the more benefits there are for pedestrians and commuter rail users in a transit district. This results in economic development and vitality for the entire community.

Tax Revenues

A study done by the University of North Texas found that within a ten-minute walk of a transit station, commercial property values increased by 53% and residential values increased by 39%. While increased property value can potentially be a problem if provisions are not made to protect long-term residents and low-income families, the increased revenue from property taxes can help the Village improve its services and continue to support desired growth.

Place-making

Los Lunas will also benefit from the place-making involved in creating an identifiable district. Developing and instituting design standards in this transit district will also serve in planning to maintain the desired built environment and community activity during future growth.

Health

Reducing the dependence on automobile use has several health benefits. In a TOD area, there are places to walk, and a safe route to access them. The first benefit comes from increased physical activity. Over 60% of Americans are overweight, and dysfunctional street design bears some

The Center for Transit-Oriented Development seeks to use transit investments to spur a new wave of development that improves housing affordability and choice, revitalizes downtowns and urban and suburban neighborhoods, and helps individuals local governments to recapture the value of infrastructure investments.

Transit-Oriented Design

Context

of the culpability. Creating streets that are designed for people as much as for cars and that are linked to trail networks allows walking to become part of daily living. The second health benefit of TOD design is through a reduction in automobile waste and pollution. Fewer miles traveled means less air pollution, less pollution created by runoff into the waterstream, and fewer used tires.

Traffic

A good system of multi-modal transportation reduces traffic congestion and slows the need for additional roads and road improvements. Transit-oriented design can provide higher densities without adding to traffic congestion.

Open Space

Planning for higher-density development allows for the preservation of open space and agricultural land. Infill development can be required by comprehensive plans, and priority for development can be assigned to land that has already been converted to non-agricultural uses.

Other Benefits

- Better-connected roads
- Community Interaction & Participation
- Quality of life
- Greater mobility with options
- Reduced travel costs
- Reduce incentive to sprawl
- Less cost of building roads in outlying areas

Historic Preservation

All efforts at revitalizing any part of Los Lunas should build off the successful historic precedents that already support a lively and unique place. Several buildings on the historic register, the Luna Mansion, Teofilos, the Wittmer House, and the Valencia County Courthouse, can be used as the focus for future development.



Development in the transit district should leverage these assets in order to support more preservation. Retail activity draws tourists and visitors, and more visitors support more preservation. In turn, more historic buildings draw more people to support retail activity.

Several historic buildings have survived in Los Lunas but are currently not restored or on the historic register. Local historians should be involved in assessing the area and local buildings and applying for grants and nomination for historic status for important buildings.

While many retailers fear that historic preservation efforts will tie their hands or raise their rents, these undesirable consequences can be avoided with advanced planning and careful implementation. Protection can be instituted with historic zones, rental increase caps, or decreased rental rates for long-time renters or locals.

Designating Main Street as a cultural and historic center and NM-314 as the main commercial corridor will help preserve the area's buildings and history. Adding to pedestrian improvements already made to Main Street, design element like streetlights or hanging flower baskets will help establish the area as a historic district and serve as a formal entrance to Los Lunas for car traffic.

Transit-Oriented Design Elements

- Multi-modal Transportation
- District Identity
- Street Hierarchy
- Pedestrian-scale Streetscapes
- Residential Density
- Commercial Destination
- Civic Space
- Public Art

Multi-modal Transportation

The core purpose for transit-oriented design is encouraging different modes of transportation. As gas prices rise, and our investment in highway construction soars, people will begin to look for options. This commuter rail line offers a real alternative for individuals accustomed to driving I-25. By providing a range of transportation choices, we can begin to shift our reliance on automobiles to a more comprehensive system.

The success of a multi-modal transportation system relies on creating higher-density and more interesting living environments. It includes having basic shopping within walking or biking distance from people's homes and providing bus or shuttle service to reach more distant locations.



Since the very young and old both have difficulties with transportation, designing around public transit and pedestrian destinations will help create a more just society, allowing those without access to vehicles to get around with ease.

The establishment of a transit district gives people both independence and control over their lives by providing many choices for transportation, fun destinations to walk to, and a safe environment for everyone. Successful transit districts combine high density, high quality development within a 10-15 minute walking radius. The rule of thumb in urban design is that people will walk approximately a quarter-mile, people are willing to walk farther and longer if the walk is interesting.

District Identity

Transit-oriented design has the ability to create an identifiable district within the Village. District identity creates a “mental map” that helps orient people. It identifies the area as a public transportation development that supports multiple modes of travel. Characterized by mixed-use development within a quarter-mile walking radius, the transit district addresses the pedestrian. Tree-lined streets give the community a sense of cohesiveness and scale. Street lanterns, benches, and small building setbacks begin to create a consistent character for the district.

Transit-Oriented Design

Context

Street Hierarchy

Creating identifiable streets within the framework or “mental map” helps to orient people and establish the character and identity of the community. Streets within the transit district should be distinguished visually by their main activities, whether commercial, civic, or residential. Street design should support and complement its adjacent land uses. By maintaining consistent street design, a hierarchy of space is established.

Regional

The regional street links the transit district and secondary areas to core commercial areas, communities and schools. It is designed to carry moderate to heavy levels of traffic that may provide for on-street parking and is compatible with foot traffic. Bikeways can either be on the street or separate.



Many small towns are looking to create design improvements along major highway corridors to create a safer pedestrian environment and help support economic revitalization. State highway design regulations are often a barrier to the kind of improvements that urban designers recommend.

Nationally, there has been a movement toward context-sensitive highway design, especially in traditional towns on the East Coast. Highways should respond to their contexts. As they pass through the center of town, they should include traffic calming elements and pedestrian-scale features. The State of New Mexico has recently contracted with the University of New Mexico to develop approaches toward context sensitive highway design in small towns so that eventually villages and towns in New Mexico will be able to work with the Department of Transportation to design

streets that meet state regulations while serving the economic activity that supports the community's quality of life.

Civic

The civic street should have narrowed travel lanes and provide on-street parking to slow traffic. Bicycles are encouraged in the street with a delineated bike lane. This should be a pedestrian-oriented street that should serve low to moderate volumes of traffic.

Commercial

The commercial street is located in the center of core commercial areas and should be designed to accommodate pedestrians, slow traffic, on-street parking on both sides of the street, and two travel lanes with raised turning medians. This street is characterized by wide sidewalks, street furniture, sidewalk cafes, awnings, and street trees. The commercial street building setback should be minimal, with shops fronting the street and holding the edge for the pedestrian.



Pedestrian-scale Streetscapes

Enhancing the pedestrian realm encourages a sense of community by creating livelier streets with more foot traffic. A street should be a public place, not simply a space for cars to move through. A safe, lively pedestrian realm also brings economic benefits as the Village Metro Center develops into a regional destination for retail and civic activity.

Safety

Accident rates drop significantly if there is a buffer zone between the moving traffic and pedestrians. Buffers can be anything from parked cars to planter beds and should provide a physical distinction from the street and the sidewalk.

Shade

Street trees and awnings provide shade from the summer sun as well as protecting from winter elements.

Choice of Activities

Walkways and centers should give the pedestrian a multitude of choices of activities, including sitting, reading, and people watching.

Attractive Environment

The visual environment can affect people's health, peace of mind, and productivity. Walkways that produce views of buildings, public art, and trees can reduce stress and improve the quality of life.

Quietness

Pedestrian buffers provide alternate walking routes away from motor vehicles and traffic noise.

Residential Density

Imagine living in a neighborhood where going to the town center is an easy and safe walk away. Perhaps your office is within the town center, allowing for a pleasant walk to the office every morning.

These are the underlying principles of transit-oriented neighborhoods. Housing options in the transit district emphasize density, whether the building types are single-family homes, townhomes, live-work units, or courtyard family units. This high-density housing close to commercial activity helps to support the commuter rail service and nearby retail businesses. Having a lively pedestrian district also helps ensure everyone's safety by encouraging more "eyes on the street."



Introduction

Context

Designing for the pedestrian scale allows the focus to remain on people and social spaces and not the automobile. Homes are designed to make streets feel safe and more inviting. Homes have porches and windows that face the street and not just large garage doors. Residential neighborhoods in the transit district should rarely have parking lots or garage doors fronting the street. Parking is relegated to the rear of buildings, accessed by an alley.

Residential streets in the transit district are narrow and shaded by row trees, slowing traffic and creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicyclists. Streets within a neighborhood form a connected network, which disperses traffic by providing a variety of options for pedestrians and drivers.

Commercial Destination

Transit-Oriented Design can help to create a new market for businesses and retail. Instead of trying to compete for development near I-25, the human scale and walkable streets in the transit district support different kinds of commercial activity than big-box retail dependent on the automobile. While I-25 may be convenient for shopping now, in time the increased traffic congestion will make a walk to the corner store much more appealing. Los Lunas can have the kind of vitality provided by transit-oriented development now. Providing smaller retail spaces for businesses dependent on foot traffic, such as art galleries, specialty stores, and businesses that support nearby civic activities will help to encourage a healthy commercial district in the transit area.

Creating a commercial destination is dependent on place-making, walkability, and car access and parking. By definition, place-making is the establishment of a sense of place or identity. Los Lunas can build on the introduction of transit to the area to craft an effective and identifiable neighborhood commercial district for the Village of Los Lunas. Provid-

ing attractive retail buildings, interesting commercial destinations, and cultural activities will help make the transit district a memorable place for the residents of Los Lunas and visitors. The more identifiable the district becomes, the more activity it will attract. Eventually, this district can become the commercial landmark, for the Village, perhaps even rivaling the iconic status of the Luna Mansion or Benny's!

The introduction of walkable streets and pedestrian access into the overall urban design helps to encourage pedestrian use and safety, as well as orient users. Added pedestrian access provides increased connectivity from surrounding neighborhoods and the transportation center to the proposed destination commercial.



Urban design should consider building types that mask parking by pushing buildings up to the street edge and enclosing interior parking lots on two or more sides. This will create a defined and walkable street and sidewalk zone and will enhance pedestrian use and safety.

Vehicles access will be from alleys or other secondary roadways to reach parking. Parking will be regulated to the rear of buildings and in interior surface lots. This will allow for maximum street frontage for buildings and a defined street edge and sidewalk zone.

Civic Space

Because the County Seat Courthouse is located so close to the site of the new Commuter Rail Station and Transportation Center, Los Lunas has an exciting opportunity to build on and protect this district as a civic center.

Ideally, civic space consists of four key elements: an iconic atmosphere, formal design vocabulary, gathering spaces, and a multi-purpose performance space. These components, working together functionally and in their designs, create a space where people want to go to. While some civic

spaces emphasize just a few of the elements, the success of the ideal civic space depends on a balance in emphasis of all four key components.

An icon is defined as a person or object that is monumental and provokes an identifiable image of the referenced group or area. Using icons helps to create a district identity that everyone will recognize. Icons are often used to associate one thing to another, such as the Statue of Liberty to New York or the Golden Gate Bridge to San Francisco. Ideally, the iconic space paints an initial picture of what the place is in terms of its history and its people. When people come from all over the world, the iconic place is where they will go and see.

A formal design vocabulary helps to emphasize the iconic atmosphere. It is mainly defined as the use of linear axes and traditional or local materials. Rows of trees, light posts, and street banners are used to emphasize the linear axis. Traditional materials include brick and stone. The formal design vocabulary allows people to easily understand the space they are in.

Gathering spaces play an important role in the success of a civic space. Typically, these spaces provide the community with a public forum for rallies and special events. The use of shading and seating will help organize these areas and make them pleasant places to be in. The use of open spaces and linear edges will also serve to define these spaces.

A multi-purpose performance space can be used for rallies and special events but more importantly by government officials as a speaker's platform for addressing the public. This platform focuses attention to a single point for important announcements. This platform also provides a backdrop that helps identify the place.

Public Art

Public art can help create an identity for the district. The transit district has the potential to develop in a fun, new direction. Increased numbers of residences and shops will encourage a fuller street life enlivened by the strategic placement of public art and the involvement of local groups, schools, and community members. Repetition of design elements, such as streetlights with banners, or way-finding signs can begin to develop a language of place. Artists can be commissioned to design gateways to the area, sculptural elements, or structures such as bridges over the acequias. Intersections and stopping points along the mixed-use trails prioritizes places and helps orient walkers and cyclists. Local artists and cultural traditions can be celebrated and supported through a robust public art program and space for local galleries or community centers.

Transportation Center

Village of Los Lunas

Context

Opportunities

The Transportation Center provides opportunities as a depot for access to major networks, community-meeting rooms, and basic human needs such as restrooms and food vending. The Transportation Center acts as one of the main focal points in a larger network system that includes the Civic Space, the Retail Triangle, and the Third Anchor. It also has the opportunity to become a major stop in a bigger rail network that will run up along Albuquerque and even further up to Santa Fe. Within the Transportation Center, there is also a space setup for community meetings and special conferences. Vending and basic human necessities will also be available at the Transportation Center to help ease the time of the passengers waiting for the train.

Concerns

There are a few issues with the Transportation Center site design proposed by the architectural firm Molzen-Corbin & Associates.

By-pass Road

One of the major issues is with the by-pass road just in front of the center on the parking lot side. Although this road provides direct access to the Transportation Center parking lot, it also is a major access road for the residents living just south of this site. This conflict has the potential of creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians crossing the parking lot to the Transportation Center.

Soccer Field

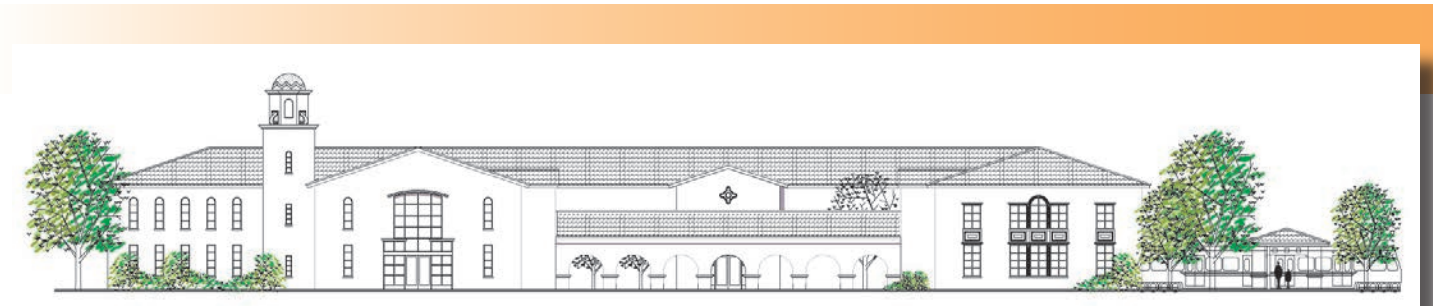
Another concern is the soccer field proposed at the east end of the site. This area was recommended for a soccer field because it is prone to flooding due to the high water table at that location. While a soccer field might be a good flexible solution for this problem, the site could be designated as a wetland park, allowing for preservation of natural habitats and a connection to the acequia trail system.

Third Anchor

This site would also be a prime location for the addition of a community cultural center or other civic building that could be supported by and help to support the regional commuter rail service. This kind of civic building could serve as the third anchor for the transit district that includes the Transportation Center and the Valencia County Courthouse. The addition of this anchor in the vicinity of both the Transportation Center and the area's existing civic activities would help to increase and encourage community involvement and to support the growth that will result from the commuter rail service. The addition of a community cultural center next to the Rail Station would provide an additional reason for residents from Valencia County, Albuquerque, or Santa Fe to use the commuter rail service to visit Los Lunas.

Parking

Parking is currently proposed to be just east of the Transit Station. A possible better option would be to locate the parking along the frontage roads just north and south of the Station. This would allow for the area east of the station to be developed into commercial and high density residential. The frontage road parking area is currently not being utilized and any building development in this area is not feasible. Also, the design of the "parking park" provides a transition space for the Transit Station on its north and south sides.

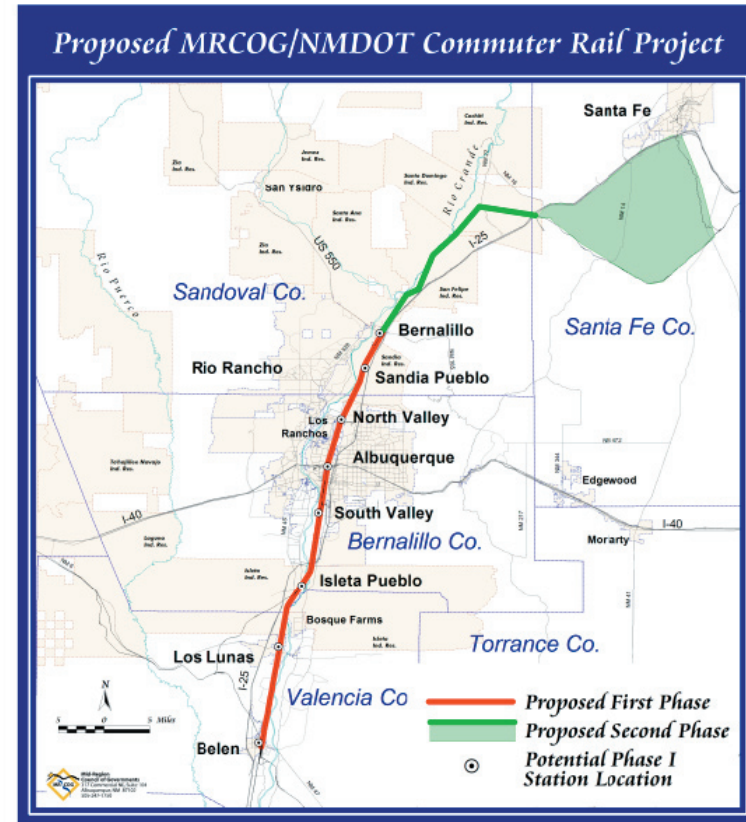


Commuter Rail Station

Middle-Region Council of Governments

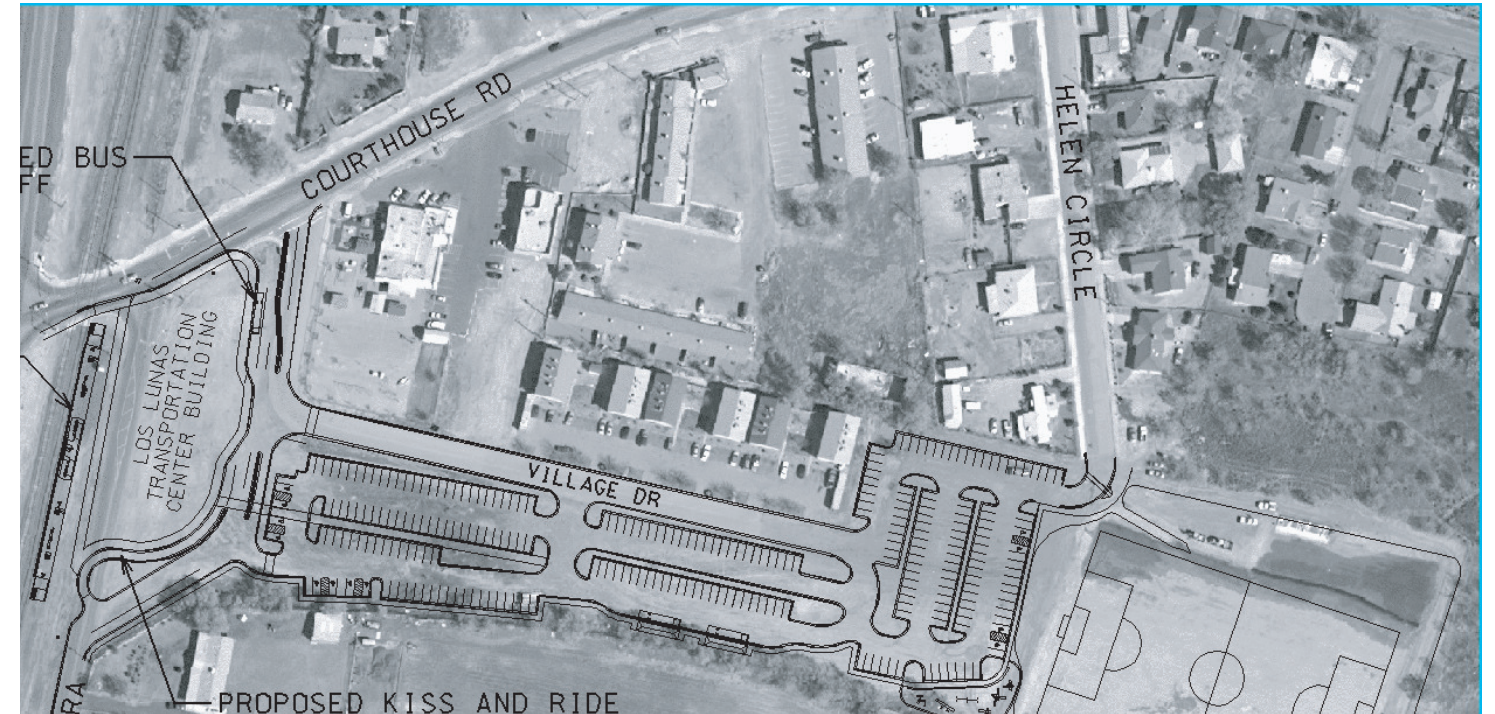


Context



Opportunities

This regional commuter rail system will be completed in two phases: the first connecting Belen, Los Lunas, Albuquerque, and Bernalillo, and the second extending the line north to Santa Fe. Los Lunas residents working in Albuquerque will be able to commute to work using the commuter rail for a minimum cost and with considerable comfort. The ride should take approximately 45 minutes. While this is a little longer than the trip currently takes by car, MR-COG estimates that as the I-25 corridor fills with more and more traffic as Valencia County continues to grow, the commuter rail will eventually be a much faster method of travel for commuters and will allow them to work, read, or simply relax every morning and evening.



Concerns

Residents in Los Lunas have many questions about how convenient it will be for them to get to their workplaces in Albuquerque after leaving the rail station. MR-COG should continue to develop better and faster methods for connections, such as shuttle services or ride sharing commuter cars or bicycles. MR-COG should also investigate providing free or reduced-price parking near the rail station for some families that might be able to afford a second car designated for Albuquerque trips. In any case, the Albuquerque connection must be convenient for commuters and families that may have multiple destinations, such as work, school, medical services, or shopping.



Los Lunas currently offers van service to Albuquerque for its welfare-to-work residents. This service should be coordinated with the commuter rail station to best utilize this opportunity and stretch tax dollars in the most efficient and responsible manner.

As development continues west of I-25 in Los Lunas, the Village should consider offering a shuttle service to the commuter rail station for residents who wish to use the commuter rail, reducing traffic congestion both on Main Street and I-25.

Administrative Offices

Valencia County

Opportunities

Currently, Valencia County is investigating moving the County Courthouse to a new building on Main Street, closer to I-25, and on a site with room to provide a safety buffer in accordance with Homeland Security concerns.

The vacated Courthouse building would most likely continue to be used as administrative offices for Valencia County staff and Sheriff's office. Whether the Courthouse function moves or remains, the current building is well-situated to remain an important civic building for Los Lunas in its role as County Seat. The site has been an important one for many years, and its historic importance should be protected and enriched in the future as this area continues to grow as a center for regional and local transit.

The addition of the Los Lunas Transportation Center and the Commuter Rail Station to this area add to the importance and potential opportunity to integrate the Valencia County Administrative Offices into the development of a lively district for transit and commerce.

Concerns

While the Courthouse may move to Main Street, many of the supporting businesses, such as lawyer's offices, bail bondsmen, and office supplies stores will remain in their current locations, since the buildings and infrastructure already exist to support these activities. Los Lunas should continue to build on, leverage, and encourage these services in the new transit district.

If these services move to Main Street to be closer to the Courthouse, traffic congestion on Main Street will only get worse. Main Street cannot be widened further to accommodate this additional traffic without compromising the sites of the historic buildings at the intersection of Main Street and NM-314.

Aguierre Service Station and Courthouse c. 1930



Photo courtesy of Patricia Guggino

Valencia County Courthouse, 1936



Photo courtesy of Patricia Guggino

The Village should concentrate development along NM-314 and Courthouse Road and work to support the Commuter Rail in order to minimize congestion on Main Street and I-25. A trolley or bus system to connect the Transit District to the Courthouse and Village Administrative Offices would help to alleviate traffic congestion, as well.

Concentrating this economic activity will also result in a multiplier effect for businesses in the district, which will help support additional retail activity. The livelier the district activity, the more attractive the area becomes for consumers. The more consumers that come to the district, the more lively the district becomes.

Los Lunas should leverage the activities that surround the County Courthouse and the activities that support the Transportation Center and Rail Station to create a district with enough activity to support retail and entertainment.

Lawyers and judges from Albuquerque and elsewhere in Valencia County will be more likely to use the Commuter Rail if there is an easy connection to the Courthouse and a lively district with good restaurants and shops near the Rail Station.

Valencia County Courthouse, 2004



County Seat

CIVIC SPACE

In Los Lunas, civic space should be organized around two major spaces: the Civic Square and the Administrative Plaza. These two components incorporate the elements of the icon, formal design vocabulary, gathering spaces, and a speakers' platform. These elements in turn will create a successful civic space.

Elements

Civic Square
Administrative Plaza

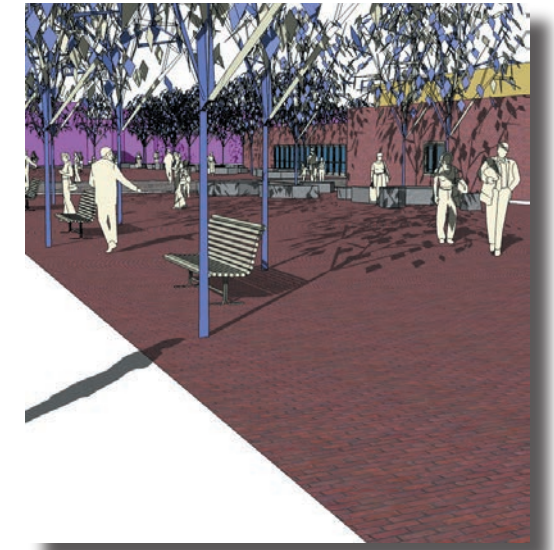
Goals

The Civic Square and the Administrative Plaza combined help to emphasize the civic space defined by the iconic atmosphere, the formal vocabulary, gathering spaces, and the speakers' platform.

site plan



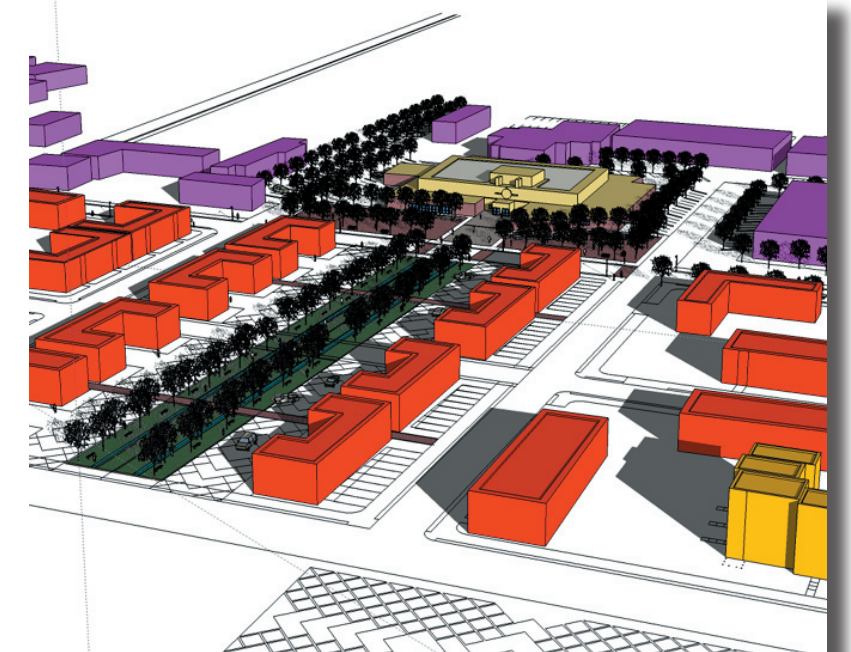
administrative plaza



civic square



birds-eye perspective



Civic Square

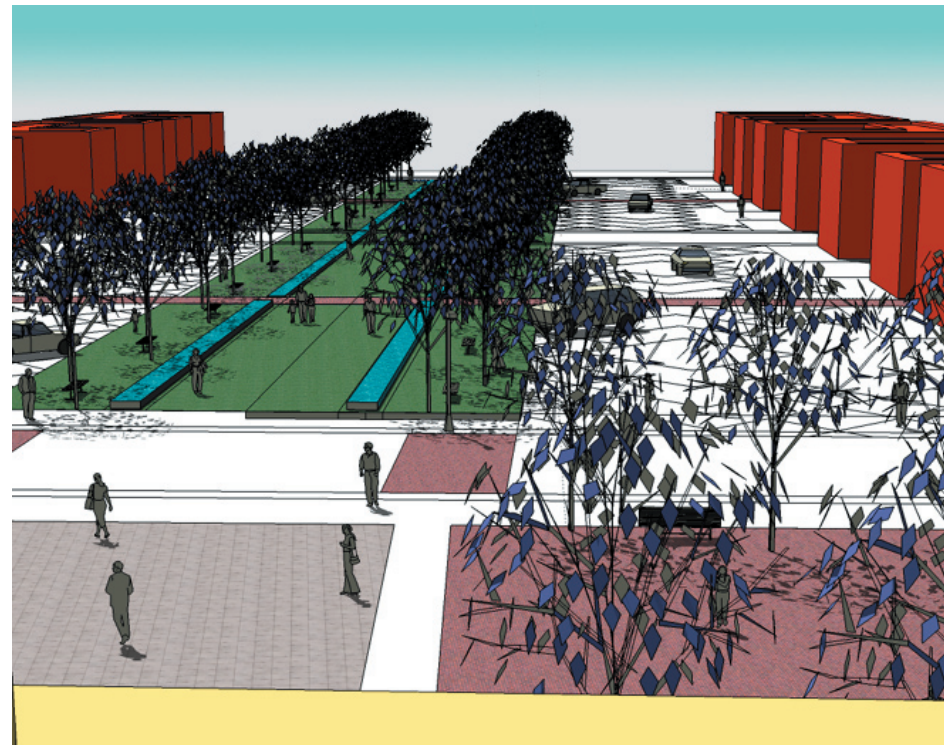
CIVIC SPACE

The Civic Square is made up of open gathering spaces, flexible parking, and commercial buildings flanking either side. Generally, the gathering spaces are open, providing a forum for rallies and special events. Defined seating areas allow for smaller gatherings.

Open spaces are flanked by rows of trees that provide shade and define a clear linear axis to the County Administrative Offices. Flanking these trees are the flexible parking lots that allow for multiple uses: diagonal parking and expansion of the gathering spaces for larger rallies and events. On the outer edges of the civic square are opportunities for commercial retail. These serve the needs of the people gathering in the open spaces as well as the employees at the Administrative Offices.

As the transit district develops into a lively place to be, the Civic Square can be used for various public gatherings such as concerts, arts and crafts fairs, and farmers' markets.

birds-eye view of civic square looking west



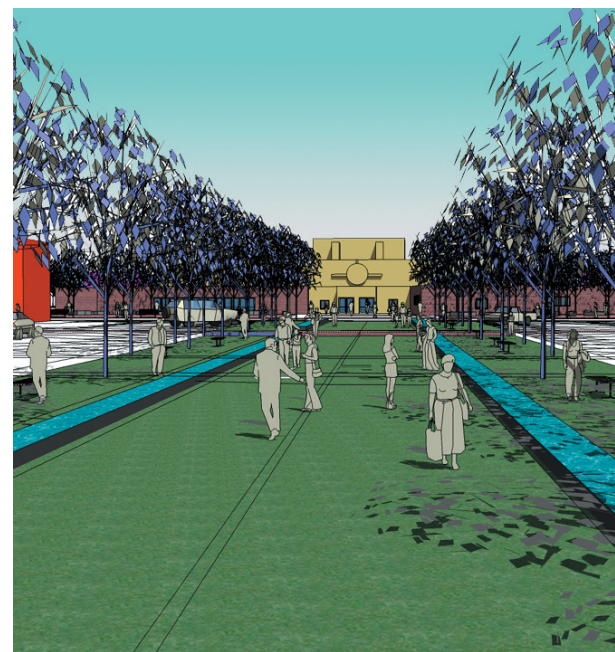
site plan



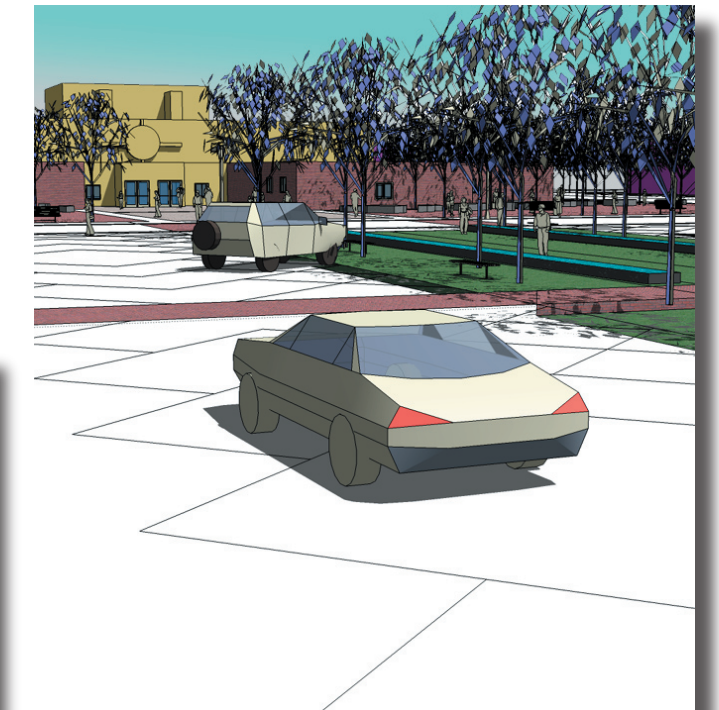
existing view to courthouse



civic square looking east



civic square parking lot north end



existing parking



Administrative Plaza

CIVIC SPACE

The Administrative Plaza is made up of gathering spaces and a speakers' platform. The gathering spaces contain seating areas that serve the dual purpose of comfortable furniture and a barrier against vehicular attacks. There are also trees all along the edges of the gathering spaces that help provide shade and also act as a barrier. The plaza also contains a speakers' platform. This platform allows for a formal organized address to the public, a formal axis entrance to the administrative offices, and a barrier.

Elements

Gathering spaces
Speakers' platform

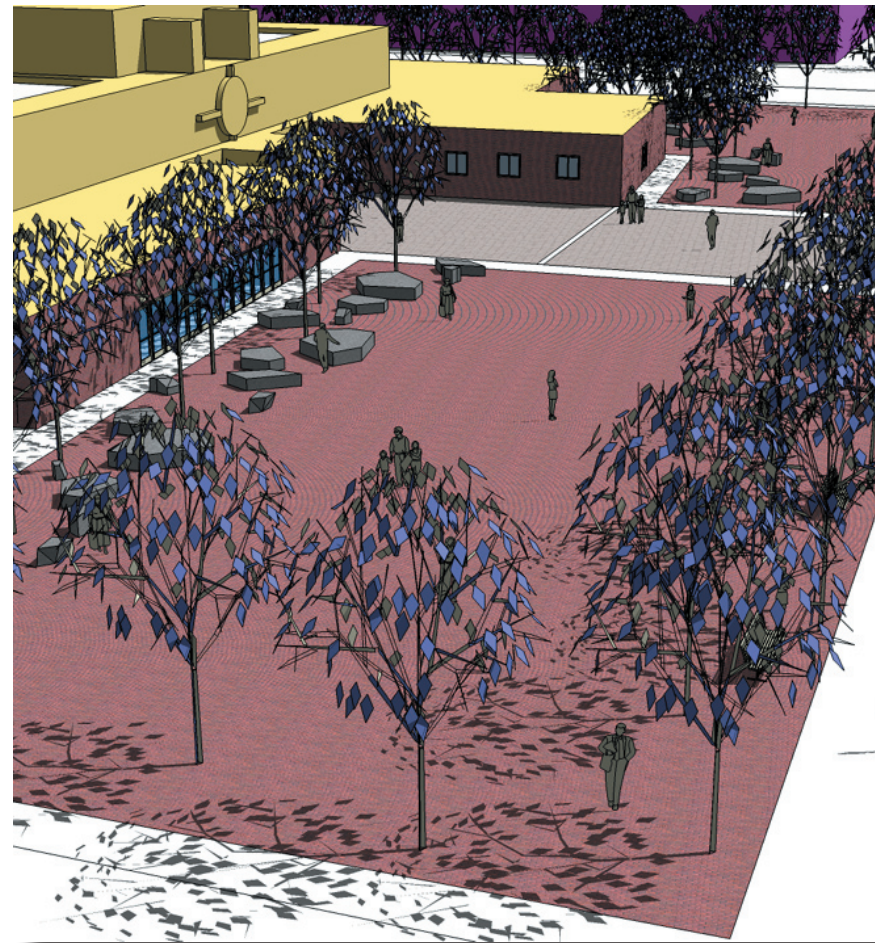
Goals

Successful civic space
Attractive spaces
Safety

existing courthouse entrance



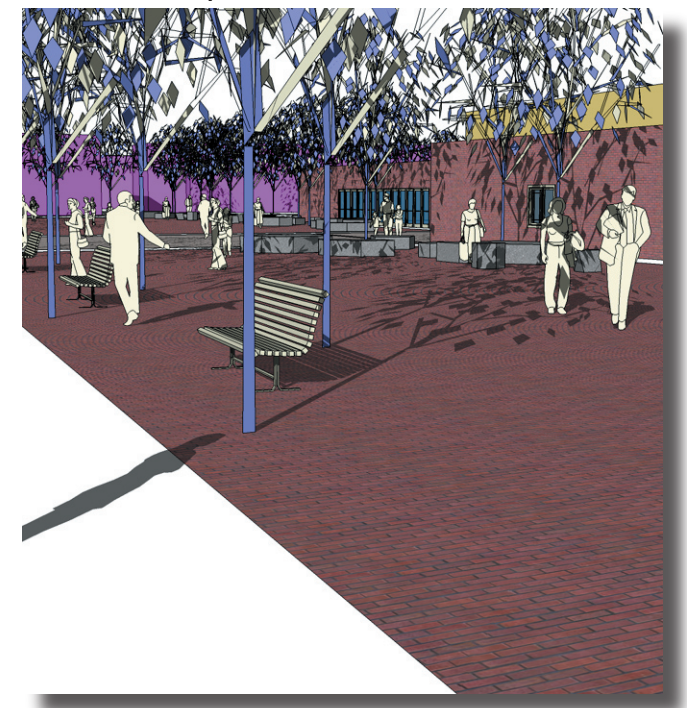
birds-eye of administrative plaza north end



site plan



administrative plaza south end



Streetscape

Luna Boulevard

Civic Space

existing view north to Main Street



proposed view north to Main Street



site plan



view south to Courthouse Road



Courthouse north parking



existing



Street Section

Luna Boulevard

CIVIC SPACE

Recommendations

- Provide places for people to sit and socialize
- Calm traffic with on-street parking and street trees
- Enliven sidewalk with pedestrian scale street furniture
- Preserve and leverage historic schoolhouse as integral part of civic history, culture, and built environment



Los Lunas High School – 1936

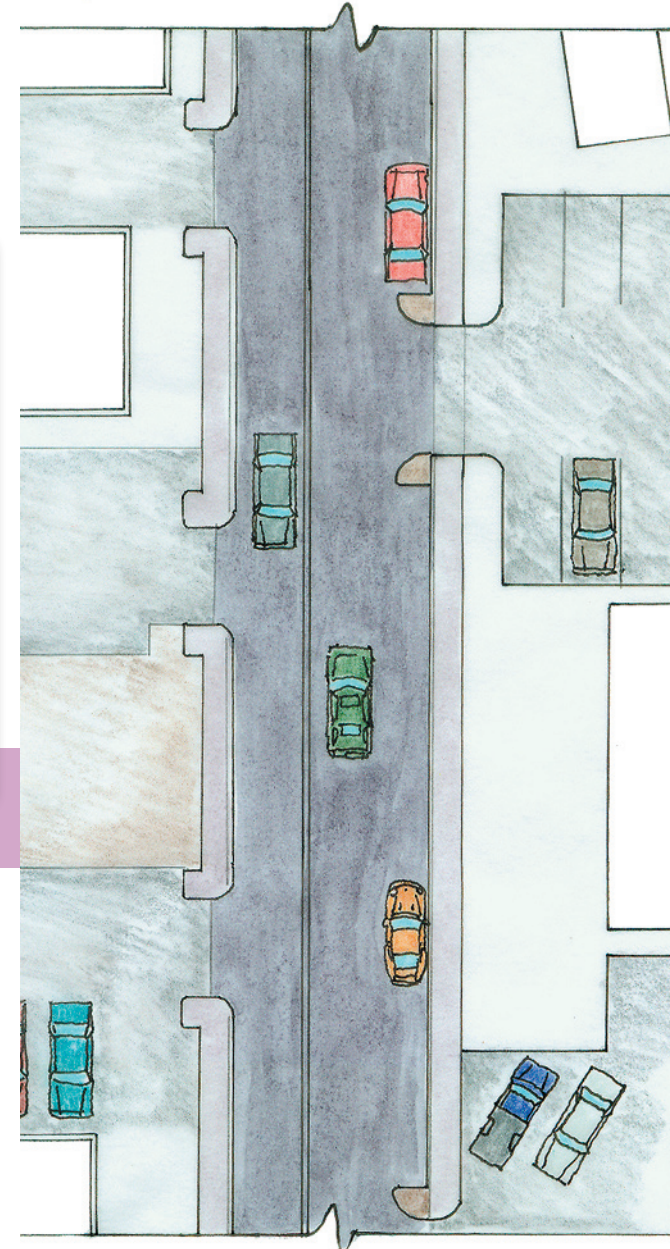


Photo courtesy of Patricia Guggino

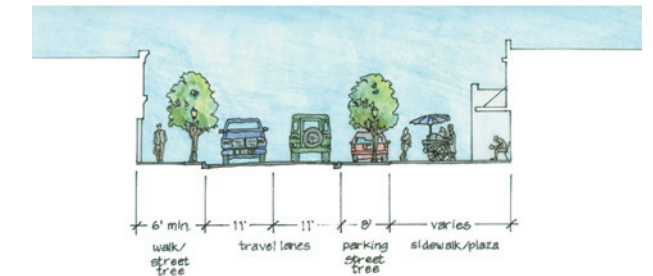
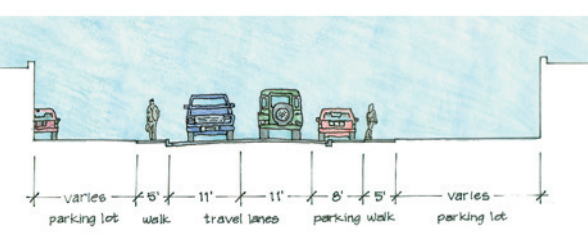
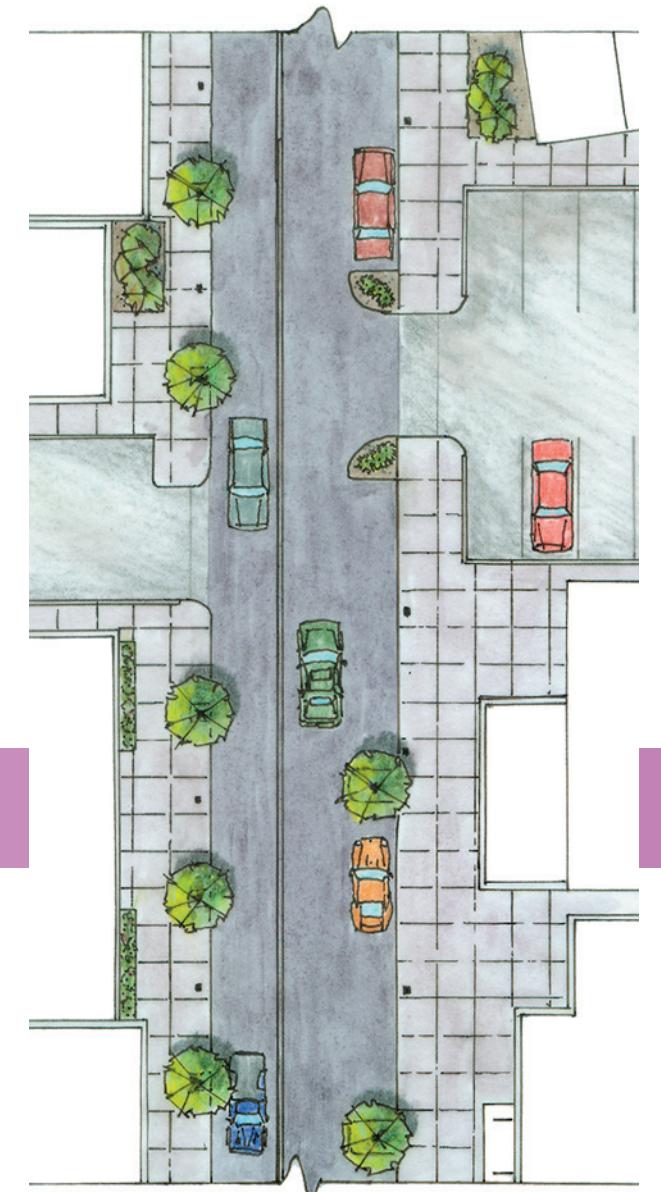
Schoolhouse Today



existing street plan & section



proposed street plan & section



Destination

Commercial

Elements

- Strip Retail
- Pedestrian-scale streetscapes
- Retail Triangle
- Third Anchor
- Parking

Goals

- District identity
- Walkable streets
- Vehicular access
- Vernacular design vocabulary

description_

placemaking_ create identifiable neighborhood commercial district for the village of los lunas; sense of place; commercial epicenter

pedestrian friendly_ create walkable streets geared toward pedestrian use; activate the sidewalk and define sidewalk zone and street edge; link surrounding neighborhoods and proposed transportation center to commercial district

vehicular access and parking_ define sidewalk zone and street edge by obscuring parking, vehicular access at rear from alley

appearance_ low to medium density; limit scale of buildings to fit into existing vernacular; explore new mexican themes in architecture/design

urban regulations_

placement_

1. street frontage--90 percent minimum
2. lot width--300'
lot depth-- 150' to alley
3. building depth--20' minimum, 40' preferred

parking_

1. interior surface lot
2. access through alley
3. off-street parking provided

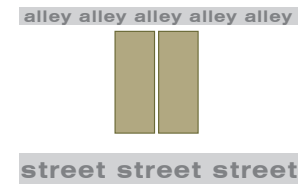
height and profile_

1. street frontage height--3 storeys maximum at center
2. setbacks--10' minimum for 3rd storey

use_

1. mixed-use--retail, commercial, office, and residential

building typologies_



pedestrian oriented building type_ description_ street frontage with pedestrian cut through and vehicular access and surface lot to the rear suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space between 900--2,000 sqft



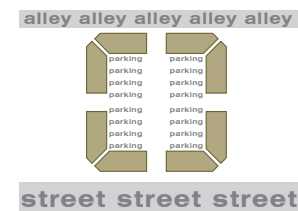
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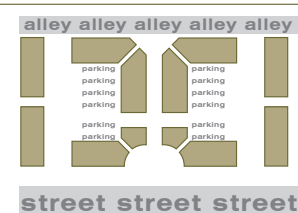
pedestrian oriented building type_ description_ street frontage with pedestrian cut through and vehicular access and surface lot to the rear suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space between 900--3,000 sqft



vehicular oriented building type_ description_ street frontage and vehicular access and parking to the rear and side; unattached suggested use_ stand-alone retail (walgreen's, kinko's, mc donald's, local business) between 1,500-8,000 sqft



vehicular oriented building type_ description_ street frontage with pedestrian cut throughs and vehicular access and surface lot to the rear suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space between 900--3,000 sqft



vehicular oriented building type_ description_ street frontage with pedestrian cut throughs and vehicular access and surface lot to the rear suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space between 900--3,000 sqft

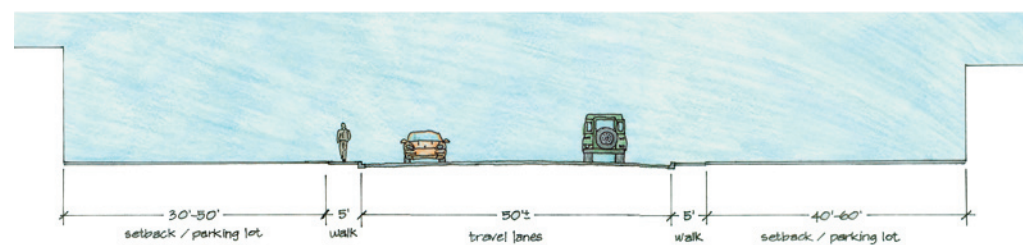
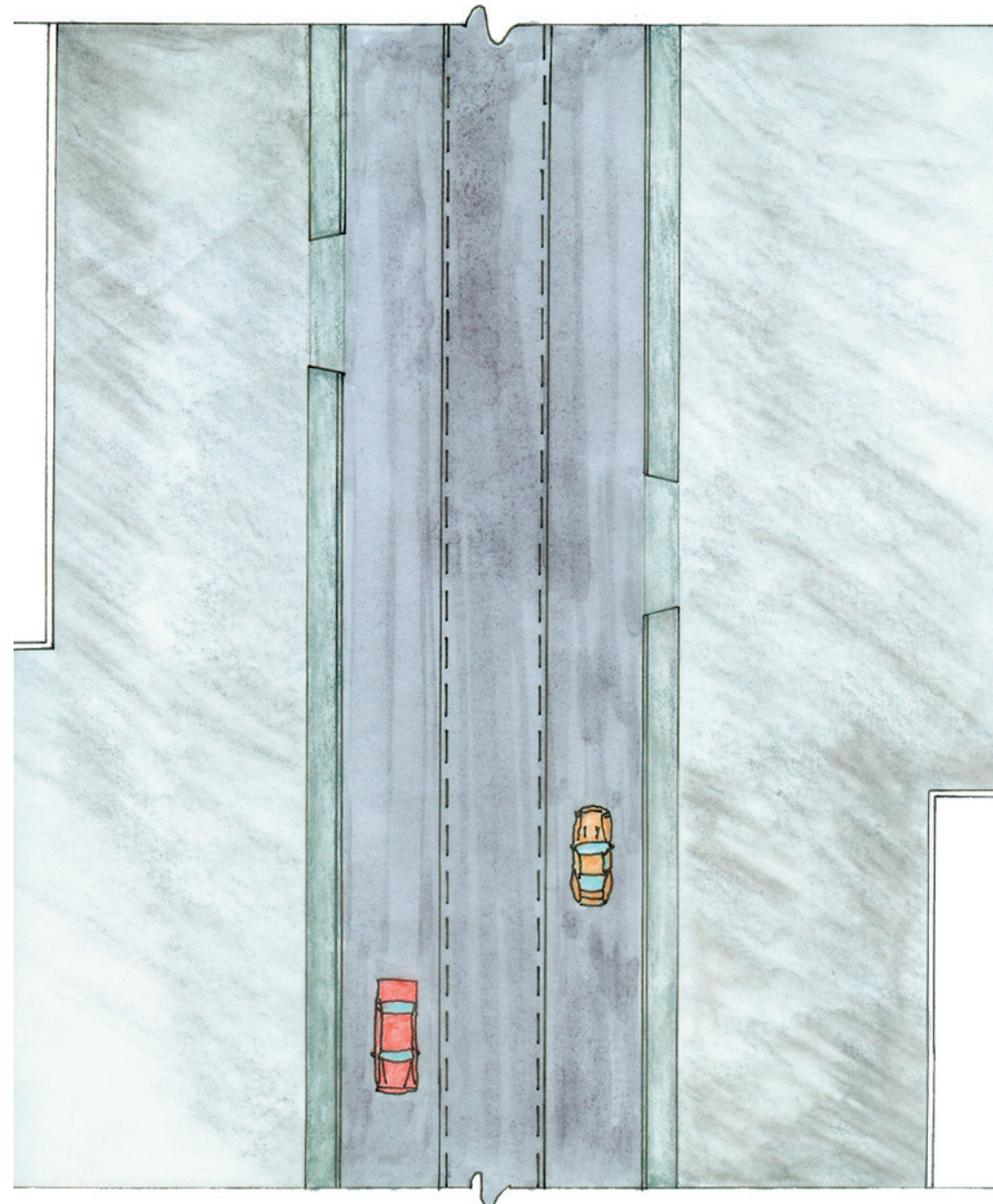


Streetscape

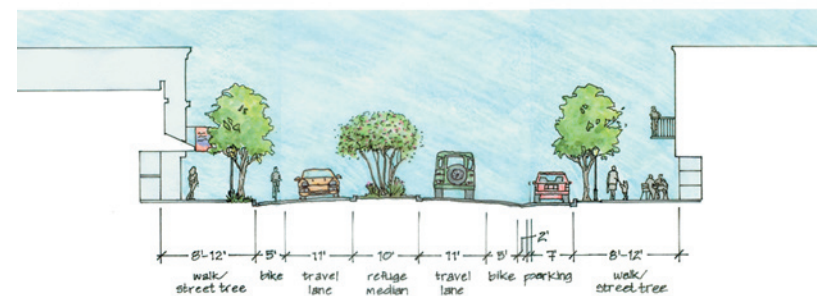
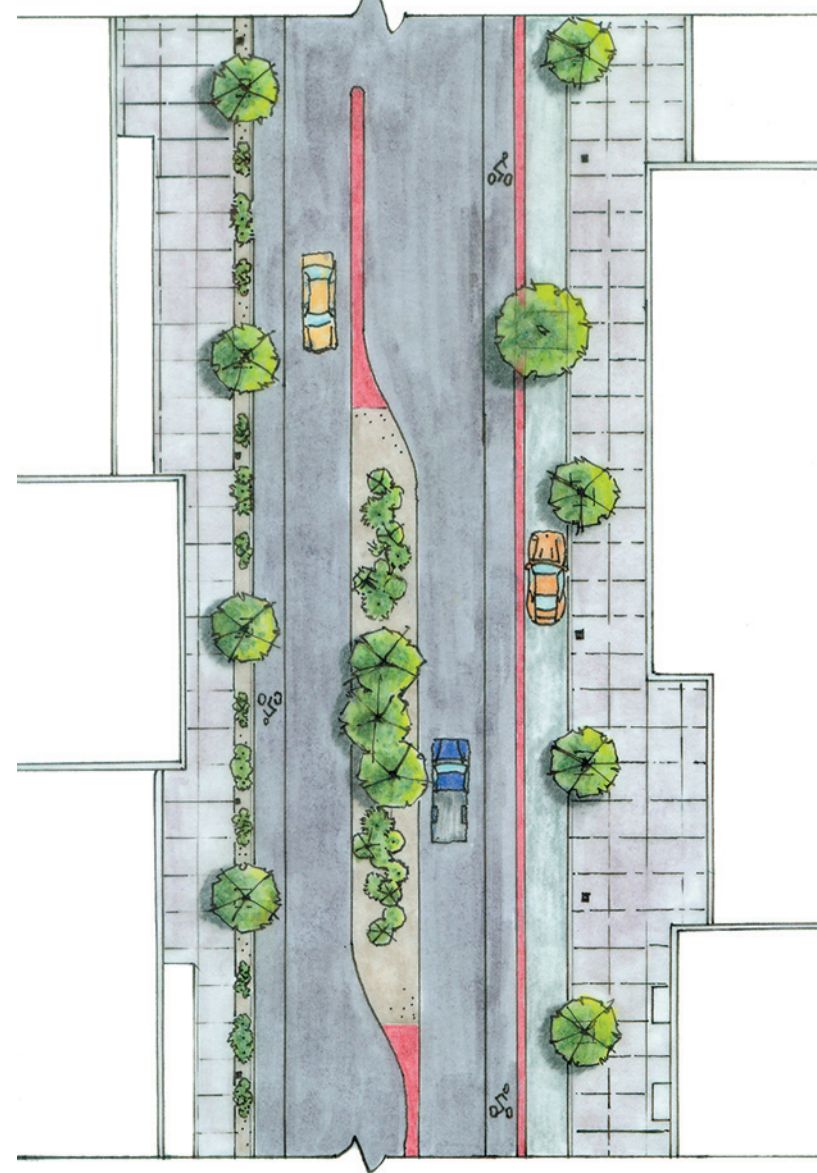
Courthouse Road

Commercial

existing plan & street section

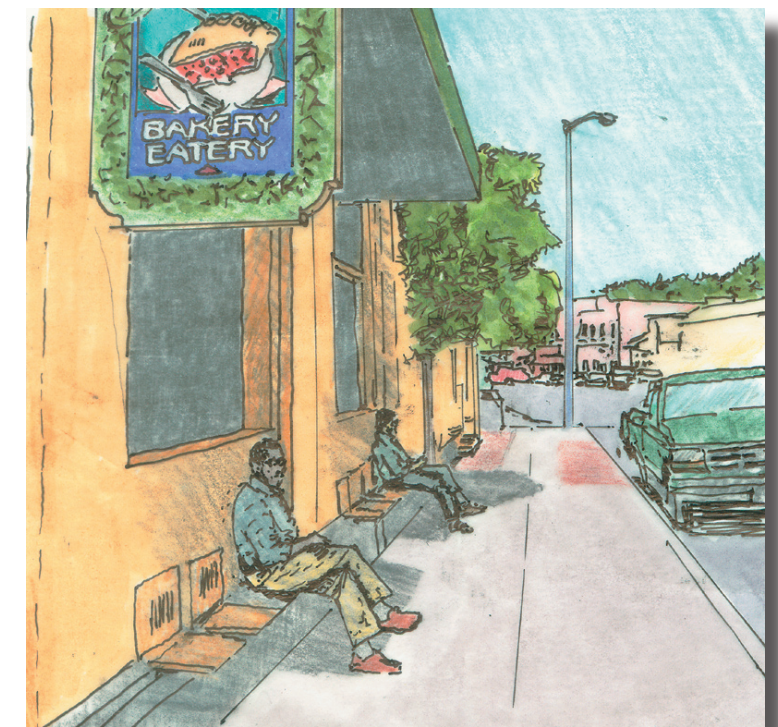


proposed plan & street section



Recommendations

- Invite street activity by allowing for storefront seating
- Provide raised turning median for safety
- Allow for on-street parking with delineated bikeway
- Minimize building set-back to create strong street edge
- Provide on-street trees and xeri-scaping for shade and run-off control



Third Anchor

Community Cultural Center

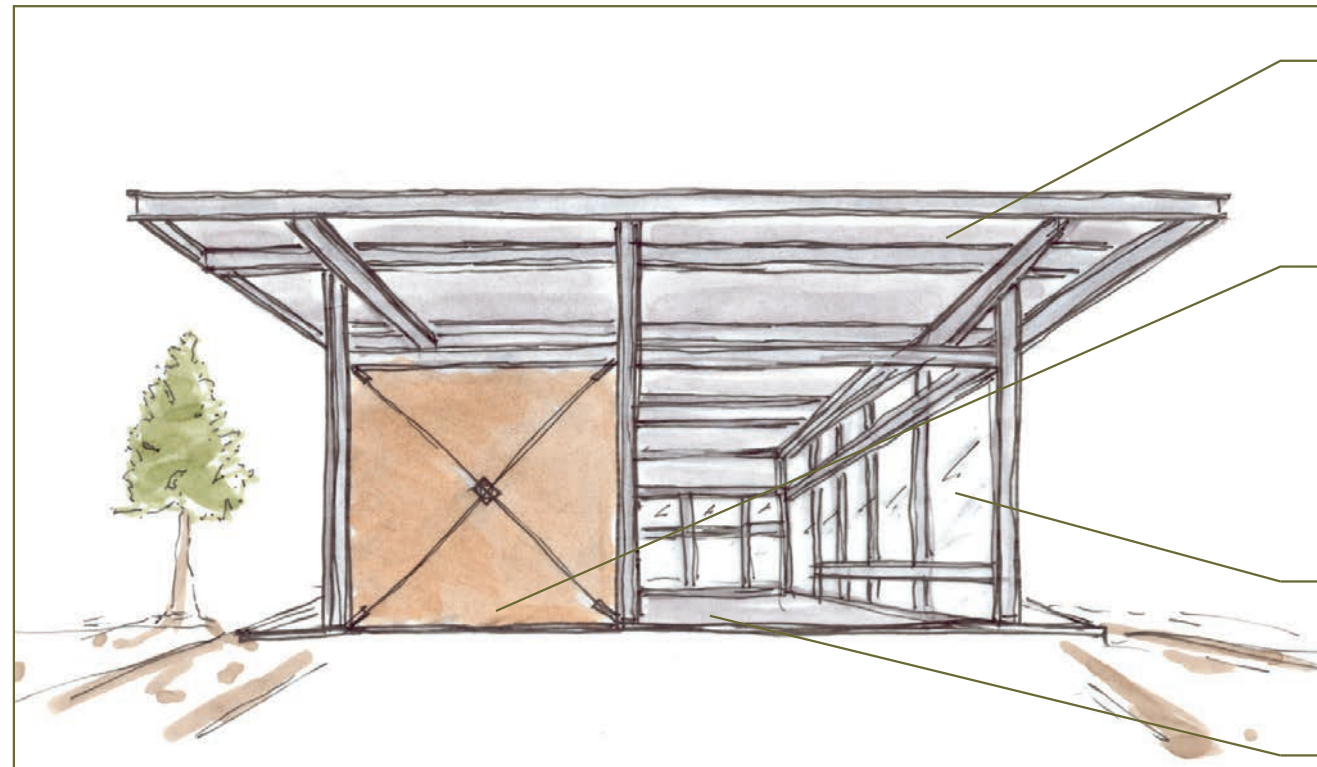
Commercial

Building placement of the third anchor on East/West axis will emphasize the view corridor from transportation center.

Anchor design provides views through the building to the park beyond.

Potential for outdoor performance spaces.

Open, flexible plan to allow for varying programmatic needs and customization of spaces for gallery exhibits or performances.

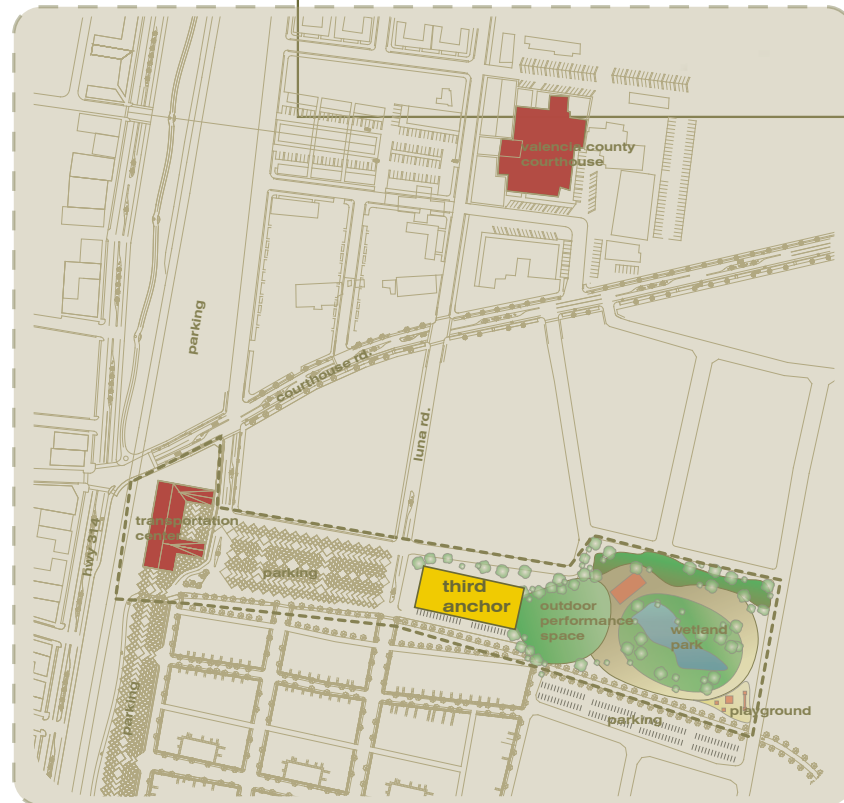


'barn-like' structure derived from agricultural influence

oversized 'barn' doors open for extension of performance space to the adjoining outdoor seating area and park

large display areas for community art

open, flexible plan allows for various exhibitions and performances



Retail Triangle

Commercial

Elements

- Range of Retail Spaces
- Live-work Units
- Relation of 3 Major Anchors to retail triangle commercial development
 - Valencia County Courthouse
 - Transportation Center

Goals

- Transit District Identity
- Lively Activity
- Pedestrian-friendly Development
- Village-scale Store Fronts

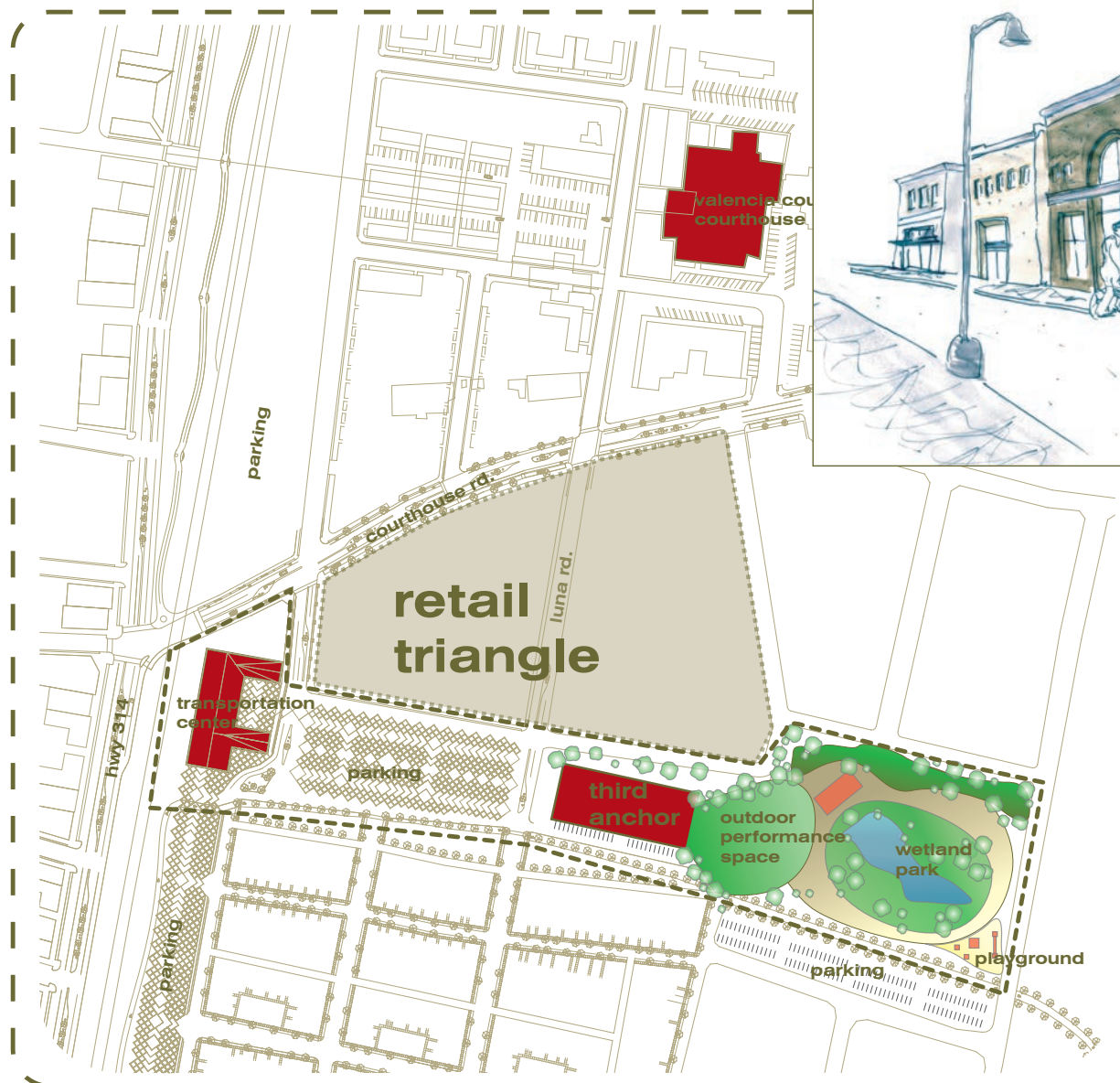
Recommendations

- Medium to large scale retail buildings with retail wrapper buildings to keep commercial development at village-scale and create a walkable retail environment
- Parking accessed from secondary roadway; buildings envelope interior surface parking lots to obscure parking and create a more walkable street front

proposed commercial wrapper buildings + large-medium scale retail



- wrapper buildings can have individual character
- signage opportunities
- lamp posts for security
- awning structures provide shade
- large display windows for retail
- pedestrian friendly wide sidewalks with textured paving



urban regulations_

placement_

1. street frontage--90 percent minimum

parking_

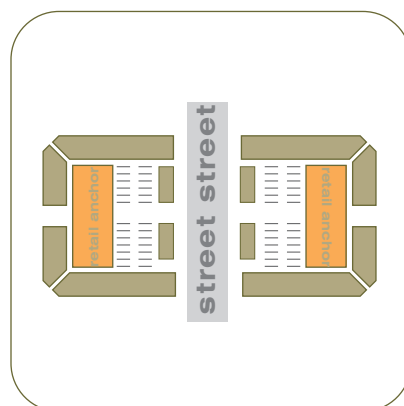
1. interior surface lot
2. off-street parking provided

height and profile_

1. street frontage height--3 storeys maximum at center
2. setbacks--10' minimum for 3rd storey

use_

1. mixed-use--medium-large retail, retail wrapper commercial, and office space



vehicular oriented building type_ description_ retail wrapper buildings with street frontage and pedestrian cut throughs; big box/retail anchor with limited street frontage; vehicular access and interior surface lot suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space between 900--3,000 sqft and retail anchor (smith's, albertson's, walgreen's) between 7,500--50,000 sqft

Retail Triangle

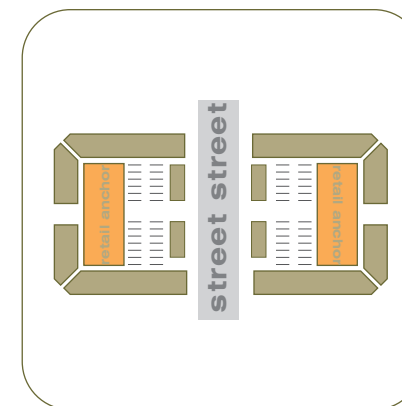
Commercial

Elements

- Range of Retail Spaces
- Live-Work Units
- Medium to Large Scale Retail Anchors
- Retail Wrappers
- Existing Molzen-Corbin Site Plan Proposal

Recommendations

- Keep Molzen-Corbin proposal for Transportation Center site plan and existing plans for parking lot design and soccer field and add 'retail triangle' piece adjacent to transportation center site
- Implement 'retail triangle' scheme--medium to large scale retail anchors with small to medium retail wrapper buildings coupled with a range of mixed-use development
- Create parking access from secondary roadway, with the envelope of buildings obscuring interior surface parking lots and introducing a more walkable street front



vehicular oriented building type
 description_ retail wrapper buildings with street frontage and pedestrian cut throughs; big box/retail anchor with limited street frontage; vehicular access and interior surface lot
 suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space
 between 900--3,000 sqft
 and retail anchor (smith's, albertson's, walgreen's)
 between 7,500--50,000 sqft

Retail Triangle

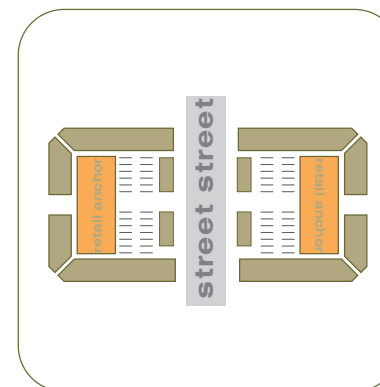
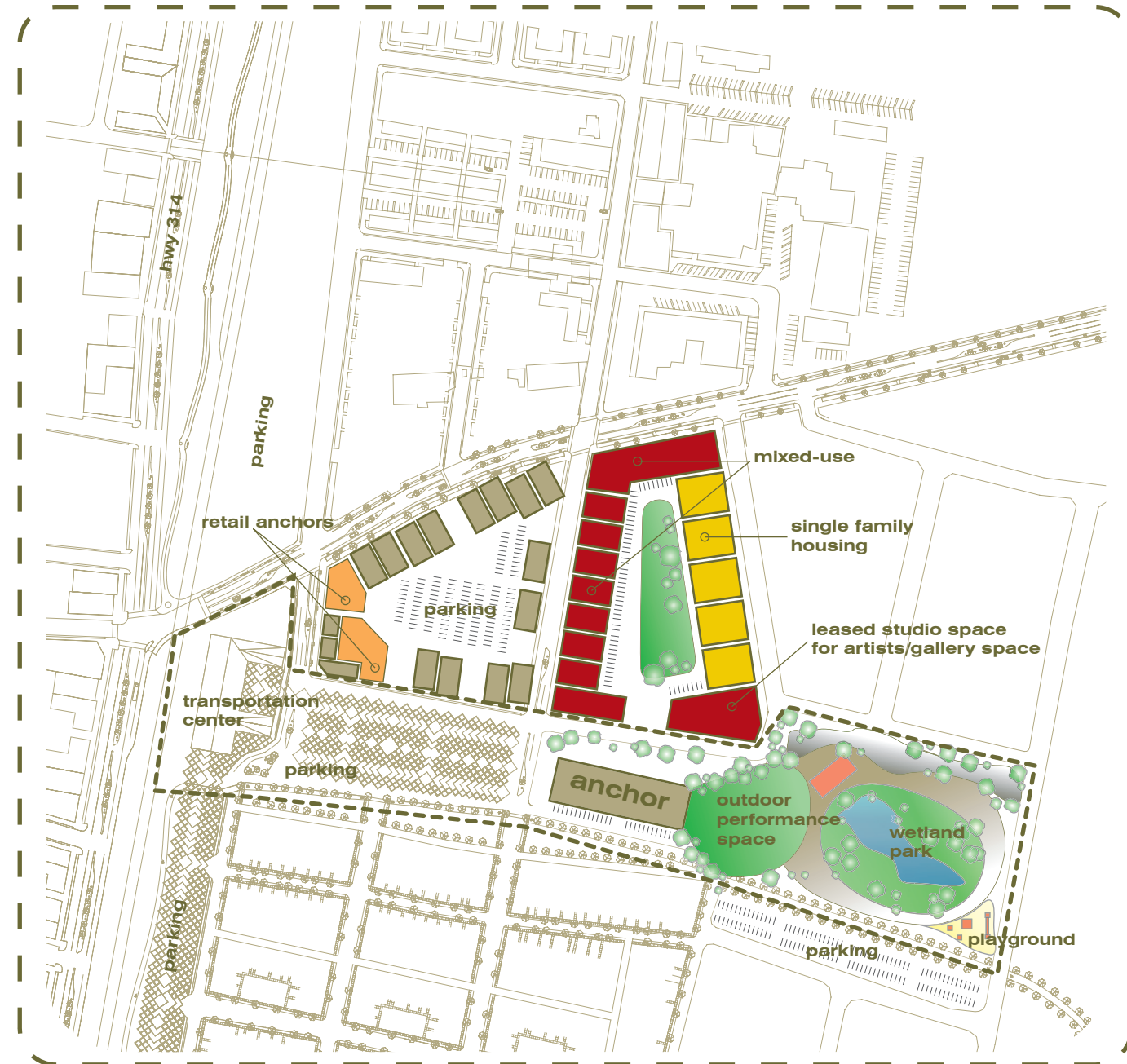
Commercial

Elements

- Range of Retail Spaces
- Live-Work Units
- Single-Family Housing
- Medium to Large Scale Retail Anchors
- Retail Wrappers
- Design Park Area with Wetlands
- Third Anchor
- Relocation of Transportation Center Parking
- Parking Design/Flexible, Open Space

Recommendations

- Replace Molzen-Corbin parking proposal with alternative parking design proposal; re-allocate parking for the Transportation Center along the eastern side of the rail line and setback 25' in accordance with the railroad regulations
- Design parking lot to function as flexible, open space that can be used for both parking and other events
- Rework site plan proposal to accommodate placement of third anchor opposite the Transportation Center
- Consider a designed park with exercise areas, trails, an outdoor performance space, play ground, pavillion, and wetlands rather than a soccer field
- Implement 'retail triangle' scheme--medium to large scale retail anchors with small to medium retail wrapper buildings coupled with a range of mixed-use development; consider development that would support the transportation center and proposed third anchor
- Create parking access from secondary roadway, with the envelope of buildings obscuring interior surface parking lots and introducing a more walkable street front



vehicular oriented building type _
description_ retail wrapper buildings with street frontage and pedestrian cut throughs; big box/retail anchor with limited street frontage; vehicular access and interior surface lot
suggested use_ strip retail (starbucks, subway, blockbuster video, local business) and small office space
between 900--3,000 sqft
and retail anchor (smith's, albertson's, walgreen's)
between 7,500--50,000 sqft

Retail Triangle

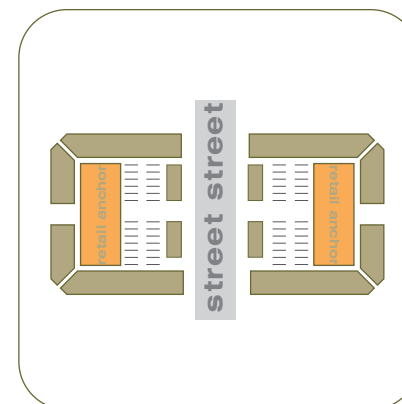
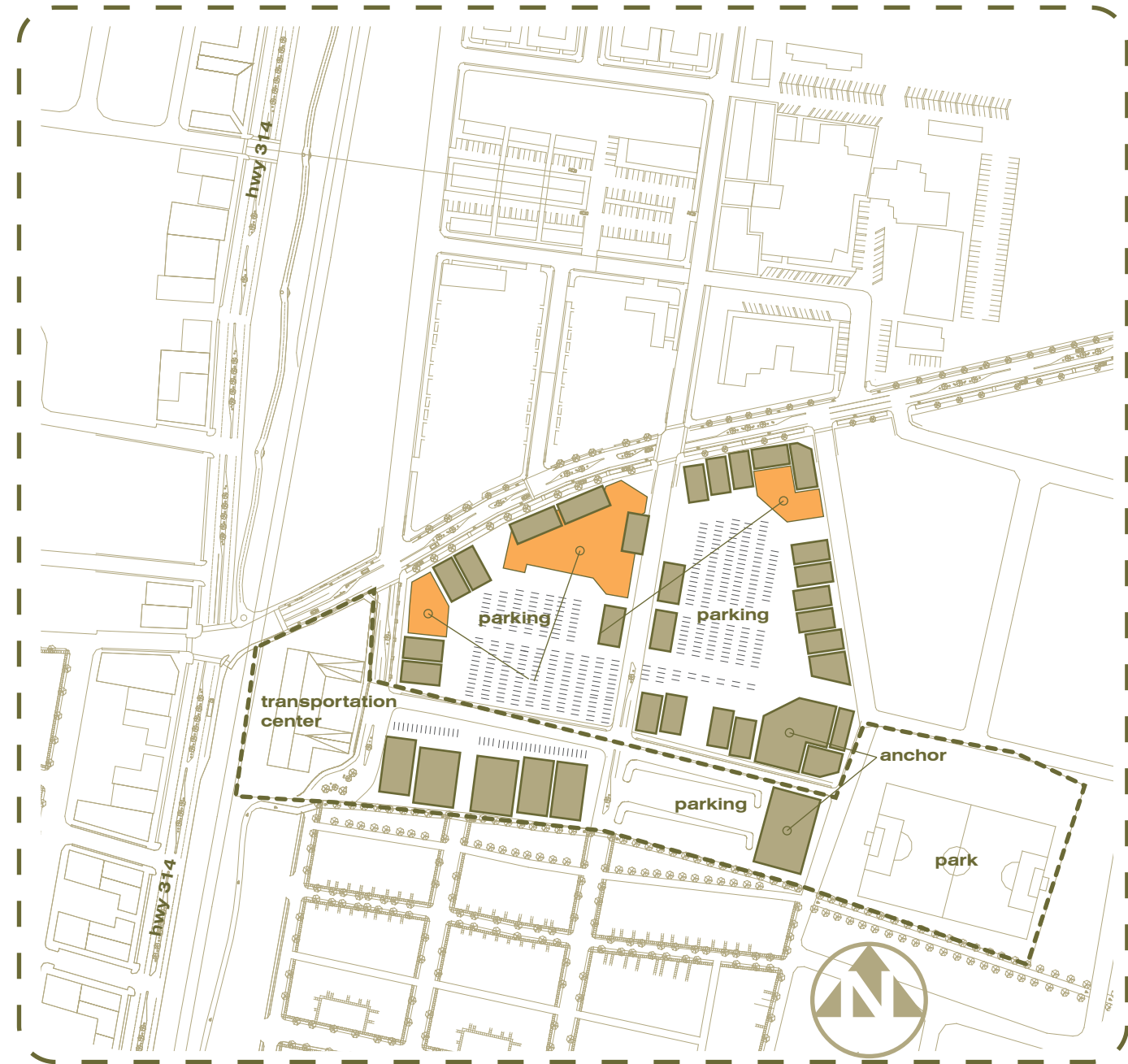
Commercial

Elements

Range of Retail Spaces
 Live-Work Units
 Medium to Large Scale Retail Anchors
 Retail Wrappers
 Third Anchor
 Shared Parking between Transportation Center
 and Retail Triangle

Recommendations

- Rework Molzen-Corbin parking proposal to accommodate mixed-use development; utilize shared parking between Transportation Center and 'retail triangle' piece
- Rework site plan proposal to accommodate placement of third anchor opposite the Transportation Center
- Implement 'retail triangle' scheme--medium to large scale retail anchors with small to medium retail wrapper buildings coupled with a range of mixed-use development; consider development that would support the transportation center and proposed third anchor
- Parking accessed from secondary roadway; buildings envelope interior surface parking lots to obscure parking and create a more walkable street front



vehicular oriented building type
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Strip Retail

Commercial

Strip retail along the west side of the NM-314 corridor is designed to work within existing commercial zoning ordinance for the Village of Los Lunas.

Inclusion of alleyway creates a buffer between existing commercial and residential zoning; provides vehicular access to interior surface lot parking in rear of retail strip, and provides retail with a service drive.

Building types should require a maximum percentage of street frontage to define the street edge and provide an active sidewalk, helping to create more walkable streets.

proposed commercial character



- tree-lined with landscaping
- signage opportunities
- lamp posts
- planters and outdoor seating options
- large display windows for retail
- pedestrian friendly wide sidewalks with textured paving

vehicular oriented



pedestrian oriented



- alley as retail street
- new side street
- pedestrian mall/new street
- new side street
- pedestrian mall/new street

Parking

Commercial

Elements

Third Anchor
Relocation of Transportation Center Parking
Parking Design/Flexible, Open Space

Recommendations

Replace Molzen-Corbin parking proposal with alternative parking design proposal; re-allocate parking for the Transportation Center along the eastern side of the rail line and setback 25' in accordance with the railroad regulations

Design parking lot to function as flexible, open space that can be used for both parking and other events

Rework site plan proposal to accommodate placement of third anchor opposite the Transportation Center

Parking accessed from secondary roadway; buildings envelope interior surface parking lots to obscure parking and create a more walkable street front



_opportunity for public art; emblem with city identity/logo; brick pavers with family names engraved

_proposed sound wall with opportunity for public art/advertising and landscaping

_proposed bike trail along landscaped sound wall

_scored concrete, stained concrete, and/or brick pavers create pattern; landscaping helps to organize circulation and parking and highlight entrances/exits

_existing frontage road with vehicular access to parking

_proposed pedestrian cross walk over train tracks

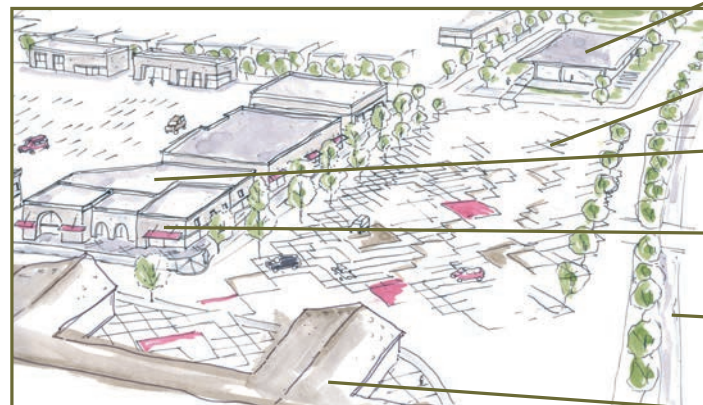
_parking park

the parking park is intended to be a flexible, open space for both parking and other public events

the parking park can be achieved using any variation of the following material palettes:

- _concrete and/or brick pavers to create overall pattern with crusher fines and/or dirt infill
- _stained concrete to create overall pattern
- _poured concrete with score lines to create overall pattern

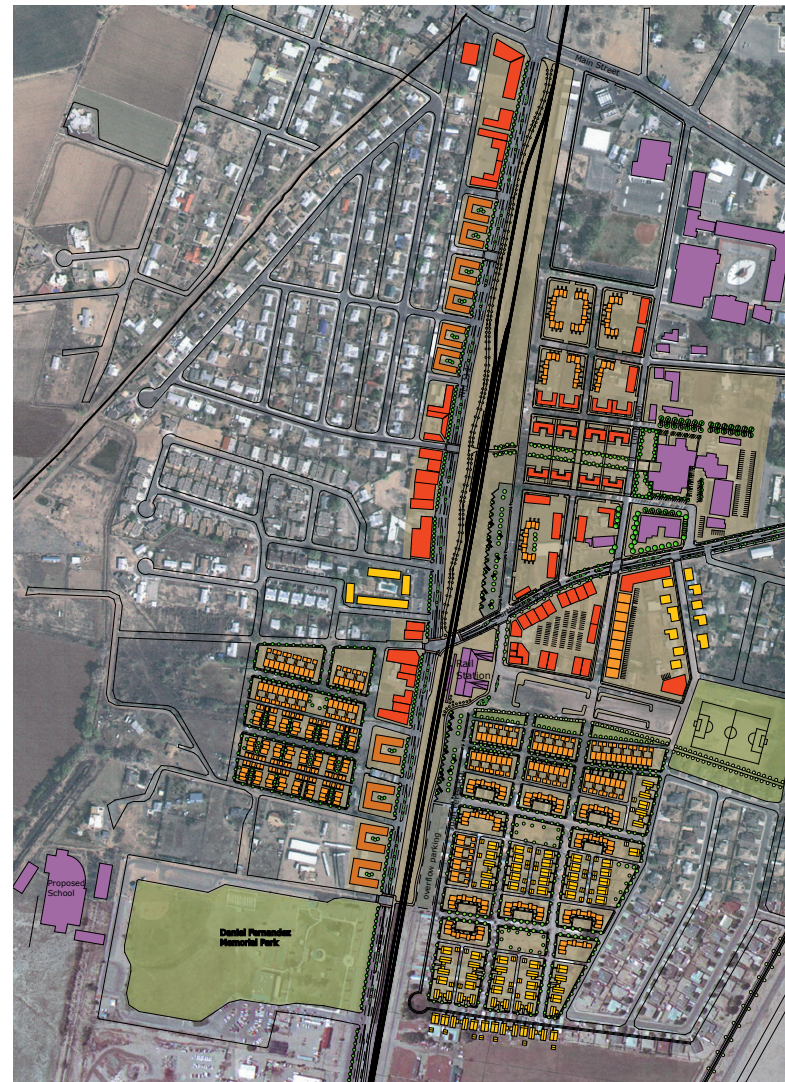
transportation center
anchor, destination commercial
and parking design



- proposed anchor_ cultural community center opposite the transportation center
- parking lot design allows for flexible open space
- retail anchor with wrapper retail_ retail anchor fronts interior surface lot
- wrapper buildings
- bike trail follows southern site boundary
- proposed transportation center

Density

Residential



Locating everyday destinations closer to home and closer together may be a better strategy for growth than building more roads. By siting the majority of proposed housing just a five- to ten-minute walk (1/8-1/4 mile) from the proposed commuter rail station will accomplish three major goals:

1. support the new commuter rail
2. allow for commercial and retail to develop over time
3. improve people's mobility and access.

Propose housing just south of the the commuter rail contains many different types of households, including singles, single parents, some empty nesters, low income and also affordable housing for the elderly. Having a variety of dwelling types allows for younger and older people, single and families, the poor and the wealthy to live together.

Housing along NM-314 fills the voids and strengthens a transit district edge, which helps develop a more prominent streetscape. This housing arrangement creates an important promenade along NM- 314 to the Rail Station and ending at the new Civic Square.

Elements

- Transit-oriented Design Residential Streetscapes
- Range of Square Footages & Typologies
 - Single-family Homes
 - Townhomes & Live-work Units
 - Courtyard Family Units



Goals

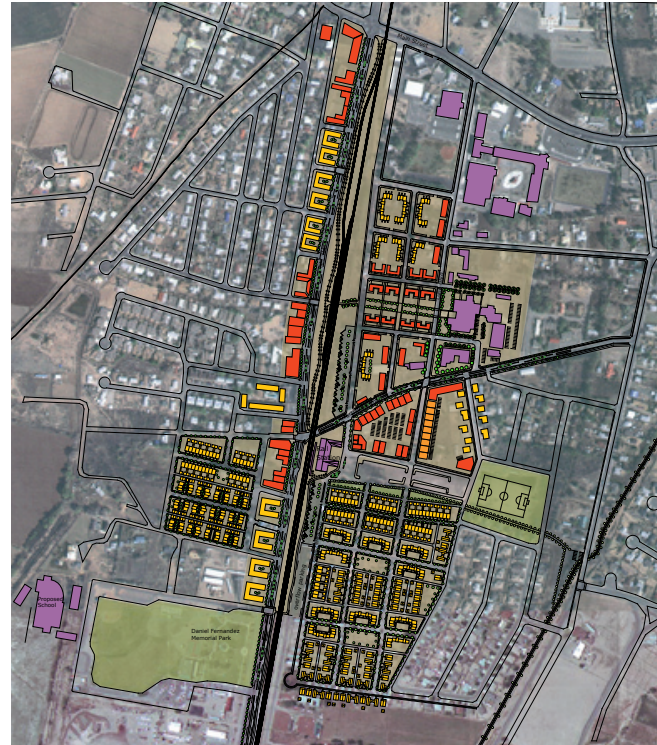
- Diversity
- Range of Housing Options
- Connection to Commuter Rail Station
- Connection to Trail System

Recommendations

A new high-school should be located within the Transit District. The site just west of Daniel Fernandez Memorial Park would be ideal. The adjacent land provides the opportunity to teach agriculture, and its close proximity to the park allows for ball-field sharing. This new high school would relieve crowding at the current high schools and would help support and stimulate growth within the Transit District.

Streetscape

Residential



existing affordable housing



proposed affordable housing



existing residential street



lively, pedestrian-friendly street



Single-family Homes

Residential



Porch in the front creates an inviting communal environment



single-family home precedent



wide sidewalks add to lively, pedestrian-friendly street

75 Units

Two stories

Granny flats

Rent out for Additional income
Support Multi-Generational Household

Garages in the back

Separate Car and Pedestrian
Use Streets for Neighborhood Activities

Two-car garage is moved to the rear, leaving the front a safe pedestrian environment for social activities



alley and rear-garages

Townhomes

Residential



mixed-use units

live-work ground floor office



live-work townhomes



95 Units

Two - Three stories

Live-Work

Ground floor Office/ Studio space

- Garages in the back**
- Proximity to Transit Station**

Courtyard Family Units

Residential



existing apartments



courtyard precedent

350 Units

Affordable Housing for everyone

Shared Open Courtyard Gardens

Ground floor Office/ Studio space

Garages and On-Street Parking
Proximity to Transit Station

proposed courtyard family units



proposed courtyard family units



Multi-modal

Transportation

Multi-modal Transit is an integrated system that provides alternatives to using a car on every trip. A Village-wide transit system links neighborhoods to each other through a safe and comfortable pedestrian realm, a well-connected bike network, bus routes, and other mass transit systems.

This type of multi-modal system will reduce traffic congestion by decreasing the number of vehicles on local roads and increasing alternative methods of getting around for everyone, but especially for those without access to a car such as teens and elderly residents. Reducing automobile traffic has been shown to reduce pollution and help conserve energy and resources, such as gas and land.

Activities in the Village transit district, including retail, the Transportation Center, the Commuter Rail Station, the Courthouse, and the Cultural Center, provide multiple destinations for pedestrians, bikers, and drivers. Providing incentives to walking, such as retail window-shopping and picturesque trails, helps residents to incorporate the health benefits of walking into their day-to-day activities. Increasing the number of pedestrians in this dense commercial and civic district boosts economic development by providing more foot-traffic to local businesses. More lively pedestrian activity on the street also has an incalculable positive effect on the sense of community and camaraderie of Village residents.

Elements

- Multi-Modal transit — bus, shuttle, transit, auto
- Bike connections and facilities
- Pedestrian trails and amenities — sidewalks, destinations, acequias

Goals

- Offer alternatives to the automobile
- Relieve traffic congestion
- Develop transit systems and reduce investments in automobile infrastructure

Recommendations

- Develop the acequia system as a pedestrian/bike/horse environment and link it to transit center and recreation.
- Complete missing sections of bike lanes and sidewalks to increase these types of transportation
- Create more frequent shops and other destinations along the transit lines and at stops. The increased number of people in the area can support more economic development.
- Provide bike facilities such as bike racks



darker-colored roads are potential routes for local bus or shuttle service because of their high traffic volume

Connectivity

Transportation

A well-connected road system provides more immediate access to local destinations, shortening trip length and duration. It distributes vehicular traffic among a hierarchy of streets. This network also encourages more utilitarian and recreational walking and biking by linking local and regional mixed use trails and bike lanes.

Elements

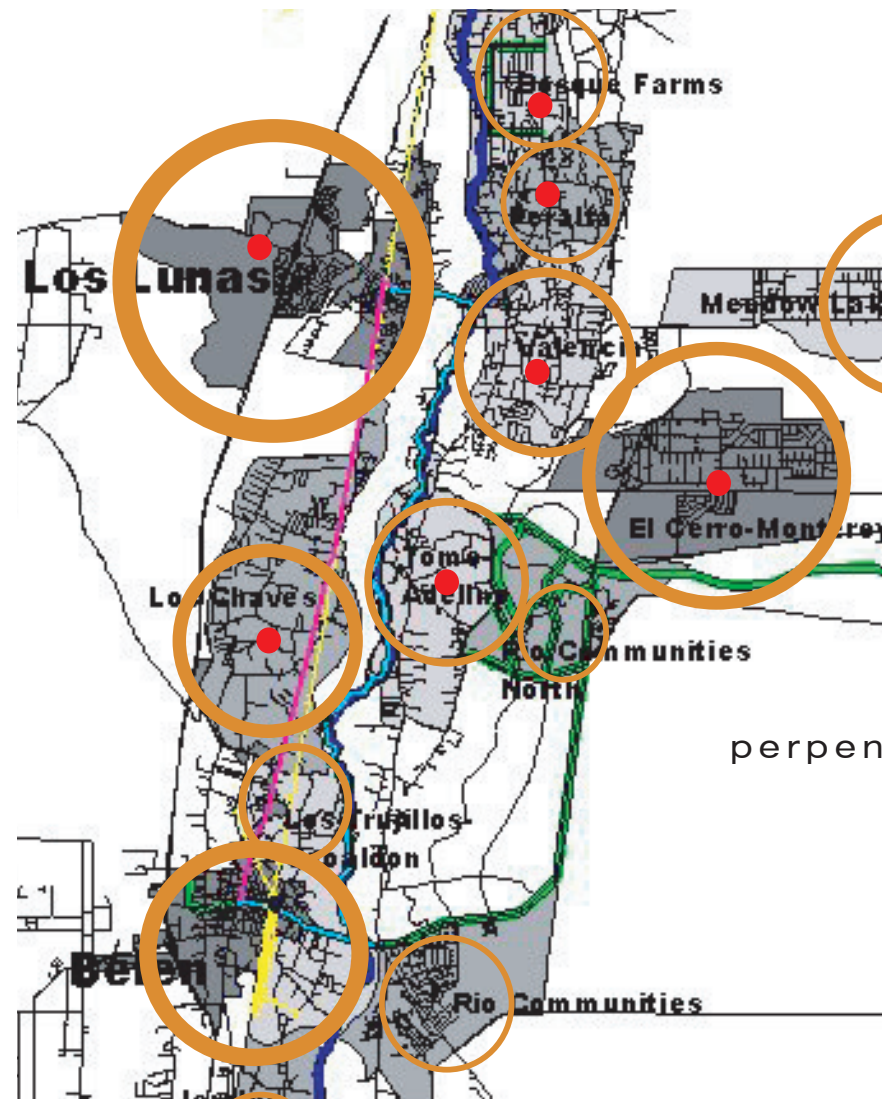
- Road Network
- Proposed Pedestrian Connections
- Regional System

Goals

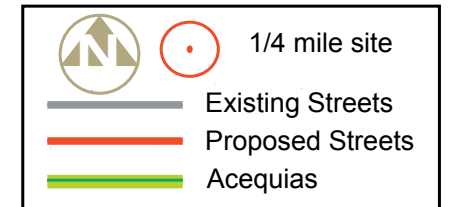
- Increase connectivity of road and trail systems to encourage walking and biking and support transit
- Reduce the number and length of vehicle trips
- Increase pedestrian use to promote health and community development

Recommendations

- Connect deadend roads to establish a network of roads
- Create pedestrian through-ways in cul-de-sacs
- Link acequia and bosque to the street network



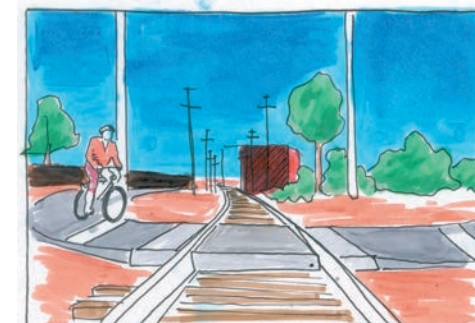
street network



lights, signs, & bollards for safety



perpendicular railroad crossing



Trail System

Transportation

Acequias have traditionally been considered the lifeblood of a community, providing water for crops and supporting community bonds through shared maintenance of the waterways. This community asset can now be used for both recreation and transportation. It also provides an opportunity for ecotourism. Guides can identify local flora and fauna and provide an opportunity similar to Bosque del Apache.

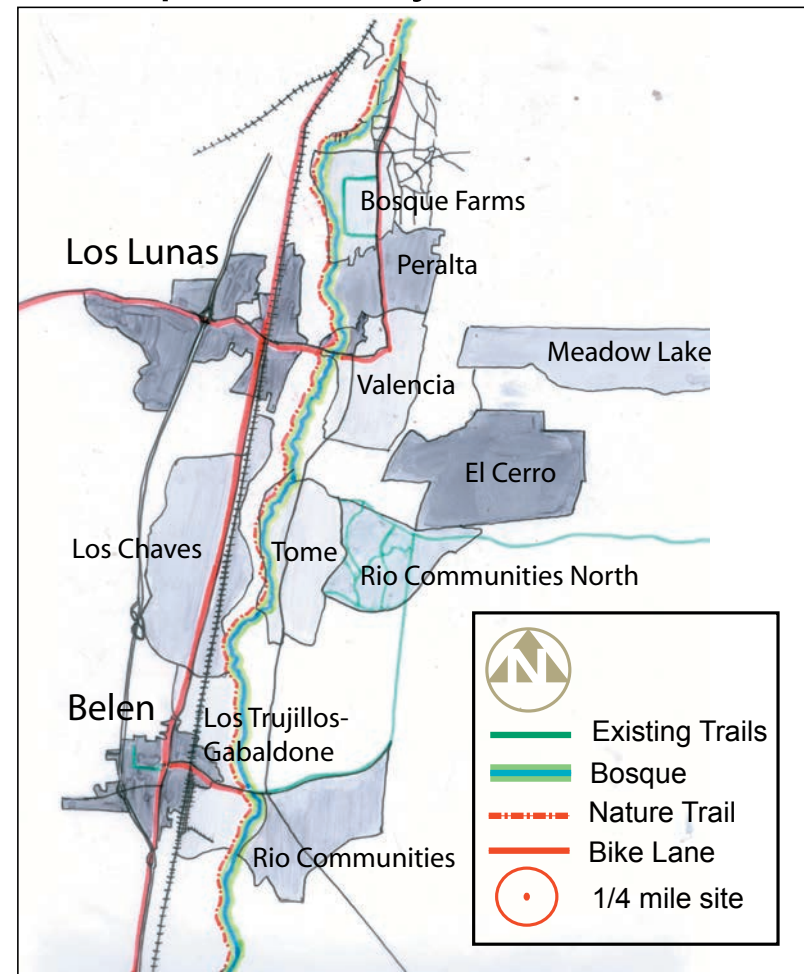
Elements

- Mixed use trail system
- Open Space
- Road crossings

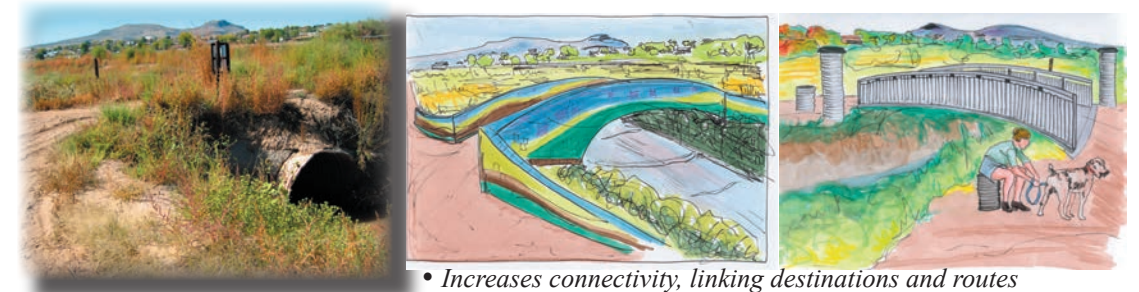
Goals

- Connect residential, commercial and open space
- Interface with road network and bike lanes
- Establish lateral connections to acequia system

Proposed Bicycle Network



acequia bridge



- Increases connectivity, linking destinations and routes
- Creates an identity for the trail system through repetition of design
- Serves as an opportunity for public art

trail character



- Preserves rural character within the urban environment
- Uses design elements, such as lighting, benches, signs and trail markers, soil cement paving, safety guard rails

wildlife corridor

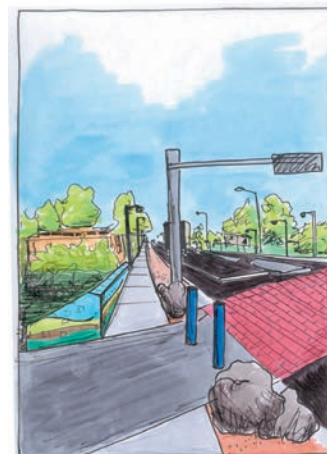


- Preserves network of natural, open space
- Serves as an opportunity for birdwatching, ecotourism

existing trail crossing



proposed trail crossing



trail section



Streetscape

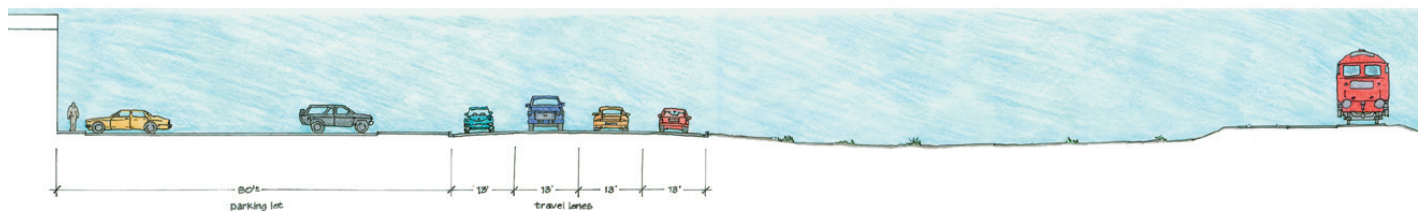
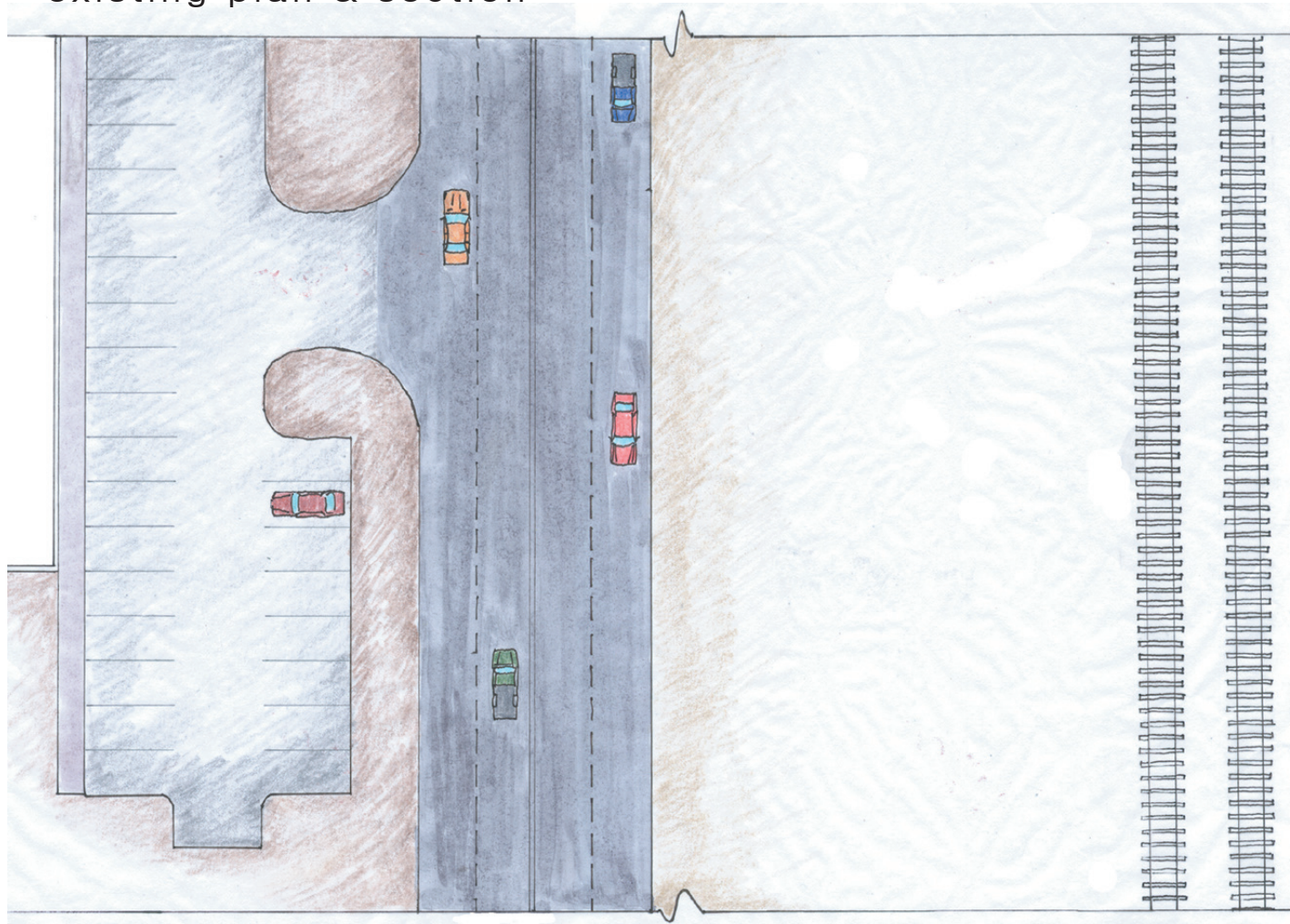
NM-314

Transportation

Recommendations

- Provide sidewalks with buffer from traffic with on-street parking and plant strip
- Narrow travel lanes to reduce speed
- Provide refuge medians and turning lanes
- Minimize building set-back to create strong street edge

existing plan & section



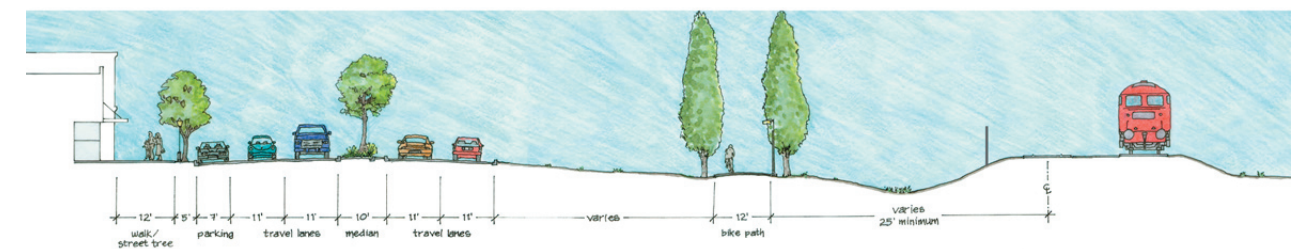
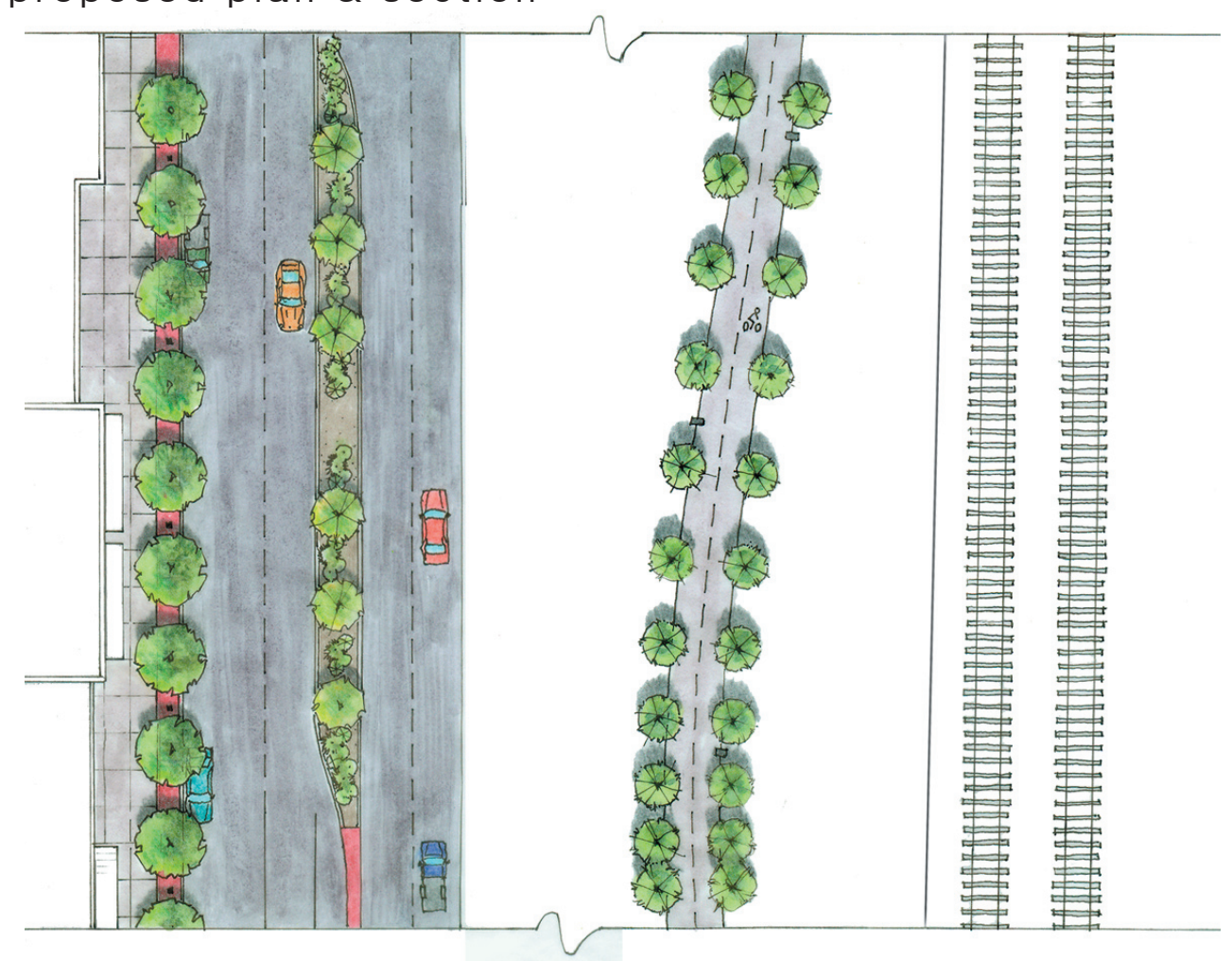
existing view



bike path



proposed plan & section



Safety

Transportation

Street Parking

- A row of cars as a buffer between the pedestrian and street traffic.
- Reduced vehicle speed
- Benefits adjacent land-use for easy access

Sidewalk

- Wide enough to accommodate passing people
- Sidewalk seating to enhance street life
- Bulb at corners for a shorter street crossing distance
- Street vendors to enliven the sidewalk
- Storefronts open to the sidewalk — more inviting and safer
- Street edge created by limiting building setbacks and rear parking
- Street furniture such as benches, trashcans, and street lamps to provide a sense of scale and encourage people to stop and interact

Connected land uses and neighborhoods

- Create pedestrian crossings for ease of use and safety by clear markings and signaling. Mid-block crosswalks provide alternate locations for pedestrians to cross the street when intersection crossings are infrequent.

Crosswalks

- Changing the texture and color of the paving over a crosswalk can provide clear designations for both the driver and pedestrian for safe places to cross the street. An advantage to providing a material change in the crosswalk is that repainting is not necessary.

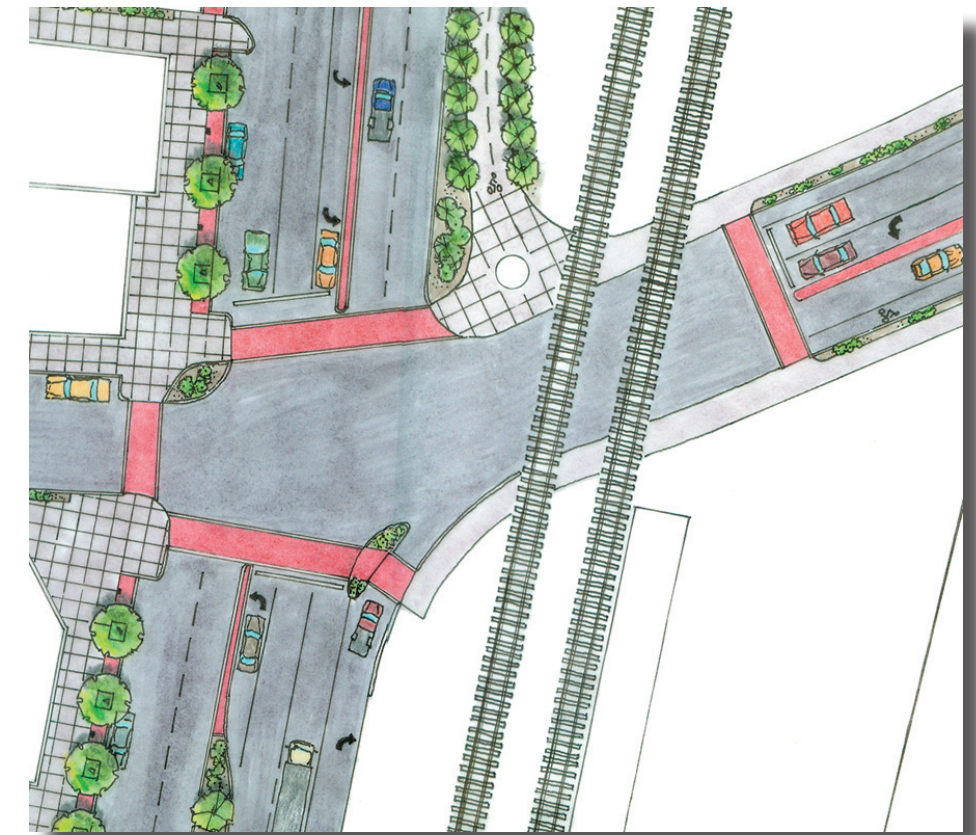
Street Trees

Advantages

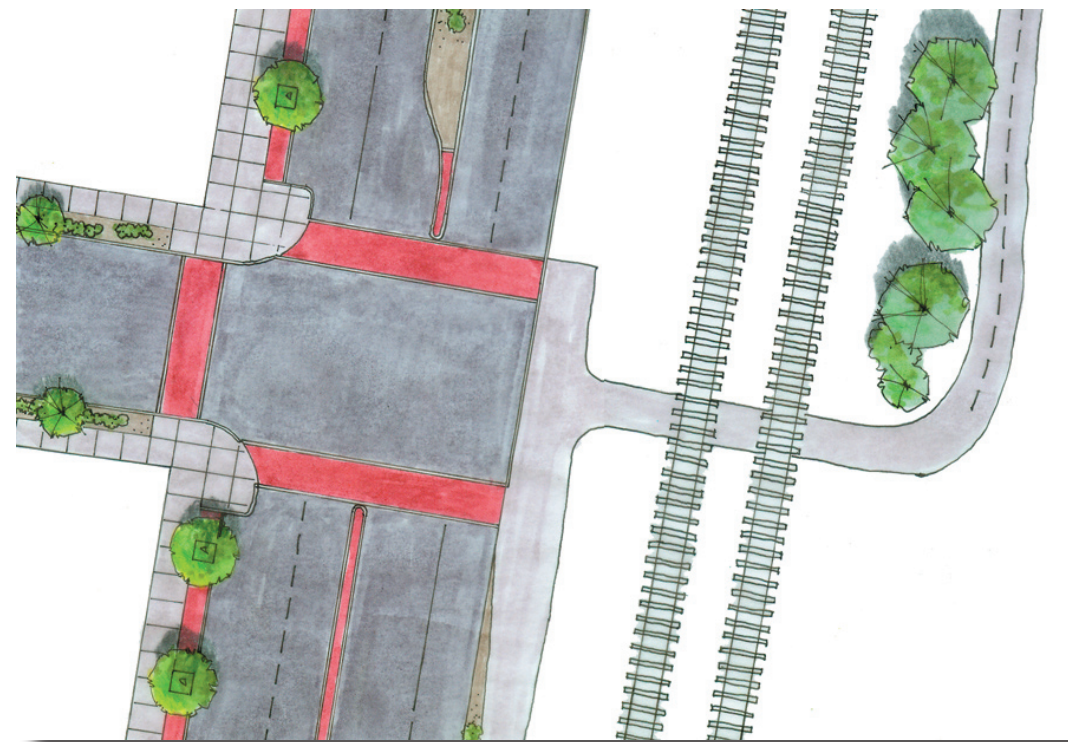
- Shade protection
- Provides local bird habit
- Aesthetic enhancement
- Create unified street image

Disadvantages

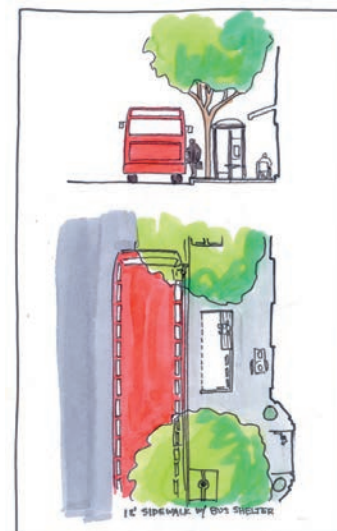
- Requires maintenance
- Will need irrigation until established



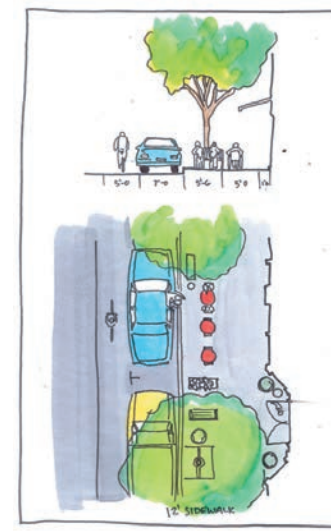
midblock crossing from NM-314 to bike trail



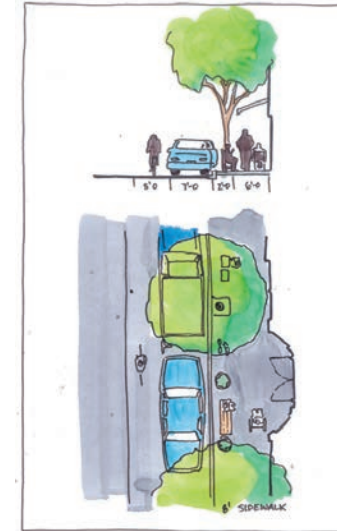
bus section



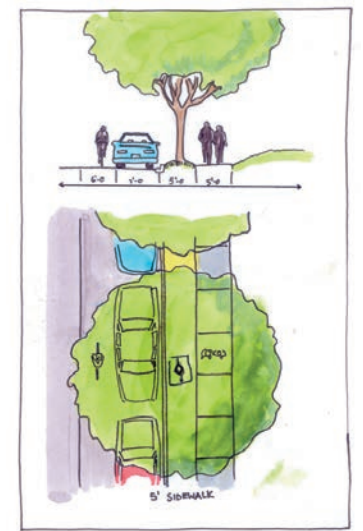
12-foot sidewalk



8-foot sidewalk



5-foot sidewalk



Transit District

Public Art

Public art presents a unique opportunity to create an identity for the district. The area within a ten-minute walking radius of the commuter rail station has the potential to develop in a fun, new direction. Increased numbers of residences and shops will encourage a vibrant community street life. This can be enlivened by the strategic placement of public art. Repetition of design elements, such as streetlights with banners, or way-finding signs can begin to develop the language of a place. Artists can be commissioned to design gateways to the area, sculptural elements, or structures such as bridges over the acequias. Intersections and stopping points along the mixed-use trails are places that are prioritized.

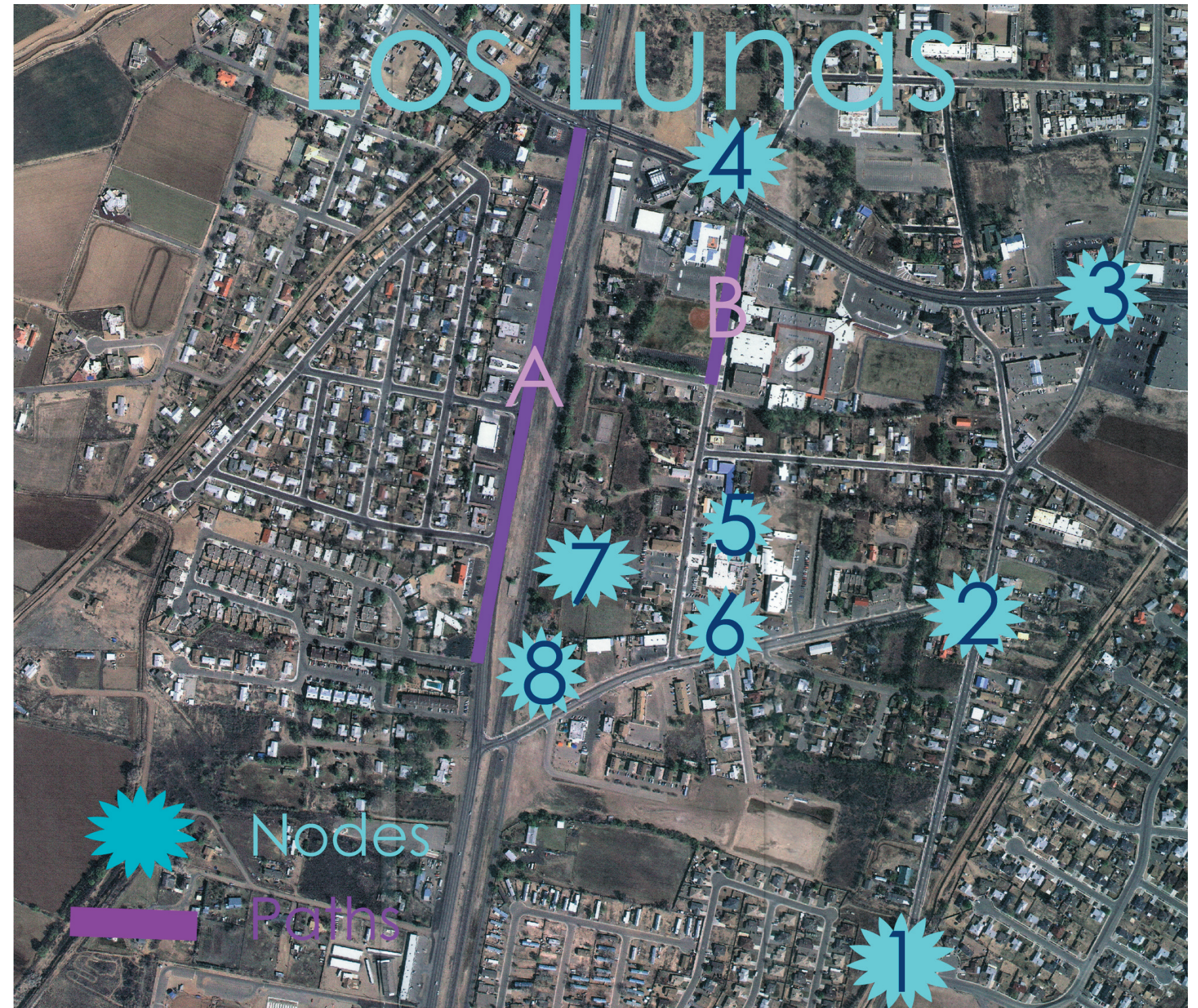
Elements

Nodes

- Gateways
- Bridges
- Statues
- Mosaics

Paths

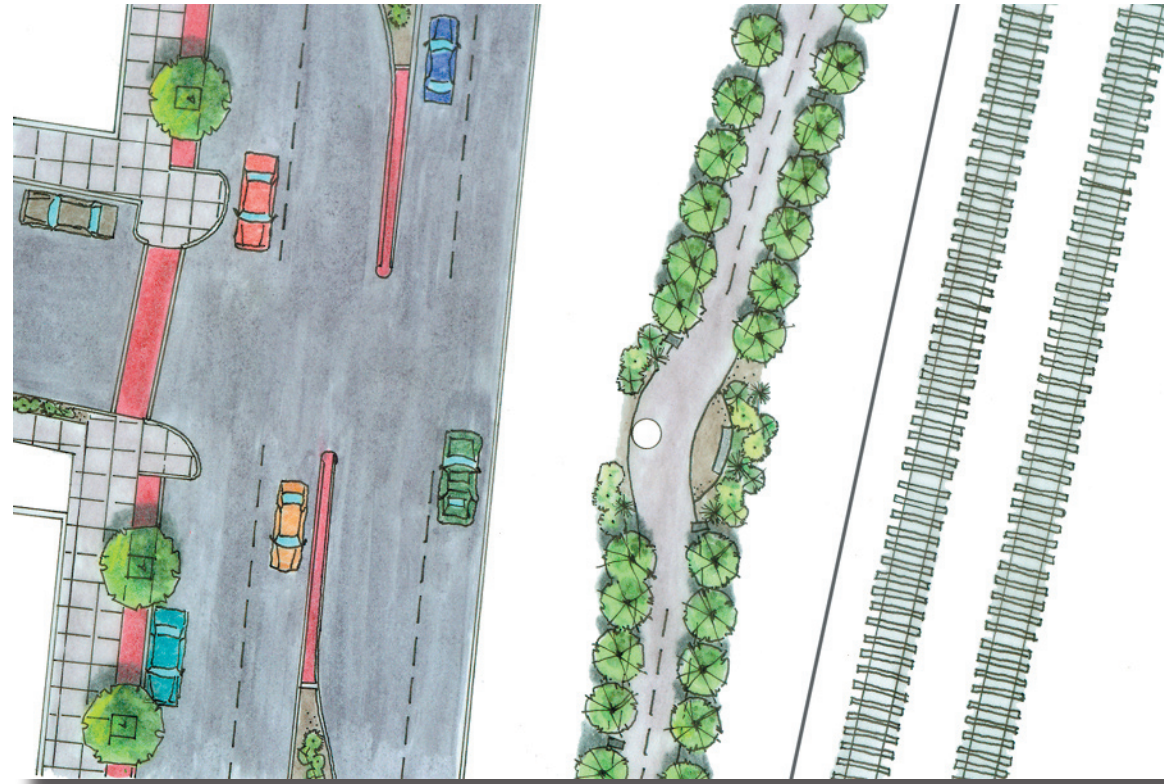
- Railings
- Soundwalls
- Sidewalks
- Pavements



Nodes

Public Art

art as transition



gateways



bridges



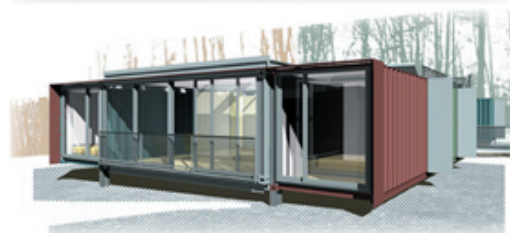
statues



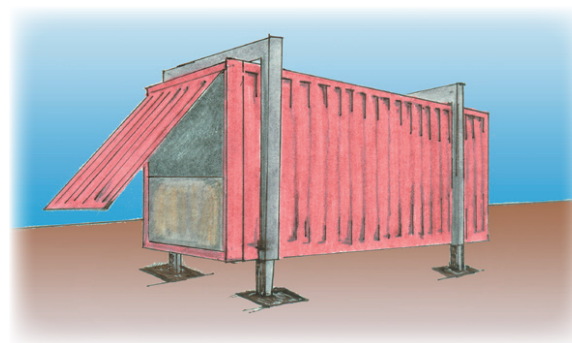
sculptures



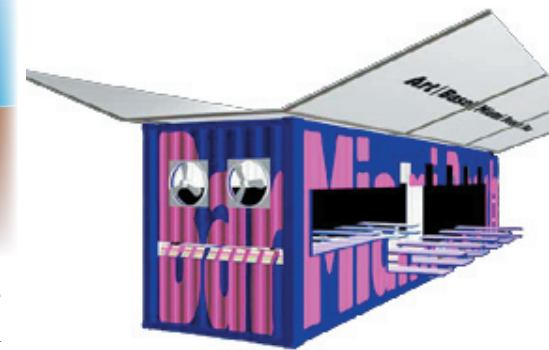
container architecture



Jones, Partners: Architecture



Container architecture consists of an 8' by 20' cargo container that lends itself to the train-car transportability. This kiosk can be located anywhere within the transit district and can serve as a coffee shop, a small retailer, or a newsstand. A self contained unit with flip-up doors and windows can be secured when not in use. Its mobility would allow for the vendor to find the best location for business.



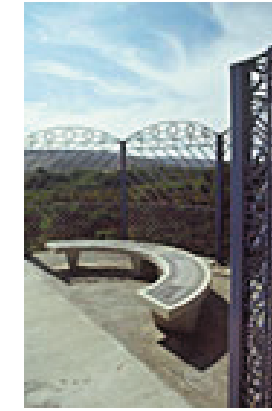
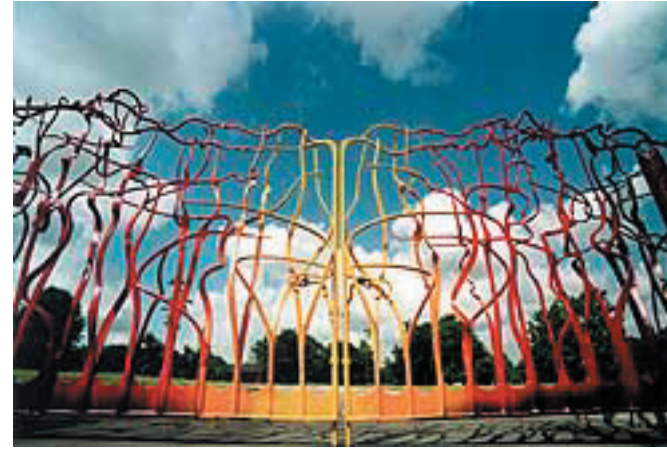
Lot-ek



Paths

Public Art

r a i l i n g s



p a v e m e n t s



s i d e w a l k s



f e n c e s



s o u n d w a l l s



Art Bike Program

Public Art

Put them at Nodes to mark a transitional space

Taken as a whole, they help establish character of district and enrich the sense of place

Provide an inexpensive art opportunity for individuals or community organizations. Tie in to the schools. Fund a Village-wide design competition



Art Train

Public Art

gallery space in box car provides local artists an opportunity to show their work



funding and promotion of tourism gift shop and restrooms in box car



as art objects, these cars provide a unique opportunity for community-based art projects



flat car



freight car



tank car

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Photo Precedents

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