



# TRANSPORTATION CENTER MASTER PLAN

UPDATE 2018

PREPARED BY:





## **VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS RESOLUTION 19-03**

### **A Resolution of the Village of Los Lunas Adopting the Transportation Center Master Plan Update 2018, which Amends the 2013 Transportation Center Master Plan**

**WHEREAS, THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS COUNCIL**, the governing body of the Village of Los Lunas, has retained the authority to adopt master plans for the physical development of areas within its planning and platting jurisdiction as authorized by Chapter 3, Article 19, NMSA 1978, and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 3, Article 19 permits the adoption of a master plan in parts provided that the part corresponds with one of the functional subdivisions of the subject matter of the plan or any part thereof, and

**WHEREAS**, in 2013, the original Transportation Center Master Plan was created to demonstrate and guide desired development surrounding the Los Lunas Transportation Center and Rail Runner Station; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission, acting as advisor to the Village in matters related to planning has reviewed and recommended the Transportation Center Master Plan Update 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2013, there have been changes in the transportation center area that are reflected in the updated 2018 plan; and

**WHEREAS**, adoption by the Village of Los Lunas Mayor and Council demonstrates their commitment to smart, planned development in the area surrounding the transportation center.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE VILLAGE OF LOS LUNAS, COUNTY OF VALENCIA, STATE OF NEW MEXICO, as follows:**

**That the Village of Los Lunas approves the Transportation Center Master Plan Update 2018.**

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Governing Body of the Village of Los Lunas this 7<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2019.

**APPROVED:**

  
Charles Griego, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Gregory D. Martin, Village Administrator

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## Village of Los Lunas

Mayor Charles Griego

Councilman Christopher Ortiz - District 1

Councilman Gino Romero - District 2

Councilman Gerard Saiz - District 3

Councilman Phillip Jaramillo - District 4

Christina Ainsworth, AICP, CBO, Community  
Development Director

Erin Callahan, AICP, Special Projects  
Planner

Ralph Mims, MCP, Economic Development  
Manager

***Special thanks to the Village of Los Lunas  
residents***

## Consultant Team

**Sites Southwest, LLC**

George Radnovich, ASLA

Phyllis Taylor, AICP

Rosemary Dudley

Madeline Jacknin

Michael Wright

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	2
History	2
Vision	4
Village Center Goals	4
Recent Accomplishments	7
Changes to Come	8
 <b>II. Market Analysis</b>	 <b>11</b>
Market Characteristics	12
Market Opportunities	16
 <b>III. The Master Plan</b>	 <b>17</b>
A Mix of Uses	18
Outdoor Civic Space	18
Circulation	20
 <b>IV. Implementation</b>	 <b>21</b>
Implementation Strategies	22
Additional Land Acquisition	23
Development Guidance	24
Collaboration	25



**Figures**

Figure 1. Plan Boundaries	3
Figure 2. Phase II Improvements	7
Figure 3. Context Map	9
Figure 4. Master Plan	19

**Charts**

Chart 1. Annual Growth	12
Chart 2. Residential Permits	12

**Tables**

Table 1. Demographics, 2016	13
Table 2. Los Lunas' Employment In Key Industries, 2016	14



# I. INTRODUCTION

## Background

The Transportation Center has long been an area of focus within the Village of Los Lunas (the Village). Since the 2013 Transportation Center Master Plan and the 2015 Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Plan were completed, the Village has acquired additional land, several parcels are now developed, and many of the recommendations have been completed. Because the area is a designated MRA, there are a range of possibilities for development and redevelopment. The local economy is booming and Village-wide economic development, branding, and quality of life projects have created opportunities that may not have existed when the last plans were completed. Thus, this plan serves as the Transportation Center Master Plan and MRA Plan update.

## History

The Transportation Center consists of the train station building and the courtyards, plazas, and parking lots around it, yet it is considered the heart of the envisioned mixed-use Village Center. Since 2008, the Transportation Center has been the focus of many planning efforts, all of which envision it surrounded by a Village Center made up of high-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development and community amenities. The plans include:

**Los Lunas Transportation Center/Station Area Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan Report (MRA)**, November 2015. The area surrounding the Transportation Center was designated as a Metropolitan Redevelop-



ment Area (Resolution No. 15-22), which is prioritized for redevelopment (see Figure 1 for MRA boundary). The report outlined projects and actions the Village could take to encourage redevelopment of the Transportation Center area. The MRA Plan identified goals and objectives based on public input and the Village's vision, which guide this update.

The Village of Los Lunas is the project sponsor for this update, and the Community Development and Community Services Departments will have primary responsibility for initiating the projects and programs for the MRA that are identified.

**Los Lunas Transportation Center Phase II Master Plan**, July 2013. The master plan focused on the Transportation Center site (see Figure 1 for plan boundary), including landscaping, plazas, as well as parking and drainage areas (see Figure 2) on Village-owned properties. It also explored options

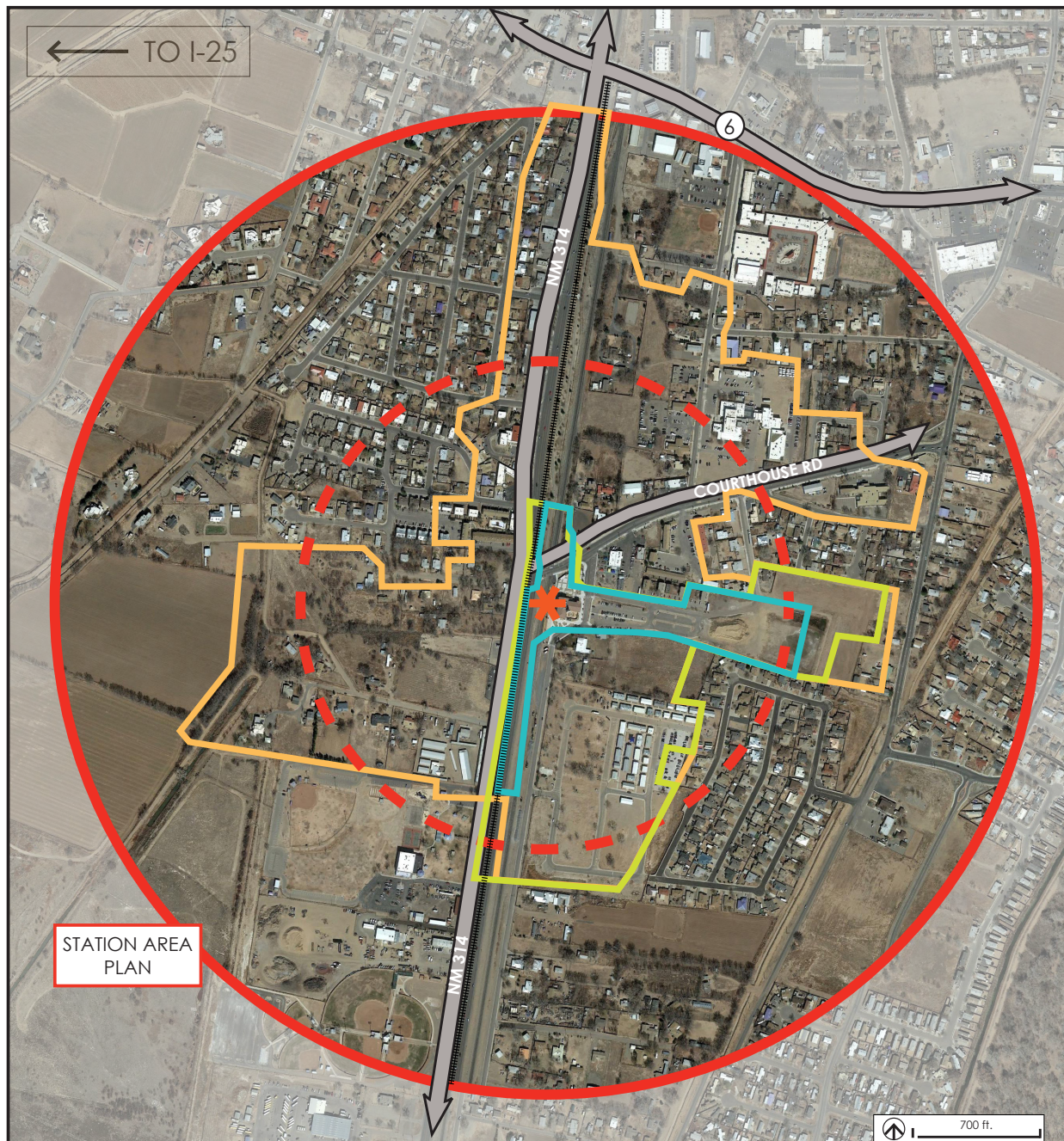
and a final concept for the redevelopment of surrounding underutilized properties into a Village Center.

**Los Lunas Master Transportation Plan**, July 2013. The Village adopted its Master Transportation Plan to guide the Village's transportation improvements. This plan identified the Transportation Center as an area ideal for transit-oriented development and reiterated the goals set forth in the Master Plan and Station Area Plan.

**Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station Area Plan**, May 2008. The Station Area Plan focused on the Rail Runner Express Station adjacent to the Transportation Center, and served as the foundation for the Master Transportation Plan. The plan identified goals and design controls for a Mixed-Use Core within a quarter-mile of the Transportation Center and a Station Area between a quarter-mile and a half-mile from the Center.



**FIGURE 1. PLAN BOUNDARIES**



**LEGEND**

- Transportation Center
- Railroad Tracks
- MRA Plan Boundary
- Transportation Center Phase II Master Plan Boundary
- Station Area Plan's Mixed-Use Core Boundary
- Station Area Plan Boundary (1/2-Mile from Transportation Center)
- Station Area Plan's 1/4-Mile from Transportation Center

## Vision

The vision for the area was set forth in the Station Area Plan and echoed in the MRA Plan and subsequent plans. The vision is consistent with the overarching vision for the Village of Los Lunas to maintain its small town character while attracting sustainable economic development and a range of housing options and amenities.

*“A vibrant, walkable Village Center that serves local residents and visitors, provides a variety of attainable housing options, promotes economic development, and supports increased Rail Runner and transit ridership.”*

## Village Center Goals

The MRA and the 2035 Comprehensive Plan established goals for the Village Center. These goals are outlined in the following sections as a reminder that all proposed development and improvements should be aligned with them.

### MRA

The MRA designates the Transportation Center, Rail Runner Express Station, and surrounding area a focal point for community activity and a prime location for mixed-use development. To this end, the goals for the MRA are enforced in this update:

- Provide a range of land uses around the Los Lunas Rail Runner Express Station that will create a destination and provide opportunities for a wide range of residential lifestyles, work environments, retail, entertainment, and services.
- Provide a safe, active, and inclusive community around the station that supports community participation and transit ridership for residents of all incomes.

- Encourage the development of the station area as a retail and service destination for commuters, local residents, and visitors.

- Develop a strong identity and character for the station area through high quality architectural and streetscape design in order to foster an attractive walking environment.

- Improve the circulation system in Los Lunas by providing transportation choice and enhanced connectivity through improved transportation within and around the station area.

- Provide an appropriate supply of parking for station area land uses, while avoiding an oversupply of parking.



## 2035 Comprehensive Plan

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan for Los Lunas also identified goals for the Village. The following goals are enforced in this plan update to guide improvements and development around the Transportation Center:

### **FUTURE LAND USE AND GROWTH**

- **Preserve the rural character of the community.**
- **Create a town center in the Village.**
- **Improve facilities in existing annexed and developed areas.**
- **Implement zoning policies that achieve a desirable mix of different land uses and densities, preserve existing neighborhood character, and respect the rights of private property owners.**
- **Allow and encourage appropriate commercial development in Los Lunas to create a stable and sufficient revenue source that will permit the Village government to perform necessary services.**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

- **Prevent flooding and protect public health, safety, and welfare by requiring storm water and drainage plans for all new development.**
- **Maintain arroyos and drainageways in their natural condition and minimize the destruction of native flora and habitat.**

All of the parcels within the MRA boundary are within a 100-year floodplain.<sup>1</sup> The AE floodplain designation will affect development in the future by making it more cumbersome and possibly more expensive to develop. Insurance is more expensive in the floodplain and buildings are required to obtain an elevation certificate and to raise elevation to meet base flood elevations. The Village of Los Lunas continually takes actions to mitigate flood hazards upstream to reduce the risk of flooding in this region.

<sup>1</sup> Areas within the 100-year floodplain is defined as “areas subject to inundation by the 1-percent-annual-chance flood event determined by detailed methods.” This floodplain is also referred to as Zone AE or AE floodplain. <https://www.fema.gov/zone-ae-and-a1-30>

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

- **Provide equal access and distribution of all public services to properties throughout Los Lunas.**
- **Provide diversified parks and recreational facilities and services throughout the Village in areas convenient to residential developments.**
- **Maintain a high quality standard for existing parks. Design new parks to maintain high quality standards.**
- **Explore ways to preserve open space in suitable areas.**
- **Develop a system of pedestrian and bicycle trails to provide recreational opportunities as well as connectivity between parks, schools and neighborhoods.**



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to develop and promote the Village of Los Lunas Community Brand Essence and establish a positive image for the Village.
- Continue to support a diverse mix of economic development and employment opportunities that balance social, economic and environmental values and goals.
- Encourage regional economic development efforts with coordination amongst the Village, County and various economic development groups.
- Create a tourism program that showcases the region's culture and heritage.

## HOUSING

- Encourage the development of a variety of housing types to meet the current and future needs of the community.



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Improve the visual appearance of public areas and corridors.
- Define and protect neighborhoods in the Village that have distinct character.
- Preserve community history and culture.
- Reinforce community identity through new public and private developments.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Provide access and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Improve access to transit service.



# Recent Accomplishments

Los Lunas has accomplished many of the goals it has set out to achieve. Since the decision to provide a station for the Rail Runner adjacent to the Transportation Center in 2006, the Village has followed the strategies in its adopted plans, making progress towards the vision of a mixed-use Village Center. The Transportation Center building was completed in 2015.

## Exterior Improvements

In 2016, the Village completed Phase II improvements that enhance amenities for the community's use of the Center which included the North Plaza, Courtyard, and South Plaza and Drop-off Zone:

- **North Plaza** features a small stage and plentiful shade to facilitate social gatherings, such as musical performances and other community events. The plaza's surfaces are made predominantly of permeable pavement with a shallow water wicking system to encourage tree growth. The plaza will include a bus stop on Juan Perea Road.
- **The Courtyard** is enclosed by a stuccoed wall matching the Transportation Center to provide a more intimate setting conducive to smaller, private gatherings with a water feature and plazuela with centralized seating area.
- **South Plaza** is designed to accommodate pedestrian traffic between the Rail Runner Station and the Drop-off Zone on Juan Perea Road. It features permeable paving, several landscaped berms with seating areas under Cottonwood trees that provide refuge from the sun.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.loslunasnm.gov/806/Transportation-Center-Phase-II-Project>

**FIGURE 2. PHASE II IMPROVEMENTS**



The North Plaza features a small stage and plentiful shade to facilitate social gatherings such as musical performances and other community events. Permeable pavement with a shallow water wicking system will provide the trees with an excellent growing medium. On Juan Perea Road improvements include a bus stop and shelters.

The Courtyard is enclosed by a stuccoed wall to match the transportation center; it provides a more intimate setting conducive to smaller, private gatherings. At the heart of this plazuela is a centralized seating area and a demure water feature.

The South Plaza is designed for pedestrian traffic between the Rail Runner station and the new permeable pavement loading and unloading zone at Juan Perea Road. It features several landscaped berms and seating areas sheltered by a dense canopy of Cottonwood trees providing refuge from the sun.

## Land Acquisition

The Village continued to take steps toward achieving the vision of a mixed-use Village Center and implementing the redevelopment envisioned by the MRA designation. The Village's program for land acquisition around the Transportation Center enables the Village to incentivize development of the mixed-use activity center as envisioned. The Village now owns twelve parcels encompassing approximately 33.5 acres (see Figure 3) and the majority of the MRA (81 percent). These parcels provide the nucleus for development of a Village Center. The remaining parcels are owned by Valencia County and private landowners.

The Village now rents 21 acres south of the Transportation Center to School of Dreams Academy Charter School, which has activated the area with more than 400 students, teachers, and administrative personnel present during the weekdays.

School of Dreams Academy



## Circulation

The Transportation Center is adjacent to the train tracks and NM 314, a four-lane state highway and a north-south regional principal arterial with a speed limit of 45 mph. The average weekday daily traffic on NM 314 south of Courthouse Road and north of Los Lentes Street in 2016 was recorded as 11,536 trips.<sup>2</sup>

There are sidewalks and a landscape buffer on the western side of NM 314. A paved bike and pedestrian trail was constructed between the railroad tracks and NM 314 north of Courthouse Road and it will be continued south to Morris Road. There is also a bicycle route (sharrow) on Courthouse Road.

<sup>2</sup> <https://public.mrcog-nm.gov/taqa/>

Existing pedestrian crosswalk on NM 314



## Changes to Come

### Zoning

The MRA Plan proposed rezoning the MRA parcels as Transit Oriented Development-Mixed Use (TOD-MU) to allow for a higher-density, walkable area that promotes alternative transportation.

### Courthouse Road Realignment

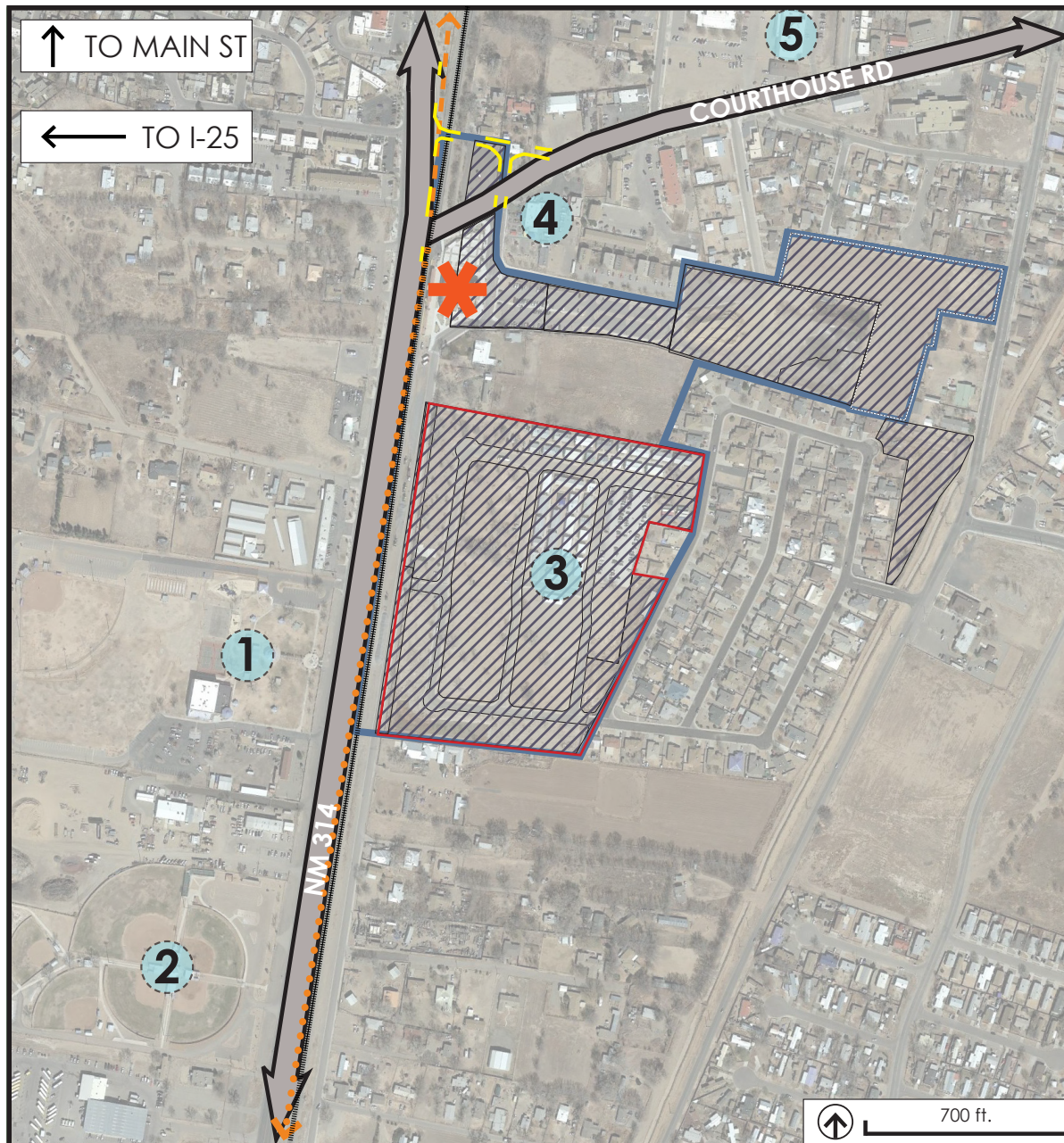
The New Mexico Department of Transportation intends to realign Courthouse Road in 2020. The road realignment will connect Courthouse Road to NM 314 where Colonial Avenue intersects NM 314, just north of the existing intersection. The realignment will make the intersection safer and result in a sizable parcel immediately adjacent to the station that the Village can redevelop.

### New Pedestrian Connections

There is funding for a pedestrian path connecting Aspen Drive to the Transportation Center across Los Lentes Street. The Phase II Master Plan identified a new pedestrian crossing at the new Courthouse Road intersection and at Daniel Fernandez Memorial Park. In addition, future redevelopment should provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to the existing amenities shown in the Context Map (Figure 3).



**FIGURE 3. CONTEXT MAP**



## LEGEND

- Transportation Center
- Village-owned parcels
- MRA
- Current School of Dreams Academy Campus
- Courthouse Rd. Realignment
- Trail to Main Street
- Future Trail
- Railroad Tracks

- 1 Daniel Fernandez Memorial Park**  
Daniel Fernandez Memorial Park, a 17-acre park west of NM 314 includes a recreation center, an adult softball field, a football field, a basketball court, two tennis courts, two playgrounds, eight picnic shelters, a gazebo, and public restrooms.
- 2 Enchantment Little League**  
Enchantment Little League is a sports complex located off NM 314.
- 3 School of Dreams Academy**  
The School of Dreams Academy Charter School (SODA) is located on a 21-acre, Village-owned parcel south of the Transportation Center and was founded in 2009. With 500 students in grades preK-4 and 7-12, SODA has been ranked among the best charter high schools and college readiness programs in the County. The school occupies a portion of the mobile home park redevelopment site, which was originally considered for a mix of commercial and residential development. The school opens up a new range of opportunities for the surrounding area.
- 4 Kids Korner Preschool & Daycare**  
Kids Korner Preschool & Daycare is located just northeast of the Transportation Center and can serve commuting families traveling on the Rail Runner.
- 5 Valencia County Buildings**  
The Valencia County Administrative Building houses most of the County's governmental departments and has 45 employees. The detention center employs 60. These employees could benefit from nearby amenities.

Page intentionally left blank.





## II. MARKET ANALYSIS



## Market Characteristics

The Village has easy transportation access, available work force, affordable housing, and a business-friendly environment. The Transportation Center provides access and connectivity to other communities in New Mexico. The Rail Runner Train system running between Belen and Santa Fe stops at the Center and serves commuters traveling to Albuquerque and Santa Fe. Los Lunas' proximity to I-25 provides good vehicular access; it is a 26-minute drive to downtown Albuquerque and a 23-minute drive to Albuquerque Sunport Airport.

The Village's historic Main Street, home to the Museum of Heritage and Arts, favorite local restaurants, including, Luna Mansion and Teofilos, and other cultural activities, is a 12-minute walk from the Transportation Center. Other local assets include the popular open space preserve, El Cerro de Los Lunas, as well as bosque trails that start at our Riverpark, and many local parks (for example, Daniel Fernandez Park and Recreation Center which is right across the street from the transportation center), the Los Morros Business Park that houses the Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Wal-Mart Super Center, Fresenius Medical Supply, Tillery Auto Dealership, and Merillat building. Regional amenities include the Manzano Mountains, Isleta Casino and Resort, Isleta Fun Connections, Isleta Golf Course, Isleta Lakes fishing and RV Park, and the University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus.

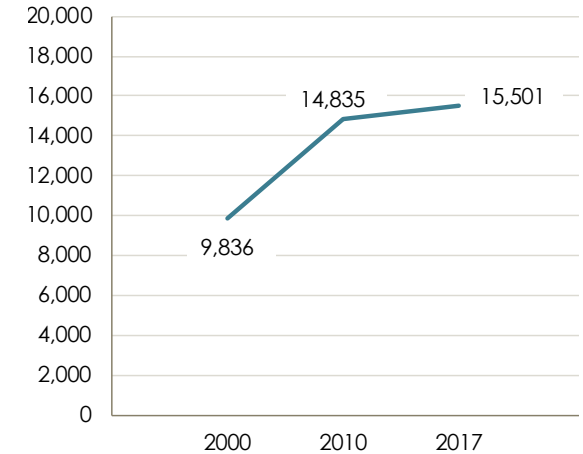
Los Lunas was the fastest growing

community in the state between 1960 and 2010 and experienced a dramatic jump in population of almost 50 percent between 2000 and 2010;<sup>1</sup> this growth tapered off between 2010 and 2017<sup>2</sup> due to the recession (see Chart 1). Overall residential construction has increased since 2010 (see Chart 2). The area is experiencing economic growth due in large part to the construction of the Facebook Data Center. The expanding residential market is appealing to local residents and Albuquerque commuters looking for an affordable place to live in a community based in agricultural roots.

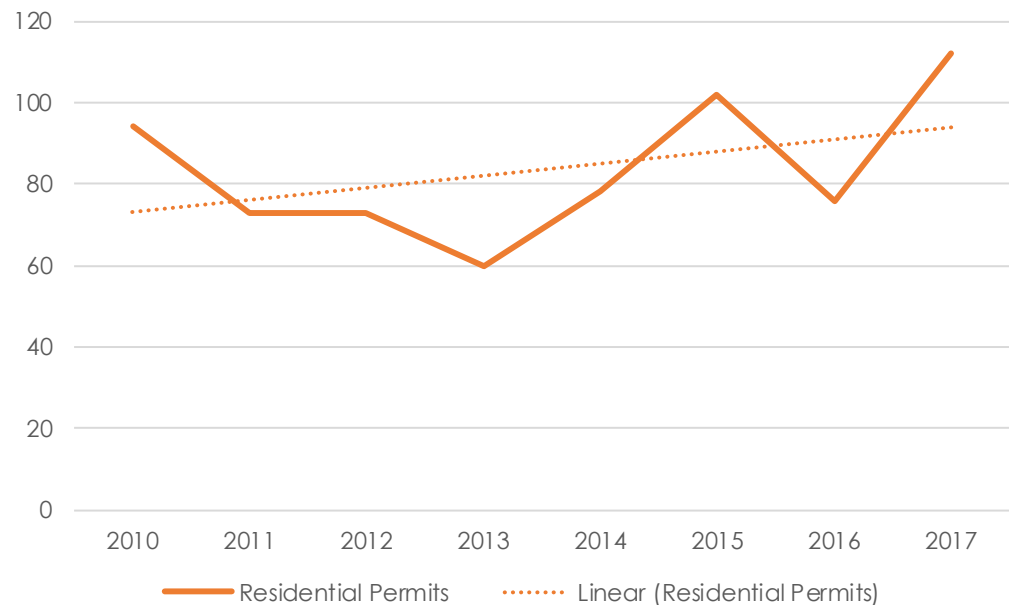
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/region-a-people/regional-profiles/los-lunas>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/loslunasvillagenew-mexico/PST045217>

**CHART 1. ANNUAL GROWTH**



**CHART 2. RESIDENTIAL PERMITS**



## Demographics

In 2016, the median age in the Village was 36 and the median household income was \$51,304 (see Table 1 ).<sup>3</sup> Compared to the state of New Mexico, the state's median age was higher at 37 and the median household income was lower at \$45,674.<sup>4</sup> The majority of Los Lunas residents have a high school diploma, 38 percent have some college, and 19 percent have a Bachelor's, Graduate, or Professional degree.<sup>5</sup> Statewide more than 84 percent have high school diplomas, and more than 26 percent have Undergraduate, Graduate, or Professional degrees.<sup>6</sup>

## Housing

Understanding where Los Lunas residents live and work is important in understanding what types of housing and transportation facilities are needed. The number of occupied homes in the Village in 2016 was 6,210; one-quarter were renter-occupied and the remaining three-quarters were owner-occupied. This was similar to the state's averages, however overall the state has a higher percentage of renter-occupied households (32 percent). The average household size in Los Lunas was more than 3 people, which was slightly larger than the state's average household

size.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, the median home value was \$171,583, almost \$10,000 higher than the state's median home value.<sup>8</sup> Los Lunas' poverty rate was 15 percent<sup>9</sup> compared to almost 20 percent of households that were below the poverty line in the state.<sup>10</sup>

The vast majority of Los Lunas residents live in single-family detached homes (81 percent), and just 8 percent live in attached single-family homes and 6 percent live in buildings with 3 or 4 units.

7 [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Housing.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Housing.pdf)  
8 <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>  
9 [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Employment\\_Income.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Employment_Income.pdf)  
10 US Census, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/nm/IPE120216#viewtop>

Densities greater than that are even less common; fewer than 2 percent of residents live in buildings with 5 or more units.

Even though the Village poverty rates were lower than those statewide, there is need for affordable housing. The Village has an Affordable Housing Ordinance that allows it to offer incentives for affordable housing development.<sup>11</sup>

11 Valencia County/Village of Los Lunas Joint Affordable Housing Plan, 2015, (pp 28-49).

**TABLE 1. DEMOGRAPHICS, 2016**

	Los Lunas <sup>1</sup>	Statewide <sup>2</sup>
Median Age (years)	36	37.2
Median Household Income	\$51,304	\$45,674
Percent of Residents with High School Diploma	28%	84.6%
Percent of Residents with Some College	38%	-
Percent of Residents with a Bachelor's /Grad/Prof Degree	19%	26.7%
Percent of Owner-occupied Households	75%	67.8%
Average Household Size (people)	2.71	2.56
Median Home Value	\$171,583	\$161,600
Households Below Poverty Line	15%	19.8%

1 Source of Los Lunas data: [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Age\\_Education.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Age_Education.pdf) and [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Housing.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Housing.pdf)

2 Sources of State data: <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF> and <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/nm/IPE120216#viewtop>

3 [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Employment\\_Income.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Employment_Income.pdf)  
4 <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>  
5 [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Age\\_Education.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Age_Education.pdf)  
6 <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/nm/IPE120216#viewtop>

## Local Economy

With over \$1 billion in economic activity, as measured by gross receipts, the Village of Los Lunas is thriving. The industry categories that generated the highest gross receipts in 2017 were the Construction and Retail sectors. These industries generate 37 percent and 33 percent of the Village economic activity, respectively. The sector with the next highest gross receipts is Accommodation and Food Services, which accounts for five percent of gross receipts.<sup>12</sup>

### CONSTRUCTION

Construction activity was overwhelmingly commercial construction and related sub-contractors, likely related to the construction of the Facebook Data Center and new retail construction.

### RETAIL

Los Lunas is the retail center for the surrounding rural communities. Within the Retail sector, grocery stores accounted for \$138 million in gross receipts, which is 41 percent of the sector. Auto parts and Home Centers are the next largest categories within the Retail sector, with 11 percent and 13 percent of receipts.

### FOOD SERVICES

Restaurants are the primary driver of the Accommodation and Food Services sector, accounting for 87 percent of the \$50 million in gross receipts in this sector. Full-Service Restaurants are the largest share of the sector.

<sup>12</sup> New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department

## TRENDS

On a per capita basis, the Construction and Retail sectors stand out as not only dominant, but greatly exceeding the statewide average. In addition to these industry sectors, Los Lunas' Accommodation and Food Services businesses generate gross receipts that are greater than the statewide per capita rate.

The composition of the local economy is slated to change over the next several years as data centers are completed and the industrial rail park comes on line. Technical Services and Transportation and Warehousing are sectors likely to grow.

Growth in economic activity and the associated jobs provide opportunities for new residents. The predominance of the retail and food services industries, along with the income characteristics of the population, support the need for affordable housing in Los Lunas. The Village's role as a center of retail and restaurants for the surrounding community creates opportunities for new retail and restaurants.

## Employment

In 2016, there were 612 businesses and 6,620 employees in Los Lunas. The majority of jobs (2,433) are in Retail/Food Service (see Table 2). Health/Education industries held the second highest percentage in employment at 19 percent followed closely by Public Administration (given the number of County offices located in the Village). Manufacturing, Professional/Scientific/Tech, and Construction employment each only made up less than 5 percent of the Village's total jobs.<sup>13</sup> Given that 26 percent of Los Lunas' population has a professional degree of some kind (approximately 4,000 residents) and the Village only has 2,725 employees in the Health/Education, Public Administration, and Professional/Scientific/Tech industries, the Village has a deficit of the types of jobs for which its residents could be suited. The majority of residents commute less than 30 minutes to work (59 percent) and the vast majority drive alone (83 percent).<sup>14</sup> Just over half the Village residents work outside of Valencia County (55 percent).

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Employment\\_Income.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Employment_Income.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Commuting\\_Data.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Commuting_Data.pdf)

**TABLE 2. LOS LUNAS' EMPLOYMENT IN KEY INDUSTRIES, 2016<sup>1</sup>**

Type of Job	Employees	Percent
Retail/Food Service	2,433	36.8%
Health/Education	1,277	19.3%
Public Administration	1,269	19.2%
Manufacturing	288	4.4%
Professional/Scientific/Tech	179	2.7%
Construction	174	2.6%

<sup>1</sup> Source: [https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region\\_and\\_people/Los\\_Lunas\\_Employment\\_Income.pdf](https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/images/stories/region_and_people/Los_Lunas_Employment_Income.pdf)

## New Business

Many new businesses have been established since the 2013 adoption of the 2035 Comprehensive Plan. These businesses include:<sup>15</sup>

- **Health and Emergency Services:** Los Lunas Smiles, National Guard Center, and Wolff Family Chiropractic
- **Food and Beverage Services:** Blended Café, Burger King, Burritos Al instante, Church's Chicken, Domino's Pizza, Europa Bakery, Jersey Mike's, and Wiener Schnitzel
- **Retail Services:** Goodwill, Sally Beauty Supply, Su Casa Décor, and The Shops@Los Lunas
- **Other:** Facebook Data Center, Central New Mexico Rail Park, and Niagara Bottling.

<sup>15</sup> <https://acomunitythatworks.com/>

## FACEBOOK DATA CENTER

In 2016, Facebook broke ground on a data center campus, which is projected to be one of the most advanced and energy efficient data center facilities in the world using 100 percent renewable energy. Facebook is investing more than \$1 billion in the project.<sup>16</sup> Phase 1 included two buildings and administrative suite totaling 970,000 square feet. Later phases include four more buildings totalling 2 million square feet.<sup>17</sup>

During construction, between 650 and 1000 construction workers will be on the site. There are currently 14 professional-level positions. Once operating, the data center will employ about 50 people in permanent positions. The company expects construction will be completed in 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Albuquerque Journal, November 14, 2017 <https://www.abqjournal.com/1092599/facebook-shows-off-its-status.html>  
<sup>17</sup> <http://acomunitythatworks.com/news-posts/los-lunas-data-center-triple-size-four-new-buildings/>



Facebook Data Center

Source: [Facebook.com/pg/LosLunasDataCenter](https://www.facebook.com/pg/LosLunasDataCenter)

## CENTRAL NEW MEXICO RAIL PARK

Another draw for new business will be the new Central New Mexico Rail Park. The Village annexed the 1,400-acre property in July 2016 and installed a rail switch and spur to allow manufacturing, warehouse, and distribution businesses to utilize the railway.<sup>18</sup> The park is anticipated to provide 5,000 jobs.<sup>19</sup>

## Jobs/Housing Balance

There were an estimated 4,826 employed Los Lunas residents counted in Census Journey to Work data in 2015. Approximately 18 percent of these workers also live in Los Lunas.<sup>20</sup> Workers commute to Los Lunas from Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Belen and other nearby communities in Valencia County. More than 5,000 new jobs are anticipated in the next two to five years as Facebook and the Rail Park begin operations.

More than half of Los Lunas' employed residents work in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. Residents also commute to other communities in Valencia County, Rio Rancho, and Santa Fe.

People who commute to Los Lunas are a potential market for housing in Los Lunas. Workers who leave Los Lunas to work have the potential to fill local jobs that fit their qualifications. The proposed Village Center surrounding the Transportation Center provides new housing, employment, and quality of life opportunities for the entire Village; the next section describes these opportunities in more detail.

<sup>18</sup> Rio Real Estate Investment Opportunities LLC, July 7, 2017  
<sup>19</sup> <http://acomunitythatworks.com/news-posts/village-los-lunas-regional-rail-park-project-groundbreaking-success/>  
<sup>20</sup> <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>



# Market Opportunities

## Jobs

There are multiple market conditions—most are not unique to Los Lunas and relate to many commuter-based populations—that offer opportunities for market growth in the area around the Transportation Center. One of these primary market conditions is low daytime activity due to a large number of residents working in other areas during the workday. Most of the employment opportunities within the Village are located close to I-25 and Main Street, with the exception of the County offices on Courthouse Drive. This job/housing imbalance presents an opportunity for new businesses and development to provide more jobs for the local population. By creating more opportunities for local employment, residents that have had to leave the area for work may be able to be employed in businesses that locate around the Transportation Center, increasing daytime spending and the demand for more retail.

## Housing

Many of Los Lunas' employees commute in to work in the Village. There are opportunities to attract new and current employees to live in Los Lunas.

The population has historically shown a desire for single family homes, as there is a perception that higher density homes are undesirable and low quality. However, if executed correctly, the community could

be in favor of more dense housing near the Transportation Center. Higher density housing development around the Transportation Center can diversify the Village's housing stock.

## Commercial

There are currently limited eating or drinking establishments and no existing retail establishments near the Transportation Center. As noted in the Jobs and Housing sections, the Village Center could provide commuters with additional job opportunities in the office sector adjacent to the Transportation Center, as well as housing and retail services commuters need on their way to and from home and work everyday. Incentives to attract local businesses could be offered. By providing small retail and services connected by walkable streets in close proximity to community assets, the area around the Transportation Center can become a more community destination.

## Access

Currently, there is only one interstate exit off of I-25. However, the Rail Runner Station provides excellent access to the Village Center and the realignment of Courthouse Road will improve vehicular access to the Center, thereby supporting future businesses and housing. With the realignment of Courthouse Road, traffic issues will be remediated and will provide easier access to the Transportation Center, as well as more opportunity for development immediately adjacent to it.

## Village Center

The goal of supporting viable, mixed-use, transit-oriented development depends on pedestrian-friendly streets, smaller blocks, and community amenities near the Transportation Center. The pedestrian/bike trail that connects to Main Street, planned Courthouse Road improvements, and new plaza and landscaping support this goal. There is ample land supply to allow for high-quality development and infrastructure surrounding the Transportation Center. Because the Village now owns parcels surrounding the Transportation Center, redevelopment with affordable, high-density homes, businesses, and pedestrian-friendly streets is possible. The Center is in close proximity to many community services and recreational opportunities. This provides opportunities for shared resources and more private investment interest once the density of housing and businesses increases.







# III. THE MASTER PLAN



The Master Plan for the Village Center upholds the goals and vision set forth in previous plans and builds on the recent achievements. It proposes a mix of development, open space, and circulation improvements that benefits from and serves the Transportation Center and the surrounding neighborhoods. Each component is described as follows.

## A Mix of Uses

The undeveloped parcels in close proximity to the Transportation Center provide an opportunity for new development to create an active and attractive Village Center. High-quality multifamily housing east and south of the station and commercial buildings between the station and Courthouse Road can provide the Village more housing and jobs. The parcels immediately adjacent to the Transportation Center's courtyards and parking lots could serve commuters and residents with ground-floor retail.



Source: Greater Albuquerque Housing Partnership



Source: Apartments.com



Source: Multi-Family Executive



Source: WhyY

## Outdoor Civic Space

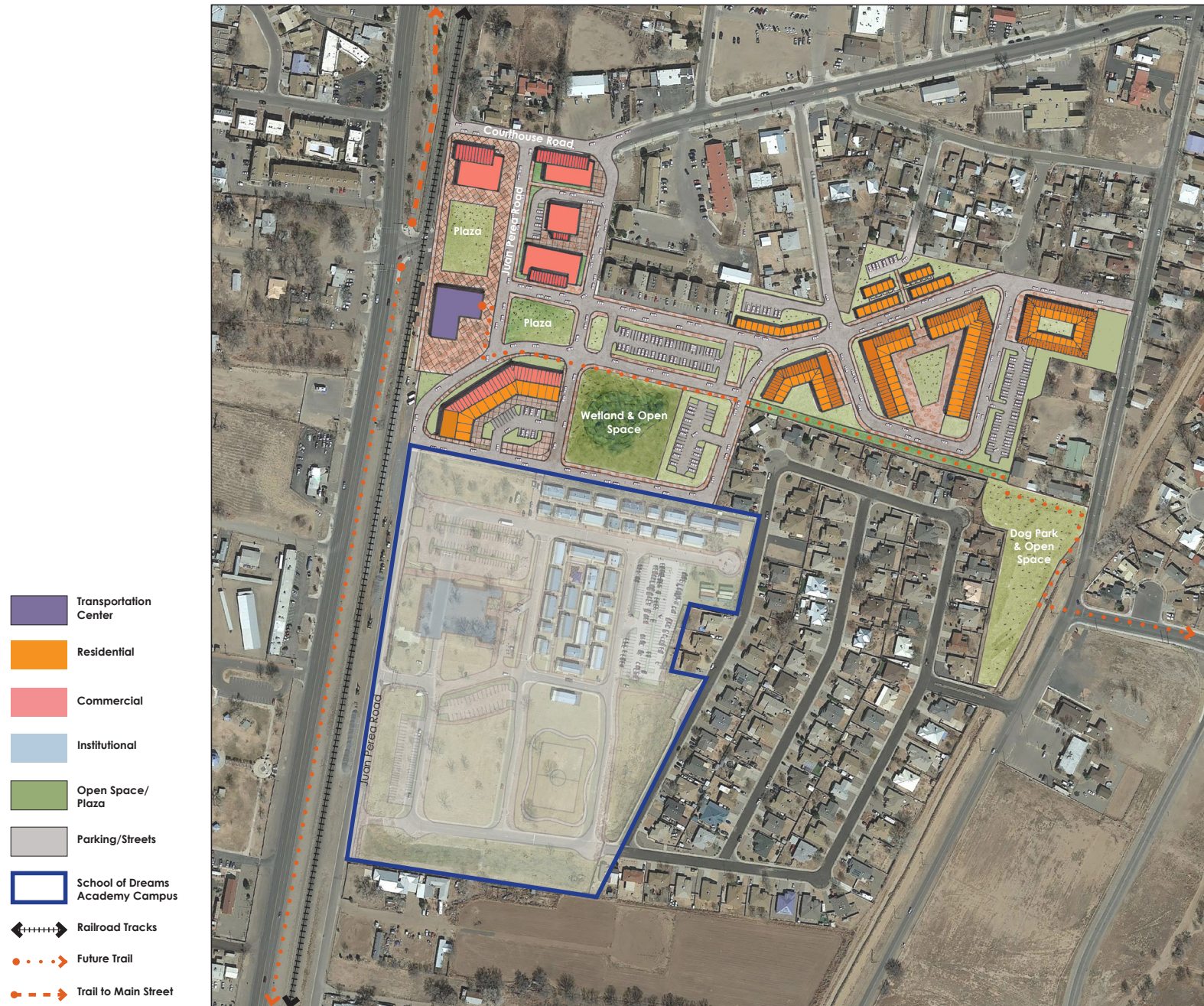
A key component to creating a vibrant Village Center is providing places for the community to gather and recreate. Open space that takes advantage of the proximity to the Transportation Center's transit lines and parking can provide places for outdoor recreation spaces and can transform the area into a well-used activity center. In addition to the courtyards to the north and east of the Transportation Center, new open spaces that incorporate attractive and ecologically beneficial site drainage can become community destinations.



Source: Hunt Midwest



**FIGURE 4. MASTER PLAN**





The spaces should include interactive, children-friendly parks, such as a splash pad and a butterfly garden. They will be well-positioned to serve the community at large, as well students at the School of Dreams Academy.

## Circulation

The redevelopment should take advantage of the existing infrastructure and use the existing roadways where feasible to integrate with the surrounding neighborhoods. Shared parking lots are encouraged to allow for maximum use.

Pedestrian and bicycle connections should provide people commuting via train easy, safe, and attractive means to get to and from their homes, offices, and school.







## IV. IMPLEMENTATION



# Implementation Strategies

The Village's affordable housing ordinance allows it to offer incentives or grants to developers for the development of affordable housing. Developers can work with the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority to utilize other state and federal funding programs.

The Courthouse Road realignment, new internal streets, pedestrian crossings of NM-314, and pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the Transportation Center are key improvements in realizing the Master Plan. They can be funded by getting into the State's Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP). The Plan is viewed by all State boards and commissions that have any form of state or federal revenue sources to grant. These include the State's earmarked funding streams, federal programs managed by the State, and other State-funded programs. It is recommended that the 2019-2024 ICIP document be submitted with the circulation improvements identified in this Master Plan as top priorities.

existing struggling companies by providing entrepreneurs with a facility and other services. Business incubator feasibility studies identify potential clients for a new incubator, or lack thereof; assess the availability of resources for the clients; identify obstacles to the incubator's success; and provide an implementation plan for the incubator development. The Village and other communities in the County are working together to find a permanent space for the incubator.



## General

### **PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

In many public/private partnerships (also known as PPPs or P3s) a private investor or consortium of companies or developers may lease land or buildings at a lower than usual cost in exchange for the private entity to remodel a facility or build new facilities thus creating jobs, additional tax revenue and much needed services for the public entity. They are also used to generate investment capital to build new infrastructure needed when the public entity is unable to raise sufficient public funding and debt. Multi-use facilities are more and more popular especially in areas of the state where commercial vendors and housing stock is suffering.

In New Mexico Public/Private partnerships are attractive because of the many tax credit programs that are used to create jobs and address critical needs. The following tax credit programs can be awarded to a private and/or non-profit partner:

- New Market Tax Credit Program – (New Mexico Finance Authority)
- Smart Money Loan Participation Program – (New Mexico Finance Authority)
- NM Credit Enhancement Program (CEP) – (NM Economic Development Department)
- Historic Tax Credits - (NM Economic Development Department)

- Frontier Communities Initiative - (NM Economic Development Department)
- Mainstreet Program - (NM Economic Development Department)

A Public/Private partnership can be engaged to build facilities and operated by both private and public sectors. This allows the opportunity for many economic development funding programs as well as New Market Tax Credits. A “One-Stop” facility to house a convenience store, restaurant, coffee shop, an artists shop and local market place can be all inclusive in this type of facility. Or they can also be developed next to each other to attract and maintain traffic to the respective businesses. The New Mexico Economic Development Department has a program called The Frontier Communities Initiative to assist in the study and development of these exact type of developments.

### **FUNDIT**

FUNDIT was created to assist communities in accessing financing from a group of agencies simultaneously. This collaboration saves time and duplication, improves the effectiveness of project review and support, and ensures strategic investments with public resources.

Agencies represented in FUNDIT include:

- Capital Outlay Unit, New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration

- Local Government Division, New Mexico Department of Finance & Administration
- New Mexico Councils of Governments/ NewMARC
- New Mexico Economic Development Department
- New Mexico Environment Department
- New Mexico Department of Indian Affairs
- New Mexico Finance Authority
- New Mexico Energy, Minerals & Natural Resources Department
- US Small Business Administration
- US Department of Agriculture, Rural Development
- New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority
- New Mexico Department of Transportation

## Additional Land Acquisition

As opportunities arise, it will be important for the Village to encourage redevelopment of properties within the MRA. This can be done by acquiring the properties between the Transportation Center and the School of Dreams Academy Campus or by rezoning the property and encouraging their redevelopment through private investment.



# Development Guidance

To see the Village Center vision implemented, the Village can issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for development of key parcels to include housing, commercial, and civic space. The RFPs should specify the following project criteria to guide future development.

## Neighborhood Connections

New development should connect to the surrounding neighborhood, integrate pedestrian and bicycle connections, and provide walkable, pedestrian-scale streetscapes, open space, and buildings oriented to the public realm. The redeveloped site(s) should provide a seamless connection between adjacent neighborhoods and encourage future development in the Center. At a minimum the development should:

1. **Streetscape.** Accommodate wider sidewalks, landscaping, and on-street parking along streets to make the development attractive to and accessible by pedestrians. Set buildings back from property line to provide more open space/plazas adjacent to the sidewalks. Provide highly visible crosswalks across Courthouse Road and Los Lentes Road.
2. **Vehicular Access.** Provide ample access from existing neighborhood streets. New north-south access from Helen Circle, Roberts Court, and/or

Amber Court could be used to access the site(s).

3. **Multi-modal Connections.** Connect the Transportation Center to the neighborhood, area businesses and amenities, and the school with pedestrian/bicycle paths. Coordinate with the Village and School of Dreams Academy to link to existing routes and provide seamless connections.

## Development Types

Development should relate to adjacent housing in density and height as follows:

1. **Mixed-use.** Locate the highest density vertical mixed-use buildings (ground-floor retail with residential above) on parcels in closest proximity to the Transportation Center on the parcels facing Juan Perea Road and the new east-west road south of the Transportation Center's parking lot. Ground-floor retail serving the neighborhood and commuters should include local cafés, restaurants, and groceries/convenience stores. This development should be primarily three-story buildings except where adjacent to parcels with single family residential, which should be limited to two stories.
2. **Commercial.** Locate commercial buildings near the Transportation Center on Village Drive and fronting the realigned Courthouse Road.
3. **Multifamily.** Locate the highest density multifamily residential on the lots to the east and south of the center. These should be two- and three-story buildings.

4. **Single family.** Locate single family (attached or detached) on the narrow parcels adjacent to existing residential uses. These should be one- and two-story residences.

## Quality Design

The site's redevelopment must integrate quality materials and pedestrian-scale architecture with modulation and massing that enhances the streetscape and makes the redeveloped area a desirable place to live, work, shop, bike, and walk. The design should include the following:

1. **Site Design.** The design should integrate and respond to surrounding land uses and infrastructure and not be inward-facing or secluded from the existing neighborhood. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be followed so new development is designed to increase safety with "eyes on the street." Primary entrances to commercial spaces should front Courthouse Road, Juan Perea Road, Village Drive, and the new east-west road south of the Transportation Center's parking lot. Driveways should be strategically located to limit interruptions in the pedestrian flow and not deter from the streetscape. Site buildings to frame the streetscape and provide open space with adequate sun and shade. Lighting should be focused along the pedestrian realm and the pedestrian/bicycle paths; lighting design should be sensitive to light pollution.

**2. Building Massing and Design.** Break up the mass of the sites and maintain the “feel” of historic Los Lunas. The massing and modulation of the buildings should be varied to provide visual interest, break up the development, and allow for a mix of housing types, commercial spaces, and building heights. Commercial storefronts and residential lobbies should be designed to face the public streets and be visible and inviting to pedestrians; retail should set back from the property line to provide for outdoor plaza or eating areas adjacent to sidewalks. Green building principles with attention to solar energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable materials should be followed.

**3. Open Space.** Include a prominent outdoor public space, such as a plaza or courtyard adjacent to and visible from Juan Perea Road [and others depending selected plan]. Secondary outdoor spaces should be visible from other public rights-of-way. Outdoor spaces and landscaped areas should be enhanced with public art that represents the culture and history of the area. Attention to shade with structures or vegetation should be integrated into the design.

**4. Landscaping.** Provide landscape buffers between the new development and existing and along all adjacent streets and parking areas. Provide private or semi-private open space for residential units. Landscaping should

be selected to comply with the City’s landscaping standards, and with longevity, drought tolerance, and water usage in mind. Rain gardens that filter water onsite should be located to aid in the site’s drainage and beautification.

**5. Parking.** Locate the majority of off-street parking behind buildings; locate garages at the rear of properties; cluster residential parking; plant the edges of all parking areas with landscaping; integrate trees into parking lot designs; and use permeable materials on all parking areas to lessen the heat island effect and storm water run-off. Parking for commercial uses should be shared with residents during evening hours.



## Collaboration

The School of Dreams Academy’s campus is in the Village Center and has ample space. Collaboration between the Village and the School will benefit both and the community at large. Collaborative projects could include:

- Performance Space
- Library
- Open Space
- Community Center/Recreation Center/ Gym

