

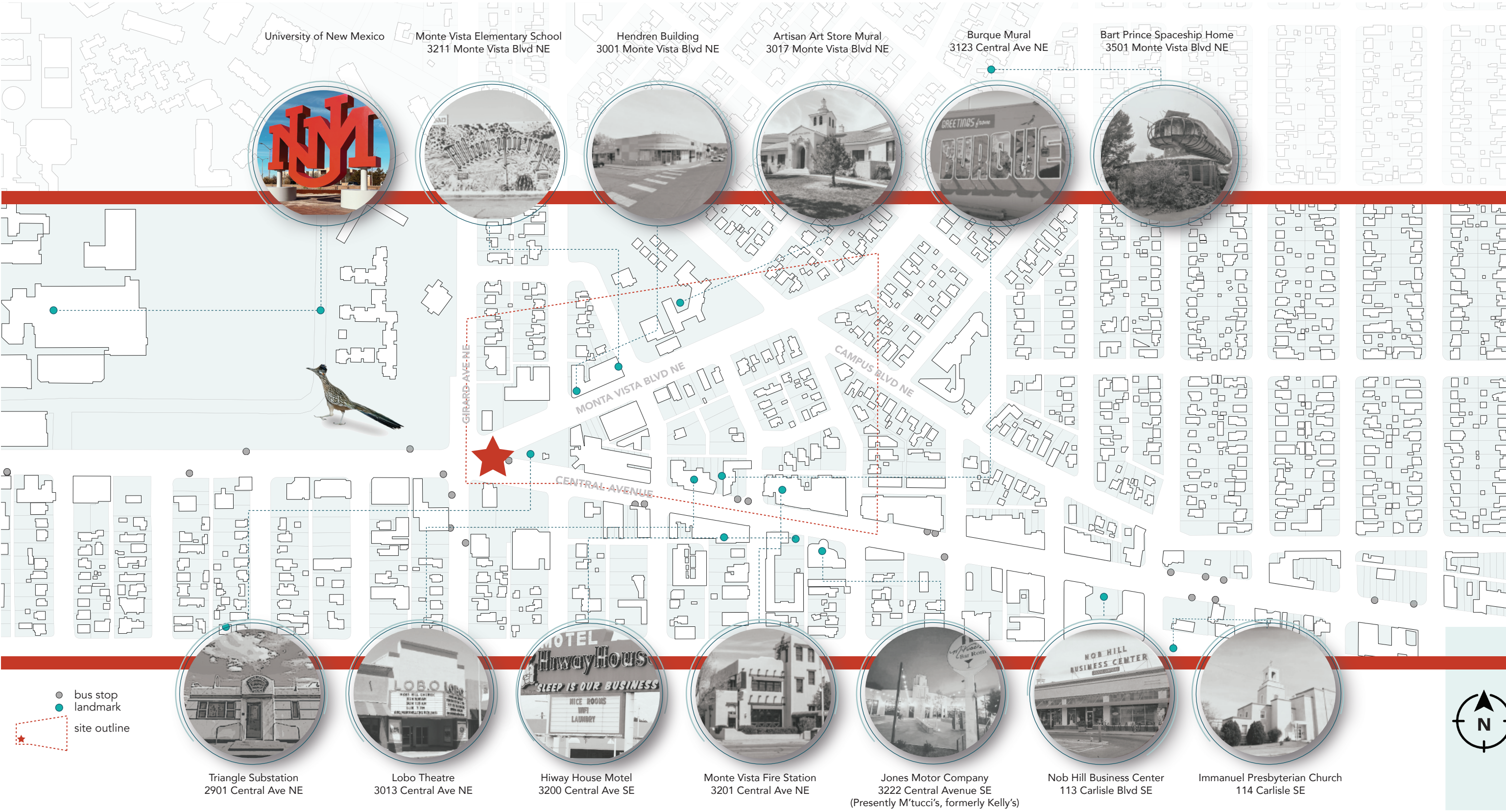
LA502/402 Urban Typologies Studio

Project Context

Central Avenue - Nob Hill West Gateway

Nob Hill is considered one the most “walkable” neighborhoods in Albuquerque, but without good direction and a basic understanding of the area, it can seem confusing, and lacking a cohesiveness, and even dangerous to a pedestrian or bicyclist. Its varied mix of architecture, history, landmarks and an ever-changing retail and dining corridor on and near Central Avenue

make Nob Hill a top destination for both locals and visitors. By reconsidering and planning better roadways and traffic direction/signage, and by creating new, greener, walking and biking paths off the main avenues, Nob Hill could have a new less auto-centric design and feel.

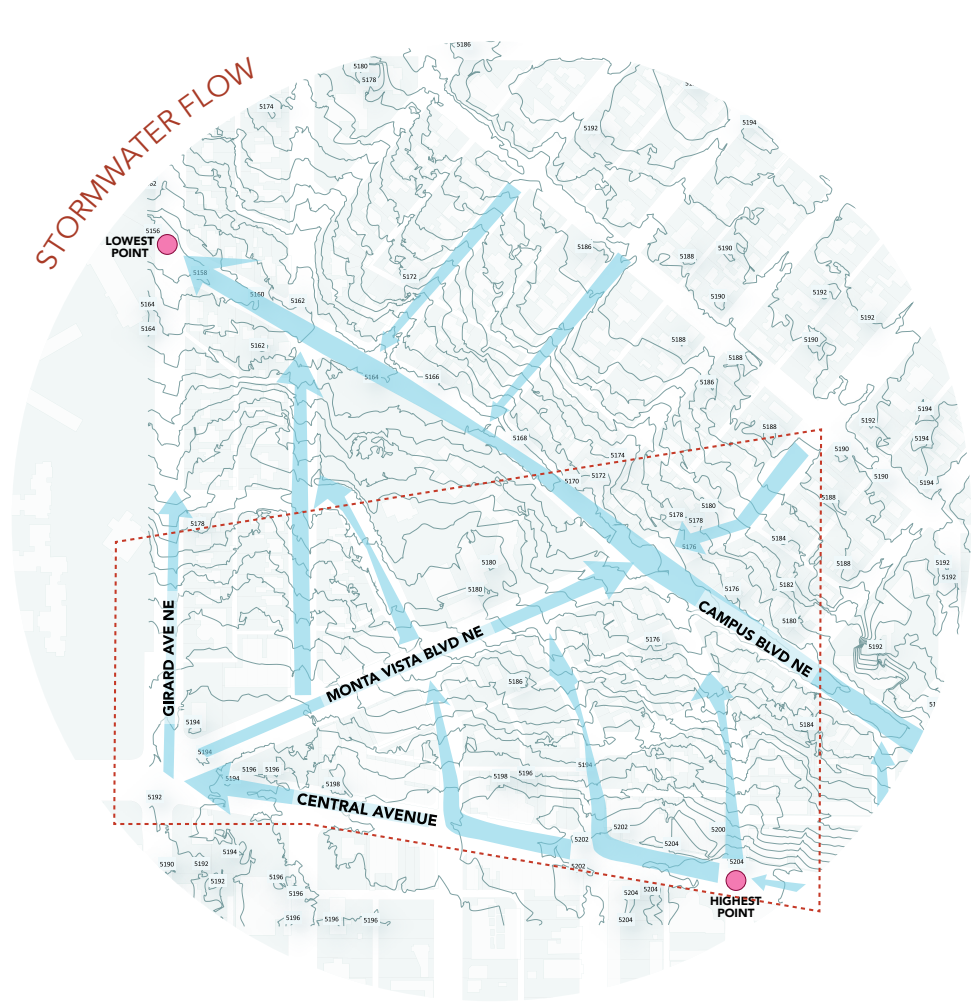


LA502 Urban Typologies Studio

Site Analysis Summary

The 3900 Block of Central Ave at Monte Vista

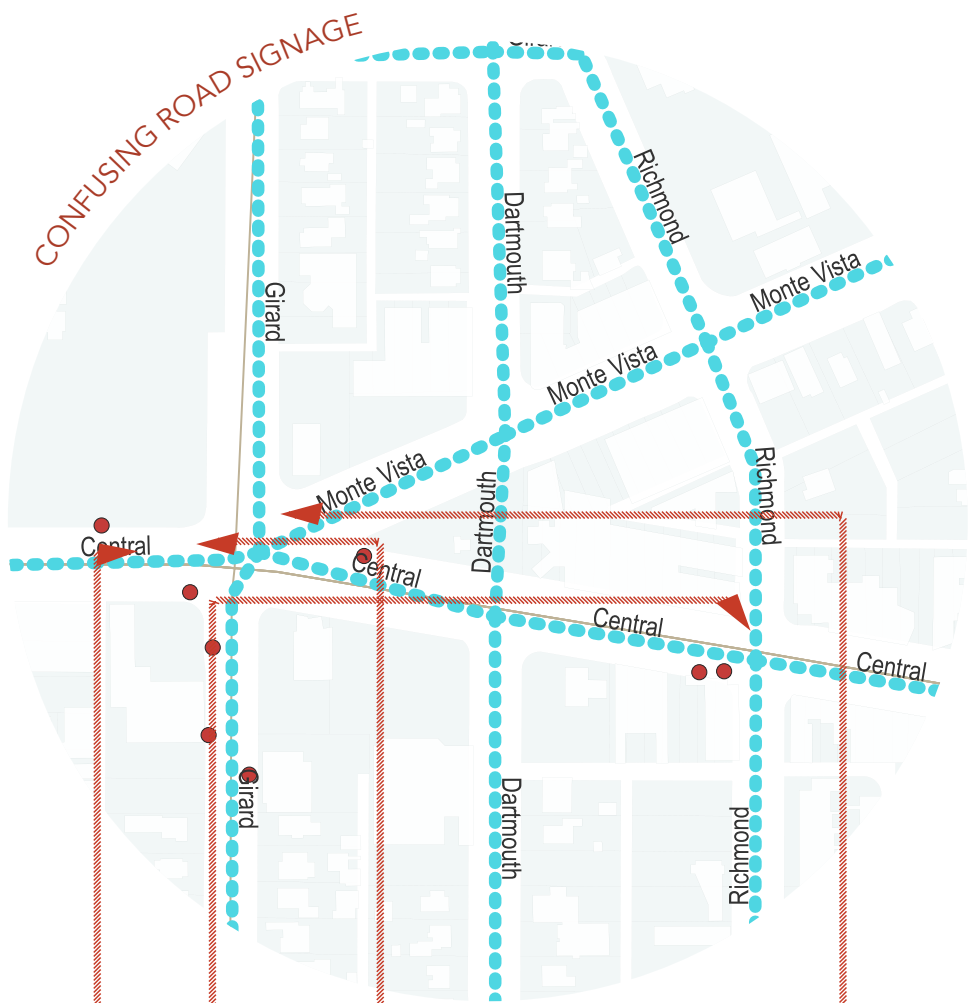
While there are major constraints on the site, particularly confusing and dangerous traffic patterns, and a lack of tree canopies and plantings, there are many opportunities to add better walk and bike paths, and to add more greenery and park space, as well as shared amenities to better make Nob Hill the “walkable” historic retail and community district it is proclaimed to be.



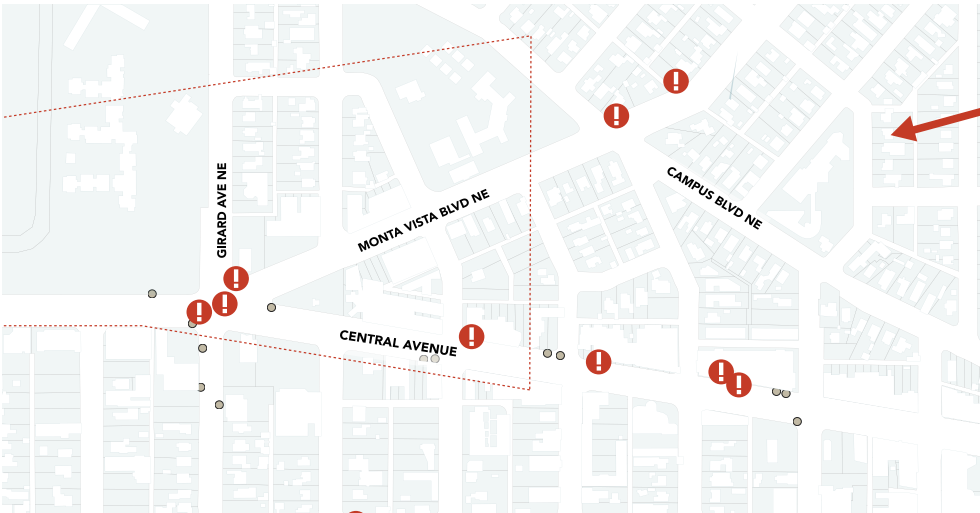
Map shows how stormwater would flow from high to low. A walking inspection showed NO storm drains, so water would flow through street toward Monte Vista Blvd (MV)-- a former arroyo-- and towards the site's low point at Girard and MV



Tree canopy map shows the barrenness of immediate site context. Would recommend adding more greenery and parks in Traingle and installing a wastewater rain garden when putting MV Blvd on a road diet



Roads and bus stops with confusing signage setting up possibilities for accidents

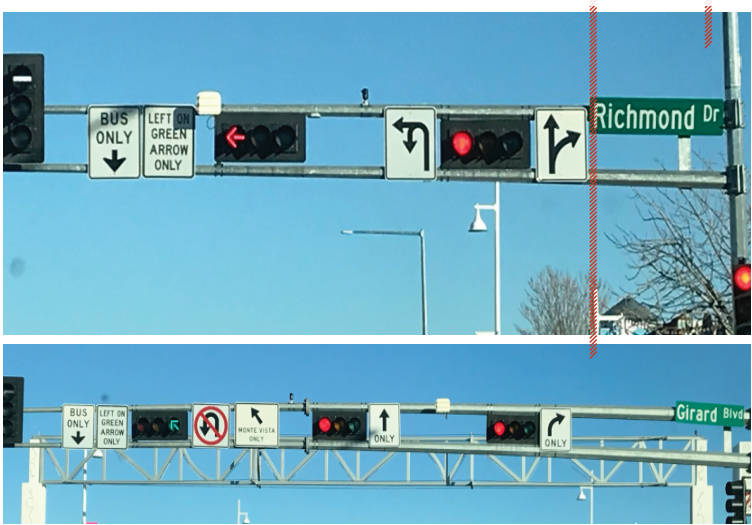


Summary of Crimes in Project Area (1/27/23-2/1/23)

SUSPICIOUS PERSON	2-1-23 11:15AM
ONSITE SUSPICIOUS	1-30-23 11:53PM
ONSITE DISTURBANCE	1-30-23 12:26AM
FIGHT IN PROGRESS	1-29-23 10:26PM
STOLEN VEHICLE FOUND	1-29-23 12:51PM
TRAFFIC STOP	1-29-23 10:46AM
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	1-29-23 3:16AM
ONSITE SUSPICIOUS	1-29-23 12:42AM
DISTURBANCE	1-29-23 1:58PM
SUSPICIOUS PERSON	1-28-23 4:58AM
TRAFFIC STOP	1-27-23 10:28PM
DISTURBANCE	1-27-23 2:05PM
DISTURBANCE	1-27-23 1:32PM

62% of crimes occurred after dark, with 5 of these after midnight

Source: www.crimemapping.com



The area around the 5 point intersection has a distinct traffic problem. Pedestrians (including many students), bicylist, buses and cars all use the area. All need an easier and safer passage through the area. The signage and particularly the ART bus routes are very confusing and dangerous.

Historical Timeline of Nob Hill as Shopping District

The shopping center, a "centralized area where goods are exchanged and services provided", has long been an important and necessary feature of cities. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, before the automobile, such centers were organized around a main street, characterized by rows of storefronts placed near the street line often filling the whole lot or block. Because they were individually erected and independently owned, their architectural styles and mix of businesses were uncoordinated.

Unique to the 20th c. and the rise of the automobile is the **planned shopping center**: commercial establishments developed and operated under single ownership with off-street parking provided and related in location, size and type of store to the trade area it served. As cities began to decentralize in the 1920s, when automobiles provided large numbers of people with fast, personal transportation, traffic congestion increased in densely built central business districts that had not been originally designed for automobiles. Nob Hill is a prime example of this phenomenon.*

The automotive hey day of Route 66. Shoppers flock in their cars to the Nob Hill Business Center.

Nob Hill experiences a neighborhood revitalization

Controversial and disruptive \$135 million ART project construction and launch



Colonel D. K. B. Sellers c. 1938. Photo Courtesy of Albuquerque Museum

1906

East Mesa was mostly empty land crossed by arroyos, grass and brush, a few ranch operations and cemeteries. D.K.B. Sellers, a prominent local businessman and developer (and mayor in 1916) was a big proponent of the automobile lifestyle and purchased land south of Central and west of Carlisle, which was platted in 1906 as the University Heights Addition and developed beginning in the late 1920s forseeing that people would move out of the valley with its coal and wood smoke.



“MOVE OUT OF THE LOW ZONE AND UP TO THE OZONE”

In 1916 Sellers platted the eastern half of University Heights, the first subdivision in what is now known as Nob Hill. Developers platted four additional subdivisions between 1925 and 1931 and 80% of the houses in Nob Hill had been built by WWII.

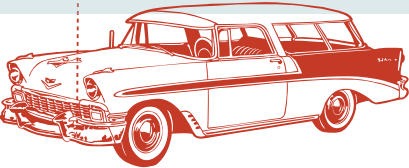
1930-1937
The number of buildings in Nob Hill grows from 6 to 44 providing goods and services for motorists.



1937

1937: Route 66 is rerouted through ABQ down Central Avenue

Built in 1947, the **Nob Hill Business Center** was Albuquerque's first shopping center and is one of the best-preserved examples of its type nationally from the early postwar period. The center represents the first attempt in Albuquerque to provide spaces for separately owned businesses in one architecturally unified building under single management, with an on-site parking area – an integral feature of the design – and a mix of tenants intended to serve the immediate needs of the residents of outlying subdivisions. It was the first major step in the abandonment of the railroad-era commercial downtown that had been ABQ's center. At this time, Nob Hill represented the postwar shopping center typology, a major force in shaping the growth of cities, especially in the West. It is an excellent and relatively unaltered example of Moderne design in Albuquerque.*



1947

1953

1961



Winrock Center

Aerial view of Winrock Center, 1961. Source: "It's Fun to Shop at Winrock," New Mexico Architecture 3 (May-June 1961). Photograph by Dick Kent.

A shiny, modern multi-million-dollar retail complex called **Winrock Center** opened in 1961 north of Nob Hill that forever changed the way residents shopped in ABQ, as the city grew too congested with automobiles. ABQs --and NM's -- first shopping mall enjoyed 40 years of profitable business before poor management and a crippled economy forced it to close.



2018
"This project is a bit of a lemon," Mayor Tim Keller said of the ART bus system.

The problems range from traffic flow challenges to serious design flaws.

1980



2017 +

The triple whammy of the recession, ART construction on Central and the pandemic has been detrimental to the success and walkability of Nob Hill's historic commercial district.



* : <http://albuquerquemodernism.unm.edu/wp/nob-hill-business-center/>