



N E W M E X I C O

arts e³ cultural

D I S T R I C T

NM Arts and Cultural Resource Team:

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Molly Bleecker, UNM BBER

John Villani, Cultural Planner

Elmo Baca, NM MainStreet

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Los Alamos Creative District in Science and Innovation

NM Arts and Cultural Districts

- Legislation adopted in 2007
- Six communities accepted as State-authorized A&CDs
- 2 yr Start-Up
- Benefits
 - Enhanced State Historic Tax Credits
 - State Branding
 - Technical assistance and resources

New Mexico Arts and Cultural District Start-Up Development Flow Chart



Los Alamos Creative District

- The Resource Team affirms Los Alamos' application focus of "Science and Innovation" for Los Alamos' Creative District:
 - Lead with your strongest assets
 - Many other sub-texts for tourism development but would take much more work and development of new amenities to re-position the community and the proposed District.

Los Alamos Creative District

- The Resource Team heard the disconnect and understands the recent history behind the real or perceived lack of stronger collaboration between LANL, UNM and the downtown:
 - To create the proposed Science and Innovation District it will require both partners at the table.
 - The Resource Team recommends a high-level conversation convened by our NM US Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall to discuss and engage all in the Creative District's development.
 - High-level representatives from LANL and UNM need to be engaged in the Steering Committee from the start to be part of planning and development of Creative District.
 - Opportunities to contribute substantially to the Creative Clusters for strengthening the district's "pull" to tourists could be critical to its success.

Benefits of Cultural Districts

- Fostering Economic Development
- Attracting Artists and Entrepreneurs
- Sustaining Current Creative Communities
- Business and Job Development
- Establishing Tourism Destinations
- Preserving and Reusing Historic Buildings

State Level Policies

| State | Program Name | Established | Number of Districts |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Indiana | Arts and Cultural Districts | 2008 | 3 |
| Iowa | Cultural and Entertainment Districts | 2005 | 29 |
| Louisiana | Cultural Districts | 2007 | 45 |
| Maryland | Arts and Entertainment Districts | 2001 | 18 |
| New Mexico | Arts and Cultural Districts | 2007 | 6 |
| Rhode Island | Tax-Free Arts Districts | 1998 | 9 |
| Texas | Cultural Districts | 2005 | 12 |
| West Virginia | Certified Arts Community | 2005 | 5 |

Cultural Planning

Jesse Rye, ACD Policy Analyst

John Villani, Cultural Planner

Chuck Zimmer, NM Arts

Los Alamos Creative District in Science and Innovation

Assets/Kudos



- Strong demand for arts and cultural programs is fundamental to the community's quality of life.
- In a community filled with high achieving and well traveled residents there's expectations that artistic pursuits will reach high standards.

Assets/Kudos

- Participation in the arts...from audience, volunteer, and performer/artist perspectives...is admirably high and buttress social interaction throughout Los Alamos.
- Support for art's role in well-rounded education is a key element of the community character

What we heard...

- Arts Organizations and Arts Presenters are sandwiched between venue options, with religious institutions serving as 300-500 seat forums for theatre, music and literary events
- In a community defined by scientific creativity of all variations there's a desire to offer local residents a setting that incubates the creative process of all artistic expressions.

What we heard...

- Arts Organizations must limit their creative horizons as a result of fundraising concerns. Supporters tend to be more generous with their time than they are with their checkbooks.
- Artists seeking studio as well as live/work environments in the Creative District are hindered by the absence of local government interest in facilitating these types of amenities.

Recommended Actions

- The ACD Steering Committee should assemble a cultural planning committee.
- Community representation on this committee needs to be:
 - Representative of artistic, creative and scientific disciplines.
 - Inclusive of all ethnic communities.
 - Inclusive of the youth of Los Alamos.
 - Representative of community retail, hospitality and creative businesses.

Recommended Actions

- From its start the cultural planning committee needs to:
 - Launch an initiative targeted toward maximizing the economic, social and tourism impacts possible through presenting the wide range of Los Alamos artists. An updated inventory/registry would provide an effective starting point for informing local committees of issues impacting the visual arts sector.
 - Contact the Arts in Public Places Program of New Mexico Arts to assess current public art projects and determine future strategies and potential resources.

Recommended Actions

- Develop vehicles promoting access to arts and creative programs for the full range of Los Alamos' cultures...strengthening not only Hispano and American Indian participation but also including the community's growing Chinese, Russian, Indian and Arabic residents.
- Effectively assess the community's actual needs for performance and creativity environments....ensuring that any proposals be minimalist.

Recommended Actions

- The ACD Steering Committee should identify additional Cultural Facilities to complement the Bradbury and strengthen and brand the District as a Science and Innovation Destination:
 - Visionarium (Gateway to history and culture of the region).
 - From “Atoms to the Universe” Museum of history and Sciences (LANL has a lot of materials already produced).
 - Museum of Geology and Volcanology.
 - Public Cultural Performance space (300-500 seat).
 - Public Conference Center.
 - Teen Center designed programmed and run by a Youth board.
- More Public Art on the street to create vibrancy in the district

Marketing and Promotions

Rich Williams, State ACD Coordinator
Molly Bleecker, UNM BBER
Elmo Baca, NM MainStreet

**Los Alamos Creative
District in Science and
Innovation**

Assets/Kudos

Many A&C offerings –
events, exhibits,
performances, lectures,
classes – well-attended
and beloved by locals

Good coordination of
offerings (fyiLA.com,
Arts Council calendar)

Beginning to market
package deals (Pajarito)

Assets/Kudos

Promotional materials
(Visitors' Guide, Historic
District walking tour, new
kiosks) are very well-done.

Weekday hotel occupancy
rates are very impressive.

Skate park has brought
youth to the district

Local public transit well-
received

What we heard...

Lack of consensus around Los Alamos' main "product" for branding the ACD (History? Arts? Science? Outdoor recreation?)

Lack of amenities (restaurants, evening entertainment) to complement creative activities and serve all potential markets (locals, LANL employees who live elsewhere, tourists)

What we heard...

- Lack of easily accessible marketing and promotional materials for tourists – no LA brochure in our hotel, locals not recommending local businesses, lack of signage or visual cues to businesses and services for drivers; lack of advertising in the region.
- Misperceptions of Los Alamos outside the area (a closed city, a radioactive city, not a city).

Recommended Actions

Figure out Los Alamos' A&C niche: something authentic and unique:

- City of Science/Innovation (expand Next Big Idea Festival, science-related lectures, competitions, showcases such as a visionarium, a natural history and sciences museum of the region, a cultural center).
- Bring appropriate lab innovation on to Central Ave for public access in a Science "Innovation Center" that spotlights nano and laser technology, solar and wind power lab tech transfer to private industry other advances in security and safety, etc.
- Basecamp for outdoor recreation, Native American and Hispanic Traditions.

Recommended Actions

Complete a new, five-year comprehensive marketing plan, including a public relations and marketing strategy geared towards key target markets and based upon chosen product(s).

Potentially use lodgers tax to pay for study.

Training for non-profit leadership for the ACD Steering Committee (take advantage of opportunities available through MainStreet)

Promote/support Youth-driven activities and events

Recommended Actions

Regular hospitality training throughout the year.

Increase collaborations (LANL, UNM-LA; area Pueblos) and tourism package deals

Better way-finding signage for businesses on side streets

Develop regional market advertising (outside Santa Fe) on the positive aspects of Los Alamos and the opportunities available in the A&C District.

The Town That Still Isn't....

Planning and Design

Charlie Deans, Urban Planner

Will Powell, Architectural Designer

Steve Borbas, Urban Designer

Los Alamos Creative
District in Science and
Innovation

Assets/Kudos

- Safe and family-friendly community
- Pedestrian areas, walkways
- Rim trail
- Atomic City transit



Assets/Kudos

- New street improvements with increased signage/wayfinding
- Historic District is well organized and interpreted
- Dramatic views and natural beauty



Assets/Kudos



- Cultural activities, quality of museums, library etc.
- Ashley Pond and adjacent green space
- “Sculptural” Skatepark at the Library
- Walkable downtown

What we heard...

- Lack of street life, pedestrian traffic, human scale
- Lack of identity – need to define architectural, landscape, and streetscape elements

What we heard...

- Wayfinding, signage could be improved
- More housing downtown, especially in workforce and housing affordability
- Ashley Pond and Fuller Lodge are two places residents identify themselves with

What we heard...



- Parking lots are 65% of land use.
- Need to attract and keep young people in town with amenities and affordability in housing.
- Pedestrians crossing Trinity can be difficult

What we didn't hear...

- Parking is an issue.



Recommended Actions

- Expand the “Creative District” boundary to include Ashley Pond, Library, Demo Garden, Little Theater and residential to the north.



502

Canyon Rd

Rose St

Crater Dr

Central Ave

Trinity Dr

Loma Vista

24th St
22nd St
Tulip St

Spruce St

S Peach St

Oppenheimer Dr

Juniper St

18th St

Main St

Necker St

16th St

Myrtle St

Iris St

Opal St

Nugget St

Pine St

20th St

Deacon St

15th St

15th St

15th St

Wall St

14th St

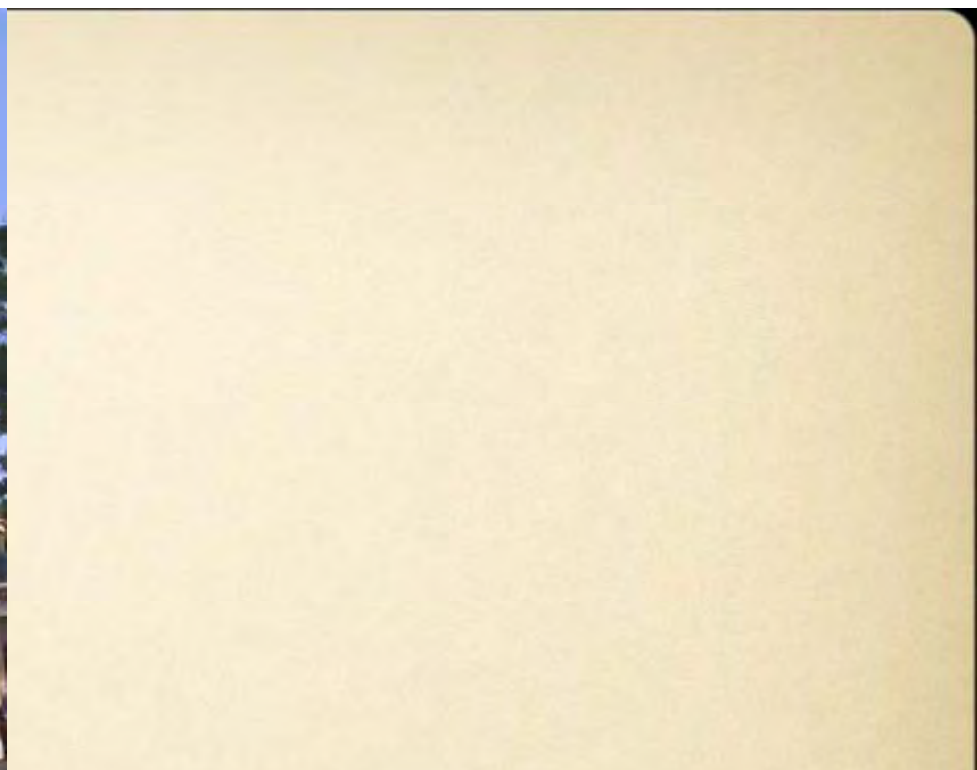
Sagebrook

Deacon Blvd

Quail

Recommended Actions

- Expand the Historic District boundary to include the Little Theater and residential area to the north
- Parking structure- financed through Revenue bonds or TIF district
- Redevelop the parking lots with infill development, especially along Central Ave., with retail, offices, housing. Need mindset shift from suburban shopping centers to downtown “street wall”.



- Examples of Parking structures

Recommended Actions

- Increase the affordability of housing in the District and along its edges, especially for those engaged in the creative economy and young professionals.



Examples of downtown
residential building types



Recommended Actions

- Develop a Landscape theme through the District to establish connectivity, public art and sense of place- its now showing symptoms of schizophrenia



Recommended Actions

- Create stronger presence with UNM twig and LANL in the District
- Opportunities for youth in the District, including their “own” place
- Develop a flexible Creative District Pavilion
- Can the technology that’s being developed at such a high level within the Labs be manifested in the architecture and built environment of the District?



ENTERTAINMENT

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

RETAIL (HOUSING)

PAZA

PARKING

PAZA

PAVILION MARKET

ARTS

NEW RETAIL

PARKING STRUCTURE

PEDESTAL OPEN SPACE

PARK

HOUSING

PARKING

OPPORTUNITY SITES

Main St

10th St

11th St

**Capacity Building and
Sustainability**

Elmo Baca, NM MainStreet

Molly Bleecker, UNM BBER

Rich Williams, ACD Coordinator

Los Alamos Creative
District in Science and
Innovation

Assets/Kudos

- Los Alamos is blessed with exceptional leadership and strong organizational infrastructure
- Los Alamos County enjoys strong revenues, and has the financial capacity to invest in “cultural facilities” and programs within the A & C District
- Los Alamos is home to several high quality arts and cultural organizations, performing arts companies, and many other dynamic non-profit organizations



Assets/Kudos

The community has access to several important private and institutional development partners, including LANL, and UNM-Los Alamos

The volunteer base is strong, but people might rather give time than money to projects and programs

Los Alamos enjoys a strong workforce, and new initiatives such as the Regional Human Capital initiative and the “Train the new nuclear worker” strategy



What we heard...

- Entitlement attitude – everything was free before, so why should we pay for it now?
- Paralysis by Analysis – the community can be hypercritical and skeptical of new projects
- Land assembly and high land costs hamper development
- Non-profit organizations are surviving, but struggling in the recession. Funding for arts and cultural organizations is stagnant.
- Los Alamos appears to have weak foundation funding support for arts and culture
- Los Alamos has high quality and high cost of living, but affordability of housing is an issue

Recommended Actions - Master and Finesse the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA)

- The NM Arts and Cultural Districts Act provides for flexible public investment in “cultural facilities” and “metropolitan redevelopment projects” through LEDA
- LA County staff is well-versed in LEDA procedures and can work creatively with private and non-profit “cultural entrepreneurs” to develop new cultural facilities and economic enterprises in the new Arts and Cultural District
- “Cultural facilities” eligible for public support include theaters, museums, libraries, galleries, cultural compounds, educational organizations, performing arts venues and orgs., fine arts organizations, studios and media labs, and live/work housing facilities

Promote Historic Preservation Planning

- Owners of registered historic properties located within the Arts and Cultural District may earn a double state income tax credit of up to \$50,000 for a qualified rehabilitation project
- The Certified Local Government Program (CLG) is a steady funding program from education projects



Consider “layered” and Complementary Financing Strategies

The County may consider other innovative redevelopment strategies for the downtown Arts and Cultural District such as Tax Increment Finance or Development District (TIF and TIDD), or a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), or a Business Improvement District (BID)



Develop Innovative Partnerships

Major investment partners such as LANL and UNM-LA are interested in supporting projects that may include cultural compounds, student live/work housing, science and tech based tourism, and other innovative collaborations

Contact the USDA about their Rural Tourism Initiative- it may provide funding for a Science and Tech Tourism Initiative, Eco-Tourism and trails



Encourage Cultural Entrepreneurs

Invite Tom Aageson,
Director of the Museum of
New Mexico Foundation to
present his ideas on
“Cultural Entrepreneurs” in
Los Alamos





What's Next:

Los Alamos Creative District in Science and Innovation Plan

This is an exciting time for Downtown Los Alamos!

Thank You!