



## ABQ THE PLAN: ROUTE 66 ACTION PLAN

BRINGING BACK THE 'MOTHER ROAD'



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City of Albuquerque, NM

February, 2013



To learn more about this project, please visit us on the web at [ABQthePlan.cabq.gov](http://ABQthePlan.cabq.gov)  
Mayor's Office: 505.768.3000 Email: [theplan@cabq.gov](mailto:theplan@cabq.gov)

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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The City of Albuquerque has been working with Strata Design, community leaders and citizen groups to write a Route 66 Action Plan, a long term plan to bring the 'Mother Road' back to Albuquerque and promote it as a destination for visitors as well as a great place to live, work and play.

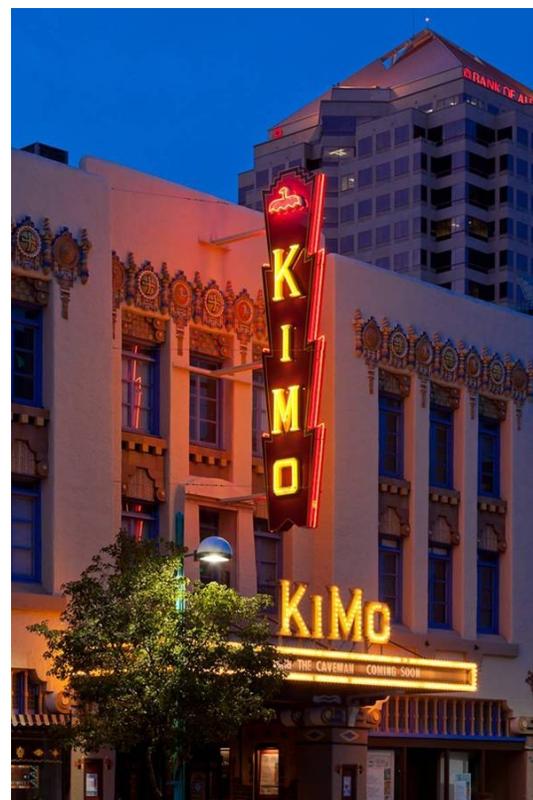
## VISION

Route 66 in Albuquerque is a vibrant and rich experience for all generations; its attraction builds upon the memories of the past, contributes to the present lives of locals with an ever-evolving appeal that expands into the future.

The City of Albuquerque is developing the Route 66 Action Plan in coordination with the City Council and the community. We estimate that this plan will span the next 25 years, with regular updates to its content.

## GOALS

1. **Historic Legacy Goal:** The historic legacy of Route 66 shall be celebrated for its past present and future experiences.
2. **Community Placemaking Goal:** Support real places for real people.
3. **Economic Investment Goal:** Support opportunities that are catalytic for a diverse economy.
4. **Tourism Goal:** Recognize and support the potential Route 66 has to create a thriving tourist economy.





## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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# APPROACH

The Route 66 Action Plan focuses on the following key areas:

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### Infrastructure and Transportation

- Digital Backbone
- High Speed "Fiber to the Premises"
  - Create a Municipal Wireless Network
  - Transportation Level of Service
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

### Streetscape Design

- Signage & Way finding
- Streetscape Infrastructure & Amenities
- Public Art to unify corridor
- Neon Sign Design Overlay
- Preserve and redevelop historic Route 66 buildings\*

### Business Incentives

- Façade Improvement Program
- Minimize "gaps" on Central
- Encourage and incentivize business development
- Increase housing density

### Promotion

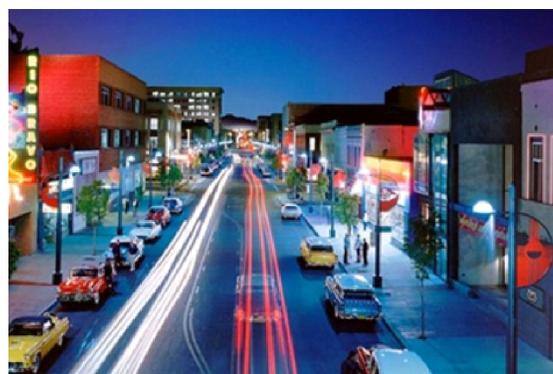
- Neighborhood Identity & Branding of Route 66
- Central Avenue website & visitor's centers
- Special events & festivals

\*Historic Route 66 buildings, such as De Anza and El Vado - *Both these motels will be redeveloped as City of Albuquerque landmarks.*

# IMPLEMENTATION

Ideally, the Route 66 Action Plan will function as a master plan that is used as a reference point for city planners and project managers. The City of Albuquerque will explore various funding options and partnerships. The projects will most likely be done in phases over several years.

We have also partnered with the UNM School of Architecture and Planning called *ABQ+UNM CityLab*, which enables professors and students to work on real city projects in the Route 66 corridor and other locations in the city.



*Photo courtesy of Marble Street Studios*



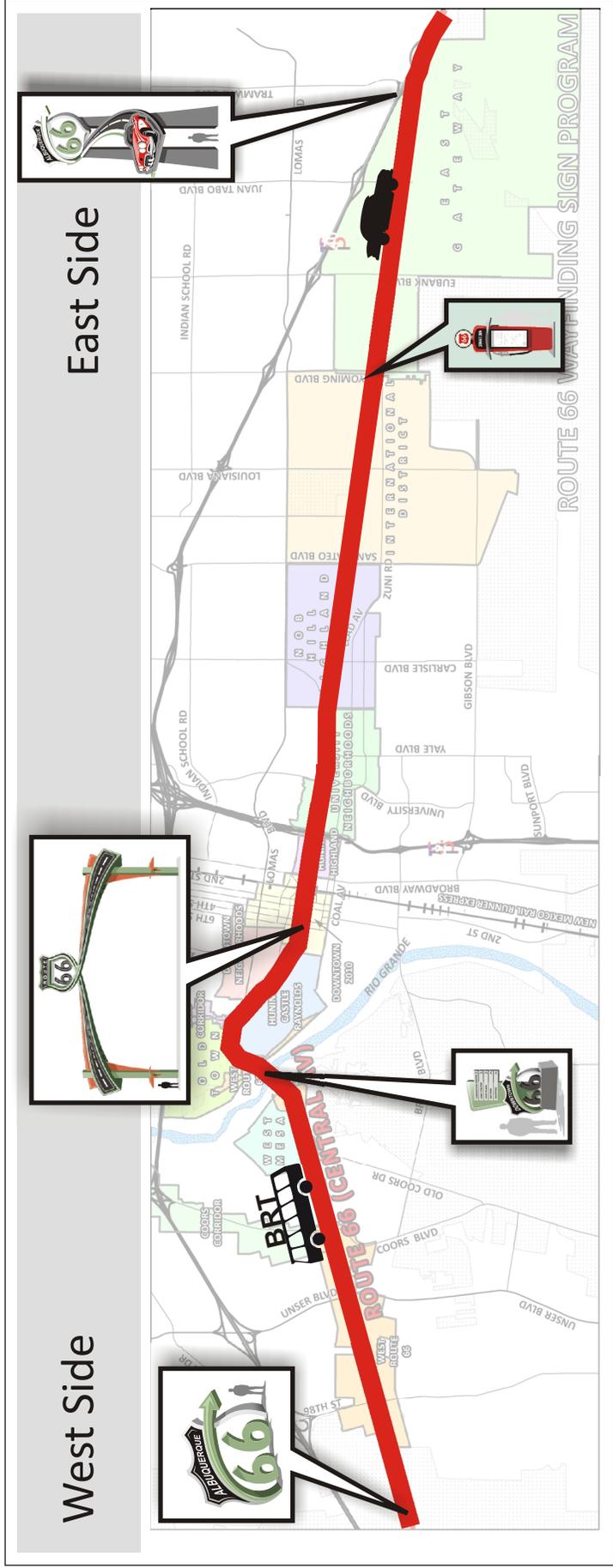
ABQ the Plan is Mayor Berry's long term plan to invest in the future of Albuquerque. ABQ the Plan is about large scale public projects that will increase quality of life for residents, enhance economic development opportunities, promote tourism, and spur private sector investments.

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# Project Overview Map



**Note:** This map is conceptual and is not to scale. There might be several wayfinding and kiosk signs throughout the corridor. These are just examples of possible locations.



## Project Elements

### Infrastructure and Transportation

Improving infrastructure and transportation along Route 66 will make it more livable and usable, attracting new residents, high tech, multi-media businesses and state of the art research institutions.

#### DIGITAL BACKBONE

- Install fiber optic cabling and other high performance digital systems.
- Provide free high speed internet service along the Central Corridor.

#### TRANSPORTATION LEVEL OF SERVICE

- Provide a high level of transportation service for all users along Route 66.
- Incorporate a strong network of pedestrian and bicycle improvements to support diverse transportation choices.

#### ENHANCED TRANSIT

- Prioritize the development a Bus Rapid Transit system (BRT) along Central Avenue.

### Streetscape Design

Comprehensive streetscape design is vital to the success of Route 66 in Albuquerque as a destination by providing safe and comfortable places for all modes of transportation.

#### SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

- Install a comprehensive wayfinding system visible by car leading visitors from interstate exits to activity nodes.
- Enact a pedestrian wayfinding system, for each activity node identified in the plan to direct visitors to explore historic sites, attractions, and neighborhoods.

#### STREETSCAPE INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

- Implement a comprehensive streetscape design with coordinated pedestrian amenities to reinforce the Route 66 identity along Central Avenue that is consistent throughout the corridor.
- Develop a flexible streetscape palette that responds to individual neighborhood character and distinctiveness.
- Construct low walls to frame the street edge and mask vacant lots and parking.

#### PUBLIC ART

- Install Public Art pieces throughout the Central Corridor.
- Use public art to re-purpose orphan signs and blank sides of existing buildings.

#### GATEWAY AND IDENTITY ELEMENTS

- Establish a comprehensive series of gateways at significant points along Route 66, introducing activity nodes, the crossroads, and key entry and exit points along the road.
- Implement neighborhood identity elements along Route 66.





Photo courtesy of Marble Street Studios



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## Project Elements

### Business Improvements

The public support of physical improvements to private property, is a key redevelopment strategy necessary to transform Route 66 into an inviting destination for locals and visitors alike.

#### PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Establish a façade improvement program for existing businesses along Central
- Minimize development “gaps” along Central Avenue

#### ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Provide a series of Fee waivers
- Implement a streamlined approval process for development
- Offer businesses tax breaks or other incentives
- Incentivize higher density development

#### PRESERVATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

- Incentivize the preservation and redevelopment of historic buildings Inventory existing building and signs
- Develop a pictorial inventory of signage and buildings that have been removed
- Create incentives for refurbishing and maintaining existing signage
- Develop and market a signage tour using both print and digital media.

### Promotion

The successful promotion of Route 66 is instrumental to attracting and retaining businesses, locals and visitors alike.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY AND BRANDING OF ROUTE 66

- Reinforce the identity of Route 66, the unique identity of Albuquerque, and the southwest (cacti, cowboys, Native American and Hispanic cultures and general Americana)
- Develop branding elements that reflect the unique characteristics of the neighborhoods along Central Avenue
- Incorporate identity elements into public infrastructure, including bus shelters, wayfinding signage, information kiosks, streets signs, banners, etc.

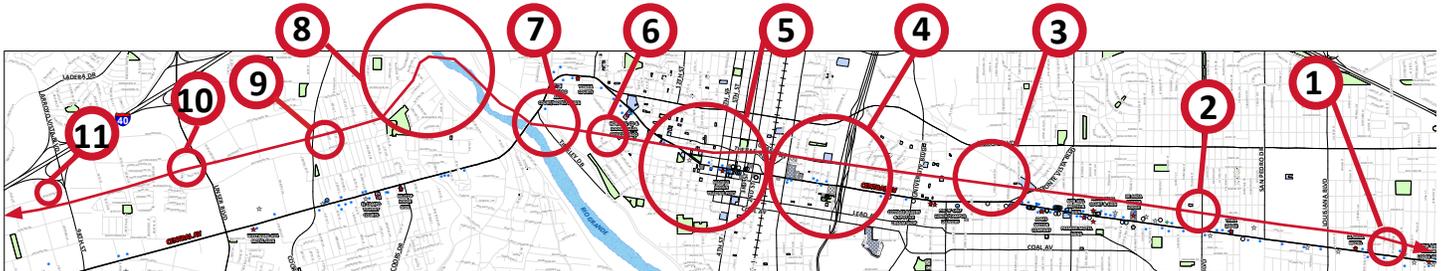
#### PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

- Establish a Route 66/Central Avenue website dedicated to the events and activities of Route 66 in Albuquerque.
- Develop user friendly Apps to key visitors into features on Route 66 (what to do, where to eat, where to stay)
- Install streetlight banners to advertise events and activities
- Organize special events & festivals

#### MARKETING PLAN

- Develop a local marketing campaign to attract locals
- Develop a nation and international marketing campaign for Route 66

# Project Nodes



- 1. East Gateway
- 2. Ponderosa Park
- 3. International District.
- 4. Nob Hill/Highland
- 5. University
- 6. Edo
- 7. Downtown
- 8. Cultural Cluster
- 9. Old Coors
- 10. Unser
- 11. Lodging/Venue



strategic areas as nodes: a cluster of route 66 elements such as signs, motels and restaurants with direct access to other cultural and local amenities.

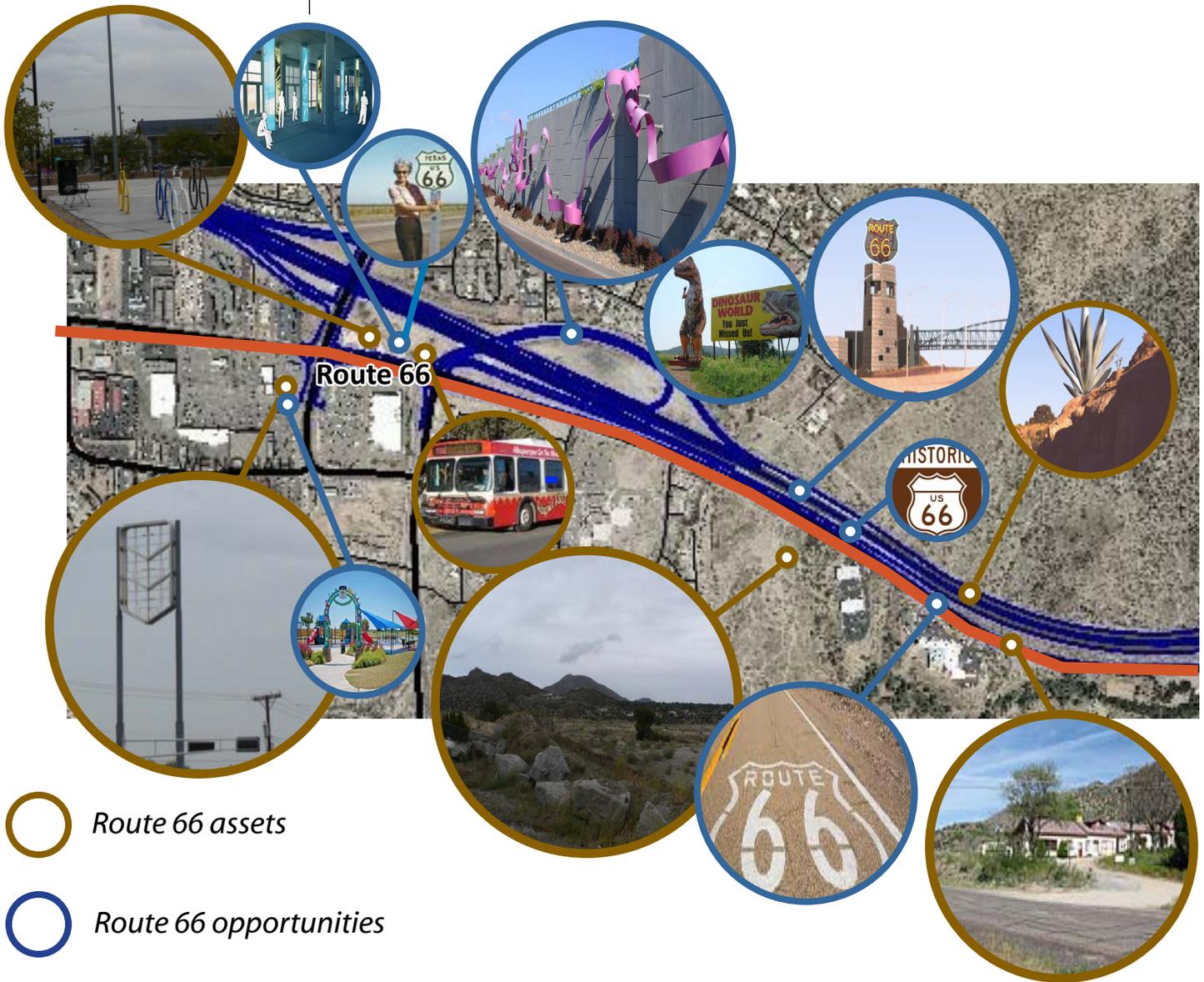


spaces in between nodes as linkages: a linear experience of elements along the road such as neon signage and streetscaping.

Eleven “activity nodes have been identified through the planning process as having key assets contributing to the Route 66 experience. These are areas with either a high concentration of Route 66 elements, such as signs, buildings and businesses, or other amenities that currently attract people to Central Avenue, such as shops, restaurants, entertainment and cultural attractions. The intent of the projects for Route 66 nodes is to:

- draw people along the Mother Road with existing, enhanced and new elements
- allow people to experience Route 66 for an hour, a day, or as a destination vacation
- capitalize on existing amenities and Route 66 attributes, allocates resources to established areas, expands opportunities in existing environments

# 1. East Gateway





# 1. East Gateway

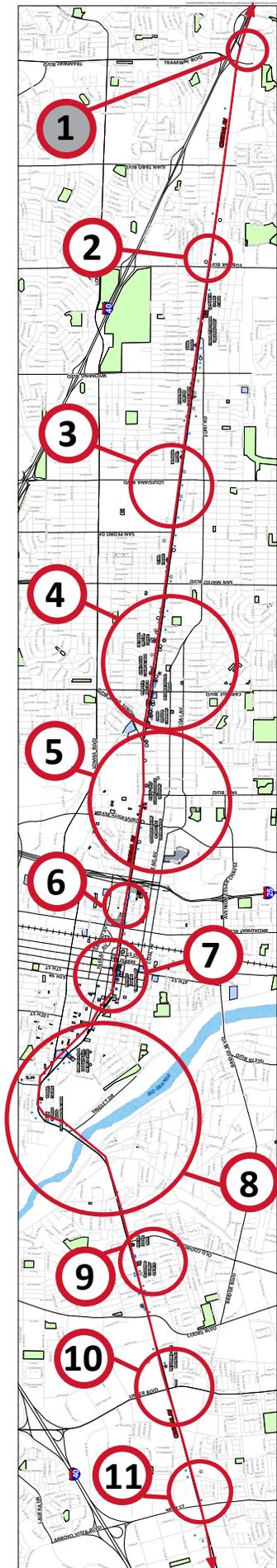
**Location:** Central Avenue: City limits to Figueroa Street

**Description:**

The East Gateway node is the eastern most entry point to Route 66 within Albuquerque and is envisioned as a “Gateway,” welcoming travelers and enthusiasts to Route 66. This node includes the Four Hill Shopping Center, La Luz de Amistad Park, a large number of existing lodging facilities, restaurants and services.

**Potential Projects:**

- Public Art piece along Tramway Interstate off ramp
- Interpretive elements related to Route 66
- Public art piece incorporated with existing orphan Chevron sign
- Facade improvements and enhanced streetscaping
- Enhanced, multi-use trail with Public art, linkages and wayfinding signage
- Improve Route 66 signage on Interstate
- Enhanced pedestrian intersections
- Digital resources and App for virtual Route 66 tour/information
- Pedestrian I-40 overpass connecting open space and trail systems
- Transit turn around and park and ride facility



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### 3. International District



 *Route 66 assets*

 *Route 66 opportunities*



### 3. International District

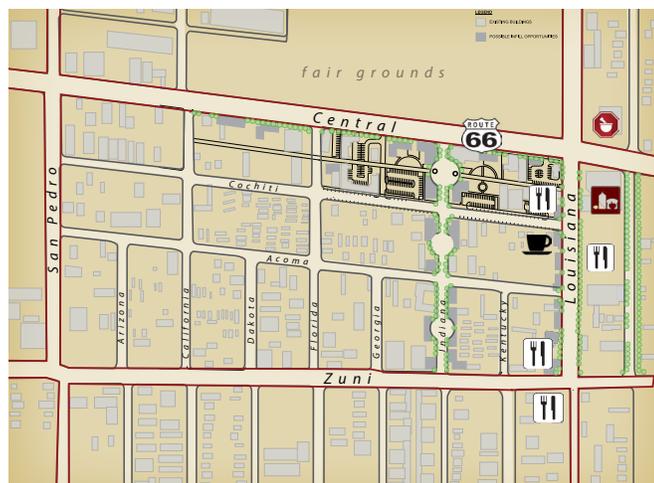
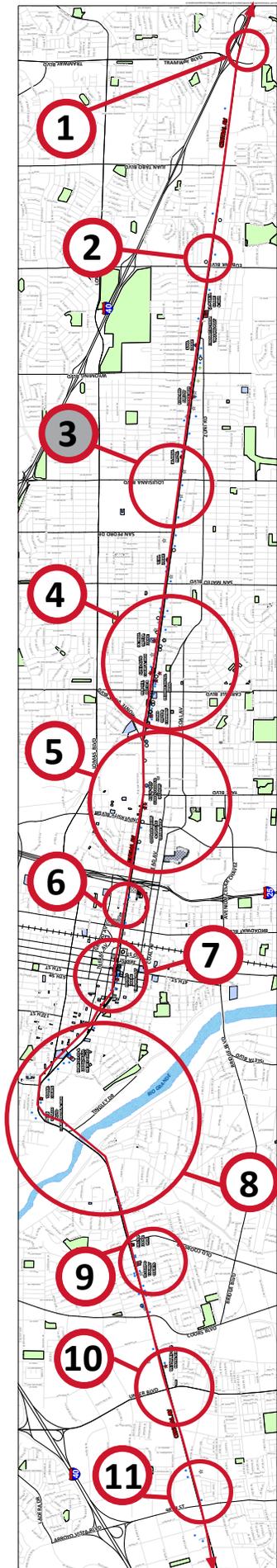
**Location:** Central Avenue: Wyoming Boulevard to San Mateo Boulevard

**Description:**

The International District is home to a diverse collection of residents and businesses representing countries all over the world. The area is full of ethnic restaurants, shops and cultural attractions including museums, temples and art. It is also home to a large sampling of neon signage, icon Route 66 buildings and businesses. The vision for the area is to highlight the Route 66 history in the area as a complementary asset to the burgeoning international scene.

**Potential Projects:**

- Rehabilitation of neon signage, development of a linear sign experience
- Enhance pedestrian streetscape
- Facade improvements
- Signage and wayfinding
- Interpretive Route 66 elements and Public art
- Streetscape and facade improvements to fairgrounds
- Pedestrian intersection improvements
- Pedestrian street lighting
- Outdoor market and event space



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## 8. Cultural District



 *Route 66 assets*

 *Route 66 opportunities*

## 8. Cultural District

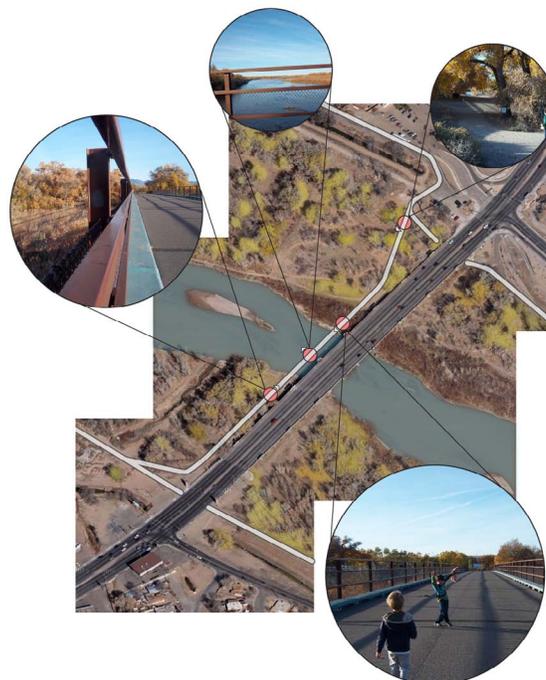
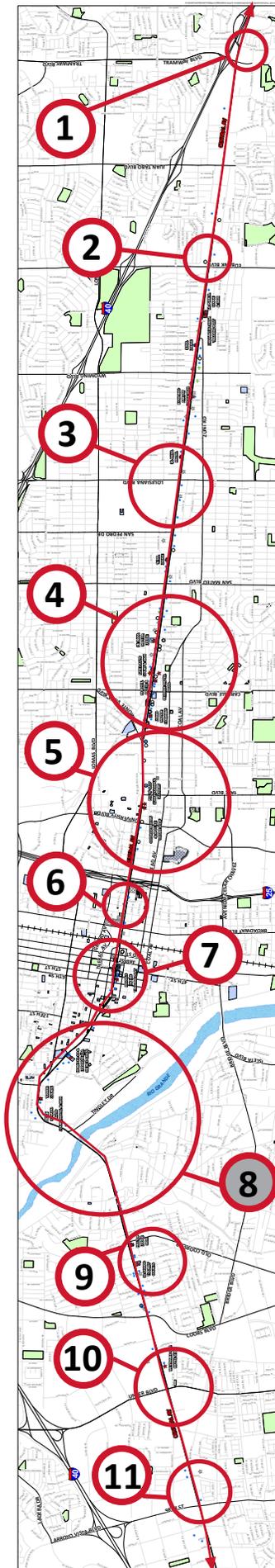
**Location:** Central Avenue: Laguna Boulevard to 46th Street

**Description:**

The Cultural Cluster node is the “heart” of Albuquerque. Comprising of X miles of Route 66, this area is home to the bosque, BioPark, Tingley Beach, the Zoo, Old Town, Museums, and the Atrisco shopping center. The vision for this area is to build up the existing amenities to create a identifiable cultural district which is easy to navigate by foot. The district is intended to attract locals and visitors, offering a variety of experiences, amenities and characteristics unique to the area.

**Potential Projects:**

- Pedestrian bridge across river
- Enhanced bosque access
- Comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian circulation systems, linking cultural facilities
- Enhanced streetscapes along Central
- Redevelop El Vado motel
- Facade improvements
- Interpretive elements and Public Art related to Route 66
- A comprehensive wayfinding system
- Improved pedestrian access to BioPark from Central
- Possible equestrian access and parking on southwest side of river
- Neon lighting on bridge



# 10. Unser and Central



Route 66 assets



Route 66 opportunities

## 10. Unser and Central

**Location:** Central Avenue: 75th Street to Bridge Boulevard

**Description:**

A major westside nexus, the crossing of Unser and Central is envisioned as a mixed use major activity center that serves the southwest mesa. The area features spectacular views of downtown and the mountains and is home to several Route 66 motels, businesses and related public art pieces.

**Potential Projects:**

- Incorporate Route 66 interpretive elements into existing Transit facility and future public library.
- Create an outdoor space for public events
- Develop a multi-use trail along frontage road using Low Impact Design and incorporating Public art and Route 66 interpretive features
- Improve pedestrian crossing at Unser and Central
- Support development of development of cultural attractions such as the Unser Children’s museum

