



# Executive Summary



Post Card (1)



1940 Standard Oil Map



Historic Route 66 (1)

## Introduction

The Route 66 Action Plan (the Plan) is part of ABQ the Plan, Mayor Richard J. Berry's plan to invest in the future of Albuquerque, NM. ABQ the Plan is a long-range plan for projects that will enhance the entire city by spurring job creation and economic development while increasing the quality of life for current residents and future generations. ABQ the Plan consists of several major planning efforts, including the Route 66 Action Plan, the 50-Mile Loop and the Rio Grande Vision.

Albuquerque contains the longest intact stretch of the original Route 66 highway in an urbanized area. The Route 66 Action Plan is a Rank II City plan that covers the 15 miles of Central Avenue/Route 66 within Albuquerque city limits from 116<sup>th</sup> Street to I-40 at Tramway Boulevard. The Plan creates strategies to improve, enhance and celebrate this portion of Route 66. The intent of the Plan is to inform and direct City efforts that impact Central Avenue and to guide lower ranking plans. In addition, the Plan outlines actions to be taken throughout the corridor and at specific nodes for pedestrian improvements, urban enhancements and catalytic redevelopment projects. For implementation purposes, the Plan focuses actions within ten established neighborhood districts to foster nodes of activity along the Route 66/Central Avenue corridor.

## About Route 66

Commissioned in 1926, Route 66 has played an important role in the history of Albuquerque and the U.S. In 1937, the highway alignment shifted from 4<sup>th</sup> Street to Central Avenue, but continued to pass through Albuquerque, creating an intersection of the pre-1937 and post 1937 Route 66 highways. The westward migration of those seeking "the cure" for tuberculosis, escaping the Dustbowl and searching for new opportunities during the Great Depression brought people to and through Albuquerque, creating a demand for goods, services and lodging. The more prosperous years, following the Great Depression, brought families on vacation, military supplies and building materials to the area. Both alignments helped to make Albuquerque a thriving place. However, the completion of Interstates 40 and 25 caused traffic to divert off of Central and many businesses left or closed. Since then, many groups have worked to continue the legacy of Route 66 in Albuquerque. The New Mexico Route 66 Association, local businesses, the City of Albuquerque and many other entities champion Route 66 working to maintain its assets and image.



Historic Route 66 (1)



Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library



Historic Route 66 / Central Avenue (2)

## About the Route 66 Action Plan

The vision for Route 66 in Albuquerque is a vibrant and rich experience for all generations with attractions that build upon the memories of the past, contribute to the present lives of locals and has an ever-evolving appeal that expands into the future. The Plan identifies strategic actions, developed during an extensive community planning process, which improve, enhance and celebrate the roadway’s legacy: as historic Route 66, as Albuquerque’s main street, and for the future, as a diverse, technologically advanced economic engine for the City.

The Route 66 Action Plan is a Rank II City plan that includes goals and policies to provide a framework for the preservation and redevelopment of Route 66/Central Avenue within City limits. The Plan also identifies strategic actions, projects and infrastructure improvements to the Route 66 corridor within Albuquerque and makes recommendations for additional efforts for portions of the corridor outside the City limits. Plan actions respond to distinct character and conditions along corridor. In some areas, actions direct physical improvements; including pedestrian amenities, urban enhancement and catalytic redevelopment projects. In other areas, actions focus on revitalization and reuse of existing Route 66 inventory and fostering economic development. The intent of these actions is to focus public and private resources to preserve the existing assets of the Mother Road and stimulate reinvestment in the communities along Central Avenue in order to make Route 66 a viable experience for both visitors and residents. This Plan focuses on the Central Avenue Route 66 Corridor. Future planning efforts should consider developing strategies and projects for the pre-1937 Route 66 alignment along 4th street.

The Plan outlines five main goals that will guide City investments. All of the projects proposed through this planning effort will align with at least one of these goals:

### Goals:

1. **Historic Legacy:** *Preserve and protect Route 66 assets and interests.*
2. **Infrastructure and Transportation:** *Ensure public infrastructure responds to current and future development needs. Develop and support an attractive, comfortable, efficient and easily accessible multi-modal transportation system.*
3. **Public Spaces:** *Foster a sense of place and a unified streetscape.*
4. **Business and Development:** *Support opportunities that are catalytic for a strong and diverse business economy.*
5. **Promotion and Tourism:** *Recognize and support the potential Route 66 has to create a thriving local and tourist economy.*



## Planning Process

In early 2011, the planning process for the Route 66 Action Plan began when Mayor Berry formed a Vision Team comprised of city leaders from the private sector, UNM and key city staff to brainstorm on ABQ the Plan, followed by a Council visioning session. The Route 66 Action Plan was among the concepts that emerged from the vision session. In 2011, the concepts were presented at over 100 events to over 3,000 people, including community groups, business organizations, government functions, town halls and summer festivals as well as on the City's website, Facebook and Twitter. In June of 2012, a consultant, Strata Design, was contracted to work with Planning staff and the Mayor's office to draft the Route 66 Action Plan.

*ABQ+UNM CityLab.* An additional part of the Route 66 Action Plan planning process included the ABQ+UNM CityLab initiative. CityLab is a partnership between the City of Albuquerque and the University of New Mexico School of Architecture and Planning. The City has provided the Architecture and Planning School with a space downtown where students work on projects in conjunction with the Route 66 Action Plan and other City projects.

## Implementation Strategy

In order to facilitate and coordinate public investment along Route 66, projects and actions are grouped into two areas: those which will be implemented corridor-wide and special projects specific to each activity node. This strategy recognizes the need for consistency and inter-department coordination for large-scale projects that affect the entire corridor, as well as the unique conditions and needs of projects within individual neighborhoods and districts. Where possible, projects have been identified for existing public property to maximize City resources. In addition, this strategy recognizes the need for implementation flexibility to allow for actions and projects to be implemented as funds and opportunities become available. An Action Plan Matrix has been developed as part of this Plan and lists priority projects and funding sources. The Action Plan is intended to be a "living" document that is reviewed and updated by relevant City departments on an annual basis.



Mayor Berry, Parade (3)



Working group meeting (3)



City Lab (4)



Aztec and Premier motel signs (1)



Bell Trading Post, then (1)



Bell Trading Post Lofts, now (1)



Albuquerque Route 66 Businesses (2)

### Corridor-wide Efforts

Corridor-wide efforts are actions that take place along the entirety of Route 66 and bring quality of life improvements such as building preservation, facade improvements, streetscape improvements, public safety, enhanced transportation, public art, and additional elements that attract businesses, including state of the art digital infrastructure, marketing, and other business incentives. These efforts are part of a long-term investment strategy and intended to be implemented in conjunction with projects and efforts currently identified by City departments.

The Plan identifies specific projects to be implemented throughout the Route 66/Central Avenue corridor within the city limits. They are intended to bring current infrastructure and services up to date and to create an environment that is attractive and to residents and visitors. The following actions and activities have been determined to be significant to the revitalization of Route 66.

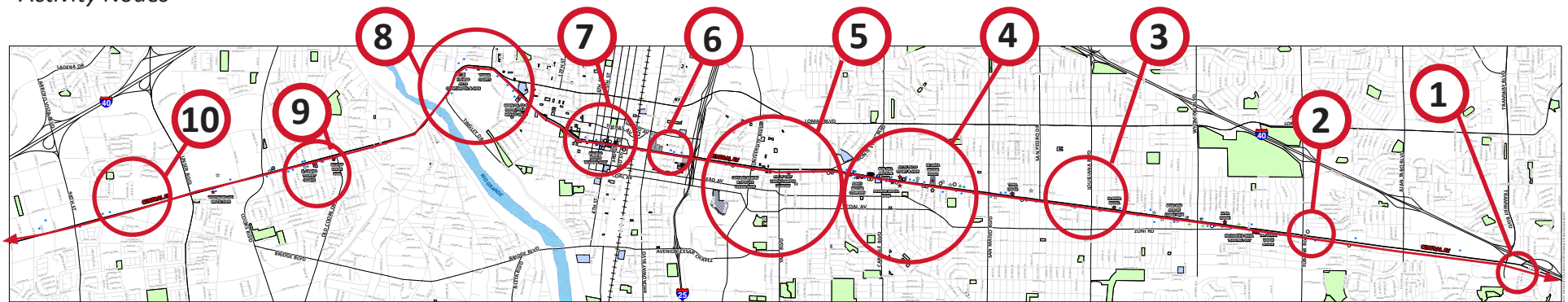
- Signage and wayfinding systems
- Modern pedestrian infrastructure
- Digital infrastructure
- Enhanced transit system
- Streetscape infrastructure
- A kit of Route 66 branded pedestrian amenities to develop a public space in each node
- Public Art
- Enhanced public spaces
- Enhanced attractions
- Neon sign preservation and the implementation of the Central Avenue Neon Sign Design Overlay Zone (CANDOZ)
- Coordinated local marketing efforts
- Façade improvement programs
- Development incentives
- Community ownership
- Neighborhood Identity and Branding of Route 66
- Route 66 website and visitors center
- Special events and festivals
- Incentivize business
- Historic Preservation and conservation of period structures



### Special Projects (Nodes)

The Plan proposes specialized projects in identified activity nodes along Route 66 that are vital for creating an experience of “Come, Stay and Stay Longer.” Examples of specialized projects include the development of pedestrian plazas with Route 66 features, micro visitor’s centers, event venues, museums, lodging and public events and activities. Some of these specialized projects are identified in the existing Sector Development and Metropolitan Redevelopment plans for neighborhoods and communities along the Central Corridor. Others are new projects that are intended to enhance the Route 66 experience.

### Activity Nodes



**Legend**

- ★ ROUTE 66 HISTORIC PROPERTIES
- CITY LANDMARKS
- REGISTERED HISTORIC PLACES
- PARKS
- SIGNS ALONG CENTRAL
- HISTORIC NEON
- ICONIC SIGN
- NEW NEON
- ★ ORPHAN SIGN



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**NODE KEY**

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

