

What about Land Use?

It's Your Community . . .

During the planning process, community members and elected officials envisioned making the areas near the Rail Runner stations great places, with improved transportation options, access to parks and recreation, and a variety of housing options, maintaining Camino del Pueblo as a lively and viable main street. The amount of residential or commercial building permitted on a given parcel of land – generally referred to as density - is key to making this vision a reality.

The center of Bernalillo has historically been relatively densely built. The plan maintains the existing density found near the downtown station and encourages the town to expand its center to appropriate areas within walking distance of the stations. The benefits of well-designed density include:



- More efficient use of land - leaving more for open space and agriculture
- Greater housing choices including "workforce" priced housing
- Makes transit service such as buses and shuttles possible
- Support for retail, main street, and small local businesses
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Decreased public infrastructure costs
- Easier and more enjoyable walking and bicycling experiences

To ensure that future land use in the area benefits the Town, the plan recommends appropriate design standards and guidelines and a master plan approval process. This provides elected officials and the public an opportunity to review specific project proposals and ensure they contribute to the community vision.

FAQ's

How was the plan developed?

The plan was developed largely through a public Community Design Workshop attended by community members, town and county officials, local business leaders, local developers, area youth, and professional planners.

What will the plan do?

The plan will serve as a guide for local decision-makers on how to respond to opportunities and challenges arising in areas directly surrounding the two Rail Runner stations.

Elected officials and town residents will ultimately have the final say in what specific projects will actually get built.



How will the plan help us keep the Bernalillo we know and love?

The plan focuses on maintaining those parts of the Town residents identified as important, while recognizing the real pressures of growth and change that the town – and the region - is experiencing. Looking at the bigger picture allows the plan to recommend ways to turn these pressures into opportunities.

To address residential growth, the plan recommends offering more housing options with a wider variety of prices, types, and styles so the town can continue to be home, now and in the future, to all Bernalillo residents. This includes families who have deep roots in the community and newcomers who are attracted and charmed by small town living and the traditional culture of the region.

Additionally, the plan promotes existing community businesses by recommending increasing public parking, establishing attractive pedestrian connections, and a few key new roads connecting Main Street, existing neighborhoods, schools, and the Rail Runner stations.

The Draft Bernalillo TOD Plan contains much more information on these visions and the steps to achieve them. For more information, or to review the plan, please contact the Town of Bernalillo's planning office at (505) 867-3311.

Town of Bernalillo/ Sandoval County Rail Runner Stations Station Area Planning



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Looking Back while Moving Forward

Long ago, early Spanish settlers traveled north on foot and horseback along the famed El Camino Real... a few hundred years later, people motored by in cars on historic Route 66... nowadays, many arrive in the Town of Bernalillo by the newest form of transportation – the New Mexico Rail Runner Express. With the station area planning effort, the Town is looking at its future to ensure that the Rail Runner best serves the Town and its residents while preserving the community's history and character.



Creating a Community Vision

For almost a year, elected officials, town staff, and the general public have worked to develop a land use and transportation plan for the areas near the commuter rail stations. The draft Bernalillo TOD Plan (Transit Oriented Development) is the result of this effort. The plan focuses on small but important portions of the Town within walking distance (roughly ¼ to ½ mile) of the Downtown Bernalillo and Sandoval County / US 550 stations.

The plan is designed to help support local businesses, encourage housing options, provide open space and trails, and preserve the town's historical architectural styles. Included in the plan are several viable and useful recommendations on how to achieve the visions for each station area. Serving as a guide, the plan will help steer the decisions of elected officials and town staff as they make their day-to-day decisions on activities near the stations.



What We Heard From You - Quotes from Design Workshop Participants

- Town Character** "We must preserve the area's historic structures"
- Walkability/Connections** "Formalize a trail network now for future generations"
- Downtown Destination** "Patio atmosphere adds life to the streets and would draw people to Bernalillo"

Downtown Bernalillo Rail Runner Station:

Moving Ahead and Recalling the Past

Imagine extending the vibrancy of Bernalillo's Downtown Main Street through a lively shopping street to the Downtown Bernalillo Rail Runner Station. As you stroll to the station, perhaps you pick up flowers, drop off your mail, buy a book or simply enjoy a cup of coffee before getting on the train. Even if you are not going to the train, maybe you choose to visit the area to stroll the shaded sidewalks, to browse the shop windows, or to meet with your neighbors.

Travelers and friends arriving on the Rail Runner are greeted by a safe and inviting station and can comfortably walk to the area's regionally known restaurants, thriving retail stores, art galleries, public parks and historic landmarks. Visitors will immediately recognize Bernalillo's rich history and character.



This vision is not far from what Bernalillo is today. But, in order to achieve this in the time of big box stores and sprawling residential development, some important improvements have been identified for the area:

- A lively shopping street will connect the station to Camino del Pueblo, providing public space for outdoor dining, performance areas, farmer's market, retail storefronts and places to simply relax.
- Safe, lighted, and shaded sidewalks connecting the Rail Runner station to homes, local businesses, and Camino del Pueblo.



- Much-needed additional parking to serve local businesses and other destinations near the station.
- New roads and pathways to ease circulation and provide safe and convenient routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- New commercial and residential development that will be "neighborhood sized" and will look and feel like those found along Camino del Pueblo.
- Revitalized acequias and historic trails to provide vital links to residential areas and community open spaces.
- New housing that offers maximum choice in size, type, and price and is designed to reflect Bernalillo's architectural styles and sustainable building practices -- all within a convenient walk to the station.

Sandoval County/US 550 Rail Runner Station:

A Snapshot of the Future



Some say New Mexico's first taste of the wine industry started right here – at the northern edge of Bernalillo. Perhaps that is why it is only appropriate that the vision for this station blends Bernalillo's historic characteristics with the more modern, active setting of the US 550/I-25 corridor. In fact, modifications to the existing parking lot area include the addition of more trees and vineyard-themed landscaping - all aimed at creating a visual amenity reflecting Bernalillo's history. For residents, it adds up to a feeling of real community - instead of simply a parking lot and a place to catch the train. These features combined with the stores and offices – lined with active sidewalks and pedestrian paseos - inspire a vibrant "sense of arrival" for visitors to the area. Pedestrian paths, some along the acequia,

will make for a comfortable and relaxing walk between the station and nearby houses, businesses, schools and of course, the annual Bernalillo Wine Festival.

To achieve this vision, improvements identified for the station area include:

- Mixed-use development and new residential development on vacant parcels within walking distance of the station.
- Bike routes that will connect the station area to a network of existing and future bike lanes.
- A pedestrian and bike connection under US 550 that will safely and comfortably bring people to the high school and north.
- Creation of "sense of arrival" through landmark architectural elements, direct views of the Sandia Mountains and the addition of trees and vineyard-themed parking lot.
- New parks, public open spaces and enhancements to the historical trails and acequias to reflect the vineyard and rich agricultural history of the area.

Sandoval County/US 550 Rail Runner Station will have an increasingly important transportation role by providing connections between the Rail Runner and numerous bus and shuttle linkages. Additionally, this vital stop will soon serve as the gateway station for future Rail Runner service north to Santa Fe.

