

## St. Michael's Drive Corridor Project

St. Michael's Drive runs through the heart of the Santa Fe Urban area (pop. 85,000). Originally built as a 2-lane highway around what was then the south side of Santa Fe in the 1950s, and later expanded to 7-lanes, this roadway now has excess road capacity with 1960s and 1970s-era strip commercial development and a somewhat marginal business climate. The City of Santa Fe has identified a 1.5 mile stretch of St. Michael's Drive for redevelopment anchored by CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center and a cluster of other medical businesses at one end and by the Santa Fe University of Art & Design at the other end.

The Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® has a long history of supporting local [housing affordability programs and initiatives](#) throughout the Santa Fe community. Like many communities across the country, Santa Fe remains challenged in providing workforce housing to those providing vital services such as police, fire, emergency workers, educators, hospital workers, and other care providers. The association believes St. Michael's Drive redevelopment could help address the city's housing shortage.

In 2011, the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® received a \$15,000 National Association of Realtors® Smart Growth Grant to investigate the inclusion of housing (for-sale, rental, and affordable) as part of the City of Santa Fe's continuing efforts to encourage redevelopment with a form-based approach along a 1.5-mile stretch of St. Michael's Drive. The [Housing Study](#) conducted by am+a design found that the estimated total number of rental apartments projected for the District is 1,038 units with a mix of units that might look as follows:

- 15% Studio Units - 259 units @ 647 sf each
- 60% One Bedroom Units - 518 units @ 750sf each
- 25% Two Bedroom Units - 259 units @ 450 sf each

The Housing Study including a number of policy steps that could be adopted by the City of Santa Fe to incentivize housing along the corridor. The study was shared with the City of Santa Fe, recognized by city leadership, and shared with the public.

In 2014, the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® received a \$15,000 National Association of Realtors® Smart Growth Grant to establish a Midtown Alliance comprised of key stakeholders to guide and support the redevelopment, growth, master plan, and community outreach for St. Michael's corridor in Santa Fe with a focus on creating a vibrant urban center connecting existing educational facilities at the beginning of the 1.5 mile stretch identified by the City of Santa Fe for redevelopment. The stakeholders' vision will be created with the help of renderings, informational meetings, promotional website, competitive RFP to offset preliminary expenses for the first redevelopment project, and other community outreach.

In December 2016, Mayor Javier Gonzales announced a proposed policy change to expand the supply of multifamily housing in the city. He further identified the desire to create overlay zones along St. Michael's Drive and Siler Road to accelerate the development by offering some key incentives.

In May 2016, the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® in partnership with the Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce held an informational meeting where Matt O'Reilly, City of Santa Fe Asset Development Director, offered an overview of a proposed new overlay district for St. Michael's corridor.

In October 2016 with the support of the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® ([Letter of Support](#)), the City of Santa Fe adopted the Midtown LINC (Local Innovation Corridor Overlay District) *which incorporates many of NAR's Smart Growth principles* with the purpose and intent to:

- Strengthen and animate the built environment and the business and population links within the demographic and geographic center of the city between the existing employment centers of the Santa Fe University of Art and Design and the CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center;
- Incentivize multi-family residential development, complementary non-residential uses, and an enlivened street-oriented pedestrian environment by freeing development capacity of existing under-developed land and buildings for these targeted uses, while allowing existing uses to continue as redevelopment occurs;
- Allow for innovative development and redevelopment of the district while providing buffering between the district and existing residential development outside of the district by the application of amended land development regulations and fees and by establishing conditions precedent for future infrastructure enhancements and the application of other redevelopment and financing tools;
- Promote a more healthy, safe, and enjoyable environment within the city's midtown area through the enhancement of pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and safety, landscaping and other street-related amenities and the eventual reduction of traffic speeds and provision of on-street parking, bicycle lanes, and improved crosswalks; and
- Provide flexibility in sign design and location so as to maintain effective communication, business identification and wayfinding for existing buildings whose visibility may be reduced by new development.

Full provisions including development incentives can be found in Ordinance #2016-39, available at: [http://www.santafenm.gov/archive\\_center#cat-8993](http://www.santafenm.gov/archive_center#cat-8993)

Since the adoption of the Midtown LINC Overlay District, key stakeholders including the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS®, City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce, Lambda Alpha International – Santa Fe Chapter, and Santa Fe Area Home Builders Association have met to coordinate a number of informational events to promote the new district.

In March 2017, a free breakfast was held for property owners to offer an [informational presentation](#) on the Midtown LINC Overlay District. Many participants agreed to form the Midtown Alliance, *a business and property owner group focused on promotional and development opportunities in the City of Santa Fe's Midtown LINC Overlay District.*

Presently, the Santa Fe Association of REALTORS® has dedicated funding to work with key stakeholders and members of the Midtown Alliance to create a promotional website. A breakfast will be held to announce the website later this year.

The association is exploring hosting a 2017 Workforce Housing Conference devoted to multi-family housing opportunities along St. Michael's Drive and Siler Road. Efforts are underway to identify sponsors.