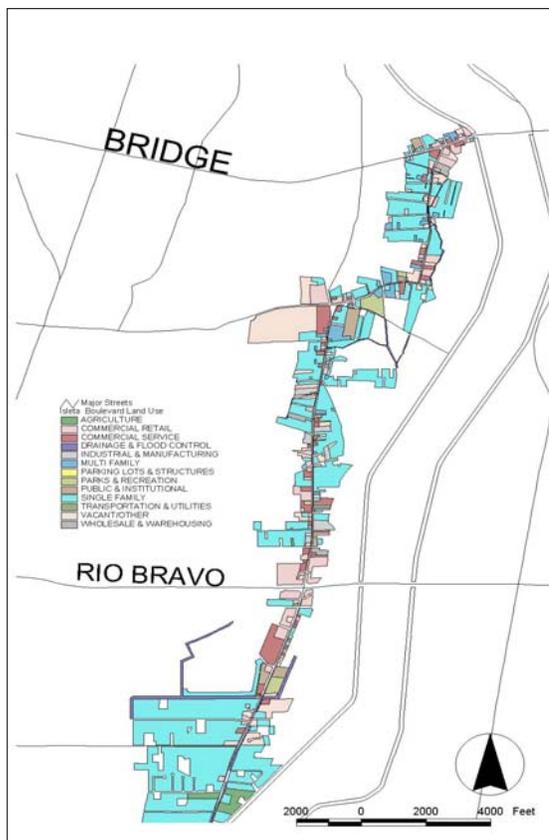


Sec.2 Current Conditions

Today, Isleta Boulevard is a combination of a 3 lane hybrid road in the northern section and a two-lane road in the southern section that parallels the meandering Rio Grande for 7.3 miles between Bridge Boulevard and the Isleta Pueblo. The need for an Isleta Boulevard sector plan stems from Westside growth and traffic congestion, the loss of open space, the decline of farming, the loss of rural character, and the need for economic development.

Land uses vary along the corridor from north to south, which suggest distinct character zones along Isleta Boulevard. In the northern portion of the corridor, lots are smaller and tend to be commercial in use. After the heavily commercial intersection of Isleta and Rio Bravo, the land use along Isleta becomes markedly different with larger lot sizes and agricultural uses.



Northern portion of Isleta Boulevard contains smaller parcels with more commercial use



Southern portion of Isleta Boulevard contains larger parcels and more open space

Westside Growth and Traffic Congestion

Area residents often describe their community as being caught in the path of Westside growth. According to the U. S. Census, Bernalillo County saw a 21% rise in population from 1990-2000 alone. Much of this growth has taken place on the Westside of the city, where land that until relatively recently was open space is today growing with residential subdivisions and large shopping centers, mainly because this land is cheaper than east of the river. The considerable housing/job mismatch on the Westside greatly exacerbates traffic problems. With significantly more homes than schools, roads, and jobs, the 2000 Census saw a 69% increase in Bernalillo County drivers commuting 30 minutes or more to work since 1990.

Development geared toward commuters does a disservice to local residents and does not reflect the history or character of the community

Because Isleta Boulevard is one of only two major north-south roadways serving the residents living west of the Rio Grande, westside growth carries serious implications for development patterns on the valley floor. Recent land use changes along Isleta Boulevard also reflect a catering toward a commuter driver with a focus on speed and efficiency rather than quality and uniqueness. Along Isleta Boulevard (particularly near the Rio Bravo interchange), we see a place where the automobile rules in a sea of franchise drive-thru restaurants and strip malls and where development standards favor corporate recognition rather than the South Valley's historic character. For longtime South Valley residents who've grown up in this unique community, seeing their surroundings turned into strip malls with suburban influences is disheartening. There is an immediate need to protect the remaining character of the Isleta corridor and to invest in future development that will enhance the community's uniqueness, rather than detract from it.

What's the worst thing that could happen to Isleta Boulevard?*

- It'll be a thoroughfare, not a destination
- Full of chain stores that people ignore
- Housing development on current farmland
- Dwindling open space and farmland
- 5-lane commercial "Anywhere USA"
- Loss of agriculture
- Too much modernization at the risk of losing the cultural/historic buildings
- Lack of vision and planning
- A highway with too much economic development
- Over-development
- Loss of open space and agriculture
- Uncontrolled high-density development
- Big-box retail

*Resident responses from a survey administered during the 9/21/04 public meeting