

# MetroABQ Real Estate Newsletter

by Chris Lucas

Including Rio Rancho, Corrales, Placitas, Atrisco Valley, Los Lunas & the East Mountains.

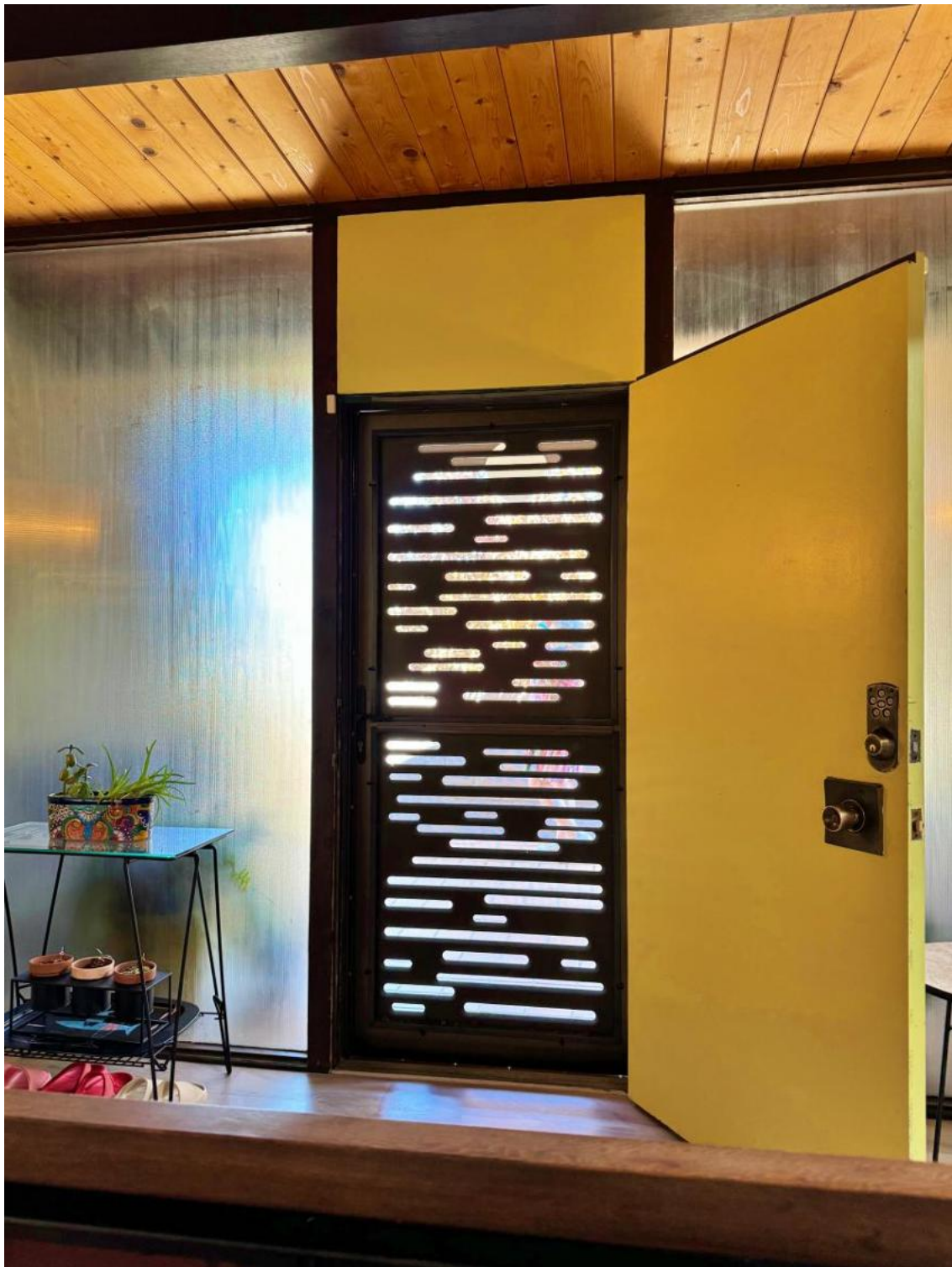
Late Spring

ABQ Mid Mod Home Tour in photos

Mid-Century Modern clusters mapped across the Metro

Do you know DAN?





### Metro Mid-Century Modern Up Close

The ABQ Mid Mod Home Tour took place recently & was again a flawless event. Participants toured eight homes & a Mid Mod church, all built around the middle of the last century (~1945-early 1970's), & following a certain loose aesthetic: neutral palettes with pops of color, clean lines, minimalist design & uncluttered spaces, a focus on functionality, simple building materials like stone, metal, wood & glass, & allowing the outside in & vice-versa.

As with the last ABQ [Mid Mod Tour in 2019](#), which brought us from Four Hills to the

neighborhoods around Netherwood Park, this current raft of homes was spread out nicely, some in Mid Mod pocket neighborhoods & a few stand-alone gems. This year included homes around the La Sala Grande neighborhood to the east, to across the river into the Vista Grande neighborhood, along the West Rio Grande Cliffs.

Above, top, is one of the showpieces in this year's tour, the residence of renowned Mid Mod architect Max Flatow, which sits on the edge of Nob Hill; notice the high-walled horizontal windows, flat roof, overhangs & pops of color. It's a special house & will be featured in an upcoming MetroABQ newsletter.

Just above is a scene from a home in La Sala Grande, a NE Heights neighborhood with winding-streets; notice the tongue-&-groove wood beam ceiling, the floor-to-ceiling windows & the pop of color from the yellow door & panel.



## Mid Mod Clusters

Mid-Century Modern homes can be found in neighborhoods across the city, but tend to be concentrated in post-war residential boom areas. From the NW Rio Grande Cliffs, to the NE Heights at Wyoming Blvd, & with many in between, the map above shows the individual homes on [the tour](#), some in clusters & some stand-alone homes without any or many Mid Mod neighbors.

There exists an excellent survey of the MetroABQ's Mid Mod population--including commercial, industrial, institutional & residential properties--which focuses on the individual clusters & maps them. If you are interested in where many Mid Mods reside in the city, & love maps like I do, the survey is essential. It's the [Survey of Albuquerque's Mid-Century Modernist Architectural Resources](#).

Interestingly, I could not find a section describing any neighborhood or stand-alone

houses with Mid Mods on the West Cliffs. Yet one of the most interesting specimens on the tour lives there. It was described as "this expansive property overlooking the Rio Grande River Valley offers incredible views of the city & the Sandia Mountains." Two images facing the river from the house are below.



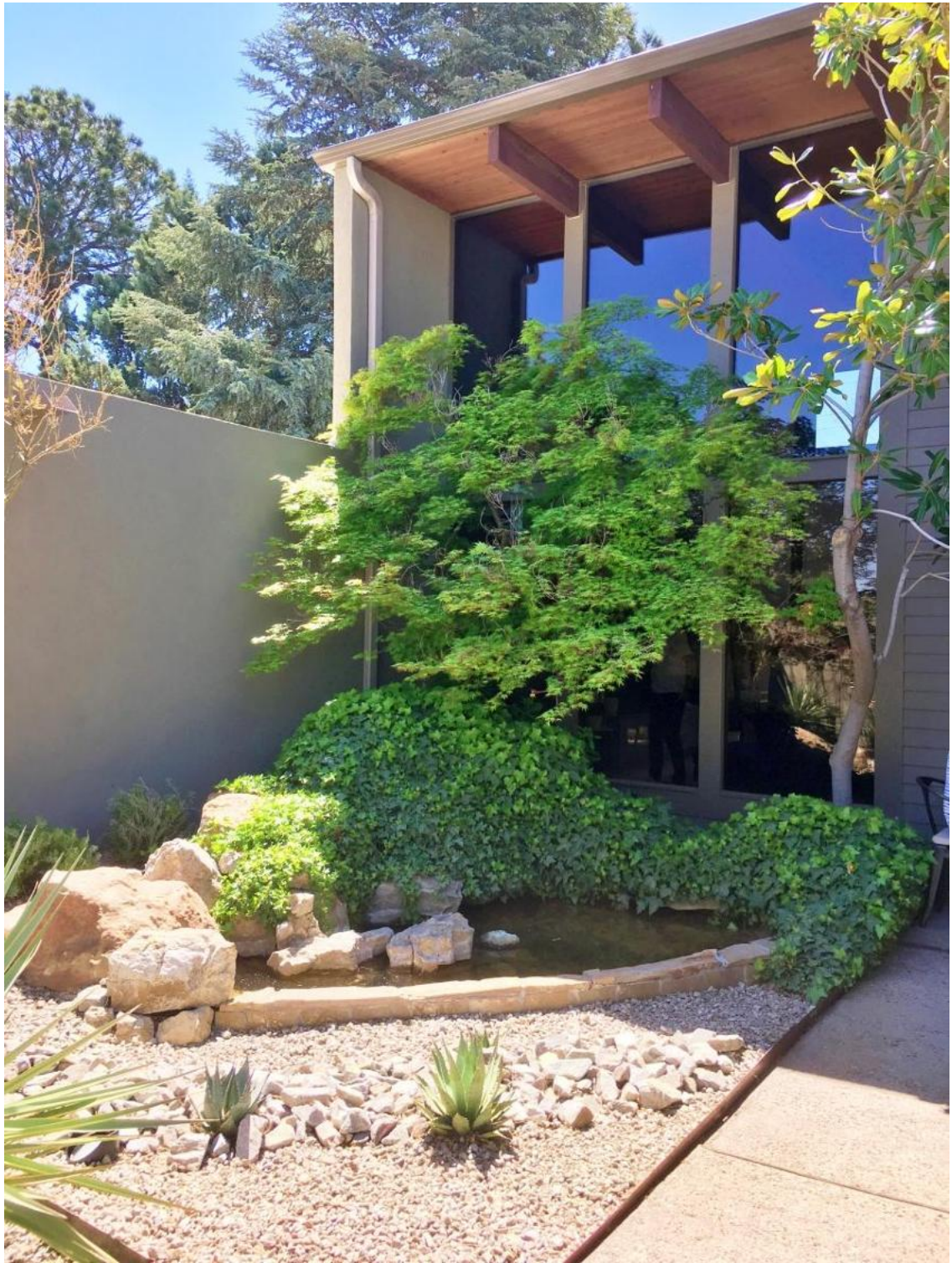


The property in the two images above sits on the West Side Cliffs overlooking the Rio Grande. The West Cliffs run alongside the river, from south of I-40 along Atrisco Blvd, & on the north, they end just shy of the [La Luz community](#), south of Montañó Blvd. The cliffs are often unknown & overlooked. The house & it's views are only a few of the reasons to visit [the nicely eclectic area](#).



As we made our way from house-to-house on the self-guided tour, several features dominated the conversations. The **exterior architecture** of many of the specimens was one discussion of course; other notable features include some extensive **outdoor greenspaces** (both private high-walled front courtyards & lush backyards--see image below), interesting **interior architectural elements**, many of **the kitchens**, numerous **floor-to-ceiling things**, & other design elements were the themes that seemed to connect the homes.

An excellent outdoor greenspace example is above--a home on the tour in the NE Heights near Wyoming & Comanche. Besides the mature shade trees & the summer-temperature-cool backyard, it also features a lot of wood, especially the curved eaves under the straight roofline.





### Architectural Accents

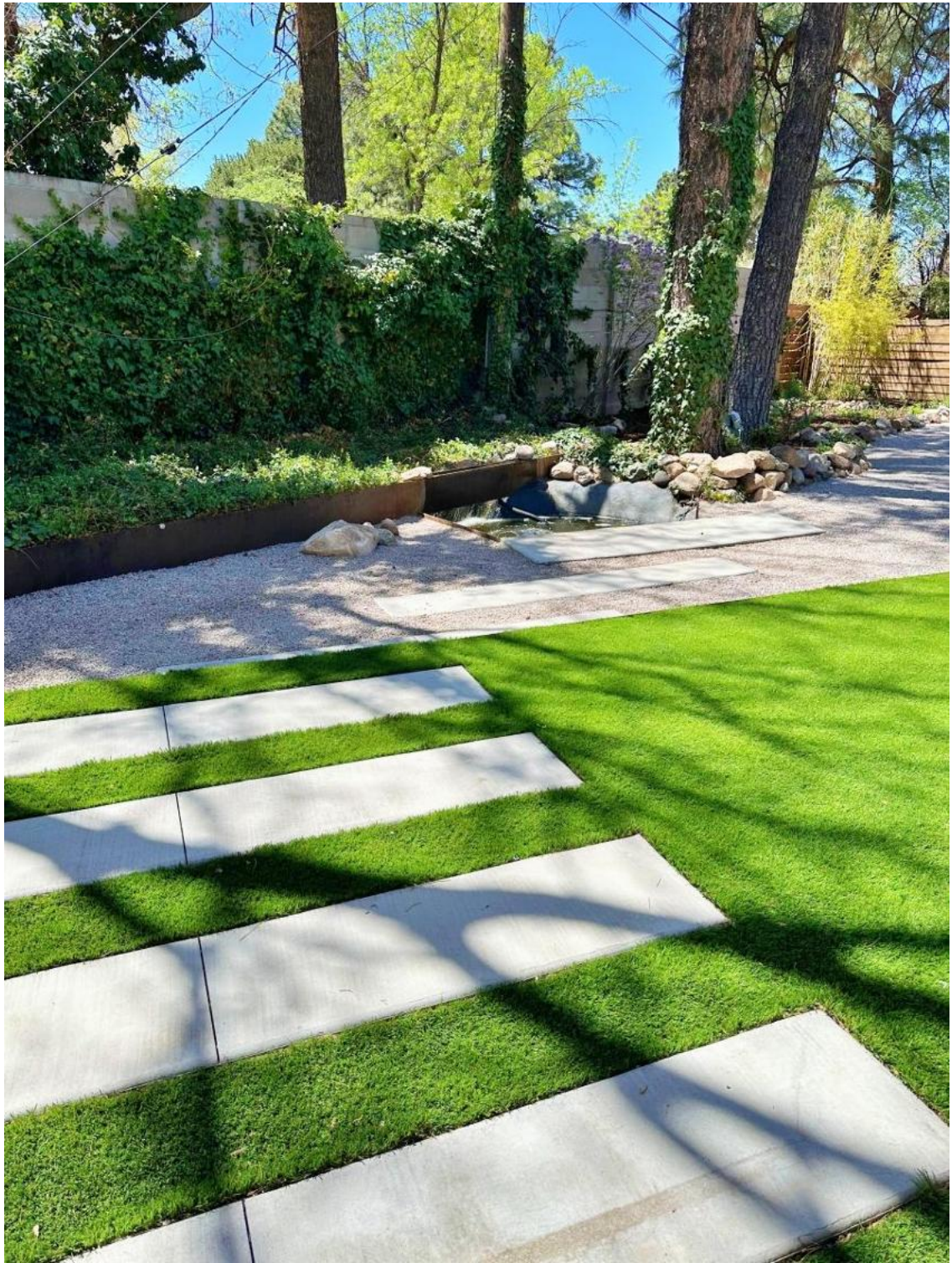
Both inside & outside these homes, there were interesting mid-century architectural elements. Many were built with post-&-beam construction, extended & exposed eaves, & use of exposed brick, inside & out. The two images above, one in the Netherwood Park neighborhood & the other on the West Side's Grande Vista area, are great examples.

Another element that typically runs through Mid Mod homes is a horizontal row of windows, used primarily to allow sunlight inside, similar to clerestory windows but often sitting lower than the roofline. They are set up high on the wall, at or above eye-level. Mid Mod horizontals, often slider windows, create natural daylighting, minimizing the use of

electricity during the day. The former Flatow flat, at the top of the article, has a nice row of high horizontal windows; immediately above & below are other good examples from the tour.



The above image also has a good use of steel for landscape edging, & a steel fire pit. Steel & concrete are great accent elements at these Mid Mods, seen below at the same home. Another backyard greenspace from the tour is below that.







The modern Samsung *Bespoke* Refrigerator, above, with cool interchangeable color panels, would blend in extremely well in the kitchen at another house on the tour, below, built in 1962. Notice the wooden architectural beam & T&G ceiling in the kitchen below, the simple stainless steel table & wood flooring.





## Kitchens

Often the centerpiece of the home, the kitchens on the tour didn't disappoint. It's a great place for the whimsical splashes of color (inspired by nature), which adds personality to the gathering spot, examples above. There's usually a lot of unpainted wood that shares space in the kitchen, often wood cabinets, wood flooring, beams & tongue-&-groove wood slat ceilings. The example below has the original wood cabinets, plus the T&G wood ceiling, with the important exposed ceiling beam, adding both aesthetic & structural support.



### Atomic Ranch

The main component of Ranch-style architecture is that it is single-story, & the living room & dining rooms were often opened to each other. Ranch-style emerged after WWII, about the time as Mid-Century architecture, so it's inevitable that they would merge together, creating a new style. Atomic Ranch-style takes the best parts of Ranch style & brings it a step further, adding focus on outdoor living areas that extend the home's interior living space, with large sliding glass doors & plenty of natural light; most have floor-to-ceiling walls of windows. The image below is a fantastic Atomic Ranch Mid Mod found in

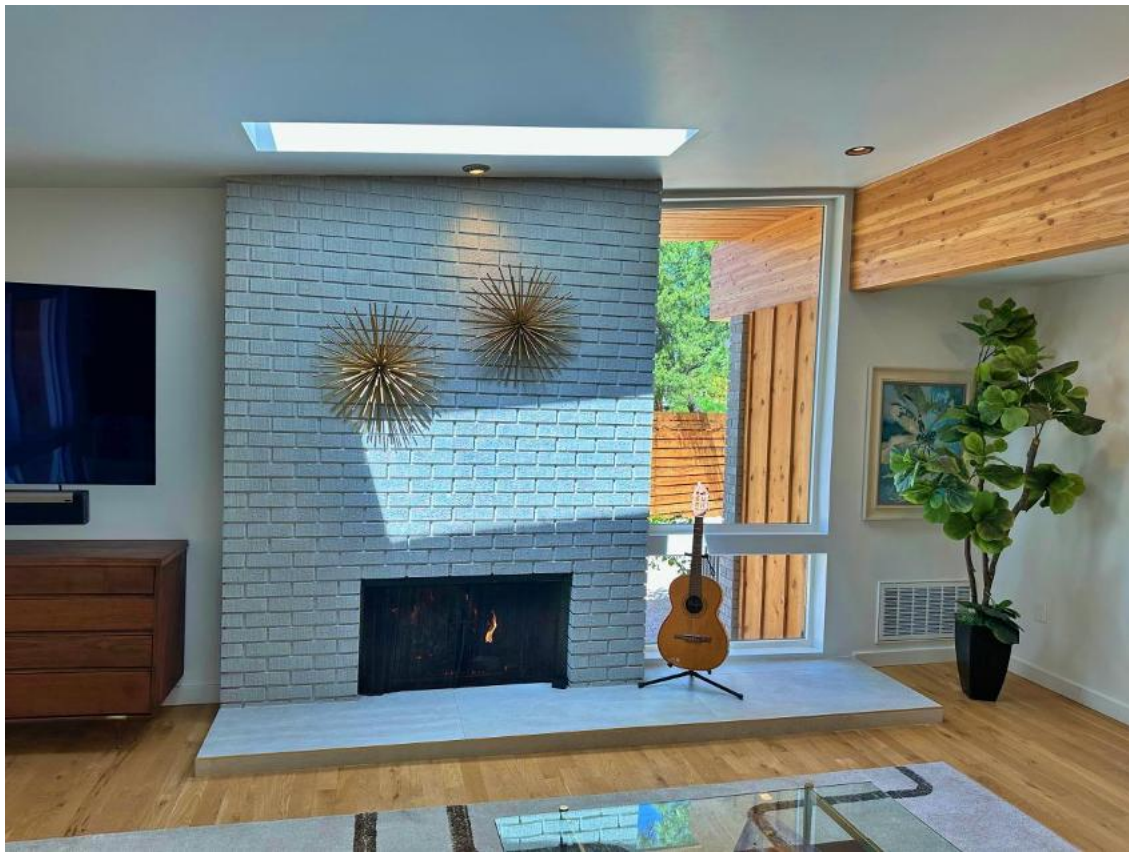
Netherwood Park. Notice the low-pitch almost flat ceiling/roofline, the floor-to-ceiling windows & open living room/dining room/& later, open kitchen.



Speaking of **Floor-to-Ceiling**, Mid Mods present that design feature very well. Be it floor-to-ceiling interior brick walls, like the two images below housing the fireplaces, or floor-to-ceiling walls of glass, just above in two areas, the side & back yard .

The chandelier in the Atomic Ranch image above, though probably contemporary, feels nicely Atomic mid-century in this setting.





The pendant chandelier below, hanging in the dining room of the almost untouched dwelling west of the Rio, is an original Nelson Saucer Bubble Pendant, from Herman Miller, created in 1952. Its flying saucer design is an iconic Mid Mod fixture; one of the Herman Miller's pendant lights is on permanent loan to the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Below that is another interior architectural element that helps define the Mid-Century Modern aesthetic. It's a great rectangular built-in room divider & it reminds of the scene props from Rowan & Martin's television sketch comedy Laugh-In, from the late 1960's. Below that is a classic example of a Mid Mod-designed wall sconce.\*

Thank you for making it this far.

\* \* \*







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\*Note: in some of the homes, there was a no-photos rule, unless the owner gave her express permission. Talking with a friendly & gracious owner of a home in the La Sala Grande Cluster, she did just that, allowing me to snap a few shots, one of which is just above; another image from the house is the stand-alone *Bespoke Refrigerator*, far above.



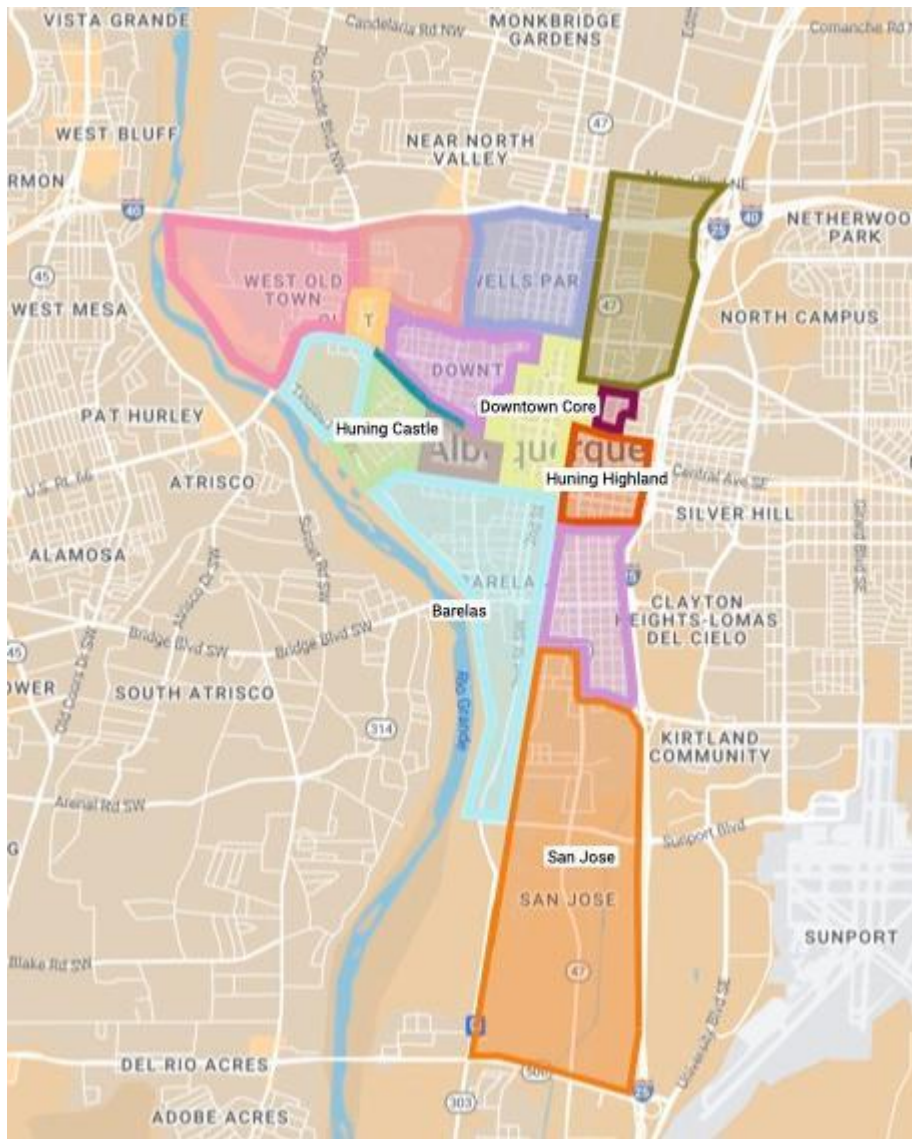
**Downtown  
Albuquerque  
News**

## Do you know DAN?

I'm glad I do. I love local news--always excited to know what's happening in our fabulous city. Recently I discovered [Downtown Albuquerque News \(DAN\)](#), a local online news feed that reports from the heart of the city. DAN is the digital newspaper serving Downtown, Old Town, Huning Highlands/EDo & surrounding neighborhoods, published weekdays. One doesn't have to live Downtown to find out--& benefit from--what's going on here.



The Downtown MetroABQ skyline scene, above, is the banner image for the Downtown Albuquerque News (DAN) digital newspaper. The image was perhaps clicked from the top of the Lead Roadrunner overpass, which heads west into Downtown, from the historic Huning Highlands--one of the 16 neighborhoods included in the DAN information oeuvre. The map of DAN's coverage is just below.



- Greater Downtown**
- ◆ West Old Town
  - ◆ Sawmill
  - ◆ Old Town
  - ◆ Huning Castle
  - ◆ Barelás
  - ◆ Wells Park
  - ◆ Downtown
  - ◆ Raynolds Addition

- ◆ Raynolds Addition
- ◆ Downtown Core
- ◆ West Park
- ◆ West Downtown Business Group
- ◆ Santa Barbara Martineztown
- ◆ Citizen's Improvement Committee of Martineztown
- ◆ Huning Highland
- ◆ South Broadway
- ◆ San Jose

I didn't know how much I needed DAN until I started receiving the digital paper. Downtown news, business, jobs, real estate, architecture, & trends & entertainment are a few of the topics I appreciate reading about.

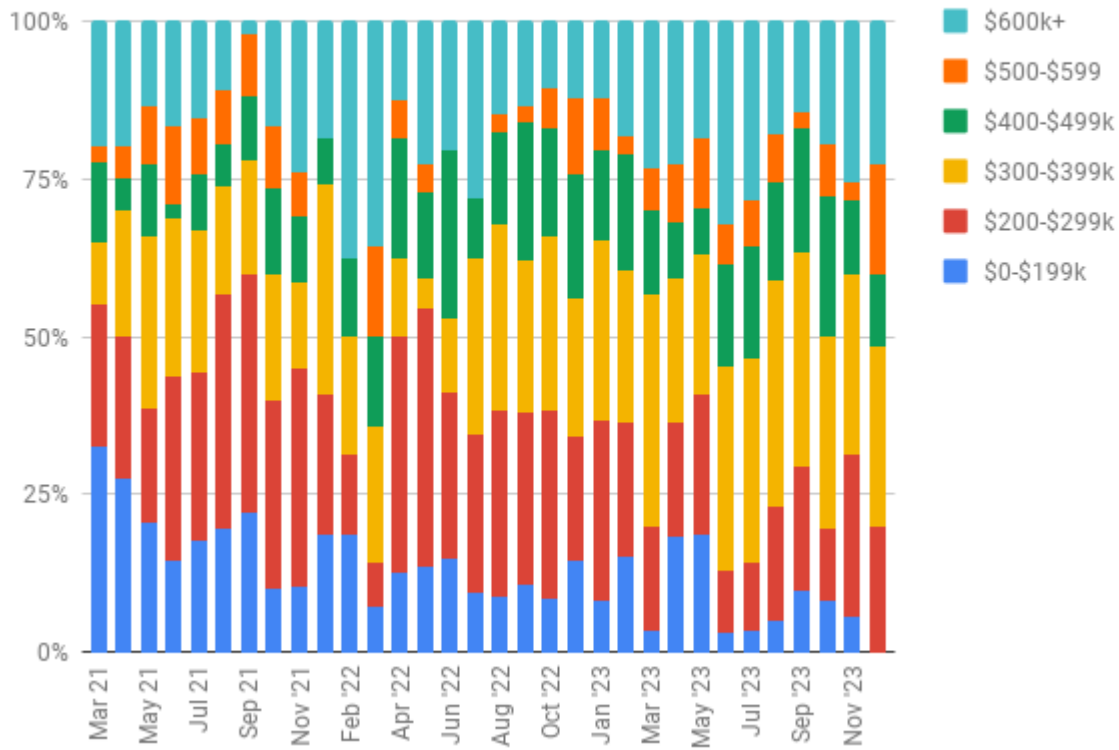
A few recent examples:  
[Film academy heads to Rail Yards, turning page on years of halting redevelopment](#)

-This article has good tidbits all the way to the end.

The **DAN Real Estate Index** assemblage is an excellent resource: A recent January Index chart (Zillow data up to Nov '23) below, shows the affordability over the last two & a half years. Notice that single-family homes for sale under \$200,000 (dark blue) have all but disappeared in the greater Downtown area...

## Greater Downtown listing price range

Data by Zillow



### Downtown Historic Home and Garden Tour tickets go on sale

I'm always drawn to historic homes--especially Downtown--& the greenscapes that have been created around them. The perpetually-excellent Historic Homes Tour ran last month & certainly didn't disappoint.

Another recent favorite:

**The lesser-known landmarks of Greater Downtown: A photo essay, by Roberto Rosales.** [Roberto Rosales' images](#) are honest & local. As the editor mentioned in the article about the Rosales mural image, below: "you would definitely point it out while out for a walk with a friend from out of town." [The Tortuga Gallery](#), below, is always interesting inside & out, below...

A few weeks ago: This 1920s cul-de-sac was developed by a single woman with **chutzpah**. The article featured a lesser-known Downtown architect, Anna Gotshaw, as discussed by MetroABQ native William Robertson, who lives in the cul-de-sac & is a friend of mine. We can't get this stuff anywhere else...



Shameless Plug:

Clearly, I like DAN. I read it when it pops into my box Monday through Friday & hope it continues forever.

I was fortunate to be asked to contribute to a holiday project envisioned by the editor of DAN, published in *Downtown Albuquerque News* just before this New Year.

Called **A photo tour of Fourth St: Murals & Buildings**, the article was adapted from a previous [MetroABQ Newsletter](#) article, entitled: *The Barelás/South Fourth Historic District In Photos & A Sweet Barelás Victorian To Explore*.

Recently, DAN also linked to an article I wrote about the On-Ramp Art project ([Smiling Daisies](#), MetroABQ Newsletter, March '24).

Thank you, DAN, for being there, & for filling in the missing pieces...

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As interest rates fluctuate, many people are seeking mid-to-long-term rental solutions. Good property management--**for both tenants & owners**--is more essential than ever. Going on a year-long sabbatical? Call me--I quickly find good, temporary & long-term tenants for all the properties I manage.

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### Missing Something?

**MetroABQ Newsletter individual article archive:**  
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**Complete MetroABQ Newsletter archive:**  
[Chrislucasabq.com/newsletter-archive](https://chrislucasabq.com/newsletter-archive)



I am a dedicated seven-days-a-week real estate professional, representing clients for 15+ years throughout the MetroABQ—I love this city!

I continually seek out the hidden gems in all areas for my **Buyers**, & am a tireless promoter for all of my **Sellers'** listings. I love talking real estate...

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**My 3-D Virtual Tours**



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