

MetroABQ Real Estate Newsletter

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

<March>

Albuquerque Can Be Brutalist
Plus: Sweet Historic Nob Hill Home



Albuquerque Brutalism...

Ever come across an article that really opens your eyes about a topic?

Dwell.com recently published: [*Why you either love or hate Brutalism--The concrete history of modern architecture's most polarizing style*](#), by Nathan Ma. If the raw Brutalist architectural style is something you appreciate, feel disdain for, or you don't know too much about it, the article is a great read.

Evolving in & from the [Modernist Movement](#), Brutalism seriously emerged in the 1950's as a stripped down, rough architectural form, with concrete often the main building component. Brutalism champions the use of raw materials over decorative

design; it utilizes materials like exposed concrete, brick, steel & sometimes glass; it eschews circular designs for angular geometric shapes, & the finished work is often raw, unpainted &/or monochromatic, making it look unfinished & incomplete. The image above epitomizes that unfinished style.

The Humanities Building above is one of my favorite Brutalist structures in Albuquerque & lives on the main University of New Mexico Campus. Built in 1974, it's "[composed of abstracted cubic forms](#)." The building is surrounded by a network of raised raw concrete walkways that encircle the massive building & also encompass two adjoining buildings.

The image below is the Humanities Building from the south side, featuring the seemingly unfinished, elevated 2-story striated-concrete walkway. Another [image of the elevated walkway](#).





University of New Mexico Brutalism

Besides the show-stopping Humanities Building, UNM has a bunch of other Brutalist-inspired architecture treats, if one knows where to look.

West of the Humanities Building sits the Clark Hall Chemistry Building. Originally representative of [John Gaw Meem](#)'s Spanish Pueblo Revival style, it was reimaged in 1969 with the addition of the Brutalist Riebsomer wing, seen above, featuring massive twin exterior floating concrete stairwells. More brutalism: heavy massing & entirely windowless from that view (the side-by-side 'stacked' windows are somewhat hidden at the top right of the image, facing north).

[From Dwell](#): "To stand amongst brutalist buildings is to feel their presence; at times, this presence can be overwhelming."

Next head south & west to the Brutalist Mechanical Engineering Building, seen below, which resembles an old time-clock [punch-card](#). Another image from the west side of the [Mechanical Engineering Building](#).



UNM is Brutalist! The more one walks on the UNM Campus, the more there is to see. Fronting Redondo Dr on the south side near Buena Vista Dr, is Logan Hall, home to the UNM Psychology department, which also sports a fantastic raw/unfinished Brutalist façade, seen below.

Dwell: "While Brutalism is often criticized for appearing unfinished, that's part of the appeal."





Downtown: MetroABQ Brutalism

A Brutalist piece of the Downtown Skyline is a good place to start. Realtors at least are familiar with Plaza del Sol, at 600 2nd St NW: it's home to the City Planning Dept, construction permitting, & residential & commercial zoning offices. It has a lot of concrete massing & the concrete staircase that spans the width of the north side is a large aspect of the building. Another [image, from the south side](#).

Plaza del Sol was on a (short) list of [MetroABQ Brutalist buildings](#). I love the design & shape of it; however, it feels less Brutalist, & more Meso-American style, with the stone imprinting above the 1st floor & its pyramid shape. The building reminds me of the [Isleta Pueblo Casino & Resort](#), just south of the Metro (image borrowed from [Isleta Pueblo](#)).

Still, Plaza del Sol has a lot of concrete massing, with straight lines instead of curves, is monochromatic with just the tan color, & it creates quite a presence when standing anywhere close to it. As architectural styles evolve, I imagine buildings can find themselves in more than one category...



Downtown Art Brut

The unassuming building above looks vacant, but it is actually a Brutalist Parking Garage & sits west of Plaza del Sol.

Around the corner, the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office, image directly below, lives conveniently next to the Bernalillo County Detention Center, further below, with its unique 2-sided jail cell windows & the interesting large windowless section spanning the middle of the building.

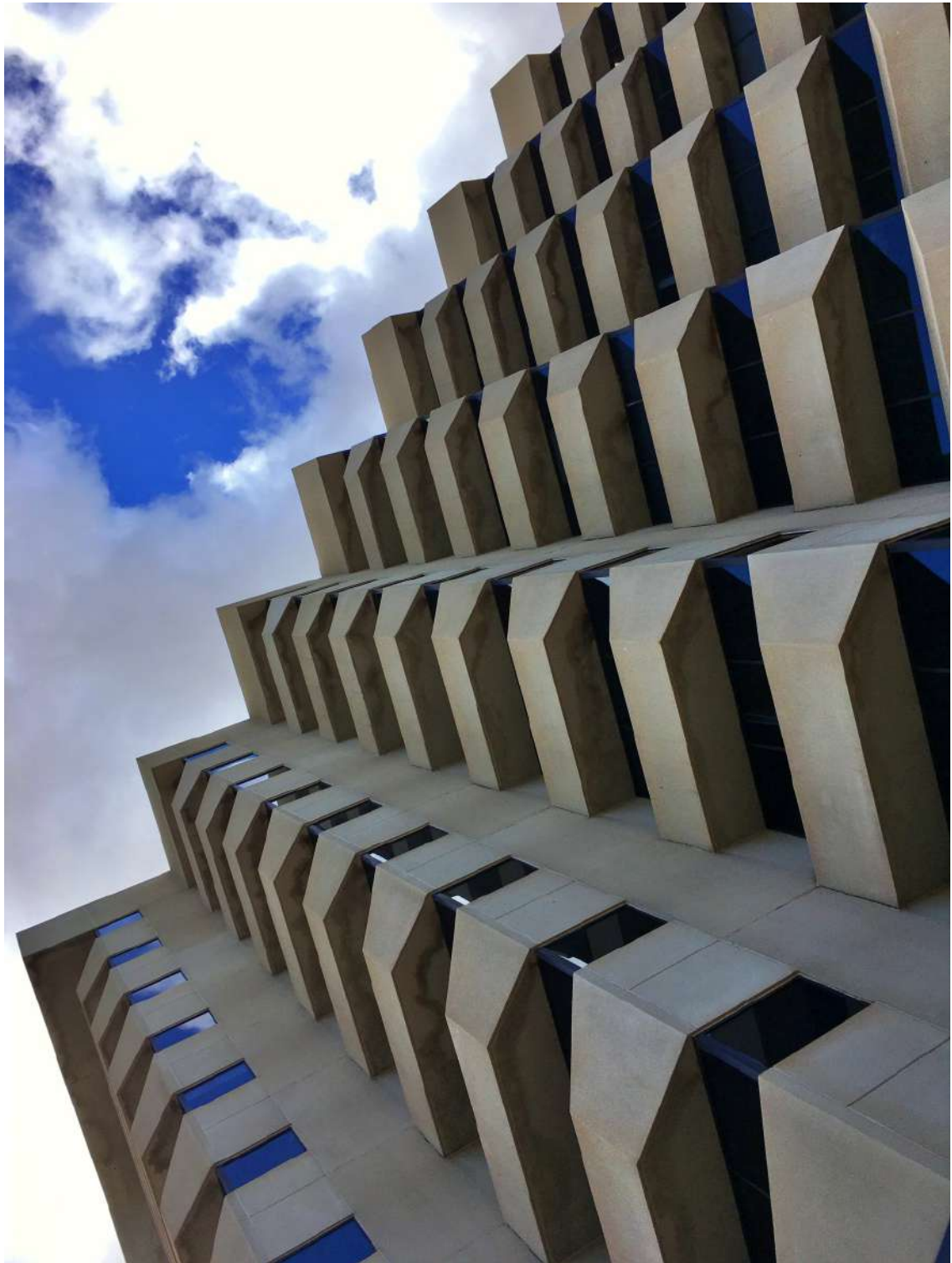




Civic Plaza Brutalism

Albuquerque's Downtown [Civic Plaza is home to many things](#). A stunning Brutalist Skyline building that lives on the west side is one of them: the City/County Building, seen on the left, in the image above. Not sure what goes on inside the building; however, the outside is mesmerizing up close, directly below.

Side-by-side, the stacked concrete image below reminds me of another MetroABQ Brutalist monument to concrete boulders: the [John B Roberts Spillway](#), part of the [Bear Canyon Arroyo](#) greenspace.





Back Downtown:

While only built in 1975, the Brutalist-ly boxy Downtown [Main Public Library](#), seen above & below, was recently designated a MetroABQ Landmark (2020), which is rare for a building so young.

From [Albuquerque Modernism](#): *"The structure contains 104,577 square feet of floor space divided over 3 stories, designed in the Brutalist style by George Pearl & his firm, SMPC Architects. It stands in the core of downtown Albuquerque. The structure consists of concrete column & slab construction with an exterior of buff brick & glass surrounded by a concrete plaza. It features two protruding windows on the east corners that allow for views of the nearby Sandia Mountains."*



New kid on the Downtown block...

The recently renovated, LEED-certified, 8-story Alvarado Square building is a Brutalist behemoth that is well worth standing near, to experience how whelmed-or-overwhelmed it makes you feel. Up close, it's as if a gigantic beige anvil landed on 4th St, seamlessly suspended over the top of Gold Ave, which it actually is...The Brutalist Alvarado Square is a great, dramatic image-with-presence, perfect to end with.

[Dwell.com](#) final quote: "Love it or hate it: Brutalist architecture is hard to ignore. You'll find it around the world—from the famed [Barbican Centre](#) in London to the [Yale Art and Architecture Building](#) in New Haven, Connecticut. These are buildings that command attention, & hark back to a midcentury movement that isn't remembered for its subtlety... The Brutalist style is championed—& chided—for its massive lines, its undecorated facades, & yes, its arguably brutal & blunt approach to geometry & form. Brutalist buildings are buildings with presence—they feel massive, & almost foreboding. But with a fresh perspective, they're buildings that can be loved, as well."

Thx for making it this far...

For Sale:

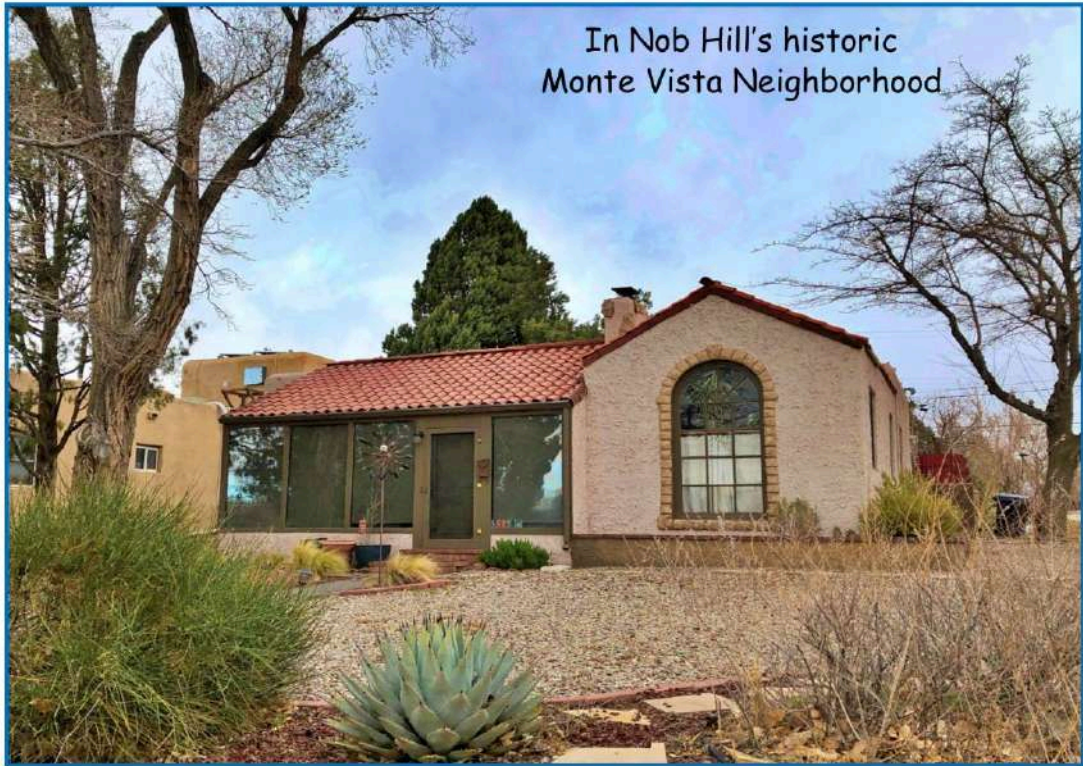
Sweet home for sale in Nob Hill's historic [Monte Vista Neighborhood](#).

Nicely, MetroABQ real estate continues to be very robust.

Good properties still sell quickly & for surprising prices.

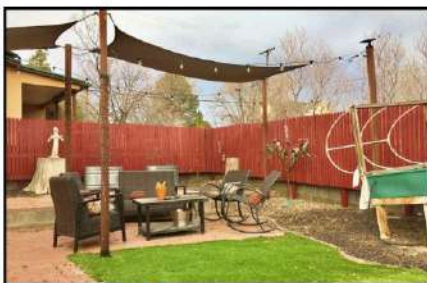
3115 Campus Blvd NE sold last week after only two days.

You can read about it & see the 3D Virtual Tour, linked below.



In Nob Hill's historic
Monte Vista Neighborhood

Welcome to: **3115 Campus Blvd NE**



Fabulous historic home in a fantastic location!
Primary bedroom, next to back entrance, is separated from rest of the house for maximum privacy, & is super spacious at 18x12' w/extensive daylighted walk-in closet & flexroom/office space next to Primary. In love: updated kitchen with 4-stool, 14' walnut b'fast bar w/pendant lights, spanning the length of the kitchen. Backyard chill space w/electronic gate. Come see!



3 bedrooms/2 full baths all on 1742sqft
Asking \$435,000



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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.

<Upcoming Rental>

Available for 11 months starting this August:
Live in the North UNM Campus area for (almost) a year!
Beautiful inside & out, the fully-furnished 1858sqft,
3 bedroom/2 full bath home is available late summer.

A few blocks from UNM, what a great place for a comfy sabbatical...

Check back here next month for more details.

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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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