

**CRACK A GOLD ONE**  
 And see how Ted Rice got his start in the beer biz **20**



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**Economic diversity: Who's in charge?**

Readers respond to our poll on whose responsibility it is to develop new sources of economic prosperity for New Mexico.

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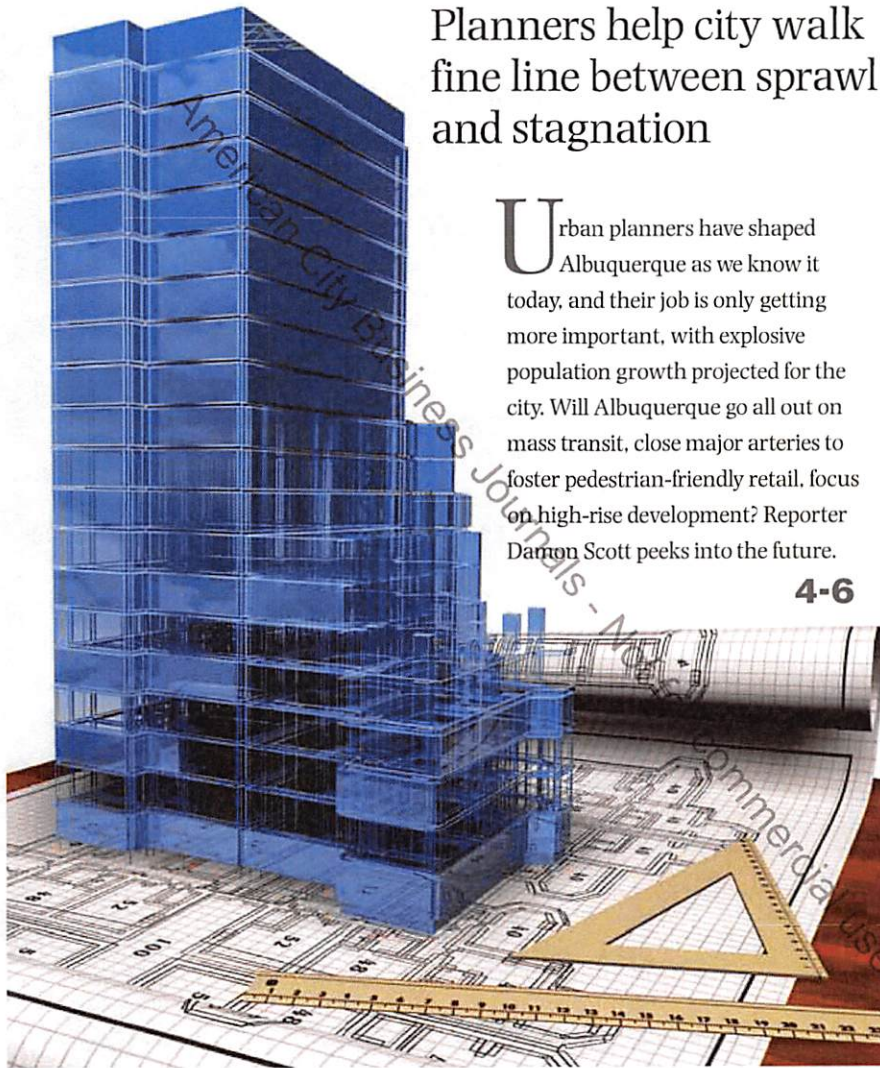
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# It's all in the plan

Planners help city walk fine line between sprawl and stagnation



Urban planners have shaped Albuquerque as we know it today, and their job is only getting more important, with explosive population growth projected for the city. Will Albuquerque go all out on mass transit, close major arteries to foster pedestrian-friendly retail, focus on high-rise development? Reporter Damon Scott peeks into the future.

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**The List: New Mexico breweries and wineries**

The Land of Enchantment is home to ever-growing rows of hops and grapes that become in-demand products. See which breweries and wineries rank at the top.

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**Behind the deal: Presbyterian's new HQ**

An attractive price and low interest rates played into Presbyterian Healthcare Services' decision to end its tenant days and buy a flagship property.

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## HOW HIS FIRM CAUGHT INTEL CAPITAL'S EYE



SBA Materials is creating novel technology that could change how computer chips are made and how much power they use. CEO Hash Pakbaz shares how Intel Capital's investment in the company developed.

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## COVER STORY

# Urban planners: the people who ask “What if?”

BY DAMON SCOTT | ALBUQUERQUE BUSINESS FIRST REPORTER

Some locals might remember the fleeting idea to dredge the Rio Grande for riverboats. Others will recall the Albuquerque light rail plan, a project former Mayor Martin Chavez was interested in advancing. More recently, a Downtown event arena was proposed, but public interest in funding it appeared low when Mayor Richard J. Berry compiled survey results soon after taking office.

Other ideas have come and gone, such as the Super Pit (big enough to attract an NBA team). And there was the idea for a commuter train connecting Albuquerque to Santa Fe. That became the Rail Runner.

While the Super Pit wasn't built, a \$60 million renovation of The Pit stadium at the University of New Mexico took place. And while there's not light rail, interest in bus rapid transit is alive and well.

Urban planners have helped to shape what the city looks like. Planning efforts today come with some urgency. Even in a lingering recession, conservative growth rates for the Albuquerque area show a population that could almost double in the next 20 years. Analysts say if we don't plan for that growth, we could be overwhelmed by it — like Los Angeles was in the 1980s with traffic congestion and pollution.

Or, they say, we will shrink because people will move to other cities that have planned more efficiently and are more welcoming, especially toward key demographics like millennials and baby boomers. The change in demographic preferences is having an immediate effect.

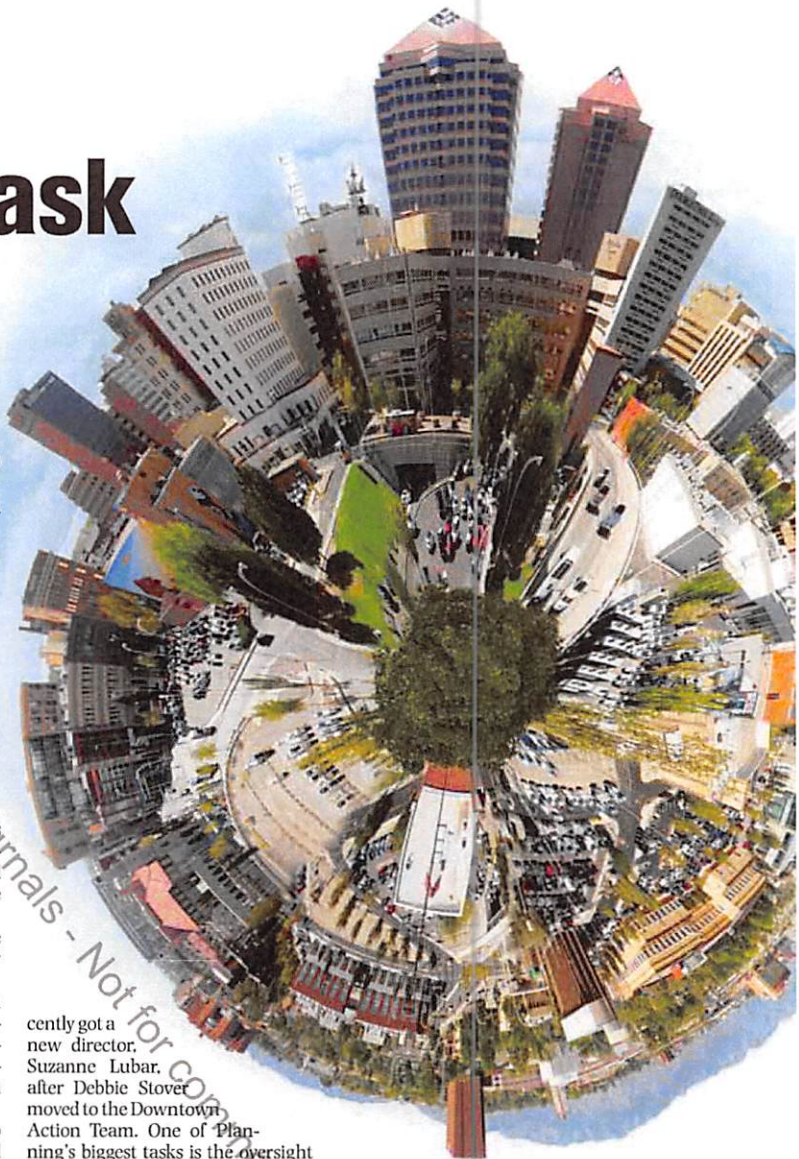
“For the first time in human history, more people live in urban environments than rural, and the trend is going to snowball for the next couple decades,” said Todd Clarke, a longtime commercial real estate broker and analyst.

Planners have begun to respond to the urban shift, and they also have to be ready to respond to political shifts.

Mayors are typically very influential on planning efforts, and Albuquerque's current leader has been heavily involved. Berry, just elected to his second term, is a contractor by trade and has connected with commercial and residential developers.

The makeup of the city council is key to the passage of plans, and so is public will — parts of Berry's ABQ the Plan proposal had their share of detractors. But Berry was elected with a high percentage of the vote and is moving forward on long-term plans for the ABQ BioPark and the city's historic Railyards. How city-owned land and assets are used have a significant effect on development and the way a city ends up looking and functioning.

Albuquerque's Planning Department re-



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cently got a new director, Suzanne Lubar, after Debbie Stover moved to the Downtown Action Team. One of planning's biggest tasks is the oversight of sector development plans, and the city has many in place or being studied.

The economy plays a big role in what is possible, and planners say one of the challenges during a recession is convincing residents that long-term visions matter.

“When Greg Lindsay spoke here a couple of years ago, he said Albuquerque offered something most cities crave — authenticity,” Clarke said. “He said our growth is

organic, our history is interesting and it's all real.”

Lindsay is the author of the best-seller “Aerotropolis: The Way We'll Live Next.” “By planning, we support growth, and as Detroit has shown, cities do two things: they grow, or they die,” Clarke added.

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## My vision for Albuquerque



**Rob Dickson**  
East Downtown/DeAnza developer, Paradigm & Co.

In the midst of a recession, it may be the best time to take stock as a community and say, do we need to be a different kind of city with a different kind of economy? A walkable city of neighborhoods, driven by neighborhood-based businesses and perhaps an agrarian food economy based on locally produced items. Our physical form could translate back to our economy.



**Tim Trujillo**  
Urban planner, Dekkar/Perich/Sabatini

I want to see a vibrant Downtown with thousands more jobs and residents and a connected series of vibrant urban neighborhoods along Central. Central should be transformed to a people-first corridor, complete with quality infrastructure for walking, bicycling and mass transit. The vibrant core of the city could be connected to a series of other smaller villages on both the east and west sides.