MEMORANDUM

TO: Cultural Properties Review Committee
FROM: John W. Murphey, Historic Preservation Division
DATE: May 9, 2006
RE: Los Alamos Addition – SR

Former Albuquerque preservation officer and CPRC member, Mary Davis, prepared this nomination for the Los Alamos Neighborhood Association.

Nominated Resource:

The 1937 Los Alamos Addition lies just east of North Fourth Street two blocks north of Montaño Road in the center of Albuquerque’s North Valley. With only two exceptions houses in the subdivision were built between 1937 and 1962, with 75 of the 108 lots developed before 1950. Of the 105 residences in the district, 78 are contributing. In addition, a number of original unaltered garages, agricultural outbuildings and exceptional trees (“Heritage Tree”) are recommended as contributing. The Los Alamos Addition displays the verdant characteristics that historically distinguished it, with tall Siberian elms shading the streets and many yards landscaped with mature specimen trees.

Considerations:

As New Mexico’s postwar housing subdivisions near the 50-year mark, issues of eligibility and integrity will challenge preservationists. The housing stock of the Los Alamos Addition, like many subdivisions of the period, is experiencing rapid change, mainly through window updates and additions.

Staff Recommendation:

The Los Alamos Addition is representative of the suburban transformation of the farmlands of the middle Rio Grande valley near Albuquerque. Irrigation ditches accessible to all the house lots were part of the original plat and are still in use today. Homes from the period between the late 1930s and the early 1960s convey the architectural massing and simplified styles of a modestly priced development from this period. The Los Alamos Addition is eligible for the State Register of Cultural Properties as a unique example of the suburbanization of Albuquerque as seen in the subdivision’s platting and inclusion of an irrigation system still in use. The Los Alamos Addition meets eligibility for State Register listing under the Thematic Classifications of Planning and Landscape Architecture. Additionally one house is separately eligible for its association with Charles Winstead.
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

1. Name of Property: Los Alamos Addition Historic District
   Other Name(s) for Property: n/a

2. Location of Property:
   County: Bernalillo
   Municipality: Albuquerque
   Congressional District: 001
   Vicinity of: n/a
   Address or Rural Location: (w) Fourth St.NW (n) Alamosa Rd. NW (e) Gallegos Lateral/2nd St. NW (s) Sandia Rd. NW

3. Ownership of Property: (Check one or more as appropriate)
   Private: x State: □ Federal: □ Multiple: □ list of property owners maintained by NMHPD
   Name: ______ List of property addresses maintained by HPD
   Address: ______ Zip: ______
   Name: ______
   Address: ______ Zip: ______

   Occupant, Tenant, Manager, or Contact:
   Name: ______
   Address: ______ Zip: ______

4. Accessibility of Property:
   Open to Not Open the Public: □ to the Public: X
   Visible from a Public Thoroughfare X

5. Location of Legal Description for Property:
   Courthouse, Deed Registry, etc.: Bernalillo County Clerk’s Office
   Street and Number: One Civic Plaza
   City, Town, Zip Code: Albuquerque, NM 87102

6. Category of Property:
   District: ______ Buildings: ______ Structure: ______ Site: ______
   Object: ______ Collection: ______ Other (Specify): ______
   Historic District: X

7. Present Use of Property: (Check one or more as appropriate)
   Agricultural: □ Governmental: □ Museum: □
   Commercial: X Grazing: □ Park: □
   Educational: □ Industrial: □ Residential: X Other (Specify): □
   Entertainment: □ Military: □ Religious: □
   Scientific: □ Transportation: □
8. **Present Condition of Property:** (Check one or more as appropriate)
   - Excellent: X
   - Deteriorated: □
   - Altered: X
   - Moved: □
   - Good: X
   - Ruins: □
   - Unaltered: □
   - Date Moved: □
   - Fair: Unexposed: □
   - Vandalized: □

9. **Present and Original Physical Appearance of Property:** Provide a detailed description of the archaeological and/or architectural features present, include construction dates, dates of significant alterations, extent of any vandalism, etc. See page 5.

10. **Summary of Property Data:**
    - Culture/Period/Phase: 
    - Builder Architect: Paul Robinson, Robert C. Monroe, Wenzel

11. **Thematic Classification** (Check one or more as appropriate)
    - Archaeology- Economics:
    - Prehistoric: □
    - Education: □
    - Culture:
    - Historic: □
    - Exploration: □
    - Builder:
    - Agriculture: □
    - Industry: □
    - Architect:
    - Architecture: X
    - Invention: □
    - Art:
    - Landscape- Settlement: X
    - Commerce:
    - Architecture: □
    - Law:
    - Communications:
    - Literature:
    - Community- Theater:
    - Planning:
    - Military:
    - Other (Specify):
    - Conservation:
    - Music:
    - Charles Winstead

12. **Significance of Property:** Trace significant archaeological or historical trends, developments, events, or historically significant persons associated with property, reference documentary sources, etc. see page 20

13. **Bibliographical References:** See page 28.

14. **Geographical Information:**
    - Map Reference: (USGS 7.5' Quad) Los Griegos
    - Legal Description: (Describe to the nearest 1/4 1/4 1/4 Section (10 acres))
      - Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ Subdivision: __________
      - Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ Subdivision: __________
      - Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ Subdivision: __________
      - Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ Subdivision: __________
      - Lot: _____ Block: _____ Plat: _____
    - Acreage of Property: 65.50 acres
    - UTM Coordinates: (starting at southwest corner moving clockwise)
      - A. 13 350520 3889720
      - B. 13 350630 3890490
      - C. 13 351110 3890340
      - D. 13 350920 3889760

15. **Verbal Boundary Description:** List all states and counties for properties overlapping political boundaries. (Use a continuation sheet if necessary)
Beginnng at a point 125 feet north of the intersection of the east right-of-way line of North Fourth Street and the north right of way line of Alamosa Road NW, proceed east 200 feet to the west property line of 311 Alamosa Road NW, thence north along this property line to the intersection with the north right-of-way line of the ditch easement at the north boundary line of the Los Alamos Addition, thence east 1415.6 feet along the north right-of-way line of the ditch easement to the west right-of-way line of the Gallegos Lateral. Then proceed south along this right-of-way line 1932.4 feet to its intersection with the southeast corner of the private ditch easement south at the south boundary line of the Los Alamos Addition. Then proceed west along the south right-of-way line of the ditch easement 1270.9 feet to the intersection of the ditch easement and the east right-of-way line of North Fourth Street. Then proceed north along the east right-of-way line of North Fourth Street 1695.3 feet to the place of beginning.

**Verbal Boundary Justification:** With the exception of the northwest corner, these are the original boundaries of the Los Alamos Addition. The northwest corner has been omitted to remove an asphalt parking lot north of 6100 Fourth Street and a vacant lot used as a dump north of 311 Alamosa NW. The north boundary of these two lots cannot be visually judged accurately.

16. **Photographs:** (Provide a log of archival B&W photographs submitted with nomination)
   see continuation sheets, pp. 30-31

17. **Future Research Questions:** (If applicable, develop a list of questions that could be pursued by future researchers)

18. **Application Submitted By:**
   Name: Mary P. Davis  
   Organization: Albuquerque City Council  
   Address: 1756 West Ella Drive, Corrales NM  
   Zip: 87048     Phone: (505) 898-5017

   Inventory Data By: Mary Ragins/Mary P. Davis  
   Recent Photograph By: Mary P. Davis  
   Recent Map: Mary Ragins/Mary P. Davis

19. **National Register Eligibility:**
   Yes: No:
   Criteria A: B: C: D:
   Area of Significance:

This Space for Cultural Properties Review Committee Use Only

Date Application Received: Complete: Incomplete:  

Committee Action:
   State Register:  
   National Register Recommendation:  

Approved:  
   Committee Chairman: Date:  

Comments:  
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Section: 9 Page: 4

Present and Original Physical Appearance of Property

The 1937 Los Alamos Addition lies just east of North Fourth Street two blocks north of Montaño Road in the center of Albuquerque’s North Valley. The 65+acre subdivision forms a quadrangle with a NE-SW slanted east boundary created by the Gallegos Lateral, a Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) irrigation ditch. From their intersection with north Fourth Street, the Addition’s four tree-lined, straight streets — Alamosa on the north, La Plata, Placitas, and Sandia on the south — run for approximately 1400 feet straight east ending in cul-de-sacs 100 feet from the Gallegos Lateral (figs1-4). These streets are paralleled by five private irrigation ditches that run behind the rear lots of the homes in the subdivision. With only two exceptions homes in the subdivision were built between 1937 and 1962 (the end date of the Addition’s covenants) with 75 of the 108 lots developed before 1950. Of the 105 main buildings in the nominated area, 78 are considered contributing as is the private ditch system. In addition, several original unaltered garages, exceptional trees and agricultural outbuildings, are recommended contributing. The Addition still displays the verdant characteristics that historically distinguished it. Tall original Siberian elms shade the streets in the Addition; where the elms have been lost; several owners have planted replacement ashes or mulberry trees. Exceptionally tall specimens of a wide variety of trees rise from both front and rear yards throughout the Addition. Houses in modest builder versions of the predominant styles of the period before and after World War II line the streets behind liberally landscaped front yards. Rear yards often feature animal pens or small orchards.

Setting

The Los Alamos Addition sits on the lowest part of the broad flood plain created by the Rio Grande. Once surrounded by farmland, it now sits between the two busiest streets in the North Valley, Fourth Street (U.S. highways 66 and 85) and Second Street. Between Second Street and the east boundary of the Addition lie two Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District easements: the Gallegos Lateral on the west and the wider and deeper Alameda Drain closer to Second St. Dirt roads and low grass parallel the Conservancy easements. On the east side of wide Second Street are a variety of small businesses. The southern boundary of Los Ranchos de Albuquerque sits at the north edge of the Addition; uses just north of the edge are a trucking business accessed from Second Street across the Conservancy easements, a bowling alley and restaurants accessed from Fourth Street, and between them a large apartment complex. On the Addition’s Fourth Street edge the neighborhood intermingles with commercial uses and constant traffic on Fourth Street. At Sandia Road and at the northeast corner of Placitas Road and Fourth Street, homes extend to Fourth Street (these are the first homes immediately adjacent to Fourth Street north of downtown Albuquerque several miles south). On four of the other corners at Fourth Street modern office buildings and a townhouse complex have been built. On the west side of Fourth are more small businesses behind which lies the 1945 Gavilan Addition of small homes. South of the Addition lies the one-block-long 1945 Harper Addition on Gene Avenue. South of that is the busy intersection of Fourth and Montaño with its small strip shopping center, two gas stations, a City of Albuquerque art installation and thousands of commuter cars traveling daily on Montaño Road.
Streetscape pattern

The Addition's half-acre lots, most of them at least 100'x230', and oriented in a north-south direction, stretch back to the five private ditches that bring water from the Gallegos Lateral. Lots on the cul-de-sacs are larger than the standard 1/2 acre. Most of the houses front the streets behind a 40-foot setback with all exceptions at the cul-de-sacs. Here they are set at different angles; some, due to their larger lots, sit significantly farther from the street edge (284 Alamosa and 287 La Plata, fig 5).

Originally each street in the Los Alamos Addition was bordered on both sides by a continuous row of Siberian elms. About half have been removed and several replaced with other street trees (Figures 1-4). The remaining elms and other street trees and the many tall shade trees and giant evergreens in individual yards and along the irrigation ditches, have created an oasis. From across the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District’s easements west of Second Street the Addition appears like a small forest. (fig. 6).

Streets are paved and are edged with low curbs; there are few sidewalks, all of which lie at the west ends of three of the streets adjacent to Fourth Street. For most of the lengths of the four Addition streets, landscaped yards extend to the street edge. Landscaping varies from original arbor vitae, trees and lawns to a few recently xeriscaped front yards (figs. 7, 8). Thick hedges obscure a number of the homes while others feature a curved driveway in the front yard (fig. 9). Preservation consultant Mary Ragins, in her comprehensive 2004 report on the Addition, described some of its other features:

There are few yard walls of solid materials; most properties that are enclosed along the street are done so with fences of a more rural design including split rail, chain link, or hog wire. Older garages are detached or are minimally attached - usually with an archway connection - and placed toward the rear of the residence along one side. Later garages are, for the most part, attached and placed closer to the plane of the front façade of the homes. Outbuildings that served to support early agricultural uses on the properties, such as barns and chicken coops, are typically placed as near the rear property line as possible (Ragins, 26).

These rear yard buildings have been joined in recent years by garage extensions or separate buildings housing a variety of uses.

Contrast with other North Valley subdivisions

The Los Alamos Addition differs from contemporary subdivisions in the North Valley in its street pattern, streetscape and in its irrigation system. Its irrigation system is unique in its planning and current use as detailed in Section 12. Some of the subdivisions in the North Valley platted between 1925 and 1950 included irrigation

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1 Subdivision plats for Albuquerque’s North Valley were available at Bernalillo County Records Map Room. Information on current ditch use and streetscapes is from Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District ditchrider records and an informal survey of relevant subdivisions by Mary Davis in October, 2005.
caspements in their plans, but currently lack any planned system still in use. North Valley subdivisions from this period now within the City limits are predominantly urban in appearance with sidewalks, curb and gutter, small lots, and few street trees (an exception is the Livingston Place Addition, described briefly in Section 12). Subdivisions located farther north in the Valley — in the County or within the Village of Los Ranchos — generally have larger lots and greater private landscaping, but lack the planned elements of the Los Alamos Addition such as the rows of street trees and curb and gutter. None of the contemporary or later subdivisions presents such a concentrated — almost geometric — and lush but orderly appearance.

Styles and architectural details

Styles in the Los Alamos Addition display the regionally inspired architectural styles that reflected Albuquerque’s position as a major city in the Southwest as described in the Suburban Growth of Albuquerque context by David Kammer (Kammer, 2000). During the period of significance the changes in the appearance of these styles in massing, degree of detailing and placement of garages can be clearly traced from smaller boxy decorated houses with detached garages to more horizontally oriented homes with attached garages and less detailing. Styles include Minimal Traditional cottages, early and later versions of the Ranch style, Pueblo Revival, Spanish Eclectic, Territorial Revival, Modernistic, and Contemporary. Except for 291 Sandia (fig. 10) and some recently remodeled homes, houses are one-story. Building materials where noted in the 1940 MRGCD reappraisal records (see note #3 below) are frame or hollow clay tile. Two homes in the Addition are clapboarded, while most are stuccoed. Later homes were often built of brick or featured brick facing. Approximately 75% of the homes in the Addition have been remodeled, though many of the remodelings are limited to window replacement, enclosed porches and/or remodeled garages. Homes built after 1950 are the least likely to have been altered.

Summary table of construction dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Number of Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937-1940</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-1949</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1956</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957-1962</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-present</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information on other subdivisions is given in Section 12.
Buildings from 1937-early 1940s

The 41 houses built before 1940 are similar in size and shape to homes in the Monte Vista and College View Historic District (HPD 1774), but lack the details found in Monte Vista, particularly in the earlier homes in that subdivision built in the late 1920s and sporadically through the 1930s (Kammer 1999, 35). The boxy shapes of the Los Alamos Addition homes are only minimally adorned with elements of various period styles. The majority of these early buildings are either Pueblo Revival style or Minimal Traditional/early Ranch. The former feature vigas (apparently all imitation), canales, log posts and/or exposed lintels (figs. 11,45,45). They are all flat roofed and have detached garages often connected to the house with an arched gateway. The Hanawald House at 305 Placitas Road NW (fig. 11) is an excellent example of this style as well as of original landscaping.

The second most popular style of early homes, Minimal Traditional or early Ranch, are compact, have pitched roofs with narrow overhangs, and a detached garage in most cases. Some are simply a small rectangle with a gable-sided pitched roof parallel to the street; the roof in some instances covers a corner porch (fig. 12) Houses termed Minimal Traditional usually feature a shallow gabled projection on one side of the home, as at 308 Alamosa NW and 295 Sandia NW (figs. 13,14). Some of these homes are so devoid of detail that they could almost be classed with McAlester’s folk national homes. (McAlester 1994 pp. 93,98,99).

The Huffman House (299 La Plata - fig. 15) built in 1937 is a slightly more developed example of Minimal Traditional in the Addition. It features a hipped roof with a shallow cross gable with a deep eave and exposed purlins. Windows are metal casements with horizontal lights bordered by vertical panes (once a very common window in this subdivision). A corner window and a porthole window accentuate the front facade. The house is sheathed in white stucco and features an attached garage (very rare for early homes here).

A few other styles appear during this first phase of building. The house with the highest appraisal recorded in the MRGCD records ($5000) at 313 Placitas NW (fig.16) features Spanish Eclectic styling. A few others also have elements of this style: an arched window or porch opening with a red (sometimes tiled) roof. Two homes, 300 and 304 La Plata NW (fig. 17) were recorded as Modernistic when first surveyed in 1981, now only 304 retains traces of this style: a curved door overhang and corner windows (although replaced they remain in the same openings). Only one of these pre-war homes was in the Territorial Revival style; the

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3 Information on the building dates for homes in the Los Alamos Addition is not uniform. The earliest homes are listed in the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD)'s 1940 reappraisal data. Since the Addition was outside the City, building permit information was not recorded locally and is not available from the county or state. Even after the 1948 annexation, permits were limited to buildings of over $8000 in value (only one house in the Addition made it on the list). City Directories did begin to list homes in the Addition until 1949, so houses not listed in 1940 that appear in the 1949 City Directory are assumed to have been built during those eight years. A few homes could be dated from their listing in early 1940s phone directories, but phone directories from the later 1940s are not available. These homes all resemble the boxier and more detailed late-1930s houses. A few 1940s houses for which no date was available could reasonably be dated by their resemblance to the early styles. Later houses (post-1948) are dated from their appearance in the City Directories.
Alexander House at 307 Placitas Road NW (fig. 18) features a denticulated brick coping on the parapet and on the garage and elaborate brick quoins on the corners of the chimney. 

Houses built between 1941 and 1949 with features similar to those of the early homes were probably built in the early 1940s. The Collier House at 294 Placitas Road NW (fig. 19) appears for the first time in the City Directories in 1949, after the Los Alamos Addition was annexed into the city. The style of the home is very similar to Pueblo Revival houses built in the neighborhood before 1940: flat-roofed and cube-like with a small open porch tucked into the shallow el created by a projecting wing. The porch features vigas (not genuine) and log posts; vigas are also placed on the street facade of the projecting wing and on the garage. The garage is attached to the house by a curved arch. The original metal casement windows remain, with central horizontal panes flanked by vertical panes. The house is virtually unaltered. 

Buildings from late 1940s - 1962 

Homes first listed in the 1949 City Directory that present a more horizontal design were probably built after World War II. These homes and those built throughout the 1950s display many of the early styles but not with such cubelike massing. They spread across the lot with the garage on the side at or near the same plane as the front of the house (figs. 20-23). Several have recessed porches. The period style homes feature a variety of roof types, while the ranch homes feature either hipped or gabled roofs. The most stylized of these later homes is the Mattingly House, a brick Spanish Eclectic home built in 1950 at 288 Placitas Road NW (fig. 24). This home combines Ranch style massing and roof shape with a red tile roof, round white Classical Revival porch columns and a wide decorative brick chimney. The Hiller House, 304 Placitas NW (1949-50,) was based on a drawing in Good Housekeeping Magazine that appeared as a Ranch style home in the magazine, but to fit the house on the lot, it had to be rotated 90° so the broad façade designed to face the street faces west rather than toward Placitas Road (Mark Gutierrez). 

Two pre-1957 houses display elements of the Contemporary style: 284 Alamosa Rd. NW, built in 1950, is very minimal, almost a vernacular version (fig 25). Its owner was Mrs. Helen Grimes, a draftsman with the Corps of Engineers; perhaps she designed the house. The other Contemporary style home, 305 Sandia Road NW (Monte House, fig. 26), was built in 1952-54 by George Monte, who owned M & R liquors. The recent owners of the home, who bought it in 1974 and sold it in 2005, have the original house plans. They state that Paul Robinson, owner of a local building company, was the builder. Until its sale this past summer, the house had only two owners - the Montes and the Mulcahys. 305 Sandia with its horizontal massing, textured Roman brick facing and severe lines topped by flat or low shed roofs stands out among the Ranch, Territorial Revival and Pueblo Revival styles on Sandia Road. The Mulcahys converted the garage to living space and added a rear addition, but they retained overall the striking original appearance of the house. 

Only six houses were built in the Addition between 1957 and 1962. All but one are typical one-story Ranch homes with low hipped or pitched roofs and deep eaves (fig 27). The exception is the Robinson House, 290 Placitas Road NW, built in 1957. It is a Contemporary style featuring a tall window wall on the front façade under a low-pitched roof (fig 28) joined to its two-car garage by a ramada-covered entryway.
Irrigation system

Five private irrigation ditches or contra acequias parallel the Addition’s four roads. Mary Ragins in her 2004 report (p. 24) numbers them 1 through 5 from north to south as follows:

Ditch 1: runs along north side of properties on the north side of Alamosa Road
Ditch 2: runs between the properties on the south sides of Alamosa Road and the north side of La Plata Road (fig. 29, 30)
Ditch 3: runs between the properties on the south side of La Plata Road and the north side of Placitas Road (figs. 31)
Ditch 4: runs between the properties on the south side of Placitas Road and the north side of Sandia Road
Ditch 5: runs along the south side of the properties on the south side of Sandia Road

Locked gates from the Lateral close off access to Ditches 1 and 4, while the other ditches are open at the Lateral (Ragins 24). The ditch easement is 10 feet wide and the ditches are approximately 2 feet across and 1 1/2 - 2 feet deep. They are bordered, usually on one side only, by a dirt pathway. As Ragins describes them:

In apparent violation of the access easement established by the plat of the Addition, some of the ditches are fenced across the easement by certain property owners. Various forms of historic and modern “hardware” can be found along the ditches. These include metal gates and flues, PVC pipe inlets, and concrete collecting ponds and channels. (p.24) [figs. 32 - 34]

Additional features of the irrigation system include raised concrete curbing at the street constructed to serve as a “dike” that holds excess irrigation water in the front yard at 311 Placitas Rd. and some yards retain backyard concrete channels that take the water from the ditch as at 301 Placitas (fig. 35)

Trees in the Los Alamos Addition

Because the Los Alamos Addition is located on the “yazoo” or old riverbed, it’s primarily clay soil and high water table provided a good environment for the vigorous growth of trees, shrubs, and gardens. Advertisements for the subdivision trumpeted the “rich irrigated level land” (fig. 50) and invited homebuyers to come and plant trees. The invitation must have succeeded for the Los Alamos Addition appears to have attracted — and still attracts — residents who love trees and gardening. A wide variety of deciduous and evergreen trees can be found in the Los Alamos Addition, many of them identified as “heritage trees” by Brian Suhr, Albuquerque arborist now in charge of the UNM campus, and Frank Feather, retired University of New Mexico arborist. Feather owned and operated a nursery in Mesilla Park during the 1940s and believes that several of the trees in the Addition may have come from his nursery. “Heritage trees” are trees 30” in diameter at chest height; trees of this size, according to Suhr and Feather, are probably original plantings and exemplars of the landscaping choices made in Albuquerque 50+ years ago. Many are also of exceptional height.
Trees identified in three surveys of the neighborhood (Nov. 25, 2005, February 23 and 27, 2006) included 75'-80' Siberian elms (fig. 7); 70'-75' pecans - probably grown by Stahlmans in Las Cruces according to Suhr and Feather (fig. 18); 50'-55' Arizona ashes, 50'-55' Ponderosa pines, 50' Colorado blue spruce, 70'-75' Arizona cypresses and 60- year-old lanceleaf cottonwoods and plains cottonwoods (the latter from Tom Bolack's ranch in Farmington). Mr. Suhr evaluated the Los Alamos Addition as containing the widest selection of varied tall and healthy trees in a city subdivision. Along the rear irrigation ditches are large valley cottonwoods, possibly remnants of the time when this area was a cow pasture. Rarer trees identified in the neighborhood, many of them apparently original or early plantings because of their size, include quince, pomegranate, birch, Italian cypress, cork bark fir, English walnut, silver maple, Raywood ash, green ash, Austrian pine, Mugho pine, Virginia red cedar, Japanese Pagoda tree, and Scots pine. Two especially rare specimens are the 65' American elm at 302 Placitas NW (Fig. 12) and a redwood in the rear yard of 308 La Plata NW.

The neighborhood also features the original Siberian elm street trees on all its streets. Their dense shade canopy is greatest on Placitas (fig. 3 and color digital photos 3 & 4) where very few of the elms have been cut down. Mulberries and ashes have been planted as replacement street trees in some yards. Rear yards feature orchards, some original and some new orchards with up to 42 fruit trees (304 Sandia NW), while a number of front yards retain original arbor vitae plantings.

Trees that are exceptionally tall for the Albuquerque area, or are 50+ year-old “heritage trees” from 1937-1956 landscaping preferences, or are a species rarely seen in the Albuquerque area, are included in the property listings at the end of this section and recommended for contributing status.

Appearance in historic period

By 1962, all but four of the lots in the Los Alamos Addition not adjoining Fourth Street had been developed; two of the vacant lots were in use by the neighboring property. Mostly Ranch style homes had been built on the lots that remained empty after 1950. Window replacement had not reached its peak; even by 1981 when the first architectural survey was conducted in the area, most of the early houses retained their original metal casement windows. Fourth Street was a busy thoroughfare, the major route north from Albuquerque to Bernalillo, Santa Fe and the north. A local grocery store, Conniffs Grocery, had been built at the corner of 4th and Montaño. Montaño Road continued no farther than Guadalupe Trail, halfway across the valley.

Changes and current appearance

Since the 1960s, the Los Alamos Addition has changed in small ways while its surroundings have changed considerably, becoming increasingly commercialized and with much more automobile traffic. Montaño Road is now a major river crossing. Second and Fourth Streets carry commuter traffic to the river crossings as well as serving expanding commercial uses and residential growth in the North Valley. A large shopping center,
Guadalupe Plaza, has been built just northwest of the Addition on the west side of Fourth Street. North of the Addition, new restaurants, and an apartment complex have joined the 1960s bowling alley.

Development of the nine (one was divided into two) lots bordering Fourth Street has been varied. Three lots retain their original residential character (313 Placitas NW (fig. 16), 312 and 321 Sandia). One large lot and one half lot remain vacant. One of the remaining four was developed in 1997 with Spanish/Pueblo style town homes (fig 37). The other three were commercially developed between 1980 and 1982: a veterinary clinic, an office complex (both in a simple Pueblo Revival style), and a modern business building currently being readied for new occupancy in January 2006. (figs.36, 38, 39). The townhouses and the commercial buildings are all one-story and face away from the neighborhood.

In terms of its layout and landscape, the Addition has seen next to no changes: its covenants were re-established before they expired in 1963, the acequia system is still in use, and the streets still terminate in cul-de-sacs. The landscaping has matured, many of the original elms still line the streets and most houses retain plantings in their 40-foot setbacks. This maturing landscape has added to the appeal of the neighborhood and more newcomers have purchased homes there. Two more houses have been built: 310 Alamosa Rd. NW - a 1980 Ranch style home, and 310 Sandia Road NW - built in 1964 and also a Ranch style home. The growing popularity appears to have resulted in an increased rate of remodeling, especially of the pre-1950 five-to-six room homes. Since the 1981 survey seven houses in the Addition have disappeared under total remodelings, two in 2005 (293 Alamosa NW and 293 Placitas NW - figs. 40, 41). 309 Alamosa Road NW (fig.42) appeared a small typical Pueblo Revival home (built 1937-40) when surveyed in 1981. It is now a large green-stuccoed building with a wide low-pitched-roofed one-story section in front of a shed-roofed two-story section that stretches across the rear, including a garage on the ground story. The most recent total remodelings appear to be more responsive to the neighborhood’s scale, but earlier ones such as 294 La Plata NW and 309 Placitas NW are totally out of scale (figs. 43,44)

Many homes have been expanded, though most additions are to the rear or sides due to the front setback requirements and do not detract from the house’s historic appearance. Responding to higher energy costs, many owners have replaced the metal casement windows that were ubiquitous in the neighborhood in 1981. A number of porches have been enclosed and garages converted to working/living space.

Attributes required for contributing status

Because the relationship of the houses to the street, plus the streetscape, plantings, and ditch location are the features most important to conveying the historic period of the Los Alamos Addition, all structures listed as contributing will meet the following criteria:

2. Pre-1963 massing is unaltered or easily discernible if the house has been added to and the additions do not detract from the original house.
3. The character-defining details of a house’s architectural style are intact or clearly evident even though the house has been remodeled.
4. Replacement windows are fitted into the original openings and the facade retains the original proportions of wall to openings.
5. Alterations of front porches and attached garages (be they fully attached or only attached by way of an archway) have not substantially changed the house’s relationship to the streetscape, including its visibility from the street, and its credibility as a house built or remodeled in the Albuquerque area between 1937 and 1962. This criterion is applied with special consideration for properties adjacent to a commercial property where a yard wall or fence is needed to make the front yard reasonably habitable.

As examples, the altered buildings listed below have been determined contributing:

307 La Plata (fig. 45); although it has a clerestory addition on the rear that is visible from the street, the original massing and details are clearly visible as is its unremodeled detached garage (contrast this building with 309 Placitas, fig. 44)

306 La Plata NW (fig.46) is a pre-1940 Minimal Traditional house. A garage has been added to the east of the house, but the original massing, roofline and details are still evident. The replacement windows are fitted into the original openings.

300 Sandia (fig. 9) was built in 1950; at an unknown later date its porch was enclosed for a breakfast room - the house still retains its original massing and details, such as the metal casement windows, the “G” on the chimney, and the siding in the gables.

Window replacements that do not destroy the proportion of windows to wall surfaces can be seen in 304 Alamosa NW (fig.7), 302 Placitas NW (fig 12), 295 Sandia NW (fig. 14), and 295 La Plata NW (fig. 47).

One house that has been expanded but in which the original house massing is still visible is 291 Sandia Road NW (Winstead House - fig. 10), built in 1941 and the earliest house on this street. The house is in the Spanish Eclectic style and appears older than it actually is because it was based on an older home. According to current and second owner Pat Latimer, the original owner had his builder replicate a house in the Parkland Hills Addition (914 Ridgecrest Drive) in Albuquerque (fig. 10). Although 291 Sandia NW was noticeably enlarged 30 years ago, the massing of the original house can be seen. Its owner, Charles Winstead, was head of security at Los Alamos Labs and is credited as the man who shot John Dillinger (see Section 12 for details), so this building is determined contributing for both its architecture and its resident.

Other examples of houses that have been altered in some way but keep their massing and sufficient period details to identify the style are 305 Sandia NW (fig.26, attached garage conversion in east wing of house); 303 Placitas NW (fig. 27, attached garage conversion), and 304 La Plata NW (fig. 17, window replacement and garage conversion).
Additional contributing elements

Detached garages, or those attached only by a gateway, that are unaltered are also considered contributing. As well, "Heritage Trees," important to the history, design and feeling of the subdivision, are considered contributing.

The 1940 MRGCD reappraisal forms listed outbuildings on ten lots in the Los Alamos Addition. As barns, chicken houses, and small agricultural outbuildings were allowed under the original covenants and are strongly tied to the rural character of the subdivision, the remaining intact outbuildings built within the period of significance are listed as contributing buildings in the district.

Non-contributing examples

These structures are examples of non-contributing buildings because they have lost credibility as a house built within the period of significance. 304 Sandia (fig. 48) was built in 1943. An attractive 1980 remodeling has obscured the original house and created a horizontal home fronted by a long portal. The new windows at 294 Alamosa (fig. 49), built in 1949, replaced its broad metal casement windows and shutters (recorded in the 1981 survey) with much narrower eight-light wood casement and completely skewed the original proportions of the facade. In 1981 this house appeared as an unaltered and typical ranch house from the late 1940s.

The following list of buildings and their recommended contributing/non-contributing status includes notation on whether a garage or tree on the property is recommended for contributing status as well. The other section include notes on a distinctive style or detailing, and the photograph number. A map showing contributing structures can be found in Figure 51.

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<td>Va. red cedar</td>
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# APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
## NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES
### CONTINUATION SHEET

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NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

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### APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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Significance of Property

The Los Alamos Addition is a rare part of the suburban transformation of the farmlands of the middle Rio Grande valley near Albuquerque. Irrigation ditches accessible to all the house lots were part of the original plat and are still in use today. The accessibility of irrigation water, the Addition's location above the valley's high water table and its rich clay soil, plus the developer's careful platting and the continued use of the ditches by residents, created and has sustained an ideal situation for an exceptionally verdant landscape in a uniquely planned subdivision. Siberian elms planted in the late 1930s today line all or part of the Addition's streets and uncommonly tall shade trees and evergreens, some of them rare species, flourish on the Addition's half-acre lots. Homes from the period between the late 1930s and the early 1960s still convey the architectural massing and simplified styles of a modestly priced development from this period. Although few of its residents were notable in state or local history, one resident, Charles Winstead, achieved notoriety as one of the men who shot John Dillinger; he later served as the security chief at the Los Alamos Laboratory during the 1940s. The subdivision is eligible for the State Register of Cultural Properties as a unique example of the urbanization of Albuquerque as seen in the Addition's platting inclusive of an irrigation system still in use. For these reasons the Los Alamos Addition meets eligibility for State Register listing under the Thematic Classifications of Planning and Landscape Architecture. Additionally one house is separately eligible for its association with Charles Winstead.

Gutiérrez land

For the first quarter of the 20th century, this area of the valley was predominantly farms separated by salt grass, swamps and sand hills. Old timers remember the land from Montaño Road north to the modern-day Guadalupe Plaza as "Nipp's pasture" where cows were grazed in the vega [meadow] adjacent to a swamp (Sargeant 191). Much of the land in the area belonged to Guadalupe Gutiérrez, a wealthy farmer and rancher for whom Guadalupe Trail was named. This old road winds south through the valley to Griegos Road from its intersection with Fourth Street at the traffic light near Alamosa and Fourth St. After his death in 1896, Gutiérrez's large landholdings were distributed among his several heirs and the land surrounding his house (which once stood a little west of 4th Street on Guadalupe Trail) was left to his daughter Josefa. She married James B. Nipp in 1902. (Title Abstract for lots 8, 9, 10 Vineyard Addition, pp 4-13)

In 1926 Josefa Gutiérrez Nipp and James B. Nipp sold the 127 acres stretching east from the old Gutiérrez home toward the old Highland Road (now Edith Blvd.) to Ross Merritt, acting as the trustee for a group of local investors. Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) records in 1927 describe the area as unirrigated pasture and grass with a feed barn, milk house and water tank as its only improvements.

Merritt familiar with Albuquerque real estate
Merritt came with his family from Kansas to Albuquerque before 1900. His father had “large ranching interests near Albuquerque prior to his death in 1892.” (Davis 2019) So Merritt, who was born in 1878, grew up in Albuquerque, going to the local schools and then entering the banking business. Besides banking he sold real estate and represented several national insurance companies (Davis 2019). According to advertisements for his business, he specialized in farm and ranch lands. For two years in the 1920s, his residence was listed in the City Directories as Five Poplars Ranch in the north valley (Hudspeth, 1923,24). Besides the 65+ acres on which the Los Alamos Addition stands today he purchased many other lands in the valley and in 1927 platted Merritt Acres on land just north of the present-day Los Alamos Addition. This development, however, grew only sporadically and was re-platted several times as the land changed hands. (Bernalillo County records)

Merritt did not rush to develop the Nipp Pasture as it was called. He was far-sighted enough to realize that events of the mid-1920s marked a turning point in the development of the North Valley. These events could change a hundred grassy acres last farmed in 1915 (Conservancy records) and lying fallow for over 15 years into a profit-making venture.

In 1925 the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District had been created to modernize the over 200-year-old irrigation system in the entire middle valley as well as install flood protection and lower the water table that stood in many parts of the valley at less than two feet below grade. In 1926 the federal highway system had designated Fourth Street as a major component of two national roads: US Route 85, the Pan American Highway stretching from Canada to Mexico, and US Route 66 which crossed the state by a circuitous route from east to west. Automobile use nationally and in New Mexico (470 registered cars in 1910 grew to 54,000 in 1930) had increased dramatically and the city’s population was growing due to a determined publicity campaign waged by the City fathers.

By 1930 the Albuquerque area population had doubled from 13,000 in 1910 to 26,570 in 1930 (Kammer 2000 14). The 1929 stock market crash, however, slowed Merritt and his investors’ development plans. As the Depression hit New Mexico after 1931, housing development slowed to a crawl. Housing starts that had averaged 461 per year from 1924 through 1931, fell to 42 in 1932, rose to 159 in 1933 and then dropped again in 1934 to 61 (figures taken from Biebel 1986 in Kammer 2000, 25).

The Golf Club

A small portion of the property had been put to use by 1932. In January 1932 the Valley Golf Club, spearheaded by the owner of M & W Sporting goods (the first such store in Albuquerque) was opened four miles north of the city according to an article on page 5 of the January 1, 1932 Albuquerque Journal. The oiled sand greens had been installed, grass fairways mowed and in good condition, and a “small” clubhouse had been built that only needed stuccoing to be completed (ibid). In a 1937 advertisement for the Los Alamos Addition, the golf course is shown lying on both sides of what was later to be Sandia Road (fig. 50).

The course was later renamed the Sandia Golf Club and the club house replaced in 1938 when Albuquerque Progress, a small magazine first published in 1934 to record and celebrate Albuquerque
development, notes that in the fall of 1938 a new club house for the Sandia Golf Course had been built. This is undoubtedly the building described in the 1940 MRGCD reappraisal records as a 14’x40’ 1-story frame structure worth $450. The golf course lasted until 1940 the last date of its listing in the Albuquerque City Directories. Newspaper reports from 1932 and 1933 indicate that it was used not only by the general public, but also by athletes from Albuquerque High School (the city’s only public high school at that time) and varsity students from the University of New Mexico (AJ April 19, 1933, October 17, 1933).

Albuquerque Grows

The development of the North Valley between 1920 and 1940 and the even vaster development on Albuquerque’s east mesa during this period reflected trends across America in the years between the two world wars. Advances in transportation, in particular the astonishing growth of automobile ownership, fueled suburban growth. Automobile registration nationally went from 458,000 in 1910 to 22 million in 1930 (Historic Residential Suburbs, 21) and by the 1920s suburban growth was outdistancing central city growth (op.cit. 2). Albuquerque was no exception. During the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, many new housing subdivisions were platted on Albuquerque’s broad - and mostly vacant - east mesa (many undeveloped until after the end of World War II, [Kammer 2000, 20]). This unprecedented growth was made possible in 1925 by the city’s annexation of 4,166 acres, “the largest increment to the city’s size until after World War II.” (Kammer 2000 17) In 1927 the city had annexed the “North End,” but this only extended Albuquerque’s city limits to Indian School Road, approximately where Interstate 40 runs today (ibid).

Residents in the North Valley — families who had lived there for generations and newcomers seeking a country lifestyle — were not so eager to become part of the city. In the early 1940s as a new generation of civic leaders took control of Albuquerque, these leaders argued for expanding the city’s population - and services - by annexing both the sparsely populated unincorporated areas on the east mesa as well as the increasingly populated “North End.” Many residents opposed this annexation and it died until after the end of the war and the call for annexation was renewed (Wood, p. 104-105). According to Robert Wood, whose detailed dissertation on the growth of Albuquerque during these years is an excellent record of this period, the “heavily populated areas on the other side of town [from the east mesa] had remained “sturdily resistant” to annexation (Wood, p. 109). However, in 1948, using a new state law that facilitated annexations, both the Old Albuquerque area and the area north of the old “North End,” were annexed into the City. “Residents of these two absorbed areas however expressed vehement dissatisfaction and it was apparent the disputes were not settled.” (Wood, p 110) The northern area that was annexed explicitly included the Los Alamos Addition. The boundaries were north on Edith to Candelaria, west to the railroad tracks, north along the railroad line to the north boundary of the Bobb Addition, west to Second St., north to the northern boundary of the Los Alamos Addition and then south to Grecian Road [the intersection of Guadalupe Trail and Fourth St]. (Albuquerque Journal, August 14, 1948, p. 2). That article noted that residents planned to protest, which they must have done since an editorial in the Albuquerque Journal in June, 1949 notes with an air of satisfaction that the State Supreme Court had found that the annexation law used to annex the new northern portion of the city was valid (Albuquerque Journal, June 30, 1949, p. 16).
The push for development of suburban lots around Albuquerque grew as the Depression in New Mexico lightened, helped by millions of federal dollars funneled into the state. Much federal funding went into the work of the Conservancy District, so that between 1930 and 1935 the acres of swampland became arable - or developable - land, the risk of flooding was significantly lessened, and archaic irrigation systems modernized (Kelley, 19). Another boost to housing in New Mexico and across the country was the creation of the Federal Housing Administration in 1934. The FHA program created a much more secure means of paying for a new home as well as insuring buyers of at least a minimum standard of house construction quality (Historic Residential Suburbs 48; Kammer 2000, 24-25). Albuquerque housing starts, a popular economic indicator, went from 61 in 1934 to 353 in 1939 (NCNM, Vol. 2, Graph VIII - 1).

Developers in the North Valley could promise not only larger acreages, but also good soil for trees, vineyards and berries, found a ready response (Sargeant 188-192). Results of a random sampling of Bernalillo County records for the period between 1925 and 1940 reflect that during this period at least twelve additions were platted in the North Valley and were distributed throughout the area. From 1940 to 1950 more than thirteen other subdivisions appeared in the valley. Prominent among the housing advertisements in the Albuquerque Journal from the late 1930s are advertisements for houses in the North Valley with 5 - 30 acres of land plus assurances of “modern” homes.

Since the only through highways leading into Albuquerque in the 1920s were located on North Fourth, it attracted the lion’s share of automobile-related business. In 1931 eighteen of the city’s 46 filling stations and fourteen of Albuquerque’s tourist camps were located here (Wilson 11). It was natural that astute land developers would seek to purchase tracts of land adjacent or close to North Fourth St. Even as late as 1938, after Route 66 had opened on Central Avenue, one advertisement in the April 10,1938 Albuquerque Journal stated: “there is more traffic on North Fourth than on any street in Albuquerque and it is constantly getting heavier. Value of North Fourth frontage is steadily increasing. Why not reap some of this profit yourself?”

Los Alamos Addition’s unique platting

Ross Merritt did not, however, build to attract tourist and automobile traffic, but rather to attract homeowners seeking a “country” experience. It is possible that when the huge Alameda Drain was cut parallelizing Second Street in 1934, Merritt may have requested that a new ditch be dug along the east side of his land. Since the Drain cut across the old Gallegos Lateral (in place since the 18th century), some reconfiguration of the Lateral was necessary. There is no record of his making a direct request of the Conservancy District; however, he was a long time landowner in the north valley and was probably well acquainted with the Conservancy district managers. The resultant extension of the Gallegos Lateral made a unique layout possible in the Los Alamos Addition. With a large rectangle of land clearly bounded by a busy street and a ditch, Merritt created a strikingly geometric subdivision. He could subdivide the land into four long unbroken blocks with streets bordered by large lots (most at 1/2 acre or more and all with 100’ frontage) each touching a private ditch.

All other subdivisions from this period lack the integrated irrigation system of the Los Alamos Addition since these subdivisions did not have the irrigation opportunity made possible for the Los Alamos Addition by its overall spatial design. Its pattern of relatively short east-west straight streets paralleled by private ditches...
ending at a right angle to a straight north-south irrigation ditch is unique in the Valley. Although several other subdivisions were platted with ditch access, none featured universal access within the subdivision. This was probably due in whole or in part to the winding nature of many of the older ditches in the valley, making it difficult to plan for water to reach all properties. Seven other North Valley subdivisions - Zia Gardens (1946), Livingston Place (1938), El Paraiso (1941), Linda Vista (1938) Guadalupe Gardens (1938), Pueblo Solano (1934) and Fourth Street Gardens (1926) - were platted with ditch easements. Although in a few of these subdivisions homes immediately adjacent to an irrigation ditch continue to use water from that ditch, no subdivision retains a complete system available to every lot. The only subdivision that features a communal irrigation system that is still in use is in the Livingston Place Addition west of 12th Street south of Matthew Road. The Addition is only one street and its current irrigation system consists of a concrete private ditch that runs perhaps 500 feet east from an unidentified irrigation ditch (a branch of the Griegos Lateral) along Los Arboles Road.

The land for the Los Alamos Addition was surveyed and the plat drawn in September of 1937. The plat was amended a year later so that the lots fronting on Fourth Street (originally platted as running east-west with the narrow frontage facing Fourth) were reoriented so that north-south lots from one end to the other bordered the residential streets. As noted in the physical description, Los Alamos remains the only housing development on north Fourth Street between downtown and Solar Road where homes are immediately adjacent to Fourth Street.

The Addition is offered to the public

The introductory advertisement that appeared in the October 16, 1937 Albuquerque Tribune makes the case for having it all: suburban country living, with the emphasis on country (fig. 50). After a banner headline reading “At Last - - - RELEASED FOR SALE! The choicest spot anywhere near Albuquerque for country homes” and a neatly drawn subdivision plan of the Addition’s three northern streets with the golf course where Sandia Road would eventually be placed, the ad goes on to invite prospective buyers to:

... enjoy all the undisputed health and economic advantages of suburban living, safe in the assurance that no shack or temporary living quarters could ever be built beside you; but also a district where all these advantages could be had at a MODERATE PRICE.

It has long been recognized that the old ‘Gutierrez Pasture’ on No. 4th Street (4 miles from Central) was the one ideal spot for such a country home site community. This tract, lying between 4th and 2nd streets, with the Sandia Golf Course as the southern boundary and the long line of old cottonwoods as the north boundary, has been divided into large homesites. Enough rich level irrigated land for a modern home and your own garden, orchard, berries and all the other good things of suburban living.

The number of sites is limited and they offer every advantage -- rich fertile land under ditch -- far enough from the city for country quiet -- near enough to enjoy city utilities. Unlimited pure water -- private 'dead end' graded and graveled streets...

Well before the plat was filed in March, 1938 housing construction had begun. The January 1938 Albuquerque Progress reported that:
"considerable interest has been shown by Albuquerque home-seekers in recently developed additions and subdivisions in and near Albuquerque. Among the latest developments are Los Alamos . . . which has begun to build up . . . three houses have appeared. Residents at Los Alamos, although several miles outside the city, will be supplied with gas, electricity, and telephone. It has adopted a code of building restrictions." (p. 6).

During this period, covenants were used by an increasing number of builders to assure new homeowners that their investment was secure, since Albuquerque, and certainly not Bernalillo County, did not have any zoning regulations until 1953 (Kammer 2000, 22). The covenants for the Los Alamos Addition (reprinted by the neighborhood association) reflected the developers' desire to create "Albuquerque's finest suburban residential section." (AJ 4/3/38) No lot was to be less than 15,000 square feet (although most remained at their original 1/2 acre size of 110' x 230'); each lot could hold no more than one detached single-family dwelling plus a garage and outbuildings, and no business or commercial uses were allowed. Front setbacks were established between 40 and 60 feet. All buildings except for rear garages and outbuildings had to be at least 10 feet from the side lot lines. Housing designs had to be approved by a committee with exceptions allowed if no committee existed or if it did not act expeditiously, provided the proposed building was "in harmony with existing structures." Residences had to cost at least $2500 and on the ground floor had to be not less than 700 square feet. All residences had access to ditch irrigation. The original covenants also banned sale to persons of oriental or African descent, but this was made illegal in the early 1960s. (New Mexico's African American Legacy, np).

A review of title abstracts for a number of the properties revealed that the covenants included with the original plat and in property transfers for land sold before August 1938, had additional clauses stating: "nothing shall prevent the owner of more than one lot from erecting a dwelling house on one and barns, chicken houses and outbuildings on an adjoining lot and nothing herein contained shall prevent the erection of a duplex residence of not more than two apartments." (Title Abstracts for Lots 62 and 64 p. 76 LTIC). It was probable that the developer realized that the presence of duplexes and the apparent limitation on where outbuildings could be placed would only lessen the Addition's desirability.

A street of trees

Advertisements for the Los Alamos Addition also made it clear that this was to be a verdant place: "Trees are growing. Select one of the spacious home sites for yourself. Plant trees on your property. Let nature beautify it for your better enjoyment and greater investment value" states the April 3, 1938 advertisement. A week later prospective home buyers are urged to "Drive out north Fourth. See the new trees and the fine homes they will make cozy when they leaf out. Buy now and plant trees to beautify YOUR future home. Watering and care provided for." (AJ 4/10/38)

Originally each street was bordered on both sides by a continuous row of Siberian elms. Their use was encouraged by erstwhile Albuquerque Mayor Clyde Tingley for many of his years on the Albuquerque City Commission beginning in the 1920s. Under his leadership, in 1931 the City began selling elm saplings for sixty cents and later distributed them for free (Kammer 2000, 19); in the early 1930s the City nursery, beginning with 1 1/2 pounds of seed from Clyde Oden's yard, produced thousands of Siberian elm seedlings (Scrapbooks,
3/24/34). The last statement in the advertisement quoted above suggests that the owners planted the street trees but that the developer cared for them. A large Siberian elm at the corner of 4th and Alamosa, in front of a lot where no house ever stood, and a former resident’s remembrance that the elms were tall even in the 1940s (making allowances for a child’s memories) [Leonard, 11/05], support the possibility that the developer was responsible for planting and caring for the street trees.

Lots are Sold

Ross Merritt did not handle the disposition of each lot. He did sell 24 lots before selling most of the other lots north of Sandia (the golf course was still in place) to William J. Stehle in October 1939 and the remainder to Stehle in April 1941 (Center for Southwest Research, Lawyers Title collection). Many of the lots listed in the MRGCD 1940 records are listed with William J. Stehle or A. J. Stehle as the owner and both of the April 1938 Journal advertisements note that Merritt is the “agent” for Stehle. Stehle is also listed in 1940 as owning a number of the houses and is also the original seller of the lot in the title abstracts, so it can reasonably be inferred that he was the actual developer, who had the houses built and then sold to the homeowner.

Evidently the attraction of large lots in the valley, accessible irrigation, the promise of modern homes with amenities (gas, electricity, and telephone) - water and sewage was by individual wells and septic systems until the early 1950s - and a location close to a major arterial as well as proximity to open fields drew many buyers. It stood practically alone in this area, but by the beginning of World War II had nearly half of the lots developed. In 1948 this area of the North Valley was annexed into the city. By that year, close to two thirds of the 108 lots in the Los Alamos Addition had been developed. At least five of the lots still vacant were owned and used by an adjacent homeowner. By 1956 20 more homes had been built and by 1962 six more had been added. 310 Sandia was built by 1965 and 310 Alamosa was not constructed until 1980.

Residents

Los Alamos, for all its large lot size and street trees, was not an upscale subdivision. Of those owners listed by the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District on their 1940 Re-Appraisal records most appear to have held non-professional jobs: salesmen, barbers, clerks, mailmen, proprietor of a men’s clothing store, a nurse and three bus drivers. Fewer than ten homes were valued by the MRGCD at over $3500; among their owners were a teacher, small business owners, a contractor, a bank department manager, and an AT&SF Railway station engineer. The most costly home (313 Placitas NW) was a $5000 clay tile home belonging to the owner and manager of a trading post.

Gary Leonard (his father owned and operated “Shifty’s Garage” and sold tires; the family is still in the tire business) lived at 304 Alamosa during the 1940s. He well remembers that west of Fourth was open country, most of it part of the huge land holdings on the Los Poblanos Ranch belonging to Albert and Ruth Hanna.
McCormick Simms. He and his brothers “roamed far and wide” in the fields surrounding his neighborhood. He also remembers the Humphrey family who he says had orangutans swinging from the large willow trees in their back yard. This bit of urban folklore has not been verified.

Another early homeowner on Sandia was Miss Bessie Edsall, well remembered for her outstanding history classes at Albuquerque High (Harrington, 26). Miss Edsall left Albuquerque to earn her PhD at University of Wisconsin where she then taught for many years. After her retirement she returned to Albuquerque in 1943, settling into her new home at 304 Sandia.

Charlie Winstead who had a large two-story home built in 1941 at the east end of Sandia Road, became something of a local legend. A Texan and former FBI agent, he was famed as one of the two men who shot John Dillinger as acknowledged in a letter to Winstead from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (Dallas Morning News 8/6/2005). Winstead came to New Mexico to serve as the security chief at Los Alamos and the atomic bomb trigger mechanism was developed at this home. He lived at 291 until his death in 1973. A 47-page memoir by Winstead is kept by the Red River Historical Museum in his hometown of Sherman, Texas (ibid.). Another story is that he kept a burro - as well as other animals - that he used to carry his groceries home from Conniffs Market on Fourth Street and Montano.

Preservation Outlook

The residents of the Los Alamos Addition who talked with this writer, spoke of a love for their neighborhood. There is an active neighborhood association, which is in large part responsible for this nomination being prepared. They have been actively pursuing having the nomination written for over five years. The association’s newsletter often includes information on the older homes and families in the neighborhood as well as information on the ditches.

Use of the private ditches within the Los Alamos Addition has lessened throughout the years, but at least 32 homeowners still take advantage of their water rights according to ditch rider records for 2003. Homeowners either clean the ditches themselves as a communal effort or hire someone. Those that use the ditches treasure them. One recent resident, riparian biologist Manuel Molles, is quoted in a short paper by another resident and University of New Mexico professor Enrique Lamadrid:

The water in the ditch connects all of us to the river. But it connects all of us to each other as well in a really substantive way. We need to be in contact with each other because of the ditch... Even if there are conflicts over the watering schedule and you are mad at your neighbor, you know you have to figure out how to resolve it. Over the long term it keeps people interacting in a very positive way. (Lamadrid 3)

Lamadrid goes on to state that his neighborhood “is dedicated to the preservation of a unique and well watered urban lifestyle” (op. ct. 3). The Spring 2003 neighborhood newsletter includes a detailed article on “Ditch Etiquette,” that highlights the necessity of working with your neighbors when using the ditch. It urges homeowners to use only enough water needed to flood their property, to make sure all have access to the ditch
(no fenced or locked gates across the ditch), to never leave the ditch unattended and to notify any neighbor who
may be waiting for water when watering is completed (LAANA newsletter, Spring, 2003).

The houses will continue to be altered as families expand and owners become more energy conserving.
However, the covenants were renewed in 1962 and later homebuilders have respected the required setbacks. If
the district is listed, the neighborhood association will make an even greater effort to inform homeowners of the
distinctive historic qualities of their neighborhood and of the benefits of retaining those qualities.
Los Alamos Addition Bibliography

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  Helen Gutiérrez, 300 Sandia Rd. NW, Albuquerque NM
  Mark Gutiérrez, 304 Placitas Rd. NW, Albuquerque NM
  Mrs. Carl Hatton, 287 La Plata Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM
  Pat Latimer, 291 Sandia Rd. NW, Albuquerque, NM
  Gary Leonard, 1745 Savannah Dr. NE, Albuquerque, NM
  Red and Madeline Phillips, 304 Sandia Rd. NW, Albuquerque NM
  Brian Suhr, arborist, 9029 Guadalupe Trail NW, Albuquerque NM
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Wilson, Christopher Auto-oriented Commercial Development in Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1916-1956, National Register Multiple Property Listing 1996

Photograph log (all photographs by Mary Davis; B & W taken 12/2005; color digital taken 10/2005)
Map of photograph locations can be found at Fig 52.

1. Alamosa Road looking east
2. La Plata Road looking east
3. Placitas Road looking east
4. Sandia Road looking east
5. Front entry yard & drive, 287 La Plata NW, looking NE
6. View of Gallegos Lateral looking NW from 2nd St., east of Sandia Road NW cul-de-sac
7. Leonard House, 304 Alamosa NW, 1937-40 >S
8. 292 La Plata NW, 1956 >SW
9. Gutierrez House, 300 Sandia NW, 1951-52 >S
10. Winstead House, 291 Sandia NW, 1941 >NNE
11. Hanawald House, 305 Placitas NW, 1937 >NE
12. 302 Placitas NW, 1937-40; American elm behind house >SW
13. 308 Alamosa NW, 1937-40 >SW
14. Schmuck House, 295 Sandia NW, 1941-49 >N
15. Huffman House, 299 La Plata NW, 1937 >NW
16. Parker House, 313 Placitas NW, 1937-40 >N
17. 304 La Plata NW, 1937-40 >SSE
19. Collier House, 294 Placitas NW, early 1940s >S
20. 302 La Plata NW, 1955-56 >SE
21. 303 Sandia NW, 1951-52 >NW
22. 301 La Plata NW, 1941-49 >NNE
23. Chavez House, 308 Placitas NW, 1950-52 >SSW
24. Mattingly House, 288 La Plata NW, 1950 >SE
25. Grimes House, 284 Alamosa NW, 1950-52 >NW
26. Monte House, 305 Sandia NW, 1952-54 >NW
27. 303 Placitas NW, 1957-58 >NE
28. Robinson House, 290 Placitas NW, 1957 >SSW
29. Ditch # 2 looking west
30. Hatton Hse., 287 La Plata NW at left; Ditch #2 just north of house; check dam & gate, Gallegos Lateral >W
31. Ditch #3 looking east
32. Ditch #3 check dam
33. Ditch #3 check dam and gates
34. Ditch #3, take off pipe, rear yard 295 Placitas NW
35. Rear yard irrigation canal, 301 Placitas NW
36. 5820 Fourth St. NW, 1982 >SE
37. 6021-6049 Fourth St. NW, 1997 >NE
38. 5920 Fourth St. NW, 1981 >SW
39. 6100 Fourth St. NW, 1980 >NE
40. 293 Placitas NW, 2005 remodeling of 1944 Ranch style > NE
41. 293 Alamosa NW, 2005 remodeling of 1937-1940 Minimal Traditional >NW
42. 309 Alamosa NW remodel of 1937-40 Pueblo Revival >N
43. 294 La Plata NW remodel of 1937-40 Pueblo Revival >SE
44. 309 Placitas NW remodel of 1937 Pueblo Revival model home >NNE
45. 307 La Plata NW, 1937-40 with rear clerestory addition >NE
46. 306 La Plata NW, 1937-40 with garage addition >SSW
47. 295 La Plata NW, window replacements >NE
48. Edsall House, 304 Sandia NW 1943 with 1980 front remodel >SE
49. 294 Alamosa NW, 1949, inappropriate window replacements >SW

Color digital photos 1. Gallegos Ditch >SE; 2. 305 Placitas NW; 3. Placitas Rd. NW > E; 4. Placitas Rd NW >NE
5. 914 Ridgecrest Blvd., Albuquerque >NE - model for 291 Sandia NW
APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
NEW MEXICO STATE REGISTER OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES

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PHOTO

#1

#2
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PHOTOGRAPHS

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Digital color
   Gallego Ditch
   2nd st in backyard.

305 Placitas NW

2. Digital color
#4 #3
Digital/color
Placeto NW
→ east

#4
Digital/color
Placeto Rd NW → NE at 305
Homes Appearing in New Subdivisions

New Subdivisions Building Up

Considerable interest has been shown by Albuquerque home-seekers in recently developed additions and subdivisions in and near Albuquerque. Among the latest developments are Los Alamos and West Park, both of which have begun to build up. Two houses have appeared at West Park, and three at Los Alamos, while lot sales are reported to be brisk. Residents at Los Alamos, although several miles out of the city, will be supplied with gas, electricity, and telephone. Both localities have adopted a code of building restrictions.

Plane Service to Mexico

City Resumed.

Plane service between Albuquerque and Mexico City has been resumed with the re-establishment of the route between Juarez and the Mexican capital, according to John C. Keenum, district traffic agent for Continental Air Lines. Planes will leave Juarez at 5:45 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, arriving in Mexico City Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Stops are made at Chihuahua City, Parral, Torreon, and Leon.
At Last---
RELEASED FOR SALE!
The choicest spot anywhere near Albuquerque for country homes

For years there has been a demand here for a really nice suburban district; a district where your neighbors would be your friends and associates; a district where you could build a lovely home, and enjoy all the unexpected health and economic advantages of suburban living, sale in the assurance that no shock or temporary living quarters could ever be built beside you; but also a district where all these advantages could be had at a MODERATE PRICE.

It has long been recognized that the old "Guadalupe Pasture" on Nw. 4th Street (6 miles from Central) was the one ideal spot for such a country home estate community. This tract, lying between 4th and 24th streets, between the northern boundary and the long line of old cottonwoods at the north boundary, has been divided into large homesteads. Enough rich land is available to build a modest home and your own garden, orchard, berries and all the other good things of suburban living.

LOS ALAMOS Addition

Merritt-Stamm Agency
Agents for Wm. J. Stehle

These sites are bound to enhance in value. The number is limited and they offer every advantage—rich fertile land under ditch—far enough from the city for country quiet—near enough to enjoy city utilities. Unlimited pure water—private "dead end" graded and gravelled streets and marvelous unobstructed view of the broad mesa and colorful mountains.

First prices are amazingly low and the terms most reasonable. See your favorite realtor now.

We have two five-room homes under construction. Drive out and inspect them.

Figure 50 advertisement for Los Alamos Addition, 10/16/1937 Albuquerque Tribune