St. Michael’s Drive
Visions of the Future
This booklet celebrates a “Sketch Design” project that provides alternative visions of St. Michael’s Drive; how the roadway might look as well as how the land along it might be redesigned to provide a vibrant district of activity in Santa Fe.

Six urban design firms and a City of Santa Fe staff planner participated in the project by providing plans/designs showing their own future visions of a revamped St. Michael’s Drive.

The following individuals and firms participated:

- **Albert Moore+Associates / Santa Fe**
- **Roy Wroth Urbanism & Planning / Santa Fe**
- **Lloyd & Associates Architects / Santa Fe**
- **Spears Architects / Santa Fe**
- **Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, Architects and Planners / Albuquerque**
- **Steve Price (Urban Advantage) / Berkeley, CA**
- **Richard Macpherson, Santa Fe City Planner**

**Public Event**

An “open house” at which the following plans/designs were on public display was held during Friday and Saturday, May 8 & 9, 2009 in the lobby of the former CinemaCafe located in the St. Michael’s Village West shopping center along St. Michael’s Drive. Nearly 100 individuals attended the 2-day event. We wish to thank Forrest Thomas for providing the location for the open house.

**Credits**

- Kathy McCormick, Housing and Community Development Department Director
- Reed Liming, Director, Long Range Planning Division
- Richard Macpherson, Senior Planner
- Maria Vigil, Project Specialist
- Valerie Chelonis, Graphic Artist, Graphics Section
St. Michael’s Drive – a Brief History

Originally built in the 1950’s and designed as a “by-pass” highway around what was then the southern edge of Santa Fe, St. Michael’s Drive has since become a commercial corridor at the center of Santa Fe’s growing Urban Area of 90,000 residents.

St. Michael’s Drive, Cerrillos Road and Airport Road, act as a transportation and land use spine extending through the geographic and population center of a growing Santa Fe. St. Michael’s Drive is one of the city’s busiest streets and has become essential to the urban fabric of the city. Yet, it has been identified in public forums as lacking a redeeming urban form or aesthetic, and not particularly safe for pedestrians.

Today, St. Michael’s Drive contains 7 lanes of traffic (6 thru lanes and a center turn lane) in the 1.25 miles between St. Francis Drive and Cerrillos Road. It handles approximately 25,000 to 35,000 vehicles per day (ADT). The adjoining, suburban-style land development pattern includes a combination of shopping centers and older car dealerships, marked by large expanses of parking lots along the road edge and large, aging buildings set back from the roadway.
St. Michael’s Drive – Designs

The concepts put forward by the various participants focus on the combination of a re-designed roadway, as well as a new development pattern and new approach to urban design along the road.

Albert Moore + Associates  
pages 4-5

Roy Wroth Urbanism & Planning  
pages 6-7

Lloyd & Associates Architects  
pages 8-9

Spears Architects  
pages 10-11

Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, Architects and Planners  
pages 12-13

Steve Price, Urban Advantage  
pages 14-15

Richard Macpherson  
pages 16-17
Albert Moore & Associates (Santa Fe) designed a future St. Michael’s Boulevard as a “special district for life as a creative expression through contemporary architecture, design, media, performance & sustainable practices.”

Moore’s design includes generous use of green, landscaped parks and plazas as interior courtyards surrounded by mixed-use buildings with below-ground parking. St. Michael’s, itself, would be reduced to 4 through-lanes of traffic with a landscaped median irrigated by a system of underground storm water reservoirs that also collect roof water from adjacent buildings.

The over-arching theme of the St. Michael’s Boulevard district would be focused on a “living laboratory” of contemporary design & sustainable practices… in the built environment, as well as the programs & organizations inhabiting those buildings.
Roy Wroth, Urbanism & Planning (Santa Fe), developed a concept calling for 3 primary “nodes” along St. Michael’s including a **College Node** at the west end centered on the College of Santa Fe, a **Rail Node**, an area surrounding the rail line that runs through the heart of St. Michael’s and a **Green Enterprise Node** at the east end of the study area near St. Francis Drive.

Wroth’s design includes public space; roundabouts at both ends of St. Michael’s; parallel roads behind major developments fronting on St. Michael’s to encourage local circulation without using St. Michael’s Drive; complete streets that widen sidewalks, provide bike lanes and greater landscaping; the concept also calls for a “road diet” reducing St. Michael’s to 2-lanes in each direction, rather than 3, converting the 3rd lane in each direction to on-street parking.

This design also stresses making better connections into and access from nearby neighborhoods. Green networks and better defined neighborhood “gateways”, small architectural, landscaped designs at intersections would act as elegant, traffic-calmed entrances to residential neighborhoods.
Lloyd & Associates Architects (Santa Fe) took a bold approach to a future St. Michael’s Boulevard that features roundabouts at all of the currently signalized intersections. Pedestrians would be afforded 22-foot wide sidewalks on each side of St. Michael’s with an additional 22-foot landscaped median running down the center of the boulevard.

The centerpiece of the Lloyd & Associates design is a large, circular shaped park surrounding a proposed train station with the mainline of St. Michael’s running underneath the train station area. St. Michael’s would split into side streets for local traffic while maintaining through traffic traveling the length of St. Michael’s Boulevard.

The train station would feature a solar/wind “orchard” of turbines; quiet, efficient and architecturally unique. While new multi-storied buildings would front St. Michael’s, the train station area would provide the focus of energy & activity located at the heart of the new St. Michael’s district.
Spears Architects (Santa Fe) split St. Michael’s into a tri-segment boulevard, with two 25-foot medians separating a simple 4-lane “through” street from a side street that allows one-way traffic and on-street parking.

The use of a wide color palette is a recurring theme in the Spears concept evoking someplace that is “fun to be” and creating a distinctive district along St. Michael’s. Two and three-storey buildings with ground-floor arcades and upper floor, open-air balconies, front the xeri-scaped, tree-lined medians that create a welcomed separation from the main road.
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, Architects and Planners (Albuquerque) created an entire “art corridor community” down the middle of St. Michael’s Boulevard with a self-sustaining 100-foot wide median known as Paseo de las Artes that includes art galleries, studios and live/work units served by underground parking located beneath the median. The entire Paseo community running down the center of St. Michael’s would be energy self-sufficient fully powered by sun and wind with water harvested and stored below ground.

More intensive 3-5 storey mixed-use buildings are located around the rail station located on the north side of St. Michael’s. Three distinct districts, Knowledge, Railroad and Wellness reflect the current college, commuter rail and hospital & medical offices that help define the St. Michael’s area.
Steve Price / Urban Advantage (Berkeley, CA) focuses on creating visions of “walkable, socially-interactive communities by transforming photographs into photo-realistic visualizations.” Price created a 5-frame progression of a future St. Michael’s Boulevard by beginning with the way St. Michael’s looks today. He then adds, frame-by-frame, new elements that culminate with a boulevard complete with pedestrian-oriented sidewalk, an off-road bike lane separated from walkers by a tree-lined landscaped area.

St. Michael’s Boulevard would contain 2-lanes in each direction separated by a landscaped median of 25-feet. The existing outer, 3rd lane in each direction, would be converted into on-street parking to serve new, sidewalk-fronted buildings. A new 6th Street extension would be continued on the south side of St. Michael’s across from the existing 6th Street that ends on the north side.
St. Michael’s Drive

Steve Price,
Urban Advantage
Richard Macpherson, City of Santa Fe staff planner, contributed his own hand-drawn images of a new St. Michael’s Boulevard, re-named Milla Real (“Royal Mile”) evoking the impressive nature of Barcelona’s famed Las Ramblas.

Macpherson’s 60-foot wide, tree-lined promenade is clearly designed for people to be on, to walk along, to meet one another and to shop at the boulevard’s stores and dine at its cafes and restaurants. This wide, tree-lined and canopied walkway has a focus on pedestrian activities. The design of this boulevard assures comfort for pedestrians: shade in the summer and sun in the winter, due to deciduous trees. Four lanes of traffic with on-street parking would be accommodated along with 2 and 3-storey buildings lining the street.

Milla Real brings Santa Fe full-circle with its Spanish origins and re-introduces the new world settlement with its European lineage in a bold, 21st Century creation.