

MetroABQ Real Estate Newsletter

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

December

What is "Bat Family Cruisin" & Why Is It Important?

&

The Annual Parks & Greenspaces Issue



Nature does the body good & the comprehensive new analysis published in The Lancet of more than 8 million people suggests that to boost longevity, cities should get a lot less gray and a [lot more green](#). Even the color [green is beneficial](#) to humans, in many ways...



Staying along the Rio (above, in autumn) for a bit: That Alameda Trail & Drain greenspace is part of the network of waterways that irrigate the agricultural areas; it also shunts rainwater to the Rio Grande during storms. Along the ribbon of river is a ribbon of greenspace--the Rio Grande Valley State Park--[a 4,300-acre greenspace](#) that extends from Sandia Pueblo in the north through the Metro & south to Isleta Pueblo; it is located on both the east & west sides of the Rio Grande.

Rio Grande Bosque Access? There's plenty: easy access to the Rio Grande Valley Park from the [walking trail across the Rio](#) at I-40, seen in a previous [MetroABQ Newsletter](#); also from Tingley Beach, the Rio Grande Nature Center, & at the [Bachechi Open Space](#) in Alameda, just to name a few. Meanwhile, there are many other, lesser-known public access points to the rio, one of which is from the Thomas Village community on Rio Grande Blvd. If you don't know where the discrete path between houses is, it's easy to miss. The three images just below are from the Thomas Village entrance at the rio...kinda stark in the winter, but an amazing greenspace in the middle of a large metro area year-round.







Above is the [Rio Grande Nature Center](#) Duck Blind as seen near the entrance. It's one of the many Rio Grande Valley State Park entrances. The cool image below was taken from the [New Mexico State Parks](#) site & is the [Antoine Predock](#)-designed Nature Center from across the pond.





Away from the Rio Grande, there are plenty of greenspaces & parks within a 10-minute walk from most neighborhoods. Two parks on opposite sides of the city are seen above: Little Cloud Park in the NE Sandia Heights, with a children's play area, is directly above. More than 10 miles away, on the westside, sits the 13.6 acre Santa Fe Village Park, looking toward the Sandia Mountain chain, two above. There are a bunch of neighborhoods there, adjacent to the Taylor Ranch

Library & the [Petroglyph National Monument](#).

Another benefit of generous parklands in the city is the mitigation of the [Heat-Island effect](#). Large greenspaces like the Petroglyph National Monument, seen below, on the westside & urban-area parks like [Tiguex Park](#) in Old Town & Roosevelt Park go a long way to absorbing some of the excess heat created by asphalt & concrete.



From healthy greenspace article: *Researchers tracked the millions of people across seven countries, including the US, throughout their lives, and found that no matter the location on Earth or [type of "green,"](#) living near nature yielded similar health benefits globally.*

Vegetation can act as a buffer between residents & blaring city racket, even if it's as simple as a tree-lined street. Plants also help regulate temperature & extremity of environments, tempering the effects of climate change, the authors discussed.

The analysis doesn't answer the question of why proximity to plants is a boon to human health. But this confirms the assumption with big data — being near greenspaces really is good for you--the more, the better--& the effect likely applies no matter where you are in the world.

How does Albuquerque fare, compared to other metropolitan areas? Pretty well, apparently. According to [The Trust for Public Land](#), Metro Albuquerque has recently moved up six notches, to #34 in the nation, for the amount of parks & greenspace acres per person. Other good news: 87% of our residents live within a 10-minute walk to a public park or greenspace; the national average is 54%. The MetroABQ has also devoted 23% of public lands for parks & recreation; the national average is 15%.



Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller is leading an effort with the City's Parks & Recreation Department to help restore the city's urban forest. Recent studies show Albuquerque is losing its tree canopy at a rate of nearly one percent every year. With the current canopy cover at less than 10 percent, the loss of the urban forest leaves the city vulnerable to heat & wind, a changing climate, & harsh urban conditions. The City's forestry program is refocusing its efforts to create an effective & [unified program to support a thriving urban forest](#).

Additionally, from the [CABQ.gov](#) site: Last July, Mayor Keller joined a coalition of

mayors across the country to work toward ensuring that every Albuquerque resident lives within a 10-minute walk (or half-mile) of a high-quality park or green space. Since then, the Parks and Recreation Department has acquired nearly 40 acres of Open Space in the Tijeras Arroyo and opened the Anderson Heights Park in southwest Albuquerque. The Department is also in the midst of constructing Memorial Park and will soon break ground on Juan Tabo Hills Park in southeast Albuquerque.

Beyond the construction of new parks and Open Space, the Parks and Recreation Department is exploring other innovative options to improve access to already existing parks and Open Space, such as creating new access points and potentially building new infrastructure to shorten the distance it currently takes some residents to travel to get to a park or Open Space property.

Although not considered city greenspaces, the dozen or so acres of dedicated greenspaces on the UNM campus are always there for folks to explore. A great thing about UNM is the public art installations that dot the main & north campuses. The lobo image above can be seen on-campus on the corner of Central Ave & University Blvd. Below is Roosevelt Park in winter, another great urban park; below that is [Netherwood Park](#), in warmer weather.





Real estate is a huge factor in all of this: where you choose to live is vitally important to mental & physical health. Homes near parks & greenspaces will add to your quality of life. Lucky for us, Albuquerque is a greenspace-rich river valley sporting a whopping [384 parks & greenspaces](#)--most of us are only a ten-minute walk to a high quality park or greenspace. That makes the MetroABQ a pretty special place to be...

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Unless otherwise indicated, all photos by Chris Lucas.



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