



Rethinking

Cerrillos Corridor



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1. INTRODUCTION

Cerrillos Road is more than a transportation route—it's a corridor that shapes how Santa Fe moves, connects, and thrives. It plays a central role in the daily lives of Santa Feans, influencing mobility, economic activity, and the cultural and visual character of the city.



Image Source: Sites Southwest

Today, many Santa Fe residents express concerns about the corridor, describing it as congested, unsafe, and lacking a sense of place. Previously under the ownership of the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the City of Santa Fe did not have jurisdiction to make changes or respond to many of the complaints about Cerrillos Road. Now that the City has primary ownership and management of the Cerrillos corridor, the City and the

Santa Fe community are presented with a unique and strategic opportunity to reimagine the road's future. To plan effectively for the future, it is vital to begin a critical analysis of how the corridor functions today. Is Cerrillos Road meeting the needs of the community? How can it better balance the goals of transportation, business vitality, safety, housing, culture, and equity for Santa Fe? This assessment aims to answer

those questions by examining the Cerrillos Corridor through key lenses: design, safety, land use, transportation, community values, and social equity. The goal is to build a foundation for informed transportation planning decisions that influence a future iteration of Cerrillos that reflects the aspirations of the Santa Fe community.



Image source: Adobe-Wiki Commons

2. HISTORY OF CERRILLOS

Mapped as early as 1846, Cerrillos Road has been part of the Santa Fe landscape for almost 200 years. As part of the Santa Fe Trail, it followed established indigenous routes and was used by traders and travelers to and from the City of Santa Fe. This development brought tourism and car-oriented amenities that would help Santa Fe thrive economically and maintain the city's relevance on the national scale. Cerrillos Road began to develop as a destination in and of itself, full of roadside motels and attractions dedicated to auto-oriented tourism.

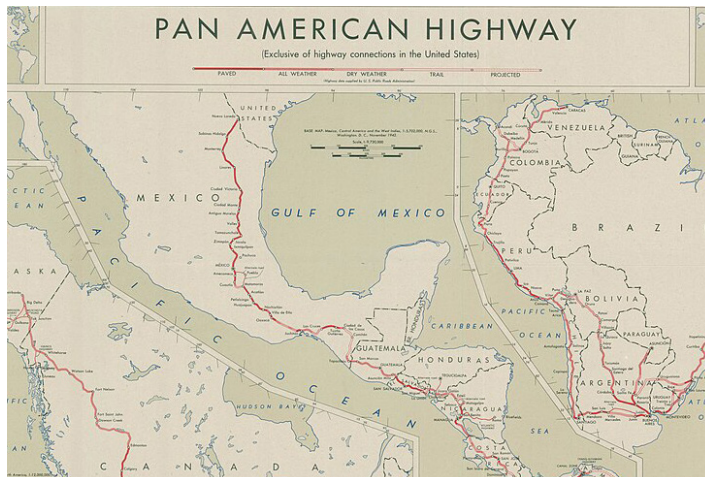


Image source: Wikimedia Commons by National Archives and Records Administration



Image Source: Wikimedia Commons by Alfred McGarr Adv. Ser., Albuquerque, NM.

Like many American cities, Santa Fe began planning for quicker and more efficient movement of cars which resulted in bigger and more modern roads. Though eventually removed from the official alignment of Route 66, Cerrillos Road embodied the national moment as it became part of the Pan American Central Highway. This transformation coincided with a population boom in Santa Fe, growing from 7,236 people in 1920 to 20,325 people in 1940. As more people began to live in Santa Fe, housing development grew to keep up – and with the use of the car – households were able to live further away from the city center. Cerrillos Road became a main thoroughfare for commuter traffic and continues to function similarly in the current era.

TABLE 1. SANTA FE POPULATION GROWTH, 1920-2020

	1920	1940	1960	1980	2000	2020
Population	7,236	20,325	33,394	49,160	62,200	87,505
Percent Change		180.9%	64.3%	47.2%	26.5%	40.7%

Source: New Mexico Economic Development Department, 2021

3. CERRILLOS TODAY

Today, Cerrillos Road is home to housing, stores, services, public institutions, and healthcare, providing goods and services needed by Santa Fe residents. As a result of its centrality to Santa Fean life,

Cerrillos is highly used by commuters and residents alike and is inundated with car and vehicle traffic. While transit service and bike lanes exist on Cerrillos, these modes of transportation are considered ineffective and often dangerous. The challenges of human safety and movement of vehicles on Cerrillos Road today continue despite efforts at redesigning driving lanes and intersections aimed at balancing these two priorities. As a whole, Cerrillos is generally perceived as a road Santa Feans “have to” use and not one they want to use.



FIGURE 1. STUDY AREA CONTEXT MAP

Study Area Demographics

For this assessment, the study area is a 0.5 mile buffer from the center of Cerrillos Road between Early Street in the north and where Cerrillos intersects I-25 in the south. A half mile reflects resources and amenities that are within walking distance of Cerrillos Road and the general livability of the corridor for its residents.

As of 2024, the Cerrillos Road study area is home to over 20,000 residents (almost 1/4th of all Santa Fe residents) and a hub for 23,000 jobs, making it one of the most active and vital parts of the city. The demographic and socioeconomic profile of the corridor reveals important insights into the communities it serves and the challenges it faces.

Despite its role as a job center and proximity to public transit, the Cerrillos study area is still largely car-dependent: a striking 74% of workers in the area drive alone to work. Carpooling trails far behind at just 6%, with even fewer workers walking, biking, or taking public transit. Notably, public transit use sits at just 0.03%, pointing to significant gaps in accessibility, infrastructure, or perceived convenience and safety for transit riders.

When comparing commuting patterns across geographies, a few key trends emerge. Overall, Santa Fe follows national patterns, with the majority of workers driving alone to their jobs. However, the percentage of solo drivers in Santa Fe is slightly lower than the state average, reflecting a modest deviation from statewide norms.

FIGURE 2. STUDY AREA COMMUTE PATTERNS, 2022

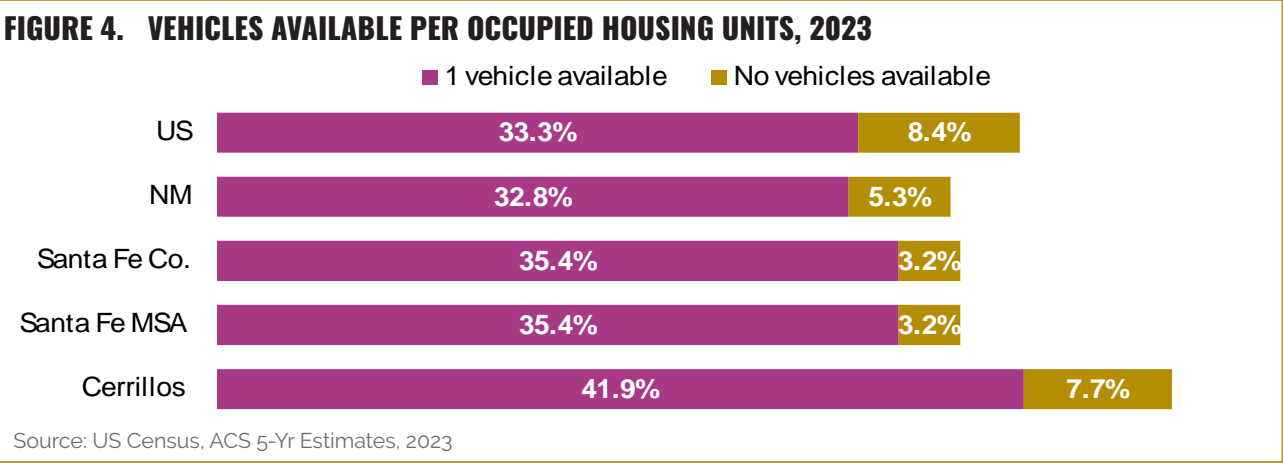
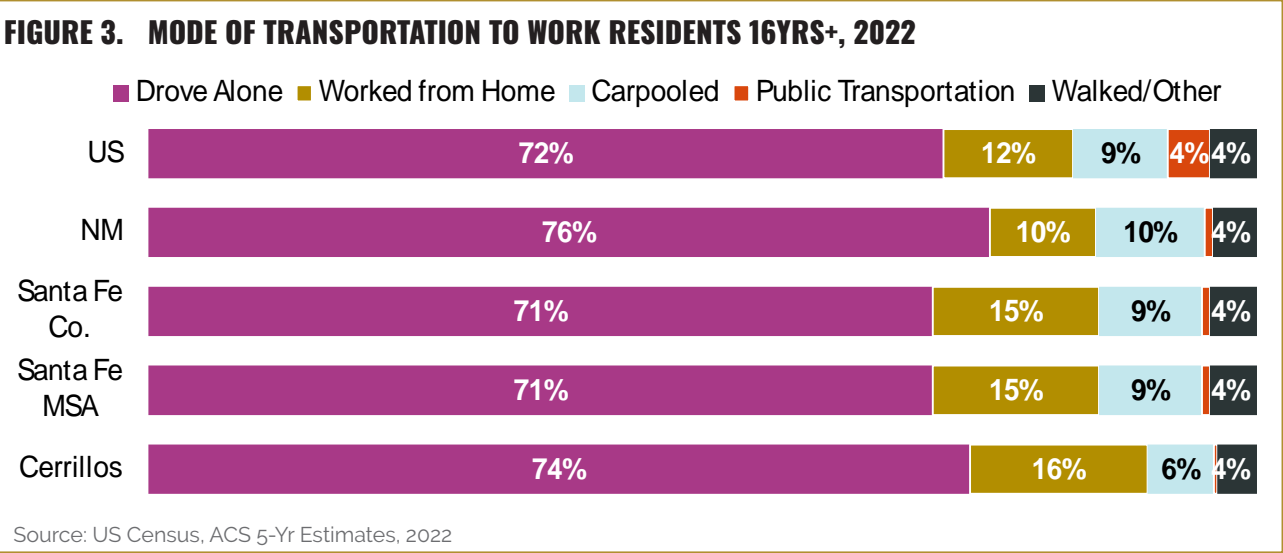


Image Source: Sites Southwest

Notably, Santa Fe has a higher work from home, around 15% and 16%, which exceeds both New Mexico and national averages. This trend may reflect employment base in professional, government, or creative sectors that allow for greater flexibility, highlighting the need for flexible, multimodal infrastructure that supports short trips, neighborhood access, and safe connections to local services for those spending more time in their immediate communities.

Public transportation is generally low across geographies, with the smaller study area of Cerrillos at the lowest. Despite this small percentage, Cerrillos Bus Route 2 has the highest ridership numbers in the city. This indicates a clear demand for transit along the corridor and suggests that with improved service and supporting infrastructure, ridership could grow and public transit could become a more viable and reliable option for more residents.

Households around Cerrillos show distinct patterns in vehicle access when compared to the broader Santa Fe region, the state of New Mexico, and the United States. In the study area,



41.9% of households have only one vehicle available, a higher share than the Santa Fe MSA and County. This figure is also above the statewide average of 32.8% and the

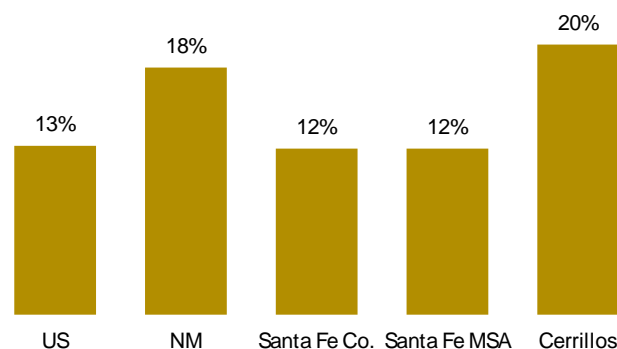
national average of 33.3%, suggesting that many households in the study area rely on a single car for their transportation needs. More significantly, 7.7% of households

have no vehicle at all. This is more than double the rate of households without vehicles in the Santa Fe MSA and County, where only 3.2% fall into this category.

A significant portion of the study population, 66%, identify as non-White or of Hispanic/Latino origin, reflecting the cultural richness and diversity that defines much of Santa Fe's southside. This area is also home to a wide range of age groups, with over 20% of residents aged 65 and older, and more than 17% under the age of 18, underscoring the need for universal design for infrastructure and services that support all ages and abilities.

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FIGURE 5. PERCENT OF PEOPLE LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY RATE, 2022



Source: US Census, ACS 5-Yr Estimates, 2022

Adding to these challenges, 20% of residents within the study area live below the poverty rate, significantly higher than the surrounding Santa Fe area and the highest percentage overall. When combined with potential barriers to mobility, these conditions suggest that many corridor residents may be experiencing disproportionate burdens when it comes to transportation costs, and access to employment, and services.

Demographic Summary:



Equity and access are central issues in the Cerrillos Corridor. A large percentage of residents are from historically underserved communities, including seniors, youth, and people living in poverty.



Car dependence is extremely high, yet a notable portion of households have limited or no access to a vehicle. This mismatch points to an urgent need for better transit, bike, and pedestrian infrastructure.



Low transit usage does not necessarily reflect low need—it likely reflects low quality, low frequency, or lack of safe and convenient access to transit options.

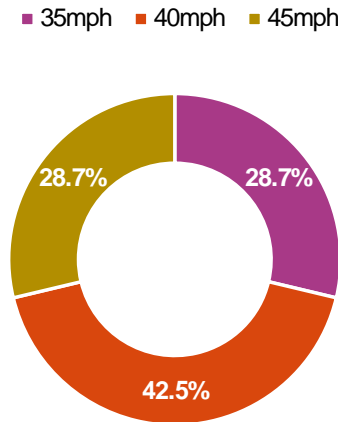
Cerrillos Road Functionality

Cerrillos Road is classified as a principal arterial road. Principal arterials are defined as major roadways designed to carry large volumes of traffic between cities or key areas within urban regions. These roads typically prioritize vehicular flow instead of pedestrian access and generally feature higher speed limits.

Within the study area, Cerrillos Road reflects this definition. The center segment of the road is posted at 40 miles per hour, making up 42.5% of the study area. The northern segment has a speed limit of 35 mph and the southern segment - 45 mph.

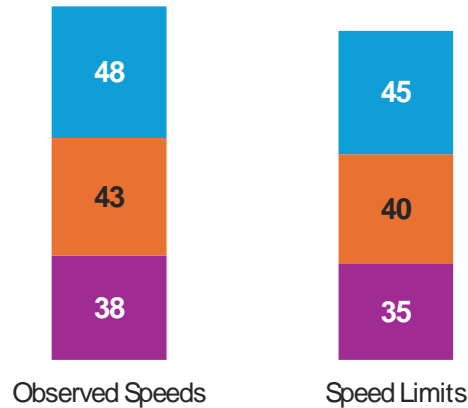
Analysis of traffic speeds in the study area reveals a consistent pattern: vehicles tend to travel around 40 miles per hour regardless of posted limits, time of day, or day of the week. The fastest speeds are recorded between midnight and 7:00 a.m., when traffic is light and average speeds range between 45 and 48 mph. Lower speeds are observed from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., aligning with peak business and travel hours. During these periods, average speeds range from 38 to 42 mph, indicating congestion and more complex traffic conditions. Speeds begin to rise again in the evening hours after 7:00 p.m., continuing through midnight as travel

FIGURE 6. STUDY AREA SPEED LIMITS AS PERCENTAGE OF ROAD LENGTH, 2024



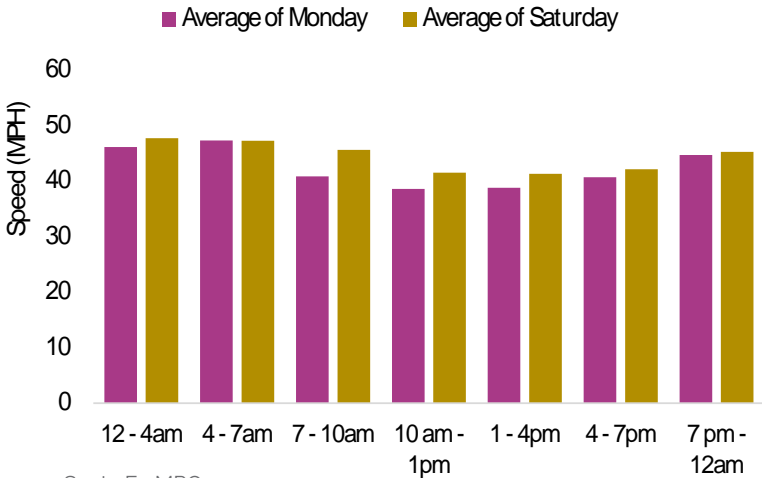
Source: Santa Fe MPO

FIGURE 7. CERRILLOS ROAD, OBSERVED SPEEDS V. SPEED LIMITS, 2024



demand declines. While there are slight differences between weekdays and weekends, particularly between Monday and Saturday, these variations are minimal, suggesting that Cerrillos remains consistently active throughout the week. Vehicle speeds are an essential point of

FIGURE 8. CERRILLOS ROAD OBSERVED SPEEDS, 2024

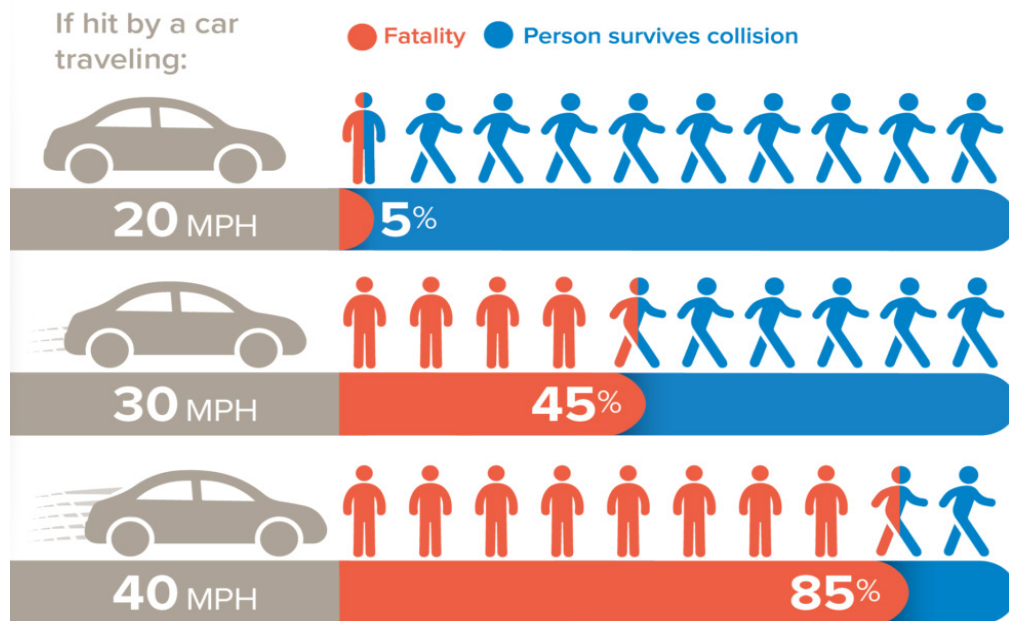


Source: Santa Fe MPO

analysis: vehicle speed is the most critical factor influencing human safety. The National Traffic Safety Board has shown that the risk of a pedestrian being killed in a collision increases dramatically as vehicle speeds rise. A person struck by a car traveling 30 mph has a 45% chance of being killed, while the risk jumps to over 85% at 40 mph. Given that much of Cerrillos Road sees average driving speeds at or above 40 mph, especially during the busiest daytime hours, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users are regularly navigating an environment with heightened risk. This reality is compounded in areas where crossings are inconsistent and inadequate. To create a safer, more balanced corridor, speed management strategies and improved safety infrastructure must be implemented to counteract high vehicle speeds.

Traffic patterns along the Cerrillos

FIGURE 9. NATIONAL TRAFFIC SAFETY BOARD, VEHICLE SPEED AND RISK OF FATALITY



National Traffic Safety Board (2017) Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles. Available from: <https://www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf>

Image source: National Traffic Safety Board



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Road Corridor have seen notable shifts between 2019 and 2023, revealing the evolving ways in which people move through and connect to this critical Santa Fe artery.

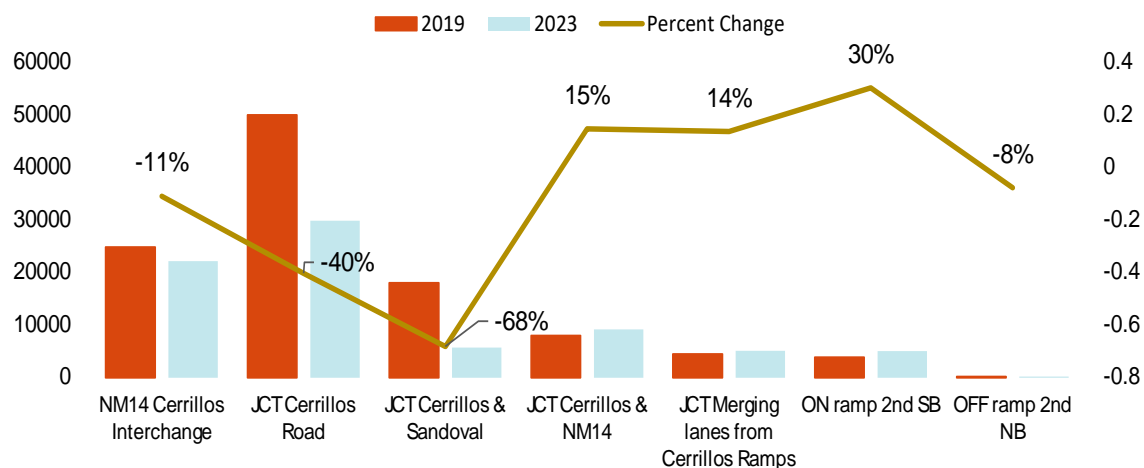
Based on Road AADT by Year, traffic on Cerrillos seems to be generally declining. The junction of Cerrillos Road and Sandoval experienced a dramatic 68% decrease in traffic, dropping from over 18,000 vehicles in 2019 to just under 6,000 in 2023. This sharp decline could point to changes in nearby land use, shifting travel behavior, or reduced accessibility. Similarly, the main Cerrillos Road junction lost over 20,000 vehicles, a 40% drop, suggesting a broader trend of declining traffic at central corridor intersections. By contrast, some parts of the corridor are experiencing growth rather than decline. The 2nd south bound on-ramp saw a 30% increase in traffic, the highest in the dataset. Modest but meaningful growth also occurred at the junction of Cerrillos and NM-14 (15%) and the merging lanes from Cerrillos (14%). These increases may indicate changing commuter patterns, especially for regional or highway-bound travelers who rely more on ramp access points.

Notably, traffic at the NM-14 Interchange and the northbound ramp near Exit 278 declined slightly, but not dramatically—hovering between 11% and 12% decreases. The relatively stable traffic at these outer edges may reflect consistent regional travel.

These patterns may suggest a need for redevelopment or redesign, suggesting changing uses and new demands on infrastructure.

Traffic volume is very high and seems to back up, Lights are not very well synchronized.

FIGURE 10. FIVE-YEAR PERCENT CHANGE IN ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT) ON CERRILLOS ROAD



Source: NMDOT Data Management Bureau & SFMPO

Crash Patterns

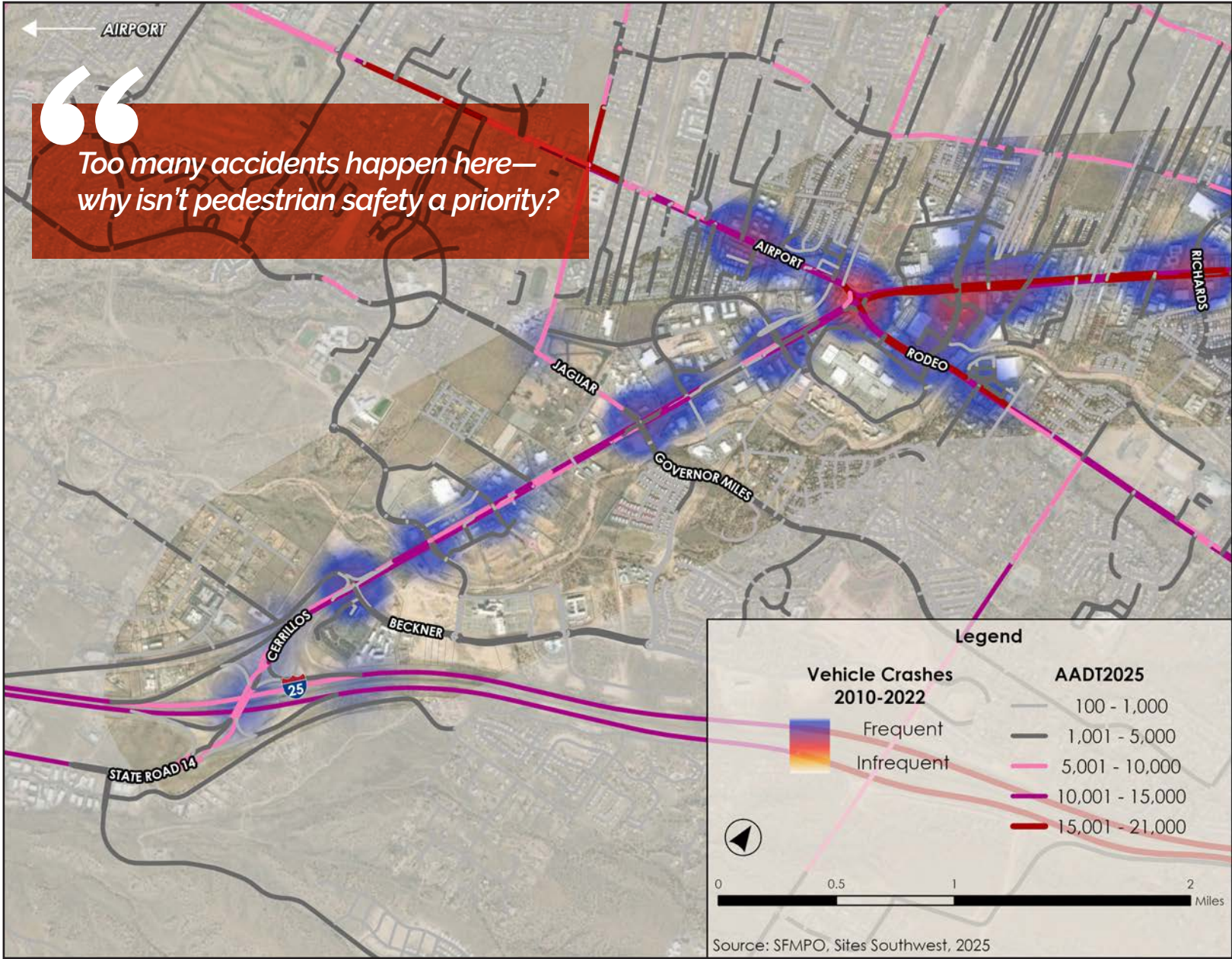
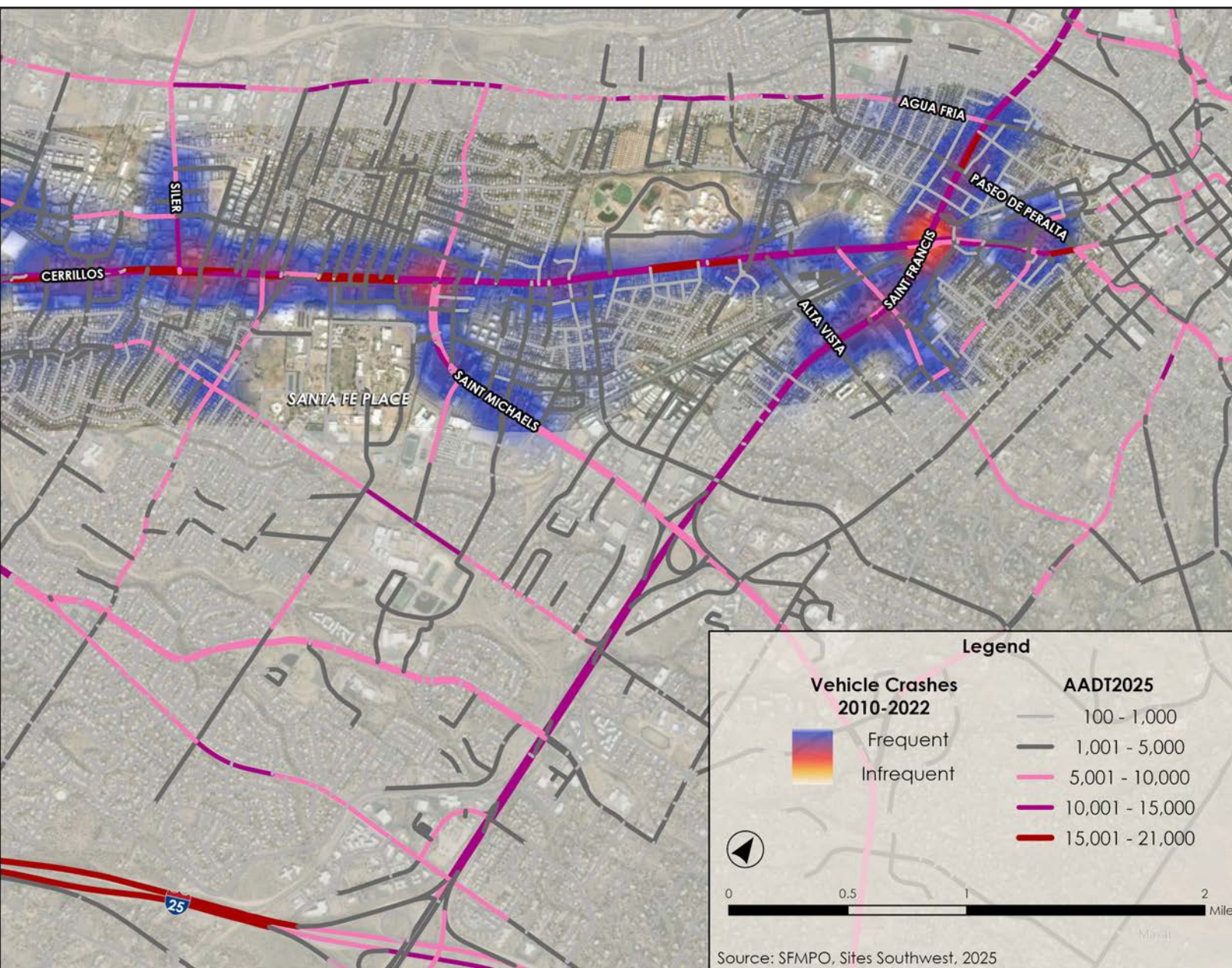


FIGURE 11. AADT & VEHICLE CRASHES HEAT MAP



This heat map provide a spatial overlay of crash frequency and AADT, emphasizing areas of concentrated traffic volumes and repeated incidents.

The zones with the highest frequency of crashes along Cerrillos (orange) occur at major intersections, with the highest frequency at St. Francis, followed intersections leading to I-25. Lower-frequency zones (purple) are found in more residential or lower-traffic sections. With crash heat especially concentrated at central intersections, this reinforces the importance of safe pedestrian crossings and access management. Less-traveled segments still experience crashes but less frequently.

When assessing Santa Fe through the High Injury Network (HIN) framework, Cerrillos shows the highest concentration of both fatal and serious injury crashes (KA) in the city, and maintains that level when visible injury crashes are combined with the count (KAB). Out of 61 corridors assessed within the HIN, Cerrillos has a clear and far lead, at 27.52% KA and 20.86% KAB. To demonstrate the magnitude of crashes on Cerrillos, the next highest corridor is Airport Rd at 11.93% KA and 10.36% KAB.

The Santa Fe Metropolitan Regional Local Road Safety Plan (SFMPO) has identified Cerrillos as one of its priorities for safety improvements within the HIN. This suggests that factors beyond just vehicle volume may be contributing to crash activity, such as roadway conditions, driver behavior, turning movements, pedestrian activity, and access patterns.

Road Functionality Summary




-  **High usage** regardless of the time of a day points to the essentiality of the corridor
-  **Observed speed behavior**, despite posted speed limits, is generally above 40mph, the speed at which a vehicular crash with a pedestrian or cyclist becomes deadly
-  **Average annual daily traffic has changed** throughout the corridor reflecting dynamic travel demands



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

4. LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT

The Cerrillos Rd. study area represents a significant cross-section of Santa Fe and serves as a key connector between neighborhoods, commercial centers, destinations within Santa Fe and the region beyond.



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Cerrillos Road Zoning & Land Use

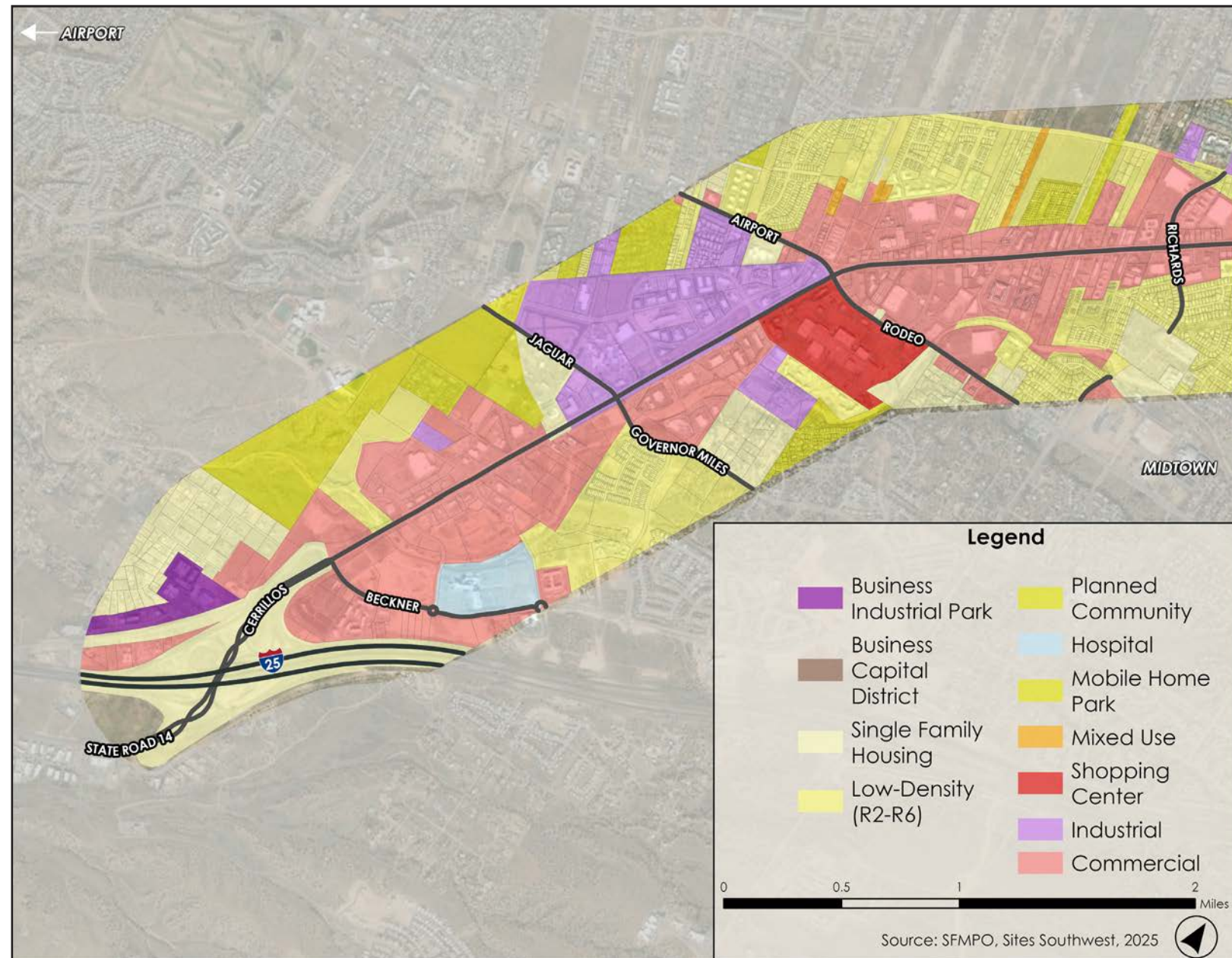
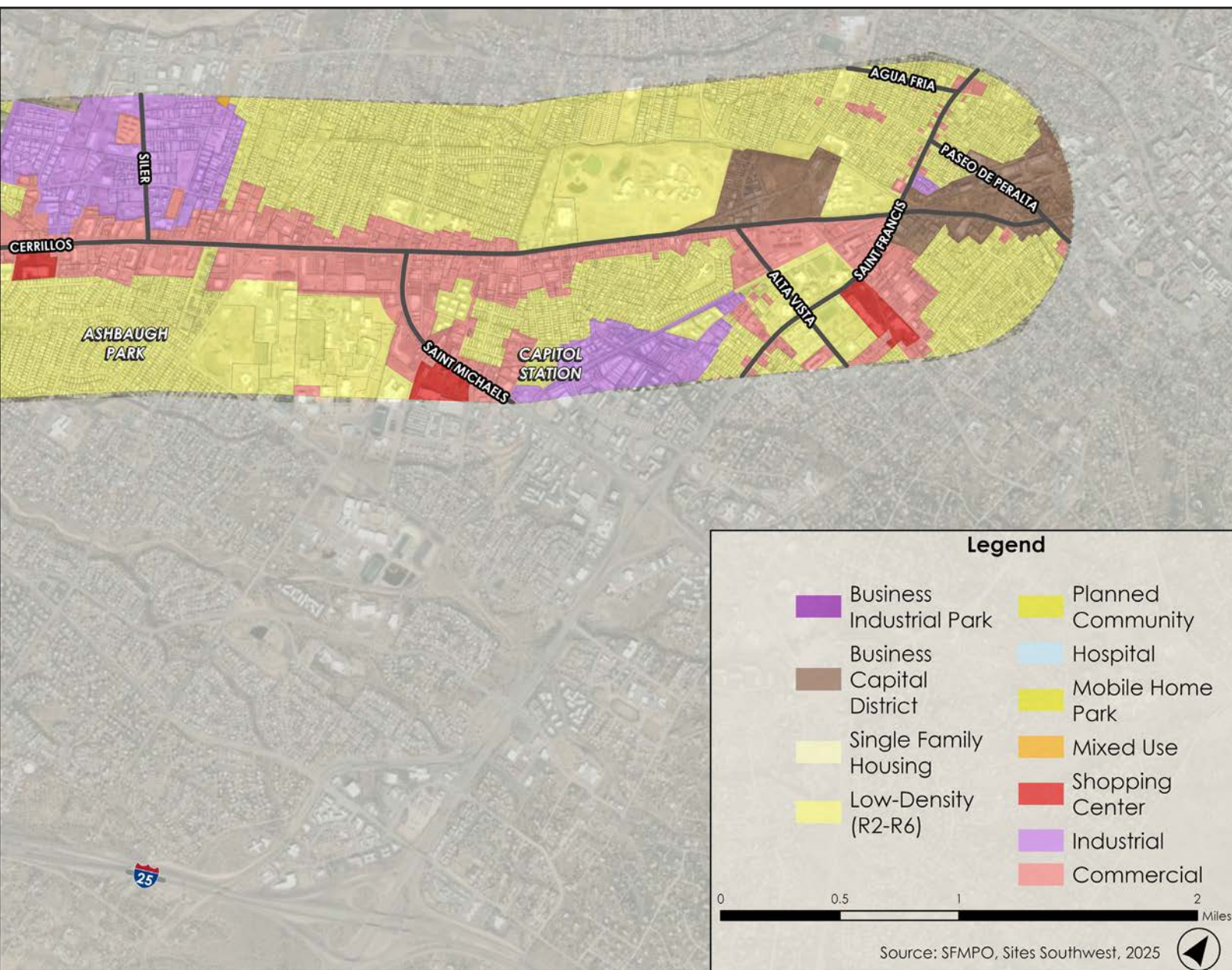


FIGURE 12. STUDY AREA ZONING, 2024



The land uses within the study area are diverse, reflecting a mix of zoning categories and development patterns. While the zoning is varied, the current land use is largely isolated commercial, industrial, and residential in character with very few developments taking advantage of mixed use zoning. Big-box retail, strip malls, restaurants, and light industrial businesses dominate the center of the corridor. These uses reflect the corridor's history as a major commercial spine of the city.

Surrounding housing is primarily comprised of single-family homes, with a much smaller percentage being mid-density and high-density housing. Higher density housing would be appropriate in a major corridor that is the city's primary destination for shopping and services. The relationship of neighborhoods to the commercial and employment hubs of Cerrillos may be hindered by a perceived lack of walkability, safety, and neighborhood cohesion.



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

FIGURE 13. STUDY AREA ZONING, 2024

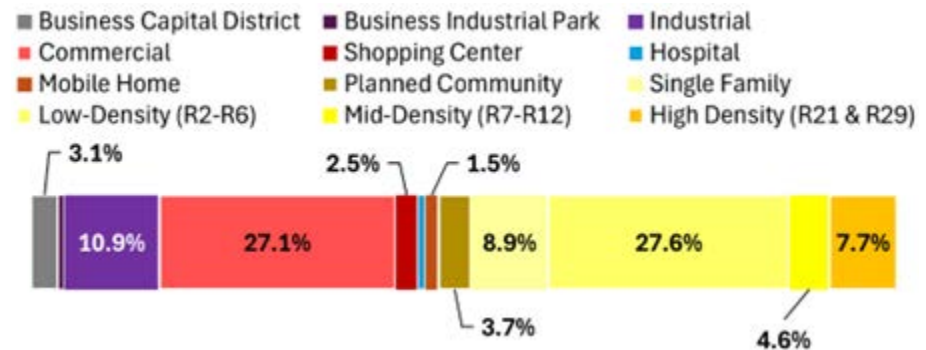


FIGURE 14. STUDY AREA ZONING: RESIDENTIAL MIX, 2024

	Sq. Meters	%
Residential		
Low-Density Residential (R2-R6)	5,359,082	27.60%
Single Family Residential	1,728,838	8.90%
Planned Community	720,084	3.70%
Mobile Home	298,819	1.50%
Rural Residential	55,939	0.30%
<i>Subtotal</i>	8,162,762	42.08%
Attached Residential		
Mid-Density Residential (R7-R12)	895,294	4.60%
High Density Residential (R21 & R29)	1,502,738	7.70%
<i>Subtotal</i>	2,398,032	12.36%

Source: City of Santa Fe, GIS Department, Zoning layers (accessed Dec. 2024)



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio



An analysis of commercial and residential property values per square foot along Cerrillos Road reveals a corridor marked by variability, mirroring varied land use patterns, multimodal access, and development intensity.

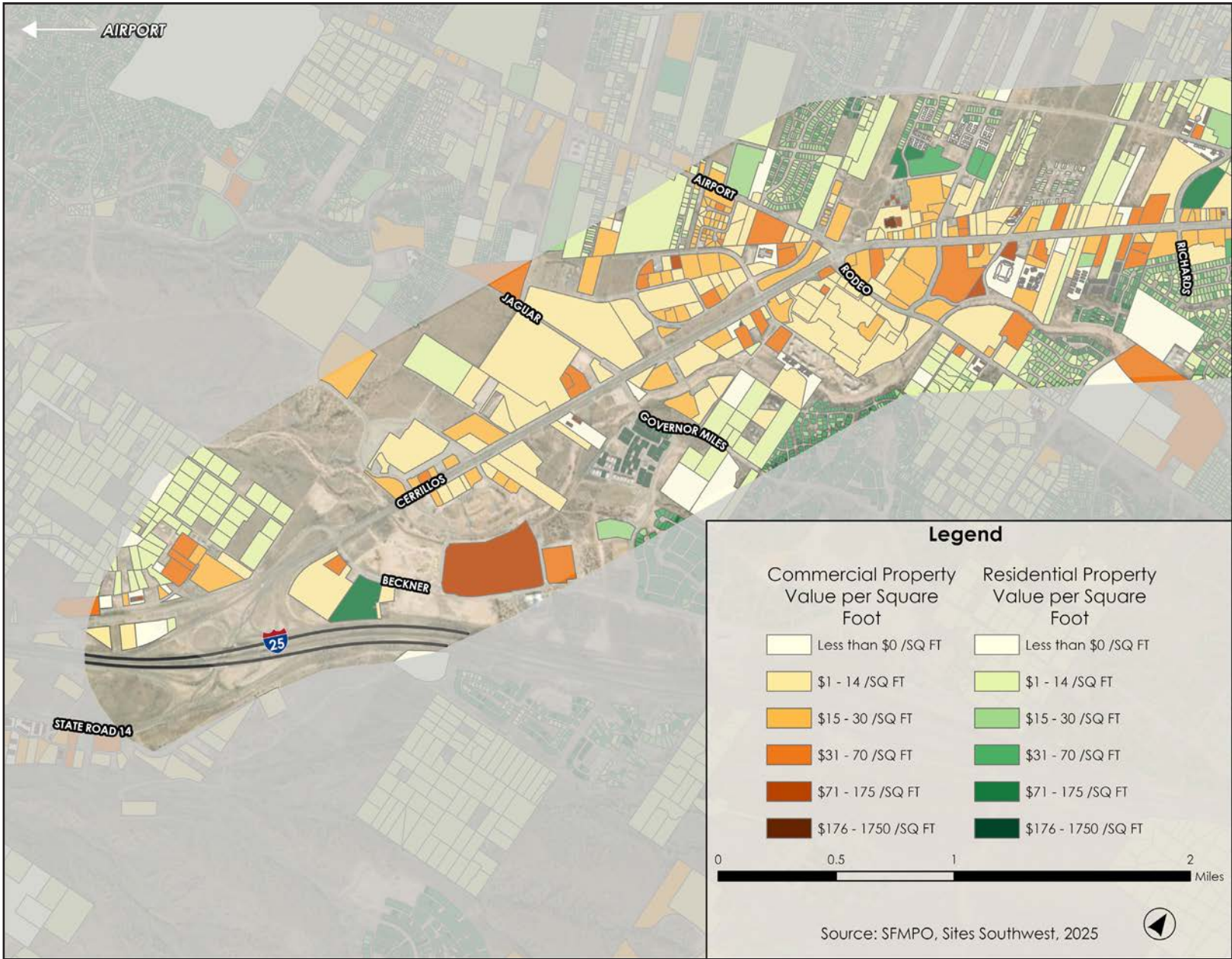
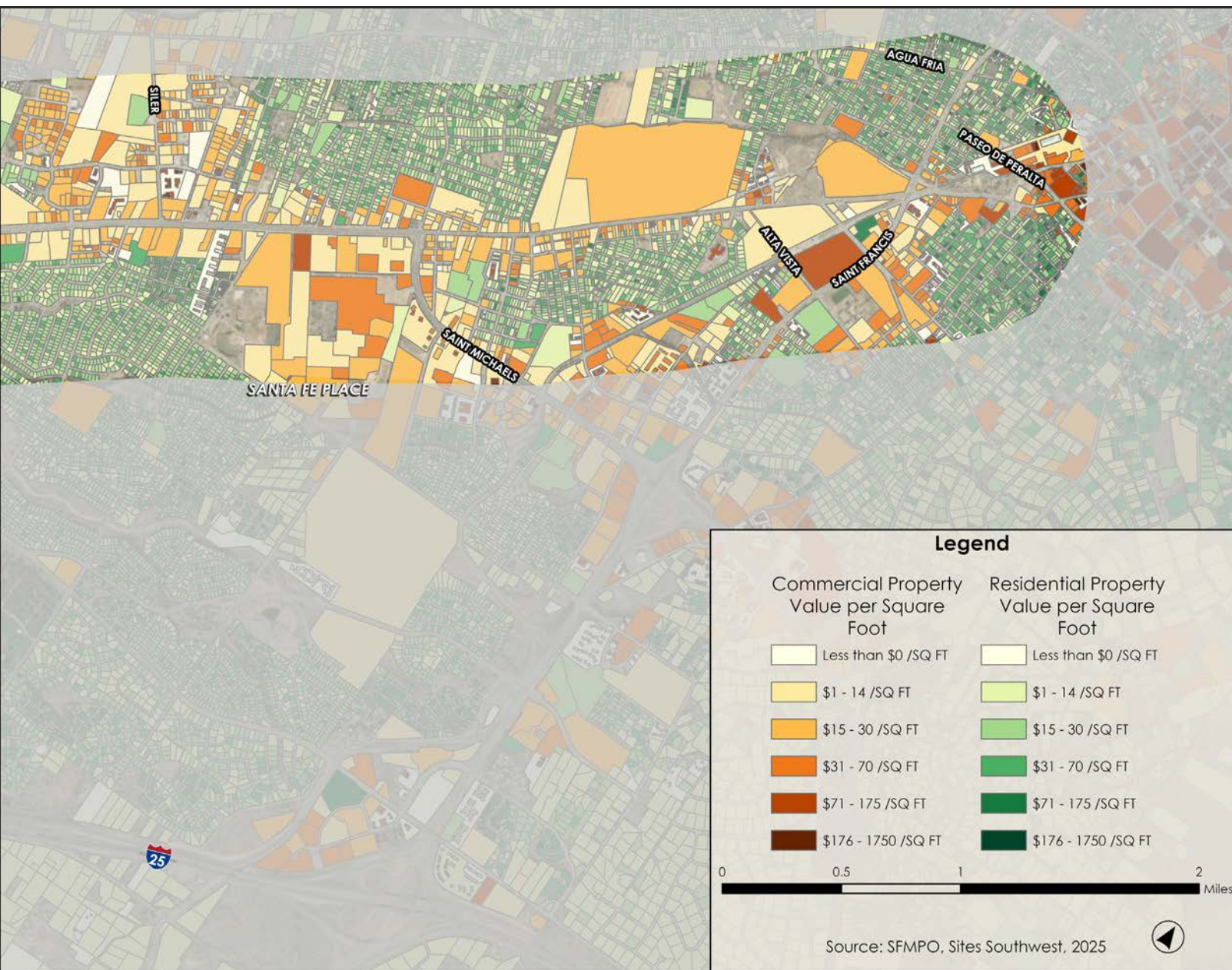


FIGURE 15. PROPERTY VALUES IN THE STUDY AREA, 2025



The eastern half of the study area has higher commercial property values clustered around Paseo de Peralta Blvd and St. Francis Rd., suggesting a strong demand for services in this area. A portion of the properties to the east are state government agencies that act as major employment nodes on Cerrillos Rd. The corridor's more compact, pedestrian-oriented form and increased transit connections nearby are likely to support and contribute to this concentration of value. Residential values are generally moderate to high, particularly closer to downtown. Residential values are lower in larger, more rural tracts of land that have not been subdivided into housing developments, such as those further west on Cerrillos, near Airport Blvd and I-25.

West of Richards Ave, property values and parcel sizes begin to reflect the auto-oriented character of the corridor. High-value commercial properties around Airport Blvd /Rodeo Rd reflect popular big box stores and services. As Cerrillos Road progresses further west to the freeway, overall property values lessen, large parcels with low commercial valuation point to underutilized or transitional land. These areas, while currently auto-dominated, may offer future opportunities for mixed-use redevelopment given their proximity to regional transportation infrastructure. Housing values are modest, indicating that there may be a lack of connectivity and access to the assets and opportunities of Cerrillos, or elsewhere in the city.

Ultimately, property value patterns along Cerrillos mirror the corridor's broader identity, one shaped by layers of infrastructure, access, and urban design. Denser parcels closer to the city center have higher values, more complete street connectivity, and proximity to key amenities and services. Larger parcels and less density are more common towards the west end of Cerrillos and reflect more suburban development patterns that result in lower values. There are opportunities to build on high-performing areas while also supporting investment and reinforcing equitable, connected development along the corridor.



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Cerrillos & Car-Centralism

Cerrillos Road functions most prominently as a commercial and employment corridor. The road supports retail, services, and employment, making Cerrillos a vital economic corridor. However, many of these uses are car-oriented and lack pedestrian-scale design, reinforcing its auto-dominance.



Image Source: Adobe-Wiki Commons

The map shows that a significant portion of parcels bordering the road include automobile-related uses, such as drive-thru restaurants, tire and automobile repair shops. Overall, within the study area, there are 158 auto-centric businesses.

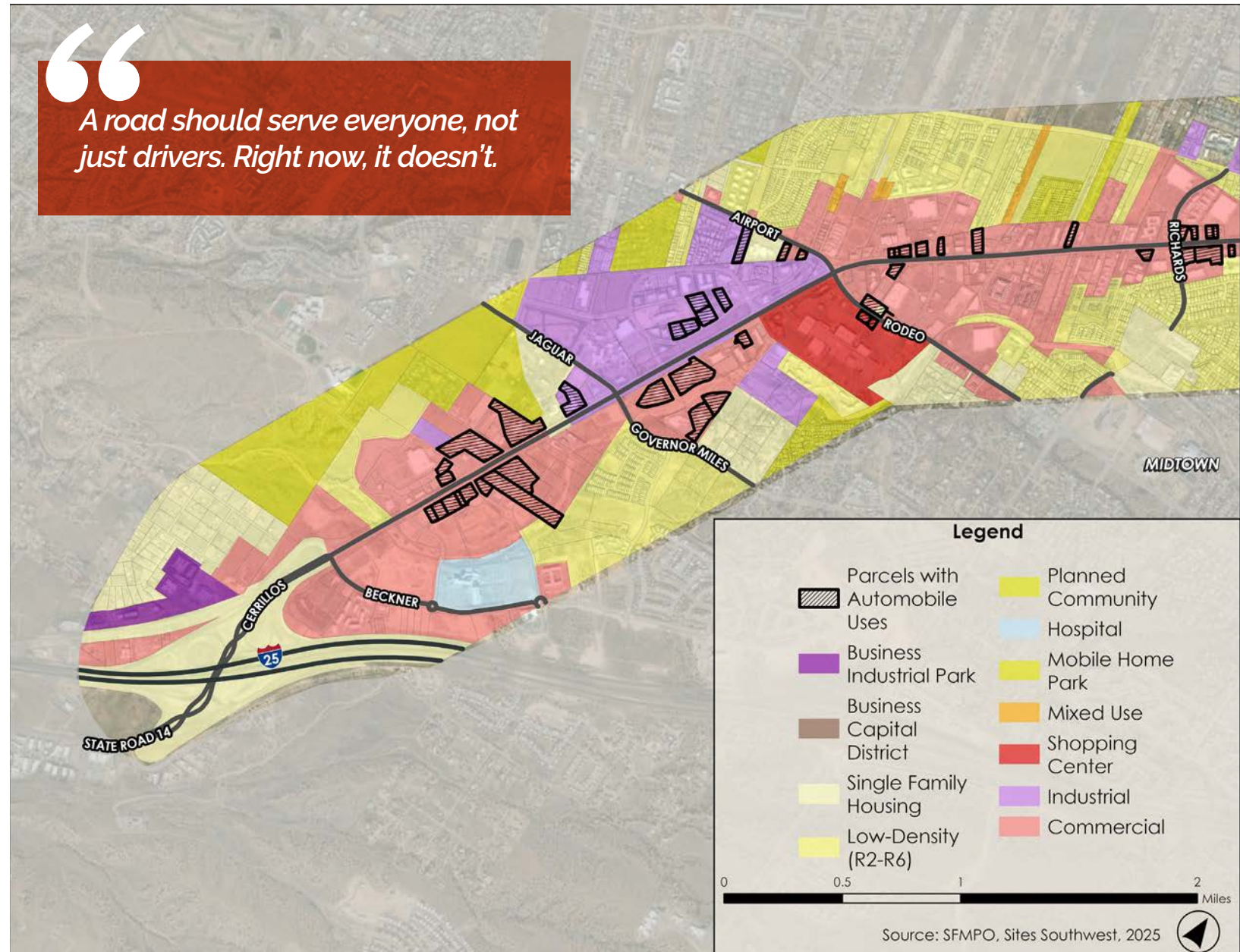
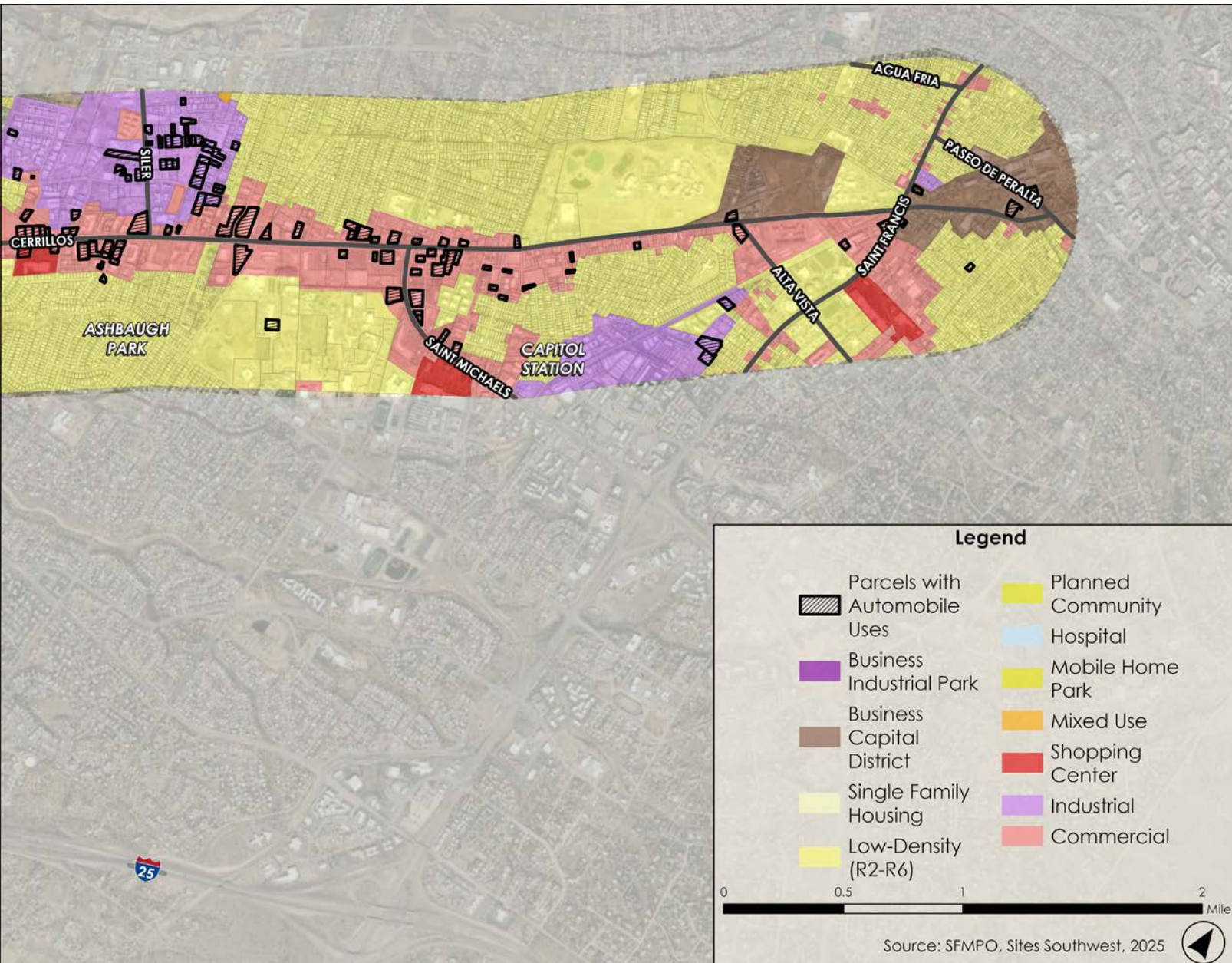


FIGURE 16. STUDY AREA CAR CENTRIC USES & ZONING



This includes extensive surface parking and wide setbacks. The street's length and design reinforce car dependency, particularly in the central and western portions near Rodeo Road, Airport Road, and I-25.

The dominance of commercial and industrial zoning, often designed for vehicle access and loading, further emphasizes Cerrillos' function as a vehicle conduit rather than a multimodal or pedestrian-friendly spine.

Of the institutional or community-serving land uses along Cerrillos, most are dispersed and not concentrated along the corridor.

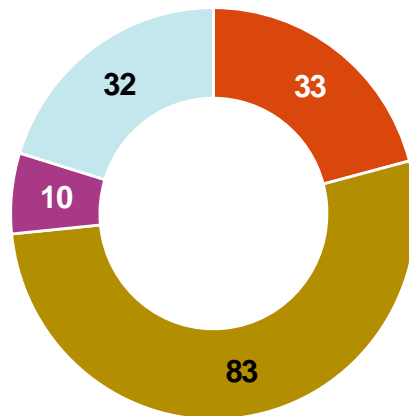
While mobile home parks and single-family neighborhoods make up a large portion of the study area, Cerrillos itself has not been designed as a

social or community gathering space. The lack of mixed-use zoning, public parks, and civic uses directly on the corridor limits its role as a community hub.

Of the institutional or community-serving land uses along Cerrillos, most are dispersed and not concentrated along the corridor.

FIGURE 17. AUTO-CENTRIC BUSINESS COUNT IN STUDY AREA, 2025

■ Drive-Thru ■ Retail/Repair ■ Gas Station ■ Dealership



Source: Sites Southwest

Zoning & Land Use Summary:

⚡ **Low-density single family zoning** limits the accessibility of the goods and services available on Cerrillos.

⬆️ **High-density residential zoning** would allow more people to live nearby, reducing the dependence on car travel in the area.

🚶 **Physical barriers** to accessing goods & services have been created through long intersection crossings, lacking pedestrian facilities, and poor lot design standards, leading to an environment - practically - only accessible by car.



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Cerrillos Road Transportation

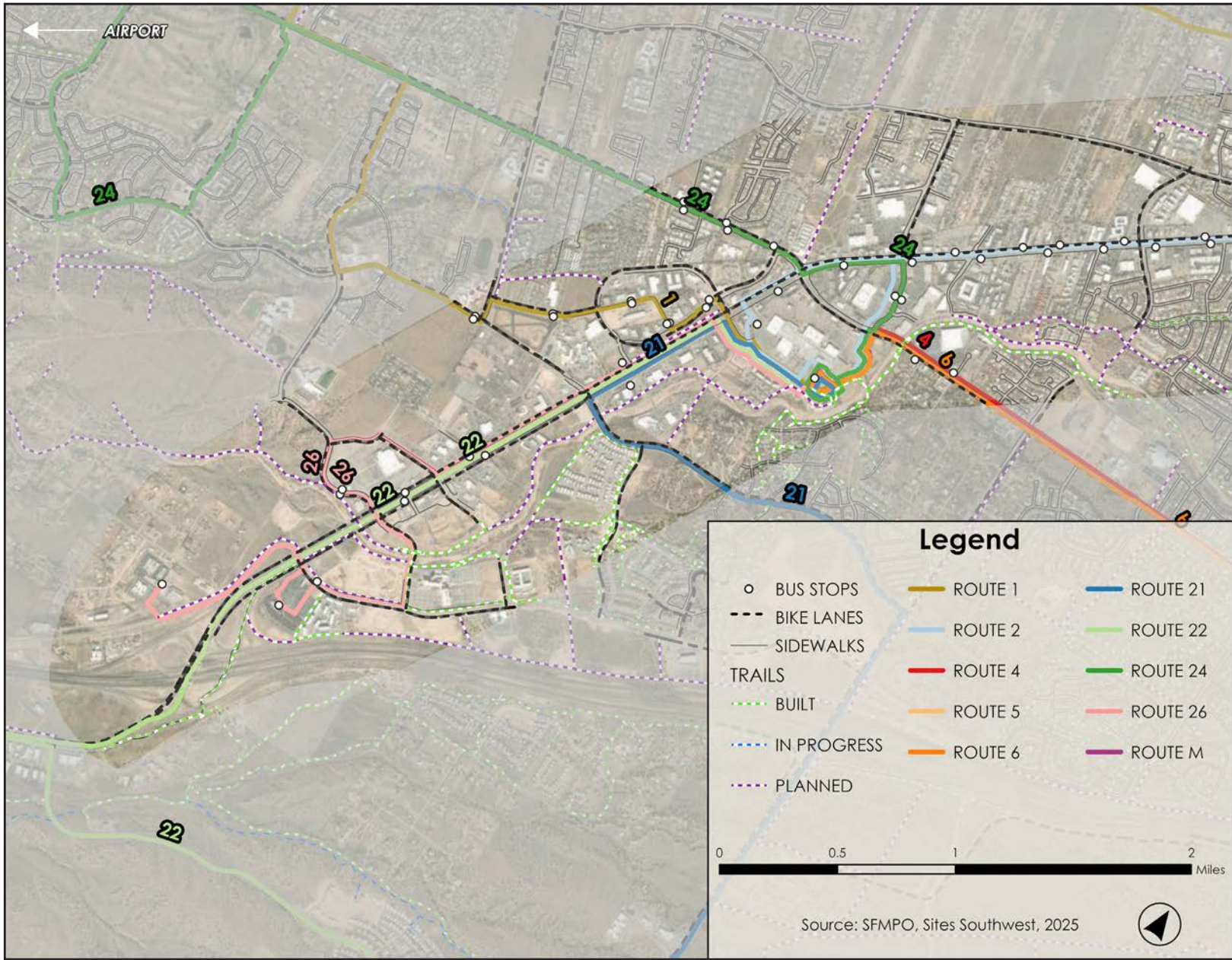
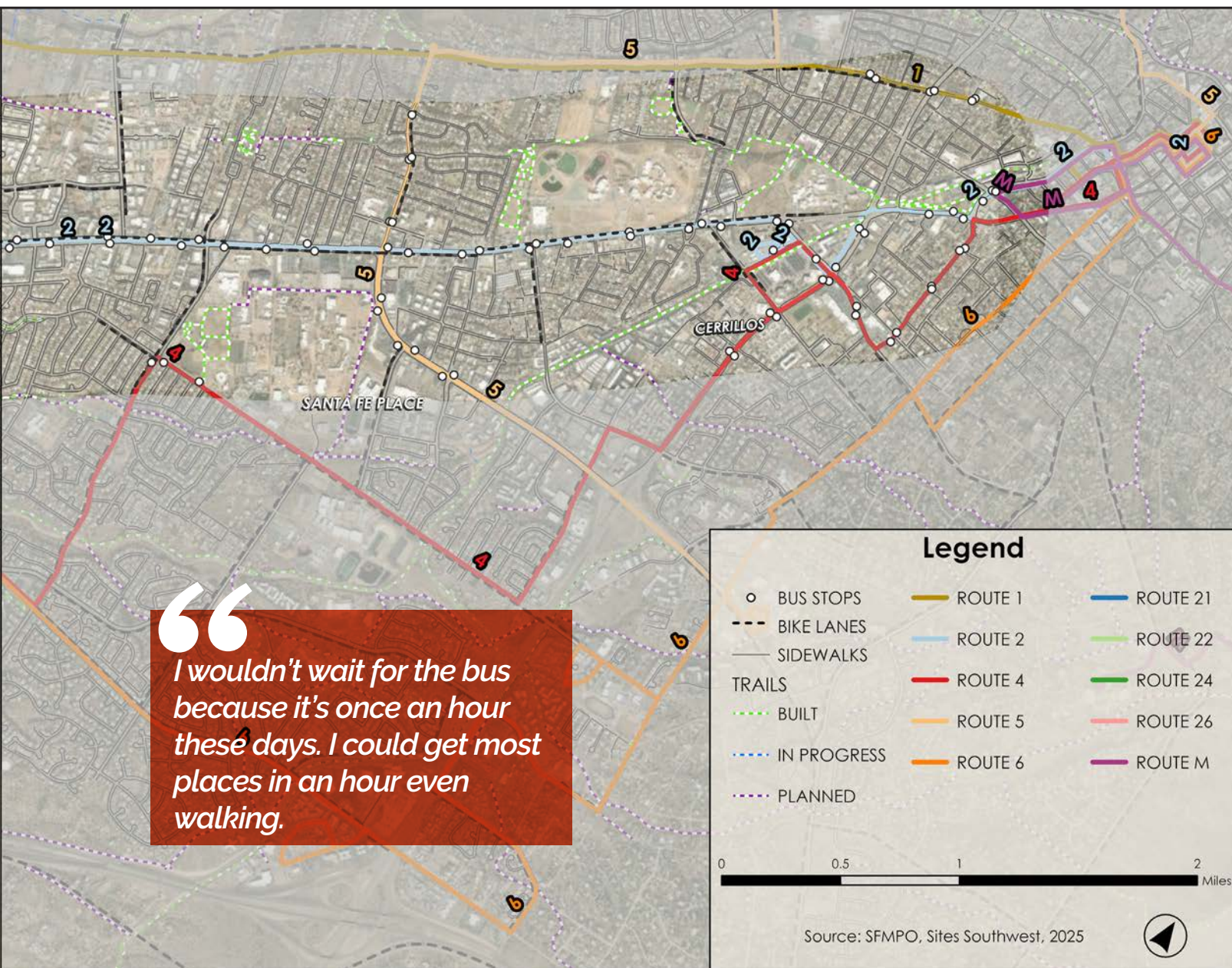


FIGURE 18. STUDY AREA TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

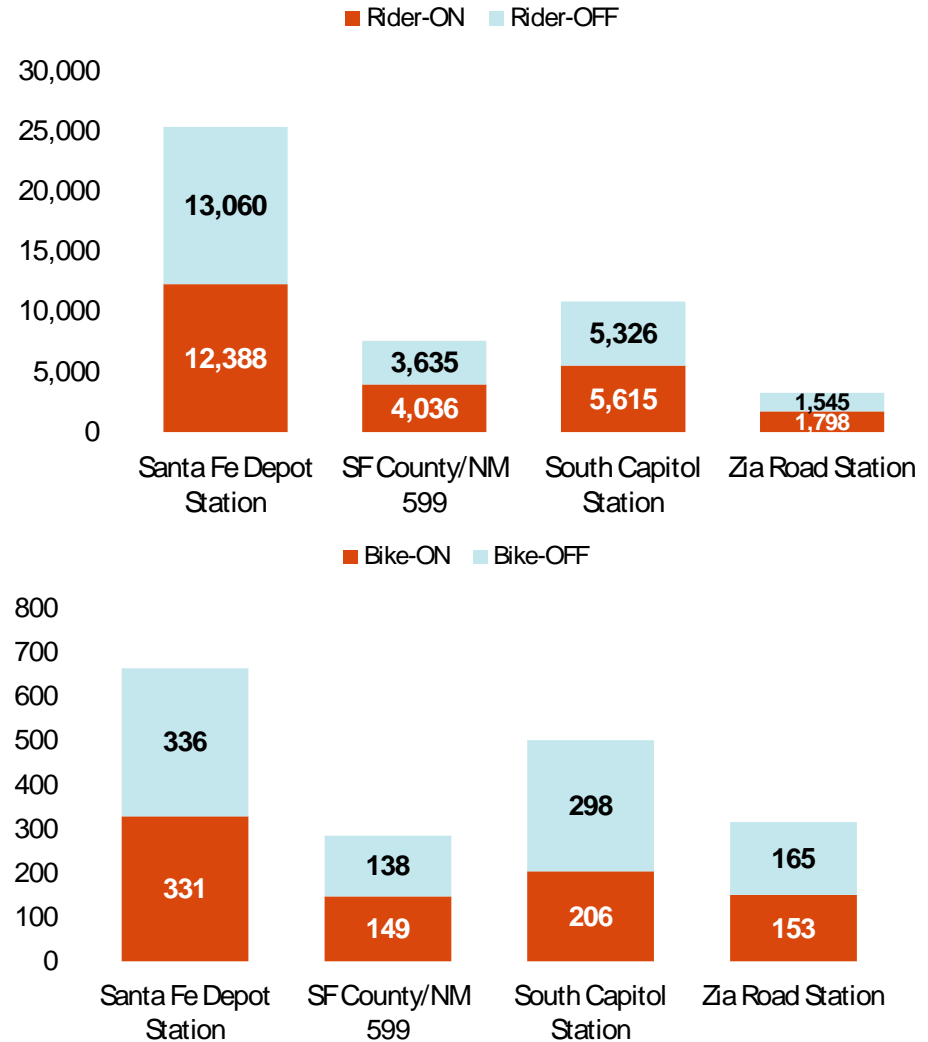


Public Transit

Train

Serviced by the New Mexico Rail Runner Express, Santa Fe has four stops within its city limits. Two stops within the Study Area are the Santa Fe Depot and South Capitol Stations, seeing the highest ridership numbers, including passengers with bikes. This pattern highlights the important role the Rail Runner plays in connecting residents and visitors to economic, civic, and service opportunities in or near the Study Area. The strong ridership at these stations suggests that many people rely on a combination of transit and active transportation to reach jobs, services, and community destinations within the corridor. Improving connectivity between rail stations and the Study Area's key destinations is important to support multimodal travel and make Cerrillos more accessible to all users.

FIGURE 19. RAIL RUNNER OCTOBER RIDERSHIP BY STATION, 2024



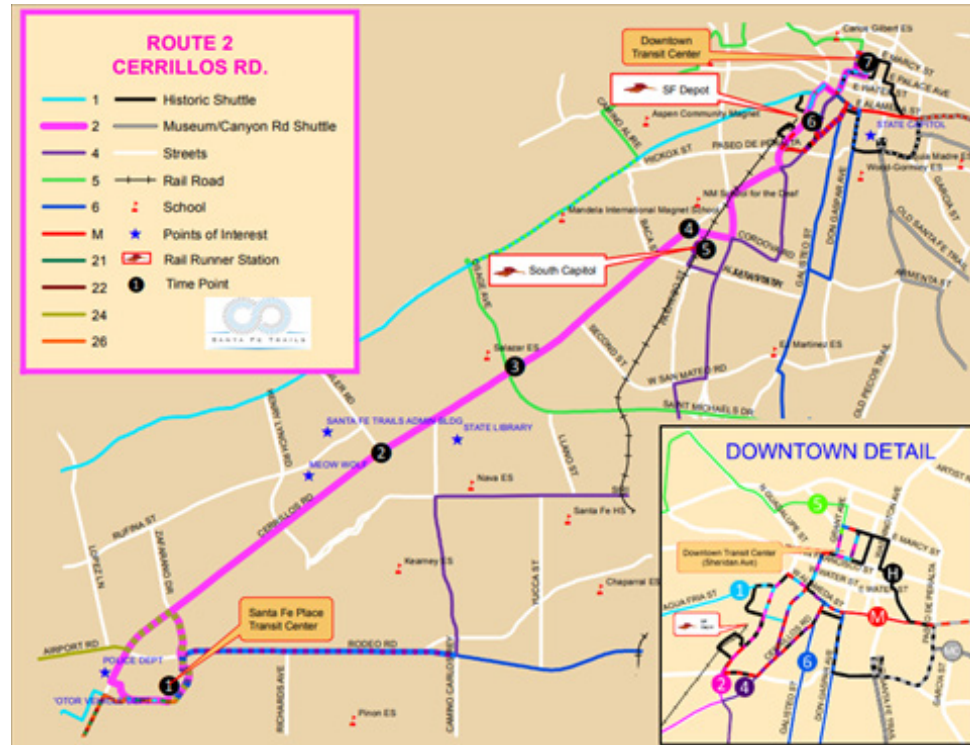
Source: Santa Fe MPO

Bus

Santa Fe Trails, the city's primary bus system, recorded 316,678 riders between January and November 2024 according to the Annual Ridership Report, generating approximately \$123,861 in fare revenue. Ridership remained relatively stable through the first half of the year, averaging between 26,000 and 33,000 boardings per month.

A seasonal pattern emerged later in the year, with a dip in July, a sharp peak in August, reaching a high of 42,889 passengers—and a gradual decline through fall, followed by a notable drop in November. These fluctuations could reflect broader seasonal rhythms tied to school schedules, tourism activity, and early winter weather.

FIGURE 20. SANTA FE TRAILS ROUTE 2, 2025



Source: Santa Fe MPO

This transit data reinforces a key dynamic: while public transportation is a vital part of daily life for many, its use is still vulnerable to external factors and infrastructure limitations. Given the heavy concentration of schools, healthcare centers, government offices, and community resources within the Cerrillos corridor, reliable and convenient bus service is critical. However, the challenges of accessing stops, particularly during months of more extreme weather, can make transit less practical for many potential riders.

Looking specifically at Route 2, which serves the entirety of Cerrillos, it is apparent that it is the most used bus line in the city. When comparing the annual average ridership data across most active bus routes during the years 2020-2024, the graph shows that historically, Route 2 has been the most used bus route in Santa Fe by a wide margin. Looking at the total 2024 ridership numbers, Route 2 makes up 43%, almost half, of all ridership in Santa Fe for the entire year. Since 2020, Route 2 ridership has gradually increased, with a sharp peak in 2023. While ridership declined in 2024 from that high point, it still remained above pre-2023 levels. This sudden and significant spike is worth investigating for any possible changes in service, scheduling, or overall conditions that could lead to higher numbers.

FIGURE 21. SANTA FE TRAILS ANNUAL RIDERSHIP AVERAGES BY ROUTE, YEARS 2020-2024

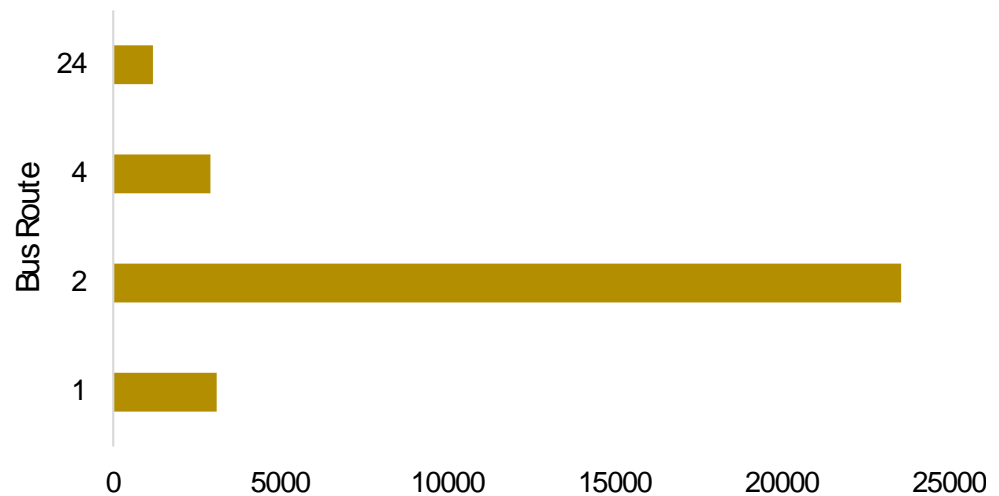
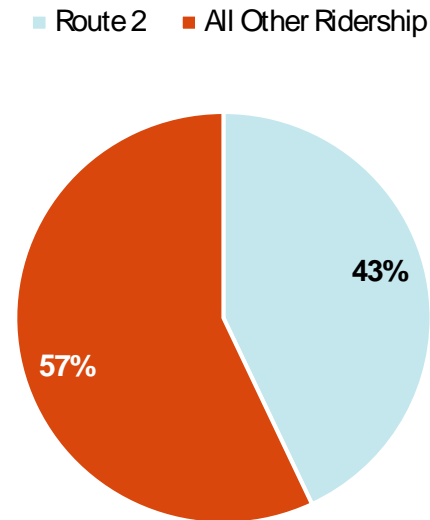
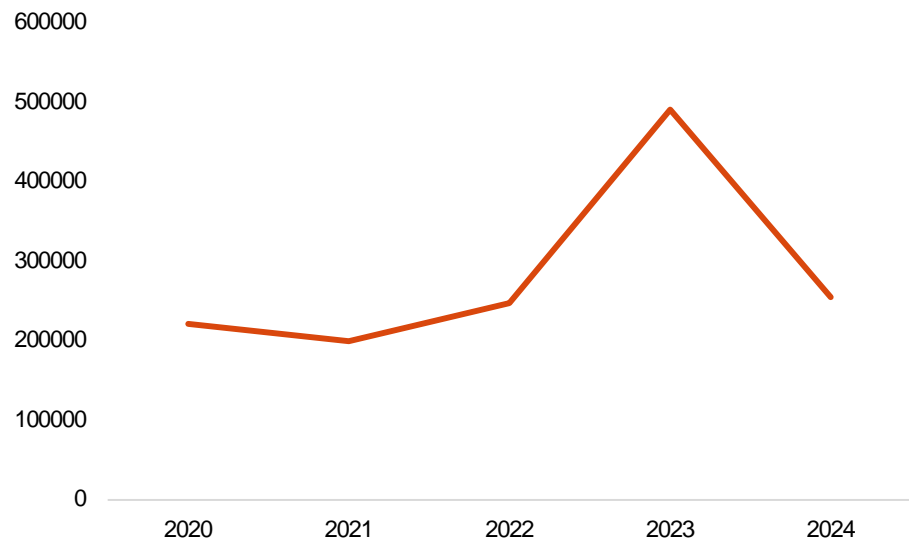


FIGURE 22. ROUTE 2 VS. ALL OTHER BUS RIDERSHIP, 2024



Source: Santa Fe MPO

FIGURE 23. ROUTE 2 ANNUAL RIDERSHIP TRENDS, 2020-2024



Source: Santa Fe MPO

The high usage of Route 2 affirms the importance of Cerrillos, however, with overall low public transit user statistics, confounded by testimonies from community members, it is apparent that both bus service, and its supporting infrastructure, need improvement for residents to feel safe and comfortable utilizing it. For example, when looking at the bus schedule for Route 2, service ending at 8pm imposes further barriers on workers or users who need access after this time.

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Lighting is poor and it feels unsafe at night, especially around bus stops.



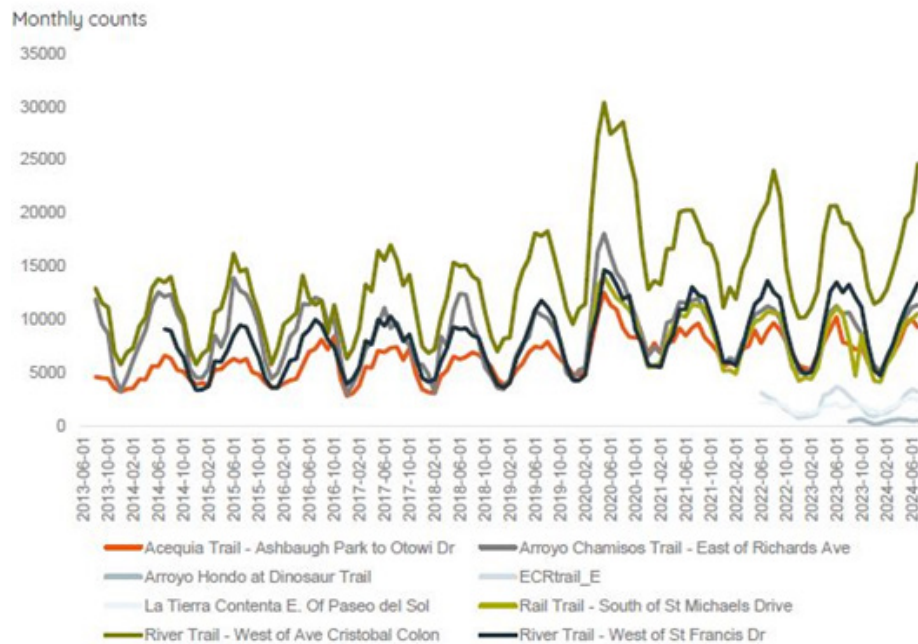
Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Bicyclists and Pedestrians

Cerrillos has numerous active transportation opportunities between bicycling and pedestrian urban trails. Trail usage for walking and bicycling has grown substantially in Santa Fe, with several key trail corridors experiencing over 50% growth in counts between 2013 and 2024. This indicates that active transportation options are becoming increasingly popular. These patterns highlight the importance of improving multimodal connections between trails and transit to better serve a community that is showing a growing interest in walking and biking.

From survey results, 161 respondents mentioned bike lanes and safer cycling infrastructure, reflecting cycling popularity and need. The bike lanes along Cerrillos are identified as being in a higher speed and traffic area, with the northern portion showing that trails are “Shared-Higher Speed and Traffic,” signaling potential for incidents and threats to safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

FIGURE 24. COUNT GROWTH ON SANTA FE TRAILS, JUNE 2013-JULY 2024



Source: Santa Fe MPO

“

*I feel like I'm
risking my life
everytime I bike
here.*

Transportation Summary



Rail Ridership

Santa Fe Depot and South Capitol stations have the highest ridership counts, showing the Rail Runners role in connecting people to opportunities along the Cerrillos Corridor.



City Bus Transit

While Santa Fe Trails serves thousands each month, including Cerrillos, ridership is shaped by seasonal trends & limited evening service, highlighting the need for more reliable, accessible transit.



Trails

Usage for walking and biking is growing rapidly, but much of Cerrillos remains unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians due to high speed and minimal protection.

5. URBAN DESIGN & CERRILLOS ROAD CULTURE

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Trees, lighting, and art could transform this from a soulless stretch of road into a community space.



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

Physical Planning Characteristics

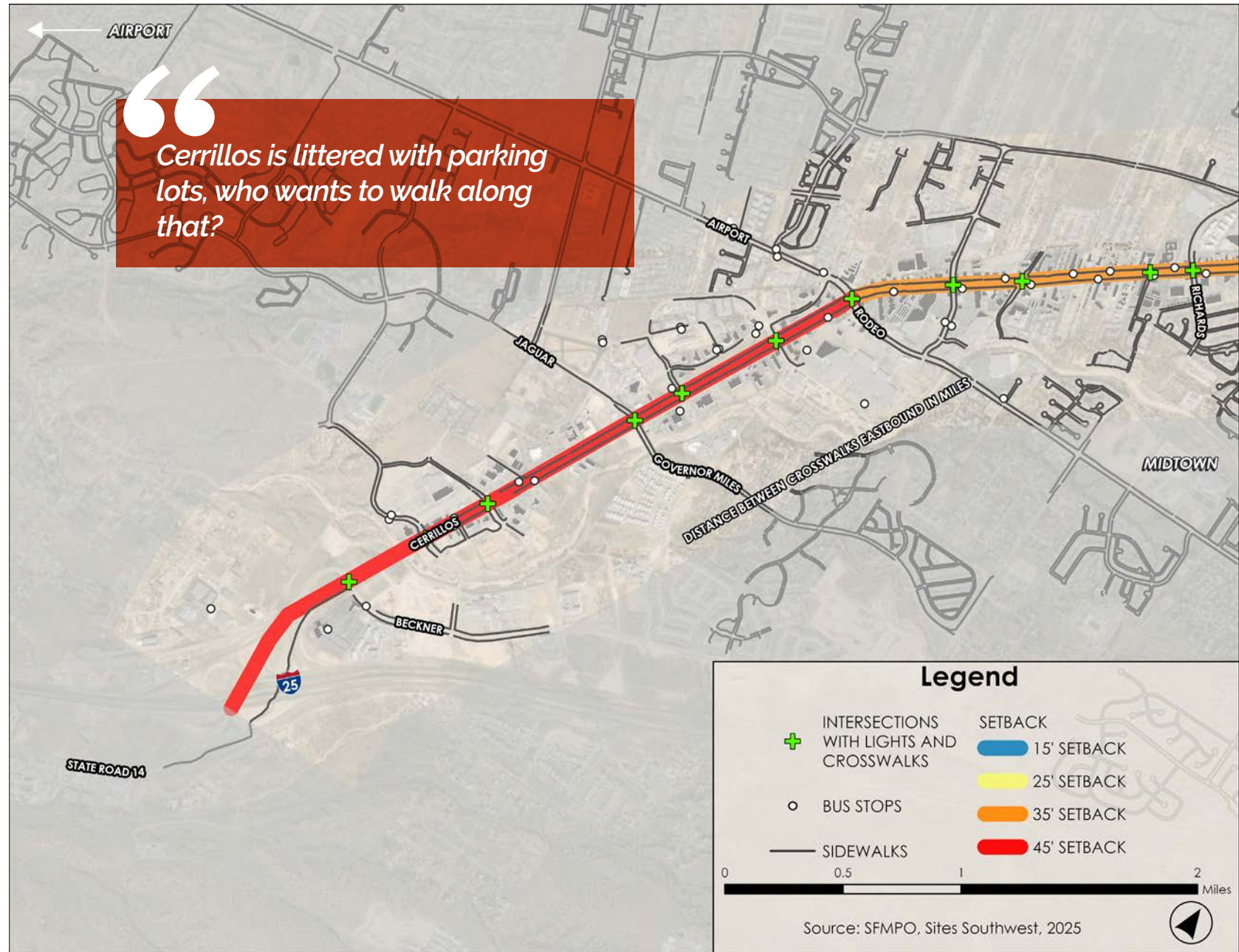


FIGURE 25. URBAN DESIGN WITHIN THE STUDY AREA



LANDSCAPING CONDITIONS

Landscaping along Cerrillos is uneven. In the northern section, medians are planted and sidewalks occasionally feature trees and shrubs, providing shade and a more welcoming pedestrian environment. Further west however, landscaping becomes sparse or absent. Bare medians, wide expanses of concrete, and a lack of shade define the westernmost stretches, making the corridor less walkable and much hotter, especially in summer.

LIGHTING & SAFETY

PNM is in the process of converting around 1100 streetlights with LEDs. A significant portion of these lights are along and around the Cerrillos corridor. This upgrade improves visibility and pedestrian safety and if implemented thoughtfully, LED conversion could enhance nighttime walkability without further increasing light pollution. This process must also account for surrounding residents' concerns and needs.

BUILDING SETBACKS AND ORIENTATION

In the eastern segment of Cerrillos, buildings sit close to the street with minimal setbacks and closely neighbor each other, creating a human-scale, engaging streetscape. This pattern quickly shifts further west where big-box retail and expansive parking lots dominate. Here, buildings are set far back from the road, separated by wide lots that discourage walking and contribute to stormwater runoff and heat island effect. These wide setbacks also reduce visual interest and street enclosure, making the corridor feel disconnected and sprawling.

CROSSING DISTANCE & FREQUENCY

An analysis of crosswalk lengths along Cerrillos Road reveals a clear trend: as the corridor transitions westward, crossing distances increase significantly, creating significant challenges for pedestrians. In the eastern section, at major intersections like St. Michael's and St. Francis, pedestrians must cross nearly 100 feet to

reach the other side. Smaller intersections in this area average just over 65 feet. As Cerrillos extends west, crosswalk distances become longer. In the western segment, smaller intersections average 98 feet, and at the intersection with Rodeo Road and Airport Drive, the crossing stretches to 230 feet—more than double the distance of many central Cerrillos crossings. The increasing width of Cerrillos Road, particularly in its western stretches, poses a significant barrier to pedestrian mobility and safety. Long crossing distances not only make walking more strenuous - especially for older adults, children, and people with disabilities - but also increase exposure time in active traffic lanes, raising the risk of collisions.

TRANSIT & BUS STOP DISTRIBUTION

Transit service is present along Cerrillos, but the placement and quality of stops vary, with inconsistent spacing, exposure to traffic, and limited rider amenities. Numerous stops lack safe crossing opportunities, compounding access issues. However, many transit stops along Cerrillos include seating, shelters, and trash cans.



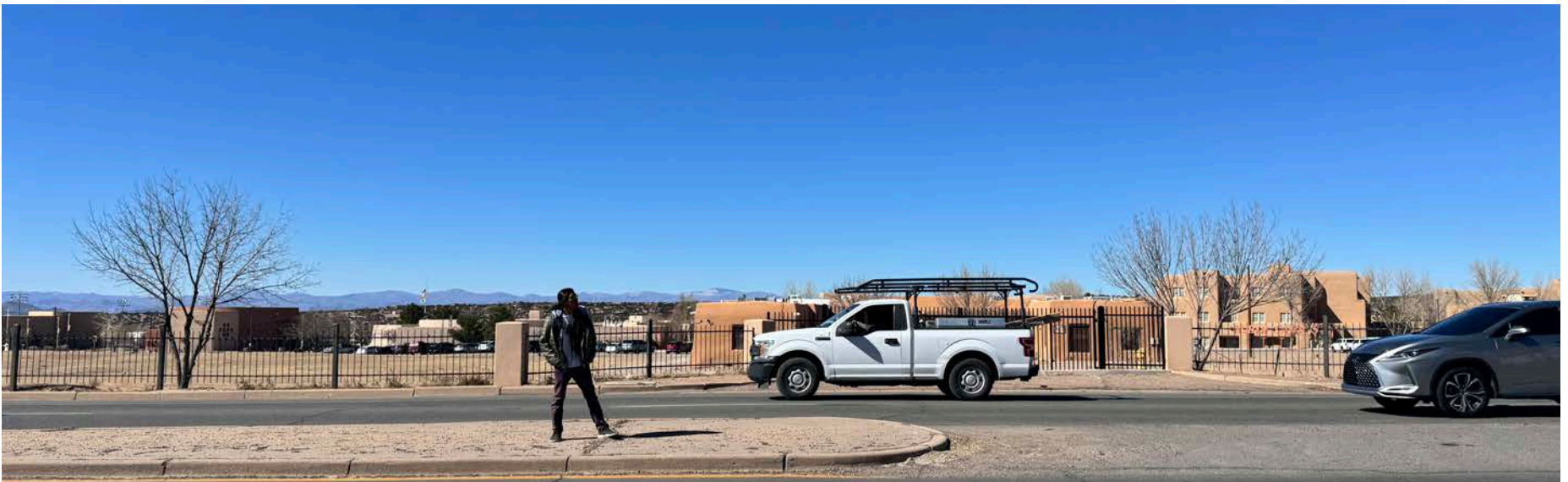
Image Source: Dylan Tenorio



Images Source: Dylan Tenorio

URBAN DESIGN SUMMARY

- ||| **Uneven Streetscape**
 As Cerrillos moves west, landscaping fades, buildings are set farther back, and the pedestrian environment becomes hotter, less shaded, and more disconnected.
- ⌂ **Gaps in Transit & Lighting**
 Transit stops are inconsistently spaced and can lack safe crossings, while ongoing LED upgrades aim to improve safety but require careful placement.
- /// **Riskier Crossings in the West**
 Crosswalks become wider and less frequent in the western corridor, with some reaching 230 feet, increasing pedestrian exposure to traffic and safety risks.



Cerrillos Road Culture

Community Assets along Cerrillos

Within the study area, residents can find schools, parks, healthcare offices, libraries, government services, community centers, and spaces for arts and culture. These assets reflect the many ways Cerrillos connects people and surrounding neighborhoods to essential services, recreation, learning, and public life. Community and senior centers reflect the diverse needs of the population, particularly for older adults and families, while nonprofits along Cerrillos offer vital social services. Cultural life along the corridor exists with arts and museum spaces that can contribute to the identity of the area.

The current design and speed-focused layout of Cerrillos can make accessing these assets challenging, especially for those who are walking, biking, or relying on transit.

Zoning plays a key role in shaping how people access community resources. Large setbacks, single use zoning, and auto-oriented site design often create physical gaps between destinations and limit walkability. Low density housing reduces the number of people who live within walking distance of the valuable assets on Cerrillos. In contrast, mixed-use zoning and pedestrian-scale development can improve connectivity by

clustering homes, services, and transit within closer reach. It is important to understand these elements when evaluating the use and accessibility of Cerrillos for Santa Fe residents.

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Imagine a place where people can actually walk safely, where businesses thrive because they are accessible.

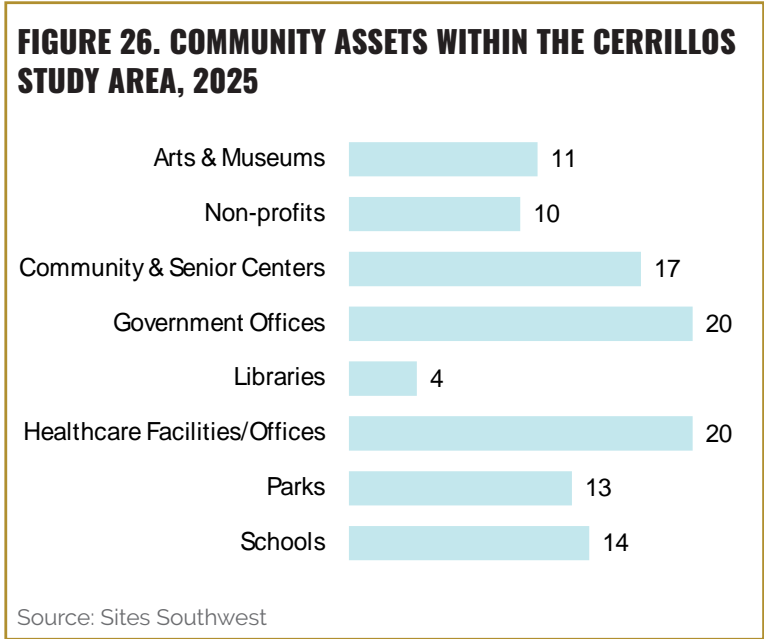


Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

How is Cerrillos serving the community?

Cerrillos functions most prominently as a commercial and employment corridor. The road supports retail, services, and employment, making Cerrillos a vital economic corridor.

However, many of these uses are car-oriented and lack pedestrian-scale design, reinforcing its auto-dominance.



Cerrillos Assets Summary



Rich Community Resources

Cerrillos has essential assets like schools, parks, healthcare, libraries, etc., reflecting its role as a lifeline for public services and everyday needs.



Access Barriers Undermine Use

High speeds, car-oriented design, & limited pedestrian infrastructure make it difficult for those walking, biking, or using transit to safely & comfortably access these resources.



Designed for Cars, Not Community

Zoning and built form prioritize vehicle access. Increased mixed-use spaces and other measures could result in a corridor that serves as a community hub.



Image Source: Adobe-Wiki Commons



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

6. TRANSITIONS ALONG CERRILLOS

Cerrillos Road is a corridor of contrasts, with its landscaping, street design, and overall character shifting significantly. The general landscaping of Cerrillos is small street trees and shrubs, with xeriscape and desert-hardy plants in medians. Although the volume of traffic threatens pedestrian (and vehicle user) safety, the beginning stretch of Cerrillos lends more to accessible and safer pedestrian circulation.

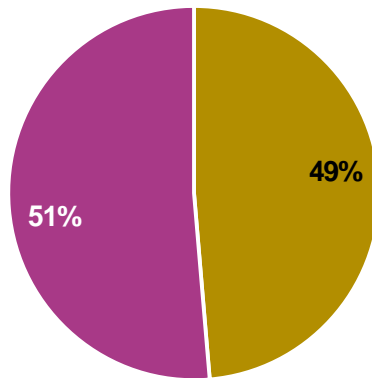
As Cerrillos progresses south, it centers car throughfare over pedestrians, with land use patterns reinforcing car dependency. Toward its end, it is majority car-focused with little to no landscaping. The study area can be broken into four distinct segments, each with different land use, street design, character, and speed limits:

- **Historic Core (St. Francis to St. Michael's Dr):** Narrow roadway, small-scale mixed-use, slower speeds (35 mph), with more potential to be pedestrian friendly. Average distance between crosswalks: 763 feet.
- **Transition Zone (St. Michael's to Rodeo Rd):** Wider roadway, commercial strip development, moderate speeds (40 mph), wide sidewalks, but greater crossing distances. Average distance between crosswalks: 1,183 feet.
- **Updated Land Use Area (Rodeo Rd to Jaguar/Governor Miles Rd):** Same width of roadway, businesses are set closer to the road with improved bus and pedestrian access, high speeds (45 mph). Average distance between crosswalks: 1,723 feet
- **Outer Corridor (Approaching I-25):** Highway conditions, large-format retail, high speeds (45 mph), minimal crossings and shade. Average distance between crosswalks: 1,489 feet.

Counting the overall number of intersections within the study area and corresponding crosswalks, 51% of intersections have crosswalks accounted for on all sides and 49% are either lacking a crosswalk on one side of the intersection or have none at all.

FIGURE 27. CROSSWALK COVERAGE AT CERRILLOS ROAD INTERSECTIONS, 2025

■ Partial Crosswalks or None ■ Crosswalks on all Sides



Source: Sites Southwest



Image Source: Dylan Tenorio

St. Francis to St. Michael's Drive

From beginning to end, Cerrillos varies greatly in width, landscaping, and character. Starting at St. Francis and Cerrillos, the Rio Metro Rail Runner and the corresponding Rail Trail cross directly through the roadway. This creates a confusing point for users, navigating a mix of cars, trains, bikes, and pedestrians. From this intersection to St. Michael's Drive, Cerrillos maintains a narrower four-lane configuration, with some businesses featuring back-out parking directly onto the roadway. While this type of parking is a historic remnant of Cerrillos' former life as a main street, it presents a safety concern today given the corridor's high traffic volumes.

Within this historic section of Cerrillos, the roadway is narrow, and dense neighborhood development creates a more human-scale and friendly section of the road. Buildings are built to lot lines, sitting close to the street. Xeriscape and planted medians act as pedestrian refuge islands for safer street crossings. Landscaping around the sidewalks is lightly planted with trees and shrubs, offering visual interest and shade, making this section more inviting and walkable than much of the corridor. However, many sidewalks are narrow and even disappear in some sections. In assessing the length pedestrians must walk before they reach the next opportunity to cross Cerrillos, the average between crosswalks in this section is 763 feet, with the least being 295 ft. and the highest 1,561 ft.

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I picked my kids up at camp on Second Street...there are no more crosswalks, and if you want to take your kids to Baskin-Robbins after camp and you didn't cross early enough, you're jaywalking, or you're forcing your six- and eight-year-old to walk another half a mile to cross safely.

St. Michael's Drive to Rodeo Road

As Cerrillos approaches the St. Michael's intersection, Cerrillos widens. Both St. Michael's and Cerrillos are designed as state highways and each have 6 or 7 lanes, cutting through the heart of Santa Fe. This scale prioritizes vehicular movement and significantly reduces opportunities for safe and convenient pedestrian crossings. Medians become narrow and serve mainly as turning lane buffers. Tree cover remains somewhat consistent, but there are now wider stretches that are bare. The land use changes as well: big-box retail, expansive parking lots, and wide setbacks begin to make up the landscape. These large parking areas are often difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to navigate, particularly when walking store-to-store. In addition to their inefficiency, they contribute to increased stormwater runoff and further separate people from the businesses they are trying to access.

This larger section of the corridor lends to wider turning lanes, inhibiting driver visibility and increasing risk and dangerous driving decisions when turning across the road. The average distance between crosswalks is 1,183 ft., with the lowest distance at 381 ft. and the highest at 2,332 ft. To put this in perspective, walking this distance between crosswalks is walking nearly half a mile.



Image Source: Sites Southwest

Rodeo Road to Jaguar/Governor Miles Road

Nearing the I-25, Cerrillos resembles more highway than road. There are fewer destinations and cars can more easily speed through this area. Businesses are spread further apart and they are majority big box stores, dealerships, and chain hotels. Sidewalks still exist on either side of the road, however there is little to no shade and no rest stops. That combined with increased difficulty in accessing businesses and increased car speeds at 45 mph, could affect pedestrians' feelings of safety on sidewalks. It is a long cement path with no visual breaks or potential to rest. Walking this section of Cerrillos in the summer would be very hot. Medians provide no refuge, and they are bare of any planting, minus weeds growing in. This segment contains only three intersections, resulting in an average distance of 1,723 ft. between crosswalks, with the shortest gap measuring 984 ft. and the longest stretching to 2,240 ft.



Image Source: Sites Southwest

Jaguar/Governor Miles to Herrera Dr/ Wellness Way

This stretch of Cerrillos Road reflects the influence of newer land use codes that introduce better sidewalk connectivity, pedestrian crossings, and decreased setbacks. Developments near Las Soleras Drive and Wellness Way, for example, show parking placed behind buildings and structures oriented closer to the street, a departure from the more traditional auto-oriented pattern seen elsewhere along Cerrillos. This segment represents a transitional zone, where development is beginning to follow more walkable, pedestrian-oriented principles. A closer look at the intersections in this area confirms that crossings are more frequent than the previous segment, with the average distance between three intersections in this segment being at 1,247 ft. Although the distance between crosswalks is still neither ideal nor accessible, it is of note that each of the intersections have crosswalks on all sides, and there are closer entrances to businesses. Compared to the rest of the southern portion of the study area, these newer land use codes offer an improved shift for pedestrian movement.



Image Source: Google Maps

Herrera Dr/Wellness Way to I-25

The final segment of the study area is designed almost entirely for vehicle access to the I-25 on- and off-ramps, with little consideration for pedestrians. Sidewalks are absent, forcing people to walk along an unmaintained dirt path directly adjacent to the fastest-moving traffic on Cerrillos Road, with no curbs or physical barriers for safety. The roadside is overgrown with a mix of native and invasive vegetation, requiring pedestrians to weave around shrubs and grasses as they walk. The only marked crosswalk before reaching I-25 is at Beckner Road, meaning pedestrians must travel roughly 1,476 ft. along this uneven, exposed path to reach a safe crossing point. After crossing Cerrillos at Beckner, the path continues through dirt and brush on one side, or pedestrians can use a multi-use trail on the other side that goes under the highway.

Cerrillos Transitions Summary



Dramatic Design Shifts

Cerrillos changes from a narrow, historic core to a wide, high-speed, auto-dominated corridor, with changing landscaping, building orientation, & pedestrian experience.



Pedestrian Safety Drops Westward

Crosswalk distances and gaps in pedestrian infrastructure increase westward, raising challenges for pedestrian access.



Potential for Better Walkability

Updated land use codes have brought buildings closer to the street with improved crossings and sidewalks, offering a promising model for pedestrian improvements along Cerrillos.



Image Source: Google Maps