

SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR

JON BARELA
CABINET SECRETARY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 8, 2016

Contact: Angela Heisel
(505) 827-0309
Angela.Heisel@state.nm.us

Downtown Gallup Commerce Area is New Mexico's Newest Historic District

Santa Fe, NM - Today, New Mexico MainStreet (NMMS) and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (HPD) announced that Gallup's original commercial area is New Mexico's newest National Register historic district. The roughly 12-block area has the largest concentration of historic commercial historic buildings in Gallup and speaks to the city's roots in Native American and Route 66 cultures, coal mining and the arrival of the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad in 1881.

"The addition of Gallup Commercial Historic District to the National Register celebrates the district's achievement and honors the unique history of the Gallup area which is tied to early commerce, the railroad, Route 66, and the wonderful cultural hub that it is today," New Mexico Economic Development Cabinet Secretary Jon Barela said. "Investing in historic assets helps maintain vital downtowns that are critical in the economic revitalization of New Mexico's rural communities."

State and National Register nominations commemorating these histories were approved by the state Cultural Properties Review Committee (CPRC) of HPD and the National Park Service earlier this summer.

The district runs along West Route 66 and West Coal Ave. and is bound by South Puerco Drive to the east, and South Seventh St. to the West. Sixty buildings and structures erected between 1881 and 1966 contribute to the district, which makes their owners eligible for federal and state preservation tax credits to preserve the buildings. In New Mexico, preservation tax credits are administered by HPD.

"In the last five years, more than \$30 million has been invested in historic homes and business through the New Mexico credit and another \$46 million through the federal credit, which is for income-producing properties only," said Jeff Pappas, HPD Director and State Historic Preservation Division director. "Neighborhoods and commercial areas have been transformed and renewed because of the availability of preservation tax credits."

Nationally, the federal credit and other financial incentives have leveraged a \$45- billion investment in the nation's historic buildings and structures over the last 30 years through partnerships among private developers, and local, state and federal entities.

The district is notable for hosting the Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial, which began in 1922 and includes a Native American parade down West Route 66 and West Coal Avenue. The parade route passes by numerous businesses, which began sponsoring it in appreciation of local Native Americans. The Ceremonial Parade held every August features traditional and contemporary music, and draws participation from 50 tribes across the U.S.

Significant buildings in the area convey the commercial and cultural character of the district including the El Morro Theater, which is being restored with assistance from the New Mexico MainStreet Historic Theaters Initiative; the Morris -Ruiz Optical Building; Shanklin Hardware Store; Lexington Hotel, which features a roof-mounted neon sign installed in the 1930s, one of the oldest surviving neon signs along Route 66; White Café; and Southern Hotel. These distinct buildings help reflect a district of mixed-use residential, commercial, historic and newer structures.

In recent years, NMMS has funded the listing of historic resources in the State Register of Cultural Properties, thus providing both individual buildings and contributing resources in districts with the opportunity to receive tax credits for qualified rehabilitation work. Listing is an important tool in the revitalization of our downtowns.

Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

A program of the Department of Cultural Affairs, the [New Mexico Historic Preservation Division](#), works with the public to list properties in the State Register of Cultural Properties and facilitates their inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. It helps ensure historic preservation is an integral part of government planning, provides preservation grants, and facilitates tax credits for preserving historic homes and buildings. HPD provides technical assistance to individuals, businesses and governments working to preserve historic and archaeological sites and provides educational opportunities for those interested in protecting cultural heritage.

A program of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, New Mexico MainStreet works throughout the state to help affiliated local organizations create an economically viable business environment while preserving cultural and historic resources. New Mexico MainStreet currently serves 27 affiliated MainStreet Districts, eight state-authorized Arts & Cultural Districts, 14 Frontier Community projects, and eight Historic Theater Initiatives. For more information about New Mexico MainStreet, visit www.goNM.biz or nmmainstreet.org.

#