

<May>

Save the Summit!

The End of The Gathering

Property Spotlight: Westside



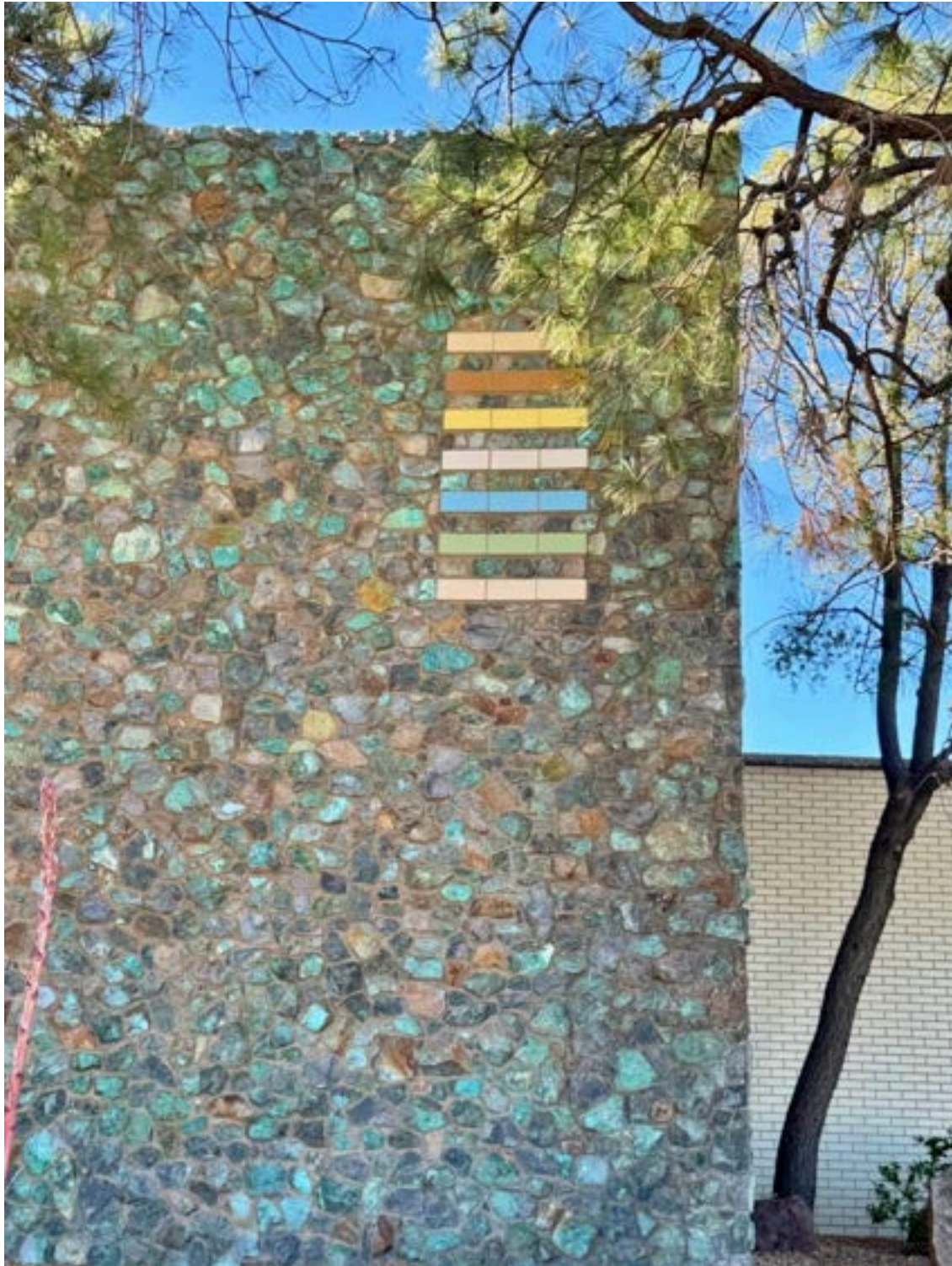


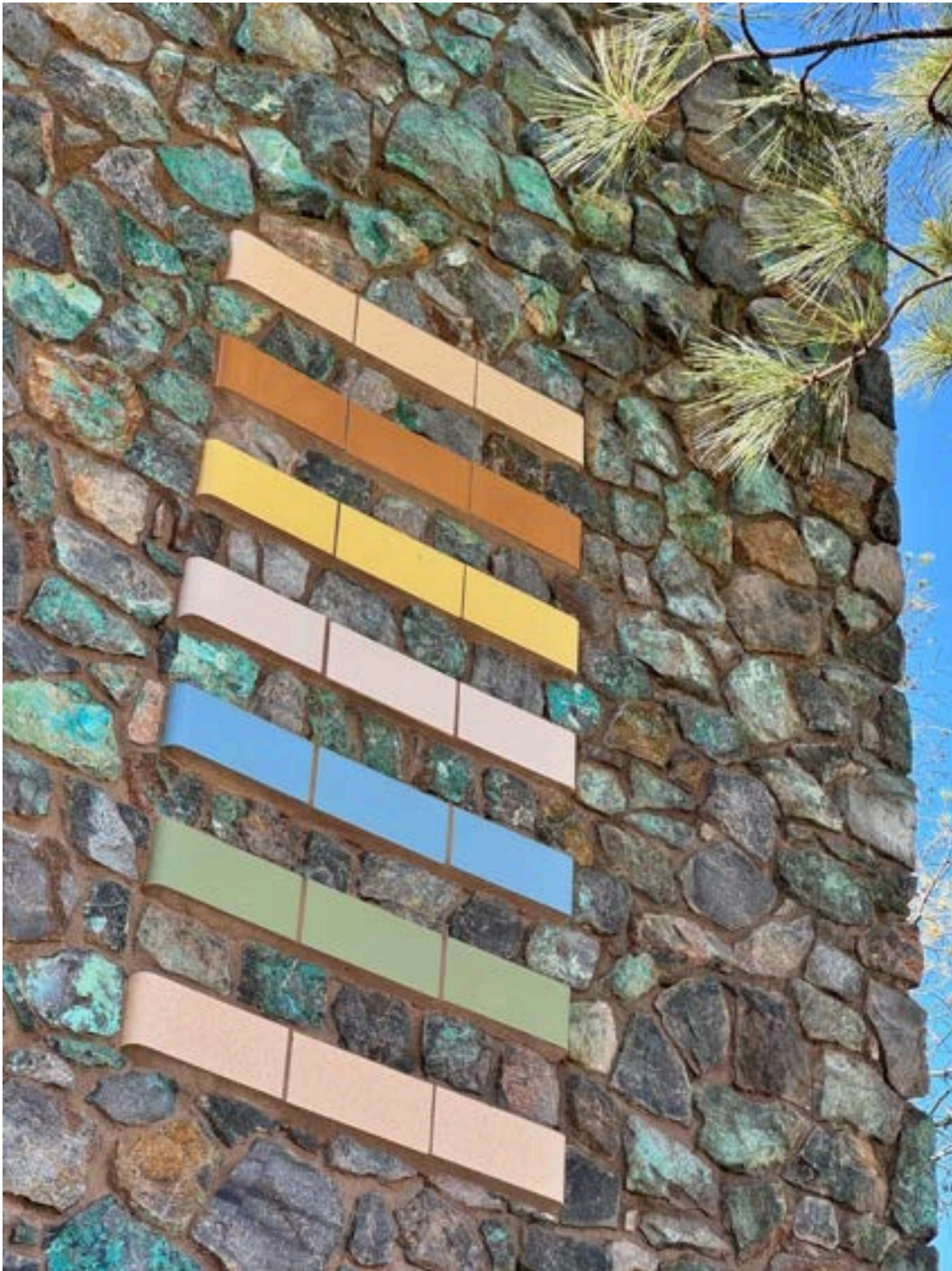
The Summit Construction Building -- A Mid-Mod Gem

The wrong place at the wrong time...after being in the right place at the right time for so long...

It's impossible to have known 62 years ago when the Summit Construction building was created, that Albuquerque in 1964--then with a population of only 264,000 residents--would become the current MetroABQ, housing almost one million New

Mexicans today. The city has progressed much since then...Unfortunately, the Summit Construction building is in the way of that progress. Read on...





What makes The Summit stand out?

Erik Mease, principle architect with [SMPC Architects](#), is spearheading an effort to Save The Summit. In his comprehensive [Save The Summit brochure](#), he describes it this way:

Completed in 1964, the Mid-Century modernist structure is a testament to the vision of architect Don Stevens of Ferguson, Stevens, Malory & Pearl (later SMPC) & craftsmanship of builder George A. Rutherford, Jr.

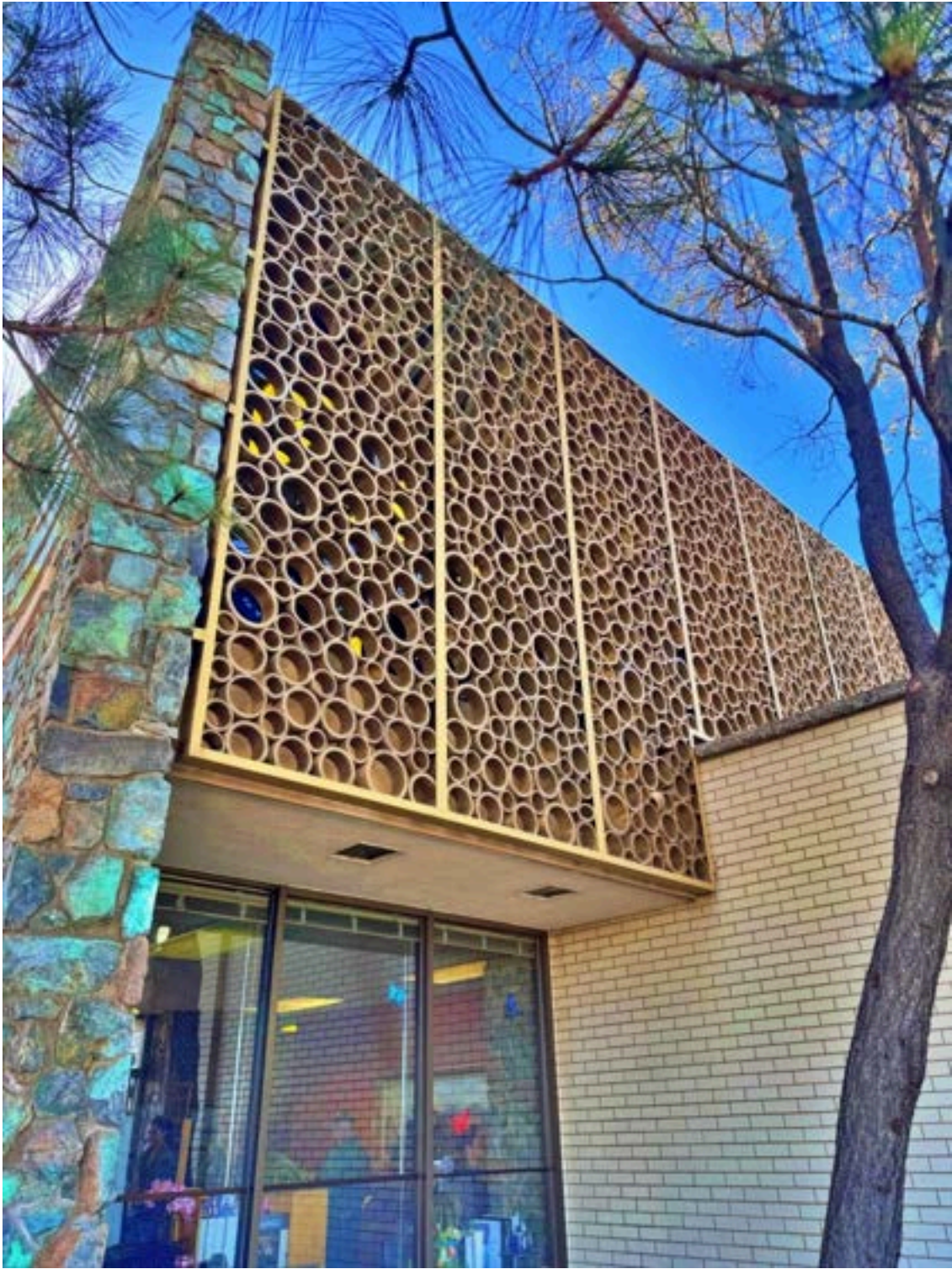
This three-level building features a striking blend of brick, stone, glass, & a unique custom gold-painted screen made from asbestos drainage pipes of various diameters. A 20-foot quartzite façade showcases a natural turquoise, green, red & grey palette, further enhanced by a colorful inlaid tile column.

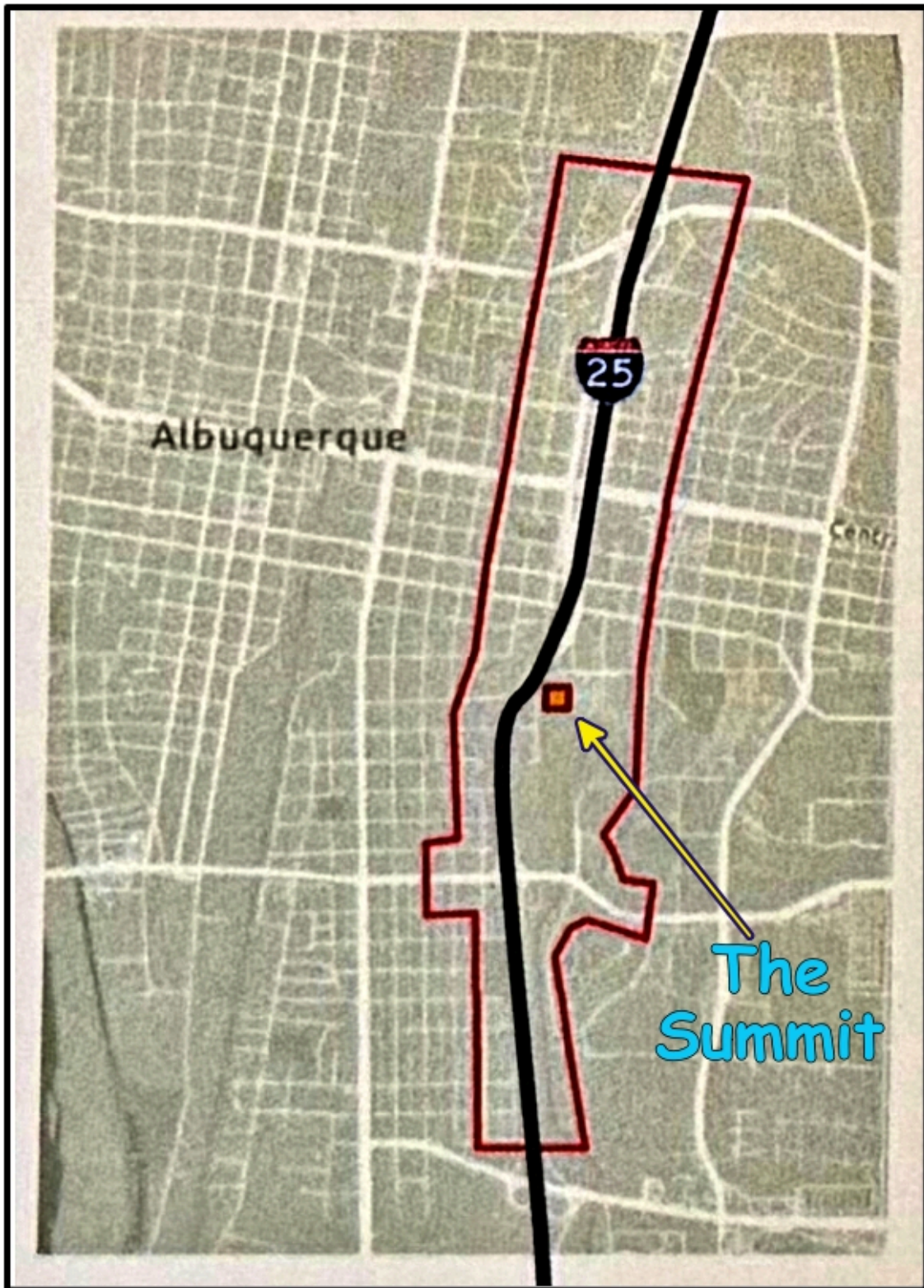
Inside, the ground floor houses office suites & a spacious studio, while the upper level boasts a conference area & a well-preserved 1960's era apartment. Originally serving as Rutherford's construction company headquarters, now Summit Construction, the building stands as an enduring example of mid-century modern architecture, & its continued relevance in the architectural landscape of New Mexico.



The Summit feels like a living sculpture--it's imbedded with pleasing works of art throughout. Above, the quartzite rock placement is functional artwork, creating a colorful façade, but with style.

Below, the different-sized drainage pipes are aesthetically interesting & functionally allow light to diffuse into the 1st & 2nd floors. If you were asked to design a wall using stones & drainage pipes, would you create the artwork just below?





The issue: Interstate 25 takes a zig, then a zag, south of Coal Ave; that so-named 'S-curve' creates one of the highest crash rates in the area & is considered one of the "biggest transportation safety issues" in the Metro. The NM Dept of Transportation proposed a plan, below, to realign the Interstate, in an effort to improve safety.

On the map above, it almost looks as if the currently controversial S-curve had been created to skirt around The Summit. Unfortunately, the exquisite mid-

mod is located on the eastern edge of the curve, directly in the path of the proposed highway, seen below.





Interior, the drainage tubes create a unique effect that reflects the design era in which it was built, above.

Below, in the 1960's apartment, is a pristine one-piece kitchen unit, a light blue/green color used regularly over 50 years ago.





Exterior, one of the mid-mod design elements the architects utilized was wood, in this case to create shade for the employees & clients in the courtyard, above. The wood slat screens are probably not original, having been added in the subsequent years. Below, brick is another building element, used for a wall of clerestory windows, the mid-mod way...

Further below is an exquisite xeriscaped garden on the west side of the building, created using exclusively southwestern desert plantings. The bright red flowers of

the Ocotillo used to be a rare site as far north as the Metro--descriptions of them mention being found in Texas, Arizona, California & Mexico, without naming the great state of New Mexico. As the planet warms, the spikey ocotillo plant has found its way further north & is thriving.





What can be done?

I heard about the Save The Summit project, the 1st stop on the 3rd [ABQ Mid-Mod Home Tour](#), which has been absolutely amazing every year! The ABQ Mid-Mod folks are three-for-three so far, producing their (every-other-year?) tours that let folks explore stunning Mid-Mod homes & Mid-Mod clusters, in locations perhaps heretofore unknown (by me) in the city.

Getting the word out...[Atomic Ranch magazine](#) recently featured the building with

this headline: [The George A. Rutherford General Contractors Office Building Needs Your Help.](#)

Directly to the NM Department of Transportation:

- NMDOT study@i25scurve.com,
- 505-600-2232

During our conversation, Erik Mease mentioned NM Modernism, which deserves a special shoutout.

From Erik: [NM Modernism](#) is the Parent organization of the ABQ Mid-Mod Home Tour. NM Mexico Modernism maintains a registry of significant residential/commercial properties & public works of art built or created during the modern era. Our goal is to preserve their historical legacies & educate the public about their importance. We accomplish this goal through political activism, outreach, & public events. [Eric can be reached here.](#)



Days of future past...When entering the S-curve heading south on I-25, look (carefully!) to your left & you may catch a glimpse of Summit Construction, above. Time, & smart landscaping, have somewhat obscured the west-facing façade of the unique landmark, but it's still there, for now. Park along Hazeldine Ave & walk to the building to experience a stunning example of functional artwork, up-close. Then call the NMDOT & share your experiences...Just maybe,

in another 62 years, you'll pass that location again, & the mid-mod gem might still be there, standing the test of time, & progress...

Know someone who would enjoy this Newsletter?

Feel free to pass it along to friends.

Or with their permission, send a note to jebalucas@gmail.com,
& they will be added to the [MetroABQ mailing list](#).



The Last Dance

After 43 years, the Gathering of Nations, the largest powwow in North America, had its last dance this April at Expo New Mexico. Over the span of two days, 3,400 indigenous people from over 500 tribes--from as far away as a Guatemalan Mayan tribe & an Aztec tribe south of Mexico City, to Alaska & the First Nations people up north--danced, drummed, created artwork, gave performances & connected with people from all over the continent.

The Grand Entry was the showcase for each participant tribe, as they slowly filled the Tingley Coliseum floor, culminating with an estimated 2000 colorful dancers in full regalia celebrating life through dance, above & directly below.





Meanwhile, over forty drum circles representing individual tribes kept the intense beat going along the sides of the stadium; one circle is above & [one is here](#).



Throughout the *Gathering*, artists plied their trade, like the above charcoal artist sketching a Miss Indian World contestant. Also, six roving performance groups zigzagged throughout the complex, stopping along the way for impromptu dances, below. There were trading booths & interesting displays, like the [Hawks Aloft](#) folks, who brought a [large wiley hawk](#) for demonstrations.



The final drum beat...

As the DJ's shared messages of unity, the last Gathering of Nations Powwow turned out to be an emotional event. There's something wonderful about thousands of people gathering together from all over this half of the world, for the purpose of dancing, singing, performing, eating, drinking, shopping, people-watching & being entertained. It was a grand-scale celebration of Native culture & pride, allowing people from an array of diverse locations & tribes the opportunity to meet & connect.

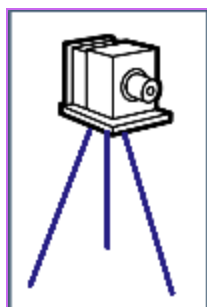


Photo Credits:

Unless otherwise mentioned, all photos were taken by [Rob Thalmann Photography](#) or Chris Lucas.



Featured Home: Welcome to the Westside

With a population of over 134,000 Burqueños now living west of the Rio Grande, the housing there is now considered much more than simply Suburban.

The townhome above is a great example. If you weren't told that the home was just over 20 years young, you might think the place was brand new. It is a well-loved & immaculately maintained home, with a lush smartly-designed backyard surrounded by mature trees & shrubs. The home, [6423 Los Pueblos Place NW](#), is also only a few hundred feet from the large & also lush Calle de Vida Park. Come see!



The open kitchen is above; & the primary bath below, with the steam shower in the background.





::Open House::

Come see 6423 Los Pueblos Place NW!

The 3 bedroom/3bath home will be available to view Saturday May 23rd, from 1-3pm.

Want to know more? Click on the permalink for more info: [6423 Los Pueblos Place NW](#)

You can also check out the [3D Virtual Tour](#), below. Or call me for more information.

Thank you for reading the MetroABQ Newsletter, & for making it this far.



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<p>Chris Lucas Owner/Broker 505.463.5317 ChrisLucasABQ.com jebalucas@gmail.com</p>	



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Mailing address:

Chris Lucas Real Estate

PO Box 40081

Albuquerque, NM 87196

To reach Chris, call or text: 505.463.5317

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