

TOWN AND RANCH...Los Poblanos' Urban Expansion

Distilleries and tasting rooms have gained momentum in the New Mexico spirits landscape over the past few years adding another dimension to agritourism and increased sophistication to our hospitality industry benefiting both residents and visitors. Equally interesting and as complex as the spirits served is the story behind these businesses. This is the story of the new Los Poblanos establishment, *Town and Ranch Tasting Room*, an Albuquerque distillery and tasting room that is much appreciated by the after-work crowd who applauds the addition to the area.



Town and Ranch Tasting Room, which opened in October 2022, boasts signature cocktails made with the newly designed Los Poblanos' *Western Dry* and *Lavender* gins and New Mexico beers and wines. An elevated *bites* menu complements the local imbibements. The new tasting room brings a bit of the farm to urban downtown in an unsuspected setting: The *Los Poblanos (LP) Warehouse* at 1318 4th St. NW.



The gins served at Town and Ranch represent both the evolution and curation of Los Poblanos botanicals as botanicals have been grown and distilled at the farm for more than over two decades with a much different purpose. The pandemic lockdown provided the time for this next step. Now made at the LP Warehouse, the gins were developed by the Los Poblanos team teeming with knowledge of the kitchen and the farm, and most familiar with the necessary components required to produce premium spirits (distillation, mixology, and more). When discussing the gins, the team explains that the New Western Dry has “its regional botanicals and juniper notes that bring to the palate the flavors of New Mexico’s Rio Grande Valley and high desert landscape,” and that the Lavender gin, has “the soothing medicinal and aromatic properties of lavender in with the complexity of four varietals from the fields of Los Poblanos.”

Most recently, the building that houses Town and Ranch was the Silverado textile showroom and manufacturing facility, and before that, the historic 1940s *Heaston's Town and Ranch Tractor Supplies*. The coincidence of the original building's commerce—farm supplies—did not go unnoticed, it became part of the tasting room's identity and decor. The neon sign is a replica of the original *Heaston's* all those years ago. There is also a retail component of *Town and Ranch* at the LP Warehouse that features a bountiful selection from the Los Poblanos Farm Foods line, heritage flours and wheat berries from the Southwest Grains Collective (a renewed grain infrastructure for New Mexico), and offerings from local farmers, artists, and artisans.

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CONTACT US

505-468-1279

EconDevCares@bernco.gov
bernco.gov

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Marcos A. Gonzales
Director,
Economic Development

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

While businesses remain a key focus of economic development, a new player on the field—the remote worker—is gaining significant, deserved recognition. That worker, whether solopreneur or company employee, is attracted to the very same quality-of-life attributes available here that appeal to the employees of brick-and-mortar businesses: a reasonable cost of living, diverse educational system, great weather, arts and culture, and year-round recreational activities. The remote worker is the *now opportunity...is your business positioned to attract this talent?*

Conventional thinking asserts that the majority of economic development rests primarily with traditional business growth (infrastructure expansion and job creation), and this remains true. What is also true is that businesses today struggle with retaining and finding talent—so much so that employers are more than willing to think and act outside the lines that previously established work boundaries. Today both employer and worker both look to redefine the workplace for mutual benefit. Permanent, not temporary or conditional, remote workers' time has come.

No longer a one-off in the employee landscape, this demographic is growing and capturing attention. They choose where they want to work and live, and then they emmesh themselves in that place. Research shows that in addition to their work, they connect to their selected community through volunteering and leadership roles. These business and civic-minded individuals strengthen their communities.

If you believe that the remote worker, either directly or indirectly, offers your business an extra advantage in the marketplace, explore the possibilities. Take a look at MakeMyMove.com that highlights incentives across the country with the “Do what you love, from a place that you love.” Discover if your business is what a particular remote worker wants. Find out what symmetry may exist. Also, for more about the draw of Bernalillo County, visit the Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance tool: <https://www.abq.org/living-here/>.

Remember, Bernalillo County is remote-worker friendly, in its quality-of-life offerings and its State and regional initiatives. Make no mistake: Bernalillo County is on the same stage of larger cities—let's make our performance count. Interested in knowing more? Reach out to us...we are here to help.

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Director of Economic Development

Thank You to Commissioner Debbie O'Malley

Commissioner O'Malley,

Your vision for what is possible and your commitment to the residents of Bernalillo County are exemplified by your many accomplishments over the past eight years as Commissioner of District 1. These accomplishments reflect your values by which you are known: a champion for social justice, behavioral health, preserving the heritage and legacy of our community, and helping businesses realize their goals. We respect your work and appreciate that we have had the opportunity to move your ideas forward as they relate to economic development.

Throughout your tenure you have supported multiple Economic Development endeavors from manufacturing to professional services, housing to technical assistance. Dedicated to keeping the traditions of our cultures alive and thriving through foods and cuisine—from farm to fork, you have always had a keen eye for agritourism and have been proactive from projects to Business Summits (*Buen Provecho / Agritourism: Whetting Your Patrons' appetite for Your Restaurant, Cultivating Bernalillo County Food Summit (2015)*). Today our food hub is stronger, improving our economy, and our heritage enriched and more widely known, because of your efforts. Thank you.

Your legacy includes improving our community through enhancing the quality of life for residents through affordable housing. Economic development means job creation which our residents deserve, and affordable housing provides what they need—clearly a win-win. Again, thank you.

As you move forward, know that Bernalillo County does so also because of your contributions as Commissioner. We wish you the very best in your future plans.

Legislative Items (Sponsored or co-sponsored) by Debbie O'Malley

- **LEDA (Local Economic Development Act) for Flagship Food Group North America, LLC.** Funds were used to make tenant improvements to its distribution center located on the Westside of the County in an existing facility.
- **Impact Fee Waiver for KW AQE, LLC (FedEx Ground Center):** The impact fees were connected to a new Federal Express palletized freight long haul local Pickup and Delivery (P&D) facility in unincorporated Bernalillo County.
- **Amazon Fulfillment Center:** Upgrades to roads, lighting and other infrastructure in the Atrisco Vista area to facilitate the new construction and attract future business expansion in the area.
- **IRB for Vitality Works:** Vitality Works Inc. (VWI) planned an expansion of its manufacturing plant that included purchase of warehouse equipment, manufacturing equipment and quality control testing equipment.
- **LEDA for Vitality Works:** Vitality Works Inc. expanded its existing manufacturing operations.
- **LEDA for Lavu, Inc.:** For relocation to a larger facility and expansion of its operations to accommodate growth and the potential of new market opportunities.
- **IRB for Sawmill Market:** For a restaurant and retail development featuring unique format and purpose in promoting locally based vendors and their menus of authentic local cuisine.
- **IRB for Ben E. Keith:** Development of a new BEK Foods regional headquarters. BEK expanded its New Mexico Division to the new location.
- **The Commons at Martineztown PRB Ordinance:** The County approved an Ordinance for the purpose of an acquisition/rehabilitation of ninety-six (96) units for three low-income housing properties on neighboring serving seniors and households with disabilities.
- **San Roque Apartments, LLC PRB Ordinance:** This newly-constructed multifamily apartment community consisted of 136 units bringing much needed 100% affordable apartment homes, bringing between 30% and 80% Area Medium Income (AMI) workforce housing units to this community.
- **IRB for American Gypsum Company, LLC:** For modernization of the Company's manufacturing plant equipment.

ATRISCO ACEQUIA MADRE PROJECT

Plans are currently underway to design and create an educational outdoor site in the vicinity of Central Avenue and the Rio Grande River. Referred to as the *Atrisco Acequia Madre* project, its purpose is to promote and celebrate the acequia culture of New Mexico by protecting and preserving the long held agricultural traditions of the Rio Grande Valley as well as the connection to the river and bosque. Acequias are small waterways—gravity-powered ditches—that bring water to fields, orchards, and gardens. The water comes from mountain snowmelt and rain.



The Acequia Madre de Atrisco, one of the oldest irrigation canals in the United States, has its heading on the west side of the Rio Grande, across from the Albuquerque BioPark. This project is a collaboration with Bernalillo County, the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD), the City of Albuquerque, and the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority (ABCWUA). Improvements may include educational and recreational use of the open space through a system of trails, interpretive sites, and trailhead signage.

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HOW IT HAPPENED

When the hospitality industry was laid fallow by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, *Matt Rembe, Executive Director of Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm*, and his team pushed forward, motivated by what is known to be true: *Necessity is the mother of invention*. What was Rembe's goal? To generate new ideas and approaches for business opportunities in a vastly changed landscape by continuing to cultivate partnerships and ventures designed to promote and preserve New Mexico's agriculture and heritage with a focus on the Rio Grande Valley. The distillery and tasting room are elements of their success, as is the Warehouse.

The LP Warehouse, which opened in 2021, impresses. The acquisition of this property and its subsequent transformation demonstrate how potential can be realized when vision and creativity take root and flourish. It is home to the Town and Ranch Tasting Room and Farm Store, the distillery, a manufacturing operation, and administrative offices. Its mixed-use design illustrates smart business practices tied to agriculture and heritage, and in this case, brick and mortar.



Rembe says, "Covid forced us to innovate to survive. We've taken a risk...but it's the right thing to do for the business." This forward-thinking process is a key ingredient of Los Poblanos leadership and that process includes working and developing mutually beneficial partnerships with both the public and private sectors. Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm is located in the Los Ranchos' North Valley within District 1 with Commissioner Debbie O'Malley.

To experience the taste and ambiance of the farm in a downtown setting, visit Town and Ranch Tasting

Room, Tuesdays through Fridays, 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., and Saturdays 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The Town and Ranch Farm Shop is open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Los Poblanos Town and Ranch, 1318 4th St. NW, Albuquerque, N.M. 87102. For more information, visit www.lospoblanos.com.