

SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN

Mixed-use business park in the works

St. Francis Drive project could include offices, 'limited' retail

[Phaedra Haywood The New Mexican](#)

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The owners of 69 acres on the southwest corner of St. Francis Drive and Rabbit Road have plans to create a mixed-use business park there.

Santa Fe businessman David Gurule and Ernie Romero, his partner in the project, envision a development similar to the Rodeo Business Park, with about 90 percent of the proposed 22 lots being devoted to "economic development" uses such as offices, warehouses and distribution centers.

Limited residential units — in the form of apartments or senior housing — could also be part of the project, Gurule said, as could some "limited" retail spaces.

A gas station/convenience store was also discussed as an option at a September meeting, as the land is adjacent to Interstate 25.

But what ultimately gets built will be up to who purchases the lots, estimated to be an average of three acres each. Gurule said he and Romero plan to divide the land and install utilities, then sell off parcels.

Gurule said he and Romero manage Santa Fe Estates — a 500-acre development on Santa Fe's north side that includes the Thornburg campus — and have other shared business interests in Santa Fe.

The County Development Review Committee approved the St. Francis Business Park's master plan in September. Discussion during that meeting included concerns regarding traffic — the development will connect to Rabbit Road — and one neighbor has written a letter protesting the proposed subdivision based on those concerns.

According to the minutes of that meeting, the state Department of Transportation requested that the applicants address certain issues and present a revised traffic impact study before DOT approval.

"The Applicant has responded to the DOT comments and states that they have done the traffic counts, prepared the requested data and have a meeting scheduled with the DOT to discuss the results," according to the minutes of the September CDRC meeting.

Gurule said Tuesday that the DOT has since issued a letter approving the development's traffic plan.

The county planner in charge of the case said the project will be considered by the Board of County Commissioners in December.

Gurule said Monday that he felt it was a bit premature to forecast what the development — scheduled to be built in four phases — would ultimately include, as the project has not yet been approved by the Commission.

"It's hard to tell what will happen, because the County Commission can impose some restrictions on our use types," Gurule said.

Contact Phaedra Haywood at 986-3068 or phaywood@sfnewmexican.com.