1. Name of Property
Historic name: La Luz del Oeste
Other names/site number: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
Street & number: Loop One NW
City or town: Albuquerque State: NM County: Bernalillo Zip Code 87120
Not For Publication: [ ] Vicinity: [ ]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets
the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic
Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I
recommend that this property be considered significant at the following
level(s) of significance:
___ national   _X_ statewide    ___ local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
_ X _A    ___B    _ X _C    ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: Date
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government
4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

__ entered in the National Register
__ determined eligible for the National Register
__ determined not eligible for the National Register
__ removed from the National Register
__ other (explain:) __________________________

Signature of the Keeper __________________________ Date of Action ____________

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: X

Public – Local 

Public – State 

Public – Federal 

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

Building(s) 

District X

Site 

Structure 

Object
La Luz del Oeste
Bernalillo, New Mexico

Name of Property                   County and State

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
</tr>
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<td>132</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **0**

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6. **Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

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La Luz del Oeste
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7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Adobe townhouse community

___________________
___________________
___________________
___________________
___________________
___________________

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Adobe, Stucco, Concrete

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

La Luz del Oeste is a residential development located on Coors Avenue above the west bank of the Rio Grande on Albuquerque’s West Mesa. Between 1967 and 1974, architect Antoine Predock designed blocks of townhouses, tennis courts, fountains, a pool, paths, and public spaces on 24 acres. The development embraces nature and follows the natural contours of the land. The townhouse blocks are nestled in the hillside with views of the community’s 46 acres of desert scrub, the bosque (vegetation) along the river, and the Sandia Mountains. The arc-shaped plan of townhouses includes units with two-story and split-level plans. The townhouses are built with adobe, concrete, and brick, expanses of plate glass, and covered in brown-tinted stucco. Each house has front and rear walled courtyards. Garages are mostly separate from the houses. The architect landscaped the community with wide medians on principal streets, Berm and Tumbleweed, grass lawns and fountains between most blocks, and landscaped cul de sacs. The community includes tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a playground.
La Luz del Oeste is a townhouse development that was built on a tract of open land west of Albuquerque that slopes east toward the Rio Grande. Planned and designed by architect Antoine Predock and built from 1967 to 1974, the community is tightly nestled into a hillside with views of undeveloped desert scrub. The rows of townhouse blocks step up the sloped site, overlooking the townhouses below. Its low profile and thick adobe walls create the appearance of Pueblo roomblocks. The streets, organized in two sections, fan out into subtle curves that form the terrace foundations. The townhouses are built of adobe walls, cast-in-place concrete lintels and canales. Most units have front and rear walled courtyards. Each townhouse unit is served by a two-car garage. These were built individually in clusters, pairs, and in long blocks. Some are remote from their associated townhouse.

Fourwing saltbush, sand sage, and prickly pear cactus surround the townhouse development. Antoine Predock explained, “the concept of La Luz involves a basic attitude toward the land: An urban environment and large open natural areas should exist together—especially in New Mexico. Existing natural patterns should be recognized and reinforced rather than eliminated. The delicate balance of plant and wildlife need not be destroyed by development.”

The plan of La Luz emphasizes pedestrian access via concrete paths between townhouses that converge on the seven fountains located in the community. Paths provide pedestrian access among the townhouses and garages, common areas, plazas, pool, tennis courts, and along the undeveloped land. The presence of vehicles is minimized by garages. Predock described, “A curvilinear pedestrian route separated from vehicular traffic will connect plaza and courtyard spaces to form a sequence of “places.” This pedestrian system will also connect with a major existing arroyo which runs west to east from the high ground west of the project. Landscaping and paths . . . create a meandering pedestrian path to the Bosque.” In his plan, Predock created common areas formed by long grassy spaces between rows of townhouses; six plazas with a fountain and brick paving; and a meadow that lies between Berm Street and the pool.

The townhouses are long, low blocks of brown townhouses that blend into the surrounding desert scrub landscape. The east elevations utilize only stucco, unpainted concrete lintels, and floor-to-ceiling glass walls, with no architectural ornament. The floor plans, which include recessed rooms, create the appearance of individual houses rather than the planar rowhouses built in eastern cities. The rectilinear main blocks are balanced by curvilinear garden walls, garden entrances, and rounded chimneys. The west elevations mostly feature a small courtyard and entrance, but appear closed when compared to the open, glazed east façade.

The mud for the adobe blocks was dredged from the wetlands along the Rio Grande. The adobe elevations evoke traditional Pueblo architecture with exposed, unfinished concrete lintels and

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2 Predock, 9.
distinctive concrete drain spouts. These canales punctuate the horizontality of the buildings as massive right triangles. The concrete lintels and drains contrast to the dark brown stucco walls. The dark brown buildings, darker than traditional adobe architecture, contrast with the dun-colored high desert that surrounds the community.

The 16-inch-thick adobe load-bearing walls are oriented west to east. The 14-inch-long adobe blocks are laid with one-inch of mud. The massive walls accumulate and retain heat and are soundproof. Low exterior walls in the front and the rear courtyards are 12-inches thick and incorporate a curve, which is reminiscent of ancient southwestern structures. The low walls and brick paving appear blur the distinction between indoor and outdoor space. Some walls are frame construction covered with stucco with wall-to-wall glazed openings facing east. The glass walls incorporate sliding-glass doors and provide views of the Sandia Mountains to the east. Most of the original single-pane glazing was replaced by double-pane glass.

Roofs consist of plywood roof decks supported by 10-inch joists, and originally topped with built-up tar and gravel. Earlier units had exposed linear wood ceilings in the living room and kitchen. After 1970, units mostly have more economical drywall ceilings. The developer offered wood ceilings as an optional finish on Tennis Court and Pool and Tumbleweed streets.

Floor Plans at La Luz

Some floor plans were intended to attract families with children, while others are smaller to accommodate couples or singles. In the late 1960s, prices ranged from $29,000 to $40,000 and targeted middle-income buyers seeking a community in isolated natural surroundings. The original Arco Street townhouses offer floor plans and sufficient space for families with children. Subsequent single-story Berm Street units offer floor plans that are ideal for couples or singles. A pair of long, two-story townhouse blocks feature efficient floor plans with a wide master bedroom and fireplace. The two two-story rows on Pool and Tennis Court streets include spacious units built over garages. The remaining townhouses on Tennis Court, Pool, and Tumbleweed streets have similar three- and four-bedroom plans. End units have a small Pullman-style kitchen, or kitchenette, and dining areas that overlook sunken living rooms. Each townhouse has views of the mountains from the dining area, living room, and, in some units, kitchens. La Luz has five principal floor plans that are specific to streets in the community.

Arco (north)/Pool/Tennis Court Streets Split-Level House

The first La Luz townhouses were constructed on Arco Street in 1968 and 1969. These townhomes are two stories, with the garage under the master bedroom. The lower level includes the living room; the upper level includes the dining, kitchen, and bedrooms. The entrance leads to the living room. The glass wall across the living room is built at an acute angle. The trapezoidal-shaped living room is particular to this floor plan. The houses are roughly 2,200 sq. ft. with long driveways and front and back courtyards. This layout, unlike most houses in La
La Luz del Oeste, forms a visual extension between the west courtyard and the dining room. This plan includes a lower-level garage.

Arco Street/Berm Street Four-Unit Cluster

In 1968 and 1969 on Arco Street, a cluster of four townhouses were built. A similar cluster on Berm Street, in a pedestrian area, was constructed in 1970. These townhouses, roughly 1,500 to 1,650 sq. ft., are bisected by a loadbearing interior wall that separates social areas from bedrooms for privacy. The entrances are pedestrian only, offering a sense of privacy and decoupling the house from the automobile. The floor plan in these townhouses became the basis
for most of the Pool Street, Tennis Court Street, and Tumbleweed Street clusters. This plan includes remote garages in separate buildings housing four, two-car garages.

Berm Street Split-Level House

This plan appears in two clusters of five small living units, with two bedrooms and a living room on the lower level. The angled exterior wall across the front bedrooms result in trapezoidal-shaped bedroom. The angle seems to be a remnant from the larger Arco Street units that included an angled window-wall across the living room. The Berm units 1-10 are smaller, with three bedrooms or two bedrooms and a study. These plans, roughly 1,400 to 1,600 sq. ft., accommodate singles or couples. This plan includes a detached garage, which is accessible through the courtyard.
Berm Street/Link Street Two-Story House

Following Arco Street and the initial Berm split-levels, three two-story townhouse blocks were built between 1969 and 1971. These large units measured roughly 1,700 to 2,000 sq. ft. Like all La Luz townhouses, these units include a kitchen and dining room that overlook the sunken living room. The living room, which is uncharacteristically wide, is bisected by a fireplace. There is a small bedroom or study beside the entrance with a sliding glass door that opens to the front courtyard. A stairway leads to second-story bedrooms. Berm Street two-story houses and some two-story Link Street units have three bedrooms, a master bedroom, and two baths. The Link Street blocks include smaller two-story houses with a bedroom, master bedroom, and two baths. This plan includes a detached garage, which is accessible through the courtyard.
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Pool, Tennis Court, and Tumbleweed Streets Split-Level House

The townhouses in the remaining nine clusters are variants of the early Arco Street/Berm Street split level floor plans. These townhouses have sunken living rooms. Most include kitchens and dining rooms that overlook the living rooms. The north and south end units on each cluster have a small “pullman” type kitchen attached. In end units, these small galley kitchens may open to the dining room to provide more practical meal preparation. Large windows provide a visual connection to pedestrian spaces.

The Pool, Tennis Court, and Tumbleweed streets split-level townhouses were built between 1971 and 1974 with plans that range from 1,800-2,000 sq. ft. These plans include separate end units with side-projecting kitchens, three bedrooms, and a study. The alternate floor plan include only bedrooms and an integral kitchen. These are among the most common floor plans in La Luz.
The north Arco Street floor plan was replicated on the west side of Pool Street in c.1971. A year later, a modified version of this floor plan was built in a five-unit cluster on the west side of Tennis Court Street. The Tennis Court layout includes an expanded basement behind the garage and under the back side of the house. A stairway led to the basement beneath the garage. The basement area is dark with only a skylight above the stairway. The dark basement rooms are unusual in La Luz where most spaces are illuminated with natural light. This plan includes an unattached garage.

Pool, Tennis Court, and Tumbleweed Streets Split-Level House (end unit)

**Interior Finishes**

The floor finishes in the living room, dining room, and kitchen at La Luz are earth-colored brick. The brick complements the color of exterior stucco and contrasts with exposed linear wood plank ceilings. Bedrooms and halls were carpeted in early townhouses. Later units (1971-1972) have oak-parquet floors in the bedrooms and the hall. Flooring surfaces are laid over a concrete slab.
Cabinetry, parquet floors, and interior doors in the later units (1971-1972) were stained medium dark. The early units included natural-colored birch doors and cabinets. The darker stain is less durable and was mostly replaced with painted surfaces.

La Luz townhouses include an arched fireplace in the living room. The fireplace rests on a soldier course of white firebrick. In some of the two-story and later floor plans, optional fireplaces could be included in the master bedroom. These floor plans feature the master bedroom alongside the living room, or above it, so both flues are contained in a single chimney stack.

The La Luz development includes a designed landscape, undeveloped landscape, pool and pool house, tennis courts, and playground.

The designed landscape that is part of the townhouse development was carefully planned by the architect to include larger roads with landscaped medians along the perimeter with smaller dead-end streets to provide access to the townhouses. Garages to hide vehicles. The roads are necessary for vehicular movement, but the path knit the community together. Pedestrian paths behind and between townhouse blocks connect to plazas with fountains, green spaces, tennis courts, swimming pools, and the bosque. The architect selected native trees and shrubs to be planted throughout the community. The undeveloped landscape is 46 acres of desert scrub east of the townhouse blocks.

The rectangular-shaped pool is surrounded by five-foot-tall stucco-covered wall. The pool house includes a shallow gable entrance and is banked into a man-made hill. The east (main) façade of the concrete pool house includes entrances for men and women with clerestory windows to illuminate the interior changing rooms. The building, which is painted in red, yellow, and white, is covered in chamisa and Apache plume. The tennis courts to the east of the pool are surrounded by a tall chain-link fence.

The playground once included large, organic-shaped concrete play structures designed by the architect. They were painted in bright blue, green, red, yellow, and white. These were removed and replaced with an open-frame steel dome. It is located on a terraced site below the pool.

**Historic Integrity**

La Luz del Oeste retains a historic integrity of location and setting. The neighboring development to the northeast is separated from La Luz by scrub desert. Developments to southwest and south bound La Luz property but maintain the residential scale of La Luz. Although Coors Boulevard has been widened, the community is sheltered from the highway by a high berm. The La Luz community maintains significant undeveloped land.

La Luz retains a high level of integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Design is evident in the townhouse blocks, garages, and the plan of streets, which appear as they did during the
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historic period. Design also includes the unaltered plan of roads, the network of paths and green spaces, and the undeveloped open space. Building materials, adobe, concrete, stucco, and glass have mostly not been altered. Workmanship is evident in the adobe blocks formed on site, concrete lintels cast on site, and the glazing appears in its original configurations.

The result of the integrity at La Luz is that the complex maintains the feeling of a late 20th-century residential development. It maintains the association of a development of townhouse blocks designed with an emphasis on community, pedestrian movement, views of the bosque and mountains, and the open space preserved by the developer.

Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

Townhouse units are each counted as one contributing building.
Garages (both individual and clusters) are counted as one contributing structure.
The plan of roads is counted as one contributing structure.
The pool is counted as one contributing structure.
The pool house is counted as one contributing building.
The tennis courts are counted as one contributing structure.
The designed landscape associated with the townhouses is counted as one contributing site.
The undeveloped, desert scrub landscape is counted as one contributing site.

The office building (built in 1978) is counted as one noncontributing building.
House at 8 Arco Street (ca. 1978) is counted as one noncontributing building.
House at 10 Arco Street (ca. 1978) is counted as one noncontributing building.
House at 12 Arco Street (ca. 1978) is counted as one noncontributing building.
House at 14 Arco Street (ca. 1978) is counted as one noncontributing building.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

- B. Removed from its original location

- C. A birthplace or grave

- D. A cemetery

- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

- F. A commemorative property

- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years
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Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance
1968-1974

Significant Dates
1968-1974—La Luz is built

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Predock, Antoine (architect)
Graham, Ray III (developer)
Ravel, Didier (developer)
La Luz del Oeste

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

La Luz del Oeste is significant at the state level Under National Register Criterion A in the area of community planning and development because it is an excellent example of community that was part of the New Town movement—which includes Irvine, California (begun 1959) and Reston, Virginia (begun 1964)—that was inspired by Radburn, New Jersey (planned in 1928). La Luz shares with these communities tightly clustered houses, separate automobile and pedestrian routes, distinct public (parks and plazas) and private spaces, and conservation of undeveloped landscape. La Luz del Oeste is significant at the state level under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture because the buildings represent the modern Environmental movement with their basic building materials—adobe and concrete—and split-level designs oriented on open land conserved by the community with views of Rio Grande bosque and the Sandia Mountains. The townhouse blocks are defined by the repetition of the rows, curvilinear forms and what Kenneth Frampton described as “critical regionalism,” an architecture that integrates “topography, context, climate, light, and tectonic form” into a coherent sense of place.³

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

La Luz del Oeste, a townhouse development on the western side of Albuquerque, attracted critical attention because of its plan and its unique approach to materials and landscape. Architect Antoine Predock designed a community that was open to nature and conservation, adapted to the climate, represented the foundation for a different type of regional architecture, and an alternative approach to the rapid suburban growth that the city experienced in the postwar period.⁴ The architect asserted that “In many ways the cluster planning at La Luz and the buildings themselves are very traditional, but not by assembling superficial trappings in the name of pueblo architecture (i.e.: fake vigas, elaborately contrived parapet erosion, etc.). In similar ways to the indigenous builder, the buildings at La Luz respond to the climate and landscape of New Mexico.”⁵

In 2000, Predock expanded on the landscape at La Luz, which “was also derived from attitudes about site planning with an ecological conscience—a fundamental component that is embodied in various ways in all my work. At La Luz, rather than usurping large areas of the site, the flood plain was protected by organizing the units in tight groupings with common yards and roads.”⁶ The architect continued:

⁵ Predock,11.
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La Luz was not a “normal” development. It was built in phases and played out as a laboratory for me: I lived the project through construction, physically working on it. Building parts of a play area myself. Phase by Phase I learned about nuances of orientation—focused views, response to sun, and many other aspects. Working this way showed me how the seasons act on a building, how time acts on architecture, how we relate to a summer evening in a way different than a fall morning. It was a chance to understand that even though buildings are derived operations that are somewhat formulaic—wind direction, views, topographic nuances, social and cultural milieu—the architecture has a life of its own, a particular aura. Architecture lives and has many guises beyond the rational—atmospheric, phenomenological, and poetic.\(^7\)

In 1974, as the development was completed, *Progressive Architecture* editor, “John Morris Dixon hailed La Luz as a reassuring return to regionalism after decades of placeless International Style architecture. Dixon connected Predock’s modernist yet regionally inflected vocabulary with earlier efforts by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer in New England, Paul Rudolph in Florida, William Wurster and Harwell Hamilton Harris in California, and Pietro Belluschi in Oregon to reconcile a modernist aesthetic and use of materials with a sensitivity to local conditions of place. Lewis Mumford, championing the Bay Region Style of northern California in a New Yorker article, had listed these local conditions as terrain, climate, and way of life.”\(^8\)

**New Towns Movement**

La Luz developed as part of the New Towns movement in the United States. Popular in England since the mid-19th century, New Towns did not develop in the United States until suburbanization in the 1960s. The movement used elements of the earlier Garden Cities movement with an effort to reduce congestion in cities and redirect new growth to the suburbs. The movement was bolstered by new highway construction, urban renewal, and white flight to the suburbs. The best known and most successful examples include Irvine, California (begun 1959), Reston, Virginia (begun 1964), and Sea Ranch, California (begun 1964).

Irvine, California, is the largest, privately developed New Town in the United States. Irvine planners used landscape architecture and urban design as a marketing instrument to position the city as the alternative to Los Angeles’ sprawl. This was achieved through the hiring of talented designers and the creation of urban design guidelines for the planning of residential villages. The landscape of Irvine was carefully designed and manipulated to achieve the best possible imageability and create a memorable environment (Lynch, 1960). Roads, greenbelts, paseos, trails, and parks constituted a framework that would direct the future growth of the city.

\(^7\) Ibid.
\(^8\) Mead.
Reston, Virginia, is a suburban community located twenty miles west of Washington, DC, on the heavily travelled corridor between Washington and Dulles Airport. Robert Simon, founder of Reston, envisioned this revolutionary concept of land use, the model was for a clustered residential development, putting a premium on the preservation of open space, landscapes, and wildlife habitats. Reston was the first private community to explicitly incorporate natural preservation in its planning. Reston also included dense village and community centers with access to transit hubs and public parks.

Sea Ranch was founded in 1964, on ten miles of California coastline three hours north of San Francisco by a group of architecture faculty at the University of California, Berkeley. Principal designers included Charles Moore, Joseph Esherick, William Turnbull Jr., Donlyn Lyndon, Richard Whitaker, and landscape architect Lawrence Halprin. The plan transformed a 5,200-acre sheep ranch into a progressive residential community built with open spaces and in tune with nature. Inspiration for the architecture derived from the local agricultural buildings, prevailing weather, and topography. Sea Ranch architecture consists of plain timber-frame structures clad in wooden siding or shingles. The majority of the 1,800 houses are both modern and vernacular, a style called the "Sea Ranch" style.

La Luz, like other New Towns, emphasized improved living centered on residential villages that included shared green parks and recreational facilities as well as access to natural open spaces. "Predock applied four interlocking principles to the plan of La Luz: first, the architecture would respond to its site, keeping as much of the land as possible in its native state, especially to the east; second, housing would be tightly clustered on high ground to the west; third, automobile and pedestrian traffic would be separated; and fourth, the community’s private and public spaces would be carefully coordinated.”

Architecture and the Late 20th Century Environmental Movement

La Luz is significant because its design is informed by the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s, which focused its attention on pollution and successfully pressured Congress to pass measures to promote cleaner air and water. In the late 1970s, the movement increasingly addressed environmental threats created by the disposal of toxic waste. Environmentalism was based on the spread of an ecological consciousness that viewed the natural world as a biological and geological system that is an interacting whole. Ecologists emphasized human responsibility for the impact of their daily living on a wider natural world, fearing that human disruption of the earth's ecosystem threatened the survival of the planet.

The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970. Twenty million people took to the streets across the United States to protest environmental destruction. The nation had recently witnessed the devastating impacts of the Santa Barbara oil spill and seen the first photographs of the Earth taken by astronauts. The beauty of those images from space contrasted bleakly with the state of

9 Ibid.
the Earth that they knew from the ground. Earth Day was recognized in “in virtually every town, every village, in the United States. It took this basket of issues that we now call 'the environment' and elevated them spectacularly in the public consciousness.” In December 1970, Congress created the Environmental Protection Agency, and over the next decade it passed legislation aimed at cleaning up the nation's air, water, and other natural resources. The status quo in which rivers caught fire and bird numbers were decimated by pesticides was becoming increasingly unacceptable to many Americans.

Antoine Predock designed and constructed La Luz del Oeste to reflect the imperatives of the environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s. Environmental houses vary in design, materials, and the personal expression of the owner, who is often the builder. Here, the architect departed from the International Style to create a new vernacular architecture that incorporates the landscape and ancient and historic building traditions in the region. It was conceived as a modern regional community with a conscious historical affinity to the Ancestral Puebloans, including the ancestors of the nineteen modern Pueblos, and the Spanish Colonial era in New Mexico. Both cultures relied on mud architecture. Ancestral Puebloans used mud called puddled mud that had no fixed shape or form. The Spanish introduced adobe bricks; standard units baked in the sun with regular dimensions.

La Luz utilized current ideas in energy conservation and relied on locally sourced mud for the adobe bricks, which formed thick exterior walls on houses in La Luz. Adobe heats during the day and transmits the heat to the interior at night. The townhouse plan is efficient because the middle units are insulated by their neighbors. Most houses at La Luz include a fireplace to minimize the need for polluting fossil fuels. The split-level plans respond to the sloping site rather than, as was common after the Second World War, destroying the natural topography to create a level site.

The architect designed the townhouses to face east to the bosque and mountains. The large windows utilize natural solar heat in winter months to heat the interior spaces and provide natural light to lower the dependency on electrical light. Skylights, as many as six, provide illumination deep in the interior of the houses. Curvilinear forms, built of masonry and difficult to build on a large scale with traditional house plans and materials, reflect organic and naturalistic forms common to the architecture of the environmental movement.

La Luz was intended to foster an openness to nature, a unity with the land, and an adaptation to the semi-arid climate. The development is highly integrated into its natural setting of mesas and the mountains. These qualities were the driving ideas of the project, and one of its most distinctive characteristics. The architect and builder preserved the existing natural elements, avoiding the usual practice of clearing and leveling the varying topography of the site. The housing units were designed to follow the contours of the land, and they were oriented in a manner to ensure that each home includes views of the mountains. The compact, clustered design of the townhouses offered a marked alternative to the predominant suburban single-family house. This layout strategy helped preserve and create open spaces inside and around the community.

Roughly seventy percent of the site was left undeveloped. The townhouse clusters were designed to accommodate different family sizes and income levels. Elsewhere in the city, most residential development was based on single-family houses constructed on small rectangular lots with no shared spaces. La Luz was conceived to meet the needs of a range of homeowners who would value private interior spaces in a communal setting with shared common areas and open space.

Summary Career of Antoine Predock

Antoine Predock was born in Lebanon, Missouri, in 1936. He moved to New Mexico to study engineering at the University of New Mexico. He earned his bachelor’s degree in architecture from Columbia University in New York in 1962. Following his graduation, he was awarded a fellowship to study in Spain in 1962-1963. He later apprenticed in the offices of I. M. Pei and Partners in New York, the Architects’ Collaborative in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Gerald McCue in San Francisco. He returned to New Mexico in 1965 and established his own office in 1967.

In 1968, Antoine Predock was hired to design La Luz del Oeste. A young architect, Predock proved capable of his first independent commission because of his regional and modern vision. He possessed an understanding of the building practices of the Native Peoples and the architectural contributions of Hispanic peoples in New Mexico. La Luz, conceived as a cluster of townhouses, was a multifamily development. In 2006, Antoine Predock was awarded the AIA Gold Metal, the highest recognition by the American Institute of Architects. Thomas S. Howorth, FAIA, chairman of the Gold Medal Committee, described Predock’s work as “Arguably, more than any American architect of any time, Antoine Predock has asserted a personal and place-inspired vision of architecture with such passion and conviction that his buildings have been universally embraced.” Howorth continued, “Antoine Predock designs buildings that grow out of their unique landscapes, creating, at the same time, symbols that are fearlessly expressive and sincere, simultaneously complex and guileless.”

Predock’s approach to design derives from his geographic surroundings, the American West, an open desert. The scale of Predock’s work ranges from the Venice House in Venice, California, a concrete frame with large windows and terraces for views of the Pacific Ocean, to a $285 million ballpark for the San Diego Padres that reimagines the stadium as a “garden” rather than a sports complex. His influence includes international sites, namely the new National Palace Museum in Taiwan and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. He has integrated his work in historic settings at Stanford and Rice universities.

Inspired by architects such as Louis I. Kahn and Frank Lloyd Wright, Predock included with his regional sensibility the elements of the modern in his 1993 design of the Turtle Creek House in Dallas, Texas. Large limestone ledges recall the geologic setting of Dallas, and the great glass wall recalls the architecture of the International Style. The house, surrounded with trees and plantings, provided a specialized setting for the patrons who were avid bird watchers. Birds
crowd the site because it is located along the major north-south migratory flyways. This same axis also became the dominant processional path through the house.

Antoine Predock has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the William Kinne Fellows Traveling Prize, Columbia University, 1962-63; Fellow, American Academy in Rome, 1965; American Institute of Architects, AIA Gold Medal 2006; Fellow Royal Architectural Institute of Canada 2014; National Academy, National Academy Academician; d a 2015 Royal Institute of British Architects International Fellow, 2015; Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt Lifetime Achievement Award; and the Rome Prize.

Predock’s concentration of award-winning projects in the American West and throughout the United States include American Architecture Award, Pima Community College Learning Center, Green Valley, AZ (2005); GSA Design Award, U.S. Federal Courthouse, El Paso, TX (2004); the Tucker Architectural Award, Shadow House, Santa Fe, NM (2004); the AIA Western Mountain Region Honor Award, Robert Hoag Rawlings Public Library, Pueblo, CO (2004); USITT, Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts, Alto, NM (2004); and the AIA/New Mexico Honor Award, Shadow House, Santa Fe, NM (2004).

Predock and firm, Antoine Predock Architect PC, have planned, developed, and collaborated on over 100 buildings and projects. The firm has been featured in over 60 exhibitions, 250 books, and over 1,000 publications. Predock has held teaching positions at 14 universities in the United States and elsewhere.

Criteria Consideration G: Properties that achieved significance within the last fifty years.

La Luz del Oeste in Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico, meets National Register Criteria Consideration G at the local level because the property has achieved significance within the past fifty years. Between 1971 and 1974, the Pool, Tennis Court, and Tumbleweed Streets Split-Level Houses were completed, two years after most of the townhouses achieved significance and one year short of fifty years of age. These houses, built in blocks on Pool, Tennis Court, and Tumbleweed streets, appear like most houses in La Luz and complete the continuous period of building at La Luz. These townhouses provide visual and historical continuity to the community, and they should be included as contributing buildings in the historic district.

Antoine Predock is 86 years of age, and he continues to practice architecture. La Luz del Oeste merits listing in the National Register because it was the architect’s first independent commission, and because the townhouse development remains the architect’s only large-scale development of houses. La Luz represents a discrete early period in Predock’s work before he began to focus on large, single-family houses. These later houses, mostly in the desert Southwest, continue the architect’s attention to site with designs that are abstract with some elements of Postmodernism. Materials are mostly poured concrete, concrete block, and steel. His best-known houses include Boulder House, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1975-1976; Fuller House, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1984-1987; Winandy House, Desert Highlands, Arizona, 1988-1991;
Rosenthal House, Manhattan Beach, California, 1986-1993; and Turtle Creek House, Dallas, Texas, 1987-1993. The architect’s commercial and institutional projects reflect the themes and material utilized in his houses in the 1980s and 1990s.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

Ray Graham III and Didier Raven conceived the La Luz del Oeste community. Both were residents of nearby Corrales, a rural area in the Rio Grande Valley north of Albuquerque. Graham had envisioned an environmentally sustainable community and Raven, who shared Graham’s vision, was charged with finding a location for the community. The concept reflected the idealism and communal experimentation of the 1960s. Ray Graham purchased the property from Joel Taylor in the mid-1960s.

Albuquerque architect Antoine Predock designed La Luz del Oeste and general contractor Gunner Dahlquist managed the construction. The first Arco Street block of townhouses was completed in 1968. Predock and Raven spent time onsite and were actively involved in the construction as the community expanded to the north and east. Predock designed all but one of the La Luz del Oeste townhouse blocks. Architect Hildreth Barker designed a block of four units at the end of Arco Street. La Luz was Predock’s first independent commission.

La Luz remained the only development on Coors Boulevard on the west mesa for three decades. Albuquerque is bounded to the south by a military installation and tribal lands, to the east by National Forest land, and to the north by tribal lands. The city developed to the west and surrounded La Luz with residential suburbs. Predock’s plan includes buffers with native vegetation to the north, south, and east, and berms to minimize traffic noise from Coors Boulevard. The result is that La Luz feels private and self-contained amid the recent development.

Unlike Predock’s later institutional work, La Luz was conceived as cluster of townhomes, as a multifamily development. Although the architect’s future work included a multifamily public housing project in downtown Albuquerque constructed in the 1980s, his residential work was otherwise large single family. Most commissions from the 1990s through 2010 were large institutional projects and large residential work.

Antoine Predock’s work demonstrates an exquisite sense of place. Almost without exception, the architect has produced designs that complement the surroundings in a natural and harmonious manner. Antoine Predock’s work is regional in that it is adapted visually and culturally to the place and region where it is constructed. Having designed projects in many countries, this versatility is uniquely Predock and reflects the architect’s sensitivity, and profound interest in place and surrounding. Unlike Predock’s subsequent projects, the plasticity of adobe and the naturally rounded edges that characterize the walls and parapets at La Luz are unique to the development. Predock’s work incorporates colors that demonstrate a sensitivity to surrounding
features but the surfaces themselves tend to be hard and sharp compared to the rounded and beveled lines that characterize La Luz.

Many Predock projects seem to rise from the earth and slope back into it. La Luz is spectacularly nestled in the escarpment overlooking the Rio Grande. Likewise, many projects emulate the shapes in a mountain backdrop or rise gently to a peak in flat surroundings. La Luz incorporated exposed large-aggregate concrete in lintels and sidewalks, as well as in canales. Large institutional projects that were the mainstay of Predock’s subsequent work also juxtaposed concrete or stone finishes with glass but lacked the smooth edges created by the adobe at La Luz.

Linear wooden or metal ceilings in large projects draw directly from the timber ceilings that are standard in early La Luz living room and kitchen areas and that were optional in later La Luz units. The linear wood ceilings at La Luz lead the eye towards the mountain views in the distance and visually extend interior living space to include the outdoor courtyards beyond. This effect recurs in some of the subsequent large scale institutional projects to similar effect.
La Luz del Oeste

Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


La Luz del Oeste  
Name of Property  

Bernalillo, New Mexico  
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
___ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #__________
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #__________
___ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #__________

Primary location of additional data:

___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
   Name of repository: ______________________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  Approximately 70 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:__________
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 35.141918   Longitude: -106.688062
2. Latitude: 35.139220   Longitude: -106.688165
3. Latitude: 35.139249   Longitude: -106.696756
4. Latitude: 35.14342    Longitude: -106.69660
5. Latitude: 35.142917   Longitude: -106.692170
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
La Luz is identified on the sketch map, drawn to scale and corresponds to the points of longitude and latitude.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
La Luz includes the intact historic property associated with the La Luz development.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Glenn Mallory
organization: La Luz Landowners Association
street & number: 1a Loop One NW
city or town: Albuquerque state: NM zip code: 87120
e-mail
telephone: _______________________
date: July 2023

State Historic Preservation Office
name/title: Steven Moffson, State and National Register Coordinator
organization: New Mexico Historic Preservation Division
street & number: 407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236
city or town: Santa Fe state: New Mexico zip: 87501
telephone: 505.476.0444
date: July 5, 2023

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps: A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

- Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** La Luz del Oeste  
**City or Vicinity:** Albuquerque  
**County:** Bernalillo  
**State:** New Mexico  
**Photographer:** Steven Moffson; Glenn Mallory photos 1-2, 26, and 28  
**Date Photographed:** June 14, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 28. Aerial view of Berm Road (left) and Link Street (top right), photographer facing northwest.

2 of 28. Aerial view of Link Street (right) and Pool Street (left) with Meadow and Arco Street in background, photographer facing south.

3 of 28. La Luz entrance with Loop One (right) and Link Street (left), photographer facing east.

4 of 28. Loop One, photographer facing southeast.

5 of 28. Berm Street townhouse street-facing façade, photographer facing east.

6 of 28. Berm Street canale, photographer facing east.

7 of 28. Berm Street window detail, photographer facing southeast.

8 of 28. Common Area between Link Street and Pool Street, photographer facing northeast.

9 of 28. Office, Berm Street, photographer facing west.
La Luz del Oeste
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10 of 28. Berm Street sidewalk, photographer facing south.

11 of 28. 6-10 Berm Street, photographer facing south.

12 of 28. Berm Street townhouses, view from meadow, photographer facing northwest.

13 of 28. Undeveloped land with bosque and Sandia Mountains, photographer facing east.

14 of 28. Arco Street, photographer facing east.

15 of 28. 1-7 Arco Street, photographer facing northwest.

16 of 28. 9-15 Arco Street with fountain, photographer facing west.

17 of 28. Arco Street plaza, photographer facing north.

18 of 28. 8-14 Arco Street, photographer facing southeast.

19 of 28. Path through the meadow to the swimming pool, photographer facing east.

20 of 28. Pool house, photographer facing west.

21 of 28. Tennis court, photographer facing northwest.

22 of 28. Tennis Court plaza, photographer facing north.

23 of 28. Tennis Court garages, photographer facing south.

24 of 28. Tennis Court berm, photographer facing south.


26 of 28. Interior, Berm Street townhouse, living room, photographer facing southeast.

27 of 28. Interior, Berm Street townhouse, living room, photographer facing northwest.

La Luz del Oeste  
Bernalillo County, New Mexico

National Register boundary

Scale: one inch = 0.2 miles
La Luz del Oeste
Bernalillo County, New Mexico

National Register Boundary

Scale: one inch = 315 feet
La Luz del Oeste
Bernalillo County, New Mexico
Site Plan

Contributing

Noncontributing

No Scale
La Luz del Oeste
Bernalillo County, New Mexico
Photo Key

No scale
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico
County and State

Antoine Predock, Site plan for La Luz, 1967
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico
County and State

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968
La Luz del Oeste

Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico

County and State

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico
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La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico. 1968

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

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La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Move-in day, 1968
La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

Bernalillo, New Mexico
County and State

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1968

La Luz, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Playground, 1968
Photographs

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La Luz del Oeste  
Name of Property

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La Luz del Oeste
Name of Property

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County and State

27. Interior, Berm Street townhouse, living room, photographer facing northwest.

28. Interior, Berm Street townhouse, kitchen, photographer facing north.