DEKKERVISION

Dale Dekker, the head of Albuquerque architectural firm Dekker/Perich/Sabatini, is the face behind many of the area’s most notable buildings. Now he has his sights set on something bigger.

EXECUTIVE PROFILE
‘Do the right thing’
Read how Serena Raybaut went from a Ph.D. in English literature to regional director for SABRE Financial and why she says being fair doesn’t always mean that everyone is a winner.
MIKE ENGLISH, 16

DATA
Rattled by rankings
New Mexico ranks high on two lists that could spell trouble for recruiting companies and talent to the state.
ANDY BEALE, 12

RESTAURANTS
SEE WHAT’S ON THE MENU FOR ALBUQUERQUE IN 2015

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Goodbye, short commute?
If we truly reinvent our economy, build new industries and new kinds of jobs, we’re going to attract more people. Are we OK with that?
RACHEL SAMS, 3

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Turn stories into plans
Read why the chief investment officer at Portfolio Wealth Advisors uses clients’ life experiences to create effective financial plans.
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Meet the man who isn’t just building a brand —

HE’S BUILDING ALBUQUERQUE

“Our industry has had a few bright spots around multifamily and health care, but the other sectors have suffered. Our city is beginning to look a little tired and frayed around the edges [and you] can only stretch money so far. We’ve got our work cut out for us. You’ve got to have a multi-pronged approach, and surely you have to help your local businesses that do business out of state — building the ecosystem of new businesses that will grow. You’ve got to realize that the Teslas are the far and few between. However, a Tesla sends out clues about where business is headed. At this stage in my career, I can be effective in a business leadership role; that’s where I think I’m headed. Business is going to have to take on a much more important role in defining our economy. We all want to live in a city that has the amenities, live in a place that’s authentic — a city our kids want to be in.”

DALE DEKKER | Dekker/Perich/Sabatini

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His personality and business philosophy is a little bit speak-softly-and-carry-a-big-stick style.

And though Dale Dekker’s reach is expansive, in many ways the leader of one of the state’s largest architectural firms — Dekker/Perich/Sabatini — is one of the most low-key in the business. There’s an emotional and passionate guy there, no doubt, and those traits are accompanied by a laser-like and relentless business focus.

The emotional side of Dekker was on display last month when he was recognized with the second Chuck Gara Leadership Award in honor of the real estate heavyweight who died in the spring of 2013. Dekker took the stage at NAIOP-New Mexico’s final event of 2014 to receive the award and was visibly moved.

“It was a true honor as I, like many in our profession, were truly blessed to have known and worked with Chuck over the years. Chuck truly loved our city and always had a positive ‘can do’ attitude, and I hope that through receiving this award, other people and leaders in our community will put forth the effort to make our city a great place to live, work and raise a family,” Dekker said.

That holistic view on how to heal Albuquerque’s economy has been in Dekker’s sights for years, and his ascent as a local leader could have big implications for the direction of the city’s growth.

Dekker’s firm, like many, was knocked hard by the recession. But the 150-employee company has been landing major projects through the recovery and has stabilized. Dekker, born and bred in the Duke City, has been turning up the economic development volume, and that’s a good sign because, in many ways, as Dekker/Perich/

Sabatini goes, so goes Albuquerque.

Some speculate that a political run is in his future. He says no. Dekker says he is part of the Albuquerque community, business and otherwise, and wants to continue to spur the economy through leadership in the projects he pursues and the groups he’s involved in.

Dekker’s presence on boards and committees tells a big part of the story of his rise. He was just named to a three-year term as a director of Albuquerque Economic Development; is a past chair of NAIOP; the commercial real estate development association; is a member of Economic Forum of Albuquerque; and is a past district-council chair of the Urban Land Institute — a group focused on revitalizing Downtown Albuquerque, which is big with Dekker.

It doesn’t stop there. Gov. Susana Martinez appointed Dekker to the Construction Industries Commission and the state’s Workforce Development Board, and he’s involved in education — he’s on the foundation boards of both Albuquerque Public Schools and Central New Mexico Community College. He’s also leading an effort dubbed the 2065 Plan for the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce — an initiative that takes a long-range look at what the metro area might look like in 50 years.

And then there are all the commercial developments, which have catapulted Dekker/Perich/Sabatini to the helm of the city’s architecture community. Although the collaborations can be complex, Dekker says his business philosophy is relatively simple — develop a network of people and businesses, and bring them together on successful projects.

He’s designed research facilities for Sandia National Laboratories, award-winning school designs across the state and a large-scale master planning project for UNM. There are also the nationally recognized redevelopment projects such as the old Albuquerque High School’s transformation into The Lofts at Albuquerque High.

Dekker said he’d like Albuquerque to be a city where kids like his want to stay and plant roots, which is why knowing Dekker the businessman means knowing Dekker the family man. His wife, Diane, is a psychologist; the two met at Texas Tech in the early 1970s and have been married for 38 years. Dekker’s oldest son, Travis, and daughter, Paige, graduated from La Cueva High School, where his youngest son, Luke, will graduate this year. Travis attended the Air Force Academy and went to Georgetown’s School of Medicine. He’s a second-year resident at Duke University and plans to re-enter the Air Force as a captain. Paige earned an economics degree from Dartmouth and is attending UNM with plans to apply to medical school.
HOW DEKKER/PERICH/SABATINI IS BUILDING THE ALBUQUERQUE METRO AREA

PRESBYTERIAN RUST MEDICAL CENTER

Rust is considered one of the most significant projects ever to be constructed in Rio Rancho. It is now undergoing a massive expansion and has spurred ancillary businesses nearby.

COURTESY DPS/KIRK GITTINGS

PRESBYTERIAN REV. HUGH A. COOPER ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

Dekker designed Presbyterian’s new 322,000-square-foot administration headquarters near Balloon Fiesta Park in Albuquerque.

COURTESY DPS/PATRICK COULIE

ALBUQUERQUE CONVENTION CENTER RENOVATIONS

Downtown Albuquerque projects are high on Dekker’s priority list. The firm designed the $25 million renovation of the Convention Center.

COURTESY DPS

OLD ALBUQUERQUE HIGH LOFTS

Dekker and staff redeveloped old Albuquerque High into one of the most sought-after live-and-work locations in East Downtown.

COURTESY DPS/PAUL KOHLMAN

DOWNTOWN @ 700 2ND

Dekker believes the Downtown corridor needs more density to have successful revitalization. Apartment projects add to the density, he says.

COURTESY DPS/PATRICK COULIE

CASITAS DE COLORES

Dekker forged a relationship with the Jonathan Rose Cos. to bring Casitas to Downtown. The new development is almost fully leased.

COURTESY DPS/PATRICK COULIE

WHAT THEY’RE SAYING ABOUT DALE DEKKER

“I would argue that Dale has been very active in economic development and community building ever since I met him 25 years ago. When I took on the role of leading the CBRE office over 10 years ago, Dale was my role model of what a leader should do and be. He seemed to be on all of the important boards and in all of the important meetings. He is a man of high integrity who is passionate about improving the community. He is still my role model of what a leader should be.”

JIM CHYNOWETH
managing director, CBRE New Mexico

“I have worked with Dale the past two years. He is always looking into future trends and how Albuquerque can fit and benefit from these trends. [His work] is so valuable for our region and how we position ourselves to move our city and state forward.”

ELIZABETH “LISA” J. KUUTTILA
CEO and chief economic development officer
STCU/UNM

SILVER MOON LODGE

Multifamily projects are part of the firm’s portfolio mix. A unique one was completed in late 2014 in west Downtown — the Silver Moon Lodge.

COURTESY DPS

BLUEPRINTS FOR A LEGENDARY BRAND


SOURCE: DEKKER/PERICH/SABATINI
DEKKER/PERICH/SABATINI PROJECTS

DEL NORTE HIGH SCHOOL
Public school projects make up a large percentage of D/P/S’s portfolio. The firm worked on about 150,000 square feet of new structures at Del Norte.
COURTESY DPS/KIRK GITTINGS

UNM HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER MASTER PLAN
Dale Dekker and his principals have made inroads in both the health care and higher-education sectors. The HSC master plan covers 139 acres of work.
COURTESY DPS

UNM MASTER PLAN UPDATE
The firm landed the lead on a UNM master plan update (essentially a new plan, Dekker said). The plan covers 700 acres of land and property.
COURTESY DPS

ALBUQUERQUE RAPID TRANSIT
Dekker’s Mimi Burns and Tim Trujillo have been studying what would be the first leg of ART, which would cover primarily the Central Avenue corridor.
COURTESY DPS

INNOVATE ABQ
D/P/S is the architect at the Innovate ABQ site at the former First Baptist Church on Central Avenue and Broadway Boulevard east of Downtown.
FILE PHOTO

ABQ UPTOWN
Dekker took ABQ Uptown from a vacant 20-acre brownfield site to one of the city’s most desirable destinations for restaurants and retail.
COURTESY DPS/PATRICK COULIE

BY THE NUMBERS

1, 4, 3
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini is one firm with four offices (Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Phoenix, Amarillo) in three states (New Mexico, Arizona, Texas).

18
Number of principals in the firm.

9
Number of practice areas: commercial, education, government, health care, housing, interiors, planning, landscape architecture and structural engineering.

150, 80
Total number of staff and licensed professionals, respectively.

50, 3,000, $1 billion
Years of combined experience, number of projects completed and dollar value of projects, respectively.

80
Number of local, regional and national design awards received.

5, 12
D/P/S has been ranked in the top 100 fastest-growing architectural-engineering firms in the U.S. five times in the past dozen years.

THE BLUEPRINTS, CONT.

1998
Merger forms Dekker/Perich/Sabatini (D/P/S)
in Albuquerque

2000
D/P&S & HSAA Las Vegas merge to form Dekker/Perich/Holmes/Sabatini

2002
Firm named AIA Western Mountain Region Firm of the Year

2003
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini opens in Amarillo, Texas

2005
Holmes retires; company becomes Dekker/Perich/Sabatini

2006
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini completes ABQ Uptown

2007
D/P/S moves into first commercial LEED Gold office building in New Mexico

2011
D/P/S completes largest project in firm history: Presbyterian Rust Medical Center

2013
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini named Design Firm of the Year by Engineering News-Record (ENR) Southwest

2014
Dekker/Perich/Sabatini opens in Phoenix

SOURCE: DEKKER/PERICH/SABATINI