

MEETING SUMMARY
Downtown Neighborhood Area
Sector Development Plan Update

9am to 12:00pm, September 25 – MRCOG Office

The third public meeting for the Sector Plan update was held at the MRCOG office at 809 Copper NW, adjacent to the Farmer's Market at Robinson Park. There were 51 attendees signed in at the meeting. The attendees were asked to place a dot on a map showing where they lived. Based on the map, it appeared that a wider distribution of people attended the meeting than the previous two public meetings.

The primary purpose of this meeting was to review the draft Sector Plan document, which was posted on the City's web site and distributed at the meeting. The meeting format was an open house, with two brief presentations given at 9:30 and 11:00 am. Councilor Debbie O'Malley welcomed the participants to the meeting and gave a brief overview. She also explained to the participants that two separate flyers had been distributed announcing the meeting. One was from the City and the other was from a community member with commentary regarding the draft Sector Plan on the back. Councilor O'Malley wanted people to know that the flyer with commentary did not come from the City.

The presentation was an overview of the planning process and key elements of the Sector Plan. It provided contact information for the project team and City staff for any follow-up comments or questions. It also included a summary of the next steps, including the approval process through the Environmental Planning Commission and the City Council. The Sector Plan will be revised based on the open house and then submitted to the Environmental Planning Commission on October 28th for a December 2nd hearing. However, please check the City website: <http://www.cabq.gov/council/current-projects-and-studies/downtown-neighborhood-area-sector-plan-update> to confirm the date, time, and location after the submittal on October 28th.

A summary of the comments are as follows:

Land Use and Zoning:

- Concern regarding dumpsters and lack of maintenance in alleys
This is an operational issue that Staff will transmit to Solid Waste Department.
- 1105 Tijeras is a private home, not an office
Existing Land Use map and Proposed Zoning map have been revised accordingly; Existing Land Use and Proposed Zoning revised to SF.
- Gallegos Grocery on 16th is not single family
Existing Land Use map and Proposed Zoning map have been revised accordingly; Land Use revised to multi-family and Proposed Zoning retains TH zoning.
- Desire for outdoor dining areas along sidewalks
We will revise the Plan to clarify that outdoor dining areas along sidewalks are allowed. Other Sector Plans should provide a good model (Nob Hill, Downtown 2010).
- Both support for and concern regarding building heights along Central Avenue as proposed

Building height along Central is reduced from what is allowed today by the current zoning. The neighborhood's desire for reduced building heights must be balanced with Comprehensive Plan goals for increased densities and mixed-use along Enhanced Transit Corridors. The building heights proposed are a compromise since we are proposing to add residential as a permissive use to Central.

- Both support for and concern regarding the amount of parking required for new development
The proposed parking standards are relaxed for multi-family, general commercial, and office to some extent, but we kept the restaurant standard per the Code. This is a compromise with the neighborhood representatives who are concerned about overflow parking onto interior neighborhood streets.
- Desire for “Santa Fe” style buildings on Central Avenue
“Santa Fe style” is not the predominant architectural style on Central. In fact, there is a wide range of styles both along Central and throughout the neighborhood. We have not dictated a particular style for any specific areas of the DNA.
- Both support for and concern regarding density along Central
The Comprehensive Plan has policies for increased density along Enhanced Transit Corridors, such as Central. Residential density in the Central zone is per the R-3 zone in the Code. The Plan proposes to increase the range of uses possible on Central by adding multi-family residential as a permissive use.
- Parking lots should not be allowed along Central
We have allowed for a portion of the Central frontage to include parking to match several of the existing developments (Manzano Day School, Myers, Oliver and Price Law Office, and the new office building at 1429 Central NW). All parking facing Central must include screening for vehicles. This is a compromise reached by the Sector Plan Committee who didn't want to rely solely on rear access parking.
- Question regarding how much of the building would have to front Central
The Plan will be revised to clarify this element. A minimum of 50% of the lot frontage along Central must be building. The remaining 50% can be parking, courtyard, landscaping, outdoor restaurant seating, or a combination thereof. We have also revised the Plan to allow for outdoor restaurant seating that if located in front of the building, then the front setback can be an additional 5 feet for a total front setback along Central of 15 feet. If there is no outdoor restaurant seating in front of the building, then the maximum front setback along Central remains 10 feet.
- Support for mixed use and less parking
Mixed use is incorporated into several of the proposed zones: CC, which occurs along Central Avenue; MUL, which is primarily along Mountain Road; and MUM, which occurs along Lomas Boulevard. The OR zone, which occurs along Tijeras, allows office and residential, but no commercial use. Parking standards have been relaxed somewhat (see above).
- Use “dead” motels for community gardens
Community gardens are supported by the Sector Plan in the Quality of Life goals/objectives. However, community gardens along Central would not be the highest

and best use for these properties, and would not be in accordance with Comprehensive Plan goals for increased densities and mixed use along Enhanced Transit Corridors.

- Limit building colors on new development
This is a concept that has been discussed at length with the Sector Plan Committee. The Committee decided not to carry this forward in the draft Sector Plan presented at the open house. City staff also has expressed a lack of support for color control neighborhood-wide due to concerns over enforcement and interpretation.

Transportation:

- Support for transit use and desire for lit and covered bus shelters.
Enhanced transit service and improvements to bus shelters/amenities are incorporated into the transportation strategies in the Sector Plan.
- Concern regarding left turn lane and right-of-way changes proposed at 12th/Lomas
The left turn lane is recommended to address the traffic back-up at 12th Street during peak hour and fix the existing problem. This change would not impact speeds, rather, it will prevent idling cars at the intersection. The left turn lane matches what currently exists on the north side of Lomas. The existing right-of-way is adequate to allow for the turn lane. Paved surface would expand only slightly, with relatively minimal impact to the landscape parkway.
- 14th Street Bike Boulevard pavement is bad and needs traffic calming
Improvements to the 14th Street Bike Boulevard are included in the Sector Plan's Implementation Policies and Strategies.
- Neighborhood transportation study should be completed before the Sector Plan
The Transportation Study is underway, but will not be completed prior to the Sector Plan. The study builds on the Sector Plan and looks at in greater detail the local traffic system.
- Wider sidewalks needed
Wider sidewalks are included in the West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan. The Sector Plan identifies improvements to existing sidewalks and ramps, removal of impediments, and new sidewalk sections as methods to increase the walkability of the neighborhood.
- Don't remove speed humps on 12th Street
The Sector Plan does not recommend removing the speed humps. There is no reference to the existing speed humps on 12th Street in the Plan. The Plan does recommend reclassification of 12th Street from a minor arterial to a collector to support the use of traffic calming measures.
- 12th Street is mostly drive-through traffic, not local
This has been clarified in the description.
- Traffic noise from Central and Downtown
Concern will be passed on by City staff to the Downtown Action Team.

- 16th Street south of Fruit – maintain unpaved road section
This element will be added to the description contained in the Sector Plan for La Orilla de La Acequia Historic District. Should also be addressed by the Transportation Study.
- Numerous concerns regarding local streets and flow including:
 - Mountain Road, 7th to 12th needs wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and relocation of power poles
 - Fruit dead end – needs signs
 - 11th/Granite corner – cut through to Lowes Grocery Store
 - 11th Street, Mountain to Lomas – narrow, especially with parked cars
 - Laguna, Central to Lomas – drag racing, no speed humps
 - 15th/Lomas – no parking sign is ignored because street is wide
 - Laguna/Central – cut through to Lomas
 - 12th Street – wants stop signs to discourage cut through
 - 7th/Lomas – can Slate be permit parking only

These local street and traffic flow issues will be addressed in the Neighborhood Transportation Study, which is a key Implementation Policy/Strategy contained in the Sector Plan.
- Bike racks needed in new development
Bike racks are required by the Zone Code for new commercial development. The Sector Plan includes working with existing business owners on adding bike racks.

Historic Preservation:

- Allow application for tax incentives/credits/rebates on repairs that couldn't wait due to emergency that would otherwise have been approved by review committee
This has been passed along to Mary Ellen Hennessy and Ed Boles, City Lucc staff and Historic Preservation Planner, respectively.

General Comments:

- Promote recycling
The Sector Plan promotes the adaptive reuse of buildings as one method of recycling
- Maintenance of street trees (as promoted and required by the Sector Plan) should be assured; the DNA should be made responsible – grant funds available
Assuming full responsibility for street trees should stay with the property owner. DNA could potentially assist with planting and maintenance. This should be taken to the DNA Board for its concurrence, but not something the Sector Plan can place responsibility for.
- Support for the Sector Plan and planning process
Thanks!