



**Environmental
Planning
Commission**

**Agenda Number: 2
Project Number: 1005238
Case #s: 14EPC-40032, 14EPC-40033
October 2, 2014**

Supplemental Staff Report

Agent	City of Albuquerque Planning Department
Applicant	City of Albuquerque
Request	Amendment to Map of Coors Corridor Plan Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan
Legal Desc.	The Rights-of-way of Coors Blvd. and Coors Blvd. Bypass and all lots generally located on and/or near Coors Blvd. and Coors Bypass between Bridge Blvd. and Alameda Blvd., containing approximately 2,200 acres.
Current Zoning	Various
Proposed Zoning	No change

Staff Recommendation

RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL to the City Council of Case #s 14EPC-40032 (Amendment to Corridor Plan Map) and 14EPC-40033 (Adoption of Rank 3 Corridor Plan), based on the recommended Findings and Conditions beginning on page 4.

**Staff Planner
Carol Toffaleti, Senior Planner**

Summary of Analysis

[This staff report should be read in conjunction with the staff reports dated June 5, July 10, and August 14, 2014]

The 2014 Coors Corridor Plan is proposed replace the existing Plan (1984, as amended) in order to reflect current higher-ranking City plans and policies and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, as well as current conditions in the area. The proposed Plan area extends 11 miles along Coors Blvd. and Coors Blvd. Bypass from Bridge Blvd. in the south to Alameda Blvd. in the north. In addition to the rights-of-way of Coors Blvd. and Coors Bypass, it encompasses adjacent properties in the City with a total area of approximately 2,200 acres.

This Rank 3 Plan establishes a multi-modal transportation strategy to address worsening traffic congestion along the Corridor by providing policies and design standards and recommending projects in the rights-of-way of Coors Blvd. and Coors Bypass, including a Bus Rapid Transit route. The transportation component of the Plan is advisory to the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), the agency with jurisdiction over these state highways. The Design Overlay Zone (DOZ) component regulates certain aspects of development on private properties that are adjacent to the arterials and under City jurisdiction, but it does not establish land uses or change their underlying zoning. Special View Preservation regulations apply to a sub-area that extends east of Coors and north of Namaste Rd., in order to preserve views toward the Sandia Mountains from Coors Blvd. The Plan also recommends public improvements to streetscapes and to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed DOZ (both the area and associated regulations) meets the tests in R-270-1980. It is more appropriate than the existing DOZ due to changed conditions in the Corridor and it furthers applicable goals and policies in higher-ranked plans, including the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, the West Side Strategic Plan and the Major Public Open Space Facility Plan.

There is both stakeholder support and opposition to the April 2014 EPC draft Plan. The concerns center on: the impact of road widening for a future Bus Rapid Transit system and of potential major roadway projects on adjacent properties and neighborhoods; and the changes to the View Preservation regulations regarding structure height and massing. The October 2014 Red-Line attached to this report incorporates staff's recommended revisions to the April 2014 draft Plan, as directed by the EPC and in response to comments and testimony. It reflects input from City, Bernalillo County, Regional and State agency staff, neighborhood associations, business and commercial property-owners, residents and other parties with a particular interest in the function and appearance of the Corridor.

The April 2014 EPC draft Plan and October 2014 Red-Line are available at <http://www.TinyURL.com/cabq-coorscorridorplan>

The 1984 plan is listed in alphabetical order at <http://www.cabq.gov/planning/publications/>

I. UPDATE

At the conclusion of the August 14, 2014 EPC hearing, the EPC provided direction to staff for improving the draft Plan, including the addition of a vision statement and diagram to convey the purpose of the Plan and identify the lead agencies responsible for reviewing and approving development and for project implementation.

Since the hearing, the project team (City DMD and Planning staff, and the transportation consultant) has met with the District 3 NMDOT Engineer and his staff to flesh out more details about NMDOT's processes. The NMDOT has submitted a letter to the EPC explaining the scope of their authority and their standard operating procedures, and stating their position on the draft Coors Corridor Plan (see att.). The information on authority and responsibility for different elements of the Coors/Bypass ROW is being incorporated into a table in the draft Plan (Chapter B).

Planning staff has obtained a copy of the roadway exchange agreement that transferred jurisdiction and responsibility from the City to NMDOT in 2010 for the segment of Coors Blvd. between Bridge Blvd. and St. Josephs Dr. (see Exhibit F. att.). DMD staff has provided a cover memo that provides some general context for these kinds of exchanges.

Planning staff also met with representatives of interested neighborhoods (Taylor Ranch NA, La Luz Landowners Assoc., Las Casitas del Rio II HOA, Alban Hills NA) and the development community (Consensus Planning, Hugh Floyd Development Services) regarding the View Preservation regulations. A joint meeting held on September 11th was an opportunity to clarify positions and priorities, and to seek compromise on some issues. Notes of the meeting are attached, along with exhibits brought by staff and participants to the discussion (Exhibit E).

The October 2014 Red-Line of the draft Plan attached to this report is a revision of the April 2014 EPC draft Plan, that incorporates EPC suggestions, staff responses to comments entered in the August 2014 Matrix, and other staff recommendations including clerical corrections and minor editorial changes. Some of the map series in the Plan have been updated, e.g. drainage facilities, bikeways and trails, and sections such as demographics have been completed (see Appendix F). Substantive revisions to the text and diagrams are indicated in red and deleted text is struck-out in red. The revisions are followed by a reference in brackets to either the comment [number] in the August 2014 Matrix, EPC direction [E], or staff recommendation [S].

III. ADDITIONAL INPUT

Public

A resident of the Andalucia neighborhood (Namaste/Coors area) has submitted additional suggestions for managing traffic congestion in the Corridor and a critique of noise walls. Officers of the Taylor Ranch NA have sent comments that reiterate and expand on their previous submittals. Although they support some elements of the 2014 Plan, they object to: the transportation projects, which they think would adversely affect their neighborhood (Coors/Montano interchange, Winter Haven connector street); the omission of some environmental and design goals and policies in the

1984 Plan; and to changes in the View Preservation regulations, which they feel are weaker and more complicated than the 1984 regulations. (See Exhibit D att.)

Agency

See the NMDOT letter dated 9/25/2014 attached to this staff report (Exhibit B).

All the additional input is attached to the staff report, but is only partially addressed in the October 2014 Red-Line due to time constraints. The EPC may want to address them in additional recommended conditions of approval.

VI. CONCLUSION

The October 2014 Red-Line of the Coors Corridor Plan updates a 30-year old Plan for a key thoroughfare on the City's West Side, whose visual quality and transportation function are highly valued by local residents and commercial property interests. Coors Blvd. and Coors Bypass not only connect to several river crossings and the local street network, but private land along the 11-mile Corridor provides residential and commercial uses for the West Side community. The design of this built environment is an important consideration throughout the Plan area, but especially so in the stretch north of Western Trail/Namaste where a significant strip of the Rio Grande valley is protected as Open Space and views to the Sandia Mountains are exceptional. The new long-range Plan provides a policy and regulatory framework to continue protecting and enhancing these attributes of the Corridor, but it also reflects current conditions and City plans and codes, and addresses the traffic congestion forecast 20 years hence by metropolitan transportation models. It also aims to be more user-friendly and predictable, for example by consolidating all development design policies and regulations in one chapter and providing detailed information on procedures, including NMDOT's processes, and criteria for deviations to the DOZ.

The proposed multi-modal transportation strategy and Design Overlay Zone of the new Plan further a preponderance of City policies and plans. While the Plan does not change land uses in the Corridor, the amended boundary and development regulations of the DOZ have been justified per R-270-1980, the City's test for zoning changes, due to changed conditions in the area.

The April 2014 EPC draft generated both support and opposition from residents, businesses and commercial property-owners. Staff believes that the October 2014 Red-Line has addressed many of the public's concerns about the DOZ policies and regulations. The Red-Line fosters quality development that is sensitive to natural context and views and accessible by all transport modes, and provides predictable rules for all interested parties yet some flexibility of design within set criteria. There remains some misunderstanding about the transportation policies and long-range projects in the state right-of-way, but the letter from the NMDOT dated 9/25/2014 in the public record along with clarifying language in the Plan should help dispel some of this uncertainty.

Staff respectfully requests that the EPC forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council for the Plan area and adoption of the new Coors Corridor Plan, based on recommended findings and the revisions in the Red-Line that serve as recommended conditions.

FINDINGS - #1005238, 14EPC-40032, Amendment to Map of Coors Corridor Plan, and 14EPC-40033, Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan - October 2, 2014

1. The dual request is for an amendment to the existing map of the Coors Corridor Plan and a request for adoption of the proposed Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan to replace the 1984 plan.
2. *The Charter of the City of Albuquerque, Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, West Side Strategic Plan, Major Public Open Space Facility Plan, Bosque Action Plan, Facility Plan for Arroyos, Facility Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation 2010-2020, Trails and Bikeways Facility Plan, Albuquerque On-Street Comprehensive Bike Plan, Coors Corridor Plan (1984, amended), §1-13 of the City of Albuquerque Code of Resolutions, the City of Albuquerque Zoning Code and 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.*
3. The proposed Plan area extends approximately 11 miles from Bridge Blvd. in the south to Alameda Blvd. in the north along Coors Blvd. and Coors Blvd. Bypass. In addition to the rights-of-way of Coors Blvd. and the Bypass, it encompasses adjacent properties in the City with a total area of approximately 2,200 acres.
4. Coors Blvd. and Coors Bypass are part of the state highway system and are currently under the jurisdiction of the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). The segment of Coors Blvd. in the Plan area that includes Coors Bypass is part of NM45, and is designated a principal arterial with limited access. The segment of Coors Blvd. from Coors Bypass to Alameda Blvd. is part of NM448 and is designated a principal arterial. The roads' functional class is designated per the Interim Long Range Roadway System Map (Metropolitan Transportation Board R-13-17, 10/08/2013).
5. The segment of Coors Blvd. between Bridge Blvd. and St. Josephs Dr. was transferred from the City to NMDOT in a roadway exchange agreement executed on 11/29/2010, which means that all of NM45 and NM448 within the proposed Coors Corridor Plan area is under the NMDOT's jurisdiction..
6. The proposed Plan area contains three regulatory sub- areas, which overlap to some degree: a Transportation sub-area along all of Coors Blvd. and Coors Blvd. Bypass, where the transportation policies and requirements apply; a Design Overlay Zone (DOZ) along Coors Blvd. beginning north of Central Ave., where the general development regulations apply; and a View Preservation sub-area within the DOZ that covers the area east of Coors Blvd. and north of Namaste Trail, where the view preservation regulations apply.
7. Additions to the 1984 Plan area are:

- The segment between Central and Bridge that extends to meet the northern edge of unincorporated Bernalillo County and the Bridge Blvd. Corridor Plan Area under its jurisdiction;
- The segment along the Coors Blvd. Bypass, which was built since the 1984 Coors Corridor Plan was adopted and is part of NM45.

The transportation component of the Plan will apply to properties along these two segments of Coors Blvd. to provide a consistent policy framework for the Corridor that winds almost entirely through City jurisdiction. The DOZ will not apply to these two segments, because other Rank 3 sector development plans already govern the design of development in those areas:

Tower/Unser, West Route 66, and Seven-Bar Ranch SDPs.

8. The following properties are being removed from the 1984 Plan area:
 - Properties that are not contiguous to Coors Blvd. and are under Bernalillo County jurisdiction or zoned for single-family residential use.
 - Land in the Rio Grande Valley State Park east of the Lower Corrales Riverside Drain , which is covered by other City plans (*Major Public Open Space Facility Plan, Bosque Action Plan*)

Properties being removed that are located within the City will continue to be subject to the Zoning Code and other applicable City plans and codes.

9. The proposed Plan aims to protect natural endowments of the Coors Corridor and to promote an aesthetic and humane urban environment with multi-modal transportation strategies and design standards. Updating the Plan, including the geographic area to which it applies, is a reasonable exercise in local self-government consistent with the *City Charter*.
10. The proposed Plan, including its Plan area, is consistent with and furthers several goals and policies of the *Comprehensive Plan*: [cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]
 1. The proposed landscape setback/buffers of Open Space lands and the requirements for trail connections in the DOZ further the Open Space Network Goal and policies II.B.1.c & f.
 2. The policies and regulations in the DOZ aim to enhance the quality of the built environment of the Coors Corridor. The View Preservation regulations will help maintain its unique vistas. The site design guidelines encourage respect for any natural and scenic resources adjacent to development sites as well as the existing topography within sites. Mitigation of traffic noise along Coors Blvd. and the Bypass will be considered in relation to future transportation projects, per Chapter C in the Plan, while the landscape strip required by the DOZ all along these arterials provide additional buffering for users of adjacent properties. The View Preservation regulations contain additional architectural standards to ensure developments are designed to complement the

- backdrop created by the bosque and other Open Space lands. (Developing And Established Urban Areas Goal, Policies II.B.5.d, g, k & m)
3. The Plan aims to balance furthering the Activity Center Goal and Policy II.B.7.c for transit-supportive, higher-density development on the one hand, and other Goals (Developing And Established Urban Areas, Developed Landscape) by allowing deviations to the View Preservation regulations within specific parameters and subject to EPC review (see B.4.3)
 4. The Plan calls for a multi-modal transportation strategy for the future of Coors Blvd. and the Bypass that includes Bus Rapid Transit (from Central Ave. to Alameda Blvd.), walking and cycling, based on a thorough analysis of a range of alternatives (Air Quality Goal, policies II.C.1.d & g)
 5. Several policies and regulations in the DOZ help maintain the quality of the natural and developed landscapes in the Corridor, including: buffers for Open Space lands; consideration of natural features within and adjacent to development sites at the site design stage; structure height and mass regulations, particularly in the View Preservation sub-area. (Developed Landscape Goal, Policies II.C.8.a & e)
 6. The transportation alternatives analysis completed for the Coors Corridor fulfills the Goal and Policy II.D.4.a. The multi-modal transportation strategy and individual policies in Chapter C of the Plan, supported by regulations in the DOZ, help implement the remaining policies of this section to balance the mobility needs of all roadway users and improve connectivity in the Plan area. (Transportation and Transit Goal, Policies II.D.4.a, g, h, i & q)
11. The proposed Plan, including its Plan area, is consistent with and furthers several goals and policies of the *West Side Strategic Plan*: [cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]
1. The transportation and DOZ elements of the Plan are geared specifically to the Coors Corridor, a critical thoroughfare and prominent area on the West Side. They are formulated to strike a balance between addressing the increase in traffic that is forecast for the West Side with preserving its unique scenic resources. (Objectives 2 & 3)
 2. The proposed update to the DOZ includes View Preservation regulations and guidelines for properties east of Coors and north of Namaste Rd.. They call for site layout and structure height and mass that retain a portion of the views to the Sandia Mountains, and to the bosque where possible. They have been calibrated to allow development, and deviations to regulations in certain circumstances, subject to meeting specific criteria and to public review and approval through the EPC hearing process. Sections C.11 and E.3 of the Plan are coordinated to help implement public viewsites as part of roadway projects and on other public land in the Corridor, where they can capitalize on grade differences and proximity to trails and Open Space. Public viewsites are also encouraged in private

- non-residential developments where public amenities are already required by general regulations in the Zoning Code (§ 14-16-3-18). (4. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS ISSUES – Views East of Coors Blvd.)
3. The proposed DOZ furthers the policies and addresses most of the elements of a development that are identified by the WSSP under “Other Views” and “Visual Quality” including: Height; Lighting; Vegetation; Overhead Utilities; Signs; Fences and Walls; Standards for multi-modal access in residential and commercial developments (4. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS ISSUES, Policies 4.6, 4.6 c, e, g & h)
 4. Chapter C of the Plan partially furthers the intent by recommending dedicated transit lanes and providing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on Coors Blvd. and the Bypass. The DOZ also calls for segments and connections to multi-use trails to be provided through the development process. (6. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM)
 5. The DOZ requires a landscape setback/buffer along the San Antonio and Calabacillas Arroyos and other public surface drainage facilities (D.3.3). It also calls for trail segments and aggregate common space to be provided through the development process, along arroyos designated in the Facility Plan for Arroyos. (7. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, RECREATION AND SPECIAL AREAS, Policy 7.6.)
12. Segments of, and connections to, existing trails along arroyos are required within the proposed Design Overlay Zone by DOZ regulation D.3.7, and landscape setback/buffers are required to retain existing vegetation by D.3.3 iv). These further General Policy 6 and Major Open Space Arroyo Policy 4 of the *Facility Plan for Arroyos*. [cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]
13. DOZ regulation D.3.11 applicable to the proposed Design Overlay Zone refers to the *Facility Plan: Electric System Transmission & Generation 2010-2020*, which meets the goal and objective 5 of this Rank 2 plan. [cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]
14. Transportation and DOZ policies and regulations, and the public project recommendations for the Plan area further the goals, objectives and policies of the *Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan* (TBFP) and the *Albuquerque Comprehensive On-street Bicycle Plan*, by requiring on-street bicycle facilities, and segments of, and connections to, the trail network designated in the TBFP.
15. Chapter C of the Plan furthers the themes of the *2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* through its multi-modal strategy and policies that call for dedicated transit lanes and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists within the rights-of-way of Coors Blvd. and the Bypass.
16. The proposed Design Overlay Zone (DOZ) in the Coors Corridor Plan meets the criteria in §14-16-2-28 (F) DO Design Overlay Zone of the Zoning Code:

1. The size exceeds 320 acres and is part of a Rank 3 sector development plan (in this case the “sector” follows the Coors Blvd./Bypass Corridor).
 2. It meets at least two of the conditions: (a) The DOZ includes the View Preservation sub-area, which has highly significant views of the Sandia Mountains and, to some extent, of the bosque; (c) the DOZ encompasses properties adjacent to a 10-mile stretch of Coors Blvd. and the Bypass, which are principal arterials of local and regional significance for north-south as well as east-west mobility, since they connect to five river crossings that provide access to major employment, educational and health centers.
17. The proposed changes to the DOZ, which applies to the majority of the Plan area, are justified per R-270-1980 because the existing DOZ boundary and regulations are no longer appropriate due to changed conditions in the Coors Corridor area. The justification is split between two findings (17 & 18 below) that analyze the Amendment to Map of Coors Corridor Plan and Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan individually.
18. R-270-1980 justification for Case# 14EPC-40032, Amendment to Map of Coors Corridor Plan:
[cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]
- A. A proposed zone change must be found to be consistent with the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the city.

The proposed changes to the DOZ are consistent with the health, safety and general welfare of the many citizens who frequent the Coors Corridor, including requirements to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections that make walking and cycling more convenient and safer, which in turn promote active, healthful travel (D.3.6 and D.3.); and requirement to control fugitive dust per the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Fugitive Dust Ordinance in the NM Administrative Code (D.3.10 a. and c.). The DOZ does not affect the morals of the city since no land use change is involved.
 - B. Stability of land use and zoning is desirable; therefore the applicant must provide a sound justification for the change. The burden is on the applicant to show why the change should be made, not on the city to show why the change should not be made.

Thirty years have now elapsed since adoption, along with increased urbanization of the Corridor. Although a few of the DOZ regulations in the existing plan have been amended since 1984, the changes that are currently proposed are more comprehensive and would bring the DOZ in closer compliance with current higher-ranked City plans and policies. However, the new DOZ boundary has been carefully chosen to only encompass properties where future development and redevelopment needs to be controlled to fully realize City goals and policies that are applicable to the Coors Corridor. Properties have been removed that are not contiguous to Coors Blvd., are under Bernalillo County jurisdiction or are

zoned for single-family residential use, along with land close to the Rio Grande valley that is now protected as public Open Space.

- C. A proposed change shall not be in significant conflict with adopted elements of the Comprehensive Plan or other city master plans and amendments thereto, including privately developed area plans which have been adopted by the city.

The proposed changes to the DOZ are not in significant conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or other applicable plans:

- 1. The 1984 DOZ boundary was amended to exclude areas where development is already governed by design regulations in the Tower/Unser and West Route 66 Sector Development Plans (SDPs). This is to avoid conflict between overlapping sets of regulations that is often unproductive and confusing for all interested parties. The proposed DOZ continues to overlap with the East Atrisco, University of Albuquerque, Riverview and Seven-Bar Ranch SDPs, because these have either no design regulations or only guidelines, but the area of overlap has been minimized.*
- 2. The new DOZ is updated and furthers a preponderance of elements in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (CP), the West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP), the Facility Plan for Arroyos (FPA), and Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan (TBFP) References to regulations in the DOZ are in [brackets] at the end of each citation. These include:*
 - a. (CP) Open Space Network Policy II.B.1.f., (FPA) General Policy 1 - Encouraging Multiple Use, (FPA) General Policy 6 - Appropriate Access, by providing segments of multi-use trails and connections to trails along arroyos and ditches through the development process [D.3.7].*
 - b. (WSSP) Arroyos Policy 7.6, by buffering and enhancing arroyos that are designated in the FPA for their value as open space and recreational corridors [D.3.3 ii), D.3.18 ii) e.]*
 - c. (TBFP) Multi-Use Trail policy – Access Standards, by requiring pedestrian access to the trail system at the time of platting or site development plan approval where appropriate [D.3.7 ii)]*
 - d. (CP) Developing And Established Urban Areas Policy II.B.5.d and II.B.5.m, by controlling the design of new development through View Preservation regulations so that development respects unique vistas and scenic resources valued by area residents and the wider community [D.4.0].*
 - e. (CP) Developed Landscape Policy II.C.8.e, (FPA) Major Open Space Arroyo Policy 4 - Preserving Topsoil And Existing Vegetation, by providing guidelines and regulations to ensure that buildings are sited to minimize alteration of existing*

vegetation and topography and visibility of structures in scenic vista areas [D.3.2 i), D.3.3. iv) c., D.3.9 iii), D.4.0]

- f. (CP) Transportation and Transit Policy II.D.4.g, by integrating pedestrian opportunities into development to create safe and pleasant non-motorized travel conditions [D.3.6, D.3.7].*
- g. (WSSP) Visual Quality Policy 4.6, by formulating regulations for the Coors Corridor that control several aspects of development: site design to preserve some degree of bosque and mountain views and other views; signs that enhance development and protect views; building height and massing; lighting that protects the "night sky"; the retention of existing vegetation; and openings in walls to allow access for pedestrians and cyclists. [D.4.0, D.3.16 & 4.6, D.3.12 & 4.3, D.3.15 & 4.5, [D.3.2 i), D.3.3. iv) c., D.3.9 iii)]*
- h. (WSSP) Residential Development Policy 4.6.c, by limiting the size of gated communities and requiring openings in their perimeter walls for pedestrians and cyclists [D.3.18 i) b.]*
- i. (WSSP) Commercial Development Policy 4.6.h, by limiting the maximum number of parking spaces to 10% above Zoning Code requirements in developments and requiring a multi-modal circulation plan that provides routes to neighboring properties, adjacent streets, and transit service, as well as convenient internal access [D.3.8, D.3.2 iii)]*

D. The applicant must demonstrate that the existing zoning is inappropriate because:

1. There was an error when the existing zone map pattern was created; or
2. Changed neighborhood or community conditions justify the change; or
3. A different use category is more advantageous to the community, as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan or other city master plan, even though (D)(1) or (D)(2) above do not apply.

The changes to the boundary of the DOZ are justified per D.2.

The Coors Corridor has changed since the existing Plan was adopted 30 years ago. Residential population along the Coors Corridor has doubled. Vehicular traffic flows on Coors Blvd. and the Bypass have increased accordingly, fuelled by similar growth across the West Side and northwest of the City, and are forecast to continue increasing significantly over the next 20 years. Coors Blvd. has been widened from four to six lanes. Coors Blvd. and the Bypass have become a critical conduit for travel across the river on six bridges between the West Side and major employment centers. While private motorized transport is the predominant mode of transportation, several bus routes now use this designated Major Transit Corridor and should provide a viable alternative for more commuters in the future. Although much of the adjacent land has been developed for

residential and commercial use, some private vacant land remains open for development, and redevelopment will also occur over time. On the other hand, significant areas in the valley have been set aside by the City since 1984 as public Open Space for their natural, agricultural or archaeological value and will not become part of the urban fabric along this principal arterial.

The proposed DOZ boundary is more appropriate because it reflects these changed conditions along the Corridor since 1984 and excludes properties that the City believes no longer warrant an additional layer of design control over and above their underlying zoning, regulations of other SDPs and/or the general regulations of the Zoning Code, including:

- *Bernalillo County has chosen not to adopt an updated DOZ given the small area of undeveloped land that remains under their jurisdiction in the Corridor, and therefore land under county jurisdiction is removed from the DOZ.*
- *The east edge of the new DOZ ends at the Corrales Riverside Drain instead of the center line of the Rio Grande, because the Rio Grande Valley State Park and City Open Space are now continuous along the river and are controlled by other policies, laws and regulations.*
- *The boundary follows current property lines and encompasses sites with multiple lots that are governed by approved site development plans throughout the Corridor.*
- *Land that is zoned and already developed for single-family residential use and that is not contiguous to or directly accessed from Coors Blvd. The City considers it unnecessary to continue including properties that: are not immediately adjacent to the Coors ROW; whose zoning is inherently stable; and are unlikely to be redeveloped within the time horizon of the Plan (10 to 20 years). The exception is the View Preservation sub-area.*

E. A change of zone shall not be approved where some of the permissive uses in the zone would be harmful to adjacent property, the neighborhood, or the community.

Not applicable because the change to the DOZ does not affect land uses.

F. A proposed zone change which, to be utilized through land development, requires major and unprogrammed capital expenditures by the city may be:

1. Denied due to lack of capital funds; or
2. Granted with the implicit understanding that the city is not bound to provide the capital improvements on any special schedule.

Not applicable because the change to the DOZ is not related to a specific development and does not require any capital expenditure by the city.

- G. The cost of land or other economic considerations pertaining to the applicant shall not be the determining factor for a change of zone.

Not applicable because the cost of any specific piece of land or other economic considerations pertaining to the city are not the determining factor for the request to update the DOZ.

- H. Location on a collector or major street is not in itself sufficient justification for apartment, office, or commercial zoning.

Not applicable because the change does not affect land uses types in the DOZ area.

- I. A zone change request which would give a zone different from surrounding zoning to one small area, especially when only one premise is involved, is generally called a “spot zone.” Such a change of zone may be approved only when:

1. The change will clearly facilitate realization of the Comprehensive Plan and any applicable adopted sector development plan or area development plan; or
2. The area of the proposed zone change is different from surrounding land because it could function as a transition between adjacent zones; because the site is not suitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone due to topography, traffic, or special adverse land uses nearby; or because the nature of structures already on the premises makes the site unsuitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone.

The change to the DOZ does not affect one small area.

- J. A zone change request, which would give a zone different from surrounding zoning to a strip of land along a street is generally called “strip zoning.” Strip commercial zoning will be approved only where:

1. The change will clearly facilitate realization of the Comprehensive Plan and any adopted sector development plan or area development plan; and
2. The area of the proposed zone change is different from surrounding land because it could function as a transition between adjacent zones or because the site is not suitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone due to traffic or special adverse land uses nearby.

The existing and proposed DOZ generally affect land along a street, i.e. Coors Blvd., but neither affect the type of land uses in the Corridor. The change does not call for strip commercial zoning.

19. R-270-1980 justification for Case# 14EPC-40033, Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan.:
[cross-references are to the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan]

- A. A proposed zone change must be found to be consistent with the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the city.

The proposed changes to the DOZ are consistent with the health, safety and general welfare of the many citizens who frequent the Coors Corridor, including requirements to provide pedestrian and bicycle connections that make walking and cycling more convenient and safer, which in turn promote active, healthful travel [D.3.6 and D.3]; and requirement to control fugitive dust per the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Fugitive Dust Ordinance in the NM Administrative Code [D.3.10 a. and c.]. The DOZ does not affect the morals of the city since no land use change is involved.

- B. Stability of land use and zoning is desirable; therefore the applicant must provide a sound justification for the change. The burden is on the applicant to show why the change should be made, not on the city to show why the change should not be made.

Thirty years have now elapsed since adoption, along with increased urbanization of the Corridor. Although a few of the DOZ regulations in the existing plan have been amended since 1984, the changes that are currently proposed are more comprehensive and would bring the DOZ in closer compliance with current higher-ranked City plans and policies.

- C. A proposed change shall not be in significant conflict with adopted elements of the Comprehensive Plan or other city master plans and amendments thereto, including privately developed area plans which have been adopted by the city.

The proposed changes to the DOZ are not in significant conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or other applicable plans:

1. *The new DOZ is updated and furthers a preponderance of elements in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan (CP), the West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP), the Facility Plan for Arroyos (FPA), and Trails & Bikeways Facility Plan (TBFP) References to the DOZ regulations in the April 2014 EPC Coors Corridor Plan are in [brackets] at the end of each citation. These include:*

- a. *(CP) Open Space Network Policy II.B.1.c, by protecting Major Public Open Space areas from adjacent development through setbacks landscaped with native vegetation [D.3.3 ii) - iv)].*
- b. *(CP) Open Space Network Policy II.B.1.f., (FPA) General Policy 1 - Encouraging Multiple Use, (FPA) General Policy 6 - Appropriate Access, by providing segments of multi-use trails and connections to trails along arroyos and ditches through the development process [D.3.7].*
- c. *(WSSP) Arroyos Policy 7.6, by buffering and enhancing arroyos that are designated in the FPA for their value as open space and recreational corridors [D.3.3 ii), D.3.18 ii) e.]*

- d. ***(TBFP) Multi-Use Trail policy – Access Standards***, by requiring pedestrian access to the trail system at the time of platting or site development plan approval where appropriate [D.3.7 ii)]
- e. ***(CP) Developing And Established Urban Areas Policy II.B.5.d and II.B.5.m***, by controlling the design of new development through View Preservation regulations so that development respects unique vistas and scenic resources valued by area residents and the wider community [D.4.0].
- f. ***(CP) Developed Landscape Policy II.C.8.e, (FPA) Major Open Space Arroyo Policy 4 - Preserving Topsoil And Existing Vegetation***, by providing guidelines and regulations to ensure that buildings are sited to minimize alteration of existing vegetation and topography and visibility of structures in scenic vista areas [D.3.2 i), D.3.3. iv) c., D.3.9 iii), D.4.0]
- g. ***(CP) Transportation and Transit Policy II.D.4.g***, by integrating pedestrian opportunities into development to create safe and pleasant non-motorized travel conditions [D.3.6, D.3.7].
- h. ***(WSSP) Visual Quality Policy 4.6***, by formulating regulations for the Coors Corridor that control several aspects of development: site design to preserve some degree of bosque and mountain views and other views; signs that enhance development and protect views; building height and massing; lighting that protects the "night sky"; the retention of existing vegetation; and openings in walls to allow access for pedestrians and cyclists. [D.4.0, D.3.16 & 4.6, D.3.12 & 4.3, D.3.15 & 4.5, [D.3.2 i), D.3.3. iv) c., D.3.9 iii)]
- i. ***(WSSP) Residential Development Policy 4.6.c***, by limiting the size of gated communities and requiring openings in their perimeter walls for pedestrians and cyclists [D.3.18 i) b.]
- j. ***(WSSP) Commercial Development Policy 4.6.h***, by limiting the maximum number of parking spaces to 10% above Zoning Code requirements in developments and requiring a multi-modal circulation plan that provides routes to neighboring properties, adjacent streets, and transit service, as well as convenient internal access [D.3.8, D.3.2 iii)]

D. The applicant must demonstrate that the existing zoning is inappropriate because:

- 4. There was an error when the existing zone map pattern was created; or
- 5. Changed neighborhood or community conditions justify the change; or
- 6. A different use category is more advantageous to the community, as articulated in the Comprehensive Plan or other city master plan, even though (D)(1) or (D)(2) above do not apply.

The changes to the regulations of the 1984 DOZ are justified per D.2.

The Coors Corridor has changed since the existing Plan was adopted 30 years ago. Residential population along the Coors Corridor has doubled. Vehicular traffic flows on Coors Blvd. and the Bypass have increased accordingly, fuelled by similar growth across the West Side and northwest of the City, and are forecast to continue increasing significantly over the next 20 years. Coors Blvd. has been widened from four to six lanes within the right-of-way designated in the 1984 Plan. Coors Blvd. and the Bypass have become a critical conduit for travel across the river on six bridges between the West Side and major employment centers. While private motorized transport is the predominant mode of transportation, several bus routes now use this designated Major Transit Corridor and should provide a viable alternative for more commuters in the future. Although much of the adjacent land has been developed for residential and commercial use, some private vacant land remains open for development, and redevelopment will also occur over time. On the other hand, significant areas in the valley have been set aside by the City since 1984 as public Open Space for their natural, agricultural or archaeological value and will not become part of the urban fabric along this principal arterial.

The design regulations for development in the Coors Corridor area (referenced in brackets under C. above) are more appropriate because they have been updated to realize City goals and objectives in higher-ranking plans that are more current than the existing DOZ, including:

- (CP) Open Space Network Goal: “to provide visual relief from urbanization and to offer opportunities for education, recreation, cultural activities, and conservation of natural resources by setting aside Major Public Open Space, parks, trail corridors, and open areas throughout the Comprehensive Plan area”
- (CP) Transportation and Transit Goal: “to develop corridors, both streets and adjacent land uses, that provide a balanced circulation system through efficient placement of employment and services, and encouragement of bicycling, walking, and use of transit/paratransit as alternatives to automobile travel, while providing sufficient roadway capacity to meet mobility and access needs.”
- (CP) Developing And Established Urban Areas Goal: “to create a quality urban environment, which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work areas, and life styles, while creating a visually pleasing built environment.”
- (WSSP) Objective 2 - “Provide the opportunity for creative and innovative solutions to housing, utility, and transportation problems. Improve upon methodologies employed elsewhere in the region in order to eliminate repetition of previous mistakes. Provide incentives for "good" development, not just deterrents for "bad" development, through design requirements specifically geared toward the West Side environment.”

- (WSSP) **Objective 3** - *“Plan for the ability to manage and preserve unique West Side resources (scenic, natural, cultural, historical, and spiritual) within the context of a growing metropolitan area.*

E. A change of zone shall not be approved where some of the permissive uses in the zone would be harmful to adjacent property, the neighborhood, or the community.

Not applicable because the change to the DOZ does not affect land uses.

F. A proposed zone change which, to be utilized through land development, requires major and unprogrammed capital expenditures by the city may be:

3. Denied due to lack of capital funds; or
4. Granted with the implicit understanding that the city is not bound to provide the capital improvements on any special schedule.

Not applicable because the change to the DOZ is not related to a specific development and does not require any capital expenditure by the city.

G. The cost of land or other economic considerations pertaining to the applicant shall not be the determining factor for a change of zone.

Not applicable because the cost of any specific piece of land or other economic considerations pertaining to the city are not the determining factor for the request to update the DOZ.

H. Location on a collector or major street is not in itself sufficient justification for apartment, office, or commercial zoning.

Not applicable because the change does not affect land uses types in the DOZ area.

I. A zone change request which would give a zone different from surrounding zoning to one small area, especially when only one premise is involved, is generally called a “spot zone.” Such a change of zone may be approved only when:

3. The change will clearly facilitate realization of the Comprehensive Plan and any applicable adopted sector development plan or area development plan; or
4. The area of the proposed zone change is different from surrounding land because it could function as a transition between adjacent zones; because the site is not suitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone due to topography, traffic, or special adverse land uses nearby; or because the nature of structures already on the premises makes the site unsuitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone.

The change to the DOZ does not affect one small area.

J. A zone change request, which would give a zone different from surrounding zoning to a strip of land along a street is generally called “strip zoning.” Strip commercial zoning will be approved only where:

3. The change will clearly facilitate realization of the Comprehensive Plan and any adopted sector development plan or area development plan; and
4. The area of the proposed zone change is different from surrounding land because it could function as a transition between adjacent zones or because the site is not suitable for the uses allowed in any adjacent zone due to traffic or special adverse land uses nearby.

The existing and proposed DOZ generally affect land along a street, i.e. Coors Blvd., but neither affect the type of land uses in the Corridor. The change does not call for strip commercial zoning.

20. In addition to inter-departmental and agency consultation since 2010, the planning effort for the transportation element and overall Plan update was informed by public participation in the form of four open houses held in 2011 and two in 2013, presentations and discussions with neighborhood, business and commercial development groups, and conversations with individual stakeholders. Over 50 neighborhood associations and coalitions and 5,000 owners of property within and near the 1984 and proposed Plan areas were notified in writing prior to the first EPC hearing in 2014. As of September 2014, over 300 stakeholders are kept updated on the review process via email and directed to the project webpage for further details.

21. Comments and suggested changes to the April 2014 EPC draft Coors Corridor Plan have been received from departments, agencies, neighborhood associations, residents, property- and business-owners. There is both support and opposition to certain transportation and DOZ-related policies, regulations and recommended projects. There is no objection to the proposed Plan area, and support for the Bridge Blvd. -Central Ave. extension.

22. Staff has prepared the October 2014 Red-Line draft Coors Corridor Plan to address public and agency comments and direction from the EPC from the August 2014 hearing.

RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS - #1005238, 14EPC-40032, Amendment to Map of Coors Corridor Plan, and 14EPC-40033, Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan

1. The revisions in the October 2014 Red-Line draft Coors Corridor Plan attached to the October 2, 2014 staff report serve as recommended conditions. The revisions are cross-referenced to the comments [numbers] in the Matrix dated August 14, 2014, to EPC suggestions [E] and/or to staff recommendations [S].

RECOMMENDATION – Project #1005238, October 2, 2014

A Recommendation of Approval of case 14EPC-40032, to amend the map of the Coors Corridor Plan, and 14EPC-40033, Adoption of Rank 3 Coors Corridor Plan, based on the preceding Recommended Findings and Conditions.

*Carol Toffaleti
Senior Planner*

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Attachments

- A. October 2014 Red-Line Coors Corridor Plan
- B. Letter from NMDOT to EPC, dated 9/25/2014
- C. Letter from City Assistant City Attorney to Mr. Colby May, Esq, 09/23/2014
- D. Comments received since August 2014 hearing
- E. Notes and exhibits from stakeholder meeting re. View Preservation regulations, 09/11/2014
- F. Roadway exchange agreement between NMDOT, State Transportation Commission and the City, 11/29/2010
- G. R-05-234, July 2005 (initiation of Coors Corridor Plan update)