

HISTORIC CENTRAL

Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan

Adopted December 2, 2013 (R-13-183, Enactment R-2013-125)



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CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTIETH COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-13-183

ENACTMENT NO.

R-2013-125

SPONSORED BY: Isaac Benton

RESOLUTION

APPROVING THE HISTORIC CENTRAL METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN.

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Legislature has passed the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (herein "Code"), Sections 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 inclusive NMSA, 1978, as amended, which authorizes the City of Albuquerque, New Mexico (the "City") to prepare metropolitan redevelopment plans and to undertake and carry out metropolitan redevelopment projects; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, the governing body of the City, (the "City Council") after notice and public hearing as required by Code, has duly passed and adopted Council Resolution No. R-12-52 Enactment No. R-2012-051, including the recently formed Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (R-12-52), making certain findings, among other things, that one or more blighted areas exist within the corporate limits of the municipality and that the rehabilitation, conservation, development and redevelopment of and in the Area designated as the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is necessary in the interest of public health, safety, morals and welfare of the residents of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, by Resolution No. R-12-52, has made certain findings which declare the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area to be blighted, has designated the Area as appropriate for Metropolitan Redevelopment Projects and has called for the preparation of a metropolitan redevelopment plan identifying the activities to be carried out to eliminate the present conditions; and

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1 WHEREAS, the Albuquerque Development Commission, which acts as the
2 Metropolitan Redevelopment Commission under the provisions of §14-8-4-1
3 ROA 1994, (the "Commission") recommends approval of the Historic Central
4 Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan") for the redevelopment of the
5 Area, as required by the Code; and

6 WHEREAS, the City Council has conducted a public hearing, after proper
7 notice as required by the Code, on the Plan; and

8 WHEREAS, the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan
9 proposes redevelopment of certain sites within the project area; and

10 WHEREAS, the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan
11 identified two catalyst projects: 1) The redevelopment of a 2.45-acre
12 commercial site (El Vado motor court and Casa Grande properties) along the
13 south side of Central Ave., north and south of the New York Ave. intersection;
14 and 2) The redevelopment of under-utilized 2.108-acre commercial surface
15 parking lots along the north side of Central Ave., between Rio Grande and San
16 Felipe; and

17 WHEREAS, the Plan proposes a coordinated redevelopment of certain
18 public projects in the area which will meet the objectives of the code and will
19 benefit the City's efforts to revitalize the Historic Central Metropolitan
20 Redevelopment Area; and

21 WHEREAS, this Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan for projects will
22 promote the local health, general welfare, safety, convenience and prosperity
23 of the inhabitants of the City and will benefit the City's effort to revitalize the
24 area.

25 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
26 ALBUQUERQUE:

27 SECTION 1. The City Council, after having conducted a public hearing
28 pursuant to the code, finds that:

29 A. The proposed redevelopment of the Historic Central Metropolitan
30 Redevelopment Area will aid in the elimination and prevention of blight or
31 conditions which lead to development of blight.

1 B. The Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan does
2 not require the relocation of any families or individuals from their dwellings;
3 therefore, a method for providing relocation assistance is not required.

4 C. The Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan
5 complements the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and
6 affords maximum opportunity consistent with the needs of the community for
7 the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Historic Central Metropolitan
8 Redevelopment Area by the public activities and the private enterprise; and
9 the objectives of the Plan justify the proposed activities as public purposes
10 and needs.

11 D. The Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan,
12 attached as Exhibit A, and made a part hereof, is approved in all respects.

13 SECTION 2. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, sentence,
14 clause, word or phrase of this resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or
15 unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not
16 affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this resolution. The Council
17 hereby declares that it would have passed this resolution and each section,
18 paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any
19 provisions being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

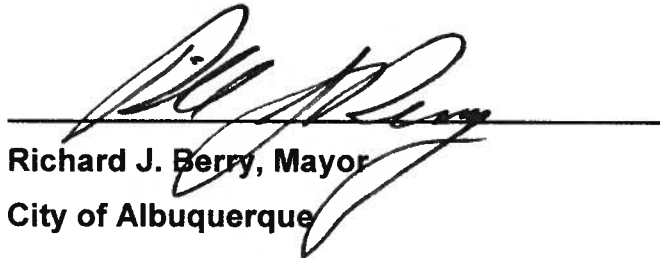
1 PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 2nd DAY OF December, 2013
2 BY A VOTE OF: 9 FOR 0 AGAINST.

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5 
6

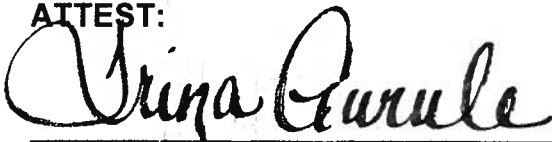
7 Ken Sanchez, President
8 City Council
9

10
11 APPROVED THIS 13th DAY OF December, 2013
12
13
14

15 Bill No. R-13-183
16
17

18 
19
20 Richard J. Berry, Mayor
21 City of Albuquerque
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24 ATTEST:

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27 City Clerk
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. PURPOSE OF THE MRA PLAN

The designation of the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) and the adoption and implementation of this MRA Plan are two parts of implementing redevelopment activities within the Central Ave. corridor between Laguna Dr. and Sunset Road, with specific goals as follows:

- Brand the area as important to the city residents and a travel destination.
- Introduce iconic structures and directional signage near the intersections of Central Ave. and Tingley Dr. and Central Ave. and Rio Grande Blvd., and at either end of the Rio Grande Bridge, to draw attention to the uniqueness of the area.
- Redevelop Catalyst Areas in the Historic Central corridor in order to spur redevelopment of other vacant or underutilized lots.
- Improve the image, functionality and safety of the Historic Central corridor by developing an attractive and welcoming streetscape with street furnishings, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle facilities and improved transit services to and between tourist attractions and parking.
- Rehabilitate existing building facades and signs.

B. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The MRA Plan proposes four areas of redevelopment strategies to revitalize the Historic Central MRA:

Strategy 1 is to **facilitate redevelopment of key land areas**, which have the potential to become vibrant activity centers and are referred to as **Catalyst Areas**, and to encourage owners of **Opportunity Sites**, which are under-utilized sites, to redevelop their own properties. There are two key locations within the Historic Central MRA that have been designated as Catalyst Areas, where the City can focus its economic resources on facilitating redevelopment:

- **Catalyst Area A** is the highest priority catalyst area within the Historic Central MRA. Catalyst Area A consists of 2.45 acres along the south side of Central Ave., north and south of the New York Ave. intersection. Catalyst Area A is located strategically along Central Ave. near several of the major recreation activity centers and tourist draws in Albuquerque, and contains the historically significant El Vado motor court motel.
- **Catalyst Area B** is the second priority of the catalyst areas within the Historic Central MRA. Five parcels of land, the largest of which is under City ownership and control, comprise Catalyst Area B. Catalyst Area B consists of 2.08 acres along the north side of Central Ave., between Rio Grande Blvd. and San Filipe.

Strategy 2 is to construct **streetscape improvements** that would make Central Ave. more inviting to those traveling its length through the MRA, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists. These would include:

- Street lighting for vehicles and pedestrians
- Street furniture such as seating areas
- Landscaped nodes along Central Avenue
- Low walls to screen large parking lots and to frame intersections.

Strategy 3 is to **construct iconic art as wayfinding signage** and as district identity. Design would draw on the Route 66 theme through various types of signage to entice travelers to explore historic sites, Old Town businesses, and other attractions.

Strategy 4 is a **façade improvement grant and/or loan program** to private property owners for the rehabilitation of building facades, signs and landscaping areas.

Strategy 5 is to offer **direct and/or indirect financial incentives** to encourage property owners to redevelop Catalyst Areas, Opportunity Sites and other areas noted in the Plan. These incentives could include grants, low-interest financing to help enable the procurement of private redevelopment loans, and establishment of a Tax Increment Finance district to help generate funds for infrastructure improvements in the area.

C. IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE REDEVELOPMENT

The New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment code (Section 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) empowers New Mexico municipalities to take actions to correct economic decline and stagnation and encourage redevelopment in specific geographic areas. This is accomplished by designating Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas and adopting plans that outline and prioritize proposed projects and other implementation strategies.

Projects elsewhere in the city have included upgrading or rehabilitating infrastructure in the area such as water and sewer lines, electrical capacity, drainage, roadways and installing new streetscapes in order to encourage private development. Other efforts have included acquisition of vacant or underutilized properties for redevelopment or assembly of small lots to create a larger parcel that would attract private sector interest.

The Planning Department's Metropolitan Redevelopment Section can offer particular benefits or financial incentives for redevelopment in the Historic Central MRA. The City MR section proposes the following activities:

1. Partner with private developers for redevelopment of the former El Vado Motel and other nearby structures; in Catalyst Area A, including re-purposing of the El Vado motor court buildings, to promote new housing, retail, or other mixed-use development opportunities.
2. Partner with private developers for redevelopment of Catalyst Area B, to promote new mixed-use development with significant space for community activities outdoors, indoors or both.
3. Facilitate needed streetscape improvements, including wayfinding signs and street furniture.
4. Implement a Façade Improvement Program.
5. Assist MRA property owners in creating a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, if desired by the owners.

D. FUNDING

Funding for the proposed projects will be sought over time from various sources. Funds may be available in the future from General Obligation Bonds issued by the City and appropriations from the City Council and State legislature. Other potential sources of funds include revenue from tax increment financing, metropolitan redevelopment bonds, and other federal loan and grant programs available through the State of New Mexico and other sources. These include federal transportation funding, federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and loan guarantees, New Mexico Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund, National Scenic Byways Grants, New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) grants, and various types of tax credits available to finance affordable housing and historic rehabilitation. A detailed list of funding sources is provided on page 69 in the report Appendix.

2. OVERVIEW

A. INTRODUCTION

Central Ave. has long been the focus of attractions for the motoring public. As Railroad Ave. and later Central Ave., the road has been Albuquerque's primary transportation artery between Old Town and the New Town (now Downtown) since the 1880s; however, with the construction of I-40 in the late 1960s, Central Ave. as Route 66 lost its importance as a gateway into the city and became largely a commercial arterial for adjacent neighborhoods. Community interest in Central Ave. between Rio Grande Blvd. and the Rio Grande has been high since the 1990s, when the Albuquerque BioPark was being planned and the El Vado Motel was recognized by the community as threatened by deterioration and obsolescence. Following the opening of the Aquarium and Botanic Garden of the Albuquerque BioPark in 1996 and the City's acquisition of the El Vado, the City initiated conversations with property owners in the corridor about creating a new Metropolitan Redevelopment Area to fill this key gap between the West Central Ave. MRA west of the Rio Grande and Soldiers and Sailors Park MRA closer to Downtown.

B. NEW MEXICO METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE

The State of New Mexico has several statutes intended to help municipalities promote economic development, redevelopment, and stability where these are hindered by a variety of factors. The New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (§3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) is one such statute. It provides New Mexico municipalities with the powers to improve conditions that "substantially impair or arrest the sound and orderly development" in areas within the city. These powers can help reverse an area's decline and stagnation; however, the municipality may only exercise these powers within designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs).

Designation of an MRA is based on findings of "slum or blight" conditions, as defined in the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Section 3-60A-4). Criteria for a "blighted" area include both physical and economic conditions that substantially impair the sound growth and economic health and wellbeing of a community, reduce the availability of adequate housing, are an economic or social burden, and are a menace to public health, safety, morals or welfare. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Code Section 3-60A-4 defines "blight" as the presence of:

- A substantial number of deteriorating structures
- Faulty street or lot layout
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions
- Deterioration of site or other improvements
- Diversity of ownership
- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the land's fair market value
- Title problems
- Improper subdivision or lack of adequate housing facilities in the area
- Obsolete or impractical planning or platting
- A significant number of declining or closed commercial or mercantile businesses
- Low levels of commercial or industrial activity or redevelopment

In adopting the MRA boundaries, the City Council made the requisite findings that blight, as defined by the State Code, exists within the MRA.

C. MRA PLAN BOUNDARY

In January 2008, the City conducted a public meeting on the proposed New York Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), the predecessor to the Historic Central MRA. The proposed New York MRA boundary encompassed the

boundaries of the current MRA proposal west of Rio Grande Blvd., excluding the BioPark and two parcels along New York Ave. On March 4, 2008, the City Council staff and MRA staff held a community meeting on a proposed MRA, including the El Vado motel and adjacent Casa Grande properties. The boundaries of the proposed MRA, called the New York MRA, included most of the commercial properties along Central Ave. between Tingley Dr. and Rio Grande Blvd. At that community meeting, attending property owners and community members expressed a preference for expanded MRA boundaries, to include commercial properties along Central Ave. to Laguna Ave. on the east to meet up with the western boundary of the Soldiers and Sailors Park MRA. In June 2012, the City Council adopted the current Historic Central MRA boundaries including the expanded area plus the BioPark, the Little Theater property, and several residential properties along Rio Grande Blvd. and New York Ave. south of Central Ave. (see Figure 1).

D. SUMMARY OF NEED AND PURPOSE OF THE MRA PLAN

The West Central Ave. commercial corridor through Albuquerque marks the western entrance to Downtown. It has a rich history from its early beginnings as a connection between Old Town and the New Town to its notability as part of the Historic Route 66 highway that ran from Chicago to Los Angeles. Eventually replaced by Interstate 40 and decommissioned in 1985, the “Mother Road” was designated a National Scenic Byway in 2000. The New Mexico portion is also on the Register of Historic Places and State Register of Cultural Properties, rendering it, and businesses along it eligible for specific tax credits and other funding.

Motor courts, gas stations and cafes were built along the length of Central Avenue to cater to the needs of the motorists. Over time, other auto-oriented commercial businesses have developed resulting in a more strip-retail character reflective of the 1950s through 1990s. Today, Central Ave. has a number of chain franchise businesses typical of urban commercial strips, and while several early motor court motels remain, the only designated historic landmark building along this segment of Route 66 is the El Vado motel, which was designated a City Landmark in June 2006. The City condemned and purchased the El Vado in 2010.

Since the 1960s, the area within the Historic Central MRA has declined and become blighted, and is in need of reinvestment and redevelopment. In some locations, the MR area is now characterized by an unattractive streetscape, deteriorated building facades and under-utilized properties. The purpose of the Historic Central MRA Plan is to identify and create opportunities for redevelopment and improvements in the public realm. These improvements can be implemented from a variety of funding sources including federal funds, state grants, and municipal funding. These improvements can act as catalysts for further improvements on private properties.

Figure 1 — MRA Boundary



E. CHARACTER AREAS

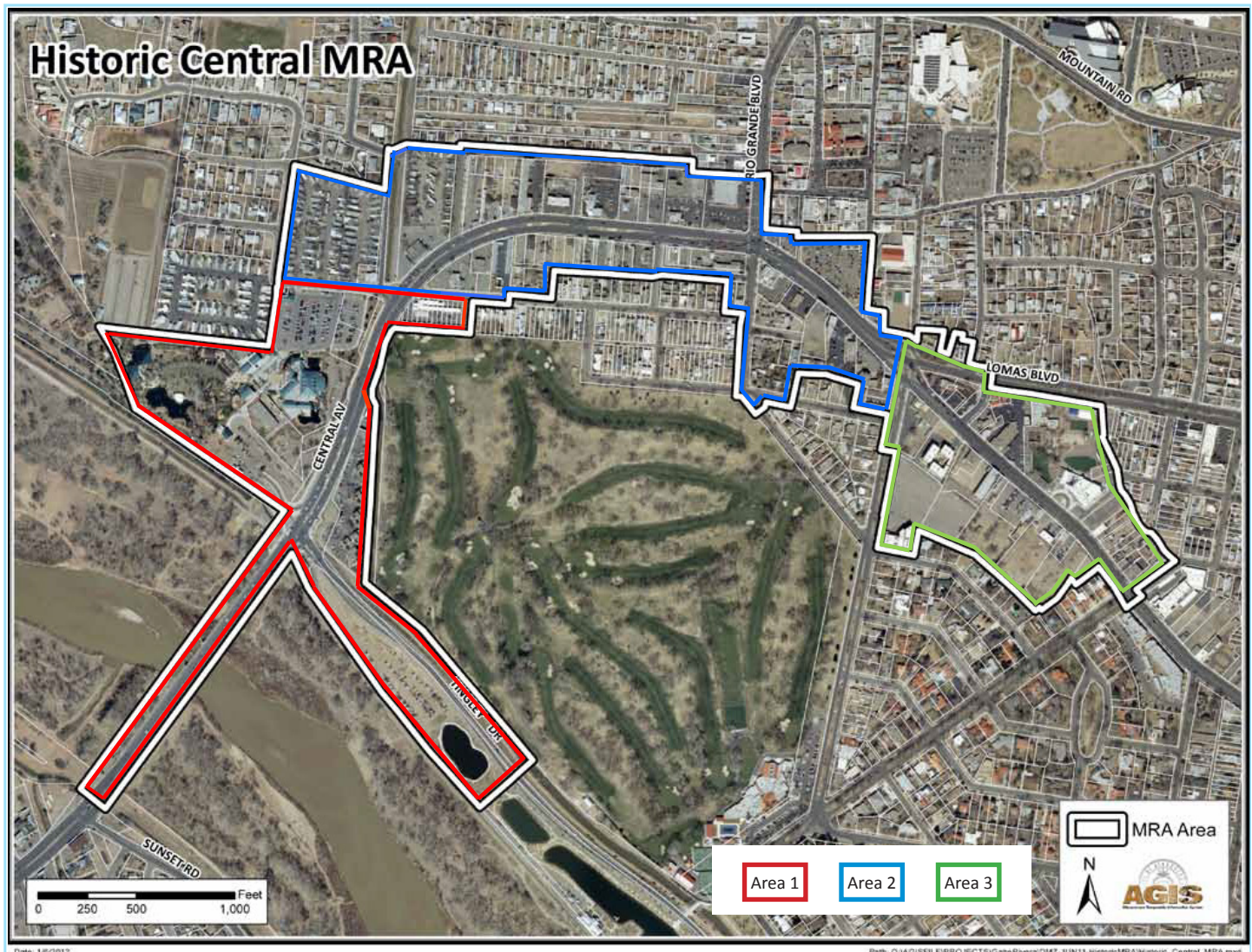
The Historic Central MRA boundary encompasses approximately 42.7 total acres excluding streets. Since the character of the corridor differs between the Rio Grande and the Central Ave./Laguna St. neighborhoods, it is useful to consider the corridor as three distinct character areas.

Figure 2 on the next page illustrates the different character areas within the MRA. Each area is comprised of various land uses, building types and parcel configurations. The difference in these elements is what makes each character area unique.

Character Area 1 [Central Ave. from the Rio Grande Bridge to New York Ave.]

This area is oriented toward large-scale recreation activities and includes the BioPark's Tingley Beach, Aquarium and Botanic Garden and the historic El Vado Motel as well as access points for the Rio Grande and Bosque. The Central Avenue bridge over the Rio Grande is the western entrance into the Historic Central area, creating the visitor's first impression of Historic Central when traveling eastbound on Central Ave. At the east end of the bridge, the view takes in the Rio Grande, the surrounding Bosque, the iconic Beach Apartments, and the south edge of the BioPark's Aquarium and Botanic Garden, which has recently undergone improvements to landscaping and perimeter fencing. At night, the lighting along the Central Ave. bridge and neon accent lighting on the Beach Apartments create visual interest. However,

Figure 2 — MRA Character Areas



the El Vado Motel is surrounded with chain link and barbed wire fencing, contributing to the abandoned appearance of the property, and its free-standing neon sign, a significant nighttime attraction, has been removed for refurbishment. The City owns most of the properties in Character Area 1, including the Albuquerque BioPark's Aquarium, Botanic Garden and Tingley Beach, the Beach Apartments, El Vado motel and former Casa Grande properties.

Character Area 2 [Central Ave. from New York Ave. to San Pasquale]

A variety of commercial businesses, with a local customer orientation, predominate in this sub-area. While many of the businesses are locally owned, a few corporate businesses are located here including Church's, Walgreen's and Wendy's. In many aspects, this segment of Central Ave. has become a fairly typical example of a commercial strip arterial road. A few tourist-oriented motels are within this segment of Central Ave. There is no unified architectural style evident along this segment of Central Ave. which has buildings constructed at widely different times since before World War II. Two mobile home parks are within this area, both of which exhibit signs of age and functional obsolescence.

Central Ave. within Character Area 2 is presently an auto-dominated roadway, with narrow sidewalks, few street amenities and little visual connection between Old Town and the BioPark's Aquarium, Botanic Garden and Tingley Beach attractions. Only a few existing businesses have a relationship with Old Town, consisting of the tourist motels and the commercial parking lots on the north side of Central Ave. east of Rio Grande Blvd.

Character Area 3 [Central Ave. from San Pasquale to Laguna]

This Character Area has much larger lot sizes than elsewhere in the MRA, and contains a diverse mix of commercial businesses, consisting of retail, restaurant and service businesses. The general character of the area is individual retail and service businesses catering to the surrounding neighborhoods.

At one time this area was primarily agricultural, thus the larger lots. Today, the largest existing single land use is the Manzano Day School, a private elementary school that attracts students from all over the region. Substantial land area remains under-utilized in the parcels south of Central Ave. The eastern-most parcels, addressed as 109 Laguna Blvd NW, 115 Laguna Blvd NW and 115 1/2 Laguna Blvd NW are included within the La Orilla de la Acequia Historic District. This Historic District is characterized by small adobe homes in a New Mexico architectural style, some of which have been converted from residential to commercial uses.

An awkward roadway junction between Central and Lomas Blvd creates traffic problems, hinders walkability and makes vehicle access to some parcels difficult in this area.

F. THE MR SECTION'S ROLE IN THE MRA PLAN

The Metropolitan Redevelopment section of the City of Albuquerque Planning Department is primarily responsible for executing projects and programs that lead to revitalization of blighted areas. This can be accomplished by redeveloping City-owned properties through public-private partnerships, incentivizing the redevelopment of privately owned properties by offering grants or low-interest financing for improvements and investing in a high-quality public realm. The primary focus is on implementation, through the creative use of City land and financial resources to trigger private investment. The Metropolitan Redevelopment section also cultivates partnerships with community-based and non-profit organizations to develop and implement projects beneficial to the community.

The Metropolitan Redevelopment section's role in Historic Central includes identifying it as in need of revitalization, overseeing the plan development, and coordinating plan elements with other City departments. Metropolitan Redevelopment has embarked upon an extensive community involvement process that will culminate in the implementation of projects and programs identified within this plan.

G. RELATIONSHIP TO ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES

Development in this area is regulated by several adopted plans, including the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan (2012), Huning Castle & Raynolds Addition Sector Development Plan (1981), Old Town Sector Development Plan (1977) and the Rio Grande Corridor Plan (1989). In general, these plans set out strategies for improvement of the streetscape and built environments along Central Ave. toward making the street welcoming to pedestrians. The Historic Central MRA Plan identifies implementation methods for making physical improvements addressing these strategies, as discussed below.

Additionally, the MRA is within the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan's Established Urban Area, and the portion of the MRA north of Central Ave. is further classified as Established Urban Area – Central Urban Area. These designations direct development and redevelopment to take on mixed use urban character, which is reiterated in the Sector Development Plans. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes certain Specialty Activity Centers within the metropolitan area, including the 'Old Town/Museum Complex' and 'BioPark/Zoo' as providing unique recreational and entertainment opportunities. These special activity centers lie fully or partially within the MRA, and are the anchors of the MRA Plan.

This Plan's consistency with specific policies in the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan is further explored in the Appendix (Section 5.D.).

3. THE PLAN

This Plan proposes to accomplish redevelopment in the Historic West Central MR Area by employing five strategies:

- Facilitate redevelopment of Opportunity and Catalyst Sites, such as the El Vado Motel;
- Improve streetscapes with lighting, landscaping and other features;
- Installation of public art and wayfinding signs to highlight the area's many recreational and historic attractions;
- Develop a grant or loan program for facade, landscaping and sign improvements on private property;
- Develop financial incentives for redevelopment of underutilized parcels or structures, such as low-interest loans or tax increment financing (TIF).

These strategies are discussed in detail in this section. A map of City-owned property within the MRA is provided on the next page as a reference for the discussion of Catalyst Areas and Opportunity Sites.

1. Redevelopment of Catalyst Areas and Opportunity Sites

This Plan focuses particular attention on several small areas within the MRA boundary, referred to as Catalyst Areas and Opportunity Sites. There are two key locations within the Historic Central MRA that have been designated by this Plan as Catalyst Areas, where the City can focus its economic resources on facilitating redevelopment and/or adaptive re-use. Comprising several parcels and considerable street frontage, these prominent locations along Central Ave. have the potential to spur additional nearby redevelopment. Opportunity Sites typically comprise privately owned parcels, which are either vacant or under-utilized and might be available and suitable for redevelopment, possibly with City assistance, and thereby incrementally improve the Historic Central MR area.

Catalyst Area Selection Criteria

Catalyst Areas were chosen according to the following criteria:

- Suggested by participants at community meetings.
- Constituted contiguous blighted and/or vacant parcels.
- Adjacent to a Community or Special Activity Center as designated by the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan.
- Direct access to, and substantial frontage along, Central Ave.
- Primarily under public ownership (City -owned properties are identified in Figure 3 above).

Based upon these criterion, two areas have been selected as Catalyst Areas, and are presented in order of priority. The following Figures 4 and 5 show an aerial view of each Catalyst Area. Tables 1 and 2 show the parcel sizes, Central Ave. frontage, land use and zoning of each parcel within the Catalyst Areas. Each Catalyst Area's strengths and weaknesses were assessed and are summarized in the following sections.

Catalyst Area A

Area Context

Catalyst Area A is the highest priority catalyst area within the Historic Central MRA. It consists of 2.45 acres located along the south side of Central Avenue, north and South of New York Ave. The site comprises four parcels, all under City ownership, and contains the historically significant El Vado Motel, a designated City Landmark, as well as two commercial buildings, one of which is vacant. The site is directly accross the street from the Albuquerque BioPark's Aquarium and Botanic Garden, and the BioPark's Zoo approximately one mile to the south. Old Town Albuquerque, perhaps the best-known tourist destination in the city, is approximately one-half mile to the east along Central Ave. To the south of the El Vado motel is the Albuquerque County Club. East of the El Vado along Central Ave. are auto-oriented businesses spanning more than 60 years of development, including mobile home parks, motels, auto repair shops, strip

commercial, stand-alone commercial, restaurants, and a car wash. Along New York Ave. east of Catalyst Area A are low- to medium- density residential uses in single-family and townhome configurations.

Existing Zoning

Catalyst Area A is subject to the regulations of the C-2 Community Commercial zone. According to the City Zoning Code, the C-2 Zone 'provides suitable sites for offices, for most services and commercial activities, and for certain specific institutional uses.' Attached residential is also a permissive use. One parcel, the easternmost of the El Vado property, is zoned R-T Residential. The Zoning Code describes the R-T Zone as providing 'suitable sites for houses, townhouses, and uses incidental thereto in the Established and Central Urban Areas.'

Proposed Zoning

The proposed WR66 Special Activity Center (SAC) Zone, under the West Route 66 Sector Development Plan, is intended to be 'a mixed use, form based zone to support and facilitate development which serves neighborhood and tourism needs while remaining sensitive to the character of the Old Town and BioPark areas.' By this definition the WR66 SAC Zone will be specific to its one proposed location in the City, West Central Ave. between Rio Grande Blvd. and Atrisco Dr., in contrast to the current C-2 Zone. The proposed WR66 SAC Zone permissive uses, including restaurants serving liquor, jewelry and pottery making, bed & breakfast, and hotel, reflect the unique character of the Historic Central MRA.

2011 MRCOG Traffic Counts

The 2011 MRCOG Traffic Count (latest available data) for Central Ave. was 26,600 Average Daily Trips (ADT) between Tingley Dr. and Rio Grande Blvd. This compares to 37,300 ADT from a 2001 MRCOG Traffic Count along the same segment of Central Ave.

The Draft WR66SDP (2013) identifies the intersection of New York Ave. and Central Ave. as particularly problematic for pedestrians and a high priority per MRCOG for pedestrian improvements. The crossing of the Alameda Lateral at

Figure 4 — Catalyst Area A



Table 1 — Catalyst Area A Sites							
Owner	Size (Acre)	Frontage (Ft.)	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning		Proposed WR66SDP Zoning	
City	0.709	Central Ave. - 292	Vacant commercial bldg.	C2	Permissive Uses:	SAC	Permissive Uses:
		New York Ave. - 250			Banking		Uses permissive in the C-1 zone plus:
City	0.332	Central Ave. - 116	Vacant commercial bldg.		Clinic		Catering, baking, confections, Jewelry making, Pottery making
City	0.157	New York Ave. - 70	Parking lot		Commercial parking lot		Hotel, Restaurant serving liquor
City	1.255	Central Ave. - 184	Vacant motel bldgs. (El Vado)		Drive-in restaurant		Nursing and rest homes
		New York Ave. - 300			Institution		Prohibited Uses:
					Office		Vehicle sales, service, repair & storage
					Residential		Building material sales;
					Sign, off-premise		Commercial parking lot
					Retailing incl. vehicle sales, service, repair & storage		Permitted Building Types:
					Jewelry wholesale		Residential various except single family detached
					Wireless telecomm		Mixed-use/Non-residential various
					Conditional Uses:		
					Outdoor storage & activities		
					Mobile home development		
					Retail alcohol sales		
					Retail of products manufactured on-site		
					RT		
				R-1 permissive w/exceptions			

the intersection is an opportunity for improved bicycle connections between converging bike routes north and south of Central Ave. Work is on-going to close the east leg of the intersection to motor vehicle traffic. This is expected to be followed by improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure at this location.

Strengths/Opportunities

- The El Vado motel is an iconic example of the motor courts that lined Route 66 through Albuquerque.
- All parcels are under City ownership.
- New York Ave., between the El Vado and the commercial properties to the north, has very low traffic volume and can readily be vacated as public right-of-way and reconstructed as a cul-de-sac street with an easement for a bicycle and pedestrian path.
- All necessary utilities (water, sewer, electricity, natural gas) are in place.
- The area is served by two bus lines: the Rapid Ride Redline 766 and the 66 local.
- The site is quite close to major draws in Albuquerque, including the BioPark's Aquarium and Botanic Garden, the Rio Grande and the Bosque. Old Town is less than one-half mile east.

Issues/Considerations

- Redevelopment of the El Vado must adhere to the limitations imposed by its landmark status.
- Existing buildings on the properties are deteriorated and may require major structural work to be compliant with applicable building codes.
- Transfer of the 'Casa Grande' properties to the Redevelopment Agency is conditioned on housing development occurring on that site.

Potential Uses

In the years since the City purchased the El Vado Motel, many suggestions for its reuse have been offered by redevelopment experts, city leaders, Route 66 aficionados and neighborhood residents. These include restoring it for use as a tourist motel anchoring a re-branded Central Ave. with a strong Route 66 theme; adapting the structures and grounds into an outdoor/indoor market for local products, multi-family housing, offices, an artists' colony, a private or charter school, and other uses. The 1.2-acre 'Casa Grande' property would be best suited to a mixed use development, including up to 36 multi-family residential uses (assuming a density of 30 dwelling units per acre) and ground floor commercial or office space.

Catalyst Area B

Area Context

Catalyst Area B is located along the north side of Central Ave. between the Rio Grande Blvd. and San Felipe intersections. It consists of 2.108 acres and comprises five parcels, the largest of which is owned by the City. Old Town Albuquerque is adjacent to the north, and the Catalyst Area B sites are currently used as commercial parking for Old Town visitors. The City-owned property is zoned C-2, while the other 4 parcels are zoned H-1 (Historic Old Town). The existing streetscape along this portion of Central Ave. has landscaping improvements and will be further enhanced by additional specific improvements to the public realm. The existing land use along Central Ave. to the east and west of Catalyst Area B is a mix of auto-oriented businesses, including motor court motels, strip commercial, stand-alone commercial uses, and restaurants; institutional and residential uses are east of San Pasquale. The BioPark's Aquarium and Botanic Garden are approximately one-half mile west of Catalyst Area B.

2011 MRCOG Traffic Count

Data from MRCOG show approximately 26,6000 vehicles pass by this property daily on Central Ave. and Lomas Blvd., which converge along its frontage.

Strengths/Opportunities

- The majority of properties are owned by the City.
- The properties are located at the main entrance to Old Town from Central Ave.
- The properties have street frontage on almost all sides, including long frontages on Central Ave.
- All necessary utilities (water, sewer, electricity, natural gas) are in place.
- The area is served by three bus lines: the Rapid Ride Redline 766, the Rapid Ride Blueline 790 and the 66 Route.

Issues/Considerations

- Development of the properties would displace a significant supply of off-street parking spaces for Old Town visitors.
- Because the properties lie between Central Ave. and Old Town, their development must be done in a manner to ensure the design is appropriate for a major entrance to Old Town.
- Excavation activity on the properties is likely to encounter historic artifacts.
- Some of the properties are zoned H-1, which limits building heights to 26 feet. This could preclude higher-density residential redevelopment on the Catalyst Area B properties.

Potential Uses

Catalyst Area B presents an opportunity to create a “Grand Entrance” from Central Avenue to Old Town, drawing visitors toward the plaza along Romero and San Felipe Roads. Accomplishing this would require relocating some or all of the public parking elsewhere in the vicinity of Old Town, such as the under-utilized City museum parking lots off of Mountain Road. The site would also be a prime location for mixed-use activity, including residential, retail, live-work and/or art studio space that capitalizes on its location adjacent to a major tourist attraction and provides indoor and outdoor community gathering areas with a “sense of place.”

Figure 5 — Catalyst Area B

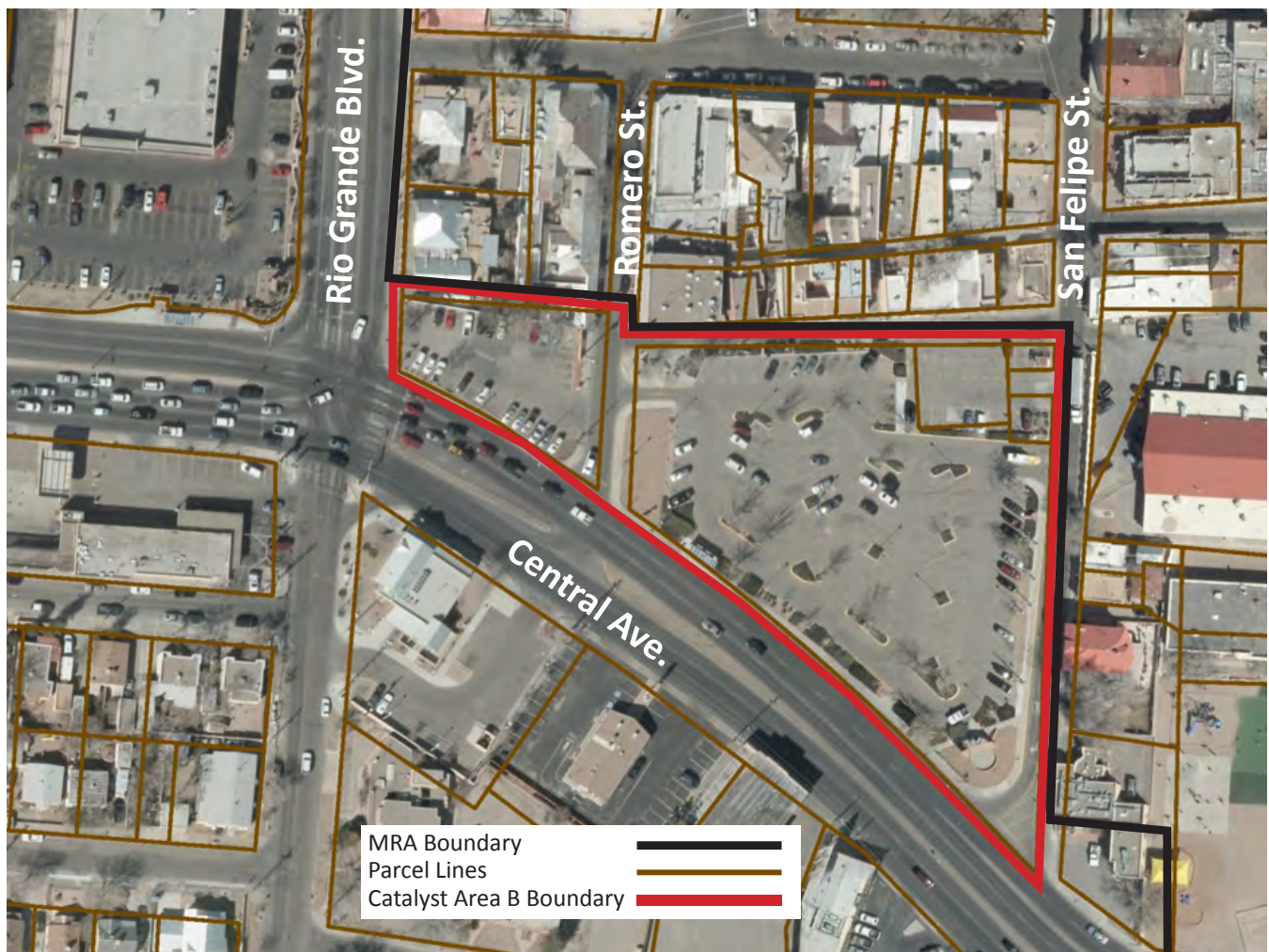


Table 2 — Catalyst Area B Sites							
Owner	Size (Ac.)	Frontage (Ft.)	Land Use	Existing Zoning		Proposed WR66SDP Zoning	
City	1.655	Central Ave. - 426	Parking lot	C2	<i>Permissive Uses:</i>	SAC	<i>Permissive Uses:</i>
		Old Town - 220			Antenna		Uses permissive in the C-1 and R-2 zones plus:
		Romero St. - 128			Clinic		- Residential w/o density ceiling
		San Filipe - 336			Copying		- Catering, baking, confections
					Institution		- Jewelry or curio making,
					Office		Pottery, bed & breakfast, hotel, restaurant serving liquor
					Residential		- Nursing and rest homes
					Sign, off-premise		<i>Limited Uses:</i>
					Radio / TV Station		- Drive-up service windows
					Retailing		<i>Prohibited Uses:</i>
					Jewelry wholesale		- Vehicle sales, service, repair and storage
		Wireless telecomm			- Building material sales		
Private	0.175	Old Town - 110	Parking lot	H1	<i>Permissive Uses:</i>		- Commercial surface parking lots
		San Filipe - 76			R-2 except wireless telecomm		- One house per lot
Private	0.278	Central Ave. - 180	Parking lot		Institution		
		Romero St. - 140			Manufacturing arts & crafts		
		Rio Grande - 60			Office		
					Parking lot		
					Retail sales		
					Services		
	Sign, off-premise						

Opportunity Sites

The Opportunity Sites identified by this Plan exhibit two primary characteristics:

- They constitute parcels that are vacant or deemed underutilized; and
- They have characteristics such as size, location, and zoning that make them good candidates for future redevelopment.

Table 3 lists all of the identified Opportunity Sites within the Historic Central MRA and information about each site. Figure 6 shows the location of each site within the MRA.

Area Context

All of these sites have Central Ave. frontage, except one, and existing development reflects the strip commercial pattern that has evolved along Central Ave. since the 1920s in the auto-dependent culture that characterizes most of post World War II Albuquerque. Some of the parcels have buildings occupying only a small portion of the lot, a vestige of Western U.S. history when land was cheap and plentiful.

Existing Zoning

Existing zoning of Opportunity Sites includes C-2 Community Commercial, SU-2 CLD (Commercial and/or Low Density Apartment, Huning Castle & Reynolds Addition Sector Development Plan), SU-1 Mixed Use, R-1, R-G and R-LT Zone. As

described above under Catalyst Area A, the C-2 Zone ‘provides suitable sites for offices, for most services and commercial activities, and for certain specific institutional uses.’ The existing SU-1 zones apply to specific land uses on the property to which they are attached.

Proposed Zoning

The proposed WR66 SAC Zone (Special Activity Center Zone) would apply to the MRA Opportunity Sites west of Rio Grande Blvd., and, per the Draft WR66SDP, is intended to provide for a 1 to 4 story mixed use environment serving neighborhood and tourism needs that is sensitive to the character of the Old Town and Bio Park areas accommodating ‘medium to high density residential, shopping, service, office and entertainment uses along a designated Major Transit Corridor.’

The Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site is owned by the City. Under the proposed update to the WR66SDP, the zoning of the property would be WR66 RA (River Activity). The stated intent of this zone is unique to its location within the MRA: ‘provides for a mix of non-residential land uses and for development design appropriate at this unique confluence in the city between urban Activity Centers and a Major Transit Corridor on the one hand, and the Open Space and waterways associated with the Rio Grande on the other.’ Permissive uses would be the C-1 Zone uses, plus commercial uses related to recreational activities, and residential up to 30 du/acre.

As of adoption of this MRA Plan, the Draft WR66 SDP was still under consideration by the City Council.

Selection Criteria

Opportunity Sites were identified according to following criteria:

- Vacant of any active land use or structures, or under passive land use such as outdoor storage or surface parking over most of the site.
- Buildings absent, unused or used for activity ancillary to the primary use of property.
- Multiple small and/or irregular platted lots.

Strengths/Opportunities

- Potential exists for combining vacant, abutting parcels to create larger development sites for mixed uses.
- All of the sites are within one-quarter mile of the Rapid Ride and the 66 Route transit.
- All necessary utilities (water, sewer, electricity, natural gas) are already in place or can be connected to within a short distance.

Issues/Considerations

- Aside from 2415 Central and 1800 Tingley Dr., the sites each consist of relatively small parcels that may need to be combined for new development to be cost-effective.
- 1736 Central and 232 Laguna have constrained access.
- 1736 Central, 1800 Tingley Dr. and 232 Laguna have no frontage on Central Ave. and thus limited commercial attractiveness.

Potential Uses

Public Gathering Spaces

Several of the Plan’s identified Opportunity Sites, such as parcel at the north end of Tingley Beach Park at 1800 Tingley Dr., would be ideal locations for outdoor seating areas, public plazas and facilities for public or cultural events, such as markets, food truck gatherings and art shows.

Multi-Family Housing

The Central Ave. corridor has the potential for multi-family housing, particularly for commuters interested in taking the bus, Rapid Ride, and possibly the future Bus Rapid Transit line to work, school or other daily activities. Accessibility to

Table 3 — Opportunity Sites Within the Historic Central MRA

Map ID	Address	Size (Ac.)	Existing Land Use	Zoning		
				Existing zoning		Proposed WR66 Zoning
1	1700 Central Ave SW	1.030	Vacant	SU2 OLD	Permissive Uses:	Permissive Uses:
2	1720 Central Ave SW	2.737	Motel & retail		- R-2 except wireless telecomm	Uses permissive in the C-1 and R-2 zones plus:
3	1736 Central Ave SW	1.349	Vacant		- Institution	- Car wash
4	232 San Pasquale SW	1.130	Parking		- Manufacturing,	- Residential w/o density ceiling
5	1920 Central Ave SW	0.964	Retail		- Arts & crafts	- Catering, baking, confections
					- Office	- Jewelry or curio making pottery, bed & breakfast, hotel, restaurant serving liquor
					- Parking lot	- Nursing and rest homes
					- Retail sales	Limited Uses:
6	2026 Central Ave SW	0.668	Vacant	C2	Permissive Uses:	- Drive-up service widows
7	2056 Central Ave SW	0.475	Restaurant		- Car wash	Prohibited Uses:
8	2305 Central Ave NW	0.883	Parking		- Clinic	- Vehicle sales, service, repair and storage
9	2411 Central Ave NW	1.121	Motel		- Copying	- Building material sales
10	2437 Central Ave NW	3.760	Restaurant & trailer park		- Institution	- Commercial surface parking lots
					- Office	- One house per lot
					- Residential	
					- Radio / TV Station	
					- Retailing	
					- Jewelry wholesale	
					- Wireless telecomm	
					- Sign, off-premise	
					- Services	
11	0 Tingley Dr.	4.26	Recreation	R1	Single Family Residential	RA Recreation activities
12	222 Rio Grande Blvd. SW	0.630	Vacant Buildings	R2	Attached Residential	N / A
13	2060 Central Ave SW	0.618	Police Sub-Station	SU1	Police Sub-Station	N / A
14	2313 New York Ave. SW	0.212	Vacant Buildings	RLT	Single Family Residential	N / A
15	2303 New York Ave. SW	0.489	Single Family Residential	RG	Single Family Residential	N / A

Figure 6 — Opportunity Sites



transit could cut down on the need for a second or even first car, leaving households more disposable income for rent.

The local apartment market in Albuquerque has held up fairly well in the wake of the recession, with occupancy rates holding at about 95 percent in 2011 and monthly rents edging upward, according to a CB Richard Ellis survey (Metcalf 2011). By comparison, the average occupancy rate nationwide was 93 percent in the third quarter of 2011, and monthly rents only just returned to levels seen before the real estate crash of 2008-09. A local apartment broker attributed this to the lack of an oversupply of apartments in Albuquerque as well as a lesser shadow market of unsold condos and homes. Renters traditionally have made up about 30 percent of Albuquerque's housing market. The city has generally been an inexpensive place to rent an apartment, but low average rents have slowed apartment development. This has been gradually changing. According to the Ellis survey (Metcalf 2011), the average rent in Albuquerque increased \$43 or 6.2 percent from \$688 a month in September 2008 to \$731 a month in September 2011. Since the beginning of 2012 through July, however, Albuquerque's rents dropped about 5 percent (Ginsberg 2012).

During the housing boom, the pace of local apartment construction remained moderate. In 2006, for example, more than 6,600 single-family homes were built but only 718 multi-family units, which included condos and age- or income restricted apartments. Builders and architects attribute this to Albuquerque's comparatively low average rents (mid-\$700s versus close to \$1,000 a month elsewhere) and higher construction costs.

A majority of apartments built during the past decade had income restrictions and used federal low-income housing tax credits. Through October 2012 the City issued building permits for apartment projects totaling 615 units.

Specialty retail

Much of the commercial activity in the Historic Central area has traditionally been automobile-oriented motels, restaurants, stand-alone retail, and ancillary vehicle repair. The proximity to Old Town indicates there may be a market for a limited number of specialty retail businesses catering to visitors to the area. A long-range strategy for the redevelopment area may be to encourage small, independent retail and restaurant activities within new buildings facing Central Ave., with multi-family residential development in the same development or in close proximity.

2. Streetscape Improvements

Central Ave. from New York Ave. to Rio Grande Blvd. is part of the visual gateway to major City attractions and is characterized by relatively new median landscaping. However, high traffic demand and a relatively narrow right-of-way limits the pedestrian realm to a narrow sidewalk abutting mixed development with widely varying setbacks. Auto-oriented land uses, vacant buildings and older strip-style commercial centers contribute to an environment that may not be particularly welcoming or pleasing to some visitors.

Physical improvements within the public realm could make Central Ave. more visually inviting and more oriented to pedestrian and bicycle travel. Street improvements for Central Ave. west of Lomas Blvd. are not included in the City's CIP Plan for 2013. However, the City's Metropolitan Redevelopment Section can initiate the construction of streetscape improvements along Central Ave. within the MRA, outside the CIP process, as funding is available. The Central Ave. improved roadway maintains a fairly consistent street width of approximately 84 feet east of Tingley Dr. to approximately 90 feet at the Central Ave. / Rio Grande Blvd. intersection, back to approximately 84 feet east to the Lomas Ave. intersection, measured from curb-to-curb. The width of actual right-of-way surrounding Central Ave. varies somewhat more, widening out at the eastern foot of the Rio Grande bridge.

The Historic Central MRA Plan proposes the following improvements to the streetscape:

Themed Streetlight Design

Streetlight design can be an effective way to tie an area together through a design theme, such as Historic Central. Newer street lighting has been individualized to reinforce the unique character of several areas of the City, including Mountain Rd., Downtown, and the Nob Hill/Highland area.

This MRA Plan recommends new lighting within the right-of-way along the Central Ave. segment between Laguna and Tingley Dr., within the Historic Central MRA. The lighting could be comprised of a unique fixture mounted on a standard

pole, a unique fixture and pole, or light poles that can accommodate two different light fixtures, one for the roadway and the other for pedestrian areas, as shown in the photo at right below. Mounting brackets for special events banners can be included on light poles.

Low Screen Walls

Low Screen Walls can be installed to screen large parking lots and to frame intersections where buildings are set far back from the street. Wall materials can vary from low opaque to solid, including adobe, block, and ornamental screen. Fig. 8 (Page 22) shows a screen wall concept superimposed on a photograph taken along East Central Ave.

Burial or relocation of utility infrastructure

At present, there are utility poles located within the sidewalk along the north and south sides of Central Ave., between New York Ave. and Rio Grande Blvd. These utility poles impede the safety of pedestrian travel in some locations and contribute to a cluttered streetscape in front of commercial storefronts in the MRA. Any comprehensive streetscape improvement project must address this issue and the City should explore collaboration with PNM on a program for the relocation of utilities away from the sidewalk.

Soto Ave. Pedestrian/Cycle Connection

The Historic Central MRA Plan also identifies construction of streetscape improvements along Soto Ave. and Hollywood Ave. between Rio Grande Blvd. and where Soto Ave. intersects Central Ave. just east of the BioPark. An improvement program would likely include the reduction of paved surface area, striping to delineate a bicycle lane, and installation of street amenities and landscaping to make bicycling and walking more attractive. This street improvement program is proposed in the draft WR66SDP as well but is conceptual and the design has not yet been finalized.



Historic street lights along Mountain Road



New lighting in the Highland Area for pedestrians and pedestrians and vehicles

Figure 7 — Landscape and Street Furniture Examples



Candelaria near 12th Street - patio (plaza) area with shaded seating



New bench and refuse container on Coal Avenue



Rio Grande Boulevard landscape buffer



San Mateo Art Wall

Multiple adopted or in-progress plans affecting the area contain neighborhood-driven proposals for improvements to Central Ave., some of which are in the early stages of implementation. These include:

Central Avenue Streetscape Master Plan and West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan

The Historic Central MRA Plan is one vehicle for implementation of the recommended strategies for improving Central Ave. as articulated in the West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan. The Concept Plan identifies three design concepts for West Central Ave. Two of the design concepts are as follows:

1) Central Ave. Road Diet

- Reduce travel lanes from two to one in each direction of travel , and a center turn lane, from 8th St. to Lomas Blvd.
- Width gained from lane reduction used to increase on-street parking, provide bike lanes and improve pedestrian facilities.

2) Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements from 47th Street to Lomas Blvd.

- Pedestrian improvements at Central Ave. / Rio Grande intersection.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity between downtown and the Rio Grande.

The DMD implemented the Central Ave. Road Diet through a re-striping program to alter the lane configuration along the Central Ave. segment. The program was a one-year “demonstration project” of traffic circulation with the Road Diet in place. The “demonstration project” received broad support from property owners and businesses along Central Ave., and will be permanently implemented with road improvements beginning in 2014. The recommended streetscape improvements under the MRA Plan should be implemented concurrently with the pedestrian realm improvements coming out of the Corridor Concept Plan, including widening of the sidewalks along Central Ave. to a minimum width of six feet clear (unimpeded by utilities and other obstructions) and up to 10 feet where sufficient right-of-way exists, and relocation of above-ground utility facilities out of the sidewalk area. In addition, the Central Ave. improvements should include installation of landscaping in the form of street trees and, where feasible and appropriate, seating areas and art. This would be particularly suitable for the Central Ave./Lomas Blvd. and Central Ave. /Rio Grande Blvd. intersections and at the principle entrances into Old Town from Central Ave.

The third design concept from the West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan is as follows:

3) Central Ave./Lomas Blvd. Intersection Improvements

- Simplify intersection through development of three intersection alternatives
- Improve pedestrian crossings

Three intersection alternatives were developed and evaluated by the DMD committee. At such time as the selected alternative is implemented, pedestrian realm improvements including sidewalks and street crossings should be implemented in keeping with the streetscape recommendations of this MRA Plan.

Draft West Route 66 Sector Development Plan

The proposed West Route 66 Sector Development Plan recommendations may not be implemented by other departments if the Plan is not approved. However, the proposed Plan contains pertinent recommendations for much of the West Central Ave. corridor, which the MRA Plan seeks to implement. At the time of publication, the WR66SDP was in draft form. The following are recommended transportation improvements within the Central Ave. public right-of-way, based upon recommendations in the Draft WR66SDP.

- The WR66SDP recommends the construction of a multi-use trail along the southern frontage of the BioPark’s Aquarium and Botanic Garden property. This would provide a key linkage from existing on-street bicycle facilities along New York Ave. to the Rio Grande where traffic speeds and right-of-way limitations preclude continuation of these facilities on Central Ave. Recent improvements on the BioPark property, including replacement of the perimeter fence, included landscaping along the north side of Central at this location. This currently landscaped

area could be used for a future multi-use path adjacent to the existing sidewalk. However, a widened sidewalk at the western end of this frontage (closer to Tingley Dr.) would preclude a multi-use path unless it were comprised of pavement markings dividing the sidewalk between pedestrians and cyclists or other users.

- The WR66SDP identifies the intersection of Central Ave. and New York Ave., where the Alameda acequia goes under the roadway, as an appropriate location to establish a public monument to the importance of the acequia system to the history of Albuquerque. This location could incorporate a seating area as an invitation to pedestrians.
- One method for gaining sidewalk width is to narrow traffic lane width. Depending on the availability of right-of-way for sidewalk widening, this recommendation may be viable in sections along Central Ave., with construction staged over time. Narrowing lane widths has the added benefit of calming (slowing) traffic.

3. Iconic Art and Wayfinding Signage

Iconic art, such as the archway signs used elsewhere in Albuquerque to highlight districts or attractions, could be constructed at key intersections such as Tingley Dr. and Rio Grande Blvd. The art would be in the form of highly visible 'markers' signaling entry into the Historic Central area for vehicles and pedestrians traveling along Central Ave. and as a visual statement announcing the start of the Central Ave. bridge for vehicles and pedestrians traveling eastward. The addition of a pedestrian or multi-use bridge running parallel to the Central Ave. traffic bridge, as proposed in the Draft West Route 66 Sector Development Plan, would allow for westward continuation of the planned multi-use trail west across the Rio Grande.

Introducing iconic structure(s), including directional signage in the public right-of-way and an iconic structure near the intersection of Central Ave. and Tingley Dr., would help to draw attention to the many attractions in the area including, the Rio Grande and Bosque.

Figure 8 — Concept Illustration





Destination signs close to the intersection of Central Ave. and Rio Grande Blvd. and close to the intersection of Central Ave. and Tingley Dr. would show motorists what attractions were upcoming (see Fig. 8). The signs could point the way to such destinations as Old Town, Downtown, museums, and the BioPark's various facilities. Iconic art monuments could include markers to guide drivers to more Route 66 attractions, and illuminated with LED or solar lights, as shown in Figure 8 below. By way of an example, a Gateway Arch spanning Central Ave./Route 66 at Sunset Road, Tingley Dr. or Laguna Dr., such as those shown below, would signal that drivers have reached Historic Central and Route 66 and welcome them into the area.

4. Façade Improvement Program

Redevelopment plans typically identify areas and sites where blight conditions exist, and one key indicator of blight is dilapidated or obsolete facades on commercial structures, despite the presence in these buildings of otherwise successful businesses. In some municipalities a Façade Improvement Program has been successful at improving the overall appearance of older commercial streets. These types of improvements signal that reinvestment is being made in an area and encourage further redevelopment. In Albuquerque, smaller-scale Façade Improvement Programs have been initiated to address deteriorated conditions on segments of Broadway Blvd. and in Downtown.

A typical Façade Improvement Program offers low-interest loans (in addition to available grants) to program applicants. The administration of these local programs can fall to private corporations or to municipal agencies administering neighborhood programs or development review. Allocation of funds can also be the responsibility of a public-private entity, such as a business improvement district.

The funds allocated can come through a City agency following review of applications by a City Council or board appointed to the task. The details of programs can vary widely, particularly the monetary size of grants made available to single properties. Activities eligible for reimbursement typically include the removal of façade materials compromising exterior painting. Non-structural improvements, such as awnings and attached signs, can also be included as eligible for grant funds. Site improvements, such as landscaping and exterior lighting, can also be eligible for funding. Interior work including changes to bring building elements into compliance with building and zoning codes should not normally be eligible for funding under grant programs.

A Façade Improvement Program would be consistent with New Mexico Redevelopment Law because Section 3-60A-2 – Findings and Declarations of Necessity is met (B. Certain slum areas and blighted areas ... may require land acquisition and clearance by the municipality... other areas ... may be suitable for conservation or rehabilitation efforts and the conditions ... may be eliminated ... by those efforts), and the area has been designated as a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, consistent with State Code 3-60A-8.

The Historic Central MRA plan recommends a Façade Improvement Program with funding for loans and other incentives provided to businesses to upgrade their building facades and replace or rehabilitate existing neon signage, operated within specific parameters including pre-approval of all work. With any Façade Improvement Program, the specifics of each application need to be confirmed before approval can occur. These include an assurance of the availability of applicant funding, contractor bids (typically two or three), and detailed drawings of the work to be done.

5. Financial Incentives

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Section has the authority to offer direct and/or indirect financial incentives to encourage private owners to redevelop Catalyst Areas, Opportunity Sites, or other MRA property into vibrant activity centers that will spur further redevelopment in the area. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency may offer a private owner a direct financial incentive through a grant or low-interest loan that is subordinate to primary financing. This direct financial incentive is not intended to cover a large portion of a private development's financing. Instead, it is intended to help close the financing gap that many times exists when redeveloping private property in an MRA into an

Figure 9 — Examples of Façade Improvements



New and rehabilitated neon signs along Central Avenue



Adaptive reuse and facade improvements along Central Avenue.

activity center that will spur further redevelopment. The Agency will ensure this direct financial incentive is only offered after a fair, open, and transparent procurement or application process, and it may be subject to approval by City Council depending on the funding source.

Additionally, the Agency may collaborate with other City agencies to offer indirect financial incentives through implementation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for projects in the MRA.

Tax Increment Financing

A Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district is a special purpose district that provides a way for the City to reinvest added tax revenue from new development back into the area where it originated through financing new public improvements. The goal is to stimulate new private investment and thereby increase real estate values. Any increase in tax revenues (caused by new development and higher property values) is paid into a special TIF fund to finance public improvements to benefit all of the district. Potential investments include wider sidewalks, public area landscaping, street furniture, screening walls and lighting.

Tax Increment Financing can be a particularly useful economic tool for redevelopment. It is based on the assumption that successful redevelopment activities typically result in an increase in property values in an area, leading to an increase in property tax revenues. That incremental tax increase, or 'new' property tax revenues, can then be reinvested back into the designated MRA/TIF district.

TIF is designed to channel funding toward improvements in distressed or underdeveloped areas where development might not otherwise occur. TIF districts tend to grow faster than non-TIF districts within the same municipality. This bodes well for areas that would otherwise be passed over by private sector investment alone.

HISTORIC CENTRAL Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan

PART TWO: BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

4. BACKGROUND

5. APPENDICES

4. BACKGROUND

A. AREA HISTORY

Founded as a colonial outpost in 1706, Albuquerque has undergone continuous growth since the arrival of the railroad in the late 19th Century. Prior to 1900 much of that growth occurred within the 3.1 square miles of the original town site. In 1904 an electric streetcar line replaced the horse-drawn trolley that ran along what would be Central Ave., from the new railroad town (now Downtown) to Old Albuquerque (Old Town), site of the original Spanish settlement in 1706. Over the next quarter century, this streetcar system was extended in all directions, giving real estate developers and the town's boosters opportunities to create new suburbs. Although the streetcar line succumbed to the rising popularity of the private automobile by the mid-1920s, its nearly twenty-five years of operation contributed to the form and development of Albuquerque's first generation of suburbs.

In 1922, additional unplatted parcels away from Central Ave., including the Country Club Addition, were annexed. The 33-acre Reynolds Addition was annexed in 1923. The streetcar system was replaced by a city bus system in 1928, when Albuquerque became one of the first cities in the nation to abandon its electric traction system in favor of bus service. With Public Works Administration (PWA) funding, Central Ave. was widened, and designated U.S. 66 in 1937. Commercial enclaves sprang up along Central Ave., forming a continuous commercial strip. In 1956 the national highway system was adopted to allow construction of the Interstate highway system. By 1960, the patterns of growth in Albuquerque that had marked earlier suburbs had greatly altered, with development companies moving beyond the city limits to develop remote suburban communities that were completely dependent upon the automobile. Central Ave. was still the primary, but no longer the only, east-west automobile route through Albuquerque. In 1969, Interstate 40 opened and the importance of Central Ave. as a national and regional artery declined significantly.

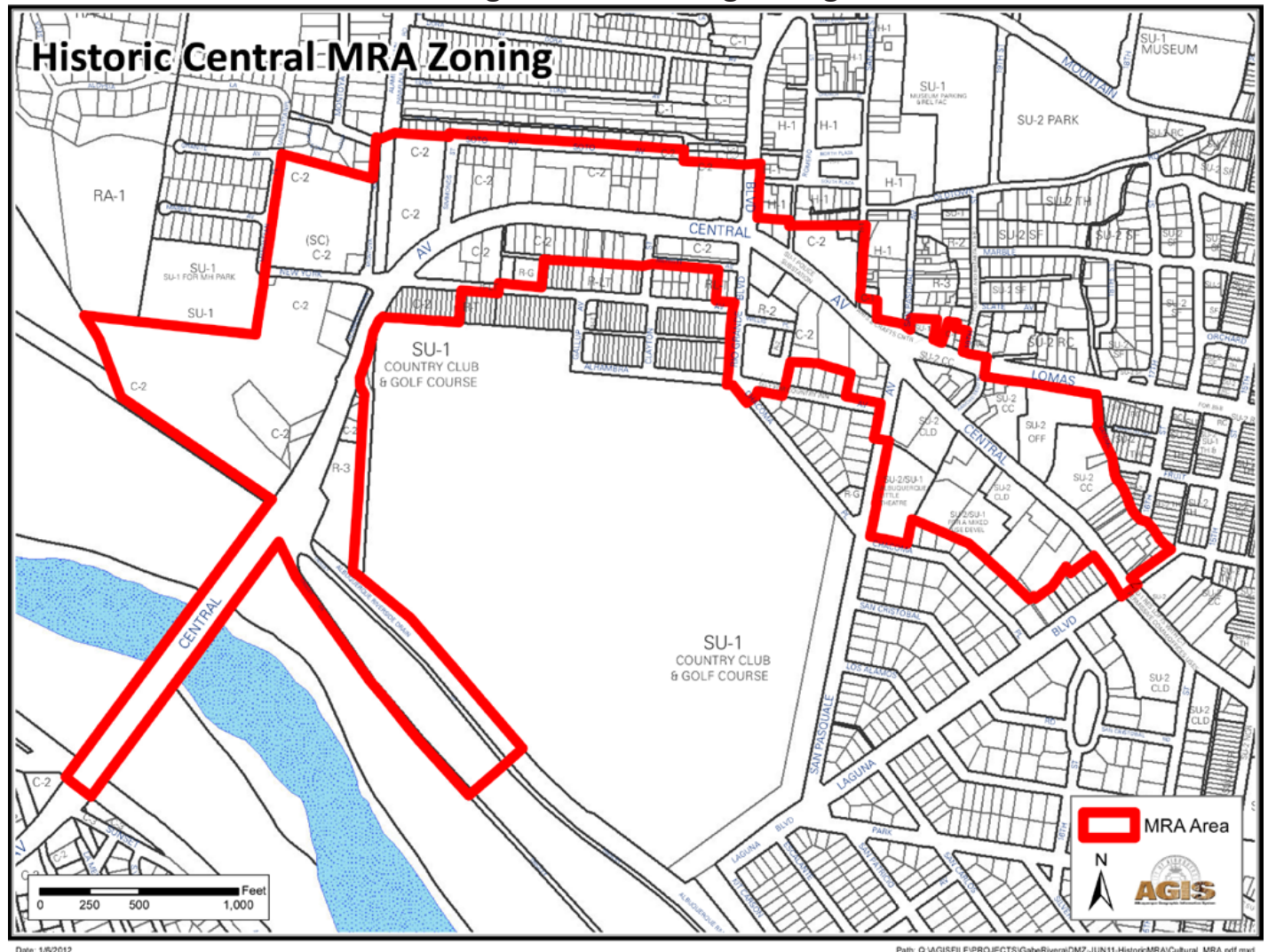
B. HISTORIC CENTRAL MRA HISTORY

Redevelopment activities along Central Ave. near Old Town first involved the City's Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency in a concerted effort by city residents to preserve the El Vado motel. In September 2005, the El Vado property owner submitted applications to the City for a zone change from C-2 (Commercial) to R-T (Residential-Townhouses) in order to develop townhouses to replace the El Vado. At a public hearing on December 14, 2005, the Land Use Conservation Commission (LUCC) reviewed a certificate of appropriateness for demolition of the El Vado, and denied the demolition request while also passing a recommendation for Historic Landmark designation of the property. In August 2006, the City Council denied the owners appeal of the LUCC decisions and adopted an ordinance designating the El Vado as a City Landmark. The El Vado motel, a signature property within the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA), ceased operation as a tourist motel in 2007.

In part spurred by the community's desires to see the El Vado rehabilitated and preserved, the City Council directed the formation of a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area incorporating the El Vado and adjacent blighted properties. On March 4th, 2008, a community meeting was held on the proposed New York MRA, bounded by the intersection of Central Ave. and Rio Grande Blvd. on the east and the intersection of Central Ave. and New York Ave. on the west. The El Vado and adjacent Casa Grande properties were included in the MRA proposal. The community meeting attendees advocated for expansion of the MRA boundaries from New York Ave. west to the far end of the Rio Grande bridge near Sunset Rd., and from Rio Grande Blvd. east to Laguna Blvd., including some residential parcels along Rio Grande Blvd. and New York Ave. south of Central Ave. In 2010 the City purchased the El Vado and adjacent Casa Grande properties.

A second community meeting on an MRA for the area was held on October 26, 2011. At the second meeting approximately 20 people attended, representing property and/or business owners, neighborhood organization representatives, and area residents. Overall, the community expressed support for an MRA and the proposed boundaries.

In January 2012, the City held a third community meeting on the proposed Historic Central MRA, with boundaries extending from the west side of the Rio Grande bridge near Sunset Rd., east along Central Ave. to Laguna Blvd. On June 4, 2012, the City Council adopted Resolution (R-12-52), establishing the current Historic Central MRA boundaries.



neighborhoods with a combined population of 30,000 or more and offer commercial, office, entertainment, medium-density residential and institutional uses in buildings scaled to pedestrians. One such Activity Center is designated around the Central Ave. and Atrisco Rd. intersection, just west of the Historic Central MRA.

The MR Plan boundaries fall within an area further classified as Established Urban Area by the Comprehensive Plan. According to the Comprehensive Plan, the objectives of redevelopment within the Established Urban Area are commercial revitalization, job creation, historic preservation, and mixed use development. The Comprehensive Plan promotes public/private partnership agreements as a way to economically strengthen neighborhoods while promoting the diversity and uniqueness of the neighborhoods within the Established Urban Area. Some properties fall within the Central Urban Area of the Established Urban Area designation, which is intended to be an area focused on arts, cultural and public facilities and activities.

The Comprehensive Plan designates Central Ave. through the MRA as a Major Transit Corridor. The Comprehensive Plan defines Major Transit Corridors as roadways designed to optimize public transit and move large numbers of people in a timely and efficient manner and in a pedestrian friendly environment.

The Comprehensive Plan's overall land use objective for Transit Corridors is that they connect activity centers. Related policies focus on street design, transit service, and development form promoting a strong pedestrian environment with wide sidewalks, building frontages close to and focused on the street, floor area ratio and higher housing density, and frequent transit service. There are also Major Transit Corridor policies to promote public/private cooperation in creating additional housing and jobs through the private market.

Huning Castle and Reynolds Addition Sector Development Plan

The Huning Castle and Reynolds Addition Sector Development Plan was adopted in 1981 and amended in 1993 and 2002 (see Sector Development Plan location map below). The Sector Plan's land use objectives for the community were to encourage development that is mixed use and neighborhood oriented. The Sector Plan establishes zoning classifications for the MRA south of Central Ave. The MRA east of San Pasquale is zoned CLD (Commercial and/or Low Density Apartments), which allows for a mix of residential and commercial uses.

Old Town Sector Development Plan

The Old Town Sector Development Plan is the primary regulating plan for the portion of the Historic Central MRA north of Central Ave. and west of Rio Grande Blvd. The Old Town Plan was adopted in 1977, pre-dating the Albuquerque BioPark and some of the commercial development along Central Ave. The Old Town Plan is a de-facto redevelopment plan, prepared in compliance with New Mexico Community Development Law in effect at the time, with its principal goal being renewal of neighborhoods through the improvement of living conditions of low- and moderate-income families. The Old Town Plan is a social planning document, referencing policies of the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan that are oriented toward the improvement of living conditions as opposed to physical redevelopment of sites.

Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan

The Historic Central MRA portion east of Rio Grande Blvd. and north of Central Ave. is within the Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan (DNASDP). This Sector Development Plan was updated in June 2012. DNASDP goals applicable to the Historic Central MRA Plan include the following:

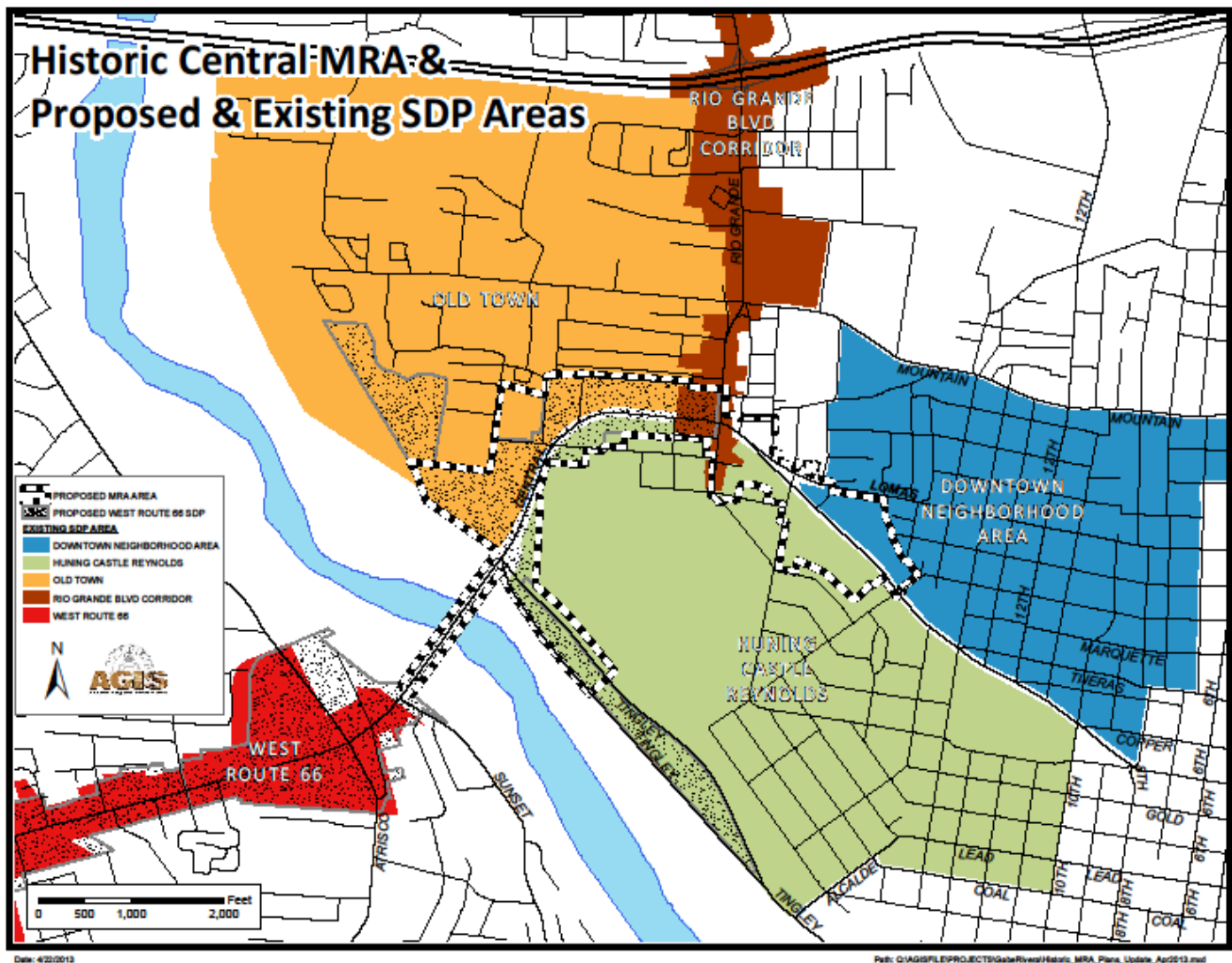
Land Use Goal 1: The Downtown Neighborhood Area will include neighborhood-scale commercial and office uses that are well designed, appropriately located, and consistent with the existing neighborhood character.

Land Use Goal 2: The Downtown Neighborhood Area will promote infill development of surface parking lots and vacant parcels, and redevelopment of distressed structures and properties.

Land Use Goal 3: The predominantly single-family character of the Downtown Neighborhood Area will be preserved and protected, while maintaining economic diversity in housing.

Historic Preservation Goal: The historic character of the Downtown Neighborhood Area will be celebrated and preserved, and balanced with future growth and redevelopment.

Figure 11 — Existing and Proposed Sector Development Plans



Community Character Goal 2: The character-defining elements (e.g. architectural style and history, size and massing of buildings, etc.) of the areas outside of the Downtown Neighborhood Area's historic zones will be recognized and preserved.

Transportation Goal 1: The Downtown Neighborhood Area will be the City's most walkable neighborhood.

Transportation Goal 3: The Downtown Neighborhood Area will have excellent access to transit services.

Quality of Life Goal 1: The Downtown Neighborhood Area will be safe and well lighted.

The DNASDP offers implementation policies for many of the Plan's goals, including Policy 3 which states that:

The City (shall) provide incentives and partner with the private sector on prioritizing redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized parcels throughout the Downtown Neighborhood Area.

The DNASDP identifies three sites for future redevelopment opportunities; however, none of the sites are within the Historic Central MRA.

Rio Grande Blvd. Corridor Plan

The Rio Grande Blvd. Corridor Plan was adopted in 1989, for Rio Grande Blvd. and adjoining properties between the Albuquerque Country Club on the south and 3.7 miles to the north, at the Montano Rd. intersection. The intent of the Corridor Plan is described by the overall goals and objectives:

- To develop a strong sense of place on Rio Grande Blvd. by reinforcing the existing physical qualities that contribute to the characters of each neighborhood in the plan area and to promote visual order and visual interest in the public right-of-way.
- Improve and expand commercial, residential, employment and entertainment opportunities along the West Central Corridor to benefit neighborhood residents and to attract tourists and residents from the greater Albuquerque area.
- Promote mutually supportive land uses and minimize conflicts between less compatible land uses.

There are four Subareas within the Corridor Plan boundaries. Subareas 1 and 2 involve properties within the Historic Central MRA. The proposed WR66SDP will, if approved, overlap the Rio Grande Blvd. Corridor Plan by inclusion of several properties around the Rio Grande Blvd. / Central Ave. intersection (see map above).

West Route 66 Sector Development Plan

The Historic Central MRA, west of Rio Grande Blvd., is within the area proposed to be regulated by the West Route 66 Sector Development Plan (WR66SDP). The proposed WR66SDP has recently been vetted through the Environmental Planning Commission public hearing process, and while some of the WR66SDP development standards may be revised before final adoption of the Plan by the City Council, the WR66SDP recommendations are relevant to the Historic Central MRA Plan. The implementation strategies of this MRA Plan should dovetail with goals and implementation strategies of the adopted WR66SDP. Applicable WR66SDP goals include the following:

1.2.3 Encourage land uses that support the existing open space and recreational facilities such as the Rio Grande, Bosque, the BioPark and Tingley Beach.

1.3.1 Preserve and enhance the unique identity of the West Central Corridor including Route 66, the New Mexican cultural legacy and the eclectic nature of existing development.

1.3.3 Create pedestrian friendly activity centers and segments of commercial and residential development that encourage a 'park once and walk' or 'bus once and walk' strategy.

1.4.1 Make Central Ave. an attractive and inviting corridor that accommodates all modes of transportation including walking, biking, transit and motor vehicles.

1.5.1 Realize the full potential of the BioPark as an area destination and a gateway to the Bosque Open Space that serves both tourists and Albuquerque residents.

1.5.2 Create more opportunities for active recreation.

1.6.1 Improve area drainage and sewer infrastructure and on-site drainage management to prevent flooding and address environmental concerns.

1.6.2 Minimize visual impact of utilities.

The proposed WR66SDP development regulations cover land uses and building envelopes, representing a hybrid form-based zoning. The WR66SDP proposes WR66-SAC (Special Activity Center) Zoning designation along both sides of Central Ave., between Rio Grande Blvd. and the BioPark, affecting much of the MRA. The stated intent of this zone is to:

provide for a 1 to 4 story mixed use environment serving neighborhood and tourism needs, sensitive to the character of Old Town and the BioPark areas. Further, medium to high density residential, shopping, service, office and entertainment uses along a Major Transit Corridor (designated by the Comprehensive Plan) are prescribed within walking or biking distance of existing residential areas.

The Tingley Dr. property is within the WR66-RA (River Activity) Zone under the proposed Sector Plan. This zone applies only to this one property, with an intent statement that the zone is for a mix of non-residential land uses and for development design appropriate to the property's unique location between urban Activity Centers, a Major Transit Corridor, and the open space and waterways associated with the Rio Grande.

Historic Route 66 National Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan 2009

Commissioned by the New Mexico Route 66 Association, The 2009 Corridor Management Plan summarizes the history of Route 66 and the efforts to preserve and promote the ‘mother road’ in New Mexico. It provides photographs and text on much of the remaining Route 66 architecture and buildings along Central Avenue. Among its goals are to make Albuquerque “once again” the neon capital of the United States through installation or refurbishing of neon signs along the corridor and establishment of a neon museum.

West Central Avenue Streetscape Plan

The West Central Avenue Streetscape Plan was prepared jointly by the Planning Department and Sites Southwest consultants in 2001 and adopted by the City Council in 2002 (R-2002-021). The Plan was intended as a blueprint for improving West Central, identifying design measures for the public right of way and redevelopment on abutting private property.

West Central Corridor Concept Plan 2010

The West Central Avenue Corridor Concept Plan was prepared by consultants for the City, and completed in 2010. The stated goal of the Concept Plan is to improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment along Central Avenue through capital and operational improvements that will enhance the viability of anticipated redevelopment. Another goal is to encourage pedestrians and bicyclists to use Central Avenue between Downtown and Old Town. The Concept Plan also identifies certain constraints along Central Ave:

- Central Ave. is classified as a principal arterial, and design avoids significant impacts to traffic operations.
- Central Ave. is ABQ Ride’s Rapid Ride and local bus route. Central Ave. is also an identified High Capacity / Major Transit corridor per the MRCOG 2030 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- Additional right-of-way cannot be readily acquired.
- Existing sidewalk along much of the segment is not ADA compliant.

The design concepts for the 2.5-mile segment of Central Avenue from 8th Street to 47th Street include the following elements:

- Central Ave. ‘road diet’ whereby travel lanes are reduced to one lane in each direction; and on-street parking and bike lanes provided; between 8th St. and Lomas Blvd. (restriping completed as a “demonstration project;” full reconstruction of roadway pending);
- Improvements to the intersections of Central Ave. and Lomas Blvd., and Central Ave. and Rio Grande Blvd.
- Improving the safety of pedestrians and bicycle riders, including pedestrian improvements at the Central/Rio Grande intersection and improving connectivity between Downtown and the Rio Grande.

The Concept Plan studied and recommended three alternatives for reconfiguration of the Central / Lomas / San Pasquale intersection. Funding has been made available for these intersection reconfigurations, and the Department of Municipal Development is currently evaluating these alternatives and holding public meetings to further consider them. Improving traffic operations at these challenging intersections has implications for improving the appearance and safety of the corridor, including providing better vehicular and pedestrian access to support businesses and area attractions.

Cultural Plan for the City of Albuquerque

The Cultural Plan for the City of Albuquerque was prepared by the Arts Alliance, Inc. in 1995 and updated in July, 2001. The Cultural Plan is still in effect while a new Cultural Arts Plan is being prepared by the City. The Arts Alliance, a consortium of interested organizations, has served as the designated agency for implementing the Plan. The Cultural Plan advocates for the arts on several fronts:

- Arts education as a tool for academic and workplace success, as a means of encouraging creativity, and as a foundation for developing life- long participation in the arts.
- Promotion of awareness of the diverse cultures in Albuquerque.

- Need for predictable, sustainable funding to enable organizations to focus on broadening citizen participation through local, regional and national marketing of arts and culture in Albuquerque.
- Create a public awareness campaign to support increased understanding of the value of the arts.

Recommended implementing measures are:

- Establish a downtown arts district.
- Establish and develop public/private partnerships to support the arts community.
- Develop and program future facilities through the Capital Improvements Program and other appropriate departments.
- Support quality urban design through land use planning, development approvals and other City efforts.

Study on the Economic Importance of the Arts and Cultural Industries in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County

In 2007, a study entitled *The Economic Importance of the Arts and Cultural Industries in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County* was published by the University of New Mexico's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER). The study was a collaboration between the University of New Mexico, the City of Albuquerque and the County of Bernalillo, local non-profit arts and cultural organizations, and members of the business community. The study, conducted over the period of 2006-2007, measured the economic impact of the region's Arts and Cultural Industries, including education, museums, media, spectator sports and cultural tourism. The study identified the region's unique advantages and disadvantages in national markets for the arts and cultural industries, and made recommendations of 'best practices' in cultural economic policy nationally.

The policy recommendations of the study identify:

- A need to better coordinate the efforts of the institutions and individuals that comprise the local arts and cultural industries, including both artists and innovators and those that support them.
- Leaders of the local arts and cultural industries should assess the region's advantages and opportunities in the context of a rapidly evolving national and global market, and strategically position the community in these markets.
- A need to establish a secure and dedicated mechanism to fund local arts and cultural industries, particularly small and mid-sized organizations.

The City of Albuquerque is preparing a new Cultural Arts Plan based upon these recommendations.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the region's current long-range transportation plan. The MTP has set forth goals to enhance quality of life, ensure the mobility of people and goods, and support economic activity and growth. The 2035 MTP addresses future growth in several new ways. For example, a comprehensive transit system, including Bus Rapid Transit, would connect areas of population to major activity centers. Albuquerque's Rapid Ride and the New Mexico Rail Runner have shown that people will use transit if it is fast and convenient. The 2035 MTP also recommends improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian networks, preservation and optimization of the use of existing infrastructure, and lays out a process for selecting the most beneficial projects for the region as well as monitoring progress made toward stated goals.

Central Ave. through the MRA is identified as a Priority Transit Improvement Corridor, which are corridors that have been identified as well suited for further evaluation and development of potential high frequency and high volume transit service. The selection of the appropriate transit service is to be based on existing, planned, and desired land uses, density of development, and proximity to major activity centers, employment centers, and major destinations, potential ridership and cost effectiveness. A comprehensive, integrated and regional approach to long-range transit planning is encouraged to coordinate services, such as local, fixed route, express/rapid ride, commuter rail, and services provided by the various transit providers. Long-range strategies include the development and analysis of corridors and areas for future transit initiatives. Corridors and areas were identified by the Transportation Coordinating Committee to assist in the development of future planned transit service and facilities.

El Vado Market Study

In 2006, a market study was commissioned by the City and prepared by a consultant , regarding the highest and best use for the El Vado. In developing an RFP for redevelopment of the site, the City may wish to consider the information contained therein. Though this study is potentially out of date, it may provide a general orientation to the site's potential.

5. APPENDICES

A. FUNDING SOURCES FOR CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE MRA PLANS

City of Albuquerque Capital Improvement Plan

The purpose of the City of Albuquerque's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is to enhance the physical and cultural development of the City by implementing the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans and policies. Through a multi-year schedule of public physical improvements, CIP administers approved capital expenditures for systematically acquiring, constructing, replacing, upgrading and rehabilitating Albuquerque's built environment. In practice, the CIP develops, and sometimes directly implements, diverse projects and improvements to public safety and rehabilitation of aging infrastructure such as roads, drainage systems and the water and wastewater networks. Funding for these projects comes from long-term bonds approved by the voters and issued by the City.

Tax-Increment Financing

Tax-increment financing or TIF is created through a local government's property tax assessment. The incremental difference in tax assessed before and after improvements is used to finance further improvements within the district. In New Mexico, tax-increment financing is enabled through the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, Enterprise Zone Act and the Urban Development Law. The City of Albuquerque uses tax-increment financing within its designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs).

Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB)

An IRB is a loan by a lender/bond purchaser to a company, where the loan proceeds and the loan repayments flow through a government issuer. The tax benefits of IRBs result from the form of the loan and the involvement of a government issuer (eg., the City of Albuquerque). In its simplest form, an IRB structure involves a company (typically a corporation, a limited partnership or limited liability company) that wants to purchase and/or construct and/or equip a facility. Instead of purchasing, constructing or equipping directly, the company enters into an agreement (usually a lease) with a government issuer. The agreement provides that the company will lease the facility from the government issuer, construct and equip the facility and, at the end of the lease term, purchase the facility from the issuer at a nominal price. Importantly, the company constructs and equips the facility as the agent of the issuer. The proceeds of the bond sale are used to pay the expenses of the facility. The bonds are paid off solely with the payments made by the company to the issuer under the lease.

Only "projects" can be financed with IRBs. Projects include land, buildings, furniture, fixtures and equipment. Municipal projects (as opposed to county projects) do not include facilities used primarily for the sale of goods or commodities at retail and certain regulated utility projects. Projects do not need to include land; they can be for equipment only. Also, any land included in a project need not be owned in fee simple. The costs of projects that can be financed are limited to capital costs and transaction costs. Working capital generally cannot be financed with IRBs, nor is there any benefit associated with doing so.

Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds

Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds, while similar in some respects to Industrial Revenue Bonds, have certain differences. These bonds are restricted to financing projects in designated Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas and are available to a wider variety of projects. The public purpose for these projects is to stimulate redevelopment activities in economically distressed areas. Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds provide a limited property tax abatement on the net improvements to the project site (i.e., current property taxes on the existing value of the property are not exempted). Also, Metropolitan Redevelopment Bonds do not offer gross receipts or compensating tax exemptions on the purchase of equipment for the facility. However, they are a reasonable option for projects that may not generally qualify for Industrial Revenue Bonds.

As with Industrial Revenue Bonds, the City does not provide the financing or credit enhancement for the bonds; the applicant is responsible for finding their own financing, based solely on the rates they can negotiate with the purchasers of the bonds. Financing and legal costs are paid by the applicant.

Non-Profit Financing

There are a number of opportunities for partnerships to occur between these various entities. Partnerships hold a high potential for redevelopment opportunities to occur in the East Gateway MRA area. The City can provide incentives through public financing, land holdings, or eminent domain authority to serve as incentives/collateral for groups such as the New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund, ACCION, WESST, the US Small Business Association and private developers.

New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund

The New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund is a private, non-profit organization that provides loans, training and technical assistance to business owners and non-profit organizations. Their services support the efforts of low-income individuals and communities to achieve self-reliance and control over their economic destiny. Loans of from \$5,000 to \$500,000 are available to new and existing small businesses for such needs as equipment, inventory, building renovations and operating capital. Non-profits can seek loans for such needs as bridge financing against awarded private and public contracts, capital improvements and equipment, and loans to non-profits that develop affordable housing.

WESST

WESST is a statewide small business development and training nonprofit organization committed to growing New Mexico's economy by cultivating entrepreneurship. Founded in 1988 to create a path out of poverty for low-income women and minorities, it now provides training, technical assistance and access to capital to any New Mexico resident interested in launching a new business or improving the performance of an existing one. WESST now offers clients access to six Enterprise Centers, located in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, Roswell and Farmington. Loan amounts range from \$200 to \$10,000 for start-up businesses and up to \$50,000 for those in business more than a year. In 2009 it opened a new Enterprise Center and small business incubator in Albuquerque.

ACCION

ACCION is a non-profit, micro-lender and business support organization located in New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado. It is dedicated to helping entrepreneurs in those states who cannot get credit they need due to modest capital, lack of business or credit history, or limited collateral. It offers business loans from \$200 to \$300,000 and extends lines of credit from \$20,000 to \$100,000. Terms range from two months to seven years, depending on the loan size. Interest rates vary, reflecting the market rate and loan risk. Accion also charges a "community benefit fee," due at closing, of from 2% to 9% of the loan to help offset a portion of their lending, training and outreach costs.

State Financing Programs

Business Loans

- The State of New Mexico has several loan programs to support business expansion and relocation to the state:
- Business Bonds
- Private Activity Bonds for Manufacturing Facilities
- Real Property Business Loan
- Severance Tax Permanent Fund/Participation Interests in Business Loans
- Severance Tax Permanent Fund/Purchases of SBA/FMHA Obligation

Federal Financing Programs

Federal Transportation Funding

The most recent of Federal bills to fund transportation across the nation is the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2011. Approved in September 2011 was the eighth extension of the SAFETEA-LU Act, which awaits a six-year reauthorization. The most recent extension expired on September 30, 2012. Enhancement funds in these bills are allocated to integrate transportation projects with environmental and community revitalization goals over a period of six years. They are applicable beyond highways, road and transit construction and maintenance; funds may also be used for relevant environmental restoration, landscaping, pollution abatement, historic preservation, trails, bike paths and pedestrian infrastructure including aesthetic enhancements.

HUD Funds for Local CDBG Loans and "Floats"

One of the nation's largest Federal grant programs, the Community Development Block Grant Program, is used to promote the revitalization of neighborhoods and the expansion of affordable housing and economic opportunities. Eligible activities include planning for redevelopment, site acquisition, environmental site assessment, site clearance, demolition, rehabilitation, contamination removal and construction. Also, when a grant recipient can show that previously awarded CDBG funds will not be needed in the near term, it may tap its block grant account on an interim basis, using a "float" to obtain short-term, low interest financing for projects that create jobs. Money borrowed from grants in this way may pay for the purchase of land, buildings and equipment, site and structural rehabilitation (including environmental remediation) or new construction.

The City of Albuquerque receives an annual Community Development Block Grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to fund redevelopment activities in low- and moderate- income communities across the City. The City's consolidated plan, which specifies how the funds are to be spent over a five-year period, has established several programs that could support redevelopment activities in the East Gateway MRA such as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), which funds neighborhood improvements designed to reduce crime and enhance security; Acquisition of Nuisance Property, which funds the purchase of property creating conditions of slum and blight; Neighborhood Business Assistance Fund, which assists businesses with low-interest loans, façade improvements and technical assistance; and Job Training for Businesses in Low/Moderate Income Areas, which provides funding for training employees.

Loans

SBA Micro Loans

These loans are administered through responsible nonprofit groups, such as local economic development organizations or state finance authorities that are selected and approved by the SBA. The SBA loans the money to the nonprofit organization which then pools the funds with local money and administers direct loans to small businesses. In New Mexico these loans are provided through WESST and ACCION.

SBA micro loans are administered much like a line of credit and are intended for the purchase of machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures, inventory, supplies and working capital. The funds are intended to be dispersed with close monitoring of the recipient and a self-employment training program may accompany the loan. The maximum maturity for a micro loan is six years. The average loan size is \$10,000. The loan cannot be used to pay existing debts.

SBA's Section 504 Development Company Debentures

Small businesses can receive long-term capital for fixed assets from SBA-certified local development companies who issue notes backed by SBA. These resources can support up to 40 percent of a project's total costs, up to \$750,000. A private financial institution must provide 50 percent of the project financing, but has first claim on collateral. The remaining 10 percent of funding must be obtained from the developer, a nonfederal economic development program, or owner equity.

SBA' Section 504 Development Company Debentures

Small businesses can receive long-term capital for fixed assets from SBA-certified local development companies who issue notes backed by SBA. These resources can support up to 40 percent of a project's total costs, up to \$750,000. A private financial institution must provide 50 percent of the project financing, but has first claim on collateral. The remaining 10 percent of funding must be obtained from the developer, a nonfederal economic development program, or owner equity.

Loan Guarantees

HUD Section 108 Loan Guarantees

HUD Section 108 is the loan guarantee provision of the Community Development Block Grant program. It provides communities with a source of funding for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities and large-scale physical development projects. The principal security for the loan guarantee is a pledge by the applicant entity or the State of its future CDBG funds. It is a powerful investment tool in that it allows local governments to transform a small portion of their annual CDBG funds into multi-year federally guaranteed loans, often at lower interest rates, large enough to pursue physical and economic revitalization projects that can renew entire neighborhoods. City or state applicants may pledge up to five times their annual CDBG grants as collateral. States may also pledge their own CDBG allocation on behalf of their small cities.

SBA's Section 7(a) and Low-Doc Programs

Under Section 7(a), SBA will guarantee up to 90 percent of private loans of less than \$155,000 to small businesses and up to 85 percent of loans between \$155,000 and \$500,000. The Low-Doc Program offers SBA backing of 90 percent and a streamlined application, review, and approval process for guarantees of loans of less than \$100,000.

Grants

EDA Title I and Title IX

Grants are available to government and nonprofit organizations in distressed areas to fund improvements in infrastructure and public facilities, including industrial parks.

SBA's Small Business Investment Companies

Licensed and regulated by the SBA, Small Business Investment Companies are privately owned and managed investment firms that make capital available to small businesses through investments or loans. The use of their own funds plus funds obtained at favorable rates with SBA guaranties and/or by selling their preferred stock to the SBA.

Tax Incentives and Tax-exempt Financing

NM Historic Preservation Revolving Loan Fund

This program was established in 1987 to provide owners of registered cultural properties in New Mexico with low-cost financial assistance in the restoration, rehabilitation, and repair of properties listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties or National Register of Historic Places. Loans are structured to last for five years with a blended interest rate (from all loan partners) that is considerably less than traditional financing. The State Historic Preservation Division provides preservation assistance to ensure that the historic integrity of the properties is maintained while the Lender of Record is responsible for loan processing.

Federal Historic Rehabilitation Income Tax Credits [vetted by State Historic Preservation Office]

Investors can receive a credit against their Federal income taxes for up to 20 years for qualified rehabilitation work on an income-producing building beginning the year the property is put into service. The credit is equal to 20 percent of the cost of the work on certified historic structures (those listed on the National Register of Historic Places or that contribute to a listed historic district.) Property owners or long-term tenants seeking tax credits should contact the NM Historic Preservation Office prior to beginning work.

State Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties

For properties listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties, or that contribute to a historic district listed in the State Register, the State Income Tax Credit program yields a tax credit of up to 50% of pre-approved rehabilitation expenditures for owners or long-term tenants. It can be used against state income tax owned for up to five years (unless depleted sooner). Property owners or long-term tenants seeking tax credits should contact the NM Historic Preservation Division prior to beginning work.

New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC)

The NMTC Program permits taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs). Substantially all of the qualified equity investment must in turn be used by the CDE to provide investments in low-income communities. The credit provided to the investor totals 39% of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year credit allowance period. In each of the first three years, the investor receives a credit equal to five percent of the total amount paid for the stock or capital interest at the time of purchase. For the final four years, the value of the credit is six percent annually. Investors may not redeem their investments in CDEs prior to the conclusion of the seven-year period.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

The LIHTC program is an indirect Federal subsidy used to finance the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households. It offers a ten-year credit for owners of newly constructed or renovated rental housing and sets aside a percentage of the units for low-income individuals for a minimum of 15 years. The amount of the credit varies for new construction and renovation. The project must receive an allocation of New Mexico's annual credit ceiling or use multi-family housing tax-exempt bonds that receive an allocation of New Mexico State's bond volume cap. Allocations are made on the basis of the New Mexico State Qualified Allocation Plan.

National Scenic Byways Grants

The National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grants program provides merit-based funding for byway-related projects each year, as part of the Federal Highway Administrations Discretionary Grants Program. Projects to support and enhance National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads and State-designated byways are eligible. Applications are prepared online but submitted through the State's byway program agency. Projects submitted for consideration should benefit the byway traveler's experience, whether it will help manage the intrinsic qualities that support the byway's designation, shape the byway's story, interpret the story for visitors, or improve visitor facilities along the byway. National Scenic Byways Program funds may be used for facilities or improvements directly related to the byway and the byway's intrinsic qualities that support the byway's designation. The following is a list of additional activities that are eligible for Byway Grants:

- State and Indian Tribe Scenic Byway Programs
- Corridor Management Plan
- Safety Improvements
- Byway Facilities
- Access to Recreation
- Resource Protection
- Interpretive Information
- Marketing

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C. PROPERTY OWNERS SURVEY

On March 8, 2013, 85 survey forms were mailed to property owners within the MRA, based upon City property ownership records. There were 5 responses returned. At a community meeting held on April 2, 2013, 15 completed survey responses were returned. In general, the respondents expressed opinions that the most beneficial improvements to the MRA would be Central Ave. streetscape improvements, building façade improvements, and E. **RESOLUTION**

Dear property owner,

The Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan, now underway, will make recommendations for the revitalization of the Historic Central corridor. While all of the recommendations will not necessarily be implemented, the City decision-making process for allocation of funds for capital improvements often relies on adopted plans and policies. City staff requests your feedback on the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (see map on back). Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Chris Glore, MR Planner, City Of Albuquerque cglore@cabq.gov (505) 924-3357

Property Street Address

Property Owner Name and Telephone

What changes in the area would most benefit your property? (mark all that apply)

- a. ☐ More people living in the area
- b. ☐ More people working in the area
- c. ☐ More tourists from Old Town
- d. ☐ More recreation facilities like the BioPark and Tingley Beach
- e. ☐ Street appearance improvements
- f. ☐ Building façade improvements
- g. ☐ Crime reduction
- h. ☐ Road improvements on Central Ave.

What *public* improvements could benefit your property the most? (mark all that apply)

- a. ☐ Streetscape enhancement (such as new sidewalks, landscaping and/or benches, trash cans)
- b. ☐ Street lighting (new light fixtures)
- c. ☐ Façade improvement program (loans and/or grants to property owners)
- d. ☐ On-street parking on Central Ave. (more spaces or fewer spaces)
- e. ☐ Recreation activities for City residents

What *private* investments in the Redevelopment Area would be the most beneficial to your business? (mark all that apply)

- a. ☐ Hospitality industry (motels and related businesses)
- b. ☐ Entertainment (such as theaters, night clubs)
- c. ☐ Restaurants
- d. ☐ Stores for the surrounding residents
- e. ☐ Tourist draws / activities
- f. ☐ Artist studios and shops

In your opinion, what would be the best new land use for the vacant and under-utilized lots in the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area? (mark all that apply)

- a. ☐ Commercial development with new stores
- b. ☐ Industrial and/or office development for more jobs
- c. ☐ Housing development to bring more residents into the area
- d. ☐ Tourist-serving businesses such as restaurants and motels
- e. ☐ Recreation activities for residents of the City of Albuquerque

D. CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
Comprehensive Plan Policies and Goals	MRA Plan Implementation
The Comprehensive Plan sets an overall land use objective relative to the Transit Corridors, that these corridors form 'bookends' connecting two activity centers. In between sections of the corridors are to be developed with 2 to 3 story residential and mixed use adjacent to the activity centers (the Moderate Profile), transitioning to 1 to 2 story residential and mixed use (the Lowest Profile).	Redevelopment activities within the Historic Central MRA should be complimentary to the Comprehensive Plan land use objective for transit corridors. The MRA is currently anchored by two designated activity centers, the Bio Park/Zoo area and Old Town/Museum Complex. According to the Comprehensive Plan land use objective, public realm improvements to enhance transit use and mixed-use development are to be encouraged within the private realm. Mixed-use development can be required for redevelopment of the Catalyst Areas, located along the designated Transit Corridor.

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
Land Use – Open Space Network	MRA Plan Implementation
<p>Policy B.1.a – Open space lands and waters shall be acquired or regulated as appropriate to serve one or more of the following purposes:</p> <p>Conservation of natural resources and environmental features</p> <p>Provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation</p> <p>Shaping of the urban form</p>	<p>Public realm projects recommended in this MRA Plan include iconic sign and art elements where West Central Ave. intersects Lomas / San Pasquale and Tingley Dr., including art works to demarcate the start of the Historic District. Iconic directional signage is recommended for the public realm to point the way to museums, the BioPark, the Bosque, Old Town and other attractions.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.b – Access to the Rio Grande, Bosque, and surrounding river lands should be carefully designed to provide entry to those portions suitable for recreational, scientific and educational purposes, while controlling access in other more sensitive areas to preserve the natural wildlife habitat and maintain essential watershed management and drainage functions.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site must balance the highly sensitive natural environment surrounding it with its strategic location relative to the major activity centers within and surrounding the MRA.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.c – Development in or adjacent to the proposed Open Space network shall be compatible with open space purposes.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site should include programming of significant public activities, such as a park-and-ride for a ‘cultural shuttle’ transit operation and public spaces for community events. Unique outdoor dining could include foot carts and food trucks with central seating areas.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.f – A multi-purpose network of open spaces and trail corridors along arroyos and appropriate ditches shall be created. Trail corridors shall be acquired, regulated, or appropriately managed to protect natural features, views, drainage and other functions or to link to other areas within the Open Space network.</p>	<p>The Historic Central MRA Plan proposes redevelopment of the Soto Rd. right-of-way into a primary route for bicycles and pedestrians between Old Town and the BioPark, with a high-profile crossing at Rio Grande Blvd.</p> <p>The 2004 FAABS report identifies the Alameda Drain as part of a ‘proposed bike route’ between Central Ave. and Mountain Rd. and thus a link in connecting the Tingley Beach and Bosque open spaces with the parks and museums just east of Old Town.</p>
Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas	MRA Plan Implementation
<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.d – The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, as part of a Catalyst Area development or an Opportunity Sites project, will be evaluated for consistency with the community-generated WR66SDP development standards.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.</p>

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
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<i>Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.d – The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, as part of a Catalyst Area development or an Opportunity Sites project, will be evaluated for consistency with the community-generated WR66SDP development standards.</p>

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.	Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.
Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas	MRA Plan Implementation
<p>Policy B.5.h – Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In designated Activity Centers • In areas with excellent access to the major street network • In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available. • In areas where a transition is needed between single family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas. 	<p>The MRA includes two Catalyst Areas, both of which are adjacent to a Comprehensive Plan designated Activity Center.</p> <p>A mixed residential density will be encouraged within the MRA, where a full range of urban services is already present. Redevelopment in each Catalyst Area will favor higher density live/work and residential land uses.</p> <p>At the MRA boundaries, where single family residential uses abut the commercially-zoned properties fronting Central Ave., development of projects including higher density residential will need to be sensitive to the less-dense adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p>
Policy B.5.i – Quality and innovation in design shall be encouraged in all new development; design shall be encouraged which is appropriate to the Plan area.	In reviewing proposals for Catalyst Areas the ADC will consider the appropriateness of building design of redevelopment on the two Catalyst Areas to ascertain consistency with the design standards of the WR66SDP.
Policy B.5.m – Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.	<p>Redevelopment of the two Catalyst Areas will be required to provide a high quality design, complimentary to surrounding attractions including the BioPark and Old Town. Public facilities, including new Central Ave. streetscape, must also be of high quality design.</p> <p>Public art elements, and other construction projects in proximity to the Rio Grande bridge should contribute to the visual assets of the Bosque and Tingley Beach areas.</p>
Policy B.5.o – Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.	The Historic Central MRA Plan deals specifically with development and re-development of an older area of Albuquerque, within the Comprehensive Plan’s Established Urban Area. Redevelopment of Catalyst Area A will completely rehabilitate the El Vado within National Register of Historic Places guidelines.
Policy B.5.p – Cost-effective redevelopment techniques shall be developed and utilized.	Proposals submitted to the City for redevelopment on the City-owned Catalyst Area sites will be required to demonstrate cost - effectiveness as one of the proposal review criteria.

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
<i>Land Use – Open Space Network</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
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<p>Policy B.1.b – Access to the Rio Grande, Bosque, and surrounding river lands should be carefully designed to provide entry to those portions suitable for recreational, scientific and educational purposes, while controlling access in other more sensitive areas to preserve the natural wildlife habitat and maintain essential watershed management and drainage functions.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site must balance the highly sensitive natural environment surrounding it with its strategic location relative to the major activity centers within and surrounding the MRA.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.c – Development in or adjacent to the proposed Open Space network shall be compatible with open space purposes.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site should include programming of significant public activities, such as a park-and-ride for a ‘cultural shuttle’ transit operation and public spaces for community events. Unique outdoor dining could include foot carts and food trucks with central seating areas.</p>
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<i>Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.d – The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, as part of a Catalyst Area development or an Opportunity Sites project, will be evaluated for consistency with the community-generated WR66SDP development standards.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.</p>

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<p>Policy B.5.h – Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In designated Activity Centers • In areas with excellent access to the major street network • In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available. • In areas where a transition is needed between single family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas. 	<p>The MRA includes two Catalyst Areas, both of which are adjacent to a Comprehensive Plan designated Activity Center.</p> <p>A mixed residential density will be encouraged within the MRA, where a full range of urban services is already present. Redevelopment in each Catalyst Area will favor higher density live/work and residential land uses.</p> <p>At the MRA boundaries, where single family residential uses abut the commercially-zoned properties fronting Central Ave., development of projects including higher density residential will need to be sensitive to the less-dense adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p>
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<p>Policy B.5.m – Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the two Catalyst Areas will be required to provide a high quality design, complimentary to surrounding attractions including the BioPark and Old Town. Public facilities, including new Central Ave. streetscape, must also be of high quality design.</p> <p>Public art elements, and other construction projects in proximity to the Rio Grande bridge should contribute to the visual assets of the Bosque and Tingley Beach areas.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.o – Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.</p>	<p>The Historic Central MRA Plan deals specifically with development and re-development of an older area of Albuquerque, within the Comprehensive Plan’s Established Urban Area. Redevelopment of Catalyst Area A will completely rehabilitate the El Vado within National Register of Historic Places guidelines.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.p – Cost-effective redevelopment techniques shall be developed and utilized.</p>	<p>Proposals submitted to the City for redevelopment on the City-owned Catalyst Area sites will be required to demonstrate cost - effectiveness as one of the proposal review criteria.</p>
<p>Policy B.6.b – Upgrading efforts in neighborhoods within the Central Urban Area should be continued and expanded and linkages created between residential areas and cultural/arts/ recreation facilities.</p>	<p>Improved linkages for pedestrian and bicycle travel are proposed in this MRA Plan, including the Soto Ave. right-of-way between Old Town and Central Ave., and an easement through a closed right-of-way in New York Ave. between Central Ave. and the residential neighborhood.</p>
<i>Land Use – Activity Centers</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>

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<i>Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>
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Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.	Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.
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Policy B.5.l – Quality and innovation in design shall be encouraged in all new development; design shall be encouraged which is appropriate to the Plan area.	In reviewing proposals for Catalyst Areas the ADC will consider the appropriateness of building design of redevelopment on the two Catalyst Areas to ascertain consistency with the design standards of the WR66SDP.
Policy B.5.m – Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.	<p>Redevelopment of the two Catalyst Areas will be required to provide a high quality design, complimentary to surrounding attractions including the BioPark and Old Town. Public facilities, including new Central Ave. streetscape, must also be of high quality design.</p> <p>Public art elements, and other construction projects in proximity to the Rio Grande bridge should contribute to the visual assets of the Bosque and Tingley Beach areas.</p>
Policy B.5.o – Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.	The Historic Central MRA Plan deals specifically with development and re-development of an older area of Albuquerque, within the Comprehensive Plan's Established Urban Area. Redevelopment of Catalyst Area A will completely rehabilitate the El Vado within National Register of Historic Places guidelines.
Policy B.5.p – Cost-effective redevelopment techniques shall be developed and utilized.	Proposals submitted to the City for redevelopment on the City-owned Catalyst Area sites will be required to demonstrate cost-effectiveness as one of the proposal review criteria.

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<p>Policy B.1.c – Development in or adjacent to the proposed Open Space network shall be compatible with open space purposes.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site should include programming of significant public activities, such as a park-and-ride for a ‘cultural shuttle’ transit operation and public spaces for community events. Unique outdoor dining could include foot carts and food trucks with central seating areas.</p>
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<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.d – The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, as part of a Catalyst Area development or an Opportunity Sites project, will be evaluated for consistency with the community-generated WR66SDP development standards.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.</p>

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
<i>Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.5.h – Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In designated Activity Centers • In areas with excellent access to the major street network • In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available. • In areas where a transition is needed between single family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas. 	<p>The MRA includes two Catalyst Areas, both of which are adjacent to a Comprehensive Plan designated Activity Center.</p> <p>A mixed residential density will be encouraged within the MRA, where a full range of urban services is already present. Redevelopment in each Catalyst Area will favor higher density live/work and residential land uses.</p> <p>At the MRA boundaries, where single family residential uses abut the commercially-zoned properties fronting Central Ave., development of projects including higher density residential will need to be sensitive to the less-dense adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.i – Quality and innovation in design shall be encouraged in all new development; design shall be encouraged which is appropriate to the Plan area.</p>	<p>In reviewing proposals for Catalyst Areas the ADC will consider the appropriateness of building design of redevelopment on the two Catalyst Areas to ascertain consistency with the design standards of the WR66SDP.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.m – Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the two Catalyst Areas will be required to provide a high quality design, complimentary to surrounding attractions including the BioPark and Old Town. Public facilities, including new Central Ave. streetscape, must also be of high quality design.</p> <p>Public art elements, and other construction projects in proximity to the Rio Grande bridge should contribute to the visual assets of the Bosque and Tingley Beach areas.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.o – Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.</p>	<p>The Historic Central MRA Plan deals specifically with development and re-development of an older area of Albuquerque, within the Comprehensive Plan’s Established Urban Area. Redevelopment of Catalyst Area A will completely rehabilitate the El Vado within National Register of Historic Places guidelines.</p>
<p>Policy B.5.p – Cost-effective redevelopment techniques shall be developed and utilized.</p>	<p>Proposals submitted to the City for redevelopment on the City-owned Catalyst Area sites will be required to demonstrate cost - effectiveness as one of the proposal review criteria.</p>
<p>Policy B.6.b – Upgrading efforts in neighborhoods within the Central Urban Area should be continued and expanded and linkages created between residential areas and cultural/arts/ recreation facilities.</p>	<p>Improved linkages for pedestrian and bicycle travel are proposed in this MRA Plan, including the Soto Ave. right-of-way between Old Town and Central Ave., and an easement through a closed right-of-way in New York Ave. between Central Ave. and the residential neighborhood.</p>

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
<i>Land Use – Open Space Network</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.1.a – Open space lands and waters shall be acquired or regulated as appropriate to serve one or more of the following purposes:</p> <p>Conservation of natural resources and environmental features</p> <p>Provision of opportunities for outdoor education and recreation</p> <p>Shaping of the urban form</p>	<p>Public realm projects recommended in this MRA Plan include iconic sign and art elements where West Central Ave. intersects Lomas / San Pasquale and Tingley Dr., including art works to demarcate the start of the Historic District. Iconic directional signage is recommended for the public realm to point the way to museums, the BioPark, the Bosque, Old Town and other attractions.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.b – Access to the Rio Grande, Bosque, and surrounding river lands should be carefully designed to provide entry to those portions suitable for recreational, scientific and educational purposes, while controlling access in other more sensitive areas to preserve the natural wildlife habitat and maintain essential watershed management and drainage functions.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site must balance the highly sensitive natural environment surrounding it with its strategic location relative to the major activity centers within and surrounding the MRA.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.c – Development in or adjacent to the proposed Open Space network shall be compatible with open space purposes.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of the Tingley Dr. Opportunity Site should include programming of significant public activities, such as a park-and-ride for a ‘cultural shuttle’ transit operation and public spaces for community events. Unique outdoor dining could include foot carts and food trucks with central seating areas.</p>
<p>Policy B.1.f – A multi-purpose network of open spaces and trail corridors along arroyos and appropriate ditches shall be created. Trail corridors shall be acquired, regulated, or appropriately managed to protect natural features, views, drainage and other functions or to link to other areas within the Open Space network.</p>	<p>The Historic Central MRA Plan proposes redevelopment of the Soto Rd. right-of-way into a primary route for bicycles and pedestrians between Old Town and the BioPark, with a high-profile crossing at Rio Grande Blvd.</p> <p>The 2004 FAABS report identifies the Alameda Drain as part of a ‘proposed bike route’ between Central Ave. and Mountain Rd. and thus a link in connecting the Tingley Beach and Bosque open spaces with the parks and museums just east of Old Town.</p>
<i>Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
<p>Policy B.5.a – The Developing Urban and Established Urban Areas as shown by the Plan map shall allow a full range of urban land uses</p>	<p>The MRA Plan provides strategies for implementing redevelopment of Catalyst Areas with urban land uses and densities.</p>

Table 5 — Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comp Plan	
Policy B.5.d – The location, intensity, and design of new development shall respect existing neighborhood values, natural environmental conditions and carrying capacities, scenic resources, and resources of other social, cultural, recreational concern.	Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties, as part of a Catalyst Area development or an Opportunity Sites project, will be evaluated for consistency with the community-generated WR66SDP development standards.
Policy B.5.e – New growth shall be accommodated through development in areas where vacant land is contiguous to existing or programmed urban facilities and services and where the integrity of existing neighborhoods can be ensured.	Redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties within the Historic Central MRA, as a Catalyst Area or Opportunity Site, will be contiguous to the full range of urban facilities and services that exist throughout the MRA.
Land Use – Developing & Established Urban Areas	MRA Plan Implementation
<p>Policy B.5.h – Higher density housing is most appropriate in the following situations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In designated Activity Centers • In areas with excellent access to the major street network • In areas where a mixed density pattern is already established by zoning or use, where it is compatible with existing area land uses and where adequate infrastructure is or will be available. • In areas where a transition is needed between single family homes and much more intensive development: densities will vary up to 30 dwelling units per net acre according to the intensity of development in adjacent areas. 	<p>The MRA includes two Catalyst Areas, both of which are adjacent to a Comprehensive Plan designated Activity Center.</p> <p>A mixed residential density will be encouraged within the MRA, where a full range of urban services is already present. Redevelopment in each Catalyst Area will favor higher density live/work and residential land uses.</p> <p>At the MRA boundaries, where single family residential uses abut the commercially-zoned properties fronting Central Ave., development of projects including higher density residential will need to be sensitive to the less-dense adjacent residential neighborhoods.</p>
Policy B.5.i – Quality and innovation in design shall be encouraged in all new development; design shall be encouraged which is appropriate to the Plan area.	In reviewing proposals for Catalyst Areas the ADC will consider the appropriateness of building design of redevelopment on the two Catalyst Areas to ascertain consistency with the design standards of the WR66SDP.
Policy B.5.m – Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.	<p>Redevelopment of the two Catalyst Areas will be required to provide a high quality design, complimentary to surrounding attractions including the BioPark and Old Town. Public facilities, including new Central Ave. streetscape, must also be of high quality design.</p> <p>Public art elements, and other construction projects in proximity to the Rio Grande bridge should contribute to the visual assets of the Bosque and Tingley Beach areas.</p>
Policy B.5.o – Redevelopment and rehabilitation of older neighborhoods in the Established Urban Area shall be continued and strengthened.	The Historic Central MRA Plan deals specifically with development and re-development of an older area of Albuquerque, within the Comprehensive Plan’s Established Urban Area. Redevelopment of Catalyst Area A will completely rehabilitate the El Vado within National Register of Historic Places guidelines.

Table 7 - Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan	
<i>Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Plan —Goals</i>	<i>MRA Plan Implementation</i>
Land Use Goal 1 Objective 1.1: Encourage a mix of uses that serve the neighborhood to locate along primary transportation corridors	The MRA Plan is not a land use regulatory document per se, however the implementation of strategies identified in this MRA Plan will integrate Redevelopment strategies with the goals and objectives of applicable Sector Development Plans, when weighing the highest and best use of redevelopment sites.
Land Use Goal 1 Objective 1.2: Develop design standards for new and redeveloped commercial and office uses	The MRA Plan does not set district-wide design standards for development. However, when evaluating redevelopment proposals for the City-owned Catalyst Area properties, the decision-makers will prioritize superior development design.
Land Use Goal 2 Objective 2.1: Replace surface parking lots and vacant lots with appropriately-scaled infill development.	The MRA Plan responds to this objective with the designation of Catalyst Area 2, City-owned commercial surface parking lots, as high priority for redevelopment activities.
Land Use Goal 2 Objective 2.3: Ensure that all existing surface parking lots meet City Zoning regulations relative to landscaping, buffering, and lighting.	Recommendations of the MRA Plan include streetscape improvements along Central Ave., including landscaping and parking lot screening.
Land Use Goal 2 Objective 2.4: Encourage public/private partnerships and provide incentives for redevelopment of distressed properties and opportunity sites, and adaptive re-use of buildings.	Following the adoption of the Historic Central MRA Plan, the MRA can enter into public/private partnerships for redevelopment of City-owned property. The City can also offer financial incentives, such as waiving impact fees, for redevelopment on private properties within the MRA.
Land Use Goal 2 Objective 2.5: Encourage new investment through the use of municipal planning tools (e.g. Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas, Tax Increment Districts, Historic Tax Credits, New Market Tax Credits.)	The MRA Plan identifies a number of financial tools available to assist development and re-development within the designated MRA. These include forming public/private partnerships for redevelopment of City-owned property
Land Use Goal 3 Objective 3.4: Identify the appropriate areas for townhome and multi-family development and ensure adequate buffering between higher-density development and existing single-family development while maintaining a pedestrian-friendly street frontage.	The MRA Plan process includes the identification of highest and best land uses on Catalyst Area parcels. These uses will be identified in a Request for Proposal for redevelopment, and will include multi-family residential development as appropriate. The review process will score the beneficial aspects of each proposal, including pedestrian orientation, and any potential negative impacts of proposed redevelopment including any adverse effects on adjacent land uses.
The Downtown Neighborhood Area will be safe and well lighted.	The MRA Plan has identified street lighting, with both street-oriented and side-walk oriented lighting fixtures, as an improvement priority project within the Central Ave. right-of-way .

Table 7 - Consistency of Historic Central MRA Plan with Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan	
<i>Downtown Neighborhood Area Sector Development Plan</i>	<i>Historic Central MRA Plan</i>
Implementation Policy 3. The City should provide incentives and partner with the private sector on prioritizing redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized parcels throughout the Downtown Neighborhood Area.	The Historic Central MRA Plan outlines incentives for redevelopment within identified Catalyst Areas and opportunity sites. Redevelopment of the Catalyst Areas has been prioritized and may be accomplished through public-private partnerships where the City-owned land represents the City's contribution to a redevelopment project.
Implementation Policy 4. The City should promote and provide incentives for the adaptive reuse of buildings in the Downtown Neighborhood Area.	<p>Redevelopment in Catalyst Area A under the Historic Central MRA Plan requires the adaptive re-use of the El Vado buildings, which strongly connect to the past of Central Ave. through the building's architectural vernacular and by the community's association with the motor court motel.</p> <p>A Façade Improvement Program administered by the City can offer financial incentives for improvements to private commercial properties.</p>

E. BOUNDARY RESOLUTION

**CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTIETH COUNCIL**

COUNCIL BILL NO. F/S R-12-52

ENACTMENT NO. 8-2012-051

SPONSORED BY: Isaac Benton and Debbie O'Malley

RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING THE HISTORIC CENTRAL METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA, MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS PURSUANT TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE, AND AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT TO PREPARE A METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE HISTORIC CENTRAL METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA.

WHEREAS, Section 3-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Sections 3-60A-1 through 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) states: "A municipality shall not prepare a metropolitan redevelopment plan for an area unless the governing body by resolution determined the area to be a slum area or a blighted area, or a combination thereof, and designated the area as appropriate for a metropolitan redevelopment project"; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque Planning Department has, for some time, engaged in a study of blighted areas within the city and has submitted findings and recommendations concerning the area detailed in the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Designation Report, which is attached as Exhibit A to this resolution and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 30-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, the Council caused to be published in the Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper of general circulation, a notice containing a general description of the proposed metropolitan redevelopment area and the date, time and place where the Council will hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of this resolution and announcing that any interested party may appear and speak to the adoption of this resolution; and

1 WHEREAS, the Albuquerque Development Commission held an advertised
2 public meeting on December 16, 2011, took testimony from the public, and
3 recommended to the Council the designation of the Historic Central
4 Metropolitan Redevelopment Area, as set forth in the Designation Report
5 attached to this resolution as Exhibit A; and

6 WHEREAS, the Council has considered the findings, determinations and
7 conclusions set forth in Exhibit A as well as all comments submitted by
8 members of the public to the City concerning the conditions that exist in the
9 proposed Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.

10 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
11 ALBUQUERQUE:

12 SECTION 1. The Council makes the following findings of fact with respect
13 to the designation of the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area
14 (MRA):

15 A. The area that consists of Central Avenue and the premises that front it
16 between Laguna Boulevard and the west side of the Central Avenue Bridge,
17 shown in the official Historic Central MRA boundary map attached hereto as
18 Exhibit B, is found to be blighted for the following reasons: (1) because of the
19 presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures,
20 unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, and obsolete
21 and impractical planning and platting; (2) because a significant number of
22 commercial or mercantile businesses have closed or significantly reduced
23 their operations due to the economic losses or loss of profit due to operating
24 in the area; (3) because of low levels of commercial activity or redevelopment;
25 and (4) because the area constitutes an economic or social burden and is a
26 menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present condition
27 and use.

28 B. The rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment or development, or a
29 combination thereof, of and in the Historic Central MRA is necessary in the
30 interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of
31 Albuquerque.

32 SECTION 2. In accordance with the requirements of 3-60A-8 NMSA 1978,
33 the Council hereby designates the area that consists of Central Avenue and

the premises that front it between Laguna Boulevard and the west side of the Central Avenue Bridge, shown in the official Historic Central MRA boundary map attached hereto as Exhibit B, as the Historic Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area and finds it to be appropriate for a metropolitan redevelopment project or projects.

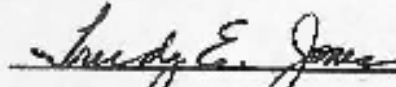
SECTION 2. The Planning Department is hereby authorized and directed to prepare a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan for the Historic Central MRA, which, without limitation, shall (1) seek to eliminate the problems created by the blighted conditions of the area, (2) conform to and coordinate with the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, any applicable Rank 2 and 3 plans, and any other applicable plans or policies, and (3) be sufficient to indicate the proposed activities to be carried out in the area, including, but not limited to, any proposals for land acquisition; redevelopment; proposals for improvements, rehabilitation and conservation; and the plan's relationship to definite local objectives respecting land uses, improved traffic patterns and controls, public transportation, public utilities, recreational and community facilities, housing facilities, commercial activities or enterprises, and other public improvements.

[+Bracketed/Underscored Material+] - New
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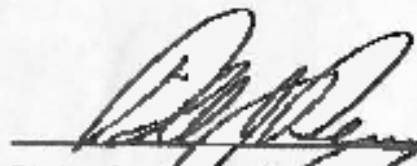
1 PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 4th DAY OF June, 2012
2 BY A VOTE OF: 8 FOR 0 AGAINST.

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4 Excused: Winter

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8 Trudy E. Jones, President
9 City Council

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13 APPROVED THIS 12th DAY OF June, 2012
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18 Bill No. F/S R-12-52

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21 Richard J. Berry, Mayor
22 City of Albuquerque
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26 ATTEST:

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29 Amy B. Bailey, City Clerk
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