



***Metropolitan
Redevelopment
Agency***

Staff Report

Case Number: 2019-001

Applicant: Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency

Request(s): Minor Modification to the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area to include 39.16 acres on the southwest corner of Unser and Central.

Location: Southwest corner of Central Avenue and Unser Boulevard, bounded by Central Avenue to the North, Unser Boulevard to the East, Bridge Boulevard to the South, and 86th Street to the West.

Size: Approximately 39.16 acres

Zoning: MX-M and MX-L

BACKGROUND

In 2001, the City Council designated the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (Enactment#82-2001). In 2004, the City Council approved the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan (Enactment #66-2004) consisting of approximately 920 acres. Councilor Peña introduced resolution R-18-102 on November 26, 2018 to expand the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area. The matter has been deferred to Albuquerque Development Commission for a recommendation.

ANALYSIS

Adopted in 2004, the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan highlights the need to develop under-utilized properties at the Central/Unser intersection as additional commercial space. Since then, the City acquired the property on the northwest corner, cleared the property, and made significant street and infrastructure improvements. Improvements on the northwest corner have included a City library, a UNM Hospital Clinic, and an upgraded City Transit center. In 2017, MRA entered into negotiations with YES Housing, Inc. and Maestas Development Group to develop a mixed-use project with 86 residential units and 23,000 square feet of office and retail use. Despite this activity on the northwest corner, development on the southwest corner has languished. The property was re-platted and an interior paved traffic roadway circulation system was built. However, with exception of a relatively small CVS store, the entire property has remained vacant and underutilized since 2001. Improvements are now deteriorating, and weeds cover the property, creating a blighted and unsafe condition. The development of the southwest corner of Unser and Central will help expedite the continued infill development of the northwest corner of Unser and Central, catalyze additional public investment, and increase the economic vitality of the area.

The three property owners within the Subject Area: Doughty Enterprise Inc., Armstrong Central Unser Blvd LLC, and Lowes Homes Center Inc., were notified of this meeting by certified mail. The Alamosa,

Avalon, Skyview West, and Route 66 Neighborhood Associations as well as the Southwest Alliance of Neighborhoods were notified of this meeting via email.

FINDINGS

1. The Subject Area is blighted due to low levels of commercial activity, deterioration of site improvements, and unsafe conditions.
2. The state of the Subject Area is substantially arresting the sound growth and economic wellbeing of the City the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.
3. The Subject Area suffers from and is contributing to blighted conditions, and the development of the Subject Area is in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare of the City and its residents.
4. The addition of the Subject Area into the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area is consistent with the State Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, Article 60 A.
5. The change is consistent with the following adopted West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan's goals and objectives:
 - a. Economic Goal 1. Increase the economic vitality of the MRA.
 - i. Objective 2. Attract public and private investment to key opportunity sites and location in the MRA.
 - ii. Objective 5. Reduce leakage of neighborhood spending from the MRA.
 - iii. Objective 6. Increase the number of jobs within the MRA.
 - b. Design Goal 1. Improve the overall appearance of the MRA.
 - i. Objective 1. Encourage private property owners to maintain and improve the condition and appearance of their properties.

RECOMMENDATION

MRA staff recommends that ADC recommend to the City Council approval of a Minor Modification of the West Central Metropolitan Redevelopment Area to include 39.16 acres on the southwest corner of Unser and Central as reflected in Exhibit A, and described as the area bounded by Central Avenue to the North, Unser Boulevard to the East, Bridge Boulevard to the South, and 86th Street to the West.



CITY of ALBUQUERQUE

TWENTY-THIRD COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-18-102 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Klarissa Peña

1 RESOLUTION

2 AMENDING THE BOUNDARY OF THE WEST CENTRAL METROPOLITAN
3 REDEVELOPMENT AREA TO DESIGNATE AN ADDITIONAL AREA FOR
4 INCLUSION WITHIN THE MRA, MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND
5 DETERMINATIONS PURSUANT TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT
6 CODE, AND AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE METROPOLITAN
7 REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY TO UPDATE THE METROPOLITAN
8 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE WEST CENTRAL METROPOLITAN
9 REDEVELOPMENT AREA CONSISTENT WITH THIS RESOLUTION.

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

16 WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 30-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan
17 Redevelopment Code, the Council caused to be twice published in the
18 Albuquerque Journal, a newspaper of general circulation in the metropolitan
19 redevelopment area hereinafter identified, with the last publication no less than
20 20 days before any hearing on this matter, a notice containing a general
21 description of the proposed metropolitan redevelopment area and the date, time
22 and place where the Council will hold public hearings to consider the adoption
23 of this resolution and announcing that any interested party may appear and
24 speak to the issue of the adoption of this resolution; and

25 WHEREAS, in 2001 the City of Albuquerque (“City”) and the Metropolitan
26 Redevelopment Agency engaged in a study of blighted areas within the City,

[+ Bracketed/Underscored Material+] - New
[- Bracketed/Strikethrough Material-] - Deletion

1 and submitted findings and recommendations concerning the area from the
2 intersection of Central SW and the Rio Grande River west on Central SW to
3 slightly west of Unser, north on Unser to I-40, including the Atrisco Business
4 Park and the node at Airport Road and Central SW, and the area from Central
5 SW on Old Coors Road south to Bridge Street SW, and including the commercial
6 properties north and south of Central SW and east and west of Old Coors
7 Boulevard which comprise the present “West Central Metropolitan
8 Redevelopment Area” (the “West Central MRA”); and

9 WHEREAS, since 2001 when the original West Central MRA boundary was
10 established, the area generally located at the southwest corner of Central
11 Avenue and Unser Boulevard, bounded by Central Avenue to the North, Unser
12 Boulevard to the East, Bridge Boulevard to the South, and 86th Street to the
13 West (the “Subject Site”) was not fully included within the initial MRA
14 boundary; and

15 WHEREAS, the Subject Site was at one point staged for development as a
16 retail shopping center known as “Unser Crossing,” to be anchored by a home
17 improvement store that never materialized, and despite initial infrastructure and
18 access investments at the site, it has since remained largely undeveloped with
19 the exception of a CVS pharmacy at the corner, apparently as consequence of
20 the 2008 National economic recession, and the initial infrastructure and access
21 investments have significantly decayed since that time and are now otherwise
22 limiting new opportunities at the site, and access is being controlled at the site
23 with temporary jersey barriers, and the roadway/access improvements have
24 become overgrown with weeds and fugitive grasses; and

25 WHEREAS, in contrast with the Subject Site, and as a result of the prior
26 West Central MRA designation, the area directly across Central Avenue from the
27 Subject Site – located at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and Unser
28 Boulevard – was purchased by the City and is now being utilized in part for a
29 city library and transit center, and it is staged for additional prosperity with a
30 mixed-use redevelopment; and

31 WHEREAS, in approximately 2008 the City and the City’s Metropolitan
32 Redevelopment Agency evaluated the Subject Site and determined that the

[+ Bracketed/Underscored Material+] - New
[- Bracketed/Strikethrough Material-] - Deletion

1 West Central MRA boundary should be amended to include the Subject Site
2 because even at that time it had remained vacant and underutilized since the
3 original West Central MRA designation, and area residents and the City believed
4 it could serve as an integral part of the redevelopment efforts at the intersection
5 of Central and Unser; and

6 WHEREAS, no final action was ever taken on the Metropolitan
7 Redevelopment Agency's 2008 recommendation that the Subject Site be fully
8 included within the West Central MRA, and the conditions at the Subject Site
9 have continued to deteriorate and worsen since that time, and accordingly the
10 reasons for possible inclusion of the Subject Site within the West Central MRA
11 have only increased over time and have substantially impaired the sound growth
12 and economic health of the area, including the City's redevelopment efforts
13 across Central; and

14 WHEREAS, the Subject Site suffers from low levels of commercial or mixed-
15 use activity, from under-utilization and vacancy across its vast majority, from
16 the deterioration of prior physical improvements, and from unsafe conditions,
17 and it substantially impairs and arrests the sound growth and economic
18 wellbeing of the City and the West Central Area; and

19 WHEREAS, based on the foregoing the subject site suffers from and is
20 contributing to blighted conditions, and the rehabilitation, conservation,
21 redevelopment or development, or combination thereof of the Subject Site is
22 necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the
23 City and its residents;

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

26 Section 1. Because of its blighted conditions and the findings outlined in the
27 Recitals (which are incorporated by reference into the body of this resolution)
28 the Subject Site is hereby included within the West Central MRA, and the
29 boundary of the West Central MRA is hereby amended to include the Subject
30 Site, more specifically as depicted on the attached Exhibit 'A' and described as:

[+ Bracketed/Underscored Material+] - New
[- Bracketed/Strikethrough Material-] - Deletion

1 The area bounded by Central Avenue to the North, Unser
2 Boulevard to the East, Bridge Boulevard to the South, and
3 86th Street to the West

4 Section 2. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency is hereby authorized
5 and directed to prepare updates or amendments to with West Central
6 Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan or Plans for the West Central Metropolitan
7 Redevelopment Area which, without limitation, shall seek to eliminate the
8 problems created by the blighted conditions at the Subject Site, and shall
9 conform to any general plan for the City as a whole, and shall be sufficient to
10 indicate the proposed activities to be carried out or encouraged in the area and
11 the Plan's relationship to defined local objectives respecting land uses, improved
12 traffic patterns and controls, public transportation, public utilities, recreational
13 and community facilities, housing facilities, commercial activities or enterprises,
14 and other public improvements.

15 SECTION 3: SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, sentence,
16 clause, word, or phrase of this resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or
17 unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not
18 affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this resolution. The Council
19 hereby declares that it would have passed this resolution and each section,
20 paragraph, sentence, clause, word, or phrase thereof irrespective of any
21 provisions being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

31 x:\city council\share\cl-staff_legislative staff\legislation\23 council\r-102.doc