



Environmental Planning Commission

Agenda Number: 06
Project Number: 1008444
Case #: 14EPC-40084
February 12, 2015

Staff Report

Agent	Consensus Planning, Inc.
Applicant	Pulte
Request(s)	Sector Development Plan Text Amendment (Volcano Cliffs SDP)
Location	Bounded by the Volcano Trails & Volcano Heights SDP boundaries north, Petroglyph National Monument on the east, south, & west.
Size	Approximately 2,327 acres
Existing Zoning	SU-2 / Various
Proposed Zoning	No change

Staff Recommendation

Recommendation of APPROVAL of 14EPC-40084 is forwarded to the City Council, based on the Findings beginning on Page 13.

Staff Planner
Vicente M. Quevedo, Planner

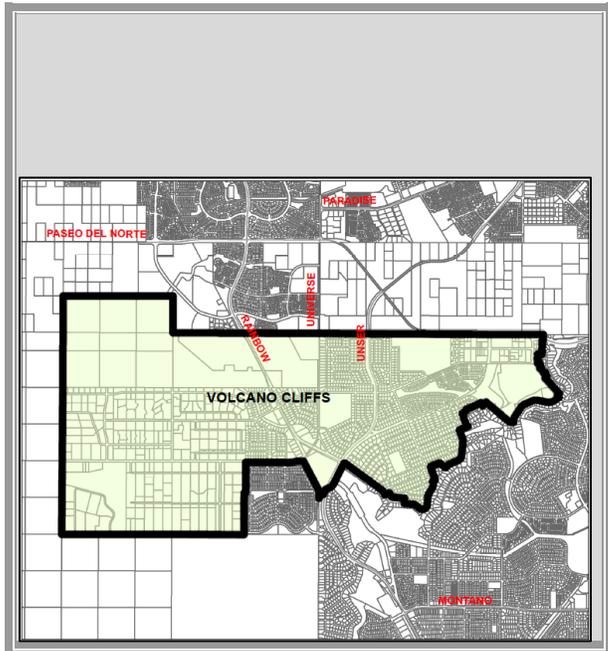
Summary of Analysis

The applicant is requesting an Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) recommendation to City Council to approve text amendments to the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan to amend the residential garage standards table on page 88 of the plan.

The requested amendment is to reduce the requirements from a 10 foot minimum front garage setback from the main façade to a 2 foot minimum setback from the main facade. No zone changes for individual properties are included as part of this request.

The requested text amendment generally meets the intent of applicable goals and policies in City Plans. A facilitated meeting was not requested or held.

There is no known neighborhood opposition to this request.



City Departments and other interested agencies reviewed this application from 1/5/15 to 1/16/15. Agency comments used in the preparation of this report begin on Page 17.

I. AREA CHARACTERISTICS AND ZONING HISTORY

Surrounding zoning, plan designations, and land uses:

	Zoning	Comprehensive Plan Area; Applicable Rank II & III Plans	Land Use
Site	<u>All Volcano Cliffs SDP</u> <u>Zones:</u> SU-2/VCVC SU-2/VCUR SU-2/VCMX SU-2/VCLL SU-2/VCRR	Developing Urban, Established Urban, Reserve West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP) Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMEP) Volcano Cliffs SDP	Park, school site, single family residential, vacant
North	SU-2/VHTC, SU-2/VHRC, SU-2/VHVC, SU-2/VHMX, SU-2/VHET, SU-2/VHNT SU-2/VTVC, SU-2/VTUR, SU-2/VTSL, SU-2/VTRD A1 County	Developing Urban WSSP NWMEP Volcano Heights SDP Volcano Trails SDP	Vacant, single family
South	R1, RD, RO-20	Developing Urban, Established Urban, Reserve, WSSP, NWMEP	Petroglyph National Monument, single family, vacant
East	R1	Established Urban, WSSP, NWMEP	Petroglyph National Monument
West	RO-20, A1 County	Reserve, WSSP, NWMEP	Petroglyph National Monument

II. INTRODUCTION

Request

This is a request for an amendment to the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan (VCSDP) to amend the residential garage standards table, labelled “Residential Garage Types” on page 88 of the plan. More specifically, the amendment would reduce the minimum front garage setback from the main façade from 10 feet to 2 feet. No zone changes for individual properties are included as part of this request.

Purpose

The applicant states that the primary concern with the residential garage standards table in the VCSDP is that the required 10 foot setback is being measured from the main façade rather than the property line which will severely restrict the owner’s ability to build homes in the plan area

as well as create unnecessarily long drive-ways which may conflict with a sector development plan recommendation to limit the amount of impervious surfaces (assuming all drive-ways will be designed to utilize an impervious surface such as concrete). Lastly, the applicant states that the amended table will reduce the amount of requests for variances for future residential development in the plan area.

EPC Role

The task of the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) is to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed text amendments. The City Council is the City's Zoning Authority and will make the final decision. The EPC is a recommending body with review authority. This is a legislative matter.

III. OVERVIEW

History / Background

In 2004, the Albuquerque City Council initiated a planning process for the Volcano Cliffs area of the city, which consists of approximately 1,700 small, largely undeveloped lots in a subdivision that was platted in the 1960s and annexed by the City in 1981. Located along the volcanic escarpment of the city's Northwest Mesa, Volcano Cliffs is an area of unique features and special characteristics and conditions worthy of preservation and protection.

In the following years, the City studied and developed plans for Volcano Cliffs as part of a larger area referred to as "Volcano Heights" (now known as Volcano Mesa – a community planning area that includes the Volcano Cliffs, Volcano Trails, and Volcano Heights SDP areas). While the original Volcano Heights SDP was adopted by the City Council in 2006, the plan did not have the support of the Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Association, which challenged the plan in court, and the plan was remanded to the City in 2008/09.

Early in 2010, at the direction of City Councilor Dan Lewis and then-Planning Director Deborah Stover, the Planning Department and City Council staff began work on three sector development plans (Volcano Cliffs, Volcano Trails, and Volcano Heights SDPs) and an accompanying policy amendment to the Rank II West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP). While the three sector plans originally were drafted with the same general standards, as each plan went through the adoption process, varying levels of refinements and improvements were incorporated into each plan.

Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan (Rank III)

The Volcano Cliffs SDP covers 2,327 acres of land and contains goals and policies related to Transportation, the Environment /Open Space and Land Use. The Land Use chapter adopts zoning and general regulations to guide future development within the area. The policies and regulations in the plan were developed to reflect the Vision and Guiding Principles in the plan, as well as implementing the policies of the Volcano Mesa amendment to the WSSP.

The VCSDP was adopted in May 2011 with widespread support. Once the last of three previously discussed sector plans (Volcano Heights) was adopted in August 2013, its

transportation network needed to be incorporated into the Rank 2 Volcano Mesa Amendment, and cross sections in the VCSDP needed to be re-aligned to the newer standards. At the same time, the Planning Department attempted to re-align the general standards in all three plans such as residential garage standards and construction mitigation standards to minimize fugitive dust. The residential garage standards table in the VCSDP was updated as intended to match the garage standards table in the Volcano Heights Sector Development Plan. The only residential garage standards that are not currently consistent are those contained within the Volcano Trails Sector Development Plan.

Context

The Volcano Mesa community covers approximately 3,532 acres, and includes the Volcano Cliffs, Volcano Trails, and Volcano Heights sector development plan areas. Volcano Mesa is surrounded on three sides by more than 7,000 acres of open space under City, state, and federal jurisdictions, including the Petroglyph National Monument, set aside by the U.S. Congress in 1990. The area's cultural, natural and built conditions were used to inform the planning process and to guide the development of policies that are sensitive and responsive to the area's unique needs, challenges and opportunities.

The Volcano Cliffs SDP covers 2,327 acres of land and contains goals and policies related to transportation, the environment and open space, and land use and urban design. The Plan adopts zoning, transportation standards, general standards, and general regulations to guide future development within the area. The policies and regulations in the plan were developed to reflect the vision and guiding principles in the plan, as well as implementing the policies of the Volcano Mesa amendment to the Rank II WSSP.

Transportation System

The Interim Long Range Roadway System (ILRRS) map, produced by the Mid-Region Council of Governments (MRCOG), identifies the functional classifications of roadways.

The ILRRS designates Unser and Paseo del Norte as a Principal Arterials, with rights-of-way of 156 feet.

The ILRRS designates Universe as a Minor Arterial, with a right-of-way of 86 feet.

The Long Range Roadway System designates Rainbow as a Principal Arterial, with a right-of-way of 124' (Established & Developing Urban) or 156' (elsewhere).

Comprehensive Plan Corridor Designation

The Albuquerque/Bernalillo Comprehensive Plan designates Paseo del Norte and Unser Boulevard as Express Transit Corridors.

Trails/Bikeways

A multi-use trail is located along Paseo del Norte (Paseo del Norte West Multi-use Trail) and a bicycle land is located along Unser Blvd. A bike trail is shown on Gila Road on the MRCOG Long Range Bikeway map.

Transit

The MRCOG High Capacity Transit map shows Paseo del Norte and Unser as Potential High Capacity Transit Corridors.

Public Facilities/Community Services

See attached Public Facilities Map for details.

IV. ANALYSIS OF APPLICABLE ORDINANCES, PLANS, AND POLICIES

Charter of the City of Albuquerque

Note: Policy citations are in regular text; staff analysis is in ***Bold Italics***.

The Citizens of Albuquerque adopted the City Charter in 1971. Applicable articles include:
Article I, Incorporation and Powers

“The municipal corporation now existing and known as the City of Albuquerque shall remain and continue to be a body corporate and may exercise all legislative powers and perform all functions not expressly denied by general law or charter. Unless otherwise provided in this Charter, the power of the city to legislate is permissive and not mandatory. If the city does not legislate, it may nevertheless act in the manner provided by law. *The purpose of this Charter is to provide for maximum local self-government.* A liberal construction shall be given to the powers granted by this Charter.” (emphasis added)

Article IX, Environmental Protection

“The Council (City Commission) in the interest of the public in general shall protect and preserve environmental features such as water, air and other natural endowments, ensure the proper use and development of land, and promote and maintain an aesthetic and humane urban environment. To affect these ends the Council shall take whatever action is necessary and shall enact ordinances and shall establish appropriate Commissions, Boards or Committees with jurisdiction, authority and staff sufficient to effectively administer city policy in this area.”

Clarification of a sector development plan is an exercise in local self-government and falls within the City’s powers (City Charter, Article I). The text amendments of the VCSDP “ensure the proper use and development of land, and promote and maintain an aesthetic and humane urban environment.” (City Charter, Article IX). Staff finds that the request is consistent with the City Charter.

Albuquerque Comprehensive Zoning Code

Authority and Purpose (summarized): The Zoning Code is Article 16 within Chapter 14 of the Revised Code of Ordinances of Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1994 (often cited as ROA 1994). The administration and enforcement of the Zoning Code is within the City’s general police power authority for the purposes of promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the public. As such, the Zoning Code is a regulatory instrument for controlling land use activities for general public benefit.

Amendment Process (summarized): The City Council is the zoning authority for the City of Albuquerque and has sole authority to amend the Zoning Code. Through the City Charter, the

City Council has delegated broad planning and zoning authorities to the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC). The EPC is advisory to the City Council regarding proposed text amendments to the Zoning Code.

The VCSDP is an extension of the Zoning Code through its SU-2 zones; therefore, amendments made to a sector plan's zoning are an amendment made to zoning regulations. The zoning ordinance is codified in the Zoning Code with extensions of modified regulations for unique areas in sector plans. The Zoning Map remains unchanged. As the zoning authority for the City of Albuquerque, the City Council will make the final determination on any proposed amendment to the VCSDP.

Albuquerque / Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan

Policy Citations are in Regular Text; Staff Analysis is in ***Bold Italics***

The Comprehensive Plan, the Rank 1 planning document for the City, contains goals and policies that provide a framework for development and service provision. The Plan's goals and policies serve as a means to evaluate development proposals and requests for text amendments.

The Rank 3 Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan includes areas designated as Developing and Established Urban by the *Comprehensive Plan* with the goal to "create a quality urban environment, which perpetuates the tradition of identifiable, individual but integrated communities within the metropolitan area and which offers variety and maximum choice in housing, transportation, work areas, and life styles, while creating a visually pleasing built environment". Applicable goals and policies include:

Policy II.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, and recreational concern.

The vision, principles, and goals contained within the VCSDP are focused on view preservation (scenic resources) to and from the plan area, as well as pedestrian oriented development (resources of other social concern). The proposal to amend the garage standards table from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports a residential environment in which garages do not dominate the front/main building façade and supports the view preservation goals of the plan. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.B.5.d.

Policy II.B.5.f: Clustering of homes to provide larger shared open areas and houses oriented towards pedestrian or bikeways shall be encouraged.

In the SU-2/VCRR (Volcano Cliffs Rural Residential) zone, clustering of houses is encouraged to create larger open areas and to maintain the sense of openness in the area. The residential dwelling units within the Montecito West Subdivision are proposed to be clustered. The request to amend the garage standards table does not remove the clustering of homes. Therefore the request furthers Policy II.B.5.f.

Policy II.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.

Ensuring “good quality development” and preserving views to and from the plan area are key components of the vision and guiding principles of the plan that are in turn supported by the goals and design standards outlined in the plan. These standards include residential garage standards that seek to prevent domination of the main building façade by garages when viewed from the street. Amending the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.B.5.l.

Policy II.B.5.m: Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.

The setback requirements in the residential garage standards included in the VCSDP are specifically intended to enhance unique vistas, create visually attractive settings and improve the overall quality of the visual environment. Amending the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. The request furthers Policy II.B.5.m.

II.C.8 Developed Landscape: The goal is to maintain and improve the natural and the developed landscapes’ quality.

Policy II.C.8.e: In highly scenic areas, development design and materials shall be in harmony with the landscape. Building siting shall minimize alteration of existing vegetation and topography and minimize visibility of structures in scenic vista areas.

The Volcano Cliffs Rural Residential Zone (VCRR) specifically states that the zone is surrounded on three sides by the Petroglyph National Monument and that this unique location deserves appropriate development standards that reflect the distinctive context. In addition to encouraging clustering of homes and design standards that limit building color to natural landscape shades and regulations about walls and fences, residential garage standards are included that are intended to minimize the visibility of structures in scenic vista area of the Petroglyph National Monument. The request to amend the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.C.8.e.

West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP) (Rank 3)

The *West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP)* was first adopted in 1997 and amended in 2002, 2009, and 2011. The WSSP area is bounded by the Sandoval County line on the north, the Rio Puerco Escarpment on the west, a line south of Gun Club Road (the Atrisco Grant line) on the south, and the Rio Grande on the east for areas north of Central, and Coors Boulevard on the east for areas

south of Central. It encompasses over 96,000 acres of land, or approximately 150 square miles. Specific boundaries are shown on the Plan Boundary map on p.2 in the WSSP.

The WSSP identifies fourteen communities in established areas of the West Side that are partially developed and describes how community concepts can be applied. A Community is comprised of a Neighborhood Center(s) and Community Center(s), and the Plan outlines uses that should occur within the centers, as well as uses that should occur in areas adjacent to the centers. The WSSP emphasizes throughout its text the concept of commercial development in cluster configurations in contrast to the traditionally evolved strip commercial development. Applicable policies include:

WSSP Policy 3.100: Important views from locations within the Volcano Mesa area to the Rio Grande basin, the City of Albuquerque and the Sandia Mountains should be protected with height restrictions in future Rank 3 sector development plans for the area; and the analysis of the views to the Volcano Mesa area and from the Volcano Mesa area should provide the basis for regulations in future Rank 3 sector development plans for dealing with height, color, reflectivity, lighting, building materials, and landscape design. To minimize the visual impact of development, predominant colors used on structures should blend with the natural colors of the mesa.

WSSP Policy 3.104: Adequate setbacks from petroglyphs and archeological sites should be maintained. Development, trails, and recreation areas should be set back at least 50 feet from prehistoric petroglyphs or other sites with high archeological value, unless part of an approved interpretive exhibit.

The VCSDP requires a 50-foot setback from prehistoric petroglyphs to assist in implementing this Rank 2 policy. Since the request does not change this requirement, it generally furthers Policy 3.100 and 3.104 of the WSSP.

Northwest Mesa Escarpment Sector Development Plan (NWMESDP) (Rank 3)

The Northwest Mesa Escarpment Sector Development Plan (NWMESDP) was first adopted in 1987 and amended in 1989. The Plan generally encompasses properties between Coors and Atrisco Vista Boulevards, the Bernalillo/Sandoval County Line, and I-40. It sets forth goals and policies regarding Escarpment face and the Volcanoes. Applicable policies include:

Policy 9: Development at the edge of public or private open space shall be designed to complement and enhance the open space.

Policy 12: Structures shall not block views of the Escarpment or visually contrast with the natural environment.

Policy 20: The predominant colors used on structures within the View Area shall blend with the natural colors of the Mesa.

Color restrictions to all development in the Volcano Cliffs area are included in the plan regulations in order to minimize the visual impact of development and clarify fence

and wall regulations to preserve views into and from the Escarpment. The proposed text amendments to amend the residential garage setback standards from the plan do not specifically impact views of the Escarpment and are intended to complement open space by enhancing view corridors. The request generally furthers Policies 9, 12 and 20 of the NWMESDP.

V. ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS

The purpose of the VCSDP is to adopt zoning and overall policy guidance for development within the plan area. Given the area's distinctive context in terms of its close proximity to the Petroglyph National Monument, the Northwest Area Escarpment and City of Albuquerque Major Public Open Space, view preservation is a key plan component. This is reflected in the Vision, Guiding Principles and Goals of the plan:

VCSDP Page 3:

Vision. The plan will:

- PRESERVE the fantastic views from the Volcano Cliffs area.

Guiding Principles. The following principles guided the development of this plan:

- Protect views to and from the Volcano Cliffs area.

VCSDP Pages 10 – 11:

Goals

A. Environmental and Open Space Goals

4. *Conserve Volcano Cliffs' archaeological resources and protect and emphasize views and visual connections to the Volcanoes, Sandia Mountains and the Rio Grande.*
5. *Maintain scenic edges, protect important views and minimize the visual impact of development on the western horizon as seen throughout the city.*

In addition, the plan goals also focus on view preservation in terms of the design of streets and buildings that focus on a pedestrian-scale of development where people walk and interact and the ways in which this element is essential to successful and sustainable development:

VCSDP Page 11 - 13:

B. Transportation Goals

1. *Provide a choice of viable transportation options for commuting and daily needs. Create thoroughfares that are walkable and pedestrian-friendly but still serve motorists by providing street trees, landscaping, wide sidewalks, and active uses.*

C. Land Use and Urban Design Goals

1. *Recognize walkable neighborhoods and districts as contributing to a more sustainable city and region.*

3. *Encourage architectural and landscape treatments that are consistent with the region’s traditions and climate and that help to enhance a unique sense of place.*

In addition to the aforementioned plan sections, the Zoning and General Standards section of the VCSDP not only emphasizes the importance of view preservation but also outlines ways to mold the physical environment into “rich pedestrian-scale, healthy residential neighborhoods...(page 58)”.

The VCSDP contains five Special Use SU-2 zones to guide future development within the plan area: 1.) VC Village Center, 2.) VC Mixed-Use, 3.) VC Urban Residential, 4.) VC Large Lot and 5.) VC Rural Residential (VCRR). Each zone establishes regulatory standards for permissive uses, setback requirements and heights that are specific to the lots contained within that zone. As part of the setback requirements each zone states that “residential garages shall be set back from the front façade” and refers the reader to Section II - General Standards B.1.5 (pages 86 & 87) which then references Table 2: Residential Garage Types (page 88) which outlines the required minimum setback dimensions for residential garages. This table has been included below for reference (Note – pages 86 & 87 will not be affected by the request).

The Montecito West Subdivision (as referenced in the project narrative for the requested text amendment) is located within the VCRR Zone. This zone provides for larger homes on larger lots and encourages clustered housing design per Section §14-16-3-16 (Private Commons Development) of the Zoning Code. A 25 foot minimum front building setback measured from the property line is required per the VCRR Zone. In addition, the minimum lot width within the Montecito West Subdivision is 55 feet meaning that all six allowable garage types are permitted.

TABLE 2: RESIDENTIAL GARAGE TYPES*

Lot Width	Allowable Garage Types*	Front Garage Setback from Main Façade <i>(Front-loaded)</i>	Side Garage Setback from Property Line <i>(Side-accessed)</i>	Rear Garage Setback from Property Line <i>(Rear-loaded)</i>
40+ Feet	A,B,C,D,E,F	10 ft. Minimum	5 ft. Minimum	2 ft. Minimum
Less than 40 Feet	A,D	10 ft. Minimum	5 ft. Minimum	2 ft. Minimum

* See Figure 7 – Garage Type Diagrams

Note: Garage setbacks are minimums only. Building setbacks set by the underlying zone prevail.

The Building Articulation requirements of the VCRR Zone (page 74) also require any developer constructing 3 or more dwelling units to ensure that at least 2 of every 3 units incorporate a porch that is at least 5 feet in depth.

The original request submitted by the applicant was to delete Table 2, on page 88 of the VCSDP. Following discussions with staff, the applicant is now requesting that the General Standards

residential garage requirements of Table 2 only be amended from a 10 foot minimum setback from the main façade to a 2 foot minimum setback from the main façade. This equates to an 80% reduction from the current residential garage setback requirements and would apply to all SU-2 zoning categories within the plan area.

The current text amendment request to reduce the minimum residential garage setback from 10 feet to 2 feet from the main façade still meets the general intent of the policy and development goals of the VCSDP. More specifically, in addition to the 2 foot minimum residential garage setback from the façade, the developer is still required to address the street with a porch for 2 out of every 3 dwelling units when 3 or more units are proposed to be constructed.

In order to implement the current request by the applicant, no additional amendments other than the amendments to Table 2 would be required. Staff notes, however, that while this amendment request would keep in place a dimensioned minimum front residential garage setback within each of the three sector development plans, each plan would have a separate dimensional requirement as outlined below:

Volcano Cliffs (Proposed)

Front Garage Setback from Main Façade <i>(Front-loaded)</i>
2 ft. Minimum
2 ft. Minimum

Volcano Heights (Current)

FRONT GARAGE SETBACK FROM MAIN FAÇADE <i>(Front-loaded)</i>
10 ft. Minimum
10 ft. Minimum

Volcano Trails (Current)*

FRONT GARAGE SETBACK
20' MINIMUM
20' MINIMUM
20' MINIMUM

*Volcano Trails set back is measured from the property line not the main façade.

VI. AGENCY & NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS

Reviewing Agencies

Agencies reviewed the request from January 5, 2015 to January 16, 2015. The most substantial comments received were from the Long Range Planning Department who stated that one of the goals of an amendment initiative last year was to re-align the general standards in all three sector development plans (Volcano Heights, Cliffs, & Trails) within the Volcano Mesa Area of the West Side Strategic Plan.

During the amendment process, Long-Range Planning staff made an error and failed to update the residential garage standards table in the Volcano Trails Sector Development Plan. However, Volcano Cliffs was updated as intended to match the table in Volcano Heights. These 2014 updates included a revised table but also revised graphics illustrating the garage types. In the

original 2011 Volcano Cliffs plan, the graphics showed the 10 foot setback from the main façade to the garage façade, but this requirement was not reflected in the narrative text or the associated table. The 2014 amendment captured the 10 foot setback in the regulatory table and revised the graphics to be illustrative and non-dimensional.

The Long Range Planning Department was not in favor of removing the table from the plan because the department's intent was for the general standards section of each plan to be aligned. Secondly, they stated that removing the table would equate to each sector development plan having a different set of standards for residential garages. The Long Range Planning Department's comments were discussed with the applicant. Subsequently, the request was modified by the applicant as previously outlined in this staff report.

Following receipt of the modified request from the applicant, staff also received updated comments from the Long Range Planning Department suggesting that that the table not be amended for all zones, but rather that a note be added to the table to only allow a minimum 2 foot setback from the main façade for all PCD developments within the VCRR Zone. All remaining zones would still be required to meet the 10 foot minimum setback from the façade. Long Range Planning staff noted that *"Changing the standard for other zones is counter-productive to the intent of the plan to minimize the auto-oriented elements of the built environment, namely the dominant garage façade"*. These items will need to be addressed by the EPC at the hearing.

Neighborhood/Public

The Molten Rock Neighborhood Association, Ventana Ranch Neighborhood Association Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association, The Westside Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Petroglyph Estates Homeowners Association, Paradise Hills Civic Association and The Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Association were all notified of this request. Staff received a letter of support from the Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Association on February 2, 2015 (see attached).

A facilitated meeting was not requested or held. There is no known neighborhood opposition to this request.

VII. CONCLUSION

This is a request for an amendment to the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan (VCSDP) to amend the residential garage standards table, labelled "Residential Garage Types" on page 88 of the plan. More specifically, the amendment would reduce the minimum front garage setback from the main façade from 10 feet to 2 feet. No zone changes for individual properties are included as part of this request.

This equates to an 80% reduction from the current residential garage setback requirements and would apply to all SU-2 zoning categories within the plan area. No zone changes for individual properties are included as part of this request.

The VCSDP contains zoning and general design standards aimed at ensuring high-quality, appropriate pedestrian-friendly development. In addition, views can be protected and enhanced through platting and considerate site planning by creating view corridors using streets. Residential environments that include dwelling units where garage structures do not dominate the streetscape are directly aligned with this development goal contained within the VCSDP.

Staff notes that while this amendment request would keep in place a dimensioned minimum front residential garage setback within each of the three sector development plans, each plan would contain different dimension standards. That being said, the request generally meets the intent of applicable goals and policies in City Plans. Staff recommends that a recommendation of approval of the sector development plan text amendments is forwarded to City Council.

FINDINGS – 14EPC 40084 - February 12, 2015 - Text Amendment to Sector Development Plan

1. The Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan (VCSDP) covers an area of approximately 2,327 acres. The plan boundaries are the Petroglyph National Monument on the east, south and west and Volcano Heights and Volcano Trails Sector Development Plans on the north.
2. This plan is one of three distinct but related sector development plans intended to guide future development in the larger Volcano Mesa community. The other two plans are the Volcano Heights and Volcano Trails Sector Development Plans.
3. The VCSDP contains the following zoning designations: R1, RO-20, A1 County, SU1 for Major Public Open Space and SU-2/VCVC (Volcano Cliffs Village Center), SU-2/VCMX (Volcano Cliffs Mixed Use), SU-2/VCUR (Volcano Cliffs Urban Residential), SU-2/VCLL (Volcano Cliffs Large Lot), SU-2/VCRR (Volcano Cliffs Rural Residential).
4. The VCSDP includes General Standards that apply across different zones. All properties within the VCSDP must comply with the provisions of the General Standards section, as applicable.
5. The VCSDP is an extension of the Zoning Code through its SU-2 zones; The Zoning Map is not changed: proposed amendments only affect design standards and do not change zoning or land uses for any property; therefore, they are not subject to R-270-1980 analysis.
6. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, West Side Strategic Plan, Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan, Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan, etc. and the City of Albuquerque Zoning Code are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.
7. The proposed text amendments are consistent with the City Charter, which empowers the City to ensure proper land use and development (City Charter, Article I and support a high-quality urban environment (City Charter, Article IX).
8. The sector development plan area is within the Established and Developing Urban Area of the Comprehensive Plan. The request furthers the following applicable goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan:
 - A. Policy II.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, and recreational concern.

The vision, principles, and goals contained within the VCSDP are focused on view preservation (scenic resources) to and from the plan area, as well as pedestrian

oriented development (resources of other social concern). The proposal to amend the garage standards table from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports a residential environment in which garages do not dominate the front/main building façade and supports the view preservation goals of the plan. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.B.5.d.

- B. Policy II.B.5.f: Clustering of homes to provide larger shared open areas and houses oriented towards pedestrian or bikeways shall be encouraged.

In the SU-2/VCRR (Volcano Cliffs Rural Residential) zone, clustering of houses is encouraged to create larger open areas and to maintain the sense of openness in the area. The residential dwelling units within the Montecito West Subdivision are proposed to be clustered. The request to amend the garage standards table does not remove the clustering of homes. Therefore the request furthers Policy II.B.5.f.

- C. Policy II.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.

Ensuring “good quality development” and preserving views to and from the plan area are key components of the vision and guiding principles of the plan that are in turn supported by the goals and design standards outlined in the plan. These standards include residential garage standards that seek to prevent domination of the main building façade by garages when viewed from the street. Amending the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.B.5.l.

- D. Policy II.B.5.m: Urban and site design which maintains and enhances unique vistas and improves the quality of the visual environment shall be encouraged.

The setback requirements in the residential garage standards included in the VCSDP are specifically intended to enhance unique vistas, create visually attractive settings and improve the overall quality of the visual environment. Amending the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. The request furthers Policy II.B.5.m.

- E. II.C.8 Developed Landscape: The goal is to maintain and improve the natural and the developed landscapes' quality.

- F. Policy II.C.8.e: In highly scenic areas, development design and materials shall be in harmony with the landscape. Building siting shall minimize alteration of existing vegetation and topography and minimize visibility of structures in scenic vista areas.

The Volcano Cliffs Rural Residential Zone (VCRR) specifically states that the zone is surrounded on three sides by the Petroglyph National Monument and that this unique location deserves appropriate development standards that reflect the distinctive context. In addition to encouraging clustering of homes and design standards that limit building color to natural landscape shades and regulations about walls and fences, residential garage standards are included that are intended to minimize the visibility of structures in scenic vista area of the Petroglyph National Monument. The request to amend the residential garage standards from a 10 foot minimum setback to 2 feet still supports the intent of the policy. Therefore, the request furthers Policy II.C.8.e.

9. The request generally furthers the following applicable goals and policies of the West Side Strategic Plan (WSSP):

- A. WSSP Policy 3.100: Important views from locations within the Volcano Mesa area to the Rio Grande basin, the City of Albuquerque and the Sandia Mountains should be protected with height restrictions in future Rank 3 sector development plans for the area; and the analysis of the views to the Volcano Mesa area and from the Volcano Mesa area should provide the basis for regulations in future Rank 3 sector development plans for dealing with height, color, reflectivity, lighting, building materials, and landscape design. To minimize the visual impact of development, predominant colors used on structures should blend with the natural colors of the mesa.
- B. WSSP Policy 3.104: Adequate setbacks from petroglyphs and archeological sites should be maintained. Development, trails, and recreation areas should be set back at least 50 feet from prehistoric petroglyphs or other sites with high archeological value, unless part of an approved interpretive exhibit.

The VCSDP requires a 50-foot setback from prehistoric petroglyphs to assist in implementing this Rank 2 policy. Since the request does not change this requirement, it generally furthers Policy 3.100 and 3.104 of the WSSP.

10. The request generally furthers the following applicable goals and policies of the Northwest Mesa Escarpment Plan (NWMESDP):

- A. Policy 9: Development at the edge of public or private open space shall be designed to complement and enhance the open space.
- B. Policy 12: Structures shall not block views of the Escarpment or visually contrast with the natural environment.
- C. Policy 20: The predominant colors used on structures within the View Area shall blend with the natural colors of the Mesa.

Color restrictions to all development in the Volcano Cliffs area are included in the plan regulations in order to minimize the visual impact of development and clarify fence and wall regulations to preserve views into and from the Escarpment. The proposed

text amendments to amend the residential garage setback standards from the plan do not specifically impact views of the Escarpment and are intended to complement open space by enhancing view corridors. The request generally furthers Policies 9, 12 and 20 of the NWMESDP.

11. The Molten Rock Neighborhood Association, Ventana Ranch Neighborhood Association Taylor Ranch Neighborhood Association, The Westside Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Petroglyph Estates Homeowners Association, Paradise Hills Civic Association and The Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Association were all notified of this request. A facilitated meeting was not requested or held. There is no known neighborhood opposition to this request.

RECOMMENDATION – 14EPC 40084 - February 12, 2015 - Text Amendment to Sector Development Plan

That a Recommendation of APPROVAL of 14EPC-40084, a Text Amendment to Sector Development Plan (to amend the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan), is forwarded to City Council based on the preceding Findings.

*Vicente M. Quevedo
Planner*

CC list:

Jim Strozier, Consensus Planning, 302 8th Street NW Albuquerque, NM 87102
Pulte, 7601 Jefferson Street NE Albuquerque, NM87109
Markku Koskelo, 7916 Victoria Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120
Lydia Ashanin, 8001 Cliff Rd. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120
Tom Anderson, 10013 Plunkett Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114
Maria Warren, 5020 Russell NW Albuquerque, NM 87114
Steven J. Metro, 8860 Desert Finch NE Albuquerque, NM 87122
Blake Thompson, 3009 Palo Alto Dr. NE Albuquerque, NM 87111
Jolene Wolfley, 7216 Carson Trl. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120
Rene Horvath, 5515 Palomino Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120
Laura Horton, 7224 Cascada NW Albuquerque, NM 87114
Joy Garratt, 10308 Marin Dr. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114
Dave Heil, 160 Itasca Rd. Rio Rancho, NM 87124
Gerald C. Worrall, 1039 Pinatubo Pl. NW Albuquerque, NM 87120
Harry Hendriksen, 10592 Rio Del Sole Ct. NW Albuquerque, NM 87114

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE AGENCY COMMENTS

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Zoning Enforcement

Reviewed, no adverse comments.

Office of Neighborhood Coordination

Molten Rock NA

Paradise Hills Civic Assoc.

Taylor Ranch NA

Petroglyph Estates HOA

Ventana Ranch NA

Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Assoc.

Westside Coalition of NA's

Long Range Planning

Project 1008444 - Text Amendment to the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan

The Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan was adopted in May 2011 and amended in November 2014. It is one of three sector development plans within a community planning area called Volcano Mesa, as designated by the Rank 2 West Side Strategic Plan as of February 2011.

The three sector development plan areas were adopted as separate plans largely because of their different ownership conditions: Volcano Cliffs was platted into individual housing lots many years ago; Volcano Trails was originally owned by one master developer; and Volcano Heights is owned by approximately 30 owners, each with at least 2-5 acres of unplatted land.

At the same time, these areas share many of the same planning considerations – all have a close relationship with the Petroglyph National Monument, which surrounds Volcano Mesa on three sides, and all share a goal of creating high-quality built environments that are accessible by bike and on foot, as well as by car. In an effort to create more mixed-use, sustainable, and walkable communities over time, each sector plan area includes a commercial center surrounded by areas zoned for higher-density residential uses, as well as other areas zoned for a range of lower-density residential uses. In addition, each sector plan area includes general design standards aimed at ensuring high-quality, pedestrian-friendly development, both out of respect for the Petroglyph National Monument but also as part of the overall goal to create districts amenable to transportation by means other than private vehicle.

While the three sector plans originally were drafted with the same general standards, as each Plan went through the original adoption process, refinements and improvements were incorporated. Once the last of three plans – Volcano Heights – was adopted in August 2013, its transportation network needed to be incorporated into the Rank 2 Volcano Mesa Amendment, and cross sections in Volcano

Cliffs needed to be re-aligned to the newer standards. At the same time, the Planning Department attempted to re-align the general standards in all three plans where the intended result was the same: residential garage standards, construction mitigation standards to minimize fugitive dust, etc. During the process to amend all three sector plans and the Rank 2 West Side Strategic Plan, Long-Range Planning staff made an error and failed to update the residential garage standards table in *Volcano Trails*. **Volcano Cliffs was updated as intended in November 2014 to match the table in Volcano Heights.** These updates included a revised table but also revised graphics illustrating the garage types. In the original Volcano Cliffs plan, the graphics showed the 10-foot setback from the main façade to the garage façade, but this requirement was not reflected in the narrative text or the associated table. The 2014 amendment captured the 10’ set back in the regulatory table and revised the graphics to be illustrative and non-dimensional.

The Volcano Trails table on residential garages does not specify a 10’ setback; rather, narrative text requires garages to be “set back from the main façade” but does not specify a dimensional minimum or maximum. (That language is identical to language in the Volcano Cliffs and Heights plans.) However, taken together with building setbacks from the underlying zoning, the garages in Volcano Trails have an effective minimum setback from the main façade of 5 feet.

	Original Adoption			Amendment		
	Volcano Cliffs SDP (May 2011)	Volcano Trails SDP (August 2011)	Volcano Heights SDP (August 2013)	Volcano Cliffs SDP (November 2014)	Volcano Heights SDP (November 2014)	Volcano Trails SDP (November 2014)
Ownership Character	Platted lots	Master Developer	2-5 acre unplatted lots	Platted lots	No change	Multiple Builders
Residential Garage Table	X	Same as VC	Amended	Same as VH	Same as VC	Not Amended
Dimensioned diagram	X					
Illustrative diagram		X	X	X	X	X
Setback in narrative (unspecified dimension)				X	X	X
Garage setback	20’ min from property line	20’ min from property line	10’ from main façade	10’ from main façade	10’ from main façade	20’ min from property line

The requested text amendment – to delete the table altogether from Volcano Cliffs – would mean that each sector development plan has a different set of standards for residential garages: Volcano

Heights as amended in November 2014, Volcano Trails as originally adopted in August 2011, and Volcano Cliffs without a table at all. This inconsistency is problematic from both a policy and enforcement standpoint. The original intent of the policy was certainly for them to be consistent to create a similar high-quality, pedestrian-oriented built environment, and certainly from an enforcement standpoint, consistency is much easier to track and implement. Further, eliminating the table will perpetuate inconsistencies in the types and quality of houses developed in the area that were caused in part by confusion in the regulations as originally adopted.

Existing property owners in Volcano Cliffs, including members of the Volcano Cliffs Property Owners Association (VCPOA), who was very active in the original plan adoption effort and in the subsequent amendment, know about, have relied upon, and currently rely upon this residential garage standards table. Eliminating the table at this point may be unfair to those owners who have already developed their lots by following rules intended for all houses in the area.

For these reasons, the Long Range Planning stands behind the Volcano Cliffs table as amended in November 2014.

UPDATED COMMENTS FROM LONG RANGE PLANNING RECEIVED 2/3/15:

In response to the applicant's updated justification request, Long Range Planning would like to suggest that instead of amending the table, an exception to the table be made for Private Commons Developments in the VCRR zone. Staff agrees that lot sizes often need to be adjusted to take advantage of this clustering option, and the additional garage setback is less important than the benefit of common open space. For this reason, a note could be added to the table (and other relevant cross references) to allow a minimum 2-foot setback from the main façade for PCD developments.

Long Range Planning would prefer not to amend the table, which applies to all zones, as it is only the VCLL and VCRR zones that require a substantial setback to the main façade, which results in the long driveway that the applicant references. Changing this standard for the other zones is counter-productive to the intent of the plan to minimize the auto-oriented elements of the built environment, namely the dominant garage façade. Volcano Heights has no zones with such large setbacks, so no adjustment to the garage setback seems necessary.

Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency

No comments received.

CITY ENGINEER & DEPARTMENT of MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Project # 1008444 - Volcano Cliffs - Text Amendment to Sector Development Plan

City Engineer/Transportation Development:

- *No objection to the request.*

DMD Transportation Planning:

- *No objection to the request.*

Hydrology:

- 1008444 Text Amendment

Staff described this as an amendment to allow the garages to be closer to the street. This may increase driveway slopes that have already gotten steeper as home builders have changed their lot slope criteria from 0.5% to 1.0%. Driveways are not to be steeper than 14%. Amendment is most likely OK.

NMDOT:

- Reviewed, no adverse comments.

WATER UTILITY AUTHORITY

Utility Services

Project #1008444: No comment on Text Amendment. All water and wastewater service in the majority of the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan will require a Water Authority Governing Board Development Agreement.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND RECREATION

Planning and Design

Reviewed, no adverse comments.

Open Space Division

Reviewed. No adverse comments.

City Forester

No comments received.

POLICE DEPARTMENT/Planning

EPC 1008444 – This project is in the Northwest Area Command.

- No Crime Prevention or CPTED comments concerning the proposed *Amendment Sector Development, Area, Facility or Comprehensive Plan* request at this time.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Refuse Division

No comments received.

FIRE DEPARTMENT/Planning

Reviewed, no adverse comments.

TRANSIT DEPARTMENT

<p>Project # 1008444 14EPC-40084 TEXT AMENDMENT TO SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN.</p> <p>VOLCANO CLIFFS, REMOVE TABLE 2:RESIDENTIAL GARAGE TYPES FROM THE PLAN, LOCATED NEAR PASEO DEL NORTE AND WOODMONT AVE. B/W MAJOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND UNIVERSE BLVD. APPROX 446 ACRES. (C-8 & D-8)</p>	Adjacent and nearby routes	Route 162, Vantana Ranch commuter route, passes through the site on Rainbow.
	Adjacent bus stops	Multiple stop along Rainbow.
	Site plan requirements	None
	Large site TDM suggestions	None.
	Other information	None

COMMENTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES

BERNALILLO COUNTY

No comments received.

ALBUQUERQUE METROPOLITAN ARROYO FLOOD CONTROL AUTHORITY

Reviewed, no adverse comments.

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan, located near Paseo del Norte and Woodmont Ave between Major Public Open Space and Universe Blvd. Pulte Homes proposes a text amendment to the Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan General Standards residential garage requirements to allow for the deletion of the table found on page 88 of the Plan. APS does not oppose this proposal.

MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

No comments received.

MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

No comments received.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW MEXICO

Project #1008444 Text Amendment to Sector Development Plan (Volcano Cliffs Sector Development Plan) 14EPC-40084

PNM has no comments based on information provided to date.