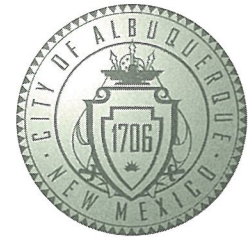


# CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE



PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
URBAN DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION  
600 2nd Street NW, 3rd Floor, 87102  
P.O. Box 1293, Albuquerque, NM 87103  
Office (505) 924-3860 Fax (505) 924-3339

## OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

January 9, 2020

City of Albuquerque  
Planning Department  
Urban Design & Development  
600 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

**Project #2019-003120**  
RZ-2019-00070 – Zone Map Amendment (Zone Change)

### LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Consensus Planning, agent for Unser & Sage LLC, request the above action for all or a portion of Tracts A1 & A2 Plat of Tracts A-1 through A-6 of Unser & Sage Marketplace, Zoned MX-L to MX-T, located on Sage SW, between Unser & Sage Rd. SW, containing approximately 5.80 acres. (M-10) Staff Planner: Whitney Phelan

PO Box 1293

On January 9, 2020 the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) voted to APPROVE Project 2019-003120/RZ-2019-00070, Zone Map Amendment from MX-L to MX-T based on the following Findings:

NM 87103

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1. This is a request for a Zoning Map Amendment (Zone Change) for a site approximately 5.80-acres known as Tracts A-1 and A-2, Plat of Tracts A-1 through 6, Unser & Sage Marketplace. The subject site is located on the south side of Sage Rd SW, between Unser Blvd SW and Sage Rd SW. The site is currently vacant and contains two lots.
2. The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) is hearing this case as a recommending body. Pursuant to Section 6-7(F)(1) of the Integrated Development Ordinance because the subject site is less than 10 gross acres and is located wholly or partially in an Area of Consistency as shown in the ABC Comprehensive Plan, as amended.
3. The subject site is zoned MX-L (Mixed-Use Low Intensity); the intention of the MX-L zone district is to provide for neighborhood-scale convenience shopping needs, primarily at the corners of Collector intersections. The applicant is requesting a zone change to MX-T (Mixed-Use Transition) in order to provide a transition between residential neighborhoods and more intense commercial areas.
4. The subject site is located within an Area of Consistency and along a Commuter Corridor as designated in the Comprehensive Plan. The subject site is not located within a Protection Overlay Zone.

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5. There is MX-L and County designated residential zoning to the north of the site. Lots to the south and east of the subject site are zoned R-1A and developed with single-family dwellings. The property immediately adjacent to the west is zoned PD.
6. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan and the City of Albuquerque Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.
7. The request generally furthers the following, applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies in regards to Community Identity:

- (a) POLICY 4.1.2: Identity and Design: Protect the identity and cohesiveness of neighborhoods by ensuring the appropriate scale and location of development, mix of uses, and character of building design.

The requested MX-T zoning would protect the identity and cohesiveness of the surrounding neighborhood. The purpose of the MX-T zoning district is to provide a transition between residential neighborhoods and more intense commercial areas. The current zoning, MX-L, is intended to provide for neighborhood-scale convenience shopping needs, primarily at the corners of collector intersections. This request would create a transition between higher intensity retail at the intersection corner and the residential lots to the south and east.

- (b) POLICY 4.1.4- Neighborhoods: Enhance, protect, and preserve neighborhoods and traditional communities as key to our long-term health and vitality.

The request would allow a mix of uses that can serve as a transition between MX-L zoning to the north and County designated C-1 to the northwest of the residential neighborhood to the south of the subject site.

8. The request generally furthers the following, applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies in regards to Land Use:

- (a) GOAL 5.1- Centers & Corridors: Grow as a community of strong Centers connected by a multi-modal network of Corridors.

POLICY 5.1.1: Desired Growth: Capture regional growth in Centers and Corridors to help shape the built environment into a sustainable development pattern.

Commuter Corridors are intended for long-distance trips across town by automobile, including limited-access streets. These roads tend to be higher-speed and higher-traffic routes. Although the subject site is ripe for strip development, increasing retail uses along the corridor would decrease the utility of this corridor. MX-T allows multiple residential options as well as some commercial, like office and accessory retail uses, which generally require longer visits and would not generate as many vehicle trips as a retail or other more intense commercial uses. The requested zoning, MX-T, would support the type of development intended by the Comprehensive Plan for Commuter Corridors.



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- (b) GOAL 5.3- Efficient Development Patterns: Promote development patterns that maximize the utility of existing infrastructure and public facilities and the efficient use of land to support the public good.

POLICY 5.3.1-Infill Development: Support additional growth in areas with existing infrastructure and public facilities.

POLICY 5.3.2- Leapfrog Development: Discourage growth in areas without existing infrastructure and public facilities.

The request allows more residential uses than MX-L and will create an opportunity for transitions between the MX-L to the north and a buffer between Unser Blvd to the west and housing to the east of the subject site. Infrastructure has already been improved on the site, therefore it will not create growth in areas without existing infrastructure.

- (c) GOAL 5.6- City Development Areas: Encourage and direct growth to Areas of Change where it is expected and desired and ensure that development in and near Areas of Consistency reinforces the character and intensity of the surrounding area

POLICY 5.6.3- Areas of Consistency: Protect and enhance the character of existing single-family neighborhoods, areas, outside of Centers and Corridors, parks, and Major Public Open Space.

The subject site is located in an Area of Consistency, where the Comprehensive Plan intends and encourages support of zone changes in predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods that help align the appropriate zone with existing land uses. It seeks to ensure that development will reinforce the scale, intensity, and setbacks of the immediately surrounding context. In areas with predominantly single-family residential uses, the Comp Plan intends that zone changes be considered that help align the appropriate zone with existing land uses.

- (d) POLICY 5.6.4- Appropriate Transitions: Provide transitions in Areas of Change for development abutting Areas of Consistency through adequate setbacks, buffering, and limits on building height and massing.

The request generally furthers Policy 5.6.4- Appropriate Transitions by creating a transition, MX-T, between MX-L zoned properties to the north of the subject site and R-1A zoned properties to the south. County zoned properties to the north are zoned for agricultural and residential uses as well.

9. The request partially furthers the following, applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies in regards to Urban Design:

GOAL 7.3: Sense of Place: Reinforce sense of place through context-sensitive design and development streetscapes.

POLICY 7.3.4: Infill: Promote infill that enhances the built environment or blends in style and building materials with surrounding structures and the streetscape of the block in which it is located.

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The request is for a zone change, which does not include building design or site planning. There is no way to evaluate future design at this stage, though the applicable IDO design standards (see 4.1.2-Identity and Design) would ensure higher quality design that would add to the existing community character.

10. The request generally furthers the following, applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies in regards to Housing:

GOAL 9.2: Sustainable Design: Promote housing design that is sustainable and compatible with the natural built environment.

POLICY 9.2.1: Compatibility: Encourage housing development that enhances neighborhood character, maintains compatibility with surrounding land uses, and responds to its development context – i.e. urban, suburban, or rural – with appropriate densities, site design and relationship to the street.

The MX-T zone district allows more options for single-family residential development and duplexes. The design standards in the IDO would require that the new development match existing densities, scale, and setbacks as the surrounding single-family homes. The current MX-L zoning only allows townhomes and multi-family residential uses, which are not as closely aligned in density and scale as the existing single-family properties.

11. The applicant has adequately justified the request pursuant to the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO) Section 6-7(F)(3)-Review and Decision Criteria for Zoning Map Amendments, as follows:

- A. Criterion A: Consistency with the City's health, safety, morals and general welfare is shown by demonstrating that a request furthers applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies (and other plans if applicable) and does not significantly conflict with them. The applicant has not adequately demonstrated, in his policy-based response, that the request would be consistent with the City's health, safety, morals and general welfare.

The request on conflicts with Subpolicy 5.2.1.k- Discourage zone changes to detached single-family residential uses on the West Side. However, the current development pattern to the east and south of the site (zoned R-1A) is single-family dwellings with extra-small lot sizes. The request from MX-L to MX-T zoning would allow for single-family dwellings of small lots sizes, duplexes, townhomes, apartments or a mix of all these uses to exist on the property. MX-T would also maintain many of the commercial and office uses allowed in MX-L, therefore allowing the site to be developed with both residential and commercial uses. The applicant has stated throughout the justification letter and at the neighborhood meeting that up to half of the site will be maintained for small-scale commercial uses permitted in MX-T. The change to MX-T would also allow the MX-L properties to the north of the site to develop as desired because the zoning would not trigger neighborhood edge provisions that the R-1 and R-T zoning districts would apply. The request furthers applicable Goals and Policies regarding Areas of Consistency, Commuter Corridors, Appropriate Transitions and Efficient Development Patterns



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- B. Criterion B: The subject site is located wholly in an Area of Consistency. A zone change from MX-L to MX-T would permit development that would reinforce and strengthen the established character of the surrounding parcels. The applicant has sufficiently shown that the current zoning of MX-L is inappropriate because MX-T is more advantageous to the community as articulated by the ABC Comp Plan, as amended. The adjacent R-1A lots have been developed with Single-family dwellings and the request will allow similar development to occur on the currently vacant site, while still allowing small neighborhood-scale commercial development to occur as a transition between residential uses to the south and commercial uses to the north of the site. Although Policy 5.2.1.k discourages zone map amendments that encourage more single-family residential development on the westside, zone map amendments are not based on the intended use and the allowable uses in MX-T only differ slightly from the current zoning and meets policies related to Areas of Consistency and Appropriate Transitions.
  - C. Criterion C: The subject site is located wholly in an Area of Consistency, so this criterion does not apply.
  - D. Criterion D: The change in potential permissive uses from MX-L to MX-T create a predictable development pattern and decrease the bucket of potential uses in terms of commercial uses. Several uses, such as Car Wash, Light Vehicle Fueling and Light Vehicle Repair would no longer be permissive if the request is approved, which can sometimes be seen as nuisance uses by residential property owners. Additional permissive uses that would be allowed are dwelling, single-family and dwelling, duplex, both of which would match the surrounding context and not be harmful.
  - E. Criterion E: The City's existing infrastructure and public improvements will have adequate capacity to serve the development made possible by the change of zone (Criterion 1) because the site already has adequate capacity to serve the development made possible by the change of zone.
  - F. Criterion F: The justification for the request is not based on the property's location on a major street.
  - G. Criterion G: The request is not based primarily upon the cost of land or economic considerations. The request would allow the site to serve as a transition zone between the MX-L to the north and the R-1A to the east and south, while also maintaining the context and scale and the surrounding land uses.
  - H. Criterion H: The request would result in a spot zone by applying a zone district different from surrounding zone districts to one small area or one premises, however, the area of the zone change can function as a transition between adjacent zone districts (Criterion 1).
13. The applicant's policy analysis adequately demonstrates that the request generally furthers a preponderance of applicable Goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan and does not significantly conflict with it. Based on this demonstration, the proposed zone category would be more advantageous to the community than the current zoning.

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14. The affected neighborhood organizations are the Southwest Alliance of Neighborhoods, Westside Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, South Valley Coalition of Neighborhood Associations, Stinson Tower Neighborhood Association, and Westgate Heights Neighborhood Association. Property owners within 100 feet of the subject site were also notified as required.
15. As of this writing, Staff has received no letters in support or opposition of this request.

**APPEAL:** If you wish to appeal this decision, you must do so within 15 days of the EPC's decision or by **JANUARY 24, 2020**. The date of the EPC's decision is not included in the 15-day period for filing an appeal, and if the 15<sup>th</sup> day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or Holiday, the next working day is considered as the deadline for filing the appeal.

For more information regarding the appeal process, please refer to Section 14-16-6-4(U) of the IDO, Administration and Enforcement. A Non-Refundable filing fee will be calculated at the Land Development Coordination Counter and is required at the time the appeal is filed. It is not possible to appeal EPC Recommendations to City Council; rather, a formal protest of the EPC's Recommendation can be filed within the 15 day period following the EPC's recommendation.

You will receive notification if any person files an appeal. If there is no appeal, you can receive Building Permits at any time after the appeal deadline quoted above, provided all conditions imposed at the time of approval have been met. Successful applicants are reminded that other regulations of the City Zoning Code must be complied with, even after approval of the referenced application(s).

Sincerely,

  
for Brennon Williams  
Planning Director

BW/RB

cc: COA Planning Department, , 600 2<sup>nd</sup> St. NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl., ABQ, NM 87102  
South West Alliance of Neighborhoods, Cherise Quezada, [cherquezada@yahoo.com](mailto:cherquezada@yahoo.com)  
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