



January 18, 2021

Ms. Kathryn Carrie Barkhurst  
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Senior Planner  
City of Albuquerque – Planning Department  
600 2<sup>nd</sup> St NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Re: Proposed 2021 IDO Amendments

Dear Ms. Barkhurst, Planning Department Staff, and City Council Staff:

I write this letter to urge the EPC to revisit proposed changes to the Sawmill CPO. Over the past decade, Heritage Hotels have helped to transform the Sawmill area from an underutilized and blighted industrial area into a premier destination for residents and tourists. The development of Hotel Chaco and the Sawmill Market, with an investment of over \$100,000,000 to date, have together changed the identity of the area for the better, bringing new visitors and generating substantial economic activity. But these types of projects would not have been possible under the proposed small area amendment to the IDO. In particular, the proposed changes to Sawmill/Wells Park - CPO-12:

"Street-facing façades over 35 feet long ~~on residential buildings~~ must be designed to appear as a collection of smaller buildings".

"Street-facing facades on buildings in non-residential development on Mountain Road or adjacent to a Residential zone district must be designed to appear as a collection of smaller buildings by incorporating variations in massing, building height, or building materials at least every 35 feet of façade length."

The underlying premise of creating the appearance of an assemblage of small buildings does not lend itself to creating distinctive, enduring architecture that expresses a coherent identity through careful consideration of the entire site and structure. The imposition of this attempt to legislate design will result in a contrived style of architecture and detract from the identity of the Sawmill area. The buildings located on Mountain Boulevard, between Rio Grande and Old Town Road Northwest, which includes our beautiful museum district, does not comply with the proposed

amendments, and to require future development to do so would conflict with the existing scale and character of the area. **I urge you to reject these amendments, or at the very least, to drop the inclusion of NR-LM in the zones to which these amendments would apply.** The NR-LM districts in the Sawmill area are prime sites for future development and have little to no impact on existing residential areas.

Heritage is in the planning stages for further development in the Sawmill District and intends to invest hundreds of millions of more dollars in this area, creating more jobs and gross receipts taxes, all of which are desperately needed in our community. Unfortunately, the limitations imposed by the small area amendments to the IDO will restrict our ability to move forward. I hope that you understand our concerns about the impact of these amendments on the future development of the Sawmill District.

Please feel free to contact me or Mr. Jim Long with any questions about this. I know that we are all focused on improving the built environment in Albuquerque. Let's make sure that the amendments work towards that goal. My contact information is [slubar@heritagerec.com](mailto:slubar@heritagerec.com) or (505)-239-1006, and Jim Long's contact information is [jlong@heritagerec.com](mailto:jlong@heritagerec.com) or (505) 505-998-5450.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Best regards,



Suzanne Lubar  
President

cc: Mr. Jim Long  
Mikaela Renz-Whitmore, Planning Department  
Petra Morris, City Council  
Shanna Schultz, City Council