

January 16, 2024

Via email: [abcto@cabq.gov](mailto:abcto@cabq.gov)  
Attn: Environmental Planning Commission Chair Shaffer

Re: PR-2023-009664 / RZ-2023-00052 –Amendment of Comprehensive Plan  
PR-2023-009663 / SI-2023-01928 – Central ABQ CPA Assessment Report

EPC Chairman Shaffer,

Two CPA Assessment Reports have been accepted by City Council; Near Heights CPA and Southwest Mesa CPA. The Central ABQ CPA Draft will be heard on Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. Both the Near Heights and Central ABQ CPAs contain policies of promoting active, walkable streetscapes and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) design standards that encourage “eyes on the street.”

The Near Heights CPA contains the Nob Hill/Highland Character Protection Overlay (CPO) that prohibits walls greater than 3 feet in the front or street side yard; see Page 99, 5.8 Walls & Fences (this CPA devoted an entire page to the subject and noted the following Action plan:)

***“The Planning Department will create a handout, trainings, and/or an education campaign for wall/fence companies and the public about IDO regulations.”***

Most variances for taller walls in the front yard setback are to rectify a violation—we often hear ‘but the contractor said this was ok’. The low walls (or higher patio walls set back 10’ from the property line) create open, walkable streets that reinforce neighborhoods’ eyes on the street.

The Central ABQ CPA contains 7 of the City’s 13 CPO’s and 5 of the City’s HPO’s (Historic Protection Overlay). This CPA is home to some of the most diverse and historic neighborhoods in the city. The CPA process has improved as planning staff learns from each Report; the Introduction on Page 2 clarifies a purpose of these assessments:

***“CPA assessments are intended as vital tools to help identify, implement, and track the policies in the Comp Plan and regulations in the IDO to better serve and protect neighborhoods. We hope this process not only allows for but encourages community members to take an active role in shaping their neighborhoods.”***

The CPTED design standard of eyes on the street is mentioned specifically on Page 86 of the Draft:

***“It is a generally accepted planning principle that more “eyes on the street” contribute to public safety.”***

Public safety— isn’t “crime” number one on all the lists of concerns? People need to feel safe where they live, work, and play. Big visions are important, but more important is how one feels walking down their block. I urge the EPC to codify some of these accepted planning design standards in their review of the Comprehensive Plan Update. (And I applaud Planning Staff for their incorporation.)

I support APPROVAL of the Central ABQ CPA Assessment Report. Though I serve as the Victory Hills neighborhood association president (VHNA), am a District 6 Coalition officer and an Inter-Coalition Council (ICC) representative, these are my personal comments.

Sincerely,



Patricia Willson