

CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
URBAN DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
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ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING COMMISSION

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number: [SP-2026-00042](#) - Site Plan – EPC, Major Amendment

Project Number: PR-2019-002284

Hearing Date: 07-16-2026

Applicant: Daniel Chavez

Subject Property: 1500 Desert Surf Cir.

Case Description: Tierra West, agent for Daniel Chavez, requests a Site Plan – EPC, Major Amendment for all or a portion of Parcels C-1-A, C-1-B, and B-1-A (correction plat of parcels C-1-A, C-1-B and B-1-A) Renaissance Center III, located on Desert Surf Circle NE, between Alexander Blvd. NE, and Montano Rd. NE, approximately 24 acres. (F-16)

Staff Planner: William Steele

DECISION

On July 16, 2026, the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) voted to APPROVE Case # [SP-2026-00042](#), a Site Plan – EPC, Major Amendment, based on the following Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval.

FINDINGS

1. This request is for a Major Amendment to a Site Plan – EPC for an outdoor amphitheater on an approximately 9.3-acre portion of the overall site (“the subject site”), legally described as all or a portion of Parcels C-1-A, C-1-B, and B-1-A (correction plat of parcels C-1-A, C-1-B and B-1-A) Renaissance Center III, located on Desert Surf Circle NE, between Alexander Blvd. NE, and Montano Rd. NE, approximately 24 acres. (“the subject area”).

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2. This major amendment would replace the prior approved site plan for a 97,000 SF indoor entertainment facility on the subject site.
3. History:
 - A. In 1986, the EPC approved a water park through a zoning map amendment for SU-1 for SU-1 IP for Water Park and related facilities of a permanent character (Z-88-66) and a Site Development Plan for 42 acres. In 1996, the EPC approved a Major Amendment to the Site Development Plan for 19 acres of the water park (Z-96-128). The water park closed in 2005.
 - B. With the effective date of the IDO in May 2018, zoning on the subject site converted to NR-C (Non-Residential – Commercial). Later in 2018, 24 acres of the Site Development Plan was replatted and amended for an outdoor recreational facility (PR-2018-001634, SI-2018-00178) on the 14-acre Tract C-1-A. An administrative amendment was approved in 2019 for Tract B-1-A for a public drainage area to serve the adjacent site and a future youth field.
 - C. In August 2022 the EPC approved a Major Amendment to the Site Plan (PR-2019-002284, SI-2022-01301) for an indoor entertainment facility. The indoor entertainment facility was never constructed.
4. 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.
5. The subject site is located in an Area of Consistency as designated by the Comprehensive Plan.
6. The Subject site is within the Near North Valley CPA.
7. The subject site is located adjacent to the Montaño Rd. Major Transit Corridor along its northern border and the subject area is within 660 feet of the Montgomery Blvd. Major Transit Corridors prioritize high-frequency and local transit service to support a convenient and efficient transportation network. While walkability is emphasized in the vicinity of transit stops along these corridors, development patterns outside of those areas generally remain auto-oriented.
8. The subject site is located within the Renaissance Employment Center. Employment Centers are intended to remain predominately industrial, business, and retail centers. Employment Centers tend to be auto-oriented and need to provide excellent access for trucks and connections for freight. For this reason, Employment Centers should be located near major intersections or along highways or major arterials. Additionally, because land uses are typically separated by parking lots or arterial roads, street design should emphasize efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrian accommodation within business parks. Once Employment Centers are largely developed, it may be appropriate and beneficial to introduce mixed-use and/or higher-density residential development.

9. The request is consistent with the following Goals and Policies related to CHAPTER: LAND USE.

A. GOAL 5.1 – CENTERS & CORRIDORS: Grow as a community of strong Centers connected by a multi-modal network of Corridors.

The subject site is adjacent to and within 660-feet of the Montaña Rd., Major Transit Corridor, as designated by the Comp Plan. The subject site is also within the Renaissance Employment Center. The outdoor amphitheater use will strengthen an existing regional employment and entertainment center by introducing an additional destination that compliments the surrounding commercial and entertainment uses, including the neighboring Restaurant/Entertainment facility and outdoor entertainment facility. Because the site is served by an established multimodal transportation network, including nearby freeway access, transit service, and an existing street network, the proposal utilizes infrastructure intended to support regional destinations. The request reinforces the Comprehensive Plan's vision of concentrating commercial and entertainment activities within designated Centers and Corridors rather than encouraging dispersed development.

B. POLICY 5.1.1 – DESIRED GROWTH: Capture regional growth in Centers and Corridors to help shape the built environment into a sustainable development pattern.

The proposed Site Plan accommodates additional regional commercial and entertainment activity within an Employment Center and Major Transit Corridor rather than extending development into undeveloped areas. The proposed amphitheater redevelops an underutilized site within an established commercial area and transforms it into an active regional entertainment venue that complements nearby businesses rather than extending development into undeveloped areas. The project redevelops an underutilized parcel with a drainage pond into an active regional destination that will support surrounding businesses and existing entertainment uses. Because the property is already served by public infrastructure, roadway access, and transit opportunities, the proposal promotes efficient growth patterns envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan. The amphitheater will attract visitors to an area specifically planned for commercial and employment uses, reinforcing the desired development pattern for this portion of the City.

C. 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.

The proposed Site Plan redevelops an existing underutilized site within an urbanized area that is already served by transportation infrastructure and public facilities. The project makes efficient use of existing streets, utilities, and nearby transit services without requiring significant expansion of public infrastructure. Because the property is surrounded by established commercial and industrial development, the amphitheater represents an efficient use of land within an existing developed area. The proposal replaces an

underutilized parcel with an active regional entertainment use that contributes to the local economy and public enjoyment.

- D. POLICY 5.3.1 INFILL DEVELOPMENT: Support additional growth in areas with existing infrastructure and public facilities.

The Site Plan proposes infill development on an underutilized property surrounded by existing commercial development and public infrastructure. The site has direct access to Desert Surf Circle, proximity to I-25 and Montano Rd, and is located within an established employment district. Because utilities, roadways, and supporting public facilities already exist, the proposal efficiently accommodates additional development without encouraging outward expansion. Redeveloping the site also strengthens the surrounding commercial area and increases activity within an existing developed district.

- E. POLICY 5.3.7 - LOCALLY UNWANTED LAND USES: Ensure that land uses that are objectionable to immediate neighbors but may be useful to society are located carefully and equitably to ensure that social assets are distributed evenly and social responsibilities are borne fairly across the Albuquerque area.

The outdoor amphitheater is located within a commercial area where entertainment uses are anticipated and are compatible with surrounding land uses. The site is surrounded primarily by commercial, office, industrial, and entertainment uses, and no residential zoning is immediately adjacent to the property. Because the proposal includes setbacks, landscaping, buffering, and site design measures intended to minimize potential off-site impacts, it appropriately addresses compatibility with neighboring properties. The location also provides convenient regional access while limiting conflicts with residential neighborhoods.

- F. POLICY 5.3.8 - SOLAR PROTECTIONS: Protect solar access to encourage solar energy collection and healthy living conditions.

The proposed Site Plan protects solar access while incorporating renewable energy features into the development. The amphitheater is primarily an open-air facility with limited vertical structures, and the site layout maintains adequate separation between buildings to avoid creating substantial shadow impacts on adjacent properties. In addition, the Site Plan incorporates solar panels on the proposed parking shade structures, and the surrounding development does not impede solar access necessary for their effective operation. The integration of solar carports supports renewable energy generation while providing shaded parking for visitors, consistent with the objective of encouraging solar energy collection.

10. The request is consistent with the following Goals and Policies related to CHAPTER 7: URBAN DESIGN

- A. GOAL 7.3 – SENSE OF PLACE: Reinforce a sense of place through context-sensitive design of development and streetscapes.

The proposed Site Plan introduces a unique entertainment destination that complements the established commercial and entertainment character of the Renaissance Employment Center. The amphitheater expands the area's identity as a regional destination by providing an additional venue for community events, performances, and cultural activities. Because the project builds upon the existing entertainment uses surrounding the site, it reinforces the area's evolving character rather than introducing an incompatible development pattern. The proposal also activates an underutilized property, improving the overall appearance and functionality of the site.

- B. POLICY 7.3.3 - PLACEMAKING: Encourage efforts to establish and strengthen district identity within Centers, business districts, and neighborhoods.

The proposed Site Plan establishes an entertainment venue that strengthens the identity of the Renaissance Employment Center as a regional destination for recreation, dining, and entertainment. The amphitheater complements existing attractions while creating opportunities for concerts, festivals, and community events that increase activity within the district. Because the project enhances the overall visitor experience and encourages longer visits to surrounding businesses, it contributes to placemaking and district identity. Redevelopment of the site also improves the visual quality and functionality of the area.

11. The request is consistent with the following Goals and Policies related to CHAPTER 8: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

- A. GOAL 8.1 PLACEMAKING - Create places where business and talent will stay and thrive.

The proposed Site Plan introduces a regional entertainment destination that supports business growth and attracts visitors to an existing entertainment area. The amphitheater will complement existing commercial and entertainment businesses by increasing activity and generating additional economic opportunities. Because the project promotes a vibrant destination environment, it encourages continued investment in the surrounding area. The proposal transforms an underutilized property into an active community asset that contributes to Albuquerque's entertainment economy.

- B. GOAL 8.2 ENTREPRENEURSHIP - Foster a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship and encourage private businesses to grow.

The proposed Site Plan introduces a privately developed entertainment venue that expands opportunities for local performers, event organizers, vendors, and supporting businesses. The amphitheater will provide a venue capable of hosting a variety of performances and community events that encourage creative activity and economic participation. Because the proposal supports both existing businesses and future entrepreneurial opportunities, it contributes to a more diverse local economy. The development also reinforces private investment within an established employment center.

C. POLICY 8.2.6 JOB TRAINING - Support existing entrepreneurship, education, training, and programs.

The proposed Site Plan supports entrepreneurship and employment opportunities associated with Albuquerque's entertainment industry. The proposed outdoor amphitheater will complement the existing Entertainment Center and strengthen an established entertainment district by creating opportunities for local businesses, vendors, performers, and service providers. The project will support creative talent and expand professional opportunities for marketing professionals, performers, and stage experts while reinforcing the Renaissance Employment Center as a regional entertainment destination. Although the Site Plan does not include a formal education or job training program, the development supports the types of businesses and employment opportunities that foster entrepreneurship and workforce development.

12. The request meets the Site Plan-EPC Review & Decision Criteria in IDO §14-16-6-6(I)(3) as follows:

A. 6-6(I)(3)(a) The site plan is consistent with the ABC Comp Plan, as amended.

As demonstrated by the policy analysis of the Site Plan – EPC the request is consistent with applicable Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies from Chapter 4 Community Identity, Chapter 5 Land Use, Chapter 7 Urban Design and Chapter 8 Economic Development. The proposed amphitheater redevelops an underutilized property within the Renaissance Employment Center and within both Montañó Major Transit Corridor and reinforces the identity of the existing entertainment district by expanding opportunities for community events, cultural activities, and regional entertainment while encouraging complementary investment in surrounding commercial development.

B. 6-6(I)(3)(b) The Site Plan is consistent with any applicable terms and conditions in any previously approved NR-SU or PD zoning covering the subject property and any related development agreements and/or regulations.

There are no prior approved NR-SU or PD zoning covering the property or prior development agreements or regulations.

C. 6-6(I)(3)(c) The Site Plan complies with all applicable provisions of this IDO, the DPM, other adopted City regulations, and any terms and conditions specifically applied to development of the property in a prior permit or approval affecting the property.

Staff reviewed the proposed Site Plan for compliance with the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), the Development Process Manual (DPM), and other adopted City regulations applicable to this request. The previously approved Site Plan for the Indoor Entertainment Facility does not impose continuing obligations on this request. The prior applicant requested administrative expiration of the previously approved Site Plan in order to terminate the associated Infrastructure Improvement Agreement (IIA) and be released from any remaining obligations under that agreement. Upon approval of the expiration

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request, the previously approved Site Plan and associated IIA no longer govern development of the subject property. Accordingly, the proposed Outdoor Amphitheater Site Plan is being reviewed as a new Site Plan–EPC application under the current provisions of the IDO and applicable City regulations.

- D. 6-6(I)(3)(d) The City's existing infrastructure and public improvements, including but not limited to its street, trail, drainage, and sidewalk systems, have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development, and any burdens on those systems have been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable.

The City's existing infrastructure and public improvements have adequate capacity to serve the proposed development and that any burdens on those systems have been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable. The subject site is served by existing public streets, sidewalks, utilities, and drainage infrastructure, and the proposed Site Plan includes internal circulation, pedestrian facilities, utility connections, and grading and drainage improvements that integrate with the existing public infrastructure network.

The Hydrology Section issued a preliminary approval of the Conceptual Grading and Drainage Plan for Development Facilitation Team (DFT) review, subject to the submission and approval of a detailed Grading and Drainage Plan prior to building permit issuance. Transportation Development Services also determined that a Traffic Impact Study is not required because the highest concentration of traffic generated by the proposed amphitheater is anticipated to occur after the weekday PM peak hour.

The previously approved Infrastructure Improvements Agreement (IIA) associated with the former development will be terminated with the expiration of that Site Plan. The proposed amphitheater will be subject to a new IIA that will identify and secure all required public infrastructure improvements in accordance with City standards prior to development.

- E. 6-6(I)(3)(e) The application mitigates any significant adverse impacts on the project site and the surrounding area to the maximum extent practicable.

The proposed Site Plan mitigates potential impacts to the maximum extent practicable. The project has been designed to comply with applicable development standards related to access, circulation, parking, landscaping, buffering, lighting, drainage, building design, and screening, all of which are intended to minimize potential impacts on surrounding properties. The proposed amphitheater is located within an established commercial and entertainment district where the surrounding land uses are generally compatible with the proposed regional entertainment venue. Landscaping, pedestrian circulation, buffering, lighting controls, and other site improvements contribute to compatibility with adjacent development while enhancing the overall site design. Continued review by City departments during DFT final sign-off will ensure that any remaining technical issues are addressed before construction.

- F. 6-6(I)(3)(f) If the subject property is within an approved Master Development Plan, the Site Plan meets any relevant standards in the Master Development Plan in addition to any standards applicable in the zone district the subject property is in.

The subject property is not within an approved Master Development Plan; therefore, the above criterion does not apply.

- G. 6-6(I)(3)(g) If a cumulative impact analysis is required in the Railroad and Spur Small Area pursuant to Subsections 14-16-5-2(E) (Cumulative Impacts) and 14-16-6-4(H) (Cumulative Impacts Analysis Requirements), the Site Plan incorporates mitigation for all identified cumulative impacts. The proposed development will not create material adverse impacts on water quality or other land in the surrounding area through increases in traffic congestion, parking congestion, noise, vibration, light spillover, or other nuisances without sufficient mitigation or civic or environmental benefits that outweigh the expected impacts.

The subject property is not within a Railroad and Spur Area. Therefore, a cumulative impacts analysis is not required. Thus, the above criterion does not apply.

- H. 6-6(I)(3)(h) If an outdoor or site lighting performance analysis is requested, the proposed lighting design must prove it will not adversely affect the lighting requirements of Section 14-16-5-2(E) without sufficient mitigation and benefits that outweigh the expected impacts.

The Site Plan includes a comprehensive outdoor lighting plan demonstrating compliance with the applicable lighting standards of the Integrated Development Ordinance. The lighting design incorporates full cutoff fixtures, shielding, appropriate mounting heights, and photometric information intended to minimize light trespass and glare while providing adequate illumination for pedestrian safety, vehicular circulation, and site security. The lighting plan is designed to be compatible with the surrounding commercial development while limiting impacts on adjacent properties and maintaining consistency with the City's dark-sky objectives. Final review of the lighting design will occur during DFT review to ensure continued compliance with all applicable technical standards prior to final sign-off.

13. Proposed Site Plan:

- A. The proposed Site Plan consists of an approximately 9.3-acre development within the 24-acre subject area centered around a new 880-seat outdoor amphitheater designed to complement the existing adjacent entertainment center and reinforce the Renaissance Employment Center as a regional entertainment destination. The development includes a performance stage, audience seating, backstage support facilities, pedestrian gathering areas, parking, and associated site improvements.
- B. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation has been designed to provide safe and efficient access throughout the site. Parking is provided through surface parking areas and covered parking

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with solar canopies and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. An interconnected network of sidewalks, plazas, and accessible routes links parking areas, entrances, and the amphitheater.

- C. Landscaping, open space, utility infrastructure, and grading and drainage improvements are integrated throughout the site to enhance the pedestrian environment, support site functionality, and minimize impacts on surrounding properties.

14. The subject site is not within 660 feet of Major Public Open Space or tribal land, so a tribal meeting offer was not required [IDO § 14-16-6-4(B) and Table 6-1-1] at the time of the application submittal date.

15. Neighborhood/ public support or opposition is unknown.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Following approval by the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC), the applicant shall coordinate with the Staff Planner to ensure that all Conditions of Approval have been satisfied and submit a final, revised Site Plan for staff review prior to submitting the application to the Development Facilitation Team (DFT) for final sign-off. Pursuant to IDO §14-16-6-6(I)(2)(m), the Site Plan shall be reviewed administratively for compliance with all Conditions of Approval, the Development Process Manual (DPM), the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), and all other applicable City requirements prior to the issuance of a building permit. Upon completion of the administrative review, the approved final Site Plan shall be filed with the Planning Department.
2. Pursuant to IDO section 14-16-6-4(P)(4) Any conditions shall be met within 1 year of the approval, unless stated otherwise in the approval. If any conditions are not met within that time, the approval is void. The Planning Director may extend the time limit up to an additional 1 year.
3. Site Plan Clean Up:
 - A. All sheets within the drawing set shall be numbered and shall correspond to the Index to Drawings on the cover sheet.
 - B. The site plan sheet shall be revised to include a sheet number and sheet title.
 - C. Light fixtures mounted on canopy structures shall be identified on the site plan sheet.
 - D. The table Site Data on the site plan and site plan area sheets shall be revised to include both the required and the proposed bicycle parking totals.
 - E. The required landscape area identified on the site plan sheet shall be consistent with the required landscape area shown on the landscape plan. The discrepancy between the table

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Site Data on the site plan sheet (40,155sf) and landscape sheet LS-101 (60,232.42sf) shall be resolved.

4. Landscaping: The applicant shall work with the Development Facilitation Team (DFT) to identify an acceptable alternative to the required parking lot trees (IDO §14-16-5-6(F)(2)(c)) where canopy structures prevent compliance. The proposed alternative shall satisfy the intent of the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO).
5. Signage: The main entrance canopy sign shown on Signage Detail Sheet A-501 shall be reduced so that its width does not exceed 50 percent of the canopy frontage, as required by IDO Table 5-12-3. The Final Sign Plan shall demonstrate compliance with all applicable dimensional and design standards of IDO §14-16-5-12 prior issuance of any required sign permits.
6. Signage: Permanent signage shall comply with the applicable standards of IDO §14-16-5-12 (Sign Regulations), including requirements related to sign area, height, location, illumination, and design. Any illuminated signage shall also comply with the applicable outdoor lighting standards of the IDO to minimize glare and light trespass while maintaining adequate visibility for patrons and visitors.
7. Grading and Drainage: The applicant shall submit a detailed Grading and Drainage Plan to the Hydrology Section for review and approval prior to issuance of building permits
8. Any minor technical revisions identified during Development Facilitation Team (DFT) review shall be completed prior to DFT final sign-off in accordance with the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), the Development Process Manual (DPM), and all other applicable City requirements.
9. The applicant shall coordinate with the Development Facilitation Team (DFT) to ensure that all applicable mechanical equipment screened in accordance with IDO §14-16-5-6(G) prior to DFT final sign-off.
10. The applicant shall comply with all applicable Conditions of Approval from reviewing agencies, as identified in the attached agency comments. In particular, Transportation Development Services requires that a Traffic Circulation Layout be approved prior to approval of any Site Plan or issuance of any building permit.

APPEAL

If you wish to appeal, you must do so within 15 days of the EPC's decision or by **July 31, 2026**. The date of the EPC's decision is not included in this 15-day period. If the 15th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or Holiday, the next working day is considered the deadline for filing an appeal.

For more information regarding the appeal process, please refer to the Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO), [§ 14-16-6-4\(U\)](#) (Appeals). A non-refundable fee is required to be paid when the appeal is filed. It is not possible to appeal EPC recommendations to the City Council, because a recommendation is not a final decision.

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You will receive notice if anyone files an appeal. If the decision is not appealed, you can receive building permits any time after the appeal deadline, provided all conditions of approval associated with the decision and all other applicable regulations have been met.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

for Alan Varela
Planning Director

AV/MJ/WS

cc: Daniel Chavez, dchavez@nrgstaging.com
Ronald Bohannon, RRB@tierrawestllc.com
Sergio Lozoya, slozoya@tierrawestllc.com
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EPC file