

**FINDINGS –SI-2018-00220, December 13, 2018-Site Plan – Alternative Set**

1. The request is for a site plan for an approximately 14,716 square foot building on a portion of a larger, approximately 16 acre site known as Singing Arrow Park. The City of Albuquerque owns Singing Arrow Park, zoned NR-PO-A, and proposes to develop a new community center on a portion of the park’s northeastern side.
2. An approximately 1.4 acre parking lot, which the City acquired to provide parking for the proposed community center, is also part of the subject site. The parking lot, zoned MX-M, is located directly south of the proposed location of the new community Center. The existing community center building, which will remain, is approximately 12,360 sf and is sited at the western side of the park.
3. Both sites, Singing Arrow Park and the parking lot, are included in the proposed site plan, which is in the Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) process because the subject site is greater than five acres in size and is located adjacent to designated Major Public Open Space (MPOS) [IDO 14-16-6-6(H)(1)(a), p. 397].
4. The subject site is located in both an Area of Change (the parking lot) and an Area of Consistency (the park) as designated in the Comprehensive Plan. The Major Public Open Spaced (MPOS) Plan also applies.
5. The Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan, the MPOS Plan, and the Integrated Development Ordinance are incorporated herein by reference and made part of the record for all purposes.

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6. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goal and policy in Chapter 4-Community Identity:

A. Goal 4.1-Character: Enhance, protect, and preserve distinct communities.

The community surrounding Singing Arrow Park is distinct based on its location near the Tijeras Arroyo and its diversity. It includes single-family homes (smaller and larger lots), and multi-family apartments. Generally, improvements to the park will help enhance the community by providing additional services that will contribute to protecting and preserving the community’s distinct identity.

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B. Policy 4.1.5- Natural Resources: Encourage high-quality development and redevelopment that responds appropriately to the natural setting and ecosystem functions.

The request would result in high-quality development that will respond appropriately to its natural setting because it is required to comply with the IDO Design Standards for Site Design and Sensitive Lands, which help ensure this compatibility between development, its setting, and the ecosystem around it.

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7. The request is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan Goals and policies in Chapter 5- Land Use:

A. Goal 5.2-Complete Communities: Foster communities where residents can live, work, learn, shop, and play together.

A community center generally fosters complete communities where residents can live, work, learn, shop, and play because it is a use that contributes to a sense of community and provides opportunities for residents to come together in various ways.

B. Policy 5.2.1 -Land Uses: Create healthy, sustainable, and distinct communities with a mix of uses that are conveniently accessible from surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed community center will contribute to creating a healthy and sustainable community by providing additional services that enhance the existing community center's offerings. The location is accessible by transit and is within walking distance from many single-family and multi-family residences in the surrounding neighborhoods.

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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 request will promote development patterns that maximize the utility of existing infrastructure because it will use existing infrastructure near the park's northern boundary and be sited on land that is already developed as a park, thus not altering existing development patterns in the area. The parking lot will become part of the City facilities and serve as a link to existing transit stops, all which generally will promote the efficient use of land to support the public good.

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D. 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.

The subject site is in both and Area of Change (the parking lot) and an Area of Consistency (the park). Though not growth, the re-use of the parking lot would be consistent with what is generally expected in Areas of Change. The proposed community center is subject to IDO requirements regarding adjacency to MPOS, which function to ensure that a development is consistent with the intensity of the surrounding area (the park, single-family and multi-family residential uses) and that it reinforces the character of the area.

E. 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 park portion of the subject site is located in an Area of Consistency that is outside of a designated Center or Corridor. The area is characterized by single-family homes, multi-family homes, commercial uses, and MPOS (the Tijeras Arroyo). Overall, the request will contribute to enhancing the character of the surrounding neighborhoods because it will support the existing community center and park, which contribute to neighborhood character. The request will also utilize and clean-up the existing parking lot, which would also contribute to protecting and enhancing neighborhood character.

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8. The request is consistent with the following, applicable Goal and policy from Chapter 7- Urban Design:

A. Goal 7.5-Context-Sensitive Site Design: Design sites, buildings, and landscape elements to respond to the high desert environment.

B. Policy 7.5.1- Landscape Design: Encourage landscape treatments that are consistent with the high desert climate to enhance our sense of place.

Due to the subject site's adjacency to MPOS, certain IDO requirements (in addition to general requirements regarding building design, parking, landscaping, and dimensional standards) apply. Section 5-2: Development Standards for Site Design and Sensitive Lands contain requirements to ensure that development is sensitive to its special context and responds to the high-desert environment, including landscape treatments.

9. The request is consistent with the following, applicable Goals and policy from Chapter 10- Parks & Open Space:

A. Goal 10.1-Facilities & Access: Provide parks, Open Space, and recreation facilities that meet the needs of all residents and use natural resources responsibly.

The request will provide a community center, which will have a variety of recreation facilities (outdoor, indoor, meeting rooms) that will be available to all area residents who want to participate. The natural resources in the remaining, approximately 15 acres of the park and the adjacent MPOS is not a part of the request. The Parks & Recreation Department has issued an RFP to update the previous archaeological survey.

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B. Goal 10.2-Parks: Provide opportunities for outdoor education, recreation, and cultural activities that meet community needs, enhance quality of life, and promote community involvement for all residents.

The request will facilitate development of a new community center that will provide additional services for more area residents, and therefore there will be more opportunities for residents to engage in outdoor education, recreation, and cultural activities related to the community center, the park, and the adjacent open space.

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C. Policy 10.2.2- Security: Increase safety and security in parks.

The proposed community center will provide a presence in the eastern side of the park, and would have lighting, people coming and going, and Staff to provide "eyes on the street". The vacant parking lot will be re-used and become part of the new community facility, so it will be less of a nuisance to neighbors.

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D. Goal 10.3-Open Space: Protect the integrity and quality of the region's natural features and environmental assets and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and education.

The Tijeras Arroyo and its associated open space is a regional natural feature and environmental asset adjacent to the subject site. The request will help to protect it by providing community uses, such as the proposed facility, at the northernmost edge of the park that is closest to existing development.

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10. The request is consistent with the following, applicable Goal and policy from Chapter 11- Heritage Conservation:

A. Goal 11.4-Archaeological & Paleontological Resources: Identify, acquire, and manage significant archaeological and paleontological sites for research, education, tourism, and recreational use.

The subject site contains an identified, significant archaeological site, which has been documented previously. An archeological certificate is required and is included with the request, which will facilitate development of a community facility that would provide additional opportunities for education and recreational use.

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B. Policy 11.4.2 -Proactive Protection: Identify, evaluate, and protect archaeological and paleontological sites and items on a proactive, ongoing basis.

An archaeological certificate is required and is included with the request, which acknowledges that existing archaeological site on the subject site. The Open Space Division has determined that the request would not adversely affect the existing archaeological site, which has been previously evaluated and would continue to be protected on a proactive, on-going basis.

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11. The request is consistent with the following, applicable Goal from Chapter 12- Infrastructure, Community Facilities & Services

Goal 12.2-Community Facilities: Provide community facilities that have convenient access and a wide range of programs for residents from all cultural, age, geographical, and educational groups to enhance quality of life and promote community involvement.

The request will provide a community facility that promotes community involvement and generally has convenient access for nearby residents and would offer a wide range of programs, from children's programs, to a fitness center, to meeting spaces, which all residents can participate in to enhance their quality of life.

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12. The request will be consistent with the following policies provided that some site improvements are incorporated:

A. Policy 5.6.2-Areas of Change: Direct growth and more intense development to Centers, Corridors, industrial and business parks, and Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas where change is encouraged.

The parking lot portion of the subject site is in a designated Area of Change. The parking lot will become part of the proposed community center facility and will be re-developed and re-activated. Therefore, the request is consistent with Policy 5.6.2-Areas of Change.

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B. Policy 7.2.1- Walkability: Ensure convenient and comfortable pedestrian travel.

The proposed design would generally provide for walkability near the new center's entrance and around it. The existing parking lot does not have dedicated pedestrian connections to the center, but the pedestrian path along the east side of the parking area provides some connectivity. Maintaining a pedestrian connection from the north to the community center is important to promote and support walkability in the area. For neighbors to the east, pedestrian travel would be convenient and comfortable. For those coming from the north or west, improved connections to the pedestrian path will ensure convenient, comfortable, and safe pedestrian travel.

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13. The request furthers Goal 3 of the Major Public Open Space (MPOS) Facility Plan: Identify community needs and desires related to MPOS.

Part of the development process for the proposed community center consisted of public involvement of area residents. Throughout the process, including public meetings and hearings, residents have expressed concern about how the request relates to the archaeological site. This community need is related to the MPOS, because its preservation is essential to maintaining the integrity of the archaeological site. The Parks & Recreation Department has issued an RFP to update the previous archaeological survey.

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14. The applicant notified the following affected neighborhood organizations as required: the Coronado Terrace Homeowners' Association (HOA), the Willow Wood Neighborhood Association (NA), the Singing Arrow NA, the Juan Tabo Hills NA, the Sandia Vista NA, the Mirabella Miravista NA, the Four Hills Village HOA, the Supper Rock NA, the Hidden Valley Community Services Association, Inc., and the East Gateway Coalition. Property owners within 100 feet of the subject site were also notified as required.

15. A facilitated meeting was held on November 29, 2018. Meeting participants had differing views about the proposed project. Those opposed are skeptical about the process and question the need for a new community center. Some do not want a community center on the eastern edge of the park so close to

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their neighborhood. Other participants expressed support for the childrens' programs that would be offered. Specific details are included in the facilitated meeting report.

16. As of this writing, the Planning Department has received both letters of opposition and letters of support for the request.

**RECOMMENDATION - SI-2018-00220, December 13, 2018**

**APPROVAL of Project #2018-001760, Case #SI-2018-00220, a Site Plan for an approximately 14,154 square foot building on an approximately 1.05 acre portion of Singing Arrow Park, an approximately 16 acre site located between Wenonah Ave. SE and the Tijeras Arroyo Major Public Open Space, and an approximately 1.4 acre parking lot site on the north side of Wenonah Ave. SE, zoned NR-PO-A and MX-M, respectively, based on the preceding Findings and subject to the following Conditions of Approval.**

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL –SI-2018-00220, December 13, 2018–Site Plan**

1. The applicant shall meet with the Staff planner to ensure that all conditions of approval are met and submit a finalized version for filing at the Planning Department.

2. Add a note that states: A Grading and Drainage Plan shall be provided for Grading Permit and Building Permit review.

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**Deleted:** Letters of support refer to the importance of community centers in general, benefit to children, and availability of new recreational options. Letters of opposition question the need for the center and state that City funds were appropriated for expansion and renovation of the existing community center, not for a new community center that would take away green space from the park and is likely to attract transients. They are concerned about the potential for additional crime and drug use in the area, and increased traffic and noise in the neighborhood.

**Deleted:** 1. The EPC delegates final sign-off authority of this site development plan to the Development Review Board (DRB) to ensure all technical issues are resolved. The DRB is responsible for ensuring that all EPC Conditions have been satisfied and that other applicable City requirements have been met. A letter shall accompany the submittal, specifying all modifications that have been made to the site plan since the EPC hearing, including how the site plan has been modified to meet each of the EPC conditions. Unauthorized changes to this site plan, including before or after DRB final sign-off, may result in forfeiture of approvals.

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**Deleted:** 3. Overall Site Plan (Sheet AS101): ¶  
<#>Add a note that the portion of the park being developed for the community center is approximately 1.05 acres (consistent with the grading and drainage plan).¶  
<#>Remove the gray shading from the overall site plan and place it on the utility plan. ¶  
<#>Clarify if the three homes shown on the eastern side of the overall site plan are in an easement or not. ¶  
4. Pedestrian Access and Circulation: ¶  
<#>The pathway on the north side of the building shall be extended westward to connect to the existing community center [IDO 5-3(D)(3)(b)]. ¶  
<#>Two connections from the parking lot to the existing pathway on the lot's eastern side shall be added to provide pedestrian access to the pathway and avoid landscaping. ¶

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The developer shall take steps to prevent disturbance of soil and vegetation on the adjacent

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