

## Sept. 12, 2019 Comments for City Council Amendments:

I went to the Study Session Tuesday. And I have been trying to review the 21 City Council Amendments and 300 Technical changes. It is very overwhelming to review this many at once. I suggest we break all this into sections. While the study session suggested that the technical changes are minor. I see a lot of the technical changes need more review and analysis. We don't want to give away our quality of life entitlements or good design that we will later regret. Let's take the time necessary to do a good job.

Thank you! Rene' Horvath TRNA and WSCONA land Use Director

Let's start with the City Council amendments: *My comments are italicized.*

**1. City Council Amendment D: Cluster development:** *Cluster design is a great design tool to build a sensitive development that helps to preserve open space or provide a very necessary buffer to sensitive lands. The proposed illustration for Amendment D is a good cluster design. It could work well in some areas. For other areas where there are sensitive lands that need protection a large buffer is very important and necessary to protect these sensitive areas. We need examples of cluster designs that cluster homes on one side of the property in order to provide buffer on the other side to protect sensitive areas. Cluster designs should not be high density, basic cookie cutter subdivisions. They should be more creative and sensitive to the surrounding area and protect and complement the natural surroundings and preserve community assets. This is what cluster design is suppose to do. It's very disappointing that a very good design tool has been used only to increase the density and ignore the other attributes of the site. We need more training for our Planning Staff in order for them to promote creative and beneficial designs to illustrate this wonderful design tool.*

**2. City Council Amendment E: Contextual Standards: 10,000sf. lots within 1/4 mile of UC-MS-PT can be reduced by 50%:** *I am concerned we are making lot sizes too small. Do you have any desirable examples of what this would look like? Where are we planning to do this? A lot of areas are already built up. What will the community receive in return for reducing lot sizes 50%? What will these developers provide to the community, if lot sizes are reduced by 50%. More parks or open space? This reduction in lot sizes should be eliminated.*

**3. City Council Amendment H: General Retail Small:** *Changing the sq. ft. of small retail in MXL zones from 10,000sf to 25,000 sf. CVS and Walgreens are around 17,000sf. They make good anchor stores for MXL areas. I recommend keeping it to 20,000 sf in both Areas of change and Areas of consistency. I would not go any higher in MXL zones.*

**4. City Council Amendment J: Liquor retail:** *Page 132, Table 4-2-1 revise as follows: Replace the P for Liquor Retail in the MX-M zone with C. on Page 161, Section 4-3(D)(36)(f), revise as*

follows: In the MX-M zone district, this use is [conditional unless accessory to a grocery store]:  
*Agree this should be conditional.*

**5. City Council Amendment S: Cul de Sacs: cul-de-sacs that terminate the road are prohibited, with the following exceptions:** [1. **Cul-de-sacs are allowed where necessary to avoid those types of sensitive lands listed in Section 14-16-5-2(C)**, or where vehicular safety factors make a connection impractical, including but not limited to size or shape or lots, topography, surrounding development patterns, and physical characteristics **[and are limited to 100 feet in length.]** *Remove language: "cul-de-sacs are allowed where necessary to avoid those types of sensitive lands". Replace with: "cul de sacs are prohibited from pushing development closer towards sensitive open space areas,"* *Buffers are necessary to protect our open space areas. Cul de sacs push development towards sensitive areas and removes protective buffers. The language needs more work to protect sensitive areas.*

**6. City Council Amendment T: Transit Parking Reduction:** Page 236, Section 5-5(C)(5)(c) 1. revise as follows: The minimum number of off-street parking spaces required may be reduced by 30 percent if the proposed development is located within 1,320 feet of any transit stop or transit station with a **[transit route with a]** peak service frequency of **[30] T [15]** minutes or better, **or may be reduced by 10 percent if the proposed development is located within 1,320 feet of any transit stop or transit station].**

*I do not agree with reducing parking spaces by 30% or 10%. Albuquerque is still a commuter city and does not have an extensive bus service. For the west side we need those parking spaces. We have limited bus service mainly along certain commuter routes, such as Coors Blvd. The bus service does not extend out into the neighborhoods. Therefore we need parking spaces near bus stops for people to park their cars and catch the bus. We have a few businesses and large shopping centers that have extra parking spaces that have allowed people to park near the bus stop to catch the bus. If we want people to ride the bus we need to make it convenient for them. Currently we have large shopping centers sprinkled all along Coors that can provide the opportunity for transit riders to park their cars in the parking lots. It does not pay to reduce the size of the parking lots.*

*Parking in general has been a hot topic and needs more evaluation. As we have been reducing parking space there have been more conflicts associated in doing so. It has been hard for a business to retain customers when there is little to no parking available for the customer. Customers will go else to shop, etc.*

*Neighborhoods are now compensating for the lost parking, people are parking in the neighborhoods adjacent to these developments that have been allowed to reduce their parking spaces. This has created conflicts as well in these neighborhoods. We should not burdening the neighborhoods with this problem.*

*Safety is also a concern. We have a situation on the westside, where our young employees who work late at night are required to park across Coors Blvd. to another location because there is not enough parking on site where they work. They end up walking across Coors Blvd at night to get to their cars. This situation was brought up at hearings but not addressed. Parents of these young employees have been complaining about this. The parking is still needed in Albuquerque. We need to reexamine this amendment, before we start reducing onsite parking. This is what good planning is about.*

**7. City Council Amendment U: VPO West Central:** • **Purpose:** The purpose of this proposed amendment is to establish regulations within along the West Central Avenue corridor to protect views of the eastern landscape. The IDO potentially allowed for more building height along West Central, which could have impact on views to the east as one is traveling down the mesa. Establishing a new View Protection Overlay will ensure those views aren't impacted by development. *Good Idea! A facilitated meeting is currently being scheduled.*