

Los Alamos

Downtown East MRA

Council Meeting

groundworkstudio



**LOS ALAMOS
MAINSTREET
AND CREATIVE DISTRICT**

LOS ALAMOS
where discoveries are made

February 20th, 2024

Agenda

- Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Overview
- Los Alamos Downtown East MRA
- MRA Toolkit



Vacant buildings throughout the MRA offer opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment

MRA Overview



ATTACHMENT A

Overview of MRAs

- The New Mexico (NM) Metropolitan Redevelopment Code provides municipalities and counties with tools to support revitalization and redevelopment in areas that have existing economic and physical conditions such as:
 - low business activity
 - vacant/underutilized properties
 - deteriorating buildings and/or public infrastructure
 - unsafe conditions
 - housing deficits
 - zoning conformance issues
 - obsolete planning/platting
 - high unemployment/low-income levels
- Part of Statewide Code:

Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Statute
Chapter 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48



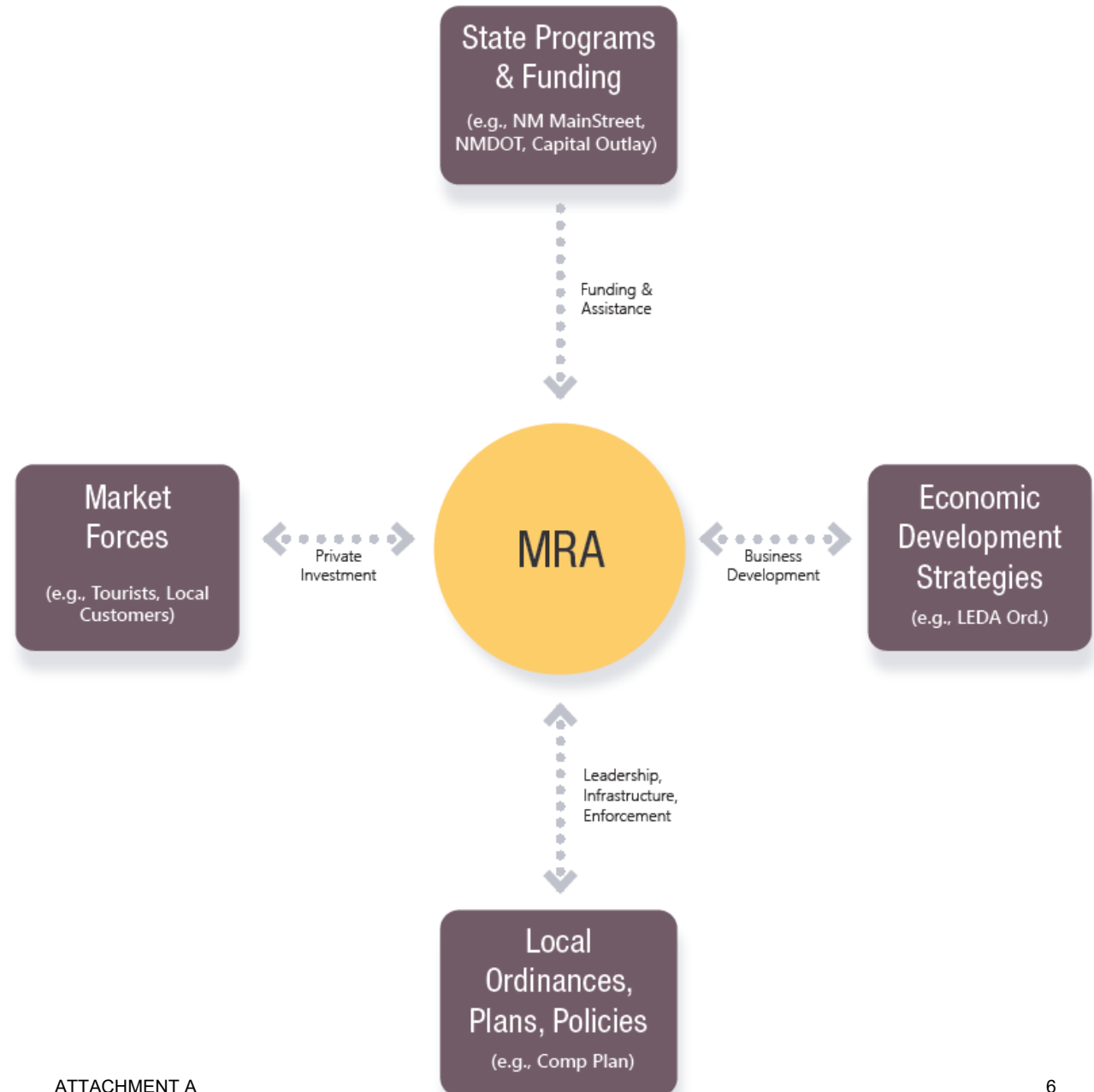
MRA Myth Busting

- MRA designation does NOT:
 - raise taxes
 - enable eminent domain
 - damage property values
- When projects meet the criteria established in the MRA Plan, properties which are eligible for support can be developed.
- MRA boundaries are often different from other planning boundaries, as they are established based on an understanding of which properties qualify for the designation and have the highest potential for positive impact.
- Nothing in the 2021 New Mexico Statutes Chapter 3 – Municipalities Article 60 A- Metropolitan Development code requires that an MRA does or does not correspond with another planning boundary.

Why Designate an MRA?

The designation of an MRA includes a corresponding MRA Plan that outlines redevelopment projects to correct declining conditions and provide tangible community benefit.

Once an MRA Plan is adopted, it allows for the contribution of public resources to private redevelopment projects without violating the New Mexico Anti-donation Clause.



Benefits of MRA Plans

Contribution of **Public** Resources to **Private** Redevelopment Projects without violating the Anti-Donation Clause

	Possible without MRA	NOT possible without MRA
Public Infrastructure Improvements	X	
Infrastructure Improvements for Businesses		X
Incentives (tax abatements, sale + lease below market value) to attract private investment		X
Public Private Partnerships		X
Tax Increment Financing (TIF)		X
Tax Increment Development District	X	
Direct Contributions to Specific Projects		X
Staff Technical Assistance		X

Note: LEDA allows some of these items, but only for projects that result in job creation. MRA brings more flexibility to support community improvement projects

Los Alamos Downtown East MRA

Downtown East MRA

- Los Alamos County & Los Alamos MainStreet have initiated an MRA Designation for a council-approved section of east downtown.
- The designation enables community-guided public investment in private redevelopment projects that support downtown revitalization and provide public benefits.



Proposed MRA Boundary

- Incorporates approximately 55 acres comprised of approximately 19 parcels in east downtown Los Alamos
- Zoning is mixed-use
- Current land-use is primarily commercial
- Bulk of commercial buildings are vacant

ATTACHMENT A



Proposed MRA boundary & the Downtown Master Plan boundary

- Based on eligibility of the parcel directly adjacent and south of the Roundabout and east of Trinity Dr., the proposed MRA boundary differs slightly from the current Los Alamos Downtown Master Plan.
- The proposed MRA boundary is not required to align with the Downtown Master Plan Boundary.
- The Downtown Master Plan and the MRA Plan are separate planning processes that inform each other.

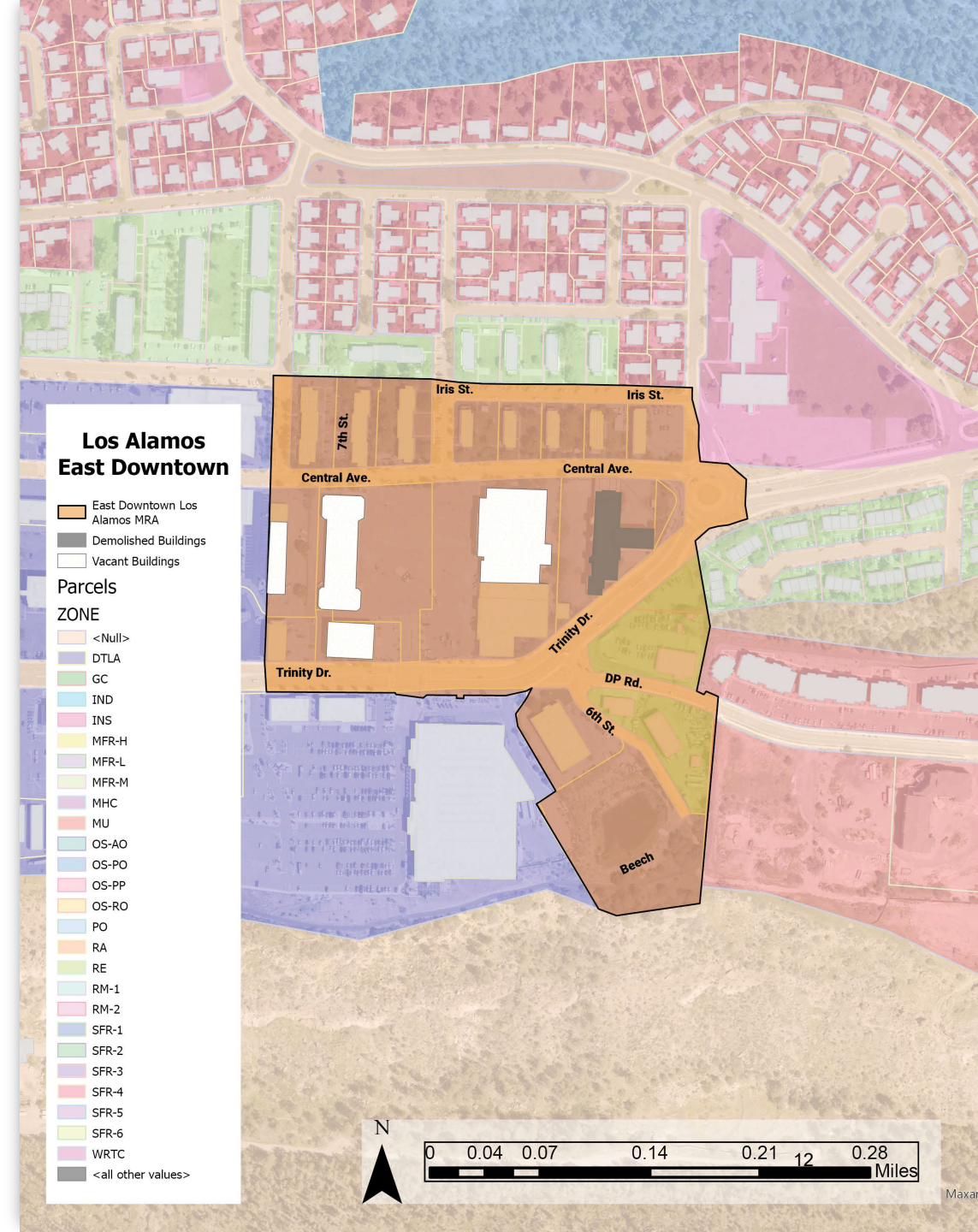
ATTACHMENT A



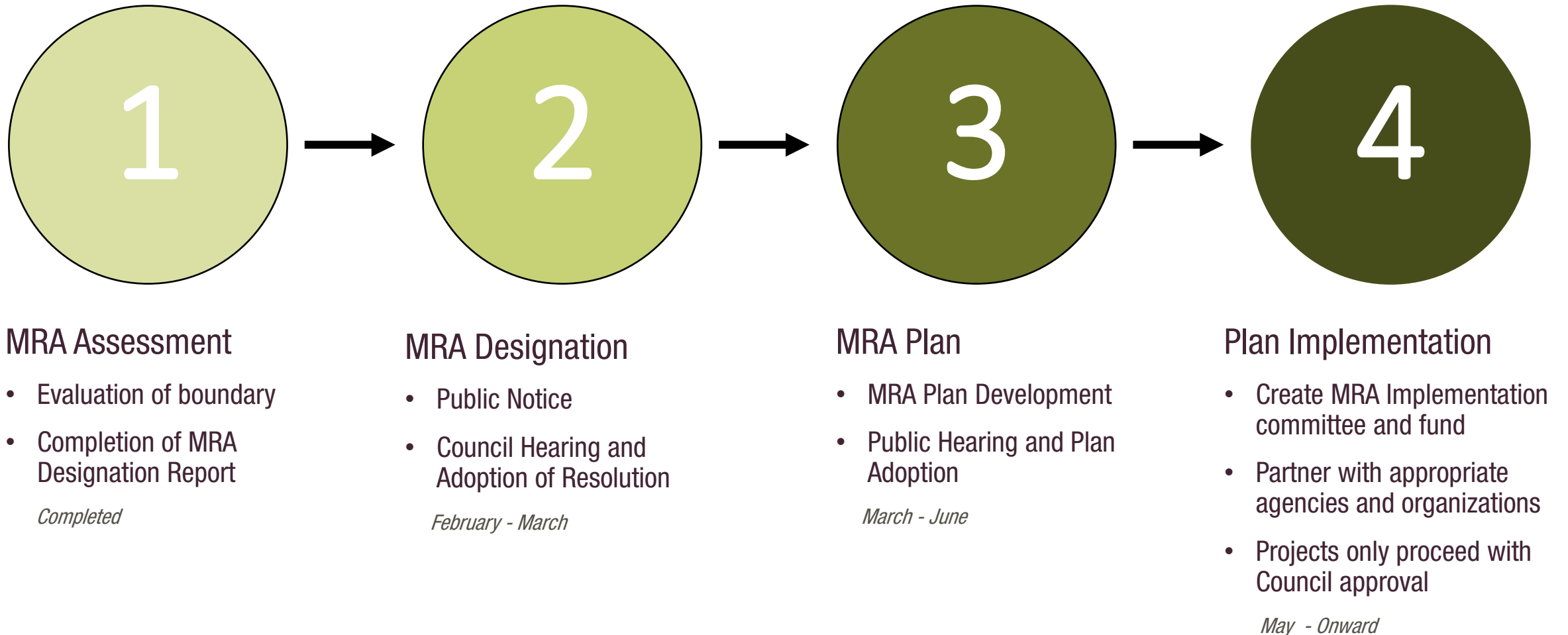
Boundary Justification

- Follows parcel lines (best practice)
- Gateway to Los Alamos
 - high impact location for investment of public resources
 - Roundabout welcomes visitors to Downtown
- Properties within boundary generally meet socioeconomic/physical conditions required by statute
 - Conditions of “blight”
 - Aged infrastructure
 - Low occupancy rates

ATTACHMENT A



Timeline



[illegible]

MRA Plan Toolkit

MRA Enabled Tools

MRA Board or Agency

MRA Fund

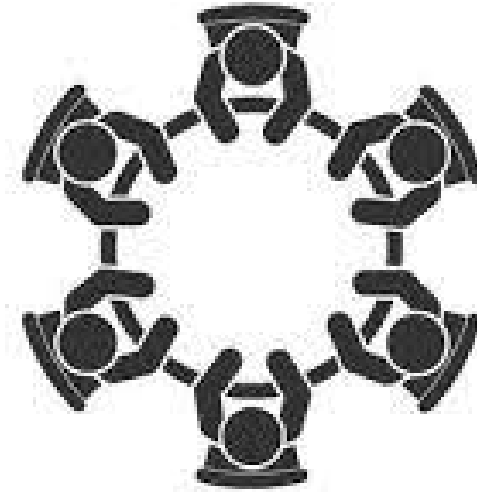
TIF District

Public Private Partnerships

Development Incentives

MRA Board

- The MRA Board is responsible for overseeing the implementation and funding of MRA Plan projects to ensure community benefit.
- The board is established by local ordinance and is often comprised of council members



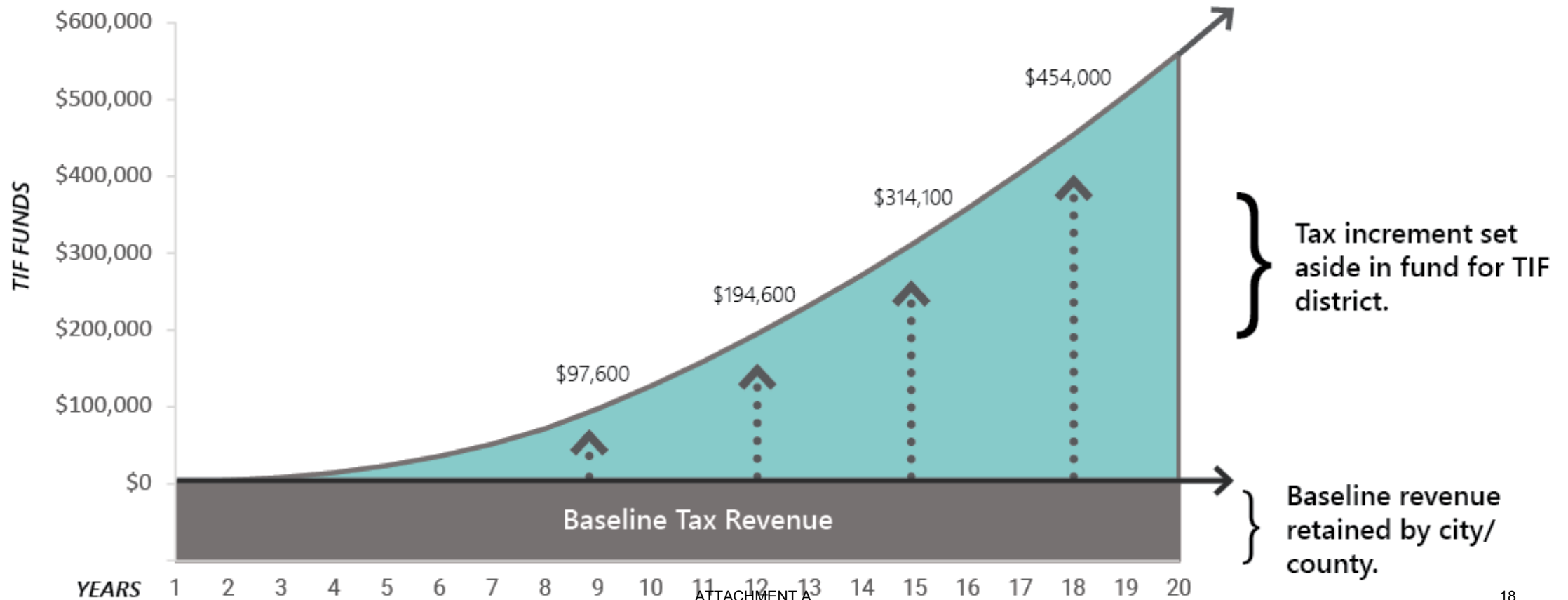
MRA Fund

- The fund sets aside money for MRA projects
- Overseen by the MRA Board



Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts

A funding tool which captures the incremental rise in property taxes and/or a percentage of the incremental increase in local or state Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) within the district (The inclusion of GRT is a recent change to the code (SB 251)). The collected funds can be used for MRA administration and projects.





Public Private Partnerships (P3s)

- A P3 is a cooperative agreement between the local government (Town, County, etc.) and one or more private sector entities. These partnerships enable the implementation of projects that are too costly or high risk for either sector to pursue on their own. The P3 process includes:
- Request for Proposal (RFP) – The local government creates an RFP to solicit developer interest and qualifications to enter a P3 for implementation of an MRA Plan project
- Community Benefit Matrix – The MRA Board or Ad hoc committee evaluates proposals using a community benefit matrix to ensure projects meet minimum community benefit requirements
- Development Agreements - Holds developers accountable for the use of public funding in their projects. Types include purchase, lease, and owner participation agreements. Claw back provisions are usually included.

Development Incentives

- The contribution of public resources to private redevelopment projects and business improvements without violating the NM anti-donation law, including but not limited to:
- Redevelopment tax abatement
- Storefront activation grants
- Expedited permitting
- Impact fee waivers
- Gap financing grants



MRA Plans in Action

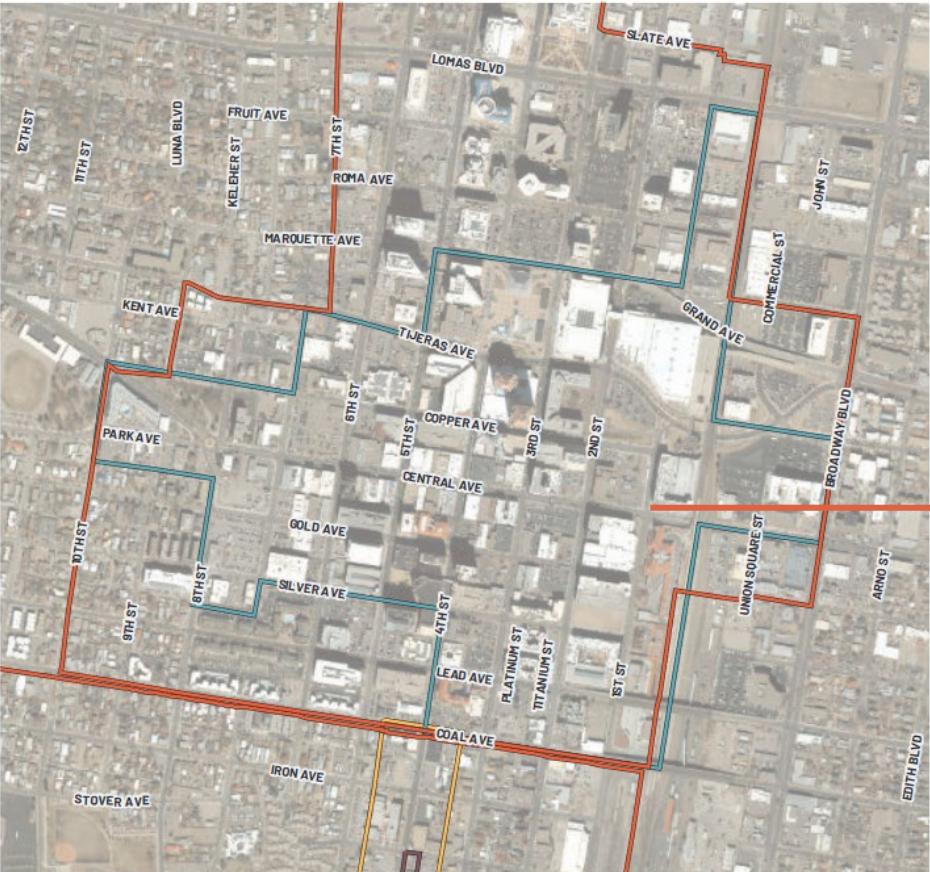
Albuquerque Downtown Arts and Cultural District



“The development of the theater blocks and a downtown grocery store laid the foundation necessary for a residential community in the city’s urban core. Residents are key to creating urban vitality that spurs economic growth.”

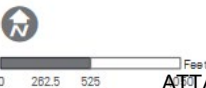
President, Downtown ABQ Mainstreet
David Silverman

ABQ DOWNTOWN ARTS AND CULTURAL DISTRICT



LOCATION: Albuquerque
BOUNDARY TYPE: ACD
ACRES: 170 (approx.)

- BOUNDARY TYPE
- Metropolitan Redevelopment Area
 - MainStreet District
 - Arts and Cultural District
 - Historic District



One of Albuquerque’s 22 Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas, the Downtown MRA contributed to the transformation of Albuquerque’s central core. With development partners including Romero Rose, Geltmore LLC, YES Housing, and others, the city has turned 5-city blocks into mixed-use development.

MRA Plans in Action

Lovington, NM

Beloved by the local community in Lovington and neighboring Hobbs, NM, the Drylands Brewing Company is a P3 success story.



Drylands Brewing Company | Lovington, NM

In 2017, Drylands Brewing Company opened a restaurant, tap house, and canning facility in the Lovington MainStreet District. The project was made possible through a P3 in the City's MRA. The City sold the 2 acre vacant lot to the brewery for the below market, fair value of \$100. In exchange, the developer built the brewpub and committed to creating 10 manufacturing jobs and 20 service jobs supported by the new brewing and canning operation.

This project was made possible with a partnership between the City, MainStreet, and the entrepreneurs (brewing company), as well as funding from New Mexico Resiliency Alliance and state/local LEDA funds.



White Rock MRA

- Development and implementation of the MRA toolkit for the Los Alamos Downtown East MRA, can coincide with development and implementation of the MRA toolkit in the already designated White Rock MRA.

WHITE ROCK CENTER MRA DESIGNATION

Existing Conditions Assessment - Updated 8/3/2020

 Proposed MRA Boundaries

0 150 300 600 Feet

Thank You

Check out the website: bit.ly/losalamosmra

Contact Amy Bell or Helen Ganahl with any follow-up questions or comments:

amy@groundworkstudiohm.com

helen@groundworkstudiohm.com