CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY SEVENTH COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. R-26-65 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Joaquín Baca, by request

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RESOLUTION

APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM A NEW MEXICO STATE TOURISM DEPARTMENT DESTINATION FORWARD GRANT AND PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2027.

WHEREAS, the City desires to promote redevelopment in areas designated as blighted so as to promote neighborhood stabilization and encourage visitation by providing housing, services, new jobs, upgrading area buildings, infrastructure and housing for such areas and to promote public health welfare, safety convenience and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, Sections 3-13 60A-1 through 3-60A-48, New Mexico Statutes Annotated, 1978 Compilation, as amended (the "Act"), the City is authorized to acquire, whether by construction, purchase, gift or lease, and to finance, sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of, projects as defined in the Act; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency (MRA) is committed to improving the economic conditions and physical infrastructure in designated areas; and

WHEREAS, Downtown wayfinding has been deemed to be a priority by both the city and partners. Banners and signage will help to improve neighborhood identity, ease of navigation. The wayfinding system is expected to attract more investment and visitors Downtown; and

WHEREAS, Visit Albuquerque and Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet Initiative are both supporting the City in the effort to fund and install better wayfinding; and

WHEREAS, on April 14, 2026, the MRA applied for a State of New Mexico Tourism Department Destination Forward grant for $242,880 to support installation of Downtown wayfinding; and

WHEREAS, on August 12, 2026, the MRA was notified that a partial award of $121,440 was granted; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albuquerque approves appropriation of these funds to MRA to help in the installation of Downtown wayfinding banners and signage.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE:

Section 1. That the Council hereby approved and authorizes the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency to accept the grant in the amount of $121,440 from the State of New Mexico. The submission and filing with appropriate official and/or office is in all respects approved.

Section 2. That upon approval, funds in the amount of $121,440 from the State of New Mexico are hereby appropriated to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency in the Capital Fund (305) for Fiscal Year 2027.

Section 3. That the following appropriations are hereby made to the Capital Program to the funds and projects as indicated below for Fiscal Year 2027:

Department Fund	Source	Amount
MRA/Fund 305		
Downtown Wayfinding	State of New Mexico	$121,440

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CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Office of the Mayor

Mayor Timothy M. Keller

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM 8/14/26

TO: Klarissa J. Peña, President, City Council

FROM: Timothy M. Keller, Mayor

SUBJECT: APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM A NEW MEXICO STATE TOURISM DEPARTMENT DESTINATION FORWARD GRANT AND PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2027

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency was awarded a grant of $121,440 from the State Tourism Department's Destination Forward grant competition. This grant will partially fund a new downtown wayfinding system, including signs, banners, and murals. An 8% match is required, which MRA will pay for out of General Obligation Bonds earmarked for the Downtown MR Area.

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APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM A NEW MEXICO STATE TOURISM DEPARTMENT DESTINATION FORWARD GRANT AND PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2027

Approved:

Samantha Sengel 8/28/26

Samantha Sengel, EdD Date
Chief Administrative Officer

Approved as to Legal Form:

DocuSigned by:
Lauren Keefe 8/25/2026 | 6:52 PM MDT
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Date
City Attorney

Recommended:

DocuSigned by:
Terry Brunner 8/19/2026 | 3:09 PM MDT
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Date
Director

Cover Analysis

1. What is it?

An award appropriate for a $121,440 grant from the New Mexico Tourism Department Destination Forward FY27 program.

2. What will this piece of legislation do?

This legislation will approve and appropriate the grant award to MRA's Capital (305) account.

3. Why is this project needed?

The award will partially fund a new downtown wayfinding system. This systems of signage and banners will help direct people to parking, lodging, dining, and other destinations around downtown. Better wayfinding will help make Downtown feel more welcoming and accessible, encouraging people to come Downtown more and to explore. This is the first stage of what the city hopes becomes a larger wayfinding effort around the city.

4. How much will it cost and what is the funding source?

The grant award is for $121,440 and MRA will provide an 8% match, which will be covered by General Obligation Bond Funds earmarked for the Downtown MR Area. The grant award is expected to cover the cost of banner printing and installation, You Are Here maps, and some directional signage. MRA is working with partners to secure the rest of the funding needed on the $264,000 estimated budget.

5. Is there a revenue source associated with this contract? If so, what level of income is projected?

No

6. What will happen if the project is not approved?

The City will continue to seek out alternative funding sources for this project.

7. Is this service already provided by another entity?

No

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FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

TITLE: APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS FROM A NEW MEXICO STATE TOURISM DEPARTMENT DESTINATION FORWARD GRANT AND PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY IN FISCAL YEAR 2027.

R: O:
FUND: 305
DEPT: DFAS

[X] No measurable fiscal impact is anticipated, i.e., no impact on fund balance over and above existing appropriations.

[ ] (If Applicable) The estimated fiscal impact (defined as impact over and above existing appropriations) of this legislation is as follows:

	Fiscal Years 2027	2028	2029	Total
Base Salary/Wages				-
Fringe Benefits at				-
Subtotal Personnel	-	-	-	-
Operating Expenses		-		-
Property		-	-	-
Indirect Costs	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
[ ] Estimated revenues not affected				
[x] Estimated revenue impact				
Revenue from program				0
Amount of Grant	$ 121,440		-	
City Cash Match	$ 9,715			
City In-kind Match	$ -			
City IDOH	$ -		-	-
Total Revenue	$ 131,155		$ -	$ -

These estimates do not include any adjustment for inflation.
* Range if not easily quantifiable.

Number of Positions created N/A

COMMENTS: The grant is for $121,440, with an 8% cash match covered out of MRA GO Bond funds earmarked for Downtown This award will allow the MRA to install a Downtown wayfinding system. The full amount of the grant will go to construction and will not affect MRA's operating budget.

COMMENTS ON NON-MONETARY IMPACTS TO COMMUNITY/CITY GOVERNMENT:

Better Downtown wayfinding will help the area to be more appealing and easier to navigate for residents and visitors alike. It will make attracting tourists easier and complements efforts underway by the Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet Initiative and Visit ABQ. MRA hopes to expand the wayfinding effort to other neighborhoods over time.

PREPARED BY:
DocuSigned by: Daphany Martin 8/19/2026 | 2:45 PM MDT
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FISCAL ANALYST

APPROVED:
DocuSigned by: Terry Brunner 8/19/2026 | 3:09 PM MDT
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DIRECTOR (date)

REVIEWED BY:
Signed by: Donna Sandoval 8/19/2026 | 4:44 PM MDT
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EXECUTIVE BUDGET ANALYST

Signed by: Donna Sandoval 8/20/2026 | 9:30 AM MDT
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BUDGET OFFICER (date)

Signed by: Christine Boerner 8/20/2026 | 9:35 AM MDT
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CITY ECONOMIST

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STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Tourism Department
Lamy Building
491 Old Santa Fe Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Phone: (505) 795-0343

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Howie Morales
Lt. Governor

Lancing Adams
Acting Cabinet Secretary

Dr. Shanna Sasser
Deputy Cabinet Secretary

8/12/2026
Jennifer Jackson
Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency
jjackson@cabq.gov

Dear Jennifer Jackson,

Thank you for applying for the FY27 cycle of the New Mexico Tourism Department's Destination Forward Grant Program (DFG). There were a record number of applications submitted this year and all displayed respectable levels of dedication and effort. The applications were reviewed individually by a panel to assess eligibility requirements, tourism impact and quality of application.

After careful review, we are pleased to inform you that **Downtown Albuquerque Wayfinding** has been selected for a Partial award of **$121,440.00 for FY27.** Grant funding timeline and amount(s) will be discussed after receipt of award acceptance in kick-off meeting.

Please confirm your acceptance of this award by signing and returning the acceptance page (page2) below via e-mail to Cassandra Porter, Tourism Development Coordinator, at Cassandra.Porter@td.nm.gov ***NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, 8/21/2026*****,** so that we may schedule a preliminary meeting.

Best,

Marisol Lucero
Marisol Lucero
Tourism Development Director
New Mexico Tourism Department

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Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency is pleased to accept this award for **Downtown Albuquerque Wayfinding** in the amount of **$121,440.00** for FY27.

Initial

Signed by:

BC2424C09B8741A...

Signature of authorized authority

8/13/2026 | 2:09 PM MDT

Date

Destination Forward 2027

https://newmexicotourismdepartment.submittable.com/submit

SECTION 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. **Legal Name of Entity**(required) City of Albuquerque

2**. Type of Eligible Entity**(required)

- County Government
- Local Government, including Political Subdivisions and Special Districts
- Municipality
- Tribal Government

3. **Primary Contact Name**(required)

First Name(required) Jennifer
Last Name(required) Jackson

Primary Contact Organization and Title/Role(required) Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency, Deputy Director

Primary Contact Address (required)

Country(required) USA
Address(required) PO Box 1293
City(required) Albuquerque
State, Province, or Region(required) NM
Zip or Postal Code(required) 87103

Primary Contact Email Address(required) jjackson@cabq.gov

Primary Contact Phone Number(required) 505-263-5376

4. **Financial Contact Name**(required)

First Name(required) Daphany
Last Name(required) Martin

Financial Contact Organization and Title/Role(required) Fiscal Officer

Financial Contact Address(required)

Country(required) USA
Address(required) PO Box 1293
City(required) Albuquerque
State, Province, or Region(required) NM
Zip or Postal Code(required) 87103

Financial Contact Email Address (required) dmartin@cabq.gov

Financial Contact Phone Number(required) 505-768-6070

5. **Signature Authority/Fiscal Agent Name**(required)

First Name(required) Terry
Last Name(required) Brunner

Signature Authority/Fiscal Agent Organization and Title/Role(required) Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency, Director

Signature Authority/Fiscal Agent Address(required)

Country(required) USA
Address(required) PO Box 1293
City(required) Albuquerque

State, Province, or Region(required) NM
Zip or Postal Code(required) 87103
Signature Authority/Fiscal Agent Email Address(required) terrybrunner@cabq.gov
Signature Authority/Fiscal Agent Phone Number(required) (505) 895-2142

6. **Please provide your entity's NM Business Tax ID Number**(required) 01-406793-005

7. **Please provide your Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN)**(required) 85-6000102

8. **Please provide proof of eligibility** (Recent W9s, W9 subs, etc.)

9. **Have you previously participated in any NMTD grant programs? If yes, please check which program(s) you have participated in below**. (required)

- Cooperative Marketing Grant Program
- Clean & Beautiful Grant Program
- Rural Pathway Grant Program
- Rural Pathway Incubator Program
- Tourism Event Growth & Sustainability Program (TEGS)
- NM True Certified Program
- Route 66 Centennial Grant Program
- I have not previously participated in any NMTD programs

Section 2: PROJECT CONCEPT AND PURPOSE

10. **Is your project on the State of New Mexico's Department of Finance & Administration's (DFA) Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan (ICIP) list?(**required)

- Yes
- No

If your project is not on the ICIP list, please explain why not here.

The City of Albuquerque submitted Downtown Wayfinding to the state for capital outlay, but it was not selected for funding in the most recent legislative session. (See https://www.cabq.gov/mayor/2026-legislative-priorities/cabq-full-capital-outlay-list, ID# 1790.)

While wayfinding itself is not on the ICIP list, this project will directly support a number of projects on the ICIP by improving how residents and visitors navigate to them. Better visibility and awareness is expected to help the viability and popularity of each of the following projects:

- Main library improvements (I2766, H2841)
- Performing art center construction (F2639, H2855)
- Wheels Museum and Rail Yards Improvements (J2822, J2821, I2801, I2847, F2668, H2865)
- BioPark renovations (J2712, H2801)
- 4th Street Great Blocks and Barelas Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Improvements (H3287, I4035, G3113)

It also relates to a project to improve signage along Route 66 (J4045) by concentrating navigational signage in the downtown area.

11**. What kind of tourism infrastructure project are you intending to fund? Please select all that apply.** (required)

- Development of outdoor recreation infrastructure (e.g. interpretation, trail development, connectivity, way finding, water recreation, etc.).
- Recreational improvements.
- Signage and way finding that align with community branding and marketing.
- Tourism-related parking and transportation (e.g. airport passenger enhancements, RV parking upgrades, etc.).
- Tourism Attraction Facilities (e.g. restroom facility upgrades, ADA accessibility, system upgrades and replacements, broadband, waste management, etc.).
- Dark Skies viewing area.
- (Re)Development of historic assets (e.g. museum, theater, public space, historic locomotive, industrial district, other cultural/historic assets and facilities.).
- Rehabilitation, maintenance, and conservation of cultural sites/Indigenous sites/archaeological sites for tourism purposes.
- Bike, pedestrian, and equestrian transportation and other related developments
- Camping and RV-related accommodation.
- Beautification and conservation for tourism purposes (e.g. sustainable park design and re-developments, sustainable landscaping, wildlife refuges and rewilding areas, conservation education centers/ information centers, etc.).
- Fairgrounds, convention centers/facilities, performance venues and other event spaces and venues.
- Public art.
- Agritourism farms, food trails, or other related facilities.
- Innovative (re)developments leveraging technology to showcase authentic NM culture (and nature if applicable) (e.g. kiosks, digital signage, etc.).
- Visitor Information Centers and their improvements.
- Other tourism-related infrastructure.

12. **Project Name**(required) Downtown Albuquerque Wayfinding

13. **Project Summary**(required)

Please provide as many project specifics as possible about what has been completed thus far. What is happening now and what will be done in the future with the project - How does your project stand out? What are the "needs" that will be met vs. the "wants"? What is the relative community impact over time?

Downtown Albuquerque has long struggled with inconsistent branding and inadequate wayfinding. Wayfinding is signage that helps residents and tourists navigate the resources an area has to offer. Currently, downtown lacks a cohesive wayfinding system, which creates barriers for residents and visitors alike. The lack of clear signage makes visiting downtown challenging—people unfamiliar with the area struggle to find parking, shops, restaurants, entertainment, and local landmarks. Visit Civic Plaza during any convention, and you will see visitors trying to figure out where to go and what to do. A recent MRA-commissioned parking study shows that people often will spend extra time circling downtown because they do not know where parking is located.

The proposed wayfinding system will divide downtown into five branded and color-coded districts, with routes designed to help people find parking and lodging quickly and encourage them to stay and explore businesses, restaurants, and cultural amenities. The system will strengthen brand awareness, highlight what makes each district unique, promote cultural tourism, enhance navigation safety, and facilitate better data sharing. Overall, the approach is intended to build strong neighborhood identities and help visitors and residents better understand and experience the character of downtown.

Wayfinding has been divided into three phases:

1. Branding and design;
2. Signage location; and
3. Printing and installing signs, street art, and other features to enhance navigation.

The first two phases have leaned heavily on community input, particularly from business and property owners in the downtown area. In Phase I, downtown stakeholders helped shape district boundaries and branding, resulting in a style guide that outlines logo usage, color palettes, and typography guidelines. In Phase II, which is currently ongoing, a landscape architect is conducting an existing conditions assessment to inventory current sign locations and create a base map highlighting Downtown Albuquerque's destinations, transportation infrastructure, and key entry and exit points. This assessment has involved reviewing relevant planning documents, including the City's own guidelines and engineering standards, and summarizing the findings and recommendations. A draft wayfinding plan will be posted on the MRA website for public input in late May, wherein stakeholders will be welcomed to weigh in on sign design and placement. Final deliverables will include print- and web-ready files in multiple formats and color variations. The sign placement plan will adhere to state and local guidelines for sign colors, size, and placement to ensure compatibility with existing infrastructure.

Phase III is the subject of this grant request. Following public input and finalization of sign design and placement, the installation of signs, banners, lighting and other elements will roll out, district-by-district, over the summer. The wayfinding system will include signage for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists; banners on light poles; colored lighting to function as gateways; and graffiti-style artwork on the street and on walls. The primary barrier to completing this phase is funding.

14. **Which Destination Forward Grant (DFG) Tier and Track do you wish to apply for?** (required)

- Tier I: Ready Projects
- Tier II: Growth Projects
- Tier III: Signature Projects

Reference the grant guidelines for additional information.

16. **Is your project "shovel" ready? Have you completed Tier 1 or similar and can you begin construction in the immediate future?**

- Yes
- No

Please provide evidence of your project's shovel-readiness (e.g. provide evidence of completing Tier 1 or similar - preliminary studies, reports and maps, letters of support/commitment/approval, lease agreements (if applicable), zoning, public easement, right of way and other legal compliance documents, etc.

17. **Does your region/city/town/etc. have an economic/comprehensive development plan and/or a destination development plan?**

- Yes
- No

How will your project incorporate into the plan?(required)
The Downtown Wayfinding system aligns with three planning documents: The city's Comprehensive Plan, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency's Downtown 2050 Plan, and the Visit Albuquerque 10-Year Destination Master Plan. Each of these documents points to the importance of placemaking, the pedestrian experience, and the importance of wayfinding in helping people to safely navigate through space.

Wayfinding ties into Visit Albuquerque's priority on Downtown Development. Helping people to navigate to parking, lodging, and landmarks will support activating downtown in a variety of ways by making it easier and more pleasant for people to find their way around. Further, it aligns with a priority on Destination Development and elevating existing products and experiences. By raising the profile of neighborhoods and amenities, wayfinding will help to elevate what is already there. For instance, Downtown has amenities to offer, but visitors, including the many that use the Convention Center and attend performances throughout the year, struggle to find them because of limited navigational supports.

Wayfinding is also a priority in the MRA's Downtown 2050 Plan, which puts a heavy emphasis on creating a wayfinding system and other placemaking efforts as a means of improving the visitor and resident experience downtown, and as a complement to larger and more ambitious redevelopment efforts. Finally, the city's update Comprehensive Plan also calls for easy-to-use wayfinding signs for downtown.

Please provide a copy of the economic/comprehensive and/or destination plan.
Select up to 3 files to attach. No files have been attached yet. You may add 3 more files.

18. **Identify the top three project needs to be addressed through this grant program**. (required)

1. Funding to fabricate and install a cohesive, district-wide wayfinding system
2. Improved visitor orientation to reduce confusion, increase safety, and enhance access to downtown businesses and amenities, especially important during the Route 66 Centennial
3. A unified navigation system to replace fragmented and inconsistent signage

19. **Please list and identify any and all key partners and stakeholders of the project and describe how they have been engaged thus far.** (required)
Include people and entities who have the ability to contribute to the project's success through financial or otherwise measurable investments; people and entities affected by project implementation.

To date, key partners have contributed significant time and expertise through stakeholder meetings, surveys, and design review. Moving forward, we also anticipate that some will support the project financially, either directly through funding sign fabrication, or through placemaking projects that enhance the wayfinding system and further create a sense of distinct neighborhood character. Below is a summary of key partners:

MAYOR KELLER AND CAO SENGEL have been closely involved in overall project direction, providing leadership-level support and ensuring alignment with broader City priorities. Their continued support has been critical in advancing the project through each phase.

CITY COUNCILOR JOAQUIN BACA has participated in stakeholder meetings and has been engaged throughout the planning process. He has expressed general support for the project and interest in identifying ways to support the project financially, within available resources, and has served as a critical liaison to the community.

DOWNTOWN ALBUQUERQUE MAINSTREET has been instrumental in business engagement across all five districts. MainStreet has led outreach efforts to ensure businesses are informed, has gathered and communicated feedback, and has helped incorporate stakeholder concerns into the design. MainStreet has also encouraged business owners to take ownership of district identity and has identified the wayfinding system as a top priority project.

VISIT ALBUQUERQUE has played a key role in shaping the visitor experience, including helping to define district boundaries and ensuring that proposed color schemes and iconography align with existing tourism branding. Their participation has ensured consistency with broader destination marketing efforts and has helped secure strong alignment with City leadership. Visit Albuquerque is also supporting the project financially and has committed to helping cover the cost of signage in the Convention Corridor district.

THE ALBUQUERQUE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION has supported community engagement efforts by providing resources for meetings and helping expand outreach through its networks, increasing awareness and participation across a broader cross-section of stakeholders.

THE GREATER ALBUQUERQUE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE has contributed an economic perspective, helping to review the project in terms of business impact and alignment with broader economic development goals, while also sharing information through its membership network.

LOCAL BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS have been central to every phase of the project. They have participated in surveys, stakeholder meetings, and design discussions, providing critical input on district boundaries, branding, and sign placement. Their ongoing involvement ensures that the system reflects the needs and character of the downtown community.

20. **Please provide evidence of community and any other stakeholder support, letters of support, MOUs, MOAs, etc**.
Select up to 12 files to attach.
Councilor Baca -Received
Downtown Mainstreet- Received
Visit ABQ- Received
The Groove- Received
Bill Keleher- Received

21. **Provide the physical location(s) for the project (exactly where the project is located) and all communities, regions, and other physical areas impacted. Is your project within legal compliance with local zoning (if applicable), protected areas and/or cultural heritage for your selected site?**(required)

The proposed wayfinding system will be located in the Downtown Albuquerque area, generally spanning from Lomas Blvd to the north and Coal Avenue SW to the south, and from the BSNF rail lines to the east and 10th Street SW to the west. The project boundaries are entirely contained within the commercial areas of the Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (https://www.cabq.gov/mra/redevelopment-areas/downtown-2025). The proposed wayfinding system is in legal compliance with existing zoning, and final sign locations will be determined in coordination with the City's Department of Municipal Development to ensure no conflicts with existing road and other signage.

21a. **If you have a map of the planned project location, please upload it here.**

22. **Describe any challenges that exist or may exist by using the locations specified above for the project (if applicable).**(required)
There are no anticipated challenges with locations. The project will be carried out in public right-of-way, with final location and placement determined in coordination with the Department of Municipal Development to ensure no conflict with existing road or other signage.

23. **Please describe how your project will ensure minimal disturbance to local biodiversity, culture, and community and/or how it plans to mitigate any disturbances.**(required)
The project is not expected to disturb local flora or fauna, nor will the installation of the signage disrupt communities. All installation locations will be previously-disturbed urban sites, typically on or near sidewalks and roadways. Wayfinding will incorporate historical and cultural landmarks. All components will be in commercial areas of downtown. The design has been created in collaboration with community members and in consideration of existing reports and plans. Local merchants, business owners, and property owners will be contacted in advance of installation to ensure that work occurs during minimally disruptive time-periods.

24. **Please feel free to upload additional documentation, e.g. any maps, zoning surveys, environmental studies, and other related plans and documents that convey the environmental and cultural sustainability of the project's proposed location**.
Select up to 10 files to attach.

25. Please feel free to provide any marketing materials, mock-ups, and the like that you may have already developed.

26. **This grant's main purpose is to fund tourism infrastructure, assets and experiences that help build resilient, vibrant communities and that align with the NM True Brand promise of "adventure steeped in culture." How do you plan to deliver on this brand promise through this project?** (required)
The Downtown Wayfinding System will support New Mexico True's "adventure steeped in culture" brand by guiding visitors through culturally distinct districts that highlight Albuquerque's history, arts, and Route 66 heritage. The project has sought to prioritize cultural respect and sensitivity at each stage by directly engaging with stakeholders who are rooted in the community. By making it easier to park and explore downtown on foot or by bike, the system will support elevating Downtown Albuquerque's assets and encourage people to discover downtown. The comprehensive vision ensures that the wayfinding system integrates with other navigation platforms, including the Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet business directory, the ABQ Art Walk map, and the new Visit Albuquerque travel planning app.

27. Describe how your project engaged community stakeholders and contributes to quality experiences for both visitors and residents.

Phase I of this project engaged more than 250 residents, business owners, and downtown stakeholders through surveys and district-level meetings, establishing a strong foundation of community-driven design. This early engagement has shaped district boundaries, branding, and sign concepts, ensuring that the system reflects local identity and the needs of tourist-serving businesses. The City has continued this collaborative approach with Visit ABQ and Downtown MainStreet to ensure that this wayfinding system meets the needs of tourist-serving businesses and services.

This work is especially timely given national trends. According to the International Downtown Association (IDA), visitation recovery in downtowns has plateaued, making renewed growth in the visitor economy essential as the daily worker population remains diminished. Downtowns across the country are leaning more heavily on tourism, cultural assets, and placemaking to drive economic activity. The IDA notes that placemaking is now a core economic development strategy, helping downtowns leverage their cultural and entertainment assets to attract visitors, support small businesses, and create a vibrant sense of place.

The wayfinding system is expected to generate measurable benefits for tourism-related businesses by navigating parking, transit services, lodging, dining, entertainment, restrooms, and other amenities. Helping visitors understand where amenities and services are located will help to drive business activity by capitalizing on major upcoming tourism opportunities, including the Route 66 Centennial and large-scale events hosted at the Convention Center and elsewhere downtown.

The system promotes health and well-being by encouraging walking, biking, and scooting within the five districts. Increased pedestrian activity improves perceptions of safety, supports active lifestyles, and contributes to a more vibrant street environment.

28. Describe the anticipated short-term and long-term benefits and potential impacts of your project on the destination's economy, culture, environment, and local community.

The system is expected to generate short-term benefits in the form of increased visitor satisfaction. The Downtown Wayfinding System will adopt a park-once and pedestrian-first approach. This will accomplish two things: it will encourage people to get out of their cars and walk, and it will help shift negative perceptions of downtown as dangerous. A lot of downtown's issues stem from the perception that it is unsafe. When places are not heavily frequented, it is easier to fixate on the negative aspects. Increasing visible pedestrian activity is one of the most effective ways to counter that perception. By reducing unnecessary vehicle circulation and promoting walking, scooting, and biking, the system also supports environmental sustainability through lower emissions and a more people-oriented street environment. When combined with ambitious projects to attract more people downtown (including the Rail Trail, redeveloping vacant lots, and attracting more conventions and events), the wayfinding system will help people to linger downtown and explore more of what the area has to offer.

Further, dividing Downtown into five distinct districts is expected to help businesses within each district develop a coherent identity, complete with a color scheme and style guide that each business can use to foster a strong sense of place and pride. Similar to the perceptions of safety, local businesses report a lack of pride in downtown. An investment in wayfinding is expected to help change that narrative by reinforcing district character, elevating cultural assets, and supporting a more vibrant and cohesive visitor experience.

The long-term benefits will come from making downtown a more appealing market for investments. The City has some marquee attractions planned and underway that will help to draw more visitors downtown, including the Rail Trail and Central Crossing—which will feature a two-story-tall neon tumbleweed mounted over Central Avenue. The MRA has established a Downtown Tax Increment Financing District, which is expected to help raise many millions for downtown redevelopment.

Wayfinding will also help the Convention Center as it seeks to attract more and larger conventions and events. The City has also been planning how to activate its underutilized empty downtown lots to bring more people downtown and to create more reasons to come downtown in the first place. Finally, investing in downtown placemaking, including wayfinding, can make attracting new visitors easier through creating a virtuous cycle wherein current visitors leave positive reviews of their experience, and encourage other people and events to come.

A strong sense of neighborhoods and clear navigation will help ensure that this investment is sustainable as downtown attracts more developments, and in turn more residents and visitors.

29. Has your community/proposed project location been affected by a natural disaster in the past five years?

- Yes
- No

SECTION 3: PROJECT GOAL ALIGNMENT

Please select the goal(s) and objectives you aim to address through your project. You do not have to address all goals and objectives, but the more you can address the more competitive your application will be. You must address at least one goal and at least one of its objectives.

If you select to complete Goal 5, you MUST also select at least one other goal and its objectives

Please explain how you will address these goals and objectives in the section provided below each goal checklist. Also provide any supporting evidence of your ability to address the goals and objectives you select.

30. **GOAL 1: INCREASE VISITATION** - Select Objectives for Goal 1 Below:

- 1.1 Increase sustainable visitation rates.
- 1.2 Increase repeat stays.
- 1.3 Increase extended stays.
- 1.4 Increase visitor spending at the destination.
- 1.5 Bring visitor experience or service to market readiness.

Please describe how you will meet the goal and objectives you've selected above for Goal 1: Increase Visitation.

The proposed Downtown Wayfinding System will improve the overall experience of being in downtown, which is expected to increase the likelihood of repeat stays and extended stays. Clear and intuitive navigation makes downtowns more pleasant to be in and to navigate around, which increases the chances of a visitor having an experience worth repeating. By guiding visitors to various attractions, accommodations, and amenities—and encouraging people to navigate within the five downtown districts— the system is expected to boost overall visitor spending at the destination.

The system will also encourage visitors to explore beyond a single block or venue. When people feel confident that they can find their way back to parking, lodging, or landmarks, they are more likely to wander, visit additional shops and restaurants, and stay longer. This supports sustainable visitation by spreading foot traffic across districts and strengthening the economic resilience of downtown businesses.

31**. GOAL 2: IMPROVE OR ENHANCE THE VISITOR AND RESIDENT EXPERIENCE** - Select Objectives for Goal 2 Below:

- 2.1 Increase positive reviews from tourists.
- 2.2 Increase positive reviews from residents and enhance the community's quality of life via tourism (re)development.
- 2.3 Increase accessibility for residents and tourists.
- 2.4 Provide visitor-oriented services that are open for use to the public and not limited to private membership.
- 2.5 Ensure resident support for tourism development through collaboration.
- 2.6 Ensure cultural respect and sensitivity in tourism development.
- 2.7 Ensure high quality diversity and authenticity of interpretation to tourists.
- 2.8 Support legacy opportunities, including the enhancement of existing tourism infrastructure or new construction e.g. visitor facilities and attractions.

Please describe how you will meet the goal and objectives you've selected above for Goal 2: Improve or Enhance the Visitor and Resident Experience.

Visit ABQ and Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet, both critical partners on the wayfinding effort, collect feedback from visitors, downtown businesses, and residents alike. It is expected that downtown wayfinding, through making downtown feel more walkable and accessible, will increase positive reviews across the board.

It is not just visitors who will benefit from downtown wayfinding, but also residents. Many Albuquerque residents visit downtown rarely, or not at all, and therefore do not know how to navigate it. It is expected for large events, like the Downtown Growers' Market or for downtown concerts, that the wayfinding system will help residents to navigate within their own city.

The branding of districts is expected to build pride of place for those who work or live in and near the districts—fostering a stronger sense of community and collaboration. A well-designed wayfinding system promotes cultural respect and sensitivity by guiding visitors to engage with authentic local experiences while maintaining the community's integrity. By helping people find businesses, cultural assets, and public spaces more easily, the system encourages exploration, supports local enterprises, and contributes to a more vibrant and welcoming downtown environment.

32. **GOAL 3: SPUR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CAPACITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS** - Select Objectives for Goal 3 Below:

- 3.1 Increase capacity building efforts in tourism development at the destination.
- 3.2 Create tourism-related jobs.
- 3.3 Diversify the local tourism economy.
- 3.4 Expand the creative economy.

Please describe how you will meet the goal and objectives you've selected above for Goal 3: Spur Economic Growth and Capacity Opportunities for Residents.

The Downtown Wayfinding System will spur economic growth by increasing visibility and accessibility for local businesses, directly contributing to higher customer traffic and visitor spending. By guiding visitors to restaurants, retail, entertainment venues, and cultural destinations, the system strengthens the connection between tourism activity and local economic benefit, and helps diversify the local tourism economy.

The project will also generate short-term economic activity through the fabrication, design, and installation of signage and public art elements, supporting local vendors and creatives. In the long term, organizing downtown into clearly-defined districts will strengthen business clustering, enhance neighborhood identity, and support ongoing capacity building for tourism-related enterprises. Clear navigation and stronger district branding make it easier for new businesses to open, for existing businesses to grow, and for residents to participate in a more vibrant and resilient tourism economy.

33. **GOAL 4: INCREASE NATIONAL AND GLOBAL RECOGNITION OF NEW MEXICO AS A SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION** - Select Objectives for Goal 4 Below:

- 4.1 Aid in destination recovery, emergency preparedness, and resiliency.
- 4.2 Diversify the wider, local economy.
- 4.3 Support a thriving tourism economy.
- 4.4 Increase the visitor experience and/or services within a community or region.
- 4.5 Foster sustainable tourism development that ensures a balance between economic, social, cultural, and environmental values.
- 4.6 Measure, monitor, and/or assess tourism impacts and risks at the destination level across economic, social, cultural, and environmental assets.
- 4.7 Increase the competitiveness of New Mexican visitor experiences and services as well as exposure of New Mexican communities as desired by the communities.
- 4.8 Spur private-sector investment in new and enhanced visitor experiences and services state-wide.
- 4.9 Create sustainable tourism jobs and economic activity in communities state-wide.

Please describe how you will meet the goal and objectives you've selected above for Goal 4: Increase National and Global Recognition of New Mexico as a Sustainable Tourism Destination

Wayfinding can play a key role in diversifying the local economy by enhancing the tourism experience and supporting the growth of a vibrant tourism industry. By improving signage, maps, and information points, the system increases visitor engagement and satisfaction—directly supporting a thriving tourism economy and strengthening Albuquerque's competitiveness as a destination. Clear and intuitive navigation helps visitors discover more businesses, cultural assets, and public spaces, which in turn incites visitors to explore beyond the downtown boundaries.

Thinking of wayfinding as an adaptive system also supports its long-term sustainability. The city can adapt and grow the network of banners and signs as new investments and attractions come downtown, and it can be expanded to add additional downtown neighborhoods overtime (for instance, the commercial areas of Barelas or East Downtown). By improving signage, maps, and information points, communities can increase visitor engagement and satisfaction, leading to greater economic benefits.

34. GOAL 5: INCREASE POSITIVE IMPACTS ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT WHILE DECREASING NEGATIVE IMPACTS - Select Objectives for Goal 5 Below:

- 5.1 Utilize green, ethically, responsibly, and sustainably sourced goods, materials, and labor for tourism (re)development.
- 5.2 Rehabilitate, restore, rewind, and/or revegetate any disturbed areas caused by the tourism infrastructure project with local, native species.
- 5.3 Ensure minimal disturbance to local, native wildlife, and flora/habitat in tourism (re)development.
- 5.4 Engage with local and Indigenous experts, as well as other relevant experts and community stakeholders in the safeguarding of local biodiversity throughout the project's development and management.

Please describe how you will meet the goal and objectives you've selected above for Goal 5: Increase Positive Impacts on the Local Environment While Decreasing Negative Impacts

The project is designed to minimize environmental impact by focusing entirely on previously developed urban areas, avoiding disturbance to natural habitats, wildlife, or native vegetation.

The wayfinding system promotes a “park-once” and pedestrian-first approach, encouraging visitors to walk, bike, or use alternative transportation methods. This can help reduce vehicle congestion, lower emissions, and support a more sustainable downtown environment.

Materials and fabrication methods will prioritize durability and long-term use to reduce waste and maintenance needs over time.

SECTION 4: PROJECT FUNDING, BUDGET & TIMELINE

35. **How much are you asking for this project?** (required)
$242,880

36. **What is the total estimated cost of the project?**
$264,000

37**. Please provide/upload a budget below. Provide a full, complete, and itemized budget for the project**. (required)
Select up to 5 files to attach

Are you able to meet the 5% match as specified in the guidelines and if relevant to the track to which you are applying? If not, please indicate if you will include/apply for a hardship waiver regarding the 5% match.(required)

- Yes, I am able to meet the 5% match
- No, I am not able to meet the 5% match and wish to apply for hardship and include a match waiver
- I am able to provide a match greater than 5%
- Not applicable - Tier IB Programming does not require a match

P**lease provide a Resolution of Sponsorship from a governing entity and/or a signed letter by the primary applicant and/or budget authority for the project indicating the 5% match or greater availability. If you are not able to meet the match and are applying for hardship** (match waiver).
Please upload a signed statement attesting to this circumstance.

38**. List all current project funding. Include the following: source, amount, purpose, and conditions of the funds, and any additional relevant information**. (required)

- Local, general obligation bond funds, $21,120

39. **Describe the projected timeline and milestones, as well as any estimated risks, impacts, and adjustments for the project in the short and long term. Please identify the project's current status within the timeline. If this application is for one phase of a larger project, provide the timeline for this phase and for the completion of the larger project**.

	A	B	C	D
	Milestones	Anticipated Risks	Anticipated Impacts	Stakeholders Involved
1	Phase 2 plan received from consultant	Delay in receipt of document will push back other timelines	If delayed, MRA will recalibrate other milestones.	MRA, Visit ABQ, MainStreet, Consultants
2	Phase 2 plans published for public comment	Public criticism; pushback on design or placement	Adjustments to the plan are made, but public involvement makes the final plan stronger	Business and property owners; industry groups; philanthropy; consultants
3	Phase 2 plans deemed complete	Public feels their feedback was inadequately incorporated	Minimal; public process has been well-documented	MRA, MainStreet, consultants
4	Funding secured	MRA fails to secure full funding for this project	Project fundraising moves to the district-level; and/or Council Services supports with capital set-aside	Business and property owners; industry groups; philanthropy
5	Groundbreaking celebrations for each of the five districts scheduled	Complications with scheduling celebrations due to elected official and business owner schedules	Rescheduled events	MRA, elected officials, other stakeholders
6	Grand opening celebrations for each of the five districts scheduled	Complications with scheduling celebrations due to elected official and business owner schedules	Rescheduled events	MRA, elected officials, other stakeholders
7	Contracts and purchase orders finalized	Delay in this step delays fabrication	Slowed-down timeline	MRA, city purchasing

8	Signs, banners, and murals ordered	Delay in this step delays installation	Slowed-down timeline	MRA, selected vendors
9	Signs, banners, and murals installed	Delay in this step delays completion	Slowed-down timeline	MRA, Department of Municipal Development, selected vendors
10	6-month post-survey	Public pushback to the wayfinding system	MRA adapts signage plan to improve experience	MRA, MainStreet, Visit ABQ
11	Reprint, relocation of some signs	It is expected that minor alterations will be made over time	MRA finds funding to make adaptations	MRA, Department of Municipal Development, selected vendors

40. Please use the text box below to explain your project's current status, as well as any other information you would like to share that is not illustrated in your timeline above. (required)
The project has been underway since early 2025. It commenced with stakeholder surveys and district-level meetings to determine appropriate district boundaries, district names, icons, and color schemes. This work established the foundation for a community-driven system.

The project has now progressed to Phase II, which involves sign design and placement. Draft plans will be released for public comment, after which final adjustments will be incorporated.

The grant request will fund Phase III, which will fully fund fabrication and installation of the wayfinding components. With design nearly complete and stakeholder engagement already conducted, the project is positioned to move immediately into production and installation upon receipt of funds.

41. **Please feel free to upload your own timeline for additional information related to the project's status and/or timeline.**
Select up to 5 files to attach.

SECTION 5: DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

42. **Describe any data you plan to collect as part of this project, including how it will be collected, managed, and stored.** (required)
With the support of partners, the City will collect survey data on the following: stakeholder feedback on the usability and utility of the wayfinding system and local businesses reporting on whether business increases post-installation. Feedback will be collected from the publication of the draft wayfinding plan (estimated in late May), and surveys will be disseminated to downtown contact lists six months post-installation. The city will use feedback to continue to refine the system to ensure that it meets people's needs. The data will primarily be collected through digital means, although paper options will be available for surveys. It will be collected by the city in coordination with Visit ABQ and Downtown Albuquerque MainStreet, and stored in a password-protected City file folder.

43. What metrics or indicators will you report to demonstrate the outcomes of this project?(required)

In coordination with community partners, Visit ABQ and Downtown Albuquerque Mainstreet, the MRA will report on user satisfaction with the new wayfinding system. MRA will make adjustments to the location of signage if users find that the system has gaps or is confusing.

44. How many jobs will be created through the project. Please list both temporary and full-time positions.

It is impossible to estimate full-time positions created by a new wayfinding system. However, it is anticipated that having a more pleasant, easier-to-navigate downtown will lead to economic investment and job creation indirectly by making downtown a more appealing business location. Further, making it easier to navigate downtown will support the downtown businesses that already exist. The fabrication and installation of signs will employ an estimated 6-12 people temporarily. Murals will employ additional artists.

45. Please upload any economic impact data that has been completed for the project.

46. Please provide any relevant supporting documentation you may have (e.g. photos, media, promotional strategies, support letters, MOUs, plans, blueprints, studies, surveys, case studies from other destinations you plan to implement, etc.).

Select up to 7 files to attach.

SECTION 6: DOCUMENT UPLOAD CHECKLIST

For your reference, please use the checklist below to ensure that you have uploaded all the required documentation in the specified fields in the application above for the Tier/Track you are applying for. Please refer to the grant guidelines as well as the document upload checklist on our website for more information.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

- Proof of eligibility (W9s, W9 subs, etc.).
- Proof of ICIP project.
- (Tier I Applicants Only) Evidence of your project's "shovel-worthiness" (e.g. quotes, signed contracts/agreements, signed letters of commitment/approval, preliminary maps, etc.).
- (Tier II and III Applicants Only) Evidence of completing Tier I or similar a.k.a "shovel-readiness" (e.g. preliminary studies, reports and maps, signed letters of commitment/approval, lease agreements (if applicable), zoning (if applicable), public easement, right of way and other legal compliance documents, etc.).
- Evidence of community and other relevant stakeholder support (e.g. signed letters of support).
  (Tier II and Tier III Applicants) A Resolution of Sponsorship from a governing entity and/or a signed letter by the primary applicant and/or budget authority for the project indicating the 5% match or greater availability. If you are not able to meet the match and are applying for hardship (match waiver) please upload a statement attesting to this effect.
  An itemized budget.

OPTIONAL UPLOADS - BUT HIGHLY ENCOURAGED

- A copy of the community's economic/comprehensive and/or destination development plan.

- Further documentation, e.g., any maps, zoning surveys, environmental studies, and other related plans and documents that convey the environmental and cultural sustainability of the project's proposed location.
- Any marketing materials, mock-ups, and the like that may have already been developed.
  Any economic impact estimates generated for the project.
  Any relevant supporting documentation you may have to address and support your specified goals and objectives above (e.g photos, media, promotional strategies, support letters, MOUs, plans, blueprints, studies, surveys, case studies from other destinations you plan to implement, etc.).

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

- Benchmark/SWOT analysis of your project or other, similar projects.
- Any additional photos, news stories, media, branding or marketing concepts of your project or of similar ones done elsewhere.
- A community socio-economic and socio-cultural management plan.
- A community environmental management plan.
- Any other relevant, local community business and action plans that are in effect or are in the process of being made.

DESTINATION FORWARD GRANT APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

If awarded funding, I agree to report on my project's progress and budget as outlined in the executed grant agreement to be completed upon award. I also agree to inform NMTD if budgets, milestones, and timelines change. I also agree to report any other adjustments and plan improvements made to the project to NMTD. I agree to provide data-driven reports regarding the positive and negative impacts the project incurs across the social, cultural, economic, and environmental assets of the site and wider community.(required)

First Name(required) Jennifer
Last Name Jackson
Email(required) jjackson@cabq.gov
Date Signed 4/14/26

Downtown Wayfinding System Budget, 2026

Item	Count	Unit Cost	Subtotal
Vehicular signs (Directional)	15	$1,500	$22,500
Pedestrian Waypoints (Directional)	25	$4,000	$100,000
You Are Here Signs (Large maps)	10	$3,500	$35,000
Lights (Colored LED, programmable)	5	$11,000	$55,000
Murals (Time and materials, branded elements and directional signage on streets and walls)	4	$5,500	$22,000
Banners (Mounted to existing poles and/or buildings with brackets)	57	$300	$17,100
Installation (Labor, truck rental)	1	$12,400	$12,400
		Total	**$264,000**
		Match (8%)	**$21,120**
		Request	**$242,880**

Budget amounts are estimates based on prior projects. They will be updated upon finalization of the location plans in late May