



Legislation Text

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CITY of ALBUQUERQUE
TWENTY FOURTH COUNCIL

COUNCIL BILL NO. O-20-6 ENACTMENT NO. _____

SPONSORED BY: Isaac Benton

ORDINANCE

Designating The Main Library Located At 501 Copper Avenue NW As A City Landmark (Benton)

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 3-22-3 NMSA 1978 of the Historic District and Landmark Act the City Council, the governing body of the City of Albuquerque, has the authority to adopt zoning districts designating certain areas as historical areas and to adopt and enforce regulations and restrictions within such district relating to the erection, alteration and destruction of those exterior features of buildings and other structures subject to public view from any public street, way or other public place; and

WHEREAS, the authority conferred by the Historic District and Landmark Act is consistent with the authority of the City Council to amend the Zone Map for the physical development of areas within the planning and platting jurisdiction of the City as authorized by Section 3-19-3, NMSA 1978, and by the City of Albuquerque's home rule powers; and
WHEREAS, the Integrated Development Ordinance Section 14-16-6-7(C)(3)(c) provides the criteria for the designation of a City Landmark; and

WHEREAS, the protection, reuse, and enhancement of significant historic buildings and districts is a goal of the 2017 Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the property owner consents to the designation of the property as a City of Albuquerque Landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Main Library has historic and cultural significance through its listing on the New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties and the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Commission, in its advisory role on historic preservation matters recommended City Council approval of the Landmark designation for the Main Library at their January 8th 2020 hearing.

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

SECTION 1. That the Main Library be designated a City of Albuquerque Landmark.

SECTION 2. FINDINGS ADOPTED. The City Council adopts the following Findings as recommended by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission:

(A) This is a request by the property owner to designate the property at 501 Copper Ave. NW, specifically described as Lots 16-37, Block B, Springer Addition as a City Landmark. The approximately 1.72 acre property is located on the north side of Copper Ave NW between 5th and 6th Streets NW.

(B) The subject site contains the Albuquerque Main Library, a 1970s Brutalist building designed by George Pearl in 1975.

(C) The City of Albuquerque is the owner of the property and initiated this application for landmark designation.

(D) Part 14-16-6-7(C) of the Integrated Development Ordinance of 2018 (IDO) provides procedures and criteria for evaluating the suitability of a property for landmark designation.

(E) The Main Library has historical and cultural significance and integrity, is suitable for preservation, and has educational significance. As detailed in the staff report, the Main Library is located in one of only two small concentrations of Brutalist buildings in New Mexico. It is a highly visible public building in the avant guard style that that was promoted, largely by university professors, in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. Brutalism embraced individual expression that addressed individual design programs rather than the uniform simplicity of the International style. The rarity of Brutalist buildings in New Mexico makes the strong massing and monumental forms of the Main Library all the more significant.

(F) The Main Library meets the criteria for designation of a city landmark in that it is listed on both the New Mexico Cultural Properties Register and the National Register of Historic Properties.

(G) The Main Library meets the criteria for designation of a city landmark in that it represents the work of George Clayton Pearl, a leader of the regionally-responsive design and historic preservation movement and one of Albuquerque's most prolific architects, whose individual work has influenced the development of the city.

(H) The Main Library meets the criteria for designation of a city landmark in that it embodies elements of Brutalist architecture as exemplified by a unification of structure and walls, brick construction, and its expression of the specific design program rather than repetitive design elements.

(I) The features of the Main Library that are significant and help to define the architectural character of the building include the use of a 9-ft square grid system on the ceiling that allows for temporary wall treatments to modify a main rectangular space.

(J) The architectural features of the coffered ceiling module consisting of lighting, air supply and return, and connections to electrical systems so that they may function independently if necessary.

(K) The architectural features of the stark, unadorned brick walls.

(L) The architectural feature of the main sign set at a 45-degree angle from the main entrance of the building towards the intersection of Copper Avenue and 5th Street. The sign is concrete and features a common Brutalist chiseling pattern. The sign reads: "ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC LIBRARY."

(M) The architectural features of lower level courtyards provide space for visitors to utilize outdoor space. These exterior spaces also serve as temporary refuge for visitors in case of an emergency; there are multiple points to exit the building from the lower level. Large windows encase this level of the library, providing light and views of the courtyard that make the space seem as though it is on the street level (rather than below).

(N) The architectural feature of dark, vertical pane windows in anodized frames.

(O) The federal Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation shall be incorporated into the specific development guidelines for the Main Library by reference.

SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY CLAUSE. If any section, paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this ordinance. The Council hereby declares that it

would have passed this ordinance and each section, paragraph, sentence, clause, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any provision being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

SECTION 4. OFFICIAL ZONING MAP. The City Planning Department shall update the Official Zoning Map to reflect the adopted City Landmark designation for the Main Library, located at 501 Copper Avenue NW.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect five days after publication by title and general summary.