

February 2013

North Mountain

Redevelopment Study Area Report



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Executive Summary

The Mayor and City Council initiated this report to analyze the current building, land use and area conditions for the North Mountain Redevelopment Area (NMRSA). The area is bounded by 19th Avenue and 15th Avenue on the east; Cholla Street, Sahuaro and Peoria Avenues on the north; 35th Avenue on the west; and Butler, Alice and the Arizona Canal on the south.

The primary purpose for the study is to evaluate conditions of the area and determine if the area is blighted and arresting sound municipal growth within the area.

The study is divided into six sections which describe the history and boundaries of the area, past planning and revitalization efforts in the city and throughout the city, demographic, land use and zoning background in addition to a physical survey of the existing conditions and statistical information.

The study identifies the following blight conditions that warrant designating the area as a redevelopment area:

- 1) Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout in some areas;
- 2) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness;
- 3) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- 4) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- 5) Improper or obsolete subdivision platting.
- 6) There are conditions that endanger life or property by fire, criminal activity and other causes.

This study recommends that the Mayor and Council make a finding that a predominance of the properties are impacted by one or more of the above blight conditions and that it should be declared a redevelopment area.



Home with trash in NMRSA



Vacant property in NMRSA



Abandoned property in NMRSA



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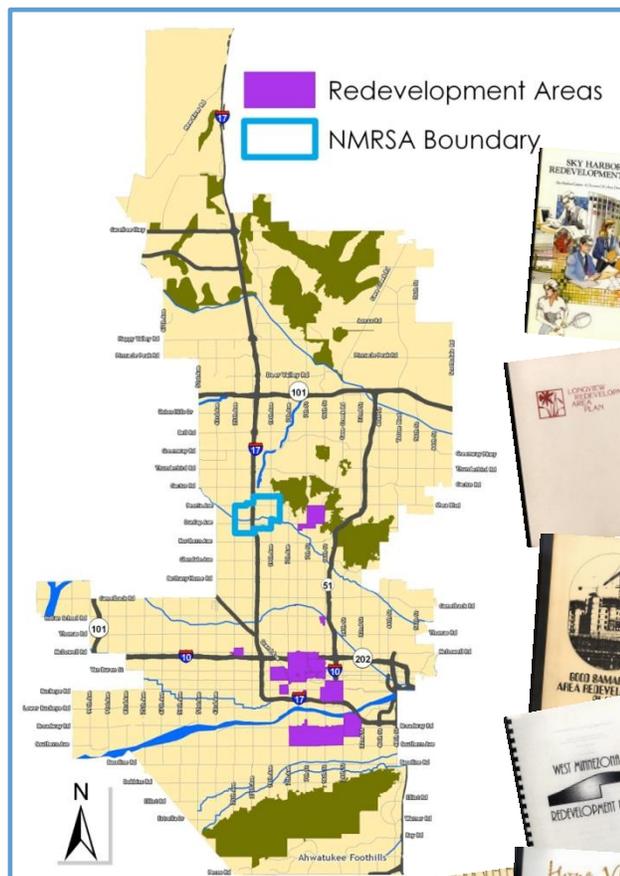


Redevelopment Area Overview

Deteriorated and blighted conditions - from abandoned or vacant properties to buildings with debris and graffiti - create a multitude of negative impacts on a neighborhood's quality of life. These conditions diminish property values within the entire area and compromise the health, safety and welfare of residents and businesses. Over the long-term, deterioration and blight contribute to the neighborhood's instability and results in a decrease in private investment and a loss in tax revenue that supports community services. The end result is a cycle of decline with long lasting impacts.

Stabilizing declining neighborhoods by reversing the spread of blight has been a long-standing goal for the city of Phoenix and its residents. As a means of accomplishing this goal the city of Phoenix has established and administered 18 Redevelopment Areas. Designation of neighborhoods as Redevelopment Areas provides the legal basis to enable the city of Phoenix to work with community stakeholders to help apply for various funding sources that are aimed at revitalizing the area. The map to the right illustrates the locations of the city's 18 Redevelopment Areas along with the NMRSA. A majority of the 18 Redevelopment Areas are located in the central and southern portions of the city.

While the city's Redevelopment Area program has been successful, several of the past redevelopment areas were designated to combat not only blight, but slum conditions as well. The existence of slum conditions, in addition to blight, requires a significant amount of resources to address and can take several years before any measurable progress is seen. The city of Phoenix is adopting the approach of establishing this Redevelopment Areas when blight is present and before slum conditions result. This new approach allows for a more lean and efficient revitalization effort to occur.



Redevelopment Area Requirements

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S. 36-1471 et. seq.) outlines several criteria that must be met for a municipality to make a finding that an area is blighted. This study provides a summary of key demographic data and documents blight within the NMRSA to substantiate designation of it as a redevelopment area. A.R.S. 36-1471 defines a blighted area as: “An area other than a slum area where sound municipal growth and the provision of housing accommodations is substantially retarded or arrested in a predominance of the properties by any of the following:

- a) A dominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
- b) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness;
- c) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- d) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- e) Diversity of Ownership;
- f) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- g) Defective or unusual conditions of title;
- h) Improper or obsolete subdivision platting
- i) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire and other causes. “

The purpose of this report is to evaluate if the NMRSA meets the statutory requirements to declare this area blighted and establish a redevelopment area pursuant A.R.S. 36-1471 et. seq. Once these findings are made by the Phoenix City Council, the City may assist residents, property owners and business groups to apply for grants and other funding mechanisms to help eliminate blight. The City will also prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the area. The plan will outline local objectives as to appropriate land uses, improved infrastructure, public transportation, and other items of concern based upon public input during the planning process.



Fence in disrepair in NMRSA



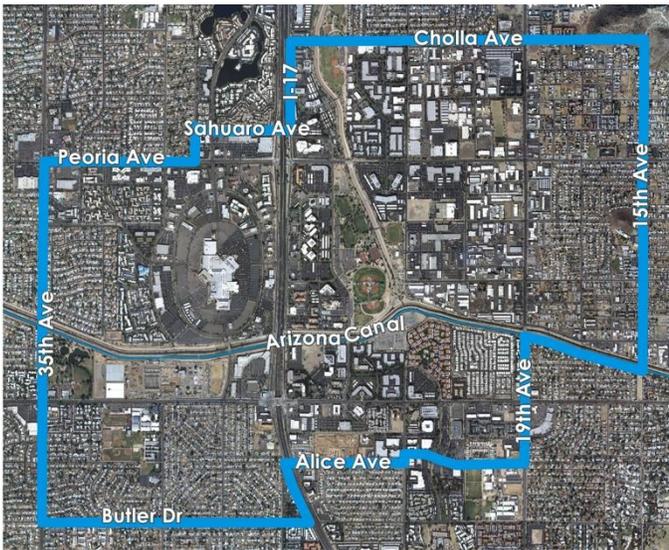
Substandard home addition in NMRSA



Boundaries and Context

The NMRSA is located approximately 10 miles northwest of Downtown Phoenix and is approximately 2,500 acres in size.

The boundaries for the study area are illustrated in the maps below and to the right. Major landmarks within the NMRSA include: the Rose Mofford Sports Complex; Metro Center Mall; and the Arizona Canal

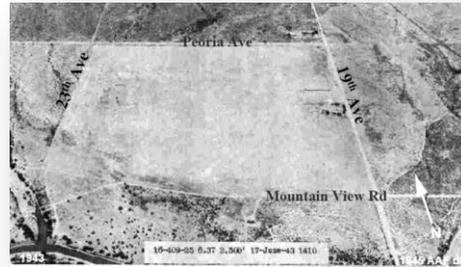


The southern portion of the NMRSA captures the Northwest Extension of the METRO light rail line which includes a light rail station at 19th and Dunlap avenues. At the time of this report construction of the line is ongoing and scheduled to be completed and operational in early 2016.



History

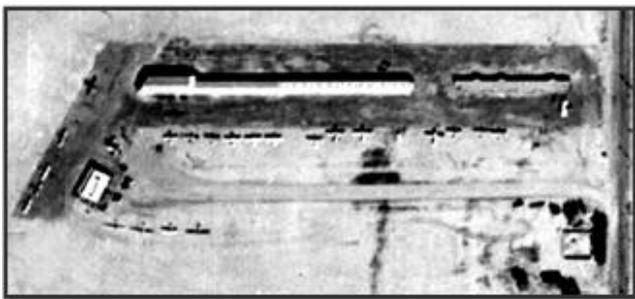
The NMRSA was part of the vast agricultural west valley – fertile land that benefited from the Arizona Canal. With the exception of canal right-of-way and the Cave Creek Wash flood zone, the bulk of its 4 square acres remained mostly agricultural until the late 1950's. There was one noticeable exception - between 1941 and 1942 the Army Air Force (AAF) built the Auxiliary Airport A-3 on a full quarter section (160 acres) as a support to Thunderbird Airfield and as a training facility for cadets. The earliest aerial photo of the site is an AAF image from June 17, 1943 and there wasn't much in the area.



Source: www.airfieldsdatabase.com

In 1948 the airfield was established as a civil airport and became the Paradise Airport. In fact, it could be seen from the air since the name of the airport was painted on top of the building. Although the airport had been in operation since 1942, it did not spur a lot of development in the NMRSA. The aerial photographs from 1949 show a few scattered homes between 19th and 15th avenues, from Peoria Avenue to the Arizona Canal.

In 1954, the first subdivision in the study area was platted at the corner of Butler Drive and 31st Avenue, as part of a large development called Alta Vista. However, most of the early industrial and commercial development settled east of the airport and south towards the canal. In fact, the homes built by the canal were quickly being replaced by commercial buildings. The aerial image from 1959 below shows the airport had grown to three unpaved runways and several hangars. Although quite a few aircraft can be seen on the airport's ground, that was the end of the road because just one year later the Paradise Airport closed.



Above: Paradise Airport, 1949. You can make out the name of the airport painted in white on the rooftop.

Left: Paradise Airport, 1959 just before it closed.



History

By 1962 the airport's 160 acres were empty, but two major employers settled in the area: Arizona Public Service on part of the airport site and the City of Phoenix at 29th Avenue for a waste water treatment plant. Otherwise, agricultural uses continued to exist to the west along the Interstate 17/Black Canyon Freeway and the Cave Creek Wash area until around 1969.

In November 1970, Westcor announced the concept for the Metrocenter Mall at I-17, and the first site plans and artist renderings were introduced in the spring of 1972. The mall opened for business in October 1973, as the first two-level, five-anchor mall in the U.S. It was the largest shopping center in Arizona.



1949 aerial photograph of the study area. Source: Flood Control District, Maricopa County

Significant Structures

Most of the study area's commercial development occurred during the late part of the Postwar Period, as defined in the report *Phoenix Commercial Architecture: 1945-1975*, prepared for the City of Phoenix by Ryden Architects, Inc. The document identified three properties as eligible for historic designation by the City of Phoenix, and all three are showcased as outstanding architectural examples in the book *MidCentury Marvels, Commercial Architecture of Phoenix 1945-1975*, produced by the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office.

APS Administration Building at 21 W. Cheryl Drive

Formalism emphasizes the massing of building and the visual relationships between the building's parts and the entire work. Local architects Guirey, Srnka and Arnold's approach incorporated the proportions, orientation and shading strategies of the building to take into consideration solar angles and the heat factor of Phoenix climate.



The architects created highly detailed pierced concrete screen panels that are suspended two feet away from the building's glass curtain walls (City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office, 2011).

Valley National Bank, 2950 W. Peoria Avenue

Tom Zimmerman created his own regional interpretation of Modern Architecture by incorporating the characteristics of the indigenous Hopi Pueblo and the rounded corners and massive solid walls reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright's Johnson Wax Building. This building demonstrates how primitive forms and Modernism often share the ability to strip away the superficial ornamentation to reveal the important essentials (City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office, 2011).



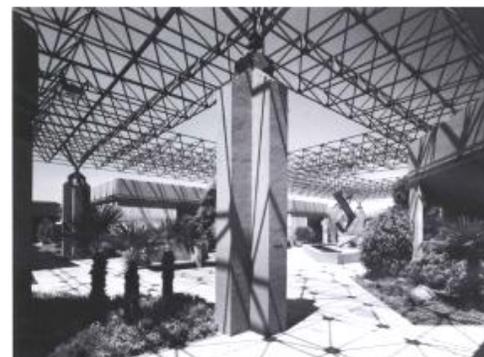
Western Savings Branch Bank, 10005 N. Metro Parkway E.

Designed by W. A. Sarmiento, this unique sculptural shape and organic form is a fine example of Expressionism, which was seldom built in Phoenix. The few that exist, however, are very dramatic. The design was probably inspired by the work of architect Oscar Niemeyer's famous round Cathedral of Brasilia. Not surprising since Sarmiento briefly worked as a junior drafter for the world-renowned architect (City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office, 2011)



Metro Medical Plaza, 3201 W. Peoria

Designed by the Associate Design Group, the four buildings wings originate from a central and four secondary courtyards which are covered by a floating frame that unifies the complex and responds to the desert climate (City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office 2011).



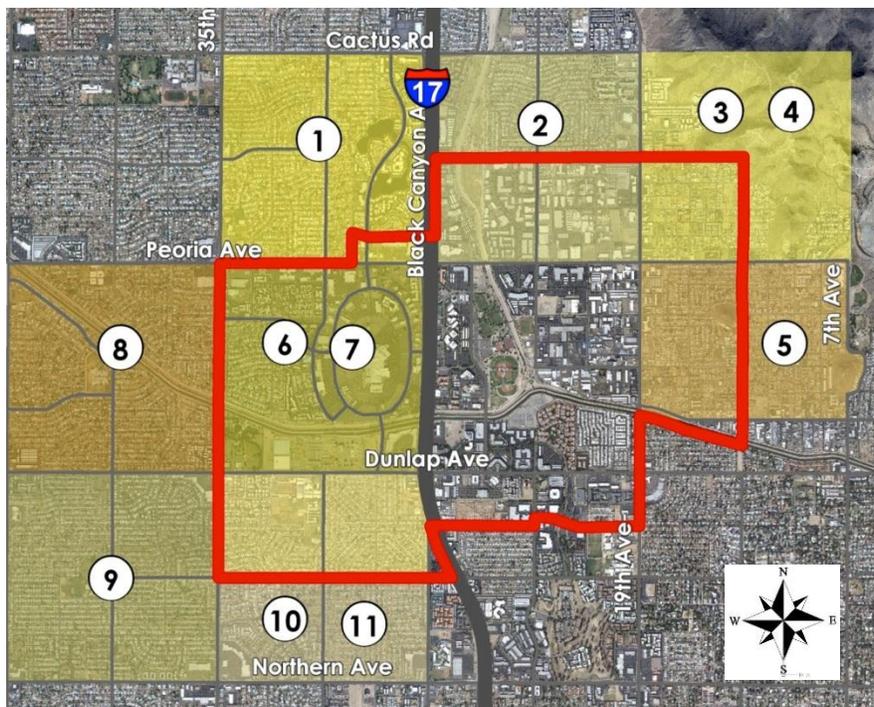
Past Planning and Revitalization Efforts

The neighborhoods and businesses within the NMRSA have been the target of many past revitalization and planning efforts. These efforts, which include a series of “Fightbacks”, the North Mountain Commercial and Industrial Study, and the Urban Land Institute’s Arizona Technical Panel, demonstrate a long standing commitment by the community to attempt to improve the area.

Fightbacks

From 1993 to 2008 the city of Phoenix administered the Neighborhood Fightback Program. The program designated neighborhoods for specialized city support for a limited time to assist with resident-driven neighborhood improvement efforts. During this time frame, eleven Fightback programs were established in and adjacent to the NMRSA. The table and map below provide a summary of the subject Fightbacks.

Fightback	Year	Map #
Fightback District 1	1993 - 1994	10
Shaw Butte	1996-1997	2
Cholla	1997-1998	1
Save Our Sunnyslope	1998-99	3
Save Our Sunnyslope II	2000-2001	4
Alta Vista	2001-2002	11
Mountain View	2002-2003	5
Manzanita	2003-2004	9
Dunlap Peoria Neighborhood Revitalization	2004-2005	8
Metro Center	2006-2007	6
Metro Center Neighborhood II	2007-2008	7

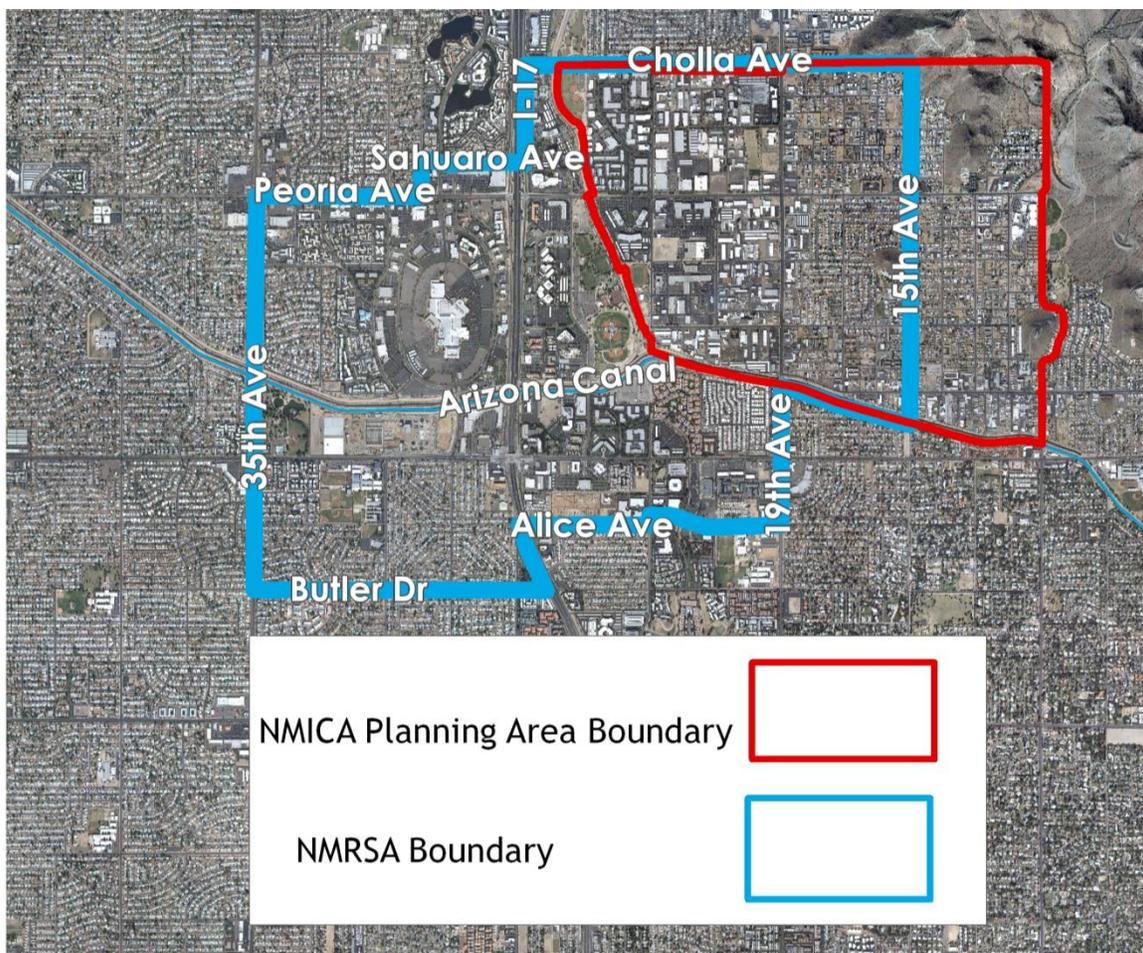


North Mountain Industrial and Commercial Area Study

In 2011, the North Mountain Industrial and Commercial Area (NMICA) Study was conducted to identify both assets and constraints that could assist the area’s businesses as they investigated the possibility of forming a business alliance. The catalyst for the study was two-fold: a group of businesses had organized to oppose a Zoning Adjustment Use Permit request; and the 50-acre Karsten PING facility’s plans to re-investment in its existing campus.

The study concluded with a set of recommendations, the primary one being that a business alliance for the area’s many businesses be formed. Participating members would benefit through on-going interaction, improved communication, pooling of advertising and marketing dollars, negotiating better prices for services and products, crime reduction, and improved visibility within the local community. Shortly thereafter, the North Mountain Business Alliance was formed.

The map below illustrates the NMICA study’s boundaries in context with the NMRSA’s boundaries.



Urban Land Institute (ULI) Arizona Technical Panel (AzTAP)

In the fall of 2009, the city of Phoenix, in coordination with the Urban Land Institute (ULI), hosted an AzTAP (Arizona Technical Assistance Panel) event to analyze the growth potential of the area around the Metrocenter Mall and the North Mountain Village Core. The AzTAP gathered prominent business owners, developers, design consultants and real estate for this endeavor. Although the panel focused on the Village Core, information regarding the larger area was studied and the panel toured the area as well, a small portion of which included this study area. (See map of area as Exhibit A). The panel looked at existing land uses, connectivity, light rail, Interstate 17 and existing strengths and weaknesses. Seven priorities were identified by the panel:

1. Locate a light rail station at or near the Metrocenter.
2. Enhance canal banks and improve connectivity.
3. Double the density of residential in multiple product types.
4. Fix Metrocenter Mall through visioning and master planning efforts.
5. Encourage the City of Phoenix to take a lead and coordinate with other entities.
6. Facilitate the creation of a trail system with a connection under Interstate 17 and over to the Phoenix Mountains Preserve.
7. Promote the area as a higher education destination.

Participants in the AzTAP believed that addressing these issues would strengthen existing businesses in the surrounding area and spur redevelopment of distressed properties.



Demographics

The information found in this section is based on data from the 2010 Census Block Group Scale Geography and the 2007-2011 Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Report. The study area is located within Census Tract-Block Groups 1036.15, 1042.05, 1044.01, 1044.02, 1045.01, 1045.02, 1055.01, 1055.02, 1056.01 and 1056.02. The Census boundaries do not match exactly those of the North Mountain Redevelopment Study Area, but approximate the area as closely as possible.

The total population is 26,002 people. The demographic information for the study area shows a relatively young population. The 18 to 34 years range is the most prevalent age group (33.6%) and the median age is 29.07. Only 6.4% of individuals living in the area are 65 years or older. This shows that the median age of the Study Area is lower when compared to the rest of the city of Phoenix. The median age for the entire city is 32.2 years old.

The analysis of the list of races in the study area shows that the majority of the people are White (57.6%). This percentage is lower than the city average of 65.9%. The percentages of Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and other minority populations in the Study Area (7.6%, 4.8%, 5.8%, 0.3%, and 19.5%, respectively) were higher than citywide percentages (6.5%, 2.2%, 3.2%, 0.2%, and 18.5%, respectively). The percentage of Persons of Two or More Races (4.2%) was higher than the citywide percentage (3.6%).

The percentage of Hispanic or Latino (of any race) Ethnicity (41.8%) and Not Hispanic or Latino (of any race) (58.2%) are almost the same as the citywide averages (40.8% and 59.2%). Those that identified with Not Hispanic or Latino (White Race), (38.7%) was lower than the citywide average percentage of 46.5%.

Between 2007 and 2011, the Study Area's average household income of \$32,647 was approximately 59.63% of the city average of \$54,745. Approximately 35.95% of the Study Area's households reported incomes below \$25,000. Approximately 25.3% of the Study Area's population was living below the poverty threshold. This percentage was higher than the city average of 15.9%.



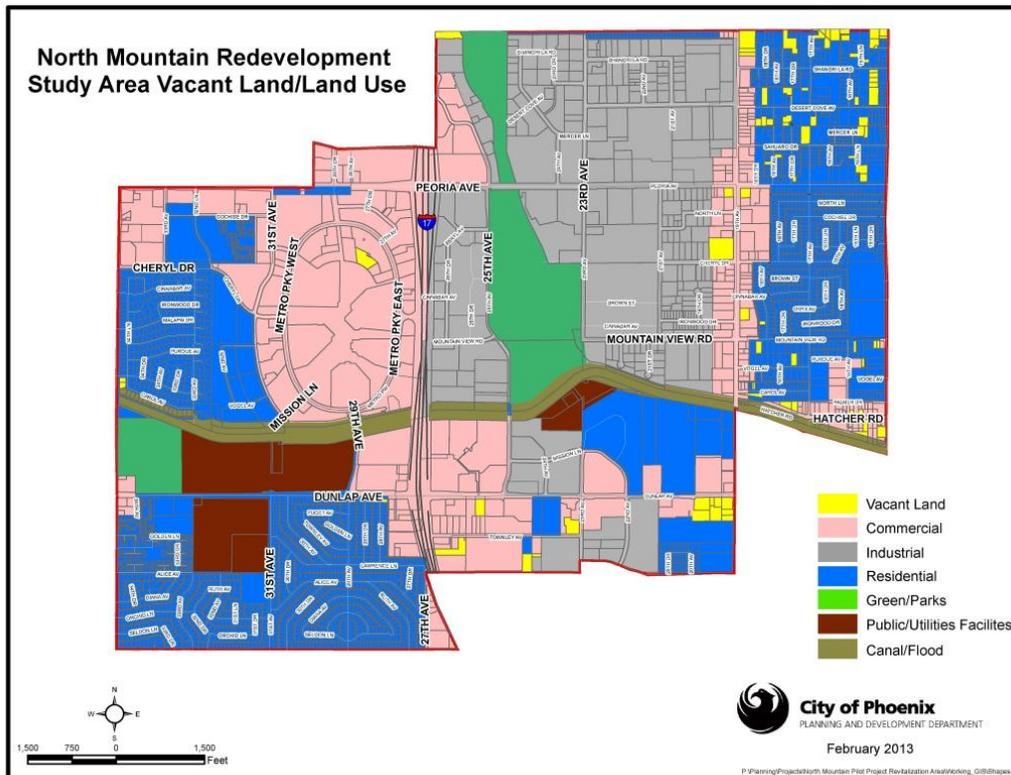
Land Use

Varying degrees of each of the three major land use categories (Residential, Industrial, Commercial) are found within the NMRSA as illustrated in the map below. There are subdivisions of single-family residences in the eastern, western and southwestern portions of the NMRSA. Multi-family residential uses are commonly found adjacent to the single-family residences. These multi-family uses act as a buffer between the single family homes and more intense uses, such as industrial and commercial.

The scale of the commercial uses greatly ranges from small corner store convenience markets to Metrocenter Mall. With the exception of the aforementioned residential land uses, commercial land uses are prevalent throughout the NMRSA.

Industrial uses also a strong presence in the NMRSA. Along the west side of 19th Avenue, starting north of the Arizona Canal and spreading north and west from that point to the northern boundary of the NMRSA, are a mix of both indoor and outdoor industrial uses.

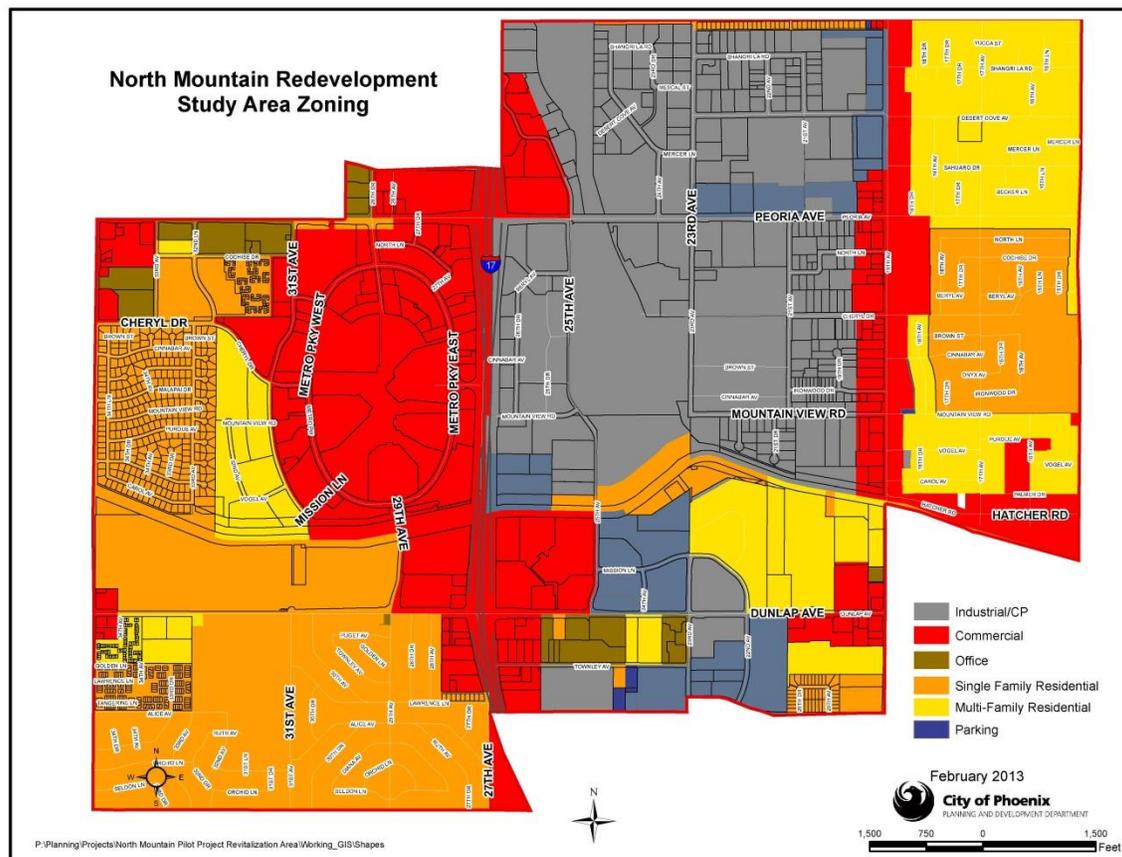
The Rose Mofford Sports Complex and Cave Creek Wash are located within the NMRSA. Both provide excellent recreational opportunities for individuals who work, live, or play in the NMRSA. Bisecting the NMRSA from west to east is the Arizona Canal. Along both sides of the canal is the Arizona Canal Trail. The trail is paved and is used by bicyclists and joggers.



Zoning

The area has a diverse mix of zoning. While Industrial / Commerce Park (30.68%) zoning cover the most land areas, Commercial (26.98%) and Single-Family Residential (27.19%) follow closely behind. The Industrial and Commerce Park zoning are concentrated west of Interstate 17 and north of the Arizona Canal. The Single-Family zoning is located in two pockets at the southwest and northeast corners of the NMRSA.

Zoning Category	Acreage	Percent of
Multi-Family Res	375.227	15.00%
Single-Family Res	680.306	27.19%
Commercial	675.077	26.98%
Industrial / CP	767.528	30.68%
Office	57.961	2.32%



Area Conditions

This section is comprised of three parts – a property condition survey conducted by the Neighborhood Services Department; a “windshield survey” and research done by the Planning and Development Department to evaluate other conditions to ascertain if the Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S) conditions for a Redevelopment Area exist; and a report of two other elements of the NMRSA – Vacant Property and Environmental Data.

Property Conditions Survey

A property condition survey was conducted on February 1, 2013, in the NMRSA by the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department. Properties were visually inspected for the following code violations:

- **Over height / dead vegetation:** Property owners are responsible for keeping their properties, and the adjacent rights of way, free of dead or dried vegetation (weeds, tall grass, tumbleweeds, shrubs, trees, palm fronds, etc.). All dead or dried vegetation must be removed and disposed of properly. Property owners are also responsible for assuring that grass and weeds on their property and in the adjacent rights of way do not exceed six inches in height.
- **Inoperable vehicles:** Inoperable vehicles must not be visible from beyond the bounds of the property. An inoperable vehicle is one that is not equipped with all parts that are required to legally and safely operate on public streets and/or cannot be driven under its own power. Car covers, tarps, bamboo, shades and other similar types of materials are not acceptable screening.
- **Trash / litter:** Property owners are responsible for keeping their property free of junk, litter and debris. This includes tires, junk, furniture, building and landscaping material; litter such as discarded paper, cardboard, plastics, etc.; debris such as tree trimmings and fallen tree limbs; or any other discarded items.
- **Outside storage:** Outside storage of personal property at residentially zoned properties is limited to the rear yard behind the primary structure only. Any building or landscape materials for use on the property, machinery, appliances or parts/auto parts may not be visible from beyond the boundaries of a residentially zoned property. Outdoor storage of items for commercial or business use at a residential property is not allowed. There are specific regulations that apply to outdoor storage and use on properties zoned for other than residential use that vary by zoning district.
- **Fences in disrepair:** Fences and screening walls must be structurally sound and made from the same materials. They also must be maintained so that they are free from deterioration and blight. Some examples include fences or walls that are leaning, missing slats or blocks, rotted or damaged.
- **Non-Dustproof Parking:** All parking and maneuvering areas must be dust proofed according to city specifications. Specific standards vary by zoning district.
- **Over 45% Parking:** Residents are permitted only to utilize a maximum of 45% of their front yards for vehicular parking.



- Graffiti:** The property owner is responsible for removing graffiti from all sidewalks, walls, fences, signs and other structures or surfaces visible from beyond the bounds of the property. The city can provide free paint and graffiti removal supplies, as well as assistance for those unable to physically remove graffiti themselves.

The survey found that of the 3,318 properties in the area, 1,231 (37%) parcels had one or more violations. A total of 1,696 violations were observed during the survey. The table below provides a summary of the top-ten violations for the area.

Violation	# of Violations	Percentage of Total # of Violations
Over height / dead vegetation	660	20%
Inoperable vehicles	40	1%
Trash / litter	272	8%
Outside storage	296	9%
Fences	67	2%
Non Dustproof parking	115	3%
Over 45% parking	23	0.7%
Graffiti	51	2%



Wall in disrepair in NMRSA



Dead vegetation at properties within NMRSA

A.R.S. Conditions Survey

Staff from the Planning and Development Department toured the area in January and February of 2013 to further evaluate overall area conditions that may be impeding sound municipal growth and arresting normal development efforts in the area. Staff found six of the nine indicators throughout the study area:

- 1) Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout in some areas;
- 2) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness;
- 3) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- 4) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- 5) Improper or obsolete subdivision platting.



- 6) There are conditions that endanger life or property by fire, criminal activity and other causes.

1) Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout in some areas

A defective or inadequate street layout impedes normal development efforts because of the significant costs to replace infrastructure. There are streets within the NMRSA that dead end into alleys and non-existing or inadequate cul-de-sacs for proper passenger or emergency vehicle ingress / egress. These factors, combined with the smaller lot sizes, make it economically inefficient for someone to redevelop a small parcel and face the financial burden of replacing inadequate street infrastructure.

The Metrocenter Mall ring road is a defective street layout for a regional shopping center. The concept of a central shopping district encircled by a drive aisle is a product of an automobile oriented era of design and development that makes it nearly impossible to redevelop in a manner consistent with market trends. Newer regional shopping center street layouts, like those found in Kierland Commons or the Scottsdale Quarter, utilize small block patterns and are focused around the pedestrian. Automobile traffic in these centers is largely contained in one area. The end result is a pedestrian friendly environment with the flexibility to incorporate a myriad of activities and stores.

The dominance of these defective and inadequate street layouts combined with the other blight factors are impeding sound municipal growth of this area as a continued employment hub and village core. It is also substantially arresting the provision of housing within the village core and existing residential areas.



Dead end street in NMRSA



Undedicated street Right-of-Way in NMRSA

2) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness

As highlighted in the Land Use and Zoning sections of this report, a large portion of the NMRSA east of the Interstate 17 freeway is defined by a variety of uses and A-1 Light Industrial zoning. The A-1 Light Industrial District is a district of industrial uses designed to serve the needs of the



community for industrial activity not offensive to nearby commercial and industrial uses. Manufacturing and storage are two of the most common uses found on properties zoned A-1.

In order to ensure that uses such as storage or manufacturing do not negatively impact any nearby commercial or residential properties, the A-1 District contains standards that require significant setbacks for open storage and uses. These setbacks are meant to encourage properties with A-1 zoning to be of a sufficient size so that they may be developed in accordance with the district's requirements. A-1 zoned properties smaller in size have challenges meeting the district's setback standards for industrial type uses, and as a result are not able to utilize the full breadth of their A-1 zoning entitlement. The map to the right highlights the existence of a cluster of these smaller A-1 properties within the NMRSA. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the parcels in this area are less than 0.5 acres in size.



This concentration of smaller industrially zoned properties could prove to be a significant hurdle for revitalization and redevelopment. Due to the small lot sizes and distance from residential uses or zoning, there are several less desirable uses permitted by right within the A-1 Zoning District. The uses include an adult bookstore, adult novelty store, adult theater, adult live entertainment, erotic dance or performance studio. In fact there are already three of these uses located within the NMRSA.

Without some type of mitigation the area's A-1 Industrial Zoning and distance from residential zoning makes it a potential destination for a set of uses that conflict with the community's short and long term goals for the area. The typical lot size in this cluster is inadequate to meet the required setbacks for outdoor storage uses as primarily intended by the A-1 Light Industrial zoning district.



A-1 Zoned property with narrow lot distribution



3) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions arise when a property is not maintained and falls into disrepair. This type of blighting experience can take many forms: from dilapidated structures, such as fences or buildings; to boarded up vacant buildings that are easily broken into and make people feel unsafe while in the area. It can also take the form of a lack of infrastructure such as sidewalks. There are numerous parcels within the NMRSA that demonstrate unsanitary conditions such as outdoor storage in the front yard of a residentially zoned parcel, dilapidated structures, and unsafe outdoor storage conditions within A-1 Industrial zoned properties. The photos below illustrate some of these conditions within the study area.



Boarded-up single-family home in NMRSA



Vacant property with electric fence and barbed wire

4) Deterioration of site or other improvements

Numerous parcels within NMRSA demonstrate characteristics of site deterioration. As stated in the historical write-up for the NMRSA, it first started to develop in the 1950's. The City of Phoenix did not annex this area until the 1960's and 1970's. Maricopa County did not have a building code until the 1970's, therefore a number of the structures that were built in prior years did not meet the city's existing building code. In addition to older residential and industrial structures there are a number of commercial sites that exhibit site deterioration factors such as little or no landscape, deteriorated parking lot pavement and dilapidated infrastructure. The photos below illustrate some of these conditions within the study area.



Vacant commercial site with no landscaping

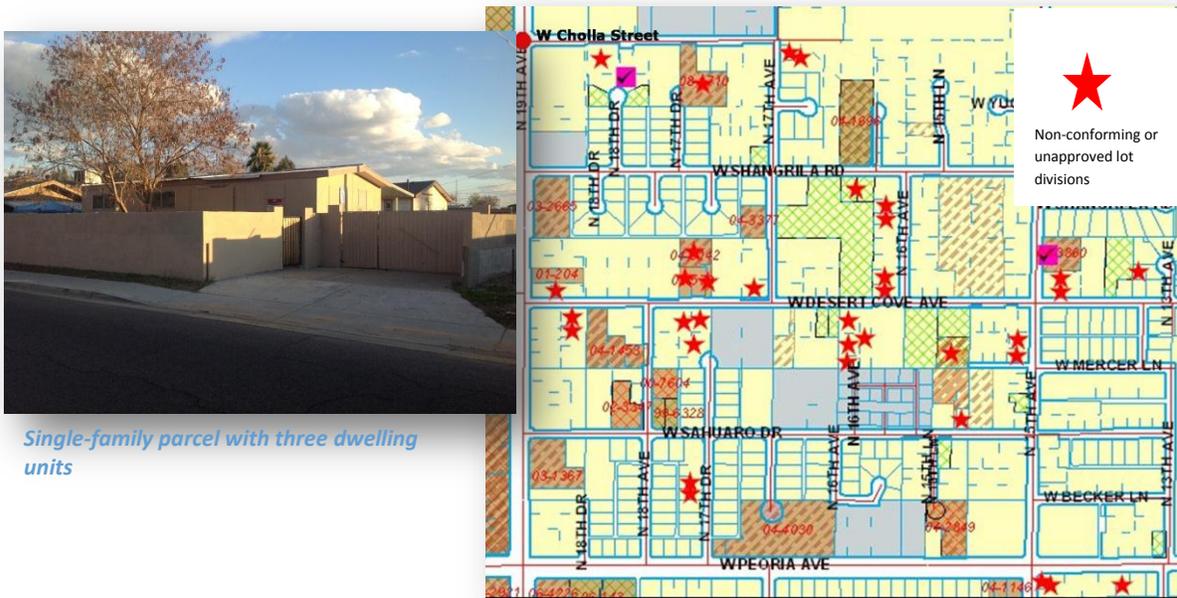


Residential property with apparent non-permitted construction



5) Improper or obsolete subdivision platting

The area between 19th Avenue, Cholla Street, the Phoenix Mountain Preserve boundary, 15th Avenue and the Arizona Canal has more unapproved lot divisions than the citywide average. Unapproved lot divisions are ones that have been recorded with Maricopa County but are not recognized by the City of Phoenix because they have not completed the review process to determine if they meet City lot division requirements or because they have not submitted a subdivision plat for review by the City of Phoenix. This data indicates that at least some of these parcels will have trouble meeting city development requirements and likely lead to development that does not meet city requirements because of the lack of subdivision platting or improper/obsolete subdivision platting in the area.



6) There are conditions that endanger life or property by fire, criminal activity and other causes.

The NMRSA has experienced a significantly higher rate of Fire Department investigation and violent crime when compared to the city as a whole. The information below provides a summary of this data.

Fire Statistics

The NMRSA is served by Fire Station #60 located at 2405 W. Townley Road and Fire Station #33 located at 2409 W. Cactus Road.

The following statistics represent the top ten types of fires within NMRSA from 2007 to 2012.



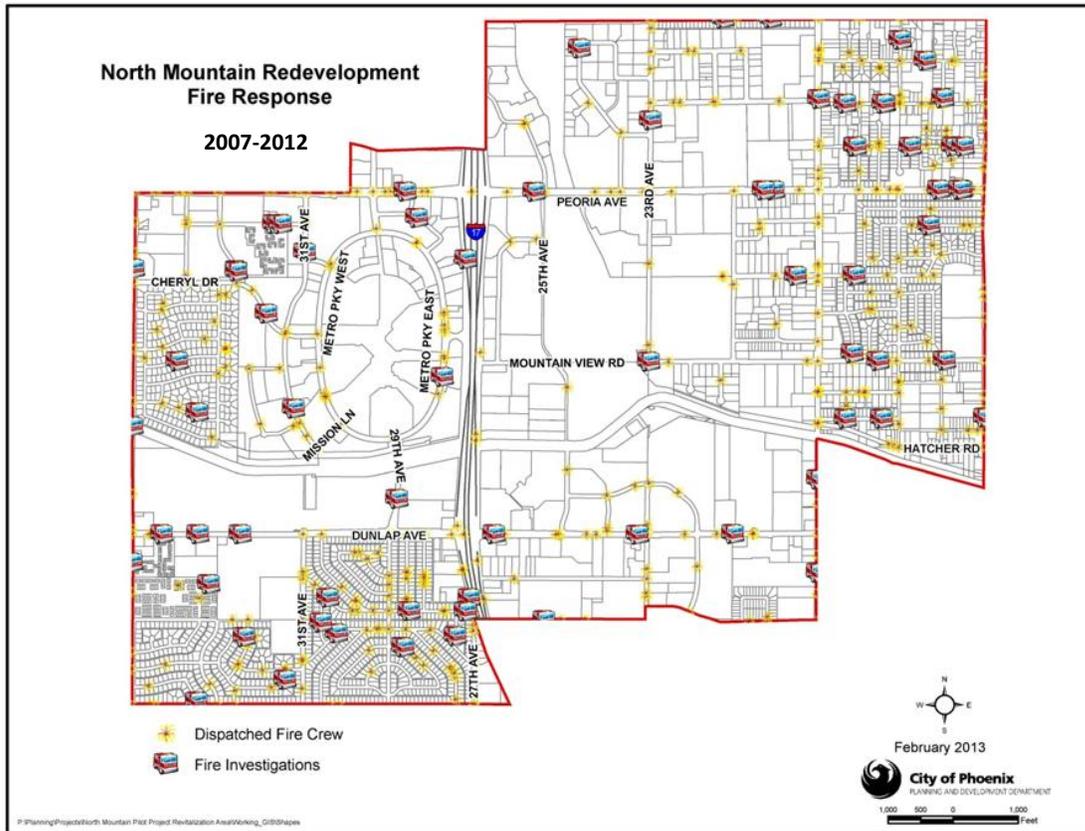
Type of Fire	Number of Fires
Alley Fire	32
Apartment Fire	58
Check Fire reported out	83
Check Smoke	56
Debris Fire	60
Dumpster Fire	173
Illegal Burning	44
Structure Fire	48
Unknown Fire	100
Vehicle Fire	155

The following matrix represents the number of fires and investigations per square mile from 2007 to 2012 located in the City of Phoenix and within the NMRSA. The numbers show that per square mile the NMRSA is consistently higher, in some cases double, in the percentage of fires and investigations than the city as a whole.

	Investigations	Fires	Square Miles	Investigations per square mile	Fires per square miles
2007					
City of Phoenix	850	19483	566.80	1.49	34.37
NMRSA	13	219	3.9	3.33	56.15
2008					
City of Phoenix	844	17656	567.27	1.48	31.13
North Mountain	19	201	3.9	4.87	51.53
2009					
City of Phoenix	730	16860	568.46	1.28	29.65
North Mountain	13	147	3.9	3.33	37.69
2010					
City of Phoenix	741	15847	568.49	1.30	27.87
North Mountain	12	149	3.9	3.07	38.20
2011					
City of Phoenix	815	16703	568.52	1.43	29.37
North Mountain	15	164	3.9	3.84	42.05
2012					
City of Phoenix	803	16510	568.5	1.41	29.04
North Mountain	13	154	3.9	3.33	39.48
2007-2012					
City of Phoenix	4783	103059	568.5	8.38	181.28
North Mountain	85	1034	3.9	21.79	265.12



The map below provides a geographic summary where the fire and fire investigations occurred within the study area.



Fire damaged apartment complex in NMRSA



Crime Statistics

Crime statistics in the NMRSA were gathered for the years of 2010 and 2011. Complete data for all of 2012 was not yet available to be broken down into an analysis by crime grid. The data indicates that there are more crimes per 1,000 persons within the NMRSA in several major categories such as aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, and theft.

The below tables provide a breakdown in key categories and clearly indicate that criminal activity, that is in some cases double the citywide average, is endangering life and property.

2010 CRIME STATISTICS				
	Number Reported		Per 1000 population	
	City-wide	NMRSA	City-wide	NMRSA
Aggravated Assault	4,113	114	2.85	4.65
Homicide	116	5	0.08	0.20
Rape	522	16	0.36	0.65
Robbery	3,250	132	2.25	5.38
All Violent Crimes	8,001	267	5.53	10.88
Arson	320	4	0.22	0.16
Burglary	15,626	345	10.81	14.06
Theft (Automobile)	7,777	353	5.38	14.39
Theft (Larceny)	38,012	1236	26.29	50.38
All Property Crimes	61,735	1938	42.70	78.99
City Population (2010 Census)		1,445,632		
NMRSA Population* (2010 Census)		24,535		
<i>**Population is different than reported elsewhere in this study because of slight variation in land area analyzed for crime statistics.</i>				
Source: City of Phoenix Police Department				

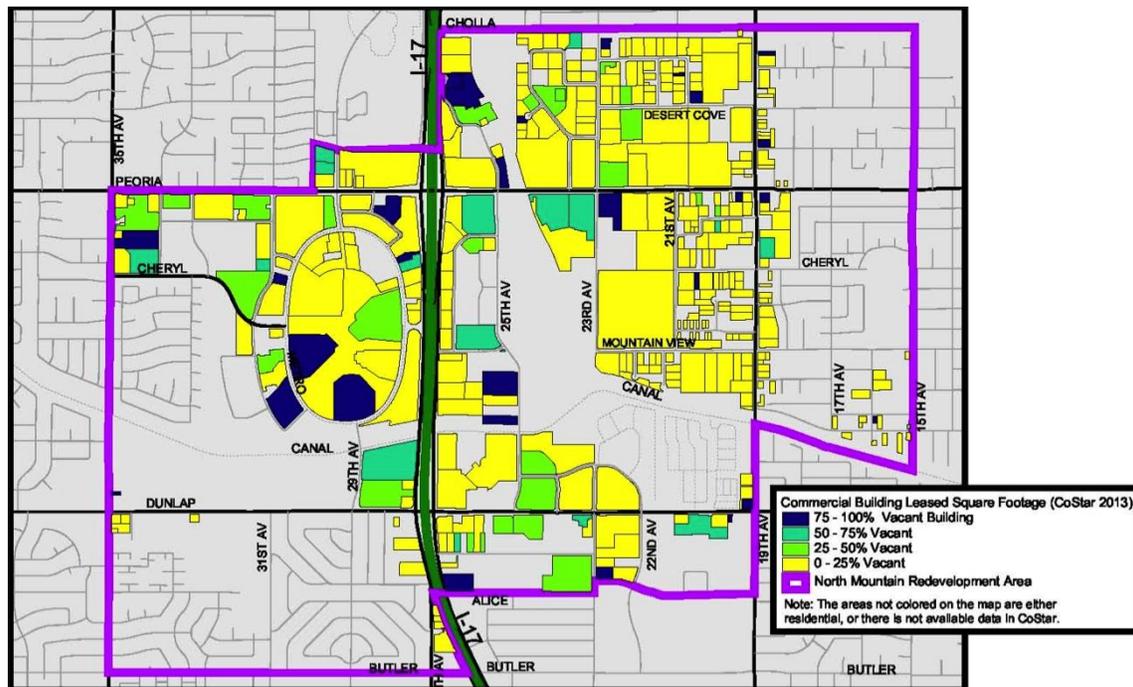


2011 CRIME STATISTICS				
	Number Reported		Per 1000 population	
	City-wide	NMRSA	City-wide	NMRSA
Aggravated Assault	4,090	112	2.83	4.56
Homicide	120	1	0.08	0.04
Rape	559	14	0.39	0.57
Robbery	3,324	121	2.30	4.93
All Violent Crimes	8,093	248	5.60	10.11
Arson	273	7	0.19	0.29
Burglary	18,666	453	12.91	18.46
Theft (Automobile)	7,555	327	5.23	13.33
Theft (Larceny)	38,258	1208	26.46	49.24
All Property Crimes	64,752	1995	44.79	81.31
City Population (2010 Census)		1,445,632		
NMRSA Population* (2010 Census)		24,535		
<i>**Population is different than reported elsewhere in this study because of slight variation in land area analyzed for crime statistics.</i>				
Source: City of Phoenix Police Department				



Vacant Buildings

The existence of vacant properties or buildings is one of the trademarks of a blighted area. The maps below illustrates the vacant commercial areas within the NMRSA. The Metrocenter Mall and commercial areas to the south and northwest of it are some of the areas with the highest vacancy percentages.



%Vacant Building Square Footage Map

The average retail vacancy rate for the NMRSA between Peoria Avenue and Dunlap Avenue and Interstate 17 and 35th Avenue is estimated to be at 28% as opposed to Citywide vacancies at approximately 11.8%, office 21.5% versus 19.4% citywide, industrial development 11.5% compared to 12.4% citywide. An example of declined retail is with the regional mall, Metrocenter. Major anchor tenants at the Metrocenter Mall have left and their spaces have remained unoccupied for 6-8 years (this includes the Broadway, and JC Penney). This has resulted in a drop in shoppers along with ancillary retailers within the mall creating an approximate 20% decline in overall sales in last 5 years. The table on the following page provides additional data regarding the vacant property in and around Metrocenter.



Metrocenter Vacant Surrounding Property (Dunlap to Peoria and I-17 to 33 rd Ave)				
	Name / Location	Vacant Sq. Ft.	Vacant %	Use
1	Metro Center Mall	545,573	42%	Retail
2	Metro Power Center	175,000	82%	Retail
3	10040 N. Metro Parkway Pad Bld	6,800	100%	Daycare
4	Metro Marketplace (formerly Toys R' Us)	160,000	65%	Retail
5	10011 N. Metro Parkway Pad Bld	3,500	100%	Retail
6	10047 N. Metro Parkway Pad Bld	7,000	100%	Restaurant
7	10057 N. Metro Parkway Pad Bld	5,500	100%	Retail
8	Mega Furniture Center	2,400	5%	Retail
9	Metro Village Pad Bld (formerly Swenson's)	4,200	100%	Restaurant
10	Metro Towne Center (currently Ross, Petsmart)	5,208	3.53%	Retail
11	Metro Plaza (formerly Shoe Pavilion)	40,000	50%	Retail
	Total Vacant Square Feet	955,181		

With loss of so many tenants, the Metrocenter area's infrastructure has suffered. Parking areas are in a deteriorated condition with inadequate/obsolete lighting. The Metrocenter area has an insufficient and obsolete signage (pylon, entry, directional, etc.) to adequately serve the area to be competitive in today's market. The vacancy rates are an indicator of lost revenues generated to the City for programs and services provided to the community. Vacancies attract and perpetuate blight and have significant impact to the community with properties in distress attracting crime.

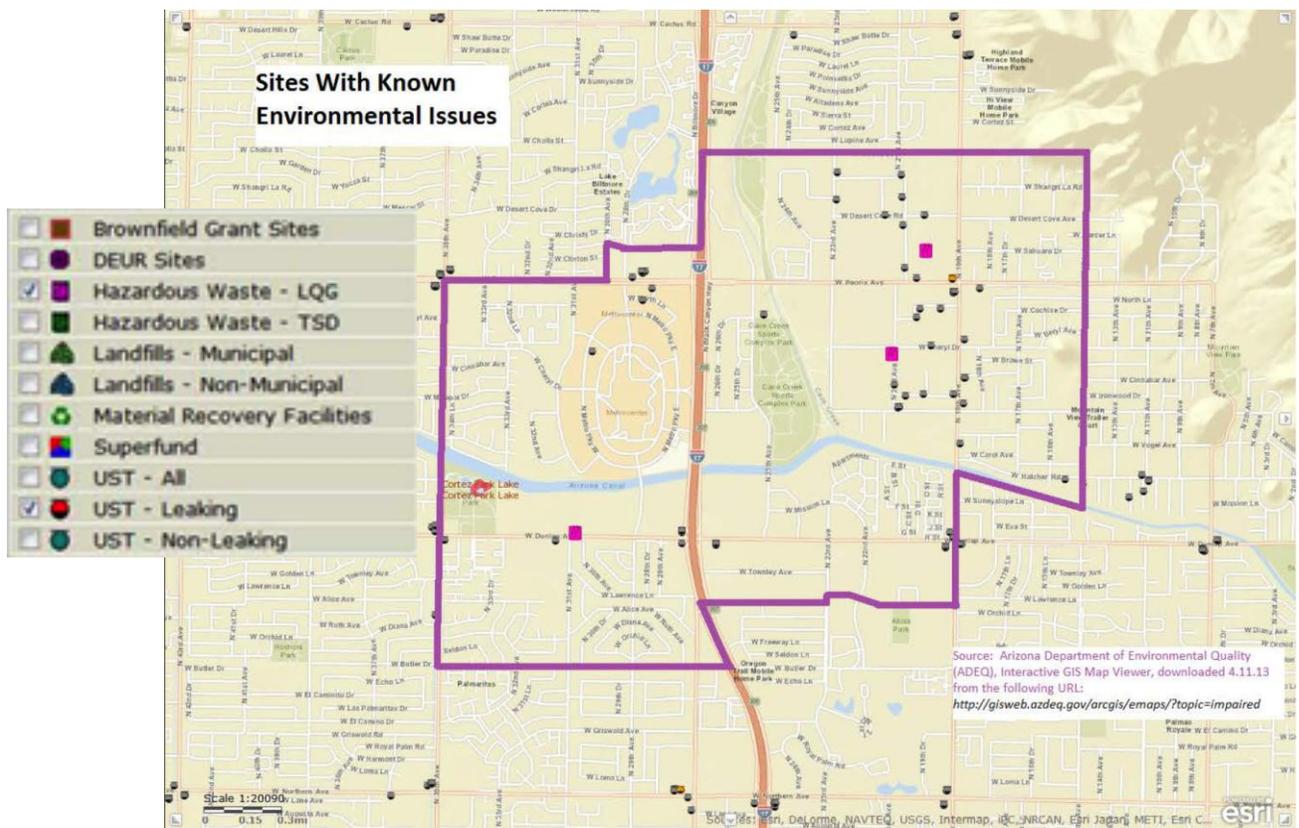


Environmental Data

There are some sites within the NMRSA that have identified environmental issues by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). The map below illustrates that there are 70 Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites (LUST) inside the study area. None of the LUST sites are considered priority 1 leaking sites, which are the groundwater contamination sites. A vast majority of the LUSTs are all considered Status 5, the lowest priority LUST sites - except for the 3 LUSTs colored yellow-orange on the NWC of Peoria & 19th Avenue - these three are all on one property and are considered Status 3. ADEQ considers the other 67 sites (Status 5) closed.

The map also indicates that there are three RCRA Large Quantity Generator (LQG) Sites. These sites were included only to note that the processing or storage of hazardous materials occurs on the property. The LGQ sites inclusion in this map is by no means any indication that there are any environmental violations associated with them.

At a minimum the existence of the LUST sites adds to the mix of challenges facing the redevelopment of property within the NMRSA. They are a contributing factor that is arresting redevelopment in some cases.



Analysis and Conclusion

The NMRSA exceeds the statutory requirements to designate it as a redevelopment area pursuant to A.R.S. 36-1471. Existing vacant land uses/buildings, inadequate or decaying infrastructure, substandard buildings, defective or inadequate street layouts, faulty lot layouts, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, and deterioration of site or other improvements are evident on the predominance of the properties within the area. An analysis of crime and fire statistics indicate the existence of conditions that endanger life or property because of the significantly increased crime and fire incident rates compared to the citywide averages. All or a combination of these factors afflict a predominance of the parcels and are substantially arresting sound municipal growth within the area. Please see map on the next page for image of areas.

Area 1 (35th Avenue to Interstate 17 and from Butler to Peoria/Sahuaro)

This area demonstrates a predominance of vacant office/retail buildings, defective or inadequate street layout, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, Neighborhood Services Department blight statistics and the existence of conditions that endanger life or property based upon calls for service from the Police and Fire Departments. A combination of these factors is arresting sound municipal growth and redevelopment within this sub-area.

Area 2 (Interstate 17 to 19th Avenue and from Cholla to Alice streets)

This area shows signs of stress with a predominance of the properties having vacant industrial buildings/land area, faulty lot layout, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, improper or obsolete subdivision platting and conditions that endanger life or property based upon calls for service from the Police and Fire Departments. A combination of these factors is arresting sound municipal growth and redevelopment within this sub-area.

Area 3 (19th to 15th Avenue from Arizona Canal to Cholla Street)

Properties in this area demonstrate a predominance of defective or inadequate street layouts, faulty lot layouts, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, deterioration of site or other improvements, improper or obsolete subdivision platting, Neighborhood Services Department blight statistics and conditions that endanger life or property based upon calls for service from the Police and Fire Departments. A combination of these factors is arresting sound municipal growth and redevelopment within this sub-area.



Conclusion

A predominance of the properties within the NMRSA are afflicted with one or more of the blight criteria as defined by A.R.S. 36-1471 and the City Council should find that one or more blighted areas exist in the NMRSA and redevelopment of the area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the residents. The City Council should also direct staff to work with the community on a redevelopment area plan for the NMRSA.

