



WEST

Redevelopment Area Study



Findings of Necessity

August 2017



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Findings of Necessity • August 2017

For more information contact:

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Visit the Website at www.MesaAZ.gov/RDA





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Findings of Necessity

Presented to:
City of Mesa, Arizona

Presented by:
Matrix Design Group

August 2017

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1. Executive Summary

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate a finding of necessity to determine the need for establishing a Redevelopment Area (RDA) per Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) §36-1471 et seq. This statute provides local governments the authority to designate RDAs to revitalize blighted areas within a city. Blight includes visual conditions, as well as non-visual conditions, such as platting, title issues, and crime. This report assesses and details the extent of blight within the proposed West Mesa Redevelopment Area (RDA).

A Finding of Necessity, as outlined in ARS §36-1473, is a required first step that a municipality must approve and adopt prior to establishing an RDA. Therefore, this information is provided as evidence to the Mesa City Council that the study area contains a predominance of blight.

Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1471 defines the meaning of “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 dominance of defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness; unsanitary or unsafe conditions; deterioration of site or other improvements; diversity of ownership; tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land; defective or unusual conditions of title; improper or obsolete subdivision platting; and the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire and other causes.

Each property within the proposed West Mesa RDA was visually assessed during an on-site field survey for the following blight factors:

- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions
- Deterioration of site or other improvements
- Conditions that endanger life or property
- Obsolete subdivision platting
- Inadequate street layout
- Faulty lot layout

This data was then validated through an aerial survey using a combination of the 2017 aerial imagery provided on the Maricopa County’s Assessor’s website and Google Maps. Other blight conditions that were also assessed were code compliance violations and incidents of crime from 2012 to 2016.

Conclusion

The following summary shows that a substantial number of blight conditions exist in the West Mesa RDA. There were 2,141 out of 3,794 parcels, or 56.4% that were identified to have at least one blight factor, as well as 80.5% of the total acreage was determined to be blighted. Conditions that endanger life or property (including crime) were the most common blight factor throughout the West Mesa RDA, representing 53.2% of the total land area. Other major blight factors include deterioration of site or other improvements (24.9% of the total land area), and improper or obsolete subdivision platting (24.0% of the total land area).

It is in the opinion of Matrix Design Group that the Mesa City Council could make a finding of blight in the West Mesa RDA study area. Establishing the West Mesa RDA is in the residents' interest of public health, safety, morals and welfare.



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2. Overview and Purpose

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2. Overview and Purpose

Introduction

In order to determine the need for redevelopment, it is important to understand how blight is defined, where it may be occurring, and what impact it has on the surrounding community. This section includes definitions of blight, as provided by the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS), as well as descriptions of the methodology used to assess and analyze blight conditions within the West Mesa RDA.

Arizona Revised Status §36-1471

Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) Title 36 provides local governments the authority to designate Redevelopment Areas (RDA) to revitalize blighted areas. RDAs are designated by a city council in locations that are in need of revitalization due to a predominance of blight. The relevant sections pertaining to blight are provided below in order of application.

A Finding of Necessity, as outlined in ARS §36-1473, is a required first step a municipality must approve and adopt prior to establishing an RDA. The report assesses and details the scope and extent of blight within a defined study area. This information is provided as evidence to a city council that the study area contains a predominance of blight.

Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1473 requires municipalities to conduct and adopt a Findings of Necessity study prior to creating an RDA. This ARS states:

- A. *A municipality shall not exercise any of the powers conferred on municipalities by this article until its local governing body adopts a resolution by a two-thirds vote finding both of the following:*
 - 1. *One or more slum or blighted areas exist in the municipality.*
 - 2. *The redevelopment of that area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the municipality.*

Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1471 defines the meaning of “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 dominance of defective or inadequate street layout; faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness; unsanitary or unsafe conditions; deterioration of site or other

improvements; diversity of ownership; tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land; defective or unusual conditions of title; improper or obsolete subdivision platting; and the existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire and other causes.

There are nine blight factors indicated by Arizona Revised Statute §36-1471. These factors are:

- **Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout** includes street layouts and roadways that are incapable or inadequate at handling traffic flow. Conditions include inaccessible parcels and / or confusing or unsafe traffic patterns.
- **Faulty lot layout** includes parcels that are either inadequate in size and / or shape, or properties that are inefficient in supporting appropriate use of land.
- **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions** includes environments that may be harmful to human health and safety. Conditions include uncontrolled solid waste, evidence of homelessness, excessive animal droppings, and storage of items with little or no economic value other than salvage.
- **Deterioration of site or other improvements** includes physical property conditions that detract from the overall appearance. Conditions include general deterioration from age and weathering, unmaintained property, and major repairs unattended.
- **Diversity of ownership** includes buildings that are split between two or more parcels with different property owners, making it difficult to redevelop structures.
- **Obsolete subdivision platting** includes areas that are poorly subdivided, making proper development difficult. Conditions include unproductive and / or inaccessible parcels.
- **Conditions that endanger life or property** includes properties that contain conditions that pose threats to life or properties by fire, contamination, or other causes. Conditions include vacant buildings, excessive junk, blocked entrances, code violations, structural damage, and higher than normal crime rates.
- **Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land*** includes any financial burdens linked to the property.
- **Defective or unusual conditions of title*** includes any conditions granted in a title that may make the property unmarketable or difficult to redevelop.

Seven of these nine blight factors were used to assess blight in the West Mesa RDA. The "*" indicates the two blight factors that were not assessed. As documented later in this report, conditions exist for the Mesa City Council to make a finding of blight in the West Mesa RDA Study Area without a review of the two blight factors referenced above.

Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1472 grants a local government the authority to declare a redevelopment area due to the predominance of blight based on five existing conditions. This ARS states:

1. *That there exist in municipalities of the state slum or blighted areas which constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious and inimical to the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the residents of the state.*
2. *That the existence of these areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, necessitating excessive and disproportionate expenditures of public funds for the preservation of the public health and safety, for crime prevention, correction, prosecution, punishment and the treatment of juvenile delinquency and for the maintenance of adequate police, fire and accident protection and other public services and facilities, constitutes an economic and social liability, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of municipalities and retards the provision of housing accommodations.*
3. *That this menace is beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids provided by this article.*
4. *That the acquisition of property for the purpose of eliminating the conditions or preventing recurrence of these conditions in the area, the removal of structures and improvement of sites, the disposition of the property for redevelopment and any assistance which may be given by any public body in connection with these activities are public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and the power of eminent domain exercised.*
5. *That the necessity in the public interest for the provisions of this article is declared as a matter of legislative determination.*

Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1474 grants a local government the authority to undergo redevelopment planning. This ARS states:

- A. *Every municipality shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this article, including the following powers in addition to others granted by this article:*
 1. *To prepare or cause to be prepared redevelopment plans and to undertake and carry out redevelopment projects within its area of operation.*

City of Mesa City Code Title 8 Chapter 6

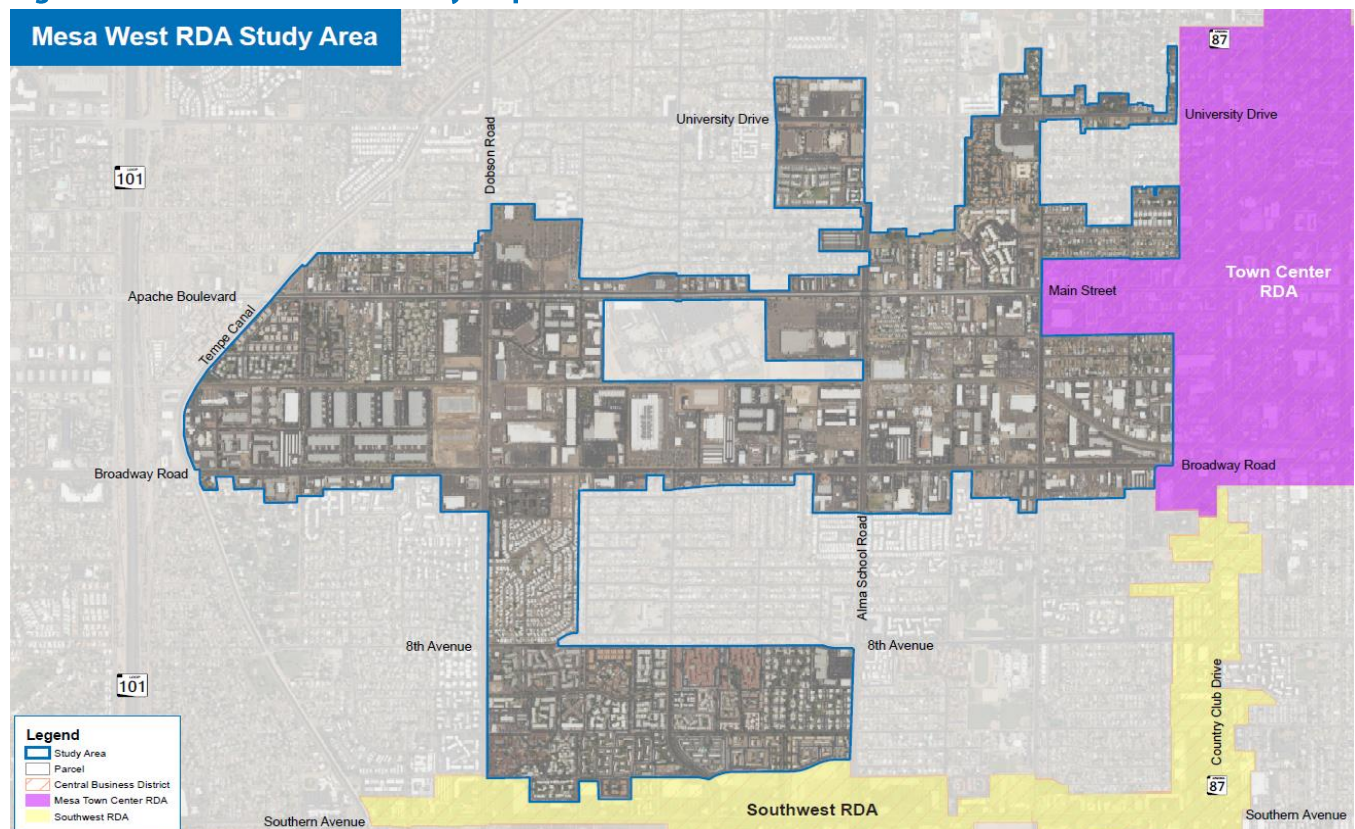
Blight is defined in Title 8 Chapter 6 of Mesa's City Code as:

"Unightly conditions including the accumulation of litter or debris; buildings or structures exhibiting holes, breaks, rot, crumbling, cracking, peeling or rusting materials; general damage to the integrity of the construction of a building or structure; uncontrolled growth of landscaping exhibited by lack of maintenance, untended damage to plant and landscape materials, the continued presence of dead or decaying plants; and any similar conditions of disrepair and deterioration regardless of the condition of other properties in the vicinity or neighborhood."

Background

The proposed West Mesa RDA is adjacent to the western edge of Mesa's existing Town Center RDA, and extends westward to the Tempe Canal, comprising nearly two square miles. The area generally includes properties between W. Main Street and W. Broadway Road, as well as offshoots north along N. Alma School Road and N. Extension Road. There is another large portion extending south between S. Dobson Road and S. Sycamore to the Southwest RDA's northern border. Figure 2-1 displays the proposed West Mesa RDA's boundary.

Figure 2-1. West RDA Boundary Map



Methodology

The process of surveying and assessing the proposed West Mesa Redevelopment Area was programmatically divided into steps to thoroughly analyze blight conditions for this Findings of Necessity.

The West Mesa RDA boundary was established based on the existing light rail corridor along W. Main Street, and was extended along the major arterials that intersect with the light rail stops at Main Street and Sycamore (near Dobson Road) plus one at Main Street and Alma School Road. The boundary was also expanded south of W. Main Street in order to include some of the aging industrial properties and other blighted properties as well.

An initial cursory aerial survey was completed within the proposed West Mesa RDA boundary to identify areas of concern prior to conducting a detailed on-site field survey. The Maricopa County Assessor's website contains an interactive mapping tool with 2017 aerial imagery and parcel data. These web-based tools were used to analyze the West Mesa RDA study area as a precursor and preliminary guide for an on-site field survey.

The West Mesa RDA study area was divided into 10 subareas in order to help expedite organizing a field survey and to help locate blight issues.

The field survey team used a mobile data collection application called Fulcrum (www.fulcrumapp.com) to assist with data collection. To further prepare for and facilitate a field survey, parcel data from the Maricopa County Assessor's Office was isolated to the Study Area and then uploaded to Fulcrum. This data was then able to be accessed and edited while on-site.

An on-site field survey was conducted between March 6 and March 10, 2017. The field survey was organized and completed systematically by subarea. Each member of the survey team was assigned to a subarea, in which the survey team member assessed each parcel visually for blight conditions, captured a picture of the property, and recorded their assessment in the Fulcrum application (Figure 2-2). If the parcel was identified as containing one or more conditions of blight, the surveyor recorded the property as blighted with a description and photograph of the blight condition. This process was continued until each parcel was assessed.

Figure 2-2. Fulcrum App Example

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Mesa East West RDAs Blight Assessor

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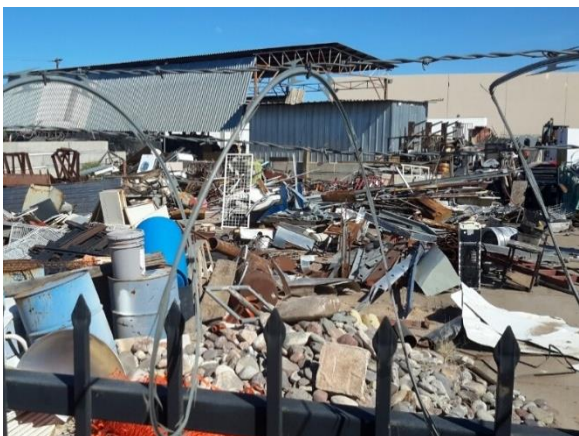
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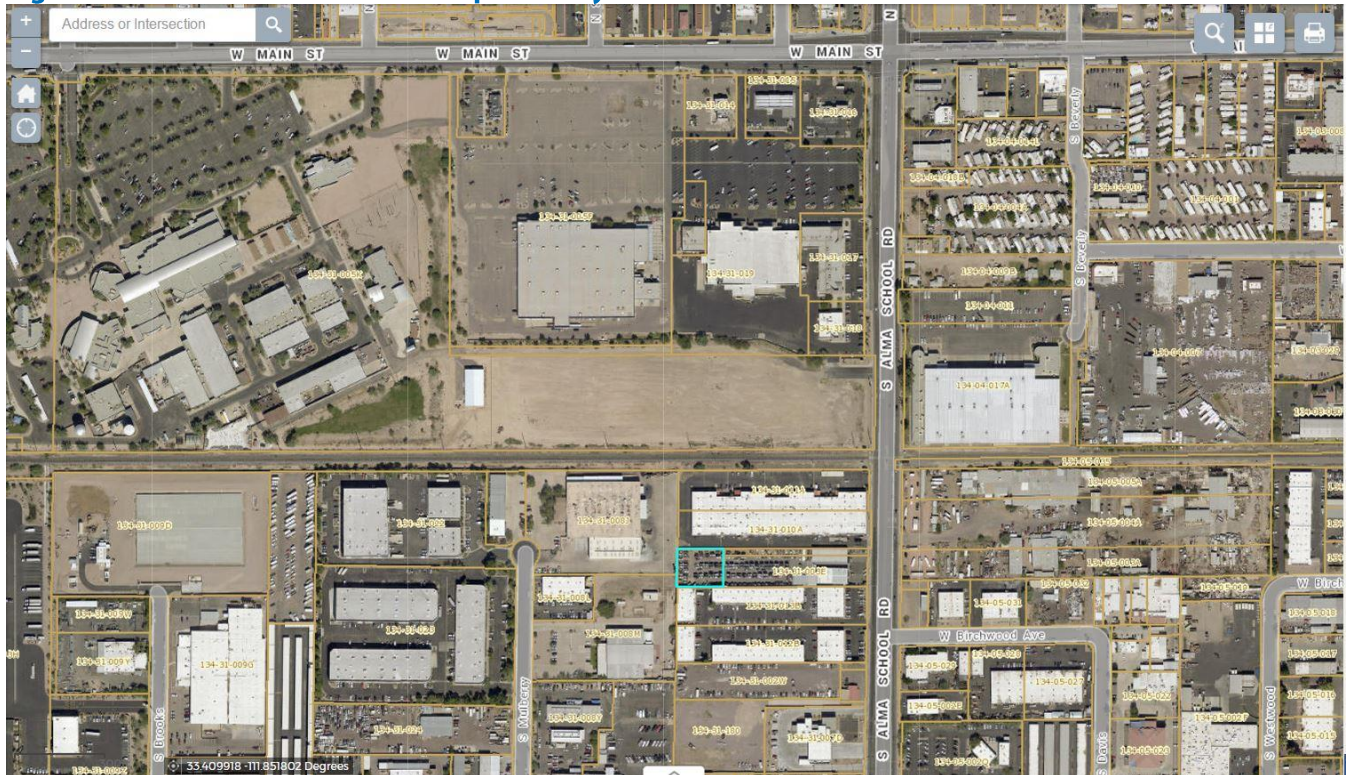
APN	13411003	ⓘ
RDA	West RDA	
Sub Area	W6	
Date Assessed	* March 8, 2017	
Assessed By	* Coker	
For Sale or Lease	No	
Vacant	No	
Blight?	Yes	ⓘ



Sample photos taken during the on-site field survey

Once all of the parcels in the West Mesa RDA were visually analyzed following the on-site field survey, each parcel's blight assessment was validated through an aerial survey using a combination of the 2017 aerial imagery provided on the Maricopa County's Assessor's website (as shown in Figure 2-3) and Google Maps. This aerial survey also provided the potential to analyze portions of parcels that were inaccessible from an on-site field survey. Results were recorded in Fulcrum in the same manner as the on-site field survey.

Figure 2-3. Screenshot of Maricopa County's Assessor's Website



Upon completion of the field and aerial visual surveys, the information that was recorded in Fulcrum was exported to a geodatabase. After running checks for errors or omissions and correcting any issues, this data was then mapped in ESRI's ArcGIS ArcMap to assess the West Mesa RDA as a whole and to calculate the scope of blight in the area. Blight was measured initially in two forms: 1) a simple raw parcel count of blighted versus non-blighted parcels and 2) adding up the assessor-provided square footage of the blighted parcels versus non-blighted parcels. After the field and aerial surveys were completed, the assessment examined crime and code compliance violations, which are two other indicators of blight.

Crime data for the census tracts that intersect the West Mesa RDA was obtained for the years 2012 through 2016. This data was paired with American Community Survey population data pulled from the US Census Bureau's website for the same timeframe to calculate crime rates in terms of crimes per 1,000 people. The same was done for the City of Mesa as a whole to compare the two geographies.

Code compliance violations were analyzed in addition to crime. Code compliance violations were provided for the years 2012 through 2016. Similar to crime rates, code compliance violations were paired with American Community Survey population data pulled from the US Census Bureau's website to calculate code compliance violations per 1,000 people. The same was done for the City of Mesa as a whole to compare the two geographies.

Following are brief descriptions of each subareas' existing conditions. A detailed review of each parcel is included in the Appendix.

Subarea W1

Subarea W1 is located north of W. Main Street starting at the Mesa / Tempe border. The majority of the properties within the subarea feature residential uses, with some commercial areas located along W. Main Street itself. This subarea benefits from being situated along the Valley Metro Light Rail and transit-oriented development (TOD) has started to occur, specifically with the high quality, affordable housing apartment complex La Mesita. Not all areas within subarea W1 experienced TOD as there are a number of aged motels, auto repair shops, vacant lots, and an RV park in various stages of decay. Additionally, there are a number of roads branching off Main Street that exhibit blighted conditions.

Construction is currently underway along Ella Street on the La Mesita campus. Construction on La Mesita Phase 3 started in 2016 and upon completion, the campus will add an additional 30 housing units for the chronically homeless.

Subarea W2

Subarea W2 is primarily centered along W. Main Street between Dobson Road and Alma School Road. All of the properties in this subarea are commercial use. There is a Fry's grocery store located on the southwest corner of W. Main Street and S. Alma School Road that has the potential to serve as the commercial anchor of this area.

The Valley Metro Light Rail runs through this subarea, providing east / west connections to Mesa and Tempe. There is one stop located in this subarea, the Sycamore / Main Street stop. In addition, there is the Sycamore / Main Street Transit Center that serves transit riders in the area.

Subarea W3

Subarea W3 is located along N. Alma School Road, primarily between W. University Drive and W. Main Street. There are two large portions of this subarea, one being west of N. Alma School Road straddling W. University Drive. The other major portion is the north east quarter of the N. Alma School Road and W. Main Street intersection. This subarea contains a mix of commercial and multifamily residential uses, as well as the AT&T Data Center at the southwest intersection of W University Drive and N Alma School Road. There is a light rail station near the intersection of Alma School Road and W. Main Street.

Subarea W4

Subarea W4 is located mainly along the N. Extension Road and W. University Drive corridors. There are also some residential streets included in this subarea. A majority of properties within this subarea are residential use, both single-family homes, townhomes, and apartment complexes. Commercial properties are mainly located along N. Extension Road and W. University Drive, including one shopping center anchored by Planet Fitness at the southwest corner of the intersection.

Subarea W5

Subarea W5 is located between W. Main Street and the rail line just north of W. Broadway Road, and between S. Alma School Road and S. Vineyard. This subarea is a mix between commercial, industrial, and residential uses. Within the subarea, the Valley Metro light rail passes through the subarea with one stop located on Alma School Road and Main Street

Subarea W6

Subarea W6 is located mainly along the W. Broadway Road corridor between S. Vineyard Street and S. Alma School Road. The rail line that forms Subarea W5's southern border runs along the Subarea W6's northern border. A majority of this subarea is occupied by commercial and industrial properties, including numerous scrap yards and engine repair facilities. A handful of single-family homes are also located in this highly industrial area.

Subarea W7

Subarea W7 is located in between W. Main Street and W. 8th Avenue, between S. Dobson Road and S. Alma School Road. While there is residential property located in the southern end of the subarea, the majority of this subarea is characterized by commercial uses.

Subarea W8

Subarea W8 is located along W. Main Street at the Mesa / Tempe border. This subarea could be split into two characteristics, divided by the railroad. Uses located south of the railroad consists of commercial and industrial properties, including the Broadway 101 Commerce Park—which is a 52-acre master planned business park. The properties north of the railroad are largely residential in nature and have several large apartment complexes, including Pala Mesa, Tierra Vida, and Midtown on Main.

Subarea W9

Subarea W9 is located two parcels north of W. Southern Avenue, between S. Dobson Road and S. Alma School Road. The northern border of this subarea extends to W. 8th Avenue, but then follows W. Emelita Avenue west of S. Sycamore Road and W. Emerald Avenue east of S. Sycamore Road. Nearly all of the properties in this subarea are high-density, multifamily complexes, except for some properties that front along S. Dobson Road.

Subarea W10

Subarea W10 is located between W. Pueblo Avenue and W. Emerald Avenue, excluding the single-family residential properties fronting along W. Pueblo Avenue, and between the S. Alma School Road and S. Sycamore. This subarea consists of mostly multifamily residential uses, including large-scale apartment complexes and townhomes. Some of the complexes in this area include the Villas Mesa II apartments, Mesa Coronado Condominiums, the Villetta Apartments, and the Graysill Casitas. The only commercial uses the W10 Subarea are located at the southwest corner of the S. Alma School Road and W. 8th Avenue intersection, which includes Food City as the anchor.



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3. Demographics

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3. Demographics

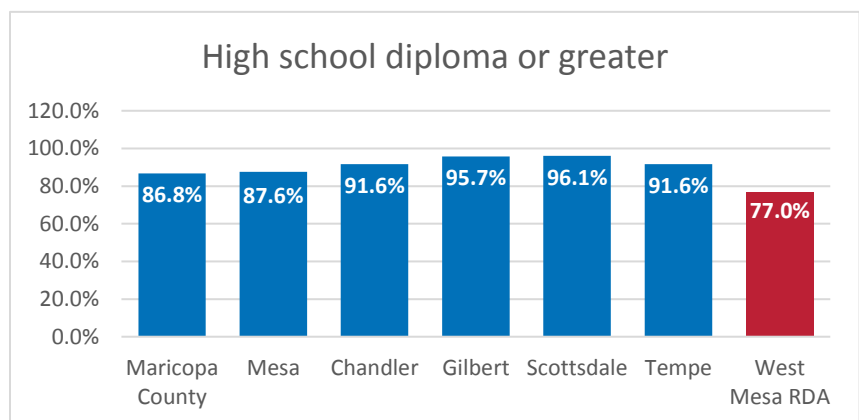
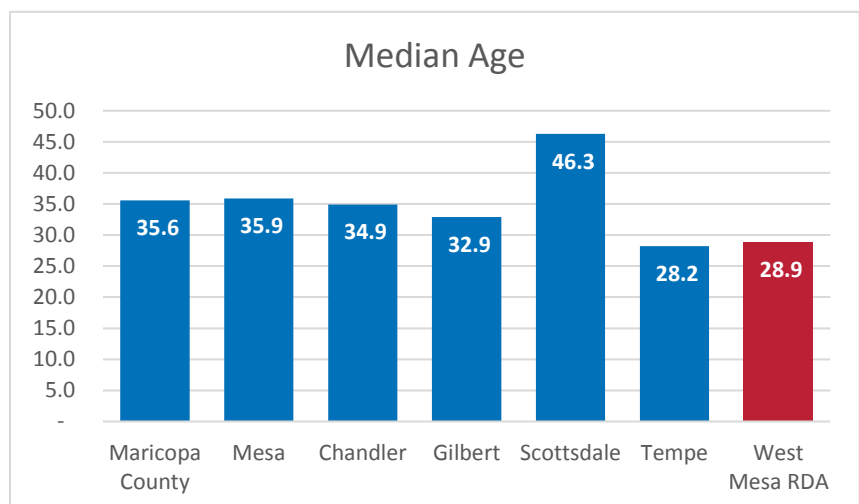
Demographics

The West RDA's demographic information was compared against the City of Mesa and several other similar, nearby cities to understand how the proposed West RDA is positioned within the City of Mesa and other comparable communities¹. The other communities are:

- Maricopa County
- City of Chandler
- Town of Gilbert
- City of Scottsdale
- City of Tempe

The total population within the proposed West Mesa RDA was approximately 22,800 in 2016. The population within the proposed West Mesa RDA is relatively young, with a median age of 28.9 years. This is several years younger compared to the median age throughout the City of Mesa, which is 35.9 years. The West Mesa RDA is only slightly older than the City of Tempe, which has a large population of students that attend Arizona State University.

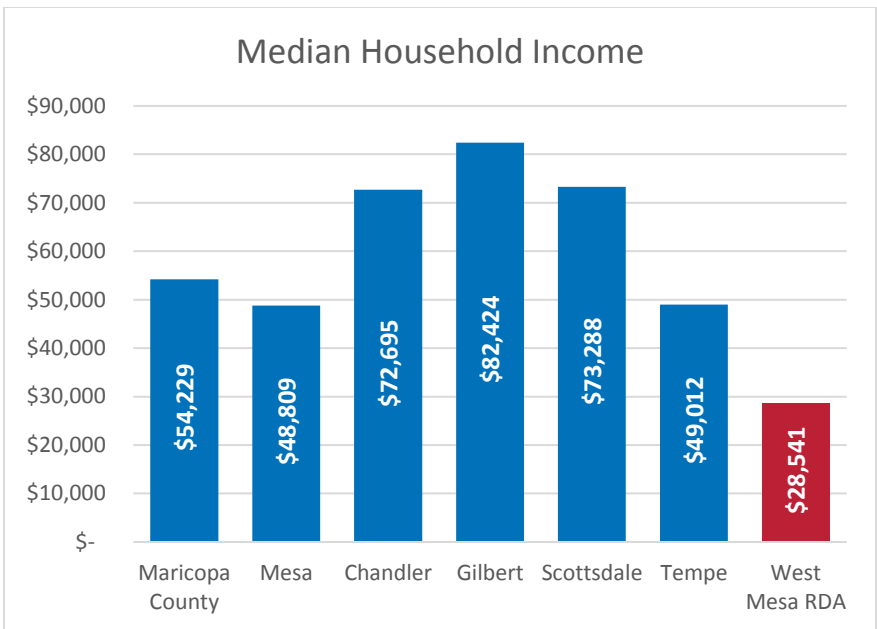
The educational attainment within the proposed West Mesa RDA is relatively low. Only 77.0% of the adult population (25 years of age



¹ Data provided by the City of Mesa from ESRI Community Analyst. ESRI Community Analyst uses US Census Bureau 2010 Census data to forecast 2016 demographics. Demographic information for Maricopa County and the communities of Mesa, Chandler, Gilbert, Scottsdale, and Tempe was obtained from the most recent American Community Survey results in 2015.

and over) has a high school diploma or equivalent. This is over 10% less than the City of Mesa as a whole.

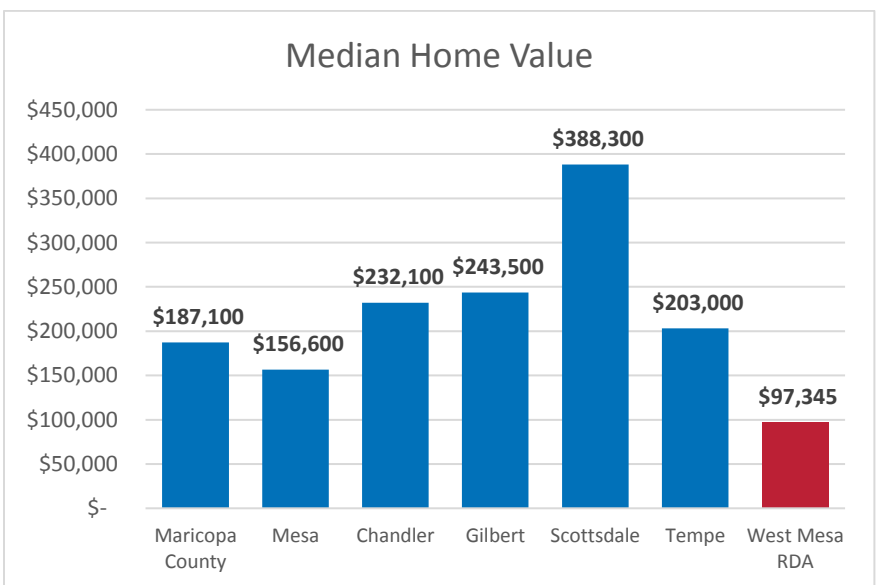
Median household income within the proposed West Mesa RDA was \$28,541 in 2016, which is less than half of many of the regional counter parts, including the Town of Gilbert (\$82,424), the City of Scottsdale (\$73,288), and the City of Chandler (\$72,695). The West Mesa RDA's median household income is also \$20,000 less than, or 42% less than the City of Mesa as a whole.



Furthermore, according to ESRI Community Analysis 2021, the median household income within the proposed West Mesa RDA is projected to decrease by 2021 to \$27,980—a decrease of \$561 (1.9%) in a five-year span. On the other hand, the City of Mesa as a whole is expected to increase its median household income to \$54,811 by 2021—an increase of over \$6,000 (12.3%) in a five-year span. This shows the proposed West Mesa RDA is not only several thousand dollars less than that of its regional counterparts, but the economic climate is also relatively stagnant compared to the City of Mesa as a whole.

The median home value within the proposed West Mesa RDA is \$97,345, which is 48.0% less than the county-wide average of \$187,100 and 37.8% lower than the city-wide average of \$156,600.

As of 2016, there were 11,459 total employees located within the proposed West RDA. Crescent Crown Distributing, Auer Precision, and East Valley Institute of



Technology (EVIT) include some of the larger employers within the proposed West Mesa RDA, located in the Broadway 101 Commerce Park².

Infrastructure

The major east and west arterial streets that travel through the proposed West Mesa RDA are W. Main Street and W. Broadway Road, with portions of the West RDA that include properties along W. University Drive. The major north and south arterial streets are Dobson Road and Alma School Road.

The Valley Metro light rail system has two light rail stops within the West Mesa RDA—one at Main Street and Sycamore plus one at Main Street and Alma School Road.

The Valley Metro bus system has five routes that traverse the proposed West Mesa RDA. These bus routes are:

- Route 30: University
- Route 40: Apache / Main Street
- Route 45: Broadway
- Route 96: Dobson
- Route 104: Alma School

The Tempe Canal flows along the western edge of the West Mesa RDA. The Tempe Canal Trail runs along the western edge of the canal, providing the only trail within the proposed RDA.

² Source: City of Mesa's Request for Proposal from August 8th, 2016

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4. Determination of Blight

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4. Determination of Blight

Introduction

Seven of the following nine blight factors were used to assess the West Mesa RDA and establish a determination of blight per ARS requirements (the "*" indicates the blight factor was not assessed as part of this study). As documented later in this report, conditions exist for the Mesa City Council to make a finding of blight in the West Mesa RDA Study Area without a review of the two blight factors referenced below.

1. A dominance of defective or inadequate street layout
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. Diversity of ownership
6. Improper or obsolete subdivision platting
7. The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes (including crime)
8. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land*
9. Defective or unusual conditions of title*

As described in Section 2 of this document, each parcel within the proposed West Mesa RDA was visually assessed for each of the seven blight factors. Based on this assessment, the following blight conditions were observed:

- 2,141 out of 3,794 parcels, or 56.4% have at least one blight factor
- 80.5% of the total area is determined to be blighted
- 16.4% of parcels and 34.4% of the total area contains more than one blight factor

Table 4-1 summarizes the number of parcels exhibiting one or more blight conditions in the proposed West Mesa RDA.

Table 4-1. Number of Blight Factors

Number of Factors	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
0	1,653	43.6%	245.62	19.5%
1	1,517	40.0%	579.86	46.1%
2	373	9.8%	304.88	24.2%
3	211	5.6%	90.51	7.2%
4	34	0.9%	27.67	2.2%
5 or more	6	0.2%	9.17	0.7%
Parcels with at least 1 Blight Factor	2,141	56.4%	1,012.1	80.5%

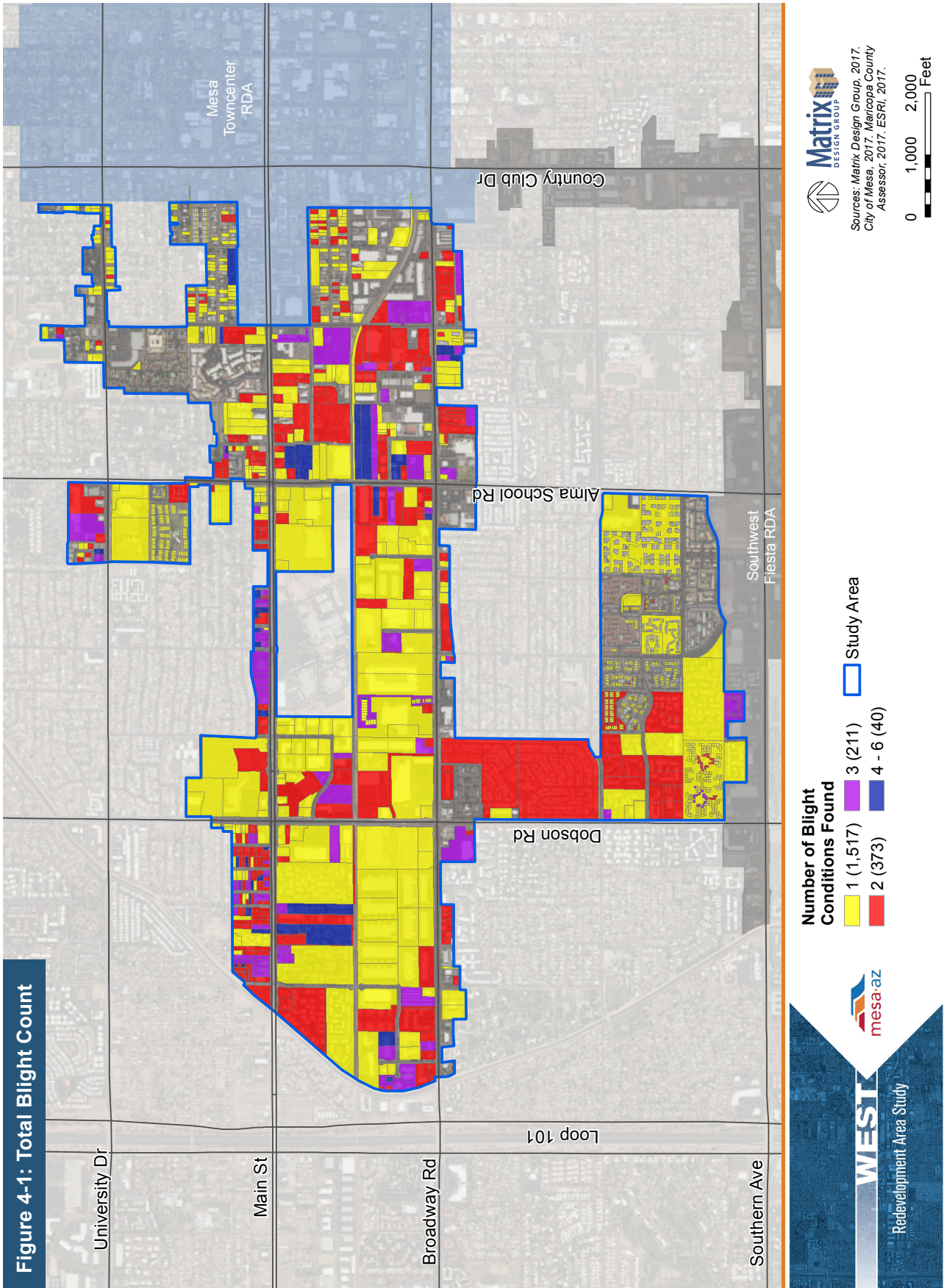
To further analyze the blighted parcels, Table 4-2 indicates the type of blight factor affecting each blighted parcel. As noted below, conditions that endanger life or property (including crime) was the most common blight factor representing 41.8% of all parcels and 59.9% of the total land area. Other major blight factors include deterioration of site or other improvements (24.9% of the total land area), and improper or obsolete subdivision platting (24.0% of the total land area)

Table 4-2. Number of Blighted Parcels by Blight Factor

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
1. Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout	10	0.3%	3.1	0.2%
2. Faulty lot layout	173	4.6%	104.8	8.3%
3. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions	283	7.5%	114.0	9.1%
4. Deterioration of site	706	18.6%	313.7	24.9%
5. Diversity of ownership	8	0.2%	12.6	1.0%
6. Improper or obsolete subdivision platting	288	7.6%	301.8	24.0%
7. Conditions that endanger life or property	1,586	41.8%	753.2	59.9%
<i>Crime rate twice city average</i>	<i>1,523</i>	<i>40.1%</i>	<i>668.8</i>	<i>53.2%</i>
8. Tax or special assessment delinquency			Not Assessed	
9. Defective or unusual conditions of title			Not Assessed	

* Not a part of this blight study

Figure 4-1 displays the total amount of blight assessed within the West Mesa RDA.



1. Dominance of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout includes street layouts and roadways that are incapable or inadequate at handling traffic flow. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Inaccessible from a public street
- Along confusing or unsafe roadways

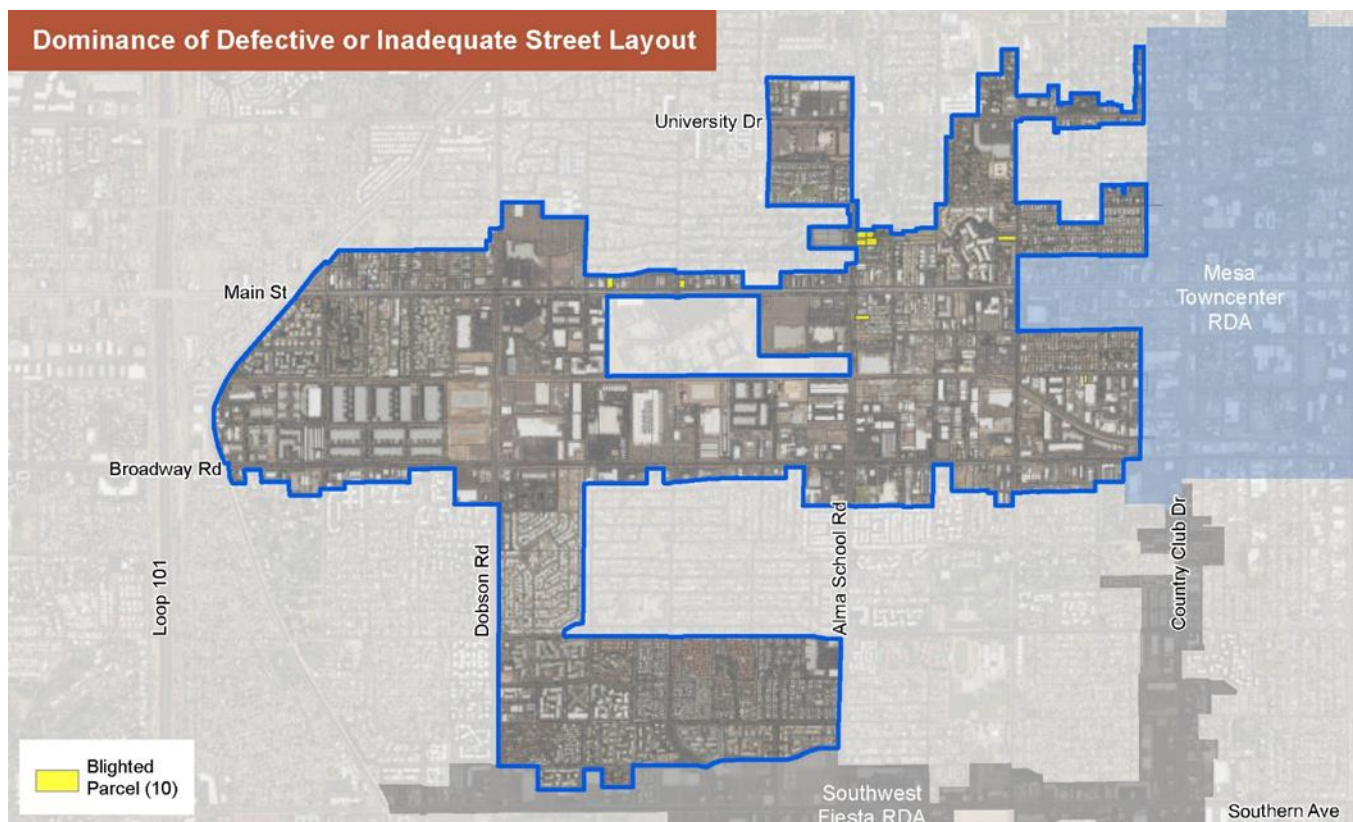
The West Mesa RDA contains 0.3% of parcels and 0.2% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to a dominance of defective or inadequate street layout.



Parcel does not have any direct access to a public roadway

Table 4-3.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
1. Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout	10	0.3%	3.1	0.2%



2. Faulty Lot Layout

Faulty lot layout includes parcels that are either inadequate in size and/or shape, or properties that are inefficient in supporting appropriate use of land. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Parcel size was inadequate to meet needs of use
- Property was difficult to maneuver and / or poorly planned

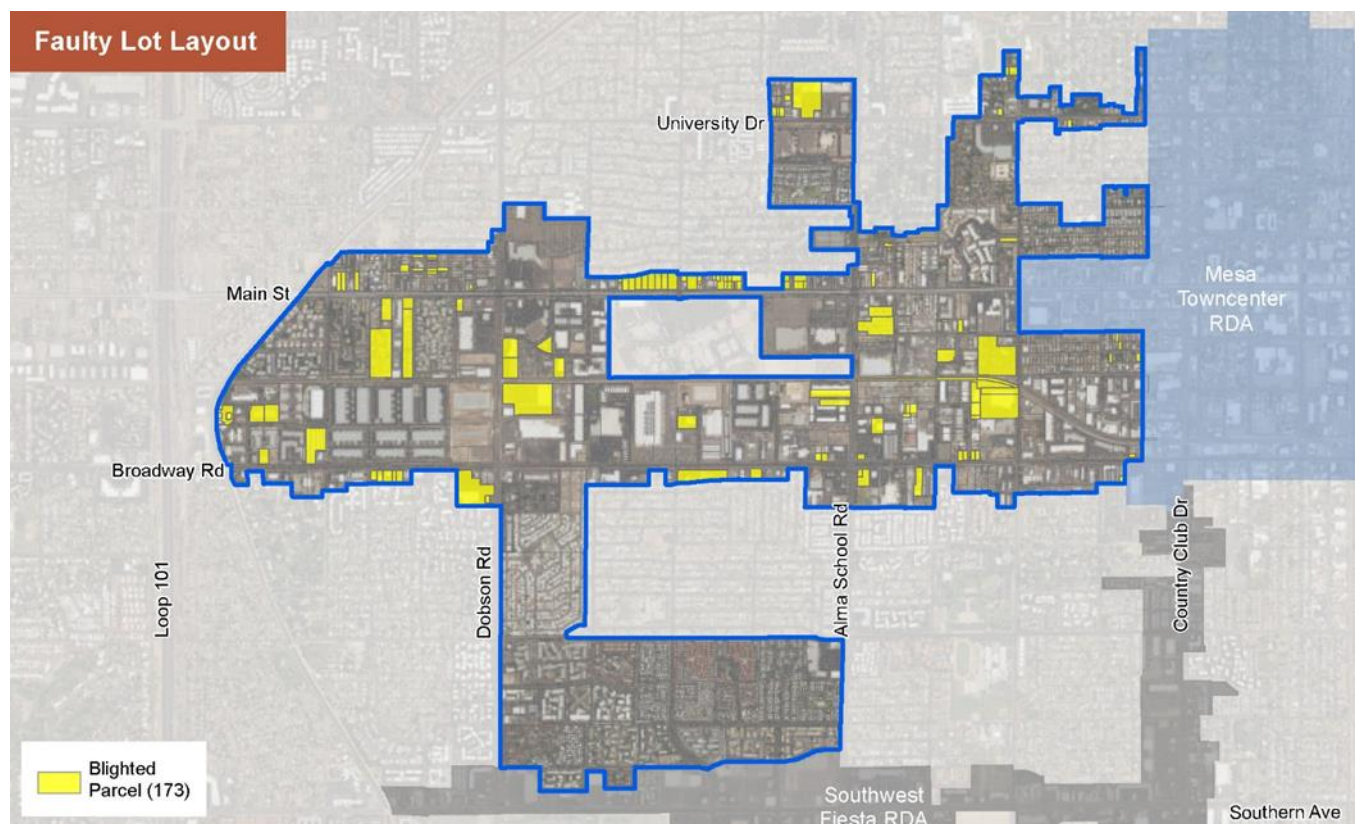
The West Mesa RDA contains 4.6% of parcels and 8.3% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to a faulty lot layout.



Parcel does not have adequate space for parking, and does not have access to a public roadway

Table 4-4.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
2. Faulty lot layout	173	4.6%	104.8	8.3%



3. Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions includes environments that may be harmful to human health and safety. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Uncontrolled solid waste
- Evidence of homelessness
- Excessive animal droppings

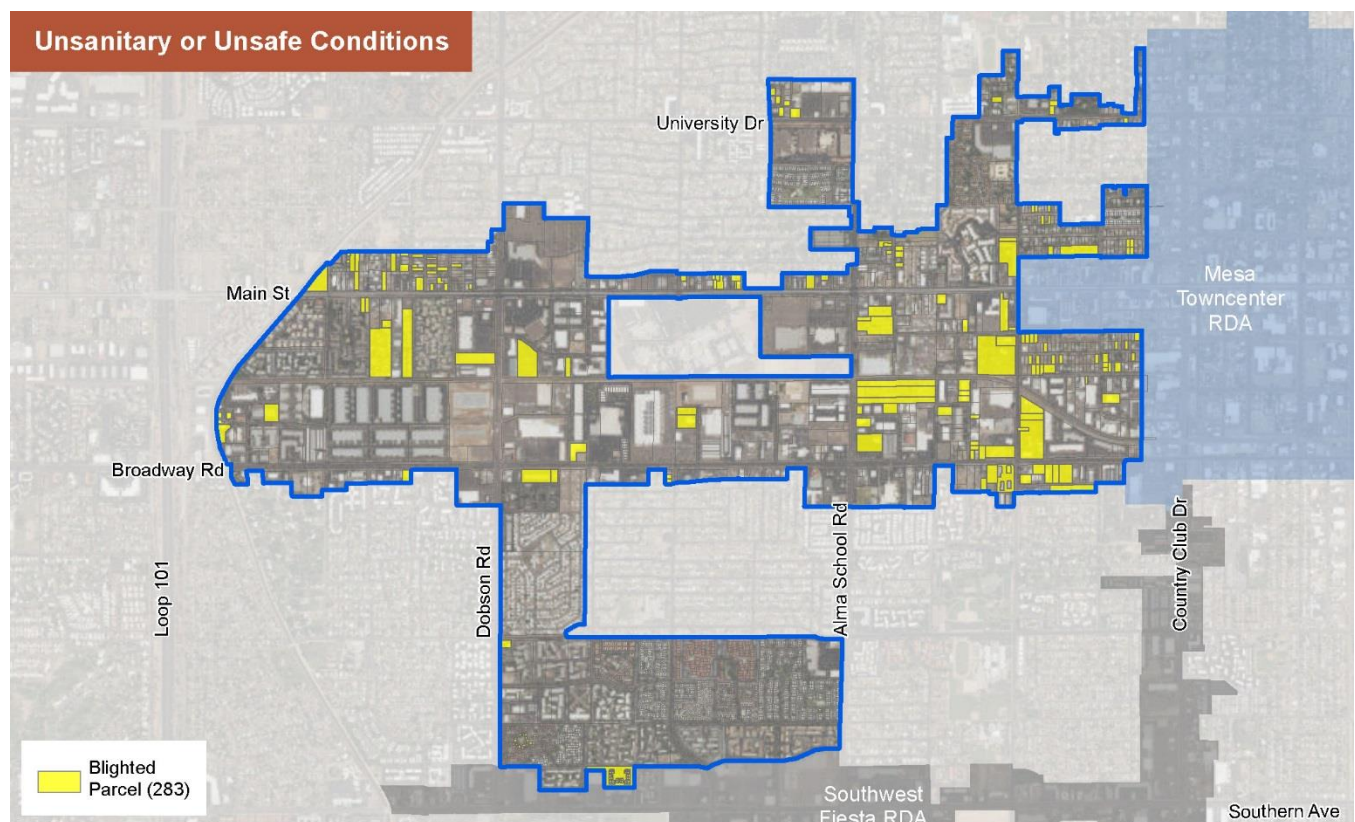
The West Mesa RDA contains 7.5% of parcels and 9.1% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to unsanitary or unsafe conditions.



Property has excessive, uncontrolled solid waste stored outdoors, as well as abandoned vehicles stored on an unpaved surface.

Table 4-5.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
3. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions	283	7.5%	114.0	9.1%



4. Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Deterioration of site or other improvements includes physical property conditions that detract from the overall appearance. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- General deterioration from age and weathering
- Unmaintained property
- Major repairs unattended
- Broken windows

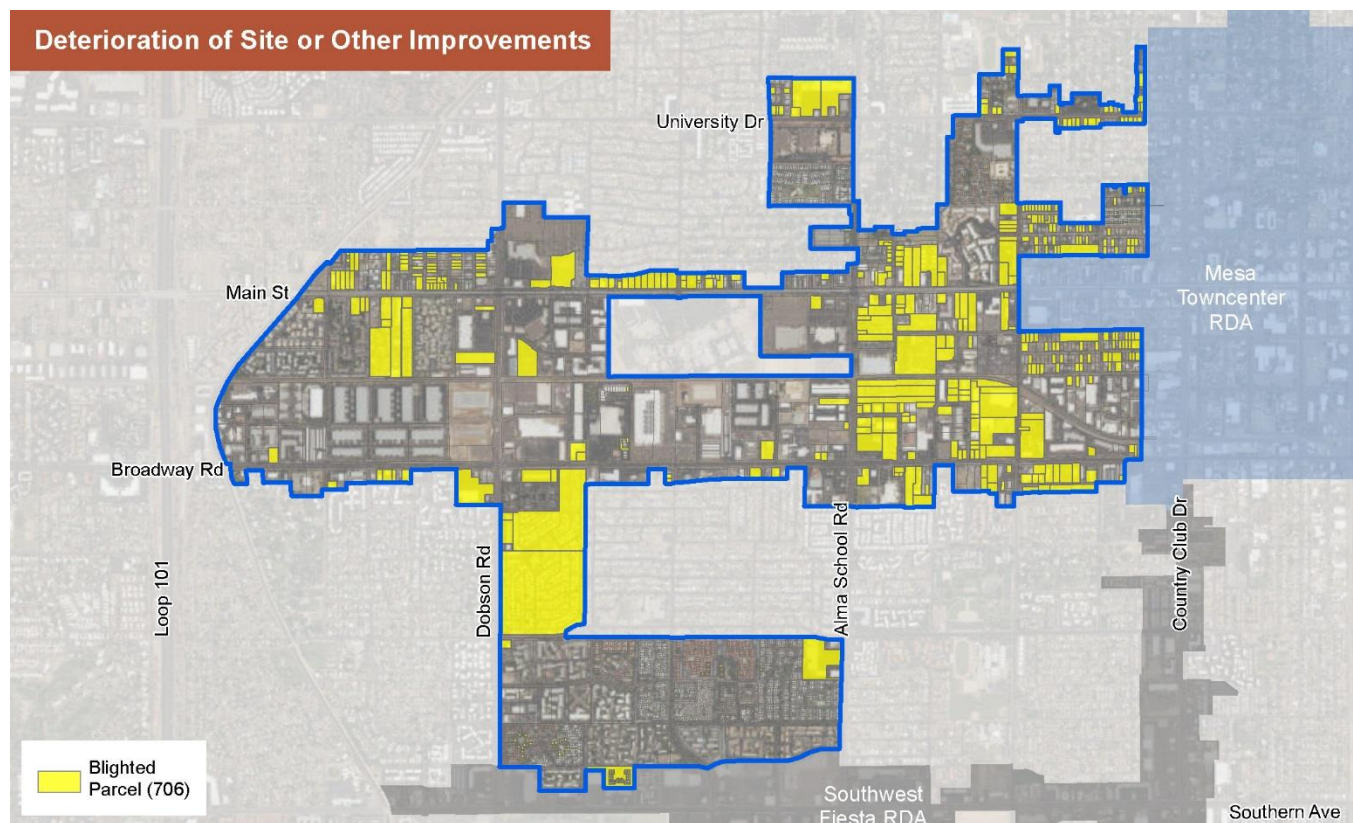
The West Mesa RDA contains 18.6% of parcels and 24.9% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to deterioration or site or other improvements.



Property is unmaintained and the covered carport has been partly removed, but not entirely and is in need of significant repairs.

Table 4-6.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
4. Deterioration of site	706	18.6%	313.7	24.9%



5. Diversity of Ownership

Diversity of ownership includes buildings that are split between two or more parcels with different property owners, making it difficult to redevelop structures. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Single structures split between multiple parcels and property owners

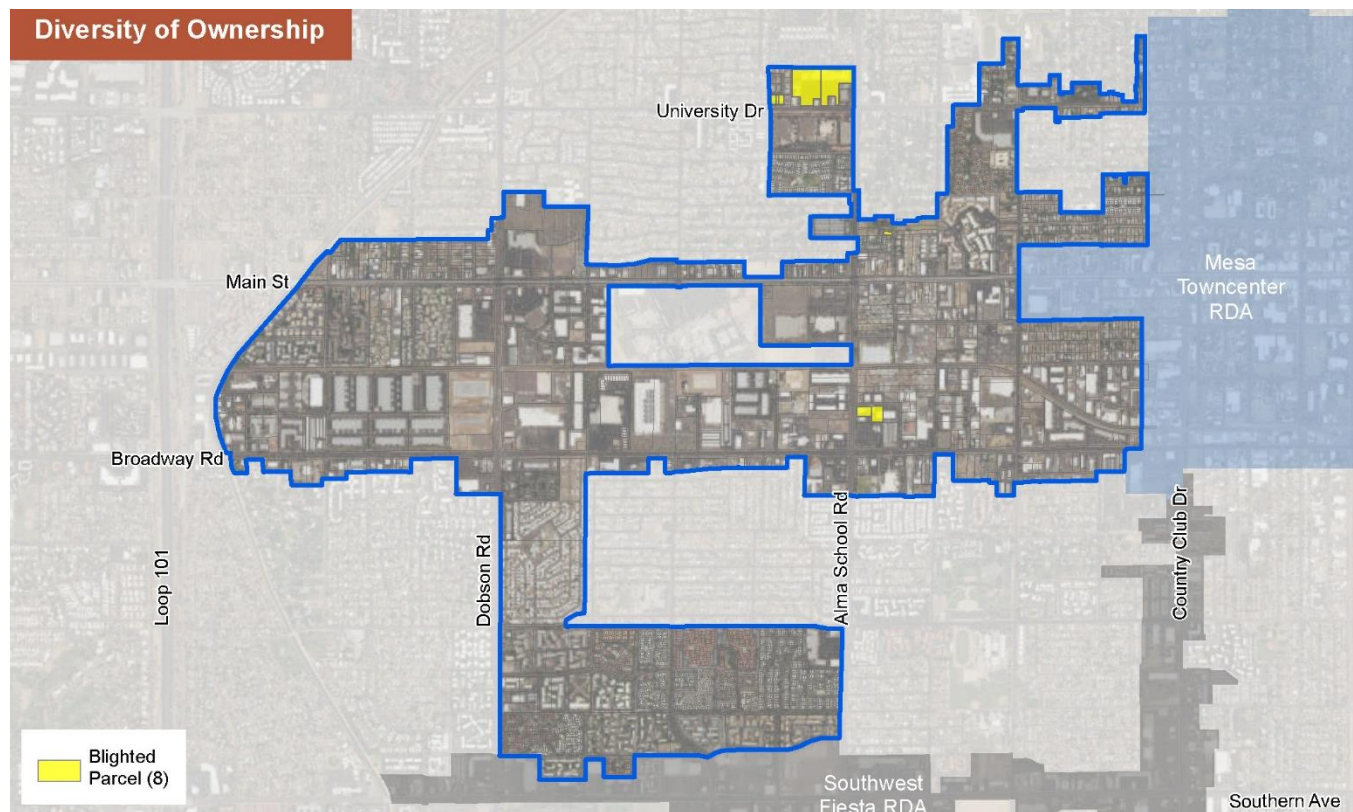
The West Mesa RDA contains 0.2% of parcels and 1.0% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to a diversity of ownership.



Building is split between two parcels, each with a different property owner.

Table 4-7.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
5. Diversity of ownership	8	0.2%	12.6	1.0%



6. Improper or Obsolete Subdivision Platting

Improper or obsolete subdivision platting includes areas that are poorly subdivided, making proper development difficult. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Unproductive and / or obsolete parcels
- Inadequate size or location of parcel in relation to street layout and / or land use

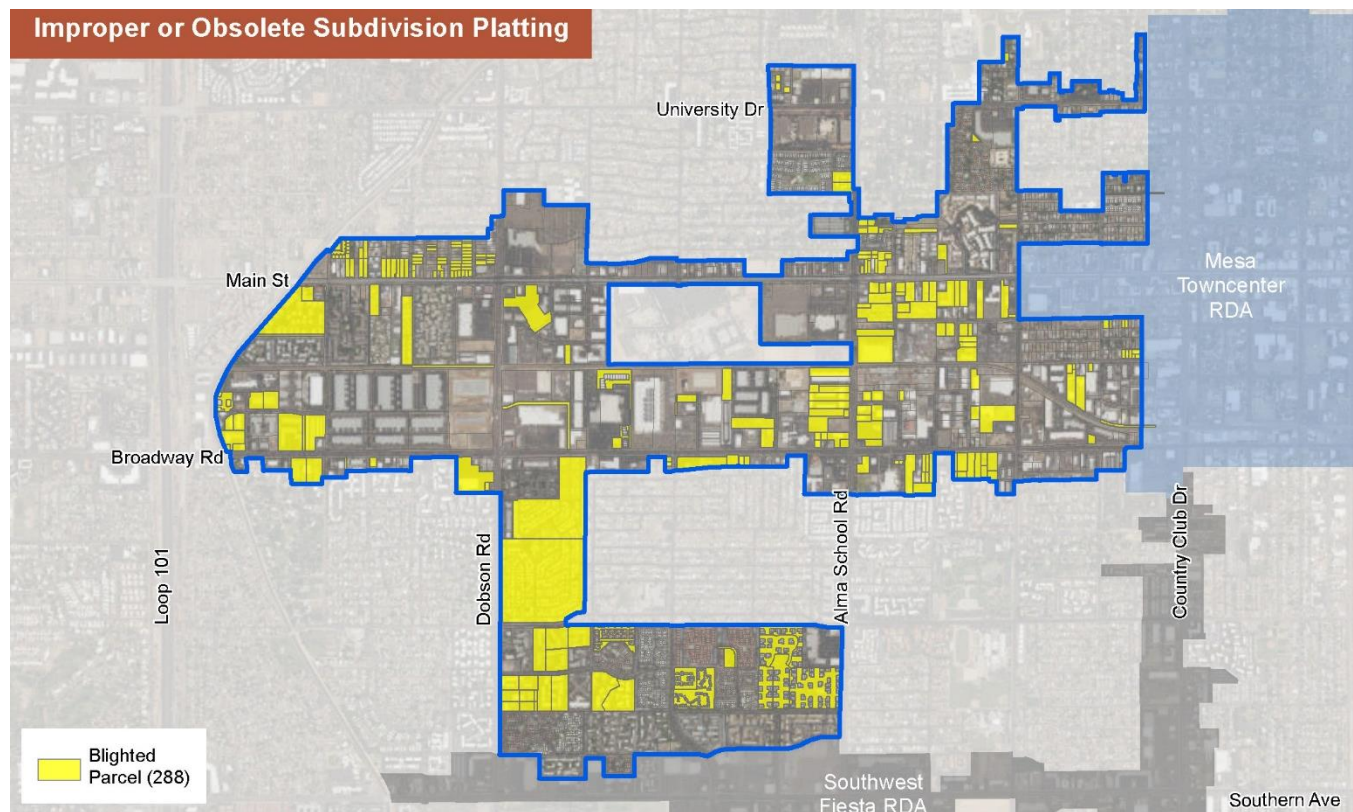
The West Mesa RDA contains 7.6% of parcels and 24.0% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to a diversity of ownership.



Parcels were subdivided in such a way that does not provide any street frontage or sufficient access to a public roadway.

Table 4-8.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
6. Improper or obsolete subdivision platting	288	7.6%	301.8	24.0%



7. Conditions that Endanger Life or Property

Conditions that endanger life or property includes properties that contain conditions that pose threats to life or properties by fire, contamination, or other causes. Parcels were determined to be blighted if they contained the following indicators:

- Abandoned vehicles
- Excessive junk
- Code violations
- Blocked entrances
- Vacant buildings
- Structural damage
- High crime rates
- Overcrowding

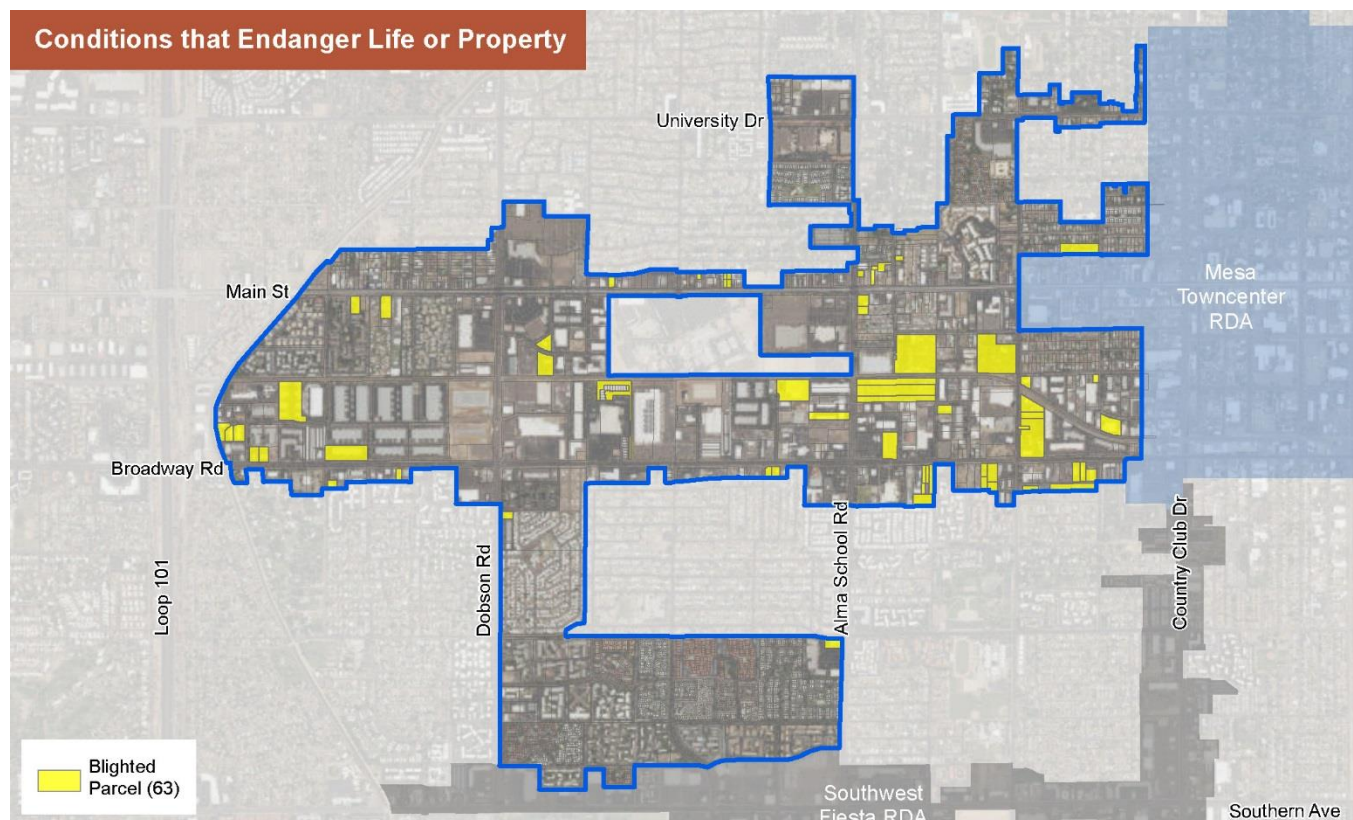
The West Mesa RDA contains 41.8% of parcels and 59.9% of acres that were determined to be blighted due to conditions that endanger life or property.



Excessive junk is stored on this property, making it dangerous for people to inhabit.

Table 4-9.

Blight Factor	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
7. Conditions that endanger life or property	1,586	41.8%	753.2	59.9%



Additional characteristics that endanger life or property are excessive code violations and crime rates that are substantially above the city average. Code compliance violations and crime rates were collected, analyzed, and mapped at the Census Tract level. Disproportionate amount of code compliance violations and crime rates are an additional indicator of blight that endangers life and / or property. Code compliance and crime statistics in the West Mesa RDA were compared to the City of Mesa as a whole. The West Mesa RDA data includes the 10 census tracts that overlap the study area. These 10 Census Tracts are:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| ■ 4211.02 | ■ 4221.02 |
| ■ 4212.02 | ■ 4221.03 |
| ■ 4213.02 | ■ 4221.04 |
| ■ 4213.03 | ■ 4221.06 |
| ■ 4213.04 | ■ 4221.07 |

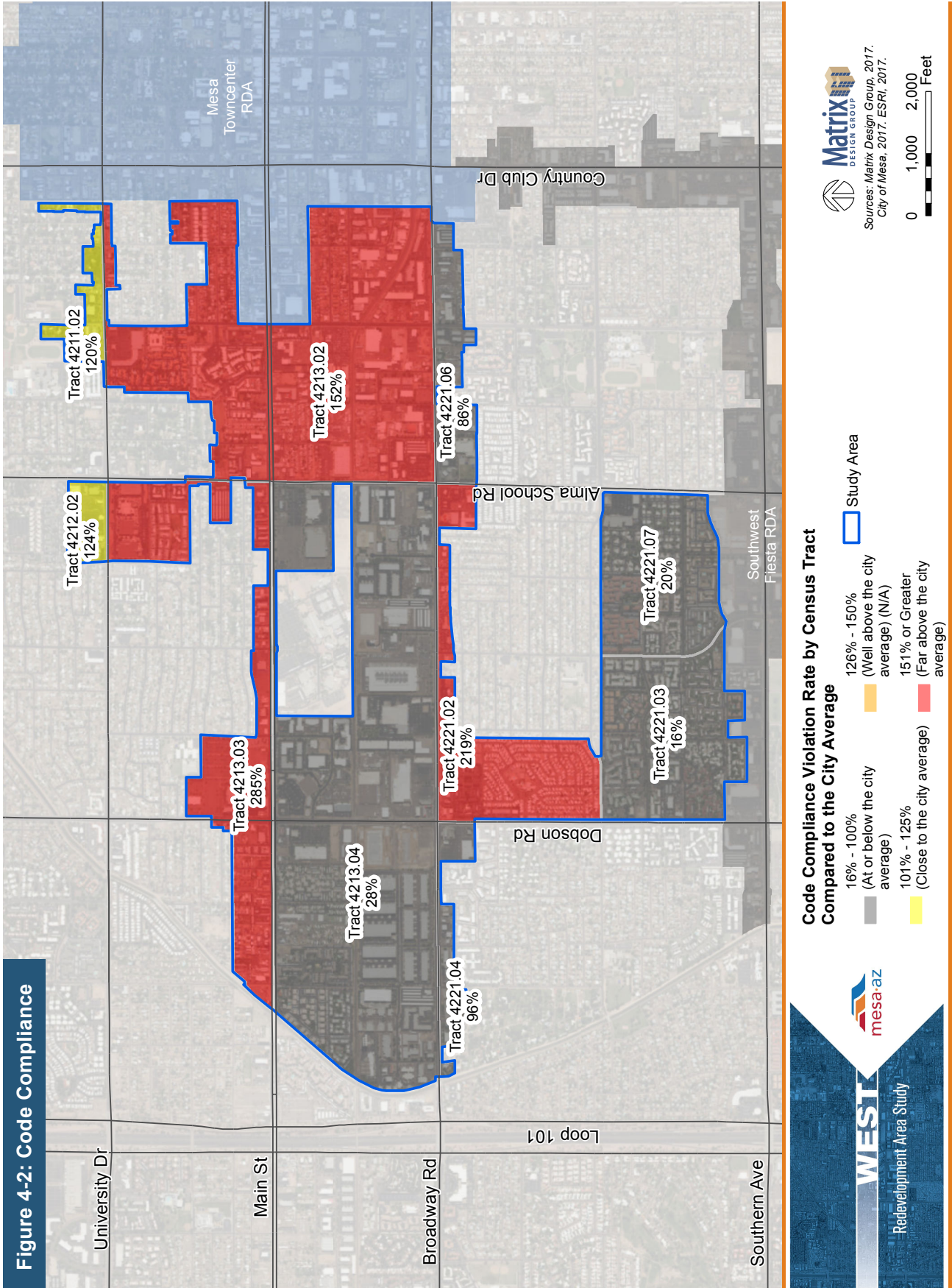
Code Compliance

Code compliance data was collected from the City of Mesa for the years 2012 to 2016. The data was provided as the number of code violations by Census Tract for the Mesa West RDA. To compare code compliance violation rates between the City of Mesa as a whole and the West RDA study area, population totals were pulled from the U.S. Census Bureau to calculate the number of code compliance violations per 1,000 residents. The City of Mesa's 2016 population was obtained from Maricopa Association of Governments' Municipality Population and Housing Unit Update 2016. The total population for the 10 Census Tracts was estimated based on the average annual growth rate between 2010 and 2015 (1%).

Figure 4-2 maps the five-year average (2012-2016) code compliance violations for each individual Census Tract within the West Mesa RDA. The percentages represent the comparison between the code compliance violations for each individual Census Tract and the city-wide average. The map shows:

- Five of the ten Census Tracts on average experienced greater code compliance violations than the City of Mesa as a whole.
- Three out of ten Census Tracts are described as "far above the city average," meaning they averaged over 50% greater code compliance violations when compared to the city-wide average.
- Two Census Tracts (4213.03 and 4221.02) averaged more than double the number of code compliance violations than the City of Mesa as a whole.

Although no additional parcels were determined to be blighted due to the number code compliance violations, the data helps validate the field survey results detailed in Section 4.



Crime Statistics

Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data between 2012 and 2016 was gathered from the City of Mesa Police Department. Crime statistics were provided at the Census Tract level for the Mesa West RDA. To compare crime rates between the City of Mesa as a whole and the West RDA study area, population totals were pulled from the U.S. Census Bureau to calculate the number of crimes per 1,000 residents. The City of Mesa's 2016 population was obtained from Maricopa Association of Governments' Municipality Population and Housing Unit Update 2016. The total population for the 10 Census Tracts was estimated based on the average annual growth rate between 2010 and 2015 (1%).

Table 4-10 compares crime statistics between the City of Mesa as a whole and the West RDA study area. Although total crimes and the crime rate per 1,000 residents in the City of Mesa has generally decreased between 2012 and 2016, the West RDA study area's average crime rate over that five-year time span was over 50% greater than the City of Mesa as a whole. The West Mesa RDA study area had a higher crime rate than the overall City of Mesa for each of the last five years.

Table 4-10. Crime Statistics from 2012 to 2016

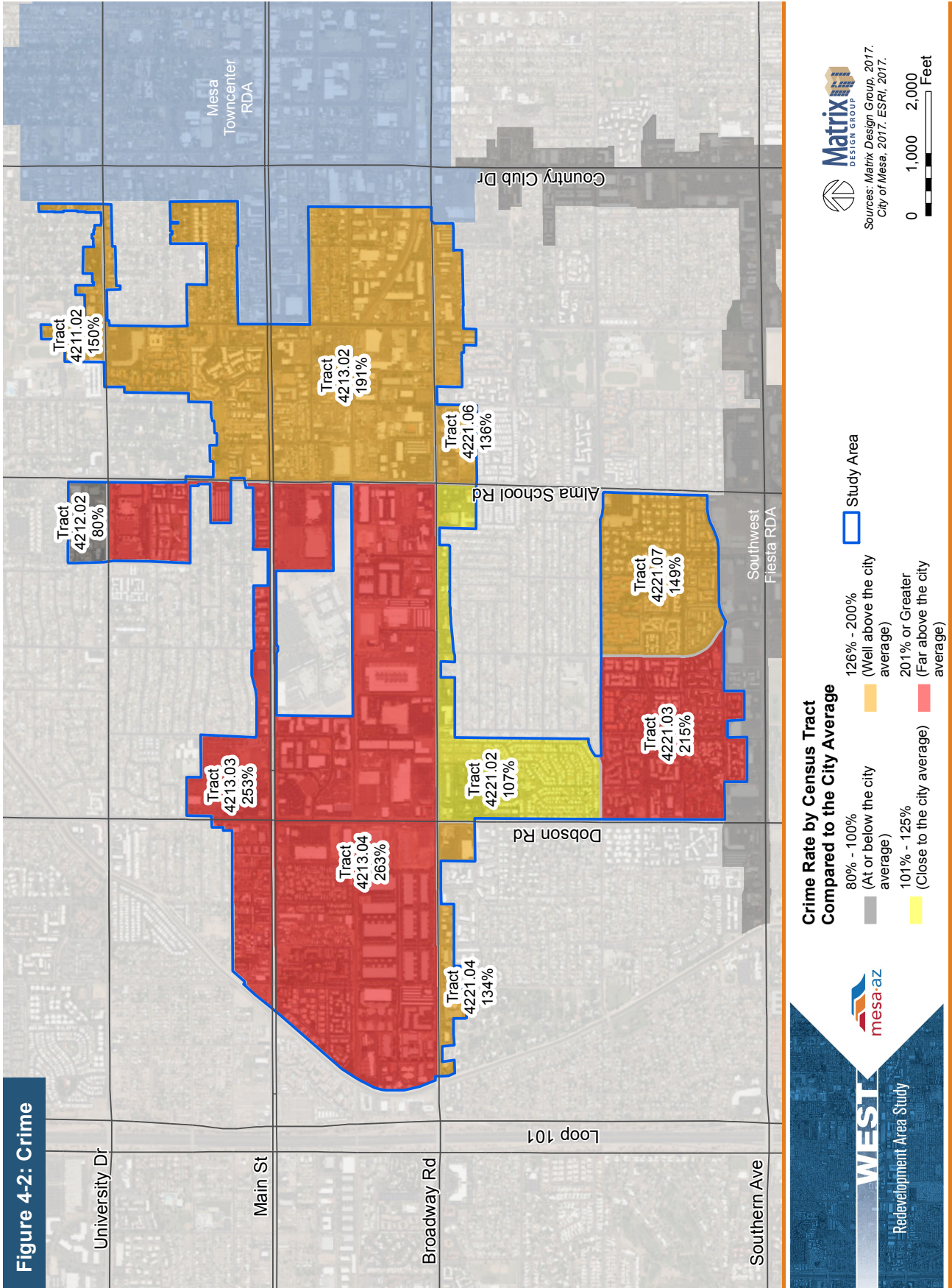
Year	Total Crimes		Crime Per 1,000 residents		
	City of Mesa	West RDA*	City of Mesa	West RDA*	Difference
2012	15,945	2,582	35.2	55.3	57.2%
2013	14,724	2,293	32.1	48.5	51.2%
2014	15,049	2,445	32.3	51.4	58.9%
2015	13,879	2,058	29.4	42.0	42.7%
2016	13,265	2,030	28.4**	41.2***	45.0%
5-Year Average			31.5	47.7	51.4%

Source: City of Mesa Police Department, U.S. Census 2012-2015

*Crime and population data were derived from census tracts and contain area outside the Mesa West RDA study area

**Population data used to calculate crime per 1,000 residents is from the Maricopa Association of Governments 2016

***The annual average growth rate of 1% was used to estimate the 2016 population data for census tracts





5. Conclusion

Please see next page

Conclusion

Arizona law grants local government the authority to declare a redevelopment area due to a predominance of blight. Blight, according to Arizona law, includes the following factors:

1. Dominance of defective or inadequate street layout
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. Diversity of ownership
6. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land
7. Defective or unusual conditions of title
8. Improper or obsolete subdivision platting
9. Existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire and other causes.

Seven of the nine blight factors were carefully assessed during an on-site field survey and aerial survey of each parcel within the West Mesa RDA. This analysis found there were 2,141 out of 3,794 parcels, or 56.4% that were identified to have at least one blight factor, as well as 80.5% of the total acreage was determined to be blighted. The most common blight factor throughout the West Mesa RDA was conditions that endanger life or property (including crime), which represented 41.8% of all parcels and 59.9% of the total acreage.

Deterioration of site or other improvements and improper or obsolete subdivision platting are two other major blight factors identified within the West Mesa RDA, representing 24.9% and 24.0% of the total area respectively.

Number of Factors	Number of Parcels	Percent (%) of Parcels	Number of Acres	Percent (%) of Acres
0	1,653	43.6%	245.62	19.5%
1	1,517	40.0%	579.86	46.1%
2	373	9.8%	304.88	24.2%
3	211	5.6%	90.51	7.2%
4	34	0.9%	27.67	2.2%
5 or more	6	0.2%	9.17	0.7%
Parcels with at least 1 Blight Factor	2,141	56.4%	1,012.1	80.5%

This report shows there is a predominance of blight present in the West Mesa RDA per Arizona Revised Statutes §36-1471 et seq. It is in the opinion of Matrix Design Group that the Mesa City Council could make a finding of blight in the West Mesa RDA study area. Establishing the West Mesa RDA is in the residents' interest of public health, safety, morals and welfare.



For more information contact:

City of Mesa Office of Economic Development • 480-644-2398

Visit the Website at www.MesaAZ.gov/RDA

