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money-driven civil disputes, was sentenced Friday to spend 27 months in federal prison for bank fraud and to pay more than \$700,000 in restitution.

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Albuquerque real-estate developer Vincent J. Garcia, prominent for his projects and money-driven civil disputes, was sentenced Friday to spend 27 months in federal prison for bank fraud and to pay more than \$700,000 in restitution.

Garcia, 61, pleaded guilty in 2011 to bank fraud involving drawdowns on bank loans that he used for personal expenses and an investment in a casino in Washington state.

The projects included Copper Square, a five-story building at 5th and Copper NW, and Anasazi Downtown, the nine-story, boarded-up eyesore at 6th and Central SW. First Financial Credit Union made loans on Copper Square, and stands to receive \$96,471 in restitution based on the order entered by U.S. District Judge James O. Browning.

Browning ordered \$626,072 in restitution to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., receiver for the now defunct Columbian Bank and Trust of Topeka, Kan., which loaned money on the Anasazi project. Garcia defaulted on the Copper Square loan in June 2008, and First Financial foreclosed on it in May 2010.

Browning held a hearing in August to determine size of the loss, which the plea agreement set at \$842,237, whether the fraud involved “sophisticated means” and whether the sentence should be higher because of the number of victims. In a 110-page opinion, he outlined reasons for his own, slightly lower calculation of the loss reflected in the restitution.

Garcia told the court his ordeal, which has gone on for four years, has cost him his

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become known for his marketing skills, which currently includes “Wisdoms by Vincent” — dichos, proverbs and poems on Egyptian papyrus sold on the Internet.

But Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathon Gerson countered that the 22 of Garcia's subcontractors who were left unpaid to the tune of millions of dollars, or the 81-year-old man who wrote the court claiming Garcia had defrauded him of \$400,000, would not agree with Garcia's self-assessment as an honest, hardworking and ethical businessman.

Browning, however, said he had been impressed by Garcia's willingness to step up and take responsibility for his actions, both in the criminal case and in other cases, including a bankruptcy appeal, that the judge also is handling.

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