Recommendations
Downtown Revitalization Ad Hoc Committee

July 2011

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INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

Downtown Las Cruces was a dusty little western town at the beginning of the 20th century. Pictures dating back to that time show typical western style buildings, hitching posts to tie up the horses, a beautiful church, and rugged frontier scenery. Downtown was, and remains, both the center and the heart of the community. In 1934, Mayor Sam Klein and the village council ordered the main street of the town to be paved. As the area grew, more and more businesses established themselves downtown. Many were locally owned, several were branch stores from El Paso and a few others, such as J. C. Penney's, Woolworths, and Motts, were regional or national chain stores.

Throughout the 1960's the downtown was bustling. Many of the stores were busy, but dated. This was made most obvious when, on the corner of Main Street and Lohman Avenue, the Loretto Center opened featuring an indoor, air-conditioned mall, bright shiny fixtures and a new upscale feeling. A few of the downtown merchants moved into the new facility, with J. C. Penney's and Dunlap's being the two anchors of the new center. The First National Bank also moved from its old facility to a beautiful new edifice on South Main Street right across from the Loretto Mall. The archdiocese of El Paso, which owned St. Genevieve's, the downtown church, decided that the old adobe building was in poor condition, sold the property and built another church several blocks away. The decline of downtown had begun.

During the administration of President Lyndon Johnson and his vision of "The Great Society," a federal program entitled "Urban Renewal" made millions of dollars available to blighted inner cities across the nation. Las Cruces applied for and received a grant to form an Urban Renewal district in the downtown area. The then-current plan of an open pedestrian mall with ample parking was adopted as were similar projects in over 100 cities across the country. All buildings in the area were evaluated by the local Urban Renewal organization. Buildings deemed "acceptable" remained while those considered "sub-standard", 60% of the downtown fabric, were demolished. The owners of the "sub-standard" properties were given a choice: either sell their property to Urban Renewal at fair market value or rebuild with financial assistance from Urban Renewal. Some property owners, particularly those out-of-town, jumped at the opportunity of divesting themselves of their holdings in the downtown area; only a handful of others rebuilt.

Many properties on the west side of Church Street and the east side of Water Street were condemned, demolished and converted into parking lots. A dispute as to who (the property owners, the city, or Urban Renewal) would pay for the paving delayed that conversion for more than three years. By 1976, the downtown renewal was completed. Metal shade canopies and "the yellow brick road" highlighted the 8-block-long Downtown Mall, but a majority of the businesses and buildings were gone. Over the next

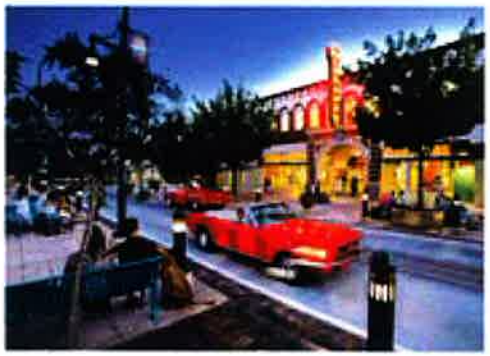
two decades, the city hired various consultants to study the situation; reports were filed with the Council, as the downtown become less and less relevant. In 1994, the Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) report was compiled and submitted. This report involved over 1000 Las Cruces citizens sharing their memories and visions of downtown as well as distinguished urban planners from various parts of the country absorbing information and making recommendations, and a spark was ignited.

While the R/UDAT signaled the beginning of a solution, progress in the intervening years materialized slowly. In 2002, a group of citizens from the private sector began meeting to further build on the prior revitalization efforts. An organization, "Las Cruces Downtown", was formed; public forums were held; a professional urban planning firm, Sites Southwest, was hired to assist; and in July of 2005, the "Las Cruces Downtown Revitalization Plan" was adopted by City Council.

Since that time, much has been accomplished of the plan, but more remains to be done. In the summer of 2010, Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagashima appointed an Ad Hoc committee, made up of a cross section of Las Cruces residents and stakeholders, to review the adopted plan, to measure what has been accomplished, to identify any areas that are no longer relevant, to prioritize future projects and to make recommendations that are relevant to the future of downtown Las Cruces. The following pages represent the conclusions reached by that Downtown Revitalization Ad Hoc Committee.

MEMBERS

Clark C. Myers, Chair	Dona Ana Community College, NMSU
Dave Blanchard, Vice Chair	Building Industries Association
Miguel Silva	Councilman, District #1



Christina Little	At Large Member	Jim Hawman	Property Owner
David Chavez	Las Esperanzas	John Schutz	Las Cruces Public Schools
Diana Lyons	Hispano Chamber of Commerce	Mike Beckett	Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce
Ellie Lanphier	Green Chamber of Commerce	Mike White	Business Owner
Emily Coss	Alameda Depot Neighborhood Assoc.	Sharon DeBraal	Board of Realtors
Heather Pollard	Dona Ana Arts Council	Steve Newby	Downtown Las Cruces Partnership
Irene Oliver-Lewis	Alameda Depot Civic Association	Win Jacobs	Las Cruces Housing Authority
Jean Williams	Farmers and Crafts Market	William Slettom	Downtown Development Coordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Downtown Revitalization Ad Hoc Committee, formed in the summer of 2010, has met biweekly to review the current downtown in relationship to previous plans, to discuss changes and to recommend priorities for implementation. The Committee identified various core issues including Economic Development, Arts and Culture, Public Places, the Farmers and Crafts Market, Housing, Transportation and Parking, and Planning and Zoning. As part of the process, the topical areas were discussed by the entire committee before dividing into subgroups to further define our recommendations, which are found in the sections to follow.

After extensive conversations with numerous parties and further review of previous plans and documents, the committee is encouraged by recent progress in the Downtown district, such as the completion of the City Hall, the construction of the Federal Courthouse, and the imminent re-opening of the North section of Main Street. The Committee recognizes that several important projects have been completed and others are no longer applicable, yet the core concepts and ideas found in the 2005 Master Plan still remain and many strategies continue to be valid. The Committee's recommendations include both policy developments and physical projects that deserve attention.

The Committee recognizes that a vibrant city is comprised of interconnected urban elements. The fabric of the city is interrelated with each area connecting and responding to another. Examining the Las Cruces downtown revealed the re-evolving interwoven relationships - links between downtown and the rest of the city; between downtown, the El Paseo Corridor and NMSU; and between the historic neighborhoods flanking downtown. Fostering these connections will further the success of downtown. Additionally, mixed uses of activities stimulate the local environment and provide diversity. The recent consolidation of local and federal government centers and the public museums have laid a foundation for a dynamic city center. Increased population supports both growing commercial activities and residential opportunities. Commercial development and residential units must be market-driven, cognizant of financial realities, and balanced with concern for the building of an economically and culturally diverse, stable community. With this in mind, the committee concludes that a range of interconnected projects are pivotal to the continued progress and ultimate success of Downtown Las Cruces.

The committee identified three priority issues, ranked equally - the issue of **parking**, the need for a **major downtown plaza** and the need for **City Staff** dedicated to Downtown issues.

- The issue of parking permeates every topic discussion from housing to commercial activity to arts and cultural events. Without adequate parking, future buildings and increased activities downtown will continue to suffer from avoidance and ignorance. The recommendation is that a comprehensive parking management plan be developed and adopted. One recommended component would include a publicly constructed city parking structure. This parking management plan needs to include a policy of *"parking neutrality"*, further discussed in the Parking and Transportation section. Since the parking issue is so critical to downtown, these two important elements, occurring throughout the report, need further definition:

    - *THE PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN* is both a short and long term project. The city must formulate a policy as to how the current and future parking needs shall be managed. At the present time, all parking in the downtown area has no time limits and there are no charges to the user. As Downtown flourishes and the parking demands grow, the current situation of free and immediately accessible parking will have to be modified. Some parking spaces may be time restricted, while others may continue to be free. In the long term, a variety of parking options will have to accommodate visitors, customers, and employees.

    - *PARKING NEUTRAL* simply means that existing parking spaces that are in existence at the time of this report shall be replaced along with the additional parking spaces for the anticipated project needs. This concept assures that the existing inventory of spaces plus the projected needs of the future development will not adversely affect the Downtown area. The exact number of existing and active parking spaces, the "occupancy" rate, and other factors are best determined by a comprehensive parking survey as part of the management plan.

- A Central Plaza remains a priority in order to support Downtown as a destination for large scale community activities such as the vibrant Farmers and Crafts Market, SalsaFest and Winterfest. Considering the difficulties with the originally proposed site, the identification of alternative appropriate plaza sites remains crucial to the vitality of the urban environment.

- Rounding out the highest priority projects, it is recommended that the City redefine a current position to act as a Downtown Coordinator, *dedicated only to downtown issues*, to oversee the continued implementation of the 2005 Master Plan and the resolution of unique urban situations such as formulating comprehensive policies regarding parking, public art acquisition and display, and the downtown overlay zone standards. Such a position would centralize aspects of downtown

concerns – marketing, arts and culture, codes and permits, etc. Additional education of other departmental staff in the distinct issues affecting the district such as existing building codes and regulations would benefit the downtown progress. In the future with continued development downtown, other solutions – additional staff positions, increased attention, the development of a Redevelopment Authority - need to be considered and explored.

The continued success of downtown revitalization is reliant on the **establishment of updated city policies**. As the area continues to develop, new issues confront our existing structures. Recognizing this, the city needs to remain proactive with solutions to potential new situations. Downtown represents a unique and distinct district with specific needs. A comprehensive parking management plan that addresses both current and future needs must be developed, especially with the imminent re-opening of North Main Street. The built environment downtown presents special opportunities and challenges regarding building codes and design; the current downtown overlay district needs review and updating. Furthermore, with the development of new public spaces, the city will need to adopt a policy for public art, including issues of funding, selection and maintenance.

Following these initial recommendations, the next tier of priorities includes creating **small public parks**, reconfiguring **Water and Church Streets** into 2-way traffic, and implementing a **cohesive cityscape** through landscaping, streetscaping and signage. Each of these projects would improve the experience of downtown by providing easier access, a recognizable and legible community, and a cohesive environment. While the major priorities provide strong anchors – parking, plaza and city staff - these next projects would continue to unify and reweave the fabric of Downtown.

In our discussions, several independent topics surfaced repeatedly. One of the overarching elements is the honoring **the past commitments to specific public memorials** such as *La Entrada*, the Gustafson memorial and others. Area-wide **provision of wireless internet access** would benefit multiple stakeholders from the Farmers and Crafts Market vendors to businesses to visitors. In keeping with the civic leadership evidenced in the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design)-certified City Hall, our recommendation is to emphasize **progressive infrastructure** that anticipates the future with LEED construction projects, electric car charging stations in public parking, and Wi-Fi, all of which will attract a diverse and active community. Promoting and maintaining enthusiasm and awareness of the myriad successes and opportunities in the downtown area will ensure that past efforts and current recommendations move forward.

The need is great to continue and enhance what has already been accomplished. The City has led this

process with numerous studies for improvements, Master Plans, and more recently, the public funding of infrastructure improvements of more than $6.4 million on Main Street reconstruction. City investment in the downtown is illustrated further by consolidating public buildings, both governmental and cultural, in the downtown area. Private involvement has followed with several new restaurants, art galleries and an increase in private project investment ($1.28 million for the period 9.2008-3.2010). Further collaboration includes the partnership with the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership, the Dona Ana Arts Council and the City to develop the Camuñez building. Recognizing the dynamic urban potential, the Dona Ana Community College Pre-Architecture program has been utilizing the downtown area and Main Street as the site for various student architectural explorations. Additional positive activity in the downtown includes projects like the future Intermodal Transit Center on Amador Avenue and Alameda Boulevard. Public-private art collaborations have developed with the Rio Grande Theater, the numerous art galleries, and cultural festivals such as the Downtown Rambles. The critical mass necessary for a thriving urban downtown is blossoming from all of these actions.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Downtown is both cause and effect of civic pride. At its best, Downtown represents local culture, comprised of diverse traditions, artistic and entrepreneurial talents, and the blood and sweat and dreams which span and ennoble all the generations who call it home. No matter how far flung the annexations, no matter the pressures of burgeoning population, Main Street holds the heartbeat of Las Cruces. That heart has wearied over the past several decades; the subcommittee has come to see revitalization as imperative. Economic development – sustained and sustainable – represents the basis for revitalization. Grants come and grants go, loans must be repaid. Government can and must provide infrastructures both physical and regulatory. Quality of life attracts both transient dollars and permanent residence. In the end, however, it is the community that pays its own way that endures. Economic development is not the icing on the cake, it is the cake itself.

Various aspects of the Downtown need to be considered when promoting economic development:

Parking, transportation, and the ease of access. A downtown can be beautiful, have all of the planning to incorporate multi-use properties, museums, art galleries, events, etc., but none of these will actually succeed if the target audience can't get there. Transportation to and from major points within the city, including NMSU, and the ability of clients to park and spend time at any or several of the downtown venues is a major consideration by not only the customer, but also the investor looking at locating in that district.

Tax Increment Developmental District. The TIDD is devoted to development and improvement of infrastructure - the roundabouts at the northern and southern ends of Main Street are present direct improvements but far from last. As economic development prospers, the TIDD will also grow and the infrastructure possibilities it offers--independent of governmental largesse.

Marketing. Marketing of existing and forthcoming amenities would best be achieved through a public/private partnership with the structure to utilize volunteer or contracted talent.

Arts and Culture. The city has a large component of arts and cultural venues downtown. Initiatives such as the Arts and Culture District Designation, confirms public commitment and helps to entice investors to an area that has long term growth potential.

Public Spaces. Outdoor public places should be seen as increasing the pleasure of residents and visitors alike, making Downtown a place folks want to be – a vibrant active community.

Housing. A city whose core is comprised solely of government offices and financial institutions is a ghost town after five o'clock and on weekends. The street life is created by the residents. Lights on in their apartments above at night dispel the feelings of a void often experienced in a financial or

government district that has no residents. Their existence creates a "neighborhood" which adds soul to an otherwise austere district. Housing is the "rooftops" that businesses count when using demographics and densities to determine whether or not they should consider a community in which to locate.

Farmers and Crafts Market. Often this event is the first experience travelers have with our community. This can be a tremendously valuable tool to promote tourism and even relocation to Las Cruces if the market is fostered and allowed to grow through the support of not only the city meeting the market's needs, but also meeting the needs of the merchants who are impacted by the large influx of people during these times.

Zoning and Codes. Need to be clear, streamlined, concise, and business friendly to the unique property layout found downtown. These codes need to be sensitive to the existing fabric of an area that has evolved over time as opposed to a vacant swath of land being developed for the first time. An understandable process of where to go and what to expect is critical to enticing investors and encouraging improvement of existing properties.

City of Las Cruces 2040—As the Plan progresses toward and achieves implementation, the effect on the community in general and Downtown in particular will be two-fold: manageable addition to urban density, both economic and, especially, housing. Both can only maximize the center of Las Cruces as a destination rather than an afterthought.

ARTS AND CULTURE

The Arts and Culture Subcommittee recommends that the City Council adopt a concept that was initiated in a White Paper for The Mayors' Institute on City Design, a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the United States Conference of Mayors and American Architectural Foundation in 2010.

This concept is called **"creative placemaking"** from the report of the same name "Creative Placemaking" by Ann Markusen (Markusen Economic Research Services) and Anne Gadwa (Metris Arts Consulting). They write, "In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired."

The 2005 Las Cruces Downtown Revitalization Plan designated "Arts, Cultural, Entertainment and Specialty Retail Districts". Much has been accomplished in creating a focused "arts and culture" district since 2005. Some of these successes include:

- Continued growth of the Farmers and Crafts Market and its national and state recognitions.
- The completion of *La Placita* allowing for an alternative performance/event venue.
- The visual and artistic growth of the museum system to include the location of the Natural History Museum downtown and securing national and regional exhibits.
- The successful first Friday Arts Hops and now the addition of the Camino Real Arts Hop in the Mesquite Historic Neighborhood.
- Yearly events like the SalsaFest and Winterfest in partnership with the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership (DLCP) and the historic neighborhoods, Dona Ana Arts Tuesday events, as well as community events like Las Posadas, creating Main Street as a viable community venue.
- Acquisition of the Camuñez Building by the City to be managed and maintained by the Dona Ana Arts Council and the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership.
- Continued improvement of infrastructure: roads, utilities, and signage on Main Street and the Downtown.
- Future designation of Downtown as an Arts and Culture District.
- City partnerships with facility developments like the Amador Hotel and the Court Youth Center Arts Complex.
- Addition of new private businesses and restaurants.

However, we encourage the City to further develop "arts and culture" in what "creative placemaking calls a more 'decentralized portfolio' of space. These would include fostering "...entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, spin-off new products and services, and attract and retain unrelated businesses and skilled workers." These are livability and economic development outcomes that would interest the private sector, retail businesses and mixed-housing opportunities and bring arts and culture consumers and advocates to Main Street for varied opportunities.

Recommendations

The Central Plaza – continue to revisit and review the opportunity to have a civic plaza that could attract different types of cultural and other events attracting many people to Downtown. Some of these events might include dog shows, concerts, bike rallies, and a number of other community events. Part of the suggestion includes an event policy with an affordable rental fee for community use.

We also entertain the concept of smaller parks, "Pocket Plazas," interspersed throughout the Downtown incorporated into new building sites like parking lots. The top of a parking garage could become a venue and a green space for a number of events throughout the year in our climate-friendly environment.

We would like to acknowledge a recent report prepared by the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership Design Committee that also mentions small parks. "Small parks will increase the appreciation of the Downtown as a destination and as a place of sophistication. Thus, small parks add value to the real estate downtown reducing the need for infrastructure. They will also require less of those trying to coordinate land exchanges and sales. Some of these could be used for locating the Paz monument, *La Entrada,* the Gustafson Fountain and other sculptural and monumental or memorial pieces that might be better appreciated if not all concentrated in one civic plaza location." The report suggests seven potential existing sites in the Downtown.

Funding/Additional Revenue Sources – The following suggestions need more research to fully articulate their potential and their viability. However, the subcommittee realizes that the City and the community must work together to create new and different revenue streams. In addition, a reassessment of City staff time (allocation) might be looked at to support the Arts and Culture growth from a concentrated grant writing and business development viewpoint and working on an on-going basis with established arts groups creating collaboration and partnerships in the Arts and Culture growth.

Funding possibilities:

A bond issue designating a percentage of tax dollars for arts and culture/downtown/community uses
Public/private partnerships
Federal/State Initiatives
Gross Receipts

Staffing – It is recommended that the City reassess their current arts and culture staffing to see if repositioning or new positions are to be added – even in a tight budget environment.

Create a city position to coordinate the new Arts and Culture District
City review of current arts positions and their job descriptions
Review Farmers and Crafts Market position as a complementary focus to Arts and Culture

Use of Main Street – Minus a civic plaza, the use or closing of Main Street during several events serves as a Civic Plaza and this may create potential difficulties to the businesses, traffic flow, and the Farmers and Crafts Market. As part of the parking management plan, City staff needs to formulate a policy for closing Main Street - addressing issues such as how often this might happen, the impact on downtown businesses, and conditions for events.

In addition, the committee encourages the rethinking of Main Street, once the entire street is opened, to bring back some events such as festivals and parades. The idea is to view Downtown as a focal point of activity.

Challenge – Continued and sustained communication with the community and general public about what is happening, what has happened, and what will happen is desperately needed. There is still a "lack" in the public's mind to think of Downtown as a destination and center of activity. We suggest a promotional strategy be created with input from businesses, artists, and stakeholders who benefit. A large campaign of coming together for the 'greater good of all' needs to be created.

Policy – Policy frameworks and networking around 'creative placemaking' need to be built. "A new policy platform could link creative actors from multiple sectors, local agency missions, and levels of government in a visible and concerted initiative to encourage *creative placemaking* and cultural industry innovation."

Evaluation – An evaluation component could be built into new efforts as a condition to ensure more effective outcomes with all aspects of the City working arts and culture groups and projects.

PUBLIC PLACES

Open Spaces provide public "living rooms" in the urban setting. The design and location of these spaces are important determinants in creating successful pedestrian environments. In general, the type and character of the urban open space should be influenced by the desired function of the space, surrounding uses and the potential users of the space. In addition, amenities provided within open spaces can enhance the connectivity of the various design elements making up these spaces. Amenities included benches, chairs, tables, planters and landscaping. Public Art will enliven open spaces and buildings adding to the cultural vibrancy of our Downtown. There is a general lack of gathering places in the Downtown District. The District could benefit from gathering places created as public or private space in the form of small parks, paths and plazas.

The Central Plaza and Smaller Parks - The Civic Plaza area, as originally envisioned in the 1994 R/UDAT and 2005 Master Plan, would be the exciting urban gathering place in the heart of Downtown. It would be our downtown's "living room" and would connect the office, government, retail, arts, and entertainment, and restaurant development as the Downtown market matures. The Plaza itself would be a well-landscaped public park where people can meet, relax, exercise and enjoy the amenities of a wonderful urban space similar to a traditional southwest plaza. Visitors, residents, and employees would enjoy music and dance performances, as well as arts, crafts and cultural festivals. The location of the Civic Plaza may change due to economics and opportunities; however, the basic underpinning concepts remain.

Opportunities abound for additional open spaces, small pocket parks, and pedestrian pathways. Guidelines for these spaces should be as follows:

Appropriate:

- Open spaces which function as transitions between the public sidewalks and streets and the use of the property (residences, offices, stores, etc.).
- Clearly defined entrances into open spaces with direct access from adjacent streets and adequate buffering from vehicular traffic.
- Open spaces that are visible and inviting to the pedestrian.
- Open spaces which utilize an aesthetically coordinated marriage between hardscape (buildings, planters, lighting, walls, fences, paving, etc.) and landscape elements (trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, etc.). Large open spaces broken into smaller, human-scale spaces through the use of changes in grade, planters, pots, landscaping, sculpture, fences, walls, etc.
- Open spaces designed to relate and connect to adjacent properties.
- Formal or informal seating appropriate to the scale and function of the open space. Seating may

include park benches, the tops of garden/planter walls, monumental stairs, etc.

The location of public art in accessible open spaces designed and located so as to enrich the pedestrian experience and create a stronger sense of place.

Planning for a performance area/stage, whether portable or permanent.

Inappropriate:

Open spaces that are not easily accessible from public streets or that become unsafe "dead" spots.

Lack of seating, shade, and clearly defined perimeters.

Open space that does not relate to the uses and buildings surrounding it.

Paths: Pedestrian and Bicycle Paths - Existing pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the Downtown District is currently provided by both the public and private sectors. Public sidewalks are contiguous and in good condition, and private realm connections too are provided and maintained.

The observed disconnect in pedestrian and bicycle circulation exists between public and private realms as well as between individually owned private properties. Landscaping along pathways is sparse and shade is infrequent, making the district visually and physically disconnected. There is a lack of contiguous development fronting along pedestrian paths creating a non-cohesive "street wall" which is typically necessary for contributing to a hospitable urban pedestrian environment. Development setbacks are staggered and parking often occurs adjacent to the pedestrian realm, and district crosswalks are widely spaced demonstrating a lack of emphasis on the pedestrian.

Public Art and Memorials - In satisfying the mission of the Subcommittee, it became very apparent that plazas and open spaces would be appropriate for downtown public art opportunities and memorials. New policies and honoring past commitments. For those unfamiliar with some of the history downtown, there have been promises made and memorial funds dedicated to the Main Street of downtown Las Cruces.

The first project was a free standing art mural entitled *La Entrada* (The Gateway). This was a dream of Dr. Raymond Paz, a prominent eye doctor and respected community figure. The mural depicted the entry of Don Juan de Onate along the Camino Real and the artist was the local muralist, Tony Pennock. The Paz family donated the funds for the mural and the Sister City of Lerdo gave the granite base. The mural was torn down as the middle section of Main Street came under construction. The Paz family and the artist were promised that the mural would be rebuilt and relocated downtown.

Another opportunity for a Main Street project came when the Gustafson family requested that memorial funds for their parents be dedicated to downtown. Native born Colonel Henry Gustafson was a decorated war hero, a prominent business man and served on the City Council during the latter years of his life. His total passion was to open Main Street and see his beloved downtown revitalized and he served on the Board of Directors of Las Cruces Downtown from its inception to his death. His widow, Caroline passed away soon after Henry, but had visited with City staff and made her wishes known that she very much wanted a water feature/splash pool downtown. The family concurs that the significant memorials money, plus a match from the family, be dedicated to a downtown fountain.

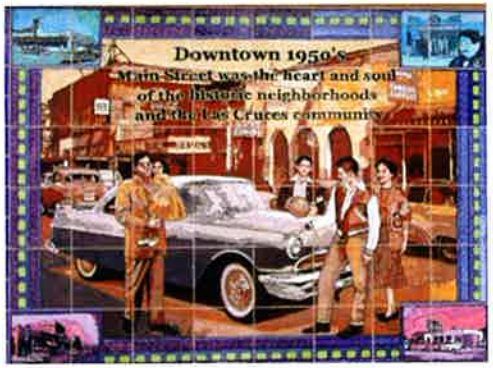
Along with those funds, the family of the late Cynthia Ott-Askew asked that her memorials be added to the Gustafson funds. Cynthia was a pioneer member of the Las Cruces Downtown organization and died a tragic death at a very young age.

The Ad Hoc Committee also discussed a memorial downtown for the late Senator Frank O. Papen. Consensus has been clear that there is not one building, street or monument dedicated to Senator Papen other than the one he and his first wife, Julie, erected for their small son who was fatally injured in a car accident (the Pieta at the Wells Fargo plaza). Senator Papen was a larger than life historic figure, a successful businessman who guided commerce in Las Cruces, and as a state senator, championed education at New Mexico State University, water rights on the border, agriculture in the north and south valley, and indeed influenced the whole fabric of life in Dona Ana County. His second wife, Senator Mary Kay Papen, has been at the forefront of all downtown efforts. It is only fitting that Frank Papen be remembered on Main Street.

Both the Papen and Gustafson families are in mutual accord that a combined memorial would be most acceptable for all.

These projects lead our Committee to suggest that the City needs to explore and establish a public art policy. City staff has done some preliminary thinking on this idea. A One Percent for Art has been an established program at the State level for many years (see Appendix) and local community has resources who have served on both the State and Federal Arts Acquisition projects over time. Cities across the nation have set aside at least a portion for Art in Public Places. Public art will further the vitality and pride in downtown and will draw tourists and townspeople alike to the cultural properties and ambiance on Main Street.

A City public art policy can include guidelines for art acquisition, art selection committee criteria, and

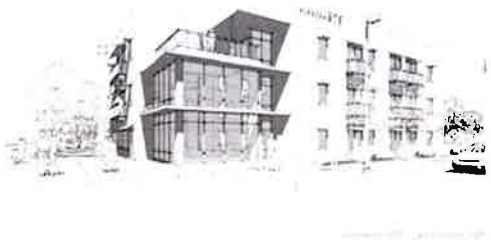


installation and maintenance of public art. Some of the issues surrounding *La Entrada* and the bronze sculptures dotted downtown can be avoided. A memorials policy also needs to be addressed by the City in order to accept monetary donations or art objects which would be placed downtown. Memorials lend interest and honor to historical figures who have contributed so much to this community... however, a haphazard unregulated approach can lead to costly errors and a loss of good will for all involved.

This Subcommittee sees a common thread for both public art and memorials and can see the benefit of merging these efforts. This committee would also be pleased to further assist and serve the City in formulating policies and procedures for public art and memorials.

HOUSING

A revitalized downtown that is economically and culturally attractive will have a human presence at all hours of the day. One of the ways this will be accomplished is by ensuring that there is a wide range of housing options available downtown. The Subcommittee perceives that development of housing downtown and environs can be both market-driven and economically catalytic; thoughtful planning and careful use of available resources can bring housing in to full play as part of Downtown revitalization, as full complement to the infrastructure and commercial improvements. For the central downtown, the selection could include apartments, townhouses, lofts, and condominiums. Such developments should be "parking neutral," spatially harmonious with existing properties, and insofar as financial markets allow, they should serve mixed-uses and mixed-incomes.



The market research conducted by Robert Charles Lesser & Co. and Research & Polling for the 2005 Sites Southwest study indicated a significant interest in locating downtown. It is important that there be a range of prices for housing. One explanation of national trends in housing and transportation is set forth in a November, 2010 article in *Reuters*:

> "The twist is that the market is demanding different transportation improvements and housing than we have been building for the past two generations, highway-based single-family housing on the ever expanding fringe of our metro areas. This type of housing was the epicenter of the housing and mortgage crash. What is needed is alternative transportation (rail transit, bike, and walking infrastructure), as the two recent rounds of the U.S. DOT's TIGER grants have provided. In addition, the real estate industry must re-tool to build what the market now wants, *walkable development*, whether in the central cities or the suburbs."

The timely construction of a parking garage will enable currently City-owned surface lots to be sold for development and thus "graduation" to the City's tax roll. Adequate and convenient parking is an essential component of successful housing as well as commercial development. Use of a mixed use commercial and residential wrap of a parking structure not only provides ample parking for downtown housing and businesses, but also helps transition the "walls" between the existing residential neighborhoods and downtown.

The development of residential, as well as professional and retail use of downtown and environs must be *market-driven*, cognizant of financial realities, and balanced with concern for the building of an economically and culturally diverse yet stable community.

With increasing awareness and appreciation for alternative building methods, two options should be considered in planning for downtown housing:

Reuse and repurpose of existing structures should be explored. For example, loft residences located above retail or offices at street level would enhance a sense of place on Main Street.

Green building should be promoted as a sustainable and smart construction choice that will result in energy savings and improved living possibilities.

Both of these options will increase the sustainability consciousness in this community as well as possibly bring additional funding opportunities.

Plans should focus on accommodating the needs and interests of the variety of potential residents: families, childless couples, seniors, beginning workers, among others. The proximity of 1 public and 2 charter schools can be used to attract families. Young people and seniors can benefit from the availability of theatres, art galleries, restaurants, a lively entertainment scene, the Farmers and Crafts Market, and community festivals. The addition of area-wide Wi-Fi would greatly enhance the attractiveness of the downtown area as a place to live, work, and play.

Both the Alameda-Depot and the Mesquite Historic Districts must be seen as integral components that energize Downtown Las Cruces. Focal points and physical connections to these adjacent neighborhoods should be important factors in a Master Plan revision. Additionally, both the Intermodal Transit Center and the coming implementation of El Paseo Re-Visioned corridor assure a demand for residential, commercial, and professional space that far exceeds the Central Business District alone; planning and execution alike must proceed seamlessly between these important hubs. Finally, variously sized and located public spaces downtown could provide the opportunities suggested in the 1994 R/UDAT study for housing to be located adjacent to a plaza as well as providing additional connectivity and relevance to the adjacent districts and the larger community.

There is a virtual "government wall" between downtown and the original Townsite/Mesquite Neighborhood, while a similar business/school/church "wall" almost as effectively cuts downtown off from the Alameda Depot Neighborhood. Some planning might effectively break through these "walls," but perhaps efforts to reinsert housing downtown can more successfully accomplish this if certain city owned lots downtown are actively promoted for housing. Additionally, certain properties that may be traded could be designated as attractive additional options for housing. This would in no way preclude the possibility of lofts in existing buildings or the possibility that sites currently being used for different purposes could be converted to housing. However, this is a concession to the greater likelihood that housing will occur in locations currently being used as parking lots or where existing buildings may be razed.

The Subcommittee perceives that the development of housing downtown can be both *market driven* and *economically catalytic* if the City helps create a fertile environment for it. TIDD resources could be used to build streets and parking structures as well as create the Civic Plaza, parks of various sizes and other downtown amenities considered to be infrastructure. Thoughtful planning and careful use of other available resources can bring housing into full play as part of the revitalization of downtown and in full complement to the infrastructure and commercial improvements. This opportunity to develop residential property downtown should be embraced.

FARMERS and CRAFTS MARKET

As one of the persistent downtown presences and a success story we can build on, the Farmers and Crafts Market has been in existence now for forty years and is a draw for out of town visitors as well as for many area residents. A recent national survey placed the Las Cruces Market as #1 in New Mexico and #9 in the nation. In a nutshell, it serves very well to showcase what both downtown and Las Cruces have to offer.

Several things are critical for the market to continue its draw as the primary and sustaining event downtown. All recommendations and suggestions made in this section are with regard to not only the market but also to other events that will serve to enhance downtown.

The first priority for downtown and for the Market is for the Market to remain downtown and primarily on Main Street. Growth of the Market will potentially double as downtown improves and matures. Areas to accommodate this growth need to be identified and those areas need to be outfitted with the infrastructure that will serve the market as well as other events that will occur downtown. There are currently potential areas on the North, South, and middle sections of downtown Main Street. Attractive open spaces and a civic plaza are also necessary and recommended, not only for Farmers Market but because a civic plaza is "a major civic element" and an "important regional tradition." (2005 report)

A current problem for market and other events is insufficient parking. A parking structure needs to be built sooner than later. This structure will benefit the Market on market days and will also benefit current and potential businesses in the downtown. The Subcommittee recommends that the surface parking lot at Water and Griggs Streets as the best available site for this structure. It is centrally located and large enough to accommodate a good sized parking structure. Parking designs exist that serve parking needs, are attractive, and can provide revenue through gross receipt taxes as well as from parking fees. Certainly, a carefully chosen design should be used.

A dedicated city staff person is essential for the success of the Market. City involvement is the unbiased management that saved the Market from self-destruction in the past. As the Market continues to grow and the needs to expand, vendor fees should be increased and that a portion of the increase be designated to the city to help maintain city staff dedicated solely to market and to other events downtown. The remaining increase in funds can be applied to extra advertising and promoting ever-increasing Market special events and needs such as extra portable toilet rentals.

Equally important issues for market and other downtown events are infrastructure and amenities. Opportunities for stage areas need to be provided. Stages should be temporary, but they will require adequate electricity. Another recommendation is that the designated market areas include permanent shade structures equipped with photovoltaic cells for the generation of electricity. Additionally, 220 volt power needs to be available throughout the Main Street area, and might be located at the base of all street lights. Such an amenity is useful beyond the Market vendors and entertainers, serving Downtown to meet various event requirements. Necessary creature comforts include sufficient restrooms for all. The addition of Wi-Fi to a broad area of downtown is the final accoutrement to enhance and modernize the downtown experience and will entice citizens to enjoy the planned open space and civic plaza. It would attract young people to downtown and would also be beneficial to FM vendors who increasingly accept credit and debit cards. Market growth has brought credit card fraud because currently all cards cannot be immediately checked.

Another important recommendation would be to construct or purchase permanent yet moveable road-closure barricades if the Market is to remain on the street and not in one or more plazas. Current cost of bi-weekly manual placement of wooden barricades by contract workers is approximately $6,000/year.

PLANNING, ZONING & PERMITS

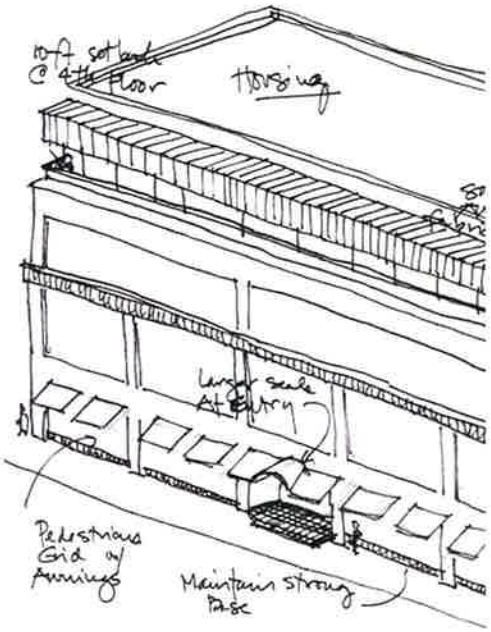
There is reluctance by owners of existing buildings and businesses to make repairs or improvements due to a genuine fear of the unknown. Much of this concern could be avoided by publication and distribution of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document giving specific information about how the building code views specifications involved in repairs, remodeling, renovation and change of use for the existing downtown buildings. This should be a living document that is constantly updated based on City staff experience and our constantly changing world. Some examples of questions are:

What renovations can be done without a permit?

If electric circuits are added or changed, how extensive are the requirements to the rest of the electric system relative to current code?

If a single bathroom is renovated, what effect does that have on the bathroom and on the balance of the building?

At what level does the repair of any system require a permit? Answer should be specific to the system.



Downtown Las Cruces is a unique situation in the city for the Planning, Zoning and Permitting process. Currently, from anecdotes, the permit process seems inconsistent and cumbersome. Given the complex nature of the Downtown environment, and both exemptions and incentives in the current Las Cruces codes, the following are recommendations for streamlining the permitting process:

Pursue a more consistent and efficient process for plan review and permitting. There are examples in other municipalities of our size and larger. These examples show excellent results without any increase in staff utilization.

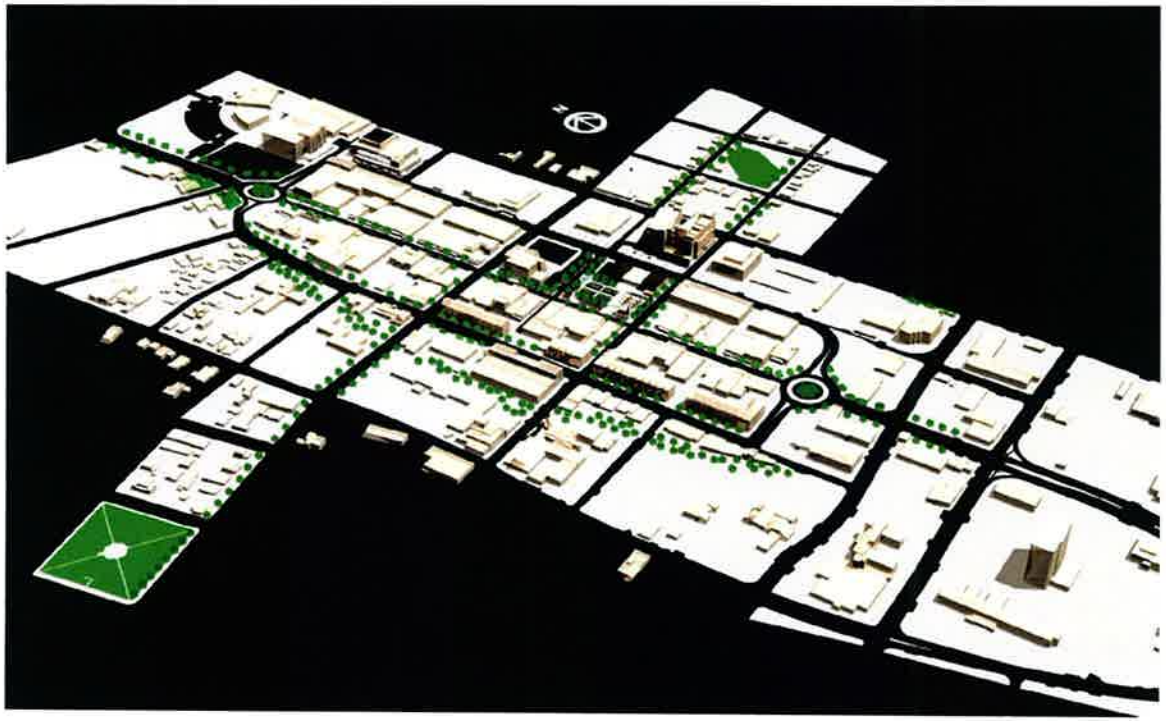
Recommended pre-submittal meetings to enhance the comfort and ease in the permitting process by increasing communication between the various parties - owner, architect/ engineer, contractor, and City staff. These meetings should help all parties to resolve issues and questions early in the process, thereby reducing conflict, increasing clarification of codes and policies. This approach should be beneficial to everyone involved by saving time and resources as well as relieving stress at all levels.

Staff should be given more latitude on both zoning and codes issues although a formal process needs to remain available in the case of a dispute.

The key to all of these recommendations is a knowledgeable and dedicated "Downtown Project Coordinator" who works directly with the owners prior to and during the project. The Coordinator should

have the ability to authorize exceptions and/or variances where necessary as long as safety standards are maintained.

The Revitalization of Las Cruces Downtown should be a priority and both streamlining and clarifying the permitting process for Downtown projects would lead to an improved and more efficient process throughout the entire City.



PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

The recommendations of this subcommittee concern the policy recommendation **to formulate and establish a comprehensive parking management plan** and **the consequent building of a parking garage**. While the management plan is being formulated, any development of currently public-owned land used as parking lots needs to be "**parking neutral**" to protect the current downtown stakeholders.

A *Parking Management Plan* is both a short and long term project. The City must formulate a policy as to how the current and future parking needs shall be managed. At the present time, all parking in the Downtown area has no time limits and there are no charges to the user. As Downtown flourishes and the parking demands grow, the current situation of free and immediately accessible parking will have to be modified. Some parking spaces may be time restricted (ex. 2 hr. parking) while in the long term there will have to be metered or hourly charges. It would be best if this plan was phased in gradually in order to give the citizens time to become accustomed to the concept of parking management – metered or paid parking, walking distances, etc. Most pressing, early on in this project would be to have a plan in place by the time the north end of Main Street is open. For example, the limited number of spaces on Main Street might be 2 hr. parking. In whatever form this is decided, ordinances would have to be passed and enforcement would have to be delegated. Other consideration need to be explored by the city for charges either in metered lots or the eventual parking garages. The Federal General Services Administration has been clear in their attitude that they will not pay for parking so long as free parking exists in the area.

The concept of *Parking Neutrality* means that existing public parking spaces that are in existence at the time of this report need to be replaced along with provision of the additional parking spaces for the anticipated project needs. The concept means that if an existing parking lot is sold by the city for development and that lot has 175 spaces and the development on that lot will generate the need for 100 spaces, 275 spaces will need to be provideded. This idea assures that the existing inventory of spaces plus the projected needs of the future development will not adversely affect the Downtown area. The exact number of active parking spaces, the "occupancy" rate, and other factors are best determined by a comprehensive parking survey as part of the management plan.

The asset that drives the revitalization of downtown is the future development of the city-owned surface parking lots. It has always been the vision of the City that these lots would be used for commercial, residential, and public spaces. However, parking spaces used for these purposes must have alternative replacement solutions envisioned, so as not to strangle the current stakeholders in the downtown area.

For this reason, the subcommittee recommends that the City move toward construction of the first parking structure. Conversion of public surface areas to other uses requires the parking neutrality issue is maintained and remedied in the near term. It is possible that subsequent parking structures might be developed with private sector funds; however, the City may have to take the initial step in order to move revitalization to the next level.

The following pages replicate the major transportation and parking elements in the 2005 Master Plan, and then add the specific recommendations of this subcommittee.

The 2005 Master Plan recommended the following elements concerning parking and transportation:

<u>1. Improve Vehicular Access to Businesses in the Downtown Area</u>

a) Restore two-way traffic and parallel parking on Main Street
b) Reopen Organ Street
c) Restore two-way traffic on Church and Water Streets
d) Develop an effective system for visitors and employees to find their way around

<u>2. Improve Pedestrian Accessibility to the Downtown Area</u>

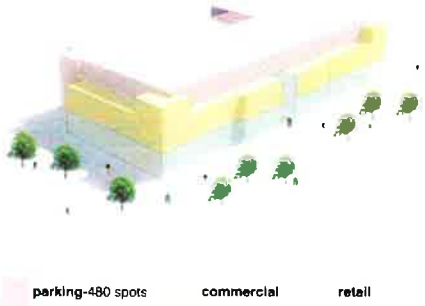
a) Enhance vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods
b) Improve Lighting in Pedestrian Areas
c) Improve signage and "Way-Finding"

<u>3. Improve the quality of Downtown Parking</u>

a) Resolve conflicts between employee and visitor parking
b) Maximize on-street parking
c) Build parking structures to replace develop parking lots

<u>4. Improve Transit Access to the Downtown Area</u>

a) Evaluate locating a proposed transit center in the Downtown Area
b) Provide transit access to Downtown from the NMSU campus



The Master Plan also listed three Phasing Scenarios, of which Scenario One had the primary goal of opening all of Main Street as soon as possible. *This is actively being implemented.*

Scenario One of the 2005 Master Plan suggests the following sequence for the Transportation and Parking elements. (Please note that, except for Item 1, elements not related directly to transportation and parking are not listed below.)

a) Construction of the Federal Courthouse and both phases of the new downtown Plaza

b) Open Main Street from Lohman Street to Picacho Avenue, including all intersecting "Callecitas" and the construction of the new Roundabouts as gateways to Downtown
c) Conversion of the one way streets on Church and Water Streets and the construction of a new parking structure at the southwest corner of Griggs Avenue and Church Street.
d) Construction of the connecting streetscapes on Las Cruces, Organ, and Griggs Avenue
e) Construction of the proposed retail residential and parking structure building on the west side of Water Street at Griggs

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommended revisions to the JULY 2005 MASTER PLAN are italicized below.

<u>1. Improve Vehicular Access to Businesses in the Downtown Area</u>

a) Restore two-way traffic and parallel parking on Main Street. *This is being accomplished now. It is recommended that parking on Main Street have time limits that are enforced, in order to make spaces available for retail customers.*
b) Reopen Organ Street. *Construction of La Placita makes this option no longer practical – Suggest elimination of this item.*
c) Restore two-way traffic on Church and Water Streets. *As money becomes available*
d) Develop an effective system for visitors and employees to find their way around.
e) Water Street should be extended (reopened) south to intersect Lohman Avenue.
f) The "Callecitas", May, Hadley, and Court Ave should be made one-way with parking in the downtown core if sufficient Right of Way exists.

<u>2. Improve Pedestrian Accessibility to the Downtown Area</u>

a) Enhance vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods. *It is recommended that shade structures and trees must be an integral part of the initial construction of all streetscapes in order to maintain a pedestrian friendly environment, even in July and August.*
b) Improve Lighting in Pedestrian Areas
c) Improve Signage and "Way-Finding"

<u>3. Improve the quality of Downtown Parking</u>

a) Resolve conflicts between employee and visitor parking
b) Maximize on-street parking
c) Build parking structures to replace developed parking lots
d) All new construction on existing public-owned land used for parking must be parking neutral until a parking management plan is in place.

4. Improve Transit Access to the Downtown Area

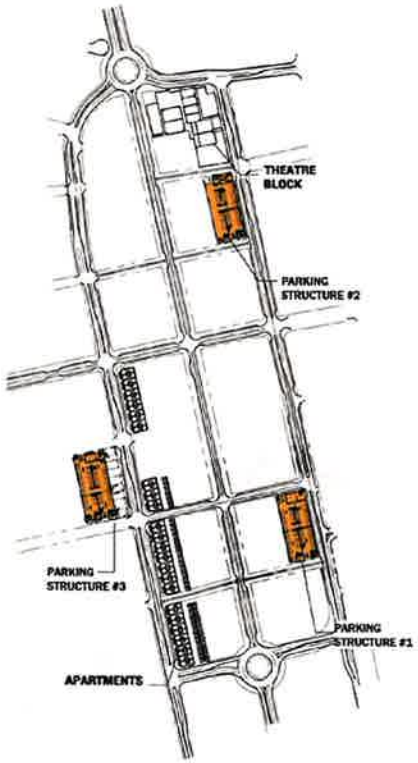
a) Evaluate locating a proposed transit center in the Downtown Area. *This is presently being done at the southwest corner of Alameda Boulevard and Lohman Avenue.*

b) Provide transit access to Downtown from the NMSU campus

The Ad Hoc Subcommittee recommends the following revisions to the sequences outlined in Scenario One of the JULY 2005 MASTER PLAN.

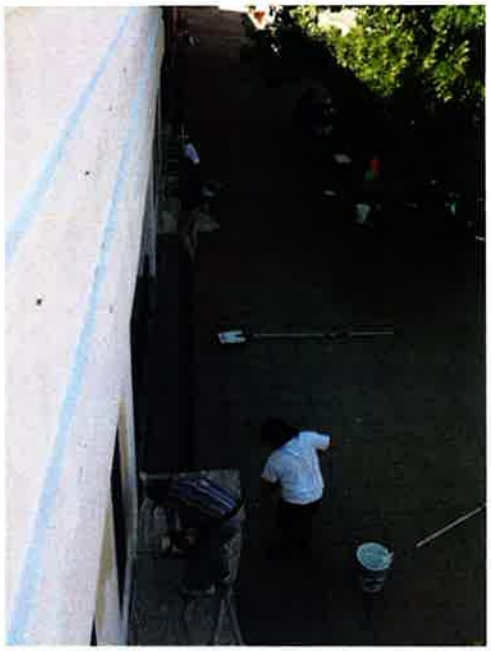
1. Construction of the Federal Courthouse and both phases of the new downtown Plaza *Construction of the Courthouse is complete. Construction of the Plaza is covered in other areas of this report.*
2. Open Main Street from Lohman to Picacho, including all intersecting "Callecitas" and the construction of the new Roundabouts as gateways to Downtown *Main Street construction, including roundabouts is being accomplished now. It is recommended "Callecitas" come later in the sequencing.*
3. Conversion of the one-way streets on Church and Water Streets and the construction of a new parking structure at the south west corner of Griggs Avenue and Church Street. *It is recommended that the first parking structure be built on the parking lot on the west side of Water Street at Griggs. Construction of the parking garage, sooner rather than later, will remove the "double burden" of replacing parking spaces + generated spaces, thus making more private projects feasible while not harming the existing downtown merchants. The reasons for constructing the parking lot on the west side of Water Street at Griggs first are listed below*
   a. *This parking lot will give the "biggest bang for the buck" and will make almost twice as many parking spaces (600+/-) immediately available for development.*
   b. *The parking study by Walker Consultants recommended this location as the first priority because the site "has excellent dimensions for an efficient garage footprint"*
   c. *The site is located within 500 ft. of the center of the downtown area and within 2½ blocks of the new federal courthouse.*
   d. *While the site is slightly more convenient for parking on the south part of downtown, the site is still within reasonable walking distance for the north part of downtown, especially on the west side away from the current City Hall parking.*

   Conversion of the one-way streets is also a significant cost and may be delayed until later in the sequencing and be done in conjunction with extending (reopening) Water Street south to intersect with Lohman Ave.



4. Construction of the connecting streetscapes on Las Cruces, Organ, and Griggs Avenue *It is recommended that the "Callecitas" be accomplished along with Griggs Ave. As mentioned previously, construction of the Organ streetscape as a connecting street is no longer practical.*

5. Construction of the proposed retail residential and parking structure building on the west side of Water Street at Griggs. *As mentioned previously, it is recommended that construction the parking structure on the west side of Water Street at Griggs be executed when funding priorities match.*



IMPLEMENTATION

Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation

Implementing a successful downtown revitalization effort is a complex task. This is especially true for downtown redevelopment, because there are many types of projects and a variety of public and private players. Three categories of Public Sector and Private Sector redevelopment that need to be undertaken for Las Cruces Downtown Revitalization to be successful are distributed between the City of Las Cruces, the Downtown Las Cruces Partnership and Private Sector Developers. The roles and responsibilities for the City and DLCP are noted below:

City of Las Cruces	Downtown Las Cruces Partnership
o Develop Parking Management Plan o Develop Central Plaza and Pocket Plazas o Consolidate City Staff Positions and define Role o Update Downtown Master Plan o Agency Coordination & Public Outreach o Public Infrastructure Improvements o Create Redevelopment and Developer Recruitment Packets o Project Review and Approval o Streamline Zoning and Code Updates o Attract Housing and Retail Developers o Economic Development Package and Incentives o TIDD District Management o TIDD Financial Manager/Overseer o Update Design Overlay o Detailed Planning and Studies o Manage and enhance Farmers and Crafts Market	o Business Retention and Recruitment o Marketing o Expand Special Events & Event Coordination o Enhance Communication with Business Owners & Operators o Increase Fundraising and Grants o Advocate for policy and Activity that supports Downtown o Increase Partnerships for Downtown Activities o Proceed with DAAC in Camunez Building Completion o Champion the Arts and Culture District o Coordinate Master Schedule for all Downtown Events

Recommended Next Steps by Category and Responsibility

This review of the 2005 Las Cruces Downtown Master Plan recommends to maintain the original goals and objectives and to continue the good work that has occurred, while moving in a new direction by playing a more active role in redevelopment. These updated Master Plan recommendations have outlined many types of initiatives to help achieve a revitalized downtown Las Cruces. The previous sections lay out recommended 'next steps' by categories and responsibilities. The updated plan has included recommendations on internal policies, code updates, redevelopment incentives, parking, business development, capital improvements and design. The goal of the recommendation is to address the revitalization of downtown in a holistic and integrated way.

The Downtown Revitalization Ad Hoc Committtee considers the existing Master Plan solidly based and the most important next steps to be the issue of the parking, the creation of a Central Plaza, and the consolidation of City Staff. The multi-faceted approach to redevelopment outlined throughout this plan is complex. It will take coordination, partnerships and on-going communication to complete the wide array of projects. It is critical that continued implementation of the Master Plan, with these updated recommendations, begin immediately, as the downtown core continues to pull life into itself. Periodoc reviews of the both the Plan and the progress, such as the formation of this committee, and regular public discussion, will maintain the awareness that the efforts have been worthwhile. Regular updates of TIDD progress and funding to the community and stakeholders will reinforce the positive change. The saying that "It's really happening" has become self evident.

The engagement of stakeholders during the process to update the Master Plan has proven the downtown is ready, willing and anxious to embark on this next phase of work in order to achieve the revitalized, livable and sustainable downtown business district envisioned.

APPENDICES

City of Las Cruces Resolution 10-250
TIDD Summary

Resources:

1994 R/UDAT Study
2004 Walker Parking Study
2005 Master Plan Sites Southwest
2011 Revisions to the Downtown Master Plan, DLCP Design Committee Suggestions

References:

Design Principles for Downtown Revitalization, Las Cruces, UNM DPAC
NM Percent for the Arts

RESOLUTION NO. 10-250

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF REVIEW OF AMENDEMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN, AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS RESOLUTION AND CHAPTER TWO OF THE LAS CRUCES MUNICIPAL CODE, 1997, AS AMENDED.

The City Council is informed that:

WHEREAS, City staff have been given direction to establish an ad hoc committee for the purposes of assisting in developing a review of the various and most recent downtown revitalization plans; and

WHEREAS, the ad hoc committee will work with staff in determining the scope and scale of such a study to be recommended to the City Council.

NOW THEREFORE, Be it resolved by the governing body of the City of Las Cruces:

I

THAT, a Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee is hereby established.

II

THAT, the Mayor of the City of Las Cruces is hereby authorized to appoint the members of the Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee in accordance with Sections 2-188 (a) and (b) and 2-1071 (a) and (b) of Chapter 2 of the Las Cruces Municipal Code, as amended, with the membership and duties as outlined in Exhibit "A" attached hereto and made part of this resolution.

III

THAT, the appointed Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee members must meet residency requirements as outlined in Section 2-188(a)(1) of Chapter 2 of the Las Cruces Municipal Code.

IV

THAT the Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee shall provide bi-monthly reports to the Council and conclude its review within six months of their first meeting.

EXHIBIT "A"

Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee
Description

Organization

The Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee shall elect a chair and vice-chair and shall hold said positions until replacement or vacancy requires re-election of officers or upon completion of Committee duties.

Meetings

The Committee shall hold regular meetings as deemed necessary in the accomplishment of assigned duties, but at minimum said meetings shall occur no less than once per month.

Voting

Actions by the Committee shall be determined by a majority vote of the seated committee membership.

Membership (18 members)

The Committee shall be comprised of one representative from:

- Las Esperanzas, Inc.
- North Mesquite Neighborhood
- Alameda Depot Civic Association
- Alameda Depot Neighborhood Organization
- The Las Cruces Downtown Partnership
- Downtown property owners
- Downtown business owners
- The Farmers and Crafts market
- The Dona Ana Arts Council
- The Greater Las Cruces Chamber of commerce
- The Las Cruces Hispano Chamber of Commerce
- The Green Chamber of Commerce
- The Las Cruces Board of Realtors
- The Southern New Mexico Building Industries Association
- New Mexico State University
- Las Cruces Public Schools

And:

- Councilor from District 1 (Ex officio, non-voting)
- At-Large Appointee from the Mayor

City of Las Cruces®
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Council Action and Executive Summary

Item # 17 **Ordinance/Resolution#** 10-250 **Council District:** 1

For Meeting of April 5, 2010
(Adoption Date)

TITLE: A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF REVIEW OF AMENDEMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN, AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS RESOLUTION AND CHAPTER TWO OF THE LAS CRUCES MUNICIPAL CODE, 1997, AS AMENDED.

PURPOSE(S) OF ACTION: Approve a Resolution authorizing the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee that will assist City staff in reviewing various downtown revitalization plans in order to determine the scope of changes which might be needed to update the plan.

Name of Drafter: William Slettom		**Department:** Community Development/EDR		**Phone:** 528-3163	
Department	**Signature**	**Phone**	**Department**	**Signature**	**Phone**
Community Development	DW	528-3066	Budget		541-2300
			Assistant City Manager		541-2271
Legal		541-2128	City Manager		541-2076

BACKGROUND / KEY ISSUES / CONTRIBUTING FACTORS: The City has a long history of addressing planning issues in the Downtown. Even before the 1994 RUDAT study, City officials, staff and the downtown community were engaged in dialogue about the success and failure of urban renewal and the future of downtown. The RUDAT study was the result of wide participation from across the City, and although specific recommendations were not acted on, many of the proposed projects and the general vision of the study formed the base for subsequent planning studies in 2003 and 2005.

The 2003 plan offered goals and strategies for revitalization. The 2005 plan built on those goals and presented design opportunities and strategies for economic development. These plans were adopted by Council and as funds were secured, the implementation of the plan was commenced. Major achievements have been made including the renovation of the Rio Grande Theatre, the construction of Main Street between Griggs and Las Cruces Ave, the acquisition of property on Main Street for the Museum of Nature and Science, the removal of the shade structures, the completion of the Federal Court Building, and the new City Hall.

Several new restaurants and businesses have moved into downtown, and there has been a net gain in employment since Main Street reopened in 2007. Property owners overwhelmingly approved the formation of a Tax Increment for Development District to support the infrastructure improvements as described in previous plans. A significant setback has been the failure to secure financing for housing, retail and parking projects. A low-income housing project was

(Continued on page 2)

RESOLUTION NO. 11-132

A RESOLUTION AMENDING COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 10-250 ESTABLISHING AN AD HOC COMMITTEE TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF REVIEW OF AMENDEMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN, AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS RESOLUTION AND CHAPTER TWO OF THE LAS CRUCES MUNICIPAL CODE, 1997, AS AMENDED.

The City Council is informed that:

WHEREAS, the Council established the Downtown Revitalization Plan Ad Hoc Committee with the intention of gathering a broad range of views and participation; and

WHEREAS, there is a vacancy on the Committee because the original Resolution listed representation from a group that is not a formal organization; and

WHEREAS, the Committee has expressed a desire to have the participation of a housing organization.

NOW THEREFORE, Be it resolved by the governing body of the City of Las Cruces:

(I)

THAT the Committee membership include one representative of the Las Cruces Housing Authority in place of the North Mesquite Neighborhood.

(II)

THAT City staff is hereby authorized to do all deeds necessary in the accomplishment of the herein above.

DONE and APPROVED this 6th day of December, 2010.

APPROVED:

Mayor

City of Las Cruces®
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Council Action and Executive Summary

Item # 7 **Ordinance/Resolution#** 11-132 **Council District:** 1

For Meeting of December 6, 2010
(Adoption Date)

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AMENDING COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 10-250 ESTABLISHING AN AD HOC COMMITTEEE TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF REVIEW OF AMENDMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN, AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS RESOLUTION AND CHAPTER TWO OF THE LAS CRUCES MUNICIPAL CODE, 1997, AS AMENDED.

PURPOSE(S) OF ACTION: Add one representative of the Las Cruces Housing Authority to the ad hoc committee.

Drafter and Staff Contact: William Slettom		Department: CommDevelop/EDR		Phone: 528-3163	
Department	**Signature**	**Phone**	**Department**	**Signature**	**Phone**
Department Director		528-3067	Budget		541-2107
Other			Assistant City Manager		541-2271
Legal		541-2128	City Manager		541-2076

BACKGROUND / KEY ISSUES / CONTRIBUTING FACTORS: The intent of the Downtown Revitalization Ad Hoc Committee is to include a broad range of views and participation; adding the Las Cruces Housing Authority will help meet that goal. Resolution #10-250 listed 18 members including one from the North Mesquite neighborhood for which there is no organization. The Committee will benefit from the participation and input of the housing community, and would like to add the LC Housing Authority to the list of organizations.

SUPPORT INFORMATION:

1. Resolution/Ordinance.

Las Cruces TIDD GRT Distributions (Net of Administrative Charges)

Source	Distribution Month				FY09 Total
	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	
City of Las Cruces	$1,485	$1,952	$2,646	$2,313	$8,395
Doña Ana County	$66	$86	$116	$102	$370
Total	$1,550	$2,038	$2,762	$2,414	$8,765

Source	Distribution Month												FY10 Total
	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	
City of Las Cruces	$2,283	$4,076	$2,599	$2,082	$2,837	$11,066	$8,144	$9,305	$235,762	$51,539	$86,128	$41,420	$457,241
Doña Ana County	$100	$179	$114	$91	$436	$3,837	$1,252	$1,431	$36,250	$7,924	$13,242	$6,368	$71,225
Total	$2,383	$4,255	$2,713	$2,174	$3,274	$14,902	$9,396	$10,736	$272,012	$59,463	$99,370	$47,788	$528,466

Source	Distribution Month												FY11 Total
	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-11	Feb-11	Mar-11	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	
City of Las Cruces	$59,244	$110,727	$55,660	$54,730	$98,839	$65,039	$62,013	$66,651	$69,023	$50,964	$98,286	$74,610	$865,786
Doña Ana County	$9,109	$17,025	$8,558	$8,415	$15,707	$10,000	$9,535	$10,247	$10,613	$7,839	$15,112	$11,468	$133,628
State				$156,384	$140,021	$92,138	$87,851	$94,428	$97,782	$72,227	$139,237	$105,738	$985,806
Total	$68,353	$127,752	$64,218	$219,529	$254,567	$167,177	$159,399	$171,326	$177,418	$131,030	$252,635	$191,816	$1,985,220

Source	Distribution Month												FY12 Total
	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	
City of Las Cruces	$62,295												$62,295
Doña Ana County	$9,578												$9,578
State	$88,251												$88,251
Total	$160,124												$160,124

Totals Inception to Date:		
	City	$1,393,717
	County	$214,800
	State	$1,074,057
	Total	$2,682,575