

LAS CRUCES DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN



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I. Current Conditions

A. Location

This study focuses on Las Cruces' historic Downtown area. This area, the city's original townsite, is still at the geographic "heart" of Las Cruces as shown on Figure 1. The area represents the city's only "urban" environment with building proximities and adjacency of residential communities that is unique for this growing, mostly suburban, community.



One-way street surrounds the Main Street Mall. Downtown's core is bordered on the north by Parker Road and Spruce Avenue, on the east by South Solano Drive, on the south by Idaho Avenue and on the west by the railroad rights-of-way as depicted in Figure 2.

Downtown is a unique mixture of public and private offices, specialty retail, museums, theaters and banking outlets surrounded by the historic neighborhoods, Mesquite on the east and the Alameda Neighborhood on the west.



Figure 1. Central Location of Downtown District & Mall

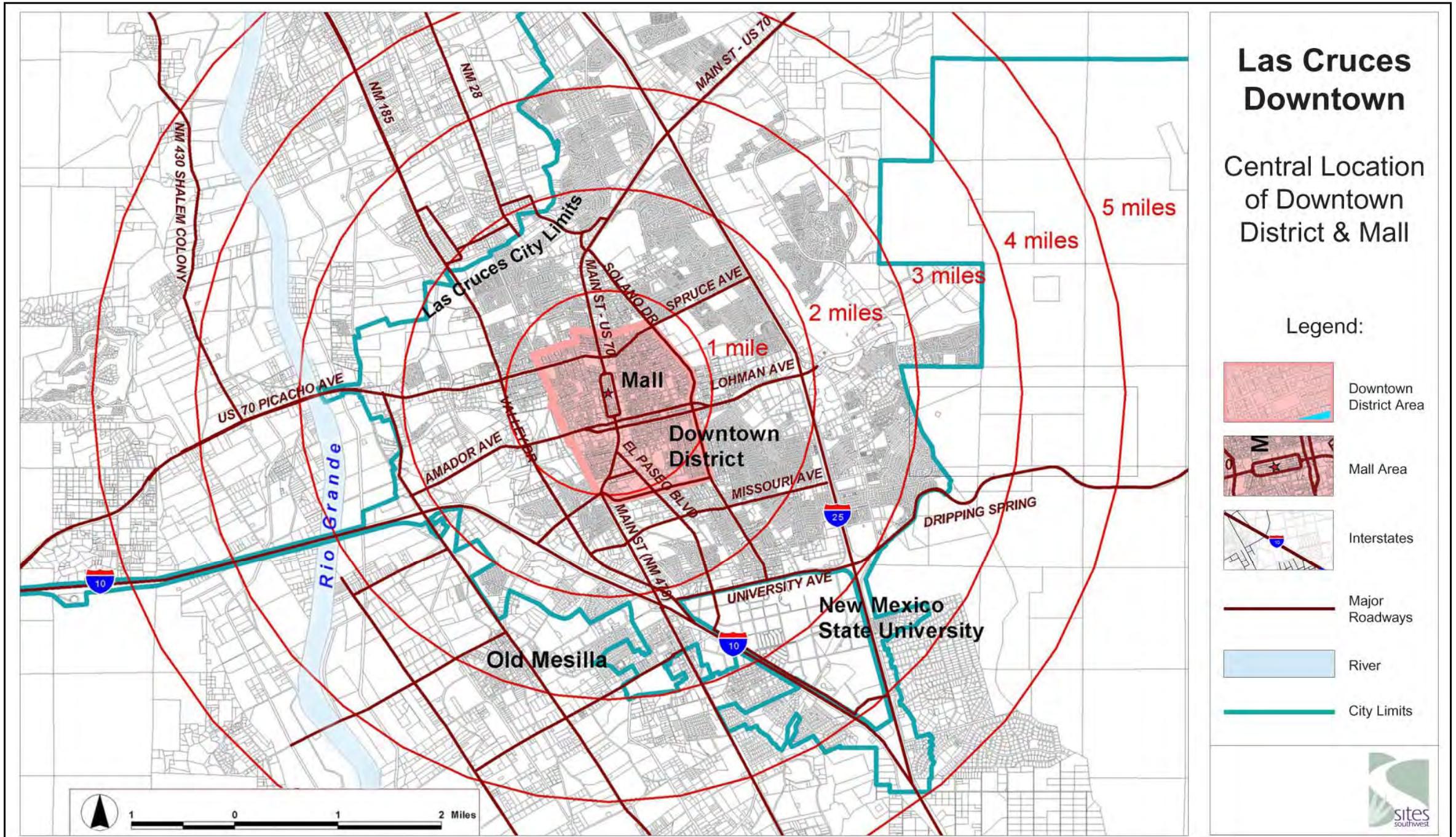
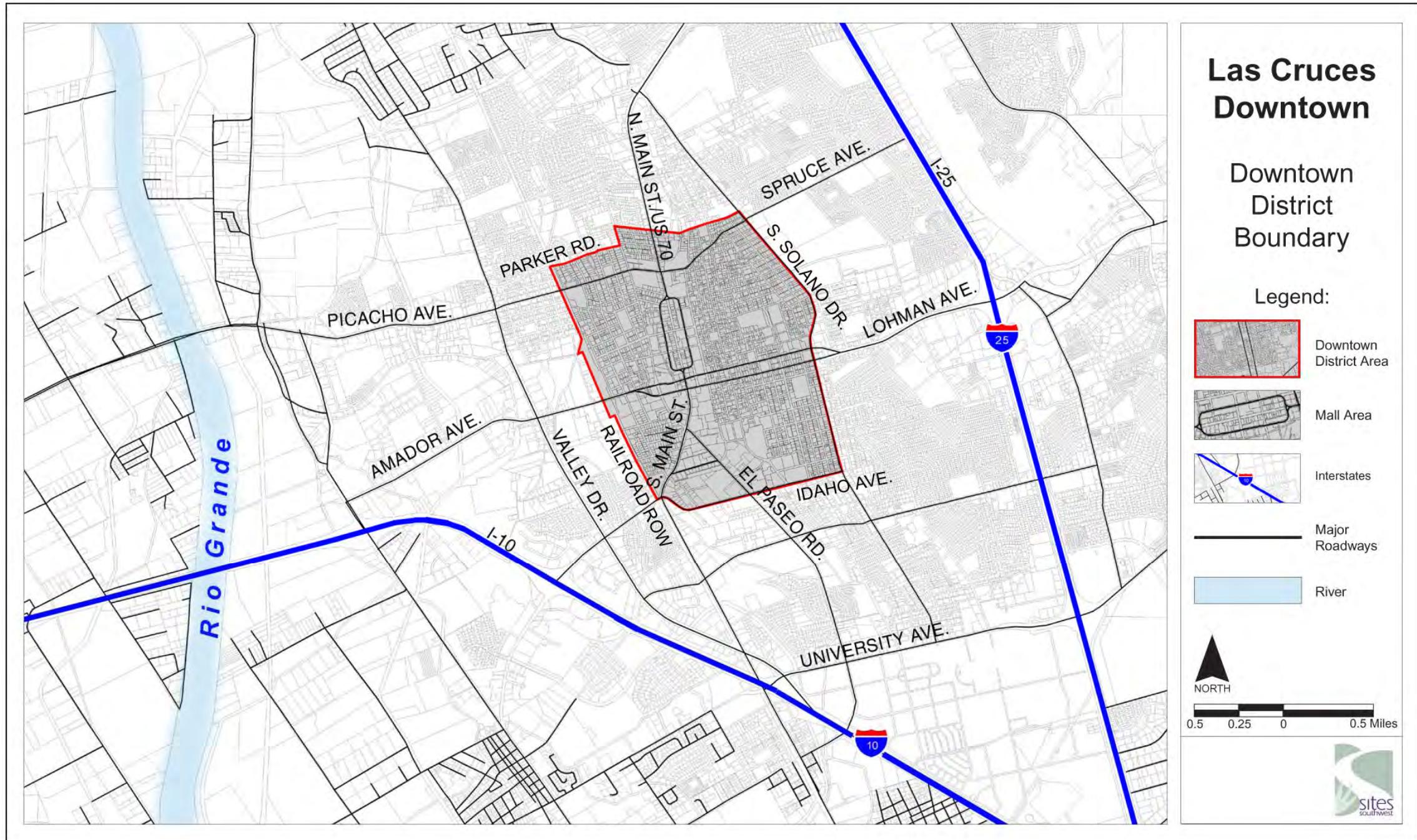


Figure 2. Downtown District Boundary



B. Community Perspective

1. Introduction

Downtown Las Cruces suffered the same fate as many other main streets across the nation during the 1960s when retailers began moving their stores to large, new shopping malls on the outskirts of town. Urban renewal in the same era unwittingly compounded its loss of commercial anchors by tearing down 60 percent of the remaining Main Street buildings. Some were historical buildings; many were rows of houses and apartments whose residents had constituted a market for the area. Seeking to compete with the suburban malls, the city, like many others across the country, closed off seven blocks of Main Street to traffic to create a pedestrian Downtown Mall. It was paved in yellow brick, covered with large, angular, metal canopies, and was able to retain enough small businesses and offices to stay marginally viable economically. The streets surrounding it were converted to a one-way “racetrack” encircling the mall.

In its current configuration, the Downtown Mall attracts a considerable number of residents and visitors on Wednesday and Saturday mornings throughout the year to buy produce and arts and crafts items from over 200 vendors at the Farmer’s and Crafts Market. Visitors also flock the Mall for special events such as The Whole Enchilada Festival and for evening theater

shows. Long-time city dwellers still are drawn periodically to the remaining stores such as White’s Music Box, a music store that offers instruments and lessons, the Coas Bookstore as well as the public library, the Branigan Cultural Center and Fine Arts Museum, Black Box Theater, and the Community Theater. The Federal Court, Magistrate Court and Municipal Courts also bring office workers into the area.

Many residents agree, however, that Main Street lacks the vibrancy of years past. One long-time resident recalled better times when most of the stores were Downtown and the businesses were open six days a week. Restaurants, bars and off-track betting created an atmosphere of entertainment and socializing well into the evening. By contrast, evenings now find the Mall area businesses dark and shuttered, making it more attractive to vagrants than patrons. The few restaurants in the area open for breakfast and lunch, but none serve dinner.

2. Revitalization Proposals

In response to the decline of Downtown, the city has entertained a number of proposals over the years to revitalize the area and recreate a “center” for Las Cruces. Previous community efforts have struggled due to a lack of a consensus on a clear vision of what actions should be taken to accomplish a meaningful revitalization. Garnering the most attention and interest was a proposal in 1994 by a group sponsored by the Regional Urban Design Assistance Team or

RUDAT, a volunteer design charette service offered through the American Institute of Architects.

The RUDAT proposed to restore two-way traffic on Main Street and create a civic plaza in the Downtown. The plaza would be a raised area where public events could be staged, surrounded by an open area that might include a mix of grass and concrete to allow for easy access for people. Organ Street would be reopened, and the plaza would be paved with bricks and feature portals on each side for shade as well as ample seating.

The proposal touched off a city-wide debate in community meetings, City Council meetings, and the newspaper on what to do about the Downtown Mall. A privately-led committee, Las Cruces Downtown, was formed to pursue revitalization efforts, chaired by Steve Newby and led by executive director Heather Pollard, former founder of the Dona Ana Arts Council. Other real estate ventures began to percolate and the increased interest in revitalization sparked a few encouraging initiatives:

- **Renovation of the Rio Grande Theater:** This historical two-story adobe building near the south end of the Downtown Mall is in the midst of being restored to a state-of-the-art performing arts center to serve as a venue for national and international touring groups and for presentation of plays, films, dance, music, literary readings, visual arts displays and more.

- **New Federal Courthouse:** The present federal courthouse in Las Cruces hears 70 percent of all federal cases in New Mexico and is running out of space. The federal General Services Administration has proposed to build new Federal Courthouse north of the existing building in the parking lot just south of City Hall. Designed by renowned Albuquerque architect Antoine Predock, the building is slated to be 205,000 square feet and five to seven stories high. It will house the U.S. Marshal's office, Federal District and Magistrate Courts, and other agencies.
- **The Southwest Environmental Center and Project Del Rio:** Both these nonprofit organizations recently leased space in the Downtown area. The environmental center also offers a gift shop.

Various residents who have a stake in the outcome of revitalization—business owners, city councilors, vendors at the farmer's market, neighbors—have advanced a new, more focused, vision of the Downtown Mall as well as specific proposals for individual buildings or parking lots. These are summarized briefly below, followed by opinions from each group.

3. Proposed Visions for Downtown:

- **Specialty Retail Center:** This focus would involve reopening Main Street and attracting

specialty boutique retail stores such as coffee shops, bakeries, children's stores, boutiques and restaurants. Restoring two-way traffic to Church and Water Streets would make the retail stores more visible to passing pedestrians and automobiles.

- **Center for the Arts:** This proposal would build upon the visual arts anchor provided by the Branigan Cultural Center and adjoining Las Cruces Museum of Fine Art and Culture at the Downtown Mall to create an arts focus for the Downtown. This would likely require the housing of independent galleries and studios Downtown. Obstacles are that Las Cruces' art scene is widely dispersed, which deters tourists from easily drifting into galleries, and that another center for visual arts has begun to emerge through a cluster of three galleries in Hadley Center at the corner of El Paseo and University Avenue near the NMSU campus.
- **Cultural Center:** A broader vision than the arts focus, this concept would also build on the museums and the renovated theaters that are already Downtown and move the Natural History Museum into the area. It would rely on the influx of new workers at the new courthouse building, more and better advertised cultural and theater events, as well as expanded arts and crafts and local produce at the Farmer's Market to draw more people Downtown at varied times of the day.

- **Botanical Garden:** This relatively new proposal suggests that turning the Downtown Mall into a botanical garden would attract a steady flow of local residents, students, and tourists. Trees would replace the metal canopies for shade. Information markers would identify the southern New Mexican plants and their various uses and flowering times.
- **Convention Center:** A convention center could be built Downtown with the hope that resulting visitors would spark retail revitalization.

4. Past Proposals for the Downtown Mall area:

- **Reopen Main Street to Traffic:** This proposal seeks to transform a seven-block long mostly silent walking mall to a vibrant area full of open air coffee shops, restaurants, and tree-lined walkways. It would recreate a two-way street with parallel parking, thus providing vehicular access and visibility for Downtown businesses.
- **Create a Plaza:** Acquire and convert the Community First Bank parking lot next to the city's judicial complex to a plaza area.
- **Purchase the Klein Building:** For several decades until 1995, the Klein Building was



home to the Las Cruces Furniture store. In Fall 2001, the organizers of the Natural History Museum requested City Council to purchase the building to house the museum, which is running out of space it leases at the Mesilla Valley Mall. Before the deal was consummated, however, a private buyer bought the building. The new owner has been silent about how he intends to use the building.

- **Reuse City-owned SoLo Building:** The City purchased the 74,000-square-foot SoLo Building north of the Downtown Mall in 1989 and continued to lease it to a grocery store until it went out of business. Since then, it has been vacant. A Dallas-based supermarket company that initially expressed interest in the building decided it was too large for most supermarket designs. Several different ideas center on reuse of the SoLo Building.
 - Move the Farmer’s and Crafts Market to the south side and convert the inside space to permanent market office space, storage and bathrooms. Installing a commercial kitchen inside would allow vendors to make baked goods to sell at the market.
 - Relocate the Dona Ana Magistrate Court and the municipal court from the overcrowded 9,600-square foot judicial complex at the corner of Griggs Avenue and Church Street to the SoLo Building. The Museum of Natural History could then move into the vacant courthouse and

perhaps a Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau could occupy the top floor if not needed by the museum.

- Lease the building to an energetic entrepreneur who could manage a “Mercado” in the building complete with new façade, arched and walled-in entry, landscaped courtyard and fountain. Inside the Mercado would be different stalls for a variety of small business users.
 - Trade both the SoLo Building and the existing City Hall for the Harold Runnels Federal Building and parking lot south of there to use for a new City Hall.
 - The community has discussed reusing the former SoLo Grocery store as an “events” center.
- **Relocate the Farmer’s and Crafts Market:** Several proposals have surfaced for relocating the Farmer’s and Crafts Market should Main Street be opened to two-way traffic. An initial suggestion was to move it to the plaza area in the bank parking lot across from the Rio Grande Theatre. A later suggestion was to move it to the south side of the vacant SoLo Building.
 - **Retain Mall Amenities, especially Shade Structures:** Citizens have been quite vocal about the need to retain some form of shade Downtown to shield vendors and pedestrians from the blistering Las Cruces sun.

- **Allow Liquor Sales at Restaurants, Nightclubs:** An ordinance change in 1997 permitted liquor sales Downtown in hopes of persuading restaurants and bars to move into the Mall area. A suggested brew pub still would be banned by the zoning code as an industrial use.
- **Increase Housing, Neighborhood Retail:** Proposals for adding more housing to the Downtown Mall area to create a market for retail and enliven the area have come primarily from residents who live there. Downtown Las Cruces estimates that 10 to 15 percent of available space in the Mall could be transformed into living areas.
- **Start Business Improvement District:** Discussions are underway among the business community about the cost and benefits of creating a business improvement district Downtown which could raise fees to pay for security, clean-up, and joint advertising among other activities.

C. Stakeholder Views

1. Business Owners

In February 2003 Sites Southwest held roundtable discussions with three groups that included business owners in the area and several neighborhood

representatives to solicit their opinions about existing conditions in the Downtown and ideas for rejuvenating the area.

As it exists now, government (including the various court buildings and City Hall), professional offices (law, engineering and architectural firms), and institutions such as the museums, churches and banks form the backbone of the Downtown Las Cruces activity. Some said they located Downtown because they do business with the government, some because the rent is inexpensive, and others because of family tradition. Contrary to the Mall's atmosphere of emptiness, approximately 75 percent of the building space is occupied. Many of the buildings are occupied by businesses or institutions that do not generate weekday activity or pedestrian traffic.

Very few retail businesses remain in the mall. Retail businesses that survived both the construction of suburban shopping mall and the creation of the pedestrian mall tended to be those that did not rely on a certain volume of cars or pedestrians passing by but were destinations in their own right. White's Music Box, for example, sells and rents instruments throughout the region and gives lessons to 200 children a week. They also hold recitals at the store and small concerts in the community theater. Occupying 23,000 square feet, Coas Bookstore is the largest used bookstore in the southwest. Days Hamburgers started in 1932 in a box car with a pound of hamburgers and 12 buns and draws its customers from all over the city. Atlas Travel agency also relies

on repeat clientele rather than walk-in business. Other successful businesses are those that provide support services for existing businesses, such as copying and printing.

The year-round Farmer's and Crafts Market has operated in the Downtown Mall for 31 years, benefiting from the shade canopies and shelter of the buildings. Saturday is its biggest turn-out. Some 75 percent of their customers are tourists, and the number of vendors ranges from 90 in the late winter months to as many as 300 before Christmas.

a. Obstacles to Revitalization

What is lacking, except during the Farmer's and Crafts Market or other events, is the hustle and bustle of activity on the Mall, particularly in the evening and weekends when it is said to feel desolate, spooky, and unsafe. The one-way streets that surround the Mall allow traffic to speed by without even noticing the stores. Employee parking sometimes conflicts with visitor parking, creating the perception that the number of spaces is insufficient. Other obstacles to revitalization include the checkerboard pattern of buildings and parking lots that interrupt a solid street wall for pedestrians, shade structures and other elements that cover up building facades, and dim lighting at night. Poor signage contributes little to helping visitors find historic sites. Crime in the area tends to come in waves and consists mainly of break-ins, broken windows, and vagrancy. Bike patrols in the area had fostered a sense of security in the past, but police couldn't afford to keep a concentrated focus

on the Downtown and now tend to respond only to specific incidents.

Other obstacles include a building code that many feel is too restrictive—particularly regarding ADA requirements—to make it economically feasible to restore older buildings. A new rehabilitation code or sub-code could provide renovators with greater flexibility.

b. Ideas

While business owners said they did not expect to compete with the regional shopping mall as a retail center, they believe the Downtown needs to develop its own sense of place to attract more customers. The regional mall has generic stores and architecture; Mesilla is the historical center of the region. What niche could the Downtown fill?

One person advocated turning the Mall into a “hip and happening” place with cafes, music, dance, nightclubs geared to younger people. She pointed to the success of Graham Central Station, a dance club that moved into a storefront nearby several months ago, which is a big attraction. She also referred to Professor Richard Florida's work on the types of communities favored by those whom he calls the “creative class”—a “fast-growing, highly educated and well-paid segment of the workforce on whose efforts corporate profits and economic growth increasingly depend.”

“A lot of cities believe that they'll make it in the new economy if they get a professional

sports team and build a downtown mall. They couldn't be more wrong. It's almost like taking drugs away from an addict: No more stadiums. No more convention centers. What cities need to do is really simple: make it fun. Create a music scene. Build bike lanes. Make sure that there are parks where people can play Ultimate Frisbee. Think about the city's historic assets—the old buildings—as cool spaces for hot companies.”—Richard Florida and Bill Breen

Others focused on bringing people to the Downtown more consistently by sponsoring joint cultural activities that would generate foot traffic between venues. Theater attendance needs to become a habit. Events could be coordinated so there is always something happening Downtown.

Representatives from the Hispanic community, who are still distressed by the removal of St. Genevieve Church, said their issues are often ignored. The local parishes have a rich cultural heritage and love of the arts on which to draw. They suggested evening promenades and a hub of Sunday events on the mall when families are searching for activities. The Hispanic Chamber also expressed interest in moving their office Downtown in the future.

Opinions differed about whether to rip out the pedestrian mall and reopen Main Street to traffic. Retailers tend to see traffic on Main Street as a

prerequisite to more visibility and customers. Museum representatives and theater managers opposed it. Most would like to see some evening restaurants, and one mentioned a brew bar.

Other ideas included using vacant building spaces as business incubators for high tech firms or for Farmer's Market vendors, managing the available parking through charging fees or other means, creating a plaza for public events, and sponsoring a "Fiesta Fridays" city event as well as activities for seniors and youths.

2. Las Cruces Downtown Board

The mission of Las Cruces Downtown, a private, volunteer organization that formed to revitalize the Downtown area is to provide a center and defining feature for the city, an attraction for its citizens and tourists, and an area where people will want to live, work and visit. Sites Southwest met with the Las Cruces Downtown Board on February 12, 2003, to lead them through a SWOT analysis, or assessment of the internal strengths and weaknesses as well as the external threats to revitalization and opportunities for the Downtown. The exercise elicited the following opinions.

- **Strengths:** The strengths mentioned by the group fell into five categories: cultural, retail, government/nonprofit services, events, and design/location, special qualities.
 - *Cultural Places:* museums, theaters, museum school, historic residential areas, historic churches.

- *Retail:* largest used bookstore in the southwest (Coas), regional music store (White's Music Box), Instacopy, Meat Market lunch counter, new bank, new restaurant.
- *Government/Nonprofits:* Main post office; city, county, federal government center, expanding courts (attorneys and other support staff), potential for visitor's center, nonprofits (such as the Southwest Environmental Center), financial center, library, East Side and Museum senior centers, Boys and Girls Club, southwest counseling center.
- *Events:* Farmer's and Crafts Market, live theater, The Whole Enchilada Festival.
- *Design/Location:* some interesting architecture, shade from canopies, compact and walkable area, available land for development, geographical center, good access (north-south streets, Main, Church and Water streets), walking distance from public schools (elementary: Alameda and Central Strong; Court Youth Center-Arts Charter High School), view to Organ Mountains.
- *Special Qualities:* synergy, committed businesses, low rents, people already worrying about parking due to too many customers, residential neighborhoods that are organizing for revitalization, public safety, churches that are strong institutions for public gatherings.

- **Weaknesses:** Comments about weaknesses were grouped into three categories: function, design, and attitudes.
 - *Function:* not enough parking, lacks night life, traffic flow, street people, lacks retail businesses, entertainment for youths and adults, no grocery store (east side residents have no access to transportation), lacks a park or plaza or gathering place, Wal-Mart drove four groceries out of business in one year, poor connections to residential neighborhoods.
 - *Design:* signage is bad, access to businesses is poor, aesthetics of view of buildings, plain facades, canopy is ugly but provides shade, planters don't make sense, no visual identity, deteriorated building, lack of density, need more green space.
 - *Attitudes:* Graffiti, “let it die” negative attitude of public
- **Opportunities:** Turning to opportunities, the group viewed the city's growth, its lack of a special identity in the state, and its number one ranking as the “best small area to do businesses” as creating opportunities for a new identity and new retail businesses.
 - *Potential Identity:* Downtown as a gathering place, an arts and entertainment center, a cultural center with tours for visitors, a destination. They saw renovation

of the Rio Grande Theatre and the possibility of the Natural History Museum relocating Downtown as positive steps.

- *Retail Opportunities:* niche-center for boutique or specialty stores; shoe store; place for up-scale, related stores; expanded and enhanced arts and crafts market; a bakery where people could watch the owner making products; stores making and selling jewelry, pottery, candy stores, bridal and prom dresses.
- *Design opportunities:* a bus station location, a plaza where events could be held; opportunity to better organize, label, and use existing parking.

The group commented that people's attitudes become more positive when they see something happening, such as groundbreaking. They also saw opportunities for partnerships with the museums, cultural organizations and the university to foster improvements Downtown.

- **Threats:** The Las Cruces Downtown Board members acknowledged problems engendered by realistic issues such as lack of funding for the project, the faltering national economy, and lack of input into design and construction of federal buildings, and politics and competing interests in general. But they saw serious threats in people's attitudes and perceptions as well. Among these they cited apathy, failure to

investigate “bad” information, and negative perceptions printed in the newspaper's “Sound Off” column. The inability to shed the “Downtown Mall” name and the area's poor image as too old to bother with threaten revitalization efforts. The Board also expressed concern about the lack of pioneers who will pave the way for others, and that they might miss the window of opportunity needed to meet expectations and show results.

3. Adjacent Neighborhoods

Neighborhood representatives noted that residents in the adjacent Mesquite and Alameda neighborhoods lack basic retail services. This is an important issue as many residents depend on walking and public transportation. They would appreciate having a grocery store, a hardware and drug store, a small post office, and more restaurants.

They also suggested physically tying the two neighborhoods to the Downtown through landscaping and signage. Las Cruces Avenue, which still spans both neighborhoods and Downtown, was the first paved street in the city. The Mesquite neighborhood was the site of the original town in 1848. The City and residents will have to work together to prevent historic buildings along San Pedro street from being demolished if parking and office demands increase after the new federal courthouse is built next to City Hall. Residents there called for an overlay zone to protect the properties as an historic district.

At the same time, however, they cautioned that too much success with economic revitalization could drive up property values in the neighborhood, making it difficult to afford for the current low- and moderate-income residents. Elderly residents already are hard pressed to comply with 30-day notices to fix building code violations. Some type of tax relief for low income people might be necessary.

4. Residents of Las Cruces

- **Reopening Main Street:** A majority of citizens at a June 2002 community meeting sponsored by 1000 Friends of New Mexico raised their hands in favor of a plan to rebuild Main Street. Nevertheless, letters and editorials in the city paper indicate residents may be the group most skeptical and least in favor of spending the money required to reopen the Downtown Mall.

They concur that the area is only lively during the Farmer's Market and other events. Many add, however, that the shade, pleasant atmosphere and abundant parking are a big improvement over the former dingy buildings and lack of parking space. They attribute the success of the Farmer's market to the plaza-like area, partial shade, benches for resting and visiting with others, planters, and absence of "distracting traffic noise and obnoxious fumes."

Several believe that the concept of a city "center" is obsolete, and that Downtown can never recapture the major retail presence that it lost to the east side of town. They also view Las Cruces as too small and lacking of "upscale, arts-oriented people with lots of leisure to sustain" a bright lights, nightlife district. Moreover, galleries are too dispersed around the city. Instead, they argue that the new federal building will draw more people. They advocate that the City keep the present Mall and that it concentrate on selling to new businesses. Most importantly, they want to keep the awnings that protect the Downtown from a blazingly hot street.

- **Housing:** Another line of opinion among citizens is that appealing architectural designs and physical improvements to commercial buildings will not revitalize Downtown. What is needed is housing and neighborhood improvements to entice people to move there. One woman called Downtown a "semi-deserted shell" that needs inhabitants. She suggested that a complex of relatively low-cost units with a drug store and small grocery store would be appealing to those with beginning salaries (students or young employees) or for retirees. They would also form a base of customers for a few small restaurants. Another man proposed that the city invest federal housing money to leverage housing construction and renovation in and around the

Downtown. It could result in as many as 700-1,000 housing units.

- **New Federal Building:** Opinions of the new federal courthouse building ranged from "fresh, modern, cosmopolitan" to "a star wars, sci-fi building." One man said Downtown needed better shops, theater, dining facilities to draw people Downtown, "not less parking and bigger buildings." One couple was opposed to the new courthouse taking over the parking lot, although they supported revitalization in general. They pointed as an example to Cathedral Square in New Zealand, a lively area with food vendors, restaurants with outdoor tables, and "action all day and into the evening." They much preferred this to Auckland, which had "worker bees" getting on and off busses to work in "sterile high rise office buildings" which everyone left after closing, creating massive traffic jams. They advocated retaining the parking lot and letting the Government Services Administration buy other space. Other opinions were split between welcoming the influx of new office workers and not wanting any more tax –exempt federal buildings Downtown.

5. NMSU Students/Faculty/Staff

Total fall 2002 enrollment for NMSU main campus was 15,243, which includes 2,712 graduate students. Minority enrollment at the main campus is about 49 percent (41 percent Hispanic, 3 percent American

Indian, 3 percent African-American and 2 percent Asian-American). Regular faculty members on the main campus number 654. The professional and classified staff totals 2,793.

The Doña Ana Branch Community College, located on the main campus, offers postsecondary vocational-technical education, primarily to Dona Ana County residents.

The students, faculty and staff represent an untapped potential consumer base for future Downtown goods and services. There is a significant lack of entertainment venues for NMSU students in Las Cruces. Students frequently travel to El Paso to find entertainment options. Apparently, the recent opening of Graham Central Station near Downtown has met with a positive response from the university population.

University students historically are “urban pioneers” and can be the first into a declining downtown seeking affordable housing and bringing life to the area.

Information on Las Cruces transit system shows that there is no direct transit service between NMSU and Downtown. Since many students are without automobiles at the University this is a significant deterrent to living in or frequenting the Downtown.

NMSU student faculty and staff representation should be part of the Downtown planning strategy.

D. Asset Utilization Analysis

1. Buildings and Vacant Land

The locations of buildings and vacant land are shown in Figure 3. Currently vacant parcels are primarily used as parking lots in the Downtown area.

2. Land Ownership

Land ownership is shown in Figure 4. It can be seen that a large amount of land in the mall area of Downtown is owned by the government. It is also apparent when referencing the vacant land map, Figure 3, that much of this vacant land is a result of the urban renewal clearance of the early 1970s and represents an important resource for this areas future.

3. Land Uses

Land uses in and surrounding the Downtown core is shown in Figure 5. The most notable feature of the land use in Las Cruces’ Downtown is the density and mixture of retail and service commercial with government and institutional uses surrounded b a significant residential population within easy walking distance.

4. Hours of Activity

According to a survey of Downtown businesses, most activity takes place between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. A few businesses are open on Saturday, but they are spread out in the mall and do not create a nucleus of weekend activity. The Farmers

Market operates on Saturday mornings, churches bring members to Sunday services, and the theaters have evening performances, but none of these are concentrated enough to create a feel of activity throughout the week and daytime and evenings.

5. Synergy Opportunities

Several businesses in Downtown support each other and form the beginnings of niche retail and service opportunities. These business clusters are discussed in more detail in Section II. Examples include the service cluster that has grown up around the government and banking anchors in Downtown, including printing, consulting services, attorneys, accountants, and restaurants. Another example is the theaters and museums. Each of these business clusters provides an opportunity to attract business and customers to Downtown if appropriately marketed.

6. Parking and Accessibility

The locations of existing parking lots and on-street parking are shown in Figure 6. The Downtown core is encircled by public and private parking lots, and on street parking is available on most east-west streets

The lack of convenient parking has been cited by multiple businesses as a problem, discouraging customers from patronizing Downtown businesses.

The number of parking spaces appears to be more than adequate, and parking locations are convenient to most parts of the Downtown core. A likely source of the perceived lack of parking is that the most convenient

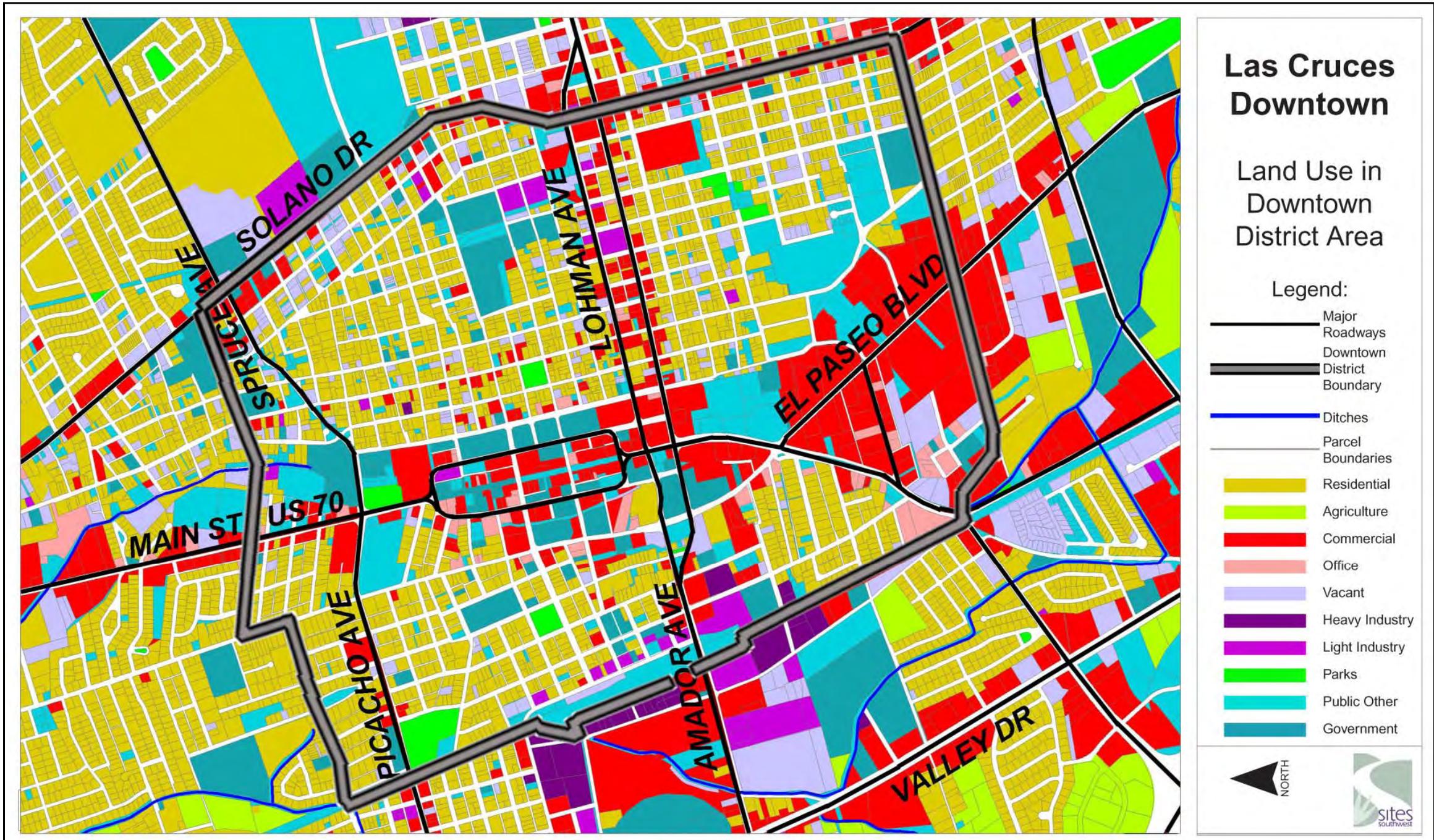
Figure 3. Mall Area: Existing Buildings



Figure 4. Mall Area: Land Ownership



Figure 5. Land Use in Downtown Area



parking is taken by employees of local businesses, who occupy parking spaces for several hours. The impact of a mismatch between long-term use and short-term needs had led to a paradox: Downtown retail businesses sought to discourage Downtown employment and activity generators because of their impact on short-term parking availability.

There are several potential solutions to this. The City could charge for parking on the most convenient lots and for on-street parking. In Las Cruces, where free parking is the norm, paid parking could discourage visitors. As an alternative, public lots and on-street parking within and adjacent to the Downtown Mall could be time limited, with long-term employee parking moved to less convenient locations. Also new parking garages in the Downtown could accommodate long-term parking and free up visitor spaces.

Vehicular circulation and daily traffic counts are shown on Figure 7. There are several interesting conditions illustrated by this map. First of all, Main Street North and South of the Mall area carry between 15,00 and 17,000 cars per day to and from this area. There are also 12,000 to 14,000 cars passing Downtown on Picacho Avenue to the north daily and 20,000 to 26,000 cars on Amador and Lohman to the south. Figure 7 also clearly shows the negative impact on the accessibility to Downtown businesses caused by the closing of Main Street and many east/west streets through Downtown like Hadley and Organ.

Public transportation to the Downtown area is illustrated by Figure 8. While the Downtown is located in the geographic center of the city and is accessible by general bus routes it is interesting to note that there is no direct bus access to Downtown from New Mexico State University.

E. Trade Area Profile

Downtown is envisioned to function as a regional center. Potential customers for Downtown businesses include Downtown employees, residents of Downtown neighborhoods, residents of Las Cruces and Dona Ana County, and visitors from elsewhere. The customers from this geographic trade area provide the continuing patronage necessary for steady support of Downtown businesses. The trade area can be described as having three components: the primary trade area composed of the closest residents and workers, a secondary trade area that includes the Las Cruces metro area, and a tertiary, or regional, trade area. Local and regional support for Downtown would be supplemented by tourist spending.

Each of these groups could have different motives for patronizing Downtown businesses.

- Primary trade area – Nearby neighborhoods and workers. Families buy food and convenience items within their immediate neighborhoods when competitive opportunities are available. Employees of Downtown businesses provide a daytime population of potential customers within walking distance.
- Secondary trade area – Surrounding region. specialty, destinations
- Tourism – unique, possibly New Mexican, Mexican and/or southwestern – goods and entertainment

Table 1. Primary Trade Area Population and Housing Characteristics, 2000

Neighborhood	Population	Households	HH Size	Housing Units	Vacancy Rate	Median Age
DT North	2,116	934	2.27	1,050	11.0%	37.6
Mesquite	4,067	1,419	2.87	1,609	11.8%	29.8
DT Core + Alameda	1,040	514	2.02	563	8.7%	30.6
DT South	2,776	1,170	2.37	1,296	9.7%	33.0
Total	9,999	4,037	2.48	4,518	10.6%	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000



Figure 7. Mall Area: Circulation



Figure 8. Bus Routes in Downtown District Area

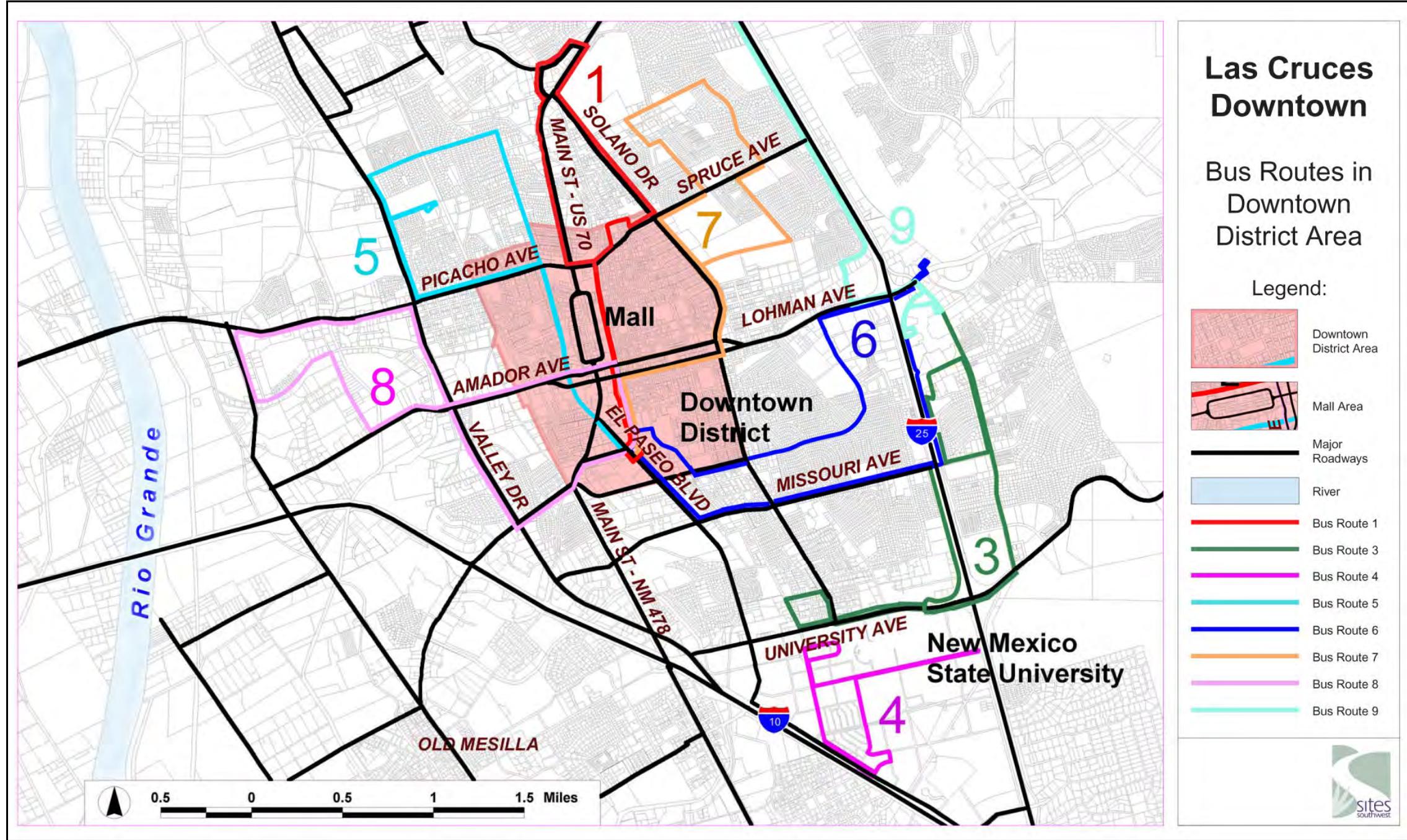


Figure 9. Demographics



1. Primary Trade Area

The primary trade area is defined as the downtown core and neighborhoods within approximately walking distance, or about ¼ mile, of the edges of downtown. Typically, the primary trade area for a retail commercial center is composed of the nearby walk-in area plus any nearby area that has no closer convenience stores. For Downtown Las Cruces, this includes the areas to the north and south of the Downtown Mall, the Mesquite neighborhood to the east of Downtown and the Alameda Depot neighborhood to the west. Residents of these neighborhoods, Downtown workers, and the businesses themselves constitute the customer base for the primary trade area.

The people who live in and around Downtown and the people who work there have an enormous impact on its image and economic activity simply because they visit Downtown so frequently. For these people, Downtown could be a source of convenience goods such as food and personal services. For convenience items, it is likely that 90 percent of the customers will be drawn from the area within a five minute driving time. The potential for neighborhood residents and workers to walk to purchase goods and services is important because once someone is in their car, they are likely to travel to other commercial centers.

a. Area Residents

- **Population and Age**

Nearly 10,000 people lived in Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods in 2000. The median age of the population in nearby neighborhoods ranges from 29.8 years to 37.6 years, compared to a City median of 31.2 years. Just over 40 percent of the Downtown population lives in the Mesquite neighborhood, which is characterized by larger households and a younger population.

- **Income**

The household income of area residents represents the buying power for goods and services in the primary trade area. According to the 2000 Census, most of the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown had lower incomes in 1999 than the City average, which was

\$30,375. The exception was Census tract 3, which is located north of Downtown (see Table 2).

The relatively low incomes in the primary trade area indicate that stores that cater to the local population should carry items, like groceries, that meet basic needs and products that offer quality at a modest price.

Table 2. Age and Income Characteristics of the Primary Trade Area

Neighborhood	Census Tract	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income
DT North	3	\$33,298	\$16,925
Mesquite	4.01	\$19,318	\$10,876
DT Core + Alameda	5	\$20,750	\$12,508
DT South	6	\$22,241	\$11,733

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

- **Ethnicity**

The ethnicity of neighborhood residents helps define the cultural identity of the area surrounding Downtown. Overall, the population is 70% Hispanic or Latino, with a majority of Mexican ancestry. The residents of the Mesquite neighborhood and the neighborhoods south of Downtown are predominantly Hispanic or Latino.

Table 3. Ethnicity Characteristics of the Primary Trade Area

Neighborhood	Population	Hispanic Population	% Hispanic
DT North	2,116	1,025	48.4%
Mesquite	4,067	3,444	84.7%
DT Core + Alameda	1,040	446	42.9%
DT South	2,776	2,072	74.6%
Total	9,999	6,987	69.9%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

b. Downtown Workers

Employees of the businesses in the primary trade area are a source of support for restaurants, convenience shopping and after-work entertainment. If a suitable range of goods and services are available, within easy pedestrian or auto access, Downtown workers can shop during their lunch hour or on their way to and from work.

A city database of local businesses shows that there are 2,400 employees of Downtown businesses in more than 1,000,000 square feet of office and retail space.

Businesses buy from each other. The print shops on the Downtown Mall serve nearby attorneys, engineering firms and government offices. Attorneys locate because of proximity to the courts, and engineering firms locate Downtown to be near their government clients. This type of synergy is one of the key advantages of a Downtown location and a characteristic of strong Downtown business centers. An expanded mix of mutually supportive businesses

can be used to attract additional businesses to the Downtown.

2. Secondary Trade Area

Dona Ana County approximates the secondary trade area for Downtown. For a specialty regional center like Downtown, the secondary trade area represents the broadest area from which local customers may be drawn, typically the area within a 15 to 30 minute drive time. For Downtown Las Cruces the tertiary trade area extends to include all of Dona Ana County.

Reasons why customers would drive this distance to patronize Downtown include entertainment, better merchandise and services, specialty merchandise and services not available elsewhere or a greater selection of items. For these customers, who arrive by car, easy access and parking convenience are important considerations in their decision to patronize Downtown.

Businesses that appeal to this broader market can support each other – theater patrons and customers of retail businesses that are open nights and weekends may allow restaurants to extend their hours.

Several businesses and institutions in Downtown survive because they serve a regional market – Coas Bookstore, White’s Music Box, the theaters and museums, churches and the Farmer’s Market are examples. However, the mix and linkages among these businesses could be improved to take better

advantage of the potential for cross-merchandising – the joint promotion of related businesses to increase sales for all of them.

F. Tourism

Entertainment and specialty retail can draw not only metro area residents, but visitors to Las Cruces as well.

A study completed for the Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau in November 2002 pointed out Las Cruces’ assets as a tourist destination: 350 days of sunshine, numerous special events, a strong arts presence, local museums, and area and regional attractions.

Visitors to Las Cruces spend an estimated \$120 per day, with an average length of stay of 2.3 days. The Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau does not estimate the number of visitors to Las Cruces, but the transient occupancy tax collected by area hotels has increased steadily over the past ten years, indicating that the number of visitors to the City is increasing. Estimates based on the transient occupancy tax do not include visitors who stay with friends and relatives or visitors who pass through the City without spending the night. Tourism is seasonal, with the highest tax revenues in March, April and May and October and November.



G. Competition

Downtown businesses and organizations serve a number of functions for Las Cruces area residents. Competition for Downtown businesses and activities is located throughout the community, and the competition varies by type of activity. This section evaluates the competition for six types of business or activities: convenience goods and services, office space and local institutions, specialty retail, galleries and the production and sale of arts and crafts, entertainment and other leisure activities.

1. Convenience Goods and Services

Convenience goods and services serve primarily Downtown residents and workers. Nearby strip centers are the most likely source of competition for such day to day needs as groceries, drug store items, cards and gifts, business services and personal services.

2. Office/Institutional

Telshor from University to Lohman has become a location for professional offices and institutions such as banks and medical services. To some extent, this area has drawn long-time Downtown businesses to a newer suburban location.

3. Specialty Retail

Specialty stores carry a narrow product line – sporting goods stores, kitchen stores, teen apparel, for example. Specialty stores are scattered throughout the Las

Cruces area, with concentrations in Old Mesilla and in the mall.

4. Arts/crafts/galleries

Galleries exist throughout the Las Cruces area. The predominant locations include: Old Mesilla, Mesilla Valley Mall, NMSU galleries, and the vicinity of the El Paseo/University intersection.

5. Entertainment

Competing entertainment venues are located near NMSU and near the Mesilla Valley Mall. Movie theaters are located along Telshor. The closest movie theaters to downtown are located on El Paseo and south of Downtown.

Museums outside of the Downtown include the NM Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum, the NMSU Museum, the Gadsden Museum, and the Natural History Museum (Mesilla Valley Mall). A number of festivals are held each year in Las Cruces, and the Whole Enchilada Festival, one of the largest, is located Downtown. Festivals not located in Downtown and their 2003 dates are listed in Table 4.

6. Other Leisure Activities

Other leisure activities that will compete with Downtown entertainment include outdoor activities like golf and hiking and mountain biking.

H.

Table 4. Las Cruces Annual Events

Date	Event	Location
January 19-20	10 th Annual Wells Fargo Mesilla Valley Balloon Rally	Swig Field
April 19-20	15 th Annual Frontier Days	Fort Selden State Monument
April 26-27	La Vina Blues & Jazz Thing	La Vina Winery
May 3-4	Cinco de Mayo	Old Mesilla Plaza
May 17-18	3 rd Annual la Fiesta de San Ysidro	New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum
May 24-26	New Mexico Wine and Chile War Festival	Southern New Mexico State Fairgrounds
August 30-31	Hatch Chile Festival	Hatch, New Mexico
August 30-Sept 1	New Mexico Wine Harvest Festival	Southern New Mexico State Fairgrounds
August 30-Sept 1	Hillsboro Apple Festival	Hillsboro, New Mexico
Sept 13-14	Diez y Seis de Septiembre Fiesta	Old Mesilla Plaza
Sept 20-21	White Sands Balloon Invitational	White Sands National Monument
Sept 26-28	The Whole Enchilada Fiesta	Downtown Mall
Oct 1-5	Southern New Mexico State Fair	Southern New Mexico Fairgrounds
Oct 18-19	Cowboy Days	New Mexico Farm & Ranch Museum
Nov 1-2	32 nd Annual Renaissance Craftfaire	Young Park
Nov 12-16	International Mariachi Conference	New Mexico State University Pan American Center
Dec 24	Christmas Carols and the Luminarias on the Plaza	Old Mesilla Plaza

II. Establish a Downtown “Identity”

A. Economic Role of the Future Downtown

Las Cruces’ Downtown is no longer the primary provider of goods and services to the urban area. That function has relocated to numerous small commercial centers and the area along Telshor surrounding the Mesilla Valley Mall. The cycle of disinvestment, with declining rents leaving property owners with less money to invest in their businesses, physical decline, and even more difficulty attracting new businesses, has been repeated across America’s urban landscapes. The need for downtowns to reposition themselves to compete in their local markets is so well recognized that it has a name – “economic restructuring.”

Downtown’s existing businesses and institutions, the strengths identified through community discussions and meetings, and existing buildings provide the seeds of economic revitalization. New market opportunities will point to new uses for existing buildings, public investment that reinforces positive change, and appropriate strategies to bring about the desired future Downtown.

Over the past 30 years, the role of Downtown Las Cruces has evolved from the retail commercial center of the region to a government, office and institutional center, with the major businesses being City, County and Federal offices, banks, churches and related businesses. The large spaces and low rents in

Downtown have attracted light industry like Calculex and the Excell Agent Services call center. Historic structures have become homes to museums and live theater, creating a nucleus of cultural facilities and venues.

The vision for Downtown as expressed in public meetings and by Las Cruces Downtown is a mixed commercial and entertainment center.

These roles, or a combination of them, are equally viable economic choices. Each can contribute to the region’s economy and to revitalization of Downtown. The predominant business types, customers and potential for each option are summarized in Table 5.



View North on Church Street

Table 5. Options for Downtown's Economic Role

Option	Predominant Business Types	Customers	Advantages and Disadvantages
Government, Office, Institutional Center	State, municipal, county and Federal offices Local bank headquarters Churches Civic organizations Support businesses, such as printing, law offices Consulting firms Design firms Lunchtime restaurants Convenience retail	Neighborhood residents Downtown workers Customers of major businesses	<p>Pro: Las Cruces Downtown is currently serving this function, so strengthening Downtown's role as a government, office and institutional center is most consistent with current trends. The employers in these categories are stable and have historically provided the employment base for Downtown. Government and major institutions support a variety of related business services.</p> <p>Con: Office uses are active 8 to 5, but do not provide for evening activity.</p>
Business Incubator	Call centers/telecommunications High-tech startups Small-scale assembly Arts and craft industries (jewelry, clothing, crafts, fine arts, furniture) Support businesses	Regional and national	<p>Pro: Light industry can occupy large inexpensive spaces with minimal renovation. Craft industries can complement arts activities and support wholesale showrooms, gallery space or retail outlets. Business incubator could promote regional economic growth by providing space in which to nurture local businesses. Industrial uses provide daytime population to support other Downtown businesses. Businesses with a regional or national customer base are not dependent on local customers and can be successful before a local market for Downtown is established.</p> <p>Con: Industrial uses do not typically have a vibrant street presence. Liner stores or showroom storefronts could increase the appeal of the streetscape.</p>
Arts and Cultural/ Entertainment Center	Restaurants Nightclubs and bars Coffee shops Live theater Movie theater Artist studios Galleries Museums	Neighborhood residents Downtown workers University students Visitors Local residents	<p>Pro: Entertainment can anchor nighttime activity, an important part of a 24-hour Downtown. Entertainment is more likely than other options to draw visitors. Existing museums and theaters have established a nucleus of arts and cultural activities. Museum classes and events can bring visitors to Downtown during weekdays and weekends.</p> <p>Con: Entertainment venues are inactive much of the time. Those that focus on evening activity do not contribute to daytime street life. Evening activity may be sporadic.</p>
Mixed Use Regional Activity Center	Any or all of the above Housing Specialty retail	All of the above	<p>Pro: A mix of uses provides multiple activities in an area that may no longer be able to support a single function. The more variety there is in Downtown activity, the more reasons for people to visit and the better the opportunities for multi-purpose trips. A mix of activities brings different people to Downtown at different times of day.</p> <p>Con: Las Cruces Downtown has some of the elements of a mixed use center, but this option is the most radical departure from the current trend and will require the most effort to accomplish.</p>

1. Successful Downtown Revitalization/Lessons Learned

Literature describing successful downtown revitalization efforts mentions a number of issues that Las Cruces should keep in mind as it formulates its approach to Downtown redevelopment.

- If property owners invest too much money in physical improvements before small businesses have been strengthened, rent will increase beyond the ability of merchants to pay them. A successful strategy will balance real estate and business development, gradually accelerating the pace as the district's market improves.
- A deteriorated downtown is not likely to transform overnight. A successful strategy will help businesses that already have a foothold in Downtown to expand and become more successful. In the beginning this could be more important as an economic foundation for Downtown than recruiting new businesses.
- Emphasis on specific niches, or types of economic specialization, allows Downtown to focus on part of a market and enables it to be unique with little or no competition; multiple niches bring more people and enable multipurpose visits. Niche markets already in place include Downtown workers, Downtown businesses, the culture and history of the Mesquite and Alameda neighborhoods, a concentration of live theaters and

museums, and the concentrations of government activity and banking.

- Dominance in a specific niche is easiest to achieve from the perspective of both business recruitment and attracting more customers when the Downtown already has a cluster of businesses that operate in the same retail function and are strong or capable of being strong. Organization and cooperation among the businesses in a cluster, including joint promotions, advertising or business recruitment makes the cluster stronger and more competitive than they are on their own.
- Ideal niches provide growth potential and the opportunity for Downtown to dominate in a particular market.

2. Niche Examples Relevant to Downtown Las Cruces

- The “wedding niche” in Rutland, VT. This niche brings together a compatible cluster of businesses such as travel agents, florists, printers, men's and women's clothing stores, jewelers, restaurants, caterers, and other related businesses in one advertising and promotional campaign. Pieces of such a niche in Downtown Las Cruces include a travel agent, bridal shops, photographers, beauty salons, restaurants and caterers, churches, and printers. Other services that are in Downtown, such as banking, insurance, accounting and real

estate could be marketed to these new households through a niche marketing approach.

- Ethnic markets. Downtowns are increasingly recognizing the tremendous retail demand created by inner-city consumers. Successful retailers in these communities cater specifically to the consumer preferences among and within specific ethnic groups in the neighborhoods surrounding Downtown. The population surrounding Downtown Las Cruces is predominantly Hispanic, which is a potential niche market for Downtown.
- Student Oriented Business Districts. The Church Street Pedestrian Mall in Burlington, VT is an example of a pedestrian-scale business district that caters to the students at nearby Middlebury College. The potential for student-oriented businesses in Downtown Las Cruces is limited because Downtown is not walking distance from New Mexico State University (NMSU) and there is no direct transit service. However, because of zoning restrictions and limited land availability near NMSU, Downtown could fill this need if it were accessible. Graham Central Station and Rodeo USA are the beginning of night clubs in the Downtown area. Other student-oriented businesses could include coffee shops, ice cream, office supplies, books and clothing. Central Avenue in Albuquerque has an array of student oriented goods and services along the south border of the University of New Mexico campus, and student-oriented businesses such as the Buffalo

Exchange used clothing store extend into the Nob Hill area east of the university.

- Services to Retirees – The retirement age population is growing nationally. Communities such as Sequim, WA and Hendersonville, AL have a specific strategy to attract retirees to their communities and to downtown.
- Tourism. Tourism has become a key strategy of communities of all sizes and in all parts of the U.S. Las Cruces has tourist activity because of its climate and location. Currently, most tourists are drawn to destinations like the Mesilla Plaza. According to vendors, many of the visitors to the Farmer’s Market are from out of town. A renovated Downtown could increase the variety of experiences for visitors to Las Cruces. Tourists can expand the market for other niches, such as arts and crafts, entertainment and restaurants.
- Arts and Crafts. Eureka, CA Cultural Arts District. Eureka’s Morris Graves Museum of Art, located in a restored Carnegie Library building, anchors Eureka’s growing Cultural Arts District. Eureka has implemented a “phantom galleries” program in the cultural arts district. "Phantom galleries" are a part of an economic development plan to turn empty storefronts into vibrant and interesting galleries that can introduce artists to the general public. Through this program, temporary art exhibits are placed in vacant storefronts. “Phantom galleries” also exist in Sacramento, San

Jose and other northern California cities. This approach could be used in the Las Cruces Downtown to enliven building fronts along the mall where buildings are vacant or where businesses do not have storefronts until permanent galleries occupy Downtown buildings.

- Jewelry. Jewelry manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing and service businesses can comprise a niche that attracts both local customers and tourists. Downtown Las Cruces’ buildings could accommodate both manufacturing and sales. Small-scale artist studios are sufficient for individual artists, who could create their products in the studio and sell them through retail outlets or an artist’s cooperative.
- Arts and Entertainment. In 1996, the City of Providence, Rhode Island established income tax and sales tax exemptions for artists living in its arts and entertainment district. Also passed in 1996 was legislation that provides tax incentives to property owners who convert buildings formerly used for industrial or commercial use into residential units. The outgrowth of these bills is the birth of an exciting area of the old core of the City of Providence dedicated to the arts. This area is the home of Trinity Repertory Company, NewGate Theater, CenterCity Artisans, Providence Black Repertory Company, Providence Performing Arts Center, AS220, Groundwerx Dance Company and Perishable Theatre to name a few.

- Restaurant Niche. A restaurant business cluster would include a variety of full-service and limited-service restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream and other dining establishments. This niche would be complementary to both the daytime business activity in Downtown and a cluster of nighttime entertainment venues.
- Office Worker Retail. Published studies of this niche indicate that most downtown workers are clerical workers with modest incomes. The most frequent downtown purchases are food, greeting cards, books, tapes, CDs and the like. Examples of stores that would cater to this market for convenient lunchtime purchases are sandwich shops, card and gift stores and book stores.

3. Building a Successful Business Mix

The Urban Land Institute has developed a matrix that indicates compatibility of uses in a mixed use district, as shown in Table 6. When placed in close proximity, the compatible uses create synergy – the mix of activities creates a more lively and successful area than would the individual uses on their own.

Efforts to recruit tenants for vacant space in Downtown should focus on businesses that will complement the types of activities envisioned for that part of Downtown.

For example, the theater and museum district on the Downtown Mall would benefit from a mix of uses that cater to theater patrons or generate activity at times when theaters and museums are open or holding events. Uses that complement the theaters are specialty retail and art galleries, comparison shopping such as apparel or shoe stores, bars and restaurants and theaters. Residential is potentially a

conflicting use because nighttime activity generates noise. Offices are neutral – they don't contribute to an entertainment district nor do they conflict. Hotels and convenience retail are weaker contributors to an entertainment district.

Table 6. Land Use Compatibility Matrix

	Entertainment: Theaters & Museums	Entertainment: Bars & Restaurants	Retail: Comparison	Retail: Specialty, Galleries	Retail: Convenience	Hotel	Offices	Residential
Residential	X	?	?	?	•	X	•	
Offices	—	•	?	?	?	•		•
Hotel	?	•	?	•	?		•	X
Retail: Convenience	?	?	?	X		?	?	•
Retail: Specialty Stores, Galleries	•	•	•		X	•	?	?
Retail: Comparison	•	•		•	?	?	?	?
Entertainment: Bars & Restaurants	•		•	•	?	•	•	?
Entertainment: Theaters, Museums		•	•	•	?	?	—	X
<p>Level of Market Synergy in Mixed Use Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong ? Weak or Uncertain — Neutral, Absence of Synergy X Potential Market Conflict <p>Source: Adapted from Urban Land Institute, <i>Real Estate Market Analysis: A Case Study Approach</i>, 2001.</p>								



4. Case Study: Downtown Albuquerque's Revitalization Strategy

The City of Albuquerque has struggled for many years to stop the decline of its downtown. First, retail activity left the downtown, and then other business began leaving for the new commercial centers of Uptown and North I-25. In 1991, the City completed a study of its Center City and embarked on a multi-year effort to diversify and revitalize the downtown. Albuquerque's strategy established a sequence of activities that would be cultivated and encouraged to locate downtown. Rather than attempting to recruit new daytime business as its first step, the City and

later the Downtown Action Team (DAT), a private non-profit supported by tax revenues generated by a business improvement district (BID), focused first on entertainment – making downtown a lively place with a variety of evening activities. Once entertainment venues, including restaurants and nightclubs, were established, the focus shifted to housing to create a 24/7 downtown population. Two successful apartment projects have recently been completed, and several residential loft projects are underway. Third, the DAT is seeking retail businesses to enliven the daytime environment, and fourth, the DAT will focus on attracting non-retail businesses back to the downtown.

Several factors have contributed to the successes to date. First, the City of Albuquerque was willing to invest in projects that could set the tone for private

investment. This included construction of a new multi-modal transportation center to be the hub of the City's bus system, private inter-city bus companies and the Amtrak station. The City subsidized a new multifamily project on downtown's southern boundary, redevelopment of a long abandoned high school into residential lofts, and development of a mixed-use block that contains a 14-screen movie theater, restaurants and office space. In addition, the City provided strategically placed parking garages to support the redevelopment projects.

Early surveys determined that Albuquerque residents did not patronize downtown because it was perceived as dirty and unsafe. Once the DAT was in place, and a BID established, funding was available for special "clean and safe" to that provide extra maintenance and security.



Phase One: "The Theater Block"



Downtown Albuquerque: Before/"The Vision"

Important lessons to be learned from Albuquerque are that

- revitalization is built on small successes that create opportunities for bigger impact projects;
 - revitalization is incremental and can take many years;
 - public investments can stimulate private investment and further redevelopment goals;
 - a multi-pronged approach broadens downtown's appeal to multiple markets;
 - private contributions to ongoing maintenance, public safety, and promotion can fill gaps in municipal services;
- the goal is to create an environment where people want to be and businesses can thrive

B. Revitalization Strategies

The following list of revitalization strategies for the future of Downtown Las Cruces derives from research on the existing condition of Downtown, the history of public opinion about the future of the area, information and opinions gathered recently from stakeholders in the Downtown area, and examination of the area's current assets and trade area characteristics.

1. Circulation

a. Improve Vehicular Access to Businesses in the Mall Area

1. Restore two-way traffic and parallel parking on Main Street
2. Reopen Organ Street
3. Restore two-way traffic on Church and Water Streets
4. Develop an effective system for visitors and employees to find their way around

b. Improve Pedestrian Accessibility to the Downtown Area

1. Enhance vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods

c. Improve the Quality of Downtown Parking

1. Resolve conflicts between employee and visitor parking
2. Maximize on-street parking

d. Improve Transit Access to the Downtown Area

1. Evaluate locating a proposed transit center in the Downtown area
2. Provide transit access to Downtown from the NMSU campus

2. Public Space

a. Create an Outdoor Space for Public Gatherings

1. Create a place for Sunday "promenades"
2. Create a quality location for the Farmer's Market in Downtown

b. Optimize the Amount of Shade in Downtown Public Spaces

1. Utilize both permanent and temporary shade elements

c. Create a "Heart" in Downtown Las Cruces

1. Develop a new plaza

3. Entertainment

a. Make Downtown "Fun"

1. Create an environment that appeals to younger people and members of the "creative class"
2. Develop more activities at night and on the weekend

b. Create an Atmosphere of Entertainment and Socializing

1. Renovate the Rio Grande Theater
2. Encourage more nightclubs, restaurants and movie theaters

4. Retail

a. Attract More "Destination" Retail Establishments

1. Build on #1 ranking as "best small town to do business"
2. Attract specialty boutique stores
3. Make retail stores more visible

b. Promote More Neighborhood-Serving Retail

1. Attract a small grocery store and drugstore

5. Office

a. Attract More Office Uses to the Downtown

1. Utilize vacant buildings as high tech business "incubators" and craft/artisan manufacturing centers
2. Encourage additional public and private sector offices in the Downtown

6. Arts

a. Create an Arts Focus for the Downtown

1. Attract more independent galleries and studios Downtown
2. Expand arts and crafts at the Farmer's Market

7. Culture

1. Promote more well-coordinated cultural and theater events
2. Cluster cultural facilities to create a "focus" for cultural activities in the Downtown
3. Bring the Natural History Museum to the area

a. Preserve and Enhance Historic Buildings

1. Rehabilitate the Rio Grande Theater

8. Resources

a. Use City-Owned Properties as Catalysts for Revitalization

1. Utilize the City-owned So-Lo Building to stimulate Downtown revitalization
2. Seek private investment to infill vacant, publicly-owned parcels

b. Build on the Prestige of the New Federal Courthouse

9. Housing

a. Create Housing in or near the Mall Area

1. Build affordable housing that will appeal to young people and seniors
2. Capitalize on the proximity of public and charter schools in the area to attract families to the area
3. Create "loft" housing opportunities over retail

b. Build "infill" housing in surrounding neighborhoods

10. Organizational

a. Create a BID to Support Enhanced Security, Clean-up and Advertising

1. Establish a public perception of safety in the Downtown area
2. Create strategies to more effectively deal with vagrants and pan-handlers in the Downtown

b. Explore partnerships between the museums, cultural organizations and NMSU to foster improvements for Downtown

c. Identify and support "pioneers" that will pave the way for others

1. University Students
2. Artists
3. Business "start-ups"

11. Downtown Design

a. Create a Distinctive and Visible "Sense of Place" for Downtown

1. "A Gathering Place"
2. "An Arts and Entertainment Center"
3. "A Cultural Center"
4. "A Niche Center for Boutique and Specialty Stores"

b. Reestablish the "Street Wall" Downtown

1. Eliminate the "checkerboard" pattern of buildings through infill development
2. Create a clear view of building facades

- c. **Improve Lighting in Pedestrian Areas**
- d. **Improve Signage and “Way-Finding”**
- e. **Capitalize on Views to the Organ Mountains**
- f. **Improve the Appearance of Existing Building Facades**
 - 1. Amend building codes to make rehabilitation more economically feasible
 - 2. Create more “green space”

12. Neighborhoods

- a. **Enhance Pedestrian Accessibility to the Downtown from the Adjacent Neighborhoods**
- b. **Enhance Access of Neighborhoods to Public Transportation**
- c. **Support Residential Infill in Surrounding Neighborhoods**

13. Implementation

- a. **Utilize “Federal Housing Money” to Leverage Housing Construction and Renovation**
- b. **Utilize State Funds for Public Space Design and Development**



C. Downtown Concept Alternatives

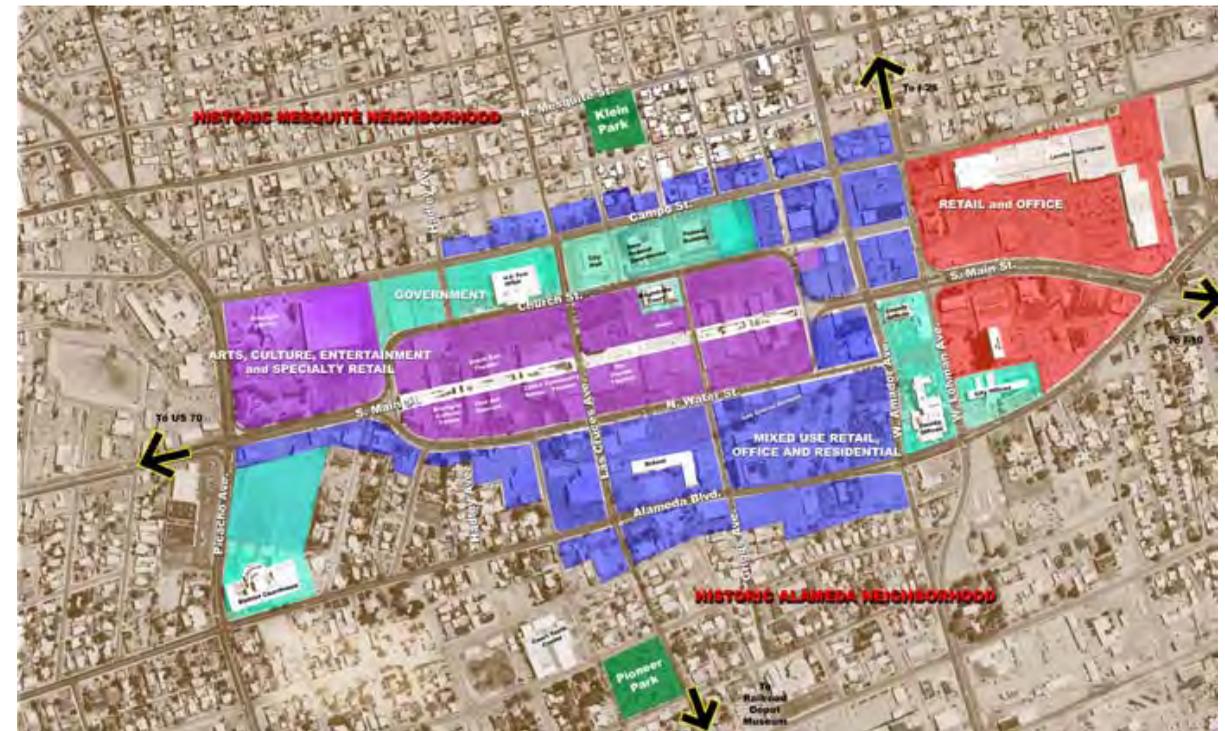
The following are two concepts for establishing an identity and vision for the future of Downtown Las Cruces. The intent of these concepts is to present options for creating an agreed-upon vision of the future that will become a guide for the revitalization and redevelopment of Downtown Las Cruces.

1. Concept A

Concept A presents a development strategy that revolves around the opening of the entire length of Main Street through the Downtown area. The concept proposes development districts with unique characteristics, a vehicular and pedestrian circulation strategy, a system of landscape and entry gateways, locations for public events and recommended development infill sites.

a. Districts

The district designations describe areas in the Downtown that are most suitable to specific types of development. This mix of uses will differentiate the area from the rest of Downtown, create a unique environment, enhance convenience and add to the “feel” of the Downtown as the urban center of Las Cruces. Among the districts identified are the Government District, the area housing the majority of the City, County, State and Federal Government buildings; and the Arts, Cultural, Entertainment and Specialty Retail District, the area including all the existing and future museums, new restaurants and nightclubs as well as one of a kind retail establishments. The area surrounding the core of Downtown is the Mixed Use Retail, Office and Residential District; this is an area with a mix of land use activities including new buildings with uses on the upper floors than the pedestrian oriented ground floor. There is also a more traditional Retail and Office District at the south side of Downtown.



Districts

b. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The circulation scheme in Concept A proposes the opening of the full length of Main Street. It also proposes that all one-way streets in the Downtown area, with the exception of Lohman and Alameda, be converted to two-way with the provision of on street parking on all streets that have sufficient right-of-way. All existing closed east/west streets, with the exception of Hadley, will be reopened with on-street parking where the right-of-way is sufficient.



Circulation

c. Landscape/Gateways

Concept A proposes an east/west landscape system that links Klein Park on the east to Pioneer Park on the west. This system of street trees, paving and street furniture will also connect the pedestrian mall of the new Federal Courthouse to a new plaza west of the present Magistrate Court building. This landscaped pedestrian way will cross Main Street and connect to the future landscaped trail along the Las Cruces Acequia and then to Pioneer Park along Las Cruces Avenue. The landscaping of Main Street will be primarily at non-retail locations with awnings or arcades at retail buildings creating the pedestrian shade in those areas. There will be landscaped gateways, with way-finding signage announcing arrival to the Downtown area, where Main Street intersects Picacho and Alameda Boulevard and where Las Cruces Avenue intersects Campo Street and Alameda Boulevard.



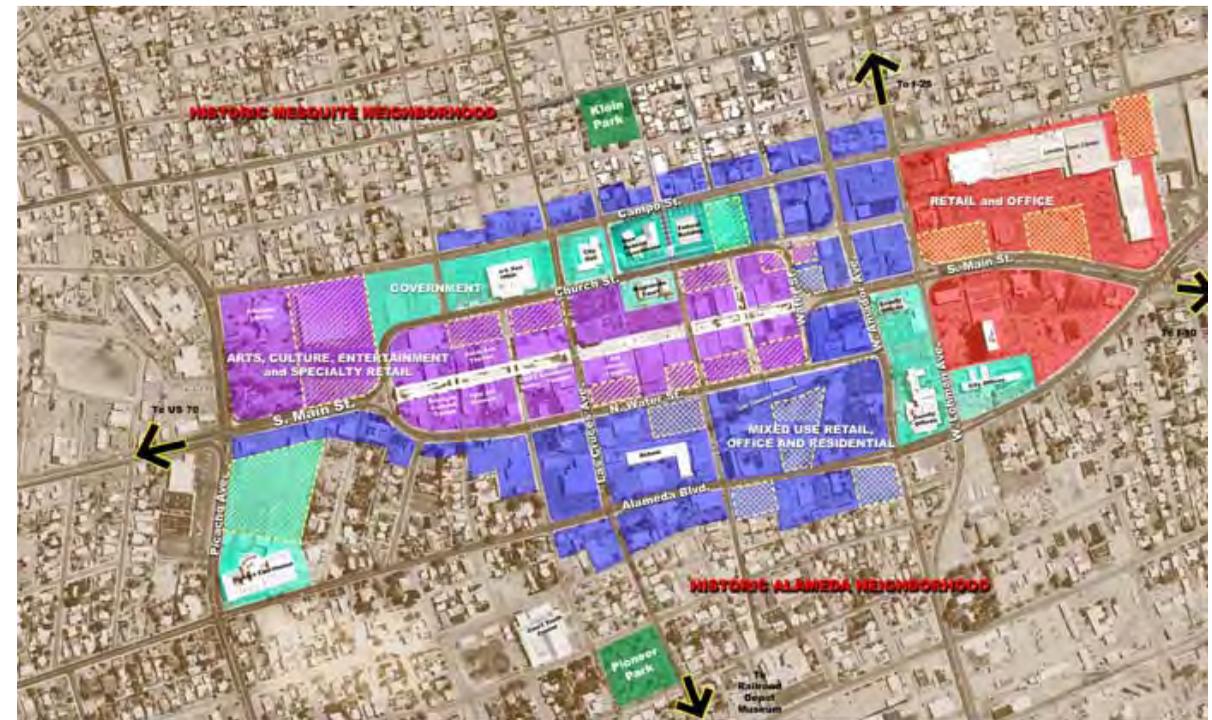
Landscape/Gateways

d. Public Events

Concept A proposes to create multiple opportunities for public events such as the Farmer’s Market, the Whole Enchilada Festival and smaller events in pedestrian-oriented, shaded areas. There will be a landscaped pedestrian mall along the closed portion of Organ Street from Campo Street on the east to Water Street on the west. A new plaza is proposed for the property west of the Magistrate Court’s present location. This plaza will provide landscaped and hardscaped areas with permanent shade structures. For major events such as the Whole Enchilada Festival and weekend Farmer’s Market events, Main Street will be designed so that temporary bollards can be placed to eliminate vehicular traffic and create a pedestrian mall with temporary and permanent shading opportunities depending on the season and type of event.

e. Infill Potential

There are numerous opportunities for development of currently vacant land in the Downtown Mall area. Much of this land is under public ownership while some is under private ownership. Concept A proposes that these properties be developed, when possible, as mixed-use projects. These mixed-use projects should be appropriate to the district theme of their site and could include buildings with retail on the ground floor and office or residential above, or parking structures with retail on the ground level. A large portion of these infill properties are currently being used for surface parking lots. A parking strategy, including construction of several public parking garages over time, will be necessary to make these properties available for development.

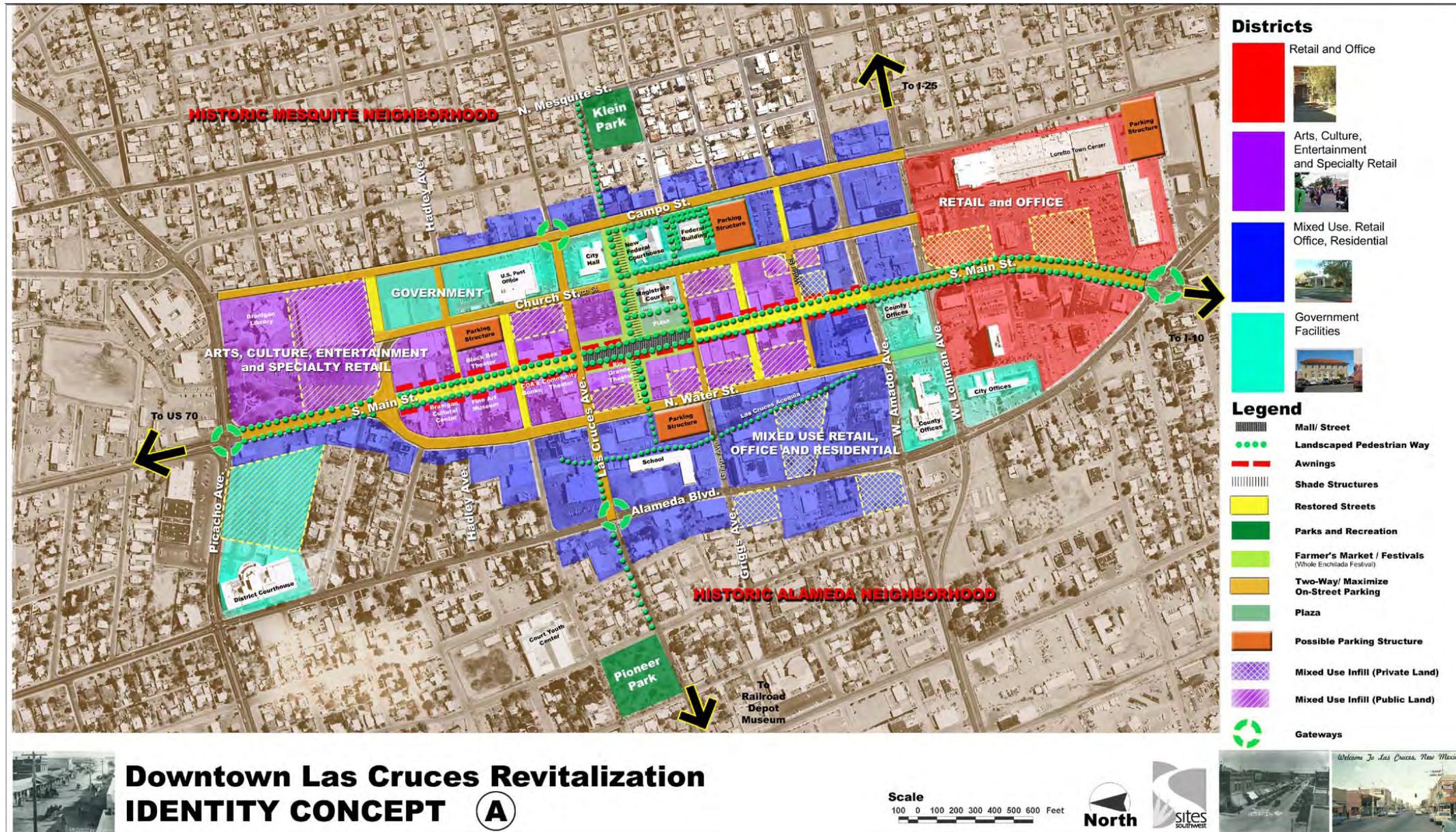


Public Events

Infill



Figure 10. Identity Concept A

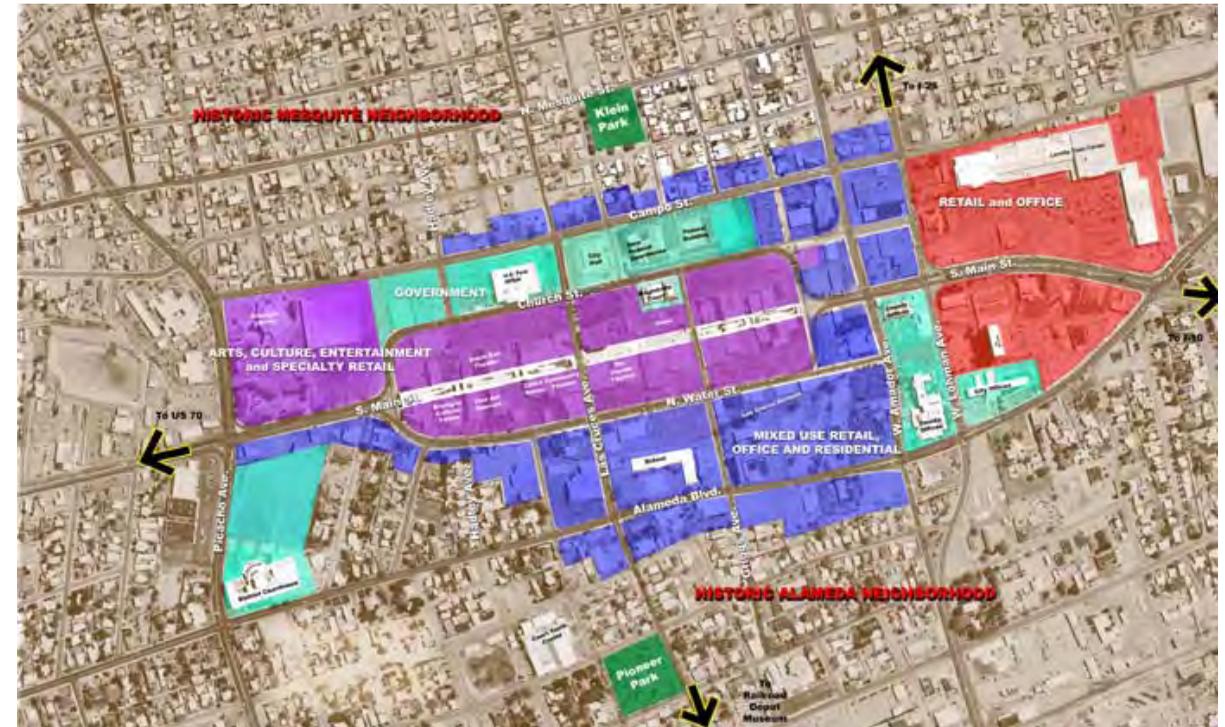


2. Concept B

Concept B presents an alternative strategy that opens Main Street from West Amador Avenue to Las Cruces Avenue. The northern three blocks of Main Street beginning at Las Cruces Avenue remain as an “Arts and Culture” pedestrian mall. Similar to Concept A this concept proposes development districts with unique characteristics, a vehicular and pedestrian circulation strategy, a system of landscape and entry gateways, locations for public events and recommended development infill sites.

a. Districts

The District designations are identical to Concept A and describe areas in the Downtown that are most suitable to specific types of development. This mix of uses will differentiate the area from the rest of Downtown, create a unique environment, enhance convenience and add to the “feel” of the Downtown as the urban center of Las Cruces. Among the Districts identified are the Government District, the area housing the majority of the City, County, State and Federal Government buildings; and the Arts, Cultural, Entertainment and Specialty Retail District, the area including all the existing and future museums, new restaurants and nightclubs, as well as one-of-a-kind retail establishments. The area surrounding the core of Downtown is the Mixed-Use Retail, Office and Residential District; this is an area with a mix of land use activities, including new buildings with uses on the upper floors that are different from the pedestrian-oriented ground floor. There is also a more traditional Retail and Office District at the south side of Downtown.



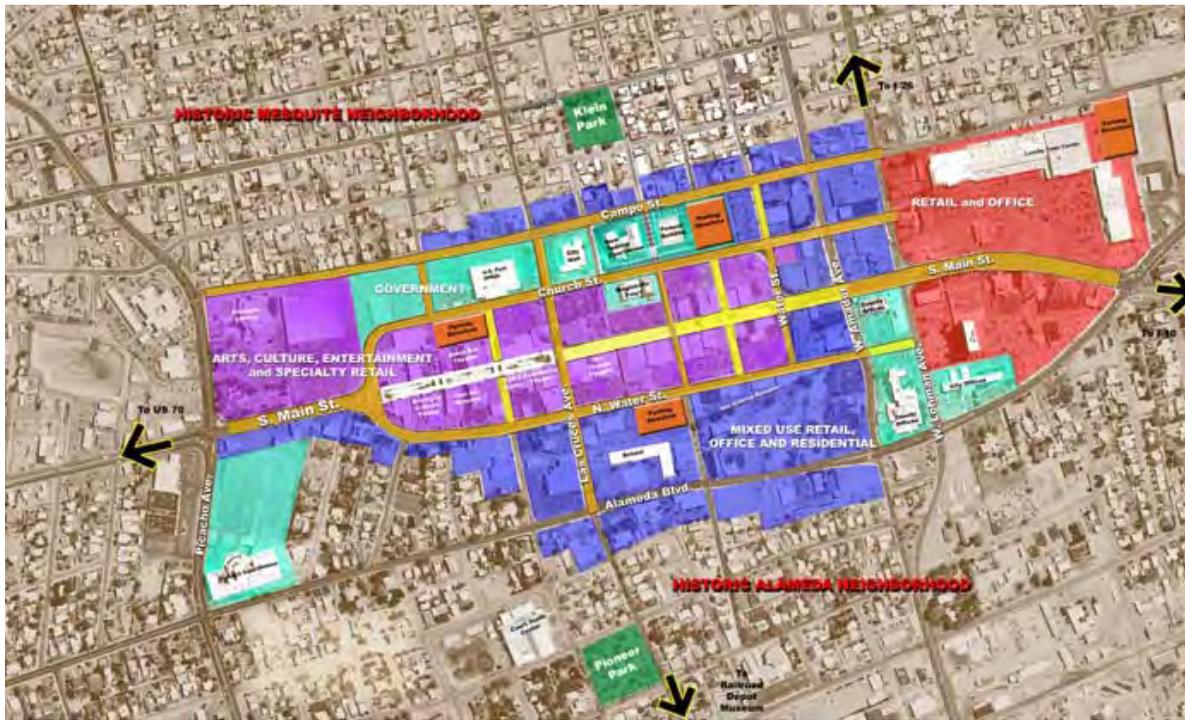
Districts

b. Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

The circulation scheme in Concept B proposes the opening of Main Street north to Las Cruces Avenue. It also proposes that all one-way streets in the Downtown area, with the exception of Lohman and Alameda, be converted to two-way with the provision of on-street parking on all streets that have sufficient right-of-way. All existing closed east/west streets, with the exception of Hadley, will be reopened with on-street parking where the right-of-way is sufficient. Court Street will be opened with a pedestrian-friendly mall-crossing design.

c. Landscape/Gateways

Concept B also proposes an east/west landscape system that links Klein Park on the east to Pioneer Park on the west. This system of street trees, paving and street furniture will also connect the pedestrian mall of the new Federal Courthouse to a new plaza west of the present Magistrate Court building. This landscaped pedestrian way will cross Main Street and connect to the future landscaped trail along the Las Cruces Acequia and then to Pioneer Park along Las Cruces Avenue. The landscaping of Main Street will be primarily at non-retail locations, with awnings or arcades at retail buildings creating the pedestrian shade in those areas. There will be landscaped gateways, with way-finding signage announcing arrival to the Downtown area, where Main Street intersects with Picacho and Alameda Boulevard and where Las Cruces Avenue intersects with Campo Street and Alameda Boulevard.



Circulation



Landscape/Gateways



d. Public Events



Public Events

Concept B also proposes to create multiple opportunities for public events such as the Farmer’s Market, the Whole Enchilada Festival and smaller events in pedestrian-oriented shaded areas. There will be a landscaped pedestrian mall along the closed portion of Organ Street from Campo Street on the east to Water Street on the west. A new plaza is proposed for the property west of the present location of the Magistrate Court. This plaza will provide landscaped and hardscaped areas with permanent shade structures. Three blocks of the existing Downtown Mall will be saved and be available for special events. This portion of the mall should be completely updated, saving the mature landscape where appropriate.

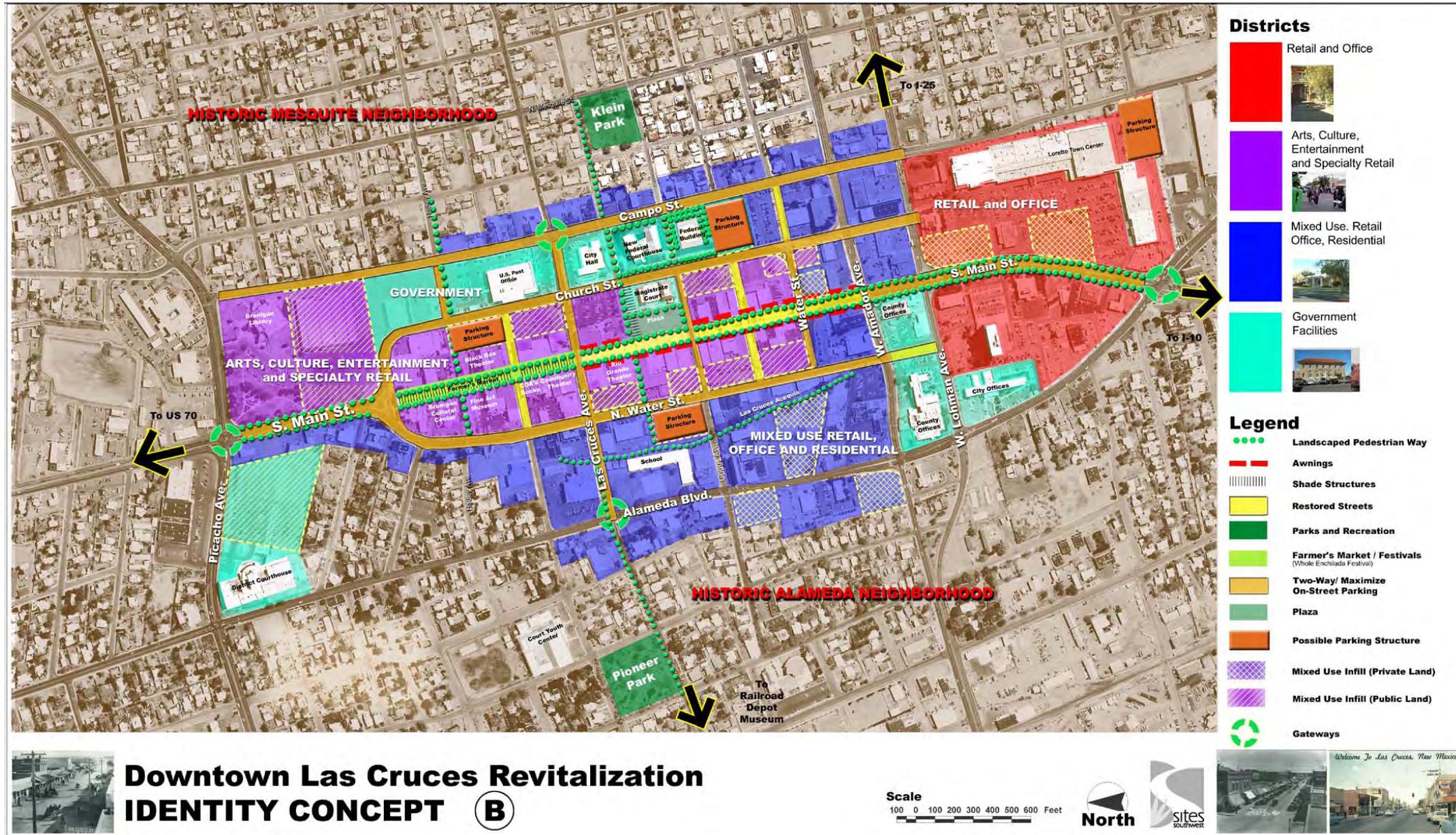
e. Infill Potential



Public Events

There are numerous opportunities for development of currently vacant land in the Downtown Mall area as described in Concept A. Much of this land is under public ownership while some is under private ownership. Concept “B” also proposes that these properties be developed, when possible, as mixed-use projects. These mixed-use projects should be appropriate to the District theme of their site and could include buildings with retail on the ground floor and office or residential above, or parking structures with retail on the ground level. A large portion of these potential infill properties are currently being used for surface parking lots. A parking strategy, including construction of several public parking garages over time, will be necessary to make these properties available for development.

Figure 11. Identity Concept B



D. Recommended Concept/ Vision for the Future

1. The Recommendation

Both “Identity Concepts” developed here are very similar in their presentation of a vision for the future of Downtown Las Cruces. They both build on the strengths of today’s Downtown by proposing “districts” that focus on development activities that will create special areas that reinforce the arts, culture, entertainment, government and specialty retail. These are the existing activities that differentiate Downtown from the rest of Las Cruces and should be the cornerstone of its future. Both concepts propose a modified vehicular circulation system to enhance the visibility of, and accessibility to, all parts of Downtown. If the Downtown is to have a viable retail presence in the community, visibility and accessibility are critical components for success. All one-way streets are proposed to be converted to two-way with parking on both sides of the street where rights-of-way are sufficient. Both concepts propose that many of the currently closed east/west streets be reopened and on-street parking provided where rights of way permit. Concept A proposes to reopen all of Main Street while Concept B proposes to leave three blocks of the existing mall in place. Concept A is recommended over B since it will do the most to maximize the

potential to create a future entertainment and retail center in Downtown Las Cruces. Opening all of Main Street will reinstate this street as a major north/south arterial and will bring thousands of cars and people through the heart of the city. The new Main Street will be designed to be closed for special events between Griggs and Las Cruces Avenue. There will be special paving for the street in this area and permanent shading elements and it will be adjacent to a new plaza and pedestrian mall, making it easily convertible to an exciting pedestrian environment for major public events.

Tomorrow’s Downtown Las Cruces will continue to be a center of government. There will be a new government center built to consolidate government services and make them more convenient to the citizens of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County. There will be convenient on-street parking throughout Downtown with strategically located public parking structures. Once you park your car, you will be able to conveniently walk to multiple locations in a pleasant and interesting environment. Vacant lots currently devoted to surface parking lots will be developed with multi-story mixed-use buildings, typically with retail or office activities on the ground floor and office or retail in the two or three stories above.

Downtown will continue to be the center for arts and cultural facilities in Las Cruces. The Museum of Natural History will move Downtown. There will be a concentration of art galleries and working artists’

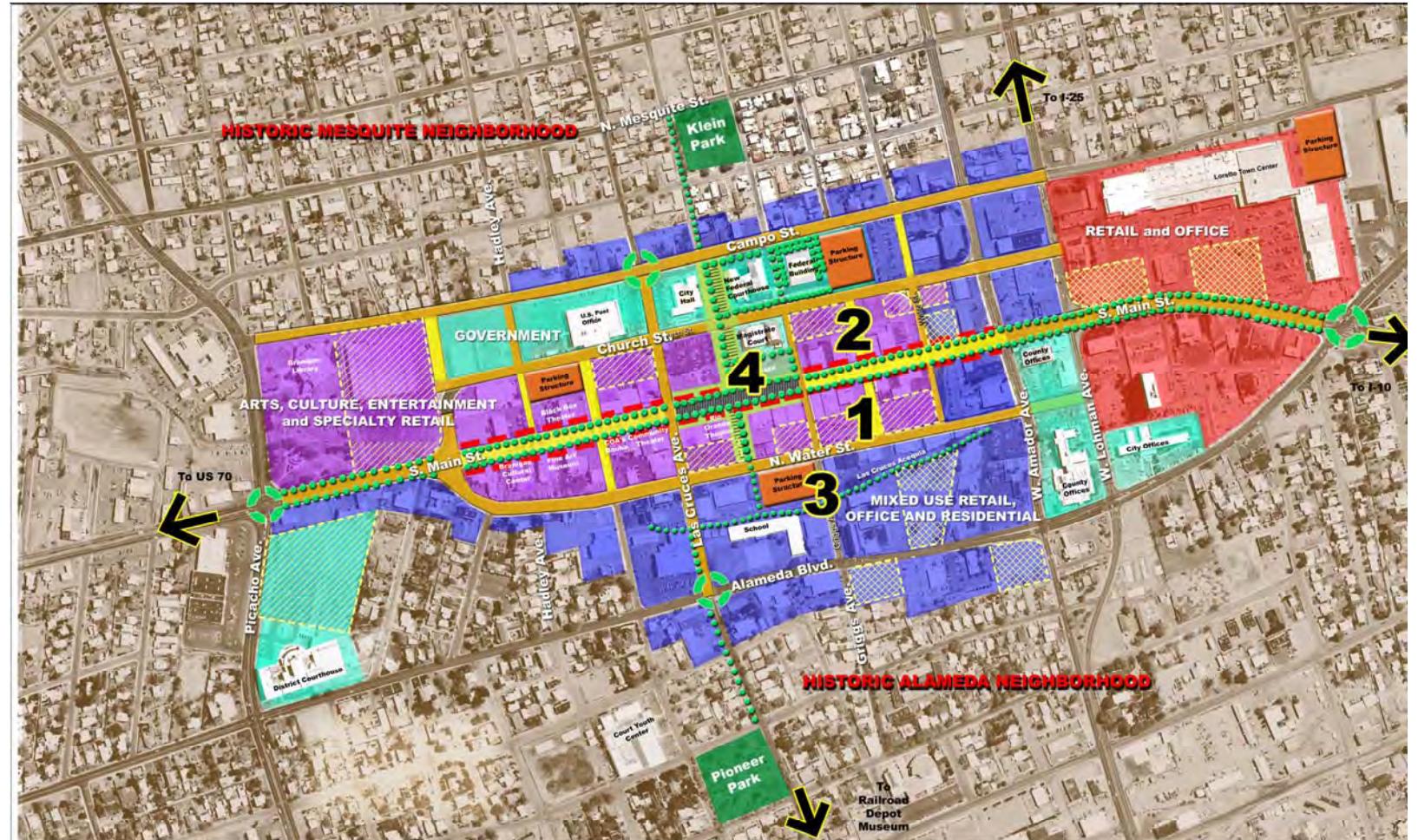
studios. Downtown will be the place in the region that has the greatest concentration of contemporary and traditional arts and crafts. Many artists will create “live/work” studios in the Downtown area.

Tomorrow’s Downtown will become the entertainment center of the city. It will continue to be the location of major public events such as the Farmer’s Market and the Whole Enchilada Festival. There will be new night clubs, brew pubs, restaurants and other entertainment venues to complement the existing theaters. All of these facilities will be within convenient walking distance of one another, making this environment unique to Las Cruces. These activities will create an exciting evening and weekend life in Downtown that currently does not exist. The possibility of an evening out in Downtown will become a reality with dinner at an interesting ethnic restaurant, a stage play at one of the theaters, a stroll by interesting store windows after the show and coffee and desert at a jazz club to round out the evening. All of this will be possible without getting back in your car, which is conveniently parked at a secure nearby public parking garage. No where else in the city can you have this experience.

Downtown will become the center for unique, one-of-a-kind specialty stores. These retail establishments will draw customers from the region as well as from the tourist community. Downtown will have the most interesting shops in the city and will be the place to go find unique one-of-a-kind items not available in the franchise discount world of retail.

A wide spectrum of the Las Cruces community will be seen Downtown as well as City, County, State and Federal Government workers, NMSU students and senior citizens who will be drawn to Downtown because of its convenience, excitement and pleasant environment. Many of these individuals will seek housing in the Downtown area because of its vibrancy and convenience. Much of this housing will be new and will be built on vacant or underutilized land currently used for parking. This housing will be multi-story and will have convenience retail and services on the ground floor. New and existing residents of the Mesquite and Alameda Neighborhoods will be seen in greater numbers Downtown because of the new convenience retail and service businesses. They no longer will have to get in their cars to go to a drugstore or to buy a loaf of bread.

Downtown has become the most interesting pedestrian environment in Las Cruces. Main Street has beautiful awnings on all of the retail establishments, harking back to its historic roots. Street trees are strategically located to provide additional shade and beauty to all of the Downtown streets. There is a landscaped pedestrian way that connects Klein Park in Mesquite to Pioneer Park in the Alameda Neighborhood. This shaded, landscaped pedestrian way moves west from Klein Park through the pedestrian mall of the newly constructed Federal Courthouse and across Church Street to the new plaza west of the Magistrate Court Building. It then crosses Main Street and continues west where it connects with the newly renovated trail and landscaped way along the historic Las Cruces Acequia and from there down Las Cruces Avenue to Pioneer Park.



Downtown Las Cruces Revitalization Preferred Concept

Scale
100 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 Feet



III. Visualizing the Future Downtown

A. Visual Concepts

1. Housing/Retail

This visual simulation depicts a mixed use building built on the existing parking lot at the southeast corner of Griggs and Water Streets. This concept could potentially yield 30,000 gross square feet of retail on the ground floor and approximately 30 units of apartments or condominium units on the upper two floors. The alley to the east would remain and parking would be off-site, on street or in a parking garage.

2. Office/Retail

This visual simulation shows a potential mixed use infill project at the northwest corner of Organ and Church Streets. This building could have 35,000 gross square feet of retail on the ground floor and 35,000 gross feet of office above. Parking could be off-site and the alley on the west would remain.

3. Parking/Retail

This computer simulation shows a four story parking garage with retail at street level at the northwest corner of Griggs and Water Streets. The structure could have 15–20,000 gross square feet of retail on the ground floor and approximately 450 parking spaces.

4. Main Street

This view looks north up Main Street from the intersection of Griggs and Main Streets. The first computer simulation shows Main Street open to traffic and a new plaza developed where the drive up bank currently exists. Permanent and temporary shade elements would be part of this new Main Street design. The next view shows how, using movable bollards, Main Street can be turned into an exciting pedestrian mall for festivals and special occasions.



Now



Future

1. Housing/Retail Las Cruces & Water Streets





Now



Future

2. Office/Retail Church and Organ Streets



Now



Future

3. Parking/Retail Griggs and Water Streets



Now



Future Main Street / Open

4. Main Street at Griggs



4. Main Street/Closed for Festival

IV. A Private/Public Strategic Plan and Implementation Structure

The strategic plan for Downtown’s revitalization builds on existing public and private resources, particularly the people who have already expressed an interest in being part of Downtown’s renewal. The plan is project – and action-oriented, with leadership and accountability vested in “action teams” that will carry out specific aspects of the strategy.

The Strategic Plan was prepared in consultation with key Downtown stakeholders.

Principles for successful Downtown revitalization are:

- There isn’t a single “magic” solution to revitalizing a deteriorated downtown. Many actions, large and small, must occur simultaneously to accomplish change.
- Both the private sector and local government have important roles to play in revitalizing Downtown Las Cruces. The most successful strategies are based on a structure of private sector leadership with public support.
- The existing Las Cruces Downtown (LCDT) organization can serve as a catalyst for revitalization. As an entrepreneurial non-profit organization, LCDT can monitor the activities of other entities as well as carry out its own responsibilities.
- Downtown Las Cruces is important to the whole community. Downtown revitalization

must involve people from throughout the community, with clear community benefits.

- Downtown revitalization must be market-driven if it is to be sustainable. A variety of development types, including office, retail, housing, non-profit organizations and institutions will make up Downtown. An understanding of demand and proper timing to meet demand are critical to successful development and redevelopment.

A. Public and Private Resources

The revitalization of Downtown Las Cruces will be a joint effort of many people and both public and private resources. Las Cruces Downtown’s committees provide an organizational structure to carry out the plan. This structure includes both advocates to promote implementation of the plan and the entities that will carry out plan activities.

B. Action Plan

The action plan is organized by goals that state the broad intent of the City of Las Cruces and Downtown Las Cruces. Las Cruces Downtown’s committees could organize around these topic areas and take responsibility for the actions in applicable sections.

Goals, objectives and recommended actions of Downtown Las Cruces and its public and private partners to accomplish each objective are listed below.

1. Commercial Revitalization

GOAL: Identify, promote and develop opportunities in the Downtown Area that build on the existing infrastructure and attract businesses and new development.

Objective: Take advantage of the City’s authority under the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Act to create a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area and capitalize on financing opportunities and incentives.

Actions

1. Complete a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Designation for the Downtown Area within six months.
2. Develop a Metropolitan Redevelopment Plan for the MRA within one year of the establishment of the MRA.
3. Create or designate a Redevelopment Agency within the City’s Community Development Department to implement Metropolitan Redevelopment projects within one year.

4. Identify, prepare and provide opportunity for redevelopment of three key in-fill sites within the Central Business District in the next two years.
5. Prepare developer packets and select developers for the development for one mixed-use project within the next two to three years.
6. Utilize the City-owned So-Lo building and/or site to stimulate Downtown revitalization.
7. Make available, market and leverage existing City-owned vacant land for housing and mixed-use opportunities.

Objective: Identify, develop and promote opportunities for businesses to locate in the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Create an inventory of all commercial space in the Central Business District and market available spaces to potential businesses through advertisements in business journals and a one-stop Las Cruces Downtown website within the next year.
2. Develop a list of potential Downtown tenants, determine the lease expiration on their current space, and develop a tickler file to contact them six months prior to lease expiration if suitable Downtown space becomes available.
3. Identify any vacant buildings that might be suitable to house a high tech business incubator center. Identify opportunities for property owners to capitalize on a business incubator center.
4. Coordinate with the Hispano Chamber of Commerce within the next year to re-locate their current office space to Downtown.

5. Coordinate with Downtown businesses in the next year to start an Independent Business Alliance that promotes and advertises the benefits of shopping at locally-owned businesses (See Independent Business Alliances in Appendix A).
6. Attract and recruit at least three new businesses to the Downtown within the next two years.
7. Attract and recruit at least three new specialty and boutique stores within the next three years.
8. Recruit three local non-profit organizations to locate in the Downtown area in the next three years. Work with Downtown property owners to identify potential locations for a combined office space/building for the joint use of non-profits.
9. Attract and recruit a small grocery store and drugstore.
10. Identify possible sites for a multi-screen movie theater to locate in the Downtown area and begin communications with potential theater companies for future development.

Objective: Develop and expand on “niche” markets.

Actions

1. Identify businesses within Downtown that fit with the potential “niche” markets and contact those businesses to initiate a joint marketing effort within the next year. Ideas for niche markets are contained in Section II of this report.
2. Identify and select up to three “niche” markets that fit well with existing Downtown businesses.
3. Develop a promotion strategy for each “niche”.

2. Arts, Culture and Entertainment

GOAL: Increase the arts, cultural and entertainment value of the Downtown Area.

Objective: Create an arts focus for the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Attract and recruit independent art galleries and studios to Downtown within the next one to three years.
2. Attract and recruit arts and crafts manufacturing to the Downtown Area. Identify potential vacant buildings in which a center for arts and crafts manufacturing could be established where visitors could watch artists making their handicrafts. Work with property owners to develop strategies to accomplish this goal.
3. Promote and fund interactive and climbable art, city murals, sculptures, giant game boards and paint buildings with vibrant and fun colors.
4. Develop a monthly Downtown arts calendar within the next year.

Objective: Develop, promote and coordinate cultural events and entertainment activities in the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Publish a monthly multi-facility calendar of Downtown cultural and theater events.
2. Set-up a mechanism for Downtown cultural venues to coordinate schedules and organize

Downtown events within the next year. Develop and promote new events for the Downtown.

3. Assist and ensure current Downtown cultural organizations stay in Downtown and identify any potential organizations that might wish to locate Downtown.
4. Develop “Theater Nights” during which the Downtown theaters and restaurants coordinate to offer dining and entertainment throughout the evening hours.
5. Develop and sponsor night and weekend activities at least once a month.
6. Expand the existing Farmer’s Market to include new vendors and artists, and secure a permanent location for the Farmer’s Market over the next two to three years.
7. Attract and recruit at least two new restaurants or nightclubs within the next one to three years. Encourage current establishments to extend business hours.
8. Identify and secure a location for the Natural History Museum to locate in Downtown in the next one to two years.
9. Complete renovation of the Rio Grande Theater within the next three years.

3. DOWNTOWN DESIGN

GOAL: Promote good design throughout the Downtown.

Objective: Develop design guidelines for the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Develop and adopt design guidelines for the Downtown Area within the next two to three years.
2. Develop and publish a landscaping and street tree design book for appropriate planting materials in the Downtown Area.
3. Adopt a standardized sign code for the Central Business District and Main Street Plaza.
4. Adopt standards for shade elements, which could include awnings, street trees or a combination that does not block storefront visibility.

Objective: Improve the overall appearance and image of the Downtown.

Actions

1. Complete an inventory of Downtown buildings which includes conditions, height, design, square footages, vacant spaces, current tenants, etc.
2. Add and improve lighting along streets, sidewalks, parks and public spaces over the next three years.
3. Design and add shade elements along the sidewalks on Main Street over the next three years.

4. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

GOAL: Improve and support the transportation network in the Downtown Area.

Objective: Improve vehicular and pedestrian access to businesses in the “mall” area.

Actions

1. Restore two-way traffic and parallel parking on Main Street.
2. Re-open east/west streets within the next three to five years.
3. Restore two-way traffic on Church and Water Streets within the next three to five years.
4. Develop an effective signage, way-finding and directional system.
5. Enhance vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods
6. Accelerate maintenance, upgrades and improvements to existing streets within the next three to five years.

Objective: Improve the quality and availability of Downtown parking for both short-term and long-term visitors.

Actions

1. Develop a public/private parking management team to assist in resolving the conflict between employee and visitor parking.
2. Develop and enforce parking regulations, and investigate paid parking and time-limited parking zones.
3. Maximize on-street parking and allow it to count towards parking requirements for businesses within 600 feet.
4. Provide incentives to mixed-use and housing developments for parking under structures or off-site structured parking.
5. Create shared parking structures within the next five to seven years.



6. Construct or secure city parking to accommodate employee parking off the main streets.

Objective: Improve transit access to the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Contact RoadRUNNER Transit and New Mexico State University to develop a new bus route that provides service from NMSU to the Downtown Area. Propose the new route for the 2004 transit bus route changes. The City and NMSU should share the costs of the new route and extend weekend hours to accommodate emerging Downtown nightlife.
2. Evaluate locating a transit center or hub in the Downtown Area.
3. Evaluate the current public transit system in Downtown and identify any potential improvements on an annual basis.

5. PUBLIC SPACES

GOAL: Enhance existing public spaces and develop new spaces.

Objective: Improve and develop new public spaces in the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Design and construct the Las Cruces Acequia Trail within the next three to five years.

2. Construct a new plaza to create an outdoor place for public gatherings within the next three to five years.
3. Design and construct gateways at the four entrances to the Downtown area within the next three to five years.
4. Design and construct the east/west streetscape improvements within the next five years, which include landscape and pedestrian improvements to the Klein Park/Pioneer Park corridor.
5. Design and construct a playground area for children in the Downtown Area within the next three to five years.
6. Design and construct the city/state government center within the next five to seven years.

6. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

GOAL: Improve and support housing and neighborhoods in and near the Downtown Area.

Objective: Create and promote housing opportunities in or near the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Identify and market sites for affordable housing that will appeal to young people and seniors within the next one to two years.
2. Build new Downtown housing within the next two to five years.
3. Identify potential sites and encourage live/work housing for artists.

4. Capitalize on the proximity and quality of public and charter schools in the area to attract families to Downtown.

Objective: Protect and enhance adjacent neighborhoods.

Actions

1. Develop and adopt neighborhood plans for adjacent Alameda-Depot and Mesquite neighborhoods within the next three years.
2. Provide links and better accessibility to Downtown and public transit through gateways, paths, signage and outreach.
3. Support residential infill development and rehabilitation of existing units in surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Establish primary and secondary school liaisons to foster relations and coordinate activities between the community and the schools.
5. Develop unique identifications to historic neighborhoods – signage including street signs, gateways, lighting, historic markers and other design elements.

Objective: Protect historic buildings and houses.

Actions

1. Provide grants and technical assistance to property owners and residents for the rehabilitation of historic structures.
2. Adopt residential design review and design guidelines for historic neighborhoods.



7. FUNDING AND FINANCING

GOAL: Ensure an adequate supply of money to assist the City in funding capital improvements and City programs in the Downtown.

Objective: Research and locate funding sources.

Actions

1. Establish a staff person to research potential funding opportunities at the Federal, State and local level and apply for grants.
2. Find and partner with potential private investors.
3. Implement a Business Improvement District (BID) within the next two to three years where business owners tax themselves to provide an income source for Downtown improvements.
4. Seek private investment to in-fill vacant publicly-owned parcels.

8. GOVERNMENT LIAISON

GOAL: Coordinate City regulations with the goals of Downtown businesses, residents and property owners.

Objective: Regulatory reform and initiatives.

Actions

1. Develop a one-stop shop and streamlined permitting process for developments in Downtown within three years.

2. Increase code enforcement in the Downtown Area, but provide technical assistance and grant programs to seniors and low-income residents for clearing up code violations.
3. Provide technical assistance and grants to businesses in order to bring existing buildings up to code with current ADA requirements. Allow flexibility in requirements.
4. Provide public incentives to developers to build housing in Downtown which might include: height and density bonuses for mixed-use developments, decreased parking requirements, fee reductions, tax incentives and abatements for the housing portions of mixed-use developments, and other opportunities.

9. PUBLIC EVENTS, TOURISM AND PROMOTION

GOAL: Support and enhance the Downtown Area for community events and tourism.

Objective: Promote the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Develop a Downtown brochure highlighting businesses, restaurants, etc., and incorporate this brochure into existing events schedules and fliers.
2. Consider renaming the Downtown Area within the next year – “Welcome to Old Town Las Cruces, the Heart of the City”. Other possibilities include: Main Street Las Cruces, Hometown Las Cruces,

the Original Las Cruces, and the Las Cruces Townsite.

3. Hire an ad agency to help the City develop a branding and image identity for the Downtown Area and expand and develop new ideas for advertising the Downtown.
4. Coordinate activities and build alliances with the Town of Mesilla and the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA) to promote tourist activities for both.

10. PUBLIC SAFETY

GOAL: Create a safe Downtown for Las Cruces residents and Visitors.

Objective: Establish a public perception of safety and cleanliness in the Downtown Area.

Actions

1. Provide an increased security presence throughout the Downtown Area via bike and foot patrols. Potential funding could come from money collected from the implementation of a Business Improvement District.
2. Ensure that the streets, sidewalks, alleys, and buildings are free of debris and graffiti. Provide appropriate trash receptacles throughout Downtown. Potential funding could come from money collected from the implementation of a Business Improvement District.



11. UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

GOAL: Build on the strength and creativity of New Mexico State University.

Objective: Develop and foster relations with New Mexico State University.

Actions

1. Market entertainment opportunities to NMSU students and provide discounts.
 - a. Create a student discount coupon booklet.
 - b. Encourage Downtown businesses to offer discounts with student IDs.
 - c. Host ads in the school newspaper.
 - d. E-mail a Downtown newsletter to students highlighting upcoming events.
 - e. Maintain a college booth or table at student events to promote the Downtown and give out promotional materials and coupons for Downtown businesses.
 - f. Provide free theater tickets and other promotions through the campus radio station.
2. Encourage student and faculty participation on Downtown Las Cruces committees.
3. Coordinate with NMSU for the use of Downtown theaters for University-sponsored plays, art displays, shows and other events.

12. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

GOAL: Develop expertise within the Las Cruces Downtown organization in Downtown redevelopment and project implementation.

Objective: Provide staff training and development.

Actions

1. Maintain participation in the New Mexico Main Street Program.
2. Provide training through at least one workshop per year sponsored by the above organizations for City planning staff working in the Downtown and members of the Las Cruces Downtown staff and board of directors.

C. Funding Sources

1. Tax increment financing

Tax increment financing is created through a local government's property tax assessments. Special assessments are made on properties that are expected to accrue particular benefits from a general improvement. The incremental difference in tax revenues between the original assessment rate and the new, higher assessed rate is then used to finance the improvement activity.

In New Mexico, tax increment financing is enabled in slightly different forms through the Urban

Development Law, the Enterprise Zone Act and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code.

Tax increment financing does not include a property tax break. The two mechanisms cannot be used in the same program.

2. Metropolitan Redevelopment

Tax incentives include a wide variety of mechanisms that encourage redevelopment through the use of public taxation tools. These often take the form of tax credits or tax deferrals. By crediting or deferring taxes to be paid on property, income, or sales, governments create incentives for businesses to act on redevelopment opportunities. Conversely, special tax programs can be used specifically to fund improvements in the area benefited by the tax. These programs would not be used together. The City can take advantage of either option, but would choose the approach that would provide the best benefit.

The Metropolitan Redevelopment Act (NMSA §3-60A-1 *et seq.*) is a comprehensive program aimed at promoting urban renewal and eliminating slums in major metropolitan areas. Redevelopment may only be undertaken by a city after a finding of public necessity has been made by a city council and after a redevelopment plan has been prepared. The powers afforded a city under the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code are numerous, but mainly consist of the power to acquire property (which is tax-exempt as long as the city owns it) by purchase or eminent domain, refurbish or replace it, and then lease or sell the new or remodeled property to a qualified developer in

response to a request for proposals issued by the city. A city may issue tax-exempt revenue bonds or may employ tax increment financing to finance the redevelopment project.

3. City of Las Cruces ICIP

The City of Las Cruces Capital Improvement Program (ICIP) was created to realize the City’s adopted goals and objectives. The ICIP’s mission is to enhance the physical development of the City by implementing the Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan and other policies and procedures. Administered through the Finance Department, the ICIP uses approved capital expenditures to acquire, construct, repair, upgrade and rehabilitate Las Cruces infrastructure and built environment. Funding mechanisms for these projects are provided by a variety of sources. Among them are General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds, Federal and State grants, special taxes, the City general fund, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds.

Major capital improvements proposed for Downtown, such as street improvements, streetscapes and public spaces, may be funded through the City’s ICIP. These projects must go through the standard City process to be added to the list of approved capital expenditures.

The City’s 2004-2008 ICIP identifies funding for several Downtown facilities including the Railroad Depot, Rio Grande Theater, Cultural Center and Museum of Fine Art, Las Cruces Museum of Natural History (which could potentially move Downtown), the Museum System Log Cabin and the Court Youth

Center. Downtown is being considered as one of the possible locations for the Las Cruces Convention Center. Table 7 shows projects and funding projects by year and source.

Table 7. ICIP Downtown Project Summary

Funded Projects							
Priority Ranking	Project Title	Funding for Projects by Year					Funding Source
		<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	
04-02	Las Cruces Railroad Dept	116,000	0	0	0	0	TEA-21
04-05	Rio Grande Theater	225,000	0	0	0	0	SAP, Private
04-06	Cultural Center and Museum of Fine Art	60,000	0	0	0	0	SAP
Unfunded Projects							
05-03	Rio Grande Theatre	0	400,000	600,000	0	0	SAP, Private
05-06	Las Cruces Museum of Natural History	0	500,000	0	0	0	SAP
05-08	Museum System – Log Cabin	0	50,000	0	0	0	CLC GenFund
06-01	Court Youth Center	0	0	400,000	0	0	SAP, 400800, HUD



V. Strategy for A Self-Sustaining Downtown Improvement Organization

A. Proposed Organizational Structure

A successful Downtown revitalization strategy will be a cooperative effort between Downtown businesses, neighborhoods, and public agencies. The suggested organizational structure for implementing the plan is a Business Improvement District (BID) funded through a special tax on Downtown commercial properties. The BID would work closely with individual businesses and government agencies to implement its programs.

The entities involved and their primary roles are described below.

B. What is a BID?

A Business Improvement District, known as a BID, is a quasi-public organization of property owners in a commercial district who tax themselves to raise money to improve their district. BIDs are formed at the request of a group of property owners in a geographically defined area to fund a variety of services that supplement the services provided by local government.

BIDs are administered by a locally-based non-profit organization that is responsive to district interests and carries out the projects that the BID agrees to do.

Because local governments have limited funding, a BID can provide supplemental services that are outside of the scope of municipal government but are needed to stimulate investment in older urban areas.

C. What Does a BID Do?

The activities of a BID are determined by the business and property owners in the district. Typical activities of BIDs include maintenance, clean-up, graffiti removal, and security above the level of service provided by the city.

In addition, depending upon the amount of funds generated by the district, BIDs can construct capital projects, undertake marketing and promotion, and other similar activities intended to spur economic development.

D. How is a BID Formed?

The formation of a BID is a lengthy process often taking more than a year to complete. The first step in

the formation of a BID is to evaluate the potential for a Business Improvement District. After it has been determined to move forward with a BID, a steering/advisory committee is formed. This committee is the backbone for getting the BID approved and working with property and business owners to develop initial budgets, boundaries, service options, workplans, assessment options, timelines, and communication strategies.

The steering/advisory committee will develop a petition document to take to the city council. This petition must be signed by over 51 percent of property or business owners. Once the petition is signed, the city council will hold a public hearing and approve or deny the BID. Upon approval, an ordinance is established enacting the BID, and the city selects a non-profit management committee to implement the BID. For more information on the formation of a BID, please see the New Mexico Economic Development Department's, "The BID Handbook for New Mexico."

E. How is a BID Funded?

Once a BID is formed, mandatory assessments fund capital investments, and additional services to fill the gap between the level of services provided by the city



and those demanded by business and property owners in the district.

Assessments are agreed to in advance by property owners within the district. The basis for assessments can include land area, land and improvements value, front footage or other measures.

The municipality or county in which the BID is located collects the BID's supplemental property tax assessments and distributes them to the BID.

The Downtown organization should work with tax-exempt government property owners to obtain cash in lieu of taxes to support the BID.

VI. Regulatory Initiatives

A. Comprehensive Plan

The 1999 Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan was developed by the Community Development Department staff to establish a broad vision for the City. The Comprehensive Plan establishes the core values and goals important to Las Cruces and provides a framework for accomplishing those goals. This framework is made up of five levels, with the City Plan at the top level to define the City's vision and goals. The second level establishes the elements in the Comprehensive Plan which include Land Use, Community Facilities, Urban Design, Utilities, Economic Development, Housing, Transportation and Environment. As of this time, the Las Cruces City Council has adopted the Land Use, Urban Design, Transportation, Utilities, Economic Development and Housing element sections of the Comprehensive Plan.

The third level is for the development of more detailed policies that draw on elements in the second level. Examples of third level documents include the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, the Storm Water Management Policy Plan, the Infill Policy Plan and the Water and Wastewater Master Plan. The fourth level is for planning documents that provide an even greater level of detail than those in level three. Examples of these documents include the Downtown Mall Action Plan, the University Corridor Plan, the Bicycle Facilities and System Master Plan, and the Avenida de Mesilla Gateway Plan. The fifth level of

this framework is for the policies and ordinances that provide the implementation framework for the Comprehensive Plan. The implementation framework includes the Subdivision Code, Design Standards, the Capital Improvements Plan, the Zoning Code, the Municipal Code and the Budget.

Within the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan, the Central Business District (CBD) is established as a Special District. Under this designation, the CBD is defined as an overlay zone to be evaluated for appropriate uses in accordance with low, medium, high and regional commercial land use policy. This provides a general land use policy, with the current overlay zoning regulations driving the development standards.

As part of the Downtown plan, it is recommended that the City take the following action to make adjustments to the existing Comprehensive Plan and overlay zone.

- Amend the Comprehensive Plan to include Downtown redevelopment strategies in the next three to five years.

B. Neighborhood Protection

Within the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Las Cruces has established a land use policy for historic districts. The objective of this policy is to preserve and enhance local historic areas. As part of this

policy, the City has designated the Mesquite and Alameda-Depot Neighborhoods as historic districts. This policy provides the neighborhoods with a local historic designation in addition to the existing State and Federal governments historic designations. Under this policy, an overlay zone shall be created in historic districts as a means of providing flexible standards to address historical considerations. In addition, specific land use and urban design policy for local historic districts shall be established in fourth-level planning documents, and historic district policy shall observe City infill policy for development standards within historic districts.

Located adjacent to the Downtown area are the Mesquite and Alameda-Depot Historic Neighborhoods. The Mesquite neighborhood is north and east of the Downtown area and is the original townsite of Las Cruces. The Alameda-Depot neighborhood is west and north of the Downtown area and one of Las Cruces' oldest residential areas. Both of these neighborhoods are filled with historic and interesting homes which neighborhood residents wish to preserve and retain. Recently, the Alameda-Depot and Mesquite neighborhoods have experienced a number of re-zoning and special use applications for converting residential to commercial uses. It is important that these historic neighborhoods retain their residential nature as they can provide a tremendous customer base for businesses in the Downtown area.



In 1999 the Community Development Department undertook the development of a neighborhood plan for the Alameda-Depot Neighborhood to address concerns of commercial development, preservation of historic homes, and land use issues. The Alameda-Depot Neighborhood Plan established the following goals and objectives:

- Establish a boundary that will encompass the neighborhood's historic district.
- Work with the neighborhood association towards preservation of the neighborhood.
- Establish design guidelines for all additions, exterior remodels, new structures, etc.
- Preserve the historic quality and character of the existing structures and protect them from demolition.
- Formulate land use policies to protect the interests of both homeowners and businesses.
- Provide a cohesive design and aesthetic unity to the historic district through their streetscapes.

As of this date, the Alameda-Depot Neighborhood Plan has not been approved, but an adopted plan would be an important step in the protection of this historic neighborhood. It is recommended that the City work towards approval of this neighborhood plan. It is also recommended that the City begin to complete a neighborhood plan for the Mesquite Neighborhood that supports the preservation of that historic neighborhood, consistent with the goals of neighborhood residents.

C. Metropolitan Redevelopment

If the City decides to take advantages of its powers under the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act, it must complete the following steps prior to using these tools:

- Designate a department or establish an agency that will serve as the City's redevelopment agency.
- Complete a study, approved by the City Council, to determine and declare a public necessity for redevelopment under the Act. This document will describe conditions of blight and will identify the geographic area to be included in the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.
- Complete a redevelopment plan adopted by the City Council. This document should identify the projects that will be undertaken to eliminate blighted conditions.

D. Zoning

The Central Business District's zoning standards are regulated by the existing overlay zone. This overlay encompasses both the Central Business District and the Main Street Plaza with design guidelines established specifically for the Main Street Plaza. The table on the following page describes the current zoning regulations, determines the consistency with the goals and objectives of the Downtown Plan, and provides possible code amendments.

The following actions are recommended:

- Revise and adopt amendments to the existing overlay zone within the next year.
- Create and adopt a mixed-use zoning district for the Central Business District and Main Street Plaza within the next three to five years.
- Adopt a goals-based or performance-based regulatory approach to planning and zoning to allow flexibility and function within the Downtown core.

E. Building Codes

During initial meetings with Downtown property owners and businesses, owners described high costs and technical difficulties in meeting modern building codes when renovating historic buildings. The City should:

- Amend the building codes to make rehabilitation more economically feasible or adopt a Rehabilitation Building Code to ease the renovations of historic and older buildings in the next two years (See Rehabilitation Building Codes in Appendix A).

Table 8. Current Regulations

Code Section	Current Regulations	Consistent with Objectives	Code-Amendment Concepts
Central Business District Overlay Zone (CBD)			
<i>Purpose</i>	To accommodate government facilities, retail, office, residential and other similar uses in the CBD with appropriate height, yard, and intensity standards to allow for a higher density of development.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with the addition of some new wording.	Consider including mixed-use, entertainment, arts, cultural, pedestrian and tourism-oriented wording in the purpose statement.
<i>Development Standards</i>	No minimum lot area, width and yard requirements except to meet other requirements.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Might consider setting a maximum front setback of 10 feet. Review subdivision regulations to ensure that parcel division allows for flexibility and for rear and flag lot development to provide for in-fill and redevelopment. Consider adopting commercial design review and design guidelines for the entire CBD. Consider sidewalk widths of no less than 10 feet. Consider open space requirements for multi-family developments (allow balconies and roof gardens to count).
<i>Height</i>	50-foot height requirement. Special permit for structures exceeding 50 feet.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider setting height based on the number of stories; allow up to five stories as a right and require a special permit for any structure over five stories
<i>CBD Permitted Uses - No Conditions</i>	All uses permitted in other commercial, office and residential zones. Light manufacturing permitted as accessory use to a business use.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider permitting bed and breakfasts and small inns as a right to encourage mixed-use. Consider permitting specialty retailer (sells tourism-related items) as a right excluding the sale of fireworks. Consider permitting small-scale manufacturing to include jewelry, stone, glass and clay products, clothing and furniture.
<i>Permitted Uses With Conditions</i>	Above-ground storage tanks, temporary amusement enterprises, Outdoor Café/Bar/Restaurant and other retail uses, outdoor vendor of handicraft products, outdoor plays and events, single-family and multi-family dwellings, home for the disabled.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider allowing brewpubs with a conditional use permit. Consider prohibiting any new religious institutions and homeless shelters; consider allowing single-family only in conjunction with a commercial use (i.e. living space above artist studio, retail, office) and not permitting a home occupation with that single-family use. Allow higher density for multi-family and mixed-use.
<i>Prohibited Uses</i>	Adult entertainment, auto and camper sales, commercial kennel, drive-in theater, firewood sales, flea market, heavy equipment repair and service, keeping of large/small animals, mini-warehouse, mobile home park, stone monument sales, storage of wrecked vehicle, tower, outside storage.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider prohibiting: construction yards, tire sales and repair, crematorium and other non-compatible uses that do not promote a pedestrian and retail-oriented Downtown.
<i>Light Manufacturing Uses</i>	Light manufacturing uses permitted as an accessory use to a retail business. Maximum 49% of square footage of building to be used for light manufacturing.	May be in conflict with the goals and objectives.	Consider limiting light manufacturing to more pedestrian and retail-oriented uses (i.e. bakeries, arts and crafts manufacturing, etc.).
<i>CBD Special Uses</i>	Auto repair, boarding house, building height over 50 feet, car wash, service station.	May be in conflict with the goals and objectives.	Consider excluding auto repair, gas and service stations and car washes from Downtown and allowing in a transitional zone outside the CBD.
<i>Signs</i>	2 square feet for each linear foot of building wall; to be placed on same wall of building which is calculated.	Current regulations work might consider changes later.	Consider prohibiting off-site signage and billboards; might consider a maximum square footage and total number of signs (i.e., 40-50 square feet of signage and 3 signs total). Hanging signs should be no more than 4 feet out from building and at least 8 feet above

Code Section	Current Regulations	Consistent with Objectives	Code-Amendment Concepts
			grade. Consider placing a maximum height requirement or reducing allowed square footage above a certain height (i.e., no higher than 11 feet or 12 feet above grade).
<i>Parking Requirements</i>	Public/Semi-Public buildings - 1 space per 1,000 square footage of GFA; 1.5 space per dwelling unit; hotels - 1 space per guest room and 1 space per 1,000 GFA; other permitted uses - 1 space per 1,000 square footage of GFA.	May be in conflict with the goals and objectives.	Consider working towards the elimination of parking lots and encouraging only on-street parking and parking structures and garages. Consider counting on-street parking towards parking requirements for businesses within 600 feet. Consider reducing parking requirements for residential - 1 space per dwelling unit; also consider setting maximum parking standards.
<i>Landscaping</i>	1 tree per 10 parking spaces, 1 tree per every 20 linear feet of street frontage. Plus, inclusion of irrigation system.	May be in conflict with the goals and objectives	Consider requiring street trees along all major pedestrian ways in conjunction with awnings to provide maximum shade. Ensure that street trees are placed between store frontages to allow for unobstructed views of retail spaces.
<i>Main Street Plaza Overlay Zone - These regulations supersede the CBD zoning district standards for any subject addressed in this zone</i>			
<i>Height</i>	Existing alignment of buildings cornices or rooflines shall be maintained; height not more than 2 stories along the façade to a building depth of 20 feet; beyond the 20-foot depth, the building not more than 5 stories in height.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.
<i>Width</i>	Single buildings exceeding the maximum width on the same block by 50% or more shall be designed to have facades to simulate the maximum width of existing buildings or a fraction thereof.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.
<i>Setback</i>	Side setback of a building facing the street - zero; side setback of a building facing an alley - not to exceed existing setback of building also facing alley; building entrance vestibules and walkways through building can recess maximum of 10 feet only for width of walkway; parking lots and courtyards to be separated from pedestrian walkway with a wall located on property line with minimum height of 2 feet.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.
<i>Proportion of Openings</i>	Facades shall have minimum 30% of open transparent street level frontage; store fronts shall not use reflective glass.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider increasing street level frontages to have a minimum 50-75% of open transparent windows or fixed glass; second story frontages to have a minimum 30% of windows or fixed glass.
<i>Horizontal Rhythms</i>	Horizontal elements (balconies, canopies, awnings, cornices, railings, window sills, wainscots) to match existing adjacent buildings.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.
<i>Materials</i>	Allowed finish materials: masonry which includes slump block, brick, split-faced fluted and non-fluted concrete masonry unit; and stucco.	Consistent with the goals and objectives with possible changes.	Consider eliminating the use of slump block as a building material.
<i>Roof Forms</i>	Roof plane to be hidden from street level with parapet walls that are less than 3 stories in height.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.

Code Section	Current Regulations	Consistent with Objectives	Code-Amendment Concepts
<i>Sidewalk Coverings</i>	Must comply with building codes; not to project more than 10 feet from any building and not to obscure architectural details; awnings to be over door and windows.	Consistent with the goal and objectives with possible changes.	Consider creating a minimum size requirement for awnings located along pedestrian walkways to allow for more shade (i.e., no less than 6 feet).
<i>Signs</i>	Signs shall be hanging, flush mounted or window signs. Hanging/projecting signs - maximum 40 square feet; window signs - not to exceed 30% of window area; flush-mounted signs facing Main street - maximum 40 square feet; signs along alley - 2 square feet per linear foot with maximum 120 square feet.	Current regulations work might consider changes later.	Consider prohibiting off-site signage and billboards. Might consider developing sign design guidelines for signage along Main Street. Might consider a maximum square footage and total number of signs (i.e., 40-50 square feet of signage and 3 signs total). Hanging signs should be no more than 4 feet out from building and at least 8 feet above grade. Consider placing a maximum height requirement or reducing allowed square footage above a certain height (i.e., no higher than 11 feet or 12 feet above grade).
<i>Existing Canopies</i>	Removal of existing canopies prohibited.	Consistent with the current goals and objectives until the re-opening of Main Street.	Design and construct new shade structures along Main Street.
<i>Parking Requirements</i>	No parking requirements.	Consistent with the goals and objectives.	No changes needed.
<i>Landscaping Requirements</i>	No landscaping requirements.	May be in conflict with the goals and objectives.	Consider requiring street trees along all major pedestrian ways in conjunction with awnings to provide maximum shade. Ensure that street trees are placed between store frontages to allow for unobstructed views of retail spaces.

VII. Appendix

A. List of Resources

- **Independent Business Alliances**

1. American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA)
222 South Black Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59715
Telephone: 406-582-1255
Website: www.amiba.net
2. Albuquerque Independent Business Alliance (AIBA)
Contact: Elissa Breitbard
Telephone: 505-341-3456
E-mail: Elissa@bettysbath.com
3. Austin Independent Business Alliance (AIBA)
P.O. Box 4400
Austin, TX 78765
Telephone: 512-418-1800
Website: www.austin-iba.org
4. Boulder Independent Business Alliance (BIBA)
1202 Folsom Street
Boulder, CO 80302
Telephone: 720-565-3854
Website: www.boulder-iba.org

5. Corvallis Independent Business Alliance (CIBA)
c/o The Book Bin
228 SW 3rd Street
Corvallis, OR 97333
Telephone: 541-752-0047
Website: www.corvallisiba.org
6. Santa Fe Independent Business Alliance/Citizen Alliance (SFIBCA)
510 1/2 Don Gaspar Avenue
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Telephone: 505-989-5362
Website: www.santafealliance.com

- **Rehabilitation Building Codes**

1. Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code, October 2001
Department of Housing and Community Development
The complete document can be accessed on-line at <http://www.dhcd.state.md.us/smartcodes/handbook/toc.cfm>
2. New Jersey's Rehabilitation Subcode, January 1998
Department of Community Affairs
The complete document can be accessed on-line at

<http://www.state.nj.us/dca/codes/rehab/pioneerart.htm>

- **Design Review Guidelines and Standards**

1. City of Seattle's Design Review Guidelines for Downtown Development
Department of Design, Construction and Land Use
The complete document can be accessed on-line at <http://www.cityofseattle.net/dclu/Publications/DesignReviewGuidelines/Down-town1999.pdf>
2. Downtown Austin Design Guidelines, May 2000
The complete document can be accessed on-line at <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/downtown/designguidelines.htm>

- **Mixed-Use, Sustainable Development and Redevelopment Guidelines**

1. The Heart of the Community – Downtown Planning and Sustainable Development
Hometown Minnesota, Inc.
Prepared by BIKO Associates
The complete document can be accessed on-line at



<http://www.moea.state.mn.us/sc/downtownplan.cfm>

2. State of Oregon, Commercial and Mixed-Use Development Code Handbook
Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program
The complete document can be accessed on-line at
<http://www.lcd.state.or.us/tgm/publications.htm>
3. State of Oregon, The Infill and Redevelopment Code Handbook, September 1999
Prepared by OTAK
The complete document can be accessed on-line at
<http://www.lcd.state.or.us/tgm/publications.htm>
4. State of Oregon, Model Development Code and User's Guide for Small Cities, September 1999
Prepared by OTAK
The complete document can be accessed on-line at
<http://www.lcd.state.or.us/tgm/publications.htm>

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

1. City of Tempe's, Arizona's CPTED Guidelines
The complete document can be accessed on-line at
<http://www.tempe.gov/tdsi/PLANNING/CPTED/>

- **Business Improvement District**

1. The BID Handbook for New Mexico
New Mexico Economic Development Department
P.O. Box 20003
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Telephone: 1-800-374-3061
Website: <http://www.edd.state.nm.us/>
2. Oregon Downtown Development Association
P.O. Box 2912
Salem, OR 97308
Telephone: 503-587-0574
Website: www.odda.org

B. Circulation Scenarios

Figure 12. Circulation Scenario "A"

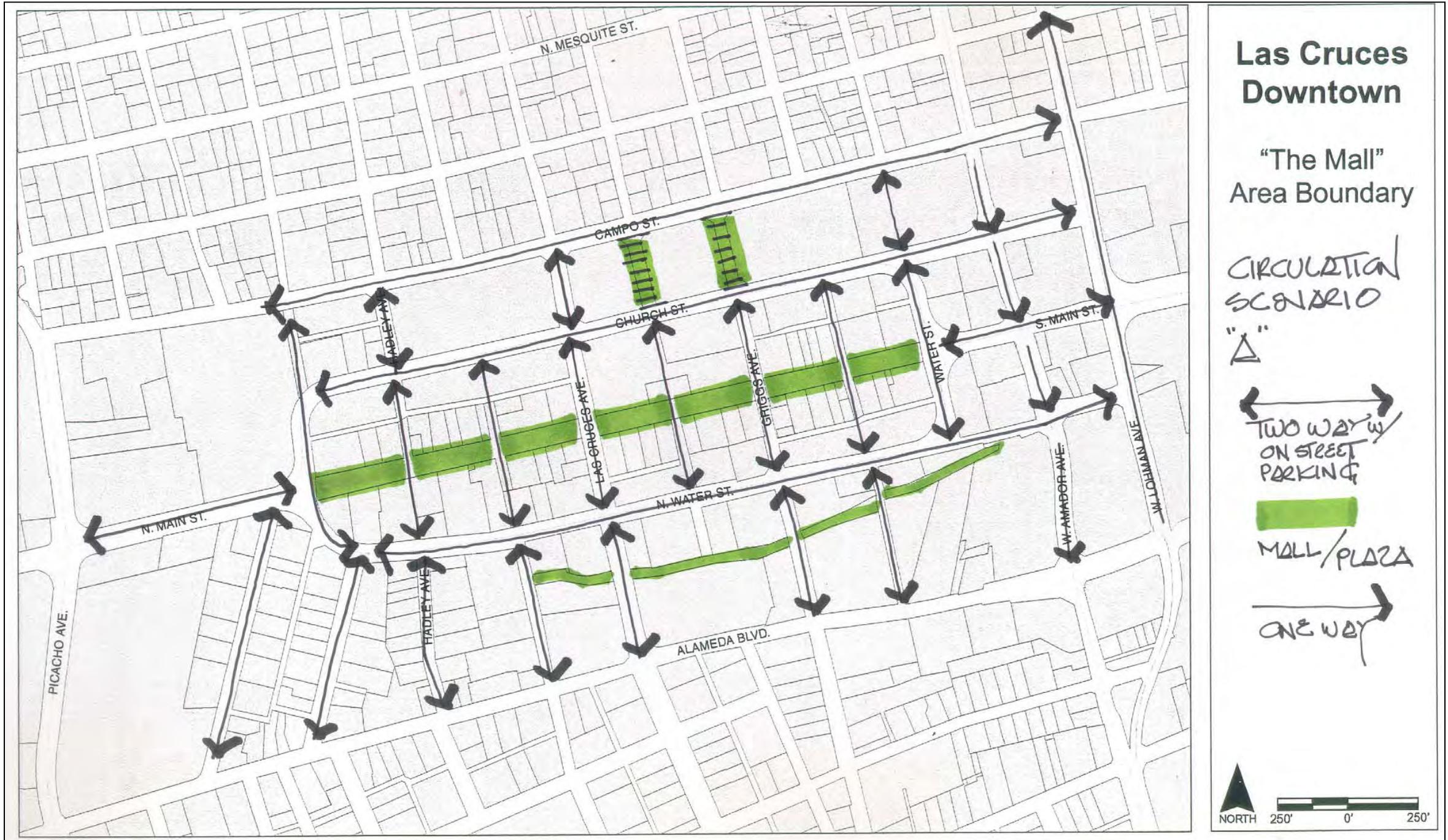


Figure 13. Circulation Scenario "B"

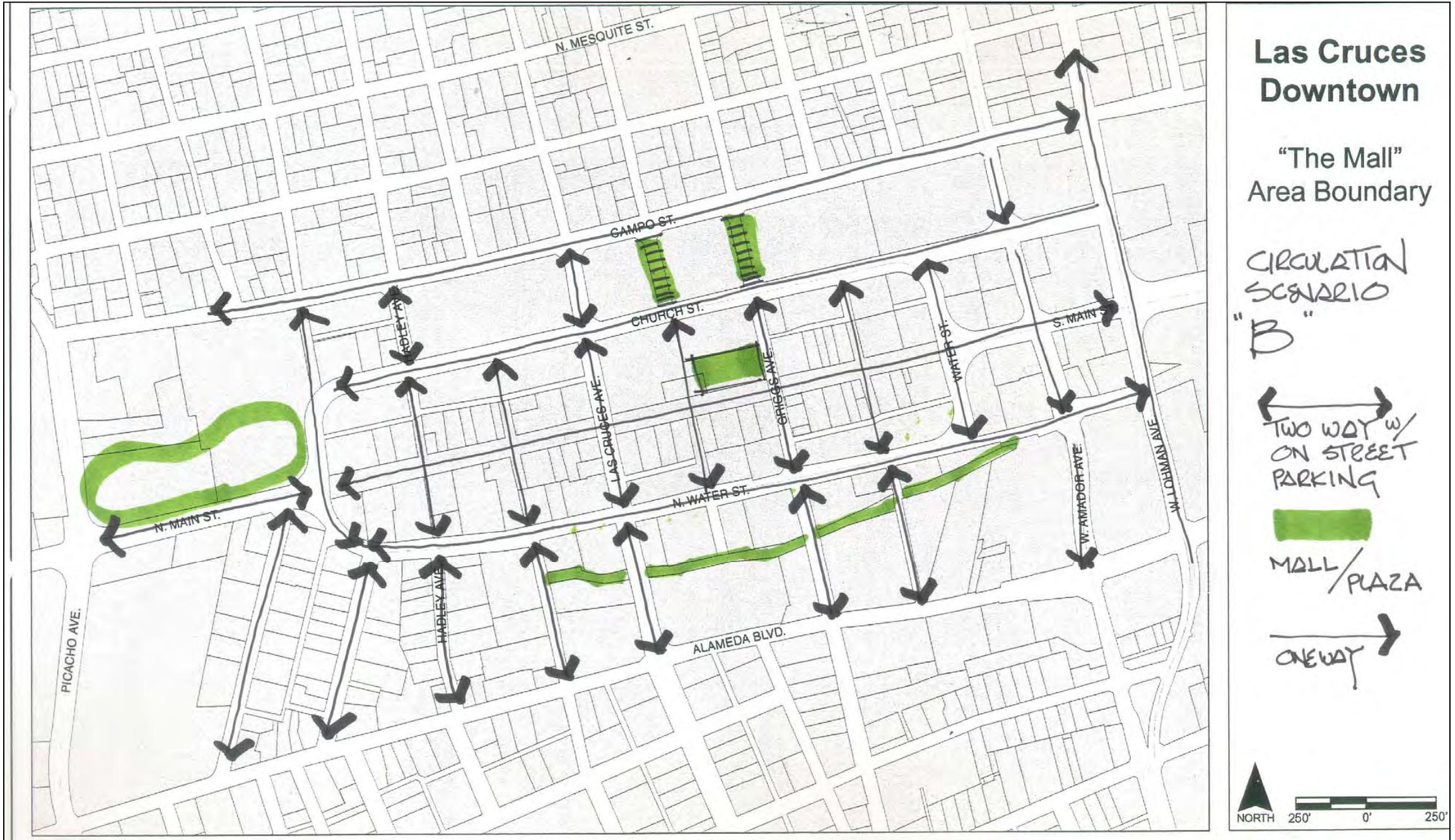


Figure 14. Circulation Scenario "C"

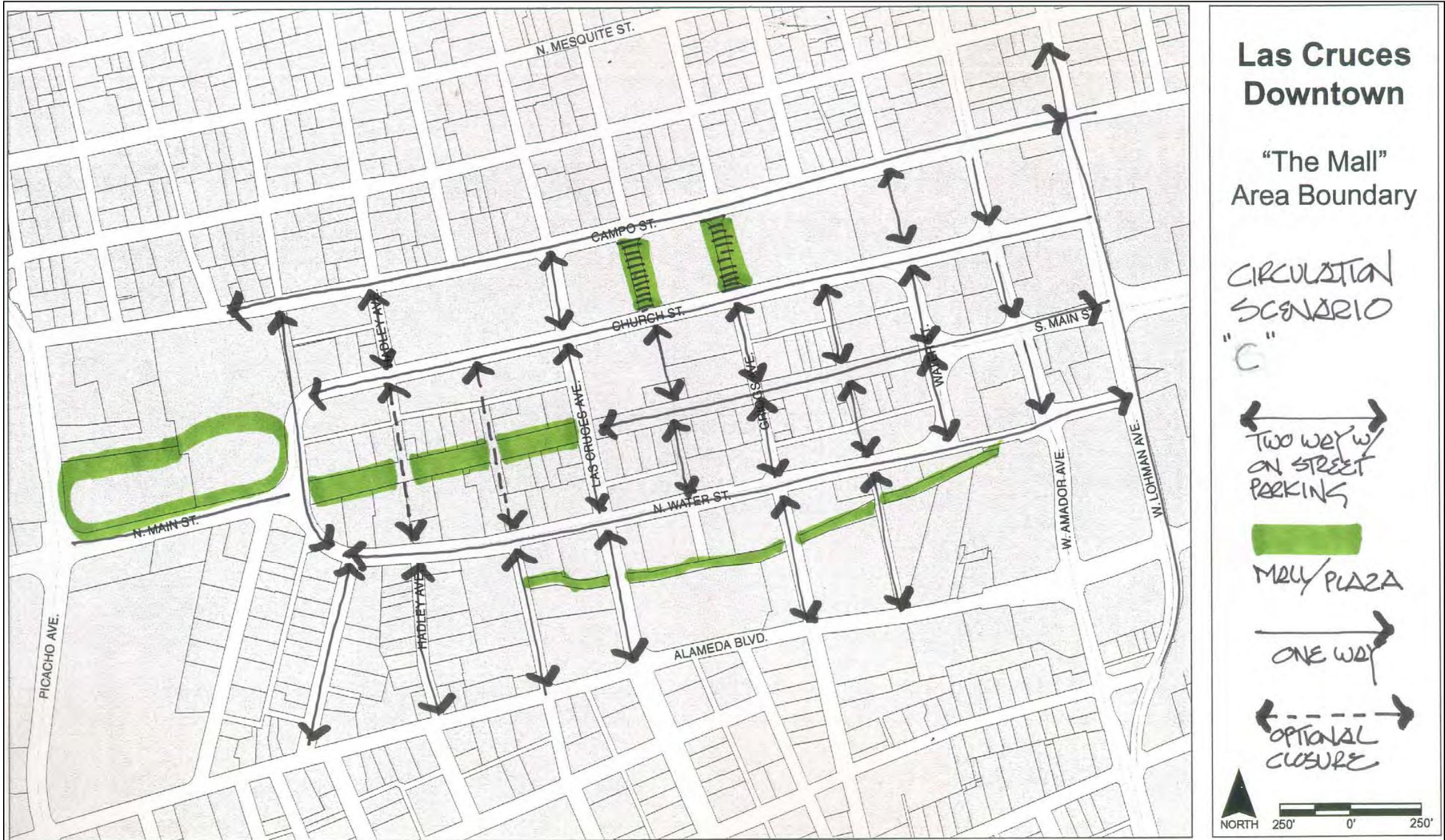


Figure 15. Circulation Scenario "D"

