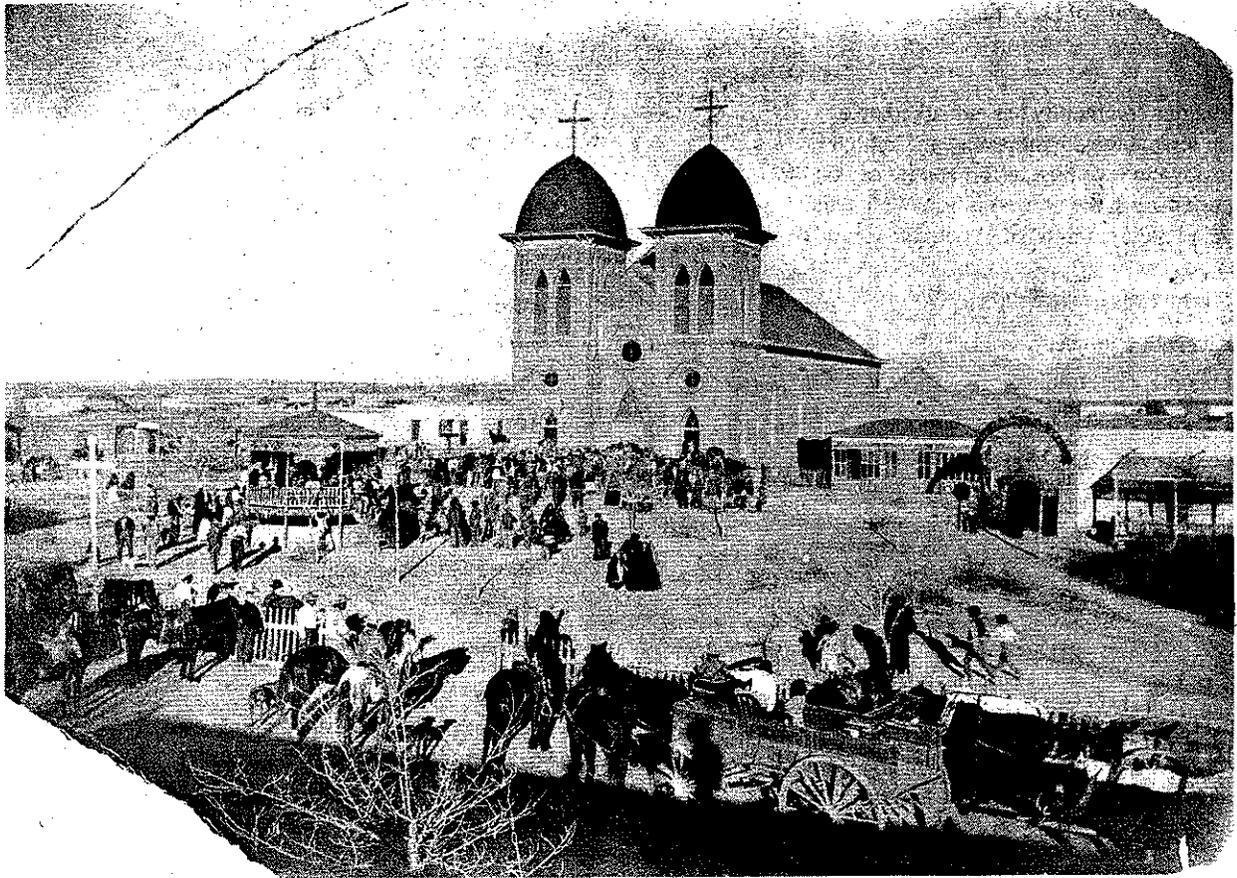


“Start with the Heart”



St. Genevieve's
Catholic Church

“It would be a place where people would experience the exchange of humanity, spontaneously and freely, through the expression of the various natures of their humanity in the display of their talents, abilities, cooperation, consideration and respect for one another.” —Dr. Raymond Paz

**Las Cruces R/UDAT
February 1994**

START WITH THE HEART

February 1994

Letter to Community of Las Cruces:

Since 1992 our community has embarked on a process to look at the downtown area. Through generous donations of time, effort and money on the part of our citizens, the process is coming together tonight in a report entitled "Start with the Heart." It is ready for your review.

"START WITH THE HEART" is:

- A process, not a project
- About people, not buildings
- About the heart and soul of Las Cruces

Las Cruces Revitalization involves more than an architectural solution. It involves:

- Families and Youth
- Our history and culture
- Heritage
- Jobs
- Public Policy

We must be sensitive to them all!

This report will help us identify practical, affordable and realistic projects and programs for our community.

Ruben A. Smith



Chairman

Las Cruces Revitalization Steering Committee

February 1994

Carta a la Comunidad de Las Cruces:

Desde 1992 nuestra comunidad ha embarcado en un proceso para evaluar la area central. A traves de generosos donativos de tiempo, esfuerzo y dinero de parte de algunos de nuestros ciudadanos, el proceso es realidad. Juntos esta noche en un informe titulado, "Comienza con el Corazón" Está listo para su repaso.

"Comenzar con el corazón" es:

- Un proceso, no un proyecto
- Como personas, no edificios
- Acerca del corazón y alma de Las Cruces

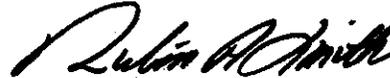
Las Cruces Revitalization, envuelve más que una solución arquitectural. Envuelve:

- Familias y Juventud
- Nuestra historia y cultura
- Herencia
- Empleo
- Política Pública

¡Tenemos que ser sensibles a todo esto!

Este informe nos ayudará a identificar programas y proyectos prácticos, economicos y realísticos para nuestra comunidad.

Rubén A. Smith



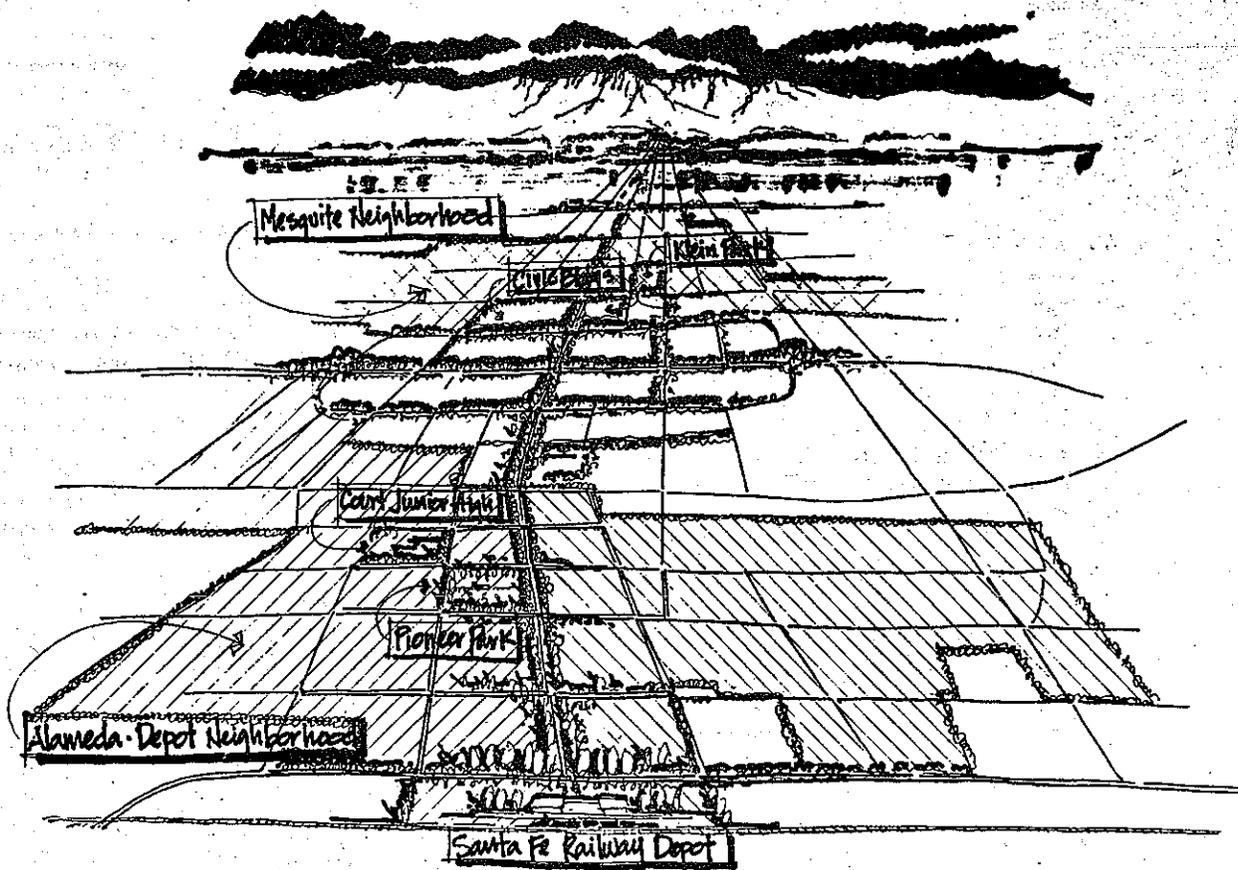
Chairman

Las Cruces Revitalization Steering Committee

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, the American Institute of Architects, through its Urban Planning and Design Committee, has offered to communities the services of a Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT).

R/UDAT team members who perform their services voluntarily have been appointed by the AIA's Urban Design and Planning Committees's R/UDAT Steering Group. As with the other 100 teams who have served communities over the past 20 years, each team member agrees not to receive any commission for work based upon the team's recommendations.



Start With the Heart

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SECTION 1: COMMUNITY VISIONARIES

Don Schlegel, FAIA is a distinguished Professor of Architecture at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. Having taught at the Graduate School of Architecture & Planning at the University for 40 years, he teaches Design and Architectural Theory at the Graduate level. A graduate of MIT, and a fellow in the American Institute of Architecture, he particularly enjoys designing religious facilities and has been involved recently in the designing of Prototype Fire Stations in the Duke City. He is affiliated with the Architect Firm SLND Architects.

Mr. & Mrs. Schlegel were chaperons and sponsor to the 11 UNM graduate students at the recent R/UDAT study which took place in Las Cruces, NM.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

Preston Kelsey
Feng Feng
Alexander Lungershausen
Robin Dehnert
Reagan Hamilton
Matraschid Mohdyazah
Carlos De La Torre
Ramon Sarason
Vincent Payne
Clark Myers
Dave Wyzenbeck

ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

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Farhengkrog, Don
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Klein, Sonny
Perez, Eddie
Pickel, Jack
Pollard, Heather
Ross, Matt
Smith, Candie

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Butler, Beverly
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Padilla-King, Tina

Pearlman, Lew
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Key, Jack
Milam, Michael
Newby, Steve
Ramirez, Ricardo
Smith, Ruben

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Boberg, Kevin
Holstein, Ben
Lara, Leo
Moen, Don
Myers, Clark
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Szaley, Elaine

CONTRIBUTORS

50-Off Store
98 Plus KSNM
A-1 RENTAL
A-1 Self Storage, Inc.
A Bagel In The Sun Bakery & Cafe
Abbey, Ann
ABC Home Health Services, Inc.
ABC Printing Co., Inc.
Abraham's Restaurant
Acosta, Ramon
Adams Auto & Tire Center
Aday, B. Joe, DDS
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Advanced Sciences, Inc.
Adventure Travel & Cruise Ctr
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Aggie Sports Association
Aguirre, Gloria
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Ausbrooks, Ron and Heidi
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Autumn Wood
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Baskin-Robbins
Baxa, Robin
BCG, Inc. dba Domino's Pizza
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Bennett, Ruth
Berhett, Patra
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Best Western Mission Inn
Better Business Bureau
Better Drugs Southwest, Inc.
Better Health Home Care Center
Bevz, Mary Jo and Mike
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Big Chief Stone
Big Daddy's Market Place
Big O Tires
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Biebins, Tim
Blue Teal Winery

Bogart Enterprises
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Botsford Land Surveying, Inc.
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Braswell, Jim
Bravo, Oralia
Brewer, Mark
Bright View Land Company
Brisbin, Bryce
Brockwood Home Furnishings
Bullock, William
Burger King #5935
Burger Time
Burke & Moore Insurance
Burke, Gerald
Burke Outdoor Advertising, Inc.
Burr, Marjorie
Burton, D'Anne
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C-3, Inc.
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C.B. Smith & Sons, Inc.
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Callahan, Eddie
Camp Town RV
Camunez, S. J.
Camunez, Sylvia
Capron, Tom Q.
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Cardoza, Dolores
Casa del Sol Senior Care Cntr
Casa Mexicana Enterprises, Inc.
Casey Carpet of Las Cruces
Cassles, Judy
Casual Corner
Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces
Cattle Baron Steak & Seafood
CCH Developers, Inc.
Ceballos, Ruben and Salome
Central and Southwest Corp.
Central Loan Company
Century 21 All Stars
Ceramics By Shirley
Certified Concrete Products
Charles F. Dickerson, Inc.
Cherry, Mary
Chief Of Public Affairs. WSMR
Cimarron Managed Care Corp.
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Clark Reynolds & Co.
Clark Tractor & Equipment
Clifford & Ross
Coachlight Motel & RV Park
Coca Cola
Coldwell Banker-Results Realty

Collectrite, Inc.
 Collins, Seaborn
 Comet/Qwik Cleaners
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 Crodero, Aida
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 Cummings, Ernest
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 Cutcheon, Bea
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 Doña Ana County Farm & Livestock
 Doña Ana County Humane Society Inc
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 Jawes, Linda
 Day, Marianne R., DDS PA
 Day's Hallmark
 Days Inn
 de Leon, Jaime
 Dealers Electrical Supply
 Deals On Wheels
 Dean, Kelli Jay
 Debug Club
 Del Valle Printing & Graphics
 Delk, Diane
 Delta Sigma Pi
 Desert Sound
 Deca Club
 DeVargas, Adrian
 Dickson, Lana
 Diemer Construction Co.
 Dillard's
 Dinsmore, Rene P.
 Disability Resource Center
 Discount Tire Co.
 Divers II Dive Centers
 Dodson, Jerome
 Doke, Larry A., PhD
 Dominguez, Jonny
 Domino's Pizza
 Dominguez, Rebecca
 Dominquez, Johnny
 Doña Ana Arts Council
 Doña Ana Savings & Loan Assoc.
 Doña Ana Title Company

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 Downum, Larry
 Duggan, Col. Dan E.
 Dunn, Kelly
 Duran, Patsy
 Dynamic Business Machines, Inc
 E & E Auto Body & Glassing
 E-Z TV & Appliances
 Edmonds, Suzette
 Edward D. Jones & Company
 El Paso Bell Fed. Credit Union
 El Paso Electric Company
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 Electronic Parts
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 Encantada Park
 Envision Technology Corp.
 Equifax
 ERA Aadvantage Associates
 Ericson, James
 Ericson, James and Barbara
 Everett & Flesher, PC
 Ewing, Nikki
 ExpertTire
 Factory 2 U
 Fahrenkrog, Don
 Family Medical Center
 Fanning, Jed
 Farmer Brothers Coffee
 Farmers Insurance Group
 Federal Express
 Fielder, Clarence
 Fiesta Travel
 Figueroa, Terri
 First Alert/Quick Alert
 First Federal Savings Bank
FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF DOÑA ANA COUNTY
 Flamm, Richard
 Flowerland
 Foodland
 Foreman, Harold "Chub"
 Fort Bliss Federal Credit Union
 Fort Seldon State Monument
 Foxworth-Galbraith Lumber Co.
 Frank, Candie Smith
 Frank, Chip
 Franzoy, Tina
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 Frederick, W. A DDS
 Friendly Flowers
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 Furr's/SO:LO Fresh Mart
 G.L.C. Rental Association
 Gallegos, Barbara
 Gamboa, Phyllis
 Garces, Sandra
 Garcia, Ace
 Garcia, Frances
 Garrison, Jacque
 Geisel, Col. & Mrs. Frank
 Geomets, Lee
 Gencon Corporation

Genesis Fitness Center
 Gerend, Dr. Thomas and Theresa
 Gernard, Larry
 Getz Funeral Home
 Gibson, Carol
 Gila Signs & Graphics
 Gilbert, Brian J., DDS
 Gillette, Elizabeth
 Glenn Cutter Jewelers
 Glover, Rhonda
 GMA, Inc.
 Gohrick, Jennifer
 Golden Corral
 Golden West Productions
 Golden West Trading Company
 Golf USA
 Gonzales, Eloisa
 Goodman Financial Group
 Goodyear Tirecenter Plus
 Gospel Rescue Mission
 Gray, Collette
 Gray, Debbie
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 Grider, Jane
 Griffin, Richard
 Grindell & Rollings
 Grove, Joe
 GTE
 Gutierrez, Joni Marie
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 Hanley Paint Company, Inc.
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 Heath, Alta
 Heath, Gerda
 Heck, Pat and Mark
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 Helsel, Ed
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 Hernandez, Art
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 Herrera, Mike
 Hesse, Peg
 Hestir, Kristen
 Hiatt, Julie
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 Hillcrest Memorial Gardens
 Hilliger Oil Company
 Hinojosa, Myrna
 Hispano Chamber of Commerce
 Hixengaury, Alysia
 Hoffmeister, Martin
HOLIDAY INN DE LAS CRUCES
 Home Education Livelihood Program
 HOMEDCO of New Mexico
 Horse N Hound Feed N Supply
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 Hoxworth, Deanna
 Hubbard, Dick
 Huber, Hale W.
 Hunt, Sinclair
 Hunter, Tessie
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 IIT Research Institute
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 Key, Jack
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KZIA-TV
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 La Pifata
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LA QUINTA INN
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 Langston, Kimberly
 Larry Edwards Advertising
 Las Cruces Abstract & Title Co
 Las Cruces Board of Realtors
 Las Cruces Bulletin
 Las Cruces Community Theater
 Las Cruces Do-It Center, Inc.
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 Las Cruces Home Builders Assoc
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 Las Cruces Symphony Assoc.
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LAS CRUCES SUN NEWS
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 LC Comm Concerns of Handicap
 LC Convention & Visitor Bureau
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START WITH THE HEART

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MV Chapter Prof. Secretaries Int'l	PCI, Inc.	Rio Grande Contract Furnishing	Sisbarro/Buick/Pontiac/GMC	The Kiser Organization, Inc.
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Nabes Coffee Bar	Pecos Partnership	Rio Grande Travel	Smith, Jason	The Prudential Sun Belt Realty
Nambe Foundry Outlet	Pellegrino, Lisa	Ritter Distributing Company	Smith, Josephine G.	The Salvation Army
NAPA Parts Unlimited	Pennock, Anthony	River's Bend	Smith, Peggy	The Sharpen' Shop
NASA White Sands Test Facility		Rivera, Dan	Smith, Ruben	

The Sleep Gallery

Thomas, Gerald
TLC Temporary Services
 Tiernat, Vickie
 Toenies, Mark
 Tom Carr Garage
 Tombes, Averett
 Topley, J. Bruce
 Torres, Olga
 Torres, Victor
 Travel Unlimited
 Travis, Randy, CPA
TRESCO, INC.
 Tri-Tel Communications
 Troffer, Jessica
 Trophy Country
 TSM Radio & Television
 Tuttle, Kimberly
 U.S. Army WSMR
 U.S. West Communications
 U.S. West Direct
 UniFirst Corporation
 Uniforms Unlimited
 United Blood Services
 United Chamber Medical Plans
 United Parcel Service
 United Way of Southwest NM
UNITED NEW MEXICO BANK
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 Upton, Patsy
 Val-Pak of Southern NM
 Valentine, Gerald
 Valley Transit Mix, Inc.
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 Vestal, Terrance
 Village Inn Pancake House
 Vintage Car Wash
 Viramontes, Joseph
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 Vista Travel
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 Vital Signs
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 W.N.G. Enterprises
 Wagner, Dennis
 Wainwright, Kelly
 Wal-Mart Stores
 Walgreens
 Walker, Elbert
 Walker, Margy
 Wall, Col. K. Darrell
 Wallace Chev/Olds/Cadillac/Geo
 Wallace, Johathan
 Walters, Trina
 Walton, Dave
 Ward, Kathy
 Warren, Tom
 Water King Purified Water Co.
 Watson Food
 Webber, William J.
 Wellborn Paint Mfg. Company

Welsh, Clint F., MD
 Wendell Hull & Associates
 West Coast Sound Systems, Inc.
 Westbrook Rehab & Spl. Injury
 Westco Builders
 Western Blend
 Western Communications
 Western Office Systems of NM
WESTERN BANK
 Westinghouse Electric Corp.
 Wheat, Sally
 Wharton, Brig. General
 White Hat Realty
 White Sands Fed. Credit Union
 White Sands Missile Range
 Wienerschnitzel
 Wiese, Donald
 Williams, James
 Wing, Melissa
 Witrera, Kipes
 Women Emerging, Inc.
 Wood, Becky
 Woodward, Deana
 Woodward, Frederick
 Wright, Derek
 X-PERT Auto Glass
 Zamora, Catalina
 Zubia, Adolf and Beverlye

Participants:

Acosta, Ramon
 Address, Dathie
 Bailey, Edward C.
 Baxa, Robin
 Beck, Dorothy L.
 Beckett, Patrick H.
 Bell Atlantic Mobile
 Beltran, Dolores
 Bennet, Robert
 Bennet, Ruth
 Biedron, Joe
 Binneweg, Nancy
 Blue Sky, Cetan Ska
 Bode-Hempton, Sharon
 Boone, Nancy
 Buchfield, Beni
 Bueche, Chris
 Bueche, Dee
 Bullock, Terry
 Burch, Patsy
 Burnett-Ving, Leila
 Camunez, Sylvia
 Caruthers, Sue
 Catherman, Joanne
 Chacon, Mario
 Chacon, Robbie
 Chayez, Edmundo
 Clark, Bobby C.
 Clark, Rosie
 Coker, Carl
 Cole Jr., Albert
 Connelly, Harry Sinclair
 Connelly, Susan
 Cordero, Charlene

Coykendall, Guy
 Daniels, Shirley
 Dawn, Dolores
 Defago, Norma Jean
 Defago, Samuel
 DeVargas, Adrian
 Dunn, Richard B.
 Ewing, Phil
 Ferreira, Beatriz
 Fisher, Vi
 Flores, Estela
 Fox, Mr. and Mrs. Willard
 Francis, Robert
 Gatlin, Beulah
 Gilman, Mike
 Glickler, Joan
 Gonzalez, Jeh
 Grider, Jane
 Hansen, Candy
 Hassel, Bob
 Hautz, Aandra
 Haymer, Kim
 Henry, Ann
 Herrera, Mary Ann
 Hestir, Kristen
 Hidalgo, Joe
 Hidalgo, Lupe
 Holguin, Harry
 Hopper, Gordon
 Hoxworth, Deanna
 Jaramillo, Felix
 Klein, Sonny
 Kongs, Dan
 Kongs, Rebecca
 Kunz, Sam
 Lady, Cathy
 Lander, Ray
 Lansford, Kurt & Mary
 Lipson, Charlotte
 Lopez, Danny
 Mahony-Saez, Julie
 Meikranz, Fren
 Melendez, Michael
 Mervine, Nina
 Moen, Donald G.
 Montes, Pauline
 Neaves, Margaret
 Oliver, Cecilia
 Oliver, Fred
 Onsureg, Eric
 Ortega, Gloria
 Ota, Clem
 Owen, Becky
 Owens, Garry
 Paz, Raymond
 Perez, Eddie
 Perez, Norma
 Pierce, John C.
 Pinto, Linda
 Pitts, Jim
 Popp, Rita
 Popp, Tony
 RB Design & Printing
 Rhodes, Jeane
 Roberts, Esther

Rodriguez, Manny
 Romero, Robert
 Rosales, Veronica
 Rosen, Helen
 Rosen, Richard
 Ross, Matt
 Scoggin, J.P.
 Scoggin, Patrick
 Shea, Trophia Ann
 Sievers, Suzanne
 Silva, Natalie M.
 Slopes, Maria
 Spaulding, Bill
 Stowe, William
 Strauss, William
 Sullivan, Terry
 Tiede, Ernest
 Tomlin, Barbara
 Upton, Patsy J.
 Van der Aa, Roy
 Van Skiver, Helen
 Viana, Sandra
 Vinz, Leilani
 Vizcarra, Sandra
 Vorenberg, Jim
 Wagoner, Fritz
 Wagoner, Janie
 Webber, William
 Werler, Hazel
 White, James
 White, Ken
 White, Mike
 White, Tricia
 Yabeny, Raina
 Zamora, Renee
 Zapien, Pat
 Zintio, Jane
 Zubia, Adolf
 Zubia, B.J.

SECTION 2: RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations listed below are a general summary of the highlights of the report. A more detailed understanding of this summary can be gained from review of the entire document, which supports and details the following recommendations.

- Memorialize the unfortunate destruction of St. Genevieve's Church through a community sponsored event. This participation will assist the community to grieve the loss of its spiritually and emotionally significant landmark and to bring it together to commit to a new beginning.
- The downtown Plaza area should be envisioned as the focal point, or "heart" of the community. The Plaza is a place for the community and its many cultures to come together at Plaza "Las Culturales".
- Government facilities must be encouraged to remain and future facilities should be located in the downtown area to gain, centralize the community focus.
- The downtown Plaza area must be visually enhanced based on the City's own landscaping ordinance standards. Planting of the streetscape, public right of way and medians is encouraged.
- The views from the Plaza to the Organ Mountains should be emphasized in the Plaza design and orientation.
- The essential element of the downtown design is the creation of an attractive, safe community-oriented and pedestrian scale environment.
- The existing canopy of the present downtown mall should be removed and replaced with shade devices more appropriate to a vital, outdoor environment. The structural elements of the canopy can be modified and reused if the Depot is converted into a transportation museum.
- Traffic in the downtown area should be "calmed" to permit a pedestrian-friendly environment for foot travel to and around the Plaza. The opportunity for increased use of the area is key to its enhancement.
- Both Chambers of Commerce should relocate to the Plaza area as a commitment to the new beginning for the area.
- The transfer center for the Roadrunner Transit System should be relocated to the downtown to give the community another option for access to the area.
- The Farmer's Market should continue on the Plaza. It is a community landmark that is part of the life of the plaza.
- A community-based planning process for the Mesquite and Alameda neighborhood areas should be established. Gathering input from all affected groups in developing a plan serves to build consensus and a mandate for implementation.
- Provide connections between the Mesquite Area and Alameda Depot Area neighborhoods through the downtown area and encourage pedestrian movements in making these connections.



- The Depot Building should be utilized as a location for cultural facilities and perhaps as a transportation museum, with both static and active displays.
- The historic character of the community should continue to be a focus. Opportunities for the enhancement of historic structures and districts should be targeted, as well as efforts to identify eligible historic resources not now on the State or National Registers. The continued focus on the historic character of the community could also include an expansion of the museum complex and museum displays.
- The image of Las Cruces should be communicated through a formal marketing strategy to include an identifying logo. The multi-cultural character of the community would be a key element of the message.
- Affordable rental and owner-occupied housing is important to community stability and productivity. The possibility of housing on the plaza is a long-term planning consideration.
- Issues of homelessness must be addressed by the community.

- Opportunities for economic growth in the R/UDAT area include:

The size of spaces for office and retail use on the Plaza are consistent with past and current market patterns of small scale office and retail development served by automobiles. As a result, the plaza space is marketable.

Emphasis on residential uses on the plaza, tourism and convention business should be reserved for the mid to long term, current trends do not indicate strong support at this time.

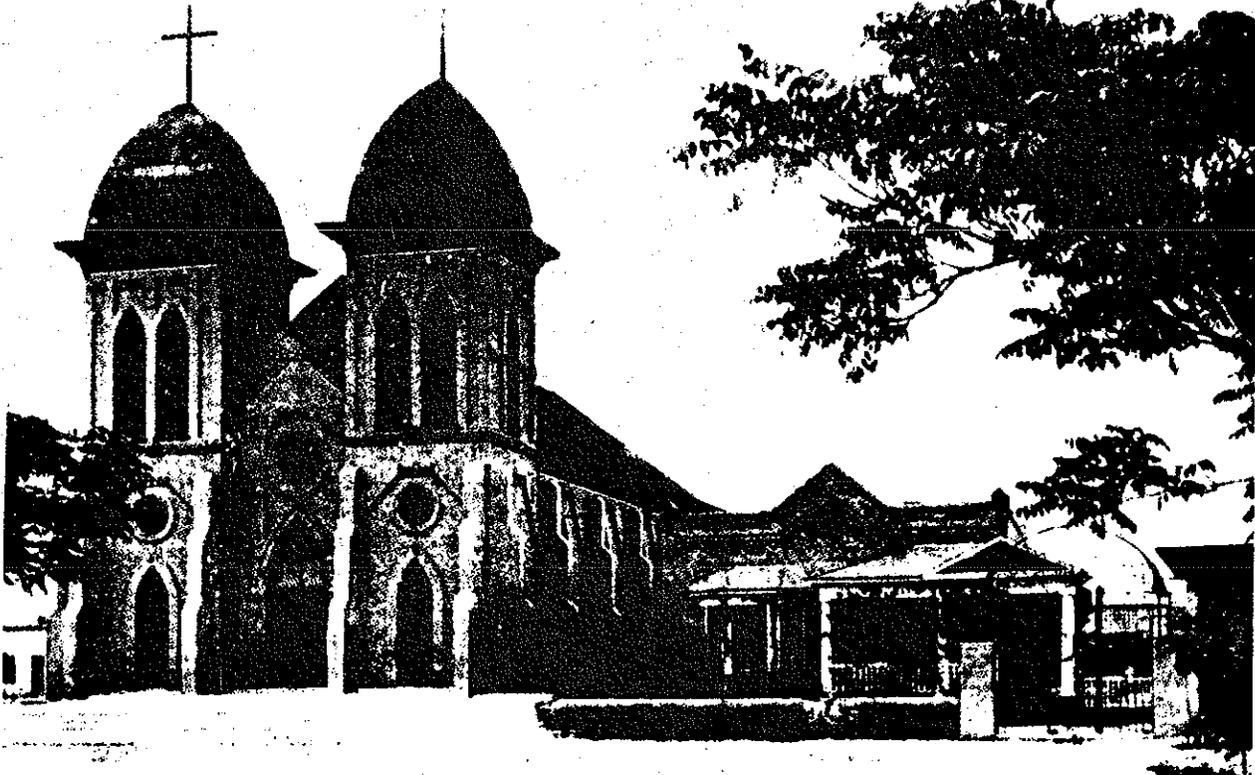
The Mesquite Historic district should move to realize its residential and commercial potential within the existing land use patterns. The City should consider regulatory and infrastructure support based on a community planning consensus.

The Alameda Depot Historic district should decide the extent to which it wants to encourage or discourage the trend of non-residential uses expanding into converted residences.

- Challenges for the Las Cruces community and its city government are to plan and implement a development strategy that identifies what public and private actions are necessary and who will lead a long-term public-private implementation strategy to

enhance the economy of the R/UDAT study area by mobilizing local and state resources to achieve community based goals for the Plaza, Mesquite and Alameda Depot Historic Districts.

The R/UDAT team recommends that the City government of Las Cruces be the primary implementor of these recommendations and proposed projects with the full participation of all segments of the community. With this concentrated effort, Las Cruces can move toward a new beginning.



St. Genevieve's Catholic Church. Las Cruces, New Mexico

RECOMENDACIONES

Las recomendaciones registradas son un resumen general de los puntos notables del informe. Un entendimiento más detallado de éste resumen puede ser ganado con el repaso del documento entero, que mantiene y detalla las recomendaciones siguientes:

- Comemorar la destrucción desafortunada de la Iglesia Santa Genoveva a través de un esfuerzo patrocinado por la comunidad. Esta participación ayudará a la comunidad afligir la pérdida de una marca de reconocimiento significativa y traerá a la comunidad juntamente a cometer a un principio nuevo.
- La plaza tiene que ser percibida como la punta focal, o "corazón" de la comunidad. La plaza es un lugar para la comunidad que pueda atraer juntas sus muchas culturas en la "Plaza Las Culturas".
- Edificios del Gobierno deben de quedarse y edificios futuros deben ser situados en la plaza para centralizar el enfoque de la comunidad.
- La Plaza debe ser visualmente basada sobre las leyes propias de la ciudad sobre el arquitecto de jardines. Se anima el sembrar de plantas a la vista de la calle y en los derechos publicos y en las divisiones de la calle.
- Las vistas de las Montañas de los Organos deben ser acentuadas en el diseño y orientación de la Plaza.
- La sombrilla que existe en la Plaza debe ser removida y replasada con sombrillas mas propias al ambiente de aire libre.
- El tráfico en la área debe ser calmado a un ambiente mas cordial para el uso de

peatónes. Esté tráfico calmado ofrece oportunidad para más uso de la área.

- Las Cámaras de Comercio deben ser situadas en la Plaza como un compromiso al principio nuevo para la área.
- La estación de Autobús Roadrunner debe ser situada al centro para dar a la comunidad otra opción para transporte a la área.
- El Mercado "Farmer's Market" debe ser continuado en la Plaza como punto significativo de la vida de la Plaza.
- Un proceso comunitario para las vecindades Mesquite y Alameda debe ser establecido para implementar las recomendaciones.
- Conexiones deben existir para las vecindades Mesquite y Alameda para promover movimiento de gente.
- La estación de trenes Alameda debe de ser utilizada como un sitio cultural y quizás como un museo de transporte.
- El carácter histórico de la comunidad debe ser el enfoque.

Oportunidades para engrandecer las estructuras historicas deben ser apuntadas tanto como esfuerzos para identificar edificios eligibles para los registros estatales y nacionales. El enfoque sigue siendo el carácter histórico de la comunidad y también puede incluir una expansión del museo y sus exhibiciones.

- La imagen de Las Cruces debe comunicarse a través de una estrategia formal para promover señal de identificación.

El carácter multicultural de la comunidad sería un elemento del mensaje. Rentas económicas y alojamiento propio son

importantes a la estabilidad y productividad de la comunidad. La posibilidad de alojamiento en la Plaza es una consideración de planificación del futuro.

- Punto en disputa de gentes sin casa ni hogar tienen que ser dirigidos por la comunidad.
- Oportunidades para crecimiento económico en el R/UDAT área incluye:

El tamaño de las oficinas ocupadas en la Plaza es consistente con los espacios servidos por automóviles. Énfasis en usos residenciales en la Plaza, negocios de turismo y convenciones deben ser reservados desde el medio a el término largo, tendencias presentes no indican sustento fuerte al presente.

El distrito histórico de la calle Mesquite debe realizar sus potenciales de viviendas y comercio dentro los modelos que existen sobre el uso de tierra. La Ciudad tiene que considerar sustento de infra-estructura y reglas basadas en un plan de consenso entre la comunidad.

El distrito histórico de estación de trenes Alameda debe decidir la extensión al cual desea animar o desanimar la tendencia de usos que no son para viviendas y residencias convertidas.

- Desafíos para la comunidad y su gobierno son de planeamiento y implementación de una estrategia que identifica que acciones del público y la comunidad son necesarias y quien debe dirigir tales acciones.

El equipo R/UDAT recomienda que el gobierno de la Ciudad de Las Cruces sea el implementor primario de estas recomendaciones y proyectos propuestos con la participación completa de todos segmentos de la comunidad. Con éste esfuerzo concentrado, Las Cruces puede moverse hacia un principio nuevo.

SECTION 3: CONTEXT/ISSUES & OBSERVATIONS

The American Institute of Architect's, Las Cruces Regional Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) dedicate this publication to the citizens of Las Cruces and respectfully offer the ideas and dreams contained in this report for their consideration.

The R/UDAT process searches the hearts and minds of a community for the formation of the team's recommendations in contrast to the urban revitalization efforts of the past.

This report attempts to deal comprehensively with the social, cultural, economic, transportation, planning, architecture and environmental concerns of the study area. In doing so, it has relied upon the insights and wisdom of people of all walks of life in the City of Las Cruces.

Thus, the results are a melding of both the professional experiences of the team and wisdom of the community at large and its leadership. Taken together, we hope this vision will be the framework for action.

Thank you for your warmth and generosity during our visit.

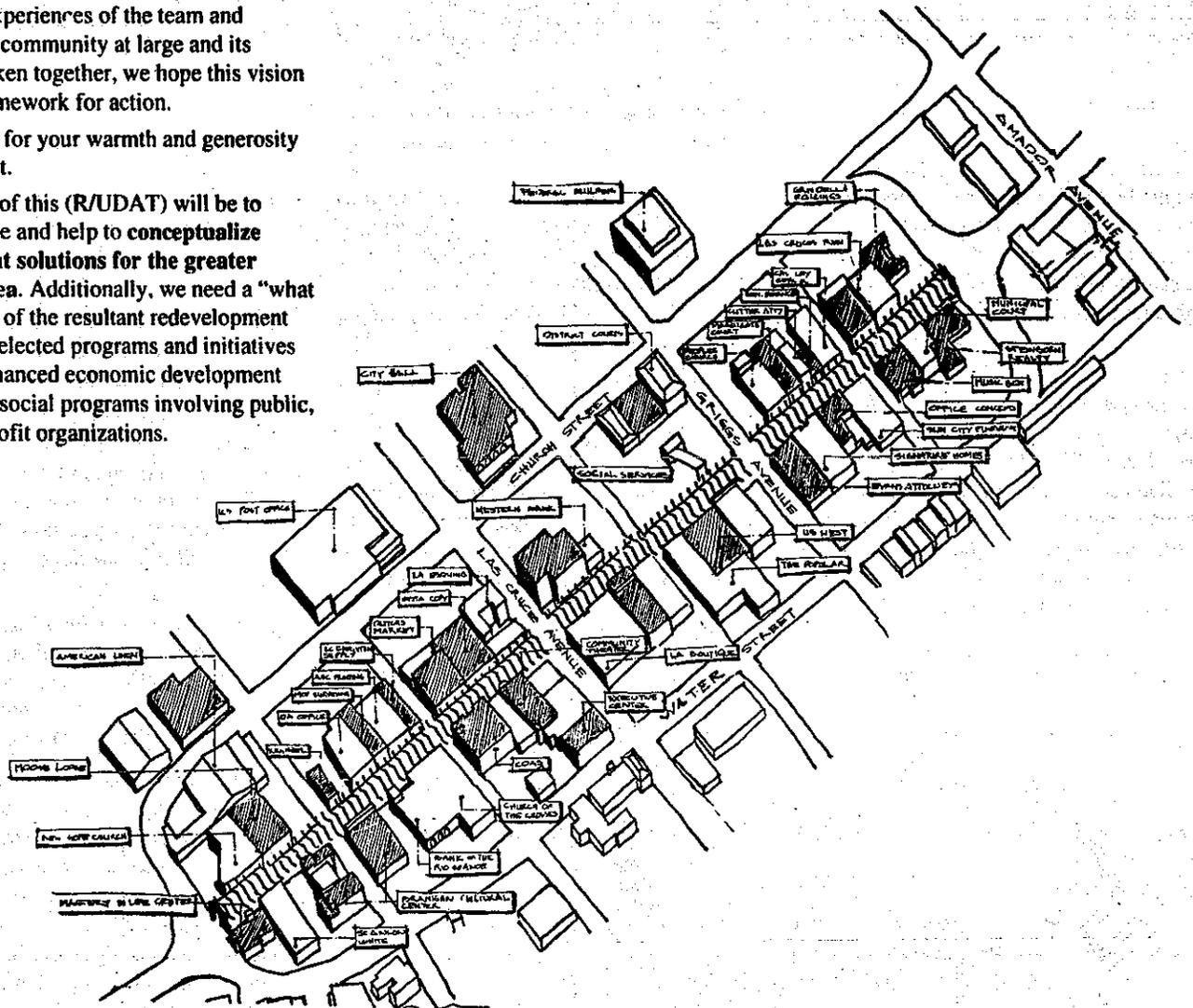
The scope of this (R/UDAT) will be to assess, evaluate and help to conceptualize redevelopment solutions for the greater downtown area. Additionally, we need a "what if" assessment of the resultant redevelopment proposals on selected programs and initiatives oriented to enhanced economic development and expanded social programs involving public, private non-profit organizations.

Las Cruces is the 10th fastest growing city in the United States, and was recently rated by MONEY Magazine as the most desirable city in New Mexico to live. Las Cruces has a population of 63,000 people and enjoys an extraordinarily rich diversity of cultures, manufacturing, educational institutions and progressive civic institutions.

From our multi-cultural heritage has sprung a land rich in agriculture, fed by the Rio Grande, with major defense installations at White Sands Missile Range and the NASA testing facility. The Las Cruces Public School District supports 20,000 children, and New Mexico State University (with 15,500 students) is a Carnegie I Research University serving the entire state of New Mexico.

While Las Cruces has enjoyed its position as New Mexico's second largest city, and has benefited from its temperate weather, beautiful mountains and valleys, and a steady growth rate of three to five percent per year, it has had its growing pains. This growth has been guided by a Comprehensive City Plan first completed in 1985, and currently being updated for the past-1992 time frame.

All previous studies of this same area (and there have been several) have received varying degrees of attention and priority, but overall have not been acted upon. The usual reasons prevail: lack of consensus by the public and private sectors; overly ambitious; inability to finance coherently; a changing marketplace dominating the longer view; and lack of community involvement and commitment.



START WITH THE HEART

The Downtown Area of Las Cruces has historically been the "Heart" of the City, and even represents that portion of Las Cruces that is emotionally the "soul" of the people. It has gone through many phases, from being the central business and cultural center, to a canopied landscaped mall devoid of through streets, people and retail traffic. Urban Renewal "improved" the old area of downtown in 1968-1972, by demolishing 30 per cent of the historic buildings, closing the main street, and erecting a partial shade canopy over a landscaped mall.

The huge redevelopment project was completed just in time to see the opening of the first 190,000 square foot enclosed retail mall just one block south of the downtown area. The new retail trend, coupled with lack of direct access to the downtown stores (all the new parking lots created at the back doors of the business) began the decline of the center of the City.

The surrounding neighborhoods also began to decline, as growth first headed west toward the Rio Grande, and then east toward the Organ Mountains. In the mid 1970's a new 450,000 square foot enclosed mall opened in the eastern suburbs of the city, and the downtown practi-

cally died. The downtown mall itself stood totally empty for a number of years, and the vacancy rate in the downtown area approached 60 percent.

In the last four to five years a new spirit has begun, and in the last one and one-half years, a strong emphasis (police bike patrols, higher occupancy rates, painting, twice-weekly Farmers Market, Summer programs of music on the mall, Community Theatre presentations, and expanded programs by the Branigan Cultural Center) turned things around and has begun to reverse the tragic trend.

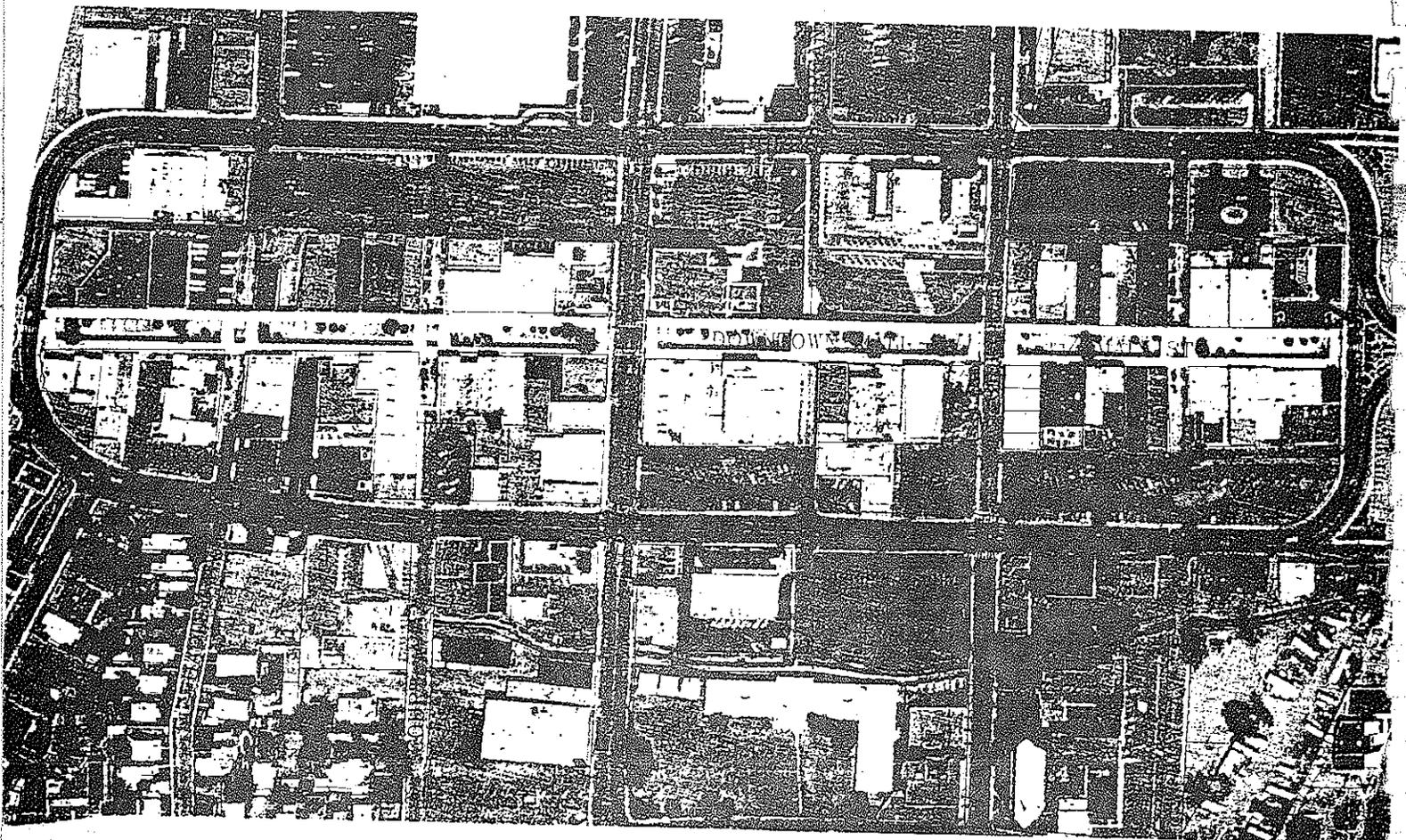
The residential neighborhoods have also seen a resurgence in the desire to preserve the historical sites. Emphasis by the Community Development Block Grant program has made funds available to those families that stayed in the downtown and provided incentive to those who wanted to move back into the downtown area.

However, the most important indication of the need for an overall development plan in the downtown area is the interest and commitment of a broad-based coalition of businesses, private and public sector institutions and governmental

entities to help develop a realistic and achievable plan that is not biased toward a single segment of society.

Our R/UDAT process began over six months ago on an informal basis and has been gathering momentum rapidly. We have had three preliminary public presentations to create awareness and solicit input from all sectors of the community. We have many more public hearings to conduct so as to get the word to the maximum number of people. Local newspaper coverage has been positive. So far, it appears that we came to the public at the right time with the right message, and have received generally favorable support and encouragement to begin the process.

The Steering Committee was established on July 22, 1992 and the first nine operating subcommittees on September 14. We expect the committee structure to change in size and description as we become more aware of the R/UDAT requirements but this group seemed logical for starters.



SECTION 4: FAMILIES AND YOUTH

FAMILIES AND YOUTH SUBCOMMITTEE

The Quality of Life and the Future of Las Cruces cannot be improved unless the community has a vision for the future of children, families and youth.

The concept of enhancing the downtown area must be centered on recognition and celebration of the family, the heart of Las Cruces. Although land use, design of buildings, traffic patterns, and historical/cultural preservation are important to this process, we must not lose sight of the fact that families are the community.

A healthy community is comprised of families who live in healthy atmospheres including sound economics (jobs and business), education, recreation and social/health services.

Families and Youth Subcommittee (FYS) was formed and is composed of youth, parents, counselors, early childhood educators, former gang members, a judge, and representatives of schools, religious organizations, government, and the media.

Since February of 1993, the FYS has examined a multitude of issues related to youth, families and community. Key to this

examination was an understanding of teen dropout, violence and violent acts, substance abuse, gang activity, teen pregnancy, unemployment, recreation, education, social needs, fear and pressures on the family, need for conflict resolution, media influence, and the need for community collaboration.

The FYS, on March 23, 1993, developed the following Statement of Commitment to Community:

Las Cruces is committed to improving the quality of life for all members of the community, acknowledging that the family of today is changing from the traditional nuclear family.

The commitment to improve the quality of life shall be accomplished by:

- working towards providing insights and strategies to address family and community needs.
- helping young people to contribute and become an integral part of their family and their community.
- providing accessible, affordable, coordinated services; a safe and healthy social environment; opportunities for increased self-sufficiency and positive self-esteem; a variety of wholesome family activities; and

extend the impact of commitment to all families in the community.

The following recommendations were formulated as a result of this year-long examination which included community input, expertise of committee members, youth input, formal and informal surveys, field-tested recreation projects, and four topic subcommittees (Education, Social/Recreation, Communication Network, Family Issues):

We submit our recommendations with this thought in mind: "The cost of doing nothing is greater than the cost of change."

1. FAMILY DEVELOPMENT/ INFORMATION CENTER

The FDIC would be a central coordinating office, clearinghouse, and service center located in the downtown area. Satellite outreach centers could be established in outlying areas in response to high concentrations of need within the city/county.

At a minimum, the following services would be provided:

- Family resource library (books, videos, movies, pamphlets, etc.)

I want a peace plant in every Park

Daniel Delacruz



Child's Drawing
Montessori School, Las Cruces

START WITH THE HEART



- Multi-cultural Activities/Workshops/ Estudiantinas
- Parent/Child Activities
- Family, Youth Activity Scheduling/ Coordination
- Intergenerational Activities
- Mentoring/Tutoring Programs
- Mediation Team Counseling
- Adult Education Satellite
- Community-wide Educational Resources
- Employment Opportunities

2. YOUTH SOCIAL/RECREATION CENTER

Our youth are sending us a message: "There's nothing to do, there's no place for us!" We cannot continue to operate in the negative. We ask our youth to say "No" to drugs, "No" to violence, "No" to being a dropout, "No" to gangs. We must give them something to say "YES" to.

With our youth in mind, we submit these recommendations as "YESSES":

- Teen-Night Club run by Teen Board/Parent, Teacher Advisors
- Neighborhood Teen Centers monitored by volunteer parents
- A City Skating Rink
- Completion of Court Junior High as a Youth Center encompassing a variety of social, cultural, recreational activities for youth

- Indoor Swimming Pool
- Use of neighborhood school facilities for evening recreation
- City Zoo/ Children's Museum

3. COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATION NETWORK

There is a lack of coordination among social, recreational, medical, educational, religious services and activities available within our city and county. A comprehensive communication network linking services and calendars/bulletin boards would be a positive step in meeting the needs of children, youth and families within the demographic area of our city and county.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our community is experiencing growing pains, including the pain of economic poverty as the third lowest metropolitan statistical area in the nation. However, we are not a community poor in culture or in caring; therefore, we must address a basic need of economic development:

- Maintain existing small business and provide opportunities for business expansion for a more stable and diversified economic base translating to additional jobs.
- Mutual support of local government and the business sector
- Opportunities for mentoring and employment of youth
- Development of partnerships between the business sector, schools and local government to address all economic levels.
- Showcasing of role models
- Apprenticeships for at-risk youth using a team approach to match potential skills and talents with appropriate needs of business



5. COMMUNITY-WIDE MARKETING PROGRAM FOR EDUCATION

Our community recognizes the importance of education. In order to promote educational excellence, a concentrated marketing approach is needed. The "THINK EDUCATION CAMPAIGN" should involve local government, schools, businesses, media, parents, and students. The following educational issues need emphasis:

- Alternative high school programs
- In-house mediation teams
- Work-Study Cooperatives
- Expanded night high school options
- Reduction of dropout rate
- Celebrate excellence through citywide recognition programs.

LIFE AFTER RUDAT RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. A joint venture between the City of Las Cruces, the Las Cruces Public Schools and the business sector to fund a position for a community/school liaison to:

- work closely with community entities to establish a more effective communication between home, school, and community
- identify and secure funding for projects and programs
- coordinate information and resources.
- assist families in accessing services
- provide input to the Families and Youth Commission
- liaison to agencies providing services to families and youth

2. A Families and Youth Commission to be a permanent committee of the City of Las Cruces. Functions of the Commission would be to:

- Advise the Mayor on issues and activities related to families and youth
- Coordinate and disseminate information
- Review potential projects and programs
- Interact with the Community/School Liaison
- Develop plans for a continued vision for families and youth
- Solicit community input
- Recommend policies

SECTION 5: HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing construction, whether in the Plaza area or within study area neighborhoods, requires public subsidies to make projects financially feasible. As public funds are scarce, only through combining resources and exercising creativity can projects be successfully developed. Local government, acting as its own sponsor or in conjunction with a non-profit sponsoring organization, can take the lead in implementing development that responds to affordable housing needs. Rental housing is a growing need in the community as indicated by the City's 1994 Comprehensive Housing and Affordability Strategy (CHAS).

Donation of land; use of CDBG funds for infrastructural improvement, property acquisition, or site clearance; federal HOME funds; Section 8 certificates; Low-Income Tax Credits; State Housing Finance Agency funds; Farmers Home Financing; and home matching funds are some of the sources that should be considered.

PLAZA "LAS CULTURAS"

Suggestions have been made for housing construction above some stores on the Plaza. R/UDAT views this not as an immediate solution, but as an intermediate/long-term future possibility—with some reservations.

First, as new construction will be required which probably cannot be fully subsidized under known state or federal housing legislation (although partial subsidies may be available to improve access for senior citizens and the physically challenged/mobility impaired), it may not be "affordable" to many low-income people. Second, how many Plaza buildings are strong enough to support construction of a second story is presently unknown. Third, the public image of the Plaza area must be changed to one of personal security (especially at night) before such housing will be attractive to the current market.

Finally, recent experiments with even quite elegant "shophouses"—housing above commercial facilities—have met with mixed results, especially in upscale Northeast U.S. "new town" developments such as Reston, Virginia. Basically, "shophouses" run contrary to the American dream. Immigrant families in East-coast cities originally moved out to the suburbs to get away from such housing; some of their children, however, have a more positive view of downtown living, and may be willing to return.

The market for on-Plaza housing can be segmented by age and income, and perhaps by ethnicity. It is likely to be most appealing to single young adults and childless couples, at middle-income level or above. Plazas are fun

for small children, but a headache for parents trying to supervise them. Also, providing adequate accessibility to older adults may be a problem. Further, if the Plaza is to become the lively place it needs to be, it cannot also be quiet and serene (in fact, to enhance the atmosphere and the Plaza population, strolling musicians — including those playing for contributions — and visiting musical groups should be encouraged). Thus, such housing may appeal most to those who like to be surrounded, at least some of the time, by excitement. It may also appeal to people whose cultural backgrounds place positive value on residing close to commercial areas or, for those who own the stores below, or for those living next to their places of work.

An intermediate option would be to build some second-story space for offices, studios for artists, or, in such cases as the COAS Bookstore, coffee-shops with romantic balcony-level views of the Plaza. Such additions could be made with an eye to the later conversion of some of these to rental apartments or condominiums, if the Las Cruces housing market seems favorable. The artist population of Las Cruces, happily, appears to be on the increase, symptomatic of the fact that those who market their art in such centers as Santa Fe can no longer afford to live there. Studios for artists may, then, later become apartments for artists, some of whom may be eligible for low-income housing assistance.





THE MESQUITE NEIGHBORHOOD

The Mesquite neighborhood is characterized by a large number of unique, historically-significant buildings, many occupied by the same families for several generations. To call them single-family dwellings would not be entirely accurate as this label is generally associated with the once "normal" and now exceptional Anglo-American nuclear family: two parents and their biological children. Many of the Mexican-American *familias* in Mesquite are large and multi-generational, occupying a set of not necessarily neighboring houses (even extending outside the city, state, and country) and consisting, beyond the nuclear family, of grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, and cousins. It is important to note this because *familias* are also social support systems, mutual aid societies, and a form of insurance against misfortune: the *familia* takes care of its own.

The houses of Mesquite are not merely "housing." Together, they make up a stable, cohesive community that R/UDAT finds essential to preserve. These houses may be the only "affordable housing" that the residents of the neighborhood can afford. Many, however, are in need of maintenance, improvement, and aesthetic enhancement. For this, the *familias* are an invaluable resource: many include experienced craftspeople, skilled masons, and construction experts among their members. Their problems are, first, lack of funds, and second, lack of information concerning sources of funds for home improvement.

Fortunately, needs for upgraded affordable housing can be combined with cultural and historical preservation and the human resources of the *familia*. Funds for families below certain income levels to improve historically significant houses are available under CDBG in the form of grants and, where needs for physical or aesthetic improvement exceed grant limits, as long-term loans. Health conditions can also be improved: lead-based interior paints (especially hazardous to small children), for example, can be replaced with non-toxic coatings. Funds are

also available, as indicated in the "Plaza" section, for improving safety and accessibility for senior citizens and the physically challenged/mobility impaired.

Special skills are required for the restoration of adobe dwellings: happily, New Mexico abounds in people, some living in Las Cruces, with the necessary knowledge and experience for this work. Upgrading and rebuilding must of course conform to CDBG requirements, in which City officials can be of help to community residents. Establishment of an information network, through which community residents can find out what funds are available, how to apply for them, how to use them, etc., is absolutely essential. So, too, is establishing methods of effective citizen participation which allow community residents to take and keep control of their own destinies and of their environment.

Although important, uniform building codes are often a vehicle for displacing lower income families from their homes. The cost of meeting such codes to the letter often exceeds both available grant monies and limits on loans which banks are willing to extend. In order to ensure this does not occur in Mesquite, efforts to modify the building code to affordable but safe standards are strongly recommended. Thus, strict enforcement of arbitrary uniform building codes and standards can hamper self-help community upgrading, or even prevent it. R/UDAT views allowing "non-conforming uses" in this area as necessary.

First, it is essential that mixed land uses, as determined by community residents in cooperation with the City, be allowed: people are dependent, socially as well as economically, on local shopping and services. The intermingling of residences and small businesses is critical to both economic and social development in Mesquite. Second, restrictions regarding, for example, setbacks, need to be relaxed: many homes, appropriate to the time they were constructed, are built to the property line. This is normal in areas of Santa Fe and Mesilla, for example, and in many parts of northern New Mexico: it is part of the aesthetic appeal of such places, as well as of this area of Las Cruces.

Third, back yards are useful rather than just decorative; many *familia* activities, including machinery repair, take place there. This is quite normal. The issue is not to prevent such activities, but to shield them, for security as well as aesthetic reasons, from the street. Finally, states such as Oregon have set a valuable precedent through "relaxing" codes in certain areas. Application of this principle would exempt homes in Mesquite, and their neighborhood as a whole, from conformance to certain codes, but enforce basic standards of health and safety, in plumbing and electrical installation, and in such potentially hazardous building elements as stairways.

Community art has been a focus of many Mexican-American communities in the United States, and community arts groups should also be encouraged. R/UDAT was impressed with the quality of mural art on the walls of, for example, Klein Park and the former Bradley Elementary School, and encourages the further expression of community cultural values in mural form. Young people's mural art cooperatives, aided by local artists, have proven to be constructive outlets for adolescent energy in a number of other cities, and, together with provision of more recreation could help some problem adolescents to find their way into society.

HOUSING THE HOMELESS

There are those who can afford no housing at all: homelessness in Las Cruces, as across the nation, is a community concern. The issue for local government is how to address particular circumstances. R/UDAT recommends that the City utilize the report from its Task Force on the Homeless and seek out organizations capable of meeting a broad range of needs: emotional, physical, occupational, social, medical, educational, etc., of this segment of the population. Particularly urgent are (1) the situations of families in the community with children, whose incomes or positions in the society place them in danger of homelessness; and (2) exploring the potential for increased homelessness prevention activities.



SECTION 6: TOURISM

One of the tasks assigned to R/UDAT was to determine methods for improving the tourism product and the quality of life in Las Cruces. This section will address issues of city image; disseminating information on R/UDAT follow up to the residents of Las Cruces; identifying activities that serve both residents and visitors; enhancing the tourism product in Las Cruces; and identifying factors associated with venturing into the convention market in Las Cruces.

CITY IMAGE

One of the main issues on the minds of local residents has been that Las Cruces has no singular image that comes to mind. Neither the city nor the convention and visitors bureau has a solid image. The city was described to R/UDAT as having no "heart" or "soul." Once the city adopts R/UDAT's recommendations, the city's identity must be established immediately and reinforced in every way possible.

- All Steering Committees should stay in place until the R/UDAT plan is completely implemented.
- Community involvement at every level is essential in order to generate support and ownership of the plan.

The first step to establishing a city image is to create a slogan and a logo to represent the city and its utilization efforts.

- A school contest can be held to choose the slogan for Las Cruces (i.e. "Start with the heart;" "The City with a heart.")
- Once a slogan is selected, a city wide contest to create a logo needs to be held. This logo, a graphic, will then be used in conjunction with the slogan in all phases of the plan.

A celebration of this accomplishment and recognition of all participants need to follow the adoption of slogan/logo.

DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

In studying the City of Las Cruces and its residents, several concerns were raised regarding getting important information to all residents.

- City has no set means of getting information to the public.

- There is no central clearinghouse to find out about City services, special events, schools, policies, fire safety.

- People have no clear idea of where to turn for assistance as was identified in the Family/Youth Committee research.

After the selection of the city slogan/logo, the community should bring in a full service, professional public relations/marketing agency to finalize logo and disseminate committee information and activities to the public.

- Agency should be asked to do pro bono work as a public service.
- Agency usually has other corporate contacts that could offer underwriting opportunities on community projects.

The agency will not take over the community's plan. It will only follow community's instructions and assist in keeping the community informed and involved.

- Artist will help finalize slogan/logo that was selected by community.
- Writers will create public service announcements, advertisements for print

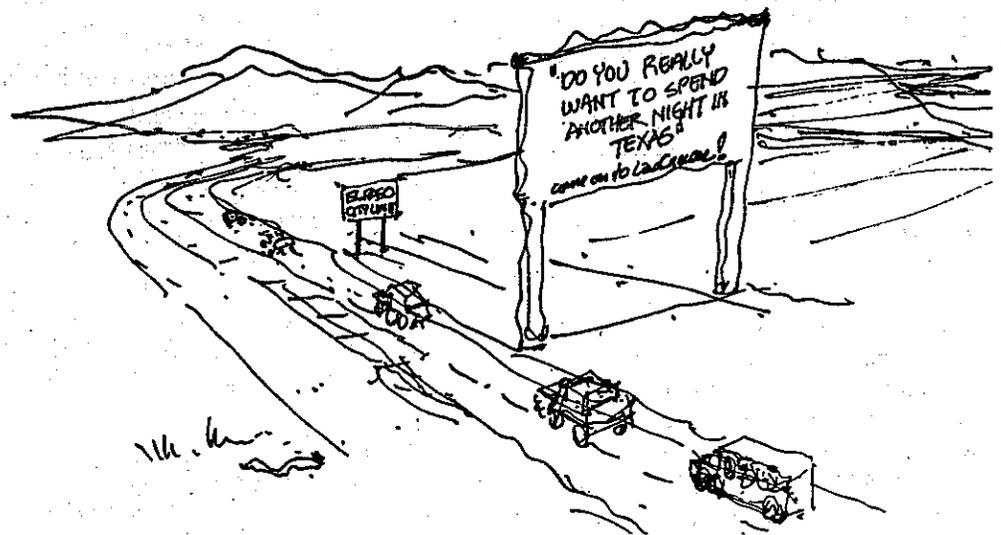
and broadcast media, flyers, billboards, community calendars, etc.

- Each committee will continue implementing the R/UDAT plan.
- Committee heads will meet with agency regularly to inform/update them on activities/progress.
- Agency will be central clearinghouse and get the word out to the rest of the community, i.e., flyers, news releases to media and any other means as identified by the Steering Committees.

Because committees will be busy enough in plan implementation, the agency should be the central information center that the city residents said they were looking for. The committees and agency will work in concert on all phases of the plan implementation.

ACTIVITIES SERVING RESIDENTS & VISITORS

As R/UDAT set out to recommend a plan to improve tourism and the quality of life in Las Cruces, it was discovered that the city already



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has the beginnings of a tourism industry. The attractions and activities in Las Cruces currently serve both residents and visitors, and the best tourism cities are ones that can maintain that balance. The following are current assets in Las Cruces that will help build a tourism foundation:

- Climate
- Sports/recreation/parks
- Mountains/outdoor scenery
- Historic districts
- Art/culture—galleries, museums, theatres, community art
- Festivals and special events
- Farmers and crafts market
- New Mexico State University—performing arts, special events
- Hotels/motels
- Shopping—Mesilla Valley Mall, Downtown Mall, El Paseo
- Dining—El Paseo, R/UDAT target area

ENHANCING THE TOURISM PRODUCT

Enhancing the existing assets will improve the quality of life for all residents and lay the foundation for tourism. The City of Las Cruces can then evolve into a true visitor destination.

Many tourism enhancements will occur naturally as the R/UDAT target area is vitalized. When a city can meet the economic, cultural, planning and spiritual needs of its citizens, then the city is well positioned to expand its tourism base. With R/UDAT plan adoption, the attractions that exist will continue to strengthen, such as parks, sports and recreation, and the weaker areas will be enhanced, such as shopping, dining and accommodations.

The Las Cruces Convention and Visitors Bureau can and should be instrumental in accomplishing these enhancements. The purpose of the Bureau is to promote the city as a tourism destination, with the bottom line of filling hotel and motel rooms. That is the ultimate purpose of any Bureau in the world.

- Hotel guests spend dollars on food, fuel, entertainment, shopping, etc., leaving dollars in the city
- Generated bed tax funds Bureau marketing programs

The primary task of the Bureau is to reach outside target markets and diversify the local economy by bringing in visitors and their dollars. However, there is also a need for local community awareness of the Bureau's purpose and activities. A city that does not support its Bureau cannot evolve into a true destination.

The Bureau currently operates with a staff of four and a budget of approximately \$620,000. The Bureau has a board of directors, appointed by the Mayor, who represent hotels, travel agents and restaurants. The Bureau also has a written marketing plan to accomplish the goal of attracting visitors. The efforts of the Bureau are largely on target. The Bureau is underfunded, understaffed and yet, competes with Albuquerque, Santa Fe, El Paso/Juarez and other areas for the same visitor dollars.

However, some priorities may be arranged in a way to maximize limited resources. In the future, increasing resources and staff will have to be implemented if Las Cruces is to compete in tourism and someday branch out into large conventions. Following are recommendations for making the Bureau stronger and more efficient until more resources are available.

- Work with city public relations agency to enhance current Bureau logo and come up with a Bureau slogan
- Use new slogan/logo to market Las Cruces to target markets
- Use logo on all letterhead, business cards, office supplies
- Use slogan/logo on all collateral pieces like brochures, visitor guides, posters, postcards, T-shirts
- Update marketing video and distribute free copies to travel agencies, tour operators, meeting planners for their files

The Bureau needs a solid corporate identity. Everything from the Bureau must have a consistent "look" to attract visitors. Over time, people in target markets will easily recognize the Bureau's identifying trademark and look forward to making the trip to see the city and its attractions.

The Bureau's slogan/logo must be different from that of the city. The Bureau directs its efforts to outer markets and needs a unique approach to do so. However, it is important that the Bureau work with the city-selected agency because of the community awareness program that the Bureau will do locally. There needs to be a relationship between the city and the

Bureau regarding community awareness/support, and having a single agency can achieve that.

The Bureau needs to prioritize market segments by changing them in the marketing plan and implementing steps/allocating funds to successfully bring these markets to Las Cruces.

- Regional leisure travelers a top priority
- Motorcoach tours/international visitors
- Convention sales
- Film and television

REGIONAL LEISURE TRAVELERS

- Coming from within 300 miles
- Driving west on Interstate 10
- Looking for weekend getaways
- Looking for shopping, dining, festivals

Recommendations for enhancing Bureau's efforts in this market:

- Improve/expand "Fiesta Fridays" (FF)
- Allocate more funds for FF
- Get complete backing for FF from local hospitality industry, city officials, city staff
- Assist festivals and special events
- Invite state tourism officials to Las Cruces to update them on what is available to visitors
- Focus first on what is locally available to visitors, then branch out to outlying areas

"Fiesta Fridays" is a specific way to capture regional leisure travelers looking for weekend dining, shopping and fun. This program won an award at the 1991 Idea Fair of the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus. This award-winning idea should be utilized to the fullest.

The Bureau currently assists with festivals and needs to remain involved, especially when the city is deciding on festival locations. Regarding the state tourism office, the Bureau should make officials aware of the R/UDAT plan and how it will enhance tourism in the city. If the state does not know about the expansion of the tourism base, they cannot assist with promotion of the city. In addition, R/UDAT learned that Old Mesilla, Fort Seldon, White Sands and other areas are promoted to target markets. There is nothing wrong with taking advantage of other tourist areas. Proximity to a greater area is a plus, but more effort needs to focus on Las Cruces and keeping visitor dollars

in the city. This will be easier when the other components of the R/UDAT plan are in place.

MOTORCOACH TOURS/ INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

- Mainly senior market for motorcoach tours
- Looking for good climate, shopping, historical/cultural sites
- International visitors looking for shopping, dining, sports, family visits

Recommendations for enhancing Bureau's efforts in this market:

- Continue membership in motorcoach associations
- Continue strategic advertising in motorcoach publications
- Continue attendance at motorcoach tradeshows that have proven successful in generating tour business
- Enhance efforts in marketing to interested tour groups by attending tradeshows, direct mail and working with state tourism office

The motorcoach market is not easy to get into and only years of nurturing the market and participating in activities will create a successful program. The market should become easier as Las Cruces becomes well known in the market, and as more local activities are created through the vitalization of the city.

CONVENTIONS

- Looking for inexpensive hotel/meeting space
- Looking for inexpensive food service
- Looking for free-time activities

Recommendations for enhancing Bureau's efforts in this market:

- Target state, board meetings that can meet in current hotels
- Target individual corporate travelers
- Target sports/tournament groups

The city of Las Cruces has not pushed itself as far as it can regarding the convention/sports markets. Open and honest communication between hotels and the Bureau needs to be enhanced and more work needs to be done in capturing the youth sports market. When the city has "peaked out" in serving both groups and leisure travelers, it will be time to pursue larger groups and a convention center.

FILM/TELEVISION

- Looking for Western/desert locations
- Looking for inexpensive hotels/catering facilities
- Looking for cooperative city/county/state government
- Looking for locations near Los Angeles for quick filming

Recommendations for enhancing Bureau's efforts in this market:

- Work with state film commission
- Use strategic, cost-effective advertising in trade publications
- Keep current color prints and slides of possible locations on file
- Create a production manual to give to film companies
- Use direct mail to contact film production companies

The Bureau currently attends a film tradeshow in California to promote the city's locations. This may still be continued, but only after funding the other three target market programs. An evaluation of this tradeshow will determine the viability of the program. Many cities who are successful in the film business never attend tradeshows, but maintain strong ties to the state film office, use advertising and direct mail to promote their city.

The city must seriously consider relocating the Bureau office to Interstate 10 to capture westbound travelers going through Las Cruces. Thousands of potential visitors are lost each year because there is no mechanism to direct them to Las Cruces and its attractions. Once they arrive at the current downtown location they are in the city and do not need the assistance that highway travelers need. There is still a need for a presence in the Plaza, but perhaps one staff member and a volunteer could assist visitors. Most tourism cities have more than one location, and many have three or four sites, depending on the number of strategic locations in the city.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Enhancing the tourism product takes as much work in the city as in outer markets. The Bureau needs the financial and spiritual support of the city in order to be successful. The public relations agency can help the Bureau create a comprehensive community awareness

campaign, but following are recommendations to outline the program.

- Create local flyers or low-cost brochures to be distributed locally detailing the Bureau's function in the tourism industry
- Send news releases to media on Bureau activities
- Have Bureau board of directors act as a speakers bureau, speaking to civic groups, schools, churches, business leaders about the importance of tourism to the city
- Have an open house, where city officials, city staff and media tour the Bureau and learn about its function in the city
- Recruit volunteers to assist visitors and Bureau staff
- Allow city officials/board members to travel with Bureau staff when making a bid presentation to secure a group's meeting
- Recognize/award local contacts who assist in booking a group
- Have board/city officials work in the Bureau office for one day, assisting visitors. This is especially appropriate for National Tourism Week, which is always in May.

Informing and educating the public about tourism and the Bureau's role in diversifying the economy is a never-ending program. For example, many local residents believe the Bureau is funded with local tax dollars, when in fact, the Bureau is funded solely with dollars brought in from the outside. People need to be reminded frequently of the importance of this growing industry to their city.

Tourism is a clean industry, with vertical growth. A person can go from busboy to hotel general manager in a short time. Tourism usually hires from within the ranks, giving loyal employees the chance for upward mobility. Everyone in Las Cruces is directly or indirectly affected by tourism. The catering director who gets paid and spends money on groceries, dentists, rent, clothing, etc. spreads outside dollars throughout the city. Tourism brings money in and keeps it in.

EXPANDING THE CONVENTION MARKET

After the city of Las Cruces expands and solidifies its tourism base, it may be time to consider funding and building a convention center. It is not recommended to venture into

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this area at this time, especially since the issue has failed at the ballot before. The citizens of Las Cruces must thoroughly understand the tourism industry and support it before they will support a convention center. However, following are key points to remember when considering all issues surrounding a convention center in this city. The main resources for this section came from information on local economic activity; interviews with member of local hospitality industry; discussions with city officials/city staff; data from cities with a similar profile to Las Cruces.

Most data indicates that meetings are currently being held at local hotels and some at New Mexico State University. The Bureau generates leads to hotels about potential business, but most hotels book their own groups and depend on the Bureau to service the group once it is in town.

This plan recommends waiting until the city has thoroughly investigated all opportunities for booking groups under existing conditions and letting the tourism industry grow before trying to garner support for a convention center. Some cities build convention centers in order to stimulate the development of hotels and retail activities. This latter redevelopment approach requires large amounts of public sector support and patience to continue efforts over the usually long incubation periods for convention business to reach self-sustaining levels.

When the time comes to actively pursue a convention center, the city citizens must look at several factors: Reasons for pursuing a convention center; market segments to be served by the center; and the maturity of the local tourism industry.

The reasons for pursuing a convention center are similar to those for tourism: Diversify economy by assisting local businesses; provide new employment; attract more hotels; satisfy demands in the lodging industry; provide the needed space for local assembly; generate more hotel tax.

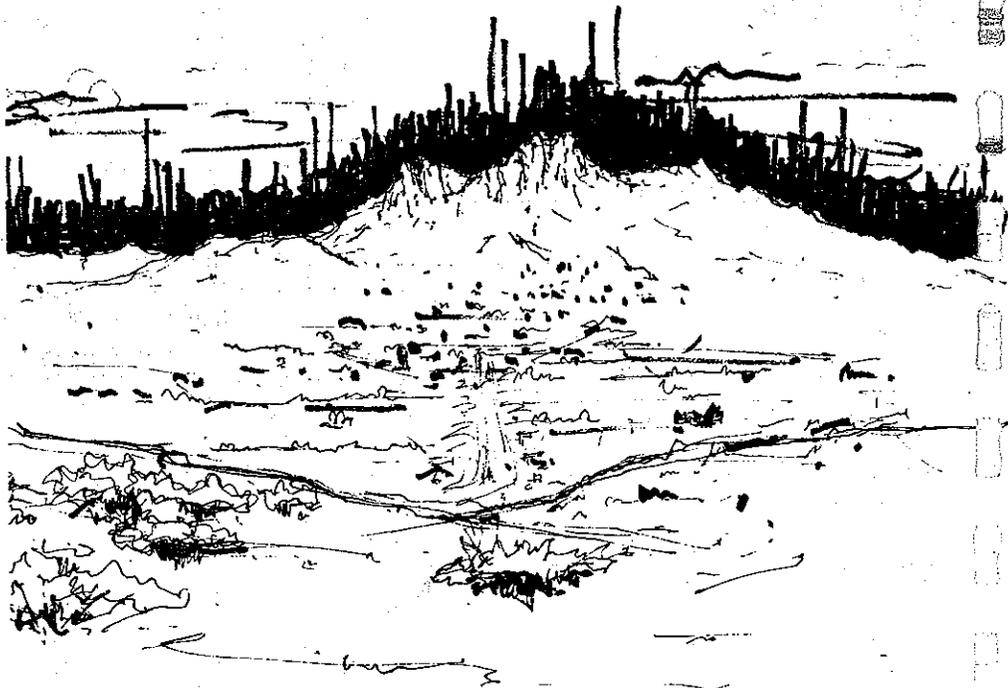
The market segments envisioned for a new convention center/auditorium are state meetings; regional meetings; sports events; military gatherings; educational meetings; religious meetings; fraternal meetings; consumer shows; large and small public/private gatherings; performing arts events.

Convention markets utilize the same attractions in a city as do tourism markets. Most

data on this topic does not significantly differentiate between the interactions of leisure visitors, business travelers or conventioners. A mature and self-sufficient tourism industry is a solid economic foundation on which to build a convention center. The following checklist represents typical preferences for auxiliary or free-time activities for convention delegates in a city.

- Shopping
- Relaxing/sightseeing
- Restaurants/clubs
- Museums/historical sites.
- Visit friends/relatives
- Cultural/artistic activities
- Hiking
- Winery tours
- Fairs/festivals
- Boating/camping/fishing
- Sporting events

Once a convention center is to be built, location must be carefully considered. The center must be able to be expanded, especially column-free exhibit space, in order to continue hosting groups that grow larger each year.



SECTION 7: ECONOMICS

A. Situation Analysis Summary

There are a number of background facts that help understand the situation of the R/UDAT study area:

1. Population

- The Las Cruces metropolitan area's growth has been two and one half times faster than the State and 55% faster than other metropolitan areas in this state.
- Local, state and federal agency projections of population growth for Doña Ana County expect continued above average future growth.
- Expected future growth will come from aging of the current population; in-migration of retirees and more rapid growth of persons of Hispanic culture.

2. Economy

- Las Cruces area's economic growth has been lead by agriculture, aeronautics, and academics
- Two out of every five local jobs is government
- The relative importance of government has declined in the last decade as the relative importance of services, and retail trade has increased.
- This pattern of increased diversity is expected to continue.

3. Real Estate Development

- Local retail development has reduced the leakage of spending outside the community
- Lower incomes locally limit most types of retail development

- Recent years have experienced a consolidation of retail space into a regional mall and significant conversion of older retail and some residential space to small scale office spaces.
- Government, education, and medical uses occupy larger office buildings.
- Lowered incomes of local workers and some retirees tend to keep residential real estate prices and size of development below average.
- Mobile homes on relatively cheap land limit multi-family development.
- Scattered development patterns are encouraged by public policies and abundant, less expensive land.
- These economic, demographic, and real estate trends provide opportunities for enhancement of the R/UDAT study areas commercial and residential components.

B. Development in R/UDAT Study Area

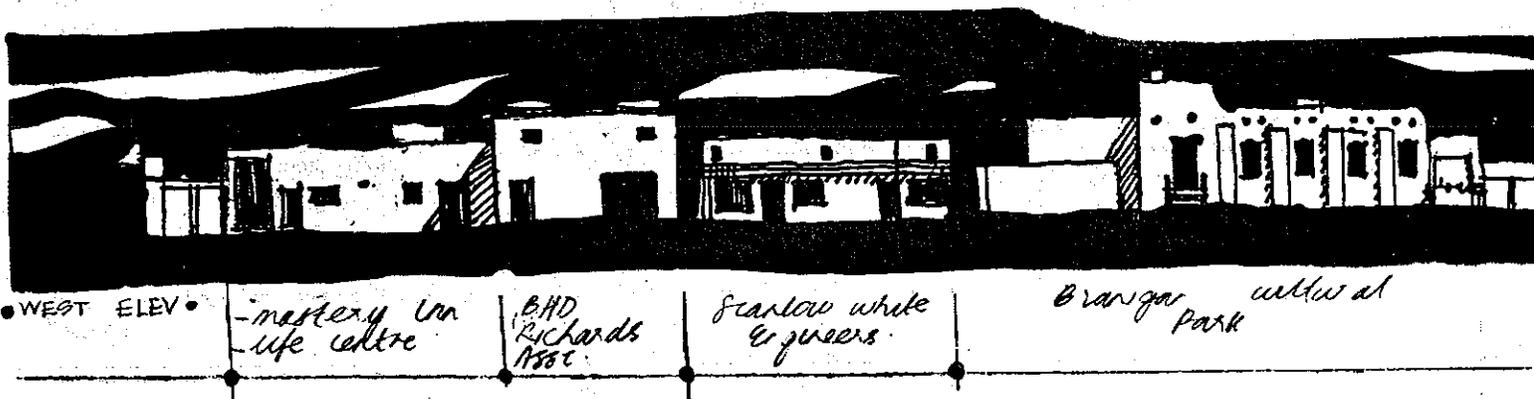
1. Overview

Development in the R/UDAT Study area is subject to the market dynamics and development patterns of the greater Las Cruces area. The two residential neighborhoods (Mesquite and Alameda Depot Historic Areas) and the "downtown" mall are affected by trends and conditions over which the residents, businesses and property owners have little control. Alternatively, these international, national, and regional trends present the R/UDAT Study area with a unique set of opportunities and challenges.

The Dona Ana County, Las Cruces Metropolitan Area, has evolved in a series of waves. The first was the agriculture revolution that was accelerated by mechanization and introduction of science and technology. The second wave of development is associated with the dramatic growth of government during the Post WWII period for national defense and space (White Sands) and higher education (New Mexico State University). The most recent wave is a strong local attraction for retirees from throughout the U.S. and to a lesser extent modern high technology industry. This latter component and North American trade and commerce appear to be the influence on future development in the Mesilla Valley area.

An important factor in development in the Las Cruces area is that significant growth occurred after the introduction of autos and trucks. The pattern of local growth is one of scatter and spread. There is little central development tendency in Las Cruces. There is apparently a large amount of vacant land in and near Las Cruces available for development of all kinds. While the old mall is referred to as Downtown and central business district, there is no strong market dynamic that draws or compels development to this area.

There are several local areas that have specialties for non-residential development. The southeast area is strongly influenced by the university and a concentration of hospital and medical/services. The eastern slopes of Las Cruces serve as the main retail center at the Mesilla Valley Mall. This area also has a significant concentration of small scale and scattered office space. Significant retail space is spread throughout the city in strip centers along major arteries. The area near the "downtown" mall has a high concentration of government and social services facilities. However the



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University is also a larger concentration of government employment as does the White Sands area which is at some distance from the city. Agriculture lands are under cultivation within the city.

There is no concentration high density development. Most residential and commercial development is low scale with only a small portion on the second (or third) floors. There are three high mid-size buildings: a hotel, hospital and office building and they are widely scattered. Views to the mountains are valued and even in the "downtown"-central business district." Height limits restrict development to three stories. Single family and multi-family homes are most often one story and smaller in size as is consistent with cultural/historical patterns inexpensive land and generally a lower income pattern for the community.

This pattern of low density, scattered and auto oriented development is neither a positive or negative, but the inherent development pattern that has evolved out of long term market dynamics and community choice. While some in the real estate industry consider land scarce, there appears to be a large amount of vacant and developable land scattered throughout the community and especially on the edges north and south of the city.

In summary, while there are not strong market forces to attract development to the mall/plaza, there are some factors that provide development opportunities that the commercial and residential areas in the R/UDAT study over can take advantage of.

- A concentration of city owned land
- Historic focal point for community
- Consensus for community improvement
- Existing business on the Plaza
- Vacant land and buildings for new uses
- Parking available
- Traffic volumes adequate for retail uses

- Past investment in infrastructure and amenities
- More scaled housing and residential lots
- Parks and open space
- Views to mountains
- Current activity retail, offices, social and public agencies, restaurants, churches and cultural attractions on the Plaza
- Well established farmers and crafts market.
- These attributes provide a solid base to build upon and a basis to build an area that will attract development attention.

2. Development Opportunities

Three aspects of the development of any small area would have to be consistent to allow local economic development to occur in an area like the R/UDAT study area:

- Appropriate market opportunities
- Appropriate urban design & physical conditions
- Supportive land use planning, regulation and infrastructure

The latter two aspects are discussed elsewhere in the report. This section discusses the various land uses or sectors of the real estates market and where type and size are appropriate for this area. An assumption underlining this discussion of market opportunities is that there are no significant changes in current market trends and conditions, land use regulatory changes within the city nor massive amounts of public funds for dramatic changes in infrastructure.

Table A provides a summary of the types of typical real estate development that might be attracted to an area such the R/UDAT Study area.

A. Retail

These are several ways to class retail market segments by product sold, by motivation for shopping, by type of buyer and by kind of

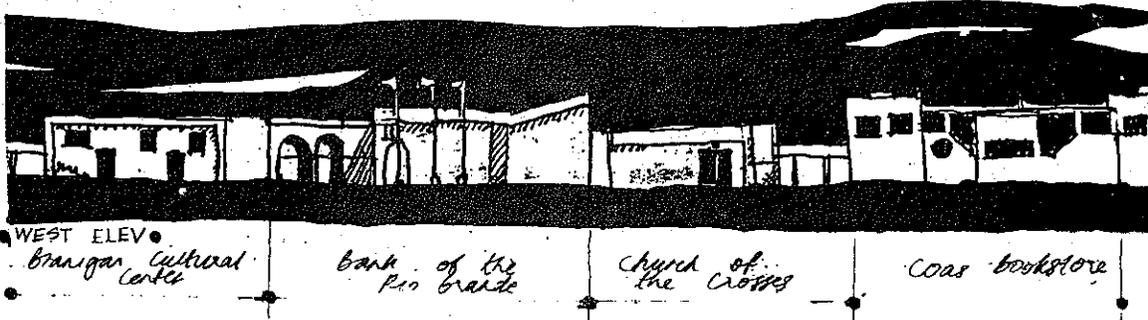
shopping feasibility. The following suggests some niches likely to be attracted to the study area but is not the result of an in-depth feasibility study.

By Goods Sold:

- building materials - usually require large storage areas often out of doors - not appropriate except near industrial areas.
- home improvements - carpet, paint, hardware etc - potential in large existing spaces - strong competition from shopping centers, malls and strip center.
- general merchandise/department store type goods - some potential in plaza area in larger shops.
- clothing and apparel - boutiques, specialty stores and products with strong market identity and specialized clientele.
- furniture and appliances - usually require large cheaper spaces not found in malls and shopping centers - eating and drinking and food stores - small shops that specialize and restaurants.
- auto related products - usually sold in specialized facilities or strip centers.
- miscellaneous retail - this category includes many of the types of smaller stores that could be attracted such as camera stores where the product is not a convenience item.

By Motivation:

- convenience retail- usually groceries, drugs etc. - specialty stores such as deli, take-out, bakery may locate after pedestrian traffic is established.
- comparison retail - usually large ticket items but jewelry, electronics and other infrequent purchased goods could be attracted to spaces by requisition of the store.
- festival retail - this newer hybrid combines specialty foods, restaurants, cafes, cocktail lounges, entertainment, bookstores, etc. that



cater to browsing and infrequent but leisurely visits and often serves daytime workers and visitors as well as locals.

By Market Niche:

- the Plaza's proximity to residential neighborhoods, increasing proportion of retirees, proximity to office workers in public and private buildings, university students and visitors; these types of buyers are attracted by amenities, convenient parking, pedestrians scale and comfort, visitors to agencies, offices, churches and cultural center.

By Type of Facility:

- there are several trends in retail shopping facilities
- continuation of strip centers and malls oriented to cars
- large free standing stores surrounded by parking
- high amenity festival and pedestrian oriented small scale neighborhood or office oriented and visitor serving areas or rehabilitated buildings.

The Plaza area could operate successfully in several niches of the retail spectrum if the physical circumstances, parking and traffic tensions are resolved. The size of spaces available and as potential new construction would not allow it to compete successfully with malls, strip centers and power centers. The retail niches for future development should be festival pedestrian attractive flexible space with small and specialized attractive spaces.

Around the nation old downtown areas with spaces that are not apropos of large scale auto-oriented retail are finding a niche as incubator areas for new small businesses, either retail or services (personal, business, professional). The relatively cheaper rents are for smaller spaces, ability to provide the "sweat equity," i.e. The renter provides their tenant improvements and maintenance and attract these newer beginning

small businesses. The Plaza area is an ideal area for this type of economic activity. And the City may wish to pursue formation and operation of a mall incubator for non-manufacturing businesses that could range from restaurants to arts and crafts people.

B. Office

The Las Cruces market for offices is not particularly strong. The lack of a large concentration of private businesses, lack of a large concentration of finance insurance, real estate, business and professional businesses and competition with larger nearby metropolitan areas (El Paso, Albuquerque and Juarez) are not attributes that soon will allow large amounts of office development. Government offices typically cannot afford high rents for new space or high amenities.

The current market for office space in Las Cruces should be able to provide some opportunities for development of small office or converted space in the R/UDAT study area. Office development in Las Cruces is scattered. There is one mid-rise building, a concentration of new medical and health related space near the hospital and many small offices near the Mesilla Valley Mall. There is also a concentration of office space for government and related offices near the Plaza and R/UDAT area including a large amount of office space in a rehabilitated shopping center (Loretto Center). The university also provides a large amount of office space that is separate and independent from market forces.

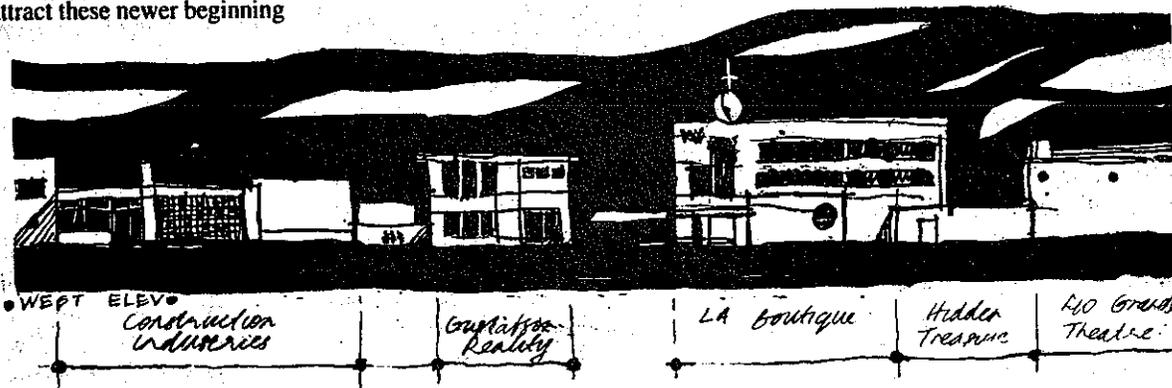
The Plaza area has many of the qualities that could be enhanced to attract a share of the private office market: small spaces, potential for attractive area amenities proximity to restaurants, business services, and government including judicial offices. Offices often provide employment opportunities for entry level workers. Proximity to affordable residential areas would be a benefit to these workers.

The Alameda Depot Historic District has experienced and may continue to experience a conversion of residential units to office and commercial businesses use, including resident/businesses. Small residential units convert easily to office space and space for other types of businesses. These units often provide an affordable alternative to newer, more expensive office space.

C. Residential Development

The issue of housing, affordable and non-market rate, is dealt within other areas of the report, as is the issue of regulatory changes to encourage neighborhood residential improvements. This section discusses the general market for residential space in the Plaza "Las Culturas" area.

- Population growth, university growth, increased interest in Las Cruces by retirees as full or part time residents has driven the residential market. Prices for homes are modest by West Coast standards.
- Less expensive land, lower incomes, cheaper construction, moderate climate and lower property taxes have combined to keep prices moderate. Mobile homes have been successful in keeping lower priced homes and apartments' rents moderate, since they provide a less expensive option.
- The prospects for multifamily rental housing in the Plaza area, especially above first floor retail or is problematic. First there are so many small scale relatively affordable alternatives. Secondly the plaza does not now provide the area amenities to allow it to be an attractive alternative to single family, multifamily or mobile homes. And finally the traffic levels and "sea" of parking is not attractive relative to other local alternatives.



D. Recreation, Cultural and Visitor Development

The presence of movie theater, community theater and Branigan Cultural Center as well as churches and social service agencies mark this area for appropriate special and non-market driven uses. In the short run these uses are better for the development prospects of the Plaza area. In the longer term when commercial (retail and office) uses are attracted to the Plaza some of these uses will be encouraged to leave because of escalating rents and building prices or their own desire to grow and cash in equity of their investment.

Cultural, recreation and visitor uses should be encouraged for reasons and to the extent discussed else where in this report. In addition these uses are useful for the Plaza to improve its potential. These uses complement retail uses to attract clients, extend the day from light hours of use to 12-15 hours per day and contribute positively to festival retailing. Tourism may be less important here except to supplement other more basic uses. While festival retail is attractive to tourists a larger proportion of festival retail caters to the regional market. Exceptions are numerous but they appear in places like San Francisco, New Orleans, or other areas with large tourist development.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

General Advice

UNCLE BEN'S ADVICE FOR PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Remember often:

- that anything called development takes a loooooong time!
- that you don't always get what you want but if you try you get what you need.
- that if you are a human being don't forget what you know about how cooperation and compromise ends up better.
- that you are not doing this for the community. You are doing for your business, your family, your organization and it is part of your job. If you do it for "them" it will never get done.
- that there is strength in numbers and that a whole bunch of things tied together (like the sheaves of wheat) can be very strong and then you are still going to need a lot of luck and hard work.
- that often we pluck the feathers from a bunch of mangy ducks to make a feather bed for all of them. And that is why we pay taxes and tithes.
- that you should not forget your business and good judgement skills just because you serve on public or community committees.
- give everyone credit for success and blame no one for things that don't work.
- publicize and build on successes.



Financial Options

There are several principles that guide implementation of plans for community improvement. While these general principles may be obvious, it is useful to review them. The guiding principle is "TANSTAAFL" or, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch!" Someone will have to use some resources, either time or money to implement the community's vision. It may be a smaller amount of money and/or time,



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Jake Evans Attorney	Mike Wiley Attorney	Office Concept	Dr. Paul Denton San Jose	100 Valley Mortgage
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such as that required to write and administer detailed design and zoning regulations, or it may require a large amount of public and private funds and community energy for a major construction project.

There are two ways to obtain the resources necessary:

- Pay for it yourself (yourself could be an individual property owner; business [sole proprietor, partnership or corporation], a group [an organization that represents the community or businesses or a mixed group that may be more or less formally organized and funded]; or a government body. For the relevant jurisdiction now is the government. There are two basic ways of financing implementation.
 - save out of cash flow of the business or public general fund annual budget,
 - borrow against future cash flow or anticipated tax receipts.
- Get someone else to pay for it, again there are two general sources...
 - gifts, grants, or voluntary contributions of time or funds,
 - using the political process to get a large number of households and businesses to generate funds from a large area/tax base to take care of the needs of a particular small segment of the community.

Public funds are usually precluded from being used to assist private firms directly unless there is some over-riding public purpose. Some implementation devices and mechanisms that have been used elsewhere in the U.S. are not typically available for community improvement in New Mexico.

Four types of categories of actions or projects are the target for implementation funding activities. The categories and examples are as follows:

Planning - Determining what to do and design reaching consensus; designing specific construction projects and/or design regulations; advice and processes for raising funds or applications for funds, grants, etc.

Regulations - Private market will provide pressure to do something with property once land prices, rents, business incomes, and suitable demand and supply conditions are favorable. Regulations guide, shape, structure, form or mold the reality of market responses. The design, administration, interpretation and resolution of disputes about these regulations requires funding resources for interpretation and administration.

On-going Operations and Maintenance or Small Capital Projects - Staffing of government agencies or private groups responsible for implementing community improvement projects or small physical projects such as purchase of equipment, signage, landscaping materials, lighting, etc. usually amounts small enough to be funded out of current cash flow.

Long Term Labor Commitments and Large capital Projects - Almost any project related to major construction and development of real estate falls into this category.

Tools for Community Planning and Implementation

Table A summarizes the tools available for implementing the R/UDAT recommendations. The four categories of actions/projects that are discussed above are related to the tools to indicate appropriate uses for each tool. The tools are divided into four groups based on the nature of the entity of organization that activates the tool. The size of the group, organization and entity is indicated as is the geographic range of that entity's scope or jurisdiction.

Each tool not only has a range of appropriate and in some cases specific uses, but each represents trade-offs between opportunities provided by its use and challenges to their effective use that need to be dealt with and overcome.

Table B at the end of this section summarizes these operational trade-offs.

The following discussion describes the implementation tools available and associated with each entity, their typical use, and trade-offs that each carries with it.

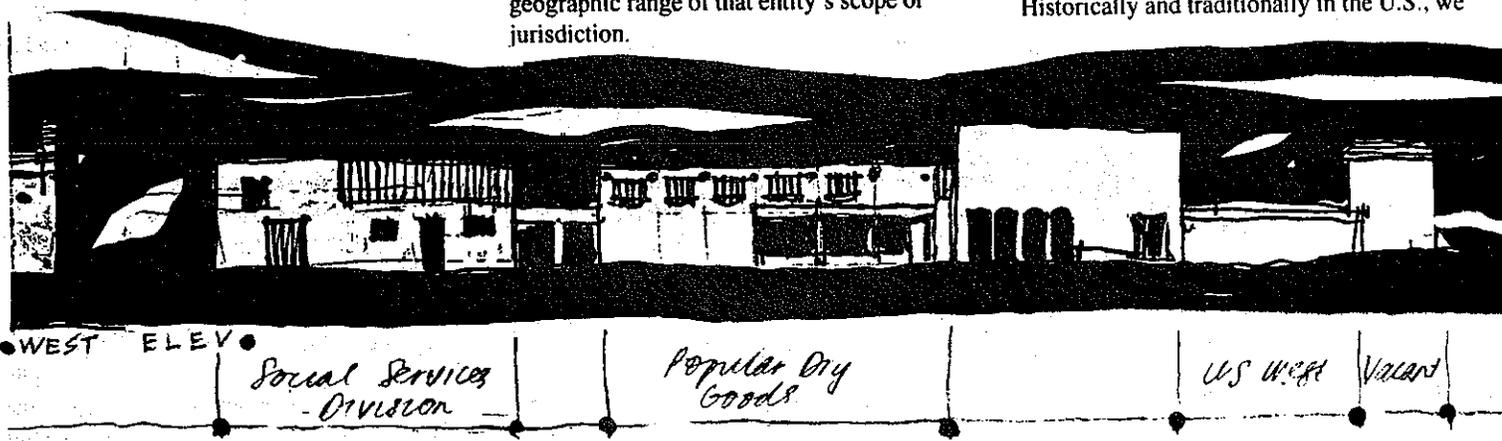
The Community

Using its input and participation, the whole community can and has been able to influence the future shape of the plaza area. This active community support and interest is important for soliciting external assistance and also signals potential businesses, developers and property owners what is and what is not tolerable within the community. Such community input and participation is directly appropriate and useful for planning and to some extent design activities.

The community, by its sheer numbers, can provide a large amount of energy to activate and accomplish plans. However, large amorphous groups are hard to get and keep focussed; often it is hard to get large percentages of active participation and unless the issues are susceptible to being simplified into a "for" and "against" vote decisions, consensus is hard to get and maintain. The community can indirectly support and pay for other activities but is not appropriate as an implementation organization.

Public Agencies

The community formally acts together for both general and specific purposes as a group with definite (and often complicated) rules and procedures as a formal public agency. Historically and traditionally in the U.S., we



START WITH THE HEART

have institutionalized collective action by creating general government, such as cities, to deal with our community needs and concerns. Specific problems that occasionally require localized or multi-jurisdictional attention have been dealt with by creating specialized governments (or special districts). The City of Las Cruces is the general government that has the responsibility for planning, regulating and financing many aspects of community life and improvement. This agency has the most resources and strongest influence over private and public development issues for the R/UDAT study area.

The City's budget collects taxes and fees from a wide area from all households and businesses. The City can also be a conduit when state and federal funds are available. These funds are applied to the area's problems and services in response to the political process. This large tax base also supports quite a bit of borrowing capacity for spreading the responsibility for repayment over many households and many years.

The programs available for operations and capital projects through the City of Las Cruces are potentially the most useful but depend so much on the community's ability to impact the political process.

Public-Private Partnerships

There are many informal or project specific ways that public bodies and private group can form partnerships to accomplish community improvement.

A business improvement area is a tool to fund small capital projects but more often provides operating funds to implement programs or services for a small business district. B.I.A.'s have been used for promotional campaigns, to staff merchants' organizations, operate parking programs, and security and

clean-up programs. The cost of these programs is levied like a business tax in relation to size of business (e.g., number of employees, square feet of businesses) or level of business activity (e.g., percent of gross income or sales). This tool relates directly to the business and their needs. The key ingredient is consensus among the business community in the target area about what they need and an equitable way to fund that need. The local government administers the program through the tax collection process.

Private Organizations

Government assistance is not necessarily a required condition for business district improvement. Many business centers and other neighborhood projects have been successfully implemented through joint community action to get things done. Business and community members can formally link themselves together in an organization that is constituted for the express purpose of encouraging and sponsoring community growth. Trusts and non-profit corporations can hold land so that development can be controlled; operate as non-profit firms to raise funds through grants and other activities. They are a device for mobilizing groups of individuals to accomplish something. They typically are organized and operate to take advantage of tax laws or other government regulations that would disadvantage individual private actions. Once a blueprint for improvement is agreed to for the R/UDAT area, specific projects could be undertaken through a non-profit organization rather than relying on government action. Traditionally informal groups have taken on specific projects that are unitary events or short term actions occasionally large capital projects in smaller (and larger) communities.

Once a plan, design, regulations, and design specifications are in place, portions of large

projects or continuous projects could be undertaken by individual business or property owners according to the specifications of the overall plan. For example, an overall design theme could be implemented by individual business and/or property owners making improvements to their own property according to common design specifications. The potential for success for this tool rests squarely with the strength of the group consensus; commitment of the individual parties and ability of some group to supervise, arbitrate and mediate to assure that the letter and intent of the plan and design for specific projects is followed so that the sum of the individual actions or projects accomplish what a more formal group or organization would through unitary action.

Leadership

The City of Las Cruces, through its elected representatives and staff, and R/UDAT steering committee have provided leadership and direction through the two-year-long process. They have provided and encouraged widespread input and discussion. It is not altogether clear which group organization or entity will provide leadership once the plan is refined, debated, and adopted by the City. There are at least two groups who represent businesses in the area. There will be a need for a group to shepherd the eventual plans adopted by the City. The plan and any specific design guidelines or regulations that result will be administered by the City as part of the land use regulatory processes. Markets pressure will determine when and where this will happen. Specific projects may be added to the various City capital improvement planning processes. There are significant specific projects that will have to be undertaken by one of the groups utilizing tools listed above and available to provide continuity and energy over a long time.

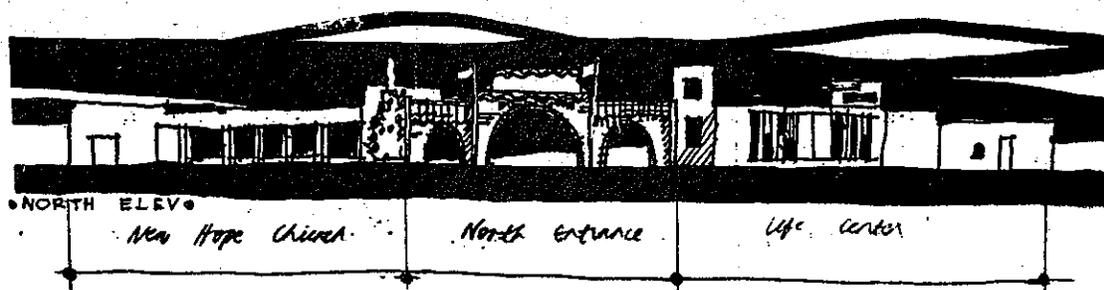
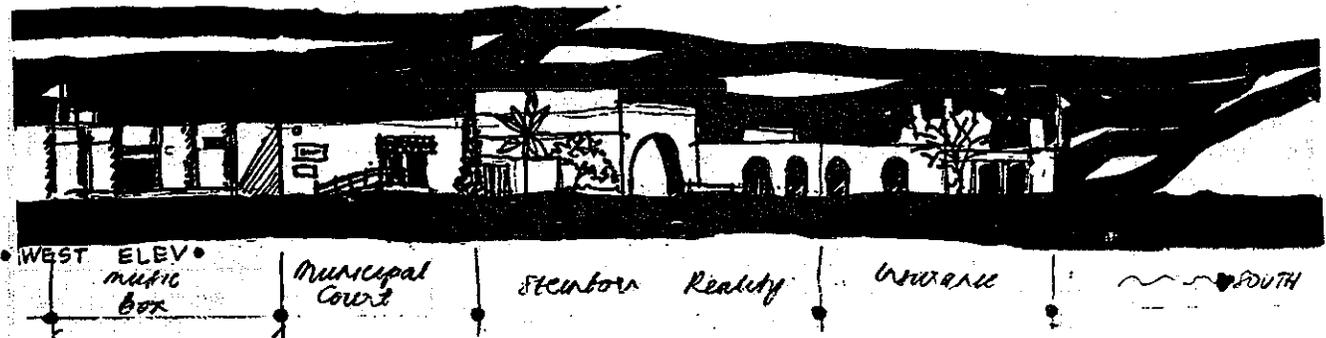


TABLE A
MENU OF DEVELOPMENT
OPTIONS
FOR PLAZA "LAS CULTURAS"

Type	Typical Requirements	Comments
<p>RETAIL <u>Auto-oriented:</u> Shopping Center & Shopping Strips: Comparison and convenience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • depends on pop & income in area, rules of thumb • neighborhood: 15,000-30,000 pop within 1-2 miles • community: 40,000-150,000 pop. within 3-5 miles • regional: 200,000+ pop. within radius 8-10 miles • usually sited on freeways and major arterials 	<p>Not appropriate for Plaza "Las Culturas"</p>
<p><u>Pedestrian-Oriented</u> "Festival"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has or can create "unique" area, site & building amenities • dense population, residential and/or office • Parking nearby • building or area "unique" • site area amenities • changing mix of "unique" shops - mostly small • large percent of food shops, restaurants • entertainment available • high degree of programmed activities • large population or tourist accessible 	<p>Potential for location and expansion on Plaza</p>
<p><u>Eating & Drinking</u> • convenience • destination/occasion • fast foods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient resident population and/or employees • parking and transit or arterial • demographics • site and area ambience • quality - experienced operator • sufficient population and traffic counts • demographics • visibility 	<p>Moderate support Some support lack auto access - pedestrian oriented</p>



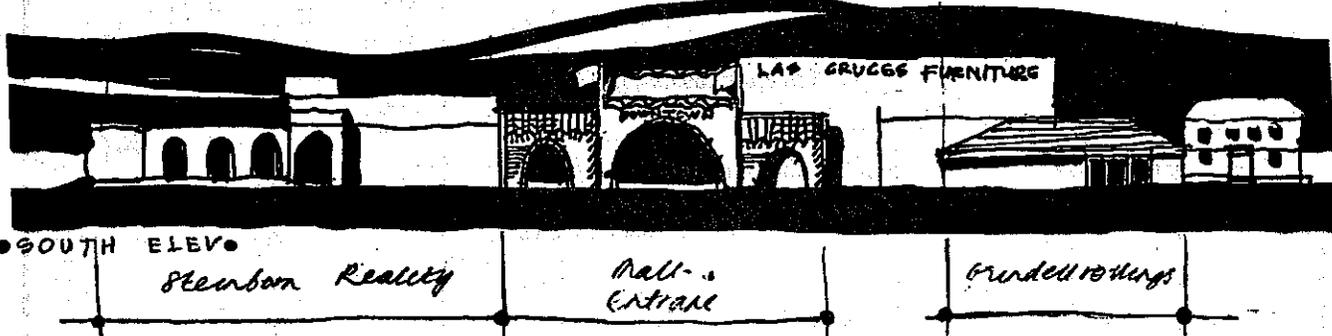
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**TABLE A
MENU OF DEVELOPMENT
OPTIONS
FOR PLAZA "LAS CULTURAS"**

Type	Typical Requirements	Comments
<p>OFFICE</p> <p>Walk or Drive-in (personal services, medical, dental, F,I,RE)</p> <p>General and Back office</p> <p>Professional Services, Headquarters, "footloose" employers</p> <p>Office - Showrooms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient population base & growth • Parking, traffic counts • visibility • cheap space and large labor force, reasonable wages • cheap parking and/or transit • dense development • large number of businesses in area. • agglomerated activities • clients convenient • site, building and area amenities • "footloose" • quality housing stock • flexible space within building • large number of businesses in area 	<p>Appropriate for Plaza</p> <p>Not strong for Plaza</p> <p>Potential location</p> <p>Problematic</p>
<p>RESIDENTIAL(multi-family) "High End"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apartments & Condos • Second Homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient population • demographics • site, area & building amenities • retail and service • distance from large residential areas 	<p>Not likely</p>
<p>"Mid/Moderate"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apartments • Condominiums • Low Income • Specilized adult (includes congregate and continuing care, assisted living, licensed convalescence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient population, employment • zoning for density • parking • retail and service nearby • empty nesters, two workers, young professionals • site and area amenities • recreation nearby • requires public financial subsidies • sufficient demographics, incomes • amenities • services (medical & dental) 	<p>Potential only in long term</p> <p>Problematic</p> <p>Problematic</p>

**TABLE A
MENU OF DEVELOPMENT
OPTIONS
FOR PLAZA "LAS CULTURAS"**

Type	Typical Requirements	Comments
<p>RECREATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Serving • open space • parks • marinas • recreation • movies • cultural facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public investment and subsidy that also provides area amenities for private development • sufficient population and demographics • large public and/or private subsidies 	<p>Appropriate</p> <p>Appropriate</p> <p>Appropriate</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Serving: • Hotel/Motel • Public Assembly • Tourism • destination • casual (specific versus combinations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sufficient population, business activity, tourism, and traffic counts • visibility • highway versus amenity-oriented • public subsidies • large business and/or population base • private • isolated with amenities and/or activities, e.g., golf, tennis, spas, etc. • among attractions, close to shopping, business, and hotel rooms • large capital costs • large population and/or tourism • heavy promotion • less promotion necessary • attracted to area not specific attractions • quality operators • typical public subsidies 	<p>No current potential on Plaza</p> <p>Long term community potential but at other locations</p> <p>Not possible now</p> <p>Consistent with festival retail</p>



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Table B
Alternative Development Concepts
for
Las Culturaz Plaza

Concept	Local Business Node	Mixed Use Urban Village	Community Plaza
Primary Focus	small private retail and office businesses	small businesses and residential units	Combinations of private and public uses
Retail	restaurants movie, boutiques specialty retail and farmers and crafts market	restaurants movie, boutiques specialty retail and farmers and crafts market	restaurants movies, boutiques specialty retail and farmers and crafts market
Office	Small business professional, medical, business services	Small business professional, medical, business services on 2nd and 3rd floors	Small business professional, medical, business services and concentrate government offices close by as well as social or non-profit agencies
Residential	none	Second and third stories	none
Recreation & cultural facilities	encouraged	evening uses not encouraged	encouraged
Open spaces	support retail and office		capacity for large public events
Public infrastructure	support and joint funding with businesses	high public amenities and improvements joint with business and property owners	major public investment to open areas and link to government offices

Table C
Tools for Community Planning and Implementation

Entity	Constituency	Scope of Action	Tools Available	Type of Actions/Projects			
				Planning and Design	Regulation	On-going and Small Capital	Long-Term and Large Capital
Community	140,000		input and participation	X			
Public Agency * City of Las Cruces	66,000		*general budget revenues *inter governmental revenues *Capital improvement plans	X	X	X X X	X X X
Public - Private Partnerships *Voted	varies	small area	business improvement area * "taxes" and fees	X			X
Private *Voluntary Associations	varies	small area	-formal: trusts corporations (e.g. 501c3) -informal: organizations and "barn raising"	X		X	X
				?		X	
*Business and Property Owners	individuals, partnerships & Corporations	unlimited	-saving from surplus and profits -borrowing from financial institutions	X		X	?
				X		X	X

Table D
Evaluation of Tools for Community Planning and Implementation

Entity	Opportunities	Challenges
Community	• large amount of energy	• hard to focus • hard to get participation • hard to get consensus
Public Agency *City of Las Cruces	• large amount of resources and power • responds to political process	• responds to political process • large and unwieldy • distant • limited scope for action
Public-Private Partnerships	• potential energy and resources • flexibility of actions • complementary strengths with public agency	• small group political process • stability • large amount of negotiation
Private *Voluntary Associations	• potential energy and resources • flexibility of actions • complementary strengths	• formal—"red tape" required • informal—lack of stability • mobilizing resources difficult • motivated by enlightened self interest
*Business and Property Owners	• motivated by enlightened self interest	

SECTION 8: ZONING AND PLANNING

A fundamental task facing the City of Las Cruces is to translate its new vision into its planning and zoning practices. Within the R/UDAT study area a number of planning and zoning issues were identified. First, as the study area contained two historic districts, the Mesquite Street and Original Townsite Historic District and the Alameda Depot Historic District issues were raised concerning the historic preservation efforts in these areas.

The historic character of the community should continue to be a focus for the city. This emphasis provides Las Cruces with an identity and expresses the value of its heritage. The challenge for Las Cruces is to target opportunities for enhancement had utilization of the resources it has already identified as well as identify additional historic resources eligible but not now on the State or National Registers.

The city should also consider the development and adoption of an historic preservation ordinance. The ordinance would establish a program of historic preservation which would:

- Promote the creation of historic districts and designation of register eligible properties
- Encourage harmony in the planning of new buildings and development within the proximity of existing historic structures
- Establish design and enhancement guidelines to reinforce the historic and architectural integrity of a structure or area

- Strengthen the city's economic base by the stimulation of conservation and reuse
- The historic resources of Las Cruces should figure prominently in the city's planning efforts

A second point is to develop the documents which direct development of the area. The entire R/UDAT area/zoning is subject to the Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan and Ordinance. How the comprehensive plan and existing ordinances function given existing land use conditions and R/UDAT planning recommendations must be addressed.

R/UDAT recommends that the Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan be modified and updated to reflect the solutions chosen by the community following the R/UDAT process. The Comprehensive Plan must clearly articulate the vision of the community and record it in this document. The Comprehensive Plan will then serve as a commitment to its future policy development and implementation.

Future consideration of the R/UDAT recommendations for the downtown mall will necessitate zoning changes for the CBD zone. The specifics of those recommendations will follow the community's follow-up selection process.

R/UDAT has also focused on the neighborhoods adjoining the CBD, the Mesquite Street Area and Old Townsite Historic District and the Alameda depot Historic District Area.

The Mesquite Area is the oldest neighborhood in Las Cruces. Streets in the district date to the original survey of 1849. The area features vernacular adobe architecture. In most cases the buildings front directly on narrow streets with simple, stuccoed or stone facades. Many of the homes have backyard garden "compounds". These features are essential not only to the area's historic character, but also to the life of the community.

Concern has been expressed that the existing zoning in the Mesquite neighborhood is inflexible as it does not allow for the continuation of the existing neighborhood character and living patterns. The existing structures provide the area with its unique quality and reflect its culture. An overlay for the present residential and commercial zoning (primarily the R-2 and C-2 zones) in this district should be created to guarantee the continuance of this historic and cultural pattern.

Recommendations for the overlay include:

- The grandfathering of lots that are less than the minimum zoned lot size so that these properties are no longer non-conforming.
- Permit the rebuilding or building of a new residential structure within the footprint of the prior residential structure allowing no more than a 10% variation from the footprint. This would continue the pattern of the existing built environment.
- Lot dimensions and setback exceptions for construction within the footprint would be provided.

MESQUITE ST ORIGINAL TOWNSITE DISTRICT

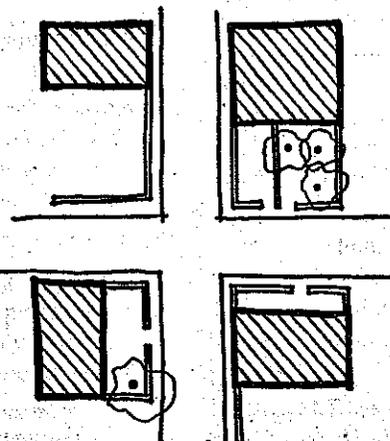
SCHEME:
Grid Looking South, A. Building Foot. - Blockside around Courtyard, level around Plaza

4 sided block
Repeated divisions
Over time

Med. Density - Small scale
Shallow or Unimportant setbacks
Front Courtyard
Frequency Low delineated by Walls

LANDSCAPING:
Individual Schemes
Front Trees or "Blind" Plant Trees
Selective Accent Planting

MATERIALS:
Selective Palette of Adobe and Rough Stone



ALAMEDA DEPOT DISTRICT

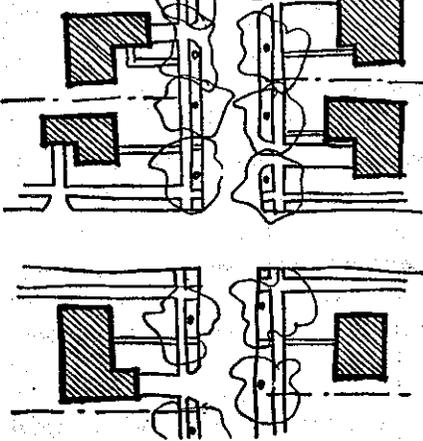
SCHEME:
Grid Expanding Inwards on Irregular Blocks, Linear Front Street

2 sided Block
Parasol Plan

Low Density & Scale
Deep setbacks at All Edges
Front Lawns
Frequency Low delineated by Plants

LANDSCAPING:
Community Parkway Scheme
Large Shade Trees
Intensive "Midwestern" Planting

MATERIALS:
Varied Palette of Adobe, Front Simple or Frame Stucco



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- New construction of residential and commercial structures should have a maximum lot size and dimension which reflects the original platting of the area.
- Frontyard setbacks for new construction should be variable to the streetline.
- Side and rear yard standards should be established which reflect the existing patterns of the immediate neighborhood area.
- Parking standards for new construction should recognize the existing provision of on and off street parking in the neighborhood.
- Architectural design and facade materials should be appropriate to the Area.
- Garden walls and courtyards should be permitted as appropriate to the character of the area.

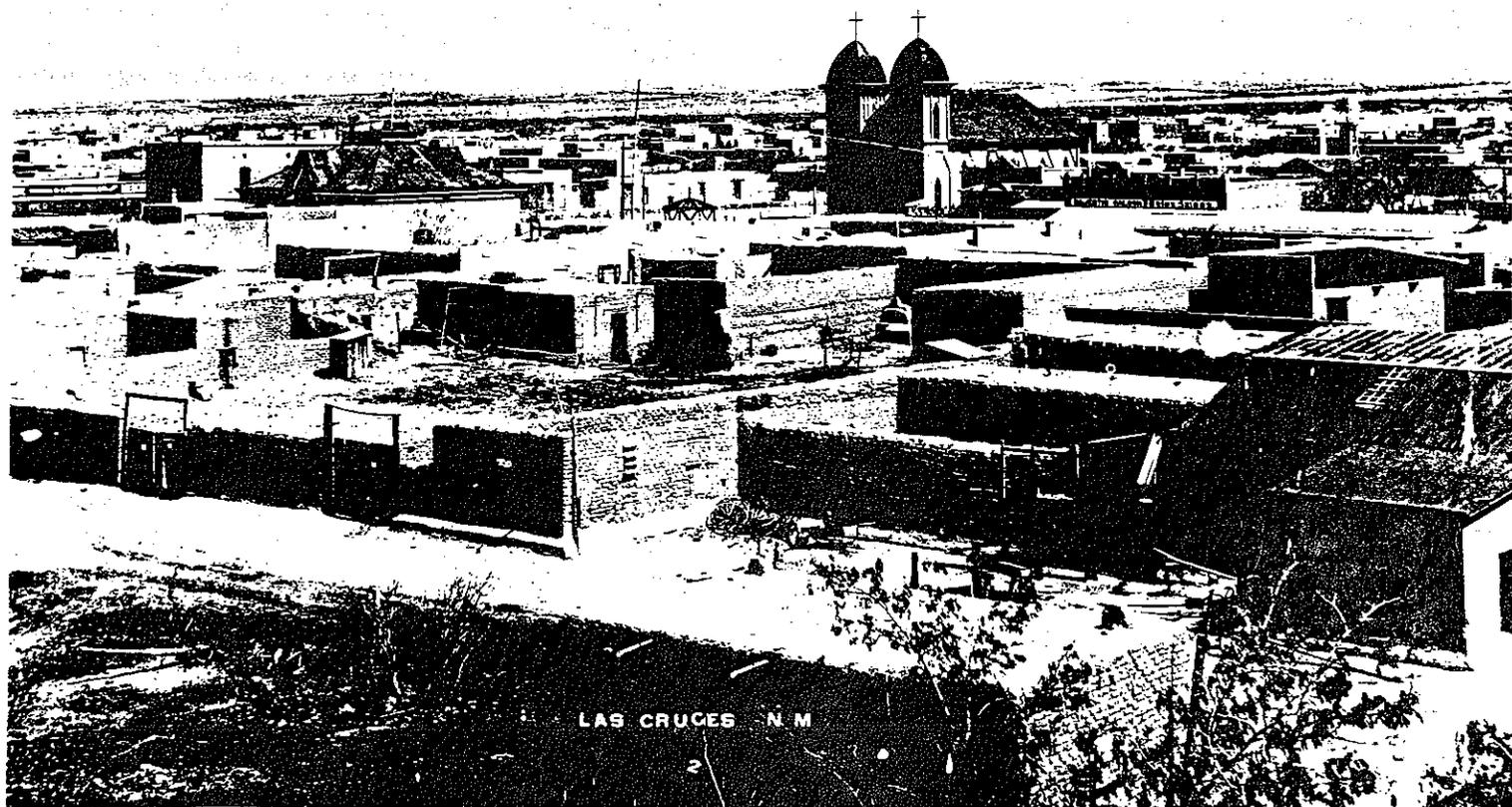
All of these overlay recommendations are made with the intent of preserving the neighborhood physical and cultural structure. An additional recommendation which follows, concerning community-based planning for the area, is also important to the enhancement of this neighborhood.

The Alameda Depot Historic District originally developed after the arrival of the railroad in 1881. A number of Architectural styles are featured such as Queen Anne, Mission Revival, and Bungalow, to name a few. Each street contains a mix of styles which creates a visually attractive and historically-significant neighborhood.

The Alameda Area zoning should be reviewed in the context of the following neighborhood-based planning process. This process provides interaction between residents and the city to reach a consensus on the direction of this community. The community should consider whether there is a need to define a balance or geographical limit of intrusion of commercial uses in the zone.

Finally, the continuance of a community-based planning process such as that which occurred in the University Avenue Corridor Area is encouraged for both the Mesquite and Alameda Depot Areas. R/UDAT recommends that this process be implemented to develop grassroots planning strategies to meet the needs specifically expressed by the neighborhood residents. The process also works to unify the neighborhood around its culture, lifestyle, and goals.

The interactive planning process will best shape a plan for these areas to meet the needs of all segments of each community. As under the University Corridor process, a schedule of meetings to gather public input and assess the public's need will be organized. From the direction charted in these meetings, research on identified planning topics and the development of plan proposals will take place. Once a draft plan is developed, a final public meeting to review the proposal and obtain consensus is recommended. The community-based approach to these neighborhoods and the consensus it builds provides a base for plan implementation by the City.



SECTION 9: TRANSPORTATION

Mobility is essential to the American lifestyle and the single occupant vehicle, called the SOV, has been America's mode of choice. However, in recent years the issue of the SOV has been the subject of reexamination. The reality that automobile traffic is choking our communities is now being recognized and transportation needs are being redefined to meet scarce resources.

Government, at the federal, state and local level is rapidly being stripped of its ability to provide for the single occupant vehicle. Roads are expensive to build. Currently, the majority of states in the United States barely have enough federal and state transportation funds to maintain their existing inventory of highways, much less provide for new roadway alignments or increased capacity to existing roads. Most citizens don't understand that roads require scheduled maintenance and resurfacing in order to remain structurally healthy; and, maintenance and resurfacing dollars are much less costly than construction dollars.

Despite America's preference for the SOV, over the next decade the movement of people and goods will have to take precedence over the movement of automobiles. Cars will be an integral part of the mobility scenario, but other

mobility options like public transportation, bicycle, pedestrian and rail considerations will also play a key role in taking us to and from our destinations.

Las Cruces, too, must examine the issue of mobility within its community. The City must balance it needs, resources and quality of life concerns when re-thinking its transportation system, especially in the downtown, R/UDAT area. Recommended changes to the existing transportation network at both the policy and planning level address not only a new vision of the downtown, but the redefinition of mobility as well. The result is a plan for the balanced and efficient movement of people and goods enhancing Las Cruces' quality of life.

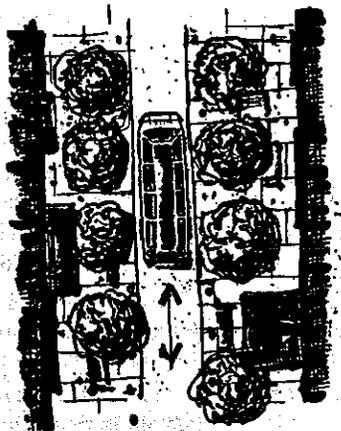
Typically, transportation components of an urban area take on a very technical profile. Traffic counts, average daily traffic, turning movements, future projected travel, traffic engineering, etc., yield formulas, numbers and engineering drawings. Results not very "user friendly." The R/UDAT chose a different approach for Las Cruces primarily because the basic policy framework for the development of an efficient multi-modal transportation system exists in the Transportation Element of the Las Cruces Comprehensive Plan. The document is

very well done and the R/UDAT Team feels the addition of the following recommendations will serve to strengthen the element more.

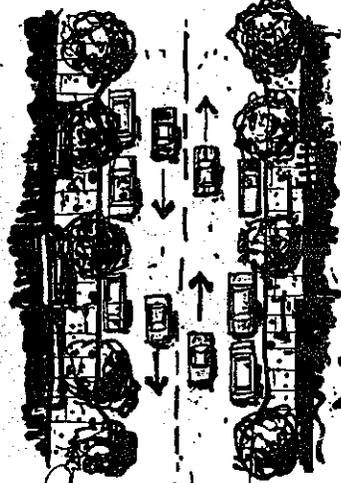
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan should be implemented. It is an excellent beginning for the comprehensive treatment of transportation issues within the City. The following concepts are offered for consideration with the belief that their inclusion will broaden the base of an already well thought out plan.

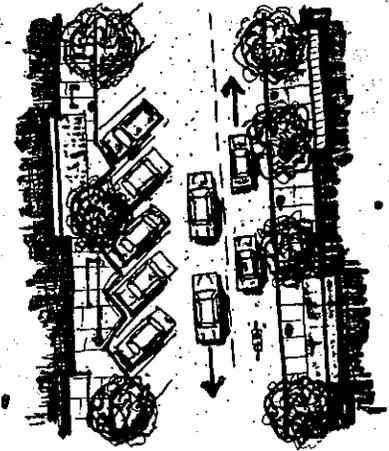
- The Transportation Element should contain a mission statement for the City of Las Cruces that focuses its transportation system planning and development activities on creating a multi-modal, balanced transportation system.
- Parking should be one of the most well planned and managed aspects of the Transportation Element. Efforts to curb the development of additional parking in the downtown area should be discouraged. Observation indicates that ample parking now exists and the provision of more parking spaces only serves to negatively impact transit ridership.



Plaza Transit



Plaza Walk



Plaza Auto

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- Level of Service (LOS) C for principal arterials serving the urban core with level of service D being the indicator for the need to provide capacity expansions is set too high. The strictness of this standard will inhibit urban infill and the creation of densities necessary to support a healthy public transportation system and other alternative modes. The standard should be dropped to at least LOS D with LOS E being the indicator that traffic operation or capacity expansions need to take place.
- Separating bike lanes from roadways is not always the safest means of providing for this type of mobility. Many publications exist that illustrate acceptable roadway/bike lane designs and should be considered in the overall Master Plan. A spinoff benefit is a reduction in the right of way width necessary to accommodate separate facilities reducing the overall cost.
- Pedestrian facilities are either non-existent or incongruous. The City should develop a sidewalk policy that states that sidewalks will be added to all resurfacing, reconstruction or new construction transportation projects. In addition, a Pedestrian Master Plan should be developed in conjunction with the already specified Bicycle Master Plan.
- The use of continuous turn lanes called "suicide lanes" should be discontinued. Suicide lanes existing on roadways

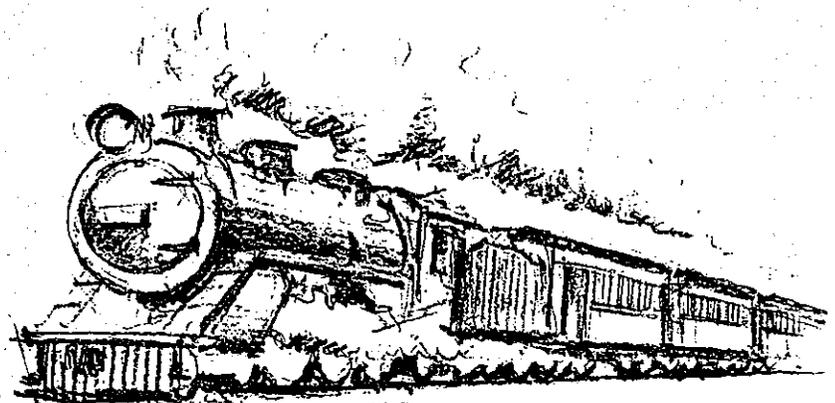
considered to be a "gateway to the City" should be converted into raised, landscaped medians with designated turn lanes.

- If New Mexico state law allows, implement impact fees for developments that adversely impact the designated level of service of urban roadways.
- The Transportation Element designates a 3% mode split between automobiles and transit use. It is suggested that this mode split might better be determined by analyzing the level of service documented by the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) long range transportation plan and planned capacity improvements. The difference between the

two may be higher than 3%, giving a more realistic planning target when planning for alternative modes. Mode splits should also be given for bike and pedestrian travel.

- Implement a "Transportation Management Association" (TMA) for the downtown area of Las Cruces. A TMA (not to be confused with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act's TMA designation) is a group of private sector businesses, brought together by local government for the purpose of developing and implementing transportation demand management solutions for parking problems. Transportation demand management includes programs like rideshare, car/vanpool, satellite parking, etc. Florida State University's, Institute for Marketing Transportation Research can be contacted about how one structures such an organization.
- Relocate the current transit transfer facility to the southern portion of the new Las Cruces Main Street.
- Establish a designated transit route from the University to the new Plaza area.
- Implement state-of-the-art traffic operations and intersection improvements to make the existing system more efficient.

In closing, for the Comprehensive Plan's Transportation Element and the R/UDAT recommendations to be implemented, the citizens of Las Cruces will have to open their minds to new solutions and opportunities. The question isn't "if" we will have to invest in alternative modes, but "when."



SECTION 10: DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

A Study Area

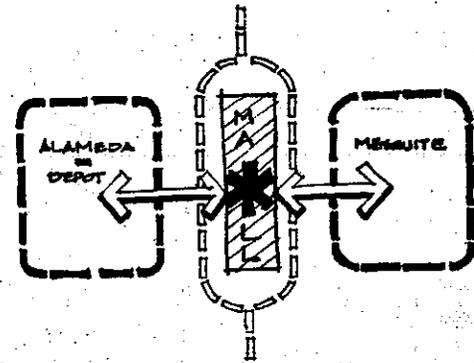
The study area encompasses the core of the city, with the downtown mall roughly at its center. The area includes the mall and the Mesquite district to the east and the Alameda Depot district to the west. Outside of the relatively coherent residential neighborhoods, the area is characterized by relatively anonymous, auto-oriented, low-scale retail and commercial structures, omnipresent parking lots, and myriad signs and billboards.

The quality of the routes to and around the geographic core are generally undifferentiated. They do not easily lead one to the geographic heart of the city. Fortunately, a project is underway to enhance the landscape of North Main Street and of Picacho. These are important first impressions—gateway opportunities for the city and its visitors. In a similar manner and for the same reason, similar efforts should be made on Amador/Lohman

Avenues between I-10 and I-25, on Idaho Avenue between I-10 and South Main, and on South Main between Amador and Idaho Avenues.

There are other valuable links to be developed and/or enhanced in the core. The city is preparing a "hike and bike" system which should be integrated into the circulation patterns. Las Cruces also has a resource relatively unique to the Southwest which is the system of acequias, historically open irrigation and drainage ways. These offer atypical routes through the city. Well landscaped with accompanying paths, these provide linear parks through the city, frequently adding special interest by not conforming to the overlay of the city grid.

The Organ Mountains are a special reference point in the geography of Las Cruces. All east-west roads and paths, as well as large parks, provide orienting views to the mountains. These views should be maintained.



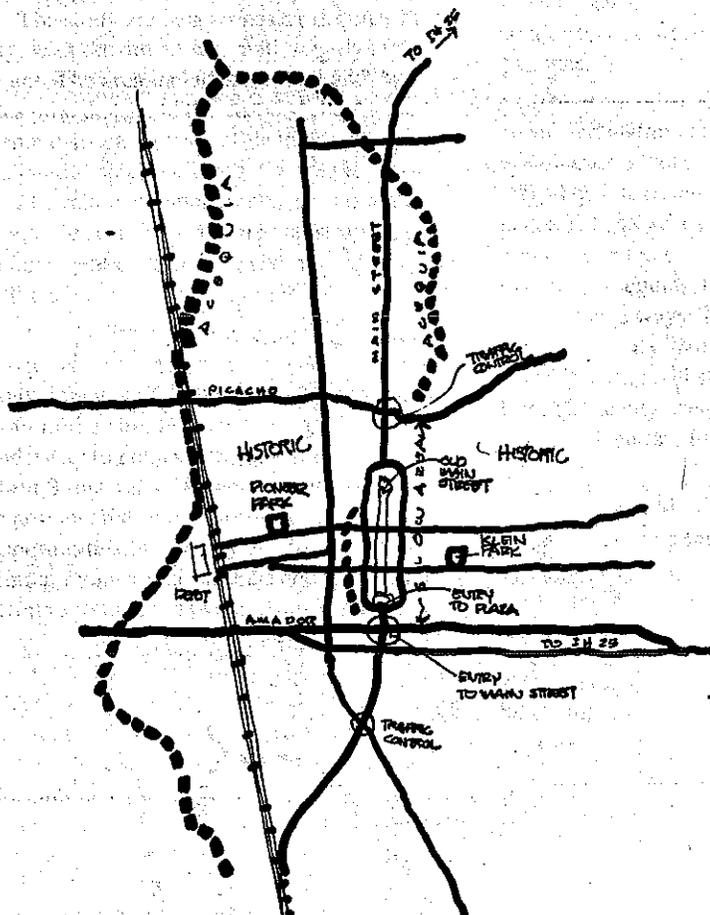
Las Cruces has begun a regional landscape within its boundaries that create subtle but discernable quadrants. For example, the program identifies high mesa to the east and river edge to the west. This program should be followed as long as plant materials are selected and planted in a water-sensitive manner.

THE "MALL"

The place referred to "as the mall" is a seven block section of Main Street closed to traffic. It is landscaped as a pedestrian mall and partially covered by a metal canopy for shade. With many buildings still missing following their destruction in the 1970's for "urban renewal" and low use in most of the remaining structures, the area is relatively inactive. The exceptions typically the farmers and crafts market twice a week and the occasional festivals.

The mall lies midway between and close to the historic districts of Mesquite and Alameda/Depot and their respective communities. It offers a tremendous opportunity to develop a place that serves as a welcome, common ground, both to the adjacent communities and the City of Las Cruces. For this to succeed it is essential that the neighboring communities be connected physically and actively through the "mall." And it must reflect the spirit, vitality, and cultures of these and the larger communities.

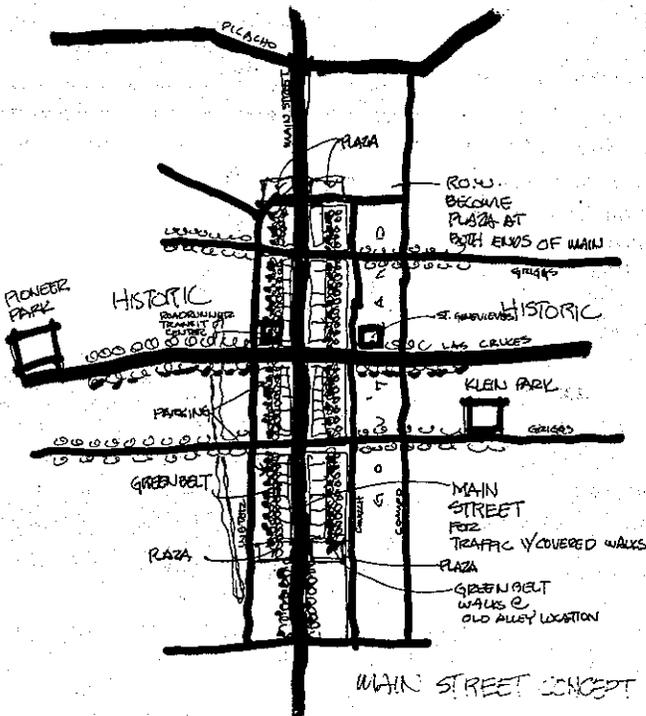
Unfortunately, the parallel, contiguous blocks are surrounded by a significant vehicular one-way couple made up of Water and Church Streets. The speed of the traffic and width of the road makes it very difficult for pedestrians to cross, creating an island. Reinforcing this isolation is the insufficient amount of perimeter parking.



START WITH THE HEART

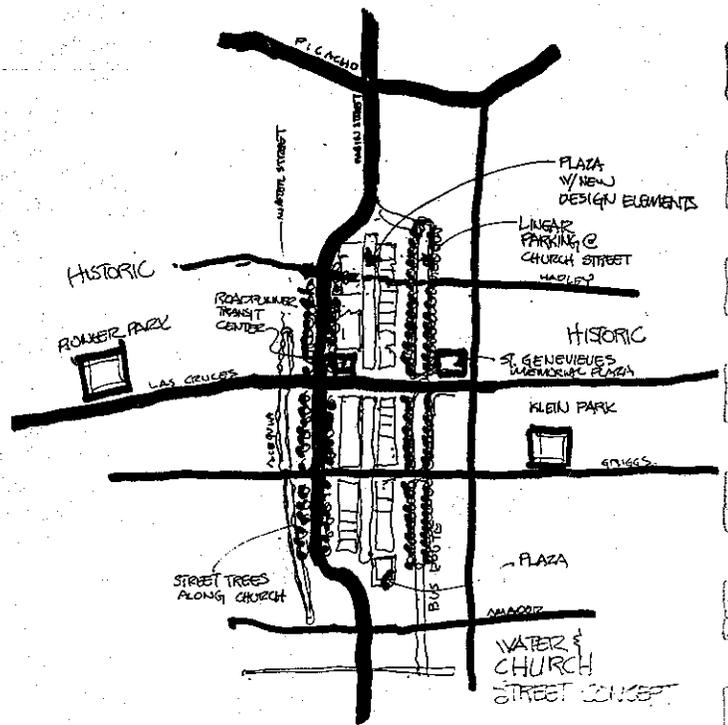
To reconnect the areas, the surrounding "speedway" must be tamed and crossed. The R/UDAT team has identified several alternative concepts to enable this to occur. Each presents a means of increasing the ease and safety of east-west movement by way of changes to the north-south traffic patterns and strengthening the east-west routes.

These are illustrated to present the opportunities they offer. The final selection and design of a solution will be dependent on the consensus and commitment of the community.



MAIN STREET CONCEPT

- Open main street to 2-way traffic
- 12' side walks with selected parallel parking
- Cover canopy on sidewalks
- Permanent location for Farmer's Market Sidewalks/side plazas
- Green belt along original alleyways
- Water and Church as secondary streets
- New small plazas at North and South
- Entry to business at both sides

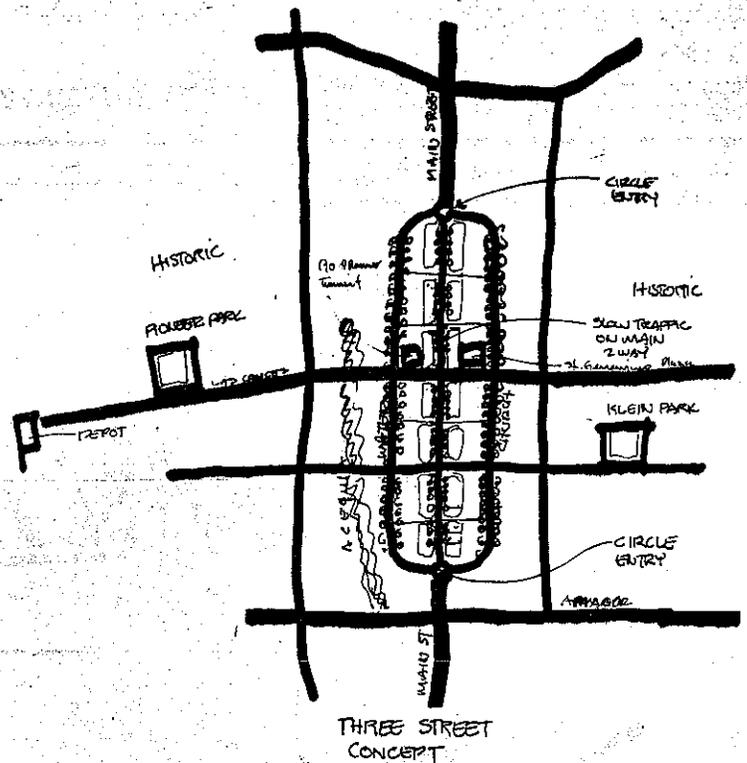
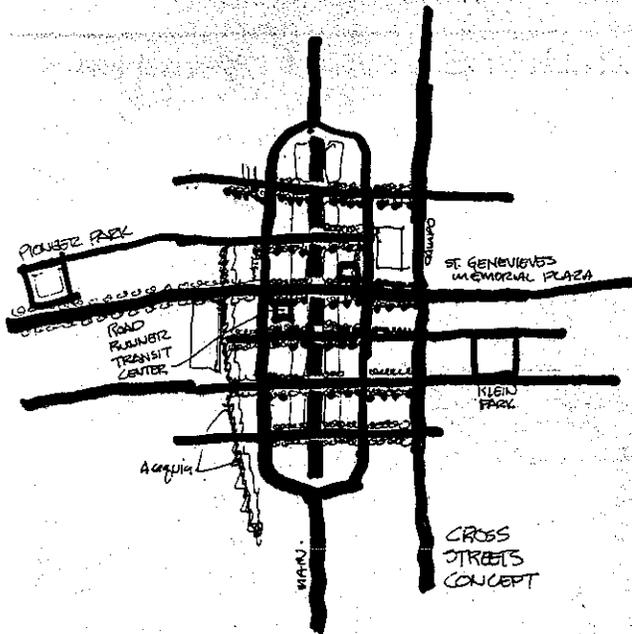


WATER STREET CONCEPT

- All traffic along Water Street
- Bus route & slow traffic along Church Street
- Street trees along Water and Church Street
- Plaza "Las Culturaz" renovated
- Selected traffic (delivery on Plaza)
- Metal Canopy removed
- Building facades each with appropriate canopy / shading devices
- Move water in the plaza



... Leandre Villarreal Collection
 ... Museo, State University Library



CROSS STREETS CONCEPT

- Cross streets R.O.W. landscape & extended landscape between Church & Water street
- Main street open to limited bus traffic/delivery
- Building facades each with appropriate facade design
- Symbolic link to neighborhoods and downtown Plaza de Las Cultures

THREE STREET CONCEPT

- New traffic control circle at the North & South entry to the Plaza
- Through traffic along Water & Church (one-way)
- Water and Church to have Medians for landscape and slowing traffic
- Main street to open to 2-way traffic from North & South
- New landscaping at Water and Church Street
- New canopies and waterfeatures along plaza.

START WITH THE HEART

NAME CHANGE

The present name of the "Mall" is misleading. The present day connotation for a mall is large, open grass area (ex. college campus) or a shopping mall. It is neither; rather it is a civic place at the core of the city. The RUDAT team recommends the reference be changed. Within this community it is expected to become a plaza, as linear as it is. The working title that the team has used is La Plaza de Las Culturas to recognize the diversity within the community.

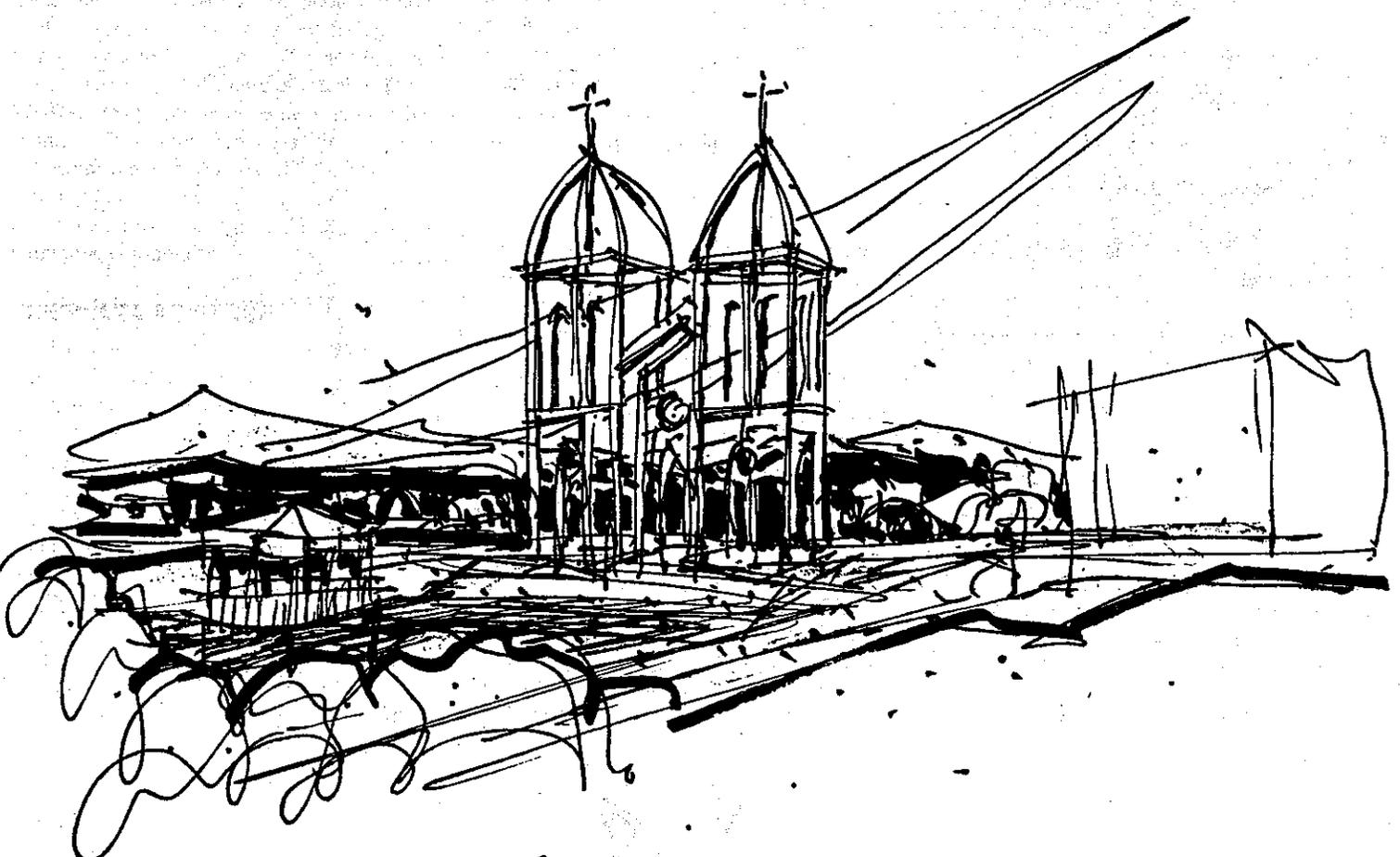
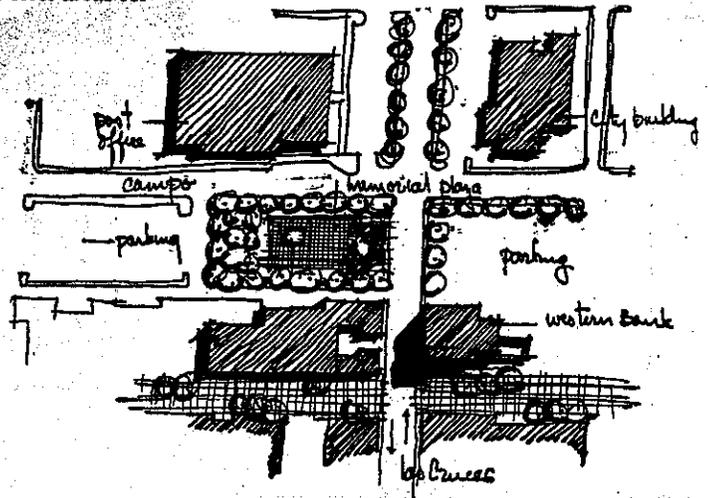
THE PLAZA AS PLACE

The new plaza must celebrate the cultures of Las Cruces and their shared pasts and futures. A key and specific element must be a memorial to the lost St. Genevieve's. It could take a variety of forms: a structural outline of the original facade, a single landmark tower with a bell or carrillions adding hourly sound, to a placita named in its honor, or a combination thereof.

The linear plaza must be comfortable, both day and evening, for strolling, shopping and socializing. It must also accommodate it's most consistent "festival" use, the regular gathering of the farmers and crafts market.

The addition of a small plaza or placita or two along the linear plaza offer areas for

gatherings of various sizes. They also provide places for commemoration, other memorials, or physical expression of the diverse cultures. The latter can be achieved through materials (ex. local stone), patterns and rhythms, and details and through associated costs.



VISIBILITY

The present mall suffers from a remarkable lack of visibility. The end porticos serve more as walls than windows. On cross-streets the canopy's structure, which is contiguous with the street's building wall, obscures the mall. The continuous asphalt of the cross-streets reinforces views past the mall. Even when one glances into the mall, the structure of the canopy tunnels the view which is also blocked by the meandering planting.

The removal of the existing metal canopy and its replacement by a more appropriate shading approach will increase visibility. This will open views into the ends and reveal the diverse roof tops.

The marking of the intersections at the cross-streets is of paramount importance. People must be alerted to the presence of the plaza. The paving materials must change from the asphalt and be visually continuous with the plaza. This design tool marks the intersections, alerts drivers to important pedestrian crossings, and tempts a look into the plaza. This move should be reinforced vertically by trees, pylons, and/or special light fixtures to infer gateways. This can also remind plaza pedestrians to look to the view of the Oigan Mountains.

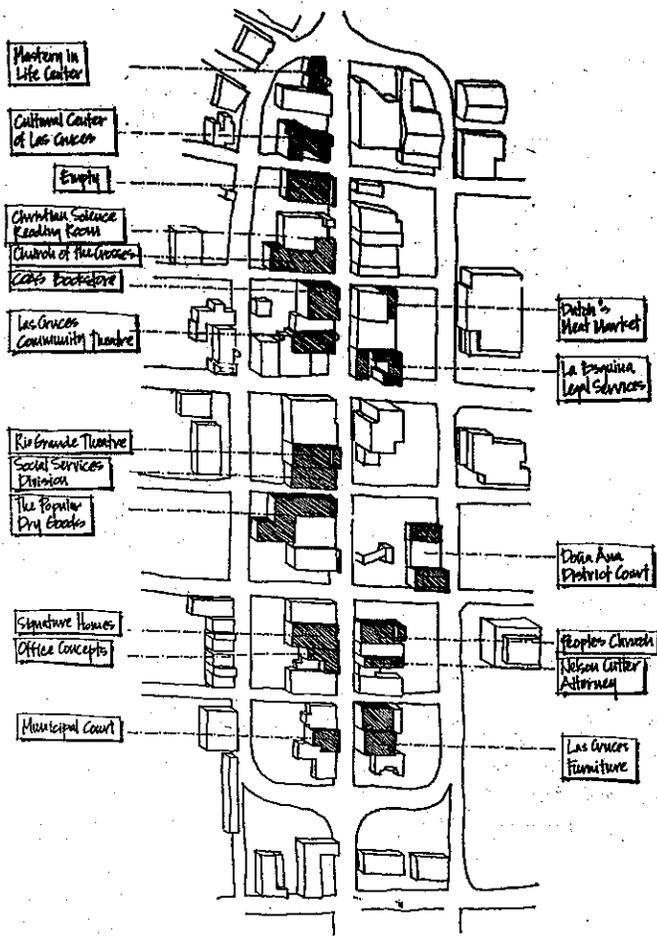
Several of the previously described alternative concepts introduce transit or vehicular traffic through the linear plaza to increase visibility and access. This alternative to pedestrian only access provides another means for orientation and exposure for an auto-dependent community.

THE ARCHITECTURE

Removal of the metal canopy will reveal the buildings, especially the taller structure. It should also stimulate a number of historic and visually interesting buildings that are presently observed or covered by later renovations.

The plaza generally corresponds to the core of the original Main Street. Like many western towns, it was built and changed incrementally, representing a number of different mercantile styles. The earlier, remaining buildings, including Italianate, Art Deco, southwestern Territorial, and pueblo. This same variety should be reflected in the large amount of infill opportunities and the eventual and evolving renovation of less sympathetic structures built since the devastating "urban renewal".





HISTORIC BUILDINGS ON PLAZA

STREETScape

The Alternative Concepts present a range of configurations for the plaza, from fully pedestrian to a return to vehicular access. The new linear plaza must be designed with an appropriate mix of canopy and tree shade. Linear placement of trees enhances general visibility as well as giving greater ease in seeing storefronts and signage.

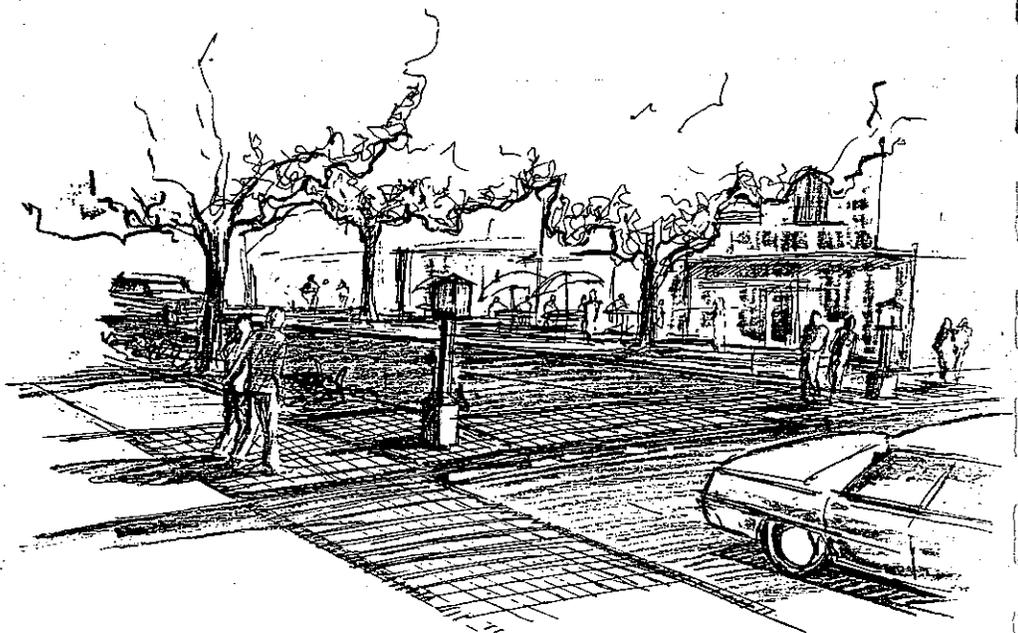
Whether or not there is vehicular access, the plaza surface should be flush from side to side (no curbs) so its use during market days and festivals is easy and safe. Separation from vehicles can be handled by material changes, bollards, and similar and successful non-curb methods. The detailing should facilitate easy handicapped and physically challenged access.

The plant materials should reflect the character and ruggedness of indigenous plants or those introduced for agriculture such as trees emulating pecan trees. It is important that these materials reflect a local context to be disciplined in developing a local character to help differentiate it from other cities. Where possible, collections of local plants should be presented in publicly accessible fore-courts, side yards, and rear yards and labeled for the interest of both locals and tourists.

Shade tree devices should be readily available and dependable. This benefits shoppers, pedestrians, and market vendors.

The historic structure, in addition to specific renewal ideas, also lend ideas for materials, scale and treatment of windows, high level of craftsmanship, effective doorways and entries, etc. The present structures that have reduced the number of doors (or even located them off the mall) and have reduced, limited or eliminated window openings should be renovated to relate to the plaza and present a more welcome front. Principal entries should be on or should be on the plaza. Other entries such as those facing rear parking should be converted to egress use only to encourage reinforcing beneficial activity along the plaza.

The structures in height can range from one to three stories. The upper floor uses can be a number of uses such as restaurants, offices, art studios, shops and apartments.

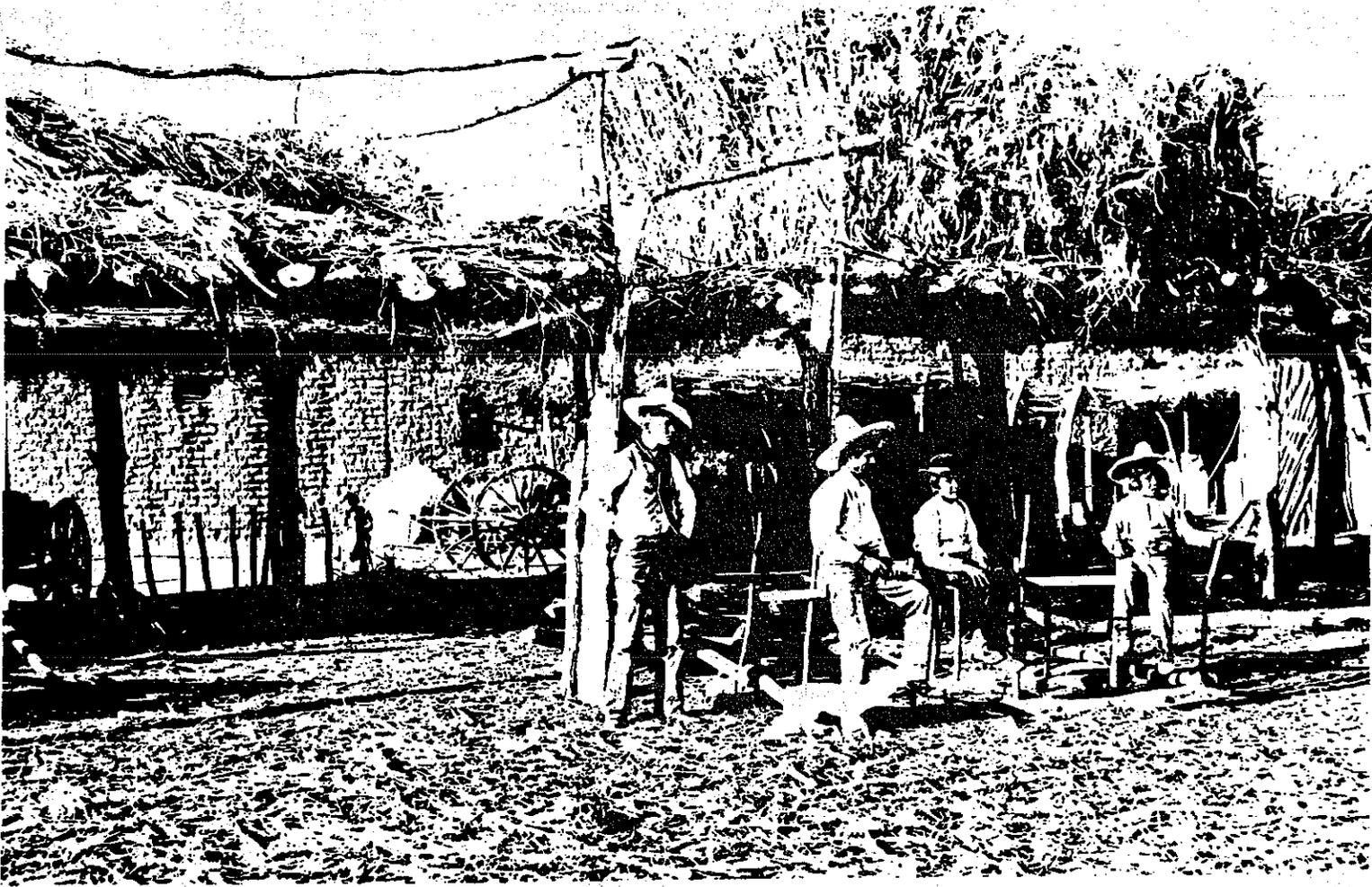
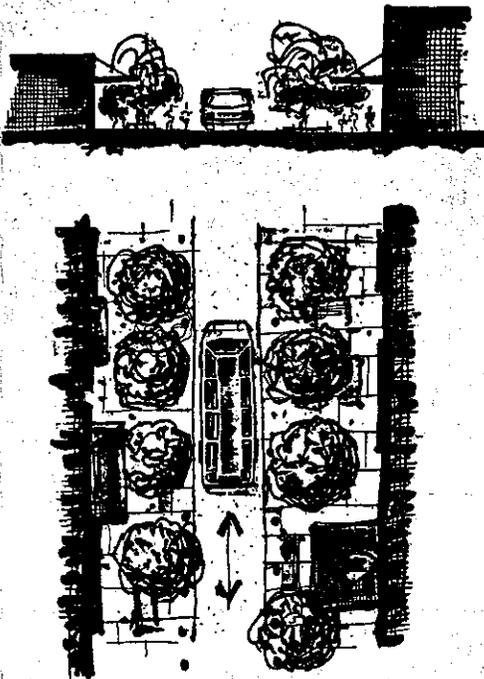


They should not be ad hoc, but part of a consensus approach. It can consist of a regular pattern of substantial roll out building awnings like those of the '40's and '50's, a standard system of retractable canvas awnings, or small scale battery systems. They should be festive in character and easy to maintain.

Lighting should be pedestrian in scale and appropriate to shadows while conveying an attractive, and not overly lit, ambiance. The lighting standards and/or canopy system should allow for vertical banners to mark special events.

USES

The Economic section outlines a number of appropriate uses for buildings along the plaza. They include retail, government offices and services, galleries and artists, and cultural facilities. The latter are important to convey the special characteristics and talents of the Las Cruces community and its diverse cultures. This obviously includes the growing Branigan center and the community theater as well as ideas for such as activities as a children's museum, a Blue Sky native american center, and evolving community performing arts activities. We would also encourage the restoration of the Rio Grande theater both as a social resource and a historic preservation milestone.



START WITH THE HEART

PARKING

Many comments were heard about a shortage of parking. It was described as a special problem when the market schedule overlaps the local business schedule and during peak season for the market. The economics don't justify parking structures and the area cannot afford to physically isolate itself further by demolishing buildings to create more surface lots. To help in the quantities, all of the alternative concepts introduce parking along Water and Church streets to supplement the existing lot parking.

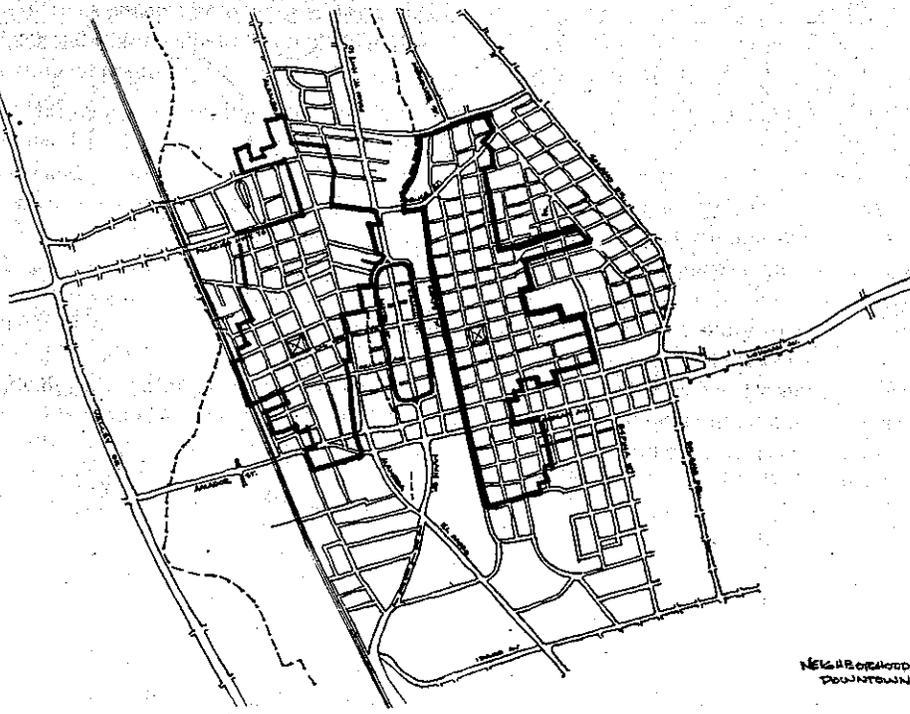
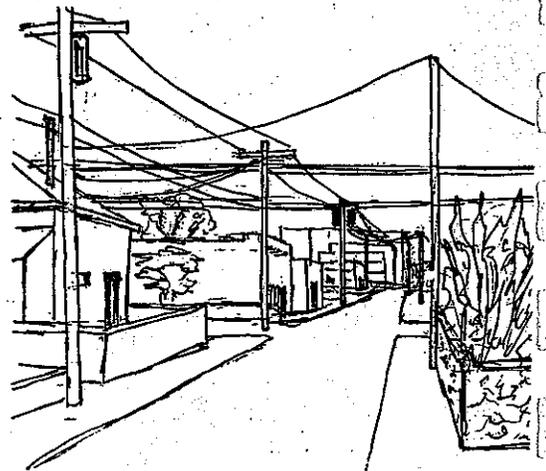
The present lot parking contributes to a dry and parched character for the area as being harsh and isolating. In an unusual way this offers an opportunity to develop a contrasting "green oasis". Both their edges and their interiors must be landscaped. The edges can be small walls and appropriate shrubs with accompanying street trees. The lots themselves should include trees. In reference to the valley agriculture, a parking lot pattern of trees (possibly pecan like) can recall the important identity giving agricultural context.

MESQUITE

The Mesquite Area is Las Cruces' oldest neighborhood. It is the location of the original townsite dating back to 1849. The narrow streets, adobe architecture, garden courtyards and local merchant services comprise the physical environment. The visual array reveals a neighborhood life rich in history, culture and family. (Further discussion of the Mesquite district is included in the Planning section of this report).

ALAMEDA/DEPOT

The Alameda/Depot area grew from the arrival of the railroad in Las Cruces in the late 19th Century. The railroad caused the area farmlands to be subdivided into lots and homes of a variety of architectural styles which were constructed. Today the neighborhood streets feature well preserved examples of various late 19th to early 20th century styles, traditional front and side yard set backs of more modern residential subdivisions. Commercial uses and offices in historic homes dot the neighborhood along with churches and schools. (Further discussion of the Alameda/Depot district is included in the Planning section of this report).



THE DEPOT CONNECTION

Las Cruces began as a railroad town. There is opportunity to celebrate such buildings, to relate the Plaza of the present and the future to the genesis of Las Cruces, by linking an enhanced depot area to the Plaza, much as was done when the Santa Fe railroad gave the first impetus to development of the embryo City.

R/UDAT suggests the enhancement of Las Cruces as a visual axis, perhaps enhanced with trees and period lightpoles, connecting the Depot with the center of town, its vista centered on the Organ Mountains. The Depot area itself, currently derelict, could be developed so as to make it an attraction for both tourists and residents, at fairly minimal cost. R/UDAT suggests that the funds allotted for station rehabilitation be invested in public-private sector partnership, with one section of the station being developed as an historic railway/transportation museum and the other as a commercial facility, such as a restaurant. There are literally hundreds of examples of successful private-sector railway station adaptive re-use,

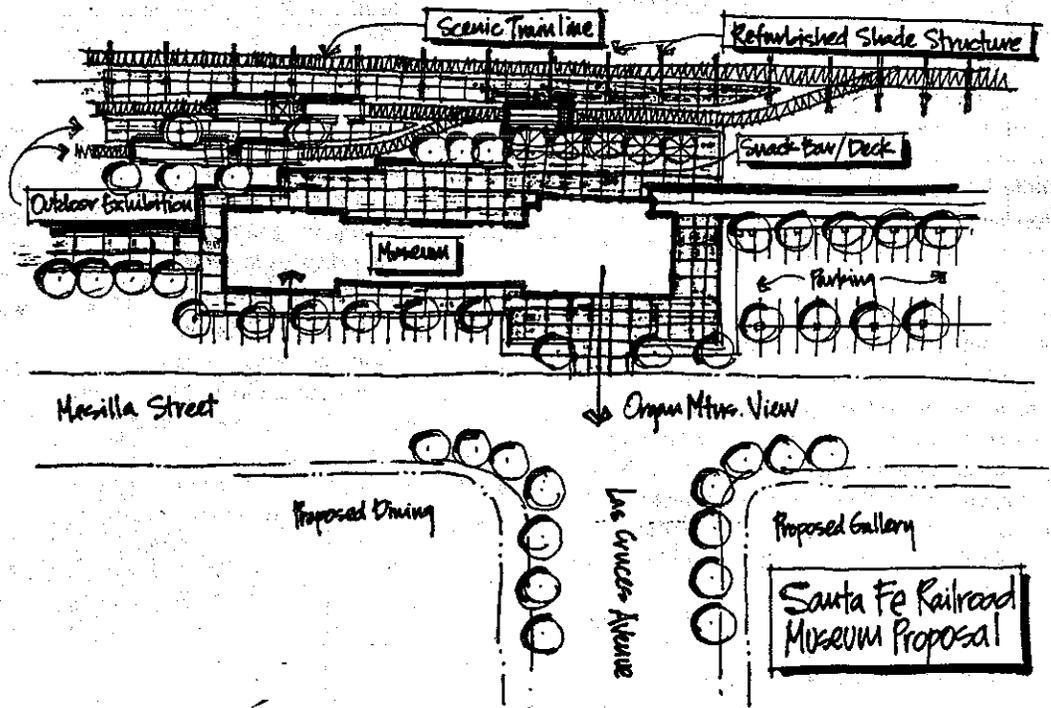


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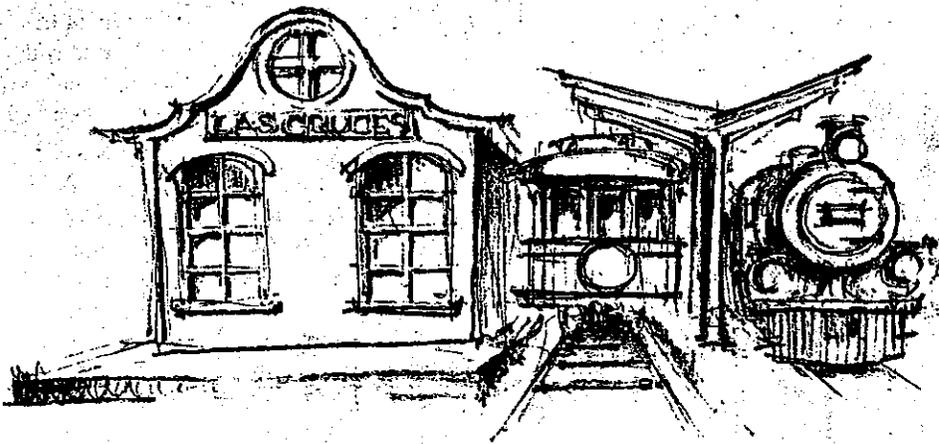
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To expand the transportation exhibit, R/UDAT suggests a static display of railway equipment on currently disused sidings, with additional museum exhibits inside. The first of the 4-6 cars incorporated into this exhibit (perhaps together with an old steam engine)



START WITH THE HEART

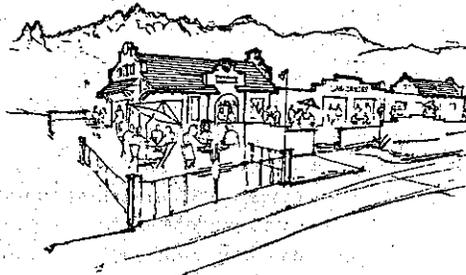


could be the passenger coach now resting to the north of the Depot. This car, condemned for mainline use, could probably be obtained from the AT&SF for very little, and would provide almost 800 square feet of additional exhibit space. The car is structurally solid; the interior has already been gutted and some community energy could be devoted to cleaning out the sparse remaining debris, and repainting interior and exterior in preparation for the installation of exhibits. Restoration of later-acquired rolling stock could also incorporate interested members of the community. A railway restoration society could be formed, and solicit donations (such efforts have been surprisingly successful elsewhere) and membership (perhaps from as far away as El Paso, whose railway enthusiasts are starved for relevant projects).

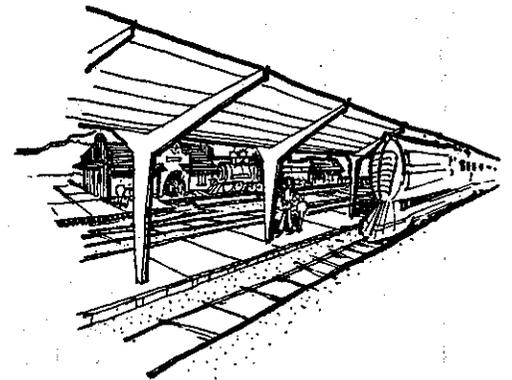
It is also suggested that, whether Amtrak ever restores service on the Albuquerque—El Paso line or not, the Las Cruces community consider encouraging the development of two aspects of Las Cruces—El Paso passenger train service. The first is a commuter service, the second a seasonal tourist train, perhaps powered by a steam locomotive during peak seasons. Regarding the second, there are more than 100 such tourist railways operating in the U.S.A. at the present time and listed in the directory of tourist and steam railways, and they have proven to be enormously popular—and, with proper management, quite profitable. Such towns as Chama, New Mexico; Antonito, Durango, and Silverton, Colorado; Ft. Bragg and Willits, California; South Carver, Massachusetts; Strasburg, Pennsylvania; Bellows Falls, Vermont; Palestine, Texas; and Cass, West Virginia owe much of their existence to railway museums incorporating such tourist railway lines. Such an operating museum attracts many tourists to otherwise unattractive Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Some states have established state-level railway museums and become eligible for public funding; New Mexico has none. Further, the U.S. Southwest from mid-Texas west through southern New Mexico and southern Arizona and the Mohave desert is the largest area of U.S. territory with no tourist attractions of this sort. Increasingly numerous each year, railway-oriented tourists who currently find a dearth of attractions along Interstate 10, would be extremely likely to stop—and perhaps to take advantage of other Las Cruces attractions while here.

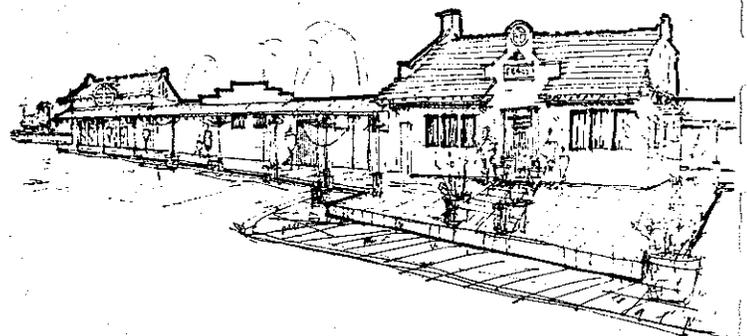
Such tourists, while not the biggest spenders, are also low-impact. Well-behaved and undemanding, they take only pictures and leave only footprints—along with some money. They alone among tourists pay not only to get to a tourist destination but also to leave.



The constellation of Depot attraction would justify extension of Roadrunner bus service to the Depot area; this would also provide those tourists arriving from El Paso who are not staying overnight with transportation to the enhanced Plaza area, where they will find restaurants, shopping, and other attractions (such as the Saturday market) to provide diversion and opportunities to spend money between trains. Alternatively, tourists might be induced to spend the night in Las Cruces, then to make a day-trip to visit El Paso by train.



Several consultants make full-time livings working with developers of operating railway museums and advertise their services in such magazines as *Trains*, which also advertise rolling stock for sale. The network of expertise is far-flung but tight, and can easily be tapped into for advice. In recent years, dinner trains, winery trains, and moonlight specials have become both popular and profitable, spreading the appeal of tourist trains to more affluent sectors of the market.



SECTION 11: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

"The larger portion of the people in our community are yearning for opportunities that will make community life more fulfilling."

Dr. Raymond M. Paz

There is no doubt that Las Cruces has been working on improvements to the quality of life. This city has been successful in obtaining creative ideas from very talented individuals who have donated countless hours to addressing individual problems. Some of these ideas, although presented before, are incorporated in this report.

The area in which the City has shown weakness has been thorough follow-through on a strategy to implement its proposals. Indicated reasons include:

- lack of consensus on the part of the public and private sectors
- overly ambitious plans
- inability to finance coherently
- a changing marketplace dominating the longer view; and
- a lack of community involvement and commitment.

By increasing the number of citizens involved in deciding the solutions to its problems, Las Cruces will have a more effective means of implementing changes. Fear of change often comes from a perception that "others" are deciding solutions for "us". It continues the "them" and "us" syndrome. **They** decided, let them see how they can do it without **us**.

This paralysis to progress can be seen in the recent failed city bond election and neighborhood rehabilitation efforts.

The intense preparation for the R/UDAT visit has ignited community spirit. The challenge will be to maintain the resulting enthusiasm with motivating participation and to continue systematically to add new people to the process.

An effective implementation plan must:

- Identify all the financial resources available. The community must feel that money is being used wisely and that every effort to avoid additional taxation was pursued first.
- An attempt to maximize the benefit of

expenditures by combining them with matching funds where appropriate is expected by the community.

- Establish financing options for the greatest cost items. Prioritize needs to make maximum use of Community Development Block Grants.
- Establish mechanisms and time schedules to pursue financial opportunities.
- Develop a campaign to promote the value of the expenditure to the community.
- Seek support for financing options.
- Poll the community prior to taking action.

Opportunities exist in combining state and federal grants specifically targeted to special groups such as:

- Older Americans
- Physically Impaired Citizens
- Low and Moderate Income
- Training and Adult Continuing Education
- Housing

We recommend that the city:

- Utilize current City department and advisory board Grants/Proposal Writers to pursue federal and state matching funds to affect quick and lower cost changes within the plaza to show immediate progress.
- Stay abreast of the new International Bank approved by Congress to provide money to border cities affected by NAFTA.
- Consider establishing a Housing Finance Corporation to pursue low interest rate mortgage loans. Legal requirements must be met that include structural requirements of establishing a Board of Directors, etc.
- Utilize the existing Mesilla Valley Economic Development Corporation to issue conduit financing for low interest rate loans.
- Explore 60/40 percent matching funds for small businesses available through funds external to CDBG.
- Consider a 1/16th cent sales tax increase to use as leverage to public works improvement money.

Each avenue of financing opportunity should include:

- Specific goals and outcomes expected
- Timetables
- Personal responsibilities
- Communication Campaign: print, TV, personal contact, etc.
- Prepared fact sheets
- Shared responsibilities by leaders and citizens

These implementation strategies are especially critical to the success of bond elections and any other actions requiring citizen approval. The coordination of communication flow needs to incorporate all sectors of the community. Assign community information tasks to Citizen Steering Committees, Hispanic and Las Cruces Chambers of Commerce, school district, and church leaders.

An ongoing effort should be maintained to increase participation of citizens in developing new image for the plaza.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

- Develop a strategy to raise funds for a St. Genevieve Memorial
- Prepare a letter to all city churches; follow-up with phone calls, have a fact sheet on history of demolition, involve newspapers and radio.
- Develop a recognition program for milestones accomplished in the Image Campaign.
- Announce the amount of money raised
- Have an architect prepare a rendition of the memorial based on the amount of money raised.
- Celebrate the coming together of the community.

As a result, some of the pain relating to demolition of the church may be defused. Excerpts of the R/UDAT report can be released in a timely fashion to diffuse any fears of bulldozing of area neighborhoods. Las Cruces should develop a full new image campaign to benefit its citizens and develop community pride, and to spur interest of tourists.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS:

Work with the Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance and send a letter to ad agencies specializing in multi-cultural markets

Ask for assistance in finding a corporate sponsor to develop an ad campaign for rebuilding the image of the city as a multi-cultural arts city, and for implementing R/UDAT recommendations to include:

- logo design
- slogan
- TV/newspaper press releases
- image development
- council and community leaders fact sheet and "sound bites"

Explore the creation of cross-sector leadership development programs through the Chambers of Commerce as a joint project of both Chambers that also includes representation from the Southwest Native American Network Consortium, and the Hispanic, and Black Communities.

PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND CO-DESIGN

Techniques of effective public participation have been enhanced over recent years, beyond the traditional mechanisms of survey questionnaires, community meetings, and public hearings. Notable among the newer innovations is the use of techniques which augment verbal input through putting some visual tools of physical planners and environmental designers in the hands of participating citizens. These have been utilized with considerable success throughout the U.S.A. and in other countries, and are especially important where the citizen population is multicultural and represents a wide range of socioeconomic levels and occupational backgrounds.

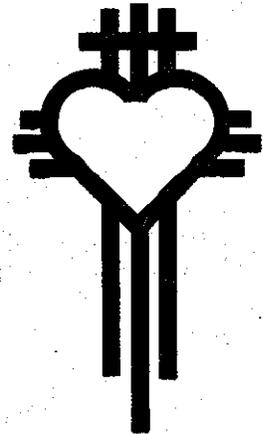
One such procedure involves groups of people constructing environmental models, using simple, everyday materials. Unlike architectural models, the representation of physical objects is not the real objective of such exercises in collaborative design ("co-design"); rather, through the creation and manipulation of simple models of physical objects and ensuing discussion, both citizens and planners are better able to see and to identify people's underlying values, needs, and wants. These can then inform design decisions. Environmental designers can thus see, quite literally through physical

representations, the considerations that will determine public satisfaction. Such visual representations relate more closely to what they must later produce than mere words can convey. This process can be iterative, designers producing their own models in response to citizen models, with successive iterations "zeroing in" more and more closely to satisfactory solutions to problems perceived with increasing clarity. The process has many desirable spinoffs, such as enhancing both community cohesiveness through perceived effectiveness, on the part of the public, in influencing environmental decision-making; and mutual trust between design and planning professionals on the one hand, and participating citizens on the other.

The many aspects of participatory processes which enhance verbal input are too numerous to be detailed here. They are elaborated in a number of books on the process and its applications, and summarized in several papers, reports and published articles which R/UDAT has provided to the Steering Committee.

"If you have a problem, do something about it so that we can get back together as a community again."

Beverly Zubia



SECTION 12: R/UDAT TEAM

JOE STUBBLEFIELD, A.I.A.

Joe Stubblefield, a registered architect, is the principal in the firm of Stubblefield & Associates A.I.A. of San Antonio, Texas. Joe was educated at the University of Texas at Austin receiving a Bachelors degree in Architecture with Honors and a Masters degree of Community and Regional Planning. He served as chair of the Board of Review for Historic Districts and Landmarks for the City of San Antonio and has been active in Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce projects including Leadership San Antonio. Joe's work has included planning, urban design, restoration, and historic preservation in cities in Texas. His projects include: Revitalization of the Strand; Galveston Texas, and St. Paul Square Historic District Redevelopment San Antonio and Ft. Sam Houston Gateway Historic District in San Antonio. This work has been featured in magazines such as Architectural Record and Southern Living. He has participated in R/UDAT Teams for Carlsbad, New Mexico and Caldwell, Idaho.

BEN FRERICHS

Ben Frerichs, Ph.D. in Economics, is a principal in the Seattle firm, Economic Consulting Services. Ben served as the Economic Development Manager for the City of Tacoma and writes a regular column for the *Tacoma-Pierce County Real Estate Trends*. He provides economic and financial analysis and strategic planning for a wide range of public and private sector clients. In addition, he teaches urban development and real estate in the School of Architecture of the University of Washington. Typical assignments include real estate feasibility studies; projections of populations, employment and school enrollment; economic and financial development strategies; land use and impact analysis; and feasibility studies for public facilities for conventions, sports, and performing arts centers.

SALLY A. DOWLEN

Sally A. Dowlen, after serving 9 years as a senior transportation policy/planning analyst for the Florida Department of Transportation in Tallahassee, Florida accepted the position as Transportation System Coordinator for Leon County where the State's Capitol is located. In her current position, Sally is Chief of Transportation Planning and is responsible for developing and implementing new and aggressive transportation programs including public participation, transportation systems planning, urban mobility and urban form, and intergovernmental coordination. As a governmental liaison, she also informs the Board of County Commissioners of state and federal legislation impacting local governments. Sally received her M.A. in Architecture from Florida A & M University, School of Architecture.

JUDY EVERETT RAMOS

Judy Everett Ramos, Director of Communications, Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau, is responsible for writing and editing quarterly newsletter/news releases; monthly board reports; departmental marketing plans; other internal publications; and working with advertising agencies to create collateral materials/graphics; shooting color slides and photos for library. She has also served on festival committees, downtown committees and entertainment committees in Arlington and Corpus Christi. In 1992 she was named Who's Who Among Young American Professionals. She received a BS in Education, Journalism/Speech Communications from Southwest Texas State University, and is a member of the Society of American Travel Writers, Texas Public Relations Association, Dallas Fort Worth Area Tourism Council, and National Association for Female Executives.

DAVID STEA

David Stea is Director of the Centro Internacional para la Cultura y el Ambiente and Chair of the Department of Liberal Studies at Universidad Internacional de Mexico. He is also Enrique Aragon Distinguished Professor, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México and Adjunct Professor of Environmental Studies at Ramapo College of New Jersey and the University of Illinois-Chicago, U.S.A. David is currently consultant to Shell Petroleum (U.K.) on replanning its Thornton Research Centre and to the Centre for Maori Studies and Research, University of Waikato, on design of New Zealand's second Maori University. He received a B.S. in Mechanical/Aeronautical Engineering from Carnegie-Mellon University, an M.S. in Psychology from the University of New Mexico, and a Ph.D. in Psychology from Stanford University. David is co-founder of the Environmental Design Research Association; a member of the International Association for Impact Assessment, Association of American Geographers, Association of Borderlands Scholars, and International Society for Environmental Ethics; and an Associate Member of the American Institute of Architects.

MARK J. MAVES, A.I.A.

Principal/Director of Urban Planning, Florance Eichbaum Esocoff King—Architects in Washington, D.C. Experienced in master planning, urban design, and design guidelines for public and private clients, he received his Masters of Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley. He is a registered Architect in the District of Columbia and is a member of the American Institute of Architects, American Planning Association, and Institute for Urban Design. His recent projects include mixed-use waterfront plans for the Southeast Federal Center and the

Buzzard Point area of Washington. Institutional plans include the National Institutes of Health, The French International School, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Education /Training Campus. He is a consultant to the National Endowment for the Arts on arts facilities, served as a facilitator for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and is recent chair of the A.I.A.'s National Regional and Urban Design Committee.

KAREN J. KOMINSKY, PP, AICP

Karen J. Kominsky is a partner with Clarke & Caton, a firm which provides Architecture, Planning and Community Development services, located in Trenton, NJ. She received a Master of City and Regional Planning degree from Rutgers University, and is a licensed planner by the New Jersey Board of Professional Planners, and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Karen has worked extensively in planning and government policy in the private and public sectors with expertise in the fields of affordable housing and environmental matters. She has been appointed by the Supreme Court of New Jersey to assist the judiciary in affordable housing litigation. As a private citizen she serves as the Vice-Chairperson of the Vote Environment Committee PAC and serves on the Community Reinvestment Act Council of the Flemington National Bank. She was appointed by the Governor to the New Jersey Pollution Prevention Advisory Board and is a member of the New Jersey Women's Political Caucus.

ERLINDA CORTEZ DIMAS

Erlinda Cortez Dimas is an Investment Banker and Vice President of Apex Securities, Inc. She provides underwriting services to municipalities on tax-exempt bond issues. She is a licensed municipal securities principal by the National Association of Securities Dealers. She serves as Vice Chairman to the Texas Public Finance Authority which issues the majority of the municipal bonds for the State of Texas. She is headquartered in San Antonio where she volunteers her time to Leadership San Antonio, Hispanas Unidas, and committees to assist Small, Women, and Minority Owned Businesses obtain access to city contracts. She has helped sponsor conferences that address youth and gang issues. She has served on the City of San Antonio's Budget Advisory Committee and provided testimony on the use of Community Block Grant money. She has a B.A. in Business and Economics from Our Lady of the Lake University. She served on a prior R/UDAT for San Ysidro/San Diego, California.



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