



As this Plan has already indicated, a pedestrian-friendly environment is integral to the revitalization of Downtown. The preceding policies and actions are all concretely linked to the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* program. Without achieving a *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment, the policies and actions developed in *The Plan* will be ineffective. In order to ensure that Downtown becomes a *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment, specific civic infrastructure improvements will be developed over the next five years.

The *Park Once - Pedestrian First* program shifts the priority for using Downtown's street. For several decades, moving cars had the highest claim on the use of Downtown streets. The need to move so many cars developed out of conditions at the time. In the pre-Interstate days, Downtown Albuquerque streets carried major interstate highway traffic, most notably the famous Route 66. Off-street parking was scarce, and therefore, the demand for on-street parking (for example, diagonal on-street parking on Central Avenue) claimed much of the street space. This loss of street space resulted in other measures (one-way streets) being utilized to compensate for the lost traffic capacity.

In downtowns throughout the nation, there is a renewed quest for "balance" in the use of streets and sidewalks. In order to compete with suburban shopping malls and office parks, downtowns must reactivate their prime asset - the welcoming, walkable, human-scale which prevailed a hundred years ago. No where else in cities can people experience a *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment, and it is essential to Downtown's success that we promote, enhance, and renew that pedestrian friendly environment wherever possible.

The *Park Once - Pedestrian First* pattern of travel is fundamentally different in every respect from the conventional suburban pattern. In the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* pattern, motorists are encouraged to drive as little as possible, by being invited into the first available parking. This parking is clearly "public" in operation, conveying a clear message to the driver that all destinations within Downtown can be reached by walking from this parking. The traveler then walks or uses transit to multiple destinations within the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* district.

Elements of the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* Area

Parking is the first activity that the incoming visitor encounters in a *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment. Parking must be located throughout the Downtown, so that drivers are greeted by parking regardless of their route of arrival. The visibility of multiple parking structures scattered throughout Downtown further adds to the reassurance that parking is available and plentiful.

In the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* area, it is essential that the parking feel public in nature, regardless of its ownership by either public agency or private entity. The parking is a unified system that presents drivers with highly predictable fees, availability, and hours of operation.

In today's Downtown, the presence of parking must be advertised strongly, but without the visual blight of large areas of parked cars. This advertising is accomplished through:

1. on-street parking, which informs drivers that parking is an expected and permitted part of Downtown and
2. prominent identification of parking structure entrances.

A critical element of the park once environment is the concealment of parking (other than on-street parking) from the view of the street. This is accomplished by locating parking in the interior of blocks, by fronting parking structures with a veneer of retail floor space, and by designing the exterior of the parking structures to disguise their interior use.

Once the visitor is out of their parked vehicle, the next important element of the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment is the landing of the pedestrian into a public space. Typically, this is accomplished by providing ramps, stairs, elevators, escalators, etc. which lead to public spaces such as sidewalks, arcades, or public building lobbies. Privatized pedestrian spaces, such as skywalks to private buildings, upper floors of private buildings, direct connection into a single retail store, etc., are detrimental to the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* atmosphere. It is also critical that parking spaces serve multiple users. As a result, it is important that parking spaces not be dedicated to a single building or use but rather shared between nearby uses (such as office, restaurant, retail, and entertainment).

How Many Parking Spaces are Enough?

Over the next eleven year period (1999 - 2010), we estimate the need for around 3,000 more parking spaces Downtown. At present, there are 14,400 parking spaces in Downtown Albuquerque.

Our estimate of future parking demand is based on the following assumptions:

- A 20% growth in parking demand over the eleven year period 1999 - 2010 from the current peak demand of 9800 vehicles.
- A loss of 1,800 parking spaces in surface lots over the eleven year period 1999 - 2010.
- An increase in parking garage occupancy from the existing 68% to a projected occupancy of 76% by the year 2010.

Computing the above factors we project for some 3,000 spaces of new parking by the year 2010.

Location of New Parking Facilities

A ten-year program of adding 3,000 spaces to Downtown Albuquerque's parking supply can be accommodated through a series of 7 - 10 new garages over the next decade. Several of these can be precisely located at the present time, and the remainder can be placed with a lesser degree of precision. (See Parking Structures Map)

In their projected order of priority, the new parking structures would be:

Garage 1 - The Alvarado Redevelopment Area.

This garage will serve the new multi-screen cinema, transportation terminals, retail, and office development already committed for this area. This garage also serves an area of Downtown that is currently not served at all (within 500 feet walking distance of a parking structure). It is located on Gold Avenue between First and Second Streets.

Garage 2 - PNM/South Federal Area.

This garage serves commercial activity in the southern part of Downtown. It will serve PNM and Federal Office expansion. It is located on Silver between Fifth and Sixth Streets.

Garage 3 - located south of Lomas Blvd. to the West of Fourth Street. The demand for this garage will come predominately from the new courthouses. Garage 3A is an alternate privately funded facility located north of Lomas.

Garage 4 - located at the Old Albuquerque High School Reuse Site. This small garage serves not only the uses in the recycled high school, but also walk-in visitors to Downtown Albuquerque.

Garage 5 - located at Copper Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets. This garage will anchor the revised commercial activity in the west end of Downtown including a possible super-market. Its location one block north of Central Avenue will help fill out a matrix of parking decks along either side of Central Avenue. Garage 5A is an alternate site for garage #5 activity.

Garage 6 - This garage is a counterpart to garage #5 and will anchor the southwest sector of the central business district. Its demand will derive from revitalized retail along Central Avenue. Similar to garage #5, it flanks Gold Avenue from Seventh to Eleventh Streets, creating multiple options for visitors to Central Avenue and the streets crossing it.

Garage 7 - located along Copper Avenue to the east of Third Street. This garage will serve the new Duque Hotel, an expansion of La Posada Hotel, as well as increased retail activity in the eastern part of Downtown.

Garage 8 - north of Central Avenue to the east of First Street. This large garage would serve a new arena and increased activity at the Convention Center.

Garage 9 - located on First Street between Lead and Coal Avenues. This garage serves future commercial growth within the southeastern sector of Downtown.

Garage 10 - located in the northeast sector of Downtown. Three options are suggested to serve future commercial growth in the northeastern sector of Downtown.

Transit Circulator Service

In order to facilitate further *The Park Once* concept, a transit circulator system for Downtown is needed. The circulator would be used by residents, visitors, and Downtown employees. For employees in particular, a Downtown shuttle service would greatly reduce the hindrance to mid-day travel between the employment and retail centers in Downtown and maximize parking facilities throughout Downtown.

Non-daily visitors to Downtown are generally on a more flexible schedule than daily Downtown workers, and are likely to visit other Downtown destinations beyond their primary destination. Tourists visiting Downtown are a predictable source of ridership for the Old Town/Biopark express shuttle. Typically, tourist visitors to a downtown area prefer to leave their automobile parked for an extended duration (several hours), and prefer to visit multiple destinations either by walking or with the assistance of a circulator shuttle. Similarly, a link between Downtown and the University will serve students, residents, and visitors alike and create a predictable ridership for a UNM/Nob Hill express shuttle.

Three routes are proposed for Albuquerque:

A. Downtown Circulator Loop

This 1.8 mile loop connects the employment area along Lomas Blvd. with the commercial and retail area to the south of Central Avenue. This loop is important for mid-day travel by employees in the Lomas Blvd. area. This loop is also an important factor in increasing the use of available parking to the south of Central Avenue. It should operate on five to seven minute headways to be effective.

B. Express Shuttle between Downtown and Old Town/Bio Park

This is an express route, making three stops outside Downtown: Laguna, Old Town, and Bio Park. Primarily users are tourists and non-daily visitors to Downtown. A thirty-minute headway is proposed for this route.

C. Express Shuttle to the University between Downtown and UNM/Nob Hill

This route would operate along Central Avenue, making stops at the University of New Mexico and Nob Hill. Primary source of ridership is University students, employees and visitors to Downtown. A seven-minute headway is proposed for this service.

Pedestrian-First Zones

In support of the *Park Once - Pedestrian First* concept, we recommend that two zones within Downtown be designated for high priority sidewalk and streetscape treatment:

- The first priority streetscape zone is the retail center of Downtown bounded by Copper and Gold Avenues to the north and south and by Robinson Park and First Street to the east and west. Part of the streetscape treatment for some of the north/south streets will include a change in pavement width, with a corresponding increase in sidewalk size.
- The second priority should be improving the Fourth Street sidewalks and streetscape to connect the Central Avenue retail and entertainment district to the emerging judicial office zone along Lomas Blvd. in the north part of Downtown.
- The employment district along Lomas Blvd. between Fifth and First Streets should receive streetscape improvements as the third priority.

The pedestrian first treatments also include major public spaces at the Courthouse Square and at the Civic Plaza on Fourth Street.

Conversion of the One Way Streets

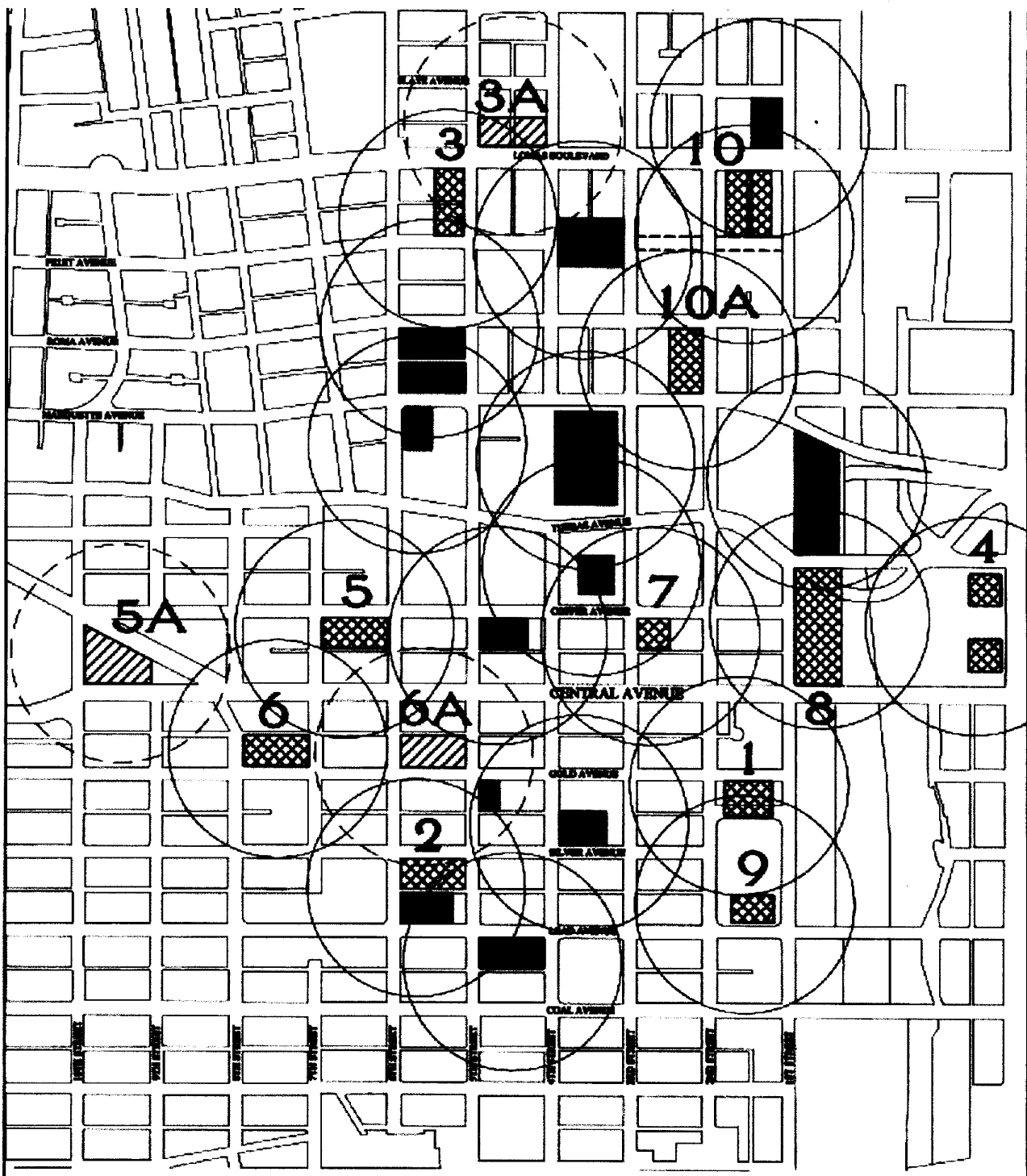
Conversion of the one way to two way traffic encourages pedestrian activity by calming traffic and providing additional very visible on-street parking. The conversions of the one way couplets should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, bicycle corridors and facilities will be designed and implemented with the conversion of one way streets to two way operations in the Downtown Core.

Bicycle Amenities and Routes

At least one North/South and at least one East/West bike route into Downtown will be established. These routes must be striped and signed for bicycles everywhere but the arts and entertainment section. Bike lockers, facilities, and showers should be encouraged in new Downtown

buildings and secure bike facilities should be provided in highly visible locations at ground level at each parking facility with a minimum of 1.2% of the spaces devoted to bicycle parking.

The combined efforts of the public and private sectors are an essential element of *The Plan*. The civic infrastructure improvements discussed here are the key public component which will create an environment in which private sector businesses and entertainment establishments can thrive and which invites substantial private investment. Downtown's *Park Once - Pedestrian First* environment is what will enable it to be special and unique, offering something which no suburban mall or factory outlet center can. By giving people the ability to get out of their cars once, and have a multitude of safe, enjoyable experiences, we will make Downtown Albuquerque an urban center we can be proud of.



300' RADIUS FROM
PARKING STRUCTURE



EXISTING PARKING
STRUCTURES



PROPOSED PARKING
STRUCTURES



ALTERNATE PROPOSED
PARKING STRUCTURES