



downtown 2010's policies & implementation actions

As a result of the Downtown Action Team's *October 1998 Strategic and Implementation Plan*, a number of teams comprised of hundreds of community volunteers, were formed to carry out strategic initiatives. The products of those teams follow, and when adopted they will become *The Downtown 2010 Policies and Implementation Actions* for:

- **Transportation and Parking**
- **Land Use/Design**
- **Healthy Neighborhoods**
- **Urban Housing**
- **Urban Retailing**
- **Employment**
- **Education\***
- **Arts and Entertainment**
- **Tourism and Hospitality**
- **Parks and Open Space**
- **Minimizing the Impact of Homelessness\*;** and
- **Managing and Marketing Downtown**

Each category contains specific actions to be undertaken by the public sector and/or the private sector to meet our community goal of,

**"becoming the best mid-sized downtown in the USA."**

*The Plan* shall not alter or change zoning or land use policies outside the area defined as the Downtown Core, nor shall *The Plan* mandate or encourage any future changes in existing zoning or land use policies outside the area defined as the Downtown Core.

A complete analysis and disclosure to the City Council and the public will be required for all public funds expended or committed by this *Plan*. Specific appropriations to support these policies and implementation actions will require future action of the City Council.

The terms 'Downtown' and 'Downtown Core' are used interchangeably throughout the *Downtown 2010 Plan*. When used, these terms refer to the area included within the boundaries of the *Downtown 2010 Plan*, as reflected on the 'Downtown Core' map on page 4, and the 'Districts Map' on page 29.

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\* *Additional goals relating to education and minimizing the impact of homelessness are attached to the Plan as Appendix B and Appendix C.*

*Notes: The Plan policies are identified on the following pages as "we will" statements and the implementation actions as "by" statements.*

*The City of Albuquerque Planning Department shall provide the City Council, by July 31, 2000 a comprehensive fiscal impact analysis.*

**We will:**

**Make Downtown a “pedestrian-first,” “park-once” place with excellent pedestrian, transit and bicycle facilities.**

**By:**

**1. Modifying Downtown streets and sidewalks to serve the needs of pedestrians, transit, bicyclists, and cars, with the focus on serving pedestrians first.**

**Actions:**

- “Pedestrian priority” signage shall be installed throughout Downtown. (Public)
- May fund and operate a Downtown “circulator” within the Downtown Core. The circulator may operate in two directions, be free, operate on 5 minute headways, and be fun. (Public / Private)
- Amenities (such as lighting, signage, street furniture, plantings, etc.) shall be provided in the public right-of-way to support and encourage pedestrian activity. (Public/private)
- Bicycle racks and other bicycle-friendly facilities shall be provided throughout Downtown, and the Historic District. (Public/Private)

**2. Developing, managing, and operating parking as an essential civic infrastructure, and reducing overall parking ratios over time to a Park Once environment.**

**Actions:**

- All parking requirements for Downtown development shall be removed. (Public)
- A Downtown “Park-Once Strategy” shall be developed and instituted which includes a “shared use” parking program for both public and private structures/lots, and which investigates the most effective way to manage parking facilities throughout Downtown. (Public/Private)
- On-street parking shall be maximized throughout Downtown. (Public)
- Long term parking structures may be located at strategic entrances to Downtown, and short term parking may be strategically located throughout the arts/entertainment/retail district. (Public/Private)
- Include some form of commercial activity on the ground floor of all parking structures facing the sidewalk. (Public / Private)
- Prohibit new commercial surface parking lots in the Downtown Core. (Public)
- Pave, landscape (15% minimum) light, and maintain existing commercial surface parking lots. (Public/Private)

**3. Changing Downtown to make it more understandable to infrequent users, and providing easy access to other parts of the Historic District.**

**Actions:**

- The entire one-way street system may be converted to two-way operations. (Public)
- Express “shuttles” between Downtown and Old Town/Biopark and between Downtown and UNM/Nob Hill may be funded and operated. The Old Town “shuttles” may operate on 30 minute headways, and the UNM/Nob Hill “shuttle” may operate on 7 minute headways. (Public)
- When the Hispanic Cultural Center is completed, fund and operate a shuttle on Fourth Street connecting the Center to Downtown. (Public)
- An informational and directional (way finding) signage program for the Downtown shall be developed. (Public/Private)
- The Central Avenue/Railroad Underpass may be improved to be pedestrian friendly. (Public/Private)

We will:

Make Downtown New Mexico's premier pedestrian-oriented "urban place".

By:

1. Focusing on preservation and quality building development.

Actions:

- *The Plan* adopts building types and standards which encourage high quality urban buildings, promote street level pedestrian-friendly building designs, and requires that buildings respect their urban context. (Public)
- Historic sites in and around Downtown shall be preserved, restored and reused. (Public/private)

2. Declaring the Downtown 2010 Sector Plan Area a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.

Actions:

- A Redevelopment Plan for Downtown shall be adopted which makes the Downtown Core a tax increment financing district. (Public/Private)
- The City may use tax increment financing to fund programs, infrastructure, and facilities. (Public)
- The City will use redevelopment powers to support and encourage residential development in and around Downtown. (Public)

3. Safeguarding the pedestrian character of the public realm (streets, sidewalks, plazas, etc.) and the adjacent building edges.

Actions:

- *This Plan* promotes and requires retail and other uses at street level and provides improvements to the public right-of-way that support pedestrian activity. (Public)
- Encourage sidewalk retail and dining activity in the public right-of-way to strengthen pedestrian activity. (public/private)
- Consistent lighting, signage, and streetscape improvements throughout Downtown shall be provided, concentrating initially on the Arts and Entertainment District and 4th Street as the link between the Arts and Entertainment District and the Lomas Employment Corridor. (Public)
- Conserve and reintroduce the traditional street grid of 300'x300' blocks; Fruit Avenue from Third Street to the railroad tracks may be rebuilt. Where the traditional street grid is broken, pedestrian connections may be established. (Public)
- Prohibit the vacation or closure of alleyways and streets in the Arts and Entertainment District and strongly discourage vacations and closures elsewhere in the Downtown Core. Applicants must prove that the requested vacation or closure will enhance the pedestrian character of Downtown and that the proposed development could not be built without the vacation or closure.

**We will:**

**Preserve and enhance the character of the neighborhoods which surround Downtown.**

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**By:**

**1. Protecting surrounding neighborhoods from incompatible land uses and minimizing the impacts of Downtown revitalization.**

**Actions:**

- *The Plan* makes the boundary between the Downtown Core and its adjacent neighborhoods a hard line in order to protect adjacent neighborhoods from encroachment of commercial activity outside of the core. Variances, zone changes and other administrative actions which would allow commercial activity to creep across the boundary from the Downtown Core into the adjacent neighborhoods should only occur in the most exceptional of cases. (Public)
- Commercial surface parking lots in neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown are prohibited. (Public)
- Permit parking shall be provided for neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown. (Public)
- Urban conservation overlay zones shall be developed to protect historic structures in existing neighborhoods which surround Downtown. (Public)

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**2. Promoting high density urban housing within the Downtown Core.**

**Actions:**

- *The Plan* designates an urban Housing District within the Downtown Core which encourages high density urban living mixed with neighborhood support sources compatible with urban living (see Urban Housing Policies and Implementation Actions). (Public/Private)
- Buffer the Barelás, Reynolds and Downtown neighborhoods from intense commercial activity by using the urban Housing District; buffer the Wells Park, Santa Barbara/Martineztown, Huning Highlands, and South Martineztown neighborhoods from intense commercial activity by using the Warehouse District. (Public/Private)

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**3. Encouraging residential infill development in neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown and/or located within the Historic District.**

**Actions:**

- Tax increment financing shall be utilized to fund future civic infrastructure improvements in the Downtown, particularly for parking structures in the core and urban trails connecting Downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods. (Public)
- Redevelopment powers shall be utilized, where possible, to assist in assemblage of infill residential building sites in Historic District neighborhoods. (Public/Private)

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We will:

Have at least 20,000 people living within one mile of the Downtown Core, and 5,000 living within the Downtown Core by 2010.

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By:

**1. Creating a plan for assembling and developing building sites of adequate size within reasonable time frames, in order to build market rate and affordable urban housing.**

**Actions:**

- *The Plan* identifies the district and sites that are best suited for new housing development within the Downtown Core. (Private/public)
- Redevelopment powers shall be utilized to assist in assemblage of building sites, when a super majority of property owners request such public assistance. Land assemblage must be simple and efficient to stimulate private sector development. (Public)
- Private sector urban housing initiatives may be supported by providing parking and by minimizing off-site infrastructure deficiencies. (Public)

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**2. Developing a variety of housing types throughout Downtown (townhouses, urban apartments, lofts, condominiums, live/work etc.)**

**Actions:**

- High density housing (50 du's/acre or more) is encouraged within the Downtown core. (Public)
- Locate UNM student housing Downtown. (Public/Private)
- Redevelop existing commercial and industrial buildings into loft housing and artist live/work space. (Private)
- Work with churches to create senior housing Downtown. (Private)

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**3. Protecting the character of the existing urban neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown and/or within the Historic District.**

**Actions:**

- Commercial parking lots in neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown shall be prohibited and "permit parking programs" shall be made available to neighborhood residents. (Public)
- Neighborhood commercial businesses shall be attracted to locate Downtown. (Private)

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We will:

Create Downtown as an exciting “urban retail destination”.

By:

1. Creating an inventory of existing buildings and land within the Downtown Core for urban retailing.

Action:

- Survey all Downtown buildings and land; develop a database including square footage, rental rates, vacancy rates, etc. on all commercial properties within the Downtown Core. (Private)

2. Providing a variety of retail goods and services in Downtown to serve a broad range of residents, employees and visitors.

Actions:

- Recruit basic and specialty goods and services into Downtown, including art-based retail, restaurants, and “high fashion” retail. (Private)
- Recruit a full service urban grocery store and drug store in Downtown. (Private)
- Recruit a multiplex movie theater in Downtown. (Private)
- Recruit retail “anchor” stores Downtown. (Private)
- Recruit convenience services (dry cleaners, shoe repair, etc.) close to office buildings and housing. (Private)
- May build a municipal mercado in Downtown. (Private)

3. Maintaining a compact specialty retail core by concentrating those facilities within the arts and entertainment district, and on the Fourth Street Mall.

Actions:

- Encourage sidewalk retail and dining activity in the public right-of-way. (Public/Private)
- Reinforce the image of a “main street” shopping experience with visually interesting street level design of buildings. (Private)
- Encourage retailing of art and associated art products in Downtown, concentrating on the contemporary art market. (Private)
- Develop “continuous” retail building frontage on Central, Gold and Copper Avenues. “Fill in the missing teeth” (Private)
- Require retail uses to utilize on-street, off-alley and “park-once” structures in lieu of off-street surface parking lots - both within the specialty retail core and throughout Downtown. (Public/Private)

**We will:**

**Maintain Downtown as New Mexico's largest employment center and the Region's Center of Economic Activity.**

**By:**

**1. Attracting 5000 new jobs to Downtown by 2010.**

**Actions:**

- Aggressively recruit federal agencies to relocate Downtown. (Public/Private)
- Encourage more UNM/TVI activities to locate Downtown, particularly in the areas of continuing education, fine arts, and planning/architecture. (Public)
- Recruit information technology industries (multi-media, software, internet services, etc.) to locate Downtown. (Private)
- Recruit professional service firms and financial institutions which have left Downtown to return to the core. (Private)

**2. Encouraging small businesses to locate and stay Downtown.**

**Actions:**

- May establish a low income loan pool to encourage small business investment in Downtown. (Public/Private)

We will:

Make Downtown Albuquerque a vibrant, urban 24 hour destination for arts, culture and entertainment.

By:

1. Designating the area along Central/Gold/Copper Avenues between First and Eighth streets as the Arts and Entertainment District.

Actions:

- Locate urban specialty retail, restaurants, clubs, entertainment venues, cultural facilities, and art related activities in the Arts and Entertainment District. (Public/Private)
• The region's one-of-a-kind facilities (i.e. arena, ballpark, museums, performance center, etc.) may be located to the greatest extent possible Downtown in or near the Arts and Entertainment District in order to create an ever-changing urban experience/community gathering place. (Public/Private)
• Major festivals and community events may be held Downtown - during such festivals/ events, outdoor sales of food and drinks may be held on public rights-of-way and in public parks to create a festive environment. (Public/Private)
• Outdoor dining and retailing on sidewalks are encouraged in the Arts and Entertainment District and along the Fourth Street Mall. (Public/Private)
• Permanent and changing street performance venues shall be permitted in the Arts and Entertainment District; promote the Arts and Entertainment District as a street performance opportunity. (Private/Public)
• "Route 66 Neon District" may be created on Central Avenue as a 1% for the Arts Program (Public)

2. Promoting existing and new arts, entertainment, and cultural facilities (Kimo Theatre, Kiva Auditorium, Civic Plaza, Library Auditorium, South Broadway Cultural Center, etc.) as Albuquerque's "horizontal performing arts center" (APAC).\*

Actions:

- Investigate ways that the artistic, promotional and programming functions of these public facilities can be consolidated and better managed. (Public/Private)
• Encourage joint promotions/schedule coordination of all public and private venues within the Arts and Entertainment District. (Private/Public)
• Any privatization of public arts, entertainment or cultural facilities may be considered only if the City adopts a public and competitive process to award such contracts. Any privatization of public facilities suggested or recommended by the Plan shall be applicable only to venues located in the area defined as the Downtown Core.

3. Making Downtown the "Contemporary Arts Center" of the Southwest.

Actions:

- Develop live/work spaces for artists, work only spaces and galleries Downtown. (Private)
• May develop a contemporary arts museum in the Arts and Entertainment District. (Public/Private)
• Encourage major art festivals (i.e. Site Santa Fe, Magnifico, Southwest Arts Festival, NM Arts and Crafts Fair, etc.) to locate in Downtown. (Private)
• Concentrate the "fine print" industry in the Arts and Entertainment District. (Private)

\*Note: The Albuquerque Performing Arts Center (APAC) would consist of several Arts venues located within walking distance of one another. The venues would coordinate programming and management.



We will:

Make Downtown and the Historic District a "Tourist Destination."

By:

1. Making it easy for tourists to visit and enjoy the District attractions, and by promoting the District as a "tourist destination."

Actions:

- Promote Downtown and The Historic District at the airport and car rental outlets (Public/Private).
- A trolley service may be operated throughout The District connecting attractions (Downtown, Old Town, Natural History Museum, Albuquerque Museum, Explora, Aquarium, Botanic Gardens, Tingley Beach, Zoo, the Cultural Centers, etc.). (Public)
- Consider starting a lowrider taxi service in Downtown. (Private)
- "District" directional/informational signage shall be installed throughout The District (Public/Private)
- A pedestrian urban trail may be built throughout The District. (Public)
- Operate bicycle rentals for visitors to experience The District. (Private)

2. Thinking of the Historic District as a "theme park" with highly organized experiences.

Actions:

- Provide programmed event packages and retailing discounts in Downtown and Old Town to visitors/tourists. (Public/Private)
- The Albuquerque Convention & Visitor's Bureau (ACVB) shall develop a promotion package highlighting District attractions. (Public/Private)
- May build a Multi-purpose Arena Downtown to expand Convention Center and hospital-ity services for residents and visitors alike. (Public/Private)
- Develop a single pass to area attractions such as the Albuquerque Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Zoo, Explora, etc. (Public)

3. Planning and promoting year-round festivals and "markets" in the District. These festivals and markets shall be targeted to District visitors, residents, and employees.

Actions:

- Program many festivals, celebrations, and parades Downtown. (Public/Private)
- Recruit event promoters to sponsor annual Downtown Events (i.e. Taste of Albuquerque, Fall Crawl, Cinco de Mayo, etc.). (Private)
- Expand the Farmers Market; may develop a municipal market/mercado. (Public/Private)
- Hang banners promoting upcoming events along Central Avenue and along the Fourth Street Mall. (Public/Private)

**We will:**

**Create new parks, open space and plazas that are easily accessible to downtown residents, workers, students and visitors.**

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**By:**

**1. Developing new parks and open spaces in the Downtown.**

**Actions:**

- A park may be built on the western edge of the Downtown Core to serve Lew Wallace Elementary, St. Mary’s and the surrounding neighborhood. (Public)
- A park may be built south of Central to serve the office and residential population in that area. (Public)
- May create a series of triangular parks along Central Avenue from Downtown to Old Town, to strengthen the pedestrian connection. (Public)
- May create a plaza in front of the bus/train depot as an element of the Alvarado Metropolitan Redevelopment area.(Public/Private)
- *The Plan* adopts building standards which encourage courtyard spaces within new development (Public)

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**2. Creating Albuquerque’s “Central Park.”**

**Actions:**

- A regional park adjacent to the Rio Grande may be established, connecting the Biopark, Tingley Beach, Zoo, and Hispanic Cultural Center. (Public/Private)
- The attractions in the region may be connected to the Downtown Core by train, shuttle, or some other interesting means of transportation. (Public)

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**3. Enhancing the Fourth Street Mall as a safe, attractive and lively pedestrian link between the Civic Plaza and Central Avenue.**

**Actions:**

- Landscaping and street furniture along the Mall will be provided and maintained. (Private)
- Additional security and maintenance through the Mall area will be provided. (Private)
- Programmed activities, food vendors and retailing on the Mall will be provided. (Private)

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**4. Enhancing existing streets as linear paths connecting destinations throughout the District.**

**Action:**

- “Gateways” may be created at each end of Central Avenue as entrances into Downtown from both the East and the West. (Public)
- An Urban Pedestrian Trail will be built to interconnect the series of parks and open spaces in The District. (Public)
- Pedestrian walking connections between District attractions will be enhanced. (Old Town, Bio Park, Zoo, Museums, etc.) (Public/Private)

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**We will:**

**Develop, maintain, and market Downtown as if it were a single mixed-use project.**

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**By:**

**1. Developing a comprehensive marketing strategy for Downtown, with an emphasis on livability and accessibility.**

**Actions:**

- The DAT and the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau (ACVB) shall develop a Downtown promotions package, coordinate publicity, and develop a District advertising budget. (Private)
  - The “user-friendliness” of the District should be continuously evaluated by developing and administering surveys to be given out at conventions, hotels, etc., to visitors, residents, and employees. (Private)
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**2. Privately developing, maintaining, and programming the Fourth Street Mall.**

**Actions:**

- The City and DAT have entered into a long term lease to develop, maintain and program the Fourth Street Mall. (Public/Private)
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