



PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN  
**TUCSON**

DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
1978





**PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN  
TUCSON**

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# PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

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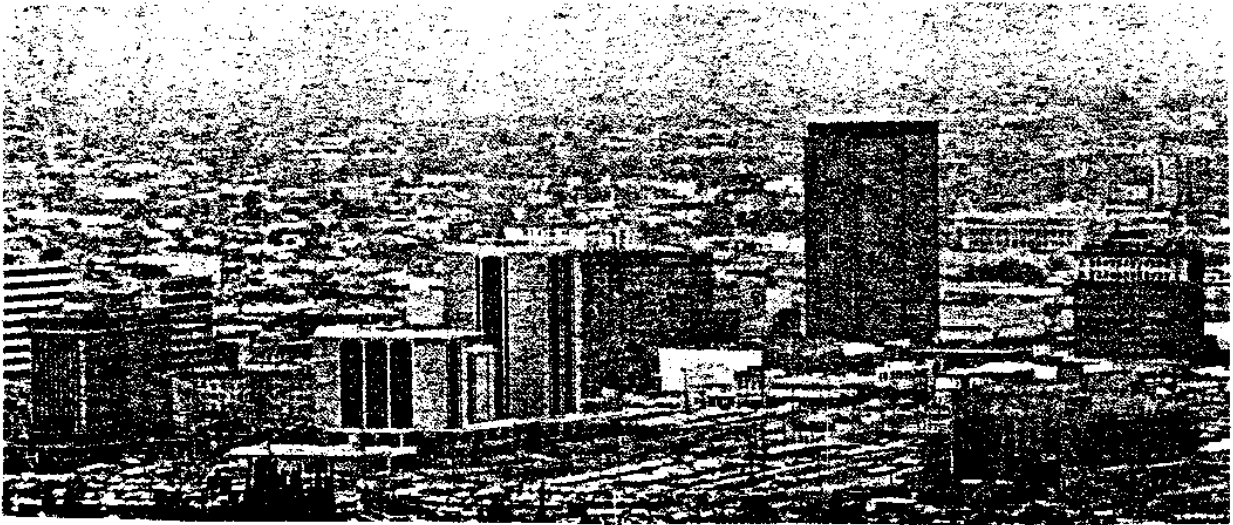


# **INTRODUCTION**









## INTRODUCTION

Among all the centers of activity in the Tucson region, downtown is in a class by itself. It is the regional center for office employment; it is the place where city, county, state, and federal governments have their central headquarters; it is Tucson's center for the performing and visual arts; it is the place where our historical roots are preserved for all to see.

If all this is true, why, then, do we hear people speak of downtown Tucson as though it were an unwanted relic, without hope of rehabilitation? The main reason for this attitude is downtown's negative image--an image which has been brought about by its decline as a regional shopping center. There is no doubt that downtown retailing has fared poorly since the opening of El Con and Park Mall. But, retailing is only one of many downtown functions and there are many different types of retailing. In fact, certain downtown retail markets are quite strong. It is a mistake to give up on downtown solely because of its performance in one retail area, when it has so many other strengths.

For the last 10 to 15 years, it has not been clear just what "official" attitude should be adopted toward downtown. But, more recently, optimism about downtown's future has increased as people have begun to understand that it has basic strengths which had gone unrecognized in the shadow of retail decline. This new optimism has resulted in increased levels of support for

downtown revitalization. Some reasons for supporting downtown revitalization are based on such notions as economic common sense, while others are less tangible, having to do with the symbolic value of downtown to the community-at-large.

From the economic viewpoint, downtown represents a public and private investment which is simply so substantial that it cannot be permitted to deteriorate. It is also generally understood that a vigorous, attractive downtown is an important factor in attracting new investment to the entire Tucson region.

Downtown's symbolic value is harder to define, but is, nonetheless, real. Psychologists point out that human beings living in urban areas need various geographic and social points of reference which provide them with a sense of identity and equilibrium in what can be a very impersonal and lonely environment. Downtown is an important point of reference to Tucson residents. Because downtown represents Tucson as a whole, it is also a necessary link in the chain of places by which an individual can understand his relationship to the national and world communities.

For whatever reasons, economic or symbolic, many people and organizations are actively working for downtown improvement programs, are beginning to better understand downtown's current situation and future potential, and are giving an affirmative answer to the question--"Does Tucson need a downtown?"

This Plan marks a significant transition for downtown, as an attitude of ambivalence gives way to a new era of optimism.

The task of the Downtown Plan is to bring into focus an up-to-date definition of downtown Tucson and its role in the community, to indicate its potential for new growth and renewal, to suggest ways for overcoming whatever obstacles may exist to the achievement of that potential, and to generate a level of enthusiasm for downtown improvements which can be converted into the energy to carry them out. This Plan suggests appropriate actions to be taken by both local government and private enterprise. But, success will not come easily. Downtown revitalization will depend on the ability of the public and private sectors to maintain, over a period of many years, an unwavering commitment to the task and a spirit of cooperation which is without local precedent.

**YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW**  
**AN ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS**  
**AND FUTURE POTENTIALS**





## YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

An assessment of existing conditions and future potentials

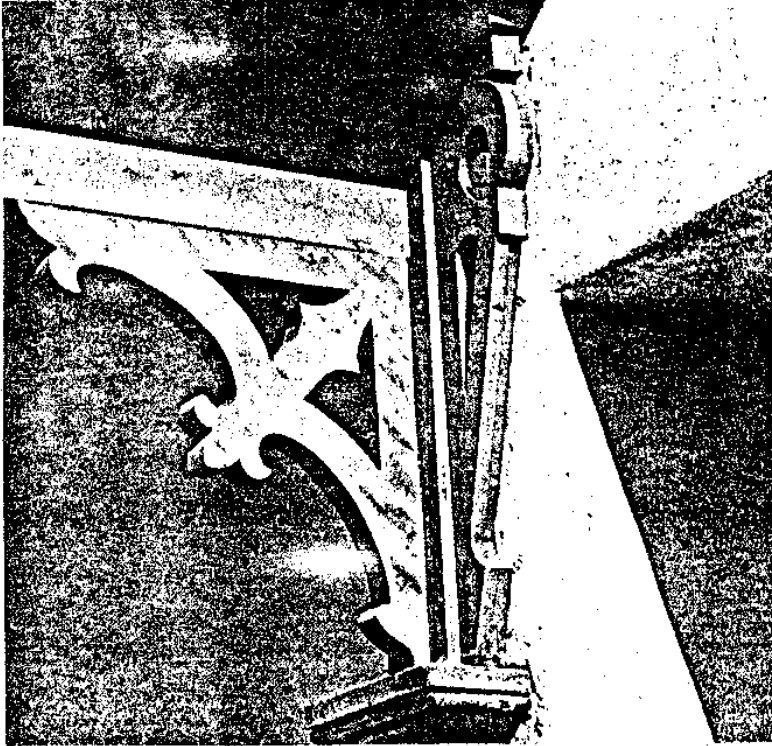
Tucson is a city of newcomers. Long time residents are a scarce commodity. The whole idea of revitalizing downtown Tucson must seem an odd notion to those--now a large majority--who never knew it in its heyday. But, in the days before shopping centers, downtown really was the center of everything. People really did live in Snob Hollow, making downtown a place where households of all income levels were well represented. All six of Tucson's department stores were located downtown. If you wanted to go to a movie, to the YMCA, or to get your allergy shot, you went downtown.

Downtown **has** changed in the last 25 years. In some ways, it's been a change for the better--in some ways it has not. The time has come to focus on the present and future, rather than to bemoan the passing of an era to which we cannot return.

Without forgetting what downtown **was**, let us take stock of what it is.

**DOWNTOWN  
YESTERDAY**

**DOWNTOWN  
TODAY**



### DOWNTOWN HISTORIC SITES

- 1 Verdugo House
- 2 Steinfeld House
- 3 Sam Hughes House
- 4 La Casa Cordova
- 5 Fish-Stevens House
- 6 E.P. & S.W. RR. Station
- 7 Case del Gobernador
- 8 El Tiradito
- 9 Hoff House
- 10 Wright-Zellweger House
- 11 Pithouse Site
- 12 Location of Presidio Wall
- 13 Charles O. Brown House
- 14 Samaniego House
- 15 St. Augustine Cathedral

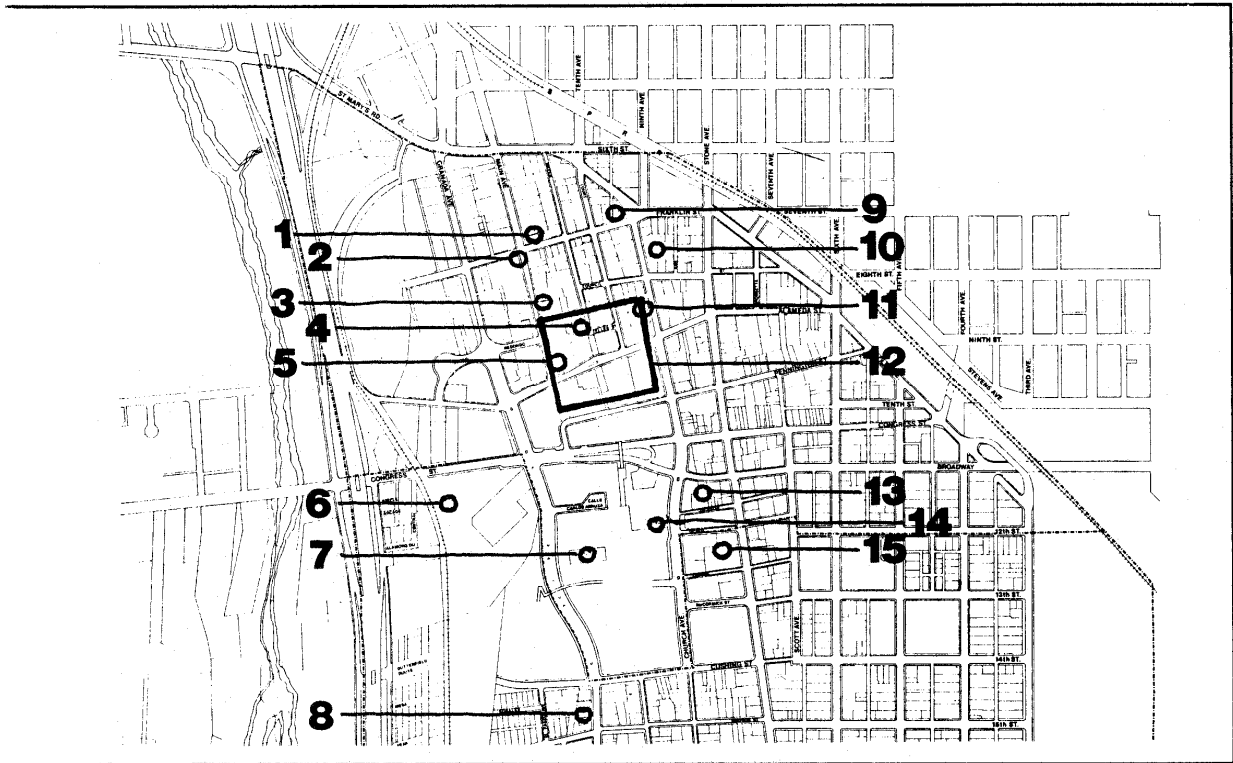
Today downtown Tucson, like many downtowns in maturing American cities, is experiencing several serious problems. They include a familiar list: physical decay, commercial competition from regional shopping and office centers, and a predominance of low-income residents and shoppers.

Downtown, while sharing many familiar patterns of other cities, is unique in several important ways. It has many assets which represent a strong foundation on which to build tomorrow's downtown:

**Governmental Center:** Downtown is the region's governmental center with 2,900 combined federal, county, state, and city employees providing a relatively stable mix of income levels.

**Decision-Making Center:** Downtown is the meeting place of the City Council, the Pima County Board of Supervisors, and other groups whose decisions have impacts on the entire community.





**Financial Center:** Almost all local banks and other financial institutions have their main offices downtown. For some, downtown is a subregional headquarters.

**Retail Center:** Downtown is the third largest retail center in the region and the largest in Tucson's southwest trade area.

**Office Center:** Downtown is the region's principal office center, with over one million square feet of general office space.

**Cultural Center:** The downtown, since Tucson's founding, has been the cultural focus of the community. The Main Library, the Community Center, the Temple of Music and Art, and the Tucson Art Museum are all located downtown, making it a true cultural center today, as it has been in the past.

**Historic Center:** Downtown **IS** the history of Tucson. The CBD is ringed with three designated Historic District Neighborhoods, two of them on the National Register of Historic Places. Significant individual historic sites and structures are located throughout the downtown area. Among them are El Tiradito (The Wishing Shrine), the Pit House (900 AD), an archeological site which establishes Tucson as the second oldest continuously inhabited



community in the United States, the Casa Cordova (1843), the Fish-Stevens House, the Steinfeld House, and the Wright-Zellweger House.

**Convention Center:** Good convention facilities make downtown the region's leading convention center. Almost two-thirds of Tucson's convention visitors stay at downtown and central area hotels and motels.

**Regional Access:** Interstate 10 provides excellent regional access to downtown from the northwest and southeast; I-19 makes downtown the "gateway" to Tucson for travelers from the south.

**Transportation Hub:** All modes of transportation converge in the downtown which is the main transfer point for most local bus routes. Intercity buses and the railroad have their stations downtown.

**Natural Setting:** The heart of downtown is within two miles of Sentinel Peak ("A" Mountain). Tumamoc Hill and the Tucson Mountains form a picturesque backdrop for downtown's tall buildings. Views of the mountains from the buildings and from street level enhance the experience of being downtown.

**Santa Cruz River:** Proximity to the Santa Cruz River will become an important asset as work proceeds on the linear park.

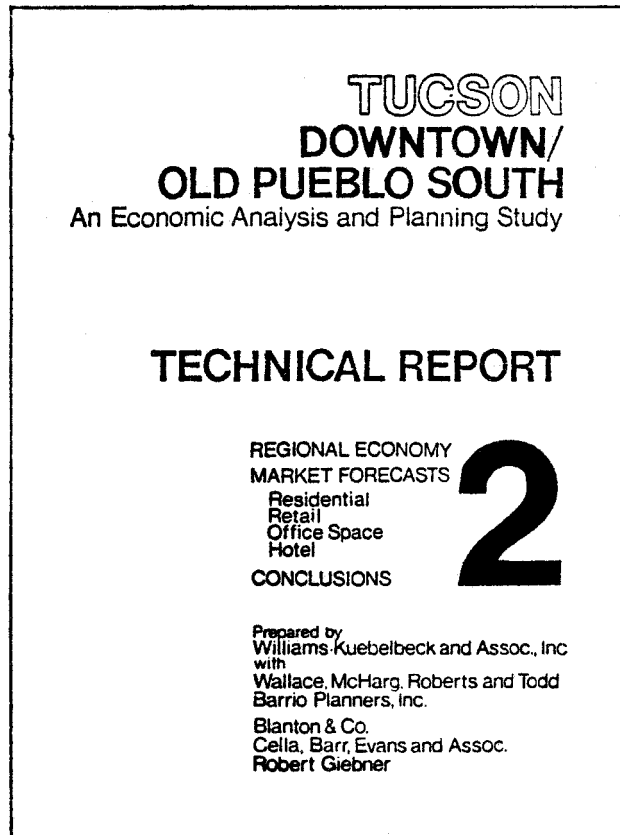
**Unique Architecture:** Downtown and the areas around it display the continuous evolution of architectural style from the 1870's to the present. The contrast between old and new is highlighted by many notable examples--pre-territorial adobe houses, brick Victorians, the Pima County Courthouse, E.P.& S.W. station, St. Augustine Cathedral, the buildings of the Community Center, the Main Library, etc.

**Self-Containment:** Downtown has the I-10 Freeway and railroads which act as major physical boundaries, keeping the Central Business District in a concentrated area.

**Variety:** No other area in Tucson offers the diversity of land uses, income and ethnic groups, historic resources, and concentration of activities.

**Expansion:** Several sites, public and private, are available. Investment in downtown, if structured correctly, can have a positive catalytic action.

**Energy Conservation:** As the public transit hub and with its great variety of services and other activities, downtown and surrounding areas will be an attractive residential location as strict energy conservation becomes necessary rather than merely fashionable.



While it is often easier to become frustrated about downtown's problems than excited by its virtues, it is important that the problems not be magnified to the point where any progress seems impossible and positive action is discouraged. It is clear that downtown has many, natural advantages upon which to base revitalization efforts. It is also encouraging to review the recently completed economic projections for downtown Tucson, which suggest a real, though conditional, potential for significant positive changes.

**DOWNTOWN  
TOMORROW**

The ways in which downtown Tucson will change in the next 12 years are, first and foremost, a product of economic factors. As a part of the Downtown Study, an economic analysis was conducted in 1977 to illuminate downtown economic potentials. The market analyses presented here are the results of extensive investigations of the Pima County market area and its localized impacts on the Tucson Central Business District. The dynamics of the Tucson region provide the economic basis for redevelopment within downtown Tucson. Accordingly, historic and current economic activity have been assessed at this larger scale in order to determine the potential for various urban land uses in and around the downtown.

Surveys conducted as part of the economic study indicated that proximity to the CBD is an important determinant in residential choice to some residents, and should become an even greater factor in the future with:

**Residential Market  
Forecast**

increasing energy costs, which discourage longer work trips;

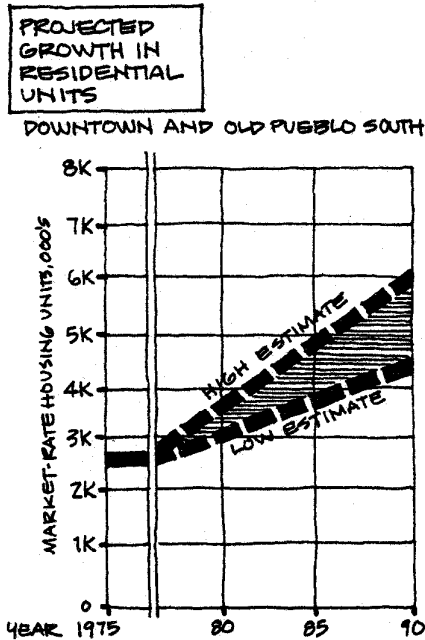
increasing costs of new streets and utilities which encourage higher prices for peripheral housing;

demographic shifts toward adult-only households;

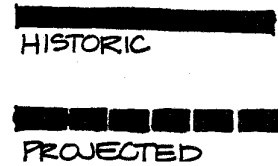
expanded employment in the downtown area; and

expanded growth of institutions and cultural activities in and around the CBD. (The University of Arizona student population is expected to increase from 28,000 in 1978 to about 36,000 by 1985.)

Given that households with one or more of these characteristics should represent an increasingly significant component of the total demand for housing in the future,



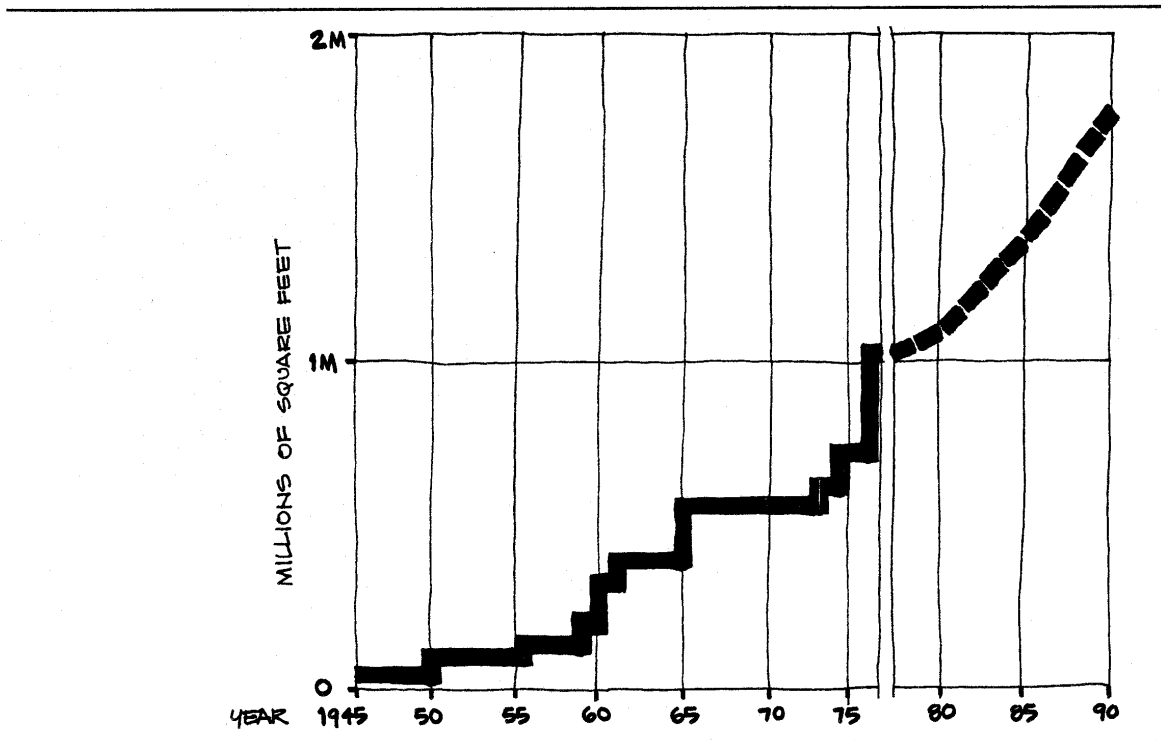
**GROWTH IN DOWNTOWN OFFICE SPACE**



it is realistic to project that between five to ten percent of the region's housing demand for multiple family housing could be attracted to the downtown area in the future. This demand represents on an annual basis from 40 to 80 townhouses/condominiums and 80 to 160 apartments. Projected over the 14-year period, 1977 through 1990, this represents a total demand for housing of between 1,700 to 3,400 units.

**Office Market Forecast**

In the future, the potential for office development in the downtown will depend primarily upon those services and functions which desire interaction with the governmental institutions, courts, and financial facilities. Given the continued significance of these activities, the potential capture rate for the Central Business District has been projected at 25 percent of the total regional market demand for the projection period 1977 to 1990. This projection, allowing for the continuation of the trend toward suburbanization of the majority of office-using activities, amounts to a net of 815.6 thousand square feet over the next 14 years, **after** allowance is made for absorption of 176.6 thousand square feet of existing vacant space. The CBD demand for new office space by time period is as follows: 1977 to



1980, 70 thousand square feet; 1981 to 1985, 336 thousand square feet; and 1986 to 1990, 410 thousand square feet.

Historically, the capture rate of hotel/motel facilities for downtown and the freeway adjacent to downtown has averaged about 35 percent of the competitive market. However, as decentralization of employment continues both easterly and northerly of the downtown area, it is unreasonable to assume that the central area will continue to attract such a substantial market share of the business travel market. Despite the difficulties experienced by several of the downtown establishments, there are still a significant number of factors supporting the central area as a major hotel/motel facility location.

**Hotel/Motel  
Market Forecast**

First, the center city continues to play an important functional role as an employment center for governmental activities as well as for private sector financial, legal and other business services. Second, the presence of the Convention Center and other cultural/institutional assets gives the downtown prominence as a location for convention and conference activities. Finally, the central area's proximity to I-10 gives it strong advantages with respect to attracting tourist or short-term visitor patronage. Given these

**GROWTH IN  
CENTRAL AREA  
HOTEL/MOTEL  
FACILITIES**

  
HISTORIC

  
PROJECTED

*More rooms in the downtown area and increases in hotel and motel occupancy will boost patronage of downtown restaurants and entertainment facilities, making downtown a more attractive and lively place at night as well as by day.*

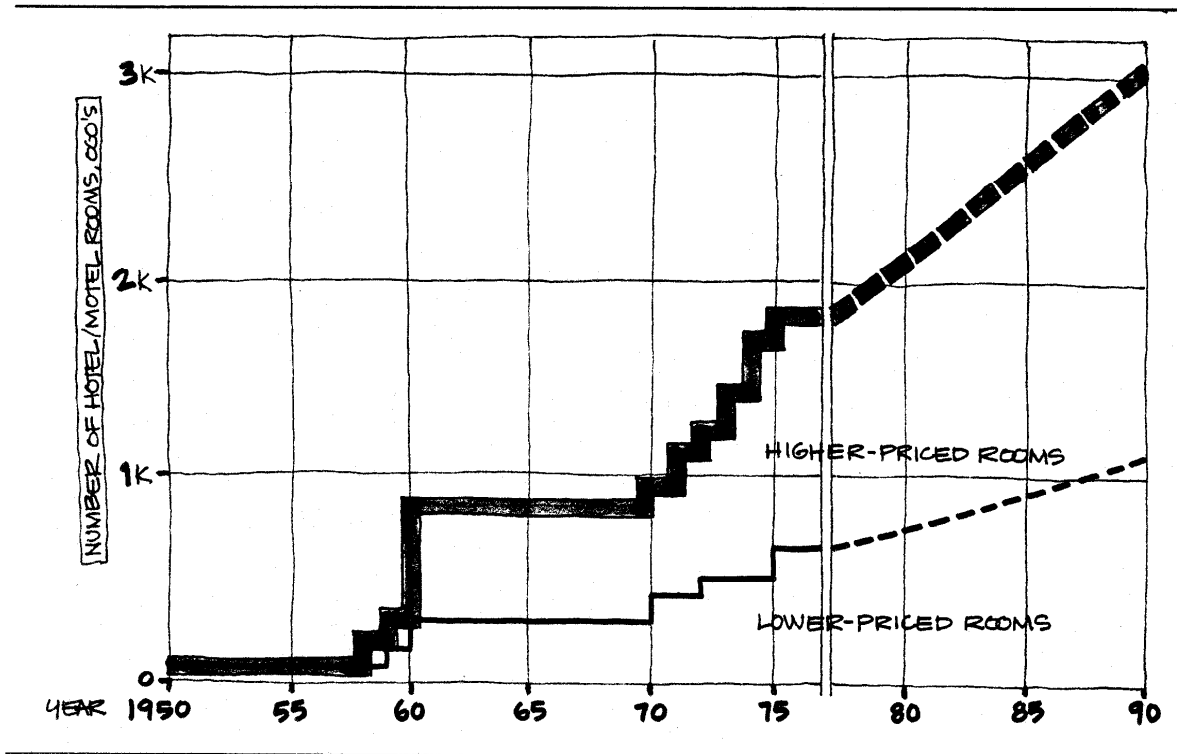
advantages, in the future, the combined central areas should be able to attract 20 percent of the new higher-priced room demand and 30 percent of the new economy room demand. More rooms in the downtown area and increases in hotel and motel occupancy will boost patronage of downtown restaurants and entertainment facilities, making downtown a more attractive and lively place at night as well as by day.

Over the 14-year period 1977 to 1990 the total potential for the central area is estimated at between 1,200 and 1,300 rooms, 700 to 800 in the higher priced category and 500 in the economy price range. These capture rates are distributed by time period as follows: 1977 to 1980, 200 higher-quality rooms and 120 economy rooms; 1981 to 1990, 500 to 600 higher-quality rooms and 375 economy rooms.

**Retail Forecast**

A vigorous retail sector generates pedestrian activity which is essential if downtown is to have a lively image and a human scale.





The future of downtown retailing will be influenced by the performances of the residential, office, and hotel/motel markets, and forecasts for all three give rise to a measure of optimism. The only negative aspect of the downtown retail picture is the regional market forecast. While there will be demand for one additional regional shopping center in the Tucson market area within the next three to four years, it is highly unlikely that it can be attracted to the downtown.


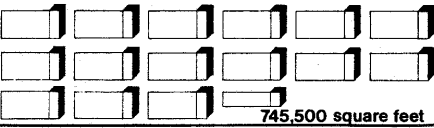


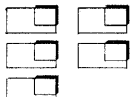

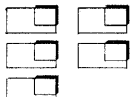

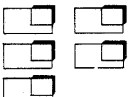

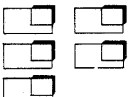

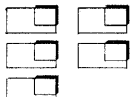

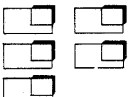


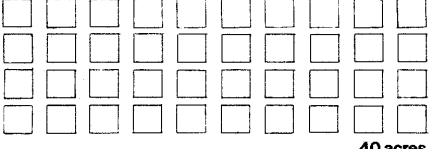


Over the longer term, however, concurrent with the expansion and infilling of new developments westerly of the CBD and the creation of a high amenity environment along the Santa Cruz River, it may be possible to develop a regional facility on Congress Street west of I-10 or even within downtown proper on a site with good regional access and visibility.

With an increase in residential development to the west, downtown could strengthen its role as a community shopping center serving the southwest portion of the Tucson area. In this sub-area, there is currently sufficient demand to support development of a community-sized shopping center of 150,000 to 200,000 square feet.

**SPACE  
FORECAST**

There is an excellent potential for development of convenience facilities. Development of downtown housing units at the scale suggested in the residential forecast would have significant beneficial effects on the retail base in the downtown area, particularly in terms of providing a market base for convenience retail and eating and drinking establishments. An infusion of resident market support would tend to stabilize the existing merchant base as well as promote diversification to include major food, drug/variety, and personal services establishments.

Within the downtown core, an orientation toward convenience facilities to serve the expanding downtown employment base appears as a realistic market alternative; with particular focus on drugstores, personal services, and a variety of eating and drinking facilities. As office employment increases, there will be additional demand for such facilities, and with more restaurants, the CBD could become increasingly competitive for evening dining and entertainment.

	1977-1980	1981-1990				
<b>COMMERCIAL OFFICE</b>	 70,000 square feet	 745,500 square feet				
<b>HOTEL/MOTEL</b>	 320 units	 925 units				
<b>RETAIL</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>   <b>CONVENIENCE</b>                      100,000 square feet                 </td> <td>   <b>REGIONAL</b>                      235,000 square feet                 </td> </tr> </table>	 <b>CONVENIENCE</b> 100,000 square feet	 <b>REGIONAL</b> 235,000 square feet	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>   <b>CONVENIENCE</b>                      100,000 square feet                 </td> <td>   <b>REGIONAL</b>                      140,000 square feet                 </td> </tr> </table>	 <b>CONVENIENCE</b> 100,000 square feet	 <b>REGIONAL</b> 140,000 square feet
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 <b>CONVENIENCE</b> 100,000 square feet	 <b>REGIONAL</b> 140,000 square feet					
<b>LIGHT INDUSTRY</b>	 15 acres	 40 acres				
<b>GOVERNMENT OFFICE</b>	 138,000 square feet	 192,000 square feet				

Industrial sites in or near downtown offer excellent access from rail and major arterial streets. They may be expected to attract approximately 10 percent or 55 acres of light industrial development between 1977 and 1990.

**Light Industrial Forecast**

These economic forecasts demonstrate that downtown Tucson is alive and well and can look forward to a brighter future. However, the achievement of maximum economic potential in each market sector is not automatic. Some of the forecasts are based on the assumption that certain improvements will be made in the downtown area and that local government will be consistently supportive of downtown revitalization efforts. For example, the forecasts for all sectors assume that the circulation system will be periodically upgraded to keep pace with increasing traffic volume and that parking space will be available in appropriate quantities and locations.

Achievement of the residential potential will require a number of public and private improvements which enhance the downtown as a residential location for "private market" housing. These improvements include the following actions:

providing major environmental amenities, such as the

development of Santa Cruz Linear Park; encouraging the

development of good convenience shopping within easy access to new residential development;

encouraging development of specialty retail, restaurants and entertainment complexes as part of the expansion of office development and other activities in the downtown area; and

assisting in land assembly, and possibly land cost write-down of residential sites, in order that land sufficient for economically-scaled development is made available at reasonable price levels.

Maximizing downtown's retail potential is wholly dependent upon the fulfillment of certain critical conditions. The downtown economic analysis reminds us of the 1968 study which suggested that to maintain its shopping facilities in the CBD, Tucson would have to:

add parking;

facilitate pedestrian and automobile traffic circulation; and

pursue a beautification program.

In the absence of such programs, a loss of 200 thousand square feet of retail space was projected to occur over the next eight to 10 years. The recommended improvements were not made, and the predicted shrinkage of retail facilities has, in fact, occurred. In order to prevent further decline, it would still seem necessary to undertake the three measures identified as vital to downtown's success in 1968, specifically: develop convenient, inexpensive parking facilities; improve access into and through the area; and undertake beautification programs to improve the aesthetic character of the urban environment.

The portions of the Downtown Plan which follow deal with the actions which will be necessary to assist the transformation of these economic forecasts into reality.

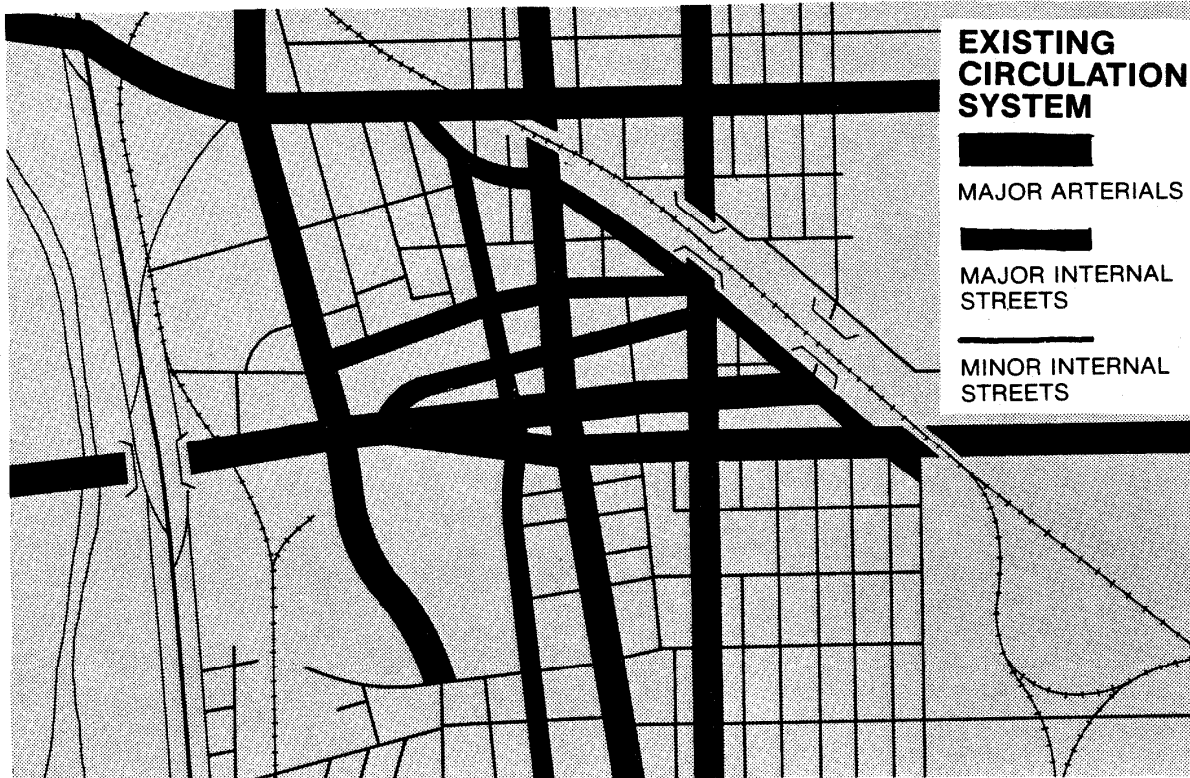


# **CIRCULATION**









## CIRCULATION

Accessibility to downtown is constrained, a condition which inhibits its future growth. Access to the downtown area from the west is limited by the I-10 Freeway to two east--west arterials--St. Mary's Road and Congress Street. The Southern Pacific Railroad delineates the northeast boundary of downtown with access limited to underpasses at Stone Avenue, 6th Avenue, 4th Avenue and Broadway. Measures needed to improve downtown access will require significant outlays of capital.

The streets which provide access to downtown carry significant volumes of traffic not destined for nor originating in downtown. This is especially true of Broadway, Congress, Stone, and 6th Avenue and, to a lesser extent, Toole Avenue.

The principal streets used for internal circulation within downtown include:

Congress/Broadway one-way couplet;

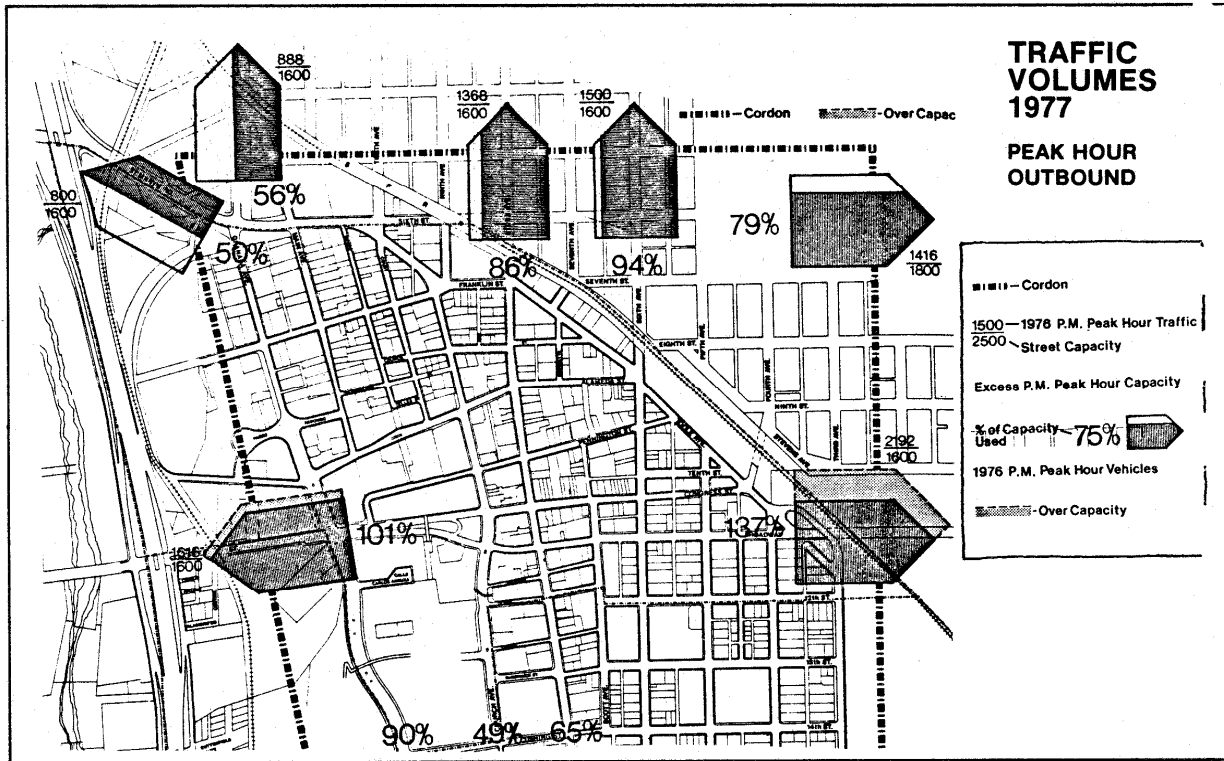
The one-way couplet of Stone Avenue southbound and 6th Avenue northbound;

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### Through Traffic

#### Internal Vehicular Circulation

# PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



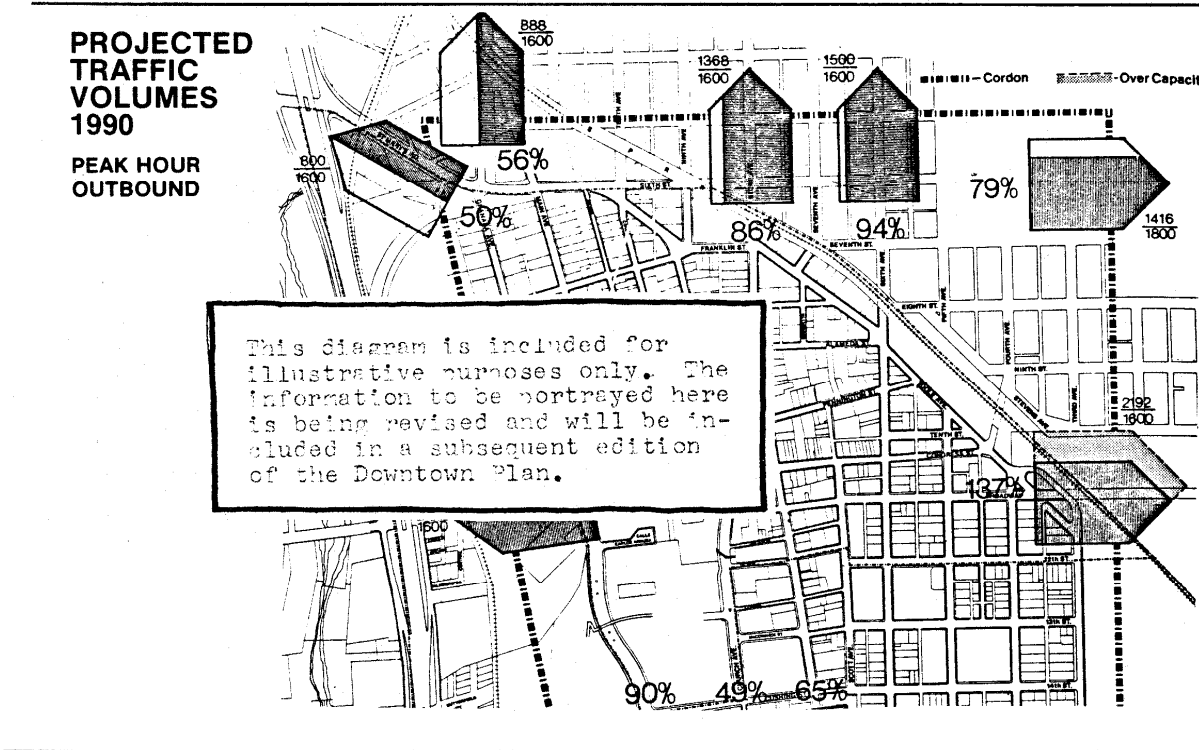
Main-Granada Avenue, a north-south arterial paralleling the I-10 Freeway which provides access to the Community Center;

Alameda Street westbound and Pennington Street eastbound are primarily internal access streets; and

Toole Avenue serves as a minor arterial for north westerly bound traffic and provides access to the northern sections of downtown.

## Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian trips in downtown exceed vehicular traffic volume. The highest volumes of pedestrian traffic occur along Stone Avenue between Alameda and Congress, Congress between Scott and Church, Pennington between Scott and Church, and in the La Placita-Community Center complex. Most of the high volume pedestrian ways in the core of downtown are extremely narrow, dirty and gumspotted, and tend to create negative negative impressions of downtown. In the easterly section of downtown, deteriorated buildings and an unfavorable environment discourage pedestrian circulation. Only in the La Placita-Government complex area has an attempt been made to encourage pedestrian circulation through separation from vehicular traffic and the provision of an aesthetically pleasing environment. Little has been done to connect or expand this concept to the rest of downtown.



Most local bus routes circulate through the downtown. Downtown is the only transfer point between the SunTran and Old Pueblo bus systems. Bus transfers are conducted at curb loading areas offering a bare minimum of comfort and shelter. Greyhound and Continental Trailways provide intercity bus service from terminals located in the eastern section of downtown. AMTRAK passenger train service is provided at the railroad station on Toole Avenue near the intercity bus terminals. Taxi cabs, airport minibus and tour buses also serve the downtown area. No common transfer point is provided for all the different types of public transportation. Thus, transfers from one mode to another can be inconvenient. A detailed analysis of public transportation issues is included elsewhere in this report.

**Public Transportation**

Some level of congestion always occurs in major activity areas. The major objective is to ensure that vehicular flow is not completely disrupted.

**CIRCULATION PROBLEMS**

The principal causes of vehicular congestion are:

**Congestion**

- Vehicles queuing up while waiting to make right or left turns;
- Vehicles looking for on- and off-street parking;
- Vehicles entering and leaving parking spaces;
- The current pattern of through travel;

**CIRCULATION  
CONCEPT PLAN**

Pedestrian signal timing; and

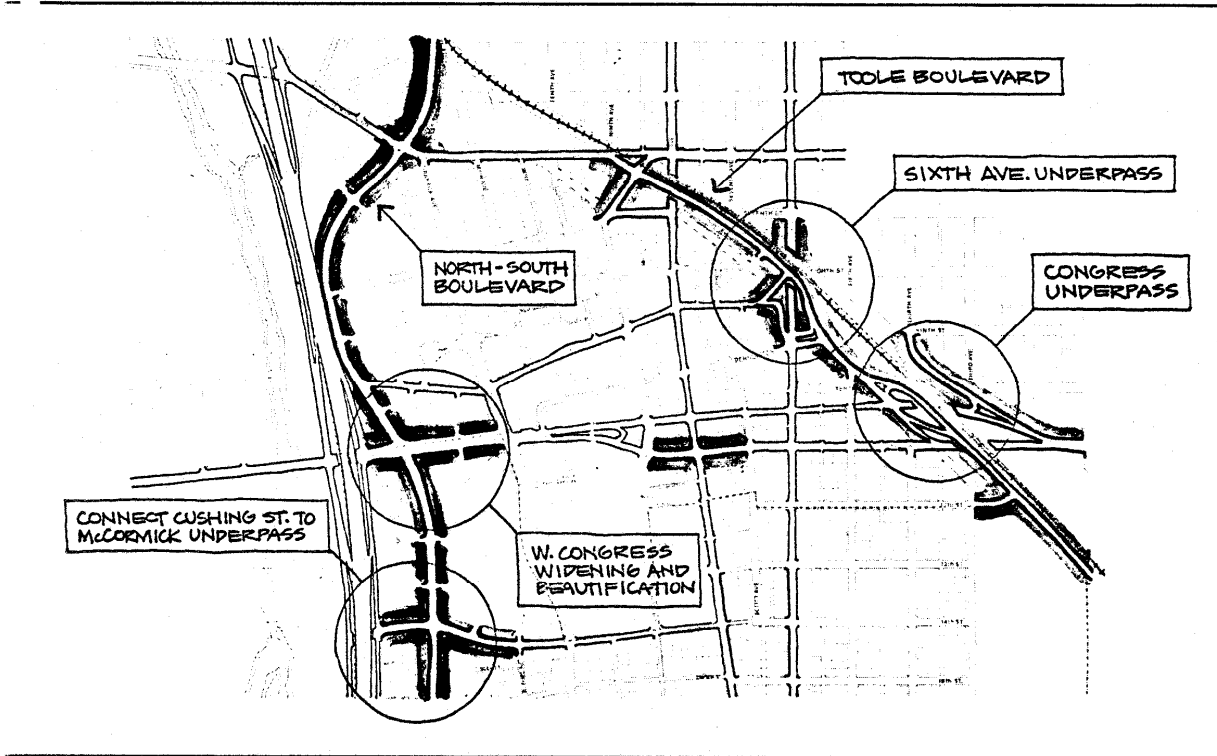
Service vehicles illegally parking (double parking, etc.)

**Confusing Street  
Patterns**

Another major traffic problem is a confusing pattern of one-way and two-way streets in a non-grid configuration found only in downtown. This situation is especially awkward and confusing to motorists entering downtown from the east along Broadway where the westbound connection to Congress lacks clear definition. Internal circulation is difficult for those who are not completely familiar with the street system

**Pedestrian  
Circulation**

Narrow sidewalks adjoining heavy traffic flows create a poor pedestrian environment. Frequent intersections further inhibit pedestrian flow. Linkages between the downtown business district, the Government Center and La Placita are circuitous and inconvenient.



Other problems which have a localized affect are:

**Other Traffic  
Circulation  
Problems**

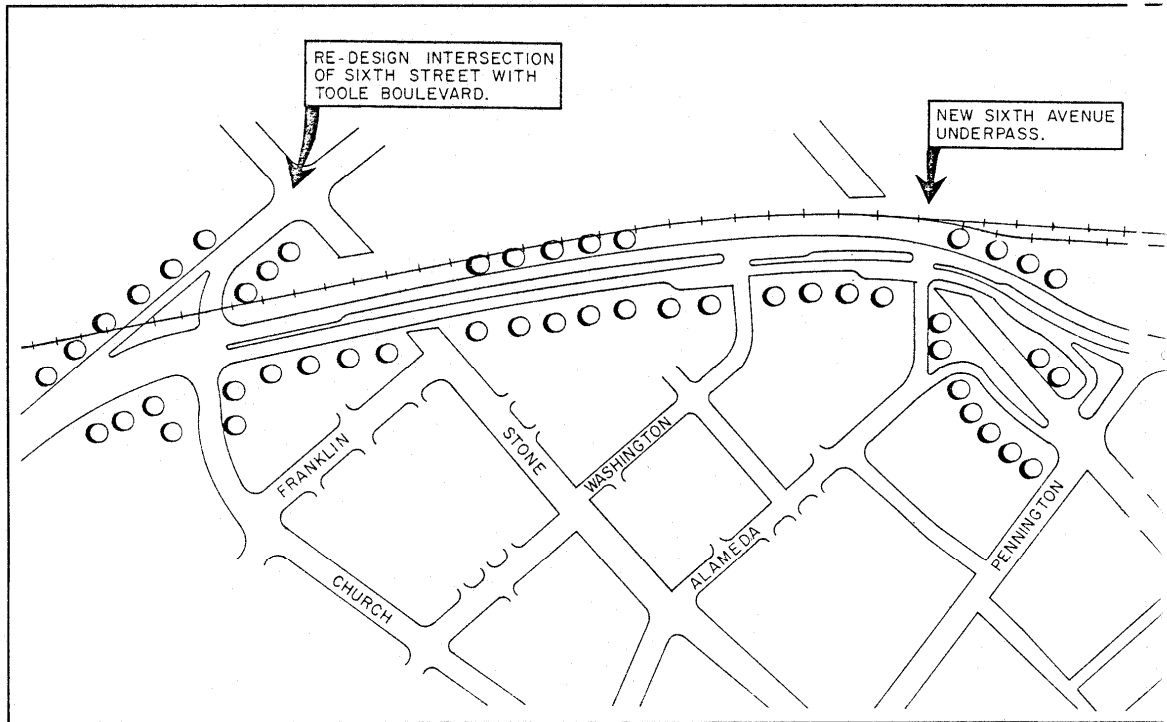
Jogged intersections and substandard street widths introduce a confusing movement pattern along Toole Avenue, Scott, and Council. In the case of Toole Avenue, this problem significantly reduces its role as an access route.

Several of the major arterials cross the railroad by substandard underpass or controlled at-grade crossings. These underpasses are subject to flooding and the grade crossings are frequently interrupted by passing trains. The substandard design of the 6th Avenue underpass is particularly critical because of the high volume of traffic the street carries.

On-street parking is allowed on most streets downtown. On some of those streets operating near capacity, this conflicting use of street space has been a traffic safety problem. An example of this problem occurs on Congress, between 6th Avenue and Church, where in excess of 50 percent of the mid-block traffic accidents are related to on-street parking. Toole Avenue is another example where on-street parking by trucks, loading and unloading goods to abutting warehouse uses, has reduced capacity and disrupted Toole Avenue use.

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

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### **Future Problems**

Economic forecasts suggest that downtown can add about 800,000 square feet of office space between now and 1990. The forecast also calls for increases in retail and government sector use. Downtown streets, i.e., Broadway, Congress, 6th Avenue, Stone, and Toole are now exceeding capacity and will be more severely congested if major circulation improvements are not completed.

### **CIRCULATION CONCEPT**

The circulation system is the foundation for the future development of downtown. The proposed system provides for the free flow and access of vehicular traffic, coupled with an emphasis on the needs of the pedestrian. Downtown has an opportunity to establish an environment that will encourage growth and development. This goal can be attained by several specific actions.

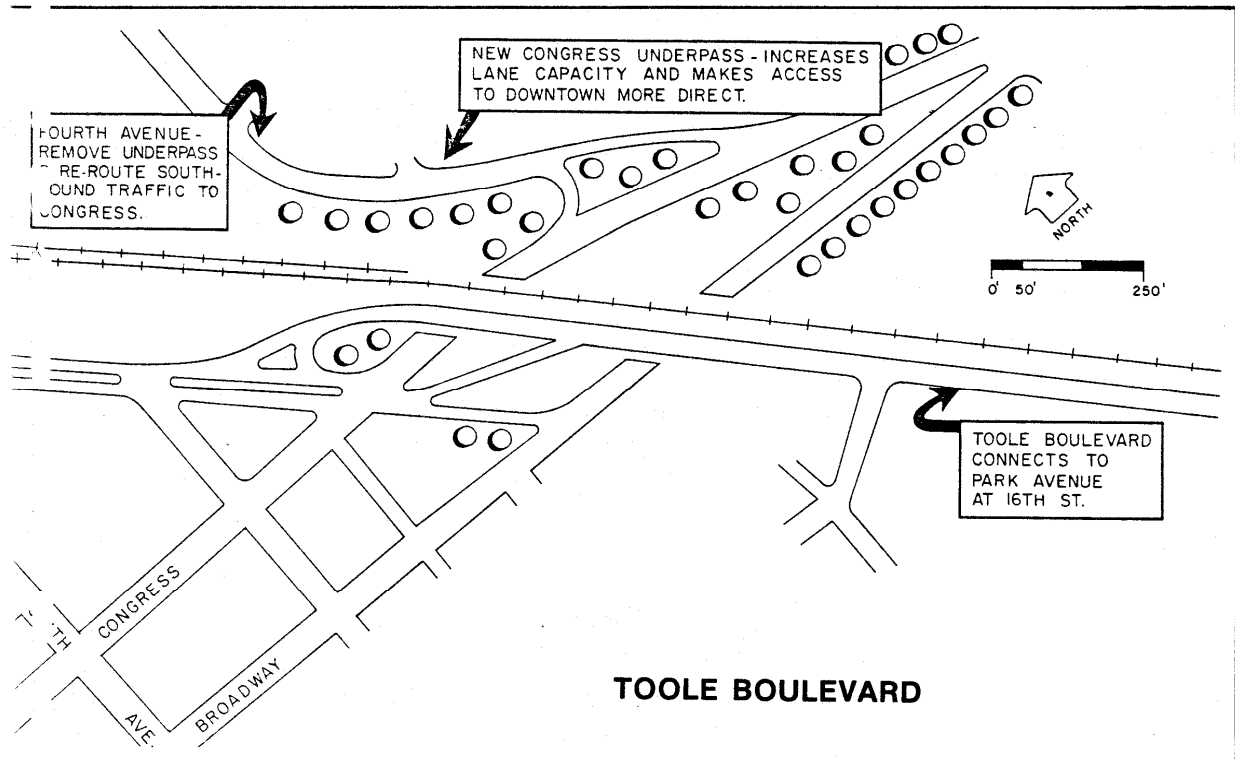
### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Improved Downtown Access**

**Broadway-Congress.** The one-way couplet of Broadway-Congress is the main east-west corridor in the urban area. This corridor presently carries the highest volume of traffic in downtown and has increased 20-25 percent in the last 10 years. Approximately 70 percent of the traffic using this route has origins and destinations inside the downtown.

Various studies during the past 20 years have investigated alternative routes for accommodation of the Broadway-Congress traffic load. Of all the suggestions, the Broadway-Congress couplet remains the most reasonable route for improved access.

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



Major elements of the Broadway-Congress Improved Access include:

Construction of a new underpass at Congress to connect with Broadway east of the Southern Pacific Railroad.\*  
Re-routing of N. 4th Avenue traffic.

Widening of portions of Broadway and Congress to accommodate increasing traffic volumes. Encourage construction of off-street parking facilities. Widening and beautification of Congress, Granada to I-10.

**Toole Boulevard.** Toole Avenue represents a further opportunity to improve access for traffic entering downtown from the east along the Broadway corridor. This will reduce some of the traffic load on Congress Street and provide an additional route to I-10. In order to increase capacity for through traffic and remove conflicts with local traffic, Toole Avenue should be upgraded to a boulevard status. This will require relocation of existing warehouse functions between 6th Avenue and 9th Avenue, as well as extensive realignment and

\* Plan amendments have deleted the sentences outlined. See the Tucson General Plan, Land Use Element.

widening.

**New North-South Boulevard.** Currently, north-south traffic uses Main-Granada and the Stone-6th Avenue couplet. Routing this traffic along Main-Granada causes these vehicular trips to pass through the El Presidio and Barrio Historico neighborhoods. Future increases in traffic volume on this route will have a negative impact on these residential areas. Southbound through traffic on Stone Avenue disrupts pedestrian circulation in the downtown core and interferes with the flow of internal traffic. This problem will become more serious as through traffic, internal traffic, and pedestrian volumes all increase. An alternative to the Stone and Main Granada routes is a new arterial paralleling the freeway along the railroad spur line right-of-way.

This route would provide the following advantages:

Traffic on Stone and Main-Granada would be reduced.

Provide two-way access to a large underdeveloped land area located between St. Mary's Road and 22nd Street which is presently served by the one-way freeway frontage road. It would also provide better visibility to these properties and could encourage development.

**6th Avenue Underpass.** The existing 6th Avenue underpass is substandard in both overhead clearance and lane width. The underpass should be reconstructed to remove these deficiencies.

**Cushing Street-McCormick Underpass.** Cushing Street/14th Street and McCormick Street are not connected. These two routes should be connected to provide better internal circulation and improve access to the Community Center.

With the upgrading of these access routes, all other streets in downtown can provide better local circulation, pedestrian movement, off-street parking, onstreet parking, loading facilities, and bus transit operations.

### **Pedestrian Circulation**

An improved pedestrian environment would encourage more walking which reduces internal vehicle trips and, thereby, street congestion and air pollution.

Pennington Street presents one of the best opportunities for creating a better pedestrian environment because of low vehicular traffic volumes and its connection to the government complex



across Church Avenue. Improvement of pedestrian facilities on Stone would be possible with the reduction of through traffic made possible by the development of the new north-south route paralleling the freeway.

Redevelopment of the east end of Downtown depends in part, on the degree to which it can be made to seem a part of the Downtown core. Convenient, attractive linkages should be established which connect the east end with the lively pedestrian activity in the heart of the Downtown core.

A great deal of confusion is created in Downtown by the existing street configuration. A comprehensive signing program directing users to parking, major activity generators and access routes would reduce much of the confusion and encourage greater use of Downtown facilities.

**Improved Signing**

**PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON**

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**PARKING**







## PARKING

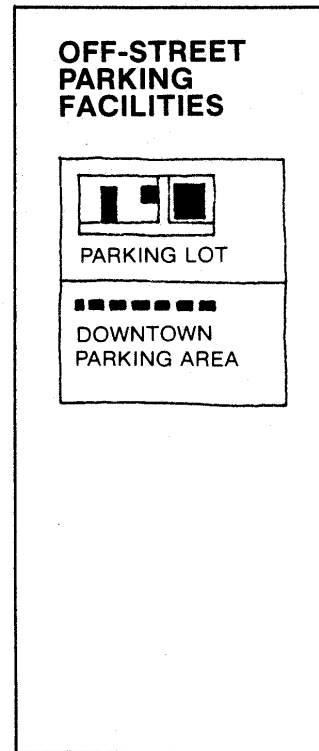
The relative strength and vitality of any major activity center depends heavily on a street system allowing free circulation of vehicles coupled with sufficient parking facilities. In downtown Tucson, as in most downtowns, adequate parking facilities are a major concern, both in the sense of capacity and location.

The parking area related to downtown is somewhat larger than downtown, extending across the railroad tracks and into the northern portion of the Armory Park area. Within this parking area there are approximately 13,000 parking spaces.

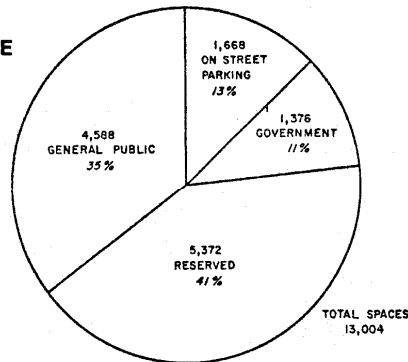
Historically, the parking supply downtown has developed through four separate processes: the private market providing parking spaces as part of a development or as a business venture; government regulation requiring developers to provide a certain number of spaces based on the size and type of their project; governmental provision of parking for community facilities or government use; and, governmental control of on-street parking as part of the circulation system.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

*There are 11,336 off-street spaces in the downtown parking area. During peak usage, 47% of these spaces are occupied. This figure shows the location of off-street parking facilities.*



**DOWNTOWN PARKING SPACE BY CATEGORY**

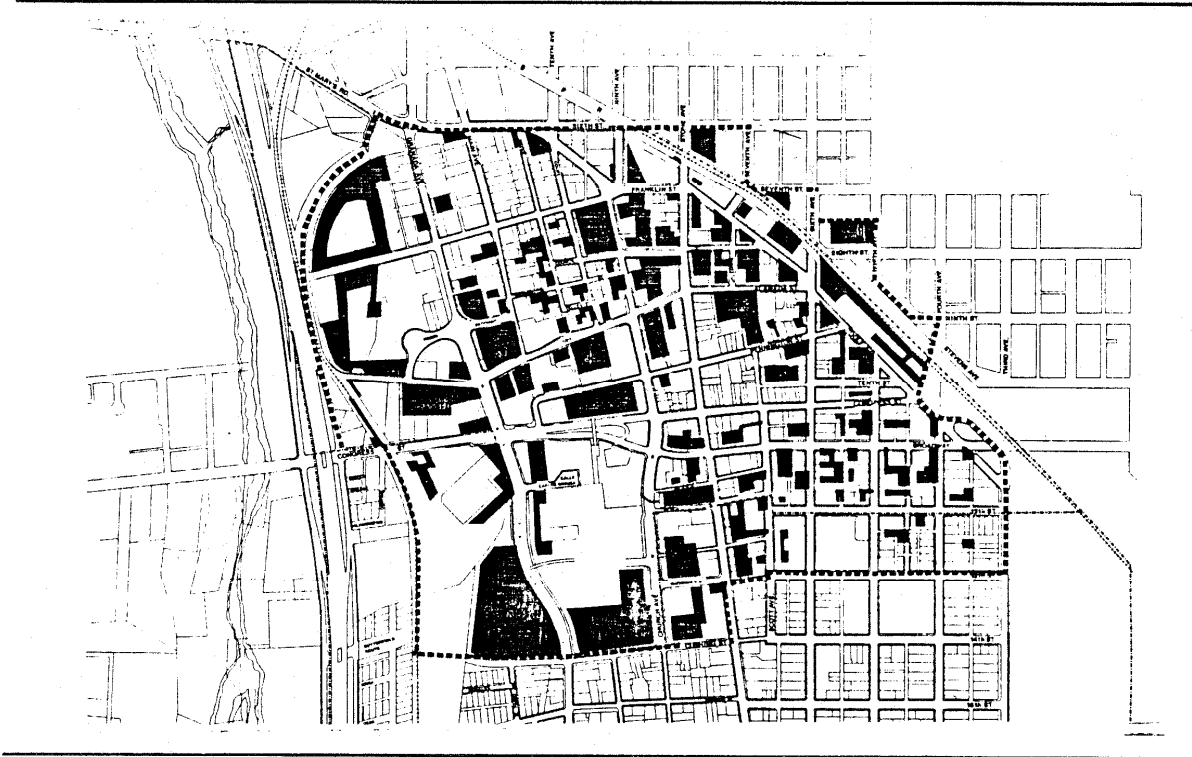


This inventory represents the gross number of available parking spaces. In actual practice, continuous 100 percent occupancy of available parking spaces during peak periods of demand is never achieved for two primary reasons; an individual parking space is vacant during each period following the departure of one car and the arrival of the next and drivers usually perceive a parking lot with high occupancy to be full when actually it is not.

In relating supply to usage and demand it is more realistic to think of a practical parking space supply, which is about 15 percent below the actual supply. Thus, locations having occupancy levels of 85 percent or more may point out areas of parking supply deficiency.

**Parking Space Usage**

Surveys taken in 1976 show that approximately 53 percent of the practical parking space supply is occupied by 9:30 A.M. When most retail stores open for business, use of parking space increases, reaching approximately 57 percent of practical supply between 1:30 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. The 4 percent increase in parked vehicles is assumed to represent customer or client vehicles.



The availability of parking space for the general public is critical to downtown establishments. There are 4,588 public off-street spaces available. During the peak usage period 61 percent of the practical public parking space is occupied. The other major increment of public parking space is on-street parking. There are 1,668 on-street parking spaces in the downtown parking area. By 9:30 A.M., 858 (60 percent) of these spaces are occupied. During peak use 1,027 (72 percent) are occupied.

Parking meters control the usage of on-street parking space through rate structure and time limits. In the downtown core where activity is concentrated, parking meter rates and time limits are set up to encourage high vehicle turnover. This emphasis shifts, moving outward from the core to meet the needs of the longer duration parker. Off-street parking reflects the same system with charges ranging from \$ .50 per hour in the core to \$ .12 per hour on the edges of downtown. To reduce parking costs for downtown customers and clients, approximately 80 merchants and business participate in a "PARK AND SHOP" program.

**Parking Space  
Cost**



### **PARKING PROBLEMS**

#### **Defining Parking Adequacy**

Before evaluating the adequacy of downtown parking, it is necessary to define **adequacy**. Absolute adequacy would require a parking space to be available at the precise destination of each trip. However, that is not possible economically or physically. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt a more practical definition of parking adequacy. A practical standard of adequacy for a trip to a specific location could be defined as an available parking space within **reasonable walking distance** of a trip's destination. For a shopping or personal business trip, a parking space with a walking distance of 200 to 400 feet (approximately one block) is a reasonable standard. For a work trip, a parking space with a walking distance of 400 to 1,000 feet (approximately one to three blocks) is a reasonable standard. Evaluating parking data at a block level suggests that parking space deficiencies are very localized and not a widespread problem in downtown. Most blocks with occupancy levels above 85 percent have alternative parking space available in adjacent blocks within reasonable walking distance.

The reasonableness of these walking distance standards can be modified by other factors perceived by users:

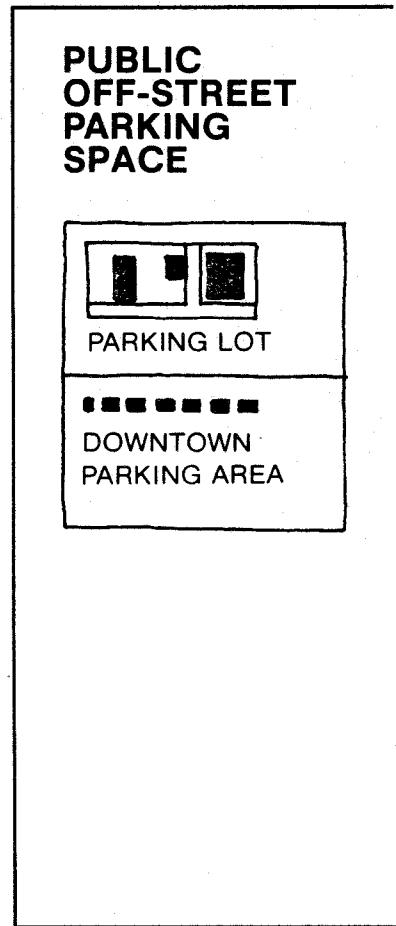
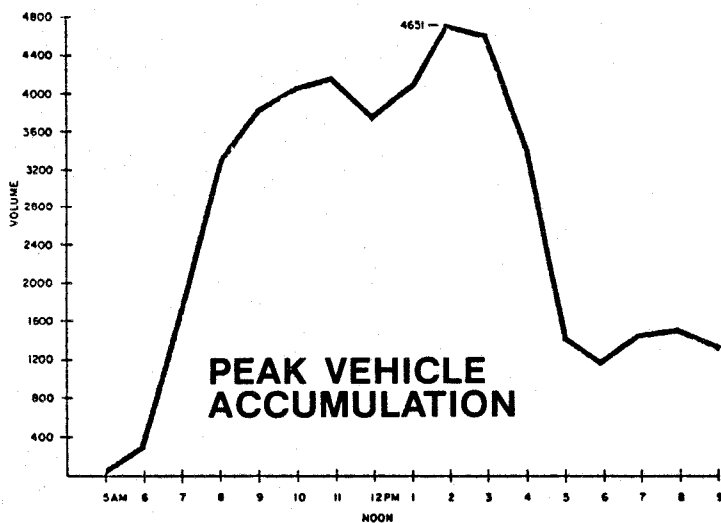
**Readability or Line of Sight.** If a person's destination cannot actually be seen from the parking space, the perceived walking distance may seem further than the actual distance.

**Safety.** If the path from parking space to destination passes through an area which the pedestrian perceives as unsafe (for example, a poorly lighted pedestrian underpass), the walking distance may seem further than it actually is.

**Obstacles.** If a person's path from parking space to destination requires negotiation of obstacles (major street, etc.), the perceived walking distance may seem further than the actual distance.

*There are 4,588 off-street parking spaces for the general public in the downtown parking area. During peak usage, 52% of these spaces are occupied. This figure shows the location of public off-street parking facilities.*

*This graph shows downtown vehicle accumulation for a typical weekday in 1975. The highest vehicle accumulation occurred between 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.*



Although parking for people making personal business and shopping trips to the Downtown may not seem to be a problem when analyzed on a numerical basis, the perception by these user groups is quite different. Since 1968, surveys and informal interviews have revealed a dissatisfaction with Downtown parking space availability. The main problem with public parking in Downtown appears to be visibility or recognition, not lot location or parking space deficiencies. This problem can be explained as either a user expectation problem (users have been conditioned to expect shopping center or strip commercial type parking facilities which are not found Downtown because of high land costs and development densities) or a limited knowledge situation for the occasional user (which could be caused by limited or poor signing, limited exposure to Downtown, a confusing street pattern, etc.). This problem is especially critical in the retail core of Downtown.

**Perception of User Groups**

### **Future Localized Deficiencies**

The existing parking problem is more a problem of perception or expectation than actual deficiencies in parking spaces. Even though Downtown parking facilities are reasonably adequate, the balance between supply and demand at a specific location is susceptible to rapid change. Each land use and traffic circulation change or adjustment will affect both parking capacity and demand for parking space. Between now and 1990 Downtown could absorb another 800,000 square feet of new office space. This would generate a need for over 2,400 parking spaces. In addition, several present day parking lots are logical candidates for office development. Thus, the parking space inventory will be depleted as demand rises.

### **Parking Cost**

Most parking in Downtown has some cost, which is highest in the core area. High land costs and the construction costs to build multi-level parking structures make it very expensive to provide general public parking space Downtown. This cost has been passed on to the parking consumer giving Downtown a negative parking image when compared to the rest of the community, where free parking is usually available.

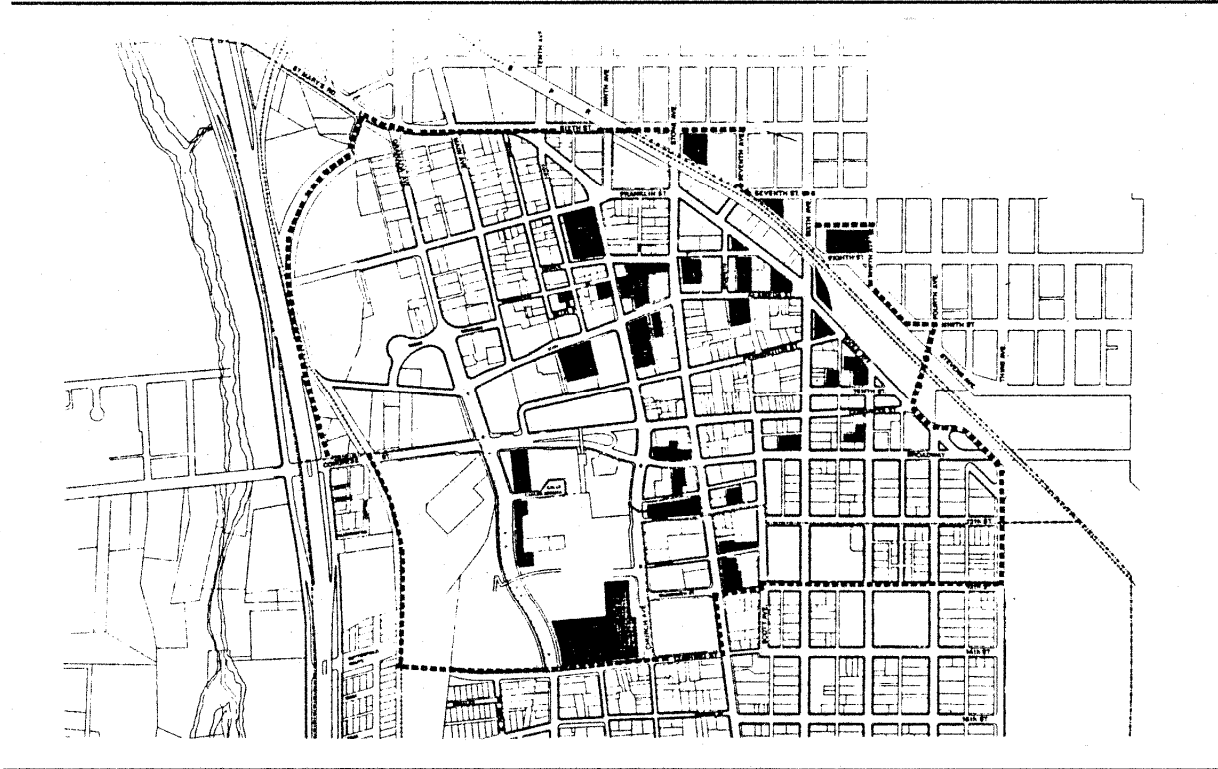
### **Parking Requirements**

The existing parking code requires developers to provide a specified number of parking spaces for certain types of development. It is applied city-wide and does not respond to the specific needs of the Downtown.

When the parking code was last revised in 1966, a nonconformance clause was included in an effort to give the regulations more flexibility. This provision allowed any new development project to reduce its parking requirement to a level which corresponded to the average parking space deficiencies of surrounding properties. The overall effect of this provision has been the reduction of parking requirements for new Downtown development below reasonable levels, thus creating localized parking deficiencies.

### **Signing**

Parking facilities are scattered throughout downtown in a disorganized manner. Existing signing does provide some assistance to users unfamiliar with downtown, but confusion still exists. This confused condition is aggravated by the non-grid street pattern.



**RECOMMENDED  
PARKING  
CONCEPT**

Nationwide, approaches to parking in downtown range from total private market responsibility for parking supply to total public responsibility for parking supply. Most cities fall somewhere in the middle of this range, generally relying on off-street parking regulations for different uses to supply parking in downtown. This appears to be the most reasonable approach for Tucson.

**New Downtown  
Parking  
Requirements**

Downtown is an unique area within the city. The existing parking code which regulates off-street parking within the entire city is too general to meet the special needs of downtown. The city should adopt a specific set of parking requirements which apply only to the downtown area. This approach could establish a balance between providing an adequate number of parking spaces for each new development and maintaining downtown's competitive position for attracting new development.

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

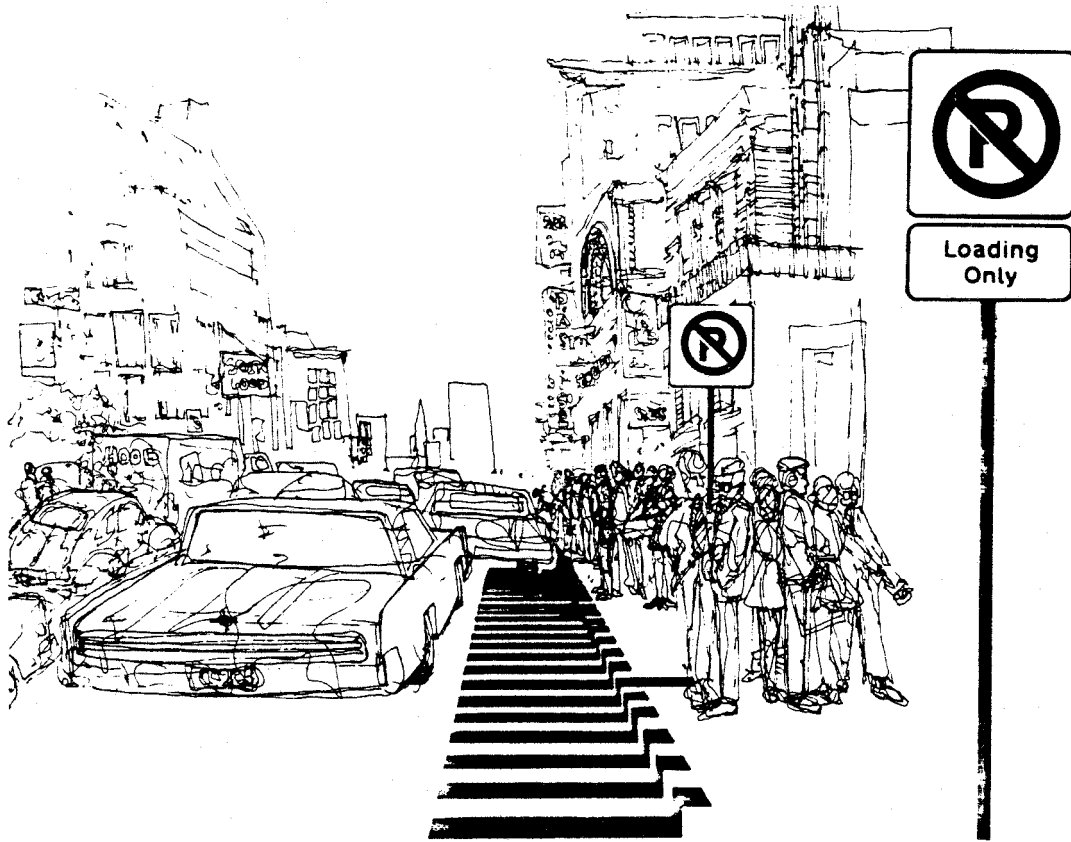
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The new downtown parking requirements should provide for a flexible approach to meet the new parking code. This approach could take the form of an in lieu fee, where a developer could reduce the number of required spaces by paying an in lieu fee for a specific percentage of the parking spaces any new development would require. If the in lieu fee approach was used, it would become a funding source for a parking authority or other downtown circulation needs.

**Flexibility  
in Meeting  
Requirements**

The parking ordinance should be amended to eliminate the non-conforming use clause whereby parking space deficiencies which have existed historically become the standard for new construction. If this is not done, a serious capacity problem will develop.

**Nonconformance  
Clause**



The city should facilitate the development of a private or quasi-public downtown authority which could, as one of its functions, manage the supply of public parking in downtown. Potential roles for this authority are:

**Parking  
Authority**

- coordinate the management of existing public parking;
- develop funding sources for new public parking facilities;
- maintain a continuing inventory of downtown parking capacity;
- make recommendations on parking space requirements for new developments;
- construct parking facilities; and
- provide educational material to the general public on the location and access to parking facilities downtown.

**Parking Meter  
Revenues**

The city should allocate a percentage of parking meter revenues and fines from downtown parking violations for operating expenses of the authority and/or as a guarantee for the financial obligations of new parking facilities development.

**Signing for  
Parking**

The city should develop a uniform and highly visible public parking location signing system to direct potential customers or clients to available parking. This would be a cooperative effort between a downtown authority and the city.

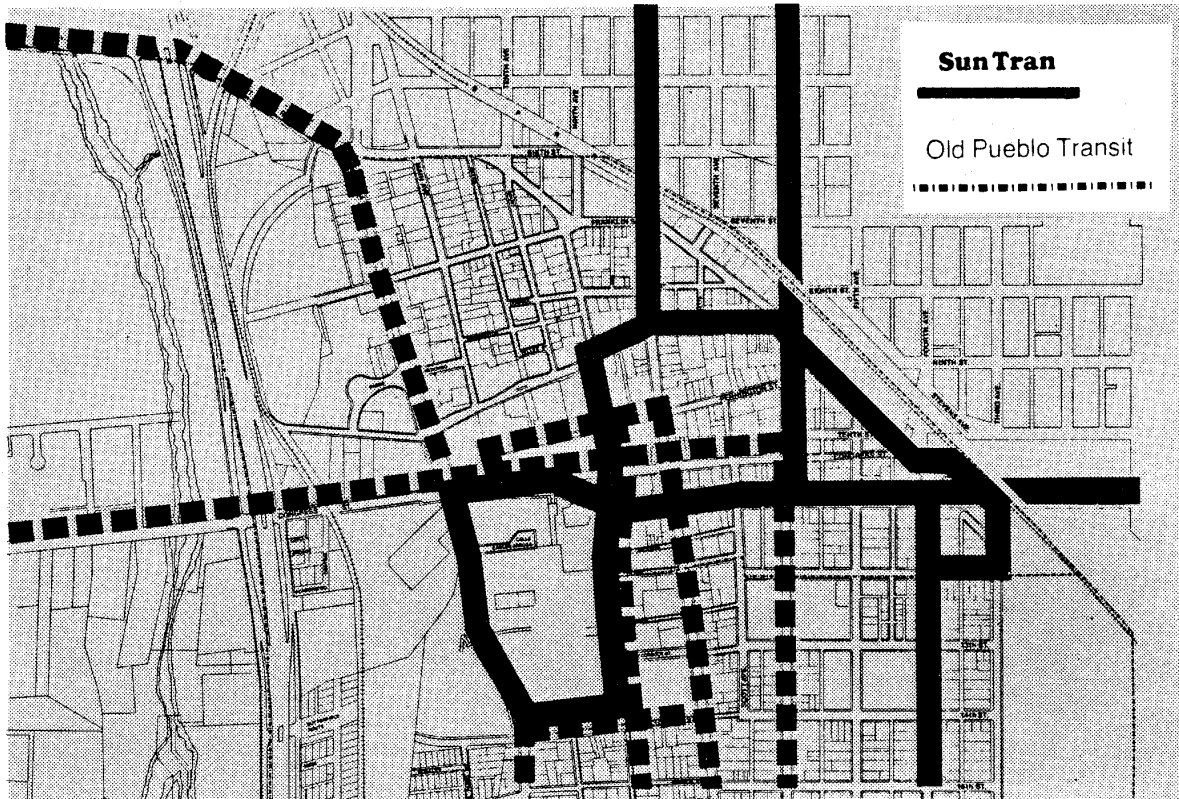
# **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**











## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Currently, local bus service plays a major role in reducing peak downtown traffic volumes by providing an alternative to the employee commuter. In 1975, bus trips amounted to 15-20 percent of all work trips to the downtown. As downtown office employment increases, the bus system can play an increasingly important role in reducing traffic congestion and parking problems.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Local bus service is provided by two transit companies, SunTran and Old Pueblo Transit Company (OPTC). SunTran's service area generally covers the area north and east of downtown. OPTC's service area extends to the south and west of downtown. Downtown is the main transfer point between the two systems.

### Local Bus Service

Within the downtown area, SunTran's buses circulate on routes around the retail and office core on Alameda, Church, Broadway and 6th Avenue. This routing increases route miles but has the advantage of avoiding the vehicle congestion in the heart of the core while still providing good access to employment generators for the commuter. Also, the loop around the Community Center provides for a staging area outside of the core which is necessary for efficient operation.\*

OPTC routes penetrate the retail and office core on Congress, Stone and Pennington. Penetration routing provides the same level of service to employment generators with better access for passengers who shop in the downtown core. It also concentrates buses in the retail section of downtown, which has in the past been a major complaint of some downtown retailers.

Both bus systems conduct passenger off- and on-loading and bus transfers at curb side bus stops.

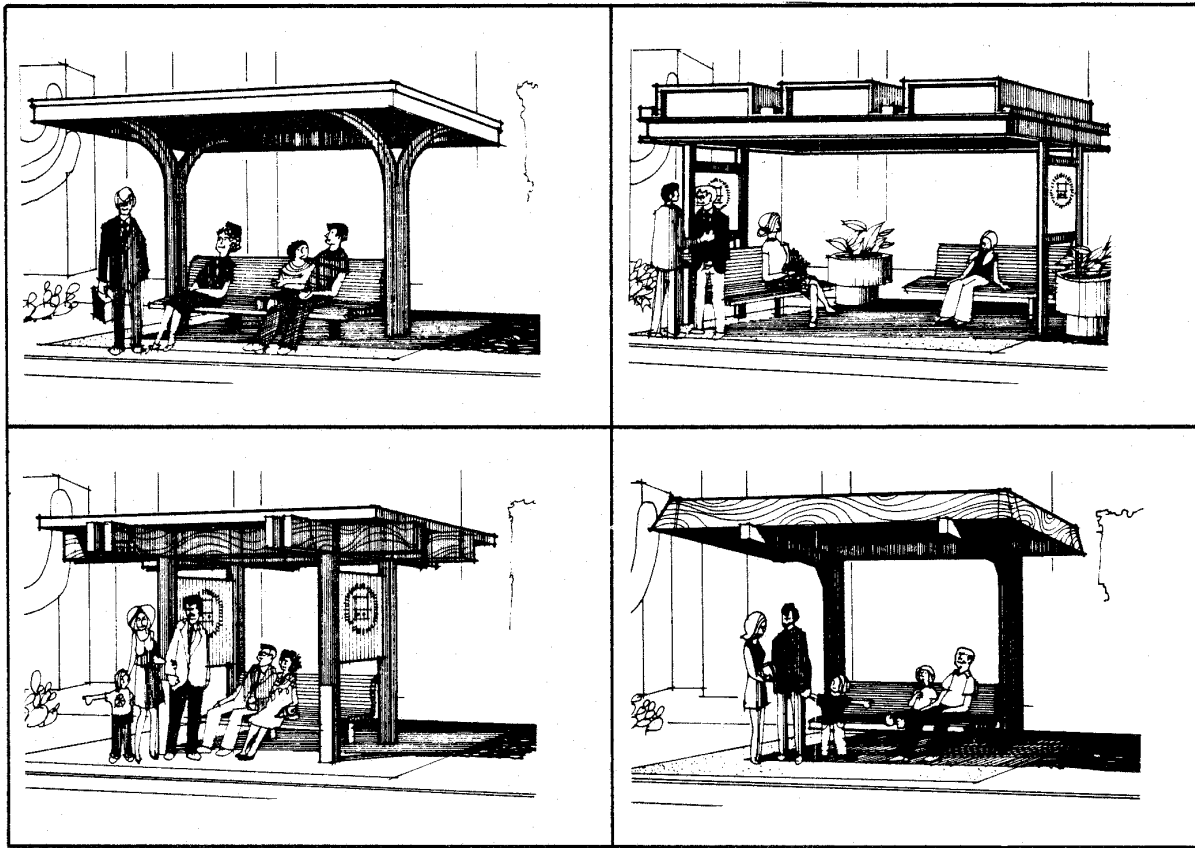
SunTran's buses generally operate at frequencies of 25 minutes during the weekdays on most routes with greater frequency of 15-20 minutes on some routes during commuter rush periods. OPTC buses operate at frequencies of 15-30 minutes on most routes with greater frequencies on heavily traveled routes.

**Other Public  
Transportation**

Greyhound, Citizen Auto Stage, and Continental Trailways provide intercity and interstate bus service. Their terminals are located at the eastern edge of downtown. AMTRAK passenger train service is provided at the railroad station on Toole Avenue near the intercity bus terminals. Taxi cabs, airport minibuses and tour buses also serve the downtown area.

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\* Plan amendments have deleted the sentences outlined. See the Tucson General Plan, Land Use Element.



Downtown bus stops have a preponderance of either off-loading or onloading passengers, even though no bus stops prohibit either type of movement. Off-loading bus stops do not present a problem because passengers rapidly disperse to their destinations. On-loading bus stops are a major problem because many of these stops are located at points where sidewalks are narrow and pedestrian activity is high. The inevitable result in these locations is sidewalk use conflicts between waiting bus passengers and client/customers of nearby businesses and retailers. Besides pedestrian congestion, waiting bus passengers are subjected to noise and exhaust fumes from vehicles, and inadequate seating areas.

Approximately 10-15 percent of local bus passenger trips into downtown are transfer trips between the two bus systems. Because each bus system maintains stops at different locations these transfers are inconvenient to passengers and lower the overall level of service. Scheduling between the two systems is not synchronized, causing delays for many transferring passengers, and added congestion at bus stops.

**Connections  
Between Local  
Bus Systems**

### **Potential Downtown Shuttle**

Each of our two local bus systems has its own service area, within which the other system cannot operate without permission. This causes a coordination problem between the two systems which is focused in the downtown. A major part of the problem created by the two service areas relates to the possibility of establishing a downtown minibuss route or shuttle at some time in the future. A shuttle system, in general, is not viewed as an **improvement** to the existing transit systems, but as a completely new and distinct transit service serving a very specific function. It is likely that an internal system of some kind will eventually become desirable to move people between the downtown core and peripheral parking lots, to connect downtown with the Santa Cruz Park, to link downtown's historic neighborhoods, or for some other purpose. Any logical internal loop would serve activity generators in both systems' areas. This means that some type of agreement would have to be developed between the local bus systems to allow for an internal loop. Past experiences suggest that such an agreement may be difficult to achieve and may even prevent the establishment of a necessary transit service.



A staging area is necessary for efficient operation of the bus system. The staging area for SunTran is located on Cushing Street along the southern edge of the Community Center. This location removes the staging area from the office and retail core to reduce congestion and conflict with core activities. It does increase route time and mileage which increases overall operation cost.

**Staging Area  
Location**

A higher level of service in the public transportation system attracts more bus riders and helps to reduce private vehicle trips. Improved service throughout the system would have the greatest affect in downtown by reducing peak hour vehicle congestion.

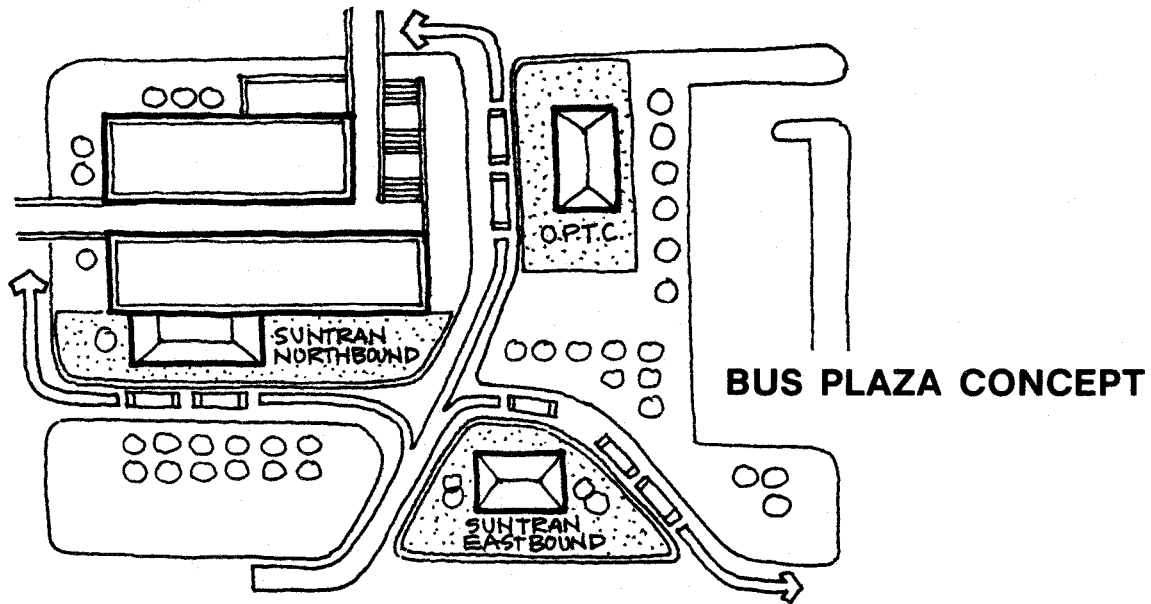
**RECOMMENDED  
PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION  
CONCEPT**

The level of passenger convenience and comfort for existing ridership through the SunTran and OPTC systems should be increased by:

improving waiting areas with more exclusive space, ample seating, shelter and information;

**Overall Transit  
System**





maintaining existing bus stop locations or locating new bus stops to reduce walking distances;

maintain or increase existing frequency, especially during commuter rush periods; and

promoting a park and ride system, whereby commuters can drive to special parking lots and take an express bus to the downtown.

In addition to these city-wide improvements, the following public transportation improvements should be made in the downtown area.

**Improve Downtown  
Bus Stops**

Bus service should be improved at all downtown bus stops by providing wider sidewalks, ample seating, and shelter. Any opportunity to incorporate attractive bus stops in future redevelopment projects along bus routes should be pursued. These actions would encourage local bus usage and reduce pedestrian and waiting passenger congestion.

**Passenger  
Transfers  
Between the  
Two Systems**

Because Tucson is served by two separate transit systems, some system-to-system passenger transfers are created which would not exist if there were a single coordinated system. These excess transfers add to the number of people waiting for buses at downtown stops. Some of these passenger concentrations can be reduced by developing convenient transfer points between

SunTran and Old Pueblo Transit. This would focus through trip passengers waiting for bus transfers into public space or bus plazas and alleviate congestion at other downtown bus stops. These bus plazas could provide seating, shelter, restrooms, and information facilities. They are not envisioned as substitutes for existing bus stops which would still be necessary to provide good service to downtown employees and shoppers

Some of the bus plazas could also serve as convenient connections between local bus service and other public transportation modes (intercity bus service, taxis, airport limousines, etc.). Focal points of this type could encourage greater usage of different modes of travel and reduce the existing interconnection problems.

The two local bus systems should join into an agreement which would permit the future operation of an internal downtown transit system which would serve some function distinct from the type of service now provided by SunTran and OPTC. (The adequacy of these existing systems is not an issue here.) A shuttle service would make possible a connection of peripheral parking lots with the downtown core, a tram circulating in the shopping area, a connection between downtown and the university, and a variety of other innovative systems. when they become appropriate.

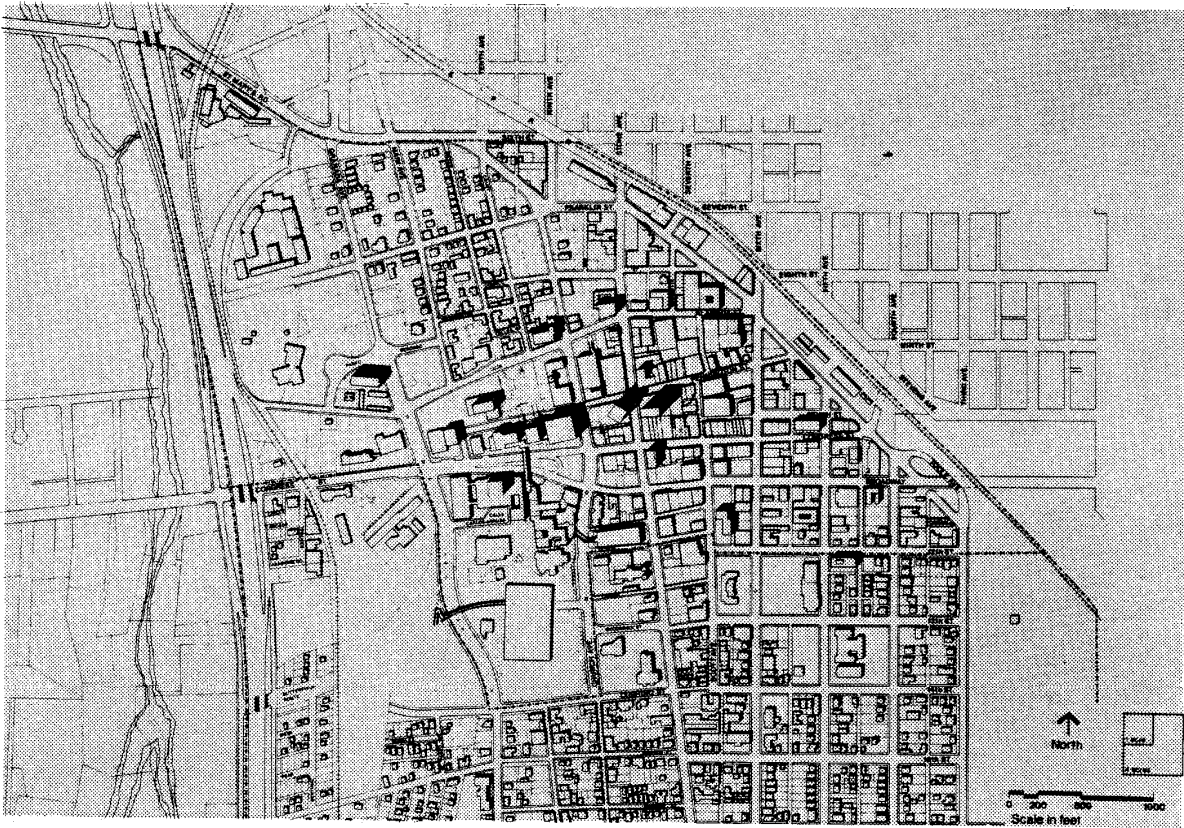
**Downtown  
Shuttle**

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# **LAND USE/URBAN DESIGN**





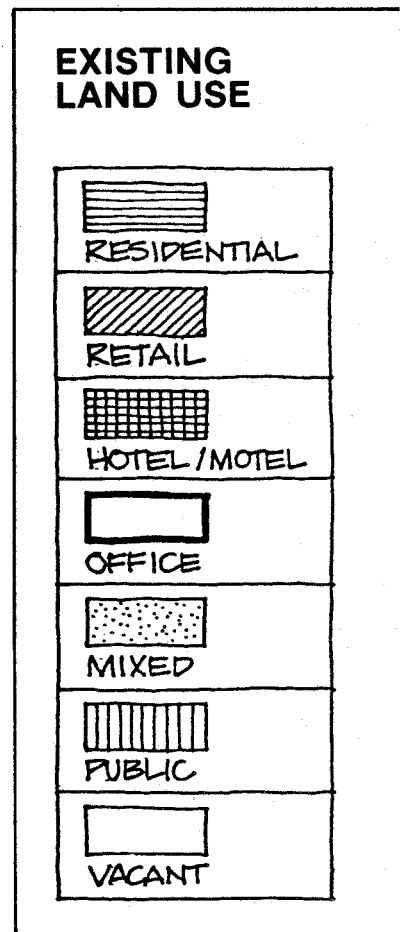
### LAND USE/URBAN DESIGN

Two fundamental objectives in the design of any product--whether it is an automobile or a toaster--are that it should function efficiently and that it should have an attractive appearance. So it is with a downtown.

The chapters on parking, circulation, and public transportation deal primarily with the way downtown **functions** in respect to the manner in which people get in and out of downtown and circulate within it. Efficiency comes from reducing congestion, making the movement patterns easy to comprehend, and providing adequate parking space.

Urban design also addresses the issue of functional efficiency and, in addition, deals with improvements to downtown's **appearance** as a means of broadening its acceptance in a variety of competitive markets.

The arrangement and density of land uses are important factors which help to determine the functional efficiency of downtown. In general,



physical compactness and proximity between interacting functions are desirable because they contribute to the convenience on internal pedestrian trips. Legibility is important because it makes it easier for the infrequent visitor to find his way around.

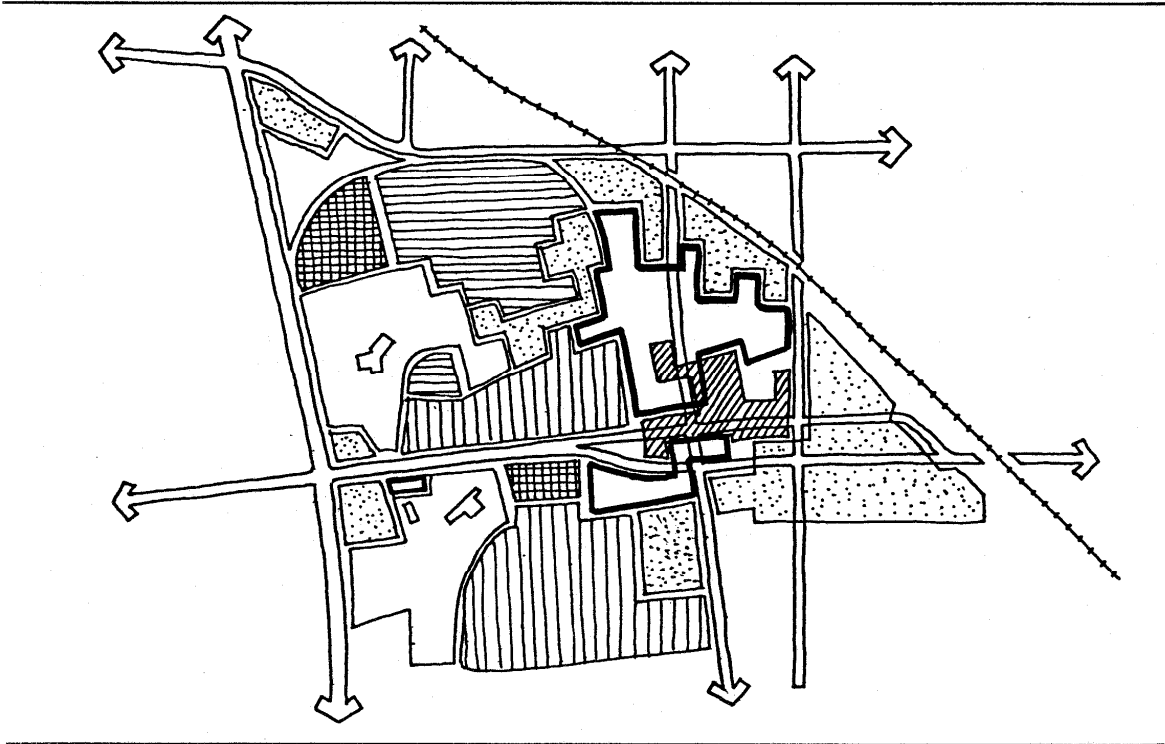
**EXISTING  
LAND USE  
PATTERN**

Downtown Tucson's land use pattern has the following characteristics:

**Government Offices** have been consolidated in a compact area bounded by Alameda and Congress west of Church. (Two exceptions: City Hall Annex and the U.S. Court House.) The centralization of this public office function is a convenience for those who have frequent dealings with the various government agencies and gives the area good legibility, making it readily identifiable to visitors.

**Private Offices** are located primarily along Stone Avenue and Alameda Street where access to government offices (one block west) and to each other is potentially very convenient.

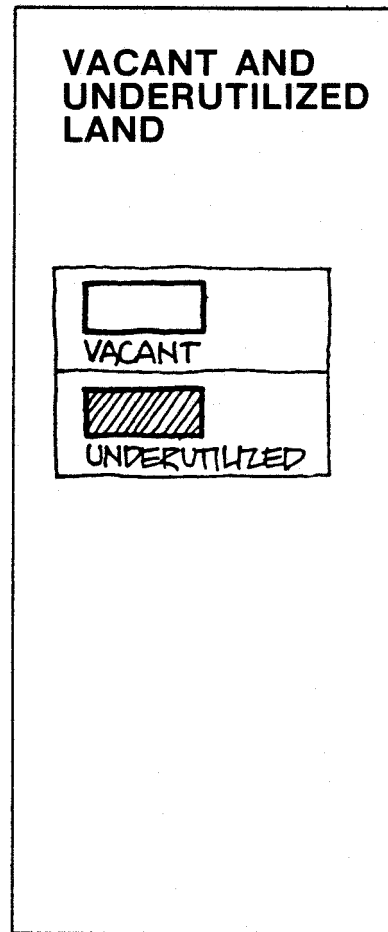




The height and clustering of many of the office buildings give the downtown office center good legibility.

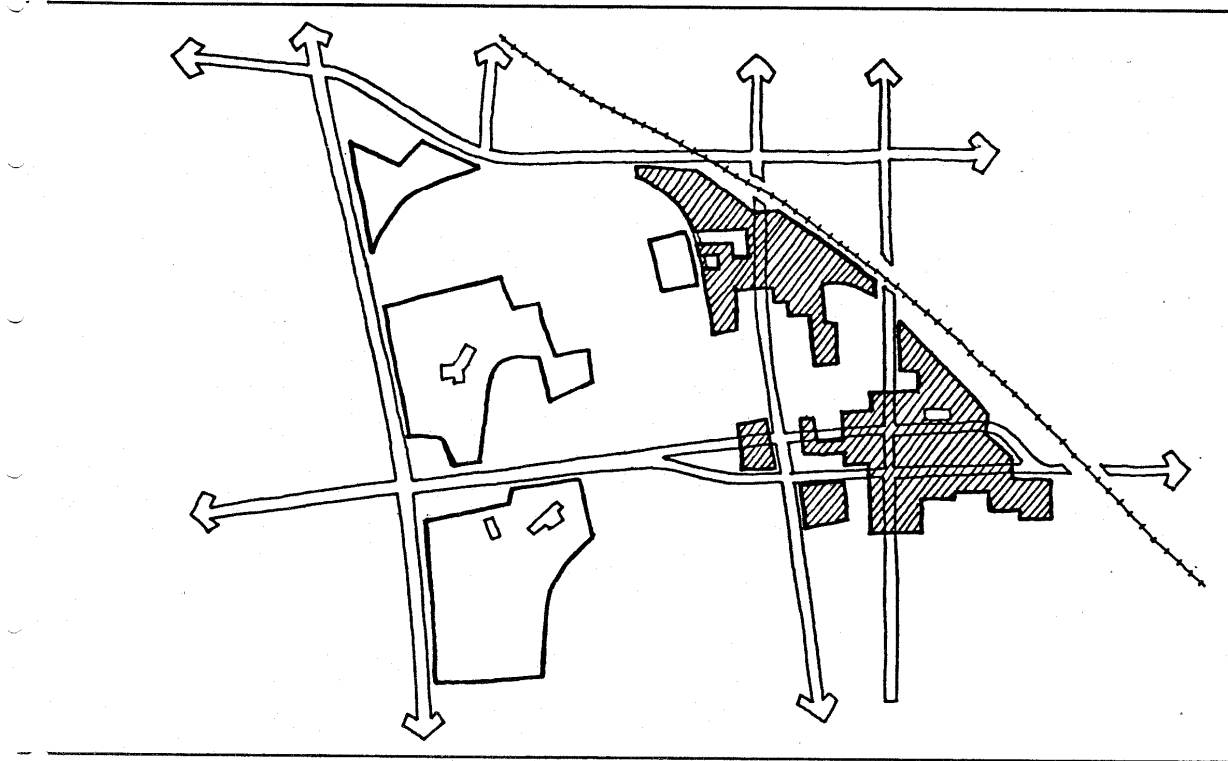
**Retailing** in downtown is located along portions of four principal streets--Pennington, Congress, Broadway, and Sixth Avenue. In the face of considerable shrinkage of the downtown retail function in the last 10 years, retail space which is closely integrated with the high density private office core has remained relatively strong. (The number of eating and drinking establishments in the area bounded by Alameda, Church, Congress, and Sixth Avenue has increased from 3 to 15 in 10 years.) However, legibility of the retail area is poor. The fact that a few downtown retailers are doing good business is not reflected in the overall appearance of the retail area which gives an impression of disorganized obsolescence.

**Motels** in the downtown area are appropriately located along I-10 where visibility to inter-state traffic is good. The Marriott Hotel is also visible from the freeway and has the additional advantage of proximity to the Convention Center and the government office complex. Although the Santa Rita



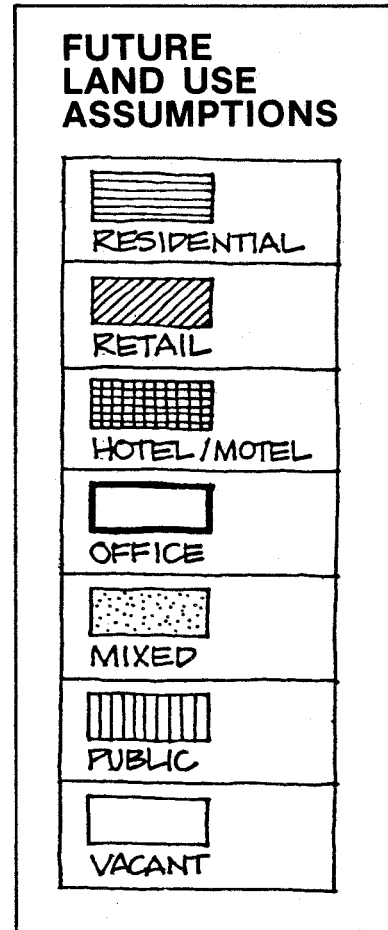
Hotel is only two blocks from the Convention Center, it **seems** to be more distant because of poor visual and pedestrian linkages.

**Industrial or Warehouse** functions are located on the edge of the downtown with access to highway or rail transportation. In general, these functions derive no particular benefit from an immediate downtown location, nor does downtown benefit from their presence. Modern, well-landscaped industrial uses near downtown may be welcomed in the future. However, because of building age and condition, existing facilities have a generally negative impact. Their location on the edges of downtown gives them a relatively high level of visibility and their contribution to the overall image of downtown is greatly in excess of their functional importance.



**Residential** activity in downtown Tucson is found in El Presidio neighborhood (north of Alameda Street and west of Church Avenue), in many of the older hotels, in the Martin Luther King Apartments, and in a variety of apartments and boarding houses in the blocks south of Broadway between Sixth and Third Avenues. El Presidio neighborhood is an especially good location for people who want convenient access to downtown activities since it is not necessary to cross busy streets to reach the heart of downtown on foot. The neighborhoods immediately south of downtown are somewhat more separated from the core by heavy traffic on Broadway and Congress. Armory Park, Barrio Historico, and other neighborhoods, important elements in downtown's future, are discussed in the Old Pueblo South Study.

**Vacant and Underutilized Land** represents an opportunity for new downtown development. The location of this land relative to other downtown activities helps determine its appropriateness for various possible uses. Most of the vacant land is found to the west of the downtown core, to the east on the Southern Pacific Reserve, and to the north, where it is presently used for surface parking.

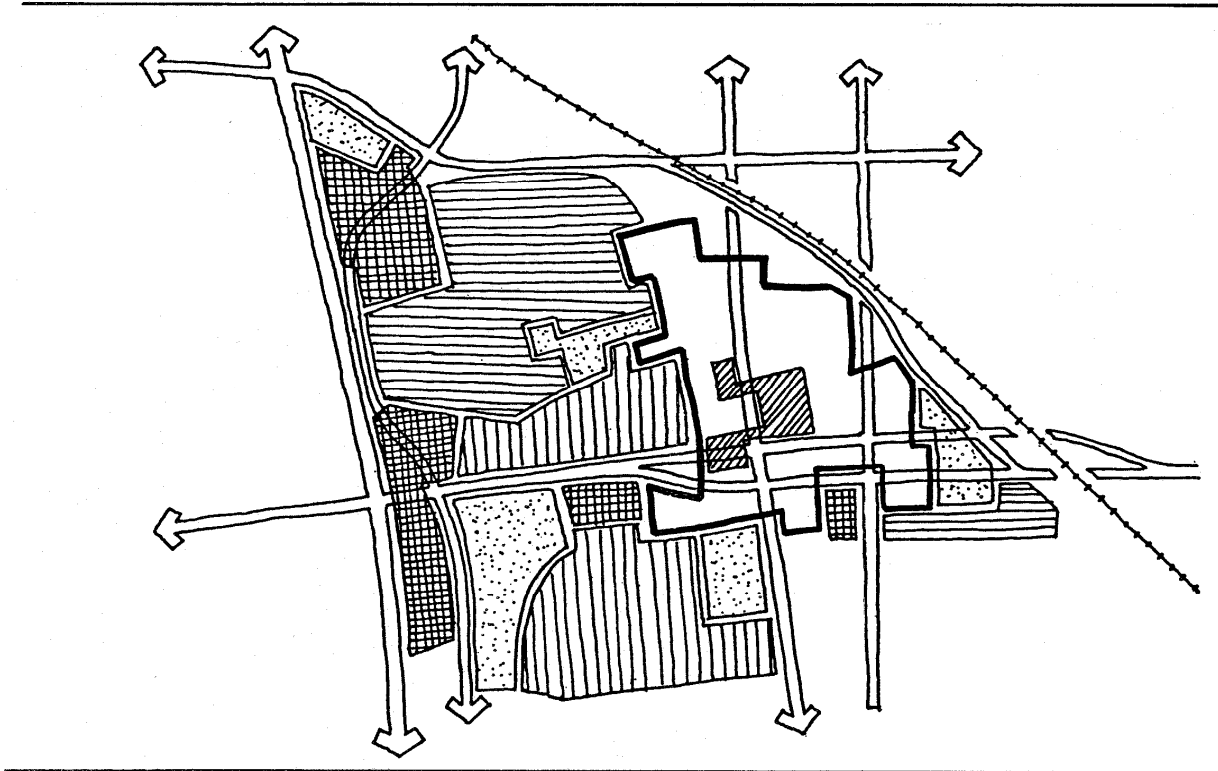


Underutilized land is land presently occupied by structures having a low life expectancy. Life expectancy is defined as a function of a building's size, age, physical condition, and its value in relation to the value of the land upon which it is built. In general, it is assumed that a new, large, modern building is more resistant to demolition than an old, small, obsolete building.

Much of downtown's underutilized land is found along Congress and Broadway from Church to Toole and in the area east of Sixth Avenue. (For a more detailed discussion of building life expectancy in downtown Tucson, see Technical Report One, pp IV-1 to IV-11.)

## LINKAGES

At least as important as the arrangement of the various downtown functions are the linkages between them, which constitute the pedestrian circulation network. Certain portions of the existing network function very well. Circulation within the main government complex

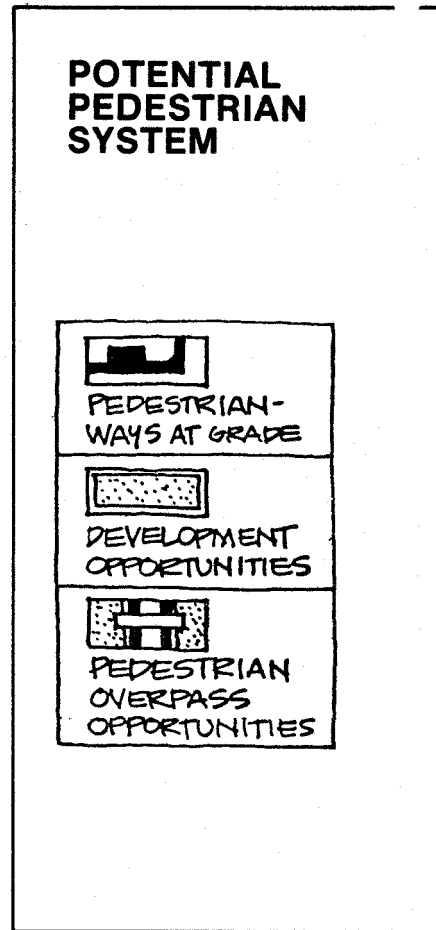


is excellent. Distances are short and El Presidio Park provides a pleasant pedestrian environment. Bridges over Pennington, Congress, and Broadway provide the ultimate in convenience for pedestrian trips between the government complex and Community Center activities to the south. As for the balance of downtown's pedestrian system, it is, with few exceptions, functionally deficient and generally unappealing. As a system, it lacks legibility, since it follows a street system which, itself, is difficult to comprehend.

Linkages from block to block are made unpleasant by the frequent necessity to cross streets clogged with vehicles. Of special concern at present are poor connections across Church Avenue between the Community Center and the government complex on the west and the office and retail core on the east. As traffic volumes increase, conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles will become more numerous and more acute.

The downtown economic forecast provides us with estimates of the **magnitude** of the potential increase in office space, retail space, hotel rooms, residential units and light industrial acreage. It does not tell us which specific parcels of land will be used to accommodate this additional downtown activity. Neither does the Downtown Plan presume to dictate these locations.

**FUTURE  
LAND USE  
ASSUMPTIONS**

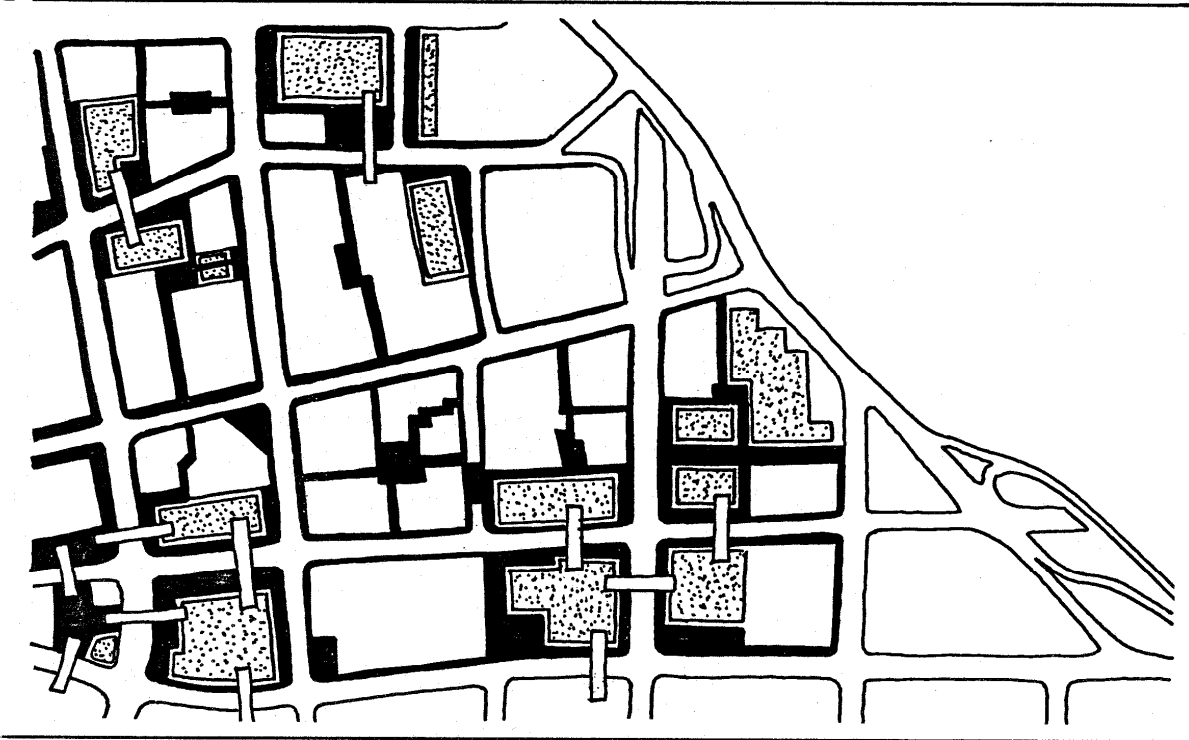


But it is necessary to make assumptions about the most likely pattern of future land use change. And, the Plan does **suggest** specific uses for certain parcels in the hope that development opportunities can be identified which might, otherwise, have been overlooked.

In the following paragraphs the various land use functions are discussed as separate items. This is not to imply, however, that new development must occur in the form of single-function projects. On the contrary, **mixed-use development**, in which several land uses are integrated on a single site or in a single building, is an exciting concept which is almost always appropriate in downtown areas.

**Office.** Major new office developments will continue to show a locational preference for the high-density core area, with some additional expansion to the north across Alameda Street. Smaller one- and two-story office buildings will favor locations further from the core.





**Residential.** With assistance from the public sector, the large vacant parcels in El Presidio neighborhood will be developed for residential uses at medium to high density. Other residential development will take place, not in the Downtown Study area, but in the neighborhoods to the south and west in conjunction with Santa Cruz Park.

**Hotel-Motel.** Underutilized land west of the Community Center makes an ideal hotel site because of its convenience to convention facilities and good visibility from I-10. Several sites along the east side of the freeway are well suited for motels.

**Retail.** The retail function will consolidate around the area of greatest strength, the core area bounded by Alameda, Church, Congress, and 6th Avenue.

**Governmental Offices.** Any expansion of government office space will take place within the boundaries of the government complex.



### **RECOMMENDED URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT**

The urban design concept is described here in general terms. Specific applications of the ideas expressed in the concept are found in the sketch plans which follow.

**Compactness.** Compactness of downtown's core area should be encouraged, so that pedestrian trips among downtown activities remain convenient. Compactness of the core will also help to achieve the "critical mass" of activity which is necessary for the long-range vitality of retailing.

**Pedestrian System.** The network of pedestrian ways should be made legible and enjoyable:

Somewhere between Alameda and Congress, establish a pedestrian corridor which connects the core area with the government complex and Community Center to the west, and with the area across 6th Avenue to the east. This corridor should contain all the elements which contribute to a rewarding pedestrian experience: wide sidewalks, abundant landscaping, exposure to visually interesting building facades, opportunity to shop, browse, and sit along the edges, protection from the sun and rain.

Where pedestrians must cross streets which are planned to carry large volumes of traffic, look for opportunities to build pedestrian ways over or under the street. Particularly important are the crossings of Church, Congress, Alameda, 6th Avenue, and Broadway.

Minimize the negative impacts of vehicular traffic within the area bounded by Church, Alameda, Congress, and 6th Avenue:

By creating attractive alternative routes, keep the traffic volume on Stone from increasing so it can be comfortably accommodated in two lanes, rather than three.

Presently, the pedestrian network in the core has an important positive characteristic inasmuch as there is no

point on two blocks of Stone or three blocks of Congress where vehicles are able to cross the sidewalks and interrupt pedestrian flow. This characteristic should be preserved and extended to all other parts of the core as opportunities arise.

Sidewalks must not always be at the edges of blocks where pedestrians are constantly exposed to vehicles. Pedestrian ways may be created through the centers of blocks. These should be so arranged that they become an integral part of the pedestrian circulation network. These new paths can be carved out of the existing structural fabric of the core by making connections among potential path segments, such as alleys. They can be provided in new development through persuasion, reservation of easements, or public acquisition.

Any new structure built in downtown should enhance the pedestrian environment by reserving its ground level frontage either for retail or restaurant uses or for a landscaped plaza.

**Retail Core Remodeling.** The retail core should be remodeled as soon as possible to give it and the downtown in general a fresh image. The remodeling project should be centered on the block bounded by Pennington, Stone, Congress, and 6th Avenue (Block 195) and should include additional short-term parking and special attention to improving building facades and the pedestrian environment.

**Historic Preservation.** Remodeling of any downtown structure should take into account the fact that design details from the past are highly valued by today's culture and should be preserved wherever possible rather than covered up by a "modern" facade. Downtown's connection with the past can, thus, be made more visible and marketable.

(The Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission has compiled a list of downtown buildings which may have historic significance.)



**Improvement of Visual Environment.** Downtown signing programs to improve traffic flow or identification of parking facilities will be more successful if the signs are not lost in the visual clutter which is typically present in urban areas. A background of landscaping makes directional signs much easier to see than a background of other signs, wires and power poles.

Guidelines should be developed for signs in the downtown area which would permit the necessary identification of buildings and businesses in ways which would not compete visually with signs giving information about circulation and parking.

The City should join with downtown property owners to pursue the undergrounding of utility lines by taking advantage of the fund which T.G. & E. reserves annually for that purpose.

**Downtown Entry Points.** Improve the visual image of downtown by paying special attention to those portions of the circulation system which are points of entry to

downtown.

At these points there should be special landscaping features and special consideration given to the design and siting of new buildings so that motorists experience a sense of arrival at a unique and exciting place. Entry points to be given this attention include Congress at Toole, Stone at Franklin, 6th Avenue at 12th Street, Congress at I-10 and the freeway approaches from the north and south.

The net effect of these land use and urban design recommendations, when considered together with the recommended improvements to circulation, parking, and public transportation, is to improve all aspects of the downtown environment for all who use it--employees, shoppers and other visitors, motorists, and pedestrians. Congestion between vehicles and pedestrians will be kept to a minimum; smoother vehicular flow will help maintain a high air quality level; visual improvements will produce a more pleasant pedestrian environment and more easily perceived circulation patterns for people in cars and on foot.

As improvements are implemented and policies faithfully pursued, downtown will gradually overcome its negative image. Each individual improvement project and new development can be promoted community-wide as tangible evidence of revitalization. As more activity and improvements take place downtown, the more effectively downtown as a whole can be promoted. More people will be encouraged to explore what downtown has to offer and, when they find out, they'll return often.

The sketch plans which follow are intended to **suggest** how the concepts discussed in this section might be applied to certain parts of downtown, and even to specific parcels. They are also intended to demonstrate that application of these ideas can lead to a downtown which is measurably more legible, more accessible, more efficient functionally, and more pleasant to be in for pedestrians and motorists, employees and visitors. \*

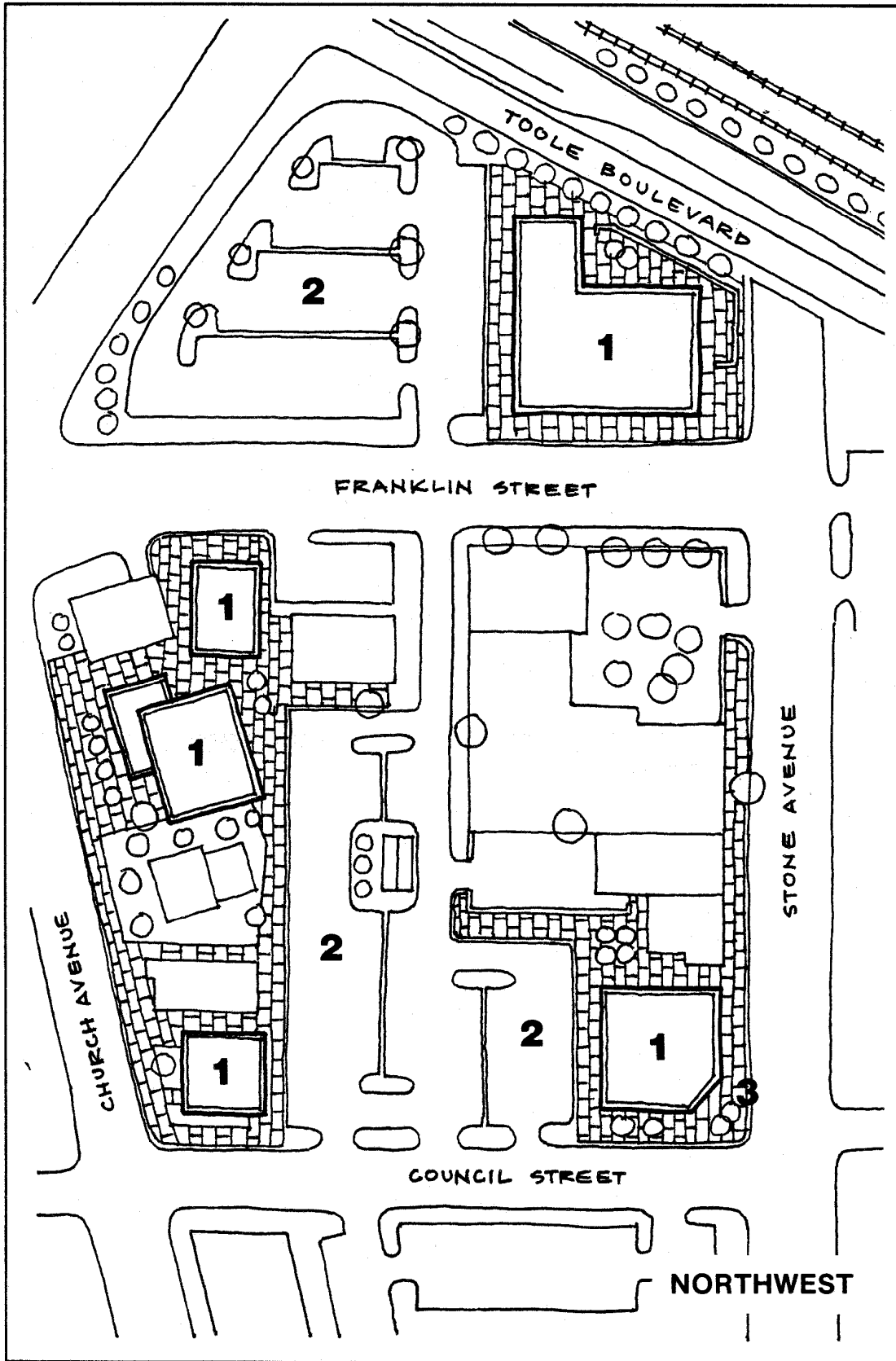
Implementation schedules and mechanisms are included in the next chapter.

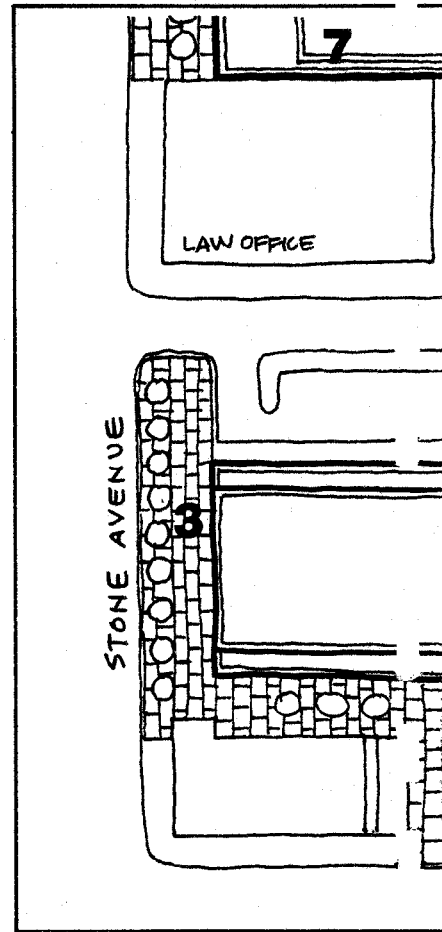
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\* A plan amendment has incorporated additional concepts into this plan. See the **Tucson General Plan, Land Use Element**.



PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



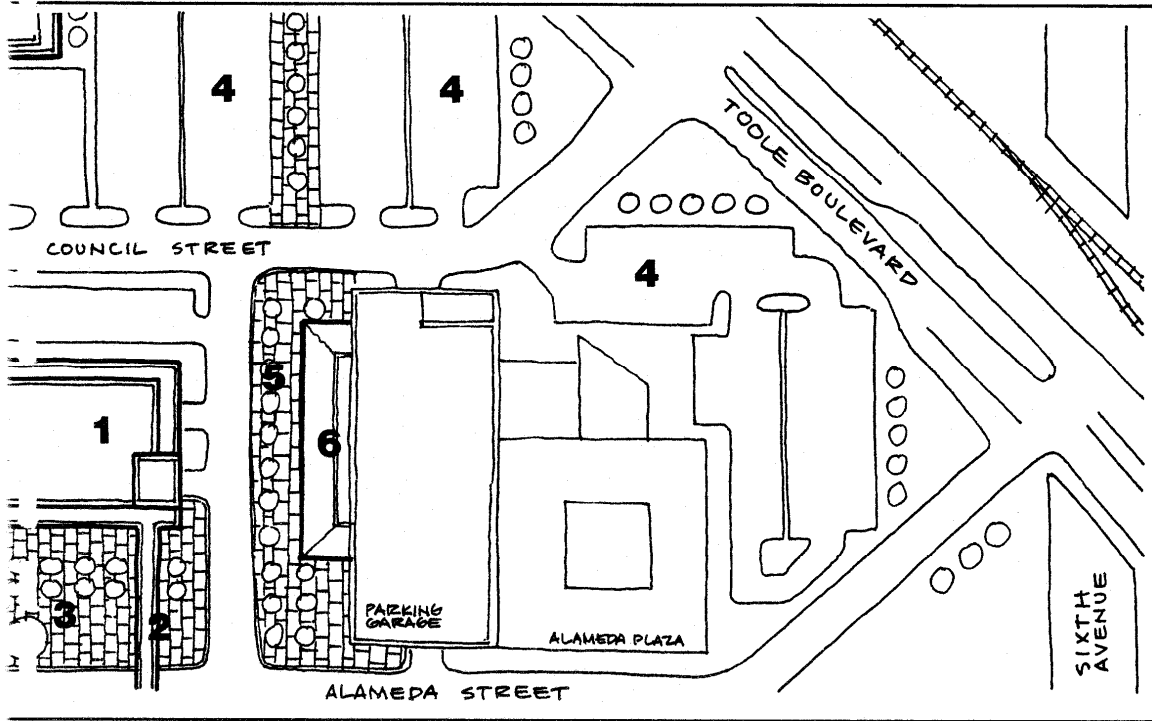


**NORTHEAST**

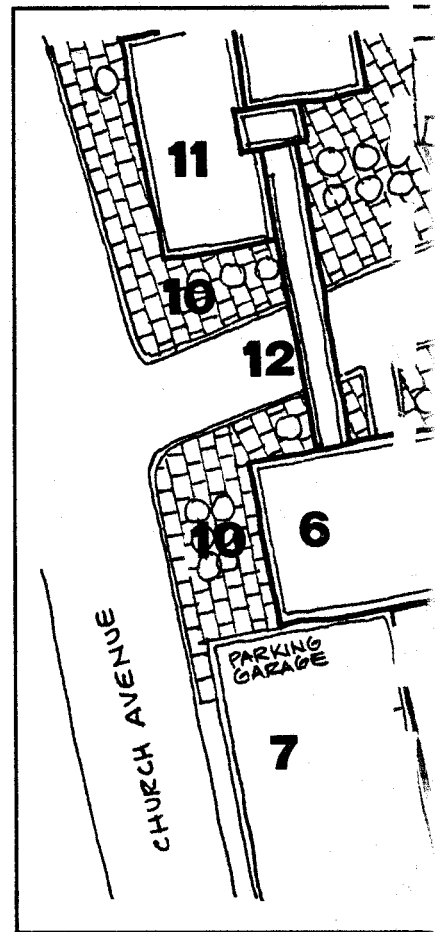
**NORTHEAST AREA DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS**

1. Mid-rise office building with parking underground and/or on first few levels above grade.
2. Pedestrian bridge over Alameda Street connects to parking garage and pedestrian corridor to Pennington Street.
3. Generous setbacks from Stone and Alameda provide pedestrian amenities, landscaping opportunities.
4. Re-organized surface parking. Landscaped pedestrianway connects peripheral parking area with office core to the south.
5. Landscaped pedestrianway connects peripheral parking area with office core to the south.
6. Opportunity for new row of shops and/or restaurants along pedestrian path and close to new office building.
7. Possible mid-rise office building or main library site.

PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON





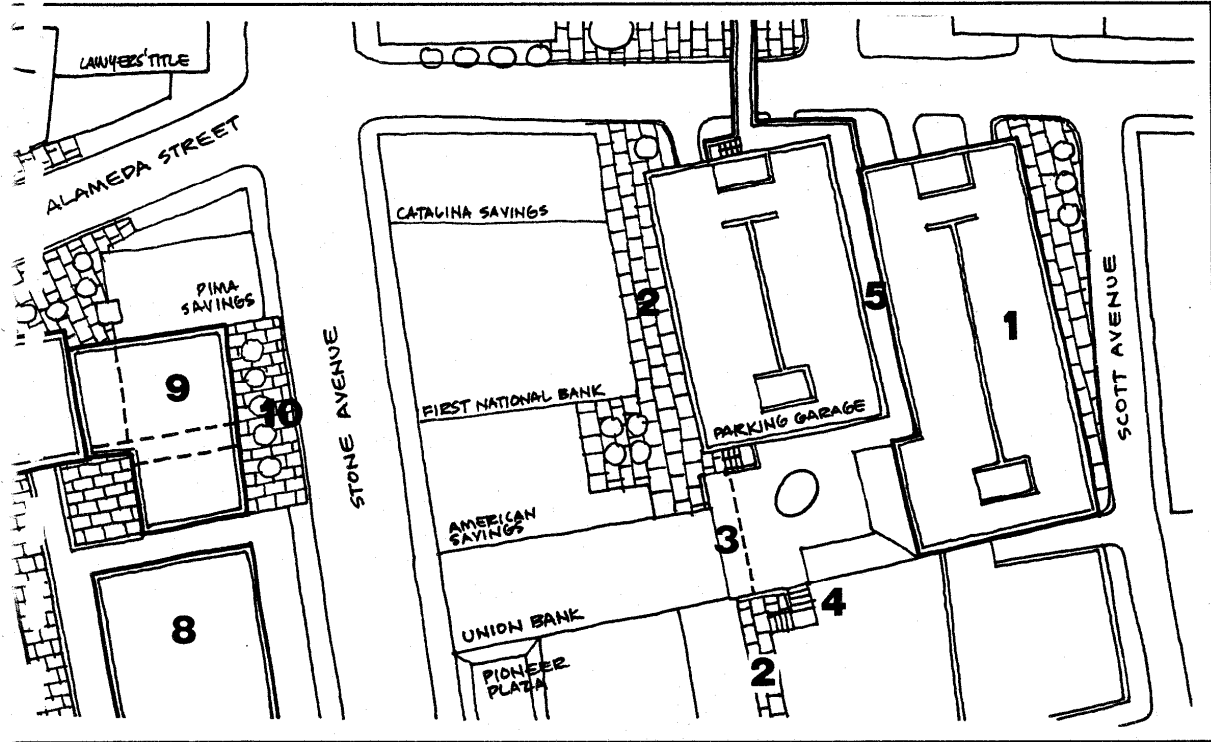


**NORTH CORE**

**NORTH CORE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS**

1. New parking structure.
2. Convert existing alleys to exclusive pedestrian use.
3. Construct pedestrian corridor to link the two alleys.
4. Construct stairway from second level to alley level using space now devoted to Cele Peterson store rear entry.
5. Pedestrian corridor linking Pennington retail area, parking structures, and development on north side of Alameda.
6. New high-rise office building, residential tower, or both.
7. New levels added to Downtown Shoppers Garage.
8. Athletic club constructed on roof of Jacome's and Pennys.
9. Low-rise retail or retail on ground floor of taller building. Pedestrian corridors connect Alameda and Stone to small interior plaza.
10. Building setbacks provide space for landscaped pedestrian plazas.
11. New mid-rise office building and attached parking garage.
12. Pedestrian bridge connects new buildings 11 and 6 across Alameda Street.

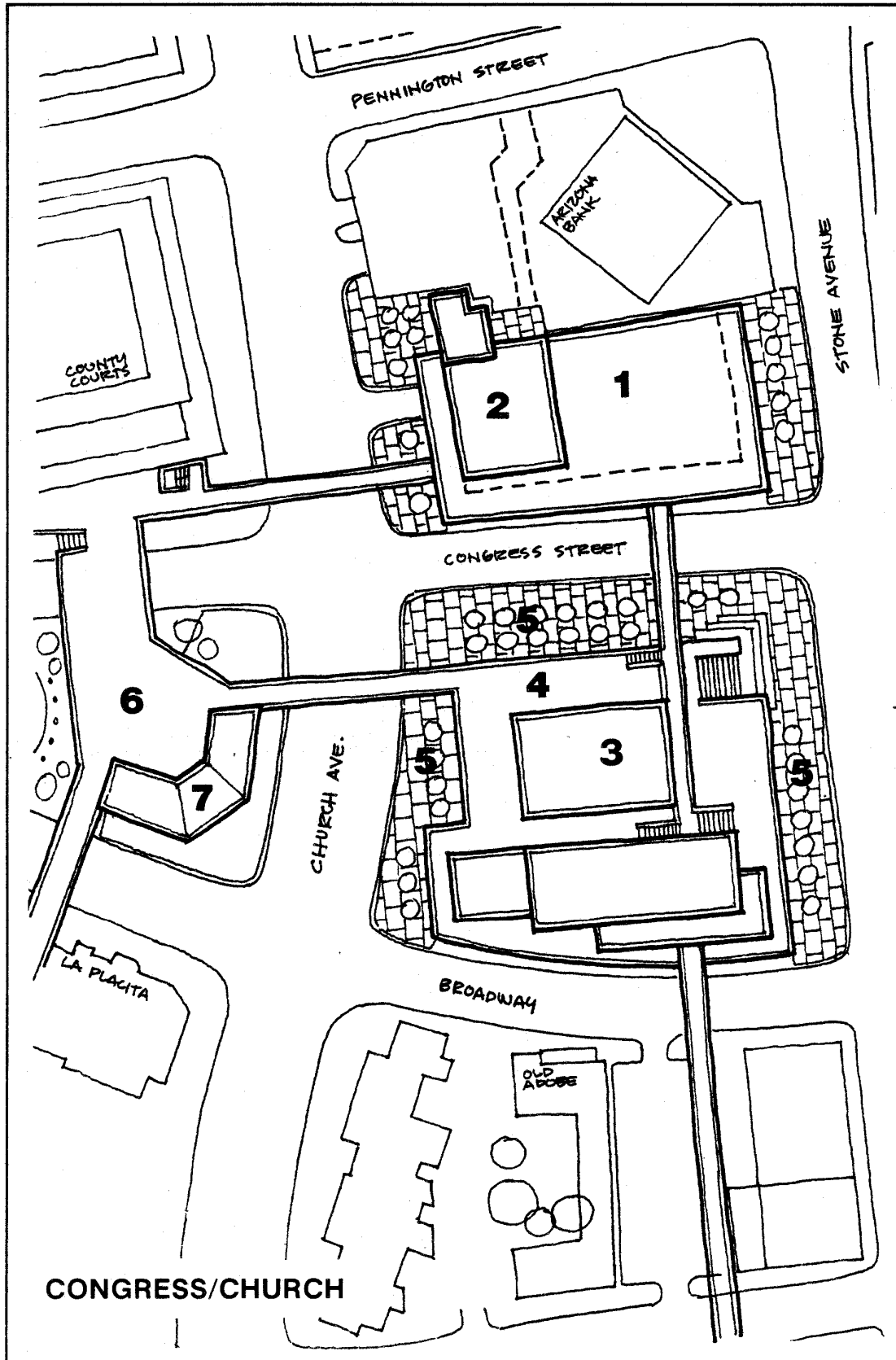
PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

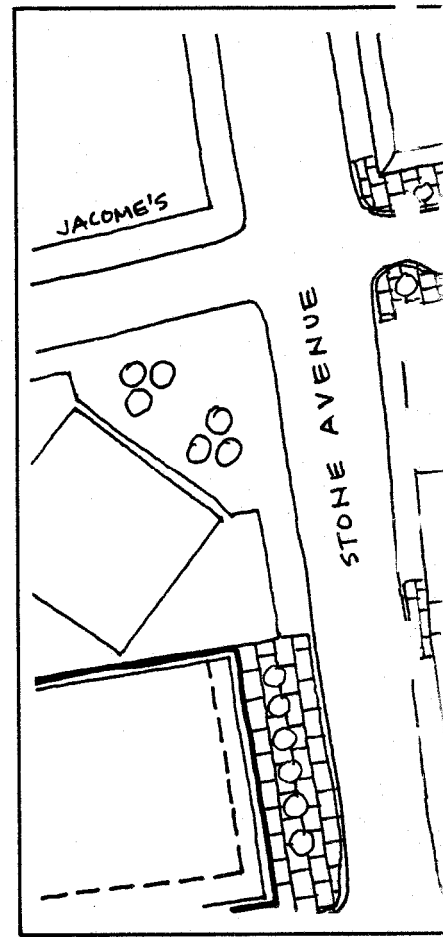


### CONGRESS/CHURCH DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS

1. New parking garage with shops and restaurants on first floor along sidewalk frontage. Second floor of building overhangs sidewalk along Congress Street to create pedestrian arcade.
2. New office/residential tower above parking garage.
3. Mixed-use development has underground parking, retailing on sidewalk level, office, residential and/or hotel towers above retail level.
4. Roof of retail level provides pedestrian promenade overlooking Congress, Stone, and Church; pedestrian bridges connect complex with parking garage across Congress, La Placita garage one block south, and to elevated pedestrian plaza on west side of Church Avenue.
5. Building setbacks and landscaping provide improved pedestrian environment.
6. Elevated plaza is the hub of the downtown pedestrian environment, providing the essential links across Church Avenue to connect the older areas east of Church with LaPlacita and the government complex to the west.
7. New restaurant with sidewalk service and a few shops both generate and benefit from pedestrian activity.

PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



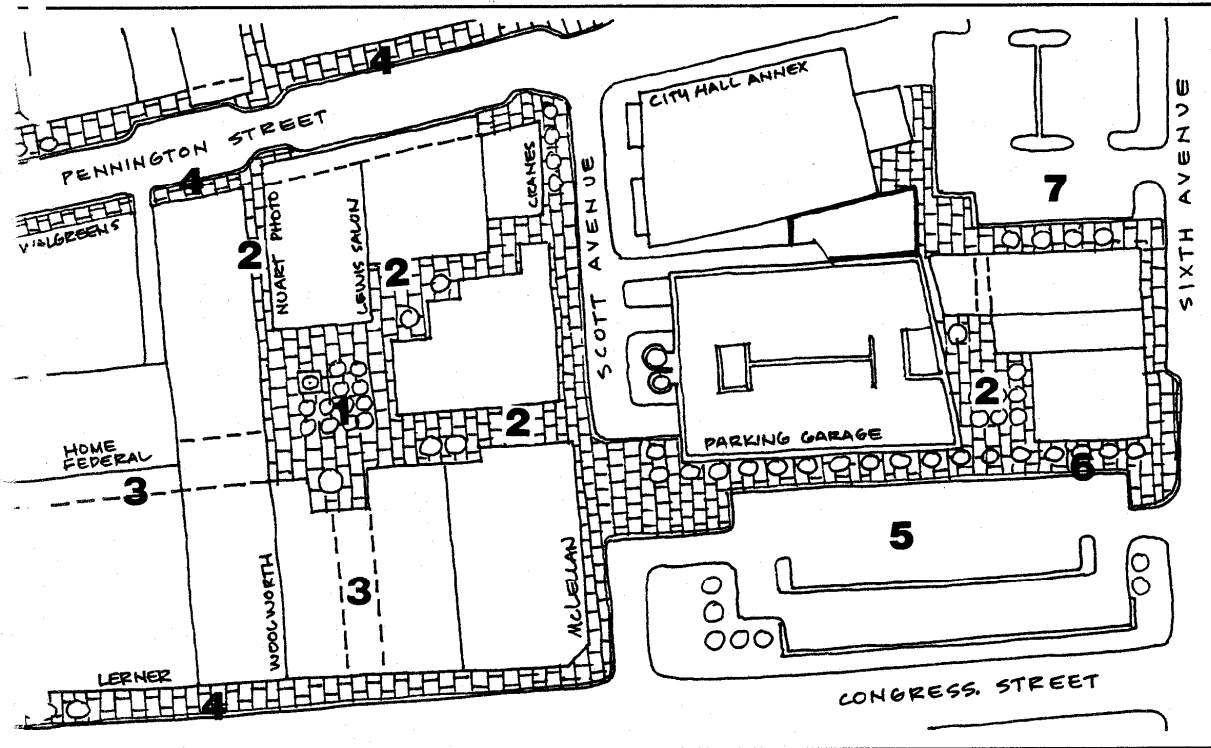


**RETAIL CORE**

**RETAIL CORE AREA DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS**

1. By removing a single building in the center of the block, a pedestrian plaza is created which provides a place for outdoor eating and an attractive pedestrian link from Scott Avenue to Pennington Street.
2. Existing alleys and passageways converted to pedestrian use.
3. New interior corridors connecting central plaza with Stone and Congress. This entire internal pedestrian network creates additional exposure for existing retail stores and new retailers who might wish to locate there.

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



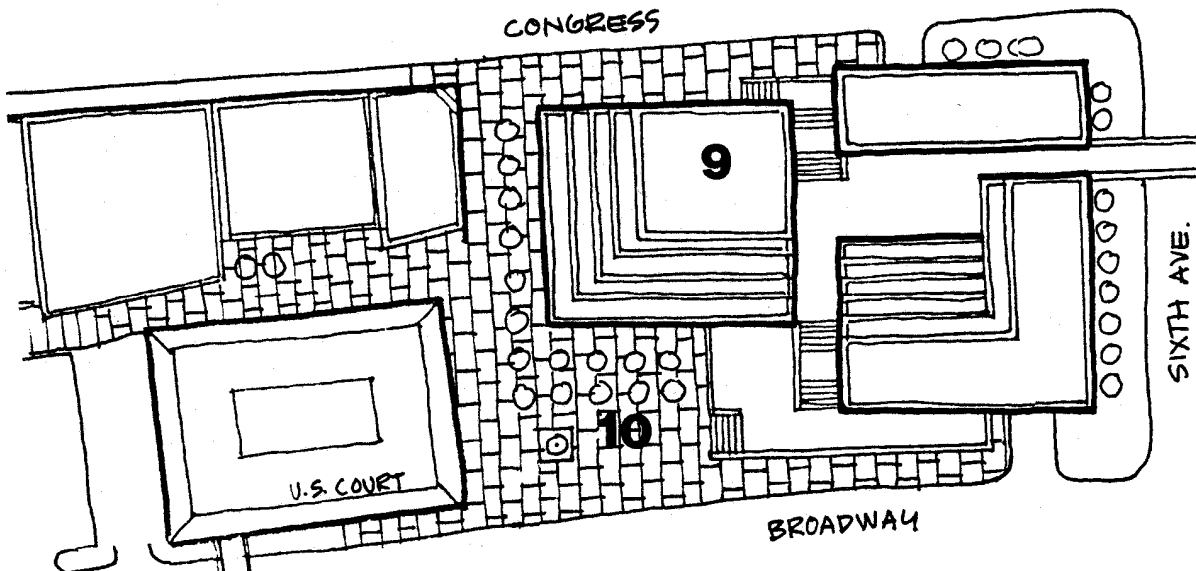
4. Store fronts on both sides of Pennington and the north side of Congress are remodeled. Sidewalks are widened, repaved, and landscaped. Arcades are provided to protect shoppers from the sun and rain and to create a more intimate atmosphere. The net effect is to identify the main downtown shopping area as a distinct, special "place," rather than a loose assemblage of unrelated stores.
5. Build a new surface parking lot adjacent to the retail core with good visual relationship to Congress Street traffic and remodeled stores.
6. Attractive pedestrian path provides east side of Sixth Avenue with a direct linkage to retail and office development to the west.
7. Expanded parking lot.

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

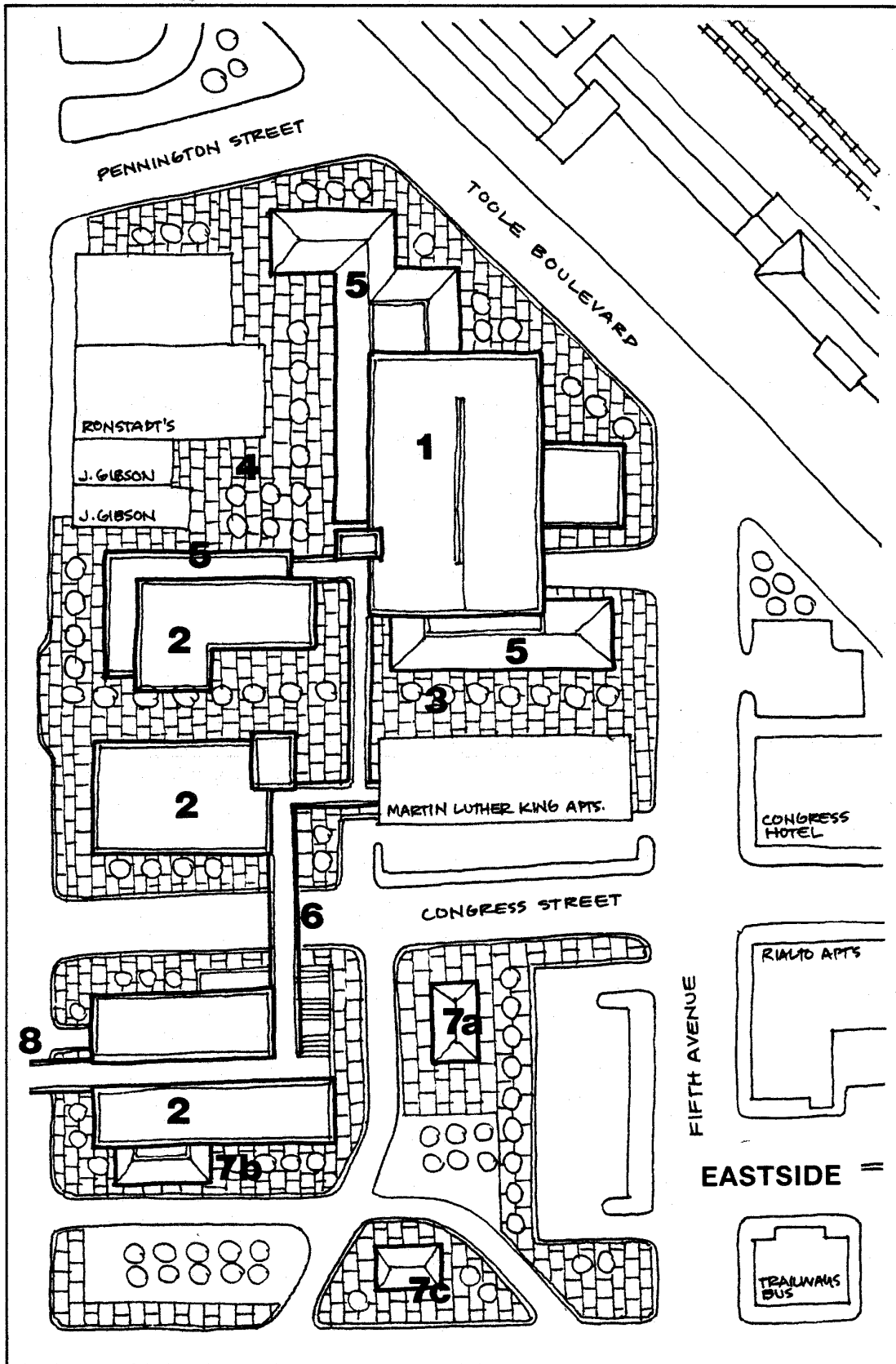
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### EASTSIDE AREA DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS

1. New parking garage.
2. Low- or mid-rise office buildings.
3. Tenth Street Mall.
4. Alley converted to pedestrian plaza. Shops, restaurants, services supported by new office development.
6. Pedestrian bridge across Congress Street.
7. Bus Plaza. 7a, b, and c are sheltered waiting areas to serve the various routes.
8. Pedestrian bridge across Sixth Avenue connects to a new office complex in the block now occupied by the Roskrue Hotel.
9. New office building with parking underneath.
10. Pedestrian plaza provides more appropriate setting for the U.S. Court building.



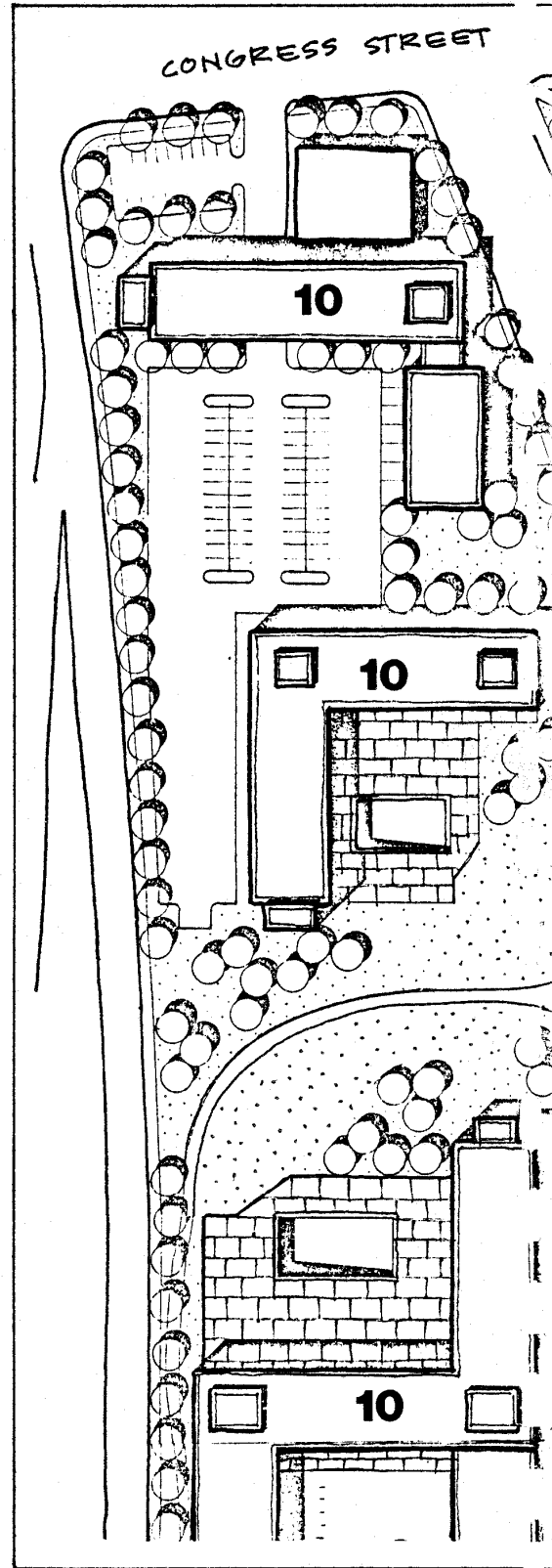
PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



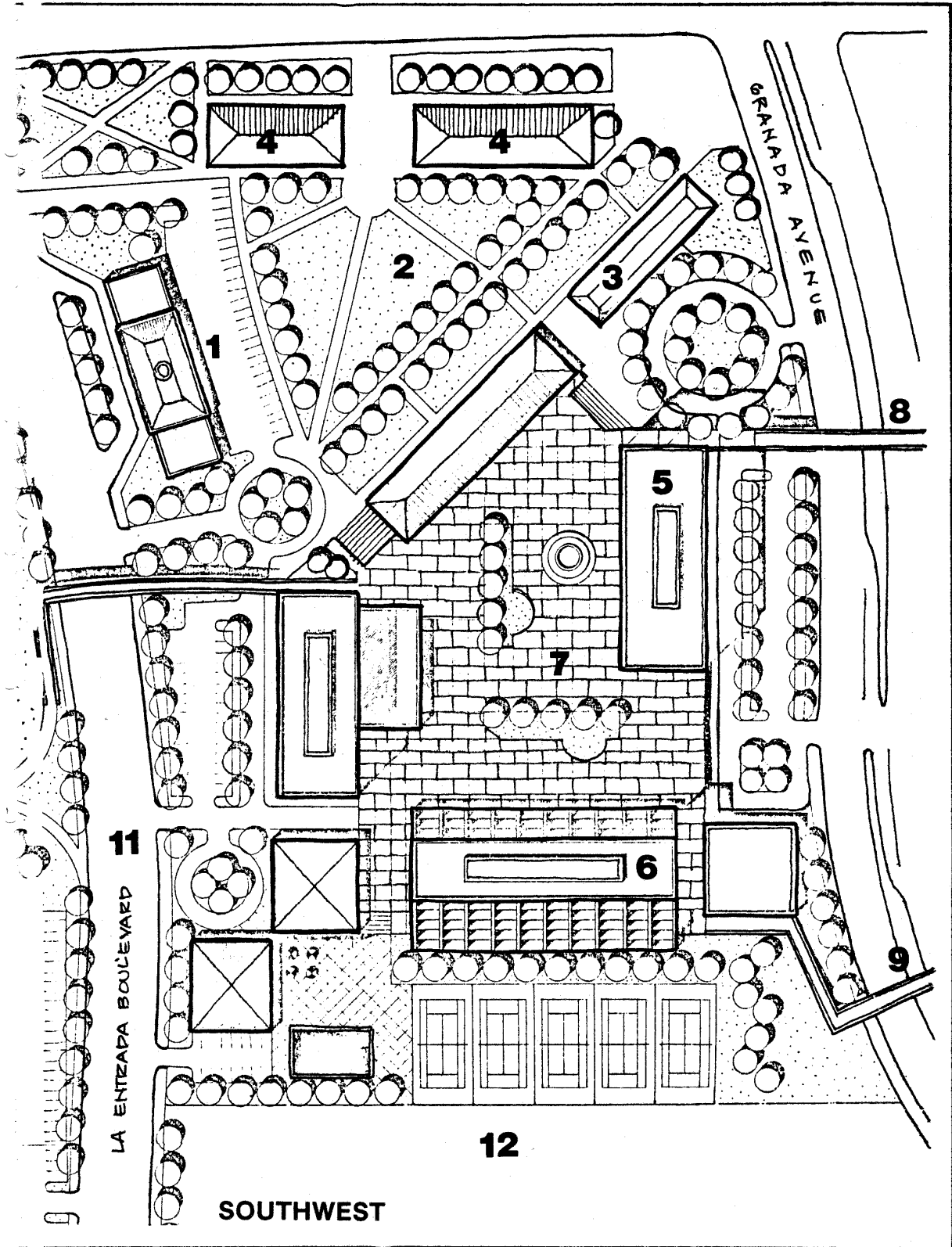


**SOUTHWEST AREA DEVELOPMENT POTENTIALS**

1. El Paso & Southwest Railroad Station converted to restaurant and shops.
2. Rehabilitate existing park.
3. Remodel S.P. hospital for offices and shops.
4. New garden office building.
5. Mid-rise office buildings.
6. 300-room hotel.
7. Elevated plaza with parking underneath for offices and hotel.
8. Pedestrian bridge to Marriott complex and La Placita.
9. Existing pedestrian bridge to Community Center.
10. New motels adjacent to freeway.
11. La Entrada Boulevard, a new north-south arterial on the alignment of the railroad spur, gives improved access to Community Center, increases development potential for abutting properties.
12. Expanded Community Center parking lot.



PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON



**PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON**

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## IMPLEMENTATION

The downtown of Tucson represents an important investment for the entire community. The maintenance of existing community resources dictates a major investment of time and money by the public and private sectors to ensure protection of the important facilities. The revitalization of downtown also helps safeguard from erosion the foundation of Pima County's tax base.

During the past several years, few, if any, improvements have been made in the areas of access, beautification and parking.

The following programs are recommended as a series of actions aimed at improving the downtown and adjacent areas. Some of the programs have already been initiated by previous city plans and decisions, but others will require new funds to be identified and committed from public and private sources. The recommended programs include:

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Revision of the City of Tucson Parking Code to reflect the special needs of downtown parking requirements and begin preparation of a Downtown Parking Plan.

**1978-79**

First Phase Revitalization of the El Presidio Historic Neighborhood to focus on new residential uses of vacant lands and financial assistance to residents of the area to rehabilitate property for residential uses.

Continuation of the Parade of Homes and the initiation of new downtown housing projects, i.e., U of A Student Housing and La Entrada.

Art Museum Block Revitalization to complete the Fish and Stevens House restoration and provide for improved vehicle access.

Beautification and storefront remodeling of Pennington Street-Stone Avenue to Scott Avenue.

Development of a more permanent location and festive decorations for the Downtown Mercado.

Completion of the First Phase of the Santa Cruz Land Acquisition from Mission Lane south to Irvington Road.

Completion of Phase II of the Santa Cruz River Park located north of Speedway to Grant Road.

Acquisition of the Convento, located adjacent to the Santa Cruz River, to protect and preserve this important historic site.

### **1979-80**

First Phase Revitalization of the Armory Park Historic Neighborhood to include financial assistance of low-cost loans to rehabilitate housing and improvements to public landscaping, sidewalks and street lights to enhance the historic importance of the area.

Continuation of the El Presidio Historic Neighborhood Revitalization.

Restoration of the Romero and Corbett houses as a part of the Art Museum Block Revitalization.

Begin the acquisition of rights-of-way and construction of the 6th Avenue Underpass.

Initiate the acquisition of rights-of-way and the construction of Toole Boulevard, Congress Street to 6th Street/Mary's Road.

Initiate improvements to the western entrance of downtown by construction of a boulevard-type arterial on Congress from I-10 to Granada.

Construct a series of bus plazas in the downtown area to provide a more effective means to integrate SunTran and Old Pueblo transit systems and provide an improved atmosphere for bus patrons.

Continue downtown housing programs, i.e., U of A Student Housing, Parade of Homes, La Entrada, and initiate a new housing project on vacant lands adjacent to the Santa Cruz River.

Initiate the First Phase of the Old Pueblo South Neighborhood Revitalization to include rehabilitation and loans for renovation of residential dwellings.

Continue the Santa Cruz Land Acquisition program with acquisition of lands north of Mission Lane to Camino del Cerro and from Irvington Road south to the San Xavier Indian Reservation.

Acquire land and begin construction of the main library in downtown to serve as a central point for the Tucson Library System.

Construct improvements to the Downtown Storm Drainage System in conjunction with widening of sidewalks and beautification.

Assist private developers in construction of new downtown buildings and shopping areas through Tax Increment Financing and/or Revenue Bonding.

Initiate a major redevelopment of the Downtown Gateway, which consists of lands located south of Congress to Ochoa Village and bounded on the west by the freeway and the east by Main Avenue. This project will be a combination of rehabilitation and new residential, commercial and light industrial development.

**1980-81**

## PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN TUCSON

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Begin purchase of right-of-way for a new north/south boulevard between St. Mary's Road and 22nd Street following the Southern Pacific Spur Line to link the downtown with southwest Tucson and vacant lands adjacent to I-10 for development.

Complete the La Reforma replacement housing.

Begin construction of the new Congress Street Underpass to provide an improved east/west linkage and facilitate improved access to the downtown, freeway and west side areas. The new underpass will also replace the 4th Avenue Underpass and 4th Avenue will be realigned to connect with Congress east of the Southern Pacific Railroad. \*

Acquire the Pithouse and begin restoration of this site as an important community resource linking Tucson's history with the Hohokam Indian culture.

Acquire right-of-way to extend Cushing Street from Granada Avenue to I-10. This will provide improved access to the Community Center and also develop an additional route to I-10 and the west side.

### 1981-82

Construct Toole Boulevard south from Broadway to connect with 16th Street to provide for improved access to the Southern Pacific Reserve and increase its potential for redevelopment to medium residential and light industrial uses.

Begin the construction of the Downtown Gateway Boulevard to connect St. Mary's Road and 22nd Street.

Initiate East Downtown Revitalization.

Widen Broadway between Church and 6th Avenue to allow for four standard traffic lanes.

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\* Plan amendments have deleted the sentences outlined. See the Tucson General Plan, Land Use Element

Construct the Cushing Street, I-10 to Granada Avenue improvements.

Undertake development of improved parking facilities.

The Downtown Advisory Committee further recommends the immediate establishment of a "Downtown Development Authority." This new entity would be responsible for facilitating downtown development efforts. The "Authority" would combine the duties of an Industrial Development Authority and a Redevelopment Agency. The Downtown Advisory Committee foresees this agency as a developer and manager of projects such as parking facilities, acquisition of sites, etc., and also serve as a linkage between private and public sectors. Several cities in the United States, successful in downtown revitalization, have used a similar mechanism.

**DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY**