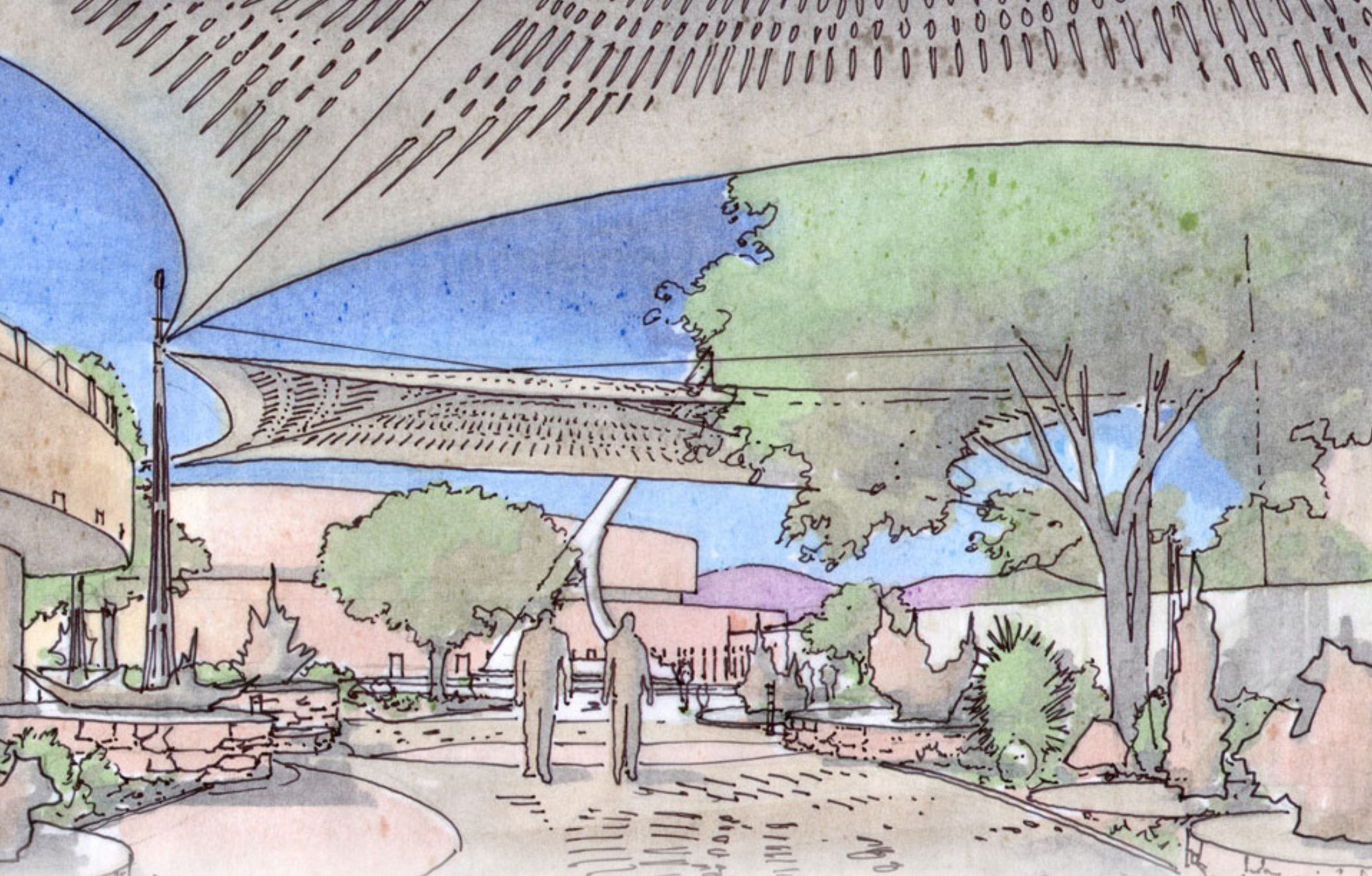

DOWNTOWN PATHWAY & CREATIVE KIDS WORKSHOP

MARCH 2012

DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning

DOWNTOWN PATHWAY & CREATIVE KIDS WORKSHOP

was created by:

Mayor John Cook

City Council
Ann Morgan Lilly, *District 1*
Susie Byrd, *District 2*
Emma Acosta, *District 3*
Carl L. Robinson, *District 4*
Dr. Michiel Noe, *District 5*
Eddie Holguin Jr., *District 6*
Steve Ortega, *District 7*
Cortney Niland, *District 8*

City Manager & Deputies
Joyce A. Wilson, *City Manager*
David R. Almonte, *Health & Safety*
Deborah G. Hamlyn, *Community Services*
Jane K. Shang, *Mobility Services*
William F. Studer Jr., *Finance & Management Support Services*

City Plan Commission
Kristi K. Borden
Melissa C. Brandrup
Elma Carreto
Luis H. De La Cruz
Jose M. Landeros
Larry Nance
David A. Schauer
Richard Vorba
Geoffrey Wright

Planning and Economic Development
Katherine Dodson, *Director*
Mathew McElroy, *Planning Director*
Fred Lopez, *Comprehensive Plan Manager*
Carlos Gallinar, *Comprehensive Plan Manager*
Shamori Whitt, *Comprehensive Plan*

Museums and Cultural Affairs Department
Sean McGlynn, *Director*
Ben Fyffe, *Cultural Programs Supervisor*

Creative Kids
Andrea Gates-Ingle, *Executive Director*
Stephen Ingle, *Artistic Director*

Creative Kids students and staff

Local Artists (in alphabetical order)
Adrian Aragones
Ho Baron
Suzi Davidoff
Christina Keime
Geraldine Lozano
L.B. McKay
Jesus Meza
Sabina Muñoz
René Nevarez
Mitsu Overstreet
Polly Perez
Rachelle Thiewes
WERC

Dover, Kohl & Partners
town planning
Joseph Kohl
Jason King
James Dougherty
Pamela Stacy
Kenneth Garcia

IPS Group
urban planning
Natalie Ruiz

SITES Southwest
landscape architecture
Deborah Hradek

…and El Paso residents

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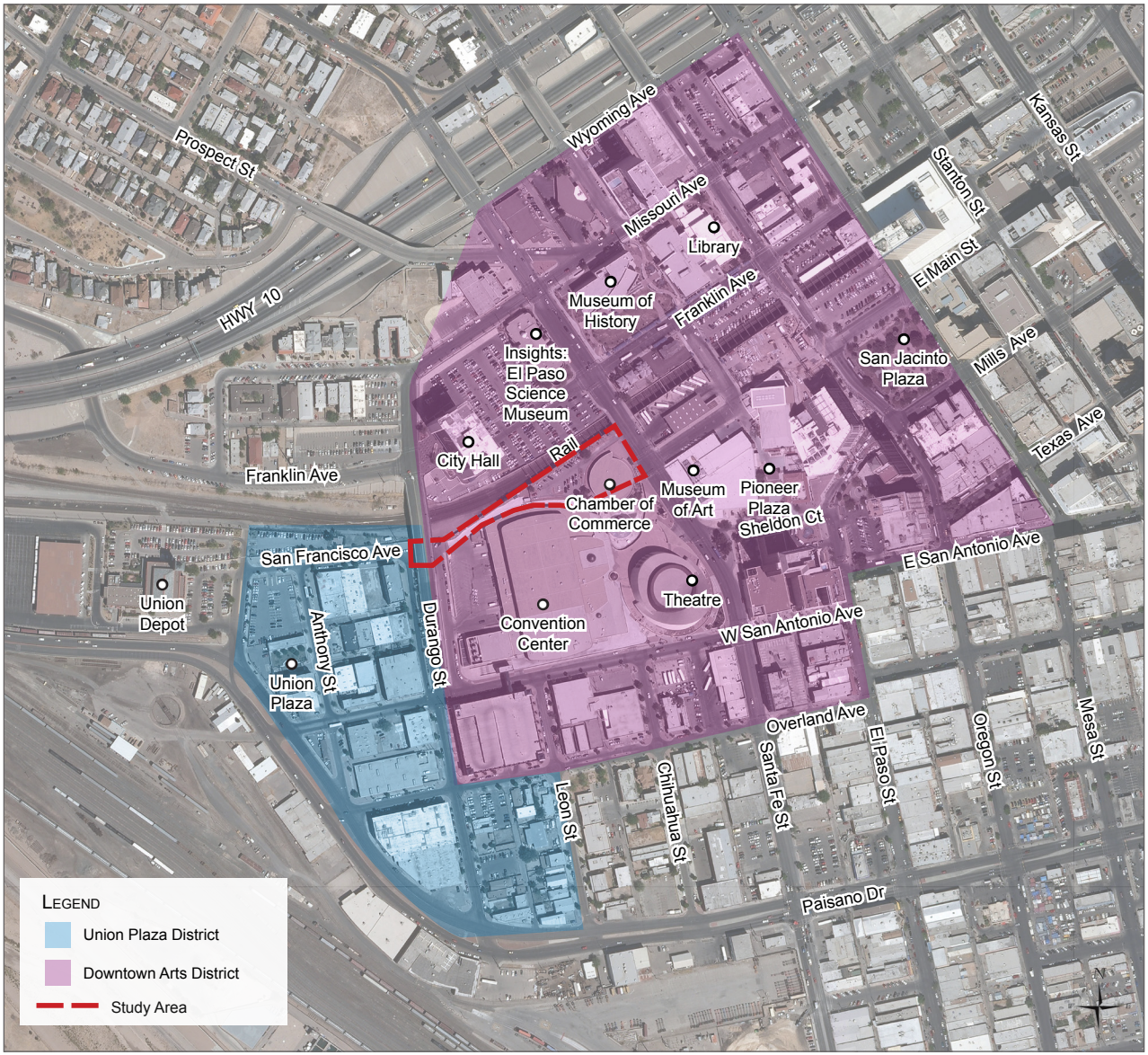
1 PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Downtown El Paso is showing new signs of life as it experiences a renaissance of revitalization efforts, new development, and enhanced Sun Metro transportation efforts. The City of El Paso is committed to the rejuvenation of Downtown as has been expressed in the *Downtown 2015 Plan*, *Connecting El Paso*, and *Plan El Paso*. The City's focus on downtown has led numerous civic institutions to locate Downtown creating a cultural and arts district that includes the Museum of History, the Library, Insights: El Paso Science Museum, Museum of Art, Pioneer Plaza, Plaza Theatre, and the Convention Center. In addition, the Union Plaza District, established in 1996, has become one of the premier night time entertainment districts within the City. Although the Arts District and the Union Plaza District are adjacent to one another, the Convention Center creates a barrier between the two centers of activity.

The Museum and Cultural Affairs Department (MCAD) teamed with Creative Kids to pursue a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in order to create a plan to reconnect the Union Plaza District and the Arts District with a new pedestrian path. This new Downtown Pathway will be located between Durango Street and Santa Fe Street and between the railroad tracks and the Convention Center. The area has been used as parking for the Chamber of Commerce and vehicular access to the back side of the convention center but is typically closed off to pedestrians.

MCAD and Creative Kids brought in Dover, Kohl & Partners to work with Creative Kids students, local artists, and the public to design the pathway. Dover-Kohl was assisted by Natalie Ruiz of IPS Group, a planning firm based out of College Station, Texas and Deborah Hradek, a local landscape architect from SITES Southwest. The team led a public workshop December 2nd through the 6th, 2011.



Downtown El Paso including study area

Creative Kids and the oLo Gallery

Creative Kids Inc., is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational community-based art agency and is celebrating its 10th year. Founded by Stephen and Andrea Gates-Ingle, the mission of Creative Kids is to extend the reach of the arts to diverse student groups including children battling cancer, disadvantaged youth, foster children, children with disabilities, and other conditions of marginalization.

Through the arts process, Creative Kids is able to encourage new life visions, give hope and self-empowerment, and equip participating children and youth to lead productive lives. Creative Kids uses "hands on" arts techniques and mediums that range from printmaking, painting on canvas, sculpture, water-media, and digital media that engage participants in creative and constructive pursuits linked to the development of life skills. At the same time the Creative Kids program is used to provide an opportunity to augment creative expression, self-discovery and build on their self-concept.

OLo (Other Learning Opportunities) Gallery and the Creative Kids Art Studios houses the agency's offices and classrooms in the Union Plaza District and is situated in a federally recognized Empowerment Zone area. The space has more than 8,000 square feet of gallery space in a 16,000 square foot building that includes a multimedia technology lab and full kitchen.

Creative Kids has been widely profiled in the press at the local and statewide level. It has been the recipient of national recognitions including Best Practice Model for Arts in Healthcare by the National Endowment for the Arts, 2007 Coming Up Taller Semifinalist, and featured Success Story by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

For more information of Creative Kids programs or the oLo gallery please visit:

www.creativekidsart.org

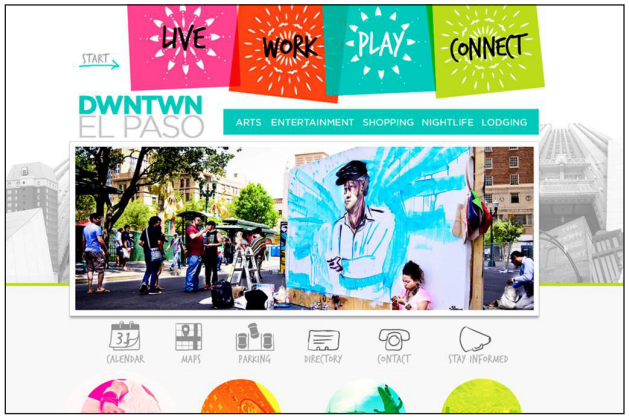
THE PUBLIC PROCESS

A SMALL PART OF A LARGER EFFORT

On Friday, December 2nd the Dover-Kohl team began the charrette week with a series of meetings to better understand the various planning efforts underway throughout the Downtown and to get a better idea of how to incorporate existing efforts such as the re-branding and wayfinding efforts soon to be initiated throughout the Downtown by the Downtown Redevelopment Organization. The Downtown re-branding will bring renewed interest and get the word out about all the varied and unique opportunities that Downtown has to offer including restaurants, shopping, entertainment, and culture. Wayfinding in the Downtown will be done through a series of kiosks, signage, light bollards, and directional pavement tiles. Large kiosks will feature maps of the Downtown with five and ten minute walking distance circles to tell a passersby where parking, restaurants, shops, and museums are within their vicinity.

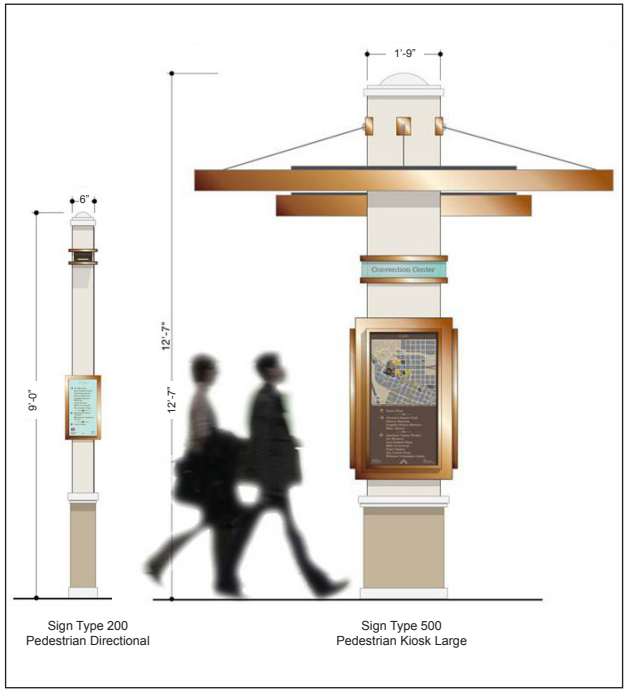
Two of the first areas slated to receive the new signage will be the Downtown Pathway and El Paso Street connecting the library and Museum of History to Pioneer Plaza and the Museum of Art. The addition of the path and the wayfinding kiosks will help to get people from the Arts District to the Union Plaza District and back again.

In addition, the Convention Center recently repaved the plaza at their entry and added new shade structures. Convention Center personnel intend to expand their efforts to increase pedestrian awareness and facilitate pedestrians crossing Santa Fe Street to and from the Convention Center and theatre by resurfacing the street at Sheldon Court.

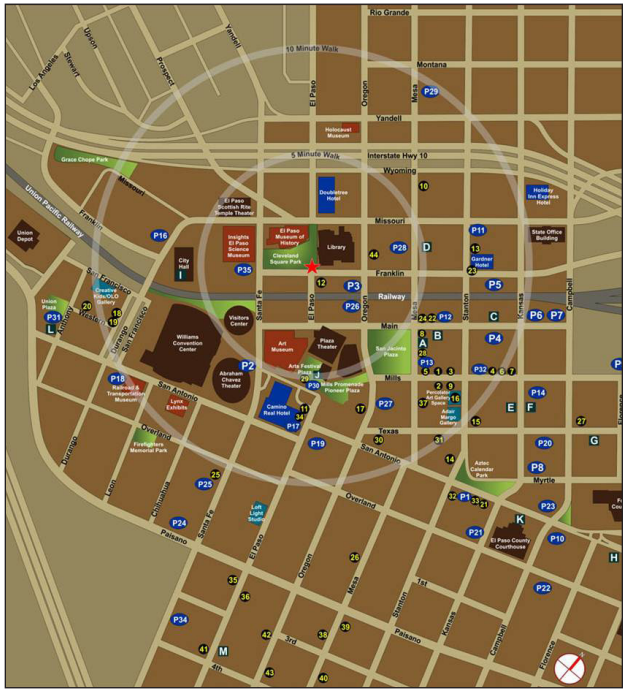


Proposed website design focusing on Downtown

Sample pavement medallion to assist in Wayfinding.



Sample designs for wayfinding kiosks and directional signs



Sample Downtown locator map

AREA TOUR WITH CREATIVE KIDS

On Saturday, December 3rd the Dover-Kohl team met the students and staff of Creative Kids at the oLo Gallery and led them on a day of exercises to engage the students and gather their ideas for the pathway. The day began with a brief presentation by Jason King, Project Director from Dover-Kohl. The students were also given an overview of what town planners and architects do and how they can use their art and creativity in numerous ways to change and enhance the built environment followed by an explanation of the parameters of the project at hand and how it fits in with planning efforts going on throughout the Downtown. Pamela Stacy, Town Planner from Dover-Kohl presented some ideas of other kids artwork projects and precedents for ways to incorporate art into pathways around the country.

Following the overview of the project the team and Creative Kids students and staff set out on a walking tour of the site. The group also visited Cleveland Park as a precedent to help gather ideas.

The Dover-Kohl team and students walked, measured, and drew the site along with initial concepts for what the pathway could look like in the future. Students were asked what they liked about the space, what they did not like about the space, and what types of uses or art they would like to see in the space. They used words and drawings to describe how they would like the area to be transformed.

After visiting the site, the group walked over to Cleveland Park which was recently renovated and incorporates a "papel picado" theme through shade structures, railings, and benches. The students were once again asked what they liked about the space, what they did not like about the space, and what types of elements they saw that they would like to incorporate into the new walkway they were designing.

HANDS-ON DESIGN SESSION WITH CREATIVE KIDS

Following a hot chocolate and pizza lunch break back in the Creative Kids studio, the students gathered into four small groups to work collaboratively on hands-on exercises to express and incorporate their ideas from the site into a plan. The hands-on exercise began with an image preference survey of art and architecture to help get the discussion started. The students discussed what types of art they liked and felt would be appropriate for El Paso and the proposed pathway.

A map of the study area was placed before each group and the students were asked to draw, discuss, and locate their ideas for the pathway.

At the end of the session the results of the image surveys were tallied and presented back to the students. Then, representatives from each table presented their ideas before the group so that everyone's ideas could be heard and discussed.

EVENING KICK-OFF PRESENTATION & HANDS-ON DESIGN SESSION

In the evening, over 60 members of the public gathered at the oLo Gallery for an evening public Kick-off Presentation and hands-on design session. Jason King led the group though an introduction to the project and a recap of the students activities earlier in the day. Participants were then asked to partake in the same hands-on exercises as the Creative Kids students earlier in the day. Strikingly, many of the conclusions and ideas that the students expressed and described were repeated by others in the evening. In addition, people were asked to fill out "one word" cards to describe Downtown today and in the future as well as exit surveys. The surveys allowed the design team to receive individual detailed responses of the ideas people like best and to hear new ideas not fully described or discussed at the tables.

Prior to the workshop, the City sent out a call for local artists to participate in the charrette and bring their ideas for the pathway to the workshop. A total of 15 local artists participated during the workshop, primarily at the hands-on exercises but with some continuing to volunteer their time to assist the design team in the studio over the weekend.

BIG IDEAS

SANTA FE AS A CROSSABLE STREET

MAKE IT A PLACE, NOT JUST A PASS THROUGH

PROVIDE SHADE

ADD INTERACTIVE, EXCITING & CHANGING ART

DREAM BIG: MAKE AN ICONIC PLACE

OPEN DESIGN STUDIO

The Dover-Kohl team set up a design studio at the Museum of History from Sunday, December 4th through Tuesday, December 6th. The studio was open to the public and the team was joined by local artists, Creative Kids students, the El Paso Times, and City officials and staff. Over the course of three days the design team incorporated many of the ideas gathered during the hands-on design sessions to create a single vision for the walkway.

While in the studio, the team continued to meet with members of MCAD, stakeholders, and the City in a series of technical meetings to ensure that the plan was feasible and would meet everyone's needs.

Some local artists joined the team in the studio and assisted in the development of the plan. Mitsu Overstreet added his expertise as a muralist and also weighed in on different ways both permanent and temporary art installations could be incorporated into the design and layout of the space. Werc explored the use of shade structures along the pathway and spanning across Sante Fe Street to let pedestrians and drivers know something unique is happening. In addition, Geraldine Lopez worked with the team to refine some of the design concepts.

Deborah Hradek of SITES Southwest lent her expertise to the design team to ensure suggested plantings were native, drought tolerant, and would meet the shade or decorative requirements to make the pathway an attractive usable space.

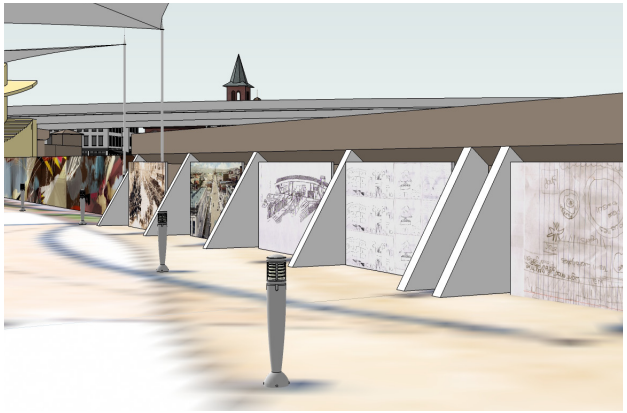
OPEN HOUSE / WORK IN PROGRESS PRESENTATION

The oLo Gallery hosted an interactive open house the evening of Tuesday, December 6th. The community image surveys and table maps from the Saturday sessions were pinned-up around the gallery. The drawings that the Creative Kids students worked on over the weekend were incorporated into a digital model of the proposed plan that played on a continuous loop on the wall of the gallery. Maps of the proposed plan were posted and participants were encouraged to write their ideas, concerns, and comments on the draft plan.

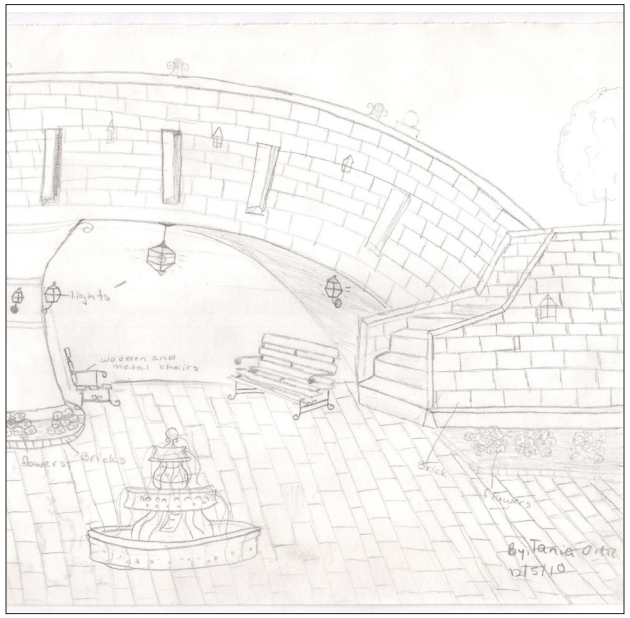
The gallery filled with more than 40 participants including Creative Kids students, local artists, interested members of the public, and City officials. The details of the draft plan were presented by Jason King and James Dougherty of Dover-Kohl. Following the presentation the team encouraged discussion and questions. Attendees were also asked to fill out an exit survey to see if the draft plan was on the right track.

CREATIVE KIDS DRAWINGS

Creative Kids participant ideas were incorporated into the draft plan drawings,and included in the Work-in-Progress Presentation. The following pages contain a sampling of the drawings that were produced.



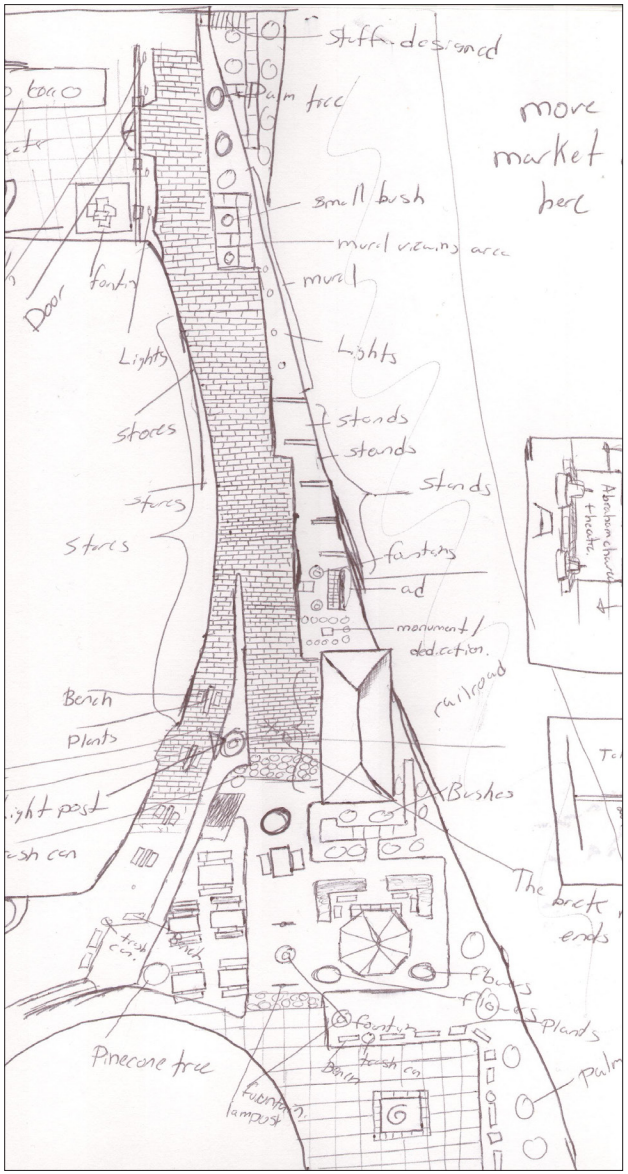
Digital model with kids drawings



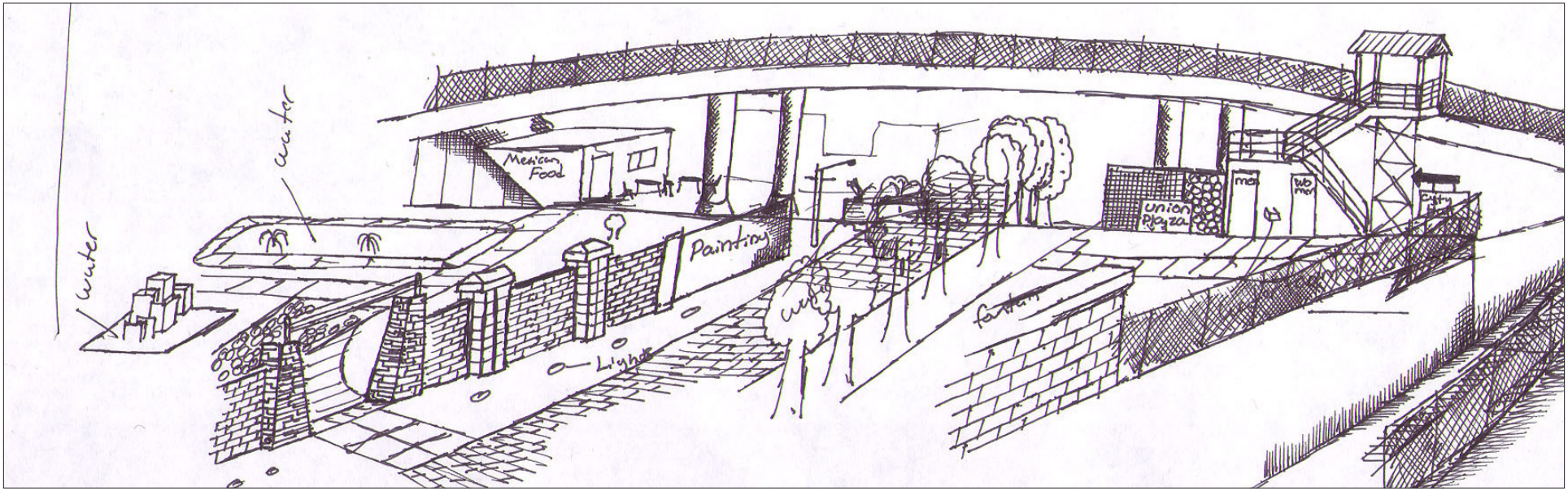
Creative Kids participant, Tania Ortiz

Creative Kids participant, Juan Pablo

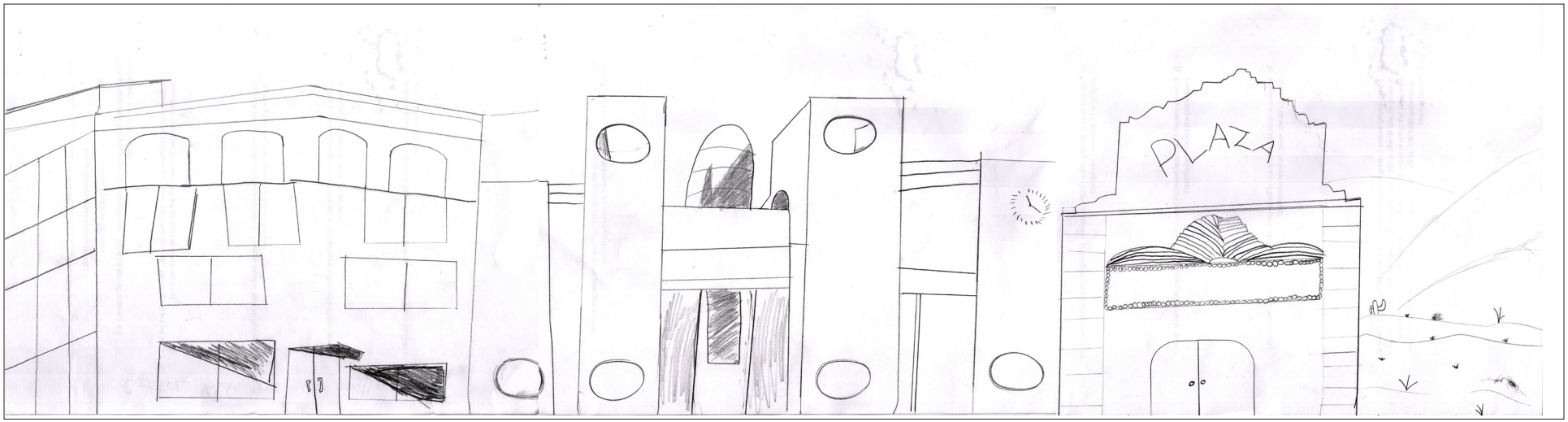
Creative Kids participant, Juan Pablo



Creative Kids participant, Eddy



Creative Kids participant, Eddy



Creative Kids participant, Alejandra

2 PLAN CONCEPTS

BIG IDEAS

During the Hands-on Design Session key ideas emerged from the presentations made by Creative Kids students, local artists, and other participants. The following "Big Ideas" were identified to guide improvements for the pathway connecting the Arts District and Union Plaza District. Although specific details may change as the plan is further detailed and implemented, the "Big Ideas" should remain intact and incorporated into the overall plan for the Downtown Pathway.

SANTA FE AS A CROSSABLE STREET

Santa Fe Street is the eastern boundary of the Downtown Pathway. The ability to cross Santa Fe Street safely is essential to the function of the pathway. Participants suggested that each intersection along Santa Fe Street, from San Antonio Street to Franklin Street, become paved intersections to slow cars down for pedestrian crossings. Expanding the walkability of Santa Fe Street will help calm traffic by the time it reaches the crossing at the end of Main Drive. As Santa Fe Street approaches Main Drive from the north, the road slopes down making it more difficult to see pedestrians crossing the street. By slowing vehicles down at Franklin Avenue it will help making crossing Santa Fe Street throughout its length more feasible, comfortable and safe for pedestrians.

MAKE IT A PLACE, NOT JUST A PASS THROUGH

Participants stated their hope that the study area be more than just a connecting path. The more people utilize the space the safer it will be and the greater the likelihood that the Chamber of Commerce, Visitor's Bureau, and Convention Center will orient some of their functions toward the space. Benches, shade, and art give people the ability to spend time in the space.

BIG IDEAS

SANTA FE AS A CROSSABLE STREET

MAKE IT A PLACE, NOT JUST A PASS THROUGH

PROVIDE SHADE

ADD INTERACTIVE, EXCITING & CHANGING ART

DREAM BIG: MAKE AN ICONIC PLACE

PROVIDE SHADE

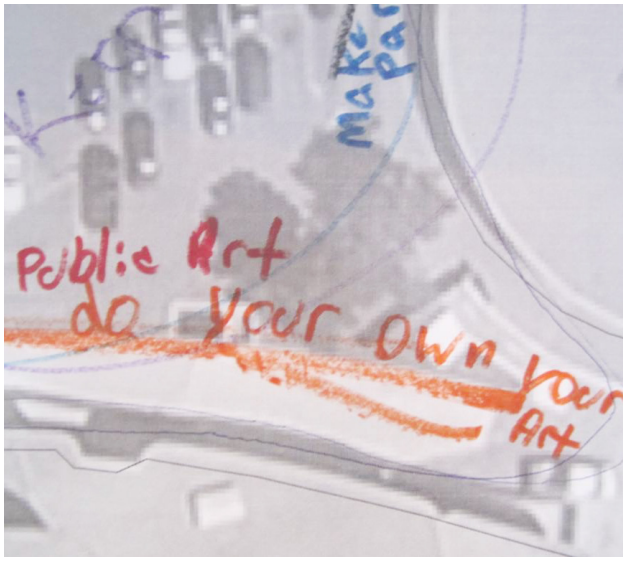
El Paso's sunny skies can be harsh for pedestrians. In order to make a walk or visit more enjoyable, residents proposed shade structures or canopies cover the pathway. When considering the proper shade structures other factors such as wind gusts and precipitation should be taken into account. Some kinds of canvas tensile structures may be susceptible to damage in high winds. Others are used effectively in the area already. The Garden restaurant has a large plaza area entirely shaded by tensile structures. Shade trees require watering; although some may be planted, using only trees to shade the space may be impractical. Usage of a papel picado canopy motif as a shade stricture was suggested by several workshop participants.

ADD INTERACTIVE, EXCITING, AND CHANGING ART

Art was a prevalent theme at every Hands-on Design Session table. Numerous types of art were suggested for various areas throughout the space. Art installations involving light were proposed for under the Durango Street bridge. This installation could utilize sound and motion based on train or car movements. Decorating the wall with cultural murals or interactive changing art walls to keep the space changing over time was also recommended. The overall desire for the space is that it is one that is interesting and keeps changing over time in order to keep people coming back again and again.

DREAM BIG: MAKE AN ICONIC PLACE

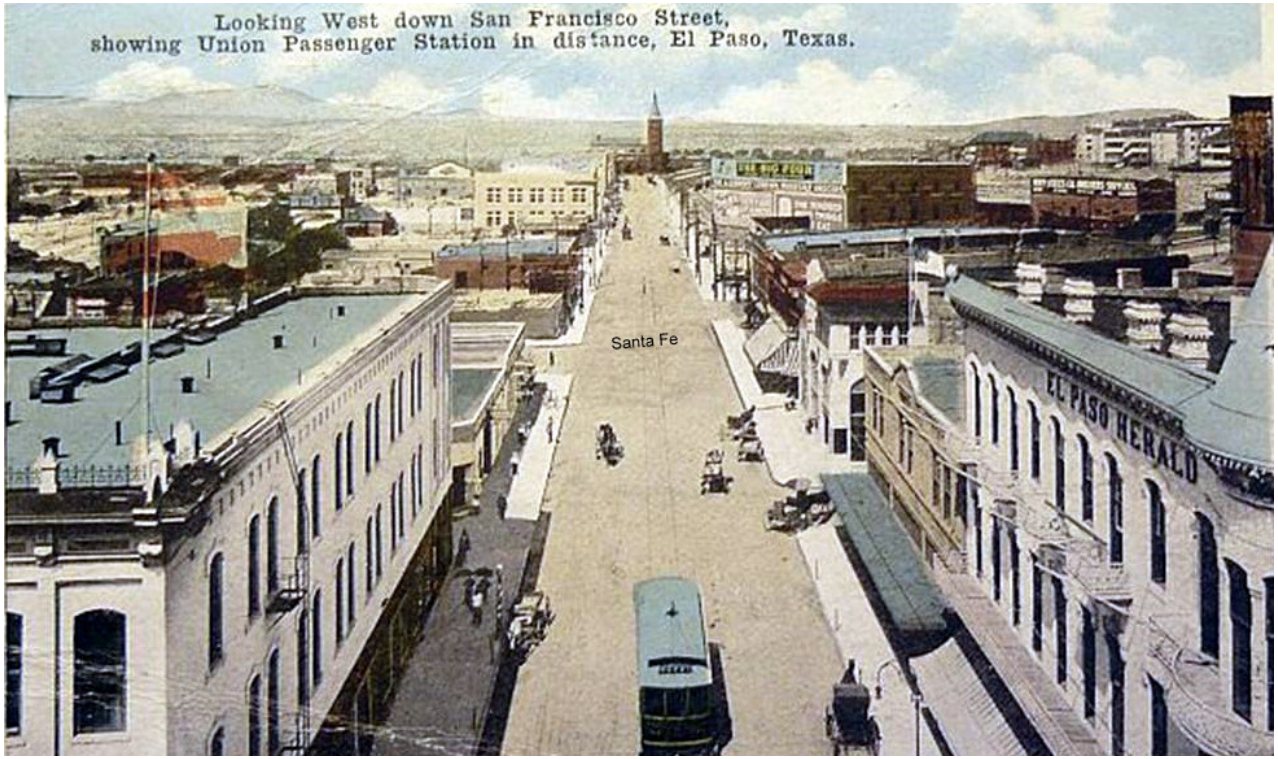
An icon for El Paso can help bring a sense of identity to El Paso residents and point of recognition for tourists. People want the pathway to be a sense of pride for El Paso. For the people of El Paso, dreaming small is not an option. The City is making a concerted effort with *Plan El Paso* to take a leap forward and advance the City, starting with bringing back the Downtown. By making a large gesture and iconic effort with the Downtown Pathway the City makes a positive statement about the future. The big gesture could come in many ways. The point is to not count out any possibilities and to not be afraid to dream the impossible. It just might be possible after all.



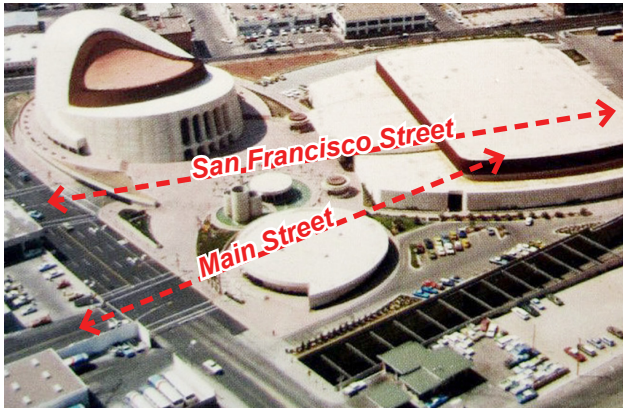
HISTORY

SAN FRANCISCO STREET

San Francisco Street once connected Daniel Burnham's Union Depot to the heart of Downtown El Paso to what is now know as Sheldon Court. In addition, Main Street used to continue and intersect with San Francisco Street. However, when the Convention Center was built it closed portions of these streets, severing the link between what is now known as the Union Plaza District and the rest of Downtown.



San Francisco Street once connected Union Station & Downtown



1974, Convention Center eliminated most of San Francisco Street

Parade marching down San Francisco Street

LOCAL ART

FAMILIAR & NEW ART

Mural and wall art are prevalent throughout El Paso and the southwest. Many older examples incorporate religious themes and images of the virgin of Guadelupe. More recent example carry other themes such as recalling images of the landscape and local culture. Most art tries to teach or invoke emotion from observers. One recent art project in Downtown El Paso harkens to bring back the international trolley between El Paso and Juárez.

"Let Me Take You Home" project

Virgin of Guadelupe on the side of a building in Ysleta.

Landscape of El Paso-themed mural

Religious-themed mural

Cultural-themed mural

PLAN CONCEPTS

The Downtown Pathway offers an opportunity to transform what had previously been a parking lot and back-of-house space behind the convention center into one of El Paso's signature new public spaces. The Downtown Pathway reconnects The Union Plaza District with the heart of Downtown with a much more direct pedestrian route than has, until now, been available. The Downtown Pathway is also a great opportunity to showcase the work of El Paso's artists community with a terraced sculpture garden, and spaces for the display of murals and other works.

Harmonious Geometries

The spatial geometry of the Downtown Pathway is quite complex. The shape of the space is formed by the curving walls of the convention center, the chamber of commerce building, and the wall along the edge of the railroad tracks all while sloping downhill from east to west. The geometries used for new pavement patterns, planting areas, and art display terraces are primarily curved or circular in order to merge harmoniously with the existing curved shape of the edges of the space

The Downtown Pathway space is narrow at its entrances and widens substantially at its middle. The natural spatial compression at the entrances can be enhanced by covering the Pathway in these locations with a series of shade canopies. These canopies are envisioned to feature "papel picado"-like perforations and openings that will create playful shadows from the bright El Paso sunlight. The larger central space is left uncovered to emphasize its openness. This large central space lends itself to especially large sculptural installations.

A Space for Artists

El Paso is blessed with a wonderful community of artists whose work is deeply imbued with the nuances of local culture. The Downtown Pathway is envisioned to function not just as a pedestrian thoroughfare, but as an outdoor gallery space. Artists will be able to display their works in a variety of configurations. Terraced platforms will be provided for sculptural artworks. Walls are available for mural art. Opportunities abound for lighting installations that will transform the passage at night.

Symbolism

El Paso is known as the "sun city," and the influence of its hot desert climate is evident in both the local culture and built environment. The Downtown Pathway seeks to celebrate this close connection to an environment dominated by the sun.

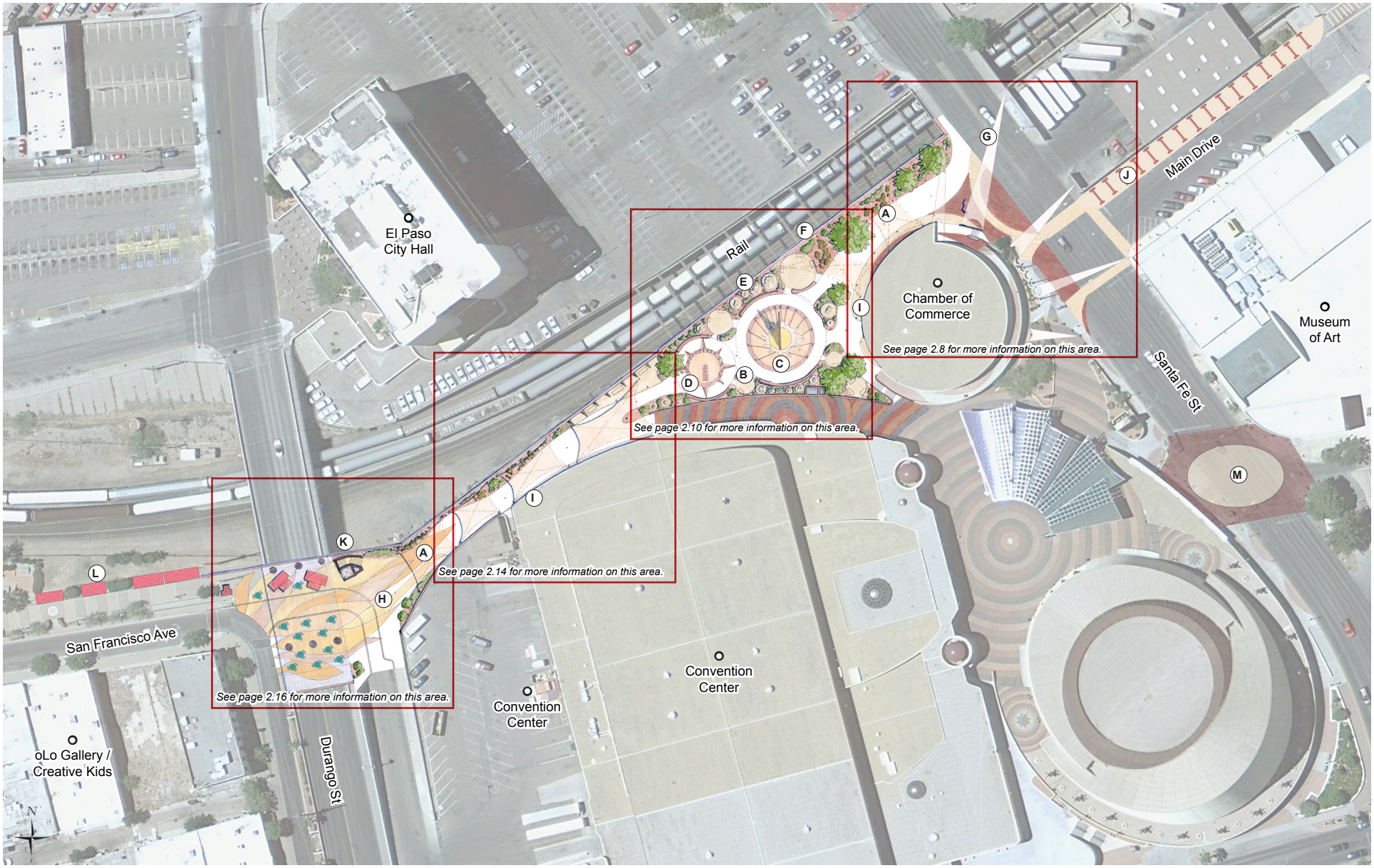
The passage of the sun marks time, and the cycles of nature. Within the Downtown Pathway, sculptural sundials are envisioned to be displayed to render visible this constant progression of the sun across the sky. An especially large sundial may be used as a sculptural focus for the central open area. Explanations of the rich variety of possible forms of sundials will present great educational opportunities. A sundial, where the viewer's own shadow is used to tell time can be a fun and interactive component.

A rich palette of plantings, grouped around the sundials and art displays to form a desert garden, emphasize the connection between the sun and the cycles of life. Explanation of the roles of various indigenous plants in the local culture will form an integral part of the Downtown Pathway's educational focus. A plant list of existing and proposed plants for the pathway are included in section 3 of this report.

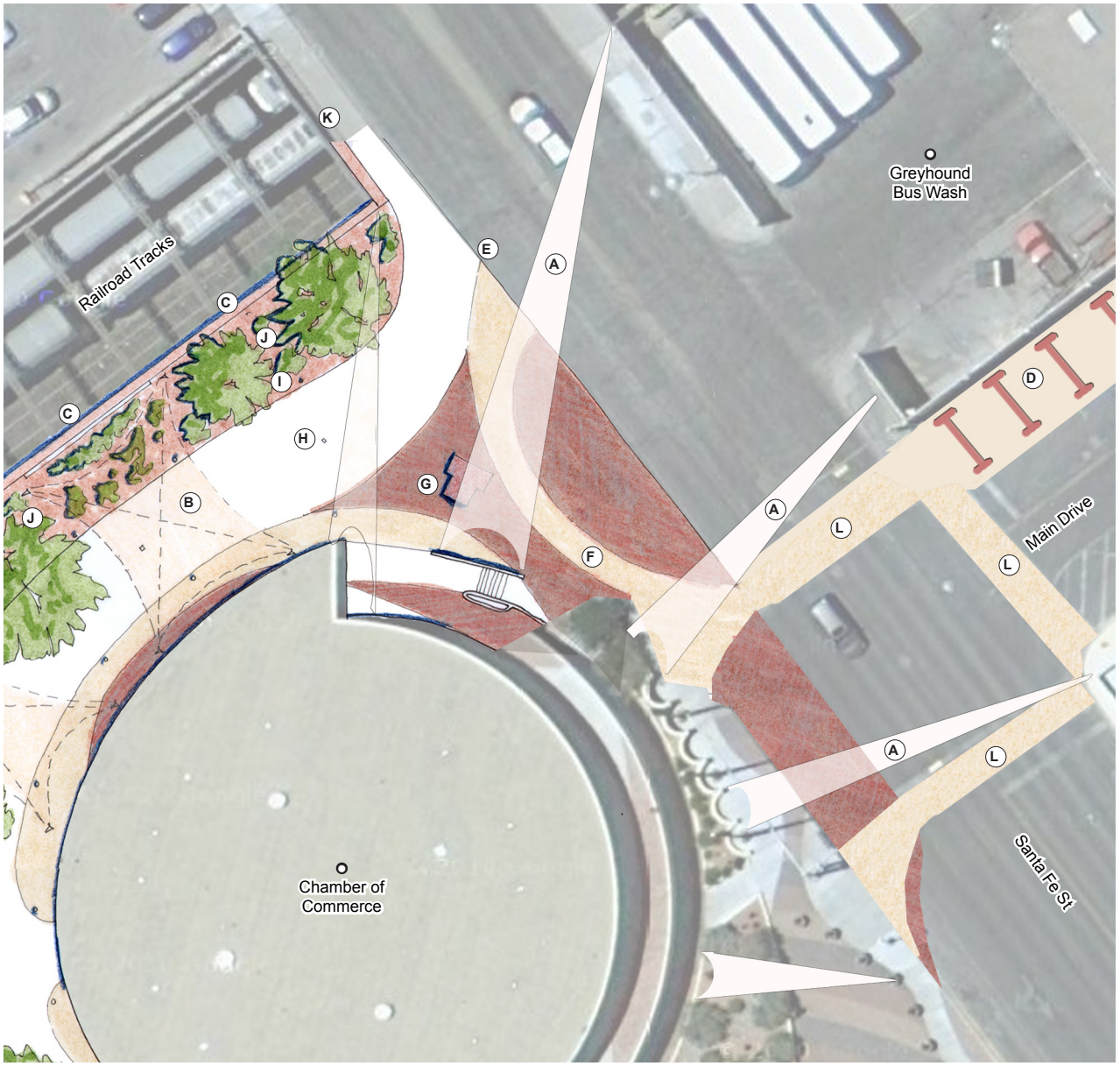
General Recommendations

- (A) The entrances to the Downtown Pathway are covered with canopies perforated with "papel picado" patterns.
- (B) The large central area forms a sculpture garden lushly landscaped with desert plantings.
- (C) A large sundial forms a central sculptural focus.
- (D) A smaller interactive sundial, where the viewer's own shadow is used to tell time, forms a secondary sculptural focus.
- (E) A variety of terraces of various heights are provided for the display of artworks.
- (F) The wall along the edge of the railroad tracks provides an opportunity for the display artworks such as murals.
- (G) Canopy structures extending across Santa Fe Street can help to increase the awareness of the Downtown Pathway for ease of wayfinding.
- (H) Decorative paving patterns and vivid, colorful lighting help to enliven the passageway underneath the Durango Street bridge. The space beneath the bridge can be further activated with amenities like food trucks.
- (I) Care must be taken to provide "eyes" on the Downtown Pathway space. This will be greatly helped by providing active uses within the buildings overlooking the Pathway.
- (J) Care should be taken to extend the Downtown Pathway along Main Drive to connect with San Jacinto Plaza. First steps should focus on a well-connected walkway with pedestrian-scaled lighting. Over time, focus should be placed on lining the connection with active uses to provide "eyes on the street."
- (K) A stairway and elevator connect Durango Street to the Pathway and Union Plaza district below.
- (L) Renovated trolley cars could be installed as small stores or restaurants with easy viewing of the trains passing by.
- (M) Intersections along Santa Fe Street are made more pedestrian-oriented and friendly with paving patterns.

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN

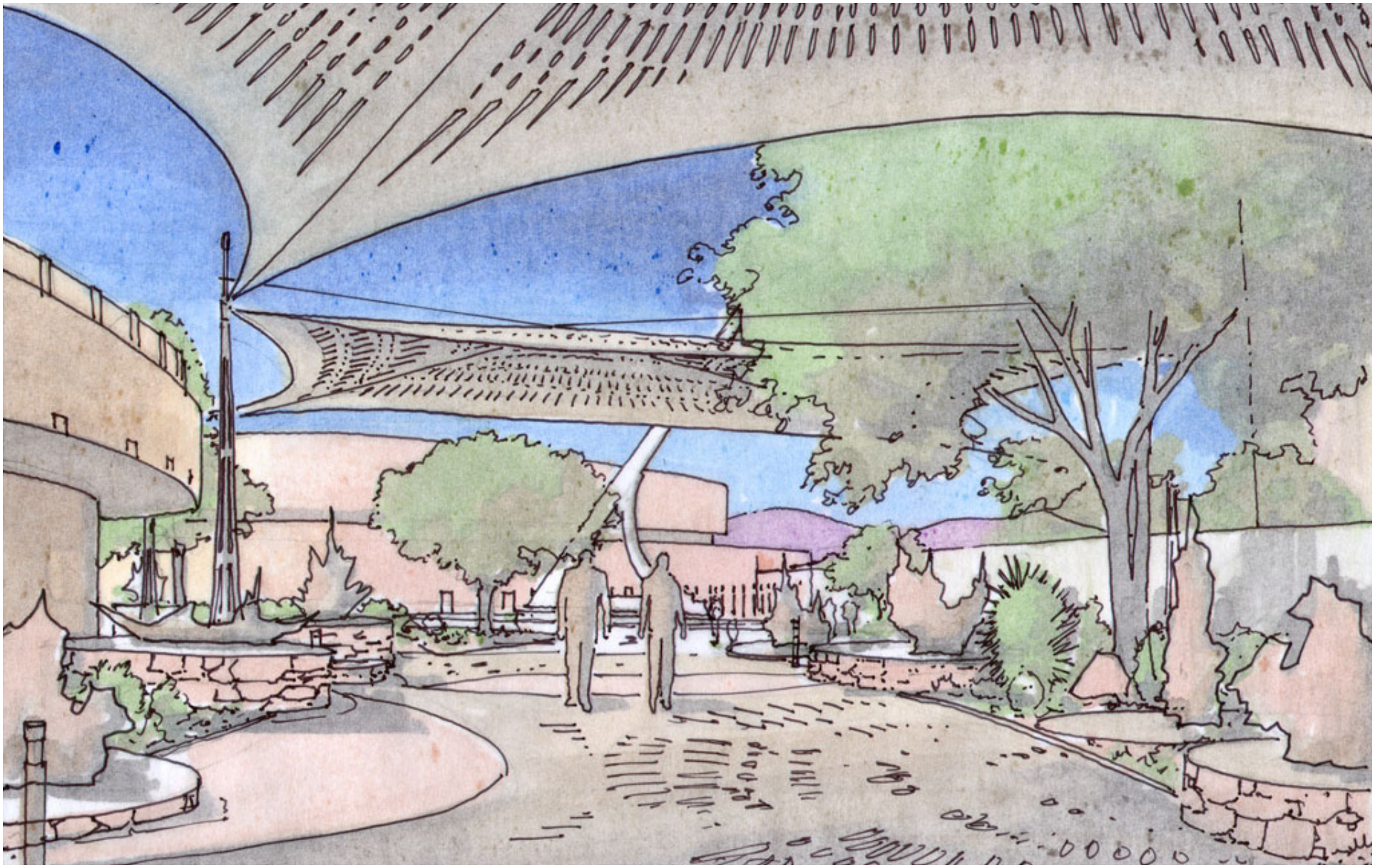


SANTA FE STREET ENTRANCE FEATURES



General Recommendations

- (A) Canopy structures extend across Santa Fe Street to increase the awareness of the Downtown Pathway and pedestrians.
- (B) The entrances to the Downtown Pathway are covered with canopies perforated with "papel picado" patterns to provide shade for pedestrians and also dapple the pavement with interesting and beautiful shadows.
- (C) The wall along the edge of the railroad tracks provides an opportunity for the display artworks such as murals.
- (D) Care should be taken to extend pedestrian elements along Main Drive to connect with Pioneer Plaza and San Jacinto Plaza. First steps should focus on a well-connected walkway with pedestrian-scaled lighting. Over time, focus should be placed on lining the connection with active uses to provide "eyes on the street."
- (E) The street is narrowed from bridge over the railroad crossing until after Main Drive (where turn lanes for entering the convention center parking lot would be added) in order to enlarge the pedestrian realm by the Chamber of Commerce building and to slow motorists.
- (F) The existing pavement pattern is extended when the street is narrowed.
- (G) Wayfinding Kiosk
- (H) Wayfinding Pavement Medallions
- (I) Light bollards line the pathway.
- (J) Terraces of various heights for the display of sculpture and art by local artists can line the Pathway, interspersed with indigenous plantings and existing trees forming a desert garden.
- (K) Work by local artists are to be implemented along railroad bridge overpasses.
- (L) Crosswalks are made more distinct with a change in pavement material.

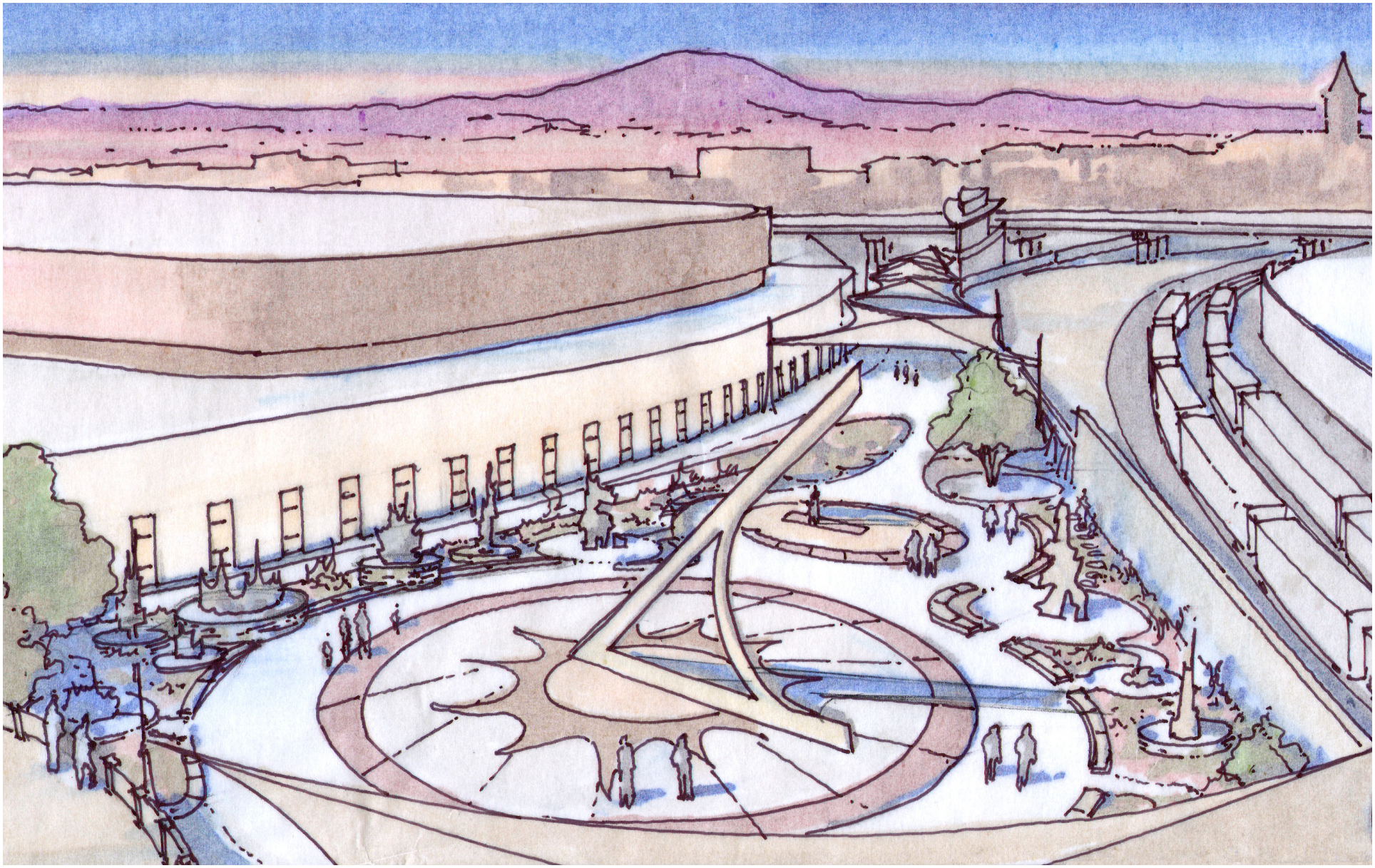


View entering the Downtown Pathway looking toward the central space

CENTRAL SPACE FEATURES

General Recommendations

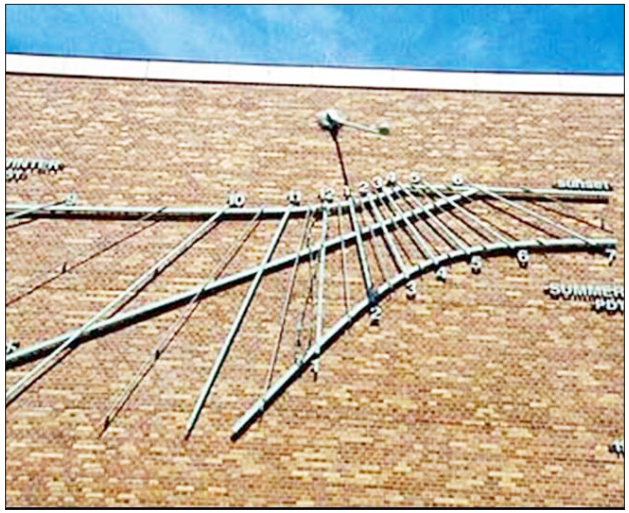
- (A) Circular patterns harmoniously resolve the complicated geometries of the site.
- (B) The large central area forms a sculpture garden lushly landscaped with desert plantings.
- (C) A large sundial forms a central sculptural focus.
- (D) A smaller interactive sundial, where the viewer's own shadow is used to tell time, forms a secondary sculptural focus.
- (E) Benches align the edges of the main spaces.
- (F) Terraces of various heights for the display of sculpture and art by local artists included larger spaces that can also provide additional seating area can line the pathway, interspersed with indigenous plantings and existing trees forming a desert garden.
- (G) The wall along the edge of the railroad tracks provides an opportunity to display artworks such as murals.
- (H) Care must be taken to provide "eyes" on the Downtown Pathway space. This will be greatly helped by providing active uses within the buildings overlooking the pathway.
- (I) Pedestrian Directional signage
- (J) Wayfinding Pavement Medallions
- (K) Light bollards line the pathway.
- (L) Paving pattern from the Convention Center Plaza is extended down the adjoining walkway. The pavement variation is a way for pedestrians to distinguish where each path will take them.
- (M) Parking Garage Ventilation
- (N) A new entrance to the parking garage below exits into the pathway.
- (O) A new entrance to the Chamber of Commerce / Visitors Bureau is added from the pathway increasing uses and visibility of the pathway.
- (P) A variety of pavers and concrete create the various spaces along the pathway.



Aerial view of the central space looking west: sundial concept illustration

SUNDIAL DESIGN

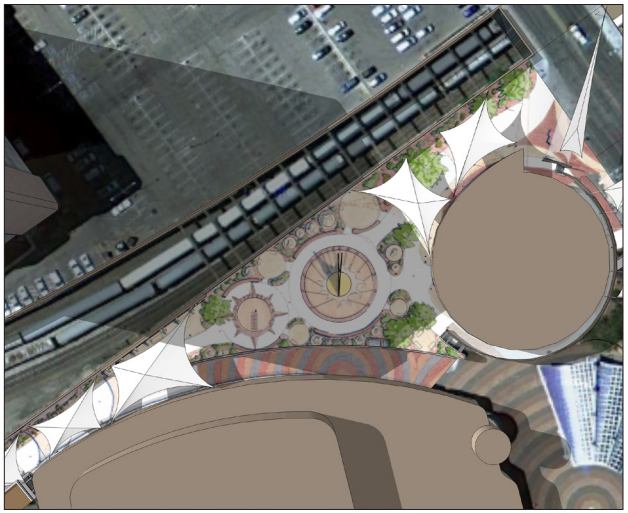
In El Paso's hot desert climate, the sun exerts a powerful influence on local culture and architecture. The movement of the sun marks the passage of time and regulates the rhythms of life. The movement of the sun's light is also critical to the perception of works of art, particularly sculpture. For these reasons, the Downtown Pathway is envisioned to incorporate a collection of functioning sundials of various shapes and forms although other themes could be utilized or incorporated into the space as well.



SUN STUDY

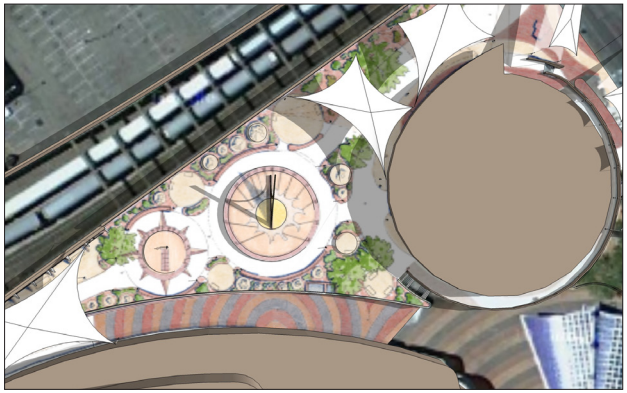
Under current conditions, a sundial will work as intended during any time of the year between the hours of 7:30 am and 4:30 pm. Beyond these hours there are two main conflicts. In the winter the sun rises late and sets early. In the summer there are longer hours of daylight, but the shadow from City Hall covers the area after 4:30 pm. After the hours of natural operation artificial lighting could replace natural light to keep the space interactive and interesting.

If the City Hall property were to redevelop, careful thought should be given to the siting of any tall structures. The current siting of City Hall produces the maximum shading effect on the pathway site. Any tall structures sited along the Santa Fe Street side of the would have no shading effect on the pathway, while structures close to Durango Street, such as where the City Hall building currently resides, would affect the site during summer afternoons. With this in mind, any redevelopment could be designed to extend hours of sunlight on the pathway beyond current conditions.

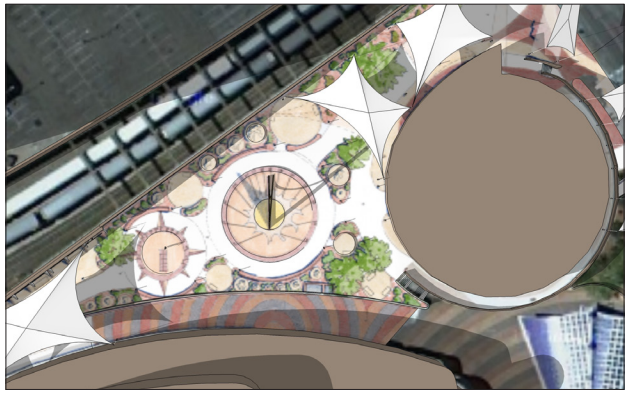


City Hall's shadow covers the area in the summer after 4:30 pm

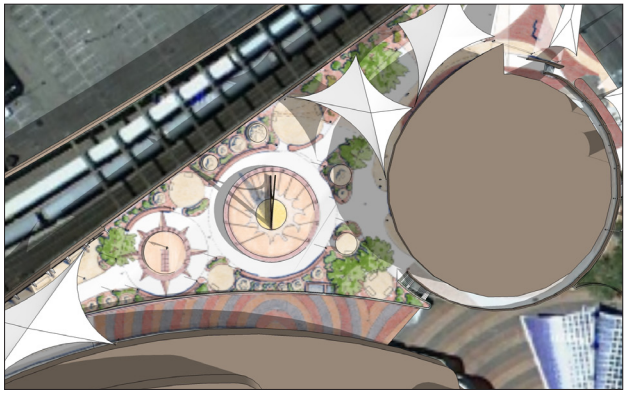
Summer Solstice - 8:00 am



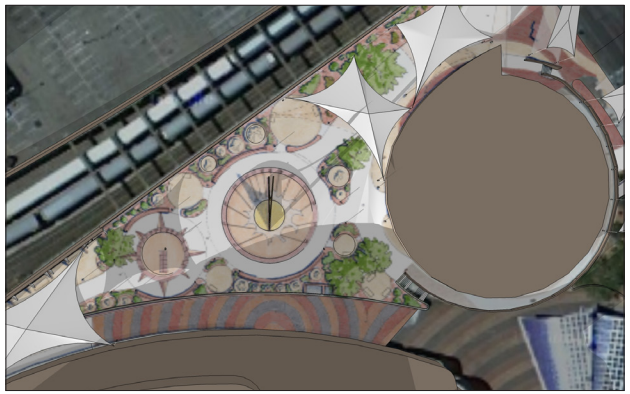
Summer Solstice - 4:00 pm



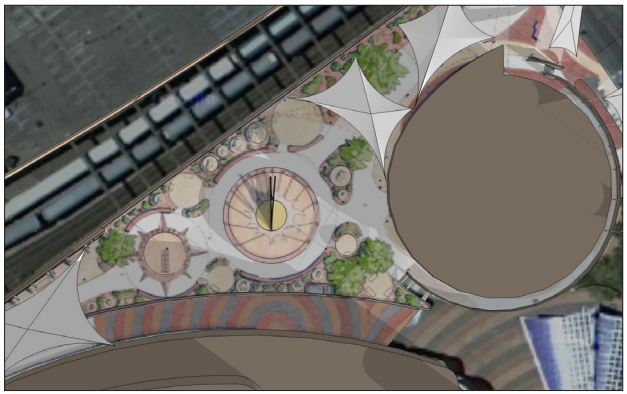
Fall/Spring Equinox - 8:00 am



Fall/Spring Equinox - 4:00 pm



Winter Solstice - 8:00 am



Winter Solstice - 4:00 pm

ALTERNATIVE FOCAL ELEMENTS

The central display platform of the Downtown Pathway could feature a variety of different focal sculptural elements over time. Here are some hypothetical examples. These examples feature forms that would create interesting and engaging shadows throughout the day, and that could be lit dramatically at night. Ideas of light fountains and interactive

elements that would be affected by passing trains and people were discussed during the charrette. Ultimately, it should be up to the artistic community in El Paso to determine the central focal element and other artistic artworks throughout the site.

MENU FOR ART PIECES

One of the main concepts of the pathway is that numerous types of art should be incorporated into the space. The nature of the pathway is that some types of art are permanent and will not change, such as paving patterns, while other types of art are more flexible. Incorporating both flexible and permanent works of art into the pathway will make it a dynamic space while permanent works will give the space stability. The adjacent chart lists types of art and ranks them from how permanent or flexible they are based on the nature of its installation and mobility.

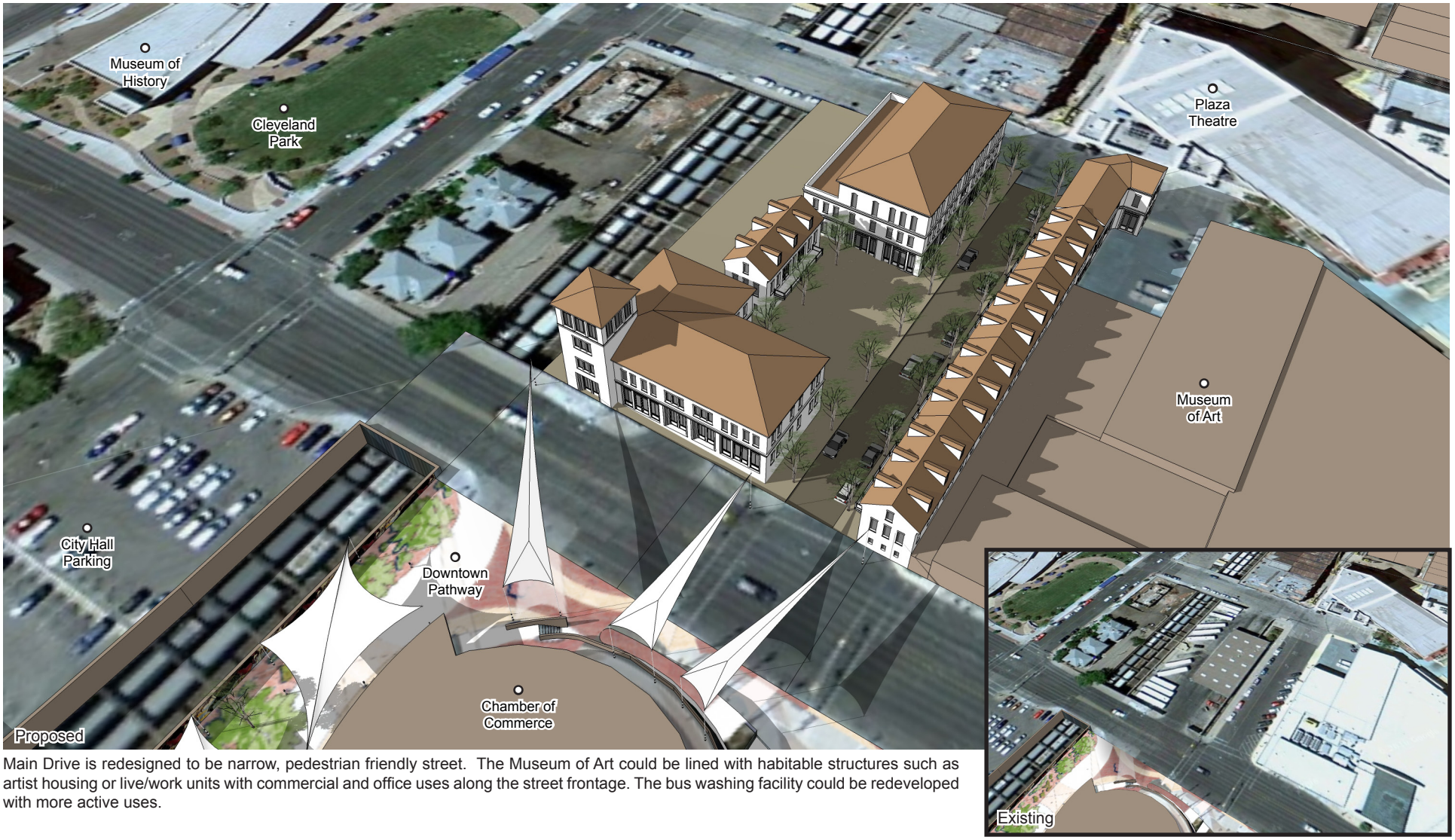
Although the central space is currently designed with a sundial theme, the final plan and focal art piece(s) should be determined by the City and community. Other themes or elements expressed during the charrette include:

- El Paso's Culture
- El Paso's Landscape
- El Paso's connection to Juárez
- Cesar Chavez Sculpture
- Open Air Trolley/Shuttle (throughout Downtown)
- Trains (Movement and Sound)
- Types of Movement through the Space
- Lighting
- "Urban Symphony" - Trains, the Sound of the City
- Soft music playing by recordings of local musicians
- Technology, i.e. Solar Panels, LEDs
- Interactive Art, i.e. Pieces that React to Movement
- Star
- Light Fountain
- Water Feature
- Digital - light, sound, projection movies
- Music Venue
- Chess Tables
- Underlit Walkway
- Gateway Arches
- Bikeshare
- Wi-Fi

	Most Flexible	More Flexible	Semi-Permanent	Permanent
Applied Art *(Requiring a fixed or movable structure)*				
Posters	•			
Painted Walls	•			
Relief Sculpture/Painting		•		
Hanging Sculpture		•	•	
Free Standing Sculpture				
Small moveable installations with base	•			
Tall medium sized		•		
Large (to be viewed from the outside)			•	
Large (can walk inside)				•
Lighting Installations				
Utilitarian				•
Dynamic, LED, for entertainment			•	
Fountains				
Stationary, traditional			•	•
Stationary, modern			•	•
Stationary, "playful"			•	•
Interactive, splash				•
Misting stations			•	
Buildings/Infrastructure				
Towers			•	•
Buildings				•
Renovations to exiting buildings				•
Storm drainage			•	
Shading Devices *(Could be incorporated into sculpture)*				
Tensile canvas structure		•	•	
Fixed rigid panels (vertical & horizontal)		•	•	
Trees			•	•
Tensile framework with vines		•	•	

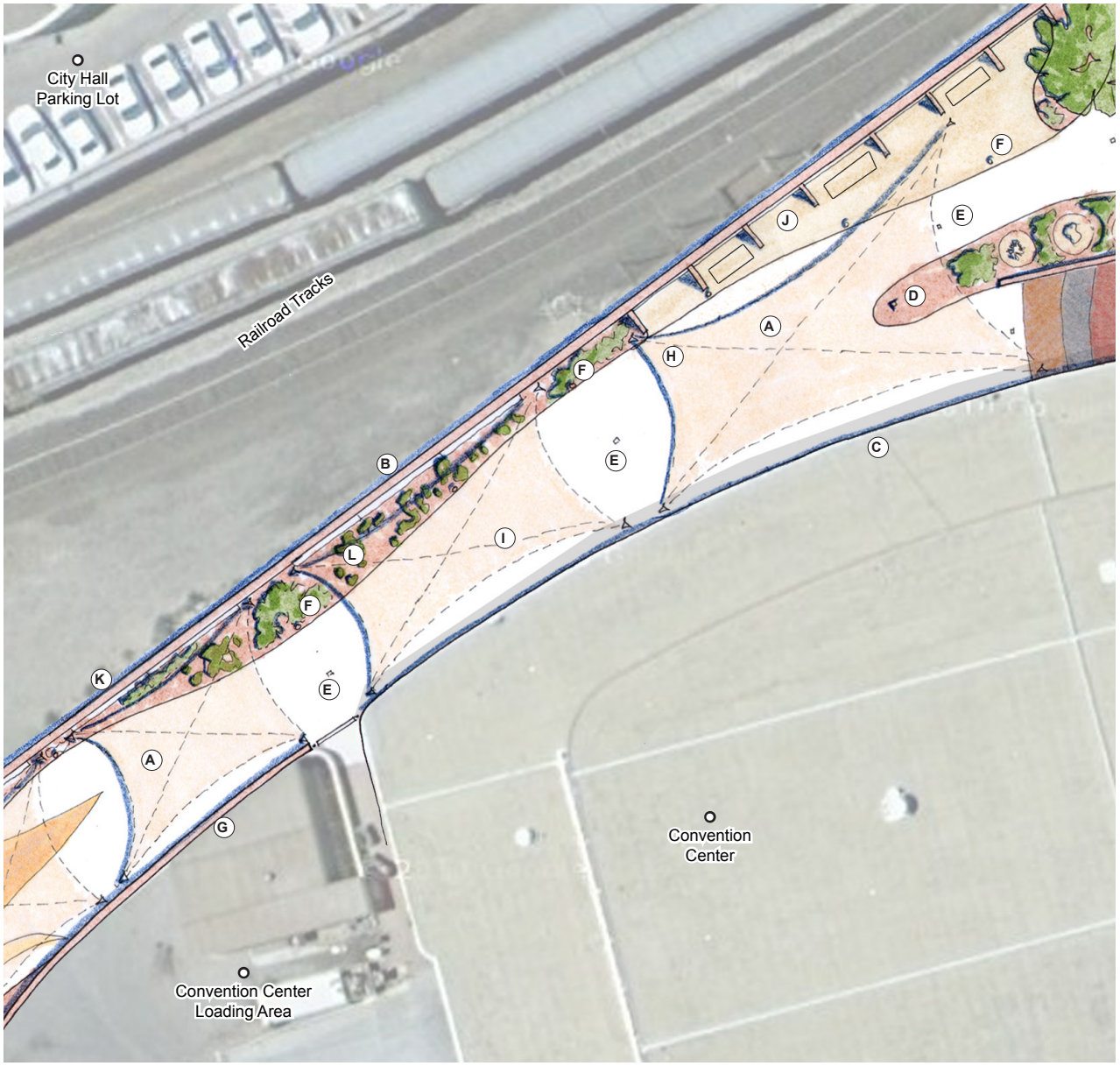
BUS WASHING FACILITY

The bus washing facility located on Santa Fe Street and Main Drive can be relocated to free this important site for redevelopment. Main Drive has the potential to be transformed into a narrow, pedestrian friendly street with active frontages and better connecting the surrounding civic functions and pedestrian areas of the Downtown.



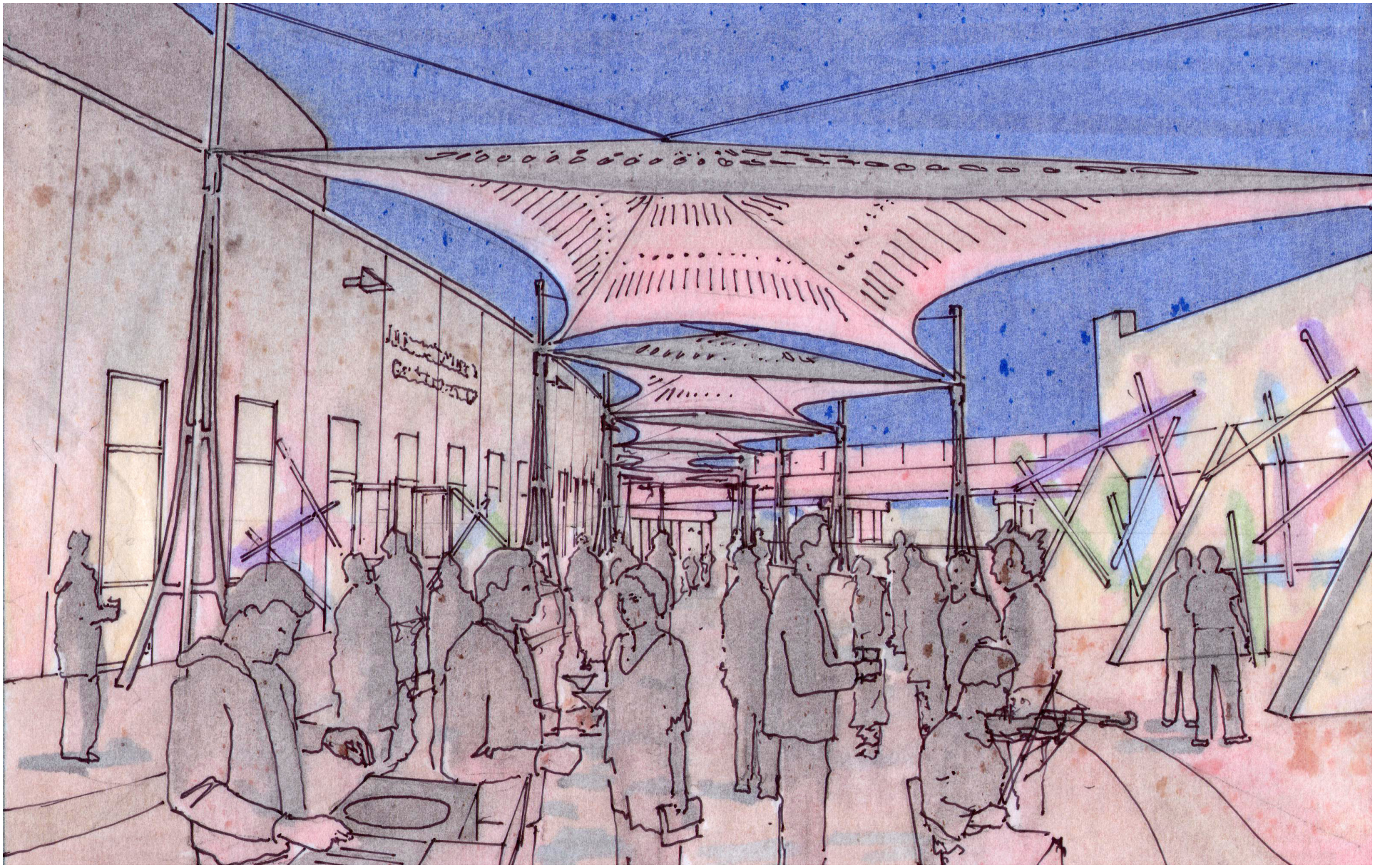
Main Drive is redesigned to be narrow, pedestrian friendly street. The Museum of Art could be lined with habitable structures such as artist housing or live/work units with commercial and office uses along the street frontage. The bus washing facility could be redeveloped with more active uses.

PATHWAY FEATURES



General Recommendations

- (A) Portions of the pathway are covered with canopies perforated with "papel picado" patterns to provide shade for pedestrians and also dapple the pavement with interesting and beautiful shadows.
- (B) The wall along the edge of the railroad tracks provides an opportunity to display artworks such as murals.
- (C) Care must be taken to provide "eyes" on the Downtown Pathway space. This will be greatly helped by providing active uses within the buildings overlooking the pathway.
- (D) The pedestrian directional signage helps to direct pedestrians towards which path will lead them to their destination. In addition, the different paving patterns hint at where the paths will lead, i.e. the brick path will lead toward the Convention Center Plaza with the same pattern.
- (E) Wayfinding Pavement Medallions
- (F) Light bollards line the pathway.
- (G) A wall extending the arc of the building separates the pathway from the loading area of the Convention Center. This wall could be incorporated into new habitable space that faces toward the pathway.
- (H) If lighted dramatically, the Downtown Pathway can become a vibrant environment at night. Colorful uplighting can transform the "papel picado" patterns of the overhead canopies into a meandering sculptural procession guiding one through the space.
- (I) The dynamic space of the pathway can also provide opportunities for events at the convention center to flow outside.
- (J) Niches created by supports for the wall can provide seating or separated art spaces.
- (K) The wall lowers and moving trains become visible adding movement, activity, and interest to the space.
- (L) Indigenous plantings form a desert garden.

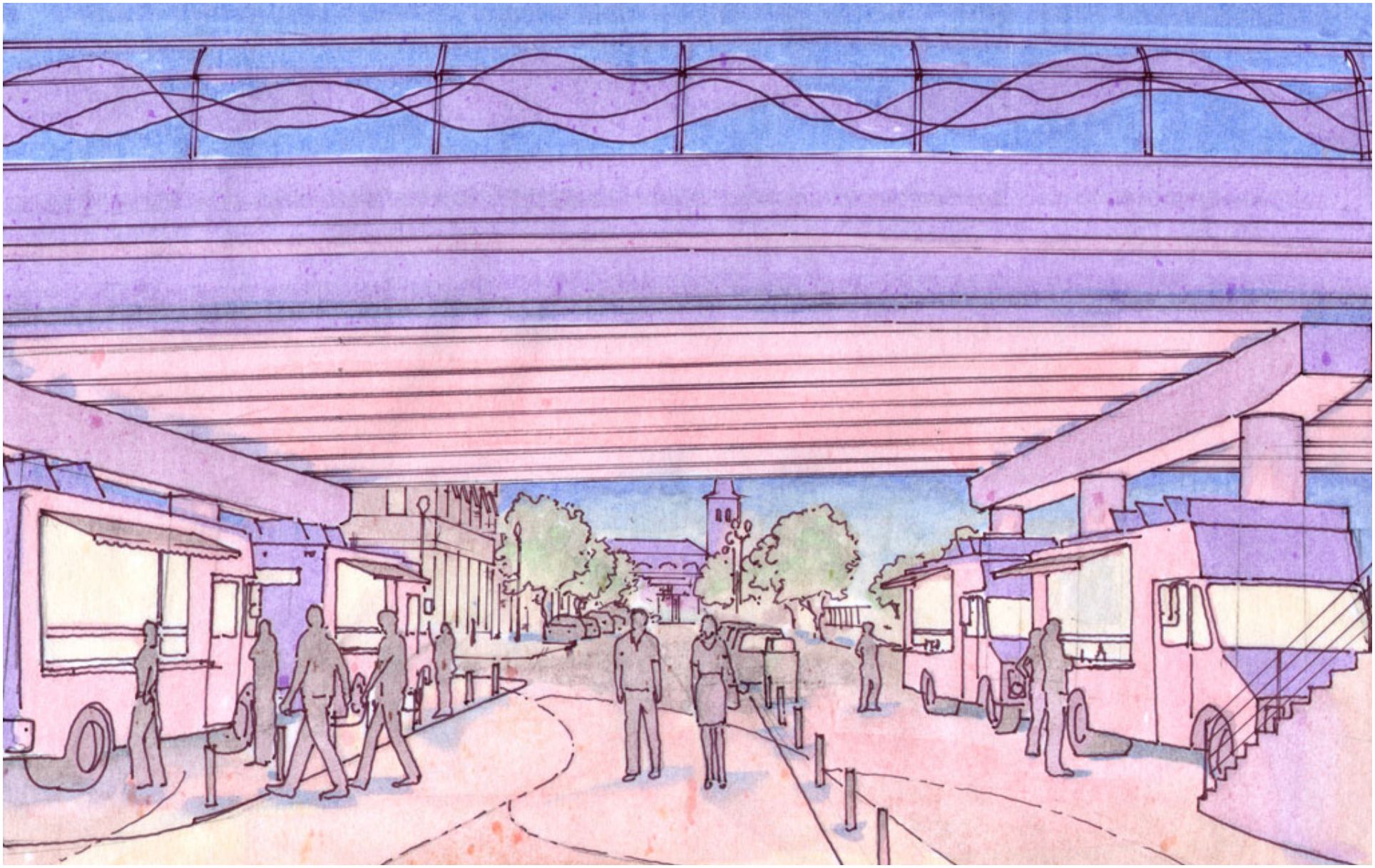


View of the pathway being utilized as an event space for the Convention Center.

DURANGO STREET BRIDGE FEATURES

General Recommendations

- (A) Decorative paving patterns draw people to the Downtown Pathway from the Union Plaza District.
- (B) Vivid, colorful lighting can help enliven the passageway underneath the Durango Street bridge.
- (C) The space beneath the bridge can be further activated with amenities like food trucks.
- (D) Tables and chairs beneath the bridge provide spaces to enjoy a meal.
- (E) A stairway and elevator connect Durango Street to the pathway and Union Plaza district below. This vertical connection enables people from City Hall and subsequent parking lots to access this side of the railroad tracks.
- (F) The entrance to the pathway are covered with canopies perforated with "papel picado" patterns to provide shade for pedestrians and also dapple the pavement with interesting and beautiful shadows.
- (G) The wall along the edge of the railroad tracks provides an opportunity to display artworks such as murals.
- (H) Wayfinding Kiosk
- (I) Wayfinding Pavement Medallions
- (J) Light bollards line the pathway.
- (K) A wall extending the arc of the building separates the pathway from the loading area of the Convention Center. This wall could be incorporated into new habitable space that faces toward the pathway.
- (L) Indigenous plantings form a desert garden.
- (M) San Francisco Street can be narrowed and made the same level as the sidewalk to slow vehicles traveling under the Durango Street bridge. An alternative idea is to close San Francisco Street by the Convention Center in order to enlarge its back-of house area in exchange for the dedicated pathway. This could limit access to the Union Plaza District which should be taken into careful consideration before vacating the street.
- (N) Large areas adjacent to the railroad tracks should be considered for incorporation into the pathway to enlarge the active spaces.



View under the Durango Street bridge showing colorful light displays, food trucks, and a view to Union Depot.

QUICK WALL DESIGN CONCEPT

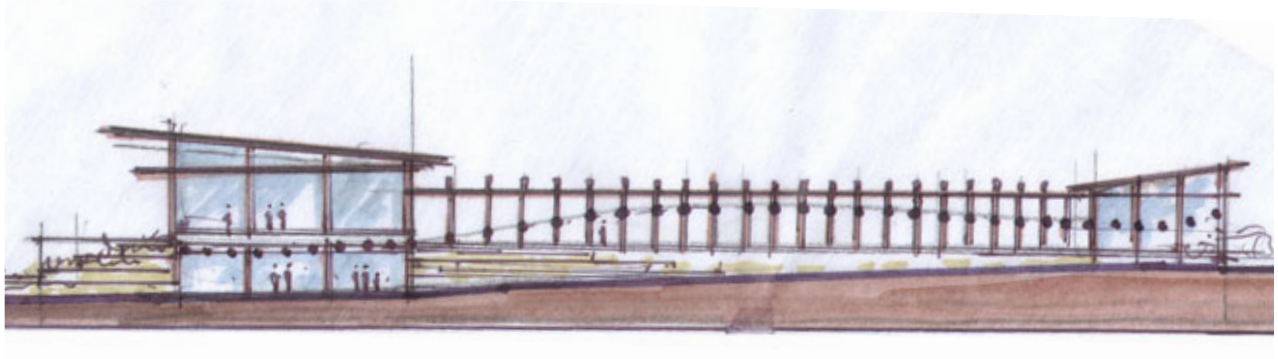
Local artist Mitsu Overstreet created a mural design for the wall that separates the pathway from the railroad tracks while working in the Open Design Studio with the design team.

San Francisco Street

Santa Fe Street

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN

The proposed plan presented in this report is one possible concept. In addition to other art themes being used, a more dramatic change of the space may also be envisioned. One early concept included the addition of permanent structures to the space to be used as art, event, or even office space in order to activate the pathway and provide natural surveillance of the space. The concept sketch shown here illustrates habitable space constructed adjacent to the wall by the railroad tracks with a structure by Santa Fe Street and a second where the site opened up to a larger space. As the site slopes downward a walkway would remain level while providing access to the second floor of a gallery, meeting, or event space that would also look down onto the railroad tracks. The walkway between buildings could have a trellis to protect it from the elements while the pathway at ground level could be covered with a series of shade structures suspended on wires extending from the chamber of commerce building to the new buildings in a radial pattern. The final look of and design of the shade structure would be determined by a local artist.



3 PLANT LIST

EXISTING PLANTS ON THE SITE

Shade trees, landscape, and greenery are elements consistently desired throughout El Paso and for the Downtown Pathway. This existing plant list specifies the plants existing on the site today.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Flower	Water Usage	Comments
Shade Trees				
Chilopsis linearis	Desert Willow	White, pink, burgundy	Low	Seed pod
Prosopis glandulosa	Honey Mesquite		Low	Seed pod, thorns on upper branches
Pinus eldarica	Eldarica Pine		Low - Medium	Evergreen
Pistacia chinensis	Chinese Pistache		Medium	Orange-red fall color
Fraxinus oxycarpa	Raywood Ash		Low - Medium	Burgundy fall color
Fraxinus pennsylvania	Green Ash		Medium	Yellow fall color
Quercus texana	Texas Red Oak		Medium	Red fall color
Gleditsia triancanthos	Honey Locust		Medium	Large seed pod
Quercus sp.	Live Oak		Medium	Acorn litter, evergreen
Ornamental Trees				
Sophora secudiflora	Texas Mountain Laurel	Purple	Low	Evergreen, fragrant, seed pods
Vitex agnus castus	Vitex, Chaste Tree	Purple or white	Low	Seeds
Pyrus calleryana 'Bradford'	Bradford Pear	White	Medium	Pest problems, short lived, red fall color
Chilopsis x Catalpa	Chitalpa	Pink	Low - Medium	Pest problems
Laegerstroemia indica	Crepe Myrtle	White, pink, red	Low - Medium	Attractive peeling bark
Washingtonia robusta	Mexican Fan Palm		Low	Somewhat cold tender
Washingtonia filifera	California Fan Palm		Low	
Shrubs				
Caesalpinia pulcherrima	Red Bird of Paradise	Red/orange	Low	Seed Pods
Lleucophyllum sp.	Texas Sage sp.	Purple	Low	Evergreen
Chrysactinia mexicana	Damianita	Yellow	Low	Evergreen
Tecoma stans	Yellow Bells	Yellow	Low	
Rhaphiolepis indica	Indian Hawthorne	Pink or white	Medium	Evergreen
Ornamental Grasses				
Muhlenbergia cap. 'Regal Mist'	Regal Mist Muhly		Low	Fall pink color
Ground Cover				
Rosemarinus ' prostrata'	Trailing Rosemary	Purple	Low	Edible leaf
Lantana sp.	Lantana varieties	Yellow, red, pink	Low	

PROPOSED PLANTS LIST

The proposed plant list should be utilized to select plantings throughout the Downtown Pathway. Plants for the list have been chosen based on their climate adaptive nature. The existing and proposed plant lists were assembled by Deborah Hradek of SITES Southwest.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Flower	Water Usage	Comments
Shade Trees				
Chilopsis linearis	Desert Willow	White, pink, burgundy	Low	Seed pod
Prosopis glandulosa	Honey Mesquite		Low	Seed pod, thorns on upper branches
Pinus eldarica	Eldarica Pine		Low - Medium	Evergreen
Pistacia chinensis	Chinese Pistache		Medium	Orange-red fall color
Fraxinus oxycarpa	Raywood Ash		Low - Medium	Burgundy fall color
Ulmus parvifolia	Lacebark Elm		Medium	Yellow fall color
Quercus texana	Texas Red Oak		Medium	Red fall color
Quercus sp.	Live Oak		Medium	Acorn litter, evergreen
Ornamental Trees				
Sophora secudiflora	Texas Mountain Laurel	Purple	Low	Evergreen, fragrant, seed pods
Vitex agnus castus	Vitex, Chaste Tree	Purple or white	Low	Seeds
Cercis canadensis ‘mexicana’	Mexican Redbud	Deep Pink	Low	
Washingtonia filifera	California Fan Palm		Low	
Shrubs				
Caesalpinia pulcherrima	Red Bird of Paradise	Red/orange	Low	Seed Pods
Lleucophyllum sp.	Texas Sage sp.	Purple	Low	Evergreen
Chrysactinia mexicana	Damianita	Yellow	Low	Evergreen
Tecoma stans	Yellow Bells	Yellow	Low	
Euphorbia antisyphilitica	Candelilla		Low	
Salvia clevelandii	Cleveland Sage	Purple	Low	Fragant
Ornamental Grasses				
Muhlenbergia cap. ‘Regal Mist’	Regal Mist Muhly		Low	Fall pink color
Pennisetum purpureum	Purple Fountain Grass			Purple leaves
Muhlenbergia rigens	Deer Grass			
Nolina Microcarpa	Bear Grass			

Continued on next page.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Flower	Water Usage	Comments
Vines				
Macfadyena unguis-cati	Cat's Claw Vine	Yellow	Low	Can grow on solid surface without support
Antigonon leptopus	Coral Vine	Pink	Low	Needs support
Campsis grandiflora	Trumpet Vine	Orange	Low - Medium	Seed pods, needs support
Ground Cover				
Rosemarinus ' prostrata'	Trailing Rosemary	Purple	Low	Edible leaf
Lantana sp.	Lantana varieties	Yellow, red, pink	Low	
Dalea capitata	Lemon Dalea	Yellow	Low	Evergreen, fall/winter flowers
Dalea frutescens	Black Dalea	Pink\purple	Low	Evergreen, fall/winter flowers

Deer Grass

Bear Grass

Black Dalea

Lemon Dalea