



## Downtown Transformation

### Projects large and small are changing Downtown

Downtown El Paso is going through a metamorphosis. Although lengthy and not without growing pains, the new Downtown that is emerging is impressive.

Most don't realize that since 2006 alone, more than \$150 million has been invested in Downtown by both the private and public sectors. This figure represents money already spent or is in the process of investment and is expected to increase in the next few years.

Major private projects include the Mills Plaza development, the renovated Doubletree Hotel (formerly the International Hotel), the Magoffin Park Villas housing development, and the First Avenue Lofts development.

On the public side, there is investment in a new nine-story Federal Courthouse, a new Sun Metro Downtown Transfer Terminal, the Convention Center Plaza renovation and canopy addition and renovation of both Downtown international pedestrian bridges are contributing to the new Downtown. Each of the private projects also include public involvement to varying degrees,

such as improving or adding sidewalks, street-scaping, landscaping, and other types of support. A prime example of this is the 1st Avenue Lofts development from the El Paso Project.

Numerous other projects are also underway, including new clubs and restaurants in the Union Plaza area, such as ONICH and The Garden.

In addition, the historic Gardener Hotel is being renovated as a bed & breakfast. Plans are also in the works to open a restaurant, Pot-au-Feu, next door.

The new clubs and restaurants are expected to draw both old and new visitors to Downtown.

While larger projects such as the Mills Plaza development, the Federal Courthouse project and the Magoffin Villas housing development grab the majority of the headlines, all of the development in Downtown contributes to its transformation into a place where El Pasoans can truly live, work, shop, play and visit.



1st Avenue Lofts



Federal Courthouse



Mills Building



Doubletree Hotel

## Internet for Everyone

Digital El Paso provides free wireless Internet in Downtown El Paso and is the result of innovative work and collaboration among many interested parties, including El Paso County, the City of El Paso, La Fe and El Paso Community College.

The coverage area is an approximately one square mile area south of the County Courthouse to the Cesar Chavez Highway and the U.S.-Mexico border.

The program also provides computer training, a refurbished computer loan program and financing to help buy new computers through the El Paso Community and Economic Development program.

More Info: [www.digitalelpasso.com](http://www.digitalelpasso.com)



## Live, Shop, Work, Play — Downtown Goes Online

Whether you're an investor looking to move into Downtown or you want to know where you can park during a weekend shopping trip, the City of El Paso has put together a website to showcase what the area has to offer and the revitalization efforts now underway.

"I've always said a great downtown is a key ingredient in making a great city," said Mayor John Cook. "This website points out the many things our Downtown has to offer and highlights the vision for what the future holds as revitalization moves forward."

The site is extremely user-friendly and provides information for everyone, including citizens, the

business community and out-of-town visitors. In addition to detailing the history of Downtown El Paso, the site offers information on current redevelopment projects and details the incentives

available for potential investors. There are also maps to help people find everything from the unique architecture to shops and restaurants in Downtown.

Every effort was made to include retailers, restaurants and available entertainment options in Downtown. If anyone would like their business to be added to the site, call (915) 541-4670 or send an email to [econdev@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:econdev@elpasotexas.gov).

Online: <http://www.elpasotexas.gov/downtown>



## March Events

**Borderland Trade Show** — The 22nd annual industrial tradeshow serving the maquila/production sharing industry .

**Where:** Judson F. Williams Convention Center

**When:** March 17 & 18

**Info:** (915) 771-7061

**Online:** [www.borderlandtradeshow.com](http://www.borderlandtradeshow.com)

**Broadway Musical** — Part of the Broadway in El Paso series, "Bye, Bye Birdie" is presented.

**Where:** Plaza Theatre

**When:** March 17 @ 7:30 p.m.

**Info:** (915) 231-1111

**KidsPalooza** - Children's fair featuring arts and music workshops, live entertainment, games and activities, locomotive bells and whistles, food and drinks and more.

**Where:** Various sites downtown

**When:** March 28, 8:30 am - 5 pm

**Info:** (915) 532-3776

## Business Spotlight: Café Nopal

Tucked away inside the Main Library in Downtown El Paso is a new place to enjoy lunch or a good cup of coffee.

Café Nopal had a soft opening in early February and has enjoyed a brisk business since. This is the second library café for owners Lidia and David Ramirez, who also own and operate the



Squirrel Café in the Memorial Park Library.

"This is a new philosophy and business model," said Jack Galindo, Library Market-

ing Coordinator. "Patrons can even bring reading materials to the Café's seating area."

The menu consists of sandwiches, snacks, desserts, and drinks, including flavored coffees. While lattes and cappuccinos are not yet available as they are at the Squirrel Café, those choi-

ces are coming, along with free public Wi-Fi.

Current seating capacity is 14 with the ability to quickly expand in the available Library Lobby space.

"We are excited about our ongoing and expanding partnership with the library and hope to do our part to draw additional people to our libraries and to Downtown," said Lidia Ramirez.

A grand opening is being planned, with an expansion of the menu expected at that time.

**Where:** 501 N. Oregon

**When:** Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-8 p.m.

Friday-Saturday 11 a.m.-6 p. m.

**Phone:** (915) 781-5109

**Online:** [http://www.elpasotexas.gov/library/ourlibraries/main\\_library/border\\_heritage.asp](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/library/ourlibraries/main_library/border_heritage.asp)



## TIRZ Board of Directors

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## Property Highlight: 119 N. Stanton St.

Also known as the International Building, this eight-story Trost & Trost designed building stands at the corner of Texas and Stanton streets. There is currently 1,250 square feet of ground floor retail space available. For more information, contact Don Pistotnik at (818) 535-9771 or via email at [donpistotnik@aol.com](mailto:donpistotnik@aol.com).

To feature a Downtown building in *el centro*, send an email to [rosalesv@elpasotexas.gov](mailto:rosalesv@elpasotexas.gov) or call (915) 541-4670.



## Meet the Staff



**Kathy Dodson, PhD.**

**Economic Development Director**

Kathy Dodson has led the City's Economic Development Department since 2006, after five years as President/CEO of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce in California. She is a graduate of Coronado High School, and has degrees from SMU, Thunderbird and Clemson University. She has worked in the maquila industry in Juarez, for the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, Santa Teresa Real Estate Development and Best Real Estate.

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