

DOWNTOWN

el pasonext

ADELANTE

el centro

june 2008



A Proven Track Record of Success

Community Foundation continues work Downtown

El Paso Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization first chartered in 1975. It began giving grants in 1977 and has become a well-respected and committed steward of good works in our region.

The organization, with offices in the historic Cortez Building, funds charitable causes and provides public leadership in the El Paso tri-state border region with money obtained from hundreds of individual donors. In fact, their assets, which equal \$100 million, come from 350 individual endowment funds.

As their website states: "People from our area are known for working together to meet community needs. Though we are divided by an international boundary, those of us on either side of the border breathe the same air, work on the same issues and are inextricably bound to one another. Few cities are faced with such challenges and unique opportunities. The El Paso Community Foundation has been one of the solutions since 1977."

This year, the Community Foundation completed a \$24 million gift to El Pasoans — the

Plaza Theatre Performing Arts Centre.

The Foundation has performed extensive work and funding in West Texas, Southern New Mexico and Northern Mexico, having done work in the *colónias*, eliminating *aguas negras*, as well as hundreds of scholarships to students from a broad array of backgrounds and interests, at colleges and universities around the country. It works with a myriad of nonprofit organizations to bring positive change to the region and has made a strong impact on Downtown El Paso.

Whether it is the Plaza Theatre, the Wyler Aerial Tramway, programming at the Olo Gallery or the purchase of the El Paso Museum of Art for the City, the clock in San Jacinto Plaza or the holiday lights which adorn our Downtown square, the Foundation has played a major role. Even many of the benches, trees and historical markers in Downtown are Foundation projects.

The El Paso Foundation's slogan says all you need to know about good citizens helping make El Paso great: For good. For El Paso. Forever.

More info: (915) 533-4020
Online: www.epcf.org

**EL PASO
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**



The El Paso Community Foundation led the renovation efforts for the Plaza Theatre, making it one of the premier entertainment venues in the Southwest.

Makeover In Progress

Workers install new moldings around the building at 504 and 504 1/2 W. San Antonio Ave. The two properties are among the 12 to get grants from the Façade Improvement Program.



Thousands expected for Downtown Street Fest

The city's biggest outdoor party, the annual Downtown Street Festival, is set to take place on Friday, June 27, and Saturday, June 28.

There will be food, fun, fireworks and live entertainment all weekend featuring Shinedown, Alter Bridge and Endeverafter on the Main Stage on Friday and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts and Foghat on Saturday.

This year, the rocking won't be confined to the Main Stage as "Rock Band" and "Guitar Hero" competitions will be going on in the Abraham Chavez Theatre. There will also be:

- Four music stages
- Two fireworks spectacles
- Dozens of local food, drink and novelty booths
- A Gamer's Hall
- A children's playground inside the Convention Center

Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children ages 12 and younger. They are available at all area 7-11/Fina locations in El Paso.

Santa Fe Street in front of the Convention Center will be closed for the festival. However, the portion of Mills Street which has been closed for work on the Mills Plaza project will be opened to allow access to the Camino Real Hotel and other nearby businesses.

More info: (915) 534-0600
Online: www.elpasocvb.com



June Events

Runway Fashion Show — The first annual "Bring it Downtown" runway fashion show will be a first in the city. It will feature fashion designs by Sylvester Rodriguez, whose urban wear is becoming an El Paso favorite.

Where: The Place at Union Plaza

When: June 22 @ 7:30 p.m.

Cost: \$15

More Info: (915) 626-8822

Art Exhibit — Binacional de Arte, the first binational juried exhibition which will be hosted by EPMA and INBA. The purpose of this juried exhibition is to bring together artists and their art from a defined circular region along the U.S. – Mexico border with El Paso.

When: June-August 24

Where: Museum of Art, 1 Art Festival Plaza

Cost: Free

More Info: (915)532-1707

Business Spotlight: : Pike Street Market

Pike Street Market in Downtown markets itself as "a bit of Seattle in the heart of El Paso." But the coffee shop means much more to lots of people who have crossed paths inside.

"Sometimes people come in and tell us they are celebrating their anniversary here because this is where they had their first date," said Jennifer Montes, Pike's new owner. "A lot of people have met here; it's kinda crazy. I mean, I met my boyfriend here. It's a great little spot."



Although she just bought the shop, Pike Street is nothing new Montes -- her aunt, Rosie Tate, owned it since the mid-90s.

"I really wanted to keep Pike Street in the family because I didn't want it to lose its charm," the El Paso native said. "I wanted to keep that go-

ing. I plan on adding to the menu, but I'm going to keep what was originally there. I spent a lot of my childhood here and most of our family worked here. I think the family feel is part of what makes up the charm of the place."

Montes said in the near future, she will be begin to offer catering (including on Saturdays) and will stay open until 5 p.m. Pike also offers WiFi availability with a \$5 purchase.

"In different places Downtown, you can get coffee, you can get sandwiches, you can get WiFi," she added. "But at Pike Street, we have everything in one place. You can have a meeting here or a date; grab a sandwich to go or sit down and eat here. We have it all."



Where: 207 Mills Street

Phone: (915) 545-1010

Hours: M-F, 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Online: www.pikestreetmarketep.com

TIRZ Board of Directors

Chair: Veronica Escobar
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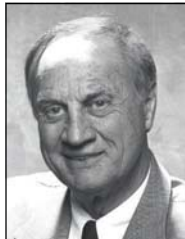
Property Highlight: 325 N. Kansas St. (Artisan Hotel)

A unique hotel opportunity in the heart of the Central Business District. The hotel is within walking distance to the Convention Center, the Plaza Theatre and museums. Directly adjacent to parking garage with drive-up hotel entry. For more information, call J. David Young at (972) 419-4309.



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

Meet the Board



**Jim Phillips, TIRZ Board Member
Broadcaster and Banker**

Jim Phillips' background is in broadcasting and banking. The U.S. Air Force veteran has served as President of the Texas Association of Broadcasters during his broadcasting career and he has served on numerous boards, including being Chairman of the Board of Directors for Wells Fargo Bank. Additionally, he has numerous civic and community honors including: United Latin American Citizens Humanitarian Awards, Hispanic Chamber Chairman's Award, and the City of El Paso Conquistador Award.

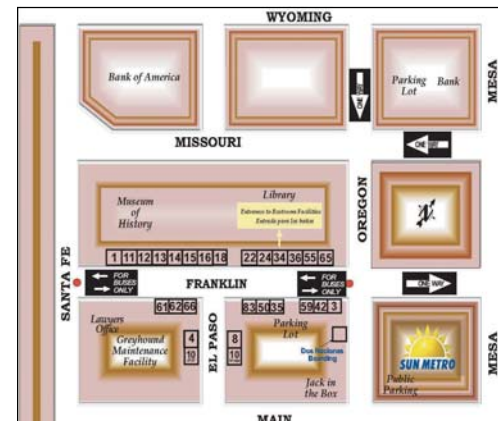
Franklin Street Closure Scheduled For June 15

In an effort to optimize the safety of public traffic circulating in the area of the Temporary Downtown Transit Terminal, Franklin Street from Santa Fe Street to Oregon Street will be restricted to bus traffic only beginning June 15. Additionally, a small portion of El Paso Street will also be used for bus traffic. The closure is expected to be in effect throughout the next several months.

While the current temporary bus locations have improved pedestrian safety, the closure of Franklin Street will further enhance safety measures.

It will also improve the proximity and consolidation of amenities available to Sun Metro customers and serves as a logistical advantage to maintain on-time service.

Additional canopies, benches and water fountains will be installed along Franklin. Added signage will be installed to facilitate the new routing of pedestrians, customers of businesses and vehicular traffic in the impacted area. Existing restroom facilities at the Main Library will continue to be available for Sun Metro customers.



Downtown Incentive Programs

To encourage revitalization, the City of El Paso offers incentives for development in Downtown. The incentives are part of an overall strategy to leverage investment, lower the cost of doing business and level the playing field for businesses and property owners choosing to invest in Downtown properties. The incentives are part of the Downtown 2015 Plan adopted by City Council in Oct. 2006.

Sales Tax Rebate

This program rebates the city's portion of sales tax on construction materials and labor for improvements and new construction. A minimum expenditure of \$100,000 is required. Pre-application requested. This program sunsets in 2012. **More info: (915) 541-4811**

Green Building

There are grants for buildings certified under the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® Green Building Rating System, encouraging private sector developers to build sustainable buildings in El Paso. New construction or major remodels of commercial or mixed-use properties are eligible for the program. Structures must be at least 15,000 square feet. Grants range from \$50,000-\$200,000, depending on level of LEED certification. Grants double to \$100,000-\$400,000 for buildings of at least five floors, of which at least 50% have been vacant at least five years prior to grant submission.



Properties must become LEED-certified and achieve a minimum of 10 of the 17-point requirement in the "Energy and Atmosphere" section of the LEED Project Checklist. **More info: (915) 541-4811**

Development Application Fee Reductions

Several development permit fees for projects located within the TIRZ district are reduced. The program sunsets in five years on August 31, 2012. The reductions vary for fees with most of these following a graduated percent reduction:

Year 1	FY 2007-08	100%
Year 2	FY 2008-09	80%
Year 3	FY 2009-10	60%
Year 4	FY 2010-11	40%
Year 5	FY 2011-12	20%

Development applications which have this graduated reduction are:

- Grading permit-clearing and access
- Subdivision
- Vacation of recorded subdivision
- Resubdivision
- Vacation of public easement
- Metes and bounds dedication of a public easement or right-of-way
- Special Permit
- Rezoning
- Detailed Site Development Plan

Rezoning for Historic Designation: There is no fee for properties seeking historic designation, or an H-overlay, via a rezoning application. This is a permanent provision.

Building Permits for Properties with Historic Designation (H-overlay): 50% reduction in the plan checking fee for properties with a historic designation (historic zoning overlay).

Off-Premise Sign Demolition: 25% fee reduction (sunsets in 2012)

Demolition of any building or structure: 25% fee reduction (sunsets in 2012)

Assistance is also available for the following programs:

- International Existing Building Code, which makes rehabilitation of older existing buildings easier.
- Zoning Code mixed-use district.
- Economic Development Department incentives for investments in capital and labor for significant investments in this area on a case-by-case basis

More info: (915) 541-4811

Historic Tax Exemption

This citywide program is available for any property owner of structures within a designated municipal historic district. There are nine historic districts in the city, with two of these overlapping the Downtown Plan area. City Council has also designated several areas within Downtown as Areas of Potential Effect, which are also eligible for this exemption.

The program consists of a tax exemption for restoration/renovation of historic properties for exteriors. Some interior work is eligible when done in conjunction with exterior work. The tax exemption is for the City's portion of property taxes. The exemption time frame varies from four to 10 years, depending on the value of the investment based on the preimprovement value in accordance to the table below:

Value of Improvements as compared to value prior to preservation on a percentage basis	Exemption Period (Years)
50% or more of assessed value	10
Between 40% and 49.99% of assessed value	8
Between 30% and 39.99% of assessed value	6
Between 20% and 29.99% of assessed value	4

Only the value of the improvements are abated; the City continues to collect taxes on the preimprovement value of the property. Application required.

More info: (915) 541-4668

Downtown Incentive Programs

Façade Improvement Grant Program

Provides grant funding to existing business and/or property owners to encourage renovation and rehabilitation of the exterior of buildings in the Downtown area. Funding for the program is provided by the Downtown Management District and the City of El Paso. The program provides reimbursable grants on a dollar-to-dollar match up to \$10,000 for approved improvements that restore, rehabilitate, enhance or beautify a structure. Pre-application is required.

More info: (915) 541-4811 Following are before and after examples of approved applicants and their grant amounts:



106 E. San Antonio Ave.
\$10,000



320-326 S. El Paso Street
\$3,450



315 S. El Paso Street
\$10,000



216 E. Overland
\$10,000

city of el paso
economic development department
2 civic center plaza
el paso, texas 79901

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