



City of El Paso, Texas

# Downtown Deck Plaza Feasibility Study

April 2025



PHASE 1 REPORT





## LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

“As mayor of El Paso, I am deeply committed to initiatives that enhance our city’s vibrancy and economic vitality. The proposed Downtown Deck Plaza represents a transformative opportunity to reconnect our neighborhoods, celebrate our cultural heritage, and create a dynamic space for residents and visitors alike. This project not only addresses infrastructure challenges but also promotes equity, environmental sustainability, and economic growth—key priorities for our community”

**Mayor Renard U. Johnson**

“The Downtown Deck Plaza is a visionary project that exemplifies the power of thoughtful urban design to unite people and places. At the Paso del Norte Community Foundation, we believe in investing in initiatives that strengthen connections and create opportunities for all residents to thrive. This transformative space will serve as a bridge—physically and metaphorically—fostering community pride, increasing recreational and green spaces, and stimulating mixed-income housing and economic growth. We are proud to support this project as a cornerstone of El Paso’s bright and inclusive future.”

**Tracy J. Yellen, CEO, Paso del Norte Community Foundation and Paso del Norte Health Foundation**

“The Downtown Deck Plaza presents an extraordinary opportunity to align with the reconstruction of I-10, creating a seamless integration of infrastructure improvements with community-focused design. By coordinating these projects, we can maximize resources, minimize disruptions, and deliver a transformative public space that connects neighborhoods and enhances the urban fabric of El Paso. This collaborative approach reflects the city’s commitment to building a more unified and resilient city.”

**Joaquin Rodriguez, AICP, Director – Grant Funded Programs, Capital Improvement Department**

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## OPENING STATEMENT



What Mesa could look like with a Deck over I-10 that connects Downtown to Uptown and creates an amenity for ALL El Pasoans

A Deck Plaza is more than just a goal; it represents a unique community development opportunity arising from the timely convergence of diverse forces.

To justify its costs, this project must meet four essential criteria: (1) Restore the connection between Downtown and nearby Uptown neighborhoods separated by I-10's construction in the late 1960s, (2) generate significant environmental and public health benefits, (3) achieve financial feasibility, and, most critically, (4) create a unique destination for all El Pasoans. This destination should reflect El Paso's rich heritage, celebrate its living culture, enhance livability, and close the historic divide along economic, cultural, and racial lines. The Deck Plaza meets these criteria by bringing life and economic purpose to a void in the heart of El Paso and the region.

Since its initial construction roughly sixty years ago, Interstate I-10 has divided El Paso's Uptown neighborhoods from Downtown with a six-lane depressed freeway. Like similar urban highways, I-10's presence discouraged new investment along both sides of the freeway. This lack of new investment led to disinvestment, replacing a two-block wide swathe of urban fabric with six traffic lanes, further exacerbating the separation of nearby neighborhoods from Downtown.

El Paso's high desert climate, which is dry and windy for much of the year and extremely hot during the summer, transformed this gap into a significant obstacle that discourages pedestrian and bicycle access to Downtown's jobs, services, culture, and other resources. The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is similarly isolated, and access to Downtown resources and surrounding residential neighborhoods is interrupted.

Longstanding concerns about the lack of critical connectivity, coupled with growing unease about the depressed freeway's health and environmental impacts, have spurred increasing calls to address I-10's impacts.

In response to these concerns, City and County elected officials have called for I-10's relocation to a less impactful location – a formidable challenge made more complicated due to the freeway's role as a national defense corridor. Meanwhile, community leaders and environmental justice advocates have had to temper their growing support for a deck out of concern that a complex stand-alone project would compete with city funding for critical neighborhood investments.

The winds are changing, and four key factors have converged to create an opportunity to address the harmful impacts of the I-10 corridor. This opportunity has united city staff, community leaders, and stakeholders from across El Paso to work together on creating a Deck Plaza:

- The City's recent Uptown + Downtown Plan emphasizes the importance of revitalizing and enhancing Downtown as a regional economic engine, especially in an era dominated by knowledge and innovation industries, including smart manufacturing. It also stresses restoring access to Downtown jobs, services, retail, and other resources for the economically and culturally diverse Uptown, Downtown, and South El Paso neighborhoods.
- TxDOT's Reimagine I-10 proposal to add two additional lanes to I-10 and rebuild deteriorating bridges has created a sense of urgency to improve connections and address health and environmental impacts.
- Ironically, the reconstruction of the I-10 right-of-way (ROW), which is necessary for widening the freeway and rebuilding bridges, has opened a once-in-a-lifetime window of opportunity to commit to and build a Deck Plaza.
- Building the Deck Plaza in conjunction with the I-10 reconstruction will not only reduce construction costs but also avoid long term disruptions to I-10 traffic and its essential role in accommodating growing cross-border trade.

This window of opportunity will close when TxDOT's Reimagine I-10 planning is complete.

The time to act is now.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE EL PASO DECK PLAZA ABOVE SANTA FE STREET,

**EPA  
TX**

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to celebrate El Paso's rich heritage and vibrant culture, close a historic divide among El Pasoans, enhance livability and opportunities, and foster a shared community in this bi-national region.

▶ **OVERVIEW**

## OVERVIEW: MISSION, VISION AND GOALS

As noted above, a Deck Plaza represents a timely and unique community development opportunity brought about by a convergence of forces. To justify its costs, this project must meet four essential criteria: restore the connection between Downtown and nearby Uptown neighborhoods separated by I-10's construction in the 1960s, generate significant environmental and public health benefits, achieve financial feasibility, and, most critically, take advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a unique destination for all El Pasoans. This destination should reflect El Paso's rich heritage, celebrate its living culture, close a historic divide along economic, cultural, and racial lines, enhance livability and economic opportunity, and foster a shared sense of community in this binational region.

The Deck Plaza planning project began with intensive stakeholder engagement in early 2023, resulting in a set of community values that continue to guide planning:

- **Be authentically El Paso:** Embody El Paso's lifestyle, environment, culture, and history, and provide economic opportunities for residents and organizations in El Paso.
- **Fit the Deck Plaza to its context:** Enhance connections and opportunities for Uptown and Downtown and improve environmental, climatic, pollution, and resilience conditions. Address needs not currently met in Uptown and Downtown.
- **Make planning transparent and communications clear:** Communicate that the Deck Plaza represents a generational opportunity and highlight the opportunity costs of not acting.
- **Provide strong communications from ideation to completion:** Clarify what decisions need to be made by the community and when, ensuring engagement is expansive.



Movies in the Park

### MISSION

What should a Deck Plaza accomplish for Uptown and Downtown? El Paso? The region?

Put this unprecedented opportunity to work to create a transformational place, inspired by El Paso's rich heritage and living cultures, that achieves its full promise by being at once...

- From a regional perspective—a compelling destination that touches and enriches the lives of all El Pasoans.
- From a neighborhood perspective—an animated “seam” that restores the synergies between nearby neighborhoods and Downtown.
- From a Downtown perspective—an amenity and source of interactive community that unlocks Downtown's ability to be emerge as the hear of 21st century El Paso and its region.

### VISION


How can programming and placemaking bring the mission to life? A Deck Plaza offers an unprecedented opportunity to create a space that touches the lives of every El Pasoan by celebrating El Paso's rich heritage, vibrant cultures, and distinctive high desert ecosystem. These qualities provide the foundation for a new common ground where locally inspired food, music, art, gardens, recreation, and similar pleasures invite Uptown, Downtown, the city, and the region to come together and celebrate the unique riches of their shared community.

### GOALS


To ensure our design efforts align with our mission and vision, we have established six goals at the outset. We will revisit these goals throughout the project to stay true to our mandate. These goals will serve as the criteria for evaluating our recommendations:

- 1. Promote an Authentic Cultural Crossroads:** Have we created something that feels and looks like “El Paso”?
- 2. Meet Unmet Needs and Aspirations:** Have we identified and addressed program elements and uses that are missing or lacking within the city?
- 3. Reconnect Uptown, Downtown, and UTEP:** Have we improved the ability to traverse the I-10 cut and connect Downtown to Uptown?
- 4. Unlock Downtown's Potential:** Will this become a catalytic intervention that unlocks Downtown's full potential?
- 5. Nurture Cutting-Edge Sustainability:** Are we improving the environment intelligently without creating maintenance or financial strain?
- 6. Build a Deck Plaza that is Worth Building:** Have we collaboratively envisioned something that is buildable and worth building?


By following these goals, we strive to deliver a project that is both meaningful and impactful for El Paso.




**PROMOTE AN AUTHENTIC CULTURAL CROSSROADS.**




**RECONNECT UPTOWN, DOWNTOWN, AND UTEP.**




**NURTURE CUTTING EDGE SUSTAINABILITY.**



**MEET UNMET NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS.**



**UNLOCK DOWNTOWN'S POTENTIAL.**



**BUILD A DECK PLAZA THAT IS WORTH BUILDING.**



“Let the project build on traditions and build new traditions [in] El Paso”.

— Patrick McNeil



## OVERVIEW: THE BASICS

### The Study Area

The study area is centered around I-10 and the deck, with the plan's implementation directly impacting city blocks within a mile's walk. We have evaluated this area for long-term support of the deck and its programming, including parking, residential population, businesses, activation, and management. Strengthening the streetscape and connections will be crucial to unlocking the deck's potential.

**WALKING DISTANCE:** The Deck Plaza spans approximately 1,800 feet from Santa Fe Street to Kansas Street, which translates to a 7- or 8-minute walk.

**DECK PLAZA ACREAGE/SF:** Approximately 275,000 square feet of deck or 6.35 acres (excluding the streets)

**DECK TERRA FIRMA:** Approximately 106,000 square feet or nearly 2.5 additional acres.

**NEARBY DESTINATIONS:** Within a 10-minute walk from the Deck Plaza, you can find several notable destinations including the Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens, International Museum of Art, El Paso Holocaust Museum & Study Center, Magoffin Home State Historic Site, El Paso Scottish Rite, El Paso Museum of History, El Paso Museum of Art, Wigwam Museum, OLO Gallery, City of El Paso Museum, La Nube

Additionally, El Paso Community College's Rio Grande Campus is immediately to the north, and UTEP is just a short transit or bike ride away. The Deck Plaza is also surrounded by a richly diverse mix of El Paso neighborhoods within a one-mile radius.



Proposed Footprint for the Deck Park

## OVERVIEW: THE PROCESS

After adopting the Downtown + Uptown Plan in July 2023, the City emphasized revitalizing Downtown as a live/work/play/innovate new economy engine for El Paso. The plan also aimed to enhance the quality of life for adjacent Uptown neighborhoods by improving connections to Downtown’s jobs, services, culture, and other resources.

The City then turned its focus to one of the biggest challenges facing the future of Downtown and Uptown: I-10. The depressed freeway’s six lanes of traffic divide Downtown from Uptown, undermining the Plan’s goals for both areas. The freeway’s negative impacts include significant health and environmental issues, as well as two blocks of blighting disinvestment and parking on either side. This creates a continuous three to five blocks of “no-person’s land” and presents an unprecedented opportunity to reconnect historic neighborhoods within a mile radius.

Diverse stakeholders who participated in the Downtown + Uptown Plan expressed widespread concern that the Texas Department of Transportation’s (TxDOT) decision to launch “Re-imagine I-10” and add an additional lane in each direction would exacerbate the freeway’s longstanding negative impacts on both Downtown and Uptown. However, these stakeholders also voiced concerns that spending City dollars to create a deck to mitigate these impacts would limit the City’s ability to invest in neighborhoods and other community priorities.

TxDOT’s offer to configure the reconstruction of I-10 to provide structural support for a deck and allow simultaneous reconstruction of both the right-of-way and a deck opened a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reduce the cost and disruption associated with the I-10 improvements. Recognizing that this window will close when planning for “Re-imagine I-10” is complete, the City decided to move forward. The Paso del Norte Community Foundation established the Downtown Deck Plaza Foundation to partner with the City in planning for a deck that would reconnect Downtown and Uptown, remove I-10’s blighting influence, and reduce the freeway’s health and environmental impacts. This deck would also create a plaza that serves as a regional destination, celebrating the rich heritage, living culture, and shared sense of community that distinguish this binational community.

With funding from the City of El Paso and \$400,000 in matching funds from the Downtown Deck Plaza Foundation, the partnership launched the Deck Plaza Feasibility Plan. This plan articulates a mission, vision, and goals; proposes a concept plan; and addresses the costs, partnerships, and funding essential to achieve this plan. The partnership began its work in January 2023 by holding listening sessions with more than 50 neighborhood associations, residents, non-profits, small business owners, property owners, elected officials, and leaders in El Paso.

### CORE VALUES & PLANNING FOR THE DECK PLAZA

This broad cross-section of stakeholders coalesced around a set of core values to guide the planning and shaping of the Deck Plaza:

**1. Be Authentically El Paso:** How can the Deck Plaza embody its lifestyle, environment and context?

- **Build on El Paso values:** Create a “park for everyone” that embodies El Paso’s nature, adapts to its climate, provides free events and programming for people of all ages and backgrounds, and commits to long-term sustainability.
- **Tell the history of El Paso:** Include the stories of nearby neighborhoods, the legacies of “redlining” and urban renewal that I-10 continues to reinforce, and the personal stories of those impacted by I-10’s construction.
- **Reflect the Chihuahuan Desert ecoregion:** Incorporate views of the mountains and use landscape elements that fit the ecological context.
- **Showcase local art:** Engage local artists to enrich the park and tell its stories.
- **Provide economic opportunities:** Include small businesses and local entrepreneurs in the Deck Plaza’s programming.

**2. Contextualize the Deck Plaza:** How can a Deck Plaza enhance connections and opportunities for Uptown and Downtown?

- **Utilize a comprehensive approach:** Explore broader opportunities for Downtown and Uptown neighborhoods. Complement these areas by promoting better north-south and east-west connections and support the goals of the Uptown + Downtown Plan.
- **Benefit existing communities and mitigate challenges:** Attract El Pasoan families to the core, avoid displacement, promote reinvestment in nearby neighborhoods and residents, and create complete streets that reconnect Uptown and Downtown.
- **Create better and safer streets**
- **Improve environmental, climatic, pollution, and resilience conditions.**
- **Meeting needs not currently available in Uptown and Downtown:** Use the Deck Plaza and nearby redevelopment sites to create mixed-income housing that supports a diverse community. Include affordable shopping and dining options, a farmers market/mercado, a grocery store/bodega, venues for small local businesses and vendors, cultural facilities, parks,

public art, venues for artists, storytelling, history walks, public gardens, mini soccer fields, better connections, and safe access to the Deck Plaza. Ensure sufficient parking.

- **Connect to the 68-mile Paso del Norte Trail:** Led by the Paso del Norte Trail Foundation in partnership with the Paso del Norte Community Foundation, Paso del Norte Health Foundation, City of El Paso, County of El Paso, El Paso MPO, Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority, Texas Department of Transportation, and hundreds of stakeholders across the region.

**3. Planning needs to be transparent and communications clear:** Misinformation can lead to opposition.

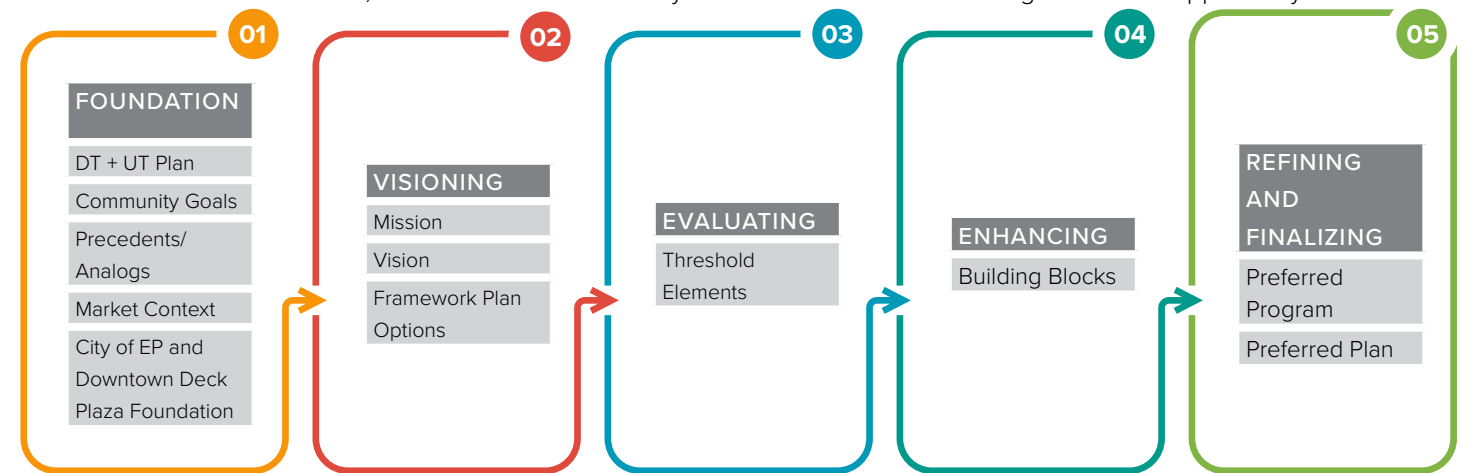
- **Communicate the significance:** Highlight that the Deck Plaza represents a generational opportunity, and highlight the costs of not acting. Emphasize that the Deck Plaza and the TxDOT I-10 reconfiguration are two separate projects.
- **Ensure effective communication:** Maintain clear and consistent communication from ideation to full completion.
- **Clarify decision-making processes:** Inform the community about what decisions need to be made, when, and how. Explain how the Deck Plaza will be funded and maintained, and ensure the community

knows when and how decisions will be made.

- **4. Community engagement should be expansive:** Draw on leaders, storytellers, and influencers to reach new audiences and engage the full spectrum of the El Paso community. Patrick McNeil, a participant in these discussions, captured the spirit of these core values: “Let the project build on traditions and build new traditions in El Paso.”

As part of the planning process, the partnership formed a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to provide essential input and review as the process advanced. An interdisciplinary consultant team, led by Stantec’s Urban Places, worked with the partnership and CAC to translate these values into a transformative Deck Plaza. The larger community provided valuable input during a series of community meetings to generate ideas for programming and placemaking that formed the building blocks for this concept plan. The team tested and refined the concept plan to ensure that a Deck Plaza plan embodying the letter and spirit of the core values would be feasible.

Following review by the CAC and the larger community, the partnership is moving forward to complete a detailed Feasibility Study. The next steps focus on confirming costs and funding strategies and outlining an organizational structure to manage the Deck Plaza in a manner that unlocks the full promise of this generational opportunity.



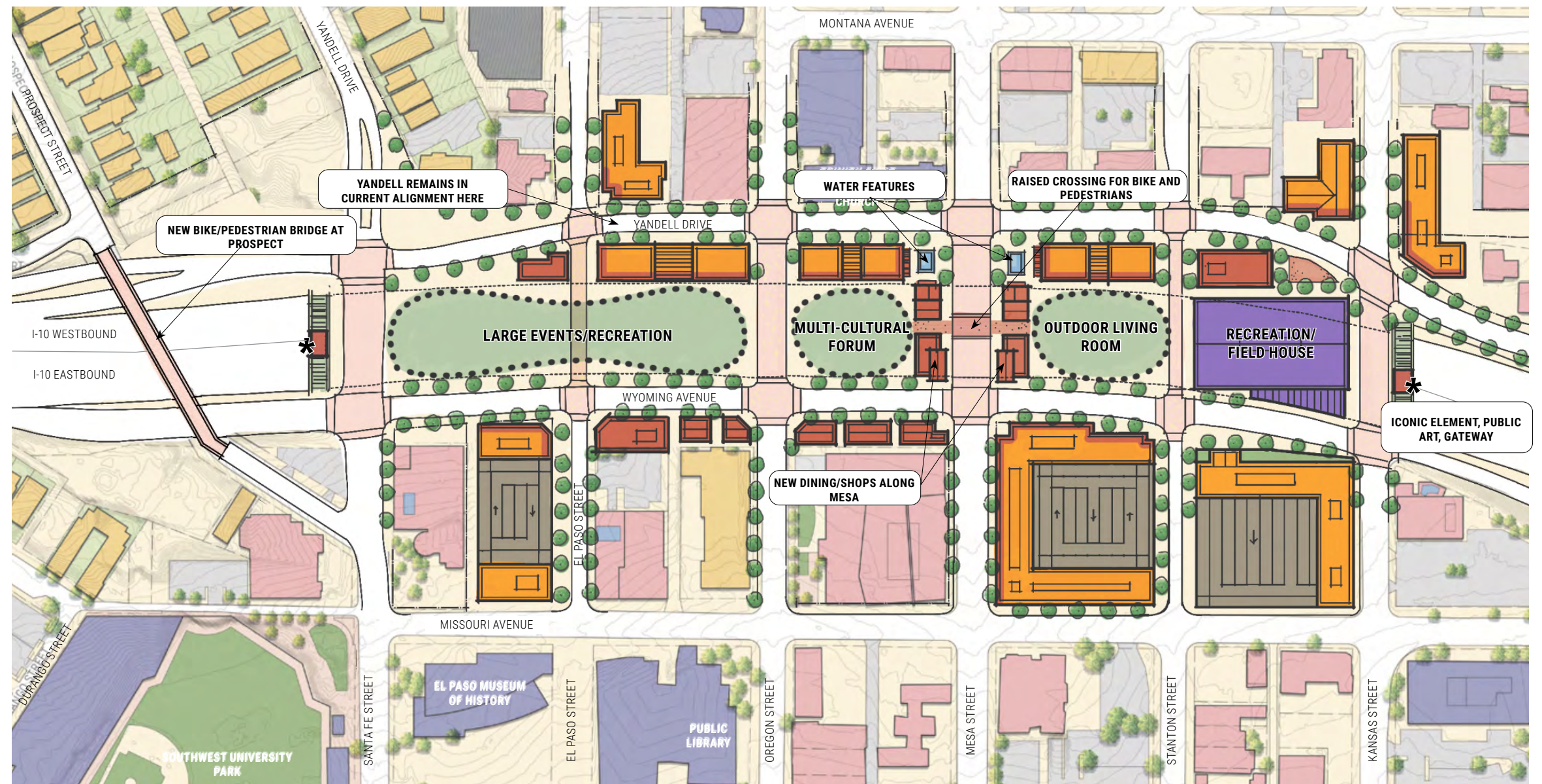
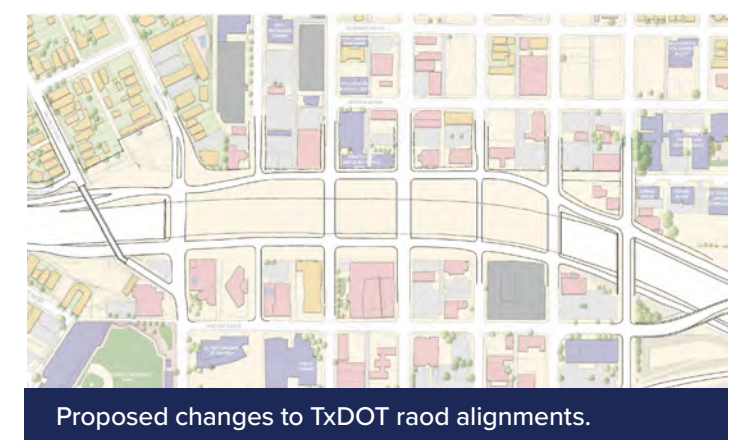
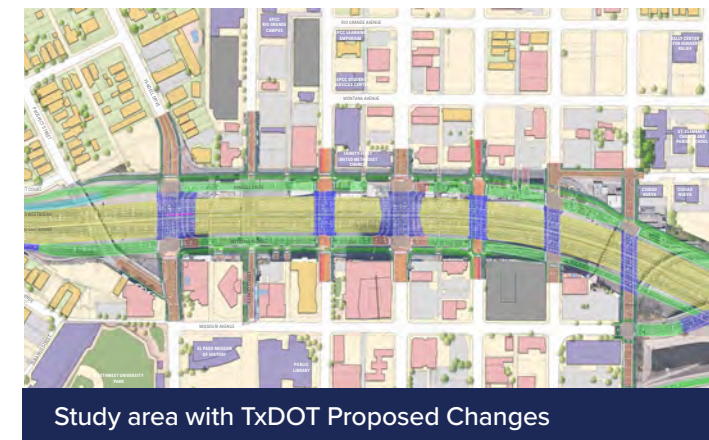
Community Engagement & Active Listening

# OVERVIEW: THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN

## CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA PLAN

Work with TxDOT to create a setting for a Deck Plaza that provides a genuinely inviting reconnection between Uptown and Downtown, making it a robust citywide and regional destination.

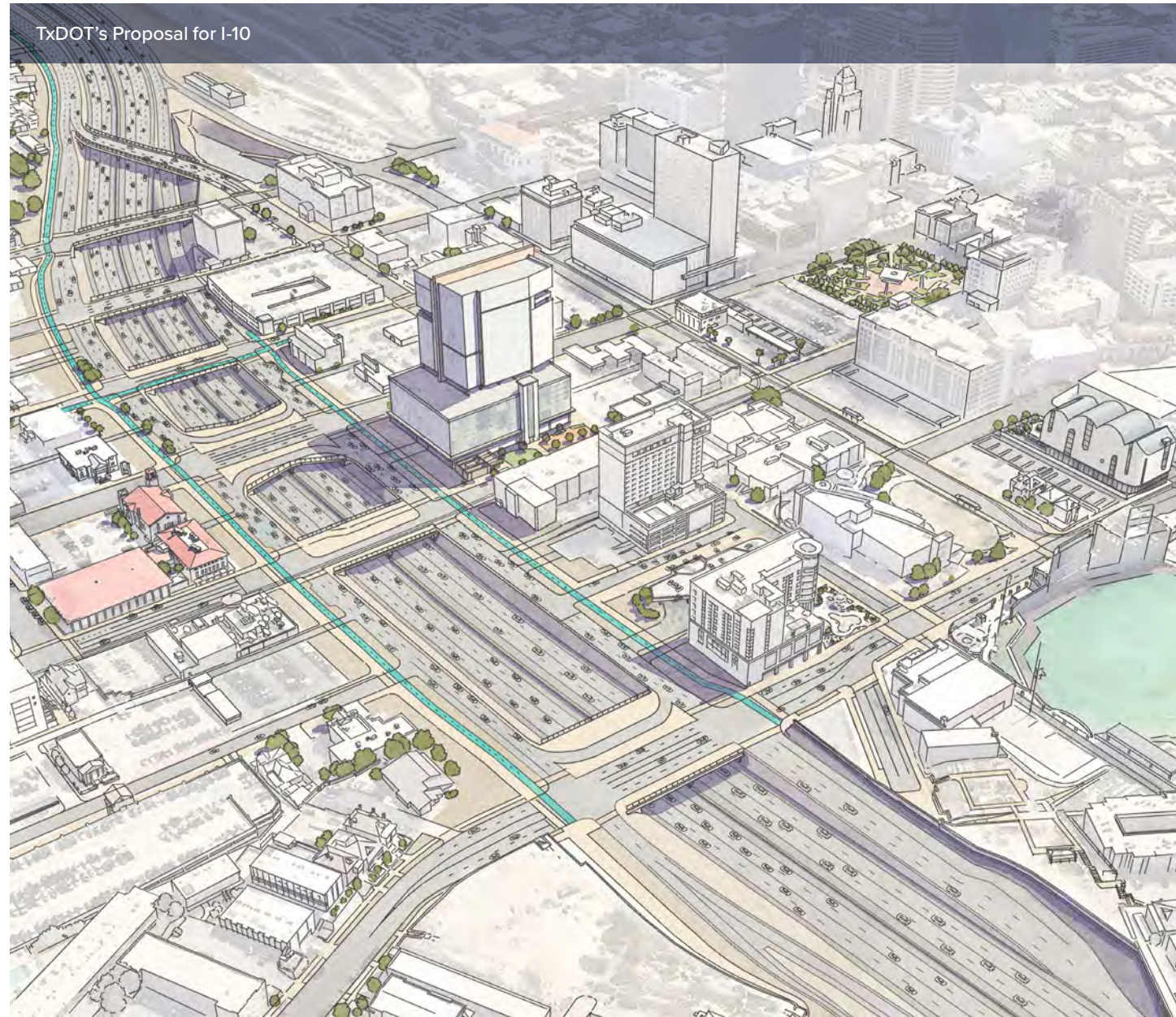
- **Provide sufficient “terra firma”:** Ensure a minimum of 70 feet of developable solid ground. This will significantly reduce development costs for buildings with cafés, art and music venues, unique small businesses, and other lively uses that can open directly onto and animate the Deck Plaza.
- **Integrate the regional bike path and the Paso del Norte Trail:** Reimagine I-10 has committed to building these onto the Deck Plaza, creating more room for terra firma.
- **Promote pedestrian-friendly, tree-lined frontage “city streets”:** These streets should invite walkability and facilitate pedestrian and bike crossings to and across the Deck Plaza.
- **Line these city streets with lively uses:** Engage pedestrians with vibrant activities that integrate the Deck Plaza into the life of both Uptown and Downtown.



REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: SUMMARY	
New Community-Serving Development SF	1,263,390
Residential	909,120
Retail / Community	173,270
Innovation / Art / Community	142,000
Field house	39,000
Combined New Parking Spaces	1,890

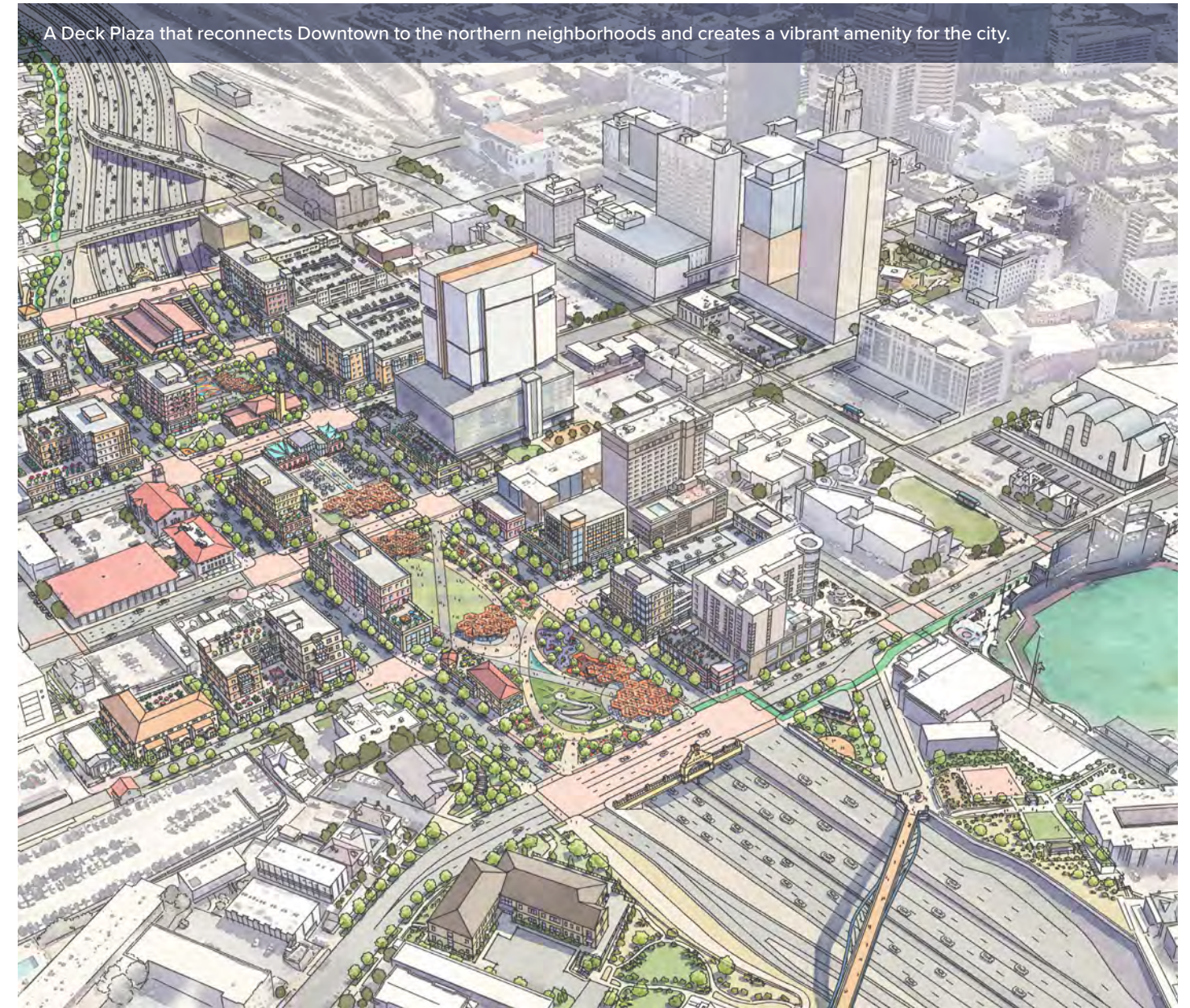
A new master plan for the Deck Plaza and adjacent supportive mixed-use development. The chart (above) summarizes the potential new development that will complement Plaza programming and usage.

## OVERVIEW: THE CONCEPTUAL PLAN



### PROPOSED TxDOT ALTERNATIVE I

This illustration of TxDOT's schematic corridor design for I-10 emphasizes the added separation between Downtown and Uptown: not only has TxDOT indicated that it might need to widen the I-10 trench by 30' at street level, but two bridges are removed and the frontage streets (Yandell Drive and Wyoming Avenue) are located in greatly expanded right-of-way that removes urban building frontage along Yandell.



### DECK PLAZA CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION

As illustrated here, the Deck Plaza offers unparalleled opportunity to restore connection between Downtown and Uptown El Paso. A cornerstone of the concept explored in this feasibility study is the use of terra firma outside of the I-10 freeway channel to support mixed-use buildings that frame the plaza public space and amenities and add an immediate community to the park.

## OVERVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION

**Phase II of this planning study** will include more detailed findings and recommendations related to funding capital expenditures required to build the Deck Plaza and subsequent operations and maintenance.

### FUNDING CAPITAL EXPENDITURES TO BUILD THE DECK PLAZA

The City of El Paso tasked Stantec with exploring funding strategies for the I-10 Deck Plaza project, which carries an estimated total cost of roughly \$200 million. This initiative aims to address infrastructure needs and enhance urban connectivity by creating a deck park over a section of Interstate 10 in downtown El Paso. The project team assessed various financing options, including federal grants, public-private partnerships, and municipal bonds, to secure the necessary funding for this ambitious urban development project. Based on a thorough evaluation, the project team has presented actionable recommendations for the next steps, aiming to position the project for success and secure the necessary funding to advance the project toward realization. This initiative underscores El Paso's commitment to enhancing urban connectivity and public infrastructure, setting a precedent for future development endeavors in the region.

The total cost of Deck Plaza may exceed local funds, but El Paso has opportunities to leverage external resources. The I-10 Deck Plaza project includes various park amenities, mobility enhancements, and building features that can be funded through available state and federal grants. The most achievable sources include incorporating a combination of grants, low-interest loans, and development financing tools featuring programs such as RAISE, TIFIA, and TIF. To position the El Paso and I-10 Deck Plaza for success, it is strongly recommended that the City consult with the Reconnecting Communities Institute and engage the Build America Bureau to establish a partnership that will accelerate project planning, financing, delivery, and operations.

### OPERATING AND MAINTAINING THE DECK PLAZA

The Deck Plaza Foundation will maintain and operate the Deck.

While determining the costs and corresponding revenues for maintenance and operations will be projected during Phase II, this plan recommends that a significant portion of the tax revenues generated by roughly 1.2 million square feet of mixed-use development projected for the Deck Plaza or on vacant or under-utilized sites whose redevelopment will be attributable to the Deck Plaza should be used to fund operating and maintenance costs. This strategy is likely to generate ten to twenty million dollars (2025 \$s) over the next two decades. This development reflects the market demand

identified in the 2023 El Paso Downtown + Uptown Plan.

#### Additional preliminary findings include:

Key considerations for governance include:

- Expertise and capacity to operate the park.
- Accountability to the public and stakeholders.
- Flexibility to evolve and adapt as the project progresses.

Critical questions to consider when determining a governance structure include:

- What is legally permissible and politically acceptable?
- What is each stakeholder's appetite for risk? What is the strength and commitment of their leadership?

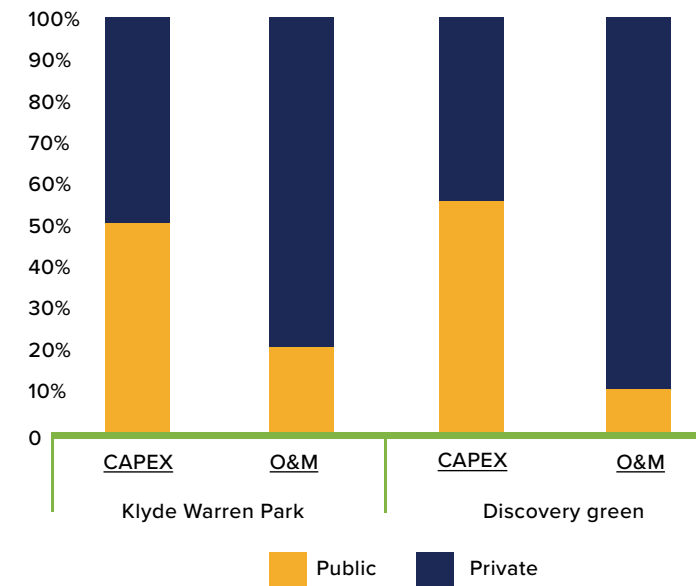
In parallel with governance, successful and sustainable park operations depend on a diverse range of funding sources, which will also guide the optimal governance strategy.

Sources of operating and capital revenue include:

- **Public Funding:** Parks increasingly require a foundation of public funding, particularly in their early operational years as other revenue streams stabilize. Common public funding sources include general fund or bond contributions, and dedicated tax streams.
- **Contributed Income:** This includes donations from park stakeholders and users, such as philanthropic contributions and corporate sponsorships.
- **Value Capture:** As noted above, like many parks, the Deck Plaza will generate substantial value for the surrounding area, which can be quantified by real estate premiums (e.g., increased property values and accelerated development), new visitors and tourism, and increased retail spending. This value can sometimes be leveraged to offset the costs of park investments and/or operations.
- **Earned Income (for operations only):** Earned income from park programming and activities provides a flexible revenue stream for park operators. This revenue can help create a park brand and sustain operating budgets.

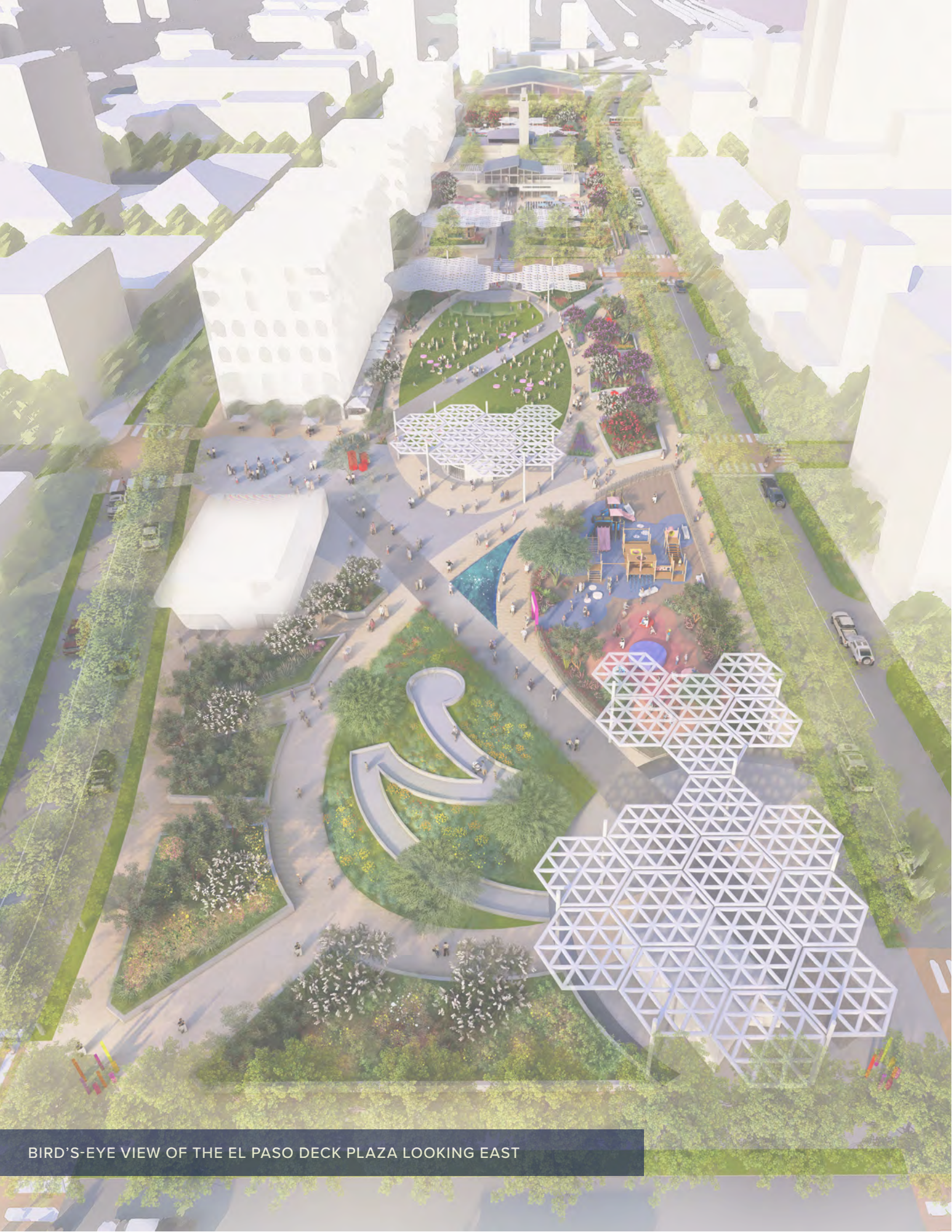
Examining two other parks in Texas – Klyde Warren Park in Dallas and Discovery Green in Houston – reveals the role of public-private partnerships. Klyde Warren Park is owned by the City of Dallas but operated and managed privately by the Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation, a nonprofit organization. Discovery Green operates through a partnership between the City of Houston, the Houston First Corporation, and the Discovery Green Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

### Funding Sources by Type



Capex: Initial capital expenditures to build the Deck Plaza  
O&M: Operating and maintaining the Deck Plaza

At both parks, capital expenses were divided relatively equally between public and private sources, while operational costs are largely funded through private sources. This includes a combination of non-profit membership dues, monetization of park revenues through rentals and programming, and fundraising efforts.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE EL PASO DECK PLAZA LOOKING EAST



Locally inspired food, music, art, gardens, and recreation will invite Uptown, Downtown, the city, and the region to celebrate shared community.

## ▶ WHY CREATE A DECK PLAZA?

## WHY CREATE A DECK PLAZA?

### EL PASO'S OPPORTUNITY

A Deck Plaza presents a unique opportunity to preserve the current mobility benefits of I-10 while enhancing them by better integrating I-10 into El Paso's multimodal approach to future mobility. Additionally, it addresses the significant and longstanding negative impacts of I-10 on both Uptown neighborhoods and Downtown. These impacts include:

- **Economic and Social Divide:** The nearby rail line has historically deepened the economic and social divide, with more affluent white residents to the north and less affluent Mexican and Black residents to the south. Redlining practices institutionalized this divide from the 1930s to the late 1960s.
- **Discouraged Investment:** Investment has been discouraged for one to two blocks on either side of the depressed right-of-way. This has effectively widened the divide between Uptown and Downtown from six lanes of depressed freeway traffic into a continuous two to four block corridor. This corridor exposes passersby not only to noise and poor air quality associated with crossing narrow bridges but also to unshaded sidewalks bordered by vacant sites, surface parking lots, and blank walls.
- **Environmental and Health Challenges:** I-10 is a major source of ozone and particulates, contributing to El Paso's status as an ozone non-attainment area. This has led to disproportionately high rates of asthma and other public health threats, as noted by the Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) and El Paso County.
- **Underutilized Land:** Over ten acres of land occupied by I-10 were identified as underutilized in the 1960s. However, this land is now needed for parks, housing, cultural activities, and other essential uses to support the rapid growth of the 21st-century region.

### How we got here

#### ORIGINAL RATIONALE FOR I-10

I-10 is a crucial part of the national interstate highway system, initially announced as a Cold War defense initiative in 1956. This freeway stretches from Santa Monica, CA, to Jacksonville, FL. Although its original Cold War purpose is no longer relevant, I-10 remains a vital link in the interstate highway system. It serves as a major truck route for growing trade with Mexico and Latin America and functions as a national defense corridor connected to Fort Bliss. Locally, as El Paso's cross-border economy and migration grew rapidly in the 1950s and 60s, I-10 supported suburban expansion and connected these areas to Downtown.

### I-10 TODAY

Today, I-10 runs through a densely built urban environment, and its impacts are significant. In the eastern neighborhoods of El Paso, surface-street crossings are typically about three-quarters of a mile apart. Through downtown El Paso, there are bridges at every block, but crossings become limited again to the west. Beyond creating physical separation, I-10 has shaped the city in other ways: its concrete channel generates notable noise, and the high volume of traffic affects downtown air quality.

In addition to physical separation, noise, and air pollution, I-10 has significantly influenced the local street network's use for circulation and multimodal accommodation. Many downtown streets connected to I-10 access ramps have been configured for one-way traffic to channel vehicles to these ramps. The City of El Paso has only recently begun reconsidering these streets, as traffic volumes no longer justify their traffic-focused designs.

### REIMAGINE I-10

TxDOT began studying the I-10 El Paso corridor in 2016. While the initial focus was on projected growth in personal vehicle and truck traffic, the resulting Reimagine I-10 report highlights the importance of accommodating cross-border trade-related truck growth. I-10 serves five cross-border port cities, and TxDOT notes that cross-border trade increased by 162% between 2010 and 2020, with significant growth expected to continue. Additionally, TxDOT points out that the Borderplex region (El Paso, TX, Ciudad Juarez, MX, and Las Cruces, NM) is the seventh-largest manufacturing hub in North America and one of the fastest-growing manufacturing economies.

TxDOT plans to spend nearly one billion dollars to add two additional lanes and reconstruct the existing lanes, retaining walls, bridges, ramps, and cross streets in the Downtown segment. This will better connect the expanded number of lanes on either side of I-10 and avoid the "choke point" in the downtown corridor. I-10 will also provide east/west transit service with a stop and direct vertical access to Sun Metro's Downtown + Uptown north/south streetcar and BRT service.

The TxDOT-proposed designs for I-10's reconfiguration include not only the mainline freeway lanes but also adjustments to the surface streets directly adjacent to I-10. The mainline freeway would be widened, and Yandell Drive and Wyoming Avenue relocated to allow for better sight distance for passing traffic. Additionally, the proposed designs removed two existing street bridges over I-10, El Paso Street and Prospect Street, with the latter serving as the primary connection from Downtown to the Sunset Heights neighborhood. The design also includes a series of U-turn lanes between one-way Yandell and Wyoming in advance of



TxDOT Exploration of cap concept from the Reimagine Document

## WHY CREATE A DECK PLAZA?

the Mesa Street and Santa Fe Street intersections, allowing traffic to connect from one to the other without making left turns directly on these streets.

The combined impact of these changes would further separate the Downtown business district from the Uptown neighborhoods north of I-10, keeping El Paso's most dynamic area of potential redevelopment and investment divided into two parts, hindering its growth as a single urban core.

### A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Recognizing the challenges I-10 already poses for Uptown and Downtown, and the projected increase in truck and other traffic – along with the two additional travel lanes required to accommodate this traffic – TxDOT proposed that the I-10 reconstruction presents a unique opportunity to create a Downtown/Uptown deck. The Reimagine I-10 report includes a recommendation to incorporate this deck. While TxDOT will not commit to funding the deck, planning and designing it simultaneously offers significant advantages:

- **Enhanced Connectivity:** The City and TxDOT can collaborate to design walkable frontage roads that make access to and across the Deck Plaza inviting, thereby enhancing the ability to reconnect Uptown and Downtown
- **Structural Integration:** TxDOT can anticipate and accommodate the Deck Plaza's structural requirements, reducing overall costs and increasing flexibility in locating water, landscaping, trees, buildings, and other features that require additional support.
- **Cost Efficiency:** Combining construction efforts will reduce costs and avoid the disruption generated by two separate projects.

Most importantly, the realization that this window of opportunity will remain open for a limited time has brought the City, the Downtown Deck Plaza Foundation, and other key stakeholders together to advance this landmark initiative.

### SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

While TxDOT will not commit to funding the deck, its advisory committee and the larger El Paso community partnered to create an initial concept, conceived by OJB Landscape Architecture. This collaboration aimed to craft and articulate a community-based mission, vision, and goals to guide the planning for a Deck Plaza, making it an initiative worth achieving and a place truly authentic to El Paso. The resulting mission, vision, and goals are defined as follows:

**Mission:** Utilize this unprecedented opportunity to create a transformational place, inspired by El Paso's rich heritage and living cultures, which achieves its full promise by being:

- **From a regional perspective:** a compelling destination that touches and enriches the lives of all El Pasoans.
- **From a neighborhood perspective:** An animated "seam" that restores the synergies between nearby neighborhoods and Downtown.
- **From a Downtown perspective:** An amenity and source of interactive community that enables Downtown to emerge as the heart of 21st-century El Paso and its region.

**Vision:** How should programming and placemaking bring the Mission to life? A Deck Plaza offers an unprecedented opportunity to create a place that touches the lives of every El Pasoan by celebrating El Paso's rich heritage, living cultures, and distinctive high desert ecosystem. These qualities provide the building blocks for a new common ground where locally inspired food, music, art, gardens, recreation, and similar pleasures invite Uptown, Downtown, the city, and the region to come together to celebrate the unique riches of their shared community.

**Core Goals:** Six essential building blocks for a transformative opportunity:

- **Authentic Cultural Crossroads**
  - Symbolism
  - Heritage
  - Contemporary Culture
  - Common Ground
- **Inviting Sense of Place**
  - Active Edges
  - Amenity & Programming Variety
  - Shade
  - Safety
  - Noise Mitigation
- **Enhanced Accessibility / Connectivity**
  - Street Grid
  - Walkability
  - ADA Access
  - Bike-ability
  - Transit Access
  - Vehicular Access
  - Parking

- **Inclusive Economic Development**
  - Local Businesses
  - Local Institutions
  - Minimizing Displacement
- **Sustainability / Climate Action**
  - Native Planting
  - Water Conservation
  - Heat Island Reduction
  - Energy Conservation
- **Implementation Feasibility**
  - Constructability
  - Infrastructure Compatibility
  - TxDOT Alignment
  - Traffic Capacity Thresholds
  - Cost
  - Phasing
  - Value Capture

These building blocks are the foundation for the six core goals:

1. **Authentic Cultural Crossroads:** Foster a mix of cultural, nonprofit, and commercial uses that bring El Paso's diverse living culture of food, music, art, performance, and innovation to every part of the Deck Plaza. Create a lively east/west walk that celebrates the Deck Plaza's multicultural richness. Promote inclusive jobs, small business, arts, and cultural opportunities through diverse venues for small businesses, jobs, arts and cultural expression, workforce readiness, skills training, business support, and similar initiatives.
2. **Enhanced Accessibility/Connectivity:** Reconnect Uptown, Downtown, and UTEP. Promote inviting north/south pedestrian and bike connections by providing pop-up and permanent retail, places to enjoy arts and culture, shade trees/structures, and additional amenities that invite people to walk and bike between Uptown and Downtown, on and off the deck. Extend this enhanced connectivity to UTEP, recognizing its increased importance to both Uptown and Downtown. Reinforce linkages and promote collaborative programming of the Deck Plaza by working with museums, neighborhood organizations, local artists, cultural and other nonprofits, UTEP, and similar partners.
3. **Sustainability/Climate Action:** Nurture innovative environmental practices. Establish net-zero and water

self-sufficiency goals for buildings, programs, and public spaces across the Deck Plaza. Take advantage of El Paso's potential for clean energy from its extensive sun exposure and Chihuahuan Desert wind patterns to reduce the Deck Plaza's carbon footprint.

**4. Inviting Sense of Place:** Realize unmet needs and aspirations for Uptown, Downtown, El Paso, and the region. Transform highway air-rights and underutilized sites on either side of I-10 into parks, recreation, cultural and small business venues, public gathering places, mixed-income housing, and other uses that enrich the quality of life for Uptown and Downtown alike, enhancing Downtown as the heart of this diverse city and region.

**5. Inclusive Economic Development:** Strengthen Downtown as an engine for expanded economic opportunity across El Paso and the region. Leverage the amenities the Deck Plaza can offer to draw significant mixed-income housing investment, which will support more small businesses, breweries, arts and entertainment, and similar uses that animate Downtown's streets. Transform Downtown into a live/work/play/learn/innovate environment that benefits all El Pasoans by enhancing El Paso's competitive position for 21st-century jobs and investment.

**6. Feasible to Build, Operate, and Maintain:** Create a Deck Plaza that is both buildable and worth building. Ensure the Deck Plaza achieves the mission, vision, and goals in ways that respect the opportunities and constraints inherent in a highway deck. It should be fundable and managed, operated, and programmed by a Deck Plaza Partnership.

**Is a Deck Plaza worth its cost?** The projected construction cost to achieve the Deck Plaza, documented in this draft report—beyond costs covered by TxDOT as part of Reimagine I-10, would be roughly \$400 million, separate from the reconstruction of I-10. This cost is estimated to increase by roughly 10 to 20 percent if the Deck Plaza were constructed separately from the I-10 reconstruction. The partnership will pursue funding strategies to cover this cost. Subsequent management and maintenance would be provided by a new nonprofit, funded by a mix of public (City) support and private philanthropy.

**Should El Paso invest time, energy, and resources to create a Deck Plaza?** Yes! Read on!



CITY GARDEN + EVENT SPACE

Decades of community advocacy, findings in the 2023 Downtown + Uptown Plan, the growing importance of Downtown as an engine for enhanced livability and prosperity, and planning for I-10's future create a perfect storm of opportunity for developing a Deck Plaza.

## ▶ SETTING THE STAGE

## SETTING THE STAGE

The Core Values, followed by the Mission, Vision, and Goals, provide clear direction for moving forward. This direction has been filtered through diverse perspectives to form the foundation for creating a Deck Plaza that is truly authentic to El Paso.

### EL PASO'S HIGH DESERT CLIMATE AND ECOSYSTEM

El Paso is located in the Chihuahuan Desert, the largest desert in North America. This region is characterized by hot summers and cool to cold, dry winters, with most of its annual precipitation occurring during the summer monsoon season and ranging from 6 to 20 inches. The desert's basin and range topography include broad valleys, terraces, mesas, and mountains.

The Chihuahuan Desert is known for its unique flora and fauna, which have adapted to the arid conditions. However, the ecosystem faces threats from urbanization, water depletion, and invasive species that can displace native vegetation.



El Paso Skyline

The Deck Plaza is designed to be a green space in this arid and windswept environment, considering these climatic conditions. The park's design incorporates drought-resistant plants and efficient water management systems to thrive in the desert climate. Additionally, windbreaks, shade structures, and strategically placed vegetation create sheltered areas within the park, enhancing comfort and usability for visitors. The park will also serve as a crucial green space, helping to mitigate urban heat island effects and providing a better-connected, more equitable El Paso.

### RELEVANT CITY POLICIES AND PRIORITIES

The concept of a Deck Plaza, based on the core values articulated by diverse stakeholders, aligns with longstanding City priorities to:

- **Enhance Equity and Inclusion:** Expand opportunities for local small businesses and entrepreneurs, creating a place designed to invite the full spectrum of El Pasoans to come together.

- **Pursue Greater Environmental Responsibility:** Increase the efficiency of city services by providing a major amenity that attracts population growth, projected to consist primarily of couples and singles without kids over the next two decades, to the core to live and work.
- **Expand Downtown's Role as an Economic Engine:** Promote economic growth and increased opportunities for all El Pasoans by creating a highly amenitized environment that fosters a live/work/play/learn/innovate ecosystem, attracting and retaining talent, jobs, and investment for El Paso and the region.
- **Expand Downtown's Residential Population:** Create significant mixed-income housing that supports existing and new businesses, culture, entertainment, and similar amenities, leveraging changing housing market trends.
- **Promote Use of Transit:** Provide a compelling destination accessible by streetcar, bus rapid transit, walking, biking, and other forms of micro mobility.

### EMERGING TRENDS RESHAPING NORTH AMERICA'S CITIES AND REGIONS.

As reported in the Uptown + Downtown Plan, El Paso's future will be shaped by fundamental economic, demographic, technological, and climate trends over the next two decades and beyond.

**Economic Development:** The future will be dominated by knowledge and innovation industries, including advanced manufacturing. As a shortage of skilled and educated talent spreads across the developed world, jobs and investment in these industries will follow talent to mixed-use, walkable, culturally rich places where this talent prefers to live and work. The El Paso region can be highly competitive in this new economy if it creates strong connections between UTEP and other educational institutions and an increasingly lively, amenitized Downtown that attracts and retains educated workers. This strategy will be significantly reinforced by a Deck Plaza.

These jobs and investments unlock enhanced economic opportunities for all El Pasoans. The City of Buffalo projects that each new knowledge industry job generates five additional jobs for people with a wide range of skills, often jobs that are in decline. This dynamic is particularly critical for advanced manufacturing investment, for which El Paso is highly competitive. Growing knowledge industry jobs also support new small local businesses. While the pandemic highlighted hybrid work, it has been increasing for more than two decades, decreasing support for traditional office investment. Housing and innovation employers attracted to highly amenitized, walkable places can replace this lost

investment for Downtown El Paso and help attract innovation investment to the city and region.

**Demographic Shifts:** Over the same period, demographics will be dominated by a dramatic shift toward one- and two-person households without kids. Across North America, these households will represent more than 80% of all net new households and dominate housing markets. While continuing emigration suggests that a larger share of El Paso's household growth will consist of families with kids, housing market growth in this region will also be influenced by childless households. These households are more likely to prefer mixed-use, walkable, amenitized, and transit-accessible neighborhoods. Downtown and nearby Uptown neighborhoods will attract a larger share of this demand.

In 2020, Downtown and adjacent Uptown neighborhoods accommodated 10,300 housing units. Reflecting changing demographics, projected demand over the next two decades ranges from 6,500 to more than 10,000 additional units. Roughly 90% of this demand will be for multifamily housing, with the majority focused on Downtown. For Uptown, sites directly abutting the Deck Plaza will accommodate this demand without disrupting Sunset and other existing neighborhoods. For Downtown, the Deck Plaza will offer an important amenity to create a critical mass of new housing, likely increasing Downtown's occupied total built square footage from roughly nine to 14 million SF. Several thousand new housing units can reinvigorate Downtown streets, boosting Downtown as a live/work/play/learn/innovate environment that retains and attracts an educated workforce, drawing knowledge and innovation jobs and investment.

**Mobility Innovations:** The advent of transformative mobility innovations, most prominently connected and autonomous mobility, will reduce the need for expensive structured parking associated with Downtown development. The critical mass of people and destinations offered by Downtown will facilitate increased shared mobility, decreasing annual mobility costs for Downtown residents and reducing traffic growth.

**Environmental Performance:** The most effective way to increase regional environmental performance is to attract growth from the region's auto-dependent edges to its transit-served and walkable core, particularly Downtown.

### Citywide context

Although I-10's original role was to support cross-continental freight mobility and defense mobilization, it has also become a key local transportation link for El Paso's urban area, especially as the city has grown since the Interstate's construction. The geographic constraints of the Franklin Mountains, Fort Bliss, and Rio Grande have caused El Paso to expand outward from its core in discrete branches. The

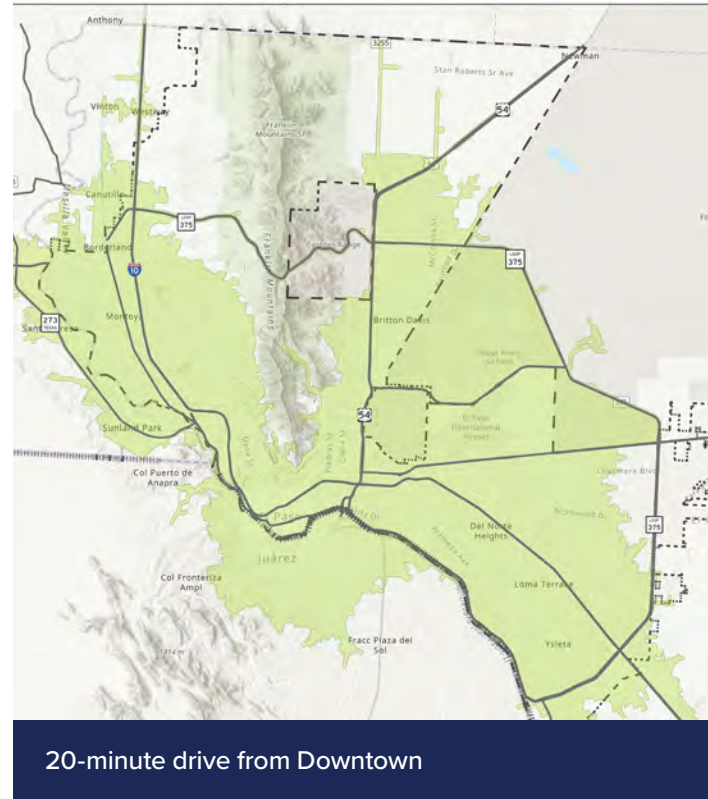
## SETTING THE STAGE

I-10 corridor is a key thoroughfare in two of these branches, including the largest and most populous areas (east and southeast, along the Alameda Avenue and Union Pacific corridors). In this regard, I-10 serves a dual role as both a major freight and logistics corridor passing through El Paso and a local connection within the city and its metropolitan area.

As noted previously, I-10 traverses the heart of El Paso, and the impacts of a large-scale corridor exclusively serving motorized traffic are evident in the city's urban core. Its concrete channel creates significant noise and air quality impacts through Downtown due to the high volume of traffic relative to surface streets. Downtown is also the primary section of I-10 with a dense network of connecting streets across the freeway, featuring bridges at every block. However, TxDOT's proposed design for I-10 includes the removal of two bridges, including the primary connection into the Sunset Heights neighborhood.

### What El Paso can learn from other relevant highway decking initiatives

To inform this effort, we studied precedents for freeway decks constructed elsewhere that serve as successful examples of collaborations with DOTs to achieve the goals of their respective cities. These initiatives illustrate vibrant public spaces or developments that positively impact their communities. These examples provide invaluable lessons for El Paso on how to execute its vision, identify potential pitfalls, and demonstrate the possibilities.



## Uptown + Downtown context

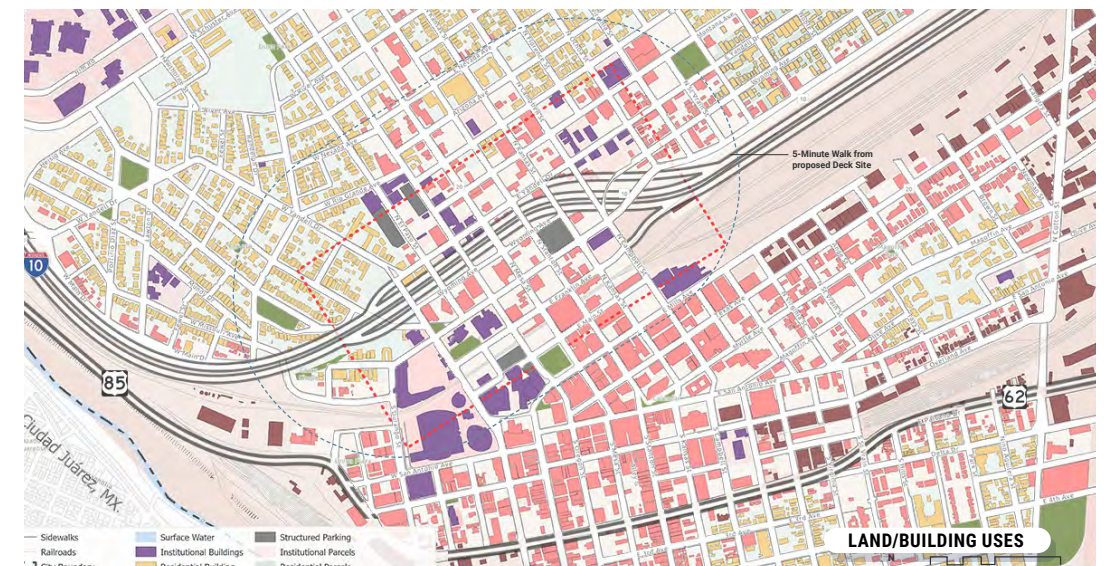
This feasibility study follows El Paso's comprehensive master plan for its Downtown and Uptown districts, which extends from the Segundo Barrio neighborhood through the Kern Place commercial district adjacent to the UTEP campus. The plan outlines several goals that support the investment in a Deck Plaza:

- **Realize Potential:** Unlock greater economic opportunity, equity, livability, resilience, and shared community by transforming the largely untapped potential of the Downtown and Uptown blocks on either side of the I-10 corridor. This transformation aims to create a walkable live/work/play/learn/innovate environment that serves as common ground and a compelling amenity to help retain El Paso's workforce.

- **Expand Public Art:** Increase the presence of public art in Downtown and Uptown, including designating the Uptown neighborhoods adjacent to the Deck Plaza as an "art incentive area" as defined by El Paso's 2014 Public Art Master Plan.
- **Connect Cultural Facilities:** Link cultural facilities and similar Downtown resources to create a more vibrant and livable Downtown and Uptown.
- **Address Park Shortages:** Tackle the shortage of parks and recreational spaces in both Uptown and Downtown.
- **Promote Downtown Intensification:** Encourage development in areas that are readily accessible to streetcars and BRT, specifically along Oregon and Mesa streets.
- **Enhance Mobility Links:** Strengthen pedestrian, bike, and other micromobility connections.

The dividing effect of the highways in Downtown El Paso are clear when looking at street hierarchy. The opportunity to minimize this divide is critical to unlocking the potential of both Downtown and Uptown, and all of El Paso would benefit.

The area is replete with cultural resources like Centennial Museum and Chihuahuan Desert Gardens, International Museum of Art, El Paso Holocaust Museum & Study Center, Magoffin Home State Historic Site, El Paso Scottish Rite, El Paso Museum of History, El Paso Museum of Art, Wigwam Museum, OLOGallery, City of El Paso Museum, and La Nube.



## SETTING THE STAGE

### The Site and Immediate Context

The noise, wind, and general harshness of the existing I-10 cut creates a seemingly impassable edge to Downtown and the northern neighborhoods. As we think about constructing new, active, open spaces to cover this scar, it is clear that the context will need to change, over time, to better support and connect to the investment atop I-10.

There are three significant factors that impact the on-site conditions:

- the large amount of vacant, surface parking, or generally underutilized land,
- the inactive ground floors to buildings - either with their backs turned to the site, or with vacant or inactive uses, and
- the low scale of development (excepting recent construction)

The diagrams on the facing page illustrate these concepts. The combination of all three result in the harsh conditions experienced at the I-10 cut – even with a deck constructed, any proposed plan should address these three significant impacts to ensure that the final design feels activated, protected, and seamlessly connected to Downtown and Uptown.



I-10 Trench

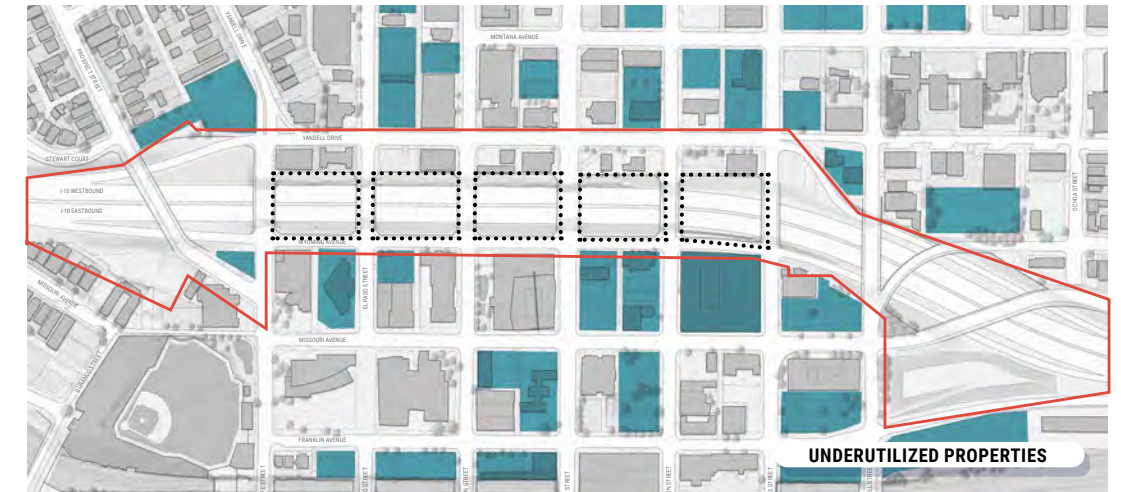


Downtown El Paso Streetscape



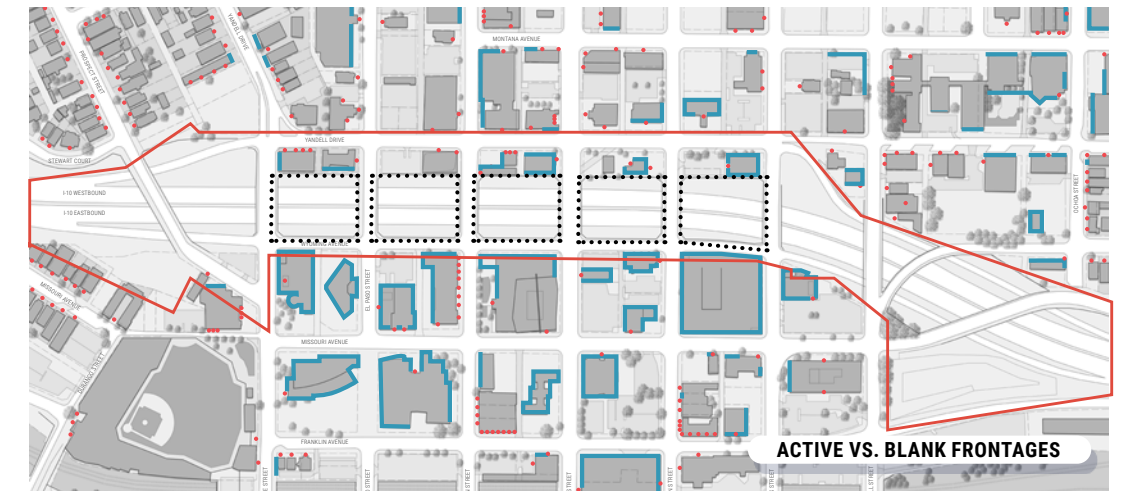
Looking at the edges of the highway today, it is admittedly difficult to imagine wanting to spend time here. This is the very reason that this effort is so crucial to the future of Downtown El Paso.

The dark teal shaded areas in this image identify vacant or “underdeveloped” properties - meaning that they could be designed and constructed in such a way to contribute to a lively, active, mixed-use district as identified in the Downtown + Uptown plan and HR&As economic analysis (included in Appendix)



UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

The blue lines indicate the inactive ground floors of buildings. These negatively impact the feeling of walking down the sidewalk and discourage foot traffic. On the Deck Plaza, we want the opposite - lots of entries and lots of foot traffic (indicated by red dots) Ideally, the Deck Plaza would be entirely surrounded by red dots.



ACTIVE VS. BLANK FRONTAGES

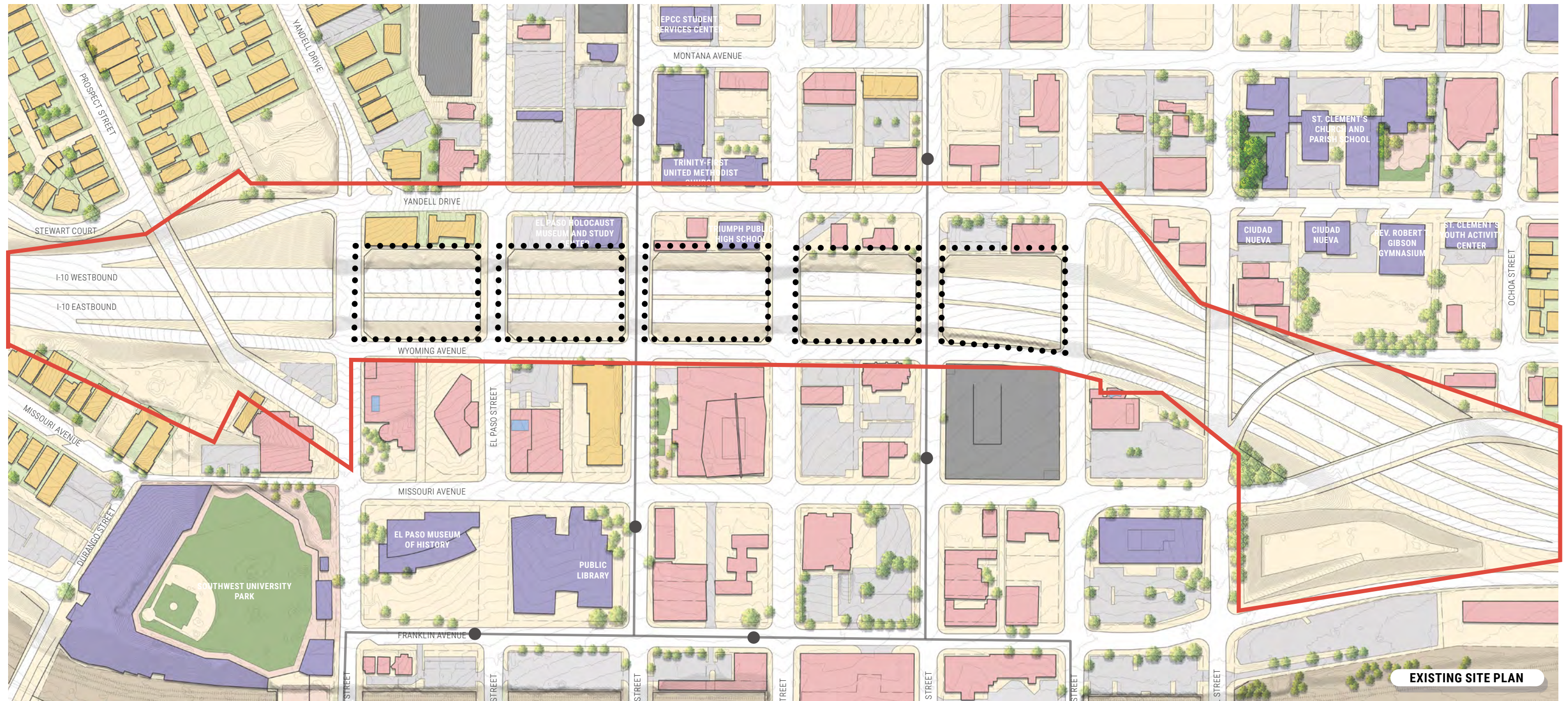
The map to the right shows that most of the development surrounding the Site is one- and two-story buildings. This scale does little to protect streets and sidewalks from a harsh desert climate.



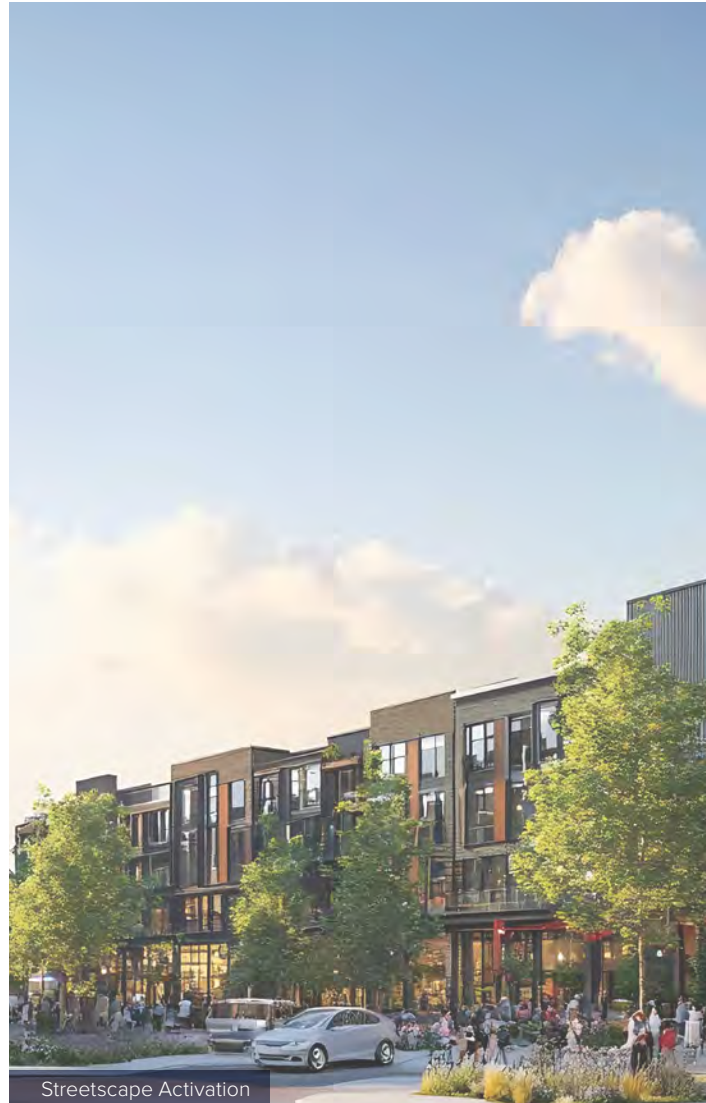
BUILDING SCALE

## SETTING THE STAGE

The base map below highlights the extents of the immediate site, as well as the areas studied for “decking” over the I-10 cut.



## SETTING THE STAGE



### SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATIONS INTEGRATE SEAMLESSLY WITH THE EXISTING STREET GRID, ENHANCING THE URBAN FABRIC

- **Active Edges:** These are crucial for creating a sense of safety and activity in any park or plaza spaces.
- **Leveraging Development:** Related development is inevitable and should be leveraged to support public investment. For example, Klyde Warren Park has triggered billions of dollars in development, yielding significant returns. In contrast, similar development in El Paso may require subsidies.
- **Blended Funding:** Funding is often achieved by combining public and philanthropic sources at local, state, and federal levels.

### DECK STUDIES WE INCLUDED:

- **Klyde Warren Park, Dallas**
- **Greenway, Boston**
- **MA Turnpike, Boston**
- **Freeway Park, Seattle**
- **Pittsburgh's I-579 Cap**
- **Margaret T. Hance Park, Phoenix:** Phoenix's park over I-10 (since 1990)
- **Central Atlanta Progress's Stitch:** A \$300 million proposed project to cover portions of the I-75/I-85 "connector."
- **Chicago's Millennium Park:** Built over railroad tracks.
- **Oak Cliff Park Deck, Dallas:** Part of a \$666 million highway reconstruction project to widen I-35 from eight lanes to ten.

These examples offer invaluable lessons for El Paso on how to execute its vision, identify potential pitfalls, and demonstrate the possibilities.

### HIGH LEVEL LESSONS LEARNED

- **Integration with Existing Street Grid:** Decks should recognize and interact with the existing street grid to fit seamlessly into the city's fabric.
- **Variety of Uses:** Primary uses vary widely, but the most successful decks are active and well-used. Examples provide diverse experiences for all ages (e.g., Seattle's deck functions as a downtown park, while Klyde Warren Park includes a children's park, dining areas, and other "rooms").
- **Construction Considerations:** Building on a deck differs from building on firm ground ("terra firma") and has cost implications. Trees, water features, and vertical elements need to be carefully sited for maximum advantage.

### LEARNING FROM EL PASO'S PEERS

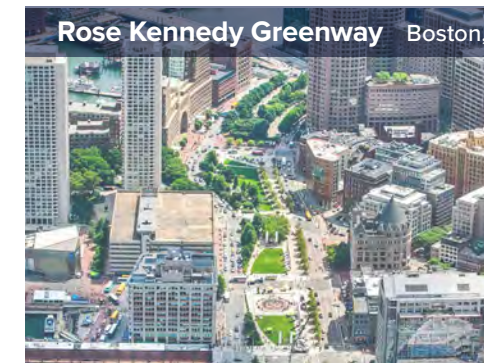
El Paso can benefit from several precedent examples of freeway decks that have become vital public spaces, reconnecting their communities. The examples shown here illustrate a variety of construction methods, land uses, and programming potentials. All of these decks are located above active freeways that are part of or connect to the Interstate Highway System.



Klyde Warren Park Dallas, Texas



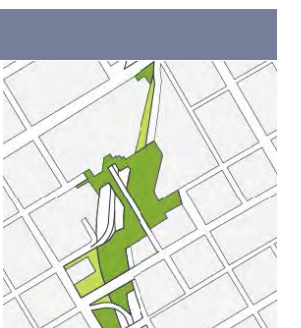
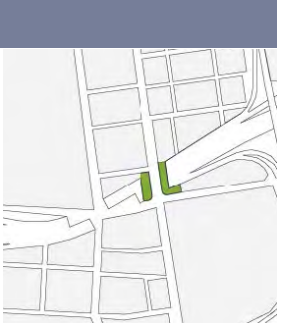
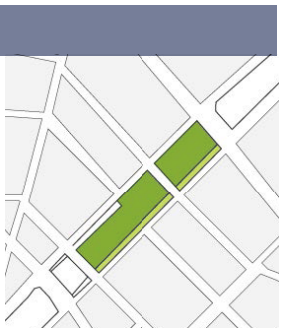
The Cap Columbus, Ohio



Rose Kennedy Greenway Boston, Massachusetts



Freeway Park Seattle, Washington



## SETTING THE STAGE

### Climate and Climate Resilience

In addition to studying decks, we explored numerous ways to address and manage the climate in El Paso's dry and occasionally harsh desert environment. As we designed a Deck Plaza that accommodates a variety of uses, including large open spaces, concerns about the sun and wind were frequently discussed throughout the process.

We understand that large swaths of pavement can contribute to the "heat island" effect, while traditional lawns are water-intensive and difficult to maintain through a typical El Paso summer. Therefore, we look to precedents for cooler paving and native plants that can withstand the intense heat. On this page, we have included imagery to illustrate the palette of materials and techniques that can be employed.

Additionally, we are studying ways to cool the space through wind capture, shade structures, and water features. These elements can be strategically placed throughout the programmed spaces and integrated into adjacent buildings to provide refuge and protection from the intense sun. It is important to create a space that works year-round, and considering this palette of tools will enhance the final recommendations of this broader feasibility study.



Cooling and Interactive Water



Native Landscape Palette



Examples of Shade Structures

Urban gardens and places to gather; a multicultural forum; a lively Mesa Street lined with food, arts, and music; a Downtown living room; and a recreation field house for the entire community will connect Downtown and Uptown — creating a new civic heart for El Paso and its region.

# ▶ A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### The Armature Provided by TxDOT's Preferred Right-of-Way Configuration

Understanding the potential layout of the Downtown Deck Plaza requires an understanding of TxDOT's preferred alternative for the I-10 expansion. While we have discussed the layout and its implications on the surrounding context, it is important to distinguish between what happens "in the trench" versus what occurs at the city level. The grade separation of the highway can be a significant asset, allowing through-traffic to flow freely below while El Paso focuses on infilling, connecting, and reestablishing the urban fabric above.

The plans on the right illustrate the existing TxDOT footprint (red line) and the areas of the highway to be decked. TxDOT's alternative reconfigures Wyoming and Yandell, requiring the acquisition of existing private properties to accommodate not only the highway construction but also the "frontage roads" that cut through the city. Although

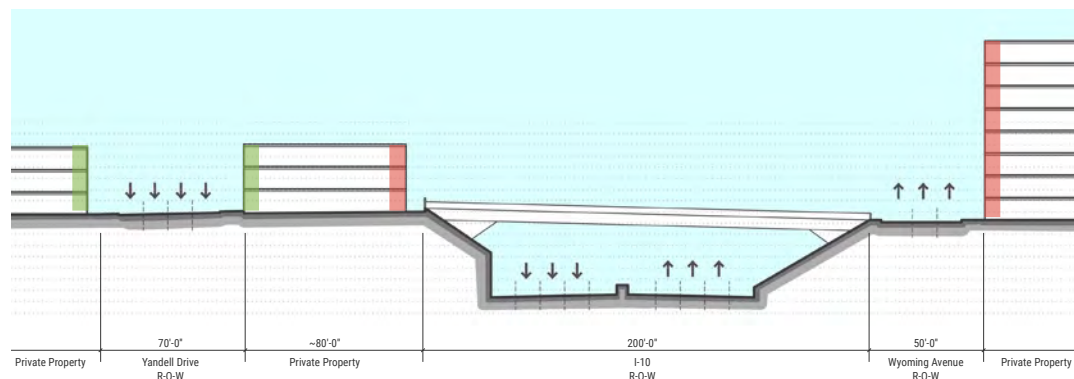
these roads are named Wyoming and Yandell in TxDOT's alternative, they are relocated and built to Department of Transportation specifications, despite being crucial parts of the city street network and the front address of properties along Yandell.

Assuming the TxDOT alignment of the proposed I-10 is fixed and outside our authority, how can we positively influence the layout at the city level to accommodate TxDOT safety and access concerns while also maximizing the benefit of the Deck investment for the city and the broader region?

The answer is to design the surface roads and bridges as if they were regular city streets. While the TxDOT Right-of-Way has a fixed boundary, it is part of a broad network of interconnected streets that serve Downtown and Uptown. There is a significant capacity to distribute cars, connect people to a new Deck Plaza, and provide numerous opportunities for new and improved facilities to activate and serve this area. The following chapter will illustrate the potential to enhance TxDOT's approach while manifesting a catalytic and transformational plan.

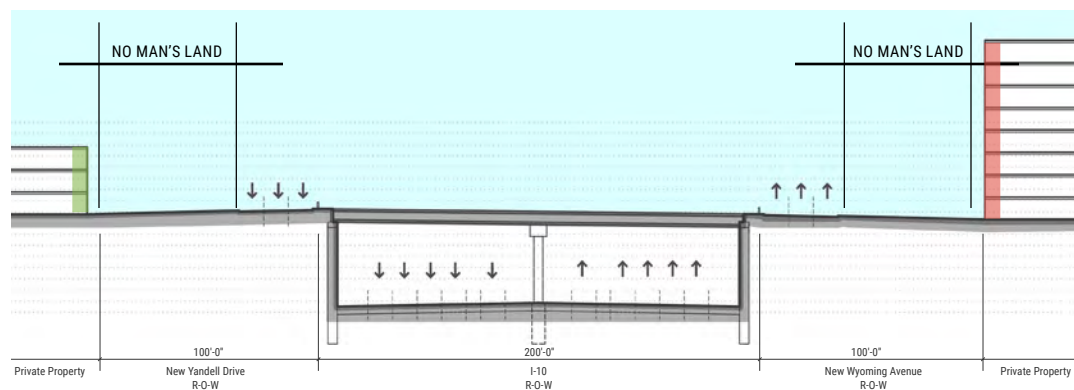
#### I-10 Today:

Backs of buildings face the I-10 corridor and create a hostile environment for cyclists and pedestrians. The proposed plan must identify ways to reverse this relationship

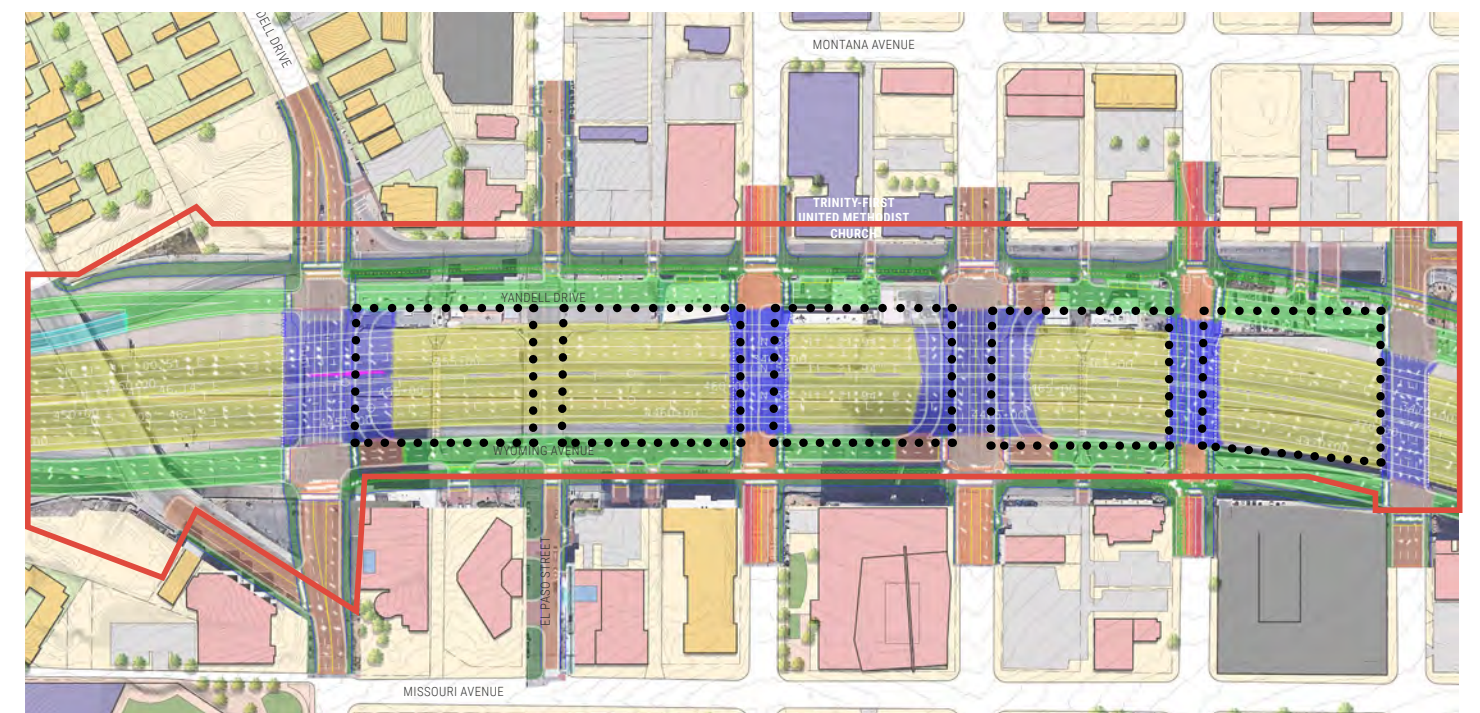


#### TxDOT Alt. I

The reconfiguration of highway trench and surface streets leaves "leftover" land, isolated, unmanaged, and not of a size to support deck activity.



Plan of existing conditions showing the proposed decked areas and the right-of-way for the I-10 study.



Plan of the TxDOT Alternative I approach to the I-10 widening project.

## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

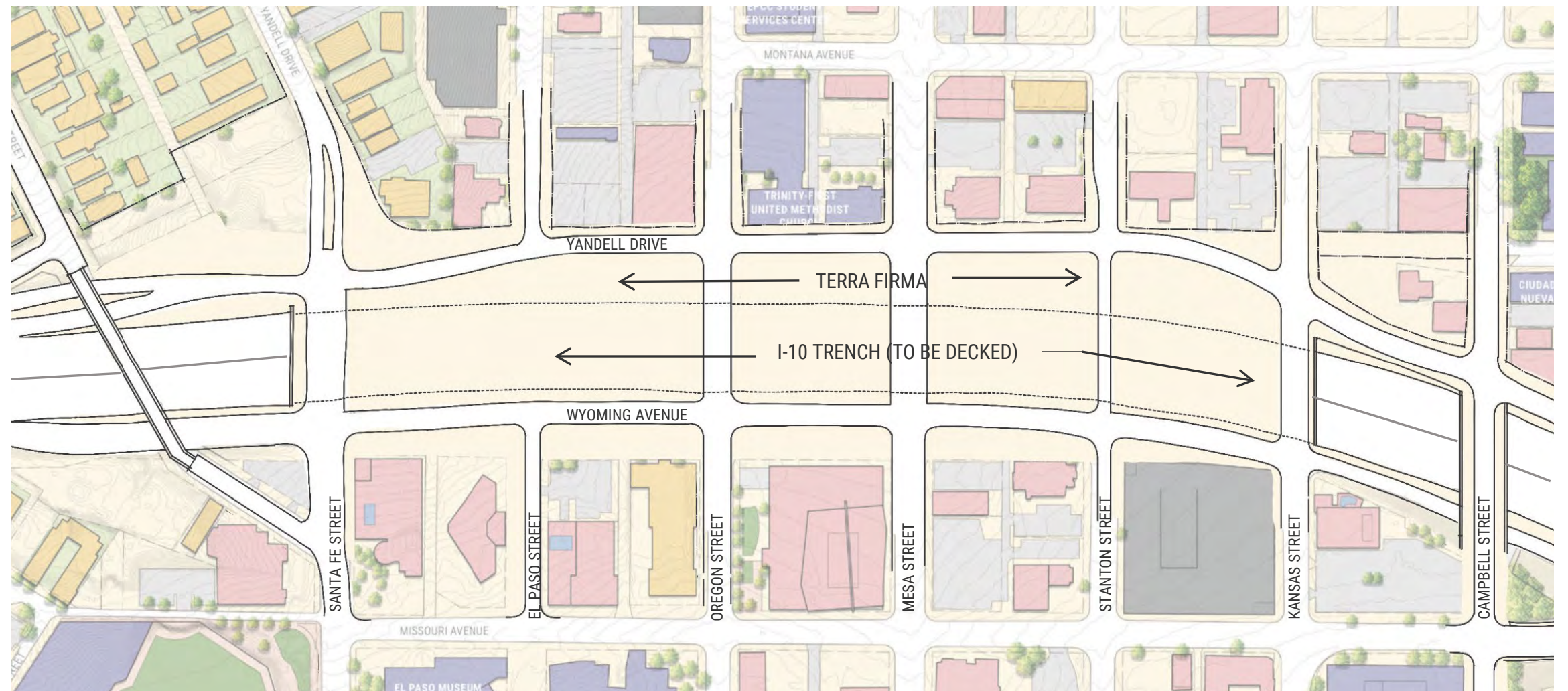
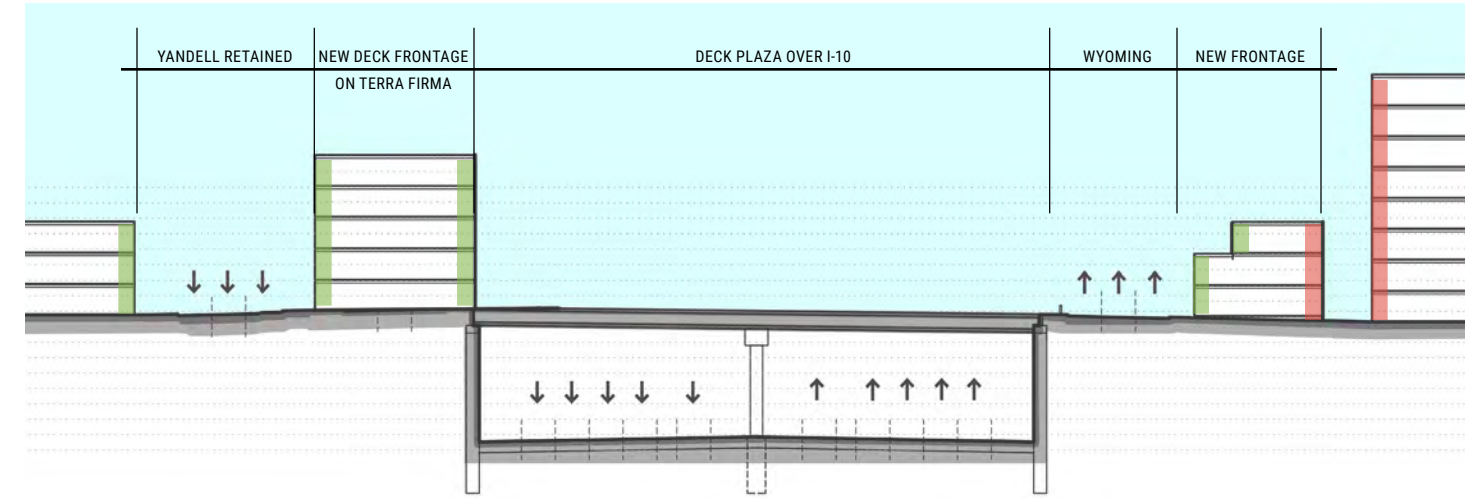
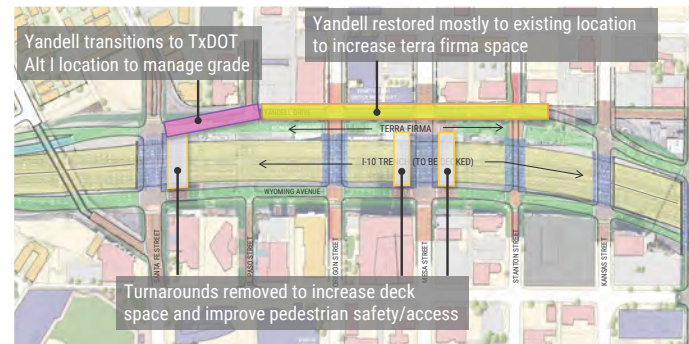
The transformation of the TxDOT I-10 Alternative I proposal is critical to better accommodate the proposed Deck Plaza and its connections to Downtown and Uptown. This ongoing conversation involves addressing a myriad of issues, including engineering considerations, public safety, accessibility, and bike and pedestrian connectivity.

The major factors impacting a future Deck Plaza include:

- The “Texas Turnarounds” at Santa Fe and Mesa
- The relocation of Yandell
- The resulting “terra firma”, or ground within the TxDOT Right-of-Way, which is situated outside of the highway trench, is consequently more suited for construction due to the absence of weight restrictions and other limitations

The framework pictured (at right) serves as the basis for this feasibility study. By providing the requisite space between Yandell and the I-10 trench, the deck program can be enhanced with elements that contribute to a successful public space: active uses, businesses, shade, water features, and a mix of upper-story uses like residential units.

Next, we will explore the placemaking and programming potential for the study area.



The revised framework that accommodates TxDOT Alternative I and serves as the blank slate for the urban design framework.

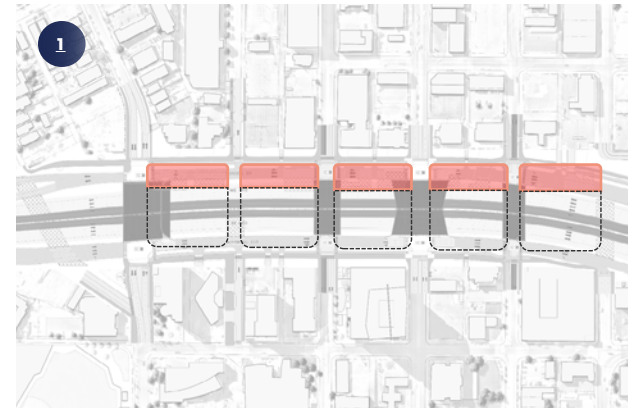
## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### The Anatomy of the Deck Plaza

The design of Interstate 10 as it traverses the city poses multiple challenges. To ensure the Deck Plaza is successful, several key elements need to be incorporated to create a safe, maintained, and active space:

- 1. Terra Firma:** The portion of the deck spanning the highway carries with it many complications. It has to physically support the uses above and adequately service the tunnel of the highway below with lighting, ventilation, and safety access. The weight and nature of the uses immediately over the highway are limited (smaller/lighter landscaping, lightweight structures, no standing pools of water, for example). However, if we are able to align the surface streets to the Deck's advantage, we can create solid ground or "terra firma" upon which buildings, shade trees, water features, etc can be supported more affordably and without impact on the I-10 trench.
- 2. Active Frontage:** Great civic open spaces are actively programmed with events, equipment, and landscape features that encourage social interaction and play. The best civic spaces are also surrounded by uses and population density that ensure they are active and safe throughout the day, week, and year. Multiple entryways to surrounding buildings, retail and restaurant spaces spilling onto sidewalks and plazas, and daily activities like residents coming and going, walking pets, commuting to work, and grabbing coffee are all critical to the plaza's success.
- 3. Friendly Streets:** Yandell and Wyoming must be easy to cross and properly calmed to encourage access to the Deck Plaza from the north and south. While they may technically be "TxDOT" roads, there is no reason they can't be designed to look like the best urban streets in El Paso. As critical entry points to Downtown, they should convey a sense of welcome.
- 4. Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity:** Once on the Deck, it should be easy to move from one urban space to the next. Adding a useful multi-use trail linking the various portions of the plan will improve east-west connections and serve as an important linkage to the Paso Del Norte trail system.

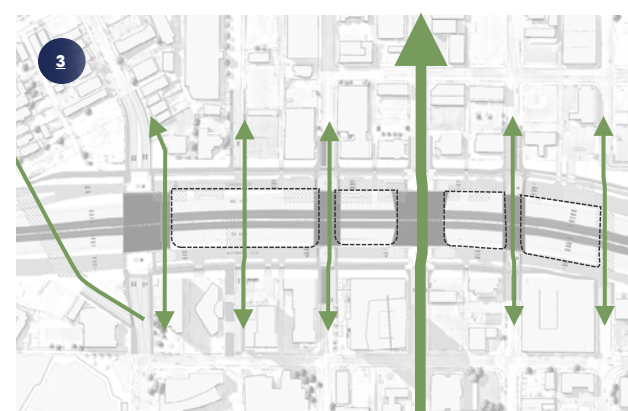
These four elements were evaluated against TxDOT's Alternative I. We then asked, "Can we make this more functional without affecting I-10's geometry?" The diagrams to the right illustrate our evaluation of how to improve the active frontage on the deck, tame the frontage roads, and accommodate a proper multi-use path where it has the most positive effect.



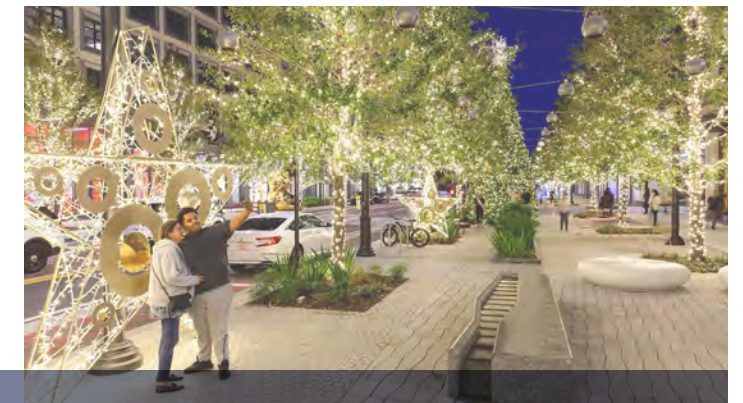
Terra Firma



Active Frontage



Friendly Streets



Bike and Pedestrian Connectivity

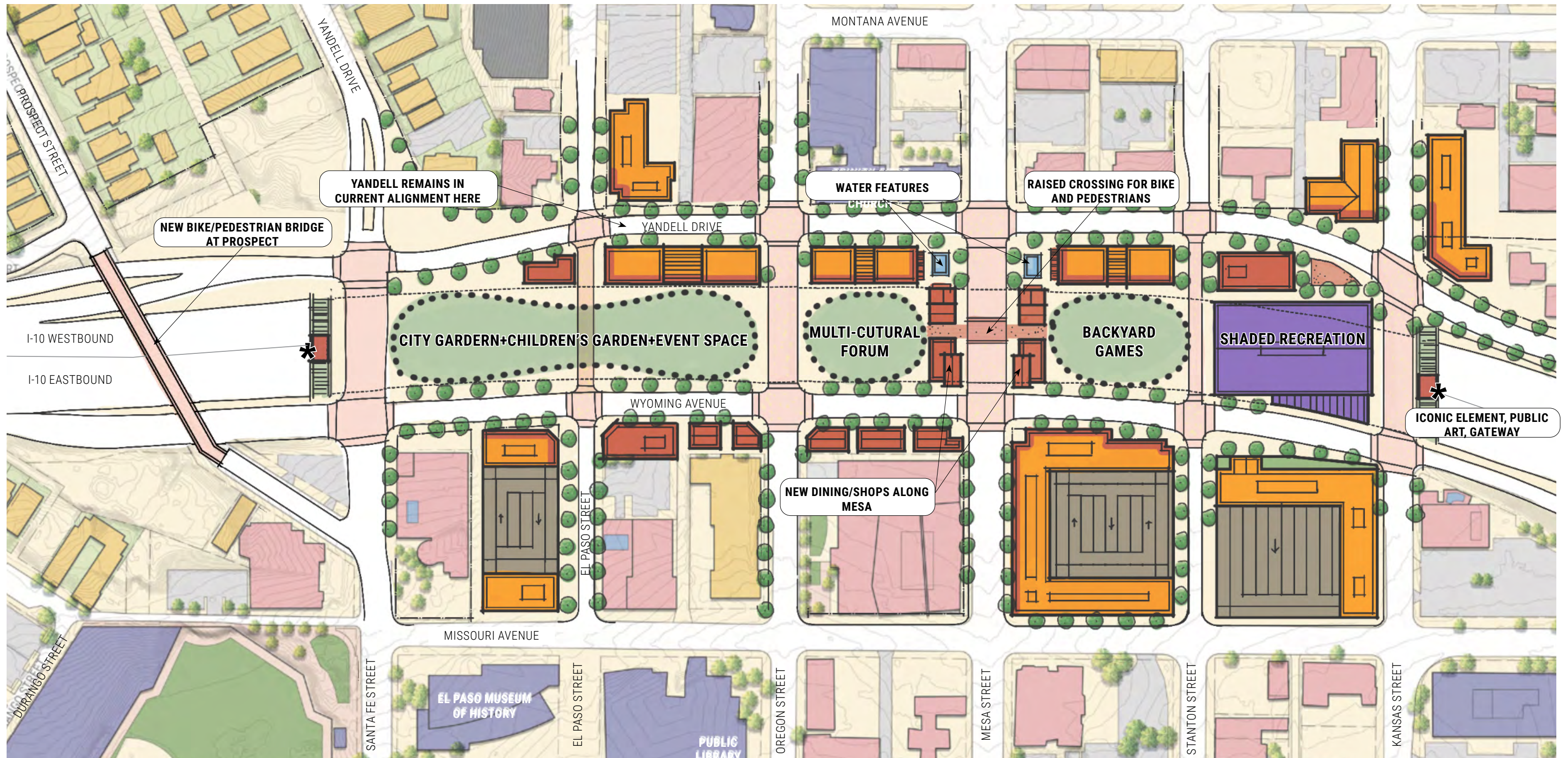


# A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

## Deck Plaza Framework

This brand new civic landscape with development that frames the plaza will utterly transform the scar formed by I-10. The proposed framework, depicted below, has five major components, each framed or formed by new multi-use buildings with active ground floors.

CITY GARDEN + CHILDREN'S GRADEN + EVENT SPACE	MULTI-CULTURAL FORUM	BACKYARD GAMES	SHADED RECREATION
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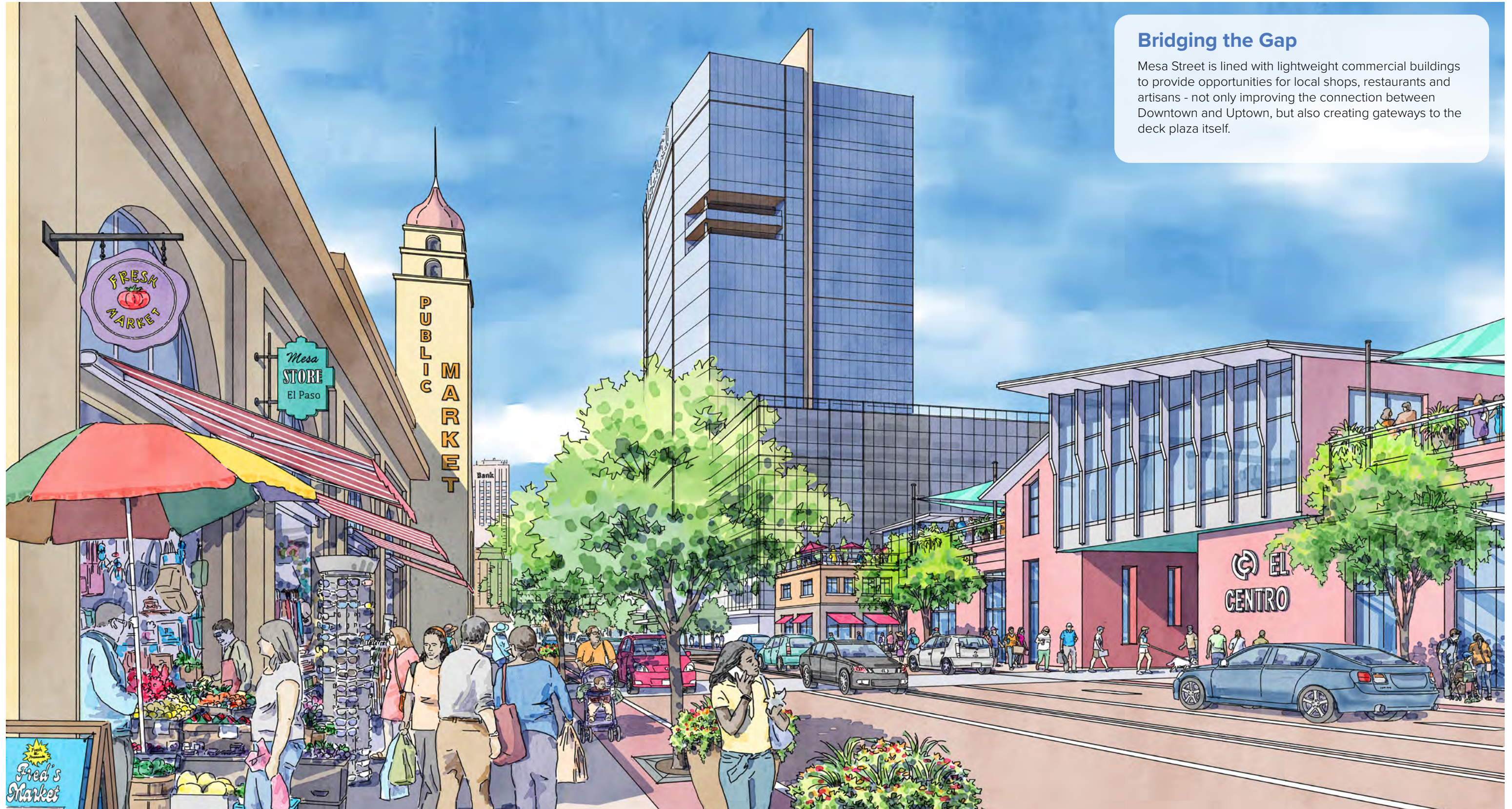
## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### A Highway Transformed

The I-10 trench is capped and replaced with dynamic activated spaces that are surrounded by new, occupied, vibrant, diverse housing and businesses.



## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK



**Bridging the Gap**

Mesa Street is lined with lightweight commercial buildings to provide opportunities for local shops, restaurants and artisans - not only improving the connection between Downtown and Uptown, but also creating gateways to the deck plaza itself.

# A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

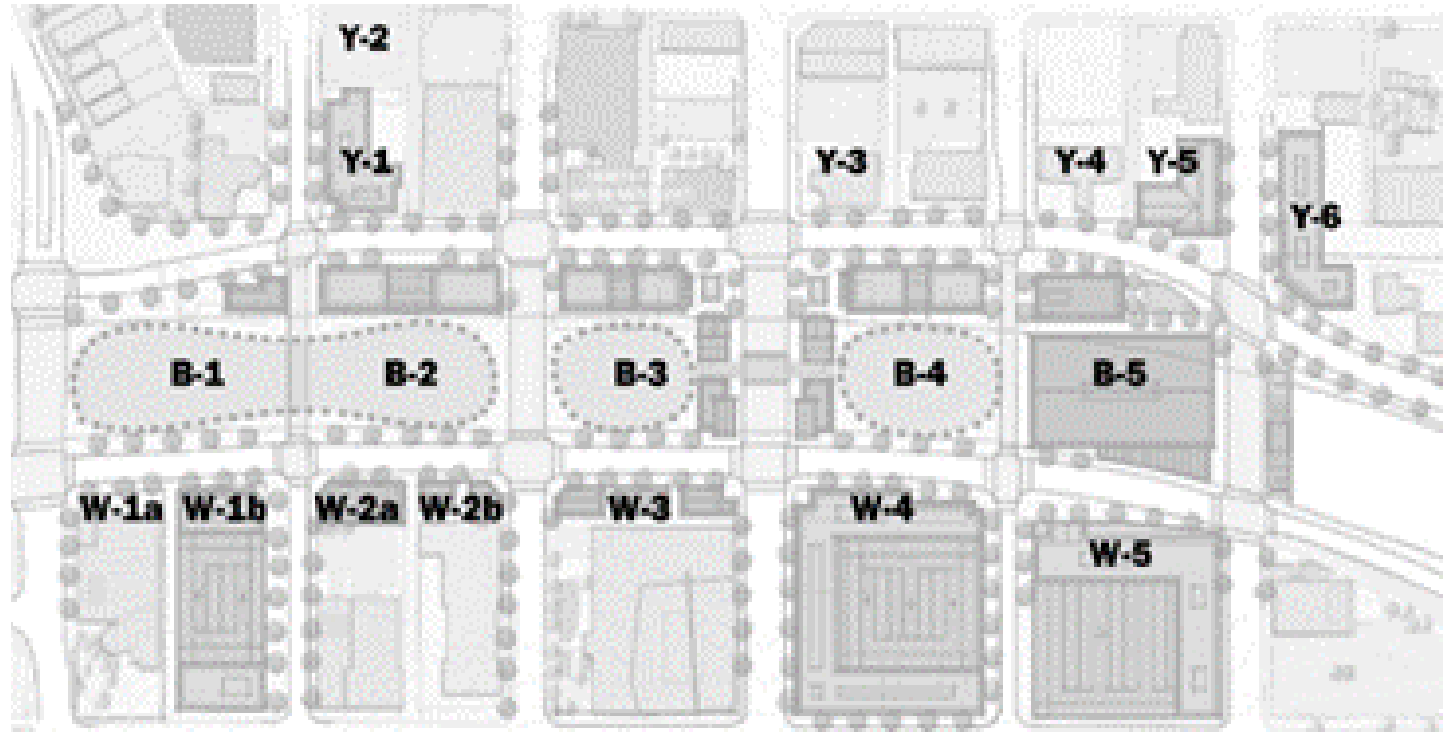
## Reaping the Full Benefits: Unlocking the Deck Plaza's Ability to Spur Related Development

### PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT

As demonstrated in the Downtown + Uptown Master Plan market study, a demographic shift toward more households without children has significantly increased housing market demand for mixed-use, walkable, highly amenitized places. This shift is further reinforced by growing interest from households, particularly single parents with children, to live in similar environments. The Deck Plaza's mix of uses, walkability, and range of amenities will make it a prime target for new Downtown housing. With careful planning, this demand can be extended to adjacent underutilized blocks of Uptown in ways that avoid displacing existing residents.

The Deck's role as a regional destination and multicultural center, combined with new housing, will support the activation of street levels in new buildings for a diverse mix of eateries, beer gardens, unique retail, arts, and similar lively uses that animate the Deck Plaza. In addition to housing, upper floors would be excellent locations for a hotel, innovation startups, nonprofits, community organizations, and similar uses.

### PARCEL PLAN



### SUMMARY TAB

	Retail / Commercial / Innovation	Residential GSF	Residential Units	Parking GSF	Parking Spaces	TOTAL GSF	TOTAL LAND ACRES
Deck Plaza	114,000	174,000	201	0	0	-	1.7
Yandell Dr North	44,320	343,920	388	118,240	316	-	2.5
Wyoming Ave South	135,000	370,150	435	528,000	1,509	-	4.9
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>293,320</b>	<b>888,070</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>646,240</b>	<b>1,825</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Garage Parking Provided	800		1,024				
	Public Parking		Resi Parking				
	Retail / Commercial / Innovation / Deck Plaza Park		1.25 ratio				

### DECK PLAZA TAB

		DECK PLAZA					SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL	
USES		B-1	B-2	B-3	B-4	B-5			
Total Block Area		53,900	55,000	52,800	59,800	63,400	284,900	284,900	6.5 Acres
TERRA FIRMA AREA		10,800	16,250	15,600	16,900	14,100	73,650	73,650	1.7 Acres
1ST Floor	Retail / Commercial / Active Use	4,400	13,650	14,750	16,050	7,800	56,650		
	Parking	0	0	0	0	0			
	Fieldhouse						39,000	39,000	
2ND Floor		4,400	15,600	14,100	15,400	7,800	57,300		
3RD - 5TH Floor	Residential	3,300	39,600	29,700	32,400	14,400			
	Road Unite		47	35	38	17			
6TH - 7TH Floor	Residential	0	13,200	19,800	21,600		174,000		
	Rest Units		16	23	25				
TOTAL GSF		12,100	82,050	78,350	85,450	30,000	287,950		
TOTAL UNITS			62	58	64	17	201		

### YANDELL DR NORTH TAB

		YANDELL DR NORTH					SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL	
USES		Y-1	Y-2	Y-3	Y-4	Y-5			
Parcel Area		21,000	15,600	22,560	30,600	17,000	106,760	106,760	2.5 Acres
1ST Floor	Retail / Commercial / Active Use	10,200	0	10,720	15,000	8,400	6,000	44,320	
	Residential GSF		10,000				4,000	10,000	
	Rest Units		12				4	12	
	Parking GSF	10,800	10,400	11,840	78,000	7,200	15,200	118,240	
	Parking Spaces	34	33	37	190	23	48	316	
2ND Floor									
2ND - 5TH Floor	Residential	65,200	20,400	59,520	60,000	43,200	52,800		
	Rest Units	77	24	70	71	51	62		
6TH - 7TH Floor	Residential			14,400	14,400			343,920	
	Rest Units			17	17			34	
TOTAL GSF		86,200	40,800	96,480	167,400	58,800	449,680		
TOTAL UNITS		77	24	87	88	51	62	388	

### WYOMING AVE SOUTH TAB

		WYOMING AVE SOUTH							SUB-TOTAL	TOTAL	
USES		W-1a	W-1b	W-2a	w-2b	W-3	W-4	W-5			
Parcel Area		2,500	34,800	16,800	4,800	9,600	78,000	67,600	214,100	214,100	4.9 Acres
1ST Floor	Retail / Commercial / Active Use	2,500	13,200	8,800	4,800	8,400	14,300	14,300	66,300		
	Parking GSF	-	108,000	0	0	-	189,000	231,000	528,000		
	Parking Spaces		309				540	660	1,509		
	Residential						27,200	8,400			
	Rest Units						32	10			
2ND Floor		2,500	6,600	16,800	4,800	9,600	14,300	14,300	68,900		
2ND - 5TH Floor	Residential		46,200	24,000			143,450	76,500			
	Rest Units		54	28			169	90			
6TH - 7TH Floor	Residential		19,800				18,000	6,600	370,150		
	Rest Units		23				21	8			
TOTAL GSF		5,000	183,800	49,000	9,600	18,000	379,050	342,700	997,750		
TOTAL UNITS			78	28	-	-	222	108	435		

## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### Multimodal Connections

The City's recent efforts to improve non-driving transportation options for El Pasoans are concentrated in Downtown. However, direct multimodal access to the Deck Plaza is heavily influenced by TxDOT's proposed designs for I-10's reconfiguration, which include adjustments to the mainline freeway lanes and the surface streets directly adjacent to I-10. Although Yandell Drive and Wyoming Avenue are proposed to have one less general travel lane each, current designs retain a series of U-turn lanes between one-way Yandell and Wyoming in advance of the Mesa Street and Santa Fe Street intersections. Additionally, the proposed design removes two existing street bridges over I-10, El Paso Street and Prospect Street, with the latter serving as the primary connection from downtown to the Sunset Heights neighborhood. These changes would further separate the downtown business district from the Uptown neighborhoods north of I-10, keeping El Paso's most dynamic area of potential redevelopment and investment divided into two parts and hindering its growth as a single urban core.

The Deck Plaza over I-10 offers a unique opportunity to address this division and create a central amenity and public space. This would facilitate crossing between Uptown and Downtown and serve as an anchor for investment in an area that has historically been a fringe of both areas. It also offers an opportunity to right-size the surface street network to accommodate a full range of travel options while respecting TxDOT's investment in the I-10 corridor and allowing freeway traffic to transition into the urban street network appropriately. This includes approaches such as:

- **Aligning Yandell Drive and Wyoming Avenue:** Preserve space on the freeway side of each block, keeping their spacing more in line with existing block dimensions.
- **Integrating Key Multimodal Components:** Incorporate elements of the Reimagine I-10 project, such as the Paso del Norte Trail, into the Deck Plaza and provide safer street crossings.
- **Using Local Streets:** Utilize streets like Kansas and Campbell to manage freeway traffic destined for

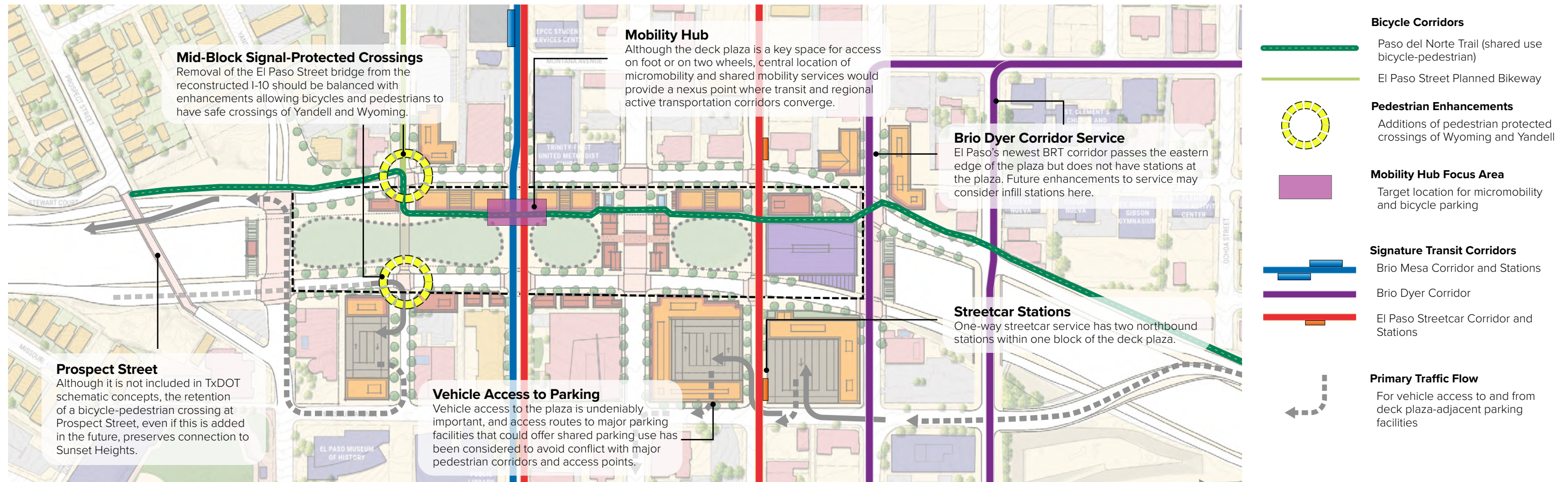
Uptown and Downtown, distributing traffic away from TxDOT's Mesa Street corridor and managing the need for turnaround lanes.

TxDOT's proposed designs for Wyoming and Yandell reduce their typical section to three lanes, offering shorter and safer pedestrian crossings. However, the closure of the El Paso Street bridge does not feature a protected pedestrian crossing at this location, and El Paso Street is a key focus for the city's bicycle network through the Sunset Heights and University of Texas at El Paso districts to the north. This concept addresses this with additional pedestrian hybrid beacon crossings at El Paso Street and, outside the primary Deck Plaza footprint, restoring the Prospect Street bridge as a bicycle/pedestrian connection.

The I-10 crossing is also a concentration of several transit services, including two of the City's Brio bus rapid transit corridors and its streetcar connecting downtown, the UTEP district, and Segundo Barrio to the south. These transit services are concentrated on Oregon Street (both directions of bus rapid transit and southbound streetcar), Stanton Street (northbound streetcar), and Kansas and Campbell

Streets (Dyer Brio corridor) with a Brio stop just north of I-10 at Rio Grande and Montana Avenues and streetcar stops throughout the larger district.

All of this underscores the importance of ensuring that a Deck Plaza is, first and foremost, walkable and accessible, allowing a broader range of multimodal options to expand easy access to it. This, in turn, prioritizes the space over I-10 for the public realm and civic amenities that would enrich downtown and unify both sides of I-10.



## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### Parking

- **Access to the Deck Plaza:** Ensuring access to the Deck Plaza is crucial for its success. Peak access periods for both special events and regular amenities will be during weekday evenings and weekends. El Paso has made significant progress in offering transportation alternatives. The Deck Plaza will be directly accessible by streetcar to the north along the Mesa/Oregon corridor and to the east along the Montana and Dyer corridors. These corridors provide access from existing and potential new park-and-ride facilities for peak demand periods.
- **Driving Access and Parking:** Despite the progress in transportation alternatives, driving access and the subsequent need for parking remain significant. As planning for the Deck Plaza proceeds, it will be essential to develop parking strategies for anticipated events and regular visitors. These strategies should focus on providing inexpensive, convenient parking.

This Feasibility Study suggests that exclusive parking for the Deck Plaza may not be necessary for several reasons:

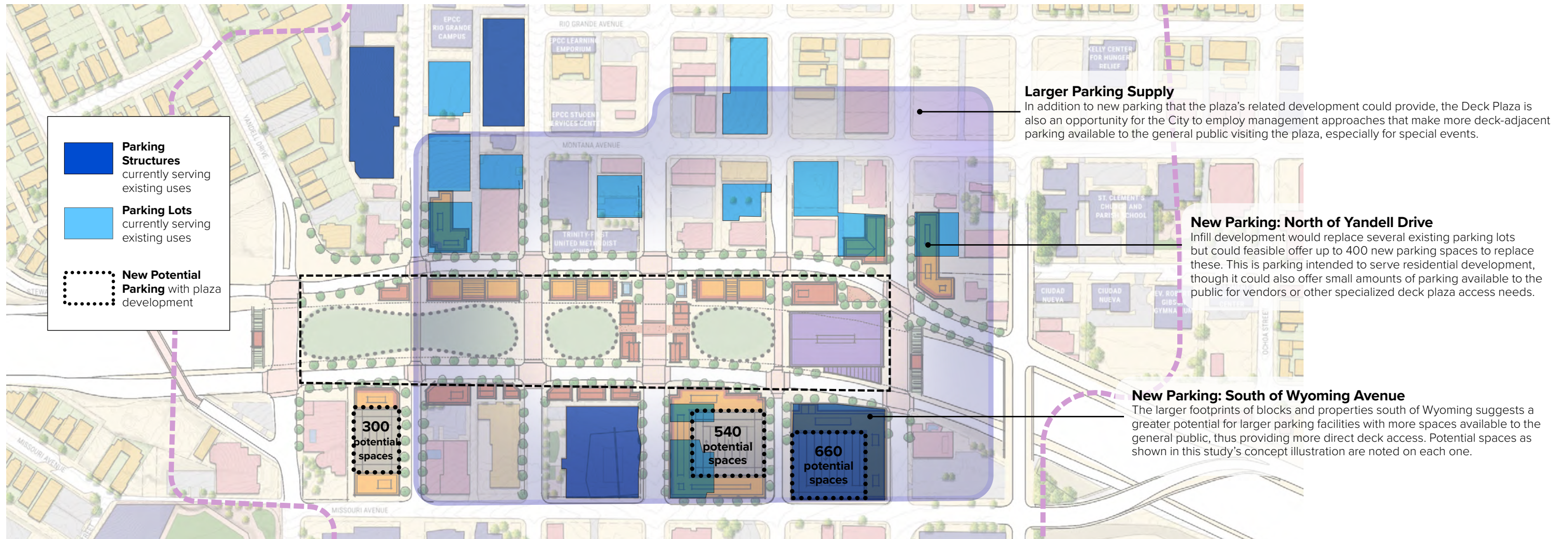
- **Cost of Structured Parking:** New structured parking is expensive to build and operate, with construction costs well above \$20,000 per space. Private operators in El Paso need to earn around \$240 per space per month to cover financing and maintenance/operations costs. This would require substantial subsidies to provide inexpensive parking for Deck Plaza visitors.
- **Surface Parking:** While less expensive, new surface parking would displace parkland on the Deck Plaza or redevelopment on nearby sites.
- **Demand Management:** Both structured and surface parking would primarily be needed for evening and weekend demand but would require full-time staff to manage, maintain, and operate the facilities.
- **Existing Parking Capacity:** Public and private parking

facilities within a five to 15-minute walk already offer significant excess capacity during peak demand periods. For example, the State-owned structure south of Wyoming and the WestStar parking structure provide more than 1,600 spaces within a short walk of the Deck Plaza and should have considerable available capacity during evenings and weekends.

demand can be met in conjunction with meeting the parking needs of these new projects. Shared parking facilities will continue to be a more cost-effective way to create and operate parking. The Deck Plaza management organization can collaborate with developers to secure access to this parking as needed.

To unlock access to this excess parking capacity, the management organization responsible for programming, operating, and maintaining the Deck Plaza should be empowered to negotiate and manage parking agreements with parking facility owners and operators. This organization should also monitor changing parking demand and work with nearby neighborhoods to ensure they are not negatively impacted by peak period demand.

- **Future Parking Needs:** As new development proceeds near the Deck Plaza, additional parking



# A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

## Programming the Plaza

Urban parks are essential for community engagement and environmental stewardship. When programming the El Paso Deck Plaza, we began with a comprehensive site analysis and needs assessment to align with community goals and priorities. During this phase, we considered site programming priorities as we developed our framework plans. We worked closely with the public and key stakeholders to gain a clear understanding of their goals and priorities.

It is important for visitors to the plaza to feel safe and comfortable at all times of the day, every day of the week, and throughout the year. The deck should feel welcoming whether it is hosting crowds of thousands for a big event or festival, or just a few people eating lunch on a weekday.

Programming within the plaza is more than just an organizational tool; it connects the park to its community, inviting diverse groups to engage in various activities. Programmed activities are crucial in creating a vibrant social atmosphere, providing spaces for play, exercise, and socialization. They also contribute to sustainability and resilience, helping to mitigate urban heat island effects and noise pollution, ultimately fostering a better-connected, more equitable El Paso.

The relationship between programming and funding is increasingly important, with events often generating revenue for park maintenance and development. The success of these programs depends on the compatibility and cooperation between different activities, ensuring a harmonious coexistence that maximizes the use of space and time.

Programmed spaces in the El Paso Deck Plaza are designed to be inviting, promoting gatherings and activities that encourage social media sharing, attracting both regular visitors and newcomers. While the natural beauty of the park draws people in, it is the programming that enriches their experience, making it truly unforgettable and fostering a lasting connection with the space.



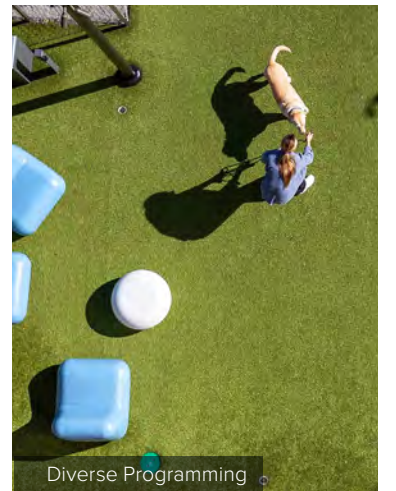
Community Connection



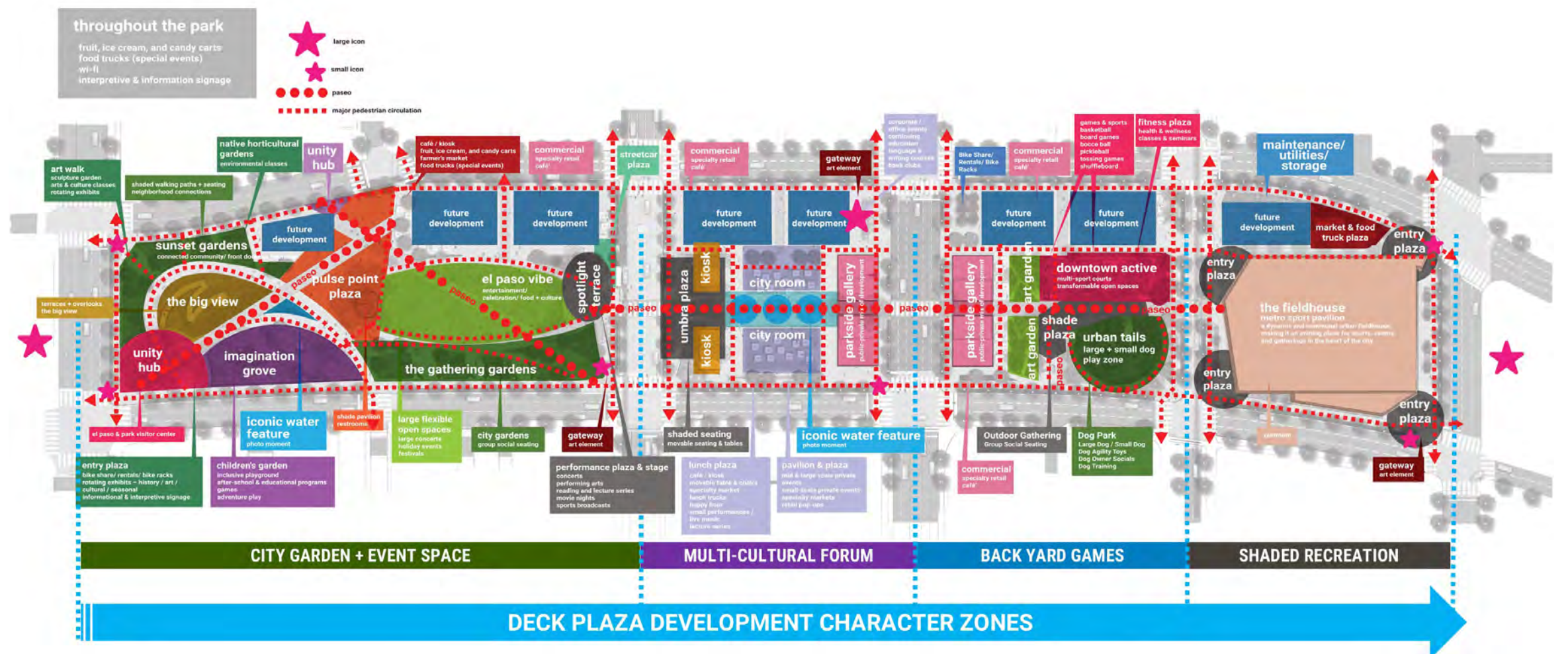
Healthy Living



Spaces for All



Diverse Programming



## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### City Garden + Children's Garden + Event Space

The City Garden + Event Space is a versatile and vibrant area designed for both large events and everyday enjoyment. This space will be both functional and beautiful, offering a variety of features for different interests and activities. Whether you're attending a large event or simply enjoying a leisurely stroll, the City Garden + Event Space has something for everyone, including.

- **Large Open "Lawn":** The expansive lawn area is designed to accommodate large-scale events such as concerts, festivals, and community gatherings. Its open layout ensures unobstructed views and free movement, making it an ideal setting for public events.
- **Native Gardens:** These gardens are a tribute to the region's natural heritage, featuring a collection of native plants from the Chihuahuan Desert. They serve not only as a visual delight but also as an educational resource, promoting biodiversity and ecological awareness.
- **The Big View Overlook:** The Overlook offers an elevated experience, both literally and figuratively. Visitors can ascend to the park's highest point, gaining a panoramic perspective of the area. This feature not only provides a unique vantage point but also symbolizes the park's connection to the broader landscape.
- **Children's Discovery Zone and Play Area:** This area is specifically designed to stimulate the curiosity and imagination of children. It is a safe and engaging environment where play and learning go hand in hand, fostering a lifelong appreciation for nature and the outdoors.
- **Iconic Water Feature:** The water feature stands as a centerpiece, drawing attention and providing a sensory experience through the sound and movement of water. It is a focal point that enhances the park's identity and ambiance.
- **Visitor Center, Restrooms, and Community Police Sub-Station:** The inclusion of facilities underscores the park's commitment to visitor comfort and convenience. These facilities are strategically located to serve the needs of guests during both everyday visits and special events.
- **Paseos:** These broad walkways are not just pathways but active spaces that contribute to the park's social

atmosphere. During market days, they can transform into vibrant avenues lined with vendors, embodying the park's role as a community hub.

- **Shade Trees and Gateway Shade Structures:** The thoughtful placement of shade trees and structures throughout the park provide relief from the climate, enhance the park's human scale, and contribute to the overall comfort and enjoyment of the space.



## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### Multi-Cultural Forum

The Multi-Cultural Forum Plaza at El Paso Deck Park stands as a beacon of community and diversity, seamlessly integrating the essence of urban life with the tranquility of nature. Its design is a reflection of the city's commitment to fostering a multicultural dialogue, offering a space where the arts, commerce, and leisure coalesce.

- **Civic Rooms:** Vibrant hubs for social interaction, offering a serene environment for morning coffee and casual meetings under the shade of umbrellas, with the park's lively atmosphere as a backdrop.
- **Centerpiece Pop Jet Fountains:** The heart of the plaza, these fountains are not only a visual spectacle but also an acoustic feature that provides a cooling effect and entertainment for children, enhancing the plaza's peaceful atmosphere.
- **Grand Stage:** As daylight fades, the plaza transforms into a dynamic venue for cultural events, concerts, and community gatherings, showcasing its versatility and commitment to cultural expression.

- **Umbr-Plaza and the Parkside Gallery:** Serve as harmonious meeting points, offering a serene retreat from the sun's intensity. Their location allows for thoughtful interplay of light and shadow, creating a welcoming atmosphere. As an iconic gateways to the Multi-Cultural Forum, they stand as symbols of unity, embracing diversity and fostering a sense of community among all who pass through its thresholds.
- **Landscape Terraces:** These terraces blend aesthetics with functionality, serving as comfortable seating and an innovative water management system that supports the park's greenery, reflecting the plaza's dedication to sustainability.



### Backyard Games

The Backyard Games area of El Paso Deck Park represents a blending urban life with the tranquility of home. With its inviting benches, chairs, and terraces, it is a space for residents to unwind and socialize. This functions both as a communal gathering spot and a platform for local artists, contributing to El Paso's vibrant cultural scene. Moreover, it promotes well-being through community-driven activities and games, emphasizing the importance of active lifestyles.

- **Multi-sport courts:** A versatile playing field for various sports, catering to diverse interests and promoting inclusivity providing a venue for exercise, relaxation, and socialization. They are also transformable open spaces, adapting to different events and activities, ensuring the area serves multiple purposes.
- **Art Terraces:** Situated as a transitional zone between the sports courts and the Dog Park, these terraces act as cultural epicenters that enhance the community's artistic experience and provide opportunities for creative exhibitions.

- **Seating Arrangements:** both permanent and temporary, provide rest areas and encourage social gatherings and offer a respite from the hustle and bustle of the more active zones of the Deck Plaza.
- **Gateway Shade Structure and Center Plaza:** These structures act as central meeting points within the park, offering protection from the sun and a comfortable environment for visitors. The thoughtful design promotes a play of light and shadow, enhancing the welcoming ambiance of the space.
- **Landscape Terraces:** These terraces blend aesthetics with functionality, serving as comfortable seating and an innovative water management system that supports the park's greenery, reflecting the plaza's dedication to sustainability.
- **Dog Park:** For dog owners looking to give their pets a taste of outdoor bliss. This urban dog park is an off-leash area where dogs can frolic freely. The amenities include shaded seating and play structures, making it a fantastic destination for both dogs and their owners. Gated areas for both small and large dogs.



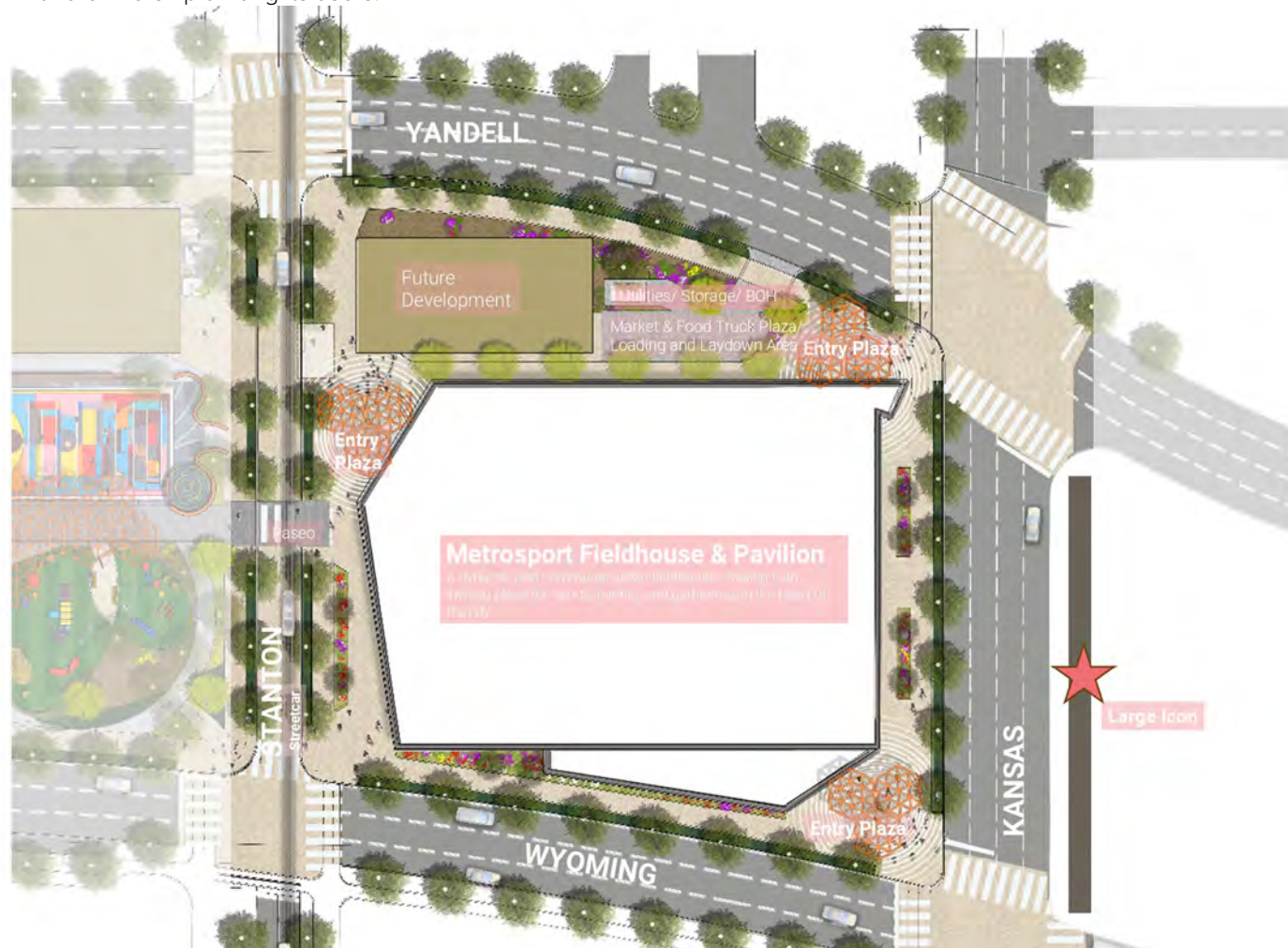
## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

### Shaded Recreation

The Shaded Recreation Area, featuring the Metro-sport Fieldhouse and Pavilion, is designed to promote community engagement and active lifestyles. This fieldhouse serves as a vibrant hub for sports, cultural events, and social gatherings, with the surrounding site crafted to be visually and physically inviting, fostering a sense of belonging and accessibility.

- **Metro-sport Fieldhouse and Pavilion:** Designed to be visually inviting, the fieldhouse is a hub for sports, cultural events, and social gatherings. The fieldhouse is a versatile structure capable of hosting a wide range of activities, from high-energy sports tournaments to serene yoga sessions, making it a cornerstone for health and wellness in the city. The pavilion extends this versatility by providing a sheltered area that complements the open spaces of the Deck Plaza. Here, the community can engage in casual recreation or simply enjoy the shade on a sunny day, further enhancing the area's recreational offerings. It will stand as a landmark in the city, fostering a sense of pride and ownership among its users.

- **The Market & Food Truck Plaza:** Serving operational needs of the fieldhouse while also doubling as a vibrant social space for culinary experiences. It will support the fieldhouse's operational demands with a dedicated loading and laydown area, ensuring smooth event management. Furthermore, it will transform into a lively gathering space where visitors will be able to enjoy a variety of culinary delights, mingle, and soak in the urban atmosphere before attending events inside the fieldhouse. This multifunctional design will address both the logistical demands of the fieldhouse and the social needs of the community.
- **Entry Plazas:** The entry plazas of the park are strategically designed to ensure high visibility and physical accessibility from every corner. These plazas serve as welcoming gateways. Their placement and design allow for easy navigation and access, inviting residents and visitors alike to enter and enjoy the Metro-sport Fieldhouse and Pavilion from multiple points.



### Benefits











The Downtown + Uptown Master Plan announced four core goals to guide planning, policy, and public investment for Downtown. Development attributed to the Deck Plaza will play a critical role in achieving these goals:

- **Promote Affordability with Expanded Housing Options:** The Deck Plaza's amenities will spur housing development. City policy calls for a certain percentage of this housing to be affordable. The Deck Plaza's parks and proximity to Uptown neighborhoods will also offer households with children, across the economic spectrum, an opportunity to live Downtown.
- **Create and Improve Public Areas with a Focus on Health and Safety:** The Deck Plaza is directly relevant to achieving this goal, addressing the challenges posed by I-10's current impact on the city center.
- **Increase Economic Activity and Talent Retention with a Vibrant Downtown:** El Paso's economic growth, like that of other regions across North America, will largely be driven by knowledge and innovation industries. As workforce growth slows and is increasingly fueled by immigration, competition for educated and creative talent is accelerating. Jobs and private investment will follow this talent. This workforce, whether locally educated or imported, is more likely to choose to live and work in a region anchored by a lively, mixed-use, walkable, and amenitized Downtown—qualities to which the Deck Plaza will significantly contribute. Knowledge and innovation jobs also have high job multipliers. For example, the City of Buffalo projects that each new knowledge industry job creates five additional jobs for people with a wide range of skills. Together with UTEP, other nearby educational institutions, and Downtown's existing amenities, the Deck Plaza will play a vital role in transforming Downtown into a powerful economic engine for the entire city and region.
- **Establish a Virtuous Cycle Between Public Transit and Development:** Development spurred by the Deck Plaza will be located within a few minutes' walk of public transit, as noted in the previous section on multimodal connections. While El Paso's investments in transit have not placed stations here due to the present-day barrier of I-10, the high-capacity transit services intersecting at the Deck Plaza offer potential for infill stations and augmented services in the vicinity of the Deck Plaza, which is adjacent to the downtown business and entertainment district and its concentration of jobs and visitor amenities.

In addition, the Deck Plaza's development concept will have direct economic and fiscal benefits for the City through its increased tax base and the addition of households to the urban core, increasing tax revenue for El Paso through added property tax intake and increased retail and service spending. The financial structure of this development is discussed in detail in a companion document to this report, but the following summary outlines key benefits:

- **Real Estate Market Analysis:** Redevelopment is likely not financially feasible without incentives and public support. The existing Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) districts of downtown are key tools, along with tax rebate programs and other incentives, to support this development.
- **Property Value Growth:** The Deck Plaza investment is likely to increase property values at a faster rate than current market trends suggest, with a premium of 5 to 10 percent above typical rates of property value growth once the Deck Plaza implementation begins. Existing tax abatements and TIRZ allocation commitments extend for several years after the 2027 Deck Plaza construction start date. Tax revenue is expected to increase substantially within ten years of construction, from a break-even point in the next five years without the Deck Plaza to approximately \$600,000 per year with the addition of the plaza. The 20-year difference is even more pronounced, with just over \$2 million per year forecast from TIRZ revenues within 20 years without the Deck Plaza and \$3.6 million per year with it. While investment requires time to pay dividends, it represents a significant increase in potential tax revenue, reducing funding burdens from other sources and bringing substantial community benefits.

## A CONCEPTUAL DECK PLAZA FRAMEWORK

GOAL	Key Deck Plaza features]
 <p>1. Create a compelling sense of place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multicultural food, music, performers</li> <li>The five “rooms” (recreation, urban living room, the square, public gathering space, city garden)</li> <li>Mixed-use buildings that frame the Deck Plaza and connect it to Uptown and Downtown to either side.</li> </ul>
 <p>2. Reconnect Uptown, Downtown...and UTEP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multicultural food, music, performers</li> <li>Programming inspired by the full spectrum of El Pasoans</li> </ul>
 <p>3. Promote an authentic cultural crossroads.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multicultural food, music, performers</li> <li>Programming inspired by the full spectrum of El Pasoans</li> </ul>
 <p>4. Tell El Paso's stories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public art</li> <li>Interpretive walks</li> </ul>
 <p>5. Celebrate high desert nature in the city.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A high desert garden in the city</li> </ul>
GOAL	Key Deck Plaza features]
 <p>6. Foster community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multicultural food, arts, music</li> <li>A public gather space</li> <li>Interactive public art that invites strangers to become friends</li> </ul>
 <p>7. Nurture cutting edge sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBD</li> </ul>
 <p>8. Meet unmet needs and aspirations for Uptown, Downtown, El Paso, and the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreation Pavilion</li> <li>Mixed-income housing</li> <li>A great new park</li> </ul>
 <p>9. Unlock Downtown's ability to serve as an engine for expanded economic opportunity across the El Paso and the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the above</li> </ul>
 <p>10. Assemble these building blocks into an achievable vision—a Deck Plaza that is worth building...and buildable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of the above</li> </ul>

# Implementation

## IMPLEMENTATION

Phase II of this planning study will include more detailed findings and recommendations related to funding capital expenditures required to build the Deck Plaza and subsequent operations and maintenance.

### INITIAL FINDINGS

#### FUNDING CAPITAL EXPENDITURES TO BUILD THE DECK PLAZA

#### PRECEDENTS

The City of El Paso tasked Stantec with exploring funding strategies for the I-10 Deck Plaza project, which carries an estimated total cost of roughly \$200 million.

Prior to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), no single dedicated funding source for highway removal or highway capping projects like the I-10 Deck Plaza existed. Very few interstate remediation projects existed prior to 2020. Examples that did take place include the Cap at Union Station in Columbus (1995-2004), the Embarcadero Freeway in San Francisco (1991-2005), and “The Big Dig” in Boston (1991-2007). These projects ranged in costs from \$10 million to more than \$20 billion and were financed through a combination of State and Federal appropriations, revenue bonds, and public-private partnerships. Projects like these advanced and became financially viable only when construction, reconstruction, or expansion of the existing interstate became necessary and unavoidable. For example, the Embarcadero freeway removal became feasible only after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake damaged the existing elevated freeway beyond repair, resulting in a reconstruction cost that was significantly more expensive than a boulevard conversion. The Cap at Union was financed primarily through private investment from local businesses spurred in response to Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) plans to widen I-670 which would further separate the Convention Center from the business district of Short North and result in substantial economic loss.

#### FUNDING STACK

Due to the size and scale of these types of complex infrastructure projects like the I-10 Deck Plaza, it can be difficult to identify one source of funding to complete the work. Often, these projects require phasing (completing one portion of the project at a time) and/or the accumulation and combination of several funding sources known as a “capital stack.” A capital stack is essential for any project where total cost exceeds the capacity of any single funding source. By combining multiple sources such as federal grants, state funds, private investments, and municipal bonds, a funding stack ensures sufficient capital, spreads financial risks, provides stability, leverages matching funds, and engages

various stakeholders. By creating a robust funding stack, project managers can ensure that large-scale infrastructure projects are adequately financed, managed efficiently, and completed successfully. This approach mitigates financial risks by spreading them across multiple stakeholders, maximizes available funding through leveraging and matching funds, and engages various stakeholders, including government agencies, private investors, and community organizations. This engagement leads to better oversight, increased transparency, and stronger community support, all of which contribute to the project’s overall success.

When building a capital stack, the project partners must take into consideration which agency is an ideal lead based on the capacity to manage the scope and scale of the project, the eligibility of the entity for available resources, and the ability to provide financial compliance and oversight as required. For these reasons, public infrastructure components are best led by the agency who ultimately owns, operates, and maintains the facility. Project elements such as buildings, public art, and landscaping can be more difficult to finance through publicly available grants programs and often require significant private equity unless specifically designed to address the needs of low-income communities. These elements of the project can often be led by private investors or quasi-government agencies (i.e. Economic Development Corporations, Business Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing Districts).

Agency partners who cannot contribute financially but offer in-kind contributions in the form of staff time and resources are also valuable to a capital stack. This non-monetary support can be considered as local cost-share contributions in several grant programs, reducing the local financial match requirement while also providing evidence of collaborating and community support. It is recommended that covenants in the form of Memorandum of Understanding or Memorandum of Agreements be in place for all project partners prior to incurring significant project costs.

#### FUNDING SOURCES

The I-10 Deck Plaza project is a transformative initiative aimed at enhancing connectivity, reducing congestion, and promoting economic development in El Paso. As noted above, the total estimated cost for this project is roughly \$200 million. It is unlikely that a project of this scale could be funded fully by U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) discretionary grants, though a \$450 million award was provided through a Neighborhood Equity and Access Grant to ODOT in 2023 to complete the \$1.7 billion I-5 Rose Quarter Project. It is highly likely that El Paso’s project will require phasing and/or a combination of funding sources to reach completion. Table 1 provides a compilation of identified

potential funding sources including funding type, program title, and a brief description. The fundings sources are inclusive of all project components, but specifically address the financial needs of constructing the deck structure.

Additional resources for specific project elements including park amenities, mobility improvements, and buildings, can be found in **Attachment A: I-10 Deck Plaza Funding Matrix**.

Table 1: I-10 Deck Plaza Funding Sources

FUNDING TYPE	PROGRAM TITLE	FUNDING DESCRIPTION
FEDERAL LOAN	Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)	The TIFIA program provides Federal credit assistance in the form of direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit to finance surface transportation projects of national and regional significance.
FEDERAL LOAN	Section 129 Loan	Section 129 of Title 23 allows Federal participation in a state loan to support projects with dedicated revenue stream including tolls, excise taxes, sales taxes, real property taxes, motor vehicle taxes, incremental property taxes, or other beneficiary fees.
BOND	Private Activity Bonds (PABs)	PABs are debt instruments authorized by the Secretary of Transportation and issued by a conduit issuer on behalf of a private entity for highway and freight transfer projects, allowing a private project sponsor to benefit from the lower financing costs of tax-exempt municipal bonds.
BOND	General Obligation Bond (GO Bond)	A GO Bond is a type of municipal bond issued by state or local governments to raise funds for public projects such as infrastructure improvements, schools, parks, or other community developments. These bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuing government, meaning that the government pledges its taxing power to repay bondholders, regardless of the specific project funded by the bond.
FEDERAL GRANT	Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (RCP)	It is the first-ever Federal program dedicated to reconnecting communities that were previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure. Funding supports planning grants and capital construction grants, as well as technical assistance, to restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities.
FEDERAL GRANT	Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)	RAISE Discretionary Grant program provides a unique opportunity for USDOT to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Previously known as the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) and Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants, Congress has dedicated nearly \$14.3 billion for fifteen rounds of National Infrastructure Investments to fund projects that have a significant local or regional impact.

# IMPLEMENTATION

Table 1: I-10 Deck Plaza Funding Sources

FUNDING TYPE	PROGRAM TITLE	FUNDING DESCRIPTION
STATE GRANT	Texas Mobility Fund	The Texas Mobility Fund is administered by the Texas Transportation Commission (the commission) as a revolving fund to provide a method of financing for the construction, reconstruction, acquisition, and expansion of state highways, including costs of any necessary design and costs of acquisition of rights-of-way, as determined by the commission in accordance with standards and procedures established by law.
DEVELOPMENT FINANCING	Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	TIF is a public financing method that local governments use to encourage economic development and redevelopment in specific areas. When a TIF district is created, the current property tax revenue is set as a baseline. As property values increase due to new development, the additional tax revenue generated from the increased property values, known as the "increment," is used to fund development projects within the district.
DEVELOPMENT FINANCING	Business Improvement District (BID) / Community Improvement District (CID)	A BID or CID is a defined area within which businesses or property owners pay an additional tax or fee to fund projects and services that enhance the local business environment or community.

**Important Note:** In 2022, the I-10 Deck Plaza was awarded \$900,000 from the USDOT RAISE grant. Projects that are RAISE recipients and seek further funding through USDOT's discretionary grants program are prioritized for additional RAISE, RCP, and NAE awards. The NEA Program is now closed as all NAE funds were expended during the FY23 grant cycle.

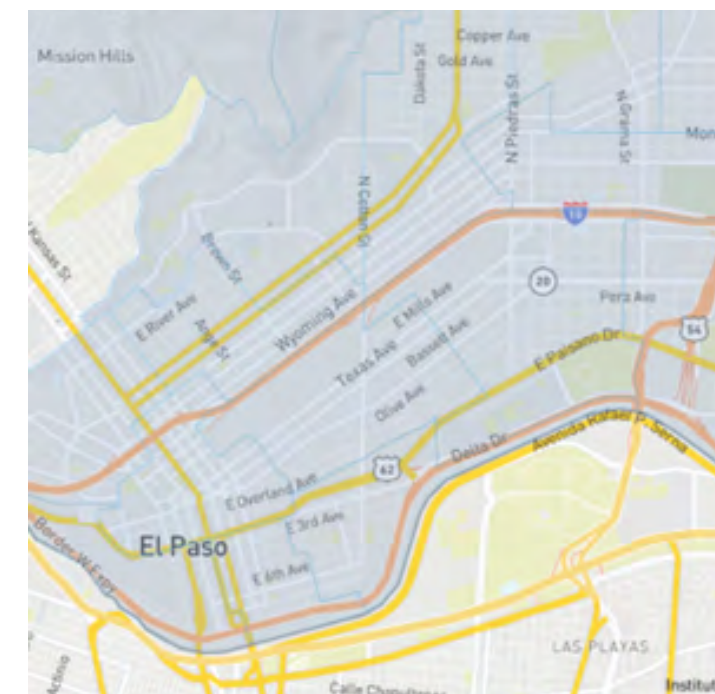
Though this should naturally benefit the I-10 Deck Plaza project in future applications, RCP legislation specifies that funds cannot be used for a project for additional through travel lanes for single-occupant passenger vehicles [§ 60501; 23 U.S.C. 177(h)(2)]. The primary goal of this program is to

reduce barriers and enhance connectivity, which typically involves removing or modifying existing infrastructure rather than expanding it. This focus inherently deprioritizes projects that would add traffic lanes, as such expansions are generally seen as counterproductive to the aim of reconnecting communities and reducing environmental and social impacts. Though the Deck Plaza itself does not include additional single occupancy vehicle travel lanes, the I-10 Widening initiative does. Since I-10 Widening is what appears to have necessitated the Deck Plaza, it has precluded the project from RCN.

**Consultation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI), and the Build America Bureau is recommended to determine (1) if I-10 Widening's inclusion of bus only travel lanes meets the legislative requirements for RCP and/or (2) what modifications would be necessary to the I-10 Widening Project to make the Deck Plaza eligible for RCP funding.**

### JUSTICE 40

Established by President Biden through Executive Order 14008, "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad," the Justice 40 initiative focuses on investments in areas such as clean energy, energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, workforce development, remediation of legacy pollution, and clean water infrastructure. Under the initiative, a minimum of 40 percent of all federal investments must be directed at disadvantaged communities as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST). The primary goal is to address decades of underinvestment in marginalized communities and reduce environmental and economic disparities. As shown in Figure 1, the entire I-10 Deck Plaza project area is located in census tracts that are shaded blue, indicating they qualify as disadvantaged under Justice 40. This is critical to the project's success under the current administration as most USDOT discretionary grant programs have been awarded to disadvantaged census tracts at a rate that exceeds the 40% minimum. This is of particular significance in the RCN program which awarded 99 percent of funds to disadvantaged communities in FY23.



### RECOMMENDATION

**1. Project Coordination:** Highway widening and capping can take place concurrently, offering several benefits such as increased efficiency, cost savings, and comprehensive urban planning. By executing the coordination of the I-10 Widening Project led by TxDOT and the I-10 Deck Plaza led by the City of El Paso, overall construction time can be reduced, minimizing disruptions to traffic and local communities. Additionally, coordinating the projects can lead to cost savings through shared resources, labor, and equipment. Addressing both widening and capping simultaneously could allow for a more holistic approach to urban planning, potentially improving connectivity and urban space utilization. However, this approach also presents challenges, including increased complexity in planning and execution, difficulties in securing sufficient funding, and the need for extensive stakeholder coordination. Ultimately, the decision to undertake both projects concurrently depends on the reasonableness of the ability to align project readiness and construction timelines, in addition to the capacity of available resources, stakeholder support, and the overall goals of the infrastructure improvements. If combined, the projects could benefit from a [Planning and Environmental Linkages \(PEL\) Study](#) approach that would streamline environmental, economic, and community engagement components, avoiding duplicate efforts across both projects.

**2. Consider Project Phasing:** Project phasing is beneficial for large infrastructure projects like the I-10 Deck Plaza. By breaking the project into smaller phases, it becomes easier to manage financial commitments at each stage, possibly allowing for more grant opportunities for smaller award amounts and better loan structuring. Phasing also allows ongoing operations to continue with minimal disruption, which is important for projects where it's crucial to maintain daily activities, such as in downtowns, near hospitals, or at airports. Additionally, dividing a project into phases helps in identifying and mitigating risks early; if issues arise in one phase, they can be addressed without affecting the entire project. This approach also allows for adjustments based on market conditions, stakeholder feedback, and unforeseen challenges, leading to more efficient and successful project completion. The project team provided cost estimates representing four project segments that fall within two phases:

- Phase 1:** Sante Fe to Oregon Streets and Oregon to Mesa Streets
- Phase 2:** Mesa to Santos Streets and Santo to Kansas Streets

## IMPLEMENTATION

### 3. Ensure that funding projections include project risks:

Historically, highway remediation projects have taken several years to finish. One of the main risks to successful completion is the potential for costs to escalate excessively and for construction delays to lead to budget overruns and funding shortfalls. The substantial amount of capital needed for these projects can also strain political and public support. Since project implementation can span multiple election cycles, resources are vulnerable to shifts in political priorities, which could jeopardize the effort. If possible, secure legal protections for dedicated funding sources through legislative action.

**4. Join the Reconnecting Communities Institute:** The RCI is a new initiative led by USDOT and launched July 3, 2024, to provide technical assistance and training to entities, including states, local and tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations. It focuses on communities economically disadvantaged by transportation infrastructure. The RCI will offer resources for project development, equitable community building, and innovative strategies to overcome barriers created by existing transportation facilities. Grant writing clinics and office hours are available beginning July 2024.

**5. Engage the Build America Bureau:** Engaging with the USDOT Build America Bureau offers significant benefits for those involved in major infrastructure projects in the United States. The Bureau manages funding programs that provide crucial financial support for transportation, water infrastructure, and public works projects. Beyond funding, they offer valuable expertise and guidance on project planning, financing strategies, and regulatory requirements. By connecting with the Bureau, stakeholders can also access a network of industry experts, government agencies, and potential investors, fostering partnerships that enhance project feasibility and success. Additionally, the Bureau's role in advocating for supportive infrastructure policies and providing access to resources like data and research reports further enriches opportunities for informed decision-making and project excellence.

### OPERATING AND MAINTAINING THE DECK PLAZA

Phase II of this planning study will include more detailed findings and recommendations for operations and maintenance.

The Deck Plaza Foundation will maintain and operate the Deck.

The Deck Plaza Foundation will manage and operate the Plaza Deck, working closely with the City. The Foundation will collaborate with partners across El Paso and the region to program the Deck Plaza; recruit a multicultural mix of food, drink, entertainment, art and other forms of

cultural expression across the Deck Plaza; and ultimately be responsible for ensuring that Deck Plaza programming, operations, and maintenance are furthering the mission, vision and goals. The Foundation may, as appropriate, contract with specific operators for the High Dessert Garden, Recreation Pavilion, and other facilities that would benefit from specialized operators.

The Foundation will also work with Sun Metro, local parking facilities owners and operators, and the City to ensure that the Deck Plaza and the events it hosts are accessible to all El Pasoans.

While determining the costs and corresponding revenues for maintenance and operations will be projected during Phase II of this planning effort, note this plan recommends that a significant portion of the tax revenues generated by roughly 1.2 million SF of mixed-use development projected for the Deck Plaza or on vacant or under-utilized sites whose redevelopment will be attributable to the Deck Plaza should be used to fund operating and maintenance costs. This strategy is likely to generate ten to twenty million dollars (2025 \$s) over the next two decades. This development reflects the market demand identified in 2023 El Paso Downtown + Uptown Plan.

### Additional preliminary findings include:

Key considerations for governance include:

- Expertise and capacity to operate the park
- Accountability to the public and stakeholders
- Flexibility to evolve and adapt as the project progresses

Critical questions to consider when determining a governance structure include:

- What is legally permissible and politically acceptable?
- What is each stakeholder's appetite for risk? What is the strength and commitment of their leadership?

In parallel with governance, successful and sustainable park operations depend on a diverse range of funding sources, which will also guide the optimal governance strategy.

Sources of operating and capital revenue include:

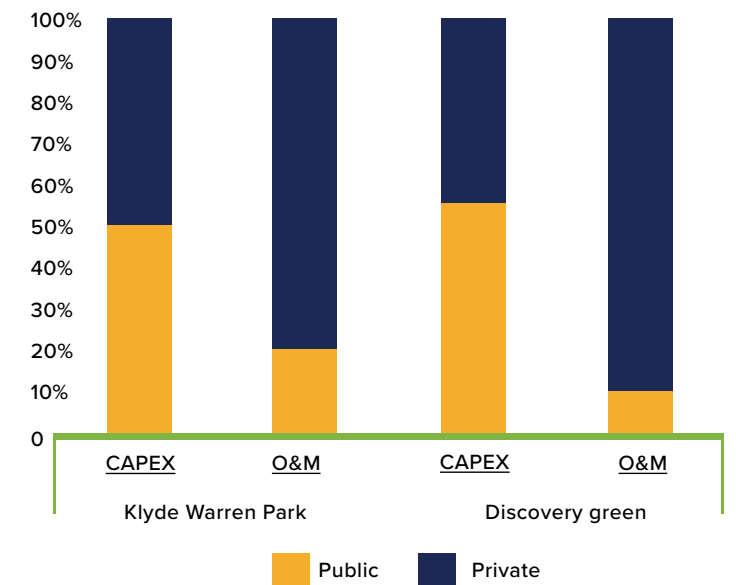
- **Public Funding:** Parks increasingly require a foundation of public funding, particularly in their early operational years as other revenue streams stabilize. Common public funding sources include general fund or bond contributions, and dedicated tax streams.
- **Contributed Income:** This includes donations from park stakeholders and users, such as philanthropic contributions and corporate sponsorships.

- **Value Capture:** As noted above, like many parks the Deck Plaza will generate substantial value for the surrounding area, which can be quantified by real estate premiums (e.g., increased property values and accelerated development), new visitors and tourism, and increased retail spending. This value can sometimes be leveraged to offset the costs of park investments and/or operations.
- **Earned Income (for operations only):** Earned income from park programming and activities provides a flexible revenue stream for park operators. This revenue can help create a park brand and sustain operating budgets.

Examining two other parks in Texas—Klyde Warren Park in Dallas and Discovery Green in Houston—reveals the role of public-private partnerships. Klyde Warren Park is owned by the City of Dallas but operated and managed privately by the Woodall Rodgers Park Foundation, a non-profit organization. Discovery Green operates through a partnership between the City of Houston, the Houston First Corporation, and the Discovery Green Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

At both parks, capital expenses were divided relatively equally between public and private sources, while operational costs are largely funded through private sources. This includes a combination of non-profit membership dues, monetization of park revenues through rentals and programming, and fundraising efforts.

### Funding Sources by Type



Capex: Initial capital expenditures to build the Deck Plaza  
O&M: Operating and maintaining the Deck Plaza

**PHASE I**

**CITY GARDEN + EVENT SPACE**

SANTE FE' TO OREGON STREETS - DECK PARK	SQUARE FOOTAGE <b>147,285 SF</b>
PARK AMENITIES	\$6,585,970.00
SITE PREP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT / NOT ON STRUCTURE	\$220,000.00
DECK STRUCTURE	\$35,903,124.50
MOBILTY IMPROVEMENTS	\$1,565,553.33
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2024</b>	<b>\$64,198,239.36</b>
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$69,976,080.90</b>

**MULTI-CULTURAL FORUM**

OREGON TO MESA STREETS - DECK PARK	SQUARE FOOTAGE <b>70,300 SF</b>
PARK AMENITIES	\$2,904,532.22
SITE PREP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT / NOT ON STRUCTURE	\$300,000.00
BUILDINGS ON STRUCTURE / OVER CANTILEVER DECK	\$3,100,000.00
DECK STRUCTURE	\$15,118,432.50
MOBILTY IMPROVEMENTS	\$897,383.33
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2024</b>	<b>\$32,448,736.12</b>
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$35,369,122.37</b>
<b>PHASE I TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$105,345,203.27</b>

**PHASE II**

**BACKYARD GAMES**

MESA TO STANTON STREETS - DECK PARK	SQUARE FOOTAGE <b>76,743 SF</b>
PARK AMENITIES	\$3,956,758.89
SITE PREP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT / NOT ON STRUCTURE	\$300,000.00
BUILDINGS ON STRUCTURE / OVER CANTILEVER DECK	\$3,100,000.00
DECK STRUCTURE	\$16,644,252.50
MOBILTY IMPROVEMENTS	\$921,403.33
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2024</b>	<b>\$36,252,247.36</b>
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$39,514,949.62</b>

**SHADED RECREATION**

STANTON TO KANSAS STREETS - DECK PARK	SQUARE FOOTAGE <b>77,800 SF</b>
PARK AMENITIES	\$2,036,966.67
SITE PREP FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT / NOT ON STRUCTURE	\$200,000.00
BUILDINGS ON STRUCTURE / OVER CANTILEVER DECK	\$19,500,000.00
DECK STRUCTURE	\$16,493,612.75
MOBILTY IMPROVEMENTS	\$963,383.33
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2024</b>	<b>\$56,890,318.02</b>
<b>TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$62,010,446.64</b>
<b>PHASE II TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$101,525,396.26</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL WITH FEES, PERMITS, DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION CONTIGENCIES // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$206,870,599.53</b>
<b>COST PER ACRE (+/- 8.5 ACRES TOTAL) // YEAR 2027</b>	<b>\$24,337,717.59</b>



**Phase 2 Report: Implementation Memorandum of the El Paso Deck Plaza Project builds on the foundational work of Phase 1, advancing the project with 30% schematic designs for the full Deck Plaza concept. This phase also includes a comprehensive funding and implementation strategy, a detailed economic assessment, and essential environmental recommendations. Together, the Phase 1 and Phase 2 reports form a cohesive research feasibility study, providing in-depth insights into the project's development and its potential impact on the community.**

