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The following are summary minutes for the meeting of the **City of Las Cruces Downtown Parking Committee** on March 12, 2020 at 4:00 pm at City Hall, 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, New Mexico in the Las Cruces Conference Room 1158. The meeting was held

**Members Present:**

- Kasandra Gandara, District 1
- Ceara Angel, Las Cruces Resident
- George Pearson, Member-at-Large
- Michael White, Business Member
- Heather Pollard, Adjacent Neighborhood Representative
- Tiffany Thompson, Farmers Market Representative

**Members Absent:**

**Others Present:**

- John Jarrard, Huitt-Zollars
- Jose Zelaya, Huitt-Zollars
- Mallory Baker, Walker Consultants

**City Staff Present:**

- Mandy Guss, Business Development Administrator
- Sreedevi Mohanraj, Architect, Public Works
- Tony Trevino, Engineering Administrator
- Eric Martin, Facilities Management Administrator

**1. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at approximately 4:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

- a. February 13, 2020:** Board Member Pearson mentioned there is a missing Board Member. Motion by Board Member White, seconded by Board Member Thompson. Motion passes.

**3. Action Item: None**

**4. Discussion Items:**

- a. Parking Garage Input:** Mr. Trevino introduced Huitt-Zollars. A contract has come to fruition from the capital outlay, \$2 million. Started with a parking garage study Las Cruces/Griggs area. A feasibility study to not only include the parking but adding municipal court or retail or residential.

Mr. Jarrard gave a briefing on the history of the parking structure and the parking study and stated the full study will be completed the first part of May. Walker Consultants has done studies of the Downtown in 2008, updated in

1 2012, 2014, now preparing another study.

2  
3 Ms. Baker gave a briefing on the various studies through the years. This  
4 scope of work included evaluating currently publically available parking  
5 inventory and parking demands at various times, comparing to previous  
6 studies. Next they would be projecting parking needs based on existing  
7 and future demand, and possible parking structure. Approximately 1,500-  
8 1,600 off-street public parking spaces Downtown, 419 on-street spaces 739  
9 excluding the civic area to the north (south of Mountain Avenue), 351 total  
10 public on-street spaces during Farmer's Market. Occupancy Thursday  
11 February 20, 2020 bi-hourly counts 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., good  
12 distribution of activity. Weekday is primarily concentrated on the northern  
13 portion of the site, north of Mountain Avenue. Peak at 10:00 was 58% of  
14 the spaces on an aggregate basis were full. 62% occupied in the off-street  
15 areas. Weekend Saturday February 29, 2020 during Farmer's Market,  
16 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 8:00 p.m. Peak occurred at 12:00 p.m.  
17 at 52%. If new structure is paid parking, it is a managerial and operational  
18 tool and not a way to just generate revenue. Implementing paid parking  
19 should be to improve the health of the parking system by increasing  
20 turnover, improving demand distribution, to serve more people. Pricing tiers  
21 should coincide with typical parking behaviors. On-street should become  
22 paid parking first because it is the highest demand area for parking. Next  
23 step is future demand projections from the City and get a sense of what the  
24 parking needs are based on known Developments and aspirational  
25 development.

26  
27 Board Member Pearson asked if motorcycle parking would be in the study.  
28 Ms. Baker stated it was not specifically looked at. Board Member Pearson  
29 asked if adding bicycle parking would offset the need for vehicle parking.  
30 Ms. Baker stated it would be transportation demand management solution.  
31 She stated there are not clear studies, but good data on improvements to  
32 bicycle infrastructure generally. Board Member White stated in the early  
33 2000's thee were approximately 1,340 surplus parking spaces, and today  
34 there are about 400 surplus parking spaces. How soon does that require a  
35 parking garage? Ms. Baker stated they have a fairly health system based  
36 on the existing demands, demand distribution is a challenge and something  
37 the City should act on in the near future. The report looks at the next two  
38 years what will development look like and based on those projections then  
39 look at a parking structure. Ms. Baker stated that between 2008 and 2012  
40 there was a large jump down, but not so between 2012 and 2020. This is  
41 not just an inventory issue, also a demand distribution and management  
42 issue. Mr. Jarrard asked about the counts in February of the Farmer's  
43 Market and that is one of the slowest months of the year. Ms. Thompson  
44 stated late summer is the peak but summer would be a high times and that  
45 number is doubled from the February number.

46  
47 Mr. Zelaya stated only a couple structures work for narrow lots. For a  
48 parking structure to work a width of 120 feet is ideal. One deign had three

1 levels for about 152 cars, about 15,000 square feet of retail. Another design  
2 ramp on the outside, store about 104 cars in two stories, 280 feet x 114 feet  
3 more possibility for retail ground level. Mr. Jarrard stated until the studies  
4 are done they will not know what type of parking is really needed. A four  
5 story building is a game changer in terms of cost, structure, analysis. Lot 3  
6 has approximately 100 spaces. Downtown has a height restriction of 55  
7 feet and that does apply to a parking structure as well. It probably can go  
8 four or five stories depending on how tall the stories are. Board Member  
9 Pearson asked if going underground to get four stories would be possible.  
10 It is very expensive to do that, including extra ventilation. Board Member  
11 Thompson stated the El Paso Electric lot is still under private lease and that  
12 was verified. It was asked what it would take to break that lease and the  
13 response was it cannot be broken. Mr. Jarrard stated that lot is really the  
14 right size.

15  
16 Board Member Thompson stated when they started talking about parking  
17 lots approximately 10 years ago, do not build these ugly parking lots in our  
18 downtown. Because the State Legislature has given the money some feel  
19 it might be premature, but here it is and we have to spend it within a certain  
20 period of time. To alleviate the concerns of the citizens, we felt once it was  
21 explained to them there would be retail on the ground floor, that really did  
22 help to alleviate a lot of the concerns. The question was asked if Huitt-  
23 Zollars had done a lot of parking lots with retail. Mr. Jarrard stated they have  
24 done some, Walker has done a lot. They have the right experience. He  
25 agrees there needs to be something on the ground floor other than just  
26 parking. Board Member Thompson brought up the children's museum.  
27 Board Member White stated if they cannot at least double the number of  
28 spaces taking away on that lot it is not worth it. Suggested another kind of  
29 design or talking about a five-story building. Taking Lots 3 and 4 might be  
30 needed. It was suggested to negotiate with the Downtown Partners to get  
31 the El Paso lot back. Ms. Basnyat suggested a ramp between Lots 3 and  
32 4. Ms. Baker was asked how many more spaces were needed for the  
33 parking structure and she needs more future demand modeling. But she  
34 did mention a recent parking garage that had one level underground and  
35 the ground level a park. Mr. Trevino suggested that seeing everything and  
36 pricing would be good. He stated they have and estimated \$20 million for  
37 the project, and did include retail, five stores, one down, four up, 400 parking  
38 stalls. Mr. Jarrard stated it is about \$26,000 per stall. The municipal court  
39 project also needs to be factored into the plans, adjacent, connected, at the  
40 same time as the parking garage. Mr Trevino mentioned 150,000 square  
41 foot for 400 parking spaces with 15,000 square foot commercial. Board  
42 Member Pearson asked about Griggs and Church and it was explained that  
43 that is going to be looked at. More discussion concerning the leased El  
44 Paso Electric lot at Griggs and Water, buying out the lease. Once the size  
45 parking structure is the most feasible and most appropriate, then they can  
46 look at other sites. The question was asked if the they had the money, etc  
47 were going to build a 300 car structure, how long would it take to draw up  
48 the plans. Mr. Jarrard stated probably six to eight months for plans, year

1 and a half for build out.

2  
3 Mr. Zelaya asked what else they want this parking structure to do. What to  
4 achieve for the community? Mr. Jarrad stated the 31st of the month doing  
5 the public meeting and then have more comprehensive study by then,  
6 parking requirements and some more detailed drawings. Draft around the  
7 end of April, and final draft around middle May. Mr. Pearson asked the what  
8 is the outermost horizon that is being looked at. Ms. Baker stated they are  
9 looking at the immediate future of one to two years, to five year. Then the  
10 outer horizon will be 20 years due to using the Elevate Comp Plan.

11  
12 **5. Next Meeting Discussion Items:**

- 13 a. Loading Zones:  
14 b. Timed Parking:  
15 c. Parking Signage:  
16 d. April 9, 2020:  
17

18 **6. Future Discussion:**

- 19 a. Parking Lighting:  
20 b. Bike Parking:  
21 c. Parking Lot #7 Redesign:  
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23 **7. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:16 p.m.**  
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Chairperson

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33 Approved: \_\_\_\_\_