



Spatial models for Parking and Pedestrian Access in Historic Downtowns: A Preservation and Design Perspective | 1997-31

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**SPATIAL MODELS FOR PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS IN
HISTORIC DOWNTOWNS: *A Preservation and Design Perspective***

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SPATIAL MODELS FOR PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWNS: *A Preservation and Design Perspective*

Small downtowns present a range of environmental and economic problems. In the most struggling centers, business survival and preservation of the town center are basic problems. In those where economic survival is more assured, environmental issues predominate, and many of these deal with the relationship between pedestrians and their cars. The ironic situation of most economically successful historic downtowns is that their own success causes increasing pressure for negative change. Prime among these pressures is the need to accommodate greater numbers of automobiles.

Various design and planning approaches have been used to adapt town centers to contemporary circulation patterns. Complete street or precinct pedestrianization plans based on the models of Victor Gruen and Lawrence Halprin were attempted in many towns, but were found to work only in a few special circumstances. In diluted versions of the early pedestrianization schemes, downtown revitalization plans funded by Urban Development Action Grants and other sources emphasized materials, furnishings, and plantings to diminish the effect of auto circulation on pedestrians. These plans typically focused on only one or a few specific streets and were not necessarily preservation oriented. A more comprehensive extension of the main street revitalization plan is the corridor planning concept that identifies one or more important street corridors leading to downtown. These corridors are redesigned according to the varying land use conditions and circulation characteristics along their length.

Parking design, placement, and integration with a pedestrian system is still one of the weak areas in most historic downtowns. Parking and pedestrian movement are most often considered separately, rather than as linked elements. Parking becomes a destructive element in the urban fabric, interrupting the building pattern, separating the commercial center from residential areas, and creating unpleasant pedestrian paths.

In many towns where there is a perceived shortage of parking, parking studies have shown that there is an appropriate quantity, but those who need the parking can't find it. Downtown parking is often placed in an ad hoc way, with too many different locations, and without clear connection to downtown destinations. This lack of organization is caused by thinking about parking as a single element, rather than as a component in a pattern of access.

The best older small towns have systems of access that function for the entire sequence of experience. In these towns, parking is accessible and in convenient locations, the walking experience is a cohesive spatial sequence, and the historic building pattern is intact. They do not share similar forms or use the same model for parking and circulation. Their common characteristic is a compatibility between the morphology of their built form and their patterns of circulation.

Prescott, Arizona

Prescott, Arizona is an unpretentiously great small town. As you drive into the town center from either direction on Arizona 89, the downtown is at the bottom of a gentle slope. The view from the top is of the large, elm-shaded courthouse square surrounded by commercial blocks. A few strip-style business locations occupy the edge of the downtown, but this is not a

barren zone of parking lots or underutilized space. As drivers approach the square, they begin looking for parking places. Chances are good that one of the diagonal parking places on both sides of the streets encircling the square will be available. If not, on-street parking is abundant in the rest of the downtown, and there are three other reservoirs of public parking. Union Street has been converted to three rows of diagonal parking. A driver who leaves a car there can walk directly onto the square and the commercial streets surrounding it. Following a directional sign to the Montezuma Street parking lot, allows one to walk out of the lot and be at the prime downtown corner, across from the square, in less than two hundred feet. The third choice is to park in the Granite Street lot where a large sign will direct you into an alley way leading through the interior of a commercial building. The alley way is lined with shops and the exit faces the town square.

Of the four blocks bordering the square, three have no gaps in the line of building facades (figure 1). Parking has not intruded into the building pattern. Every storefront is occupied, just as they are in the rest of the downtown. One who visits Prescott will inevitably walk into the square and realize that it is the downtown's heart, but with a tree canopy that distinguishes it from the streets. The environment of the square is so pleasant that in an hour one would be likely to see the same elderly men in cowboy hats, the college students reading and talking, and the children playing that were seen the first time through (figure 2a - 2c).

These are the signs of a town that works: an image of the downtown is readily established by visitors; parking is abundant and easy to use; pedestrian routes are pleasant, direct, and lead to landmarks or imageable places; commercial space is fully used, and the building fabric is intact; and people are willing to linger, because the environment is humane.

Prescott clearly owes its success as a place to more than a well functioning pattern of access. Many components contribute to a town that works. An influx of retirees and college students have boosted the retail economy. Contemporary citizens of Prescott have inherited and conserved a lively and cohesive built environment. New businesses have been established and the owners of existing stores have been responsive to their market. The town contains a significant public space. Nevertheless, the design of physical access plays an integral role in supporting and protecting the other components of the downtown environment.

Are there models for organizing access that can develop simplicity while retaining the historic resources of downtowns? What are the characteristics and advantages of different organizational models?

This study set out to answer those questions by evaluating a regionally diverse group of historic downtowns in the United States. Over 30 towns from across the country were visited on-site. The towns that were selected for the study represent a particular economic niche. They are in the range of 10,000 to 30,000 in population. They have economically successful downtowns with a partial dependence on tourism, college students, or other markets beyond the local population. Because of their economic success and their larger market area, they all have significant pressure for parking places. None of the towns have extraordinary financial resources that preclude them being a model for parking and access design in similarly sized towns.

Ten of the towns were mapped in detail so that spatial patterns could be examined and measured. The first stage of mapping included building and street patterns. The second stage of mapping was based on the site visits and included building uses, on and off-street parking location and quantities, and pedestrian routes.

The purpose of the site visits was to document parking quantity and location, to evaluate building occupancy rates and building conditions, to document pedestrian paths from parking to downtown destinations, to photograph the experience of the pedestrian routes, and to document the condition of the street corridors that form the connections between the downtowns and the neighborhoods around them. As a last stage of mapping, after the site visits, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps were used to determine what had historically occupied the sites of off-street parking areas.

The evaluation of this information took place in two stages. The first determined that there were consistent access patterns that allowed the towns to be categorized into types. The second evaluated each type, as represented by the towns that were visited, for its ability to encourage building preservation, the development of comfortable pedestrian routes, and the maintenance of traditional connections between downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

PARKING ORGANIZATION AND ACCESS MODELS

The definitions of different models of access were based on public parking distribution patterns in the downtowns. The study towns all provided similar quantities of parking in relationship to their size, but in different arrangements.

Calculating the Need for Parking

There is a systematized method for modeling necessary parking quantity in downtowns. Like the methods used for calculating parking in shopping centers and other related uses, it is based on ratios of parking spaces to the floor areas of different types of building uses. The application of this method to town centers is particularly well documented in *The Parking*

Handbook for Small Communities (Edwards 1994). An analysis of parking demand in an individual town should consider the mix of building uses to create the most accurate model, but a typical mix results in a ratio of 2 parking spaces required for each 1,000 square feet of commercial or institutional floor area.

Analysis of the towns in this study determined that their public parking quantities met the standard of 2 per 1,000 square feet. Quantity also consistently related to the length of commercial and institutional building street frontage in a ratio of 12 spaces for every 100 feet of frontage.

Base Parking Quantity

Most towns provide some on-street parking. The base level amount of parking results from the most typical situation: parallel parking spaces on both sides of all commercial blocks. Parallel parking on both sides of downtown streets will supply about half of the public parking needs of a downtown. If the base level of parking is provided, then an equivalent amount of additional parking must be provided in off-street lots. When the base level can be exceeded through the use of diagonal parking or other ways to increase on-street parking, then a smaller number of off-street spaces is required. Conversely, if the base level is not met in on-street parking then a greater number of off-street spaces must be provided.

Parking Location and Access Models

The supply of additional parking happens in distinct patterns and creates different types of downtown access patterns. Five models for arranging the parking supply were identified, along with some hybrids of those models, and a no-model approach. The models are described below as generalized from several examples. The diagram for each (figure 3) is an idealized layout that

illustrates the pattern of parking, buildings, and streets.

On-street. The on-street model for access is the simplest system for parking and pedestrian access. Highlands, North Carolina, Kearney, Nebraska, and Nevada City, California are all examples of on-street models. All of these, however, have a small amount of supplemental off-street parking. To achieve the required quantity of parking on the street requires parallel parking extending into residential areas around the commercial district, as in Nevada City (figure 4), diagonal parking on every commercial street, as in Kearney, or parking spaces in the center of the street, as in Highlands. Pedestrian routes use sidewalks on the streets and no exclusive pedestrian passages are required.

An alternative form for the on-street model occurs in towns with a courthouse square or park surrounded by commercial streets. The combination of diagonal parking on both sides of the streets and commercial buildings on only one side creates a high ratio of parking quantity to commercial frontage.

Quadrant. Quadrant parking results from a distribution where each block contributes a portion of the off-street parking supply. The lots are adjacent to the street, usually on the corner furthest from the town center (figure 5). Pedestrian routes use cross streets to connect to the main commercial street(s). Some alleys and pedestrian passages may also be used to connect to cross streets.

Perimeter. Perimeter parking encircles the downtown commercial core. Parking lots usually occupy the back edge of the blocks that face the commercial center. In some towns, such as Glenwood Springs, Colorado, parking is interspersed with detached commercial buildings. In others, such as Ames, Iowa, parking forms a nearly unbroken band on the back side of the

commercial district. Pedestrian access is usually through an outlet from the parking lot onto a cross street connecting to the town center.

Alley Slot. Alley slot parking occurs in towns that have alleys parallel to the main commercial street. Parking that is arranged along the alley occupies a swath or slot through the middle of the downtown blocks (figure 6). Both auto and pedestrian access are typically through the alleys, but pedestrian circulation can be separated into other passageways.

Block Interior. Block interior parking results from the insertion of parking into the centers of blocks adjacent to main commercial streets. The system requires consolidation of individual properties in the interior to achieve greater efficiency in parking (figure 7). Pedestrian routes out of the block interiors are through gaps in the building pattern along the streets surrounding the block. The placement of the passageways allows people to be distributed into different parts of the downtown.

The Tactical Model: Opportunistic Parking. Many towns, though few of the ones visited in this project, use no strategic model for parking. They develop parking based on real estate opportunities. When the demand for parking outstrips the supply, and properties in or near the downtown core are available for purchase, then parking lots are developed on those sites. The location of the parking supply can become unbalanced because of the concentration of available properties in particular areas. Pedestrian routes that result are varied. Some use alleys to connect lots with side streets, others connect directly to side streets, and some open onto main commercial streets (figure 8).

PRESERVATION AND DESIGN CRITERIA FOR ACCESS

If historic preservation and design quality are important values in a downtown, then criteria emphasizing those values should guide access design. These criteria govern convenience, quality of experience, preservation of historic fabric, and connections with neighborhoods.

Convenience and Experience

Shopping center designers work with a premise that shoppers desire to walk 300 feet or less from their car to a store, and will accept a maximum of 450 feet (Lynch 1971). Several other researchers have found distances within that range also apply to small downtowns (Untermann 1984).

To measure walking distance downtown requires identification of a destination. For this study, a “commercial center of gravity” was identified in each town. The center of gravity is the place that is sensed as being as deeply imbedded as possible into the commercial area of a downtown. In some towns it may be a clearly defined point, like an intersection. In others, it may expand into a small area that has the sense of centrality. These places were identified in the field, and were found to be symmetrical to the edges of the downtowns when they were placed on maps. Convenience, as related to distance between parking and destination, was measured relative to the commercial center of gravity.

Quality of pedestrian experience was evaluated based on mapping and photographic documentation of the various routes from parking areas to the commercial centers of gravity. These routes are the essential element of the access experience, once the zone of the downtown has been reached. Positive factors associated with route experience include views to orienting landmarks, early visual contact with business entrances or signs, specifically designed pedestrian

ways, and clean and maintained areas adjacent to the route. Negative factors associated with the routes include space shared with service uses or vehicles, lack of commercially activated building facades, and expanses of parking without clear cues for pedestrian circulation.

Preservation: Buildings and Connections to Context

Preservation is concerned with buildings, but also is concerned with relationships between different activities and spaces. The types of buildings in downtowns vary, but two signature characteristics of downtowns are the higher density of the building pattern, and the clear definition of street corridors by buildings. Parking, of course, is in direct competition with the ground that is, or was, occupied by buildings. The parking areas in each town were overlaid onto Sanborn maps from the 1920s to identify buildings that had previously occupied the sites now used for parking. Any loss of building density can be considered a negative impact on a downtown, even when it is replaced with needed parking. These losses, however, vary in degree. Commercial and institutional buildings are greater losses because they could serve contemporary uses of downtown. Industrial, warehouse, livery, and other similar buildings, while still a loss, are less so because of the greater difficulty in adapting them to contemporary downtown uses. Buildings with street frontage are greater losses because of their role in creating the public environment.

The adjacency of commercial and residential areas is another distinguishing historic quality of small downtowns. Maintaining adjacency is a significant motive for downtown preservation, because it is one of the essential qualities that is not duplicated in other types of commercial development.

Parking areas and access routes have a large role in maintaining the connections between neighborhoods and downtown commercial centers. Parking areas can interrupt connections along

streets and destroy adjacency. Well-developed pedestrian routes from parking areas can reinforce connections by serving two groups - those who parked a car and those who walked from a neighborhood.

The strength of each town's connections to its downtown was documented by walking and photographing the street corridors leading into the center. The qualitative strength of connection along the corridors was evaluated by comparing the degree to which the corridor was influenced by connecting elements with the degree of influence of parking lots. Connecting elements include such features as dwellings, commercial buildings, front yards, and street trees.

ANALYSIS OF MODEL CHARACTERISTICS

Five towns are described here as examples for the five access models. These towns were chosen not necessarily as the most successful examples, but as the most illustrative of issues in each model.

On-street: Highlands, North Carolina

Highlands is essentially a downtown without parking lots. Parking has been developed to the maximum extent possible on all downtown streets. Main Street, which is also U.S. Highway 64, has diagonal parking on both sides and one row of diagonal parking in the center of the street. There is one travel lane running each direction. When parking on Main Street is nearly completely occupied and traffic is at its busiest, vehicles are still able to flow easily, though slowly, without significant congestion (figure 9).

The most used pedestrian routes are up and down Main Street. Other major routes lead from a large reservoir of on-street parking on Church Street, and from the single public parking

lot behind the Town Hall.

Convenience and experience. The great majority of the parking spaces in Highlands is within 450 feet of the center (figure 10). Those spaces that are further away are stretched out the long Main Street and are still in front of retail businesses.

Walking paths in Highlands are predominantly on sidewalks, but there are several variations on the sidewalk experience. In some places the sidewalk is elevated above the street, in another it literally becomes the front porch for a hotel, and in others it connects with small courts (figures 11a - 11c). All the sidewalks incorporate a wide variety of retail facades.

Preservation and context . Parking has not displaced buildings in Highlands since it is on the street. During peak parking hours, automobiles become a dominant visual element in the downtown. Parking does not play a role in interrupting neighborhood connections in Highlands.

Quadrant: Lebanon, Ohio

Lebanon has four major business blocks that form a set of quadrants surrounding the commercial center of gravity. Each quadrant provides a part of the off-street parking supply. Some of the lots follow the pattern of the idealized model and are carved out of the corner of the quadrant furthest from the center. Others are located across the street from the back side of the quadrant (figure 12). Lebanon has parallel parking on both sides of most downtown streets.

Convenience and experience. In Lebanon the correlation between parking lot distance and parking lot occupancy is clear. The closer the lot, the more full. The off street spaces range between 150 feet and 450 feet from the center, with the exception of one parking area. One lot is completely outside of the 450 feet distance and is almost unused.

Most of the parking lot connections in Lebanon are on sidewalks on cross streets. The

sidewalks pass by some business facades, but mainly by blank side walls of buildings that front on the main commercial street. One parking lot in Lebanon uses a passageway to connect to the center (figure 13).

Preservation and context. The parking lots in Lebanon are mainly on sites that were once occupied by dwellings. Nineteen dwelling sites are used for public parking along with the sites of eight businesses. Because the quadrant sites face out to the street, all of the removed buildings were ones that framed the street corridor.

The transitional areas between commercial and residential uses in the downtown are impacted by the parking locations. Several lateral street corridors that lead into downtown pass by one of the public parking areas and experience an interruption in pattern. The tree plantings around the perimeter of the lots in Lebanon reduce the negative impact that parking has on the sidewalks (figure 14).

Perimeter: Taos, New Mexico

The streets in Taos, New Mexico are narrow and provide for little parking. The major on-street supply is a row of diagonal parking all the way around the outside edge of the streets surrounding the plaza. The town compensates for the lack of on-street parking with a mixture of public and private lots that encircle the core downtown and plaza area (figure 15).

Pedestrian routes into the center of Taos are through a converging set of alleys and streets that lead from the perimeter into the plaza.

Convenience and experience. The perimeter model has made it possible to achieve a good distribution of parking for convenience in Taos. All of the parking is between 150 and 450 feet of the plaza, with the exception of two outlying lots not shown on the map.

Many of the pedestrian sequences in Taos feel decidedly like back door approaches. Some of the pathways are in alleys without walks, the better approaches are on streets. A high degree of anticipation is a strong part of all of the paths and is created by the indirect views into the plaza. The poor quality of many of the entrance sequences is compensated for by the knowledge of the plaza. Towns that use perimeter parking as a model need a highly focused and imageable center to balance the dominance of parking on the edge (figures 16a - 16c).

Preservation and context. Parking in Taos occupies the former sites of a variety of building types, including a church, many attached adobe dwellings, an agricultural products dealer, and other service businesses. Of all the parking sites, the Guadalupe Church and its plaza have been the greatest loss for Taos.

The pedestrian connections to neighborhoods are affected by passing through parking zones immediately before entering the core of the town center. Most traffic corridors through the center of Taos have been visually impacted by perimeter parking areas. Perimeter parking consistently disrupts historic building patterns on perimeter streets. Disconnection from context is a frequent result. In Taos, the small size of the parking areas helps to maintain visual connections.

Alley: Franklin, Tennessee

Franklin, Tennessee has off-street parking organized along the alleys that bisect the downtown blocks. The parking lots fill a wide slot, parallel with Main Street, down the center of each block (figure 17). Like block interior parking, the lots are consolidated from several smaller properties.

Pedestrian access out of the lots in Franklin is through the alleys. Little design provision has been made to identify pedestrian space within the alleys.

Convenience and experience. The linear form of the parking allows good distribution of spaces. Because Franklin has a fairly long commercial district, some of the spaces are further than 450 feet from the center, but are still easily within 300 feet of Main Street. Franklin does not have mid-block passages to connect parking areas and the street, so parking in the middle of an alley lot can lead to an extended walk in the alleyway.

Pedestrian passageways and shared alleyways in Franklin contrast the best and worst pedestrian experiences that can be had in an alley parking organization (figures 18a - 18b). The pedestrian passages in Franklin connect to the square, the downtown's most significant space. The alleyways are narrow and only one has been improved above the level of a service alley. The alleys connect to cross streets which then lead to Main Street.

Preservation and context. Alley parking can be fairly non-destructive of buildings, because most of it is placed away from street corridors. In Franklin, the alley parking areas occupy the sites of only seven dwellings and four stores. The preservation impacts become greater where the parking areas extend all the way to the cross street corridor. The worst cases in Franklin are two places where the parking areas widen at the cross street, on the sites of commercial buildings (figure 19).

Alley parking that respects the cross street corridors has the potential to improve connections to neighborhood context, if it stimulates private investment in buildings along the cross street connection to the center or public investment in the pedestrian walks on the cross street. In the areas where it widens out at the cross street, alley parking has a negative impact on the neighborhood connection. In Franklin, this impact is not mitigated with tree planting.

Interior: New Berne, North Carolina

New Berne is an example of a town that uses block interior parking in combination with its on-street supply. Block interior parking results from the consolidation of individual properties in the interior of commercial blocks. Combining properties allows greater efficiency in parking. In New Berne, the two blocks on either side of the strongest commercial segment of Middle Street have had their interiors carved out for parking (figure 20).

Pedestrian routes out of the block interiors are through gaps in the building pattern along the streets surrounding the block. The placement of the passageways allows people to be distributed into different parts of the downtown.

Convenience and experience. The interior lots in New Berne are able to place the majority of off-street parking within 300 feet of the center. Distribution could be a problem for outlying blocks without interior lots in some towns; in New Berne on-street parking compensates for the lack of parking lots in some areas. New Berne has one well-designed parking lot that is outside the 450 feet radius from the center that is virtually empty (figure 21).

Passageways are required to allow pedestrian traffic onto streets, unless access drives or alleys are used. New Berne has passages exclusive to pedestrians in which attention has been given to lighting, planting, and artwork (figures 22a - 22b). The passageways also allow views from the parking areas directly into the commercial center of the downtown.

Preservation and context. The parking areas themselves have taken the place of storage and work buildings that were behind the downtown retail buildings. Those buildings are a minimal loss to the town. The automobile and pedestrian passageways require existing openings in the line of commercial buildings, or demolition to create an opening.

Block interior parking does not interrupt street corridors, and so does not directly impact connections to neighborhoods. Because investment may be concentrated into the lots and the connecting passageways, however, the streets that connect neighborhoods with the town center may be neglected.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE STRENGTHS OF THE MODELS

When the towns in this study were first planned and built, pedestrian access was assumed to be relatively evenly distributed on walks on streets leading to the center of the commercial area. Parking of horse-drawn vehicles, and later automobiles, was easily accommodated on the streets. Thriving historic downtowns are forced to retrofit for increased parking and for concentrations of pedestrians on selected pathways that are the result of parking location.

Increasing the amount of on-street parking is the best choice from a preservation perspective. Towns that increase their on-street parking achieve access retrofit with the least damage to historic properties, and the smallest required investment in pedestrian facilities. Parking cars on streets removes pressure for building demolition. Pedestrian pathways on streets capitalize completely on downtowns' greatest architectural assets.

When towns are required to expand parking off-street, they begin moving away from the traditional access model. Any expansion of parking off of the street will affect the building fabric and will create completely new pedestrian experiences. It is a time to plan comprehensively, not incrementally. The necessity of achieving appropriate parking quantity and location for economic well-being does not override the need to preserve buildings and street corridors, and to ensure a qualitatively desirable pedestrian environment.

Towns that turn access inside-out by bringing parking inside blocks and creating pedestrian connections to streets create less disruption to the historic fabric than those that incrementally expand street parking into the blocks. The block interior model allows buildings on the street to retain their role in defining public space. The pedestrian on the sidewalk experiences only one automobile space, balanced by a wall of commercial buildings. Planning responsibilities and financial costs are greater for interior parking. Coordination is required to assemble parts of many properties to create an interior parking lot. Design and development of pedestrian passages requires investment and can have consequences for building preservation. Individual property owners become obligated to improving the rear of their buildings and to considering new entrances.

Alley slot parking functions similarly, but has more impact on the street at the ends of the parking lots that are created. Care should be taken to prevent widening of the parking areas at the ends, so that street front buildings are retained. A distinct advantage of alley slot parking is that the existing alley is used for the travel lanes and reduces the amount of land required for the parking area.

Off-street parking adjacent to streets essentially allows streets to push into blocks, creating wider and less even corridors. When streets invade the edges of blocks, definition of streets and the architectural continuity of blocks are both lost. The quadrant model for parking has this effect by taking the space of dwellings and secondary commercial buildings. In addition, it typically removes corners, which are the most visible portion of a block perimeter, and the locations most likely to affect walking routes from neighborhoods. The visual impact can be reduced with planted buffers or walls, but the liveliness of the lost buildings cannot be replaced.

The perimeter model is the most difficult to mitigate for pedestrian and visual quality because of its widespread impact. A perimeter pattern for parking can remove the architectural edge on most of the streets at a downtown's edge. The paths from neighborhoods must then pass through the parking zone, and the buildings on the opposite sides of the streets are disconnected from the rest of the building pattern. Perimeter parking has the potential to create the least impact, however, on the core of a downtown.

There is no best model to guide the development of downtown access. The level of standardization that is possible for suburban shopping centers cannot be achieved with the varieties of downtown forms. The advantages and disadvantages of each access model should be fitted to the architectural and experiential characteristics of an individual town. All of the models force the planning issues and preservation costs to be made explicit, and they allow choices to be made within the context of the whole downtown. Towns who examine their fabric and opportunities comprehensively have a stronger chance of maintaining qualities that are valued while achieving access patterns that support their downtown economies.

References

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Abstract

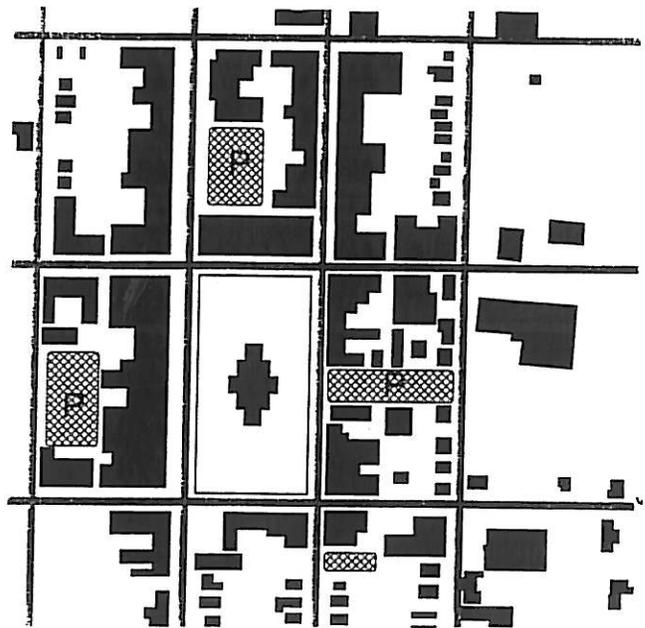
Small historic downtowns possess an inherent tension between providing adequate parking, preserving historic resources, and creating a liveable human environment. Successful strategies for downtown access deal with all three elements. Economically thriving downtowns that park large numbers of cars, have preserved a significant proportion of their historic resources, and have maintained a comfortable human environment were studied to determine the formal patterns of successful access strategies. From a group of towns representing different regions of the United States and a variety of town morphologies, five models for access were identified. The five models were based on parking location within the downtown: on-street, in quadrant locations, around the downtown perimeter, along alleys, and in block interiors.

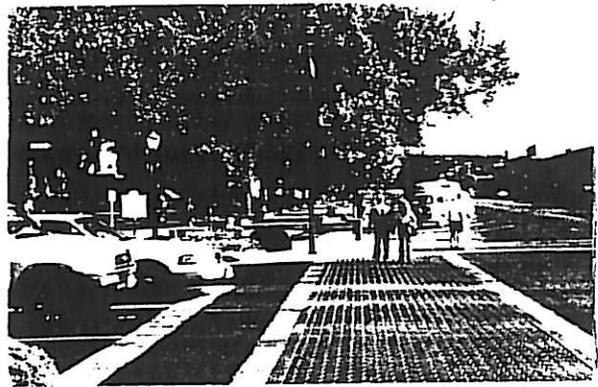
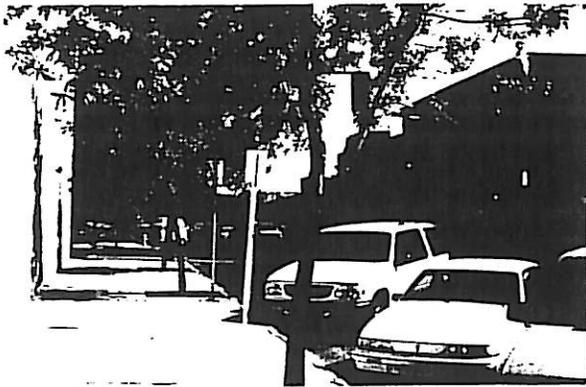
Each model was evaluated for its ability to provide the following urban design elements:

- convenient parking locations
- desirable pedestrian routes between parking areas and destination points
- preservation of historic architectural and landscape resources
- environmental continuity with areas surrounding the downtown.

The models that best reflect these values are the on-street, block interior, and alley slot models because they avoid encroachment of the street into the block. All of the models have specific strengths that may make them appropriate for application in a particular downtown. Access can be an integrative system that is coordinated with historic preservation and pedestrian space improvements when the fit between a specific town and an access model are evaluated.

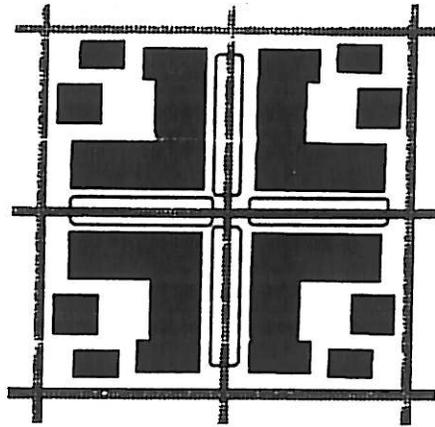
FIGURE 1. Downtown Prescott
Arizona is centered on the
Courthouse Square. The building
pattern in the commercial blocks
around the square is uninterrupted
and contributes to an optimal visual
and pedestrian environment, yet
parking is conveniently close.



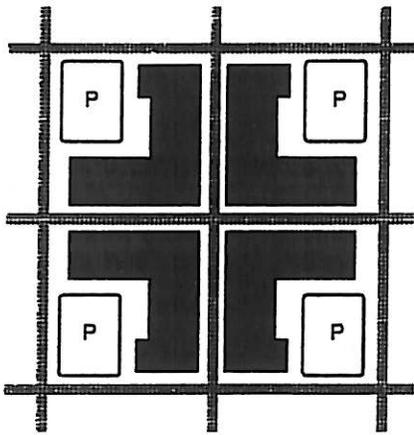


FIGURES 2A - 2C. A typical parking and walking sequence in Prescott covers a short distance before reaching the square and passes through high quality pedestrian space.

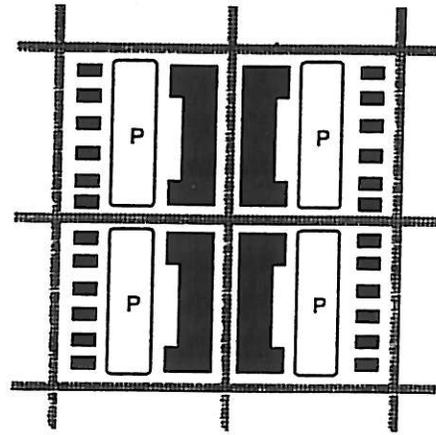




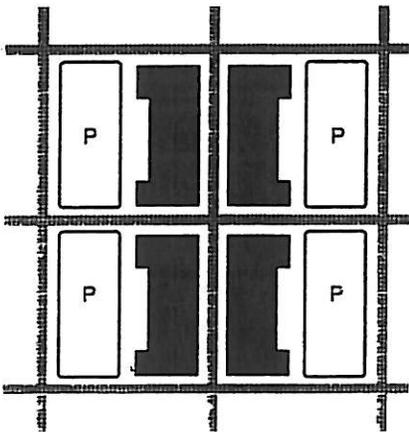
On-street



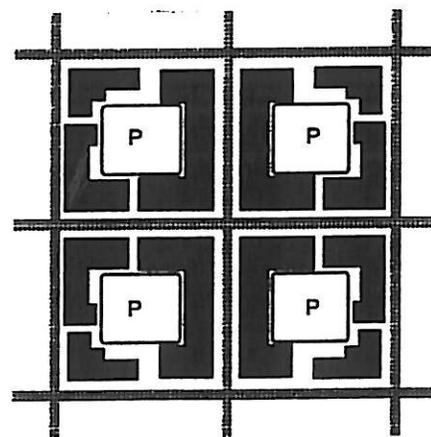
Quadrant



Alley Slot



Perimeter



Block Interior

FIGURE 3. Idealized diagrams of parking and building relationships in small downtowns.

FIGURE 4. Public on-street parking in Nevada City continues into the neighborhoods around the commercial center, making it possible to minimize off-street parking.



FIGURE 5. Parking lots are usually sited on the rear corners of commercial blocks in towns with quadrant parking systems.

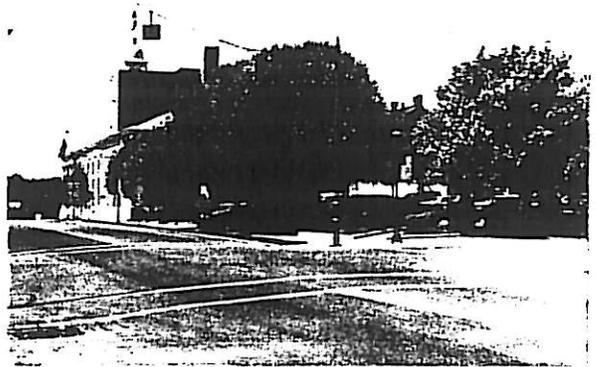


FIGURE 6. Alley slot parking occupies the space adjoining the alleys in downtown blocks.

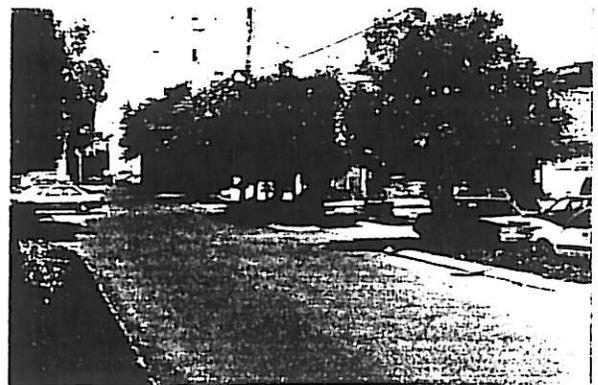


FIGURE 7. Consolidation of properties within the interiors of blocks allows the development of efficient public parking areas.



FIGURE 8. Parking locations based on real estate opportunities may be in locations that are marginal in regard to access and image.

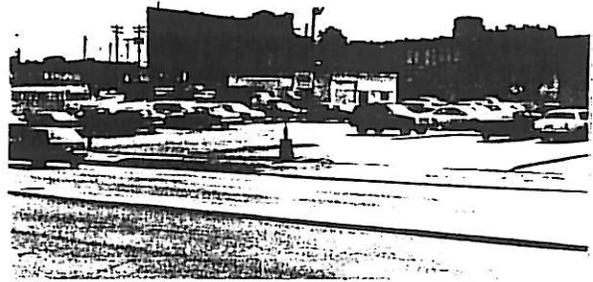


FIGURE 9. Main Street in Highlands has diagonal parking in the middle and on both sides.



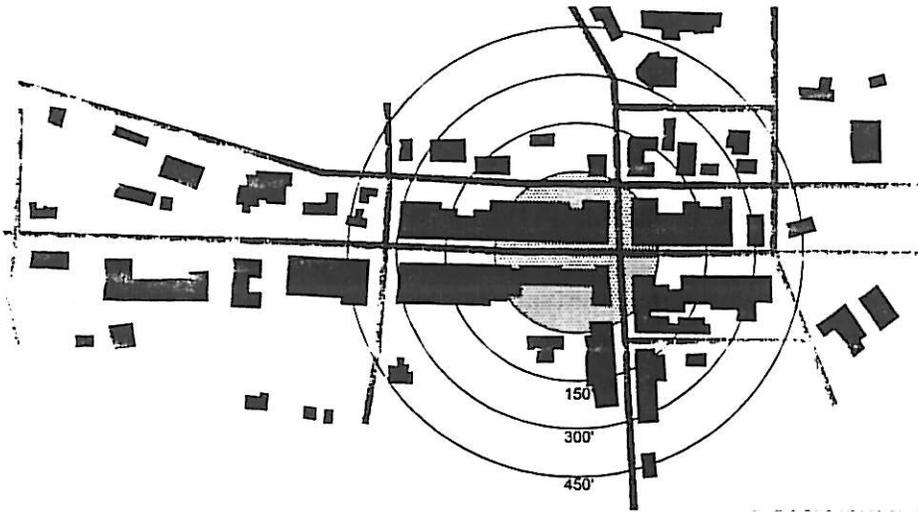
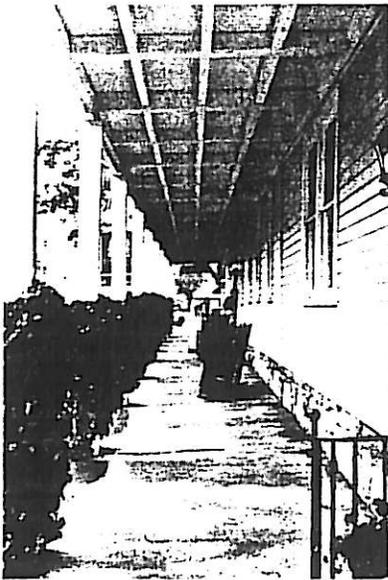


FIGURE 10. Downtown Highlands' commercial buildings are in a linear pattern on Main Street.



FIGURES 11A - 11C. Walking sequences in Highlands are on sidewalks, but involve a variety of spatial experiences.

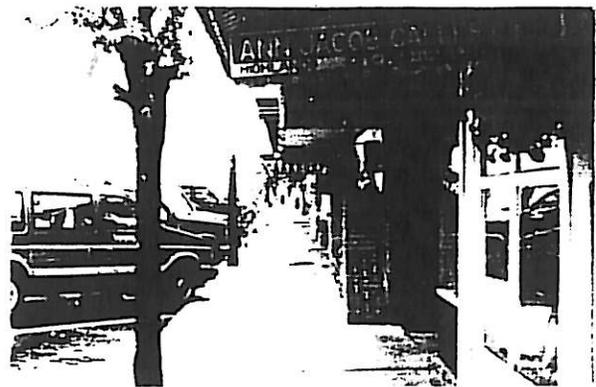


FIGURE 12. Plan of downtown
Lebanon, Ohio.

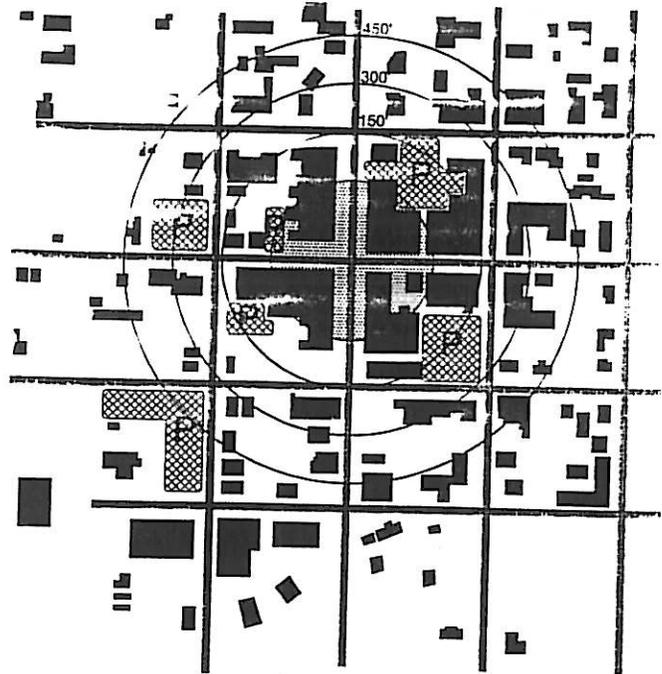


FIGURE 13. Quadrant parking can
be connected to the commercial
center with a pedestrian passageway.

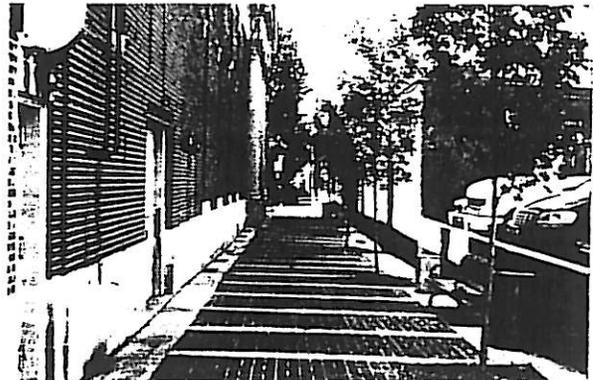
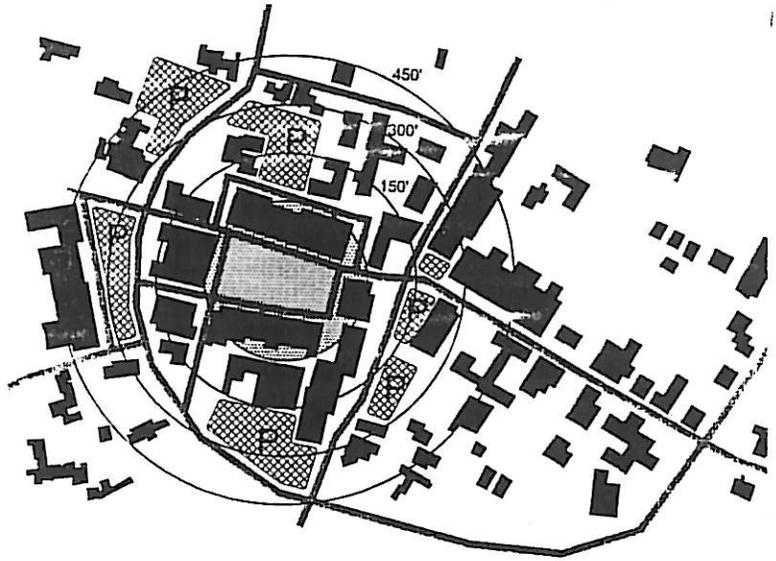


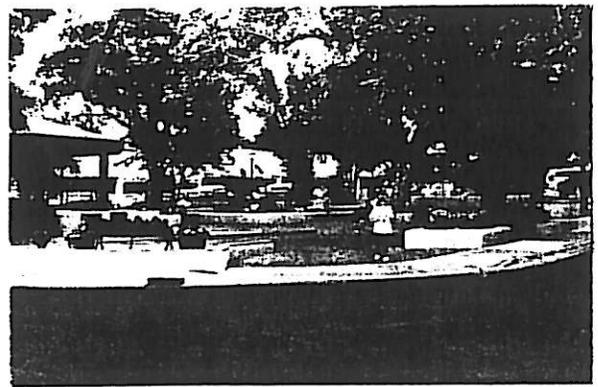
FIGURE 14. Tree plantings next to
parking areas aid in giving continuity
to the street corridor.



FIGURE 15. Plan of the town center in Taos, New Mexico. The commercial center of gravity is in the plaza.



FIGURES 16A - 16C. The sequence from the old Guadalupe Plaza parking area into the plaza is a back street approach, but the experience is enhanced by anticipation of Taos Plaza.



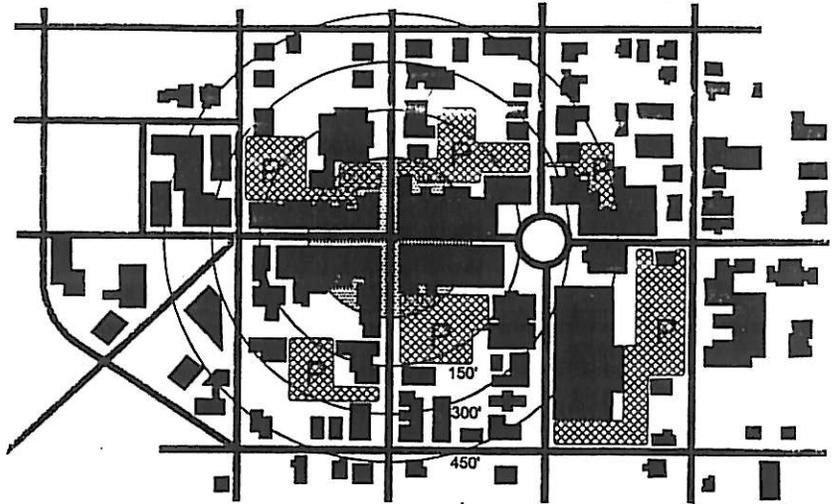
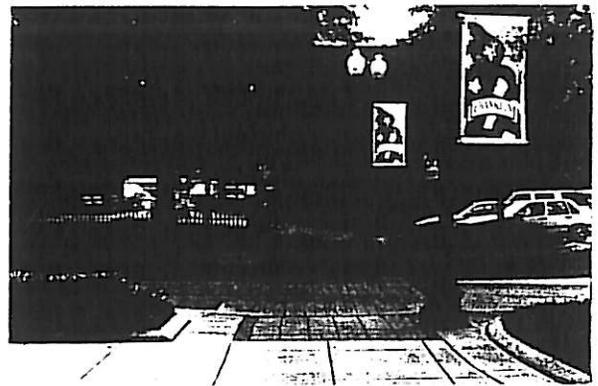


FIGURE 17. Plan of Franklin, Tennessee. The commercial center of gravity and the town square are separated.



FIGURES 18A - 18B. Pedestrian access to alley parking in Franklin is through both pedestrian passages and the alleys themselves.

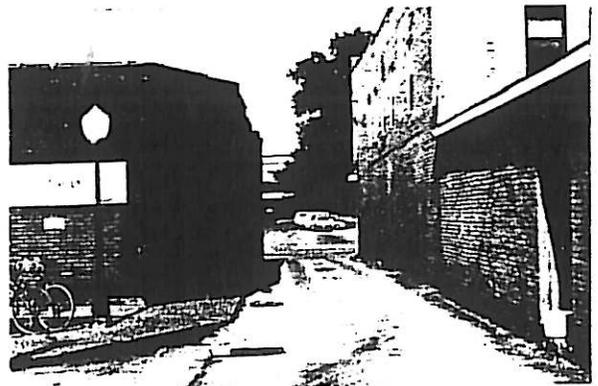


FIGURE 19. The street environment is impacted when alley parking extends to the street edge.



FIGURE 20. Plan of downtown New Berne, North Carolina.

