

# Space solution

## Glory Road garage may ease parking woes

By Aileen B. Flores

El Paso Times

EL PASO — Parking congestion near the Cincinnati entertainment district eventually may ease a bit because of a \$9 million project involving two government entities.

The city plans to sign a lease with the University of Texas at El Paso to convert a parking lot at North Oregon Street and Glory Road into a bus terminal and parking garage.

Cynthia Villa, vice president of business affairs at UTEP, said the university would lease the lot for 30 years, with two 10-year renewal options.

Both UTEP and the city will benefit, Villa said. Students will be able to use half of the parking spaces on weekdays during school hours, and the public will be able to use the parking garage for special and athletic events at the Don Haskins Center.

The parking garage will also help resolve the parking problems in the Kern Place neighborhood, she said.

"We gain parking spaces for the students, and the city provides parking for the entertainment district," Villa said.

Nearly 450 parking spaces will be available when the seven-story, 202,000-square-foot garage is completed in October 2010. That will replace 110 spaces now at the site.

For years, residents of Kern Place have complained about students and Cincinnati Avenue pa-



Vehicles are parked on Oregon Street after the city recently removed "no parking" signs.

trons parking in the area. They have been pressing the City Council for a solution.

Plans call for the Glory Road Transit Terminal ground floor to house the new express Sun Metro service and retail space. The terminal will have indoor and outdoor waiting areas, sidewalks and enhanced lighting.

People at the terminal will be able to track a bus by looking at real-time screens showing departure and arrival times, like the screens at airports.

Most of the money for the project will come from the federal treasury, said Julie Baldwin, a spokeswoman for the city Engineering Department.

The proposal will be presented Tuesday to the City Council, Baldwin said.

UTEP student Chris Figueroa, 22, who works at Cincinnati Bar, said a new parking garage would provide parking spaces for many students and would attract more people to the entertainment area.

"It's a pretty good idea," he said. "We have a lot of traffic, and that parking lot (at Oregon Street and Glory Road) is too small."

Luis Alvarado, 23, another UTEP student, said the construction of a new parking garage would not solve the parking problems in the area.

He said that though some students must spend money on expensive parking permits, others continue to look for free parking alternatives.

He said the new parking garage would be for the students and customers who are willing to pay for

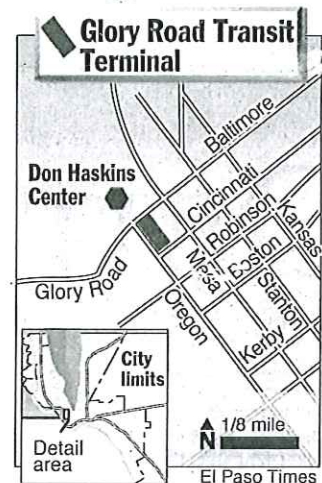
a parking space.

Alvarado said he had to spend about \$200 for a student parking permit after the city implemented a no-parking restriction along Oregon Street to accommodate the new Sun Metro SMART 101 service.

"I used to park there, but after they put the signs, it was impossible to find parking," he said.

According to Baldwin, the parking restriction on Oregon Street, between Kerbey Avenue and Robinson Avenue, was lifted after the Engineering Department decided it was no longer necessary.

Baldwin said that eventually the no-parking rule would go into effect.



El Paso Times

Aileen B. Flores may be reached at [aflores@elpasotimes.com](mailto:aflores@elpasotimes.com); 546-6362.