downtown phoenix campus
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
the first 5 years

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Tribute

TO MAYOR PHIL GORDON

“If it weren’t for Mayor Phil Gordon, the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus wouldn’t be here. Period. This was an extraordinary idea and without Mayor Gordon’s leadership and support, there would be no downtown campus. We take it for granted now because it’s been built. We’re here, it works, everybody’s happy. What the mayor had hoped would happen is actually happening. I think other cities will look at our example and follow what Mayor Gordon has done here with ASU.”

Chris Callahan
Dean of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication

“The two people who were very key in making the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus really happen were Mayor Phil Gordon and ASU President Michael Crow. It simply would have not happened without Phil Gordon pushing this issue with the City Council and community by leading the way. No way, no how.”

Mernoy Harrison
Former Provost and Vice President of the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus

“Mayor Gordon deserves a lot of credit for the vision and the foresight of what a university campus would bring to the downtown Phoenix area. He brought the same vision to the community and then to support it in a major bond election. His enthusiasm and support of the university was key in getting the campus built. It was Dr. Crow’s passion that pushed the time line, but Mayor Gordon was right there with him at the same time conveying to voters this project needed to happen for the city and got everyone on board.”

Patrick Panetta
ASU Real Estate Division

“Phil Gordon is one of those guys who has 10 times more on his plate that he could possibly ever tackle but is a leader who isn’t afraid to take chances or have a vision. He’s just not afraid of anything. His greatest strength is engaging other people to accomplish a task. Making the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus a reality was truly a collective effort and we can all take credit for it, but Phil is the person who led the charge and saw it from conception to reality.”

Paul Johnson
Former Mayor of Phoenix

“Mayor Gordon articulated the vision and kept the employees in the city focused on delivering the campus. In turn he did his part by selling it to the bond committee and the voters. The bond election was critical and this was not a normal circumstance which would have usually been paid for by the university or the state.”

Paul Naimark
Phoenix Deputy City Manager
“I’ve been in city management for 35 years and having worked with dozens and dozens of elected officials over the years, I don’t think there’s anyone else I’ve ever known who has a higher energy level than Phil Gordon. He spends more time at the public office than most I’ve ever worked with and is truly dedicated to making the community better.”

Sheryl Sculley  
Former Phoenix City Manager

“It’s been a monumental time of growth and excitement, and we have two people to thank for that — Michael Crow and Phil Gordon. They are very visionary, have a lot of energy, and put the resources and commitment behind it to make it happen.”

Bernadette Melnyk  
Former Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation

“The campus is thriving and exceeded everyone’s growth expectations. It has now become a magnet for the downtown area and is exceptionally successful. Phil Gordon gets credit for many things, and one can’t imagine a more spirited, enthusiastic champion and advocate for the Downtown Phoenix campus.”

Debra Friedman  
Former Dean of the College of Public Programs

“There simply had to be a Phil Gordon in order to make ASU Downtown Phoenix campus happen. If Michael Crow awoke one morning out of a deep sleep and said, ‘Aha! We need an ASU Downtown,’ that would have been wonderful, but without Phil there’s a big chance it would not have happened.”

Marty Schultz  
2006 Phoenix Bond Election Education Chairman  
Phoenix Community Alliance Chairman  
Former Chairman of the Arizona State University Alumni Association

“Undeniably, building the campus was the right thing to do. To his credit, Mayor Gordon staked his reputation by getting Phoenix taxpayers to invest in the future via a state institution. It’s unprecedented. He was brave because he placed an “all in” and it’s going to be his greatest legacy. He was a mayor with vision and a leader who made things happen.”

Wellington “Duke” Reiter  
Former Dean of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design

“The ASU Downtown Phoenix campus could not have been built without Mayor Phil Gordon and Michael Crow. They are an ideal match for each other in terms of leadership style. They are the kind of people who see the future and work towards an end result rather than seeing the future and hoping that it happens. Mayor Gordon’s legacy is that he modernized downtown Phoenix and led it into a Golden Age.”

Richard Stanley  
ASU Senior Vice President and University Planner
Foreword

A Message from ASU President Michael M. Crow

There is broad consensus among economists and urbanists alike that the presence of a major research university correlates with significant competitive advantages for metropolitan areas. Apart from the geographically localized economic benefits that accrue to cities and regions, universities contribute broad societal benefits associated with quality of life and quality of place. Synergies emerge between universities and local government agencies and the private sector. Regional economic development expert Richard Florida argues persuasively that universities lend cultural dimension to cities that fosters the presence of a “creative class.” Thus the establishment of a campus of a major research university in the historic urban core of metropolitan Phoenix, the heart of the emerging megapolitan region known as the Sun Corridor, provided an unparalleled opportunity for the city to reinvent itself.

As the result of an unprecedented public referendum in March 2006, Phoenix voters approved propositions securing funding for the development of the Downtown Phoenix campus of Arizona State University, the nation’s youngest major research institution and largest university governed by a single administration. The outcome of the election was a defining moment for all of us who call the region home, and a vital step towards both building a great university and the revitalization of Downtown Phoenix into a vibrant and dynamic metropolitan district. The Downtown Phoenix campus allows us to advance the broad educational interests of business, government, non-profit organizations, and professionals and individuals living and working in the area and lends critical mass to other educational and cultural institutions locating downtown. And because the colleges and schools on this campus have in common a focus on the public mission of ASU, our capacity to serve the many diverse communities of the metropolitan region is enhanced.

The irreducible core of a great university is the human relationships within its scope. ASU is a public asset that belongs to all the citizens of Arizona, and its remarkable trajectory of success has in no small measure been a consequence of the effort and dedication of the many constituencies it serves. The work of so many on behalf of the Downtown campus is an important statement of that commitment, and of the many individuals who have inspired and guided its creation, none more so than Mayor Phil Gordon and his entire staff deserve credit for its success. The City of Phoenix has been our leading partner throughout the project, and we owe thanks to Mayor Gordon and his staff as well as the members of the city council. The insight and input of community members and civic and business leaders has been especially invaluable.

The establishment of the downtown campus is easily one of the most significant achievements in the history of the university, and I would like to express the appreciation of the entire academic community to all those who contributed their steadfast support to this important civic project. As we approach the tenth anniversary of the initiation of the reconceptualization of Arizona State University
as the foundational model for the New American University, ASU at the Downtown Phoenix campus contributes to our capacity to provide educations of unmatched quality without financial barriers to all qualified Arizona students even as we seek to transform the quality of life, sustainability, and economic competitiveness of our state and nation.

Michael M. Crow
President, Arizona State University
Introduction

A MESSAGE FROM WELLINGTON “DUKE” REITER

I recall with great clarity my first meeting with President Crow to discuss the idea of an ASU campus in downtown Phoenix. Having worked as an urban designer and architect in many cities, I was enthused about the prospect of creating what many of those urban centers already enjoyed — a university presence in the heart of the city — one that makes an ongoing impact and tangible difference in the lives of the citizenry and students alike.

My conversation with him took place in early 2004. The takeaways are still vivid:

1) don’t worry about which colleges or schools are involved (that was still to be determined);
2) how about a 60-day turnaround? and
3) the implied question: why are you still sitting here?

By 2006, a location had been established along the pending development of a light rail system; Phoenix citizens graciously passed a bond election in support of the initiative; buildings were renovated; the initial cohort of students were aligned for class attendance; and new buildings were under construction. By 2008, the valley’s first light rail system was dropping students off at the doorstep of the campus, the new Cronkite School building was gaining national recognition, all to be followed by an oasis of green space and the sound of water unlike any other in the city. What President Crow demonstrated is the need to seize moments of opportunity when they present themselves and move forward with conviction.

The emergence of the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus is also illustrative of a larger truth: the fortunes of great cities and the universities embedded within them are inextricably linked. It is not by accident that the top public and private research institutions are in or directly adjacent to large metropolitan centers. They need and foster the well-being of each other. Both are knowledge creation and innovation dependent as Boston, Austin, Seattle, and San Francisco demonstrate time and again.

Creativity in the classroom, laboratory or studio necessarily engenders entrepreneurial behavior in the form of take-charge employees, expanded markets, and even entirely new industrial sectors. Examples of this virtuous cycle are available in every major metropolitan area with a top-flight research university invariably at the center. Citing an exemplar, an estimated 6,900 MIT alumni companies are headquartered in Massachusetts. The estimated sales of these companies — $164 billion — represent 26 percent of the sales of all Massachusetts companies. Worldwide employment of these 6,900 companies is nearly one million, with a substantial share of these jobs spread across the United States. ¹
But, of course, it was the vibrancy of Boston and Cambridge 400 years ago that made it an attractive location for the founding of Harvard College and the 60-plus institutions of higher education that have followed in its wake. Highly motivated faculty and researchers are attracted to equally productive colleagues. A university needs a thriving city to provide the conditions for the fluid exchange of ideas — the DNA of innovation and economic growth. It is well documented that productive academics are also inclined to join universities surrounded by a vibrant civic life, quality K-12 education, access to the arts, plus a generous and welcoming private sector — everything a mayor would want for his/her community, as well.

This ideal synergy is best accomplished when distance and time are minimized and direct communication is enhanced, an attribute of quality urbanism in the 21st century just as it was in the 17th century. In Silicon Valley, this truth has been distilled to “the 20 minute rule.” Craig Johnson, managing director of Concept2Company Ventures, a venture capital firm in Palo Alto, Calif., who has 30 years of experience in early-stage financings, said he knew many venture capitalists who adhered to this doctrine: if a start up company seeking venture capital is not within a 20-minute drive of the venture firm’s offices, it will not be funded. ²

This presents a challenge. Contemporary, auto-centric, metro Phoenix is not built upon an intricate historical framework; that is, for example, the result of animal-powered transportation. As a result, our particular brand of urbanism is alien to visitors from the coasts, accustomed to a tighter weave of streets and buildings and the virtues of a highly functional public transportation system. After spending the previous 25 years in either Boston or New Orleans and arriving somewhat abruptly in Phoenix in 2003, I will admit to a degree of disorientation. I was an explorer trying to decipher the strange clues being offered. I recall photographing the parking lot at the intersection of Central and Washington — the center of the state of Arizona — and wondering how this could possibly be. (At one public presentation, I also remember my good friend Mayor Phil Gordon asking me very politely if I could cool it on the images of a vacant downtown when I was making my case for the future campus and avoid the term “lunar” if at all possible).

Previous to the Downtown Phoenix campus, ASU had never tried to sell an urban experience, in part, for the reasons suggested above. It was also doing quite well by offering its students the classic college campus menu in Tempe, complete with dorms, quads, student union, football games, Mill Avenue, and that much sought after, close-as-possible, parking spot. Students from across the state and nation were attracted to “Palm Walk” and everything it represented. So much so that expansion was inevitable and the readily available answer was to offer more of the same.

To President Crow’s credit, he saw an opportunity to expand not just our physical plant but to expand our mission. “Leveraging Place,” the first of the eight New American University design aspirations, insists that we embrace our cultural, socioeconomic and
physical setting and become fully invested in the community we serve. Nothing demonstrates this desire and ultimately delivers more effectively than relocating our operations to the places where they can be fully engaged with society. The ASU Downtown Phoenix campus is a model in this regard.

An urban educational environment combines the syncopation of everyday life (and occasional grittiness) with the regimented demands of the college curriculum, courses and clock. The vision supplied by Mayor Gordon and President Crow did not begin with the notion of reducing the friction between these two worlds. Quite the opposite. Each leader, for comparable but different reasons, desired precisely what could be found at the intersection of public and academic life. The offerings of the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus were chosen expressly because students would benefit from being proximate to working journalists, healthcare professionals, public officials, and others of all backgrounds. In short, they would be citizens of the city and able to pursue their careers and studies in a more dynamic, and arguably, authentic arrangement. Unquestionably, both Phoenix and ASU are enriched as a result, as are the students who have endorsed the campus by their presence.

These objectives are reflected in the design of every aspect of the campus district. The thoughtfulness and invention of the new architecture has set a precedent that others are already following. The re-purposing of historic structures responds to the city’s desire to build upon its distinguished heritage. Welcoming public spaces for performances, exhibitions, food service, and retail are built into every component of the project. The Taylor Street landscape and water retention strategies were without precedent in the downtown. And most importantly, the university was insistent that a true civic space tailored to the urban, programmatic and climatic realities of Phoenix be built as a “bridge” to the greater community. The city’s parks department graciously embraced this goal and made it happen, topped by a signature work of public art.

Of course, the students don’t need this explained to them. They already get the logic of “third places,” social engagement, use-inspired research, and entrepreneurship; it simply took us time to catch up with them. These same students are demanding that their education and work be evaluated on its potential to address “real world” challenges and not be an isolated or internal experience. This is why they are venturing out well beyond Arizona and the U.S. to be a part of a rapidly globalizing future.

We want their counterparts in other countries to see Phoenix and ASU as worthy of their interest, talents — and maybe even their investment. This city and its university can be such a magnet…but only working in tandem. The downtown campus is the recognition of that reality and is only the first stage of a dynamic partnership, which will surely play out in glorious and unexpected ways.

2. Randall Stross, New York Times, 10.08.11; “It’s Not the People You Know, It’s Where You Are.”
Site...
Campus...
Linked to downtown...
Urban...
Focus on the City...
The desolate urban landscape is gone. In its place you can see, hear and feel the synergy, the energy, the infusion of student life. Downtown Phoenix is a place where education isn’t confined within four walls, but is woven into the fabric of daily life.

Arizona State University’s vibrant, integrated, academically rigorous, downtown campus revitalized Phoenix’s urban core, ushering in a new dynamic of service-oriented education and recreating the idea of what the university experience should be. Students are graduating. But they’re not leaving — infusing their time, talent and skills into the local economy, both day and night.

And to think that the high-energy vision and, some say, lofty aspirations all started with two great minds — and two empty stomachs — and a sketch of the future on a plain, white restaurant napkin.

That was breakfast in 2003.

ASU President Michael Crow and Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon wanted more than a satellite school. They wanted bacon and eggs — and they wanted everyone studying in downtown Phoenix to stay for breakfast for a very long time. It began to happen in 2006 when the 3,000 charter students opened their minds to the possibilities of living and working in downtown Phoenix while attending school. That number increased to approximately 9,300 students five years later, on pace to meet their 2015 goal of 15,000 students.

It’s a story of two minds, one destiny.

And they say breakfast is the most important meal of the day.
Gordon and Crow shook hands, vowing to work together to take the university, the city, and the region to new heights. Gordon, a fearless municipal leader taking on epic challenges, and Crow, the academic iconoclast who felt that the old college system was broken and declared ASU a “New American University,” seemed perfectly matched.

Phoenix and the university’s burgeoning populations pressured both men to act swiftly to create an environment that would attract a “creative class” — people who would build a knowledge industry and develop technologies to nourish Arizona in the 21st century.

Despite Phoenix’s designation as America’s fifth largest city (surpassing Philadelphia) and its growth and prosperity in the new millennium, its core had been somewhat hollow and desolate, especially after business hours. North of Van Buren Street and Central Avenue, downtown Phoenix was a wasteland of abandoned buildings, parking lots, and vacant acreage. Merging students, staff and faculty with merchants, artisans, government and nonprofits would inject a much needed, livelier ambiance in the city’s moribund core.

ASU’s Tempe campus was also bursting at the seams. In 1958, 10,000 students attended ASU; in 2003, about 50,000 were on the Tempe campus. In order to meet the projected growth in college-bound Arizona high school graduates, the university needed capacity to serve 100,000 across all campuses in less than 20 years. With limited ability to add additional students to the Tempe campus, ASU began shifting its focus to other campuses in the valley to handle the overflow: ASU West campus, ASU Polytechnic campus, and a small satellite facility at the Mercado at Seventh and Van Buren streets. Both Crow and Gordon knew expanding ASU to a full-scale campus in downtown Phoenix made perfect sense.
“It had been a longstanding community ambition to have a major university campus located downtown, but ASU’s presence was minimal,” Gordon said. “It was then that President Michael Crow and I changed the future of both the university and downtown Phoenix, outlining his plans for an expansion on the back of a napkin.”

That napkin became ASU’s visionary blueprint for the consummate urban college experience — a campus geared toward city-minded students attracted to service-oriented careers. Phoenix is a city packed with industry, business, diverse neighborhoods, arts, and parks. ASU would be a university without walls, encompassing the dynamics of the region’s teeming range of government, media, nonprofit, legal, medical, and business operations ripe for full- or part-time internships, mentoring and professional networking while studying. The region’s bevy of professional arts, dance, theater and music venues; sports stadiums; and fine and casual dining would cap off the university’s unique work-study experience. Full service with a smile. Game on.

Crow assigned a university design team to develop a strategy for handling enrollment growth on multiple campuses during spring 2003. ASU outlined its goals of a full university with four campuses almost a year later, predicting that 30 to 40 percent of the student population would ultimately live downtown.

He called upon Wellington “Duke” Reiter, dean of ASU’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design, to help flesh out his vision for downtown, tentatively called the Capital Center Campus (it was later changed to the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus). Before coming to ASU in 2003, Reiter was an associate professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston and principal of the architecture and design firm Urban Instruments. He had earned a reputation as a bold and innovative designer for his work on urban monuments and civic infrastructure, and had a major hand in designing Pittsburgh’s riverfront and revitalizing Fort Worth. This
time around he was tasked to shape a new university campus in the heart of downtown Phoenix that united progressive academics, architectural and public art agendas.

Reiter says in early 2004 he was “pulled into” Michael Crow’s office and asked if he could design an urban campus for ASU. He wasn’t given many specifics, including which colleges would locate downtown, but he was given one directive — have it done in 60 days.

“How do you design a house before you know who the occupants are? How do you design a campus before you know which colleges will go there? The only thing I really knew was the scope, which was, one day the campus would potentially serve 15,000 students, which was a start,” Reiter said.

As it turned out, the master architect knew exactly what the area called for. He didn’t pull any punches with Crow, Gordon or the media regarding his thoughts on downtown Phoenix.

“People are confusing being a big city with being a great city. Phoenix may be big, but it isn’t great...yet,” Reiter told one publication. “We are bigger in size [than Philadelphia] but aren’t bigger in terms of universities, medical schools, culture or other amenities.”

Reiter enlisted noted and locally based architecture firms to think beyond the normal constraints of what might be possible. The highly motivated firms included Will Bruder Architects, Architekton, SmithGroup, and DeBartolo Architects. Also involved in the planning was Ayers Saint Gross, who was examining all of ASU’s holdings across its four campuses.

The firms collectively identified several universities — George Washington University in Washington, D.C.; New York University; Emerson College in Boston, Mass.; and Savannah College of Arts and Design in Savannah, Ga.
— as excellent models of how an urban campus interacts with the community. They took away characteristics from each place and incorporated them to create a distinctive campus for Phoenix. They brainstormed in a second floor office of the Mercado and eventually came up with a unique vision that was bold and innovative.

“The design of the campus must aspire to be a truly authentic and sustainable environment based on its desert location,” Reiter proclaimed at the outset. “ASU will be taking the lead in demonstrating how shade, water, and the use of appropriate materials to reduce heat are essential to making downtown Phoenix a great place to live, work and study.”

Reiter also advocated for a civic space or multiuse park to be used by the students and general public. The idea was to bridge the city and university and offer community related events sponsored by both entities. The end result was a $34 million sustainable park that eventually opened in 2009.

Around the same time Reiter was given his marching orders, Crow recruited Senior Vice President and University Planner Richard Stanley from New York University in February 2004. Stanley was assigned to work behind the scenes with the city of Phoenix and explore the possibilities and realities of locating a campus downtown. Stanley said he quickly had to get into a West Coast state of mind in order to prosper.

“I’ve spent my entire life in the East Coast and coming to Arizona was new territory for me in many ways. Building an entirely new campus in the course of a few years seemed like an unlikely possibility to me,” Stanley said. “Back East, you might be able to pull that off over a long period of time, but it became clear very quickly that the way people thought about new things and new projects was very different in Arizona. In New York, you have to be around for 15 years before you’re treated as a serious player. Here the attitude seemed to be, ‘You want to get things done? You want to help? Okay, you’re in. Let’s go.’”
Phoenix Futures, a group of developers, also revealed its plan for the downtown, envisioning an exciting diversity of housing, mixed use districts, innovative retail, and enhanced historic districts. A study by an independent planning consultant stated that Phoenix needed to develop a vital, dense and truly urban downtown to attract educators, artists, writers, architects, designers, technology workers, and business people.

“For many years what kept downtown Phoenix from thriving after business hours was its residential and activity component. You have to make sure there’s activity after work hours, whether it be a Diamondbacks or Suns game or some kind of performing arts activity, or workers simply drive away to their suburban homes,” said Sheryl Sculley, former Phoenix city manager. “We saw the university changing some of the housing dynamic where people who worked for ASU might also want to live nearby. A university campus can be a hub of cultural activity as well as a place to learn.”

The study also predicted a vibrant and dynamic downtown emerging as a result of many exciting new projects, including the light rail corridor, convention center expansion, a new 1,000-room hotel, and several significant residential developments as well as the proposed ASU Downtown Phoenix campus.

“At the time we embarked on this project, Phoenix was one of the few large cities in the U.S. that didn’t have a major university in its downtown area,” said Phoenix City Manager David Cavazos. “We knew the potential a university campus could have on our city in terms of redevelopment, business, and the opportunities it could provide to residents. It seemed like such a natural fit and it made sense for us to pursue this opportunity.”

The idea seemed to confirm what was already in Downtown Phoenix: A Strategic Vision, a city-based blueprint for future development in the next decade. The 2004 report stated that “downtowns are hot again”
and that “the cornerstone of regional economic development” occurs because government, business, universities, medical, and technology facilities tend to locate in the core of large cities.

Valley economist Elliot Pollack predicted through a 2004 economic impact study that the downtown campus would ultimately create 7,700 jobs, generate more than $500 million per year in spending, and provide $7 million a year in revenue to the city. The university predicted the presence of 15,000 students and 1,800 employees by 2020, creating significant impact on the local economy, housing, and downtown neighborhoods.

“The study revealed that the number one indicator to a community’s quality of life is the education level of its residents,” Dave Cavazos said. “If you want to increase a city’s quality of life and per capita income, then education must be a part of the mix.”

Although Phoenix had developed guidelines and mission statements as it tried to revitalize the downtown, there was no comprehensive master plan for the whole area, so ASU stepped up to the plate and offered to create one. In June 2005, the university entered into an intergovernmental agreement with the city of Phoenix. The agreement essentially stated in writing that the city of Phoenix would develop the campus and purchase the land and buildings. In turn, ASU committed to bring academic programs and colleges downtown, develop student housing and parking, and operate and maintain the campus, while the city acquired the initial land and developed the buildings and infrastructure. Once the agreement was signed by the Phoenix City Council in November 2005, the audacious plan was underway. The two parties had less than a year to open for business.

EMBRACING AN URBAN FUTURE

Phoenix citizens had voted 2-to-1 in favor of a $1.1 billion multimodal transportation system in 2000. Increased bus service and a light rail system
running through the heart of downtown Phoenix would be connected to ASU’s Tempe campus. The 20-mile track paved the way for a new generation of transportation in Phoenix, and city planners and university officials said it was the most important factor in ASU’s site selection for the downtown campus. It ultimately proved to be a path to glory.

Richard Stanley said the university gave serious consideration to properties in Phoenix’s warehouse district and vacant land near Margaret T. Hance Park at Central and Third avenues. However, when it was revealed that the city’s light rail would run through Phoenix’s Central Avenue corridor, Stanley said the university looked no further.

“The campus area itself was developed because of its proximity to the light rail,” Stanley said. “We wanted to make everything essentially a five-minute walk from the station and so we used that as the anchor for our boundaries.”

An area for the campus was selected within the boundaries of Fillmore Street on the north, Van Buren Street on the south, First Avenue on the West, and Third Street on the east in Phoenix’s Copper Square area, a stone’s throw from the future light rail stop at Central Avenue and Van Buren Street.

“Perhaps the two biggest projects in my 37 years at the city were light rail and the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus, and we happened to be constructing them simultaneously,” said Frank Fairbanks, assistant city manager for Phoenix. “It was very complex in terms of electrical issues, technological issues, and how they interfaced with the neighborhoods. We pretty much had to take our staff and divide it by half — one half worked on light rail while the other half worked on the Downtown Phoenix campus.”
Crow selected his team in October 2005, choosing number cruncher Mernoy Harrison, ASU’s executive vice president and chief financial officer, to oversee the completion of the campus. Even Harrison admits he was an unlikely pick, since he was so close to retirement.

“I didn’t ask Michael Crow a lot of questions when he first told me his plans. In fact, I chuckled when he said he wanted me to run the campus,” Harrison recalled. “Then when he gave me title of executive vice president and provost, I really started chuckling. But I had to take him at his word. He said he didn’t have anybody else who could pull it off, and I saw this as a new challenge.”

Crow gave Harrison a daunting directive: to assemble a team and have the campus ready by late August 2006. Harrison brought with him three employees from Tempe: Vice President for Administrative Services Sheila Stokes, Executive Secretary Cynthia Ramirez, and Executive Assistant Cookie Ellis. Stokes said Crow made a wise decision in selecting Harrison as the downtown’s front man.

“Many of us felt that because of Mernoy’s leadership, no one ever doubted his sincerity or that the campus would be completed in time. He gave us the confidence that this was something we could achieve,” Stokes said. “It wasn’t particularly the things he said but his leadership style. Having worked for a number of people over the years, leadership is something where if you don’t have it, people don’t buy into whatever it is you’re trying to accomplish. Mernoy had it.”

Harrison said his task was actually simple: “My job was to smile, pat everyone on the back, sell the dream, and tell them that it was going to happen.”

ASU chose several colleges to relocate downtown, creating a strong connection to the community. Crow wanted the campus to embrace the concept of “social embeddedness” in which the university becomes part
of the community to learn its needs and direct its intellectual strengths and resources to meet those specific needs.

“We envision a campus that is embedded within the city and embraces the cultural, social and physical setting of urban downtown in the 21st century,” Crow said.

A university design team spent several months deciding which colleges should relocate to the Downtown Phoenix campus. They ultimately included the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, College of Public Programs, University College, and the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, as well as Phoenix’s PBS affiliate, KAET. The university would also take over and renovate a historic post office constructed in the 1930s at 522 N. Central Ave. and utilize it for a future student union, also housing faculty and staff; the top two floors of the historic Security Building at 234 N. Central Ave. to develop a research center focused on city and municipality design issues; and simulation labs at the Mercado on behalf of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. Plans also included a campus bookstore, library, student housing, food service, and offices of the registrar, admissions, financial aid, and student employment. In addition to funding the acquisitions and renovation of the campus buildings, the city would design and construct a 2.7-acre urban park and community meeting space as a hangout for students, a place for tourists, and a spot where nearby office workers and residents could unwind.

But how to turn a sketch into a viable 20-acre, multimillion-dollar university campus in such a short amount of time raised many an eyebrow and had skeptics wondering if it would really ever happen.

When the city and ASU unveiled its master plan to the community, it was met with mixed applause from the business community, local residents, and most especially The Fourth Estate. Landholders debated whether or
not to sell their land, private developers in the CopperSquare area wondered if they should get involved, and residents didn’t want the university to change the downtown’s character. The media reception openly questioned the viability of the project.

The Arizona Republic wrote: “The push to remake Phoenix’s city center is monumental in scope and cost. It’s staggering in complexity, as several new major projects jockey for space and funding. The visions build upon each other in full view of skeptics who question the need for any public investment downtown.”

Several columnists, critics and consultants opined the city did not have a “visible leader” to lead the charge and that the real test wasn’t in creating a vision, but “converting the plan into reality.” One headline read: “No shortage of hurdles, and biggest is money.” Another proclaimed, “No knight in shining armor to take charge.”

There were even some members on the home team who wondered aloud if the city’s greatest revitalization project was really going to happen.

“One of the deans asked me early in the process what was ‘Plan B’?” Mernoy Harrison said. “I told this person, ‘There is no Plan B. It’s do or die. We either launch this campus or we die trying.’”

Harrison’s declaration soon became the battle cry for ASU and city of Phoenix employees, who accomplished the near impossible: they designed, renovated and constructed a university campus from scratch in record-breaking time.

Forward thinking, innovation, and pooled resources are all well and good, but money greases the wheels. Most universities finance large real estate
projects by the sale of bonds issued by the university or a state board of regents. But in this particular case, Gordon asked city staff to come up with some innovative ideas how to finance the campus.

“We could have funded it through the city budget, but the problem with that idea was that construction would substantially be delayed and would have made it impossible to build that size project in such a tight time frame. It also meant not expanding city services,” said Frank Fairbanks, assistant city manager. “There were also some other borrowing approaches we could have taken, but they would have been more costly, and in the long run taxpayers would have either paid more or we would have had to shrink the project according to the allowed funding. None of those options would have allowed as much to be done in the short amount of time we had to build.”

Knowing a bond election was coming up in March 2006, the city of Phoenix felt that was their best option. However, it meant a majority vote by Phoenix citizens would be required for the project to proceed. In the interim, the city agreed to provide the land and construct the needed buildings and infrastructure. They would pay interest only on the first $100 million necessary to open Phase I of the campus, which Crow wanted open by August 2006.

“Yes, it was a very tight deadline, but I’m not so sure there was any other way to sell it to the voters. I’m not so sure they would have waited until 2007 or beyond,” said Patrick Panetta, ASU Real Estate Division. “The other part is that it’s simply the personality of President Crow to get things done quickly. He sees something, has an idea, and assembles the right people to carry out his vision. His mind-set is, ‘Let’s get it done right now.’ Mayor Gordon has a similar mind-set. They’re both men who don’t see obstacles.”

ASU agreed to pay 50 percent of the interest cost for up to three years or until revenue became available for the bond program. The university also agreed to bring some of its schools and programs to the campus and
pay the operating costs, including utilities, maintenance, classroom and office supplies, and salaries. The university would also provide fixtures, furniture and equipment. Some facilities, such as dorms, parking and retail, would be handled by private companies. The city would provide funds for construction through the issuance of bonds; money for operating costs for new facilities would be a challenge for the city to work into its budget.

“That was probably the toughest part of the contract because we’re talking about $100 million worth of exposure,” said Rich Stanley. “How much should the city pay for and how much should the university pay for? It was a huge risk on both sides. I’ve always contended the city of Phoenix and ASU did more for land values than any other project in recent memory. Prices for land in that area almost skyrocketed overnight.”

With Reiter spearheading the urban design, the city and ASU began acquiring the land, negotiating property exchanges, and entering into public-private partnerships.

With not much time to spare, the city ended up acquiring the former Arizona Public Service building at 411 N. Central Ave. for $30.5 million, which included a 4.65-acre parcel of vacant land, which was later used to construct the Cronkite School, and Park Place at 500 N. Third St. for $12.5 million. The university already owned the Mercado at Seventh and Van Buren streets (purchased in 1991 for $9 million), and entered a two-year lease agreement with the owners of a local hotel to house approximately 150 “pioneer” students.

The 2006 bond proposal totaled $878.5 million for homeland security, education, parks, libraries, streets, fire stations, and other city infrastructure and amenities. Of those funds, $223 million was earmarked for the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus — almost a fourth of the budget and the largest single proposed bond expenditure.
Gordon selected former Mayor Paul Johnson to chair the 2006 Citizens Bond Committee. Johnson said he was humbled by the honor but somewhat startled when he first learned of his new role — on the front page of a major newspaper.

“Phil and I go jogging about two to three times a week and one morning he told me about the idea of the Downtown Phoenix campus, and I told him I thought it was a great idea,” Johnson recalled. “About five months went by and I read in the paper that he named me as the chairman of the bond committee. I called Phil and said, ‘Hey buddy, thanks for volunteering me for the bond committee and giving me a heads up.’ Phil replied, ‘You said you thought it was a great idea.’ With God as my witness, Phil never told me until I first read about it in the paper.”

Gordon instinctively knew Johnson was the right man for the job. Johnson led Phoenix during a time of explosive growth in the city’s history, and was a seasoned consensus builder. Johnson had the arduous task of getting approximately 700 volunteers and 14 subcommittees to agree on the allocation of the bond money.

Not everyone initially agreed with how the funds were going to be spent, including City Council members.

“Phoenix is composed of several single-member districts, and the reward system for the council members is to make sure the residents within their district are accommodated,” said Sheryl Sculley. “If you don’t have many advocates on the council for a project, then it becomes incumbent on the mayor to push the citywide agenda. In this case it meant that the entire council needed to get behind the redevelopment of the downtown area. Mayor Gordon believed that great cities have great downtowns and rallied the council to support the new campus.”

Gordon eventually obtained consensus from his fellow council members but still had some pushback from the bond committee and the business
community. One committee member felt the public-private partnership was a “backdoor giveaway” to tax-exempt agencies that cheats other areas of government, and an opposition group called STOP (Stop Taxing Our Property) misinformed voters that their property taxes would be raised if the bond were approved.

Johnson said several bond committee members and a few neighborhood groups also expressed concerns about the distribution of funds, but by the end of the process he felt everyone placed a premium on education.

“All district felt they had an equal right to the money and there was a challenge at first to explain why downtown Phoenix needed the lion’s share,” Johnson said. “But by the time we were finished with the process, there was 100 percent backing by the committee. We then went to the voters, who ultimately had to decide if this is what they wanted for the city.”

A BONDING FOR OPPORTUNITY

Bond proposals in Phoenix typically occur every four to six years. The last one was held in 2001. Many in the community felt it was a chance to do something historic with the funds.

“I can’t remember a time as crucial as this. Here’s the bottom line: The decisions Phoenix voters make in this bond election will determine whether Arizona’s capital limps towards becoming just another big city or leaps towards becoming a great city,” wrote Jana Bommersbach, a longtime Phoenix journalist. “The funds will transform this city in more ways than anything since the discovery of air conditioning around World War II.”

Phoenix businessman Marty Schultz, who served as chairman of the education subcommittee of the 2006 Phoenix bond election, said most members agreed that higher education was a noble pursuit, but it took time and effort to get everyone on the same page.
“There were many questions on the committee and in the business community why it was a good idea to grow a university campus in the middle of downtown. A lot of interpretation and explanation was needed to educate voters how and why we needed the funds to use the bonds that way,” Schultz recalled. “Remember, these bonds are supported by property taxes and this was a sensitive issue. Traditionally, bonds are for roads, water and sewer systems, and infrastructure, but to interpret why we needed the bonds to support education was a challenge. There was definitely a need to educate committee members as well as the public as to how and why communities are enhanced when you bring a university into the mix.”

Schultz said Gordon was also instrumental in specifically developing an education subcommittee for the bond election, something that had never been done before.

“Typically there’s not an education committee with the bond issue, but because this was a nontraditional use of the funds, Phil made sure there was one established and that I headed it up,” Schultz said. “He was impressive in his thinking and strategy, and ultimately he proved correct.”

City leaders and university officials had to quietly move forward while the public education and election process commenced.

“It was an extraordinary risk on the part of both Mayor Gordon and President Crow,” said Mernoy Harrison. “If the voters didn’t approve of the bond, that $100 million still had to be paid back. I think both men stuck their necks out by taking such a chance.”

Former Mayor Paul Johnson said this is where Gordon particularly showed extraordinary leadership and tenacity.

“Mayor Gordon used his bully pulpit whenever he could by expressing how important this campus was to the community and to the city of
Phoenix,” Johnson said. “He was not going to go down without a fight.”

As it turned out, Gordon didn’t have much of a fight on his hands. On March 14, 2006, Phoenix voters did what the citizens of no other city had done: they made an unprecedented investment in a state university by approving the sale of $223 million in bonds to finance the construction of the downtown campus. The bond easily passed with 66 percent of the vote.

“We’re going to be investing in education...because it’s going to train our future leaders in politics, in education, in journalism, and in science,” Gordon told voters who supported the proposition. “It’s going to create the ideas that are going to lead to new jobs and new prosperity.

ASU employee Sheila Stokes recalled the feeling of elation and relief that night, but it was tempered with the reality of what lay ahead.

“Winning the bond election was a major victory for all involved, and we were glad to have it behind us,” Stokes said. “We also knew we had to roll up our sleeves the next day because the real work was about to begin and the clock was ticking.”

ASU and city officials had less than six months to renovate several buildings, purchase office supplies, equipment and furniture, strategize operations, move 600 faculty from the Tempe campus, and hire 80 new staff members, including the four founding deans: Debra Friedman of the College of Public Programs, Gail Hackett of University College, Bernadette Melnyk of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, and Christopher Callahan of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Callahan was working at the University of Maryland when he received a
call from ASU asking if he was interested in helping the Cronkite School transition from Tempe to downtown Phoenix.

“The move was one of the great appeals of the job. I thought, ‘Wow, this is exciting and are these people nuts?’” Callahan said. “I have an East Coast mentality. The notion of building a brand new campus in the middle of downtown Phoenix and having thousands of students attend in such a short time, by East Coast standards, that’s just insane. I thought it was impossible.”

When Callahan came to Phoenix for an on-site inspection in 2005 he was even more dubious. He visited the downtown area with architect Patrick Panetta, who espoused the university’s plans for the area.

“As an architect, I have to envision how a property might develop and fit into a neighborhood and then hopefully sell it and extend that vision to others,” Panetta said. “I’d take all the deans around the neighborhoods and say, ‘Imagine this is where your college will be and there’ll be thousands of students attending classes in your building.’”

Callahan admits he didn’t share the same vision as Panetta. As he surveyed his surroundings, all Callahan could see were vacant parking lots, a dilapidated apartment complex, a dry cleaner, and a not-so-subtle strip club named The Jungle.

“When Patrick finished showing me the campus, I was very skeptical. I’m being kind when I say the area was rough and rundown,” Callahan said. “Then I met Michael Crow and minutes after talking with him, I changed my mind completely. I knew it was going to happen.”

Construction crews scrambled, working around the clock, while ASU staff worked late into the night, planning for the massive four-college move and Central Avenue’s ensuing light rail system. Buildings were gutted, classrooms readied through endless construction noise and electrician
wiring, navigating torn-up streets was a challenge. It was a crazy amount of hard work and diligence to get it all up and running.

But almost magically, trucks and shipments with televisions, computers and furnishings started to arrive, the finishing touches finally put in place. It was coming together — then finally — it was done. Time to soar.

“All the planets were aligned for this project,” said Wellington “Duke” Reiter. “We had a mayor who was ready to do something great; a governor who was predisposed towards higher education; a university president who was ready to build; a community who supported this idea; a bond election which could fund this and make it a reality; and a thriving economy which gave voters the confidence to make positive change. It was the right cast of characters at the right economic time.”

Seven hundred dignitaries, politicians, ASU employees, friends, business owners, and locals flooded the August 15, 2006, ribbon-cutting ceremony inside the University Center lobby to listen to special remarks from Gov. Janet Napolitano, Mayor Phil Gordon, and ASU President Michael Crow, as well as to take a tour of the various campus facilities. ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus went from napkin sketch to reality in just three short years.

“ASU’s mission can be summarized in three words — quality, access and impact,” Crow told the standing-room only crowd. “Our downtown campus provides high-quality education and greater access to students who are just graduating from high school or working adults achieving their educational goals.”

Mayor Gordon was equally effusive in his praise of the new campus. “As mayor, I am proud to be a partner in the future academic success of our residents, to improve the workforce and strengthen our economy,” he said. “The City Council and I are focused on a knowledge economy
with a high quality of life. The ASU Downtown Phoenix campus plays a major role in meeting that goal.”

Final speaker Mernoy Harrison grinned ear-to-ear as he stepped up to the wooden podium, keeping his remarks short and sweet.

“Success going forward is not assured, but failure is not an option,” Harrison said. “We’ll work toward success, and we will be successful.”

A mere five months after the historic bond election, ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus welcomed more than 3,000 full-time and 6,000 part-time students.

The partnership between ASU and the city of Phoenix created jobs, increased public revenue and private investment, stimulated local businesses, improved social services, and most important, offered educational opportunities that will influence generations to come.

“It’s an opportunity to leave our children, and our children’s children’s children, a prosperous and vibrant urban environment in which to live,” said Michael Crow.
BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME — AND STAY.

TWO MINDS, ONE DESTINY, A POWERFUL NEW UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE.

STARTED WITH A GOOD BREAKFAST AND A NAPKIN SKETCH.
DOWNTOWN PHOENIX CAMPUS  | phase I
Buildings

University Center
411 N Central Ave

The former Arizona Public Service building’s modern classrooms, offices, labs, seminar rooms, and study areas also include student services, an information commons, the ASU bookstore, and a small cafe. The College of Public Programs occupies floors four through nine, which includes the schools of Community Resources and Development, Social Work and Public Affairs, the Morrison Institute of Public Policy, the Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management, and three other centers in the college. University College and the School of Letters and Sciences’ administration offices, student success programs, and labs also operate within this building on the third floor.

College of Public Programs

The College of Public Programs is a community of scholars dedicated to knowledge-based social and economic change. Educational and research programs include social work, public affairs, criminology and criminal justice, and community resources and development, each offering undergraduate, graduate, professional degree, and certificate programs.

The College of Public Programs’ centers and institutes at the Tempe campus were scattered in no less than 11 different buildings before the move to downtown Phoenix, creating more than a few challenges, according to former Dean Debra Friedman, who was hired in April 2005.

“One day I watched two faculty members from the college walk past each other on campus and they had no clue what the other looked like,” Friedman said. “That pretty much sums it up, I think.”

Relocating near Arizona’s city, state, county government, social work, and nonprofit offices was a logical choice since the college focuses on interdisciplinary public and community issue studies.

“The core of our mission has a great deal to do with community engagement and internships with so many different agencies. Almost all of those agencies were located downtown,” Friedman said.

Friedman viewed this new environment as a laboratory for her students, envisioning a future with culturally competent social
workers and public officials — a future where public policy is crafted by common work between bureaucrats and academics.

“The university will have stepped up to ensure that social workers, who are the number-one provider of mental health services in the U.S., are educated and prepared,” she added, addressing the social worker shortage.

**THE SCHOOL OF LETTERS AND SCIENCES**

The School of Letters and Sciences offers a core of liberal arts classes and offers undergraduate degrees in communication; English; general studies; history; interdisciplinary, liberal and organizational studies; science, technology and society; and technical communication. Graduate degrees provide instruction in humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and professional fields.

“We are invested in the development of integrated coursework for students in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, the College of Public Programs, and the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication,” says Frederick C. Corey, School of Letters and Sciences director.

With the school’s location in the center of the city, opportunities for community partnerships that enhance student engagement are plentiful. There also are opportunities for bridge programs, curriculum formation, and academic enrichment that are relevant to the area. Partnerships include collaborations with downtown museums, school districts, and other organizations.

“Downtown Phoenix is experiencing a renaissance, and the School of Letters and Sciences is positioned well to leverage its locale and become a full participant in the rebirth of downtown Phoenix,” Corey says.

The school provides students across ASU the knowledge and skills to comprehend and effectively engage the changing world of the 21st century at local, national and global levels.

**UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**

University College advances academic excellence, broad access, and the impact of a university education through a dedicated focus on individual undergraduate students. The college’s program in academic advising and major and career exploration promotes the success and advancement of undergraduate students who are exploring their choices for an academic major. This program includes assessments, courses, individual academic advising, online tools, and workshops, and it is designed to guide self-discovery and exploration of academic and career choices to assist each student in finding a focus for academic enrichment.
Built during the height of the Depression, the registered Historic Post Office is located at Central Avenue and Fillmore Street.

The Phoenix landmark opened in 1936 and for many years served as the home for federal government offices such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Agriculture, and for three decades it has been the home of the U.S. Post Office.

The three-story brick and terracotta structure continues standard retail postal services while housing the offices for student affairs, the provost’s staff, and other administrative and student support functions.

In 2012, it will become the campus’ new student union. The renovation plans call for a lounge/game room, courtyards and patios, meeting space, and student offices. The south side of the building will open onto Civic Space Park, which will feature a sloped lawn, street plaza, and space for outdoor events.

“It’ll be a place where students come to eat and play pool, watch TV, relax, and enjoy all the amenities we will have in store,” said Patrick Panetta, associate director of university real estate project management at ASU.
An extension of ASU’s Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, the Phoenix Urban Research Laboratory (PURL) has a bird’s-eye view of the campus and a large-scale model of downtown Phoenix. PURL is situated on the top two floors of the historic Security Building at the southwest corner of Central Avenue and Van Buren Street. PURL is a research center focused on seeking solutions to the most pressing design problems facing cities today and enhancement of the civic realm. Complete with studio space, meeting rooms, and offices, PURL also serves as a think tank where decision makers, city leaders, community groups, visiting experts, and students can discuss the future of the city and region.

It was from this perch that the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus was created.

“I was sitting with Marty Schultz in his office at Arizona Public Service, and I saw the Security Building out his window and I asked him about the space on the top floor. He told me it was an old ballroom,” recalled Wellington “Duke” Reiter.

The space turned out to be the former penthouse of Walter Bimson, founder of the Valley National Bank and philanthropist. It featured Second Renaissance style architecture, high vaulted ceilings, exposed brick walls, tiled terraces, lengthy rooftop patio, and a grassy backyard with a white gazebo.

The Security Building was purchased by Maricopa County in 2001 and renovated starting in 2005. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and the Phoenix Historic Property Register.

Within days of the conversation with Schultz, Maricopa County Manager David Smith embraced the project, and the county spent a six-figure sum to renovate the two floors and graciously donated the space to ASU, Reiter said.
Located at Third and Fillmore streets, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation (formerly Park Place) is occupied by student services, nursing research centers, and faculty, staff, and administrative offices. The 8,000-square-foot ASU Health Center is also located on the first floor of the building and offers preventive care and treatment services, as well as health and wellness programs for students and the community.

The college provides educational programs that prepare nurses to meet the healthcare needs of individuals, groups and communities. The faculty is committed to preparing nurses for compassionate, evidence-based, and competent nursing practice, as well as leadership in lifelong service to the community and nursing profession.

Former Dean Bernadette Melnyk said moving to the Downtown Phoenix campus made the college’s mission much easier to achieve than from their outdated Tempe digs.

“The offices were small, dark and dismal. In fact, when I walked into the building for the first time, I remember saying to Michael Crow, ‘I’m going to have to build a really big dream to get people to come and work here.’ The building was not in good shape at all. It was very old and outdated,” she recalled.

Melnyk said not everyone on her staff was excited about relocating from Tempe to downtown, but she used newly renovated facilities with state-of-the-art technology and innovative nursing programs to get them fired up. The former College of Nursing was given a new name — the College of Nursing and Healthcare Innovation (it changed again in 2009 to the College of Nursing and Health Innovation).
— to underscore the tremendous changes. In 2005, the school recruited 23 new full-time faculty and increased enrollment. ASU graduated 160 nurses in 2002; five years later, that number increased to 320. Funding also dramatically improved. A business advisory group of alumni and community members was formed to create business plans and to assist with raising funds. A local executive and philanthropist matched donations in a series of challenge grants that raised almost $56,000 in 2005. A solid infrastructure was developed, and grant applications submitted to the National Institutes of Health increased by 225 percent.

Educational partnerships were developed with the Mayo Clinic, Banner Healthcare, and other medical institutions. New centers of excellence were created, such as the Center for Advancement for Evidence-based Practice. To demonstrate the college’s mission and to play an integral part in the community, nurse practitioners and 200 students provided healthcare services at a ground-level clinic, the ASU Healthcare Center, to students, faculty, staff, and nearby residents.

“Opening the center was a great victory because it was the first time the college was delivering healthcare services to the ASU students, faculty and staff,” Melnyk said. “That was a monumental step for the college.”

The school also is helping to fulfill the state’s increasing need for nurses as baby boomers reach their golden years. Approximately 4,800 students were enrolled in the school at the end of 2010, thanks to the additions of Exercise and Wellness, Health Sciences, Kinesiology, Medical Laboratory Science and Nutrition programs. When Melnyk manned a backhoe at the groundbreaking ceremony for the second nursing building, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation had become the largest nursing program in the country. The new five-story building, erected in 2009, provides additional classroom space for nearly 2,000 students.

Plans are in the works for a larger community health center that will provide additional training opportunities.
Residential Commons
401 N First St

Formerly known as the Ramada Inn-Downtown, ASU renovated this 1955 hotel into the Residential Commons to provide housing and food services to approximately 150 charter students.

Rooms featured 25-inch televisions, individual bathrooms, alarm clocks, fans, bedding, towels, a patio/balcony overlooking the spacious pool, and grassy courtyards in the center of the property. A large communal patio and a plush indoor student lounge with overstuffed chairs for social gatherings made students feel at home.

“Students loved Residential Commons because it was more spacious than your typical dorm room and each room opened out onto the pool area,” said Mernoy Harrison. “Students gathered in the common areas, around the pool, and really developed friendships in that unique atmosphere.”

Upperclassmen tutors and resident assistants provided peer-to-peer guidance from a veteran point of view and were responsible for planning outings at many of the city’s amenities to engage students in the urban experience. Such ventures included a play at Herberger Theater, a movie at AMC Theaters, dinner at a local ethnic eatery, and a Diamondbacks game at Chase Field.

“Students were exposed to art, theater, sports, music, and service opportunities in the community,” said Cassandra Aska, Assistant Dean and Director of Student Engagement. “Going to these events created an intimacy and kinship between the students. These were the ‘pioneers,’ the ones we entrusted to shape, develop and enhance the Downtown Phoenix campus culture. They really charted the way for student life as we know it today.”

Taylor Place, a twin 13-story residential tower, retired the Residential Commons in 2008. Three years later, the old building was demolished to make way for a city parking lot, in hopes that it will become the university’s future law school.
The Wells Fargo ASU student union opened in October 2006. The 4,000-square-foot space, located in the Arizona Center inside the Wells Fargo branch above the AMC Theaters, housed student clubs and organizations, student government, a multipurpose room, and lounging areas for students to relax, dine and watch television, shoot pool, or play video games between classes.

Both the university and the mall benefited from the deal. The partnership helped boost foot traffic to an underutilized commercial destination while exposing students to a number of fast-food chains, multiple sit-down eateries, and shopping establishments.

The leasing arrangement cost the university about $100,000 a year over a five-year period, which ended in 2011. ASU is constructing a new student union in and around the Historic Post Office on Central Avenue, which is expected to open in 2012.
THE MERCADO
502 E MONROE ST

Known previously as the ASU Downtown Center, the Mercado was purchased by the university in 1991. It is composed of six Spanish-style buildings accommodating a variety of ASU classrooms and offices, and is located between Van Buren and Monroe streets and Seventh and Fifth streets. The Mercado accommodated University College’s extended education and distance-learning programs, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation’s simulation labs, and the College of Public Programs’ Bob Ramsey Executive Education Program. Students in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College also attend classes in the Mercado. Various ASU organizations and initiatives have offices in the Mercado, such as the Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family, and additional space is leased to local businesses and government agencies.
phase 2
The Cronkite School is recognized as one of the leading journalism schools in the country, with students consistently placing at the top in national competitions such as the Society of Professional Journalists’ Mark of Excellence Awards and the Hearst Journalism Awards. Students learn to apply time-honored journalism fundamentals across digital, broadcast and print platforms in today’s multimedia news environments. They gain experience in professional internships at top news organizations and in the school’s immersive professional programs.

To prepare for the move to the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus, the school became an independent college of ASU, doubling the number of faculty and staff, recruiting high-profile journalists from the nation’s top newspapers and media services. It also was an opportunity to design a building suitable for the rapidly changing world of digital media and technology and to locate closer to major media providers where partnerships could be formed and students could intern.

“Tempe is the quintessential college town, and it’s a great place for students to attend. But if you’re going to study journalism, you want to be where the action is, and that’s in the middle of the city,” said Cronkite Dean Christopher Callahan. “Not only to cover the news but to walk to the state’s largest newspaper (The Arizona Republic), television stations, federal, state, and city agencies as well as public relations outlets. There’s a huge advantage for us being downtown.”

The spectacular $71 million, six-story building is the only college on the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus built entirely from scratch. It is the creation of a design-build team of Steven Ehrlich Architects of Culver City, California and HDR architecture of Phoenix and constructed by Sundt Construction. Dean Christopher Callahan also had a major hand in almost every detail of the building.

“Our biggest and most overriding vision was flexibility because while journalism was changing, and it will continue to evolve, we wanted a building where we weren’t locked into things. What you see are a lot of open spaces and a lot of cooperative spaces, and that was really important in the interior design,” Callahan said. “On the flip side, we wanted people in the city to look up at the Cronkite building and say, ‘What’s going on up there? It doesn’t look like a typical academic building. It looks like a lot of news activity is going on.’ There’s a lot of transparency both ways, and that was an important design element. This is arguably the best journalism building in the country.”

The 210,000-square-foot facility is about five times the size of the school’s previous home, Tempe’s Stauffer Hall, which had been its headquarters since 1973. Today it is home to a wide range of journalism programs and initiatives including the Carnegie-Knight News21 Journalism Initiative, the Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism, the New Media Innovation Lab, the Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship, and KAET, Phoenix’s public television station since 1961.
Building features include seven state-of-the-art professional newsrooms and media incubators, seven other digital computer labs, the Sony TV Studio, the Cronkite NewsWatch Studio, two KAET/Eight TV studios, KBAQ radio studio, 17 fully mediated classrooms, nearly 1,000 classroom seats, and 280 digital workstations for students. The school's First Amendment Forum was inspired by Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, a focal point where students and faculty gather to encourage the free exchange of ideas.

The building also got the nod from the man for the school that bears his name — the legendary CBS news anchor Walter Cronkite.

“Michael Crow is a true visionary of our time,” said the 90-year-old Cronkite, who attended the February 21, 2007, groundbreaking ceremony. “He took the reins of this university and gave new direction and energy beyond anyone’s imagination. Together with Dean Callahan, these two inspiring leaders are working to make our journalism school the best in the land...I’m grateful beyond measure to those who made this dream a reality.”

Callahan said one of his great regrets was that Cronkite never did get to see the school when it opened in August 2008. However, Cronkite did see the building during the construction phase and Callahan said he was witness to a touching moment.

“The last time Walter Cronkite came to ASU was for a luncheon at the Biltmore for Jane Pauley on November 12, 2007. Keep in mind Walter flew in the night before from across the country, and we had stayed up late visiting with each other. We had the luncheon the next day and afterward, everyone was exhausted. However, Walter was really jazzed to see the building and hinted strongly he’d like to see it. I said, ‘Walter, it’s your building and we can go anytime you want to see it.’ Walter said he wanted to see it right now and who was I to say no?”

Callahan gathered the troops, including the design-build team, and whisked Cronkite to the school, where he stood in awe of the building for about 45 minutes.

“Walter just stood there staring at the building while I pointed out to him where everything was going to be. He was asking all sorts of questions and was so excited by the scale of the building and that it would be the place where the minds of future journalists would be shaped,” Callahan said. “As we chatted, about eight of the construction workers began pointing
at us, and I noticed them out of the corner of my eye. I said, ‘Walter, I think they recognize you.’ One of them cupped his hands over his mouth and yelled out, ‘Hey Walter, we’re building this for you!’ Then all of the guys who were with him threw up their hands and cheered. Walter gave them the big thumbs up, and it was such a beautiful moment. I’ll never forget it.”

The U.S. Green Building Council also gave the building a big thumbs up in November 2009 when it awarded the Cronkite School its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver certification.

The facility was constructed with numerous sustainable features, including an east-west orientation for solar control, exterior overhangs and sunscreens for shading windows, energy-saving materials to help optimize building energy performance, low-water landscaping, low-flow plumbing fixtures, building materials that meet LEED low-emitting product requirements, and occupancy sensors for lighting control.
CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW
respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or
abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to
assemble, and to petition the Government

"Put it before them briefly so they will read it,
clearly so they will appreciate it,
picturesquely so they will remember it
and, above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light

Joseph Pulitzer
The distinct copper-clad urban building, a nod to Arizona’s mining roots, opened in August 2009. Standing five stories high and covering 84,000-square feet, the $29 million building was designed by SmithGroup and built by DPR Construction, Inc. It offered several classrooms, office and administrative space, gathering spots for students, and a 240-seat conference center and 60-seat computer classroom laboratory.

Two months after its grand opening, NHI-2 won the Design-Build Institute of America’s National Design-Build Award for Educational Facilities Over $25 million, and one of two buildings to be nominated for the Best Overall Award. In addition, the building achieved Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design New Construction Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, making it one of just a few LEED NC-Gold certified buildings in Phoenix.

More than three-quarters of construction waste (967 tons) was diverted from conventional landfills. Other sustainable features include solar water heating and recycled wood, glass and other contents.
Taylor Mall

This three-block landscaped pedestrian walkway is Tempe’s answer to Cady Mall and is the heart and soul of the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus. The $5 million project was funded by the city of Phoenix, unifying the campus by creating a pedestrian walkway along Taylor Street from Central Avenue to Third Street. It links Civic Space Park, the Walter Cronkite School of Mass Communication and Journalism, the College of Public Programs, the School of Letters and Sciences, University College, Taylor Place, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, the School of Nutrition and Health Promotion and the Arizona Center.

Filled with trees, plants, benches, mosaic sidewalks, concrete benches, and lighting, the mall provides shade, ground cover, and color to the urban atmosphere. It also provides a calming respite from the skyscrapers, light rail, and Phoenix traffic.

“I think every campus needs something more than a place for students to sit and go to lectures,” said Jeremy Legg, program manager for Phoenix’s Downtown Development Office. “Taylor Mall will truly be the spine of the campus.”

All photos and sketches for Taylor Mall provided by Ten Eyck Landscape Architects, Inc.
“A big part of our concept was to pay homage to the lateral canals that used to be in the area. We talked the city into letting us harvest the storm water into the slightly sunken ‘canal’ linear streetscape to help water it as well as the condensate from the AC system at Journalism so that the new streetscapes would be watered by the rain water and sweat from the new buildings. Using the permeable pavers in the parking spaces plus reducing the width of the road posed a challenge. It took 35 people in a room with the Assistant City Manager and an ASU executive to get it done.”

Christine E. Ten Eyck, FASLA
Ten Eyck Landscape Architects Inc.
Taylor Place is Arizona State University’s premier residential community located in the heart of downtown Phoenix. The first floor of the complex, which opened August 2008, includes a dining facility, retail stores, mail services and housing offices. Each floor has a laundry facility, small meeting room, vending area, atrium lounge, and screened porch areas. Rooms include cable television and wireless, high-speed Internet.

Two 13-story towers were constructed at a cost of $150 million and designed by SmithGroup. It offers spectacular views of the city lights and distant mountains. Students enjoy a private rooftop terrace, overlooking the 4,000-square-foot shade garden. This public garden includes seating and a water feature and is linked with Taylor Street’s landscape and pedestrian plan. A “green” feature of Taylor Place is the use of air conditioning condensation in the outdoor water feature and for landscape irrigation.

Totaling more than 1,200 beds, the complex has become a favorite gathering place not only for students but has also made a significant impact on Phoenix’s central core.

To further encourage a sense of community, the residence hall has a floor designated for students from Barrett, The Honors College; the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication; the College of Nursing and Health Innovation, and University College.

Taylor Place epitomizes sustainable, technologically advanced urban student housing. Located on each floor, electronic ‘DigiBoards’
post student announcements, activities, photos, and stream live video via the Internet. WiFi throughout allows students instant access to services within the buildings, including up-to-the-minute status of their laundry loads. Each floor features a casual student gathering space equipped with flat-screen televisions and comfortable seating to encourage casual conversation and socializing.

Retail stores and a game room highlight the exterior across the first floor and a glass-enclosed penthouse on the top floor. Inside, students enjoy living quarters with city views, commons areas, private bathrooms for every two students, meeting spaces, and a full-service cafeteria.

The second tower of the residential hall opened in August 2009.
CIVIC SPACE PARK
424 N CENTRAL AVE

The 2.7-acre Civic Space Park was finished in April 2009 at a cost of approximately $34 million. It connects ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus with the business corridor, transportation hub, and residential communities, accommodating a variety of uses, events and daily functions of the university. The post office building, the A. E. England Building, a stage, and the green space comprise a student commons area. The splash pad water feature is a fun place to cool off, and there are abundant shady areas for picnics and outdoor relaxation. A signature shade structure is the centerpiece of the park’s sustainable design. Solar panels on the shade structure provide energy for lighting and electrical needs. Designers utilized previous concrete surfaces and underground rain collection systems to ensure all rainwater is captured and returned to the earth.

Boston artist Janet Echelman’s $2.4 million net sculpture “Her Secret is Patience,” floats above the park announcing to all the creation of a truly unique, sustainable, urban space. The sculpture’s design was inspired by Arizona’s distinctive monsoon cloud formations, and by saguaro flowers and boots (which form inside the cactus). The piece is suspended 38 feet above the ground on a framework of steel rings, cables and poles, and reaches an overall height of 100 feet and width of about 100 feet at the top.

“The nets are about adapting. None of them are static or stationary. They all adapt or change with time,” Echelman said. It was the perfect metaphor for downtown Phoenix, which was undergoing an unprecedented period of transformation.

Phoenix Deputy City Manager Rick Naimark said the city had a tremendous amount of input from the public, who pushed for a sustainable park.

“Civic Space Park is the only one in Phoenix where there is no parking lot and you can only get there by walking or light rail,” Naimark said. “I believe this speaks to our urban downtown vision and the public support had exceeded all of our expectations.”

The park was the “Best of 2009” winner in the Engineering News-Record’s annual awards of notable design and construction from throughout the country. In June 2011, the park won a Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence for contributing to Phoenix’s urban community, a biannual national award earning the park $10,000 to be used for improvements.
The historic A.E. England Building was constructed in 1926 for a local automobile dealership and later occupied by an electrical equipment company. The building is listed on the Phoenix Historic Property Register and is located in the center of Civic Space Park. Renovations were made in 2008 to coincide with the grand opening of the park. It provides retail, meeting and event spaces, completing the park for a wide variety of community users and civic and ASU-related events.

“People were initially concerned that the A.E. England Building would block the flow of the park, but it has been integrated so beautifully,” said Rick Naimark, deputy city manager for Phoenix. “The building is an example of excellent historic preservation and adaptive reuse.”

The Fair Trade Cafe and Gallery, located in the A.E. England Building, offers organic, fair trade coffee and hosts musical and cultural events. The Artlink A. E. England Gallery is also located here, and features work by established and emerging artists in all art disciplines.

“The idea behind the sunken plaza at the park came about when we had to dig a huge hole out near the A.E. England Building to help lay the foundation,” recalled Richard Stanley. “Duke Reiter walked by the hole and thought we could do something with that area. He got out his sketch pad and drew a design. What you see in the original sketch is almost exactly how it turned out in real life. That’s the kind of serendipity that can happen when you work with existing buildings.”
looking to the future
WHILE MUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, MUCH WORK REMAINS.

ASU will continue to develop and expand the Downtown Phoenix campus. In the following years, more schools, classrooms and amenities will be located in the area. Future projects include transforming the Historic Post Office into a student union for the campus by 2012; a new Student Resource Center by fall of 2013; a third residential tower at Taylor Place, a residential-retail project to serve the growing employee and student population, and eventually, the future home of the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law.

The campus began its fifth year of operation on August 18, 2011, with approximately 9,300 full-time students — giving new meaning to “smart growth.”

“The Downtown Phoenix campus continues evolving along with this city,” Gordon said. “I hope downtown will be the center of ideas that create companies, jobs and an economy that keeps the city healthy.”

The ASU Downtown Phoenix campus has twice been awarded the C. Peter McGrath University Community Engagement Award for the Western region, which recognizes the outreach and engagement partnerships of four-year public universities. The 2008 award recognized ASU’s partnership with the city of Phoenix, and the 2009 award acknowledged ASU’s American Dream Academy that helps parents in low-income, disadvantaged areas learn how to transform their children’s educational experience.

The business community, residents and local merchants say the campus has helped to create a dynamic city core, and students are enjoying the classes, programs and services offered on the campus, particularly the academic support.

The report card is coming back all A’s.

The university remains a frontier for fresh ideas and independent thought that leads to innovation. It is a high-energy center that has the potential to set a new standard for all universities, positively impacting social and economic development in its community, where theory meets practice.

And practice makes perfect.
renderings of a future Law School
Appendix I

List of Colleges/Programs at the Downtown Phoenix Campus

College of Nursing and Health Innovation
- School of Nutrition and Health Promotion
- Center for Healthcare Innovation and Clinical Trials
- Center for Healthy Outcomes in Aging
- Center for Improving Health Outcomes in Children, Teens and Families
- Center for World Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence

College of Public Programs
- School of Public Affairs
- School of Community Resources and Development
- School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- School of Social Work
- Center for Community Development and Civil Rights
- Center for Policy Informatics
- The Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation
- Center for Urban Innovation
- Megapolitan Tourism Research Center
- Morrison Institute for Public Policy
- Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center
- Bob Ramsey Executive Education Program
- Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy
- Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety
- Center for Social Cohesion
- Partnership for Community Development
- Nina Mason Pulliam Legacy Scholars Program

Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication
- Carnegie-Knight News 21 Initiative
- Cronkite New Media Academy
- Cronkite News Service
- Cronkite NewsWatch
- Cronkite News Service in Washington
- Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Business Journalism
- Enravision Summer Digital Media Institute
- Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship in Journalism
- Institute for High School Journalism
- KAET (Channel 8)
- Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship
- Mayo-Cronkite Fellowship Program
- Meredith-Cronkite Fellowship Program
- National Center on Disability and Journalism
- New Media Innovation Lab
- Public Relations Lab
- Scripps Howard Entrepreneurship Institute
- Village Voice Digital Media Fellowship

School of Letters and Sciences

School of Nutrition and Health Promotion

University College
- Major and Career Exploration
- Explorers Residential Colleges
Appendix II

Appendix II

DOWNTOWN PHOENIX CAMPUS BY THE NUMBERS

ASU Downtown Phoenix campus by 2020

- 15,000 students
- 1,800 faculty and staff
- 1.5 million square feet of academic and support space
- 4,000 student housing beds
- 20-acre campus district
- 57,000 visitors annually
- 7,700 university and private sector jobs created
- $40 million in annual operating expenses
- $281 million in annual wages
- $570 in anticipated economic impact
- $34 million in annual tax revenues to the state, Maricopa County and the city of Phoenix

*Source: Elliot Pollack Economic Impact Study, 2004
Appendix III

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY DOWNTOWN PHOENIX CAMPUS
TIMELINE & MAJOR MILESTONES

Fall 2002 to Spring 2004  Significant planning efforts commence for downtown Phoenix. Neighborhood residents, business owners, artists, city staff and other parties are involved in the planning process to develop a set of strategies and goals for the future of downtown Phoenix. Three town hall meetings are held in 2004 with more than 1,400 citizens in attendance, providing comments and questions to Phoenix and ASU officials. ASU President Dr. Michael Crow announces plans for expanding the university in downtown Phoenix with up to 15,000 students.

2003  Mayor Phil Gordon and Michael Crow meet for breakfast and sketch out on a napkin their vision of the ASU Downtown Phoenix campus.

Spring 2004  The City of Phoenix begins coordinating all downtown planning efforts, including hosting Town Hall meetings to present a diverse and cohesive vision for downtown to the public, local stakeholders and City Council.

December 14, 2004  Phoenix City Council adopts the Downtown Strategic Vision and Blueprint for the Future. This “Downtown Plan” emphasizes the role of connectivity and the need for knowledge anchors and workers that will shape our economy and future. The plan also looks to the creation of great civic spaces, the arts and diverse mixed-uses such as retail, residential and office/research.

June 15, 2005  Arizona State University enters into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the City of Phoenix to develop the ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus. ASU commits to bring various academic programs and colleges downtown, develop student housing and parking, and operate and maintain campus operations, while the city acquires the initial land and develops buildings and other infrastructure.

Spring to Summer 2005  The city and ASU work together to begin to develop the physical campus, including managing the design-build process, entering into community and public-private partnerships and negotiating property exchanges and acquisition.

September to November 2005  Approximately 700 Phoenix citizens volunteer for the 2006 Citizen’s Bond Committee to deliberate and make recommendations on how to allocate bond funds to secure a successful future for Phoenix. Various bond subcommittees recommend the allocation of $223 million for the development of the ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus.
November 16, 2005  Phoenix City Council approves the recommendations of the 2006 Citizens’ Bond Committee, which includes $878.5 million for homeland security, education, parks, libraries, streets and other vital city infrastructure and amenities. A ballot is set for the 2006 Bond Program including funding for the ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus, which voters will decide upon on March 14, 2006.

March 14, 2006  Phoenix voters are asked to support the 2006 bond program, which includes funding for public safety, neighborhoods and the ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus. Voters approve the bond by a margin of 66 percent.

March 15, 2006-Summer 2006  Upon approval of the 2006 bond program by Phoenix voters, more public input on civic space, streetscapes, and campus design is scheduled.

Fall 2006  Classes begin for approximately 3,000 students at the new ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus. Phase I of the campus is complete, including about 300,000 square feet of academic and academic support space for the University College and College of Nursing as well as other programs, student support services and student housing.

2008  Phase II is complete, which includes a major civic/open space for both ASU and the Phoenix community at large. Another 470,000 square feet of ASU development is being used for the College of Journalism and Mass Communication, a library, and retail and other amenities; streetscape improvements further beautify downtown. Approximately 1,200 beds are available for the 7,500 students that attend classes at the Downtown Phoenix Campus through Taylor Place. Phoenix’s light rail line becomes operational and shuttled students, staff and faculty between the Downtown and Tempe campuses.

2009  The $39 million College of Nursing and Health Innovation II opens in October 2009. Located at 555 N. Third St., the copper-skinned facility adds more classroom space and meeting places for students to gather. The $34 million Civic Space Park and A.E. England Building makes its debut in April 2009; Taylor Place adds a second tower in August, adding 544 beds and giving the 13-story complex a total of 1,284 beds.

2010  Residential life at Taylor Place gets a big boost with the additions of Devil’s Den and Devil’s Greens. Devil’s Den creates a 2,000-square-foot space for residents to lounge, watch television, play on video game consoles and hang out seven days a week. Devil’s Green, a large salad bar, offers healthy food choices to students, faculty and staff. The Center for Violence Prevention makes its debut under the College of Public Programs, and the Center for Applied Behavioral Health relocates from its west side location to the Downtown Phoenix campus. The College of Teacher Education and Leadership expands its presence in downtown, moving into offices at The Mercado.

2011  The ASU Downtown Phoenix campus celebrates its fifth anniversary when classes start on August 18, 2011.
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