

Why I Love Downtown Albuquerque

By Laurie Roach

Let me count the ways during my lunch hour while riding on my shared BICI bike. #PNMPedalPower. Seriously. I count my favorite things about Downtown ABQ during the entire ride. Here they are, in no particular order. Visualize with me!

1. Civic Plaza. The architecture, the blue water, the sounds, the perception of cool moisture from the fountain, the diverse groups of people gathered around to enjoy.
2. Festively colored tables, food trucks, nighttime movies, special events, shade structures and native plants in planters.
3. Murals, art and sculptures everywhere you look. My favorites are the bronze figures of the skateboarder, business people, a Native American woman and her child, and a cowboy in front of the “Starbucks/Keva Juice entrance” to the Hyatt. Great gift shop inside, too!
1. Hotel Andaluz. Ibiza! Rooftop bar and live music. Tapas. Meticulously maintained Kasbahs. Unique meeting space with outdoor break opportunities and a BICI station across the street.
2. The Library (the one with the books), and Al’s Big Dipper tuna sandwiches.
3. The amazing, historic churches, bells, steeples and events such as the “Breaking Brass” ensemble during a lunchtime music series.
4. Gertrude Zachery’s “secret” garden with fountains.
5. All the great coffee shops like The Brew, Deep Space, and Zendo, which are actually art studios with varying displays and always something uplifting to read or see.
6. Tingley Beach. Friendly ducks. Pedal boats! The waterfalls. Sculptures. Plants and flowers.
7. The bike path along the Bosque. Currently, the flowers are blooming along the fence. The well-maintained decks. The hidden pathways and ponds that the more introverted ducks have found.
8. Bio Park Train and friendly engineers. They always wave. Passengers that look happy.
9. Our amazing Zoo!!! The Run for the Zoo has been a family tradition since 2000ish. We love the zoo concerts on Friday nights after work and are looking forward to one of the Friday night happy hours on the Plaza with some Marble brew.
10. Downtown Growers’ Market and the Rail Yards. The well-used recycling stations and unique table and chairs are so impressive. (Thanks #PNMGrants)

11. Breaking Bad and ABQ Trolley tours. It's fun to run or ride by Jesse's house, and I recently encountered enthusiastic tourists from Germany taking photos and asking me to direct them to the house where they filmed Better Call Saul. I saw them later taking a photo of our KiMo Theater. I felt proud.

With sincere gratitude for the opportunity to work in a Downtown with easy, walkable, ride-able access to cool shops and galleries, like 516 Arts and Sumner & Dean, as well as nature and nightlife options depending on the season or mood. Love letter now includes the Imperial Building with the classy new grocery store and the new Monks' Ale location. Maybe my next walking adventure will be to see what's happening at the Sunshine Theater or the Box.