



Wednesday, October 11, 2006

## A modern solution for an old parking problem

**Proposed six-story building in downtown Santa Ana would employ a semiautomatic lift to make maximum use of a small space for off-street parking for eight cars.**

By AMY TAXIN  
The Orange County Register

SANTA ANA – On a narrow lot measuring just 40 feet wide, real estate developer David DiRienzo didn't know how he was going to fit parking.

Building an underground garage would be too costly and tricky with harrowing turns. Street parking in downtown Santa Ana – where finding a space is a stroke of luck – wasn't an option for owners of five live-work lofts.

The answer: a three-level, semi-automatic parking lift that works like a Rubik's Cube. The lift has eight trays filled with cars and a ninth left empty so it can shuffle vehicles around and deliver them to drivers on demand.

"I don't know if it makes sense for a big project or not. But for our project – eight cars – it makes all the sense in the world," said DiRienzo, estimating that residents will be able to get their cars in 20 to 40 seconds.

The lifts have been used in several infill developments in Northern California. Mark Rhoades, planning manager for the city of Berkeley, said the only drawback is people must wait to access their cars. But even some private homeowners have started installing them to maximize space, he said.

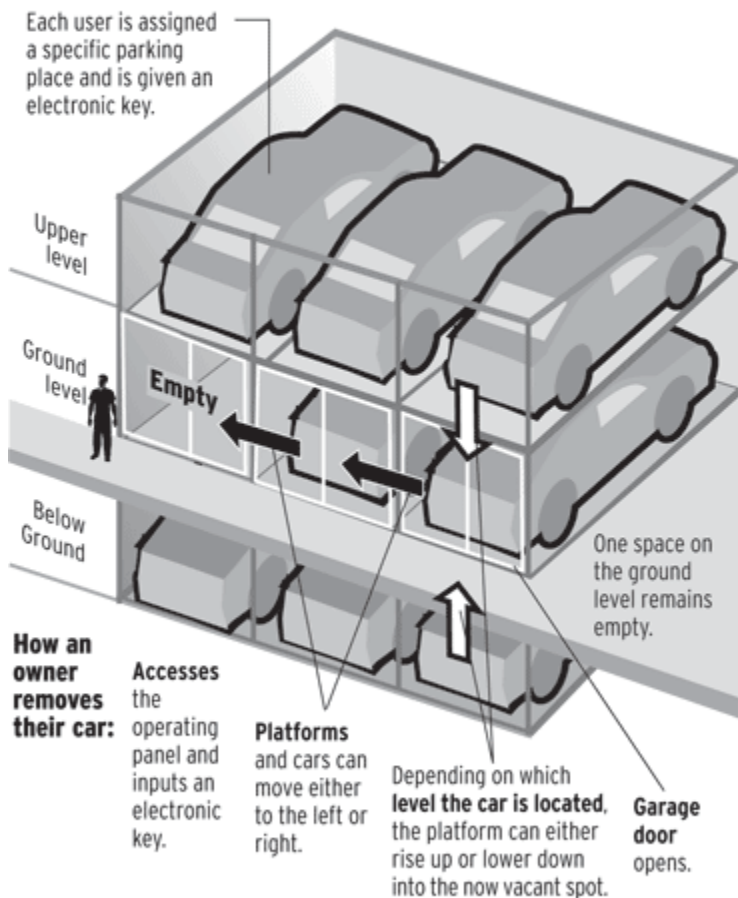
Under the proposal for 320 W. Fourth St. in Santa Ana, residents would have a special key and code to call up their car, said Norm Brudigam, owner of lift manufacturer Klaus Parking Systems Inc. The lift – excluding the cost to dig the hole for it – costs \$15,000 per car. DiRienzo said it would cost less than half the expense of building an underground garage.

Brudigam said it would be the first semi-automatic lift his company installs in Orange County. Despite a growing emphasis on urban living here, few areas are so packed that a lift is required, said Eric Heffner, principal for Windstar Communities, which is building Anaheim's Stadium Lofts.

"Even though it's more dense than it ever has been, we're probably still a ways away before those lifts will be needed or required as an amenity," Heffner said.

# Parking gets a lift

A proposed new building in the heart of Santa Ana's historic district would use a parking lift to maximize space. The parking systems come in several variations, but the one in Santa Ana would have three levels.



Source: KLAUS Car Parking Systems Inc.; [www.parklift.com/products.html](http://www.parklift.com/products.html)

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