

by Alex Achimore – 20-year resident, architect, former Planning Director for a redevelopment authority, 17 years as a building project manager for UC Davis—built the stadium, Schall Pool, ARC, managed design phase for all Student Housing bet. 2010-2017.

Summary:

The Specific Plan does well to present a vision of an optimum small city in the 21st Century. All the key issues of current city planning best practices (“urban design” in today’s lexicon)—a town center, infill development, affordable housing, sustainability, universal design, historic resources, walkability (reducing car use) and economic development—are described and applied to Downtown Davis. I do think it’s unfortunate that they are lumped together as if relatively equal—affordable housing, for instance, is not in the same category of need as “hierarchy of form” – and the Plan greatly exaggerates its ability to address any of them. Other aspects of the Plan, such as the recommendations to reduce parking well before the transportation alternatives are in place, and the fact that this is a new and difficult to comprehend set of regulations, may even be an impediment to achieving the Plan.

Comments:

The Plan document implies that the new code will simply generate the vision. On Page 212, the first Implementation Action listed is “Adopt the form-based Downtown Codeto generate compact, mixed-use development...” When I went to work for a redevelopment agency, I had similar hopes but soon learned that changing regulations is a very weak tool to spur any action. Ideally, regulations can steer development that is already being driven by economic incentives to include more community benefits along the way, but ill-advised regulations can also stall or prevent development.

Other than some nods to the importance of simplifying regulations, nothing like an incentive jumps out, and the document is anything but simple to wade through. Ideally, there would be some density bonuses to go with increased regulation of the form of bigger buildings, and that has spurred redevelopment in other places. Perhaps a one-page spreadsheet could be prepared to at least compare, block by block, the allowable density under the existing code and the proposed. Hopefully, it would show that there are advantages to redeveloping a large, one-story property into something 3 or 4 stories, but if there aren’t, it’s hard to see why a landowner who has paid off all their loans would be in any hurry to do so. In any case, it’s critical that the new Plan clearly simplifies entitlements or it might simply generate a shrug from the development community.

Despite our hopes for a future of greatly reducing car use, a well-discussed issue for many decades, the Plan’s strategy of eliminating parking lots now sends more negative messages to developers, merchants, and customers. Struggling merchants, and the number of empty storefronts downtown suggests there are many, are rightly concerned about any further obstacles to their customers, whether real or just perceived. I visit downtown several times a week, and have never not found a parking place within a block or two of my destination, so I don’t think additional parking is actually needed, but perception is otherwise, and that’s more than enough to discourage people from patronizing downtown stores.

A related problem in my view are the diagrams of development scenarios the Plan contains showing both removal of parking and new development, some of which might at least add parking demand, on the city-owned downtown parking lots. Regarding the site next to the existing plaza, I don’t sense any

underlying desire to create an even larger one and wonder whether that “need” truly came from the citizenry in the public meetings or from the handbook of good urban design (which I am certainly an adherent). If anything, the city’s placement of the trash and recycling storage shed right on F street was a major blunder and it should be relocated. But I think the existing plaza is an adequate size for a city the size of Davis, especially given that there are several other active public spaces like the train station, the Davis Commons (when it gets a new anchor) and the Farmer’s Market corner at 3rd and C. The existing downtown plaza’s limitation has more to do with the clutter of features, including the clock tower and light stands, that makes it appear already full and block views of the retail storefronts. Much would be accomplished by simplifying and eliminating many of the features and paving the plaza with a more accessible finish—I wonder if the existing pavers meet Universal Design standards.

The document is full of the jargon of the planning profession, which I can understand due to my professional background, but I’ve also learned how it makes little sense to the people supposedly being served. “Form Based Code” is obscure enough to the general public, but words like “place making” “public realm” “civic space” and “hierarchy of form” are anything but clear to non-professionals. Jargon is typically used to identify important issues, perhaps even to elevate their apparent importance, but compared to affordable housing and economic development, a lot of these issues could arguably be labeled trivial. I’ve never heard anyone complain of getting lost in downtown because of inadequate hierarchy of form, but the housing crisis is real, and the Plan doesn’t indicate any connection between its focus on form and the solution to more housing.

The document includes thorough analysis of numerous issues that are already best practices, many even required by law, and much of it feel redundant. Regarding sustainability, the California Green Building Code, the popularity of LEED certification, and UC Davis’ constant construction of “demonstration projects” more than drives a sustainable future for Davis. Universal Design is required by the American Disabilities Act, and the City of Davis is hardly dragging its feet, given all the sidewalk and intersection improvements. It’s not clear what the Downtown Plan has to add to the conversation.

I do think there are several moves the City could make that would push along the generally positive goals in the Plan, but they would require much more active intervention than a regulation-only approach. Despite elimination of the redevelopment agencies in California, the City still has the ability to pursue a public-private development partnership on property it owns, and the parking lot between 3rd, 4th, E and F could have the best potential to spur other development. I find the diagram for that site in the Plan to be unrealistic, but the city could issue an RFP that stipulates a high percentage, if not 100%, affordable housing on top of a 2-story parking garage that contains retail on the ground level facing the streets. The parking ratio for the housing should be far lower than current planning requires, albeit not zero, and the garage should maintain the existing number of spaces so as not to communicate the naivete that the current diagram indicates.

The City might have to accept a minimal return in the short run, but the advantages of adding housing to downtown, increasing the customer base for merchants, and simply creating a new buzz about redevelopment would be a good payoff by itself. In any case, I don’t see much of anything happening by simply adopting the new Downtown Plan, but a more robust intervention by the City could accomplish a lot, and there are numerous examples of how it has elsewhere.

Jennifer Anderson
William Fleeman
DA Land LLC
Andeman Company
1801 Hanover Drive Ste C
Davis, CA 95616

January 10, 2020

City of Davis
Downtown Core Area Planning Task Force
Planning Commission
City Council Members

Dear Members and Participants,

The Downtown Davis Advisory Plan has been in the process a long time. As you finalize the comments on the new plan, please include a few specific comments and requests.

1. Do not take away existing zoning as a fallback position. We are excited to see new and higher uses downtown – however, in order to make a project pencil it may need to be even higher than the new proposed zoning. Currently, there is no actual height limit for buildings in the downtown core, and a property owner can apply for a Conditional Use Permit beyond the allowed 2 stories. This conditional use option for additional stories should be kept in the plan going forward to allow for flexibility. We need housing. We need to do our share – but it needs to be financially feasible.
2. This is a young town – only 102 years old. We were farmland where there are now houses in the Downtown Davis area. We are the center and support multiple transportation options. This makes the area the FOCUS of the future generations that avoid cars and use alternatives. This area needs to be responsive and flexible to housing and job needs of the community. Downtown is to increase housing units by 1000 which cannot be accomplished in units of 2, 5 or 10 units per parcel. We will never reach our goal. Density and height is the solution.
3. The committee is made of community members but the obvious missing designated representative is a commercial property owner. Chamber of Commerce, Downtown BID, residential are all represented. Neighborhoods are represented. Commercial property ownership is not. No one should recuse themselves at this upcoming meeting. All voices should be heard. But as a commercial property owner with significant investment in the downtown, we feel left out and NOT represented.
4. The potential financial success of any development will determine IF it will be built. This has NOT been discussed. Davis has a very NEGATIVE REGIONAL reputation. It is not about staff. It is about our process, our fees and the time it takes to execute a project. This has to change if we want to see and execute change in our community. Time and money make or break a deal.

5. Some of our community members are unnecessarily rude and exhibit inappropriate behavior in a professional setting. We need to address this as a community. Bullying and intimidation is not acceptable anywhere, anytime. We have professional staff. We have laws and responsibilities to be welcoming and to accept our share of growth. If we don't grow we will die. Our schools are declining due to the lack of families affording Davis. This subject of "Welcome to Davis" needs to be addressed. (It is with deep gratitude that my grandparents came to Davis in the early years of the 1900's—they were welcomed. We returned as a family in the 1950's – we were welcomed.) BRING BACK the WELCOME MAT.

Thank you for your work. Let us make it happen together in a positive way.

Kind regards,

Jennifer Anderson

William Fleeman

Heather Bischel & Nicolas Fauchier-Magnan
516 G Street
Davis, CA 95616

January 11, 2020

Mr. Eric Lee, Planner
Department of Community Development and Sustainability
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard
Davis, CA 95616

Sent via email

Dear Eric,

We submit these comments on the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan (Oct. 2019).

As homeowners who live on the East side of the 500 block of G street with our two children, ages 4 and 1, we believe that the Downtown Plan will have a meaningful and overall positive impact on our lives. We chose to purchase our home (in 2017) in a large part for its close proximity to downtown and for its charming character that reflects the greater North Davis neighborhood. As a family, we are committed to building a vibrant community in Davis and to environmental sustainability. Before purchasing our home, we walked through the neighborhood to meet neighbors who share these values and families who we would come to regularly interact with and befriend. We applaud the efforts of the design team to balance varying goals and perspectives received to date. This letter represents our first engagement with the Downtown Plan design process. We have several specific comments that we hope are fully considered in the next draft of the Downtown Plan.

Our first and primary concern relates to the location of our home and the designation of the East side of the 500 block of G street as "Mainstreet Medium" - a strong departure from the "Neighborhood Small" designation from the Admin Draft Plan presented in early 2019 (see Attachment). What was the motivation for this change? While we understand that our block has potential for more intense development, we are concerned that the "Mainstreet Medium" designation would encourage and eventually allow our home to be subsumed by large commercial buildings, blocking natural light to our living spaces and forever altering the character of the neighborhood. We believe that the designation of Mainstreet Medium (4-story block-form buildings with small to no setbacks) is an extreme change from the one-story single-family homes currently on this block and is inconsistent with the incremental changes proposed in most of the rest of the Downtown Plan. Additionally, the "Mainstreet Medium" designation is directly across from a "Neighborhood Small" designation on the West side of 500

block of G street. This stark change from the lowest density category to the second-highest density category is not seen elsewhere in the Downtown Plan, and seems inconsistent with the smoother, more thoughtful transitions proposed in the rest of the Plan. **We request a change in designation of the East side of the 500 block of G street to "Neighborhood Medium (3 stories maximum)", which would allow for a smoother transition of scale.** An example of a similar transition in the Downtown Plan is the West side of B street, which is also designated as "Neighborhood Medium (3-story maximum)" and is adjacent to the single-family parcels in the University / Rice Lane neighborhood. A "Neighborhood Medium (3 stories maximum)" designation on our block would allow for a sensible increase in density and building height over current conditions, but would make for a more gradual transition with the West side of the 500 block of G street. We hope, in any final designation, that future developments would continue to complement the historic character of the neighborhood.

Our second concern relates to the indication of our home (516 G Street) as a potential historic resource. The consequences of listing our home as a potential historical resource have been challenging to interpret and left us with an increased level of uncertainty regarding the future of our home. After a brief discussion with Eric Lee and others, it is our understanding that the listing of our home, and of the Hibbert store, as potential historical resources does not mean that they will necessarily receive such designation. Our comments in the preceding paragraph were thus made with the assumption that our home will not be listed as a historical (merit) resource. Should the official historical resource designation be established, we understand that this would set in place adjacency standards to the North and South of our home, as detailed in Table 40.14.080.C . These adjacency standards have limited effects on adjacent properties on the North and South sides, and no effect on adjacent property behind our home (to the East at the Hibbert lumber yard). Altogether, we don't believe that these adjacency standards would sufficiently protect our home to a liveable status within a block that is otherwise "Mainstreet Medium". The stark contrast between our one-story, single-family home and adjacent 4-story block-form buildings would make our house feel out of place. We are concerned that should the "Mainstreet Medium" designation be retained in the Downtown Plan, and a historical resource designation be established for our house, we would essentially be displaced from our home with limited capacity to realize enhanced property value (due to limitations set on historical resources). We believe a "Neighborhood Medium (3 stories maximum)" designation would be more compatible with the potential historic status of our home (whether officially established or not).

Our third concern relates to safety and noise impact of the freight railroad tracks. The four crossings that are within or on the edge of the Downtown Plan boundaries (3rd, 4th, 5th and 8th street crossings) are protected with automatic gates; however, these gates only block half the width of the crossing and can be circumvented by going into the oncoming traffic lane. Pedestrians walking on the sidewalk against traffic are fully unprotected from crossing the tracks. As part of the general infrastructure upgrades that will be implemented with the Downtown Plan, **we strongly feel that these crossings should all be equipped with four-quadrant gates blocking both directions of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic on**

both sides of the crossing, to greatly improve their safety. We also feel that commercial properties and streets adjacent to the tracks (Co-op block, 6th street, Sweetbriar) should be equipped with fencing to prevent people (especially children) from wandering on the tracks. Four-quadrant gates are an approved supplemental safety measure per [Appendix A](#) of CFR Title 49 part 222. Implementation of safe crossings in this manner would also allow the half-mile section of railroad from the Davis Depot to 8th street to automatically qualify as a “quiet zone” in which trains are not required to sound their horn (per [this DOT guidance document](#) for establishing quiet zones). Establishing a quiet zone would be a significant benefit to all Downtown residents, employees, and visitors and is even more important as the Downtown area becomes more densely populated.

Our fourth concern relates to the designation of nearby parcels as potential sites for parking lots or structures. Behind the one-story homes on the East side of the 500 block of G street lies the Hibbert property, and to the North of our block is the Davis Food Co-Op. Chapter 6 of the Plan notes both properties as potential locations for future parking lots or structures. We believe that establishing parking structures or parking lots on either of these parcels would make our neighborhood less attractive, less walkable, more congested with vehicle traffic, and would fail to realize the potential for a vibrant, livable neighborhood. We understand how affordability of new Downtown housing will be improved by having no parking minimums for new developments, but we do not want our neighborhood to be a casualty of that otherwise sensible policy by becoming an area for large-scale car parking.

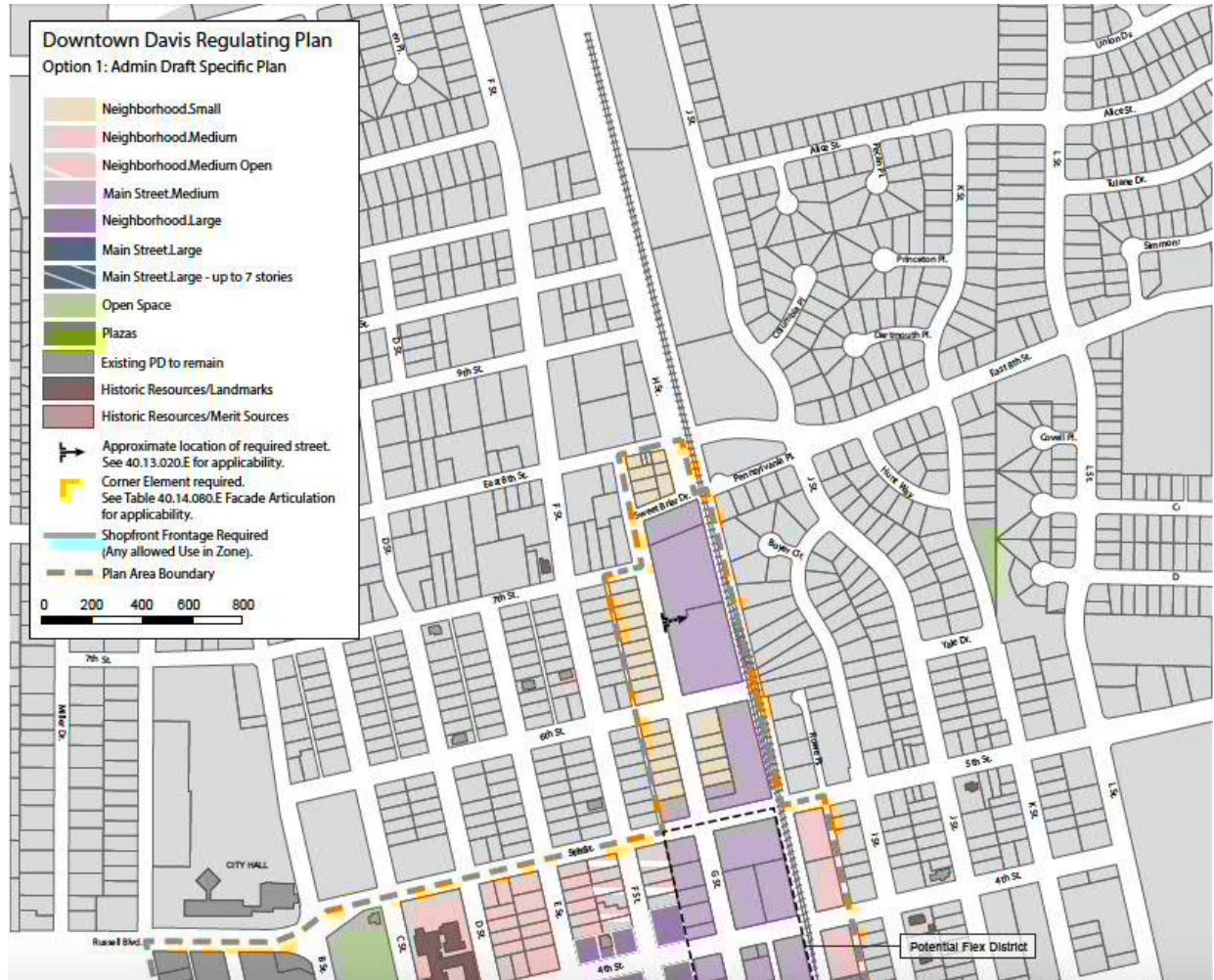
Our last concern relates to the protection and enhancement of the downtown tree canopy. The concepts in Chapter 7.1 on “Low Impact Development - Green Infrastructure” are valuable on the whole, but this section does not make any mention of the extensive tree canopy present in much of the Downtown area. There lacks a coherent vision and policy on managing and enhancing the tree canopy - overlooking the significant value and ecosystem services currently brought by this canopy (e.g., heat island reduction, bird and insect habitat). The only mention of existing trees in the draft Code requires the developer to make “every effort [...] to incorporate mature on-site trees into the required landscaping, subject to approval by the Director.” (40.14.040.D.4) This hints to a piecemeal, discretionary approach and does not constitute a coherent policy for preserving and enhancing our valuable tree canopy. This is especially important to clarify in the Main Street designations, in which block form buildings and limited setbacks offer little space for substantial vegetation other than street trees.

Thank you for your extensive efforts in this undertaking and for taking our comments and concerns into consideration as the Draft Plan is updated. We look forward to further engagement in the planning and implementation of this plan.

Sincerely,

Heather Bischel and Nicolas Fauchier-Magnan

Attached: Admin Draft Downtown Plan, early 2019, showing the East side of the 500 G St block as “Residential Small”





BROWMAN DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, INC.

Development • Leasing • Management

January 14, 2020

Ashley Feeney, Assistant City Manager
City of Davis, Community Development & Sustainability
23 Russell Blvd, Suite 2
Davis, CA 95616

Re: Comments to Downtown Specific Plan and Form Based Code

Dear Ashley,

I would like to share with you some comments and suggestions relating to the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan and Form Based Code. First of all, as an owner of 5 buildings in the downtown, including the two buildings abutting the south side of E St Plaza (Brinley and Quessenberry Buildings), Cinema Buildings with Philz Coffee and Acacia Wellness and the Red Brick building with Froggy's, we are excited to participate in this process and we are impressed by the amount of hard work and community input that has gone into this process already. We believe this Specific Plan and Form Based Code along with some new and significant job growth in Davis have the potential to transform downtown and create a more vibrant urban environment for citizens to live and work. With this in mind, I would like to provide the following comments for consideration by the members of the DPAC, Planning Commission and City Council.

Specific Plan Section 3.3, Sustainability Themes in the Specific Plan

The last sentence of Page 40 states the following: "The Specific Plan recommends that sustainability strategies for Downtown be developed in a separate process, resulting in a Sustainability Implementation Plan for Downtown." While we support incorporating sustainability measures in new developments, having a separate discretionary process outside of the Specific Plan to determine sustainability could undermine the Specific Plan and the point of form based code which allows for developments to move forward if they meet certain criteria dictated in the form based code and the intent of the Specific Plan. All sustainability requirements should be listed in the Specific Plan and projects that meet these requirements and the form based code should be allowed to move forward without a separate sustainability review.

Specific Plan Chapter 4, Built Environment

This chapter discusses the transformation of E St Plaza into Davis Square. In the first year, it is proposed to remove significant parking from E Street Plaza to expand the open space. Given the demand for parking in and around E Street Plaza, we are very concerned about losing any more parking in the near term as it could negatively impact the businesses in the immediate area. Stabilizing an already shaky tenant base, and continuing to attract high quality retailers and restaurant operators is a critical part of a vibrant future for Downtown. Further, redevelopment of the neighboring properties will require the E St Plaza property for staging of construction materials and equipment. The best time to build Davis Square is after most or all of the neighboring properties have been redeveloped.

Form Based Code – Main Street Large

We suggest the following adjustments to the standards of the Main Street Large Zone:

- In general, minor deviations from the standards in the zone should require an exception to be approved by the Planning Director or equivalent.

Main Street Large Zone (MS-L 40.13.130) & Main Street Large Zone: Up to 7 stories (MS-L 40.13.130)

- Table D
 - o Residential – Requiring residential units to be raised 12” above ground eliminates the possibility of live work units. Consider eliminating this requirement or creating a carveout for live work.
 - o Non Residential – “Entry” flush with sidewalk
 - o Ground Floor Ceiling 14’. Consider reducing this to 12’ or at least an average height of 14’.
 - o Footprint – Revise depth to 30’ to provide more flexibility in design. This could also help create smaller spaces for more pop up style tenants.
 - o Lot Coverage: Required interior walkways should be deducted from the lot coverage of a development.
 - o Setbacks – Setbacks require more flexibility and/or a waiver on encroachments for architectural elements to allow for articulation of the building elevations.
- Table F
 - o Parking – Revise to 1 stall per studio/1BR and 1.5 stalls per 2BR+
- Table J – Signage
 - o Directory – 1 per building may be insufficient to help people navigate around the building to shops/residential entries and through a pedestrian corridor. Suggest a maximum of 4 directory signs per building or no maximum.

Allowable Uses

- Health and Fitness uses should be Permitted Uses (P) in this zone. These tenants have become a standard component of a healthy tenant mix in any shopping center or downtown.

Davis Square Requirements (Fig 40.13.070.B)

- Suggest including a provision whereby the City may dedicate portions of civic space as part of development in exchange for community benefit. This is ultimately the city’s decision and it will need to determine if the community benefit is worth the dedication. The city should be allowed to make this determination without amending the Specific Plan and/or Form Based Code.
- Dimension requirements:
 - o B/C – Suggest deleting the setback requirements in the E Street Plaza. The city owns and controls the land and should be able to determine the proper size of Davis Square without requiring an amendment to the Specific Plan and/or Form Based Code.
 - o D – Suggest deleting the 60’ setback requirement above 4th story as the 5th floor and above will be too inefficient to build economically.
- Pedestrian connection: These required connections should count towards public space and should not count towards FAR.

- This plan needs to consider operation functions like driveway access, trash enclosures and utility access. There need to be placeholders and flexibility so that the form based code can work as intended.
- The diagram shows required shopfront frontage along 100% of the building frontages. There needs to be a percentage of minimum linear storefront required which allows for utility rooms, driveways and other service areas. (See also Shopfront 40.14.090.J)

Passage 40.14.100.E

This provision requires the entire pedestrian passage to be non-residential shop fronts or residential ground floors and pedestrian entries; In practicality this is typically a logical location for some portion of non-glazed back of house uses like utility areas with tasteful wall treatments. We suggest allowing for flexibility for utility rooms, service areas, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these documents. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Stephens', is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Jim Stephens
Vice President
Browman Development Company, Inc

From: Marijean <marijeanburdick@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 12, 2020 5:06 PM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Submitting a comment on the draft Downtown Plan.

January 12, 2020

Meg Arnold, Chair
Downtown Plan Advisory Committee
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard
[Davis, CA 95618](#)

Dear Downtown Plan Advisory Committee Chair Arnold and members:

We support up to 3 stories on parcels at the periphery of downtown neighborhoods. Also-it is equally important to thoughtfully design any redevelopment and new buildings to fit in the character and setting, and to transition from downtown into the surrounding neighborhoods both in mass and scale. The Trackside property east of the railroad tracks is a specific example.

Historic Neighborhoods:

We are proud of the Old North, Old East, and University Rice Lane neighborhoods. There are so many lovely private family homes, cottages, California bungalows, duplexes, accessory cottages, beautiful gardens and yards, as-well-as small businesses. These vibrant neighborhoods are supported by homeowners, renters and business owners, who together have built a strong, healthy community. Our neighborhoods in turn are cornerstones to the vitality and health of Downtown Davis.

Here we live, and are the caretakers of our town's most significant historic homes and structures. The character and setting of our grand Davis neighborhoods along the perimeter of Downtown contributes immensely to our amazing and unique town. Passionately we believe in preserving Davis' attributes, as they are irreplaceable treasures! We also emphasize that city officials and developers have a duty to honor and protect the unique character of these magnificent settings, and the historical character of Davis. They should carefully review and approve new development and redevelopment projects to enhance the future of Davis without harming our town's finest qualities! Development should with certainty keep to two or three stories as it meets with the neighborhoods. Development should have appropriate architectural treatments.

Davis has an extraordinary old-town train depot. It can tell visitors the story of Davis. Highlighting early train, agricultural, and university themes in a future plan for downtown could work well for preservation and could have a positive and harmonious effect, compelling visitors and the community alike to enjoy this beautiful town with much to share.

Old East Davis neighborhood seems to be a continuous target. It appears that there's a long time plan by the city and developers to expand downtown and effectively push us out of our homes.

Our home is across the alley from the Core Transition East. When we purchased our home on I Street in 2001, the property behind our parcel at [901-919 3rd Street](#) was zoned as a single level commercial property. Although the structure of the building immediately behind our home has remained as a single level commercial property, the zoning of this parcel was changed to allow mixed use. When the Trackside property was purchased in 2015 it was zoned to allow a two story, (three if carefully designed) mixed use building. Clearly the investors bought the property in 2015 knowing this. Nevertheless they had the confidence to submit a plan to the city for a massive redevelopment.

To this day Old East Davis neighbors continue to participate in city planning processes. Neighbors have been open, and welcome a reasonable plan that preserves the irreplaceable attributes of Davis's old town charm, and the character and setting of the adjacent neighborhood homes.

It is absolutely incredible that massive four story buildings (best suited for the core downtown) would ever be considered directly next to single level homes adjacent to a neighborhood. This action shows blatant disregard for thoughtful transitions from downtown into surrounding neighborhoods.

DPAC Process:

In October 2019, the work of the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee was presented for public review and opened for the comment period. Yet what is being presented to the public is incomplete and misleading. Beautiful illustrations of thoughtful and reasonable structures are colorfully displayed. However, the pictures are starkly different than the written text. Three stories was discussed at length by DPAC to uphold intensity in the core with smaller buildings on the edge.

It is unbelievable that regardless of the process, the time and tax dollars spent and more than one unanimous vote in the DPAC process to carefully transition from downtown into the surrounding neighborhoods with a maximum of three stories, we are right back to defending against taller structures.

So where did the four story change come from?

After many months of conversation in this DPAC community forum, DPAC reconvened on February 21, 2019. City staff unexpectedly introduced an alternate plan. So different than the one that the citizen-based committee and Opticos collaborated on, that it cause palpable concern in the room.

From that meeting there was concern that "City staff wanted to take control of the process and direction." And, "Staff changes would create bigger buildings around the perimeter of the core and create a ring of tall buildings around the core."

Although we'd like to believe that the process works and can be trusted, the city's presentation of plan B showed just the opposite! The city's altered plan called for four story structures, and in effect created a wall in our neighborhood, again with no transition and no consideration for the community, or respect for collaborative effort and dedicated work between DPAC and the Opticos team. Frankly, the plan B announcement on February 21, 2019 seemed to have shocked many in the room, including the Opticos consultants Mitali Ganguly, and Dan Parolek. Response from Opticos staff mentioned, "that four story height reference in Neighborhood Medium zone was a mistake, and that they would get back to DPAC with clarification, and that there was no other mention of that issue by city staff one way or another."

Our homes, businesses, neighborhoods and commitment to the current health, vitality, and character of Davis were being offered up by the city. To that we say, make your investments, build respectfully, but don't take from others to get what you want!

Livability becomes a real issue because families, with young children and grandchildren, retirees, students, working professionals and seniors will be affected by the impacts of a solid wall of massive buildings:

Deprivation of

- sun-light
- privacy
- peace and quiet
- clean air
- traffic safety
- natural light
- historical setting

It destroys a sense of place and will force us out of our homes.

The preservation of community, character, and historical values is vitally important to us. OEDNA has been very clear with the city and remains determined to preserve and protect our neighborhood and community. Together and individually we have stressed that it is of the utmost importance to create a plan that will help the city and developers actively pursue a profitable future for downtown, while respecting neighborhoods, historical settings and the uniquely charming Davis.

Sincerely,

Marijean and Ray Burdick
[315 I Street](#)
[Davis, CA 95616-4214](#)

cc: Brett Lee, Mayor
Members of the City Council

M. D. Byars Thesis Brief

for The City of Davis

1/14/2020

Author: Michelle Byars

After researching downtown Davis from a design, inclusion, and transportation perspective, I reached several conclusions through my research that I recommend here to be included in the Downtown Specific Plan and the form-based codes. The E Street Plaza space will likely be designed under a different city council and different commissioners. By explicitly stating these recommended processes, design requirements, and the demands for a civic gathering space, downtown Davis is more likely to achieve community support from the outset.

For more detailed explanations, examples, and additional recommendations, please refer to my full thesis, "An Inclusive Civic Gathering Place in Davis: Connecting Community Input, City Goals, and Design at the E Street Plaza" that is being submitted along with this brief.

Process recommendations to include:

1. **Deep outreach** must be performed during the planning and design phases to gain both financial support and endorsement from the community at large.
 - a. An advisory committee representing various interests and various cultures that include: multi-racial people, people from all generations from small high school children to UCD students and the experienced generation.
 - b. It is critical to include people with disabilities to ensure Universal Design.
 - c. Participatory design outreach – go to the people, go to the site.

Form-based code, design and policy recommendations to include:

1. Prohibit waste storage on civic property to free up and provide cleaner pedestrian space.
 - a. Require commercial businesses and landowners to store their waste and waste run-off within the boundaries of their private property.
 - b. Enforce violations.
 - c. Offer daily waste pickup for downtown businesses and residents.
2. Prohibit privately owned seating on the plaza to prevent losing civic space and to ensure social equity for those that cannot patronize those businesses.
 - a. Encourage private café/street seating on E and F streets.
3. Employ fun design elements to invite children and families to the plaza, but do not allow a segregated playground section.
4. Promote UC Davis as a significant part of Davis' identity and pride.
 - a. Use UC Davis blue/gold colors in designs.
 - b. Provide wi-fi on the plaza to encourage students to visit.
 - c. Take advantage of the intellectual knowledge at UC Davis by partnering on events, and engaging people downtown in the artistic, sustainability, and technological disciplines.

5. Indicate a long-term economic generator(s):
 - a. Become regional leaders in applying and showcasing sustainability.
 - b. Become regional leaders in applying universal design.
 - c. Prioritize active, progressive, and safe downtown transportation to rejuvenate Davis' identity as such.
6. Focus transportation funds and grants on creating safer active transportation facilities.
 - a. Protected bike lanes.
 - b. Wider, inclusive sidewalks and crosswalks.
 - c. Transit and ride share zone and process improvements.
7. Require people with disabilities be involved on all civic design projects.
8. Require mitigation of heat island effect through vegetation and passive solar design requirements.
9. Designate required sustainable solutions for downtown home and businesses such as: water usage and storage, implementing renewable energy, and solid waste reduction measures.

An Inclusive Civic Gathering Place in Davis:

Connecting Community Input, City Goals, and Design at the E Street Plaza

By

MICHELLE DENISE BYARS

THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Community Development Graduate Group

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

Approved:

Stephen Wheeler, PhD, Chair

David de la Peña, PhD

Rachel Hartsough, M.S.

Committee in Charge

2019

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: Introduction.....	1
Positionality - Relating Self to the Research	2
Research Method.....	5
Literature Review: Community Development and Urban Planning.....	9
CHAPTER 2: Analysis in Context	23
Situating the Project	23
Participation in the Downtown Specific Plan Process	24
Comparing Alternative Locations.....	33
E St. Plaza – Site Analysis and Existing Conditions	37
Analysis regarding Sustainability	56
Analysis regarding Inclusivity	70
Analysis of Davis’ Identity	79
CHAPTER 3: Design Strategies, Recommendations, and Final Design	91
Sustainability Strategies	92
Inclusivity strategies	103
Identity Strategies.....	107
Final Design – The Davis HUB	112
Recommendations to the City of Davis	125

CHAPTER 4 Conclusion	129
Works Cited.....	130
Notations	136
Terminology & Acronyms.....	137
Acknowledgements	138

ABSTRACT

This design research delivers a design and recommendations to meet the community's vision and goals of an inclusive civic gathering space in the heart of downtown Davis, California. This work was intended to inform the City of Davis Downtown Davis Specific Plan (Specific Plan), and the subsequent form-based code. The City's central objective of the Specific Plan and form-based codes was to improve the economic and social viability downtown by providing a predictable development process for landowners and bordering neighborhoods.

The Davis community indicated strong support for the development of a civic gathering space at the E Street Plaza, therefore it is the focus of this design research. My knowledge of community development and engagement, landscape architecture, environmental design, and transportation practices guided this research and findings. The design objective applies the community vision, values, and aspirations for a communal gathering space by establishing these goals:

1. **Sustainability** pilot demonstration an intensity to attract visitors.
2. **Inclusivity** modeled as public space planning and design for people of all ages and abilities.
3. **Identify** Davis as a progressive, health conscious, intellectual city.

Analysis confirmed that the centrally located E Street Plaza and the adjoining building forms, spaces, and streetscape create an ideal form to hold a gathering space. The property is city-owned, highly visible, has a people catchment, and is accessible by multiple travel modes. This location possesses an exceptional opportunity to exhibit progressive energy technology

and sustainability techniques, demonstrate commitment to fully integrated inclusivity, and to validate Davis' overall identity.

Sustainability is exhibited through these essential features:

1. Pilot and model the newest energy collection systems.
2. Deliver a low-stress streetscape for all travel modes and allocating space for next-generation transportation.
3. Prohibit commercial waste storage on civic property to induce waste reduction and improve pedestrian facilities.

Inclusivity is delivered through these key strategies:

1. Apply a Universal Design framework from the planning to implementation phase.
2. Prohibit privately-owned seating, provide open seating and other shared amenities like restrooms.
3. Integrate interactive sculpture and playful elements throughout the space to include people of all ages and abilities, from families to the experienced generation.

To distinguish Davis' identity, one that honors and rejuvenates the story of Davis, the design aesthetic focused on the following elements:

1. Historic geography, by exhibiting a ground plane of the oldest recorded map.
2. Portray Davis' achievements in bicycling transportation through design.
3. Community reflection through structures that are mirrored underneath, to see at once one's own reflection as well as the community in which they belong.

The final recommendations revealed through this design research could help establish specifications for Downtown sustainability infrastructures, design process, and conceivable techniques to communicate Davis' identity. I expect these findings to open conversation about designing a gathering space and further refining the community vision for such a space.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

My design research project comprises a site in Davis, California at the E Street Plaza (as it was built in 1999), the adjoining parking lot, and the bordering streets. Logistically speaking, the E Street Plaza area meets many basic requirements like being centrally located with a people catchment and possessing the ideal size and form for civic gatherings. Politically speaking, the community and the appointed representatives on the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee, support this site becoming a civic gathering space to attract visitors to the heart of Davis. My thesis research seeks to answer the question: How could a design of the E Street Plaza area in downtown Davis, California create an inclusive civic gathering space that reflects Davis' identity and vision to sustainably progressively respond to climate change?

My concerns about downtown Davis (Downtown) first emerged from being a mother. During the years 2006-2012, I was a new mom with crawling and toddling babies; I felt isolated at home while caring for my small people. I was desperate for social interaction with adults and needed a place that suited both my needs and those of my little ones. I could "schedule" a playdate at someone's home, but that limits relations to those invited. My desire was to be Downtown with more organic interactions for both myself and my littles, clean houses being unnecessary. Because Downtown civic spaces did not offer this, especially on days with inclement weather, we spent many rainy days at privately-owned businesses like a baby retail store and a centrally located corporate bookstore. In these places we had protection from the weather, people to interact with, and most importantly, safe clean bathrooms reachable with very short notice. However, these locations came with the expectation of spending money.

Both places have since closed, further limiting opportunities for current families with young children to hang out downtown.

Fast forward a few years, now a mom with pre-teen children, I have different concerns about their presence downtown, primarily their ability to safely bike or walk to and around downtown. Every year around August, I begin alerting them of all the new students coming to town who have never lived in a town with so many walkers and bikers. I coach them about how the cars and other bikers will often not follow the rules, nor notice them, especially during this time of year as they become acquainted with the local transportation culture. These hazardous conditions do not provide a suitable environment to include kids and families, thus limiting patronage and viability of downtown.

Positionality - Relating Self to the Research

My experience in life, as a mother, a UC Davis student, being a longtime Davis resident, and my professional experiences influence the methodology for this research project. I am sensitive to vulnerable and underrepresented populations after having grown up quite poor. My experience as a mom influences my inclusive design strategies that invite all generations to participate, including families. My experience as a bicyclist in Davis for 20 years lead to concerns about my children's safety and therefore shape my transportation design strategies. My education level and professional experiences also add to my worldview because as an environmentalist, I value sustainability both during implementation and in its ability to provide a demonstration space for research pilot projects on new sustainable technologies. As an air pollution specialist at the California Air Resources Board and as a researcher for Yolo County

Waste Management, I recognize that it is critical to our future that we reduce carbon emissions from vehicle trips, solid waste, and other sources.

The City of Davis' Downtown Davis Specific Plan (Specific Plan) outreach process formed a Downtown Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC), appointed by the Davis City Council (Council) in November 2017. This committee's function is to provide individual input and group recommendations to the City Planning Commission and City Council, and to broaden community outreach efforts. The DPAC has 19 members, some of whom represent specific neighborhoods or interests. My formal research on downtown Davis began when I was appointed to the DPAC by City Council member, Lucas Frerichs to represent the community at large and subsequently being elected as Vice Chair. Although I sincerely attempt to represent the community at large, consensus on specific topics is difficult within the entire community. I recognize that as a member, my opinions may hold more weight than the average citizen and that the process has also had an influence on my viewpoints.

The DPAC is meant to play a significant role in forming the vision of downtown, and the new Specific Plan and hence, it informs my design research. As Vice Chair on this committee for two years I have had a unique vantage point to observe the new Specific Plan process and the entities that assert their influence. I could quickly ascertain ideas that the community at large did or did not support, as well as the representatives from Business and Development sectors. I acknowledge that my position has likely had an influence on my research, creating biases in the research question, methods, findings, and recommendations.

When I completed my bachelor's degree at UC Davis in 1997, Downtown was much different. Shopping locally is a core value of mine, so I have frequented downtown businesses

for more than 20 years. I've watched the E Street Plaza space go from being all parking to adding a small plaza. I've seen the Downtown change from the primary retail location of Davis, to a place that primarily offers eateries and other service-oriented businesses. I've been here to see the UCD student enrollment increase by 15,000, bringing with them additional staff and faculty. In 1997, Downtown served the smaller student population well. Students patronized the local eateries and met up at the 2 or 3 small, undiscerning bars. However, as the population and retail economy have changed, the general form and shape of downtown has changed very little.

My life experiences, or lack thereof, and my demographic and personal inclinations influence this research. As a long-time resident with an environmental and architectural background, I've spent years thinking about the function and design of Downtown and E Street Plaza. Now, as a master's student studying community development, transportation, landscape architecture, and environmental design, my ideas have expanded and been influenced by my classes, research, and my role as a teaching assistant. Interactions with other students have also informed my current views about Downtown.

I recognize too that although I have studied this area for years, my understanding of this space is limited. As white woman currently in her 40's, without disabilities, who is part of the dominant demographic, I cannot fully grasp the experiences of the older generations, men, or people that are in the minority demographics of our population, including people of color, those living in Davis with very low incomes, nor people with disabilities.

Research Method

My site analysis spanned over several years and includes more than 30 site visits in which I document the quantity and quality of behaviors and uses. While observing, I saw near collisions between pedestrians, cyclist, people with mobility assistance devices, and vehicles. The conclusions I've reached are influenced by my limited experience and limited time to observe. They are also based in context, meaning they apply for this site and may not hold true for another site.

John Creswell defines widely accepted approaches to research for academia. In several versions of his work, with varying co-authors, he describes qualitative research in terms of words and open-ended questions (Creswell, 2017, 3) often pursuing 'why?' to generate data. He describes quantitative research in terms of numbers and closed-ended questions that reveal cause and effect. Mixed method uses both qualitative and quantitative. Furthermore, he provides four frameworks or worldviews, that shape the research and may be applied to the method of choice: (post)positivist, constructivist, transformative, and pragmatic. Creswell describes postpositivism as one that is focused on cause and effect and empirical observation. Constructivism uses individual, subjective responses to situations and seeks to understand the social experience. The transformative worldview recognizes how politics play a role in social oppression, seeking to collaboratively produce action that will transform lives, especially of those not typically represented. Pragmatism tends to be real-world oriented and seeks to derive knowledge from a problem and find solutions using any method that works. (Creswell, 2017)

Landscape architectural design research methods, the related inquiries, and other question-driven projects involving design have not been well-established or defined in academia. Sanda Lenzholder, Ingrid Duchhart, and Jusuck Koh propose a framework for landscape architecture research that is based on Creswell, asserting that it can improve interdisciplinary communication tools. I support this view because I find that images and drawings effectively communicate ideas, without direct knowledge of other disciplines. This research team shows landscape architecture research is valid and rigorous by describing and grouping the types of knowledge sought. Based on this, they found three types of landscape architectural design research: research for design (to inform the design), research-on-design (queries on finished designs), and research by design/research as design/research through design (active practice of designing). The term they use to describe the latter research is "Research through designing" (RTD). RTD addresses socio-cultural issues, asks questions to generate something new, and is embedded in context. (Lenzholder, 2013)

My primary method is qualitative; however, some quantitative analysis was also performed. Transformative worldview guides my research since the purpose is to influence City policy that will ultimately change Downtown. I use the constructivist RTD methodology to determine how a design can meet the aspirations of the Davis community. While researching, I have applied my research question to every element of the design and in turn, the designing process has influenced my recommendations for the design. Limitations of this methodology include my personal biases, my personal aesthetics, and my limited experience with design and design processes.

I used several methods to collect data for this research. I studied many public documents about Downtown. Through behavior mapping at the E Street Plaza site I recorded counts of people using various travel modes, I kept qualitative notes of my observations, and photographed the Site to document use, amenities and behavior. To better understand why people were present and what they were doing or how they were using the space, I performed qualitative interviews of several people including city staff, firefighters, parking engineers, and small business owners. These collection methods are limited due to my limited time at the site, my skillset, and my ability to read and comprehend all documents. They are further limited by the people I chose to interview who also have a subjective, limited, personal, experience-based opinion.

Photography played an important role in my ideation and site analysis process. I documented at least 3000 images of the Site and related sites over the last two years. These images are of the physical site, amenities, and human behavior. During this time, I also used travel opportunities to study other plazas, town squares, streetscapes, and downtowns. The travel images I've taken were also to document the site, amenities, construction, and behaviors that could apply to Davis. These images provide inspiration for my ideas, validate the size spaces that work or don't. Photography also allowed me to analyze changes to the Site, such as several businesses turning over or remodeling and a new and expanded trash building added to the E Street parking lot. I've been able to record just how much double parking occurs and by whom. I also photographed people using a wheelchair or a walker having difficulty in getting to and navigating the plaza space. I acknowledge these methods are inherently biased as I chose the day and times to record the information and this information may not be comprehensive

because my time was limited. I also chose when and how to photograph a scene and its postprocessing. I returned several times to record specific images to make them more explicit for this paper, such as alleyway conditions and Davis logos.

As Vice Chair of DPAC, I used the participant observation method within the Specific Plan process as I interacted with people in the community and DPAC while collecting data. (Jorgensen, 2015) I have taken detailed notes at the 18 DPAC meetings over the last two years. I have also attended several days of two separate participatory design workshops, as well as several pop-up outreach events, and other public forums. I summarized the DPAC opinions for a letter to the Council to be included with the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan release. In this process, I analyzed the meeting minutes, my notes and other relevant documents such as the existing conditions report. These qualitative methods are inherently biased because my personal involvement and skill level affect the interviews, observations, and data collection.

The all-encompassing limitation goes back to my positionality discussion. The methods employed, skilled accessed, and data interpretation to name a few parts of the process, is all based on my personal experiences and my positionality. The data collected from individuals is also based on their view of the world. In combination, all these limitations mean that I am only able to generate a partial understanding of the research (Myers, 2010). I want to recognize that my design is but one of many possibilities, however the recommendations derived from this research are applicable for the City of Davis and could be used for any design.

Literature Review: Community Development and Urban Planning

Here I present an academic exploration of the theories and concepts that have an influence over the design of a civic gathering space. The ideas of community, successful urban squares, inclusivity, and accessible design are all relevant to this paper.

First and foremost, as a Community Development student, and because this project is focused on community gathering, I must discuss the term “community”. This term can have a multitude of definitions and an accepted definition is still being debated in academic circles. In the planning and development world the term is often used to invoke an emotional feeling of connectedness. For this research paper, community refers to the place-based community of Davis. This includes residents, workers and frequent visitors of Davis.

When this research paper uses “community” in combination with “gathering” it means a physical place that offers the opposite of isolation, rather it offers a place to connect with friends and strangers and provide a sense of belonging among citizens (Block, 2009). Peter Block summarized it with this, “to transform the isolation and self-interest within our communities into connectedness and caring for the whole” (Block, 2009). It is a place of community well-being, where people can form high quality relationships and cohesion among its citizens (Putnam, 2000).

To describe the intent of the community gathering space, I also call on Ray Oldenburg who writes about the concept of community and established the theory of a third place (Oldenburg, 2001). Oldenburg describes the first place as home, the second as work, and the third place as one that allows public social interaction without the need to spend money (Oldenburg, 2001). Subsequent to his theory, others have suggested that coffee shops, where

money exchange is expected, can also serve as a third place, (Rosenbaum, 2007) however it is limited to particular social groups with adequate financial means.

To ensure basic sustainability practices for the plaza, opportunities for travel to and from must be considered. When people use active travel to get to their recurrent destinations, their carbon footprint is reduced and their health is improved (Higgins, 2005). A civic space can promote sustainability simply by being centrally located among other common destinations and providing complete streets, see figure 1. According to Smart Growth America, a “Complete



Figure 1 This is an example of a complete street. Opticos, the City's consultant that is preparing the Specific Plan, proposes this layout for F Street. (Opticos, 2019)

Streets” approach “integrates people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks. This helps to ensure streets are safe for people of all ages and abilities, balance the needs of different modes, and support local land uses, economies, cultures, and natural environments” (Smart Growth America).

Handy and her collegial researchers have concluded that when accessibility is used as a basis for planning, vehicle trips are reduced (Handy, 1997) (Handy, 2001) (Salon, 2012), and

consequently greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint are minimized. Dr. Susan Handy has generated a considerable amount of research to show that transportation accessibility is a function of proximity and connectivity. (Handy, 1996) Accessibility can be thought of as the ability to get what one needs. Proximity means how close one is to their need/destination. Connectivity describes how direct the route and the amount of energy expended to get to that need. Poor connectivity would be if one must walk to the bus, take the bus to a train, and walk again to get to school.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and live a healthier, more active lifestyle, it is important that people have good transportation accessibility, meaning they live near where they work, attend school, and other prevalent destinations and that the connections between these destinations are not complicated or time consuming.

The shorter the distance between frequently visited destinations, and the easier it is to get between them, the more likely a person is to use non-single occupancy vehicular means of transportation such as walking, cycling, or transit. (Brown, 2016) (Freeman, 2013) (Handy, 2001) When the connections between these destinations are short enough to be walkable, the more opportunity people will have to use active modes of transportation (Handy, 2002). Travel distances to and from a new gathering space and its location are important sustainability factors.

Civic urban squares function by allowing people to gather for some purpose or no purpose at all. A square is often called the front porch, living room, or the door to civic engagement for a city. Squares host economic exchanges, social encounters, and/or public assemblies (Gatjie, 2010) (Lang, 2017). Some squares lean more heavily toward one or two of

these roles. Successfully utilized and appreciated public spaces such as Pearl Street in Boulder Colorado, another college town, focus on retail. Historic squares such as the Piazza Della Rotonda, in Rome, which holds the Pantheon, presently serves visitors from around the globe as a place to gather and be without fear of moving vehicles (Gatjie, 2010), to come see historic sites, but, no longer serve as a place to rest, play, nor gather for civic discourse.

Urban squares can vary in size and shape, they may be fully paved with a hard surface or in combination with trees and vegetation (Lang, 2017). Squares have historically formed in places where important roads converged as exemplified by Old Town Square in Prague where 13 roads meet (Gatjie, 2010), or the Zocalo in Mexico that was used as a ceremonial space. It is still seen in modern cities like Cambridge, Massachusetts which holds the infamous Harvard Square. A “catchment of people” contributes to a successful urban square (Lang, 2017), in other words a place that already draws people within proximity, such as a civic building or popular places to dine. A square that is repeatedly well-used and well-loved, requires an appropriate social and physical context (Lang, 2017). In other words, a town square would not likely succeed if it is surrounded by warehouses or parking lots.

Squares are usually publicly owned, but private spaces and public-private spaces have been created for similar purposes, such as Millennium Park in Chicago. Urban squares are not only found in large cities like Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco, they are also found in college towns such as San Luis Obispo California, Boulder Colorado, Corvallis Oregon and Davis. Urban spaces occur between buildings, occupying the volume between the masses; they may or may not be squares or any particular geometric shape. The size of a square may vary but if it

becomes too large, say above 500 feet in any direction, it loses a sense of enclosure and becomes more of a park, recreational space, (Gatje, 2010) or a district.

To explore what makes gathering spaces successful, I consider several descriptions of downtowns, public places, and town squares. Starting with Jane Jacobs, a writer who left an enduring influence on urban studies by advocating for community-based planning and maintaining lively, diverse streets. In her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, she described the two characteristics that make downtowns special: "Individuality (drawn from the district's particular history and natural resources) and people (attracted to the place by its centrality and clustered activities)" (Jacobs, 1958). She went on to say that the liveliest downtowns have activity in "two shifts" of pedestrians, meaning during the day and the night. For example, the business and shopping crowd during the day and the entertainment crowd at night.

William Holly Whyte, a pioneer in urban studies whose film and study called "The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces" provides the essential foundations for successful gathering spaces (1979). He viewed success as a space that facilitates civic engagement and community interaction. His study found 5 key factors, the most important being sittable space, without the ability to sit and enjoy a space, people are likely to pass by or through it without lingering. Other important factors he identified are tree canopies, water features, sculptures, and food vendors. Beyond these elements he concluded that:

"What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people." William H. Whyte

Robert Gatje defines a successful urban square as having three qualities. The first quality, *utility*, meaning it serves a purpose such as commerce or public assembly. The second

quality, *integrity*, meaning the space is held by and integrated with surrounding buildings, meaning it fits in context. The last quality is *delight*, meaning people are pleased with the space and appreciate the beauty and historical value, feel its energy, and they want to participate in its life by coming to visit and staying a while (Gatje, 2010).

Another perspective of the square considers children and their role. Claire Freeman and Paul Tranter say in their book, *Children and their urban environment: Changing worlds*, that “The square is more than a paved plaza with seats: it has social meanings that influence social inclusion and exclusion; it has written and unwritten rules on its use, and these change over time, even between daytime and evening use” (Freeman, 2012).

Henry Shaftoe wrote the book, *Convivial Urban Space* about public space and he is often quoted with his description of a gathering space:

Places where people can be ‘social and festive’ are the essence of urbanity. Without such convivial spaces, cities, towns and villages would be mere accretions of buildings with no deliberate opportunities for casual encounters and positive interactions between friends and strangers. . . Without good urban spaces, we are likely to drift into increasingly privatized and polarized society, with all its concomitant problems. (Shaftoe, 2008, 5)

The experience of an urban square can be perceived using all our senses and the ambiance of the place provides these experiences. (Lang, 2017) Important factors to consider beyond visual stimulation are sunlight and other illumination mechanisms, sounds, smells, and texture. Authors Wei Yang and Jian Kang, who research sound in public squares found that soundscape is an essential quality in an urban square and can trigger feelings of pleasure or

annoyance (Yang, 2005). “The preferences of soundscape elements are proved to influence people’s choice of using an urban square” (Yang, 2005, p. 76). Yang and Kang’s research found that nature sounds are generally more preferred and that the sound need not be loud. Moreover, they found that the sound of water with a dynamic, inconsistent sound level can attract more visitors, consistent water sounds are ignored with time. (Yang)

Public palates effect how public space functions, how it is designed and redesigned, and therefore how it is regulated. Today, middle-aged, high social status people do not tend to use squares unless they are located in high status areas, however, most square development is targeting this population rather than also serving lower-economic groups. (Lang, 2017). These higher social classes use private spaces that serve food and drinks and do not allow their children to interact in public squares (Lang, 2017). This separation of classes is a detriment to our democratic ideals that require civic discourse and engagement.

Another example of regulations that had a lasting impact is the auto-centric planning that began in the 1950’s. When car ownership skyrocketed, it triggered the focus of public space design to revolve around automobiles. Just as it was thought that no home should be without a garage, planners reinforced the notion that no commercial building or shopping district should be without plenty of parking spaces, especially the day after Thanksgiving. That day has historically been the largest single day that people go shopping and therefore minimum commercial parking requirements were based on the needs for that day, even though most of these parking spaces are not used throughout the year.

This auto-centric planning rationale was at the expense of lower classes that didn’t own automobiles and required sidewalks and transit options. During these auto-centric years the

City of Davis made way for a parking lot and commercial businesses by acquiring and demolishing homes. As cities made way for and required parking, homes got further away from businesses and frequented destinations. People without cars found active transportation much more difficult.

Equitability and diversity are important considerations when planning public space (Shi, 2016). Although diversity is a cultural construct that groups people by age, ability, race, gender, religion, and other things, a diverse community that includes people of all ages and abilities and exhibits cultural pluralism is necessary to promote civic discourse, social interactions, and to prevent isolation between groups which leads to apathy rather than caring for all citizens. Exclusion from public space with respect to diversity is a direct expression of privilege. (Lynch, 1984) Vitality is a measure of human health and health of vulnerable groups is crucial to environmental justice (Lynch, 1984). In this study, vitality refers to human health and includes sensory and social health. In her well-read and oft cited book, "Design for Diversity", Emily Talen says that "diversity is seen as the primary generator of urban vitality because it increases interactions among multiple urban components" (Talen, 2012, p. 35)

Cultural pluralism frequently sits in conflict with the business community that is focused on stimulating economic growth (Lees, 2003). Downtown businesses typically pursue employment and retail as a means of achieving vitality. However, they should also seek residents because the density of people residing near businesses directly influences the economic growth of downtowns. (Jacobs, 1961) This idea still holds true today, more than 50 years later. It is exemplified in Downtown, which has been courting businesses for many years to bring in tax dollars for the City budget. However, Downtown accommodates very few

residents. Compact cities that provide housing within walking distance of people's needs, offer ample social, ecological and economic benefits (Wheeler, 2013).

Civic gathering spaces, such as a square are regulated to some extent at many government levels, from national to local. Regulations grew out of the need to plan for disasters such as fire. As the planning profession arose during the early 19th century, it provided safety codes, separated land uses, and made rules for acceptable building standards (Ford, 2000). Today the categories that State and federal laws regulate include natural resource protection, air quality, transportation, and water. Local government regulations cover land use planning, building codes, transportation, water runoff, sewer and other infrastructure (Fulton, 2012).

Rules and regulations over public space has continued to expand and evolve with public impulse, regulating everything from street width to benches, justifying the rules as necessary for property value protection (Ford, 2000). Today, legislated standards, rules, and regulations are justified as a means of liability protection. However, these rules have historically and continue to, result in segregation of people in differing classes, races, abilities, and socioeconomic status. This notion of protecting the city from liability results in excluding teens, young children, people with limited budgets, as well as the experienced generation. Groups of people such as those experiencing homelessness, skateboarders, or children are often not included in civic space development and are often explicitly excluded from these spaces by regulations or by design (Lang, 2017) (Flutsy, 2000).

In Larry Ford's book, *The Spaces between Buildings*, he describes local governments as seeing the glass half empty when it comes to public space (Ford, 2000). With roots from the

Victorian era, Ford acknowledges the pessimistic attitude that planners, engineers, and other have about public space design because they wish to keep people “safe” (Ford, 2000). However, this safety argument results in the separation of people in public spaces as it minimizes interaction between groups. This is exemplified by suburban residential areas that do not provide a mixture of housing types and in the playground systems that are separated from areas where adults, or even children of differing ages spend their time. The experienced generation often get overlooked completely or may have a special facility set aside where they can connect with each other, separate from other generations.

Inclusivity is a primary goal for my design, and it permeates throughout my research. Inclusive design means more than welcoming someone from outside the dominant demographic, it means involving them in the design process and responding to their circumstances in an integrated way so that they are as much a part of the space as anyone.

“When we create a city around the needs of our most vulnerable citizens (children, older adults, the poor, the disabled), we build a city that is great for everyone” (80 Cities, 2017, 9).

For a civic space to be inclusive it must go beyond the minimum standards required by law; it must be thoughtful of all generations and cultures of people that intends to serve. The New Urban Agenda document that was created in October 2016 during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (New Urban Agenda, 2016) in Quito, Ecuador, , states that “the spatial organization, accessibility and design of urban space, as well as the infrastructure and the basic services provision, together with development policies, can promote or hinder social cohesion, equality and inclusion” (New Urban Agenda,

2016, 11). Emily Talen says in her book well-respected book, “Design for Diversity” that “At the heart of a diverse community, there should be something that connects people, by providing ‘identity space’” (Talen, 2012, 112). Identity space is a recognizable image, landmark, or symbol of a place that can serve as a spot that brings people together (Baker, 2012).

Inclusive Design integrates people of all generations, abilities, and cultures allowing interaction, rather than separation. This is community building, bringing people together that otherwise might not have contact with each other. During the last 100 years, beginning with the industrial revolution, it is said that women and their children were separated into the suburbs to avoid the industrial filth. However, this coded language was used to justify separating white families from black or brown families and from the lower-class workers that remained in the city. This institutional segregation has influenced not only our built landscape, but, our entire culture.

Civic spaces should be inclusive places for children of all ages, as well as adults. Isolating the experienced generation to “senior centers” and young children to “playgrounds” essentially removes them from our public spheres. Childcare givers in most American cities are typically obliged to drive to specific playground location to keep children “safe”. However, these spaces do not typically include adult needs. Civic space design should provide a balance of generational needs, allowing families the opportunity to participate in downtown areas, without sensing that their children are out of place. As indicated by Building Better Cities in their guide of best practices to engage young citizens and families, “Voices of young children, their parents and caregivers, and pregnant women have been underrepresented in traditional city building

processes and overall civic engagement strategies” (80 Cities, 2017, 9). It follows then, that outreach for civic space design should include youth and families.

Movement to and through spaces is the primary barrier that can limit people with mobile disabilities or those with hearing or sight impairment. Infrastructure accessibility laws are meant to allow all citizens, including those with a disability to enjoy the same ability to “to participate in the mainstream of American life” (Introduction to the ADA). These laws are known as the Americans with Disabilities Act. This equal opportunity act was signed into Federal law in 1990 and updated in 2010 (Introduction to the ADA) Having a disability is not just a category of the population, it is a fact of life. It is important to understand that a disability can affect anyone directly or indirectly and it could be temporary or long lasting. For example, when people age, their caretakers will find themselves needing to accompany someone by pushing a wheelchair or walking alongside someone that cannot climb stairs or walk long distances. When a person breaks their foot or acquires some other physical challenge, they experience having a disability and they also have a need for accessible inclusion.

The ADA codes are a minimum requirement, but Universal Design goes beyond the minimum accessibility standards and uses an inclusive approach during the planning and design phases when changes are easily made to ensure accessible elements are beautiful and fully integrated. Universal Design is defined as “design that's usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” (Mace) The overall design should not only be pleasing, but functional for all people, including those using wheelchairs or other disability assisting equipment. Universal Design seeks to avoid segregation of people with disabilities, providing for all users equally, for instance allowing a person using a

wheelchair to enter the same door as people without, rather than a segregated door around the side of the building or requiring a staff person with a key to provide assistance or to lift a wheelchair, which can be demoralizing.

According to the National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD), inclusion means to “transform communities based on social justice principles in which all community members:

- Are presumed competent;
- Are recruited and welcomed as valued members of their community;
- Fully participate and learn with their peers; and
- Experience reciprocal social relationships.” (Definition of Inclusion)

Authentic Universal design integrates accessibility during the design process, including multiple people with differing disabilities such as visual, hearing, or mobility in the outreach and design process. Planners, architects, and engineers have a practice of appending their designs to meet the ADA code requirements, without consultation from people with disabilities, therefore limiting more inclusive design options. For example, when a business requires stairs to reach the entrance, the designer can include a ramp as an architectural design feature to be used by all or, one that meets minimum codes of ADA by using accessible ramp off to the side, out of the usual path of pedestrian flow.

I attended a webinar hosted by “America Walks” on October 29, 2019 called “Addressing Ableism in Your Built Environment”. This presentation included a panel of four people with disabilities that presented some of the daily challenges they face in the built environment like participating in their children’s lives. Karin Korb quoted a friend with a disability who said, “If we can't get there, we can't participate.” Vincent Robinson said that he

experiences anxiety as he plans his day around the possibility of arriving to new spaces that may have highly inconvenient “accessible routes” that technically meet the ADA code requirements. He told us how he faces challenges like having to “wait for a person with the [elevator or door] key” to gain access into spaces. Wendy Lu highlighted that people with disabilities should be involved in the process of creating accessibility. “So, the more actual disabled people are involved, the more successful a project will be. And it's better for business as well!” (Addressing Ableism).

Reflecting on these various views and elements needed for successful gathering spaces and squares, I have created the following list of questions to consider when locating and designing a civic gathering space.

1. Does it have potential of commerce/economic exchanges?
2. Does it have potential for civic assembly?
3. Can its development be community led?
4. Is it centrally located with a people catchment?
5. Does it have good transportation accessibility?
6. Is it a suitable context for a civic gathering space (does it fit into its surroundings)?
7. Is it a space where people participate without the need to spend money?
8. Can it serve two shifts of people – day and night?
9. Can it serve a diverse set of people, ranging in age and cultures?
10. Is it enclosed between buildings and no more than 500 feet in any direction?
11. Does it or could it express local identity?
12. Does it have or offer the potential for social and festive activities to allow for interactions between friends and strangers?
13. What sensory experiences are present and are they appropriate for the venue?

CHAPTER 2: Analysis in Context

Situating the Project

The City of Davis, California is located west of Sacramento, across the flood plain of the Sacramento River. It is a college town within an easy commute distance from Sacramento but separated enough that it is not exactly a suburb. Its European roots lay undeniably in agriculture and academia and it is surrounded by agriculture fields. Davis is broadly recognized as a walkable and bike-friendly place, particularly in its downtown. Downtown Davis (Downtown) consists of short blocks lined with large trees and is predominantly 1-2 story buildings, with very few residential units. Downtown is a lively, active area comprised of some retail shops and offices, and many cafés and other eateries. There are a few historic buildings and it hosts many local events.

Since the 1960's the form of Downtown has changed only marginally, but the great recession, increasing UC Davis population, demographic changes, changing retail environment, and new transportation choices have caused a conspicuous change in how it functions. The Davis City Council (Council) recognized this change and in early 2017, as part of Council goals, they initiated the process of developing a new Specific Plan for Downtown, as adopted in City of Davis Resolution No. 17-002. The overall idea was to identify opportunities to implement form-based codes, clarify and consolidate development policies for the Core Area (Downtown), and serve as a first step to a General Plan Update.

The current Core Area Specific Plan (CASP) was adopted in 1996. This plan is not regulatory but serves as a community vision for policies about Downtown. This plan focused on maintaining the current character of Downtown and limiting growth. Layers of other plans and

guidelines also apply to Downtown development or have been created to address certain aspects of development, including: Downtown Davis Traditional Residential Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Guide to Infill Development, Core Area Strategy, Davis Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, Sign Design Guidelines, and Beyond Platinum Bicycle Action Plan. This list makes it apparent that a new Specific Plan is needed to provide clarity to developers, Downtown property owners, and neighbors.

Under Council directions and objectives, Downtown is undergoing a visioning process to create a new Specific Plan. The first objective was to consider a form-based code approach, meaning the creation of new zoning codes that focus on the built form at human scale, rather than the current codes which are land use and density focused. The codes will regulate changes to both public and private spaces and built forms. The objective of the Specific Plan outreach process is to develop a community-driven vision of that form. Another objective is to provide a basis for infrastructure needs like transportation, stormwater, and utilities, and to provide code clarity to ease development risks. The Council also stated an intention to reach for innovative and creative solutions for Downtown. Furthermore, Council also expressly called for effective community engagement and an advisory committee to help characterize the long-term vision of Downtown.

Participation in the Downtown Specific Plan Process

To expand outreach and inform the new Downtown Specific Plan, the City Council adopted City of Davis Resolution No. 17-113 in August of 2017, directing the formation of an advisory committee, at the time referred to as the Core Area Advisory Committee, now known as the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC). Members were formally appointed in

November and the first meeting was held in December. At this meeting, I was elected Vice Chair. I've served in this capacity since and will continue to until the Draft Specific Plan is adopted in 2020.

Outreach is the first step in creating an inclusive design. Inclusive for this design project means to be accessible to all ages, abilities and cultures. By effectively involving the entire community, the overall vision of Downtown ought to be captured along with the political will to move forward. But what is effective outreach? How will we know if the vision portrayed in the final plan matches that of the community?

Generally, there are at least two transition points where interpretation of community vision could be altered or misunderstood, see figure 2. First, between outreach to people and policy writing (interpretation of outreach) or between the final policy to the design and implementation (see graphic below). The specific plan process that includes DPAC is meant to alleviate the first transition. Clarified codes, once written and adopted seek to alleviate the second transition.



Figure 2 Community Vision can get misinterpreted in at least two areas before the plan is living. The first challenge is correctly interpreting public input and feedback into policy. The second is to appropriately implement the policy and interpret it into a design via specifications and code that results in making reality from these visions.

As the Vice Chair of DPAC, I have been able to participate and observe the outreach processes of developing a new specific plan for Downtown. The process has provided widespread outreach to neighbors, university, high school students, and focus groups. Two improvements identified include providing enhanced visual hierarchy of downtown streets, to give a sense of direction, and a large communal space, to provide for public events and festivals, as well as increased daily pedestrian traffic to support downtown businesses.

The 19 member DPAC was chosen to broadly represent all facets of the community that could be affected by the implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan. The committee consists of ten voting members appointed by the City Council to represent the community at large, two voting members represent downtown businesses (The Davis Chamber of Commerce and Davis Downtown), and three voting members represent adjacent neighborhoods on three sides of Downtown, including Old East Davis Neighborhood Association, Old North Davis Neighborhood Association, and University Avenue/Rice Lane Neighborhood. Three non-voting liaisons represent the following City commissions: Bicycling, Transportation & Street safety Commission, Planning Commission, and Finance & Budget Commission. Lastly, the nineteenth member is a non-voting liaison representing UC Davis Administration. Each neighborhood, Business, and UCD representation position self-selected a person to represent them. Together the DPAC represent Davis' interests in the downtown specific plan and the formal vision for the future form of Downtown.

Members were selected to reflect wide-ranging categories of interest as shown below. The intent was to be inclusive. One of the goals was to include a person with a disability on the DPAC, as shown in the table below, however, it did not come to fruition. The committee

requested that Bonnie Mintun attend a meeting and present information about the needs of the disabled community. This was immensely helpful information that helped DPAC to understand more about accessibility needs. In the future, when creating a new gathering space, the city should explicitly seek and include people with disabilities to a greater extent in the design and outreach process.

When appointing the the DPAC, Davis City Council looked for people that could represent these groups.	
Affordable housing advocate	Historic resources advocate
Architect, landscape architect or urban designer	Parks and open space advocate
Community member or Davis resident	Resident of Core Area or a surrounding traditional
Core Area business or property owner, or employer	Senior citizen advocate
Developer, builder, or realtor	Social services provider
Disabled community representative	UC Davis student
Environmental advocate	Youth advocate
Faith-based community representative	

As specified by the City Council, DPAC members use their personal experiences in the community when providing insights and preferences, as well as representing their designated group. The three main functions of the committee members are to:

- 1) Provide comments and feedback on existing plans and documents related to the Specific Plan.
- 2) Provide recommendations to the Planning Commission and City Council about the new Specific Plan.

- 3) Communicate information to other community members, encouraging their participation.

Since its inception, the DPAC has held 18 official meetings, all with a quorum and typically with almost all positions represented. All meetings were public, and the committee was subject to the Brown Act and thus public notices were posted, as required. In May of 2018,



Figure 3 Images of outreach events that I attended showing some of the activities and types of information presented and gathered.

the DPAC formed small subgroups to discuss the specific plan outside of our regular meetings with other members who had similar interests. These groups returned in June to offer a more thoughtful conversation about our aspirations for the plan, helping to form our direction and opinions about the plan.

From the first meeting, DPAC guided public outreach ensuring it was broad-reaching and persistent. We helped with the outreach directly through our contact with community members and the distribution of flyers. Individually, we participated in public outreach events such as the downtown tour, design charettes, pop-up events, brown-bag presentations, and surveys, see figure 3. During these outreach events, we conversed with the community and listened to their ideas and concerns. I also attended relevant meetings of city commissions and city council to give and receive information.

To ensure the committee was well informed about the plan, we heard presentations throughout the process. Consultants and community members came to talk about universal access, historical resources, form-based codes, missing middle housing, transportation, and economic conditions. DPAC formed ad hoc subcommittees to dive into sustainability, affordable housing, guiding principles, and fiscal analysis. Those committees met and reported back their recommendations to the DPAC, furthering our knowledge to shape the plan.

It is important to remember that beyond community members and DPAC, several forces can be expected to influence the overall downtown plan, including the E Street Plaza space. Through conversations with local property owners, business owners, and developers I have learned that they are already speculating on the value of Downtown properties after the passage of this plan. Neighborhoods are already threatening lawsuits if it isn't created in

accordance with their neighborhood characteristics. Professional opinions of city staff do not necessarily align with the community or DPAC. UC Davis may or may not align itself with the Downtown plan. There are community factions that do not want to see changes Downtown. Concerns of these groups must be balanced for a successful, inclusive plan.

The specific plan development process that established DPAC was largely effective and has benefited the community as it guided and steered the overall development of the Specific Plan. DPAC has been able to defend the community desires and concerns within the process and as such was a good choice for helping keep the plan within the community realm. However, additional outreach to specific groups of the community may have resulted in a broader view of the visions and aspirations for downtown. It would also have been helpful to arrange activities that were more interactive in discussing and developing the form.

From the letter that Meg Arnold and I wrote as Chair and Vice Chair of DPAC to the City Council, 10/04/19:

In the course of its meetings from December 2017 through October 2019, the DPAC has made several recommendations for and about the development of the Downtown Specific Plan. These are summarized here in no particular order, with the use of bold to identify major topics per bullet point.

- Unanimous support for integrating **accessibility** through universal design and more, to make accessibility a priority, and distinguishing Davis as such a place.
- Strong support for creating much **greater certainty** in the building and redevelopment process for the benefit of both neighborhoods and downtown property and business owners.
- Strong support for thoughtful **transitions** from downtown to residential neighborhoods.
- Strong support for providing the possibility of a **taller central core** of downtown. The core of downtown is understood to be between E, F, 2nd, and 3rd Streets.

- Strong support for a **larger, more useful urban “center”** in the current E Street Plaza area, to include pedestrian priority
- Strong support for **4-sided architectural features at transitions** like at the railroad tracks along G Street.
- Strong support for proper **step-backs** with height of buildings at transitions like at the railroad tracks along G Street.
- Unanimous support for **adding housing** capacity and options downtown.
- Strong support for providing **affordable housing** downtown.
- Strong support for **maintaining local businesses**.
- Strong support for **innovative parking management**, such as parking maximums, due to predicted future changes in transportation and mobility.
- Opposition to adding a **public parking garage**, also due to predicted future changes in transportation and mobility.
- Strong support for a plan that is **economically viable**, for both the City and for property owners/developers, and therefore more likely to be implementable.
- Strong support to embed **sustainability** as a core attribute and distinguishing feature of the downtown.
- Strong support for using sustainability and food/ag as **economic drivers** downtown.
- Strong support for ensuring that the Plan helps support business opportunities to provide **local jobs**.
- Strong support for not including the **University Ave / Rice Lane** neighborhood in the Downtown Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan process is continuing into 2020 and once implemented, it is intended to be in effect until 2040. As the City reaches out to the community and DPAC to understand its vision and aspirations for the future of Downtown, there is also an opportunity to establish a vision and objectives for a community gathering space.

E Street Plaza (Plaza) is central to the City and the Downtown Core area, where the most activity happens outside of UC Davis. The E Street Plaza and adjacent parking lot are in the core of Downtown and central to the City as a whole. This Plaza is located between F Street to the

east and E Street to the west and in the middle of the block bound on the north by 3rd Street and the south by 2nd Street. The Plaza is currently used for lingering, rest, and for small events throughout the year, see figure 4. In combination with the bordering parking lot and streets the Plaza Site also hosts large events such as the Davis Tree Lighting and the July 4th Davis Criterium.



Figure 4 The E Street Plaza with the clock fountain, looking East with the parking lot to the right, behind the firetruck that is double parked on the plaza.

The Downtown core has existing multi-modal transportation infrastructure that serves the Site. Digital maps, such as Google Maps, pinpoints the City within half a block of this site. Consequently, when visitors journey to Davis via a digital map system, they will be guided to or

just past this space, making it a conspicuous location to welcome people and establish the City's first impression or identity.

Comparing Alternative Locations

During the Specific Plan outreach, four other downtown sites were suggested by DPAC members, community members, and the consultants including the F Street parking lot, the G Street parking lot, Central Park, and the Train Depot parking lot. Figure 5 shows each site with a circle encompassing an approximately 5-minute walk from center of the site indicated. A 5-minute walking distance is a good measure of how far people are willing to walk to reach a second destination, meaning they are more likely to run errands by pedestrian facilities rather than by vehicle. All these sites offer good alternatives. However, I highlighted businesses on the maps in yellow to show how many commercial sites are present for each location. E Street Plaza prevails in this comparison. Detailed analysis of each site is offered below.

The F Street parking lot seems a likely possibility for a central location. It offers a good tree canopy and is somewhat enclosed, however the businesses that enclose it are dominantly day use only services such as banks. With some minor alterations, the city could provide a mid-block crossing that extends from this parking area through to the new plaza. This space is not incredibly active with pedestrian activity, with very little during the evenings. I observed that in the evening when parking is full at the E Street Plaza parking lot the F Street parking lot has an abundance of open spaces. When the E Street Plaza block is bustling with activity during the evening, the F Street lot block is not. This block does not offer the evening businesses that bring crowds downtown. The F Street lot was proposed for redevelopment years ago, but the



proposal did not have community support. This space offers parking that would serve people well from this perimeter location, just a block away from the E Street Plaza.

The G Street parking lot and surrounding space holds potential for an urban square as it is enclosed by buildings on three sides and it is located near the Train Depot. The area is accessible by motor vehicle traffic on one side only. The street does not currently offer a designated or protected bike lane and biking behind diagonally parked vehicles is dangerous. G Street, and this block in particular, was the original main street in Davisville and still holds historic landmark buildings. However, the space is smaller than E Street Plaza, and it is limited regarding pedestrian mid-block access points. It is situated further to the east than central downtown. The DPAC and citizens have showed strong support for keeping the activity in the central core of downtown and leaning to the west where UC Davis students have clearer, quicker access.

Figure 5. This image shows the location of all five potential civic space locations. Top to bottom: Central Park, F Street parking lot, E Street Plaza, G Street parking lot, and the Davis Train Station. The circle shown on each is approximately 0.25 miles, or a 5-minute walk. Businesses are shown in light yellow, indicating the number of nearby commercial properties. E Street Plaza is by far encompasses the most Downtown businesses.

Central Park has amenities such as a children's carousel, flower garden, art, play spaces, an associated building, and a large, permanent canopy for the twice weekly Davis Farmer's Market. Central Park is well used during the times of Farmer's Market and for the periodic community event such as the German Brewfest or the Soup's-On Fundraiser. It has a large size to accommodate large events and playground spaces for children. It also boasts one of our most important treasures, The Hattie Weber Museum of Davis. However, outside of Davis Farmer's Market hours, the space serves a neighborhood park and is often void of activity, except for the larger, cordoned off space for children. The associated building held a teen center for many years, but, has struggled to remain relevant. It currently holds the Bicycle Hall of Fame. There are a few food services across the street to the east and south, but these businesses and the neighboring buildings do not enclose the space to provide the "mass form" required of a healthy, vibrant downtown square in that they do not enclose the space, but rather are "nearby". I contend that this space is now and should remain a "park" by landscape architecture definitions, rather than a town square.

The Train Depot parking lot offers a large space, with historical roots of Davis. There has been talk and even formal suggestions that the rail line that goes north/south through town could be turned into a trail that would provide a greenway connection to downtown. However, council members that I have spoken with say that it is much farther in the future than this specific plan will provide for. The space as used today, for train transportation, is not an ideal town square as it is cut off from downtown businesses and it abuts a neighborhood that would not likely appreciate additional noise and parking impacts of large events. Events such as the Criterion bike races could not be held in this location because of the tracks and its distance

from the race route. More importantly, although this space could serve as a park or a transit center, it would not meet the goals of the City to revitalize downtown as it would not stimulate economic growth for downtown businesses due to its separation.

The descriptions above speak to the qualities of the spaces. To compare these categories along with location, I used criteria based on, the explicit aspirations of the City, community input to the Specific Plan process, and best practice design guidelines for successful urban public squares/plazas (see questions at the end of Chapter 1). Based on the criteria set forth and other features that are difficult to quantify or compare, E Street Plaza and its adjacent parking lot are the most favorable option from the five possibilities. This site meets all the criteria proposed. Hence, the rest of my analysis will focus on this site.

Table 1. Comparing advantages of 5 possible locations for a gathering space.

Criteria for locating Downtown Public Gathering space	Central Park	F Street parking lot	E Street Plaza & parking lot	G Street parking lot	Train Depot
Property is City owned (for civic assembly and community led project)	x	x	x	x	x
Proximity to the core of downtown Davis		x	x	x	
Historic resources nearby	x	x	x	x	x
Enclosed, less than 500' sides			x	x	
Transportation accessibility	x	x	x	x	x
People catchment with activity throughout the day and night			x	x	
Absent of sensory experiences that need to be masked	x	x	x	x	
Visitor recognition	x		x		x
Visible and able to establish Davis' identity	x		x		
Connection to several cultural spots, such as entertainment	x		x	x	x
Hosts local events	x		x		

E St. Plaza – Site Analysis and Existing Conditions

The E street Plaza and adjacent spaces are owned by the city, therefore would permit civic assembly. This also makes redevelopment of this site achievable because there is no need to buy or exchange property. The Site is accessible for construction and utilities are readily available. Because it is a level site it provides straightforward accessibility and with simple ground coverings, the Site can be easily transformed. Below I analyze existing conditions and amenities.

In early 2018, I took a Landscape Architecture and Environmental Design studio class in which we were assigned to do a site analysis and design of the E Street Plaza area. My teammate, Rasul Madyun and I both separately studied the current uses and behaviors of

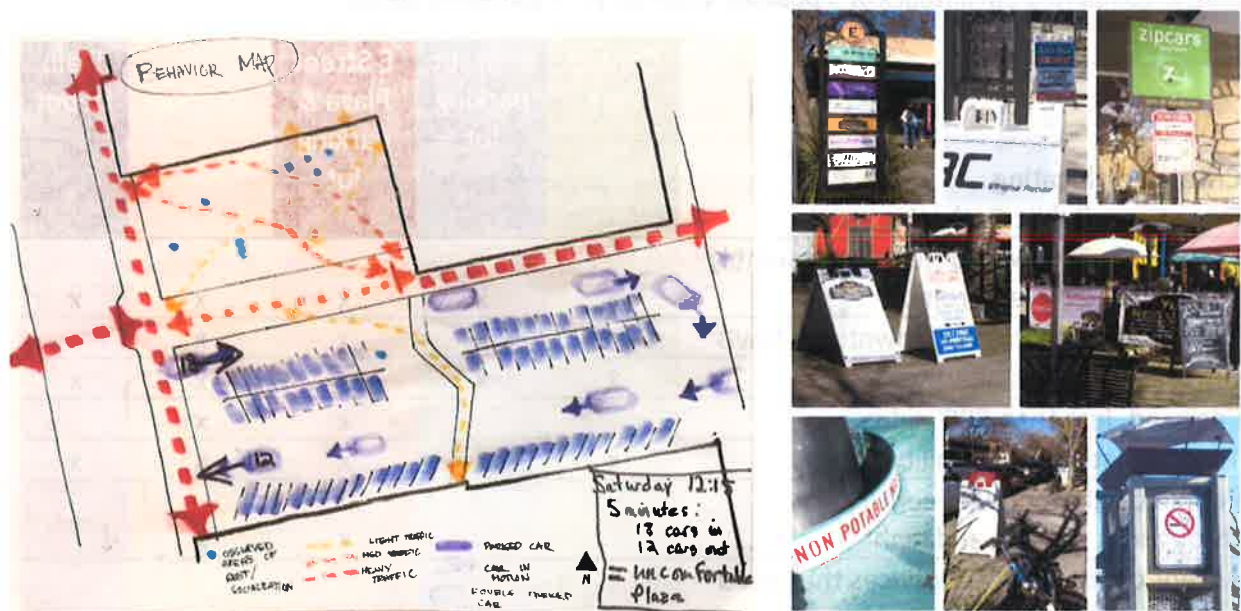
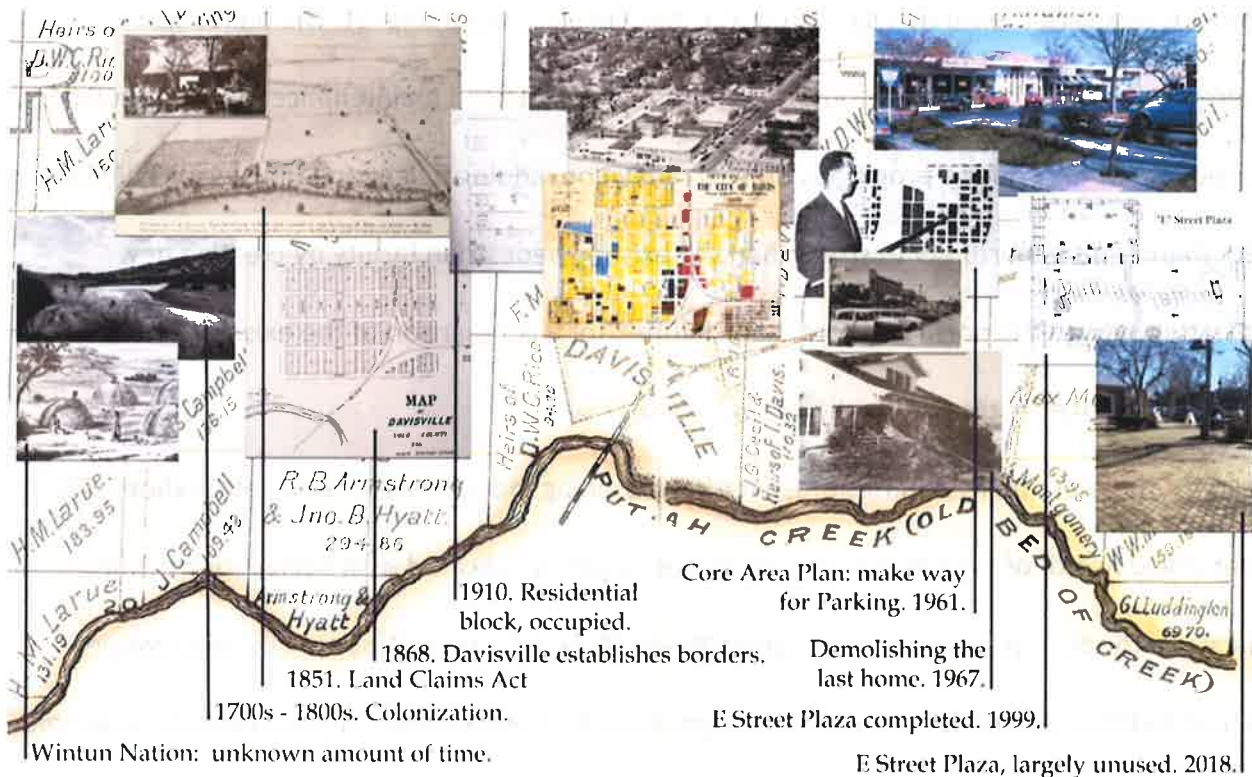


Figure 6 This behavior map of the E Street Plaza area, performed with teammate Rasul Madyun, 2/18, exemplifies the underutilization of the E Street Plaza, as most people walk through or past. We also observed a significant number of cars circling the parking lot. The image on the right, shows the abundance of signage we observed in the plaza area indicating that these spaces were not intuitively designed.

people and cars at the plaza and parking lot area. Our combined site analysis showed that people typically walk through or past the E Street Plaza. We also observed that the plaza had an abundance of sandwich board type signs, sometimes multiple for the same business, see figure 6. The presence of these signs indicated poor patronage of the businesses from pedestrians. Discussions with two business owners on the Plaza confirmed the decline in business.

As part of that assignment, I researched the history of the plaza using planning documents and other historical books, maps, and records. I created a visual depiction of this in



HISTORICAL BORDERS, E STREET PLAZA

Figure 7 Historical analysis of E Street Plaza shows that first the Miwok of the Wintun Nation inhabited the area, and much later when Davisville was established by Europeans, this block was all residential properties with homes. After the 1961 Core Area Plan which was auto centric, those homes were torn down to make way for a parking lot. In 1999, the small E Street Plaza was completed in the northwest corner of the lot.

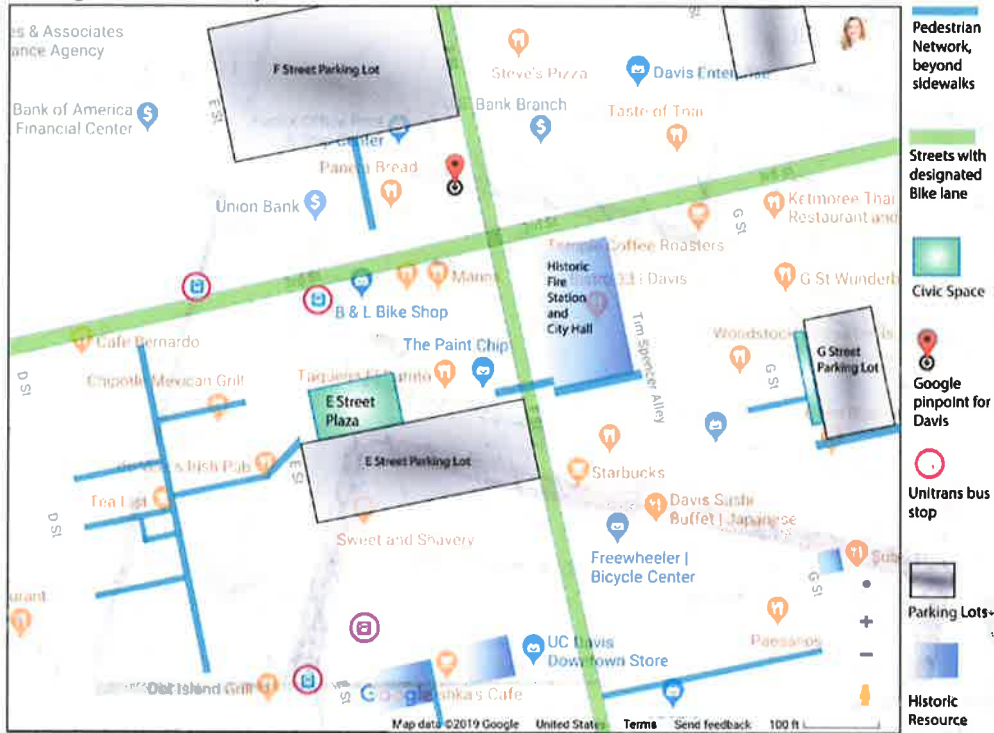
an historical timeline, see figure 7. This work continued throughout my thesis project. I include the historical timeline as the start of my research.

My research analysis continued for two years and I found that this Site offers a prime opportunity to be a destination for people originating either from Davis or the surrounding region. The location, as I have already established, is in the heart of Downtown Davis. The Site is easily noticed from all modes of travel, especially from the wider western side on E Street.

I observed the following things about the physical form and context of the Plaza. The Site has sides less than 500 feet in any direction, even when including the side streets. An historic resource is entirely visible from the east side of the parking lot. The buildings surrounding the plaza show deteriorating conditions and need maintenance. As these buildings need repair, they offer a propitious time to redevelop, adding height and housing. While doing so, there is an opportunity to strengthen the existing pedestrian facility by creating new passthroughs to the north and south. See figure 8 for a comparison of the existing pedestrian facility with one that is potentially strengthened.

There are many eateries present offering dining, bars, desserts, and coffee shops. The perceived health of the eateries and other businesses is indicated with smiley (or frowning) faces on the site analysis map, see figures 9 and 10. Discussion with some business owners attest to these perceptions. My other judgments are based on observing the number of people that appear to patronize the places. This information of course, is not systematic and is only based on my personal perception or descriptions by a few business owners.

Existing Pedestrian Facility



Potential Pedestrian Facility

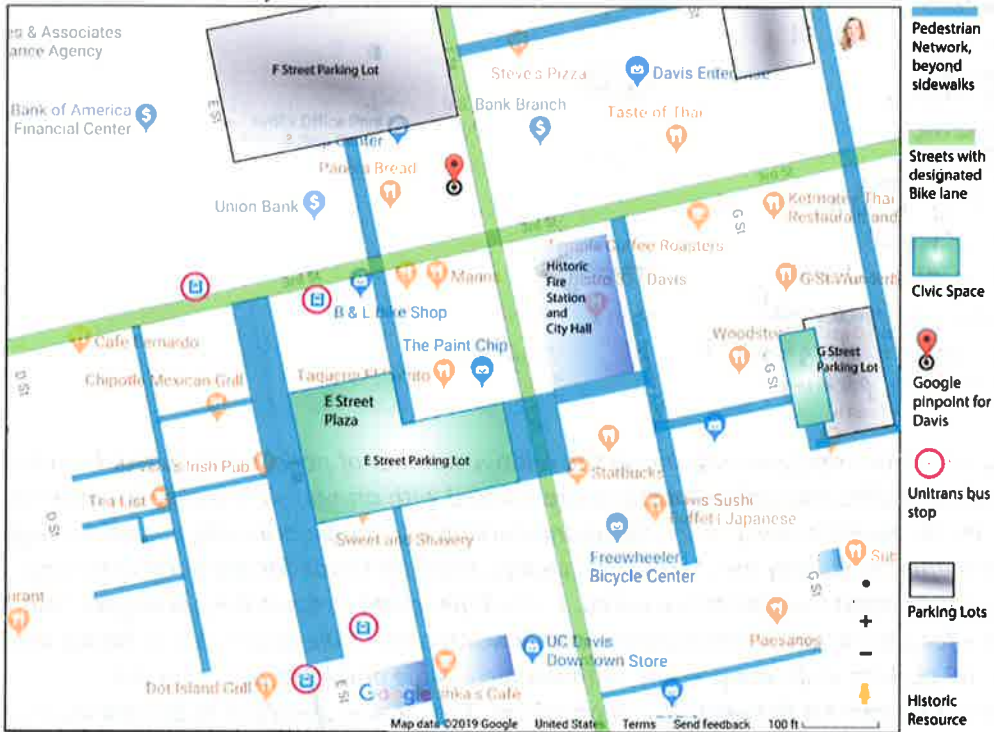
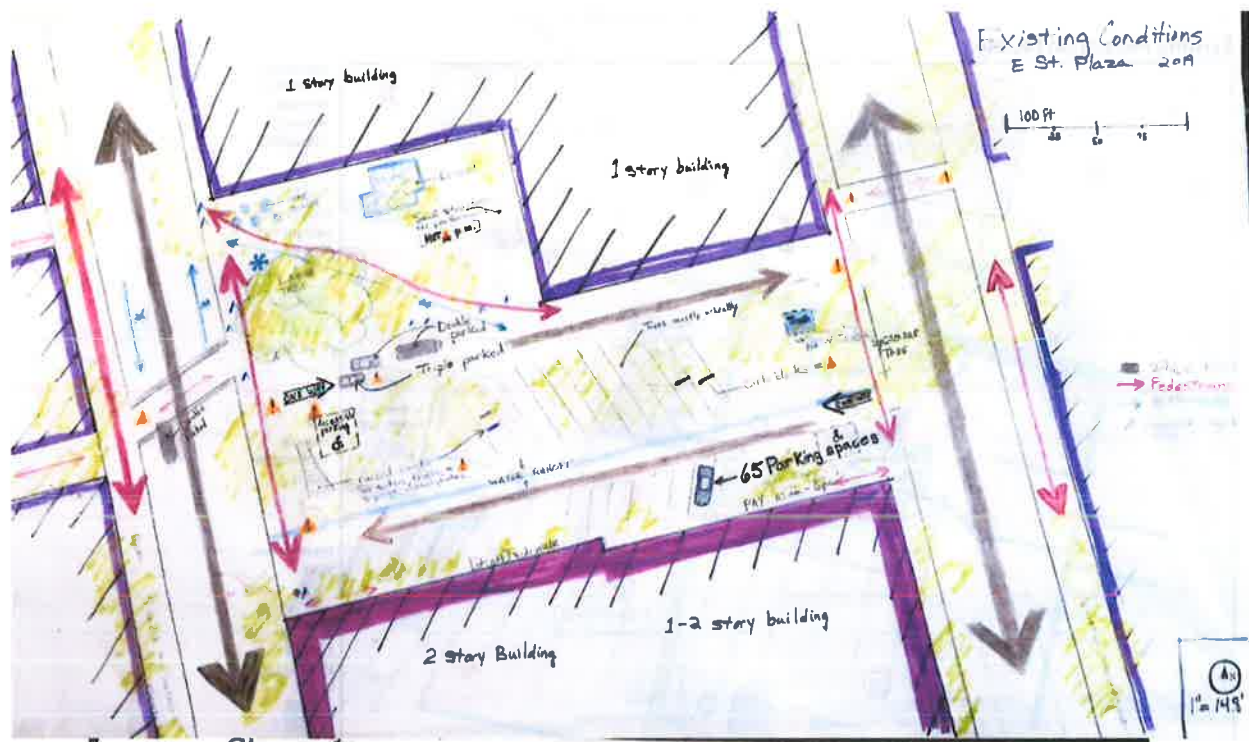


Figure 8 Google Map of Davis, California showing how the pedestrian facility can be strengthened Downtown. The map highlights the E Street Plaza, historic resources, parking lots, designated bike lanes and pedestrian access routes.



E St. Plaza Area Current Uses:

- Parking
- Small events
- Seating
- Cut-through for pedestrians
- Some seating
- Few bikes move through + store
- Restaurants dominate
- Services / Retail
- Few large seasonal events
- Trash storage (commercial)
- electric vehicle charging (1)
- shared vehicle parking

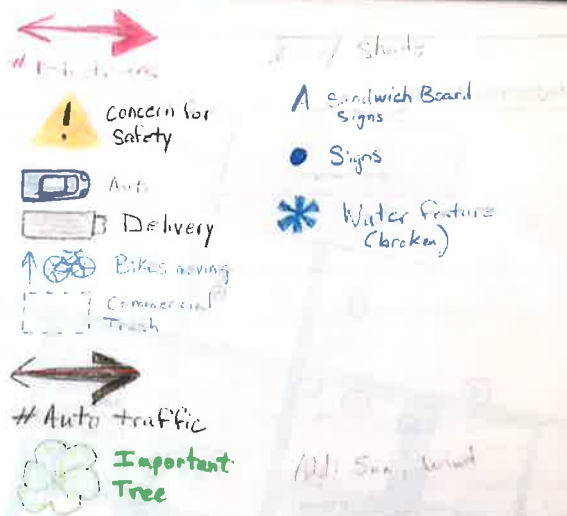


Figure 9 This existing conditions analysis map shows the relative number of pedestrians (pink), bicyclers (blue), and vehicular (grey) traffic. Hazardous locations are marked with orange yield symbols. I observed constricted sidewalks on the buildings next to the Plaza and Parking lot. People primarily passed through E Street Plaza without lingering or visiting the stores. Tree canopy provides shade for the parking lot and part of the plaza. Civic land leased to eateries are noted. I noted the raised curbs in the parking lot that make events hazardous for pedestrians. I observed the overly warm area of the stage, due to facing west and the lack of shade. 65 parking stalls are present, with two accessible parking places that are inadequate. Parking must be paid for between 10 am and 6 pm. The lot was observed to be near capacity at every visit. Sandwich board signs are noted surrounding the plaza.



Figure 10 Site analysis map of the E Street Plaza space, showing size, opportunities, weather, sun pattern, large trees that should be retained, water flow, business types and perceived health of the businesses with smiley faces.

The general area appears somewhat deteriorated and mismatched as the sidewalks and furniture strips are sometimes at differing levels and vegetation does not appear to be cared for or consistent. Trash cans and recycling bins are present in many different styles from plain black squares, to concrete or plastic 3 partitioned bins. Still, trash is seen on the ground at every observation, see figure 12.

Appealing visual aesthetics are important for a community gathering space. Regardless of style, an appealing atmosphere would be clean and kept clean by people who use the space. However, when it is unappealing with a degraded feeling, the opposite is true. Milan Kumar Jana and Tanaya De published an article in the European Scientific Journal saying that:

The term pollution signifies an inclusion of those affecting in a subtle way such as visual pollution. This kind of pollution affects the overall well-being and thus the quality of life of a community, reduces aesthetic appeal, economic health and civic-sense. This may incite a psychological aversion and thus affect mental and physical health of neighbouring residents. (Kumar, 2015)

The current atmosphere of the plaza and parking lot area gives a worn-out feeling. Trash is left on the ground at almost every corner or planter space, even though there is more than an abundance of trash bins within and surrounding the Site. Equipment is in disrepair. Parts of the water fountain along with the tall green decorative lights are rusty and do not operate consistently. Until a recent volunteer cleaning day was held, the immobile benches and the

water fountain were also rusty. Signage within and around the Plaza gives the space a disorganized atmosphere. Sandwich boards dominate the Plaza area as they try to attract customers to their services, see figure 11. Commercial signs are in tatters or outdated, see figure 12. Permanent signage directing people to stores is also prevalent



Figure 11 Sandwich board signs dominate the plaza.

throughout the site and is somewhat repetitive. Parking signage is incredibly complicated and difficult to read with a profusion of words required to describe all the rules. There seems to be a parking sign every few feet, sometimes piled on top of one another.



Figure 12 The E Street Plaza feel worn. Trash is on the ground, vegetation areas are neglected, signs dominate the space creating a chaotic feeling, equipment and amenities are deteriorating and unsafe.

The E Street Plaza has a Clock Fountain that, when running in the summer, is well loved by children. However, it does not provide sound as it slides down the smooth surface of a central post. When it was functioning, it became a loved playful art sculpture for kids and adults. A sign is posted on the bench declaring that the water is not potable, seemingly trying to discourage its use, or to “protect” the City from liability, see figure 12. The water was turned off during the drought, it lost its appeal, and the bench surrounding it has deteriorated to the point of creating a safety hazard as sections of it are unstable.

The site is located diagonally across the street from the original, historic Davis City Hall which is designated as an

historic landmark, see figure

13. This property is currently

being used as a successful

restaurant with abundant

outdoor seating that wraps

around to the west side,

providing a view to the plaza

space. The present City Hall

is about an eight-minute

walk away.



Figure 13 Historic buildings near E Street Plaza. The Davis Train Depot on the left and the historic City Hall, which can be seen from the E Street parking lot, on the right.

The Plaza and the parking lot have a tree canopy that covers much of the area. A few of the trees are quite large and I expect that the Community would not want them removed.

However, many of the trees may not be appropriate for the future climate of Davis because

they already appear unhealthy, with dead branches and a wilted appearance. The tree roots are constricted, and water constraints have likely played a role in their condition.



Figure 14 The E Street Plaza pergola for performances, photo taken in the morning, trash piled in the space. Afternoon and evening sun make this space very warm to hot.

Weather conditions show that the wind travels through the Plaza predominately from the west, northwest in the winter and southwest in the summer. Water runoff is collected in catchment drains in the plaza and I observed many problematic puddles were observed during the winter, presumably due to movement of bricks. The parking lot runoff is collected in

linear trench drains located in the driving lanes. Ironically, the pergola area is the one part of the plaza that does not have shade and is therefore warmer than the rest of the plaza, making it uncomfortable on warm and hot days, see figure 14.

The Site does not have amenities like restrooms, water refill stations, skateboard nor scooter racks. Neither the plaza nor the parking lot have bike racks, but there are several racks streetside, between the sidewalk and parked cars where they are often full. Amenities must also be functional and located so that they can be used. Locating and installing a bike rack may seem simple, but if its misplaced, it is simply useless. See example in figure 15.



Figure 15 These bike racks were likely required when the Caldwell Banker building was remodeled. However, their placement, almost hidden, in an alley, on the backside of the building, by the trash, renders them useless.



Figure 16 A Portland Loo such as this has been approved for installation at the west end of the E Street parking lot.

The absence of a public restroom facility has been problematic. Interviews with business owners say they find human waste next to their buildings when they arrive in the mornings and must allow extra time to clean it up before they open. The City did a study to determine where a restroom could help. And yet, there was controversy because the businesses didn't want it located near them. However, the City has moved forward and funded a construction project to install a "Portland Loo" style toilet facility on the east side of the parking lot in 2020. This type of facility offers privacy and security at the same time for an outdoor busy area. See image in figure 16.

For a successful civic gathering space, people must not only be able to see the space but be able to get there safely using a variety of travel modes. In its existing condition, active travel can be hazardous Downtown. I observed that very few bicyclers used E Street, likely due to the hazardous conditions. The Existing Conditions map in figure 9 above shows the many hazardous locations that I observed. Mid-block crossings and double-parked, and sometimes triple-parked delivery vehicles as well as parked vehicles on the street prohibit visual sightlines required for safe maneuvering. Delivery vehicles can be particularly hazardous due to their size and activity.

During my research, I documented and photographed some of these hazardous situations both during the day and after dark. During the day delivery trucks seem to be an almost constant presence – double parked on E Street or in/on the plaza. I witnessed a man who uses a walker nearly get hit in the mid-block crossing as a car went around a double-parked vehicle on the east side of the street. See the bottom two left images in figure 17. I have

also observed people that approach the mid-block crosswalk, hesitate, and continue along the sidewalk to the end-of-block crossing. To me this indicates that people do not feel safe in crossing at this crosswalk. The midblock crosswalk on F Street does not show the same level of hazard, likely because the street is wider and buffered by bicycles lanes which improve the sight lines. Jaywalking, or crossing the street at points without a crosswalk, is also prevalent.

The evenings share similar hazards, compounded by darkness, but nighttime also brings some new elements of risk. The first is circling ridesourcing vehicles; ridesourcing is the term used to describe the type of service offered by Lyft or Uber. While I was compiling the night hazards photographs, I realized that several of the images, taken at different times and some on different nights, were the same vehicle, a Lyft vehicle. As the population of the City, UC Davis, and Downtown increase, I expect the number of these vehicles to increase as well, both during the day, and the evening when people come Downtown for the nightlife.

Another new technology has added additional hazards, digital food orders. I observed both individuals and digital delivery services, such as Door Dash or Uber Eats, double park their cars and go into eateries to get the order, while traffic continued to get clogged up around them, creating a hazardous condition for pedestrians and bicyclers. See figure 18.

E Street needs new policy and perhaps infrastructure that can provide space and time for deliveries. A plaza that prohibits vehicle use on E street will need to provide an alternative means for businesses to receive goods. Some downtowns use a time enforcement for delivery, wherein trucks may come only during certain hours, such as early morning or late evening. Others provide temporary spaces on the street specifically for delivery only. Food pickup and delivery service should also be accommodated with spaces that ensure pedestrian safety.

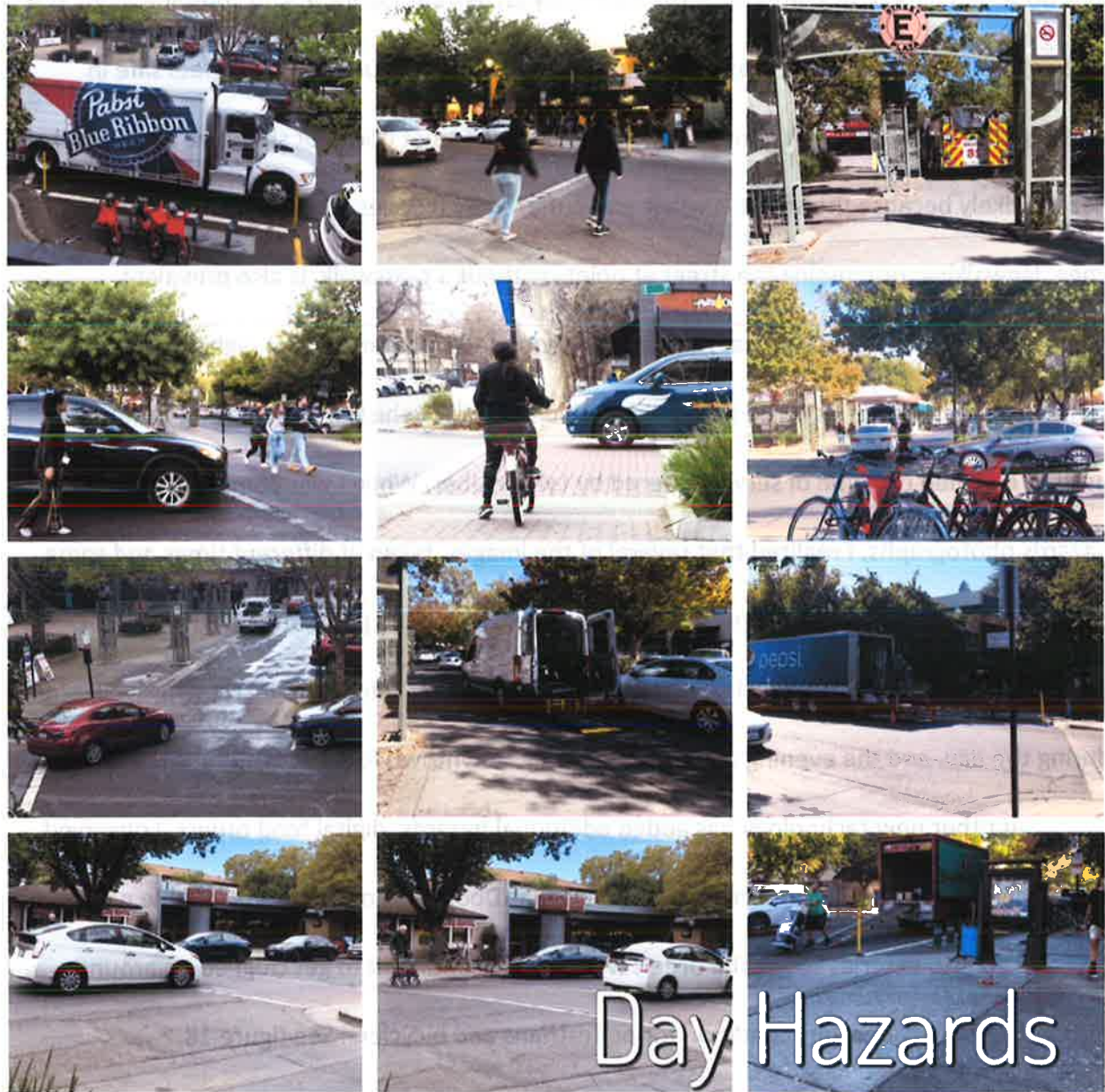
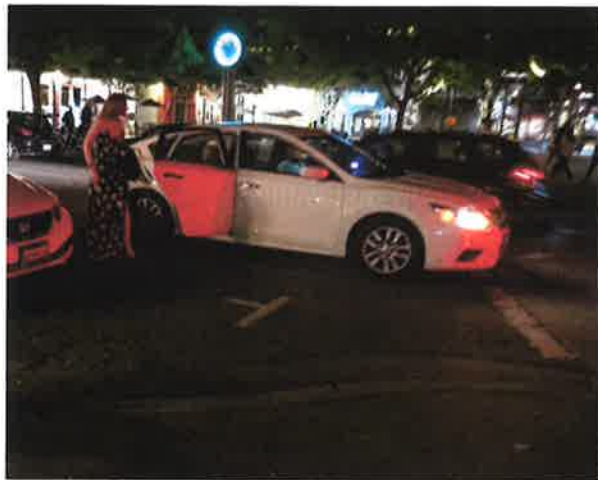


Figure 17 Here is my photographic documentation of several instances of double-parked cars and delivery vehicles that caused near collisions. The images here represent only a sampling of these occurrences that I witnessed. The top left shows Jump Bikes that are barricaded by a delivery truck. The top right shows that the firefighters park here while grabbing a quick coffee (per an interview). Second row, middle column, when traveling by bicycle, some people feel safer crossing traffic intersections via the cross walk. Second row, right and third row, middle show a Davis Transit van attempting to unload a passenger that uses a wheelchair as a car squeezes through on the side. The bottom two left images are taken in sequence, documenting a man using a walker crossing mid-block and nearly getting hit by a car that was passing a double-parked car on the east side of the street. Bottom, right image shows the Delivery truck using the crosswalk as a ramp. On average, I recorded that these delivery trucks remained double-parked for 15 minutes.



Night Hazards

Figure 18 This is a documentation of the hazards I witnessed after dark. The top left and bottom left show a double-parked car with pedestrians present. The image at top right shows a double-parked car on E Street Plaza another car backing out of a parking spot, while a third vehicle attempts to pass it. The left, middle image shows bikers that had a near miss with the car the turned in front of them. The right, middle image shows individuals picking up food, double-parked behind another double-parked vehicle, while an emergency response vehicle squeezes through on the side. Bottom right shows a car passing a double-parked car while bicyclers are traveling on the east side of the street.

The adjacent parking lot has 65 parking spaces that include accessible parking, vehicle share parking, and electric vehicle charging. The lot charges for parking from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. I have observed that it is near capacity throughout most of the day and evening, indicating a need for nearby, long-term parking. This lot offers one of only three locations where a vehicle may be parked for more than 2 hours. The parking lot also provides designated space for commercial trash, recycling, and grease collection, newly rebuilt and expanded in summer 2018, see figure 19.



Figure 19 Private trash holding space on civic property, specifically in the E Street parking lot. On the left was the original area on the right is the 2018 expanded space.

Within two blocks of the Plaza there are an assortment of thriving businesses including: retail, eateries, coffee shops, banks and other services, as well as entertainment. There are a several eateries, coffee shops and bars that have views into the plaza. Two eateries have outdoor seating on the plaza itself. Many nearby businesses on the blocks surrounding this site are well patronized, creating a bustle of activity around the Plaza. However, only a small percentage of people going by stop will to spend time at the plaza, most walk straight through without stopping.

Seating in the Plaza is limited to immobile black metal benches, except for privately-owned furniture supplied by Baskin Robbins. The benches within the Plaza face away from each other, offering some privacy for intimate conversations or individual activities such as reading a book. However, this pattern limits group gatherings, leaving groups with more than three



Figure 20 Street side benches are mostly unused, here is an example of why - it faces trashcans, which are not located in a convenient spot either.

people needing to stand. The black metal material can make for a very hot seat in the summer sun. Additionally, there are also immobile metal green benches on the sidewalk to the west. In my research observations, I have never witnessed them being used. Anecdotally, I have only occasionally seen them used. Some of these benches face each other, however the distance between provides a distance that is awkward for both a group conversation and for privacy. Some of these benches face trash and recycling bins, also at an uncomfortably close distance, see figure 20. These sidewalk benches are located next to parked cars, with little to no greenery at ground level. In short, they are not very inviting.

A gathering space must provide reasons to visit and reasons to stay. Downtown and particularly the E Street Plaza block already draw people in for nearby dining, coffee, dessert, and entertainment. But current programming is variable and challenging due to barriers like heat, sun, curbs, double parked vehicles, and inclement weather. Regular event programming would keep the space dynamic and alive. To better deliver programming, a stage would offer a new gathering site to hold civic events, performances, and other currently held activities.

The E Street Plaza has a small performance pergola structure with a semi-opaque cover that faces west-southwest. The Site periodically hosts small venue events such as Fire University, see figure 21, children's entertainment, and small band performances. However, the stage area provides limited shade for events held at midday, afternoon, and early evening. Furthermore, the lack of shade all day and abundance of concrete and brick surfaces means that the space absorbs and retains heat. Daytime and evening performers get overly warm and face the direct sun, making it an unappealing performance spot. It is also an unappealing spot for an audience because the seating in this space is largely immobile and not oriented toward the performance space. A properly oriented performance space with electricity, lights, and sound, as well as some cover from the weather, would encourage use by both audiences and performers more consistently.



Figure 21 Davis' informal group called Fire University meets on the E Street Plaza each Thursday evening.



Figure 22 Someone "yarn bombed" a couple of trees in the plaza with dragons. Notice two double parked vehicles in the background.

The Site, including the plaza and parking lot, and sometimes the streets, are also used to host large City events like the annual Christmas tree lighting and the Independence Day celebration that includes a long-established Criterium bike race and the historic children's bike parade. During these events parking in the lot is prohibited so that the event may overflow from the E Street Plaza. However, the parking bumpers and the raised curbs around planting spaces, machinery, and signage cause significant tripping hazards and dramatically limit access to people with decreased mobility. See figure 23. Additionally, the lighting quality for evening events is insufficient for safe navigation.

The plaza has some wonderful Davis-specific features, for instance the yarn dragons that appeared last summer, see figure 22. When it was at its prime, the clock water feature is a

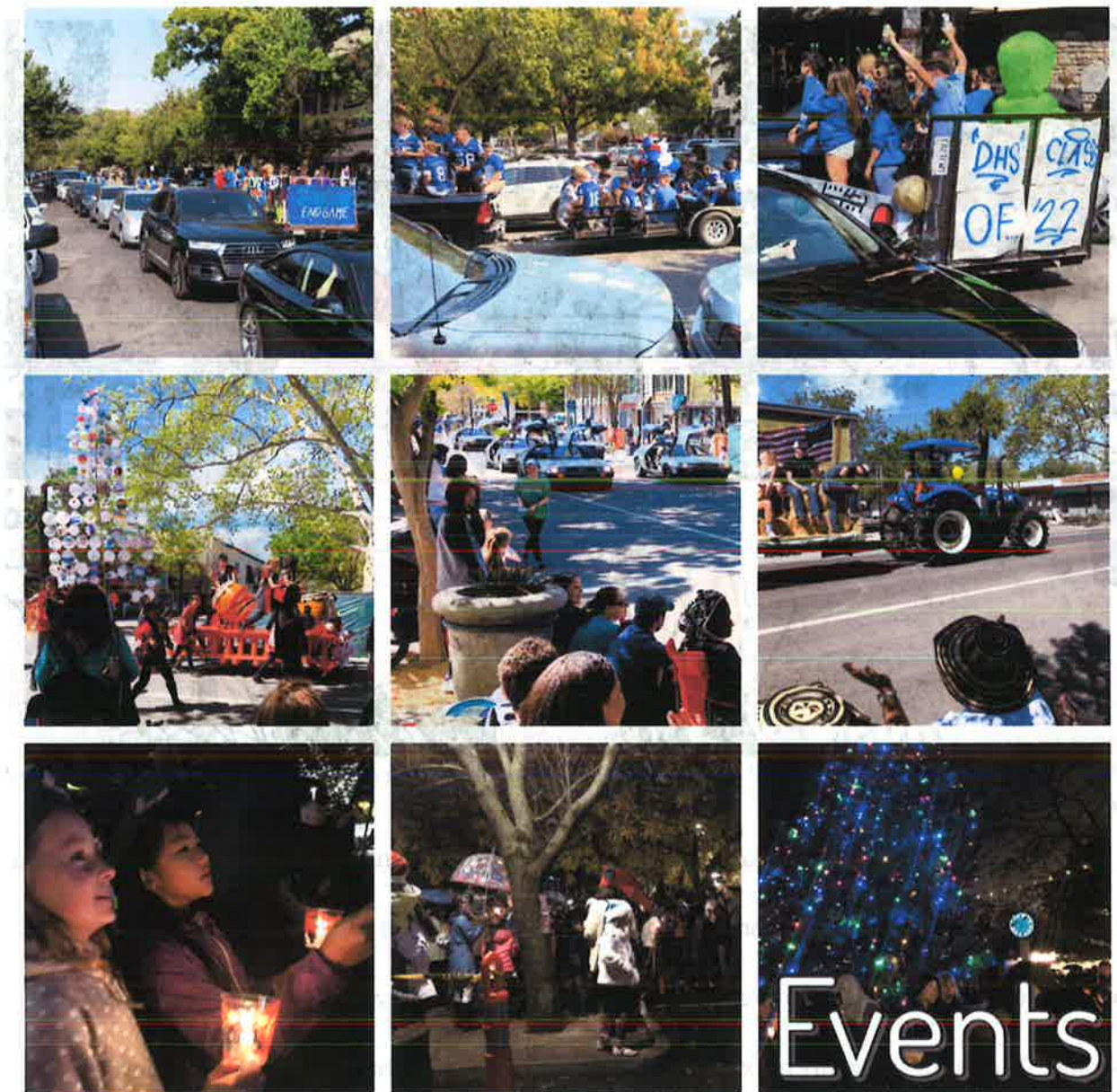


Figure 23 This shows some events that happen in and around the E Street Plaza. Top row shows the Davis High School parade. Middle row shows UC Davis Picnic Day Parade. Bottom row shows the Davis parade and tree lighting, the middle photo shows some of the tripping hazards.

beautiful art installation. The brick ground gives a casual, homey feel. The tree canopy gives a sense of enclosure and intimacy.

The E Street Plaza site has great potential to become an important destination for visitors from both local and regional origins. It is accessible by all modes of transportation; it is

highly visible but enclosed and appropriately sized. The space is active both day and night. The site is bounded on the east and west by well-traveled streets with thriving businesses and on the north and south by buildings also containing commercial businesses. The site is already used for small and large civic events, although regular programming is minimal.

Analysis regarding Sustainability

Transportation has the deepest impact on reducing carbon emissions, therefore reducing vehicle miles traveled and facilitating active travel must be a primary sustainability goal. The location of this new plaza, especially after housing is added Downtown, provides direct sustainability by reducing vehicle trips and providing the ability to park once to reach multiple destinations. Beyond location, transportation choices to reach the plaza have a substantial impact on its sustainability. Surveys taken during the specific planning process show that people do not feel safe and comfortable moving about downtown by any mode of transportation, whether it be driving, biking or walking due to the collision potential with other travel modes (City of Davis Virtual Survey, 2018).

According to comments from the community, improving the safety and comfort for all transportation modes is very important, and will likely increase the patronage downtown. Many comments were received by the community and the DPAC members that they avoid going downtown for two key reasons, a recognized high risk of collision and the perceived lack of parking. People will be encouraged to use active travel more often when walkability is improved. Separating active travel modes from vehicle travel will improve the walkability.

Although I have observed high pedestrian usage of the E Street Plaza and its surrounding blocks, the existing pedestrian-only system is fragmented, see the map in Figure 8,

above. Connections can be improved on all sides of the E Street Plaza block via pedestrian alleys and cut-through access to strengthen this system. Two existing pedestrian-only alleyways can lead people to the Site from the west. However, these alleys are not very inviting or pleasant to travel through in their current state. Alleyways store trash bins and/or serve as routes to the trash bins, making them feel unsafe and not clean. See figure 24 for a sample of pedestrian alleys available in Davis. A more complete and safer system would encourage more active travel.

Codes requiring pedestrian passageways in building blocks need to be written into the code and negotiated upon redevelopment. To the north there is a pedestrian path that leads from the F Street Parking lot to 3rd Street, with a code requirement for pedestrian access, this existing path could extend into the E Street Plaza site. These mid-block pedestrian access points would provide additional views into the plaza and would help connect some of the busiest blocks of downtown to the plaza, creating a safer, more pedestrian-friendly space.

Biking routes in Downtown are limited, located in the streets, and somewhat hazardous. Biking, skating, and other types of wheeled travel modes are not allowed on the Downtown sidewalks and instead they are supposed to use the streets. Both F Street (on the east side) and 3rd Street (just north of the site), have delineated, Class II bike lanes that offer a moderate amount of protection. 3rd Street serves as the primary bike route used by residents traveling east and west. Throughout downtown there are many bike racks located in the furniture strip between the walking path and the street. On the busier blocks surrounding E Street Plaza, they are often full, indicating desire to access this location by bike.



Figure 24 Pedestrian alleys in Davis are often unclean and do not feel safe. Others give a sense that they are private spaces.

Jump Bikes is an electric bike sharing company that was recently added to Davis' transportation portfolio. There have been several charging stations placed through the city, one of which is located on E Street, across from the parking lot. In my observations, it is often nearly empty, which may indicate high-level utilization and demand to depart from this location, see figure 25.



Figure 25 Jump bike spaces are often empty. The bottom photo shows two regular bikes locked to the Jump stations.

Bus transportation is offered downtown and can transport people to and from local and regional origins and destinations. The local bus routes are provided by Unitrans, a partnership between the City and UCD. Undergraduate students contribute a fee for Unitrans and in return get free transportation on the bus. However, residents and graduate students must pay to ride. Unitrans has two bus terminals located on UC Davis campus, each serving different routes. All bus transfers happen at these terminals. The closest terminal is the Memorial Union station. However, Unitrans has two bus stops within a block of the Plaza, at E and 3rd Street, see map in figure 26. Additionally, the Yolobus, which serves the Yolo County region, stops 3 blocks away, allowing people to easily access downtown and E Street Plaza. The Yolobus connects to towns and cities in Yolo County like Woodland and West Sacramento,

where many students have been forced to live due to the lack of housing in Davis. Yolobus also provides service to the Sacramento International Airport and can be accessed from the UCD campus, at Memorial Union, is a 12-minute walk away from the Plaza, see figure 26.

The Davis train station that links Davis to the Bay area, Sacramento, and beyond, is located within three blocks. I observed that the parking spaces in the lot next to the station and designated for Amtrak-users-only are typically full during work hours, indicating high usage by commuters. Because the cost of parking in this lot is low, commuters often originate from other cities and use this location as a park and ride. These commuters spend very little time in downtown Davis to shop or play.

Interstate Highway 80 is the primary connection linking the Bay area to Sacramento and on into Nevada, is located only a few blocks away from downtown and E Street Plaza. Visitors coming to Davis for the first time or to patronize downtown businesses are typically routed to the Downtown exit which brings them through the Historic Tunnel under the railroad tracks and onto E street. These visitors require a place to park their cars. The E Street Parking lot has 65 metered parking stalls that I have observed to be near capacity both day and night.

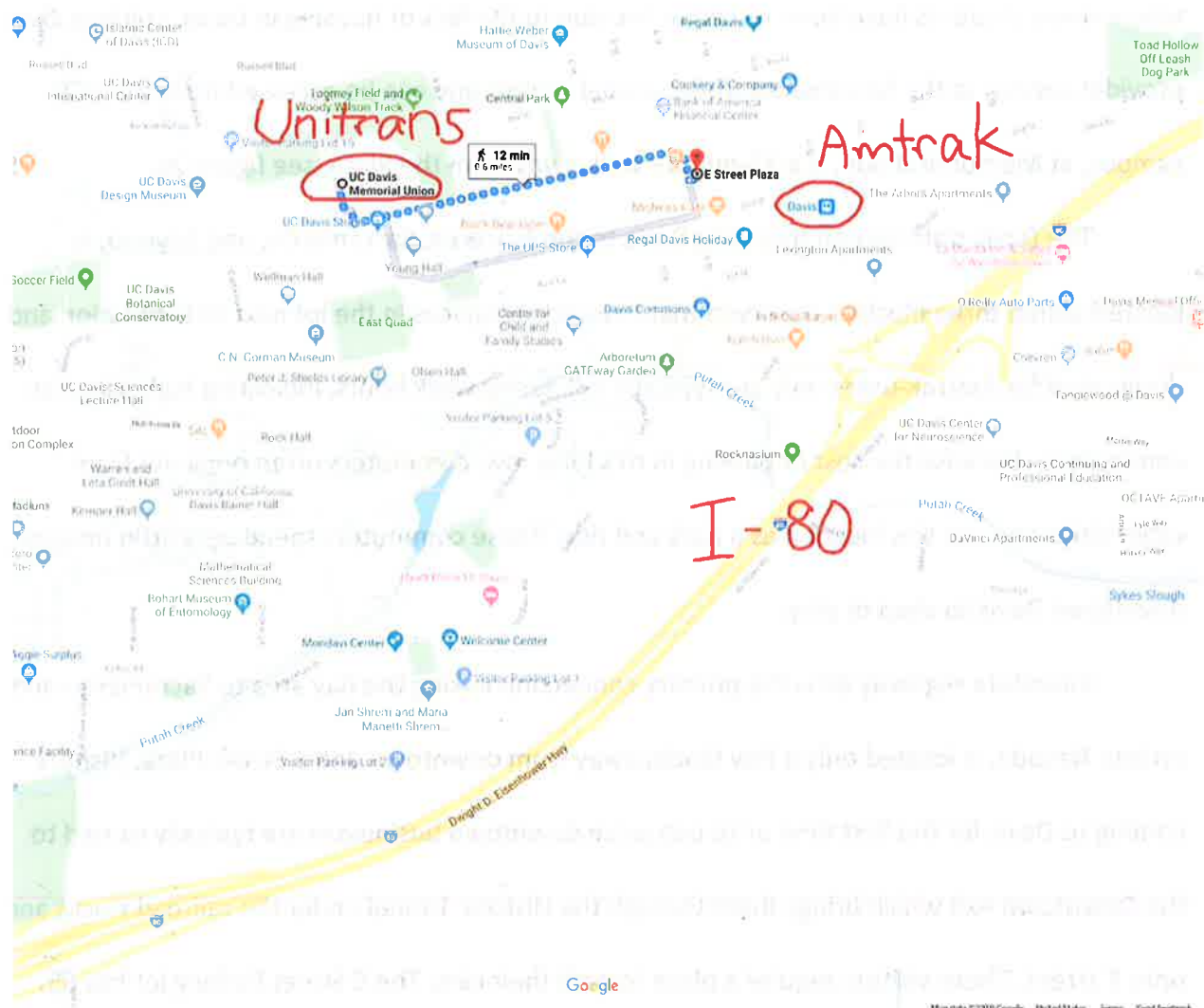


Figure 26 Google map showing multimodal access to E Street Plaza, from UC Davis Memorial Union Bus Terminal, Interstate 80, and the Davis Amtrak train station. The route shows that it is a 12-minute walk between E Street Plaza and the Unitrans station/UC Davis.

However, in my view, the E Street parking lot is underutilized in that it serves approximately 65 people at a given time. Downtown employees and students are known to use this lot to park for most of the day and it saves moving their vehicle every two hours. For a quick napkin calculation then... if we make some conservative assumptions, first that on average cars are occupied by one person when they arrive. If only half of the lot is used all day, 32 spaces, and the remainder spots change over on average every two hours (33 spots with a

different vehicle every 2 hours during the 10 hours requiring payment = 330 vehicles) + (32 use spaces all day), then this location serves approximately 362 vehicles/people daily. However, this space has the potential to be a community gathering space that could serve the entire community throughout the day and evenings.

The specific plan process has garnered strong support for higher buildings that include housing options surrounding the plaza. Residents in this location would have significant opportunities to work, shop, and play within a 10-minute walk of their residence. These buildings could house a substantial number of people, who would assuredly reduce their vehicle use to get to work or other destinations, thereby reducing overall carbon emissions for Davis.

There are several other ways to reduce vehicle trips and alleviate concerns about parking loss at the E Street parking lot. If the City attracts more visitors and increases housing opportunities downtown, parking mitigation measures must be considered. One option is to add more periphery parking on the edges of Downtown such as a lot or garage near the highway that connects to Downtown with a pedestrian bridge. Another, less expensive option and more immediately available, is to provide employees free parking at the existing and underutilized parking garages. The City's financial responsibility for providing Unitrans could be bolstered by a small property tax in exchange for allowing free rides to residents. Continuing to add electric bike share and similar options will also help to decrease vehicle trips and thus parking for local people.

Climate change requires Davis to plan for the health of the community in a much warmer environment, one that is predicted to be about 10 F higher by 2100, making the climate

closer to that of Tucson currently (Kerlin, 2018) (Houlton, 2018). One of the biggest health concerns will be due to the heat-island effects of exposed surfaces, particularly hard ground covering, such as those in the plaza. Hashem Akbari, Melvin Pomerantz, and Haider Taha found that “summer heat islands are created mainly by the lack of vegetation and by the high solar radiation absorptance by urban surfaces” (Akbari, 2001) A heat-island in 90 degrees Fahrenheit can exacerbate smog impacts and require 20% more energy for cooling (Akbari, 2001). Dark, unshaded surfaces retain the most heat; by using light colored or high-albedo materials the heat-island effect can be offset or reversed (Akbari, 2001). The current dark colored brick surface of the plaza is not ideal to prevent heat absorption.

Although it is beautiful and it allows for rainwater infiltration, the brick ground plane of the existing Plaza is functionally inadequate. The current surface primarily consists of tumbled brick pavers with decomposed granite in between which is problematic for people that use wheelchairs, canes, or walkers and is also difficult for people wearing heels. Additionally, when plumbing or other infrastructure must be accessed, it is difficult and reassembling the pavers increases the work required.

The existing trees in the Plaza and parking lot appear to be in deteriorating health, presumably due to water constraints over the last several years and the warming climate. The trees in the Plaza are mostly the same age, meaning they will reach maturity around the same time and will likely die around the same time. If all trees aged out at the same time, it would leave Downtown without shade until new trees are planted and grown.

Besides trees, the current vegetation is scarce and unremarkable. Plant maintenance is sorely lacking. A small square of what was neglected ground, now seems to have been claimed and taken care of by the Yeti Restaurant, and provides the only colorful plants on the plaza, see figure 28. To incorporate and demonstrate sustainability, a new plaza space must retain some large trees and quickly plant new ones to maintain shade sequence needs in the future. Along with trees, the vegetation must be capable of surviving the warming climate of Davis. Native plantings are preferred



Figure 28 Yeti Restaurant has claimed an otherwise abandoned planting square and added flowers that are neither native nor drought tolerant.

because they adapt well to the current climate and soil, however, not all of these will withstand a warmer climate with more days over 100 F and fewer cold days. Trees and plants that are



Figure 27 This is one example of visible water runoff that also provides seating.

non-invasive and can adapt to the change must also be considered.

Both water and water runoff have the potential to be visible, beautiful, and ideally informative too, see figure 27.

Water use can become visible with demonstration pipes, volume meters, or design (Napawan, 2016). Raising awareness of the water life cycle could reinvigorate a community dialog about water conservation. The more understanding the community has about the availability of water and water infrastructure requirements, the more likely

they will conserve water and eventually support water projects. Currently, there is one drinking fountain in E Street Plaza and one small decorative fountain. Otherwise, there is no evidence of water procurement, volume of use, or disposal. The redevelopment of this area provides an opportune time to make water visible. Currently the City has funding for water treatment-related art, which could prove useful in creating beautiful, visible water infrastructure.

The stormwater runoff is currently collected in drains, then sent via underground pipes to the Toad Hollow stormwater retention basin on 2nd Street, about a mile to the east, see figure 26. The water here is treated biologically with a wetland system. The parking lot drains into two linear trench drains that also flow into pipes and are sent to the same location.

Although the treatment system at Toad Hollow is satisfactory, a new plaza should utilize a more sophisticated method of collecting stormwater on site and use biological filtration, such as bioswales, see figure 29. Instead of collecting water runoff and building large infrastructures to move it to a holding area, bioswales can collect and temporarily store the runoff as it soaks into the ground. By directing water from the site to trees and other bioswale planting areas, the water can be biologically cleansed as it soaks into the ground and simultaneously provides water for the trees and vegetation. Another option for water runoff is to use permeable pavement in parts of the plaza, which also allows rainwater to slowly penetrate the ground and replenish aquifers.



Figure 29 This is an example of a bioswale that receives water runoff from the street. The plants here can cleanse the water as it percolates into the ground.

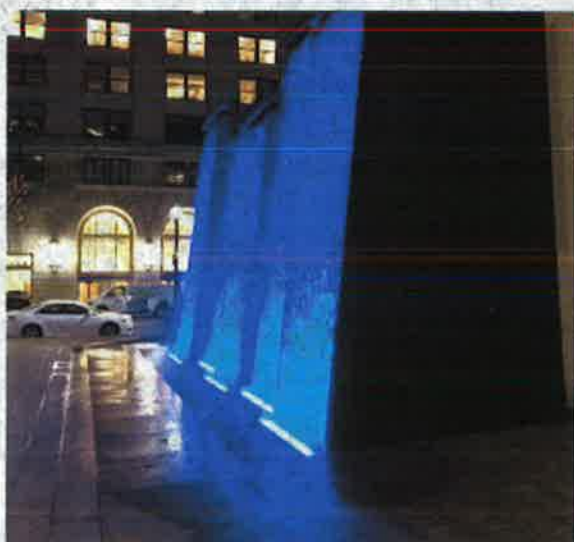


Figure 30 Touchable, playful, visible water serves many purposes in a civic space, primarily providing a reason to stay.

A civic water feature allows many people to take pleasure in its presence. Although we will have additional water limitations in the future, shared water in a public space is worthwhile for helping create an appealing social atmosphere. A water feature can provide playfulness or calm, depending on the speed and volume of water movement. It can also provide noise distraction from annoying sounds like a highway, for example (Whyte, 1980). Water can also serve as a playful attraction and provide ambient cooling for children and adults, especially on hot days, see figure 30.

Energy consumption will be a critical factor in the future as the climate warms and cooling load demand increases. The energy currently required at the E Street Plaza is primarily for lights such as area lights, decorative lights, and seasonal lights. Occasionally a sound and light system is used for performances. The power is supplied by the City grid. The parking lot uses energy for lights, parking meter, and to supply an electric vehicle charging station. There is a real opportunity to use this Site to use progressive energy harnessing technology, including solar and geothermal district heating.

The plaza must also consider Solid waste when reaching for sustainability. Currently, many downtown businesses deliver their waste and recyclables to a centralized location that is owned and maintained by the City, one of which is in the E Street parking lot. Although this space has recycling containers, a quick look in, will prove that businesses are not taking full advantage of this opportunity. In 2018, the trash holding area in the E Street parking lot was rebuilt and enlarged, see figure 19 above. Not only is this type of structure an eyesore using civic space for private waste, but it is unsanitary, and it allows businesses to deny responsibility for upkeep and their inadequate recycling efforts.

In San Luis Obispo, California I observed a different and successful downtown waste collection system. I was there in 2018, dining at the back of the building, along the river and I noticed that I could not find/smell/hear trash cans being used. So, I interviewed my waiter and he explained that they kept their waste in a special “trash room”, to keep it away from food preparations, as required for sanitary reasons. I probed further and he told me that the downtown trash is collected 7 days/week, for all downtown businesses. The waiter also said that businesses with less waste didn’t always put it out to the curb, but eateries typically would because they didn’t have space to store the waste for more than a day and keep the restaurant sanitary.

San Luis Obispo (SLO) has Development Standards for Solid Waste Services with strict requirements on waste storage. SLO offers commercial (and residential customers) service seven days per week, as needed and scheduled (Schedule). The SLO standards calculate the size and number of commercial bins required based on square footage. The standards go on to require pleasing aesthetics and hidden storage by blending with the building façade (which can be met by keeping it indoors). Furthermore, the SLO standards do not permit trash storage on public property, even the access routes and doors opening to a storage area must be contained within private property. The reasons behind these codes appear to be many, including security provisions from vandals and animals and to keep the area clean and prevent spillage of potentially toxic waste contaminants into the public realm. Contaminants could include mercury from dental offices, FOG (fat, oil, and grease) waste from eateries which could clog water runoff systems. (San Luis Obispo Standards, 2007) Prohibiting private waste on civic property prevents contamination or impairment of bioswales or other water collection systems.

Analysis regarding Inclusivity

Funding civic spaces and improvements has been unpopular with voters in recent years, thus restricting what cities can deliver. Davis has been lucky to have incredible support from taxpayers to build and maintain parks and greenbelts. However, following the end of urban renewal funds the city has had limited financial means for civic projects. To support city services, the City has leased public space on sidewalks and in parking stalls for use by restaurants. This civic leasing practice has been used throughout downtown, for example at Crepeville and Burgers and Brew on the corners of 3rd Street at C Street, see figure 31, as well as the Yeti Restaurant that is currently on the E Street Plaza. These businesses could not



Figure 31 Burgers and Brew, a restaurant at the corner of Third and C Streets uses civic land on the west and the south to operate. The south side enclosure uses a heating and cooling system and has a register and bussing area. This land is leased to the restaurant by the City. This is not the only one, there are other examples of this leasing system Downtown.

operate at their current capacity without using civic property. A new civic plaza has the potential to follow suit.

The community aspiration is primarily for civic gathering, essentially a space that functions as a third place (Oldenburg, 2001) for the whole community to enjoy. If every store front on the new plaza were to be an eatery, which has been the latest trend downtown, and those eateries were permitted to use the civic plaza, then the majority of the plaza area could be consumed by fenced off, private spaces that only welcome people patronizing their businesses. Leasing plaza property or otherwise allowing private seating on the plaza only would not only constrain the physical size of the plaza, but, the new plaza could easily become the equivalent of subsidized private property, or otherwise, an outdoor mall that benefits businesses and upper classes over the broad community.

This sort of public-private partnership that offers shopping, restaurants, and civic space has been successful in some cities, for instance, Pearl Street Mall in Boulder, Third Street in Santa Monica (Ginsberg, 2019), and Fourth Street in Berkeley, see figure 32. However, these commerce heavy spaces often rely on tourism to thrive. Most articles that have studied the success of these spaces did so before the retail economy moved online. Boulder is beginning to experience a downturn in its retail market on Pearl Street, including the closure of a major department store that anchors the area (Castle, 2019).

Furthermore, I have experienced each of these retail-focused locations personally and found them quite enjoyable environments, from a tourist perspective. However, they are not generally inclusive environments. Only people of a higher socioeconomic status feel comfortable in these spaces. People with limited financial means or without homes would not

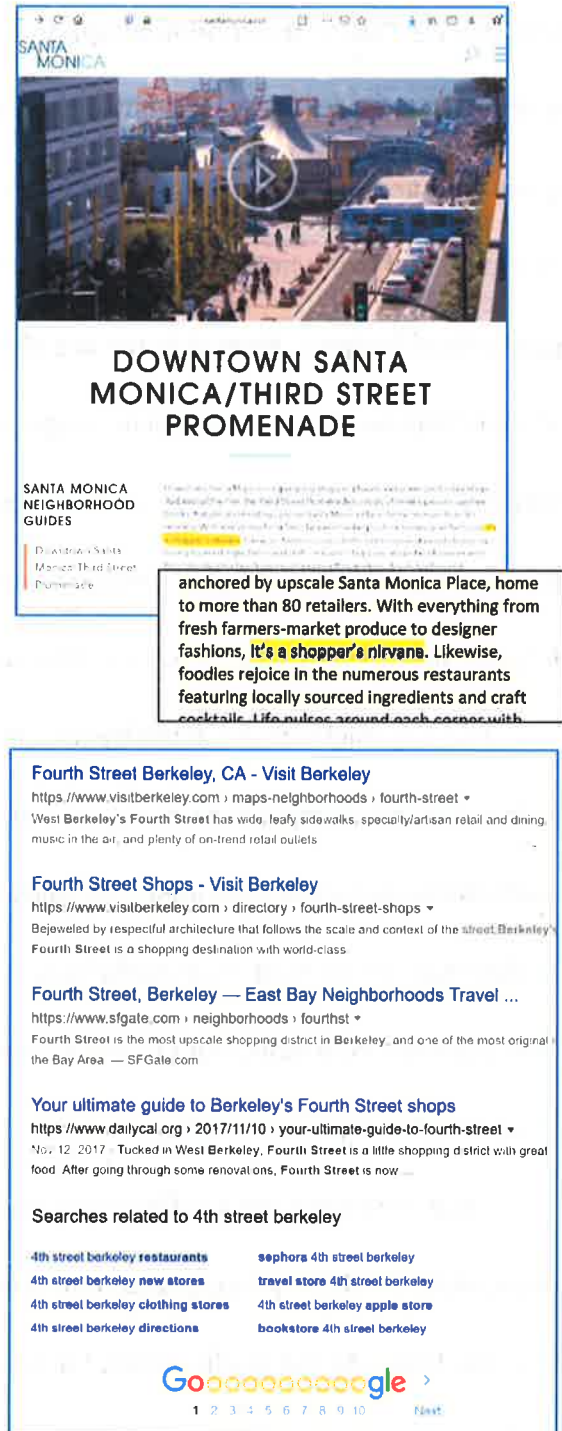


Figure 32 The two images on the left show that the primary activity at Pearl Street Mall is shopping. Although some small children's activities are offered with some event programming, the streets are lined with retail stores and restaurants. Top snip taken from Colorado.com, November 20, 2019. Bottom image with permission from Ken Lund. The top right image shows how the City of Santa Monica partnered with business and entertainment venues to provide a shopping, eating, and playing destination, one catering to the wealthy as shown by the highlight. Snip taken from santamonica.com on 11/6/19. The bottom right image shows that a quick google search of Fourth Street results in guides to shopping, as opposed to an inclusive gathering space. Snip taken from Google search 11/6/19.

feel welcome. Due to the continued opportunity gap that overshadows people of color, they are often the ones with lower incomes, thereby excluding this population as well. The experienced generation that moves slower and more carefully would also not feel welcome, they would feel overwhelmed by the busy energy or feel pressured to purchase things on their typically fixed budgets. Most children are also not included. From personal experience, I know first that children of elementary school age do not enjoy endless shopping, they seek (and need) interaction with their peers and the freedom for kinesthetic input. Children are present in these spaces; however, they are usually hovered over by parents and caregivers to ensure their safety because these spaces are generally not intended for children to play.

The City might be attracted by the idea of a lively atmosphere of cafés lining the plaza, one that is active, brings in tax revenues, and would likely keep people who are experiencing homelessness away from the area. The sales tax and lease revenue generation in combination with this interpretation of a successful space, the City could be enticed to lease ground space on the plaza to every store front facing it. However, to meet the community goal of inclusivity, I do not think this a prudent path.

I was pondering this challenge of public/private space connections during my travel to Boston, when I suddenly recognized that many of their eateries offered private seating that seemed to flow into the public street, fluently connecting these spaces. I continued to observe this phenomenon on my trip and photographed several successful examples, see figure 33.

Although this may seem like a Boston style, when I returned to Davis, I realized that there are several successful examples already present in Downtown. Paesanos on G Street borders both a pedestrian alley and G Street. Café Bernardo on 3rd Street is tucked in under a

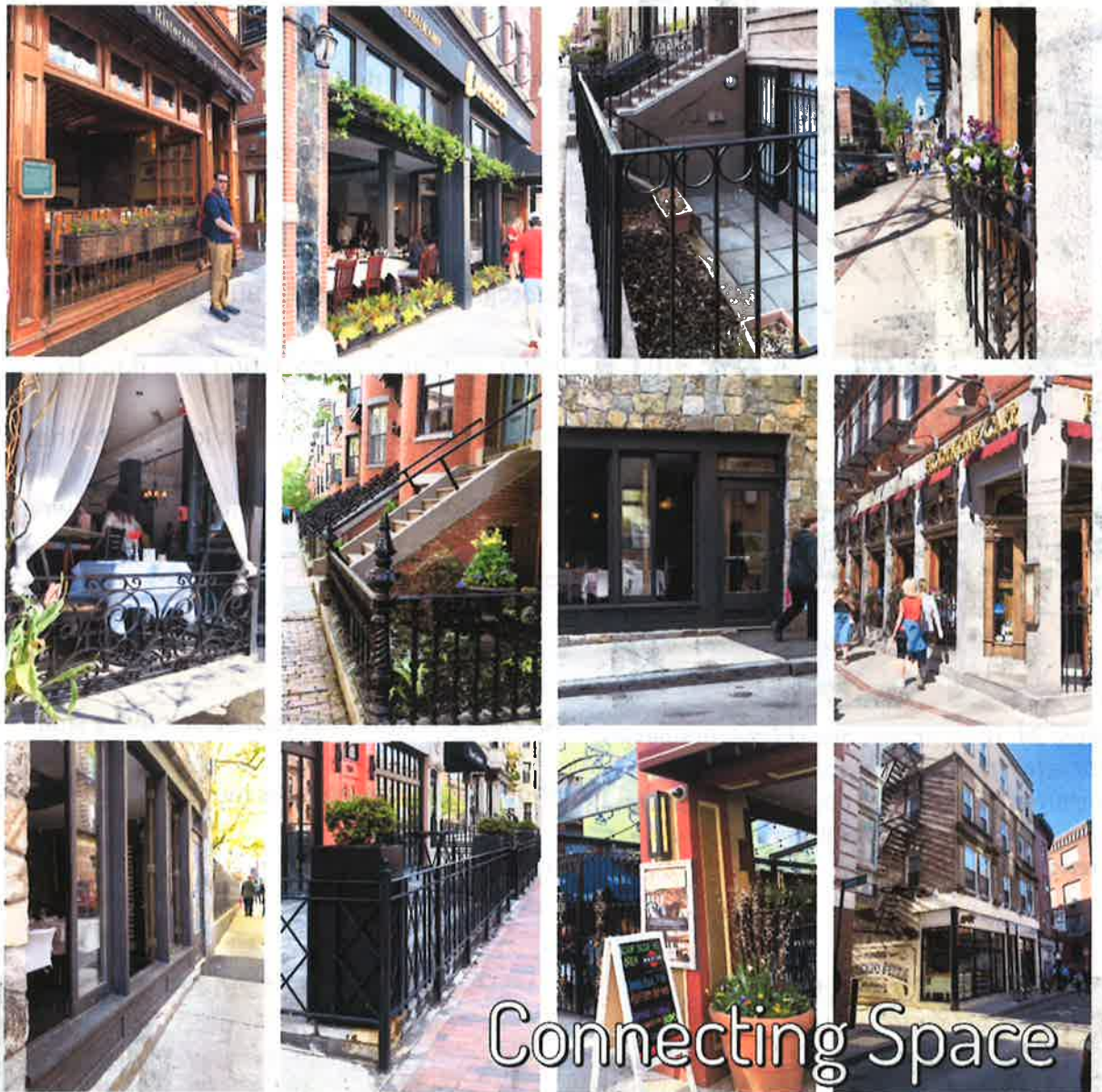


Figure 33 These images that I observed in Boston show examples of private properties that effortlessly connect to public spaces, providing a smooth integration with the outdoor atmosphere. Even stoops provide an opportunity to have a small garden space with a couple of tables.

second story, providing shade and weather protection for outdoor diners. The University of Beer, also on 3rd Street, has a patio that is protected from weather and countertop seating that faces the street for easy interaction with passersby. Orange Court invites the public into its space with a central courtyard. See figure 34 for more examples.



Figure 34 These images depict Davis businesses that retain their outdoor spaces on their private properties. They created open-air atmospheres by using patios, stoops, building insets, and interior courtyards.

There are a multitude of ways to implement this design strategy of connecting private to public space without creeping onto civic property. Many are shown in the Boston photographs in figure 33. Businesses can have indoor seating in combination with floor to ceiling windows or doors that look out to the plaza. Another possibility is for property owners to build an outdoor area on their private property, in front of their businesses. A business could also have a small stoop that accommodates more intimate spaces or private greenery.



Figure 35 This image shows highly desirable and demanded rooftop dining in Sacramento. (Kimpton Hotels)

As Davis allows upward expansion downtown, especially at the Plaza Site, central courtyards and rooftop dining will become possible, especially if the plaza has developed into a desirable space for people watching. Fully open eateries and rooftop patios such as these are seen in the San Francisco, Sacramento, and many other cities with suitable climates, see figure 35.

The whole notion of a public space is that everyone is allowed and included. But often families, teens, the experienced generation, and minority groups of people are overlooked in the design process or an explicit place is set aside where they are “supposed to” go, such as a playground, skate park or senior center. Public spaces where women and families with young children feel comfortable but are not designed for children only, are also spaces where all generations and people with different abilities also feel comfortable. For example, when a space provides paths that are easily maneuvered with a stroller, people with disabilities or other walking difficulties are also included, and vice versa. When lighting provides safety at a level that women feel comfortable, so do others. By locating restrooms close to the space, which is a necessity for young children and elders, all generations benefit. Programming should be broad reaching to include all ages and cultures to bring people together. Age- and gender-responsive planning will promote safe, accessible civic spaces (New Urban Agenda, 2017).

Indicating inclusivity for public spaces, the 2017 United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development stated that they envision cities and human settlements that are

“participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants, prioritize safe, inclusive, accessible, green

and quality public spaces that are friendly for families, enhance social and intergenerational interactions, cultural expressions and political participation, as appropriate, and foster social cohesion, inclusion and safety in peaceful and pluralistic societies, where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations” (New Urban Agenda, 2017, 5).

The urban landscape itself should be used for play. Isamu Noguchi believed that children would find play and exercise through the provision of simple elevation changes in the earth, steps for running, places for jumping and sliding (Larrivee, 2011). From my own experience as a mother, I find this to be true. Placing playful elements within an urban civic space can encourage use and participation by youth rather than act as a deterrent under the coded words of “safety.”

Civic spaces should provide opportunities for children to be a part of society, rather than apart from it, segregated to a playground. When children are not included in a space, parents and other caregivers are also left out. This is a large group to deny participation in a civic space and furthermore a large market sector to exclude from Downtown. Currently, caregivers must go to another location where children are welcome, such as a playground, at which the adults are not fully included. A better approach for a civic gathering space is to provide playful activities for people of all ages and abilities. Elements like curbs or walls that children can use to walk on, a small hill for climbing and running down offer kinesthetic inputs, a touchable water fountain or a dancing water sculpture can all offer play to many ages and abilities. An area with tall, wavy grass offers a tactile experience; a bridge to cross or circular paths can invite children to a game of chase, providing active, playful activities in otherwise seemingly adult spaces.

Providing places for children to be playful within the site design offers inclusivity to families. The play elements must also be beautiful to attract adults and kids alike. For example, interactive art that encourages touching and play can provide a way to include children of all ages. The City of Ghent, in Belgium was labeled a child and youth-friendly city in 2014 (Vision Text, 2015). One of their stated goals is “The realization of art pieces that encourage children to play on them in parks.” And to “Achieve and support a child-friendly and accessible cultural offer, with special attention for teenagers and comprehensive urban events” (Vision Text, 2015, 9-10). I think that Davis should strive for these goals to help meet its commitment of inclusion.

Another constraint for people with disabilities is the inadequate accessible parking. While recording data on uses in and around the plaza, I have witnessed several people



Figure 36 The Davis Community Transit van must double park so that there is enough room to unload a passenger with a wheelchair.

struggling to help a person who uses a wheelchair or walker out of their vehicle due to lack of space. The Davis Community Transit provides additional transportation beyond the regular bus for people with disabilities (Davis Community Transit). The van they use is large and the exit is from behind. While observing behavior at the E Street Plaza, I have witnessed this van double park and park within the Plaza to allow enough space for its passengers to exit, see figure 36.

Analysis of Davis' Identity

There are “available parking” indicator signs at the entrance to Downtown from the South, most of these point to the east. However, I have observed that most of the vehicular



Figure 37 This page shows the original Davisville train station and the one that was rebuilt in 1919, demonstrating that the Spanish Colonial style building arrived after Davis was founded. (Larkey, 1969)

traffic continues onto E Street. This suggests that E street, between 1st – 3rd Streets establishes a newcomer's first impression of Davis. Therefore, the E Street Plaza affords the opportunity to make a statement about the identity of Davis and welcome people to our downtown.

Downtown Davis has two physical characteristics that distinguish it from other cities, symmetrical arches and bright colors. At the first DPAC meeting, the consultants asked members to photograph features and spaces of downtown that we like or dislike. While on this assignment I

recognized that Davis has recurring circular symmetrical shaped arches. In one form or another, the arch is displayed on businesses and historic homes alike. See image 38. Arches stand out as a noticeable architectural feature, appearing on the oldest existing buildings in Davis as well as the newly refaced and built buildings.

The Davis arch element, as shown on the 1919 Davis Train Station building, see figure 37, originated from Spanish colonialism. Because of these roots, some community members find this aesthetic to be representative of the oppressive European culture that invaded the lands of the native people. I acknowledge and respect this perspective. Davis should seek ways to apply the arch shape more progressively and leave behind the other architectural features that so clearly define the Spanish colonial style such as those shown at the train station.

Arches are exhibited on several of the oldest buildings including the train station, the old Davis High School that now serves as City Hall, the old City Hall at 3rd and F Street, and the landmark building known as the Anderson Bank Building located on the corner of 2nd and G Street. Many other buildings and downtown homes also demonstrate the circular arch element, including modern applications of the half-circle arch that can be seen in the building at the northwest corner of 2nd and F Streets, as well as the recently built Yolo Federal Credit Union which used the rounded arch shape at its entrance in a horizontal style. There is a brightly colored circular bike tunnel at the Davis entrance on Richards Boulevard, running parallel to the vehicular underpass. Even the signage downtown incorporates the circular arch shape, see figure 38.

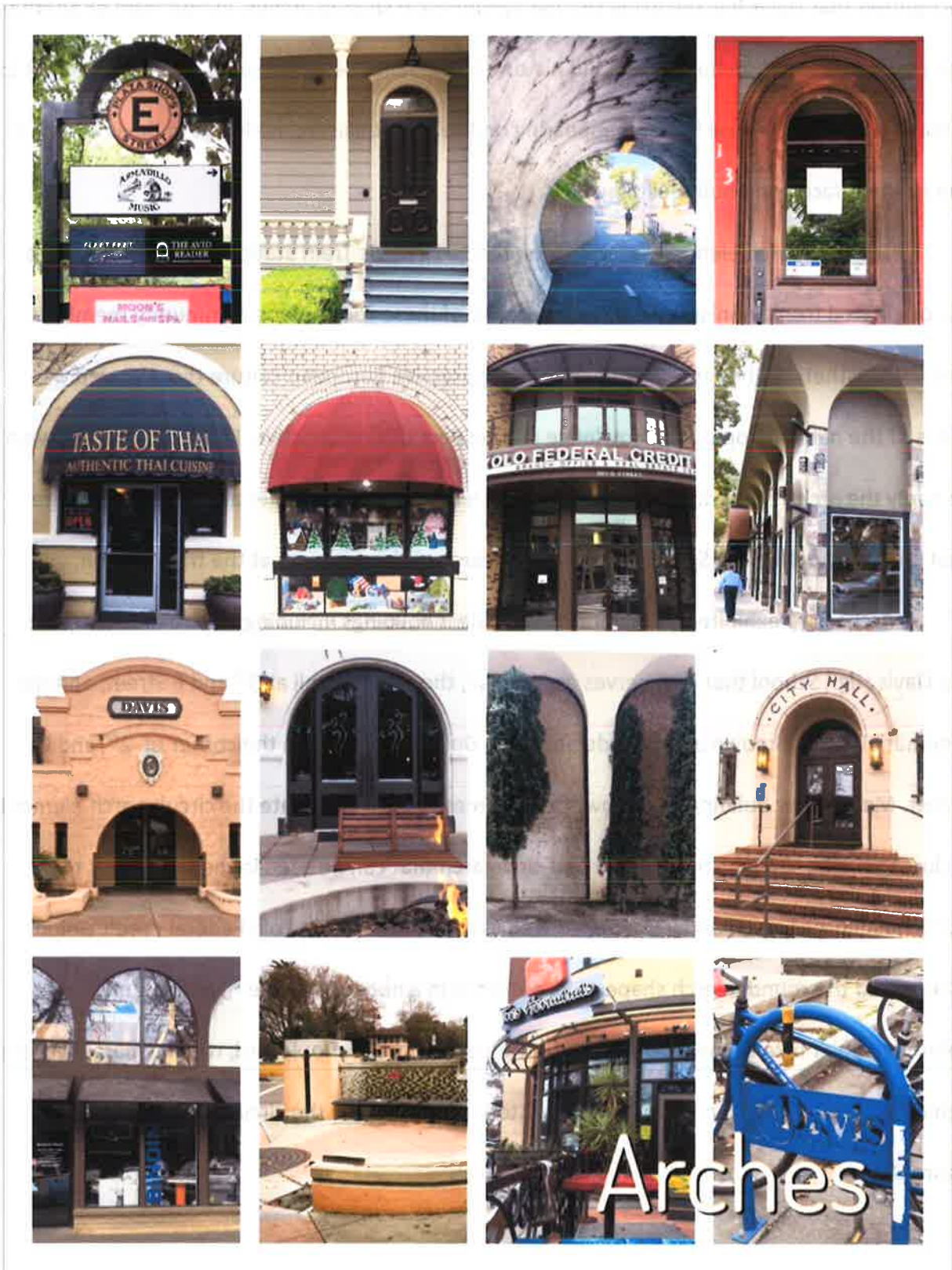


Figure 38 Symmetrical, circular arches are an identifiable characteristic of Davis and additionally could represent half of a bicycle wheel shape.

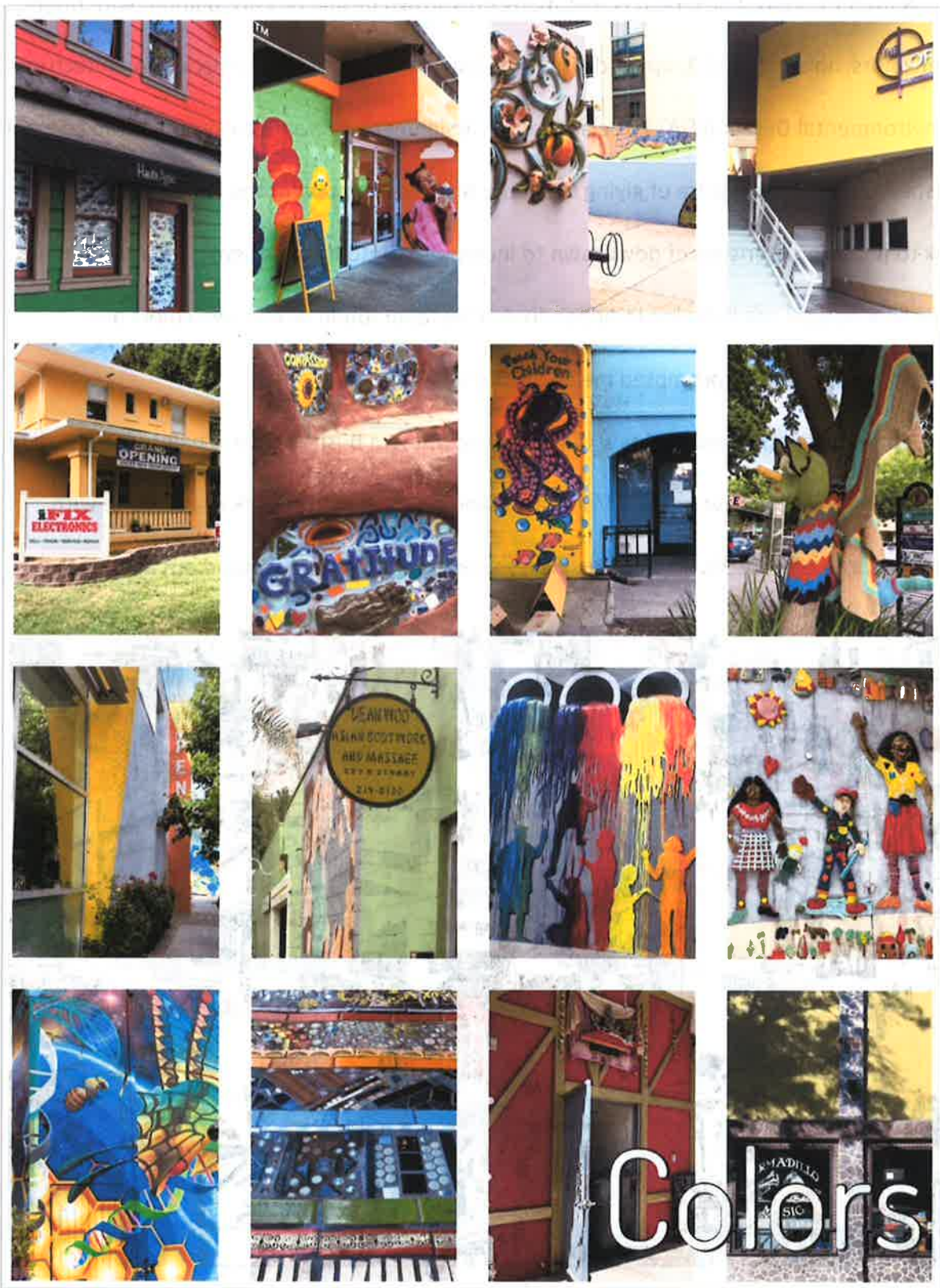


Figure 39 Images show the vibrant colors that help define Downtown Davis.

Another feature I observed is that many downtown businesses are painted with bright, vibrant colors. In spring 2019, upper division UC Davis students in the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Design (LDA) 171 class had an assignment to create a design for the E Street Plaza space. I had the pleasure of giving them the historical context of the plaza, putting them to task to find characteristics of downtown to incorporate into their designs. Several examples of their final designs are included in Appendix A. One team found downtown colors as a decidedly Davis. This idea prompted me to take another look.

Upon closer observation, I saw that many downtown businesses are painted with bright colors such as green, yellow, red, and/or orange and much of the artwork is also done with vibrant colors, see figure 39. Several businesses have used colors that stand out against the

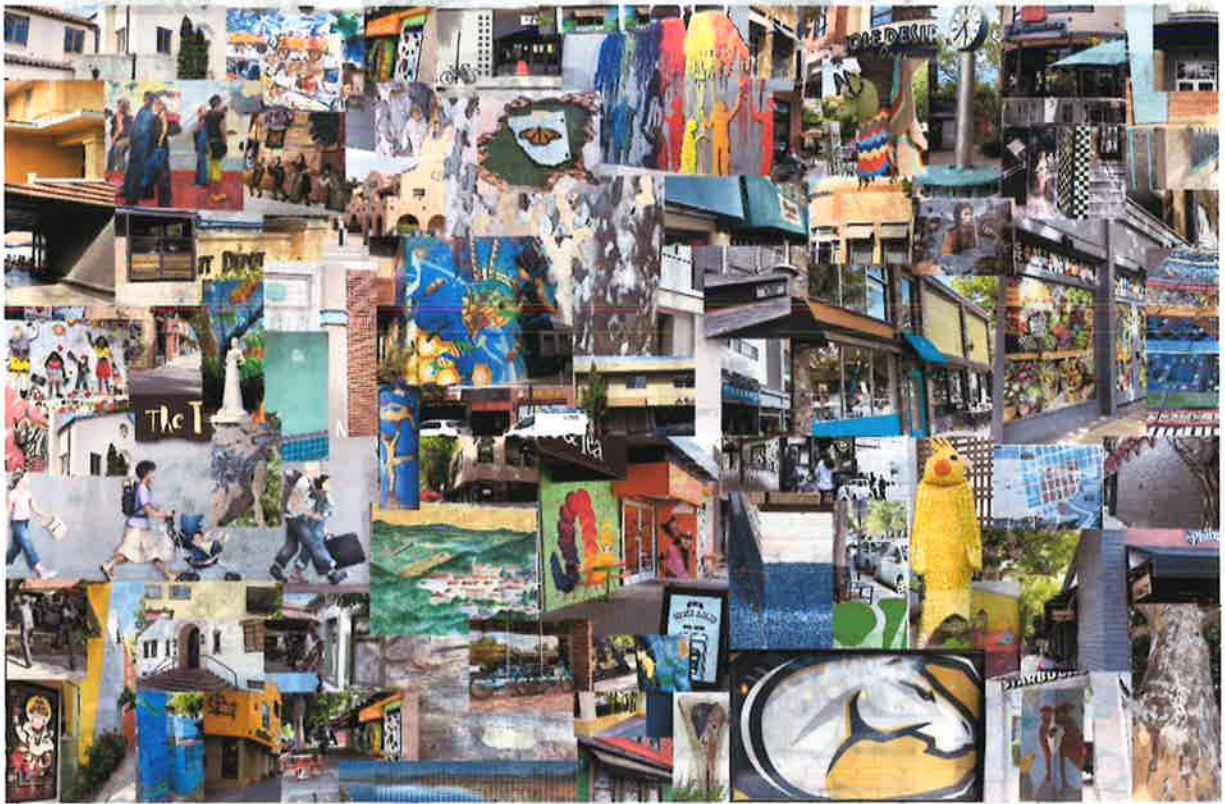


Figure 40 My final collage of photographs from Downtown, used to generate the downtown color palette.

common colors. This is exemplified at Orange Court, Pence Gallery, Cultive, and some houses that function as businesses. Consequently, I decided to perform a color analysis of downtown as part of this research. To analyze the colors of Downtown, I took hundreds of photographs of downtown buildings, art, plant life, and streetscapes and then using Photoshop, I created a



Figure 41 I chose these palettes as best representatives of the bright colors Downtown. They were generated by, top to bottom, Color Palette FX, Coolers, and Colormind generated these palettes from the Downtown collage.

collage of the colors that I thought embodied our eclectic downtown.

Using my Downtown photo collage, I was able to generate hundreds of palette options by uploading the image to three online tools: Color Mind IO, Coolers, and Color Palette FX. These programs use algorithms to evaluate colors in the image and then create a suitable palette. Each tool allowed me to click through a variety of palettes, choosing to save the ones I liked. When the initial results produced mostly neutral colors even though the bright colors stood out to me, I created a second collage to highlight the non-neutral colors, see figure 40. Using this collage, I produced several palette options. Of course, many palettes were acceptable and pleasing. Figure 41 shows the selections that I chose from each generator to represent Downtown.

I acknowledge that this analytic process is inherently biased because I choose which photographs to take, which ones were placed in the collage, and how prominently the colors were shown in the image. After considering hundreds of color combinations the final selections that are presented in the color palette, were ultimately influenced by my personal judgement.

While photographing Downtown, I realized that there was an apparent trend in colors. As a long-time resident I hold insight about which buildings were more recently repainted and I observed that the buildings most recently refaced have used shades of gray in the paint and awnings. However, the older buildings are shades of almond, bronze, and peach stucco colors. The neutral shades seem to have captured the current trend in color palettes, however this does not represent Davis, rather it is a bland palette that can be used for any town, any place.



Figure 42 The left side shows the building as it was refaced for a local owner. It has colors that blended with the other bright colors of Davis. The photo on the right shows the corporate makeover when they painted with bland, gray colors.

When choosing the final palette, characteristic color is an important factor in addition to color trends, see figure 42.

One way a college town can show its distinct character is to convey its university relationship. While performing this color analysis, I noticed that UC Davis colors are noticeably missing Downtown. In the collage image that I created to find the downtown palette, there is only one small hint that these images are connected to the college town of UC

Davis. Around the start of Fall quarter, in September, I observed only one small, unreadable sign about football that welcomed students to Downtown; see figure 43.

With the goal of inclusion, I think that it is important to incorporate the university colors into the downtown palette. I have observed thriving college towns that demonstrate their



Figure 43 This tiny, unreadable sign about football games was the only evidence I saw Downtown that UC Davis was about to begin their school year.

university pride by using the university colors throughout the city and especially in their downtown. For example, Manhattan, Kansas is a college town similar in size to Davis and



Figure 44 Even the recycling trucks are purple in Manhattan Kansas to represent Kansas State University.

Kansas State University purple is proudly displayed as accents throughout the city and downtown. They have purple trash and recycling trucks, purple trash bins, Buildings are highlight with purple lights, signs are purple, even shutters on houses are purple, see figure

44. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, the crimson

color of Harvard is used throughout Harvard square and can be seen in most every storefront.

When choosing the palettes for Downtown, I took into consideration the UC Davis blue and gold colors in addition to the bright colors.

The Davis logo, the high wheel bicycle, can be seen all around Downtown and the City, see figure 45. The highwheel was the first bicycle type available and was used right from the beginning of establishing the town. The City Council adopted the highwheel as its logo as a symbol of Davis' "dedication promoting bicycling for transportation, recreation and fitness" (Highwheel Bicycle). The highwheel now symbolizes the "community's commitment to a 'green', sustainable and healthy lifestyle" (Highwheel Bicycle).

Davis is known nationally for several bicycle-related firsts and it is an important part of the local culture that should be captured in Davis' identity. In 1967, it was the first City to implement a bicycle lane on a vehicular street after Norm Woodbury and Maynard Skinner ran for city council with a platform that included supporting bicycle lanes. (First Bicycle Lanes). In 2005, Davis was the first city to reach the Platinum Level award as a Bicycle Friendly Community from the League of American Bicyclist. (First Bicycle Lanes). In 2016 the League of American

Bicyclist awarded not only the City of Davis Platinum level Bicycle Friendly Community, but the University of Davis was also awarded Platinum status as a Bicycle Friendly University, and a Bicycle Friendly Business (McLeod, 2016). Davis also installed the first signal light at the intersection of Sycamore and Russell that allowed a bike-only crossing phase (First Bicycle

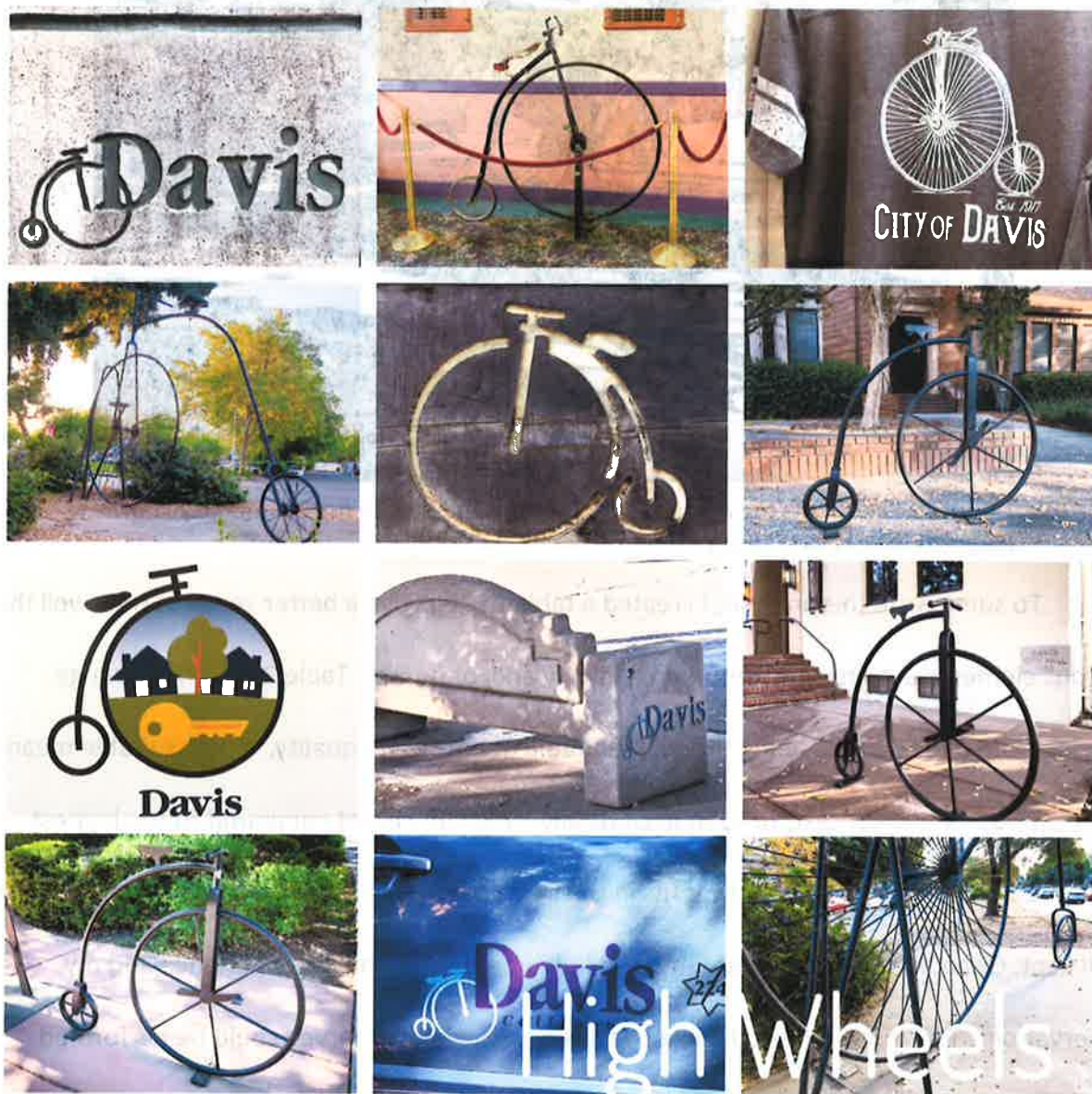


Figure 45. The City of Davis logo is placed throughout Downtown, inspiring its use in my design.

Lanes). Davis hosts the annual July 4th Criterium bike race that is attended by nationally known bicycle racers, see figure 46.



Figure 46 Davis hosts the annual 4th of July Criterium which hosts nationally known racers as well as local riders.

To summarize this analysis, I created a table to help give a better sense of how well the various elements are provided, either in quantity and/or quality. Table 2 has a heat range varying from 0 to 6, with 6 being the most suitable quantity and quality, where suitable means to be appropriate in context, or to fit in culturally. This table is not compared to the highest, best plaza in the world, rather how it fits in the Davis context, if there is enough of it and if it is well kept. Of course, the ratings are my own judgement based on my experience and my observations. This is not a reproducible conclusion. However, a survey could be performed based on these criteria to conclude if the community feels the same.

Table 2 Existing conditions in or adjacent to the E Street Plaza.

		Quantity and/or Quality of public provision on a regular basis (based on my own observation)					
Element		0	1	2	3	4	5
1	seating options						
2	movable seating						
3	food nearby						
4	water feature						
5	music						
6	visually appealing						
7	small programming						
8	large events						
9	art						
10	civic buildings						
11	water hydration station						
12	toilet facility						
13	bike racks						
14	scooter or skateboard racks						
15	safe pedestrian routes						
16	safe cycling routes						
17	safe vehicle routes						
18	safe route for other wheeled modes (skates, skateboard, scooter, etc.)						
19	delivery zones						
20	shared ride waiting area						
21	protection from elements						
22	performance space						
23	sustainable water runoff						
24	tree canopy						
25	vegetation						
26	maintenance						
27	housing						
28	work opportunities						
29	parking						
30	sustainable waste program						
31	inclusivity						
32	accessibility						
33	identity						

CHAPTER 3: Design Strategies, Recommendations, and Final Design

My design goal is to answer the question, how could a design of the E Street Plaza area in downtown Davis, California create an inclusive civic gathering space that reflects Davis' identity and vision to sustainably progressively respond to climate change? Of course there are likely as many ways to answer this question as there are designers, but in creating this design, I was called to look at these objectives in a deeper way, one that has allowed me to analyze many aspects of the site and its context Downtown. With each iteration and element of my design, I went back to the research question, as it breaks down into components: how can sustainability principles be used or shown? Is it universally accessible and inclusive of the whole community? Does it encourage gathering at varying levels of size and will it attract people to come Downtown? Does it characterize Davis?

Below I offer design solutions and strategies for the E Street Plaza Site. My intention for this Site is that it is remain true to the aspirations of the Davis community as I have derived them from the specific planning process. To apply Community aspirations and meet City goals, I utilize these three major goals to guide my design:

1. Embed **sustainability** in the design sufficiently to create a destination for visitors and become an economic generator – a hub of intellectual capacity.
2. Create an **inclusive** space where participation does not require economic exchange, one that welcomes and embraces everyone in the Community to relax, hang out, meet up, attend events large and small, and engage in civic discourse.
3. Reinforce Davis' **identity** as a city that is a walkable and bikeable, that values progressive sustainability, holds intellectual expertise, and supports a healthy Community.



Figure 47 In this design sketch of the Hub, I considered design options for the HUB such as a large energy demonstration.

From my identity analysis presented above, I use three primary design aesthetics to exhibit these goals: bicycling, geographical history, and community reflection. Figure 47 shows my working design for reference in the following sections. Before I present the final design, let's explore the strategies I used as they have helped me to shape the design.

Sustainability Strategies

Downtown could be revitalized by attracting UC Davis students to live, shop, dine and play here. If the proper design is implemented people would use a new gathering space as landmark to meet up, hang out, attend events, and other cultural pursuits. In the changing face of retail, Downtown cannot depend upon the retail tax income from the days before. However, Downtown could become more economically sustainable if it transforms from a consumer-based economy to a mixed-use neighborhood that accommodates not only retail, but housing too. Jane Jacobs' theory still holds today; the economic growth of downtowns directly

correlates to the number residents living in the neighborhood (Jacobs, 1958). Currently there are no residents in the Downtown core. The available infill sites that could add a substantial number of residential units Downtown is limited. However, this site has that possibility. The new plaza could create the heart of Davis and simultaneously catalyze the economy with its location, the latent demand for residential units, and the reinvestment potential of the surrounding buildings.

The rising UC Davis population should be viewed as beneficial to the City and Downtown. By reaching out and embracing the student population, this undeveloped market group could lay a new foundation of economic generation Downtown. The university population has the capacity to participate Downtown in completely new ways. The intellectual knowledge produced at the University can be leveraged to create urban sustainability pilot projects and test studies to advance energy capture or other sustainability initiatives. The addition of live theater, game rooms, recreational activities, and other cultural spots would ensure vitality Downtown as they connect with students and the local population.

Throughout my design process I have asked myself how each element could demonstrate sustainability. Could the element itself use sustainable principles? Could the element provide education about sustainability? What would attract regional visitors to see a sustainability demonstration?

I use five key strategies to address these sustainability questions with an overarching goal of creating an exhibit space for demonstration projects that could attract people from the region. Go big!

1. Complete streets with travel mode separation motivates active travel and reduces vehicle trips.
2. Growing trees sequenced with expected maturity and using high-albedo materials will prevent heat island effects in the future.
3. Bioswales and permeable pavement capture water runoff on site and replenish ground water aquifers.
4. Energy reduction and production using progressive and experimental technologies.
5. Prohibit private waste on civic property to reduce commercial waste and provide consistent waste receptacles on site to encourage waste reduction

Active travel must be a priority for Downtown. By creating a safer, more integrated pedestrian-only facilities Davis can promote active lifestyles and simultaneously be include people from all generations and with all abilities. My design eliminates civic waste storage, freeing civic space and providing cleaner pedestrian facilities, in addition to provoking commercial waste reduction and recycling. Cleaner, more inviting alleyways without trash storage will encourage more pedestrian trips within downtown.

An important part of my design ensures safety and comfort for all modes of travel around the Site and provides pedestrian priority at the center and safe separation creates a low-stress travel experience. See figure 48 for two options that I considered for my design.

My final design uses raised pedestrian crosswalks at intersections and key mid-block

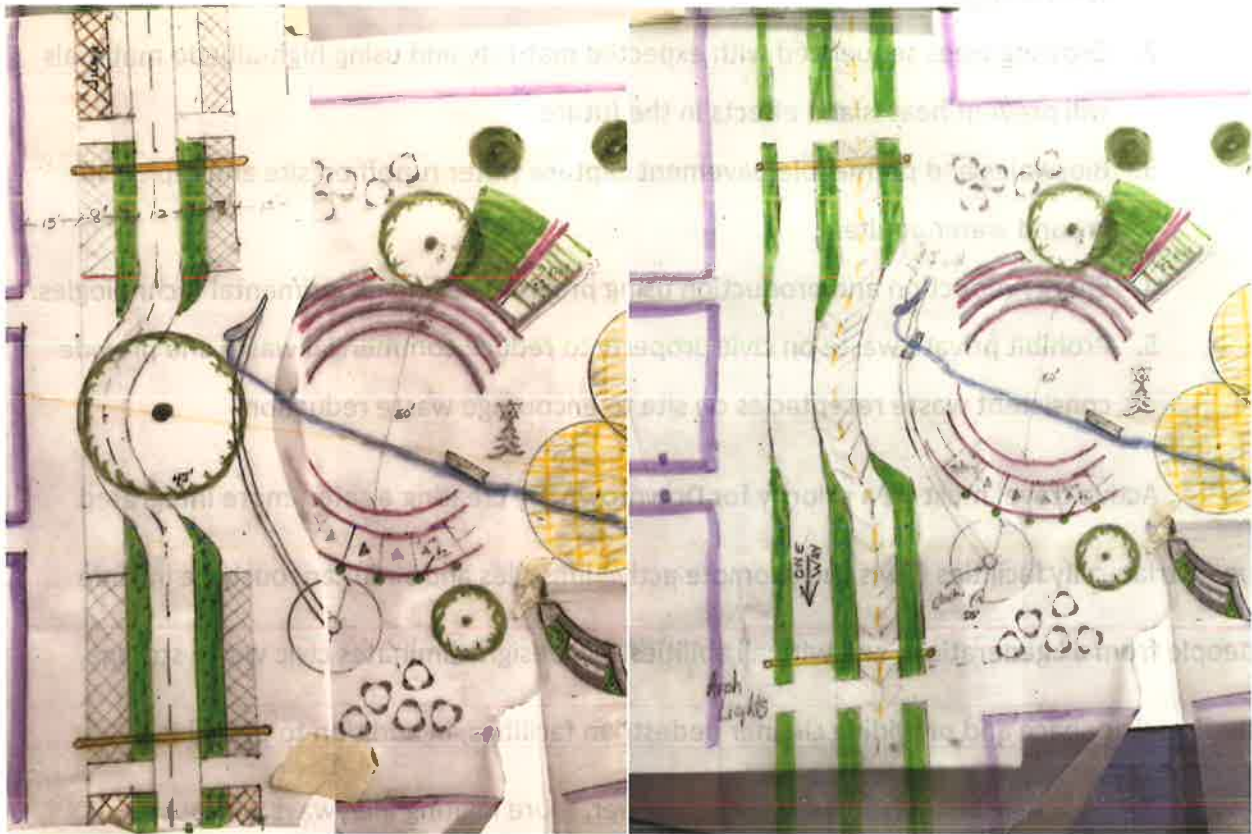


Figure 48 This design sketch shows two transportation options that I considered for E Street. On the left, automobiles are not permitted. On the right, a one-way lane heads south, with a curve and a raised platform to slow traffic to a minimum.

crossings. Bike lanes elevated to sidewalk level are used on F Street, protecting cyclist from vehicular collisions. The width of the lane permits passing and riding side-by-side, creating a more comfortable way to travel by bicycle. Street textures and narrow unmarked lanes with interruptions like planters slow both vehicular and bicycle traffic near pedestrian zones, acting as a narrowed shared street. Clear, consistent road markings also improve interactions between

travel modes. By incorporating a loading zone near the plaza, my design encourages shared transportation such as transit, ride share, or ride hailing services. A planting strip on either side of bike lanes provides separation from vehicles and pedestrians, see figure 48.

Although the community is in favor of using the E Street Plaza space to create the “heart of Davis,” parking loss is still a concern. Possible mitigation strategies include periphery parking, perhaps even a garage near I-80, which has some Community support. Added housing and people living downtown will inevitably reduce vehicle trips and reduce Davis’ carbon emissions. Providing car sharing options for Downtown residents will allow them to forgo car ownership and eliminate or reduce their parking needs.

Incentive programs that reduce or eliminate costs of parking for Downtown employees would help make street parking available for visitors. A free Unitrans ride pass for Downtown employees would also incentivize vehicle trip reduction and free parking spaces. Charging for street side parking in heavily demanded areas would encourage employees to use the free options provided and open spaces for people making quick stops Downtown.

Heat islands are problematic at most temperatures, but the effect is compounded when temperatures rise above 90 F causing more smog and heat health related incidents. By the end of this century, Davis is expected to warm 10 F beyond its current temperatures. To mitigate this impact, my design first uses tree shade because they provide a pleasant aesthetic in addition to the necessary shade. Tree shade is most effective at maturity; therefore, I have retained the larger more healthy trees in my design and I assume planting new, native and climate-adaptive trees as soon as possible.

The colors and materials used in my design have light colors and/or high-albedo materials to reduce heat retention. I assume that the buildings and other south or west facing vertical surfaces have light, high-albedo colors on their façade. Alternatively, or in addition to the color, a shade structure or awning protects the buildings from intense sun.

Plant Life is another important aspect to sustainability. The vegetation must be capable of surviving the warming climate of Davis. My design uses native and/or adaptable plantings. Grasses with a soft texture should be used as a tactile stimulus for children playing in the space, see figure 49. Where possible, the design also uses vegetation that represents Davis, such as pre-contact native plants, hops (the first ag crop grown in the area), fruit and nut trees, and sunflowers.



Figure 49 Bouteloua gracilis would provide a beautiful, touchable texture.
Photo credit:
<https://pacificnurseryseries.com/can-native-grasses-add-installation/>

Considering the orientation, I have placed a green wall on the south of the Site, next to the building. In this space plants can retain water and flourish because they have protection from direct sun. The green wall may or may not be directly attached to the building, see figure 50. Green walls also provide a sense of calm, fresh air, and a pleasing gentle aesthetic in addition to harnessing carbon dioxide. This green wall would help soften the Site and provide a sense of transition from public to private space if the southern buildings convert to include several levels of housing.

Water is at the core of sustainability concerns in California and as such, I employ techniques to capture, conserve, and educate. Water usage by the buildings next to the plaza or



Figure 50 Green wall examples. A green wall is used in my design on the south side of the Site.

possibly even for Downtown or the entirety of Davis is displayed through interactive, artistic installations. The Davis water cycle could be used as part of a wastewater treatment art and educational installation, helping people become aware of their water use lifecycle, from faucet to farm (or wetland).

Water systems like runoff should also be visible. Building drainage can be decorative and even fun to watch, see figure 51. My design uses and assumes appropriately sized and designed bioswales for collecting, storing and cleaning water runoff. Water recharge is demonstrated through permeable ground coverings on the plaza and temporary storage in bioswales and tree beds. The excess plaza water drains toward the representational Putah

creek which can then divert the water to adjacent native plantings and bioswales. Permeable pavement is used on E Street and the plaza area allowing rainwater to penetrate the ground. Excess water from E and F Streets are assumed to drain into the planting strips, again using biological cleaning methods.

Water features can make a space feel alive and dynamic or it can provide playfulness or calm, depending on the speed, volume, and fluctuations of the water movement. It can also provide distraction from annoying noises. Water and wastewater could be used as the central concept for an interactive art installation with visible water that uses auditory pieces from the



Figure 51 Water gutters can be fun! This roof provides protection from the elements and drains into an area for play.

Davis wastewater treatment wetlands. In my design, water is used at two fountains to offer two different kinds of sound, one that is lively and one that is calm. Additionally, a playful dancing water feature is also used for hot summer days. The water use in these features is justifiable because it is shared and enjoyed by the entire community.

To re-establish Davis as a sustainability leader, and attract people Downtown, I have incorporated a large art installation that also harnesses solar energy. These structures are intended to use cutting edge technology or perhaps offer an experiment to test different technologies. The three circular structures are intended to be sleek, large, and interactive. They can collect energy, power the plaza, and exemplify solar technologies that can power cities beautifully. Energy production would be visible and education by providing interactive energy gauges.

To exemplify emerging solar technology, I assume the use of an experimental road tile placed on bike lanes. The Ray is an organization that has helped fund an experimental pilot by Wattway in Georgia using solar tiles applied to roads (Kelly, 2019). In May 2019, I was lucky enough to hear The Ray's executive director, Allie Kelly, speak at the Women in Transportation Seminar International Conference in Boston. She spoke about this solar roadway project and talked about its downfalls and its possibilities. One possibility she mentioned was to apply the

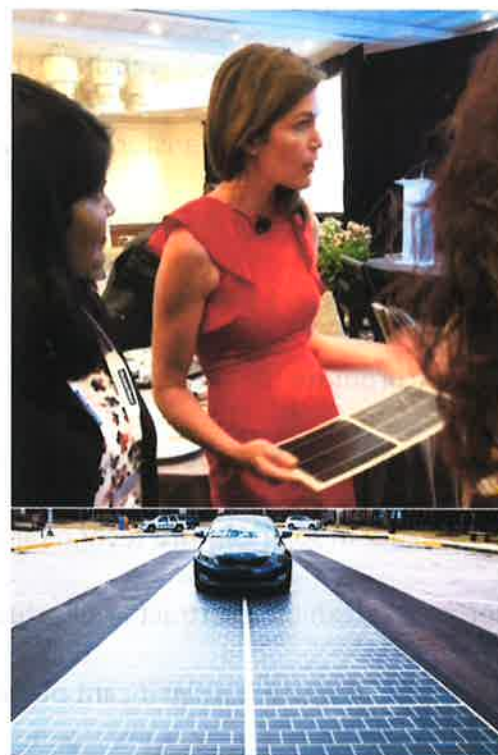


Figure 52 Top, the Ray's Executive Director, Alley Kelly holding a prototype of a solar roadway panel in May 2019. Bottom, solar road demonstration in Georgia at Wattway by COLAS' solar panels

solar tiles to bikeways, where their working life would endure longer, see figure 52. I was able to touch one of these tiles, see Allie Kelly holding a prototype in figure 52.

According to their website, “The Ray is a proving ground for the evolving ideas and technologies that will transform the transportation infrastructure of the future” and is “a nonprofit foundation that is looking to make transportation safer and cleaner” (Solar-Paved Highway). It is looking into form partnerships with DOTs and universities across the country to help incorporate the technology into their ecosystems (Patel, 2018). The solar road tiles could be used on the E Street bike paths. This is a perfect example of how Davis could triple-down to be a leader in solar capture technologies, acquire a source of funding for the infrastructure, and serve as an exhibit to attract intellectual exchange on progressive sustainability.

Solid waste is a significant outcome of our unsustainable lifestyles. Davis has a goal to reach carbon neutrality and 75% waste reduction by 2020. Commercial entities are still producing a substantial part of landfill waste. While researching I observed that several trash holding facilities were located on civic property and others used civic property to access their storage, leaving behind a trail of liquid waste that dries onto the sidewalks and pedestrian alleyways.

To clean up these alleys and other civic spaces, I propose Davis create a policy that prevents waste storage on civic property and require private/commercial waste be kept on private property. This policy would help Davis recapture functional civic spaces, yield cleaner, more welcoming pedestrian alleys that encourage active transportation throughout downtown, including connections to the E Street Plaza Site.

This commercial waste on private property policy would almost certainly reduce commercial waste. By requiring businesses to hold their own waste, they would be compelled to find the space on their own property to hold it in a sanitary manner. When commercial square footage is expensive and when recycling and compost collection is less expensive than landfill waste, it follows that businesses would be motivated to forego single use items and instead make reusable items and recycling a priority. These measures would significantly increase sanitary conditions on civic property and induce businesses to minimize waste to save their space.

The city should provide nightly waste removal Downtown to relieve these commercial waste space requirements and to help improve sanitary conditions in Downtown. This solution could be funded by waste reduction initiatives. I propose this novel solution to incentivize Downtown businesses to operate more sustainably. These three steps should be implemented:

1. Remove all city-owned trash containment areas to liberate public land.
2. Require self-storage of private waste on private property and even consider a requirement to keep it indoors.
3. Provide daily Downtown waste removal.

The new communal space at E Street Plaza Site would gain more pedestrian flow from adjacent alleyways if these measures were enacted, creating a more sustainable Downtown. Davis could also integrate “art alleyways” to connect the local art studios by providing clean, desirable, usable spaces.

Inclusivity strategies

The community gathering space envisioned for this research project is a place that has high potential to build social capacity and includes all people in our place-based community. I use the following four key strategies to provide inclusivity in my design.

1. Implement participatory design in the process to deeply engage the Community to retain Davis characteristics.
2. Provide open seating and prohibit segregating the plaza into private patios, allowing people of all socioeconomic demographics to participate.
3. Providing playful elements and programming to include all generations.
4. Apply Universal Design to all plaza elements to create beautiful, functional spaces for all people.

One of the things that people like about our downtown is its quirkiness. Retention of this sentiment was a favored outcome for the community vision. This quirky aura comes from things like yarn bombed trees with dragons, from stores like Newsbeat and Bizzaro World, from colorful restaurants like the Yeti, from weekly Fire University meetings, and from streets lined with bike racks. To ensure that a new design represents our character and our people, the City should extend the outreach in a more meaningful, tangible way that co-creates a design with the Community. The latest participatory design strategies are described in the book *Design as Democracy, Techniques for Collective Creativity* (de la Peña, 2019)

If Davis' objective is a communal space, one that is inclusive and allows people to hang out and without spending money, to bring their own lunch and socialize, where the entire community can come together for events, where the experienced generation, students, and families alike can feel comfortable, then it is my recommendation to prohibit businesses from

using the plaza space for private purposes. Instead private landowners and businesses should be encouraged to offer outdoor or open-air seating on their private property that is adjacent to the public plaza. The sidewalk space by businesses facing both E and F Streets would continue to allow café seating and such uses on civic property.

A policy prohibiting plaza use by private businesses should be included in the Downtown Specific Plan and Form-Based Codes. I recommend counterbalancing this policy with a plaza design that provides moveable seating with tables, where people can bring food from home or anywhere. Various seating types from permanent to movable are included in my design proposal. In this way the seating is available to everyone, patronizing a restaurant or not, providing a third place for the entire community.

The urban landscape itself should be used for play. Playful elements can encourage use and participation by youth rather than act as a deterrent in the coded words of “safety.” When



Figure 54 This type of canopy can represent the small part of the highwheel bike from above and create a playful exhibit or demonstration space underneath. (Tarare 69)



Figure 53 The small wheel of this design could be represented by using a colorful canopy such as the one shown to the left, figure 53.



Figure 55 These swinging nests allow multiple kids or even adults to play and are accessible. (Playground Separates)

children are not included, nor are their parents and caregivers. Children must be driven (usually) to another location where children are welcome, such as a playground, at which the adults are not fully included. A better approach is to provide playful activities for people of all ages in civic design. Elements in my design include curbs and walls that children can use to balance on and walk along, a small hill for climbing and running down to offer kinesthetic input. An area with tall, wavy grass offers a tactile experience; a bridge to cross and circular paths can invite children to a game of chase, providing active, playful activities in seemingly adult spaces.

The small wheel of the highwheel bicycle (as seen from above in the design, see figures 53 and 54) could be playful itself with a canopy of color, and it could accommodate a changing exhibit such as the Loop art installations, which would appeal to many ages, see figure 57. Underneath could also be hammocks and swinging nests, see figure 55 or other fun elements that could be used by all ages.

The fountain in my design is a circular shape with double sided bench seating that allows facing toward or away from the sculpture. The east side of the sculpture provides seating for people waiting to be picked up on F Street. The height of the fountain is meant to make it playful

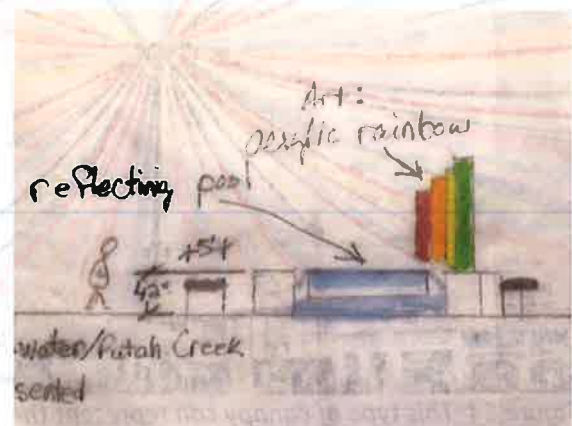


Figure 56 My design includes a reflecting pool and an art sculpture to represent many cultures of Davis.

for children and adults alike, allowing hand play in the water, without getting fully wet. Because the height of the water is also accessible by wheelchair, the touchable water fountain offers play to many ages and abilities.



Figure 57 This image shows several Loop art installations. When the handle is pumped, childhood fairytales come to life. Loop is on tour throughout the U.S. (Loop)

Inclusivity can also be demonstrated by offering electricity and internet connection. These may seem like a small gesture, but for people with disabilities or limited financial resources, this could be a life changer. My design uses free wi-fi and provides electric charging stations for phones, computer equipment, and other electric devices used to assist people with disabilities, such as electric wheelchairs. Electricity and a sound system are also part of my plaza design. Electric outlets can prevent the need for cords and other trip hazards during special events. A sound system can provide a way to speak to large groups, play music for special occasions, and offer the ability for auditory art installations, or provide a communication mechanism for the blind.

The stage area should also serve a different purposes to keep the space active throughout the day, week, and year. For instance, by programming small events such as poetry reading, plein air painting, community yoga, a spoken word night, and the ongoing venue Fire University. The space could also provide a “soapbox” (a space to stand and be seen and heard) for people wishing to reach out.

Identity Strategies

The Davis community has several identities and some community members relate to some more than others. Some of these identities include a hippy town, an intellectual town, a wealthy town, a republic where everyone has a say in the decisions, a bicycling town, a walkable place, a Caucasian town, an environmentally conscious town, an agriculture town, a conservative town, a liberal town and more. And Davis is all that. So, the question becomes, how should Davis “brand” itself, what is distinct about Davis? Based on deep historical research and current undertakings, I chose to focus my design on identifying Davis as a college town, by its geographical human history, and with its recognition as a bicycling community. The following four key strategies address identity in my design:

1. Broadcast UC Davis “blue and gold” to demonstrate a stronger connection between Downtown and the University.
2. Apply the first recorded map of Davis to the ground plane, showing land divisions and representing the pre-contact indigenous peoples (with their input and permission) connecting to Davis’ historical roots.
3. Use the Davis logo and bicycle wheel shape to inspire form and pattern.
4. Integrate all above elements by using community reflection in the present.

First, I want to offer a name for this design that could help reestablish Davis' identity. This name unifies my design goals with my design strategies: The Davis HUB. This name resonates as a hub of activity, civic engagement, and of intellectual resources on sustainability. It also symbolizes the bike theme, which is also an important part of Davis' identity.

To honor downtown Davis' history and culture and more importantly, to be inclusive of the student population from which the town derives its existence and its livelihood, I intend to prominently display the colors of UC Davis. The UC Davis branding colors as indicated on their website (Marketing Toolbox) are shown in figure 58.

UC Davis Blue and Gold

Print branding colors



Figure 58 These are the colors specified for branding UC Davis.

Considering these UC Davis colors, and the overall Downtown colors as previously analyzed, my final palette selection for the Site is shown in figure 59. These colors blend well with the trendy gray tones and the bright colors of Downtown.

My underlying design theme uses the historical geography of Davis. The entire geographic element provides the basis for the ground level design and can be recognized from above, see figures 60, 61, and 62. Because we expect up to seven story buildings around the



Figure 59 This color palette is my design choice for the Hub after considering factors such as inclusion of the University and overall Downtown colors.

plaza area, this pattern will be viewed from future residential units. On the ground, at human scale it will be presented in texture of the surfaces and in the vegetation.

I choose first, to distinguish and honor the people who inhabited these lands pre-contact (before Europeans arrived), the Patwin Tribe; although small, the tribal community continues to live on these lands and engage in their traditional tribal values (Our Community) and I think that they should be recognized in this historically rooted design. For my design I acknowledge the tribe by geographically including the original shape of Putah Creek, which is “probably named for the Pooewin (Patwin) village, Puta-to, located in what is now downtown Davis.” (Putah Creek Watershed). The ground surface south of the Putah Creek form, will symbolize the land pre-contact, including native Oak trees which was the source of life for the local Patwin tribe (Parker, 2009). Vegetation options include: the California grape, soaproot, valley oak, interior live oak, grey pine, buckeye and bay trees (Parker, 2009). Sedge, redbud and willow that were found along the creek may be demonstrated in bioswales that use the water runoff from the site. (Parker, 2009) Although I have assumed this is acceptable in my design for research purposes, I want to acknowledge that any actual design of this space would require working with the local tribe to understand how and if they want to be represented in this space.

To recognize the European influence that first brought European agriculture and then academia to this area, I include a surface representation of the agriculture fields on the north side of the Putah Creek form. Agricultural fields will be represented by delineated rectangular blocks of surface material in differing colors. The railroad tracks that bisect Putah Creek also

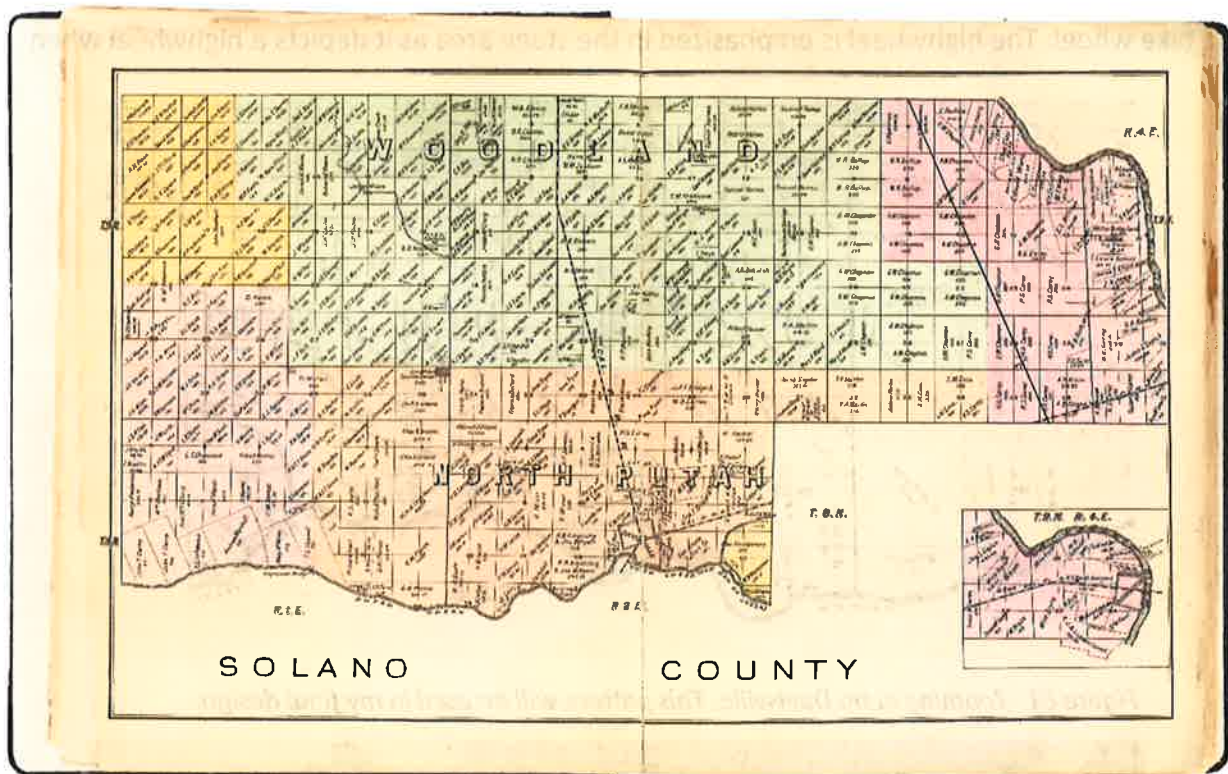


Figure 60 Map of the Davisville area in 1858. I used this as the historic geographic element in my design.

represent the founding of the University, and therefore the town, see figures 62 and 64. When the Southern Pacific Railroad added a train stop in 1868, Davisville proliferated. Vegetation north of the creek could include some of the first crop varieties grown in the area like Sunflowers, Hops, and along with low-water native or adaptive plantings for the present and future climate.

Davis is known bicycling for internationally. The City has won many awards and recognitions for being a progressive bicycling town, a fact the city is quite proud of and should be because biking is a large part of the culture. Deriving from this cultural identity I exploit bicycling as a major design theme. The circular shapes throughout my design are motivated by the bike wheel. The highwheel is emphasized in the stage area as it depicts a highwheel when



Figure 61 Zooming in on Davisville. This pattern will be used in my final design.



Figure 62 Shows historic map layer on the Site. To the north of the creek, the ground pattern will change to reflect land divisions and agriculture. To the south, it will be a

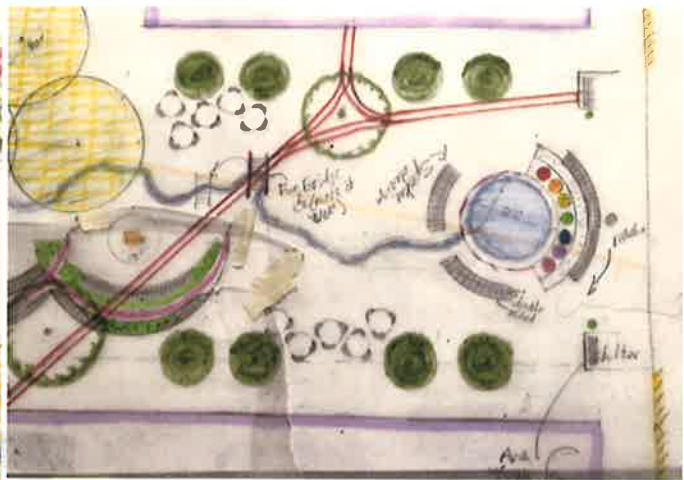


Figure 64 This sketch shows the historic geographic design, including Putah Creek as it was before it was moved to prevent flooding. The railroad tracks represent the proliferation of Davis after the founding of the University Farm.

Figure 64 During my designing analysis, I concluded that a high wheel bicycle that can be seen from above would identify Davis on maps such as Google Earth. This space forms the stage area, a water fountain, a foot path, and the colorful tent area that can be used for demonstration events.

viewed from above, see Figure 63. Perhaps it appears almost too literal from above, but my intention is for the Davis high wheel bike logo would show up in digital maps such as Google Earth. In this way, Davis could really make its mark and be easily recognized.

Final Design – The Davis HUB

This project started over two years ago. I've done many iterations of this space. The first one was with my partner Rasul, Madyun and is shown in figure 65. We recognized the need for a stage, seating and play spaces. We incorporated the map that made it into my working design as well.

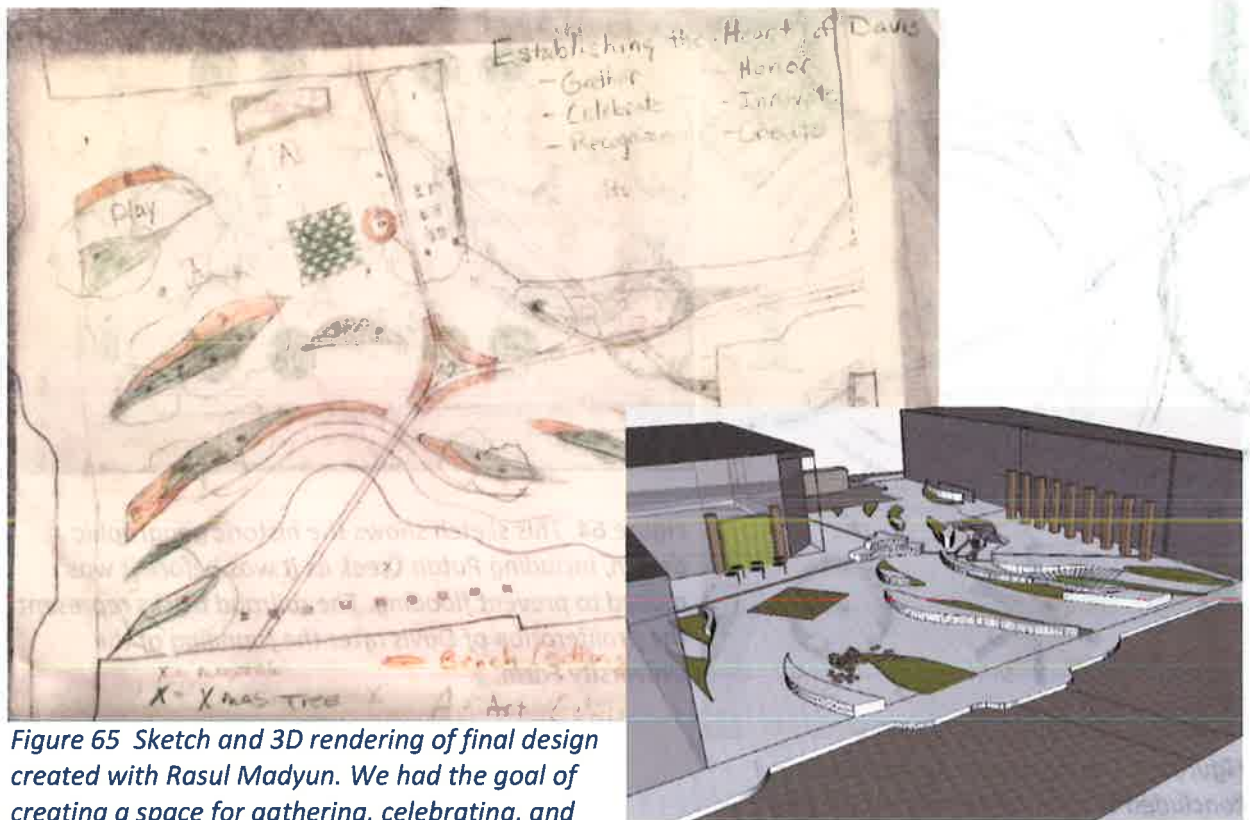


Figure 65 Sketch and 3D rendering of final design created with Rasul Madyun. We had the goal of creating a space for gathering, celebrating, and honoring the history of Davis. This project inspired my ideas for this research project.

During the next iterations I did on my own, I tried to place a structure in the middle of the plaza space that could be used to hold a small sustainability center. However, this proved difficult to provide universal design with this approach, see figure 66.

My final design uses E Street as a shared street with emphasis on pedestrian safety and bicycling use. F Street has a raised bike track that is separated from vehicle traffic and protected from opening doors of parked cars.

This design uses an artistic installation on E Street to welcome visitors to the HUB, see figure 67. This installation serves several purposes. It will show Davis' identity upon entrance, it provides a fun photo spot, traffic passing through is disrupted causing slower speeds, and it lights the area for safety.

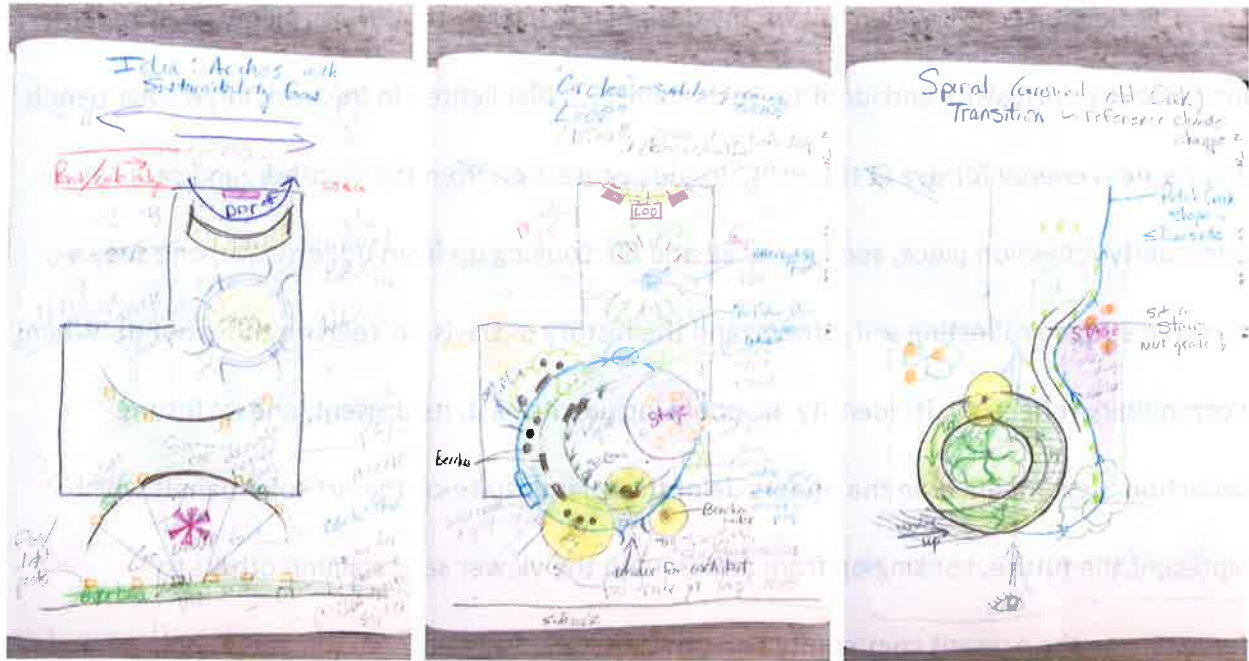


Figure 66 Design sketches in the process of creating the final design.

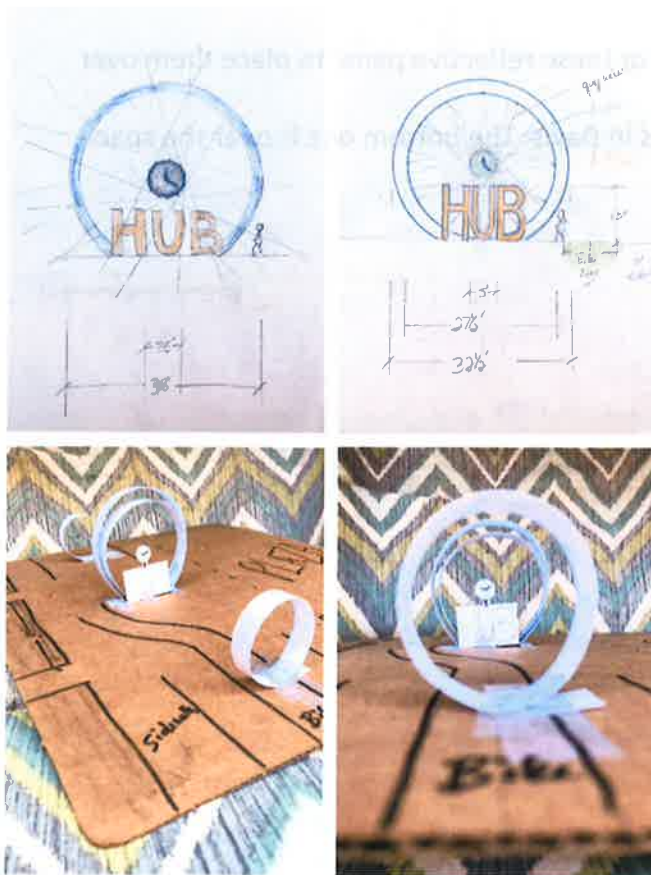


Figure 67 Evolution of the HUB, a large lighted art installation that welcomes visitors to Davis.

Reflection is a vital element for my design. It is the key that brings all my goals together, sustainability, inclusivity and identity. Sustainability is highlighted in this with large solar panels that harness energy for use at the HUB, provide protection from the weather, and serve as a community reflection piece, see figures 68 and 69. Looking up from underneath, one sees a mirrored surface reflecting self, others, and the history of Davis (as seen on the ground). When a community reflects on its identity, it should include its past, its present, and its future. Reflection is exemplified on the underside of three large state-of-the-art solar panels which represent the future. Looking up from underneath the viewer sees self and others to demonstrate the present community and can simultaneously observe the geographic ground plane representing the past.

In the final design I moved the location of these reflective panel to place them over three distinct areas that reference time periods in Davis. The bottom one is over the space

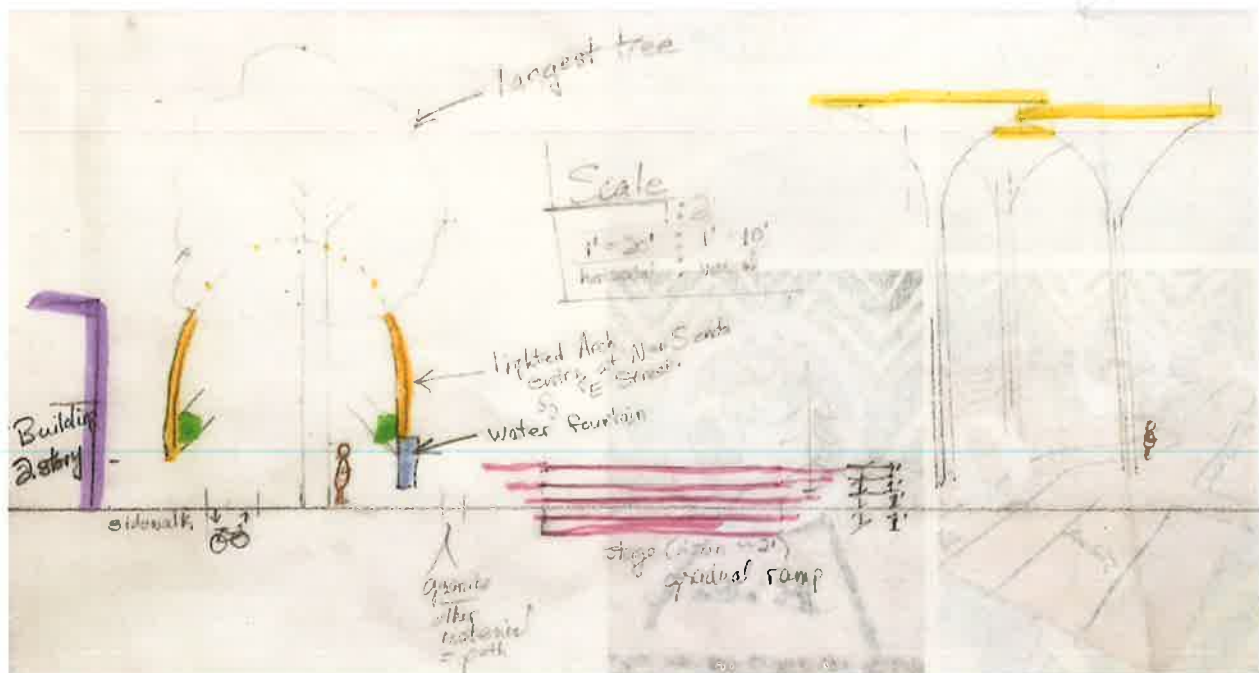


Figure 68 This section sketch shows E Street with a lighted arch in the background, the stage space that doubles as seating all the time, and large solar panels with a reflective surface on the underside.

representing the indigenous land. The left one is over the agriculture land that brought Europeans to the area. And the one on the right is over the city of Davisville, showing its first formal shape that was in fact only the streets of what we now consider Downtown. Inspiration for this concept comes from Rudolf Steiner who said,

The healthy social life is found
When in the mirror of each human being
The whole community finds its reflection
And when in the community
The virtue of each one is living.

-Rudolf Steiner

The idea is that everyone who sees their reflection should know that they are a part of the Davis Community. Further reflection happens at the infinity style water fountain. The southeast side of fountain should have an interactive art piece, something like the one in Figure 70 that was commissioned by the City of Alexandria and made by SOFTlab. This sculpture, called "Mirror, Mirror" contains lights within that are activated by sound. For Davis' plaza, the idea is to provide a colorful, interactive piece that reflects Davis' many cultures, including LBGTIA+. As the sun penetrates the sculpture, it refracts colorful light, creating beautiful patterns that would be reflected and blended in the water pool. It can be lit with varying colors to represent anything, such as UC Davis Colors, Hanukkah, or Breast Cancer support.



Figure 69. These mirrored surfaces, in combination with a funnel shape structures the basis for my solar panel design. (Photo credits: Left: Vieux Port Pavilion; Top right: 'Parc des Vergers de la Plaine; Bottom right: The Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2009)

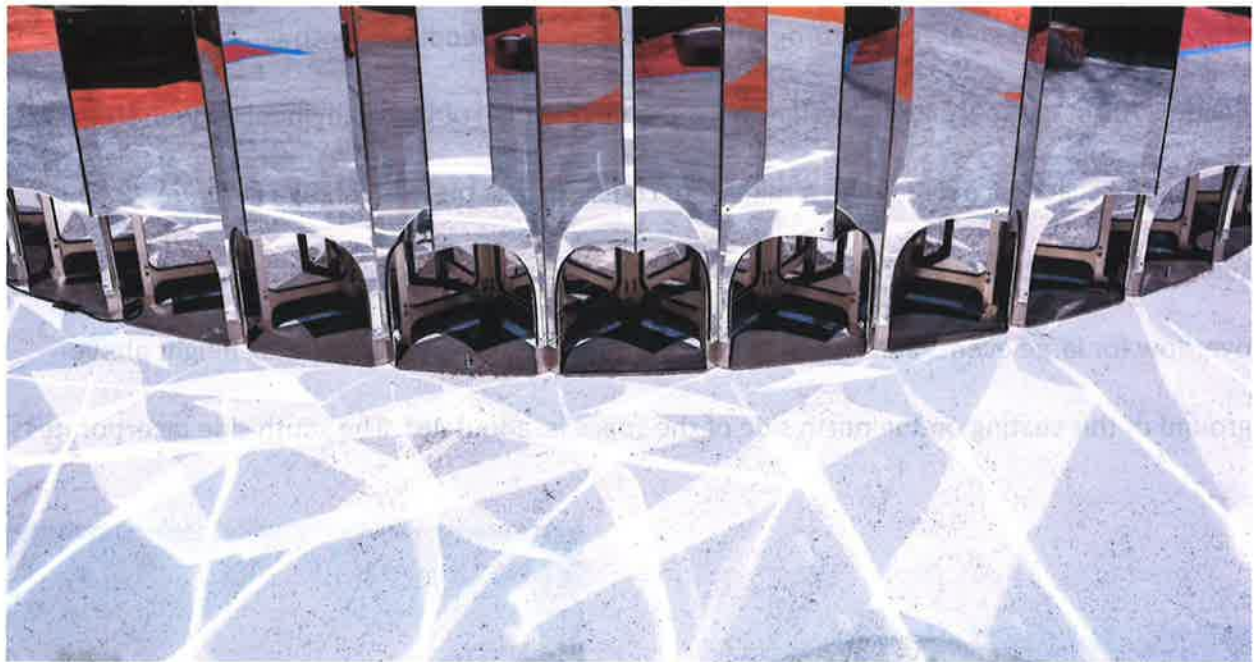


Figure 70 This sculpture created by SOFTlab refracts sunlight, producing beautiful, blended patterns. A sculpture such as this could represent the many cultures in Davis. (Mirror Mirror)



Figure 71 The reflecting pool in my design provide contemplation about who we've been, and who we are now, and who is included. The colors of the reflective rainbow could be dynamic to appear any color desired, such as blue and gold.

To better deliver regular programming that invites people Downtown, a stage space is needed. The stage space in my design forms the large wheel of the Highwheel as seen from above. The space is covered with a rain proof cover such as the ones shown in figure 72. The seating in the northern stage area holds about 100 people. The sides are open enough to allow overflow for large events and the northern side view is open as well. The max height above ground of this seating on the north side of the space is about 48". The south side incorporates



Figure 72 These canopies inspire what I envision to cover the stage area, providing the look of a wheel from above and functionality for performances from below. (Image credits: Left: "Tension Structures."; Top right and middle: "Metal Tensile Shelter"; Bottom right: "Shade Sails.")

a background for the stage, storage, and 3 accessible, all gender bathrooms. Playful elements are provided by the stage seating and the stage itself.

Seating is currently limited, by adding movable seating and other amenities to my design, I hope to entice people to stay. Amenities like music and a more prominent water feature would keep them even longer. Drinking fountains and water bottle refill stations, also adding a pet drink station. Consistent, easily identifiable recycling and trash bins should be included. Providing covered space for transit pickup areas and car share waiting may greatly increase the likelihood of shared ridership because people would be protected from the hot sun or cold rain.

Additional elements of play include a hill for running up and tumbling down. The hill will have a rail to ensure it is accessible to most. There is a bridge that traverses the “water” and it is accessible. The half circles at the southern side host bench seating in the shade, a fire pit for winter and evenings, and a space “between” for kids to climb up and through, in and out.

Mobile seating is provided along with mobile tables. Additionally I have included two long, community tables with chairs or stools. These tables offer a place to interact with strangers, to eat , to use a computer, or play a game of cards. For certain occasions they could be used as community dining tables.

Large trees are preserved and many more trees are planted , espedcially at the southern side of the buildings. A space is left open in the middle for event gatherings such as a market or pop up booths or it could also be used for larger group events.

Ground plane features are achieved through the use of materials, such as reusing the bricks from the current plaza to represent the railroad tracks. See the section provided in figure 74 for a better understanding of what the site is meant to look like.

This design is one of innumerable ways to achieve the Community aspirations and City goals. The elements included provide one way to design a gathering space that is sustainable, inclusive, and identifies Davis.

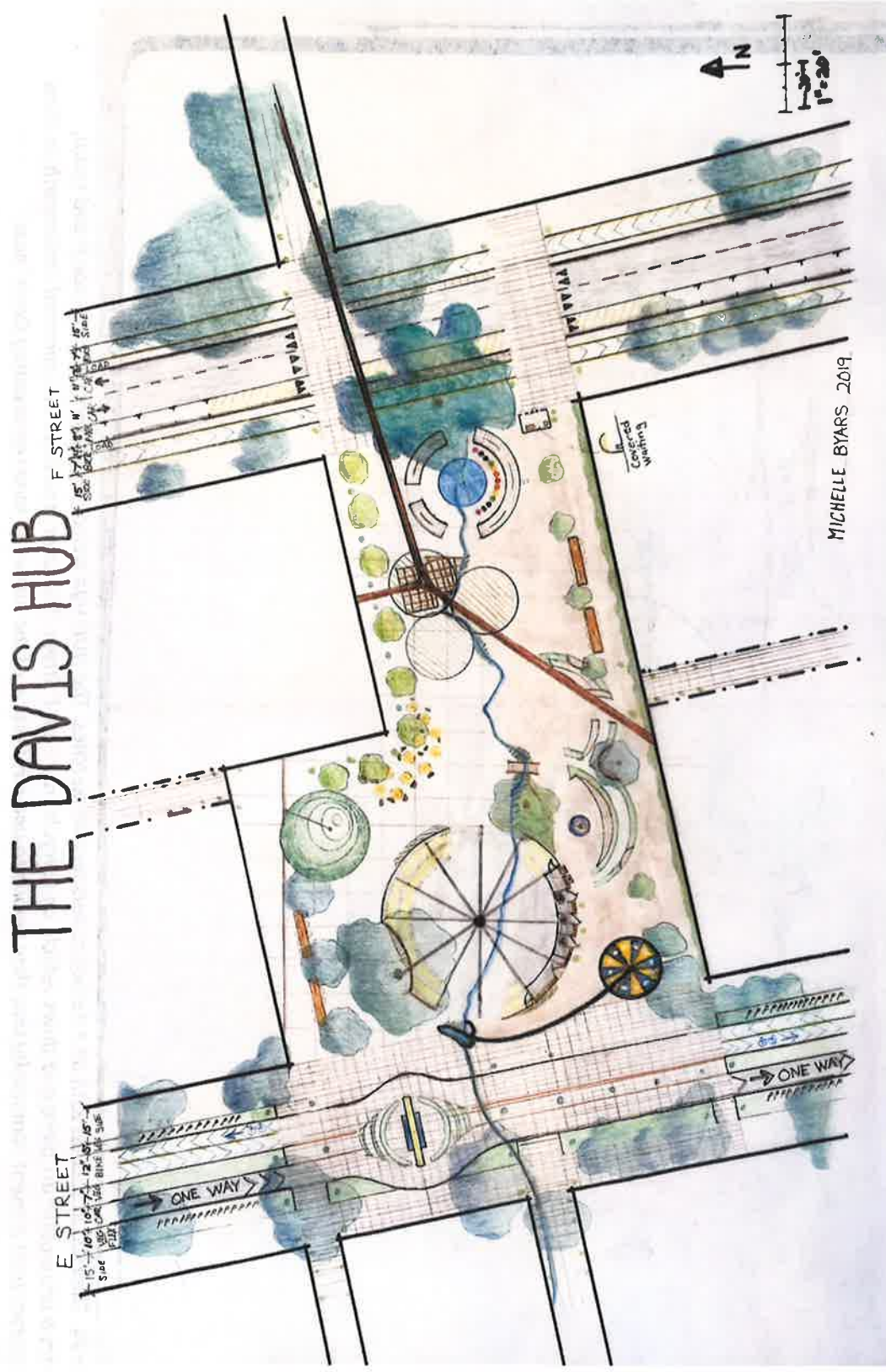


Figure 73. Final design, plan view. The Davis HUB has complete streets. The plaza and midblock crossing zones provide pedestrian priority through raised surfaces, relative to vehicular lanes. Loading zones are along the west side of F Street. E Street has a large art piece that welcomes visitors to the HUB from the north and south. Long tables offer shared seating spaces and moveable chairs and tables are also provided. Some large, mature trees are preserved. There is a green wall on the south side of the plaza. Amenities include a firepit, 3 accessible restrooms, storage, a playful hill and bridge, and more. Historical map is shown on the ground plane. Solar structures are mirrored on the underside.



Figure 74 The HUB in section with an attempt at perspective sketches. The HUB sign welcomes visitors from the north and south, provides a photogenic art piece and slows vehicle and bicycle traffic on E Street. The solar structures are mirrored underneath to show the observer their present community that they belong to and a reflection of the historical map representing Davis' past.



Figure 75 For reference, this image shows the HUB design overlaying an existing satellite image.

Recommendations to the City of Davis

The E Street Plaza site holds enormous capacity to identify Davis as a regional destination. The City can begin to establish design criteria for a gathering space at the E Street Plaza area by incorporating the following measures. These recommendations are intended to inform the Downtown Specific Plan, the visioning process for a new gathering space. These recommendations are also intended to inform a Request for Proposal (RFP) when the City chooses to create a sizable civic gathering space such as this.

To gain community support and therefore community funding, community **outreach** must be broad, thoughtful, and inclusive. To ensure this happens, the City needs to articulate this in the Downtown Specific Plan.

1. The process for creating a plaza design at the heart of Davis.
 - a. One approach is to use participatory design.
 - b. Another, less rigorous approach is to form an advisory committee, like DPAC, to inform the Planning Commission and City Council and provide to recommendations for the design.
2. An advisory committee or other public process that leads to a design should reflect all the cultures of Davis, going beyond the measures taken for the specific plan to ensure representation of ableness, people of color, people with lower income, and multiple generations including teens, college students, the experienced generation, and families with young children.
 - a. Outreach should include specific community groups, organizations, churches, schools, and other culturally appropriate groups.
 - b. Outreach material and events should be translated to Spanish, other languages and include people with disabilities such as sight.

To adapt to climate change and because Davis aspires to be a **sustainability** leader, even using this as an economic generator Downtown, the plaza should meet some essential design and specification criteria. I recommend the following policies and specifications.

3. Promote safe, active travel by strengthening the pedestrian and bicycling network facilities.
 - a. Focus transportation funds on active travel when upgrading infrastructure.
 - b. Install raised crosswalks and pedestrian-only zones at sidewalk level.
 - c. Ensure a pedestrian priority zone at the E Street Plaza and adjoining city-owned areas, including extension into E Street.
 - d. Offer free transit and deeply discounted garage passes to Downtown employees.
 - e. Require passthroughs in or between the buildings bordering and near the plaza.
 - f. Limit or omit vehicular traffic on E Street, except for delivery vehicles only during specified hours.
4. Mitigate a heat island effect.
 - a. This could be done with any combination of tree shade, passive solar design, and high- albedo surfaces on the ground plane.
 - b. Appropriate vegetation for a warmer environment with limited water resources, including adaptable and native plants and trees.
 - c. Install a green roof demonstration that provides shade.
5. Ensure water wise strategies are employed.
 - a. Use biological means to clean runoff water.
 - b. Allow ground water recharge on site.
 - c. Provide a water feature for play.
 - d. Make water infrastructure visible where possible.
6. Clean and renewable energy sources should be used to power the plaza and beyond.

- a. Provide solar energy collection, geothermal heat, or other progressive technology to harness and/or reduce energy demand.
- 7. Reduce solid waste
 - a. Prohibit commercial waste receptacles in civic space to instigate commercial recycling and waste reduction.
 - b. Require indoor and/or private-property waste storage.
 - c. Provide daily waste removal Downtown to ensure sanitary conditions.
- 8. Include a civic sustainability center.
 - a. To offer interactive education and provide informational services about how to sign up for and implement sustainable initiatives.
 - b. This space could showcase touring sustainability exhibits.

Davis aspires to be a leader in ***inclusive*** community design. The following recommendations will help deliver that.

- 9. Employ Universal Design in all aspects of the gathering space.
 - a. Beginning with the process of choosing representatives.
 - b. Provide electricity for wheelchairs and other devices.
 - c. Use fewer stairs and incorporate ramps into the design to exhibit beauty.
- 10. Include all generations, socioeconomic demographics, and cultures in the design outcome.
 - a. Include children and families by integrating playful elements into the space.
 - b. Accommodate regular programming for small and large groups that appeal to all cultures and age groups in the community.
 - c. Allow and permit street performance.
 - d. Provide a visible connection to UC Davis.
 - e. Offer free wi-fi and charging stations to encourage participation Downtown by students and others with limited budgets.
 - f. Engage local tribes to define and create a space of honor showing respect for those tribes that cared for the land for thousands of years.

- 11. Ensure social equity

- a. Prohibit privately-owned café seating on the plaza, rather encourage internal patios, rooftop patios, and floor to ceiling store fronts opening to the plaza.
- b. Provide movable seating and tables for use by everyone.
- c. Use long “farmhouse style” tables to encourage interaction.
- d. Encourage side street café seating on E and F Streets.

The following recommendations will help both re-establish Davis’ *identity* as a progressive, sustainable, and active town. These elements should be significant enough to draw visitors with travel origins in Davis as well as the region.

- 12. Consider UC Davis colors when choosing a palette and encourage Downtown businesses to display blue and gold on a regular basis.
- 13. Install notable art pieces that demonstrate progressive sustainability techniques and provide interactive opportunities.
 - a. Art could demonstrate energy, water wastewater infrastructure systems, solar energy collection, geothermal heating, electricity, or other technology that provides a clean energy.
- 14. Include photogenic sculpture
 - a. To prompt photography and “selfies” to identify Davis to the region and beyond.
 - b. Sculpture to play on and around for children of all ages.
 - c. Reflect Davis’ bicycling culture.

To meet goals and visions the City of Davis could begin advancing several of the above recommendations at a somewhat smaller scale prior to creating a newly designed civic gathering space.

CHAPTER 4 Conclusion

The Specific Plan process, the vision and codes it creates may transform Downtown Davis. If the City and the community wish to create a gathering space to draw people downtown to live, eat, shop, and work, now is the time to ensure that such a space reflects the community aspirations. Due to the size, location, political will, and other factors, the E Street Plaza Site has the potential to become a successful third place for the entire community to gather individually, in small groups, or larger civic events. To ensure this, city policies and regulations must indicate inclusivity as a priority for the Site.

There are many opportunities for improvement at this Site. A gathering space must provide reasons to visit and reasons to stay. The Plaza in combination with E street offers a chance for Davis to establish its identity and make a statement as newcomers enter Downtown. The high wheel bicycle theme bolsters Davis' identity as a bicycle friendly town, with deep roots in this transportation mode.

The design proposal and recommendations presented in this paper are intended to inform the Downtown Specific Plan and the Form-based Codes. To create an inclusive gathering space in the heart of downtown Davis that embodies sustainable principles, reestablishes the city identity, and attracts visitors, I urge the City to utilize the recommendations presented above. These recommendations will help fulfill the community vision as revealed during the Downtown Specific Plan process and through my research. If these concepts are articulated in the Downtown Specific plan, the City is more likely to deliver a civic gathering project that meets the community aspirations.

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Notations

The opinions and interpretations of data related to the Downtown Davis planning process are my own and do not represent DPAC as a whole.

This research uses people-first language because I am referring to a community rather than a specific person. "People-first language places the emphasis on the person instead of on the disability when discussing most intellectual and developmental disabilities" (Association of University Centers on Disability, AUCD). I have used language to portray people with disabilities, as recommended by the National Youth Leadership Network to describe persons with disabilities (NYLN). I want to acknowledge that some people prefer identity first language, which "emphasizes that the disability plays a role in who the person is, and reinforces disability as a positive cultural identifier" (AUCD).

All photographs are taken by the author unless noted.

Terminology & Acronyms

Community – a place-based community that lives, works, or frequents Davis.

Core Area – as specified by the current planning documents, this is the area extends approximately east-west from the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks to A street and north-south between 5th Street and 1st Street, with an extension north along G Street. This boundary was used to begin planning the new specific plan.

Downtown Core – as specified by the current planning documents, this is the area between 1st/3rd Street and D St./railroad tracks.

DPAC – Davis Downtown Plan Area Committee, appointed by the City Council to advise on the 2040 Specific Plan.

Form-based codes – Zoning codes that primarily focus on the built form, rather than the allowed uses. This zoning approaches design from a human scale.

Specific Plan – a set of planning documents that focus on a special district, rather than the General Plan that encompasses the entire City.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Steve Wheeler, I'm especially fortunate to be working with you. I'm not sure I could have finished this without your kind patience, understanding, and pushes forward. Thanks to Dr. David de la Pena for helping me with such short notice and providing motivating insights along the way. Rachel Hartsough, thank you for being an inspiration on this project and in our Davis community. I appreciate you.

Thanks to Councilmember Lucas Frerichs for doing the honor of appointing me to the DPAC and to my fellow members for two years of work together! We've done some great work and I sincerely look forward to seeing the outcome of this process.

Deep purple appreciation to Rasul Madyun, my invaluable teammate that helped create the preliminary site analysis and design; you are so talented, I hope to work with you again. Thanks also to the students from LDA 171 who graciously provided their final E Street Plaza design ideas and inspired my own.

Special thanks to the nameless graduate and undergraduate students with whom I have studied, taught, and worked. Without knowing, you've guided me, inspired me, helped me to expand my perspectives, and brought me leaps and bounds forward in my cultural awareness journey. I'm fortunate to have experienced this educational process with you.

Thanks to my husband, Steve for your support and patience. My daughters, I'm so pleased that my educational pursuit provided you the occasional opportunity to experience college classes with me. I'm grateful to be your mother, especially through this process. Thank you for being understanding and helpful. May you have the knowledge, strength and stamina to change the world.

Motion fails, 2-4.

B. Review of Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan

Commissioner Gudz introduced the item and a discussion framework for providing project input. They stated there is a ton of information in the plan, including a focus on travel demand, downtown policies, circulation and parking, street changes, and lots of input from others.

Public Comment:

Allen Lowry commented he sees Davis as a transportation hub for Yolo County. Don't build a hotel near the train station, build transit. Make north/south tracks a light rail that connects to northern parts of the state.

Commission Discussion:

Commissioner Edelman stated that 20 mph target design speed is too fast for shared streets, and proposes 15 mph.

Motion (Edelman, Gudz): BTSSC recommends target speed design to be 15 mph

Commissioner Jacobson expressed hesitation and that 15 mph is too slow as a driver. Stated consultant team has a lot of expertise and commission should trust the consultants.

Motion fails, 3-3.

Commissioner Patel expressed support for the complete street model including curb parking occupancy rate like in San Francisco, unbundling parking costs from housing, maximum parking requirements, and cash-out parking programs.

Commissioners Gudz and Mitchell echoed support for these comments.

Commissioner Mitchell stated the project does discourage automobiles from downtown and is banking on rideshare. Davis needs better transit before we implement this project. Transit should serve all residents not just students, especially from west Davis to downtown. Not everyone wants to go to campus.

Commissioner Mitchell expressed concern about frequently used phrase, "to the extent feasible". Also concerned about pedestrians walking into traffic at intersections without yielding.

Greg Behrens, Fehr & Peers consultant, responded that downtown is a "pedestrian first" environment, but street design could be clearer regarding mode hierarchy.

Commissioner Edelman stated stop signs are a failure, wasting patience and time. Should eliminate stop signs as much as possible and implement priority-based design.

Motion (Edelman): BTSSC recommends stop signs are not used for control at non-signalized intersections.

Motion fails for lack of second.

Motion (Edelman): Pedestrians should be allowed to cross street on 20 mph street intersections at a diagonal. (Cited European examples)

Motion fails for lack of second.

Motion (Gudz, Mitchell): BTSSC reaffirms endorsement of “Idaho Stop” especially as it concerns stop signs in downtown Davis.

Motion carries unanimously.

Commissioner Gudz:

- Expressed support for complete streets.
- Expressed support for incentives for parking cash-out and other alternatives.
- Encouraged closely considering how modes will interact.
- Encouraged colleagues to consider that pavement may not be as important as today due to future technologies.

9. Commission and Staff Communications

A. Long Range Calendar

Commissioner Gudz noted that elections for Chair/Vice-Chair should be added to the long range calendar for January.

Brian Abbanat noted that traffic calming items will begin arriving to the commission for review starting in January.

Commissioner Jacobson inquired whether there is a role for the BTSSC in Police Department messaging regarding recent robbery/carjacking warnings. Concerned messaging may inadvertently discourage walking and biking, stating that more people walking and biking make a street safer.

Brian Abbanat responded we can plug-in the Police Department at any time to have that conversation.

B. Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Patel announced the UC Davis Med Center shuttle’s last day of service will be April 3rd, 2020. The new Causeway Connection’s first day of service will be April 6th, 2020.

C. Subcommittee Reports / Reports On Meetings Attended / Inter-jurisdictional Bodies / Inter-Commission Liaisons / etc.

9. Adjourn

Motion (Patel): Adjourn

Motion carries unanimously.

January 14, 2020

To: Eric Lee, Staff Liaison for Downtown Davis Plan Team

Re: **HRMC Comments – Downtown Davis Specific Plan**

The City of Davis Historical Resources Management Commission (HRMC) has undertaken a comprehensive review of the October 2019 Downtown Davis Specific Plan (Public Review Draft), prepared by lead consultant Opticos Design, Inc., with historic resource input from Garavaglia Architecture. The commission also reviewed the Draft Downtown Form Based Code and the Draft Conservation Overlay District and Historic Resources Inventory Update. On the whole, the HRMC finds the documents to be thorough, well-considered, and reflective of public input. We commended all of those who played a role in shepherding the plan through to this stage.

Members of the HRMC studied the particular sections of the draft documents that related to historic resources and offer here comments that will hopefully aid the consulting team in developing a final plan. The review focused on the following areas:

- The use of a form-based code for managing historic resource planning
- Proposed revisions to the Conservation Overlay District
- The downtown survey update
- The city's historic bike lanes
- Measure for addressing archeological resources

Form-Based Code

One of the most striking features of the draft plan is Opticos' proposal to use the form-based code to protect historic resources. This proposal is articulated in Guiding Policy 1.5 ("Protect existing historic and cultural resources, and provide built form guidelines to shape new development adjacent to protected site" – Specific Plan, p. 53), and in section 40.14.080 of the draft Form Based Code. The draft code prescribes setbacks, ceiling heights, and massing restrictions for parcels that are adjacent to city-designated historic properties.

The HRMC is not in principal opposed to including historic resources within the form-based code, but has serious reservations about the proposal as currently offered. In particular, the commission wants to be certain that the existing protections afforded to historic properties through the HRMC's comprehensive, CEQA-orientated review of all significant project proposals within 300 feet of designated historic resources continues to be maintained.¹ The commission considers a wide range of direct and indirect potential impacts to historic resources that include such issues as shade impacts and alterations to a building's historic setting. These go considerably

¹ Implementation Action 2B of Table 8G (Specific Plan, p. 221) inaccurately states that the HRMC review requirement applies to properties "adjacent" to historic resource. That should be replaced with the actual 300-foot review zone.

beyond the limited design matters that are addressed in the code. We thus do not believe that a form-based code can stand alone in meeting CEQA requirements for historic preservation or the city's obligations as a Certified Local Government. We expect that the final plan will clearly state that the code is a supplement to the current HRMC process and not a replacement for it. Towards that end, we urge that the HRMC review process be added to the "Quick Code Guide" flowcharts in Section 40.13.030 of the draft code.

Additionally, the commission has specific concerns about the way the draft code is formulated. As presented, the code fails to address many resource types or development situations. The draft measure seems designed for a particular type of historic resource, that being a smaller, residential-type building that sits in the middle of a larger parcel. The Hunt-Boyer mansion fits this model, but many of the other historic resources in the downtown area do not. Commercial buildings, like those along G Street (Brinley Block, Anderson bank building, Masonic Lodge, and Bank of Yolo), occupy the full front of their parcel, and the proposed setbacks would make no sense in that context. Larger civic buildings like Old City Hall and Community Church are not dealt with in any way by the proposed code. The draft code also applies only to properties adjoined to historic resources, but it is unclear if that would include parcels to the rear of a historic resource or across a street or alley.

The HRMC believes that a significant amount of additional work is required to fully flesh out the proposed code before it could be practically implemented. We want to avoid a situation where the city commits to adopting a form-based supplemental approach for historic resources but lacks the adequate tools for doing so. Although Opticos has acknowledged shortcomings in the draft code, it has not yet committed to refining the finished product. We would ask that they make that commitment, rather than leaving it to the city or HRMC.

Conservation Overlay District

Overall, members of the HRMC agree that replacing the existing Conservation Overlay District with smaller districts will be beneficial in guiding future development and preserving the neighborhood-specific characteristics of downtown. The commission is also supportive of the proposal to eliminate the distinction between "contributing" and "non-contributing" buildings within a district, and instead review neighborhoods holistically. However, the HRMC feels that the plan needs to provide more clarity on how the proposed districts will be functionally different than the existing system and how the districts will relate to the broader plan and form-based code.

To address the issue of clarity, the consultant may consider making graphic and textual changes to this section of the plan. First, the lines and labels depicting the existing and proposed boundaries of the conservation overlay districts in Figure 5.34, "Conservation Overlay District, Existing and Proposed," of Chapter 5, "Historical Resources," are difficult to understand and should be revised. As a possible solution, the consultant could insert side-by-side maps of the existing and proposed districts instead of superimposing them on a single map. The consultant should also confirm the accuracy of the boundaries. Second, the consultant should include a brief discussion in Chapter 5 on how the proposed conservation overlay district boundaries relate to

the form-based code. Are the district boundaries and the form-based code zones completely separate from each other? Will there be multiple zones within a district?

Additionally, members of the HRMC feel that there is a disconnect between the neighborhoods described in the first part of Chapter 5 and the boundaries of the proposed conservation overlay districts. It is not clear why the consultant has defined six distinct neighborhoods (University Avenue-Rice Lane, South-West Downtown, North-West Downtown, Heart of Downtown, G Street, and North G Street), each with their own character-defining features, but is only proposing three conservation districts (University Avenue-Rice Lane, Old North, and Old East) and the G Street "special area of interest." The boundaries of the individual overlay districts should be consistent with the neighborhoods discussed earlier in the chapter, or some sort of linkage should be demonstrated, if the goal of preserving neighborhood characteristics is to be achieved.

Survey Update

As part of the downtown plan update, Garavaglia Architecture completed the historic survey of downtown, so that every property has been recorded and evaluated on a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523 form. In November 2019, the HRMC undertook an initial review of the new survey forms. Several technical issues were identified, and a request was made to correct the problems prior to the forms being finalized.

Members of the commission had more substantive concerns about the eight properties that had been identified as warranting designation as Merit Resources and thus to be added to the city's roster of historical resources. Garavaglia found five residences to be significant for their Minimal Traditional architectural style. However, the commission believes this to be a relatively common architectural type in the older residential neighborhoods of Davis and to be particularly well-represented in Old North Davis. The commission requested that greater attention be paid to determining whether the five properties are in fact strong examples of their type in comparison to other similar buildings in Davis. The commission also felt that the other three identified properties – Hibbert Lumber (550 G), the PDQ Building (216 F), and the Esau House (237 1st) – would require additional research and analysis before determining if they merited designation. As it was the intent of the survey update to bring certainty to property owners about the historic status of their buildings, the commission hopes that the additional research can be completed as part of the EIR process for the Downtown Davis Specific Plan so that final decisions may be reached on designating the proposed merit resource additions.

Historic Bike Lanes

The HRMC is unsatisfied with the brief treatment given to the historic Third Street Bike Lane in the draft plan. At the City Council's direction, the commission is pursuing National Register designation for this uniquely Davis historic resource that has made a singular contribution to bicycle traffic in the United States. The public review draft, however, addresses the bike lane in a mere two sentences in the "South-West Downtown Character and Historic Resources" subsection of Chapter 5 (section 5.2, "Neighborhood Character and Historic Resources," p. 126). The draft suggests that the historic character of the bike lane, should Third Street be

“reconfigured as a Shared Street,” could be sufficiently memorialized through “signage, paving, public art or other landscaping improvement” – yet it does not explore fully the implications of such efforts. There is no guarantee that any of these commemorative actions would not prove fatal to a National Register nomination or designation (should this occur prior to any changes in Third Street).

Additionally, in discussing changes to Third Street in Chapter 6, “Mobility and Parking,” the draft does not acknowledge the already-determined National Register-eligible status of the Third Street Bike Lane. At a minimum, the discussion in Chapter 6 should point back to the relevant subsection in Chapter 5, and ideally to the full discussion that the commission seeks. Informed decision-making demands that potential impacts to this historic resource be brought out completely, to apprise the City Council and the public of the possible loss of this resource should Third Street be reconfigured along the lines recommended.

Archaeological Resources

As the HRMC’s charge extends to archaeological resources, the commission further believes the Downtown Plan should acknowledge that human occupation of the Downtown area preceded construction of its built environment (there is only a brief mention of Patwin peoples in the “Major Milestones...” graphic on page 17). Explicit discussion of Patwin – or at least, pre-European – settlement could be made in Chapter 5, for example. In its preamble, this chapter frames considerations of Downtown’s “historic resources” only in terms of “built character.”

Additionally, while there are of course ARPA (Archaeological Resources Protection Act [1979]) concerns in broadcasting precise locations of archaeological sites, the City’s commitment to mitigating damage to its known cultural resources should be acknowledged by at least listing the existence of pre-Contact sites in the “University Avenue-Rice Lane” and “South-West Downtown” in discussion of those neighborhoods’ “Historic Resources” (pages 103, 107, 126, and 128). These are specifically CA-Yol-118 in the vicinity of 1st and A (within the Plan’s “University Avenue-Rice Lane” neighborhood), and undocumented prehistoric sites reported near the intersections of 2nd and A Streets and 2nd and C Streets (within “South-West Downtown”).

Finally, the Plan should engage with the likelihood of other, as-yet-unknown resources given the stated aim to “take into consideration existing conditions and relevant issues.” New development in the Downtown will likely encounter additional, as-yet-unknown archaeological resources. Explicit mention of the need to balance their protection along with adaptive use would be an important addition to the preamble to 5.2. It is especially important to emphasize that any necessary mitigation in these cases will take place in consultation with the appropriate tribal group(s).

NRC COMMENTS ON THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

Date: 1/13/2020
To: Eric Lee, Planner and Project Manager, ELee@cityofdavis.org
Downtown Davis Plan Team, downtownplan@cityofdavis.org
From: Natural Resources Commission, NRC@cityofdavis.org
CC: Kerry Daane Loux, Sustainability Coordinator, KLoux@cityofdavis.org
Subject: Comments on October 2019 Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) discussed the Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DP) Public Review Draft, released October 2019, at its December meeting. Additionally, some NRC members attended the December 4, 2019 Downtown Plan Presentation to Commissions by Opticos and City staff. A subcommittee including John Johnston, Courtney Doss and Richard McCann consolidated the commissioner's comments into a draft that was considered at a special NRC meeting held January 13, 2020. The comments below reflect the final NRC comments adopted by a vote of the commission at the January 13, 2020 meeting.

NRC Comments

First, the NRC agrees with the sustainability vision statements contained in the DP. As it is written now, however, many of the concepts and proposals in the DP are aspirational. The NRC believes that a holistic sustainability strategy requires more robust sustainability recommendations to be associated with the DP. The DP currently calls for a Sustainability Implementation Plan (SIP) to be developed in a separate process (Page 40). The NRC agrees that a separate process producing a focused sustainability document may be desirable as opposed to trying to improve the current DP draft. Nevertheless, there is a fear that delaying the SIP may introduce the risk that it won't be done. **Consequently, the NRC recommends (1) that the City plan for and fund the development of the SIP as quickly as possible and (2) that it incorporate appropriate elements of the SIP into the DP EIR as part of the proposed mitigation measures.** Although the commission recognizes that this may delay the start of the EIR, more clarity in the EIR from preparing the SIP would reduce uncertainty and increase the likelihood of acceptance of the EIR findings. A good template to consider is the SIP developed for the Nishi project.

Second, the NRC notes that the DP lists multiple studies that are needed to fully develop the ideas presented in the plan. (See comment 8-3 below as well.) These studies include:

- Sustainability Implementation Plan (as noted above)
- Economic Development Plan
- Infrastructure Financing Plan
- Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (in progress)
- Citywide General Plan

The NRC urges the City Council and the public to recognize that these plans need to be completed before the vision presented in the DP can be fully realized. We should not leave the downtown planning effort half-done by neglecting these issues. Accordingly, the NRC believes that it is imperative to define the intent for further studies and specify a schedule for their completion prior to the adoption of the DP.

Third, the DP sustainability strategy should focus on steps that move from aspirational goals to practical implementation steps. These must include measurable outcomes, financial or other incentives, and budget allocations for plan management and enforcement. These steps can be identified and adopted as mitigation

measures in the companion EIR. Examples of concrete implementation steps to be considered include the following:

1. Adopt City ordinances and codes that specify sustainability actions and measures that work with the form-based zoning code, and that are at least applicable to the Downtown Core area.
2. Provide specific planning guidance on public spaces such as streets, sidewalks and plazas, including street width, road materials, parking placement, traffic management, sidewalk and bikeway design and materials, greenscape coverage, and maintenance requirements. Mitigation features for urban heat island effects in the downtown such as urban forestry, landscaping, shading, and cool surfaces should be addressed as well.
3. Specify sustainability metrics for building energy use, GHG emissions, distributed energy resources installations, water use and reuse, stormwater retention versus diversion, greenscape coverage, and vehicle, transit and bicycle trips and parking.
4. Position the downtown to lead rather than follow. Currently the Implementation Plan calls for downtown buildings to adhere to whatever city energy and building codes exist at the time of construction; instead downtown features should be a model for the rest of the city. Provide incentives tied directly to meeting and exceeding sustainability requirements for building code compliance. Incentives might include discounts on impact, inspection or other applicable fees, and relief from density and parking requirements or other regulatory requirements.
5. Provide incentives for activities and project features that result in reduction in automobile trips and increased transit, bicycle, micromobility, and pedestrian trips. Such features might include parking fees and meters, transit discounts, bicycle parking access, pedestrian throughways, and episodic street closures.
6. Set aside funding for project inspection and management, public space investment and maintenance, and enforcement actions.
7. Integrate elements from the 2020 Climate Action and Adaptation Plan as appropriate.

Shown below is a tabulation of the NRC comments specific to the draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan elements. All elements presented are important to the success of the sustainability elements in the DP; however, those elements that the NRC considers critical are shown in **bold**.

Number	Reference	Recommendation
Chapter 6 Transportation		
	General	Generally, the transportation vision in the DP is strong, and the NRC concurs with many of the principles including the importance of enabling multimodal transport, ensuring that streets are safe and universally accessible, and supporting the concept of streets as public space.
6-1	(none)	Electric vehicle charging infrastructure information is lacking in the DP. If Davis aspires to achieve a 100% ZEV fleet, then the City needs to plan for charging infrastructure, placement and integration with other features, electrical grid impacts, and financing.
6-2	(none)	Prioritize bicycle-friendly standards, including traffic signal timing, traffic speed, and integration of active transit modes.
6-3	Figure 6.3	Repair the disconnect between general concepts for Davis and the illustrations, such as Figure 6.3 showing a 6-lane road which is

Number	Reference	Recommendation
		incompatible with Davis Downtown and the goal of prioritizing pedestrians and bikes.
6-4	(none)	Plan for micromobility options (such as electric scooters) is lacking in the DP. Use the DP to propose safe ways to incorporate micromobility into the downtown transportation system. Such services support the goal to reduce vehicle travel. Use the DP as a model for incorporating micromobility into citywide transportation systems. For instance, identify opportunities to define parking spaces for micromobility vehicles in the same way that bike parking is handled.
6-5	<i>Target Speeds</i> pg. 162	Consider timing intersection lights in downtown to match bicycle speeds (10-15 mph), as per New York City and other U.S. and European examples, rather than matching car speeds (20-25 mph).
6-6	<i>Target Speeds</i> pg. 162	Decrease downtown speed limits. DP states ‘ <i>maximum target speeds shall be 25 mph...and 20 mph</i> ’. Speed limits of 15 mph or lower are safer for bicyclists and pedestrians, both of which should have high priority downtown. Additionally, focus on traffic calming measures and design speed, rather than relying only on speed limits to slow down traffic.
6-7	Figure 6.9, Figure 6.14	Clarify the ‘bicycle priority network’. D Street is identified as part of the network in Figure 6.9, but Figure 6.14 proposes that the D Street bicycle lanes be sandwiched between moving traffic and parked cars. This presents contradicting approaches for the safety and convenience of bicycles over cars.
6-8	Section 6.6	Improving transportation choices is an important part of meeting GHG emissions goals. The transportation management plan should be aligned with the CAAP implementation strategy.
6-9	Pg. 150-151	Street standards should include measures that will allow for periodic or episodic closure of the streets for special events that bring pedestrians to downtown.
6-10	Pg. 182	See comment 7-11 regarding bulb-outs on 5 th Street.
Chapter 7 Infrastructure		
	General	This chapter focuses on publicly-owned water-related infrastructure. The consequences of increased density and implementation of other ideas discussed in Chapter 3 such as district heating, electricity options, battery storage and microgrid strategies, broadband data systems, natural gas systems (to be decommissioned by 2040) will have impacts on non-water infrastructure that should be described in this chapter.
	General	While the list of Low Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI) strategies is comprehensive, there is insufficient information in the text to support the choices of areas for GI improvement. Overall, the GI recommendations are significantly less robust than other chapters. The NRC recommends building upon the information in this chapter to bring it up to par with other chapter topic areas. Chapter 7 as it stands now does not appear to be readily implementable by City staff or private developers.
7-1	Section 7.3	The analysis in <i>Water Use and Demand Management</i> seems incomplete. The scenarios as presented are not significantly different from each other or from business as usual. The definitions of the scenarios should be revisited to provide greater consideration of the full suite of options

Number	Reference	Recommendation
		<p>such as indoor non-potable and potable demand reductions, more extensive greywater reuse (including showers), rain catchment, permeable pavement or other water conservation/reuse systems. Irrigation demand should not be the only difference between scenarios.</p> <p>It was mentioned to commissioners in the December review meeting with Opticos that information could be provided as appendices. It would be helpful to know where the information presented in the text came from so that readers can properly assess whether these recommendations are appropriate and should be adopted.</p>
7-2	Pg. 178, pg. 188, pg. 190	<p>It is stated in the chapter that the storm drainage systems have “<i>sufficient capacity to support planned growth</i>” and increased demand “<i>would not trigger upgrades to the water distribution network...[or] to the sewer collection system</i>”. On the surface, the significant densification proposed for the downtown area raises doubts about this issue. It would be helpful to be able to review the information used to draw these conclusions.</p> <p>Additionally, on page 180, the “Tiers of Green Infrastructure Opportunities” identify that some GI will provide relief for “system deficiency issues.” What system deficiencies are being referenced if the sewer, storm, and water system have sufficient capacity.</p>
7-3	Pg. 175-177	The language appears to be “boiler plate” approaches that have not been assessed for applicability and implementation to Downtown Davis, or in some cases even the Davis climate. For example, shallow groundwater is potentially a constraint elsewhere, but that doesn’t apply here.
7-4	Table 7A	These opportunity tiers and how they were developed needs to be described in the report; in other words, ‘show your work’. In describing Tier 1 opportunities, there are allusions to addressing system deficiencies and cost savings (top of page) that are not well described. Please elaborate so the reader understands the importance of Tier 1. A better description in <i>Identifying Opportunities</i> (pg. 176) would help the reader understand the tiers later.
7-5	Pg. 177	<p>Green infrastructure (GI) on a small scale and distributed throughout the downtown can be used for deep watering trees to promote a healthy urban forest (e.g. tree boxes). Can this co-benefit with the urban canopy be better explained and savings quantified? (See comment 7-8.)</p> <p>One suggestion is to combine distributed small-scale GI for trees with the Bioretention Bulb-Outs description (both are small scale), and to re-label the other category as Bioretention in Parks and Large Landscaping (these two applications provide flood control benefits that the small scale applications do not).</p>
7-6	Pg. 184-185	The Water Reuse District does not seem to be well thought out. It is the NRC’s opinion that there is no compelling reason for this concept to be applied in downtown. Either describe the benefits and purposes clearly, or eliminate it in favor of alternative measures to accomplish goals such as water efficient appliance standards, a greywater ordinance and incentives, rainwater storage and reuse, et al. Such water reuse systems can be difficult to operate and maintain at the scale envisioned for downtown buildings.

Number	Reference	Recommendation
		Additionally, questions remain as to who would be responsible for operations and what role/responsibility the City would have to protect against potential public health risks associated with these systems (see comment 8-4).
7-7	Pg. 177, Photo 4	Permeable paving could also be used in parking lots in addition to streets. In cases where emergency vehicle or delivery truck access is needed that would exceed the design weight of the pavement, permeable paving can be limited to parking areas and not installed in travel lanes.
7-8	Pg. 179	Regional stormwater treatment is a strategy that needs to be considered as the State implements more stringent water quality objectives for stormwater. Likely, though, this will need to be a Citywide strategy and not a specific issue to be handled as part of the Downtown Davis Specific Plan. That being said, there is no reason not to facilitate as much stormwater infiltration on site in order to promote groundwater recharge, healthy soils, and sustain the urban forest. (See comment 7-5.)
7-9	Pg. 180, Site Selection Strategy and Tiers of Green Infrastructure Opportunities	Clarify the descriptions of the tiers to highlight the characteristics of the sites, as well as the benefits different tiers of GI would provide. There are references to system deficiencies and poor soils that need further explanation. Please describe the benefits cited in more detail that helps the reader understand the differences between these categories and the reasoning behind their differentiation. One example may be landscaping irrigation and tree maintenance. The traditional benefits cited in the text are OK, but specifically to the Davis climate there is the added benefit of deep watering trees in the winter to support the urban forest, which provides context to the need for GI downtown.
7-10	Figure 7.4	Tier 3 should be not be limited to specific locations – all areas should be eligible for consideration for Tier 3 for green infrastructure opportunities. Additionally, these Tier 3 areas should not be highlighted with stars on Figure 7.4 – it provides too much emphasis that detracts from higher impact Tier 1 & 2 opportunities.
7-11	Pg. 182, Figure 7.5	Have the additional bulb-outs on 5 th Street been vetted with City transportation staff? 5 th Street was recently subject to extensive improvements, which included removal of a travel lane. Additional obstacles may be undesirable.
7-12	Pg. 182, GI plan for streetscapes	Plan proposes using bike lanes for permeable pavement locations. Permeable pavers would be a bad idea because of the uneven surface associated with them. A layout such as the one shown on pg. 177 would be preferred over having pavers in the bike lanes. Alternatively, the National Association of City Transportation Officials recommends porous asphalt or concrete for pervious bicycling surfaces rather than interlocking pavers, which may settle over time and become uncomfortable for bicycling.
7-13	Pg. 183	Delete the box highlighting the 130 gpcd existing water demand. It doesn't apply to downtown.
7-14	Pg. 186	How the upcoming state mandate of 55 gpcd indoor use is incorporated into the plan is unclear. Table 7C and Figures 7-7 through 7-9 appear to be based on a larger demand factor.

Number	Reference	Recommendation
7-15	Pg. 186, Table 7C	The demand offset using recycled water is shown as 8 AFY but the difference in total demand between scenarios 1 and 3 is only 5 AFY (162-157=5). Is the math correct? (See also comment 7-1.)
7-16	Figure 3.13	Given all of the water-reduction strategies envisioned for downtown in Chapter 7, the decorative fountain shown in Figure 3.13 appears inconsistent, especially when the Square is a demonstration area for water efficiency. The fountain could be acceptable if it designed to foster public education on water issues and uses a recycling water system. Alternatively, dry art can be an effective centering/gathering point in a public commons.
Chapter 8 Implementation		
	General	This chapter contains most of the recommendations for actually implementing the recommendations in all of the previous chapters. However, related to the sustainability components, much of the language is ‘consider’, ‘investigate’, ‘decide’. Even though further analysis may be needed for many of these components, there still needs to be some clear direction and policy on implementation.
8-1	Pg. 198 and Table 8F	The City should think through a green infrastructure (GI) policy for downtown. Consider: When should GI be part of the public realm and when should it be private? Should stormwater capture systems be public or private and is this dependent on size of the building? Is GI on private land required or incentivized?
8-2	Pg. 198	On Page 198, the author states that “<i>the recommended GI improvements in the public realm have not been included in calculating capital costs, since these upgrades are discretionary.</i>” This approach seems inconsistent with many other improvements for which costs are provided even though they are discretionary. If costs are omitted because the features are discretionary, they will never be chosen because there won’t be budgeted. The City needs these costs so it can prioritize improvements, apply for grants and other funding, work with project applicants, etc.
8-3	(none)	A process needs to be defined for implementing items that aren’t in the form-based zoning code. Since not all of the recommendations in the DP are part of the accompanying form-based Downtown Code, how do they get embedded into the policies, ordinances, standards and other implementation activities of the city? For example, related to GI, as discussed above, there is no Green Infrastructure policy—either established or recommended. Who is responsible for this after the DP is adopted? This information could be incorporated into the recommended phasing plans. (<i>This comment relates to the opening overview comment.</i>)
8-4	Pg. 224, Action 5B	The DP says to “<i>consider requiring net zero water</i>”, but the economics and the operational/institutional complications need to be examined carefully. It may not make sense (cost and finances, energy, best value) to deploy multiple small-scale, privately operated, technically sophisticated recycling units to save 8 AFY. This action only makes sense if a more extensive

Number	Reference	Recommendation
		analysis covering more water uses is presented in Section 7-3, as noted in comment 7-1.

The Social Services Commission issued the following feedback on the draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan:

- While the Plan mentions affordable housing, all references lack specificity
- The Plan should strive to better differentiate when referring to affordable by design versus below-market rate
- The Plan does not mention social services
- Overall, believe the Plan should elevate affordable housing to a higher priority

Vaitla moved that Goal 3 of the Plan should include a direct reference to affordable housing with a second by Snipes. Perez issued a friendly amendment that the Plan should also incorporate reference to the City's commitment to providing support services to the unhoused. Vaitla and Snipes accepted.

The motion passed by the following 7-0-0 vote:

AYES: Ioakimedes, Kalman, Perez, Snipes, Vaitla, Valencia, and Wise

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

City of Davis Tree Commission Comments on the Draft Downtown Plan Documents

To whom it may concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Downtown Plan and the associated documents. The Tree Commission has reviewed the available materials at multiple commission meetings and presents the following concerns and suggestions for improvement.

The proposed plan is aspirational and does not include adequate detail within the draft code documents to realize the landscapes presented in the visuals found throughout the plan. The Tree Commission feels that trees and urban canopy were completely overlooked when developing the form based code that is intended to move our city effectively towards the vibrant, tree-lined urban utopia the plan visually presents.

- Trees are fundamental to placemaking and provide significant human health, economic, social, and sustainability benefits. The draft Article 40.13 includes 27 pages on signage placement and design and zero on trees or related green infrastructure, its placement and its ongoing care. This is a gross oversight and must be rectified.
- There is no information on the current condition and placement of plan area tree resources or the retention, protection, or replacement of these resources. Our downtown area is currently fairly well canopied; a situation that will not persist without significant changes within Article 40.13 and an up-to-date City Tree Ordinance that reflects current science and best practices.
- Trees are the primary tool identified with the living landscape adaptation plan currently being developed by UC Davis. This Downtown Plan is devoid of mechanisms that would require climate appropriate landscaping. Additionally, the water efficient landscaping section (40.42) is entirely missing from the draft documents.
- Both the preservation of currently present downtown trees and the careful planning to ensure adequate soil space, proper above ground placement, and ongoing care of trees and other green infrastructure elements are critical to developing the vision presented in the plan. Developing requirements to ensure these goals are met are much more difficult than most people realize. Trees and other green infrastructure will only exist within the future downtown if it is required, properly planned for, and an enforcement mechanism is created and enforced.
- Unless our downtown trees can grow roots to support themselves, we will not be able to have safe, large, shady trees in our downtown area. This will require a careful look at the setback and frontage allowances in all building types presented in Article 40.13 and strict rules on how adequate soil space can be achieved.
- As the plan stands, there are no requirements for trees or other green infrastructure anywhere other than along the street. This should be re-evaluated for, at minimum, the Neighborhood Small and Neighborhood Medium areas. A canopy minimum should be considered for all area types to encourage the inclusion of green infrastructure solutions.
- Technologies exist to support urban tree canopy and green infrastructure even in the most difficult settings. Creation of a supporting document; either the "Tree Technical

Manual or Downtown Green Infrastructure Manual” should be developed to ensure that flexibility and creative solutions can be used by developers while ensuring our community realizes the walkable, shady, and beautiful community we all wish to live in.

- It is important that healthy trees with significant projected longevity are preserved. Either additional review of projects with impacts to existing trees must be required OR the downtown plan should map, evaluate, and identify the requirements for the protection of all trees currently located within the plan area.

In short, the Tree Commission urges the adoption of a Downtown Plan that:

1. Preserves existing canopy
2. Describes the pathway to our future climate adapted urban forest by establishing clear protocol for where and how new trees are planted
3. Describes a mechanism for ensuring new and existing tree and green infrastructure continues to thrive after planting and/or preservation
4. Defines clear, enforceable policies

The Tree Commission is ready and willing to assist in the ongoing development of a Downtown Plan that supports a future urban core that is green, beautiful, shady in the summertime, climate adapted, water efficient, and equitable for all community members. We appreciate the attention given to the concerns we have presented here.

Sincerely,
The City of Davis Tree Commission
Tracy DeWit
Larry Guenther
Stacey Parker
David Robinson
Zarah Wyy, Chair

The Utilities Commission had a few comments about the Downtown Plan, and had a short discussion on January 15, 2020 to prepare thoughts and comments as feedback.

Ultimately, they voted on the following motion (which passed)

Motion: to accept comments made by the Commission as stated as the Commission's formal comments towards the Downtown Plan, and that discussion should include that not just microgrids, but a resilient electrical supply.

Their comments:

- Cost and demand estimates for infrastructure within the plan lack the appropriate context. How the cost estimates, and the demand capacity was determined should be included. The concern is that a developer could point to the report and indicate that from the city's estimates, additional capacity or work would not be needed, and therefore would not be the responsibility of the developer. They believe it should be included in the plan that the developer will be responsible for any increased capacity needs anticipated by the city through each development review.
- The references to the microgrids and broadband within the plan are not significant enough. The mention of the items does not indicate that they are being properly looked at, and this is of concern to the Commission.

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

- Not much real info about plan process available for review - only north side to feel - this under plan
- good graphics NOT EVEN A SIMPLE PRINTED 6-page executive summary! Really limited opportunity for public understanding and reaction - A wasted opportunity
- Court has ruled against Traskside PD. What happens if city loses appeal?
- Is Lincoln Hwy as much a historic resource as 1900s bike paths? If not, why not?



Name

Dan Ray

Email Address

dan.ray@home@gmail.com

Phone Number

530-219-7541

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

universal design

THANK YOU!



Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

The sustainability features are great!
I would like to see the feasibility of a net-zero energy/
carbon downtown as a model of climate action and climate-resilience

Great vision overall!!

♥affordable housing

♥downtown housing

♥economic equity

I'd love to coordinate as we
develop our Yolo County Local Green New Deal
Feel free to reach out.



Name David Abramson

Email Address david@davidabramsonderyolo.com

Phone Number 530-902-8223

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

3-story height ~ is good for downtown to
transition zones to neighborhoods,

What is NOT OK is an exception.
Like the brown box at
3rd & Railroad. Legal & Politics should
not trump form. Leaveside property
should be part of 3-story
transition zone.



Name Alan C. Miller

Email Address acm@cmsoft.com

Phone Number 530-312-7320

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

AMTRAK STATION

- BETTER FOR PUBLIC USE THAN ANOTHER BUILDING
- NEED MOST PARKING AREA FOR HC, INTERMODAL — LT RAIL, BUS
- INCORPORATE CAR WASH BLOCK IN CONCEPT
- ASSUME TRACKS TO NORTH WILL STAY
- WHAT IS YR. PLAN FOR FUTURE LT. RAIL



Name

Allen Lowrey

Email Address

rednoodler@mac.com

Phone Number

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

PARKING LOTS

- DON'T FILL UP WITH BUSES w/o PARKING OFFSETS
- INTERIM PLAN IMPROVE PARKING MGMT.
HOW DO YOU KNOW SELF-DRIVING WILL ENTER EXCEED 50%
- SELF-DRIVING CARS ARE ALWAYS ON THE STREET



Name

Allen Lowrey

Email Address

rednoodler@mac.com

Phone Number

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

I think it's a very good plan and addresses many of the issues that ~~the~~ downtown Davis faces currently. Bikes & pedestrians to have a much higher priority in the downtown core than they currently have. The density of the downtown core ~~is~~ also needs to be increased with at least 2-story structures that have store fronts ~~then~~ on the street level and apartments or offices up above. This kind of building should meet sustainability goals ~~is~~ by decreasing commutes within the city & increasing the housing stock.



Name Daniel Feinberg

Email Address dfeinberg@ucdavis.edu

Phone Number (805) 698-6839

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

Love downtown, keep it low. No five-story buildings.



Name _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

PHASE IN PARKING - NOT ALL CAN WALK OR BIKE
REMOVAL SENIORS WON'T COME DOWNTOWN
IF PARKING NOT EASY & IF
THERE AREN'T SHOPS
RESTAURANTS FOR ALL AGES



Name _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

• Why does the Downtown Plan include recommendations for
Old East and Old North areas?



Name _____

Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Steve Mikessell

stephenmikessell@outlook.com

916 607-3723

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

EXPAND THE IDEA OF DOWNTOWN.

INCORPORATE NEW RESIDENTIAL AREAS =

- OLIVE DRIVE 1000 PEOPLE

- USCH STRIP ~1000 PEOPLE

- UCD SOLANO PARK ~500 PEOPLE

ALL OF THESE PEOPLE NEED A DOWNTOWN +
DOWNTOWN NEEDS THEM.

SEE SHUTTLE PLAN



Name

ALLEN Lowry

Email Address

rednoodler@mac.com

Phone Number

530-304-7990

Downtown Davis

Specific Plan

COMMENT CARD

Please share your thoughts, comments, or questions about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan.

I think the DDSP is great! It

addresses the issue of developers

proposing plans that are at cross-

purposes with Davis values, and

hopefully encourages the kind of dev't we want.



Name

Maureen Driscoll

Email Address

MARKPUN@MINDSPRING.COM

Phone Number

24611
↑ we need to grow so when not do it

DAVIS CALIFORNIA DOWNTOWN SHUTTLE PROPOSAL

July 1, 2019

This is an argument for a shuttle to connect the Davis commercial district to adjacent residential districts and UC Davis.

The current planning effort for the Davis Core Area envisions an active multi-dimensional downtown area with more retail, more housing and more activity. The core area is expected to have an enhanced focal point in the E Street Plaza, midway between Central Park and the AMTRAK station. Opticos, the City's planning consultant, has made a strong case for new parking, pedestrian and commercial improvements and for a form-based code structure that offers more flexibility to the City in implementing its goals. Their early analysis of the feasibility of substantial new downtown housing was not promising. In fact, they saw little financial opportunity for new housing apart from outside mandates such as Senate Bill 50, or other unknown inducements.

Fortunately, Downtown Davis will soon have abundant new residents, provided that the City reaches out to them. People in new projects such as Lincoln 40, the Nishi project and the University's Solano Park project, along with existing Olive Drive residents, and UCD staff, will be more than willing to visit downtown Davis, given reasonable access.

DEMAND: All of these areas, comprising almost 5000 adult residents, are separated from the downtown by railroad tracks or the lack of quick access, despite their close proximity. In addition, two noteworthy hotels: the Hyatt Place at UC Davis and the new 132-room conference hotel on Richards have no quick access to downtown. As most of these hotel guests arrive by car, they are just as likely to drive to Sacramento or the Bay Area for outings as to downtown Davis once they are in the car. Olive Drive residents have poor access through the tunnel, and the Lincoln 40 project has parking for only 34% of its residents. All Lincoln 40 residents are to be students, yet reasonable access to campus is not provided.

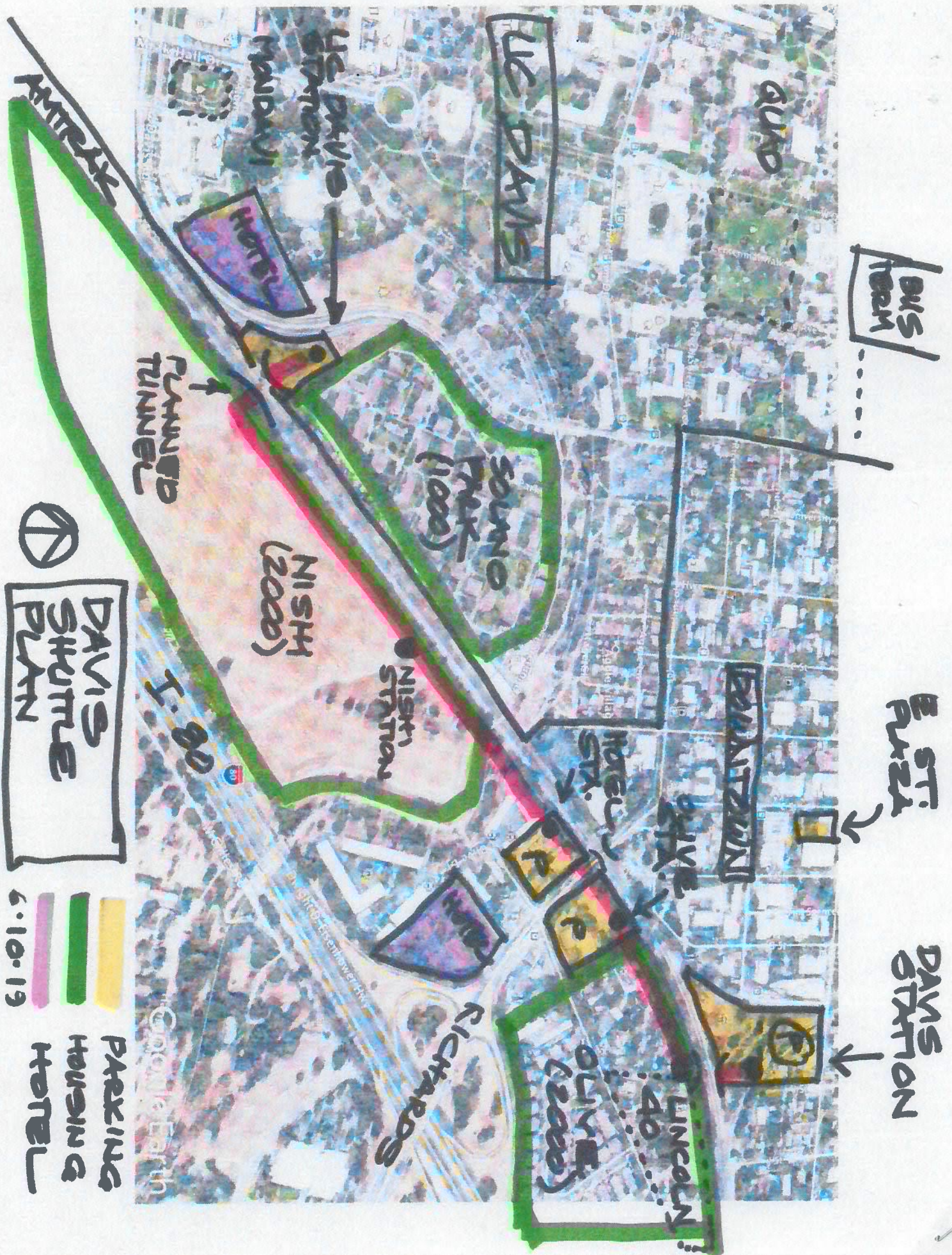
ROUTE: I propose an automated shuttle to connect all of these areas to downtown Davis by means of a new route, employing a vehicle similar to what one sees at many airports, on a dedicated path. Such a system could connect the Mondavi Center at UCD to the AMTRAK station without crossing any existing roadways and passing mostly over land that is City-owned, University-controlled, or land where public influence can be brought to bear to obtain easements. The attached sketch shows the basic route envisioned. At the west end, the connection to Campus is through a widened undercrossing already to be provided by the Nishi developer. The line would be single-track except for three stations.

VEHICLES: A minimum of six vehicles would be required to provide an end-to-end service on a 20- or 30- minute schedule. Vehicles could be rubber-tired running on a paved surface but never interacting with traffic. Vehicles could be electric, automated with the latest proven technology and perhaps supervised by Unitrans. Security cameras, network interaction, and easy access by emergency vehicles would provide an experience of safety.

SERVICE: A terminal at the UCD Hyatt hotel or even the Mondavi Center and a terminal at the Amtrak station, the major intermodal focus for Yolo County, define the overall route. Intermediate stops could include Nishi housing, a stop for the new Richards hotel, a stop at city-owned land just east of Richards, and a stop for Lincoln 40 at Hickory Drive. Parking exists or can be made available at every stop, and this will intercept some cars from driving downtown and reduce parking demand there.

FUNDING: Owing to the widespread benefits of this project, and the direct connection to AMTRAK, public funding might be obtained from the federal government [people mover?], the State [SB17] the University and the City.

This expands the idea of what the downtown is, in a healthy way. Let's explore the idea!



To: Eric Lee, City Planner, City Council Members, and the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC)

We, the governing board at Davis Community Church, write to ask for the Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DDSP) to increase the maximum building height for our city block to four stories, and accurately depict the historic resources associated with the church.

Here's why:

At Davis Community Church, we celebrate the vision and collaborative planning process you, our leaders, have engaged this last year, culminating in the draft DDSP currently out for public review. Last year, and roughly concurrent with your vision process, we too engaged in our own study, culminating in our VISION2028 statement of vision, values, and anchoring strategies--a guide for our development.

In that statement we affirm that “we exist to tend the wellbeing of the place and people around us.” One of our six anchoring strategies specifically relates to the ways we see our community’s life integrated into the larger, emerging vision of the DDSP. In that strategy we call ourselves to:

“Steward our land and buildings responsibly for the sake of the future. We will participate with the city of Davis in its new Downtown Plan to help create a thriving and sustainable community. Our land and buildings are of great value in terms of financial and social capital. We must steward this land responsibly; it can fall into ruin and irrelevance or it can be a source of economic, environmental, and relational flourishing for us and the community. How can we be part of a thriving downtown, a model for the way a religious community can help engender a new vision for human community that benefits the region and the planet?”

Recently, the Washington Post ran an article exploring the ways religious communities might help cities overcome the current housing shortage plaguing our country. In [“Cities need housing. Churches have property. Can they work something out?”](#) (November 5, 2019) The author asks, “What would it look like if churches were helping to make affordable housing possible?”

In another essay, [“Affordable, sustainable, high quality urban housing? It’s not an impossible dream.”](#) Naomi Stead of the University of Queensland shows how *The Commons*, a medium-density housing development in Brunswick, Australia, fulfills a “triple bottom line” approach—pursuing social, environmental and financial sustainability.

We are a religious community, stewarding a large and valuable asset with room for development around a historic sanctuary building, that wants to partner with others in this city to find ways to fulfill a “triple bottom line” approach, and create what we call a “Common Good Neighborhood”. We are currently beginning conversations as a leadership team about the best ways to fulfill our Vision2028.

We note that the draft DDSP identifies our property, especially the partly undeveloped land along 5th between C and D Streets, as an opportunity for infill: “Community-focused housing can occur on sites that are currently underutilized.” An illustration “shows the possible addition of housing to the open space at the corner of the Davis Community Church lot” (DDSP: 100). The property is currently zoned C-RI.

We also note that the draft DDSP specifies a maximum of four stories on the south side of our property and three stories on the north side. We would like the DDSP to allow a maximum of

four stories throughout. To achieve our goals for a "triple bottom line"--social, environmental, and financial sustainability--projects that will serve the needs for more affordable housing require an increased economy of scale according to the DDSP Economic Background Analysis.

The Downtown Plan Advisory Committee had several discussions on the building height issue, which resulted in the current three-story limit along Fifth Street to respect the scale of the Old North Davis single family homes. We point out that the property across Fifth Street from us is the Newman Center, another religious use. Parcels both east and west of us along Fifth Street are city-owned, so the north side of our property does not abut any single family uses.

We diligently care for our 93-year-old sanctuary building, having recently invested about \$2M in seismic, roofing, accessibility and energy efficiency improvements. The other buildings on our site have not been designated historically significant, so we request that the plan's historic resources section accurately depict only the sanctuary building. There are two remaining manses (former pastoral residences built by the church, now in private hands) associated with the church on the north side of Fourth Street between E and F Streets, however only one is depicted in the historic resources section. We request that both manses be depicted, as the city's records show these are historically significant.

To summarize, please:

- Zone the entire block of C to D between Fourth and Fifth as Neighborhood Medium, Four Story maximum height;
- Accurately and visually depict the 1926 sanctuary building and two manses as historic resources, but not the more recently constructed buildings on our property.

Thank you,

The Session (governing board) of Davis Community Church

From: Chris Neufeld-Erdman <erdmanc@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 9:45 AM

To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>; CMOWeb <CMOWeb@cityofdavis.org>; City Council Members <CityCouncilMembers@cityofdavis.org>; Downtown Plan Advisory Committee <DPAC@cityofdavis.org>

Subject: Downtown Davis Specific Plan comment

Dear Eric (and other leaders);

On reviewing the zoning for the proposed Downtown Specific Plan, we want to ensure that any changes don't hamper the activities (current or future) of Davis Community Church (DCC).

In reviewing 40.13.140 in the Downtown Zones plan, we note that DCC is identified as CUP. We have a copy of the Zoning Atlas for downtown dated December 4, 2012 in which DCC is marked at C-RI. It may be that these are "apples and oranges", that is, unrelated and refer to different things.

However, we write to ensure that we know what's happening to our zoning under the new Plan.

The minutes of the City Council meeting on October 14, 2008 show some debate over DCC's zoning with respect to our partnership with other local congregations in facilitating the highly acclaimed Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter.

Those minutes state: "City Manager Bill Emlen stated staff recommends the following regular agenda item discussion be tabled: Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance Restricting New or Expanded Uses in the Core Residential Infill (C-RI) Zoning District That May Be Inconsistent With the Public/Semi-Public (P-SP) Zoning . . ."

In the Public Comment period, John Oakley, DCC's legal council "spoke regarding the tabled Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance and requested City Council include DCC in zoning review discussions. He stated the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) substantially limits the City Council's discretion when zoning decisions burden the free exercise of religion in a land use contract. Further, DCC seeks to build community and neighborhood consensus regarding the scope and content of its homeless services."

Further, numerous members of the community also spoke "in opposition to the table Urgency Interim Zoning Ordinance. Comments included: "city should respect autonomy of religious institutions and acknowledge roles of church in building community through charity acts; DCC programs are in response to reality of homeless in downtown areas."

We have no plans to change this highly successful community program that has helped the city cope with rising homeless and which has, in part, led to new city programs to combat the problems homeless persons face.

However, we wish to ensure that the new zoning plan does not restrict our 150 year old community organization for finding new ways to meet community needs and address community problems.

Can you verify that the new Plan does not restrict DCC's current or future activities in ways inconsistent with past policy and practice?

Please confirm receipt of this letter and its distribution to all necessary parties.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Chris Neufeld-Erdman, pastor and moderator of DCC's Session (council)

--

Davis Community Church
(Affiliated with the Presbyterian Church USA)
412 C Street, Davis, CA 95616
530.753.2894

From: Tracy Dewit <tracydewit@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 23, 2019 3:13 PM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Cc: Robert Cain <RCain@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Downtown Davis Specific Plan - Comments

Hello Eric,

I hope you are doing well.

I will attend the Dec 4, 2019 Opticos presentation about the Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DDSP).

As a City of Davis Tree Commissioner, here are my comments regarding TREES in the DDSP.

- 1) In nearly every sketch or photo of the [Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan](#) it show a tree(s).
- 2) Yet, according Google Docs word finder, the word 'tree' or 'trees' is listed only 22 times in the 256 page document. Listed below is the page number that has the word 'tree(s)'. Besides listing why we need trees in our community, anyone can plainly see, the document grossly lacks important details regarding the preservation and sustainability of trees.

pg 23 - Street **trees** provide shade over many sidewalks.
There are over 80 landmark **trees**.

pg 42 - Shade **Trees**. Shade **trees** reduce energy demand by shading buildings.

pg. 43 - Shade **Trees**. Shade **trees** reduce heat island effect of taller and larger buildings.

pg 44 - **Trees** and Urban Greenery

pg 52 - **Trees**, seating, lighting and activities, such as food trucks, are enough to create a vibrant community gathering space.

pg 63 - Design the public realm incorporating **trees**, green infrastructure, and shade strategies to support walking and cycling, as well as outdoor recreation and dining.

pg 106 - Today, the University Avenue-Rice Lane neighborhood is an established low-intensity residential neighborhood and has a distinct character, with mainly house-form structures along **tree**-lined streets.

pg 137 - G) Street **Trees**. Select species that thrive in urban environments, provide shade and beauty, and reduce air pollution.

pg 140 - Incorporate pervious pavements, bioswales, street **trees**, and other green infrastructure elements into thoroughfare design whenever possible.

pg 149 - street scape elements such as bike racks and street **trees**.

pg 152 - Elements such as street **trees**, vegetation, utilities, sign poles, sandwich boards, outdoor seating/dining, trash cans, and other streetscape amenities should be contained within the sidewalk frontage zone or furniture zone so as to not obstruct the through zone.

pg 176 - installation on existing buildings or with a mix of shrubs, **trees**, pathways, and benches to be a valuable amenity for building tenants and the public.

pg 185 - No new street **trees** have been included in these demand projections.

pg 187 - In this scenario, all landscaping (excluding street **trees**) is replaced by drought-resistant planting, reducing estimated total water demand to 157 AFY, equivalent to 65 gpcd and 50 percent lower than the City's existing average of 130 gpcd.

pg 215 - Design all streets to maximize opportunities to support natural ecosystems and urban greenery; protecting existing **trees**, planting new **trees**, and incorporating shade strategies wherever feasible.

pg 224 - Graywater plan: Integrated water collection and reuse through descending uses and support landscaped greenery (e.g. shade **trees** and interstitial habitat).

pg 236 - Street **Tree**. A **tree** of any species or size planted in open spaces, parkways, sidewalk areas, easements, and streets.

Some of the economic benefits trees provide are listed in this document include shade, beauty, reducing air pollution, supports walking and dining and outdoor activities, and reducing heat island effect of taller and larger buildings. There is NO supporting documentation that guides the way we attain these many goals initiated by healthy living trees. Therefore, in my opinion, the DDSP misses the mark when it comes to promoting a *positive* memorable identity, sustainable *and functional* infrastructure, resilient *and enjoyable* economy, historical preservation, and *good* health simply because trees are literally not apart the plan.

This plan simply assumes that trees will be apart of our future. If we want to actually attain the 6 goals listed in this plan, then we need to actually make trees a priority and include the **preservation** and **proper planting protocol of trees**. In fact, at the very least, there should be line items dedicated to Trees in the Index. This page should state how to preserve trees and how to plant them for sustainability as well as when guidelines are not followed properly, a penalty or monetary fine(s) for each mistreated tree should be implemented and followed.

To improve quality of life for all, we must make trees a priority and treat them as **a true living asset**, attending and maintaining their health and wellness with an unwavering priority in every single development in this community.

Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,

Tracy De Wit

From: Todd Edelman <todd@deepstreets.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 4:42 PM
To: DowntownPlan <downtownplan@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Draft Downtown Specific Plan - Comments
Importance: High

Hello,

In general I am very impressed with the Downtown Plan and process.

Here are my comments:

1 - Housing:

If it determined that the supply of affordable housing in Downtown can be increased by building on city-owned lots, the mixed-use buildings constructed on these lots should be higher than is currently planned, i.e. should exceed the currently proposed guidelines for building heights in different parts of Downtown.

2 - Re-development and re-purposing of existing buildings and lots:

a) The multi-plex - parking structure at 1st and E/F should be modified as follows:

The multi-plex would stay as now. The top level of the parking structure could be converted into a flexibly-designed venue, kind of a elevated town square, but also with one or more stages. The middle level would be converted to house kitchens, bathrooms, storage facilities, HVAC and a delivery area for vehicles supplying food etc. It could have retractable stages and other features in aggregate with the top floor.

The rationale for this conversion is that a parking facility in this location will continue to induce traffic through the congested Richards Tunnel or all the way through Downtown. However, as an interim measure this can be dedicated or prioritized for parking for users of Amtrak and the transit hub at the Depot.

b) Davis Depot - a mixed use building appropriate in design flexibility for this location should be constructed. It should house a very limited amount of ADA required parking, bicycle parking and should have elevated multi use paths or at least stairs to connect to H St., 3rd St and I St.

The rationale for this is that a parking structure here would cost at least \$50,000 per space, meaning a minimum \$10 to 15 million structure that would take many years before it made a

profit. It would induce motor vehicle traffic on local streets for several hours in the morning and several in the evening - the latter would be especially ill-suited to robustly-envisioned Downtown street activities.

c) **The 4th St parking structure** would be the Davis Depot-dedicated lot for vehicles primarily arriving by 5th St. and F St. **This would be "Downtown Parking North"**. It will be connected to Davis Depot and Downtown by an autonomous shuttle on a fixed route that is primarily synchronized with arriving and departing trains, and secondarily serving Downtown (in between train services and late at night) and an additional an attractive, external, glass-walked elevator will be added to connect to 4th St separate from the car route.

d) **The lot containing the current Shell gas station and In & Out** will be constructed into a parking structure, with these businesses remaining. The structure will be prepared for later adaptation to other uses. The structure will have direct egress to and from I-80 west, thus cutting roughly in half the affect of parking access on surface streets **This would be "Downtown Parking South"**. It will be connected to Davis Depot and Downtown by an autonomous shuttle on a fixed route that is primarily synchronized with arriving and departing trains, and secondarily serving Downtown (in between train services and late at night). Phasing: This structure would be opened when the 1st St Parking Structure is closed.

3 - Circulation:

The proposed circulation plan is a very good starting point. But I have some suggestions:

a) **F St. should not be a priority route for vehicles through Downtown.** This is incompatible with the intended purpose for 2nd St.

b) **Private vehicles should not be allowed to travel through at F, G or H St.** At the ends of both in both orientations there will be Kiss & Ride turn arounds for the Davis Depot, plus these four locations will some of the several taxi-TNC loading areas in Downtown. These passages will be open to emergency vehicles and for exceptional situations and possibly late at night with electronically-controlled, retractable bollards, similar to on the ends of E St.

c) **Thus 1st, B, 5th should be a sort of partial ring around Downtown, designed for 25 mph speeds, at least for most of the day,** with a sort of access route to 4th st. and the above mentioned Kiss & Ride and existing parking structure. It is necessary to create a min. speed via timed signals and so on so that all drivers see this as the best choice, even if it is less direct than C or D St. It should also have a separated cycle track, though space for this is very limited on 5th St east of C St, especially if left turn pockets are preserved (this is why 3rd St should be a fast-as-possible route for cycling.)

For items d) and e) please refer to the following: <https://www.propublica.org/article/unsafe-at-many-speeds> & https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2363

d) The max speed design for all of Downtown - aside from 1st, B and 5th - should be 15 mph, not 20 mph as in the proposal. 20 mph is just below the street velocity that becomes particularly dangerous, 15 mph is at least twice as safe. 15 is also a reasonable maximum speed for bicycles. 15 mph is familiar to motor vehicles users as it's the posted speed at traffic calming points on local roads. It's also now possible for cities to lower speeds to 15 mph in school zones during school hours. Finally, 15 is more distinguishable than is 20, compared to the 25 mph streets surrounding Downtown and in most of Davis, aside from arteries. 20 mph as a posted speed is below what state law requires, but clearly the traffic consultants had in mind the likely change in laws that will give local jurisdictions more autonomy with speeds on local streets. That's good, but the good thought is best respected by 15 mph design speeds.

e) 2nd St. between D and H, and E St. between 1st and 3rd should be pedestrian zones with 5 mph design and limit at certain times with relectronically-controlled, retractable bollards are down, like for early morning for deliveries.

f) All of Downtown - aside from signalized intersections - should have no stop signs, only priority based on yield from a single direction.

g) All of these non-signalised intersections will allow pedestrian crossing in one movement. This feature and the e) no stop signs - must be assembled from the get-go in aggregate in order to achieve the necessary safety symbiosis. Intersections designed for stop signs cannot be optimized to have other types of controls.

h) 3rd St between B and H, D St. between 1st and 5th and G St. between 3rd and 8th / north end of Downtown should be priority cycling routes with no required yields, except to pedestrians, and a stop only at the signalized crossing of G and 8th St. If necessary D can have a marked cycling track. The shared street plan for 3rd is not advantageous for bicycles if they are required to stop at any un-signalised intersection.

Thanks,

Todd Edelman (speaking as a private citizen)

MeMe

DATE: January 14, 2020
TO: Downtown Plan Advisory Committee
Eric Lee, Planner
Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner
FROM: Cheryl Essex, Planning Commission Liaison
SUBJECT: Downtown Davis Specific Plan Public Review Draft Comments

I have appreciated the trust placed in me as the Planning Commission liaison to the DPAC. While I cannot speak on behalf of the Commission, I share these personal ideas and observations based on my expertise as an urban and park planner and landscape architect. These comments are in addition to the multiple written and verbal comments I have made over the course of the planning process. I have tried not to repeat comments offered by others or offer my opinion of others' comments.

The Downtown Davis Specific Plan is a big lift—a challenge for our town to reach consensus on a vision for a vibrant downtown as the hub of economic activity in a changing world. There is a lot to like about this plan, even as we discuss and debate what we might not like. I look forward to further public input on this plan, the opportunity to discuss at the Planning Commission, the environmental review process, and finally, the City Council's final direction which will allow this plan to be implemented.

Topic 1—Mobility

Transportation infrastructure has been the driving force behind development throughout the world and is likely the single most expensive and important investment of city funds in downtown redevelopment. I have several concerns about the transportation infrastructure plans presented in the draft. Unfortunately, the BTSSC liaison to DPAC has changed several times, so I'm unsure whether adequate and consistent input has been provided. I offer these observations and ideas:

- A. The estimated number of street parking spaces should be shown for each block based on the street sections proposed. A simple table comparing existing vs. proposed can provide clarity to plan reviewers.
- B. I support efforts to strengthen funding for transit and increase street parking for business patrons. Downtown employers might be required to provide a flexibility subsidy to underwrite either a Unitrans, YoloBus or Amtrak pass, not just for Unitrans.
- C. A stronger, more robust transit system will be necessary to meet the goals of the mobility plan. Now, Intercity Route 42 comes no closer than the Fifth and F Street intersection. Routing YoloBus into the Heart of the City and closer to the train depot would make transit more attractive for our Woodland neighbors. Should F Street

become a Transit Priority Corridor? Would YCTD consider routing buses further south on F Street as demand increases?

- D. To enliven the train depot area, improve convenience and offer value-added services which generate sales tax revenue; the west side of H Street seems to be a good location for sidewalk cafes, restaurants and bars. Storefronts (and maybe 90° parking stalls) could be required along this stretch during redevelopment.
- E. Third Street is proposed to be a “shared street”, yet it carries bus and vehicle traffic from east Second Street into downtown. Third Street is an important connector to east Second Street businesses, South Davis (via Mace Blvd) and potentially the ARC. Increasing transit options along this corridor will become necessary over time to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use, yet the “shared street” concept will increase congestion. Should Third Street become a Transit Priority Corridor between Old East Davis and E Street? The EIR should clarify the traffic impacts and consider an alternative for Third Street which accommodates smoother vehicle traffic flow.
- F. Delivery trucks need easy access in and out of downtown. Right now, delivery trucks block streets and don’t seem to use the abundant designated loading zones (maybe too small?). What if we provided larger loading zones along E and F Streets, and along Third Street between Old East Davis and E Street, to provide central access and easy connections in and out of downtown?
- G. E Street between First and Third is proposed to be a “shared street”, even though it is a major vehicle entry point to downtown from the freeway and from South Davis. Reducing street width and vehicle speed along this stretch will likely increase congestion and frustration for downtown shoppers and residents, as well as hinder emergency and transit vehicles. The EIR should clarify the traffic impacts and consider an alternative which accommodates smoother vehicle traffic flow.
- H. As the university develops further, vehicle traffic where First Street meets A and B Streets is likely to increase congestion within an already awkward circulation pattern. A traffic circle in this area might ease circulation. May it be beneficial to reset A Street traffic to one way southbound? Creating a southbound bicycle route along A Street from Eighth to First might reduce traffic conflicts, especially along a narrow stretch of B Street between Eighth and Russell.

Topic 2—Economic Development

I continue to be concerned about the lack of focus on economic development in the plan. Creating an Entertainment District might help focus and prioritize downtown economic development. This District should require higher quality building and paving materials along the streetscape with a defined style or theme (for example, an agriculture theme could support food tourism such as that envisioned in the Food and Economic Development in Davis report). Placing one edge/end of this district at the train station could help support train tourism, so either Second or G Streets might be most appropriate for this use. One consideration is having the ability to close off the street for festivals and street fairs without disrupting transit services.

Topic 3—Trees

For large shade trees to thrive and provide the benefits of cleaner air, cooler pavement, reduced heat loads, and healthier people, they need room to grow. As a landscape architect, I recommend either increasing the minimum size of street and parking lot tree planters to 6 ft x 8 ft or requiring structural soil and/or suspended pavement so roots can stretch out. The City needs to make a long-term funding commitment to maintain it's urban forest.

Topic 4—Building façade

Allowable building façade materials along the streetscape should be identified.

Topic 5—University/Rice Lane Neighborhood

I recommend that the large, dated apartment complex at the southwest corner of Russell and B Streets be rezoned Neighborhood--Medium.

Thank you for considering these comments.

EnD

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional):

Alan Hirsch

Date:

12/14/19

Comments:

Trees are Neglected in plan. More important for Street - scenes than Building Facad. (Where is update of City Tree Ordinance? Parking Lot Shade Ordinance? This is where they should be addressed, Not "the plan".

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional): Alan Hirsch

Date: 1/11/20

Comments:

Tree size & planting methods are not addressed in this plan. The nice picture with tree are a miss representation. We need regs & plan for suspended pavement.

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional):

Ad North

Date:

1-11-2020

Comments:

Please keep in mind to maintain Tree Canopy. We have many older trees in downtown already and we should remember to plan ahead and plant new growth, too. Choose trees that will mature with a canopy that covers/meets in the middle of street.

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional):

Date:

1/11/20

Comments:

Maintain pedestrian path / connection
from arboretum path through
Davis Commons. Also need to provide
good bike connection through site

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at:
<https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional):

Date:

11:20 AM

Comments:

DENSITY IS NOT
A DIRTY WORD!

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan Comment

Name (optional):

Date:

Comments:

Thanks for listening to citizens !

- Public comments are encouraged to be submitted using the online form located on the project website at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.
- Public comments may also be emailed to: downtownplan@cityofdavis.org.
- The draft plan documents and general information are available at: <https://www.cityofdavis.org/downtownplan>.

Members of the advisory committee,

In 1967 I began graduate school here in chemistry and followed this with Post-Doctoral research in Biochemistry. I worked in Aerospace for a few years then in 1978 started my own company in Folsom making custom circuit boards, while still living in Davis. I retired from this business in 2002.

We have two children who have gone through the Davis school system and U.C.D. Summarizing, I am an experienced businessman with a background in science.

Suggestions

1. There is no summary of the Specific Plan document. The original document is hard to read online due to small font size and poor coloring. Even the printed document is hard to read due to coloring over text.
I would suggest the document should be printed by the city (off set print) and be available there for free. I would strongly recommend it be summarized. At present, the dispersal of information is very inconvenient.
2. The infrastructure of neighborhood bike paths and roads leading to downtown is poor in many places. For instance, Covell Blvd. between F Street and Sycamore Lane is in terrible shape. But it is better than the parallel bike paths. My point is biking downtown has to be supported by decent peripheral paths.
3. Discussing city infrastructure, this whole town needs fiber optic cable that meets today's standards of data transfer.
4. At present, it is economically challenging to develop in Downtown due to high land costs and a regulatory process that is lengthy and uncertain. Both are very important. I am not sure what to do about high costs. Streamlining the regulatory process is brought up a number of times in this document. This needs to be assigned a very high priority because as long as I can remember this has been a complaint from contractors. I have had several contractors not willing to even work in Davis. I continually hear complaints about permits requiring months to get approved. This has to change.

The Specific Plan

1. Building height proposed includes some 4 story buildings without minimum parking. The county of Kauai in Hawaii has limited buildings to 30' for residential and 50' for commercial. The result is very attractive without urban canyons.
2. Before actually building flat roofed, garden topped buildings, I strongly recommend getting information from functioning structures that are in use. The cost of a flat roof that can support a garden's dirt and water weight may

be prohibitive. Also, after several years of use, what is the “leak” situation? Flat roofs are notorious for leaks under good conditions.

3. Access to commercial areas is key to merchants’ sales. We need arteries to carry thru traffic to their desired destinations.

East-West Russell (5th), Covell,
North-South Poleline, F Street, Anderson,

These arteries do a pretty good job. I would have good bike paths on these existing roads. Then they need to be kept in good repair. If the focus of new and smooth paths is only downtown, will you attract customers from other city areas? New paths 1st to 5th and A to H do not bring people downtown.

4. The city needs to beware that planting large scale trees (Sycamores, Etc.) within a few feet of an asphalt bike path will not work long term.
5. The challenge the downtown plan faces is being aware of the different population segments they serve.
 - a. Young Adults
 - b. Families
 - c. Seniors

People choosing to live downtown with no automobile must be fit enough to walk to shops and fit enough to carry their purchases home. They will need some form of transport to appointments outside the range of walking and biking. Young adults and young seniors are probably going to be the highest density residents.

Family groups and less mobile seniors are always going to prefer a parking spot near their destination and a cart to carry children, purchases. Also, electric sit down scooters would be helpful. The city needs to offer retail opportunities to these residents also.

6. In 2012 the city of Davis had sales tax revenue on retail sales on average of \$7,062 per capita. The city of Woodland had revenue from retail sales of \$12,498 per capita. What is the difference in shopping opportunities? I have never personally shopped at Costco in Woodland without seeing other fellow Davis residents there. There is a need for this style shopping and it certainly would be profitable for the city. This shopping would not be downtown but the income from it would help the city.
7. Most of the proposed “improvements”, i.e. “mixed use areas” seem to involve more buildup spaces and less parking. Davis rents are already higher than surrounding areas. We seem to be catering to a very affluent younger

population. If that is the result, is this equitable for all tax paying Davisites? Will it raise the necessary monies to maintain our cities infrastructure?

8. I keep seeing references that enhanced surroundings for businesses downtown will justify higher rents. With this in mind one must consider what this does to a business. For a business downtown facing increased rents, unless sales income increases, material cost will not change nor will labor costs. Overhead is the only change and it will increase at the expense of profits. One of our problems in Davis is retailers staying in business downtown. Making it more expensive to operate with higher rents may make this problem worse.
9. Paid parking is better than no parking. At least the affluent will be able to shop downtown.
10. Retention areas for water runoff involve a host of issues: maintenance, mosquitos and water quality. There is no discussion of the ongoing cost for such a system. Has a successful system been studied? How large of an input did the system have? It seems unlikely enough could be saved to justify the expense. Where are the numbers? The filtrate will have to be removed periodically or the system will quit working.
11. Laundry water is chemically laden. Any bleach in the water will kill plants. It should not be recycled.
12. Roof runoff will not amount to much due to storage difficulties.
13. Additional building costs, more plumbing, water storage, etc., makes Davis a more expensive area to do business in. Again, we see higher overheads.
14. One stated justification, for higher landlord/merchant overhead, is that business will increase as we recover from the 2008 recession. Since a lot of the customer base in Davis is employed, or retired from a public employer, we did not experience significant job loss here at that time. Therefore it will be hard to see an improvement. The student customer base is quite affluent, but seasonal. This is another problem for businesses trying to keep operating during slow periods.
15. Before building commercial or residential spaces downtown, cost per square foot at this time needs to be established and probable rents estimated. Davis real estate is for the affluent. Downtown prices will most likely be expensive. This information is necessary to visualize who will be able to afford these proposed spaces.
16. In section 8.3, it discusses "pay as you go" from increased city funding due to the enhancements. This is an excellent idea and should be considered very

heavily. No one goes into debt here. It also means no disappointments if an expected increase in funds does not materialize.

17. I have a real question as to whether reducing CO₂ with solar is economically feasible. Not including gas lines and relying totally on electrical in new structures is a problematic idea. Currently solar costs, including the panels, inverter, labor and permit fees are about \$3.18 a watt in Yolo County. I retrieved this from what I can see on an internet search and it seems logical as the national range is listed several places as between \$2.90 and \$3.20 per watt. A 4 Kw system would cost \$12,720 before credits and likely around 70% of this or \$8,904 after credits. This would be a minimum size for a 1200-1500 residential structure. Commercial would likely take a larger system for heating, cooling and lights. They will not produce much in the winter.
18. My guess is that in 20 years there is a chance that energy will be produced by reforming methane (natural gas) in an online system producing H₂ and CO₂. I would expect the hydrogen to go directly into a fuel cell producing electricity and the CO₂ to be captured. A 4 or 5 Kw system will likely compete with solar and produce electricity rain or shine. This would require natural gas lines.

Suggestions from Residents we spoke with

1. More movie parking
2. Turn FedEx parking lot into a multi-storage parking facility.
3. Make 3rd street, for several blocks, a “no drive” walking area.
4. Students (~40,000 total at this point) clog downtown parking. The University needs to offer outlying parking with jitney service to central campus. Many students park downtown with bikes on their car and take their bikes and ride to campus.
5. Everyone we spoke to emphatically wanted more parking not less.

Summary

It would be helpful to be given economics facts gathered from “actual” car-free experiments in other cities. What has benefited existing merchants? What problems were encountered? How has an area like this affected the cities’ finances?

There is a lack of solid numbers on the economics for the cost of these changes.

Davis has many unique advantages already: biweekly farmers market (why a roof top garden/), and many existing bike paths and parks. Let’s build on what we have.

Lastly, all segments of the population deserve consideration.

Ross Fitzgerald

From: Doby Fleeman <doby@outlook.com>

Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2020 3:57 PM

To: herman.boschken@sjsu.edu <herman.boschken@sjsu.edu>; Cheryl Essex <cheryl.essex.davis@gmail.com>; robertsondl@sbcglobal.net <robertsondl@sbcglobal.net>

Subject: Re: Item 07B - AMTRAK Study - Commission Review - January 8th Meeting

Dear Commissioners:

With apologies, I still don't have the complete email distribution list for all Commission members - please feel free to share this email with your fellow members and staff.

I am hoping to make public comment this evening. If not then at least you have a record of my concerns as a local, Downtown property and business owner:

"Commissioners, and Members of the Downtown Plan and Amtrak Stakeholders Advisory Committees,

Short Version:

As a longtime Downtown property and business owner, I'm not clear on the purpose of the current Access and Connection Study. The study appears to focus primarily on existing uses by local Davis residents – when my concerns as a Downtown property owner/developer and employer are focused on transit solutions addressing the dual needs of current and future visitors, residents and employees to the Downtown. Likewise, my concerns very much include enhanced linkage and transit solutions between the station and our primary employer at UC Davis and hopefully new employment centers like Aggie Research Center.

Point being, virtually all of these ridership profiles would involve people living outside the city seeking alternative and less impacted transit solutions for both inbound ridership for out-of-town residents and outbound ridership for Downtown in-town resident dwellers (a class which presently doesn't exist but is supposedly a key goals within the Downtown plan).

When might we expect the accompanying studies and recommendations to begin grappling with these ridership issues and dynamics and a corresponding timetable with clear, prioritized implementation and funding priorities?"

Extended Comments:

If memory serves, it was in 2016 that the Davis Futures Forum first began presentations focusing on the nexus between Downtown rail transit improvements and the resurgence of missing middle housing and redevelopment. Examples included Pleasant Hill Transit Village, Dan Zack's presentation on the redevelopment of Downtown Redwood City, and the role of the SMART rail initiative for Downtown Petaluma.

After this series, I had come to believe there existed an essential linkage between these dual themes of robust, reliable public transit the accompanying redevelopment potential for the surrounding Downtown district.

As the DPAC process has unfolded, I have waited – somewhat impatiently - for a clear synopsis and plan addressing how the committee ranks the importance of an enhanced Davis Station as a cornerstone for the transformation of Davis Downtown. To date I have seen precious little which explicitly attempts to link the future Downtown redevelopment with community re-investment in Davis Station as the multi-modal transit hub serving the Davis and UC Davis community.

Virtually every chapter in the DPAC plan has elements focusing on the twin goals of increasing economic activity, reinvestment and vitality in the Downtown - while simultaneously increasing local pedestrian and bicycle modalities as the dominant form of “Downtown access” while automobile transit is systematically replaced.

What am I missing? How does one simultaneously increase Downtown residence densities, Downtown retail and entertainment driven visitor trips, and Downtown office employment without an explicit and parallel plan to accommodate the accompanying, external transit demand?

As the result, I keep looking for that final list of key recommendations and investment priorities to help make this transition a reality. Where are the drawings, where are the schematics, where is the discussion, and what is the timetable for proposed new transit corridors to whisk ever more visitors to the Downtown, UC Davis and beyond?

Personally, I see Davis Station sitting at the nexus of that solution – but what I don’t yet see is a synchronizing between the plan’s ambitions and the current list of executable priorities in the section titled Implementation.

By the same token, I’m not clear on the purpose of the current Access and Connection Study. The study appears to focus primarily on existing uses by local Davis residents – when my concerns as a Downtown property owner/developer and employer are focused on transit solutions addressing the dual needs of current and future visitors, residents and employees to the Downtown. Likewise, my concerns very much include enhanced linkage and transit solutions between the station and our primary employer at UC Davis and hopefully new employment centers like Aggie Research Center.

Point being, virtually all of these ridership profiles would involve people living outside the city seeking alternative and less impacted transit solutions for both inbound ridership for out-of-town residents and outbound ridership for Downtown in-town resident dwellers (a class which presently doesn’t exist but is supposedly a key goals within the Downtown plan).

When might we expect the accompanying studies and recommendations to begin grappling with these ridership issues and dynamics and a corresponding timetable with clear, prioritized implementation and funding priorities?"

Respectfully,

Doby Fleeman

From: Doby Fleeman <doby@outlook.com>

Sent: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 3:44 PM

To: herman.boschken@sjsu.edu <herman.boschken@sjsu.edu>; Cheryl Essex <cheryl.essex.davis@gmail.com>; robertsondl@sbcglobal.net <robertsondl@sbcglobal.net>

Subject: DPAC Commission Review - December 4th Meeting

Dear Commissioners:

With apologies, I don't have the complete email distribution list for all Commission members.

Cheryl has heard my repeated public comments before the DPAC committee over the past two years.

The thrust of these comments reflect my continuing concerns with the prospects and plans for implementation of the plan as currently written. As a Downtown business owner, property owner, commercial landlord and potential developer, I have questions about what steps are being taken to record and address the legitimate concerns of this group of stakeholders with respect implementation of vital infrastructure improvements necessary to support future transportation, circulation and parking needs as we look to increase the level of economic activity in the Downtown core.

The plan is nothing if not a vision based upon increasing densification of development and uses in the core of the Downtown. If I understand the plan correctly, it envisions significant increase in residential dwelling units, commercial office space to support increasing employment, and increased retail, service, and entertainment businesses catering to increasing volumes of tourism.

Perhaps I have overlooked it somewhere, but the stages outlined in the implementation plan (Chapter 8) really don't seem to include comprehensive discussion of new investments to support alternative new modes of transportation - other than ridehailing, bicycle and pedestrian modes.

Rather the priority implementation recommendations appear to focus more on amenities and placemaking investments - the most significant of which would be Davis Square - a project which would actually remove critical, existing parking supply.

Missing, it appears, are any explicit recommendations associated with:

- 1) Planning/Increasing ridership volume via Amtrak Station
- 2) Planning/Increasing public transit investment - bus and rail - and ridership for existing Downtown employees and "would be" new Downtown residents, visitors and employees.
- 3) Planning/Investment in new Downtown or remote parking supply
- 4) Planning/Investment in new Electric Shuttle Service between new remote lots and Downtown
- 5) Planning/Investment in new, dedicated shuttle service between UCD campus and Downtown Amtrak Station.
- 5) Planning/Investment in new Municipal Downtown Entertain, Music or Community Center

To date, it seems that all we have to go on is what's been drawn and proposed - and none of these elements appear to have been considered either as foundational or critical elements for the successful implementation of this redevelopment vision.

My questions:

- A) Is one possible without the other?
- B) Should the Plan be amended to include more attention to the role and timing of these issues?

Respectfully,

Doby Fleeman

January 13, 2020

Mike Webb & Ashley Feeney
Davis City Council & Davis Planning Commission
Downtown Davis Plan Advisory Committee

Re: Review and Comments Regarding the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to comment on the Downtown Davis Specific Plan and the related Form Based Zoning Document that is being considered for adoption. Clearly, a great deal of work and preparation and community engagement went into the process and creation of this proposed plan. I commend you and the various citizens and nearly 400 people who have made efforts in this planning discussion and for the quality of the draft report. There is much to digest and comment upon in over 400 pages within the two documents. I am submitting my comments to try and encourage streamlining this document and working to create a plan that will attract investment and innovation and a plan which is implementable. I have some “macro observations” as well as some comments on specific elements of the proposed plan.

As you know I participated, as my schedule permitted in a number of the workshops and charettes regarding the downtown planning during the last 3 years. Also, my partner Nahz Anvary and I met with a number of the consultants who worked on parts of the proposed plan to answer their questions and to provide real estate information and opinions.

Davis is my home and it is one of the places where we work as brokers, advisors, and occasionally as a developer and investor in commercial and investment real estate. I love our community and with my partner Nahz we are honored to work with many businesses, landlords, developers, and tenants, both private sector businesses and public institutions. I believe that most would agree that we have very collaborative professional relationships with the city staff as well as commissioners, council members, and members of the various city advisory committees. I have a longstanding appreciation for Davis downtown. I know many of the merchants, I shop and get services from many of them. I do a great deal of business in our downtown and also drink more than my fair share of coffee in our core area.

I believe that our downtown could be so much more and to do that it needs to be invigorated and catalyzed for change! I hoped that the proposed plan could help set that innovation and investment in motion. My “constructive suggestions” are made in an effort to encourage you to edit the plan. They are just my opinion being offered in an attempt to make the plan, simpler, more aspirational, timelier, and more implementable. I hope that you will see my comments as my reasonable and honest assessment of serious flaws in the plan.

Here are my major observations and recommendations:

1. The plan does not properly identify where we want our downtown to evolve to.

2. The plan lacks specific recommendations on what steps should be taken to make it implementable and specifically how to attract investment. What are the critical decisions and resources that would make this plan implementable?
3. The timing horizon of the plan is too long. The majority of this plan is forecast for a time horizon 10-20 years from now. More than 90% of the capital investment is forecast to be made in years 11-20 in the years 2030-2040.
4. It is my strong recommendation that you set up a process to “define success”.
 - a. Ask yourself this tough question. Is this a plan to create a new future in our downtown or is it to “create a pretty document” that is so loaded with various constituents’ wish lists that it is severely diluted as a real plan? I believe that it is more of the latter.
 - b. I would recommend if we as citizens of Davis want a healthy and dynamic downtown in the future that we develop an annual public reporting mechanism which is measurable. A plan that we evaluate annually, and which allows us to measure outcomes and compare results to goals. What are the goals and what was achieved? By doing this we can “celebrate success” while instituting a process for “course correction,” if necessary.
 - c. Set measurable objectives such as “Downtown Davis should see that 100 (or some other number) residential units are constructed in the downtown in the next two years.” Then we will build 100 additional units every 2 years thereafter that for the life of the plan. Clear goals with an easy report card to monitor success. We can change what we measure! Let’s build in a process for a frank annual assessment on what is holding us back from achieving success.
 - d. I am very concerned that the current plan has “given up” on retail development and retail re-development in our downtown. We have prioritized retail in the downtown for more than 50 years and we need to continue to see the downtown as a dynamic center for goods and services. Add to your measurements of success what the downtown vacancy rate is. What are our downtown’s measurable trends related to its health and prosperity? Clearly there will be business closures but are we measuring new business licenses in the downtown, new jobs, taxable sales and reporting that information? Let’s see the trends. Let’s benchmark our downtown investment with the progress in other downtown communities. How many new businesses have opened? Let’s set goals for retail and business formation in our downtown.
 - e. The amount of office forecast in this plan is “ridiculously excessive”. There is no way that the downtown will ever have 300,000 to 500,000 square feet of new offices built on the small parcels and fragmented ownership of our downtown.

Aspirations without implementation is little more than a wish list.

After 3 years of meetings, many excellent studies, a lot of work by the City Staff and hired consultants, including plenty of citizen participation, not to mention the expenditure of

hundreds of thousands of dollars, we need a downtown plan that does not just provide “catchy text” and “pretty graphics”. We need a plan that will not just gather dust on a shelf. We need an actionable vision which puts the Davis downtown on a path towards success and that has made a realistic assessment of what is achievable and what are our barriers to success.

In Chapter 1 of the proposed plan, the stated goal is for the downtown plan to enable Davis to evolve as a “regional center while maintaining its unique identity”.¹ Purportedly, the plan “includes tangible policies, guidelines, development standards, and implementation strategies”. “The Specific Plan has a planning horizon of 20 years, through 2040.”²

This Specific Plan has made important strides to identify often conflicting documents related to planning and redevelopment in our downtown. (Core Area Specific Plan, Davis Downtown and Traditional Residential Neighborhood Design Guidelines, Core Area Infill District, Mixed Use District Zoning, Core Area Combining District, and etc.)³ The goal is to streamline review and approval and establish clear standards through the proposed Specific Plan and through the proposed Form Based Downton Zoning Code.

There remain “Other City Policies”; One Percent Growth Resolution, Phased Allocation Plan, and Affordable Housing Ordinance and Interpretations, that should be considered for streamlining in this Specific Plan and I will return to some ideas regarding those matters later in this response. ⁴

The Core Area Specific Plan, Zoning and Land Use Designation proposes to create numerous new Zoning Districts.⁵ It is also worth noting that The Current Zoning Map as presented in Figure 1.7 on Page 11 and the related Table 1B also on Page 11 indicates that the Geographical Area is 132.7 acres but if you eliminate the 40.6 acres that are Streets and the University Avenue Residential Overlay of 6.5 acres the total acreage for potential Development is = 132.7 – (40.6 + 6.5) = 85.6 Acres. ⁶

The Specific Plan’s Focus and Organization is described as having the following areas of Focus.

- Sustainability as an underlying theme
- Design of the public realm; walkability, safety, & universal access.
- Streets as shared public assets
- Economic development that responds to a community vision
- Form-based approach to development standards. ⁷

There are 10 distinct chapters to the plan

1. Purpose
2. Existing Conditions

¹ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 2

² Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 2

³ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 9 Figure 1.5

⁴ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 8

⁵ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 10

⁶ Math by Gray from Table 1B, page 11

⁷ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Page 12

3. Vision
4. Built Environment
5. Historic Resources
6. Mobility and Parking
7. Infrastructure
8. Implementation
9. Glossary
10. Appendices ⁸

The plan provides a good summary of the City of Davis' regional context ⁹

- Population of 68,986 in 2017
- 6,281 Acres in City Limit
- 15 Miles West of Sacramento
- 50 Miles North-east of San Francisco
- Calendar Year 2017 Davis celebrated its centennial

Here is how the plan describes downtown Davis ¹⁰

- 32 Block Area of approximately 132 acres.
- Houses approximately 2% of the City's population
- Houses about 17% of the City's jobs
- According to the 2015 Census data, only 14 workers live and work in downtown Davis!
- 506 housing units in downtown
- 90% of housing is renter occupied
- 1,083 residents in downtown about 1.3% of Davis planning area population
- 20% of citywide taxable sales in downtown
- 1.2 million square feet of non-residential uses
- 75% of downtown users are from Davis or UC Davis.
- There are 2,482 jobs in downtown; 17% of City of Davis and 6.2% of the Davis planning area jobs.

The context and the setting of the Davis downtown is well described. I believe what is missing from this plan is where we want to go, what we want to improve, and how we intend to encourage and facilitate those changes. We have identified over 100 things on our "wish list for downtown" but we have not identified how to attract investment, new businesses, new housing and innovation and dynamism.

The plan summarizes the following land use changes.

⁸ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Pages 12-13

⁹ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Pages 16-17

¹⁰ Downtown Davis Specific Plan, Pages 18-19

Retail. The downtown core has for fifty years been the first choice for retail in our community. This plan seems to “give up” on retail. This document says the existing should be maintained, with replacement as needed, and limited additions to supply.¹¹

Office. This plan projects 312,000 to 582,000 square feet of new office space.¹² 312,000 square feet is larger than the entire supply at the University Research Park (formerly Interland) and 582,000 is more than the University Research Park and the Buzz Oates Office Buildings along 2nd and Cousteau combined. My hunch is that the office buildings at 5th and G and the McCormick Building at 4th and F which are the most significant office buildings in downtown in the past 25 years combined are less than 70,000 square feet. (5th and G Street was a major redevelopment project, which received significant redevelopment funding and which included a public sector tenant, the USDA, and a major theatre lessee.) In my opinion, there is a very limited market for office in the downtown core – small professional, commercial service and owner user office are more likely. Some office incorporated into mixed use residential will probably be achievable.

Residential. This plan estimates/forecasts in the next 20 years in downtown 86 to 209 units of may be feasible. ¹³ It further indicates that the “Davis Regional Fair Share” through 2040 would be 3,810 units. Come on Davis, we have to do better than this! We are forecasting less than 2-5% of our future housing being added to the core area. What kind of environmentally responsible planning is this?

Here are some suggestions for thought and inclusion into the plan.

Retail

- If we want our downtown core to remain the “retail center” of our community then we can’t give up on it. We need to encourage our retailers and our landlords to continue to evolve. We need to support and encourage retailers so that they evolve and innovate. That includes recognizing changing preferences and attitudes amongst consumers. Shoppers want brands that are socially responsible, socially conscious, and that align with their culture. They also want good selection, competition and fair prices.
- Making e-commerce and shipping faster and easier. What can we do to encourage and facilitate pick-up and delivery as well as the return of goods in our downtown? How can our downtown be better positioned to get competitively priced goods into the hands and homes of Davis residents and shoppers more quickly?
- Encourage and promote “experiential retail”. Consumers don’t just want products they want a more engaging experience. Rethinking bricks and mortar to facilitate “apps”, “pop-ups”, “improved mobile technologies” at the retail locations. 5G and the internet of things will dramatically impact retail and this plan doesn’t adequately focus on the future for retail. The plan doesn’t need to identify what companies or which retailers it

¹¹ Figure 2.6 page 19

¹² Figure 2.6 page 19

¹³ Figure 2.6 page 19

merely needs to set the stage to encourage and promote retail and to link customers to the retail opportunities.

- Moving residents and visitors along the major east west grid between the Amtrak Depot with its thousands of passengers and the University core campus with tens of thousands of students, faculty and staff should receive greater focus and encouragement. The recent effort on Third Street between A and B Street should continue and be seen as just a start to better link downtown with the core campus.
- This plan does not provide sufficient consideration and discussion of demographic impacts of the rapidly growing aging population combined with a growing college student population. We can and must have our downtown plan serve both cohorts.

Office

We need a plan that sets forth realistic goals and objectives about workspace and office development. I believe that the staff and consultants need to realistically assess and forecast both office demand and constraints. The amount of square footage in this plan; let's just take a mid-point of 400,000 square feet and 4 to 6 employees per thousand square feet, that would bring 1600 to 2400 new employees to our downtown. That is equal to "doubling" the total number of employees currently working in all businesses in our downtown. That would be dynamic for sure but the probability of success I believe is between 0-1%. Let's set a goal of 5,000 to 10,000 square feet of office per year for 20 years.

Realistically, what is the "competitive advantage" that would make a user or a developer want to be in our downtown? Does the City of Davis and the Davis Joint Unified School District and other public agencies want to move from their current locations into the downtown—freeing up their sites along Russel Boulevard for redevelopment? That might bring 500 to 700 employees to the downtown. But I predict that isn't going to happen. But something of that magnitude is what is needed to meet 33% of the proposed plan's office goal. Former Congressman Fazio helped bring the USDA to Downtown Davis and the development community had a couple of competitive sites for that proposed use. What do we have in the core area that could provide a 100,000 of office space.? Nothing. Nada. Ain't going to happen.

I believe that there will be continuing demand for office, but on a totally different scale than what is in this plan. We recently were involved as brokers for new leases in the downtown with Mars Wrigley and Engage 3 great new companies in the downtown. Those two leases combined, probably the largest leases in the downtown in the past 20 years, amounted to less than 20,000 square feet combined.

Mixing in office with retail and residential is a very good idea. But the current mix and forecast is unrealistic!

Residential

I don't believe that this plan establishes aspirational goals. If, as a community, we wanted 20%-25% of our future residential supply to be walkable mixed-use urban infill then why don't we describe and prepare a residential plan element that would encourage 750 to 950 units to be

constructed in the downtown? Set that as a goal. Then tie to the plan a vision, with a reduction in administrative burdens and possibly some incentives to make it happen. We can be so much more than a “suburb” as it comes to our housing. This could and should be done.

In short, mixed-use development refers to the layering of compatible land uses, public amenities and utilities together at various scales and intensities. I believe that this plan is an effort to address mixed-use but it doesn’t go far enough. **Mixed-use properties allow people to live, work, play and shop in a concentrated area – usually all within walking distance. We need to dramatically increase the amount of residential in our downtown – by doing that our downtown will thrive and evolve.** It is the preferred environmental alternative. We can do so much better than 100 units in the next 20 years!

I want to commend the City for your visioning process. It was very participatory, it included many workshops, focus groups, design workshops, questionnaires and now this comment period. It probably has gone on for too long and has become the latest effort to express what we want for our community and downtown. Six goals have emerged in this document. ¹⁴

1. A memorable Identity for downtown that celebrates Davis’ unique culture.
2. Compact development that incorporates sustainable practices and infrastructure
3. A feasible, equitable development program that builds resilient economy and increases housing access and choice.
4. A sense of place reinforced with appropriate character, balance historical preservation and thoughtful transitions.
5. An active and inclusive public realm that promotes civic engagement and health
6. A safe, connected, multimodal network that uses innovative mobility and parking solutions

The guiding policies associated with each of these goals are broad, vague and in many cases loaded up with burdens that will make implementation difficult. My recommendation is to review these one by one and evaluate whether they are necessary and help to reduce regulatory burden and aid in implementation? Can and will the City or its downtown businesses or property owners invest in this plan to the extent that will achieve success? If not what can be done in this plan to attract new investment?

I believe that this plan should be thoroughly evaluated and enhanced for action and innovation. Reduce the regulatory conflicts and burdens. Here are a few specific parts of the plan that I want to draw to your attention.

1.7 Establish a sense of arrival into downtown through gateway elements. (Recommend eliminating.) Gateways and walls are so yesterday. Let’s create bridges and dynamism. Let activity and choice define our downtown.

¹⁴ Downtown Specific Plan 3.5 Goals and Guiding Policies pages 31-66

2.6 Provide leadership in sustainability through demonstration projects on City Property. (I encourage enhancing the public realm and noting the valuable attributes of our downtown and community ... but we don't need to spend public money on demonstration projects.)

Page 57. Last paragraph, before guiding policies, I recommend eliminating “...(T)he specific Plan recommends a strategy of requiring new development to comply with citywide development requirements to provide below-market rate units, as well as incentivizing the private sector to provide housing units that are affordable by design.” (This is an economic burden and it will thwart most if not all efforts at developing housing in the downtown. Let's add to the supply! Because they are downtown the housing is likely to be smaller and more affordable by design. Consider exempting from inclusionary affordable housing requirements any project with fewer than 100 residential units?)

3.9 Eliminate the requirement for any parking to be constructed with residential units in the downtown. Let market forces dictate parking. Make the downtown more walkable and less dependent on a car. Adding parking requirements will make the housing less affordable and more expensive.

3.10 Eliminate inclusionary housing requirements for all projects with fewer than 100 units.

Goal 4. One major aspect of the plan that I encourage re-consideration of is dividing the downtown and related planning guidelines into 6 distinct districts. (This is very similar to our current myriad of conflicting documents that govern and thwart innovation in the downtown.) This adds an unnecessary level of complexity. Streamline and simplify the zoning rules for the entire downtown. I believe that our downtown is small and compact. Reduce the planning complexity. What is the logic of different rules for “G Street, Heart of Downtown, South-west Downtown, Northwest Downtown and North G Street? (I am not recommending this for Old East Davis Neighborhood or for University Rice Lane Neighborhood). Do you really need height, set back, density, differences by neighborhood district within the downtown? In my opinion that this is unnecessary micro management of the plan.

4.3 Enhance and protect existing historic and cultural landmarks and resources. More on this and recommendations for clarity in this regard in later comments.

4.3 Map on Page 74. The regulating plan for downtown that labels in “minute detail”; “Corner Element Required” and “Shopfront Frontage Required” seems prescriptive and unlikely to receive architectural innovation and stymie investment. What is the compelling reason to layer on these requirements?

5.1 Establish a new public space and center for downtown. That is centrally located and programmatically different than Central Park. (My recommendation is to invest in the public realm but not necessarily as described and illustrated in the document with a new “interactive water feature” or a “different version of the E Street Plaza” but instead make public investment near or at the Farmer's market, and additional investment into the Bicycle Hall of Fame Facility, Hattie Webber, and along Third Street. Spending public funds to activate the connection and

leverage the Amtrak Depot would be a much better use of public money. Also spending public and private funds to better link Davis Commons and the UCD Arboretum to downtown would be a much better use of public dollars I believe.

Pages 106 & 107 related to University Avenue and Rice Lane. Apparently, a decision is being made to not allow change in this area of the downtown plan. In my opinion this is a big mistake. At a minimum the plan should encourage and consider additional and creative residential housing. There are a number of older, almost substandard apartments, and “boarding houses” that would be great sites for densification close to the campus. The recent public infrastructure improvements on Third Street between A and B Streets should also be leveraged to allow additional retail and office uses along Third Street I believe.

Page 115. Historic Preservation, I would encourage you to strike “Employ upper story step-backs for new construction two or more stories taller than adjacent resources.” This is the kind of language that will lead to uncertainty, confusion and future battles. If the Council believes that this is a needed requirement then pin-point where it is applicable and color code those sites where this rule would apply.

Page 123. Designating or consideration of designating the Hibbert Lumber Yard as a Historic Resources is a major blow to the potential development of significant residential or large-scale mixed-use office in the downtown...This should be quick evaluated and determined and hopefully not imposed.

Page 130 Conservation Overlay District ... In my opinion it is a mistake to add the Conservation Overlay District Requirement to the entire downtown. This will add to the burden, including uncertainty and cost. My recommendation is to identify in the plan the historic resources that are significant and which need to be preserved. Eliminate the district designation and the need for historic review on the balance of the plan.

Page 131 item #2. Please delete the following reference. “Discourage demolition of structures” Frequently, demolition is a necessary element of redevelopment and construction.

Page 169. Parking and Wayfinding. I believe that you are almost signaling a “public taking” of private property “by reserving additional public parking” at the Hibbert Lumber site. This is a large significant parcel for potential mixed -use development and it should not be encumbered with a public parking requirement. In the alternative the Plan should declare it a public realm site and the City should negotiate to acquire the site or take it by condemnation.

8.1 Phasing Strategy.

This is one of my major objections of this proposed plan. This plan envisions a 20 year-time horizon – Phase 1 from 2020 -2030 and Phase 2 is 2030-2040. This plan envisions the majority of the activity to occur in the Second Phase. Of a total Capital Investment in the 20 years equal to \$59,520,000, less than 10% of the investment, \$5,090,000 is planned in the first decade of the plan. If we are measuring our commitment to this plan --- it is a plan focused upon very slow implantation and almost no change or activity for the first 10 years.

I believe that if we want to encourage change in our downtown, we should identify critical variables for early success, maybe including some incentives for success, and accelerate the time horizons. What is the incentive for new private sector investment in our downtown if the plan does not show results for 20 years and 90% of the results are 10-20 years out?

8.4 Implementation Actions for the Specific Plan. This plan and these purported actions do not identify anywhere how to attract private sector development in our downtown. The matrix on pages 211 through 224 fail to create a “call for action, for investment, for public-private partnerships.”. You combine this failure to identify why someone would want to invest in our downtown and weigh the public expenditures so that 90% of the funds are in 2030 and beyond, and this is going to be a document that sits on a shelf, gathers dust and becomes stale.

By my count there are 136 action items identified in the Implementation section of the plan. Not a single one identifies encouraging or attracting investment. Or how to go about and stimulate investment and innovation. This plan is full of calls for sustainability, for demonstration projects, creating public and private recreation spots, and etc. Mostly worthy goals. But if you don’t get new investment or encourage existing owners to re-invest in their properties, homes or businesses downtown then our downtown will be what it is now, and slowly decline from lack of investment, and we will miss a great opportunity.

Also, this plan purports to simplify and streamline – but in most regards it is substituting one new form-based code and multiple new downtown neighborhood requirements for the myriad of conflicting documents that have contributed to our paltry investment in the downtown for the last 20 years.

In summary, I believe that we can and should do better than this. I hope that my comments and observations will be received in the spirit with which they have been given, to make our great town an even better place to live, work, play and shop.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jim Gray', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jim Gray
237 Guaymas Place
Davis, CA 95616
imgray95616@gmail.com

Good evening Committee Members. My name is Steve Greenfield, I am a local business owner and 30-year resident of Davis. Tonight, I am speaking on behalf of over 30 local investors as one of the Managing Members of the 2/3 acre Trackside Center property located on the north side of 3rd Street between the RR tracks and the alleyway on the east edge of the Downtown Plan boundary.

I am NOT here to discuss the merits of ongoing litigation initiated by the Old East Davis Neighborhood Association (OEDNA) against the City and Trackside Center against the December 2017 approvals for a Planned Development to build a 4-story, mixed-use building which would add 27 residences, 9k SF Class A commercial space to the Downtown. The outcome of this litigation likely won't be known until 2021 or later.

I am here for two reasons tonight: a request for contingency zoning for our property and general comments on the dangers of downzoning.

Firstly, per our letter of September 25, 2019, we request that contingency zoning for our property be included in the Draft Plan for the City Council to act upon.

Why? Imagine a scenario in which the current litigation results in overturning our City Council-approved project AND the Downtown Plan does not place an underlying land use/zoning upon our property. The parcel would thus be left without any zoning designation or design guidelines, in essence, in limbo until a NEW property-specific zoning or Planned Development is brought forth.

This scenario is the antithesis of the City Council's stated goal for this committee: "clarification of development policies and codes in the Core Area" and is also at odds with the commonly shared belief that we shouldn't "plan by exception".

We are aware of the complicated proceedings that this Committee has wrestled with in regards to the eastern boundary of the Plan. We are very concerned that after residents of Old East Davis continued to monopolize the conversation at these hearings, the Committee downsized the consultant recommended eastern boundary parcels from 4-story to 3-story as a QUOTE "peace offering so we can move on" END QUOTE.

We can not support the practice of planning to the tune of the squeakiest wheel because all too often that means the lowest common denominator NOT the highest community benefit.

However, in recognition of the difficult task you've been assigned and the many passionate yet disparate perspectives you've heard, we'd like to offer a suggestion: include in the Draft Plan four different options for a contingency/underlying zoning for the Trackside Parcel:

1. Main Street Medium – up to 4 stories
2. Neighborhood Medium – up to 4 stories
3. Neighborhood Medium – 3 stories max.
4. Opticos Plan as presented at May 2, 2019 DPAC Meeting, up to 4 stories with a significant 4th floor stepback.

If these contingent zoning options are provided in the draft plan moving forward, then you'll be giving the entire community the opportunity to voice their opinions in the Public Comment segment of this process AND you'll give the City Council options which represent the full diversity of opinion to act upon.

We do NOT support simply suggesting that our parcel be given the same zoning as the parcels to the north of us, Neighborhood Medium – 3 Stories Max (Option 3 that I just stated). In fact, we don't support that designation for any of the properties on the eastern boundary of the plan.

This brings me to my second point: downzoning is a dangerous precedent and harmful to the vitality of our community.

When we first embarked on the Trackside Center redesign in 2015 through discussions with the OEDNA, the president of the association told us multiple times that when someone purchases a property with the intent for redevelopment that the property comes with a "contract" and that the contract should be honored and followed. They went on to say, "if you can't make it work within the boundaries of the contract then you shouldn't have bought the property." I would venture to say that there is some wisdom in those remarks, but we'll have to agree to disagree on whether or not our currently approved plan honors the current contract.

Now we are in the midst of creating a new contract, namely this Davis Downtown Specific Plan Update. Yet the Neighborhood Medium – 3 Stories Max designation isn't an update at all for these properties. By adopting the 3 Story designation, with its limiting form-based designs, this City would be downzoning these properties to a less intense use than envisioned 20-40 years ago. We would be doing so in the face of a statewide housing crisis, global climate change, and a community that has consistently wanted to grow via infill, therein resisting sprawl. We would be doing so ignoring advice from the project's economic consultant who expressed concern about the financial feasibility of a building height limited to 3 stories. Considering the new setbacks and stepback requirements, we would actually be "down-zoning" properties to less buildable square-footage than currently allowed, at arguably the most prime transit-oriented locations in the Downtown.

Contracts are meant to be agreed upon by affected parties, yet instead this plan rolls over to the insistent demands of individuals who don't own the properties in question. The committee is embarking on a recommendation without agreement from the underlying property owners. We don't agree with this contract. We have studied the numbers for 5 years, both coming out of the recession and now in full economic recovery. It just doesn't work. If our property is recommended for Neighborhood Medium – 3 Story contingent zoning, I can tell you, we just won't build it unless there is something akin to funding from something like the now defunct Redevelopment Agency funding or some other type of subsidy.

However, recognizing that you're in a difficult position, if you move forward with our suggestion to include the 4 options I previously mentioned, then you'll be allowing for a fair discussion at City Council.

So, in closing, I request and urge you to take up the discussion of what happens to one of the prime transit-oriented locations in the Downtown in the unlikely event that the California Appellate Court does not uphold the City Council's land use decision on our property.

Additionally, please give the City Council the options to create a feasible plan for the folks who are actually going to build the projects.

A true community-based plan includes input from those that "do", not just those with opinions.

By Hibbert family members

Jane H. Hadley

Becky Hibbert

Property owners of downtown property.

Dear Eric,

We thank you for all the effort and late nights that have gone into developing the Draft Plan. Thank you for your patience and professionalism. As we have followed this process we have learned that city planning and development is complex, but very interesting.

We are property owners in the neighborhood of North G Street. We, along with our sister, own lots 1-8 and lot 15 (506 G Street) and lot 16 (500 G Street). We recognize the potential of this property and the importance of this specific plan.

1. Economic feasibility. The economic feasibility is a major factor and needs to be emphasized and addressed in its entirety.

2. Form based code. The draft plan has designated this block as Main Street Medium, allowing 4 stories. We strongly agree with this designation. Our two lots facing G Street are a great location for street level shops. Upper stories would be ideal for housing. Senior housing in this area would be desired as it is close to downtown activities yet also close to a traditional neighborhood. The G Street corridor would be enhanced by a design that makes use of open-air, street level eateries, artisan bakery cafe, tea and coffee shop and other gathering places. Outdoor seating integrated into shopfronts or terraces could help with the transition between neighborhood buildings and main street buildings.

In the Main Street Medium form the Opticos Plan dictates a minimum “set back” of 0 feet and a maximum “set back” of 10 feet. We think a project should be allowed to increase this to 15 feet if desired.

Step backs of upper stories should also be allowed to create a pleasant street environment. On page 145, figure 6.14 the diagram illustrates the sidewalks as 15'. This detail is important as a 15' sidewalk creates some open space that helps to soften the space between street and the building in the Main Street Medium.

Lots 1-8 are on the “back side” of the block, adjacent to the railroad tracts. These lots have tremendous housing potential, and we think the Main Street Medium, allowing 4 stories is suitable and may have economic feasibility.

3. Parking. If we are interpreting the Opticos Plan correctly, the allowed amount of parking is .75 of a parking space for studio or one bedroom housing units. A two bedroom housing unit

allows 1 parking space. It would be better to allow 1 parking space for studio or one bedroom units.

4. Historic Resources. Our building that housed our hardware store at 500 G Street has possibly been selected as a potential merit resource. We strongly suggest that this corner location could be better utilized.

5. Proposed Capital Infrastructure Improvement Plan. This plan does not offer enough improvements for the North G Street area, from 5th to 8th. This area has immediate potential for housing and innovative establishments. City improvements or city incentives in this area would jump-start investment.

Sincerely,
Jane H. Hadley
Becky Hibbert

From: AHirsch <ahirsch@neighborhoodselect.org>

Sent: Wednesday, November 20, 2019 5:52 PM

To: Tree Commission <TreeCommission@cityofdavis.org>

Cc: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>; Lucas Frerichs <lucasf@cityofdavis.org>; 'Anya McCann' <anya.m.mccann@gmail.com>; Erin Donley Marineau <erin@treedavis.org>; Larry Guenther <Larrydguenther@gmail.com>; Natural Resources Commission <NRC@cityofdavis.org>; Ashley Feeney <AFeeney@cityofdavis.org>; 'Chris Granger' <cgranger@cooldavis.org>; 'Greg McPherson' <egmcperson@gmail.com>

Subject: Davis Downtown Plan has a Tree Gap in it.

To Davis Tree Commission & other random Loraxes:

I went to the “training” on how to use the new Form Based code for the Downtown Plan.

It’s a GREAT step forward to get more investment in downtown...and part a vision for improvements there.

I don’t want my comments below to diminish from the great effort it shows and the general direction it takes us.

The idea of this new type of “form Based Code is the city and public spec results up front...and this avoid micro-management of details when specific plan comes forward. i.e. city planners and esp. our city arborist does not get to 2nd guess landscape designers on details of what trees, where and how they are planted after the fact. It removed Political Risk for developer, cutting their costs and encourage investment.

But, the Devils in the Details, i.e. if we want good stuff in our downtown, it’s gotta be written into the form based code NOW.

I am concern as Trees seem to be neglected. Not just in content of plan, but in the staff mindset as to their importance.

(not surprising as architects, planners and consultant mostly focus on buildings, not the “accessory” items like Trees they assume just happen.)

Tree are almost invisible to most folks...until you notice their shade, crown height and foliage density are more significant in the look and feel of our downtown streetscapes than the 2 or 4 story building behind them, or the sign in the window the plan so carefully defines!

IN TODAY’S MEETING, when I first asked about Trees, I was told there was no stuff on Tree in the code (by both consultant and then Ashley Feeney...).

I was told in the coming “Street standard document” for downtown.....or will be covered in the new Tree Ordinance that is yet to be OK’ed

BUT....after looking at document for 1 hour, I discovered that is not right. In table 40.14.050 D it in effect specifies 24” box tree 6-8 ft tall...but ignores any watering/care/or structural soil spec, and also seems to override Tree Tech manual that will be part of a new “system” with the new tree ordinance. And design for parking lot tree planters seem inadequate, And of course enforcement of tree maintenance requirement or any accountability if the trees are neglected.

I was concerned the consultant said “this is the first I heard of tree concerns”. I know I made comment on Trees in early public process, over 18 months ago. I admit, I have not been following it. Maybe other more junior consultants hear the concern and city staff also did not seem to hear or remember.

I was also told that trees in public sidewalk space in front of building would be address in new “Street Standard” a separate document which will be part of implementation of this code. But unless developer is required to upgrading the public tree planters in front of their new building in the code, it won’t happen. I suggest a developer who put in a new building should be required to put in new sidewalks with structural/ suspended soil as well as new trees as appropriate. (Maybe this is a “springing” requirement once the existing mature tree dies). Tree are as an important a part of the façade of the building as signs, and other minutiae that the code specifies.

I Urge the Tree Commission

- 1) To make robust comments about both incorrect spec for Tree Planting, lack of sufficient trees planning requirements in courtyard and setback, and omission of building responsibility to upgrade public trees to stand of the art standards in the proposed Downtown code.
- 2) And make a strong statement the Tree Commission want to get a full briefing on the Street Standards where trees for downtown will be covered too.
- 3) Ask for clear articulation how all these new reg and plans will work together so things don’t fall thought the cracks and become “deregulated”. i.e. how a new Urban Forestry Plan, Tree Ordinance, Street Standards document, yet to be written Tree Technical manual, work together. Work together. This should be explicitly documented in a staff memo. It should be reviewed by both Tree (and NRC) Commission AND then sent to City Council when the Tree Ordinance is presented to them so the big picture is clear.

Again I want to emphasis the new form based code is a great thing. but lets spend the details right for the trees. This is a once in a generation opportunity.
(and might actually make Rob Cain’s life easier).

I hope this is helpful.

Alan Hirsch
Part Time Lorax

From: Paul Jacobs <psjacobs@pacbell.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2019 4:05 PM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Opticos presentation

Will Opticos and the various subcontractors leave behind a list of steps the city should take to encourage the kind of development that is outlined in the plan?

(For example, will there be a listing of what the city can do to fund its share of needed infrastructure?)

Are there incentives that the city can put in place to prime the pump and get redevelopment started?

Will the various scenarios be reexamined with additional input from local developers to determine whether more of these are in fact feasible given existing market conditions?

(Strikes me that real-time feasibility studies could become the basis for encouraging redevelopment).

Will increased density increase crime and require additional policing?

What happens to the planning for increased downtown housing if the public rejects implementation of paid parking in the city core?

Paul Jacobs
Finance and Budget Commission

Sunday, January 12, 2020

To: Eric Lee, planner, and DPAC

Re: Comments on the draft Downtown Plan

Dear Eric and committee members: Please receive the following comments on the draft plan.

1.) My history in this place.

We were living on E Street in Old North Davis from 1982-1985, when our family of 4 outgrew our small duplex. We made the trek across the railroad tracks to Old East Davis in 1986. We set roots in a lovely Queen Anne Cottage built around 1900 where we raised our 2 children Daniel and Sarah Kate. Our home in Old East Davis is located just across the alley from the Core Transition East.

Our family quickly became immersed in the neighborhood environment; walking, biking, visiting with friends, and enjoying potlucks at different neighbors homes and yards. Living a block from downtown, we visited Central Park and the Farmer's Market regularly, shopped at the Davis Food Co-op, dined in the downtown restaurants and engaged in the local art, music and sport venues.

My husband Stephen and I have been able to create a thriving household and artist studio in this nurturing and supportive community. We are both artists and we have taught art classes in our studio and continue to draw, paint and sculpt our own art works in this creative environment.

Sounds great, however we faced many challenges in the neighborhood over the years.

2.) What were the issues that we faced in the 80's and 90's?

In the late 1980s the city council made plans to redevelop our neighborhood into a business district, complete with retail and restaurants. The plans were drawn out and ready to present at a city council meeting without the community being informed or consulted. The Old East Davis Neighborhood Association (OEDNA) was formed and responded with over 200 residents in attendance, we spoke out boldly against this threat to our homes and neighborhoods. The city council backed down on its proposal that night, and the Davis Enterprise featured a front page article.

In the early 1990s: No place to park! There was diagonal parking on I Street and students, shoppers and employees parked on the streets with no restrictions 24/7. A group of neighbors worked with the City of Davis to establish a parking district and parking permits for residents. The Davis Police Department then regulated the parking.

3.) What issues are we confronted with now?

In June, 2015: Trackside Center proposed to develop a 6 story building on a parcel in the Core Transition East across the alley from single-story homes. We learned of the proposal for the first time by reading a front-page article in the Davis Enterprise. The neighborhood had not been consulted as the proposal was coming together.

4.) What are the vital components of a healthy community?

A sense of community: the elements of spirit, character and pride, along with the processes of communication, inter-group relations, and networking are in place and in practice in our neighborhood. Our community is made up of different people with different interests, experiences, cultures and backgrounds. There are varied perspectives and ideas within the community that are shared and respected as we work together to solve issues that we are faced with. As families, neighbors and friends, we feel like we belong and that we are safe.

The members of our community hold a common vision for the future; we respect and celebrate our heritage, diversity, and resources. With all of these vital components established, there is an atmosphere filled with unity, harmony and friendship.

Natural resources and historical assets of our community contribute significantly to the quality of life for residents and play an integral part in defining community character. With our tree lined streets we enjoy walking and biking in our shaded urban forest, which provides beauty, clean air, and daily opportunities to relate to our neighbors. The historic homes and buildings enhance the neighborhood's personality and contribute to the everyday pleasures of community life. As a successful community we recognize the importance of these assets and continue to take appropriate measures to assure their continuance.

Informed Citizen Participation is crucial and the residents of OED actively participate by serving on local boards, attending public hearings, and being involved in civic organizations and community activities. Shared problem solving and planning for the future as a community have increased our local pride and commitment to each other.

The Old East Davis Neighborhood is a healthy community. We have a sense of place.

5.) What needs to be done to ensure that these vital components are recognized, supported and protected, now and in the future?

Efficient and Responsive Community Leadership: Community leadership must be honest, fair and accountable. The city council should have the ability to bring the community together to

participate in open, neutral dialogue on important issues. Leaders should be representative of their community and be able to envision an economically secure, environmentally sound and socially viable future. Leaders should understand the challenges facing the community and be able to take advantage of opportunities within the community and in cooperation with neighboring communities. Leadership should empower community members to take an active role in resolving community issues.

Effective Management of Growth and Development: Prudent local zoning, districting and planning regulations must guide how land is divided, used, and developed. These tools allow the community to participate in the regulation of the development of residential areas, commercial districts, and the downtown. These are key considerations in managing growth while maintaining community character. Transition zones from one story homes to the downtown must provide a gradual increase to the center of downtown. Another important factor in the development of a healthy community is the diversity of the housing. This encompasses availability, affordability, and location, all of which affect the lives of community members, especially the elderly, disabled, and low-income families.

6.) Feedback and comments about the draft Downtown Plan.

The draft plan does not include benchmarks that measure whether or not the plan's historic preservation policies are being carried out by the City.

Transition zones between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods are acknowledged in the draft plan, but our recent experiences suggest that the features of transition zones-- a gradual step-up from single-story homes, and architecture that looks like it "belongs" in the neighborhood-- are not taken seriously, and in fact are dismissed, by the City.

The draft plan intends for the largest and tallest buildings to be in the center, with smaller, two-to-three-story buildings surrounding the downtown. However, the draft plan does not give a practical road-map for how this will be accomplished.

7.) How will the Old East Davis Neighborhood be affected by the draft Downtown Plan?

Our urban landscape has a profound effect on the *human spirit*, influencing our *well-being* and *health* as well as our physical and economic activity.

I respectfully request that the Downtown Plan acknowledge, support and include active measures to preserve and enhance the *character* and *spirit* of the neighborhoods that surround the downtown and exist today.

Sincerely, Mary Kaltenbach, 327 I Street, Davis CA 95616.

Dear Eric Lee and the members of DPAC,

I have been a resident of Davis for over 44 years. I arrived here in 1963 to attend UC Davis and received my MFA in 1967.

In 1982, my wife Mary and I lived in Old North Davis with our two young children until we outgrew our small duplex.

In 1986 we moved to 327 I Street in the Old East Davis neighborhood and have stayed in this place we call home for many reasons: a great place to raise our children, beautiful tree-lined streets, historic homes, access to parks, schools, downtown, the arboretum and UCD.

And now in 2020, we begin the year with the draft Downtown Plan in place. Many issues involve the surrounding neighborhoods of Old North, University/Rice and Old East. My focus is on the Transition Zones that are critical to preserving these neighborhoods. These transition zones are part of the General Plan, Core Area Specific Plan and the draft plan and need to be respected.

Without the transition zones in place in Old East Davis, the proposed Trackside building of 4 stories would be a huge wall along the alley with increased traffic, parking, privacy and safety concerns. The integrity to the existing neighborhoods would be adversely affected.

As an artist, the visual beauty of the trees, wildlife, skies and historic buildings create an environment of inspiration. Our neighborhood is friendly, engaging and active. We are thriving!

Please respect the transition zones!

Sincerely,

Stephen Kaltenbach

From: Mick Klasson <klassonm@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 4:47 PM
To: DowntownPlan <downtownplan@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Comments on Draft Downtown Specific Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Downtown Specific Plan. Here are my comments:

Page 2 – Figure 1.1 – downtown as shown in the map can be described better than as “in the southeast corner of Davis.”

Page 7 – Historical Resources Management: this paragraph is unclear as to whether Article 40.23 is being changed or not. It should not mix the discussion of Article 40.23 with the reference to edits to Chapter 40 (Zoning). If Article 40.23 is being edited, that should be clearly stated, the edited version should be included in the zoning document, and Table 1A should note that Article 40.23 is amended.

Page 9 – Figure 1.5 does not match the documents discussed in the preceding text or in Table 1A. For example, the Core Area Strategy Report and Action Plan is identified in the figure as guiding policy. What happens to it now is not specified.

Page 11 – the legend for Figure 1.7 shows a purple layer for the B Street Transitional District. Where it appears on the map, there is also a diagonal cross-hatch. The cross-hatch should be eliminated or shown in the legend as well.

Page 16 – the Sacramento International Airport is northeast of Davis, not northwest.

Page 23 – Figure 2.11 the scale is so small and the colors so similar that this figure is hard to read, coupled with a different line scale in the legend than in the figure itself. Where First and F streets meet, there are apparently different types of bike networks joining. If F Street is Class II, the line should match that in the legend (i.e. dots instead of rectangles). This holds for all the Class II lines. Likewise, if First Street is Class III, the line style in the legend should match it and all other Class III lines on the map.

Page 23 – Figure 2.12 the term “pedestrian paseo” is undefined. The “pedestrian path” parallel to the railroad and between it and G Street between 4th and 3rd streets is regularly used by vehicles and should be shown as an alley rather than as a pedestrian path. The continuation of this south of 3rd Street I believe is fenced so you cannot walk through it and connect to another destination. If there is an intent to improve these for pedestrian use in the plan that is great, but we should not give them credit they don’t deserve. That applies to any other similar situations that may be shown on the map. On the bottom of this map, the arrow “To West Park” might be more clear to residents if it said “To South Davis”.

Page 25 – #20 is the Davis “Food” Co-op. #22 should indicate that the route “connects Downtown to UC Davis and to South Davis”.

Page 27 – Issue 1: if 9,000 workers commute into Davis and 20,000 leave, I suspect this indicates more that there are insufficient well-paying jobs rather than insufficient jobs generally. This could be more readily fixed with office space than with retail, although office space will drive some retail demand as the report indicates.

Page 27 – Issue 2: recent store closures have occurred because a new landowner purchased many lots downtown and increased rents to capitalize on the values of downtown. This does not support the statements about lack of investment.

Page 28 – Issue 3: if this plan and form-based zoning code solves this problem, it will be a tremendous accomplishment.

Page 29 – Issue 5: the demand side of the housing problem leading to high cost is that Davis is a great place to live, where it is easy to get around by biking and walking and where schools are good. Meeting housing demand in downtown helps avoid sprawl that reduces bike- and walk-ability. To the extent that new housing is low-cost and appeals to the students who might also occupy retail jobs, its impacts on vehicular traffic will be reduced and it will thus be less likely to imperil the appeal of downtown.

Page 40 – creating a separate process and Sustainability Implementation Plan for Downtown creates a risk of backsliding on this plan's progress for Issue 3 on page 28.

Page 74 – Figure 4.13: Please use a different symbol (bigger, brighter/more contrasting) for the “Approximate location of Required Bicycle Connection”. As near as I can tell, there's only one, and it is at the southernmost point in the plan area, but it took me a while to find it and I can't be sure there aren't more that I have missed. Also, the land use designation nomenclature is confusing. For Neighborhood-Medium, when the number of stories is specified, it means fewer stories are allowed than when the stories are not specified. For Main Street-Medium and Main Street-Large it's the opposite.

Page 103 – are private vehicles allowed, encouraged, or discouraged on shared streets? If discouraged, how?

Chapter 6.3 – The plan does not articulate the rationale for different street treatments that are applied in different areas (Figures 6.10-6.14) but should. In particular, the raised cycle track along F Street seems like it may increase bike/pedestrian conflicts. This area is designated as a bike and pedestrian priority zone, but in my experience gets much more pedestrian than bike use south of 3rd street. It is also a transit route (Unitrans route E) north of 3rd. The combination of buses unloading and loading and frequent pedestrian use may result in general disregard or lack of awareness of bike traffic in a lane that is at the grade of the sidewalk.

Page 151 – Third Street is a good bicycle thoroughfare now, and presumably will be more so as a shared street. If the street is then to be periodically closed for events, there should be some thought put into where it will be closed and how through bicycle traffic will be diverted. Street treatments are not shown for the closest parallel streets (2nd and 4th)

Page 151 Grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings – new grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings are very big news and should not be buried here without being illustrated. In particular, the introduction to this section on page 150 describes these bulleted items as “Proposed Improvements/as shown in Figure 6.22” and they are not shown in that figure. They also may span outside the plan area boundary. The crossing of Richards in particular is hard to place without map. In addition to being shown on Figure 6.22, these improvements should be shown in Figure 4.13 (as “Approximate Location of Required Bicycle Connection”) and Figures 6.9 and 6.25.

Page 151 Reconfiguration of certain intersections – this description gives no hint as to what is actually to be done or even what the goal is, so there will be no way to determine if the plan is being implemented or not or to measure its success.

Page 154 -- Figure 6.25 – A specific problem for cyclists now is on northbound G Street at Russell Blvd. Upon crossing Russell, the road narrows and curbside parking forces the cyclist to move left towards northbound cars whose lane centerline also shifts to the left but who may not have the awareness to adjust in concert with the cyclists. The treatment for this intersection and the Class II lane on G north of Russell should be addressed.

Page 156 Construction of grade-separated bicycle and pedestrian crossings – this description does not quite match that on page 151, and increases the need for a map.

Page 156 – The header “Striping of Class II bike lanes on A Street” discusses streets other than A Street. Suggest eliminating the bolding of “on A Street”. In addition, terms like “Central Davis” and “Plan Area” in

the descriptions of street segments are too vague to place the actual areas being described. These terms may be used with the same problem elsewhere in the plan.

Page 157 – Driveways – the term “bicycle enhancement thoroughfares” is not used in Figure 6.25. Suggest saying “bicycle network” instead.

Page 157 -- Bicycle Parking – a portion of bike parking spaces should be designed with long bikes (cargo bikes, trailers, kid tandems, full tandems) in mind. Perhaps signage should be developed indicating these spaces are to be left for long bikes unless all other spaces are full.

Page 157 – On-street Vehicle Parking – perhaps eliminating front-in angled parking is important, but perhaps back-in angled parking would be suitable in some places.

Page 158 – Figure 6.30 – At the southwest corner of the plan area, the Transit Priority Corridor is shown exiting west on Peter J. Shields Ave. Currently, Unitrans buses enter and leave the plan area on Old Davis Road by way of Hutchison Drive. If this is mismarked, it should be corrected; if Unitrans is changing its routing to Shields Ave, that should be described.

Page 159 – the term “queue jump” appears several times on this page. It should be defined. One of the obstacles to better transit service downtown is that the hub of the Unitrans service is at UC Davis. Although this is appropriate for the high bus demand for UC Davis, it means that getting to downtown from most bus routes requires a transfer and a wait on campus or walking the last quarter- to half- mile or more.

Page 165 – Curb Parking that is Well-Used but Readily Available – it seems remiss not to acknowledge the citizen’s petition to mandate free public parking for private business (recently failed, but with a vow to resurrect). Such an ordinance would hamstring the City’s attempts to make a better, safer multi-modal traffic network serving downtown.

Page 218 – Resolve actions 2B and 2E. On page 164 it states that new parking structure spaces cost \$50,000 or more. At \$25/day, that would require full occupancy of every space for six years to pay off construction of a structure, even not counting O&M costs. Perhaps 2B should state the O&M costs should be self-supporting.

Page 170 - Free Transit for Employees and Residents – this is great provided that for residents it is restricted to free local transit (i.e. Unitrans). If free regional transit (Yolobus and Capitol Corridor) were provided to residents it would encourage people to live in Davis and work in Sacramento or elsewhere, which would exacerbate the problems Davis already has with high rent, insufficient affordable housing, and so on. I’m not aware of any downside to free local or regional transit for employees.

Page 219 – 3G – Free transit passes should be local-only (Unitrans) for residents.

Thank you, again, for this opportunity to comment.

Mick Klasson

My name is Rodney Krueger. I live at the Historic Montgomery House located downtown at 923 3rd St. It is located at the intersection at 3rd and I St. and is also the first houses passed when leaving downtown and heading into the Old East Davis Neighborhood. I have resided at this home for over a decade and although I have lived in many great neighborhoods in cities such as Madison, Wisconsin, Bozeman, Montana, and San Diego, none of these places has had the rich quality of life that this neighborhood in Davis has offered.

The reasons for the quality of life are many. Currently the Old East Davis Neighborhood is one of the most walkable, friendly, safe, and clean areas in the city of Davis. Its sense of community has been established and has been thriving for decades, well before I arrived. It was this immediate sense of belonging to the community that drew me to this place and has kept me here. From my porch facing south I can enjoy watching the sun set and feeling the breeze coming in from the west. The physical and mental benefits that this kind of clean, safe, and walkable neighborhood brings is without compare and is irreplaceable.

The current plans to build a 4 story monolith at the Trackside site not only goes against City Zoning, but against the wishes of the neighborhood, and against common sense and decency. This plan will disrupt the integrity of a naturally functioning neighborhood in which Davis citizens are energetically involved with each other and the Davis community as a whole. It is an invasive plan that will ruin the community cohesion, livability, and historic nature of the community by introducing more traffic onto 3rd street and especially from the plan to turn the alley into a street that could move a potential 700 cars per day or more.

In addition to the safety and additional pollution of more cars and more parking, the look and feel of the neighborhood will be irreparably harmed by having a solid, 4 story wall with no set backs rising from alley. Cities great and small (from New York City to Ann Arbor) have setback requirements for a reason; it provides residents of these neighborhoods much needed relief from the shadows of tall structures. These zoning requirements allow air flow, sunlight, and sight lines to be maintained at levels that can be enjoyed by residents. Without these zoning rules, buildings can and will be built that will impede all of these important visual qualities of a neighborhood. The ability for residents to enjoy a sunset should not be underestimated!

Finally, such a large building next to a row of single story family homes will introduce huge privacy concerns, as windows on the East facing wall of the building will look directly into the backyards of every home along the alley. Combined with the additional noise and pollution from the extra traffic and we are talking about a serious diminishing of quality of life for all residents and visitors to the Old East Davis Neighborhood.

In closing, the Transition Zones established need to be respected as well as the legitimate concerns of those who have decided to make the Old East Davis Neighborhood their home for decades. If this neighborhood is to continue thriving for the next century, the Trackside project needs to be reigned in. Thank you for your time.

----- Original message -----

From: William Lowry <rednoodler@mac.com>

Date: 10/18/19 6:10 PM (GMT-08:00)

To: Ike Njoku <injoku@cityofdavis.org>

Cc: William Fleeman <doby@andeman.biz>, Alex Achimore <alexachimore@yahoo.com>, John Meyer <john.meyer@live.com>

Subject: NISHI PROJECT APPROVAL and DAVIS SHUTTLE

Ike—

Approval of the Nishi housing project increases the need to address the fleeting opportunity to connect the downtown to the UCD campus.

My recent proposal for a shuttle that connects the UCD entry area to the downtown will be effective only if property holders appreciate the potential value of being part of this system.

Critical participants are the Nishi property developers and the Lincoln 40 developers who must allow easements for an electric “people mover” shuttle to convey residents along the south side of the tracks and help to activate the downtown with new people and customers.

Please make sure that the concept is reviewed before the downtown plan is set in stone.

thanks

Allen Lowry AIA
DAVIS, CA

Karen Moore
616 E Street
Davis, CA 95616

January 8, 2020

Mr. Eric Lee, Planning Liaison to the Downtown Plan
Mr. Ike Njoku, Planning Liaison to the Historical Resources Management Commission
Department of Community Development and Sustainability
City of Davis

Sent via email

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan and accompanying draft Zoning Code sections. My comments and questions address one important component of the plan, the protection of historic resources.

Understanding a primary goal of the downtown planning process has been to enhance the economic vitality of the downtown area, I was pleased to see the draft plan and zoning code contains general policy language and standards in support of historic preservation. Of the six Specific Plan Goals, Goal 4 directly addresses historic preservation: "A sense of place reinforced with appropriate character, balanced historical preservation and thoughtful transitions to context" (p. 60-61).

The plan provides a commendable outline of policies aimed at revitalizing the downtown with improved circulation and increased housing opportunities. I am confident the development of this draft plan is well-intended as it has many strengths. But a careful review of the detailed policies and standards addressing historic preservation raises questions and concerns about the policy intent, thoroughness and accuracy of the draft plan and zoning code with regard to historic preservation. For reasons that are not entirely clear, it appears that issues related to historic preservation have not been provided equal attention and analysis.

What follows is a summary listing of issues evident from my review of the draft plan and zoning code. I hope my comments and questions are of some value in the process of developing documents which acknowledge and appropriately protect our community's historic resources.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON PLAN CHAPTER 3.5 – GOALS AND GUIDING POLICIES

Page 53, Guiding Policy 1.5: "Protect existing historic and cultural resources, and provide built form guidelines to shape new development adjacent to protected sites."

- What is meant by "adjacent to protected sites"? Is that limited to a property that shares a property line with a designated historic resource? Would property across a street or alley constitute adjacent? Consistent with the requirements for a Certified Local Government, city code includes HRMC review of projects within 300 feet of designated resources. Reasonable protection of historic and cultural resources should include guidelines for new development in close proximity not just adjacent to a protected site.

Page 55, Guiding Policy 2.2: “Promote the rehabilitation of historic buildings for adaptive use...”

- What mechanisms does the plan and/or zoning code include to ensure rehabilitation for adaptive use protects the historic integrity of a designated structure? Should the language of this guiding policy specify the importance of protecting a resource’s historic integrity?

Page 60, text discussing Goal 4: In discussing the surrounding Old East and Old North neighborhoods, the plan reads “Development will respond to this context through thoughtful transitions at the edges of Downtown, that will be regulated through standards for building massing and height.”

- Why are building massing and height the only elements for ensuring “thoughtful transitions”? Should items such as building placement (setbacks), materials, façade articulation standards, frontage types and some of the other features of form-based zoning be identified as appropriate or inappropriate in transition areas or in close proximity to protected sites?
- Should streetscape design be identified as an important component of the “thoughtful transitions at the edges of Downtown”? For example, a defining feature of the Old North neighborhood is its streetscape: a scored sidewalk pattern and planter area with large canopy trees between the sidewalk and curb. Should the plan include language endorsing this streetscape design along Fifth Street and along G Street as a part of the “thoughtful transition”?

Page 61, text discussing Goal 4: The plan reads “Historic resource classification will be clarified and streamlined.”

- What is the intent of this statement? Information presented elsewhere in the plan makes it appear the intent is to eliminate the conservation overlay district within the downtown area and rely upon the specific plan and form-based zoning code instead. Is there analysis documenting the rationale for the elimination of the overlay district?

The text here implies further study will occur to determine if the conservation overlay approach should be modified, yet the plan later calls for further study of the conservation overlay district only in the context of application to the adjoining neighborhoods of University Avenue-Rice Lane, Old East and Old North (see page 132). This inconsistency between the text on page 61 and later in the plan should be addressed.

Page 61, Guiding Policy 4.4: “Promote rehabilitation and adaptive use strategies to guide reinvestment in existing buildings and redevelopment of sites with historic or cultural resources.”

- Does the term “redevelopment” indicate acceptance of the removal, either by relocation or demolition, of designated historic resources? Should language be added indicating the importance of retaining the historic integrity of a designated resource?

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON PLAN CHAPTER 5 - HISTORIC RESOURCES

Pages 112-115, Introduction and Approach

- Should the language of the specific plan, particularly in the chapter on historic resources, give emphasis to the community's desire to protect the historic integrity of designated resources? Should the plan contain policies and standards specifying the goal of development compatible with designated historic resources?

The emphasis seems to be on providing opportunities to develop properties – for reuse, additions, redevelopment and the like. While the plan calls for “balanced historical preservation,” the text of the plan does not reflect a balanced approach. It promotes new development of a larger scale, an important goal with benefits for the community. But the plan lacks strong policy language in support of compatibility with designated resources.

Page 116, Figure 5.3 Historic Resources in Downtown (Current Survey): There appear to be some errors in showing the location of designated historic resources.

- The Richards Underpass/Subway is not shown. The on-line city inventory (dated 3/23/2010) lists it as a Landmark Resource (see Ord. #2003)
- The Anderson Bank Building at 203 G Street is shown as a Merit Resource, but the on-line city inventory (dated 3/23/2010) lists it as a Landmark Resource (see Ord. #1282). It is also shown as a Merit Resource in Figure 5.13 (p. 121).
- The Barovetto Home is shown, but there is no indication the Barovetto Tank House is also designated (see Ord. #1363) On Figure 5.31 of the plan (p. 129), the address is listed as 201 A Street, but the address at the time of designation was 209 and 209 ½ Second Street. Which address is accurate for the house and for the tank house?
- The McDonald House not accurately shown on either Figure 5.3 or Figure 5.31 (p. 129). When the house was designated (see Ord. #1360), its address was 337 B Street. However, with the new development in the 300 block of B Street, new addresses were assigned. The McDonald House, located at the corner of B Street and Fourth Street, is now assigned the address of 397 B Street. Since a street address may change, the plan should list a designated resource by a name, when available, and an address.
- Is the communication tower at the SP Depot also a designated resource? It is not shown in Figure 5.3 or Figure 5.11.
- Figure 5.3, as well as the figures for each neighborhood, shows potential historic sites. I support the identification of these potential historic sites, understanding that the HRMC will have the opportunity to carefully review and reach a decision on whether each property merits designation.

Pages 116-130, 5.2 Neighborhood Character and Historic Resources: This section of the plan looks more closely at the different parts of downtown, describing the character-defining features of each neighborhood. The plan reads “The Specific Plan seeks to protect historic resources and preserve Downtown’s neighborhood character, balancing historic preservation while encouraging adaptive use and sensitive redevelopment.”

- For each neighborhood, do the policies and standards balance the two goals of protection of historic resources and sensitive development? To assess whether a balance has been achieved, it is necessary to examine the potential for development on parcels near designated resources. But no such examination or discussion is found in the plan. Without such analysis, how can the appropriateness of policies and standards for protecting designated historic resources be determined?

Pages 118-119, Heart of Downtown

- Are 4 and 5 story buildings, with Neighborhood-Large and Neighborhood-Medium designations appropriate on adjoining lots and across Fourth Street from the historic resource at 619 Fourth Street, the First Presbyterian Manse? Would the block-form buildings permitted in Neighborhood-Large be appropriate next to a smaller scale house-form historic resource with sizeable front and side setbacks?
- Are 5 and 7 story buildings, with a Main Street-Large designation, appropriate on the properties surrounding the designated resources of Old City Hall? Dresbach Hunt-Boyer? The Varsity Theater? The Brinley Block? The SP Depot? The Boy Scout Cabin? The potential resource at 216 F Street? Are block-form buildings with limited to zero setbacks appropriate next to some of the smaller form buildings?
- The text of the plan inaccurately describes a 5-story height limit in the area “immediately west of the former City Hall...” The area west of Old City Hall is shown on the Regulating Plan, Figure 4.13 as Main Street-Large (up to 7 stories).
- Are additional policies and standards needed to protect the integrity of the SP Depot site? The plan rightly recognizes the opportunity presented by the land near the historic depot. The plan identifies the area as a “designated special area” with special standards (see p. 85). For example, the plan calls for a “landmark feature or building that terminates the view from Second Street.” Such a feature may be appropriate provided its compatibility with the historic resource. Policy language and standards addressing compatibility with the historical integrity of the site should be included.
- The plan indicates “...features such as street and façade setbacks may factor into compatibility with existing resource” but it does not include strong language promoting compatibility. Vague, permissive wording does not provide great assurance that protection of the historic integrity of a designated resource has been balanced with an entitlement process that will permits 5 to 7 stories with block-form next to smaller historic resources.

Pages 120-121, G Street Character:

- Are 5 story buildings, with a Main Street-Large designation, appropriate on the properties surrounding the designated resources of the Anderson Bank Building (at Second + G)? The Masonic Lodge (221 G Street)? The Bank of Yolo (at Third + G)? The potential merit resource the Davis Lumber building (at Third + G)?
- While the designated resources in this part of downtown have a block-form, are standards addressing other features such as façade treatment or materials needed to ensure compatibility with historic structures? This question is relevant to each of the neighborhoods within the downtown area.
- The plan makes a direct statement on page 120 that “some resources could receive additions and retain eligibility...” Which resources are considered appropriate for potential additions?
- Should 340 G Street be shown as a potential merit resource on Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.3? Figure 4.13, the land use map (p. 74), shows the structure at the southeast corner of Fourth and G streets as a potential resource. The survey form completed on 340 G Street, as a part of the inventory update (August 12, 2019 memo and attachments), indicates the structure with its unique storybook architecture “meets the criteria for listing in the City of Davis Register (local register) as Merit Resource and retains overall historic integrity.” The HRMC should have an opportunity to review and take action on whether it should be designated.

Pages 122-123, North G Street Character

- Why does the text describing the character of the North G Street neighborhood omit the streetscape design (a scored sidewalk pattern and planter area with large canopy trees between the sidewalk and curb) which ties this area to the Old North traditional residential neighborhood? Language should be added to the plan describing this feature and supporting its continuation.
- How does the proposed elimination of the conservation overlay district and its “contributing resource” designation affect the historical integrity of the Old North neighborhood? Many of the structures on the west side of 600 block of G Street are identified as “contributing resources.” Should this block remain in a conservation overlay district for Old North? Would such inclusion serve as a “thoughtful transition” at the edge of Downtown as called for in Goal 4 of the plan?
- Are 4 story buildings, with a Main Street Medium designation, appropriate on lots adjoining the potential historic resources in the 500 block of G Street? This designation allows both house-form and block-form buildings. Would block-form buildings be appropriate next to a smaller scale house-form historic resources that have sizeable front and side setbacks?
- Should 526 G Street be shown as a potential merit resource on Figures 5.19, 5.3, and 4.13? The survey form completed on 526 G Street, as a part of the inventory update (August 12, 2019 memo and attachments), indicates the structure “retains overall historic integrity” and “remains eligible for listing” as a Merit Resource. The HRMC should have an opportunity to review and take action on whether it should be designated.

- Are additional policies or standards needed to address potential development of the former Hibbert Lumber yard property relative to the protection of potential historic resources? The large parcel presents an important opportunity for new development. Sensitive design will be needed to ensure compatibility with the smaller house-form buildings along their shared property line. Should the lumber yard be identified as a “special designated area” with accompanying policies and standards to guide compatible development?

Pages 124-125, North-West Downtown

- As noted in questions and comments on the previous neighborhoods, it is difficult to judge whether the plan maintains the appropriate balance between protection of a designated resource and new construction as there is no discussion or analysis of the issue. Is the designation of Neighborhood-Medium, with 3 to 5 story buildings, appropriate on parcels in close proximity to designated and potential resources?
- Is it appropriate to add the Lincoln Highway marker in Central Park to the city’s historic inventory? The HRMC has considered the designation of resources that are not buildings – the Avenue of the Trees and the Third Street Bike lane being two examples. Is there an appropriate way to officially recognize the Lincoln Highway route and marker? (There is a second Lincoln Highway marker in the Avenue of the Trees near its terminus at Arthur Street.)
- Is it appropriate to add the WPA/former restroom structure in Central Park to the city’s historic inventory?

Pages 126-127, South-West Downtown

- Is the suggested commemoration of the historic 1967 Third Street bike lane with “signage, paving, public art or other landscaping treatment” an appropriate approach? The plan calls for Third Street to be a “shared street.” Figure 6.11 shows a cross-section of a “shared street” which would eliminate the on-street bike lane as the travel lane would be shared by vehicles and bikes (p. 144). While this street design may be desirable given Third Street’s role in connecting downtown to the university, how the historic bike lane should be addressed within that new street design should not be an after-thought. The plan’s language is imprecise, reading Third Street “could commemorate the historic bike lanes.” Stronger language requiring a design that appropriately recognizes the historic importance of the bike lane is needed.
- Again, it is difficult to assess whether the scale of development to be permitted in close proximity to historic resources is appropriate as no discussion or analysis is provided. Is the Neighborhood-Medium designation with 4 story house-form buildings appropriate around the Jacobson-Wilson House at 232 B Street? Are Neighborhood-Medium with 4-story house-form buildings and Main Street-Medium with 4-story block-form buildings appropriate around the Clancy House at 137 C Street? Are Main Street-Medium, Neighborhood-Medium, and Main Street-Large designations adjacent to the Hamel House at 505 Second Street appropriate?
- Have the McNeil Apartments at 118-120 C Street been evaluated for potential designation? The most recent survey completed as a part of the specific plan process makes no mention of this property. Does it warrant a careful look by the HRMC?

- Should the plan include policies or standards aimed at protecting the remaining WPA sidewalk markings in the downtown area? In a driveway cut in front of 315 First Street there are two “WPA 1938” markings.

How can such markings be included in the city’s historic inventory? Just as the HRMC has identified the Davis Cemetery and the Avenue of the Trees, is there an appropriate way to officially recognize role of the WPA in Davis by incorporating these sidewalk markings into any reconstruction or repair of sidewalks and curbs? It does not appear that an inventory of these markings has been completed, although a quick look at on-line resources includes photographs of such markings in Old North and Old East. The intent would not be to preserve a crumbling, cracking sidewalk or curb but to investigate the feasibility of saving these small links to an important historical event.

Pages 128-129, University Avenue-Rice Lane

- Have the Davis Townhouse Apartments, occupying most of the block bounded by Russell Blvd, B Street, Fourth Street and University Avenue, been evaluated for potential designation? The most recent survey completed as a part of the specific plan process makes no mention of this property. But a previous survey indicated it was one of the first apartment complexes in Davis. Does it warrant a careful look by the HRMC?

Pages 130-132, Conservation Overlay District

- What are the suggested boundaries of the new conservation overlay districts? While the text on page 132 indicates a new overlay district for each of the older residential neighborhoods, Figure 5.34 is unclear. Figure 5.34 seems to show 5 new districts: University Avenue-Rice Lane; Old North; Old East; Downtown Commercial Core; and G Street/Depot.

Would the west side of the 500 and 600 blocks of G Street remain in the same conservation overlay district as Old North?

The text on page 132 further indicates the boundary for the University Avenue-Rice Lane district has been adjusted. How?

- Recommendation B calls for developing design guidelines for each district. What changes are being contemplated? The plan’s text on page 131 indicates the existing DDTRN guidelines have largely successful in meeting their stated purposes.

Furthermore, recommendation B reads “Areas with special characteristics can be further developed with considerations to the Regulating Plan.” What does this mean? Are these the same “special areas of interest” mentioned in Recommendation D? Clarification is needed.

- Recommendation C considers the elimination of contributing resources. The rationale given is that alteration or demolition would be reviewed holistically. What is meant by this “holistic review”? What are the benefits of keeping the designation of “contributing status,” and what are

the benefits of the more “holistic” approach? Again, the plan seems to lack analysis or discussion of the rationale underlying this recommendation.

- Recommendation D calls for the establishment of “special areas of interest to encompass the transitional areas” between Downtown and Old East and Old North. This language is reiterated in Chapter 8 implementation actions. Why aren’t these transitional areas identified in the plan? Why is the plan lacking in policies and standards specifically addressing these “thoughtful transitions”? Transitions between new larger scale development and the smaller scale traditional neighborhoods are of critical importance.

The text further reads “These special areas of interest...would allow for more nuanced conservation and development in these areas as shown in Figure 5.34.” What is meant by “more nuanced conservation and development”? It is unclear what areas being referred to as Figure 5.34 shows the possible overlay districts. Clarification is needed.

- The plan’s text on page 132 reads “These recommendations would not change the purview of the HRMC, but would clarify and streamline the design review process.” With the elimination of the conservation overlay district, wouldn’t the HRMC’s advisory role for new construction, significant renovation projects and demolitions within downtown be diminished?
- Under the existing code, the HRMC’s purview includes rendering judgement on a certificate of appropriateness for a designated resource and performing an advisory review of new development, significant alteration and demolition within 300 feet of a designated resource. Under the new plan and zoning code, would the HRMC retain these two responsibilities?

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON PLAN CHAPTER 8 - IMPLEMENTATION

Page 221-222, Implementation Actions: Historic Resource Management

- Several actions are recommended but the plan never discusses the rationale for these steps, never explains how these steps promote the plan’s goals. In Action 1, the implementation plan calls refinement of Section 40.23 of the city code, specifically to clarify the distinction between a Landmark and a Merit Resource. What confusion exists regarding a Landmark or a Merit Resource?
- In Action 2, elimination of “possible redundancies and extraneous processes” is recommended. What discussion or analysis has concluded there are redundancies and extraneous processes?
- Why in Action 3 is design assistance to current and potential owners of historic resources to be provided “in advance of design guidelines?” What types of design assistance are anticipated?
- Action 4 calls for reviewing and refining the existing design guidelines. Clarification is needed as to whether, under the draft plan and zoning code, these design guidelines apply to the downtown area or only to the adjacent neighborhoods of University Avenue-Rice Lane, Old North and Old East. Are these design guidelines meant to be applied to designated resources or to properties in close proximity to designated resources? To ensure compatibility between new downtown

development and historic resources, design standards beyond the few zoning code sections on setbacks and stepbacks seem warranted.

- Action 7 reads “consider conservation overlay district approaches for suitability for downtown.” Is this language consistent with the plan’s language on page 132 to eliminate the conversation overlay district in downtown?
- Action 7 has three components, labeled 7A, B and C. Yet the recommended implementation actions in Chapter 5 on page 132 includes an A, B, C and D. Why is item C from page 132 addressing contributing status omitted from the Chapter 8 implementation steps?

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ON THE DRAFT ZONING CODE

- Section 40.13.030 contains a Quick Code Guide aimed at assisting an applicant understand how to use the code for a new or modified building. There is no mention of historical resources or the HRMC’s review role in this Quick Code Guide. Should language be added about new construction in proximity to designated resources? Such language might alert the user to the code’s standards for adjacency to a historic resource. Should language be added about the potential for review by the HRMC if within 300 feet of a designated resource?
- Why did the consultants not provide an analysis, discussion or presentation of the relationship between the form-based zoning and the city’s designated resources?

The draft zoning code is a very detailed document. As noted in comments and questions about the draft plan, without an analysis of what new construction is permitted near designated resources, it is difficult to evaluate whether the code adequately balances the goal of historic preservation and the promotion of appropriate development.

The zoning code details building types, height, setbacks, encroachments, frontage types, massing and façade articulation standards for each zone. But the only standards specific to historic resources as the Historic Resource Adjacency Standards in Table 40.14.080C. These standards deal with ground floor height, side setback, and stepbacks for upper floors for new construction next to a historic resource and do not address other important considerations:

- The standards do not address adjacency along a rear property line.
- The standards do not address new construction across a street or alley.
- The standards do not address building type, materials, façade articulation, frontage types, encroachments, signs or any of the other components of the form-based zoning approach.
- Page 115 of the plan suggests new construction be oriented in a manner compatible with the existing access and orientation of a designated resource. But the zoning code does not appear to address this.

Are the Historic Resource Adjacency Standards in Table 40.14.080C adequate for protecting designated resources? Are more comprehensive standards addressing other design components needed?

CONCLUSION

As has occurred in the downtowns of other communities, a legitimate concern is that historical structures will appear engulfed by larger scale newer buildings whose massing, façade treatments, and materials are discordant. In such instances, the smaller scale historic structure may look out-of-place. It is unclear if the policies and standards in the plan and zoning code have adequately addressed this concern. The plan and code create the potential for 4 to 7 story structures, with a 10-foot side setback for a depth of 25 feet and setbacks for construction above a second floor, next to a smaller often house-form historic structures. I am not confident the limited zoning standards included in the draft are sufficient to protect the integrity of our community's historic resources.

The plan provides a forward-looking vision for the downtown area. Throughout the draft plan, numerous illustrations show a wide mix of possibilities for the downtown – such as building scale sustainability strategies, streetscapes for shared streets or raised cycle tracks, and renderings of potential future development in different parts of downtown. These help the community envision the plan's direction and assist in showing the potential consequences of specific policies and standards. However, both written analysis and illustrative diagrams and renderings that address the treatment of historic resources is lacking. Therefore, it is difficult to envision how such resources will be affected by the plan. It is my hope this omission can be addressed before the next steps in the review process are taken.

I offer these comments in the spirit of enhancing this important document. It is not meant to be an inventory of criticisms as the plan identifies many beneficial goals for the community. My comments are meant to help identify important policy and regulatory issues that should be considered in advance in order to improve the ultimate implementation of the plan.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Moore

From: John Natsoulas <art@natsoulas.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 19, 2019 4:57 PM

To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>

Subject: Re: Downtown Plan Form Based Code Training - Wednesday 11/20 Community Chambers at 12:30

Eric,

The plan is missing the transmedia art walk among other things.

I am not in agreement with the plan this is my first look at it !

JOHN NATSOULAS

From: Chris Neufeld-Erdman <erdmanc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2020 5:16 PM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Cc: Patty Grace Neufeld-Erdman <pneufeldlmft@gmail.com>
Subject: Comments on the Downtown Davis Specific Plan

Dear Eric;

As residents who reside inside the boundaries of the Downtown Davis Specific Plan we take great interest in the evolution and eventual unfolding of this Plan. We moved to Davis five years ago because, of all the possible areas in California we explored, Davis provided us with a walkable community, a robust downtown, and a social/political environment that is forward looking and concerned to create models of sustainability, equity, and inclusion that fosters the common good.

We are deeply grateful for the process our city's leadership has engaged as it's sought to develop this Plan cooperatively, believing that together we can create a better community for all Davis' current and future residents. We are pleased with the goals and ways the Plan seeks to enhance the livability of the downtown core, and the ways it seeks to create a hub of habitation, commerce and social interaction for the region.

We are grateful for your invitation to offer comments on the Plan that could contribute to a richer Plan. With this in mind, we offer three comments:

First, the “panhandle” or “finger” section of the core, which is the strip of land north of 5th and alongside G Street, we consider to be a real opportunity for creative ways to link the downtown core with northeast Davis, including the higher density student dwellings along J Street, the Cannery, and areas stretching into Wildhorse. We imagine a flourishing residential/commercial area with an emphasis on housing, including a strong intergenerational ethos, especially attractive to seniors for whom the location provides easy walking or cycling access to shopping, dining, and recreation.

Second, as residents of the little cream colored cottage on the corner of Sweet Briar and H Streets across from the empty lot, we want to voice **our concern that future development on that lot,** while needing to be multistory, does not construct an abrupt canyon-wall several stories high. Instead we hope the development can be residential with setbacks to buffer any abrupt rise in building size, limited to 3-stories with a 3rd story stepback across from single family homes. The point is, we want to foster a stronger sense of community here; we would very much like to look out at doors and windows, and therefore, people, rather than block walls. We want neighbors with whom we can create a strong and sustainable community.

Third, we offer an idea we don't see in the Plan. As we look at the vision of this Plan, the ethos of Davis, and the California housing crisis, we wonder if, long term, the small block upon which our home sits (bordered by Sweet Briar on the south, G Street on the west, 8th on the north, and H on the east) could eventually help alleviate the crisis and support the need for more housing. The majority of the buildings in this border area are two story and not single residences.

What if the whole “panhandle” or “finger” (including the block bordered by Sweet Briar on the south, G Street on the west, 8th on the north, and H on the east) were a contiguous piece of property that could be developed creatively to foster and intergenerational living space? What if Sweet Briar and H Street were abandoned as streets and offered as part of a much larger development that could house a larger number of people, and provide for more retail/commercial as lifestyle support?

We have a concern in offering this idea. We want to be part of creative solutions and cooperative enterprise, but we would not want by offering this idea, to find ourselves staring at a three story block wall on the south side of Sweet Briar because the goal of this idea had not been realized (the full contiguous development) and instead, it had stopped short at the south side of Sweet Briar instead of pressing all the way to 8th Street. If this new idea becomes part of the Plan, we would hope there could be some kind of protection against development of the strip mall/empty lot that are merely partial developments, thereby nullifying the purpose of the structure limits we listed in our second comment above.

Please confirm receipt of this letter and its transmission to the Council and the DPAC and any other necessary decision makers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patty and Chris Neufeld-Erdman

815 Sweet Briar Road

Davis

January 14, 2020

Mark Grote, Secretary
Old East Davis Neighborhood Association
markngrote@gmail.com

Via e-mail

To: Eric Lee, planner, and the Downtown Plan Advisory Committee
Re: Comments on the draft Downtown Plan and Form-based Code

Dear Eric and committee members:

On behalf of the board members of the Old East Davis Neighborhood Association, I submit the following comments on the draft Downtown Plan and Form-based Code. We thank city staff and DPAC for their patience and perseverance during this planning and visioning process.

The implementation of the Downtown Plan will have profound effects on the people of our neighborhood, our homes and the physical environment. In this light, we reaffirm and support the plan's concern with the "triple bottom line": people, planet and profit.

At this time we support the draft plan and code as published in *concept*, but not in *detail*. Our comments are concerned broadly with two elements of the plan--historic resources, and the Core Transition East—that are important areas of intersection between the downtown, the goals of the Downtown Plan, and Old East Davis. Sub-headings under the two main topics summarize our suggestions for further consideration or action as the draft plan goes forward.

1. Historic Resources.

a. The Downtown Plan needs explicit policies and implementation actions for preserving the setting and feeling of Davis' historic resources.

Under federal and California historic resource management policies, *setting* is an aspect of a historic property's integrity, and refers to "...the physical environment of a historic property...setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just where, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space..." (*How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, U.S. National Park Service 1997).

Federal and California policies define a historic property's *feeling* as the "...expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character." (*ibid*)

Setting and feeling are tangible and practical aspects of *place-making*, as applied to historic resources.

The draft Downtown Plan references five purposes for the City's existing Conservation Overlay District, including the first purpose: to "Conserve the traditional neighborhood character, fabric and setting while guiding future development, reuse, and reinvestment". But there is no further mention of *setting* in the draft plan, and no mention in the draft plan of *feeling*. Setting and feeling are essential features of the historic resources in Davis' traditional residential neighborhoods: University Avenue/Rice Lane, which is entirely within the Downtown Plan area; Old East Davis and Old North Davis, parts of which are within the planning area. Setting and feeling are also relevant for areas of the downtown core with aggregations of historic properties, such as along Second Street between G and E Streets. All of these areas provide a setting for the historic resources they contain.

The draft plan offers only advisory language in sections bearing on setting and feeling, for example: "Particularly in areas with concentrations of historic resources and age-eligible buildings, zoning regulations and design guidelines should promote responsible development adjacent to historic resources (pg. 114, *Considerations for Future Development*). Phrases such as "should promote responsible development" are non-mandatory and, given likely competing interests, will ultimately be ineffective for historic resource preservation. Downtown Plan policies regulating the setting and feeling of historic resources must be explicit and enforceable.

Development policies in the draft plan specific to neighborhoods are also merely advisory, and suffer from language open to differing interpretations. For example, in the G Street neighborhood-- where five-story, block-scale building forms are allowed-- development adjacent to historic resources is guided by the policy: "Proposed building forms should be compatible with existing resources that are small- to medium-scale, largely one to two stories in height" (pg. 120). Here, both the weakness of the language "should be compatible", and the juxtaposition of five-story, block-scale buildings with small-to-medium, one-to-two story historic buildings, are dismaying. Similarly for the University Avenue-Rice Lane neighborhood, development is guided by the policy: "The proposed form and scale should consider compatible alterations to properties containing or adjacent to historic resources" (pg. 128). The phrase "should consider compatible alterations" is inadequate for effective historic preservation. The lack of enforceable language is a problem for policies specific to each neighborhood.

New development can have both direct and indirect impacts on nearby historical resources. Indirect impacts include: "the introduction of visual, audible or atmospheric effects that are out of character with the historic property or alter its setting, when the setting contributes to the property's significance. Examples include, but are not limited to, the construction of a large scale building, structure, object, or public works project that has the potential to cast shadow patterns on the historic property, intrude into its viewshed, generate substantial noise, or substantially increase air pollution or wind patterns" (*San Diego Land Development Manual - Historical Resources Guidelines*, p.10).

The Form-Based Code makes adjustments to ground-floor ceiling heights, setbacks, and stepbacks for buildings adjacent to historic resources (40.14.080.C), but these technical modifications are not adequate by themselves for the big-picture tasks of avoiding indirect impacts, or preserving a historical building's context and the character of its surroundings.

b. The Downtown Plan needs explicit language stating how planning and review processes related to the existing Conservation Overlay District will evolve under adoption of the Plan. Linger issues related to the application of “standards” in the Conservation Overlay District must be resolved in the Downtown Specific Plan.

Because of significant impacts on historic setting identified in the EIR for the B and 3rd Visioning Process, design review—including review under the Downtown Davis and Traditional Residential Neighborhoods Design Guidelines—is currently required for *all new development* in the Conservation Overlay District (Mitigation Measure 4.3-9(a) of the B and 3rd EIR). This review is a statutory obligation of the City under CEQA. Land-use and zoning regulations for the Conservation Overlay District are expected to be replaced by the Downtown Plan and Form-based code, for those parts of the Overlay District within the Downtown Plan area. Yet the draft Downtown Plan does not describe how planning and review processes related to the existing Conservation Overlay District will carry over functionally to the Downtown Plan upon its adoption. Neither section 5.3 of the draft plan (Conservation Overlay District), nor the Implementation Actions in Table 8G for Historic Resources Management, take on this issue. This omission raises questions about the continuity of the City’s historic resource management practices, which must be addressed prior to the Downtown Plan’s environmental review.

The use of the term “conservation district” in the draft plan (e.g., pg. 221) is confusing and misleading, and the term is no better defined in the draft plan than it is in the City’s existing ordinances. Existing policies applying to the Conservation Overlay District, such as the DDTRN Design Guidelines, have been downplayed in City planning documents and presentations as not providing specific, mandatory standards. Hence it is critical that terms are defined and standards are clearly stated.

The note on page 130 of the draft plan stating that the planning area does not include Old East Davis and Old North Davis is incorrect. The planning area includes some portions of Old East Davis and Old North Davis. The note should be edited for accuracy.

On page 131 of the draft Plan, the unsupported claim that the Design Guidelines “remain unclear” should be deleted.

In Table 40.13.060.A of the draft Form-based code, the *status* of article 40.13A, Downtown and Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District, should read: “Replaced by Downtown Code *within Downtown Code boundaries*.” As written, replacement within the entire Overlay District is implied.

c. Historic Resources located in adjacent neighborhoods, including Old East Davis and Old North Davis, should be identified on all maps in section 5.2 of the draft plan.

The map showing historic resources, on page 116 of the draft plan, gives the impression that they exist only in the plan area. Subsequently the text description for the G Street Neighborhood (pg. 120) mentions that the adjacent Old East Davis neighborhood has “a number of” historic resources; and the

Old North Davis neighborhood, adjacent to the North G Street Neighborhood, is described as having “numerous eligible or potentially eligible” historic resources (pg. 122).

Historic resources in Old East Davis and Old North Davis should be identified on the map on page 116, and on the subsequent neighborhood-specific maps whenever they occur within the frame. The spatial relationships and contexts of historic resources are relevant features, and the draft plan maps are incomplete having omitted identified resources. In neighborhood-specific maps, all historic resources (including those in other downtown neighborhoods shown in other neighborhood-specific maps) should be identified whenever they occur within the frame.

The draft Downtown Plan does as suggested above for the 1967 bike lane. The bike lane exits the downtown plan area into Old East Davis and runs north along J Street. This is shown in the map on page 116, and in neighborhood-specific maps whenever it occurs within the frame. All identified historic resources should be treated in these maps as the draft Downtown Plan treats the 1967 bike lane.

d. The form-based code has special regulations for buildings adjacent to historic resources, but “adjacency” should be clearly defined, and should relate to the whole physical context of a historic resource.

Section 40.14.080.C of the Form-based code makes adjustments to ground-floor ceiling heights, setbacks, and stepbacks for buildings adjacent to historic resources, but based on the images shown there, it could be inferred that the adjustments only apply when *front facades* are on adjacent properties. Obviously, new buildings can impact historical resources from the side and rear, and these impacts can extend over distances spanned by alleys, which are common parcel-dividers in the downtown core, University Avenue/Rice Lane, Old East Davis and Old North Davis. Concerns about the ambiguity of “adjacency” in the Form-based Code are amplified by the omission in plan area maps, noted above, of historic resources located in adjacent neighborhoods.

e. Specific standards for the height of a new building relative to the top-plate of an adjacent historic structure should be included in the Form-based Code.

An example would be: “The maximum height of a new structure adjacent to a single-story historic structure shall not exceed two times the height of the historic structure’s top-plate.” The multiple, two times the height of the top-plate of an adjacent single-story historic structure, should decrease for taller adjacent historic structures, to avoid absurdly tall new buildings. We propose that the Historic Resources Management Commission develop these standards, perhaps in consultation with an architectural historian of their choosing.

f. Policies for structures potentially eligible for historic designation, including “contributing” structures, should be explicit in the Downtown Plan. Structures recommended for designation

should be treated as historic under the Downtown Plan, pending definitive action from the HRMC and City.

The City created the Conservation District designation as a mechanism to mitigate potential impacts to historic resources under the City's 2001 General Plan. At that time, the City included Landmark and Merit designations, and also included a "contributing structure" designation. The intention was that the Conservation District overlays would function similarly to an historic district designation, but would accommodate the variety of structures that existed, given the piecemeal development in Davis over time, rather than development of full blocks or tracts. As time has passed and CEQA interpretation has evolved, the City has taken the position that protection is only afforded those structures designated as Landmark or Merit, without formal consideration of whether earlier designated contributing structures should be "upgraded". We are concerned that the draft plan continues this practice.

Demolition is final. We recommend that structures recommended for designation, such as the KetMoree building and others, be treated as historic under the Downtown Plan, pending final decisions. Federal land-use law regulating the designation of wilderness areas provides a parallel approach, prohibiting road-building and logging in areas considered for designation during their study and review period.

g. Policies to encourage and regulate adaptive re-use of historic structures should be included in the Downtown Plan.

Adaptive re-use is part of the portfolio of best practices for historic resources management. It is a green building strategy that avoids excessive accumulation of building materials in landfills, and reduces environmental disturbance at building sites caused by demolition and foundation-digging.

2. Core Transition East.

a. The 2005 City Council actions including the railroad parcels in the core planning area, along with the planning documents related to those actions, give the existing entitlements and restrictions for these properties.

In 2005, at the request of Jennifer Anderson (the owner of three of the four parcels along the railroad tracks), the City Council included four parcels in Old East Davis lying directly to the east of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks in the core planning area. The Council's actions included amendments to area plans to designate the parcels' land-uses as Retail with Offices, and an ordinance to rezone the parcels to Mixed Use (Resolution No. 05-220; Ordinances and planning documents in: June 23, 2005 Staff Report for the City Council).

The owner-- at that time-- of the southernmost parcel, consisting of 901-919 Third Street (currently the Trackside Center parcel), agreed to have this parcel included in the Core Area and re-zoned, along with

the three parcels owned by Anderson. Old East Davis neighbors participated in the City's planning process and agreed to the Council's actions, under specific provisions regarding the mass and scale of future buildings on these parcels which were stated in the resolution and ordinances, and detailed in the planning documents presented to the Council at that time.

The planning documents for these parcels allowed "buildings up to three stories and a floor area ratio of 1.5:1 (or 2.0:1 with bonuses)", and further stated that mixed use and residential structures above two stories were to "be carefully designed to avoid appearances of excessive bulk" (2005 Staff Report, pg. 27). The planning documents went on to state that "Provisions in the Design Guidelines and Core Area Specific Plan call for new infill development to respect the mass and scale of surrounding development" (2005 Staff Report pg. 27).

Along with restrictions on the mass, scale and number of stories, the housing density for Mixed Use residential projects on these parcels was capped at 30 dwelling units per acre, and Mixed Use residential projects were required to provide at least one on-site parking space per unit (2005 Staff Report). These density and parking provisions are still in effect for the parcels in the Core Transition East.

The City has processed only one planning application involving these parcels-- for the Trackside Center project-- since the 2005 amendments. The Trackside Center planning documents incorporated the 2005 land-use and zoning provisions implicitly, as defining the existing entitlements for this property (November 14, 2017 Staff Report for the City Council, pg. 05-7, Table 1; *ibid*, pg. 05-21, Table 2 "Base M-U Standard"). By analogy the 2005 provisions also define the existing entitlements for the parcels in the Core Transition East owned by Anderson.

The planning documents for the November 14, 2017 City Council hearing on the Trackside Center proposal included special provisions incorporated in the Planned Development application for this parcel, such as increased building height and density, as well as inclusion into the project area of land leased from the Union Pacific Railroad. A Planned Development application and Tier-3 review were required for the Trackside Project, because these special provisions went beyond the parcel's existing entitlements.

A decision filed on May 15, 2019 by the Yolo Superior Court ordered the City of Davis to vacate and rescind all approvals for the Trackside Project, though the City subsequently appealed this decision. The special provisions related to the Trackside Project's Planned Development application cannot be claimed as existing entitlements for this parcel (901-919 Third Street) while the City's appeal is pending. This parcel's existing entitlements are as described in the 2005 Staff Report.

The term "Main Street scale" was applied to the four Core Transition East parcels in the 2005 documents, but we caution that this phrase had a narrow meaning, referring only to setback distances (2005 Staff Report, pg. 13 and Attachment 3). "Main Street" in the 2019 draft Form-based Code refers to a collection of building forms sharing multiple features, notably mass and scale at the level of a city block. The 2005 documents did not envision block-scale buildings on the Core Transition East parcels.

b. The existing entitlements and restrictions for the parcels in the Core Transition East, as well as other applicable City policies, require that building forms and land uses on these parcels make an appropriate transition from Old East Davis to the commercial core.

At least six unique, substantive references to transitional building scales and land-uses, as applied to the railroad parcels, occur in the 2005 Staff Report. Some examples are:

- i) “These applications are considered to facilitate achievement of community goals to increase housing in the Downtown and provide a scale and use transition between the Downtown Core and adjacent residential area as identified in the Design Guidelines ‘Mixed Character Areas: Core Transition East’ (2005 Staff Report, pg. 2);
- ii) “The Core Area Specific Plan identifies the properties around the perimeter of the Downtown Core as Retail with Offices and establishes a Transitional Boundary which is to function as a transition between higher intensive commercial and office land uses and lower intensive uses...” (from the Resolution of Intent to Amend the General Plan and Core Area Specific Plan, 2005 Staff Report, pg. 6);
- iii) “The public necessity, convenience and general welfare require the adoption of the proposed amendment to ensure consistency with the General Plan, Core Area Specific Plan and Downtown and Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District (40.13A.) which encourage the mixed retail, office and residential uses on the periphery of the Downtown Core Area to support the vitality of the commercial area and to provide a transition between the more intense commercial core and surrounding residential neighborhoods” (from the ordinance to re-zone the four parcels from Commercial Service to Mixed Use, 2005 Staff Report, pg. 12).

To summarize, the requirement for transitional building forms and land uses on the Core Transition East parcels was codified in the 2005 City Council actions, and is a current condition for development on these properties.

c. The Downtown Plan’s treatment of transition areas must be consistent with policies in the City’s General Plan.

Regarding transitions, the City’s General Plan states: “Accommodate new buildings with floor area ratios that can support transit use, especially within 1/4 mile from commercial areas and transit stops, but maintain scale transition and retain enough older buildings to retain small-city character” (Land Use Principle 4, p.56). Policy UD 2.3 of the General Plan further states: “Require an architectural ‘fit’ with Davis’ existing scale for new development projects” (p.159); the subsequent Standard a) states: “There should be a scale transition between intensified land uses and adjoining lower intensity land uses”. The General Plan will still be in effect at the time the Downtown Plan is adopted, and policies in the Downtown Plan, including its treatment of transitions, must be consistent with those of the General Plan, as a condition for its adoption.

d. Imprecise language and policy direction in the draft Downtown Plan regarding transition areas between traditional neighborhoods and the downtown core, as well as incorrectly drawn neighborhood boundaries in Figure 5.34, must be revised prior to the Plan’s environmental review.

Recommendation D for the Conservation Overlay District (pg. 132) states: “...establish special areas of interest to encompass the transitional areas between the Downtown Commercial Core and the Old East and Old North neighborhoods. These special areas of interest will be for the Downtown commercial core, and along G Street including the Amtrak site, and would allow for more nuanced conservation and development in these areas, as shown in Figure 5.34.”

This recommendation occurs in the context of other proposals for how the existing Conservation Overlay District will evolve under adoption of the Downtown Plan, but it is not clear what, exactly, is being recommended in Recommendation D. In particular, the phrase “allow for more nuanced conservation and development” is unacceptable, as it is vague and open to different interpretations. Recommendation D fails to meet a premise of the Downtown Plan: to increase certainty for both residents and developers about the course of future development in the plan area and the kinds of projects that can be approved.

As a policy document concerned with transition areas, the draft Downtown Plan lacks the detail and specificity of the General Plan, Core Area Specific Plan and DDTRN Design Guidelines. It is not an improvement on, or an evolution of, these existing policy documents. Policies in the draft Downtown Plan make the future of development in transition areas less clear than in the City’s current plans.

Table 8G, Action Item 7C (pg. 222) (“...establish special areas of interest...to encompass the transitional areas between the Downtown Commercial Core and the Old East and Old North neighborhoods”) amplifies the ambiguities in Recommendation D. It is not clear what is intended by this apparent recommendation to separate, and regulate differently, the transition areas and the neighborhoods that contain them.

The dashed lines showing the existing Conservation Overlay District boundaries are incorrect in Figure 5.34 (pg. 131, referenced in Recommendation D). The map on pg. 4 of the DDTRN Design Guidelines gives the correct boundaries. A comparison of the DDTRN map with the “proposed” boundaries for Old East Davis and Old North Davis (red-orange boundaries in Figure 5.34 of the draft plan), suggests that City planners wish to annex the transition areas into the downtown core, removing them from the traditional neighborhoods. This is unacceptable in OEDNA’s view. The Core Transition East is part of the Old East Davis neighborhood. The Union Pacific railroad tracks form the western boundary of Old East Davis—they are both a *historical* and *physical* boundary.

e. The Old East Davis Neighborhood Association supports the three-story transitional building forms shown in the published draft Regulating Plan for the Core Transition East.

Since 2005 and before, OEDNA has consistently supported development of neighborhood-compatible Mixed Use buildings in the Core Transition East, in order to increase the City's housing supply near the downtown core and enhance its economic vitality. The three-story Neighborhood Medium building forms in the draft Regulating Plan and Form-based Code embody the Missing Middle housing concept, and will have OEDNA's support.

We believe that clear policy direction by the City on development in transitional areas will enhance the triple bottom line. By establishing definitive standards for transitional building forms, the City will create stable conditions that will allow market forces to determine a development project's feasibility. Feasible projects that further the City's goals for increased housing and economic activity near downtown need not overwhelm neighborhoods adjacent to transition areas. Solutions that satisfy all stakeholders are attainable.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Grote". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Mark Grote, Secretary
Old East Davis Neighborhood Association

OLD NORTH DAVIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

616 E STREET
DAVIS, CA 95616

January 13, 2020

Mr. Eric Lee, Planner
Department of Community Development and Sustainability
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Eric,

On behalf of the board of the Old North Davis Neighborhood Association, I am pleased to submit our comments on the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan (Oct. 2019) and its companion draft revision to zoning code Article 40.13: Downtown Zones. We appreciate the effort and outreach that has gone into preparation of this document and the opportunity to have a member of our board on the advisory committee that assisted with this document. We embrace the overall goals to enhance our downtown to become even more vibrant and, importantly, to bring more housing opportunities to this area. Perhaps more than most, we understand the many benefits and attributes of living downtown with its ready access to services and transit. We would welcome more people to share in this very unique and special area.

As with any similar planning process, much initial conversation was about high-level goals which most can support. Now with the release of the draft plan and zoning code these goals are translated into what will serve as regulatory standards for new development. This draft was relatively recently released so we have worked to review what are very lengthy and detailed documents. While there are many issues worthy of comment, we have focused on those that most affect Old North: these are principally related to the proposed zoning for the east side of north G Street (above 5th to Sweet Briar) and issues that may affect our neighborhood as a result of more intensive development in the downtown generally.

We hope these comments are of value. We look forward to learning what changes will be made to the draft plan prior to City Council review. Understandably, our comments may be amended as we learn of proposed changes to the plan and the results of environmental review.

We have highlighted principle recommendations in bold. Please do not interpret these as our **screaming at you**, as they serve only to highlight important issues.

As mentioned, while we have a number of comments, the majority focus on the north G Street area, so we will begin there.

North G Street

Opportunity. One of the significant challenges in realizing the aspirations of the draft plan is that downtown consists of many small lots with separate ownership. Without the powers of redevelopment, it is difficult to assemble parcels into sizes where projects can have enough scale to be economically viable. Two blocks which do have such potential are the 500 and 600 blocks north of Fifth Street and east of G Street. The area north of the Davis Food Coop (600 block) does seem to present an opportunity to repurpose an underutilized strip mall. In addition, the property just north of the strip mall and south of Sweet Briar has been vacant for several decades. With the closure of Hibbert Lumber, the 500 block also includes a very large parcel under single ownership, although the small dwellings on this block adjacent to G Street present special design challenges. We are quite intrigued by the possibility of welcoming additional residents to our neighborhood and would appreciate an intergenerational approach that combines seniors with families, professionals and students.

Underscore importance of transitions in scale. Throughout the planning process there has been recognition of the importance of thoughtful transitions in scale as parts of the downtown intensify with increased building heights and lot coverage. The west side of the north G Street area and north Sweet Briar are shown as “Neighborhood Small” within the draft plan. This is the only area with such a designation and is the least intensive land-use category. We support this designation. It allows structures up to two stories (and in some cases a third story if treated as a rooftop room). This proposed land-use addresses comments we received from those on the west G Street blocks on the F Street side of the alley who were concerned about the transition to a more urban scale across this alley.

The two eastern blocks of north G Street are proposed to be Main Street Medium. This designation allows up to 4 stories (with a step back on the 4th story when across from Neighborhood Small). It also allows the building structures to have so-called Block Form. That is, buildings may be located directly behind the sidewalk as you would find in an urban environment. While we recognize that these two blocks have great potential for redevelopment, **we have concern that this transition from Neighborhood Small directly to Main Street Medium across the street is too stark.** This could be especially deleterious to residences on Sweet Briar (which has a narrower right-of-way than G Street) as new development would be just south and therefore affect solar access. Similar concerns of scale arise from homes on the west side of G Street. While the two blocks of western G Street (as well as the 500 block of eastern G Street) are mixed use—they continue to have many owner-occupied homes of one and two stories. Therefore, the transition to a larger urban scale is important and **we believe increased setbacks from the property line should be considered in addition to upper story step backs.**

Railroad Tracks. The east side of the Hibbert and Coop blocks are adjacent to the railroad tracks. While across the tracks from the Hibbert block there are commercial uses, the Coop/strip mall block has single family residences across the tracks, so care should be given to how Main Street Medium structures may appear from that perspective. In addition, any development must consider the increasing noise that seems to be generated by the railroad. Perhaps any development could assist with mitigating this audible irritant. We hope this issue can be addressed within the upcoming environmental review. More importantly, care should be given to rail safety issues as more activity is drawn to these blocks with new

development. Enhanced crossing protection may enable the ability to designate this portion of the rail corridor as a Quiet Zone--something that would be greatly appreciated.

Public Space. We applaud the recognition for public space/plaza within the 600 block of G Street and hope public space would also be considered within the 500 block.

Contents of Draft Plan vs. Draft Zoning Code. The Downtown Plan suggests at least a portion of the 600 Block of east G Street be placed in a "Designated Special Area" to recognize both its opportunities and challenges. The closure of Hibbert Lumber occurred after publication of the draft plan—**we recommend that the 500 block of east G Street also be included within the Designated Special Area.** That said, it is unclear what this designation actually portends. The draft plan contains illustrations which reflects some thoughtful transition in this area from Neighborhood Small to Main Street Medium, especially on the parcel just south of Sweet Briar. However, these illustrations have no regulatory authority and the draft zoning code does not require any transition other than a 4th story step back. **We recommend that specific standards be articulated for the transition in areas of the northeast G Street blocks that are across from single family homes on Sweet Briar and west G Street. Consideration should be given to a 3-story limit with a 3rd story step back when directly across from single family dwellings in addition to increased set back from the property line while allowing other portions of the site to be Main Street Medium. We also request that consideration be given that buildings facing Sweet Briar be residential.**

Attached to this letter is an appendix regarding the draft zoning code which includes a list of questions and issues of a more technical nature that we submit for your consideration. We formatted these as an attachment due to their detailed nature.

500 Block of East G Street small structures/homes. Different from 600 block of G Street (Food Coop), the eastern 500 block (Hibbert block) contains single story dwellings facing G Street. Most have been converted to office/business use. However, one of the remaining single-family homes is owner-occupied and recommended for a historic designation (as is the Hibbert building). Should this new zoning designation be approved, what is the fate of this (potentially historic) single-family home? Does it become a non-conforming use? While additional setbacks are required when developing adjacent to historic structures, clearly **special care and creativity will be required if a development of scale is to be proposed adjacent to this and other small-scale structures on the east side of G Street.**

Yolo Federal Credit Union Parcel. Also shown as Main Street Medium is the credit union's parking lot and open parcel just north of the current structure. The relatively new credit union building is two stories. This designation on the open parcel would allow for up to 4 stories (with a 4th story step back) between the new 2 story credit union and a single-story dwelling (now converted to a business use) that would be allowed to be redeveloped to 2 stories under its Neighborhood Small Designation. **This does not seem to reflect an appropriate transition and we request that allowed height be decreased and that the set back from the property line be increased.**

Required Street. The draft plan map (pg. 74) shows a "required street" in the middle of the eastern side of the 600 block of G Street. Admittedly, we may not fully understand what is meant by this, but it seems

that **access to a redeveloped portion of this block should be within the private development and not a public street**, especially as it would not be aligned with either the 6th Street or 7th Street intersections.

Pedestrian Improvements. The draft specific plan proposes many pedestrian and intersection improvements within the downtown area. **We believe pedestrian improvements are warranted at 6th and G Street which serves as a principal pedestrian corridor from Old North to the Coop shopping center.** In addition, should the 600 block (strip mall) be developed, we would hope there will be connections to the H Street pedestrian corridor and the neighborhoods of north I and J Streets. For the connection to the H Street corridor we would appreciate study of improvements that may assist with this objective (e.g., crosswalks, bulbouts, etc.)

Bars and Night Clubs. The draft code allows bars and night clubs to be allowed with a conditional use permit. We believe **bars and nightclubs should be below Fifth Street and not be allowed in the North G Street area.**

Street reconfiguration and tree canopy. The draft specific plan suggests some reconfiguration of North G Street to improve bicycle and pedestrian circulation. We applaud this goal, but ask that it be approached while maintaining our street tree program which results in an extraordinary canopy throughout the neighborhood. Also, some of the sidewalks in this area have historic imprints (i.e., original lot number and dates, one being from 1913). We hope steps can be taken to preserve these markings in some manner.

Other broader Issues

Conservation Overlay District. The draft plan recommends eliminating the current “master” district and replacing that with individual neighborhood districts. Of special note is the recommendation for special transition areas between the downtown commercial core and Old North and Old East neighborhoods. While such an approach is intriguing and its goals welcomed, as previously mentioned, the current draft zoning code does not reflect this approach. So, the timing of completing the work necessary to convert to a new system is important. It appears that until such work is complete the current Old North neighborhood design guidelines would remain in place, with the understanding that the North G Street area would be subject to what is ultimately approved in the new zoning code.

What becomes of Old North? Old North was born out of the current conservation district and this draft plan recommends new boundaries for individual districts. The new boundaries show North G Street becoming part of the proposed Depot District. Given that Old North is partially a city construct, we need to discuss expectations for and of the Association. While we believe our small neighborhood community should stay intact, a conversation about this is warranted.

Parking. The draft zoning code does not include any minimum requirements to provide parking. Certainly, much of the rationale for undertaking a new downtown plan is to create more housing opportunities adjacent to transit and major employers. Housing in such locations should reduce single occupant vehicle trips. The elimination of parking requirements may also assist in making projects more

affordable or at least more feasible for developers. We believe that as we undergo a transition to a less car reliant culture, many who occupy new downtown housing will still own automobiles. There may be far less single occupancy vehicle trips to work, but in our suburban location, many individuals will still choose to own cars. And, to state the obvious, these cars will need to be stored (i.e., parked) somewhere.

Old North is proud to have one of the least exclusionary parking districts in the city. Certain spaces are designated with a marked “N” for residents with permits and the remainder of curbside parking is open anyone without restrictions. Given the substantial number of the proposed housing units reflected within the draft downtown plan and the provision that there are no minimum parking standards for these projects, it should be expected that parking demands in adjacent neighborhoods will increase. **Old North has long offered to partner with the city to develop management practices for this increased demand. It is our hope that such an approach may also result in investment in needed traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.** It is our expectations that a parking strategy will be developed prior to major building projects being approved. We are also concerned that three of the five sites identified as “Reserved Sites for Additional Parking” are within Old North. We believe these sites should be conceived with a much more vibrant use than automobile parking.

Review of projects. A tenet of the draft plan is to create certainty for both developers and neighbors as to what is allowed and what can be expected from projects in different parts of the downtown planning area. In most cases this allows for staff approval if projects meet the new zoning requirements. This certainty can then lower costs and make projects more feasible. **While there are many positive elements in the new form-based code approach, we still have a desire to comment on proposals—especially those with transition issues as mentioned above.** This is not raised in a spirit of opposition, but rather to enable conversations to work toward projects that do not have unintended negative consequences.

Conclusion

Again, thank you for this opportunity to comment on portions of the draft specific plan. We look forward to future engagement with this project and assisting with its successful adoption and implementation.

Sincerely,

John Meyer
President, Old North Davis Neighborhood Association

Attachment: Zoning Code Appendix

OLD NORTH DAVIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Zoning Code Appendix

Questions & Comments

Section 40.13.060 – Table Explaining Relationship to Chapter 40, Zoning

The table states the current ZC 40.13A on Downtown and Traditional Neighborhood Overlay District would be replaced by new Downtown Code. The draft plan indicates a new conservation overlay district would be formed for Old North, possibly excluding some or all of the North G Street area, and new design standards would be developed.

1. Clarify whether the existing Design Guidelines remain in place for Old North until the new overlay district is established and design standards are officially adopted.

Section 40.13.090 -- Neighborhood Small

Applies to the west side of the 500 and 600 blocks of G Street, except the credit union parcel

1. What is the maximum allowed building height?
Section 40.13.090D indicates a 2-story height limit w/ 24' to top plate with note explaining "refinements" to building height are specified in Section 40.14.070. **Section 40.14.070H** for Multiplex-small indicates a maximum 3 story height w/ 32' to top plate. **Section 40.13.020B** reads in part "If there is a conflict between any standards, the more restrictive shall apply."
2. Why is a 0' setback allowed for the front and street side setback on a corner lots in Neighborhood-small district? Pulling a corner building back from the corner creates a more open feel and is more consistent with the traditional residential scale.
3. Need clarification of standard for building placement in the "Façade Zone" (**40.13.090 E**). what do these mean: Front 70% minimum and side street 50% minimum?
4. What is the rear (from alley) and street side setback for allowed 3 story multiplex buildings and for allowed roof top rooms?
5. **Section 40.13.090 F** requires 5' min rear setback for parking. In an alley, is a parking pad required to have this setback?
6. Are garages/carports allowed accessory structures?
7. What standards should be included to provide for the appropriate storage of waste/recycling containers? The storage of such bins can become problematic with denser housing types as each unit may have its own bins.
8. Certain commercial uses are permitted or may be approved with an AUP. What performance and/or design standards will ensure compatibility with the adjoining residential uses? (For

example -- lights, noise, hours of operation, ventilation hoods, delivery vehicles for 5,000 SF of retail or restaurant with outdoor seating along W side of G Street)

9. To help ensure compatibility with residential uses, should commercial uses on a corner lot be required to have an orientation towards G Street, not towards the alley or towards 6th Street or 7th Street?

Section 40.13.120 -- Main Street Medium

Applies to the east side of the 500 and 600 blocks of G Street; the parcel at G Street and Sweet Briar; the Hibbert Lumber yard; the credit union parcel at the NW corner 5th + G; and along G Street south of 5th Street

1. The intent section indicates "small to none front setbacks." Given the smaller scale buildings across G Street, is a zero front setback appropriate?
2. Need clarification of standard for building placement in the "Façade Zone" (40.13.120 E). what do these mean: Front 80% minimum and side street 70% minimum?
3. Commercial uses that operate at night have greater potential for conflict with the primarily residential uses of the neighborhood small zone on the west side of G Street and north of Sweet Briar. What mechanisms are proposed to minimize the potential nuisances between Main Street uses/buildings and adjacent residential uses? Are there standards addressing details such as noise and hours of operation?
4. Are there lighting standards? Given proximity of residential uses across G Street, what standards are there to minimize the potential nuisance associated lighting more typically found with Main Street uses/buildings?
5. Are bars and nightclubs appropriate conditional uses across from the primarily residential uses of the Neighborhood-small zone? Should such uses be concentrated below 5th street in the central downtown area?
6. What is the definition of the permitted use "industrial artisan"?
7. An AUP would be required for retail uses greater than 10,000 sf. Is the 10,000-sf threshold for a single retail use or for total space in a new development?
8. The plan identifies the north end of the existing shopping center to Sweet Briar is "Designated Special Area F." How is this special plan designation addressed in the zoning code? What special treatment may be needed along Sweet Briar as transition to the Neighborhood-small designation north of Sweet Briar?
9. What standards should be included to provide for the appropriate storage of waste/recycling containers? The storage of such bins can become problematic with denser housing types as each unit may have its own bins.
10. There are some permitted uses that pose the potential for difficult integration next to a residential area. Should size limits be considered? For example, a restaurant or a cinema/theater.

Section 40.14.070 -- Building Types In Neighborhood Small Zone

1. Carriage House
 - The code describes a carriage house as typically in the rear of a parcel. Can it be in the front or a street side yard?
 - While typically residential, commercial uses are allowed. Should access to a commercial use in a carriage house or similar separate structure be from G St and not from the alley?
2. Detached SF
 - A partial 3rd story is permitted. In **section 40.14.080D**, a “rooftop room” is permitted. A rooftop room may be 14’ in height w/ minimum of 75% glazing or opening on each side, side setbacks of 10’ minimum and rear setback of 15’. Is this appropriate where adjacent to Old North houses across alley?
3. Duplex Stacked and side-by-side
 - Same as above with regard to roof top room
4. Cottage Court
 - Does the “3 to 9 units” refer to buildings or residential units? This is unclear as the section indicate one duplex or triplex unit is allowed.
 - The section calls for entrances off the shared court and permits units on a corner to have entry from the side street. Should entry treatments be required along all street facing units?
5. Small Multiplex 3 to 6 units
 - Maximum # of stories is 3. As previously discussed, this conflicts with Section 40.13.090D. If 3 stories are permitted, should an increased setback for the 3rd story be required?
 - If a 6-unit multiplex is built, can an accessory carriage house also be built?
 - The code permits shared as well as individual entries. Is this appropriate given the traditional residential design found along G Street is for individual entry to each use?

Section 40.14.070 -- Building Types In Main Street Medium

1. Detached SF and duplex buildings are not permitted in the Main Street Medium zone. Are the existing structures considered “non-conforming”? If yes, what does that mean for a property owner who wishes to do an addition and/or remodel? For example, **section 40.14.080A** indicates

all buildings must have use “tripartite” architecture in a renovation. If a front addition was proposed to an existing building, would this apply?

Section 40.14.080 -- Massing, Facades, Architectural Elements

Two potential historic structures are proposed in the Main Street Medium zone along G Street – 500 G and 516 G. This section describes standards for adjacency to historic structures including:

1. Height of the 1st floor of a new building would be required to match height of 1st floor of adjacent historic structure.
2. A new building would not be required to have a side yard setback except for a 10' side setback for a minimum distance of 25' from the building front or to a point aligned with the front of the historic building. Is this adequate next to a smaller house-form structure?
3. A new building would be required to stepback a 3rd and 4th story.
 - For a “Block Form Building,” which is the type allowed in MSM zone, there is no required front stepback for the 3rd and 4th story. Would this be appropriate next to smaller house form single story structures?
 - There is a required side stepback for upper stories and provisions for building “wings.” But the graphic is a bit confusing. Is a two-story wing permitted to have a zero side setback? Is it possible for a 4-story building to have 0 side setback after a distance of 45' from the front property line? The diagram needs to be clearer.
4. How the Hibbert property along the railroad tracks would be dealt with is not clear. It is not clear how the Zoning Code's standards for adjacency to historic structures might apply on this property which shares a rear property line with potential historic resources. Further attention is needed for this property.

General Question about Development Review Process

The proposed plan and zoning code would substantially decrease opportunities for public review and comment on development proposals. It is not clear what notification would be provided to Old North of development proposals along G Street or across 5th Street. Certain uses require either an AUP or a CUP but the new plan and zoning code eliminate a review public process for project design. What notification and opportunities to comment will be available?

Draft Downtown Plan comments submitted online

Name & Date	Comment
Georgina Valencia 10/21/2019	Housing in a downtown area (i.e. mixed use) will help to create a vital downtown. All of our communities projects that offer housing should have some percent of Affordable Housing included. Perhaps low/mod or middle income should be considered as opposed to eli/vli income to make any housing in the downtown area feel inclusive.
Georgina Valencia	Interesting concept and I have read and listened to the conversation on this type of zoning approach. Perhaps in a selected area like the downtown is a good place to start. I do think our Building Department is behind the times and a change like this could really pose a challenge for managers and productivity.
Ron Oertel 10/25/2019	<p>I'm not seeing what's "wrong" with downtown, as it currently exists. Nor is it clear exactly who/what is driving these proposed changes.</p> <p>There appears to be a concerted effort to change downtown (from a commercial "destination"), into a semi-residential neighborhood, with multi-story, semi-residential structures. The only thing that this will accomplish is to "replace" existing customers (who live throughout the city, and beyond) with customers who are fortunate enough to be able to afford the new residences. This seems like a colossal, but purposeful (and unjustified) mistake. (Again, going back to the lack of any understandable goal, in the first place.)</p> <p>As part of this effort (to diminish downtown's primary purpose of providing a commercial hub, for the city), the proposed diminishment of parking would (unfortunately) help achieve this undesirable goal. As would the insertion of semi-residential structures, reaching 5 stories in height.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the city has already approved a large amount of student housing over the past few years - apparently without any consideration of current and upcoming SACOG/RHNA requirements. I'm not sure if this now puts the city in a bind, regarding space to meet these requirements. If so, then allowing residences downtown to help meet those requirements is about the only justification I can (possibly) see, to change downtown into a semi-residential district. (Assuming that these new units also meet the appropriate RHNA Affordability categories.)</p> <p>Some claim that the city is experiencing a "shortage" of commercial space. In light of that, it seems particularly unwise to continue to compromise existing commercial sites, via the insertion of residences. In addition to the loss of future opportunities to expand commercial activities, there are some commercial uses which are not compatible with residences. One example is the compromise of downtown as an "entertainment" destination, if residences are housed above such businesses.</p>

	<p>There is also a somewhat different mix of city services (and costs), to serve residences (vs. businesses).</p> <p>And of course, the insertion of residences will virtually guarantee that parking will become much more challenging, for existing patrons of downtown. New residents will have vehicles, visitors with vehicles, and deliveries. In addition, new driveway cuts (to serve new residences) will decrease the amount of street parking, and will also impact pedestrians using sidewalks and cyclists using roadways.</p> <p>Up until this point, Davis has been unique among many valley towns in that it has protected its downtown, largely by discouraging peripheral commercial development. As a result, Davis' downtown appears to be both thriving, and relatively safe. Unfortunately, it appears that some are now attempting to irrevocably change Davis' unique/cherished downtown, for reasons that are not clear (or justified).</p> <p>I sincerely hope that the city reconsiders its plans.</p>
<p>Jordan Crumley 10/30/2019</p>	<p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>I am the owner of 212 University. I have reviewed the Downtown Davis Specific Plan, and I wanted to voice some concerns for the University Ave-Rice Lane corridor vision. Specifically on University Ave, there are a number of non-conforming properties and commercial multi-family properties that without suitable zoning approvals will be a major missed opportunity, in my humble opinion, to provide quality and affordable housing for Davis residents.</p> <p>Given the proximity to campus, the dearth of available apartments, and affordable housing it makes sense to me to allow existing commercial property owners to be able to provide some relief to these issues.</p> <p>I would love to be able to reinvest in my property and build more new units, but given the complicated zoning in-place I do not see how that is possible. I strongly hope that you will reconsider the plans for University Ave and allow higher density for existing multi-family units.</p> <p>I am not interested at all in disrupting the fabric of the street, but I think we can build in a way that a newer building would fit in well with the character of the street while providing residents with highly efficient and new construction units. And provide more units to the city to help reduce the cost burden that folks are facing. Simply put: with below 1% vacancy rates we need more supply.</p>

	<p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Jordan Crumley</p>
Chris Williams 11/2/2019	<p>Hello I'm a property owner on University Ave and I cannot for the life of me understand why the city would not include University Ave and the entire area between B street and UCD in this zoning update. This area is a hodge-podge of PD's and non conforming structures. Isn't the whole point of a revision zoning plan to bring consistency and uniformity to the areas being rezoned? On University Ave between 2nd and 3rd Street you have 4 small apartment buildings that are currently zoned single family. As property owners in this area we cannot even make the needed investments into our own property without attempting an onerous, lengthy and expensive zoning application which at the conclusion of there is no guarantee of acceptance. Leaving the University Ave area zoning unchanged is a missed opportunity and huge mistake. Please reconsider making this area neighborhood medium zone.</p>
Elizabeth Haley 11/11/2019	<p>I very rarely come downtown, there are so few businesses I'm interested in; they are all coffee houses, restaurants and not much else. RE Parking: Why doesn't the City I'd Davis purchase the vacant Ace Hardware building, demolish it and construct a municipal parking lot. Make all three lots city owned and charge a parking fee. It would bring in some revenue and eliminate parking meters. I'd pay to not have the hassle of searching for a spot.</p> <p>Also, downtown has become dirty, no business pride. Chamber of Commerce is useless.</p>
Jeremy Howard 11/11/2019	<p>It appears that there is so much focus on students and little to none on the changing demographics that see long time families forced out of the community.</p> <p>There are two additional factors that are creating greater issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Single family homes being used as dorm style living by students which has driven up rent and property values considerably. 2) Tax policies which encourage passing homes onto family trusts to keep the low tax rate. Thus encouraging rental properties and lack of churn for family renters and potential home owners.
Frank Reyes 11/14/2019	<p>Overall I approve of the concepts listed in the plan for downtown mobility. However, I would suggest consideration be given to remove access of certain streets to private automobiles and dedicating these areas to bicycles, pedestrians and/or transit. This is a similar scheme observed in "Superblocks" seen in Barcelona, Spain.</p> <p>The implementation of a city-wide shared cargo bike system, perhaps in conjunction with JUMP, can reduce the need for private vehicle parking spaces while promoting the public health of the population through an active lifestyle.</p>

Frank Reyes	I agree with the suggestion that mid-rise buildings, or higher, be allowed in the downtown area because denser housing can be supportive of local businesses. The removal of cumbersome regulations, such as parking minimums, can perhaps encourage the development of mixed-use buildings with cheaper up-front costs.
Robert Fung 12/4/2019	This is mainly a question about form based code not about the downtown plan specifically. I noticed that there is not a "single family zoning" in the downtown plan. That the smallest form was "neighborhood small". My question is in form based codes is it possible to have a "single family" form and has such a form been used in other cities when they adopted form-based codes. Thank you.
Georgina Valencia 12/13/2019	As I followed the DPAC process there was little reference, if any, to housing. In this final document there is a positive reference to housing. There is no question that the downtown will change. As commercial properties are purchased by outside commercial organizations there will be a need to go up and to increase density. As this happens, and I believe the change is positive, housing and more specifically affordable housing whether for sale or rental needs to be a part of the equation.
Georgina Valencia	We need a Chamber of Commerce or a Business Organization that actually designates what business is wanted in the downtown area. Then a plan needs to be created to attract those business's. Folsom did such a thing and ended up with Kikoman, Intel, Cal Iso and other business. Davis needs to do the same.
David Kane 12/13/2019	<p>There's an error in the map entitled "Historic Resources in the University Avenue-Rice Lane Neighborhood" (Figure 5.31 on pg. 129).</p> <p>The property designated #3 is the MacDonald House, the original structure on the farm.that was later subdivided to form the neighborhood. The map lists the address as 337 B Street, which was the case when the home was designated as a Merit Resource. Some years later the seven townhouses known as Central Park West were constructed on two lots in the middle of the block and the City asked the owners to surrender 337 and accept a new address. The house itself hasn't moved since it was built in 1894 but its current address is 397 B Street.</p>
John Slater 12/18/2019	Hello, I'm writing to support much taller buildings in Davis. I work in Sproul Hall, which is 9 stories. We need more buildings in Davis this height. I think that the Rice Lane area, especially between 1st and 3rd should be developed with very tall buildings. I'm not worried about set backs. What I'm worried about is how long it takes me to get across town on a bike. Already, if I have to run an errand near the Mace Nugget and then have an appointment at the hospital, it's nearly too much to do on a bike. The footprint of town should be shrinking (perhaps via a land bank that would buy up properties at the extremities of town). We need to get a lot taller and more dense. Let's take the gloves off and really build a livable town that doesn't act as if it were a village. Let's grow up! I also don't care about parking. Parking is nearly always available within a few blocks of where I want to go. That means there's too much parking. Let's make parking expensive and rare. Davis is turning out to be just like any other town, full of ugly single-family houses spread all over the place. Let's do something different.
Katie Manzer	My family owns and operates PDQ Fingerprinting at 216 F St in downtown Davis. We have been in business for nearly 40 years and are a service provider for the residents of Davis. We own the building and have planed to develop the property. We are

1/11/2020	<p>excited to redevelop and improve our building which would enhance the downtown and keep our customers coming to us to help them pack and ship packages, complete notaries and fingerprints and pick up their mail from our mailbox rentals. The city did a survey and is considering designating our property as a merit resource which would inhibit our ability to develop our property. Our building does not fall into the description of a merit resource building as it is a cinder block building built in the mid 1900's. The building housed doctors offices, dentists offices and a chiropractors office before we took over with our shipping, notary and fingerprinting services. This building did not house a historic figure and is not a type of historic architecture and we believe it does not meet the specifications for a merit resource building. We would like the city not to consider our building a merit resource as this would limit our flexibility and our families future with our property we've worked hard to maintain and successfully own. We have positively contributed to the city and specifically our downtown and plan on continuing to do so in the future. We hope you factor this information into your consideration.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Katie Manzer	<p>Being a downtown business owner and property owner, downtown parking is always a hot topic and issue. I also was on the DDBA for a few years and paid parking was always on our agenda and never was resolved on my watch and is still up for consideration. Because parking is so sparse downtown it doesn't make sense to me to loose any parking, it's just not practical. Even though our town is a huge biking city it does not mean everyone uses their bikes when coming downtown. This is unfortunate but can not be controlled. The downtown business owners have yet to decide if we should have paid parking for fear that it would detour customers from coming downtown to do business. Having even less parking would definitely make it harder to come downtown. It's already quite frustrating having to circle blocks to find parking, which causes congestion, wear and tear on our roads and often road rage. This is especially hard for our business that requires customers to use their cars because they are bringing boxes to our office to ship. I don't see how losing parking to provide walking spaces will help any business downtown. It may cater to some restaurants or bars but if it's not going to help all of the downtown then it's exclusive and would harm hard working business owners. I think we first need to solve our issue of paid parking or no paid parking before we decide to just get rid of parking.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
Landon Christensen 1/11/2020	<p>216 F St Davis CA 95616</p> <p>My family has owned and operated PDQ for nearly 40 years. Our building does not have historic architecture, therefore does not fall under the description of a merit resource. It's a cinder block building that's been a doctors office and chiropractors office, and now a shipping outlet. We hope the city does not consider our building a historic resource, as it will inhibit our ability to develop our property in the future.</p>
Landon Christensen	<p>As a downtown Davis business owner and member of DDBA, parking is an important issue. It would be a major inconvenience for our business (PDQ) and many others, if the downtown had no parking, and was bike/pedestrian only. Especially for our customers that often need to drop off or pick up heavy boxes. Even though Davis is a bike centric city, it doesn't make sense to</p>

	make it a bike only city.
Judith Recchio 1/11/2020	<p>Additional parking needs to be provided for the Amtrak station and to visit downtown. My husband and I frequently take the train to the Bay Area. These are sometimes overnight trips where we have suitcases or overnight bags. We have not always been able to find parking at the train station, and there is no other way to park overnight downtown or near the train station. Uber/Lyft is not always an option, has not been reliable and we should not have to incur this additional expense. Walking is not an option - it's 2 miles to our home, and that is not walkable with luggage. Nor is it reasonable in the rain, dark or bad weather.</p> <p>We need additional parking at or near the train station to encourage more citizens to use the train to go to the Bay Area. There should be an "overflow" lot available, or the ability to reserve parking spaces. We have been forced to drive at times because we can't park our car.</p> <p>Also related to parking is the traffic it creates in the downtown core. My husband and I were returning to town and decided to have dinner downtown on a Thursday night. The traffic downtown was awful, no parking was available, and after spending 20 minutes in traffic trying to get through downtown, we decided to leave downtown and eat elsewhere.</p> <p>Riding a bike into downtown is just not feasible for everyone (whether due to age or physical limitations and then adding weather as another factor), and Uber/Lyft is not a reliable or affordable option for frequent trips. I would like Davis to build or allow the building of a few parking structures on the downtown border to provide the necessary parking. Other options include using a system like Spot Hero, reservations for parking, or an on-demand public transportation system that operates 7 days a week for trips within Davis (like that being expanded in Sacramento).</p>
Gary Christensen 1/11/2020	<p>Our building at 216 F Street was recently added to a list of proposed merit resource properties. I'd like to explain why I disagree with this proposal.</p> <p>The building does not have any meaningful Historic relevance. It wasn't built in a particularly significant time in history and it wasn't occupied by a Historic person or business.</p> <p>It's not the most attractive building. The exterior is a very simple rectangular design made entirely of cinder blocks. I would go so far as to describe the building as "forgettable".</p> <p>In the past the City has recommended we make updates to the building to make it fit in better with the rest of the buildings on our block. We agree with the city and would like to update our building at some point in the future but if the building is designated as Historic it would make updating it much more difficult.</p> <p>While I appreciate the idea that our building is being considered to be a Merit resource I think it would benefit us and the City to</p>

	<p>not go forward with that plan.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>- Gary Christensen</p>
<p>Laura Christensen 1/12/2020</p>	<p>As the building owners of 216 F Street in downtown Davis, we were surprised to find that our building had been identified through a 2019 survey as a possible Merit Resource building. We were not notified of this survey, We only found out about it by reading the Downtown Davis Specific Plan. It would seem to us that the property owners should be notified when a possible zoning change is being made to their property.</p> <p>We bought the building at 216 F Street from the original owner's son, Malcolm Weaver. It was our understanding in speaking to Mrs. Weaver, that she and her husband built the building in the late 1940's - early 1950's as a medical building for a doctor and dentist. They attended the California State Fair where they saw a new building material, cinder block, and thought this would be a good material to use to build their new building. They also built their home on Russell Blvd from the same cinder block construction. In fact, when we would go to her house to pay the rent, it was like walking into our office building downtown - her home was a duplicate of our building. And we found out this past week, that the Davis Planning Commission approved tearing down her cinder block home on Russell Blvd. and building four condominiums in its place. If her home wasn't considered historical, why should our building be considered historical?</p> <p>Our downtown building is a rectangular cinder block building, set back 11 feet from the sidewalk. In the past, the city has wanted us to bring the building forward, so it matches the other buildings on the street. We would not be able to do this if it was considered a Merit Resource. We also don't feel the building has any of the criteria to make it a merit resource: no significant contribution to history of Davis, no significant person, no special architecture and no archaeological or anthropological importance.</p> <p>We would prefer that our property not be considered a Merit Resource. We would prefer the flexibility to develop our property as we see fit.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Lynn & Laura Christensen</p>
<p>Laura Christensen</p>	<p>As a business owner for the last 39 years in downtown Davis, I have seen many changes. The biggest change is the loss of retail stores. This is mostly due to internet shopping. The downtown has changed to be more of a restaurant downtown, with fewer shops.</p>

	<p>Another change is the homeless (drug addicts, etc.) problem. I have customers who will not come downtown anymore because of the pan handling, yelling, people sleeping on the sidewalks, etc. We have to monitor our property to keep trespassers from sleeping near our front doors. These trespassers will even move our outdoor lights to keep them from shining in their eyes as they try to sleep. My husband has to hose urine off the front and back of our building daily, because they use the building walls as a urinal. He also has to sweep up all the trash they leave behind.</p> <p>We frequently have to call the police to help with vagrants using our hose to shower, sitting on our property to smoke pot and other random acts. The police can't do much, other than try to move them on.</p> <p>It's frustrating as a business owner, because we have to waste time and energy dealing with the homeless situation. I even had a very scary experience this past summer, when I (a 64 year old woman) politely asked a group of homeless people sitting on the sidewalk out front to move to the bench down the street. They were yelling profanity, using our hose, smoking dope, etc. My customers were afraid to come into my business. So I bravely went out and asked them to move along, and they got in my face and said they had every right to be there and smoking pot was legal and I had no rights, they had all the rights. They were a really scary bunch of guys. I should have called the police. They finally moved on when I told them I was calling the police. This incident really scared me. Why should I have to be scared in my own business? I pay property taxes and sales tax and city business tax and DDBA assessment district tax, but I have no rights? This doesn't seem right.</p> <p>So I do appreciate the plan for a glorious downtown, but I do think the homeless situation needs to be addressed first. The drug addicts need to be helped with re-hab programs. If nothing is done, then the glorious downtown you have planned will be taken over by homeless squatters.</p>
Laura Christensen	<p>I am a business owner of PDQ on F Street in downtown. My husband and I started our business in 1981. We are celebrating 39 years in business this month. We have seen lots of change as we have gone to work each day for the past 39 years.</p> <p>What I am concerned about in the new downtown plan is the disappearance of parking. I can see that you are trying to get people out of their cars and on to their bikes. I have walked to work every day for the past 20 years. It's a nearly 3 mile walk and I do it for my exercise. But I couldn't do it without my husband's help. He takes my clothes to change into when I get to work and he gives me a ride home. People still need their cars, even if they are walking or biking.</p> <p>In our business especially (a retail shipping and mail receiving company), our customers need to be able to park close by to bring in their packages to ship out. We also receive packages for people and they need a car to take their packages home. This requires parking close by, so they don't have to carry heavy things very far.</p>

	<p>I'm concerned about the "shared streets". It seems we will lose all the parking on 3rd St. from A-H and all the parking on E St from 1st to 3rd. And F Street (our street) will only have parking on one side of the street. The E Street plaza looks as if all the parking will be gone from that location and some of the parking will be gone from the G street plaza,. Where will everyone park? We need more parking structures and we need to keep the on street parking. This is so important to a vibrant downtown. Our customers need to be able to drive downtown and easily find a place to park so they can visit businesses. Otherwise - they will take their shopping elsewhere.</p>
<p>Laura Christensen 1/12/2020</p>	<p>I was reading on Table 8H pg 241 about a new proposed regulation that no natural gas will be allowed for downtown - including restaurants. Electric only would be proposed. I have never seen a chef prepare food on an electric stove. It seems that gas stoves are the preferred method for a restaurant. How can the city regulate what a chef can use to cook his food on? This seems unreasonable.</p> <p>I would suggest less regulation and more freedom for businesses. Life would be easier for everyone.</p>
<p>Nicki Knutson 1/13/2020</p>	<p>As a 45+ year resident of Davis, I am not in favor of the proposed downtown plan. I do not think that a plan that favors pedestrians, bikes and mass transit over cars is a good idea. My understanding is that all downtown parking lots will be removed and replaced with 3-5 story housing and public gathering areas. I think this will result in fewer rather than more people coming downtown which will have a negative effect on downtown merchants. Reconstructing E Street and 3rd Street to shared streets will further discourage drivers from coming downtown. If paid parking is implemented, this will be a further incentive to shop and dine elsewhere. I also think that the plan favors young, mobile people at the expense of seniors and disabled people.</p> <p>If you want people from other cities to come to downtown Davis, where are they supposed to park their cars? Where are the residents of the new housing projects supposed to park their cars? Parking for the Wednesday night Farmer's Market is already a nightmare. These changes will make it impossible.</p> <p>I am also not in favor of adding bulbouts to several downtown intersections. In order for drivers to turn right, they must make a wide turn and partially enter the oncoming traffic lane. These bulbouts are also hard to see at night and are a danger to both drivers and bicyclists.</p> <p>I also do not think that the height and density of the 3-5 story buildings will create the small town ambiance which would make people want to come downtown.</p>

	<p>I am disappointed that there has not been more public notice about the proposed changes in the form of informational meetings, newspaper articles, facebook and nextdoor posts, citywide mailings, etc. I do not think most people are aware that the proposed changes are so drastic. It certainly surprised me when I looked at the draft. I am interested in knowing what the timeline will be for adoption of this plan after the January 14th deadline for public comment passes.</p> <p>I think that implementing this plan will be a big mistake and will have the opposite effect than the one that is intended.</p>
Robert Mustard 1/13/2020	<p>My wife and I own and reside at 549 I Street and have a huge concern about the Land Use Designation for the old Hibbert's site and the current Co-op site. If 4 or 5 stories is allowed, the privacy of our backyard, which includes a pool and spa, and our home will totally invaded. Please tell me this has been discussed in light of the Track-side Project controversy and some sort of mitigation was proposed for our 70 year old original Mustard Family Homestead. Part of the reason we love this location is the large backyard and privacy it affords.</p>
LESLIE CRENNNA 1/13/2020	<p>ZERO WATER should be the goal:</p> <p>I highly support developing a district level graywater reuse system in downtown. I am concerned, however, that we might be missing an opportunity by not actually doing exploration and preparation for a district level system as part of this current planning process. How would this impact the "form" of the buildings? How can we best prepare for this?</p> <p>State level code for greywater system setbacks, clearances, and access might be referenced in infrastructure section (or Built Environment?) especially if new construction is to be expected to be greywater ready. Water fixtures and appliances should be located in proximity to largest exterior landscaping areas for residential units that are self-contained (not part of a reuse district) and barriers such as concrete walkways should include conduit for graywater system discharge lines.</p> <p>A district water reuse system would likely benefit from certain pre-existing drainage and plumbing configurations, for instance dual plumbing required for all new construction.</p>
LESLIE CRENNNA	<p>INFRASTRUCTURE: In Chapter 7 p 174, Rainwater harvesting is not specifically mentioned as a possible alternate water source for indoor use. Rainwater cannot offset potable use efficiently using storage alone. (Page 177 suffers from vagueness; needs more headings/labels.)</p> <p>The Existing Water Demand number of 130 gpcd is the average for all of Davis across primarily residential neighborhoods. It appears you have calculated a number that relates more closely to the quantity of water that is used by the actual occupants downtown: 67 gpcd. Make the difference clear in bigger text. How was 67gpcd calculated?</p> <p>Water Reuse Scenarios</p>

	<p>Page 183: Business As Usual option should not be presented as an option. I understand the need to set a baseline but that should be presented in introductory text only.</p> <p>Sustainable Reuse and Resilient Reuse options do not include shower or lavatory graywater systems. This is a huge oversight</p> <p>In addition, the Resilient Reuse scenario should assert an indoor reuse element. This has also been completely omitted. The difference between the second and third scenarios is marginally different and should offer a clearer choice.</p> <p>The table on page 183 names "INTERIOR LAUNDRY" in the Recycled Water option column, but this is misleading considering the label in the Reuse Purpose option column is worded "EXTERIOR IRRIGATION." The descriptions on the previous page seem to indicate that the two are identical but they have different headings in the table.</p> <p>p. 186: The table should be improved. Present potable and non-potable demand first, then the total demand. Make sure to include the gpcd in the table as well.</p> <p>The water savings in acre feet due to Laundry to Landscape graywater systems appears to be rather minimal, I suppose because of the essentially non-residential nature of downtown. How was this number calculated? If both shower and laundry systems are used the number would be higher. More information here would be appreciated.</p> <p>How was 7 acre feet of water saved calculated as part of a district scale system to offset indoor non-potable demand? The column for scenario three does not actually subtract that 7 acres from the total. Seems to be a mistake.</p> <p>page 187: The circle charts are a bit confusing: Notes for Figures 7.7, 7.8, and 7.9: Scenario two says graywater produced will be used for irrigation, but the irrigation demand on page 187 circle charts indicates that irrigation DEMAND is now 0%. The offsets total 18% in the third scenario are being applied to Indoor-Non-Potable uses (only because the similar color wedges are applied just outside the Indoor-Non-Potable part of the ring) but not in the table on page 186. This is very confusing. Numbers don't add up and categories are unclear or mismatching.</p>
LESLIE CRENNNA	<p>p. 242: Table 9H Action 5: Set Target Reduction Figures for Water Conservation and Graywater Reuse: 5A. Graywater plan: Integrated water collection and reuse through descending uses and support landscaped greenery (e.g. shade trees and interstitial habitat). Plan for graywater integration with landscaping, especially for multi-story buildings (look to San Francisco ordinances).</p>

	<p>Why isn't this already part of the plan and possibly in the form section (not sure)?</p> <p>5B. Consider requiring Net Zero Water in Downtown: capture and reuse all water, e.g., dishwashing systems, appliance and mechanical system recapture, stormwater, etc.</p> <p>5C. Embed graywater ordinance and requirements for all downtown buildings in zoning code.</p> <p>Why isn't this included in the scenarios?</p>
<p>Diane Swann 1/13/2020</p>	<p>There is a lot to like about this Downtown Plan, especially with its emphasis sustainability. I like the Plan's focus on increasing biking and walking. In general, I approve.</p> <p>I do have reservations about the raised two-way cycle path, particularly on F Street. I'm not sure why this is necessary and my first thought is that it is overkill on protection. The street doesn't feel unsafe to me, now. Because I ride an e-bike, I often pass other bicyclists. If I were to see bike traffic ahead that might get in my way, I would probably take the travel lane instead of the cycle track. With a raised cycle track I would be unable to move out of the way of vehicles. We have a lot of skilled bicyclists in town and the number of e-bike riders is growing, so this might apply to more than just me. Protected bike facilities can be too confining. There are also connectivity problems with cycle tracks. Going from Class II bike lanes to a Class IV cycle track on the same street requires crossing the street. I noticed in Sacramento on one of their streets with a cycle track, the only cyclist I saw was riding in one of the vehicle lanes, beside the cycle track, not in it. A bicyclist is accustomed to riding on the right side of the road and now all of a sudden for one short section, you're supposed to ride on the left side in a cycle track. Not everyone will do that. I'm not sure it's worth the money or even desirable. On H Street between 2nd and 3rd, a raised cycle track might make sense, considering all the perpendicular parking.</p>
<p>Gerrit Mulholland 1/14/2020</p>	<p>Although I agree that unifying the building codes for Davis is necessary I am concerned with its application to the Upper G Street area. Small Main Street as a category was not included in the consultants vision which may be a better application for this area of Old North Davis which is primarily residential. I am concerned about transitioning potential 4 story buildings in a block format against or across the street from 1-2 story cottages. The Small Main Street category allows for up to 3 story buildings not in a block format but rather in separate, residential style structures which is in keeping with the character of Old North Davis.</p>
<p>Gerrit Mulholland</p>	<p>Adding 100+ new residential units to the Upper G Street Area of Old North Davis which is primarily a residential area will impact parking. With 100 units comes about 150 more people with potentially 150 cars. Our N Street parking can not accommodate these cars. What is the plan to integrate the parking needs of these new units with the needs of the current residents and businesses? During the weekday there are no open spots in front of my home on 6th/F Street. Will these new residents be given N Street parking? Current residents need the N Street parking. I know I do especially during the day.</p>
<p>Gerrit</p>	<p>Keeping the feeling of Upper G Street as a walkable residential community should be the goal as we transition to a denser</p>

Mulholland	downtown. Not only is this area valued by the current residents it is valued by all Davis residents and is an asset that needs to be preserved. This can be accomplished by keeping historic building guidelines and the process of reviewing building changes in place, dedicate areas of open space with trees/shade, provide comfortable/safe walking sidewalks and intersections, keeping bars/late night establishments south of 5th Street and make it financially feasible for multiple generations (students, families, retired) to live.
Petrea Marchand 1/14/2020	In Section 1.2, I didn't see a discussion of how this plan will relate to the Davis Amtrak Access and Connections Study. It seems like the results of that study (draft due in January 2020) should be integrated into this Specific Plan.
Petrea Marchand	As a small business owner renting space in downtown Davis, I agree with the real estate analysis on page 19 that states downtown can absorb between 300,000 and 500,000 square feet o of new office space. If there is variety of small to medium office spaces available for rent, especially with improved downtown amenities, professional services will likely locate in downtown Davis and create more jobs. More jobs means more people will shop/work downtown. While this phenomenon is described in the plan, I did not see if appropriately reflected in the goals or guidelines
Petrea Marchand	I fully support the recommendations on page 169 to improve wayfinding and to provide suitable incentives for converting underused private parking into shared public parking. Specifically, I recommend that this plan call out the 4th & G parking lot and recommend that the City negotiate an agreement that allows employees with permits who work at downtown businesses to use the 4&G lot to park all day. The existing lot at the Holiday Cinema is often full when 4th and G is empty.
Petrea Marchand 1/14/2020	Goal 3 doesn't have anything about creating opportunities and choice for office space, although earlier in the Downtown Specific Plan is says that if there are workers downtown, they shop downtown. It seems like the desire to increase retail should be coupled with an increase in office space, since workers are more likely to eat and shop downtown. Deserves a separate "guiding policy," such as "Provide incentives to maximize choices for commercial spaces designed to attract innovation and knowledge sector jobs." When I was looking for small office spaces for my four-person company, there were few options – and there continues to be few options for people who want to locate or expand small professional services firms downtown.
Petrea Marchand	For Goal 5, add a "guiding policy" that the City should "Establish app-based guides for showcasing the public art and green infrastructure in Davis and encourage people to visit the City to experience these attractions." As an example, the City could connect City Hall, Central Park, the Bike Hall of Fame and the Aboretum with a "green infrastructure and art walk." The front of City Hall will include soon cutting-edge bioswales and new seating and drought-tolerant landscaping, which will connect nicely with the Central Park Gardens and onwards to the Aboretum as well as the Third Street Improvement Project between A & B. People can view the art in Central Park Gardens and the obelisk on Third Street. City Hall should also have some public art

	featured as part of the ground improvements. If the Bike Hall of Fame is renovated to include an outdoor café or other attraction for visitors, it will increase the visibility of this walk.
Petrea Marchand	Goal 6-should mention the need to create “green, pedestrian-friendly alleys” as a guiding policy.
Laura Christensen 1/14/2020	<p>I wanted to write about the proposed regulation requiring business owners to have only a certain percentage of their employees drive to work. Employers would be required to provide transit passes for employees who aren't walking or biking to meet the proposed regulation requirement. Is this even legal?</p> <p>Business owners need less regulations and more freedom to run their businesses. We can't control where our employees live or how they get to work.</p> <p>Don't we still live in a free country?</p> <p>Less regulation - more freedom!</p>

From: Donald Morrill <donaldrmorrill@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 12:00 PM
To: City Council Members <CityCouncilMembers@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Davis Downtown Specific Plan comments

Dear Councilmembers,

Below please find a copy of Parkview Place Association members' supportive comments on the DDSP. It highlights our own four year experience in building a senior friendly, five unit, three story, zero net energy project with suggestions for improvement in that process. Thank you all for taking a look, and your many hours of dedicated service.

Don Morrill
for Parkview Place Association

Re: Comments on Davis Downtown Specific Plan

We at Parkview Place all enthusiastically support the goals of the Draft Davis Downtown Specific Plan (DDSP) and its overall goal of a "memorable, pedestrian oriented, multimodal, and mixed-use downtown with an emphasis on sustainability and an identity that is uniquely Davis." Indeed, needs for increased affordable housing, living space density, and preservation of vital agricultural land make success of the DDSP vitally important to our community and our planet.

We remain pleased that our Parkview Place building at 444 4th Street reflects that vision, as an owner-occupied, senior-based, zero net energy, LEED Platinum building. Our project has two upper stories with four- two bedroom apartments, and a first floor one-bedroom rental unit that is ADA compliant and designed as a live-work space. Over our six years of occupancy, we have averaged more than 18% annual energy surplus in our all-electric building. Just as importantly, we have established a small community that greatly enjoys downtown living and each other's company!

We understand the vital purpose of the DDSP as a prescription for necessary growth, and with a new form-based zoning code to streamline the project approval process. In support, these comments will chronicle our difficult application experience, to reinforce the importance of a simplified planning process to accelerate our downtown's progress toward the DDSP's goals.

We endured three significant hurdles on our four-year path toward a building permit:

1. Lengthy review by the Historical Resources Management Commission (HRMC)
2. Rejection by the Davis Planning Commission
3. Insistence by the Fire Marshall that we install a large gurney-sized elevator

We hope most Davisites agree that our project has been good for the downtown, but we note that it has not been duplicated; in part, we suspect, due to our application difficulties. On our three issues, more rapid conclusions might have been reached. However, it is not clear that the causes

of our long delays would necessarily be remedied under the DDSP. Here are our summaries and suggestions on each issue:

1. **HRMC Review:** The existing home was dilapidated and had been neglected too long for restoration. Further, no building of its small size could any longer be justified given the value and prices of downtown lots. The HRMC hired a consultant at our expense, who recommended designation as a Landmark project; with no conceivable way for it to be saved or managed going forward. After lengthy and confused review and discussion, the HRMC did allow our project to proceed. (We publicly offered to give the home away, including the cost of moving and building foundations, but no party expressed interest.) Not all proposed projects face the historical hurdle; but when they do, we suggest this **Better Approach:** Require that the City and HRMC first work with owners to assess whether there is an economically-viable path forward in the event the City should later accept a consultant's revised historical designation. Such a process could quickly determine whether it is worth investing time and money in further historical review.
2. **Davis Planning Commission (DPC):** The DPC appeared not to recognize that our project was within zoning restrictions and aligned with stated City goals by increasing density, owner-occupancy, and senior living; and by targeting zero-net energy performance. Instead, the DPC objected to our "non-cottage" design style and 3-story height. Our design goal of complementing the historical Community Church and limiting height to less than the nearby Church and fraternity house was not credited. After DPC rejection, our appeal to the City Council resulted in unanimous approval. **Better Approach:** The form-based code may eliminate erroneous DPC rejections in the future, but a better process might simply assess whether a project aligns with downtown plan objectives and whether the design fits with nearby buildings, rather than trying to force a match with an arbitrary "neighborhood design style."
3. **Elevator:** Senior Living downtown is not adequately addressed in the Plan, and our "elevator story" provides one example of how approval of senior projects might be streamlined. Our project was delayed approximately 8 months by the Fire Marshall's initial requirement of a (~\$250,000) gurney-sized elevator, based on his interpretation of state code. Our dismay with this interpretation was supported by local Emergency Medical Technicians' confirmation that they would not use or wait for an elevator in an emergency situation, and that our 5' wide main stair was ideal for emergency descents. After much time, effort, and key City Council support, we ultimately circumvented the over-sized elevator requirement through designation of our ADA-compliant live-work unit on the first floor. We were allowed to install an economically practical "Limited Use, Limited Accessibility" (LULA) elevator that was just right for our project and that we feel is a necessity for senior living. **Better Approach:** Add a section to the DDSP that focuses on the value of adding owner-occupied senior housing downtown, and establishes guidelines and incentives that streamline the approval process. Such a section could, among others, provide guidelines that clarify appropriate elevator size in relation to project size, and also extend to safety and transportation options.

Aside from our own application challenges, we'll chime in on transportation and parking issues that affect our downtown. We know both that downtown parking will be reduced by the DDSP, and that transportation issues outside of downtown are not addressed. Bringing workers,

shoppers, and tourists to downtown stores and entertainment venues from nearby towns, the Sacramento region, and the Bay Area are likely vital to the initiation and financing of downtown development. Regional transportation choices including light rail, Amtrak, and buses could reduce stress on parking and, in conjunction with a local shuttle system from perimeter parking lots, facilitate a more pedestrian downtown. Expansion of transportation options will require the active participation of regional leaders – City Council and Board of Supervisors, State Legislators, and perhaps members of Congress, to achieve. We look forward to supporting that effort. We also reject free parking downtown as an asset for the future, but we would support free perimeter parking and a free downtown shuttle service as contributors to achieving key goals of the DDSP.

Thank you for considering these comments and suggestions!

Respectfully submitted,

Parkview Place Associates

Sue Barton, Carol Bourne, Dick Bourne, David Hosley, Don Morrill, Phil Wagner

Barbara Wagner, gayle yamada



Kemble K. Pope & Steve Greenfield, *Managing Members*
Trackside Center, LLC
2940 Spafford St., Suite 202 | Davis, CA 95618

City Manager's Office, City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2 | Davis, CA 95616
Sent via email to: Mike Webb (mwebb@cityofdavis.org), Davis City Council (citycouncilmembers@cityofdavis.org)

Subject: Review Requested for Impacts of Housing Crisis Act of 2019 ("SB 330") on Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("DDSP") Update

December 23, 2019

To Whom it May Concern,

As the owners of property within the boundaries of the DDSP, we are concerned about the impacts of SB 330 on the DDSP. The Governor of California signed this legislation on October 9, 2019 and it takes effect on January 1, 2020. SB 330 places restrictions on certain types of development standards in addition to setting forth rules for reviewing and processing development applications and regulates certain fees.


It has come to our attention that the DDSP, in its current status, may violate State law.

There are multiple potential conflicts. As an example, most properties with the new "Neighborhood Medium" designation are likely at risk of being "down zoned" from current zoning to a lower allowable density/buildable S.F. due to multiple restrictions in the new design standards e.g. max width, setbacks, courtyard requirements. Per the Senate Floor Analysis of SB 330 (*attached*), the law:

- 1.c) Prohibits an affected city, with respect to land where housing is an allowable use, from enacting a development policy, standard, or condition that would have any of the following effects:*
- i) Changing the general plan land use designation, specific plan land use designation, or zoning of a parcel to a less intensive use or reducing the intensity of land use within an existing general plan land use designation, specific plan land use designation, or zoning district below what was allowed under the land use designation and zoning ordinances of the affected city as in effect January 1, 2018. Less intensive uses means reductions in height, density, floor area ratio, new or increased open space or lot size requirements, or new or increased setback requirements, minimum frontage requirements or maximum lot coverage limitations or anything that would lessen the intensity of housing.*

In order to ensure the DDSP meets new criteria established by SB 330 prior to the forthcoming CEQA process, we believe an analysis should be conducted as soon as possible to determine if any portions of the plan may need to be revised in order to comply with state law.

Sincerely,


Kemble K. Pope


Steve Greenfield



January 14, 2020

City Manager's Office
Community Development & Sustainability Department
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2 | Davis, CA 95616

Sent via email to: Eric Lee (elee@cityofdavis.org), downtownplan@cityofdavis.org

Subject: Comments on Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DDSP) Update

Eric,

As the owners of Trackside Center located at 901-919 3rd Street, we are herein submitting comments on the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan (DDSP) released on October 14, 2019. Some of these comments were previously presented by Trackside Center in our letters dated September 25, 2019 and December 23, 2019, but are summarized in this letter for consistency.

General Comments

1. Figure 40.13.020.A Downtown Code Zoning Map correctly shows Planning Development zoning for Trackside Center. As noted in our September 25, 2019 letter we are requesting that underlying zoning consistent with plans for adjacent properties to the north of Trackside Center and in recognition of our unique location facing 3rd Street, be placed upon our property. Said underlying zoning would become relevant in the unlikely event that the City of Davis' appeal of the Yolo Superior Court ruling against the City's approval of the Planned Development is not successful.
2. We believe the Draft DDSP may be in violation of California State Law, namely Senate Bill 330 The Housing Crisis Act of 2019. SB 330 was signed by Governor Newsom on October 9, 2019, becoming effective January 1, 2020. We request

that a comprehensive analysis be conducted to determine if any revisions to the DDSP need to be made to comply with SB 330. Additional details of the potential violations were presented in our letter dated December 23, 2019.

3. In section 1.1 Intent and Purpose, the statement “The Specific Plan recognizes that minor boundary adjustments will need to be made to facilitate effective implementation after the Plan is adopted,” is vague and problematic. The term “minor” should be defined by example(s) or the process for modifying the boundary should be defined.
4. It is our opinion that the Neighborhood Medium Zone: 3 Stories Max is short-sighted, and financially infeasible unless significant concessions or subsidies, such as affordable housing grants, are provided. Unfortunately, a plan that relies on undefined subsidies does not provide surety for development, one of goals of the plan. The Neighborhood Medium Zone: 3 Stories Max has resulted from decisions based on the lowest common denominator as opposed to providing a vision for increased housing density in a transit-oriented Downtown.
5. A transit-oriented Downtown Plan needs to include concessions for projects close to the Amtrak/MultiModal Station to achieve feasibility and come to fruition. Concession examples include but are not limited to reduction or complete elimination of onsite parking requirements, additional density, additional height, and/or fee reductions.
6. To aid in better understanding height impacts to adjacent neighborhoods we recommend a 3rd party sight line analysis be conducted which evaluates sight lines from various vantage points relative to variable building heights and upper story setbacks. For example, we believe that the impacts of a 5-story Neighborhood Large project located at the Amtrak parking lot, as currently envisioned in the plan (per Figure 40.13.070.A) will have similar or more visual presence to the closest homes in the adjacent neighborhood than a four-story building with a significant fourth floor step back would along the “G Street East Transition Lots.” A sight line

analysis would illustrate the projected visual presence of the redevelopment options as well as flesh out strategic ways to incorporate privacy screening.

Section 4.6, G Street Corridor

1. On Page 91, Subcategory "Recommendations for Designated Areas, East Transition Lots (East of Tracks) it is recommended to "Articulate massing to prevent buildings from being too long and/or deep." Too long and/or deep is a qualitative and biased opinion-based statement. It does not take into account the unique constraints that these properties already face, namely narrow frontage on their adjacent roadway, past/future aggregation of parcels, and the presence of the railroad. This approach renders the parcels useless from a feasible redevelopment strategy.
2. Table 4E, G Street Development Scenario and Intended Built Environment indicates that the G Street Neighborhood contains 18.8 Acres with the buildout intent of 168 housing units. This calculates to density of 8.9 dwelling units per acre. This is a **huge** underutilization for a downtown development corridor! Especially one in close proximity to a major transit hub. Sustainable downtown densities should be on the order of 20 to 40 dwelling units/acre at minimum. In addition, the current zoning documents for these sites indicate an average density of 40 dwelling units / acre for Opportunity Sites in the Core area; hence this is a violation of SB 330 as a density downzoning.

Chapter 6, Mobility and Parking

1. There are several programs in Section 6.2 that are great ideas to reduce downtown vehicle traffic, including the "Parking Cash Out" and "Free Transit for Employees and Residents;" however, there are no linking incentives for private development to implement said programs. For example, to incentivize a private development for the free transit program their on site parking requirement could

be reduced or eliminated allowing for more density and/or room for amenity open space.

2. Alley enhancements and/or activation is not mentioned in this chapter. The Downtown's currently underutilized alleyways have access to existing infrastructure, are an incredible resource and present an opportunity to increase density, enhance walkability and improve public safety. Alley activation in Sacramento, for example, has been a great success story.

Chapter 7, Infrastructure

1. Figure 7.4, Tiers of Green Infrastructure Opportunities: Why is the Trackside parcel not labelled as "Anticipated Development/Redevelopment Parcels?"
2. There is no discussion of elimination of overhead utility lines and implementation strategies for undergrounding them.

Chapter 8, Implementation

1. Benefit Assessment District: The Draft DDSP discusses potential funding from formation of a Benefit Assessment District (BAD). In concept, we believe a BAD is an excellent way to aid in funding infrastructure improvements that are beneficial to enhancing the downtown zones and therein catalyzing redevelopment and improving property values. However, based on the current recommended zoning for our property we would be opposed to formation of such a district since it would be an additional tax levied on properties that do not have financial development feasibility.
2. Community Facility District: For reasons similar to those presented above in regards to formation of a BAD, we also would not be in favor of formation of a Community Facility District levy based on the current Draft DDSP.

Form Based Code

Neighborhood Medium (NM) 40.13.100:

1. The code is penalizing and limiting for properties that have assembled multiple parcels. It is unclear whether side yard setbacks apply to the individual parcels of an assembly or just the entire assemblage. If assembled, the Building Type is limited only to the Courtyard form, which reduces potential density. This is a downzoning relative to the current zoning for the G Street Transition properties and we believe in violation of SB 330.
2. The NM zone is focused on a row of lots that are oriented along a downtown street. It is not applicable to how most of the G Street Transition properties operate based on the constraints of the railroad, the availability of access from the alleyway, and the long axis orientation of the assembled parcels. This is a unique configuration in the Downtown and should have zoning/form based code that addresses these constraints. This inapplicability is evident in Figure 40.14.020.A which illustrates three adjacent parcels bounded by a Front Street, Side Street, and an Alley. It does not take into consideration the configuration where the Front Street is replaced with the railroad tracks as is present in the G Street Transition Corridor.
3. A minimum floor to ceiling height of 9' with a maximum height of 30 feet and 3 stories is physical infeasible in a multifamily scenario. This leaves only 1 foot of height for each floor for subflooring and routing of utilities and ductwork. We recommend that the overall building height allowance, for a building with ground floor residential be increased to be 10.5' per floor. Additionally, if the ground floor is non-residential the overall height should be allowed to increase for a maximum 15' floor to ceiling height for the ground floor to accommodate viable commercial uses, without reduction in total floors or height for said floors. These comments are applicable to the NM four story zone as well.

4. Due to the Courtyard restriction on the assembled parcels the NM 3 stories maximum at 30' is actually a misnomer. Section 40.14.020.K actually limits the maximum height to the top plate is 24 feet. This limits the buildings to being only 2 stories in height. This also applies to the NM zone without the 3-story restriction. So, if multiple parcels were assembled to be developed together and exceeded the overall width of 150' then the Courtyard building type would be required and only two stories would be allowed. This is clearly a downzoning and in violation of SB 330.
5. Currently there is not a height limitation on buildings in the downtown due to height currently being restrained by a Floor Area Ratio calculation. Placing a maximum height on buildings in the plan is likely a violation of SB 330.
6. The plan view diagram for the NM zone is not clear on how the alley is treated. Does the presence of an alley make the said parcel a corner lot?
7. Current zoning does not have a maximum lot coverage restriction, but 25% open space is required. The DDSP has a maximum lot coverage of 20%. In most cases, in conjunction with other proposed restrictions, this is likely a down zoning and is in violation of SB 330.
8. Current zoning for the G Street Transition properties allow for zero setback along the alley and along 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets. The DDSP places a minimum setback of 10' for the rear 1/2 of the lot for a corner lot and a 5' minimum for an interior lot. Placing new minimum setbacks on these properties, in conjunction with other proposed restrictions, is likely a down zoning and a violation of SB 330.
9. We requested an Architect to review the DDSP and the Form Based Code and apply it schematically to our property. The Architect was able to schematically plan for a total of 24 units with an average size of 800 SF. This would yield a total building square footage of 19,200. The property (without the lease area from UPRR) is approximately 22,869 square feet in area. This calculates to a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 0.84. The current zoning unquestionably allows for an FAR up to

1.5 with a bonus of 0.2 if there is a public open space. The DDSP in its current format restricts the ability to develop a building anywhere close to what is currently the maximum allowable FAR. This is a down zoning and a violation of SB 330.

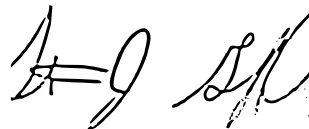
Conclusions

1. As existing property owners of an “opportunity site” within the City’s only Federal Opportunity Zone, we believe the plan undervalues the unique opportunity of a dense, transit-oriented development located just steps from the Amtrak Station. 20 years from now when the horizon for the plan is approaching will we be satisfied with the underutilized site that this property will continue to be? We believe not.
2. We have noted in detail multiple restrictions in the Draft DDSP that are greater than currently exist. We believe the plan down zones the properties along the G Street Transition Area and recommend that revisions be made such that the plan is not in violation of SB 330, The Housing Crisis Act of 2019.
3. We consider the intent of the new plan to be a contract, one that everyone understands, believes treats parties fairly, and is economically feasible. At this point, we can not “sign on” to a contract that we believe is economically infeasible for our property. We do not intend to redevelop under this plan were it to be approved in its current form.

Sincerely,



Kemble K. Pope
Project Manager | Trackside Center, LLC



Steven J. Greenfield
Managing Member, Trackside Center, LLC

Kemble Pope & Steve Greenfield, Trakside Center LLC
Jennifer Anderson & William "Doby" Fleeman

December 18, 2019

Community Development & Sustainability Department
City Manager's Office, City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2 | Davis, CA 95616

Sent via email to: Eric Lee (elee@cityofdavis.org), Ash Feeney (afeeney@cityofdavis.org), Mike Webb (mwebb@cityofdavis.org), Davis City Council (citycouncilmembers@cityofdavis.org), Meg Arnold

Subject: Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("DDSP"), DPAC and Plan Comments

Eric,

This is a joint letter representing the owners of the corridor of land within the DDSP boundary located along the east side of the railroad tracks between 3rd and 5th Streets. Please forward this communication to all members of the DPAC as soon as possible and include in your next Agenda Packet.

At the outset, we'd like to repeat in writing what we've all expressed verbally in Public Comment at DDSP meetings. We thank the members of the DPAC for giving their time, energy, experience and enthusiasm to the community in the form of this public service. We recognize that the DPAC continues to wrestle with complex and often controversial issues and we commend them for their tireless efforts.

Conflicts of Interest and Committee Procedures

Representatives of the properties were in attendance at the December 10, 2019 Downtown Planning Advisory Committee (DPAC) meeting and we were astounded at the conversation regarding potential conflicts of interest. To suggest that anyone on that committee has any more of a conflict of interest than another is ludicrous. The entire committee was formed on the basis of hearing all views on the future development plan for the Downtown¹, so wouldn't that include non-resident property owners/investors in the Downtown? The suggestion that a homeowner resident within close proximity of the Downtown has any more or less of a conflict is demonstrably false. Financial ramifications of future development to neighboring properties will occur, regardless of whether you believe the ramifications to be positive or negative.

To further suggest that individuals and/or groups living within or in proximity to the plan area should have stronger voices in the plan preparation also shows a conflict of interest. In fact, during the formation of the DPAC committee the surrounding neighborhoods

insisted to the City Council on have a voting member from each neighborhood because of the effects the plan would have on them. Thus, three voting members on the committee have conflicts of interest by self-definition. But that is the very point of the committee: to hear all of the voices. The elected officials that will have the pleasure of making the final decisions on this plan fully understand that this is indeed the make-up of the committee.

The above discussion doesn't even take into account that there are downtown business owners on the committee, some of which are also homeowners within adjacent neighborhoods. Is that not similarly a conflict of interest? There is also at least one property owner on the committee that earns business income from their property in the form of short-term rentals. And what of those committee members with immediate family members who own properties or business in the affected areas? The point being that each member has a viewpoint based on who they are representing, which is exactly what the City Council requested in the first place. If one were to draw 500' radii circles around each of the committee members' financial interests, we venture to say that the result would be a plan area that looked like swiss cheese.

Procedurally, we object to the practice of notes being handed from the public to committee members after public comment has ended. This represents an unfair procedural practice. It seems appropriate for a committee member to seek clarification from a member of the public, but notes from the audience seem to create an additional conflict. We request that this practice be eliminated during the committee meetings.

Downtown Plan Comments

Additional detailed comments on the contents of the Draft Plan will be provided prior to the end of the comment period as we continue to review the details of the form-based code. In the interim we offer the following comments regarding the plan and the process.

As we understand it, this planning exercise is charged with producing a planning document to assist the City in bringing Downtown Davis into the 21st century – reflecting best practices in transportation, environmental stewardship, and transit-oriented development. To accomplish this in our modern world requires that we focus on initiatives to encourage reinvestment in, and to ensure continuation of, our Downtown as the central economic and cultural hub for the community.

We must be visionary and reach beyond our comfort zone, not simply codify neighborhood visions that are more than 20 years out of date. Many of these older notions pre-date major shifts in public policy and new challenges to successful implementation: Measure J, climate change, 20+ years of building code revisions, the dramatic rise in construction costs and land values, the current housing crisis, new

priorities for public transit, the evolution of UC Davis and current generational trends in living style.

As Downtown commercial property owners without a designated spokesperson at the table, many of the Downtown owners' major concerns – ranging from the priorities for enhanced public transit infrastructure investments as well as actively engaging our university neighbors to better understand their vision for the Downtown – relating directly to successful implementation of the plan, have been largely missing from the monthly conversations. Let the record reflect that these and additional comments were formally submitted to the committee in written form and during public comment by Doby Fleeman on June 14, 2018.

By way of contrast, in recent meetings, we have observed a process where one group of neighboring property owners have resorted to verbal and written public attacks and unfounded accusations directed at city staff, committee members and other members of public, as well as verbal bullying and intimidation during public comment. As soon as another opinion is voiced, the chorus of "that's not the consensus" is a common refrain. We must all ask ourselves a simple question: is it even possible for consensus, rather than cooperation or compromise, to create the highest and best outcomes in our community for the next twenty years?

An example of this incongruity clearly occurred in the last two meetings of the DPAC; namely discussion about Downtown transition zones at the east and west. It is very clear that consensus will not be reached on the Committee nor between property owners and the neighborhood representatives. Both parties will be affected by the final plan, yet the property owners within the plan area are the only ones that can implement the plan on their property. We do not believe that the draft plan's framework for future redevelopment is feasible, and we do not plan to redevelop within the current context of the plan . . . period.

And so we ask: Does the process include some pathway to resolving certain inevitable conflicts? Is there to be any priority or decision hierarchy established to help guide and determine preferred uses or outcomes when inevitable conflicts are identified? Wouldn't the City want to have those that are charged with implementing the plan believe that the vision is feasible and looks toward the future?

We believe that a consensus decision-making process can be useful and worthwhile *if* everyone agrees on the complete and thorough utilization of this method at the outset of a process. Unfortunately, the concept of consensus is now being utilized by a neighborhood group as a means to chastise, degrade and alienate those that don't share their specific vision for Downtown. Again and again, we've seen the basic tenants of the

consensus method (egalitarian treatment of all participants, cooperation and inclusivity) thrown out the window along with common courtesy.

Consensus and unanimity are not synonymous; compromise and consensus are not the same. Since consensus was not the stated goal at the formation of this Committee and since it has been randomly applied, we're left with compromise to fill the void.

We do not understand the inability for compromise from the neighbors regarding a significantly stepped back fourth story along the rail corridor. Sight lines are a matter of simple geometry. Even in the absence of trees and existing buildings, with appropriate architecture, a stepped back fourth floor simply is not visible from the ground, even several blocks away. Add in trees and existing buildings and the visibility of building elements are vastly reduced. Thus, it remains unclear what forms the basis of their objection? Just saying it is "too big" is the old answer. Perhaps some consideration of a compromise, that us implementers can get behind, would go a long way!

Transit Focused Decisions/Vision

With the City lacking a PBID (Property Based Improvement District) organization, the neighborhood of Downtown Commercial Property owners is left at substantial disadvantage during this type of extended, committee planning process. This has presented a problem since the beginning of the DPAC process – where the neighborhood of Downtown Commercial property owners was never formally recognized or assigned a designated "voice at the table".

While City Staff and the independent consultants devoted generous resources and significant time to interviewing and including individual property owners, the regular monthly meetings, discussions and decisions of the committee did not include an assigned, representative voice for the Downtown Commercial property owners.

This distinction may be lost on a casual observer, and the organizers of the planning process may not have seen the need, but a review of the committee's final recommendations, together with plans and priorities for implementation, reveal troublesome aspects and missed opportunities from this lack of "at the table" engagement.

Given the many land use, planning, and parking constraints established by the City, along with the need to address climate change, a transportation centric focus for the work of this committee appears a fundamental necessity. How else is the Downtown expected to evolve and transform? A substantial increase in the density of housing units within easy biking and walking distance of public transit is fundamental to encouraging the success of transit, not to mention the health of downtown businesses.

Yet, how much discussion, planning and visioning has been devoted to exploring possible scenarios for repositioning the Downtown based upon serving the transportation needs of prospective high-density residential housing, new commercial and retail office space and additional volume of visitors to Downtown entertainment venues?

Along these same lines, shouldn't the physical proximity to the multi-modal Davis Amtrak Station of the eastern transition area be a formative component in whatever decision is to be made? This question goes to the heart of whether there is any formal commitment of the City to strengthen public transit options to the serve the Downtown. The implementation section of the plan includes ride hailing, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, but its real focus is on creating place-making amenities such as the "Davis Square." This amenity may attract more visitors to the downtown, but as it removes valuable parking spaces it will only exacerbate the problem if there isn't an equal focus on implementing investment in public transit improvements and prioritizing significant residential units and commercial development in their proximity.

In closing, we urge the DPAC, City Staff and the City Council to: fully clear the air on the topic of "conflicts of interest", enforce procedural fairness and, most importantly, establish a pathway to resolve the conflicts between status quo, external forces and a feasible redevelopment plan for Downtown.

Sincerely,



Kemble K. Pope

Managing Members | Trackside Center, LLC



Steve Greenfield



Jennifer Anderson

Downtown Property Owners



William "Doby" Fleeman

¹Note that the plan is called the Davis Downtown Specific Plan (emphasis added).



September 25, 2019

City Manager's Office
Community Development & Sustainability Department
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2 | Davis, CA 95616

Sent via email to: Mike Webb (mwebb@cityofdavis.org), Ash Feeney (afeeney@cityofdavis.org)

Subject: Inclusion of 901-919 Third St ("Trackside Center") in Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("DDSP") Update

Ash,

As the owners of Trackside Center, we are very interested in the status of the new DDSP. In review of the publicly available documents that describe the update to the DDSP, it has come to our attention that Trackside Center is not definitively included in the planning area due to its status as a Planned Development.

As you know, the Yolo Superior Court ruling against the City's approval of the Planned Development has been appealed by the City and Trackside Center LLC. In the unlikely event that the appeal is not successful in upholding the Planned Development entitlement, we request that our property and the adjacent UPRR parcel be included in the DDSP such that applicable underlying zoning is placed upon the property as envisioned by the plan.

We look forward to our continued work together on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kemble K. Pope". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Kemble K. Pope
Project Manager | Trackside Center, LLC

MEMO

TO: Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner
Eric Lee, Planner
FROM: Greg Rowe, Planning Commissioner
DATE: November 6, 2019
SUBJECT: Comments on Public Review Draft - Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("Plan")

The comments below appear in the same order as the draft Plan, preceded by general comments. A list of possible typos is at the end of this memo.

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
NA	NA	Mixed Use	<p>Plan assumes mixed use buildings will generate greater downtown visitation. But more mixed use buildings and visitation should not be equated to greater attraction and retention of retail stores. Plan also assumes dining opportunities will expand. I believe it is overly optimistic to assume an increase in retail shopping will occur on lower floors of mixed use buildings. This is because retail shopping has undergone tremendous change in recent years and will continue to evolve away from "brick and mortar" stores as internet shopping increases. It is simply too convenient to shop on the internet; plus, multiple websites provide in-depth product information and evaluations. As the <i>Wall Street Journal</i> reported on 11-01-2019, "Just this year, chains have announced more than 8,000 U.S. store closings, and several retailers have filed for bankruptcy protection."ⁱ</p> <p>A better strategy would be to tap into the research strength of UCD by encouraging mixed use space for companies complementary to UCD, some of whose employees may want to live close to their jobs. An example of such a company would be the recent location of a Mars research office in the building at the southeast corner of G and 5th Streets. As such firms and their employees occupy downtown, there will of course be some growth in complementary retail activities.</p> <p>It's also overly optimistic to assume more restaurants will lure older Davisites downtown. Between the 1999-2000 academic year and the LRDP baseline of 2016-17, UCD 3-quarter average enrollment grew by 50%, from 22,364 to 33,391. During that span most of the "adult-oriented" downtown restaurants closed (notably Soga's, Monticello, and Our House). Virtually all of the remaining restaurants cater to college students, with the exception of Season's. Most adult Davisites seeking a mature dinner venue go to Winters, Woodland or Sacramento, and I suspect that will remain so.</p>

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			Finally, the Plan's front cover is faulty in several respects. (1) A cyclist is riding down the center of the street, instead on the right side. (2) a man is walking his dog almost in the center of the street (dog leashes and bikes are not a good mix); (3) the pavement appears to be comprised of large pavers; the seams or cracks between them can catch bike tires.
NA	NA	Housing	The expected increase in downtown housing units may be the best possible solution for accommodating new housing in Davis and meeting RHNA obligations in the context of the limitations imposed by Measure J/R.
19	2.2	Socio-Economic	As Chris Granger stated at the October 24 DPAC meeting, this section should describe (if possible) the % of the overall City and downtown population that is 20-29 years old. It states that the fastest growing group is 25-34 and that the 35-54 age group in Davis is declining, but does not mention the status of those 20-29.
21	2.2	Property Ownership	"Downtown has a collection of bank building sites, many underutilized due to a City ordinance requiring financial institutions to have a main branch downtown." Comment: The City should consider amending this ordinance to allow financial institutions to apply for permission to close their downtown locations. The City could consider such applications on a case-by-case basis. Alternatively, the City could evaluate which downtown bank sites have the greatest alternative development potential, and initiate closure and/or redevelopment discussions with those financial institutions and/or their property owners.
27	2.3	Lack of Identity and Relevance	<p>Plan says 9,000 workers commute daily into Davis but 20,000 leave. As mentioned at the Oct 24 DPAC meeting, about half of the 20K actually commute to UCD; i.e., only about 10,000 leave the immediate Davis environs. If this is true, the Plan should be amended to include this clarification. Plus, it must be realized that many highly educated Davis residents have specialized jobs that do not exist in Davis. For example, I previously worked 13 years as an airport environmental planner, but no such job exists in Davis. A friend is married to a partner in a major downtown Sacramento law firm; he would not find a similar position in Davis. Many people chose to work elsewhere but live in Davis for the quality of life, schools and "small town feel." There's nothing wrong with that. The Davis population could greatly increase, but many people would still travel elsewhere to work.</p> <p>It also states that some residents interviewed travel to Sacramento or Winters for social outings and recreation. As mentioned earlier, this is completely understandable. Most Davis restaurants cater solely to students, so adults often have no choice but to go elsewhere for social and/or recreational outings.</p>
27	2.3	Economy in Transition	"Downtown has the opportunity to establish a mutual beneficial, town-gown relationship with UC Davis." This may be true, but it is common knowledge among most Davis residents that downtown Davis should for the most part be avoided during the UCD school year. The 50% growth of UCD enrollment between 1999 and 2016 means that everything from the sidewalks to the restaurants have simply become too crowded. Even

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			walking in the downtown area is often difficult because many of the students don't practice proper bicycle safety; i.e., running through stop signs and traffic lights, etc.
39	3.2	Sustainable Vision	Granger mentioned during Oct 24 DPAC meeting that she wants to see a separate, strong emphasis on the downtown economy. I concur; much attention is focused on sustainability, but not enough on economic concerns and priorities.
42	3.3	Building Scale Sustainability	Requiring SRI roof materials and permeable pavers is a good idea. Also, solar panels should be on as many buildings as possible.
43	3.3	Sustainable Strategies	Waste Source Separation: The Plan urges conveniently located color-coded recycling bins for landfill, compost and recycling. This appears good in theory, but often fails in practice. At Sacramento International Airport we tried a variety of methods to promote recycling, none of which worked. Regardless of the color of bin, people habitually put trash ("landfill items") in the recycling bins, and vice versa. I typically witness the same thing happening at major public events such as the recent California Capital Airshow. The average person either does not care or does not pay attention. Janitorial staff typically can't be relied upon to separate items that people mistakenly put in the wrong bin.
47	3.3	District-Scale Sustainability	Geo-Exchange: The Plan suffers from the lack of discussion on the cost of installing such a system. How much would it cost for a typical building? How will it be financed? Who will pay for it? Will requiring Geo-Exchange make development in downtown Davis financially uncompetitive with other cities that do not require it?
47	3.3	District-Scale Sustainability	Recessed windows to provide shading sounds like a nice idea, but it also provides ideal perching and nesting locations for birds. Bird nests and waste on window ledges can increase building cleaning and maintenance costs.
52	3.5	Memorable Identity	"A key opportunity to enhance this identity through built form is to address the inadequate hierarchy between different parts of downtown." Please define what this statement is trying to communicate. It comes across as meaningless "consultant planner lingo." (The Plan suffers from such verbiage in a number of places.)
53	3.5 Goal 1	Policy 1.9	"Integrate high-quality, unique public art throughout Downtown..." It is important to identify funds for both providing such art, and maintaining it in perpetuity after it is installed. Example: The County of Sacramento requires new public buildings to devote a percentage of the project cost to public art. In planning the new Terminal B at Sacramento International, the Director of Airports asked the Board of Supervisors to amend the County's public art ordinance to require a certain percentage of the public art budget to be set aside for long-term maintenance of the art after installation. Without such a provision, public art can fall into disrepair over time. Art groups in Sacramento County opposed the amendment, but the Board of Supervisors ultimately concurred with the Director of Airports. The same thing should occur in Davis.
54	3.5 Goal 2	Goal 2	"Compact development in Downtown will enable people to live near where they work, shop and play." This is not universally true, and is a concept that warrants challenge and refinement. For example, in a dual-wage

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			earning family, one partner may work in or near downtown Davis, but the other may commute outside Davis for work. This means sustainability and GHG reduction goals may not be as great as assumed. Also, in some cases, a family may decide to not live in downtown Davis, but instead live in a city midway between where the 2 partners work. (I once worked in downtown Sacramento with a man who lived in Fairfield because his wife commuted from there to her job in downtown San Francisco. Fairfield was a logical midway point for both of them.) Also, for a variety of reasons some people may not want to live near where they work. It's a lot harder for your boss to ask you to work on nights or weekends if you don't live near your job.
55	Goal 2	Goal 2.3	"Incentivize private developers to include sustainability features and energy efficient systems in new development, renovation and expansion projects that exceed minimum City requirements." Comment: this may not be fiscally feasible. While such features may reduce operating and maintenance costs over time, they often entail high initial costs. How will such incentives work? Will it entail lower development impact fees? If so, the fee reductions must equal or exceed the incremental cost increase of such features and systems.
57	Goal 3	Goal 3	The paragraph immediately preceding "Guiding Policies" refers to "...housing units that are affordable by design." This term must be defined, both on this page and in the glossary. Don't assume it is understood by the average, non-planner reader.
60	Goal 4	Introductory paragraph	"Form-based standards rooted in the built heritage and community character of Downtown will shape new development." What on earth does this mean? It sounds like consultant planner "gobbledygook." The Plan should be revised to use "Plain English" wherever possible.
61	Goal 4	Guiding Policy 4.2	"Reflect the intended use, intensity and eclectic character of Downtown's different neighborhoods with building and public realm standards that respond to context." Again, what does this mean? It comes across as just more professional consultant planner "gobbledygook."
63	Goal 5	Policy 5.3	The difference between pocket parks, plazas and parklets should be defined, perhaps with a sidebar.
63	Goal 5	Policy 5.10	Public Art: see previous comment on the need to establish an ongoing maintenance fund for public art.
63	Goal 5	Figure 3.32	Interactive Water Feature: California recently experienced prolonged drought, and it is certain that droughts will recur. ⁱⁱ It therefore makes no sense to waste water through evaporation and spillage by creating water features and fountains. It also makes no sense to operate electric-powered pumps for such unnecessary features. This would be a blatant example of poor sustainability. It will be hard to convince Davisites to conserve water if they see downtown fountains and water features.
65	Goal 6	Policy 6.1	"Make Downtown a place where most daily needs can be met without a car..." In many cases this will be unrealistic. How is a person supposed to get home walking or on a bike with bags of heavy groceries (especially items like milk)? The benefits of biking, walking and transit should not be oversold because in many situations traveling by vehicle is the most practical mode.

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
85	4.6	8 – Underground Parking	Below ground parking has many advantages, but may render some projects fiscally untenable.
88	4.6	Transform E Street Plaza	Loss of parking: During the Oct 24 DPAC meeting Josh Chapman expressed business community concern about the loss of downtown parking. Although Davis residents may be able to travel within downtown by means other than cars (walking, biking, transit), it will be difficult to lure non-Davis residents downtown if they find it too difficult to park. This is a valid concern.
91	4.6	G Street	Additional Recommendation 3: Use street furniture, signage and other streetscape elements to create a cohesive image and a “G Street” brand.” Comment: Street furniture could end up inducing occupancy by the homeless and other “street people,” potentially thereby dampening greater visitation.
95	4.6	North G Street	2: Articulate the portions of the building(s) not lining the plaza with residential frontages. Comment: Make this statement simpler and easier to understand. Does it mean that the buildings are now inarticulate?
132	5.3	Conservation Overlay District	A: Eliminate the district as a whole and establish existing neighborhoods as individual conservation districts. Comments: Yes, this will help expedite planning and development.
138	6.2	Thoroughfare Design	<p>The discussion theoretically good, but ignores the fact that many pedestrians in downtown Davis cross streets without looking where they are going. Students run stop signs, make left turns at intersections from the bike lane (thereby crossing in front of stopped cars), and many “blow” right through stop signs without stopping or even looking. I get the impression that many UCD students never rode a bike until arriving in Davis. Bicycle safety courses should be mandatory at UCD. Unless and until bike riders increase compliance with traffic laws, no amount of new downtown street design will increase the intersection safety among bike riders, pedestrians and drivers.</p> <p>And, despite current Davis requirements, downtown streets are often blocked during the day by large delivery trucks (which ironically includes trucks delivering bicycles to downtown bike shops).</p>
140	6.2	Goods Movement	The narrow streets advocated in the Plan will actually inhibit the movement of goods. It is contradictory.
150	6.3	3 rd Street Reconstruction	Some merchants on 3 rd Street may oppose the loss of on-street parking, as shown on Figure 6.11.
152	6.3	Sidewalk Quality	Improving sidewalk quality should be a top priority. Just as many Davis residents are frustrated that the City does not adequately maintain City streets, I believe many residents would place a higher priority on improving the sidewalks over what they could regard as overly ambitious and unrealistic urban design plans.
155	6.3	Bicycling is Social	Figure 6.27 – Bicycling is Social. Comment: When I ride my bike from home to downtown, it is imperative to be mindful of my surroundings. I therefore regard this figure and caption as highly inappropriate. Biking is an inherently dangerous activity regardless in town or in rural areas, and riding side-by-side should be strongly discouraged. If riders want to be social, they should take a break and socialize safely off the road (at a coffee

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			shop, etc.). Besides, I think side-by-side riding is contrary to the CA Vehicle Code.) I strongly advise deleting this figure and verbiage. The Plan should not encourage unsafe biking. What was the consultant thinking?
159	6.3	Transit Priority Measures	What is a “queue jump”? Please define.
169	6.6	Reserve Sites	The Plan says additional parking facilities should not be built until all lower-cost options have been implemented. It also says that if built, future public parking should be designed to allow easy conversion to other uses. Both of these recommendations make sense and should be implemented.
170 And 219	6.7 And 8.4	TMA And TMA, Table 8.E, #3H	<p>Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership: The Plan says that all non-residential developments should be required to join Yolo Commute and that tenants should remain members in perpetuity. I recommend that this strategy be deleted. Requiring dues-paying membership will impose an uncompetitive cost on downtown Davis development and tenancy. And, based on my experience, TMAs are ineffective.</p> <p>I dealt with a TMA during my 13-year tenure as Senior Environmental Analyst with the Sacramento County Department of Airports (Airports). The CA Air Resources Board (ARB) imposed an air quality management plan on Mather Airport, and delegated implementation and monitoring to the Sac Metro Air Quality Management District. Both agencies periodically criticized Airports because TMA ridesharing goals were continually unmet. The airport had many tenants, which included UPS, other air freight companies, corporate commuting aircraft fleets, aircraft sales and service, etc. The airport belonged to the local TMA and the airport manager served on its Board of Directors. He and I urged airport tenants to join and pay dues to the TMA, and to provide incentives for their employees to commute by modes other than single occupancy vehicles. Our efforts fell short, however, because: (1) The airport could not compel tenants to join the TMA; and (2) employers can't dictate how their employees commute to work. TMAs are a prime example of failed social engineering.</p>
179	7.2	Core Area Drainage Pond	Offering an option for downtown development to contribute an in-lieu fee for maintenance of this facility is a great idea and should be encouraged.
191	7.5	Sewer Capacity Charges	Capacity charges for developers may very well capture ongoing regular maintenance costs for the City, but if not moderated could end up being a factor putting Davis at a competitive disadvantage with other cities.
195	8.1	Phasing Strategy	As Eric Roe mentioned at the Oct 24 DPAC meeting, “breaks” for development impact fees could greatly incentivize downtown development. He said that City staff should be given greater latitude to be creative in helping projects “pencil out;” I concur. He further said the City Finance and Budget Commission should look at the current impact fee structure to make downtown more financially viable; again, I concur.
195	8.1	Demand for Commercial Space	The Plan says on the top of the right-hand column that there is a demand for commercial space downtown, in particular from knowledge-based sectors. There is a pro and con side to this situation. The City (and County

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			<p>of Yolo) will benefit greatly if building owners lease space to private sector employers. However, if past experience is any guide, UCD may seek to lease some of the new commercial space. When this happens, the property owner typically applies for a property tax exemption because UCD is a tax-exempt entity.</p> <p>I recommend that the City press owners of current and future downtown commercial space to refrain from applying for property tax exemptions on any space leased to UCD. And, given that the City and UCD have supposedly entered into a new era of cooperation, perhaps the City should encourage UCD to not lease space downtown, but to instead add more space on campus. Alternatively, if UCD were to lease downtown space, perhaps it could ask landlords to place a clause in the lease(s) whereby the property owner would agree to refrain from applying for a property tax exemption.</p>
195	8.1	Housing Demand	The Plan states “UC Davis...plans to increase enrollment, adding to Downtown’s economic base and adding to the housing demand.” This statement implies that the City bears a responsibility to provide housing for UCD students, which is a concept I oppose. The City should emphasize the attraction of families and workers to downtown housing. That demographic will in all probability have more disposable income to support new commercial and retail uses than would students.
196	8.1	Phase One	Mixed use infill redevelopment of the former Hibbert Hardware and Lumber site should be a top priority. This block, bounded by 5 th , 6 th and G Streets and the railroad, should be “fast-tracked” for development, and should be depicted as such on Figure 8.1.
199	8.2	Table 8.A.	Phase II projects: These are all good, but where will the City get the money to do them?
201	8.2	Table 8.A, #27	Fountain feature and splash pad: see previous comments about water features. Given the certainty of future droughts and ongoing climate change, water features and water play areas simply make no sense. Installing them would be irresponsible.
205	8.3	Funding Sources	This section continually emphasizes grant opportunities, which seems nebulous and overly optimistic. I think this is where the Plan really breaks down. Everything in the preceding chapters seems good for the most part, but the Plan falls down when it comes to explaining how the goals and recommendations will be financed.
205	8.3	Impact Fees	As previously stated, the Plan may be infeasible if developers find it easier and less costly to bring their plans to fruition in other cities.
209	8.3	General Fund	The first paragraph in the left column mentions how increased visitation, among other factors, will generate increased tax revenue. I continue questioning assumptions about how development of the Plan will increase visitation. People arriving in Davis from out-of-town may be discouraged by the parking restrictions the Plan espouses. I think the Plan should focus on improving Davis for people who live here. I doubt that Davis will ever provide compelling reasons for people to visit relative to Sacramento and the Bay Area. Our town simply is unlikely to have sufficient “critical mass” to be a visitor destination. And again, the downtown is now so

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
			crowded with students, it is hard to conceive how adding another 5,000 students to UCD will make the downtown any more attractive for adult out-of-town visitors. Do we really want more students from other colleges proliferating downtown on Picnic Day?
212	8.4	Urban Design and Placemaking	One of the really big needs downtown--not mentioned anywhere in the Plan--would be convenient and well-maintained public restrooms. My wife and recently visited the downtown shopping district in Walnut Creek. Attached to one of the department stores were well-signed, large, clean, and attractive public restrooms. We REALLY need something similar in downtown Davis, and in more than one location.
213	8.4	Table 8C, #4	I strongly endorse items 4F, 4G, and 4H (as long as UCD does not lease downtown office space, thereby depriving the City and Yolo County of badly needed property tax revenue).
213	8.4	Table 8C, #5	5E. Public art and landscaping will only be as good as the devotion of resources to maintaining them. The City currently requires developers to install landscaping in public right-of-way areas, but then does a lousy job of maintaining it. There is dead and neglected public area landscaping all over Davis. Don't add any more landscaping in public areas unless it will be maintained properly.
215	8.4	Table 8D, #1	1E: Street Network. Double-parked trucks downtown remain a problem. They block traffic and cause consternation on the part of drivers and bike riders. This problem needs to be solved.
215	8.4	Table 8D, #2	2E, Eliminate driveways and curb cuts. Comment: It would seem that the alley driveways for the recently completed Tim Spenser alley are contrary to this proposed implementation measure. I have witnessed several dangerous interactions between vehicles and sidewalk pedestrians at the 3rd Street Driveway, next to the former Davis City Hall. Also, this may be the best section to insert a clause regarding the need for more downtown public restrooms.
216	8.4	Table 8D, #2	Waste Receptacles: see previous comments. Most people don't pay attention, putting landfill trash in recycling containers and vice versa. Color-coding won't overcome innate human inattention.
216	8.4	Table 8D, #3	Bike facilities. Comment: Poor bike handling skills and vehicle code compliance are likely to remain huge problems, particularly on the part of UCD students. All of the Plan's proposed upgrades in bike facilities will do no good if riders continue to alternate between riding on streets and sidewalks, ride in the wrong direction, pedal past run stop signs, do U turns at intersections or in the middle of blocks, etc. Such problems have grown incrementally worse as UCD's enrollment has risen. Better bike facilities along won't resolve this.
217	8.4	Table 8D, #k5	5F says that VMT should become the primary metric for evaluating transportation impacts, which reflects the changes in CEQA guidelines from LOS to VMT. I suggest that VMT may not be the correct or optimum metric in all situations. Try telling someone waiting in a long traffic jam that they should not be concerned or upset because the road changes they are experiencing have, after all, reduced VMT. They just want to reach their destination in the shortest time possible.

Page	Section	Subject	Comments
223	8.4	Table 8H, #1A	<p>Discontinuing natural gas availability in commercial and residential buildings would be poor, short-sighted public policy. Most sources I've consulted indicate that the transportation sector is typically the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and should therefore be the focus of emission reduction efforts. Most experienced chefs prefer to cook with natural gas, and space heating with gas forced air is more efficient than other methods. (I lived in Ohio with electric baseboard heating, and can attest that it does not work well.) Plus, natural gas cooking is still possible when there is a blackout. (Our Davis neighborhood recently lost electrical power for a day, but my wife was still able to cook on our gas cooktop by simply lighting a match to the burners.) Totally eliminating natural gas usage in downtown Davis would do little to reduce GHG emissions in relative terms compared to the thousands of idling vehicles on I-80. Plus, the laws of thermodynamics explain that burning fuel directly on site for heating and cooking is more efficient than burning those same fuels in a central power plant and shipping the electricity over long distance wires.</p> <p>On the other hand, the actions recommended in 1E (solar) and 1F (district heating) make sense.</p>
227	Side-bar	Form-based Codes	The 2 nd bullet mentions Euclidean zoning. The vast majority of readers will not know what this means. Please define; i.e., the 1924 Supreme Court case brought by the City of Euclid, OH vs Ambler Realty, affirmed the ability of a town or community to be divided into areas in which specific uses of land are permitted.
xxvii	Typo	Acknowledgments	Add "er" to "Street," i.e., his last name is Streeter
29	Typo	Opportunity	Insert "is" between "This" and "a"
68	Typo	Special Design	A word is missing between "and" and the word "will"
72	Typo	Building Type	1 st paragraph, right side of page. A word is missing between "designing" and "using"

ⁱ "J.C. Penney Envisions Its Comeback." *Wall Street Journal*, November 1, 2019, page B1.

ⁱⁱ For more drought information see the new book by Mark Arax, *The Dreamt Land: Chasing Water and Dust Across California*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2019.

MEMO

TO: Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner
Eric Lee, Planner
FROM: Greg Rowe, Planning Commissioner
DATE: November 11, 2019
SUBJECT: Comments - Article Downtown Zoning Codes for Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("Plan")

The comments below appear in the same order as the draft Plan, preceded by general comments. This memo should be read in tandem with my November 6 comment memo on the Downtown Plan.

Section	Sub-Section	Subject	Comments
NA	NA	Overall Approach	<p>The proposed Article 40.13 provides practical guidance through the generous use of photographs and illustrations. Compared to the current zoning code for the Core Area Specific Plan, the proposed "form-based" code will allow or more flexibility and creativity on the art of both developers and City staff. It will greatly reduce the need for action by the Planning Commission, including consideration of Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) and Planned Developments (PDs).</p> <p>In talking about the draft downtown plan with friends and acquaintances, the most prominent comment is dissatisfaction with the current perceived and/or actual lack of convenient vehicle parking and the Plan's proposal to even further reduce the parking supply. Based on these comments, I continue believing that it is unrealistic to assume that a great number of Davis residents will start riding bikes to get downtown. They'll simply drive somewhere else, potentially outside Davis, where parking and carrying out the daily needs of their busy lives is perceived as being easier and hassle-free.</p>
NA	NA	Page Numbers	The document does not have page numbers. Reviewing and writing comments on the zoning code would have been easier if page numbers had been included.
40.13.140	140.A	Note 4	"Stealth Design" needs to be defined in this section (not just in the definition section).
40.14.030	F.2.A.	Screening	Screening for Roof-Mounted Equipment is described. <u>Comment:</u> such screening must not interfere with the activities of repair/maintenance personnel.

Section	Sub Section	Subject	Comments
40.14.050	A.3 and A.4	Parking and Loading	<p>This section describes standards and limits on the development of motor vehicle and bicycle parking. Among the goals is reducing motor vehicle trips per capita to and from downtown development.</p> <p><u>Comment:</u> The standards and limits described in this section may have the effect of limiting Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) to the extent that fewer people will go to downtown Davis. They will simply drive to other destinations perceived as more convenient. Restricting the number and availability of parking spaces will not necessary equate to more people deciding to bike or walk from home to downtown.</p> <p>Attempts to reduce VMT by limiting the availability of parking spaces can actually have the reverse of the intended outcome. For example, during the development of Terminal A at Sacramento International Airport (SMF), the California Air Resources Board (ARB) attempted to place limits on the number of total annual passengers, the number of flight operations, and the number of airport parking spaces. ARB's goal in restricting the number of customer parking spaces was to reduce vehicle emissions by inducing travel to SMF by mass transit, which was limited in schedule and viewed as inconvenient. (Congressional action in the early 2000s blocked such action by state agencies such as ARB, as it violated the Constitution's interstate commerce provisions.)</p> <p>It was ultimately realized that the result of ARB's actions was the exact opposite of the intent. As airport users became aware that they were unlikely to find parking at SMF, many resorted to having someone drive them to SMF for their departing flight and then pick them up when arriving back at the airport; i.e., a friend or relative would drive them to the airport for their departing flight and then pick them up from their arriving flight. Thus, instead of incurring one roundtrip to the airport, these passengers required two roundtrips by their driver, thereby doubling vehicle emissions. This is an excellent example of unintended consequences, and one that was confirmed by surveys of airline passengers. It shows that most people will find a way to defeat government imposed social engineering.</p>
40.14.050	C.1.	On-Site Parking	Sharing parking is a great idea. It helps maximize utilization of parking resources.
40.14.050	F.1.b	Carshare Spaces	What is the rationale for 800 feet? Why not another distance such as 500 feet or 1000 feet?
40.14.050	F.3.	Unbundled Costs	This is a great idea. There is no reason to charge a person for a parking space they don't need. This is an excellent way to encourage lower vehicle use without imposing a prohibition.
40.14.050	J.1.	TDM Standards	This subsection addresses Commercial Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Standards. It would require developments to prepare and implement a TDM Plan, which would be overseen by Yolo Commute, a Transportation Management Association (TMA). The goal of this requirement would be to achieve a maximum 50 percent employee drive-alone mode share.

Section	Sub Section	Subject	Comments
			<p><u>Comment:</u> I strongly recommend that the City delete this subsection from the proposed downtown zoning code. This ill-conceived decree would be the ultimate example of too much governmental interference with and involvement in the personal lives of employers and citizens. Faced with such a draconian and unrealistic mandate, employers could very well ignore or evade this measure by whatever means possible. Or, when made aware of such requirements, prospective employers contemplating locating to downtown Davis may simply choose to go elsewhere, thereby defeating the City's goal of encouraging more downtown development. This requirement would also mean that downtown developments would be forced to comply with different and discriminatory requirements to which developments and employers outside downtown would not be subject. I further question whether the City has the legal authority to impose such a requirement, particularly a requirement that employers pay dues to a TMA. In addition, enforcing a TDM plan would require the allocation of scarce fiscal and human resources on the part of both employers and the City.</p> <p>Please delete this counterproductive mandate and instead look for incentives to encourage commute modes other than single-occupancy motor vehicles.</p> <p>Below are additional comments on this subject, copied from my November 6 comment memo on the draft Downtown Plan.</p> <p>Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership: The Plan says that all non-residential developments should be required to join Yolo Commute and that tenants should remain members in perpetuity. I recommend that this strategy be deleted. Requiring dues-paying membership will impose an uncompetitive cost on downtown Davis development and tenancy. And, based on my experience, TMAs are ineffective.</p> <p>I dealt with a TMA during my 13-year tenure as Senior Environmental Analyst with the Sacramento County Department of Airports (Airports). The CA Air Resources Board (ARB) imposed an air quality management plan on Mather Airport, and delegated implementation and monitoring to the Sac Metro Air Quality Management District. Both agencies periodically criticized Airports because TMA ridesharing goals were continually unmet. The airport had many tenants, which included UPS, other air freight companies, corporate commuting aircraft fleets, aircraft sales and service, etc. The airport belonged to the local TMA and the airport manager served on its Board of Directors. He and I urged airport tenants to join</p>

Section	Sub Section	Subject	Comments
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			and pay dues to the TMA, and to provide incentives for their employees to commute by modes other than single occupancy vehicles. Our efforts fell short, however, because: (1) The airport could not compel tenants to join the TMA; and (2) employers can't dictate how their employees commute to work. TMAs are a prime example of failed social engineering.
40.14.070	E	Duplex (Stacked)	Table 3 (Building Size and Massing) lists the maximum number of stores as 2, but the photo depicting an example of such a structure on the bottom of the preceding page could be viewed by many readers as having 3 stories. (The photo caption says it is a 2-story duplex, but in my opinion this building has 3 levels of living space.)
40.14.110	F	Illumination - Typo	This subsection refers to "reverse-lit" letters. I believe the intent was to say "reverse-lit." Also, please define "box signage and visible raceways."
40.14.110	M	Sidewalk Signs	Such signs can be inherently dangerous. I tripped on the leg of such a sign outside a restaurant at a shopping center in Natomas, sustaining an injury and torn clothing.

C:\Users\Greg Rowe\Documents\Planning Commission\Downtown Plan\Comment Memo_Downtown Codes(1).docx

MEMO

TO: Downtown Davis Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC)

COPY: Mayor Brett Lee
Councilmember Dan Carson
Ash Feeney, Assistant City Manager
Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner
Eric Lee, Planner

FROM: Greg Rowe, Planning Commissioner

DATE: November 26, 2019

SUBJECT: Recommendation to Remove TDM and TMA Requirements from the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("Downtown Plan")

This memo reiterates the statement I made at the November 13 DPAC meeting. I believe the proposed TDM and TMA mandates will be detrimental to the goals of stimulating downtown revitalization, residential development and economic vitality. If implemented as currently written, the punitive nature of these directives could put Davis at a competitive disadvantage with other cities. The comments herein are strictly my own, and do not represent a position of the Planning Commission.

1. **Recommendations:** That the DPAC modify the Downtown Plan and proposed Downtown Zone Article 40.14.050 by removing the following transportation regulations and compulsory requirements.
 - a. **Development-Level Transportation Demand Management Plans (TDMs):** Delete the requirement that new downtown development prepare and implement a TDM Plan.
 - i. Delete verbiage recommending a target of no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone.
 - ii. Delete verbiage requiring developments to achieve a performance standard for reducing vehicle trips from residential development.
 - b. **Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership:** Delete the requirement that all non-residential developments join Yolo Commute, Yolo County's TMA, and that all downtown businesses remain dues paying TMA members in perpetuity.
 - i. Delete the requirement that development applicants designate an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) that would serve as the point of contact for the TMA and be responsible for demonstrating compliance with the TDM and monitoring requirements.

2. **Background:** The mandatory TDM and TMA provisions are described in these sections:
 - a. Downtown Plan Section 6.7, page 170: “Regulating Private Development: Parking, Loading and Traffic Reduction.” See Attachment 1, a copy of Downtown Plan p. 170.
 - b. Downtown Plan Section 8, page 219: Table 8E – Implementation Actions: Parking and Transportation Demand Management, items 3D (Require TDM Plans and Performance Standards) and 3H (Require TMA membership). See Attachment 2, a copy of Table 8E.
 - c. Article 40.14: Supplemental to Downtown Zones. Details on the TDM and TMA requirements appear in Article 40.140.050.J. – Commercial Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Standards. See Attachment 3.
3. **Concerns:** The imposition of TDM standards and regulations, coupled with obligatory TMA membership, will impose unnecessary financial, logistical and administrative burdens that could dissuade potential developers and employers from locating in downtown Davis. The net result would be to impede the commercial and residential development the City desires. Requiring development applicants to create and implement a TDM and compelling permanent TMA membership will impose uncompetitive costs and bureaucratic administrative burdens on downtown Davis developments and tenancy. Based on my experience described below, compulsory TMPs and TMA participation are ineffective, and are a prime example of misguided government efforts to manipulate transportation modal behavior.
4. **Experience Working with TMPs and TMAs**

Mather Airport: I dealt with a TMA during 13 years (2002-2015) as Senior Environmental Analyst with the Sacramento County Department of Airports (Airports). During the 1990s an air quality management plan requiring TMA participation was imposed on Mather Airport by the California Air Resources Board (ARB). The ARB periodically audited program compliance, and expressed frustration because ridesharing goals were continually unmet. The airport had numerous tenants, ranging from companies such as UPS and other air freighters, corporate fleets, aircraft sales and service, etc. Some tenants were small companies with limited financial resources. As required by the air quality plan, the airport belonged to the 50 Corridor TMA, and the airport manager served on the TMA’s Board of Directors. He and I continually urged airport tenants to become dues-paying members of the TMA, and to provide incentives for their employees to commute by modes other than single occupancy vehicles. These efforts fell short, however, because: (1) Airports had no legal means for compelling tenants to join the TMA; and (2) employers cannot legally dictate how their employees commute to work.

Sacramento International Airport (SMF): Attempts to reduce VMT by limiting the availability of parking spaces can actually have the reverse of the intended outcome. For example, during the development of Terminal A at SMF, the ARB attempted to restrict flight operations,

the number of passengers served, and the number of airport parking spaces. ARB's goal in restricting the number of customer parking spaces was to reduce vehicle emissions by ostensibly inducing travel to SMF by mass transit, which was limited in schedule and viewed as inconvenient by most airport customers. (Subsequent congressional action blocked ARB's action and similar efforts in other states.)

It was ultimately realized that the result of ARB's actions was the exact opposite of the intent. As airport users became aware that they were unlikely to find parking at SMF, many resorted to having someone drive them to SMF for their departing flight and then pick them up when they returned; i.e., a friend or relative would drive them to the airport for their departing flight and then pick them up from their arriving flight. *Thus, instead of incurring one roundtrip to the airport, these passengers required two roundtrips, thereby doubling vehicle emissions.* This is an excellent example of unintended consequences, and one that was confirmed by surveys of airline passengers. It shows that most people will find a way to use the transportation mode most convenient to them, regardless of government edicts.

Attachments 1 – 3 appear on the following pages.

Attachment 1 – Page 170 of Draft Downtown Plan

6.7 Regulating Private Development: Parking, Loading, and Traffic Reduction

A system of incentives and regulations for new development can improve transportation choices and reduce motor vehicle traffic, pollution, and traffic-related fatalities and injuries.

Strategies for Regulating Private Development

The following requirements for private development are described in detail in Section 40.14.050 (Parking and Loading) of the Downtown Code.

Districtwide Employee Mode Share Target

A districtwide mode share target helps to reduce the traffic impacts of new development. The Specific Plan recommends a target of at least 50 percent of employees commuting by walking, bicycling, ridesharing, or taking public transit or employer shuttles; and no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone by 2040.

Development-Level Transportation Demand Management Plans

Requiring new development to develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan helps monitor and achieve mode share targets. The Specific Plan recommends setting a target of no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone. Developments should also be required to achieve a performance standard for reducing vehicle trips from residential development.

Traffic-Minimizing Parking Standards

The Specific Plan recommends that developments be required to unbundle the cost of parking from the cost of other goods and services by charging a separate fee for parking; and to provide carshare

and preferential carpool spaces. Maximum parking requirements should be applied to all developments and there should be no minimum parking requirements. This will allow the emergence of a market for parking where spaces are bought and sold, rented, and leased.

Parking Cash Out

In new developments, parking cash-out programs should be offered by any employer who provides a parking subsidy to employees, to give employees who do not drive a cash benefit equivalent to the value of the offered parking subsidy.

Free Transit for Employees and Residents

Developments should be required to provide passes for local transit service (e.g., a deep-discount group pass similar to YoloBus and Unitrans' unlimited access pass for UC Davis undergraduates) to the development's residents and employees free of charge.

Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership

All non-residential developments should be required to join Yolo Commute, Yolo County's TMA (described on the next page) and all tenants should remain members in perpetuity.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the results of ongoing efforts should be carried out at both the districtwide level and the level of the individual development.

Attachment 2 – Page 219 of Draft Downtown Plan
Note: Deletion of items 3D and 3H is recommended

Table 8E. Implementation Actions: Parking and Transportation Demand Management	
Action	Methodology/ Steps
3. Regulate Private Development <i>Note that the actions listed here for regulating private development apply only to new development, as described in the Downtown Code (DMC Articles 40.13 and 40.14). The development standards in the Downtown Code set forth the specific applicability standards and exemptions.</i>	3A. Remove minimum parking requirements. 3B. Set maximum parking requirements. 3C. Require unbundling of parking costs from the cost of other goods and services. 3D. Require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plans and set performance standards for reducing motor vehicle trips from new developments. 3E. Require provision of spaces for carshare vehicles and carpools when parking is provided. 3F. Require parking cash-out programs. 3G. Require provision of free transit passes to residents and employees. 3H. Require membership in Transportation Management Association. 3I. Monitor ongoing efforts and results at the Plan Area level and the development-specific level.
4. Improve Transportation Choices	4A. Strengthen the existing countywide Transportation Management Association serving Davis. 4B. Establish deep-discount group transit pass program. 4C. Review and expand local transit networks. 4D. Continue improving bicycling facilities and programs.

Attachment 3 – Article 40.14.050.J of Supplemental to Downtown Codes**Note: Deletion of entire subsection 050.J. is recommended****J. Commercial Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Standards.**

1. **TDM Plan Required.** Developments shall be required to prepare and implement a TDM Plan with programs and measures designed to achieve a 50 percent drive-alone employee mode share target. TDM Plans shall comply with the following requirements:
 - a. **TDM Plan Baseline Requirements.** The TDM plan shall include the following measures and shall describe how these measures will be implemented. If any of the measures listed below are provided by a Transportation Management Association (TMA) such as Yolo Commute (the region's TMA) or a similar organization, then those measures may be implemented by ensuring that the development's occupants are enrolled as members in the TMA or similar organization:
 - (i) Employers and employees in the development shall be enrolled as members in a TMA, such as Yolo Commute;
 - (ii) On-site employee transportation coordinator to serve as a liaison between the employer/property owner and the TMA and to oversee the TDM program;
 - (iii) Shared bicycles, if a bikeshare service is not available in the Plan Area;
 - (iv) Telecommute/flexible work schedule program, when feasible;
 - (v) Guaranteed ride home program;
 - (vi) Occupants of the development shall be enrolled as members in a TMA, such as Yolo Commute;
 - (vii) Carpool matching services; and
 - (viii) Marketing of TDM programs to employees.
 - b. **Approval of TDM Plan.** The applicant shall submit the TDM plan to the City for approval. The City may request additional program measures to ensure the proposed plan will achieve the 50 percent drive-alone employee mode share target. The City may require that an applicant hire a third party to review the TDM plan to determine its efficacy in achieving the mode share requirement.
 - (1) The City may allow applicants to provide funding for district-wide programs as part of the TDM plan if it is not possible to achieve the 50 percent employee drive-alone target through a site-specific TDM Plan.
 - c. **Employee Transportation Coordinator.** The applicant shall designate an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC). The ETC will serve as the point of contact for the TMA and will provide the TMA and City with materials and data showing compliance with TDM and monitoring requirements.

MEMO

TO: Downtown Davis Plan Advisory Committee (DPAC)

COPY: Mayor Brett Lee
Councilmember Dan Carson
Ash Feeney, Assistant City Manager
Sherri Metzker, Principal Planner
Eric Lee, Planner

FROM: Greg Rowe, Planning Commissioner

DATE: January 14, 2020

SUBJECT: Reiterated Recommendation to Remove TDM and TMA Requirements from the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan ("Downtown Plan")

This memo again urges the DPAC to remove the draft downtown plan's compulsory mandates for implementing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans and dues-paying membership in a Transportation Management Association (TMA).¹ Retention of these punitive and dictatorial edicts will discourage future downtown investment and induce resentment among existing business and property owners. As former Ace Hardware owner Jennifer Anderson said at a DPAC meeting last year, starting and operating a successful local business is difficult. The City of Davis should therefore not enact requirements that intensify that difficulty. The downtown plan should not include any provisions that would place Davis in an uncompetitive position relative to other nearby cities.

Expunging the obligatory TDM and TMA provisions of the draft downtown plan would in no way diminish the important goal of reducing air pollution and Greenhouse Gas emissions. I believe, however, that other measures could accomplish the same result without imposing undue burdens on local businesses and employees. Such measures could include voluntary TDM plans and TMA membership, City-sponsored incentives to reduce "drive alone" commuting, and vigorous educational programs emphasizing the advantages of alternative modes of transportation.

Several examples of how TDM and TMA requirements are viewed by current Davis business owners are below. Specific recommendations for amending the draft plan are at the end of this memo. The comments and recommendations herein are mine alone, and do not represent a position of the Davis Planning Commission.

¹ Please see my TDM/TMA memo to the DPAC dated November 26, 2019.

1. **Comments by Former Local Business Owner:** During the most recent DPAC meeting I briefly spoke with the former owner of a long-time downtown Davis business that closed last year. This person is not supportive of mandatory TDM programs, and felt it would have been extremely difficult to implement such a compulsory mandate while operating the former business. Employees of that business commuted to work from throughout Yolo and Solano counties, including Woodland and Dixon. The former owner said that meeting a requirement to provide transit passes and a “guaranteed ride home” to such a geographically dispersed workforce would have been exceedingly difficult and expensive. The record keeping needed to demonstrate compliance with the goal of no more than 50% drive alone commuting by employees would have been a significant (and unfunded) administrative burden.
2. **Comment by Current Local Business Owner:** I regularly patronize a local family-owned business in downtown Davis. In recently discussing the draft downtown plan with the owners, one of them strongly questioned the legal authority of the City of Davis to decree TDM plans and TMA membership, an apprehension I share. In addition to this concern, other provisions of the draft downtown plan have caused anxiety among these business owners relative to what they will be allowed to do with their building due to its potential historic status.
3. **Recommendations:** The DPAC should modify the Downtown Plan and proposed Downtown Zone Article 40.14.050 by removing the following transportation regulations and compulsory requirements.
 - a. **Development-Level Transportation Demand Management Plans (TDMs):** Delete the requirement that new downtown development prepare and implement a TDM Plan.
 - i. Delete verbiage recommending a target of no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone.
 - ii. Delete verbiage requiring developments to achieve a performance standard for reducing vehicle trips from residential development.
 - b. **Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership:** Delete the requirement that all non-residential developments join Yolo Commute, Yolo County’s TMA, and that all downtown businesses remain dues paying TMA members in perpetuity.
 - i. Delete the requirement that development applicants designate an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) that would serve as the point of contact for the TMA and be responsible for demonstrating compliance with the TDM and monitoring requirements.
4. **Specific Deletion Recommendations:** The mandatory TDM and TMA provisions recommended for deletion are contained in these sections of the draft downtown plan:

- a. Downtown Plan Section 6.7, page 170: “Regulating Private Development: Parking, Loading and Traffic Reduction.” See Attachment 1.
 - b. Downtown Plan Section 8, page 219: Table 8E – Implementation Actions: Parking and Transportation Demand Management, items 3D (Require TDM Plans and Performance Standards) and 3H (Require TMA membership). See Attachment 2.
 - c. Article 40.14: Supplemental to Downtown Zones. Details on the TDM and TMA requirements appear in Article 40.140.050.J. – Commercial Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Standards. See Attachment 3.
5. **Concerns:** The imposition of mandatory TDM standards and regulations, coupled with obligatory TMA membership, will impose unnecessary financial, logistical and administrative burdens that could dissuade potential developers and employers from locating in downtown Davis. The net result would be to impede the commercial and residential development the City desires. Requiring development applicants to create and implement a TDM and compelling permanent TMA membership will impose uncompetitive costs and bureaucratic administrative burdens on downtown Davis developments and tenancy. Based on my professional experience as an environmental planner, compulsory TMPs and TMA participation are not cost-effective, and are a prime example of misguided government efforts to manipulate transportation modal behavior.

Attachments 1 – 3 appear on the following pages.

Attachment 1 – Page 170 of Draft Downtown Plan

6.7 Regulating Private Development: Parking, Loading, and Traffic Reduction

A system of incentives and regulations for new development can improve transportation choices and reduce motor vehicle traffic, pollution, and traffic-related fatalities and injuries.

Strategies for Regulating Private Development

The following requirements for private development are described in detail in Section 40.14.050 (Parking and Loading) of the Downtown Code.

Districtwide Employee Mode Share Target

A districtwide mode share target helps to reduce the traffic impacts of new development. The Specific Plan recommends a target of at least 50 percent of employees commuting by walking, bicycling, ridesharing, or taking public transit or employer shuttles; and no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone by 2040.

Development-Level Transportation Demand Management Plans

Requiring new development to develop a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan helps monitor and achieve mode share targets. The Specific Plan recommends setting a target of no more than 50 percent of employees driving alone. Developments should also be required to achieve a performance standard for reducing vehicle trips from residential development.

Traffic-Minimizing Parking Standards

The Specific Plan recommends that developments be required to unbundle the cost of parking from the cost of other goods and services by charging a separate fee for parking; and to provide carshare

and preferential carpool spaces. Maximum parking requirements should be applied to all developments and there should be no minimum parking requirements. This will allow the emergence of a market for parking where spaces are bought and sold, rented, and leased.

Parking Cash Out

In new developments, parking cash-out programs should be offered by any employer who provides a parking subsidy to employees, to give employees who do not drive a cash benefit equivalent to the value of the offered parking subsidy.

Free Transit for Employees and Residents

Developments should be required to provide passes for local transit service (e.g., a deep-discount group pass similar to YoloBus and Unitrans' unlimited access pass for UC Davis undergraduates) to the development's residents and employees free of charge.

Transportation Management Association (TMA) Membership

All non-residential developments should be required to join Yolo Commute, Yolo County's TMA (described on the next page) and all tenants should remain members in perpetuity.

Monitoring

Monitoring of the results of ongoing efforts should be carried out at both the districtwide level and the level of the individual development.

Attachment 2 – Page 219 of Draft Downtown Plan
Note: Deletion of items 3D and 3H is recommended

Table 8E. Implementation Actions: Parking and Transportation Demand Management	
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4. Improve Transportation Choices	4A. Strengthen the existing countywide Transportation Management Association serving Davis. 4B. Establish deep-discount group transit pass program. 4C. Review and expand local transit networks. 4D. Continue improving bicycling facilities and programs.

Attachment 3 – Article 40.14.050.J of Supplemental to Downtown Codes**Note: Deletion of entire subsection 050.J. is recommended****J. Commercial Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Standards.**

1. **TDM Plan Required.** Developments shall be required to prepare and implement a TDM Plan with programs and measures designed to achieve a 50 percent drive-alone employee mode share target. TDM Plans shall comply with the following requirements:
 - a. **TDM Plan Baseline Requirements.** The TDM plan shall include the following measures and shall describe how these measures will be implemented. If any of the measures listed below are provided by a Transportation Management Association (TMA) such as Yolo Commute (the region's TMA) or a similar organization, then those measures may be implemented by ensuring that the development's occupants are enrolled as members in the TMA or similar organization:
 - (i) Employers and employees in the development shall be enrolled as members in a TMA, such as Yolo Commute;
 - (ii) On-site employee transportation coordinator to serve as a liaison between the employer/property owner and the TMA and to oversee the TDM program;
 - (iii) Shared bicycles, if a bikeshare service is not available in the Plan Area;
 - (iv) Telecommute/flexible work schedule program, when feasible;
 - (v) Guaranteed ride home program;
 - (vi) Occupants of the development shall be enrolled as members in a TMA, such as Yolo Commute;
 - (vii) Carpool matching services; and
 - (viii) Marketing of TDM programs to employees.
 - b. **Approval of TDM Plan.** The applicant shall submit the TDM plan to the City for approval. The City may request additional program measures to ensure the proposed plan will achieve the 50 percent drive-alone employee mode share target. The City may require that an applicant hire a third party to review the TDM plan to determine its efficacy in achieving the mode share requirement.
 - (1) The City may allow applicants to provide funding for district-wide programs as part of the TDM plan if it is not possible to achieve the 50 percent employee drive-alone target through a site-specific TDM Plan.
 - c. **Employee Transportation Coordinator.** The applicant shall designate an Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC). The ETC will serve as the point of contact for the TMA and will provide the TMA and City with materials and data showing compliance with TDM and monitoring requirements.

Brett, Dan, Ash, Sherri and Eric:

As an additional official comment on the draft Downtown Plan, I generally concur with the recently submitted comments by Jim Gray. It is astounding to me that a plan that is supposed to generate more downtown residential and commercial development is so burdened with unnecessary regulatory requirements that will discourage investment. Instead of being excited by the plan, the few downtown business and property owners with whom I've spoken are experiencing anxiety and concern.

As an example, how does the City expect to attract new restaurants if it follows through with the plan to ban natural gas hookups? Virtually all restaurants cook with natural gas. Yes, new appliances such as electric induction cooktops are becoming available in the residential market, but they are typically MUCH more expensive than natural gas cooktops. Plus, a natural gas cooktop can still be used when there is an electric power outage, simply by turning on the gas and lighting a match (which my wife did last year during an unplanned local PG&E outage).

If cooking with gas is outlawed downtown, I believe few new restaurants will open. And, some existing ones may close. Some City commissioners have reportedly even suggested that natural gas be allowed in restaurants, but only if they pay a "mitigation fee." That would of course raise the cost of meals served by those restaurants.

These proposed restrictions won't induce Davis residents to dine in downtown Davis. Instead, they will drive to towns like Woodland (to restaurants like Morgan's On Main) or to Winters (Buckhorn and Putah Creek Cafe). How will a downtown plan that makes it necessary for residents to drive to other cities for dining achieve the goal of net reductions in GHG emissions? Simple answer: it won't.

The City correctly wants to reduce GHG and criteria air pollution emissions, but there are better ways to achieve that goal than to impose unrealistic restrictions on food is cooked. Please delete this mandate from the Downtown Plan.

Regards, Greg Rowe

From: Neel Shah <neelfirst@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 15, 2019 2:43 PM
To: DowntownPlan <downtownplan@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Input re: Downtown Davis Specific Plan

I am concerned the implementation of mixed housing around North G Street will negatively impact the owners and customers of the Davis Food Co-op. Without sufficient additional parking the store will endure congestion and negative consumer experience. It may affect revenue growth and employment opportunity at the Co-op.

Adding 1-2 small markets to the downtown plans would help combat congestion at the co-op and boost the desirability of living downtown. I do not see a mention of this in the plan. However I think it would be a big driver for city expats to adopt downtown Davis life.

Best regards

Neel Shah
904 La Coruno St
Davis CA 95618

PS the form submission link is broken.

<https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/community-development-and-sustainability/planning-and-zoning/downtown-davis-plan/draft-specific-plan-and-comments/draft-specific-plan-comments>

Overall, I appreciate the significant effort that has gone into this long planning process, and am optimistic that this document will help guide development of our downtown towards a more walkable, bike-friendly, denser and more mixed-use core of our community.

At a high level, I have some concerns about the feasibility of implementation of the vision laid out in this plan. Many of the elements described in this vision are things the City may not have direct jurisdiction or authority over. Discussion of partners that will be necessary to realize this vision would be well-placed in this Plan, especially in discussion of implementation – what actions can be undertaken by the City, and what actions must be coordinated with outside partners?

Specific comments are listed below.

- Page xvii, the Planning Commission chair is Stephen Streeter, not Stephen Street. As of January 8, 2020, the roles of chair and vice-chair have been reversed, with Cheryl Essex chairing the commission and Stephen Streeter serving as vice-chair.
- Throughout the document, remove all uses of the phrase “alternative transportation.” (First appears on page 43.) This phrasing connotes a car-centricity that is not consistent with the values of the Davis community nor the vision outlined in the Downtown Davis Specific Plan. “Active transportation,” “bicycling, walking, and transit,” or “sustainable modes of transportation” are all better choices.
- Page 43 and 170, some places in the Plan refer to providing only minimum vehicle parking required while others discuss parking maximums. Parking maximums are the more effective policy, and these references should be revised for consistency throughout the document when discussing vehicle parking. Clarify that these policies refer specifically to parking for vehicles, as opposed to bicycle parking which should be provided in abundance.
- Page 59 and 72, the graphic for Missing Middle/Building Forms appears on both of these pages but has slightly different labels for the illustrated building types. On page 72, “townhouse” is listed twice.
- Page 65, remove the suggestion of future parking structures from this Plan. Additional parking structures have been considered by the City and community multiple times in recent years, and on every occasion have been determined to be a non-starter and a waste of valuable downtown space.
- Page 74, why is Central Park not indicated with a green asterisk as civic space on Figure 4.13?
- Page 74, Figure 4.13 includes more shades of purple, blue, and grey than are listed in the legend. In particular, there are strange diagonal changes in the grey shading of the University Ave-Rice Lane neighborhood and of purple on the block bounded by 3rd, 4th, E, and F Streets. The dark blue shading also changes colors near the western rail line at the Amtrak Station parcel, and on the Davis Commons parcel.
- Throughout the document, the restaurant patio at Bistro 33 (old City Hall, at the corner of 3rd and F Streets) is shaded on many maps as existing Public Open Space. It is a private restaurant patio—is there some arrangement for its use by the public that I’m not aware of? If so, this should be clarified in the document. If not, for consistency it should either be removed from the Public Open Space layer, or all outdoor restaurant patios should be similarly shown as Public Open Space (though I think this points to it being inappropriate to consider a private patio as public space).

- Page 154, Covell Boulevard and J Street is the first protected intersection constructed in California, but was not the first constructed in America (there was at least one in Salt Lake City that preceded it, and there may have been one in Austin, TX as well). The first bicycle signals in North America were at Russell and Sycamore, another location of the historic first bicycle lanes. In fact, the bicycle lanes on Sycamore Lane were originally configured as parking-protected lanes (what we would call Class IV today) as an experimental project, and later converted to conventional Class II lanes—another notable part of Davis' pioneering history in bicycle infrastructure.
- Page 155, Class I facilities are not exclusive for bicyclists – they are shared with pedestrians. Class IV facilities should be referred to as “protected bikeways” not “protected bike lanes”—a deliberate distinction to avoid including them in a statutory requirement in California that bicyclists MUST use a bicycle lane if one is present.
- Page 157, “traffic stress” and “low-stress network” are mentioned a few times in the circulation discussion for bicyclists, but are never clearly defined or described (even in the glossary provided at the end of the document). Provide the appropriate context for these terms.
- Page 159, consider removing the suggestion that transit-only lanes be provided on First Street. The street is designated in the plan as transit-priority, bicycle-priority, and vehicle-priority—how is there capacity within the existing street width to accommodate all three of these and also provide a transit-only lane? This suggestion appears not to have been considered in the larger context of other Plan recommendations.
- Page 161, I strongly support the explicit statement that this Plan does not recommend any street widening or adding new streets or vehicle lanes. Thank you for including this.
- Page 181, Figure 7.4 the shading in the legend does not match the shading on the map figure. This is an issue on many figures throughout the Plan—all figures should be reviewed for color consistency between map shading and legend items. Check on screen as well as on printed documents.
- Page 183, ‘gpd’ is defined as ‘gallons per day.’ The same page includes a reference to ‘gpcd’ which is not defined. Please clarify.
- Page 196, the dots and lines on Figure 8.1 point to the wrong items in the caption/legend bar. Each line should be shifted down one item.
- Page 199, cost estimates provided in Table 8A for Class II bicycle lanes and Class IV cycle tracks of equal lengths (items 1 and 2) are the same. These facilities have different costs; specifically, Class IV facilities are more expensive than Class II because they include striping and stencils in addition to a physical barrier or raised profile.

From: R Thayer <rlthayer@ucdavis.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 18, 2019 8:21 AM
To: DowntownPlan <downtownplan@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Downtown plan

Greetings,

As a landscape architect and former partner in a design firm associated with many projects in Davis (Central Park, Aspen Greenbelt, Arroyo Park, Willow Creek, etc.), I applaud the city for initiating a collaborative urban design effort. However, the central issue that needs to be addressed downtown is the loss of businesses essential to Davis residents.

In the past year or so, downtown has lost an outdoor equipment store, a lumber yard, and the best clothing store in the region. Downtown Davis is turning into a "restaurant and coffee house" district. No doubt much of this is due to changing ownership of real property and the uptick in taxes due to Proposition 13. Regardless, urban design of a district consisting mostly of restaurants and few other essential businesses seems to me to be a rather shallow exercise.

How about a City-led effort to place essential businesses in the downtown core? This would help recapture efficiencies lost with the escaping businesses. As a case in point, if people could buy lumber in Davis, fewer trips to Woodland and Sacramento would be needed.

I'm all for urban design, but only if the retail efficiencies are addressed first.

Sincerely,

Robert Thayer

Robert L. Thayer, Jr. , FASLA, FCELA
Emeritus Professor
Landscape Architecture + Environmental Design
University of California, Davis
rlthayer@ucdavis.edu
(530) 902-7825

Eric Lee
City of Davis
23 Russell Boulevard
Davis, CA 95616

January 10th, 2020

Dear Mr. Lee,

The Tree Davis Board of Directors, Kevin Robert Perry of Urban Rain Design, and I have reviewed the Draft Downtown Davis Specific Plan. The plan covers many important topics relevant to revitalizing and improving our city's downtown core and we commend the authors on the fact that sustainability and green infrastructure are considered.

However, we would like to note a few key omissions concerning the importance of trees and urban greenspace in placemaking, climate change mitigation and enhancement of business districts. We recommend the following to make the plan more comprehensive and complete:

- 1) **Chapter 1.2: Relationship to General Plan and Other Plans and Policy Documents:** The City of Davis' Tree Planting, Preservation, and Protection Ordinance (Tree Ordinance) should be included in the planning documents and regulatory framework section of the plan.

Rationale: The Tree Ordinance sets standards for the inclusion and protection of trees in city spaces and is especially important given the protection that the Tree Ordinance affords for trees during construction, remodeling and demolition. Without explicit inclusion of the Tree Ordinance, it is unlikely that the provisions of the ordinance will be applied to the plan – in which case, the City could potentially lose the financial resources already invested in downtown trees as well as the public goods/benefits that trees confer now and will confer in the future.

- 2) **Chapter 2: Existing Conditions:** The City of Davis Urban Forestry Division has an inventory of City, street and landmark trees. The status of those trees, along with their collective canopy attributes should be included in the Downtown Davis Existing Conditions section of the plan.

Rationale: Setting baseline conditions for downtown tree canopy will improve future goal-setting and decision-making regarding canopy enhancement measures in the downtown area.

Board of Directors

David B. Robinson ✂ Dr. Greg McPherson ✂ Don Shor ✂
Diane Crumley ✂ Patrick Van Horne ✂ Emily Griswold ✂ Olga Levitsky ✂ Richard Dye II ✂ Larry Guenther

Emeritus Members: Lois Wolk ✂ Phil Kitchen ✂ Rob Cain

3) Chapter 7.1 & 7.2: Low Impact Development/Green Infrastructure; Stormwater

Management and Green Infrastructure Improvements: Urban trees are green infrastructure and should be included as such in this chapter – especially in the “Identifying Opportunities” section. Additionally, there are a number of more specific green infrastructure strategies that should be included within the “Matrix of Potential Green Infrastructure” (Figure 7.2), such as stormwater planters, rain gardens, green gutters, vegetated swales, and green walls. Further, if the Specific Plan is to serve as a visionary document for downtown, green infrastructure can and should be woven within streets, buildings, parking lots, parks, and plazas (not just streets, as the Plan currently indicates). Finally, we believe that a more site-specific “green infrastructure overlay” along with strategically selected green infrastructure demonstration project sites could be used to illustrate how green infrastructure can boldly enhance Davis’ downtown core and simultaneously educate the public about the benefits of urban stormwater retention, permeable surfaces and mitigation of urban heat islands. With all of these recommendations, we would be happy to sit down with the project team to discuss our suggestions further and provide support.

Rationale: Trees, in combination with an broader toolbox of green infrastructure strategies, will aid the City and its residents in adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change. For example, trees provide shade and cooling via evapotranspiration (which reduce building energy use) that decrease human exposure to heat stress – the Center for Disease control reports that extreme heat events cause more deaths in the United States than all other natural disasters combined. The occurrence of extreme heat events is projected to increase as the climate continues to warm. Additionally, trees and green infrastructure stormwater facilities clean and reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, store carbon, reduce noise, improve property values, provide jobs and enhance economic activity in business districts. Expanding the role of urban trees and green infrastructure will help distinguish Davis as the environmental leader that it strives to be.

4) Form-based Code:

- a. Currently lacks specifications on growing space for trees, including adequate space above- and below-ground. Adequate soil (volume and type) is critical for a healthy mature tree’s extensive root system.
- b. Currently lacks specifications on tree species to be considered for the downtown area. A pallet of small, medium and large climate-ready shade tree species should be specified for planting.
- c. Currently lacks specification on structure build-out and implications for green infrastructure.
- d. Should allot a certain percentage of setback or frontage space for green infrastructure.

Board of Directors

David B. Robinson ✂ Dr. Greg McPherson ✂ Don Shor ✂
Diane Crumley ✂ Patrick Van Horne ✂ Emily Griswold ✂ Olga Levitsky ✂ Richard Dye II ✂ Larry Guenther

Emeritus Members: Lois Wolk ✂ Phil Kitchen ✂ Rob Cain

- e. Should include goals for tree canopy cover – both at the scale of the overall downtown area as well as parcel-by-parcel for private property.
- f. Should include goals for percentage pervious surfaces and urban landscape.

Rationale: A plan that lacks the above specifications runs the risk of advocating lofty ideals with no means of achieving plan goals. This could result in the loss of: existing tree canopy, the opportunity to expand the downtown tree canopy and landscape/pervious surfaces, the opportunity for the City of Davis to serve as a leader in urban greening/sustainability and the public health and economic benefits that accompany them.

Thank you very much to the authors for their diligent work in preparing this plan. Davis is a very special community in many ways, not the least of which is that our city government leaders work to make intentional choices about the future of our town and the vitality of our downtown core. I hope that our comments concerning the importance of trees in this pursuit can become a useful part of the revision of the draft plan.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments, questions or feedback.

Best regards,

Erin Donley Marineau

Erin Donley Marineau, Ph.D., M.P.A.

Executive Director

Tree Davis

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Board of Directors

David B. Robinson ✂ Dr. Greg McPherson ✂ Don Shor ✂
Diane Crumley ✂ Patrick Van Horne ✂ Emily Griswold ✂ Olga Levitsky ✂ Richard Dye II ✂ Larry Guenther

Emeritus Members: Lois Wolk ✂ Phil Kitchen ✂ Rob Cain

From: Daniel Parrella <daniel@gatewayrealtypartners.com>
Sent: Monday, November 11, 2019 1:45 PM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: Downtown Planning Advisory Committee - PD-86 Inclusion

Eric,

Thanks again for all your work with the DPAC. I look forward to the meeting this Thursday. Ive pasted below an Email from various property owners in PD-86. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Daniel

Greetings members of the Downtown Planning Advisory Committee and City Staff,

As commercial property owners in the University Avenue neighborhood, we are writing you today to present you with our perspective on the work and planning that has been done with respect to the downtown update. We appreciate the time and effort that has been put in by the members of this committee and we believe that you have made good progress in creating a zoning and regulatory framework that can modernize downtown Davis.

Although the draft plan presented for public comment has many commendable aspects, we are concerned that large swathes of Planning District 86 have been left out of consideration for this update to the General Plan. We are writing you today specifically as property owners who are interested in bringing capital and improvements into this neighborhood but are unable to do so given the current zoning. We think that leaving out the parcels from A street to B street and from 2nd street to Russell is a missed opportunity to bring reinvestment and redevelopment to our neighborhood.

The City of Davis currently faces a serious budget deficit. We believe that our properties and others within the section of PD-86 we have identified could make meaningful contributions to city tax revenue. From the Opticos economic report provided earlier in the year, when they looked at tax revenues in areas around the University of Florida at Gainesville, they found that properties zoned at three to four stories that are adjacent to the university generate as much tax revenue to the city as properties that are zoned higher in the downtown core. Opticos also stated that the properties in this planning district are not yielding anywhere close to the value productivity they could create if they were zoned for even slightly higher height limits and densities. We are asking the DPAC and City Staff to zone the properties from Second to Fifth Street as Neighborhood Medium with Main Street Medium zoning for all the properties along Third Street.

Creating Main Street Medium along Third Street leverages the seven million dollars just spent on award winning infrastructure improvements. Many of the property owners on Third Street have waited for a decade for the improvements to be made. We need to be thinking about how to make the most of the expenditure of these public monies. Otherwise, the properties along Third Street will continue to face strong challenges for redevelopment.

Some of us and others have already tried to redevelop in this area. A General Plan Amendment was required to put in Guad's Tacos and Beer on Third Street. This protracted exercise was only necessary because of the antiquated zoning of PD-86 where requirements vary by street and sometimes by parcel. The zoning which is currently on the "D" variation is confusing and convoluted--the exact problem that the Downtown Plan Update was supposed to solve. Currently, developments in PD-86 are done via spot zoning. This is an arbitrary and inefficient situation that can and should be changed. We are writing you today because we want to take action at our properties, but we need your help to continue the zoning that has already been granted in part of PD-86 along B Street and to expand it all the way to the University.

Current property owners face restrictions that reduce the financial feasibility of redeveloping. The setbacks for the third story along Third Street under the current zoning make development unattractive and is the primary reason no major projects have come through in the last 20 years. Updating the zoning along all of Third Street to be Main Street Medium would build off the infrastructure investments that have already been made and encourage redevelopment that is in keeping with the character of the area. Otherwise, the underutilized parcels on Third Street will remain underutilized.

University Avenue contains several older apartment complexes in need of redevelopment. However, these projects do not pencil out for either of these property owners given the current setbacks and two-story limits. The apartment complex at Fifth and B Streets sits on the largest privately-owned site in the core area at over 81,000 square feet. It was built in 1950 and is one of, if not the, oldest apartment complex in the City of Davis. The property is currently allowed to only go to 9 units per acre, illustrating the difficulties of the current zoning. Given that it is one of the oldest apartment complexes in the city, the DPAC and City would miss a key spot for redevelopment by not including it in the Downtown Plan. It is right across from Central Park, and due to its age will be a likely property to be redeveloped within the timeframe of the Core Area update. Davis and the DPAC should take action to incentivize redevelopment on such an important parcel along with the others along University Avenue. Rezoning University Avenue to Neighborhood Medium will create the appropriate conditions for these projects to move forward. We ask that you simply extend the zoning that has already been proposed to a critically underutilized avenue ripe for redevelopment and renewal.

We are asking you to include the section of PD-86 from A to B Street and north of Second Street into the Downtown Plan Update as property owners who want to revitalize this section of Davis. There is demonstrated and actionable demand here for redevelopment which can be encouraged by replacing the antiquated zoning that currently exists with the modern form-based code that has already been proposed in sections of PD-86. We ask that the DPAC include this section of PD-86 into the plan so that it can be evaluated as part of the EIR. Preserving PD-86 for the properties on 1st Street, Rice and the Southern side of second street will protect the owner occupants who live there. We would much prefer to have this evaluated as part of a rational and organized system rather than see redevelopment done via spot zoning like Trackside which has been a very divisive issue. We urge you to create conditions that will allow us to redevelop this important section of Davis linking the University campus to Central Park and the rest of the Core Area.

Signed,

Jordan Crumley – 212 University Avenue
Ashok Patel – 201 2nd Street
Scott Mathews – 312 University Avenue
Rick Czuleger – 235 3rd Street
Ali Sherali – 232 3rd Street

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Daniel Parrella
Gateway Realty Partners | Acquisitions Director
P: [\(530\) 219-5998](tel:5302195998) | W: www.gatewayrealtypartners.com
[720 Olive Drive, Suite D | Davis, CA 95616](http://720OliveDriveSuiteD.Davis.CA.95616)

December 2, 2019

City of Davis
Department of Community Development and Sustainability
23 Russell Blvd, Suite 2
Davis, CA 95616

Attention: Eric Lee – Planning Department

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as formal request to include 212 University Avenue in the Downtown Plan Neighborhood Medium Zone. 212 University is a multi-family property within PD 2-86D, currently zoned single family. As the property owner I have made numerous inquiries to City Staff regarding the need to redevelop this property due to its age and deferred maintenance. I have been advised by City Staff to wait and participate in the downtown plan update. I was disappointed to see the entire University/Rice corridor omitted from any re-zoning at all under the draft plan update. The Rice/University or PD 2-86D area has more non-conforming properties than perhaps any other area in all of Davis. Not including, at the very least, properties that clearly do not fall within the current single family zoning designation as part of the plan update is a mistake and wasted opportunity. Not only would the inclusion of these non-conforming properties in the plan update alleviate the need for individual property owners such as myself to go through the uncertain and costly process of a zoning application it would also revitalize the area, create additional desperately needed housing units and provide new revenue for the City of Davis. As a resident of Davis for the past 25 years, I can appreciate the complex nature and the challenges of rezoning certain, if not all, areas in the town of Davis. However, we have reached the proverbial breaking point in our town and simply taking no action as is the plan for PD 2-86D under the currently proposed update is simply no longer an option.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Williams", with a stylized, cursive script.

Chris Williams
12-14 West LLC

From: Betty Woo <bettywoo@thewoos.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2019 11:53 AM
To: Eric Lee <ELee@cityofdavis.org>
Subject: RE: Form based code training

Hi Eric-

Thank you for inviting me to the training session. I actually wasn't talking about the townhouse standards, though I used it for an example of how you can make a large building feel like several small ones without putting arbitrary setbacks in the middle of a site. I don't agree with the form based code dictating what happens at the rear and sides of the site when you meet the setbacks and no one can see beyond the edge of the site. I don't agree that the side neighbors are as detrimentally affected by the internal configuration of a building as Tony alleged. If the building can be designed to look/feel in keeping with the existing neighborhood, arbitrary rules on building dimensions should not be applied. The Aiken project proves that point. The arbitrary sizes given in the draft FBC it results in a downgrading of the usability of the site. This amounts to much lost opportunity and even I dare say a "taking". I believe the form based code should have more flexibility.

For example, (I believe it's) in Philadelphia, they have a "sky plane" ordinance that dictates the angle of the building that cannot block an agreed upon angle of the sun from the surrounding buildings or street scape. This makes sense to me because this angle has real consequences for the surrounding community. It is not arbitrary. I totally support a form-based code, I would even support a "sky plane" ordinance but not one based on nonsensical arbitrary dimensions internal to a site.

That said, the session was valuable. Thanks for providing us the opportunity to engage. -Betty

Betty Woo, AIA Architect
216 Lindo Place
Davis, CA 95616
530 753-9797 ph
530 753-4239 fax

Davis Downtown Specific Plan

Preliminary Comments 12/09/19

Yolano Group Sierra Club

The draft Davis Downtown Specific Plan (DDSP), available for public comments through 1/15/20, is a long and complex document that covers a wide range of topics, some of which are of interest or concern to the Yolano Group Sierra Club. These preliminary comments are based solely on the draft plan itself, not the detailed standards and codes proposed as Article 40.13. We will provide more extensive comments after we have reviewed the relevant documents in greater detail.

The underlying issues that guide our review of the DDSP are climate change, resource conservation, open space, and environmental justice. These issues are relevant to most sections and elements of the DDSP. We applaud some sections and elements and encourage you to retain and perhaps enhance them. We are concerned about other sections and elements.

We are pleased that the DDSP emphasizes sustainability, specifically including energy, mobility, water, waste, food, and social equity. Compact development, listed as one of six goals, is essential to achieving sustainability. The goal of increased housing access and choice and the specification of 1000 additional new housing units in the downtown area are important for reducing emissions from commuting and promoting social equity. The emphasis on “complete streets” and priority given to walking, biking, and public transit (and strict limits on vehicle parking) are necessary for reducing carbon emissions and making downtown more “public friendly.” The entire Mobility and Parking element is excellent, as is the Infrastructure element (green infrastructure, storm water management, water conservation).

Despite the emphasis on sustainability, we are disappointed that the DDSP makes no mention of specific targets for reducing carbon emissions. The City of Davis adopted a goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2040. Promoting walking, biking, trees, and compact development will contribute to this goal but quantitative targets would be desirable. The Built Environment element describes size, density, and location of buildings extensively but says little about construction design. Brief mention is made of drought tolerant vegetation, passive cooling, energy savings incentives, solar panels, etc. The DDSP should go beyond these platitudes and specifically call for new buildings to be net zero energy and designed for net zero carbon emissions.

Finally we are concerned about the inadequate attention to timing. If Davis is to become carbon neutral by 2040, enormous progress in this direction must be made by 2030. Buildings and infrastructure, once developed, will endure for at least 50 years. We cannot allow “business as usual” to proceed past 2030 and then begin working toward sustainability. Yet the Implementation element lists capital infrastructure improvements of \$5,090,000 through 2030 and then \$54,430,000 after 2030. Of course it takes time to plan infrastructure projects and

building developments but the pace must be greatly accelerated to make meaningful and necessary progress by 2030.

Davis Downtown Specific Plan
Comments 1/10/20
Sierra Club Yolano Group

The draft Davis Downtown Specific Plan (DDSP), available for public comments through 1/15/20, is a long and complex document that covers a wide range of topics, some of which are of interest or concern to the Yolano Group Sierra Club. These comments are based both on the draft plan itself and the detailed standards and codes proposed as Article 40.13 and 40.14. These comments build upon and supersede preliminary comments that we provided earlier.

The underlying issues that guide our review of the DDSP are climate change, resource conservation, open space, and environmental justice. These issues are relevant to most sections and elements of the DDSP. We applaud some sections and elements and encourage their retention and enhancement. We are concerned about other sections and elements.

We are pleased that the DDSP emphasizes sustainability, specifically including energy, mobility, water, waste, food, and social equity. In emphasizing sustainability the plan seems to be looking to the future, taking into account climate change, and not dwelling on a mythical bucolic past. Despite the emphasis on sustainability, we are disappointed that the DDSP makes no mention of specific targets for reducing carbon emissions or conserving resources. The City of Davis adopted a goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2040. Promoting walking, biking, trees, and compact development will contribute to this goal but quantitative targets would be desirable. The Built Environment element and Article 40.14 describe size, density, and location of buildings extensively but say little about construction design. Brief mention is made of drought tolerant vegetation, passive cooling, energy savings incentives, solar panels, etc. The DDSP should go beyond these vague recommendations and specifically call for new buildings to be net zero energy and designed for net zero carbon emissions. Appendix VIII in Chapter 10 provides appropriate recommendations for specificity and should be incorporated into the plan.

Compact development, listed as one of six goals, is essential to achieving sustainability. The goal of increased housing access and choice and the specification of many additional new housing units in the downtown area are important for reducing emissions from commuting and promoting social equity. While we endorse the goal of compact development, we worry that the plan goes too far. Recommending buildings up to 7 stories high in the core area (specifically at Davis Square) threatens the ambiance and “human scale” of downtown. The height limit downtown should never exceed 5 stories, should aim for mostly 4 stories at most, and should require setbacks for all stories above 3.

Transportation is a major source of carbon emissions in the Davis area and must be addressed aggressively in Davis planning. The emphasis on “complete streets” and priority given to walking, biking, and public transit (and strict limits on motor vehicle speeds and parking) are necessary for reducing carbon emissions and making downtown more “public friendly.” The proposals to discourage use of motor vehicles generally are excellent, e.g. setting very modest maximum limits on parking spaces at residential and commercial establishments and eliminating minimum requirements for parking. We are deeply concerned about social equity and accessibility for everyone, however, and urge that serious attention be given to downtown access

by people with limited incomes or mobility. Public transit to and within downtown must be improved. Perhaps certain categories of people should be exempt from parking and transit fees or eligible for reimbursement of fees. The categories should be broad and inclusive to avoid stigma, e.g. all senior citizens, people with handicap certification, or low income (e.g. eligible for food stamps).

Finally we are concerned about the inadequate attention to timing. If Davis is to become carbon neutral by 2040, enormous progress in this direction must be made by 2030. Buildings and infrastructure, once developed, will endure for at least 50 years. We cannot allow “business as usual” to proceed past 2030 and then begin working toward sustainability. Yet the Implementation element lists capital infrastructure improvements of \$5,090,000 through 2030 and then \$54,430,000 after 2030. Of course it takes time to plan infrastructure projects and building developments but the pace must be greatly accelerated to make meaningful and necessary progress by 2030.