

**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](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)