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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