

**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