



Davis, California: Citywide Survey and Historic Context Update

Prepared by Kara Brunzell, Brunzell Historical for the City of Davis, 2015.

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Introduction

Preparer

This Historic Context Statement was prepared by Brunzell Historical. Its Principal is Kara Brunzell, who holds a Master's Degree in Public History from California State University, Sacramento (CSUS). Ms. Brunzell is qualified as a Historian and Architectural Historian under the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards. She is experienced in the recordation, inventory, and evaluation of historic resources using the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) guidelines. Her expertise includes preparing reports and making recommendations for federal, state, municipal, and private entities regarding Section 106 review and compliance as well as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). In addition, Ms. Brunzell has experience in municipal preservation planning and non-profit historic preservation.

Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this historic context is to provide a framework for proper evaluation of resources within the City of Davis by relating them to the periods in which they were constructed. The City of Davis has been the subject of three previous surveys: in 1980 by Historic Environment Consultants of Sacramento, in 1996 by Architectural Resources Group of San Francisco, and in 2003 by Roland-Nawi Associates of Sacramento. These surveys included historic context statements, but the history of the World War II and post-war periods were not areas of primary inquiry in previous studies. The current effort has been focused on bringing the Davis Historic Context up to date by including a more detailed discussion of these periods. In order to derive the practical benefits of a historic context of the town's entire period of development, the history of Davis prior to 1945 is summarized first. The history of Davis prior to 1945 as related in this document is primarily a collation and summary of the three earlier studies, on which it relies as sources. The World War II and post-war periods are the subjects of the bulk of this context. Readers interested in more detail can refer to the contexts provided in earlier surveys.

The geographical area of this study was defined as all areas within Davis city limits that were developed prior to 1975. Subdivisions that were recorded before 1975, but where most development did not occur until later, were excluded. Portions of central Davis that were mainly developed prior to 1945 have been intensively surveyed as part of previous studies, and were not comprehensively re-surveyed. Previously documented historic resources, most of which are located within the historic core area, were photographed by members of the City of Davis Historic Resource Management Commission (HRMC) in order to update existing DPR 523 forms.

Kara Brunzell and a team of volunteers from the community, some of whom were professionally qualified Historians and Architectural Historians, surveyed a roughly seven square-mile area within Davis city limits. The team collected information about building type, architectural style, and integrity for each parcel. In older neighborhoods, where buildings were developed individually, the team photographed each parcel. For later tracts that feature repetitive building types, the survey team photographed sample parcels. Ms. Brunzell, members of the HRMC, and project volunteers

also performed extensive research for the project. Information gathered was used to create the narrative history found in this document, and to analyze the neighborhood's built resources according to the themes developed. In addition to the narrative history, Ms. Brunzell created a property table that includes basic information about each property, as well as creating a DPR 523 D form for each subdivision or group of subdivisions. The team also produced DPR forms for a small number of individual properties. Archives and repositories visited include: the Shields Library at UC Davis, the California Room at the California State Library, and the Hattie Weber Library. Sources consulted include: John Lofland's history blog, Davis histories, historic newspapers, city directories, historic maps, building permits, U.S. Census rolls, and Yolo County Assessor's map books.

Acknowledgements

This project was undertaken with funding from the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and at the direction of the City of Davis Planning Department and its HRMC. The HRMC and its chair Rand Herbert designed this survey and has acted as the project's guidepost. Ike Njoku of the Planning Department and other City of Davis staff have provided stalwart support for this effort from its inception. Members of the HRMC have generously donated their time to field survey, research, editing, and numerous other tasks. Rand Herbert, Allen Lowry, and Rich Rifkin, have all provided expertise as well as countless hours to this effort, which could not have been completed without them. Community members who gave their time to field survey and research include Clyde Bowman, David Hickman, Hazen Kazaks Lee Maddex, and Karen Moore. David Hickman also generously volunteered to document an individually eligible resource. And Historian John Lofland, whose writings were the source of much of my information about Davis, has also provided invaluable assistance with research and advice throughout this process. I am deeply grateful for all their contributions. Errors and omissions in this document are my own.

Historic Register Criteria

National Register of Historic Places & California Register of Historic Resources

The NRHP is the United States' comprehensive listing of historic resources. Administered by the National Park Service, it lists buildings, structures, sites, objects and districts that have been found significant for American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Typically, buildings are considered eligible for the NRHP if they are over 50 years old and meet four criteria for significance (A – D), which are listed below. The CRHR is a similar listing compiled by the State of California. It follows similar significance criteria, which are listed numerically (1 – 4).

Eligibility for the NRHP or CRHR rests on meeting the following significance criteria:

- A/1. Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B/2. Properties that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past; or
- C/3. Properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or

that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D/4. Properties that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory

In addition to age eligibility and significance, eligibility rests on integrity, which affects a property's ability to convey the qualities that make it significant. Seven types of integrity are considered: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

City of Davis Register of Historical Resources

Eligibility for listing on the local Davis Register of Historical Resources is based on the NRHP and CRHR criteria, and is found in Section 40.23.060 of the City of Davis Municipal Code.

Guidelines for Evaluation

Summary of Significant Themes

This document divides the history of the City of Davis into three time periods based on events important to the development of Davis.

- I. Native American, Spanish, and Mexican Era (prehistory – 1847)
- II. Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904)
- III. University Farm and University of California Era (1905 – present)

The period after 1940 is the primary subject of this survey, and is sub-divided into the following time periods based on important events in Davis History.

- A. World War II and Post-war (1940 – 1958)
- B. Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971)
- C. Progressive Visions, Managed Growth (1972 – 2015)

Each era above is analyzed in respect to the following themes in order to illustrate the development of Davis's built environment.

- Transportation
- Davis Builders and Developers
- Residential Development

Neighborhoods and Individual Resources Documented

The following neighborhoods and individual resources were documented on DPR 523 A, B, and D forms, which are appended to this Historic Context Statement

Table A

Resource Name	Resource Type	Form Type	Eligibility Determination
Anderson Place	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing

Bautista Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Bower's Acres	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Carden Estates	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Covell Commons	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Covell Park	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Davis Manor 1-6	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Davis Manor 7-11	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Davis Manor 12-19	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Davis Parkside	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
East Acres	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
El Macero Gardens	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
El Macero Park	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
El Macero Vista	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Elmwood	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Appears eligible as a local historic district
Gentry Greens	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Holly Acres	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Huntwood Park	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Ivy Town	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
La Buena Vida	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Lewis Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Lillard's Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Macero Del Norte	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Miller's Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Norwood	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Oeste Manor	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Rancho Macero	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Robbin's Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Sierra Vista Oaks	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Stockseth Acres	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Stonegate	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
University Estates	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Appears eligible as a local historic district

University Farms	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
University Park	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
University Village	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Westwood	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
Wray Addition	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
University Village	Neighborhood	DPR 523 D	Ineligible for historic listing
3820 Chiles Road	Building	DPR 523 A & B	Eligible as a local landmark
Arneson House	Building	DPR 523 A & B	Ineligible due to lack of integrity
Davis Bike Lane	Structure	DPR 523 A & B	Eligible as a local landmark and NRHP eligible

Historic Context Statement

Native American, Spanish, and Mexican Era (Prehistory – 1847)

The original inhabitants of the Davis area were Patwin people, who were part of the Penutian language family. Although most Patwin lived along the Sacramento River, some of their outlying communities were located in the grasslands around present-day Davis. Over 130 of their settlements had been discovered in Yolo County by the 1980s, several of which were on property that is currently part of the UC Davis campus. Europeans initiated contact with the Patwin in the 1770s, when Spanish priests from the San Francisco Bay Area missions attempted to bring the Patwin under their control. In 1833, a malaria epidemic wiped out an estimated seventy-five percent of the remaining Patwin.¹

Juan Manuel Vaca and Juan Felipe Peña, the first non-native permanent settlers in the area, were Mexican citizens who relocated to California in the early 1840s. During this period, the Mexican government was offering large land grants to its citizens to encourage settlement, and Vaca and Peña received a 12,000-acre grant south of Putah Creek in 1843. Their property became known as Rancho de los Putos. Vaca's son Manuel and Victor Prudon received the area north of Putah Creek in 1845. This second grant, known as Rancho Laguna de Santos Calle, was the area on which Davis would eventually be built.²

Associated Property Types

There are no buildings that survive within city limits from the period before 1847. Archaeological resources are likely to be present beneath the surface, particularly in areas adjacent to Putah Creek. Appropriate measures should be undertaken during soil-disturbing activities to avoid destruction of

¹ City of Davis, "Cultural Resources Inventory and Context Statement," Prepare by Architectural Resources Group, September 30, 1996, p.9.

² Regents of the University of California, "Landscape Heritage Plan: A Centennial Project," Prepared by EDAW, Inc., April 2009, p. 3-3, 3-5.

archaeological resources. Any archaeological artifacts discovered in Davis are likely to be significant under Criterion D/4, for their potential to yield information about pre-history or history.

Pioneer and Railroad Era (1848 – 1904)

Davis Ranch

American settler Joseph Chiles bought a portion of the Rancho Laguna de Santos Calle, which he resold to his son-in-law Jerome Davis in 1854. Davis established a dairy and other ventures, and eventually his land holdings grew to 12,000 acres. After California became a state in 1850, other farmers, many of them German immigrants, began to settle in the area. Yolo County quickly became a prosperous farming region focused on grain, livestock and orchard crops.³

Railroad and Davisville

In the 1860s, a group of five investors sometimes called the “Big Five” began planning a railroad routed through Davis’ ranch, and by 1868 the California Pacific Railroad had built its line to the area, laying out the three-way junction in its present location and alignment, where the Woodland branch line turned north from the main line. The railroad also constructed a depot, and laid out a town around it as a speculative investment.

The arrival of the railroad was a turning point, creating an economic impetus to found a town out of what had previously been a collection of scattered farms. The railroad’s investors laid out the town site adjacent to the depot, and by 1868 Davisville had about 400 residents. The railroad and new population spurred a brief building boom, but by the 1870s local growth had slowed. Davisville during the late nineteenth century was a farm village devoted to processing, storing, and shipping agricultural products. There was also industrial activity along the railroad tracks, some of which, like the lumber-yard, served the town in general. Most of the industry, however, was related to agriculture in one way or another, such as the Schmeiser manufacturing plant, on the east side of the railroad tracks with buildings on both sides of what is now Third street, which built almond hullers.⁴

³ City of Davis, 1996, p. 9 – 10.

⁴ City of Davis, “Cultural Resources Inventory,” Prepared by Historic Environment Consultants, June 1980, p. 18 – 19; City of Davis, “Central Davis Historic Conservation District, City of Davis Historic Resources Survey,” Prepared by Roland-Nawi Associates, p. 9.

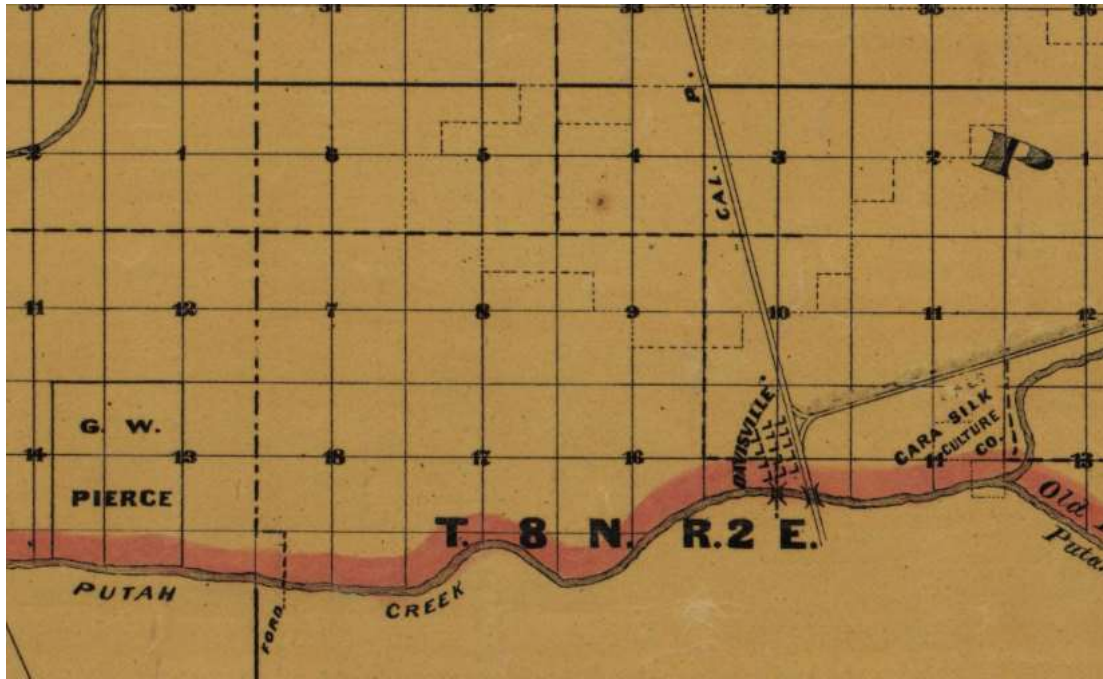


Figure 1: Detail of Davisville, Map of Yolo County, 1878

Commercial and Residential Development

After the railroad provided an economic impetus for a town, commercial establishments quickly sprang up to serve local residents. In addition to the farming-related businesses that were the community's *raison d'être*, blacksmiths, carpenters, livery stables, and wagon-makers established businesses. A post office and express office provided access to the world beyond Davis, and hotels, restaurants, saloons, and boarding houses catered to travelers. Retail businesses such as grocery stores, butchers, liquor stores, and clothing stores opened, as did a doctor's office and shoe repair shop. With warehouses and industrial services concentrated along the railroad tracks, downtown was clustered between First and Third Streets on G Street, a block west of the depot and tracks. A short-lived weekly newspaper was founded in 1869, and the *Davis Enterprise* began publishing in 1897. In addition to all the commercial activity, local residents established an Odd Fellows Lodge and Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches.⁵

With the tiny downtown located on G Street, residential development began around F Street just one more block to the west.⁶ Individual property owners built houses one at a time, and the availability of land meant that during the nineteenth century many blocks had only one or two houses set on large parcels. The gradual population growth of this area (ten residents a year) meant that residential construction proceeded at a measured pace. At the turn of the twentieth century, Davis did not have a single residential block that was completely built-out in the modern sense. The original town plat easily accommodated the gradual growth of the little town, and the only major

⁵ City of Davis, 1980, p. 18; City of Davis, 1996, p. 14 – 15.

⁶ Although originally most Davis streets were named after trees, modern street names will be used in this report for the sake of clarity.

subdivision was Rice's Addition in 1888, which was four small blocks along Rice Lane between the University campus and B Streets.⁷



Figure 2: Detail of Davisville, Map of Yolo County, 1900

Associated Property Types

Davis has a number of buildings and structures dating from the period between 1848 and 1905. These include Agricultural, Commercial, Institutional, and Residential property types. Many have been previously found eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or have been listed as City of Davis Landmarks or Merit Resources. Property types from this period and their architectural styles have been extensively documented on the three previous City of Davis Historic Context Surveys, conducted in 1980, 1996, and 2003, and these documents should be consulted for detailed information about buildings and structures from this period. Previous studies concentrated on resources located within Davis's pre-World War II city limits, and potentially eligible resources from this period may be discovered outside those boundaries.

University Farm and University of California Era, (1905 – Present)

Early Twentieth Century and Depression Era (1905 – 1939)

In 1905, Davisville experienced a second momentous economic turning point when Governor George Pardee established a commission to find a site for a University Farm. The University of California (which at the time was what is now known as UC Berkeley) had an agriculture department, but California legislators wanted a dedicated university farm located in a rural area where practical farming techniques could be taught, and where Berkeley instructors could easily

⁷ City of Davis, 2003, p. 10, 16.

travel. Communities state-wide competed for the farm, but Davis boosters ultimately won by underwriting the land sale to the University of California, purchasing water rights and promoting Davis as conveniently accessible from the Bay Area via railway. The first building was constructed in 1907, and the Farm began a period of rapid growth. The University Farm brought state investment and a well-educated population to town.⁸

In 1906, after the UC Regents announced the location of the University Farm, the publisher of the *Davisville Enterprise* changed the paper's name to the *Davis Enterprise*, to celebrate Davis becoming a more important place. Local residents agreed, and in 1907, the U.S. Postal Service changed the name of the post office, and the town officially became "Davis." In 1922, the campus began its first four-year degree program, and initiated a campus development plan the same year. By 1930, the University Farm encompassed 1,000 acres.⁹

Municipal Growth

Changing its name to "Davis" was a symbolic first step toward the growth of the little village into a more substantial and prosperous town. In addition to the economic boost provided by the University Farm, a devastating downtown fire in 1916 spurred an interest in formalizing municipal government. In 1917, Davis incorporated as a city, setting off a decade of civic improvements and additions to city services. Davis developed a water system in 1920, and sewer and garbage collection followed the next year. Davis government then undertook significant road improvements, tree planting, and streetlight installation. In 1923, citizens proposed a long-range development plan, and a more formalized plan was developed in 1927 when the city retained professional planner Charles Cheney. Cheney's Davis plan, most of which was never adopted, included urbane elements such as transforming Second Street into a formal *allée* culminating in a classical quadrangle at the University Farm entrance. Although some of Cheney's ideas were perhaps too grand for Davis, his proposal for devoting an entire block to a park was carried out in spirit when the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) built a park with landscaping, paths, and restrooms on the block between Fourth, Fifth, B, and C streets in the 1930s.¹⁰

Commercial and Residential Development

During the early twentieth century Davis' commercial district began to spread to the west and north, and its original wood-frame buildings were replaced with more substantial masonry structures as the town prospered. During the teens and 1920s banks, theaters, and new commercial buildings diversified Downtown Davis. Residents constructed new churches and lodge buildings during this period to serve the growing population. The Davis Community Church, a city landmark, was built during this era.

Early developers subdivided several ranches adjacent to the little town into residential parcels after the establishment of the University Farm. Residential development continued to increase its pace, particularly in the 1920s when prosperity, population growth, and alterations in mortgage practices fueled a construction boom. During this period, development began well west of Downtown in the

⁸ City of Davis, 2003, p. 10; City of Davis, 1980, p. 20.

⁹ John Lofland, *Davis: Radical Changes, Deep Constants*, Charleston, (South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2004), p. 54.

¹⁰ City of Davis, 1980, p. 20 – 21; City of Davis, 2003, p. 17 – 18.

area north of the University Farm. The unique College Park neighborhood, set on an oval street, was initially planned in 1923. Designed by landscape architect Harry Shepard, College Park was restricted to residential development, and – like many such developments of the era – the deeds contained clauses that were meant to prevent non-whites and Jews from owning or residing in the neighborhood. Twenty-five families signed up for College Park lots, and the houses were constructed gradually over the next decades, resulting in an eclectic neighborhood in a park-like setting. The College Park neighborhood is a City of Davis Historic District.¹¹

Transportation

Despite the importance of the University Farm to twentieth century Davis, Yolo County remained an agricultural area, and the railroad was for many decades the most important method for shipping agricultural produce. Traffic increased in the twentieth century, and the railroad built a new depot in 1913. The depot is listed in the NRHP and is a City of Davis Landmark.¹²

Although the railroad remained the dominant transportation system in the region during the early twentieth century, automobile infrastructure began to improve during the teens. The shift towards individual vehicles was gradual at first, but set the stage for automobile dominance of the second half of the twentieth century. The Yolo Causeway, a raised highway over the marshy areas east of Davis, was completed in 1916, and for the first time provided a direct route to Sacramento by automobile. In 1915, the Lincoln Highway became the first transcontinental highway in the United States. Although initially routed around Davis to avoid the channels and tributaries of the San Francisco Bay, the new highway brought new motorists to California. At the same time, the State of California proposed a new highway, State Route 6, through Davis. The construction of the highway and the Richards Boulevard underpass/grade separation in 1917 connected Davis to the network of state highways, which were eventually linked to the Lincoln Highway. The Richards Boulevard Underpass is listed in the NRHP and is a City of Davis Landmark.¹³

Depression-era Davis

Davis was somewhat insulated from the dire problems experienced in many parts of the U.S. during the 1930s, and did not experience bread lines, labor unrest, or severe unemployment. At the same time, Davis benefited from some of the federal economic stimulus programs of the era. In addition to its first public park, which was built by the WPA, Davis built a new city hall and fire station during the 1930s. Although residential construction slowed, it did not halt completely as in some areas, and a number of new houses were built in College Park and the Old North neighborhood.¹⁴

Associated Property Types

Davis has a number of buildings and structures dating from the period between 1906 and 1939. These include Agricultural, Commercial, Institutional, and Residential property types. Many have been previously found eligible for listing on the NRHP, the CRHR, or have been listed as City of Davis Landmarks or Merit Resources. Property types from this period and their architectural styles

¹¹ City of Davis, 1980, p. 20; City of Davis, 1996, College Park Historic District DPR 523 D.

¹² City of Davis, 1996, p. 21.

¹³ City of Davis, 1980, p. 20; City of Davis, 1996, p. 24.

¹⁴ City of Davis, 2003, p. 12; City of Davis, 1980, p. 21.

have been extensively documented on the three previous City of Davis Historic Context Surveys, conducted in 1980, 1996, and 2003, and these documents should be consulted for detailed information about buildings and structures from this period. Previous studies concentrated on resources located within Davis's pre-World War II city limits, and potentially eligible resources from this period may be discovered outside those boundaries.

World War II/Post-war Era (1940 – 1958)

Davis was typical of communities across the United States in that support for the war effort was a collective priority during World War II. In addition to more common volunteer activities, local residents assisted with harvesting crops and unloading railroad cars. After the fall semester in 1942, classes were suspended at the University Farm because so many students (who were almost all male during this era) had enlisted in the military. Professors engaged in agricultural research, however, redoubled their efforts to expand food production. The University also donated a ten-acre parcel south of the Richards underpass for a community garden. In February 1943, the U.S. Army took over the entire campus, which it used as an advanced training facility for its Signal Corps. The Signal Corps returned the campus to the University in fall of 1944, and classes resumed in 1945. Despite the sacrifice and disruptions of wartime, Davis during World War II remained the quiet agricultural community it had been for many years.¹⁵

Transformation of the University Farm

The end of World War II ushered in changes to California and its university system that would radically transform the little town of Davis. These changes began gradually in the second half of the 1940s, when returning veterans flooded the Davis campus after the war ended, more than quadrupling enrollment between 1946 and 1947. Over two-thirds of students had come directly from military service to the University. This abrupt spike in enrollment led to an on-campus housing crisis that quickly spilled over into the town. Without adequate dormitory or rental housing, students lived in basements, water towers, converted warehouses, and wherever else they could find space.¹⁶

The G.I. Bill (officially the Serviceman's Readjustment Bill of 1944) made it possible for more people than ever to attend college, and the federal government was also increasing its support for University research during this period. Decisions made by the University Regents to increase investment in the Davis campus caused it to grow even more quickly than other campuses in the system. In 1945, before the war had even ended, the Regents appropriated \$2,700,000 to construct six new buildings on the Davis campus, including new Veterinary College, Plant Science, and Student Health buildings.¹⁷ The University was also in the process of buying 539 acres of farmland adjacent to the campus to prepare for future expansion. In 1951, the University established the

¹⁵ City of Davis, 1980, p. 22; Sacramento Bee, "Date is Set for Signal Corps to Occupy College," December 31, 1942, p. 11 col.7; Joanne Leach Larkey, *Davisville '68: The History and Heritage of the City of Davis*, Davis, California, Davis Historical Landmarks Commission: 1969, p. 133 – 135.

¹⁶ Ann Scheuring, *Abundant Harvest: A History of the University of California, Davis*, (Davis, California: U.C. Davis History Project, 2001, p. 68 – 69.

¹⁷ The planning, funding, design, and construction of buildings on the UC Davis campus is an important context in the post-war history of Davis. Because of the size and expansive nature of this survey, and because the City of Davis is not the agency responsible for ensuring CEQA compliance for projects involving University buildings, field survey and formal evaluation of the campus is outside the scope of this project.

College of Letters and Science, a first step toward becoming an institution with a broader focus. By 1956, enrollment had risen to 2,166 students, including over 600 women. This context of growth and new emphasis on education was reflected in the massive expansion of the University of California system in the 1950s.¹⁸

Residential Development

After World War II, the U.S. population and economy grew at an unprecedented rate. The trends were not uniform nationwide, however, and growth was particularly rapid and strong in California. Hundreds of thousands of people who had relocated to California for military service and wartime work stayed after the war ended, and the state population continued to grow in the 1950s. The exponential growth of UC Davis intensified the broader trends of economic growth and pent-up housing demand after the war. These factors working together meant that the town footprint that had contained Davis's 2,500 prewar residents was woefully inadequate. And the population surge was coupled with factors that put home ownership within reach for millions more Americans than before the war: Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage insurance and G.I. Bill mortgage insurance for veterans. These federal policies, along with the relatively new tax deduction for mortgage interest, made home ownership attractive nationwide, and particularly so in a growing community like Davis.¹⁹

Davis was attractive for housing construction because of its proximity to Sacramento, a lack of strict local controls on development, and the growth of the University. Without geographical barriers like major river systems or mountains, the little town was a developer's paradise. By 1943, Davis leaders had already realized that expansion and growth in California were inevitable after the war, and that Davis would also grow. Elected officials and city staff began planning for enlarging Davis' geographical footprint, developing new areas, and improving infrastructure. The Chamber of Commerce also recognized the challenges Davis was facing, and began planning for the postwar period. By 1944, the group was discussing the need for access roads and overpasses, more housing, and the potential benefits of annexing adjacent areas.²⁰

In 1945, Davis' city limits encompassed 220 acres, only marginally larger than the original 24-block Davisville that had been laid out in 1868. The Chamber of Commerce released results of a study of annexation that year. Projecting population growth in Davis resulting from growth of the state and the University, the committee strongly recommended annexation, warning that planning would prevent development on Davis's borders in what they called "a haphazard manner." The proposed annexation would nearly triple the size of the city limits, and include areas such as Robbins and Millers subdivisions adjacent to the University (where development had already begun) as well as portions of north and east Davis that remained primarily agricultural. The Chamber also

¹⁸ Chamber of Commerce, "Facts Concerning Annexation," Prepared By Chamber of Commerce, Davis, California, May, 1945, p. 3; U.C. Regents, "U.C. Davis Centennial, Looking Back: U.C. Davis Historical Timeline," June 19, 2008, centennial.ucdavis.edu/timeline/index.php, Accessed April 7, 2015; Scheuring, 2001, 73 – 75.

¹⁹ California Department of Transportation, "Tract Housing in California, 1945 – 1973: A Context for National Register Evaluation," Prepared by California Department of Transportation, Sacramento, California, 2011, p. 17.

²⁰ City of Davis, 1980, p. 23; Letter from A.D. Coons, City of Davis Engineer to C.A. Covell, Mayor, October 27, 1943; Chamber of Commerce, "Preliminary Report, Chamber of Commerce Report on Postwar Planning, Davis, California," Prepared By Chamber of Commerce, Davis, California, May 29, 1944.

recommended new sewer lines and the extension of West Eighth and K streets. In November 1945, Davis residents approved the annexation plan in an election.²¹

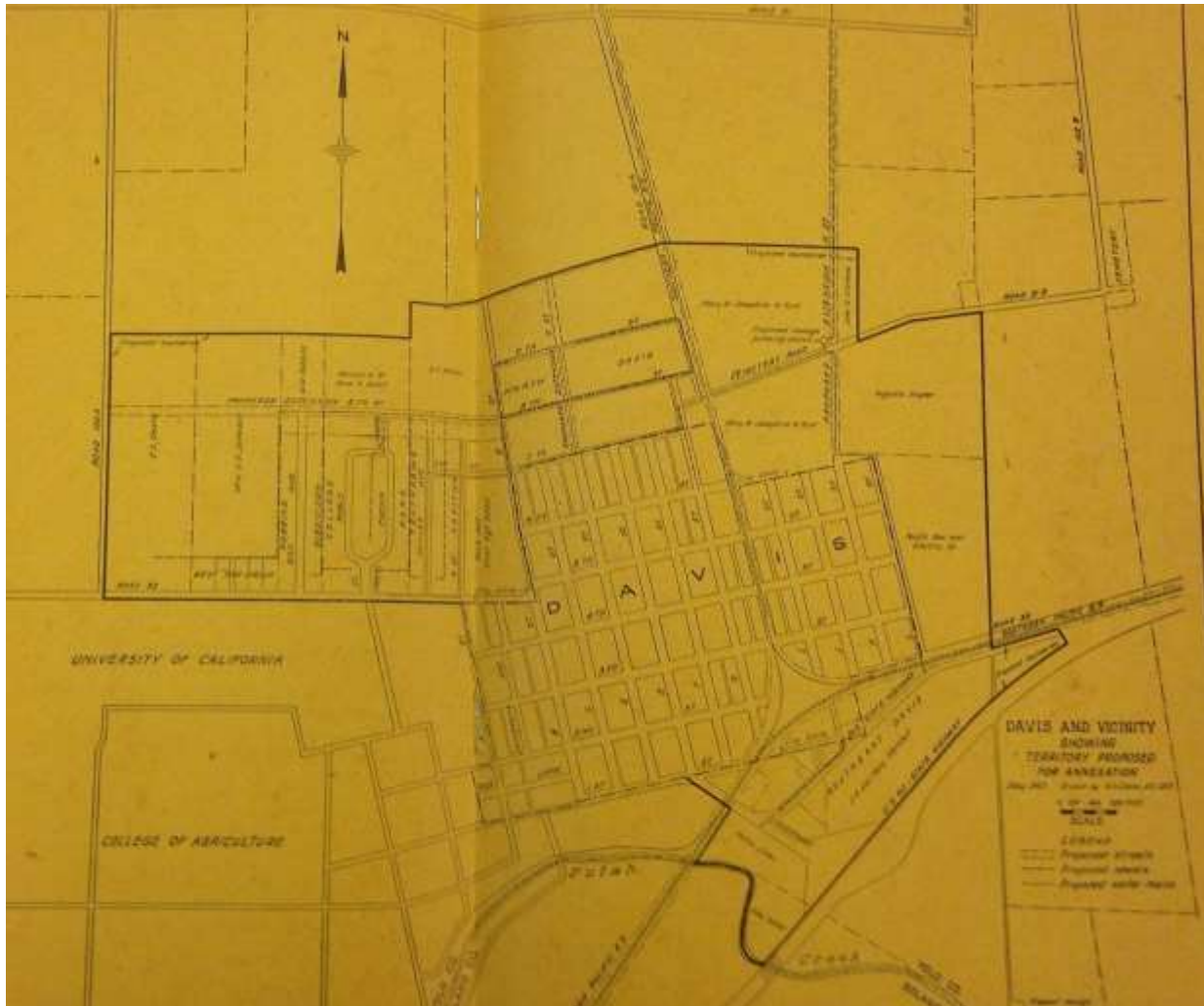


Figure 3: Davis and Vicinity Map showing territory proposed for annexation in 1945

Local investors and landowners recorded six new subdivisions 1946 and 1948. Although all were small (one had only ten parcels) their number signaled a marked change from the period from 1930 to 1945, when only one new neighborhood was subdivided. The construction was clustered around the high school (currently City Hall), in the area northeast of Downtown, and adjacent to the University. Development in the immediate postwar period was in transition from the traditional gradual expansion of neighborhoods to the industrial-scale housing construction that became the norm in the later decades of the twentieth century. For the most part, these subdivisions followed the traditional pattern, although the rate was somewhat accelerated.

²¹ Chamber of Commerce, 1945, p. 2 – 3; Sacramento Bee, “Annexation Election Carries in Davis,” November 21, 1945, p. 10 col. 1.

In fact, relatively few houses were actually constructed in the 1940s: most parcels in these neighborhoods were not developed until the early 1950s or later. This pattern was not unusual in California, despite the pent-up demand from decades of depression and war. Building materials, which had been diverted to the war effort for years, did not become available immediately after hostilities ended.²²

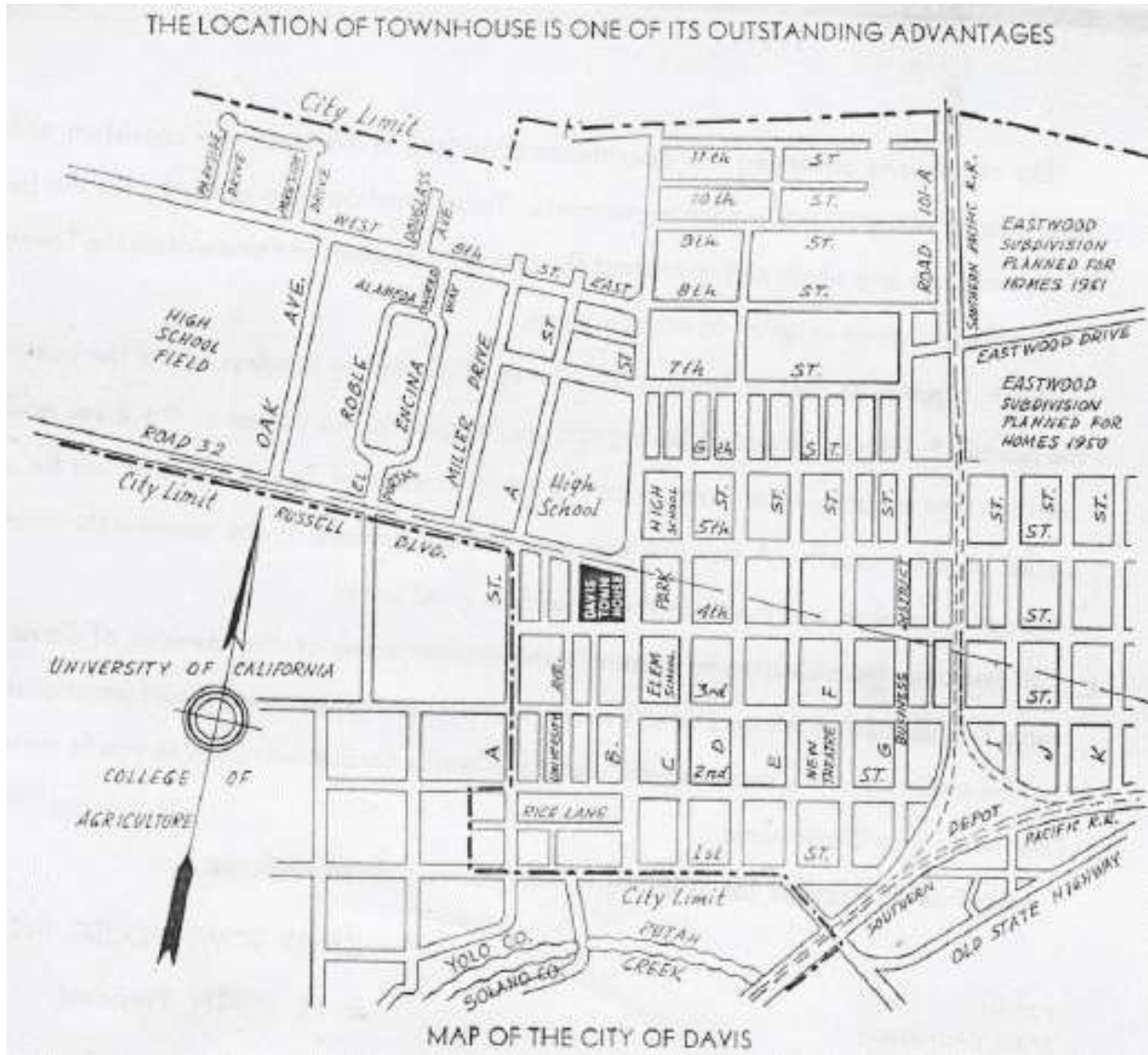


Figure 4: City of Davis Map created by Davis Townhouse Inc., c1949

After 1950, housing development in Davis accelerated markedly. Developers recorded 34 new subdivisions between 1950 and 1959, more than triple the number created in the previous two decades. The mostly contiguous new neighborhoods spread out to the north of old Downtown Davis and the University to its west, and in the area east of Downtown and the railroad tracks. By

²² California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 60.

1960, the developed footprint of Davis had roughly doubled, and a significant amount of infill construction had also occurred.

1950 marked a watershed in the type of neighborhoods developers built in Davis, as well as the pace of growth. 1950s subdivisions began exhibiting the long blocks, gently curving streets, loop streets, and cul-de-sacs that characterize post-war subdivisions throughout California. Although these features have their aesthetic roots in nineteenth-century suburbs, they did not begin to widely replace the traditional urban grid pattern until in the second half of the twentieth century. One reason for the increased popularity of suburban-style neighborhood layout was that the FHA, which controlled the flow of capital to developers, promoted these features. Probably more important, however, was the fact that in an increasingly automobile-dependent culture, this type of design was viewed by the public as a safety feature. Almost all Davis neighborhoods subdivided after 1950 share these features, as well as cost-saving rolled (rather than square) curbs. Most sidewalks lack planting strips and are situated immediately adjacent to the curbs, with city-owned street trees planted in the front yards by developers. Post-war Davis neighborhoods lack alleys, and every property is equipped with a garage or carport.²³



Photograph 1: View of Mulberry Street in University Farms, (originally developed in 1956), showing street trees, wide curving streets, and other characteristics of post-war Davis neighborhoods (Lee Maddex, November 19, 2014).

²³ California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 46 – 49.

In addition to the shift in neighborhood design, during the 1950s developers began to utilize standardization and mass-production methods to building the houses. Although the construction of standardized tracts with identical (or very similar) houses would eventually lead to the construction of large subdivisions in Davis, the process when it began was very much in scale with the traditional local construction pattern, which was much more incremental.

The industrialization of housing construction and rise of merchant builders was a trend that began transforming the housing business nationwide even before the end of World War II. In contrast to old-fashioned subdividers, merchant builders acquired large areas of land, prepared streets and utilities, and then built and sold their houses. Inspired by wartime and consumer-goods factories, and responding to the extreme need for housing after the war, industrial-scale builders began constructing houses faster and cheaper than their small-scale competitors as early as the end of the 1940s in California's urban centers. Although the trend was slower to develop in rural Davis, industrialized building was one of the most important factors in the Davis' transformation from a rural railroad junction town to an expanding "University City."²⁴

Although the residential landscape of Davis had begun to rapidly transform, city government and infrastructure grew much more slowly. New water mains, domestic wells, and sewer lines were constructed on a piecemeal basis as needed. Davis does not appear to have added new parks, libraries, or recreational facilities during this era. And city government remained headquartered Downtown in its 1938 WPA-built City Hall until 1981.

City officials attempted to both encourage and manage growth during the 1950s. A district map from 1953 shows a town divided into zones for commercial, industrial, single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and multiple-family dwellings. Fraternities were limited to portions of only 6 blocks along Second and B Streets.²⁵ Both sides of the railroad tracks, as well as the area between Highway 80 and the tracks, were zoned industrial. These areas had housed activities associated with agricultural processing since the nineteenth century. Other businesses in the industrial zone, such as a lumber yard and breweries, had serviced local needs. Almost all commercial development was Downtown on Second, Third, and G streets, although during this period it began spilling over into formerly residential areas. A grocery store at the corner of Russell Boulevard and Anderson Road was the only neighborhood commercial development.

What is most striking about the 1953 map is that the majority of Davis is zoned for two- or multi-family housing. During the late 1940s, the Planning Commission had changed zoning of some subdivisions back and forth from single- to multiple-family. This indecision was apparently at least in part due to pressure from local builders. By the early 1950s, the only areas set aside for single-family dwellings were the neighborhoods immediately north of the University, new tracts, and areas that had not yet been developed. All of Downtown-adjacent Old Davis was zoned for two families. Bowers Acres, the area of north-central Davis that had been laid out with extra-large lots in 1913, was zoned for apartments. Davis was still grappling with a housing shortage, and local leaders had decided that redeveloping Old Davis would be the best way to solve the problem. In March, 1955,

²⁴ California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 57.

²⁵ U.C. Davis did not have sororities until the 1970s.

Davis City Council instituted a six-month moratorium on new building, and requested Yolo County to do the same for the area around Davis. Davis leaders argued that the break from development would allow “orderly growth,” with plans for constructing and financing new infrastructure ²⁶



Figure 5: City of Davis Use District Map, 1953.

Davis Builders and Developers

Several of the subdividers in the immediate post-war period were local professors and farmers who became part-time developers as a sideline. Their subdivisions tended to be developed one property at a time like pre-war neighborhoods. The common practice prior to the war had been for an investor to acquire property, lay out streets and house lots, and sell the lots individually to people who wanted to build houses. Most subdividers during the pre-war period were not builders. Davis Parkside and Millers subdivisions are examples of those that fit this old-fashioned template. Each new subdivision had only twenty-five to thirty-five lots, which were developed gradually over a period of years or even decades, and the subdividers were University faculty or administrators. Since

²⁶ Davis Enterprise, April 7, 1949; City of Davis, Use District Map, Prepared by A.M. McKinnon, City Engineer, July, 1953; Sacramento Bee, “Davis Looks Ahead, Orders Subdivisions Moratorium,” March 15, 1965.

these new neighborhoods were small, they were inserted into the existing street-grid, and mostly conformed to the traditional rectilinear pattern of pre-war Davis.²⁷



Figure 6: Street scene showing 815 Miller Drive c1950 as the street was being developed, with young street trees adjacent to sidewalk and rolled curbs (Photograph courtesy of John Lofland).

East Acres No. 1, which was subdivided by John B. and Alice K. Simmons in the spring of 1950 and constructed over the next two years, marked a transition from traditional to industrialized building in Davis. At just over 30 lots, the subdivision was in scale with those built in the traditional, incremental way. Its modest houses, however, which were all about 960 square feet, were identical except for a choice of hipped or gabled roof and mirror-image floor plans. (Perhaps unsurprisingly, few of these small houses have survived unaltered to the present.) Other developers began building repetitive tracts of houses in Davis around the same time as the Simmons. By the end of the decade, the size of new subdivisions had inched up from 15 – 35 parcels to 60 – 95 parcels.

²⁷ California Department of Transportation, 2011, p. 4.



Figure 7: Oblique aerial photograph looking north from the University showing Oeste Manor No. 1 under construction with Davis Parkside center right of frame. Anderson Road is to the west of Oeste Manor with farm fields surrounding new development, c1951 (Photograph courtesy of John Lofland).

Through the 1960s, Davis still had two types of merchant builders. Alice and John Simmons were an example of the first type, the “homegrown” Davis builder. Sensing an opportunity, the Simmonses transitioned from dairy farming to construction and real estate sales at the end of the 1940s. They had started small with East Acres No. 1 in 1950, but unlike other local dabblers in early postwar subdivisions, stayed in the business and grew over time as they gained experience. Simmons Real Estate became one of Davis’s most important post-war developers. The husband-and-wife team, which later included Simmons children, never developed the very large subdivisions that came into vogue in the 1960s, but had one of the longest development runs in Davis, and there were many years between the late 1950s and early 1970s that they built two or three subdivisions. By the mid-1960s, Simmons Real Estate was working on multiple subdivisions all over Davis and offering houses in a wide range of price points.²⁸

²⁸ Yolo County CA Obituary Project Obituaries, SIMMONS , Alice Kate, July 27 2002, <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ca/yolo/obits/gob1127simmons.txt>, accessed March 5, 2015

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The second type, regional merchant builders began making inroads into Davis in the early 1950s when the Huntwood Development Co. recorded its Huntwood Park subdivision in the spring of 1951. Huntwood Park and East Acres No. 1 were the first subdivisions in East Davis. They were also the first to use industrialized building techniques in Davis, developing neighborhoods with nearly identical houses. Although the Simmonses recorded their subdivision first, the two neighborhoods were developed about the same time, and Huntwood Park was completed more quickly, probably due to the disparity in experience between the developers. With its limited variation between buildings, and its branching, curved streets and cul-de-sac, Huntwood Park was the first archetypal post-war subdivision in Davis. It was also the first local neighborhood developed by an important regional builder. Huntwood Development Co. president Oliver Rousseau was an architect and developer who became famous for the stylized Spanish Eclectic houses he constructed in San Francisco's Sunset neighborhood during the Great Depression. After World War II, Rousseau became known as a pioneer and innovator by adding features such as shake roofs, central heating, and two-car garages to his subdivisions. He eventually built 20,000 houses in Northern California, but Huntwood Park was Rousseau's only Davis development.

Figure 8: Advertisement for Huntwood Park subdivision, Sacramento Bee, June 2, 1951.

builder who would have a broader impact on Davis, recorded a small subdivision named University Park No. 4. Stanley Davis started off his professional life as a real estate agent during the Great Depression, and began developing houses in Alameda County during the 1940s. Although his first Davis development was relatively small, the Stanley M. Davis Organization was ultimately responsible for more post-war Tract Ranch houses than any other Davis developer. Along with various partners over the decades, Stanley Davis went on to develop dozens of “Davis Manor” subdivisions over the next two decades, some of which had over 100 houses.

Transportation

As discussed above, post-war Davis subdivisions were constructed to accommodate the automobile. Throughout California as well as in Davis, car culture became predominant in the 1950s. By the beginning of the decade, Davis developers were advertising heavily in Sacramento newspapers, promoting the town as an accessible suburb of California’s capital city. An advertisement from 1951 extolled Davis as “a breeze away – a 15 minute drive at peak traffic hours.” Despite the increased reliance on the automobile, Davis does not appear to have invested heavily in new or wider roads during the immediate postwar years. Although West Eighth Street was extended according to the mid-1940s plan, few new roads were built except those in new subdivisions. K Street, for example, had been slated for extension beyond city limits. By the late 1950s, however, it still ended at East Eighth Street.²⁹

Resources Constructed during World War II/Post-war Era

The limited construction that took place in Davis during and immediately after World War II largely conformed to development patterns established during the Great Depression. Projects were small in scale as one lot at a time was developed in and around old Downtown Davis. By the late 1940s, however, builders were subdividing new areas and development was picking up speed. Residential projects began to increase in scale as Davis attempted to provide housing for its new citizens. Commercial and institutional development, meanwhile, proceeded at an incremental rate. Industrial development had been sluggish since education began to replace agricultural processing as the primary local industry with the establishment of the University Farm shortly after the turn of the century. During this era, old industrial properties began gradually to be demolished or converted to commercial uses. After 1940, development of agricultural properties within modern Davis city limits also slowed, and there are no known agriculture-related resources that date from this period.

Commercial Properties

With commercial development slow during and after World War II, Downtown Davis (and the formerly residential neighborhoods around it) were sufficient to contain almost all new retail construction of this period. One exception was the Davis Supermarket, constructed in the mid-1950s at the corner of Russell Boulevard and Anderson Road, which at the time was a residential neighborhood surrounded by farmland. Although city records indicate that at least a dozen commercial buildings were constructed during this period, most have either been demolished or so heavily altered that their original forms are unknown.

²⁹ Sacramento Bee June 2, 1951, p. 13, col 4 – 8.



Figure 9: Intersection of Second and D Streets in Downtown Davis, 1957 (Eastman Collection).



Figure 10: Downtown Davis, 1957 (Eastman Collection).

Most commercial buildings from this period appear to have been typical one-story mid-century retail buildings with large glass storefronts and shared side walls. These were similar in scale and massing to earlier storefront buildings, and generally occupied an entire parcel, but lacked the decorative detail of pre-war commercial buildings. Typical examples have flat roofs and flat canopies shading the sidewalk. In addition to the more straightforward retail-oriented buildings, a handful of buildings designed to make strong stylistic statements were constructed. These include two Streamline Moderne buildings, late examples of an architectural style that had been abandoned elsewhere. The State Market on Second Street (no longer extant) was designed by local architect Silvio Barovetto and constructed in 1940, while the Varsity Theater at 616 Second Street is was built in 1950. Despite the general conservatism of the era in regards to commercial architecture, at least one Contemporary-style building was constructed Downtown, the Pence Dentist office, which has since been drastically altered.



Photograph 2: Contemporary office building at 212 D Street, 1950s. Extreme alterations have obscured original design.



Photograph 3: Art Moderne movie theater at 616 Second Street, 1950.

Civic and Institutional Properties

Construction of public buildings was largely concentrated on the University campus during and after the war. The handful of exceptions to this quiescent period in institutional development were fairly modest projects. A Lutheran congregation constructed a small church building at 317 East Eighth Street just north of Downtown in the mid-1950s, and the Odd Fellows built a new two-story lodge Downtown in 1955. Although the buildings are extant, they have undergone alterations over the years, and are not strong examples of the architecture of the period.

A number of educational buildings were also constructed outside the University campus during this period. In 1951, a modest building designed to house a cooperative preschool was built at 426 West Eighth Street. Emerson Intermediate School was built in 1948. And three more new elementary

schools were constructed in 1952, 1954, and 1957. By 1957, Davis primary and secondary schools began exhibiting strong elements of twentieth century modernist architecture.³⁰



Photograph 4: Odd Fellows Hall at 415 Second Street, 1955. Heavily altered, Figure 1 shows original design



Photograph 5: Davis Lutheran Church at 317 East Eighth Street, mid-1950s.

Residential Properties

The most widespread and important type of development between 1940 and 1958 was residential. Residential construction during the war and immediately afterward was functional, and usually architecturally straightforward. Most buildings were executed in simple, traditional materials according to standard plans, and new projects were built as infill in existing neighborhoods. During the 1940s, builders tended to construct one building at a time according to traditional methods. After 1950, Davis builders began using industrialized construction techniques, and the pace of residential construction increased. As had been the case before the war, residential construction during this period focused on development of single-family homes and a small number of duplexes. The shortage of housing also led to the addition of multi-family buildings during this period, which was a new property type in Davis.

Single-family Dwellings and Duplexes

Individuals continued to construct custom houses one at a time during this period, as they had throughout Davis's history. During the 1940s traditional building practices continued to prevail, and even small dwellings for working-class people were developed singly or in small clusters. The Minimal Traditional style grew out of an attempt to build houses based on traditional forms during the difficult economic conditions imposed by the Great Depression. For small houses in Davis, the style was dominant through the end of the 1940s. Early examples display a fair amount of variation

³⁰ The planning, funding, design, and construction of local primary and secondary schools is an important context in the post-war history of Davis. Because of the size and expansive nature of this survey, and because the City of Davis is not the agency responsible for ensuring CEQA compliance for projects involving local school buildings, field survey and formal evaluation of the schools is outside the scope of this project. A brief discussion of architecture firm Barovetto & Thomas' Modernist Davis schools can be found on page 5 of the DPR 523 form for the Intercoast Life Insurance at 3820 Chiles Road, which is attached to this document.

between parcels. During the early 1950s developers began utilizing industrialized building techniques and building houses based on virtually identical plans.

Minimal Traditional Architectural Characteristics:

- Medium pitched gabled or hipped roofs
- Minimal eave overhang
- Integral or detached single garage facing the street
- Linear or slightly L-shaped plan
- Stucco or wood cladding, occasionally with brick trim
- Steel casement or double-hung wood frame windows
- Lack of ornamentation

As regional merchant builders began making inroads after 1950, Tract Ranch gradually began to take the place of Minimal Traditional as the architectural style of choice for modest single-family homes. The modern Ranch style was pioneered by self-taught builder Cliff May in the 1930s based on his imaginative interpretation of historical precedents in California domestic architecture. Although early examples were large customized houses, the simplicity of materials and minimal exterior ornament of the style lent itself to duplication, and after World War II merchant builders adopted the style and began constructing Ranch houses on an industrial scale. In many ways a variation on the theme of the Minimal Traditional house, the Tract Ranch house displays some characteristics its precursor lacks, most notably its low-slung massing and its orientation toward the automobile.

Tract Ranch Architectural Characteristics:

- Low pitched gabled or hipped roofs
- Moderate eave overhang
- Horizontal massing
- Linear or L-shaped plan
- Prominent usually double garage facing the street
- Stucco or wood cladding, occasionally with traditional or modern detailing
- Steel casement or aluminum slider windows
- Lack of ornamentation

Duplexes in Davis were developed alongside single-family dwellings, and utilized the same architectural styles as the more modest houses. They are often, though not always, more simplified and modest versions of the houses around them and do not display unique architectural characteristics.



Photograph 6: Cross-gabled Minimal Traditional house with steel casement windows and wood shingle siding at 540 Oeste Drive, 1951.



Photograph 7: Cross-gabled Minimal Traditional house with wood-sash windows and detached garage at 322 Eleventh Street, 1950.



Photograph 8: Hipped-roof Contemporary house with compact plan, decorative chimney, and steel casement windows at 1008 D Street, 1950.



Photograph 9: Hipped-roof Minimal Traditional house with multiple-light picture window, double-hung wood sash windows, and single garage with wooden door at 857 L Street, 1952.

Although limited in number, some residences for University professors and local business leaders, often architect designed, were constructed during the immediate post-war period. In the 1940s traditional styles such as Colonial Revival remained popular for larger, custom-built houses. By 1940, however, architects began to introduce modernistic architectural styles to Davis in the design of landmark houses. After the war, Custom Ranch, Contemporary, and later Post-and-Beam style houses gradually increased in popularity. While early Custom Ranch houses were usually larger versions of their mass-produced cousins, the Contemporary and Post-and-Beam dwellings tended to be more daring. The two styles, which were closely related, were inspired by the International Style, an avant-garde design movement that advocated functionalism and eschewed ornament. Although influential by 1925, its use in domestic American architecture before the end of World War II was limited. Only a handful of houses exhibiting modernist designs were constructed in Davis before 1959, however, and despite their often ambitious designs they tended to be modest in size and constructed of simple materials. Almost all have been drastically altered over the decades.

As early as 1948, in a visionary use of principles that would eventually become widely accepted in Davis, a house was constructed with passive solar features to limit energy use.

Contemporary Architectural Characteristics

- Flat or very low pitch roofs
- Ribbon band or clerestory windows with metal sash
- Concrete block construction, or stucco or wood cladding
- Garage or carport, usually single
- Horizontal massing
- Lack of ornamentation

Post-and-Beam Architectural Characteristics

- Strong roof lines, usually low-pitch gable or shed
- Expressed structural system
- Clerestory windows on façade
- Large windows or floor-to-ceiling glass on rear elevation
- Carport or occasionally garage integrated into design
- Horizontal massing
- Lack of ornamentation



Photograph 10: Rare early Contemporary house that has retained original features at 321 West Eighth Street. Designed by architect Erling Olanson, 1950.



Photograph 11: Contemporary house designed to incorporate passive solar features at 631 Oak Street, 1948. Extreme alterations have obscured the original design.



Photograph 12: Custom Ranch house at 747 Elmwood Drive, 1958.



Photograph 13: Custom Ranch house at 726 Elmwood Drive, 1958.

Multi-family Housing

Multi-family housing was unknown in Davis before World War II. During the war, multiple unit buildings were in scale with single family dwellings. The courtyard apartment at 417 J Street, which was constructed in 1941, is a typical example, with its two duplex and two garage buildings arranged around a central courtyard. Rapid expansion of the University at the end of the war, however, left Davis scrambling for solutions to its housing crisis. Although the use of a courtyard gradually faded away as land costs and density increased, Davis developers were still constructing small-scale multi-family buildings throughout the 1950s.

Probably the first local example of large-scale multi-family housing was “Aggie Village” west of the Richards Boulevard Underpass, on the site of what had been the community “victory garden” during the war. During the immediate post-war period, the University moved military barracks from Solano County to the parcel, and converted the buildings to married student housing. In the 1970s, the barracks were demolished after the University built new facilities on campus.

In the late 1940s, developers pioneered the use of a building type that would become a permanent feature of the Davis landscape: the apartment building. Apartment buildings were an efficient solution to the need to quickly increase the number of housing units, and were particularly appropriate for the students and younger faculty members responsible for much of the population increase. Davis Townhouse Apartments, which was planned by summer of 1949, was the first local apartment buildings. It was located Downtown across the street from the high school. Although some apartment buildings constructed in later decades dwarf the Davis Townhouse Apartments, its 52 units represented the largest individual housing complex in for many years. Few Davis developers constructed a building with more than ten units before the second half of the 1960s. Ernest Smith, who was responsible for similar projects in the Bay Area and Southern California, was the developer.



Photograph 14: Davis Townhouse Apartments at 438 University Avenue, c1949

Smith marketed the apartments to UC Davis faculty and staff and to Davis newcomers who were not ready to purchase a house. The architect-designed buildings featured a garden setting, buildings laid out diagonally on the lot and modern features like optional garages.³¹



Photograph 15: Three-unit building at 1731 – 1735 Lehigh Drive, 1957.



Photograph 16: Courtyard Apartment with integral carports at 808 D Street. 1953.

Property Types and Registration Requirements

Property types include commercial properties; civic and institutional properties; landscape features, infrastructure and residential buildings including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing. In addition, districts based on geographically grouped and thematically related buildings are potentially eligible under this context.

Properties eligible under this context represent World War II / Post-war Era Davis, from 1940 – 1958. Although resources from this period are common, many have been heavily altered over the decades. Therefore consideration should be given to retaining and preserving those resources from the period that retain integrity.

Significance

A commercial, civic, or institutional property from this period may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Commercial, civic, or institutional properties from this period may be specifically associated with the growth of the University Farm after World War II and the subsequent residential expansion of the City of Davis. They may also be associated with the transformation of Davis to an automobile-oriented landscape during this period.
B/1 (Person)	A commercial, civic, or institutional property is unlikely to be significant for its association with a person important to Davis history.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic

³¹ Davis Enterprise, “Architect’s Drawing of ‘Davis Townhouse Apartments,’” August 5, 1949; Ernest Smith, “Davis Townhouse, Davis, California,” Davis Townhouse, Inc., undated brochure.

	values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed.”
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A residential property, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history. Residential properties from this period may be specifically associated with the growth of the University Farm after World War II and the subsequent residential expansion of the City of Davis. They may also be associated with the transformation of Davis to an automobile-oriented landscape during this period.
B/1 (Person)	Association with the lives of significant persons in Davis’s past. Significant persons within this theme may include civic leaders, local builders, or members of the University Farm community. Typically, to be eligible for association with a person a property must have an important association with the individual’s productive life. Residential properties, therefore, are unlikely to be significant under this criterion unless research demonstrates that a significant person performed the activity for which they were known at the property.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed.”

Integrity

In order to be eligible for historic listing a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance under the context of World War II / Post-war Era Davis. Although properties from this period are common, they have not been considered valuable in their original forms and consequently a majority have been altered over the decades.

A/1 (Event)	A property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the World War II/Post-war Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.
B/1 (Person)	A property associated with a person significant to Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A commercial, civic, institutional, or residential property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the World War II/Post-war Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.

C/3 (Architecture)	A property significant for its architecture is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property significant under Criterion C/3 must retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the World War II/Post-war Era. A property that has lost some historic materials and minor features may still be eligible if it retains essential characteristics such as massing, proportion, and fenestration pattern. However, since modern resources lack many of the distinctive decorative elements that characterized earlier architectural styles, a property that does not exhibit the majority of its original materials and features does not retain integrity and is not eligible.
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Explosive Growth (1959 – 1971)

Decades of sustained growth of the University, Davis' population, and its residential neighborhoods had begun to transform the town by the late 1950s. As noted above, the sleepy nineteenth-century farm town was being transformed into a more sophisticated "University City." By the late 1950s, local boosters were complaining that downtown was run-down and in need of redevelopment. Although some demolitions did occur, the biggest change Downtown was that the tiny commercial area began to engulf adjacent residential neighborhoods as it grew to accommodate Davis' expanding population. Commercial developments on Davis's periphery began towards the end of this era, with four grocery and retail developments constructed between 1966 and 1971.³²

In an echo of the 1945 efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, residents once again called for planned and managed growth at the end of the 1950s. The League of Women Voters released the results of a study in 1961 that recommended professional city planning, and adoption of a master plan and housing code to manage the growth already occurring. The study warned that a lack of planning could result in "potential slums," inappropriate division of houses into multiple units, and non-contiguous residential development that would threaten surrounding agricultural activity. The city released a revised General Plan later that same year. The Core Area Plan of 1961 expanded on the 1950s plans to redevelop the traditional neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown into a high-density area, envisioning an urban transformation that included mega-block commercial development and high-rise apartment housing. The most highly urbanized concepts of the Core Area Plan never materialized, and planned growth during this period did not necessarily imply limiting development. A *Davis Enterprise* photographic essay from early 1966 illustrated the prevailing view of the period, arguing that what some termed "urban sprawl" was actually planned "perimeter growth." The newspaper explained that Davis' expansion outside its original boundaries on all sides was the result of a "carefully calculated policy ... to annex all perimeter land, in every direction," and that the town's "orderly growth" in all directions was a direct benefit of this policy.³³

³² Davis League of Women Voters, "Davis is Growing, Let's Have Planned Growth," The League of Women Voters of Davis, June, 1961; City of Davis, 2003, p. 13; Lofland, 2004, p. 126 – 127.

³³ Davis Enterprise, January 20, 1966.

Consolidation of Change at the University

In, 1959, the UC Regents officially upgraded the University from an agricultural school to a full university campus. Promotion to university status was the culmination of over a decade of expansion rather than an abrupt change. After Davis became a general campus, it underwent a second rapid expansion in its student population. Between 1959 and 1965, the number of students nearly doubled, and by 1968, its 11,450 students represented a five-fold increase from a decade before. Faculty needed to expand at a similar rate to keep pace. Many academic departments doubled in size in the 1960s, and the University also formed new departments. Between 1961 and 1967, the campus added graduate programs and schools of Engineering, Medicine, and Law. The geographical footprint and number of buildings at UC Davis also reflected this pattern. Between 1959 and 1966, the campus added at least 14 major buildings, and tripled the size of Shields Library. As Lofland has pointed out, this expansion was not unique, but rather strongly in line with national trends in higher education during the 1960s.³⁴

The unrest that characterized universities across the United States during the late 1960s played out slightly differently at UC Davis. In contrast to the contentious and sometimes violent demonstrations at other campuses, student protest to the Vietnam War at Davis was relatively muted. Culturally, UC Davis became a counterpoint to UC Berkeley, drawing students from rural areas and those that were not attracted to a radical atmosphere. Although the relative calm at UC Davis was due, at least in part, to the demographics of the students it attracted, Chancellor Emil Mrak is also widely credited with defusing tension through his inclusive style. Bob Black, the student leader who would later be elected to city council, agitated for closing the campus to cars and succeeded in instituting the Unitrans bus system in 1967. The bus system, which utilized red double-decker busses imported from London, was designed to be almost completely student-operated.³⁵

Residential Development

The continuing growth of the University intensified the population and residential expansion that had characterized the previous decade, and Davis grew rapidly in the 1960s. While the increased student population led to construction of apartments and duplexes, the growth of the academic and administrative staff was even more significant, as it brought new permanent residents to Davis. Fifty-six subdivisions were recorded between 1960 and 1969, many of which were double or triple the size of a typical subdivision from the immediate post-war period. The new neighborhoods required large tracts of land, and Davis began to grow beyond its original boundaries in all directions, crossing former de facto urban limits Highway 99 and Covell Boulevard. In 1969, Davis became the largest city in Yolo County. By 1970, it had 23,488 residents, and half of its workforce was employed in education. Population expansion led to growth in every aspect of local life, which was reflected in the city's primary and secondary education systems. Nine new local schools were constructed between 1952 and 1968. City services and infrastructure often lagged behind during this

³⁴ Scheuring, 2001, p. 109 – 110; Lofland, 2004, p. 124.

³⁵ Lofland, 2004, p. 125; Mike Fitch, "Growing Pains, Chapter 1," 1998, City of Davis website, <http://community-development.cityofdavis.org/growing-pains-chapter-1>, Accessed April 10, 2015; Dennis Dingemans and Ann Foley Scheuring, *University of California, Davis*, (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2013), p. 58.

period, however. In 1965, for example, Davis still had only one traffic signal, on B Street near the High School (since 1981 City Hall).³⁶



Figure 11: Real estate billboard in field on Anderson Road, c1960.

Despite Davis' expansion in terms of housing, commercial activity, development of schools, and economic growth, the town took a hiatus from large annexations after the Chamber-led expansion in 1945. Additions to the size of the city were incremental and piecemeal in the 1950s. This did not slow development, and at least a dozen subdivisions were constructed outside city limits in the late 1950s. The pattern began to change after 1960, as developers continued to convert fields into subdivisions. Bruce Mace, a rancher with acreage east of Davis, broke ground on a new development at the end of 1959. El Macero Country Club and Golf Course was merely the initial stage of a large development that was to include hundreds of houses. Approximately three miles outside city limits, Davis leaders were afraid that it would become the nucleus of an adjacent competing city. Mace's plans spurred the Davis city council to undertake the largest annexation in city history. In 1966, Davis annexed 1.6 square miles of new territory south of Interstate 80 in order to head off uncontrolled development adjacent to town.³⁷

After 1965, public investment in infrastructure and amenities finally began to catch up with local residential growth with installation of the first local traffic light. Central Park was renovated the

³⁶ William D. Diemer, *Davis from the Inside Out, A Municipal Almanac, Volume 1: Davis as a City*, Davis, California, National Housing Register: 2000, p. 32; City of Davis, 1980, p. 23 – 24; Larkey, 1969, p. 87; Davis, "Growing Pains, Chapter 1."

³⁷ Sacramento Bee, December 13, 1959, p. D8, col. 4 – 7; Lofland, 2004, p.123.

same year, major sewer lines were installed in new subdivisions north and west of Downtown, and new police and fire departments were completed. In 1967, Davis opened its new Community Park and public pool and purchased the Municipal Golf Course. In 1969, Davis voters approved new sewer facilities.³⁸

“Cluster Planning”, which incorporated greenbelts into subdivisions, was an innovative form of development that began to take hold nationwide in the 1960s. It offered the environmental and quality-of-life benefits of increased open space, and allowed builders to avoid difficult terrain and save money by pouring less pavement. Cluster planning came to Davis in the mid-1960s. Like many development trends over the decades, more than one builder adopted the practice about the same time. By 1964, Alfred F. Smith was acquiring land in West Davis for his master-planned Stonegate development, which included a lake and golf course. In 1967, Gentry Development announced a 300-acre, 1400-house project that incorporated 19 acres of greenbelt and parks. Tom Gentry predicted that the open-space community would become a model for future development in Davis. Although Gentry had been developing in North Davis since 1965, he does not appear to have planned the greenbelt until the following year. Smith, though his planning was underway in the early 1960s, did not break ground until near the end of the decade. Although its origins in Davis cannot be credited to one developer, what is certain is that cluster planning had become *de rigueur* in locally by the last decades of the twentieth century.³⁹



Figure 12: Newspaper announcement of Gentry Greens development, Davis Enterprise, July 21, 1967.

³⁸ Diemer, 2000, p. 31 – 32.

³⁹ Davis Enterprise, “Purchase Near UCD Revealed,” July 21, 1967, p. 1, col. 8.

1968 Model Homes Now Open



**NEW By CARTER SPARKS
SHAKE ROOF CONTEMPORARY**

3 Bedroom, 1788 sq. ft. _____	\$26,200
4 Bedroom, 1990 sq. ft. _____	\$27,900

THE CLASSIC III

5 Bedroom, 1530 sq. ft. _____	\$25,000
4 Bedroom, 1700 sq. ft. _____	\$24,000

OTHER CONTEMPORARY

3 Bedroom, 1465 sq. ft. _____	\$22,400
4 Bedroom, 1520 sq. ft. _____	\$22,900

Exciting New 2-Story 4 Bedroom
 & Study, 1923 sq. ft. _____ \$27,000

RANCH STYLE

5 Bedroom, Dining Room or 4 Bedroom, 1500 sq. ft. _____	\$24,100
4 Bedroom, Formal Dining Room, 1724 sq. ft. _____	\$25,500

NEW RANCH STYLE

3 Bedroom, Dining Room, 1563 sq. ft. _____	\$24,700
4 Bedroom, Dining Room, 1813 sq. ft. _____	\$25,700
5 Bedroom, Dining Room, 1953 sq. ft. _____	\$26,500

(All Prices Include Lot)

MODEL HOMES



University Estates
 LAST LOCATION IN INNER DAVIS
 IMPROVEMENTS IN AND PAB
 NO DOWN PAY
 LOW DOWN FHA FINANCING
 All Models Available on Your Lot
 at Low Subdivision Prices

**Lots Available
 \$6000 to \$8000
 Models Open Daily
 10 a.m. til 6:00 p.m.**

STRENG BROS. HOMES
 DAVIS: 1213 Villanova Dr. SACRAMENTO: 5237 Damon Ave.
 753-2820 G13-1051 445-1051

Figure 13 Newspaper advertisement for Strenq Bros. Homes, Sacramento Bee, January 26, 1968

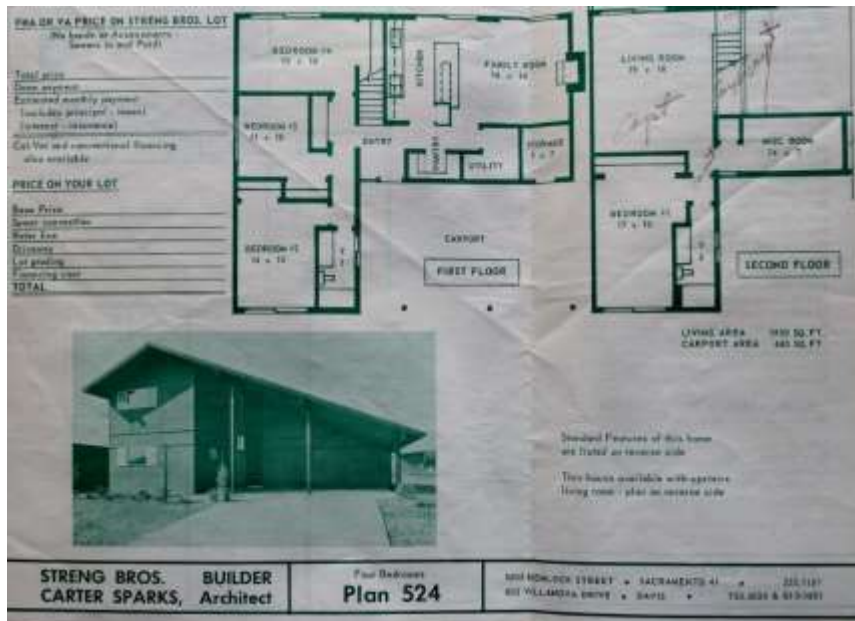
Davis Builders and Developers

More large-scale regional builders also came to Davis starting in the 1960s. Walker Donant, for example, built University Farms No. 3 in 1960. Although the company was new to Davis, they had been constructing housing in Sacramento since at least 1949. The firm built a few hundred houses in Davis over the next fifteen years, just a fraction of what it was building in the Sacramento area during that period. The Stanley M. Davis Organization had hit its stride Davis by the 1960s, developing hundreds of houses east of Downtown along with its partners. Most of the local subdividers from the immediate post-war period had constructed one or two subdivisions and then left real estate development. John Simmons, however, had gained momentum and by the late 1950s was recording three new subdivisions most years. Simmons remained an important Davis developer through the 1970s. Davis local John Whitcombe, who constructed his first house in 1959, was a newer entrant to the residential housing market. By 1970, he was an important local builder. In the 1960s, he built houses before moving on to apartment construction in the 1970s, becoming a pioneer in energy efficient construction techniques.

The Strenq Brothers probably influenced the aesthetics of the Davis housing market more than any other developers during this period. They entered the Davis market in 1962 with the first of their Ivy Town subdivisions. Bill and Jim Strenq, along with their architect Carter Sparks, were responsible for breaking the dominance of Tract Ranch style in the residential

landscape of Davis. In the late 1950s, Streng Brothers had taken over an uncle's development company and inherited its architectural plans, which were for Tract Ranch houses. After teaming up with Sparks, however, the Strengs began offering Post-and-Beam designs.

Although the Strengs and Sparks were in many respects opposites in terms of temperament and philosophy, their differences allowed them to complement one another's strengths. The Strengs have described Sparks as the creative genius and give him credit for pushing them to use building practices normally associated with custom designs, such as finishing the rear elevation with the same materials and details as the main façade. Although Sparks insisted on more expensive fixtures at times, Post-and-Beam construction saved money on materials. But the artistic Sparks, who built about 50 custom houses as well as commercial and institutional buildings, could never have designed so many houses without the practical and business-minded Strengs. Bill had been educated as an accountant, and the brothers kept an eye on the bottom line, pushed Sparks to meet deadlines, and reined in some of his excesses. The Streng Brothers operation never had a money-losing year.⁴⁰



⁴⁰ Weinstein, 2014, p. 2.



Figure 14: Brochure for two-story Streng House built in University Estates No 1 and in Sacramento, c1965.

Transportation

Bicycles were especially popular throughout the United States during World War II because of the shortage of tires and fuel, but their widespread use continued in Davis alongside the embrace of the automobile in the 1950s. The town's small footprint and flat terrain made the area conducive to bicycling. Emil Mrak, who became chancellor of UC Davis in 1959, promoted bicycle use on campus, planning for bicycle parking and instructing new students to bring their bikes to UC Davis. Nearly universal bicycle use on campus led to increased use throughout the Davis. Meanwhile, many residents viewed bicycles as a nuisance, and in 1963 and 1965, police planned campaigns of increased enforcement of traffic laws on bicycle riders. At the same time, however, Davis residents were circulating petitions for building bicycle paths and dedicated bicycle parking. In 1965, local residents Frank and Eve Child began advocating for dedicated bicycle lanes on city streets after spending time in the Netherlands, and in 1966, Norm Woodbury and Maynard Skinner won city council election after advocating for bike facilities. During 1967, two significant events in the evolution of Davis into a bicycle-friendly city occurred: the University stopped allowing cars onto the central part of campus in response to student agitation, and the city striped its first official bike lanes.⁴¹

This was the first lane dedicated to the preferential use of bikes on an existing roadway in the United States, and it would profoundly shape the future of Davis as a bike city. Not only did city officials need to figure out the standards for striping bike lanes, the California legislature had to change the

⁴¹ Theodore J. Buehler, "Fifty Years of Bicycle Policy in Davis, California," Institute for Transportation Studies, U.C. Davis, 2007, p. 5; Lofland, 2004, p. 131; Davis History Today, "Bikes '67 #8, October-November: Campus Closed To Cars & Bike Life Rolls On," John Lofland, copyright 2011 – 2015, (<http://www.davishistorytoday.org/2015/01/bikes-67-8-october-november-campus.html>, accessed April 15, 2015.

vehicle code. Davis's pioneering efforts to make the city bike-friendly also provided a template for other communities. By the end of the decade, Davis was calling itself "The City of Bicycles" and using the penny-farthing bicycle as an emblem. The four original bike lanes established in 1967 are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for their importance in the national history of bicycle transportation.⁴²

Despite the transformation to a new type of community that was presaged by the beginning of Davis' bike lane construction, the town was set in a car-oriented state and region, and automobile infrastructure grew significantly in the 1960s. Perhaps the most important element of this growth was the reconstruction of the Yolo Causeway in 1962, which made Davis more accessible from Sacramento than it had been previously. The original narrow wooden structure was replaced with a six-lane highway atop a concrete structure, making the drive to Sacramento faster and easier than ever. The widened freeway required the construction of a cloverleaf exit at Richards Boulevard, which transformed the gateway to Davis from rural to suburban. Davis realigned Fifth Street and extended F Street in 1965. In 1967, the city widened Russell Boulevard to four lanes. And between 1965 and 1968, the city added eleven new signaled intersections to moderate the increased traffic flows the higher population and wider roads inevitably brought. In 1969, voters approved a new railroad overpass on Covell Boulevard. During this era, as in many communities nationwide, Downtown buildings were being razed for public parking lots to accommodate all the cars.⁴³

Changing Views of Growth

The local response to the transformation of Davis from a farm town to a small city began shifting toward the end of the 1960s. Although a pro-growth ethos was still common, many locals were becoming ambivalent about the long-term implications of continued expansion. In 1967, the City Planning Department rejected a Chamber of Commerce proposal to double the city's area, which would have allowed for 300,000 residents. The same year, however, the City Council amended the General Plan to accommodate 110,000 eventual residents rather than the 80,000 the older plan accommodated. And for the next few years, the City would continue to approve any proposed development project that did not conflict with its General Plan.⁴⁴

1971 was a watershed year in local attitudes toward growth. Interest rates had spiked during the final years of the 1960s, and their fall in 1971 triggered another local building boom. By this time, however, issues related to development were stirring passionate debate among middle-class Davis householders as well as young environmentalists. Even as bulldozers continued to clear former agricultural land for tract housing, major changes were brewing in Davis.

The strong feelings local residents expressed in response to Strengh Brothers plans for University Estates 11 and 12 in early 1971 are illustrative of this shift. The Strenghs planned to connect Villanova Drive with West Fourteenth Street and build a mix of single-family dwellings and duplexes. In the first week of 1971, the Davis Enterprise ran a front page story entitled "Stormy rezoning hearing unable to decide issue." University Estates residents that lived on Villanova Drive

⁴² Please see the DPR523 form for the Davis Bike Lanes included in Appendix A.

⁴³ City of Davis, 1980, p. 24; Fitch, "Growing Pains, Chapter 1," 1998.

⁴⁴ Fitch, "Growing Pains, Chapter 1 & Chapter 2," 1998.

joined with people that owned houses east of Anderson Road in raising objections to the extension of West Fourteenth Street and the increased traffic a new cross-town thoroughfare would bring. The most adamant opposition to the subdivision, however, came from owners of both the Tract Ranch houses on Rutgers Drive and architect-designed Contemporary houses on Tamarack Lane. Newspaper accounts from the era suggest that neighborhood residents believed that the vacant parcel between their subdivisions (which had both been developed in the early 1960s) should remain open space permanently. Homeowners that lived to the north and south of the parcel slated to become University Estates 11 and 12 spearheaded a movement to oppose the Streng plan. These residents were concerned not only about traffic on a new thoroughfare, but vociferously opposed to the idea of duplexes in their neighborhood. Apparently worried that the lower-cost and smaller dwellings would negatively impact property values, they collected hundreds of signatures to a petition opposing the plan. They also publicly asserted that duplexes were not compatible with the “family area” already established in the neighborhood and that “transient” duplex residents brought “instability” to neighborhoods. This reaction was in marked contrast to just a few years before, when plans for duplexes and fourplexes went largely unremarked upon by the local populace.⁴⁵

Like many subsequent efforts to limit residential expansion in Davis, the 1971 agitation against University Estates 11 and 12 was only partially successful. The parcel was completely built out between 1972 and 1974, however only about a dozen new duplexes were constructed east of Anderson Road. Residents were unable, however, to keep the parcel vacant or to stop the extension of West Fourteenth Street, which had become a practical necessity as residential development spread in northwest Davis. This controversy demonstrated a principle that would govern the coming decades of attempts to restrict growth in Davis. As long as the University continued to grow, residential expansion in Davis could be managed and shaped, but local political activity could not halt growth.

Although the contentious debate surrounding the Streng proposal was new for Davis, it was a harbinger rather than an anomaly. By the close of 1971, Davis developers had built a record \$18 million in new construction. On the last day of the year, the *Davis Enterprise* identified growth as the most important issue of the year in a banner front-page headline. In addition to the Streng drama at the beginning of the year, progressive-leaning Davis citizens who were concerned about growth had formed the Greater Davis Planning and Research Group. They believed that developers were too powerful in Davis, and were dedicated to pushing the city to limit growth and update its vintage-1958 General Plan. Bob Black, who had been a student leader at UC Davis just a few years before, was among its founders. Meanwhile, the Davis City Planning Commission had emerged as a government body that was attempting to limit growth in Davis. Planning Commission battles included pushing McKeon construction to downsize a townhouse project, denying approval to a Teddy Enterprises subdivision map, and even fighting Pacific Standard Insurance Company’s plan to change the lettering on its sign. Commissioner Gerald Adler (later a Davis city councilman) advocated a building moratorium, provoking strong reactions from the developers of the Covell Park and Stonegate subdivisions (which were both master-planned neighborhoods that were well

⁴⁵ Woodland Daily Democrat, “Townhouse Fourplexes,” January 26, 1968, “Subdivision Plan Okayed,” February 7, 1968; Davis Enterprise, “Stormy rezoning hearing undable to decide issue,” January 6, 1971.

underway but far from complete in 1971). Even approval for a “conventional” Stanley Davis subdivision was nearly denied, and the commission adopted an official policy of “discouragement” of new subdivision applications in October in order to spend its time on General Plan revisions. Although the “discouragement” policy was reversed (after angry reactions from developers and others) by year’s end when the city hired an associate planner to work on the new General Plan, the commission continued to deny approvals to projects it deemed not in the public interest. Davis government would never again mildly accede to developers’ plans.⁴⁶

Resources Constructed during Explosive Growth Period

By 1959, Davis developers had hit their stride. The University continued to grow, creating a need for more housing and services each year. Industrial building techniques had been perfected at this point, and builders were grading large parcels of farmland into suburban-style cul-de-sac neighborhoods. The pace of development meant there was room for both regional merchant and local developers. With the housing crisis of the immediate post-war years solved, however, builders could widen their focus beyond residential construction. Commercial and institutional development were also strong throughout this period.

Commercial Properties

Commercial development was no longer limited to Downtown, and was robust all over Davis. Downtown continued to grow as residential properties were converted to commercial use and older buildings demolished and replaced. Meanwhile, subdivision developers were building strip-type shopping centers to serve neighborhood retail needs. And land near the freeway, even in the remote southern portion of Davis, was becoming attractive to business owners who wanted space to construct a corporate headquarters or a land-intensive venture like a car dealership. Although function was emphasized for the strip-type development, Downtown and freeway-adjacent commercial structures from the era were often ambitious, architect-designed buildings. Architect-designed commercial buildings included strong examples of established styles, such as Silvio Barovetto’s New Formalist Intercoast Insurance Building. Other architects during the period combined elements of various modernist styles to create unique buildings like the Downtown Wells Fargo Bank, designed by Gordon Stafford in 1965.



Photograph 17: Intercoast Life Insurance Building on Chiles Road in East Davis, 1966.



Photograph 18: Wells Fargo Bank Building at 340 F Street, 1965.

⁴⁶ John Russell Batchelder, “A Demographic Study of Community Support for Growth Control in Davis, California,” Master’s Thesis, Department of Business Administration, CSUS, 1990, p. 5; Fitch, “Growing Pains, Chapter 2,” 1998; Davis Enterprise, “Growth was Davis’ top issue in ’71, building hit a record \$18 million,” December 31, 1971, “Planners decide rules to allow new development,” December 22, 1971.

Civic and Institutional Properties

Development of civic and institutional properties was more rapid in the 1960s than in any other era of Davis's history. The population growth and prosperity of the era meant that new public buildings were required. The focus on primary and secondary educational buildings that started with the construction of Emerson Intermediate School shortly after the war continued into the 1960s. Two elementary schools, an intermediate school, Holmes Junior High School and the new Davis High School building were all constructed between 1960 and 1966.

In 1967, voters approved the Veterans Memorial Center which when completed included a theater, multi-purpose room, and commercial kitchen facilities. The new Davis branch of the public library, designed by local architect Silvio Barovetto, was constructed in 1968.

The boom in religious architecture during this period was striking. By the end of the 1950s, the pre-war church buildings that had served Davis's religious needs for so long were no longer adequate. In addition to the growing population, new denominations were joining the traditional Catholic and mainline Protestants that had dominated religious life, and these groups needed buildings for their worship. Many Davis religious groups during this era signaled their embrace of modernity by commissioning avant-garde rather than traditional buildings. Contemporary religious buildings constructed during this period include the Latter Day Saints Church, the Episcopal Church of St. Martin, the Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, the University Covenant Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Church just to the west of Davis city limits. Contemporary style buildings, they were either architect-designed or unique vernacular designs. All have been altered to varying degrees over the years. The Lutheran Church of the Incarnation, designed by Berkeley architects Ostwald and Kelly and constructed in 1967, is the best-preserved of Davis's Contemporary style religious buildings.



Photograph 19: Episcopal Church of St. Martin showing projecting recent addition left of frame, original building designed by Berkeley architect John Lipscomb, 1966.



Photograph 20: Lutheran Church of the Incarnation designed by Ostwald and Kelly, 1967.

Residential Properties

Because of the vast expansion of Davis residential neighborhoods in the 1960s, most of the current housing stock in town was constructed during this period.

Property types include apartment buildings in a wide range of sizes, duplexes, single-family dwellings with shared walls, and free-standing single-family homes.

Although some neighborhoods close to the University and Downtown were developed during this period, few empty lots were available for infill construction by this time, so most residential development took place at the edges of town.

Single-family Dwellings and Duplexes

By the late 1950s, the Minimal Traditional style had fallen from favor. The modest ambitions of the style, designed with cost-savings at the forefront, were out of step with post-war prosperity, and Minimal Traditional houses lacked storage for multiple automobiles. The archetypal house of this era is the L-shaped Tract Ranch. In its classic iteration a modest house with a moderately pitched side-gabled roof, a projecting double garage with front gable, aluminum slider windows, and little ornamentation, the basic Tract Ranch house allowed hundreds if not thousands of middle-class Davis residents to become homeowners. While the most modest

examples of the style were rarely more elaborate than their Minimal Traditional precursors, they were certainly more spacious. More importantly, two-car garages, considered a necessity in an increasingly automobile-oriented culture, had become standard. The characteristics of the Tract Ranch house were immortalized by Davis artist Robert Arneson in a series of dozens of visual pieces that used his own house at 1303 Alice Street as their subject. Stanley M. Davis, John Simmons, and other developers constructed hundreds of houses in this mode beginning in the late 1950s. While the simplicity of the form lent itself to endless identical repetition, it was simultaneously a template for a wide range of adaptations. Alterations to the roof form were most common, and included the use of hipped, gable-on-hip, cross-gabled, or double front-gabled roofs as well as various combinations of roof forms.



Image: Robert Arneson
Where It's At 1303 Alice, 1967-68
collage
26" x 20"
© From the Collection of the Davis Arts Center

Figure 15: Reproduction of a Robert Arneson collage with his ranch house as its subject.

Recessed and/or side-facing entryways, rear garages, or side-entry garages were also common modifications developers utilized to avoid cookie-cutter repetition.



Photograph 21: Double front-gabled, very low pitch Tract Ranch house at 945 Gregory Place, 1959



Photograph 22: Double front-gabled Tract Ranch house at 1712 Madrone Lane, 1961.



Photograph 23: Hipped roof Tract Ranch house at 825 Acacia Lane, 1966.



Photograph 24: Tract Ranch house with cross-gabled roof at 2700 Acacia Drive, 1970.

The Strengh Brothers began constructing Sacramento subdivisions with Carter Sparks designs in 1959. Over the next thirty years, they built over 4,000 houses, three-quarters of which were Carter Sparks designs. The “Classic” was the most widely built. With its wide gabled roof, expressed Post-and-Beam construction, clerestory windows, and integral carport, the efficient and stylish house is the iconic Strengh Brothers prototype. “Plan 524,” (see Figure 14) features a two-story plan under a soaring, asymmetrical gable. Sparks also designed a flat-roofed model and a plan that combined gabled house with flat-roofed carport. In later years he added an atrium model and a “transitional” that featured a Ranch plan with two-car garage and Post-and-Beam construction. A prominent front gable with clerestory windows and massive chimney further distinguished the transitional from ordinary Tract Ranch houses. The materials the Strenghs used were much humbler than the expanses of redwood and natural stone Sparks was fond of utilizing in custom designs. Fireplaces were plain brick or modular steel hanging units rather than massive stone creations. Instead of natural redwood exterior siding, the Strenghs used Weldwood vertical-groove plywood with color permanently affixed. Kitchens had all-electric appliances and vinyl floors, and doors and windows were Blomberg aluminum sliders. Although these were materials chosen with cost control in mind, they were also fashionable and technically sophisticated products. And Sparks’ functionalist instincts allowed him to deploy these

humbler materials in the same straightforward manner he used for the expensive components of custom houses, giving the houses an elegance and dignity that belied their affordability. Streng houses ranged from 1,300 to 2,200 square feet, although most hovered in the middle of that range. In addition to unique aesthetic elements, several important differences distinguished Strengs from Eichlers, most notably that they were designed with the Sacramento Valley's hot climate in mind. Forced air rather than radiant heat, wide overhanging eaves, and atriiums covered with translucent plastic domes were important adaptations to the valley climate.⁴⁷

The Strengs built 100 – 200 houses a year, and were not nearly as prolific as the largest merchant builders of the era, who sometimes built a thousand units in a year. This pace was a pragmatic solution to the fact that neither brother wanted to commute to far-flung building sites, but it was another factor that enhanced quality control. It also allowed for an unusual degree of customization, with many purchasers buying houses prior to construction and working with the Strengs to make alterations to Sparks' basic designs. The smaller scale and Sparks' involvement gave Streng subdivisions a more refined quality than the typical mass-produced tract of the era.⁴⁸

Although the Streng Brothers loved modern architecture (Bill Streng and his wife Karmen have lived in a Davis "Classic" since 1975) they were businessmen at heart, and knew that modernism was not to everyone's taste. Estimating that modern architecture appeals to only ten percent of the population, Jim Streng acknowledged that they were marketing towards this niche. However, they were astute salesmen, and always offered traditional plans alongside the bolder Post-and-Beam houses. Their Ivy Town subdivisions, the earliest Davis Streng neighborhoods, are only about two-thirds Post-and-Beam. As time passed and the Strengs gained confidence, however, they constructed a higher percentage of modern houses. FHA administrators were not among the rarified group that appreciated modern architecture, and expressed skepticism that the Carter Sparks-Streng houses could retain value over the years. The FHA effectively held sway over many aspects of subdivision design during this period, as they could refuse to finance projects that did not fit their guidelines, effectively preventing would-be buyers from obtaining mortgages. Jim Streng responded by taking a door-to-door poll in an Eichler-built neighborhood, and presented the FHA with results stating that almost all residents would buy another Eichler home. The FHA relented, and agreed to fund Streng subdivisions.⁴⁹

The Strengs were able to offer a modest-sized house with the dramatic roof-line, expressed structure, and clean design of a custom-designed contemporary house in the same price range as their Tract Ranch houses. The Strengs also built a large number of duplexes and "half-plexes" with similar Post-and-Beam architectural characteristics. Apartment buildings constructed by the Strengs were also sometimes designed by Sparks, but they are less architecturally distinguished than the single- and two-family buildings.

⁴⁷ Weinstein, 2014, p. 2; Streng Bros., Builder, Carter Sparks, Architect, "Plan 524", undated real estate brochure; California Department of Transportation, "Tract Housing in California, 1945 – 1973: A Context for National Register Evaluation," Prepared by California Department of Transportation, Sacramento, California, 2011, p. 108.

⁴⁸ Weinstein, 2014, p. 2; California Department of Transportation, Sacramento, California, 2011, p. 117.

⁴⁹ Weinstein, 2014, p. 3.



Photograph 25: Post-and-Beam "Classic" at 1128 Princeton Place, 1963



Photograph 26: Post-and-Beam duplex at 1539 Brown Drive, 1970.



Photograph 27: Post-and-beam transitional house with prominent chimney at 1520 Sycamore Lane, 1971.



Photograph 28: Two-story Post-and-Beam "Plan 524" house at 1221 Colby Drive, 1969.

Meanwhile, the prosperity the continually expanding University brought to Davis supported construction of custom houses, for example in the Elmwood subdivisions adjacent to campus and later in North Davis's Covell Park neighborhood. Contemporary and Post-and-Beam were the ascendant styles for architect-designed houses during this period. In addition to their tracts, Streng Bros. and their architect Carter Sparks designed and built many houses inspired by the Modern movement in other subdivisions during this period. Local architects Silvio "Slim" Barovetto, and Gail Sosnick, as well as UC Davis art professor Richard Cramer also produced innovative examples of these modernist styles.

A significant minority of higher-end dwellings were Custom Ranch style. During this period, a handful of Custom Ranch houses in Davis began to exhibit the exterior detail of Ranch subtypes, most notably Storybook, Post-and-Beam, and Contemporary. Despite the sometimes exuberant eclecticism of their decorative details, these subtypes nevertheless conform to a Ranch template with prominent garages and Ranch-style plans and materials.



Figure 29: Custom Post-and-Beam house at 658 Elmwood Drive, 1959.



Photograph 30: Custom Post-and-Beam house at 1012 Fordham Avenue, 1969.



Photograph 31: Custom Ranch at 617 Cleveland Street, 1961.



Photograph 32: Custom Ranch house with Post-and-Beam details at 921 West Eighth Street, 1960.

Multi-family Housing

The apartment building, which had been present in Davis since the late 1940s, began to emerge as an important building type during the period of explosive growth. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, most Davis apartment buildings were still no more than two stories. Typically, they had between five and twenty units. By this time, apartment buildings were fully accepted as a respectable housing type, particularly for students, and developers did not usually bother offering the range of amenities used to promote early examples. Cal Davis Apartments at 340 Ninth Street, a two-story, twelve-unit building is a typical example. With an L-shaped plan, exterior entrances to each unit, large surface parking lot and little exterior ornamentation, the building was constructed to offer practical and affordable housing. As the 1960s progressed, Davis developers began constructing more apartment buildings than previously, and the average multi-family building began to grow progressively larger. The pace of apartment development is illustrated by one builder's statistics: Robert C. Powell constructed about 4,000 apartment units between 1961 and 1972. By the mid-1970s, Davis had about 60 apartment buildings. Whereas older apartments were often infill projects, after 1965 whole streets could be filled with multi-building apartment complexes. Many of these buildings occupied most or all of one- to three-acre parcels, and were sometimes starkly pragmatic

buildings. The large, flat-roofed apartment building at 515 Sycamore Lane, constructed in 1965 and surrounded by multi-family housing, is a typical example.⁵⁰

At the start of the 1970s, developers introduced a new residential building type to Davis: condominiums or “Townhouse homes.” Stanley M. Davis began selling Covell Commons (one- and two-story units with shared walls set in a greenbelt) in 1971. Marketing stressed the opportunity for home ownership without the responsibilities of maintenance or yard work. In an echo of developers’ promotion of Davis’s first apartment units two decades earlier, the Woodland Daily Democrat praised the development as “the utmost in luxury living combined with leisure.” Like apartments, the townhouse became a lasting fixture of Davis residential neighborhoods.⁵¹



Photograph 33: Medium-sized apartment building at 320 Ninth Street, 1961.



Photograph 34: Covell Commons Townhouse complex, started in 1971.



Photograph 35: University Pines Apartments, originally Buckley Apartments, 1965.



Photograph 36: Large apartment building at 515 Sycamore Lane, 1965.

⁵⁰Mike Dunne, “Developer Robert Powell Lets His Work do the Talking,” Sacramento Bee, January 5, 1989.

⁵¹Woodland Daily Democrat, “New Life Style in Covell Commons,” May 20, 1971

Property Types and Registration Requirements

Property types include commercial properties; civic and institutional properties; landscape features, infrastructure (such as the Davis bike path network) and residential buildings including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing. In addition, districts based on geographically grouped and thematically are potentially eligible under this context.

Properties eligible under this context represent the Explosive Growth Era from 1959 – 1971. Although resources from this period are common, many have been heavily altered over the decades. Therefore consideration should be given to retaining and preserving those resources from the period that retain integrity. Under normal circumstances, properties must also be 50 years old or older in order to be eligible under this context.

Significance

A commercial, civic, or institutional property from this period may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Commercial, civic, or institutional properties from this period may be specifically associated with the growth of the University after its transition to a general campus in 1959 and the subsequent rapid residential expansion of the City of Davis. They may also be associated with the development of bike lanes and green belts, important aspects of Davis history during this period.
B/1 (Person)	A commercial, civic, or institutional property is unlikely to be significant for its association with a person important to Davis history.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed” and under the “Resource Constructed” heading in the previous section.

A residential property, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history. Residential properties from this period may be specifically associated with the growth of the University after its transition to a general campus in 1959 and the subsequent rapid residential expansion of the City of Davis. They may also be associated with the development of bike lanes and green belts, important aspects of Davis history during this period.
B/1 (Person)	Association with the lives of significant persons in Davis’s past. Significant persons within this theme may include civic leaders, local builders, or members of the University community. Typically, to be eligible for association with a person a property must have an important association with the individual’s productive life. Residential properties, therefore, are unlikely to be significant under this criterion

	unless research demonstrates that a significant person performed the activity for which they were known at the property.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed” and under the “Resource Constructed” heading in the previous section.

Integrity

In order to be eligible for historic listing a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance under the context of Explosive Growth Era Davis. Although properties from this period are common, they have not been considered valuable in their original forms and consequently a majority have been altered over the decades.

A/1 (Event)	A property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Explosive Growth Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.
B/1 (Person)	A property associated with a person significant to Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A commercial, civic, institutional, or residential property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Explosive Growth Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.
C/3 (Architecture)	A property significant for its architecture is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property significant under Criterion C/3 must retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Explosive Growth Era. A property that has lost some historic materials and minor features may still be eligible if it retains essential characteristics such as massing, proportion, and fenestration pattern. However, since modern resources lack many of the distinctive decorative elements that characterized earlier architectural styles, a property that does not exhibit the majority of its original materials and features does not retain integrity and is not eligible.

Progressive Visions, Managed Growth (1972 – 2015)

Despite the new climate of ambivalence toward expansion and development, the breakneck pace of growth continued into the early 1970s. By 1972, UC Davis had 15,256 students and the town’s population was 28,450. Residential development showed no signs of slowing down, with seventeen subdivisions recorded in 1970 and 1971.

Bob Black began campaigning for a city council seat in 1971, as did Richard Holdstock and Joan Poulos. The three relative newcomers to Davis had similar platforms emphasizing low-income housing, consumer protection, and growth control. In 1972, assisted by a large turnout among UC Davis students who had recently received the right to vote, all three were elected to the City Council, wiping away its long-standing pro-development and conservative tendencies. The election of a younger and more progressive city council has often been seen as a turning-point in Davis history. However, the actions of the Davis Planning Commission and public controversies surrounding development in 1971 demonstrate that the 1972 election was the formalization of a gradual transformation that had been brewing in Davis since the late 1960s. The new council instituted a massive program of soliciting community input. This era may have been the genesis of the citizen participation that is a Davis hallmark to this day. For the new general plan, eleven citizen subcommittees studied a variety of aspects of community life including housing, open space, and traffic, among others. In 1974, formation of an Ad Hoc Noise Committee brought the number of official civic study groups up to twelve.⁵²

The 1973 General Plan adopted two principals that would impact Davis for the next forty years: growth control and energy conservation. Although support for preserving agricultural land and limiting sprawl was fairly widespread in Davis by the 1970s, formal adoption of growth control was a somewhat radical move during this era, and Davis was only the second California municipality to limit development. In 1973, Davis altered its long-term plan to accommodate only “internally generated” development needs and to limit population to no more than 50,000 by 1990.⁵³

Under the new General Plan, North and West Davis were the preferred zones for new development (which formalized a practical policy that went back to at least 1971) and \$60 million worth of building permits were denied for south Davis in 1973. One of the means the city used to limit growth was adoption of an allocation process. Although the system was supposed to be based on objective criteria, it was administered by the City Council, and resulted in developers tailoring projects to the personal preferences of council members. There was widespread popular support for growth control, but of course the process also had its detractors. Developers were generally not thrilled about the City putting brakes on growth, and felt that the restrictions attempted to mandate intangibles that were difficult to incorporate into subdivisions. Many growth-control devices were tried or suggested during this period, and Davis began to develop a reputation for being a difficult place to build. For example, Davis city government began discussing an ordinance that would outlaw advertising Davis real estate in other areas because of fears that Davis would be overwhelmed by outsiders. In 1973, the Planning Commission refused to allow a minor change to a subdivision map until the developer agreed not to advertise in Sacramento. The Davis Planning Commission was attempting to prevent a practice that had been common among developers or residential subdivisions in Davis for two decades, leading to an article in the Sacramento Union headlined “Davis Tears Down the Welcome Sign.”⁵⁴

⁵² Lofland, 2008, p. 136; City of Davis, “General Plan,” 1973 – 1977, p. iv – vi.

⁵³ Fitch, “Growing Pains, Chapter 2,” 1998; Diemer, 2000, p.34.

⁵⁴ Diemer, 2000, p.34; Batchelder, 1990, p. 9; Kara Brunzell, Personal Interview with Bill Streng, December 10, 2014; Sacramento Union, “Davis Tears Down the Welcome Sign,” November 19, 1973.

The City expanded recreational and government facilities during this era in an effort to catch up with decades of population growth. Davis voters approved over \$1.5 million in bond measures in 1972. The money funded the creation of five new parks, a community pool in East Davis, and completion of the Veterans Memorial Complex. The original Downtown was no longer sufficient for government services. In 1980, a new post office opened at Pole Line Road and Fifth Street, and a DMV opened across the street two years later. And in 1981, the old Davis High School was retrofitted as a new City Hall. Although much larger than the old 1938 building, the Russell Boulevard location was still close to Downtown and the University.

Ironically, despite the attempt to slow development, 1973 was another record year for construction in Davis. In that year the city issued 1,178 building permits, allowing for construction of 452 apartments and almost 500 single-family dwellings, as well as car dealerships and office buildings. By this time, UC Davis's enrollment was up to 16,241, so expansion was inevitable. In 1977, yet another record was set when the City of Davis issued permits valued at \$23,826,000. This initial failure to stem the tide of development must be viewed in the context of the relationship between the City of Davis and the University: as long as UC Davis continued to expand, the city was more or less forced to grow along with it. The allocation process did eventually slow construction, but not until the end of the decade. Permits for single family dwellings, for example, fell from 386 in 1975 to only 90 in 1980. By this point, Davis was home to a population of 36,640.⁵⁵



Figure 16: U.S.D.A. Aerial photograph showing urbanized Davis, 1973.

⁵⁵ Diemer, 2000, p.34 – 36; Batchelder, 1990, p. 8.

Energy Conservation

The nationwide energy crisis began to negatively affect Davis in late 1973, when gas stations began closing and UC Davis had to cut back on lighting. Although the left-leaning new city leadership had explicitly called for energy-efficient housing in its new General Plan, the energy crisis lent a pragmatic urgency to saving energy. In 1975, the City Council adopted an Energy Conservation Building Ordinance tailored to the local climate. Requiring north-south orientation and encouraging solar energy, Davis gained recognition nationally and even internationally as a “solar city” in the years after its passage. In 1980, Davis became the first city nationwide to mandate domestic energy conservation.⁵⁶

Residential Development

Although the pace of development sped up in the early 1970s and then slowed markedly near the end of the decade, the type of houses constructed over the decades that followed largely stayed within the template developed during the 1960s. Single-family dwellings with two-car garages remained the most popular type of housing, although developers also built duplexes, houses with shared walls, and apartment buildings. The average size of every type of buildings got larger over the decades, and apartment buildings in particular grew much bigger. Established developers like Walker-Donant, Stanley M. Davis, Streng Brothers, and John Simmons continued building housing in Davis into the 1970s. Although new builders entered the scene, most of their developments stayed within the existing template of suburban housing construction in Davis.



Figure 17: Grinnell Drive in Davis Manor No. 17 under construction in 1972 (courtesy of John Lofland).

⁵⁶ Diemer, 2000, p.34 – 36; Fitch, “Growing Pains, Chapter 2,” 1998.

The most significant change to domestic architecture in Davis during the 1970s was the enlargement of the typical house that stemmed from decades of prosperity. By 1972, the average single family home in Davis was roughly 1,900 square feet, more than double the size of a typical post-war tract house. More expensive houses, however could be 2,500 square feet or larger. The increase in living space came with a profusion of amenities developers offered to attract buyers. In 1954, Stanley Davis had promoted Davis Manor in newspaper ads touting built-in wardrobes, 1½ car garages, and a choice of colors. By the early 1970s, a typical development offered central heat, air conditioning, wall-to-wall carpeting, and a dishwasher. Some developers went so far as to offer continuous clean ovens, gas log lighters, and cultured marble vanities in tract houses. Two-car garages were by this time standard, and some houses had three-car garages.⁵⁷

Although residential architecture was not transformed by big design ideas or new materials during this era as it had been immediately after the war, the increased size of new houses forced some stylistic changes. The most notable feature of 1970s houses was the re-introduction of the second story, which had begun to re-emerge in the late 1960s, as a popular feature. In the immediate post-war period, domestic architecture had emphasized horizontality, particularly in Ranch houses but also in Contemporary and Post-and-Beam styles. While many of the elements of Ranch design were retained in the newer houses, the horizontal emphasis was often abandoned for the extra square footage a second story could offer.



Figure 18: El Macero Vista No. 2, Model 100B, undated real estate brochure showing expanded size of tract houses, c1972.

One exception to the continuity of residential development was the Village Homes subdivision in far west Davis. Village Homes was born out of the idealistic and progressive movement that altered the City Council in the early 1970s. Michael and Judy Corbett (who were founding members of the Greater Davis Planning and Research Group along with Bob Black) conceived of Village Homes as both an innovative community and a response to ecological problems caused by development. It featured passive and active solar heating for energy efficiency, had narrow streets without sidewalks to conserve land, and common green and agricultural areas around the houses. Despite initial resistance from city officials, the new City Council supported the development, and the Corbetts

⁵⁷ Sacramento Bee, "A Home You can Enjoy," April 17, 1954; Woodland Daily Democrat, "Yolo County Living," January 29, 1971.

broke ground on the first Village Homes subdivision in 1975. The husband-and-wife team built five more Village Homes subdivisions in the late 1970s, ultimately attracting national and international attention for their innovative practices.⁵⁸

Cluster or greenbelt development, which had been pioneered in Davis by Gentry and Smith and taken to new heights with Village Homes, became the preferred form of development in Davis. In the late 1980s, landscape and urban design professor Mark Francis led a group that proposed a greenbelt around the entire city. Although, (like proponents of both the original Davis bike path and Village Homes), the idea initially met with resistance, the City Council eventually became strong backers. By 2007, Davis featured a nearly complete ring of greenbelt connected to off-street bike paths.⁵⁹



Figure 19: Oblique aerial showing Westwood subdivisions c1973. Russell Boulevard is in background with University upper left of frame. Empty fields in foreground became Emerson Junior High School, Village Homes, and other subdivisions in the 1970s and 1980s (courtesy John Lofland).

A Changing Downtown

As planned in the 1950s, Davis' Downtown shopping district and the traditional residential districts that surrounded it changed markedly during the subsequent decades. Although residential development slowed in Davis in the second half of the 1970s, commercial development spiked and alterations downtown increased. As Lofland calculated in his quantitative study of surviving Davis

⁵⁸ Judy and Michael Corbett, *Designing Sustainable Communities: Learning from Village Homes*. (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2000), p. 21 – 25; Diemer, 2000, p. 38.

⁵⁹ Benjamin Weil, "Solar City, Bike City, Growth City: Governance and Energy in Davis, California," *Journal of Political Ecology*, Vol 20, 2013, p. 142.

buildings, over 60% of pre-1945 Downtown Davis had been demolished by the turn of the twenty-first century. Most of this demolition took place in the 1970s when downtown was expanding to meet the needs of ever-increasing numbers of new citizens and their automobiles.⁶⁰

With the spike in commercial development, retail areas began spilling outside of Downtown Davis in the late 1970s. Commercial development on the edges of Davis was strong, and the City approved new shopping centers in east and south Davis in 1976. Demolitions Downtown tailed off after 1980, and commercial developers began to focus on adaptive reuse and infill projects as well as development on Davis's borders. Commercial development over the decades has included projects like the Fifth and G Street Plaza in 1997 and Davis Commons in 1998. Most of the shopping centers constructed in the 1960s and 1970s were redeveloped in subsequent decades, with not only the businesses changing, but the buildings themselves being drastically altered. In recent years, Downtown has become increasingly attractive for boutiques and independent restaurants, while most big box stores and chain restaurants prefer more expansive locations on the edges of Davis or near the University.⁶¹

Transportation

After the initial implementation of bike lanes in the late 1960s, Davis experimented with several styles, eventually settling on the one-way bike lane between moving and parked cars. By 1974, bicycle transportation and the infrastructure to support it was entrenched. As Davis grew, bicycle facilities and programs expanded proportionally. In the 1970s and early 1980s, an estimated thirty percent of students and workers in Davis commuted by bicycle. By the end of the 1980s, however, bicycle commuting began a long decline, despite the growing greenbelt network and continued City support. In 1990, only 22% commuted by bike, and by 2000, the number was down to 14%. Observers have cited falling gas prices in the late 1980s, the increased geographic size of Davis, and increased availability of public transportation as responsible for the downward trend. As gas prices rose after 2010, cycling numbers began edging up again.⁶²

Changes to Davis's transportation infrastructure after 1970 were incremental in nature, in contrast to the transformative infrastructure built in the 1960s. In 1984, the Yolo Causeway was widened, and in 1995, Davis constructed the Pole Line freeway overcrossing. In 1992, Amtrak began offering three trips daily to Sacramento and the Bay Area, making Davis more attractive than ever as a bedroom community.⁶³

Resources Constructed during Progressive Visions, Managed Growth Era

Although the political climate changed dramatically in Davis after 1972, development trends did not immediately follow. Commercial and residential development remained strong for several years despite attempts at growth control. When new styles were introduced in the late 1970s, their innovative design features were based on the growing concern with energy efficiency and environmental awareness rather than aesthetic concerns. At the same time, middle- and upper

⁶⁰ Lofland, 2008, p. 126 – 127.

⁶¹ Diemer, 2000, p.34, 35, 44.

⁶² Buehler, 2007, p. 7 – 8; Weil, 2013, p. 141 – 144.

⁶³ Diemer, 2000, p. 38, 40.

middle-class residences were growing ever larger, cancelling out much of the energy savings conferred by the new building techniques.

Commercial Properties

Almost all of the commercial properties constructed during this period have either been demolished or drastically altered over the intervening decades. A Mansard convenience store building was constructed in the Davis Manor area in 1972, and a Post-and-Beam car dealership was built in East Davis in 1974. These are two of the only commercial properties from this period that retain their original building characteristics.



Photograph 37: Mansard convenience store at 1964 East Eighth Street, 1972.



Photograph 38: Post-and-Beam car dealership at 5000 Chiles Road, 1974.

Residential Properties

The architectural styles that had begun to gain a foothold in Davis during and after World War II remained popular during this era, especially Tract Ranch, Custom Ranch, Contemporary, and Post-and-Beam. Eclectic subtypes of Ranch style, particularly Spanish Revival, became popular during this period for both Custom and Tract Ranch houses.



Photograph 39: Custom Contemporary house at 504 Del Oro Avenue, 1972.



Photograph 42: Custom Ranch house with Post-and-Beam detail at 305 Encina Avenue, 1975.



Photograph 40: Tract Ranch with Spanish Revival details at 3218 Breton Avenue, 1972.



Photograph 43: Custom Ranch house with Spanish Revival detail at 605 Hubble Street, 1974.

Property Types and Registration Requirements

Property types include commercial properties; civic and institutional properties; landscape features, infrastructure and residential buildings including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing. In addition, districts based on geographically grouped and thematically are potentially eligible under this context.

Properties eligible under this context represent the Progressive Visions, Managed Growth Era from 1972 – 2015. Although resources from this period are common, many have been heavily altered over the decades. Therefore consideration should be given to retaining and preserving those resources from the period that retain integrity. Under normal circumstances, properties must also be 50 years old or older in order to be eligible under this context, so at the present time none are eligible for listing. However, as properties from this period age into the historic period they may become eligible for historic listing if the following significance and integrity conditions are met.

Significance

A commercial, civic, or institutional property from this period may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Commercial, civic, or institutional properties from this period may be specifically associated with the continued growth of the University and residential development after 1972, when a progressive city government instituted growth controls in Davis. They may also be associated with the development of bike lanes and green belts, which continued to be important aspects of Davis history during this period.
B/1 (Person)	A commercial, civic, or institutional property is unlikely to be significant for its association with a person important to Davis history.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed” and under the “Resource Constructed” heading in the World War II/Post-war section.

A residential property, including single-family dwellings, duplexes, and multi-family housing may be significant under this context using the following criteria:

A/1 (Event)	Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history. Residential properties from this period may be specifically associated with the continued growth of the University and residential development after 1972, when a progressive city government instituted growth controls in Davis. They may additionally be associated with progressive aspects of residential planning such as energy efficiency and solar power which grew in importance during this era, and with the development of bike lanes and green belts, which continued to be important aspects of Davis history during this period.
B/1 (Person)	Association with the lives of significant persons in Davis’s past. Significant persons within this theme may include civic leaders, local builders, or members of the University community. Typically, to be eligible for association with a person a property must have an important association with the individual’s productive life. Residential properties, therefore, are unlikely to be significant under this criterion

	unless research demonstrates that a significant person performed the activity for which they were known at the property.
C/3 (Architecture)	Embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values. Additional information about architectural styles and character-defining features of commercial buildings from this period can be found in this section under “Resources Constructed” and under the “Resource Constructed” heading in the World War II/Post-war section.

Integrity

In order to be eligible for historic listing a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its significance under the context of Progressive Visions, Managed Growth Era Davis. Although properties from this period are common, they have not been considered valuable in their original forms and consequently a majority have been altered over the decades.

A/1 (Event)	A property associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Explosive Growth Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.
B/1 (Person)	A property associated with a person significant to Davis history is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A commercial, civic, institutional, or residential property must retain integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Progressive Visions, Managed Growth Era. It is expected that some historic materials, such as shake roofs and garage doors, will have been replaced.
C/3 (Architecture)	A property significant for its architecture is eligible if it retains the essential physical features that characterized the building during the period of significance. A property significant under Criterion C/3 must retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling in order to convey its significant association with the Explosive Growth Era. A property that has lost some historic materials and minor features may still be eligible if it retains essential characteristics such as massing, proportion, and fenestration pattern. However, since modern resources lack many of the distinctive decorative elements that characterized earlier architectural styles, a property that does not exhibit the majority of its original materials and features does not retain integrity and is not eligible.

Modern Davis

The change in direction that began about 1971 established a template that has survived in Davis for the ensuing four decades. Over the years, Davis has adopted progressive policies such as bilingual immersion public schools, municipal affirmative action, a public smoking ban, and domestic partnership for same-sex couples. Frequently, Davis has been one of the first communities nationwide to do so. And the issue of growth control, which became a contentious local issue as well

as a cornerstone of the policies the Davis City Council in the 1970s, has remained a key local concern. Although growth has never stopped in Davis, the policies begun in the 1970s gradually slowed expansion. Despite these successes, slow growth does not enjoy consensus support of Davis's populace, and over the decades some anti-growth measures have triumphed while others have failed.

In 1986, voters approved a measure to limit growth to the slowest rate legally allowed by the state. Nearly a decade later in 1995, residents opposed to Wildhorse, a golf course subdivision project in north Davis, forced a voter referendum to stop construction, which had been approved by the city. The referendum did not pass, however, and the subdivision, which included 800 units of new housing, went forward as planned. A decade later, an attempt to add to Wildhorse did not fare as well. Although much smaller than the initial development, the new subdivision required a voter referendum because farmland would be developed. In 2007, Wildhorse was resoundingly defeated by Davis voters.⁶⁴

By 2010, Davis had a population of 65,622, lower by 10,000 than the number forecast in the 1987 General Plan. The University remains the dominant institution in Davis more than a century after it was founded as the University Farm. For the 2013 – 2014 school year, UC Davis had over 30,000 students and more than 20,000 faculty and staff. Although not all faculty, staff, and students live in Davis, the majority of Davis residents are associated with the University. Perhaps unsurprisingly for a town so dominated by an educational institution, Davis is well-known for the quality of its primary and secondary schools, and has the highest test scores in the region. Despite the decline in bicycling from the historic highs of the 1970s, Davis has over 50 miles of bike paths and the highest per capita number of bicycles in the nation. In 2015, Davis residents are proud that they have maintained a small-town atmosphere while simultaneously cultivating the cosmopolitan advantages of a University City.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Diemer, 2000, p. 37 – 39; Crystal Lee, “Wildhorse Ranch rejected; project trounced by Davis voters,” Davis Enterprise, April 22, 2015.

⁶⁵ U.C. Davis, http://budget.ucdavis.edu/data-reports/documents/campus-population/ptotlpop_ycurr.pdf, UC Regents, April 22, 2015, Accessed April 22, 2015; Davis, California, <http://cityofdavis.org/about-davis/school-district>, <http://cityofdavis.org/about-davis/community>, Accessed April 22, 2015.

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